

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF
AUSTRALIA

METROPOLITAN CANBERRA

REPORT OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

May 1987



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JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

The Joint Committee on the Australian Capital Territory was first appointed by resolution of both Houses of Parliament in 1957 and has been re-appointed in succeeding Parliaments. Both Houses resolved to appoint a Joint Committee on the last sitting day in 1956 but time did not permit the appointment of members. The present Committee was appointed for the life of the 34th Parliament by resolutions of the Senate and the House of Representatives in March 1985.

The duties of the Committee as specified in its Resolution of Appointment are to inquire into and report on:

- (a) 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 19 November 1925, as previously modified or varied, which are referred to the committee by the Minister for Territories, and
- (b) such matters relating to the Australian Capital Territory as may be referred to it by:
 - (i) the Minister for the Capital Territory, or
 - (ii) resolution of either House of the Parliament.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE INQUIRY INTO THE
METROPOLITAN PLAN

The Committee is asked to:

examine and report on the implications for the Government of implementing the Metropolitan Canberra Policy and Development Plan with particular reference to:

- i) the levels of public sector annual capital investment required to construct necessary works and services as a consequence of continuing population and employment growth
- ii) the levels of public investment in buildings and facilities required to meet the accommodation needs of the Commonwealth Government
- iii) the levels of public investment required to meet the growing needs of the National Capital
- iv) the scope for private enterprise to accept increased responsibility for funding infrastructure works
- v) the likely increase in operation and maintenance costs for the administration and upkeep of the ACT
- vi) the impact of the Plan upon the South East Region of New South Wales

MEMBERSHIP OF THE ACT COMMITTEE

Chairman	:	Mrs R J Kelly, MP
Deputy Chairman	:	Senator M E Reid
Members	:	Senator P J Giles
		Senator A W R Lewis
		Senator J Morris ¹
		Mr J V Langmore, MP
		Mr F S McArthur, MP
		Mr J R Sharp, MP
		Mr J H Snow, MP
		Mr K W Wright, MP
Secretary to the Committee	:	Mr Bjarne Nordin
Specialist Adviser	:	Dr Colin Adrian ²

1. Senator J Morris was appointed member of the Committee on 12.3.86 to replace Senator J P McKiernan.
2. Dr Adrian was specialist adviser to the Inquiry from 26.9.85 to 18.3.86.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Committee considers that land development, marketing and lease administration should be carried out by one organisation and recommends that a land development account be established as soon as practicable to overcome the present shortage of data and financial accounts in the Territory and to provide information enabling better planning assessments concerning local and national investments and priorities in the ACT. (Paragraph 1.20).
2. In the absence of self-Government, the functions of the Committee have become more critical and for this reason the Committee recommends that all future Policy and Development Plans prepared by the NCDC be referred to the Committee for its possible consideration. Thus the Committee can exercise its prerogative to evaluate and comment on the Commission's planning initiatives where it is considered to be in the public interest. This process may be reviewed in the light of self-Government. (Paragraph 1.22).
3. The Committee recommends that the NCDC and the Department of Territories make the provision of aged persons' units one of the highest priorities on the public housing program as one strategy in increasing residential density in established areas. (Paragraph 3.33).
4. The Committee is of the view that a longer time frame for planning would, in the end, result in cost savings and a more efficient allocation of resources and therefore recommends that the Minister for Territories supports the NCDC in its proposal to adopt a Five Year Planning Schedule. (Paragraph 4.21).
5. The Committee considers that there is a need to assess the demand for more variety of housing and recommends that the NCDC initiate an updated study of housing preference and affordability in Canberra. (Paragraph 5.10).
6. The Committee recommends that the Defence Department relocate from the area of Belconnen, Jerrabomberra and Harman Bonshay thus releasing these valuable residential sites and redressing the high cost in lost opportunity for this land. (Paragraph 5.32).
7. The Committee considers that the Commission should fully examine options for development in existing areas as well as continuing preliminary work on suburbs in new areas of development. It is acknowledged that preliminary

consultations and work on the development of Gungahlin must proceed and the Committee welcomes the Gungahlin External Transport Study and recommends that development of Gungahlin not proceed until transport links have been fully evaluated and approved by the Committee. (Paragraph 5.35).

