Post Exhibition - Sydney Development Control Plan 2012 - Loading and Waste Collection

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Summary

The City of Sydney Guidelines for waste management in new developments (the Guidelines) and supporting provisions in Sydney Development control plan 2012 (the DCP), ensure new developments provide well-designed waste storage and collection areas. These planning controls ensure new developments can accommodate waste collection vehicles and provide enough space to store the amount of waste generated with the ability to separate recycling and problem waste. This supports efficient waste collection services by the City of Sydney (the City), diverting waste from landfill and improving the amenity of the city's streets.

Updates to the Guidelines and the DCP were exhibited as part of the Policy and Housekeeping Amendments (LEP/DCP Update) from 17 December 2024 to 14 March 2025. The remainder of the Policy and Housekeeping update was approved by Council on 23 June 2025. At the time, Council resolved not to proceed with the waste-related provisions pending further review. This report finalises the Guidelines and DCP following additional work.

The exhibited Guidelines and DCP included requirements for on-site loading and waste collection for all developments. They also updated the size of waste collection vehicle that developments must design for, to align with Council's existing waste collection fleet vehicle, a standard 10.6m truck.

The provisions have since been refined to provide options for smaller developments, and alternatives for sites with constrained dimensions or access. This amendment introduces:

- the ability to use kerbside waste collection for residential developments up to 6 dwellings or non-residential development up to 200sqm in floor space
- an exception for retail premises in our local centres, so they do not need to introduce driveway crossings on shopping streets
- the ability to use "wheel out and wheel in" waste collection for residential developments up to 90 dwellings in certain circumstances, which combines kerbside waste loading with on-site bin storage directly accessible by waste collection staff
- a process to agree on alternative waste collection approaches with City staff, even when the City is not the consent authority for the development application

This report recommends approving the revised Development control plan - Loading and waste collection (shown at attachment A) and Guidelines for waste management in new developments (shown at attachment B) for adoption.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

(A) Council approve Sydney Development control plan 2012 - Loading and waste collection, shown at Attachment A to the subject report

(B) Council approve Guidelines for waste management in new developments, shown at Attachment B to the subject report

(C) Council note that if approved the Guidelines for waste management in new developments and Sydney Development control plan 2012 - Loading and waste collection will come into effect 2 weeks from the date of the Resolution of Council

(D) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to make minor amendments to Sydney development control plan 2012 - Loading and waste collection and to the Guidelines for waste management in new developments, to correct any minor errors or omissions prior to finalisation.

Attachments

Attachment A. Sydney Development Control Plan 2012 - Loading and waste collection

Attachment B. Guidelines for waste management in new developments

Background

Waste management in new development is a key consideration in development assessment

1. The Guidelines and DCP ensure new buildings include well designed waste storage and collection facilities. The controls set minimum requirements for space, access and safety, ensuring waste facilities are practical for occupants and compatible with waste collection services, including the City's waste collection service for residential dwellings. They also address access for loading and servicing for deliveries, removalist trucks and other large vehicles. The controls manage operational conflicts and maintain amenity in the public domain.

2. While variations and alternative solutions to respond to site-specific constraints are assessed through the development application process, this can add extra time and uncertainty. This amended update is clearer about what alternative solutions and variations are permissible and in what circumstances, enabling more efficient assessment of applications and improved outcomes.

Updates to the Guidelines and DCP were exhibited as part of the Policy and Housekeeping Amendment (LEP/DCP update)

3. The City exhibited a comprehensive update to its planning framework, including changes to the DCP, the Guidelines and other planning instruments and guideline documents from 17 December 2024 to 14 March 2025. This update included a series of planning control changes related to housing, parking, greening, amenity, sustainability and design excellence, as well as housekeeping changes to improve the operation of controls.

4. As part of this exhibited update the DCP was proposed to be significantly amended to:

    (a) strengthen the requirements for on-site loading and waste collection to reduce reliance on the public domain

    (b) introduce detailed vehicle access standards including gradients and clearances for a medium rigid vehicle to service non-residential development

    (c) updating the reference to Council's waste collection truck for residential services from a 9.25m truck to a 10.6m truck currently used in the fleet

    (d) specify the use of a Delivery Service Plan for developments unable to meet the provisions due to site constraints.

