



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

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Woolworths has lodged an application to buy three areas of public land in Hawker Village to facilitate extension of its supermarket and loading zone. Only a small area will actually be devoted to expanding the supermarket.

My concerns regarding the Woolworths proposal are:

- a) The public road around the Springvale Drive car park and the carpark itself are to be built over, thus restricting points of access and destroying the original road plan for Hawker Place;
- b) The negative effects of this on the Belconnen Way Hotel and Serviced Apartments site are ignored;
- c) The original design for a central pathway all the way from Springvale Drive to Beetaloo Street will be further degraded;
- d) Noise associated with the loading area which is to be moved closer to Springvale Drive where residents already suffer from early morning deliveries. This would also affect shop-top housing, if built;
- e) The creation of basement parking under two thirds of the total shopping area and the necessary disruption associated with demolishing existing buildings to facilitate excavation of the ground needed for basement parking;
- f) The loss of space for tree growth over basement parking;
- g) The takeover of the Hawker Place cul-de-sac behind the shops to facilitate access to and egress from the underground parking, thus potentially creating difficulty for residents in the apartment block immediately beside the road;
- h) The loss of public open space currently available in a sheltered, sunny situation for socialising and children's playground;
- i) Moving of the playground from the above space to a less secure location closer to Springvale Drive;
- j) The motivation for this rebuild by Woolworths is to create a full-line supermarket. There are many such supermarkets in the district. What is missing is smaller ones with a satisfactory range of goods that are easy to navigate for those with physical limitations. The current Hawker Woolworths store fits those criteria very well;
- k) The additional retail and office premises will benefit Woolworths financially;
- l) Shop-top housing is not appropriate for this location.

SOME EXPLANATORY POINTS

Road layout

The road layout of Hawker Place, on the northern side, includes a loop at each end, one on the eastern side near Springvale Drive and one on the western end beside Beetaloo Street. The current plan by Woolworths is to eliminate the road and car park on the eastern side and to excavate that area for basement parking. This will inevitably require demolition of the two

buildings on that site to permit excavation, followed by rebuilding, resulting inevitably in long-term disruption to the operation of any remaining businesses.

First plan changes

Changes to the original Hawker Place plan started many years ago with the creation of the medical centre on the western loop replacing the car park opposite the Anglican church. The walkway between the row of shops from Springvale Drive to the medical centre was reduced in width by extension of the shop frontages into that walkway, thus limiting the opportunity for tables and chairs. The area was deadened in comparison with the crosswalk which is currently enlivened by outdoor eating and coffee orders from Rocksalt in the early morning to early afternoon. This will inevitably cease once work commences on Woolworths' planned redevelopment.

Delivery noise

After the original IGA supermarket was bought by Woolworths, the loading area behind the shop was enclosed to increase the shop size. Loading has since occurred on the public access road near its north-western curve, beside the Belconnen Way Hotel and Serviced Apartments. Neighbours on Springvale Drive and residents in the hotel have complained about early morning noise associated with the unloading of delivery trucks. Woolworths now plans to move its loading and unloading bays closer to Springvale Drive.

Public open space

When Woolworths subsequently bought the smaller building on its southern side, it effectively surrounded the public outdoor play space, leaving just a narrow strip of public land along the western side of Woolworths' property. It has not used any of the shops in this building. The former TAB section has been vacant since 2015 and the two shops which were originally the Grog Shop have been unused for some years. The Post Office is the only remaining original tenant.

Design outcome

The proposed redevelopment will eliminate the original design of the south-eastern section of Hawker Village altogether, by demolishing the two existing buildings to create underground parking across the entire area from Springvale Drive to the walkway from the current pedestrian crossing. This will negatively affect the nearby small-business owners.

Vegetation

Rapid population growth from immigration has increased the need for housing in Australia. At the same time, global warming necessitates the retention and regrowth of vegetation and maintenance of a stable natural environment to ensure survival of the human race. Trees planted originally throughout the parking areas in Hawker and between the shops have disappeared rather than thrived over the past half-century. It appears that there will be few areas suitable for any kind of vegetative regrowth in this area, as proposed.

Shop-top housing

The rapid population growth in Australia has its effect on the ACT. Shop-top housing has been instituted as a requirement in various centres around Canberra. Hawker has already

contributed to the need for denser housing. In the 1970s and 80s, when the Hawker Centre was being developed:

- It was decided that the area south of the current centre was not needed for the planned purpose and was removed from the Hawker Centre plan. The three blocks between Coniston and Bonrook Streets were rezoned for medium density housing with one having apartment buildings for public housing.
- The area to the south, between Bonrook and Murrarji Streets, was already designated for multi-storeyed flats. Three of the blocks became public housing with a total of 40 flats.
- Likewise, on the west of Beetaloo Street, is a large area of townhouse dwellings.
- On the northern edge of the Hawker Centre is a small building containing twenty-one apartments located on the cul-de-sac behind the shops. This is where some traffic will enter and leave the underground parking.



The main problem with shop-top housing in this situation is that the proposed buildings will run east-west so that higher buildings will cast shadows over areas to the south, including the open space and playground area. Further, it is likely that shop-top housing will involve an extra two floors above the standard ground level shop.

Residential requirements in shopping centres will also generate more traffic and need for car parking spaces. It is also relevant that development of residential areas in the Molonglo Valley, just over the ridgeline, has been accompanied by significant increases in traffic along Springvale Drive, especially in peak hours.

Basement Parking Access

The photograph below shows how the cul-de-sac road will be extended straight across the current grassed area that Woolworths wishes to purchase to provide an exit from the basement parking. This also crosses the current footpath to the underpass to Page and

necessitates significant rearrangement of the path descending from the upper shop level between the Woolworths store and the Pharmacy.

The current road is not very wide with a small parking area in front of four shops underneath the main floor of the Hawker shops. The apartments are not set back very far from the road. There is no verge. Busy traffic coming and going all day long close to twenty-one apartments might prove untenable. Local businesses, however, hope that such a development will increase their business.



The above photograph shows the apartment building relative to the rear of the current supermarket building. The existing doorway under the supermarket opens into an office space. The proposed vehicle doorway will be on the right directly opposite the end of the current road. The pathway to the Belconnen Way underpass and the suburbs of Page and Scullin currently passes along the side of the supermarket wall with stairs to the upper level on the right (in the horizontal brown strip).

In summary, there are many issues to consider in this matter to ensure a worthwhile outcome.

Robyn Coghlan

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