

Submission to the NSW Government and The City of Newcastle

The Newcastle City Centre Rail Corridor and Adjacent Land Rezoning, Development Control Plan, and Planning Agreement

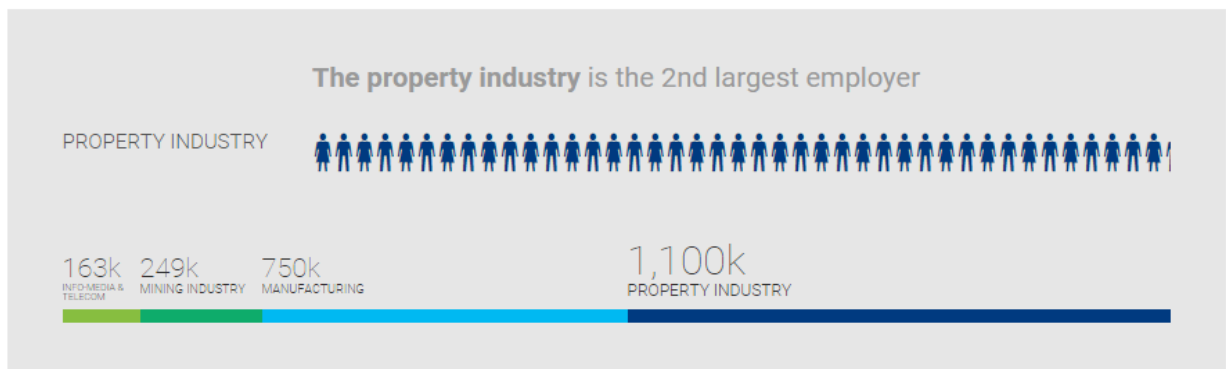
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WHO WE ARE

AUSTRALIA'S BIGGEST INDUSTRY



BIG JOB CREATOR



The Property Council of Australia is the leading advocate for Australia's biggest industry – property.

The Property Council champions the interests of more than 2200 member companies that represent the full spectrum of the industry, including those who invest, own, manage and develop in all sectors of property. Creating landmark projects and environments where people live, work, shop and play is core business for our members.

Our industry represents one ninth of Australia's GDP (the largest of any sector), employs 1.1 million Australians (more than mining and manufacturing combined) and generates \$72 billion in tax revenues to fund community services.

HOW WE DEVELOP POLICY

Following release of the Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy in December 2012, we immediately established and resourced the **Revitalising Newcastle Taskforce** – a local industry brains-trust – to advise government on the city centre’s regeneration.

And since it’s inception, the Taskforce has made dozens of comprehensive submissions to the NSW Government built on the intellectual capital, extensive experience and key market insights of our members.

All validated by independent research and grounded in truth, those submissions have covered a wide range of policy proposals including;

- 2012 Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy
- 2013 Newcastle Light Rail Project
- 2014 SEPP Amendment (Newcastle City Centre)
- 2014 Newcastle Development Control Plan
- 2014 Parliamentary Inquiry into Planning Decisions in Newcastle
- 2015 Mine Subsidence Remediation Fund
- 2015 Revitalising Newcastle Submission – **MAXIMUM OPPORTUNITY**
- 2015 Transport Administration Amendment (Closure of Railway Line at Newcastle) Bill.
- 2016 Newcastle City Centre Mine Subsidence Model
- 2017 Newcastle Light Rail Review of Environmental Factors

Where appropriate, those submissions have been supported by an integrated marketing campaign plan to raise community awareness of the benefits of these new policy settings.

Additionally, we conduct regular briefings with senior public-sector executives, elected representatives and relevant Ministers to share the latest market intelligence.

The Taskforce is coordinated by Hunter Director | Andrew Fletcher, with members appointed to provide expert advice and guidance to distinct government submissions based on skills and experience.

