



Mary Porter AM MLA
Labor Member for Ginninderra

ph: +61 2 6205 0100

fax: +61 2 6205 0040

web: www.maryporter.net

e-mail: porter@parliament.act.gov.au

Deputy Speaker of the ACT Legislative Assembly
Chair of the Standing Committee on Education, Training and Youth Affairs
Deputy Chair of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts

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Mr Gary Kent
President
Inner South Canberra Community Council
[\[mailto:gkent@ozemail.com.au\]](mailto:gkent@ozemail.com.au)

Dear Mr Kent

I am writing to you in relation to your concerns in relation to the Land Development Bill, and in particular the Symonston Mental Health Facility.

As you may remember I asked the Minister for Health, Ms Katy Gallagher MLA to respond to our concerns. Since this, Ms Gallagher has responded to your concerns directly and has furthermore sent me a copy of her correspondence.

I note in your email you were frustrated over what you believe to be a lack of appropriate consultation in relation to the Symonston Mental Health Facility. With regards to this, Ms Gallagher has noted a number of consultation processes were held with regards to this project.

Furthermore, in relation to your opposition to the Land Development Bill, Ms Gallagher has assured that whilst this bill means that that work on the secure mental health facility unit can take place, it will do so with comprehensive consultation.

From my understanding of the information I have been provided, the new legislation fast tracks the planning process but still enables important community input and also consultation from the National Capital Authority. Furthermore, it doesn't disrupt the normal process of Development Approval being lodged, which is also subject to community input.

With regards to what you believe to be a lack of consultation in relation to the RSPCA and Domestic Animal Services (DAS), Ms Gallagher has advised that full consultation would be undertaken with the community, once the future of the project has been clearly defined. I have also been advised that the Economic Development Directorate have met with the Inner South Canberra Community council and Symonston residents.

I trust that the information provided by Ms Gallagher is helpful. I hope that this information assures you that whilst the passing of the *Planning and Development Amendment Bill 2014* allows faster planning processes, the community will still able to have their say through a variety of platforms.

If you would like me to further represent you on this issue or any other issue please contact my office.

Yours sincerely

Mary Porter AM MLA
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