

Explorer Street, Eveleigh: Rezoning proposal

Key information on the rezoning proposal for the Explorer Street site.

The Department of Planning and Environment is working with NSW Land and Housing Corporation, City of Sydney Council and the local community to rezone the Explorer Street site in Eveleigh at the edge of Sydney's central business district. This will renew the social housing estate to provide more homes close to transport and jobs.

The need for rezoning

We propose to upgrade the existing social housing with new fit-for-purpose social and affordable housing mixed with private dwellings to create a thriving and inclusive community. The renewal could include upgrades to South Sydney Rotary Park and public roads within the site and incorporate new recreational spaces, pedestrian links and street trees that will benefit residents, visitors and the wider area. To do this, we need to change the zoning of the site.

The vision

The renewal of the Explorer Street site will draw on its existing character and respect the strong Aboriginal connections of the area.

The site will:

- provide well-designed housing including about 400 new homes, social and affordable housing and a dedicated minimum amount of housing for Aboriginal households
- improve high-quality open space and tree canopy and promote active and healthy living
- achieve ecologically sustainable development that supports the NSW Government's commitment to net zero emissions.

Overall, we want to create an active and connected community that respects the area's unique culture, character and heritage.

Design principles

Several planning and urban design principles have been developed to guide future development of the site. These include:

- recognising the significance of the area to Aboriginal people and fostering connections with Country through the design, development and delivery of the project
- creating a vibrant community with a range of dwelling tenures of social and affordable housing that supports a range of housing needs and living choices
- providing a well-designed and attractive site for living, with improved public and active transport connections to local and regional places for creativity, employment and education

- creating high-quality and diverse public spaces with increased tree canopy and landscaping in endemic and native species
- ensuring building heights minimise overshadowing and wind impacts on parks, homes and the public domain
- having building design that mitigates noise and vibration impacts of railway corridors and infrastructure on residents
- ensuring new buildings achieve design excellence and that development reduces carbon emissions, manages energy, water and waste efficiently to minimise future costs to residents.

Benefits of the renewal

The renewal of the Explorer Street site will provide a range of benefits to the community, including:

- up to 400 new homes with a mix of social and affordable housing and private dwellings
- a range of apartments that consider the needs of the growing population and meet higher sustainability and accessibility standards
- improvements to South Sydney Rotary Park, with new recreational spaces, accessible footpaths, landscaping and tree plantings
- upgrades to streets including Explorer Street and Aurora Place, with new kerbs, footpaths, lighting, street trees and off-street basement parking for residents.
- opportunities for collaboration and co-designing with locally connected Aboriginal people to inform future building design and landscape outcomes.
- a range of ecologically sustainable development features that support the NSW Government's commitment to net zero emissions, such as:
 - development achieving a 6-star Green Star Communities rating
 - buildings achieving a 5-star Green Star Buildings rating
 - all buildings constructed to be capable of providing a dual reticulation water system for water services
 - rooftops to be used for solar panels
 - electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure to be provided to all car parking spaces.



Figure 1. An artist's impression (indicative only) showcasing possible building design



Figure 2. An artist's impression (indicative only) showcasing possible open-space design

