



Hon Greg Smith SC MP

Attorney General
Minister for Justice

MEDIA RELEASE

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BUSY CONSTRUCTION PERIOD FOR NSW COURTS

Hard hats will replace horse hair wigs as the head piece of choice at many courts around NSW, with the NSW Attorney General, Greg Smith SC, today announcing details of more than a dozen construction projects.

“This is an exciting time for the NSW justice system, with major new court complexes to be built in Newcastle, Coffs Harbour and Armidale, while many existing courthouses are expanding or being refurbished,” Mr Smith said.

The Development Application for the \$94 million Newcastle Courthouse project has been submitted to council and the site is being prepared for construction. The seven-storey building will accommodate 10 courtrooms, two tribunal rooms and a host of facilities for the legal profession, victims of crime and justice agencies.

A Development Application will be submitted this month for the construction of a \$40 million courthouse at Coffs Harbour, which will be built alongside a new police station. The courthouse will include four courtrooms, facilities for the legal profession, victims of crime and for alternative dispute resolution.

The construction of a three-storey courthouse in Armidale is underway. The building, which will cost \$15 million to construct, will include a large trial court capable of accommodating up to 15 jurors and a Local Court with a fully glazed secure dock for prisoners.

In Sydney, the Liverpool Courthouse is undergoing a \$6.5 million expansion, with the NSW Government increasing the scope of the project to include the construction of an additional courtroom.

“The fifth courtroom at Liverpool will be necessary to meet the needs of a rapidly growing area in south western Sydney,” Mr Smith said.

“The expansion, to be completed in early 2013, will also include improvements to security and better facilities for people with a disability.”

Other major construction projects include:

- ongoing refurbishment of the Supreme Court at Queens Square in Sydney’s CBD (due for completion in mid 2013)

- a \$1.6 million refurbishment of alternative dispute resolution suites at the King St Courts in Sydney's CBD (due for completion in September 2012);
- the completion of a \$5.5 million expansion of Taree Courthouse;
- the completion of a \$1.6 million project to refurbish and expand Waverley Courthouse;
- a new \$2.5 million high security courtroom at the Downing Centre to accommodate trials involving multiple defendants (to be completed this month);
- a \$1 million upgrade of facilities at Port Macquarie Courthouse (to be completed by 30 June 2012) with further work planned next financial year;
- a \$400,000 upgrade of Queanbeyan Courthouse (additional funds will be allocated to repair damage caused by recent flooding) and
- a \$300,000 refurbishment of Milton Courthouse (to be completed in May);

Mr Smith said many of Australia's best performing courts operate in NSW and the new facilities will help to improve the efficiency of this state's justice system.

"The construction projects will also generate a significant number of jobs and stimulate the economy," Mr Smith said.