

SYDNEY  
**DOGS  
& CATS**  
HOME



## MAKE HOME HAPPEN

Case for support: Establishing a new home to lead best practices in responsibly reuniting, rehoming and rehabilitating animals in our care.



A black and white dog with its tongue out sits on the left, and a laughing baby in a striped shirt sits on the right, clapping and holding a tennis ball. The background is black.

## Before their forever home, there's Sydney Dogs & Cats Home

Since 1946, we've offered shelter, care and love to hundreds of thousands of lost, abandoned or neglected dogs and cats.

As Sydney's only community charity pound, we are the home of hope.

# FROM THE PRESIDENT

**Every year thousands of Sydneysiders contact Sydney Dogs & Cats Home (SDCH). Rising enquiries about our programs and services is not surprising with an estimated two-thirds of Australian households having a pet. An Animal Medicines Australia report suggests around 40% of households include at least one dog, followed by 27% of households owning a cat. Interest in future pet ownership – around 3.7 million non-pet owners – is particularly strong with about 7% of non-pet owning households considering getting a pet.**

Meanwhile research suggests that some 400,000 animals in need of homes end up in shelters and council pounds every year. Figures vary, but the Sydney Morning Herald has previously suggested about 250,000 dogs and cats are euthanised in Sydney and around Australia every year. We know overpopulation and capacity issues at community pounds such as Sydney Dogs & Cats Home and a lack of good homes are just a few of the issues which must be addressed. Local Governments across Sydney dedicate hundreds of hours to dealing with complaints about animals. This is also the experience of the RSPCA who have seen the amount of complaints and prosecutions by them increase in the six years to 2020 – to almost 74,000 (Annual Report 2019).

Investing in Sydney's animal welfare and management, rehoming initiatives, responsible pet ownership and community outreach programs makes financial sense. It is investment that is urgently needed. Sydney Dogs & Cats Home is best placed to meet this need, however is unable to achieve this in our current temporary facilities. Now is the time to move to a new site at Kurnell and prepare for the future.

The establishment of a new \$21.6 million Sydney Dogs & Cats Home at Kurnell is a unique opportunity without parallel. It is a chance to deliver a Sydney-specific need and provide a community pound that improves animal health and welfare, supports responsible pet ownership, expands community outreach programs and provides industry professionals and students training and education opportunities while improving outcomes for pets and people.

Sydney Dogs & Cats Home is a Sydney icon. This new home will quickly become a city treasure, attracting attention from Greater Sydney and professionals in the veterinary field. After almost 80 years it is time for a new home. This is a once-in-a-city opportunity for the NSW government, industry partners and philanthropists to join SDCH and build a facility which will achieve outstanding outcomes for animals in our care. A new home at Kurnell will be a place of best practice in animal welfare. Thanks to a recently secured long-term lease from the state government and DA approval, a new 11,043 square metre facility will deliver the best outcomes for thousands of animals in our care.

It will enable SDCH to make a greater Sydney-wide impact on the issues surrounding the number of lost, abandoned and neglected pets. A new facility will also enable SDCH to strengthen its existing partnerships with Sydney Councils and extend its service offering to others while also deepening relationships with non-profit service providers, industry and universities, resulting in an improved era of animal welfare.

Everyday we see firsthand the incredible impact that SDCH has on pets and people. We will continue our work to deliver for pets and their new families the best in adoption and veterinary services, under a mission to achieve zero euthanasia of all healthy and treatable cats and dogs. We also see the possibility of doing more in best practice education and training for students and industry professionals working in the veterinary field, led by our animal care team who are recognised for their high-quality work. For almost 80 years, Sydney Dogs & Cats Home has been part of the lives of thousands of Sydneysiders and their pets. The establishment of a new home at Kurnell is crucial, as we prepare for the next 80 years.



*Joanne Bermingham*

**Joanne Bermingham**  
SDCH, President



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Kurnell Campus, architectural concept



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since 1946, Sydney Dogs & Cats Home (SDCH) has responsibly reunited, rehomed and rehabilitated animals in our care. Today, we have grown to become Sydney's largest charity community pound – promoting the welfare of animals by providing the relief of sickness, suffering, distress and homelessness while engaging in community based services around the city that benefit both the animals in our care and many vulnerable groups of people in Sydney. We have an unmatched reputation and history of delivering animal welfare programs, veterinary services and community outreach as well as contributing to research and the professional education for people working in the veterinary fields.



Meet the needs of more lost, neglected and abandoned dogs and cats in Sydney

Increase the number of dogs and cats being adopted

Secure our future

Expand our Community Outreach Programs to help more vulnerable people

# SYDNEY DOGS & CATS HOME STRATEGIC INTENT

Sydney Dogs & Cats Home's current strategic objectives (2021-2025) are predicated on four objectives: promote animal welfare, achieve zero euthanasia of all treatable dogs and cats, engage in community based services and secure our future.

## 1. Promote Animal Welfare

Evidence suggests about two-thirds of Australian households have a pet. The impact of responsible pet ownership on Sydney's animal welfare will grow significantly in the years ahead. To prepare, SDCH has actively expanded its footprint to meet this increased need. We are currently supporting Sydney Councils, over 100 suburbs with a combined population in excess of 1 million Sydneysiders, from 2 sites. There are still areas of unmet need across Sydney and the new facility at Kurnell provides us with an opportunity to meet Council and community demand and better connect people to animal adoption, veterinary care and supporting services by:

- Delivering community relevant, responsive and embedded services
- Supporting Councils to deliver best practice animal welfare and management
- Enabling service delivery to more Sydney Councils
- Securing more industry partnerships, research opportunities and new program and service developments.

## 2. Getting to Zero Initiative

SDCH is committed to supporting the Getting to Zero initiative. This support sees us strive to rehome every healthy and treatable animal that comes through the doors of Sydney Dogs & Cats Home. SDCH do not place a time limit on any animal awaiting adoption. The new facility will increase our ability to support this initiative through increased kennel space for dogs and a larger cat pavilion - both will provide the ability to deliver therapy away from other animals, increasing their likelihood of responding positively to therapy. Critical to the success of the facility is its strategic location at Kurnell, where an increased footprint will support the Getting to Zero initiative.

## 3. Engage Community

Integration and community support are vital to the work and mission of SDCH. The community programs we deliver target aged and disability care, defence personnel, juvenile justice and youth mental health. Our operations are supported by more than 500 volunteers who give in excess of 13,000 hours of their time each year.

The new facility will increase our ability to expand existing community outreach programs through increased space to accommodate the necessary number of volunteers and program participants to increase the impact on vulnerable segments of our community.

## 4. Securing Our Future

SDCH's commitment to producing positive animal welfare outcomes and improved service offerings will ensure we remain relevant and responsive to Councils and the broader public. This will see us remain positioned for sustainable growth into the future. We will continue to strengthen our identity in the market by increasing awareness and recognition, improving how we operate and focusing on providing services where needed most. To do this SDCH will:

- Improve organisational performance, efficiency and viability
- Diversify revenue and funding streams
- Leverage assets and investments for maximum return and re-investment
- Grow recognition, awareness and engagement
- Increase services marketing to Council's to build our profile
- Build a new purpose built facility to house future operations.

## Establishing a new Sydney Dogs & Cats Home

As part of SDCH's strategic vision, we are excited to announce the development of a new \$21.6 million purpose-built facility at Kurnell. This state-of-the-art centre will serve as the new home for our iconic organisation, providing a space to responsibly reunite, rehome, and rehabilitate animals in our care. It will also allow us to offer the highest level of service to more Sydneysiders than ever before in our nearly 80-year history.

The new facility will enable SDCH to continue delivering Sydney with a positive pound solution for companion animals, ensuring the best possible outcomes for both pets and people. Our commitment to building a nation-leading facility will support best practices in animal management, responsible reuniting and rehoming of homeless pets, and the delivery of outreach programs to vulnerable community members. This facility will also enable us to expand our services into advocacy, research, and education initiatives.

Designed to be a hub of best practices, the new facility will support student and industry learning, fostering partnerships and collaborations with other Sydney-based organisations in the animal welfare and veterinary fields. Our planned expansion will promote animal welfare, achieve zero euthanasia of all treatable cats and dogs, engage in community-based services, and secure our future. The 20,890 square meter site will house 11,043 square meters of shelter spaces, kennels, outdoor exercise areas, therapy and training spaces, a veterinary clinic, with the ability to add a research and community education centre.

Moreover, the new facility will offer veterinary students from various Sydney universities practical experiences in veterinary science, medicine, and animal welfare. It will attract inter-state visits and exchanges between animal welfare experts and academics, enhancing Sydney's reputation as a leader in animal welfare and management.

For SDCH, the relocation to Kurnell is not just an operational necessity but a tremendous opportunity to expand our service offerings to more Sydney councils, increase annual animal intake, contribute to industry initiatives such as Getting to Zero, and leverage our nearly 80 years of history and experience. The new home will set new benchmarks in animal management, ultimately leading to better quality outcomes for pets and people.

The establishment of a new facility for Sydney Dogs & Cats Home is a unique opportunity for the city, unparalleled in its potential to highlight Sydney as the nation's leading city in animal welfare, responsible pet ownership, animal management, and industry education and training. This new home will quickly become a Sydney icon, attracting attention from inter-state and even international professionals in the fields of veterinary science and animal welfare and management.

