



NEWS RELEASE
The Hon. Kristina Keneally MP
Member for Heffron
Minister for Planning
Minister for Redfern Waterloo

Thursday 2 July, 2009

PEMULWUY PROJECT TO BREATHE NEW LIFE INTO THE BLOCK

The NSW Government has approved the Pemulwuy Project Concept Plan for The Block – a project that can deliver 300 jobs, 62 homes and over 9,000 square metres of commercial uses, shops and community and cultural space.

NSW Planning Minister Kristina Keneally today announced approval of the \$60 million concept plan to create new residential, commercial and cultural facilities for the local Redfern community.

Joined by State local member for Marrickville, Carmel Tebbutt, Federal local member for Sydney, Tanya Plibersek and City of Sydney Lord Mayor Clover Moore, Ms Keneally said the concept plan approval provided the guidelines to rejuvenate the area.

“Today’s announcement is the first step in creating a modern, sustainable and accessible community,” Ms Keneally said.

“This \$60 million project will deliver a boost to employment in the Redfern area through the creation of around 200 construction jobs and 100 ongoing positions once complete.”

“The State Government and the Department of Planning have worked closely with the Aboriginal Housing Company (AHC), throughout the assessment process.

“I congratulate everyone involved on the hard work that has delivered a plan to create a vibrant, safe and sustainable community.”

Ms Keneally said the redevelopment would include:

- More than 15,000 square metres of floor area for a range of commercial, retail, cultural and community uses, including up to 62 residential apartments;
- Basement and ground floor car parking for around 71 vehicles;
- At least 500 square metres of open space, opening up the site to the surrounding area and connecting to the existing public open space on the adjacent Redfern Community Centre site;
- Incorporating into the development several lanes in the area, including Eveleigh Lane;
- Conceptual landscape design; and
- Staggering the development in 3 stages.

Local member for Marrickville, Carmel Tebbutt, said she welcomed the approval and was excited by the redevelopment and rejuvenation of an important part of the Redfern and Darlington community.

“The Block for many years has played an important role in the local community and this redevelopment will complement and support its long and vibrant history,” Ms Tebbutt said.

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“Renewing this culturally significant site, with a range of housing, improved community cultural and education facilities and greater sustainability measures are fantastic news.

“I am pleased the AHC has incorporated Ecologically Sustainable Development principles such as, implementing water reuse and recycling initiatives.

“After many years of community debate, this approval represents a positive step towards seeing aspirations for The Block realised.”

Federal member for Sydney, Tanya Plibersek said the approved concept plan will deliver 62 new units providing a range of different housing options.

“This range of housing combined with new retail and commercial developments will foster a vibrant new area not only for Indigenous Australians but for the whole community,” Ms Plibersek said.

“While this is just the first step for The Block, it is an exciting step to know the historic site will become a sustainable, safe and accessible residential and commercial precinct for the local community.”

Ms Keneally said the concept plan promotes a secure and aesthetically pleasing site by incorporating the principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design.

“The plan will see buildings designed to address open spaces to promote a neighbourhood watch type of feeling,” Ms Keneally said.

“Measures include lighting and physical barriers like landscaping and security fencing to identify between private and public areas.

“There will also be public open space accessible to both residents and site workers, as well as the general public, creating a vibrant community atmosphere.”

Ms Keneally said following the public exhibition, a number of amendments were made to the proposal to address public and agency feedback, including the requirements on the AHC to:

- Comply with Railcorp’s requirements with regard to protecting the rail corridor, stormwater drainage, noise and fencing/landscaping;
- Demonstrate sustainable design, including meeting a minimum 4.5 star Australian Building Greenhouse Rating or equivalent in all new retail and commercial buildings;
- Demonstrate design excellence in accordance with the Major Projects state environmental planning policy covering the Redfern Waterloo Authority sites; and
- Prepare landscape plans for any new public domain areas.

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“The AHC has also committed to consulting with the local community and stakeholders throughout the rejuvenation of the precinct and will ensure all future applications are consistent with the concept plan.

“They will also deliver part of the commercial and retail components in the first of the three stages of development, generating economic activity.

“This will initiate the renewal of the site and encourage participation of the wider community at the outset of the redevelopment.”

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