



PRELIMINARY CONSULTATION FOR PLANNING REPORT – BLOCKS 10, 11 AND 12 SECTION 74 AND BLOCK 2 SECTION 76 WATSON



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose of this report

SGS has been engaged to undertake preliminary community consultation, as input to the preparation of a Planning Report. The Planning Report is to inform a proposed Territory Plan Variation (TPV) Plan covering Blocks 10, 11 and 12, Section 74 Watson and Block 2 Section 76 Watson. These blocks are currently zoned as CZ6 Leisure and Accommodation. The proposed TPV is to allow for residential use, as well as CZ6 uses, on these sites.

These sites have been included on the ACT's Indicative Land Release Program 2018-19 to 2021-22 (ILRP). The ILRP indicates that these sites will be released for 200 dwellings in 2020-21 and an additional 200 dwellings in 2021-22, subject to the TPV.

Community consultation processes

Public information session

A public information session was held at the Carotel Motel in Aspinall Street, North Watson, on Saturday 23rd June 2018 from 10am to 12 Noon. This was attended by representatives from SGS, EPSDD and Indesco.

This information session was advertised in a flyer explaining the proposed changes and consultation processes. Over 800 copies of the flyer were delivered to residents, businesses and community facilities in the North Watson area on 20th June 2018. Multiple copies of the same flyer were also delivered to businesses at the Watson Shops, and to the Majura Primary School and preschool.

The information session was also advertised in the Public Notices section of *The Canberra Times*, in the print version and online on Wednesday 20th June 2018.

Electronic survey

An electronic survey for feedback on the proposal was prepared, including provision for open-ended responses. There was also an option for people to provide hard copy responses to the survey.

Watson Community Association meeting

At the invitation of the Watson Community Association (WCA), representatives from SGS, EPSDD, Indesco and Traffix Group also attended a meeting on the evening of Monday 23rd July 2018, at the community centre in Tay Street, North Watson. Similar information to that available at the Information Session on 23rd June, was made available again, and there was also a Q & A session.

Timing for responses to the online survey and other input, was extended to Sunday 5th August, to allow further feedback from the WCA meeting to be submitted and considered.

Community engagement outcomes

Many residents of North Watson and surrounding areas contributed to the preliminary consultations:

- Around 25 residents attended the public information session on Saturday 23rd June.
- Around 80 residents attended the WCA meeting on the evening of Monday 23rd July.

- There were 160 responses to the online survey, with 87% of these responses being from residents of Watson.

Separate community engagement processes were also undertaken by the WCA and Living Streets Association, including information gathering at the Watson Shops.

- This additional community engagement led to a wide range of uses for the vacant sites being suggested, as well as the need for residents and Government representatives to work together to develop plans for any further development in the North Watson area.
- A copy of a petition prepared for presentation to the Legislative Assembly was also provided to SGS. This petition opposed the proposed TPV. It had a total of around 330 signatures, with around 65% of these signatories indicating that they lived in Watson.

General comments and issues raised in preliminary consultations

There was general consistency across the community forums and in the online survey on the issues and concerns raised about the proposed TPV.

The concerns expressed also often extended beyond the scope of this project to include broader concerns including:

- The Government's Land Release Program
- Inadequate opportunity for community input to the overall planning for North Watson
- Adverse impacts of "developer-led" land use planning
- Inadequate feedback from a previous consultation process, and
- Poor quality of some recent developments in the area.

A summary of other issues raised is included below, with more detail in Section 2.2 of this report.

Environment and Trees

Views were expressed about the need within North Watson to protect open space, trees, wildlife corridors and habitat for birds, such as galahs, as well as the endangered Superb Parrots. These views were linked to perceptions of Canberra as the 'bush capital'.

Concern was expressed that some existing trees on the sites, particularly Section 76, would be removed in the course of development. Some land owners/occupiers in nearby properties valued the existing pine trees and other trees that act as a visual and wind buffer.

There was support expressed for the retention of the important trees identified in the maps on both Section 74 and Section 76.

Transport and Parking

Traffic modelling information presented by the Traffix Group indicated that the additional traffic generated as a result of the proposed TPV would not have a significant adverse impact on current roads in the area, and would not generate the need for specific modifications to existing roads.

However, general concerns were expressed by residents that both Aspinall Street and Antill Streets in North Watson are currently used for "rat running" by people who don't live in this area, and that this needs to be addressed. Additional traffic on these streets would make the current situation worse.

The need for better active travel (walking and bicycle path) connections was also identified.

Concern was also expressed that some current residential developments in North Watson do not provide enough parking for residents and visitors, and that there are not enough parking spaces at the Watson shops to accommodate additional demand.

Need for additional playgrounds, child care and schools, shops and general community facilities

There was a general view that residential development in North Watson had not been accompanied by adequate provision of additional open space, leisure, school and child care centres and shops.

The current facilities in the older parts of Watson were not seen as adequate to meet the needs of North Watson residents as well. Of particular concern was the potential impact of the proposal on local schools, particularly on Majura Primary, but also on the capacity of high schools in the area.

A number of suggestions were made for potential alternative uses of the sites, or for elements that could be incorporated into future development. These included the potential for aged care facilities, recognising that this area is relatively flat and would be more suitable for such development than some other sites.

A popular sentiment was that the sites should have a role as a place for the community, potentially including restaurants or cafes which allow people to get together. The use of the sites for parks, playgrounds and nature reserves was also suggested.

Implications of allowing for residential development on the sites

Many of the responses to the online survey acknowledged that there would likely be demand for additional housing in this part of Canberra, but saw the need to balance this with community facilities and benefits for residents. There was also a perception that introducing residential uses would mean that the sites would ultimately be developed primarily for residential units and not include any of the CZ6 uses allowed under the current zoning.

Some responses identified a preference for lower density housing. There was a general view that there should be a maximum height limit of two storeys. A number of responses also mentioned the need for a different type of product that could appeal to downsizers and older people.

1. INTRODUCTION

This section outlines the context for this Consultation Report.

1.1 Context and previous work

Context

In mid-2016, SGS was engaged by the then Land Development Agency (LDA) to prepare a brief Planning Report to support a Territory Plan Variation (TPV) covering Blocks 10, 11 and 12, Section 74 Watson and Block 2 Section 76 Watson. These blocks were largely unused vacant land, zoned as CZ6 Leisure and Accommodation. The LDA was seeking to vary the Territory Plan to allow for residential use, as well as CZ6 uses, on these sites. As part of the preparation of the brief Planning Report in 2016, SGS was not required to undertake community consultation.

After completion of the previous draft Planning Report, SGS was advised that there would be further delays, including delays associated with the preparation of environmental assessments, before work on the proposed TPV could be further progressed.