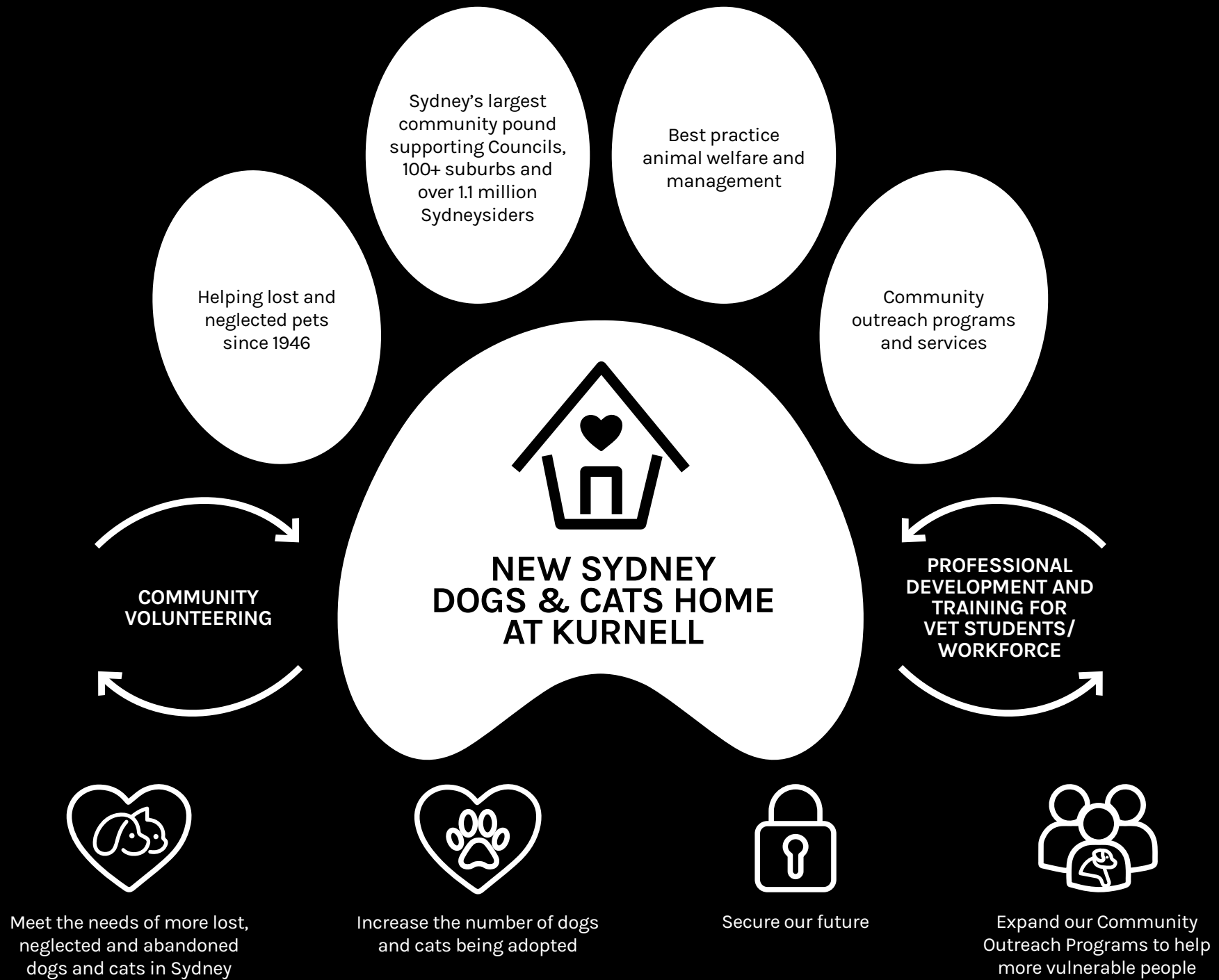
It is a once-in-a-generation opportunity for the state government, industry partners, and philanthropists to join SDCH in building a centre that will achieve outstanding outcomes for pets, people, and the professionals who support them.

When completed, the new Sydney Dogs & Cats Home will:

- Support over 3,000 animals every year
- Grow adoptions to over 2,000 annually
- Reunite 1,000 pets with their families annually
- Increase foster care placements to over 800 pets in care while awaiting adoption each year
- Expand service offerings to cover more than 100 suburbs and over 1.1 million Sydneysiders
- Enhance Sydney's largest animal management program
- Extend community outreach programs to reach more vulnerable Sydneysiders, including aged care and other community providers, with mental health support, including youth mental support and criminal justice
- Attract students studying veterinary sciences and industry professionals with research, professional development, training, and education opportunities.

In the coming years, SDCH will deepen its partnerships with Sydney councils, state government, non-profit service providers, industry, and universities, ushering in a new era of animal management and service provision for lost, neglected, and abandoned animals.



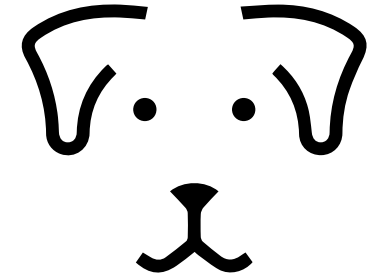


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A new facility at Kurnell will ensure SDCH is at the heart of Sydney’s animal management of lost, neglected and abandoned animals for decades to come. It will enable the organisation to promote pet ownership while bringing together leading animal welfare professionals in veterinary field, to continue improving professional education and the quality of service delivery in this field.

DR LAURA TAYLOR  
HEAD OF ANIMAL CARE  
SYDNEY DOGS & CATS HOME

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## Investing in Animal Welfare, Rehoming, and Community Outreach: The Case for Support

As of 2024, approximately 70% of Australian households have a pet ([Hepper](#)). Dogs remain the most popular pets, with nearly half of Australian households owning at least one dog (48%), followed by cats in a third of households (33%).

Pet ownership has seen significant growth during the pandemic, with a notable increase in both the number of pets and the expenditure on pet-related services. Australians spend an estimated A\$33.2 billion annually on their pets, with food being the largest expense (51%), followed by veterinary services (14%) ([PetfoodIndustry](#)).

The current trends reflect the deep bond Australians have with their pets, emphasizing the importance of investing in animal welfare programs, responsible pet ownership, and rehoming initiatives to support the well-being of pets and their owners

Almost 90% of pet owners believe their pets have a profoundly positive impact on their lives. Animal Medicines Australia’s findings indicate that most pet owners view their pets as close companions or beloved family members. Promoting pet ownership and responsible pet ownership among Sydneysiders is effectively promoting better mental health. The economic impact of poor mental health is substantial, affecting workplace productivity and increasing healthcare and aged care costs. Investing in animal welfare initiatives, such as therapy programs that enhance the temperament of abandoned and neglected dogs and cats, increases their chances of being adopted and rehomed.

Without such investments, treatable dogs and cats would be housed with untreatable animals, reducing their rehoming prospects and placing additional burdens on animal management providers. Prior to COVID-19, interest in future pet ownership among the 3.7 million non-pet owners in Australia was already significant, with about 7% of non-pet owning households considering acquiring a pet. Anecdotal evidence suggests that interest in pet ownership has grown during the pandemic.

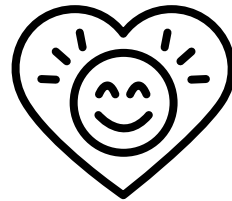
Supporting programs that promote responsible pet ownership is crucial to mitigating the future risk of an increase in lost, neglected, or abandoned animals in Sydney. Without immediate investment in a new facility, the Sydney Dogs & Cats Home will face capacity constraints in the medium to long term, forcing councils to seek alternative solutions for their animal management needs.



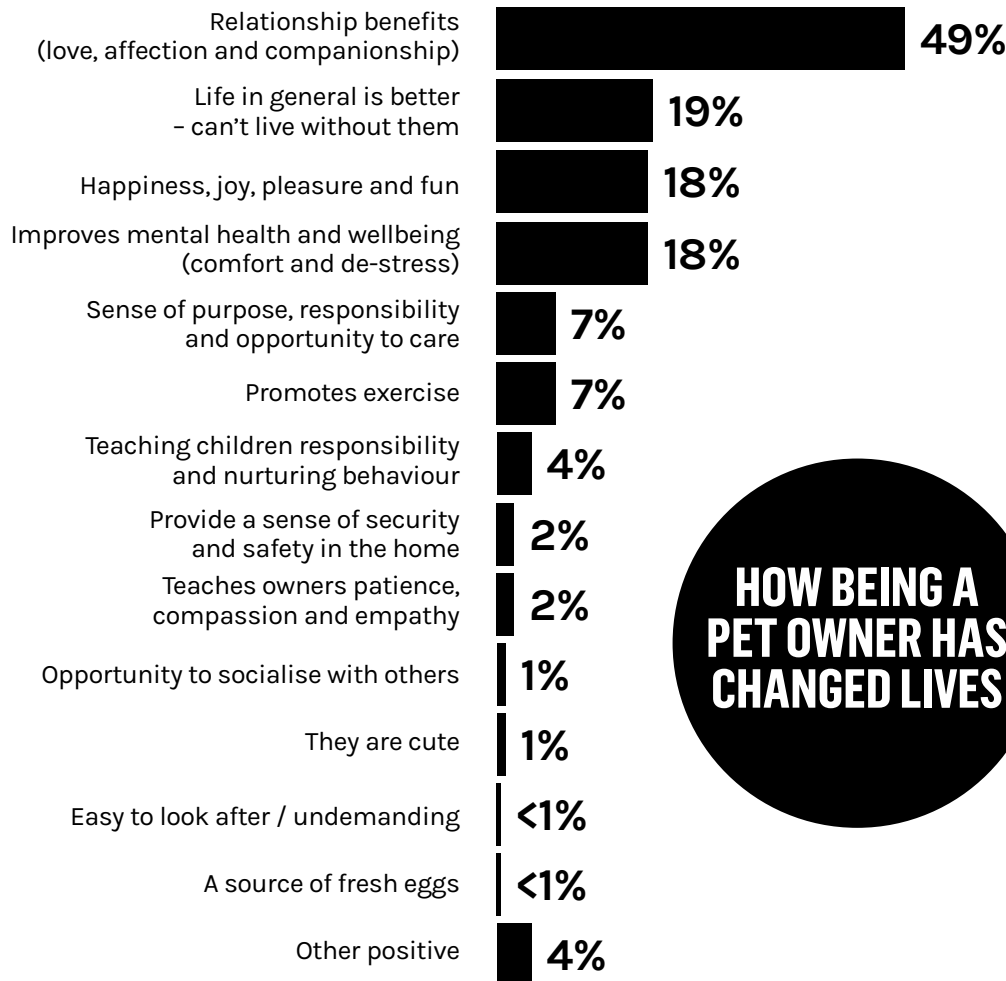
49%



19%



18%



**HOW BEING A PET OWNER HAS CHANGED LIVES**

### Alignment with policy

Sydney Dogs & Cats Home is a direct supplier of animal welfare and management services for Sydney councils covering more than 100 suburbs and over 1.1 million Sydneysiders. In addition to direct support, SDCH also enables these councils to meet their statutory reporting requirements. Members of the SDCH animal care team and senior executives sit on industry advisory boards and committees and hold strong ties and working relationships within the veterinary field. Our services and programs align to, and support government policy and legislation objectives at both local and state levels, particularly in:

- Animal Welfare, Animal Health including Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act
  - Companion Animals Act, Impounding Act, NSW Code of Practice No.5, POCTAA, Veterinary Practice Act
- Environmental Policy
- Supporting NSW Animal Welfare Action Plan
- Local Government Act
- NSW Health including aged care and youth mental health
- Community Services.

### Partnering with Sydney's Councils

The risk of increasing numbers of stray, feral and abandoned dogs and cats poses substantial challenges for many of Sydney's Councils. Continuing to work together makes sense as Council intakes account for the highest proportion of SDCH animal admissions.

We know the cost surrounding the current and future management of these animals has become increasingly contentious with euthanasia being employed as a population control strategy. In addition, we know that dogs and cats enter pounds like Sydney Dogs & Cats Home for a variety of other reasons such as changes in owner, financial circumstances, issues around "pet-friendly" accommodation or a change in human relationships.

Australia faces significant challenges related to animal overpopulation, shelter capacity issues, and a shortage of good homes for pets. Shelters like SDCH, which do not impose time limits on rehoming animals, are rare and invaluable.

According to the RSPCA's 2019 Annual Statistical Report, complaints and prosecutions have risen to nearly 74,000 over six years. Additionally, approximately 400,000 animals end up in shelters and council pounds annually. Many open-admission shelters, facing overwhelming numbers, are forced to euthanize animals to make space for new arrivals.

