



NEWS RELEASE
The Hon. Kristina Keneally MP
Member for Heffron
Minister for Planning
Minister for Redfern Waterloo

Thursday 4 June, 2009

NSW GOVERNMENT GIVES HIGH SPEED SUPPORT TO FEDERAL BROADBAND ROLLOUT

The state planning system will be amended to fast track delivery of broadband internet to homes and businesses across metropolitan and regional NSW.

Planning Minister, Kristina Keneally, announced today that the NSW Government is proposing to amend planning policy so the Federal Government can roll out the National Broadband Network.

“Along with a national broadband network comes infrastructure requirements such as cables, satellite dishes and telecommunications towers,” Ms Keneally said.

“The NSW Government will ensure timely planning approval of this infrastructure through the Infrastructure State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP).

“Proposed amendments to the Infrastructure SEPP and the new draft *NSW Telecommunications Facilities Code including Broadband* will be put on public exhibition until Friday 10 July.

“The changes will expand the types of telecommunications facilities that do not need a development application.

“I am calling on the people of NSW, including community groups, councils and the property industry, to make their views and suggestions on the proposed amendment known.”

Ms Keneally said the changes would see more telecommunication infrastructure assessed through a ‘checklist-style’ complying development code, or exempt from the planning process. Changes include:

- Certain satellite dishes will be allowed to be classed as ‘exempt development’, meaning people can buy them and get them installed without planning approval
- Telecommunications towers needed for broadband access in rural areas would be classified as ‘complying development’ subject to factors such as height limits and proximity to residential areas

The draft Code also outlines the criteria that each type of facility must meet to be considered as exempt or complying development. Types of facilities covered by the Code include:

- Base stations (including macrocell and microcell installations);
- Facilities for subscriber connection (e.g. broadband, pay TV etc);
- Above ground housing for telecommunications infrastructure;
- An underground cable or duct, including boring cable; and
- Temporary, ancillary and maintenance facilities.

“The Code is designed to make it easier to approve broadband telecommunications facilities that meet community needs, while at the same time having minimal impact on communities,” Ms Keneally said.

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“In order to be classed as exempt or complying development, telecommunications infrastructure would have to meet set criteria in terms of location, design, construction and operation.

“Those criteria are designed to minimise visual impact, encourage co-location of facilities where possible and, of course, meet relevant health and safety standards.

“The installation of new towers, for example, will not be allowed as exempt development, and would only be considered complying development in industrial or rural zones. Even then, strict limits on height and proximity to residential areas would apply.

“If a proposed piece of broadband infrastructure did not meet the criteria for exempt or complying development, it would usually then go through the council development application process.”

Ms Keneally said NSW is working with the Commonwealth Government to deliver infrastructure which will be vital to both the state and national economy.

“High-speed internet access is important to the ongoing wellbeing and prosperity of the people of New South Wales,” Ms Keneally said.

“This is vital telecommunications infrastructure that will clear a path for state-of-the-art technology to reach every household and business in the State.

“It will also contribute to economic growth and job creation across New South Wales as the necessary infrastructure is rolled out.

“Our goal is Australia’s most efficient planning system, flexible and outcomes focused to provide infrastructure, homes and jobs to the people of NSW. That’s precisely what these changes deliver.”

For more information or to view the draft SEPP amendment and draft Code, please visit the Department of Planning’s website at www.planning.nsw.gov.au

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