City’s glass ceiling smashed

25 September 2014

No Northern Territory law or regulation will limit the height of buildings in Darwin’s CBD if a proposed Planning Scheme Amendment is successfully adopted.

Minister for Lands, Planning and the Environment Peter Chandler said the proposed amendment will go on public exhibition for 28 days from tomorrow and the government hopes it will promote further investment and big ideas in the city centre.

“There is no reason why buildings in Darwin’s CBD should be limited to 90m through an arbitrary regulation. It is unnecessary red-tape and a road block to investment,” Mr Chandler said.

“Height limits can stifle design leaving developers little choice but to use every square inch of their lot, often stacking buildings next to each other. This is not conducive to a modern, liveable tropical city.”

In addition to abolishing height limits this amendment proposes authority be given to the Development Consent Authority (DCA) to vary Planning Scheme requirements for building design.

“This will allow the DCA some flexibility in recognising that a development may have found a better way of reaching design requirements. The current prescriptive nature of the Planning Scheme has resulted in some developments with long blank walls. Mr Chandler said.

“These changes will encourage investment in innovative designs which will result in developments that better suit Darwin’s lifestyle.”

Although the Territory proposes to remove restrictions on building heights, buildings over 90 metres will still need to be approved by the Department of Defence and other civil aviation authorities on a case by case basis.

“I’m hoping Canberra will see the benefits of these changes and follow the Territory’s lead in driving development of the North,” Mr Chandler said.

The proposed Planning Scheme Amendment can be found the Department of Lands, Planning and the Environment’s website from tomorrow:


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