

## ISCCC Public Forum

11 June 2019

7-9pm Yarralumla Primary School Hall

### Summary Notes

#### Speakers:

**1. Rachel Stephen-Smith, ACT Minister for Urban Renewal: Overview of urban renewal developments, including in areas identified in the Planning Strategy 2018 for intense urban infill, and overview of the Demonstration Housing initiative (eg terrace and micro terraces in Forrest and a manor house in Griffith).**

- Minister Stephen-Smith summarized the budget initiatives that benefit the Inner South. This includes \$800,000 for the Manuka Pool upgrade, upgrades to school heating, new workshops at CIT and Funding for Light Rail.
- She emphasized that urban infill was not a major increase from the current situation. The average over recent years has been well over 60%, and up to 77% in 2017.
- Furthermore, it was emphasized that the 2018 Planning Strategy is an update of the 2012 one. It was highlighted that it was substantially the same as the 2012 one except for provisions for Light Rail at the Woden end.
- The urban renewal and infill across Canberra is largely about recognising and focusing on the missing middle, not just about high-rise apartments.
- It is expected that Canberra will grow by 8,000 people per year.
- The Housing Choices research and community engagement highlighted that people want greater diversity of housing choice. They want to retain green space and avoid heat Islands.
- Six proposals have come in through the Housing Choices Demonstration Project that will go through the community consultation processes. These included Manor House at Griffith and Forrest Terrace Townhouses.
- A Manuka community panel is being pulled together to test the concept of 'What is a Precinct or District?'

**2. Kathy Cusack, Executive Director, Planning, Land and Building Policy; Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate: Implementation of the Planning Strategy, the Housing Choices initiative, and the review of the planning system.**

- The ACT Planning Framework was outlined. This starts with considering the Planning Strategy at the highest, or most strategic level. The Planning and Design Framework level then enables us to start work on how to implement actions and directions from the strategy. The Territory Plan (the regulatory level) is then prepared to take the direction from the Planning and Design Framework level and implement it, through the DA process.
- The Planning Strategy is a legislative requirement. It is set out to be sustainable and equitable.
- Refreshing the Planning Strategy aims to get the right balance between greenfield and

urban infill development. Consideration is given to minimising the Heat Island effect in all development and re-development

- The Strategy will also look at the Moving Canberra strategy. The aim is to generally have a ten minute walk to get to transport.
- The differences between the 2012 and 2018 Planning strategies include a pull back on the Western edge from the Murrumbidgee, added infill to Gungahlin and at Woden around the Light Rail.
- The Collaboration Hub associated with the Housing Choices project made 13 recommendations. More work needs to be done on these. Recommendation 5 on soft landscapes/planting area and Recommendation 7 on housing mix and diversity were mentioned. It is expected that there will be changes to the Territory Plan to accommodate recommendations 5 and 7. Recommendation 12 (about subdividing dual occupancies in the RZ1 zone) will be considered at the Canberra-wide level in the ACT Planning System Review.
- The things that are on the table for the Planning System Review include the track system for Development Applications, Legislative Reform, Policy on single residential zones and zoning generally, establishing a clear comprehensive structure for the planning system and plan, and adopting an outcomes focused planning system.
- Regarding District Planning—many things work better when looked at over a larger area.
- Slides of this presentation were provided.

### **3. Jim Corrigan, Deputy Director-General, City Services, Transport and City Services Directorate:**

**Budget commitments relating to city services, and options for addressing issues raised at the ISCCC's April public forum (<https://www.isccc.org.au/isccc-public-forum-planning-manuka-to-the-foreshore>), for example the need for better:**

- **walking/cycling connections between different areas/suburbs**
  - **street lighting**
  - **maintenance of urban forest**
  - **maintenance of green spaces/parks**
  - **need for children's playgrounds; spaces/activities for teenagers**
  - **traffic and parking management**
  - **stormwater and sewerage infrastructure**
- The Better Suburbs Statement included 14 priorities identified by the community, with water quality as the top priority and urban forest as the second priority. Those priorities guide TCCS's work in cooperation with the planning agency.
  - There is ongoing work looking at solutions for key road intersections in the area. These include signalization of Kent/Novar Street intersections, low cost interventions to improve traffic merging where Cotter Road meets Yarra Glen, and future changes to Hume Circle.
  - Urban Forest Program—The underpinning philosophy is to plant trees where there will be greater benefit, including new suburbs. The program will continue in the Inner South, including dead tree removal and replanting in Telopea Park. The budget includes provision for 17,000 more trees, however, more are needed.
  - Stormwater upgrades will be undertaken in Fyshwick, and some minor stormwater work in Narrabundah and Griffith.
  - Boomenulla Oval has been upgraded in Narrabundah.

- Active Travel Network —there is work looking at routes and links that are missing.
- There is a new street light performance-based contract in place.

### **Q and A session: questions from the floor**

Q. The area has many old heritage lights. Some have been replaced with LED lights with flat covers that do not retain the same heritage style. Is something being done to address this?

A. Acknowledged that the newer lights were not fitting in with the character of the area. It is a complex issue and they are trying to work on a solution.

