

## **Attachment B**

**Councillor Jess Scully's Speech at the  
Guangzhou International Award for Urban  
Innovation**

## GUANGZHOU URBAN INNOVATION CONFERENCE

December 7, 2018

Thank you, [MC] and good afternoon, everyone.

It's a pleasure to represent the City of Sydney at this session to share how we build on a range of partnerships to make Sydney a sustainable and resilient city for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

To give you some context, Sydney is a sprawling city of 12,000 square km, home to five million people; bound by the ocean in the east and spreading 70 km to the west, 40 km to the north and 60 km south.

The City of Sydney local government area covers just 26 square km and is home to about 230,000 people, but it is also the business, educational and cultural heart of the city. We're accommodating a growing residential population as increasing numbers are swapping a suburban lifestyle for denser city living.

Our City economy and businesses have strong links to China and East Asia, especially in the areas of financial services, business and professional services, tourism and the education sector.

We are one of the world's most culturally diverse cities, with people from every nation calling Sydney home. About half our population are overseas-born, over 20 per cent of them coming from Asian countries.

Like cities around the world, our challenge is maintaining quality of life while growing our urban population and taking action on climate change.

Over the past ten years, under the leadership of our Lord Mayor, Clover Moore, the City of Sydney has put mitigating climate impacts,

expanding social justice and improving quality of life at the top of our priorities.

Our actions are based on the philosophy that good cities embrace the common good. Good governments invest in public works that drive liveability and attract a talented, creative workforce.

### **SUSTAINABLE SYDNEY 2030**

Adopted in 2008, the Sustainable Sydney 2030 strategy commits us to reducing greenhouse emissions by 70 per cent by 2030, and we are now on track to achieve this goal.

We have maximised the efficiency of our own portfolio and operations but we can only achieve our City's net zero goal by supporting residents, property owners and businesses to make their buildings and operations as sustainable as technology and good design allows, so, partnerships are crucial.

The Better Buildings Partnership represents major property owners who between them manage over 50% of commercial real estate in our city.

Working together since 2011, the partnership has now achieved a 52% reduction in emissions on their 2006 baseline. They also achieved a 36% reduction in water use and recycled 8,000 tonnes of furniture, all while growing their portfolio of buildings by more than 20%.

This has delivered \$33 million dollars in annual savings, encouraging them to work towards net zero buildings.

We have extended this model into the tourism sector and also into smaller commercial and residential apartment buildings with grants to improve environmental performance and reduce bills.

Our approach is to keep a focus on energy efficiency improvements through ratings, upgrades and management improvements, the installation of renewable energy on-site, and buying renewable energy

from off-site. Improving local waste management and water capture will also be crucial.

This is our starting point, as over the next 18 months we work with the community and experts to shape our next guiding plan, Sustainable Sydney 2050.

## RESILIENT SYDNEY

**While there is much that is unknowable**, we are planning for a future which may be rocked by climate shocks and economic disruptions, so strong relationships will be the key: in our case, co-operation across metropolitan Sydney and across government authorities.

Three years ago, Sydney won a place in the Rockefeller Foundation's 100 Resilient Cities program, and we appointed the City's first Chief Resilience Officer, Beck Dawson.

Beck spent two years working with leaders across Sydney's 33 council areas, 100 business and government organisations, and more than 1,000 residents. The resulting strategy, Resilient Sydney, was released in July.

It defines urban resilience as *the capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, businesses and systems within the city to survive, adapt and continue to thrive in the face of chronic stresses and shocks.*

Some of these challenges will be shared by your cities: in Sydney, our most acute threat comes from extreme weather conditions. We are also concerned about infrastructure failure, the failure of financial institutions, water crisis, digital network failure, terror attack, disease pandemic and cyber attack.

Spatial inequalities also represent a growing concern. Historically, most of our key institutions like hospitals and universities have been close to the old city centre, near the coast, meaning unequal access and higher travel costs and stress for those living further from the centre.

Sydney also faces chronic stresses from the demand on health services, housing un-affordability, diminishing social cohesion, a lack of employment diversity, growing inequity, chronic illness, and transport deficiencies (that mean 70 per cent of our people drive to work), and drug and alcohol abuse. And it's not difficult to see the links between these different stresses.

