

ITEM MAYORAL MINUTE - CUMULATIVE IMPACTS OF BOARDING HOUSE DEVELOPMENTS UNDER STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICY (AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING) 2009

Department Executive Services

Author Initials: HM

REPORT

In consideration of previous concerns raised by objectors to a boarding house development under DA 2015/0486 for No. 13 Stuart Street, Concord West, I wish to put forward the following for Councillors' consideration:-

The City of Canada Bay local government area has received seven (7) development applications within the suburbs of Concord West and North Strathfield since the beginning of 2014 following the introduction of State Environmental Planning Policy (Affordable Rental Housing) 2009 by the State Government in July 2009.

The AHSEPP was introduced by the State Government to increase the supply and diversity of affordable rental housing and to ensure such accommodation is compatible with its surroundings and located in areas that are well serviced by public transport.

However, whilst the aims of the Policy are supported, the Policy does not contain any provisions that address the issue of the cumulative impact of multiple boarding houses on existing public infrastructure such as public open space, road networks, drainage and community facilities etc. At present, Council's Section 94 Contributions Plan does not include boarding house developments and therefore, to date, only Section 94A Contributions have been applied to these boarding house developments and these are significantly less than what could be potentially applied to self-contained boarding house rooms under Section 94.

Additionally, the Policy does not contain any provisions that address the potential social and community impacts that concentrating such population increases arising from an accumulation of boarding houses in one locality are likely to result in. As the AHSEPP limits Councils' capacity to refuse development applications by providing standards that, if complied with, cannot be used as reasons for refusing a boarding house application, it is currently not possible for Council to address these deficiencies in the Policy.

Finally, evidence suggests that rental rates currently being charged by developers of these boarding houses within many suburbs of the Sydney Metropolitan area are well in excess of being 'affordable'. The AHSEPP is completely silent on this issue and contains no controls that place a ceiling on the rental rates that can be charged for a boarding room within these developments.

Specifically, my concerns are that boarding houses approved under the AHSEPP 2009:

- Are not contributing to essential social and community infrastructure; and
- Are not providing affordable rental housing.

RECOMMENDATION

1. THAT Council resolve to call for a further report on amending the City of Canada Bay Section 94 Contributions Plan to include self-contained boarding house developments.

2. THAT Council write to Inner West Council, and Burwood and Strathfield Councils seeking a meeting to discuss the cumulative impacts of boarding house developments that have been approved – either by Council or through the appeal process in the Land and Environment Court – under the AHSEPP, with regard to ongoing demands on existing infrastructure and community concerns with these developments. These discussions should include encouraging these surrounding Councils to be co-signatories to the written submissions referred to below.
3. THAT Council write to Local Government NSW seeking their support in approaching the Minister for Planning to review the AHSEPP to incorporate provisions to address the cumulative impact of multiple boarding house developments within close proximity of each other on existing infrastructure and the local communities that surround these developments.
4. THAT Council write to the Minister for Planning seeking a review of the AHSEPP to address the cumulative impact of multiple boarding house developments within local communities.
5. THAT Council's submission to the Minister for Planning also include a request that the AHSEPP be reviewed to include a cap on rental rates that can be charged for boarding house developments, as evidence indicates that the current rates being charged for boarding rooms within these developments is not 'affordable'. The Policy should be amended to allow Councils to impose such caps as conditions of development consent.