



Northern Territory Election 2016: Australian Institute of Architects – Key Issues Survey

April 2016

Attention: Territory Labor
c/o Michael Gunner MLA, Leader of the Opposition

The Australian Institute of Architects represents more than 12,000 members, and exists to improve our built environment by promoting quality, responsible, sustainable design. Through its members, the Institute plays a major role in shaping Australia's future.

In this election year, we seek your response to the following questions that are important to our members, associated disciplines and, the wider electorate.

1 **Enhancing the Cultural, Environmental and Economic well-being of the Community: Planning Reform**

The Northern Territory is well placed to lead Australia in design and development in challenging climates. The current planning framework, however, does not encourage this leadership.

- There are limited instruments that promote mixed use, infill, or dual occupancy developments.
- Energy efficiency is considered independently of climatic response.
- The benefits of landscape in mitigating the impact of the urban 'heat island effect' are overlooked.
- Minimum parking requirements encourage car ownership over more sustainable alternatives such as public transport.

What is your view in relation to each of the identified deficiencies above, and how would you propose to improve them?

2 **Quality, Responsible, Sustainable Design for the Built Environment: Making Good on the Darwin City Master Plan**

The Darwin City Master Plan was developed through a well-considered and widely consultative process. The result is a well designed plan for Darwin's future, supported by peak industry groups as well as the general public.

Will you include the Darwin City Master Plan and a reference document within the NT Planning Scheme?

3

The Importance of Good Design: Minimum Design Standards for Higher Density Living

Design standards are fundamental to the provision of appropriate, safe, and healthy housing. In New South Wales, such minimum standards are addressed by State legislation in the form of SEPP65, which has contributed significantly to 'raising the bar' of higher density housing, generally.

What is your view in relation to minimum design standards for higher density living, and to delivering new medium- to high- density housing supply in established areas?

4

Community Well-being: Remote Community Housing

The design and planning of remote Indigenous communities and urban town camps is in crisis. From housing to civic and commercial buildings, from public spaces to gathering places, Indigenous communities are sites of over-crowded housing and ad hoc construction.

What policies will you put in place to foster best practice urban planning and design in remote communities?

5

Design for the Public Good: The Role of the Government Architect

The position of Government Architect is a valuable source of objective and quality design advice for Government. The most effective location of the role has been recognised in other jurisdictions as centralised within Government, allowing Ministers easy access to best-practice design advice. For the Northern Territory, we believe the logical location is within the Department of Chief Minister.

What is your view of the role of the Government Architect; would you increase the standing of the role; and where would you locate it within the structure of Government?

6

Consumer Protection: The Architects' Act

The Architects Act has long protected consumers within the Territory by defining the role and professional expectations of Architects. It also provides an economic benefit to the NT by offering Architects, through mutual recognition, the ability to practice in other Australian jurisdictions and overseas.

What is your view of the Architects Act, and would you maintain it if elected?