

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Brad Hazzard.

Agreement in Principle

Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, and Minister Assisting the Premier on Infrastructure NSW) [4.27 p.m.]: I move:

That this bill be now agreed to in principle.

Recently I introduced legislation into this House to commence the reform of the New South Wales planning system. This included the commitment of the Government to repeal part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act. Recently the Government has also announced a range of further reforms of the planning system that handed responsibility for key planning decisions back to local governments—back to the community, and also outlining how truly State-significant development will be assessed into the future.

Today I continue this reform process with the introduction of the Redfern-Waterloo Authority Repeal Bill. The bill will result in the cessation of the Redfern-Waterloo Authority [RWA], with planning consent for developments on the Redfern-Waterloo sites up to \$10 million being transferred to the City of Sydney, and the strengthening of the capacity of the Sydney Metropolitan Development Authority to ensure that the renewal of this important area for Sydney and New South Wales continues into the future.

The Redfern-Waterloo Authority was established in 2004 to implement development and urban renewal strategies to address the long-term problems associated with social disadvantage in the Redfern-Waterloo communities. The Redfern-Waterloo Authority was established with bipartisan support of the major political parties and this Government will continue its commitment to this important area through the Sydney Metropolitan Development Authority.

The Redfern-Waterloo Authority has made some significant achievements over the past six years, with the establishment of positive developments in the area, and the introduction of important employment and human service programs. This has been evidenced with the opening of the National Centre for Indigenous Excellence, the community health facility on Redfern Street and the key commercial developments at Australian Technology Park. The Aboriginal Employment Program, which was established by the Redfern-Waterloo Authority, has created over 800 employment opportunities for members of the Aboriginal community, and this Government included in its recent budget financial support for this important program into the future.

The Sydney Metropolitan Development Authority was established in December 2010 to lead timely and orderly social and economic development of high-quality urban precincts. This new authority will target nominated strategic locations in the Sydney metropolitan area with

the aim to deliver on housing and employment targets, aligning land use with transport infrastructure and ensuring the opportunities from Government's investment in infrastructure are maximised. The authority has been developed to capture the positive experience of cooperative urban renewal at Redfern-Waterloo over the past decade for the benefit of other strategic precincts in Sydney. The new authority is a development corporation under the Growth Centres (Development Corporations) Act and has broad powers to plan and coordinate urban renewal effort on behalf of Government, in consultation with local government and the private sector, and also to deal in land, leverage assets, undertake compulsory acquisition, and to enter into partnerships with the private sector and local and national governments.

The Redfern-Waterloo Authority Repeal Bill 2011 will repeal the Redfern-Waterloo Authority Act 2004 and dissolve the Redfern-Waterloo Authority. The bill will transfer all the assets, rights and liabilities of the old Redfern-Waterloo Authority, along with certain functions of that authority, to the new Sydney Metropolitan Development Authority. The bill inserts a new part 4 into schedule 6, savings, transitional and other provisions, of the Growth Centres (Development Corporations) Act 1974 to ensure that the Sydney Metropolitan Development Authority is able to take over, as necessary, the role and functions of the abolished Redfern-Waterloo Authority.

For example, one of the assets being transferred to the new authority is the subsidiary company Australian Technology Park Sydney Limited [ATPSL], and clause 17 will ensure that the new authority has such functions as are necessary or convenient for the purposes of managing that subsidiary. However, those functions do not include selling or disposing of an interest in the company, or approving of another person becoming a member of Australian Technology Park Sydney Limited. The clause will also enable Australian Technology Park Sydney Limited to continue to exercise any function that it could exercise immediately before the repeal of the Redfern-Waterloo Authority Act 2004. The ongoing development of the Australian Technology Park will be an important part of the future renewal in the Redfern-Waterloo area and therefore it is important that the Sydney Metropolitan Development Authority, which has responsibility for the Redfern-Waterloo precinct, is able to utilise this important asset for this purpose.

I am pleased to announce that the repealing of the Redfern-Waterloo Authority Act also brings to an end the "switching off" of the Heritage Act provisions within the Redfern-Waterloo area. The unique heritage of Redfern and Waterloo needs to be respected and preserved, especially where it is of State significance. The bill does not seek to transition or preserve this "switching off" mechanism, a move which should be welcomed by all.

Since its inception the Redfern-Waterloo Authority has played an important role in planning for the Redfern-Waterloo area. This includes preparing the Redfern-Waterloo Plan, which sets out the strategic vision for the improvement of the area over a 10-year period and makes provision for urban design, human services, employment, development, infrastructure, land use zoning, public land renewal and related functions. The Redfern-Waterloo Authority has

worked in close cooperation with the Department of Planning and Infrastructure to ensure the strategic vision for the Redfern-Waterloo area is complemented by appropriate planning controls in environmental planning instruments applying to the land.

The Redfern-Waterloo Authority also determines development applications for certain developments in the area, under delegation from the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure. It also manages contributions for affordable housing and other social infrastructure where developers are required to make financial contributions as a condition of their planning approvals. Despite the repeal of the Redfern-Waterloo Authority Act, these important planning functions will continue to be undertaken. For example, clause 19 of the bill provides for the continuing operation of the Redfern-Waterloo Plan with the authority being specifically charged with implementing the plan.

Consistent with the recent reforms to the planning system, including the repeal of part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, steps have been taken to return certain planning decisions to the City of Sydney. For example, the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure has delegated to the City of Sydney his functions of determining development applications for development under \$10 million in the Redfern-Waterloo area.

Importantly, clause 18 of the bill continues the operation of sections 30 to 32 of the Redfern-Waterloo Authority Act, which are provisions that require developers to make financial contributions towards affordable housing and other social infrastructure. Under the new arrangement the City of Sydney will be able to impose conditions on development consents and the contributions will be payable direct to the Sydney Metropolitan Development Authority. The authority will then be responsible for ensuring those contributions are used for the purposes set out in the adopted contributions plans. Together these measures will ensure proper urban renewal planning and development continues to be undertaken for the Redfern-Waterloo area.

Finally, clause 20 will ensure that section 33 of the Redfern-Waterloo Authority Act 2004 continues to have effect. This provision requires the Aboriginal Housing Company and other relevant representatives of the Aboriginal community to be consulted in relation to the area of land bounded by Eveleigh, Caroline, Louis and Vine Streets in Redfern. This Government is committed to the future development of The Block. Redfern is a spiritual home to the Aboriginal community and The Block is symbolic of both the struggle and optimism for the future of Australia's first people.

The Redfern-Waterloo Authority Repeal Bill is an important step in the ongoing renewal of the Redfern-Waterloo area. Whilst the Redfern-Waterloo Authority is being dissolved, the Government, through this bill, is ensuring the ongoing commitment to the renewal of this important area of Sydney and New South Wales. The bill gives the Sydney Metropolitan Development Authority the necessary powers and capability to continue the work initiated by the Redfern-Waterloo Authority, and it will also enable local government to have a greater role, with the transfer of development consent for developments up to \$10 million to the City

of Sydney on the Redfern-Waterloo sites. This change reflects the ongoing reforms that this Government has introduced to the New South Wales planning system. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned on motion by Ms Linda Burney and set down as an order of the day for a later hour.