

Wednesday, 21 March 2012

Draft policies to encourage quality development at Catherine Hill Bay

The public is being invited to comment on two draft policies for Catherine Hill Bay in the Lower Hunter region, which are being publicly exhibited by the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure.

The draft development control plan (DCP) and proposed amendment to the State Environment Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) – known as the Codes SEPP - would establish a framework to assess and determine residential development applications on the Coastal Hamlets site.

The changes would give greater power to the local council, requiring proposed dwellings for the Catherine Hill Bay area to be subject to a full development application and assessment by Council against a site-specific development control plan. Homes would not be eligible for a fast-tracked approval as complying development under the NSW Housing Code.

A residential subdivision for up to 550 lots at Catherine Hill Bay, proposed by Coastal Hamlets Pty Ltd, was approved by the independent Planning Assessment Commission (PAC) on 13 May 2011. The approval was challenged in the Land and Environment Court and the matter was settled through mediation in October 2011 without the need for a court hearing.

As a result of the mediation, the Department of Planning and Infrastructure agreed to make a recommendation to the Minister that the Catherine Hill Bay area be excluded from the complying development provisions in the State Environment Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes).

The amendment to the Codes SEPP being exhibited is also proposed to apply to a second site at Catherine Hill Bay, known as Middle Camp, meaning future proposals to construct houses on the site would also be assessed by the local council. The department is currently assessing Coal and Allied's concept plan application, and proposed State significant site (SSS) listing for Middle Camp.

The department has prepared a revised draft DCP for the Coastal Hamlets site, in response to the outcomes of the mediation and feedback received from the Planning Assessment Commission (PAC) in its May 2011 report on the draft DCP.

The draft DCP now on exhibition aims to promote quality urban design, while recognising the environmental and heritage features of the site, and includes requirements for:

- Development to adhere to the development footprint and precincts, land uses, road layout, subdivision pattern, pedestrian access, public open space and drainage corridors specified in the structure plan;
- A 50m wide "green ridge" for the full length of Montefiore Street;
- Only low scale development, screened from view, within the view corridor of the existing Catherine Hill Bay village;

- The creation of a network of open spaces and recreation facilities and a coastal walkway/ reserve adjacent to the cliff edge, connecting Middle Camp Beach to the Moonee Headland; and
- Specified controls for the Washery Heritage and Wallarah House precincts to regulate things such as height and setback.

A copy of the draft DCP and SEPP amendment can be viewed on the department's website, by visiting www.planning.nsw.gov.au/onexhibition.

The documents are on exhibition from **Wednesday 21 March** until **Thursday 19 April** at:

- **Department of Planning and Infrastructure** - Information Centre, 23-33 Bridge Street, Sydney;
- **Department of Planning and Infrastructure** – Central Coast office, Level 3, 107 Mann Street, Gosford;
- **Department of Planning and Infrastructure** – Hunter office, Price Waterhouse Coopers Centre, Level 2, 26 Honeysuckle Drive, Newcastle; and
- **Lake Macquarie Council** – 126-138 Main Road, Speers Point.

Submissions can be:

- Emailed to plan_comment@planning.nsw.gov.au;
- Faxed to (02) 9228 6570; or
- Posted to Director, Strategic Assessment, Department of Planning and Infrastructure, GPO Box 39, SYDNEY NSW 2001.

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