

18 December 2015

Mr Simon Saunders
Executive Director
Transport Policy, Planning and Reform
Department of Transport
GPO Box 2520
DARWIN NT 0801

Dear Mr Saunders

RE: Darwin Regional Transport Plan

The Northern Territory Division of the Property Council of Australia collectively represents billions of dollars of commercial investment in the Northern Territory. The property sector has a larger footprint on the Northern Territory economy than any other industry.

As an industry, we not only have a keen interest, but also a financial interest in the future development of the Northern Territory, and we appreciate and take seriously the opportunity to provide comment on the proposed Darwin Regional Transport Plan.

The importance of providing appropriate and sustainable transport options for Territorians cannot be underestimated when considering the future growth of the Greater Darwin Region. The Property Council's members are conscious of the impact that property developments – residential, commercial and industrial – have on the road network and transport corridors.

As such, we congratulate the Department of Transport on making a Darwin Regional Transport Plan a key objective of the integrated strategic plan. We believe the objectives outlined in the plan are excellent guiding principles.

The Property Council's members have raised several issues that they would like considered as part of the Plan.

- Allocation of land for a transport corridor along the Stuart Highway;
- Potential for ferry routes beyond the existing services;
- Recognition of the need for dedicated cycle paths in and around the inner suburbs.

Transport Corridor on the Stuart Highway – it is expected that significant urban in-fill will continue along the Stuart Highway between Darwin City Centre and Palmerston in the next 15-30 years; in particular at Berrimah Farm, the redevelopment of Power and Water Corporation's Ben Hammond Complex, the Darwin Show Grounds, and land at Pinelands. It is timely to consider allocating land now for a transport corridor along this stretch of the Stuart Highway to allow for high density transport options eg bus lanes, light rail or some other service.

Potential Ferry Routes – Given Darwin has a significant amount of waterfront land, the exploration of potential ferry routes beyond the existing Cullen Bay to Mandorah services should be considered as part of this Plan. There is the potential for additional routes to include Darwin City, the Waterfront Precinct, and even an extension of the current network to take in Nightcliff and Casuarina. Ferry options are successful in other large cities and provide tourism opportunities while also easing traffic congestion on the road network.

Dedicated Cycle Paths – While the Northern Suburbs are reasonably well serviced by cycle paths, the inner city suburbs are lacking in cycling options. These cycling options could be dedicated or pedestrian-shared cycle paths or on-road cycle lanes (as seen in the recent re-design of the Esplanade). Providing these options would help to ease traffic congestion in the inner city as well as parking issues in the CBD.

In addition to these issues, the Property Council's members note that there is no mention of the Stuart Highway Realignment Project, the Knuckey Street extensions or the intra-city bus service around the Darwin City Centre and the Waterfront in the draft plan. Members feel it is important that all potential options to improve transport options within the Greater Darwin region are explored and that existing projects and services are leveraged and expanded upon where possible.

The Property Council is the peak body representing the property industry in the Northern Territory. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Darwin Regional Transport Plan and look forward to working with you into the future.

Should you have any queries or require elaboration, please do not hesitate to contact rpalmer@propertycouncil.com.au

Yours sincerely



Ruth Palmer
NT Director