

BUSINESS HUNTER

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Draft Broadmeadow Place Strategy and Rezoning Plan

Business Hunter is pleased to have the opportunity to consider and contribute to the review of the Draft Broadmeadow Place Strategy and the Rezoning Plan. We congratulate the City of Newcastle and the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure for compiling and exhibiting a comprehensive package of documents in relation to the urban renewal plan for the Broadmeadow precinct.

Business Hunter is the peak business group in the Hunter region. We serve more than 4,400 member and affiliate businesses operating across the region, representative of industries spanning all sectors and all sizes of business, from start-ups through to some of the nation's most prolific organisations.

Introduction and Background

Business Hunter has a long and abiding interest in the planning and development outcomes for the future development of Hunter Park, and now more broadly, the Broadmeadow precinct. We note the precinct already supports a diverse range of uses and the prospect of retaining and enhancing many of these across the delivery of a long term plan is truly inspiring. We recognise the significance of the community opportunity that could be realised with the development of the precinct, noting it represents one of the largest of its type in an urban context on the east coast of NSW and Australia.

In initially scoping the views of our membership, the most common sentiment related to the scale of the project and not in a negative way, is understanding what the Broadmeadow precinct is and exactly represents. Initial contact from businesses focussed on concerns that once the Strategy was implemented, their activity would be curtailed, and industry and businesses could be forced to close. Our early representations on plans reflected this. We believe the overtones of the current draft plan clarifies that this is not the case, and the intent is to seek to add to existing diversity and activity, and not replace it.

More contemporary comments from businesses and industry note a strong affinity to improving the elements that already exist in the precinct relating to sport, recreation, entertainment, industry, recreational and transport uses. It's going to be a significant effort to deliver elements concurrently and without disruption and we recognise this is an operational challenge for a future time.

Indeed, it is understood the Broadmeadow precinct represents more than 330 hectares which in relative terms is an area more than six times the size of the entire Honeysuckle project. This point should not be lost in the context of Newcastle as a regional capital city and the Hunter region as a growing and aspiring region and as the second largest region in NSW.

Issues and Commentary

In the process of engagement concerning the Precinct Plan, Business Hunter has found there are several common elements expressed that are relevant.

1. The government's articulation of and the community's understanding of a complex governance framework that includes operational and delivery elements, precinct objectives, the likely costs, and the number and diversity of the respective state government agencies as well as local government involved.
2. In identifying and conceptualising a mixed use outcome across the entire precinct, strong consideration to management of conflicts at the land use interface needs to be addressed. It is recognised the principles in the Strategy and Plan acknowledge the existing diversity and it is important that industry and business is not driven out as a consequence of the transformation of the Precinct.

The existing businesses provide an economic base, cohesion and vibrancy in the Precinct. Into the future, measures should be taken to understand how these qualities can be harnessed and developed. It is a much simpler task to revitalise existing industry and business than to see it vacate and have to attract and develop new business in its place.

3. The objective to attract and secure urban services within the Precinct to support the future population and business elements is commendable. The rezoning intentions are understood to reflect this.
4. The long term nature of the project is recognised. Given this premise, the ability of the Strategy and Precinct Plan to be flexible and able to accommodate new or emerging trends into the future will be important.
5. It is recognised some eventual and desirable land uses do not attract a specific land zoning, such as Hotels. They fall into non-residential categories and then must compete with other land uses to secure specific sites. There is often a differential economic capacity for specific uses to bid for sites, meaning they miss out in the absence of a site specific, dedicated outcome. The Strategy needs to be aware of and address this shortcoming.
6. The question of financing and delivery of components within the Precinct keeps coming up. We appreciate this is not a land use matter per se, but understanding how this might be accomplished provides some assurance and confidence to the community that the vision for the Precinct has prospects of being delivered.
7. Specific issues have been aired in relation to transport plans, infrastructure investigation and delivery, housing types, market segments, and project sequencing. We appreciate this detail follows the confirmation of the land use and zoning plan and that some work has been done to understand the parameters around potential

constraints to the delivery of the plan. This does not diminish its importance and to a great extent, the principles around these matters merge with point 1 above.

8. We note that High Speed Rail have flagged Broadmeadow as a prospective station site, however there is no consideration for this in the Plan. This is something that should be taken forward with coordination from all tiers of government, to ensure that at some point in the future, it is not imposed on a plan that has already been made.

We thank you for the opportunity to comment and would be happy to expand on these matters if required.

We look forward to the plans progressing and the release of further documentation that articulate the governments priorities and intentions in relation to the delivery of the vision, strategy and plans into the future.

Your sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bob Hawes', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Bob Hawes
CEO
Business Hunter