



Year in Review 2021



Committee
for
Sydney

**Thank you to our all
of our members and
sponsors. You helped
us make a huge impact
in 2020-21.**



“Great cities need great advocates and the Committee does a fantastic job promoting Sydney and helping it to be the greatest city in the world.”

The Hon. Dominic Perrottet MP
Premier of NSW

Chair's message

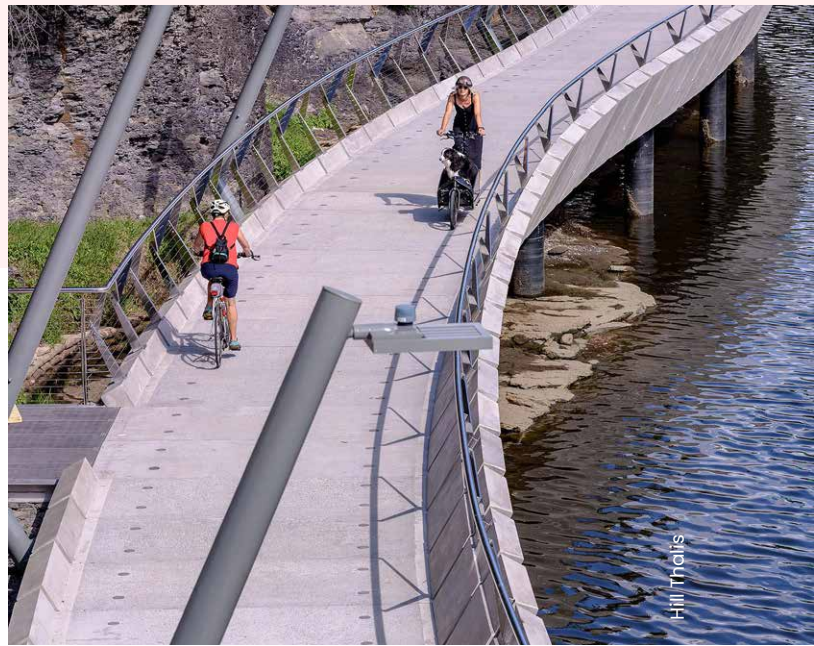
Sydney began 2021 with a sense of optimism. After last year's bushfires and lockdowns, it seemed Sydney had a real opportunity to build on its strengths as it emerged from the pandemic and recovered its momentum.

Unfortunately, 2021 had its own challenges in store, with devastating floods on the Hawkesbury River and the Delta variant pushing the city back into extended lockdown.

These events have thrown some of Sydney's challenges into even sharper relief. In particular, the continuing pandemic has highlighted the spatial dimension of inequality in Sydney, and the social and economic vulnerability this creates. It strained communities and added to the stress on key sectors – health, education, transport, construction, tourism, hospitality and property.

These challenges are not unique to Sydney. Every city is dealing with similar issues. What will matter is how well we respond, how quickly we can reset and how, as a global city, Sydney reopens to the world.

Over the last year, the Committee for Sydney has continued to advocate for Sydney – by suggesting policies and action that build Sydney's resilience and drive its recovery. We have continued to work with our members, and to focus our efforts on key priorities – planning, economic recovery, resilience, mobility and culture.



This year, under Gabriel's leadership, we expanded our team to increase our capacity, expertise and reach in critical areas. The results of this investment are clear in the quality of the Committee's work and its influence.

Our work at the Committee matters – for the future of Sydney and the people who live here. As always, that work has been driven and supported by our members. It is good to know our members are so committed to Sydney's future and are prepared to share their ideas, experience and resources to increase the Committee's impact.

Thanks to all our members, our Executive Committee and our executive team for all the great work this year. With you, the Committee will continue to do its best for Sydney in the year ahead.

Michael Rose AM





CEO's introduction

This has been one of the most significant years in the Committee's history, as we channelled the vast knowledge of our members into real world policy change, working closely with our partners in government, business and academia.

We were built for a time like this, when practical ideas, tested with industry, while drawing on the lessons from the rest of the world, are what is needed.

