

# Media Release



27 November 2007

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## UDIA NSW Supports Planning Reform

The Urban Development Institute of Australia NSW (UDIA NSW) has welcomed the Minister for Planning's release of the Planning Reform Discussion Paper as a major step towards improving the complex and inefficient NSW planning system.

Mr Scott Woodcock, UDIA NSW Executive Director said, "the development industry is encouraged that the Government has demonstrated a willingness to listen to a compelling case for reform from all users of the NSW planning system."

"Importantly, the Minister has acknowledged the impact of delays on all stakeholders in the planning process, proposing streamlined assessment processes to assist in supplying new dwellings to the market. BIS Shrapnel recently reported that dwelling commencements in this state reached a near 50-year low in 2006/07 (29,300), and still the average development application takes 75 days to be assessed."

"Even with record low numbers of dwelling starts, the planning system is overwhelmed. Local government needs to support these reforms now to get NSW back in business."

"Unreasonable delays and complex decision making processes have been eroding housing affordability and creating a serious disincentive for investors in this state. The draft Discussion Paper appears to provide a promising framework for comprehensive improvement, focussing reform on areas that are most in need."

Mr Woodcock said that "the draft Discussion Paper adopts two major recommendations from the UDIA NSW Policy Agenda 2007, providing for the creation of a Planning Assessment Commission for state significant applications, and the establishment of Regional Planning Panels for regionally significant projects – negating concerns regarding impartiality in the decision making process and enabling elected Council representatives to focus on strategic planning."

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