

Submission No. 01

(DHA Weston Creek)

Date: 08/05/12



# **Proposed Development and Construction of Housing for Defence**

## **Weston Creek Australian Capital Territory**

Statement of Evidence  
To the  
Parliamentary Standing Committee  
On Public Works



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# **Proposed Development and Construction of Housing for Defence at Weston Creek, Australian Capital Territory**

## **Need for Works**

### **Identified Need**

1. There are currently about 2800 Australian Defence Force (ADF) Members with Dependents (MWD) who reside in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) area. The majority of these personnel work in or close to the Russell Offices complex and at the Australian Defence College (ADC), Weston Creek.
2. To service the needs of those families who do not own their own home in the area, Defence Housing Australia (DHA) manages just under 2,000 dwellings in the ACT and adjacent areas of New South Wales (NSW). At 1 February 2012, an additional 240 families were in private rental accommodation, receiving their housing subsidy in the form of Rent Allowance (RA). The proportion of families on RA is currently about 13 percent, which is within the Defence and DHA target of 15 percent. This project will assist DHA to ensure that the current proportion of Defence families in private rental accommodation in the ACT area does not grow beyond 15 percent
3. In maintaining the size of its ACT housing portfolio, and in order to control the proportion of members on RA, DHA must manage the 'churn' created by leased houses reaching end of lease and needing to be replaced. While every effort is made to extend leases on suitable houses<sup>1</sup>, there remains a substantial number across Australia that need to be replaced by additional leases, direct purchases and new constructions.
4. In order to maintain the overall number of houses in the ACT portfolio while replacing houses that do not meet the new standard and houses for which

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<sup>1</sup> In 2006, Defence introduced its New Housing Classification Policy that increased the minimum standard for Defence housing. Some of DHA's portfolio does not comply with the new minimum standard. These dwellings cannot be candidates for lease renewal, adding to the 'churn'.

leases will expire, DHA has programmed the addition of 229 dwellings, through constructions and acquisitions, over the financial years 2011/12 to 2015/16. These figures are derived from DHA's capital investment and residential construction program for the ACT region.

5. This program includes the Weston Creek development described in this submission. An additional 50 dwellings at Weston Creek will contribute significantly to maintaining the RA level in the ACT below 15 percent. Furthermore, this housing is expected to be highly sought after by families of foreign military officers undergoing training because of its ideal location less than 2 kilometres from the ADC.
6. While DHA is not specifically constructing these dwellings for the foreign students, the location, designed layout and grouping render this development ideal for their use. This estate will be developed such that it meets the needs of the broader ADF community. DHA has received written confirmation from the Commandant of the ADC confirming that it also meets the needs of the foreign officer students, in keeping with Australia's obligations under the Defence Cooperation Program.

#### **Options considered for meeting the need**

7. The acquisition of 'broadacre' sites followed by development and construction is DHA's preferred delivery method because of the economies of scale associated with bulk procurement of new constructions and the surety of supply that accompanies large development pipelines. This delivery method is even more attractive when well-located land in a highly sought after area is available, such as in this proposal.
8. Other options include the construction of housing on-base where opportunity presents, the purchase of developed land where available, followed by construction, the purchase of suitable established houses, and the direct leasing of suitable housing where possible.
9. In relation to this proposal, there is limited opportunity in the ACT area to construct housing on-base.
10. DHA depends upon a combination of new constructions on developed (mostly in-fill) land, purchase of suitable housing where economically viable and direct leasing wherever possible.

11. The reality of the ACT market is that these alternatives have not been able to keep pace with the Defence housing requirement and the churn created by the need to replace existing houses at end of lease.

### **Historical background**

12. Following the 2003 Canberra bushfires, the ACT Government rezoned land within the greater Molonglo and Weston area for residential use, including this Weston Creek site.
13. The Weston Creek site was offered as a swap by the ACT government for other property held by DHA in the nearby suburb of Duffy.
14. Weston Creek is a residential development opportunity in a sought after central suburb, measuring approximately 8.3 hectares in size. It is a well located parcel of land close to the major training facility at ADC.<sup>2</sup>
15. DHA agreed to exchange the ACT Government owned Weston Creek land, being Blocks 3, 5 and 7, Section 81, Weston, in return for DHA owned land in Duffy, being Blocks 4 and 5, Section 55, Duffy.
16. Development of Weston Creek is required to proceed under the auspices of the North Weston Concept Plan and the Deed of Agreement. These were developed by ACT Planning and Land Authority (ACTPLA) after extensive consultation with the local community as a part of the rezoning of land in the greater Molonglo and North Weston area. These documents were approved and adopted by ACTPLA for incorporation into the Territory Plan 2008.
17. The majority of the Weston Creek site is vacant undeveloped land. A small portion of the site was previously utilised by the Canberra Institute of Technology Horticulture School.

