

To: Mr Eric Lumsden  
WAPC Chairman  
Western Australian Planning Commission  
140 William Street  
Perth 6000 WA

11 September 2014

Dear Mr Lumsden

**DESIGN REVIEW PANELS / DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

Discussions with our members have highlighted that there is a significant level of concern and confusion regarding the design review panels/design advisory committees (DACs) of local councils within Western Australia.

As the leading advocate for Australia's property industry, the Property Council represents key owners, investors and developers who work closely with local councils and DACs.

The Property Council wishes to commend the work done by the Development Assessment Panels (DAPs) in removing some of the more ludicrous conditions placed on development plans by councils, on the advice of their DACs. The Property Council is concerned, however, that DACs may be being used in a way that is detrimental to the DAP process.

The Property Council is too often hearing reports of DACs overstepping their terms of reference, requiring changes be made to the interiors of buildings and demanding changes that would result in developments no longer being financially viable.

The local councils for these DACs are then not supporting the development applications due to the unreasonable and unviable demands of the DACs not being met.

Reports from members suggest that those developers who progress these applications to the DAP stage are finding the DAPs will remove or ignore the conditions and recommendations made by these DACs.

However, burdening development applications with conditions that DAPs will inevitably remove anyway is a waste of time and resources for both developers and those who sit on the DAPs.

Further, many developers are reluctant to submit an application to the DAP without support from the local council due to the costs involved and the time that it will require.

The Property Council strongly recommends that the WAPC take action in order to protect the DAP process from being undermined by these DACs.

It should be noted that there are of course developments taking place that are not of the size necessary to trigger the DAP process. These developments, therefore, are entirely hostage to the stifling demands of the DACs and will not be rescued by the DAPs.

This is a situation that is detrimental to development in Perth and we trust the WAPC will be able to overcome it.

Yours sincerely,



Joe Lenzo  
Executive Director

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