



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY  
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## Exhibit

### Inquiry into ACT's heritage arrangements

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# RESIDENTS

REID RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION INC.

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Heritage Arrangements since 1980 have worked, initially with the Register of the National Estate and the subsequent ACT Heritage Register in 2004, to conserve Reid & the other Garden City precincts because they are unique. How so:

- They signify how Australian democracy can get housing development in place to support a workforce to build and administer Australia as a nation.
- They demonstrate that the Australian model of interpreting Garden City principles has contributed significantly to benefiting Canberra's history and our environment.

**1. The loss to Canberra and Australia if the Reid heritage area was recolonised with infill would be profound. We would lose:**

- The evidence of the modest built form** (dwellings) of the houses built by the Commonwealth Government in response to the need to get public servants housed in Canberra quickly so the business of governing Australia could get going in the new National Capital.
- The distinctly Australian adaptation** to Garden City ideas for suburbs. Thank goodness for John Sulman, chairman of the Federal Capital Advisory Committee (1921-24), who had lived and worked in Australia for over 30 years when he shaped the way these garden city precincts should be organised. Sustainable then and sustainable now!
- Houses that will be 100 yrs old from 2026-27 onwards which are models of smart adaptive reuse including photovoltaics.**
- A legacy built on principles of genuine consultation & profession expertise** that assessed the value to Australia and Canberra of Reid by listing it initially on the Register of the National Estate, then the ACT Heritage Register.
- A legacy of mandatory heritage requirements**, that has been supported under the care ACT Government's Heritage Unit and our residents' sense of place in the upkeep of Reid that helps retain the integrity of this place today. (REID ARCHIVES)
- The Charles Weston legacy of wide-canopied trees** supplemented by residents' plantings all of which contribute to the park-like aesthetics of Reid. As a result of John Sulman's influence and our trees, Reid does heavy lifting particularly regarding carbon capture and storage & ecosystem services right here adjacent to the urban heat bank of Civic.

Reid is a refuge, a haven of coolness for all creatures great & small. Check the CSIRO's Urban Heat Mapping in Canberra 2017 report and Andrew Gissing's comments on ABC last week. He is the CEO Natural Hazards Research Australia (NHRA) and he warns that urban heat is lethal and I quote: *Extreme heat is our largest killer in terms of natural hazards. In fact, it's the sum total*

*particularly as we see our climate warm and our communities experience more extreme heat into the future, we will need to account more and more for extreme heat in our urban design and land use planning into the future.*  
ABC RN 11 May '23.

- vii. **A legacy of areas of permeable surface** that help sustain flora and fauna and contribute to ecosystem services under mandatory requirement 2.1e: Not less than 40% of the area of a residential block shall be retained as planting area. (Objective 2.1 Siting, setbacks and garden settings for all dwellings p. 11 Reid Housing Precinct Entry 20023)
- viii. **Biodiversity & connectivity:** we have a fabulous bird population including Gang-gangs (Shibu Datta, 2000, *The Heritage of Reid*, pp. 89-91) and we send these sightings to the Canberra Nature Map and collect feathers for DNA ID.

To achieve the levels of densification of Canberra as outlined (70 % infill target) we would recommend that the environment should be prioritised and decisions should be made on the basis of sustainability.

For example, the DOMA venture on Mt Ainslie has so far achieved a scarified landscape something like a deserted mine site. There's not a blade of grass or a leaf to be seen. And here we go again interpreting the Griffin plan which we thought excluded the hills, ridges and buffers from commercial exploitation. Sadly, we have again also lost significant Aboriginal heritage. So, how about the Government builds a sustainable village Australian style for a diversity of people and, that instead of some fake import, has the capacity to adapt to climate change. We suggest the lessons learned from Canberra's unique heritage garden city precincts could be a useful model. Gissing's insightful warning is timely and salient, *we will need to account more and more for extreme heat in our urban design and land use planning into the future.*

Heritage arrangements, including the Heritage Act, need to be strengthened, broadened and enforced; sufficient resources need to be provided so that the Heritage Council and Heritage Unit has the expertise and capability to support the conservation of Aboriginal heritage, natural heritage and garden city housing precincts unique to the ACT.

Destroying areas like Reid that contribute so evidently to an understanding of our history, that support our wellbeing, that cool the place and contribute habitat for our endangered species would be totally illogical.

**RRA Committee**

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