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Contents –

NEED FOR WORKS	1
Identified need	1
Options considered for meeting the need	2
Historical background	3
Environmental matters	3
Heritage Considerations	4
Indigenous heritage	5
European heritage	5
Key legislation	5
Planning process and consultation	6
Project description and objectives	6
Local services and amenities – community facilities, shops and schools	7
Public transport	7
Local road and traffic concerns	7
Zoning, land approvals and land acquisition	8
Design concepts	8
Structural design and civil works	8
Utilities, storm water, soils and flood control	9
Electrical services, fire protection and home security	9
Acoustics	9
Landscaping	9
Water and energy conservation measures	10
Housing choice	10
Silver level access	10
Work health and safety measures	10
COST-EFFECTIVENESS AND PUBLIC VALUE	11
Outline of project costs	11
Details of project delivery system	11
Construction schedule	11
Public value	11
Revenue	12

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PROPOSED UPGRADES TO ON-BASE HOUSING FOR DEFENCE AT LARRAKEYAH BARRACKS, DARWIN

Need for works

Identified need

1. There are currently 1,700 Defence members with dependants who reside in the Darwin area. Defence bases and establishments in Darwin include RAAF Base Darwin, Defence Establishment Berrimah (DEB), Robertson Barracks and Larrakeyah Barracks. The Larrakeyah Barracks precinct incorporates the Naval establishment HMAS Coonawarra, Headquarters Northern Command (NORCOM) and a number of Army units including NORFORCE.
2. To service the needs of these families, DHA manages approximately 1,650 dwellings in and around Darwin. Only 1,200 of these comply with the Defence minimum standard introduced in 2006. Much of the stock on RAAF Base Darwin, DEB and Larrakeyah Barracks is old. Some dwellings, built in the years immediately following Cyclone Tracy, are now uninhabitable.
3. At 1 July 2012, 307 families were in private rental accommodation and receiving their housing subsidy in the form of Rent Allowance (RA). The proportion of families on RA, at 16.8 percent, is higher than the DHA target of 15 percent for the Darwin region. The private rental market in Darwin is under stress, making it difficult for Defence families who can't be accommodated by DHA to find suitable accommodation. The presence of significant numbers of Defence families in private rentals adds to the stress in this market. This upgrade project will reduce the number of Defence families in the private rental market.
4. DHA has programmed the addition to its Darwin portfolio of 872 dwellings through construction, purchase and leasing options out to 2015. These will replace houses where leases are due to expire or that do not meet the new

minimum standard. The Defence minimum standard was updated in 2006¹ with an expectation that Defence-owned and DHA housing would be brought up to these standards by 2017. There will be a small overall increase in the size of the Darwin portfolio.

5. This proposed upgrade project does not increase dwelling numbers on Larrakeyah Barracks. It seeks to refurbish run-down dwellings in order to provide Defence families with modern, up to date housing with amenity levels that meet the Defence minimum standard. The occupation by Defence families of what is expected to be highly sought after accommodation (because of its ideal location) will reduce numbers in the private rental market.
6. A total of 48 dwellings have been identified for upgrade under this proposal.

Options considered for meeting the need

7. The acquisition of 'broad acre' land followed by development and construction is DHA's preferred delivery method because of the economies of scale associated with bulk procurement of house constructions, surety of supply and higher margins associated with wholesale land development. The Muirhead development of over 1,000 lots is illustrative.
8. Other options include the construction of on-base housing (e.g. the construction of 97 new houses on Larrakeyah Barracks), the purchase of developed land (serviced allotments) followed by construction, the purchase of established houses, the upgrade of current houses and direct leasing of suitable housing where possible. DHA is exercising all of these options in its Darwin program.
9. Defence and DHA have evaluated and jointly agreed that the upgrade of 48 dwellings on Larrakeyah Barracks is economically viable and represents good value for Defence in the context of the overall program for Defence housing in Darwin. The houses are suitable for upgrade and, together with the new housing project, will provide a well located housing precinct that will serve Defence families for the next 20-30 years.

¹ In 2006, Defence introduced its New Housing Classification Policy (NHCP) that increased the minimum standard for Defence housing. All Defence housing is to be compliant to NHCP by 2017.

