

27 May 2005

Dr Hanna Jaireth
Committee Secretary
Standing Committee on Lanning & Environment
Legislative Assembly for the ACT
GPO Box 1020
Canberra ACT 2601

RE: Draft Variation to the Territory Plan No. 236

Dear Dr Jaireth

I am please to provide the following submission to the Standing Committee and re-submit our original submission to the Draft City West Master Plan dated 8 December 2003 as it remains relevant and provides back ground to this submission.

1. Block 5 Section 68 – Land Use Community Facility

We welcome the clarity that DV 236 brings in regards to the Land Use Policy for Block 5 Section 68. Northside Community Service has been the operator of the Civic Early Childhood Centre sense the early 1990's. We have been an active participant over the past four years in the various consultations, reviews and plans that have taken place in and around this area, including:

- Community Facilities Needs Assessment
- Community Facilities Scoping Study – City West
- City West Master Plan
- Childers Street Precinct Sustainable Urban Design Project

Throughout this period we have been a strong advocate for the need, maintenance and further development community facilities and infrastructure in this area, which is also demonstrated in the attached submission to the City West Master Plan.

With specific reference to Block 5 Section 68 (Civic Early Childhood Centre), again throughout this period we have been extremely concerned and frustrated with the perceived view of the planners that the Childcare Centre does not exist and that there still remains no visible commitment for the longer replacement of the Centre.

Again we welcome the clarity that DV 236 brings to the Land Use Policy for Block 5 Section 68, but continue to seek commitment from the ACT Government for the replacement of the Childcare Centre.

2 Establishment of Commercial A Areas:

In regards to the establishment of Commercial A areas there appears to be no specific reference to the provision of Childcare and/or associated community services being an acceptable Land Use Purpose.

Clearly if the operation of a Childcare Centre is not allowable under the Land Use Policy for Commercial A then there will no mechanism for the replacement or development of Childcare Facilities within the City West Precinct.

3 Redevelopment Impact

Given the major impacts on city west from the redevelopment outcomes, increased residents, employment, community activity etc we continue to strongly advocate for the provision of the equivalent or greater community facility infrastructure for the use of Childcare and/or associated community services.

4. Access to Existing Childcare Centre (Civic Early Childhood Centre)

Safe and secure access for parents and children is paramount in the delivery of Childcare. The current vehicle access and drop off area within the existing on ground car park will become both public open space and Commercial A areas. Neither DV236 or the Childers Street Precinct Sustainable Urban Design Project appear to provide any vehicle access or any designated children drop off and pick up areas.

5. Design of Public Open Space and Commercial A Block 2 Section 68 to accommodate Childcare Centre.

Currently Block 2 Section 67 (310 sqm) forms part of the Civic Early Childhood Center's playground. Unfortunately this block is in the Marcus Clarke road easement and does not appear on DV 236 figure 3.2 – Territory Plan Proposed Land Use Policy. This space is critical to the operations of the centre both for child developmental opportunities and for licensing and regulations.

If this space was to be removed then the licensing requirements for outdoor space for children would be reduced and the numbers of children attending the centre would need to be reduced. Given the ACT Government has recently completed an extension, building and playground upgrades as part of the increased childcare places funding, which has allowed the centre to increase its capacity by 10 it is strongly recommended that the equivalent to or greater than the 310 sqm be added to Block 5 Section 68 to allow for the replacement of the playground space.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments. I am happy to make myself available at any stage to meet and discuss any aspect of our submission with you. Please feel free to contact me on 62572255 to arrange a suitable time.

Yours Sincerely

Stephen Larcombe
Chief Executive Officer