

*Parish 25/5/77
J.R.*

DEPARTMENT OF THE CLERK OF THE SENATE
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On

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

REPORT ON
PROPOSALS FOR VARIATIONS OF
THE PLAN OF LAY-OUT OF
THE CITY OF CANBERRA AND ITS
ENVIRONS

(SIXTY-THIRD SERIES)

PERSONNEL OF THE COMMITTEE

Chairman : Senator J.W. Knight
Deputy Chairman : Mr K.L. Fry, M.P.
Senator B.R. Archer
Senator G. Georges
Senator S.M. Ryan
Mr M.E. Baume, M.P.
Hon. F. Crean, M.P.
Mr J.W. Haslem, M.P.
Mr A.J. Mackenzie, M.P.
Mr M.E. Sainsbury, M.P.

Clerk to the
Committee : Mr D.W. Nairn

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JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

The Joint Committee on the Australian Capital Territory was first appointed by resolutions of both Houses of Parliament on 8 November 1956 and has been re-appointed in succeeding Parliaments. The present Committee was appointed for the life of the 30th Parliament by resolutions of the Senate and the House of Representatives in March 1976.

The duties of the Committee as specified in its Resolution of Appointment are to:

- (a) examine and report on all proposals for modification or variations of the plan of lay-out of the City of Canberra and its environs published in the Commonwealth of Australia Gazette on the nineteenth day of November 1925, as previously modified or varied, which are referred to the committee by the Minister for the Capital Territory, and
- (b) examine and report on such other matters relating to the Australian Capital Territory as may be referred to the committee -
 - (i) by the Minister for the Capital Territory, or
 - (ii) by resolution of either House of the Parliament.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Having examined the proposals the Committee recommends the implementation of all items from the 63rd Series and those reserved from the 62nd Series*, subject to observations made in Part I of this Report. It supports the proposal to withdraw the two items referred to in paragraphs 5 and 6. The Committee recommends that the N.C.D.C. should endeavour to release blocks within such areas as those referred to in Paragraph 7 of this Report for medium density as well as detached housing where this is suitable and so that an option is retained where possible in this respect. The Committee notes that this has already been done in respect to Holt Map P5 Variation 1 where provision has been made for some "cluster" housing.

* Except the Campbell Park Item which was withdrawn.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY
REPORT ON THE 63RD SERIES OF PROPOSED VARIATIONS TO
THE PLAN OF LAY-OUT OF THE CITY OF CANBERRA AND ITS
ENVIRONS

INTRODUCTION

1. In the Australian Government Gazettes for 18 April 1977 and 12 May 1977 the Minister for the Capital Territory, the Hon. A.A. Staley M.P., pursuant to the powers conferred on him by Section 12A of the Seat of Government Administration Act 1909, notified his intention to vary the Plan of Lay-out of the City of Canberra and its environs. Members of the public were invited by the notice (which was published also in the Canberra Times) to lodge objections in writing with the Secretary of the Department of the Capital Territory within 12 days of the publication of the notice, specifying the grounds of those objections. On 6 May 1977 and 13 May 1977 pursuant to para 1(a) of the resolution of appointment of this Committee, 31 separate items contained in the Minister's proposals, and designated the 63rd Series, together with objections received by the Secretary of the Department of the Capital Territory were formally referred by the Minister for examination and report by the Committee. The Minister's letters referring these proposals for the Committee's consideration are at Appendix I.

2. The proposals were explained to the Committee by officers of the National Capital Development Commission (N.C.D.C.) and the Department of the Capital Territory (D.C.T.) on 6 May 1977. The examination included four items from the 62nd Series reserved by the Committee for further consideration in its Report on that Series. An officer of the Department of Defence appeared in connection with the proposed variation at Campbell Park, one of the items deferred from the previous Series. Dr C.L. Watson and Dr L.W. Day representing the Society for Social Responsibility in Science (S.S.R.S.) appeared by

invitation to present the Society's objection to Variation 13, 20 and 25. Mr J.W. Ray, a resident of Belconnen appeared by invitation to explain his objection to Variation 3.

3. This Report is arranged in the following manner. Each item in the 63rd Series is described in Part II of the Report in the order it was notified in the Australian Government Gazettes Nos. 12243/77 and 12747/77. Relevant maps and plans are attached to the Report at Appendix IV. Copies of the objections referred by the Minister are attached at Appendix II. Appendix III is a statement by N.C.D.C. of its policy concerning medium density housing. The Committee's comments, conclusions and recommendations comprise Part I of the Report.

PART I

ITEMS WITHDRAWN

4. Permission was sought to withdraw two items from the Series.

62nd Series - Campbell Park (Map N6 Variation 1)

5. This was an item from the 62nd Series reserved for further consideration by the Committee in its Report on the 62nd Series of Variation proposals. The proposal involves the addition of an access road off Fairbairn Avenue to serve the Campbell Park Offices Complex. The proposed road would have provided a second access road to the Campbell Park Offices. The Committee was informed that since the proposal was first put forward, negotiations had taken place between the Defence Department and N.C.D.C. involving major development in the area. These involved the construction of the Australian Defence Forces Academy. The Department of Defence supported the application to withdraw the item and undertook to provide the Committee with a comprehensive briefing on developments proposed for the area. The Committee agrees that approval of the access road would be premature until plans for the area are finalised and supported the application for the item to be withdrawn.

63rd Series - Intertown Public Transport Route; Belconnen (Variation 4)

6. In the previous series an area was included on the Plan for a public transport route. The Department of the Capital Territory intends to delineate the public transport route more precisely and denote it with a symbol. In the course of checking the previous gazetted reservation, it was found that the existing gazettal of the alignment of the transport route along Lathlain Drive is inaccurate.

The Committee agreed that the item should be withdrawn until the plan had been corrected by the removal of this anomaly.

MEDIUM DENSITY HOUSING

7. In its consideration of the 62nd Series of Variations the Committee was presented with a number of items which involved the provision of roads on the City Plan to service standard detached housing in areas previously designated for the development of medium density housing and institutional use. Objection was made to these proposals by S.S.R.S. (A.C.T.) on the ground stated at pp.10-15 of the Committee's Report on the 62nd Series. These arguments were reiterated by the Society in the current Series in relation to Variations 13, 20 and 25 which also involved the provision of roads to enable the designated land use in the areas in question to be changed from medium density to standard detached housing. Three items from the previous Series, namely Map Q4 Variation 4, Map P4 Variation 1 and Map L5 Variation 2, were reserved by the Committee for further consideration in its previous Report because it was felt that more information should be provided by N.C.D.C. about its overall policy in relation to housing density and the provision of alternatives to standard detached housing. The items from the previous Series were -

Map Q4 Variation 4 - Latham

The addition of a new access road off Rudall Street, Latham to serve 46 detached housing blocks (including 11 cottage blocks). Across Macrossan Crescent and Rudall Street to the west and south are existing detached houses. An area between the proposed development and Macrossan Crescent is also intended for future detached housing development.

Map P4 Variation 1 - Holt, Section 47

The addition of new access roads off Moyes Street and Chave Street, Holt to serve 63 detached housing blocks and two cluster housing sites containing a maximum 12 units. The section also contains 4 medium density housing sites served by Moyes Street. The area was previously designated for institutional use, with the southern portion designated for medium density housing.

Map L5 Variation 2 - Wanniasa East

The addition of access roads to serve approximately 280 detached housing blocks (including approximately 40 cottage blocks) in new residential development areas north and south of Sternberg Crescent and adjoining Erindale Drive. The area is bounded by proposed medium density housing and the Wanniasa Group Centre to the south west; Erindale Drive to the east; and proposed detached housing to the north and north-west.

8. Accordingly, N.C.D.C. was invited to brief the Committee fully on its policy in regard to these proposals and S.S.R.S. was invited to present its objection to items in the current Series and to comment on the overall policy of N.C.D.C. Some exchange of views was thus facilitated and these have been taken into account by the Committee. The full statement by N.C.D.C. on medium density housing policy is appended to this Report (Appendix III).

9. The term "medium density" is used by N.C.D.C. to denote types of dwellings such as town houses, courtyard and patio houses and flats. It was stressed by the Commission

that medium density housing does not necessarily mean higher population in areas where this kind of housing is provided, as the occupancy of medium density dwellings can be lower than that of standard detached housing which usually shelters larger families.

10. It has been the Commission's policy since 1970 to provide a variety of housing types overall and within each residential area. But it was stressed that, in catering for the housing needs of the community N.C.D.C. avoided compelling people to select particular types of dwelling and regarded selection of types of housing and living style as being a matter as far as possible of choice. Thus the Commission's policy had been to ensure that a variety of housing types and forms was available to facilitate a choice and to monitor and survey the demand so that sufficient housing of all relevant types was available to meet anticipated requirements.

11. The N.C.D.C. recognised, however, the social desirability of achieving higher levels of urban density to avoid unnecessary urban sprawl. It was an aim to encourage people to choose higher density forms of housing over time because of benefits that could be expected from such policies in terms of land savings, a more compact form of overall urban development, savings in urban development costs and convenience. N.C.D.C.'s policy is to ensure that sufficient serviced land is available to meet the demands for private residential accommodation. The Commission analyses against population projections the likely demand for different kinds of private housing. It attempts to provide both standard blocks and medium density housing sites of varying sizes and in various locations which will contribute to the availability of land at a range of prices and ensure its marketability and therefore acceptance by consumers. In Government housing the objective is to ensure an adequate

supply for the needs of those people on the Government housing list. Again, the Commission assesses the different forms of Government housing so that a choice in accommodation can be provided. It tries to ensure that there is a choice of housing forms, densities, environments and locations for people on the Government housing list and that there is adequate public knowledge of all forms of Government housing, particularly of innovatory designs which might be of interest to the private sector also. The Commission also has objectives in relation to existing housing, for instance - to encourage the flexible use of existing housing stock and where necessary to devise appropriate policies towards urban change in existing residential areas. There are other forms of housing with which the Commission is concerned such as hostel accommodation, aged persons' and other specialised housing; and the objective is to ensure an adequate supply of all forms of accommodation.

12. In alluding to apparent changes in policy referred to in the Committee's Report on the 62nd Series the Commission identified long-term and short-term problems which had to be confronted. In "Tomorrow's Canberra" published in 1970 these had been recognised. It was noted in that publication, when discussing the problem of retaining options for change that space can be reserved to ensure the adaptability of the urban environment in the long-term. But the reservation of valuable land near centres for unknown future development over a long period raises economic problems difficult to solve. This problem was arising, for instance, in towns such as Belconnen where urban development has proceeded round the periphery and the central area has very little development in it. The N.C.D.C. representative pointed out to the Committee that these reasons have been instrumental in leading the Commission to consider and review the amount of land being held for medium density housing, where it is creating certain problems

in producing the best town in an overall sense, the best urban development in an overall sense; utilising existing services, avoiding further sprawl further afield in the periphery. One aim of N.C.D.C.'s current strategy is thus to locate more people in the vicinity of major centres to take advantage of services and facilities located there and to limit the process of sprawl and the frontiers of development.

