



Hon Greg Smith SC MP

Attorney General
Minister for Justice

MEDIA RELEASE

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ARCHITECTS APPOINTED FOR NEWCASTLE COURT DEVELOPMENT

One of Australia's largest and most experienced architecture practices has been awarded the contract for the design of the \$94 million Newcastle Courthouse, NSW Attorney General Greg Smith announced today.

"The appointment of Cox Richardson Architects & Planners will allow detailed design work to start immediately, keeping the project on track for construction to begin in mid-2012," Mr Smith said.

Cox Richardson Architects & Planners is the NSW branch of COX, an Australian practice with more than 40 years of experience. COX has worked on a range of major projects, including the design of new courthouses in Queensland and Western Australia.

The Newcastle Courthouse, to be built on the Burwood Wedge site in the city's Civic Precinct, will feature at least 10 state-of-the art courtrooms.

"For the first time, Newcastle will have court facilities to host large trials involving multiple defendants and up to 15 jurors," Mr Smith said.

"Many of the courtrooms will have high definition audio-visual technology which will improve the transmission quality of bail applications made from prison, witness testimony from external locations and recorded evidence."

Mr Smith said the building would be among the most secure courthouses in NSW, featuring a cells complex, a network of Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras and an X-Ray machine and metal detector for the screening of court users.

"Importantly, there will be secure and well-appointed facilities for domestic violence victims and a private room for victims of sexual assault to give 'in camera' evidence to the court," Mr Smith said.

Accommodating the Local, District and Supreme Court, the complex will be up to nine storeys high and 20 per cent larger than the city's existing courthouse.

"The new courthouse will provide ample facilities for people with a disability, the legal profession, juries, justice agencies and support services," Mr Smith said.

The Australian-owned APP Corporation was last month awarded the project management contract. The project is due for completion in 2014.