



Barry O'Farrell MP Premier of NSW Minister for Western Sydney

MEDIA RELEASE

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PLANNING WHITE PAPER RELEASED: COMMUNITIES AND CONSULTATION AT THE HEART OF PLANNING

Communities across NSW will shape the future of their streets, suburbs and regions and benefit from faster development application decisions under the biggest overhaul of the State's planning system in over 30 years.

NSW Premier Barry O'Farrell and Minister for Planning and Infrastructure Brad Hazzard today released the Planning White Paper which outlines how the planning system will be transformed.

"Under the new system, communities and local councils will come together to plan for their streets, suburbs and regions whether it's housing, jobs or infrastructure," Mr O'Farrell said.

"This greater emphasis on upfront strategic planning will ensure homes are delivered affordably, people can work close to where they live and infrastructure is guaranteed to support growth.

"The NSW Liberals & Nationals gave a commitment to return more powers to local councils – this package delivers.

"This plan will drive economic growth and take the politics out of the planning system.

"The new system means there will be genuine consultation, providing certainty for the community and investors.

"We are now seeking feedback before this draft legislation is debated in Parliament later this year.

"For more than 30 years communities have been increasingly locked out of a planning system that was complex and did not grow with the population of this great State."

Mr Hazzard said the new planning system will be based on five key elements:

- **Community participation** – Upfront community participation will become a legal right and will be backed up by a Community Participation Charter enshrined in law, which is an Australian first.
- **Infrastructure** – Delivering infrastructure alongside growth and providing a more certain and consistent way of funding infrastructure.

- **Strategic planning** – Better strategies, developed early in the process with the community, to guide the best places for growth and identify the areas to be protected from development.
- **Cultural change** – A planning system that is easy to access with timely results for customers.
- **Development assessment** – An easy-to-use system that provides certainty for everyday applications such as family homes, extensions and small businesses.

“Within five years, we are aiming for 80 per cent of applications to go through a faster code assessment process, which has the potential to save the community and business around \$174 million a year through reduced delays,” Mr Hazzard said.

Some of the other transforming elements of the new system include:

- A Community Participation Charter which guarantees community participation in the planning process. Councils and communities will need to develop Community Participation Plans which are consistent with this Charter.
- The planning system will move into the 21st Century with a ‘one-stop shop’ NSW Government electronic portal will enable people to comment on 3D interactive models of planning proposals and find all relevant planning controls in one place.
- Comprehensive Growth Infrastructure Plans will be prepared alongside major planning changes – NSW is the first state or territory in Australia to take this approach.
- Introduction of a far more rigorous approach to building standards.
- The State’s development contribution system will be made more robust and accountable, with councils required to spend the money on local infrastructure within three years to ensure infrastructure is delivered when it is needed.
- Additional funds will be made available for schools, regional roads, open space and stormwater/drainage – including in existing suburbs - through the new regional infrastructure contribution system. Costs will be more evenly shared by new developments in existing suburbs and in new land release areas.

“Many of these changes are ground-breaking and in some instances an Australian-first,” Mr Hazzard.

“It turns the current planning system on its head by ensuring communities create strong long-term plans for suburbs and regions, and spend less time on debilitating site-specific development wars.”

The publication of the White Paper follows feedback received on a Green Paper, which was released in July 2012 and outlined policy options.

The White Paper is available at www.planning.nsw.gov.au/newplanningsystem and will be on exhibition until Friday 28 June 2013.

MEDIA:

**Mark Tobin or Cameron Hamilton (02) 9228 5239 (Premier)
Leonie Lamont 0407 591 926 (Minister Hazzard)**