



CENTRAL NSW
JOINT ORGANISATION

MEDIA RELEASE

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Approved by: Cr John Medcalf OAM, Chair of Central NSW Joint Organisation, Mayor of Lachlan Shire Council

NSW Government common planning assumptions are beyond a bad joke.

“Councils of Central NSW have recently received data packs from the Department of Planning, Industry and the Environment (DPIE) on the NSW Government planning assumptions. These assumptions include population growth and inform State planning for investment in infrastructure like water security, maternity beds, health education and policing services. They have been traditionally out by up to 100% and continue to be wildly wrong,” said Cr Medcalf.

“It’s always been seen as a bit of a bad joke. But it’s beyond that now. We are in the midst of a housing and skills crisis in regional Australia; not to mention the impacts of the Covid pandemic. These data packs are yet to take any of this into account,” said Cr Medcalf.

“They fail to take into account what is happening on the ground, not just now, but the pipeline of development commenced and planned. There are tens of billions of dollars’ worth of construction to occur in the next decade in this region with its corollary employment impacts,”

“It is just bad and wrong suggesting Parkes will have a population decline when the State and Federal Governments are investing in Inland Rail, the Newell Highway and the Special Activation Precinct. There has been a significant increase in Transport for NSW staff in Parkes. At least 3000 more jobs will be required as a result of activity in just this one LGA,” said Cr Medcalf.

“This is being mirrored across the region. Be it the new and expanding mines or the upgrade to Wyangala Dam. Over 30,000 jobs will be created over the decade of the Great Western Highway Upgrade where care is being taken to employ local, grow our own and target youth and aboriginal participation,” said Cr Medcalf.

Councils are becoming land developers to help fast track the call for new homes. The State Government has set up a Housing Taskforce to try and come up with some solutions for the chronically challenged State planning system.

According to the June quarter Regional Movers Index recently released, there was an 11 per cent rise in the number of people moving from capital cities to regional areas compared with the June 2020 quarter. The data shows that those areas located within a three-hour drive of the capital cities proving most popular. That is Central NSW.

“On the one hand the region is challenged to manage the current boom and on the other the NSW Government is planning for minor increases in population in some areas and decline in others. The timing of this is frankly tone deaf,” said Cr Medcalf.

“Sadly and badly, these assumptions are used by all State agencies when planning for our region. Regional plans being developed by the NSW government as we speak include for transport, water and land-use,” said Cr Medcalf.

Our maternity beds, operating theatres, schools, police numbers and water security are being determined by numbers that are just so wrong. It has to stop,” said Cr Medcalf.

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