13. Shorter term problems are also referred to in "Tomorrow's Canberra". The Commission's assumptions were that in the 4 to 8 year period (the "immediate future") 85 percent of the population was likely to continue to prefer detached houses. It estimated that the proportion of those living in medium density housing might rise from about 7 percent to 7.5 percent. The Commission was cautious about what could be achieved in the short-term. However, in order to encourage medium density housing, and in case its assumptions proved to be too conservative, the Commission provided land for medium density housing substantially above the level of demand assumed. Detached housing blocks were supplied on the assumption that 85 percent of the population would choose this option over others available but land is serviced for medium density in various locations substantially above the short-term demand.

14. The figures of servicing of medium density land for the last 5 years stated as percentages of the total land serviced and expressed in terms of units of medium density as against the total number of blocks were as follows:

1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76
21.7%	21.7%	29.2%	32.4%	18.2%
		(1,900 units)	(2,585 units)	(800 units)

For the 5 years as a whole, N.C.D.C. serviced 7,500 units for medium density housing. As a proportion this was 26 percent of the land servicing program.

15. The Government housing program involved the completion of approximately 300 units in 1974-75; in 1975-76, 310 units; 1976-77, 350 units and the present program - or the anticipated completions in 1977-78 - is approximately 200 units. In support of this program N.C.D.C. has included several medium density housing projects in its government program as a means of demonstrating both to private enterprise and the public the advantages of alternative housing forms. There have been promotions and exhibitions, such projects include, Swinger Hill, Baringa Gardens, Kambah courtyard houses and Spence courtyard houses. In order to promote medium density housing, lease conditions with the minimum number of controls were created so that construction costs for medium density housing would not be increased and would not require a high degree of labour intensive work. A range of sizes of sites was supplied to enable staging of development. Developers were encouraged to produce a range of housing types. The specific actions taken by the Commission has been to -

- (i) concentrate in its 5-year program on those sites which will be more attractive to potential choosers of medium density housing. Such sites will be situated near town centres and near the public transport stops. They will have some environmental attraction;
- (ii) further relax design controls and supply sites which range in size and have various kinds of development conditions. Some of the sites are subdivided into courtyard houses and they are suitable for individual purchases. Others are deliberately released as larger packages where the developer can plan his own development. In doing this the Commission has tried to widen the kind and choice of sites and therefore the developments that are possible.

In October 1976 the Commission produced a promotional brochure on medium density housing. More recently still there was a 3 page supplement in the 'Canberra Times'. It has also sent out letters to about 200 developers, real estate agents and architects, explaining the advantages and stressing the opportunities for medium density housing in Canberra. Numerous discussions have been held over the years, and particularly in the last few years with developers, builders and the Master Builders' Association to promote concepts that might encourage medium density housing. Apart from introducing courtyard and town house blocks so that both individuals and small or large builders can purchase an individual block, the Commission has also created specific policies and design and siting controls to enable this to happen. In the last two or three years 40 percent of the total government housing construction program has been devoted to medium density housing types. These include flats, town houses, courtyard houses and small lot housing.

16. Over the last 5 years private enterprise has completed approximately 1,700 units of medium density housing which is ten percent of total housing units built by private enterprise, although a substantially higher proportion of the land made available to private enterprise for all residential development during this period was for medium density development. In the first 9 months of this year (1976-77), 23 percent of the the total housing starts made by private enterprise have been for medium density housing. Based on the sales by the Department of the Capital Territory over the same 9 month period, it is estimated that about 20 percent of the units of land sold will be for medium density units this year.

17. The N.C.D.C. provided figures to support its argument that reservations for medium density housing could be reduced without adversely affecting its overall policy of promoting and providing medium density as an alternative to standard detached housing. At present there is land leased

to developers for 650 units, the construction of which has not yet commenced. Sites for 2000 units are currently available for lease with the Department of the Capital Territory. Sites serviced but not yet available number some 700 units. Sites serviced and held for government housing total 400 units and there are sites currently being serviced for another 700 units. Based on the demand that has occurred and that can be predicted, N.C.D.C. has concluded that private enterprise is unlikely to take up more than 450 to 550 units per year. In the Commission's view likely demand is more than adequately catered for by the available and anticipated supply.

18. The forward program for the next 5 year period proposes servicing of medium density land at this rate (i.e. 450 to 550 units per annum). Should demand exceed these estimates N.C.D.C. would then have to have approximately 1,400 more units than is currently contemplated for servicing. N.C.D.C. states that this could be easily met out of the stock of medium density land that exists plus the servicing programme for the next five years. N.C.D.C. concluded by arguing that the decision to convert some development from medium density housing to detached housing was marginal in the total picture. The amount of land contemplated for servicing in the next five to seven years, and the reservations held for it total 8,200 medium density units, which is ample to allow a substantial increase of medium density demand beyond what is a realistic expectation and to meet the future demands of continuing levels of medium density at that rate.

19. In support of its objection to proposals in the current Series, S.S.R.S. reiterated the points made in evidence to the Committee during the consideration of the 62nd Series. The Society believes that Canberra's increasing suburban sprawl, due to the large proportion of standard detached housing rather than high and medium density housing, has serious social implications. The difficulty of upgrading the public transport system in a city where, the Society states,

only 10% of the population live in medium density housing, leads to a high degree of dependence on the motor car with the associated problems of pollution, fuel shortage and expense. S.S.R.S. further believes that a mix of residential styles and densities is important in all areas, rather than what it felt was N.C.D.C. policy of separate areas of medium density housing and separate larger areas of detached housing. The Society objected particularly to the reclaiming for detached housing of land previously proposed for medium density.

20. The N.C.D.C. pointed out that if this land was not developed for detached housing, but instead left undeveloped until such time as the demand for medium density housing increased, this would necessitate the early development of residential areas on the periphery with the resultant increase in Canberra's sprawl, and the added expense of schools and town centres and other facilities in these areas, before they would otherwise be needed.

21. In reaching conclusions on the issues raised by S.S.R.S. the Committee identified a number of different aspects of the problem. It noted and both N.C.D.C. and S.S.R.S. conceded that the two organisations were not as far apart as might appear on the general philosophic questions raised by the question of providing medium density as an alternative to standard detached housing. In both cases the desirability of a higher density development to conserve land, rationalise the provision of urban services and reduce development costs was recognised. But S.S.R.S. emphasised also that current planning by failing to recognise broader problems such as the depletion of world fuel supplies was likely to be inappropriate for society in the future. One point of apparent

disagreement was the extent to which the N.C.D.C. should manipulate the housing market to increase the proportion of residents in medium density as opposed to standard detached housing. N.C.D.C. as already stated believes as a point of policy that it should cater for the estimated demands of the housing market using influence rather than coercion to persuade more people to opt for the alternative of medium density housing. Dr Day representing the Society stated:

"What I am worried about is that they may, in their attempts to avoid what they call coercion, opt for what has been termed 'consumer sovereignty'. This is a term that economists have used to mean the way that consumers spend their incomes, or applied in a broader fashion, the way in which people are behaving at a particular time, the kind of housing they are living in, the sort of clothes they are buying, the ways in which they spend their recreational time, and things of this sort. These are indicative, first of all of what people want, and secondly of what they need. I think that always needs to be subjected to some kind of scrutiny. I do not think that what people are doing at any particular time is necessarily an indication that that is what they would do if they had all the opportunities available to them, or that that is necessarily what they need or what society needs."

22. Another point of difference or of different emphasis was the importance that should be attached to obtaining a proper distribution of different styles of dwellings within localities. Dr Watson for the Society said,

"What we oppose in the whole concept of medium density placement at the moment is that the N.C.D.C. seems to be, as we say in our submission, bent on putting the medium

density in large areas. We object to this just as much as to the present large detached areas of housing. We have to move beyond that concept, we have to think our standard residential areas should be an area of mixed housing, well integrated, well planned, with small groups of medium density various types."

23. In the Society's view medium density should be better integrated within residential area rather than provided in blocks. S.S.R.S. were also critical of the efforts of N.C.D.C. to promote the alternative to detached housing and cited certain examples in Canberra of developments which, in their view, give medium density development a bad name.

"What we feel the Commission has not done is to present in a typical suburb good imaginative types of medium density housing. Acoustic treatment, courtyard treatment or landscape treatment, so when people are on the waiting list for the house they can look at detached houses and they can also look at a variety of medium density housing rather than just have to take what is offering."

The Committee noted some particular questions concerning the arguments presented by S.S.R.S. The Society's objection for instance is to a change in planning intention in areas which it proposes should be retained for medium density. This does not always appear consistent with the Society's argument that medium density should be better distributed and not provided in separate development.

While the Committee agrees with the Society that a mix of different housing forms within neighbourhoods is desirable, it has to accept N.C.D.C.'s assessment that the current demand for medium density housing is located in more urbanised areas. In order to popularise the concept it is necessary to satisfy the current demand, but at the same time promote, by making available, a variety of housing forms in residential areas.

24. It would appear that an option available to N.C.D.C., on the medium density proposals considered in this and the previous two Series, might be to release land for such developments on the understanding that the developer retain a proportion of that land for medium density as well as standard detached housing. The Committee was told that this is currently being considered in some areas.

25. The Committee concludes that N.C.D.C. has in fact made a substantial contribution to encouraging the use of medium density housing as an alternative to standard detached housing. The Commission's performance in this regard and in the actual provision of housing particularly government housing compares favourably with that of other authorities elsewhere in Australia. The Committee believes that views such as those expressed by the Society should be recognised as a valuable contribution to the planning process.

VARIATION 3 - NETTLEFOLD STREET, BELCONNEN

(See also Mr J.W. Ray's objection Schedule II)

26. The Committee was informed that an objection had been lodged to Variation 3, the addition of an access road off Nettlefold Street to service sites for service trades uses near the Belconnen Town Centre. The objection from Mr J.W. Ray, a resident of Belconnen, concerned the possibility that the development would be visually unattractive, would increase the problems of vehicle noise and pollution, and would involve the destruction of nine large gum trees.

27. N.C.D.C. informed the Committee that the screen planting along Belconnen Way and the high ground beside the road would serve to a large extent to conceal any buildings resulting from this development from the intersection. The area further to west, between Coulter Drive and the service trades area, is reserved for public utilities and this development would certainly be visible from the intersection. However, the Committee was informed that current practice is to provide a large proportion of landscaped open land in conjunction with such development to make them visually more pleasing.

