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Protecting, promoting and enhancing the economic, cultural, social and environmental well being of the residents of North Canberra

The North Canberra Community Council receives funding and support from the ACT Government



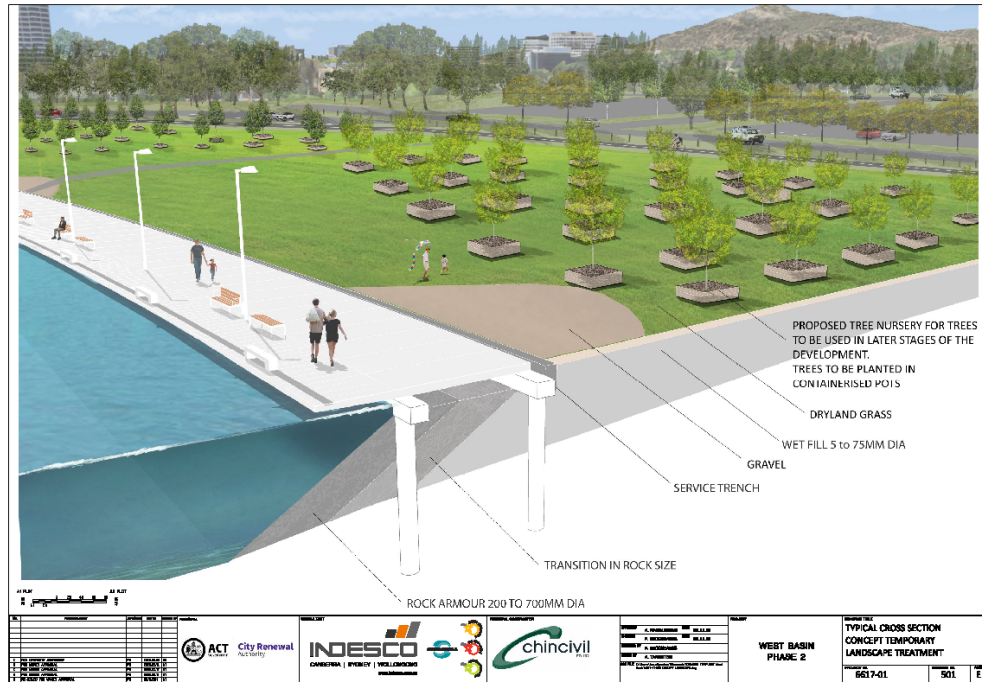
22 May 2020

To: worksapproval@nca.gov.au

Submission to Block 23 Section 33 Acton (Acton Waterfront) – Phase 2 Boardwalk and Land Reclamation

General Issues:

- (1) This proposal is part of and prepares the way for a West Basin Re-development Plan that includes the building of 2000 apartments (meaning 4000 additional cars and parking spaces), providing only space for two small parks and one already exists (Henry Rolland Park) as the rest of the area will be built on apart from a narrow strip for the boardwalk/bicycle path. **NCCC does not endorse the privatisation of public land/green space.** The lake belongs to the people and has been paid for by the community for the benefit and recreation of the community and the status of the national capital.
- (2) NCCC finds it increasingly irritating that the community is confronted with one development option for a given site, such as this one, without a chance to discuss alternatives. **NCCC requests a comprehensive assessment of the heritage, the national significance of and alternative opportunities for this site,** followed by the presentation of and consultation on, a series of options for the future management, development or improvement of the site. NCCC believes that there are more appropriate and ecologically more sensitive uses in the national interest for this space and its value as a public use asset.
- (3) Although we do understand the need for a step-by-step approach for the implementation of large projects, the current issue for consultation is an example for the typically piecemeal and misleading way in which many 'consultations' are being executed. **The large scale of the West Basin/Acton Waterfront project is hidden from the community as it is being asked to consider, for instance, 'West Basin Phase 2 Drawing No 501 - Landscape Treatment':**



and West Basin Phase 2 - Drawing No 500 - Landscape Treatment. The imagery shows boardwalk and infill without reference to the West Basin Redevelopment design for which a contract has already been awarded, and on which the ACT City Renewal Authority remains coy (e.g. <https://www.act.gov.au/cityrenewal/places/Acton-Waterfront>):



Source: <https://the-riotact.com/contract-awarded-for-west-basin-redevelopment-design/314299>.

Specific Issues:

- (4) Further to (2) above: **There are alternative designs to the current one, which are less intrusive and more ecologically sound.** For instance, a boardwalk could be constructed without infill and hard edge, so that the current infill area could be rehabilitated with water

plants and bird habitat, such as has been done successfully in many of the urban wetlands in North Canberra. In short: skip the infill.

- (5) NCCC understands that there is sound scientific evidence, including sightings of Platypus, that, although the lake is 'man-made', it is actually naturalising. **Creating infill and a hard edge shore-line will disturb and limit the ecological values of this site.**
- (6) Apart from being misleading, 'West Basin Phase 2 Drawing No 501 - Landscape Treatment' shows a landscape design fit for a car park: **the landscape design is as dull as it gets, aesthetically awful, ecologically pointless and makes no attempt to improve urban biodiversity.**

Regards,



Jochen Zeil

Chair, on behalf of the North Canberra Community Council