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For immediate release

## **Shire President calls on State Government to stop talking and act to alleviate Broome's housing crisis**

Broome Shire President Desiree Male said she hoped a meeting with the Minister for Regional Development Don Punch on Thursday, May 25, will result in State Government funding to commence the Sanctuary Road Caravan Park, Key Worker and Over 55s Village.

It was Mr Punch's first visit to Broome since replacing retired MP Alannah MacTiernan in the Regional Development portfolio.

The visit included the meeting with Cr Male and Shire CEO Sam Mastrolembo, along with local MP Divina D'Anna and Kimberley Development Corporation representatives, to discuss projects including Sanctuary Road, and the Broome Safe Boating Facility, which are both waiting on State Government funding.

Cr Male said while she was pleased the Minister expressed that housing is key McGowan Government's priority, she was hoping for more than his undertaking to consult with other ministers.

She said the time for simply talking about Broome's housing crisis was well and truly over.

"It was great to meet with Minister Punch, who fully understands the issues we face up here, particularly with housing. And while Broome is by no means the only place in Western Australia experiencing severe housing shortages, we have one of the lowest levels of available housing stock and the highest growth in rental costs in Australia.

"This has been the case for at least two years and things are only getting worse.

"Since 2021, the Shire, State Government and other key stakeholders have met and identified how the chronic housing shortage and high rents are impacting the local economy. During that time, we have seen demand for housing continue to grow quicker than originally anticipated, meaning it is now cheaper to rent in Sydney than Broome."

Cr Male said while housing wasn't primarily a local government responsibility, the Shire of Broome has responded to the crisis by preparing a Business Case for the [Sanctuary Road Key Worker, Over 55's and Caravan Park Village](#).

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The Village site, on vacant land north of Sanctuary Road, will include 91 long-stay residential homes to help alleviate the housing shortage and provide affordable accommodation for Key Workers such as Child Care employees who are in critical demand. It will allow for flexibility of use as over-55's accommodation as well as additional caravan sites.

Each plot will feature modern, high quality, two- and three-bedroom relocatable housing that can be removed or repurposed if housing demand eases.

Cr Male said the project would be built by a private developer.

"But because it is a bare green fields site, it will require site preparation, connections, roadworks and other preliminary headworks to make it shovel ready for the construction of Key Worker homes and caravan sites."

She said these works require \$16.5 million in state government grant funding, which the Shire is applying for, but is concerned about the time the entire process will take.

"The grants in question were actually introduced because of the situation in Broome," she said.

"Our plan has been in place for some time, but we can't put out tenders until the grant funding is confirmed. We can't just flick a switch and start, which is why I am hoping the State Government will act before the housing situation in Broome gets worse."

Cr Male said she hoped Sanctuary Road wouldn't end up like the Broome Safe Boating Facility, which that the State Government has also committed to but has yet to provide the remaining 50 percent of funding required.

**ENDS**