

MEDIA RELEASE – 8 JANUARY 2018

ANOTHER SYDNEY COUNCIL INVESTIGATES WHY THEY CANNOT STOP CHILDCARE CENTRES IN INAPPROPRIATE LOCATIONS

On 19 December 2018, Sydney's Cumberland Council decided to investigate why they appear to not have adequate powers to properly regulate new childcare development applications, with risks of children not being able to evacuate quickly enough in the event of an emergency, where suitable emergency assembly areas are not accessible for children aged 0-5 years old and staff, their proximity to major traffic hubs, the size of childcare centres, and any other relevant matters. (See <https://nsw.childcarealliance.org.au/news/410-another-sydney-council-investigates-loss-of-power-to-regulate-new-childcare-centres>).

This decision is in the context of another report commissioned by the [Australian Childcare Alliance](#) (ACA), the [Early Learning and Care Council of Australia](#) (ELACCA) and [Australian Community Children's Services](#) (ACCS), confirming that there is an oversupply of childcare services in many locations across Australia. (See <https://nsw.childcarealliance.org.au/news/398-is-oversupply-a-real-issue-in-the-early-learning-sector>.)

This latest report reveals that the nett increase in long day care centres in 2017 was roughly **2-3 times the estimated number of new centres needed** per annum to meet future demand.

"This supports growing concerns also from Sydney's Hornsby Shire Council, The Hills Shire Council and North Sydney Council that they are not able to refuse new childcare services in inappropriate locations, and I suspect there will be more councils who are equally concerned about their loss of local planning powers," said Mr Chiang Lim, CEO of the Australian Childcare Alliance NSW.

The introduction by the NSW Government of its State Environmental Planning Policy (Educational Establishments and Child Care Facilities) 2017 was designed to curtail the powers of local councils from slowing down childcare supply. However, with the oversupply of new childcare services, the same SEPP and associated NSW government processes have instead approved many new childcare places where normally local councils would in the past refused.

Ironically, the now oversupply of childcare services in many parts of Australia has not increased childcare affordability for parents. Even the Federal Department of Education and Training's Early Childhood and Child Care Summary reports have been reporting increasing the number of childcare services with vacancies across the years – 86% (2013), 90% (2014), 91% (2015 & 2016), 93% (2017).

"Federal and State Governments must reconsider its reliance on supply as their primary means of meeting demand when the childcare availability and affordability appear to be failing," said Mr Lim.

**For further media inquiries, please contact
ACA NSW CEO Chiang Lim on 0427 277 299**

***** END *****

Australian Childcare Alliance (ACA) NSW (www.nsw.childcarealliance.org.au) is the peak body for privately owned early childhood education and care services in NSW, numbering approximately 1,600 childcare services, over 25,000 employees and supporting over 125,000 families. ACA NSW provides advocacy, policy and regulatory and business support and advice, member services and professional development for members and their staff across the state.