

Local Planning Panel Minutes

MINUTES of the CITY OF CANADA BAY LOCAL PLANNING PANEL

Date of Panel meeting	3 December 2025
Location	Halliday Room, City of Canada Bay Council
Panel members	Jason Perica, Chair Noni Ruker, Expert Member Tina Christy, Expert Member Dean Hart, Community Member
Council staff	Paul Dewar, Manager Strategic Planning Leah Beatty, Coordinator Strategic Planning Anthony Wynen, Senior Strategic Planner
Apologies	Nil
Declarations of interest	Nil

A meeting of the Local Planning Panel was held in the Halliday Room at the City of Canada Bay Civic Centre, Drummoynne on 3 December 2025 in relation to a Planning Proposal regarding the Five Dock Precinct. Please note Planning Proposal meetings are not public meetings and therefore are not open to the public.

A site inspection was conducted by Panel members and Council staff from 10.00am to 11.00am.

The meeting concluded at 2.00pm.

ITEM 1: PP2025/0003 – FIVE DOCK PRECINCT

OVERVIEW

This Council-initiated Planning Proposal seeks to change the zoning, height, floor space ratio and other development controls throughout the Five Dock Precinct. Dwelling densities will be significantly increased to take advantage of proximity to the Five Dock Metro station. The Proposal will also facilitate upgrades to infrastructure and community facilities.

The following LEP maps (and related clauses) are proposed to be amended:

- Zoning
- Height of buildings
- Incentive height of buildings
- Floor space ratio
- Incentive floor space ratio
- Incentive Key sites
- Heritage
- Active street frontages
- Land reservation acquisition
- Affordable housing
- Sun access protection
- Design excellence

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The Panel considered the Council staff report (including attachments), a briefing by Council staff, together with matters observed during the site inspection.

RECOMMENDATION

The Local Planning Panel ('the Panel') supports the initiative and directions within the Planning Proposal – Five Dock Precinct (PP2025/0003), and supports its submission to the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure for a Gateway Determination.

The Panel notes and commends the lead taken by Council staff and notes the range of appropriate supporting studies and analysis undertaken. Some time was spent by the Panel discussing the likely sporadic nature of development in the years ahead, achieving diversity yet consistency, and the constraints to development from generally smaller suburban blocks requiring amalgamation. It is likely the built form outcome will differ to the vision in both timing and ultimate built form. Despite this the Panel was supportive of key aspects and objectives of pedestrian and bicycle priority, limiting car reliance, an urban design based approach, seeking a human scale at the streetscape, supporting walkability, aligning infrastructure with development, highlighting the main road while limiting vehicle movement within the "super blocks" and supporting commercial development in a practical way, increased open space to meet growth and demand, solar access to public spaces, heritage fine tuning, and reasonably maximising density in response to significant public investment in public transport.

Similarly, the approach of exhibiting the PP with a Development Control Plan ('DCP') and developer contributions framework is procedurally sound.

However, the Panel makes the following suggestions and comments for consideration at the appropriate time:

1. The affordable housing target and outcome is low, and surprisingly so, given the significant uplift. While it is understood feasibility analysis was undertaken, a 2% affordable housing target was not supported by the Panel. It is common for comparable areas to have an affordable housing requirement of 3-5% and a target of 5% would have been anticipated/expected given the significant uplifts here. Further feasibility testing should be done, particularly for sites with greater density. Given the importance of this matter, its resolution and greater ambition should be settled prior to exhibition, and preferably Gateway. It is also noted the 'non-key site' may not be amalgamated to the extent indicated in the Masterplan, while still meeting existing LEP controls for site area/widths. As such, this is expected to change economic/feasibility modelling. Also, such sites do not have infrastructure requirement liabilities, such that affordable housing contributions may be less onerous than otherwise would be the case.
2. Partly related to the issue of affordable housing is the recommendation to "switch off" the affordable housing bonuses under Chapter 2 of *SEPP (Housing) 2021*. The rationale for that position is understood and justifiable, like in other State-led TOD rezonings, which undertook an urban design led significant uplift around a key transport node, like here. However, the Panel was of the view this provision and mechanism to support increased affordable housing (albeit only for 15 years) with 30% increased FSR and height could be acceptable within the core area of the MU-1 Mixed Use zoning.
3. The recommendation to 'switch off' the Low to Medium Rise development provisions in *SEPP (Housing) 2021* is supported by the Panel and policy-consistent, noting the proposed controls exceed such density and the alternative LMR approach would undermine key site provisions and linking greater densities with infrastructure on such key sites.

