

RESPONSE TO ISCCC POLICY AND ACTION LIST

SEPTEMBER 2020

A. STREETSCAPES, URBAN FOREST AND OPEN SPACES

STREETSCAPES AND OPEN SPACES

The ACT Greens have proposed a Neighbourhood Democracy fund that would give the community the power to decide what their neighbourhood needs. This neighbourhood fund would allow the members of every suburb to come together to determine how to spend an average annual budget of \$100,000. This could be capital works projects, community gardens, park upgrades, new playground equipment, tree planting, employing people to work on a particular project, or community-building activities and events. For more information see <https://greens.org.au/act/neighbourhood-democracy>.

We have also committed to a comprehensive urban parks and reserves conservation and parkcare program, which amongst many other actions, includes creating neighbourhood forests in appropriate public open spaces, as well as creating a dedicated urban parks and places volunteering scheme focused on ecological improvement outcomes. More information can be found here: <https://greens.org.au/act/repairing-the-land>

URBAN FOREST

The Greens have been advocating strongly for action on trees over the last four years. That advocacy, and community advocacy from groups like the ISCCC, has seen a major step forward in attention to Canberra's trees and urban forests. This has resulted in:

- A 30% tree canopy target, through the Living Infrastructure Plan released by Greens Climate Minister Shane Rattenbury
- Increased park and street tree planting each year from 1,500 to 8,500
- The release of draft "Living Infrastructure" changes to the planning rules to make room for trees as part of new developments
- Consultation starting on changes to the Tree Protection Act and a new Urban Forest Strategy

To build on this, we have released our Repairing the Land election initiative, which includes:

- a \$21.5M injection into tree planting in the next 4 years

- planting at least 500,000 urban trees; and
- enacting tougher regulation on developers to make it harder to cut down trees and detrimentally impact green and public space.

More information can be found here: <https://greens.org.au/act/repairing-the-land>

B. PLANNING PRIORITIES

Canberra is changing, and not always for the better. The Greens believe it is time for a new plan for Canberra. Canberra needs a new planning system, and much better development. Our 'New plan for Canberra' package is available at <https://greens.org.au/act/planning>.

The Greens new plan for Canberra will:

- Substantially lift the quality and sustainability of the design and construction of new developments
- Give the community a real say in how their neighbourhood develops
- Better protect our trees and green space
- Ensure the planning and housing system delivers affordable housing that is environmentally friendly, maintains green space and fits in with our urban heritage
- Better protect Canberra's heritage, including viewlines and national heritage areas.

We will achieve these goals through a series of practical reforms, including:

- Ensuring the planning review focuses on quality, community engagement, affordable housing and protecting our trees and green space
- Delivering the recommendations of the Assembly Standing Committee Inquiry into development applications
- Changing land sales legislation so that major sites are sold for high-quality proposals, not just to the highest bidder
- Refusing to back down on the 30% tree canopy target and changing the Tree Protection Act and planning system to make room for green space and trees in development
- Delivering a "community development compact" process to find ways to encourage affordable housing while protecting our trees, green space and heritage. The compact will bring together residents' groups, younger people, government and developers

- Setting a 10 year pathway to shift to world's best practice on climate-ready and environmentally-sustainable buildings

CHANGES TO THE TERRITORY PLAN

1. ALL THE DOCUMENTATION MUST BE EASY FOR THE LAYPERSON TO UNDERSTAND

The Greens agree that this is an important principle that should be reflected when reforming the planning system.

2. GREEN SPACES AND THE URBAN FOREST MUST BE MAINTAINED IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS. MANDATORY SITE COVERAGE AND PLANTING-AREA RULES SHOULD BE ADDED TO THE PLOT-RATIO RULE.

The Greens agree. The 30% tree canopy target was strongly advocated for by the Greens, and was set by Greens Minister Shane Rattenbury through the ACT's Climate Change Strategy and the Living Infrastructure Plan. We will refuse to back down on this target, and will push hard for it to be implemented.

The Greens will fight for:

- Changes to the Tree Protection Act and planning system to make it harder for developers to cut down our mature canopy trees during development.
- Expansion of the draft "Living Infrastructure" planning changes to cover tree canopy and green space in more types of residential development, like 'mixed use' buildings, as well as commercial areas like local shops and town centres.

The Greens agree that the current approach of over-relying on plot ratio is contributing to substantial loss of green space and trees. Other tools like site coverage are needed. We will be making a further announcement about trees very soon.

