

SAVE MARRICKVILLE

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Save Marrickville response to *Employment and Retail Lands Strategy, September 2019*

About Save Marrickville

Save Marrickville is a group of residents taking positive action to ensure that the growth of our suburb is planned properly for our community, the environment and future residents. The key objectives of Save Marrickville include:

- No overdevelopment
- No high rise
- Sympathetic, well designed development and density
- Appropriate and considered transition points
- Preservation of heritage and local character
- Preservation of industrial and employment lands
- Appropriate infrastructure identified and implemented before rezoning
- Affordable housing
- Promotion and preservation of our natural assets and local environment
- Planning control to stay with Council

Overview

For some time Save Marrickville has been concerned with the continuing loss of industrial land from inner-city Sydney. Losing vast tracts of IN1 and IN2 zoned land for uplift and ‘urban renewal’ places Sydney in a precarious position to support the changing face of employment and urban services needs of a growing population, as well as the cultural and economic requirements of an important global city¹.

On a local level, the maintenance (and further support) of industrial land in the inner west (IW) stimulates local employment and provides the practical underpinnings of the inner west’s identity as a creative and manufacturing precinct – an identity built on a history of manufacturing and productivity.

University research released in 2019 has reported that “Sydney has virtually no inner industrial land left. This follows years of industrial rezonings at the hands of major property developers.”² As such the Inner West Council’s stance on protecting industrial land is encouraging and we strongly support this stance.

Comments on specific strategies and actions are as follows:

Strategy 1.1

Action 1.1.1 Adopt the recommended retail centre hierarchy as defined in Table 3

Save Marrickville disagrees with the categorisation of Marrickville as a Town Centre and would recommend it be designated as 'Local Centre'. Please refer to our response to the Local Strategic Planning Statement for full details.

Action 1.1.3 Enhance the vibrancy of town and local centres

Save Marrickville supports initiatives that increases use of Marrickville local centre, defined as the immediate vicinity of the train station and intersection of Marrickville and Illawarra Roads. The expansion of Marrickville Metro shopping mall threatens the viability of the Marrickville local centre as defined above. Marrickville Metro includes several major supermarkets and retail chains, plus services including Services NSW and NRMA. Initiatives encouraging local events and optimising pedestrianism will all positively contribute to the liveliness of the Marrickville-Illawarra Road precinct.

Strategy 1.2

Save Marrickville requests revisions to be made to Figure 6 (page 25) to better represent the diverse nature of industry in the Carrington Rd precinct. The Carrington Rd industrial precinct is labelled 'C' for 'Creative industries'. Although the precinct does contain many creative industries, it is also an important area for food/cosmetics production (eg. New Directions), auto services (eg. SmashTec), and artisanal manufacturing (furniture-making, ceramics). There is a wide range of industry in this area, already generating diverse local jobs, that must be recognised as having a valid place in the Inner West. Moreover, this mix of creative industries, urban services and manufacturing is what contributes to Carrington Rd's unique clustering effect, which is important to the area's overall viability.³

Strategy 1.6

Save Marrickville is in support of encouraging the establishment of new enterprises in the Inner West. The IW is suitable for high-value niche manufacturing, start-ups and creative industries that benefit from clustering together in networks of small businesses. The IW LGA also has the necessary older industrial building stock that is often sought-after by such businesses, especially in their startup phases, due to affordable rent, built environment factors (such as ceiling height and an ability to adapt space to project needs), and physical proximity to the city. Save Marrickville encourage IWC to partner with the State Government to explore initiatives such as subsidised rents and/or provide funding to improve infrastructure.

Strategy 2.1

Action 2.1.5 Investigate opportunities to increase civic space and deliver improved amenity

Save Marrickville supports the improvement of public domain space. We would prefer these improvements to be government-supplied and funded rather than negotiated with developers. Care needs to be taken when offering bonus floorspace for the delivery of public space in new developments. Those developments should still meet the expectation of community in terms of building height/density, build quality and provision of parking.

Strategy 3.1

Actions 3.1.1 to 3.1.4

Save Marrickville fully supports Actions 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.3 and 3.1.4. Preserving industrially-zoned land and buildings is consistent with Save Marrickville's commitment to the Inner West's heritage, character and identity. We agree with the statements made in the draft that introducing residential components into employment areas can limit the ability to adapt uses in the future, for reasons including land use conflicts, and noise complaints. We are concerned that continued rezoning of employment lands will result in increased fragmentation of lots, that reduce the flexibility and ability of businesses to cluster and network, factors which underpin their productivity.

Table 5 (page 35) provides an important insight into the future requirements of employment lands and supports IWC's strong position to protect industrial land. Save Marrickville would like to see Council (in partnership with the State Government) further support our industrial landholders and tenants to mitigate external pressures such as rent increase, flooding and climate change effects, and pressures to rezone for housing.

Cities outside Australia have protected industrial precincts (under a number of mechanisms, including State acquisition and control) from residential development pressures. Examples are in US cities such as Portland, Oregon and Chicago⁴.

Strategy 3.3

Actions 3.3.2 and 3.3.3

Save Marrickville is concerned by the many vacant ground floor retail tenancies in new developments (particularly along Illawarra Rd). As such we support the initiative (Action 3.3.2) of establishing minimum floor to ceiling heights for ground floor tenancies in the B4 Mixed Use zone and B6 Enterprise Corridors, to broaden the business base that use these spaces. For the same reasons we also support Action 3.3.3 that encourages diversity in the size and composition of floorplates.

Strategy 4.1

Action 4.1.2

Save Marrickville requests that the community be consulted early in any plans to leverage the delivery of Sydney Metro at Marrickville and Dulwich Hill.

Action 4.1.7

Save Marrickville is fully supportive of Council securing remaining land from the State Government after infrastructure projects are completed. We would like to see this land brought back (and remain) in the public domain.

Strategy 4.2

Save Marrickville would like to note a number of concerns regarding Strategy 4.2. During the preparation of this document the draft Inner West Land and Property Strategy has not been sighted. Save Marrickville would require further information on this strategy to be able to comment from an informed perspective. However, we do note that Council owns a number of historically important heritage icons including Petersham Town Hall, Marrickville Town Hall and Leichhardt Town Hall. While there may well be scope for buildings to remain in Council control, to be reused in a manner sympathetic to the spirit of the Local Strategic Planning Statement, selling off public assets would be short sighted and not in the public interest.

Strategy 5.1

Action 5.1.1

Save Marrickville is supportive of Action 5.1.1 that aims to provide a clear framework to provide clarity for businesses and residents in regards to zoning and the permissible uses within zones. We are also supportive of Council establishing a position of no additional permitted residential uses in employment zones such as Carrington Rd, identified in the draft strategy document as a key site.

1. <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/learn/research-and-statistics/the-city-at-a-glance/our-global-city>
2. <https://theconversation.com/three-ways-to-fix-the-problems-caused-by-rezoning-inner-city-industrial-land-for-mixed-use-apartments-121566>
3. http://www.urbanculturalpolicy.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Made_in_Marrickville_DP170104255-201702.pdf
4. <http://www.architecture.org/news/retrofitting-buildings/5-things-to-know-about-chicagos-planned-manufacturing-districts/>