4 February 2007

Regional Director
Sydney North West Region
NSW Department of Planning,
GPO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001
Email: northwestsubregion@planning.nsw.gov.au

Dear Sir,

Draft North Sub Regional Strategy

The Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) welcomes the opportunity to provide its comments to the Department of Planning, in relation to the draft north Sub-Regional Strategy which includes the Hornsby and Ku-ring-gai Council areas. PIA would also like to acknowledge the considerable work that the Department has undertaken in preparing the Regional Strategies to date as an extension of the Metro-strategy of 2005.

PIA has focused on the broader issues for Sydney and the further steps required for satisfactory implementation of the overall strategic proposal rather than the detailed provisions of the strategy as highlighted in our submission for the Inner North, North East and East Sub Region Submissions dated 2 October 2007.

PIA is of the opinion that the preparation of the draft documents could have benefited significantly with the inclusion of additional background research to make clearer the basis of establishing the targets proposed and in this, closer engagement with Councils and the private sector might also have eliminated various issues of concern.

For this reason, PIA submits that a specific program of local plan development steps should now be undertaken in concert with the Local Authorities as a means to more specifically identify land development opportunities. In addition, such an approach would also help to respond to the various barriers that have been identified above.

In this, PIA sees the Metropolitan Strategy and now the Sub-Regional Strategies as a highly significant initial step that provide impetus to the achievement of adequate responses to urban growth and in that regard, could be considered more as enabling documents designed to guide current and future planning rather than mandatory instruments in the traditional statutory context. As the Department may be aware, a fundamental ambition of the PIA is to ensure that planning efforts are directed at achieving sustainable and liveable communities, a goal that it is anticipated the Department would share.
On this basis, the Planning Institute of Australia (NSW Division) proposes that the Department now support the development of:

- Detailed action plans including land capability assessment for major urban development areas and infrastructure projects to be prepared in conjunction with the key stakeholders;
- Assigned responsibilities for implementation and funding at both State and Local Government level;
- Revised Local Governance arrangements designed to enable implementation to occur and to ensure that appropriate oversight of progress is achieved.

We wish to work positively with the Department and the Minister to achieve improvement and a way forward that will serve government and the planning profession well into the future.

Yours sincerely,

Julie Bindon
President
Planning Institute of Australia
(NSW Division)