Historical background

10. The Larrakeyah residential precinct is part of Larrakeyah Barracks, a Darwin military establishment since 1932. The base has operated continuously since that time. Major headquarters, formations and units on the base include Headquarters Northern Command, HMAS Coonawarra and NORFORCE.
11. The residential precinct currently comprises 131 dwellings suitable for occupation, increasing to 146 once all upgrade and construction projects are complete. The oldest of the current dwellings were constructed in the 1970s. New houses were added in the 1990s, mostly townhouses in the north-west corner. An aerial photograph and a map of the area are at Supplementary Items 1 and 2. Supplementary Item 3 illustrates the base layout and the proposed order of upgrade for the houses.

Environmental matters

12. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was prepared for DHA in September 2006 in the context of the adjacent Larrakeyah construction project (97 new houses).
13. The 2006 EIS satisfied the requirements of the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act, 1999* and Defence requirements for an Environmental Impact Assessment and, while not required, would also be applicable to this project. The EIS identified no significant impacts on the environment that would require referral to the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts.
14. All work on Defence bases requires submission and approval of an Environmental Clearance Certificate (ECC). The ECC must be submitted by the principal contractor and is reviewed and approved by the Environmental Officer at Larrakeyah Barracks. No works can commence until this approval is received. The ECC addresses all potential environmental issues and covers the scope of works, site plan, construction program, Environmental Management Plan (EMP), Defence Green Building Requirements and Safety Management Plan (SMP). The EMP is required to satisfy the recommendations of the EIS. In particular:
 - Heritage and significant trees in Allen Avenue will be retained.

- As much as possible of the existing vegetation will be retained, consistent with building refurbishment on each lot.
 - On completion of building works, affected landscape will be refurbished to include suitable plants.
 - Sediment and erosion control measures and other environmental controls as necessary will be in place before works start.
 - Dust will be controlled by wetting down or covering piles of soil and fill material.
 - Contractors will be required to remove waste from the site in accordance with the Northern Territory waste management legislation.
15. It is possible that asbestos will be present. If found, asbestos will be removed and disposed of in accordance with approved standards.
16. Since no new development is involved, the above considerations fully account for the environmental impact of refurbishment of existing dwellings within existing lot layouts. As part of the approval process, the Base Environmental Officer will issue the ECC once he is satisfied all conditions are met.

Heritage Considerations

17. The Larrakeyah Barracks residential precinct is near an indigenous sacred site. The area also contains a number of structures that are included in the Commonwealth Heritage List and/or the Register of National Estate. While the proposed works are clear of these areas, contractors will be required to ensure that none of the proposed works affect them.
18. In addition to the listed heritage items, a World War II gun emplacement is located in the rear yard of No. 3 Elliot Point Road. The upgrade works are well clear of this emplacement.
19. Existing housing in the Larrakeyah Barracks residential precinct has been assessed as having no heritage value. However, design of the upgraded houses will remain sympathetic to the heritage values of the Larrakeyah area. External design elements such as elevated construction, simple roof forms, materials and existing setbacks will be retained.

Indigenous heritage

20. The Larrakia (also known as the Goondal or Goondalwa) people are the traditional owners of the land around Darwin. An area of land on Emery Point is considered to be an indigenous sacred site, the cliffs and associated land areas having been used for male initiation ceremonies until the 1930s.
21. The houses to be upgraded under this project were built under an Authority Certificate C92/52 dated 30 April 1992 which was issued by the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority.
22. A new certificate has been issued for this project, an extract of which is at Supplementary Item 4. The new certificate retains all the conditions of the 1992 certificate with one exception. The new certificate issued on 12 July 2012 removed from the original certificate Condition 7 which referred to base access for specific indigenous custodians. As access protocols for the base are currently being developed between Defence and the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority, this condition is no longer relevant. Contractors will be required to adhere to the conditions of both certificates.

European heritage

23. The following Larrakeyah buildings, while not affected by this proposal, are listed on the Commonwealth Heritage List and/or the Register of National Estate:
 - The Defence fortifications at Emery Point;
 - The lighthouse at Emery Point;
 - Larrakeyah Barracks Headquarters building; and
 - Larrakeyah Barracks Sergeants' Mess.

