Media Release

Peter Chandler, Member for Brennan
Minister for Lands, Planning and the Environment

Grant to help save Darwin’s iconic boab

16 July 2014

The Country Liberals Government has awarded the City of Darwin $10,000 through the 2014 Heritage Grants Program to assist in the preservation of the Old Boab Tree in the GPO car park on Cavanagh Street.

Planted in the late 1800’s the tree once formed part of the grounds at the old Darwin Primary school and was declared a heritage place on 16 March 1994.

The Boab tree is an iconic example of its species standing about 12 metres high, with a trunk circumference of over eight metres and a canopy spread of close to 12 metres.

Minister for Lands, Planning and the Environment Peter Chandler said many Territorians, including former students, would have some memory or connection to the Old Boab Tree.

“This tree was planted roughly the same time Darwin was established. It’s survived a cyclone, a bombing, it’s even survived decades of recess and lunch while being on the grounds of Darwin Primary School,” Mr Chandler said.

“In fact during the Second World War a "Daisy Cutter" bomb lay unexploded within its shade for several days prior to discovery.

“That is why it is so important that the right mechanisms are in place to keep this tree a part of Darwin’s future as well as its history.

“I’m really glad that the City of Darwin has well and truly stepped up to the plate with this project and the Country Liberals Government is proud to support their wider plan for the area.”

Lord Mayor of Darwin Katrina Fong Lim said Council are committed to taking steps towards the preservation of this important tree, which has necessitated an overall upgrade of the car park at a cost of $285,000.
“Council felt it was important to take action to improve the health of the tree whilst ensuring there was no loss to car parking spaces in Darwin’s city centre,” she said.

“A number of factors were taken into consideration in Council’s response to concerns about the health of the tree and we took advice from experts.

“The works Council plan to undertake include extending the ‘Tree Protection Zone’ as well as resurfacing, revising the layout and painting new line marking in the car park area.

“There will be no reduction in the number of car parking spaces in the car park.”

**Media Contact:** Jarrad Schwark 0437 914 736 or 8928 6617