



What is the Development Co-ordination Unit (DCU) ?

How can it help me ?

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What is a DCU ?

A DCU Discussion is a formal process initiated by a person intending to submit a development application. By talking to Council's assessment staff, an applicant will be provided with relevant information, and will be referred to the appropriate policies and codes. The DCU is not a substitute for a land use application.

When you make an appointment for a DCU Discussion, ensure you provide some information about your intended proposal, such as the site, and/or the general concept proposal, therefore Council can ensure the appropriate staff are available for discussion.

A DCU is an opportunity for you to seek input from council staff, who can provide *planning information* towards a better development outcome.

Advice is provided to applicants by consultants. A potential applicant who is seeking advice should therefore engage a consultant, not rely on council staff to solve technical problems.

What advantage is there for me in initiating a DCU ?

DCUs are a user pays service for potential applicants, offered by assessment staff to ensure you are aware of the relevant standards, codes and policies against which your proposal will be assessed. The discussion you have with Council staff will be documented, and a copy of this documentation will be provided to you. If you decide to go ahead and lodge your application, staff are obliged to refer to the DCU Discussion as part of the assessment process. A DCU therefore represents a valuable information sharing opportunity.



Why does Council promote the DCU ?

Delays in the processing of development applications is undesirable for Council as well as applicants. Through a DCU it is intended that submitted development applications will:

- comply with all the relevant codes and policies;
- contain all of the information the applicant wishes to present in support of the application.

The DCU also provides an opportunity where staff may identify crucial flaws in the development proposal.



What will I get out of a DCU ?

As a prospective applicant, you will gain the following vital information to assist you with developing your proposal and then lodging your application:

- Knowledge about what information, plans, drawings, technical reports, you need to provide with your application.
- An understanding of the permissibility of your proposal and its compliance with the relevant development standards.
- Where the applicant is considering a variation to a standard, staff may be able to indicate the matters to be considered in evaluation of the variation. Prospective applicants cannot expect staff to guarantee that a variation will be accepted.
- An understanding of what issues might have the potential to cause delay, what issues require further consideration, what may have some sensitivity or cause concern amongst Councillors or in the community.
- An agreed course of action for engaging the community in discussion, which may be additional to the standard notification process.

What do I need to bring to the DCU ?

For any DCU to be productive, and not simply a missed or wasted opportunity, a prospective applicant needs to bring an open mind about the site and the development proposal, not simply a design you want ratified.

Also bring along:

- Details about the site, include photos, information on existing natural features (trees, rocks, outcrops, watercourses(and built features (buildings, easements, utility services) and adjoining development. Also include information such as boundary dimensions, the slope of the land northpoint. Photographs can help explain the site.
- Concept plans or ideas about how you see the site being developed.
- A general list about what you hope to achieve on the site and from the discussion.



How do I arrange a DCU ?

You can arrange a DCU by either telephoning the Town Planner responsible for the district where the proposal is located, or the Administration Clerk in Environment & Planning, who will organise an appointment for you with appropriate staff. Some general details will be required so that staff can be properly prepared for the discussion. You will need to provide information about:

- the site – location, address;
- your general proposal / concept.
- your consultant team, ie Builder /Architect /Engineer.
- Who you wish to attend, eg Town Planner, Engineer, Water & Sewer Branch.

Fees as set under Council's Revenue Policy will be required to be paid prior to any confirmation for bookings.