8. The Committee reiterates the recommendation in its Report on the 89th Series of Variations that a trust fund account be set up and administered by the Department of Territories by the end of 1987 to enable revenue generated from parking fees to be redirected to the policing of parking restrictions, provision of further parking facilities and/or expansion of the ACTION bus fleet. Regulations governing the trust fund should provide for its termination three years from commencement unless there are specific reasons for its continuation beyond this period. (Paragraph 6.19).
9. The Committee recommends that the Commission give serious consideration to the sensitive and sympathetic development of appropriate foreshore areas of Lake Burley Griffin as a matter of urgency. (Paragraph 8.14).
10. The Committee recommends that priority be given to the formation of the organisation proposed in 1976, referred to as the Commonwealth and South East Region Advisory Committee. The need for such a regional planning body is now becoming acute as problems related to the expansion of Canberra and its increased population levels will have greater and greater impact on the region as Canberra continues to expand. (Paragraph 9.24).
11. The Committee recommends that the NCDC and the Department of Territories implement an urban consolidation strategy with community consultation which seeks to increase residential density in existing suburbs and that detailed information be made publicly available regarding the costs and benefits of such a strategy. (Paragraph 10.10).

CONDUCT OF THE INQUIRY

On 23 May 1985 the Minister for Territories, the Hon Gordon Scholes, MP, forwarded to the Committee suggested terms of reference for an inquiry into the Metropolitan Plan. The Committee formally adopted the terms of reference at its meeting on 31 May 1985 and these are set out on page vi.

The inquiry was advertised in major metropolitan and local regional newspapers and the Committee invited a range of organisations and individuals with an interest in the future development of the ACT to make submissions. Strong interest in the inquiry was reflected in the 32 submissions received from planning authorities, government departments and interested individuals.

The Committee conducted five public hearings at which 59 witnesses appeared representing five commercial and professional organisations, six government bodies, three Shire and City Councils and two residents' interest groups. One hearing was held in Sydney to enable the Committee to question representatives of the NSW Department of Environment and Planning and to inspect Sydney Harbour foreshore development. In Brisbane, the Committee had informal discussions with officers of the Departments of Water Supply and Sewerage Works, Transport and Development and Planning and the Brisbane City Council. The Committee inspected housing developments in the Spring Hill area.

As well, the Committee was briefed in public and private session by officers of the National Capital Development Commission and the Department of Territories on specific aspects of its Inquiry.

Appendix I contains a list of the witnesses who gave evidence. Appendix II lists those organisations and individuals who made submissions but were not called to give evidence. The transcript of the evidence taken at the hearings is available from the House of Representatives Committee Office and the National Library.

The co-operation and assistance given to the Committee during the course of the inquiry is appreciated. The Committee expresses its thanks to all who made submissions or appeared as witnesses.

PREFACE

The question of urban consolidation emerged as a major issue during the course of the Committee's Inquiry into the National Capital Development Commission's Metropolitan Canberra Policy and Development Plan.

The Commission has ignored developments resulting from their own planning decisions which have made employment projections and self containment objectives, as expressed in the Metropolitan Plan, misleading and inaccurate. It is imperative that the Commission comes to terms with these developments and with the consequences of continued urban sprawl and its associated levels of high and increasing infrastructure servicing and social costs.

The Committee, in its report, has suggested ways in which the NCDC and the Department of Territories can improve the present land administration system and, with the benefit of a more comprehensive data base, achieve a Metropolitan Canberra which can realise the benefits of increasing density in established areas. This will make full use of existing service capacity and also limit, for the time being, further peripheral expansion of the urban area, until this is considered appropriate.

On the basis of available information, the Committee considers that the environmental and social costs of dispersed growth are greater than the costs associated with concentrated development. As a consequence, the Committee recommends that the development of Gungahlin not proceed according to the timetable previously proposed by the NCDC.

The Committee, in its final recommendation, proposes that the NCDC and the Department of Territories implement an urban consolidation strategy with community consultation which seeks to increase residential density in existing suburbs and make detailed information publicly available regarding the costs and benefits of such a strategy.

This strategy will only be successful if the Department of Territories, as the administering authority, and the NCDC work together to achieve the objectives set out in this report. It is expected that high levels of co-operation and improved communication will be achieved along with a better Plan for Canberra's future development.

PART A - BACKGROUND

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE METROPOLITAN PLAN

1.1 In December 1976 the then Minister for the Capital Territory, the Hon A.A. Staley, MP referred to the Joint Committee on the Australian Capital Territory for investigation and report "... the adequacy and public acceptability of the planning procedures and processes in the Australian Capital Territory" with particular reference to the adequacy of community involvement, the role of the national Parliament and the relationship between the various groups involved in the process. This inquiry, which concluded with the tabling of the Committee's report in March 1979, dealt with the major elements of the planning procedures and processes in the ACT under several headings.

