



PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE OF RETAIL

Company background:

Automotive Brands Group is a subsidiary of Bapcor Limited (BAP). Bapcor has over 800 locations across Australia and New Zealand with a combined turnover of over \$1 billion dollars. Bapcor is Australia's leading provider of aftermarket parts, accessories, and services; the combined group remains Australian owned and has the largest footprint of any Automotive Aftermarket business in Australia.

Autobarn is Automotive Brands premium automotive retail brand within the group with 125 stores nationally and is expanding at a rate of an additional 10 stores per year.

Submission:

Autobarn has been a member of the Large Format Retail Association since its formation in 1999 (under the previous Bulky Goods Retail Association name).

Automotive Brands has reviewed the *"Planning for The Future of Retail"*. We strongly endorse the LFRA's submission to the discussion paper on *"Planning for the Future of Retail"*. We believe the adoption of the proposed definition of *"Specialised Retail Premises"* will help Automotive Brands in providing consistency and clarity in goods and services that can be sold and provided.

Currently, Autobarn has 27 stores in N.S.W. In contrast, we have 43 stores in Victoria and 33 in Queensland in comparable east coast states. N.S.W. remains challenging in finding suitable properties that are zoned for our use. We have put considerable resources into expanding our store footprint in N.S.W. as our company store expansion program continues. The lack of available sites has meant other states to continue to grow in store numbers to the detriment of our presence in N.S.W.

In metropolitan N.S.W. we have identified 10 future Autobarn locations with another 11 in regional locations. Over many years we have encountered numerous issues over obtaining planning approvals. The time required to overcome red tape has resulted in the loss of several sites across N.S.W. due to the delay.

Automotive Brands invests on average \$750,000 per location excluding rental payments made to the lessor. On average an Autobarn store recruits 8-10 team members per location. Redefining the *"Specialist Retail Premises"* in N.S.W. would provide more certainty and help expand our store growth in this state. Currently, investment is being directed to other states and territories.

Automotive Brands Group strongly supports the proposition that Business zones be simplified so that Large Format Retailing such as Automotive can occur in a wider range of locations and help increase the supply of land.