3. ALL THE CRITERIA IN THE BUILDING CODES MUST BE SUBSERVIENT TO THE RULES, WHICH ARE SIMPLIFIED AND MADE MANDATORY.

The Greens are aware of groups within the community with differing views on Rules, Criteria and other ways to structure the Territory Plan. We believe this issue needs to be settled through consultation during the current review process.

4. KNOCK-DOWN REBUILDS SHOULD BE PROGRESSED THROUGH STANDARD DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS.

The Greens strongly believe that the DA-exempt development process is allowing inappropriate development and needs to change. Greens MLA Caroline Le Couteur pushed for this to be included in the recommendations of the Planning Committee Inquiry into

Development Application processes, however it was blocked by the Labor and Liberal committee members. Change to DA-exempt development was included in Ms Le Couteur's dissenting recommendations only. See p.281 for details:

https://www.parliament.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/1543994/Report-12-Inquiry-in-to-Engagement-with-Development-Application-Processes-in-the-ACT.pdf

The Greens are proposing a "community development compact" process on the planning rules for housing, that brings together residents' groups, people concerned about housing affordability, government and developers. The compact process would be tasked with developing planning changes that can be made to encourage smaller, affordable homes without losing what we love about Canberra. This process would examine DA exemptions, as well as other planning changes. The compacts would be delivered by district to allow planning changes to be tailored to local needs. While the first compact would be for the Inner North, if there is community support in the Inner South, outcomes could also be applied there as well.

5. BEFORE MAKING ANY ZONING CHANGES, THE INCOMING GOVERNMENT MUST UNDERTAKE MEANINGFUL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WITH INNER SOUTH RESIDENTS ABOUT HOUSING CHOICE AND DIVERSITY, INCLUDING SOCIAL HOUSING, TO ENSURE A REASONABLE BALANCE BETWEEN LOW, MEDIUM AND HIGH-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL STOCK.

The Greens agree with this statement. Greens MLA Caroline Le Couteur has strongly advocated for more work on housing diversity. Our election commitment is to build on the 2018 Housing Choices program, which was a worthwhile deliberative democracy program, but has unfortunately not been delivered on.

C. MANUKA TO THE LAKE

BEFORE THE 2016 ELECTION THE ACT GOVERNMENT GAVE A COMMITMENT TO DEVELOP A MASTER PLAN FOR THE AREA FROM MANUKA TO THE LAKE. NOTHING HAS HAPPENED. THERE APPEARS TO BE AN AD HOC APPROACH BASED ON WHATEVER IS PROPOSED BY ANY DEVELOPER. WE NEED A FIRM COMMITMENT FROM THE NEXT GOVERNMENT TO DEVELOP A MASTER PLAN AND A PLAN TO IMPROVE AMENITY IN THE AREA.

The ACT Greens share many of the community's concerns about recent planning in relation to Manuka. The Greens believe that in regard to Manuka, ideally any development proposal should be consistent with the outcomes of a master planning process, within the context of the wider Manuka precinct. After the Manuka land swap ordeal last Assembly, and then the unsolicited bid proposal by the Greater Western Sydney Giants proposal to redevelop Manuka

Oval, the Greens proposed to the Chief Minister that a Manuka Community Reference Panel be established to assist with local planning of the Manuka Oval and surrounds.

Our proposal would have included the oval and pool area and take into account other developments in the area such as the redevelopment of the Stuart Flats. It would also have included a comprehensive and transparent analysis of the future needs in the area for transport, housing, schools, child care, sports and recreation facilities, open space, arts and culture, and retail and commercial space. However, although the Chief Minister agreed to this in 2016, by 2017 when the proposal to develop the oval was withdrawn, the Government disappointingly withdrew its commitment to the Community Reference Panel.

The Greens still support integrated master planning for the broader precinct.

D. HERITAGE

The Greens believe that it is time to resource the heritage system and heritage groups adequately to shift from reactive to proactive.

Heritage is managed as a reactive regulatory system rather than an important community asset because community groups and the Heritage Council lack the resources for proactive work on promoting our heritage, protecting broader heritage values that the whole community can connect to and improving heritage protection processes. The Greens have proposed to provide \$500,000 over 2 years for the Heritage Council to upgrade the Heritage Register database and ACT Heritage website, so that the Council can proactively promote Canberra's heritage and people interacting with the heritage protection system can work more efficiently.

The Greens have been pushing hard for action on national heritage listing over the last 4 years. Earlier this year, we took this to a vote in the Assembly but were voted down by Labor and the Liberals. It remains a key plank of our heritage election commitments.

