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CALDERWOOD STATE SIGNIFICANT SITE LISTING & CONCEPT PLAN APPROVAL

Illawarra’s housing supply has received a significant boost with the approval of a $410 million concept plan for Calderwood that includes 4,800 new homes and 50 hectares of employment land.

NSW Minister for Planning, Tony Kelly, announced today the 700 hectare Calderwood site has also been listed as a State significant site.

“After extensive consultation with the community, including a two-month exhibition of the plans earlier this year, the NSW Government has finalised a planning framework for the site,” the Minister said.

“The State significant site listing recognises Calderwood’s potential to support a large number of new homes to help meet the significant demand for housing in the Illawarra, and rezones it for that purpose.

“We have also approved Delfin Lend Lease’s concept plan, which sets out the vision for how Calderwood will be developed over a period of at least 20 years.”

The concept plan includes:

- Residential land for around 4,800 homes;
- 50 hectares of mixed use land for retail, commercial and light industrial use;
- A multi-purpose community centre with library;
- Land for two public primary schools and one public high school;
- One private school;
- Up to three child care centres;
- Local, district and city-wide parks, riparian corridors and environmental protection lands; and
- New internal roads and upgrades to existing roads and intersections.

Mr Kelly said areas of high conservation would be protected and more than 70 per cent of native vegetation across the site would be retained.

“The areas with the most significant vegetation – Johnson’s Spur and the riparian corridors along Macquarie Rivulet and Marshall Mount Creek – will be preserved as open space, with very limited development,” the Minister said.

“The concept plan increases the protection of these areas for flora and habitat for native fauna, while also improving the ecological links across the site.”

While the concept plan provides the vision for the site, various stages of development will need to be addressed through separate applications.

A project application for the first stage, which includes 320 residential lots and 10 mixed use lots, is still being assessed by the Department of Planning.

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Mr Kelly said approval of the Calderwood concept plan will not impact on the proposed staging or timing of the West Dapto release area which remains the priority land release area for the Illawarra.

“Calderwood was identified in the Illawarra Regional Strategy as a potential urban release area,” the Minister said.

“The Growth Centres Commission found in 2008 there may be merit in the early release of Calderwood to increase the rate of housing construction and deliver a mix of affordable housing choices as quickly as possible.

“The population in the Illawarra has grown more quickly than what the regional strategy forecast, and this means greater demand for housing.

“The West Dapto land release is moving forward and Wollongong City Council’s work on key access roads, which is being assisted by a $26 million interest-free loan from the State Government, is underway.

“Work has started on excavation, stormwater services, retaining walls and construction of a new roundabout, while work on the first of five bridges is expected to begin in February.”

Delfin Lend Lease was requested to make number of changes to its Calderwood plans, in response to public feedback and a thorough assessment of the project, including:

- General residential development not being allowed on an isolated part of the site between Hazelton Creek, Macquarie Rivulet and the Illawarra Highway, due to flooding concerns. This land will be zoned as rural landscape, with a minimum lot size of 40 hectares;
- Changing the zoning of land on the south-west fringe from general residential to large residential lots, with a minimum lot size of 2000sqm, to provide a transition to adjoining rural properties;
- A reduction in the amount of land adjoining the Illawarra Highway that is being zoned for mixed use retail, commercial and residential development (B4). A height limit of nine metres has been imposed, after a council request for the height limit to be consistent with adjoining areas;
- Retaining the 18 metre height limit for the mixed use retail, commercial and residential development zone around the town and village centres, to reflect similar zones in the Wollongong and Shellharbour local government areas;
- Zoning playing fields for public recreation with a view to transferring them to Council. Management of environmental conservation and environmental management land will need to be addressed in project applications for subdivision stages; and
- Zoning riparian corridors as environmental conservation land, while an environmental management zone will apply to tributaries, rather than the infrastructure zone initially proposed.

Mr Kelly said Lend Lease will be required to pay contributions towards the provision of local and State infrastructure.

“A Voluntary Planning Agreement negotiated with Delfin Lend Lease to collect contributions for State road upgrades and set aside land for schools is currently on exhibition until February 7, 2011,” the Minister said.