



Friends of Grasslands

supporting native grassy ecosystems

PO Box 987, Civic Square ACT 2608

phone: 02 62882413 or 6241 4065

email: advocacy@fog.org.au

web: <http://www.fog.org.au>

Standing Committee on Planning, Public Works and TAMS
ACT Legislative Assembly Secretariat
Ph: 02 620 50435
committees@act.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam

Inquiry into Draft Variation to the Territory Plan No. 299 – Lawson South: Introduction of a Structure Plan, a Concept Plan and Zone Changes

Thank you for the invitation to comment on the Committee's inquiry into *Draft Variation to the Territory Plan No. 299 – Lawson South: Introduction of a Structure Plan, a Concept Plan and Zone Changes*. While Friends of Grasslands (FOG) has nothing further to add to its original submission, we would to know the final outcome of some of the issues raised in that submission. In particular, we would like to know details of how the proposed ACT biodiversity offset approach ("being developed for the consideration of the ACT Government") will be applied to this situation, given that the development process is proceeding prior to public dissemination of the Government's offset approach. Some information is provided in the recent EPBC referral for this area, but this was not a firm offset proposal. In FOG's view, offsets should actually be in place before a development commences. As well, offsets should continue for as long as the development continues to have an impact, which in this case will be in perpetuity, i.e. any offset offered should include not just reservation of land but also ongoing conservation management and guaranteed funding of that management in perpetuity.

FOG is disappointed that this development project has advanced to the stage of planning the location of roads and blocks, and forwarding a referral for consideration under the EPBC Act without taking the opportunity for follow-up surveys of threatened species to supplement the original ecological assessments. As a result of this, significant habitat areas of quality grass- and woodland are likely to be lost.

If it would be useful, FOG could appear as a witness at a public hearing of the Committee. In this case, please contact Naarilla Hirsch (phone 62882413 or email advocacy@fog.org.au) to make the arrangements.

Sincerely yours

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Geoff Robertson', written over a light grey rectangular background.

Geoff Robertson
President

9 July 2010