

Friends of Grasslands

supporting native grassy ecosystems

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Territory Plan Variation Unit
ACT Environment and Planning Directorate.
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Dear Sir/Madam

Draft Variation to the Territory Plan No351 - West Belconnen Urban Development

Friends of Grasslands (FOG) is a community group dedicated to the conservation of natural temperate grassy ecosystems in south-eastern Australia. FOG advocates, educates and advises on matters to do with the conservation of grassy ecosystems, and carries out surveys and other on-ground work. FOG is based in Canberra and its members include professional scientists, landowners, land managers and interested members of the public.

FOG generally supports the proposed variation (DV 351) which will rezone some areas in West Belconnen currently NUZ1 - Broadacre, NUZ3 - Hills, Ridges and Buffer Spaces and NUZ4 – River Corridor in the Territory Plan Map to a range of urban, non urban community and transport zones. The variation will also adjust the river corridor boundary and apply a nature reserve overlay to part of the site.

FOG notes that the proposed development facilitated by this rezoning will extend beyond the ACT Border and its environmental integrity will depend in part on a rezoning of the Yass Valley Local Environment Plan as well as an amendment to the National Capital Plan and environmental approvals from the Commonwealth and ACT Government. FOG has already expressed support for the amendment to the National Capital Plan and its support for DV351 assumes that the rezoning of the Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan will not be inconsistent with DV351 and the amendment to the National Capital Plan.

The adjustment to the river corridor boundary will result in a net increase to the Murrumbidgee River corridor of 80ha. The reconfigured river corridor will provide additional habitat for the Pink-tailed Worm Lizard and additional protection for grassy woodland. This is to be welcomed.

FOG notes that the extension to Ginninderra Drive proposed in DV351 is subject to a separate approval under the Environment Protection Biodiversity and Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) and would welcome the opportunity to comment on the proposed extension at the appropriate time.

FOG supports the provision in the proposed Structure Plan, of a conservation area on the eastern side of the Murrumbidgee River to protect the area's 'natural and cultural values in a sensitive manner' and welcomes the requirement for a management plan for the conservation corridor to be prepared in consultation with the relevant agencies and stakeholder groups.

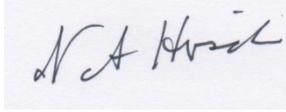
The requirements in the proposed Concept Plan for the urban edge (Part B section 7 Urban Edge) to minimise impact on Pink-tailed Worm Lizard and Box Gum Woodland are strongly supported as are the mandatory requirements (Part B, R22 and R23) relating to protection of areas of conservation and Matters of National Environmental Significance.

The provisions in the Structure Plan (7.8 Sustainable development) and the Concept Plan (Part B section 26) relating to climate change will play an important role in achieving successful environmental

outcomes for the West Belconnen Development. FOG asks that the rating system proposed to measure sustainability aspects be developed and made available to the wider community as soon as possible.

The development of the West Belconnen offers an exciting opportunity to create a new model for environmentally sound development in the ACT and FOG shall follow its progress with great interest.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Naarilla Hirsch', is centered within a light grey rectangular box.

Naarilla Hirsch
Advocacy coordinator

1 July 2015