Purpose of this report

SGS has subsequently been asked to undertake preliminary community consultation, as input to an updated and more comprehensive Planning Report. A requirement for preliminary consultation was included in the Scoping Document for the updated Planning Report provided by the Executive Director, Planning Policy Division, EPSDD, on 18 December 2017.

The requirement for preliminary consultation outlined in the Scoping Document was as follows:

Community consultation with affected communities and interested members of the public on the proposal is required to be conducted in accordance with the ACT Community Engagement Guideline at:

https://www.yoursay.act.gov.au/application/files/2614/6724/4263/community_engagement_FINAL.pdf.¹

As a minimum, consultation should include holding at least one public meeting/discussion session that is widely advertised in print and electronic media. A report on the consultations is to be provided, including:

- Details of consultation undertaken e.g. notifications, formal presentations, sessions, number of attendees and copies of relevant correspondence.
- Lists of all issues raised in consultation, outcomes, etc.
- Responses to issues raised, including any changes to the proposal as a result of consultations.

The proposed sites have been included on the ACT's Indicative Land Release Program 2018-19 to 2021-22. Subject to the TPV, it is proposed that these sites will be released for 200 dwellings in 2020-21, and an additional 200 dwellings in 2021-22.

¹ The Guideline can now be found here: https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/hdp.au.prod.app.act-yoursay.files/2614/6724/4263/communityengagement_FINAL.pdf

1.2 Site location

The location of Blocks 10, 11 and 12, Section 74 Watson and Block 2 Section 76 Watson are shown in Figure 1 below.

FIGURE 1: SITE MAP



Source: ACTmapi, 2018.

1.3 EPSDD community consultation co-ordination

SGS met with a representative of the EPSDD community consultation co-ordination area on Thursday 10th May 2018. Information about the proposed community engagement processes for the North Watson sites were provided by SGS, and SGS was subsequently advised that CMTEDD Communications had also been informed about the processes about to commence.

2. CONSULTATION PROCESS

This section summarises the consultation processes undertaken.

2.1 Community consultation processes

Public information session

A public information session was held at the Carotel Motel in Aspinall Street, North Watson on Saturday 23rd June 2018 from 10am to 12 Noon. This was attended by representatives from SGS, EPSDD and Indesco.

This information session was advertised in a flyer explaining the proposed changes and consultation processes. The flyer was delivered to residents, businesses and community facilities in the North Watson area (the part of Watson to the north of Stirling Avenue and Section 65, Watson), including the BP petrol station, the Watson Arts Centre, C3 Church and Youth With a Mission, on 20th June 2018.

The flyer included an email address and telephone contact number for further information. Over 800 copies of the flyer were distributed. A copy of the flyer is included in the Appendix to this report. Multiple copies of the same flyer were also delivered to businesses at the Watson Shops, and to the Majura Primary School and preschool on 20th June 2018.

The information session was also advertised in the Public Notices section of the Canberra Times, in the print version and online on Wednesday 20th June 2018. A copy of the notice included in the Canberra Times is also included in the Appendix to this report.

An electronic copy of the leaflet and additional information was included in emails sent to the North Canberra Community Council and the Watson Community Association (WCA) on Thursday 14th June. Hard copies of the flyer were provided to a meeting of the North Canberra Community Council on Wednesday 20th June.

Online survey

An electronic survey for feedback on the proposal was prepared, including provision for open-ended responses. There was also an option for people attending the information session to provide a hard copy response to the survey. Information on how to access the online survey was included in the flyer that was distributed.

Information session attendees were also advised that feedback in other formats could be sent to SGS, for inclusion in the consultation report.

Watson Community Association meeting

At the invitation of the WCA, representatives from SGS, EPSDD and Indesco also attended a meeting on the evening of Monday 23rd July 2018, at the community centre in Tay Street, North Watson. Similar information to that available at the information session on 23rd June, was made available again, and there was also a Q & A session.

Following advice received at the information session it became clear that a number of residences (generally units) in the north west corner of the Solstice development, adjacent to Block 11, Section 74 Watson, had not received copies of the leaflet delivered to other residences in North Watson. As a result, there was a further leaflet distribution on 15th July to these residences, with an apology for the oversight and advising that there would be a further consultation opportunity at the WCA meeting on 23rd July 2018.

Timing for input to the Preliminary Consultation phase of this project, including responses to the online survey, was extended to Sunday 5th August, to allow further feedback from the WCA meeting to be submitted and considered.

2.2 Outcomes from preliminary consultation

Public information session

The initial information session at the Carotel Motel on 23rd June was attended by around 25 residents of the Watson and North Watson areas.

In addition to the information provided in the leaflet, more detailed maps of the sites were made available. These maps showed trees identified for protection, other trees and features such as the location of infrastructure connections. Preliminary modelling of traffic likely to be generated by development on the sites was also presented.

The information session did not include a formal presentation, but attendees were given the opportunity to ask questions and provide comments. Points raised in the discussion generally focused on the following elements.

Environment and Trees

A number of attendees expressed concern that existing trees on the sites, particularly Section 76, would be removed in the course of development. This included adjacent land owners/occupiers, for whom the existing line of pine and other trees act as a visual and wind buffer.

Some attendees indicated that they, or people they know, had purchased properties in the area on the assumption that Section 76 was a reserve, or would be retained as parkland. It is unclear where this information came from, as this is not the case, with the land being zoned as CZ6 Leisure and Accommodation since at least 2008.

There was also a perception from some attendees that the land and many of the trees on Section 76 were already protected. According to publicly available ACT Government records this is not the case, however, it was agreed that a more detailed assessment of the existing trees on the site would be undertaken to establish their status and significance.

There was support expressed for the retention of the important trees identified in the maps on Section 74 as well.

Many people also mentioned concerns about the effect of future development on native wildlife, including birds and kangaroos that may intermittently utilise the sites. These concerns were also linked to perceptions of Canberra as the 'bush capital,' and that the pace of development in Watson and elsewhere was destroying the 'bush capital' ambience.

Need for better active travel connections

A consistent issue identified from attendees was a need for better and well-designed active travel routes and infrastructure linking North Watson to the rest of the suburb, including the Watson shops and Majura Primary School. The need to upgrade walking and cycling paths along the Federal Highway was also suggested.

Some attendees also identified that providing throughways for pedestrians to access the Federal Highway from North Watson was also important, with the potential for this to be incorporated into Section 76.

Lack of parking and issues with traffic

A number of attendees identified issues with an existing lack of parking within North Watson. Local residents identified that the provision of parking spaces within new developments was often inadequate and not reflective of actual household types. Examples were given of group households with multiple adult residents, all with cars, while only one or two parking spaces

were provided at their dwellings, leading to overflow on to visitor and on-street parking spaces.

