

Customer Service
Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate
16 Challis St
DICKSON ACT 2602

Dear Mr Ponton

RE Development Application (DA) 201935463 – Block: 17 Section: 1 – Woden CIT site

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposal. While the Woden Valley Community Council (WVCC) welcomes development in central Woden, we want it to be done well. The WVCC believes all opportunities should be available and considers the demolition of the buildings premature as it eliminates proposals to refurbish the buildings.

All opportunities should be available so the buildings should remain until a commitment to a new build requires their demolition. We request that a plan is developed to guide the evolution of the Canberra Hospital and the community and commercial elements of the Woden Town Centre precinct prior to the demolition of the CIT buildings.

The Canberra Hospital (TCH) is the largest public hospital in our region and is an extremely important facility for the future of health provision. It provides care to more than 500,000 people through a range of services that include acute inpatient and day services, outpatient services, women's and children's services, paediatrics and pathology. Notwithstanding this, many people believe the site is constrained and there is a concern that it does not have a Master Plan to guide the development of service provision as the community grows over coming decades.

The large 5.5 hectare CIT site is located across the road from the hospital. It is strategically important to planning future health services across the region and should be considered in a Master Plan for the provision of health and education services and retained to 'future-proof' the hospital's ability to provide services into the future.

Similarly, there is not a plan to rebuild community infrastructure in the Woden Town Centre. The basketball stadium was demolished and the lack of investment in the private 50 metre pool means it is now at risk of closure should another ice rink be built.

While the ACT Government has committed to a community centre and proposed a CIT in the Town Centre, sites have not been identified leading to an ad hoc approach to planning and development. To support social inclusiveness and the active living principles there needs to be a plan to rebuild Woden's social infrastructure.

Meanwhile the population for the Woden Town Centre catchment continues to grow with the population forecasts in the *ACT Planning Strategy 2018* reaching 174,100 people by 2041. This includes: Woden (49,200), Weston Creek (33,200), Molonglo (51,400) and South Canberra (40,300). A further 100,600 people are forecast to live in Tuggeranong. It is important to the south of Canberra that the Woden Town Centre thrives.

Canberra has four major universities on the north side of Canberra. A university campus located on the site opposite the hospital has a number of advantages as there is space for courses, research and student accommodation on the 5.5 hectare former CIT 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 alignments. The ACT Government has also committed to the second stage of light rail, which will connect the CBD to Woden.

Alternatively, the site could be used to transition the Reid CIT to Woden. This may be required to facilitate the sale of the Reid site to the UNSW.

There are many options for the development of the CIT site and an opportunity exists to future proof the health and education sectors with a further 5.5 hectares to ensure the Canberra Hospital does not become constrained in the future by a limited land supply.

It is currently not clear what the best use of the CIT site is and how it connects with residential and commercial centres. Nonetheless, until the purpose of the CIT site is determined in the context of Master Plans for the Canberra Hospital and the broader Woden Town Centre, opportunities should not be eliminated by demolishing the buildings.

The WVCC does not support demolition of the CIT buildings until the planning required to secure a sustainable future, both community and commercial, for Canberra's south is undertaken in consultation with the community.

If you have any questions about our submission please contact me on president@WVCC.org.au or 0420 533 809.

Yours sincerely



Ms Fiona Carrick
President
Woden Valley Community Council
11 June 2019

