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AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLANNED FOR NEWCASTLE CITY CENTRE

The Minister for Planning and Housing, Anthony Roberts, today announced an innovative plan to deliver affordable housing for key workers in the heart of Newcastle.

“The NSW Government is determined to deliver more new homes and is equally passionate about delivering affordable homes for people on moderate incomes who make up our key workforce,” Mr Roberts said.

“This is why I’m backing an innovative proposal put forward by the NSW Government program, *Revitalising Newcastle*, to build 30 affordable homes on a site on the corridor, centrally located between Merewether Street and the former Civic Station, adjacent to Newcastle Museum.

“The proposal involves the pooling of government resources by combining Hunter Development Corporation and the Newcastle City Council’s affordable housing funding and is awaiting approval from the council.”

The concept was recently put forward to Newcastle City Council’s Building Better Cities (BBC) Committee to use Council’s remaining BBC funding of \$3 million allocated by the Government some time ago.

“Affordable housing gives hard working people on low to moderate incomes a leg up and helps them work towards their housing goals, be it home ownership or ongoing private rental.

“Moderate income earners include nurses, fire and emergency service workers, child care and youth workers - the people in our community who provide essential services that we all rely on.”

Revitalising Newcastle Program Director Michael Cassel said the proposal allows for around 30 homes, including one, two and three-bedroom family homes close to transport, parks, services, schools, shops and more.

“It is hoped council will consider allocating funding for the proposal at its April meeting, which would be the first step in bringing the concept to life,” Mr Cassel said.

“We are focused on getting initiatives like this off the ground, so we are working in parallel with the rezoning proposal for the former heavy rail corridor. This puts us in an ideal position to deliver as early as possible for people who need accommodation solutions now.”

Under the proposal, UrbanGrowth NSW will put out a tender to engage a Class 1 Community Housing Provider to deliver, own and manage the homes once the corridor has been rezoned.

Mr Roberts said the former Empire Hotel site project, recently approved by the Joint Regional Planning Panel, will also help with housing supply.

“The Catholic Diocese of Newcastle-Maitland plans will see 128 new homes built on the site, including a significant affordable housing component and an allowance for accessible homes for people with a disability,” Mr Roberts said.

“This is great outcome. Both housing developments are in the heart of Newcastle, which is important because it helps ensure we don’t push lower income families to the fringes of the city.

“By bringing families and young people into the city we are supporting the vibrancy of local businesses and the local community,” Mr Roberts said.

“The NSW Government is committed to bringing more people into Newcastle’s city centre, growing jobs and delivering new public spaces alongside new transport solutions.”

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