### **Heritage impact**

18. As a part of the rezoning process during 2008, a cultural heritage assessment was undertaken on behalf of ACTPLA to determine the site's suitability for residential development. The cultural heritage assessment report concluded

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<sup>2</sup> See Supplementary Items 1 and 2 for a map of the Weston site and an aerial photograph showing the site and its immediate surrounds.

that there were no heritage considerations that impacted the development of the Weston Creek site.

### **Environmental impact**

19. The land is in the southern part of an area described as North Weston which was subject to ecological assessments in 2009 and 2011. Based on these assessments, two referrals under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC Act) were submitted (EPBC Ref. 2009/4752 and Ref. 2011/6163) for the construction of roads, services and landscaping. Both referrals were determined not to be controlled actions. DHA will comply with the EPBC referral recommendations.

### **Contamination**

20. As part of the Deed of Land Exchange the ACT Government is required to ensure that the Weston Creek land (Blocks 3, 5 and 7, Section 81, Weston) is suitable for residential purposes under the applicable residential zones of the ACT Territory Plan 2008. Written endorsement of this has been obtained from the ACT Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
21. A contamination assessment was undertaken for Block 3 Section 81 in October 2010. The report was reviewed by the ACT EPA who endorsed the consultant's findings that the area is *'suitable for its proposed low density residential use'*.
22. The contamination assessment for Blocks 5 and 7 Section 81 was undertaken as part of a wider assessment of land within Weston Creek. The assessment was undertaken in February 2009. The report identified that a site specific Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) must be prepared by a suitably qualified environmental consultant and endorsed by the ACT EPA prior to the commencement of development works on the site.
23. In consultation with ACT EPA and ACTPLA, the preparation of a CEMP will form part of the conditions of consent for the Development Approval of Blocks 5 and 7 Section 81.

### **Key legislation**

24. The following key legislation is relevant to this project:
  - a. *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999;*

- b. *Defence Housing Australia Act 1987;*
- c. *Building and Construction Industry Improvement Act 2005; and*
- d. *ACT Planning and Development Act 2007.*

### **Impacts on local communities**

- 25. During initial community and stakeholder consultation, the interface and interaction with the adjoining Fetherston Gardens arboretum was raised. In November 2008, the ACT Government announced Fetherston Gardens would be restored as a community park. ACT Government, Weston Creek Community Council and the 'Friends of Fetherston Gardens' are working together to create a truly attractive community asset. As a result DHA has planned for pedestrian and cycle access through the project to the arboretum as well as the provision of additional car parking.
- 26. In consultation with the arboretum and ACT Territory and Municipal Services (TaMS) it was agreed the development could enhance water retention and make it available for future use by Fetherston Gardens. It has been agreed with TaMS that enhanced water retention from the Weston Creek site will occur on the arboretum site and the water made available for use by the arboretum. Consultation with TaMS, ACT Parks, Conservation and Lands, the 'Friends of Fetherston Gardens' and the Weston Creek Community Council has occurred with respect to the development and the arboretum.
- 27. Members of the community have enquired as to the status of any trees that are to be retained onsite. As part of the Estate Development Plan (EDP) process and submission, a qualified arborist has completed a Tree Assessment Report and subsequent Tree Management Plan. Where possible, trees have been retained in the estate development design.
- 28. Members of the neighbouring school community have reinforced their desire for a bus turning area to be located at the end of Unwin Place. In accordance with the Deed of Agreement, a bus turning circle at the end of Unwin Place is planned. Consultation with the adjoining Islamic School of Canberra, ACTION buses and TaMS has ensured that the design meets all of their requirements.
- 29. The ACT Equestrian Association has requested that access to an existing informal equestrian trail between the eastern boundary of the site and the



Tuggeranong Parkway remain. This request has been incorporated into the project design.

### **Consultation with stakeholders**

30. In addition to the earlier community consultation undertaken by ACTPLA, as part of the rezoning of the land, organisations consulted by DHA in preparation of the EDP include:
  - a. Crown Castle International (owner of the mobile phone tower adjacent to the site);
  - b. the neighbouring Islamic School of Canberra;
  - c. 'Friends of Fetherston Gardens';
  - d. ACT Equestrian Association;
  - e. Illoura Horse Owners Group;
  - f. Weston Creek Community Council;
  - g. Owners of the nearby McCubbin Rise residential development;
  - h. Australian National University; and
  - i. Owners of the AFP Services Centre/Police Training College.
  
31. Numerous meetings have been held with relevant statutory authorities since February 2010 including:
  - a. ACT Chief Ministers Office;
  - b. TaMS;
  - c. ACTPLA (including Environmental and Sustainable Development Directorate (ESSD) Land Policy, ESSD Deed Management and ESSD Urban Waterways, ESSD Estate and Impact Assessment);
  - d. ACTewAGL;
  - e. Jemena (manager of the ACTewAGL gas network in the ACT);
  - f. ACT Emergency Services; and
  - g. ACTION buses.

