



STRATHFIELD-HOMEBUSH
DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

www.strathfieldhomebushhistory.org

Email: strathfieldhistory@gmail.com

14 April 2026

The General Manager
Strathfield Council
PO Box 120
STRATHFIELD NSW 2135

Re: Objection to Proposed Renaming of Parts of Homebush and Homebush West as Strathfield

Dear General Manager,

On behalf of the Strathfield-Homebush District Historical Society, we write to formally object to the amended proposal to rename parts of the suburb of Homebush, and part of the suburb of Homebush West (south of the railway line), as the suburb of Strathfield. This submission should be read in conjunction with our objection dated 7 September 2025 to the first Council proposal.

As we stated in our first submission, the Society had no objection to the inclusion of the isolated property 'Strathbelle' on Beresford Road being included in the suburb of Strathfield, as this is consistent with other property addresses in that street.

The initial and current Council proposal has high levels of impact on suburbs other than those in Homebush and Homebush West. In particular, the proposed expansion of the boundaries of the suburb of Strathfield significantly affects residents and ratepayers of the suburb of Strathfield. The suburb of Strathfield is located within the local government areas (LGAs) of Strathfield, Burwood and Canada Bay. What consultation has been undertaken with the residents and rate payers of the suburb of Strathfield in the three LGAs? Has there been any consultation with the other affected Councils? According to feedback from residents living in the suburb of Strathfield in the Strathfield LGA, they have received no direct notification of this proposal.

Strathfield Council and its community fought hard to preserve Council's independence when faced with forced Council amalgamations from 2014 to 2017. Many of Council's arguments against amalgamation included the differences in historic development and the negative impact on local community identity, distinctive character, its strong sense of place.

The Council argued the local areas within the Strathfield Council area would be materially weakened by amalgamation into a larger authority lacking historical and social cohesion. Yet Strathfield Council is now proposing to obliterate the community identity, sense of place, and the historical development and character of the three different suburbs of Strathfield, Homebush and Homebush West.

According to an article titled 'Strathfield Council Sparks Outrage With Homebush Rename Plan' published on 9 April 2026 on City Hub (<https://cityhub.com.au/homebush-rename-plan>) 'Council officials argue the rename aligns suburb names more logically with clear infrastructure boundaries and how residents already understand the area'.

The infrastructure boundary referenced in the Council statement appears to be the railway line. This railway line was built in 1855. It predates the subdivision of most 18th and 19th century land grants and estates, and subsequent development of local suburbs. This infrastructure has existed for over 170 years. It also is the same railway line that runs through the Inner West of Sydney and suburbs (and railway stations) such as Newtown, Stanmore, Petersham, Lewisham, Summer Hill, Ashfield, Croydon and Burwood. 19th century suburbs in the Strathfield Council area align with railway stations and town centres at Strathfield, Homebush and Homebush West (Flemington).

The historic development of these railway suburbs are significant in the Sydney's historical development. If Council seriously believes that this proposal addresses 'how residents already understand the area' does this imply that persons living adjacent to Flemington Station consider they live in the suburb of Strathfield? Or is there confusion about the difference between the suburb of Strathfield and the Strathfield LGA?

A LGA is a governing or administrative authority. LGAs can be abolished, merged, or renamed under the *Local Government Act* without altering the historic or geographic boundaries of their constituent suburbs. A suburb is a spatial identity and its boundaries are determined by historical development patterns, community identity and socio-economic characteristics. Suburbs, particularly in metropolitan areas, rarely align neatly with LGA boundaries. For example, parts of the suburb of Strathfield are located in Burwood LGA and Canada Bay LGA.

Reference to September 2025 Objection and further comments on the proposal concerning the suburb of Homebush

Expanding the boundaries of "Strathfield" by effectively abolishing part of Homebush, an original suburb within Strathfield Municipality since its incorporation in 1885, would blur historic and geographic distinctions between neighbouring suburbs and risk erasing a long-established name of substantial history and heritage.

The Municipality of Strathfield was established from the actions of groups of landowners from the suburbs of Homebush, Redmyre and Druitt Town who petitioned the Colonial Governor of NSW from 1884 to establish municipal government. The Municipality of Strathfield was incorporated on 2 June 1885 and covered the areas of Redmyre (which then adopted the suburb name of Strathfield), Homebush and Druitt Town. It should be noted

that Strathfield was not an original locality name, it was adopted for the new Council and was named after a local house.

Claims of “confusion” regarding location do not seem to be supported by credible evidence. The proposed renaming would demonstrably create greater confusion rather than resolve it. Homebush is a well-established suburb, containing long-standing institutions such as Homebush Public School, Homebush Boys High School, Homebush Village Shopping Centre, and the Homebush Post Office. The suburbs of Strathfield and Homebush West also contain unique suburb branded institutions.

