



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: 044

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To: LCommitteeEnvironment@parliament.act.gov.au.

Inquiry into Petition 002-25: Hawker Village Shops Redevelopment - Submission from Christine Gingell

My husband and I moved to our home in Weetangera 45 years ago and raised our family there. My two daughters and their families now live in Weetangera and my son and his family live in Hawker. I have always been a frequent visitor to Hawker Village Shops (HVS) and my extended family continue to regularly visit too.

What I like about HVS:

- Ground level parking which is free 24/7
- The low-rise character of the buildings around the 'village' square
- Sunshine and sky views
- Trees around the Springvale Drive car park which provides a buffer between the residences in Springvale Drive and the HVS
- Quick and easy access to the supermarket from the Springvale Drive car park
- A supermarket the size of which is perfectly adequate for our local shopping needs
- HVS serves a community where I almost always see someone I know to chat with
- The range of stores and services meets my needs

What I don't like about HVS:

- It is dirty
- The paved areas are unsafe
- Lack of trees/grass/vegetation
- Traders/owners do nothing to improve the external appearance of their premises

Direct sale of public land

The Direct Sale process is flawed especially for Government-owned public land in a long-established area. It provides no opportunity for the community to be involved in the decision-making process.

I can see no reason why a commercial entity like Woolworths should be deciding what changes should occur at HVS. Re-development should occur for the benefit of the community (after community consultation) not a profit-driven entity.

Easy access and convenient parking

I have personally spent many hours at the HVS talking to the people that actually shop there. Over 540 people made their views known by signing the petition to save the Springvale Drive open car park from development. Many people value very highly the quick shop that can be undertaken because of the Springvale Drive car park and ground level access to the supermarket. The petitioners want the Springvale Drive car park and eastern access to the shops to be retained.

Open parking at ground level is preferred by the elderly and those with a disability

I have observed and spoken to many people at the HVS who are mobility-impaired. Many shoppers from outside of the Weetangera/Hawker/Scullin/Page suburbs have said that they travel to HVS because of the easy ground-level parking and access. Observing a gentleman parking in a disability parking space adjacent to the supermarket he told me that if he didn't have that ease of parking he would no longer visit HVS! This is a typical response.

In addition, many large 'tradie' vehicles use the Springvale Drive car park. The vehicles sometimes have trailers attached requiring two parking spaces. These vehicles cannot use basement parking and their business might go elsewhere if the car park is not available to them.

(I am not convinced that basement parking is environmentally friendly because it requires exhaust extraction units and lighting to run 24/7. A better option, especially in this location, would be to ensure tree canopies are retained and include grasses and paving like at the Jamison car park.)

Open and dog-friendly design

It seems that the main building included in the Woolworths proposal would be akin to a shopping mall with travelator access from the basement car park. This will destroy the open spaces at HVS which have access to sunshine and sky views (those spaces just need to be cleaned!). In addition, many people walk to HVS and bring their dogs with them. Currently there are plenty of locations where people can tie-up their dogs safely while they make a quick visit to the shops. The scale of the Woolworths proposal would not be dog-friendly.

The Redevelopment proposal only addresses a limited area of HVS

The buildings on the western side of HVS are not included in the redevelopment proposal. Some traders might take up an offer to move into a Woolworths redevelopment, but I doubt new tenants would be interested in moving into the older area.

The area excluded from the redevelopment proposal has two buildings. My understanding is that the building opposite the southern car park has one owner who is not interested in redevelopment on their leased land. The northern building and its undercroft shops are unit-titled so not easy to re-develop.

I fear that these areas will be negatively affected by the Woolworths proposal.

Do we need a full-line supermarket?

NO we do not need a full-line supermarket at HVS. The current size of the Metro store enables quick, convenient shopping. We have 3 supermarkets at Westfield Belconnen, we have a large Coles and Aldi at Jamison and currently there are 2 supermarkets at Kippax and a Coles planned to open there as part of the Kippax re-development. All these supermarkets are within 2-3 kilometres of Hawker and easily accessed by car or by public transport. The population projections included in Woolworth's documents are flawed and do not demonstrate the need

for a full-line supermarket at Hawker (hopefully a submission from Friends of Hawker Village will expand on the many flaws in the Application for Direct Sale revealed in the FOI documents).

Increased Traffic

Currently the roads near the Medical Centre, church, allied health premises and Beetaloo Street are relatively quiet and do not suffer traffic disturbance. The location of an entrance to basement parking near the undercroft shops and Pinnacle apartments would be disruptive to those surrounding that area. The second entrance to basement parking is inappropriately proposed to be located on busy Springvale Drive directly opposite residents.

Shop-top units suggested by the Planning Minister should be rejected

To incorporate shop-top units would totally change the character of HVS as it would destroy the low-rise, low-impact of the HVS on its surroundings. I believe that shop-top units would NOT provide a high level of residential amenity. Reasons why shop-top housing should not be included:

- Odour from a petrol station and KFC
- Noise disturbance from the Meet Point club which for an unfathomable reason has been granted a licence to operate until 2am and 4am for special events. Nearby residents have suffered night time disturbance and interrupted sleep.
- There is no green space at the HVS. The only (partly) grassed area is behind the toilet block on the southern car park – it now has a large recycling container located there and despite the efforts of volunteers is not an attractive space for relaxing or socialising
- Even more basement parking would be required for occupiers of the units

Appropriate v. Inappropriate improvements

Everybody I have spoken to about HVS wants improvements – the area needs to be refreshed and low-rise redevelopment within the footprint of the HVS would be welcomed. What Woolworths is proposing is a greedy, self-interested redevelopment in the pursuit of profit. They have totally failed to consult the community and it was revealed in the FOI documents received by Friends of Hawker Village that they do not understand how to undertake “meaningful consultation”. EPSDD urged Woolworths, in many emails, to engage with the general community and Friends of Hawker Village in particular, but they did not do so.

I implore the Committee to ensure that the Direct Sale of any public land at Hawker to Woolworths is denied and that the Springvale Drive open car park be retained and not included in any future development proposals.

Christine Gingell