The year started with great optimism the worst of the pandemic was behind us. Medical science was coming to the rescue with vaccines on the way, and Australia managing to navigate the crisis of Covid-19 better than perhaps any other country in the world. It turned out to be a harder year than expected.

Our story – the way we got through this pandemic – has ended up revealing a lot about who we are.

Not all was good. We watched the Australian Government fumble vaccine procurement. We saw our borders close off to the world. We witnessed Sydney's stark inequalities revealed in deeply distressing ways, as so many of the people we depended on as essential workers were forced into harsh restrictions.

But we also drew on a deep well of resilience. As we went back into lockdown, we realised we were, for better and for worse, able to deal with it. We suffered fewer deaths than almost any country in the world. Our institutions held up. We have, in fact, survived this global crisis.

And finally, after a long struggle, we are on a path out. Australia will achieve one of the highest rates of vaccination in the world, with NSW leading the way. There is a sensible framework for reopening, and as I write, it looks like the end – at least of this phase – is in sight.

The Committee for Sydney has been at the centre of the action the entire time. We have advocated for the policy



settings that will minimise harm from lockdown, accelerate our way through vaccinations, and power us into recovery.

Our work this year went far beyond Covid-19. We continued to drive new thinking on governance, housing affordability, public space, transport, decarbonisation and climate adaptation. We continued to advocate for big investments in cultural organisations and universities. We continued to focus attention on the future economy, instead of the past.

The public conversation was, understandably, focused on Covid-19, but all the other issues remain, and Sydney needs us to keep moving them forward.

We deeply appreciate the members of the Committee for Sydney, who stayed with us and in many cases increased their investment over the past two years, who contributed their concerns and their ideas, who remained engaged in Sydney's future.

Once again, we write this annual review in a time of profound uncertainty. What we can promise is that we will be here for Sydney, with you, as long as it takes.

Gabriel Metcalf



Impact

Covid-19 reopening and recovery

Snapping back into lockdown was a disappointment for Sydneysiders but it didn't slow our advocacy efforts. We used this period to forge even closer relationships with members and connected their views with decision makers in government. The highlight of this advocacy work was our updated Covid-19 Reopening and Recovery Plan, released in July. This was the end result of discussions with government, researchers and senior staff from 60 of our member organisations, representing hard-hit industries, including hospitality, entertainment, construction, retail and education. The plan covered immediate measures to survive lockdown, through to longer term action to ensure we bounce back stronger. Many of the report's recommendations have now been adopted by government and we continue to push strongly for the remaining actions to be taken up.

KEY WINS

- Transition from Covid-zero settings to treating virus as an endemic disease
- Adoption of significant incentives for the take-up of vaccines, including the vaccine passport regime and mandates
- Plan to reopen our international border, the end of quarantining for fully vaccinated people and a pilot to return international students to Australia
- Income replacement and a business support package
- \$2.8 billion NSW Economic Recovery Strategy, focusing on supporting businesses, easing cost of living pressures and boosting jobs.

Moving social life outdoors

At the heart of the Committee's pandemic advocacy was a push to move social life outdoors. Global cities such as London and New York have done a brilliant job of moving bars, restaurants and entertainment outdoors. While NSW made modest progress in 2020, a major \$66 million package announced as we were coming out of the Delta lockdown signalled the state's intention to fully embrace our outdoor future.



Credit: Marc Heckner, Unsplash

KEY WINS

- \$5000 grants for hospitality businesses to establish new al fresco settings, including help to set up curbside dining or a pub-style courtyard
- Permanent outdoor dining as an exempt development for pubs and small bars statewide
- The Festival of Place – including the Long Summer Nights Program at the Rocks, Darling Harbour and The Domain, the Summer Night Fund Program and the Open Streets Program
- Emergency temporary al fresco measures for outdoor dining in parks or on private land with the owner's consent.

