

From: David Turbayne
Sent: Sunday, 28 February 2010 10:44 PM
To: Committees

Subject: Comments re Inquiry into residential development policies inner north Canberra

As a resident of Watson and a member of the Watson Community Association for the past decade I would like to offer some brief comments relating to the Inquiry:

1) I support medium density development in parts of the inner-north but believe it must be done in a sensitive and appropriate manner. I think new development along Northbourne Ave should maintain the amenity of those residents living on Northbourne Ave. I am particularly concerned that height restrictions on new developments are limited - I would prefer 3 or 4 storeys as a maximum. Overshadowing through high rise development is a major concern as is displacement of public housing tenants by private apartments. At least 10 percent of any such development should be retained for public housing tenants.

2) It is important Northbourne Avenue's capacity as a public transport corridor be facilitated in any development proposals, especially its capacity to act as a corridor for light rail, buses and bicycles. There should be space allocated for a separated bicycle lane and for light rail and much more opportunity for pedestrians to safely cross Northbourne Avenue.

3) Development on other major roads and transport corridors such as Antill St. should be limited to 2 storeys beyond the precinct of the Dickson shopping centre where I would prefer to see 3 storeys as a maximum. Around smaller suburban shopping centres such as Watson, development should be limited to 2 storeys.

4) Any future development should give primacy to residential amenity and public transport, including fostering pedestrian and bicycle amenity. In the case of Watson, this would mean reducing the speed limit of the major through road Knox St. to 50kph, a proposal which the Watson Community Association has passed at its AGM over a number of years. I'd also suggest that there be an area 500 metres in radius from the Watson shopping centre and adjacent Majura Primary School that is made into a 30 kph maximum speed zone with walking and bike paths to encourage maximum walking and cycling by school children and residents to the school and shops.

5) A major issue for inner north suburbs such as Watson, Hackett and Ainslie is the commuter traffic now using the suburban roads as 'rat runs'. This includes trucks and light vans as well as cars. There should be a much stricter regulation of traffic flows with 'local use only' traffic arrangements implemented and a reduction in the speed limit to 40kph on all intra-suburban streets, especially those without footpaths.

6) With global warming, peak oil and the loss of a sense of community caused by overuse of motor vehicles there is a pressing need to refocus planning and development policies at a local level so that pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users are given much greater importance in how transport policies and plans are formulated. Increasing density of housing is also necessary but it needs to maintain residential amenity and accessibility for public housing tenants.

28 February, 2010