



Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

Mr Ken Liddell
General Manager
Cessnock City Council
PO Box 152
CESSNOCK NSW 2325

Our ref: IRF24/2808

via email: council@cessnock.nsw.gov.au
Keren.Brown@cessnock.nsw.gov.au

Dear Mr Liddell

Subject: Cessnock Housing Strategy 2021 and Cessnock Urban Growth Management Plan Interim Review 2022

I refer to Council's correspondence requesting the Department's approval of the Cessnock Housing Strategy 2021 and the Cessnock Urban Growth Management Plan Interim Review 2022.

I am pleased to conditionally approve the Cessnock Housing Strategy 2021 and the Cessnock Urban Growth Management Plan Interim Review 2022 with exception of the Strategy's action to enable medium-density housing in the R2 Low Density Residential zone as an additional permitted use (subject to criteria). Any consideration of land for medium-density housing should be conducted through regular strategy reviews or addendum processes and be submitted to the Department for review and approval before planning proposals are lodged for rezoning.

It is understood that Council is currently preparing an Issues and Options Paper to inform a review of the Cessnock Local Environmental Plan 2012, which will also help to guide a review of the Housing Strategy and Urban Growth Management Plan. In the interim, the existing strategy and plan will apply. During the strategy and plan review process, it is anticipated that the Housing Strategy will be updated to address several issues currently not addressed to ensure alignment with the Hunter Regional Plan 2041. In particular, I encourage Council to prioritise investigations and studies to support infill development, housing diversity, and affordability to align the city's blend of housing with the goals of the regional plan.

In implementing the strategy and plan, I encourage Council to take appropriate measures to ensure that:

- an infrastructure delivery and staging plan is prepared to inform the appropriate sequencing and coordination of the greenfield investigation areas to ensure timely and cost-effective infrastructure and housing delivery;
- when undertaking flood investigations, updating floodplain risk management plans for the city or if the flood planning level is amended in the future, the appropriateness and suitability of infill housing and greenfield investigation areas be considered having regard to probable maximum flood levels, velocity, flood planning levels, and access to critical services during flood events, and amend the strategy and plan as necessary for return to the Department for further review and approval; and

- any future proposals for rezoning are to be supported by infrastructure servicing plans and detailed studies and assessment of site-specific development constraints, including potential high environmental value and probable maximum flood levels, velocity, flood planning levels and access to critical services during flood events, to confirm land suitability and consistency with the Hunter Regional Plan 2041, relevant local planning directions, and applicable State Environmental Planning Policies.

In reviewing the strategy and plan, it is expected that Council will proactively engage and consult with relevant state agencies to ensure successful future implementation. Such agencies should include, but not limited to, NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water - Biodiversity Conservation and Science, NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development - Agriculture, Transport for NSW, Mine Subsidence Board, NSW Rural Fire Service, and NSW State Emergency Service.

Regarding the Anambah to Branxton Regionally Significant Growth Area, the Department's Local Planning and Council Support team will continue to collaborate closely with Council and state agencies on the current work being undertaken. This work will set a clear direction to guide development and future strategic work in the growth corridor over the longer term and should be considered in Council's upcoming strategy review.

Should you have any enquiries regarding this matter, I have arranged for Ms Sandra Bush, Senior Planner, to assist you. Sandra can be contacted on 5778 1409.

Yours sincerely



04/02/25

Craig Diss
Director, Hunter and Northern Region
Local Planning & Council Support