LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT CARD

NSW country councils are leading the way when it comes to processing development applications, with Temora, Urana, Berrigan, Hay and Cootamundra the top five centres in the state.

Minister for Planning, Tony Kelly, congratulated those councils after releasing the Local Development Performance Monitoring Report.

“Each of the top five councils processed development applications in less than 18 days, on average, with Temora the best performed at just nine days,” the Minister said.

“Liverpool is at the top of the Sydney councils (46 days) followed by Hurstville (49).

“It’s also great to see a number of Sydney councils have significantly improved their performance, including Ashfield, Auburn, Woollahra, Lane Cove and Holroyd.

“After being the worst performer in 2007-08, Ashfield has cut its processing time by more than 40% from 160 days to 93 days in 2008-09.

“There are still some councils which have more work to do to reduce determination times, including Wellington which took an average of 203 days, Manly (136 days), Parramatta (132 days), Hunters Hill (130 days) and Palerang (130 days).”

Wellington Council advised the DAs it determined during 2008-09 had been delayed as landholders were consulted on changes about the subdivision of land as rural concessional lots.

In total, local councils and certifiers determined approximately 71,000 development applications and about 10,000 complying development applications last year worth $19.3 billion, with an increasing number of new homes being given fast-tracked approval.

Mr Kelly said the report shows there are encouraging signs the local planning system is becoming more efficient and responsive, especially for small ‘mum and dad’ building proposals.

“The report shows the NSW Government’s planning improvements are starting to speed up the local council planning process, including the 10-day approval process now available through the housing code,” the Minister said.

“Residential single dwellings received the largest time saving when processed as complying development, taking on average 64 days less to process a complying development certificate for new single houses compared to an equivalent DA process.”
Some of the other underlying improvements are:

- Fewer councils had mean gross determination times of more than 100 days for DAs – 21 councils in 2008-09 compared with 28 councils in 2007-08;
- Six councils had more than 50% of their determinations processed as complying development in 2008-09 compared with three councils in 2007-08;
- Fewer councils had mean gross determination times more than 100 days for DAs valued at less than $100,000 – 11 councils in 2008-09 compared with 14 councils in 2007-08; and
- 82% of councils achieved median net determination times of 40 days or less compared with 77% in 2007-08.

Mr Kelly said the NSW Government is considering other reforms to the assessment process used by local councils to further streamline the system and get these determination times down.

“I also encourage councils to ensure they have sufficient resources in place to process development proposals efficiently,” the Minister said.

The report is available at www.planning.nsw.gov.au