



A solutions paper to support ESD outcomes in Development Assessment Processes

***A paper developed by the Planning & Urban Design Focus Group
of the Thuringowa Sustainable Village Project, June 2007***

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Issue	Suggested Solution
Triple bottom line and performance based assessment of alternative solutions can be costly and add time to decision date.	Use Pre-Lodgement Meetings EARLY in the design process to achieve in-principle agreement for proposed development and enable further development approval to be CODE assessable. Council to support developers through the provision of an ESD checklist, eg the Thuringowa City Council Sustainability Checklist (or a revised version of).
Are local governments equipped to assess alternative solutions within tight time frames.	Use Pre-Lodgement Meetings to identify local government concerns upfront. Ensure that applications properly consider and address local government concerns. Local Government(s) to establish a pool of specialist consultants and a committee review process which can be utilized by developers who would like to speed up the assessment of proposed alternative solutions.
Process to AMEND planning scheme takes MONTHS (State Interest Check). <i>Comment: The current Thuringowa Planning Scheme is quite broad. Acceptable solutions are often not provided. This is both positive and negative. The opportunity for a comprehensive review of the planning scheme occurs on a 6 year timeframe. A key issue in absence of incorporation of amendments is that it is difficult for the Council to require higher standards especially of poor developments.</i>	Pre-Lodgment Meetings can support Council in communicating desired development standards even in absence of the inclusion of acceptable solutions in the planning scheme. It is however recognised that preliminary approval may not be a viable approach for some (smaller) developments. Enhanced emphasis on ensuring that bi-annual amendments to the planning scheme occur.
IDAS complexity and administration heavy focus can lead to DELAYS.	
IPA/IDAS improvement project has stalled which promised to free up IDAS.	New Act being developed.
Review self-assessable carrots / encouragements for ESD developments.	Support for mechanisms that enables transitions from Impact to Code and ideally to Self assessable process. Providing a time incentive means that developers can more time effectively progress ESD initiatives. Ultimately mechanisms need to be incorporated into the planning scheme ie what must be achieved to warrant the benefit. Consider specific offerings eg density credits. In developing incentives include mechanisms for peer (industry) review that are remunerated (not just industry consultation process) if want a thorough review. Council to lead an initiative to promote sharing of ESD learnings in the region through capturing post development learnings (theirs and the developers) in a simple casestudy format. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is considered to be a benefit for both the developer and the

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	<p>Council in undertaking a post development review to capture learnings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review could be undertaken in two stages – (1) at commencement of ON maintenance to capture as early as possible assessment and application learnings and (2) at OFF maintenance to capture learnings from built form outcomes and ON maintenance period. ▪ Propose a casestudy format identifying both positive and negatives experiences from both Council and Developer perspectives in relation to approval processes and ESD outcomes with the overall intent of seeking to share learnings. ▪ Simple document format for rapid documentation and reading by industry peers. ▪ Format seeks to achieve clear unadulterated sharing of ESD approval/experiences/learnings to a broader industry base than presently achieved through word of mouth. ▪ Casestudies could summarise key points in relation to what the developer did, what with hindsight they would have done differently, how it was assessed and any outcomes that the council would have liked to see achieved that weren't.
<p>Applications lodged that are sub-standard and no ability to deem them not properly made.</p>	<p>Despite no legal support in the Act for this practice, the Council can address through provision of an extensive information request and suggest Pre-lodgement meetings.</p>
<p>Use of non-statutory partnering agreements to encourage best outcome approach – list of ESD initiatives.</p>	<p>Highly support process involving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prelodgement Meetings ▪ Pre-Approval ▪ Creation of a Shared Vision (developer/council) ▪ Development of a Partnering Agreement identifying Overall outcomes ▪ Development of a list of mutually agreed ESD initiatives
<p>“Political will” required to include additional ESD principles applicable to housing and design in the scheme given some perceived resistance from industry groups.</p>	<p>Increase education and awareness of how to do ESD.</p> <p>Specifically undertake measures to educate Councillors of the benefits of raising the bar with regards to Planning Scheme Outcomes, so that Councillors endorse, expect and strongly support assessment/technical officers in requiring a higher development assessment standard in development applications.</p> <p>Share findings of this project with Councillors, Council Staff and Development Industry. Eg – ie share: (1) the ThSVP focus group findings; (2) the outcomes /benefits of the Sustainable Village at Kelso once constructed.</p> <p>Consider the merits of calling for a regional study to inform Councillors of the economic / social / environmental benefits that would result from requiring higher standards from development applications.</p> <p>Consider whether such a strategic study might be undertaken at the level of the Regional Organisation of Councils as a regional plan and / or the merit of structuring such a study similarly to the TTSP (Townsville Thuringowa Strategic Plan) process as this was a good model, however ensuring a shorter timeframe, accountability for ongoing management and mechanisms to ensure rapid updating to ensure it remains relevant.</p> <p>Consider the merit of addressing this point as part of the 2030 Visioning Process for the City of Thuringowa.</p>
<p>Building Code of Australia regulates housing, not planning scheme.</p>	<p>Take a planning approach where types of housing form to be provided informs the subdivision layout, not the other way around.</p> <p>Then recognising that the Building Code of Australia is simply setting a</p>



