

aj Pooled
51-103



→ Fax to
Quentin Clements.
6277 2067
3/4/03

SUBMISSION 37

Mr. Ross Lightfoot
Chairman
The Joint Standing Committee of the National Capital and External Territories
Commonwealth Parliament
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Mr Lightfoot

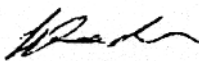
PARLIAMENTARY ZONE PARKING INQUIRY

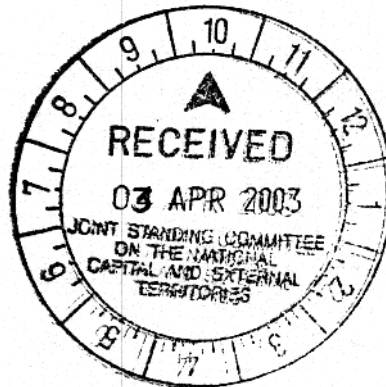
Thank you for your letter of December 2002 concerning your Committee's Inquiry into pay parking in the Parliamentary Zone. This is an issue that is of great interest to this Department and to the ACT Government in its pursuit of a sustainable transport system for Canberra.

Please find attached the submission of the ACT Department of Urban Services on this issue.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Inquiry.

Yours sincerely


Gordon Davidson
Acting Chief Executive
4/2/03



ACT RESPONSE : PARLIAMENTARY ZONE PARKING INQUIRY

The ACT Government has responsibility for strategic transport planning in Canberra. Parking is an important component of transport strategy and the parking strategies adopted by the Commonwealth in the Parliamentary Triangle have implications for the ACT Government's transport strategy for Canberra. Accordingly these matters are of interest to the ACT Government.

THE ACT GOVERNMENT'S TRANSPORT AND PARKING STRATEGIES

The ACT Government strongly supports pay parking in all town centres and major commercial areas in the ACT as part of its Sustainable Transport Plan. Pay parking in all centres will improve the management of parking across the Territory and will support the ACT's sustainable transport strategies.

The ACT is developing a range of strategies to make transport in Canberra more sustainable and to ensure that transport system is managed in line with sustainable transport principles. A major thrust of the Sustainable Transport Plan is to encourage greater use of public transport and more sustainable transport modes such as cycling and walking. The Plan also seeks to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and resource consumption and minimise the public cost of infrastructure provision.

Experience in other places highlights the need for an integrated and concerted effort to encourage greater use of public transport. This will be particularly true for Canberra, which has a high quality road network and plentiful parking. Parking management including parking charges is one of the main means that the ACT Government has at its disposal to manage travel behaviour and encourage greater use of public transport.

The availability of parking spaces is the key factor influencing modal choice and encouraging people to always use their cars, even in areas with good access to public transport.

Car users do not always recognise the full costs of their car usages on society (including social and environmental costs) nor do they correctly perceive the financial cost of their car usage. Parking charges are one means to give a more direct and effective price signal about the cost of transport to car users. Parking changes also help to make the cost of a bus trip more competitive with the direct cost of a car trip.

The ACT Government's experience with pay parking in other centres shows that pay parking has a number of policy and management benefits. In particular pay parking:

- Improves the management of car parking, allowing for different prices to encourage or discourage particular types of parking, eg commuter or visitor parking;
- Helps reduce car usage and therefore the resource consumption, air pollution, greenhouse gas and other negatives impacts of transport;
- Encourages the use of public transport and more sustainable modes such as cycling and walking;
- Ensures that car users pay some of the cost of providing parking infrastructure and services;

- Encourages more efficient and equitable use of land;
- Helps cover the costs of provision of parking infrastructure and the costs of parking management;
- Generates revenue that offsets Government costs and can finance car park structures.

The ACT Government's Sustainable Transport Plan will include an overall parking management strategy and various ways to improve and encourage the use of public transport services. Parking management plans including pay parking will complement the improvements in public transport, TravelSmart programs and the other initiatives of the ACT Government that are under development to move the Territory towards a more sustainable transport system.

ACT GOVERNMENT PAY PARKING INITIATIVES

Pay parking currently exists in Civic and Woden town centres, and at Dickson, Deakin, Kingston and Manuka. The ACT Government is introducing pay parking into Territory carparks in the Belconnen and Tuggeranong town centres during 2003. By the end of 2003, Barton/Forrest and Parkes will be one of the few remaining major office precincts in the ACT without pay parking.

The Territory is proposing to introduce on-street (kerbside) pay parking in the Barton/Forrest Area. However, this is subject to further discussions between the NCA and the Territory and would not occur before the 2003/04 financial year.

With the introduction of pay parking, the Territory would also be responsible for managing overspill parking in adjacent residential areas. Other agencies (eg DOFA) would need to consider the implications of pay parking in Territory controlled areas on the DOFA-controlled car parks in the Barton/Forrest Office Area.

In implementing pay parking in Belconnen and Tuggeranong, the ACT Government is having extensive consultations with affected land-owners, business, employers, tenants, community groups and other interested parties. This process ensures that the parking management plan takes the needs and views of stakeholders into account in the implementation. It is anticipated that the ACT Government will adopt a similar process in Barton/Forrest.