Q. What are the areas of intensive infill?

A. There is no change between the 2012 and 2018 plan for the Inner South area.

- East Lake
- Deakin, Yarralumla - light rail corridor
- Around Curtin shops
- WIN News site near Hume Circle
- Also “missing middle” eg townhouses. People want to stay in area and downsize

Q. Would high density development occur automatically within 800m on either side of the light rail corridor?

A. No eg no one is proposing to build on the sportsgrounds near the Mint

Q. While there is an Urban Forest program, builders are coming along cutting down trees and there is no apparent protection of private open space/green space.

A. The City Ranger team is being enhanced. There will be a strategy to go harder on enforcement with respect to builders and those parking on tree roots on nature strips. Protecting planting areas is being looked at in the context of the Territory Plan.

Q. Planning is focusing on the macro level but not on the micro level. New single house dwellings are being built right to the boundary without allowing any green space. Why is it so difficult to make changes to stop this from happening??

A. The frustration is shared. Making changes to controls must be done through the legislative process that must be followed to make changes to the Territory Plan.

Q. The monitoring of walking infrastructure was queried, including the need for a systematic approach

A. Where inefficiencies are known, the Government tries to fix them. Effort is being focused around transport corridors.

Q. How is the ACT going in adopting the updated Building Code?

A. Work is still needed to adopt the Building Code. This is not unusual.

Q. While there are initiatives in the Budget, rates are going up, commercial rates are also high. There are vacant buildings in Manuka.

A. The Government does deliberate on the impact on residents in all its decisions. There has been a deliberate move to a more stable source of revenue by the ACT Government. If conditions are met there are measures in place for people to defer the payment of rates.

Q. A question was asked about how to avoid whole rows of large dual occupancies changing the character of RZ1 zoned areas.

A. There is ongoing work looking at block coverage and block size as possible controls.

Q. A question was raised about the different controls involved in adding a garage (needing a certifier) and knock-down rebuilds that are treated as Exempt Developments. Documents relating to Exempt Developments should be available publicly on the relevant website.

A. Exempt development would be looked at during the review of the Territory Plan.

#### **4. Update on the Proposed Freight Facility and Waste facilities in Fyshwick: these facilities are proposed for an area near the urban intensification precinct of East Lake, which lies between Kingston Foreshore and Fyshwick.**

Key points from Peter Moore's update (Kingston and Barton Residents Group) were:

- A range of various waste proposals and DAs have been lodged and discussed for a number of co-located sites around Lithgow Street, Fyshwick for more than 2 years.
- These proposals have been subject to strong objections from local residents and other community groups surrounding the proposed developments, and also from traders, retailers and other commercial entities.
- The health objections to the various waste proposals have comprised
  - injurious air quality,
  - major new traffic problems resulting from the transport of at least 300,000 tonnes of waste onto the site,
  - noise from apparently unshielded metal crushing/shredding heavy machinery,
  - increased dust and other pollutants putting local workers, business owners and their customers at increased risk
- There is a very real prospect that Fyshwick will become the recipient of all sorts of benign and toxic waste from other states as waste companies seek to avoid other states' mandated waste levies
- There is no guarantee that there will be a limit to the waste that is shipped into Fyshwick for transshipment or processing
- The waste industry carries with it a serious fire hazard which is endemic to the industry
  - There is already evidence of 8 fires on the existing site over the last few years. Massive increases in the volume, and the nature of domestic waste to the site substantially increase the risks of fire and damage to other Fyshwick businesses
- The inappropriateness of the location of such an industry in a suburb that has recently been identified as the second most valuable commercial precinct in Canberra. Fyshwick is only second to Civic as a high value commercial centre. Waste processing on such a precinct is totally inappropriate

- The close proximity of residences in Narrabundah, Eastlake and Fyshwick itself reinforces the inappropriateness
- Fyshwick as a commercial centre has been experiencing continuing strong and evolutionary growth and there is massive and legitimate concern that establishing a substantial noxious industry such as waste in the heart of this precinct will destroy Fyshwick's growth prospects
- Clearly, massive volumes of waste transfers and processing is seriously in conflict with Fyshwick's IZ2 planning objectives which provide for:
  - Convenient access for ACT and regional residents to industrial goods, services and employment opportunities
  - Industry associated retailing, services and other commercial uses
- Fyshwick is increasingly becoming a significant retail destination, and all this will be put at risk by the introduction of a major waste facility at the heart of the precinct.

Robust and animated discussion followed the presentation on issues pertaining to development of the Fyshwick Waste Hub. Adam Perry, representing one of the developers, advised the group that there had been no issues with the development in question elsewhere in Australia including in Adelaide. However, it was pointed out that a metal processing facility in Adelaide was 1.3 km from the nearest homes and the Fyshwick facility would be adjacent to businesses and as little as 300-500 metres from current and proposed residential areas.

Leo Dobes, President of the Griffith Narrabundah Community Association, provided an update on the proposed Hi Quality waste facility in Tennant Street, Fyshwick, which proposes to process up to 1 million tonnes of waste per year. A significant proportion of that is likely to come from interstate.

The following motion was moved by Peter Moore, seconded by Margaret Atcherley, and passed overwhelmingly at the meeting:

*This meeting calls for both Health Minister Fitzharris and Planning and Land Management Minister Gentleman to establish an expert independent inquiry panel to inquire about the Environment Impact Statement submitted by Capital Recycling Solutions Pty Ltd for major waste facilities at Fyshwick. The Panel's investigation would include the extent of health impacts in relation to air emissions including those emissions associated with heavy vehicle transport as well as a comprehensive assessment of hazard and risks associated with the proposal.*