

2006

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

VARIATION NO. 165 TO THE TERRITORY PLAN –
OPEN SPACE NETWORK PROJECT

TABLING STATEMENT

Circulated by authority of the
Minister for Planning
Mr Simon Corbell MLA

30/3/06

Mr Speaker, the Government made a commitment to identify and protect Canberra's open space network. This work was undertaken by ACT Planning and Land Authority through the Open Space Network Project.

The 2001 election commitment to create a new Open Space Network, was stated in the 'Planning for People: Labor's Planning and Land Management Policy for Canberra':

'Labor will establish an integrated Canberra Open Space Network for our city...A Stanhope Government will identify and classify Canberra's open space network in consultation with community and National Capital Authority. Labor wants to stop these areas of land from ever becoming the targets of the Liberals' revenue-driven urban infill plans. These areas are not a land bank, they are areas of public land, to be used and enjoyed by the community.'

Canberra's open space network has helped give the city its image as the garden city capital of Australia and is an important element of the city structure. The formal open space network is generally unleased Territory Land, identified by the Territory Plan as Urban Open Space. It includes a planned network consisting of pedestrian ways, sportsgrounds, parks and some other landscaped spaces. The network also provides opportunities for active and passive recreation, enables the protection of natural and cultural features, maintains and enhances amenity and may also perform a stormwater drainage and minor public utilities function.

Draft Variation Number 165 proposes to implement the outcomes of the Open Space Network project, which identified a number of areas that appear to be part of the formal open space network but are not identified by the Territory Plan as being Urban Open Space.

This includes providing statutory protection for school ovals and playing fields, removing the X Overlay to include open space in public land and identifying additional sites to be added to the Urban Open Space land use policy.

The variation was released for public comment on 23 July 2004, with comments closing on 3 September 2004. A total of 22 written submissions were received during that period. A number of minor revisions were made to the variation as a result of the consultation process.

In its Report No.18 of November 2005 the Standing Committee on Planning and Environment made three recommendations in relation to the draft variation:

The Committee's first recommendation was that the proposed Variation proceed subject to the following recommendations.

The Committee's second recommendation was that the planning reform address landscaping and open space requirements in Commercial Land Use Policies.

This recommendation will be considered by the Planning Authority as part of the Territory Plan Review process.

The Committee's final recommendation was that the land use policies applicable to Percival Hill Nicholls, Stirling Park Yarralumla, Section 51 Aranda and part of Section 78 Griffith be reviewed.

The blocks in Griffith have previously been identified by the Neighbourhood Planning process for other community uses, so it is not considered appropriate to add them to the open space network. Stirling Park is reserved as National Capital Use under the National Capital Plan and therefore the Committee's recommendation of a public land overlay on the Territory Plan would not be appropriate. Percival Hill and Section 51 Aranda are within the Hills Ridges and Buffers Land Use Policy and will have a Pc Nature Reserve overlay applied to clarify their public land status. The final Variation has been changed to reflect this.

Mr Speaker, this Variation represents a significant achievement on the part of this Government to analyse and confirm a large number of important sites throughout Canberra as open space. In total, out of the 300 sites investigated, around 134 will gain additional protection from being designated as Urban Open Space, Hills, Ridges and Buffers; 76 ACT Government schools would gain additional protection; and 59 sites around commercial centres gain recognition for their importance as public places.

The Variation delivers on the Government's commitment to identify and protect the open space network that contributes so strongly to Canberra's intrinsic character.

Mr Speaker, I now table Variation to the Territory Plan Number 165 – Open Space Network Project.