

Friday, 15 June 2012

**Thornton North urban release area**  
**Response given to Newcastle Herald**

**There is apparently a cap on the number of lots that can be developed in the Thornton land release area before a rail bridge is constructed. There are 10 land owners, who each have a quota under the cap. Can the department please clarify the existence/status of the cap? Has anything been resolved in respect of the cap?**

*Department of Planning and Infrastructure response:*

A cap is currently in place in the Thornton North urban release area restricting the number of lots that can be developed. This cap was imposed by the Government in response to agency concerns about the capacity of the existing bridge and in recognition that the construction of an additional two lane bridge (resulting in a separate two-lane bridge for each direction) would be necessary to allow the full release of 5,000 lots at Thornton North.

The cap was distributed on a pro-rata basis to the landowners within the first stage land release area and would need to be removed prior to the approval of any further subdivision applications by Maitland City Council.

Currently, the cap for Thornton North is set at 1,400 lots.

However the department is currently considering alternative arrangements in consultation with Thornton North landholders which may allow for the cap to be lifted. A decision is expected shortly.

Meanwhile, the NSW Government is seeking to encourage housing growth across all regions of NSW including the Lower Hunter, and is currently reviewing the arrangements for State infrastructure contributions across NSW with the aim of encouraging housing delivery.