



the voice of the industry

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

18 April 2017

High Demand for Housing on the Fringe

Latest ABS figures on new home building approvals indicate that activity across the outer fringes of the Lower Hunter is performing well, reported the Housing Industry Association, the voice of Australia's residential building industry.

"In the 12 months to February 2017, a total of 3,760 approvals were issued for new dwellings in the Hunter region, with 1,333 or 35 per cent occurring in the local government areas of Maitland, Cessnock and Singleton. This is a significant increase over the 23 per cent proportion that these local government areas accounted for in the previous year", reported Craig Jennion, HIA Executive Director for the Hunter region."

"The increased pipeline of new dwelling activity over the past year is a welcome development, and contributes to the long-term prospects for the Hunter region," Mr Jennion said.

"The strategic direction of new housing within the Hunter is embodied within the recently released Hunter Regional Plan 2036. Should the average Hunter region building approvals of the last 5 calendar years continue for the life of the plan than the aim of 70,000 additional dwellings will be exceeded by 10 per cent", explained Mr Jennion.

"Considering the average of 410 building approvals over the past 5 years Cessnock in particular appears to be a council that is on track to not only meet the projected dwelling projections of the plan, but exceed it by 29 per cent. Following a 45 per cent increase in the 2016 calendar year it is currently the Hunter council with the greatest percentage increase in approvals in the 12 months to February 2017, up 44 per cent", Mr Jennion said.

"A hotspot for Cessnock has been the new Huntlee project that had an estimated 106 dwelling approvals in 2016. The approval of this and other greenfield projects in recent years has ensured there is not as large a problem of land supply bottlenecks that occurs in other locations in the Hunter, ensuring better outcomes in this area" Mr Jennion pointed out.

"Looking forward a key component of the Hunter's success will be how well local government areas away from the coast can deliver increased dwellings in both greenfield and urban renewal locations. If councils can perform as well as Cessnock currently is by reducing DA timeframes and working with the development community we will see increased housing affordability for local residents and a further decrease in unemployment figures on the back of both new dwelling and renovation work".

"Whilst the performance of the new housing element of the sector is mixed across the Hunter, should conditions endure on the fringe then there will continue to be many opportunities on the horizon for 2017/18", concluded Mr Jennion.

For further information contact:

Craig Jennion, HIA Executive Director - Hunter on 0414 872 090 or c.jennion@hia.com.au.

For social media commentary from Craig Jennion:



MEDIA RELEASE

