



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Standing Committee on Environment and Heritage

MEDIA RELEASE

Issued: 26 February 2004

Canberra as a sustainable city: public hearing on planning for the National Capital

Canberra, Thursday 4 March 2004

Canberra as a sustainable Australian city will be the topic discussed at a public hearing in Canberra on Thursday, 4 March 2004. The public hearing is the fourth for the House of Representatives Environment Committee inquiry into sustainable cities.

As Australia moves to larger urban populations, the pressures on land, resource and waste management increase. To ensure that Australian cities of the future are clean, liveable and accessible places, the House of Representatives Environment and Heritage Committee is conducting an inquiry into *Sustainable Cities 2025*. The inquiry began late last year with the issuing of a 20-page discussion paper.

The *Sustainable Cities 2025* inquiry is looking at issues and policies relating to the impacts of sprawling urban development, measures to reduce the environmental, social and economic costs of continuing urban expansion and mechanisms for the Commonwealth to bring about urban development reform. The inquiry is also looking to develop a 'blueprint' for ecologically sustainable patterns of city settlement, with particular reference to eco-efficiency and equity in the provision of services and infrastructure.

The Environment Committee Chair, Mr Bruce Billson MP, says the inquiry will examine how cities of the future can meet the social, environmental and economic needs of Australia within the unique context of the Australian landscape.

"Integrating the built and natural environment in a sustainable manner requires planning and a clearly articulated strategy" Mr Billson said. "Identifying the issues and articulating a forward strategy for the nation is the target of this inquiry".

Appearing before the committee on Thursday are representatives of the National Capital Authority and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Government.

The National Capital Authority was established in 1989 as part of the introduction of self-government in the ACT, with a view to securing the Federal Government's continuing interest in the planning and development of Canberra as Australia's National Capital. The functions of the Authority include accommodating the Seat of Government and associated national and cultural requirements, providing national public places for all Australians to visit and enjoy, and to enhance the unique character and symbolic meaning of the capital.

The Australian Capital Territory Government is proactive in promoting sustainable development. The development of the Canberra Plan will aim to promote a concept of *People Places and Prosperity: a policy for sustainable development in the ACT*.

PUBLIC HEARING

Venue: Committee Room 1R4
Parliament House, Canberra

11.00 a.m. National Capital Authority [submission 144]

11:40 a.m. Australian Capital Territory Government [submission 154]

For **media comment**, contact: Bruce Billson, House Environment Committee Chair, on (02) 6277 4879.

For **background information, including submissions, and copies of the discussion paper**, please contact the committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4580 or visit the inquiry website at www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/environ

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