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Minister's Guidelines and Rules feedback
Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning
By Email: bestplanning@dilgp.qld.gov.au

Dear Minister/Department,

SUBMISSION RE MINISTER'S GUIDELINES AND RULES (MGR)

I am writing on behalf of Development Watch. We are a local community group on the Sunshine Coast and our objectives include encouraging greater public involvement in development issues.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the MGR although the timeframe for providing feedback is very tight, particularly given the volume of material.

We strongly support the stated intention to ensure that the community is adequately consulted in the development of and amendments to local planning schemes. In our view this is not reflected in various parts of the MGR and in particular the Schedules. Our issues are outlined in detail below.

Schedule 1:

The definition of "minor amendment" leaves the decision about whether there "has been adequate consultation with the public and the state" to the Local Government (LG). This does not satisfy the state intention to ensure the community has consulted adequately. LG self-assessment is not an appropriate mechanism for this purpose.

The Minister/Chief Executive should

- a) require the LG to identify the public consultation has taken place and the community response, and
- b) make an independent assessment of whether that was adequate.

Schedule 2:

We strongly support the requirements outlined in this schedule.

Schedule 3:

We strongly support the requirement for LG to include a proposed communication strategy in the material sent to the Minister/Chief Executive in relation to a proposed major amendment and proposed qualified state interest amendment.

Given that not only communication but consultation is the key to community participation in these processes we suggest that the words “communication strategy” be amended to read “communication and consultation strategy”.

Schedule 4:

The requirement for a “minimum of a public notice” for planning scheme amendments is totally inadequate. We know from experience that placing a public notice reaches very few people in the community. It is our very strong view that LG should:

- a) encourage early community consultation before the amendment is sent to the State for its first tick of approval, in accordance with the current Statutory Guideline;
- b) maintain a list of key community organisations and provide them with the information about the proposed amendment as early as possible;
- c) place an advertisement in the local papers in their region that is at least ¼ page in size, and if the proposed amendment is a major amendment, the advertisement should be repeated 3 or 4 times
- d) place the advertisement on the front page of the LG website for the duration of the public consultation period;
- e) place the advertisement in any social media, such as Facebook that the LG uses.

We support the requirement to include the range of information required as outlined in Schedule 4 (1) and that this should apply to points (a) to (d) above.

Schedule 5:

For the reasons outlined in relation to Schedule 4, Schedule 5 requirements should be the same as our proposed requirements for Schedule 4.

Yours sincerely



Lynette Saxton,
President