Housing Minister John Ah Kit today released concept plans for the redevelopment of the Keith Lawrie complex in Alice Springs as part of the Martin Labor Government’s $45 million urban renewal program.

“The concept plans will be the spark for consultation which will be carried out for the redevelopment of the area that will create a safer living environment for public housing tenants, as well as improving the amenity of the whole neighbourhood.

“Consultation will commence within the next two weeks, and will involve Keith Lawrie tenants, local residents and non government organisations that are currently working with people on social problems of the area,” said Mr Ah Kit.

“The people of Alice Springs will remember the excellent work done in the development of Gillen Seniors—we aim to bring about a similarly dramatic improvement with the Keith Lawrie complex.”

The scope of the consultation will include working on design concepts that will:

- Prevent unwanted visitors from moving through the complex;
- Remove hidden public spaces and improve surveillance opportunities;
- Increase external private open space and reduce overcrowding;
- Significantly improve the overall appearance and living environment of the complex.

“There are clear social improvements for tenants with the redevelopment of the complex. It is anticipated that the redeveloped complex will have increased external living space (more yards with high fencing); and the removal of hidden public spaces (less attractive to itinerants and visitors hanging around).

Territory Housing has been working closely with other government agencies and community organisations to address the issue of petrol sniffing at the complex. This has included additional security patrols and working to support tenants.

“Plans will be on display at the Territory Housing office in Alice Springs, and I urge people to come in and have your say.

“Depending on consultation we anticipate construction by this year. The redevelopment will go out to public tender and local businesses will be encouraged to put in competitive bids,” said Mr Ah Kit.