

Ms Meegan Fitzharris MLA  
Member for Yerrabi  
Legislative Assembly for the ACT  
GPO Box 1020  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Minister

**RE Woden's participation in the social and economic benefits of higher education**

We are writing to seek your advice on the Government's policy for the equitable distribution of higher education in Canberra and opportunities for Woden to participate in the continuing expansion of higher education institutions.

The south of Canberra (including Tuggeranong, Weston Creek and Molonglo), supports around 175,000 people. While Canberra has four universities, there is an imbalance in their location as none are located in these districts. A map of Canberra's existing universities, CITs and the proposed site in Woden is attached.

A university located on the former CIT site opposite the hospital has a number of advantages as there is space for courses, research and significant student accommodation on the large 55,600 square metre site. In addition to the buildings, the site has a gym, access to playing fields and is within walking distance to the Woden Town Centre which is on Canberra's main north-south and east-west public transport alignment.

The site offers opportunities to establish a leading research and teaching campus for any faculty, including engineering and integrated education and health courses.

While the site could be used for any faculty, the area is a large employer of health services, with the Canberra Hospital providing a comprehensive range of specialist and acute care to more than 500,000 people in south east New South Wales. Additionally, nearby is the Deakin Health Precinct, which hosts allied health services and the John James Hospital.

Woden, a multi-cultural social and economic hub, is experiencing demographic changes as younger families and migrants move into our community. In light of the international students attending our universities, it is interesting to note that we have two Hindu temples for the large Indian community that reside in Woden.

With the commitment to light rail and the associated densification, our natural and built environment is facing challenges, similar to many other cities facing densification from high rise residential towers. We note the pivotal role planning plays in decisions that shape the future of our cities and we appreciate the social and economic significance higher education plays in building a strong and resilient community. Higher education in Woden would reduce car trips to the north and reduce congestion on our roads.

We acknowledge the interest of UNSW in the Reid CIT site, however, to inform this significant investment we believe the many advantages of the Woden site should be considered. We are interested in any feasibility study and options analysis undertaken as part of planning for this investment and would appreciate your feedback in order to further understand the economic viability of the Woden site.

Similarly, we are interested in the progress of the 2015-16 Budget measure for the CIT to actively seek opportunities to provide a community campus in the Woden Town Centre. We note that the CIT is offering courses in regional areas outside the ACT and seek an understanding of why this is a priority over the social and economic benefits a CIT would provide to the Woden and Weston Creek communities.

Woden is centrally located on the main north-south and east-west public transport alignments making it accessible and an ideal location to locate facilities. We would also like to understand why this advantage is not developed for the community.

We know that the ACT Government is supportive of residents working to find opportunities to improve the social and economic development of their community. We will write to Australian universities to inform them of this premier site that could provide them with an opportunity to establish a cost effective campus in Canberra.

We would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the potential for higher education in Woden. I can be contacted on 0420 533 809 or [president@wvcc.org.au](mailto:president@wvcc.org.au).

I have copied this letter to the Chief Minister, Mr Andrew Barr MLA.

Yours sincerely



Ms Fiona Carrick  
President  
Woden Valley  
Community Council

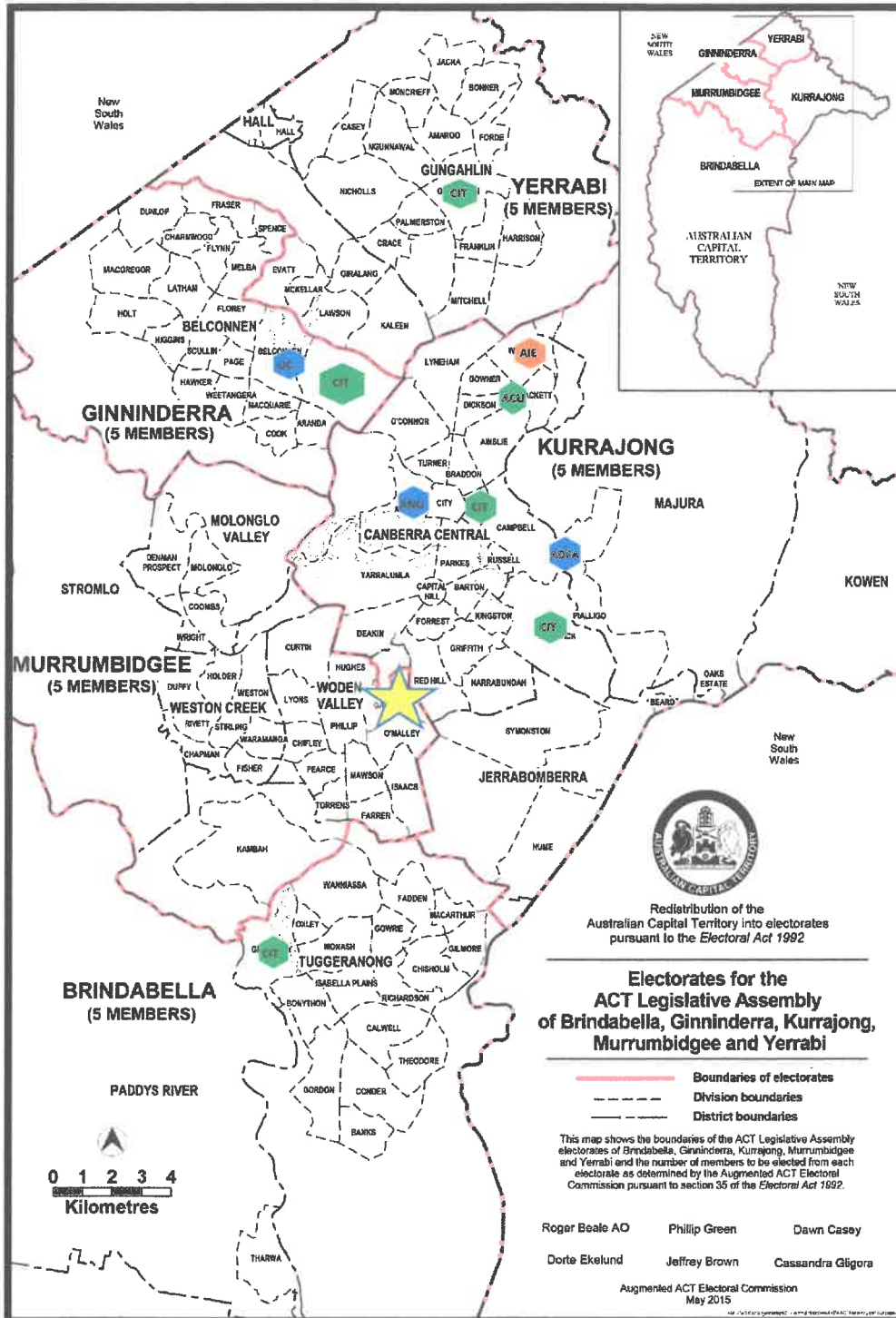


Mr Chris Redmond  
CEO  
Woden Community Service



Mr Tom Anderson  
Chair  
Weston Creek  
Community Council

# Location of Universities and CITs in Canberra



Proposed site in Woden

