



NORTHERN TERRITORY
**PLANNING
COMMISSION**

Draft Holtze Area Plan and Planning Principles

Community Consultation Report



July 2015

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1.0 Summary

On 14 April 2015 the Minister for Lands and Planning, the Hon David Tollner requested the Northern Territory Planning Commission undertake community consultation for the Draft Holtze Area Plan and Planning Principles.

The Draft Plan and principles had been developed by the Lands Planning Unit of Department of Lands, Planning and the Environment (DLPE), at the request of Lands & Economic Development unit over crown land allocated by the NT Government for the proposed regional hospital, associated medical precinct and Glyde Arterial Corridor (GAC), as well as adjoining privately owned land fronting Wallaby Holtze and Taylor Roads.

The Planning Commission undertook a comprehensive process of community engagement, which included:

- Contacting all affected residents in Holtze
- Briefing local MLA's
- Notifying NT Government Agencies
- Emailing identified stakeholders including local resident, industry and community groups
- Briefing Litchfield Council
- Briefing Palmerston Indigenous Village
- A stand at Freds Pass Show over 2 days
- Information stalls at Palmerston Markets, and Palmerston and Howard Springs Shopping Centres
- Public notices in print media over the consultation period

During the consultation period there were over 420 people spoken to at information stalls, 57 submissions were received, and several briefings took place. An on-site meeting was held with the residents of Holtze, with all NTPC members in attendance.

Key themes that were identified during the consultation included:

- Support for the location of the hospital and medical precinct
- General support of the commercial area proposed adjacent to the hospital
- Strong concern for the 'service commercial (SC)' area identified on the plan
- Little or no support for the realignment of the Glyde Arterial Corridor (GAC)
- The general community (other than residents) were generally supportive of a residential area around the proposed hospital

The feedback received will assist the Planning Commission in its consideration of the draft Holtze Area Plan and Planning Principles, and will inform the recommendations to the Minister for Lands and Planning.

2.0 Introduction

The Holtze locality is located north of the Stuart Highway approximately 2 kms from the Palmerston CBD. It is the selected site for a new regional hospital, which is expected to open in 2018. The locality is identified in the recently adopted Darwin Regional Land Use Plan 2015 (DRLUP), which states 'development of the hospital will create a focus for urban development of previously undeveloped land between the Palmerston CBD and Howard Springs Road'.

To support the planned hospital, and in accordance with DRLUP, the Department of Lands, Planning and the Environment (DLPE) has developed an Area Plan and associated planning principles to guide future development.

On 14 April 2015, the Minister for Lands and Planning, the Hon. David Tollner, wrote to the Chairman of the Planning Commission, requesting the Planning Commission 'undertake consultation to progress the draft plan and principles'.

The Commission endorsed an Engagement Strategy, and undertook six weeks of community consultation in accordance with the Ministers request.

It should be noted that several members of the Planning Commission helped man information stalls during the consultation period, and all members attended an on-site meeting at Holtze with residents.

All submissions received during the consultation period were provided to Commission board members for their review, prior to the matter being considered at the scheduled meeting on 28 July 2015.

3.0 Consultation

Consultation for the draft Area Plan and Planning Principles was undertaken by the Planning Commission over a six week period from 13 May to Friday 26 June 2015.

There were a number of methods undertaken for consultation with the community:

RESIDENTS

- Letters were both hand delivered and posted to each resident in the impacted area, offering a personal briefing from the Chairman.

STAKEHOLDERS (including Local Government, Industry and Community Groups)

- An email was sent to identified stakeholders providing information about the project, and providing a link to the consultation documents.

MLA's/MP's

- The member for Goyder, Kezia Purick, and the Member for Nelson, Gerry Wood, were briefed just prior to the release in conjunction with a briefing on the Palmerston Hospital.

- The Member for Drysdale, Lia Finocchiaro, and the Member for Blain, Nathan Barrett, were briefed following the release of the draft plan.
- Letters were sent to the Member for Brennan, Member for Solomon and Member for Lingiari with information packs. Each member was offered similar briefings to the other members.

WIDER COMMUNITY

- Information stalls were held in a number of locations to exhibit the Area Plan, namely the Freds Pass Show, Palmerston Markets, and Palmerston and Howard Springs shopping centres.
- A banner was erected on the Stuart Highway to encourage residents to “HAVE YOUR SAY”
- Public notices were placed in print media

3.1 Residents

Letters were sent to all affected residents in Holtze. The letters included an invitation to meet with the Chairman of the Planning Commission, and provided consultation materials for their information. The letters were both posted and hand delivered to ensure each owner and/or resident received the information. A sample letter is included as **Attachment 1**.

Several residents visited the information stall at the Freds Pass Show to discuss the Area Plan with the Commission, and provided feedback to the members present. Two residents requested subsequent meetings with the Chairman, which occurred during the consultation period.

