



Growth Centres (Development Corporations) Amendment Bill 2008

Growth Centres (Development Corporations) Amendment Bill 2008

Extract from NSW Legislative Assembly Hansard and Papers Wednesday 2 April 2008.

Agreement in Principle

Mr STEVE WHAN (Monaro—Parliamentary Secretary) [11.03 a.m.]: I move:

That this bill be now agreed to in principle.

The Government is pleased to introduce the Growth Centres (Development Corporations) Amendment Bill 2008, which is an important step in the Government's commitment to delivering the land supply targets identified in the State Plan and the Metropolitan Strategy. The bill will ensure that the Growth Centres Commission is better able to respond to the challenges of delivering land supply targets in the north-west and south-west growth centres. The commission is now well into its implementation phase of delivering these targets. In December last year the Minister for Planning announced the rezoning of the first two precincts in the growth centres—Oran Park and Turner Road.

This announcement represented the rezoning of almost 12,000 lots in the south-west together with the town centres and employment lands. The package included the identification of State infrastructure required, and protocols for the precinct-wide management of heritage, rivers and threatened species. It also included a section 94 contributions plan and a development control plan, which includes complying development for about 65 per cent of dwellings in the precincts. All of this was achieved in just 18 months. I expect that more precincts in the north-west growth centre will go on public exhibition in the coming months. Having established its systems, procedures and protocols, and being firmly in its implementation phase, the commission no longer requires the added guidance of an independent board.

To ensure that the Government continues to roll out adequate supplies of zoned and serviced land, the commission will be managed by its chief executive officer, who will continue his crucial intra-government coordination role, commenced on start-up, through this implementation phase. It is important to note that the Growth Centres Commission would not have achieved its success to date without the close cooperation of the six growth centres councils. Indeed, there are subcommittees of the commission known as local government coordination committees that consist of the mayors and general managers of each council as well as the commission's chief executive officer and board members. The work of these committees has been a major contribution to the relationship with councils. Under the proposed amendments in this bill these local government coordination committees would continue in operation.

I turn now to the detailed provisions of the bill. The bill makes amendments to the Growth Centres (Development Corporations) Act 1974. The Act allows for the establishment of development corporations for growth centres. Under current provisions a development corporation is established with a governing body or board. The chief executive of a development corporation is, along with other appointees, a member of the board. Currently four development corporations are constituted under the Act: the Hunter Development Corporation, the Festival Development Corporation, the Cooks Cove Development Corporation, and the Growth Centres Commission. All the current development corporations are constituted with a board.

The objective of the bill is to amend the Act to allow a development corporation to be constituted by one of two methods: firstly, a development corporation governed by a board; and, secondly, a development corporation governed by a chief executive. The availability of these two models will allow development corporations to be constituted in a manner which best reflects the mission and goals of the particular corporation. This is important for the Growth Centres Commission because it has moved on from the initial phase of establishing the broad framework for the delivery of land supply targets in north-west and south-west growth centres to the critical implementation phase. Whilst the members of the Growth Centres Commission board played an invaluable role in establishing this broad framework, it is now imperative that the Growth Centres Commission works in close cooperation with government agencies to ensure that land supply targets are delivered in a timely manner.

The Growth Centres Commission will report to the Minister for Planning through an advisory committee of senior public servants charged with responsibility for delivering the New South Wales Government's land supply targets identified in the State Plan and Metropolitan Strategy, including the Director General of Planning, the Director General of Environment and Climate Change, the Secretary to the Treasury, the Chief Executive Officer of the Roads and Traffic Authority and the Coordinator General. There is no proposed change to the constitutional arrangements for the other three existing development corporations. I turn now to other elements of the bill

designed to simplify procedural requirements relating to the constitution and operation of development corporations which otherwise date from 1974. These minor housekeeping amendments are required because existing provisions in the Act are outdated and administratively burdensome.

The Act provides for the establishment of a corporation by way of an order. Orders are required to be made also where a corporation is to be dissolved or amalgamated or where the land to which a corporation applies is to be expanded or reduced. The current provisions often can require a multitude of orders and procedural steps to be undertaken. The bill amends the Act to allow a single order to be made which constitutes or dissolves a development corporation, changes its name, alters the land to which it applies and/or changes its constitutional arrangements from a board-governed to a chief executive-governed corporation. This will reduce red tape by minimising unnecessary administrative steps and streamlining procedures under the Growth Centres (Development Corporations) Act 1974. It will ensure also that all relevant information in respect of a corporation is identified in a single schedule to the Act.

The bill includes also provisions of a savings and transitional nature necessary to give effect to the changes outlined and other related amendments. It should be noted that the Growth Centres (Development Corporations) Act 1974 as amended by this bill only deals with the constitutional and administrative arrangements for growth centres. The role of growth centres with respect to the release, development and servicing of land is governed largely by the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. I note that the Minister for Planning will be announcing shortly the next stage in the rollout of the Government's planning reforms. The rollout of these reforms follows a lengthy community consultation process. The Minister for Planning already has released a report on the submissions received during these consultations.

The reforms also will further assist the Growth Centres Commission in delivering its land supply targets. The amendments to the Growth Centres (Development Corporations) Act 1974 made by this bill will ensure that the Growth Centres Commission is better able to concentrate on the task of delivering crucial land supply in the north-west and south-west growth centres essential to meet the needs of Sydney's growing population. I commend the bill to the House.