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Perth Waterfront
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To whom it may concern

RE: PERTH WATERFRONT PROJECT

UDIA is pleased to offer the following comments on the Perth Waterfront project, which was recently launched to the public. As you are aware, UDIA is the peak body representing the property development industry in Western Australia with a membership drawn from the land development, planning, engineering, environmental and urban design professions.

UDIA offers its full support to this landmark project and believes that it eclipses any that has come before. The plan capitalises on connectivity to the new rail line, the CBD and important social spaces to create a hub of activity in an internationally recognised development. The project offers a refreshing and positive shift in how the plan has been developed with geotechnical work done as part of the concept planning.

Perth Waterfront will enhance the cultural significance of the area by acknowledging its indigenous history and as a gathering and memorial place for the RSL. An enlarged Supreme Court Gardens, new public open spaces and extensive public circulation areas on the waterfront and ease of movement between buildings will add to feet on the ground and really activate these spaces. It is crucial that the project offer a diversity of retail, commercial, entertainment, cultural and residential opportunities to draw people from all age groups and all walks of life to create the vibrancy that only a mixed community can.

This project gives Perth the opportunity to learn from the experiences of other cities that have taken bold steps to reinvigorate themselves. Planning regulations that support outdoor eating, licensing laws that encourage small, intimate bars and restaurants, the use of iconic architecture and public art, the creation of linkages between spaces and buildings, and catering for diversity are the basic requisites of successful cities.

UDIA is concerned however, that the current planning process will not support delivery of the project or induce private developers to invest in Perth Waterfront given the plethora of agencies that will be involved. Industry recommends that an appropriate legislative and regulatory environment is put in place now to ensure a smooth approvals path for the project. This could take

the form of a Development Act that essentially takes the project out of the planning system. This has worked successfully in other states, for example in Golden Grove and West Lakes in South Australia. The Minister for Planning declares a proposed project a Major Development if he or she believes such a declaration is necessary for proper assessment of the development, and where the project is deemed to be of major economic, social or environmental importance. Applications for development are put before a Development Assessment Commission (DAC), an independent statutory authority, to determine what level of detailed assessment is required, and to issue formal assessment guidelines.

When considering a Major Development referral, the DAC may be augmented by the appointment of one or two people by the Minister from a list of independent specialists, who have particular expertise in issues surrounding the sort of development being proposed.

The success of this project will rely on the attraction of significant private sector investment to Perth Waterfront and for this reason UDIA cautions against the government granting favour to its own development arm, LandCorp. Private developers must have confidence that they are granted equal opportunity to where they can develop and to the highest possible standard with the entire process being transparent and equitable.

UDIA congratulates the government on the boldness and innovative nature of the Perth Waterfront project. We look forward to being closely involved in consultation as the project unfolds and to a planning environment that facilitates successful delivery of this ground breaking project for Perth.

Yours sincerely

Debra Goostrey
Chief Executive Officer