High streets

Government is starting to talk more about the importance of our high streets. The Committee has been a strong advocate for improving the liveability of our town centres, including with our 2020 Reclaiming



Sydney's High Streets report. The Delta lockdown was another reminder how important high streets are to our lives. It reminded us that many of these high streets are suffering due to poor planning and traffic management, and a number of key announcements in 2021 have started to move us in the right direction.

KEY WINS

- \$5 billion WestInvest fund to go towards revitalising high streets
- \$15 million Your High Street Program, funding projects that permanently transform streetscapes
- Festival of Place – Open Streets, allowing streets to close temporarily to cars and be made available for events and activities.

Net zero

This year will perhaps go down as the year NSW finally embraced its electric vehicle future. After years of advocacy from groups including the Committee, the NSW Government used its budget to unveil a half a billion dollar Electric Vehicle Strategy.

Along with the economic transition being initiated with the release of the NSW Hydrogen Strategy and Renewable Energy Strategy, which both seek to attract investment and create jobs in regional NSW, this year NSW stepped up its leadership position on climate.

MAJOR WINS

- Stamp duty cut and rebates offered
- Funding for new charging infrastructure
- Tax reform through transitioning to a per-kilometre road user charge.

Major infrastructure

Facing pressure from some quarters to use the pandemic to cancel and delay infrastructure projects, the NSW Government thankfully did the opposite. It committed a record \$108.5 billion in budget funding toward infrastructure over the next four years, aimed at driving economic growth and boosting productivity. It also made good progress on projects currently underway.

KEY WINS

- Parramatta Light Rail stage 2 revived
- Start of work on West Metro project
- Underground caverns for Sydney's new metro railway station at Martin Place complete
- Two new Metro stations have been confirmed at

Pymont and Hunter Street for the Sydney Metro West Project

- Major \$1 billion budget funding to build Western Sydney Airport Bradfield city centre.

Reform agenda

The government continued its reform agenda this year and looks committed to tackling housing affordability, climate change and federal/state taxation in the new year.

KEY WINS

- Treasury report on proposal to phase out stamp duty on property purchase and replace it with an opt-in annual property tax
- New agency Investment NSW established to drive local and global investment
- NSW sets more ambitious target of halving emissions, on 2005 levels, by 2030
- Electrification of bus fleet
- City of Sydney plan for net zero energy buildings
- Reform of council rates, which now account for population growth, delivering more revenue to councils in growing communities.

Planning

Planning was further streamlined, with a focus on boosting the economy and productivity.

KEY WINS

- Introduction of Rapid Assessments Framework for state significant projects
- Final Pymont Peninsula Place Strategy released
- Review of Heritage Act
- Design and Place SEPP
- Macquarie Park Place Strategy.

Culture and tourism

Sydney is gearing up to be far more fun post-pandemic with the creation of new precincts, creative infrastructure and more strategic thinking around our 24-hour economy.

KEY WINS

- Powerhouse Parramatta construction contract awarded
- Appointing of the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner.

Research

Submission:
Treasury Laws
Amendment
(Research and
Development Tax)
Bill 2019

Statement:
How to revive
the CBD

Statement:
What does the
Federal Budget
mean for
Sydney



For too long Parramatta Road has been neglected by city makers, with improvements thrown in the 'too hard' basket. But with the delivery of Westconnex, Sydney Metro West and increased capacity on the T1 Western Line, we have an opportunity to reclaim Parramatta Road as series of dense, vibrant urban places. This report recommends new public transport and a transformation of the urban realm.

At a time when it seemed that Australia had crushed Covid-19, despite a hit to the economy, this strategy looked at steps to encourage the early signs of an economic bounce-back.



