Stephen Dunham  
Shadow Minister for Transport & Infrastructure, Lands & Planning, Parks & Wildlife, and Essential Services  

Chief hiding the truth from view  

23 November 2004  

Chief Minister Clare Martin is trying to pull the wool over Territorian's eyes with her claims that planned high rise buildings at the Darwin waterfront development will not rise over the escarpment and block the sweeping views from the city, CLP Shadow Minister for Lands and Planning Stephen Dunham said today.

"Two of the key players in the waterfront development have confirmed that not only will two 30 storey buildings rise 75 metres above the escarpment but other residential apartments will also rise above the escarpment," Mr Dunham said.

"The Territory Government's architect, Bob Nation, says the buildings rising above the escarpment are a fair trade off for a loss of view. Chairman of the Hassell architect firm, Ken Maher, says there will be some taller buildings, but they will not spoil the view of Darwin's harbor.

"According to the scale model on display there are more than 20 high rise buildings climbing above the escarpment which will block the current views forever.

"The CLP were the proponents of the wharf development and there was no trade off for high rise development. Some 18 months of public consultation resulted in a Central Darwin plan that had a height restriction of 15 metres (above height data) and well below the escarpment level of 24 metres (ahd).

"The Chief Minister is trying to toss this out the window and has proposed levels from 34m to 106m for the 20 buildings rising above the escarpment.

"Clare Martin says the three buildings, the tallest of which is 30 storeys, were worked through community consultation with the rest of the development plans earlier this year. That's nonsense. It's clear precious few in the community were consulted about the height changes," Mr Dunham said.

"The CLP also proposed the development to be a tourist precinct and the Government has proposed that 70 percent of the project will be residential.

"The Government has not made significant features of this development readily available to the public. If it wants informed debate we should not have to be picking our way through what the Chief Minister is prepared to tell us, what the architect tells us and what the Planning Minister is prepared to tell us."
Ends