

# Kahlin Compound and Old Darwin Hospital site and Flagstaff Park

## COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

### Background

The Northern Territory Planning Commission (NTPC) has produced a new draft concept plan to guide the potential development of the Kahlin Compound and Old Hospital site and Myilly Point, including Flagstaff Park.

Previous consultation has highlighted the strong values and emotional ties the community has with this land, including Larrakia cultural ties, commemoration of the Kahlin Compound, the history of the Old Hospital, the Myilly Point Heritage Precinct, Cyclone Tracy, World War II and the many people who lived here. All of these have been carefully considered in the design of the new draft concept plan.

Due to the diverse nature of the site and its rich history, some residents want to respect the heritage of the area and make it a "people's place", with parkland and strong commemorative elements. Others think this area is prime real estate that should be revitalised with a master plan and quality development.

The NTPC has carefully considered all feedback received during previous rounds of consultation and has developed a draft plan that attempts to combine these elements to create a precinct that accords with the principles of the recent Darwin City Centre Master Plan and respects the need for community spaces.

The concept plan has been kept flexible to get extensive feedback on what level and style of development the community at large accepts as appropriate for the site.

One element that has changed from previous plans is that we are now looking at the precinct as a whole, rather than sections in isolation. Another key element is that any development must be economically viable, with residential components supporting the extensive public spaces that remain part of this plan.

### Key elements of the concept plan are:

- an expanded heritage precinct
- realignment of roads to link Mitchell Street to Kahlin Terrace and a new road around the Myilly Point Heritage Precinct
- low density development adjoining Lambell Terrace, with a possible mix of between two and four storeys
- taller buildings (up to eight storeys is suggested) on the corner of the block near Myilly Towers, taking into account the views of existing residential buildings
- tall buildings (up to eight storeys is suggested) in a development area at Myilly Point, mirroring the density across the road but with views across parkland to Mindil Beach
- including large areas for community space at Flagstaff Park, Myilly Point and about 40 per cent of the Kahlin Compound and Old Hospital site which links to the expanded heritage precinct
- the potential for an iconic public facility, which was a frequent suggestion in previous consultation.

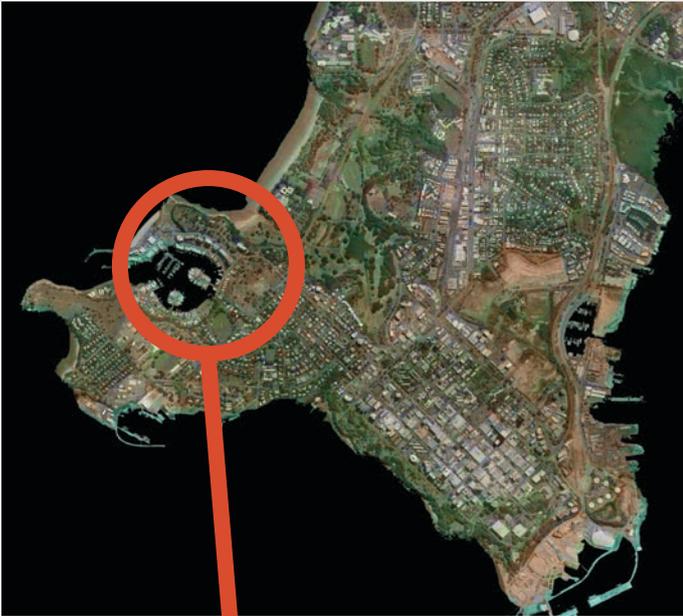
In the next few weeks, independent consultants will talk to nearby residents and stakeholder groups. Consultation will include an Open Day at Flagstaff Park on Saturday 10 May from 10 am to 3 pm. You are also welcome to send us submissions or your thoughts in writing. Please see the following pages for details.



**The sites covered by the concept plan include:**

- 8.7 hectare Old Darwin Hospital site, which formerly housed the Kahlin Compound, on the corner of Lambell Terrace and Kahlin Avenue
- 6.7 hectare Flagstaff Park, also referred to as Myilly Park, on the Myilly Point peninsula

**Proposed new concept**



View from Flagstaff Park to Mindil Beach.



