

Express Advocate

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Friday, September 17, 2004

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GIVEAWAY - P 21

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\$50m grab

Former boss slams new hospital plan

ANDREW TILLET

THE former head of Central Coast Health has slammed plans to use part of Gosford Hospital's land for housing, describing it as a \$50 million money grab that ignores the area's health needs.

Neville Boyce was appointed chief executive of Gosford Hospital in 1963, before being promoted to head of Central Coast Health when it was created.

He oversaw much of the major expansion of Gosford Hospital, as well as the opening of Wyong Hospital. Mr Boyce retired in 1992 but he has broken his silence to criticise the multimillion-dollar City Link project, which involves redeveloping much of the State Government-owned land around the hospital for new health services and high-rise units.

Up to 1800 units could be built in Holden St, Beane St West, Stephen St and Showground Rd as part of the project, as well as allied health services and teaching rooms.

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CITY LINK: Neville Boyce believes the project ignores the area's health needs. Picture: STEVE MORENOS

No threat to future expansion

CITY Link chairman John Dawson rejected Neville Boyce's claims the project would put at risk any future expansion of Gosford Hospital.

Mr Dawson said strategic advice about future health needs, hospital services and development options was being considered as part of the project.

"City Link is a question of achieving the best use of the land and bringing forward the next stage of the hospital's development without compromising future options," Mr Dawson said.

"There is no desire by the project group or Central Coast Health to compromise those health needs.

"I can understand the emotional attachment to the land because Neville was part of the group that acquired it, and I can understand why he needs persuading about the project ... we're getting the best strategic advice we can."

"Landcom is getting its costs back out of this," he said. "There is no cream on the top for it."

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Express Advocate**

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15 MINUTES OF FAME



Kellie Pankhurst, Ourimbah.
 I HAVE lived on the Central Coast all my life. I love the carefree and down-to-earth lifestyle and the fact there's lots of nature around. I mean, we're close to Sydney but still close to nature with lots of bushland around. I manage the Ourimbah Newsagency and I love it. I love working with and meeting lots of people.

WEATHER

TODAY
 Dry, mostly sunny.
 W/SW winds.
Top temp: 22C

TOMORROW
 Dry, mostly sunny
 W/SW winds.
Top temp: 22C

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» **STEPPING OUT:** Christopher Bowen conducts Songs of Serenity concert. **Page 45**

| | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Sunrise | 5.52am |
| Sunset | 5.48pm |
| Moonrise | 7.15am |
| Moonset | 8.31pm |
| Low tide | 0.13m, 3.34am |
| High tide | 0.21m, 3.55pm |
| High tide | 1.53m, 9.48am |
| High tide | 1.49m, 10.02pm |

Add one hour for Ettalong Beach,
 2.5 hours for Gosford, 3 hours
 above The Entrance bridge,
 1 hour at Spencer.

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'\$50m grab' hospital plan bad medicine

■ **From Page 1**

The joint Central Coast Health and Landcom plan also features an elevated pedestrian link between Mann St and the hospital to improve access.

Mr Boyce said while he could see sense in redeveloping the hospital's land in Holden St, plans to use land bordered by Racecourse Rd and Stephen St for units made no sense.

"Landcom's obsession with making money will be to the detriment of the health needs of the residents of Gosford and the Central Coast," he said.

"The total sell-off of all available land around Gosford Hospital is very short-sighted.

"It is a \$50 million money grab."

Mr Boyce said during his tenure, the emphasis was on increasing the hospital's landholdings for future expansion.

But Mr Boyce said the City Link plan would hem the hospital in and stop further growth at a time when bed numbers were already at a premium.

"I have stressed on many occasions that no one can be positive the land surrounding the hospital will not be required for

**at a glance
no-go zone**

■ **SLAMMED:** A former hospital administrator has criticised Central Coast Health and Landcom's City Link plan.

■ **NO SALE:** Neville Boyce said hospital land should not be sold for residential redevelopment.



John McInerney.

hospital or health care use at some time in the future," he said.

The City Link project has been on public exhibition as part of the draft CBD planning controls drawn up by Gosford Council and independent planner John McInerney.

Public submissions on the draft plans closed yesterday.

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