

16 August 2024

## Ku-ring-gai Council Election 2024 – Candidate Questions

Please return your answers to [info@foke.org.au](mailto:info@foke.org.au) by 5.00pm on FRIDAY 23 AUGUST 2024.

**Candidates Full Name:** [Sam Ngai](#)

**Ward Standing for:** [Roseville Ward \(Group A\)](#)

**Authorised Campaign Address:**.....[Suite 18, 12 Tryon Road Lindfield NSW 2070](#)

**Email:**.....[sam@roseville.online](mailto:sam@roseville.online).....**Mobile:**[0412 574 600](tel:0412 574 600)

**Website:**<https://roseville.online> **Facebook:**<https://www.facebook.com/CouncillorSamNgai>

**Qualifications:** [Bachelor of Software Engineering \(Hons\), UNSW](#)

[Master of Professional Accounting, UNSW](#)

[Advanced Diploma of Theological Studies, Moore Theological College](#)

[Master of Laws \(Environmental Law and Sustainable Development\), UNSW](#)

[Master of Business Administration, UNSW](#)

[Fellow of CPA Australia](#)

[Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors \(Order of Merit\)](#)

**.Day job:**...[Mayor, Insurance Company Director.](#)

Are you a member of a political party? **YES**

If **YES**, specify [Liberal Party of Australia – NSW Division](#)

Community/ lobby/ sporting group membership? **YES**

If **YES**, specify

[East Lindfield Community Preschool](#)

[St Barnabas Anglican Roseville East](#)

[National Trust \(NSW\)](#)

Have you endorsed Save Greater Sydney Coalition’s election planning principles? **YES**

Have you signed the YIMBY election pledge? **NO**

Do you believe dwelling supply alone will solve the housing shortage and affordability? **NO**

Do you support Ku-ring-gai Council's legal action against the NSW Government's Transport Orientated Development (TOD) SEPP? **Why or why not?**

Yes. I believe that the policy was created in a manner that does not align with the processes required by law.

I am concerned about the impacts on heritage and environment, without giving Council the opportunity to plan a better outcome.

I am also concerned about the financial impacts for infrastructure delivery, of which a few million has already materialised. This impacts the ratepayer pocket, and I will gladly support spending thousands of dollars on legals to save ratepayers millions of dollars in future infrastructure costs.

Do you support making a new place based LEP to mitigate the adverse impacts of the TOD and Low to Mid-Rise Housing SEPP on Ku-ring-gai? **YES**

Do you support maintaining public Council land for community use? **YES**

Do you support listing Ku-ring-gai GeoRegion as a UNESCO GeoRegion? **YES**

Do you support the protection of Ku-ring-gai's Heritage Conservation Areas? **YES**

Do you support the establishment of a Ku-ring-gai Council Environmental Advisory Group?

Yes I am open to it, though I recognise that it is a decision of the next council.

One issue that we have must consider is that we have multiple advisory groups with overlapping scope, and there may be benefit in reviewing each and determining whether to reconfigure.

Do you support natural turf on Ku-ring-gai's sports and playing fields; or the installation of artificial turf? **Both.** But with artificial, I expect best practice to be followed and natural infill to be used.

And I think it's dangerous to assume natural is perfect, because of the heavy use of pesticides and the use of reinforcing underlays.

### **Expanded Questions:**

*Please keep each answer less than 200 words (longer answers may be cut).*

1. What motivated you to run for office at the Ku-ring-gai local government elections?

In 2017, I was studying to become an Anglican church minister so that I could serve the community in a local context. I had a very low view of politicians. But eight weeks before the 2017 Local Government Elections, I looked up who it is that I should vote for and I decided that I might as well try running for Council myself. If elected, I would serve the community in a different way.

In 2021, I ran for Council because after four years of seeing Ku-ring-gai from the inside, I was convinced that it was not in a good state and needed reform. There was a lack of performance and accountability stemming from the top, and it did not align with my values.

In 2024, I had commenced reform at Ku-ring-gai as Mayor. I am proud of what our staff have started under a new General Manager, and I would look forward to the opportunity to guide further changes at Ku-ring-gai for the benefit of ratepayers. My other reason for running again is that I do not want to step away from this housing situation and put it in the hands of someone with conflicting values.

2. What is your vision for Ku-ring-gai?

I want Ku-ring-gai to be a great place to live for future generations. Access to fresh air, open space, reasonable connection to transport and services. It's possible to hold onto these while having a degree of population uplift, however you can't do it without proper planning.

