

26 November 2021

Queensland Innovation Places Strategy  
Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport  
PO BOX 15168  
City East QLD 4002

Via: [innovationplaces@dtis.qld.gov.au](mailto:innovationplaces@dtis.qld.gov.au)

## Queensland Innovation Places Strategy Discussion Paper

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the Queensland Innovation Places Strategy Discussion Paper. The Property Council of Australia is the leading advocate for Australia's biggest industry – property. We are a national not-for-profit organisation established to promote the work of the property industry in delivering prosperity, jobs and strong communities to all Australians. Here in Queensland, the Property Council represents over 380 member companies across a broad array of sectors including social infrastructure, industrial, commercial and retail.

As such, our members are heavily invested in helping the government realise the vision outlined within the Queensland Innovation Places Strategy. Overall, the Property Council supports the vision outlined in the strategy and commends Government for taking the initiative to champion Queensland as a world leader in innovation and research.

Recognising that the discussion paper is the first step in the process of delivering a holistic strategy, the Property Council provides the following feedback for consideration.

Overall, the final strategy will need to contain more detail on how it intends to facilitate the growth of our innovation precincts. The discussion paper- by design- is broad in nature. While it points to the significant opportunity that Queensland has over the next decade, the final plan must contain a clear strategy for how we are to collectively achieve these objectives.

### Improved accessibility

While larger scale innovation precincts such as Herston Quarter, Boggo Road Ecosciences and the Gold Coast Health and Knowledge Precinct play a vital role in the growth of our innovation and research sectors, there are many more organisations operating outside of these precincts that also contribute to Queensland's broader innovation sector.

The majority of contributors to the sector are startups and small businesses, who routinely struggle to find suitable and affordable space for their burgeoning businesses. These organisations represent broad yet essential components of the sector, and it is critical that their growth is supported to ensure Queensland becomes a world leader in innovation and research.

As such, the strategy must include a plan to cater for these businesses. Currently, our innovation precincts are largely located in close proximity to city centres. While this provides enhanced amenity and is an essential element in catering for interstate and international investment, many startups are taking up their first lease and the location of these precincts makes the rental costs prohibitive.

As the agglomeration of ideas and knowledge is a crucial for the innovation sector, the final strategy should consider measures that will allow smaller businesses to attain a foothold in well-located, high amenity precincts.

In addition to this, the strategy could also examine options that will allow for the re-purposing of retail spaces and industrial sites. Industrial precincts in particular typically have excellent connectivity to supply chains via logistics hubs and warehouses and co locating industrial hubs and precincts within these areas would ensure that "*Queensland's innovation places are connected, accessible and engaged with industry, industrial precincts, supply chains and markets*" (Pg 23).

However, industrial areas are typically subject to strict zoning conditions that preclude mixed uses. As part of the strategy the Queensland Government should consider measures that allow for more flexibility in these industrial precincts.

### **Government Coordination**

Inter-departmental and inter-governmental policy alignment is crucial for addressing many of the barriers the property industry faces when attempting to deliver suitable space for research and innovation.

At a local level, greater collaboration is required between State Government and Council to relax some rigidity in local planning provisions. As detailed above, the prescriptive nature of planning provisions is one of the biggest barriers the industry faces when delivering places that are both suitable and affordable for startups.

Furthermore, the final strategy should explore measures to enhance inter-departmental alignment. For example, for the purposes of streamlining the development of innovation precincts it is unclear why innovation is in a separate department to state development and precinct governance. Coordination between these two areas of government will be essential to ensure that the final strategy is able to facilitate the delivery of precincts that meet the needs of the innovation sector.

The 2032 Olympic Games promises to be the catalyst for many exciting developments in Brisbane. With the potential to create a range of opportunities for the innovation sector from sports science and drug testing to media and digital innovation, the Olympics represents an excellent opportunity to align inter-governmental and inter-departmental decision making.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to provide input into the *Queensland Innovation Places Strategy – Discussion Paper*. The Property Council recognises that this is the beginning of an exciting piece of work that will aim to harness the significant role this sector plays in shaping Queensland's future. We look forward to further consultation with the Government to address the practical constraints in delivering world class spaces for innovation and research.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me on 0448 432 936 or [jwilliams@propertycouncil.com.au](mailto:jwilliams@propertycouncil.com.au).

Yours sincerely

*Jen W*

**Jen Williams**  
Queensland Executive Director