32. A cultural and social planner has been engaged to complete a review of existing social infrastructure, incorporating facilities and services, examination of relevant planning documents and background reports and to develop a community engagement strategy. The strategy will provide an overview of the social, built and natural environment and outline measures for informing and engaging with local community and interest groups.
33. The Director of Relocations and Housing, Department of Defence, Mr Alan McClelland, has been briefed on the project and has written a letter of support (see Supplementary Item 3). The National Convenor of Defence Families of Australia, Mrs Julie Blackburn, has also been briefed on the project and has provided her support (see Supplementary Item 4). The Commandant of the ADC, Major General Craig Orme and his staff have been briefed on the development and are supportive (see Supplementary Item 5).

## **Purpose of Works**

### **Project location**

34. Weston Creek is an 8.3 hectare property, bounded by the Tuggeranong Parkway to the east and bounded on the western side by Fetherston Gardens arboretum and the Islamic School of Canberra to the west. The site is 2 kilometres from ADC, 13 kilometres from the Russell Offices Defence complex, 2 kilometres from the Coolemon Court major shopping centre and 12 kilometres from the Canberra Central Business District (CBD). It enjoys expansive views across the arboretum to the Brindabella Ranges.

### **Project objectives**

35. The project involves the construction of road and civil infrastructure for a Defence and private housing project, followed by the construction of approximately 50 dwellings for Defence use.
36. DHA is an experienced land developer whose in-house development strategy creates acceptable returns while ensuring that the final product is suited to Defence requirements.

### **Project description and scope of works**

37. It is proposed DHA develop the site for residential purposes in accordance with an approved Weston Creek EDP. The proposed development plan is included at Supplementary Item 6.
38. Development of the site involves the provision of all civil infrastructure that supports construction of the 73 single dwelling lots (50 for Defence provisioning) plus 3 multi-unit sites which are expected to yield up to 47 dwellings.
39. Following the completion of all civil works, it is proposed to construct 50 dwellings for Defence use over a period of one year. The remaining sites will be sold to the public and/or builders/developers for complimentary development.

### **Details and reason for site selection**

40. Land is in reasonably short supply in Canberra. The rezoning of land to residential in the greater Molonglo area, of which Weston Creek is a part, has provided an opportunity for DHA to secure land and develop new housing which meets Defence standards in Canberra.
41. The site is located approximately 2 kilometres from the ADC, within 12 kilometres of the Canberra CBD and has quick access onto the Tuggeranong Parkway. It will provide well located housing for personnel posted to major Defence establishments in the Canberra area.
42. Its proximity within Weston Creek provides Defence families with good opportunities for employment and easy access to local schools and amenities. The Weston Creek site was part of an ACT Government request for land exchange in return for a DHA site located in Duffy. The land exchange was effected on 31 May 2010.

### **Public transport**

43. The area is served by public transport via the Canberra ACTION bus network with an existing bus route along Heysen Street. A bus stop is located on the northern side of Heysen Street for eastbound services near Gruner Street. A bus stop for westbound services is located a short distance west of Gruner

Street. Both existing bus stops are within 400 metres of the southern edge of the DHA site and pedestrian and cycle pathways within the estate have been designed to link with the bus stops and with cycle paths that connect with the Canberra cycleway network.

### **Local road and traffic concerns**

44. As a part of the rezoning of land in the greater Molongo area, of which Weston Creek is a small part, a wider traffic impact statement was undertaken. The statement concluded that, whilst development of the Weston Creek site would generate additional traffic on the surrounding road network, the overall peak hour increases would be relatively low. Nevertheless, the Development Agreement (DA) provides for the construction of a new four-way roundabout at the intersection of Heysen Street and Hilder Street, and the construction of Unwin Place, including a bus turning circle.
45. A further Traffic Impact Assessment was undertaken as part of the estate development planning process. This subsequent report re-iterated the initial findings and provided further commentary of the detailed design.
46. The proposed connecting road between Heysen Street and Unwin Place will assist to mitigate impacts rather than concentrating egress at one street.
47. The layout and detailed design reflects stakeholder concerns with respect to reducing the potential for 'rat-running' through the project. Traffic calming measures where appropriate within the estate and at entry roads are proposed.
48. On-street parking is provided in accordance with the Residential Subdivision Development Code. Parking for each dwelling is provided in accordance with the Residential Zones – Single Dwelling Housing Development Code at the requisite dimensions set down in the DHA Design and Construction Specification.
49. The provision of additional public car parking at the boundary of Fetherston Gardens along with access for maintenance vehicles is being provided.

