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Friday, 24 July 2020

NSW Housing Strategy Team  
Housing Strategy Implementation Unit  
Land and Housing Corporation  
NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

### **Re: Housing Strategy**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the NSW Government's Discussion Paper for the NSW Housing Strategy.

The Sydney Coastal Councils Group (SCCG) is a regional organisation of Councils that advances sustainable management of Sydney's urban coastal and estuarine environment. We currently comprise nine member Councils who represent 1.3 million Sydneysiders. Many of our key goals identified in our [Strategic Plan](#) align with themes outlined in the Discussion Paper including that:

- people and places adapt to a changing climate and future shocks and stressors
- our region is comprised of sustainable, livable and 'smart' cities.

We understand the Discussion Paper will form the basis of the first whole-of-government, whole-of-state housing strategy with a 20 year vision for housing in NSW. It covers four themes for housing: supply, diversity, affordability and resilience. The SCCG would like to make specific comments on 'Theme 4 – Resilience'.

### **Strong support for Resilience Theme but further actions needed in high risk hazard areas.**

The SCCG strongly supports the action areas identified under 'Theme 4 – Resilience' to improve the environmental sustainability of existing housing and in residential precincts, as well as supporting housing and residential precincts that are responsive to natural hazards.

Whilst the draft Housing Strategy seeks to improve resilience for both future and existing housing supply, we note that the Discussion Paper only talks about accommodating future housing away from high risk hazard areas. The Strategy should include the need to identify effective mechanisms to adapt or address housing that is already located in areas that will become increasingly risky, due to impacts of climate change including drought, sea level rise and flooding.

We would encourage guidance on building particularly in areas subject to coastal hazards under future sea level rise scenarios. For instance, redevelopment should be allowed in such areas but only where the overall risk can be reduced e.g. replacement of at-risk buildings with lower-risk buildings but without any increase in development density.

We also urge the need for greater adoption of water sensitive urban design (WSUD) which has multiple environmental, social and economic benefits including reduce the costs of potable water (e.g. rain water tanks) and reducing the amount of stormwater containing contaminants entering our waterways. This would make a valuable contribution to the SCCG's current work in leading the development of the Greater Sydney Harbour Coastal Management Program which aims to improve waterway health in Sydney Harbour and its catchments.

**Strong support for the NSW Government providing assistance to Councils**

The SCCG commends the intent of NSW Government to recognise how it can support the contribution of councils in the Strategy and its promise for ongoing consultation in the development of the Strategy. The Strategy needs to provide leading guidance for councils in preparing their own local housing strategies. In particular, strategic partnerships with councils and industry for infrastructure contributions and incentives for innovation would improve feasibility for water sensitive urban design infrastructure.

The SCCG can provide a strong role advocating for improvements in sustainability and resilience in collaboration with its member councils, industry partners, community stakeholders and State Government. NSW Government could support the SCCG in this role by engaging with SCCG in sustainability and resilience initiatives through the Strategy implementation.

We look forward to progress of the NSW Housing Strategy and further opportunities to be involved.

If you have any queries, please contact me by email at [executiveofficer@sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au](mailto:executiveofficer@sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au) or by phone (0407733075).

Yours sincerely,



Sarah P Joyce  
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**SCCG**