

Wednesday 18 April 2012

Comment sought on plan to estimate DA costs more accurately

The Department of Planning and Infrastructure is seeking public comment on a proposal to improve the accuracy of cost estimates accompanying development applications (DAs).

The proposal is laid out in a draft Planning Circular that has today been placed on public exhibition until Friday 4 May 2012.

“These cost estimates are used by local councils and other consent authorities to calculate the DA fees they charge applicants,” Executive Director of Corporate Governance and Policy, Donna Rygate, said today.

“It’s therefore important for families and others who lodge plans for new homes and other buildings to have confidence that the fees they pay to have their applications assessed are based on a transparent and reliable formula.

“A recent ICAC investigation also highlighted the need to accurately estimate costs of proposed developments.

“The department is therefore issuing a draft guideline to specify the activities and work associated with a proposed development that must be used to calculate development costs.

“It will specify the matters associated with the erection of a building, the carrying out of works or the demolition of a work or a building that are to be considered by consent authorities when calculating DA fees.

“This will ensure DA fees are soundly based and calculated fairly.”

The department prepared the draft circular in response to a July 2011 ICAC recommendation that stated:

That the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure prepares and makes public guidelines that specify which activities and what work associated with a development are to be used by planning authorities when calculating the estimated costs of works.

The draft circular is available:

- Online at www.planning.nsw.gov.au (click **On Exhibition**, then **Draft Policies and Plans**); and
- in hard copy during business hours at the department’s Sydney (23-33 Bridge St) and regional offices.

Written submissions can be lodged by:

- email to housingpolicy@planning.nsw.gov.au
- mail to Director, Policy Planning Systems and Reform, NSW Department of Planning & Infrastructure, GPO Box 39, SYDNEY NSW 2001

Media contact: Jim Hanna, 9228 6275 or 0457 737 660