

Minns Pushes Woollahra Station, 10,000 Dwellings Despite Fierce Local Opposition

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New South Wales Premier Chris Minns has unveiled plans to construct a new train station in Sydney's wealthy eastern suburbs and rezone surrounding land to accommodate 10,000 new dwellings, in a move already sparking community backlash.

The proposal revives the long-abandoned Woollahra ghost station, shelved in the 1970s after local opposition halted the project. Despite trains passing through the site for more

than 50 years, the station has never opened, leaving the area surrounded by multimillion-dollar mansions and tennis courts.

Minns, alongside Housing Minister Rose Jackson, argued the project would relieve pressure in Sydney's housing market while improving transport. "This new train station will allow us to deliver up to 10,000 new homes right here in the heart of Sydney, close to jobs, public transport, green space, and essential services," Minns said.

The announcement comes as New South Wales faces mounting housing shortages and affordability pressures. The rezoning will cover an 800-meter radius around Woollahra station. It could allow medium and high-density housing, with up to ten percent designated as affordable homes.

Critics argue the policy favors developers while doing little to ease affordability. New dwellings are expected to be largely luxury apartments, raising doubts about whether young Australians or lower-income families will benefit. Jackson promised a "dedicated portion" of affordable housing but offered no specific figure.

Woollahra Mayor Sarah Swan blasted the government's broader housing reforms as "lazy and ill-informed," signaling fierce local resistance. Residents in the eastern suburbs have historically fought development, and Minns admitted the decision "won't be met by universal happiness in the local community."

The Premier defended the move, insisting the alternative of leaving younger Australians locked out of Sydney's housing market is "intolerable."

Construction is expected to begin in 2027 and be completed in 2029. The government plans to offset costs through "value capture," taxing developers who profit from surging land values created by the new station.

Critics warn this approach could inflate property prices further while burdening homebuyers with hidden costs. The first wave of dwellings is not expected to come online until 10 to 15 years after the station's completion, raising questions about whether the plan addresses housing shortages soon enough.

Opposition Leader Mark Speakman owns property within the rezoning area, raising concerns about a potential conflict of interest.

While the Minns government frames the project as bold action to confront a housing crisis, opponents see it as risky social engineering that places the financial burden on taxpayers and future homebuyers, while rewarding developers and failing to guarantee meaningful affordability.

With construction nearly four years away and rezoning details still unsettled, the project has already become a flashpoint in New South Wales' housing debate, pitting government ambition against entrenched local opposition and economic reality.