28. The construction of the turning circle for this road, which is not contained in this variation, will necessitate the removal of four of the nine gum trees mentioned by Mr Ray, but the other five will remain, with a substantial portion of the plantation further south.

29. N.C.D.C. said that the advice the Commission had received with regard to the air pollution in the area did not suggest in any way that the development would exacerbate this problem by further restricting the dispersal of polluted air.

30. N.C.D.C. advised the Committee that it may be possible in designing the turning circle to avoid removing the trees thus meeting part of Mr Ray's objection. It will be necessary to come to the Committee with a specific variation for the turning circle and Mr Ray's comments will be borne in mind in designing that road. This will be submitted to the Committee at a later series of variations.

COPPINS CROSSING ROAD AND URIARRA ROAD

Variation 9

31. N.C.D.C. explained that this variation was designed to increase the safety of this roadway by the improvement of alignment of some dangerous corners and by bituminising the road.

32. The Committee was concerned that this improvement should not result in a great increase in speed of vehicles over the road, thus causing more accidents instead of fewer. The N.C.D.C. stated that it was not anticipated that a significantly greater volume of traffic would use the road, or that the average speed would increase. The upgrading of the road would be consistent with the fact that it is still a rural road.

33. This roadway was discussed in the 61st Series of Variations, and an objection was lodged by a resident of Eucumbene Drive, Duffy, who was concerned about the possibility of a connection of Coppins Crossing Road and Eucumbene Drive. N.C.D.C. assured the Committee that this was not an attempt to provide that connection. The Committee is satisfied that this proposed change will not affect the objection as lodged in the 61st Series.

34. The Committee recommends that the relevant Authorities carefully monitor traffic flows on the upgraded road in order to take immediate steps should there be indications of unexpected heavy use or concern at safety aspects of the road. The Department of the Capital Territory and the A.C.T. Police should ensure that the road is clearly marked with speed signs.

35. Having examined the proposals the Committee recommends the implementation of all items from the 63rd Series and those reserved from the 62nd Series*, subject to observations made in Part I of this Report. It supports the proposal to withdraw the two items referred to in paragraphs 5 and 6. The Committee recommends that the N.C.D.C. should endeavour to release blocks within such areas as those referred to in Paragraph 7 of this Report for medium density as well as detached housing where this is suitable and so that an option is retained where possible in this respect. The Committee notes that this has already been done in respect to Holt Map P5 Variation 1 where provision has been made for some "cluster" housing.

* Except the Campbell Park Item which was withdrawn.

PART II

ITEMS FROM THE 63RD SERIES

Variation 1

Map Q5 Item 1:

Mitchell Industrial Estate, Section 22

36. Addition of access road, west of Dacre Street and the Commonwealth Brickworks site to serve industrial sites. Gungahlin Cemetery is located to the south. The access roads are required to open the area up for industrial development.

Variation 2

Map Q5 Item 2:

Mitchell Industrial Estate

37. Extension of Vicars Street from Callan Street to Essington Street to serve industrial sites and to complete the distributor road network in this section of Mitchell. A minor modification to the previously included portion of Vicars Street is involved at its junction with the northern extension now proposed.

Variation 3

Map P5 Item 1:

Belconnen Town Centre, Section 7

38. Addition of an access road off Nettlefold Street to serve sites for service trades uses. The road will provide access for service vehicles and employees' vehicles, with visitor access from Oatley Court and Nettlefold Street.

39. Land to the north of the road is intended for use by private enterprise service trades and to the south for public utilities.

40. An objection was raised to this proposal.
See paragraphs 26 - 30.

Variation 4

Map P5 Item 2:

Intertown Public Transport Route-Belconnen

41. This variation converts, by the addition of a new symbol, what could otherwise have been taken for a proposed public road, to a reservation for public transport. This was always intended to be the first stage of the Intertown Public Transport route.

42. This item was withdrawn. See paragraph 6.

Variation 5

Map P5 Item 3:

Belconnen Town Centre

43. Deletion of a portion of the reservation of Emu Bank Drive, on a corner adjacent to Section 65, to enable additional land to be utilised in sites proposed for community and entertainment purposes in Section 65.

44. Proposed development on adjacent areas is unchanged and includes car parking to the west, sites for community and entertainment facilities to the north and northwest, and a busway to the south.

45. Following detailed study of the arrangements to modify the junction between the northern and eastern sections of Emu Bank Drive - 61st Series of Variations - part of the current reservation is no longer required for road purposes, and can be deleted.

Variation 6Map P5 Item 4:Belconnen Town Centre, Emu Ridge Housing, Stage 2

46. Addition of several access roads in the area bounded by Benjamin Way, College Street, Eastern Valley Way and Belconnen Way to serve a residential area comprising 700 medium density housing units.

47. Roads and services for Stage 1 of this area which comprises sites for 420 medium density units have already been constructed, and construction of government town houses and release of sites to private enterprise will commence soon.

Variation 7Map P5 Item 5:Cook Blocks 2 and 3, Section 56

48. Provides for the inclusion of an access road for a medium density housing development. The road, all normal services, and landscaping work will be provided by the contractor as part of the overall development. At the completion of the project, the road, services and open space will be surrendered to the Commonwealth.

49. The Department of Construction inspects the work to ensure that it complies with the standards of a public road.

Variation 8Map P5 Item 6:Lynham, Section 52

50. Deletion of the truncation at the intersection of Murdoch Street and Northbourne Avenue to provide additional land for a proposed medium density housing site on Section 52. The existing truncation is not required for road purposes and there is no truncation on the southern side of Murdoch Street.

The proposed deletion will avoid the need for the Department of the Capital Territory to maintain this as a nature strip at public expense.

Variation 9

Map N4 Item 1:

Weston Creek District

51. Modifications to the existing road reservations of Coppins Crossing Road and Uriarra Road to improve the alignment at curves and the approach to the crossing over the Molonglo River.

52. Adjacent land use is vacant crown land and rural holdings.

Variation 10

Map N5 Item 1:

City to Commonwealth Avenue Bridge Cycleway

53. Addition of a cycleway extending from the end of the existing cycleway at Childers Street to the Commonwealth Avenue Bridge along University Avenue, Marcus Clarke Street and the shore of Lake Burley Griffin to serve commuter cyclists to the City.

54. The route has been designed to provide a safe and convenient cycleway, and runs through either open space, or within existing road reservations.

55. Commonwealth Avenue Bridge to Telopea Park Cycleway. Addition of a cycleway extending from Commonwealth Avenue Bridge to Telopea Park along the Lake edge through the Parliamentary Triangle and then through Bowen Park to connect to the existing cycleway in Telopea Park.

56. This cycleway will serve commuter cyclists from South East Canberra to the City, and recreational cyclists using the Lakeshores.

Variation 11

Map N5 Item 2:

City, Section 31

57. Addition of service access roads off Moore Street and Rudd Street to serve the City Health Services Building, a proposed office site and future developments.

58. The proposed road has been discussed with and agreed by A.C.T. Health Services.

Variation 12

Map N5 Item 3:

City, Section 47

59. This variation involves the degazettal of part of Garema Place for the construction of a complex involving underground public conveniences, an electrical substation at ground level and a restaurant at first floor level. The existing substation and public conveniences will be removed.

Variation 13

Map M5 Item 1:

Stirling North

60. Modification and additions to the planned road layout off Fremantle Drive, previously designed to serve medium density housing development, and the addition of new access roads off Bunbury Street, to serve 252 detached housing blocks (30 of which are cottage lots). Deletion of carpark and service roads for a shopping centre at the corner of Fremantle Drive and Bunbury Street.

61. Deletion of the carpark and service road for the shopping centre is proposed because of the doubtful viability of the shop due to the proximity of the Group Centre.

Variation 14

Map M5 Item 2:

Phillip Service Trades Area, Section 49

62. Addition of a loop access road off Parramatta Street, Pearce to serve sites for service trades and public utilities uses.

Variation 15

Map M5 Item 3:

Fyshwick, Section 7

63. The modification and deletion of part of Mildura Street, and the addition of access roads between Canberra Avenue and Mildura Street to serve industrial and commercial sites.

64. The fruit and vegetable markets are to the north-west and other food oriented industries are to be located in the area. Applications have been received for sites in the area for meat processing plant and vegetable processing and packaging plant.

Variation 16

Map M5 Item 4:

Holder, Section 12

65. This variation provides for the inclusion of an access road for a medium density housing development. The road, all normal services and landscaping work will be provided by the contractor as part of the overall development. At the completion of the project the road, services and open space will be surrendered to the Commonwealth.

Variation 17

Map M6 Item 1:

Fyshwick

66. Addition of a link road between Lithgow Street and Yallourn Street adjacent to the railway line, to improve traffic circulation in the area.

67. At present Lithgow, Geelong and Yallourn Streets are cul-de-sac roads and internal circulation between them is confined to the service road adjacent to Canberra Avenue.

68. The proposed link road will provide a more convenient network for traffic moving into and within this area and reduce the load on the service road adjacent to Canberra Avenue.

Variation 18

Map L5 Item 1:

Kambah Group Centre

69. The addition of part of a pedestrian walkway to provide means of legal access to the TAB lease in the Group Centre is proposed.

70. Because the TAB site does not have a frontage to a vehicular road the pedestrian walkway is the sole means of legal access, hence the need to include it on the City Plan.

Variation 19

Map L5 Item 2:

Kambah, Section 468

71. Modification of the access road to the local centre by providing an additional access point off Livingstone Avenue to improve visitor and service vehicle circulation.

Variation 20

Map L5 Item 3:

Wanniassa, Sections 203, 262-265

72. Modification to the planned road layout off Garratt Street, previously designed to serve medium density housing development, to serve 60 detached housing blocks. Another 16 blocks are served from Garratt Street and Wheeler Crescent.

Variation 21Map L5 Item 4:Wanniassa Group Centre

73. Addition of loop access road and associated car parking areas off McBryde Crescent in the southern part of the Wanniassa Group Centre.

74. Deletion of small part of the previously included reservation is required at the north east end of the proposed road as a consequence.

Variation 22Map L5 Item 5; Map K5, Item 2:Gowrie, Section 282

75. Addition of access roads off Bugden Avenue to serve 48 detached housing blocks. An additional 22 detached housing blocks will have access from Bugden Avenue.

Variation 23Map L5 Item 6:Fadden, Sections 342-344

76. Modification of the planned layout of culs-de-sac roads off Bugden Avenue and Fihelly Street resulting from detailed design of the roads in relation to topography.

77. The modifications proposed in Sections 342-344 off Bugden Avenue will enable safer and easier vehicular access to the residential development. The previously proposed access roads off Bugden Avenue were found to involve excessive gradients during detailed design.

