

Ms Nicola Derigo, Secretary
Standing Committee on Planning and the Environment
ACT Legislative Assembly
G.P.O. Box 1020
Canberra 2601

**Inquiry into Draft Variation to the Territory Plan No. 281 –
Molonglo and North Weston**

Thank you for the opportunity to make this further submission to this inquiry.

In spite of organizing several avenues of community consultation it is obvious from the unchanged nature of Draft Variation No. 281 that the ACT Planning and Land Authority (ACTPLA) have made the process a sham. ACTPLA is culturally incapable of incorporating the community's concerns in its planning or may be under a brief to maintain the impetus of residential development at all costs in order to perpetuate "economic growth" in and for the ACT.

ACTPLA is dismissive of any opinions, facts, research, surveys and observations that raise alternative views whether they emanate from scientists, ecologists, amateur naturalists and ornithologists, community members and organisations.

This dismissive behaviour shows the naiveté of the ACT's planners and those they inform. ACTPLA planners clearly lag behind the Canberra community's thinking on issues supposedly addressed in DV No. 281 such as:

- Ecologically sustainable development as it translates into suburban planning
- Ecosystems, habitats and individual species threatened by development in the Molonglo Valley's expansive open spaces
- Specific destruction and fragmentation of Yellow Box Red Gum Grassy Woodland
- Retaining inspiring landscapes for public health and well-being
- The inappropriate methods proposed for storm-water management and the Molonglo river corridor's protection
- Social needs and expectations in relation to housing-type and density, affordability, on-going household energy costs
- Bushfire risks

DV No. 281 shows ACTPLA's lack of interest in preserving the natural environment for the future and of preventing destruction of that 'essence of the bush capital' which is a source of national pride.

The revised version of DV No. 281 shows a rejection of contemporary science from acknowledged experts and that foregone planning conclusions have usurped community consultation.

Although the Standing Committee on Planning and the Environment's current inquiry relates to the Molonglo Valley I feel there is an urgent need for broader consideration of planning and the environment in relation to Canberra's future now that global warming is widely accepted.

Civilisations and numerous cities have collapsed in the past because they pursued similar goals to those espoused by the ACT's leaders. The local environment, Canberra's hinterland, the 'bush' are all being encroached upon at a suicidal rate. Environmentalists face 'one battle after another' as infrastructure and residential development are imposed on open spaces and nature reserves. This is not sustainable, resources are finite.

There is an urgent need to re-plan, multi-laterally, for **the long-term future of Canberra** in relation to:

- It's size/population as an inland city isolated from sources of food and fuel supplies

- The ACT's position as part of a vibrant region
- The constraints that climate change will place on lifestyle and expectations
- Balancing rainfall expectations with consumer demand
- The fact that constant development based on human needs is a totally inappropriate response to living in an area that is being considered as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve

I would respectfully urge the Committee to prioritise consideration of Canberra's planning future so that the city's uniqueness and setting are retained and enhanced for local residents and Australians.

Rosemary Blemings