

Online aid lifts green alternative

As City of Stirling unveils web help for project applications

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A world-first \$1.5 million interactive website is one of two new online aids to help people navigate their way through "green" commercial building options nationally.

The other aid helps with the application process for developments in the City of Stirling. The web-based development assessment guide was launched by Stirling to cut the red tape faced by building companies, real estate and investment companies, developers and others when developing new businesses.

The more broadly-reaching "green" tool, called Your Building, is using online social networking technology to help those in the commercial property sector wishing to create green and profitable commercial buildings.

The building sector has a significant impact on the environment, accounting for 10 per cent of Australia's greenhouse emissions, 12 per cent of water consumption and up to 40 per cent of energy use.

Designed to function as a "wiki" — a collaborative web tool — Your Building uses internet links to pool thousands of individual sources of information on sustainability, regulation, technological innovations and case studies in a single location.

It also provides how-to guides on developing business cases for green developments and refurbishments.

The one-stop internet sustainability shop is expected to be used by property owners, developers, tenants, designers and facility managers as

well as others in the commercial property sector.

Similar to the Facebook forum which allows people to network, the site enables people to add their own content, rate articles, post comments, listen to podcasts and contact each other via their personal profiles.

Project leader Tony Stapledon said the site would help tackle barriers to successful business cases by demonstrating how sustainable buildings can reduce liability and risk, increase tenant productivity and achieve a green premium.

"While they may require an initial investment above the cost of a normal building, they offer whole-of-life savings and benefits," Dr Stapledon said.

The site is a joint initiative of the Australian Greenhouse Office (AGO), the Co-operative Research Centre (CRC) for Construction Innovation and the Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council (ASBEC).

CRC for Construction Innovation chief executive Keith Hampson said the site would help the commercial building sector minimise the ecological footprint of the design, construction and operation of commercial buildings.



Keith Hampson: Reduce footprint.