

APPROVALS AND RELATED REFORMS (NO. 4) (PLANNING) BILL 2009

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by **Hon Robyn McSweeney (Minister for Child Protection)**, read a first time.

Second Reading

HON ROBYN McSWEENEY (South West — Minister for Child Protection) [9.37 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this bill is to amend the Planning and Development Act 2005 in order to streamline and improve the planning approvals process. The proposed legislative amendments are part of a series of changes to planning, environmental, mining and other legislation that have been steered by the Premier's task force on approvals, development and sustainability.

The Liberal–National government is committed to ensuring that economic growth and activity in Western Australia is not unduly hindered by an unwieldy or unresponsive approvals process. The proposed amendments will create greater efficiency and consistency for state government priority projects, and certainty for investors who are considering new ventures in important economic infrastructure, industrial development and urban land and housing.

This bill introduces significant planning reforms while also including minor and clarifying amendments to the planning act.

The key elements of the bill are to establish development assessment panels—DAPs—which will provide more effective and efficient processes than is currently the case for significant urban, industrial and infrastructure developments; significantly extend the use of existing strategic instruments such as improvement plans and schemes to strengthen state and regional planning; enable the state to collect data on local development decisions to monitor the effectiveness of reforms to the approvals process; provide a mechanism for local planning schemes to be updated to implement state planning policies; and streamline and clarify existing provisions and processes to improve the efficiency of the approvals process.

In conclusion, this bill is a true reform package. The provisions range from minor and clarifying amendments to more substantive measures which, in the view of many, are long overdue in Western Australia. I remind the Council that these measures are in line with the best practices for planning and are welcomed by the key stakeholders of the land use planning system in this state. I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.