



10 December 2009

**Legislative Council
Standing Committee on State Development**

**FINAL REPORT:
INQUIRY INTO THE NSW PLANNING FRAMEWORK**

The Chair of the New South Wales Parliament's Standing Committee on State Development, the Hon Tony Catanzariti MLC, today released the report of the Inquiry into the New South Wales planning framework.

'The main point borne out through this Inquiry was the inevitable need for a fundamental review of the NSW planning framework. This will be a significant undertaking that will take between three to five years to complete.'

'The NSW planning system has been subject to major reform over the last thirty years. The most recent reforms in 2008, while extensive, were primarily aimed at improving the efficiency and timeliness of the development assessment process. The need for these reforms was pressing and could not be delayed.'

Mr Catanzariti said that the primary recommendation of the report is that a fundamental review of the entire planning framework commence in 2010. This recommendation is based on the extensive consultation undertaken during the Committee's eighteen-month inquiry. The Committee held eleven days of public hearings and received over 100 submissions from practitioners and users of the current planning system.

'The report recommends the Government establish an independent expert and representative group to undertake the fundamental review. This group should make recommendations for legislative, strategic planning and system changes in order to develop a planning system that achieves the best mix of social, economic and environmental outcomes for the State.'

Mr Catanzariti said that this report does not seek to pre-empt or direct the outcomes of the fundamental review: 'A number of suggestions on various outcomes that could or should emerge from a fundamental review were made during the Inquiry and are examined in this report. The review will need to hear the views of all stakeholders and consider a range of proposed models rather than having a pre-determined outcome in mind. The information provided during this Inquiry will be an essential resource.'

Mr Catanzariti said that while the Committee's strong recommendation is for the fundamental review, the Inquiry also highlights specific areas where more immediate action is warranted.

'The report makes a number of recommendations relating to the development of Regional Planning Strategies and Local Environmental Plans. It also recommends that best practice electronic planning systems be developed and that independent scientific assessments of natural resource constraints accompany the granting of mining exploration licences.'

'On behalf of the Committee I would like to thank everyone who participated in the Inquiry. Their contribution has been invaluable and we appreciate their time and effort.'

The report, which includes seven recommendations, is available on the Committee's website at: www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/statedevelopment.

**For further comment please contact Mr Tony Catanzariti,
Committee Chair, phone 9230 2837**