Issues with the availability of parking were also identified at the Watson shops. A number of attendees noted that because of parking difficulties, they would often travel to other local or town centres in other districts to do their shopping. Attendees also identified issues with Aspinall Street in particular, with existing traffic volumes and delays caused by buses stopping and no room for overtaking.

Some attendees expressed concern about the initial traffic modelling undertaken. This included that the analysis around travel did not accurately reflect usage patterns (for example, as most people within the suburb would not use the Federal Highway to travel to other areas, though this route was included in the initial assessment). Other concerns related to whether the modelling had factored in the cumulative impact of development across both sites. While this had in fact been incorporated into the modelling, it was suggested that this needed to be made clearer in the reporting of the traffic assessment.

Need for local shops

Related to the above, there was a need identified by some residents for local shops or a supermarket in North Watson. It was suggested that this would be needed to cater to the level of growth in the area, but also to provide competition to the existing supermarket in Watson, as well as providing variety for residents. A supermarket in North Watson would also be within easier walking distance for many residents than the current Watson shops.

(It should be noted that the introduction of a supermarket or similar type of use on the subject sites may require separate amendments to the Territory Plan to allow for these uses, as the CZ6 zone allows for only certain types of commercial uses.)

Section 74 was suggested as an appropriate potential location for this type of development, due to proximity to other existing services (such as the petrol station) and accessibility from the Federal Highway and Antill Street.

Strategic planning and community facility concerns

Some attendees identified a perceived lack of overall planning for the Watson area, and North Watson in particular, given current levels of development. It was also noted that previous strategic planning initiatives for Watson, namely the Watson Neighbourhood Plan, did not consider North Watson.

Concerns were also raised about the potential impacts of future development on schools, particularly Majura Primary. There was a view expressed that this school is already experiencing enrolment pressures, particularly for younger age groups, and suffering from a lack of classrooms.

Issues with existing community facilities were also noted, such as the community centre in Tay Street, North Watson. Representatives of those responsible for the operation of this facility indicated they have had to invest in bollards to prevent non-users of the facility from parking in the allocated spaces. The number of parking spaces is also very limited, and this jeopardised more effective use of the facility.

Ideas for use of the sites

A number of suggestions were made as to potential alternative uses for the sites, or for elements that could be incorporated into future development. These included the potential for aged care facilities, recognising that this area is relatively flat and would be more suitable for such development than some other sites.

A popular sentiment was that the sites should have a role as a place for the community, potentially including restaurants or cafes which allow people to get together. The use of the sites for parks, playgrounds and nature reserves was also suggested.

Follow up

A number of the people who attended the information session indicated that they were intending to follow up the concerns raised. There was agreement that Indesco would make available some additional information to these community members, and in the days after the meeting, copies of the maps from the draft Tree Assessment were provided electronically.

WCA Meeting

As part of the consultation process, SGS had contacted representatives of the WCA and offered to meet to discuss the proposed TPV. As the next regular meeting of the WCA had already been scheduled for the evening of Monday 23rd July in the community centre in Tay Street, North Watson, it was agreed that the start time for this meeting would be brought forward to 6.30pm to allow for the presentation of information and a Q & A session on the proposed TPV.

The first part of this meeting was attended by representatives from EPSDD, SGS, Indesco and Traffix Group. Similar information to that provided at the initial information session was again made available at the WCA meeting. Some updated and additional information was also provided on traffic modelling and tree assessments. A copy of the Tree and Parrot Habitat Assessment maps provided at the meeting is included in the Appendix to this report.

In total there were around 80 attendees at the meeting.

The agenda for the first part of the meeting was as follows:

- Introduction from WCA Chair/host.
- Big picture of North Watson and general guidance for next steps – Living Streets Association.
- Preliminary consultation and draft Variation processes – SGS Economics & Planning
- Q & As.

A representative from the Living Streets Association provided some brief information on the community engagement that they had done recently at the Watson Shops, and the input that had been received on the preferences of local residents as to how Sections 74 and 76 should be used. A wide range of uses for the vacant sites were suggested, including:

- Parks
- Sporting fields
- A dog park
- Facilities for old and young residents
- Nature reserves and wildlife corridors
- A supermarket
- Child care
- Community garden, and
- Bowling centre.

It was also suggested that there was a need for residents and Government representatives to work together to develop plans for any further development in the North Watson area.

Additional information was also provided on posters around the hall, including “artists impressions” of ideas for North Watson. Students with an interest in community engagement were involved in the activities undertaken by the Living Streets Association, and also attended the meeting on 23rd July.

The following is a summary of the main issues, comments and questions raised in the meeting.

Overall planning and feedback from previous processes

There was a general view that planning in the North Watson area had been done site-by-site, and that there was a need for an overall plan for North Watson, linking with the plan for the older part of the suburb.

The community had previously provided feedback on a similar proposed TPV when it was part of an Omnibus Variation to the Territory Plan in 2014. There was concern expressed that there had been no feedback to those who had previously provided input, and that community members were now being asked to respond again.²

There was also a view expressed that it should not just be left up to private developers to determine the type of development and housing that occurs on a site, and that more detailed proposals should be agreed with the community first.

Need for additional playgrounds, child care and schools, shops and general community facilities

There was a general view that residential development in North Watson had not been accompanied by adequate provision of additional open space, leisure, school and child care centres and shops.

The current facilities in the older parts of Watson were seen as inadequate to meet the needs of North Watson residents as well. It was also identified that the distance to shops and schools meant that many North Watson residents need to use cars to access these facilities, and there is not enough parking at the Watson shops to meet this increased demand. There is also a need for a post box in North Watson.

Transport and Parking

Information on the potential traffic impacts of additional residential development on Sections 74 and 76 was provided by the Traffix Group representative. Essentially, this advice was that the additional traffic generated would not have a significant adverse impact on current roads in the area, and would not generate the need for specific modifications to existing roads.

There was some concern expressed that both Aspinall Street and Antill Streets in North Watson are currently used for “rat running” by people who don’t live in this area, and that there is speeding along Antill Street in particular. This needs to be addressed as it adds to the traffic and makes it less safe for residents (including children) who need to cross these streets. There was also a view expressed by one participant that a dedicated bike path is needed along Aspinall Street, not just a shared path.

Concern was also expressed that current residential developments in North Watson do not provide for enough parking for residents and visitors, particularly as many people have to rely on private cars to access shops, schools and employment.

