

SUBMISSION52.....

22 March 2003

The Inquiry Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories]
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Sir

Draft Amendment 39 to the National Capital Plan

I write on behalf of my aged parents who are the lessees of 35 State Circle, Deakin and sincerely trust the Committee will accept my comments on their behalf. Unfortunately, while they went to the trouble of putting their views in writing to the NCA in early December 2003, no reply has been received from that body.

As resident landowners, we consider the proposal is most discriminatory. We cannot understand why the NCA would approve early last year a four-storey development on Canberra Avenue with reasonable setbacks and no Plot Ratio control, but then consider the restrictive controls set out in the document of 25 November.

This proposal clearly contravenes the Main Avenues policy and will render State Circle a hotch-potch of deteriorating houses, minor redevelopment and perhaps some minor scale medium density such as townhouses. In saying this, we believe the proposed policy makes no allowance for single block redevelopment on a reasonable basis, except the corner blocks. Why is it that these blocks will have twice the Plot Ratio of single neighbouring blocks? Effectively, the value of our block is being cut in half!

The upgrading of the residential zone on State Circle has been mooted for over a decade. State Circle should be a premier address in keeping with its proximity to the new Parliament House. Buildings such as Foreign Affairs and the new commercial buildings on Sydney Avenue are consistent with the status of State Circle.

My parents had a legitimate expectation that their property would adequately fund their retirement. They looked to the eventual sale of their property as the nest egg that would secure their future. However, by applying a 40% Plot Ratio to single sites effectively halves the development potential or value of their block. Further, it leaves them with little incentive to upgrade or indeed maintain their home. Most likely, existing single residents will allow their homes to deteriorate as is already in evidence.

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It is recognised that State Circle is a Main Avenue within the context of the Plan. Yet, the NCA is in a peculiar way partially picking up the planning policies of the ACT Government and attempting to prescribe a suburban solution to the most important of Main Avenues.

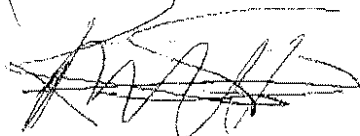
The 80% Plot Ratio and three-storey controls are purely the B11 controls of the ACT Governments planning policies of Canberra's Inner North. The current DA 39, however, contradicts the B11 controls as follows:

- B11 applies the higher Plot Ratio to all blocks, irrespective of amalgamation, rather than upon amalgamation; and
- B11 generally applies 7 metres rear setbacks rather than the 18 metres specified in DA 39.

The imposition of a Plot Ratio of 80% to amalgamated blocks together with three-storey limit and extensive rear setback of 18 metres is inconsistent with recent practice of the NCA, in particular DCP NO: 171/01/0001 of Feb 2002 for a nearby Canberra Avenue site in Forrest. Here the NCA allowed four-storey development with a 10-metre rear setback to the third floor and 15 metres only at the additional floor. No Plot Ratio control was prescribed. Likewise, recent residential re development in Turner, immediately adjoining Northbourne Avenue to the rear would allow a minimum of four storeys, if not eight which is planned at the corner of Gould and Moore Streets.

We cannot understand why lesser development would be allowed on State Circle, the most significant of the Main Avenues to Parliament House. Some say, it is because senior Authority personnel live nearby, and don't want development in their vicinity. If that's the case, perhaps there is a conflict of interest.

Yours sincerely



Robert Pastrello