



LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL

Preserving the Past, Enhancing the Future

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SD09/314

ES/KT/77.05

19 June 2009

Committee Officer
Standing Committee on State Development
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000



Dear Madam

**SUBJECT: INQUIRY INTO THE NSW PLANNING FRAMEWORK
LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL – ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS
ATTENTION KATE HARRIS**

Here is Council's response to the additional questions forwarded with the transcript from the Inquiry.

1. *Does Leeton Shire Council hold pre-development application lodgement meetings?*

Council does hold pre-development application lodgement meetings at the request of the proponents. Council encourages potential applicants to use this meeting to refine the proposed development, however it is not mandatory. Council does not charge fees for this service.

2. *Would Leeton Shire Council be supportive of electronic lodgement of Development Applications?*

Council supports the concept of electronic lodgement of Development Applications, however a major upgrade of Council's computer system would be required. To achieve electronic lodgement, Council would require financial and technical assistance.

3. *What training has been provided to your staff and councillors on the NSW Planning arrangements?*

- a) *Has training been sufficient/adequate?*
- b) *Should there be more training for staff and councillors.*

Inquiry into the NSW Planning Framework

Most of the training on planning matters is accessed through the Local Government and Shires Association, University of Technology and Riverina and Murray Regional Organisation of Councils. The Department of Planning infrequently holds information sessions, generally in Wagga Wagga, usually of two (2) hour duration. For Leeton the travel time is a minimum of three (3) hours total for a 2 hour briefing session, which may require all planning staff to attend, shutting the Council Department for a day.

- a) Generally the Department of Planning provides briefing sessions although in the past the regional office has provided training based in a regional centre, which was very useful. The briefings for SEPP (Exempt & Complying Development) 2008 were not proposed to be held in Western NSW at first. When the briefing was held, it was on the starting day of the SEPP.
- b) With the continual changes being made to the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act, more training is required for staff and councillors. It is important that training be carried out in the regions before the legislation is turned on.

If you require further information please contact the undersigned.

Yours faithfully



ECM Stoneman
Manager
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES