

Ref: HOG13/21892

Manager
Centres and Urban Renewal
Department of Planning & Infrastructure
GPO Box 39,
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Re: The Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy 2012

The NSW Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) is the owner of the Government's social housing assets. These assets provide a vital role in providing much needed safe and affordable housing for vulnerable people in the community. Effective urban planning strategies and planning instruments that enable LAHC to optimise land and housing within its portfolio are critical.

LAHC own 237 properties within the boundaries of the Newcastle Urban Renewal Area (see Attachment 1). These are predominately located in multi unit complexes (89%) with the remaining 11% townhouse dwellings. In addition, many of the 4,669 LAHC properties within the Newcastle LGA are in close proximity to the Urban Renewal Area.

LAHC and Housing NSW are broadly supportive of the proposed strategy and the opportunity it provides for future renewal of LAHC assets and social/service improvements to existing Housing NSW tenants in the area. LAHC and Housing NSW are however concerned about a number of aspects of the strategy:

- **The removal of the railway service between Wickham and Newcastle stations.**

The loss of high capacity regional public transport and resultant increased vehicular traffic, may disadvantage people who do not have access to private transport who need to travel to these locations.

Nevertheless if, following considerations of the Strategy, the railway service is to be removed between Wickham and Newcastle stations, LAHC requests that:

- The planned re-alignment of bus services be studied carefully to ensure there is no negative impact on LAHC assets east of the CBD. Bus services in this area are needed to both Newcastle and the proposed Wickham interchange.
- Assets in the study area should remain or be within 400 metres of a high frequency bus service as a result of the termination of rail services at Wickham.
- The retention of the railway corridor as proposed remain flexible enough to accommodate a variety of uses, including future reuse for public transport like light

rail. Development along the rail corridor should utilise its orientation and retain its flexibility.

- LAHC has a number of assets in Stockton. The Strategy's proposed changes will mean that Housing NSW tenants in Stockton will no longer have a connected rail and ferry service. LAHC requests that consideration be given to the interchange of ferry, rail and bus services.

- **LEP Provisions**

LAHC is concerned about the following provisions within the LEP:

- The block bounded by Bishop, Union, Station and Railway Streets Wickham is proposed to have a reduced height limit of 24m and a reduced FSR of 4:1 compared to 45m height limit and 5:1 FSR under the Newcastle LEP 2012.

This is a significant loss of development potential at a strategically located site in close proximity to what is proposed to become the commercial and transport hub of the greater Newcastle area. LAHC requests that the existing Newcastle LEP 2012 planning controls be retained.

- Both the current and proposed height and FSR controls for East Newcastle (Particularly the block bounded by Nobbys Road, Stevenson Place and the Foreshore Park including Shepherds Place and Collier Close) are not reflective of the existing built form and leave no room for future renewal. A height of 10m and FSR of 1:1 applies to LAHC assets in the area. The existing residential flat development around Collier Place ranges in height from 2 – 7 stories built into the hill side.

LAHC request the height of building control for this area be increased to facilitate development of up to 10 levels (approx. 35m) and an FSR of approx 3:1 enabling feasible future redevelopment. The DCP could be expanded to cover design principals retaining the visual connection between Fort Scratchley and the Foreshore with a possible height control in relation to Nobbys Road (i.e. 4 levels or approx. 15m) to enable this.

We would appreciate your consideration and feedback on the comments provided and are willing to clarify any matters raised in this submission. Should you have any further enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact Lindsay Dunstan, A/Manager, Urban Planning, Ph: 02 8753 8242.

Yours sincerely,



Linda Blinkhorn
Director, Portfolio

19.4.13