A meeting was organised by Member for Nelson, Gerry Wood for Thursday 21 May at 6pm at a resident’s property on Wallaby Holtze Road. An invitation was extended to the Chairman of the Planning Commission on the eve of the meeting, however the Chairman was unable to attend.

Secretariat Manager James Teh and Senior Project Officer Louise Taylor attended the meeting on the Chairman’s behalf to record feedback from the residents to include in a consultation report. The Member for Nelson provided a survey to the residents, which was completed and tallied at the conclusion of the meeting. The results of the survey were provided to NTPC, and have been included in this report as **Attachment 2**.

The Commission members undertook an on-site inspection and attended a meeting at a residents property on Tuesday 2 June. Approximately 23 residents attended the meeting and provided the Commission members with feedback to be included in this report. The summary of the feedback received at the meeting is included as **Attachment 3**.

3.2 Local Government Authorities

Holtze is located within the municipality of Litchfield Council, and is located adjacent to the boundary of City of Palmerston. For this reason, both Local Government Authorities were provided with information about the draft Area Plan, and contacted to offer a briefing by the Chairman.

The NTPC Chairman briefed the Litchfield Manager and other senior staff on 27 May 2015. The Council was interested to discuss the plan and subsequently lodged a submission. The City of Palmerston also lodged a submission, however did not take up the offer of a briefing.

3.3 Others

Industry and Community Groups identified as stakeholders in the endorsed Engagement Strategy were provided with the consultation materials, and offered a briefing if required.

Community leaders from the Palmerston Indigenous Village were briefed on the draft Area Plan on 21 May 2015 by NTPC Secretariat Manager, James Teh. The community leaders were provided with the consultation materials and were interested to discuss the plan.

3.4 Information Stalls

Information stalls were held at the following venues:

- **Freds Pass Show**

The stall was manned by NTPC members Gary Nairn, Brendan Dowd, Denys Stedman and Dr Brian Reid, Secretariat Manager, James Teh, and Senior Project Officer, Louise Taylor, as well as several DLPE staff. There were approximately 250 visitors to the stall over the two days of operation. Many visitors were interested in viewing the area plan, and provided feedback by way of verbal advice to the staff, which was then noted as feedback. Fifteen people filled out a “Have Your Say” form, which provided an opportunity to give written feedback on the spot.

- **Palmerston Markets**

A stall was held at the Palmerston Markets on Friday 12 June, which was manned by Secretariat Senior Project Officer Louise Taylor and DLPE Senior Planner, Jan Kinsella. The stall was visited by 24 people, who were interested to hear about the plan, but very few provided feedback.

- **Palmerston Shopping Centre**

A stall was located in the Palmerston Shopping Centre (outside Coles) on Saturday 13 June between 10am – 2.30pm, which was manned by NTPC Member Bill Freeland, Louise Taylor and Jan Kinsella. The stall was visited by 100 people. Feedback was generally supportive of the area plan, although there was some concern raised at the increased traffic entering Stuart Highway.

- **Howard Springs Shopping Centre**

A stall was located in the Howard Springs Shopping Centre on Saturday 20 June between 10am – 2pm. The stall was manned by NTPC member Dr Brian Reid, Chris Humphries (DLPE) and Louise Taylor. Fifty two people visited the stall and took an information flyer about the project.

4.0 Submissions and Feedback

4.1 Residents

Holtze residents had several opportunities to provide feedback to the Commission, and most took the opportunity to provide verbal and/or written feedback.

Generally the Holtze residents were supportive of the hospital and mixed use medical precinct, and the adjoining commercial area.

Most submissions lodged by residents strongly opposed the Service Commercial area proposed for the Area Plan. The residents were generally united in their opposition to this concept, apart from owners of two affected properties on Wallaby Holtze Road.

Most residents were also opposed to the possibility of their rural zoned land being reclassified as residential, potentially allowing subdivision of their large rural properties into residential size lots. While densities were not specified for this residential component of the area plan, most residents were adamant that the rural zoning should be kept.

The majority of residents advocated a 200m buffer from the southern boundary of properties on Wallaby Holtze Road to the Glyde Arterial Corridor (GAC), and rejected the concept of any residential development north of the corridor.

The survey results (from meeting organised by Member for Nelson, Gerry Wood) and the summary of feedback from on-site meeting held with NTPC members reaffirm the above feedback.

4.2 Local Government

Two Local Government Authorities lodged submissions regarding the draft Area Plan.

Litchfield Council

Litchfield Council provided comprehensive feedback on the plan, acknowledging the significant impact the proposed area plan will have on the municipality.

The Council supports the location of the proposed hospital, and the expected improvement in medical services to the Litchfield community.

The Council does not support the residential component of the area plan which occurs north of the GAC without any accompanying details regarding densities of the proposed development, or the update of the *Litchfield Planning Concepts and Land Use Objectives 2002*.