Key legislation

24. The following key legislation is relevant to this project:
 - a. *Environment Planning and Assessment Act 1979*;
 - b. *Defence Housing Australia Act 1987*; and
 - c. *Building and Construction Industry Improvement Act 2005*.

Planning process and consultation

25. The Department of Defence and DHA have prepared a Communication Plan to ensure that all possible stakeholders are provided with adequate notice of the project and its likely start date.
26. The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority and the Larrakia National Aboriginal Corporation have been formally advised of the project by Defence. They have been invited to attend the PWC public hearing.
27. The Head of Defence Support Operations (HDSO), Mr Mark Jenkin, and his Director of Relocations and Housing, Mr Alan McClelland, are responsible for the project outcome. The letter of support from the acting HDSO, Ms Alison Clifton, is at Supplementary Item 5. The National Convenor of Defence Families Australia, Ms Julie Blackburn, has also been briefed on the project and has provided her support (Supplementary Item 6).
28. DHA did not engage Social and Cultural Planning consultants because the project is confined to the upgrade of existing dwellings, introduces no new population into the local environment and is strongly supported by the on-base Defence community.

Project description and objectives

29. The proposal is for DHA to upgrade 48 houses in the Larrakeyah Barracks residential precinct. The project is to be conducted in four stages, with all houses from stages 1 and 2 available for occupation by the peak posting period in December 2013.
30. Scope of work has been agreed between Defence and DHA. The agreed scope will encompass a full mid-life upgrade of all the houses, including:
 - Modernising all fixtures and fittings;
 - Modernising of kitchens, bathrooms and laundries;
 - Upgrading airconditioning, electrical and plumbing services;
 - Providing an ensuite extension to the main bedroom;
 - Providing a double or single lock-up garage to each residence; and
 - Landscaping around the completed houses.

Local services and amenities – community facilities, shops and schools

31. Larrakeyah is within 3 km of the Darwin Central Business District which provides a wide range of shopping and services, including a medical centre.
32. There are a total of 47 child care centres in Darwin. Local child care centres are located on Mitchell and Cavenagh Streets, respectively 500m and 1.5km from the front gate.
33. Larrakeyah Primary School is located directly outside the front gate (see Supplementary Item 2). St Marys Primary School is located in the city, about 2 km from the base.
34. Darwin High School and St Johns College are located in the neighbouring suburbs of Bullocky Point and The Gardens respectively, about 4 km north of the Base.
35. No additional demand is expected to be placed on community facilities as no new dwellings are being constructed.

Public transport

36. Buses to the city run along Mitchell Street, about 500m from the front gate. The city of Darwin is about a 15 minute walk away.

Local road and traffic concerns

37. Local streets are expected to have low levels of traffic. As there will be no increase in the actual numbers of houses on base, no increase in residential traffic is expected. A small increase in traffic on Packard Street would be expected during construction.

Zoning, land approvals and land acquisition

38. As this project is on Commonwealth land, the planning controls and building approvals processes of Darwin City Council and the NT government are not applicable. However, as the various utility services to the Base are linked to those of Darwin city, the necessary liaison has been undertaken with Council and NT authorities as appropriate.

Design concepts

39. Design of the upgraded houses will remain sympathetic to the heritage values of the Larrakeyah area. External design elements such as elevated construction, simple roof forms, materials and existing setbacks will be retained. Additionally, the proposed garages will be constructed so as to be sympathetic to the original house design.
40. The upgrades will be specific for each property, but in general will include full internal and external refurbishment including new kitchens, bathrooms, floor and window coverings, new fixtures and fittings and repainting throughout. All properties will have the carport replaced with a double lock up garage. Ensuites will be constructed where they do not already exist. The upgrade works will also include the replacement of driveways where necessary and all soft and hard landscaping. Supplementary Item 7 provides an example floor plan and Supplementary Items 8 and 9 provide before and after views of proposed upgraded dwellings.

Structural design and civil works

41. All design, construction and upgrade works carried out as part of this project will comply with or exceed Local Government, State and Federal Government controls and requirements, and all housing works will meet the requirements of the Building Code of Australia.
42. All building construction requiring certification will be undertaken by approved Certifiers and, where the staged works exceed \$3 million, the head contractors for upgrades of the houses will be accredited by the Federal Safety Commission (FSC).

