

To whom it may concern

I am a Civil Engineer (Master of Science in Civil Engineering, Member of Institute of Engineers Australia, Chartered Professional Engineer) and I also have a NSW Building License. I have operated my own boutique property development and construction company in Sydney since 1994 and specialize in the development of residential units, townhouses and houses (typically around 8 to 15 units or townhouses per project).

I have reached the point now where the level of red tape applicable to my business is negatively impacting its viability to the extent of forcing its imminent closure. The main problem areas can be summarized as follows:

- 1. The NSW planning system and its associated myriad small, inefficient councils means a lack of certainty, transparency, consistency and professionalism**
- 2. The above planning system results in crippling time delays which render projects non-viable at this time**
- 3. The large number of small councils, coupled with a lack of strategic planning by the NSW State Government and the associated politicization of any planning decision due to pandering to local groups (NIMBY type), results in regular use of the courts which adds a layer of cost and time which cannot be recovered**
- 4. The lack of an integrated planning approach and a master plan in NSW makes it almost impossible to plan future development business for small companies such as mine**
- 5. Badly drafted, badly designed and unworkable planning instruments result in poorly designed developments which are not necessarily what the market requires**
- 6. Rapidly escalating Council charges, developer contributions and other levies (which cannot be passed on to home buyers due to an already serious lack of affordability) render most, if not all, small developments non-viable at this time and will continue to do so into the foreseeable future**
- 7. The complete lack of NSW State Government management in the critical area of builders Home Owners Warranty Insurance results in a crippling shortage of small builders (such as those needed to build boutique developments) due to the impossible levels of regulation imposed. This in turn renders many (if not most) small development projects non-viable and will continue to do so**

The situation for small builders and small developers in NSW is now critical. I have been a committed and hardworking person here for over a decade and, coupled with my level of qualifications, I believe that I am probably amongst the leaders in my field in terms of competence and experience. I cannot survive. If I cannot survive then many (if not most) smaller developers/builders must surely be in the same position. On a recent trip to Queensland (specifically Brisbane) I was amazed at the sophistication and efficiency of the planning system and administration of building warranty issues in that state. In

my opinion, unless the situation in NSW is rapidly reformed a crisis is imminent in my area of operation.

Yours truly

Laurence Gill
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