



 A.C.T. LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE OFFICE	
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PLEASE FIND THE ATTACHED MATERIAL OF THE IMPACT OF HIGHER DENSITY HOUSING IN THE NEW SUBURB OF NORTH WATSON.

IN YOUR COMMITTEE'S CONSIDERATION OF HIGHER DENSITY REZONING ALONG NORTH ~~BORNE~~ AVE AND OTHER AREAS OF NORTH CANBERRA. THE EXPERIENCE OF WATSON RESIDENCE MAY BE OF ASSISTANCE TO YOU.

AS IS EVIDENT BY THE MATERIAL THERE ARE A NUMBER OF ISSUES THAT SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT BEYOND DRAINAGE, TRAFFIC MOVEMENT AND DENSITY OF HOUSING, eg: NOISE, SOCIAL IMPACT, LIVABLE COMMUNITIES.

THOUGH THE MATERIAL WAS PRODUCED OVER A YEAR AGO THE AFFECTS OF URBAN RECONFIGURATION ARE STILL SUBSTANTIAL. SOME ELEMENTS HAVE CHANGED BUT MOST HAVE REMAINED THE SAME. THE EXISTING CALMING DEVICES HAVE ONLY EXTERMINATED THE SITUATION AND IN SOME AREAS AMPLIFIED IT. eg: ROUND ABOUTS + SPEED BUMPS. ADDITIONAL MAJOR ROAD SIGNAGE AND DIRECTIONS HAVE ADDED FURTHER DIFFICULTIES.

EVEN IF YOUR COMMITTEE MOVE TOWARDS LARGE SCALE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS THE UNDERLYING ISSUES IN THE WATSON EXAMPLE ARE IMPORTANT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF
D.T.C

LIVABLE, HEALTHY, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE
COMMUNITIES AND URBANE DEVELOPMENT. IT WOULD
SEEM THAT NOT TO TAKE THESE INTO ACCOUNT WILL
TO BOTH FURTHER SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC COSTS ONCE
AN URBANE POLICY AND DIRECTION IS TAKEN.

IF YOU WISH ME AND PERHAPS OTHER IN OUR
COMMUNITY TO SPEAK WITH YOURSELVES ON THE
ISSUES RAISED PLEASE CONTACT ME.

WISHING YOU ALL THE BEST
FOR YOUR COMMITTEES DELIBERATION.

Greg Weir

26th Feb. 2010

A PROMISE OF THINGS TO COME?

Last year, with an increase of traffic through Watson, Alice had to keep straightening the pictures on her wall; John and Celia found it harder to put their baby to sleep; Jason moved his lounge-room into the small spare back room; Gloria found skid marks ground into her front lawn — while children were warned about speeding traffic.

What happened? Simply, Watson has become a dangerous traffic thoroughfare for those living north of Knox Street to Gungahlin and beyond.

A survey of residents in Knox Street and some of its feeder streets has shown concerns about:

- constant, frequent speeding
- dangerous driving, tail-gating
- large increases in volume and noise by general and truck traffic
- the safety of children and other pedestrians.

This month, a large majority of households in Knox Street endorsed a letter to the departmental head of ACT Territory and Municipal Services. It asked for urgent consultation on solutions to residents' concerns.

A resident spokesperson said, "It's about making our suburb liveable again. This sort of malignant development destroys and guts our community. In the next few months residents will consider solutions to these problems. Ideas floated include: reduced speed limits, local area traffic zone and additional traffic calming measures such as speed bumps."

"Further large developments proceeding between Watson and Gungahlin will result in ill-equipped Watson becoming an even greater dumping ground for transit traffic.

We have to act now for this is a promise of worse things to come".

If you would like to know more or become involved, contact Allison or Greg at knoxstwatson@gmail.com or P.O. 329 Dickson 2602.

KNOX STREET RESIDENTS MEETING
30 Nov 2008

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AGENDA

Report on our findings so far

Are there any other concerns?

Endorsement of proposals for action

Commitment of people/residents to help solve problems in Knox St

FROM RESIDENTS IN KNOX ST - MAJOR AREAS OF CONCERN

1. Health and Safety
 - a. Speeding
 - i. Difficulty crossing the road; children and older residents
 - ii. Residential streets with Pre-school and Primary schools and retirement villages should not be turned into major roads
 - b. Increase in traffic volume.

