



## **Draft Planning Bill**

### **Submission by Tuggeranong Community Council Inc**

#### **Tuggeranong Community Council**

The Tuggeranong Community Council (TCC) is an incorporated, voluntary, not for profit, non-political, community-based association operating within the Tuggeranong District of the Australian Capital Territory. The TCC is formally recognised as the peak community body representing the interests of the residents and the communities within Tuggeranong Valley.

#### **Support for Objects, Principles and Important Concepts**

The Elements of the Planning Bill seem to have been enhanced over the current Act and should allow for future challenges to be better addressed. The enhanced Objects of the Act and Definitions provide the opportunity to include many areas of concern that should be addressed in planning for our Territory.

We support the inclusion of the Principles of Good Planning and Principles of Good Consultation and hope they will be appropriately applied and thus build more transparency, trust and certainty in the planning process.

#### **Community Participation**

While it is pleasing to see the provision of a Scheme for Community Participation included in the Objects of the Act in Section 7, 1(c) and 2(f), as well as the requirement to make guidelines of Good Consultation in Section 10, we are concerned that the guidelines have not been documented as part of the current consultation for the Bill. Without adequate, well documented guidelines, things can be misinterpreted. The community should know these guidelines for the Planning Reform Project.

The Community Participation in the planning process has been a significant issue with the current system. It is hoped that the proposed improvement of the participation process will improve the transparency of the process and mitigate the community's concerns.

We would like to see the proposed Community Participation guidelines made clear to us all and implemented as a matter of priority. and the Guidelines can then be used to complete the consultation of the Planning Bill as well as guide the implementation of the Territory Plan and District Plan stages of the Planning Reform Project.

The *Principles of Good Communication* should be included in the Act so that their use is mandated and not discretionary as indicated by the Planning Bill. In support of the Principles a comprehensive



guide on public participation should be developed to document the process. The South Australian 'Guide to Community Engagement' is an example of such a guideline.

The Guidelines should provide for final reporting to 'close the loop' and inform all stakeholders of the outcomes of the consultation process. If developed as part of the finalisation of the Bill and a 'close the loop' report published with changes and reasons for the changes it will help with many concerns about the Planning Reform Project and allow the next stages to proceed with improved certainty and trust in the process.

The guidelines would not only set out the engagement process for the Authority but advise the community what they should expect, helping overcome the differing expectations of individual community members.

### **Territory Priority Projects**

While we are supportive of the proposed Territory Priority Project system, we would like to see some independent review built into the assessment of what we expect will be major and possibly controversial projects. Most TPP's will be of a scale that would trigger the need for referral to the Design Review Panel or the Environmental Impact Statement Panel. Referral to both panels should be mandated for every TPP. The reports from the Panels published with other DA documents, would then provide a level of independent review to enable better clarification for the general public regarding the new Territory Planning Act.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our comments. We hope that the expectations of our community group for improved and informative public engagement will be realised with the Reform of the Planning Act, that includes improved communication and consultation with relevant communities, leading to better designs and outcomes for the whole of the ACT.

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