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	minimum standard (for Energy Efficient Housing Design) developers to prioritise the provision of housing types that are best able to achieve climate responsive design / energy efficient outcomes.
Climate Responsive Design policies often not addressed in any detail with smaller lot housing applications.	Council to coordinate the revision of CRD policies to ensure that CRD policies are relevant and can be applied to current development practices. This revision process should involve input from industry, preferably paid, in preference to a 'voluntary' industry consultation process.
Efficient use of land and greater densities slowly being explored by local developers.	Council to prepare (potentially utilising the Thuringowa Sustainable Village Tropical Design Focus Group) a series of suggested proto-types with tips on how to achieve good outcomes in various development scenarios.
Public transport – reluctance to plan for the future.	Suggest incorporation in 2030 City Vision. Particularly the vision should call to consider setting an urban growth boundary and increasing densities including in existing suburbs – there are so many benefits - one of which is the potential for viable public transport provision. Other benefits for the city include: economic efficiencies/increased competitiveness and improved community access to services.
State Agency referrals often unclear of requirements, lack of certainty and time frames.	Recommendation that this is addressed in the IPA review.
Traditional adversarial mentality between LG and developer instead of problem solving to achieve the best ESD outcome.	See points above. Eg Use Pre-lodgement meetings In general both sides to be open in communication and build understanding of the other's potential concerns/ preferences /wants / needs – as a foundation for finding mutually agreeable outcomes.
In a busy growth City finding the TIME to think about ESD.	Recognition that ESD is a specialised area and ESD consultants may be useful to encourage and coordinate involvement of industry practitioners in participating in discussions and the development of relevant tools/policies/checklists, etc.
Review of elements of Council Policy not promoting ESD e.g. road standards	Utilise recommendations of Thuringowa Sustainable Village Project Focus Groups to identify priority areas where ESD could be better supported.
Market demand for ESD products in high growth scenario.	Education, awareness raising and marketing to consumers of the BENEFITS available to them from choosing ESD product (education/marketing to focus on the benefits not the features of ESD product). This action can be undertaken by any party interested in promoting uptake of ESD product.
Informed and sustainable land release strategies that promote ESD	Incorporate as integral component of Thuringowa's 2030 Vision Strategy. Following compilation of the combined tender document linking the findings of all the focus groups from the Thuringowa Sustainable Village Project, To involve focus group participants from across all the Thuringowa sustainable Village Project focus groups (and potentially others) to participate in the already proposed workshop on the topic: " <i>Visioning: What kind of future community do we want to create?</i> " This could be undertaken as contribution to the Thuringowa 2030 Vision Process.