Current Taskforce Members

Name	Role	Discipline
Neil Petherbridge	Director Northrop Chair Hunter Committee	Engineering
Glen Spicer	Director EJE Architecture	Urban Design
Angus Rose	Senior Associate dwp	Urban Design
Amanda Wetzel	Regional Director City Plan Services	Planning
Rob Dwyer	Planning Manager RPS	Planning
Joanne Lever	Service Group Manager GHD	Building Services
Peter Macadam	Director Colliers International	Commercial
Craig Piper	Regional Manager Stockland	Retail
Renee Opperman	Business Executive Mitchell Brandtman	Marketing
Andrew Fletcher	Hunter Director Property Council	Advocacy

BACKGROUND

Since 2005, industry policy has been unequivocal and unwavering on the need to preserve most of the corridor for public use, and that large scale or high-rise development along the corridor's length is simply not feasible, nor desirable.

All the while, debate around future use of the corridor was dominated by the conspiracy theory that truncation was a sop to "greedy developers" who were "eyeing-off" valuable harbor front land not subject to mine subsidence.

Yet our advice to government has consistently recommended more open space, greater public amenity, and fewer developable sites, than public proposals from both UrbanGrowth NSW and Hunter Development Corporation.

This submission is further proof that the Property Council of Australia means what it says.

MAXIMUM OPPORTUNITY

In December 2015, NSW Premier Mike Baird was briefed on the signature piece of urban renewal advice from our Taskforce – the Revitalising Newcastle Submission known as **MAXIMUM OPPORTUNITY**.

By leveraging all the natural advantages on offer, **MAXIMUM OPPORTUNITY** produced an authentically Novocastrian urban design; one capable of building a reputable brand over time to attract workers, residents and visitors to the city.

MAXIMUM OPPORTUNITY also demonstrated the government's vision of Newcastle as Australia's first regional city of the Asia-Pacific could only be achieved by committing to a series of **City Game Changers**.

These are initiatives to ensure Newcastle succeeds at destination development by offering world-class tourism infrastructure and a broad range of services linked along the value-chain to enhance the experience for visitors, and the liveability for residents.

Independent research and worlds-best practice points to these guiding principles as the critical success factors in creating a globally competitive and connected city.

Unfortunately, the *City Game Changers* remain out-of-focus for both the NSW Government and The City of Newcastle.

They must now be embedded in the final plan to future-proof design of the city.

A New City Edge



The creation of unfettered harbour-side land through the realignment of Wharf Road and Scott Street; establishing a new city edge to the harbour and enough open space for a New Urban Icon as part of the foreshore.

A New Urban Icon



Adaptively repurpose the heritage-listed Newcastle Railway Station as an iconic landmark building stepping down to the waterfront – a globally competitive attraction which has significance for the entire Asia-Pacific region.

“Newcastle needs its own Opera House or Guggenheim or MONA to anchor the city as a destination.”



Darby Common



Establish Darby Common as a place of relief and meeting, with a visual and physical connection to the harbour; a public space with soft and hardscape treatments, bike racks and a low-rise building with ground floor café/bar, secure bike storage, change facilities and bike share station.

People Magnets





Create diverse and vibrant public places that welcome people to engage with the city; more than simple parkland, these spaces are pleasurable and interesting, providing choice and flexibility of uses.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

In broad terms, our Industry Taskforce considers the rail corridor plan currently on exhibition to be an excellent proposal for adopting the strategic design features of **MAXIMUM OPPORTUNITY**.

At a more granular level of detail, the Taskforce makes these recommendations to further improve the proposal;

1. Overhaul heritage provisions in the LEP to provide concessions and incentives which actively support innovative design solutions for adaptive reuse.
2. Ensure development in the Civic East section (east of Merewether Street) maintains active transport links and service vehicle access for surrounding properties.
3. Revisit the design of Darby Park to maximise useable public space.
4. Increase density controls for the section between Darby Street and Brown Street to encourage investment.
5. Undertake further industry consultation on the latest master planning for Newcastle City Centre, including each distinct precinct.



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