Over the last seven years leading to 2024, thousands of lost, neglected, or abandoned animals have been received by SDCH. During this period, the average length of stay has increased from 24 days to 60 days, and the cost per animal per day has risen from \$40 to nearly \$100. With the new facility at Kurnell, we project over 3,000 animals will be presented to SDCH by its third year of operation.

Collaborating with councils to enhance animal welfare and management outcomes will result in significant cost savings. Given that council intakes constitute the highest proportion of SDCH animal admissions, a joint approach will reduce operational costs and euthanasia rates. The municipal cost of impounding, rehoming, and euthanizing dogs ranges from \$250 to over \$1,000 per dog, with higher costs when using external pound services. Enhancing best practices in animal management with councils will decrease intake numbers and operational expenses.

Additionally, increasing the proportion of reclaimed animals is crucial. A recent survey indicated that only 43% of animal intakes in NSW are rehomed, with the highest euthanasia rates in the state at 26% of intakes and 46% of unclaimed admissions. Nationally, animal welfare agencies account for 38% of admissions, and rescue groups for 12%, primarily funded by approximately \$260 million in public donations annually. Savings from reduced dog admissions could be redirected to other council programs.

No other pound in Sydney offers the comprehensive animal welfare and management services provided by SDCH, Sydney's only community charity pound. As a stand-alone supplier to councils, SDCH is an invaluable community asset deserving cornerstone financial support and recognition as a Sydney icon.

The opportunity to build a new, larger centre at Kurnell is pivotal. This expansion will enhance service delivery to Sydney councils, increase animal intake, expand community outreach programs, and foster greater industry partnerships. With \$1.6 million already raised from supporters and \$12 million in cornerstone funding from the NSW Government, we urgently need to raise an additional \$8 million from our dedicated community of animal welfare supporters to complete this project. Your support is crucial in making this vision a reality.

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**I have always had immense respect for Sydney Dogs & Cats Home. It's the city's community pound. I have been impressed by the positive impact they have had on the lives of thousands of lost, neglected and abandoned pets and their work in the community.**

**ADAM GOODES AO  
PATRON  
SYDNEY DOGS & CATS HOME**

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# WITHOUT A NEW SYDNEY DOGS & CATS HOME THE CITY WILL FACE AN INCREASING PROBLEM

- Thousands of animals each year placing demand on other shelters & pounds, who are already at capacity
- Reduced number of animals re-united with their owners when lost
- Lack of preventative programs to support responsible pet ownership and animal management
- Increase of preventable euthanasia





# WHAT IF SYDNEY DOGS & CATS HOME WAS GONE?

**Every year, around 400,000 animals end up in community shelters across Australia, with approximately 250,000 dogs and cats being euthanised (SMH article, 2011).**

Every year, around 400,000 animals end up in community shelters across Australia, with approximately 250,000 dogs and cats being euthanised (SMH article, 2011). A significant percentage of these cases are likely occurring in Sydney, the country's most populous city. As the largest community charity pound in Sydney, servicing over 100 suburbs and approximately 1.1 million Sydneysiders, Sydney Dogs & Cats Home plays a crucial role in the city's animal welfare and management. Without SDCH, a vital part of this system would be lost.

**"Our tipping point has already arrived," warned Mr Coleman. "If you remove the Sydney Dogs & Cats Home from the equation, it is no exaggeration to say we would go into meltdown."**

**STEVE COLEMAN  
CEO, RSPCA**



Each year, SDCH cares for thousands of lost, neglected, and abandoned dogs and cats who would otherwise struggle to find food, shelter, and safety. The absence of SDCH would force councils to confront severe capacity constraints in pounds, likely increasing the reliance on euthanasia as a population control method.

Without a new facility at Kurnell, SDCH would be reduced to an administrative re-homing organisation, exacerbating existing capacity issues at other community pounds.

Municipal council intakes account for the majority of national admissions to community pounds and shelters. In New South Wales, the rehoming rate for animals is just 43%, with 26% of animals euthanised and 46% of unclaimed admissions euthanised. SDCH has worked diligently to develop strategic partnerships with councils to promote responsible pet ownership and reduce the number of stray animals through educational and community service programs, including de-sexing and preventative animal management initiatives.

The loss of SDCH would negatively impact both animals and people. Every year, SDCH rehomes thousands of dogs and cats, contributing to health cost savings for the community. Research shows that pet ownership leads to fewer doctors' visits and reduced use of medications for conditions such

as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, sleeping difficulties, and heart problems. In 1999, these health savings were estimated at over \$1.8 billion, or 5% of Australia's total health expenditure. Additionally, SDCH's community outreach programs provide critical support to vulnerable people in Sydney.

Currently, no other pound in Sydney offers the comprehensive animal welfare and management services that SDCH provides. As an unparalleled community asset, SDCH deserves cornerstone financial support. The opportunity to build a new and larger facility at Kurnell, combined with expanded service delivery to Sydney councils, increased animal intake, expanded community outreach programs, and greater industry partnerships, is of immense significance to the city.

With \$1.6 million already raised from supporters and \$12 million in cornerstone funding from the NSW Government, we urgently need to raise an additional \$8 million from our committed community of animal welfare supporters to complete this project. Your support is crucial in making this vision a reality.

# MEET MILO

**When Milo was brought in by a council ranger at only 10-weeks-old, he was terrified. He would hide behind bowls and boxes when approached and would completely freeze when handled.**

After health checks, Milo was sent straight into foster care with our Reception Team Leader Kylie to help minimise stress. Kylie quickly noticed he would come out of his shell when he heard her other cat vocalise. Milo would even talk back! "He started purring when he saw my cat," Kylie said. "We persevered with my cat who didn't really like him, but whenever he walked into the room, Milo came forward and was a different kitten. He would eat in front of me, give slow blinks and reach his paw out to touch my cat."



Shortly after Milo went into foster care, a kitten named Roro arrived at the Home. Roro was playful and confident – a perfect influence for Milo. So Milo and Roro were introduced and sent into a foster home with Karin, one of our experienced carers. Karin was a perfect fit, as she already has a laidback, confident cat named Mia, who she adopted from the Home a year prior.

For the first two weeks, Milo seemed a bit confused about the concept of toys and playtime. But with Roro and Mia there to show him the ropes, he's come to love batting around his jingle balls. After over two months in foster care, Milo transformed from a scaredy-cat who was terrified of people to a young man who enjoys being picked up and held. Most of all, he loves playing with his foster sibling Roro. Milo and Roro went up for adoption as a bonded pair and found the perfect home! They were adopted on 19 April by one of our long-term foster carers who is studying to be a vet. Milo and Roro are the family's second and third cats from the Home, having adopted from us 11 years ago. Given their experience and knowledge of cat health and behaviour, they're a fantastic match!

With the negative impact of animal welfare numbers showing no signs of reducing, no one community pound, no one animal welfare provider, can address the needs of Sydney's lost, neglected and abandoned animals and the professionals who support them without collaboration. SDCH's current location is not ideal when trying to collaborate with other partners in the sector.



For almost 80 years SDCH has been a trusted and vital part of the lives of thousands of pets and people in this city. In order to prepare for the next 80 years, we have secured a new site thanks to the state government. However, the new site requires the construction of a new facility, a new home, to create a high quality animal welfare environment that supports high quality animal management that meet the needs of Sydney's lost, neglected and abandoned dogs and cats.

# WE HAVE A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE ANIMAL WELFARE

A new home at Kurnell will showcase Sydney as a leader in animal welfare.



# SYDNEY NEEDS A NEW DOGS & CATS HOME

**SDCH is committed to addressing the rising animal welfare needs of Sydney's lost, neglected and abandoned pets, with a readiness to provide specialist animal welfare services to more animals, mostly dogs and cats, than ever before. The establishment of a new home at Kurnell is vital to our mission to responsibly reunite, rehome and rehabilitate companion animals in our care, while providing the highest level of service to the wider community.**

The new facility will enable us to expand our animal care programs, veterinary services and community outreach programs. By year 3 a new facility, at 80% capacity, will meet the needs of about 3,500 mostly dogs and cats every year. A new home will ensure we can expand our service reach more efficiently and effectively to deliver improved animal welfare outcomes for more of Sydney through state-of-the-art facilities, a high quality professionally trained animal care team and the latest technology.

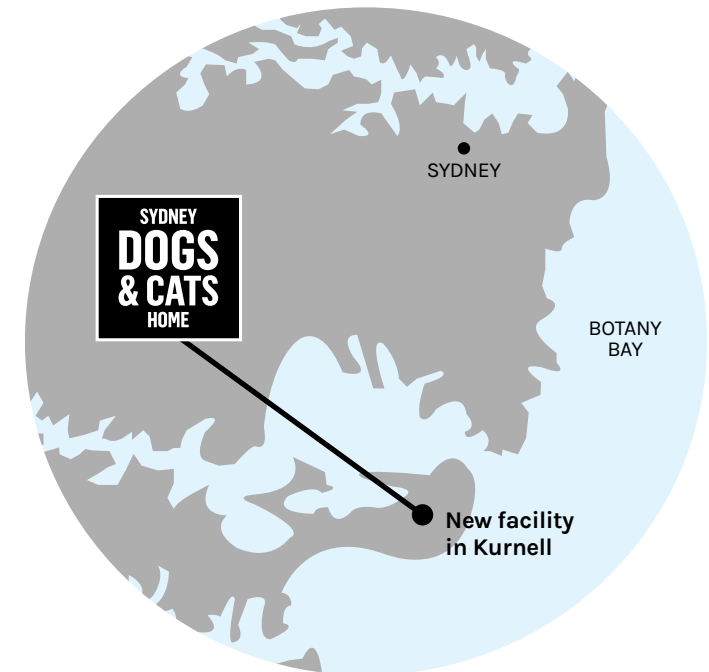
Relocating to Kurnell in Sydney's South and establishing a new home is vital to the future operation of our organisation. It will underpin a new era of animal welfare service provision for Sydney's pets and people and the professionals who support them.

## Kurnell in Sydney's South – A prime location

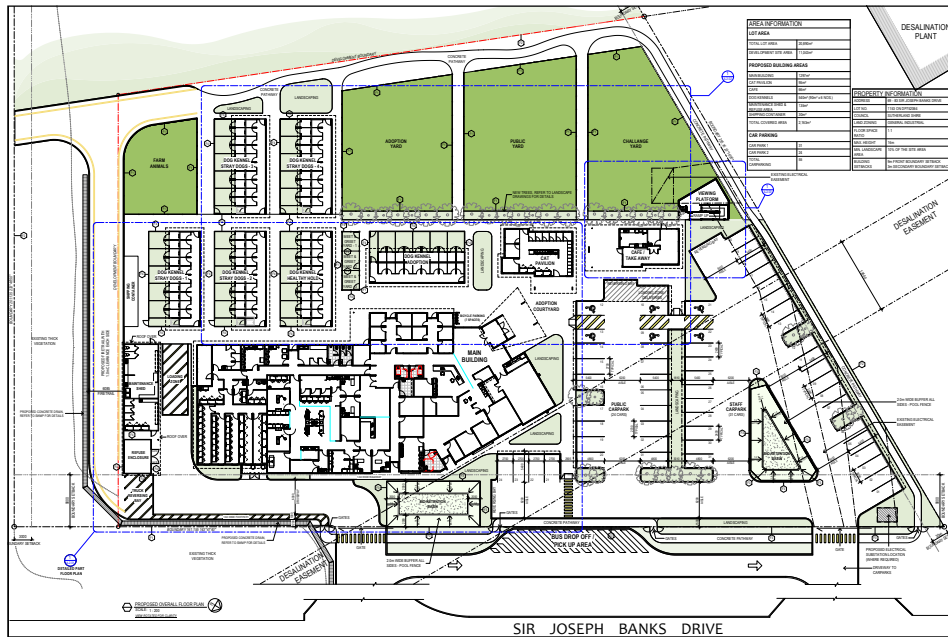
The new facility will be located in Sydney's South within the Sutherland Shire. The approved development plan provides for rehabilitation of a brownfield site (former brickworks) while maintaining a large portion of the site as a designated conservation area. More specifically, the new facility is adjacent to the desalination plant, bordered by natural sand dunes and well-established light industrial and residential developments.

