The Territory Opposition has quizzed the Minister for Sport, Karl Hampton, in Parliament, about whether he is negotiating to bring an AFL game for premiership points to Alice Springs next year.

“Whilst the Minister didn’t confirm or deny that Alice Springs is in the mix for snaring an AFL game for premiership points, he did point out how he’s previously supported the concept,” says Matt Conlan, Shadow Minister for Central Australia.

“The ball is really in the Minister’s court here. Large amounts of Territory taxpayer’s money is being dangled before cash strapped AFL clubs and that gives the Minister considerable leverage about where the game should be played.

“Should the Northern Territory be successful in securing two AFL games next year the Territory Opposition is calling for one of those minor round games to be played in Alice Springs.

“There’s no doubt Alice is the natural location for a second AFL home and away fixture.

“Central Australia is a tourist icon and having Alice host a telecast game of AFL would be savvy product placement.

“The region is football mad and bringing an AFL match for premiership points to Alice would be a terrific boost for the game throughout Central Australia.
“The pre-season AFL games that have been held in Alice have drawn big crowds and a match for premiership points would almost certainly be watched by a full house.

“Hosting such a high profile match would bring considerable benefits to the general economy of Central Australia with thousands of interstate tourists likely to travel to the game.

“The fact Territory Thunder plays 4 of its 9 home games in Alice Springs only adds further weight to the idea of bringing an AFL match to Alice.

“Karl Hampton should pull on a jumper for Alice when he’s at the negotiation table.

“Anything less than a home and away game in Alice would be a great disappointment.”

Below is the full transcript of yesterday’s parliamentary question.

**AFL – Alice Springs**

**Mr CONLAN to MINISTER for SPORT and RECREATION**

It has been reported that you are in negotiations with the AFL about the prospect of bringing a second home and away AFL game to the Northern Territory. Are you canvassing the option of that second game being played in Alice Springs, and if not, could you please tell the House why Alice Springs may not be considered to host the second home and away AFL game?

**ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, Territorians love their footy, there is no doubt about that. It is the sport of choice for all people in the Territory. I follow Collingwood, so do not hold that against me.

The Territory government has worked hard over the years since 2001 to get these events into the Territory and we have done a fantastic job. My predecessors, John Ah Kit particularly, did some great things with the national peak sporting bodies to bring national events to the Territory, not only the football but in many other sporting codes.

Those negotiations are underway, and I cannot say publicly what the details of those discussions are, but part of those discussions is getting more premiership matches in the Territory. Being a Centralian and a footy lover, I will do my best to get what we can in Alice Springs. We have been very lucky over the years to get the AFL challenge matches here. I have been on the public record saying we want to see proper matches in Alice Springs, as well as in Darwin, and if it is a one team deal or two team deal that is what is up for discussion. So, I will be doing the best I can for Territory sports lovers, for
Centralian sports lovers, and I will be happy to tell the House in the near future what happens with those discussions.

Further comment: Matt Conlan 0408 805 338