



Terry Mills MLA

Leader of the Opposition



Postal: GPO Box 3700, Darwin NT 0801

Tel: 08 - 8901 4188

Fax: 08 - 8901 4192

Email: opposition.leader@nt.gov.au

The Hon Paul Henderson MLA
Chief Minister
GPO Box 3146
DARWIN NT 0800

Mr Gerry Wood MLA
Member for Nelson
PO Box 120
HOWARD SPRINGS NT 0835

Paul *Gerry*

Dear Chief Minister and Mr Wood,

RE: Emergency Transitional Housing Proposal

I write to express my serious concerns about the lack of affordable housing in the Territory and offer a workable solution that with bipartisan support can be implemented expeditiously.

The lack of affordable housing in the Territory is having a devastating impact on the capacity of Territorians to rent or buy a home. You would be aware of people being forced to live in tents and cars or leave the Northern Territory altogether because they are unable to find an affordable home. It is also impacting on the capacity of local businesses to recruit staff with specialised skills.

This situation is intolerable and has to end. We must take immediate action.

This is therefore a pivotal moment for us as leaders in our community.

For some months now my team and I, with the assistance of building industry specialists, have been working on additional and transitional housing options with the aim of finding workable solutions to the housing problem. We have considered that any solution must be (but not limited to):

- Immediate;
- Affordable;
- Cyclone coded; and
- Appropriate.

In addition, it must not place pressure on existing facilities and should include NGOs in the provision of assistance to people in need.



It is within this context that I am writing to you to put forward my proposal to establish a village-style transitional accommodation centre near Palmerston with a view to providing temporary housing while your Government honours its commitment to fast track land release and the pace of housing construction.

My proposal would see the construction of transitional accommodation for up to 60 families for a period of up to 24 months on the old ConocoPhillips work camp near Palmerston. The village would deliver a mixture of housing from single quarters to two and three bedroom self-contained modular housing. All housing will be required to be cyclone rated. The site contains the necessary essential services infrastructure and could be up and running in a very short space of time, a matter of weeks, with the right level of determination and commitment.

I envisage the village would be run by a local NGO and provide social and financial guidance to tenants and assist them transfer into the property market by end of tenancy agreement. The village would have 24-hour security, alcohol restrictions and public transport links.


My proposal has gained the support of groups such as Sommerville and Mission Australia, who are at the coal face in respect to the housing shortage.

I implore you to genuinely consider this option or if you cannot, provide a suitable alternative location or other measure to assist the many people who through no fault of their own have found themselves without access to affordable housing.

I should set out that our support for such a measure is dependent upon there being a very clear and definitive timeline for longer term solutions to the housing crisis.

I look forward to working with you both to implement this proposal as soon as possible. Together we can demonstrate that despite our political differences, we can team up to resolve the current pressures on housing faced by Territory residents.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Terry Mills', with a stylized flourish at the end.

TERRY MILLS

16 September 2009