



Legislative Assembly for the
Australian Capital Territory

Standing Committee on Environment
and Planning

Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into DPA-04 – Missing Middle Housing Reform

Submission number: 019.1

Submitter: Reid Residents' Association Inc

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Missing Middle Inquiry

Supplementary to RRA submission

11 Feb 2026

If is of concern that the Design Guide appears to have a particular inclination on what appears to a retreat from best practice planning. In today's febrile world the planning should, in fact, **MUST** incorporate climate change, the importance of trees, sustainability and the need for recognition of the importance of conserving the character of precincts like the Reid Housing. The resilience of these heritage-listed housing precincts are excellent examples of resilience and adaptability owing to the fact the majority of the Federal Capital Commission (FCC) dwellings this year mark 100 years from their construction. Further, these early Canberra dwellings were regarded to be so important for their Garden City principles, they were registered on the Commonwealth Register of the National Estate (now archived) in 1980 and subsequently segue to the ACT Heritage Register in 2004.

It is ironic that those Garden City principles, a response to the grime and pollution of the Industrial Revolution yet here we have the climate crisis, concomitant with these ever increasing pollution levels, yet we have not come up with principles that need to be followed if successful planning for the future is to be achieved.

With ever increasing cost of all the resources any proposed development should be able to demonstrate climate change adaptation, sustainability, longevity, embodied energy and have the capacity to harbor wide canopied trees. For example, while some of the building stock on the Reid side of Ainslie Avenue are looking shabby such as Reid Court, these most likely have the capacity for restoration. Jerilderie (Architect Philip Cox) and Kanangra (architects Collard Clarke and Jackson) courts, having both

architectural merit and distinctive Canberra history, entail significant embodied energy. While the potential for upgrading and restoration of such buildings will obviously incur costs demolishing such buildings destroys their embodied energy which results in a loss of valuable resources. This cost should always be taken into consideration in demolishing genuinely habitable buildings and factored into the building cost of what is termed development. Developers should be asked to reimburse the current value of the embodied energy of when demolishing habitable buildings.

With concomitant climate change, it is vital to consider very carefully how to infill in RZ zones, particularly RZ1, so that the aesthetics, history, heritage and character that includes many trees, are retained.

How will this be managed? What legalities will protect the REID HOUSING PRECINCT and the other Canberra heritage precincts?

Please see The National Capital Plan
shall define the planning principles and policies for giving effect to the object of the Plan and, in particular, **shall set standards for the maintenance and enhancement of the character of the national capital and set general standards and aesthetic principles to be adhered to in the development of the national capital;**
<https://www.nca.gov.au/planning/planning-act#>

Regarding the climate of Canberra the Reid Residents Association submission cited readily available and applicable knowledge, such as [*Mapping surface urban heat in Canberra*, Meyers, J.; Devereux, D.; Van Niel, T.; Barnett, G.](#)

<https://publications.csiro.au/publications/publication/Plcsiro:EP178961>. It would be useful to see evidence that such research updated and being used to guide future planning when there is obvious need to adapt to climate change.

- A clearly defined ‘Missing Middle Housing Design Guide’ that sets well-articulated detailed parameters is required. What exists at present is so laissez-faire that the amenity of the older inner suburbs of Canberra would be lost.

- Most affected by the proposed changes would be the heritage listed housing precincts of Ainslie, Wakefield Gardens, Braddon, Alt Crecent, Reid, Barton, Kingston/Griffith, Blandfordia 5, and Forrest.
- Such A loss of these 'Special Character Zones' not only diminishes the history of Canberra the damage to the existing treescapes in these suburbs would increase the urban heat burden.
- The consideration given to tree planting and the treatment of trees appears confused and even contradictory as to what is understood to be best arboreal practice. Conserving and/or increasing canopy cover for ameliorating urban heat is highly desirable but encouraging parking under trees compacts soil and reduces tree longevity. Replacing trees cut down to make way for missing middle housing will require water, a component particularly essential in establishing young trees and continued maintenance is required. Will there be sufficient resources to manage this?

Use of Engineered wood products cf. the hugely unsustainability of concrete! It's used successfully in 8 –12 storeys: high strength, sustainability and **fire resistant**

The wide range of Reid's housing stock has been detailed in our submission demonstrate that this is achievable with careful planning and genuine consultation and enforceable building requirements.

Marianne Albury-Colless
President
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