MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR INVESTMENT TO BRING INTEGRITY BACK TO PLANNING IN NSW

The NSW Government has affirmed its commitment to a monumental overhaul of the NSW Planning System to restore fairness and integrity in planning and to directly address the severe housing shortfall in NSW.

Today the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, Brad Hazzard welcomed the 2011-12 Budget allocation of $37.1 million in an effort to stimulate housing growth and repair the disastrous housing deficit left by NSW Labor.

“These funds will help fund infrastructure in development areas and assist councils in completing their Local Environmental Plans (LEPs) which provide strategic direction for housing growth across the state.

Mr Hazzard said $7.5 million over two years had also been allocated to deliver a planning system that is simple, fair and transparent.

“This multi-million dollar allocation will fund the most ambitious program of community consultation undertaken in thirty years – and support the Government’s 18-month planning review.

“For the first time in three decades residents, industry and business will have their say on how the NSW Planning System operates.

“This Government has proven it’s committed to delivering a planning system free from corruption, complication and frustration.

“Regional communities will particularly benefit from this Budget with a $5.1 million allocation over three years to support the Government’s Strategic Regional Land Use Plans.

“These plans will end decades of dispute between farmers and developers by taking a consultative approach to managing competing land use.

“Plans for priority regions such as the Upper Hunter and New England North West are already underway and this funding will ensure plans are developed across the state.

“Families can rest assured this Government is committed to protecting the basic rights of future generations.

“A further $12.9 million over three years will support the Government in bringing independence and integrity back to the Development Application approval process.

“The funding will provide for the ongoing work of the independent Planning and Assessment Commission (PAC) and ensure the Government is at arms-length from private developer approvals.
“This will guarantee planning in NSW is never again subject to the backroom deals characteristic of the former Labor Government,” said Mr Hazzard.

Other Planning and Infrastructure allocations include:

- **$25 million** for the Hunter Development Corporation to assist in developing a city campus for the University of Newcastle
- **$6 million** (over four years) for the NSW Coastline Cycleway Program
- **$4.6 million** (over two years) to continue the work of the Joint Regional Planning Panels
- Additional **$4.3 million** for the development of an electronic housing code.

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