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Interim Connections Policy feedback
Queensland Urban Utilities
GPO Box 2765
Brisbane QLD 4001

Ms Dudley,

Queensland Urban Utilities draft Interim Connections Policy

Thankyou for the opportunity to provide feedback on Queensland Urban Utilities' (QUU) draft *Interim Connections Policy* (ICP). The Property Council appreciates QUU's ongoing engagement with the property industry, particularly in the lead up to the transition to the Utility Model.

As previously raised with the State Government, the Property Council holds concerns that the water distributor-retailers will not be adequately prepared or resourced on 1 July to undertake the duties required under the Utility Model.

While the ICP is a positive step towards a simple, more efficient connection and disconnection process for stakeholders, the Property Council is keen to see the full detail behind the ICP and how QUU will approach the implementation of the Utility Model.

The Interim Connections Policy

The Property Council commends QUU on the clear language and adherence to the provisions of the *Water Supply Services Legislation Amendment Act 2014* throughout the ICP.

The inclusion of Connection Area Mapping, and key schedules including local government planning assumptions, trunk infrastructure plans and schedules of works, provides clarity for industry.

Connecting under a 'Standard Connection'

The Property Council encourages QUU to further investigate opportunities for 'Standard Connections' for properties with under road services located on the *opposite side of the street*.

Connections of this type are quite common and should not require higher levels of assessment. While these connections may require works in a Department of Transport and Main Roads controlled road, the potential benefits from reduced levels of assessment would be of significant benefit to industry.

Fees and charges

The Property Council understands the ongoing complications regarding access to the information that would inform QUU's fee schedule, including local government budgets and the outcomes of the State Government's infrastructure charges framework reform.

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While the descriptions regarding fees for Services Advice Notices, Applications and the Works Phase are sound, without a detailed charges schedule, we are unable to assess the impact of the intended fees. The ICP notes that these charges will be finalised in May 2014. The Property Council is keen to evaluate these when they become available.

Changes to other plans and legislation

The ICP is reliant on local government plans for infrastructure and planning assumptions. The Property Council is keen to receive further information on QUU's processes for updating the ICP, and eventual netsew plan to ensure they remain consistent with future amendments to local government plans.

Existing applications

While the types and areas of connection outlined in the ICP do reduce uncertainty for new water applicants, confusion regarding the processing of existing applications is a significant concern for Property Council members.

This is felt particularly by proponents of staged developments that will have to navigate both local government development approvals, and distributor-retailer connection applications for their subsequent stages.

The Property Council understands dedicated factsheets outlining the processes involved in transferring a staged development between local governments and QUU will be available, and would appreciate the opportunity to circulate these among our members as soon as possible.

Conclusion

The Property Council is keen to continue its engagement with QUU to ensure a streamlined transition to the Utility Model, and build on our positive ongoing relationship.

We look forward to analysing the final ICP, including a schedule of charges before July 1 2014.

Should you have any questions regarding the Property Council or this submission, please do not hesitate to contact me on 07 3225 3000, or kmacdermott@propertyoz.com.au.

Yours sincerely



Kathy Mac Dermott
Executive Director