

Terms of Reference

Cairns Regional Council Planning and Development Industry Reference Group

1.0 Intent

The Cairns Regional Council (**Council**) Planning and Development Industry Reference Group brings together a diverse cross section of development, planning and design professionals. The reference group, incorporating representatives from within Council and the broader development industry, will work collaboratively to investigate and discuss long-term strategic planning for the region and provide strategic advice to Council representatives regarding Council's planning and development functions.

To support a collaborative working arrangement, two-way feedback regarding improvement opportunities and best practice approaches regarding delivery of strategic and development assessment processes will be provided between Council and industry representatives on the reference group.

Group Members are expected to actively and constructively participate in discussions, engagement and communication with the group generally.

2.0 Detailed Objectives

2.1 Overall

A key objective of the group is to foster a high level of collaboration between Council industry professionals, share information and provide two-way feedback in relation to Council's planning and development functions. Specifically, the group will:

- a) Provide advice and feedback on strategic planning projects, including:
 - Strategic advice about approaches being progressed by Council to support the long-term sustainable management, liveability and economic prosperity of the region;
 - Early input and advice regarding strategic planning projects, including Council's local planning instruments; and
 - Advice regarding other initiatives, including sustainability projects, being progressed by Council.
- b) Provide advice and input into business improvement initiatives related to Council's planning and development functions, including:
 - Provide advice on best practice business approaches to delivering local government planning and development functions;
 - Testing and early input about business improvement projects being progressed by Council; and
 - Bring forward ideas and process improvement projects for Council's consideration.

- c) Provide high-level feedback about Council's service delivery associated with its planning and development functions, including:
- General high-level feedback about Council's planning and development functions, in the context of Council's Planning and Development Service Charter; and
 - Council to provide general high-level feedback and improvement opportunities for industry, to assist the way in which industry works with Council across its planning and development functions.

3.0 Membership

3.1 Council Representatives

The following Council representatives will form part of the Planning and Development Industry Reference Group:

- Director Planning Growth & Sustainability
- Executive Manager Development & Planning
- Executive Manager Growth & Sustainability
- Executive Manager Licensing & Compliance

The Chief Executive Officer will be invited as an optional representative to each meeting.

Other Council representatives may attend depending on the nature of the meeting and/or agenda items to be discussed.

3.2 Industry Representatives

The following peak industry bodies will be invited to nominate a representative on the Planning and Development Industry Reference Group:

- One (1) representative from the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA);
- One (1) representative from the Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) ;
- One (1) representative from the Housing Industry Association (HIA);
- One (1) representative from Building Designers Queensland (BDAQ); and
- One (1) representative from the Australian Institute of Architects (AIA).

Council will also issue an expression of interest seeking nominations for up to ten (10) industry representatives. Generally, the number of representatives will be limited as follows:

- Two (2) – Development proponents;
- Two (2) – Town planning or related field representatives;
- Two (2) – Engineering or related field representatives;
- Two (2) – Design or related field representatives; and
- Two (2) – Sustainability and/or education institution representatives.

The industry representatives' roles on the Planning and Development Industry Reference Group will be in a voluntary and unpaid capacity. The role of the representatives above is to represent the views and opinions of their broader industry/sector to their greatest ability.

Representatives appointed on behalf of the peak industry bodies listed above are required to represent the views and positions of the peak body.

The Council will have full discretion to assess and appoint industry representatives from the pool of applicant's responding to the expression of interest.

Representatives of peak industry bodies listed above, must hold a current position with the peak body for the duration of the appointment. Where a representative appointed on behalf of a peak industry body listed above no longer holds a position with the body, an alternative representative will be appointed.

An industry representative appointment will be terminated due to two (2) or more instances of non-attendance at regular scheduled meetings each calendar year.

3.3 State Government Representatives

The Council will invite two representatives from relevant State Government agencies to nominate a representative on the Planning and Development Industry Reference Group.

4.0 Chair

The Planning and Development Industry Reference Group will be chaired by an independent chair to be appointed following nomination and assessment of Reference Group members. An independent chair must have experience in the Region in Government or private sector (or both), and be suitably qualified to hold the position in the opinion of Reference Group members.

As an alternative to the independent chair arrangement, the Planning and Development Industry Reference Group may be co-chaired by the Councils Director of Planning Growth & Sustainability and one (1) industry representative.

5.0 Administration and Operating Principles

5.1 Meetings

The Planning and Industry Reference Group will meet no less than four (4) times per calendar year. Notwithstanding, additional meetings can be called on an ad-hoc basis, upon agreement between the co-chairs.

For meetings to proceed, a minimum of two (2) Council representatives and six (6) industry representatives must be present.

5.2 Meeting Agendas

- Council will be responsible for preparing and issuing a meeting agenda at least five (5) business days before any scheduled meeting.
- Any member of the Planning and Development Industry Reference Group can nominate an agenda item prior to the issuing of the agenda.

5.2 Meeting Minutes

- Council will be responsible for documenting meeting minutes and issuing the minutes to the Planning and Development Industry Reference Group within seven (7) business days after each meeting for confirmation by all members.
- The minutes from each meeting will be published on Council's website to encourage non-members to review matters discussed and participate in discussion points outside of the meeting process, in accordance with the objectives of the Planning and Development Industry Reference Group.

5.3 Ad-hoc written feedback

- From time to time, the Council may issue a request to the Planning and Development Industry Reference Group seeking written advice or feedback on a specific project, where timing means that the matter cannot wait until the next scheduled meeting.
- Where practical, the Council will ensure members are provided with at least ten (10) business days to review and provide feedback to the Council.

5.4 Authority

The Reference Group's role is limited to the provision of advice and recommendations and to act as a conduit to the planning and development industry. There are no formal voting rights connected to Council policy or strategy.

The Reference Group or its members have no authority over Council management, cannot direct Council staff, and its members will have no involvement in day-to-day operational matters at Council. Any concerns relating to the operation of the Reference Group may be taken up with the Chief Executive Officer, Cairns Regional Council.

5.5 Confidentially

In all matters relating to discussions conducted at meetings of the Planning and Development Reference Group, together with any and all materials provided to members of the Reference Group where material is marked as confidential, members must ensure that these discussions and materials are not released to the general public.

Reference Group members should refrain from making any public comment or issuing any public statement regarding the Reference Group or its work or decisions without the authority of Council.

Minutes of discussions or materials pertaining to discussions conducted within the Reference Group may be released to the general public if directed by the General Manager Planning and Environment for the purposes of community or sector engagement.

All matters discussed at Reference Group meetings will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Information Privacy Act and the Right to Information Act.

All views of the members of the Reference Group will be treated with utmost respect but should not be discussed with parties external to the Reference Group.

5.6 Conflicts of Interest

Reference Group members are required to act impartially and represent the interests of the broader community above their personal interests. Whilst members have a role in providing specific sector or interest group opinions the Reference Group must strive to provide a balanced view or opinion and advice on a project. Where consensus or balance of opinion cannot be achieved across the Reference Group, the various views and opinions of the Reference Group will be minuted.

In addition, all members will declare any conflicts of interest at the start of each meeting and where a conflict of interest is declared, that member shall leave the meeting when the item is discussed.

Conflicts of interest will be recorded in the meeting minutes.

5.7 Discussion of Individual Development Applications

The Planning and Development Industry Reference Group will not discuss the Council's assessment of any individual or specific development application.