



Friday 9 August 2019

CITY OF RYDE LEADING ADVOCATE FOR CHANGE IN BUILDING SECTOR

The City of Ryde would like to set the record straight following commentary in the media that criticised Council for not making a submission to the Regulation of Building Standards, Building Quality and Building Disputes parliamentary inquiry.

For the upcoming parliamentary inquiry, Local Government NSW has made a submission on the City of Ryde's behalf. Local Government NSW has also confirmed it will make representations for the City of Ryde as well as other local councils in the likely event it is called to attend an upcoming hearing.

The media commentary also failed to point out that the City of Ryde has been a leading advocate for change in the building sector.

Council is on the public record in 2018 making repeated calls to reform the private certification system in NSW, following several examples of poor performance by private certifiers.

This includes:

- Lobbying against private certifiers being able to approve sensitive medium density developments, and instead make it the responsibility of Council certifiers.
- Warning that allowing certain sensitive classes of development to be considered as complying development would lead to a proliferation of medium density housing in unsuitable residential zones certified by lax or conflicted private certifiers.
- Calling on the State Government to review the process of accrediting private certifiers and the sanctions that are applied to private certifiers found to have acted inappropriately.
- Criticising private certification reforms outlined in NSW Government legislation, highlighting that they did not go far enough in protecting landowners.
- Recommending landowners to be adequately compensated if they suffer from financial hardship due to unprofessional practices of private certifiers.

In relation to combustible aluminium cladding, the City of Ryde is working with Fire and Rescue NSW and assisting relevant property owners through strata corporations.

Council will continue to maintain the confidentiality around the actual properties as has been requested by Fire and Rescue NSW. This was confirmed by the Department of Planning which this week advised councils to decline informal requests for information due to the sensitivity of the cladding register information.

The City of Ryde would reiterate that the presence of combustible cladding on a building does not necessarily mean there is a high fire hazard as the amount of cladding, its configuration and fire safety provisions should all be taken into account when assessing fire safety risks.

While Council welcomes the fact that there is now a renewed focus on private certifiers and the need to reform the overall building sector in NSW, it believes the commentary in the media was unnecessarily alarmist and ignored much of the proactive work the City of Ryde has done in this space.

Rather than continuing to point the finger and apportioning blame, it is time for all levels of government to work together and deliver real change that will reform the identified problems currently impacting on the building industry. It is what the community expects and it is what the community deserves.