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4. It is likely that applicants will seek to challenge the required amalgamated sites, either related to Key Sites or those non key sites envisaged in the Masterplan. For example, one owner may refuse to sell. There may be instances where this is acceptable, such as where the built form and infrastructure outcomes are not compromised. There will be instances where it is not acceptable and lead to uncoordinated development or infrastructure, or isolated sites. Either way, guidelines should be included in the DCP of how approaches to vary the specified amalgamation pattern will be assessed.
5. The approach of podium building forms is understood and supported in principle, to provide mediation of higher forms and a human scale at street. However, a uniform height across the whole area would lack diversity and visual interest. There is likely to be some developer push back to podium requirements, as greater value floor space occurs at greater height rather than lower levels, aligned to views. An approach recommended of a maximum 4-storey height is not supported, as zero is less than that maximum. A range could be considered, especially where street widths vary, such as between 2 to 4 storeys. Varying heights (and building typologies) could relate to creating urban character areas which relate to existing or desired future urban places such as parks, key street corners or narrow streets. This would deliver great a variety of building typologies across the precinct.
6. It is noted the existing LEP has development standards for minimum site widths and areas, related to development types and zones. These controls may warrant review at this stage, after considering the controls and guidelines within the recent NSW Pattern Book for medium density development. This review may reference the 'Key Metrics' for building types as set out in the Pattern Book to ensure alignment across State and Local planning frameworks.
7. The approach to supporting non-residential development near the centre is sound and the recommended method is practical, while a lack of demand for stand-alone commercial space is not surprising for the location, despite the pending Metro station. This may change over time. However, the Panel questions whether there will be demand to fill all the first floors of all the significant MU1-zoned developed land. Anecdotally, filling ground floor non-residential space is challenging enough in suburban centres. Another option may be to reduce the extent of this requirement to a smaller central area and/or design for higher ceiling heights for flexibility over time at first floor.
8. Consider a special entertainment precinct for a central area around the Metro station to support vitality, life and the night-time economy.
9. Given the width of the area and distances at the edges from key services within the main road (up to 800m), consideration should be given to the permissibility of other non-residential and services uses, especially at such extremities and on busier roads, where ground floor residential uses may be compromised and/or in locations that relate to creating urban character areas.
10. The Panel supports a constrained and 'maximum' approach to parking provision. However, the proposed rates are very low and equivalent, and in instances lower, than the very constrained rates in the Sydney CBD. A variable rate based on distance from the Metro Station may be more appropriate.
11. Road widening decisions should emphasise place making, pedestrian and active transport options, rather than sole primacy to cars.
12. Some targeted further testing of actual development sites is warranted (and reviewed over time with development) to ensure the proposed FSRs align with recommended heights. It places unnecessary pressure and tension in development assessment if the maximum FSRs are not aligned with the proposed heights, which seem sound, or if landscaped and tree canopy objectives are compromised due to such misalignment. Achieving the FSR within the height limit whilst also achieving site amenity may be challenging in some locations due to the propensity of long and narrow sites which often have a low site efficiency particularly where a block edge form is mandated.

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13. The infrastructure requirements with development of Key Sites is not onerous or likely too difficult (apart from timing and alignment), with the exception of the new central open space area. That will require a proactive approach and ongoing review and monitoring ahead for success.

Lastly, aligning State Infrastructure provision with the significant anticipated and planned growth is critical to a successful community neighbourhood, and eventual community acceptance of the significant change ahead. In this regard, any avenues to ensure schools particularly, but also health and bus networks are proactively planned and implemented to support growth should be actively explored, including at senior or political levels. Also, consultation is recommended with Homes NSW, including exploring any opportunities for social and affordable housing in the precinct.

VOTING

The decision was unanimous

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

We, the undersigned members of the City of Canada Bay Local Planning Panel, certify that these Minutes are an accurate record of the meeting on 3 December 2025:

PANEL MEMBERS	
Jason Perica 	Noni Ruker 
Tina Christy 	Dean Hart 