

# **BUILDING BETTER CITIES & BETTER REGIONS**

## **LIMITING TOP-DOWN PLANNING THAT ALIENATES THE NEEDS OF LOCALS**

We must empower local communities to guide the future of our cities, towns and regions. This means putting people and the planet before developer profits.

### **SAVING SYDNEY**

We must empower local communities to guide the future of our cities, towns and regions. This means putting people and the planet before the profits of developers. The high price of housing means a whole generation will likely never own a home, and it's driving people into poverty just to afford a place to live.

Across greater Sydney, communities have lost their power to be heard as state governments impose dwelling targets, strip powers from local councils, and approve exemptions from planning controls that allow bigger and more imposing developments to be constructed.

Top-down planning enables the state government to write laws that benefit their developer mates, and reduces community input to commenting on plans that

have already been decided. High density developments done poorly can lead to heat islands, food deserts and car dependent regions. Whole new suburbs have been built with no public transport, inadequate access to schools and hospitals, and lacking green open spaces for children to play.

To fix these problems with planning in Sydney requires:

- Enforceable targets for affordable housing in new developments (minimum 20%);
- Democratising decision making;
- Sensible and accountable regional planning; and
- More trees and green open spaces.

The Greens have a plan for improving strategic planning decisions in Sydney:

1. Place a specific additional goal in the Planning Act of reducing the geographic inequities in Sydney by requiring at least 20% of all new housing across the city to be community and or public housing that is genuinely affordable.
2. Creating 5 regional organisations of councils across Sydney (Western, Central, Eastern, North and South) and giving them express statutory planning powers to make regional plans and decide major regional planning matters.
3. Abolishing “planned precincts”, “priority precincts” and “urban activation precincts” and return planning powers over these areas to either local councils or regional organisations of councils (where they cross council boundaries).
4. Restoring tree protection laws, and putting in place binding tree canopy targets so that we green our cities, clean our air and cool our homes.
5. Provide the Greater Sydney Commission with auditing powers to ensure NSW Planning and local councils comply with the law and deliver on best practice planning.
6. Change the role of the Greater Sydney Commission to a co-ordination role in Sydney Planning, requiring it to work with regional organisations of councils and state education, transport and health agencies to maintain a coherent and democratic city-wide plan.

## PLANNING FOR REGIONAL NSW

The Greens support decentralisation for planning decisions in regional towns and communities. Planning controls in the regions must empower local decision makers and give the community a strong voice.

At present many rural and regional communities have little or no access to public transport, which in turn limits their educational and employment opportunities. It is critical that developments in regional areas allow for adequate transport, water, infrastructure and services.

Improving planning decisions in regional areas requires:

- Removing centralised control over regional planning;
- Fostering local cooperation in strategic planning;
- Encouraging more trees and green open spaces; and
- Radically expanding public transport options in the regions to improve access to jobs and other opportunities.

The Greens plan for improving strategic planning decision in regional areas will:

1. Empower regional organisations of councils by giving them express statutory planning powers to make regional plans and decide major regional planning matters.
2. Remove the ability of the state planning department to seize control of regional

planning projects, other than for addressing corruption or genuine and continuing mismanagement.

3. Put in place binding tree canopy targets in all urban areas so that we green our towns, clean our air and cool our homes.
4. Create a Regional Planning Authority with auditing powers to ensure NSW Planning and local councils comply with the law and deliver on best practice planning.
5. Empower the Regional Planning Authority to work with regional organisations of councils and state education, transport and health agencies to maintain a coherent and democratic statewide plan.
6. Place two specific additional goals in the Planning Act of improving public transport connections in regional NSW and protecting our state's ability to produce food and fibre.

