



MEDIA RELEASE

The Hon Frank Sartor MP

Minister for Planning

Minister for Redfern Waterloo

Minister for the Arts

4 February 2008

VISION FOR NEWCASTLE DELIVERED: 10,000 NEW JOBS

State Plan Priority E5: Jobs closer to home

State Plan Priority E6: Housing affordability

State Plan Priority E4: Better environmental outcomes

State Plan Priority E8: More people using parks, sporting and recreational facilities

The NSW Government has delivered a 25-year vision for Newcastle which is designed to generate 10,000 new jobs in the city centre and thousands of new homes.

Planning Minister Frank Sartor announced the Newcastle City Centre Local Environmental Plan (LEP) had been gazetted and would help to revitalise the city centre.

Mr Sartor thanked the community for its input into the Cities Taskforce project, which aims to boost economic, employment and housing opportunities in six regional cities outside of the Sydney CBD.

Plans for all six cities are now complete – including for Gosford, Liverpool, Parramatta, Wollongong and Penrith.

“The revitalisation of Newcastle is a key part of the Cities Taskforce initiative,” Mr Sartor said.

“This plan is designed to improve local job, housing and lifestyle opportunities in the Newcastle city centre and ensure it continues as the economic capital of the Lower Hunter region.”

The Department of Planning, in conjunction with Newcastle City Council, developed four key draft documents which were released for community comment.

All four documents have now been finalised, including a City Centre Vision, Development Control Plan and Civic Improvement Plan.

Member for Newcastle Jodi McKay said Novocastrians had played an active role in crafting this vision and guiding the future of their city.

“These plans will make Newcastle an even better place to live and work,” Ms McKay said.

“Together we have crafted a vision that will not only generate jobs and new housing options, but will also maintain the integrity of Newcastle’s heritage precincts.”

Newcastle Lord Mayor John Tate said he was pleased to see the NSW Department of Planning incorporated changes endorsed by Newcastle City Council as a result of the public exhibition period.

“During the exhibition and consultation phase, the community was very clear about wanting reductions to height and bulk of buildings in some city precincts,” Cr Tate said.

“Council recommended a number of changes to the draft document and these have been adopted in the final plan.”

Key elements of the city centre plan include:

- 10,000 new jobs in the city centre by the year 2031;
- 6,500 new residents in the city centre by 2031;
- Newcastle to become a ‘learning city’ with Newcastle University and TAFE strengthening their existing campuses at or near the civic and Newcastle West areas;
- Architectural competitions to ensure the design excellence for new developments in the city centre;
- New focus on development around Wickham Railway Station; and
- Revitalisation of ‘West End’ of Newcastle while retaining and protecting heritage values in the city east precinct.

The Newcastle City Centre LEP has undergone some minor changes following public exhibition including:

- Car parking will be permitted above-ground due to a number of geotechnical restrictions on underground parking such as mine subsidence and a high water table;
- The maximum height of buildings in the civic centre area, bounded by Derby, King, Auckland and Hunter Streets, has been reduced from 45 to 30 metres to protect nearby heritage buildings and avoid overshadowing of Christie and Civic Parks; and
- Maximum floor space controls have been reduced in city centre blocks adjacent to residential areas in Cooks Hill and Hamilton South, to help protect local amenity.