

Submission to ACT Government Inquiry into Billboards, 2017.

Dear Standing Committee on Planning and Urban Renewal,

I wish to register my strong support for the current rules and practices surrounding the use of billboards for outdoor advertising in the ACT.

In particular I wish to respond to your second point, "Community views on placement and construction of billboards".

I moved here in 2007 and I have come to love Canberra for many reasons and a lack of in-your-face advertising left, right and centre is certainly one of the defining Canberran attributes that make my list.

I do not believe that any benefits of billboard advertising, which I concede there will be, outweigh the social, aesthetic, and amenity costs.


I expect the primary beneficiaries will be landowners and leasees who will gain (fairly limited) advertising revenue while the greatest financial beneficiaries are likely to be large commercial entities who will gain at the cost of smaller and more local enterprises. I cannot see any benefit in more sales (and subsequent flight of revenue outside the ACT and/or overseas) to McDonalds or Coles, for example, at the loss of customers of local family owned companies run by people who live in and share our community.

I really do not believe any relaxation of rules would enliven our city. It would cheapen and homogenise Canberra and make it look like any other place. It would be a tragedy that could not be undone.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Paul Dowden



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