

Better Planning Network

Media Release



PO Box 989
Lane Cove NSW 1595



betterplanningnetwork@gmail.com



betterplanningnetwork.good.do

An affiliation of more than 350 community groups

NSW Government's Cynical Betrayal of Community

“The NSW Government’s planning White Paper and Draft Legislation is a cynical betrayal of every promise made to the community,” said Better Planning Network’s Corinne Fisher.

“The Government is trumpeting its push for rapid development approvals but speed comes at the cost of community consultation. So much for assurances that community will be at the heart of the planning system,” Ms Fisher said.

The White Paper has at its core the ability of developers, small and large, to achieve approval for most developments in a rapid time frame. The onus will be on decision makers to approve complying developments within ten days and code assessable developments within 25 days. In neither case will neighbours or the local community have a right or opportunity to comment.

‘Code Assessable development is not benign or necessarily low impact,’ said Ms Fisher. ‘It includes residential flat buildings in town centres, new commercial buildings, mixed use buildings and subdivisions with twenty or fewer villas or town houses. These developments can have a major impact on a neighbourhood or small town centre. The community should have the right to comment and to negotiate for the best possible outcome in such cases.’

“The Better Planning Network is deeply disappointed in the State Government. Barry O’Farrell’s election promise to: *give planning powers back to the people* (Contract with NSW. March 2011) has proven to be a cynical ploy. This planning system is a developer’s dream.”

Ms Fisher said that the community has been almost entirely cut out of the planning process at the local level. “The Government hopes that within five years 80% of development will be complying or code assessable. The rest will be merit assessed developments, including the really big developments that are determined by the Planning Assessment Commission or taken into the Minister as State Significant.”

“This is the first major overhaul of the planning system for thirty years,” said Ms Fisher. “It is a disaster for communities all over NSW.”

The White Paper will be on public exhibition until June 28th 2013 despite communities asking for a minimum consultation period of 6 months, Ms Fisher said. ‘Community comments on the Green Paper have been largely ignored in the White Paper. So how does Government expect us to believe that communities will be at the centre of the NSW Planning system?’

For more information contact: Corinne Fisher 0421 831 889
