



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY
STANDING COMMITTEE ON PLANNING AND URBAN SERVICES
REPORT NO. 77 AUGUST 2001
DRAFT VARIATION TO THE TERRITORY PLAN NO. 138
GUNGAHLIN DRIVE EXTENSION

RECOMMENDATION

The committee (Mr Corbell MLA dissenting) recommends that Draft Variation to the Territory Plan No.138 Gungahlin Drive extension be endorsed.

RATIONALE FOR COMMITTEE EXAMINATION

1. Section 25 of the *Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991* requires the Executive to refer a Draft Variation [DV] to 'an appropriate committee of the Legislative Assembly together with a request that the committee report on the DV to the Legislative Assembly'.
2. Section 26 of the Land Act requires the Executive to 'have regard to any recommendations of a committee of the Legislative Assembly in relation to the DV'.
3. On 27/7/01 the Minister for Urban Services referred DV 138 to the committee for its consideration, in line with the above sections of the Land Act.

THE CONTENT OF DV138

4. DV138 proposes to vary the Territory Plan Map by:
 - (i) Removing the "R" (Subject to Review) Overlays which indicate the various options for the future Gungahlin Drive extension (formerly known as the John Dedman Parkway alignment) as well as those applying to the adjoining land between the Gungahlin Drive extension road reserve and Kaleen residential areas;
 - (ii) Removing the existing Land Use Policies applying to the proposed Gungahlin Drive extension road reservation and replacing them with the Manor Roads Land Use Policy;

THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON PLANNING AND URBAN SERVICES

The Standing Committee on Planning and Urban Services was established on 28/4/98 to inquire into and report on planning and lease management, road and transport services, infrastructure and asset management and public utilities purchasing, electricity industry and regulation, construction industry policy, parks and forests, private sector employment inspectorate, building services, environment, heritage and municipal services and any other related matter (*resolution of appointment, as amended on 25/11/99, 7/2/00 and 15/2/01*).

Committee members: Mr Harold Hird MLA (Chair), Mr Dave Rugendyke MLA (Deputy Chair), Mr Simon Corbell MLA

Committee secretary: Mr Rod Power.

Office secretary: Ms Judy Moutia.

For further information please contact the secretary on ph: 02 6205-0435 or fax: 02 6205-0432 or email: committees@act.gov.au

(iii) Adjusting the Public Land (Pc) Overlay boundary to coincide with the proposed road reservation boundary;

(iv) Deleting the inter-town public transport [IPT] route included on the Territory Plan south of the Bruce athletics track and linking to Belconnen Way and Barry Drive between the O'Connor Hills and Bruce Ridge and linking the IPT alternative route from near the Bruce athletics track to that part of the future Gungahlin Drive extension alignment east of Calvary Hospital;

(v) deleting the Commercial E Land Use Policy from the alignment of Braybrooke Street and replacing it with the Major Roads Land Use Policy; and

(vi) deleting the Major Roads Land Use Policy the alignment of Leverrier Street and replacing it with the Community Facility Land Use Policy.¹

5. These changes are shown in the two maps attached to this report and identified as Figure 3a and Figure 3b (both taken from DV138 Explanatory Statement pp.8-9).

6. The committee notes the changes made by PALM to the original DV138 as a result of public comment.²

THE COMMITTEE'S VIEW

7. The committee (Mr Corbell dissenting) has moved speedily to bring down its report on DV138. In doing so, the committee is conscious that it has already exhaustively canvassed the issues involving the Gungahlin Drive extension [GDE] in its Report No.67 (February 2001). That report was over 60,000 words in length and carefully examined each of the eight terms of reference set by the Legislative Assembly on 21 April 1999. These were:

(1) That the Standing Committee on Urban Services³ inquire into and report on proposals for the Gungahlin Drive extension (John Dedman Parkway) taking account of:

(a) the Maunsell Study, particularly regarding the adequacy of the preliminary assessment and whether further environmental assessment of the proposed route is required, and the Government's response;

(b) other transport inquiries and studies held in the ACT, and the Government's response;

(c) the impact of the proposals on arterial roads;

(d) the desirability of improving the use of public transport and other non-car modes of transport;

(e) the desirability of reducing the number of vehicles needing to travel between Gungahlin and southern destinations;

¹ DV138 *Explanatory Statement* p.8

² Ibid p.7

³ On 25/11/99 the committee was renamed 'Standing Committee on Planning and Urban Services'.

- (f) the desirability of siting an eastern ring road from Gungahlin and the Barton Highway to other parts of Canberra via an upgraded Majura road;
- (g) a cost-benefit analysis of the two options for the route of the Gungahlin Drive extension (John Dedman Parkway), to the east and west of the Australian Institute of Sport; and
- (h) any other related matter;

(2) That the Government not proceed with proposals for the draft Variation to the Territory Plan for the Gungahlin Drive extension (John Dedman Parkway) until the Standing Committee on Urban Services has presented its report and the Government has tabled its response to the Committee's report in the Assembly.⁴

8. The Standing Committee on Planning and Urban Services presented its report to the parliament on 8 March 2001 and the government tabled its response to the report on 3 May 2001.

