

18 July 2023

Attn: News Editors, Producers

For publication immediately

Media Release

Local government association disappointed by the lack of consultation on Government's proposed planning reforms

The Government's statement today of significant changes to how some development applications will be assessed has come as a complete surprise to the local government sector.

LGAT President and Break O'Day Council mayor Mick Tucker said "it is extremely disappointing that the Premier has made this announcement today with no prior consultation with our sector".

The high-profile cases of councillors making controversial decisions on development applications represent a very small proportion of total developments.

The Government's own Future of Local Government Review has noted that the proportion of council planning decisions that go to appeal is about one per cent state-wide and that the decisions made by elected representatives were no more likely to be appealed than those by council officers.

It is the historical lack of state-level planning policy that has resulted in councils bearing the full brunt of public criticism on development problems.

While the Government is finally investing resources into developing planning policies and regional strategies, it is too late to deal with the development pressures our state is experiencing.

"Council and state government planners are working through the largest planning reform agenda in our state history. This comes at the same time as growth pressures we have not seen before," Mayor Tucker said.

"Why then is this reform needed now, when Tasmania is already undergoing the largest planning reform of its planning system in its history," he said.

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