1.2 The report, set against the background to planning in Canberra commencing with the Seat of Government Act 1908, detailed the early history of the development of Canberra dating from the original Burley Griffin Plan, followed by the Senate Select Committee on the Development of Canberra report in 1954, the establishment of the National Capital Development Commission in 1957 through to the implementation of what became known as the "Y Plan". The Committee's 1979 report dealt in detail with leasehold provisions in the ACT, government and public administration, legislative planning controls, the role and functions of the NCDC, public participation in planning and future proposals.

1.3 The report made a series of specific recommendations relating to shortcomings in the planning process as perceived at the time of the report. As the report on planning in the ACT provides background to the present inquiry it should be seen as

the historical framework in which the present inquiry has been undertaken. For this reason, much of the detail relating to planning procedures and processes has not been repeated.

The Development of the Metropolitan Plan

1.4 The National Capital Development Commission, established by an Act of Parliament, was charged with responsibility for planning and developing the city of Canberra from a population of approximately 40 000 in 1957 to a population which has now exceeded 260 000. As part of its initial strategy, the Commission published a blueprint in 1965 which would accommodate a population of 250 000 by about 1980 in a document entitled The Future Canberra. This strategy was embodied in the Outline Plan as published in The Future Canberra and established some important principles which continued to be reflected in subsequent metropolitan plans. The principles embodied the following:

- particular emphasis on the central zones of the city including the Parliamentary Triangle and Civic;
- the preservation of the open character of the city limiting the extent of the existing districts and forming new settlements in surrounding rural areas, thus limiting development to a series of clearly defined districts occupying the valleys between the main hills with covered hilltops being preserved;
- setting aside reservations of open land together with central areas to form part of a special category of land, the use and protection of which would be subject to particular consideration and care;
- the continued reliance on the private car as the main transport vehicle in Canberra due to the expressed intention to disperse a substantial portion of the

employment, shopping and other commercial facilities away from the city's central area to district centres to lessen traffic congestion and lessen journeys to work and major shopping facilities;

- establishment of districts with populations of 60 000 to 100 000 which would have many of the attributes of independent cities (having substantial employment centres and groupings of shops and service industries);
- districts made up of 10 or more suburbs with a population of 4 000 to 5 000 (sufficient to cater for a primary school) and a small group of shops and a service station within the suburb;
- a system of arterial roads located in the parkland reservation surrounding residential areas to allow for easy inter district movement. The Future Canberra report summed up the strategy as follows:

"... the plan provides for a city of 250 000 accommodated in a series of clearly defined districts, each of which is relatively self contained but which would jointly support the central areas, the city centre and the specialised institutional or functional zones. Transport will be by cars and buses using a network of major roads located within the parkland system to provide easy cross city movement with a minimum of interference to activities within the precinctual areas. Within the plan is the conception of a new category of land defined as special areas and which include the important central areas, the hills and ridges and the system of parklands extending into the western mountains. It is believed that such a plan will provide a distinguished and efficient centre for the legislature and other national institutions, that it will cater efficiently for the city's commercial and service needs and that it will retain the human qualities within its residential areas and provide the people with ready access to the surrounding countryside."

(page 35).

Vorhees Report

1.5 Studies conducted by the NCDC after the publication of The Future Canberra showed that the plan had a major shortcoming once the population exceeded 250 000. Once this population threshold was reached there were indications that the plan would break down and that the city would be overwhelmed with transport pressures and traffic congestion. This was stated to be because most of the major employment and retail facilities in the plan were concentrated in Civic and the national area of Parkes and Barton.

1.6 In 1966, the NCDC commissioned Alan M. Vorhees and Associates, an American firm of land use and transport consultants, to develop a plan which would lead to the establishment of an efficient public transport system and which would reduce potential traffic congestion. Although the study had other objectives in terms of developing a general plan concept, the central objective was that of minimising traffic congestion.

