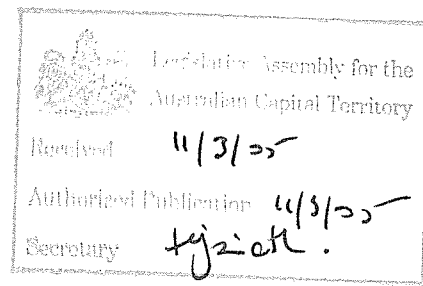


95 Buxton St
Deakin ACT 2600
Ph. 6281 1629

6 March 2005



Committee Secretary
Standing Committee on Planning and Environment
Legislative Assembly for the ACT

Dear Committee people

Re: DV237 Deakin

I was born in the late lamented Canberra Hospital nearly 50 years ago, and spent the first seven years of my life in government housing in Yarralumla, occasionally picking mushrooms on the subject site before the Embassy Motel was built.

Deakin in those days came no further west than the Girls Grammar School – I guess its two-storey mock-Tudor edifice was the “gateway building” back then.

My parents bought a block of land in Buxton Street and built a house on it and I lived there from 1963 to 1980 before moving to Belconnen for three years and then interstate. My 81-year-old mother still lives in that house, and I returned to live there, off and on as business commitments allow, in 2003.

I first learnt of the proposed redevelopment when the developers letterboxed an invitation to a solitary half-day’s on-site display of their plans. This was coyly silent on the seven-story height. I only learnt of this minor change to the suburb’s skyline (forgive my sarcasm) from a neighbour with a card-table and flyers at the local shops. I’m not in the habit of perusing the Canberra Times classifieds, but I certainly saw nothing in the news columns, nor heard anything on radio, nor saw anything on TV, until my fellow residents started kicking up a fuss.

Just as well I’m not a believer in conspiracies – if it’s a choice between a conspiracy and a cock-up I favour the cock-up every time. Otherwise I might wonder aloud about the developer’s donations to the Labor Party, and in particular to the Minister for Planning.

You get my drift – this twin eyesore would run so contrary to every principle of past suburban planning for Canberra I can’t imagine much apart from money and rampant philistinism that could possibly persuade you to consider it for a second. As for this sophistry about “gateway buildings”, I haven’t seen such patent Orwellian Newspeak since the GDR’s spiel about the merits of the Berlin Wall.

I doubt it will be enough of a shock to kill my mother, who comes from centenarian stock, but if you’re fool enough to give this phallic symbol the nod something in her will certainly die. At the very least she will have to find a new route for her daily walk around the suburb she loves.

And I will look forward to campaigning against you at the next elections.

Yours faithfully

Greg Carman