

## NSW Planning Portal Industry Reference Group – Quarter 1 meeting

Held on: 11/03/2024 – 11am to 12noon

At: Online via Teams

Chaired by: Andrew Schofield, Planning and Engagement Manager, DPHI

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### Attended

Natalie Allan, MMJ Real Estate	Cathy Towers, HIA NSW *
Richard Barry, Urbis	Gino Cavallaro, DPHI *
Michelle Blicavs, ACS	Liam Alagh, DPHI *
Jill Brookfield, AAC	Jane Blakeney, DPHI *
Tom Forrest, Urban Taskforce	Vikrant Das, DPHI
Juliet Grant, PIA NSW	Margaret Gomez, DPHI
Ross Grove, Property Council NSW	Faiq Kidwai, Building Commission NSW
Kellie Hassab, ACS	Khaleda Murad, DPHI
Michael Said, HIA NSW	Meghann Sikorski, Building Commission NSW
Brian Seidler, MBA NSW	Anthony Tavella, DPHI *
Emma Strickland, AIBS NSW	Caitlin Williams, DPHI
Matthew Thrum, Ethos Urban *	

\* Partial attendance

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### Apologies

Kimberly Everett, DPHI	Michael Murrell, UDIA NSW
Richard Barry	Michael Player, Property Council NSW
Tessa Faucheur, PIA NSW (represented by Juliet Grant)	

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### Material

A copy of the presentation to the Reference Group is attached with these minutes for reference:  
*NSW Planning Portal Reference Group – Industry – Quarter 1\_Presentation\_11032024.pdf.*

## Actions

ID	Action	Responsible	Due date
I24.1.1	<p>Provide clarification on the requirement for Fire Safety Scheduled for all classes of building for DA and CDC applications.</p> <p><u>RESPONSE:</u> Under Section 78 of the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment (Development Certification and Fire Safety) Regulation 2021</i>, a copy of the Fire Safety Schedule must be attached to the relevant development consent (DA or CDC) and construction certificate.</p>	Building Commission NSW	Complete

## Minutes

### Introduction

- The new members were welcomed to the 2024 NSW Planning Portal Industry Reference Group.

### Program updates

- The MOG changes being made to the various digital services were discussed.
- The NSW Planning Portal roadmap and the types of releases was discussed. The roadmap can be viewed at <https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/roadmap-nsw-planning-portal> and it is updated monthly.

### Release updates

- The recent and upcoming NSW Planning Portal releases, including the Farming pre-assessment tool (developed in conjunction with the Department of Primary Industries) and myHome Planner (developed in conjunction with the Department of Customer Service), were discussed.
- The reference group was provided with an update on the chatbot functionality. It is currently being tested internally prior to its release in June 2024.

### Building Commission NSW building reforms program

- An update on the Building Commission NSW building reforms program was provided, along with an overview of the changes being made in the next few months. These changes are being made in response to stakeholder feedback and many would remove the need for a stakeholder to contact customer support.
- Urban Taskforce advised that they had made representations to the Minister about the increase of the strata bond rate from 2 to 3% on 1 July 2024. There was currently only one defect liability insurer in the market, and larger developers were having difficulty obtaining the required insurance. Until there is a competitive insurance market previous advice was that developers

would not be forced to take out defect liability insurance. Urban Taskforce would be making further representations to the Minister to extend the commencement date for this change a further 6 months. The representative from the Building Commission NSW advised that the changes would be prepared so ready once legislated.

- HIA requested clarification on the class/es of building that the Fire Safety Schedules package applies to. The Building Commission NSW mentioned that the requirement to provide the Fire Safety Schedule is currently implemented for Construction Certificate application but not yet implemented for development applications and CDC applications. Clarification on the specific class of building will be provided to the group.

**UPDATE POST MEETING:** Under Section 78 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment (Development Certification and Fire Safety) Regulation 2021*, a copy of the Fire Safety Schedule is to be attached to the relevant development consent (DA or CDC) and construction certificate. Functionality already exists for a consent authority or certifier to upload an optional Fire Safety Schedule to a Construction Certificate. To provide consistency, the DA and CDC digital services will be updated to include Fire Safety Schedule as an optional document upload to meet this requirement. This is irrespective of the class of building.

- AIBS NSW asked whether the Planning Portal would confirm that the correct form is uploaded for the Fire Safety Schedule. The Building Commission NSW advised that there would be a validation that a document was uploaded with that document category but the content within it would not be validated.

**Customer service update**

- The levels of customer support for the program were outlined for attendees, including how to escalate a P ticket. If needed, the ticket could be escalated to Margaret Gomez on email address: [margaret.gomez@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:margaret.gomez@planning.nsw.gov.au).
- An update was provided on the actions the department has taken to reduce the backlog of customer support tickets.
- The Property Council asked whether the same process was followed for NSW Councils, and whether there was a similar Council reference group. The department advised the customer support model also applied to councils, and that there were quarterly reference group meetings with councils. Information about the NSW Planning Portal reference groups could be viewed here - <https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/help-and-resources/nsw-planning-portal-reference-groups>.

**NSW Planning Portal Engagement update**

- An update on the number of training sessions and attendees this year was provided.
- The Property Council asked whether recordings of the training sessions were available to be accessed 24/7. The department advised that in most instances, attendees were provided with a copy of the training session after the event.
- Attendees were asked for their feedback on the training registration page:

Question	Response	Count
Based on the example you have seen today, do you think the level of information is enough to help a user identify relevant training courses?	Yes	7
	No	2

Question	Response	Count
Is the publication of training courses three months into the future sufficient?	Yes	6
	No	3

- Addition feedback on how the webpage could be improved was provided:
  - more details on the training courses
  - ability to view the training by date and by digital service
  - a way to identify the target audience.
- An update on the internal knowledge management working group was provided. Attendees were asked about their use of this aspect of the program. 90% of respondents currently used, or knew their members used, the knowledge management resources accessed via the NSW Planning Portal website. The support information accessed was:
  - Quick Reference Guides (89%)
  - Frequently Asked Questions (89%)
  - Content pages about a particular service (56%)
  - Videos (33%)
- The concept for the consolidated help and resources section of the NSW Planning Portal was discussed. Feedback was requested on:

Question	Response	Count
Do you believe that the proposed page structure will assist users to find the relevant Quick Reference Guides?	Yes	6
	No	1
Do you believe that the proposed page structure will improve the understanding of the application and assessment process and the users involved?	Yes	3
	No	3

- Additional feedback on how the concept could be improved was provided:
  - will need good search options / supported by google search
  - sort by type first not digital service.

**Other**

- A recommendation was made that the instructional text within the digital services be improved to provide clearer explanations of what needs to be uploaded or provide clarifications on how to answer a question. Some of the existing definitions are not correct.
- Agenda items for the quarter 2 reference group were requested. A member requested an update on what the department was doing to assist with the application time delays.

**Upcoming meetings**

Next meeting: 18 June 2024