Location of the two sites



Flagstaff Park



Kahlin Compound and Old Darwin Hospital site

## Proposed new concept plan



### Legend

- Proposed Public Open Space
- Proposed Development Areas  
Residential of varying Densities, Heights and Landscaping
- Proposed Nodes  
Cultural, Heritage and Community
- Minor Entry Node (Visual)
- New Road
- Existing Road
- Major Pedestrian link/corridor/axis
- New Roundabout Intersection

## The community's views

While previous concept plans to develop the Kahlin Compound and Old Darwin Hospital site and Flagstaff Park were deferred for economic reasons, the community's views have been carefully considered in developing the new concept plan.

Key elements supported by the community in previous plans include:

- all elements of the design are to be sustainable and high quality
- natural landscaping, open space and existing trees on park elements of both sites
- exploring options for a public building on either site
- residential development options that complement and reflect existing development
- exploring an option for a retirement village on the Kahlin Compound and Old Darwin Hospital site

- historic, cultural and community nodes to recognise all historical significance of both sites
- maintaining access to Mindil Beach
- enhancing existing connections to Cullen Bay and Darwin Botanical Gardens and Darwin CBD
- exploring the best way to celebrate the history of both sites
- extending Mitchell Street and relocating Kahlin Avenue intersection as a main access and “gateway” to the Myilly Point precinct
- physically linking and expanding the existing Myilly Point Heritage Precinct to both historically significant sites.

The site was once a heavily populated residential area which has become derelict since houses and the old hospital buildings were demolished (see photos below).



## What could it look like?

The new concept plan maintains two main parkland areas while creating three new residential areas and a new “gateway” to a Myilly Point destination precinct.

### Kahlin Compound and Old Darwin Hospital Site

About 60 per cent of the Kahlin Compound and Old Darwin Hospital site is proposed to be used as residential to ensure the project is commercially viable. The site should not be overdeveloped and should be high quality to complement existing housing in Larrakeyah and Cullen Bay.

The primary residential area could be located in the south-western side of the Kahlin Compound and Old Darwin Hospital site, near existing housing in Larrakeyah and Cullen Bay, to take advantage of the Cullen Bay views. The layout could follow the block size and pattern of the adjacent Larrakeyah district with a mixture of Medium

Density (possibly up to four storeys) and Multiple Dwelling (possibly up to two storeys) and could potentially include a retirement village.

A landscaped pedestrian link has been included in the draft plan as a way to bisect the residential precinct and provide a safe, shaded linkage between the site and surrounding areas. Landscaped areas could be used to separate the residential precinct from existing housing areas.

A major design element proposed is creating a new ‘gateway’ entrance to the Myilly Point precinct.

An extension of Mitchell Street could follow the original design to create a new road that will divide the Kahlin Compound and Old Hospital site and delineate the residential and open space components. This will see the parkland linked directly to the Myilly Point Heritage Precinct. The existing roundabout at the intersection of Kahlin Avenue, Lambell Terrace and Smith Street would then be relocated to the new intersection with Mitchell Street, Marina Boulevard and a realigned Kahlin Avenue.

A second residential component is proposed next to the existing Myilly Towers and will be predominately tall buildings (up to eight storeys is suggested) and will need to consider the heritage precinct, possibly with a “gateway” element.

### Flagstaff Park

Flagstaff Park, a large area rarely used by the public, could remain predominantly open space.

There are two options for residential development on the Myilly Point site – either the south-west side (overlooking Cullen Bay) or the north-east side (overlooking Mindil Beach) – similar to apartment buildings on Marina Boulevard and Myilly Towers. The draft plan identifies the south-west side as potentially appropriate for residential development, as this will promote coastal views for new residents while allowing the northern and western cliff edges to be enjoyed by the public. Locating a residential building on the northern side of this strip of land could also be considered.

The historic Nurses Walk will be protected and remain a main access to Mindil Beach.



Nurses Walk links Myilly Point to Little Mindil and Mindil Beach.

## Recognising our history

It is important that high quality development captures the special cultural and historic values of the site.

