

WA 20108 "CITY TO THE LAKE" - CONSTRUCTION OF THE WEST BASIN  
FORESHORE

**Submission**

**From:** Alan and Susan Robertson

**Sent:** Monday, October 19, 2015 5:06 PM **To:** '[worksapproval@natcap.gov.au](mailto:worksapproval@natcap.gov.au)'

**Subject:** WA 20108 "CITY TO THE LAKE" - CONSTRUCTION OF THE WEST BASIN  
FORESHORE

19 October 2015

Mr Malcolm Snow  
Chief Executive  
National Capital Authority

Dear Mr Snow,

**WA 20108 "City to the Lake" – Construction of the West Basin Foreshore**

The planning disaster euphemistically known as Kingston Foreshore occurred for two reasons. Firstly, all planning was executed by a property developer, the Land Development Agency, and secondly all development was carried out on a "subdivide and sell" basis that resulted in the sale of individual sites to the developer that thought it could fit the highest density development on the site. This resulted in a modern-brutalist, straight-line, concrete waterfront with soulless, wind-swept residential canyons behind. The LDA, it should be remembered, was the organisation determined to jam 1800 units on the Yarralumla Brickworks site without conserving and finding sustainable uses for the heritage brickworks. It was also the organisation that, at one point, proposed the demolition of the Old Bus Depot and the Fitters' Workshop for further residential and commercial development. Such an organisation, which has the sole objective of maximising the financial return to the government at whatever cost to social, cultural and environmental values, has proved itself incapable of developing and managing such an important project as "City to the Lake". In the LDA's hands it would result in "City from the Lake" with jam-packed residential and commercial buildings, both on City Hill and West Basin, effectively blocking the city from the water.

The National Capital Authority should decline to approve these works applications until there is a complete, detailed plan for all of the "City to the Lake" areas developed through a national or international architectural design competition conducted with criteria developed through wide and transparent public consultation. We envisage that these design criteria would include the following:

The retention of the existing shoreline of West Basin, recognising that the sole purpose of the currently proposed lake infill is to provide more land for residential and commercial development between Commonwealth Avenue/Parkes Way and the lake.

That all land between Commonwealth Avenue/Parkes Way and the West Basin foreshore be reserved for public use, whether in landscaped or built form, in recognition of the recreational, social and cultural needs of a community that is likely to grow to half a million people in coming decades. The Australia Forum proposal should be considered in this context.

The development of separate pedestrian and cycle ways around the foreshore from the end of the R. G. Menzies Walk to the National Museum of Australia. This could include some over-water board walk sections, if appropriate.

The provision of infrastructure for boat and bike hire and food and drink in

buildings that are low and green-roofed.

The provision of playgrounds and informal “kick a footy” spaces and picnic facilities.

Development between City Circle and London Circuit to be at a scale that preserves existing vistas and with a layout and style that provides a village-like atmosphere that encourages people to walk through it. This would be a genuine city to the lake link rather than the barrier that existing proposals will produce.

The Authority’s decision on these works applications will determine the course of development in the city to the lake area. Approval of this over-developed, excessively expensive proposal for the lake frontage will inevitably lead to the over-development of the land behind, to the detriment of all Canberrans. Your refusal of these plans until they form part of a fully conceived overall development is strongly recommended.

Yours sincerely,

Alan and Susan Robertson