### **Zoning and land approvals**

50. Development of Weston Creek is required to proceed under the auspices of the North Weston Concept Plan and the Deed of Agreement as developed by ACT

Planning and Land Authority (ACTPLA) as a part of the rezoning of land in the greater Molonglo and North Weston area. These documents were approved and adopted by ACTPLA for incorporation into the Territory Plan in 2008.

51. The land is zoned as RZ3 Urban Residential Zone and RZ1 Suburban Zone with a Future Urban Area (FUA) overlay.
52. The responsible planning authority for the Weston Creek site is ACTPLA.
53. An Estate Development Plan (EDP) and application for development must be submitted to ACTPLA for approval in accordance with the ACT Planning and Development Act 2007.
54. The EDP for the project was formally lodged for consideration and approval with ACTPLA on 30 November 2011, and resubmitted on 5 April 2012 in response to agency circulation comments received.
55. Following written endorsement from ACTPLA, the EDP will be submitted as a Development Application to obtain development approval.

### **Planning and design concepts**

56. The design of the Estate provides an accessible public open space network that responds to community requirements and incorporates landscaping and place-making elements that contribute to its character and identity.
57. The street network provides a safe, legible and connective system, convenient for all users. The street layout and associated paths encourage walking and cycling. The network is safe and accessible for pedestrians and cyclists and connects with the external pathway network.
58. An equestrian trail is provided in the 'linear park' east of the Estate which connects horse holding paddocks east of the Tuggeranong Parkway with equestrian facilities in Molonglo and beyond.
59. The block layout responds generally to the zoning identified in the Concept Plan for Weston Creek, the Territory Plan, the Deed of Agreement and the housing requirements for DHA. The layout has located standard residential allotments towards the northern end of the Estate whilst placing higher density multi-dwelling blocks to the south, adjacent to public transport and recreation areas.

60. The project has been designed for a diverse and vibrant community providing a range of dwelling types in accordance with the Deed of Agreement, the Concept Plan and DHA housing requirements.

BLOCK SIZE	FRONTAGE	NUMBER OF BLOCKS	PERCENTAGE % OF TOTAL	NUMBER OF DWELLINGS
0 - 250m <sup>2</sup>	9.5	8	10.5	8
251 - 350m <sup>2</sup>	10-12	4	5.3	4
351 - 450m <sup>2</sup>	14-15	9	11.8	9
451- 650m <sup>2</sup>	14-19	52	68.5	52
MU (Multi Unit Sites)	35-100	3	3.9	47
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>76</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>120</b>

61. DHA expects that designs tendered will be contemporary, using a mix of different external materials and finishes with a view to diversity in the built form that will constitute its Weston Creek estate. Final work on housing typologies and finishes is yet to occur. However, in line with previous DHA developments, the focus will be on ensuring that DHA's requirements in terms of amenity can be met on the smaller lot sizes that generally characterise this estate.

#### **Dwelling design, construction and civil works**

62. All design and construction works carried out as part of this project will comply with or exceed ACT and Federal Government controls and requirements, and all housing works will meet the requirements of the Building Code of Australia.
63. Civil works will be approved by the ACT Government, TaMS, NBN Co. and ActewAGL. All building construction requiring certification will be undertaken by approved Private Certifiers.

#### **Utilities, stormwater, soils and flood control**

64. High voltage power supplies are available from existing overhead transmission cables traversing the site between Unwin Place and Heysen Street. These high voltage supplies will be relocated to the eastern boundary of the DHA site.
65. Gas and telecommunications infrastructure is available with connection points located at Unwin Place and Heysen Street.
66. Sewerage infrastructure is readily available, with connection points located near the Unwin Place and Heysen Street boundaries of the site.

67. There are existing water main services that currently traverse the site. These will be relocated as apart of the development works.
68. It is a requirement of the Deed of Agreement that post-development stormwater flows from the site are attenuated to pre-development stormwater flows. The estate layout has been designed in accordance with this requirement.
69. Overland flow paths within the site generally comprise the road network and flow from east to west and then in a northern direction. All low points located within the site are drained via a stormwater pipes.

### **Fire protection and home security**

70. DHA dwelling construction will conform to Australian standards and the Building Code of Australia. Combined security/insect screens will be fitted to all external doors, including sliding doors, and security screens will be fitted to all opening windows on the ground floor level.
71. In line with ACT emergency services requirements, bushfire buffers, known as inner asset protection zones, will be provided. These comprise a 30 metre asset protection zone to the north and a 10 metre asset protection zone to the east. Tree plantings within the asset protection zone will be undertaken in accordance with emergency services requirements for tree numbers, species and distance between plantings.
72. Blocks that require special bushfire construction in accordance with AS 3959 have been identified by way of a Bushfire Risk Assessment.