Variation 24Map L5 Item 7:Fadden, Sections 363, 365

78. The modification to the alignment of Rawlings Place and its intersection with Fihelly Street will enable safer traffic flow and reduce the amount of earthworks required.

Variation 25Map L5 Item 8; Map K5 Items 3 and 4:Chisolm

79. Addition of access roads into areas off Goldstein Crescent, Hambridge Crescent, Norris Street, Proctor Street, Maclean Street, Baskerville Street and Durham Circuit to serve a total of 415 detached housing blocks (including 51 courtyard and cottage blocks).

Variation 26Map L5 Item 9:Wanniassa Block 3, Section 253

80. Addition of a parking area off Billson Place to provide means of legal access to a local shop lease.

81. Since parking areas were generally not included on the City Plan, this parking area was also omitted at the time Billson Place was proposed in a previous Series of Variations.

82. However, it was recently discovered that the proposed lease of the shop will not have the required legal frontage to a gazetted public road unless the parking area is included on the City Plan.

Variation 27

Map L6 Item 1:

Hume (Jerrabomberra) Industrial Estate

83. Modification of previously included roads to allow more efficient utilisation of land for industrial purposes and to provide improved access to Tralee Station; addition of a cul-de-sac access road off Sheppard Street to serve industrial sites.

84. The realignment of the road reservation proposed will allow more efficient utilisation of the land for industrial purposes and improve the access into Tralee Station for tourist coaches and visitor cars.

Variation 28

Map K5 Item 1:

Tuggeranong Town Centre, Section 72

85. Addition of an access road to serve the Telephone Exchange, Mail Exchange and the future District Thermal Station site.

Variation 29

Map K5 Item 5:

Theodore, Sections 610-616, 673, 674.

86. Addition of access roads to serve a residential area, comprising 203 detached housing blocks, forming an extension to the planned layout for Theodore and resulting from the variation to the Monaro Highway alignment in the 62nd Series.

Variation 30

Map P5 Item 1:

Bruce-O'Connor

87. Inclusion of the alignment of a proposed bicycle path to link the existing path from Dickson to Turner with Belconnen, providing access to the Belconnen Town Centre.

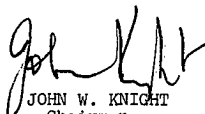
Variation 31

Map P5 Item 2:

Dickson

88. Inclusion of the alignment of an extension of the Dickson-Turner bicycle path from the Dickson Shopping Centre to Majura Avenue.

25 May, 1977


JOHN W. KNIGHT
Chairman

APPENDIX I

6 May 1977

Dear Senator Knight,

On 18 April 1977 notice of my intention to vary the plan of layout of the city of Canberra and its environs was published in the Gazette.

Wide publicity has been given to the proposals to vary the plan and two objections have been received from the Society for Social Responsibility in Science and a resident of Belconnen.

Copies of the objections, together with copies of the Gazette and relevant briefing notes have been supplied to the Committee under separate cover.

In accordance with the provisions of the instrument of appointment of the Committee, I now formally refer the proposals to the Committee for investigation and report.

Yours sincerely,

A.A. STALEY

Senator J. Knight
Chairman
Joint Committee on the ACT
CANBERRA ACT 2600

13 May 1977

Dear Senator Knight,

On 12 May 1977 notice of my intention to vary the plan of layout of the city of Canberra and its environs was published in the Gazette.

Wide publicity will be given to the proposal to vary the plan and objections will be invited. Copies of any objections will be supplied to the Committee under separate cover.

In accordance with the provisions of the instrument of appointment of the Committee, I now formally refer the proposal to the Committee for investigation and report. I am enclosing a copy of the Gazette and the relevant briefing notes.

Yours sincerely,

A.A. STALEY

Senator J. Knight
Chairman
Joint Parliamentary Committee on the A.C.T.
CANBERRA A.C.T. 2600

APPENDIX II

11 Gibbes Place,
Weetangera, A.C.T. 2614
26 April 1977

The Secretary,
Department of the Capital Territory,
P.O. Box 158,
Canberra City, A.C.T. 2601

Dear Sir,

Objection to the Intention to
Vary the Plan of Canberra

As a resident of Belconnen, I hereson object to the proposal to vary the plan of Canberra in respect of Belconnen, Section 7, shown as Item 1, Map P5 of the Schedule, in Australian Government Gazette No. P2 of 18 April 1977.

The nature of my objections are environmental and are based on the view that the resultant development of the proposed sub-division will -

- (i) be visually unattractive because
 - (a) the rear of light industrial buildings will be close to the intersection and within the clear view of residences on the other three corners of the intersection, and
 - (b) development of the blocks of land created by the sub-division will require the destruction of nine large gum trees - the remaining few of a large clump that was destroyed in 1972 when Coulter Drive was constructed; and
- (ii) increase the problem of vehicle noise and exhaust pollution. There is already a substantial amount of vehicle pollution from the intersection which will become more of a problem to nearby residents if its dispersal is restricted by additional buildings.

I would not object to a proposal to construct a sub-division which extended about one third of the distance from Nettlefold Street compared with that proposed on Map P5. Such a smaller sub-division would obviate the need to destroy the gum trees and ensure that the open space near the intersection remained as open space.

Yours faithfully,

J. W. Ray (signed)

Committee adjourned at 12.35 p.m.

SOCIETY FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN SCIENCE (ACT)
 Box 48 P.O.

O'Connor,
 CANBERRA.

ACT. 2601

2 May, 1977

The Secretary,
 Dept. of Capital Territory,
 P.O. Box 158.
 Canberra City, A.C.T. 2601

To Be Forwarded to Parliamentary Joint Committee
 on the A.C.T.

Objection to Certain Proposed Variations of the Plan of
 Layout of the City of Canberra and its Environs -
 Gazette No. P2.

1. Stirling; Objection is made to the proposed change from medium density to 222 standard detached housing sites and 30 cottage blocks.
2. Wanniasa, Sect. 203, 262-265; Objection is made to the proposed change from medium density to 76 detached housing blocks.
3. Chisholm; Objection is made to the addition of roads in this suburb to serve 415 detached housing sites.

Our objections to the three variations, listed above, are based on the following grounds:

This Society believes that there is an urgent need to increase the proportion of medium density housing in Canberra. For this reason it has made a previous objection to the Joint Committee when changes from medium density to standard detached housing were proposed. (Joint Committee on the A.C.T., Hansard 22/10/76 pp 162-188). A number of points arise from that hearing and from our previous submission.

(a) At present only 10 per cent of Canberra's citizens live in medium density housing (Joint Committee on the A.C.T. Hansard 22/10/76, Mr Siksna, NDCG, p 172). Mr Siksna talks of planning for 30 per cent of medium density housing in the various new towns. We would agree that 'the time scale in this is pretty important'. However we have as yet seen no plans as to how and when this figure is to be achieved. How do the proposed changes for additional detached housing in Stirling, Wanniasa and Chisholm fit in with a 30 per cent target for medium density housing in the towns of Weston and Tuggeranong?

(b) A mix of housing types is necessary to cater for various lifestyles, for the different needs of successive stages in the human lifespan, and to provide residential diversity for each community. Each area should, from the outset, be planned to contain a mixture of various types. All of these housing styles should harmonise and be within short walking distance of each other. Building of all types of housing should be concurrent, not with medium density housing usually trailing the field as at present.

It is worth stating here that we are as much opposed to large tracts of unrelieved medium density housing as we are to the typical Canberra suburb which contains some 90 per cent standard detached housing. Unfortunately the NCDC now seems bent on putting its medium density housing in large conurbations, e.g. in the Florey proposals (Belconnen) and the large number of flat-roofed concrete units belatedly attached to the southern edge of Melba. Also placing medium and high density units alongside busy and noisy arterials, e.g. near the corner of Melrose and Hindmarsh Drive, Lyons, is poor planning in our book.

(c) The continuing sprawl of Canberra, largely as a result of the excessive percentage of standard detached housing, is very costly in terms of transport and utility services. The matter of transport will be of increasing concern to us all in the 1980s as Australian oil reserves dwindle and we have to rely more and more on expensive imports. Presently well over 90 per cent of all weekday journeys are by the mode of private car. It is quite conceivable that an increasing proportion of Canberra's citizens will be virtually confined or 'imprisoned' in our far-flung suburbia because of soaring costs in running a car.

At least President Carter has recently rung the bells in the U.S.A. Who is going to ring the bells here? The NCDC, unfortunately, does not see the urgent need to change our lifestyles, our housing styles, etc. On the point of energy conservation along it is imperative that we create a Canberra of higher density. Only then will the public transport system become more viable, with less dependence on the private car.

Recommendations to the Joint Committee: that the three variations listed above be disallowed pending a full public enquiry by the Joint Committee into the whole question of desirable urban density and mix of housing styles for Canberra. (the current controversy on the proposals by the NCDC to infill certain areas of central north and south Canberra could be considered as part of this very question.)

Chris. L. Watson (signed)

CHRIS L. WATSON
for Committee

STATEMENT ON MEDIUM DENSITY HOUSING

Made by the National Capital Development Commission to the Joint Committee on the Australian Capital Territory at its meeting on 6 May 1977.

Introduction

The Committee wished to be briefed on the Commission's present overall policy for medium density housing as a background to the consideration to several items included in the 62nd and 63rd Series of Variations to Plan of Layout of the City of Canberra.

In this statement the Commission has attempted to cover the specific questions which Committee members have raised and also other aspects which are important to the consideration of medium density housing in a proper context and in a comprehensive manner.

(1) The Context for Consideration of Medium Density Housing

The first point to be made is that it cannot be considered in isolation as a question in itself. In the Commission's view it must be considered in terms of housing provision overall, and any objectives and policies for medium density housing must relate to and derive from overall housing objectives and policies.

Above all medium density, as any other housing, must in all respects be related to the needs and desires of people. The needs and desires of people in certain respects can be tempered and affected by persuasion. By persuasion the Commission means -

- . an imaginative demonstration of alternatives;
- . providing ample choice for them to choose alternative housing types;
- . and generally making people aware of advantages associated with new types of housing, particularly medium density housing, and also pointing out to them the disadvantages of the familiar housing types, if there are such disadvantages, and clearly there are some.

The point that must be stressed in this context is that the Commission does not believe the needs and desires should be altered by coercion and by limiting choice unless there is really a major community benefit to be derived which people recognise in their minds as being essential. Only then would they accept any limitation of choice.

There certainly is a given demand by people to live in medium density housing-quite freely, by choice because that is the kind of housing they prefer. But if one is to talk about percentages, such as say 25 per cent or 30 per cent of the population living of their own choice in medium density housing, then the Commission does not believe such levels can be expected to be reached for quite a while.

The question then arises: Should one adopt any such figure as a target and try to coerce people into it? It must be stressed that the Commission does not believe that people should be coerced in any way to go into medium density housing in preference to their natural choice.