Utilities, storm water, soils and flood control

43. High voltage power supplies are available, along with the appropriate telecommunications infrastructure. The domestic voice telecommunications network within Larrakeyah Barracks is owned and maintained by the Department of Defence. It was upgraded in late 2004 and there is adequate capacity to support the proposed upgrades under this project. Broadband access is currently not available in the Larrakeyah residential precinct.
44. Sewerage and potable water facilities are available and have been upgraded by DHA as part of prior works. In the 30 plus years since the original dwellings were constructed, there is no anecdotal evidence of local flooding of the residential area.

Electrical services, fire protection and home security

45. The on-base electrical distribution system has adequate capacity to accommodate the existing dwellings proposed by this project.
46. The upgrades will ensure the houses conform to Australian standards and the Building Code of Australia. Where damaged or not already existing, combined security/insect screens will be fitted to all external doors, including sliding doors, and security screens will be fitted to all opening windows on the ground floor.

Acoustics

47. Construction noise will be managed by ensuring contractors' equipment operates within specified noise levels and by restricting contractors' working hours. In addition, adjacent residents will be kept advised of the expected noise impacts.

Landscaping

48. The private outdoor spaces for each dwelling will continue to meet or exceed Defence requirements.
49. Landscaping upgrades of these spaces will be in accordance with the DHA specification using drought resistant native plant species appropriate to the Darwin climate and specifically Larrakeyah Barracks. The adjacent housing development of 97 houses provides parks, picnic areas, barbecue facilities and

walking tracks for the residential precinct which may be utilised by the tenants of the upgraded houses.

Water and energy conservation measures

50. Energy Efficiency Rating (EER) studies have been undertaken on a sample of the houses proposed for upgrades which show that the upgrades will have little or no impact on the current EER. DHA upgraded dwellings will comply with DHA's General Specification for Upgrades and Minor New Work V0.8 and as such will achieve a reduction in demand on the water supply through a combination of water efficient shower heads, flow regulators to basins and sinks, and dual-flush toilet cisterns.

Housing choice

51. The dwellings to be upgraded will fulfil a requirement for a range of dwellings around Darwin for allocation to families. The houses will ensure that members have a range of lifestyle and locations from which to choose.

Silver level access

52. Due to the limitations imposed by high level dwellings and the fact that the basic design and layout will remain unchanged, the upgraded 48 dwellings are unable to be upgraded to the Silver Level of the Liveable Housing Design Guidelines. However, the majority of future DHA developments and new constructions in Darwin will comply and provide easier access options to members and their families.

Work health and safety measures

53. DHA contractors delivering works valued more than \$3 million will be accredited by the FSC. Work contractors will also adhere to relevant legislative requirements, including the Workers Compensation Act and the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*.

Cost-effectiveness and public value

Outline of project costs

54. The estimated overall project cost is approximately \$25 million, including GST, contingency and escalated costs. The cost will be met by DHA and reimbursed under an annuity arrangement with Defence.

Details of project delivery system

55. Dwelling upgrade packages will be contracted on a fixed price lump sum basis through an open tender process. The successful tenderers will be required to comply with DHA's General Specification for Upgrades and Minor New Works V0.8 and the individual Scopes of Work.

Construction schedule

56. Subject to Parliamentary approval by late 2012, the significant milestones to achieve completion of the project by April 2015 are:

Date	Milestone
Feb 13	Stage 1 and 2 – 18 house upgrades start
Nov 13	Stage 1 and 2 – 18 house upgrades finish
Nov 13	Stage 2 – 16 house upgrades start
Jul 14	Stage 2 – 16 house upgrades finish
Jul 14	Stage 3 – 14 house upgrades start
Apr 15	Stage 3 – 14 house upgrades finish
Apr 15	Project Finish

Public value

57. This proposal will contribute 'public value' by upgrading the stock of housing used to meet Defence obligations to members of the Australian Defence Force and their families posted to Larrakeyah and enhancing key objectives for retention of Defence personnel. More broadly, the Larrakeyah Upgrade project will create jobs in the construction industry and, through the provision of quality

homes, remove Defence families from the Darwin housing market, thus alleviating pressure on the private rental market.

