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MEDIA RELEASE

Possible terrorism and public safety threats in Sydney's laneways – call for an urgent review

Councillor Angela Vithoukas has called on the City of Sydney to conduct an immediate audit and assessment of CBD laneways in light of recent international terrorism and fire events.

"I have been approached by a number of people that live and work in the city. They have real fears for their safety because of security gates that are being left open, rubbish dumping, lack of access to fire egresses, cars illegally parked and trucks illegally using these laneways as loading docks.

"While there has been a significant focus on public safety and the installation of bollards in public places around the CBD, our laneways often go unnoticed. It is also hard for businesses, residents or workers to report issues when they don't know whether the laneway is owned by the City of Sydney or whether it's privately owned," Councillor Vithoukas said.

At Monday night's Council meeting Councillor Vithoukas called on the Council to conduct an immediate audit and assessment of laneways in the CBD to clarify ownership and ensure that relevant safety measures are in place and communicated to the community.

In response to Councillor Vithoukas' proposal the Clover Moore team indicated they would not support a review as it would be "too onerous on staff".

"Events that have recently occurred overseas are a bit of a wakeup call. As a Council, we have a duty of care to ensure we proactively look at any possible threats and risks to the safety of the people that live and work in this City. We need to step up and take this action now rather than retrospectively reviewing events when it's too late. Indicating that a review would be too onerous on staff is a slap in the face for our local community and they deserve better" Councillor Vithoukas said.

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