

**SUBJECT: LMM 25/07/17 - DESIGN REVIEW PANEL**

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## **MOTION**

That Council:

Receives a report on the establishment of a Newcastle Design Review Panel that would provide independent and authoritative advice to Council, as well as other decision makers in Newcastle about the design of significant development proposals in the City.

## **Background**

With over \$1 billion worth of development currently underway in the City of Newcastle, the community needs assurance that significant development will be of benefit to the broader Newcastle area.

A Newcastle Design Review Panel (NDRP) would provide independent and authoritative advice to government and statutory decision makers in Newcastle about the design of significant development proposals.

The NDRP would consist of highly experienced built environment professionals, who will provide expert design review of significant projects at key stages of the design and development process. Architects, urban designers, landscape architects and planners, as well as specialists in sustainability, accessibility, health, place making and masterplanning, will contribute to the NDRP.

The NDRP would offer a structured process of review, which involves extensive briefing and the formalisation of advice back to Council, and back to the proponent of a significant development.

The NDRP would review projects that are significant because of their site, context or complexity, or because they will be establishing a precedent for new development in a place.

Design review by the NDRP is undertaken in a confidential environment, except when a planning application has been lodged and the project is therefore in the public domain.

## **Victorian Model basis**

The proposed NDRP is based directly off the Victorian Design Review Panel (VDRP) which has had considerable success reviewing significant projects in Victoria since 2012.

Since that time, the VDRP has met monthly and undertaken over 230 design review sessions. The VDRP has reviewed approximately \$18.7 billion of projects to date. Over 2000 people, including Client Departments, Responsible Authorities and design teams have been engaged in the design review process.

Projects have included major transport interchanges and transport infrastructure projects including level crossing removals, major housing projects, hospitals, parks, aquatic centres, cultural and sports buildings, commercial headquarters, and town centre masterplans.