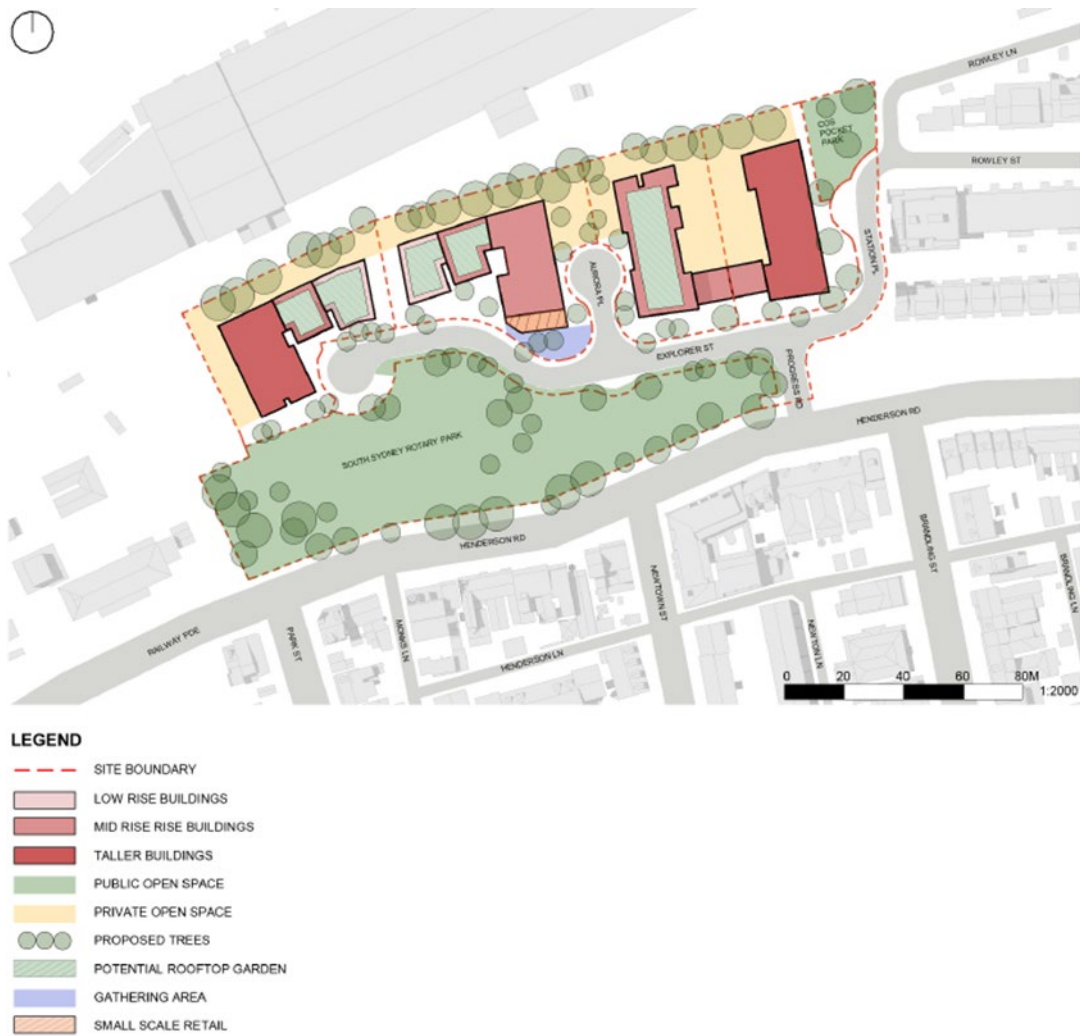


Figure 3. An indicative strategy map showing possible building heights and open spaces

Rezoning proposals

Rezoning involves changing planning controls contained in a relevant local environmental plan or state environmental planning policy (SEPP). This changes the type and amount of development allowed on a site.

Planning controls for the Explorer Street site are outlined in the Redfern Waterloo Authority Sites State Significant Precinct under the State Environmental Planning Policy (Precincts-Eastern Harbour City) 2021. To support the rezoning, it is proposed to remove the Explorer Street site from the policy and apply new, updated planning controls for the site under the Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012.

The draft planning controls proposed for the site are informed by technical studies and advice from specialists. You can view the information on our website: www.planning.nsw.gov.au/explorer-street

State-led rezonings

The Explorer Street rezoning is a state-led rezoning. A state department, rather than a council, may lead certain rezonings for large geographic areas or when a site is of state significance. In this case, the Department of Planning and Environment is leading the rezoning.

Design guides

A design guide is a document that provides detailed planning guidance and controls. It determines what can be developed on the land and how the buildings and public areas should be designed. A design guide applies to a site in the same way a development control plan prepared by council would apply to a site.

Explorer Street planning controls

We have worked with City of Sydney Council and NSW Land and Housing Corporation to prepare a rezoning proposal that outlines proposed planning controls to guide future development at the Explorer Street site. We have prepared an explanation of intended effect document that details the proposed changes to the key planning rules for the site that will sit under the Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012.

The proposed planning controls will be supported by the Explorer Street Design Guide, which provides more detailed controls to guide future development of the site.

The master plan and draft planning controls, together with the supporting studies, are now on public exhibition and you are invited to have your say.

Feedback received during the exhibition period will inform potential updates to the master plan and planning controls for the site.

To view the draft rezoning package and have your say, please visit:
www.planning.nsw.gov.au/explorer-street

The rezoning process

In November 2020, the NSW Government announced the proposal to renew the Explorer Street site and NSW Land and Housing Corporation began consulting with residents on concept options.

Between 2020 and 2022, NSW Land and Housing Corporation undertook extensive investigations to inform the proposed renewal of the site, including compiling detailed technical reports and studies. Feedback from the community was used to inform the preliminary urban design of the site.