It does not support the reclassification of privately owned rural lots on Wallaby Holtze Road, and advocates the deletion of the Service Commercial area as shown on the area plan as it believes it is inappropriate for this area. The Council believes there is sufficient land in Yarrowonga and the Archer area in Palmerston for extension of Service Commercial land.

City of Palmerston

City of Palmerston lodged a submission for the draft area plan. Unlike Litchfield Council, the City of Palmerston is supportive of the Service Commercial area, and believes it is a logical extension to the Yarrowonga area.

The Council supports the use of identified densities for the compact walkable neighbourhoods on the plan, and suggests densities be identified for other residential areas of the area plan.

Other items of note on the Councils submission include:

- Passive open space is identified only along natural drainage areas. This creates expectation that no further passive open space is required to be provided by developers
- The proposed social infrastructure assessment (item 10 on the planning principles) should inform the identification of community purpose land on the area plan 'upfront', rather than ad-hoc allocation in the future

4.3 Industry Groups

The Property Council, Urban Design Institute of Australia NT (UDIANT) and the Australian Institute of Architects (AIA) lodged submissions for the draft plan.

The Property Council and UDIANT did not support the inclusion of the Service Commercial area as shown on the plan. Their submissions noted alternate locations for the provision of such land, including Yarrowonga.

These industry groups both noted the requirement for a social infrastructure assessment in the planning principles, and suggested this should be done for the whole of the locality (Holtze), rather than the land identified in the draft area plan.

The AIA commended the inclusion of walkable neighbourhoods, but noted it may not be achievable, as the nearest school is in Palmerston. AIA also suggests the walkable neighbourhood may be more suited in a more central location on the area plan, rather than directly opposite the hospital precinct.

4.4 Other

Several submissions were received from local residents (eg Howard Springs, Virginia) urging the protection of Mitchell Creek and its catchment area, the inclusions of a 50m buffer separating any development from Stuart Highway, and the suggestion that development should include rural subdivision, rather than residential.

Submissions were received from the Environmental Defender Office and the Rural Rights Residents Group, which advocated the protection of the environment, consideration of climate change, and the belief that rural land should not be encroached upon by urban development.

Bunnings lodged a submission supporting the intent of the draft area plan, and noting the plan appeared to demonstrate an orderly and logical planning framework. The submission noted the

Holtze area provides an appropriate area for service commercial, which would be suitable for bulky good retail.

4.5 Information Stalls

- **Freds Pass Show**

Generally the feedback from the community was supportive of a residential area being developed, however there were concerns raised regarding the 'urban sprawl' into the rural area. Several people asked if the location will remain in Litchfield Council, or if it will be consolidated into the Palmerston Council area.

Several Holtze residents took the opportunity to visit the stall and discuss the area plan with NTPC members present at the stall, with two Holtze residents requesting a further meeting with the NTPC Chairman.

- **Palmerston Markets**

Visitors to the stall were interested to hear about the plan, but very few provided feedback. Of those who did, the feedback was generally supportive of a residential and commercial area being provided near to the proposed hospital.

- **Palmerston Shopping Centre**

Feedback was generally supportive of the area plan, although there was some concern raised at the increased traffic entering Stuart Highway. Visitors to the stand were interested to hear about the plan and were supportive of a residential development being provided around the hospital.

- **Howard Springs Shopping Centre**

Feedback received from those who stopped to discuss the plan in Howard Springs included the rejection of residential development in a rural area, the urgent need to address traffic concerns in the area, and the hope that quality residential project was developed. One resident put forward the suggestion of identifying land for an aged care facility on the mixed use / medical precinct or residential land.

5.0 Conclusion

During the six week consultation period a total of over 420 people were spoken to at information stalls, 57 submissions were received, and several briefings took place.

The consultation was considered to be successful, as several key themes were identified during the exhibition period.

- Support for the location of the hospital and medical precinct
- General support of the commercial area proposed adjacent to the hospital
- Strong opposition shown by several groups (eg Holtze residents, Litchfield Council, Industry Groups) for the 'service commercial (SC)' area identified on the plan.

- Little or no support for the realignment of the Glyde Arterial Corridor (GAC)
- The general community (other than residents) were generally supportive of the area adjoining the hospital precinct becoming a residential area.

The Planning Commission is appreciative of all submissions made, and feedback given, during the exhibition period. The Commission will consider this report, as well as all submissions and feedback received during the consultation process, when making its recommendations to the Minister regarding this project.

6.0 Photos from Consultation



6.0 Attachments

Please note: Attachments have not been released for public viewing

Letter to residents

Summary of Submissions

Summary of feedback - Freds Pass Show – 16 & 17 May 2015

Survey results – Meeting with residents – 21 May 2015

Summary of feedback – On-site meeting with residents – 2 June 2015