It sits within close proximity of populated suburbs including Cronulla, Taren Point and Caringbah. This will enable SDCH to engage a large local community about the organisation, including volunteering and foster care opportunities. The area is also home to a range of schools, aged care providers and other non-profit organisations which will be engaged by SDCH to participate in our community outreach programs. The new facility will occupy a site significant to Aboriginal artifacts and heritage. The design of the facility will strive to honour these items and make the most of the great potential of the site and to appropriately integrate with it.

The new Sydney Dogs & Cats Home will be impressive, readily identifiable and clearly responding to and supporting its purpose. The quality of the architectural response will reside in the intelligent and aesthetic solutions it provides for the various functional requirements of SDCH's



animal welfare focus and in the creative means by which it makes the most of its configuration, and position on the site. The new Sydney Dogs & Cats Home will serve a diverse range of pets and people. This will focus on the primary client base of lost, neglected and abandoned pets, mostly dogs and cats. However, the facility will also host donors, volunteers, staff, students and visitors who will come to the new facility seeking pet adoption, enrolling in our foster care program, volunteering with our animal welfare team, industry training and professional development, veterinary science research and meetings. Direct positioning in Kurnell offers the potential for the services offered by SDCH to more local government councils to expand and make a greater impact on animal welfare and management allowing services to be extended throughout Sydney from a contemporary and high-profile head office.



## Features of the new Sydney Dogs & Cats Home

A new Sydney Dogs & Cats Home will sit on 11,043 square metres - nearly 3 x bigger than our current home. This substantial increase in footprint will support more efficiency and efficacy of SDCH's animal welfare programs and services and enable extension of veterinary and community outreach services to reach more pets and people in Sydney.

### Features of the new facility will include:

- Pet reclaim and adoption building
- Best practise dog kennels and cat condos
- Veterinary Clinic & equipment to support Shelter & community vet needs
- Multi-disciplinary spaces for animal therapy and rehabilitation
- Configurable workspaces
- Outdoor exercise and therapy yards
- Meet & Greet yards
- Accessible parking
- Both onsite and outreach community programs





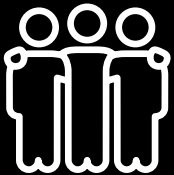
# DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The design philosophy revolves around key vision statements for a new Sydney Dogs & Cats Home.



## SENSORY

Creating a tactile, tailored and therapeutic space such as pastel colouring that reduces animal stress in kennel environments - the spaces are contemporary and incorporate technology.



## NETWORKED

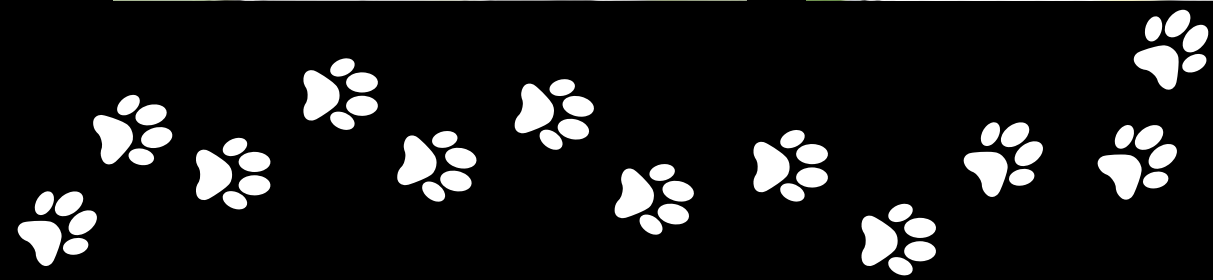
An environment that is interconnected, collaborative and community-oriented - the space as a place which different groups can come together and there is connection between function, animals, people and space.



## SENSE OF PURPOSE

A space where SDCH's purpose and culture can be incorporated - expressing the organisation's distinct identity through design solutions.





# DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS



**The new Sydney Dogs & Cats Home should serve as an exemplar of animal care, professionalism, and public engagement. It should cater to the diverse needs of its users, be adaptable for various purposes, and facilitate the efficient execution of numerous business processes and activities.**

Animals, primarily dogs and cats, brought to the new facility should experience minimal stress, embracing our Fear Free Shelter ethos. This will help shift their disposition from timid and stressed to calm and confident, enhancing the success of reuniting, rehoming, and rehabilitating animals in our care. While providing specialised services for lost, neglected, and abandoned animals, the new facility should not evoke stress but instead offer a comfortable and safe environment. The facility should be perceived as safe and friendly by pets, the public, visitors, and employees. The design should enable animals to orient themselves easily, interact with other animals and the animal care team, and move comfortably and efficiently between all areas.

The new Sydney Dogs & Cats Home should set a practical example for the animal welfare sector and the wider community of best practices and how they can be adopted and integrated into facilities that meet the needs of the veterinary profession and the general public. The new building, including outdoor kennels and exercise areas, should facilitate and support therapy practices, rehabilitation, human

interaction with pet therapy, adoption programmes, and the socialisation of animals in our care. It should also support training and education opportunities for industry professionals and veterinary students.

Navigation and ease of orientation through the site will be critical. The positioning of circulation and connective elements (foyer, intersections, passages, windows to improve sightlines to outdoor kennels and exercise yards, etc.) should adhere to best practices and be sufficiently coherent to enable easy orientation. The building and outdoor areas should be conceived as one interconnected, harmonious place. In addition to their varied purposes, the functional areas differ by the type of users they serve: animals, particularly dogs and cats, children and families, visitors, and employees. These differences will require individual design treatments while creating an inclusive environment with a common and consistent identity. The spaces for veterinary clinic work, therapy, rehabilitation, and adoption services will connect to public facilities.

The outdoor uncovered areas should provide an environment conducive to physical activities. It is vital that animals in therapy have unhindered access to a secure, shaded and unshaded external environment, allowing them to breathe fresh air, hear the wind, smell flora and fauna, and feel the sun and rain. These sensory experiences will form a critical part of the animals' rehabilitation and housing experience. The design of the outdoor areas should allow each dog and cat the freedom to play and explore securely and at their own pace.

The outdoor component of the new facility helps initiate the development of three essential and required skills supporting rehoming:

- Motor and physical skills, which are crucial for fitness and health.
- Social skills essential for preparing the animal for rehoming with a family.
- Social skills necessary for the animal's participation and effectiveness in community outreach programmes.

The new facility will prioritise principles of sustainable (green) design, incorporating features such as solar energy, rainwater harvesting, and natural ventilation. These elements will ensure the facility maximises energy efficiency, minimises demand, and recovers energy savings from lighting, air-conditioning, ventilation, and maintenance.

Additionally, the design will consider the preservation of Aboriginal artefacts and heritage items, minimising harm to perishable natural resources, and maintaining environmental quality. The facility will utilise recycled water and environmentally friendly and recycled materials, combining traditional building methods with innovative technologies for green buildings.

The orientation of the building, along with factors such as sun path, breeze, shade, natural sounds, and connections to the external landscape, will be optimised to create the best possible environment at our new home.





### Key features of this design:

We are dedicated to incorporating design elements that not only promote best practice animal welfare but also exceed compliance requirements wherever possible.

The building services have been, and will continue to be, designed to comply with the requirements of the Building Code of Australia (BCA) and the relevant Australian Standards referenced by the BCA, including provisions for disability access. The installation and commissioning processes will consider the functional needs of the operators and maintenance personnel to minimise energy consumption and waste while ensuring the systems are straightforward to use.

Some additional design regulations that are specifically required are as follows:

- NSW Animal Welfare Code of Practice No 5 – Dogs and Cats in Animal Boarding Establishments
- Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters – The Association of Shelter Veterinarians (2010)
- Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Dogs and Cats in Council Pounds and Animal Shelters) Standards 2014 No 1
- Code of Practice for the Management of Dogs and Cats in Shelters and Pounds Revision – with emphasis on adhering to the Victorian code which exceed NSW standards.

## Benefits for Dogs

In a shelter environment, best practice for dog enclosures should be flexible to accommodate varying numbers of dogs daily.

Modern best practices, such as those planned for the Sydney Dogs & Cats Home, will explore alternative housing types for shelter dogs. The new facility will ensure that kennels are spaced adequately to prevent dogs from being overwhelmed by the smells, sounds, and sights of other dogs, which can be extremely stressful. Dogs will be moved in and out of kennels without close proximity to other dogs, reducing instances of barrier-related aggression and serious safety risks for both animals and staff. The design will ensure that kennels are spacious enough for dogs to move comfortably, while providing access to fresh air and sunlight.

While standard kennels are typically designed for individual housing, the new facility will offer flexible options, allowing bonded pairs or housemates to be housed together or for socially compatible dogs to share space, reducing the stress of isolation.



Additional enclosure features include:

- **Large Enclosures:** These accommodate bonded pairs, often reducing stereotypic behaviours and alleviating stress in social dogs.
- **Larger than Standard Kennels:** Exceeding minimum size guidelines provides more space for dogs. Including internal access doors allows us to expand the size of kennels where required.
- **Outdoor Areas:** Kennels should have access to outdoor spaces for toileting, encouraging good habits and offering more choice in where to spend time. For aggressive or dangerous dogs, adjoining spaces linked by a removable divider allow for secondary toileting areas, which can be closed off for cleaning without staff contact.

Safe havens within kennels, such as visual barriers or hidey holes, provide dogs with a place to retreat from the noise and stress of the shelter. General benefits include reducing exposure to the sights, smells, and sounds of other dogs, achieved by creating barriers between kennel blocks, spacing blocks with yards or bushland, using soundproof materials, and ensuring walkways are not within sight of kennelled dogs.

The design will also provide dogs with environmental choices, proven to alleviate shelter stress. This includes different substrates for toileting, resting, and sleeping, open areas, hidey holes, and various water options.

Finally, enclosures for adoptable dogs will be designed to be as appealing to the public as possible, fostering positive, interactive experiences for both humans and animals.