Revenue

58. Details of the financial aspects of the project are included in a separate commercial in confidence briefing to the PWC.

Larrakeyah Barracks Upgrades

Supplementary information

- | | |
|--------|---|
| Item 1 | Site location – aerial photograph |
| Item 2 | Site location – area map |
| Item 3 | Site location – houses to be upgraded |
| Item 4 | Authority certificate – Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority (extract) |
| Item 5 | Letter of support – Department of Defence |
| Item 6 | Letter of support – Defence Families Australia |
| Item 7 | Larrakeyah upgrades – floor plan for 3 Steele St |
| Item 8 | Larrakeyah upgrades – before and after photographs (3 Steele St) |
| Item 9 | Larrakeyah upgrades – before and after photographs (19 Steele St) |

Supplementary item 1

Site location – aerial photograph



Supplementary item 2

Site location – area map



Supplementary item 4

Authority certificate – Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority (extract)



**Aboriginal Areas
Protection Authority**
protecting sacred sites across the territory

Our File: 2011/14782
In reply please quote: 71414

Department of Defence, Defence Support - Central West
Defence Establishment Berrimah, Building 31, PMB 13
WINNELLIE NT 0821

ATTENTION: TRACEY BISCOE

**RE: ISSUE OF AUTHORITY CERTIFICATE FOR LOT 5239, LARRAKEYAH
BARRACKS**

I refer to your application for Authority Certificate received on the 1st April 2010 for the above location.

Accordingly, under the powers delegated to me under Section 19 of the *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act 1989* I am pleased to issue the attached Authority Certificate.

Please read carefully the conditions outlined in the Certificate. In particular, you should note that it has been issued for an indefinite period of time, providing that the works covered by the Certificate start within the period stipulated in condition 3. You should also note that the Authority has issued you with two identical copies of digitised maps attached. One copy should be retained with your original Certificate. The second is supplied for use by contractors to avoid unnecessary photocopying of a colour coded document.

I draw to your attention Conditions 5 and 6 of the Certificate. These Conditions require the reading of Authority Certificate C1992/052 prior to the commencement of works, and compliance with all conditions contained in C1992/052 (except for Condition 7) in addition to those contained on the Certificate attached to this letter. Condition 7 of C1992/052 is no longer relevant given that access protocols for the base are being developed between Defence and the Authority. A copy of C1992/052 is attached to this letter for your convenience.

Please note that the cost of this Authority Certificate will be \$5,990 and an invoice will be issued to you by the Department of Business and Employment [DBE]. The terms and conditions of the invoice will require you to make payment within 30 days of receipt.

If you have any further queries regarding this Authority Certificate please contact Jackie Gould on 8999 4343.

Yours faithfully

DR. BEN SCAMBARY
Chief Executive Officer

12 July

2012

Darwin
P: +61 (08) 8999 5511
F: +61 (08) 8999 4334
www.aapant.org.au
enquiries.aapa@nt.gov.au
4th Floor, R.C.G Centre,
47 Mitchell Street DARWIN NT
GPO Box 1890, Darwin NT 0801

Alice Springs
P: +61 (08) 8999 5511
F: +61 (08) 8952 2824
www.aapant.org.au
enquiries.aapa@nt.gov.au
Ground Floor, Belvedere House
Cnr Bath & Parsons Streets Alice Springs NT
All mail to Darwin GPO

ABORIGINAL AREAS PROTECTION AUTHORITY AUTHORITY CERTIFICATE

Issued in accordance with Section 22 of the Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act 1989.

REFERENCE: 2011/14782 (Doc: 71414) C2011/085

APPLICANT: Department of Defence, Defence Support - Central West
Defence Establishment Berrimah, Building 31, PMB 13
WINNELLIE NT 0821

SUBJECT LAND: Larrakeyah Barracks, Lot 5239", as shown on the map which is annexure 'A' hereto.

PROPOSED WORK OR USE: Works associated with the upgrading of existing houses, and the demolition and removal of existing houses and replacement with new houses and associated services.

