

30 July 2021

Mr Jeremy Bath  
Chief Executive Officer  
Attention: Regulatory Planning & Assessment Team  
City of Newcastle  
PO Box 489  
Newcastle NSW 2300

By email: mail@ncc.nsw.gov.au

Dear Jeremy,

**RE: Wickham Masterplan (2021 Update)**

The Urban Development Institute of Australia NSW (UDIA) is the peak industry body representing the leading participants in urban development in NSW. Our more than 500 member companies span all facets of the industry including developers, consultants, state agencies and local government including the City of Newcastle (CN). We have a strong commitment to good growth in the Hunter and we are grateful for the collaborative working relationship we have built with CN.

We welcome the opportunity to provide comments on the *draft Wickham Masterplan (2021 Update)* (WMP) currently on exhibition by the City of Newcastle.

UDIA continues to support the implementation of the *Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan* and the *Hunter Regional Plan 2036*. The implementation of the Wickham Masterplan is a key part of implementing both plans.

UDIA is pleased to see CN's review of the WMP seeks to address the realistic development potential and the feasibility of sites in Wickham. This is an important part of actually achieving the development potential of the area.

We make the following recommendations for CN's consideration, which are further explained below:

- 1. Undertake an independent review of the Subsidence Advisory advice regarding the Wickham precinct.**
- 2. Work with the NSW Government to utilise the Newcastle Mine Grouting Fund to deliver a precinct-wide approach to rectify mine subsidence issues in Wickham to restore development potential.**
- 3. Reconsider the community infrastructure incentive policy as per UDIA's May 2021 submission.**
- 4. Replace Wickham's lost density in other appropriate areas of the inner-city.**

Mine Subsidence

UDIA is disappointed, as we are sure Council is, with the extent to which mine subsidence issues appear to be limiting the development potential of this important area. As we understand it, the mine subsidence constraints identified in the WMP are based on the advice of Subsidence Advisory NSW (SA). While UDIA accepts and supports the important role played by Subsidence Advisory in the development of areas affected by underground mine workings, UDIA is concerned that the approach taken by SA is often overly conservative and

directed more at protection of the Mine Subsidence Compensation Fund than adopting a reasonable risk-based approach to managing issues associated with the mine subsidence. UDIA suggests that the Council carefully review the advice from Subsidence Advisory and ensure the parameters SA has adopted in providing its advice are reasonable. Given the extent of the limitations and the complexity of the matter, UDIA submits that the Council would be assisted by an independent review of that issue and the potential solutions.

UDIA would like to see more funding applied to addressing issues associated with potential mine subsidence. UDIA supports the use of the Newcastle Mine Grouting Fund to deliver a precinct-wide approach to rectifying, where possible, issues associated with mine subsidence to restore at least some of the development potential that appears to have been lost as a consequence of the mine subsidence issues.

### Community Infrastructure

UDIA supports the Council's proposed community infrastructure projects for Wickham. We support the Council's initiatives to improve the integration of Wickham Park as a key piece of community infrastructure. UDIA would support initiatives that allow for the early delivery of community infrastructure in the vicinity of Wickham Park (including the correction of Maitland Road) which would make a significant and positive difference to the Wickham area.

However, we would like to emphasise our previously expressed concerns about the 'incentive' provisions in the WMP and the value capture concept it involves. In UDIA's submission to Council on its *draft Community Infrastructure Incentive Policy* (May 2021), we outlined our view that the policy as proposed overly complicates the process of maximising the development potential of the Wickham area.

In UDIA's submission, we suggested it would be better for the Council to provide the relevant 'incentive' sites with the maximum development controls and implement an appropriate development contributions regime, to deliver the necessary community infrastructure. The Council's incentive policy is unnecessarily complicated and may not appropriately deliver the community infrastructure that would allow Wickham to fulfil its potential.

### Overall Density

Given the mine subsidence constraint appears to have curtailed the development potential of Wickham, UDIA would support efforts by Council to replace the lost density in other appropriate areas of the inner-city.

### Conclusion

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission. Please contact Elizabeth York, Regional Manager at [eyork@udiansw.com.au](mailto:eyork@udiansw.com.au) or 0434 914 901 with any questions.

Yours sincerely,



Steve Mann  
**Chief Executive**  
**UDIA NSW**