### **Acoustics**

73. The impact of road traffic noise from Tuggeranong Parkway and Heysen Street has been assessed. The vast majority of the site is not impacted as result of the Tuggeranong Parkway being constructed within a cutting adjacent to the site. A small portion of the site, predominately the south-east corner is impacted by traffic noise from Heysen Street and Tuggeranong Parkway traffic.
74. None of the proposed DHA dwellings will be in the affected area.

### **Landscaping – Dwellings**

75. The DHA Design and Construction Specification for dwellings, delivers amenable private outdoor spaces that meet or exceed the space requirements of the ACT Territory Plan 2008. Landscaping of these spaces will use drought resistant native plant species appropriate to the Canberra climate.

### **Water and energy conservation measures**

76. DHA constructed dwellings will achieve a minimum 6 star Energy Efficiency Rating (EER) as certified by an independent accredited assessor, using Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme (NatHERS) or other equivalent method.
77. Reduced demand on potable water supply will be achieved through a combination of water efficient shower heads, flow regulators to basins and sinks and dual-flush toilet cisterns. In addition to these initiatives, rainwater tanks will be used throughout the development. Blocks between 300 - 499m<sup>2</sup> will incorporate a minimum 3,000 litre rainwater tank.

### **Parklands and streetscapes**

78. A simple, legible and connective urban structure has been developed for the site. The urban structure allows for the creation of impressive streets and the establishment of a unique character.
79. The southern entry has been conceived as a memorable element. The entry will be defined by medium density housing and a centrally planted median.
80. The eastern road will mitigate traffic from residential enclaves whilst allowing connection between the southern and northern entries to the estate.
81. The freeway reservation between the eastern edge road and Tuggeranong Parkway, will be reinforced with informal woodland plantings to visually and physically separate the project from the freeway. Remnant native vegetation will be incorporated into woodland planting except where there is a public safety issue.
82. An equestrian trail is currently provided between the eastern edge road and the Tuggeranong Parkway. Informal woodland planting will occur on both sides of the equestrian trail further isolating the user from the Tuggeranong Parkway.



83. The proposed wetlands along the western boundary will be planted with native wetland species to improve water quality and provide fauna habitat. The pedestrian and cycle spine will be integrated with the wetland design to facilitate public interaction with the habitat. A pedestrian bridge will provide connection to Fetherston Gardens.
84. The western boundary of the site interfaces with Fetherston Gardens and the Islamic School of Canberra. A pedestrian and cycle spine is proposed along the western boundary, effectively joining the southern and northern entries to the Estate. The pedestrian and cycle spine will create a linear open space network linking the bus stop on Heysen Street, Fetherston Gardens, newly created wetlands and school sites.
85. An edge road is provided adjacent to Fetherston Gardens and allows visual and physical connectivity to this important community facility. The edge road will enhance the sense of open space in the Estate. Higher density housing is proposed to adjoin Fetherston Gardens, providing passive surveillance, encouraging pedestrian and cycle activity and enhanced security.

#### **Provisions for people with disabilities**

86. DHA will ensure that all dwellings will be built to the Silver Level Core Liveable Housing Design Elements.
87. A disabled parking bay will be provided as part of the parking bays adjoining the Fetherston Gardens arboretum.

#### **Community facilities, childcare and schooling**

88. Weston Creek is an established suburb of Canberra and is well served by nearby social infrastructure.
89. As outlined in section 33 - a cultural and social planner has been engaged to complete a review of existing social infrastructure, incorporating facilities and services.
90. The Coleman Court shopping centre in Weston includes two large supermarkets, cafes, restaurants, wide variety of specialty shops and is able to service the local shopping demands of this project.

91. Nearby child-care centres, primary and secondary schools include, but are not limited to:
- a. Duffy Primary;
  - b. St Judes Primary;
  - c. Arawang Primary;
  - d. Orana School;
  - e. Islamic School of Canberra;
  - f. Canberra Montessori School;
  - g. Stromlo High School.
92. The adjoining Fetherston Gardens arboretum is a public park under the custodianship of ACT Parks, Conservation and Land.

### **Occupational health and safety measures**

93. DHA contractors delivering works valued at more than \$3 million will be accredited by the Federal Safety Commissioner. All contractors must adhere to relevant legislative requirements, including Workers Compensation Act and the Workplace Health and Safety Act 2011.

## **Cost-effectiveness and public value**

### **Outline of project costs**

94. The estimated overall project cost is \$39 million including GST but excluding the cost of land. The cost will be met from DHA equity and debt funding and will be recovered through sale of individual lots and the sale of DHA constructed housing through its SLB program.

### **Details of project delivery system**

95. Site development and dwelling construction packages will be contracted on a fixed price lump sum basis through an open tender process. The successful tenderers will be required to comply with the DHA Design and Construction Specifications.

### Construction schedule

96. Subject to Parliamentary approval by September 2012, the significant milestones to achieve delivery of dwellings by December 2014 are:

Date	Milestone
May 12	PWC referral
July 12	DA Approval
September 12	PWC Approval process complete
January 13	Civil Construction commence
December 13	Civil construction works complete.
January 14	Dwelling construction commences
December 14	Dwelling construction complete

### Public value

97. This proposal will contribute 'public value' by adding to the stock of housing used to meet Defence obligations to members of the ADF and their families posted to ACT, thus enhancing the key objective of retention of Defence personnel. Key beneficiaries are likely to include families of foreign officer students posted to the ADC under the Defence Cooperation Program. More broadly, while alleviating pressure on the ACT rental market, the Weston Creek project will create jobs in the development and construction industry and, through the sale and subsequent development of the excess lots, provide additional dwellings to the ACT housing market.

### Revenue

98. Details of the financial aspects of the project are included in a separate commercial in confidence briefing to the PWC.

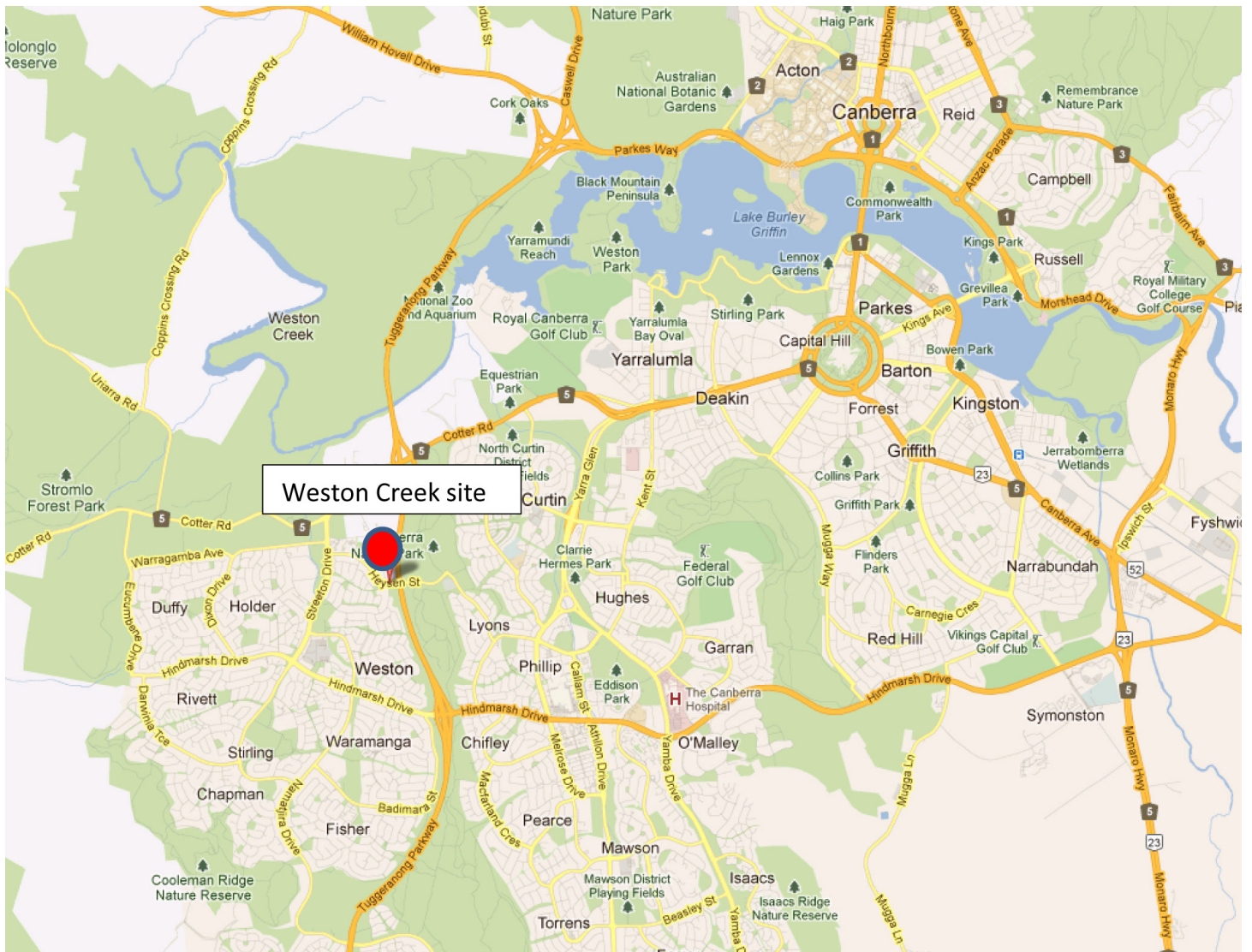
# Weston Creek

## Supplementary information

Item 1	Site location map
Item 2	Aerial of site
Item 3	Letter of support – Department of Defence
Item 4	Letter of support – Defence Families Australia
Item 5	Letter of support – Australian Defence College
Item 6	Proposed development layout