(2) The Commission's overall objectives for Housing

The main objective is to contribute, consistent with Government policy, to the provision of land and housing for the Canberra population appropriate to its needs and within its means.

The Commission attempts to do this -

- . by assessing what the total population needs for land and housing are;
- . by assessing what the demand for different types and forms of housing might be;
- . by providing the opportunity for innovation and change in the design and environment of residential areas.

Against this background the Commission implements an annual land servicing and Government housing construction programme to meet the needs as estimated.

Specifically for private housing, the objective is to ensure that sufficient serviced land is available to meet the demands for private residential accommodation. The Commission goes through much the same process - analysing against the population projections what the demand for different kinds of private housing might be. It attempts to provide both standard blocks and medium density housing sites of varying sizes and in various locations which will contribute to the availability of land at a range of prices and ensure its marketability and therefore acceptance by the final consumers.

In Government housing the objective is to ensure an adequate supply for the needs of those people on the Government housing list. Again, the Commission assesses the different forms of Government housing so that a choice in accommodation can be provided. It tries to ensure that there is a choice of housing forms, densities, environments and locations for people on the Government housing list. It ensures that there is adequate public knowledge of all forms of Government housing, particularly of innovatory designs which might be of interest to the private sector also.

The Commission also has objectives in relation to existing housing, for instance - to encourage the flexible use of existing housing stock and where necessary to devise appropriate policies towards urban change in existing residential areas.

There are other forms of housing that the Commission is concerned about too - hostel accommodation, aged persons' and other specialised housing - and the objective is to ensure an adequate supply of that kind of accommodation which does not fall into the Government and private housing sectors referred to earlier.

(3) The Commission's Aims and Assumptions for Housing in the Longer Term

As early as 1967 the Commission internally recognised that an increasing number of the population may, by free choice, want to move progressively into medium density housing as opposed to standard detached housing. Subsequently it was stated in 'Tomorrow's Canberra' in 1970 that "the assumption was that possibly 24 per cent of the population could be living in higher density housing in the future."

The time as to when this could be expected to occur is the critical element or the major question. The time was stated as 'by the year 2,000' in various public statements. In 'Tomorrow's Canberra' the Commission said: 'When the population has reached 500,000 in Canberra'. Perhaps the latter one was an optimistic forecast; the former a more pessimistic forecast as to when this might occur.

At that time the Commission also attached a proviso to this statement that possibly 24 per cent of the population could be living this way namely - "if suitable kinds of higher density can be devised." It thus recognised that people's preferences would have to deliberately shift away from the preferences in 1967 to achieve this sort of percentage. It also recognised that "environmental quality, density, location and the price of land and housing are all related in a complex and changing manner."

The Commission knew that it could have this as an assumption - that people would choose these forms of housing in those proportions. But it also realised that one could not set that as a target to work towards and make happen very quickly or, in fact, to set it as a firm target and as an immutable one.

Certainly on this assumption or expectation, the Commission adopted as an aim -

- (i) to make it possible for this percentage of the population in medium density housing to be achieved in overall planning terms;
- (ii) to encourage people to choose higher density forms of housing over time.

Thus it was not a target to make it happen; it was to enable it to happen and to encourage it to happen.

The Commission adopted this aim because of the obvious overall benefits - which are also stressed in the submission of the Society for Social Responsibility in Science - land savings, a more compact form of overall urban development, savings in overall urban development costs, and more convenience in transportation terms. There are two explanations necessary in relation to the medium density percentage figures.

- (i) The 24 per cent figure that was stated earlier became rounded off in common usage to 25 per cent.
- (ii) That percentage refers to population, i.e. the number of people in medium density housing.

When we consider the number of units needed to house that sort of percentage, in fact, we need something like 30 per cent of the total housing units built to be as medium density units, because the medium density units tend to be occupied at a lower occupancy rate than standard detached housing. On average the occupancy figure for medium density housing is about 2.2 persons, whereas in family housing which generally occurs in single detached housing, the occupancy figure would be about 3.3 people.

The assumption was that 24 per cent of population might choose to live this way and, in order to do this, that would mean that 30 per cent of the housing units in total would have to be of medium density type.

In summary, neither the Commission's assumptions nor its aims for the longer term have changed over the years, but neither have the qualifications attaching to them which are referred to above. In essence, while they are sensible assumptions, and clearly very desirable aims, one cannot predict with accuracy and assurance as to when they can be practically achieved. More important, they should not be misread as some firm and immutable target to be reached by a given time at the expense of other housing and other urban development aims and objectives.

(4) How has the Commission Planned for the Expected Longer Term Possibilities in Medium Density Housing?

Back in 1967, based on the assumptions, the Commission adopted a policy of identifying land reservations which could, by the year 2,000, enable 70 per cent of the population to live in standard housing, 25 per cent of the population to live in medium density housing and 5 per cent of the population to live in other forms such as hostels and other specialised forms of housing.

It considered that suitable locations for medium density housing were adjacent to -

- . town centres;
- . group centres;
- . proposed inter-town public transport route stops;
- . and on sites with some attraction such as a view, being near parklands or overlooking, say, a lake even though that might be from a distance.

It was never explicitly stated that such land reservations, once identified, would be held for an indeterminate time; equally it was not stated that they would be immediately developed after, say, a given time had elapsed and the demand had not arisen.

Nevertheless, in 'Tomorrow's Canberra', in discussing the subject of handling or widening opportunities for change, the Commission referred to two factors. It said that in most cases one can make provision for change by simply leaving space and trying to ensure that the built environment is adaptable in the longer term. Secondly, it made the observation that the reservation of valuable land near centres for unknown future development over a long period raises problems of an economic nature which are more difficult to solve.

It should be added that this does not apply only to land near centres; it refers equally to any centrally located land in a town such as Belconnen where urban development has proceeded round the periphery and the very central land has very little development in it and is being kept for some longer term need. Keeping such land reservations undeveloped certainly produces some problems, in urban development terms, in making the town a satisfying and a sensible place in which to live.

In 'Tomorrow's Canberra' the Commission also proposed some solutions in this respect, knowing that there were these difficulties.

(i) It said that the layout of the town could recognise and distinguish between more and less durable elements and these were spelt out. Among the less durable elements it listed " the nature of housing requirements". The Commission knew that the nature of housing requirements could not be predicted with accuracy, and that it had to be flexible in development and planning for these requirements.

(ii) It said that the planning of these elements should be allowed to evolve in time - decisions will need to be made as each sector of the town is developed. So whatever the Commission may have been casting as longer term plans it was realised that when it came to developing the town, or a particular part of the town; where it would have to make particular decisions about the most appropriate form of development; then the cost effectiveness of holding land in reserve for unforeseen needs over a long period would require validation and in certain circumstances it might be less costly to develop the land for a use with a limited life or a less intensive purpose and redevelop it when needed, say in 20 years or 30 years time.

That was the statement made in 'Tomorrow's Canberra' in 1970. However that is not to say that this is a solution one has to adopt and that it is the only solution.

(iii) Finally, the Commission also recognised that the need for a quality of environment which is satisfying and attractive at each stage of urban development has clear implications for design, staging administration.

These reasons have been instrumental in leading the Commission to consider and review the amount of land being held for medium density housing where it is creating certain problems in producing the best for the town in an overall sense and the best urban development in an overall sense, i.e. utilising existing services, avoiding sprawl further afield in the periphery.

It is this factor, and a number of factors associated with it, which were foreshadowed back in 1970 in 'Tomorrow's Canberra', that has led the Commission to look at this question. Clearly even then it was recognised that one needed to marry both longer term aims and shorter term development factors into a sensible, efficient and convenient urban development on a progressive basis, and that is what is leading the Commission to do some of the things that are contained in the variations of concern to the Committee.

(5) What Have Been and Are the Commission's Aims and Assumptions for the Shorter Term?

Again back in 1967, as confirmed subsequently in 'Tomorrow's Canberra', the Commission's assumptions were that in the immediate 5 year to 8 year period, 85 per cent of the population were likely to continue to wish to have detached houses. It felt that the proportion of those living in medium density housing might rise from about 7 per cent to 7.5 per cent, and there were also assumptions about the other specialised housing. That is, the Commission was fairly cautious and realistic about what could be achieved in the short term.

Nevertheless, the Commission felt that the assumptions about medium density housing could be too conservative against the actual demand that might arise. And it certainly felt that opportunities for encouraging a greater percentage of the population to choose medium density housing forms should be pursued very vigorously indeed.

From about 1970 onwards it therefore set as an aim for its short term development (5 years to 8 years) the servicing and releasing of land to private enterprise for medium density housing and also to provide medium density housing in its Government housing construction programme substantially above the level of demand assumed above.

Again it must be stressed that neither these assumptions nor these aims have been changed since that time; they are still being pursued in the same manner.

(6) How Has the Commission provided for these Short Term Needs or Demands?

It has certainly continued to provide detached housing blocks at the level required to enable 85 per cent of the population to choose that form of housing.

The Committee will recognise that politically, and in all sorts of other terms, one cannot limit that choice - one can encourage the other things to happen, but the Commission could not run short of blocks for single detached housing or artificially limit the supply, thus raising the price of land and therefore restricting the choice people could exercise in that regard.

But the Commission has serviced land for the various forms of medium density housing in various locations, substantially above the expected short term demands.

The figures for servicing of medium density land as a percentage of the total land serviced, expressed in terms of units of medium density as against total number of blocks for the last 5 years are as follows :

- . 1971-72, 21.7 per cent;
- . 1972-73 21.7 per cent;
- . 1973-74 1,900 medium density units; 29.2 per cent of the total land production in that year;
- . 1974-75, 2,585 units of medium density land, being 32.4 per cent of the total land servicing programme;
- . 1975-76 because of factors mentioned subsequently, this was dropped to 800 units in the year, but still being 18.2 per cent of the total production.

For the 5 years as a whole, the Commission has serviced land for medium density housing to the extent of 7,500 units, and as a proportion it is 26 per cent of the total land servicing programme.

The Commission has also attempted to push the Government housing programme fairly strongly in a medium density direction. In 1974-75 approximately 300 units were completed; in 1975-76, 310 units. The programmed completion for 1976-77 is 350 units and the present programme of anticipated completions in 1977-78 is approximately 200 units in the Government field.

(7) What Has the Commission Done to Encourage More People to Live in Medium Density Housing?

The Commission has built several medium density housing projects in its government housing programme as a means of demonstrating both to private enterprise and the public the advantages of alternate housing forms. There have been promotions and exhibitions and these have been visited by a great number of people. Such projects have included Swinger Hill, Baringa Gardens, Kambah courtyard houses and Spence courtyard houses.

