NEW SYDNEY PLANNING PANEL CHAIRS ANNOUNCED

Community and business leaders have been appointed to Chair the Sydney Planning Panels to help build on their strengths to make decisions on major development proposals.

The Chairs will commence their roles today following a rigorous selection process.

The Department of Planning and Environment’s Executive Director of Regions, Steve Murray, said the new Chairs will bring a high level of expertise to the panels.

“After careful consideration, the Sydney Planning Panels have been appointed new Chairs, having demonstrated that they have the skills, experience and acumen that makes them the top picks for the job,” Mr Murray said.

“The decisions made by the Sydney Planning Panels will be independent and based on the merits of the proposals that are put before them.”

The new Planning Panel Chairs are:

- The Hon. Carl Scully – Sydney Eastern City Planning Panel
- Mr Justin Doyle – Sydney Western City Planning Panel
- Professor Helen Lochhead – Sydney South Planning Panel
- Mr Peter Debnam – Sydney North Planning Panel

The new Chair of the Sydney Central Planning Panel is in the final stages of appointment and is expected to be determined in the coming weeks. In the interim other members of this Panel will act as the Chair.

The five independent Sydney Planning Panels make decisions about significant development proposals in their region.

The new chairs have been appointed because the roles of Sydney Planning Panel Chair and District Commissioner of the Greater Sydney Commission have been separated.

“The separation of these roles will allow the district commissioners to focus on setting the strategic direction for their district through the Greater Sydney Commission’s district plans,” Mr Murray said.

“The new Chairs will also be able to focus entirely on the detailed development proposals that come before them for decision by the planning panels.”
The appointments followed a comprehensive, state-wide expression of interest process and consideration of 70 applications by a selection panel.

The planning panels are independent bodies that make decisions on significant developments and modification applications.

Currently, the projects they assess are valued over $20 million but from the 1st March that threshold will be increased to $30 million.

The panels also act as the relevant planning authority in some decisions when directed by the Minister for Planning or the Greater Sydney Commission, undertake rezoning reviews, and provide advice on planning and development matters when requested.

Media: mediaunit@planning.nsw.gov.au

Biographies

The Hon. Carl Scully – Sydney Eastern City Planning Panel

A former minister of the NSW parliament, Mr Scully’s career spans more than 30 years in the public and private sectors.

He practised law for seven years before embarking on a 17-year political career. For almost 12 of those years he served in ministerial positions involved in the delivery of major infrastructure projects including the portfolios of public works and services, roads and transport, and housing.

He returned to the private sector in 2007 where he has worked for WorleyParsons, most recently as director of International Business Development. In 2015, he was appointed as Chair of the NSW Mine Safety Advisory Council.

Mr Justin Doyle – Sydney Western City Planning Panel

Mr Doyle is a lawyer focused on planning and environment law, with 11 years’ experience as a practicing barrister, and 10 years before that as a solicitor.

He has been the lead counsel for a team of barristers acting for the Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure in cases on the land at Badgerys Creek to allow for the development of Western Sydney Airport.

His work also includes land contamination issues and the redevelopment of the former James Hardie asbestos plant which includes negotiations with the Department of Lands and Parramatta Council.

Professor Helen Lochhead – Sydney South Planning Panel

For more than 20 years Prof Lochhead has combined university teaching with her practice as an architect specialising in complex large-scale projects.

She is currently Dean of the Faculty of the Built Environment at the University of NSW. Prior to that her career focused on the planning and delivery of major projects
ranging from a five-year city improvements program for the City of Sydney to major urban regeneration projects.

Prof Lochhead has extensive experience on university, government and industry committees, panels and boards, most notably as the National Board of the Australian Institute of Architects, Central Sydney Planning Committee, Sydney Harbour Design Review Panel and the NSW Heritage Council.

Mr Peter Debnam – Sydney North Planning Panel

Mr Debnam served as leader of the opposition of the NSW parliament as well as holding several shadow ministerial positions including shadow minister for planning and urban affairs and housing from 1997 to 1999.

Before politics Mr Debnam had broad management experience starting with his military service followed by business development and general management in the aerospace and rural service industries. He completed an MBA in 1993.

Since leaving politics in 2011, Mr Debnam has contributed to charities and not for profit organisations including as the Chair of NSW Kids in Need Foundation Limited, The Muscular Dystrophy Association of NSW, and the Advisory Board of Our Big Kitchen Limited.