



Minister for the Environment and Heritage
Minister for Planning and Land Management
Minister for Police and Emergency Services
Minister assisting the Chief Minister on
Advanced Technology and Space Industries
Manager of Government Business
Member for Brindabella

Obj # 19/17690

Mr Tom Duncan
Clerk, ACT Legislative Assembly
GPO Box 1020
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Mr Duncan

Tom

Thank you for your letter of 4 June 2019 about petitions 25-18 and 15-19 lodged by Ms Le Couteur.

The Woden Town Centre Master Plan (the Master Plan) was completed in November 2015 with the planning changes implemented through variation to the Territory Plan No. 344 (V344), which commenced on 31 August 2018.

The draft variation to the Territory Plan (DV344) was also the subject of a five month inquiry undertaken by the Standing Committee on Planning and Urban Renewal between 27 July 2017 and 11 December 2017. The outcome of the inquiry resulted in the Standing Committee providing 31 recommendations, including that the variation be approved.

A key finding on the Master Plan found that the population of the Woden Valley is much lower than in comparable town centres, leading to a lower level of demand for retail commercial uses, services and facilities. The Master Plan and associated Territory Plan variation are addressing this, in part, through encouraging redevelopment in the town centre with a particular focus on promoting residential development. As more people live in the town centre, the level of demand will increase for retail, employment, services and community facilities. This will also assist in creating a town centre that attracts people to live, work and socialise throughout the day and into the evening.

The Master Plan and subsequent variation to the Territory Plan provides the necessary planning and design guidance to promote a scale of development that is appropriate within the town centre context, while maintaining amenity along the town centre streets and public spaces.

In regards to the sites identified as N12 (Block 13 Section 81 Phillip) and N10 (Block 17 Section 156 Phillip), the Territory Plan provides site specific planning controls to limit the size of the building floor plate, limit overshadowing of adjacent residential development and public spaces and to retain important community assets such as the existing active travel path that runs adjacent to Section 81 Phillip. These site-specific requirements are in addition to other planning and design provisions introduced as part of DV344, including that a visual assessment be undertaken and that taller building elements are setback from the front block boundary above a podium level.

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In regard to Arabanoo Park, the feedback from the Master Plan community engagement activities found that few people used the park and that it does not have direct pedestrian access to the town centre. Community feedback also identified that people did not feel safe in Arabanoo Park and there is no opportunity for surveillance of the park from the more active areas of the town centre, such as the bus interchange.

To address this issue and the need for more accessible community facilities in the town centre, the Master Plan recommended that the park be 'flanked' by community facilities along the northern and southern boundaries of the park. This zoning was recommended to encourage greater use of the park, improve safety and to provide for future community facilities in a highly accessible location close to short term parking on Easty Street, public transport (including a potential future light rail station on Callam Street) and a main cycle path parallel to Yarralumla Creek. This proposal was broadly supported through the community engagement process on the draft Master Plan.

The Standing Committee on Planning and Urban Renewal recommended that if the part rezoning of Arabanoo Park proceeds, then certain uses should be prohibited, including residential, religious and health related uses. This recommendation was implemented through amendments to DV344 prior to approval, with a range of uses prohibited, including:

- business agency
- educational establishment
- emergency services facility
- office
- place of worship
- public agency
- residential care accommodation
- retirement village
- supportive housing

The master planning and Territory planning process has been a very comprehensive multi-year endeavour, with extensive ongoing consultation with the community, traders and other key stakeholders. Both the Master Plan and Territory Plan variation have been rigorously discussed and reviewed by the community, ACT Government directorates, the Legislative Assembly and the Standing Committee on Planning and Urban Renewal.

The outcomes of the master plan and variation provide a reasonable outcome that protects those things that are valued by the community, while ensuring that the town centre can attract people to create a more diverse, active and economically viable commercial centre into the future.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely



Mick Gentleman MLA
Minister for Planning and Land Management

30/03/19