



Hon Craig Wallace MP
Member for Thuringowa



**Queensland
Government**

Ref CTS 12512/07

**Minister for Natural Resources
and Water and Minister Assisting
the Premier in North Queensland**

14 JAN 2008

Mr N J Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
Cnr Alice and George Streets
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to your letter of 19 November 2007, to the Honourable Warren Pitt MP, Minister for Main Roads and Local Government, enclosing a copy of Petition No. 947-07 lodged in the Queensland Legislative Assembly.

The Petition draws to the attention of the House the fact that the Townsville Showgrounds are a publicly-owned asset that must not be sold; and that the Townsville Showgrounds Markets are a necessary and strong part of the fabric of Townsville society.

The Petition requests that the House legislate that the Townsville Showgrounds remain at its current location in perpetuity and that the regulation of noise and other emissions from any activities be the focus of control of the appropriate enforcement agencies.

My Department has commissioned a "Strategic Evaluation of the Townsville Showgrounds Site and Alternative State Land on the Bohle Plains" (the study). The study will indicate whether existing and possible future showground-related activities are best catered for by the current site, what other uses the current site could support, and whether either of two alternative sites on the Bohle Plains can meet the needs of a showground. I anticipate receiving the findings of the study in early 2008.

The launch of the study, in June 2007, was partly in response to public concerns that emerging demands on the current Townsville Showgrounds site, in particular the hosting of events such as motor sports, will outgrow the amount of land available. One focus of the study is investigating whether the existing site can accommodate additional events.

To determine the spatial needs of existing showground activities and identify desired additional activities, the views of the Townsville Pastoral Agricultural and Industrial Association (TPA&IA) and user groups including the Townsville Greyhound Racing Club and the Totally and Permanently Disabled Ex Serviceperson's Association, have been sought. From facts and opinions gained through consultation, evaluation criteria are being developed that can be used to check the suitability of any alternative site for a showground, with or without motor sport capability.

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The Townsville Showgrounds is a publicly-owned asset that is held under a Deed of Grant in Trust for Showgrounds and Recreational purposes by the TPA&IA. The Deed states that the land cannot be sold by the TPA&IA, however, if a decision is ever made to relocate the showgrounds, the *Land Act 1994* empowers the State Government to sell the property and use the funds to establish new facilities. However, it is advised that whatever the recommendations of the present study, any decision to relocate the Townsville Showgrounds will be subject to wide public consultation.

The regulation of noise and other emissions remains the responsibility of relevant agencies, but it is noted that any material change of use sought by proponents of motor racing, or any other noise generating activity, is subject to normal town planning assessment, consistent with the *Integrated Planning Act 1997* and any relevant local government planning scheme.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

Yours sincerely

Craig Wallace MP
**Minister for Natural Resources and Water and
Minister Assisting the Premier in North Queensland**