

7 November 2018

Ms Caroline Le Couteur MLA (Chair),
ACT Legislative Assembly,
Standing Committee of Inquiry into Planning and Urban Renewal,
GPO Box 1020,
CANBERRA CITY ACT 2601

By email: LACommitteePUR@parliament.act.gov.au

Dear Ms Le Couteur,

Re: Inquiry into Engagement with Development Application Processes in the ACT

Further to the submission to this inquiry lodged by the Ginninderra Falls Association (GFA) on 25 July 2018, GFA now refers to the letter dated 8 October 2018 by Riverview Projects (ACT) Pty Ltd to the Standing Committee on Planning and Urban Renewal regarding the Inquiry into Engagement with Development Application Processes in the ACT. In particular, we refer to comments made in the example on the fifth page of the letter which mentions the GFA.

GFA considered it essential to appeal the development approval of Stage 1 of the Ginninderry development as it was lodged without an environmental impact statement, that is, in the merit track. The decision to take the matter to review by the Administrative Appeals Tribunal was not done lightly as we realised it was a formidable task to oppose such a large project and would be very stressful.

GFA judged that the negotiated settlement process was the best outcome in the circumstances. We entered into the settlement in a spirit of compromise agreeable to both parties. It is disappointing, therefore, that Riverview has claimed "a lack of substance behind (our) case". It is instructive that Riverview was prepared to spend \$400,000 on legal fees for a case they considered to lack substance.

There are already very few third-party appeal rights in planning matters in the ACT. The task of small community organisations, such as ours, is to ensure that the local environment is protected through good decision-making processes. This is not controversial. Good, democratic processes allow for third parties to be involved in the decisions that affect them.

Environmental issues are acknowledged in the *Planning and Development Act 2007* as important considerations. They are complex and assessment should be guided by the imperative to balance the needs of people against the needs of other species. Community organisations such as ours play a role in providing that balance.

The above comments support GFA's submission to the Inquiry into Engagement with Development Application Processes.

Thank you for this opportunity,

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robyn Coghlan', followed by a period.

Robyn Coghlan
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