



Legislative Assembly for the
Australian Capital Territory

Standing Committee on Environment,
and Planning

Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into the Role and Future of the Woden Town Centre in the context of a compact city

Submission number: 065

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From: Lynne Bliss

Sent: Wednesday, 10 September 2025 1:44 PM

To: LA Committee - Environment <LACCommitteeEnvironment@act.gov.au>

Subject: Woden Livability enquiry

Please accept my submission to this inquiry.

1. Woden Town Centre does not have a CENTRE, a Piazza type place to gather, eat, drink, listen to music, sing Xmas carols. It is unlikely, with the current planning, that we ever will have. The square in front of the post office and at the side of Westfield has no cafes or entertainment venues to make it an interesting place to linger.

2. The new area next to the CIT is a windy area, it has a potential road in the middle. Not even a single child-friendly play equipment. In summer it will be very hot.

The Post Office is the most likely place but without cafes or bars and entertainment venues facing into the square it is dead. The Westfield is the only 'centre'.

3. I find it a dreadful place to walk around the Plaza on the outside. Dangerous, avoiding cars.

4. What is happening to the empty building above the Post Office. Please do not tell us it is going to be another tower, another reason that the current Plaza/Square would be shaded and windswept. We need a cultural centre. We need an Arts Centre. This building could be used.

4. Let's try introducing a food market weekly into the current square.

5. The Woden 50 metre pool should not be removed to make way for yet another high rise. It could be completely refurbished, a 25 metre indoor pool could be added on that block. It could be a great place for community gatherings given that we don't have much else in the pipeline, we need these places to bring people together.

6. Do a land swap with Geocon - let them go somewhere else. Hands off our Commonwealth built-asset. As for 'too expensive', all new infrastructure is expensive and pools are a necessity for community and health. They are not money making enterprises, but with the correct additions to the facilities on the current site the community will use it year round.

7.

Woden is a key urban hub with strong transport links, making it ideal for people to meet, day and night.

It needs to be designed for liveability and activity, including housing, commercial areas and jobs, health and education services, community facilities for recreation and cultural activity and great public spaces that are more than concrete

Woden's core – the beating heart

- Active Frontages for a Day and Night Economy:

- o The Town Square and West Plaza

- o Ground-level shops, cafes, bars restaurants to activate the streetscape.

- o East west – the Town Square, the West Plaza through to the bus interchange

- o North south – Bowes St through the West Plaza to Bradley St.

- Great Public Spaces for Markets and Events

- o Attracts visitors and supports a vibrant town centre.

- o Boosts local businesses and community pride.

- Low Building Heights Around the Town Square:

- o Allow sunlight into public spaces for comfort and usability.
- o Maintain a human scale and visual openness for safety and appeal.
- o Change the zoning around the town square to reduce the building heights
- We need a place plan for the core – see Documents - City Renewal

Community Infrastructure and Public Life

- Street Theatre/Arts Centre - Cultural Activation:
 - o Supports local artists and public performances.
 - o Builds cultural identity and inclusive engagement.
 - o On the West Plaza so it is at the centre of activity
- Recreation Facilities for physical and mental health
 - o An aquatic centre
 - o An indoor sports stadium
- Community Centre for Woden Community Service
 - o A building for WCS to deliver their critical services to vulnerable Canberrans

Traffic and Parking

- Improve access to the centre, particularly from Melrose Drive
- Provide adequate parking, particularly for the library and health centre

Vision for Woden: A Place to Belong

- Foster pride, inclusion, and a strong sense of belonging.

Lynne

Lynne Bliss