Environmental issues and trees

Advice had previously been provided by Indesco about the retention of specific trees on Section 74 and 76 for environmental purposes, with an emphasis on the needs of the nationally-endangered Superb Parrots that have been seen in these areas. This information was also made available at the WCA meeting.

Views were expressed by participants at the meeting about the need within North Watson to protect open space, trees, wildlife corridors and habitat for birds, such as galahs, as well as the endangered Superb Parrots.

Other issues raised

There were a number of other issues raised at the meeting, which included:

² Preliminary consultation was undertaken concurrently in 2014 for Blocks 1 to 28, Section 72 Dickson and Sections 74 and 76 Watson. The previous Omnibus Draft TPV included a diverse range of sites for potential uses, focusing on public housing.

- Majura School is already relying on demountable classrooms, and there was a time when the oval at the school was not watered and was unusable. New development in North Watson is putting additional pressure on the facilities at this school.
- Any new development in North Watson should require cat containment.
- There is a need for housing suitable for older people and community housing in the area.
- There is a need to ensure that developers put in and maintain appropriate infrastructure. It was suggested that some of the infrastructure associated with the pond and irrigation systems on part of the former Canberry Fair site is now having to be maintained by the body corporate, and that this is going to be costly for owners of the adjacent units.
- It is unclear whether the facilities proposed to be included as part of the Norrebro development (on the corner of Aspinall Street and Negus Crescent) will be accessible by other residents of North Watson. This needs to be clarified.
- The proposed inclusion of units in 5 to 6 storey developments as part of the Norrebro development is inappropriate for the area.
- The current playgrounds in North Watson are inadequate for the number of children in the area.

WCA and Living Streets Association also indicated that they were undertaking a separate survey/petition about the proposed TPV.

Online survey

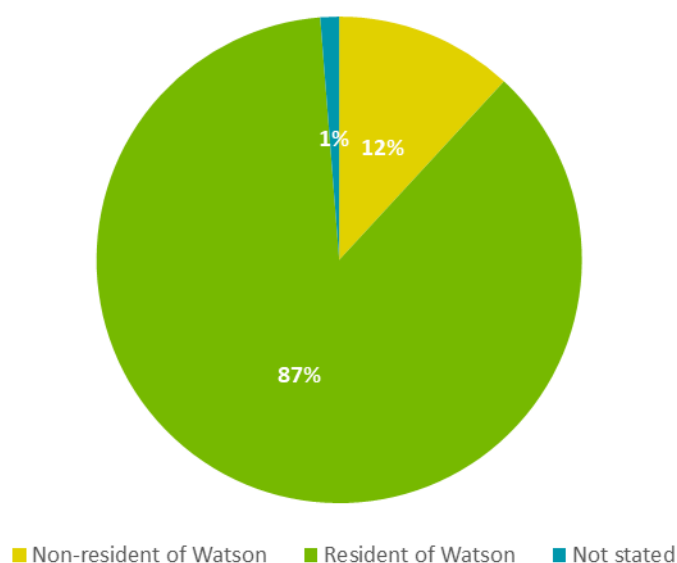
The online survey was open from the time of the initial public information session on Saturday 23rd June until Sunday 5th August 2018. The survey received 160 responses in this time. A copy of the survey format and questions asked is included in the Appendix to this report.

Many of the issues identified in the responses to the survey are the same as those identified at the initial public information session and subsequent WCA meeting. A small number of responses were provided on paper copies of the survey. These responses were entered into the survey electronically and are included in the summary information below.

Respondents

The vast majority of respondents to the survey indicated that they were current residents of Watson (including North Watson), at around 87%, as shown in Figure 2.

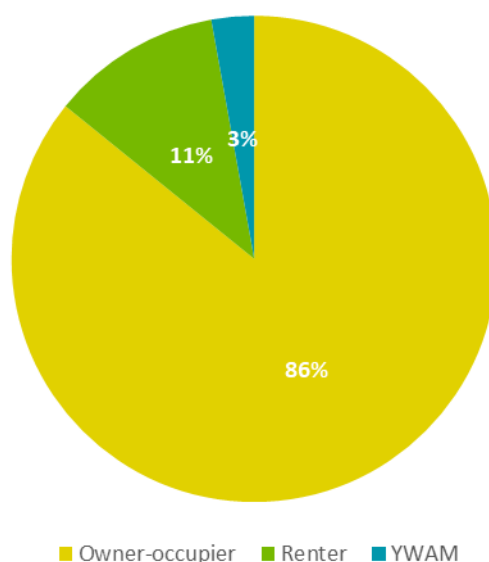
FIGURE 2: RESPONDENTS TO SURVEY



Source: SGS, 2018.

The vast majority of Watson residents who responded were also owner-occupiers, at 86%, with around 11% currently renting in the suburb. A small number of responses were also received from people residing at Youth With a Mission (YWAM), as illustrated in Figure 3 below. A number of the owner-occupiers indicated that they also own rental properties in Watson.

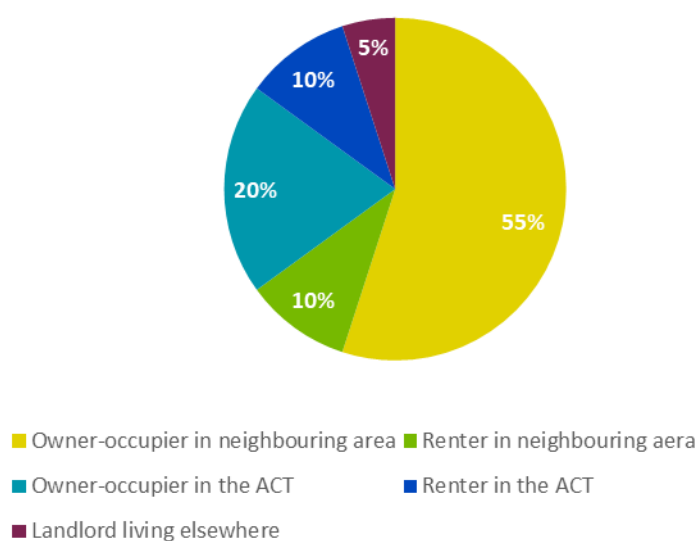
FIGURE 3: HOUSING TENURE OF RESIDENT RESPONDENTS



Source: SGS, 2018.

Of the respondents who were non-residents of Watson, a majority were owner-occupiers living in neighbouring suburbs including Downer, Hackett, Dickson and Ainslie, at around 55%. As shown in Figure 4 below, around 20% of respondents were home owners from elsewhere in the ACT, and a further 5% were living somewhere else but owned a property in Watson. Around 10% each of the non-resident responses were from renters in the neighbouring suburbs and renters from elsewhere in the ACT respectively.