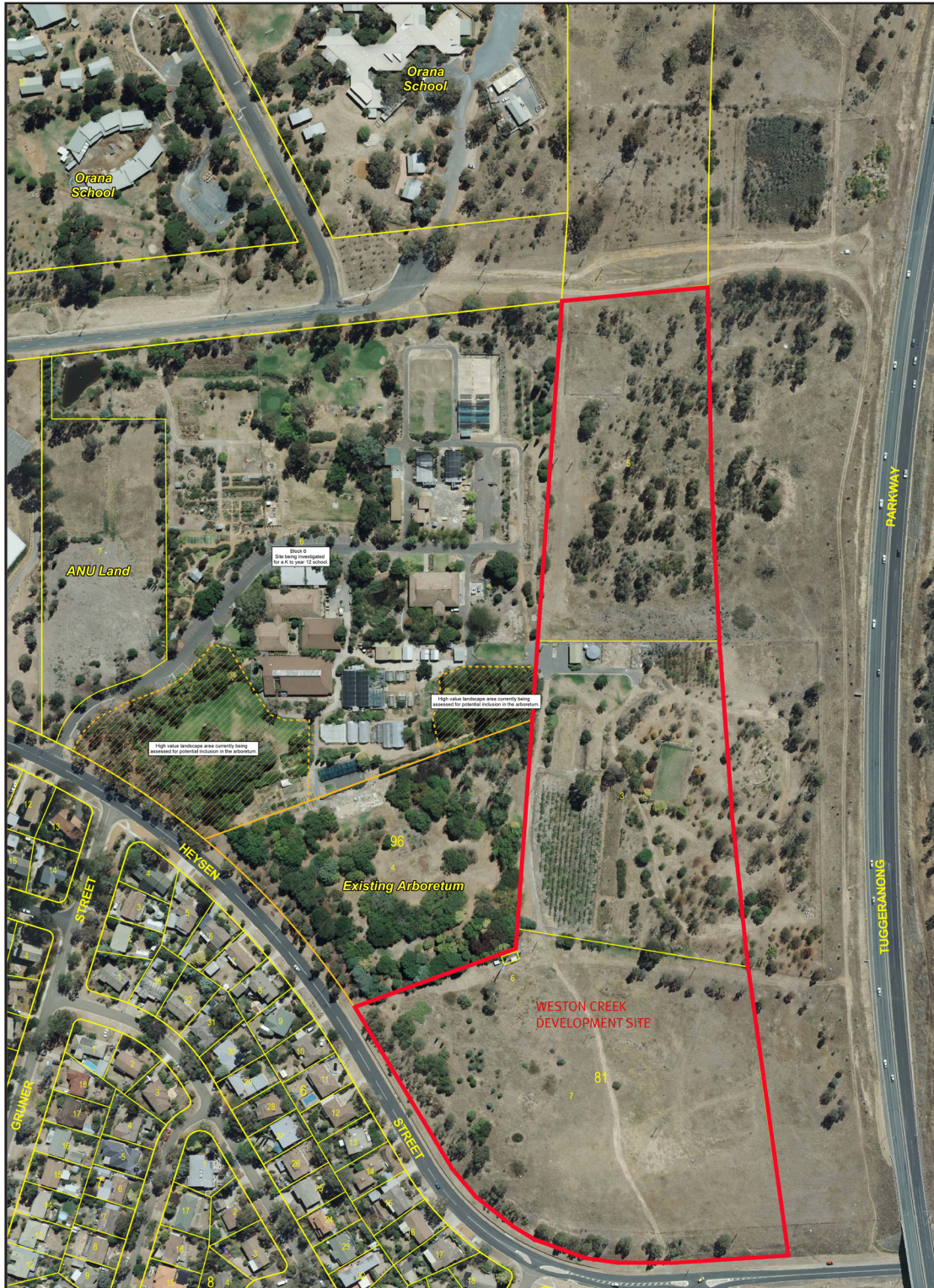
# Supplementary item 1

## Site location map



# Supplementary item 2

## Aerial of site



# Supplementary item 3

## Letter of support – Department of Defence



**Australian Government**

**Department of Defence**

Defence Support Group

### **Minute**

Director Relocation & Housing  
Garrison Estate & Business Support  
Campbell Park Offices (CP2-2-140)

DRH SP/OUT/2012/21

Mr Vern Gallagher  
General Manager External Relations  
Defence Housing Australia  
26 Brisbane Avenue  
BARTON ACT 2600

Dear Mr Gallagher,

#### **PROPOSED HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AT WESTON CREEK, CANBERRA ACT**

Thank you for providing details of the proposed Defence Housing Australia (DHA) development at Weston Creek. I have reviewed the proposal and I am satisfied that the development is consistent with ongoing Defence requirements. I support the proposed plan to provide Defence housing at Weston Creek.