Below is a count in both directions at the northern end of Knox St

 - 1 car every 15 seconds on average (Sunday at 5:30 PM on 9 Nov 2008)
 - 1 car every 7 seconds on average, i.e. 400 cars in 1 hour (Sat at 9:45 AM on 22 Nov 2008)
 - 1 car every 12 seconds on average (Sat at 11:00 AM on 22 Nov 2008)
 - 1 car every 15 seconds on average; i.e. 384 cars in 90 mins (Thurs at 5:00 -6:30 PM on 27 Nov 2008)
 - c. Tailgating – in school zones; of people turning into their own driveways
 - d. Difficulty on entering and exiting driveways
 - e. Pollution - Heavy trucks diverting from the highway and using Knox St as a shortcut – outcome: pollution, noise and increased traffic
2. Noise
 - a. Dragging/burnouts at both ends of the street
 - b. Continuous noise of heavy traffic
 - c. Non-standard mufflers
 - d. Heavy truck use
3. Property values will decrease as road usage increases
 - a. Residents have expressed concern that the resale value of their properties have decreased due to heavy traffic
 - b. People have complained heavy traffic has caused road conditions to change causing further noise and vibrations to homes
4. Quality of Life
 - a. Increased traffic destroying quality of life – people have stated they are moving out or thinking about it; people kept awake or woken at night
5. Congestion at junction of Antill and Knox Sts in the mornings
 - a. Residents in Watson can't get out of their driveways
 - b. People going about their business in this area, eg. delivering newspapers, are finding traffic conditions very dangerous

SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

1. 50 km zone
2. Speed bumps
3. More roundabouts
4. Local area traffic zoning

OUTCOMES – WHAT WE CAN DO

- o Write/email/phone relevant government departments eg. roads and police, about the problems in Knox St
- o Write to Watson Community Association and express our concerns; seeking their support and highlighting these in "The Wotzon"
- o Contact police regarding excessive speeding and burnouts
- o Circulate open letter to the Minister requesting action be taken
- o Establish ongoing residents' working committee and call for nominations/volunteers and people with specific skills and resources
- o Monitor traffic movements working group
- o Organise follow-up meeting of Knox St residents in January or February 2009

LET'S RECLAIM KNOX STREET

A November survey of Knox St. residents overwhelmingly showed a concern over recent traffic developments in the street. Many said that something needs to be done. Specific concerns included: the high incidence of speeding, dangerous traffic conditions and practices; heavy vehicle use, peak hour congestions and decline in the quality of life for residents in the street.

These are just a few comments:

"I cannot get to sleep at night with the constant traffic and when I do a truck or someone dragging away from the roundabout wakes me up again." - Retiree.

"Traffic numbers and people speeding are through the roof. Crossing the roads dangerous" - Concerned school mum.

"Late night burn-outs are bad. Last weekend, about one in the morning, they woke most of our end of the street. They spin not far from my bedroom. I was so worried I moved into my back room." - Long time resident.

"I've had to work from home over the past few months. The constant noise of traffic makes it hard to concentrate. I don't want to, but after 10 years and lots of work to make the house a home, I'll have to move. It's unfair."

"It's time traffic planners and policy makers stopped making local areas like Watson and Hackett dumping grounds for traffic from new developments. There are no winners just lots of losses in these communities."

"I live just past the so-called traffic-calming devices. By the time cars have left the roundabout, they are in top revs at third and ready to go full bore in top gear. The noise and speed are not calming. It's surprising how many drivers do it. I hear people in the retirement village have the same complaint."

"Watson is for our local residents and not a noisy, dangerous and high volume thoroughfare for others."

HOW MUCH?

The following November sample of traffic volumes was taken over half-hour periods: Saturday morning 208 vehicles, or one every 9 seconds; Sunday afternoon 105 vehicles, or one every 17 seconds; Thursday afternoon peak-time there were 130 vehicles or 1 vehicle every 14 seconds. Week-day high volume traffic periods appear to occur 7:15 AM–9 AM, lunchtimes and between 3 PM and 8 or 9 PM, depending on the day of the week.

SOME SUGGESTIONS FROM THE STREET:

There were a number of suggestions from people surveyed; some of these included: extension of the 50 km zone; more traffic calming devices; more policing; discourage non-residential traffic by creating a local area traffic zone.

Friends of Knox Street will be organising discussions of these and other alternative in February 2009.

HOW WE CAN TAKE ACTION – SEE OVERLEAF

Mr Tony Gill
Director
Department of Territory and Municipal Services
GPO Box 158, CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Mr Gill

As residents of Knox Street Watson we have become increasingly concerned about the increasing volume of traffic along our street. With this increase has come a greater frequency of dangerous speeding, unsafe motorist behaviour and unacceptable noise levels, resulting in distress experienced by many living in the street.

We urgently request that you consult with Knox St and nearby residents to develop constructive and viable solutions to address these problems.

Canberra is touted as a liveable city. Let us achieve this vision in realistic ways in Knox Street Watson.

Yours sincerely,

71 signature from residents of Watson