On 5 December 2022, the government announced that Explorer Street was one of several sites for which the Department of Planning and Environment would take over rezoning control from local councils to unlock housing supply. Since then, we have been working closely with NSW Land and Housing Corporation and City of Sydney Council to prepare the rezoning proposal, including creating a master plan, commissioning supporting technical studies and reports and drafting proposed planning controls.

Rezoning timeline

The Explorer Street master plan and draft planning controls, together with the supporting studies, are now on public exhibition. We want to hear your feedback on the proposal.

Following public exhibition, we will prepare a response to the submissions, identifying key issues raised by the community and other stakeholders. Feedback received during the exhibition period will inform updates to the master plan and planning controls for the site.

The rezoning of the site is expected to be finalised in early 2024.



Figure 4. The rezoning timeline for the Explorer Street site.

After rezoning

After the site is rezoned, the new planning controls under the Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012 and the Explorer Street Design Guide will come into effect.

Before construction starts, there are important steps that need to take place. We will do a detailed design of the proposed new building and public spaces that adheres to the new planning rules. Following that, development applications can be submitted to the council for assessment and approval to renew the site. The detailed designs prepared for the site will also undergo a design excellence process to demonstrate how a high-quality outcome will be achieved.

The future of current residents

The project is in the early stages of the planning process. After the rezoning is finalised, there will be further planning before the redevelopment starts. This includes the assessment of development approvals and detailed design work.

NSW Land and Housing Corporation will support all residents and will continue working closely with the Department of Communities and Justice, which manage the social housing tenancies.

All residents will receive a minimum of 6 months' notice of any need to move and will be kept informed as the project progresses. No tenants will be relocated from the Explorer Street estate before 2025.

We understand that moving can be challenging, and a dedicated relocations team will support all residents throughout the relocation process to minimise the impact of the move. The team will help residents find suitable homes that meet their individual housing needs.

Proposed building and open space characteristics

The proposed planning controls do not include detailed designs of what a new building would look like. This detail will be provided during the detailed design stage, prior the council approving any development application. However, the proposed planning controls determine the characteristics of a new building, such as the approved maximum heights and the location of open space. See Table 1 for a summary of key proposed controls for the site.

The master plan for the Explorer Street site is based on the following built form characteristics:

- height – the proposal will allow for a range of building heights from 4 to 13 storeys
- density – the proposal will allow for a floor space ratio of 2.94:1, which equals around 32,600 m² of floor space for residential accommodation
- built form – new built form will provide an appropriate transition from the low-rise and fine-grain scale of existing dwellings along Henderson Street to the industrial and heritage items located to the north and new residential buildings to the east
- building separation – site layout allows for adequate distance between buildings, separated by public and private open space and for linear view corridors along the streets
- setbacks – ground-level and upper-level setback controls will ensure buildings are appropriately sited in relation to surrounding properties and improve streetscape amenity.

Sun access

Proposed buildings heights, setbacks and massing have been set to ensure ample sunlight access for the parks, public domain and new dwellings.

Future development must also demonstrate compliance with overshadowing controls set out in the Apartment Design Guide and the Explorer Street Design Guide. These guides require 50% of the open space area to receive sunlight for a minimum of 4 hours between 9 am to 3 pm during the shortest daylight period of the year (winter solstice, 21 June). See Table 2 for key features of the Explorer Street Design Guide. You can find the complete design guide on our website.

Open space

The renewal of the Explorer Street site proposes to deliver a total of 7,535 m² of open space, the same amount of open space currently provided. However, we propose the following improvements to the public domain:

- **South Sydney Rotary Park** will be upgraded with accessible paths and include amenities and opportunities for large-scale community gatherings to service the needs of the wider Eveleigh community. This centrally located park will offer a large green space to accommodate a range of active and passive activities for all ages.
- **Station Place Pocket Park** will be upgraded to incorporate intimate seating and gathering zones to be used as a community space for passive recreation.
- **Indigenous vegetation and local knowledge** will be reflected in public open spaces, and landscaping must comprise a mix of indigenous tree, shrub and groundcover species. Open space will recognise and celebrate the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural values of the area.
- **Tree canopy cover** of at least 55% and 70% will be provided at South Sydney Rotary Park and Pocket Park respectively.
- **Upgrades to roads, street tree planting and a new active transport network** will be done throughout the site, including creating on-street car parking, pedestrian crossings, footpaths and shared paths.
- **Solar access** to public open spaces, new residential development and existing residential areas to the south will be prioritised.

Summary of planning controls for the Explorer Street site

Rezoning involves changing planning controls for the site. Table 1 summarises the outcomes of the proposed key planning controls for the site.

