



17 July 2020

Mr Dale Dickson
Chief Executive Officer
City of Gold Coast
PO Box 5042
GOLD COAST MC QLD 9726

BY POST/EMAIL – mail@goldcoast.qld.gov.au

Dear Mr Dickson,

RE: Supporting HomeBuilder grant during the pandemic

The Urban Development Institute of Australia Queensland (the Institute) writes to express our concern over how some local governments may be impacted during the short window for take up of the HomeBuilder grant.

As you are no doubt aware, despite the very short timeframes for securing the grant, the scheme offers a unique opportunity to attract development activity and the jobs it creates to local government areas across Queensland. Given our industry's role as the third largest creator of jobs in this state, we are keen to work with councils to give applicants the best chance of securing the grant¹⁸. To this end, developers, builders, and trades in the property development industry are moving quickly to enable home buyers to comply with the HomeBuilder grant in terms of finalising housing lots, commencing home construction, and finalising documents.

Achieving these mandatory milestones will inevitably be significantly reliant on local government processes. The performance of local government development department services will be critical across multiple stages of a given project, to enable development activity to happen.

Given this situation and in the spirit of collaboration, we provide the following ideas that could be considered (some of which have already been enacted by some councils):

- Allocating additional council resources to operational works assessment and sign off
- Engaging consultants to outsource applications to alleviate potential resource deficiencies
- Enabling parallel lodgement and assessment of related operational works
- Supporting building certification and building relaxation processes such as reducing the 35 day accepted development process

¹⁸ The Contribution of the Development Industry to Queensland, Urbis 2018

- Supporting building works approval and commencement of construction prior to survey plan endorsement
- Bolstering council resources in plan sealing and pre-seal inspections to ensure project delivery
- Accept developer undertakings to comply with condition requirements within six months after plan sealing
- Enabling as far as possible bonding of works.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge council's efforts to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and the important role local government plays in ensuring the delivery of essential services during this difficult period.

Thank you for your efforts for the industry and community and in taking the time in considering our letter. The Institute offers its support to council in assisting where we can. If you have any questions, please contact Manager of Policy, Martin Zaltron (mzaltron@udiaql.com.au) on (07) 3229 1589.

Yours sincerely,

Urban Development Institute of Australia Queensland

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kirsty Chessher-Brown', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kirsty Chessher-Brown
Chief Executive Officer