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Submission on the Review of Dual Occupancy in Zone SD (Single Residential Dwelling)

The Property Council of Australia – Northern Territory Division welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission on the Review of Dual Occupancy in Zone SD. The Property Council of Australia is the peak body representing the property industry in the Northern Territory.

The Northern Territory Division 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.

As you are aware, the Property Council made a submission on the previous Dual Occupancy in Zone SD consultation paper in August of last year.

As previously mentioned, we note that many Australian jurisdictions have policies relating to dual occupancy, which generally refers to the ability to develop a second dwelling on what has previously been a single residential lot.

From a strategic planning perspective, dual occupancy has the potential to deliver diversity in housing choice and affordability for changing demographics as well as a more compact urban form to reduce urban sprawl and maximise efficiencies through existing infrastructure. This proposal would largely affect urban areas in major centres.

We note that dual occupancy development proposals would be the subject of a development application assessed by the DCA having regard to public submissions. As you would appreciate, our members cover a broad spectrum from developers, investors, owners, manager, financiers, planners, and other professional consultants. Not surprisingly, this issue has attracted both significant interest and significant differences in opinions amongst our members.

In brief, these opinions and recommendations include:

- Dual occupancy has the potential for greater housing choice, a more compact urban form and more efficient use of existing infrastructure.

- The overall intent of the dual occupancy is to provide for housing choices, affordability by allowing densification on all Northern Territory blocks SD and which are 1000m² or greater in area. The Property Council of Australia – NT Division is supportive of infill and housing choices. However, the most appropriate way to do this is by master planning our communities.
- The ‘blanket’ application across the entire Northern Territory suggest that proper analysis and master planning has not been considered. Identification and mapping of suitable roads, power and water services, public open space and other infrastructure to permit the increased density are crucial to sensibly implementing these proposed changes.
- A Master Plan utilising this information on infrastructure serviceability and also demographic data will allow proper targeting of areas to be shifted to dual occupancy.
- Following from that point, the Northern Territory Government should provide this data and research as part of a proposal and it should explain as to why this should apply to the entire Northern Territory.
- Without a Master Plan or Area Plan for each suburb or town in the Territory, the costs associated with improving infrastructure for the various service authorities, councils, shires and others involved is completely unknown and cannot be sufficiently planned.
- SD lots of 1000m² or more are generally in very specific parts of the Territory. The basis of the selection criteria being determined principally by lot size may not necessarily bring about the intended result.
- Under the proposal, any site zoned SD in the rural area is qualified to become dual occupancy. Although rural SD lots are low in number, we would caution the introduction of dual occupancy in these areas.

We look forward to continuing to work with the Northern Territory Planning Commission 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 rpalmer@propertycouncil.com.au

Yours sincerely



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