Table 1: Summary of key proposed controls

Planning control	Current: State Environmental Planning Policy (Precincts Eastern Harbour City) 2021	Proposed: Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012	What this means
Building height	Development is restricted to existing heights	A maximum range of heights between 48.25 m and 60.7 m reduced levels	This allows taller buildings within the Explorer Street site, ranging from a maximum of 9 to 13 storeys.
Land use	A: Residential – Medium Density H: Recreation Zone – Public Recreation.	R1 General Residential and RE1 Public Recreation	The site will be used for housing and parks like it is now but with more homes and the potential for upgraded parkland and public domain elements.
Floor space ratio	Development is restricted to existing floor space ratio.	A floor space ratio of 2.94:1 on land zoned R1 General Residential	This will increase the amount of floor space that can be built on the residential part of the site.
Design excellence	Nil.	Development greater than 25 m in height or that has a capital investment value of more than \$100 million will result in a competitive design process.	New buildings and public spaces will be required to demonstrate good design by undergoing a competitive design process.
Design guide	Nil.	The consent authority must consider the Explorer Street Design Guide before granting consent to any future development at the site.	Future development will be designed in accordance with the suite of built form and urban design controls. The design guide will ensure that new development achieves high-quality outcomes for built form, public domain and heritage.
Housing tenure	Nil.	Development must comprise 30% social housing and 20% affordable housing.	This means that 30% of all dwellings constructed at the site will be used for social housing and 20% will be provided as affordable housing for low-income households.

The proposed planning controls will be supported by the Explorer Street Design Guide which provides more detailed controls to guide future development of the site. Table 2 summarises the key features of the design guide.

Table 2: Key features of the Explorer Street design guide

Topic	Summary of requirement	What this means
Connecting with Country	All future development must demonstrate consistency with the key design concepts of the Explorer Street Site Connecting with Country Framework as outlined in the Explorer Street Design Guide.	Future development will be designed in a way that strengthens and celebrates the local Aboriginal cultural heritage through architecture, design, landscaping and vegetation, art and other forms of creative expression, such as the naming of streets and public places
Public open space and landscaping	Open space and landscaping controls and upgrades to 2 existing parks including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Sydney Rotary Park • Station Place Pocket Park. 	South Sydney Rotary Park and the smaller pocket park will be maintained and potentially improved. New trees could provide more shade. Open space will allow for active sports and passive enjoyment. New seating, amenities and gathering zones can provide opportunities for community gatherings. The parks will have good sun access to ensure that a diverse range of trees and plants can thrive.
Building layout, form and design	A range of built form controls for building heights, building setbacks, housing mix, accessible design, affordable and social housing, noise and vibration mitigation, reflectivity, external lighting, private and communal open space and landscaping, heritage and design excellence	The controls make sure a building form and layout responds to the public domain and open space, with heights and density that are appropriate for the site’s context and building envelopes that provide a high level of sunlight access to parks and surrounding dwellings.
Transport, movement and parking	A range of controls relating to street design, vehicle access, footpaths, shared paths and car parking	Basement parking areas will be provided for residents, along with car-share schemes and bike parking. Upgrades to existing streets and new accessible paths provided connections to surrounding areas.

Topic	Summary of requirement	What this means
Environmentally sustainable development	A range of environmentally sustainable development controls including sustainability ratings, installation of photovoltaic solar panels, sustainable construction materials, electric vehicle charging, water-sensitive urban design and dual-reticulation water.	<p>Future development will have access to renewable energy including solar panels and electric vehicle charging.</p> <p>All buildings will be designed and constructed to meet sustainability targets and capable of fully connecting to a non-potable recycled water network.</p>

More information

The rezoning proposal will be on public exhibition until 17 November 2023.

View the rezoning proposal and make a submission at www.planning.nsw.gov.au/explorer-street

To find out more information or to ask questions, join one of our in-person or online sessions.

Register now via our website: www.planning.nsw.gov.au/explorer-street

Webinar: Thursday 26 October from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm

Drop-in session – general community: Saturday 28 October from 12 pm to 2 pm at 2 Davy Road, Eveleigh

Drop-in session – general community: Tuesday 31 October from 5 pm to 6:30 pm at 2 Davy Road, Eveleigh

Talk to a planner session: Friday 3 November or Wednesday 8 November between 12 – 2 pm.

You can also email explorerst@planning.nsw.gov.au or call us on 1300 420 596, option 2.

You can make a written submission by mail to: Department of Planning and Environment, Locked Bag 5022, Parramatta, NSW 2124.