CONDITIONS:

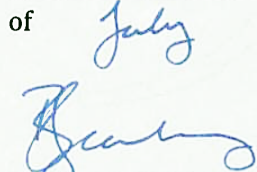
1. The applicant shall ensure that the conditions of this Certificate are included in any subsequent contract or tender documents for the works or use described herein.
2. The applicant shall ensure any agent, contractor or employee is aware of the conditions of this Certificate and the obligations of all persons (who enter on, or carry out works or use land on which there is a sacred site) under Part IV of the *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act 1989*.
3. This Certificate shall lapse and be null and void if the works in question or the proposed use is not commenced within 24 months of this Certificate.
4. The applicant shall ensure any agent, contractor or employee is aware of the content of section 40(1) of the *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act 1989* which provides that this Certificate does not negate the need for consent, approval or permission for the subject works or use of the land which may be required under another statute.
5. Authority Certificate C1992/052 is to be read in conjunction with this Certificate. All conditions except Condition 7 of C1992/052 shall be complied with. Condition 7 of C1992/052 is to be revoked in lieu of access protocols to be developed by Defence and the Authority and incorporated into a new Authority Certificate and into Standing Orders for the base. This Certificate does not replace or supersede C1992/052.
6. Within the area marked Restricted Works Area 1 (RWA1) on annexure 'A', associated with sacred site 5073-2, no work shall take place and no damage shall occur. No storage of materials, parking of vehicles or machinery is permitted within RWA 1.
7. Within the area marked Restricted Works Area 2 (RWA2) on annexure 'A', associated with sacred site 5073-2, no work shall take place except for the following limited works:
 - works associated with the demolition and removal of existing housing infrastructure and services;
 - works associated with the construction and ongoing maintenance of housing infrastructure and services within existing disturbed areas only;

No works are permitted within RWA 2 in previously undisturbed areas. Where excavation is required beyond the depth of existing services, or 600mm (whichever is the greatest), custodians must be given the opportunity to inspect the works and provide their comment. Custodians can be contacted via AAPA. Any reasonable cost and logistics involved in custodian notification and attendance should be borne by the applicant. Suitable notice should be given of the proposed works to facilitate custodian notification by the Authority.

8. Within the area marked Restricted Works Area 2 (RWA2) on Annexure 'A', associated with sacred site 5073-2, storage of construction materials or parking of vehicles and machinery is permitted only within the current footprint of the residential precinct in already disturbed areas.
9. Within the area marked Restricted Works Area 2 (RWA2) on Annexure 'A', associated with sacred site 5073-2, all excavated materials (rocks, gravel, and soil) are to be left in situ within RWA2 in a manner consistent with the design needs of the precinct and can be incorporated into the landscaping of the area. No excavation of materials solely for the needs of landscaping is allowed.
10. Within the area marked Restricted Works Area 2 (RWA2) on Annexure 'A', associated with sacred site 5073-2, upon removal of the existing infrastructure, Aboriginal custodians are to be given the opportunity to inspect works prior to the construction of new housing and services. Custodians can be contacted via AAPA. Any reasonable cost and logistics involved in custodian notification and attendance should be borne by the applicant. Suitable notice should be given of the proposed works to facilitate custodian notification by the Authority.

The COMMON SEAL of the
ABORIGINAL AREAS PROTECTION AUTHORITY

was hereto affixed on the 12 day
of July 2012



DR. BEN SCAMBARY
Chief Executive Officer

Attachment: previously issued Authority Certificate C1992/052

Supplementary item 5

Letter of support – Department of Defence



Australian Government
Department of Defence
Defence Support Group

1263947

Alison Clifton
Acting Head Defence Support Operations
Department of Defence
R1-6-A006
PO Box 7902
CANBERRA BC ACT 2610

alison.clifton@defence.gov.au

RECEIVED

28 JUN 2012

Managing Director's Office

Tel: 02 6265 6135
Fax: 02 6265 7982

HDSO/OUT/2012/084

Mr Michael Del Gigante
Managing Director
Defence Housing Australia
26 Brisbane Ave
Barton Act 2600

Dear Mr Del Gigante

LARRAKEYAH HOUSING UPGRADES

For several years Defence, in consultation with DHA, has been considering options for improving the availability and standard of housing in Darwin. Defence is concerned that the quality of on-base housing is generally poor and the Darwin housing market is extremely tight. The expansion of the mining and gas industries in the region will increase the pressures on the housing market. Available land within a reasonable distance of Larrakeyah Barracks is scarce, and land and building costs are rising rapidly in response to these pressures.

