



LAKE BURLEY GRIFFIN GUARDIANS

07 October 2015

The Hon Jamie Briggs MP
Minister for Cities and the Built Environment
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives, Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Email: Jamie.briggs.mp@environment.gov.au

Dear Minister,

The National Capital Plan Review

The Lake Burley Griffin Guardians (LBGG) congratulates you on your appointment to the Australian Government Ministry and particularly to this important portfolio. LBGG is a group of concerned individuals from various professions. The group was established early this year to safeguard the values of the Canberra's Lake Burley Griffin and its lakeshore landscape. We have great respect for sound and well researched urban planning and we believe Lake Burley Griffin and foreshores with vistas and parks is an essential national urban feature just as Adelaide Parklands is a critical component of the City of Adelaide.

Recently our group provided a submission on the Exposure Draft of the National Capital Plan Review and have been greatly encouraged that the National Capital Authority is now planning a whole of Lake Burley Griffin and foreshores masterplan. The Canberra Times Editorial (3.10.15) referring to the promised masterplan, claimed the plan is needed before there are changes made to Lake Burley Griffin.

However, planning amendments in 2007 that facilitate destruction of lakeshore landscape remain without change in the National Capital Plan (NCP) Review. Submissions against the troubling amendments were not heeded by the National Capital Authority of that time and the dubious history associated with the amendments was explained in recent letters to the Canberra Times (Kershaw 4.10.15).

West Basin is a component of public parkland encircling the lake as set out in the original 1918 Canberra Plan by WB Griffin and the subsequent 1963 lake plan by the National Capital Development Commission that guided the final establishment of the lake. Of current concern to the LBGG and countless Canberra citizens is the proposed development of West Basin perpetuated from NCP Amendment 61 that alienates public lakeshore landscape for privately owned 6-8 storey buildings. A development proposal by the ACT Government's Land Development Agency (LDA) is now seeking works approval. Near West Basin is City Hill precinct that has planning to

allow several tower buildings which will alter Canberra's urban form from its formative horizontal low-mid level concept as seen in best loved cities such as Paris, Berlin, Barcelona.

Apart from destroying public use of city open space, wonderful vistas from Commonwealth Avenue across West Basin and the lake to the hills beyond will be blocked. The LDA development disregards that Commonwealth Avenue leading to Parliament House is one of the most important avenues in Australia and that the low profile of the National Museum retains these vistas.

The LDA development for West Basin includes some lake reclamation and a public promenade in the water but this should not be considered compensation for the alienation of the open space lake landscape. A linked concern is the loss of the nationally important events from Commonwealth Park due to the loss of the basin's parking areas in the open space. The developer's ruse is that West Basin is under-utilised. However, reasonable planning should allow for the next 100 years when a much denser Canberra population will need every skerrick of its open space parkland for activities.

The proposal to use the buildings for shops and businesses as well as accommodation in West Basin has dismayed Canberra CBD Ltd that has strongly objected to the development flagging a lack of long term economic modelling <http://www.inthecitycanberra.com.au/response-to-west-basin-waterfront-designs/>.

We note that the current National Capital Authority Chief Executive Malcolm Snow who has inherited this planning saga is in a position to right the wrongs of 2007 and make the revised National Capital Plan a great Canberra urban plan that will give the best guidance for the national capital and have the respect of Canberrans and the nation. Changes must be made to prevent the West Basin development and City Hill Towers and we urge you to support those changes.

We realise that you will be very busy with your new portfolio but we would be happy to meet with you and discuss these matters if you need more information.

Yours sincerely



Juliet Ramsay, Convenor Lake Burley Griffin Guardians
on behalf of Lake Burley Griffin Guardians

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