I want to improve our public interactions when it comes to change notifications, community consultation, news releases, disclosures. As Mayor I have triggered some changes in this space – they are baked into the General Manager’s performance objectives for FY25 and the newly elected Council will be in place to finalise policy in this space.

Ratepayers expect us to make good use of the funds given to Council. This year we have commenced a review of our operations so that we can deliver better quality service with the limited funds that we do have. In the coming year you will start to see a more cost-efficient council that takes customer service and community consultation seriously.

3. What life experiences and professional experiences do you bring that will serve in your role as a councillor?

37 years living and breathing the local area, talking to residents and understanding what it is that matters to them.

Seven years in local government including the most recent year as Mayor.

Two decades in the corporate world in a range of finance, strategy, risk and governance roles.

4. What do you see as the key issues facing Ku-ring-gai?

Planning for Future Homes - We can support more diverse housing without drastic impacts to heritage and environment, but this requires upfront planning while considering appropriate transport links, traffic, parks, access to shops, and other amenities.

Financial Sustainability - We are expected to deliver more services with less money, and this year we have started that journey to see how far we can go.

Environmental Sustainability - Compared to other councils, Ku-ring-gai is quite far progressed with Net Zero initiatives and will continue to do so in 2024-28. The bigger challenge is with reducing the waste that goes to landfill, and especially organic waste. My brochure and website covers this in more detail.

Community Engagement - The groundwork has been done to expand Council's community consultation approach - and the new Councillors will soon be asked to finetune then launch the new policy. We are also about to launch a Youth Advisory Committee to give young people input to local policy.

5. How do you propose to address those issues if elected?

Planning for Future Homes – This is currently underway. Council staff are looking into alternate scenarios to provide for housing while reducing the impacts on heritage and the environment. Members of the public will be consulted on this in early November with the view of having Council make changes to the LEP next year. Also currently reviewed are our controls for dual occupancy, because if Council does not appropriately update our controls by 01 July 2025 then the default minimum lot size of 400sqm per two homes will apply.

Financial Sustainability – Internal reviews of council processes commenced during my time as Mayor and under the new General Manager. So far with the use of new technology we have identified \$100m+ cost savings in the maintenance of our long-term infrastructure

backlog, and we hope to identify other savings for you as residents in the coming months. We want to do more with the limited funds that we have.

Environmental Sustainability – Council staff are already working on this as part of their sustainability program. As councillors we will be there to provide support. I also have further ideas for promoting re-use and reducing waste that goes to landfill, and will be acting on these in the new year.

Community Engagement – As already mentioned, I have laid the groundwork through my guidance as Mayor, and the new Councillors will have the opportunity to finetune then launch the policy. My only regret is not having had the opportunity to launch the process during this council term, as other distractions (e.g. TOD) consumed much of the time of our comms team.

6. How will you ensure community engagement, and participation?

I am readily available via email, phone, social media.

For wider scale interactions with the public on environmental planning, DA, policy, and other changes this is covered by the improvements to community engagement in questions 4 and 5 above. As just one small example, traffic developments used to involve notifications with the nearest neighbours (e.g. 10-20 households) but more recently we have commenced engaging the input of all Ku-ring-gai residents through the YourSay website. On one particular issue re: Clanville x Trafalgar, we only collected 4 responses via post but after launching the online YourSay option we collected another 24 responses.

7. What do you consider are key issues in your Ward?

The TOD precincts and their impact on heritage, environment, infrastructure, and council's financial sustainability.

Traffic issues that are often linked to the uplift in population e.g. Boundary x Archbold, Shirley x Pacific, Lady Game x Delhi, Tryon x Archbold, Shout Ridge, etc. In most instances these are actually State Government matters where Council needs to continue with activism and representation. In other cases where it is a Local Gov matter, we continue to explore solutions and are often constricted by funding.

The provision of a new library and community facilities in Lindfield, open space for Roseville Town Centre, and a new masterplan for the Roseville Chase Bowling site.

8. Are there any additional comments you wish to add?

**Candidate's Name:..Sam Ngai Signature:....Sam**

**Date:..23/08/2024**

Thankyou for your time in answering the questions. Candidate answers will be published on FOKE's website, Enews and sent to members and supporters/resident's lists.

Please attach your election **photo**.