5. The Guidelines for waste management in new developments was also proposed to be amended to:

    (a) introduce waste generation rates for student accommodation and co-living developments, reflecting that the City provides waste collection services to these land uses

    (b) update the vehicle access requirements to align with Council's existing 10.6m long (26 ton) waste collection fleet vehicle, from a 9.25m long (26 ton). This update also includes more detailed requirements for vehicle turning access geometry and gradients

(c) Introduce waste storage requirements to provide further clarity on the waste related infrastructure and access requirements. These include 10cm between bins, minimum 1800 width clearances for doorways, corridors and good lifts, and basement bin transfer via ramps require a ride on tug service

(d) update requirements for chute systems, including new acoustic performance standards to reduce disturbance to residents, ensuring chute discharge rooms are not accessible to residents for safety, and clarifying the maximum travel distance of 30m from dwelling to chute

(e) improve and clarify requirements for on-site storage of bulky and problem waste, to reduce instances of dumping in the public domain.

6. Following exhibition, the updated controls were tested in a wide range of real world development proposals with proponents and City staff providing feedback on how they operate.

7. Application of the draft controls to real world development applications highlighted constraints with facilitating on-site collection with Council's 10.6m waste collection vehicle. This was resulting in sub-optimal compromises being made, such as on-street collection or retrofitting designs post submission that used the 9.25m (26 ton) truck instead of Council's waste collection fleet vehicle

8. The City undertook detailed testing of the controls against past development applications. This process identified that variations and alternative solutions to the controls were often required to respond to site-specific constraints. This analysis showed better outcomes would be achieved if the controls included additional detail for managing variations and alternative solutions, particularly for:

(a) smaller developments where on-site collection is not practical and either kerbside or "wheel out and wheel in" waste collection can be provided instead

(b) constrained sites where accommodating the proposed controls is not possible or would result in compromises in other urban design and amenity outcomes, and a bespoke approach is required in consultation with City staff.

The revised Guidelines and DCP provide managed ways to handle variations

9. The revised DCP shown at attachment A and the Guidelines shown at attachment B, which this report recommends adopting, incorporate refinements to the previously exhibited versions to provide for variations and alternative solutions to the waste loading controls. While the content is expanded, there are no new or significantly changed key requirements since exhibition.

10. The Guidelines and DCP have been amended to include criteria for variations to the controls to permit kerbside loading, wheel out and wheel in loading, and the opportunity to discuss bespoke solutions where site specific constraints require it.

11. Currently exceptions and alternative solutions for a site are prepared through the development assessment process when required. By including specific criteria and alternative solutions in the Guidelines and DCP, proponents will be able to design the solution that best suits the site and development proposal from the outset. This more transparent approach is intended to reduce costs for development, reduce assessment timeframes, and ensure more consistent outcomes where the City is not the consent authority (such as state significant development).

Small developments can design for kerbside collection

12. Developments with up to 6 dwellings, and non-residential development up to 200sqm of floor space, will be able to provide for a kerbside waste collection. This is the lowest impact requirement and relies on the resident storing bins on their property and putting them on the street on the night before collection.

13. Retail premises on shopping streets (E1 Local Centre zoned areas) on small sites without rear or side street access will also be able to design for kerbside collection. Introducing driveways to facilitate on-site loading would cut across busy footpaths and disrupt the flow of the shopping street.

14. The proposed controls for kerbside collection require bins to be stored on-site in a convenient location, so they can be moved onto the street for collection and easily put away during other times.

On-site loading and waste collection is the best option for most developments

15. As exhibited, the general requirement to provide on-site loading and waste collection will remain for developments that do not qualify for kerbside collection.

16. On-site loading and waste collection reduces the impacts associated with loading waste in the public domain, such as bins on the footpath, noise and smell from loading outside, and traffic, cycling and pedestrian flow impacts. It's generally a more convenient and durable option for residents and building management.

17. Designing for the City's standard 10.6m waste collection vehicle, provides the most operational certainty and flexibility for the City to service buildings well into the future.

Wheel out and wheel in waste collection as an option

18. The DCP and Guidelines do not currently reference wheel out and wheel in collection as a waste collection service. This update includes the service as an option in certain cases where on-site servicing cannot be accommodated or would compromise other outcomes.

19. For wheel out and wheel in, a bin storage room is provided on the ground floor with direct and separate access to a street. The waste truck does not enter the site but stops directly outside the bin storage room. Waste collection workers can unlock the door and wheel the bins to the truck, and wheel them back. This service combines the benefits of on-site loading, with no bins left in the public domain, without having to accommodate a truck manoeuvring into the building.

20. However, this service has impacts of its own. The truck is standing on the street, potentially blocking a traffic lane, and it is additional work and time for the waste collection workers which increases with the size of the building being served. Additionally, the need for a street accessible bin storage room has urban design impacts, using ground floor, street accessible space for bin storage instead of more active, useful or valuable uses.

