



ACT Planning System Review & Reform Project

TERRITORY PLAN AND INNER SOUTH DISTRICT STRATEGY

The Old Narrabundah Community Council (ONCC) appreciates the opportunity to provide comment on the draft Territory Plan and Inner South District Strategy.

According to the Chief Planner, Ben Ponton, the intention of the new draft Territory Plan and District Planning Strategy is to make the ACT planning system simpler. Whilst simplification of the planning system is a good aim, we seek clarification of how the outcomes-based model will work in practice. For example, how will the Government ensure that the legislation has strong legal standing when there is reliance on an opinion of the outcome of a development rather than rules.

Allowing a planning system to be based on outcomes as the main consideration for approval is a departure from past planning bills. We are concerned that owners, architects, builders and developers will be encouraged to take shortcuts with their projects knowing the focus of the development is to meet outcomes approved by a small approval team in the planning directorate. In the opinion of ONCC the subjective language in the draft Territory Plan and supporting documents needs to be replaced with more legally binding language that sets out the rules of what may happen on a particular site.

ONCC considers that a small team who approve development applications in this city on subjective information needs to have strong protection for their decision-making by the language used in the Territory Plan and supporting documents. A system with few rules leaves itself open to misinterpretation. We are concerned about the future cost to purchasers to rectify “bad builds” in a system lacking robust and clear rules. This cost already has impacts in our community under the present system; with less emphasis on rules there is likely to be more significant impacts.

The Technical Specifications have been developed around building requirements however these Technical Specifications are not binding as in the words of the document “it could be referred to demonstrate compliance with the Territory Plan”. (Pg 2 of Technical Specifications November 2022). This again goes back to our concern for the team of public servants not being supported in their decision-making process because of the subjective language throughout the documents.

ONCC is in favour of being a part of the efforts to participate in the population growth of our city but professional evidence needs to be presented to the community on what is being proposed for the streets of Old Narrabundah. The information and maps presented on the “Have Your Say” process for Old Narrabundah have been misleading because all the documents held by EPSDD have not been disclosed to the community. Maps buried deep within the EPSDD website shows different detail to the maps and documents in the Draft Territory Plan and the pamphlets provided at the one and only pop-up session that Old Narrabundah was allocated. The maps on the EPSDD website reveal large areas of Old

Narrabundah now zoned RZ1 marked as future investigation areas with one street possibly being marked for up to six storey development. (Although this is difficult to ascertain due to the lack of clarity in the maps and diagrams. Residents cannot make informed comment on these proposals if the correct detail is not given to them during consultation.

An addition to the proposal for Old Narrabundah is the inclusion of residential in our CZ6 zones without any consultation or reasons given to the community. (Draft Territory Plan Part A Part D4: Inner South District Policy Narrabundah). This included use does not appear to be added in CZ6 zones anywhere in the city so should not be included as a use for the CZ6 blocks in Narrabundah without consultation with the Narrabundah community. (refer Fig 15) Old Narrabundah should be allowed to protect the unique and limited key infrastructure blocks we have for the future commercial use for all the city.

As part of this District Strategy process other things that Old Narrabundah residents consider important need to be taken into consideration. For example:

- Maintaining the green streetscape that we highly value
- Safer transport connections to neighbouring areas in particular bicycle paths
- Future use of public facilities – school, ovals, parks
- Future thinking around blending of Social Housing properties into the Old Narrabundah Community
- Protecting the early design measures of our loop streets.

ONCC Inc supports the call for the protection of our Heritage areas. A professional Heritage Team or Council needs to be involved in any Development Application that is lodged on a heritage site. The decisions made by those experts needs to form part of the binding Development Application approval.

It is imperative that protected trees on individual blocks are preserved. The removal of these trees must not be allowed just for a development to take place. If, after proper professional assessments, a tree is given approval to be removed it must be replaced with a species capable of reaching equivalent height and width somewhere on the block being developed. Strong penalties must be enforced if a development does not comply, this is the only way to preserve our existing tree canopy in residential areas, particularly in the older parts of the city.

ONCC is concerned about protections for neighbours of a development with less emphasis on rules applying and more emphasis on outcomes. Under the new draft Territory Plan neighbours must continue to have protections around their rights to access to sunlight in their private open space, access to sunlight for solar installations, security around their privacy and being overlooked.

ONCC does not object in principle to basement car parking (helps keep cars off the street) but we do support the design of basement car parks remaining within the building envelope to preserve access for deep rooted plantings and vegetation on the remainder of the block. Section 39 in Old Narrabundah has been redeveloped to cover two thirds of the available blocks and this has left a totally inadequate area available for water to penetrate the soil. This is something that should not be allowed in residential zones in the future and we don't believe the draft documents will protect us from this happening again.

Media coverage over this Draft Territory Plan consultation period has extended into promoting approvals for dual occupancies in RZ1 areas. This topic has not been consulted on with the community however Narrabundah has many Mr Fluffy blocks that have been

developed as dual occupancies and they would be a good base to provide evidence-based research for planners to investigate. We are not certain that the community would support wholesale sell ups of residential blocks in a section of RZ1 areas for dual occupancies.

Old Narrabundah Community Council

Serving the Community

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