

The following is a copy of an email sent from Minister Rattenbury to the ISCCC.

From: **RATTENBURY** <[RATTENBURY@act.gov.au](mailto:RATTENBURY@act.gov.au)> Date: 5 April 2016 at 16:53 Subject: RE: Omnibus Territory Plan Variation: For debate in Assembly today (10 March 2016) To: ISCCC <[info@isccc.org.au](mailto:info@isccc.org.au)>

Dear Gary

Thank you for contacting me regarding Territory Plan Variation 334 for Red Hill. Please see below a speech I gave in the Legislative Assembly this morning during the debate on the matter. As you will note from the dot points below, I have negotiated a technical amendment to the variation to include specific design characteristics that will inform any development and help deliver quality urban infill for the site.

*Madam Speaker, some weeks ago I moved to adjourn debate on Mr Coe's disallowance motion in relation to Territory Plan Variation 334, regarding the ACT Public Housing Redevelopments in Red Hill.*

*I did this because I had been approached by some residents of Red Hill who were concerned about elements of the proposal and potential impacts on the character of the suburb with the redevelopment of public housing near the Red Hill shops.*

*I have also received constituent feedback from others in the Red Hill community that they are very keen for the redevelopment to proceed. Planning in established areas always triggers a range of opinions, and I accept that some people will be unhappy about any development proposal.*

*I have met with some of the Red Hill residents, including the Chair of the Red Hill Residents Group and walked around the site with them. Following the adjournment I also requested that a meeting be held between residents' representatives and officials from the Planning Directorate to clarify some technical*

*details. This meeting was held on March 17 and a number of technical issues were discussed in some detail. I also subsequently met with Red Hill resident representatives.*

*I have listened to the concerns raised and have taken them up with Minister Gentleman. I am pleased that significant concessions were made to the Variation to the Territory Plan, most notably a reduction in the maximum height of some building from 6 storeys was reduced to 4 storeys. I note that there are already quite a few 3 storey buildings on the site, so I believe that the additional storey in parts of the site will not be too much of a dramatic change. I have also requested that the desired character statement be strengthened, and that there be some technical clarification on issues around basements and overshadowing.*

*I think it's fair to say many of the buildings are in poor condition and the Greens generally support the renewal of the ACT's public housing stock. Much of it is expensive to maintain and is inefficient in terms of energy use, and thus expensive to heat and cool for the tenants.*

*The ACT Greens have consistently advocated for a long term vision for our city, an environmentally sustainable vision that maps out our future as a city that is liveable, well connected, and prepared for future challenges of climate change, population growth and energy security. The Greens support infill developments rather than suburban sprawl on the city's fringes, provided it is of high quality with well designed, energy efficient buildings and well landscaped public open spaces and streetscapes.*

*The proposed redevelopment of the public housing at Red Hill provides one such opportunity. It provides a unique opportunity, being a large site that is close to shops, schools and other facilities. I believe an increased number of residents in the area will help the viability of the local shops, which the*

*Greens see as a vital hub of the community. We believe that it is important to have shops that people can walk and cycle to in their local area – for a healthy lifestyle, and to ensure a healthy community.*

*Indeed, the development may provide opportunities for Red Hill empty nesters to age in place, allowing them to downsize while staying in their own community close to the shops, public transport and other facilities. This will also free up the larger traditional family homes for younger families, including those who may have grown up in the area.*

*It must be noted that this is a Territory Plan Variation, not a specific development proposal, so it is not possible to comment on the details of any future development at this point. Once a Development Application is lodged, it will follow the ACTPLA public consultation process, and residents will have the opportunity for public comments. I will also be reviewing any proposed development to ensure there is high quality urban design.*

*I support the Government's Variation to the Territory Plan No 334, and I believe that a rezoning to RZ5 will allow the flexibility for an innovative development that can provide a diversity of housing types. However, based on feedback from resident's representatives I believe we can provide more clarity and assurance that the character of the development will meet the expectations of the resident's. What is interesting in this discussion is that the one thing everyone seems to agree on is that the site is prime for re-development. The debate is about what it should look like and the character of the development.*

*To that end, I have negotiated a Technical Amendment with Minister Gentleman which will be released in late April to confirm the Desired Character of the development. This will provide a Framework for potential developers, the community and those undertaking planning assessments. For example,*

*provision is being made to allow some flexibility in building height to take advantage of the topography of the site to accommodate basement parking. In order to address residents concerns that this might effectively lead to additional storey - we have included as part of a desired character statement “that buildings predominantly engage at street level, avoiding large expanses of blank walls or grilled car parks”.*

*There are also desired character statements in relation to sustainability and a diversity of housing choices including opportunities to age in place.*

*The existing open space bounded by Cygnet Crescent and Lady Nelson Place will be retained and in addition there will be requirements for open space areas within the development, and the taller four storey elements of the development will also focus on the centre of the site and adjacent to the existing commercial zone.*

*I will outline the desired character statements that will be included in the technical amendment:*

- The arrangement of buildings and spaces enhances solar access to landscape areas, communal areas, private open space and public spaces on, and surrounding the site*
- Development fronting the public realm and the landscape areas addresses and enhances the quality and useability of the spaces.*
- Building facades should be of high quality finish, detailing and visually articulated to avoid a ‘continuous wall’ of development and excessive bulk and scale and provide visual interest and differentiation. Buildings should predominantly engage at street level, avoiding large expanses of blank walls or grilled car parks*
- The taller building elements are focused on the centre of the site and adjacent to the existing commercial zone*

- *Provision of a range and diversity of housing choices including opportunities to age in place.*
- *Landscaped areas between the buildings are of a high quality that link the overall development together and contribute to the amenity of the area*
- *There is a clear hierarchy of public and private zones through the site with safe and attractive pedestrian areas*
- *A high-level of sustainability, with a large percentage of the units facing north, and construction to achieve high-energy performance ratings*
- *Development should frame and address Lady Nelson Place Park (Section 40, Red Hill) and the landscape areas through visually interesting facades and providing passive surveillance.*
- *Development provides interest and activity to the public realm through articulated facades to public spaces, avoiding solid, featureless walls of development*

*Madam speaker, I believe that overall the Variation, along with the Technical amendment results in a good outcome for the community that will see quality urban infill and help revitalise and ensure the sustainability of the Red Hill shops.*

*I thank the residents of Red Hill for their active engagement in this process, and urge them to continue to follow the development as it proceeds. I have been impressed by the detail in which they have examined the proposal, even where we have not agreed on every point. I will certainly be reviewing any Development Proposals to ensure that they meet the Desired Character that we have defined in the Territory Plan Variation, and that they are assessed by the Planning Directorate accordingly.*

I hope you find this information helpful.

Kind regards

**Shane Rattenbury MLA**

Minister for Education; Minister for Corrections;

Minister for Justice and Consumer Affairs; Minister for Road Safety

ACT Greens Member for Molonglo

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[ISCCNote – the above differs slightly from the Hansard record which can be found at [www.hansard.act.gov.au/hansard/2016/pdfs/P160405a.pdf](http://www.hansard.act.gov.au/hansard/2016/pdfs/P160405a.pdf)]