

Media Release



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Huntlee Decision Further Erodes Fragile Industry Confidence in NSW Planning System

The Urban Development Institute of Australia NSW (UDIA NSW) has today expressed disappointment at the decision of the NSW Government to concede the Minister for Planning's approval of the concept plan and rezoning approval for Huntlee New Town. UDIA NSW Chief Executive Stephen Albin said that, "this is another bad outcome for the economy of NSW at a time when investors have been fleeing en masse for the relative security of Melbourne, Perth and Brisbane. How can the development industry in NSW proceed with any confidence that assessment outcomes that are negotiated with this Government will be upheld?"

Stephen Albin said that, "both the concession by the Minister and the recent court decision on Catherine Hill Bay bring into perspective the minefield of regulation that faces the development industry in NSW. These cases reveal the disturbing lack of certainty that this Government has provided for investment in NSW."

Mr Albin said that the decision today was a blow for the industry's confidence in the certainty of the planning process in NSW. "The industry respects the independence of the court on Catherine Hill Bay and the decision of the Minister for Planning but these outcomes do nothing to help the state's already fragile reputation as a sound and certain place for urban investment."

UDIA NSW has today written to the Minister for Planning to express the industry's concern over the Huntlee concession and to impress upon the Government the need for a quick and certain resolution to any potential cases that may be impacted by similar MOU negotiations. Stephen Albin said that, "the Government cannot continue to allow development outcomes that have been negotiated with the industry in good faith to be compromised by the Department's flawed processes."

"It is very difficult for developers in New South Wales to proceed with the level of certainty that is required to convince major corporate boards that this state is a better option for their capital than Victoria, Western Australia, or Queensland. We are reaching a point where the confidence the development industry can take from high-level decision making and commitments with regard to infrastructure is diminishing and that's very unfortunate."

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