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**West Belconnen Urban Development  
Draft Variation 351 of the Territory Plan**

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this development to both ACT and NCA.

Riverview Group has provided an attractive proposal integrating ACT land with NSW land within a half circle of hills, ridges and buffers just outside the ACT border. They have planned buffers for waterways with roads and suburban development responding to the contours of the land. This is a much better proposal than the shoehorn/grid/bulldozer one for Yarralumla Brickworks. However, the devil is in the detail.

This is a very special place including the confluence of the Murrumbidgee River with Ginninderra Creek plus the Murrumbidgee Gorge and the beautiful Ginninderra Falls. There's a fascinating biodiversity of plants and animals and we keep finding new species.

It's critical that we have great vision and "do it right" with more than adequate setbacks.

- Harry Butler used to say that the waterways are the guts of our country and must be protected.
- Canberra sits at the top of Murray-Darling basin and is its biggest urban development.
- Walter and Marion Griffin designed a city to reflect the landscape values of the beautiful valley selected as the site for our nation's capital.
- Hills, ridges and buffers enclosing the NSW part of the development complete the series of ridges that enclose Belconnen suburbs. Scrivener did a great job with the western ACT border on the counter line – it a pity the surveyors drew a straight line at this point.
- Green spaces must be of a high standard to protect and enhance biodiversity and to build on strengths of the Murrumbidgee Corridor nature reserves within ACT.
- Buffers on both sides of the river and the creek should be at least 300 metres with no buildings or hard parking spaces in that zone. Most of the buffer should be *nature reserve*.
- Tourist facilities should be kept low key until the gravel pit becomes available.
- Planning should prevent MacMansions from dominating the landscape.
- Green spaces are also important for the health and welfare of our people. Higher density brings a need for more green spaces.
- Cross border management is not a new step. We already do that with Googong Dam and the Australian Alps (ACT/NSW/VIC).

This will all be an ACT playground and ACT residential despite the accident of history that kept part in NSW. The ACT should negotiate with NSW to ensure that the Ginninderra Falls become a national park with ample space to protect biodiversity.

Jean Geue