HAVE YOUR SAY ON THE FUTURE OF THE ILLAWARRA

Illawarra residents have the chance to shape their future with the release of The Illawarra over the next 20 years – a Discussion Paper.

With more than 52,000 more people expected to call the Illawarra home over the next 20 years, planning needs to start now.

“From Werri Beach to Woonona or anywhere in between, this is a great chance for all Illawarra residents to have a say on housing, transport, infrastructure and environmental protection,” Planning and Infrastructure Minister Brad Hazzard said.

“This discussion paper is the first step in preparing a new Regional Growth Plan in line with our new planning system that will create a strategic vision and framework for balanced growth in the Illawarra,” Mr Hazzard said.

The Illawarra discussion paper focuses on some of the challenges facing the region and seeks the public’s feedback on how to:
• Secure more housing;
• Provide jobs in emerging knowledge and service industries including ICT, engineering, health, education and port-related development;
• Support the growth of the key centres of Wollongong, Warrawong, Kiama, Dapto and Shellharbour City Centre;
• Make it easier to travel within the Illawarra and surrounding areas; and
• Balance development with the protection of the environment and heritage.

Minister for the Illawarra, John Ajaka said the discussion paper highlights that providing jobs for the Illawarra is a significant challenge, with higher unemployment figures and 17 per cent of the region’s workers commuting to Sydney for work.

“We need to recognise the importance of emerging and new industries in the Illawarra – such as information communications technology, engineering and port-related operations – while continuing to recognize the importance of traditional industries, such as steel making and mining,” Mr Ajaka said.

Member for Kiama, Gareth Ward said the community will be invited to attend consultation sessions to have their say.

“This consultative approach is in line with the Government’s commitment to open, upfront engagement with communities under the new planning system, as outlined in the White Paper,” Mr Ward said.

MEDIA: Chi Tranter 0439 634 032
Member for Heathcote, Lee Evans said the Discussion Paper will be on exhibition until Monday 11 November and the community can get involved in many ways.

"Jump online, send an email, view the video – the most important thing to do is have your say on the future of the Illawarra – no idea is too small, or too big," Mr Evans said.

Submissions can be lodged via:
• Online discussion forums – www.planning.nsw.gov.au/illawarra
• Email – illawarra@planning.nsw.gov.au
• Post – Department of Planning and Infrastructure, Wollongong Office, PO Box 5475, Wollongong NSW 2500