

Development Watch Inc

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Planning Reform Group

Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning

Sent via email: bestplanning@dilgp.qld.gov.au

Dear Planning Reform Group,

Submission on Draft Development Assessment Rules

Thank you for the opportunity to make submissions on the draft DA Rules.

Development Watch is a community group based in Coolum on the Sunshine Coast. One of our primary aims is to encourage policies and planning practices that preserve and enhance the quality of life in the Coolum district for both residents and visitors. We have prepared this submission with this aim in mind.

We support:

1. ***The fixed assessment process ie. public notification to occur after all information is received.*** This provides more certainty for the community that they will have all information available upon being notified of an application.
2. ***The mandatory methods of public notification for all impact-assessable applications.*** This provides more certainty to all as to how the community can expect to be notified of a development.
3. ***The ability to accept submissions even if not 'properly made'.*** The ability of the community to provide a submission on an application is limited, particular when the submitter has only become involved in a development assessment as a result of a particular development

application and may not ever have lodged a submission before. For this reason, some flexibility is warranted.

We do not support:

1. **Ability to Opt-out of additional information.** Development Watch assesses many impact assessable applications and in doing so, relies heavily on the additional information provided to Council in order to have a full understanding of what is intended in the application. The Request For, and the Additional Information itself, often provides a full and detailed summary of the Application and is heavily relied on by us when preparing a proper submission. For this reason we do not support the ability to 'opt-out' of providing information. This would create confusion amongst the community and also place extra pressure on community members to provide a submission on an application that may not provide sufficient information. The Planning Staff should be sufficiently experienced to know when and what Additional Information is required.
2. **Remove discretion around re-notification.** Development Watch believes that any substantial change to an application as a result of Council imposing conditions and/or negotiations on conditions, or changes that have arisen due to other circumstances should result in a further submission period to enable the community to have further input on the changes to the application. This is important for transparency and to keep the community informed.
3. **Public Notification.** During the period 20 December to 5 January, not only should any business day in this period be excluded from the public notification period, but the maximum time for notification should be required for any Application in December and January. A percentage of the community are often away for the entire Xmas school holiday period (mid December to end of January) and therefore would not be aware of any potential Development Application in their area until their return. The Sunshine Coast is experiencing a large number of Development Applications at the moment and we believe this is a deliberate attempt by some developers to usurp the community.

Yours sincerely



Lynette Saxton,
President, Development Watch Inc.