1.7 The Vorhees study evaluated six optional land-use patterns consisting of different arrangements of towns of 50 000 to 150 000 people. The options were evaluated with respect to retail and market potential, transport efficiency and employment distribution. The evaluation revealed several guidelines which could minimise the probability of traffic congestion as the population grew. These guidelines were:

- metropolitan growth should be directed into a limited number of corridors;
- the optimum size for Central Canberra is approximately 90 000 employees. In addition, it should contain approximately one million square feet of retail space;
- towns should contain populations of between 75 000 and 120 000 people. Town centres containing 750 000 square feet of retail space and providing employment for

- 10 000 to 15 000 people should be established in the centre of the towns on an arterial road public transportation spine;
- the transportation system should consist of a articulated system composed of an arterial road public transportation spine and a peripheral freeway system;
- public transportation on separate rights-of-way offering high levels of transport service could be achieved if land development at the regional, towns and local level were organised to take advantage of the full potential of this mode of travel.

Tomorrow's Canberra - the Y Plan

1.8 The conclusions of the Vorhees study provided the basis for the preferred plan of Canberra which has become known as the Y Plan because the proposed form of development is in a linear pattern in the shape of a Y. The Y Plan was published in Tomorrow's Canberra in 1970 and still forms the basic concept for the current Metropolitan Plan. The essential features of the Y Plan as outlined in Tomorrow's Canberra were:

- the central area; this area, comprising the national area of Parkes and associated parts of Barton, Civic Centre, the Australian National University, CSIRO, Royal Canberra Hospital and Braddon service trade area, and Defence Headquarters, Russell, was to be planned to accommodate an employment level of 60 000 people at metropolitan population of 500 000 and 90 00 people at a metropolitan population of one million. These levels were considered to be the optimum if the area was to function efficiently and not be overwhelmed by traffic congestion;

the regional structure; the regional structure was to be formed by directing growth into a series of new towns grouped into three corridors, north, north west and south west of the central area and forming a Y shape. This would require and in turn support a clearly structured transport system. The growth corridors would occupy natural valley systems and possess a sense of self-containment by virtue of the surrounding hills;

towns and town centres; each town was intended to have a population of about 100 000 to 120 000 people. This level was arrived at having regard to the thresholds necessary to support certain social, economic and municipal developments. For example, towns of this size could support a large shopping and employment centre, hospital, court of petty sessions and police station and would be convenient units in which to operate municipal and social welfare services. A town centre in each of the new towns would contain retail space appropriate to the needs of the town population. In order to provide the opportunity for people to work close to where they live each town centre was to be designed to accommodate between 10 000 and 15 000 employees. Decentralisation of employment and retail opportunities was seen as providing relief from traffic congestion in the central area, competition for comparison goods shopping and more efficient use of the road network system through reverse loading and reduced journeys to work;

transport system; the transport system was to comprise an express public transport route connecting the town centres and running through the built-up spine of each town. It would be supported by local feeder bus systems. The main element of the road network was a system of peripheral parkways situated for the most part outside the built-up areas;

landscaped open space; a landscaped open space system was to be used to reinforce the natural hill and ridge systems in order to define a clear boundary between urban areas and rural areas. Within the town areas landscape treatment was to be used to enhance the localised natural features, provide recreational spaces and provide colour and contrast within the built-up areas.

1.9 From this general plan concept an intermediate plan was developed to cater for a population of 500 000. The plan recommended Tuggeranong as the next new area of growth after the development of Weston Creek and Belconnen. The development of Tuggeranong was seen as consolidating the growth of the southern metropolitan corridor and supporting the previous development of Woden.

Metropolitan Issues Report

1.10 In 1980, the NCDC saw a need for the plan as outlined in Tomorrow's Canberra to be reviewed, because of the dramatic changes in crucial factors, the most important of which were population growth rates, car ownership and household size. The Commission's review was published as the Metropolitan Issues - Public Discussion Paper in 1980. The paper identified the significant existing and emerging metropolitan issues as:

- changed assumptions about population growth rates which, during the late 1960's and early 1970's, had been expected to continue at 8% per annum with the likely prospect that by the year 2000, Canberra's population would exceed 500 000. However, by 1976 there had been a dramatic decline in this growth rate and by June 1981 it had fallen to 1.3%;
- associated with this decline of population growth rates there was also a slowing down in most sectors of economic activity, particularly the building industry;

Canberra's private enterprise economy also moved from a position of high growth to low growth. This was directly related to reductions in the level of government activities. Between 1971 and 1973 private sector employment growth exceeded government sector employment, while between 1976 and 1980 private sector employment declined each year at an average of 3%, in response to the containment of the government sector;

the decline in the growth rates of population and employment also resulted in more significant and persistent imbalances in the provision of shopping facilities, housing and land than would have been the case under the anticipated high growth scenario of the Y Plan assumptions.

