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Our Ref: HW2011-530/32/13.004

Director, Hunter Region
Department of Planning and Environment
PO Box 1226
Newcastle NSW 2300

Dear Sir/Madam

SUBMISSION FOR DRAFT GREATER NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN PLAN

Thank you for providing Hunter Water the opportunity to comment on the *Draft Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036* (DGNMP), released on 30 November 2017.

Hunter Water supports the Draft Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan's strategies, actions and key messages. Comments on particular elements of the plan outlining Hunter Water's support and recommended improvements are detailed below.

1. With regard to Outcome 3 (Deliver housing close to jobs and services), the urban renewal areas, priority housing release areas and other zoned residential land identified in the DGNMP are consistent with Hunter Water's Growth Plan maps that are used for its infrastructure planning and the application of its Funding and Delivery of Growth Infrastructure Standard for new developments.
2. Hunter Water has worked closely with Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) and Hunter Development Corporation (HDC) to ensure that there is a common understanding on future residential development areas and have agreed to meet on a quarterly basis to share and review data.
3. The DGNMP should mention work being done by HDC to develop an Integrated Infrastructure Planning Tool (IIPT) to inform the 20 year Hunter Infrastructure Plan. This tool will optimise the location and sequencing of land development in the Hunter region by integrating regional land use planning and regional network infrastructure planning data (water, wastewater, electricity, roads) using a spatial data and analysis framework. Hunter Water is providing information to develop the tool.
4. Hunter Water supports the view that expected growth over the next 20 years needs to be planned and managed in a way that maintains the city's liveability, but it should also enhance liveability where it reflects the community's values and expectations. Hunter Water welcomes the opportunity to be a partner in achieving this.
5. Hunter Water requests to be a member of the proposed Committee for Greater Newcastle.

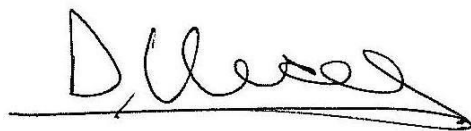
6. Hunter Water supports that Council local housing strategies should focus on locations that maximise use of existing infrastructure and minimise the need for new services. It requests that the DGNMP also emphasise that obtaining input by Councils from utilities like Hunter Water and other stakeholders is important prior to the rezoning process to efficiently plan and deliver enabling infrastructure.
7. The DGNMP states that growth at Medowie needs to be managed to protect drinking water supplies. Hunter Water requests that this be adjusted to say that growth needs to be managed to protect the supply of safe drinking water, and to not increase flooding issues in Medowie. Hunter Water and Port Stephens Council is working together so that new development proposals in Medowie have a neutral or beneficial impact on drinking water quality in Grahamstown Dam, and are developing a strategy to address the existing issues of flooding and to minimise water quality impact on Grahamstown Dam whilst allowing for future growth.
8. Hunter Water supports the strategies, actions and key messages included under Outcome 2 (Enhance environment, amenity and resilience for quality of life), but it is considered that more emphasis should be placed on sustainable water management being fundamental to its success.
9. Hunter water aims to work with the community and stakeholders to achieve a better water future for the region and become a more water sensitive region over time that is sustainable, resilient, productive and liveable. A region that efficiently uses the diversity of water resources available within it to enhance and protect the health of urban waterways, mitigate flood risk, enhance urban amenity, and reduce urban heat effects.
10. Water is central to liveability. It is fundamental to public health, primarily through the delivery of quality water and wastewater services. There is an opportunity to build on this by better integrating water into urban planning and contribute to the health and wellbeing of the community through the recreational spaces it supports, and its waterways. Productivity is also influenced by the way our region's water is managed. Well planned water, wastewater and storm water services support growth.
11. For new development areas and urban renewal areas, Hunter Water suggests that the DGNMP encourage Councils and developers to work with Hunter Water to reduce potable water consumption, wastewater generation and storm water impacts through more efficient technology and integrated water management opportunities (water reuse, stormwater harvesting etc.) to create more sustainable and liveable communities.
12. The DGNMP should encourage Councils and DPE to involve Hunter Water in strategic land use planning of new growth areas. This enables early consideration of options during the master planning of growth areas, and allows alternative servicing arrangements to be explored where they are economically efficient. Involving Hunter Water in the urban planning process provides an opportunity for embedding a clear strategic direction on water sensitive principles that can be potentially embedded into local housing strategies and local planning instruments.
13. The DGNMP discusses the proposed Broadmeadow Sports and Entertainment Precinct. Hunter Water plans to engage with Venues NSW and HDC to better understand the concept plan for this area and assess potential opportunities to

work together to improve amenity of the storm water channel and use alternative water sources for irrigation.

14. The DGNMP should encourage Hunter Water and Councils to work together to assess how storm water assets can potentially be used to reduce flooding, improve public amenity and liveability.
15. Hunter Water suggests that the DGNMP refer to and encourage participation in an interagency Water Sensitive Region Working Group that has been formed between Hunter Water, Councils, DPE and HDC to build an understanding of each other's views, issues and opportunities related to integrated water management.
16. The DGNMP talks about resilience to natural hazards and climate change. Hunter Water suggests it should also mention resilience from a water and wastewater perspective to meet the needs of a growing population, be able to withstand climate variability, and have capacity to respond and adapt to change. Becoming more water and wastewater resilient will enable the region to respond and adapt to future uncertainties, as well as take advantage of future opportunities such as technological change.
17. A key objective is to buy extra time in water supply augmentation decision making so that the community can achieve a better water future and a resilient water supply that withstands drought, enables growth and is able to respond to climate change.
18. Hunter Water is uniquely placed to play a leading role in making the region sustainable and resilient from a water and wastewater perspective. Key focus areas for the region will be water security, water efficiency, renewable energy, recycled water, and long term operation of wastewater systems. Potential recycled water opportunities could contribute to regional economic outcomes as well as reducing potable water consumption and disposal of treated wastewater to the environment.
19. The DGNMP mentions that the protection of drinking water catchments is important, but Hunter Water would like to see greater emphasis placed on this point in a similar way that the Hunter Regional Plan 2036 does, which has actions on protecting water catchments to sustain high quality and dependable water supplies, planning for the security of the potable water supply system, and applying neutral or beneficial water objectives to land use planning in surface and groundwater drinking water catchment areas.

Should you have any queries regarding this information or wish to discuss it further, please contact Hunter Water's Manager Sustainable Growth, Mr Tony McClymont on 02 4979 9702 or by emailing tony.mcclymont@hunterwater.com.au.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Cleary', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

DARREN CLEARY
Chief Investment Officer