

Thursday 12 June 2025

Council vows to fight on after TG Millner rezoning decision

City of Ryde Mayor Trenton Brown is calling on NSW Planning Minister Paul Scully to reject a decision by the Sydney North Planning Panel (SNPP) to rezone the iconic TG Millner Fields for a proposed housing development.

Mayor Brown said the plan for 132 townhouses on the 6.2ha Marsfield site was identical to the proposal rejected by the panel in December 2022 because it lacked strategic merit.

“At that time, the panel found that the proposal not only failed to adequately demonstrate strategic merit, but that TG Millner has the potential to contribute to the amount of open space needed to service the future population of Ryde LGA,” said Mayor Brown.

“I’d like to know how that position could have changed so drastically in just two and a half years. Our need for active open space has only increased during that time because of the significant housing uplift that is planned for the Ryde LGA – especially within the Macquarie Park Innovation District (MPID).

“The City of Ryde is deeply shocked by the outcome of the SNPP Rezoning Review. I’m encouraging Minister Scully to reject it in line with the 2022 decision.”

On 10 June 2025, the SNPP determined that a proposal by the landowner North Ryde RSL and developer Winston Langley should progress through the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure’s (DPHI) Gateway process. The proposal relates to rezoning the land from RE2 – Private Recreation to a combination of R2 – Low Density Residential and RE1 – Public Recreation. This means the proposal will now be assessed by the State Government through SNPP as the Planning Proposal Authority.

Approval will pave the way for the Marsfield Common development to proceed.

“It is Council’s view that this development still lacks strategic merit – the State Government broke a pre-election promise to save TG Millner Fields in order to pursue short-term housing targets that we are already exceeding,” said Mayor Brown.

“The townhouse plans are not consistent with the surrounding low-density housing, the area is not sufficiently serviced by public transport, and there is no addition of *active* open space, which has been the crux of Council’s fight to retain TG Millner for community use.

“Sports fields were promised for the former Peter Board High School site on Wicks Road, Macquarie Park but a Woolworths Customer Fulfilment Centre is now planned for that site with little likelihood of the promised active open space element.

“I believe the NSW Planning Minister has been misinformed in making the decision that TG Millner is not required to meet our forecast active open space needs.

“We are doing everything we can to help solve Sydney’s housing crisis, but we are getting nothing in return.”

In conjunction with the community, Council staged a five-year campaign to retain TG Millner Fields as much needed large open space for active recreation, aligning with its commitment to ‘strike the right balance’ between housing uplift in the LGA and the necessary accompanying infrastructure. Without the site being available for use by sporting groups, there are limited options for additional sports fields within the City to be able to meet the increasing demand of a growing community.

Ultimately, the State Government did not support Council’s plan to compulsorily acquire the site, despite the fact Council had set aside funding for that purpose based on the existing zoning of RE2 – Private Recreation.

The rezoning of TG Millner for housing means the value of this land will increase substantially, rendering the potential for Council to purchase this strategically vital open space as financially unfeasible.

Mayor Brown said he was committed to working collaboratively with the State Government to facilitate the best community outcomes to increase open space within the LGA, especially near to the MPID, which will experience significant residential uplift in the next 15 years.

“This decision by the SNPP is a catastrophic result for our community. I will continue to advocate strongly on behalf of our community for the infrastructure that must go hand-in-hand with increased density and population in our LGA,” he said.

“Our passionate campaign to retain TG Millner as green open space prioritised the needs and wishes of our community ahead of the developer dollar. The retention and addition of quality active open space is a key part of our ongoing pledge to make City of Ryde the place to be for lifestyle and opportunity at your doorstep.”

Mayor Brown said the case for more active open space in the City of Ryde was compelling, with a predicted deficit of up to 21 sports fields by 2040.

“With 22,000 new homes already in the planning pipeline for the Macquarie Park Innovation District, and a further 15,000 predicted as part of the State Government’s Transport Oriented Development plans, the need for more active open space for an exponentially growing population is now more acute than ever,” he said.

“We will continue to do the heavy lifting in terms of finding solutions to Sydney’s housing crisis – but housing uplift must be accompanied by State Government commitments to provide essential infrastructure, including vital open space for our families to enjoy and our sporting teams to call home.”

Media Contact: Brett Thomas, City of Ryde Communications m • 0466 479 556
e • media@ryde.nsw.gov.au