Local historian Samantha Wells consulted four key stakeholder groups representing military, Indigenous and historical links to the Kahlin Compound and Old Darwin Hospital site. Her historical research will inform commemorative elements and historical interpretation at the site.

Local historian Mickey Dewar put together a brief history of both sites as part of a previous consultation, a summary of which is featured below.

### Kahlin Compound and Old Hospital site

It is crucial to recognise the Kahlin Compound and Old Darwin Hospital in the site's concept plan, with opportunities to celebrate Darwin's early history through the link with an expanded Myilly Point Heritage Precinct.

The land is Larrakia country and Kahlin Compound was established in 1913 to house Aboriginal people, and members of the Stolen Generation were brought here from across the Territory.

Survivors of the Kahlin Compound endured some of the darkest times in the Northern Territory's history and many are now Darwin's oldest, prominent Aboriginal families. The compound was closed in 1938 following outrage at the living conditions and was taken over by the military.

In 1941, construction began on an 89-bed hospital on the Lambell Terrace site, which was bombed a number of times before it was rebuilt and then extensively damaged by Cyclone Tracy in 1974.

In 1980, the hospital moved to a new site at Casuarina. The old hospital buildings became a temporary home for the Larrakeyah Primary School and the predecessor to Charles Darwin University, before being demolished in the late 1990s.



The men's ward at the Old Darwin Hospital on Lambell Terrace in January 1960. Photo courtesy of Northern Territory Government Photographer Collection, Northern Territory Library.



Ward one of the old Darwin Hospital with the administration block of the hospital (left), army barracks and beach in the background on the right in 1960. Photo courtesy of Douglas Lockwood Collection, Northern Territory Library.



View of Kahlin Compound from a distance with the sea in the background in January 1920. Photo courtesy of Roy Edwards Collection, Northern Territory Library.



Kahlin Compound in April 1928. Photo courtesy of Donald Kendrick Collection, Northern Territory Library.

There was an unsuccessful bid in the late 1980s to turn the Kahlin Compound and Old Hospital site into a tourism and commercial development, with public protests at plans to demolish the four historic Burnett Houses now operated by the National Trust.

In 2008, the Northern Territory Government sought feedback on plans to develop the site into a public park with a premier residential component on the north-eastern portion.

However, a 2009 financial feasibility study to test the demand for the high-end style residential development indicated the market place made it financially unviable and the project was deferred.



Aerial view of Old Darwin Hospital at Myilly Point, looking out to Diamond Beach Casino at Mindil Beach in January 1980. Photo courtesy of Northern Territory Government Photographer Slide Collection, Northern Territory Library.

