



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON PLANNING AND URBAN RENEWAL

Ms Caroline Le Couteur MLA (Chair), Ms Suzanne Orr MLA (Deputy Chair)

Ms Tara Cheyne MLA, Mr James Milligan MLA, Mr Mark Parton MLA

## Submission Cover Sheet

Draft Variation 345 - Mawson Group Centre: Zone changes  
and amendments to the Mawson Precinct map and code

**Submission Number:** 028 - Erett

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**From:** Chris Erett  
**To:** [LA Committee - PUR](#)  
**Subject:** Standing Committee on Planning and Urban Renewal: Inquiry into Draft Variation to the Territory Plan No. 345 Mawson Group Centre  
**Date:** Friday, 27 July 2018 11:11:49 PM

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27 July 2018

ATT: The Committee Secretary  
Standing Committee on Planning and Urban Renewal  
Legislative Assembly for the ACT

Dear Committee Chair

I am writing in relation to the Committee's inquiry into *Draft Variation to the Territory Plan No. 345: Mawson Group Centre: Zone changes and amendments to the Mawson precinct map and code.*

Having read the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate's *Report on Consultation* re DV 345, it appears that many of the concerns raised in comments from the public have been dismissed without seriously addressing the issues raised. Many of the concerns were 'noted' although I note that the Explanatory Statement advises that "no changes were made as a result of consultation" (p.6). Is the 'consultation' on a Draft Variation anything other than a rubber stamp process with the Directorate simply restating its position?

For example, in my submission on DV 345, I observed that alignment options for the future extension of the light rail to Mawson (and beyond) are constrained by Yarralumla Creek and the narrowness, or absence, of the Athllon Drive median strip between Hindmarsh Drive and Beasley Street. For this reason any consideration to the rezoning of the transport corridor adjacent to Athllon Drive, which has been reserved for many decades, should be deferred until the light rail extension has been constructed (or at least until after detailed alignment planning has been completed and the location of park and ride facilities has been determined).

Other concerns were raised regarding permissible building heights and the impact on solar access to the central square. The relevant criteria (C8), relating to area D, states that "The maximum height of building may be increased to up to four storeys where the development retains reasonable solar access to the adjoining public square to the east between the hours of 12pm to 2pm during 21 June (winter solstice). I have no confidence that this criteria will protect the usability of the public square given that no definition of "reasonable solar access" has been provided, therefore open to quite different interpretations by developers and the community, and there is no requirement for solar access at all after 2pm.

I would request the Committee review all the submissions that were made as part of the Draft Variation consultation, and seek further explanation and/or justification for what has been proposed by the Directorate in DV 345.

For reference, attached is a copy of the submission I made to the to the public consultation on DV 345 - Mawson Group Centre (identified as submitter 21 in the consultation report).

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Yours Sincerely

Chris Erett





## Response to Woden and Mawson Draft Variations No 344 and 345

**1. There are currently no maximum building height controls in the Woden Town Centre. The draft variation proposes to set the building heights within the centre to between 6, 12, 16 and 24 storeys, with opportunities for an additional four storeys for development that retains the building hierarchy (where taller buildings are in the central area) and is located close to public transport.**

**Do you agree with this proposal?**

- Yes
- No
- If no, please give your reasons

The proposed building heights in the Woden Master Plan and Draft Variation do not reflect the human scale principles that were originally envisioned.

Building heights for development addressing Melrose Drive (area 'c') should be 'medium rise' (4 to 6 storeys), reflecting the medium density character opposite in suburban Lyons.

Development in area 'b' should be of 6 to 8 storeys, forming the 'high-rise transitional area' to the central core (area 'a') comprising a maximum of 12 to 16 storey buildings.

If the government is serious about achieving a sustainable built environment, this should be demonstrated by additional criteria incorporating a higher standard of solar access for residential buildings. That is:

- solar orientation should be optimised such that all apartments in a residential development must have 4 to 5 hours of solar access to living areas, between 9am and 3pm at the winter solstice. i.e. residences facing south or directly east/west should not be permitted.
- No development should adversely impact solar access to an adjacent residential building or public space.

I DO NOT support the proposed criteria that would allow the maximum height of one building tower element per block to be increased by an additional four storeys. A rational case HAS NOT been made for the 'marker building' concept. While there may be some architectural merit for marker buildings in significant locations, for example at the end of Anzac Parade, scattering them randomly around Woden and Mawson makes no sense at all (not to mention they usually turn out to be rather unattractive buildings!). If anything, allowing so-called 'marker' buildings that are close to or equal in height to Lovett tower, will dilute its significance denominating the town centre.

**2. The plan proposes to allow high density housing on several blocks directly to the north-east of the Hindmarsh Drive and Callum Street intersection. These blocks currently allow medium density housing.**

**Do you agree with this proposal?**

- Yes
- No
- If no, please give your reasons

High density development in this location (area 'a') is completely out of scale to the predominantly 3 storey buildings in Woden Green and the adjacent developments (area 'b') that are under construction.

**3. The plan proposes to change the zoning of the north-western corner of the land east of Callum Street (currently medium density residential) to commercial office zoning, which will allow mixed-use development that allows both commercial and residential uses.**

**Do you agree with this proposal?**

- Yes
- No
- If no, please give your reasons.

**4. The plan proposes supporting rezoning parts of the Woden Town Park from urban open space zone to community facility zone to allow the development of community facilities closer to the town centre.**

**Do you agree with this proposal?**

- Yes
- No
- If no, please give your reasons

With additional residential and commercial development in the town centre, public open 'green' space will be at a premium. Some of the many surface car parks could be used for community facilities.

