



Hon Tony Kelly MLC
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MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW GOVERNMENT ACTS OVER COMPLAINTS IN WAGGA WAGGA

The NSW Government has announced it is considering appointing a planning administrator to Wagga Wagga City Council.

NSW Minister for Planning, Tony Kelly, said the move follows concerns raised by local builders, residents, businesses and tourism operators.

“My office has received a total of **32 complaints in just the last six months**,” the Minister said.

“Wagga Wagga is the largest inland city in NSW, therefore it is important the local council provides timely and consistent planning outcomes.

“This is not just an issue for Wagga Wagga residents and businesses but also for the strength of the regional NSW economy, so **I have asked the council to respond to the proposal within 21 days.**”

A review of the complaints and council’s general performance of its planning functions by the Department of Planning, along with a 2007 Department of Local Government inquiry, had highlighted a number of concerns.

They include:

- **Inefficiencies in terms of development application (DA) assessment including inconsistent advice, perceived poor customer service and complaint management;**
- **Delays in the timeliness of DA processing, with an average gross determination time of 80 days, which is higher than councils of similar size;**
- **Difficulties in finalising the implementation of strategic planning decisions including delays in bringing new residential land to market and the unnecessarily laborious planning for the significant employment lands at Bomen Industrial Estate; and**
- **Poor management of the recording of and reporting on submissions during the finalisation of the comprehensive local environmental plan.**

The Department of Planning will also undertake a review of the Wagga Wagga Planning Panel.

The panel had, up until September 2009, determined development applications worth more than \$10 million and applications with significant variations from planning controls.

These proposals are now determined by the Wagga Wagga Interim Joint Regional Planning Panel (which has the same Government members as the Planning Panel).
