

To: [Legislation Scrutiny Committee](#)
Subject: Planning Amendment Bill Submission
Date: Wednesday, 11 March 2020 6:29:21 AM

To whom it may concern,
Appreciating the lack of fanfare, advertising and public notice about the Planning Amendment Bill introduced in great haste on 13th February, 2020, I wish to put in a submission AGAINST it's passing.

First and foremost, this bill does NOT have sufficient regard for the rights and liberties of individual citizens in the NT who will be directly affected by it. Having been directly involved in inappropriate development and dodgy building practices proposed by a developer who cared nothing for community aesthetics or concerns, I see very little in this amendment which would make me, a private citizen, a VOTER, happy.

Oh, I do sincerely appreciate change, and that intrinsically good development will enhance the lives of people. However, I also sincerely appreciate that the chase for the almighty dollar skews the minds of some developers who do not care for the social, cultural, environmental, aesthetics or financial cost to people suffering from inappropriate and invasive development. Without putting too fine a point on it, in the current government and the past government, the Minister in charge of Lands, Planning and the Development Consent Authority have had no background, qualifications or experience in lands and planning, have shown little regard for community engagement and have shown a far greater interest in perpetuating the myths of their particular party with regards to development.

This proposed amendment concretises that attitude in place and negates the important balance of developers and the community. Where I am headed to Brisbane for the next week, there is an absolute proliferation of green space, excellent transport hubs, environmental protections, bush zones which are kept as koala and wildlife corridors and catchment zones which are protected. Here in Darwin and in the NT? Nah, it's clear that the developer dollar holds far more weight in terms of short-term goals rather than any longer vision. I'll say it again, The balance is required between community engagement and intelligent development – and this proposed amendment bypasses all of that.

It is ill-considered, in a haste to bolster party coffers in a pre-election haste and offers nothing to members of the community who simply don't want an ill-advised and arrogant Minister making decisions without direct consultation with the people who are affected in a myriad of ways by inappropriate development. My portion of Ludmilla knows EXACTLY how it is to be run rough-shod by such a CLP and an ALP Minister, all without direct consultation of the people most affected by the proposed development. I've been in the position of assisting with petitions, submissions and direct appeals for help from our local member, and it was bad enough then. These proposed amendments clearly try to cut out even those avenues for a concerned public.

My other concern is that the short period of time shows DIRECTLY how the proposed amendment would work. I heard about the prospect of a submission through indirect means in one of my networks. I have seen little advertising, not just for submissions but for community meetings to put forward an alternative point of view. Is this how the Planning Amendment will work? In secrecy, stealth and subterfuge to get PAST the concerned members of the public? The perception in the community is that this amendment is being pushed through to approve of preferred practice. Not good

practice. Not fair practice. But Preferred Practice to avoid pesky things like concerned members of the public openly showing up where developers are erasing community amenities and the government is keen to rubber-stamp it, all for the sake of money.

If this government is sincere, then there would be that level of community engagement and the REVIEW would encompass ways to up the ante on community engagement and community rights. This is not a review. This is not an amendment. It's an attempt to push through legislation that is AGAINST transparency and fairness. This proposed legislation also goes against years of input and once again, the excuse is given of ignorance of what went on before. This government would be FULLY aware of the issues of the last CLP Minister for Planning and yet, despite those years, and now an additional three under the ALP and their changing roster of Ministers, nothing has been learned about addressing community needs. Promises about transparency are really being ignored in support of developers and it's not good enough.

In conclusion, I am definitely AGAINST the passing of the Planning Amendment Bill. It isn't even appropriate to suggest it goes back for further tweaking and to try again. It's internal parameters, assumptions and language – the use of amenity to mean a building or dwelling without consideration of its alternate meaning of the pleasantness or attractiveness of a place – are flawed, as is any legislation which hands more discretionary power to bypass valid and genuine community concerns to Ministers with limited credibility in this area.

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