



## POSITION PAPER

### HISTORIC NEWCASTLE CBD

#### HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HISTORIC NEWCASTLE CBD

The Newcastle Urban Conservation Area was listed on the National Trust Register in October, 1978 and the nearby Cooks Hill Urban Conservation Area was listed on the Register in April, 1981. A total of 234 individual places in Newcastle have been listed on the National Trust Register since 1969. The Trust's listings have facilitated the listing of 38 places in Newcastle on the State Heritage Register and 185 places listed on the Schedule of Items of Environmental Heritage of the Newcastle Local Environmental Plan 2012. Also, four Heritage Conservation Areas and three Archaeological Sites have been listed as Heritage Items on the Local Environmental Plan.

Following the 28 December, 1989 Newcastle earthquake 39 additional properties were listed on the Trust Register in February 1990. Of these, eight were subsequently demolished.

Newcastle is unique among Australian cities, in having a hill profile with the town gathered around it; an urban landscape which sweeps up from the harbour to The Hill, Cathedral and King Edward Park. Newcastle represents the archetypal cathedral port city type, with the Cathedral constructed on the highest point in the city, visible from all other parts of the settlement.

The Trust's Hunter Regional Branch has worked for over three decades to have Newcastle's heritage recognised and conserved.

#### THE THREAT POSED TO THE HISTORIC NEWCASTLE CBD

Major threats now face historic Newcastle with a proposed mall development of a height that would impact negatively on the 180 degrees view arc from the cathedral northwards and on Heritage and Urban Conservation Areas and individual buildings of heritage significance. There is also the threat to remove the historic rail line to Newcastle Railway Station, in the heart of the historic CBD. Such a proposal would be unheard of in any other major city.

#### NATIONAL TRUST POSITION

The National Trust opposes the removal of the historic rail line from Newcastle to Wickham.

The Trust also oppose major redevelopment in the historic CBD which would be of a height and density that threatens historic sight-lines (particularly the 180 degrees view arc from the Cathedral northwards), which is damaging to the heritage values of the listed Urban and Heritage Conservation Areas and which would threaten heritage-listed buildings.

State Significant Development declaration must not switch off Heritage & Environment Protection Legislation nor allow major new developments to be dealt with as modifications to existing approvals in the Newcastle historic CBD.

The Trust will urge that the low, human scale character of the area east of Auckland Street, which respects the topography of the Hill area and Christ Church Cathedral at its apex, must be protected.

In view of the high number of heritage-listed buildings already demolished in Newcastle (17) the Trust will strongly oppose any further demolition or unsympathetic development of heritage-listed and heritage contributory buildings.

#### ACTION TO CONSERVE THE HISTORIC NEWCASTLE CBD

The Trust calls on its members and the community to support this position by contacting Newcastle City Council and the NSW Government with your concerns.