

A city plan to please

Houses are for living in not pulling down

By Our Civic Reporter

NEARLY EVERY suburb bordering the City's commercial centre will be improved under schemes to raise living standards.

The schemes will ensure that the character of many of Sydney's oldest residential areas will be kept. Work now being started will restore houses rather than rebuild them.

This approach shows that civic and government authorities have sharply revised their thinking on the renewal of housing areas in the City.

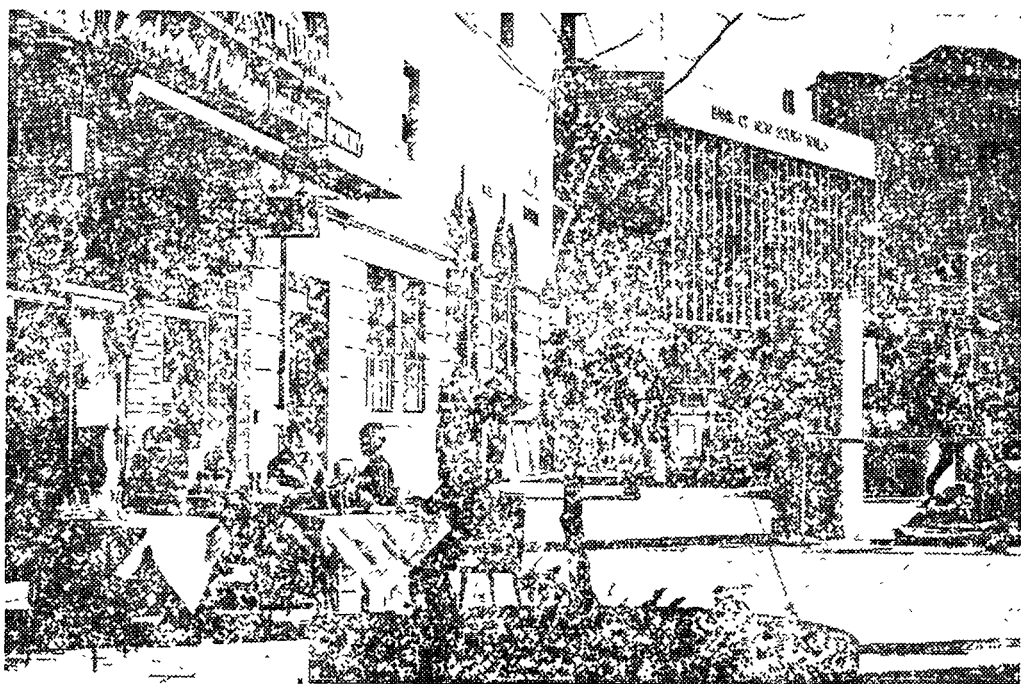
Residents are being asked to help in the planning, ending the old attitude of "we know what is best for you."

More than 4,000 houses, many built last century, will be restored or renovated. Most of the work will be done in the next 10 years.

The Australian Government will give the lead by spending \$8 million by 1979 on 710 houses and flats it owns in Glebe.

The Government also has pledged itself, working in conjunction with the City Council and the Housing Commission, to restore houses in Woolloomooloo and stop the encroachment of commercial activities.

The City Council is preparing plans, with the help of residents, for Surry Hills, the



A mini-plaza created at Darlinghurst Road and Roslyn Street, Kings Cross. Other areas are to be treated in the same way.

western half of The Rocks, Kings Cross, Darlinghurst, south Paddington and north Newtown.

The Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority is revising its plans for the commercial development in the eastern half of The Rocks, where Sydney's first settlers lived.

Residents are being asked to help to draw up plans which will ensure that many blue-collar workers can stay in the area.

The authority will now retain many existing houses which, although of no historic importance, the local residents did not want demolished.

The Federal Government paid \$17.5 million to the Glebe Administration Board, an arm of the Anglican Church, in May so that it could set the lead with its Glebe program.

Fewer than 12 of the houses on the 18.1 hectare property (47 acres) will have to be demolished. The rest will

be restored, renovated or simply repainted — depending on their condition.

Some will be given bathrooms and laundries — amenities which their builders 100 years ago did not consider necessary.

No existing tenants are likely to be rehoused during the program. They will continue to pay economical rents to their new landlord, the Government.

But when vacancies do occur, the Government hopes to encourage people on higher incomes to move in and rent a house and have the advantage of living within walking distance of the inner City.

The Government will also build new parks, close many of the weed-and-vermin infested lanes, and put more functional courtyards behind terrace buildings.

The final plans for Woolloomooloo, an area of 36 hectares (90 acres), are being prepared by the City Council, which with the State and

Federal Government owns much of the property in the suburb.

During the preparation of the plans to restore the existing terrace houses and rent them to people on low incomes, the 1,500 residents in the suburb were asked for their views.

Woolloomooloo contains more than 1,000 terrace houses, but many are now derelict or are used as workshops and offices.

Some authorities believe that about 6,000 people will be able to live in Woolloomooloo when it is restored.

The first release of Federal money for the scheme is expected before next year's Budget.

The Sydney City Council schemes, prepared largely at the direction of Alderman A. Briger, will rely on private enterprise to pay for the work.

People will be encouraged to restore existing houses in Surry Hills, north Newtown, south Paddington, Ultimo, Chippendale and the western half of The Rocks under new zonings the council has recommended.

The plans were adopted by the council only after first getting approval from a majority of residents. In all cases, stringent limits were placed on the height and design of new buildings.

Alderman Briger says he would not like the inner suburbs to become the home of "trendies."

He believes that some people with "fat bankrolls" are necessary to any suburb, but says it is vital that workers continue to be a big proportion of inner City residents. These people were needed in public transport, shops and offices and to maintain public facilities.

Alderman Briger says that authorities such as the Housing Commission should direct some of their activities to buying existing houses and re-letting them to people on lower incomes.



Cottages in Mt Vernon Street, Glebe, part of the 18.1 hectares bought by the Federal Government from the Church of England.