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By email to: rlus@ntdc.org.au

Re: Northern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy review

To whom this may concern,

The Tasmanian Chapter of the Australian Institute of Architects (the Institute) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the Northern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy (NTRLUS) at this early stage of its review.

The Institute represents architects practising across Tasmania who are directly engaged in the planning, design and delivery of housing, infrastructure, public buildings and places. Our members bring expertise in urban design, climate-responsive development, heritage conservation, housing delivery and community infrastructure – all of which are central to the objectives of a regional land use strategy for Northern Tasmania.

The Institute strongly supports the role of regional land use strategies in guiding sustainable settlement patterns, coordinating infrastructure investment and protecting environmental and cultural values. Early engagement at the strategic direction phase is critical to ensuring that subsequent policy development is robust, implementable and aligned with the objectives of Tasmania's planning system.

The Institute supports the review of the NTRLUS to align with the Tasmanian Planning Policies and the Tasmanian Planning Scheme. However, the Institute emphasises that the effectiveness of the strategy will depend on:

- clear links between high-level strategic directions and statutory planning mechanisms;

- measurable objectives and targets that can be monitored over time; and
- transparent implementation pathways that demonstrate how strategic intent will be translated into planning outcomes.

At this early stage, the Institute encourages the NTRLUS to explicitly identify how strategic directions will ultimately influence zoning, standards, settlement boundaries, infrastructure sequencing and decision-making under the planning scheme.

1. CLIMATE CHANGE AND RESILIENCE

Climate change as a core strategic driver

The Institute strongly recommends that **climate change mitigation and adaptation be elevated as a core, overarching objective of the Northern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy**, rather than treated as a discrete thematic issue.

Land use planning is one of the most powerful tools available to address climate outcomes. Strategic decisions about settlement patterns, density, transport integration, infrastructure location and building typologies have long-term emissions and resilience implications.

The Institute recommends that the NTRLUS:

- explicitly reference decarbonisation as a guiding principle;
- promote compact settlement patterns that reduce transport emissions;
- support climate-responsive urban form and building design;
- address increasing climate risks, including flooding, bushfire and heat, through land use and settlement planning.

2. SETTLEMENT PATTERNS, LANDSCAPE AND PLACE

Landscape as a defining regional value

Northern Tasmania's landscapes – including river systems, agricultural land, coastal environments and escarpments – are fundamental to regional identity, economic activity and community wellbeing.

The Institute encourages the NTRLUS to treat landscape not only as an environmental constraint, but as a **multidimensional value** that shapes settlement form, urban character and sense of place.

Strategic directions should:

- use landscape to inform where and how growth occurs;
- protect productive agricultural land from unnecessary fragmentation;
- integrate settlement planning with landscape capacity and infrastructure provision;
- recognise the relationship between landscape, culture and built form.

3. HOUSING, GROWTH AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Housing supply and density

The Institute supports the NTRLUS's focus on addressing housing need and accommodating population growth. However, density targets and growth assumptions must be **realistic, deliverable and aligned with the Tasmanian Planning Scheme**.

The Institute recommends that the NTRLUS:

- promotes compact, well-designed urban growth rather than dispersed expansion;
- ensures that density targets are tested against current planning controls and market conditions;
- emphasises housing diversity, quality and liveability – not just dwelling numbers.

Infrastructure sequencing

Housing growth must be coordinated with:

- transport infrastructure,
- social infrastructure (schools, health services, community facilities),
- quality open space and public realm provision.

The Institute recommends that the NTRLUS clearly articulates expectations around infrastructure sequencing so that communities are supported as growth occurs, rather than retrofitted after development pressure has emerged.

4. DESIGN QUALITY AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT EXPERTISE

The Institute strongly advocates for the **early and ongoing involvement of built environment professionals** – including architects, planners and urban designers – in implementing regional land use strategies.

Design quality directly affects:

- housing affordability over the life of buildings,
- climate performance,
- community health and wellbeing,
- long-term economic value.

The NTRLUS should explicitly recognise:

- the role of good urban design in achieving strategic outcomes;
- the value of design review and multidisciplinary input for significant developments and precincts;
- the importance of public realm quality in town centres and growth areas.

5. HERITAGE AND CULTURAL VALUES

Northern Tasmania contains layers of cultural heritage, including:

- palawa/Tasmanian Aboriginal cultural landscapes and sites;
- early colonial and industrial heritage;
- twentieth-century and post-war architecture that contributes to community identity.

The Institute recommends that the NTRLUS:

- recognises heritage as a living, evolving asset;
- supports adaptive reuse and sensitive integration of new development;
- ensures heritage considerations are embedded early in strategic planning, rather than addressed reactively.

6. PALAWA / TASMANIAN ABORIGINAL ENGAGEMENT

The Institute supports the recognition of palawa/Tasmanian Aboriginal people as the first custodians of the land.

We recommend that the NTRLUS moves beyond consultation framed as “insight gathering” and instead embed **ongoing, meaningful collaboration and partnership** with Aboriginal communities in both strategic development and implementation.

This includes:

- early involvement in shaping strategic directions;
- recognition of cultural landscapes, not just discrete sites;
- clear pathways for Aboriginal knowledge to influence land use decisions.

7. MONITORING, REVIEW AND ACCOUNTABILITY

To ensure the NTRLUS remains effective over its lifespan, the Institute recommends:

- clear performance indicators linked to strategic objectives;
- regular public reporting on progress;
- a commitment to review and adjust the NTRLUS in response to outcomes, not just timeframes.

The Institute supports the review of the Northern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy and welcomes the opportunity to contribute at this early stage.

We encourage the NTRLUS to:

- maintain strong links between strategic vision and implementation;
- embed climate action, design quality and landscape values as core drivers;
- promote compact, well-serviced and resilient settlement patterns;

- leverage built environment expertise to deliver long-term public benefit.

The Institute looks forward to ongoing engagement as the NTRLUS progresses to more detailed policy development. The Institute would welcome the opportunity to discuss any of the above further. If we can be of any assistance, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Kind regards,



Daniel Lane
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The Australian Institute of Architects (Institute) is the peak body for the architectural profession in Australia. It is an independent, national member organisation with over 14,500 members across Australia and overseas. The Institute exists to advance the interests of members, their professional standards and contemporary practice, and expand and advocate the value of architects and architecture to the sustainable growth of our communities, economy and culture. The Institute actively works to maintain and improve the quality of our built environment by promoting better, responsible and environmental design. To learn more about the Institute, log on to www.architecture.com.au.