

Engineering and environmental issues

Engineering

- 3.1 Evidence to the Committee indicated that a geotechnical investigation of the proposed site confirmed that it contains a significant amount of fill dumped from building activity in the 1970s and 1980s when the site served as a disposal site for builders waste and hard rock excavation spoil.¹ DHA advised that that fill was uncontrolled, and minimal compaction had occurred at the time of placement.²
- 3.2 DHA advised the Committee that it would remediate by removing the uncontrolled fill and replacing it with clean fill. Significantly, the ACT Government would meet the cost of the remediation.³
- 3.3 At the public hearing DHA was questioned by the Committee as to an apparent inconsistency in its statement of evidence. The inconsistency was between paragraph 7.4 and the executive summary of DHA's submission, which stated:

... the fill, from a contamination point of view, is suitable for use on residential developments.⁴

The proposed site is technically suitable subject to removal and replacement of previously uncontrolled fill.⁵

1 DHA submission, 4 July 2000, p. 7.

2 DHA submission, 4 July 2000, p. 7.

3 DHA submission, 4 July 2000, p. 7.

4 DHA submission, 4 July 2000, p. 7.

- 3.4 DHA advised the Committee that there was no contamination on the proposed site and that when referring to "contamination", DHA was saying that the site had not been the site of a sheep dip, a munitions factory or something of that nature.⁶ Further, DHA advised that, while the land was suitable building from an environmental point of view, from a construction management point of view, the soil could be said to be unstable.⁷

Cost of remediation

- 3.5 Evidence presented by DHA to the Committee subsequent to the public hearing confirmed that the cost of the remediation would be met by the ACT Government. In particular, DHA and the ACT Department of Treasury and Infrastructure had formally agreed that the estimated costs associated with remediation would be deducted from the site value.

Environmental issues

- 3.6 Evidence was submitted to the Committee that there were not any major environmental impacts associated with the proposed development.⁸ DHA advised the Committee that Environment ACT - Department of Urban Services had carried out a vegetation assessment of Section 24, including Block 87, and determined that the area between Teesdale Place and Fremantle Drive contains several mature Eucalypts that provide habitat and nest sites for wildlife, but is outside the boundary of the proposed development site.⁹
- 3.7 The Committee's inspection of the proposed site found that the site contained numerous mature and semi-mature native trees. DHA advised the Committee that it planned to retain as many trees as is practicable and to respect the presence of existing fauna.¹⁰

5 DHA submission, 4, July 2000, p. I.

6 Transcript of evidence, p. 42.

7 Transcript of evidence, p. 42.

8 Environment Australia submission, 2 August 2000.

9 DHA submission, 4 July 2000, p. 4.

10 DHA submission, 4 July 2000, p. 4.

- 3.8 The Committee concluded that the proposed site contained numerous mature and semi-mature native trees and that the proposed development would result in the removal of many of those trees.

Recommendation 6

- 3.9 **The Committee recommends that DHA take all reasonable steps to ensure that as many existing trees as is practical are preserved.**