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Planning Reform

4. Development Assessment Panels

The State Government is reforming the *Planning and Development Act 2005*, *Planning and Development (Local Planning Scheme) Regulations 2015* and State planning policies to create a more flexible, responsive and contemporary planning system that can support Western Australia's economic recovery.

This program of reforms has been derived from, and builds on, the 19 initiatives identified in the *Action Plan for Planning Reform*. Two initiatives focused specifically on reforms to improve the Development Assessment Panel (DAP) system:

- Development Assessment Panel (DAP) processes are more consistent and transparent.
- Development assessment processes are streamlined and outcomes-focused.

The number of panels was reduced from nine (9) to five (5) in April 2020. A number of process improvements have also been implemented across the DAP system to improve transparency and consistency of information. Amendments to the *Planning and Development (Development Assessment Panels) Regulations 2011* are currently being scoped to further reform the DAP system.

Key Reforms

- The Government will further reduce the number of panels from five, to three geographic based panels and will make provision for the appointment of permanent panel members.
- Improve public information, access to clear explanatory materials and greater transparency of decision making of the DAP process.
- In addition, a new Special Matters Development Assessment Panel will be established to consider complex proposals which could include proposals located in areas with significant tourism, unique aesthetic qualities or other unique features. Proposed regulatory amendments, including criteria for developments to be considered by this new panel, are being prepared in consultation with local government and industry.
 - The *Planning and Development (Development Assessment Panels) Regulations 2011* will be amended to include criteria for matters that would be determined by the Special Matters DAP, the process for assessment, and to specify the composition and membership which will be different to the permanent members appointed to geographic panels.
 - It is proposed that there will be a representative from the local government sector to ensure local matters and views are considered. Proposals to be determined by the Special Matters DAP will be considered by the State Design Review Panel (chaired by the Government Architect).
- Reforms to the DAP system including the reduced number of panels, permanent membership and establishing a Special Matters DAP are aimed at ensuring decision-making for developments will be timely, consistent and allow for earlier delivery of community benefit from developers seeking bonuses.
- Draft Regulations for the changes proposed to the DAP system will be available for consultation in the coming months at <https://consultation.dplh.wa.gov.au>.