Following this extensive examination, Defence has decided to retain the existing levels of housing at Larrakeyah. Larrakeyah is an important strategic base for Defence and is located close to the Darwin CBD. It is a tri-service base which hosts ten units, including HQNORCOM, NORFORCE and HMAS Coonawarra. It is important for Defence to retain these on-base houses as they are well located for members posted to Larrakeyah.

In 2010, 61 older houses on Larrakeyah were demolished to be replaced with 97 new houses. It was decided to demolish these houses as their age and condition meant that upgrading them was not cost effective. This project is in its final stages. In addition 48 houses were identified for upgrading. These are considerably younger and in better condition but still require works to bring them up to Defence standard and to extend the life of the houses. When upgraded, these houses will be used to accommodate junior ADF members and their families.

Thank you for providing plans for the upgrading of the 48 houses on Larrakeyah. The scope of the works and forecast timelines are agreed. The upgrading of these houses provides Defence with a cost effective solution and reflects the lessons learnt from the upgrading of Defence housing at Puckapunyal and Tindal. I commend your staff for these efforts.

I note that the agreed scope will encompass a full mid-life upgrade of all the houses and this includes:

- modernising of all fixtures and fittings;
- modernising of kitchens, bathrooms, and laundries;
- upgrading air conditioning, electrical and plumbing services;
- providing an ensuite extension to the main bedroom; and
- providing a double lock-up garage or single lock-up garage with secure storage added to each house.

The addition of these amenities will make the houses compliant with Defence standards and comparable with other Defence housing in Darwin and throughout the rest of the country. The Housing Classification Policy requires all service residences to be at this standard before 1 July 2017. These upgrades will mean that these Larrakeyah houses will continue as Defence housing well into the future.

I am aware that this proposal substantially increases cost estimates provided to the Parliamentary Works Committee by DHA in its initial submission. I appreciate the level of consultation undertaken by your staff since that submission and I am now confident the scope of works meets Defence's requirements for on-base housing.

The amended scope has obviously benefitted from similar upgrading programs at Puckapunyal and Tindal. One of the obvious changes is the inclusion of garages, at an additional cost of \$3m, and this is supported by Defence. It is important that these properties provide similar amenities to those being provided by DHA off base and Defence in other on-base projects, including earlier projects at Larrakeyah. The inclusions of the garages and other essential additional items in the scope will ensure that these houses meet the continuing needs of the ADF for considerable time.

If you have any questions regarding this matter my point of contact is Alan McClelland on 6266 4279 or alan.mcclelland@defence.gov.au.

Yours sincerely


Alison Clifton

Acting Head Defence Support Operations

26 June 2012

Supplementary item 6

Letter of support – Defence Families Australia



Defence Families of Australia
CP2 – 1 – 11
Campbell Park Offices
Canberra ACT 2600

Mr Peter Howman
Chief Operating Officer
Defence Housing Australia
26 Brisbane Avenue
BARTON ACT 2600

10 Sep 2012

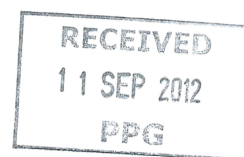
Dear Peter

I am writing to you in order to provide support for the housing upgrades at Larrakeyah. As you know, housing is a prime concern for Defence families irrespective of their location. Good quality housing that is of a similar standard to houses in all posting localities is required in order to assist a highly mobile workforce and their families settle into a new location with minimal stress. Therefore, DFA deems it to be important to not only have these upgrades completed, but for these to occur as soon as possible due to the following reasons:

