



Legislative Assembly for the
Australian Capital Territory

Standing Committee on Environment,
Planning, Transport and City Services

Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into Petition 002-25: Hawker Village shops redevelopment

Submission number: 026

Submitter: Katy Skinner

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Katy Skinner

To:

The Standing Committee on Environment, Planning, Transport and City Services

Dear Committee Members

Please accept my submission to the inquiry into development of Hawker Village Shops.

I am concerned that the proposed redevelopment of Hawker Village shops featuring a large Woolworths with underground parking:

will be detrimental to community amenity and health;

will diminish consumer choice; and,

will work against environmental sustainability.

I also consider that better ideas for the existing carpark areas should be explored.

Presumably Woolworths' plans for an expanded store at Hawker are so that it can sell such an increased amount of goods that it is worth the demolition and building works. But in terms of community and indeed, population, health, I am concerned that expanding Woolworths' range will only increase the offerings of more highly processed, high fat and high sugar foods, creating a market to a consumer base that does not need this type of consumption.

My concerns around the community amenities at Hawker Shops are that the centre is currently a gathering place for nearby residents, especially those who are otherwise at higher risk of social isolation. With the playground, the easy street-level carparking, coffee venues and thoughtful seating variety as well as the presence of local businesses

and the community garden, the very young and the less mobile frequent Hawker Village daily. As we have seen in other ACT shopping centres, such ambience is difficult to recreate and sustain when introducing an overbearing dominance of a supermarket. The expansion of duopolistic Woolworths will mean the squeezing and elimination of Hawker small businesses which offer variety and choice across a range of goods.

As for the environment, an increase of product sold from Woolworths will lead to a large increase of plastic and polypropylene trash for which no recycling has been established. The use of pallets and pallet wrapping by large stores also creates significant plastic waste. Smaller local shops, on the other hand, sell goods with minimal packaging and individually urge their customers with whom they are already familiar to use their own bags.

It is also worth noting that some goods sold by Woolworths increased in price for certain items, compared to the independent grocery previously on site, such as the cholesterol lowering milk which cost nearly a dollar more per litre.

With regard to the carpark, while street-level parking is by far preferred, I acknowledge the otherwise unused space that parking occupies in Hawker. I therefore suggest the area be covered in solar panels allowing parking in the shade, and, with a community battery, have an electric vehicle charge point installed.

Yours faithfully

Katy Skinner

(emailed)

14 April 2025