Some of Canberra's most-loved features are views, such as those along the axes laid out by Walter Burley Griffin. Many of these potentially have heritage significance or deserve planning protection, but are currently unprotected - addressing this is a key plank of the Greens election platform on heritage. The Greens will also be pushing for the funding of a peak body for the community heritage sector to give community groups the resources needed to advocate for Canberra's heritage.

On conservation management plans, Greens advocacy for heritage, and any future Greens Heritage Minister, will be guided by our policy platform, which includes the following statement: Conservation management plans should be prepared and implemented for key heritage housing precincts. Our broader heritage commitments can be found [here](#).

E. TRANSPORT

1. IDENTIFY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT IN THE BUS NETWORK IN THE INNER SOUTH

Agree. The “Network 19” public transport changes saw a substantial overall rise in public transport patronage, but some areas of Canberra have seen falls. The Greens believe that the areas which saw patronage fall need to be re-examined.

2. IMPROVE ACCESS TO AND MAINTENANCE OF SHARED PATHS, PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS AND BETTER STREET LIGHTING.

The ACT Greens have a plan to connect every suburb in Canberra to a well lit, off-road walking and cycling network. We understand the importance of high quality, well-lit walking and cycling paths for public safety, convenient travel and community wellbeing. We are committed to building local infrastructure so everyone can enjoy their neighbourhood. We will:

- light up our neighbourhoods by ensuring that footpaths, bus stops and parks have street lights so people feel safe in and around their homes.
- Invest in shared spaces, including parks, toilet facilities, playgrounds, community gardens, and exercise equipment, to create quality public space for people to meet, exercise, and enjoy
- Increase the number of city service staff, so that Fix my Street requests are more quickly and comprehensively responded to

3. PROVIDE A PUBLICLY AVAILABLE AND RIGOROUS SOCIAL COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS FOR LIGHT RAIL STAGE 2, INCLUDING A COMPARISON WITH A COMPREHENSIVE ELECTRIC BUS NETWORK.

Rather than having to choose between light rail and a comprehensive electric bus network, the Greens are planning for both. The Greens are committed to improving our public transport network across Canberra, and we see light rail as a core spine for the bus network.

We agree that a rigorous social cost-benefit analysis for Light Rail Stage 2 should be released - and note that much of this information has already been released (Stage 2A business case is [here](#)). However, some details cannot be released until negotiations with companies that will deliver it are completed - a short outline of this process is [here](#). Releasing details about expected costs now would allow large corporations to game the system and profit at the expense of Canberrans, which is unacceptable to the Greens.

The Greens strongly support zero emissions buses, with electric buses currently the most promising option. The ACT Greens have released an electric vehicle election initiative which commits to transitioning the ACT public transport system to zero emissions by 2035, and to only purchasing zero emissions buses from now on.

4. DEVELOP AN INTEGRATED LAND USE AND TRANSPORT POLICY

The Greens have long argued that there needs to be much stronger alignment between land use and transport planning and policy. While there have been some areas of good integration, for example residential infill on Northbourne Avenue tied to light rail, we agree there is more work required in other areas.

5. CONTINUE TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE NSW AND AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENTS TO DEVELOP A FASTER RELIABLE TRAIN LINK BETWEEN CANBERRA AND SYDNEY.

The Greens strongly support continued negotiations to progress the train link between Sydney and Canberra.

F. WASTE MANAGEMENT

WASTE POLICY

ISCCC REQUEST: COMMIT TO AN ONGOING WASTE MANAGEMENT POLICY THAT RULES OUT ANY FUTURE WASTE TO ENERGY PLANT, OR WASTE FACILITY LEADING TO REDUCED AIR QUALITY OR OTHER ADVERSE HEALTH IMPACTS, MASS IMPORTATION OF WASTE FROM INTERSTATE, OR THAT THREATENS THE LIGHT INDUSTRIAL AND BULK RETAIL FUTURE OF Fyshwick AND RESIDENTIAL FUTURE OF East Lake.

Given the clear gap in this space, the ACT Greens pushed the government hard to develop a clear policy on waste to energy as we were very concerned about toxic and unsustainable proposals coming forward in the ACT. We are pleased that a Government policy position arrived at a ban on waste incineration activities in the ACT. We believe there should also be clear ACT Government waste policy direction and guidance for the business sector on how to support the desired waste reduction outcomes. The Greens will work to provide clear waste policy direction to inform industry proposals and pursue measures to maximise resource recovery and highest value use of materials. Our more detailed statement on waste proposals and policy is available [here](#). We will also be making further announcements on waste in coming weeks.