Submission:
NSW Clean Air Policy

Submission:
Bay West Place
Strategy

Statement:
It's time to begin
rebuilding the country

Submission:
Design and Place SEPP

Statement:
6 priorities for
Sydney - What it
means to build
back better

Oct 20

Nov 20

Dec 20

Jan 21

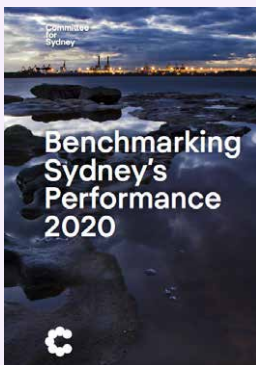
Feb 21

Mar 21

Apr 21

Submission:
Western Sydney
Aerotropolis
Planning Package

Statement:
NSW should lead on
climate change



Submission:
Pymont Place
Strategy

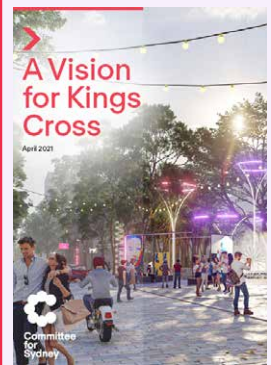
This annual research gives us key insights into our city – where we're strong, where we need to work harder, and where we need to tell a different story to global audiences. At the end of a year unlike any other, the report shows the twin impacts of the pandemic and bushfires, but Sydney's underlying strengths come through just as clearly – a strong economy underpinned by a diverse, well-educated community and strong trust in effective institutions.

Statement:
What we know
about vaccines and
what comes next

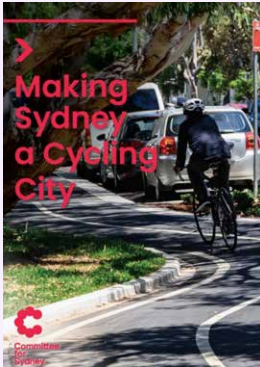
Statement:
Significant
Movement in
support of Sydney's
24 hour economy

Statement:
Bridging the
gap in women's
participation in
Sydney

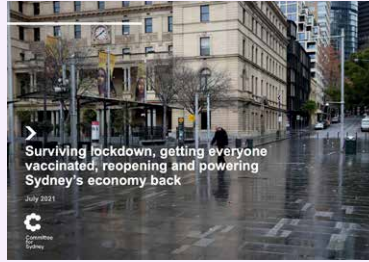
Statement:
Building Back
Better may mean
building back
somewhere else



Alongside images of the Opera House and Bondi Beach, Kings Cross is one of the most internationally recognised places in Australia – but for all its colourful history and naughty reputation, it's been knocked off kilter. This report set out a new vision for the Cross, one which builds on its rich history but also seeks to avoid some of the mistakes of the past.



Cities such as London, New York and Paris are leading the way, transforming their streets and public spaces to make cycling a convenient option for everyday trips and for everyone. This report presents a clear plan for how to create a comprehensive, safe cycling network in Sydney, a network with direct links connecting Sydneysiders to where they want to go.



At the beginning of Sydney's second lockdown, the Committee canvassed members, academics and people in Government to create this set of priorities for surviving lockdown, getting everyone vaccinated, reopening to the world and powering Sydney's economy back.

Submission:
NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into raising Warragamba Dam



These actions will help Sydney play its part in combating climate change, and provide benefits to our communities, economy and environment – from improved air quality to lower household bills and more resilient energy grids.

May 21

Jun 21

Jul 21

Aug 21

Sep 21

Oct 21

Statement:
Time to modernise the NSW approach to electric cars

Statement:
Lockdown 2.0 – same, but very different

Submission:
Standing Committee on Social Issues Inquiry into the NSW Heritage Act 1977

Statement:
NSW's big budget turnaround – our analysis

Statement:
NSW Budget – A golden opportunity to set us up for the long term

Statement:
Warragamba Dam- To raise or not to raise

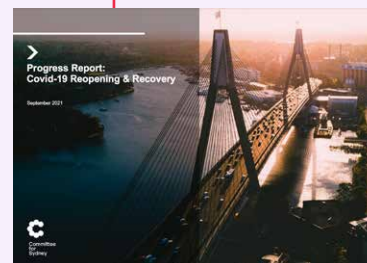
Statement:
This is the race of our lives

