

23 August 2024

Kiersten Fishburn

Secretary

Department of Planning, Housing, and Infrastructure

office.secretary@DPIE.nsw.gov.au and via the NSW Planning Portal

Dear Kiersten,

Staff submission - Macquarie Park Innovation District Stage 2 Rezoning Proposal (Transport Orientated Development)

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback to the proposed Stage 2 rezoning of the Macquarie Park Innovation District (**MPID**). The City of Ryde (**CoR**) wants to continue collaborating with the Department of Planning, Housing, and Infrastructure (**DPHI**) to strike the right balance in the MPID – delivering an Innovation District that retains competitive and resilient employment lands alongside the need to resolve the ongoing housing crisis, with appropriate infrastructure provision.

This staff submission, which builds on Council's submission to the Stage 1 Rezoning Proposal, seeks to convey the following key points to key stakeholders:

- 1) The City of Ryde is not a NIMBY Council. Council is ready and willing to do its fair share in the delivery of housing across the City of Ryde Local Government Area (**LGA**) – including in MPID. Our caveat is that the City of Ryde is seeking to **strike the right balance between housing, employment and infrastructure**. A siloed focus on housing now will create a future employment problem, and in fact Council is concerned that this has already occurred with the loss of 9,000 jobs in the MPID within 5 years.
- 2) Staff support the inclusion of mandatory affordable housing contributions of between 10-15% in perpetuity for all new residential developments. However, both the public and the private sector need to collaborate on how we can ensure residential developments remain feasible when they're delivering 10-15% affordable housing.
- 3) Staff are opposed to the allowance of BTR housing on employment--zoned land for the following key reasons:
 - a. Businesses seeking innovation and enterprise employment spaces in MPID need certainty that residential development won't encroach on their operations.
 - b. Ratepayers across the City of Ryde will have to pick up the gap in the loss of rateable income required to service new residents in BTR housing, due to the inequitable advantages provided to developers in this respect.
 - c. Like Council, State Government agencies cannot effectively forecast the impact of BTR housing – MPID's infrastructure and services will not be able to

accommodate the additional impact of BTR residents that have the same needs as any other resident.

- d. BTR housing is a premium-priced product. Should proponents struggle to find tenants due to cost-of-living pressures, it is possible that the NSW Government will succumb to future pressures from developers to flip BTR housing into a strata development for market sales.
- 4) Staff request a moratorium on data centres (including those currently in the State Significant Development (**SSD**) pipeline) in MPID until the NSW Government develops a clear strategy guiding the permissibility of this critical infrastructure across NSW.
- a. We acknowledge that data centres are critical pieces of infrastructure for our evolving economy; however, there are better locations for data centres away from residential development, potentially co-located with current and former coal-fired power stations where there is sufficient access to water and electricity.
 - b. Council has serious concerns that the energy and water requirements associated with data centres will result in significant delays in the delivery of MPID's residential and employment potential and stymie the Government's efforts to tackle the State's housing crisis.
- 5) The NSW Government needs to fund the acquisition of the former Peter Board High School (144 Wicks Road) and TG Millner (144-150 Vimiera Road) for active regional open space. Unlocking these sites is critical to ensuring residents and local workers have access to quality local amenities and open space.

Council staff have always campaigned with DPHI and the NSW Government for the need to **strike the right balance in delivering housing, employment and infrastructure**. We urge the NSW Government to give careful consideration to the issues we've raised in this submission to ensure that together we protect and enhance MPID – unlocking its true potential as an innovation powerhouse—a place where people can live, work, rest, play, and **innovate**.

The staff submission includes a detailed assessment of these issues, in addition to technical insights from Council experts. I trust the NSW Government will give due consideration to the matters raised in our submission to ensure that together we can deliver the best outcomes.

If you have any questions or concerns in relation to our submission, please contact my office on (02) 9952 8222.

Kind regards,

Wayne Rylands

Wayne Rylands

Chief Executive Officer
City of Ryde Council