## Benefits for Cats

In a shelter environment, best practice for cat enclosures focuses on minimising stress, which is the primary factor influencing disease in shelter cats. Effective design can significantly reduce the impact of stress and disease. Like dog housing, cat accommodation should be flexible to accommodate varying numbers of cats each day. Additionally, cat enclosures should be adaptable for future alternative uses.

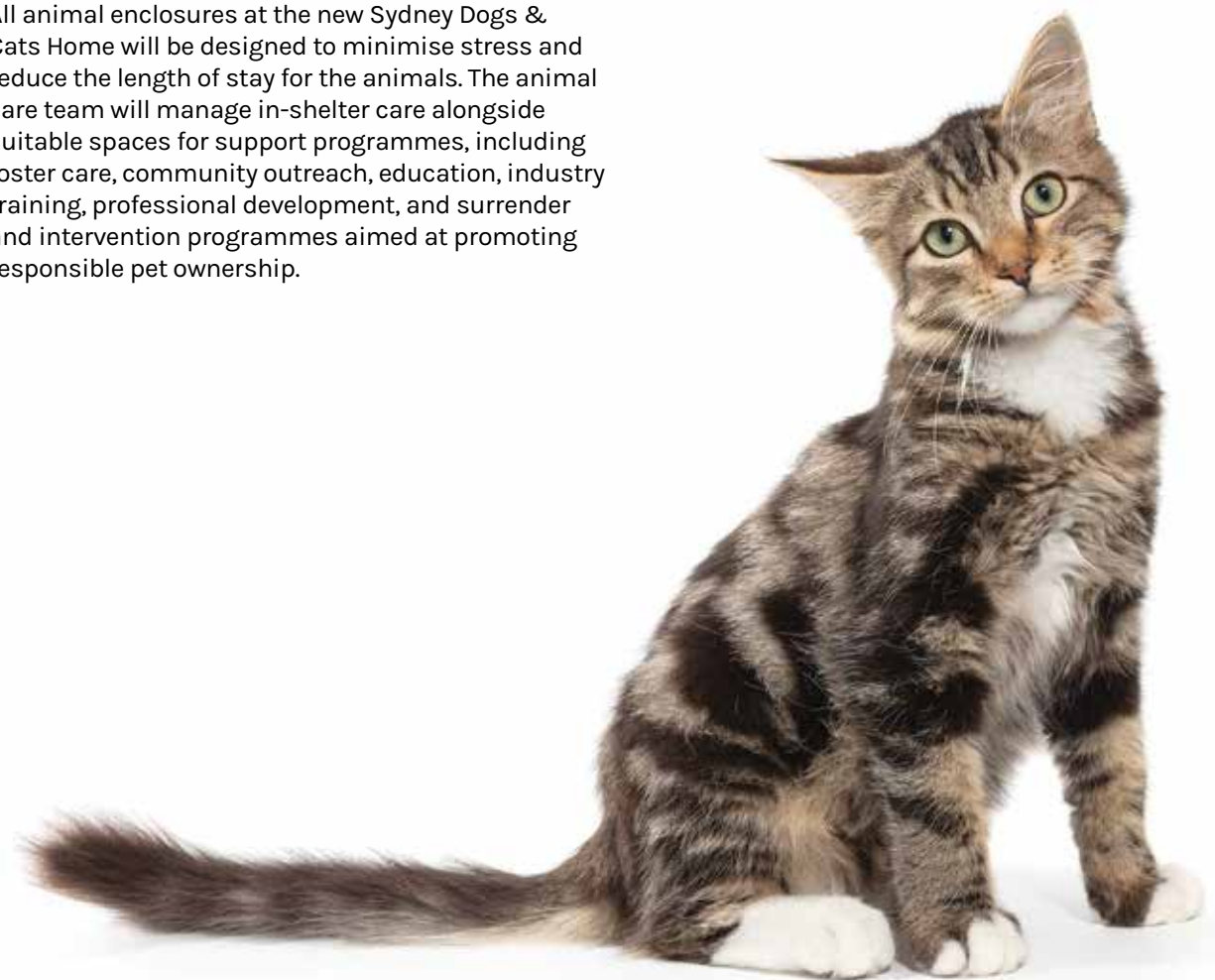
While standardised cat enclosures are common and provide efficient housing in terms of cleaning and socialisation, they reduce the staffing resources required for basic care. Cats, being inherently clean animals, require separate toileting areas. They do not like to toilet near their bed or food and water, making separate toilet areas essential.

Cats naturally seek small spaces, or "hidey holes," which help reduce stress. The new design will feature these hidey holes, offering cats a choice between open resting spaces or more secure, enclosed areas.

Vertical spaces are another best practice in cat enclosure design, as cats feel secure at higher elevations. Therefore, all enclosures will include vertical spaces. Some social cats thrive in large group housing, and the design will support this, alleviating stress in social cats and providing an interactive experience for potential adopters. The design will ensure sufficient space and resources for each cat in a group setting, while also catering to cats that need or prefer individual housing.

Disease is common among lost, neglected, and abandoned cats. Upon arrival at the new Sydney Dogs & Cats Home, cats will be placed in quarantine. The design will feature smaller rooms with fewer cages that can be closed off and thoroughly cleaned as needed, which is preferable to large spaces with many cats. Importantly, cats will always be kept separate from the sight, sound, and smells of dogs to further reduce stress.

All animal enclosures at the new Sydney Dogs & Cats Home will be designed to minimise stress and reduce the length of stay for the animals. The animal care team will manage in-shelter care alongside suitable spaces for support programmes, including foster care, community outreach, education, industry training, professional development, and surrender and intervention programmes aimed at promoting responsible pet ownership.



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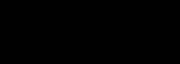
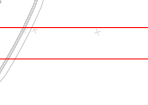
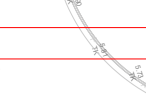
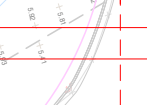
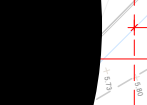
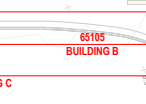
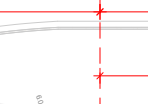
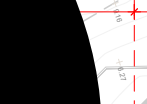
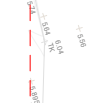
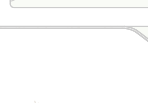
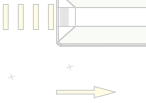
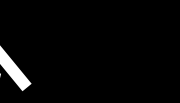
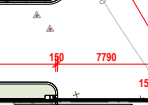
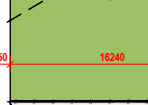
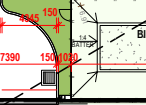
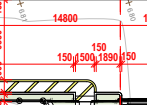
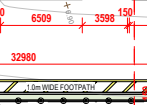
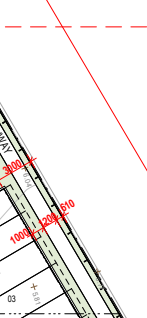
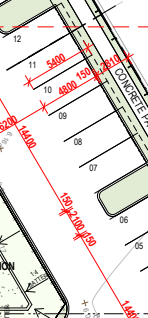
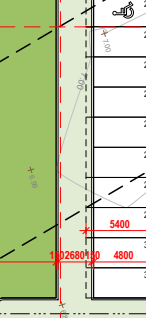
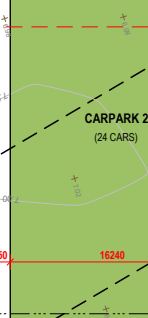
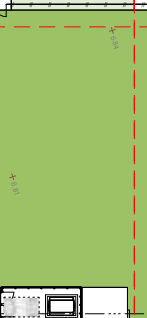
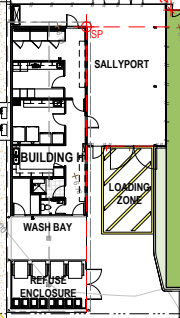
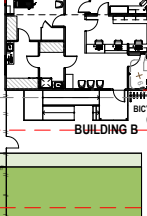
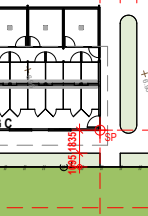
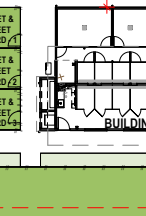
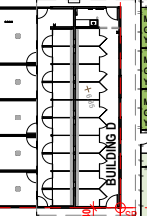
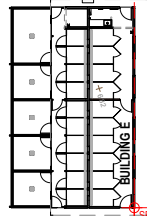
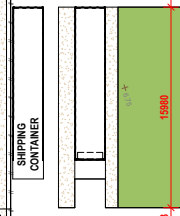
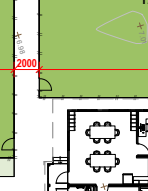
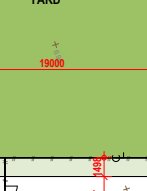
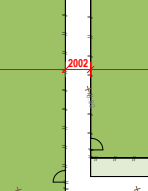
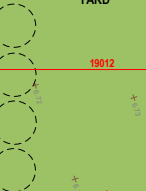
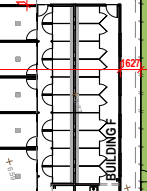
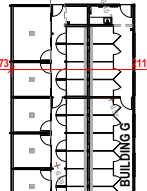
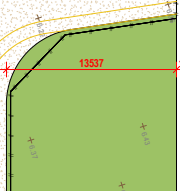
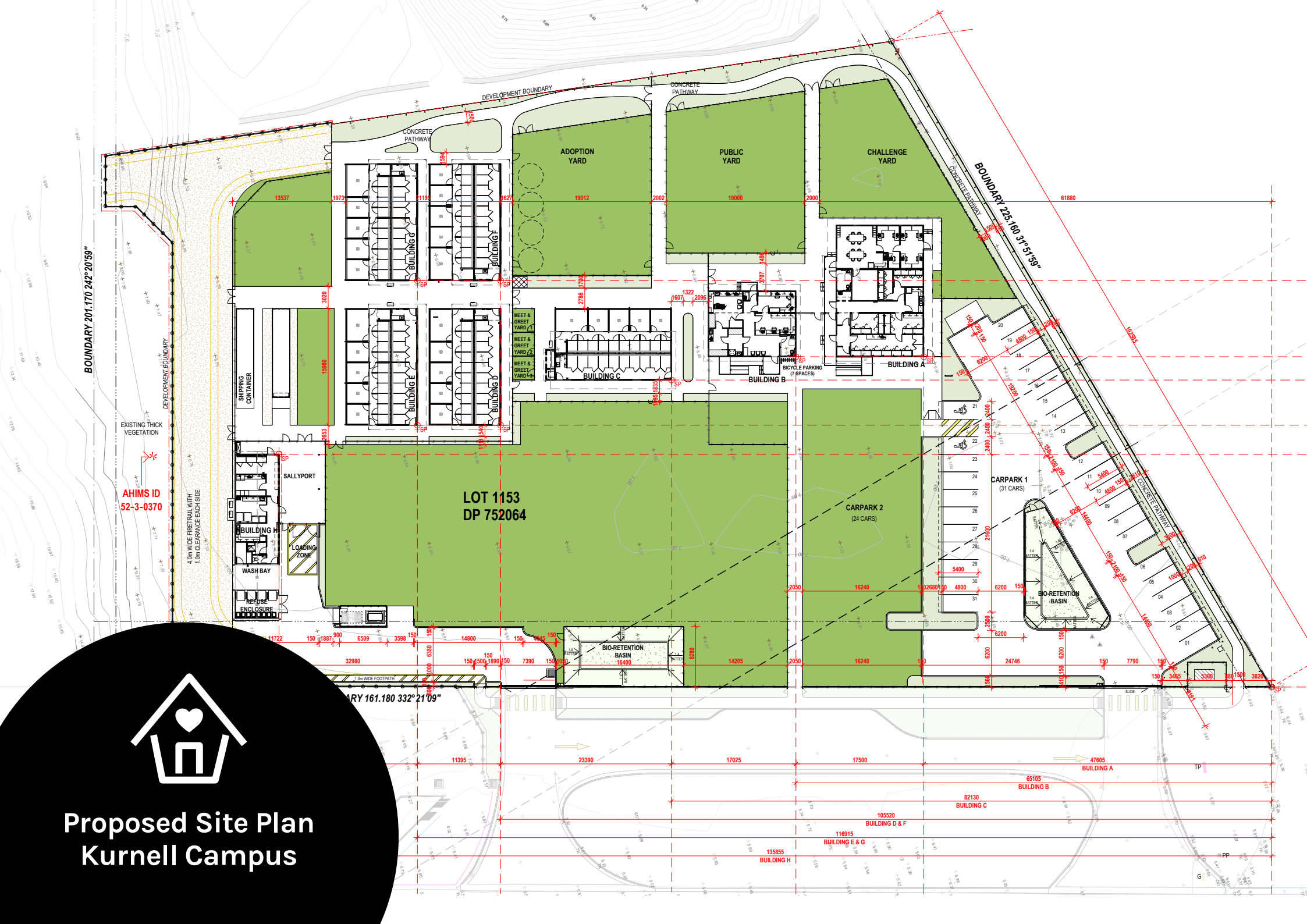
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# Proposed Site Plan Kurnell Campus



