



## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CANDIDATES in NSWVotes2023

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[BPN](#) invites responses from candidates and registered parties/groups to the questions below, which aim to provide information for voters on where they stand on the need for reform of the Planning system in NSW.

Please complete the questionnaire by indicating YES or NO to each question and, preferably, inserting comments in support (The easiest way to do this is to just edit this word document).

Please return the questionnaire, as soon as possible but by 20 March at the latest, to [bpn@betterplanningnetwork.org.au](mailto:bpn@betterplanningnetwork.org.au)

BPN intends to publicise the responses we receive, to provide guidance for voters interested in planning reform. We will also publicise non-response.

### BPN Questions for Candidates #NSWVotes2023

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1. Do you believe the current NSW land use planning system strikes the correct balance between the voice of property developers and local communities? YES NO Please discuss why.

**NO!**

**Firstly, I must say that the views expressed in all my responses are mine and not necessarily those of the City of Parramatta Council or of other Councillors.**

Poorly planned overdevelopment without the community infrastructure, green spaces or services needed for the population growth clearly shows the NSW Coalition government and planning system are favouring property developers over local communities.

Almost every change to the planning system under this government, its legislation and regulations, have advantaged the property and development industry over communities.

Recent changes such as the NSW government banning public value share of rezoning land value windfall increases, providing for secret rezoning proposals, reducing community input into the fast tracked rapid assessment framework and the government overruling the Parramatta CBD Local Environment Plan made by its own Department of Planning and Environment to allow even greater density of development, are all examples of the NSW Coalition government's planning changes that advantage developers and which The Greens opposed and will reverse as far as possible.

Another example of property developers getting unreasonable and unfair priority over communities in land use planning is that their development gets approval and is often built well before adequate state public services including transport, education, health and genuinely affordable housing. Development also occurs with inadequate and unfair public value share of

rezoning land value increases. This leaves insufficient State funding, and Council funding for essential related community infrastructure and facilities needs, such as libraries, community centres, parks, sports grounds, active transport links and swimming centres.

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2. Do you believe State Planning Policies grant excessive decision-making discretion to the Minister for Planning?  
YES NO Can you provide any examples which illustrate your view?

**YES, ABSOLUTELY SO!**

We have a great example of that in the City of Parramatta CBD where the Department of Planning & Environment (DPE) finalised an LEP (Local Environment Plan) after about six years of deliberation and planning, and spoke highly of the final result, which moderated some of the excessive unlimited commercial floorspace in the CBD. But after only a few weeks of lobbying by Property Council, developers and CBD landowners, it seems, the Minister intervened to require a review by the Department to override the LEP by means of two State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs) to allow more density, which was delivered, except so far in North Parramatta, which remains under further review.

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3. Do you regard it as a priority for the next NSW Government to address climate impacts of developments more comprehensively under the planning system? YES NO If yes, please detail what policies you have adopted and what initiatives you will pursue if elected.

**YES, DEFINITELY!**

Climate change presents a clear and present existential threat to humans and the planet. If we're not planning for massive urgent climate action, we're not planning adequately! Global warming is already a serious health threat with extreme heat related health costs exceeding the total cost of all other extreme weather health impacts.

As a Councillor, my motions have achieved increased provision for high performing building sustainability, increased tree planting, reduced use of single use plastics, planning for three community gardens, strong opposition to a huge toxic greenhouse gas emitting incinerator in Western Sydney, provisions for the electric vehicle transition in buildings and more climate related actions, including Council now purchasing 100% renewable electricity and promoting climate action in the community.

We need to provide more heat refuges from extreme heat waves and their negative heat stress health impacts, including by urgently building more water features such as fountains, aquatic swim centres and water-play parks . The Greens will create a Jobs-Rich, Clean Energy Future with thousands more secure, well paid jobs, by addressing extreme heat; supporting solar and

wind energy projects but no new gas or coal mines, planting more trees, increasing green spaces, energy efficiency and early intervention against heat stress health risks.

The Sustainable Buildings SEPP provides some welcomed improvements, but needs to extend higher residential Green Star requirements to the North Coast Climate Zone and to buildings higher than 3 storeys. All new residential and commercial buildings should have maximum Green Star requirements and be 100% electric (no gas or wood heating). Embedded carbon in building materials requirements need to be mandated urgently.

The Greens and I as an active member of BPN member group Parramatta Climate Action Network will strive hard for net zero emissions. The Greens of course also have much stronger policies to reduce the current high risk of worsening dangerous global warming. Whereas the Liberal/National party Coalition and Labor have a target of 50% carbon emissions reductions by 2030, The Greens' target is 75% reduction by 2030, as this is consistent with the United Nations' climate science experts and as strongly recommended by Australia's Climate Council and Nature Conservation Council of NSW.

