

Emmanuel H Notaras.

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The Secretary,

Standing Committee Planning, Transport and City Services.

Dear Secretary,

Re Inquiry into the Territory Plan and other associated documents.

I would like to accept the Committee's invitation to submit an expression of interest to appear at the public hearings set down for next week. I understand an appearance depends on a slot being available for me.

I offer the following statement in support of my EOI to appear.

I live in Forrest in a home built about 1930 and situated on an unusually large block measuring 5128m².

The house is 3 bedroom, full brick and solidly constructed but is a classic example of a "knock down" as it lacks many of the necessities of a modern dwelling and doesn't even have an en suite or garage. Remodelling or extending the house is not a viable option.

My options, when I do clear the block are, to construct a new single dwelling or divide the block and construct on one parcel a new dwelling of any size, providing it meets the rules, and a second dwelling of no more than 120m² on the other parcel.

In my view, under the proposed rules for RZ1, dividing the block would result in a lesser value of the sum of the two blocks than the value of the block remaining as it is now, hence no incentive to do so exists.

Although my block is far from typical applying the same economic metrics to any block down to say 1500 metres, subject to the quality and siting of the existing house, will produce a similar valuation result.

Consequently I suspect a large amount of land that could be freed to accommodate infill will remain quarantined under the proposed changes.

I read the submission made by the ACT Chapter Australian Institute of Architects and noted the Institute's strong support of the ACT Government's Demonstration Housing Project. My block and other large parcels are well suited to ageing in place townhouses or semidetached houses where the value of the sum of the land parcels would exceed the values of a single parcel.

I also noted in its submission the Institute said the following. "The Institute has completed a preliminary review of blocks in suburban areas to confirm that the RZ1 changes will not support the projected numbers of additional dwellings indicated by government".

This claim is not supported by any peer review, however other statistics in the submission, if accurate, support the finding.

Intuitively I suspect that the "missing middle" concept requires generous and flexible spaces in which to flourish and deliver on its objectives. I suspect the proposed policy is too much a "one size fits all" approach.

The outcome we wish to achieve is to maximise the number of people we can accommodate in Canberra's existing built space. The path to that outcome is not simply adding one additional dwelling to each 800m² RZ1 block in the Territory. A population focus will reduce the unit price of putting a roof over each person's head. Creating dwellings of a maximum size puts a cap on population and makes the unit cost of each shelter per person more expensive.

When Ben Ponton became chief planner he described the new territory plan as moving away from rules based planning and instead being very much more focused on outcomes. He said, somewhat provocatively, that the territory plan could be just as effective if it consisted of a single page. The expectations on the page would be, amongst other things, development excellence, connectivity, an environment for all people, mixed density, quality open space, parks and social inclusion. When one takes a bird's eye view of Yarralumla one can see the outcome of rules based planning. I seem to recall a rush to construct 'dual occies' and if a development application met the rules it was approved.

I am Canberra born and bred. As a young adult I witnessed rapid growth in our city. I particularly remember the redevelopment of Kingston which was close to the family home in Griffith. Kingston was predominantly RZ1 residential and when high density was permitted it grew organically such that it now covers virtually the whole suburb. I don't recall too much opposition; on the contrary

the residents were happy to participate in the consolidation of blocks to create a viable development site. Of course the uplift in the value of the participant's property was welcome. Those that were not interested didn't participate. It was driven by demand, community support and in most part sound design and construction. This is the template of what I describe as precinct planning.

Stakeholders of sections within a suburb should be permitted to consolidate individual residential blocks. They could then be redeveloped, subject to appropriate guidelines, to deliver a range of residential options ranging from high density, possibly along major transport routes, and backing on to medium density deeper into the precinct, feathering down to RZ1. A smaller consolidation of say two or three blocks could deliver aging in place townhouses.

If you look at Canberra's suburbs outside north and south Canberra most open spaces are sporting fields. There are very few Parks like Collins Park, Telopea Park and Haig Park or pocket parks such as Bass Gardens and Corroboree Park. I believe precinct planning will create opportunities to inject parks into redeveloped precincts which may form a buffer between redeveloped precincts and the existing RZ1.

Such an approach coupled with the recommendations of The Australian Institute of Architects is capable of meeting the expectations set out on Ben Ponton's single page Territory Plan and at the same time deliver the missing middle

Feel free to 'phone me anytime for anything further you may require.

Emmanuel H Notaras.