“

Doing my placement at Sydney Dogs & Cats Home was a perfect opportunity to put my studies into practice as well as strengthen my desire to help animals as a career path.

”

IVA

3RD YEAR VETERINARY STUDENT  
SYDNEY UNIVERSITY





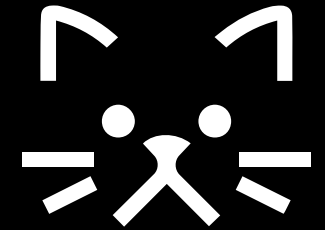
# IMPROVING ANIMAL WELFARE AND MANAGEMENT IN SYDNEY

Benefits of a new Sydney  
Dogs & Cats Home.





# BENEFITS OF A NEW SYDNEY DOGS & CATS HOME



The new Sydney Dogs & Cats Home at Kurnell represents a significant advancement in animal welfare, providing critical services and support to the community while setting new standards in the industry.

The new facility at Kurnell will provide substantial benefits to Greater Sydney, ensuring that SDCH can continue to deliver the highest quality, most accessible, and comprehensive range of community pound services. These services will support animals, veterinary students and professionals, staff, and the wider public.

The upgraded facilities will enhance SDCH's ability to offer superior animal welfare and management to existing local government councils and attract new councils. Additionally, it will create more learning opportunities for the animal welfare industry, extend community outreach programs, foster greater collaboration with university veterinary science partners, and build upon nearly 80 years of excellence in providing quality animal welfare and management in Sydney.

## Key benefits

- Support animal management services for councils covering over 100 suburbs and more than 1.1 million Sydneysiders.
- Expand animal management services to more councils in need.
- Provide welfare for over 3,000 lost, abandoned, and neglected animals annually.
- Increase opportunities to responsibly reunite, rehome, and rehabilitate animals in our care.
- Improve the delivery of high-quality care from industry professionals.
- Extend veterinary clinic services to better address disease, sickness, suffering, distress, and homelessness.
- Meet the increasing demand for animal welfare and management in Sydney.
- Promote responsible pet ownership and reduce incidents of lost, neglected, and abandoned dogs and cats in Greater Sydney.
- Extend community outreach programs, offering more support to people in aged care facilities, youth mental health services, schools, the ADF, and the Department of Justice.
- Attract industry professionals and animal welfare organisations from across Sydney and interstate to SDCH to observe best practices in care and facilities.
- Increase collaboration between industry partners, educators, local government, and the private sector in the fields of veterinary science.



## Benefits for the sustainability and growth of SDCH

The new facility at Kurnell will enable SDCH to:

- Extend commercial offer of animal welfare and management services to more Sydney local governments
- Deliver and demonstrate best practice services and support
- Ensure community-relevant, responsive and embedded services
- Ultimately Increase footprint by almost 3 times to 11,043 square meters
- Develop and expand Pet Adoptions Services, Community Outreach Programs, volunteering opportunities with brownfield site
- Enable potential industry partnerships, extend corporate partnerships through increased volunteering
- Develop and strengthen student experience of veterinary science and the animal care workforce through increased educational partnership with TAFE, open colleges and Sydney University.



While they support and care for animals, the Home also runs a number of successful community programs, which include supporting injured trainee soldiers, a youth mental health program and providing aged-care home visits. I've met with Sydney Dogs & Cats Home a number of times, and I am looking forward to supporting them and working with them in the years to come.

THE HON MARK SPEAKMAN SC MP





## Benefits for South Sydney

A new Sydney Dogs & Cats Home will open up opportunities for employment, volunteering and new business development. This will occur as a result of further state government investment in construction, supported by philanthropy. There will be a number of local benefits to South Sydney community both during construction of the new facility and post completion. These benefits will include but not be limited to:

- 80 people employed at the height of construction
- Up to \$1.5m in discretionary spending on local businesses during construction
- Up to 5 new jobs at SDCH by 2026
- Increase from 500 SDCH volunteers to 750
- The potential for new animal welfare and management to be developed as part of an expanded commercial service delivery model.



## Sydney – Australia’s leading example of best practice

Australia’s animal overpopulation and homelessness crisis is well documented. As the country’s biggest city, it is not surprising surrendered and stray dogs and cats pose a substantial problem in Sydney. Previous media reports in the Sydney Morning Herald suggest about 250,000 dogs and cats are euthanised in Australia because of overpopulation, capacity issues at community pounds and a lack of good homes. The cost surrounding the management of these lost, neglected and abandoned animals has become increasingly contentious with euthanasia being employed as a population control strategy.

A new Sydney Dogs & Cats Home is an opportunity to highlight the city’s approach to animal welfare and management. SDCH’s services delivered efficiently and effectively can support the promotion of Sydney as a leading city able to address the risk of the impact of animal overpopulation and homelessness. The new facility will play a key role in addressing these issues, that, left unaddressed may become costly imposts on the city’s local government and community. By building this asset that can more effectively impact animal welfare and management, Sydney has an opportunity to highlight to the rest of the nation, what a best practice and successful animal welfare and management program looks like. The new Sydney Dogs & Cats Home will be a lasting asset for the city in the decades ahead.

# SUPPORTING GOVERNMENT POLICY AND PRIORITIES

SDCH works closely with local government councils and state government to ensure programs and services support these levels of government and their respective policies and priorities.

Many SDCH executives sit on industry advisory boards and committees such as the Companion Animal Network Australia and the NSW Pound Reform Working Group. SDCH programs and services are particularly supporting policy priorities and various Act's in:



Department of Primary Industries  
(Animal Welfare and Management and Environment)



Local Government



Community & Department of Justice



Health  
(Aged Care, Youth Mental Health, ADF personnel)







# ALIGNMENT WITH DPI – ANIMAL WELFARE, MANAGEMENT & ENVIRONMENT

SDCH strongly supports the Department of Primary Industries priorities in the areas of animal welfare, management, compliance, enforcement and service delivery. The Kurnell build, a centre of excellence, will support the following animal related priorities:

1. Supporting policy/legislative framework regarding companion animals, effective compliance and enforcement efforts
2. Working in partnership for better animal and people outcomes
3. Supporting and supplementing the workforce in the veterinary science and animal care field.
4. Supporting Animal Health and Welfare: Environment

## 1 Supporting the Policy and Legislative Framework

SDCH is dedicated to safeguarding animal welfare by supporting the enforcement of current policies, legislative frameworks, and best practices. SDCH adheres to the highest operational standards to meet all relevant legislation, including the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979. Central to SDCH's programs and services is alignment with Section 3 of the Act. The framework for promoting responsible animal ownership and care in NSW is both legislated and implemented through SDCH operations. All dogs and cats are de-sexed, lifetime registered, vaccinated, and microchipped before rehoming.

Both SDCH and the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) believe that individuals and organisations responsible for animals should ensure their welfare in line with the best available science, evidence, and community expectations. Some animal welfare legislation is over 40 years old, necessitating modernisation to ensure better outcomes for animals, the industry, and the community.

SDCH supports the objectives of best practice animal welfare agencies, including the Animal Welfare League NSW and RSPCA.

The new Sydney Dogs & Cats Home will meet or exceed the minimum standards set forth in the Animal Welfare Code of Practice No. 5 - Dogs and Cats in Boarding Establishments, 1996. SDCH's core programs provide shelter, food, and veterinary care to lost, homeless, and abandoned animals, primarily dogs and cats, in association with Sydney local councils and under the NSW Companion Animals Act 1998. This supports the DPI's Strategic Plan (2022-2030) to maximise animal welfare in NSW and aligns with several objectives of the Animal Welfare Action Plan. SDCH promotes responsible pet ownership by encouraging pet owners to microchip, register their pets, and keep contact details up-to-date.

The new facility will be designed and operated to support the Companion Animals Act's primary objective of providing effective and responsible care and management of companion animals.





This includes specialised controls for each building, suitable kennel configurations, and HEPA filtration for feline treatment areas. The building services will comply with the Building Code of Australia (BCA) and further support the regulatory framework by adhering to the NSW Animal Welfare Code of Practice and relevant standards.

A new Sydney Dogs & Cats Home will enhance the organisation's capacity to promote the existing regulatory framework and support any updates resulting from the current Animal Welfare Action Plan.

## 2 Working in Partnership – Service Planning, Research, Policy Development, and Integrated Care

SDCH is committed to partnering with local government councils, community organisations, the private sector, educational institutions, and NGOs to meet the needs of treatable and untreatable lost, neglected, and abandoned dogs and cats. This collaboration contributes to city-wide services, planning, and policy development. SDCH's experts participate in influential professional bodies and advocacy groups in animal welfare, management, and environment fields.

Future development and implementation of animal welfare initiatives require greater cooperation between local and state governments, service providers, universities, and commercial partners. Expanding our services and partnering with more councils will enable us to continue helping lost, neglected, and abandoned animals and promoting responsible pet ownership across Sydney. This will address increasing animal welfare and management issues in the city.