1. Housing availability for Defence families posted to Darwin is limited. The high costs associated with the private rental market makes Service housing a desirable option for many families. Completion of the housing upgrades at Larrakeyah in the shortest possible time will ensure that there is an adequate number of good quality housing available and assist in reducing on-base housing availability concerns.
2. There is limited housing available to Defence families with close proximity to Darwin city and Larrakeyah. With the uncertainty and phasing out of the current housing at RAAF base, the amount of housing that is in close proximity to the base has reduced. Ensuring timely upgrades to the housing on base at Larrakeyah will ensure greater options for families posting in to the area.
3. Living on the base of Larrakeyah is a popular site for many Army and Navy families posted to Darwin. Not only does on-base living provide families with the added security of the base when the member is absent from home, it also affords close proximity to work for the member or for the family member who may work in the city.
4. All housing upgrades should take into consideration the location and climate. The tropical backyards of the area are seen as a positive to the environment and it is hoped that this will be maintained.

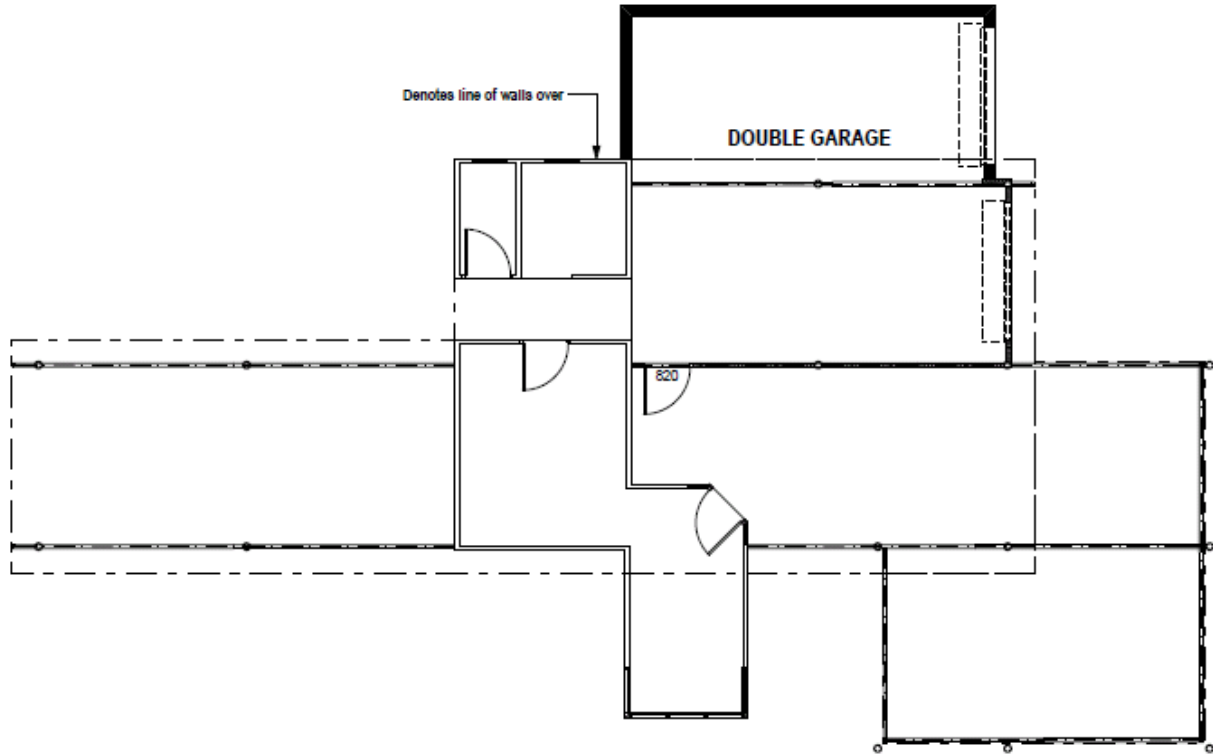
Yours Sincerely,

Julie Blackburn
DFA National Convenor
Ph: 0410 626 103
Email: julie.blackburn1@defence.gov.au



Supplementary item 7

Larrakeyah upgrades – floor plan for 3 Steele St



3 Steele St – floor plan



3 Steele St – elevation

Supplementary item 8

Larrakeyah upgrades – before and after photographs (3 Steele St)

Before



After



Supplementary item 9

Larrakeyah upgrades – before and after photographs (19 Steele St)

Before



After

