

Northern Beaches Council should support Affordable Housing

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The proposal by Northern Beaches Council to be given a moratorium on State Government affordable housing policies demonstrates a lack of support for young families and key workers, says the Urban Taskforce.

"The Northern Beaches Council at its 26 June meeting resolved to request a moratorium on the state government's Affordable Rental Housing policy and the Seniors or People with a Disability policy, both policies which provide critical supply of much-needed affordable housing" says Urban Taskforce CEO, Chris Johnson. "Presumably the council having been given a deferral from the Low Rise Medium-Density Code by the NSW Government is now looking to wind back other state government policies that could change the character of the council area. Those that will suffer the most if Council's request is granted will be young families and key workers looking for somewhere to live."

"The council resolution makes particular mention of stopping the state policies in the Frenchs Forest Planned Precinct yet this is exactly where affordable key worker housing is required particularly for staff who will work in the new hospital. More affordable housing is what the State Environmental Planning Policy is about but it seems the Northern Beaches Council is happy to accept the state government's massive investment in a new hospital but then wants to stop the key workers for the hospital from being able to live nearby"

"There is a worrying trend in the build up to the state government election of councils rejecting planning policies that are trying to provide a diversity of housing types and the NSW Government seems to be happy to put its policies on hold to avoid conflict with local councils. The recent deferral of a low rise medium-density code for 50 councils across NSW, including the Northern Beaches Council, is an incredible over reaction by councils to a code for terrace houses and town houses that only applies where councils currently allow this building type."

"The Frenchs Forest Planned Precinct is where development should occur but it seems that local councils are undermining the importance of these precincts as a place with a diversity of uses and of housing types."

"The Urban Taskforce believes the NSW Government must not give in to local council pressure that stops the provision of affordable housing. The state government has a responsibility to represent not only current voters but the next generation including those young families looking for affordable housing and the key workers who want to live near their workplace. The government must not accept the proposal to eliminate state government policies by the Northern Beaches Council as this is wrong in principle but could open the flood gate to 50 councils wanting to avoid their responsibility to housing affordability."

The Urban Taskforce is a property development industry group, representing Australia's most prominent property developers and equity financiers.

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