The current proposal to rename the majority of Homebush as Strathfield while retaining only a small area around the railway station entrance such as the shopping centre as ‘Homebush’ has no historical context or understanding of community identity. This would create fragmented suburb boundaries that serves no practical, historical, or administrative purpose.

Local shops and schools service their local communities, which is why they were established and are important to local identity and cohesion. Isolating a few shops or institutions with Homebush in the title, while renaming the rest of the suburb is a cynical manoeuvre that obscures the impact of boundary changes and the erosion of local identity and historical context.

Further Objection: Inclusion of Parts of Homebush West

We now raise additional objections to the inclusion of parts of Homebush West in the proposed renaming to Strathfield, drawing on the suburb’s rich history and heritage:

This part of the suburb of Homebush West has been part of Strathfield LGA since 1892, which is a local government arrangement. However, this area has different historical development to both Homebush and Strathfield. As previously noted, a local government boundary can be changed at any time by State Government.

Homebush West is historically known as Flemington, a name derived from John Fleming, who received a Crown Land Grant in 1806 where the suburb is located. The area’s principal landmark, Flemington Railway Station, opened in 1884, remains central to its identity and has provided the focus for much of the surrounding development.

This proposal seeks to rename a suburb which has its own Railway Station and Town/Neighbourhood Centre to Strathfield, which also has its own railway station and town centre. In fact, the current proposal involves the majority of land having the same name despite being located adjacent to three different railway stations. All properties in Homebush West are within a short walk of Flemington Railway Station. Kessell Avenue, the street located furthest to the east of Homebush West suburb is located within a seven minute walk or 500 metres of the Flemington railway station and Homebush West Shopping Centre. The same street is a 35 minute walk to Strathfield railway station or shopping/town centre.

Council appears to be arguing that this new proposal will make things less 'confusing' however a future scenario may involve explaining why an address is in Strathfield (ie previously Homebush or Homebush West) but the closest railway station is Flemington and to travel to Strathfield Station will involve a walk of over 35 minutes, rather than the five minutes needed to walk to Flemington Station.

The development of this part of the Homebush West suburb is closely tied to the Fleming grant, the subdivision of the Underwood Estate in the 1880s, and the suburb's historic development of housing and infrastructure particularly in the late 19th and early 20th century.

Homebush West is primarily a residential area, featuring the Homebush West shopping centre, Homebush West Public School, Homebush West Community Centre, childcare centres, churches, and parks such as Melville Reserve. The grid-style street layout, historic Brush Box tree plantings, and heritage memorials reflect stages of the area's historical development, which are different from the development of the suburb of Strathfield and also of Homebush.

The area of Flemington was added to Strathfield Council in 1892. There are no boundary issues, such as a suburb being partly located in a different local government area. Homebush West is fully located within the Strathfield LGA. There is no confusion as to where the location of this area is. The comparison with the renaming of Belfield to Strathfield South is not applicable, as Homebush and Homebush West have strong historic recognition and community attachment, unlike the history of Belfield.

Melville Reserve, Hampstead Road Homebush West features heritage-listed memorial gates and plaques dedicated by the Citizens of Flemington to those who served in the Great War (WWI). The area retains examples of historic development from the 19th and early 20th centuries, including residential, ecclesiastical, and commercial buildings.

Renaming parts of Homebush West as Strathfield would erode the unique identity and historical development and character of each of the affected suburbs. It would also create inconsistency with locations like railway stations and schools as well as suburb boundaries.

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, and as detailed in our September 2025 objection, the Strathfield-Homebush District Historical Society strongly opposes the proposed renaming of parts of Homebush and Homebush West as Strathfield.

As previously requested, the Society should be formally consulted as a stakeholder in any proposals affecting the history or heritage of the district. The notification of these proposals on the *Have Your Say* website does not provide a background paper nor copies of the previous Council reports or Council minutes to ascertain the origin or intent of the proposal.

We note with concern that the Society did not receive a response to our September 2025 objection submission, nor any notification of the council's decision in November 2025, until we made a request to Council in March 2026 regarding its status and then received a

response. Despite lodging a submission to the previous consultation, the Society has not been consulted about the new proposal. Members only became aware of it through the media reports from ABC News a few days ago.

This lack of direct communication and stakeholder engagement is deeply disappointing, given the Society's prior submissions and role as a community-based organisation dedicated to conserving, protecting, and promoting the history and heritage of the local district.

We urge Council to withdraw this proposal. We request that this objection be formally considered and the issues raised be fully addressed in the assessment report, and that Council clearly outline its reasoning should it choose not to uphold these concerns.

Yours faithfully,

Management Committee
Strathfield-Homebush District Historical Society