A new facility at Kurnell will drive:

- Programs and services focused on successful animal welfare and management.
- Increased responsible pet ownership programs to promote best practices.
- Enhanced connectivity between professionals in animal welfare, veterinary fields, and SDCH experts.

## 3 Supporting and Supplementing the Workforce in Animal Welfare and Veterinary Science

SDCH has a broad network of relationships with animal welfare organisations, veterinary clinics, and councils that refer lost, neglected, and abandoned animals to us. We collaborate with these professionals to provide support and assistance. Recognising the challenges faced by veterinarians and animal welfare professionals, SDCH offers unique opportunities for veterinary students in partnership with TAFE, open colleges, and Sydney University.

SDCH also provides a training program for our animal attendants, ensuring they are equipped to manage the animals in our care. The new facility at Kurnell will incorporate technology to enable online support for animal welfare and veterinary practitioners across Sydney and potentially rural and regional NSW. By fostering collaboration between councils, industry, researchers, education providers, and service organisations, SDCH will support the growth of the animal welfare workforce and the development of best practices.

## 4 Supporting Animal Health & Welfare: Environment

Our vision is to be Australia's leading shelter for companion animals, improving the lives of our animals and people. Our mission is to responsibly reunite, rehome, and rehabilitate companion animals while providing the highest level of service to the wider community. Our objectives are to:

1. **Promote animal welfare by alleviating sickness, suffering, distress, misfortune, and homelessness.**
2. **Achieve zero euthanasia of all healthy and treatable cats and dogs.**
3. **Engage in community-based services that benefit the environment, animals, and disadvantaged community members.**

The risk to the environment from increased animal disease and population is well-documented. SDCH supports early-stage research to provide evidence-based policy recommendations. We have supported various research initiatives, including population control and environmental impact. Research conducted with an academic partner in Queensland is promising, and SDCH is well-positioned to support a similar project in Sydney, providing the NSW Government with the latest evidence-based research for policy decisions.

Some evidence suggests population control methods also benefit the mental health of veterinary workers. The influx of cats into shelters can be damaging to staff and volunteers who face the difficult task of euthanasia for untreatable cats. SDCH recognises that euthanising cats does not address the fundamental population and environmental challenges, that can only be achieved with effective preventative control. Our new facility will explore innovative approaches to reduce these risks and support the well-being of our staff and volunteers.





# ALIGNMENT WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT / COUNCILS POLICY

The unique programs and services provided by SDCH not only comply with the Local Government Act but also address the specific animal management needs and statutory reporting requirements of individual councils. This enables councils to focus on delivering core services to their communities and ratepayers. SDCH's programs and the new facility at Kurnell support several local government and council-related priorities, including:

1. Improved Local Animal Welfare, Management, and Environmental Outcomes:
2. Supporting Responsible Pet Ownership:
3. Promoting Community Health and Connectedness



## 1 Improved Local Animal Welfare, Management, and Environmental Outcomes

Delivering improved animal welfare, management, and environmental outcomes remains a significant challenge for Sydney's councils. SDCH addresses these challenges across multiple Sydney councils, covering over 100 suburbs and approximately 1.1 million residents. By ensuring the continued operation of SDCH, the issue of lost, neglected, and abandoned animals is effectively managed within core council services, mitigating risks to animals, staff, and the councils themselves.

Municipal council intakes account for the highest proportion of national admissions. However, the economic burden of managing stray and surrendered animals is substantial, with costs ranging from \$250 to over \$5,000 per admitted dog. It is therefore prudent for councils to focus on decreasing intake to reduce operational costs and euthanasia rates. There is still a long way to go in improving animal welfare, management, and environmental outcomes. For example, Tasmanian councils have the highest proportion of reclaimed animals (79% of intake) and the lowest euthanasia rates (4% of intake), while New South Wales councils have the lowest reclamation rate (43%) and the highest euthanasia rates (26% of intake).

SDCH is committed to reuniting lost animals with their owners, and rehoming animals wherever possible, thereby improving outcomes for both animals and people in local communities. This approach allows council management to allocate resources more effectively rather than providing services that can be better handled by third-party suppliers. Additionally, SDCH assists councils in meeting statutory reporting requirements for animal welfare, ensuring compliance with regulations and enhancing overall service delivery.

## 2 Supporting Responsible Pet Ownership

A new facility at Kurnell will enable SDCH to better support councils in embedding responsible pet ownership within the community. This includes community education about responsible pet ownership, encouraging pet owners to comply with NSW Pet Registry requirements, which help reunite lost pets with their owners by ensuring contact details are up-to-date. Providing outreach and onsite support for microchipping will help curb the number of animals arriving in the shelter that cannot be identified and in turn reunited with their owners.

## 3 Promoting Community Health and Connectedness

Happy pets lead to happy people, and pet ownership results in significant health cost savings. For example, in 1999, it was estimated that pet ownership saved the Australian health system \$1.8 billion, or 5% of the total health expenditure. Pet owners report reduced visits to doctors and lower use of medications for conditions such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and sleep difficulties.

Governments should encourage adoption programs and initiatives that promote pet ownership to capitalise on these health benefits. SDCH supports several community outreach programs in schools, aged care facilities, and youth mental health organisations, aligning with council health and wellbeing strategies.

Through these efforts, SDCH not only supports local councils in their animal management and welfare goals but also contributes to broader community health and connectedness.

## Holistic Care Approach at SDCH

SDCH designs and delivers its programs as part of a holistic care approach, providing more than just animal health and welfare services for lost, neglected, and abandoned pets. SDCH also supports pet owners, potential pet owners, veterinary service providers, and the broader community of professionals involved with pets. Our service aligns with and supports priorities to build community connectedness. The new facility at Kurnell will enhance this work by:

- 1. Assisting People to Participate in Community Volunteering:** Including adults, youth, and seniors.
- 2. Improving Community Health:** Through animal engagement programs for aged care residents and youth mental health.
- 3. Enhancing Community Safety:** By promoting responsible pet ownership programs and support.
- 4. Increasing Community Engagement:** For those involved in the Community Justice system.



# ALIGNMENT WITH COMMUNITIES POLICIES & JUSTICE

## 1 Assisting People to Participate in Volunteering

SDCH's comprehensive approach to supporting lost, neglected, and abandoned dogs and cats involves an extensive volunteer network. These animals often come from challenging environments, and SDCH addresses their unique issues to provide the best chance for rehoming. Key to this is our Foster Care program and Community Outreach, which rely on over 500 volunteers providing over 13,000 hours of service at the new facility. Opportunities for local engagement include aged care, foster care, open days at Kurnell, corporate volunteering, and fundraising.

## 2 Improving Community Health

Established in 2014, the Youth Mental Health School Program involves small groups of students with mental health conditions visiting the shelter to interact with animals. This has expanded to include reading sessions for young people, including those with Autism. Interaction with animals has shown to significantly improve both the animals' and students' well-being.

Every fortnight, trained volunteers take shelter dogs to visit local nursing homes, which is a highlight for the residents and provides a break for the dogs. The Army Program, established in 2016, supports trainee soldiers undergoing rehabilitation by involving them in animal care at the shelter, positively impacting their recuperation.

## 3 Supporting Justice Programs through Community Service

SDCH offers opportunities for individuals to complete community service sentences, which allow offenders to serve their punishment within the community instead of prison. This program supports offenders in giving back to the community and addressing underlying issues related to their offending. Typically, SDCH has around 10 individuals in this program each week.

## 4 Improving Community Safety through Responsible Pet Ownership

Responsible pet owners microchip and register their pets, ensuring contact details are up to date. SDCH supports NSW legislation requiring all cats and dogs to be microchipped and registered. Microchipping helps reunite lost pets with their owners. Registration fees fund council animal management services, including ranger services, pound facilities, and educational programs. SDCH also provides subsidised desexing services and various behaviour programs to ensure pets are socialised safely.

### COVID-19 Impact

The pandemic and current temporary facilities have negatively impacted some of our community outreach programs. We look forward to reinstating and expanding these programs at our new facility.

Through our holistic care approach and enhanced programs at the new Kurnell facility, SDCH aims to build stronger community connections, support responsible pet ownership, and improve overall community health and safety.









Concept image only.



**Join our community of friends,  
donors and supporters and  
MAKE HOME HAPPEN**



# THE CASE FOR INVESTMENT

Sydney Dogs & Cats Home is Sydney's only community charity pound. The range of animal welfare and management, veterinary services and community outreach programs unparalleled is an asset for both the people and pets of Sydney. Established in 1946, SDCH has been a part of the lives of tens of thousands of Sydney's dogs and cats and people. The opportunity to build a new facility at Kurnell is vital if the organisation is going to continue.



## New Home for High-Quality Animal Welfare and Community Outreach

A new facility will allow SDCH to deliver top-tier animal welfare and management by incorporating best practices and evidence-based research to benefit lost, neglected, and abandoned dogs and cats. It will also serve as a training ground for future veterinary professionals and extend our community reach.

We urgently need to raise \$8 million to help build this purpose-built facility in Kurnell, located in Sydney's south. The total cost of the project is \$21.6 million. So far, we have raised \$1.6 million from supporters and received \$12 million in cornerstone funding from the NSW Government, which recognizes the urgent need for these services.

“

**Investing in a new home for Sydney's Dogs & Cats is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to build a place of significance that will change the lives of Sydney's people and pets for years to come.**

PETER SHARP  
PAST PRESIDENT, SDCH

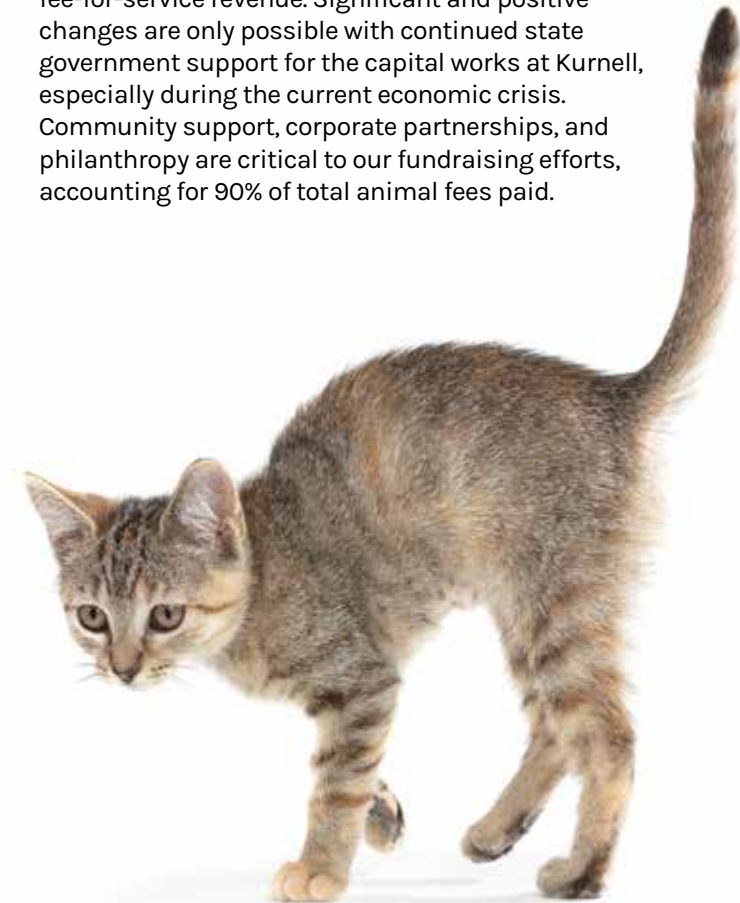
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SDCH's animal care team has identified a pressing need for increased resources to meet the needs of lost, neglected, and abandoned animals. This includes greater investment in veterinary clinical services, behavioural and emotional treatment, and physical space to maximise the chances of rehoming and rehabilitating treatable animals.