**5. The plan proposes rezoning the area containing the shared path adjacent to Swinger Hill from suburban residential to urban open space?**

**Do you agree with this proposal?**

- Yes
- No
- If no, please give your reasons

**6. The plan proposes rezoning part of the Athllon Drive corridor from suburban core residential and transport services to high density residential to allow more high-density housing so people can take advantage of employment opportunities in the centre and the Athllon Drive rapid transit corridor.**

**Do you agree with this proposal?**

- Yes
- No
- If no, please give your reasons.

Higher density residential is better placed in close proximity to the availability of services (retail shops etc) such as in the core of town centres and group centres. The Athllon Drive corridor is better suited to medium density residential, as currently zoned.

Further, to achieve a rapid-transit system, widely spaced stops are required. Significant higher density residential development *along* the transit corridor would drive demand for additional, more closely spaced stops. This would result in not-so-rapid-transit. If additional stops were not provided it would require longer walking/cycling distances from homes to the stop and/or catching local transport to get to the rapid-transit stop, somewhat defeating the purpose of living in proximity to the rapid-transit corridor.

Alignment options for the future extension of the light rail to Mawson are constrained by Yarralumla Creek and the narrowness of the Athllon Drive median strip between Hindmarsh Drive and Mawson Drive. For this reason any consideration to the rezoning of the Athllon Drive transport corridor should be deferred until the light rail extension has been constructed (or at least until after detailed alignment planning has been completed).

**7. Residences are already allowed in the Phillip service trades area, but the variation proposes to increase building heights but prohibit residences from the outer area along Melrose Drive and Athllon Drive to protect the commercial uses.**

**Do you agree with these proposals?**

- Yes
- No
- If no, please give your reasons.

Residential development is incompatible with many of the service trades currently operating in Phillip such as auto repair workshops. In retail or commercial areas that may be compatible with residences, redevelopment should only be permitted where it does not adversely impact on the availability of parking. The proposed criteria should be amended to ensure that there is no overshadowing of the existing green open space (Colbee Court and Dundas Court).

**8. The draft variation proposes a number of changes to the Phillip precinct map and code to help promote commercial and retail development in the centre and the Phillip service trades area. Please see the proposed changes.**

**Do you agree with these proposals?**

- Yes
- No
- If no, please give your reasons.

It is not clear what changes are being proposed?

**9. It is proposed to rezone the north-eastern corner of Athllon Drive and Mawson Drive to allow medium density housing (up to 6 storeys). This would increase the number of residents in the area who would use the centre and public transport.**

**Do you agree with this proposal?**

- Yes

- No
- If no, please give your reasons.

Alignment options for the future extension of the light rail to Mawson are constrained by Yarralumla Creek and the narrowness of the Athllon Drive median strip between Hindmarsh Drive and Mawson Drive. For this reason any consideration to the rezoning of the Athllon Drive transport corridor should be deferred until the light rail extension has been constructed (or at least until after detailed alignment planning has been completed).

**10. It is proposed to zone the area between Athllon Drive and Mawson Place to commercial business zone, which will encourage commercial development, potentially with residences above, in the centre and along this important transport corridor of Athllon Drive. This would allow a taller building up to eight storeys near the intersection that would signal the entrance to the centre.**

**Do you agree with this proposal?**

- Yes
- No
- If no, please give your reason

Somehow, despite the absence of a eight storey building, I have managed to find the entrance the centre for all these years. A marker building is not required.

Alignment options for the future extension of the light rail to Tuggeranong are constrained by Yarralumla Creek and the narrowness of the Athllon Drive median strip between Mawson Drive and Beasley Street. For this reason any consideration to the rezoning of the area between Athllon Drive and Mawson Place should be deferred until the light rail extension has been constructed (or at least until after detailed alignment planning has been completed and the location of park and ride facilities has been determined).

**11. It is proposed to rezone area south of the centre currently occupied by a surface carpark between the tennis courts and Athllon Drive to service trades zone and the surface car park east of Heard Street from commercial business zone to commercial core zone. This will increase opportunities for development as the demand arises.**

**Do you agree with this proposal?**

- Yes
- No
- If no, please give your reasons.

It is not clear why an additional service trade zone is required. The area south of the centre currently occupied by a surface carpark between the tennis courts and Athllon Drive, would seem to be an ideal location for commercial development (or perhaps mixed use / residential development subject to the constraints presented by the existing service station).

**12. To help promote commercial and retail development in the centre, it is proposed to amend the Mawson precinct map and code by:**

- removing the restriction that limits shops in CZ2 commercial business zone to art,

**craft and sculpture dealer and personal services**

- **removing the existing additional permitted uses of funeral parlour, light industry, service station and veterinary hospital from the CZ2 commercial business zone**
- **nominating building heights for selected areas within the centre of 2, 4, 6 and 8 storeys**
- **introducing built form provisions such as upper level setbacks, requirements for awnings and active frontages to provide pedestrian friendly areas within the centre**
- **nominating pedestrian routes and laneways where development will be required to provide publicly accessible pedestrian access**
- **ensuring development retains solar access to public spaces and residential development.**

**Do you agree with these proposals?**

- Yes
- No
- If no, please say which parts you disagree with and why.

I am concerned that an increase in permissible building heights will impact on solar access to public spaces, and therefore adversely affect the amenity, within the centre.

Chris Erett  
2 June 2017