



30 March 2020

Lachlan Rankine
Regional Strategic Infrastructure Coordinator
Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils
FNQROC, PO Box 359
CAIRNS QLD 4870

BY POST/EMAIL – l.rankine@fnqroc.qld.gov.au

Dear Mr Rankin,

RE: Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Council's Review on Regional Development Manual

The Urban Development Institute of Australia Queensland Cairns Branch (Institute) writes to the Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (FNQROC) in relation to the biennial review of the Regional Development Manual (the manual). We appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on the manual to facilitate the creation of better communities in Far North Queensland (FNQ).

The Institute is driven by our commitment to the creation of better communities that meet the needs of a growing population. To achieve this, it is critical to ensure that the right government frameworks are in place. The FNQROC development manual is a critical framework for the FNQ development industry.

The Institute is strongly supportive of the consistency the manual provides for engineering design across FNQ. The Institute also supports the FNQROC intention to achieve continued improvement of the development manual through ongoing review and involvement of the property industry.

The Institute is generally supportive of the proposed changes to the manual, including updates to the various technical documents and drawings. Given the nature of the Manual, the Institute has not provided an in-depth review of all the proposed changes, rather we have provided specific feedback and comments to further amend and change standard drawings and potentially produce new standard drawings for specific types of developments.

Rear Lot Development – Standard Drawings

Members within the Cairns branch have highlighted that there has been confusion experienced within council, between town planners and engineers, on the specifications for access handle lots.

Acceptable Outcome (AO) 8.2 of the CairnsPlan 2016 requires access strips to be a minimum 4m wide in residential zones despite the standard drawings requiring a minimum 3.6m. Members have

also reported that council engineers have imposed a minimum requirement of 4.2m; requiring a 600mm setback either side of the access handle.

The Institute is concerned by the uncertainty that arises for the property industry and landowners in the discrepancy between the CairnsPlan 2016, standard drawings, and advice from engineering officers. As such, the Institute recommends FNQROC produce standard drawings for rear allotment access handles in order to provide a true standard across FNQ. For information we are aware, many local governments have varying minimum width requirements, however, believe a minimum of 4m should be achieved, comprising of 3m wide concrete driveway and 500mm either side to accommodate landscaping and services and should be the acceptable outcome sought.

Landscaping and Irrigation Standards

The Institute raises concern about the proposed landscaping standards, the draft landscaping design manual, and the approval conditioning around irrigation requirements in relation to landscaping and public open space.

While the new policy and design manual is welcomed, it has not addressed the inconsistency being experienced by the industry in relation to the installation of temporary and permanent irrigation within the landscaping areas. The Institute is unsure of the requirement for two completely different systems where one is temporarily installed during initial landscaping and a permanent system for garden beds. The issue particularly arises where the temporary system must be removed and damages the established landscaping. Not only is this a significant cost impost, particularly for large scale residential development, it requires unnecessary works to remove pipework and disturbs the landscaping.

The Institute recommends FNQROC clarify this issue in order to avoid potentially conflicting development package conditioning at a local government level.

Conclusion

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback and comments on the manual and for the ongoing opportunity to engage with FNQROC on these important matters. In summary the Institute recommends:

- Produce a standard drawing for rear allotment access handles in order to provide a true standard across FNQ which reflects a 4m wide access handle
- Clarifying landscaping and irrigation standards relating to temporary and permanent conditioning arrangements.

If you have questions relating to the material raise in this submission, please contact Policy Executive, Robert Tily (rtily@udiaql.com.au) on (07) 3229 1589.

Yours sincerely,

Urban Development Institute of Australia Queensland



Ranjit Singh
Cairns Branch President