REANNOUNCING AN ANNOUNCEMENT

The Government’s much vaunted announcement of the biggest housing development in Darwin for more than 20 years is actually three years old.

Shadow Planning Minister Kezia Purick said then Parliamentary Secretary for Defence, Senator Sandy Macdonald, announced the purchase of 152.6 hectares of land at Muirhead for future residential development on August 4th, 2006.

At the time, he praised the role of the then Member for Solomon, David Tollner for his support of the project.

Planning Minister Delia Lawrie issued a media release on November 9th, 2007, in which she also referred to Muirhead.

“It’s another example of this Government’s capacity to repackage announcements and dress them up as fresh announcements,” Ms Purick said.

“It’s an attempt to create an impression of action, but it’s actually quite deceptive and falls a long way short of solving the current housing crisis.”

Ms Purick said at last count, the Government had issued eight media releases on the Bellamack development without so much as the commencement of a single house.

“Earlier this year the Government published projected land release forecasts (see attachment) which showed 90 lots would be released at Muirhead in 2010, 250 in 2011 and 205 in 2012,” Ms Purick said.

“Yet today we learn that residential construction isn’t likely to begin until at least 2011-12.

“That’s five years after the first announcement was made.

“And given this Government’s inability to begin projects on time, it will be sometime after that.”

Ms Purick said it was noteworthy that in 2006 – 800 lots were promised. Today, the Government’s land release policies have failed so badly, it’s now cramming 1000 blocks into the site.

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