

Record of Meeting

4 August 2010

1. The Vice-Chair, Jenny Stewart, welcomed attendees, including Shane Rattenbury MLA. Apologies were received from Steve Doszpot MLA and Brendan Smyth MLA.

2. Gina Pinkas moved and Alan Thompson seconded that the record of the WVCC meeting held on 7 July 2010, be accepted. The motion was carried.

Draft Variation 303 to the Territory Plan concerning Residential Development Codes

3. Mr Bruce Frazer explained Draft Variation No. 303 (DV303) proposes to replace two current residential codes with three codes: a Residential Zones Development Code; a Single Dwelling Housing Development Code; and a Multi Unit Housing Development Code. Key objectives of DV303 included: to refine zone objectives; improve solar access; and introduce a code for lease variations.

4. Mr Frazer said the ACT Government was committed to mandating passive solar orientation for new residential homes and subdivisions. The proposed solar access policy would be achieved through block layout and orientation of dwellings; limiting overshadowing; and building energy and solar performance. There was general support for the solar provisions.

5. Mr Frazer explained that DV303 aimed to ensure developments were consistent with the 'desired character'—that is, the siting of the development, its building bulk and scale, and the nature of the resulting landscape would have to be consistent with relevant zone (RZ1 or RZ2) objectives. RZ1 is low rise (maximum two storeys) and predominately single dwelling and low density in character; and RZ2 is low rise (maximum two storeys) with a mix of single dwelling and low to medium

density multi unit development close to facilities and services in commercial centres. Other changes in DV303 to existing planning and development regulations and codes include:

- a) reducing the minimum block size for a dual occupancy development from 800m² to 700m², increasing significantly the number of blocks where this can occur in RZ1 and RZ2 zones across Canberra;
- b) reducing the minimum block size on which multi unit development can occur in RZ2 Zones from 1,400m² to 1,200m²;
- c) redefining the standard single dwelling block to include blocks less than 500m²;
- d) reducing setback rules in some instances other than on northern boundaries;
- e) changing plot ratios for some types of residential development;
- f) providing greater opportunity for developers to construct an additional dwelling in a backyard by replacing the current strict provisions for a 'habitable unit' and 'relocatable unit' to broader provisions to allow 'secondary residences';
- g) expanding the number of developments which can be assessed under the Code Track (ie no community consultation) to include secondary residences, approving number of units in lease variations and allow removing easements; and
- h) ensuring improved solar access for residences constructed under the new provisions.

6. In responding to concerns about ACTPLA allowing increased density, Mr Frazer confirmed that density was not part of DV303. Others issues raised in questions included:

- a) the complexity of the 193 page document on DV303;
- b) the amount of wiggle room in the Code Objectives;
- c) use of vague language such as 'desired character' and 'low to medium density';
- d) concerns about reducing block sizes as outlined in 5 a), b) and c) above;
- e) concerns that density is not addressed;
- f) plot ration and gross floor area (GFA) and confusion as to what was included in the GFA;
- g) setbacks; and
- h) a call for a moratorium until the new codes came into effect.

7. Mr Frazer said the documentation for DV303 was on ACTPLA's website and that comments could be submitted by close of business on Monday, 23 August 2010.

Release of Unleased Land in the Woden Valley

8. David Daws, CEO, Department of Land and Property Services (LAPS), gave an overview of the agency and explained that affordability housing and homes for the homeless were key issues for LAPS. Initiatives in this regard included: the land rental scheme which had become popular after a slow start; greenfield development; and urban renewal. Mr Daws explained that LAPS presentation was only an introductory one as further consultation with WVCC would be required in due course.

9. Ian Wood-Bradley, General Manager for Planning Design, LAPS, said the ACT Government was proposing to release vacant land in the Woden Valley for sale in 2011. As an example, the carpark on the corner of Hindmarsh and Melrose Drive where markets operate at the weekend and the carpark near the Hellenic Club had been identified for development. He said the Woden Master plan had anticipated development of both areas.

10. Kathleen Pooley, Senior Project Manager, LAPS, drew the meeting's attention to LAPS publication, ***ACT Indicative Land Release Programs, 2010–11 to 2013–14*** which was at www.laps.act.gov.au. Proposed land releases were in Lyons, Phillip, Curtin, and Garran.

Planning report

11. The Planning Officer, Gina Pinkas, said the Woden Trademen's Club had significantly reduced the scale of its development. WVCC had submitted comments on the development application for the redevelopment of Borrowdale House in the Woden Town Centre. She explained there were a number of problems with the plans. On the otherhand, the Council was generally pleased with the plans for the Alexander and Albemarle buildings in the Woden Town Centre. The question was how the two developments related to each other.

12. The next meeting of the WVCC will be held on 1 September 2010.