

*Your local voice*



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## **Comments on Development Application 201732935**

### **25 Stapylton Street HOLDER**

The Weston Creek Community Council (WCCC) would like to offer the following comments in relation to this Development Application that is part of the Government's Public Housing Renewal program.

#### **General Comments**

Council continues to consider that the change in the land-use criteria for Community Facility Use-zoned land to allow Public Housing is a wrong decision and should be reversed, as we have relatively so little Community Facility Land remaining in the urban areas of Canberra and it is needed for Community use, not for housing.

That said, Council has accepted that the building of public housing on this land designated as Community Facilities Use is a *fait accompli*, given that the Chief Minister and the Deputy Chief Minister have both stated that Public Housing will be built on Block 2 Section 21 in Holder.

Council has therefore moved towards achieving the best possible outcome on the site. During the consultations on the proposal a number of issues were raised that have resulted in a number of positive changes to the original proposal for the Holder site.

### **Some Initial comments**

There was a complete lack of consultation in relation to the Technical Amendment to change the meaning of Community Facility Use land, as well as no consultation about the proposal to build public housing on land zoned for Community Facility Use in Weston Creek before the proposal was made public in March 2017. The community and Council had every right to be concerned and angry at this lack of consultation.

The result was a series of public meetings that were attended by a large number of residents, many of whom expressed strong comments about the proposal - some residents did not want any development at all; some did not want public housing on the site; some supported the proposal.

Council also has some concerns that it seemed in relation to this particular proposed development that “the community” who was eventually consulted comprised solely the residents immediately affected, whereas Council is of the view that the wider Holder community should have been given an opportunity to consider the proposal.

### **Division of Block 2 Section 21 into 4 blocks**

WCCC considers that this proposal has considerable merit. Block ‘A’ will be used for the proposed supportive housing development. Council understands that it is proposed that the area designated as Block B, currently zoned as CFZ, will be re-zoned as Urban Open Space, which will be more appropriate for how it will be used. This re-zoning will then allow suitable maintenance of the area by Transport Canberra and City Services (TCSS) in the future.

That leaves Blocks ‘C’ and ‘D’.

Block ‘C’ appears to only contain the proposed footpath running North/South, leaving Block ‘D’ to cover the remainder of the land, including the Community Health Centre (previously the Primary School). It is assumed that this block will remain as a CFZ zone. Council’s concern is that with the land remaining zoned for Community Facility Use land, it could be utilised in the future for additional Public Housing. Council would be totally opposed to this. Council would again ask that the uses allowable on Community Facility Zoned land be amended to exclude Public/Supported Housing from the definition.

The WCCC considers that the delineation between Blocks B/C and Block D is too far to the East. This is a heavily used pedestrian route connecting the two major areas of the suburb which are subdivided by Blackwood Terrace.

These boundaries provide only a narrow 'linkage' between the shops, bus route etc., and the oval in both a visual and practical sense, as opposed to the current wide green link.

It complements and enhances the two 'green areas' of the park and the oval, both of which are well used. Visually, the trees on the proposed Block B link up with the trees along the footpath on the northern edge of the oval. We do not want a visual tunnel but a reasonable space.

### **Number of dwellings**

The number of dwellings in the original draft proposal has been reduced from 30 to 16, which WCCC considers is more appropriate for the site.

### **Site**

The site is well placed in relation to access to facilities, and existing access has been maintained

### **Access**

While the access road has a rather awkward junction with Stapylton Street, Council considers this to be preferable to other alternatives. The junction has been realigned and traffic-calming measures are also proposed. This has also allowed for the retention of several trees, which Council also welcomes.

### **General layout**

The original draft plan had the access road running North/South in the middle of the site, with dwellings in clusters on either side. Council considers this would be preferable to the boundary access road that is now proposed, for two reasons:

- The development site is now pushed further to the West, narrowing the distance between the proposed dwellings and the Community Health Centre. At night the Centre is brightly lit, which some residents may find intrusive.
- The access road encompasses the development on the East side and will act as a barrier to use of the open space by residents of the new dwellings as well as to their interaction with other residents of Holder.

### **Effect on existing residents of surrounding houses**

The development proposal provides a considerable landscaped area between the proposed dwellings and those of existing residents in Stapylton St and Williamson St. The realignment of the access road junction with Stapylton St also improves the width of the 'buffer zone' for the adjacent dwelling.

WCCC notes the intention to provide new fencing to these existing dwellings.

### **Dwellings**

The dwellings are well located, with good solar orientation to the North and no overshadowing, while houses on the northern edge of the development are set back from the existing trees in the park.

Car parking appears to meet the required standards, as does the provision for waste collection.

The physical profile of the development is low, which means it has a low level of impact on the visual environment.

### **Landscape**

There is minimal loss of trees due to the realignment of the road and the extension of the park.

However, WCCC is concerned about the responsibility for the maintenance of the large landscaped area within the development. Council appreciates that deciduous trees will be planted in this area, which will minimize winter shade on the existing dwellings.

The intention to fence the whole development with a 1.2m chain link fence on top of a retaining wall could prove to be visually 'separating' and Council suggests that this be reconsidered. If fencing is to be installed, we suggest that low-level planting be carried out on the outside of the fence to modify this separation. Separation by a fence may work against easy communication with the surrounding community, where we have seen a willingness to assist and encourage the new residents to become part of the community. It is therefore surprising to Council that the whole development will be surrounded by a fence that will reinforce the feeling of an enclave being created.

### **Overall comment on the Development Application**

WCCC understands and has considerable sympathy with community concern about the choice of site as it has been a green open space for over 40 years. While there has now been a good deal of consultation, this concern has not been completely allayed.

In conclusion, the Weston Creek Community Council considers that this development application is reasonable allowing for the comments made earlier in this submission and remains available to discuss these comments at any time.

Tom Anderson  
Chair  
Weston Creek Community Council