Government net zero my 2050 targets are actually dangerous, as if we do no better globally, UN climate scientists estimate this will result in an unacceptably high one in three chance of runaway, irreversible catastrophic climate change.

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4. Do you think the concept of "State significance" in NSW planning is applied correctly?      YES      NO  
Can you provide any examples which illustrate your view?

**NO!**

In Parramatta, there were two recent State Significant development and infrastructure issues which are useful to illustrate my view. One was the so-called Powerhouse Museum of Applied Arts and Science where State Significance was used to demolish an important heritage building called Willow Grove and another example was Parramatta Light Rail stage one which was routed straight through the heritage significant Cumberland Hospital area in North Parramatta, which should be listed world heritage along with the Parramatta Female Factory.

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5. Do you think the NSW Independent Planning Commission is sufficiently independent of the Government?  
YES      NO      Please give examples.

**NO.**

I am concerned that the government chooses who is to be on the panel rather than there being a process independent of government for selecting panel members.

6. In your opinion does environmental impact assessment of planning developments in NSW meet community expectations in relation to the following?

- **Protecting Aboriginal cultural heritage?** **NO**
- **Protecting post-European cultural heritage?** **NO**
- **Preventing irreversible harm to natural environment?** **NO**
- **Taking into consideration flood risk?** **NO**
- **Protecting tree canopies in urban and regional contexts?** **NO**
- **Preventing sterilisation of peri-urban food bowl?** **NO**
- **Ensuring quality housing?** **NO**

The Greens and I strongly support ecologically sustainable development, better planning with priority on genuine community consultation so as to deliver on feedback, flood mitigation, quality affordable housing, tree canopy increase and preservation of Epping electorate's and Parramatta LGA's outstanding Aboriginal, multicultural, natural and built heritage.

As the first Parramatta Greens Councillor, I successfully moved that Council lobby the State and Federal Planning & Heritage Ministers to grant National Heritage Listing for the Parramatta Female Factory Fleet Street Precinct, which was approved soon after.

I have also supported and moved numerous Council motions including some successful, to reduce excessive high-rise and other overdevelopment, and to protect heritage sites.

7. Should a responsible NSW climate response include the issuing of further coal and gas exploration licences?  
YES NO Please detail what policies you would support and which initiatives you will pursue if elected.

**NO!**

See my answer in 3 above and Greens NSW Election Platform on Climate Change:  
<https://greens.org.au/nsw/climatechange2023>

8. The 2022 auditor general's review of the NSW Biodiversity Offset Scheme concluded the scheme failed to protect NSW environment. Will you support an overhaul of the scheme, so that Positive Conservation Outcomes are assured? YES NO

**YES** – the NSW Biodiversity Offset Scheme is a sham and does not and cannot genuinely offset or protect like for like.

9. Is it time for a root and branch review of the NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act*?

YES NO If yes, what do you think the scope of such changes should be, and who should be responsible for this review (e.g. NSW Productivity Commission)? If no, please explain why not?

**YES** – the ACT has been progressively watered down to the benefit of the property and development industry.

The changes should be consistent with the Principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development and the Planning for People Community Charter for Good Planning in NSW of course!

It should not be done by the Productivity Commission, but by a genuinely independent group of people drawn from the Better Planning Network, active community residents action groups, the Government Architect’s Office, the National Trust, the Climate Council, professional planners and other environmental and planning experts who are all in agreement with the Planning for People Community Charter.

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10. Many properties, particularly foreign investment properties, are reported to remain vacant. Do you support a government audit and introduction of financial disincentives for residential property owners who leave their property vacant for more than six months in order to encourage delivery of more housing to the rental market? YES NO If yes, do you have specific suggestions?

**YES** – The Greens and I support an empty dwellings special rate and other disincentives:  
<https://greens.org.au/nsw/makehousingaffordable2023>

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11. Current NSW affordable housing policy includes bonus development as an incentive for developers to deliver some affordable housing but the housing only remains affordable for 15 years. Is this in your opinion a sustainable solution to the affordable housing crisis? YES NO What is your policy on affordable housing?

**NO!**

<https://greens.org.au/nsw/makehousingaffordable2023>

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Response from (name): **Councillor Phil Bradley (City of Parramatta Council)**  
**Date: 18 March 2023**

Capacity (e.g. xxx candidate for yyy): **Greens Candidate for Epping electoral district.**

Contact details (optional): <https://greens.org.au/nsw/person/phil-bradley>