AIR QUALITY MONITORING STATION IN FYSHWICK

ISCC REQUEST: ESTABLISH AN AIR QUALITY MONITORING STATION IN FYSHWICK.

The ACT Greens strongly support this proposal, which is in line with Shane Rattenbury's February 2020 motion on air quality issues in the ACT Legislative Assembly, which called for an expansion of the air quality monitoring system in the ACT. The location of a station in Fyshwick is logical and will provide a benchmark for the community around the impact of current industrial activity in this region.

CONSIDER IMPACTS OF WASTE FACILITIES

ISCC REQUEST: CONSIDER THE CUMULATIVE IMPACT OF CURRENT AND PROPOSED WASTE FACILITIES IN FYSHWICK.

We believe that the best way for new waste technologies, processes and proposals to be assessed is with life cycle analysis, which takes into account the long term impacts of a facility and the broader waste and recycling outcomes. This analysis should be undertaken by an ACT Government agency with waste analysis expertise, rather than planning expertise.

The Greens are concerned that our current planning processes mean that waste proposals are not assessed for their waste policy outcomes, but only on their planning impacts, with pollution taken into account. We believe that waste facility proposals should be evaluated using waste policy expertise, not just planning expertise.

We believe that the absence of clear waste policy guidelines is leading to a problem where major waste proposals are only evaluated by the ACT Government via the planning system. The system then relies on EPA pollution regulations to ensure it isn't polluting excessively. However, neither the EPA nor EPSDD are currently able to consider the overall cumulative waste impacts and outcomes and ensure consistency with the government's waste policy goals through the planning process.

To address this, we would require waste facility proposals to be evaluated by waste experts for their alignment with ACT Government waste policy goals and lifecycle impacts. A positive evaluation would be required prior to applying for planning approval.

Introduce a moratorium on new waste facilities

We note the multiple proposals for waste facilities in Fyshwick currently: CRS waste facility, Ipswich St; Fragmentiser, Lithgow Street; and Hi-Qual waste facility, Tennant Street. Given that there are no such life cycle or waste outcome evaluations undertaken at present - particularly within EPSDD or the EPA, the Greens propose a moratorium on any new waste processing technologies or proposals being approved until:

- life cycle and impact assessments are undertaken for these proposals, either through waste expertise in ACT NoWaste, or through independent analysis through an EIS inquiry panel,
- a clear waste policy and assessment regulatory framework to guide industry proposals is established,
- a review of industrial zonings is undertaken, and
- a levy on interstate waste importation is investigated.

CHANGES TO TERRITORY PLAN

ISCCC REQUEST: CHANGE THE ACT TERRITORY PLAN SO THAT SUCH MAJOR WASTE FACILITIES ARE PROHIBITED AS A LAND USE IN FYSHWICK.

The Greens are aware that Fyshwick is evolving. It has traditionally been an area that has supported bulky goods retail, light industry, low impact recycling facilities, and a broad range of cottage industries. However, there are now a number of significant residential developments that are planned in the vicinity and are close to environmentally sensitive areas including the Jerrabomberra Wetlands. We believe that the competing visions of Fyshwick need to be reconciled, in consultation with members of the community.

The Greens will deliver a review or Assembly Inquiry into planning for industrial zones across the ACT to review how fit-for-purpose these zoning categories are in relation to the evolving nature of the city, with the process used to be determined in consultation with stakeholders. This process should be concluded before any irreversible decisions are made. A moratorium should be placed on waste proposals and residential development parts of the proposal for 1 Dairy Road Fyshwick until the review or Inquiry is complete (other elements of DV377 could proceed in the interim, subject to community consultation).

This is also outlined in our recently announced planning policy, which can be found [here](#).

Thank you for the opportunity to expand on our ACT Greens election plans for the Inner South and the ACT.

You can keep up to date with our election initiatives here:

<https://greens.org.au/act/better-normal>.

[Our policy platform, including our detailed education policy, is here.](#)

And of course, our lead candidates for Kurrajong are [Rebecca Vassarotti](#) and [Shane Rattenbury](#). You can see more detail about all of our candidates here: <https://greens.org.au/act/candidates>, or follow them on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/shanerattenburymla/> or <https://www.facebook.com/RebeccaVassarottiACT>

If you have any further questions about any of our policies, we would be happy to discuss further.

On behalf of the ACT Greens,

Clancy Barnard, Campaign Manager

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