FIGURE 4: HOUSING TENURE OF NON-RESIDENT RESPONDENTS

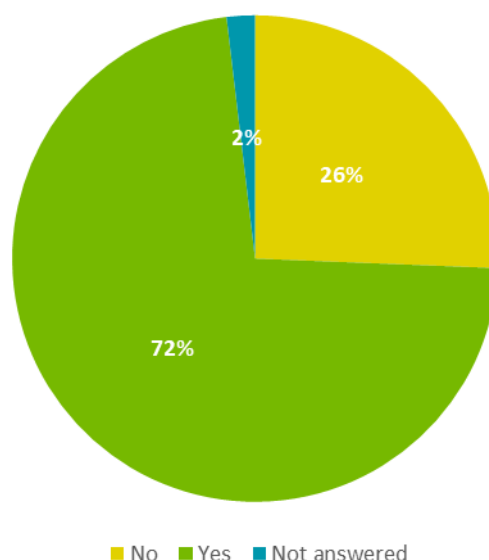


Source: SGS, 2018.

Need to limit land uses to current CZ6

In response to the question on whether there was a need to limit land uses on the subject sites to those currently allowed under the CZ6 zoning, the majority of respondents said yes (72%), while around a quarter (26%) said no, as shown in Figure 5 below.

FIGURE 5: RESPONSES ON NEED TO LIMIT USES TO EXISTING CZ6



Source: SGS, 2018.

Many of the respondents provided additional comments to this question. A consistent theme from these responses was that further residential development in North Watson would reduce amenity for existing residents. A significant proportion of responses referred to the need for more community facilities to be provided for North Watson to meet demand and accommodate the growth of the suburb at its current size. Many identified a need for master planning for North Watson to be undertaken, given the existing pace of development.

Many responses referred to the number and scale of other developments within North Watson, which have either been approved or are in the planning stages. The Norrebro development on the former Channel 9 site was mentioned specifically, with particular concern about the proposed height of 5 to 6 storeys on some parts of this development. There was concern that future residential development on Sections 74 and 76 could also include this type of higher density dwellings. Many responses indicated a preference for lower density housing to be provided on the sites.

Some responses suggested that residential development would be appropriate so long as adequate community and other services were provided to meet current and future levels of demand generated by such development. Areas of particular concern included public transport and pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. Many responses also identified a need for sporting facilities and outdoor recreation space. Of particular concern for a number of respondents was the impact on local schools, particularly on Majura Primary, but also on high school catchments and the capacity of high schools in the area.

There was also a perception among the comments that introducing residential uses would mean that the sites would ultimately be developed primarily for residential units and not include any of the CZ6 uses allowed under the current zoning.

Several responses expressed support for Section 76, in particular, to be retained as green space, potentially as a park for the community or as a nature reserve for the wildlife that inhabit it.

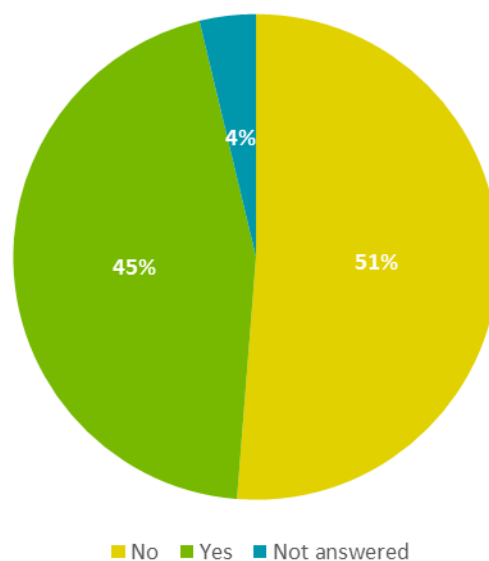
Some responses suggested alternative commercial uses for Section 74, in particular, such as using it for a tourist information venue, in keeping with its position near the Federal Highway and the gateway to Canberra. A number of responses also expressed a preference for a café or restaurant to be included as part of any development.

Many responses identified concerns about the impact of development on traffic, particularly as vehicular access will not be possible from the Federal Highway. This was seen as likely to impact significantly on Aspinall Street.

Demand for additional dwellings

Around half (51%) of respondents said that there was not likely to be demand for additional dwellings in the area, while around 45 % that there would be, as shown below in Figure 6.

FIGURE 6: RESPONSES ON LIKELY DEMAND FOR RESIDENTIAL IN THE AREA



Source: SGS, 2018.

A number of respondents also provided particular comments relating to this question.

Many responses noted that, yes, there is obviously likely to be continued demand for housing in this part of Canberra, but that this in itself was not necessarily a good reason to proceed with the proposal. It was suggested that housing demand needed to be balanced with community benefits. A consistent perception was that the proposal was being driven by developers and was focused on a potential monetary return without due consideration for the impact on the suburb and the quality of life for existing residents. Support for a cohesive plan for North Watson was expressed again in responses to this question.

Consistent with the comments received in relation to other survey questions, the responses identified a need for better planning generally to meet the demand for facilities and services in North Watson, given its level of growth.

There was particular concern from some respondents about the quality of new housing being developed, and that releasing the subject sites for residential uses would deliver more of the same. This included the size of dwellings being quite small, and the perceived poor quality of development (The Fair being one example). There was also a perception among some of those who had responded that increased development in recent years had kept unit prices in Watson low.

Some responses identified a preference for lower density housing to be included on the sites rather than the one and two bedroom units currently being delivered. A number of responses

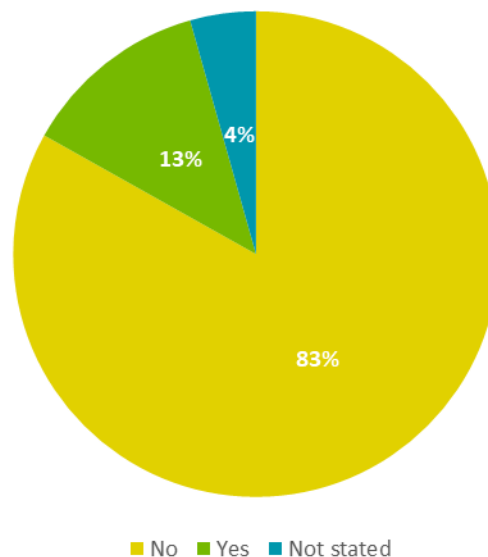
also mentioned a need for a different type of product that could appeal to downsizers and older people. Similarly, some respondents indicated that they were not opposed to residential development on the site provided that it was planned correctly and delivered adequate amenities and services.

As with previous survey questions, responses included concerns relating to school numbers and traffic impacts, including the cumulative impact of cars from the development, nearby tourist accommodation, and traffic from existing residences.

