Chatswood project to provide jobs and housing close to transport

The NSW Government has approved a $134 million commercial and residential project in the Chatswood CBD which will provide more than 300 ongoing jobs and 295 residential apartments in a well connected location, close to public transport.

Minister for Planning Tony Kelly said Chatswood was identified as a major centre in the Metropolitan Plan for Sydney 2036.

“This project makes a positive contribution to the Chatswood commercial centre and as well as towards the NSW Government’s target of 9,000 new jobs in Chatswood by 2036,” Mr Kelly said.

“The site on Railway St is located around 250 metres from the recently constructed Chatswood Transport Interchange and is well serviced by both rail and bus services to the Sydney CBD and other centres.”

The approval allows for construction of a 43-storey building, including:

- 4,876 square metres of commercial space to support an estimated 320 jobs;
- 295 residential apartments;
- Seven levels of basement parking for 332 vehicles; and
- A 1,867 square metre landscaped area and pedestrian link under the railway line, creating a total of 3,500 square metres of public open space.

Mr Kelly said the Department of Planning had subjected the project to a rigorous merit-based assessment, and had given close consideration to the need for commercial space in Chatswood. A total of 136 conditions have been imposed as part of the approval.

“The Department considered the findings contained in three economic consultants reports – two commissioned by the proponent and one commissioned by Willoughby Council – and concluded that there was no scope to significantly increase commercial floor space in the development,” Mr Kelly said.

Based on figures from the Transport Data Centre, included in the report commissioned by Willoughby Council, only a very small portion of future jobs in Chatswood – around 380 jobs - will be provided in the office precinct between 2006 and 2031.

“The commercial floor space of this project will provide capacity for approximately 320 jobs, or 90 per cent of the Transport Data Centre’s forecast for Chatswood’s job growth in the office precinct to 2031,” Mr Kelly said.

“While the site had the potential to support much more commercial office space, there are currently high commercial vacancy rates in Chatswood and the market is not expected to improve in the next 10 to 15 years.

“The approved project provides a good mix of office floor space and residential apartments which will add to the vibrancy of Chatswood and create an immediate public benefit on the site, which might have otherwise remained vacant for many years.”

Mr Kelly said the proponent had provided more than 1,000 square metres of additional commercial space, which was a requirement by the Department in response to feedback during the public consultation period, and had also incorporated additional commercial uses on the ground floor.
He said the Department had also given careful consideration to other issues, such as height, potential loss of views and overshadowing.

“The building will be located with other tall buildings in the core of Chatswood CBD, and provides a transition in height from the approved Chatswood Transport Interchange towers, stepping down to lower scale development surrounding the CBD,” Mr Kelly said.

“The new building will have no shadowing impacts on nearby residential buildings, and will create only minimal additional shadowing of Chatswood Mall over the year.”

Mr Kelly said the height of the building had allowed the project to maximise the public open space being provided, while avoiding any significant impact on surrounding buildings.

“The pedestrian link and landscaped area will provide a substantial open space to encourage public enjoyment of the Pacific Place Precinct, and that will be a very positive outcome for the community.”

Mr Kelly said he had not supported the proponent’s request for a reduction in the developer contributions it must pay Willoughby Council. The proponent will be required to pay around $4 million in contributions towards the provision of local infrastructure, in line with Council’s contributions plan.