1.11 The 1980 paper focused on the phasing of future development in Canberra within the Y Plan concept and assessed whether population settlement should continue in Tuggeranong or be switched to Gungahlin. Three options were identified and analysed for discussion purposes:

Option 1

To continue existing policy by completing the development of Tuggeranong including early settlement of Lanyon and west Murrumbidgee and the development of the town centre.

Option 2

To develop north Tuggeranong to a population of 70 000 (i.e. including development in Kambah, Wanniassa, Monash, Gowrie, Chisholm, Gilmore, Fadden, Macarthur, Oxley, Richardson, Calwell, Theodore, Isabella Plains), with a town centre, and then commence the settlement of Gungahlin. The development of Lanyon and west Murrumbidgee would be postponed until after Gungahlin.

Option 3

To develop north eastern Tuggeranong (i.e including the occupation of existing serviced blocks as well as the completion of servicing in Gilmore and Oxley) with a small centre and then settlement of Gungahlin. The development of Lanyon and west Murrumbidgee would be postponed until after Gungahlin.

1.12 The paper supported option 3, which comprised the early development of Gungahlin and the restructuring of Tuggeranong into a town of 50 000 to 60 000 people with local centres but without a town centre in its initial phase of development. The Commission believed the adoption of option 3 gave it time to gather additional information which would allow it to consider the environmental issues relating to the development of the west bank of the Murrumbidgee and the Lanyon area.

1.13 The NCDC received a large number of submissions from the Canberra community and special interest groups and the issues raised are summarised in the Metropolitan Plan report. Business groups generally focused their attention on the subject of consolidation. Most felt that because of energy costs, declining school enrolments, transport and other reasons, the Commission should concentrate on measures which would increase settlement within existing areas of development. They also pointed to several areas (e.g those occupied by the CSIRO Division of Plant Industry's Ginninderra Experiment Station and the Belconnen Naval Station) which they felt the Commission should assess before extending development beyond the present urban periphery. Several older residential areas were recommended for redevelopment to increase use of existing schools, shops and community facilities. Business groups also favoured restricting further major retail releases until existing centres were more fully utilised.

1.14 Community groups and residents generally agreed with making consolidation a higher priority, although some mixed feelings regarding inner Canberra redevelopment were evident.

Some concern about the nature of the redevelopment and its effects on the character of older neighbourhoods was expressed. However, within the wide range of issues presented by community groups, several conservation groups asked that the Murrumbidgee corridor be protected from development and maintained as a low intensity use, recreational reserve.

1.15 Since the publication of the metropolitan issues paper in 1980 further studies by NCDC have shown that the issue of future land settlement sequence is still a key issue, not so much in terms of whether the next major development stage should occur in either Tuggeranong or Gungahlin, but rather in terms of how soon and what form the development of Gungahlin should take.

1.16 In NCDC's view this issue is the most important one raised in the Metropolitan Plan report. Its significance lies in the fact that to start a new development point in Gungahlin has substantial fiscal implications for the Government. Also the development of Gungahlin could defer, but would not resolve, the question of whether or not rural lands in Tuggeranong, west of the Murrumbidgee River are to be preserved, and whether rural lands in New South Wales, north of the ACT will eventually become developed and incorporated into Canberra.

Present Inquiry

1.17 Within this context, the Committee undertook to approach the Minister for Territories, the Hon Gordon Scholes, MP with a view to conducting an inquiry into the Metropolitan Plan as Canberra enters its next phase of development. The Minister in May 1985 referred the Metropolitan Canberra Policy and Development Plan to the Committee for investigation and report and asked that the Committee specifically report on public and private investment levels required to meet present and future needs for growth, the scope for private enterprise to accept increased responsibility for funding infrastructure works, the likely increase in operation and maintenance costs and the impact of the plan on the south-east region of New South Wales.

1.18 The Committee quickly became aware that due to problems related to incomplete accounting procedures within the Territory and the lack of a data base which would indicate the proportion of revenue and expenditure allocated to national as opposed to municipal and local functions, it was not possible to obtain the basic information necessary to make comprehensive assessments about such levels of investment. As a result of ground work by the Commonwealth Grants Commission and changes made within functional areas of the Department of Territories, it is essential that this kind of information be gathered and made available for analysis in the future.

