

# Don't be dense, there's nothing to fear

**BEN PIKE**

**DON'T** fear density. That's the message from Planning Minister Anthony Roberts, who has hit back at accusations his government had opened the floodgates to overdevelopment and allowed the creation of high-rise "monstrosities".

With just months until the March 23 state election, overdevelopment, population growth and congestion have become major pressure points for the Berejiklian Government.

But Mr Roberts said increasing population density with infrastructure was nothing to worry about of itself.

"Some of the most liveable suburbs in Sydney are also some of the most dense, including Elizabeth Bay, Paddington and Kirribilli," he said. "We do not have to have a city



**Anthony Roberts.**

where everything is around the Sydney CBD itself. That is our legacy. When I was at university in the '90s we would have friends travelling from Penrith to Broadway because that was the only place where they could go to university.

"Now we have universities in Blacktown and Penrith where people are three minutes away from university."

However, NSW Opposition planning spokeswoman Tania Mihailuk said the government had been asleep at the wheel.

"The Liberals have had ample opportunity to reform the planning system ... at best they've tinkered around the edges while opening the floodgates to rampant overdevelopment in many parts of Sydney," she said. "Sydney is a growing global city but under this government's watch there has been absolutely no effort put into managing this growth."

Ms Mihailuk blamed the government for allowing "monstrosities", where apartment blocks crowd the footpath and become an eyesore instead of a centrepiece.