The ACT Government believes it is important in Barton/Forrest to progress pay parking in conjunction with the Commonwealth Government, as these actions will impact on the demand for parking in the Parliamentary Zone. The introduction of parking, even if only for on-street parking, in Barton/Forrest, will have an immediate and possibly severe impact on parking in Parkes. There would be a major increase in demand for parking as office commuters seek the available free parking spaces on a daily basis. There is likely to generate greater competition for spaces in the carparks of the national institutions and greater unauthorised use of restricted spaces in the area.

THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ACT GOVERNMENT IN PARKING IN THE PARLIAMENTARY TRIANGLE

In Parkes, the NCA has full responsibility for land management. ACT Parking Operations currently enforces on-street parking regulations on the NCA's behalf, but is not involved in the management of the on-site car parks of the national institutions in the area. These institutions are responsible for the management of their own car parks.

In Barton and Forrest, The ACT Parking Operations is primarily responsible for the management of on-street (kerbside) parking, which is approximately 10% of the total parking supply. The ACT Government also has a small off-street carpark of 130 spaces. This carpark has a user charge but is used exclusively by one organisation. The ACT Government is proposing to develop a multi-deck parking structure on this site, in due course, in line with the NCA's strategy.

ACT Parking Operations does not have a role in managing car parking on private land such as the car parks controlled by the Commonwealth Department of Finance and Administration (DOFA) in Barton. Under the Territory's Legislation, the ACT Government has no jurisdiction in these areas unless it accepts an invitation of the land-owner to apply and enforce parking regulations on the site.

ACT Parking Operations can provide a service to manage off-street car parks in Barton and Parkes on behalf of the NCA and the Commonwealth Government. However there are other management options open to the Commonwealth for the management of these off-site car parks, including use of private sector providers.

PARKING DEMAND AND SUPPLY IN THE PARLIAMENTARY ZONE AND SURROUNDING AREA

The demand and supply for parking in the Parliamentary Zone must be viewed in the context of parking demand and supply in the wider Barton/Forrest/Parkes area.

The demand for parking in the Parliamentary Zone comes mainly from employees and visitors of the Commonwealth Government agencies and institutions in the Barton and Parkes area.

In line with good planning practice, the NCA has restricted parking to less than required by new development in the Barton/Parkes area. The NCA has allowed new developments to construct one space on site and one space off site per 100 square metres of development floorspace compared with estimated demand of 3 spaces per 100 square meters. This has resulted, over time, in increasing demand for off-site parking.

Historically, parking in the Barton/Forrest and Parkes area has been available on vacant development sites, but progressively these sites have been used for development and parking opportunities have declined. The area is currently facing

significant parking pressures due to the redevelopment of several sites that had previously been utilised for parking by office employees in the precinct.

There are now two main sites that provide the bulk of off-site parking, in addition to the on-street parking supply. These two DOFA-controlled sites are designated for structured car parks under the NCA parking management strategy for the area. Both sites are being offered for sale as development sites. If and when these sites are developed, the parking pressure in Barton/Forrest will become extreme. These pressures will inevitably spread to Parkes as employees and visitors seek car parking as close as possible to their destinations.

There is also parking in Parkes associated with the Commonwealth institutions and in some cases these car parks are used by employees and visitors from other buildings in the area.

OPTIONS FOR THE BARTON/FORREST AND PARKES AREAS

The NCA and the Territory have for some time recognised the need for a joint approach to parking management. Officers of the ACT Government have worked closely with the NCA and have jointly developed an outline of a parking management plan for the Barton / Parkes area. This plan takes a comprehensive approach to parking management in the area and includes:

- Integrated management of public on-street and off-street parking in Government buildings and institutions;
- Implementation of pay parking;
- Provision for time restrictions and physical barriers to control illegal parking;
- Management and enforcement measures and protocols;
- Controls on on-site parking provision for new developments.

The parking strategy identifies several sites in Barton as future car park structures that could be operated by the public or private sectors on a commercial or semi-commercial basis.

The introduction of pay parking will assist in managing parking demand in the area, and is critical in facilitating the viability of future multi-deck parking structures in Barton.

The ACT Government recognises the importance of the Parliamentary Triangle as a visitor destination. There is a need to ensure that visitors to the area have adequate parking when they are accessing these national institutions.

A joint NCA and ACT Government approach is necessary to ensure effective implementation of a parking management strategy, including pay parking in Barton and Parkes. Neither can act in isolation.

CONCLUSION

The ACT Government strongly supports the concept of pay parking in all commercial centres in Canberra, including the Parliamentary Triangle. Pay parking is a key strategy for encouraging more usage of public transport, cycling and walking and therefore helping to achieve the goals of the Government's Sustainable Transport Plan. To make it effective and equitable it is important pay parking is applied consistently across the metropolitan area.

The ACT Government has been working with the NCA and supports the development of a joint parking management plan for the Barton/Forrest/Parkes area including the Parliamentary Triangle. The Territory will continue to work with the NCA and other Commonwealth agencies to ensure that an effective parking management plan is put in place in the Parliamentary Triangle.

In developing a parking management plan for the area, the ACT Government recognises the importance of the national institutions in the Parliamentary Triangle and the need to take account of the parking needs of visitors and employees in developing this plan. The ACT Government's approach to the introduction of pay parking in other commercial centre has involved extensive community consultation to ensure effective implementation.