

# Housing pinch critical



**DONNA PAGE**

## STUNTED GROWTH FORECAST OF NEW HOUSING LOTS IN THE LOWER HUNTER

Year	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	Total
New lots	360	430	800	1590

Source: State of the Land Report 2010  
Urban Development Institute  
of Australia NSW  
(Hunter Chapter)



## NSW Government's dwelling production forecasts to 2031

LGA	Total new dwellings
Cessnock	21,700
Maitland	26,500
Port Stephens	12,500
Newcastle	20,500
Lake Macquarie	36,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>117,200</b>

Source: Lower Hunter Regional Strategy

A CRITICAL and worsening shortage of new housing stock across the Lower Hunter will continue to price more people out of the housing and rental markets, according to a report issued at Rothbury yesterday.

Lower Hunter State of the Land Report 2010 details a shortfall of more than 3000 new houses across the Lower Hunter each year.

The report, issued yesterday by the Hunter chapter of the Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) NSW, forecasts that over the next three years only 1590 new residential lots will be realised.

This compares with State Govern-

ment population forecasts of an additional 160,000 people living in the Hunter by 2031, requiring an additional 4600 new dwellings each year.

UDIA NSW chief executive Stephen Albin said there was a "massive shortfall" in new housing stock and not enough was being done

to address the compounding problem.

Mr Albin said greenfield, or new residential, lot production in the Lower Hunter plummeted from 1371 dwellings in 2003-04 to 145 in 2007-08.

"The NSW Government's Hunter Regional Strategy targets the development of 115,000 new dwellings

over the next 25 years," he said.

"The human cost of poor infrastructure and flat-lining development is a housing and rental crisis throughout the Hunter Region."

According to the report only 360 new lots are forecast for development this financial year from seven sites.

Mr Albin said the State Government and local councils needed to act immediately before the situation deteriorated even further.

Growth corridors were being "bogged down" by the lack of basic water, transport and energy infrastructure.

The report recommends the State Government issue an urban development plan annually with five-year supply forecasts in an effort to provide a realistic picture of housing stock in the region.

"Government agencies and Hunter Water Corporation must prepare and publicly release infrastructure capital works programs that align with the Hunter urban development plan, so that industry can invest in new land with confidence that services will be supplied," Mr Albin said.

## Trainers cleared for takeoff

THE RAAF has cleared its fleet of Hawk lead-in fighters to resume operational flying.

Hawk flying operations were temporarily suspended last week after an aircraft experienced a technical fault while taxiing before takeoff from RAAF Base Pearce, Western Australia.

Defence said the RAAF maintained very strict safety protocols.

"Following an investigation into that incident, the Hawk fleet has been cleared to resume flying, with each aircraft to receive a detailed technical inspection prior to flight," Defence said.

The RAAF operates 33 Hawk aircraft at Pearce and Williamtown to train pilots for operations on advanced combat aircraft.

AAP

## Cancer professor honoured



JOHN FORBES

A LEADING Newcastle-based breast cancer researcher is to receive a national award for his efforts to treat the disease.

The Clinical Oncological Society of Australia will bestow the honour, for outstanding contributions to cancer care, on Australian New Zealand Breast Cancer Trials Group research director Professor John Forbes in Melbourne next month.

## Union to meet on uni response

THE National Tertiary Education Union will discuss today Newcastle University's response to its freedom of information application seeking details of executive salaries and salaries.

The university advised the union late yesterday that third parties about whom information was sought had appealed against the release of the information.

The university has another four weeks to consider the appeals as part of the application process.

The union lodged its application as part of its pay rise campaign for academic and other university staff.

Newcastle union branch president Suzanne Ryan said a teleconference would discuss the union's response today.



REVEALED: Father Peter Rushton was a serial sex abuser.

## Sex priest allegations rock Anglican church

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are investigating the actions of Father Rushton and other clergy.

Bishop Farran said some of Father Rushton's victims were now known to the church. He did not know how many others there might be and urged them to come forward.

The diocese started working with police after "significant allegations and information of concern" were raised following Father Rushton's death.

Allegations include that he molested young boys who worked as servers during church services, or "arranged for it to happen", Bishop Farran said.

"The diocesan director of professional standards has been investigating these matters and is fully co-operating with NSW Police. "The diocese has also been supporting persons who have come forward in relation to these matters."

Father Rushton worked in the diocese of Newcastle from 1963 until his death.

Bishop Farran first acknowledged the priest's offending at a special service at St Luke's parish, Wallsend, several months ago.

At another event last week, which some victims

of clerical abuse refused to attend because Bishop Farran would also be there, he acknowledged that "for some I may be a symbol of hope, while for others I'm a symbol of shame and suffering".

During the Wallsend service Bishop Farran performed church rededication rites to recognise the crimes committed against children within the church building.

"Most of the children were young servers who would have served the eucharist before experiencing these devastating events," he said.

"The memories for these people are so powerful. I was trying to break the strong negative associations between the building and what happened to them within it."

Bishop Farran said he was in tears at an event last week where victims of child sex abuse broke down while recounting the crimes committed against them.

"It is extraordinary, the devastation that's caused," he said.

People with information about offences involving Anglican clergy are urged to contact the diocese's professional standards director, Michael Elliott.

## Waratah

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