Win stadium expansion supported

The NSW Government has today approved the rezoning of part of a street near WIN Stadium, to assist the proposed Western Grandstand extension.

The rezoning was approved within just three months of lodgement with the Department of Planning, under the new ‘gateway’ system for local environmental plans which has helped streamline the approval process.

Minister for Planning Tony Kelly said a portion of Harbour Street has been rezoned from mixed use to tourist uses under Wollongong Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2009.

The rezoning will allow the Southern Region Joint Regional Planning Panel to be able to consider the development application for second stage of the proposed Western Grandstand.

The tourist zone is used for WIN Stadium and the Wollongong Entertainment Centre. The rezoning of Harbour Street allows uses associated with the stadium and entertainment centre to also be considered over the road reserve.

Member for Wollongong and Parliamentary Secretary for State and Regional Development, Noreen Hay, said the NSW Government had provided $29 million in funding towards the Western Grandstand.

“This funding was designed to increase seating capacity and modernise facilities to ensure that WIN Stadium remains the premier sporting venue for the Illawarra,” Ms Hay said.

“The new grandstand will provide employment opportunities during construction and long term employment associated with a conference centre,” she said.

Mr Kelly said the LEP was completed within a three-month timeframe, which included community consultation.

“One of the advantages of the ‘gateway’ plan-making system introduced in July 2009 is that it introduces benchmarks for the completion of key steps in the assessment process, by either the Department or local council,” he said.

“It also allows simpler LEPs to receive a fast-tracked approval process, instead of the previous ‘one size fits all’ system.

“Thanks to the system, and the efforts of Wollongong City Council and the Department, there’s been a speedy turnaround for this LEP.”