In 1975-76 the Commission took steps not only to make land available but also to improve any other factors that might be preventing private enterprise from building medium density housing. It developed a promotion and marketing strategy to try and cover points listed below :

- . to release more town house sites in locations with marketing advantages;
- . to provide release conditions with the minimum number of controls so that construction costs for medium density housing would not be increased and would not require a high degree of labour intensive work;
- . to provide a range of sizes of sites and to enable staging of development to occur.

The Commission also encouraged developers to produce a range of medium density housing types. Previously the choice lay between town houses and flats. The Commission has introduced newer forms such as courtyard housing, housing on smaller blocks and other types.

It was also recognised that the Commission needed to continue and reinforce its efforts to promote new concepts from outside Canberra, and to point out to both developers and purchasers the advantages of alternative life styles.

The specific actions taken by the Commission towards this has been to -

- (i) concentrate in its 5-year programme on those sites which will be more attractive to potential choosers of medium density housing. Such sites will be situated near town centres and near the public transport stops. They will have some environmental attraction;

- (ii) further relax design controls and supply sites which range in size and have various kinds of development conditions. Some of the sites are subdivided into courtyard houses and they are suitable for individual purchases. Others are deliberately released as larger packages where the developer can plan his own development. In doing this the Commission has tried to widen the kind and choice of sites and therefore the developments that are possible.

In October 1976 the Commission produced a promotional brochure on medium density housing. More recently still there was a 3 page supplement in the 'Canberra Times'. It has also sent out letters to about 200 developers, real estate agents and architects, explaining the advantages and stressing the opportunities for medium density housing in Canberra.

Numerous discussions have been held over the years, and particularly in the last few years with developers, builders and the Master Builders' Association to promote concepts that might encourage medium density housing.

Apart from introducing courtyard and town house blocks so that both individuals and small or large builders can purchase an individual block, the Commission has also created specific policies and design and siting controls to enable this to happen.

(8) What Has Been Achieved By the Commission To Date?

On the whole these efforts have been very successful. In the last two or three years 40 per cent of the total government housing construction programme has been devoted to medium density housing types. These include flats, town houses, courtyard houses and small lot housing.

On the private enterprise side the picture is not quite as encouraging. Over the last 5 years private enterprise has completed something like 1,700 units of medium density housing. That represents only 10 per cent of the total housing units built over the period and compares against the availability of serviced land to the extent of 26 per cent which the Commission made available and the promotion efforts outlined earlier.

However in the recent quarters of the year, the picture has been much more encouraging and possibly the 10 per cent figure can be expected to increase. In the 9 months of this year, 23 per cent of the total housing starts made by private enterprise have been for medium density housing. Similarly, based on the sales by the Department of

Capital Territory over the last 9 months, it is estimated that about 20 per cent of the units of land sold will be for medium density units this year.

From the builders' viewpoint, one builder has been so encouraged by his 1976 sales that almost all his production in 1977 is likely to be in the form of medium density housing. Equally, one real estate agent has sold as many town houses to the end of March as he had in the previous year as a whole in an overall declining housing market.

So definitely there are encouraging signs and one can say that the Commission's efforts in the last few years both in servicing land and promoting medium density development are beginning to pay off.

(9) What Else Can or Will the Commission Do to Encourage People to Live in Medium Density Developments?

From the foregoing it can be seen that a considerable amount has already been done. Based on the information above it should be evident that the Commission has made real, genuine and vigorous efforts in promoting medium density housing over the last few years.

The Commission will certainly continue to do that. It will be undertaking more promotional efforts, such as a supplement in the publication 'Making your Home in Canberra' to be produced later this month, which will again stress the advantages and the opportunities for medium density housing.

It will be undertaking specific promotion in relation to particular projects such as Swinger Hill - when more private enterprise housing is constructed there - and in relation to some of the inner Canberra sites in Lyneham, Turner and Reid which will be released for private enterprise development later this year. The Commission will be trying to get maximum media coverage for the developments proposed there.

It is worth emphasising again that the Commission believes it must resist a hard sell approach in doing this - by making it clear that it wants to encourage people to do this rather than appear that it wants to force people to change their life styles.

(10) What is the Current Situation in Terms of the Availability of Land and the Commission's Forward Planning and Development For Medium Density Housing?

So far only about 10 per cent of housing per year has been in the form of medium density housing; but as indicated this year it has been somewhat higher and this is an encouraging trend.

At present there is land leased to developers for 650 units, the construction of which has not yet commenced. Currently available for lease with the Department of Capital Territory are sites for about 2,000 units.

Sites serviced, but not yet available - i.e. in the process of having development conditions prepared or certain other things finalised before transfer to the Department of the Capital Territory - amount to 700 units. Sites serviced and held for Government housing total 400 units and there are sites being currently serviced for another 700 units.

Excluding the land leased to developers, the total amount of medium density housing land in various stages of availability or current production is something like 3,000 units. If one looks at the demand that has occurred over the last few years and what we can predict in the future, it is unlikely that private enterprise will take up more than 450 to 550 units per year. The Government housing programme is, of course, subject to other factors and one cannot talk about demand in that respect and it is excluded from consideration here.

But given an average private enterprise demand over the next 5 years of something like 500 units per year, one can see that at the moment there is land available or in the process of being serviced to cover that demand and to cater even beyond that demand.

The Commission's further 5-year programme is currently envisaged to produce serviced land for medium density housing at about this demand rate - ranging from 450 to 550 units per year towards the latter part of the 5-year period. This adequately covers the foreseeable demand for medium density housing even if it were to rise from the recent figure of 10 per cent to something like 15 per cent per year towards 1980.

The Commission is certainly anticipating a rise in the 10 per cent that has been experienced in the last 10 years; but by how much one cannot predict. The important point is the ample availability of serviced land now, plus the further sites which will be made available through the additional servicing programme over the next five years.

What happens if the demand goes much higher? Suppose 20 per cent of all housing starts continue to be medium density housing in the next 5 years? The Commission would probably then have to have about 1,400 more units than currently contemplated for servicing. This can be easily met out of the stock of medium density land which exists already plus the next 5-year servicing programme that the Commission is adopting.

Hence the Committee can be assured that the decision to convert some pieces of land from their previous medium density housing forms to single detached housing means that the effect on the total picture is really very marginal. The amount of land contemplated for servicing in the next five to seven years, and the reservations held for it, are ample to allow a substantial increase of medium density demand beyond what is a realistic expectation.

The most important aspect in the context of the Committee's consideration of medium density housing overall and particularly of the specific items included in the Variations is the amount of land reserved at present and which will continue to be held for medium density housing.

Land for 8,200 medium density housing units beyond those already serviced and included in the 5 year servicing programme is currently reserved. The sites are within developed towns of Canberra, Belconnen and Woden/Weston Creek and within those parts of Tuggeranong which will be developed over the next 10 years or so.

It must be emphasised this total excludes further medium density sites which will be available in the later development of Tuggeranong and Gungahlin. It also excludes those sites in Inner Canberra which are currently the subject of a public consultation programme.

Hence even if one were to assume a total of 1,000 units of medium density housing per year being required, this total would cater for some 8 years supply of medium density housing beyond the immediate 5 year period.

The consequence of not developing some of these areas of land which the Commission has suggested for conversion to standard housing is to push even further the development frontier in Tuggeranong. The Commission firmly believes that it must keep adequate land for medium density housing in reserve. However, in view of the vast amount of land currently reserved and undeveloped it does not believe that it can or should keep them all.

Conclusion

The Commission trusts that the material contained in the Statement will demonstrate that -

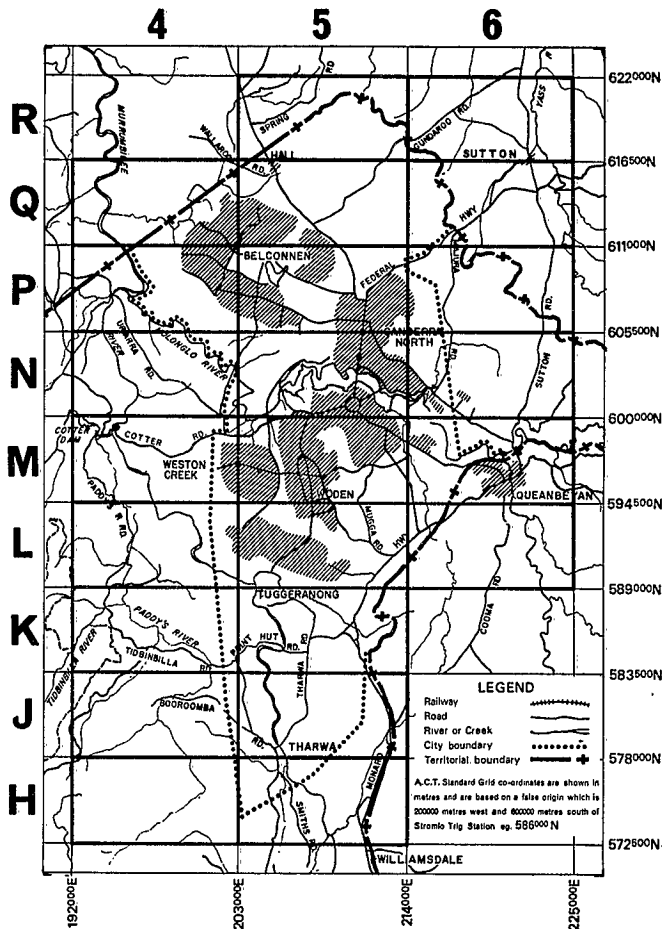
- (i) there are no fundamental changes to the Commission's assumptions or policies with regard to medium density housing;