Statement:
We need to change our thinking about risk

Statement:
The next transformative project: fast rail to Newcastle

Submission:
White Paper – Parklands for People

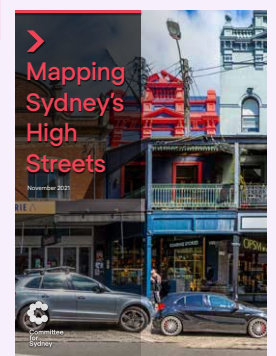
Statement:
Covid19 – How did we get here and what is the path out



A month into lockdown, this progress report on our recommendations marked how much we had achieved as a city and highlighted what remained to be done.

Statement:
Vaccine passports will open the way to freedom

This report identifies Sydney's high streets, bringing them together and putting them on a single map for the first time. It is a research project and a labour of love that we hope people will add to and improve over time. With a database of the key physical characteristics of each street, we have suggested ratings and distilled observations of what makes some of Sydney's high streets great.



Events and communication



The Hon. Dominic Perrottet, then NSW Treasurer, keynote at Sydney Summit 2021.

The Committee's events in 2021 featured political, business, community and government leaders, globally renowned urbanists, influential researchers and others, and attracted strong member participation and media coverage – you can watch all on the Committee's YouTube channel.

The refreshed program includes two major annual events and two regular series:

- Sydney Summit, a half-day leadership conference, which included a keynote from then Treasurer, the Hon. Dominic Perrottet MP
- Sydney Awards, a major new awards program celebrating the people who make Sydney the best it can be
- CFS Global, an international speaker series (based on the CFS Live program started in 2020)
- Member briefings, a new series of briefing events taking a deep dive into key challenges for Sydney (restructured from the quarterly taskforces).

Complementing these programs, the Committee hosts targeted boardroom events, workshops and roundtables that underpin research and advocacy work.



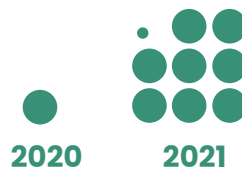
Communication

The Committee's communication program is focused on building understanding and support for the ideas that will move Sydney forward. There was strong growth on media and social channels, with refreshed brand guidelines complemented by a renewed design approach for key reports and other publications.

An overhauled digital program includes a fully rebuilt website, and new email products including The Sydneysider – a new fortnightly email newsletter on key insights for Sydney urbanists.

Media

926 unique media mentions



Social media

 **Twitter: 4,907 followers**



 **LinkedIn: 7,100 followers**



TOTAL EVENTS HELD 80

78 FREE FOR MEMBERS

2 TICKETED

IN PERSON EVENTS 29

NUMBER OF SPEAKERS 188

MEMBER BRIEFINGS (FORMERLY TASKFORCES) 18

EVENT REACH 10,515

WEBINARS 51



Partners and sponsors

Innovation Fund Partners

Innovation Fund Partners provide core financial support for the Committee's full annual research program. We are excited to work with our partners and thank them for their leadership in this space.

McKinsey
& Company

dexus

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working world

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Sydney
WATER

 URBIS

Event hosts

Allens, Arcadis, Corrs, Deloitte, ICC Sydney, PwC, Transport for NSW, University of Sydney, University of Technology, Westmead Institute of Medical Research, Office of the 24 Hour Economy Commissioner



Members

Members are essential to the Committee's output and impact.

We are funded by a group of Sydney's leading organisations spanning industry, government, education and cultural institutions. Our differences are our strength, our passion for Sydney is our driving force.

We are proud to represent our 150 members and work with them to develop innovative ideas and solutions to make our city the best place in the world to live, work and play. These organisations represent more than 240,000 jobs in NSW and 630,000 jobs in Australia.

Overwhelmingly, their number one reason for supporting the Committee to the ability to shape the future of Sydney.

