Country Liberals Shadow Indigenous Policy Minister Adam Giles today called on the Territory Government to end the culture of cover-up and tell Territorians exactly what is happening with the Strategic Indigenous Housing and Infrastructure Program (SIHIP).

Mr Giles said taxpayers have a right to a detailed cost break-down of the program, including how much has been spent at each SIHIP site, the cost of head office administration and the costs of the Alliances.

"It would be great to know how much it is costing to build each house, rather than the standard response of project management that the average cost will be $450,000, which means nothing in the scheme of things.

"We want the money they are spending itemised so we can see if value for money principles are being achieved.

"Transparency leads to greater accountability and improvements in delivery and will end speculation about performance.

On current estimates, more than $500m has been spent building just 88 SIHIP houses.

"I am advised that New Future Alliance is pulling out of Tennant Creek at the end of November with only half the refurbishments completed because Government has run out of money.

"Government must also explain what difference SIHIP will make.

"Many houses have already been trashed and are in the same condition they were in before they were upgraded.

"Also causing concern among Community leaders is that there will be fewer bedrooms when SIHIP ends than when it began.

"During this year’s Estimates Committee hearings I asked:

How many houses will have to be demolished because they are beyond economic repair?'

"The answer was disturbing:

"From our analysis thus far, and there is still a lot of scoping going on around the works in the 30 communities we are doing, we understand there is at least a couple of hundred houses that would be in that category. What we have said to alliances, or what we have requested of alliances, is that they will not leave a house in a community that will be unserviceable within 24 months of the SIHIP program...’

"Government then confirmed there would be an additional 170 houses in other communities not getting new SIHIP homes that will have to be demolished.

"That means 370 houses in Indigenous communities are earmarked for demolition. Based on the fact they are 3-bedroom homes with some 5-bedroom homes as well, it could mean 1170 bedrooms disappear.

"We know that SIHIP will only build 1800 bedrooms for the $1.2billion spent, of which 50% of the 750 houses will be 3-bedroom (1125 bedrooms), 40% will be 2-bedroom (600 bedrooms) and 10% will be 1 bedroom (75 bedrooms).

"This would suggest a net gain of 630 bedrooms, but during a recent briefing with the Housing CEO, he confirmed that out of approximately 2500 outstation houses, ’about 300’ will be abandoned by the Government and not signed over to the shires.

"If all these homes have 3 bedrooms that equates to 900 lost bedrooms – 600 if they are 2-bedroom homes – that are not being properly utilised or managed.

"What this means is it appears the Labor Government will spend more than $1billion dollars on SIHIP for no net gain in bedrooms or houses.

"It also means there will be no significant impact on overcrowding.

"The tragedy is SIHIP was supposed to be an emergency to protect children by providing them with safe places to live."

Further comment: Adam Giles 0421 588 118