Interest in buying or renting on the sites

The vast majority of respondents (83%) indicated that they would not be interested in buying a dwelling on the subject sites. This is illustrated in Figure 7 below. This is perhaps not surprising given that most of the respondents already own and/or live in a property in Watson.

FIGURE 7: INTEREST IN BUYING ON THE SUBJECT SITES

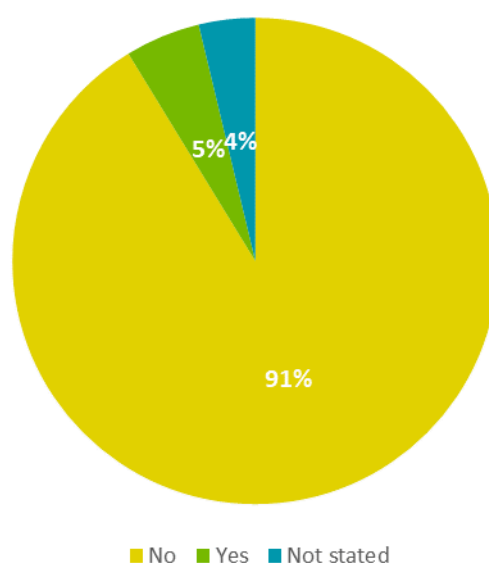


Source: SGS, 2018.

Of the 13% who suggested they may be interested, some suggested that this would be the case if the housing provided was in the form of aged care or a retirement village. A number of responses also raised concerns about the affordability of purchasing in the area generally, and the quality of building work on past developments in North Watson.

The vast majority of respondents (91%) also indicated that they would not be interested in renting in any future housing on the sites, as shown in Figure 8 below. Some responses suggested that the area would not be attractive to renters in future without adequate access to community facilities, and particularly if the housing was to be of a similar quality to other developments in the area which is perceived as poor.

FIGURE 8: INTEREST IN RENTING ON THE SUBJECT SITES



Source: SGS 2018.

Other views on the proposal

The survey included an open ended question asking for any other views on the proposal. Most of these responses were consistent with those identified above, and the issues that had been raised in the public consultation sessions.

There was strong support in the comments for the need to retain existing trees on the subject sites. Several reasons were identified by respondents, ranging from the protection of the Superb Parrot habitat in particular, to providing habitat for wildlife in general (particularly kangaroos), to the need to retain green space for the community. The visual amenity of the existing trees on Section 76 was identified as an important issue for respondents, as important to retaining the character of the suburb as well as the ethos of the 'bush capital' for Canberra overall.

Related to this, there was a perception among respondents that the green and recreation space currently provided in North Watson was inadequate, both in terms of serving a growing population and in terms of the facilities provided, such as the park equipment for children being unshaded.

As identified in the responses to other questions, many community members are concerned with the potential impact of the proposal on car traffic, perceived to be exacerbated by the lack of future direct access from the Federal Highway. This was particularly noted as a problem as many drivers use Aspinall and Antill Streets to rat-run to other parts of the city.

The existing capacity of schools was mentioned consistently by respondents. Many identified that Majura Primary, as well as Lyneham and Campbell High Schools (both PEAs for Watson) were experiencing capacity pressures.

There was support identified for the development of shop and café type facilities at these sites given their location, and an existing lack of such facilities in North Watson in particular. Capacity issues around the Watson local shops, particularly with regard to parking, were seen as compounding this need.

As identified above, there was some scepticism that CZ6 uses would be provided on the sites if residential were to be allowed, and that existing provision of infrastructure would be insufficient to provide for expected growth.

Many responses similarly suggested the need for a strategic plan to consider all facets of the suburb, including schools, open space, housing and commercial uses.

Some responses were also critical of the form of the survey, particularly some questions, and the lack of focus on strategic planning issues for North Watson.

Other submissions

During the consultation period, a copy of a petition prepared for presentation to the Legislative Assembly was also provided to SGS by a group of Watson residents, in collaboration with the Living Street Association, WCA and Youth With a Mission. The petition opposed the proposed TPV.

It also stated:

“We are already greatly concerned with the three large residential developments planned/underway in North Watson that will see upwards of 600 dwellings created (potentially 2400 plus individuals with the possibility of 1-4 cars per dwelling). Existing infrastructure, services and habitat will be negatively impacted. North Watson cannot support further residential development.”

The petition had a total of around 330 signatures. Around 65% of the signatories indicated that they lived in Watson, with the petition also including a number of signatures from people living in other suburbs in the Inner North and in other parts of Canberra.

APPENDIX

Copy of Leaflet – delivered 20th June 2018

FIGURE 9: COPY OF LEAFLET DISTRIBUTED

PRELIMINARY CONSULTATION
Provision for residential development on land in North Watson

SGS Economics & Planning Pty Ltd (SGS) has been engaged by the ACT's Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) to undertake preliminary consultation for a proposed Territory Plan Variation to provide for residential use in addition to existing CZ6 Leisure and Accommodation uses, on Blocks 10, 11 and 12 Section 74, and Block 2 Section 76 Watson (North Watson).

The boundaries of the relevant parcels of land are shown in red in Figure 1 (opposite side of this leaflet). Figure 2 (also on opposite side of leaflet) shows surrounding streets.

The release of this land in 2020-21 and 2021-22 has been included in the ACT Government's Indicative Land Release Program, subject to a Territory Plan Variation. It is envisaged that these sites could provide for a total of around 400 dwellings.

The National Capital Plan does not currently allow for any direct access roads or driveways from residential development on Blocks 10, 11, and 12, Section 74 or Block 2 Section 76 Watson to the Federal Highway.

There will be an informal public information session, from 10 AM to 12 Noon on Sat 23 June 2018 at Watson Carotel Motel, 150 Aspinall Street, North Watson, where further information will be available. This will include information from environmental and traffic assessments. The public information session will provide an opportunity for community members to ask questions and to provide initial feedback.

Feedback can also be provided via an online survey from 23 June to 27 July 2018. This survey can be accessed here- www.goo.gl/forms/oLDj5Ji0Q3LyPwMg1

Paper copies of this survey will also be available at the public information session. All feedback is sought by Friday 27 July.

If further information is required, please email sgsact@sgsep.com.au or telephone 6147 2902.

Following this preliminary consultation and preparation of a Planning Report, there is a formal requirement for further community and stakeholder input to be invited and assessed by EPSDD, before a Variation to the Territory Plan can occur.

**SGS**
Economics
& Planning

Independent
insight.

