



ACT
Government

Environment, Planning and
Sustainable Development

Obj: 21/80922

Mr Bill Gemmell
Interim Chair
Weston Creek Community Council

Dear Mr Gemmell

Community consultation during lockdown

Thank you for your email of 18 August 2021 to Mr Ben Ponton, Director-General of the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate. I am responding on behalf of Mr Ponton.

I appreciate the concern your members raise regarding effective community consultation for development proposals continuing to be delivered.

The planning and land authority (the Authority) is of the view that developers can still meet the intentions of the Pre-DA Community Consultation Guidelines (<https://legislation.act.gov.au/ni/2020-595>) during the current COVID-19 public health emergency and lockdown in the ACT.

Given the current health restrictions preventing face to face meetings, the Authority is open to alternative means of consultation including digital (such as websites, e-newsletters, social media, live streaming face-to-face sessions, teleconferences and virtual Q&A sessions) and media (including newspapers, television, radio, social media and community media/community noticeboards, etc) to reach the community, in lieu of face-to-face meetings. This is consistent with what the Authority has been advising industry throughout the pandemic.

The guidelines prescribe a minimum two-week consultation period. However, the Authority continue to encourage developers to extend their consultation periods to reach the wider community.

Development applications will continue to be publicly notified by the Authority in accordance with legislative requirements. All representations received by the Authority during public notification will be considered in the assessment of the proposal.

If you would like to discuss these matters further, Mr George Cilliers, Ag/Executive Group Manager, Statutory Planning can assist you. Mr Cilliers can be contacted on (02) 6207 6804 or at George.Cilliers@act.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Dr Erin Brady
Deputy Director-General, Planning and Sustainable Development
Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate

10 September 21