

21 September 2015

Director, Lands Planning  
Department of Lands, Planning  
and the Environment  
GPO Box 1680  
Darwin NT 0801

Dear Sir,

**RE: Submission on PA2015/0120 – CHANGE FROM GI Zoning TO CB Zoning**

The Property Council of Australia welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission on Planning Amendment 2015/0120.

The Northern Territory Division of the Property Council of Australia collectively represents billions of dollars of commercial investment in the Northern Territory. The value of the property industry to the NT economy is second only to the Resources sector.

The Property Council's membership draws together key players from property development including owners of commercial office buildings and shopping centres, financial institutions and construction companies. Our membership also extends to those engaged in professions, businesses and provision of services directly associated with the property industry (architects, engineers, financiers, legal and other consultants, suppliers etc.)

As an industry, we not only have a keen interest, but also a financial investment in the future development of the Northern Territory. We appreciate and take seriously the opportunity to provide comment on Planning Application 2015/0120.

**Overview**

Caltex Australia Petroleum Pty Ltd has applied to the Minister for Lands and Planning to amend the Northern Territory Planning Scheme by rezoning Lot 4360 Town of Darwin (12 Dinah Beach Road, Darwin City) from GI (General Industry) to Zone CB (Central Business). The site is located on the southern side of Dinah Beach Road, to the north-east of the Darwin CBD. It contains a total area of 14,000 sqm.

The Property Council of Australia, Northern Territory Division **strongly rejects** the proposed Planning Amendment as currently sought by the applicant. The application is effectively one seeking a spot rezone that is clearly inconsistent with the Darwin City Centre Master Plan.

**Concerns**

The Property Council of Australia, Northern Division holds a number of concerns with regard to this application. The timing of the applicant's submission appears opportunistic in attempting to pre-empt the implementation of the Darwin City Centre Master Plan which is currently on exhibition after the input of many months of time, considerable effort and cost on the part of multiple parties, including the NT Government.

We ask the Minister to consider the geographical location and area characteristics and in particular the following aspects.

- Darwin City Centre Master Plan:
  - envisages the City North Area (which includes Lot 4360) as being predominantly residential in character
  - envisages surrounding land as a new park, with any development adjacent to it required to be an *“elegant tree-lined residential street facing the park”* (page 35)
  - warns against potential commercial office defragmentation and envisages that the city centre needs to be prioritised as the key location for office development (page 27).
- If the application succeeds, there will be no "step down" in building size between CB scaled buildings and the existing single story residential buildings across the adjacent road.
- The benefits/advantages of the proposed new major parkland will be severely diminished by surrounding it with CB size scale buildings and;
- Were the application successful, the change would create an undesirable fragmented island effect, as there are currently no other neighbouring lots in the area zoned CB.

### **CB Zoning Objectives and Outcomes**

The purpose of a Central Business Zoning is to *“provide for a diversity of activities including administrative, judicial, professional, office, entertainment, cultural, residential and retail and other business activities with a commitment to the separation of incompatible activities”* (NT Planning Scheme). The area surrounding Lot 4360, and indeed the majority of the City North Area, does not meet this key and critical objective. If the application is successful and the Planning Scheme is amended, the outcome can and will only be considered by the Property Council of Australia, NT Division as **a major planning and policy failure**.

### **Recommendations**

The Property Council, Northern Territory Division, opposes the proposed planning scheme amendment 2015/0120 and recommends instead that the area be zoned in a similar fashion to Smith Street West (High Density Residential zoning) which is also as envisaged in the Darwin City Centre Master Plan.

We look forward to continuing to work with the Department and the Government on strategic planning policy matters relating to the Northern Territory.

Should you have any queries or require elaboration, please do not hesitate to contact the NT Director, Ruth Palmer on [rpalmer@propertycouncil.com.au](mailto:rpalmer@propertycouncil.com.au)

Yours sincerely



Ruth Palmer

NT Director