

Resolution of Council

20 February 2023

Item 13.9

Protecting Paddy's Market

Moved by Councillor Ellsmore, seconded by the Chair (the Lord Mayor) –

It is resolved that:

(A) Council note:

- (i) Paddy's Market in Haymarket is one of Australia's oldest continuing fresh food and bric a brac markets;
- (ii) for many Australians, Paddy's Market is not just a market, it's an Australian icon and an integral part of Chinatown with a long history of offering affordable fresh produce and cheap general goods;
- (iii) Paddy's Markets are located on a public land site, managed by the NSW Government (Placemaking NSW), under arrangements with private operators;
- (iv) Paddy's Market contains local heritage significance for its historical and social value. The buildings are regarded for their connection with the cultural landscape of the Chinese community in Sydney since 1870, with buildings 1&2 listed on Place Managements NSW's Heritage Conservation Register;
- (v) in December 2022, the operator of Paddy's Market, Sydney Market Limited (SML), announced plans to sublease a significant portion (3,000 square meters) of Paddy's Market to commercial operator Doltone House Group, to create a 'high-end food and beverage precinct';
- (vi) stallholders were not consulted on the plans to sublease a significant portion of the market to Doltone House Group, prior to the announcement;

- (vii) many stallholders oppose the plans, claiming they are being pushed into less profitable marketplace areas, and that the plans threaten the history and nature of the market. There are currently over 11,000 online signatures on the online petition website, Change.org, titled “Help Save Iconic Paddy’s Markets! Redevelopment a Treat to Small Businesses/Tourism”, and around 2,000 written signatures to “Save Paddy’s Markets”;
 - (viii) the community concerns include gentrification of the markets, loss of an important social value heritage market in the city, concerns of food security if one of the few low-cost food markets in the city is lost, and the treatment of the historic stallholders;
 - (ix) stallholders generally acknowledge that the markets are in need of investment and revitalisation, but strongly disagree that subleasing a large portion of the market floor to Doltone House Group - an entity that does not appear to have any experience operating or managing markets - is the most appropriate way to do this. The investment and support should be directed toward the multicultural community of stallholders that has contributed so much to the markets and helped them make iconic over the years – not a corporate entity with no particular connection to the site;
 - (x) the current proposal is not the first time the social and built-form heritage value of Paddy’s Market has been threatened. Efforts to redevelop Paddy’s Market into a commercial and residential development were stopped by the successful mobilisation of stallholders in 1988;
 - (xi) displacing and putting at a disadvantage the very community that helped shape and maintain its identity would be a devastating blow. From public housing to low-cost eateries and shopping destinations, gentrification has seen the destruction of various Sydney icons in recent years – it would be disheartening if Paddy’s Markets followed the same path;
 - (xii) on 7 February, the Lord Mayor wrote to Sydney Markets Limited CEO. Brad Latham, to raise stallholder concerns and asked him to work collaboratively with the stallholders during this process; and
 - (xiii) Mr Latham’s response to the Lord Mayor committed to continuing to meet and liaise with stallholders on future plans for the markets;
- (B) the Lord Mayor be requested to write to the Minister for Infrastructure, Cities and Active Transport, the Hon Robert Stokes MP, to:
- (i) outline concerns about the proposal by Sydney Market Limited to sublease a significant portion of Paddy’s Market to commercial operator Doltone House Group; and
 - (ii) request that the NSW Government consider alternative options to support and invigorate Paddy’s Market including public investment, while maintaining the Market’s distinct identity, history and uses as a low cost market; and

(C) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to:

- (i) provide advice to Council on the opportunities within Council powers or instruments (planning, heritage or otherwise), to protect or promote Paddy's as a low cost, heritage market; and
- (ii) provide advice about what support, in the form of grants or otherwise, could be made available to support Paddy's Market stallholders.

Carried unanimously.

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