

SHOPPING CENTRE

COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

S009/335

STATE DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE

13 JUL 2009

RECEIVED

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Ms Kate Harris
Committee Officer
Legislative Council Standing Committee
on State Development
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Ms Harris

Inquiry into the NSW Planning Framework

Please find enclosed an annotated transcript of the Shopping Centre Council's evidence at the public hearings of the above inquiry on Monday 15 June 2009. The Committee has also sought further information on the following question:

In your evidence and submission you noted the SCCA is looking forward to the release of the exempt and complying code for internal changes to retail, commercial or industrial development. You note the need to lodge a development application for every internal fitout and minor change of use is a significant burden on retailers. Does this burden exist consistently across local government areas, or is it more or less onerous depending on the relevant council?

Response

The burden of having to lodge a development application for fitouts and minor changes of use in shopping centres can vary across local government areas depending on each council's processes but, regardless of the council, the assessment of a development application in NSW took an average 74 days in 2007/08. In some cases it can take from two to three months. This is all lost trading time for a retailer and is the most significant cost of the current system, especially as new fitouts are usually required in major shopping centres at least every five years (when leases are renewed or new leases signed).

Some councils have developed their own exempt and complying development controls to simplify the approval process for changes of use etc. but we understand that this is not widespread or comprehensive. By contrast, the state-wide exempt and complying code currently being finalised by the Department of Planning will reduce the burden in every local government area across the state and introduce a standard approach to the assessment and approval of low impact development (such as shop fitouts) within a designated timeframe of 10 days. For this reason, the SCCA supports introduction of the code.

Currently only 11% of proposed development in NSW is assessed as complying and the aim is to increase this figure to 30% in two years and 50% in four years. The Government sees the exempt and complying development code for retail, office and industrial buildings as a key step in meeting these targets.

Yours sincerely



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Leaders in Shopping Centre Advocacy

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