

EMBARGOED UNTIL:
April 20, THURSDAY NIGHT, 10PM.

MEDIA RELEASE

Race on for first *EnviroDevelopment*

Queensland's top sustainable developers are lining up to have their projects among the first certified EnviroDevelopments, following the launch of the world-first development branding system this week.

The EnviroDevelopment system was officially unveiled by the Minister for the Environment and Local Government and Planning, Desley Boyle, at an Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) event on Wednesday night (April 19, 2006).

The launch of the UDIA initiative included the announcement of the first EnviroDevelopment pilot (trial) project – the EcoVillage in the Currumbin Valley on the Gold Coast.

UDIA Queensland President Brent Hailey said EnviroDevelopment has been designed to increase the number of genuinely sustainable developments being delivered in Queensland and, ultimately, Australia.

"The environmental branding system is designed to reward projects which have achieved outstanding sustainable outcomes, thereby providing a marketing edge to the developers," Mr Hailey said.

"The UDIA recognized that many of our members were interested in pursuing sustainable development options but were sceptical about the financial viability of these choices," he said.

"People marketing sustainable developments, will now have certainty that a framework exists to reward positive environmental outcomes.

"Our industry and, we believe - the market - is ready for a product such as EnviroDevelopment to harness the existing and growing interest in sustainability.

Mr Hailey said the EnviroDevelopment branding system provided recognition for achievements across six identified areas of sustainable development – water, energy, ecosystems, community, materials and waste.

"A developer will apply to have their development certified in any one or more of the six elements of sustainability and, if successful, will be entitled to use the relevant leaf-logos for their area of performance," he said.

"When viewing the EnviroDevelopment logos, purchasers will know that the project has achieved specific environmental outcomes as decided by independent certifiers."

As well as providing a competitive marketing advantage, the EnviroDevelopment system is hoped to encourage more incentives for developers in the way of sustainability rebates.

"We hope that State and Local Governments will appreciate the opportunity to encourage a more sustainable State and regions with more efficient use of resources and reduced pressure on infrastructure and services," Mr Hailey said.

"Developers satisfying the technical standards for certification will, therefore, have a positive platform for negotiating reduced infrastructure charges, offsets and reduced development assessment delays," he said.

"We have worked closely with Brisbane City Council – one of the EnviroDevelopment Foundation Partners – in developing the system.

"It has always been one of our primary goals to enable developers to deliver sustainable outcomes without substantial financial disadvantage."

Mr Hailey said many developers had already expressed an interest in being one of the EnviroDevelopment Pilot Projects which will trial the system in the lead up to its public launch later this year.

"We've had interest from a number of our members right from the start, but that has increased as the industry anticipation has grown and we have drawn closer to launching," he said.

Mr Hailey said the EnviroDevelopment system had been developed over three years, with significant input from industry, environmental experts and government.

"The integrity and credibility of EnviroDevelopment is paramount which is why we have consulted widely in the development of the technical standards and why we have built in a stringent process for licensing and monitoring.

"We have also set the bar high to reward those developers who are achieving genuinely excellent outcomes and to inspire others to lift their game," he said.

Developers wanting more information about EnviroDevelopment are encouraged to contact the UDIA on (07) 3229 1589 or visit the EnviroDevelopment website: www.envirodevelopment.com.au

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For more information, interviews, photographs, etc, please contact Susan McCosker on 0422 567 667.