

Better Planning Network

Media Release



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An affiliation of more than 360 community groups

Environment Threatened by NSW Planning Reforms

There are grave concerns that the NSW planning reforms will not provide adequate protection for our environment. Better Planning Network's Corinne Fisher said that when the new planning reforms take effect, most development applications will not adequately consider impacts on threatened species, ecological communities and their habitats.

'With the Government planning to have 80% of development approved within 25 days, most approvals will not consider the impacts of development on people, let alone on our environment - animals, plants and their habitats,' Ms Fisher said.

'Currently the impact of most developments on our environment must be assessed. However under the new system it is unclear whether up to 80% of development will require any kind of environmental assessment.'

'While the Government is saying it will protect our environment at the strategic landscape level, it has not identified how this will happen.' said Ms Fisher 'The Government hasn't even identified a budget to conduct the sophisticated mapping it would need if it were going to protect threatened species, ecological communities and their habitats in regional plans.'

'Australia has one of the worst rates of extinction in the world.' Ms Fisher said. 'We are concerned that the new planning laws will add to the problem. 'We are also concerned that several of the existing Environment Protection zones will be scrapped. E3 Zones will become rural zones and E4 Zones will become residential zones. The White Paper does not even mention climate change mitigation. The community could be forgiven for thinking that the NSW Government has very little concern for the environment.' said Ms Fisher.

'We are urging the Minister to change course. We don't believe the community wants a planning legislation that builds apartments and roads but ruins the environment along the way.'

'We agree with the Minister that we need more housing, especially more affordable housing, but surely a society like Australia's can achieve this while remaining proud of our villages and without ruining the environment.'

For more information contact Corinne Fisher 0421 831 889

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