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THOUSANDS OF NEW DWELLINGS SET TO BE BUILT IN RYDE'S NEIGHBOURHOODS UNLESS HOUSING CODE IS DEFERRED

More than 23,000 additional dwellings could be permissible in the City of Ryde's low-density residential neighbourhoods from 1 July unless the NSW Government grants Council a short deferral of the Medium Density Housing Code.

The Medium Density Housing Code, which is due to be implemented from 1 July, allows multi-dwelling houses such as small blocks of flats (knowns as manor houses) and dual occupancy dwellings to be built in R2 Low Density Residential neighbourhoods in numbers far exceeding low densities.

The code's implementation was initially deferred in the City of Ryde and 45 other local government areas by the NSW Government to allow councils to undertake planning work that would guide housing provision and accommodate predicted growth.

As part of this work, Council produced a draft Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS), with the support of the Greater Sydney Commission in March 2020, that set the priorities and vision for Ryde's growing city.

Council also developed a Local Housing Strategy to address the city's evolving demographics and ensure appropriate housing diversity can be delivered in a sustainable manner into the future.

In accordance with the vision in Council's LSPS and based on the evidence and analysis in the Local Housing Strategy, Council then developed a planning proposal to ensure the Medium Density Housing Code would apply in a more sustainable and appropriate manner.

This proposal, which would prevent the approval of multi-dwelling developments and manage the number and location of dual occupancy developments in Ryde's low-density residential neighbourhoods, was provided to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment seeking approval for public exhibition on 30 March 2020.

At the start of this month – one month before the code's implementation – the department requested further information be included in the proposal before community consultation can take place.

City of Ryde Mayor, Cllr Jerome Laxale, said the short deferral was essential to allow Council to finalise the planning proposal and protect Ryde's low-density residential neighbourhoods.

"The City of Ryde has opposed the Medium Density Housing Code since day one, as it has the potential to allow 23,000 additional dwellings and 60,000 residents in low-density neighbourhoods – numbers which are five times higher than the targets set by the Greater Sydney Commission," Cllr Laxale said.

"Despite our opposition to the code we worked with the NSW Government on the undertaking that our planning proposal would be completed in time to save our streets. Instead, at the 11th hour, they've shifted the goal posts, making a mockery of Planning Minister Rob Stokes' statement that he's willing to work with council.

"Given it is the government's department that has put the brakes on Council's proposal, it is only right for the government to grant Council a short deferral so we can save our quiet neighbourhoods. Without a deferral, there will be bulldozers in every street in two weeks.

“Canterbury-Bankstown and Northern Beaches councils are in the same boat as the City of Ryde with planning proposals currently with the department that require more time before finalising.

“This is not about politics, it is about doing what is right for our communities.”

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