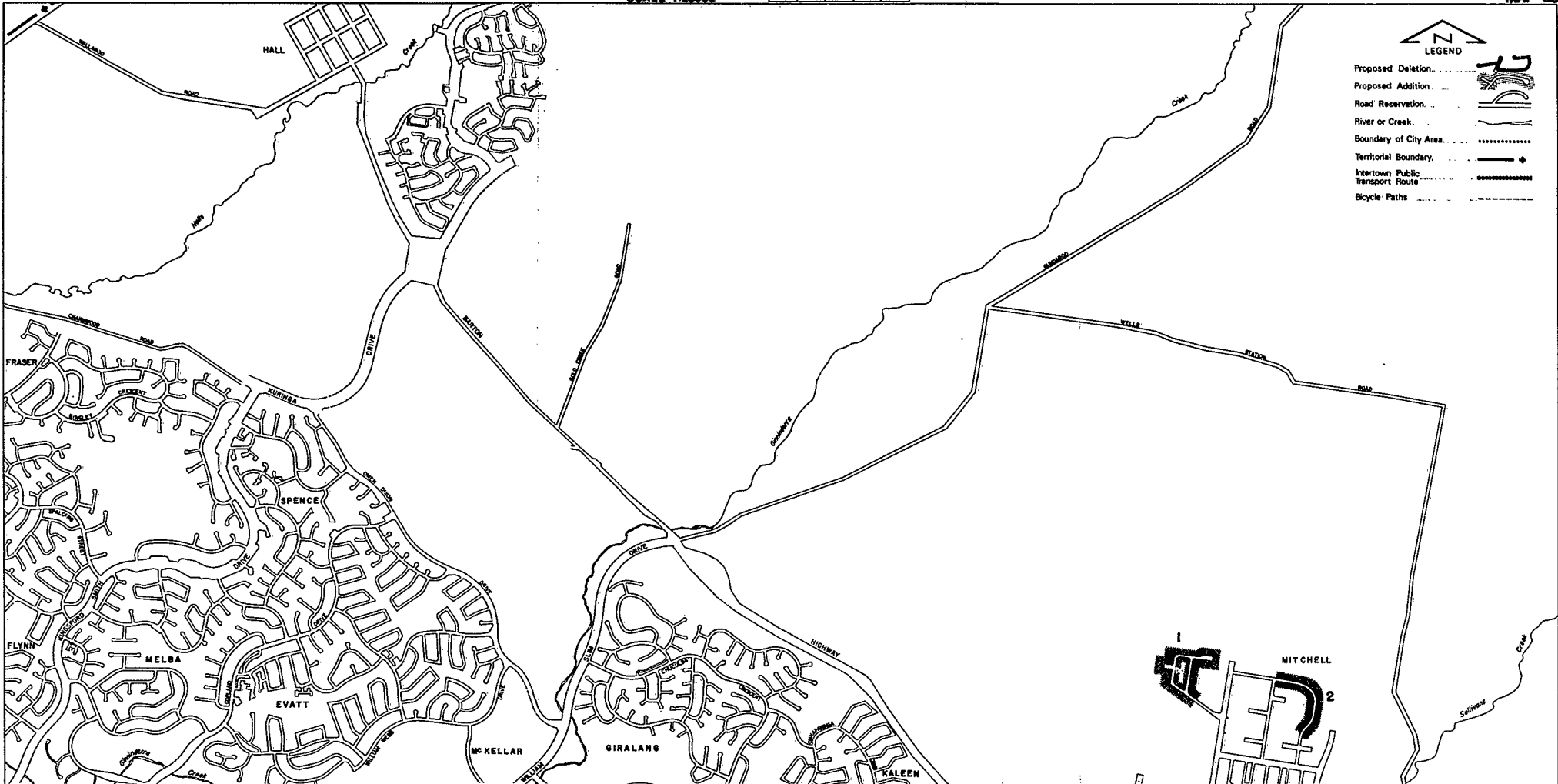
- (ii) the Commission will maintain its efforts in encouraging, promoting and hopefully attaining greater percentages of medium density housing in Canberra over the next years;

- (iii) there is a significant amount of land - currently available, proposed for servicing in the 5 year programme and held as future reservations - for medium density housing well beyond expected demand; and that this will be only marginally affected by the proposed conversions of some areas to detached housing.

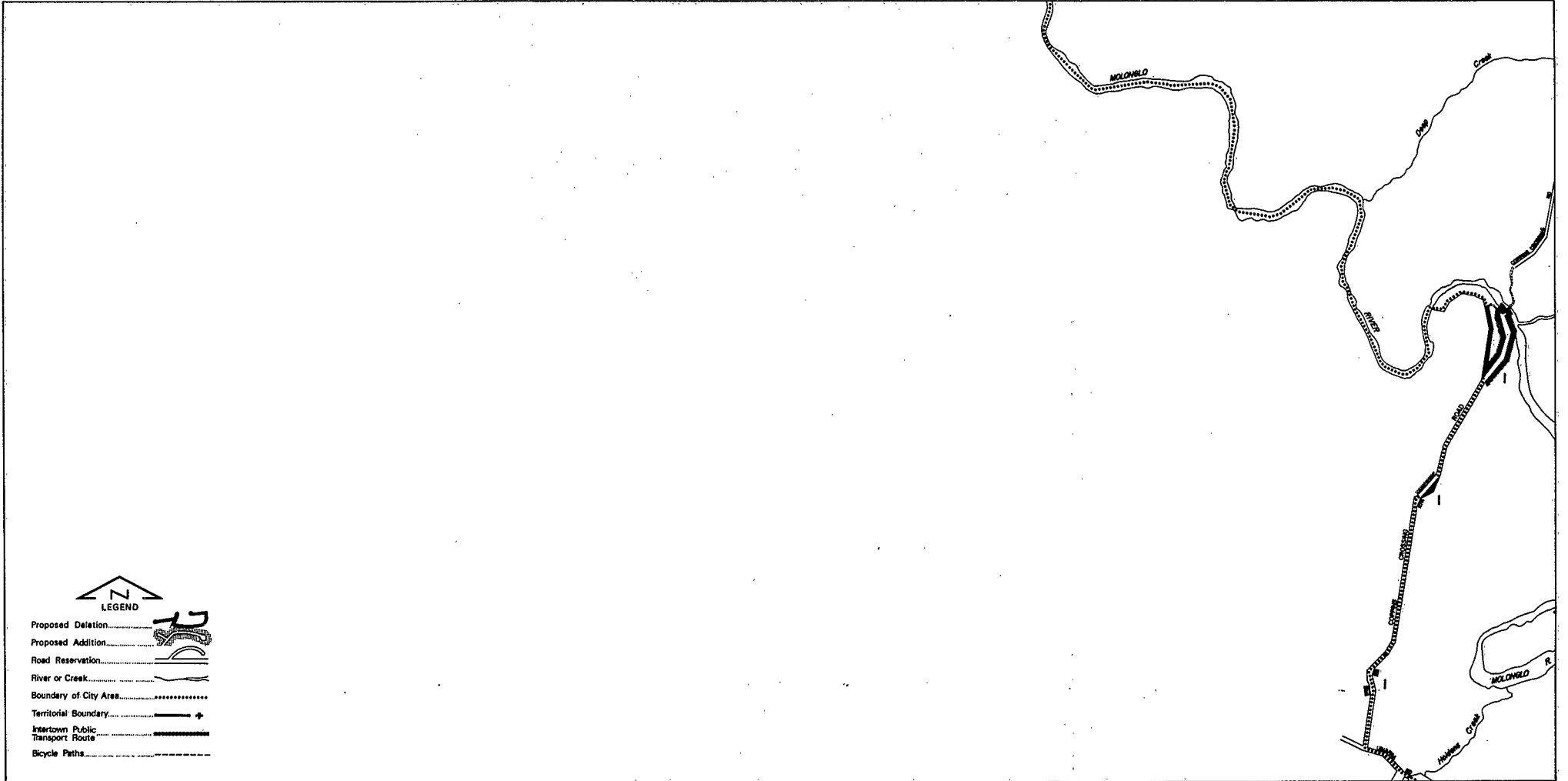
Plan of Layout of City of Canberra and its Environs
Published in the Commonwealth of Australia Gazette
on 19 November 1925 as Modified or Varied to
16 November 1976

**INDEX OF DETAIL MAPS
INCORPORATING THE CITY PLAN**

















LEGEND

- Proposed Deletion..... 
- Proposed Addition..... 
- Road Reservation..... 
- River or Creek..... 
- Boundary of City Area..... 
- Territorial Boundary..... 
- Intertown Public Transport Route..... 
- Bicycle Paths..... 