2021 performance feedback

Quality of research:

90% rated this as strong or very strong

Quality of events and briefing program:

89% rated this as strong or very strong

Usefulness as a source of information for you:

80% rated this as strong or very strong

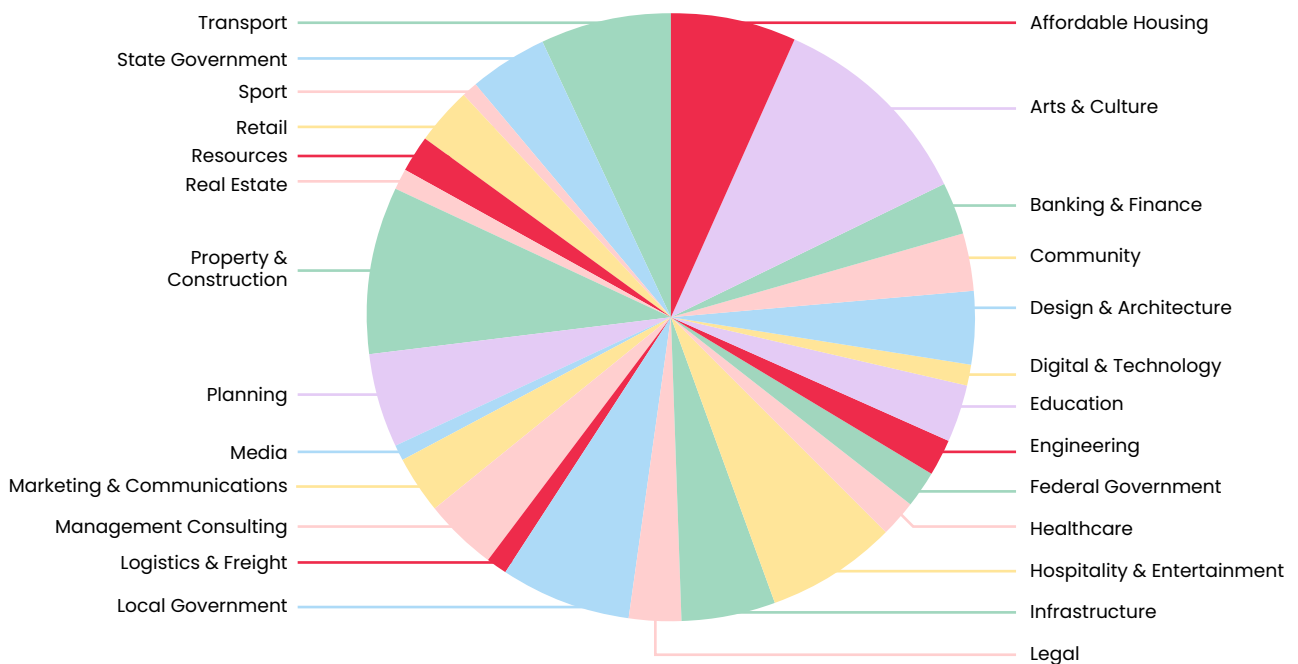
Ability to influence debate and media discussion:

80% rated this as strong or very strong

Ability to influence government:

81% rated this as strong or very strong

Membership by industry



Members

Accenture
Accor
AECOM
AFL NSW and ACT
Airbnb
Allens
Aqualand
Arcadis
Architectus
Art Gallery of NSW
Arup
Aurecon
Ausgrid
Australian Museum
Australian National Maritime Museum
Australian Turf Club
Bangarra Dance Theatre
BaptistCare
BESydney
Blacktown City Council
BlueCHP
Bridge Housing
Brookfield Australia Investments Limited
BVN
Campbelltown City Council
Captain Cook Cruises
Carnival
Celestino
Charter Hall
City of Canterbury Bankstown
City of Parramatta
City of Sydney
City West Housing
Cochlear
Coles
Community Housing Ltd.
Compass Housing Services
Corrs Chambers Westgarth

