



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT AND CITY SERVICES  
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## Submission Cover Sheet

### Nature in Our City

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Dear Members,

**Re. Private submission to the Inquiry into Nature in our City**

I write as a resident living in Kambah at the foothills of Mount Taylor to support the view that our natural open space and Nature Reserves should be made as accessible as possible to all in our community.

I will focus my submission on two points, framed around experience in my local community:

- There should be a focus on creating infrastructure that ensures our Nature Reserves are accessible to the community – with a view to also protecting the biodiversity in the area.
- The cross-portfolio place based vision for the development of appropriate and quality infrastructure in our open spaces to enable and encourage the full utilisation of space.

**Access to Mount Taylor Nature Reserve**

The benefits of physical activity and connection to our natural environment for members of our community are obvious and I hope will be well documented in your Inquiry.

The number of people utilising the Mount Taylor Nature Reserve has anecdotaly risen significantly over the past 5 years. This can be seen with the number (hundreds) of vehicles accessing the makeshift parking area – particularly in the mornings, evening and over the weekends.



Figure 1 Cars parked at the Mount Taylor entrance from Sulwood Drive Kambah

The fact that more people are accessing the Reserve is wonderful for the wellbeing of our community – particularly in Tuggeranong who the Heart Foundation rate as the most obese region of the ACT.

The local community have expressed a view through a petition to the ACT Legislative Assembly tabled in November 2017, that the safety around the access to Mount Taylor via foot, car or bike (and vehicles driving through) from Sulwood Drive needs to be improved.

This call has been supported by Members of the Legislative Assembly, however at this point no funding has been set aside for any meaningful improvements.

If the ACT Government were to genuinely support the safe and sustainable access to our nature reserves, they would have more focus on creating the infrastructure that enables this without risk to public safety and the preservation of habitats on the reserve.

*Examples of access hindered:*

*The Early Learning Centre on Summerland Circuit in Kambah have connected with the Mt Taylor Landcarers to have preschool students undertake some environmental work in the Reserve, which is less than 1km along Mannheim Street from their Centre. A wonderful opportunity to have children connecting with nature in their local area from a young age. While the students are capable of walking the distance, a bus needs to be arranged to transport the children up the hill as the crossing at Sulwood Drive is too dangerous to contemplate. This may actually limit the ability of the Centre to introduce their students to the reserve.*

*There are many ageing residents in my community who are genuinely scared that they won't have the footspeed to cross Sulwood Drive onto Mount Taylor – they are avoiding the Reserve. In addition to this, the erosion that exists at the lower part of the trail also limits the access to the Reserve for residents with mild mobility concerns – a problem they would not have in the formed parts of the trail. It is a shame that they are missing out on such a soul enhancing vista of the Brindabellas from a few points on the trail.*

***Need for cross portfolio vision***

I would also urge the ACT Government to have a broader/cross portfolio focus on delivering quality open space and access to nature. For example – given the position of Sulwood Drive as a major arterial, couldn't a carpark and safe crossing be created that serves the reserve access as well as a Park and Ride Facility and bus route that has direct access onto the Tuggeranong Parkway, Athlone Drive and Erindale Drive? This shared use would then create a better case for investment in quality infrastructure.

An example of where the Government have invested positively in infrastructure and generated greater use of the lake foreshore is in East Greenway off Mortimer Lewis Drive. Yet this is also an area where a broader view to the potential to deliver a brilliant open space has not been realised.

East Greenway is the location of the Tuggeranong Dog Park, the new Tuggeranong Bike Facility, a pop up coffee location, a run-down park, BBQ areas and the brilliant foreshore of Lake Tuggeranong. It is becoming very popular for the community to recreate in the combination of open space.

However, the park did not receive any shade cover despite community concern about the metal slide and 8 other parks in the region attracting shade cover – the park should also have some fence barrier between it and the lake. The calls for decent/safe car parking and toilet facilities at the dog park (which would provide also for the bike park) have also been ignored.

The fact that the Government are building a public housing development and the SLA have just sold the land opposite this area for over \$18 million is a little insulting to the community directly affected by the development. It is also a missed opportunity with the impending population growth of the area to provide a connected and vibrant community open space that connects directly to our lake foreshore.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit to this Inquiry. Our natural open space is to be treasured. I believe that quality infrastructure and linkages from our suburbs to the natural environment genuinely contribute to the wellbeing of our community.

Yours sincerely

'submitted electronically'

Taryn Langdon  
28 June 2018