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10th May 2013

Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee
Parliament House
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Housing Industry Association (HIA) welcomes the introduction of legislation that addresses the inconsistent, complex and often costly manner in which constructing a dwelling in proximity to infrastructure has been traditionally dealt with in Queensland.

The increasing complexity of legislation with the inherent costs in both time and money associated with the construction of a dwelling is a significant contributor to the rising cost of building a new home.

HIA members have been expressing their frustration for many years at legislation that results in an automatic requirement to lodge a town planning application with all the associated costs (Logan City application fee \$900) and delays just simply because a piece of infrastructure was also located on the site regardless of the actual risk to the infrastructure. However, convincing Local Governments to acknowledge the pointlessness of the exercise has been challenging to say the least.

HIA is aware of examples in South East Queensland where builders have turned down work involving building on sites where infrastructure exists because the associated approval process is so complex. In the current economic climate this speaks volumes as far as the need to implement change.

HIA has long argued that the legislation surrounding building near infrastructure needed to be outcome focused based on clearly explained technical requirements rather than focusing on establishing a convoluted process that provided little if any certainty for the builder in relation to assessment timeframes or the likely outcome.

The introduction of legislation into the Queensland Development Code establishing a consistent set of rules that cannot be overruled by Local Government is a welcome initiative that should deliver significant efficiencies.

Defining once and for all a clear consistent set of clearance requirements based on sound

technical principles that if met mean no further assessment is required will streamline the design, pricing, approval and construction processes significantly, providing certainty for both the builder and the client.

HIA is hopeful that this is just the first in a string of initiatives aimed at standardising the requirements for low risk projects and facilitating the assessment of technical matters by appropriately qualified practitioners bypassing the need to navigate complex Local Government application and approval processes.

HIA would be more than happy to expand upon any of the issues raised

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Warwick Temby', with a stylized, cursive script.

Warwick Temby
Executive Director - Queensland