9. The conclusion reached by the committee at the end of its inquiry is directly relevant to considering DV138:

The committee appreciates the need to make a decision about the JDP in the near future. There has been a plethora of transport inquiries over many years and, during this time, the population of Gungahlin has grown to over 20,000. This committee's predecessor (the Standing Committee on Planning and Environment) commenced an examination of proposals for the Gungahlin Drive extension in 1997; the current inquiry is an extension of that one. Three years is long enough for parliamentary investigation. There should be no further inquiries into whether to provide a JDP, nor into a JDP route alignment. *It is time to get on with the job of building essential transport infrastructure to benefit the families of Gungahlin.* On this basis, the committee considers that it is imperative the current Legislative Assembly make a decision on the Gungahlin drive extension.

However, the committee recognises that, even with the best effort by this committee and by the Assembly, there will not be unanimity about decisions on the JDP. When dealing with so controversial a matter as the Gungahlin Drive extension, any process used to make a decision—whether it be weighted toward technical matters as was the Maunsell Report, or more 'parliamentary' as is the current inquiry by the Standing Committee on Planning and Urban Services—will be criticised by some in our community; and that is their right.

But the current inquiry has provided the opportunity to review a great amount of material bearing on a decision about the JDP. It has also provided the chance to hear the views of over 900 Canberra citizens. In particular, it has provided the opportunity for the residents of Gungahlin to be heard by their elected representatives in the Territory's parliament. The committee is unanimous in the view that Gungahlin families deserve better transport facilities than they possess at the moment, and that the JDP is an essential component of these improved facilities.⁵

⁴ Resolution of the Legislative Assembly on 21 April 1999. The terms 'John Dedman Parkway' and 'Gungahlin Drive extension' refer to the same proposed road.

⁵ Standing Committee on Planning and Urban Services *Proposals for the Gungahlin Drive Extension (John Dedman Parkway)* Report No.67 (February 2001) p.151

10. The committee (Mr Corbell MLA dissenting) reiterates its conviction that the **current** Territory parliament should make a decision about the GDE. Parliamentary examination of the GDE commenced in the *Third* Assembly (which ran from March 1995 to February 1998) **and it should not be allowed to carry over into the Fifth Assembly (to be elected on 20 October 2001). To allow this to occur would be an abrogation of the decision-making responsibility of this parliament.**

11. Against this background, the committee (Mr Corbell dissenting) considers that a further round of public hearings on the GDE is not required. Rather, what is required is a speedy report by the committee in order to get the whole issue into the Territory's parliament where it can be debated by all 17 members and a decision reached before the last sitting day of the current parliament on 30 August 2001.

12. If this timetable is achieved, then 'detailed design [of the road] will commence in 2001/02 [with] construction expected to commence in 2002/03, with completion in 2004'.⁶

13. The committee notes that DV138 substantially picks up the recommendations of the committee in its Report No.67. There is one important difference, which is that DV138 removes the proposed inter-town public transport route over the O'Connor Ridge. In the view of the committee, this change to the committee's own recommendations is acceptable.

14. The committee (Mr Corbell dissenting) also accepts the eastern alignment of the GDE. The arguments for and against the eastern route were canvassed in Report No.67 [see Chapter 13 of that report]. The committee came down in favour of the eastern route because it is more cost effective, it is well away from O'Connor homes, and it will not detrimentally affect the public's ongoing enjoyment (and use) of Bruce Stadium, the Australian Institute of Sport, and Bruce Athletics Oval. The eastern route also does less damage to the Kaleen grasslands.

15. For these reasons, the committee (Mr Corbell MLA dissenting) considers the eastern alignment to be the most appropriate one for the GDE. The committee points out that the eastern alignment is significantly different to that put forward by Maunsell and initially favoured by the government. The eastern route now utilises some of the current carparks at Bruce Stadium in order to minimise the effect on the local terrain. Also, the eastern route no longer incorporates the spur connection across O'Connor Ridge to Barry Drive. Nor does it include the inter-town public transport route which originally was shown crossing O'Connor Ridge.

16. In these respects, the alignment of the GDE shown in DV138 represents a significant compromise by the government in an effort to meet the concerns expressed during this committee's inquiry.

⁶ DV138 (July 2001) *Explanatory Statement* p.5

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

17. Following tabling of the committee's report in the parliament, the government—having regard to this report—may approve the variation with or without amendment. It will table its approval and the variation in the form that it has been approved. Members of the Assembly have five sitting days to reject all, or part, of the approved variation.

Harold Hird MLA
Chair
7 August 2001