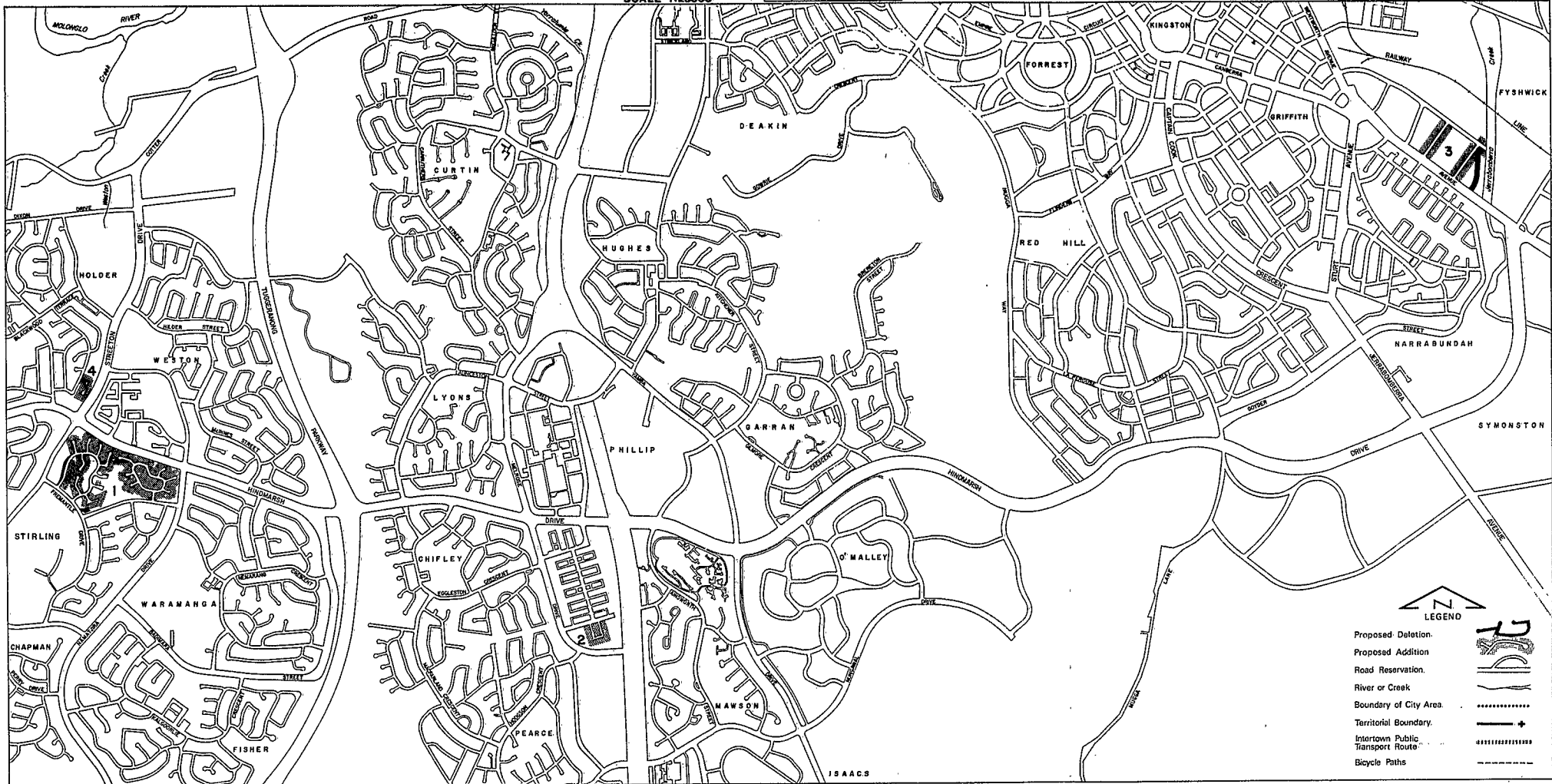
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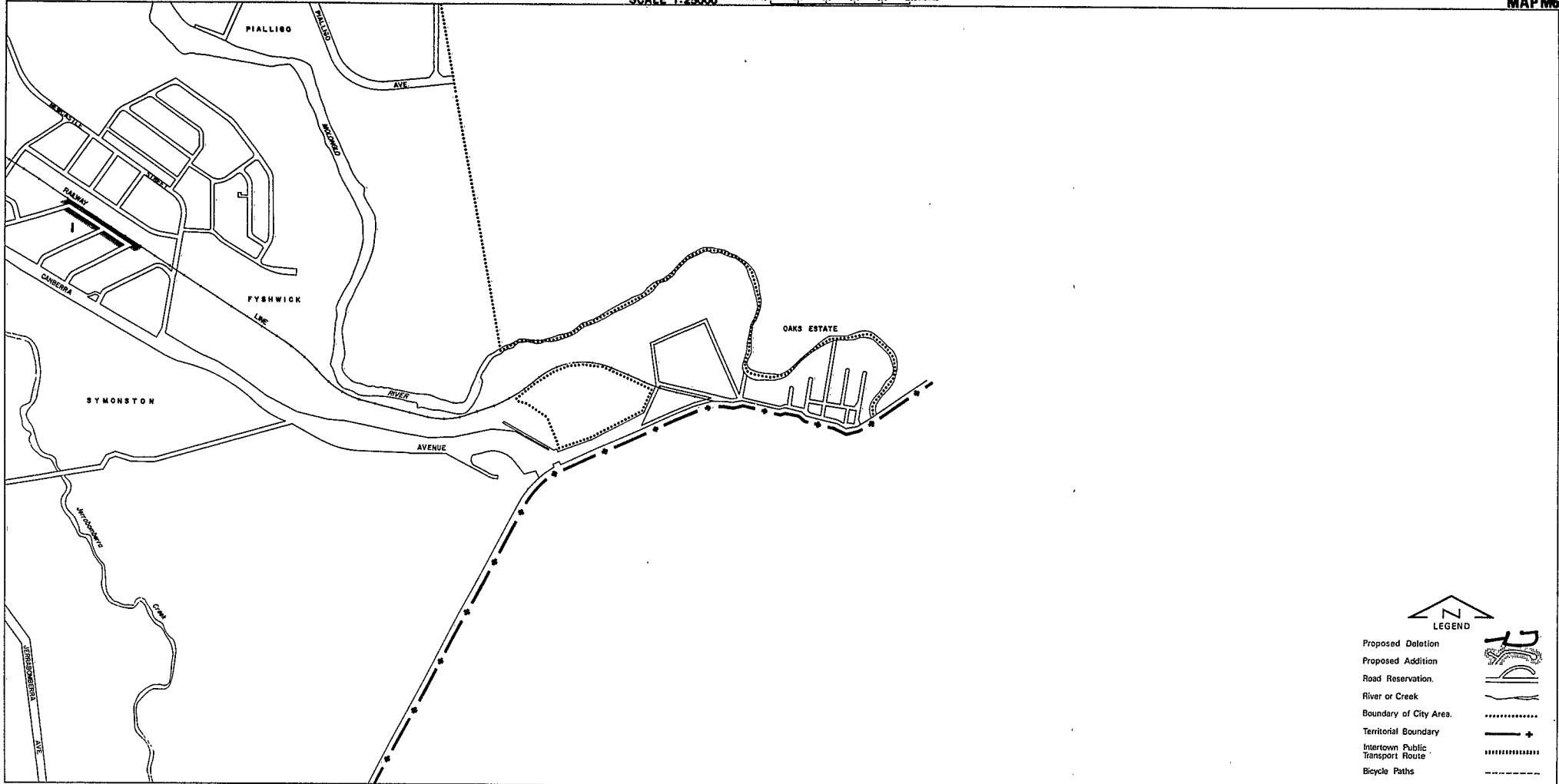
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MAP M5



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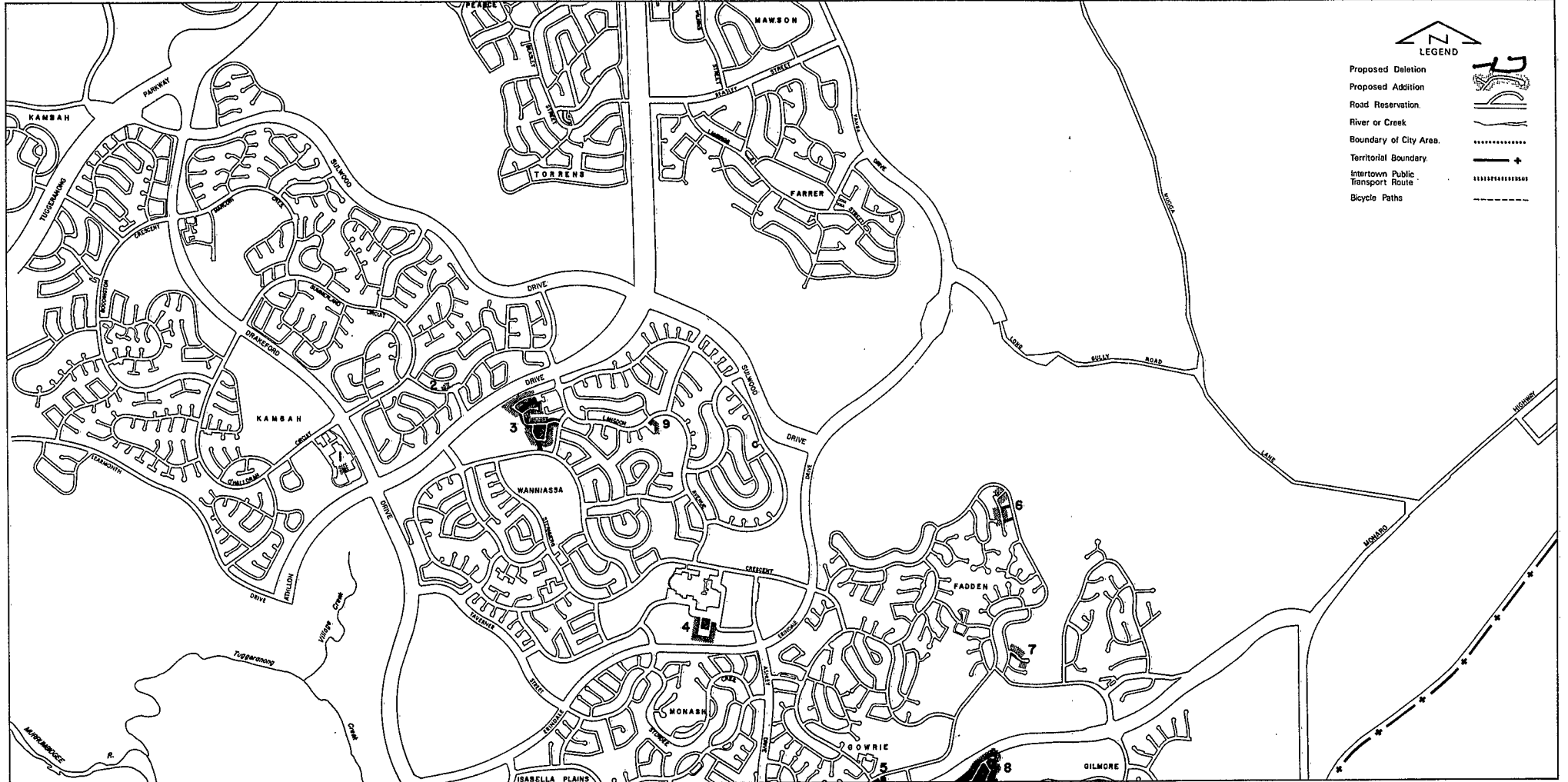
- Proposed Deletion.
- Proposed Addition
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- River or Creek
- Boundary of City Area.
- Territorial Boundary.
- Intertown Public Transport Route.
- Bicycle Paths



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MAP 15

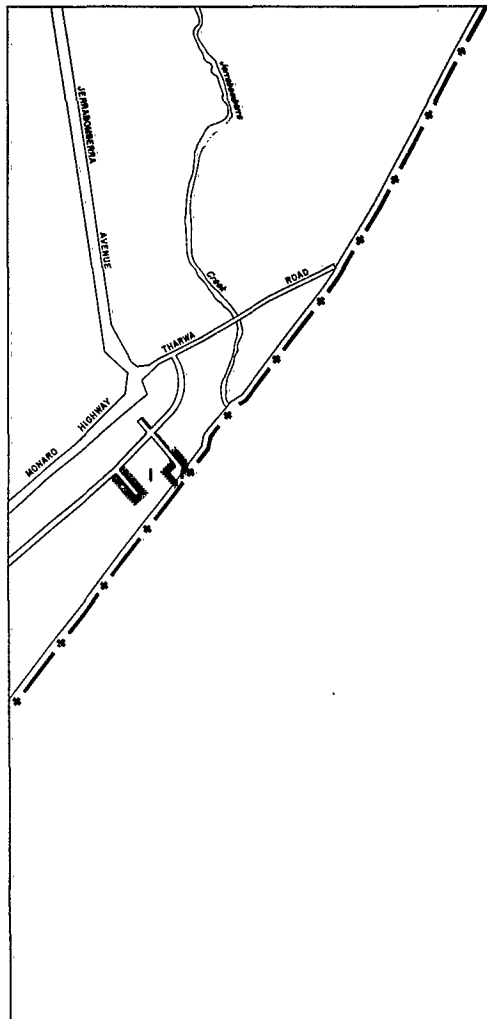


- LEGEND**
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





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MAP 16



LEGEND

- Proposed Deletion . . . 
- Proposed Addition: 
- Road Reservation: 
- River or Creek: 
- Boundary of City Area: . . . 
- Territorial Boundary: . . . 
- Intertown Public Transport Route: . . . 
- Bicycle Paths: 

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MAP K5



LEGEND

- Proposed Deletion
- Proposed Addition
- Road Reservation
- River or Creek
- Boundary of City Area
- Territorial Boundary
- Intertown Public Transport Route
- Bicycle Paths

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MAP P5

