



NEWS RELEASE

The Hon. Kristina Keneally MP

Member for Heffron
Minister for Planning
Minister for Redfern Waterloo

The Hon. Jodi McKay MP

Minister for Tourism
Minister for the Hunter
Minister for Small Business
Minister for Science and Medical Research
Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Cancer)

Friday 5 December, 2008

NEW HOMES AND JOBS FOR THE LOWER HUNTER

The NSW Government has approved the rezoning of a major new residential development at North Cooranbong that will deliver up to **2,500 new homes and 5,000 jobs to the Lower Hunter**.

Planning Minister, Kristina Keneally, said the North Cooranbong residential project would provide more affordable housing and up to **\$2 billion in commercial investment** for the Lower Hunter.

"The rezoned land will enable future development of up to 2,500 dwellings in a single major residential project, with the potential to generate almost \$2 billion in economic activity and create close to 5,000 jobs over the 20 year lifespan of development," Ms Keneally said.

"This vibrant new community will be home to up to 6,550 people as well as a commercial and retail centre at North Cooranbong."

Ms Keneally said the rezoning continues the delivery of new housing lots to the Hunter Region in line with the Lower Hunter Regional Strategy (2006).

"More than 10,000 lots have been rezoned for housing in the Hunter Region since the release of our final regional strategy in October 2006," Ms Keneally said.

"The North Cooranbong project will provide zoned land to accommodate 3% of the total 69,000 dwellings to be located in Greenfield areas identified in the Lower Hunter Regional Strategy."

Minister for the Hunter Jodi McKay said that today's announcement was a big win for the local area.

"This is exactly the kind of project we want to see in the Hunter, delivering more jobs, more investment, and more homes," Ms McKay said.

"The Hunter region is growing, and an additional 2,500 dwellings will help keep homes affordable.

"We are well ahead of the projected annual rate for identifying and rezoning new release land for the market, and will continue to push for the release of land in the Hunter region.

"I want to see more projects like this which attract people to the area, so they can earn local dollars which contribute to the local economy."

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NEW SOUTH WALES

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Member for Lake Macquarie, Greg Piper, welcomed the announcement and is pleased the project supports the development of Morisset as a major emerging retail and commercial centre.

"There is a responsibility to provide for much needed housing and at the same time deliver employment and community infrastructure in the Southlake area," Mr Piper said.

"This project will do just that by adding significantly to residential land availability, providing specific affordable housing options, creating jobs for current and future residents and delivering important infrastructure including road and intersection upgrades, parks, playgrounds and cycleways.

"This will be good for everyone, particularly young families and those starting out with their first home.

"The approval by the Minister, and the Voluntary Planning Agreement with Council will also ensure that some 120 hectares - over one third of the land, will be retained for conservation purposes.

"This is a great outcome with this land having the highest level of conservation zoning under the Lake Macquarie Local Environmental Plan 2004."

Ms Keneally said the North Cooranbong project would comprise:

- Residential Zone: low density housing of 182 hectares;
- Residential Urban Living Zone: medium and high density housing of 19.25 hectares;
- Urban Centre (Core) Zone: commercial, retail, recreational and housing of 0.15 hectares;
- Urban Centre (Support) Zone: a commercial hub of 2.6 hectares of land;
- Infrastructure Zone: including 3 hectares of land for a primary school;
- Open Space Zone: five separate areas, with 14.7 hectares zoned for recreation needs.

The Department of Planning is currently considering a concept plan for the North Cooranbong site and a proposed voluntary infrastructure agreement between the developer and NSW Government is on exhibition until December 12.

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