

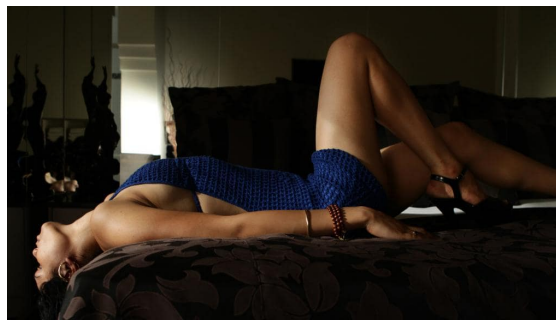
CENTRAL SYDNEY


City of Sydney introduces more red tape to limit sex services at massage parlours

NEW massage parlours in central Sydney will be required to jump through extra hoops under changes aimed at stamping out illegal brothels.

Heather McNab, CENTRAL

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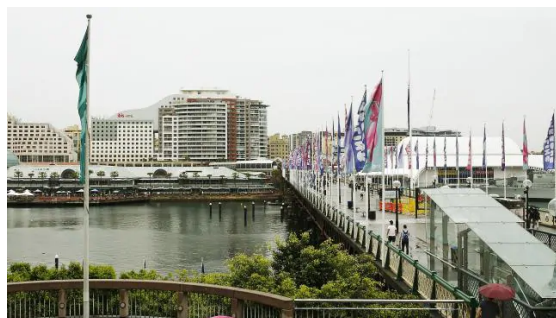
 A change in regulations will limit the potential for massage parlours to offer sex services.

BUSINESSES applying to open massage parlours in the City of Sydney will be required to jump through extra hoops under changes aimed at stamping out illegal brothels in the inner city.

When development consent is sought for premises for medical or therapeutic massage businesses, the City will now ask for additional information to ensure the parlours are not able to change their focus to sex services.

The City will require proof that operators and staff have remedial massage qualifications such as diplomas or certificates and evidence that the operator is accredited with at least one recognised health fund as a registered health provider.

In order to prevent physical conversion of premises to accommodate illegal sex services, controls will be in place for any DA restricting the addition of solid wall partitions.



 Many of these premises are in Pyrmont and surrounds. Picture: John Appleyard

ABN numbers, details of current liability insurance policy and insurance details will also be requested as part of a development application.

The new requirements follow information revealed by *Central Sydney* that the City has received 80 complaints relating to 49 premises — many of which were located in Pyrmont — allegedly carrying out illegal sexual activity. Despite evidence available through simple internet searches that many premises were offering unauthorised sex services, only seven prompted investigation and one search warrant was issued.

Liberal City of Sydney councillor Craig Chung labelled the council’s additional requirements as “limp red tape”.



 Councillor Craig Chung. Picture: Jess Husband

“When someone intends to operate an illegal brothel from a massage shop, I don’t think making them provide an ABN or give their insurance details is going to stop them operating illegal sex shops next to a preschool or in the heart of our shopping precincts,” Cr Chung said.

“If the Lord Mayor thinks that making an illegal brothel operator get a massage certificate will stop them offering illegal sex services then she clearly isn’t committed to stamping out the proliferation of these premises throughout the city.”