



Senator Zed Seselja
PO Box 6100
Senate
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

senator.seselja@aph.gov.au

Dear Senator Seselja

Thank you for your response on the 21 April 2016 to the paper, *Protecting the Future of Lake Burley Griffin and its Lakeshore Landscape*, sent by the Lake Burley Griffin Guardians. In your response you raised some issues that are also a concern for the Guardians.

1 Failures of the ACT Government in Planning and Public Consultation

The Guardians agrees that the ACT Government's consultation process and planning system is flawed as strongly voiced by the community at fora held on 16 February at Albert Hall, a public meeting on the Manuka Oval on 28 April and several media articles. Indeed at a recent workshop sponsored by the ACT Government with Canadian experts Larry Beasley and Gordon Harris, the role of a consultation process of deliberative democracy was a key point encouraged and discussed.

Failures identified by the public:

- There appears to be little or no cooperation between the Land Development Agency and the Department of Environment and Planning.
- There appears to be little or ineffective public consultation with regard to the sale of public land or changes to public land use, particularly with regard to the appropriating public parkland.
- There appears to be no proper tendering process nor design competitions to seek the best solutions from developers. Instead it has been reported that deals are directly set up with developers.

Responses we hope you will support:

- An enquiry into the sale of public land and changes to public land use particularly when they involve appropriating public parkland.
- A review of the effectiveness and efficiency of the ACT planning process, with particular regard to the interaction of the Land Development Agency and the Department of Environment and Planning and best practice in planning.

2 City to the Lake Proposal

Flaws in the proposal

- Several issues regarding this proposal are detrimental to the Canberra public such as the loss of public parkland, the loss of scenic vistas, diminution of the parkland perimeter of the lake, traffic congestion and business competition with established Civic merchants.
- The consultation process was disingenuous in breaking the entire development into stages and seeking development approval only for the Foreshore Development with enticing images of a promenade, cafes, manicured parks and gardens. There was almost no explanation of the lake infill and the ensuing Building Estate for apartments and businesses between the Lake and the City.
- The Foreshore Development is an extravagant land grab involving extensive infill of the lake and a high maintenance foreshore complex that has a strong potential to fail. The financial benefits for the Government from the sale of West Basin for real estate will not offset the devastating loss of public parkland forever.
- The lowering of Parkes Way, essential for vehicular access to the Foreshore development, and crucial to the City to the Lake proposal, is now considered too difficult and expensive. New approaches for bridging the road are being investigated indicating a lack of an overall planning concept.

Responses we hope you will support

- West Basin can be a major feature of City to the Lake because as a park it offers a great environment for continuing recreation activities of biking, lake swimming, walking and barbequing, space for an imaginative children's playground (such as at the Arboretum), free space for markets, concerts and art exhibitions, space for community recreation and cultural buildings, space for lake shore cafes and space for large canopy trees to mitigate urban heat build up *all without infilling the lake waters and constructing the Foreshore and Building Estate proposals.*
- Parkes Way can be bridged to bring people to the lake more feasibly by upgrading and strengthening the existing overpass and perhaps, upgrading and cantilevering a decent walkway off Commonwealth Avenue Bridge. The Menzies Walk can continue from Commonwealth Park along the existing lakeshore to the National Museum

There is NO need for lake infill NOR the Foreshore Development infrastructure in the lake, NOR the Building Estate and we seek your support in opposing it.

3 Quality Capital Infrastructure

- As you noted, Canberra deserves to have high quality infrastructure. The architectural quality of development particularly in Civic during the last decade is generally underwhelming. We agree with the need for the Australian Forum project and particularly with the stunning architectural concept by Massimiliano Fuksas but why is the government continuing with the proposal for 'Landmark'

buildings at the corners of London Circuit and Commonwealth Avenue? A landmark building alongside the Fuksas concept will greatly damage its beauty and as it wraps partway around City Hill any vistas to the south west of the lake will be lost.

Responses we hope you will support

That you take up the case for quality Capital infrastructure and encourage the removal of 'Landmark' buildings on either side of Commonwealth Avenue to allow the proposed Australian Forum project to fully benefit from its location and outstanding architectural concept.

4 Protection of Lake Burley Griffin and its Parklands

The Guardians believe the public lakeside parks must be kept for our children and grandchildren with effective protective management. The Guardian's mission and objectives (on our website: lakeburleygriffinguardians.org.au) is about protecting the wonderful qualities of Lake Burley Griffin and its lakeshore landscape but we also support development that serves the need of all lake users.

Responses we hope you will support

Full heritage protection of the Lake and its lakeshores as National Heritage Listing that you argue it should be given. As a model, we note Adelaide Park Lands that was entered in the National Heritage List and now has its own protective legislation.

In closing we ask you to consider the extent of public support for our concerns and the reasons for our advocacy. As an important member of the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories, and now a candidate for reelection as an ACT Senator, we appreciate that you have a high standing among the Canberra electorate. We are sure that a firm stand on these issues will commend you to Canberrans as a Senator with a strong commitment to Canberra, its development, design and planning.

We would be pleased to meet with you to further discuss any of these matters during the forthcoming Federal Election.

Sincerely



10 May 2016

Juliet Ramsay, Convenor, Lake Burley Griffin Guardians

Phone: 0498 034 555

Contact address:

13 Lincoln Close

Chapman ACT 2611