GUNGAHLIN
Transfer of Land
Block No. 806

GUNGAHLIN
Transfer of Land
Block No. 793

76

74

0 50 100m

Copy of Covering Letter to Leaflet – distributed to residences in north west corner of Solstice complex on 15th July 2018

FIGURE 10: COPY OF COVERING LETTER TO LEAFLET

Dear North Watson Resident

Preliminary Consultation – Provision for residential development on land in North Watson.

The attached leaflet was delivered to most residences in North Watson on 20 June 2018, prior to an Information Session on 23 June 2018.

We have subsequently been advised that some residences in the Solstice complex did not receive a copy of this leaflet. We apologise for this oversight.

The information that was made available at the Information Session on 23 June will also be available at a meeting organised by the Watson Community Association, at 6.30 PM on Monday 23 July 2018 at the Community Centre, Tay Street in North Watson. Paper copies of the online survey will also be available at this meeting.

In addition, the preliminary consultation timeframe has now been extended to allow for feedback to be received up to and including Sunday 5 August 2018. This includes input to the online survey, or any other feedback sent to sgsact@sgsep.com.au or to the SGS ACT office, P O Box 455, Civic Square, ACT 2608.

If further information is required, please email sgsact@sgsep.com.au or telephone 6147 2902.



www.sgsep.com.au
Offices in Canberra, Hobart, Melbourne and Sydney
Shaping policy and investment decisions to achieve sustainable places, communities and economies.

Copy of Notice in Canberra Times on 20th June 2018

FIGURE 11: COPY OF NOTICE IN CANBERRA TIMES ON 20TH JUNE 2018

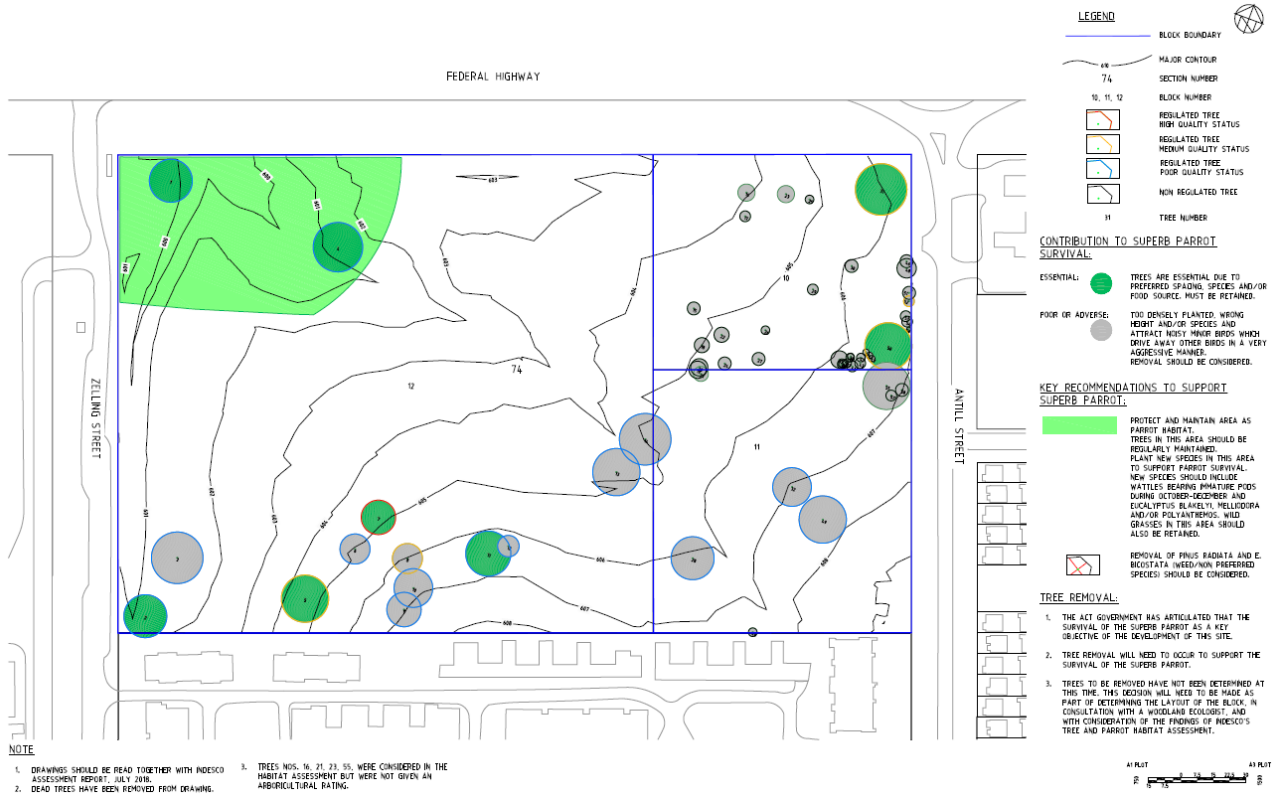
NORTH WATSON

Preliminary consultation is being undertaken for a proposed Territory Plan Variation to provide for residential use in addition to existing leisure and accommodation uses on Blocks 10, 11 and 12 Section 74 and Block 2 Section 76 Watson. More information will be available at a public information session from 10am to 12 noon on Sat 23 June at Watson Carotel Motel, Aspinall Street.