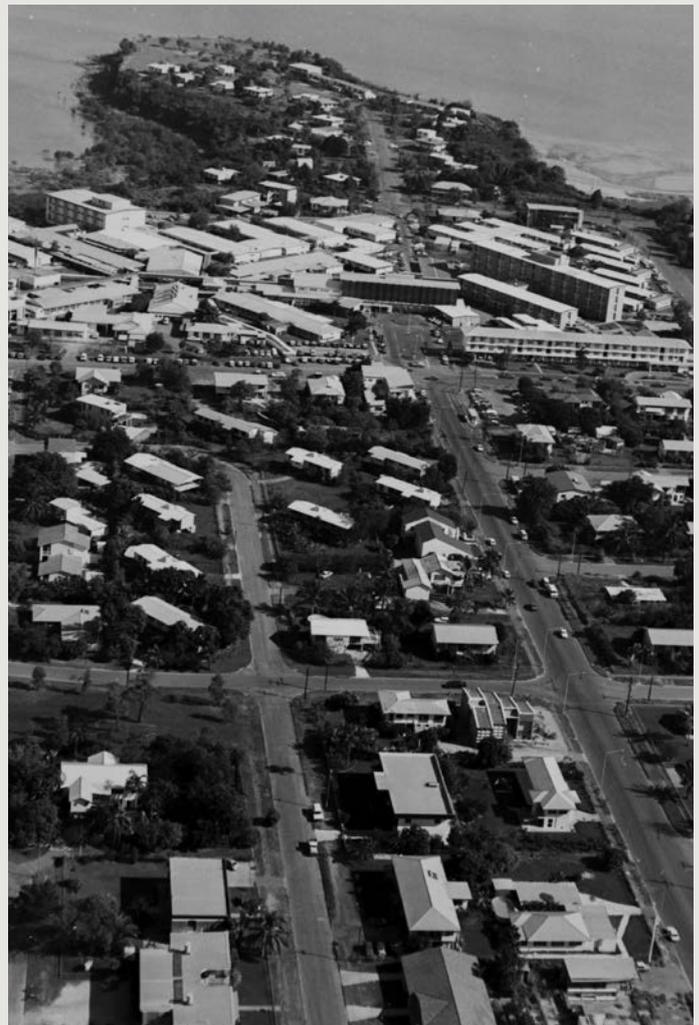
### Flagstaff Park and Myilly Point

The name Myilly Point first appears on a survey plan in 1914 when the area was divided into housing lots for senior public servants in 1913-15. It is assumed that the name Myilly comes from the Aboriginal word 'Maielli' and means 'stone place'. Myilly Point, originally known as Dead Horse Point, was a peninsula and housed a number of residential buildings.

In the 1930s an elevated home known as Flagstaff House was built to accommodate senior military staff on the portion of land at the tip of the Myilly Point peninsula, now known as Flagstaff Park. Four pre-war houses were designed by renowned architect B.C.G. Burnett and built in what is now the Myilly Heritage Precinct. They were used by the Commonwealth Public Service until they were almost destroyed by Cyclone Tracy in 1974.



Flagstaff Park on Myilly Point in January 1940. Photo courtesy of Herbert Wong Collection, Northern Territory Library.



Aerial view looking down Mitchell Street to Myilly Point, showing Darwin Hospital and Larrakeyah in April 1979. Photo courtesy of Northern Territory Government Photographer Collection, Northern Territory Library.

The four houses – Magistrates House, Mines House, Burnett House and Audit House – were saved from demolition, restored and now operate as the National Trust headquarters, a coffee shop and as commercial offices.

Three privately owned blocks on Myilly Point include a Harry Seidler designed house built by the Paspaley family in 1959. The strongly-built house survived Cyclone Tracy.

A path and staircase, now known as Nurses Walk, was in use, at least by the 1920s, to connect Myilly Point to Mindil Beach. It remains a main access to Little Mindil parkland at the bottom of the cliff.

In 2009 a concept plan to develop Flagstaff Park on the Myilly Point peninsula received support from the community but the project did not go ahead.



Aerial view of Myilly Point featuring the houses of senior public servants in January 1964. Photo courtesy of Alan V Atkins Collection, Northern Territory Library.



Aerial view of Darwin from Myilly Point with Flagstaff House under construction for Army company, date unknown. Photo courtesy of Murray H. Fletcher Collection, Northern Territory Library.



National Trust Headquarters at Audit House in the Myilly Point Heritage Precinct.



An old driveway for one of the houses used by public servants on Myilly Point.

## Consultation

Independent local consultants Michels Warren Munday have been engaged to consult with the community and will be in contact with nearby residents and stakeholder groups to get feedback on the latest concept plan. An Open Day on 10 May 2014 from 10 am to 3 pm at Flagstaff Park will be a chance for all Darwin residents to come down, see the proposed concept and provide feedback.

Anyone wanting to provide written submissions can write to [penny@michelswarrenmunday.com.au](mailto:penny@michelswarrenmunday.com.au) call 08 8981 6445 or go to [www.planningcommission.nt.gov.au](http://www.planningcommission.nt.gov.au). Submissions can be made until close of business on 11 June 2014.

## What will happen next?

The Planning Commission will consider a report on the consultation before reporting to the Minister for Lands, Planning and the Environment.

It is intended that the concept and design brief will be used to inform an Expressions of Interest process for developing the sites, with a strong emphasis on the need for a master plan that considers the consultation report and continues to consult with the public.



Myilly Point with Marina Boulevard.



Burnett House at the Myilly Point Heritage Precinct.



Enjoying nearby Mindil Beach, linked to Flagstaff Park via Nurses Walk.



People enjoying the lawns at nearby Cullen Bay beach.