MEDIA RELEASE

March 5, 2013

HOUSING SUPPLY AND CERTIFIER CHANGES BEGIN

NSW Government laws which cut red tape that holds up housing starts, and strengthens controls on accredited certifiers, have come into force.

NSW Minister for Planning and Infrastructure Brad Hazzard said the raft of changes was necessary because of policy neglect of the previous Labor government.

“Housing construction reached a 50 year low under Labor, and we are working hard to turn that around.

“These changes will reduce planning delays – in particular for new housing proposals – by clarifying the role of development control plans.

“We are also addressing the integrity of building certification, and providing greater consumer protection.”

The changes will:

- Broaden the Building Professionals Board’s powers for assessing competency of a certifier
- Ensure that certifiers must provide written contracts with consumers that clearly set out expectations and legal requirements;
- Require the Building Professionals Board to take into account the nature and extent of previous disciplinary actions when considering penalties
- Allow councils to publish a wider range of planning material online, including rezoning proposals and voluntary planning agreements without risking copyright action
- Clarify the role of development control plans

“Development control plans (DCPs) were first introduced in NSW more than 30 years ago as flexible guidelines, but over time have become highly complex documents of up to 3,500 pages which create confusion and delays,” Mr Hazzard said.

“These changes return to the original intention as guidelines. However they can still be used to promote good local planning outcomes, including supporting heritage.”

Mr Hazzard said while housing approvals and completions are the best since 2003-04, clearly more needs to be done to meet the State’s growing population.

“The government will continue to look at ways to improve the efficiency and simplicity of the planning system,” Mr Hazzard said.

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