Contact
sgsact@sgsep.com.au or
phone **6147 2902**

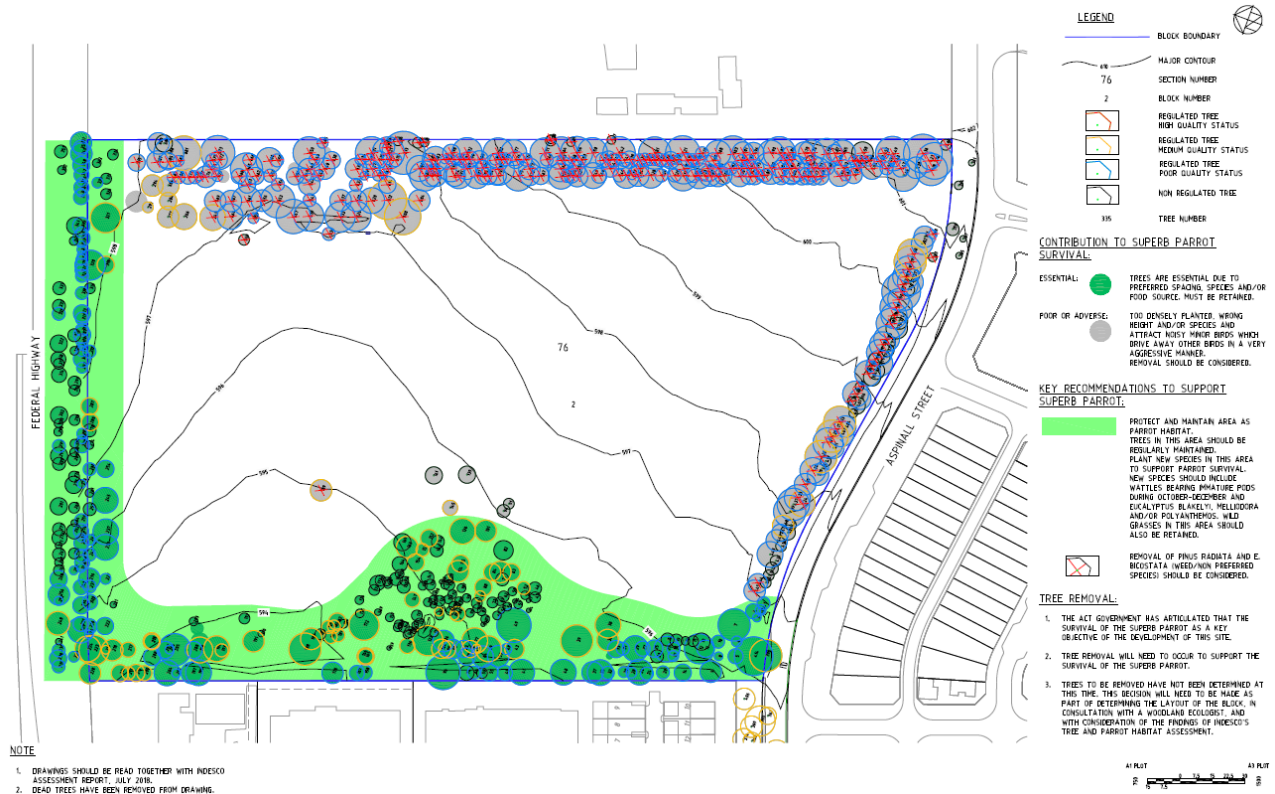
Tree and Parrot Habitat Assessment Maps

FIGURE 12: TREE ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDED ACTIONS, BLOCKS 10, 11 AND 12 SECTION 74



Source: Indesco, 2018.

FIGURE 13: TREE ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDED ACTIONS, BLOCK 2 SECTION 76



Source: Indesco, 2018.

Copy of online survey questions

Provision for residential development on land in North Watson

SGS Economics & Planning Pty Ltd (SGS) has been engaged by the ACT's Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) to undertake preliminary consultation for a proposed Territory Plan Variation to provide for residential use in addition to existing CZ6 Leisure and Accommodation uses, on Blocks 10,11 and 12 Section 74, and Block 2 Section 76 Watson (North Watson).

The boundaries of the relevant parcels of land are shown in red in the figure below.



Section 74 is bounded by the Federal Highway, Antill Street and Zelling Street. Section 76 is bounded by the Federal Highway and Aspinall Street and is immediately south of Section 63 which is occupied by Youth With a Mission. Under the provisions of the National Capital Plan, no additional road or driveway access to the Federal Highway will be permitted from these blocks of land.

The release of this land has been included in the ACT Government's Indicative Land Release Program for 2020-21 and 2021-22, subject to a Territory Plan Variation. It is envisaged that this land could provide for a total of around 400 dwellings.

This survey includes three questions relating to the proposed additional use of this land for residential purposes, including options for comments. It also includes six questions about you and your circumstances. The answers that you give to the first three questions will be treated seriously, even if you choose not to answer the questions about your personal or family circumstances. The information collected from this survey will be amalgamated, and survey results will be presented in a way that protects the privacy of individuals.

The survey should take around 5 minutes to complete. Please provide responses by 27 July 2018 (note this was later extended to 5 August).

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROPOSED ADDITIONAL USES FOR THE LAND

Question 1

Do you see a need to specifically limit the use of Blocks 10,11 and 12 Section 74, and Block 2 Section 76 Watson for current leisure and accommodation purposes (CZ6 in the Territory Plan), including tourist accommodation, camp ground, caravan park, indoor entertainment facility, outdoor recreation facility, craft workshop or restaurant?

Yes

No

Any other comments.

Question 2

Do you think that there is likely to be a general demand for additional dwellings in this area?

Yes

No

Any other comments

Question 3

Do you have any other views on the proposal to allow residential use as well current leisure and accommodation purposes (CZ6 in the Territory Plan) on Blocks 10,11 and 12 Section 74, and Block 2 Section 76 Watson?

Yes

No

Comments

QUESTIONS ABOUT PERSON RESPONDING TO SURVEY

Question 4

Are you currently a resident of Watson (including North Watson)?

Yes – (go to Question 5)

No – (go to Question 6)

Question 5 – For current residents of Watson

Are you:

A current resident of Watson and living in **an owner-occupied residence** with or without a mortgage.

A current resident of Watson living in a **rented dwelling**.

Other

Question 6 – For those who are not current residents of Watson

Are you:

A current resident of Downer, Hackett, Dickson or Ainslie living in **an owner occupied residence** with or without a mortgage.

A current resident of Downer, Hackett, Dickson or Ainslie living in **a rented dwelling**.

A current resident of the ACT, but not a resident of Watson, Downer, Hackett, Dickson or Ainslie, living in **an owner occupied residence** with or without a mortgage.

A current resident of the ACT, but not a resident of Watson, Downer, Hackett, Dickson or Ainslie, and living in **a rented dwelling**.

Other (please specify).

Question 7 –

If additional housing is built on Blocks 10, 11 and 12 Section 74, and Block 2 Section 76 Watson, would you potentially be interested in **purchasing** a house, town house or medium density unit on this land?

Yes

No

Comment

Question 8 –

If additional housing is built on Blocks 10,11 and 12 Section 74, and Block 2 Section 76 Watson, would you potentially be interested in **renting** a house, town house or medium density unit on this land?

Yes

No

Comment

Question 9 –

Your current household circumstances can best be described as:

Sole person household

Couple without children

Couple with children

Sole parent with children

Extended family household

Group household

Other

THANK YOU FOR RESPONDING TO THE QUESTIONS IN THIS ONLINE SURVEY.

Your responses to these survey questions will be part of the preliminary consultations that will provide input to a Planning Report being prepared by SGS. There is a formal requirement for further community and stakeholder input to be invited and assessed by EPSDD, before a Variation to the Territory Plan can occur.

Would you like to be kept informed about follow up to this preliminary consultation process?

If so, please include details below.

Name:

Email Address:

Postal Address:

Your personal details and contact information will only be used for the purpose of following up this preliminary consultation process.

If further information is required, please email sgsact@sgsep.com.au or telephone 6147 2902.



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