

AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF PLANNING CONSULTANTS, APPEALS SYSTEM

135. Mrs EDWARDES to the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure:

In light of comments from the Australian Association of Planning Consultants WA President David Caddy reported in *Business News* of 7 June that the association is receiving feedback that the system has become bogged down, and that members are concerned that little is being done on planning appeals, I ask -

- (1) Is it true that this backlog exists?
- (2) How many appeals are in that backlog?
- (3) What action has the minister taken to expedite those cases?

Ms MacTIERNAN replied:

I am glad the opposition spokesperson on planning matters has such confidence in my ability that she thinks I can recite the precise numbers. As it turns out, I can.

(1)-(3) When I first arrived in my office, I found 370 outstanding planning appeals. I can advise the minister - Several members interjected.

Ms MacTIERNAN: That is the best members opposite can do.

Since then, 115 new appeals have been lodged and my office has dealt with about the same number. We have sorted out all the dodgy appeals and they have been withdrawn. We now have 340 outstanding appeals. Obviously, we are in a much better position than we were. We have made it perfectly clear that we will continue in a workperson-like way to get through that workload.

The previous Government promised in 1997 to abolish ministerial appeals, but it did not do that. It is inappropriate for a minister of State to spend time second-guessing local authorities about whether Aunty Rosie's garage extension should be permitted. We should be dealing with broader strategic issues, not trying to exercise complete control over local government.