



# Fact Sheet 21

## What is CAP?

CAP is the abbreviation for Council Assessment Panel. CAP is a body of people who consider and make decisions on some development applications in their Council.

The role of CAP is to make impartial and transparent development assessment decisions based on the policies in the Development Plan.

The CAP consists of four members appointed by the Council. A minimum of three members must be independent of the Council and one member can be a Council elected member or Council staff. All members have voting rights and decisions are made on a majority basis.

CAP members have to abide by the Code of Conduct under Section 82 & 83 of the *Planning, Development & Infrastructure Act 2016*. Some important things in the Code of Conduct are that panel members can not:

- Talk to a representor or an applicant about a development that is going to be considered by the Panel, except at the CAP meeting when the application is considered,
- Enter a development site unless it is part of the assessment of the development such as a formal panel viewing.

The independent members who are on the CAP are experienced professionals, who have worked in development related fields. Some of the professions include planners, architects, engineers, heritage experts, environmental experts, urban designers and lawyers. This means that decisions made by CAP will be informed by the Development Plan and what the Development Plan has envisioned for the area.

The Elected Members of Council as a whole has no role in decisions made by CAP. The CAP will weigh up the pros and cons of a proposal by referring to the relevant provisions of the Development Plan. Decisions are made on the 'balance' of the Objectives and Principles contained in the Development Plan. Decisions are not required to be endorsed or ratified by the elected Council. The mixture of Council representatives and independent members provides a balanced view on the CAP combining local experience and technical expertise.