



**Legislative Assembly** for the  
**Australian Capital Territory**

Standing Committee on Environment  
and Planning

# Submission Cover Sheet

## Inquiry into DPA-B – Forrest Section 19 Blocks 5, 6, 9, 11 and 12

Submission number: 005

Submitter: Greater Canberra

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Standing Committee on Environment and Planning  
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## Submission to the inquiry into DPA-B Forrest Section 19 Blocks 5, 6, 9, 11 and 12

We support the proposed Major Plan Amendment DPA-B, in line with our support for rezoning proposals for this site in earlier rounds of consultation in 2024 and 2025, and the support expressed by some of our Inner South members in the initial 2021 consultations by the site lessees.

The Assembly recently voted to establish a right to housing in the ACT. For this right to be meaningful, we must build more homes in the places people want to live. The site has been vacant since 2016; beginning development here to benefit the community is long overdue.

DPA-B is consistent with good planning, sustainable growth, and the ACT Government's housing and climate commitments. It is a practical, well-located, and carefully controlled opportunity to deliver homes where they are most needed alongside commercial uses where they are convenient for residents and nearby workers.

### **A well-located site for mixed use**

The site is within walking distance of major employment centres, close to arterial roads and well served by public transport. It's also near schools, parks, retail and community services. This makes it an excellent location to provide housing, enabling more people to live in a well-connected area with high opportunity.

The Inner South has limited land zoned for mixed-use development. Mixed-use zoning allows the kinds of retail businesses that provide an important quality of life enhancement for residents in a future development, as well as for other nearby residents and workers.

With the growth in employment in the Forrest area - including large public service and commercial office sites on Canberra Avenue, National Circuit and Sydney Avenue, as well as the proximity of Parliament - the flexibility provided by mixed-use zoning will open the possibility of future commercial uses that support Forrest's role as a growing employment hub, such as shops and retail services that are useful to workers. In particular, amending the Commercial

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Zones Policy to permit serviced apartments will allow more potential options to use the site for commercial accommodation that supports public service and commercial activity.

Rezoning this site is consistent with the ACT Planning Strategy's core compact and efficient theme, by using under-utilised land and avoiding unnecessary urban sprawl.

### **Appropriate development**

DPA-B will enable mid-rise development of a scale appropriate to its location near Canberra Avenue and adjacent to a major employment hub. We submit that 7 to 8 storey buildings are entirely suitable for the site, and consistent with the gradual evolution of the broader Barton and Forrest area.

Extensive consultation has occurred over several years with attention given to managing impacts on existing residents. We do not believe that the proposed increase in building height imposes an unacceptable impact on these residents, and we note that possible externalities of any particular development proposal on the site will be considered again at the DA stage. Our members that live and work in the Inner South welcome the increased vibrancy and services that higher density will bring.

### **Considering future residents**

The Committee's media release of 8 August 2025 says this inquiry commenced due to concerns raised during ACT Government consultation about the effects of the rezoning. The volume of submissions does not appear sufficient to reliably reflect broader community sentiment.

Consultation processes often capture the views of existing groups who have the capacity to make submissions, but less so the perspectives of the many Canberrans who will live at or use this site in the future. We encourage the Committee to consider not only current residents, but also the future households who will rely on this precinct for well-located, sustainable housing.

Thousands of people work in and around the Parliamentary Triangle, Barton and Forrest each day. Many would welcome additional options to live closer to the workplace, and additional commercial and retail space near their offices. These Canberrans have not written submissions - they are instead expecting the ACT Government and the Assembly to deliver on the commitment to provide more housing and services in the right places.

For these reasons, we urge the Committee to support DPA-B and enable development that will benefit both current and future Canberrans.