

From: Barrie Virtue [barrievirtue99@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, 1 July 2015 10:35 AM
To: Terrplan
Subject: Planning and Development (Draft Variation No 351)

I would like to offer the following comments on the above.

Although I have no direct interest in the proposals for development at West Belconnen, my indirect interest stems from my research into the history of the area as part of my preparation of a talk I give to various community groups about the Murrumbidgee River, its exploration by Charles Sturt, and the grant of land to Sturt in 1835 - at what is now West Belconnen and a small part of NSW - as a reward for his exploration work. I am also aware to a limited extent of the history of the area involving pioneer families such as the Southwells and the Kilbys.

As part of my research I visited Shepherd's Lookout and was most impressed by the views from that vantage point of the Murrumbidgee as it nears the end of its passage through the ACT and re-enters NSW. In a sense those views are of similar significance to what is now the Marion Mahony Griffin view from Mount Ainslie. The view across the land that was granted to Sturt also underlined for me the historic nature of the area. Shepherd's Lookout, I understand, is sited in the Woodstock Nature Reserve.

According to a map published in J H L Cumpston's biography of Charles Sturt, an area in the ACT at the confluence of the Murrumbidgee River and Ginninderra Creek, including Ginninderra Falls, was set aside as a reserve when the land grant to Sturt was made in 1835. This suggests that the importance of setting aside land for various purposes was recognised 180 years ago - an importance which is even more relevant today.

I am prompted therefore to say that I feel it is very important that these historic associations not be lost sight of as plans for the area are developed. In particular it would seem essential that the corridors of the Murrumbidgee River and Ginninderra Creek, and the natural features and species in them, be adequately protected and that urban development be restricted to an appropriate distance from both corridors so that public access to the river and to the creek, and to the falls which

are such a feature of the latter, is maintained (and enhanced) in a suitable way.

I am aware of proposals by the Ginninderra Falls Association for the development of a Murrumbidgee-Ginninderra Gorges National Park. This seems to me to be an excellent objective and one which I would hope would be kept very much in mind and not in any way compromised by current planning for urban development in the area.

A map published with an article in the *Gang-gang* column in *The Canberra Times* on 8 May 2015 shows that a large part of the proposed development is in NSW. I would hope that ACT authorities would make every effort to work in co-ordination with NSW authorities to ensure the best planning outcomes.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. I have no objection to my name and suburb being published. I have lived in NSW for 15 years. Prior to that I lived in Canberra for 35 years.

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