Major Defence locations in Canberra are strategically important to Defence. Recent increases in the number of ADF members in Canberra, including HQJOC, have placed considerable pressure on DHA housing and the private rental market. Weston Creek is conveniently located to ADF bases and provides easy access to all suburbs of Canberra. It provides easy access to community facilities such as schools, shops and public transport.

Approval of this proposal will assist Defence and DHA to meet the increased provisioning requirements. I am confident that the proposed development will be popular with ADF members and their families.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan McClelland'.

Alan McClelland  
Director Relocations and Housing  
(02) 6266 3114

24 Apr 12

# Supplementary item 4

## Letter of support – Defence Families Australia



Defence Families of Australia  
CP2 – 1 – 11  
Campbell Park Offices  
Canberra ACT 2600

Mr Peter Howman  
Chief Operating Officer  
Defence Housing Australia  
26 Brisbane Avenue  
BARTON ACT 2600

*Defence Housing Project: Weston Creek, ACT*

*Peter*

24 April, 2012

Dear Mr Howman

I have recently received information that DHA is intending to develop housing at Weston Creek, ACT for Defence Families.

As you know, Defence Families of Australia feel it is important to be located in service housing that is in keeping with Defence Requirements - that also provides a backyard and proximity to work location. Access to schooling, amenities, and work opportunities for the family members is also of vital importance. My understanding from this presentation is that the development of housing at Weston Creek will be in line with these areas of importance for families. I understand that the site may be subject to traffic noise from Tuggeranong Parkway, and that noise attenuation measures will be developed in order to overcome this, by way of building construction and sound walls near the road side. Consideration of access to public transport for all residents living in this development, will also be of benefit to this project and families who will reside here.

Therefore, so long as this development will not negatively impact on those individuals intended to reside in this area, Defence Families of Australia supports the Weston Creek project as presented me at this time, and would welcome updates on its progress.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julie Blackburn', is written over a horizontal line.

Julie Blackburn  
DFA National Convenor  
Ph: 0410 626 103  
Email: [julie.blackburn1@defence.gov.au](mailto:julie.blackburn1@defence.gov.au)



Defence Families of Australia



CP2 - 1 - 11, Campbell Park Offices, Canberra, ACT, 2600



1800 100 509



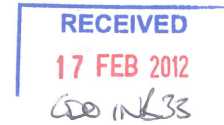
[www.dfa.org.au](http://www.dfa.org.au)





# Supplementary item 5

## Letter of support – Australian Defence College



AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE COLLEGE

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE, CANBERRA ACT 2600, AUSTRALIA, Phone:(02) 6266 0600 Facsimile: (02) 6266 0666

ADC/2012/OUT/R10845504

Mr Peter Howman  
Chief Operating Officer  
Defence Housing Australia  
26 Brisbane Avenue, Barton ACT 2600

*Dear Peter,*

I write in support of the proposed DHA development in Weston Creek. I understand that, while DHA is not specifically constructing these dwellings for use by Australian Defence College (ADC) students, the location and layout render the development ideal for use by the foreign students at ADC. Discussions have occurred within the Department of Defence and the ADC regarding the proposed residents of these dwellings. There are about 50 international course members and their families attending ADC, a similar number to the planned number of dwellings to be delivered for Defence use in this development. Current international course members occupy DHA dwellings located up to 10 kilometres from ADC. Most of these dwellings are over 10 years old.

The international course members at ADC are an important part of Defence's international engagement plan under the auspices of the Defence Cooperation Program and provide an opportunity for both Australian and international officers to form relationships to enhance and develop Australia's defence capability. An important aspect of the international student program is that many of the international course members are accompanied by their families.

Many of these families are from a Non English Speaking Background and their children require access to an Introductory English Centre (IEC). The opportunity for overseas course members' children to live in the Weston area and to attend the IEC at the nearby Namadgi School has contributed significantly to the international engagement program at the College. Proximity to the College has also assisted those international officers and spouses who do not drive. Experience has shown that families living in close proximity to the College and the IEC are more likely to remain in Australia for the duration of the course and also engage in College activities.

This development is a welcome addition to Defence housing in the Weston Creek area. While final use is still undecided, I will ensure that the needs of the foreign students at ADC are strongly considered closer to the allocation date of these dwellings.

Yours faithfully



C.W. ORME  
Major General  
Commander Australian Defence College

13 February 2012

# Supplementary item 6

## Proposed development layout

