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NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY CITY CENTRE EXPANSION APPROVED

Minister for Planning Pru Goward today announced planning approval of the University of Newcastle’s proposal to expand into the city centre with a $95 million, cutting-edge education and business precinct.

“The NSW Government’s plans to breathe life back into Newcastle have caught the attention of all kinds of organisations, including tertiary education,” Ms Goward said.

“The NSW Liberal and Nationals Government has invested heavily in Newcastle, including $25 million towards this landmark project.

“The new campus will be one of the first projects to be completed in the CBD since the NSW Government released the Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy in 2012.

“This is a true urban renewal project, with a significant portion making use of a disused site while protecting and regenerating the heritage-listed University House.”

The approval means the University’s ‘NeW Space’ proposal can proceed, including:

• building a 10 storey education building in the Newcastle city centre, including lecture theatres, a library, teaching and learning spaces, and office and retail areas;
• refurbishing University House (formerly NESCA House);
• establishing pedestrian walking routes around the development and between the new building and University House;
• expanding the existing Laman Street car park; and
• various landscaping and work on utilities and surrounding streets.

“The new campus will bring increased numbers of new students and staff to the CBD every day, which is exactly the kind of injection of people and activity that will help stimulate the local economy and accelerate the city’s rejuvenation,” Ms Goward said.

Acting Vice-Chancellor of the University of Newcastle, Professor Andrew Parfitt said the planning approval will pave the way for work to start on the project.
“We welcome today’s announcement by the NSW Government regarding planning approval for the University of Newcastle’s landmark city building, NeWSpace. This is a transformational project for our University and city and it will deliver sector-leading innovation in education and benefits for business, industry and the community across Newcastle,” Mr Parfitt said.

“As we move into the next stage of this significant project, we look forward to working closely with our stakeholders to deliver an outstanding asset for the future of Newcastle.”

Liberal Candidate for Newcastle Karen Howard said the approval represents yet another example of a resurgent city looking toward the future.

“The education community is already embracing the project, with the new city centre location set to host the 2016 Australian Medical Students’ Association Global Health Conference late next year, shortly after the new campus is expected to be complete,” Ms Howard said.

“And of course Newcastle Light Rail will play an important part in how people travel to the University, contributing to a reduction in traffic and reducing the need for excessive car parking.”

To view the Department of Planning and Environment’s assessment of the proposal, visit the Major Projects website at www.majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au.

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