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Urban Renewal
Department of Planning and Infrastructure
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Carter Street, Lidcombe | urban activation precinct

We understand that only two of the 8 initial sites identified as urban activation precincts have had planning controls settled, to date. In neither case have the new planning controls included provision of affordable housing. That this is so is particularly shocking in the case of the North Ryde Station site because the site was largely in government ownership, and because the planning report of January 2013 that went on public exhibition actually suggested there be a component of affordable housing (proposing a target of 4% affordable housing). In the case of the Epping town centre, there was no mention of affordable housing in either the planning proposal or the planning report. In the case of Wentworth Point, where the new planning controls have not been finally announced, the UAP sites are 100%-government owned, and, again there was no mention of affordable housing in the planning proposal.

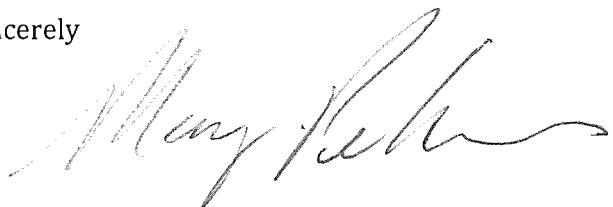
The planning proposal for the Carter Street precinct in Lidcombe declares that the UAP program will 'increase housing choice and affordability by delivering increased housing supply' (p.1). Assertions like these can only convince if housing markets were in an equilibrium situation and laws of supply and demand worked as they do in text books. In practice, affordability is affected by a range of supply-side factors and also by demand-side factors, like people's capacity to pay. There is no assurance or expectation that the 5,500 new dwellings in the Carter Street precinct will be accessible to a range of income groups. For this reason we do not think that increased supply of dwellings should be relied on as the sole mechanism for housing choice and affordability in delivering UAP outcomes. Rezoning and building construction needs to be supplemented, or reinforced, by specific mechanisms in the new planning and development controls.

- Development controls for apartment buildings need to encourage a range of bedroom numbers, including for large families, and accommodate features conducive to children living in medium-rise and high-rise apartments (B Randolph, 'Children in the compact city: Fairfield as a suburban case study', City Futures Research Centre, University of NSW, 2006). This would involve new provisions in the site-specific DCP.
- The planning controls should provide a mechanism for affordable-housing contributions, either through planning agreements, or, *preferably* (on the ground

of consistency and transparency), a specific mechanism that 'captures' a share of the value-uplift of the land following the rezoning and densification: this would require new provisions in the Auburn LEP, based on section 94F(1)(c) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act* (and to give effect to section 94F(3)(b)). In some respects, redevelopment of the Carter Street precinct has an antecedent in the regeneration of brownfield areas around Green Square in inner Sydney: the existing land-uses were deemed to not be the most optimal for the neighborhood and zoning and development controls were changed to allow for more residential and at larger scale. In that case some of the value uplift was recouped for community benefit in the form of affordable housing, through mandatory developer contributions, a precedent that seems justified in the Carter Street precinct on social-wellbeing grounds. The Auburn local government area has a need for rental housing for lease to low-income households: only 16% of private-rental dwellings are affordable for very-low and low income households, and social housing comprises only 5% of the dwellings in the LGA (Housing NSW, 'Local Government Housing Kit Database').

We recommend these changes with a view to promoting a more comprehensive approach to housing wellbeing than has been evidenced in the UAP program so far.

Sincerely



Mary Perkins
Executive Officer