21. To control these impacts, there are important limits on the use of wheel out and wheel in, including:

    - The service is only available to buildings with a maximum of 90 dwellings, to limit the time the waste truck is standing and waste collection workers are working in the public domain.

    - Where there is a rear service lane, the waste collection point must be oriented to this lane.

    - Where there is no service lane, a maximum of 45 dwellings can be serviced with the waste truck standing in a traffic lane.

    - Where between 45 and 90 dwellings need to be serviced without lane access, an on-street loading zone will need to be provided. This can only be provided by agreement of the City or other roads authority where relevant.

Some developments will need bespoke arrangements

22. In the City's analysis of real-world development applications, providing access arrangements for trucks and other loading vehicles is highly subject to local and site-specific conditions. Many sites require bespoke arrangements developed in consultation with the City during the development assessment process to ensure the best outcome is achieved.

23. Increasingly, residential developments are being assessed as state significant development, so the NSW Government is the consent authority rather than the City. This bypasses the standard process of the City developing bespoke arrangements through the development assessment process. To respond to this, the Waste Guidelines will strongly recommend that where developments are unable to meet the requirements for kerbside or on-site waste collection, or if providing these requirements would result in reduced outcomes in other planning priority areas, the proponent will be advised to meet with City staff prior to lodging a development application. This aims to ensure that staff from Planning Assessments, Cleansing and Resource Recovery, and Traffic Operations if required, can inform the design solution at an early stage.

24. Bespoke arrangements involve variations to standard requirements, which can only be allowable when appropriate safety, operational and other arrangements are put in place. These are too complex and varied to codify in the DCP or Guidelines.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

25. Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision renews the communities' vision for the sustainable development of the city to 2050. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the city, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. This proposal is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:

    (a) Direction 1 - Responsible governance and stewardship - Provides clear and transparent planning controls that improve certainty for the community.

    (b) Direction 2 - A leading environmental performer - Supports waste diversion from landfill and sustainable waste management practices in new developments.

    (c) Direction 3 - Public places for all - Reduces reliance on kerbside waste collection, improving amenity of the public domain.

    (d) Direction 4 - Design excellence and sustainable development - Ensures design impacts of loading and waste servicing are considered at early design stages, and provides the ability to vary controls in response to urban design impacts.

    (e) Direction 5 - A city for walking, cycling and public transport - Minimises conflicts between waste vehicles and active transport users by prioritising on-site waste collection.

Organisational impact

26. Providing improved transparency over variation criteria and alternative solutions will help reduce delays in development assessment and re-referrals to the waste and transport teams.

Environmental

27. The proposal supports the City's Environmental Strategy by improving waste diversion from landfill, reducing truck movements in the public domain, and protecting space for deep soil and tree planting.

Risks

28. Planning controls involving loading and waste collection carefully consider and minimise a broad range of risks, including safety risks associated with vehicle movements, impacts on traffic, cycling and pedestrian flow, waste management within private developments and operational risk for the City.

29. The City has limited appetite for safety risks involving the manoeuvring of waste vehicles and other heavy vehicles, both in the public domain and within development, and prioritises preventing harm, injuries and workplace injuries to our workers, residents, visitors and other stakeholders. For this reason, the controls prioritise safe movement of heavy vehicles and include detailed specifications to ensure new development is built to safely accommodate these vehicles.

30. The City has a cautious appetite to financial risks. The City has an obligation to provide waste collection services to residential development, so the controls prevent new development from imposing ongoing operational challenges to the City. The controls prioritise new development accommodating the City's largest waste collection vehicle wherever possible, which provides the City the most operational certainty and flexibility. Where this is not possible, the controls provide a managed way for the City to balance operational needs with development outcomes.

Relevant legislation

31. Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

32. Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021

33. Local Government Act 1993

Critical dates / Time frames

34. If approved by Council, the draft DCP and Guidelines will come into effect 2 weeks from the date of the Resolution of Council.

Public Consultation

35. As part of the Policy and Housekeeping Amendments (LEP/DCP Update), the Guidelines and relevant provisions of the DCP were exhibited from 17 December 2024 to 14 March 2025. An expansion of alternative loading and waste servicing is provided in the DCP.

36. The exhibited updates included the key requirements detailed in this report for on-site collection, accommodating a 10.6m waste truck for residential development or an 8.8m MRV for non-residential development, and for forward in, forward out access to sites.

37. The Guidelines and the DCP attached to this report do not significantly change these key exhibited requirements for loading and waste collection. As no key requirements are introduced or removed, and the amendments are limited in scope to providing additional detail for variations to the exhibited requirements, re-exhibition is not necessary.

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