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LOCAL DEVELOPMENT EXPRESS LANE NEEDED FOR JOBS

The state's peak business organisation, **Business NSW**, believes that local councils need to immediately create an express lane for projects that retain or create local jobs.

"One of the greatest frustrations for business owners across NSW is the impact that slow development application approval processes have on their growth and expansion plans," said **Business NSW** CEO Nola Watson.

"When a business owner decides to invest in expanding their operations or setting up a new business, these unnecessary delays can make it financially unsustainable or, even worse, the business opportunity might no longer exist by the time the green light is given," Ms Watson said.

"As NSW looks to get back on track from the COVID-19 lockdown, all tiers of government, including local councils, should immediately look at prioritising development applications that maintain and create local employment opportunities.

"No one is suggesting applications should be approved without the necessary rigour, but what the business community wants to see is that Local Councils prioritise projects that will support jobs.

"Anecdotally, members are telling us that architects in some Local Government Areas recommend that business owners should build in the cost of an application to the Land and Environment Court as part of their project cost estimates, because that's the only way for some applications to be approved in a commercially acceptable time period.

"At a time when unemployment in metropolitan areas is rising as a result of the economic crisis, and regional employment prospects are even worse, we must develop sensible solutions to encourage businesses to invest in job creating enterprises, and not allow government bureaucracy to kill off this desperately needed investment with unnecessary paperwork and delays," Ms Watson said.

About Business NSW

Formerly the NSW Business Chamber, *Business NSW* is the peak policy and advocacy body which has been representing businesses in NSW since 1826.

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