David Tollner  
Minister for Lands and Planning

Planning Act amended to strengthen strategic planning

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The NT Government has amended the Planning Act to strengthen strategic planning in the Northern Territory and limit the opportunities for spot rezoning.

Lands and Planning Minister David Tollner said the amendments passed in parliament today will assign some functions currently held by the Development Consent Authority as a reporting body to the Planning Commission.

“As part of developing its highly detailed plans and policies, the Planning Commission conducts extensive community consultation to ensure that local knowledge and insights are properly considered,” he said.

“All Territorians will benefit from these changes as the Planning Commission will take a proactive approach to community consultation as opposed to the current system, which essentially reacts to proposals.

“These changes will drive investment and contribute to a prosperous economy and better planning processes also provide for a balanced environment.”

The Country Liberals Government established the Planning Commission in 2012 to prepare integrated strategic land use plans, area plans and policies for inclusion in the planning scheme.

The Planning Commission also advises on significant development proposals and exercises its functions independently, impartially and in the public interest, according to the Planning Act.

“Given the extensive community consultation the Planning Commission undertakes in developing these strategic plans and policies they are the most appropriate body to report on submissions regarding proposals that do not fit into the parameters set by the planning scheme,” Mr Tollner said.

"A reporting body does not make decisions on applications; but instead it conducts hearings, consults with the community and prepares a report for the Minister detailing all matters to be considered in making a decision on an application."

Local Councils, representatives and community members will still be able to make submissions in response to applications for consideration by the reporting body, as is currently the practice.

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