Cox Architecture
Create NSW
Crown Resorts
CSIRO
Deloitte
Destination NSW
DEXUS
Endeavour Energy
Ethos Urban
Evolve Housing
EY
Five at Heart
Georges River Council
Gilbert + Tobin
GML Heritage
GoGet
GPT Group
Grimshaw Architects
HASSELL
Hatch RobertsDay
Hoyne
Hume Community Housing Association
Inner West Council
Intelmatic
International Convention Centre Sydney
Investa Office Management
Ipsos Australia
ISPT Pty Ltd/WSQ Retail
Jacobs
Jawun
JLL
John Holland Group
Keolis Downer
Kinesis
KPMG
Laing O'Rourke
Landcom
La Perouse Aboriginal Alliance



| | |
|--|---|
| Lendlease Development | Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils |
| Link Housing | St George Community Housing |
| Liverpool City Council | Stockland |
| Luna Park Sydney | Sydney Airport |
| Macquarie Group | Sydney Community Foundation |
| Macquarie Park and North Ryde Innovation District | Sydney Dance Company |
| Mastercard | Sydney Festival |
| McKinsey & Company | Sydney Fish Market |
| Mecone | Sydney Fringe |
| MinterEllison | Sydney Harbour Federation Trust |
| Mirvac | Sydney Living Museums |
| MJH Group | Sydney Local Health District |
| Monogram Partners | Sydney Opera House |
| Mott MacDonald | Sydney Symphony Orchestra |
| Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences | Sydney Theatre Company |
| Museum of Contemporary Art | Sydney Water |
| NAB | Sydney Writers' Festival |
| NBN Co | Thales |
| News Corp Australia | The Star Entertainment Group |
| Night Time Industry Association | The University of Sydney |
| NRT Group | Tract |
| NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment | Transdev |
| NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet | Transport for NSW |
| NSW Land and Housing Corporation | Tribal Warrior |
| NSW Ports | Uber |
| Origin Energy | University of New South Wales |
| PAYCE Consolidated | University of Sydney |
| Plenary Group | University of Technology, Sydney (UTS) |
| Port Authority of NSW | University of Wollongong |
| Poulos Brothers | Urbis |
| PwC | Veolia |
| Royal Botanic Gardens Trust | Western Sydney Airport |
| RPS Group | Western Sydney University |
| Sculpture by the Sea | Westpac |
| SEC Newgate Australia | Willoughby City Council |
| SGS Economics & Planning | Woolworths |
| SMEC | WSP Australia |
| South Western Sydney Local Health District | WT Partnership |

Executive Committee

Michael Rose AM,
Chair

Sue Horlin,
Deputy Chair
Managing Partner Sydney, PwC

Virginia Briggs
CEO and Managing Partner,
MinterEllison

Professor Attila Brungs
Vice-Chancellor & President,
University of Technology Sydney

Lisa Chung AM

Doug Ferguson
Chair NSW and Head of Asia and International
Markets, KPMG

Susan Ferrier
Group Executive People and Culture, NAB

Kevin George
Executive General Manager Office, Dexus

Nicholas Gray
Managing Director, The Australian, NSW & Prestige,
News Corp Australia

Simon Kennedy
Partner, McKinsey

Lyn Lewis-Smith
CEO, BESydney

Larry McGrath
Managing Director Rainhill and
Non-Executive Director John Holland Rail

James Rosenwax
Regional Managing Director, NSW and ACT,
AECOM

Sam Stevens
Executive General Manager Corporate Affairs,
Origin Energy

David Thodey AC

Gabrielle Trainor AO

Brian Tyson
Managing Partner, SEC Newgate Australia

Thank you to Executive Committee members who stepped down in 2021

- Martin Blake (Lead Partner, KPMG)
- Dorte Ekelund (Principal Advisor – Smart Cities, SMEC)
- Kate Jordan (General Counsel, Origin Energy)
- David Rolls (National Development Director – Property, Lendlease)
- Siobhan Toohill (Head of Group Sustainability & Community, Westpac).

If you are interested in learning more about the Committee, or joining as a member, please reach out to Hannah Jamieson, Director of Engagement and Development, at hannah@sydney.org.au

We'd love to talk.



Committee
for
Sydney

Keep in touch

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