SDCH is committed to enhancing service delivery to minimise the impact of the kennel experience and optimise rehoming and rehabilitation outcomes, particularly for dogs and cats. This effort ensures that these services do not place additional strain on Sydney's already stretched local councils.

## Challenging Financial Landscape

Even before COVID-19, SDCH operated in a challenging financial environment, competing for local council animal welfare contracts, philanthropic grants, and fee-for-service revenue. Significant and positive changes are only possible with continued state government support for the capital works at Kurnell, especially during the current economic crisis. Community support, corporate partnerships, and philanthropy are critical to our fundraising efforts, accounting for 90% of total animal fees paid.





## Financial Prudence and Governance

SDCH's effort in raising \$1.6 million for the new facility has been made possible through the generosity of a dedicated supporter base. The organisation cannot dispose of assets or draw upon capital reserves to fund the construction. Despite a challenging financial landscape, we focus on driving new and existing revenue streams while maintaining prudent expense management.

SDCH has secured a 50-year lease from the NSW government for the new facility. The organisation has demonstrated solid corporate governance, community commitment, and wise financial stewardship since 1946. To achieve our vision, SDCH is investing in expanding its animal welfare programs and services, people, and community outreach, while maintaining a strong fiscal position.

## Expertise in Animal Welfare and Management

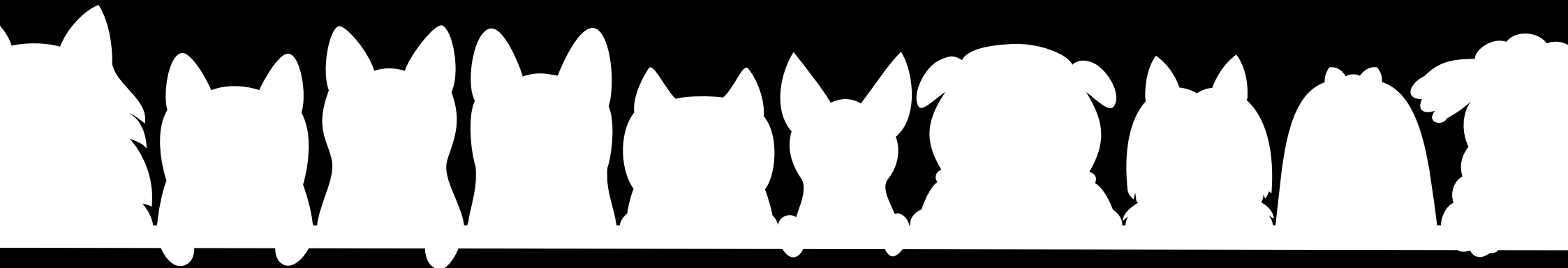
SDCH has extensive experience in developing, delivering, and demonstrating best practices in animal welfare and management. The organisation's long history of providing services to lost, neglected, and abandoned animals means its veterinary and management procedures, governance, risk, and data management strategies are unmatched by other Sydney pounds.

## Business Efficiency and Strategic Planning

SDCH launched its strategic plan (2021-2025) to evolve in response to changing animal health and welfare needs. The organisation has recalibrated around a geographical management model and maintains a focus on cost reduction, enabling efficiencies and organisational sustainability. SDCH's track record of transformation and its expertise make it uniquely positioned to extend services and cement its role as Sydney's leading community pound.

## Unique Position to Deliver at Kurnell

SDCH is uniquely equipped to offer comprehensive services and benefits through the development of the new community pound at Kurnell. With a specialist team, extensive volunteer network, and foster care roster, SDCH is poised to make continuous improvements for the animals in our care. The new facility will feature expanded program spaces, a veterinary clinic, outdoor exercise areas, marking a new era of service provision for Sydney's lost, neglected, and abandoned animals. Our strong relationships with councils, veterinary clinics, industry partners, and other welfare providers enable effective referrals and support.





Deserve  
Victory

MILITARY  
BOATMAN

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1

### History of Sydney Dogs & Cats Home

Sydney Dogs & Cats Home has been caring for lost, abandoned, and neglected pets since 1946. It began as the local pound within the St George Animal Hospital. The second owner, John Holt, was a visionary veterinarian who set many ethical standards for the treatment of dogs and cats, significantly influencing small animal practices in Sydney.

In 1999, Dr Peter Britton purchased the practice and transformed the pound into an animal welfare charity. Recognising a community need for a reputable pound service for several Sydney councils, Dr Britton aligned the organisation with the introduction of the Companion Animal Act. He assembled a board with a strong focus on animal welfare, setting a mission to prevent the unnecessary euthanasia of healthy, loving pets by rehoming them and giving them a second chance at life. The organisation quickly became reliant on community support and volunteers to help care for and enrich the lives of animals during their stay.

The organisation underwent several name changes: from St George Animal Shelter Incorporated in 1999 to Sydney Dogs Home Incorporated in 2000, and finally to The Sydney Dogs & Cats Home Incorporated in 2006. Over time, the number of councils using the Home's services expanded to include eight councils across Greater Sydney: Georges River, Bayside, Fairfield, Inner West, North Sydney, Randwick, Waverley, and Woollahra.

Providing meaningful experiences for both pets and people led to the development of mental health-focused community programmes. These include pet therapy visits to aged care facilities, shelter activities for youth with mental health issues, and rehabilitation programmes for army personnel. The organisation also offers various volunteering opportunities such as cleaning, socialising animals, foster care, event volunteering, reception assistance, and animal transportation.

Today, as Sydney's only charity pound and community facility, the mission of Sydney Dogs & Cats Home has evolved to responsibly reunite, rehome, and rehabilitate companion animals while providing the highest level of service to the broader community. Welcoming thousands of pets annually, the Home never imposes a time limit on any pet awaiting adoption, tailoring positive, long-term solutions to meet each animal's needs.



## APPENDIX 2

### Construction Costs

#### Summary

No.	Item	Cost
1	Meeting Spaces/Vet Clinic (ex. Equipment)/Administration and Reception/Adoption Centre	\$7,391,796
2	Animal Housing: Kennels and Catery, multi-purpose exercise yards/Meeting Spaces/Community Outreach Centre	\$9,063,796
3	Pre-Development Expenses	\$589,587
4	Post Development Application cost variations	\$245,180
5	Professional and Authority fees	\$1,044,222
6	Vet clinic equipment and animal housing	\$1,400,709
7	Contingency	\$1,864,710
<b>Total project costs (Incl. contingency)</b>		<b>\$21,600,000</b>





## APPENDIX 3

### Sydney Dogs & Cats Home Facilities – Site access

The new Sydney Dogs & Cats Home will be designed to create service zones with varying levels of access, allowing the facility to be flexibly ‘shut down’ and ‘opened up’ throughout the day and out of hours. Ease of access for animals, staff and visitors is a key consideration. Zoning key spaces accessed by pets and people near the main entrance will simplify routes and journeys. The spaces will be categorised as:

- Public Access Spaces, including administration areas for reuniting lost animals, and adoption areas. Veterinary Clinic reception, waiting room and consultation rooms will also be accessible to the public.
- Private Access Spaces, including clinical veterinary area, animal impounding, general animal housing areas, animal isolation areas & staff administration. Any guests requiring access to these spaces will need to be accompanied by staff (other than Council who will have 24/7 access to animal impounding areas).

## APPENDIX 4

### Relevant NSW Government Acts, Plans and Priorities

- Department of Primary Industries Strategic Plan 2022-2030  
(includes Environmental Action)
- NSW Animal Welfare Action Plan
- Bayside Council Community Health & Wellbeing Plan  
(template for other council reference)
  - Fairfield Council
  - Georges River
  - Inner-West
  - North Sydney
  - Randwick
  - Waverley
- NSW Animal Companion Act / Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act
- NSW Ageing, Disability and Home Care – Strategic Plan
- NSW Department of Communities and Justice Strategic Direction 2020-2024
- NSW Department of Education Strategic Plan.





K9B CROSS

RESS

## APPENDIX 5

### Volunteer and Foster Carer Statements

#### Our foster carers

Sydney Dogs & Cats Home has one of the city's largest foster care programs. Every year hundreds of Sydneysiders generously provide animals in need the opportunity to enjoy having a safe and loving place while we find them a "forever home". While people get to experience the wonderful aspects of having a pet.



“

During this stressful time I've found it makes me more relaxed, take more breaks and exercise more... when working from home. I love "matchmaking" them into their perfect forever homes... it's been great to see them all go to such loving homes!

BECCA  
FOSTER CARER

”

“

Fostering for the past 2 years has been an amazing experience. We've watched tiny kittens grow and find their personality as well as shy adult cats slowly come out of their shell. We have learnt so much about caring for cats and kittens thanks to the foster coordinators, vets and shelter team at SDCH.

CAITLIN AND MATT

”



“

Fostering has definitely enriched our lives. It's so rewarding to watch a puppy blossom into a great dog, or to watch a dog that's had a tough time settle comfortably into your life (and your couch). We also love it when we receive updates from their forever home about how they have settled into their new lives, knowing that we played a small part to help get them there.

TOM AND SILVIA

”



## Our volunteers

Volunteers play a very important part in helping us do what we do. Before COVID-19 some 500 volunteers provided over 13,000 hours of support. From kennel activities like cleaning, feeding, grooming and playtime to dog walking and kitten cuddles volunteers are a vital part of our animal care.

With COVID-19 we are currently more heavily dependent on paid staff, which increases our operating costs. With COVID-19 restrictions to ease in the future and a new and bigger site at Kurnell, we look forward to volunteers once again helping Sydney's lost, neglected and abandoned dogs and cats.



“

Being able to work with animals is a dream come true for me. The animals help me as much as I help them. It's a blessing to be a volunteer at the SDCH.

”

MELISSA AND TIGER

“

Volunteering at SDCH has enabled me to grow as a person and I've also been blessed with the adoption of Toby and Dudley.

”

CAMPBELL, TOBY AND DUDLEY



“

I've enjoyed being able to share the amazing work done by our staff and volunteers in caring for the beautiful animals who pass through our home on their way to their forever families. I've been moved to tears many times by the compassion and love shown to our animals. It's an honour to be part of this special organisation.

”

KERRY AND BELLA



**SYDNEY  
DOGS  
& CATS  
HOME**

To discuss how you can help support the establishment of the Sydney Dogs & Cats Home at Kurnell please contact:

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