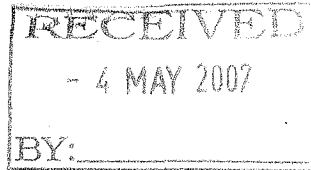
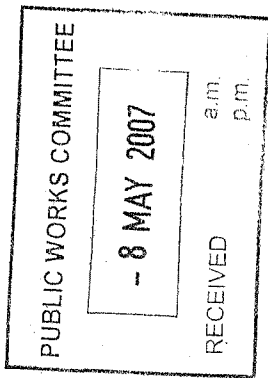


Deb Foskey MLA

Member for Molonglo



SUBMISSION3.....

Hon. Judi Moylan MP
Chair of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works
Parliament of Australia
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Ms Moylan,

Thank you for including me in the consultation process for the proposed fitout of new premises for the Department of Health and Ageing.

As you are no doubt aware, the ACT Greens take a keen interest in all large-scale building works throughout the ACT, and have consistently lobbied for both private and government agencies to adhere to more sustainable and environmentally friendly design principles in the design of their premises.

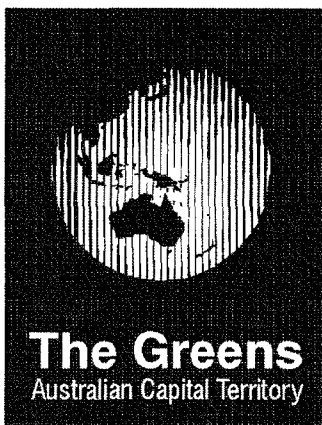
As both the nation's capital and the home of the Federal government's administrative operations, it is important that the ACT shows leadership on environmental issues, which is why I applaud the moves towards sustainable energy use and greenhouse gas limitation outlined in this proposal. It is heartening to see that the Australian Greenhouse Office has been involved in consultation on this project, and hope its recommendations on energy conservation measures are given serious consideration. In particular, I hope that the target of a 4.5 star Australian Building Greenhouse Rating for the finished building is met, rather than being allowed to slip from future plans because of a lack of political will.

Of more concern however are the landscaping plans outlined in the proposal, which include a water feature and two large lawn areas. While I understand the need to create a pleasant environment in which Health employees can eat lunch, socialise and find respite from the pressures of the office, the installation of a lawn area which will require constant watering, as well as a water feature which, while aesthetically pleasing, serves no useful purpose, represents an unreasonable drain on already-scant water resources.

In the current climate, water is a precious resource, and one which we must do everything we can to conserve and use efficiently. Yet this plan makes no mention of water recycling, and indeed proposes to install landscaping features which will require a huge volume of water to maintain. I would suggest that rather than a European-style landscape dominated by a stretch of perfectly manicured lawn, the grounds of this building should be planted with native trees and shrubs, which will require less water and maintenance while still providing the restful garden atmosphere envisaged by the designers. In addition, water recycling infrastructure should be included in the refit of the building as a matter of priority, as without at least "grey water" recycling no building can genuinely be considered sustainable and efficient.

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May I state again my support for the current positive initiatives outlined in this proposal, however I hope that more serious consideration will be given to water management in light of the issues I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Deb Foskey MLA
27 April 2007