

Wednesday 14 December 2011

Feedback sought on proposed West Menai rezoning

Public feedback is being sought for an extended period on major plans to rezone land for new homes, employment and conservation in the West Menai area in the Sutherland Shire.

The NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure today exhibited rezoning plans for the 865-hectare site lodged by the Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council.

The Land Council proposes to develop 2,700 new homes, 70 hectares of employment land and 514 hectares of conservation areas on a site it refers to as "Heathcote Ridge".

As a first step in its development plans, the Land Council is seeking that the NSW Government support its rezoning.

The plans are on public exhibition from Wednesday 14 December 2011 to Wednesday 29 February 2012. Submissions received during the public exhibition period, along with the proponent's response to submissions, will be made available on the Department's website.

Department Deputy Director-General Tom Gellibrand said the exhibition was an important opportunity for people to have their say.

"We normally exhibit such schemes for a month but are running this exhibition for two and half months after requests from the community and local councillors at a community reference group meeting on 7 December," he said.

"The Department proposes to hold at least two further community reference group meetings next year, and we understand the proponent is also proposing to hold public forums.

"We've also set up a working party with Liverpool and Sutherland councils and other government agencies to look at this site."

The NSW Government is investigating the potential rezoning of this site due to a number of reasons, including:

- Its regional importance and the fact it could impact on two council areas (Sutherland and Liverpool)
- Its proximity to sensitive land-uses of State significance (the Holsworthy defence site and the ANSTO research reactor)
- It contains threatened species and endangered ecological communities
- It has a long history of proposed urban development, including being listed on the Metropolitan Development Program and listed in the draft South subregional strategy for employment purposes

Most of the Heathcote Ridge site is currently zoned Rural (Future Urban) under Sutherland Shire's Local Environmental Plan 2000.

If the rezoning is supported, future development applications for the site will need to be lodged with Sutherland Shire Council before any subdivisions or building can take place.

The Land Council is also undertaking Strategic Assessment to assess the potential impacts of its proposed development on matters of national environmental significance under the relevant Commonwealth laws.

The exhibition will therefore also include a draft Strategic Impact Assessment report and Heathcote Ridge Program report for public comment and review.

The “Heathcote Ridge” site is 25km south west of the Sydney CBD and includes parts of the suburbs of Holsworthy, Menai, Lucas Heights and Barden Ridge. It has been known as the “West Menai” area for many years.

The documents relating to proposal may be viewed during business hours at:

- **Department of Planning and Infrastructure** – Information Centre, 23-33 Bridge Street, Sydney
- **Sutherland Shire Council** – Administration Centre, 4-20 Eton Street, Sutherland
- **Sutherland Library** – 30-36 Belmont Street, Sutherland
- **Menai Library** – 34-40 Allison Crescent, Menai
- **Liverpool Library** – Library Plaza, 170 George Street, Liverpool

A copy of the proposal documentation may also be viewed on the “On Exhibition” page of the Department’s website <http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au>

Submissions can be:

- Lodged online at <http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au> (then search for the project);
- Emailed to plan_comment@planning.nsw.gov.au;
- Faxed to (02) 9228 6455; or
- Posted to Major Projects Assessment, Department of Planning and Infrastructure, GPO Box 39, SYDNEY NSW 2001;

Media contact: Laurel-Lee Roderick on (02) 9228 6128

NOTE: The Department of Planning and Infrastructure is issuing this media release to encourage the community to take part in the planning process. However, it is the role of the proponent (either through its documents published on our website or otherwise) to provide further specific details about the proposal.