Our resilience strategy is a platform to help us work together across boundaries to empower our communities to bounce back from the stresses and shocks that we know will come.

It outlines five flagship actions to be implemented over the next two years.

These actions are:

for every council in Sydney to adopt a resilience strategy;

to set a cool suburbs target to reduce the effects of extreme heat;

to foster a 5% improvement in community cohesion over the next five years;

to get Sydneysiders prepared for emergencies by downloading the Get Prepared app,

and to have the 100 organisations involved in preparing the strategy to implement it.

## **GREEN SQUARE**

**Our approach - embodied in Sustainable Sydney and Resilient Sydney - comes to life in the example of Green Square, one of Australia's largest urban renewal projects.**

**If you attended the Award sessions yesterday, you would have heard about our work at Green Square. By 2030 it is expected to be home for 61,000 residents and 21,000 daily workers, 30,000 of which have already moved in.**

One of the first problems we faced there was the issue of stormwater, as the site is located on a flood-plain and the Town Centre is subject to flooding during periods of heavy rainfall.

In partnership with the water authority, we co-funded a \$140 million new stormwater drain through to a nearby canal. Its route through the Town Centre allowed us to supply recycled water to the surrounding apartments, commercial buildings, civic facilities and parklands.

We achieved residential water efficiencies by offering developers planning benefits if they entered into a Green Infrastructure Deed that, among other things, required their buildings to be dual plumbed for potable and recycled non-potable water.

Stage one of the scheme has already reduced pollution going into the Cooks River. It also supplies water suitable for irrigation, and for use in washing machines, toilets, car-wash facilities and cooling towers of three major apartment buildings.

It will eventually supply the entire Town Centre and reduce potable water use by 50%.

Initially, we had hoped to take the entire Green Square urban renewal area off the coal-fired power grid with district trigeneration.

Unfortunately, our plans were blocked when state and federally controlled rules were changed to exclude individual commercial office owners from counting district energy in their mandatory disclosure of energy efficiency.

These state obstacles to distributed, district-scale energy production, combined with the failure of Australian federal governments to price carbon, meant the scheme became economically unviable.

While we can't overcome the blockages to making district-level power generation viable for the private sector, we have installed a private wire system, powered by solar, across our own sites at Green Square.

The former South Sydney hospital, its buildings and large tracts of adjacent land are being redeveloped to provide community facilities for the new population.

The original hospital building has been repurposed as a Green Infrastructure Centre which houses our water recycling plant and a 20kW rooftop photovoltaic installation.

When the Gunyama Aquatic and Recreation Centre is completed in 2020, it too will be connected to the private wire. The centre will also have 120kW of rooftop PV and a 260 kW co-generation unit.

Also in Green Square, this year we launched a new works depot to replace three existing depots servicing the southern city area. It is the base for 150 staff from our fleet, cleansing and waste, civil maintenance and construction services.

The depot building has strong green credentials including natural ventilation and lighting, roof water collection for re-use and a large-scale battery and a 1600-panel PV installation with a 484kW capacity.

In a joint venture with the state's high-voltage electricity transmission company, we installed a Tesla lithium ion battery with a storage capacity of 500kWh to store surplus power for use later in the day.

These partnerships allow us to deliver the technical foundations of a sustainable city: but liveability at high densities requires investment in social and community infrastructure also. At Green Square we are investing \$1.3 billion in infrastructure, of which, the private sector is contributing over 50%, delivering new roads, tree lined streets, 40 new parks and community, creative and sports facilities.

Our Joynton Avenue Creative Centre - part of the former hospital mentioned before, is now transformed into affordable workspaces for artists, creative practitioners and the community.

It was designed with cross ventilation and plenty of windows to rule out the need for air-conditioning. This project shows us that design

excellence has just as important a role to play as technological innovation in adaptation for a more sustainable future.

We were the first council in Australia to introduce competitive design excellence processes and the 100-plus competitions we have run have seen our projects win numerous local, state and international awards.

Co-operative action is the only way we will deal with the challenges facing us in this 21<sup>st</sup> century - and that applies globally, as well as locally. And that is one reason why the City of Sydney is glad to be represented at this conference, so that we can learn from each other and share our experiences with you.

Thank you.