1.19 One significant step in this direction is the adoption of a land development account incorporating land development, marketing and lease administration functions in one organisation. This should ideally operate as a management accounting system which provides the kind of information required to make planning decisions on a large scale and enable assessment to be made about local and national investments and priorities in the ACT. It should also enable informed decisions to be made concerning the costs and benefits of urban consolidation as opposed to further peripheral expansion, issues which are discussed in greater detail in Part B of the Report.

1.20 The establishment of a land development account is a proposal which has been recommended by the Joint Committee in its previous inquiry into Self-Government and Public Finance in the ACT, the Land Tenure Inquiry and the White Committee of Review of the NCDC. The Committee therefore reinforces its support for a land development account within one responsible authority and recommends that it be established as soon as practicable thereby going some way to overcome the present shortage of data and financial accounts in the Territory.

1.21 The Committee has, however, gathered extensive evidence on the perceived impact of the Commission's proposed Metropolitan Plan and has taken evidence from a variety of groups and individuals who are likely to be affected by the future plan. As

such, a series of major issues have been identified and addressed in a way which highlights their importance for the social and economic development of the ACT.

1.22 As it does not now seem, at least in the short term, that self-government for the ACT will be achieved, the Committee reluctantly has to assume a role as a public consultative mechanism forming an important element in the overall planning process. In the absence of self-Government the functions of the Committee have become more critical and for this reason the Committee recommends that all future Policy and Development Plans prepared by the NCDC be referred to the Committee for its possible consideration. Thus the Committee can exercise its prerogative to evaluate and comment on the Commission's planning initiatives where it is considered to be in the public interest. This process may be reviewed in the light of self-Government.

2. POPULATION TRENDS AND FORECASTS

2.1 After the public release of the Commission's Metropolitan Policy and Development Plan, the Committee was briefed in September 1984 by officers of the NCDC about the scope and intentions of the Plan. At this hearing the Committee was told that "metropolitan planning is really about a few very basic points. It is about where people live, where they work, where they do their major shopping, where they go for major recreation and how they get there via the transport system, both public and private to connect those kinds of activities" (transcript of evidence page 6).

2.2 Within this rudimentary framework it is possible to make informed decisions about community preferences and to enable a range of choices to be provided, so that a city may diversify and develop to the benefit of most of its residents. It must be recognised that planning decisions are limited by the validity and reliability of population statistics and demographic data and are influenced in the ACT by such things as employment growth, population growth, rate of social change and planning in the interests of Canberra as the National Capital.

Employment Levels

2.3 According to figures issued by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in the Labour Force Survey in December 1986 the ACT labour force was 127 700. This figure does not include Queanbeyan which employs over 6 000 people.

2.4 According to the Metropolitan Plan for Canberra, the Canberra/Queanbeyan work force is projected to increase to about 186 000 in the next 20 years. The Report provides a brief description of employment distribution and structure in the ACT stating that "although the employment distribution is strongly

biased towards inner Canberra, the fundamental goal of Canberra's planning has been the dispersal of employment away from the central area to the new towns so as to reduce the costs associated with the journey to work, congestion and pollution" (pages 46 and 47).

2.5 One feature of the employment structure in the ACT which is different from other areas of Australia is that the public sector comprises 59% of the work force compared with 25% for Australia as a whole. A recent trend in employment growth has been that during 1971 to 1976 public sector employment increased by nearly 16 000 while the private sector increased by 15 000. From 1976 to 1981 there was a decline in employment in the private sector and an increase in the public sector of about 10 000. Thus the transfer of Government Departments and subsequent growth of Departments has been a major reason for employment growth in the ACT in the 1960's and early 1970's.

2.6 Major features of the ACT labour force include high participation rates, high levels of education, relatively high income and expenditure and increasing part-time employment. Graphs of ACT employment levels are set out in Tables 1 and 2.

2.7 Unemployment developed as a problem in the ACT in the late 1970's and early 1980's. Between the 1976 and 1981 census the unemployment rate increased from 2.6% to 5%. Since 1982 to 1983 the general improvement in employment opportunities in the ACT together with local oriented employment programs saw a decline in the number of unemployed, a reduced average duration of unemployment and junior unemployment rates falling to around the national level (approximately 20%). By June 1985 the unemployment rate had fallen to 4.3% of the labour force. This compared to the national rate of 8.4%. This trend, however, has to some extent been reversed and current figures are set out in Table 3.

TABLE 1

Statistics Group
Department of the Parliamentary Library

A.C.T. EMPLOYED AS A PERCENTAGE OF AUSTRALIA'S EMPLOYED

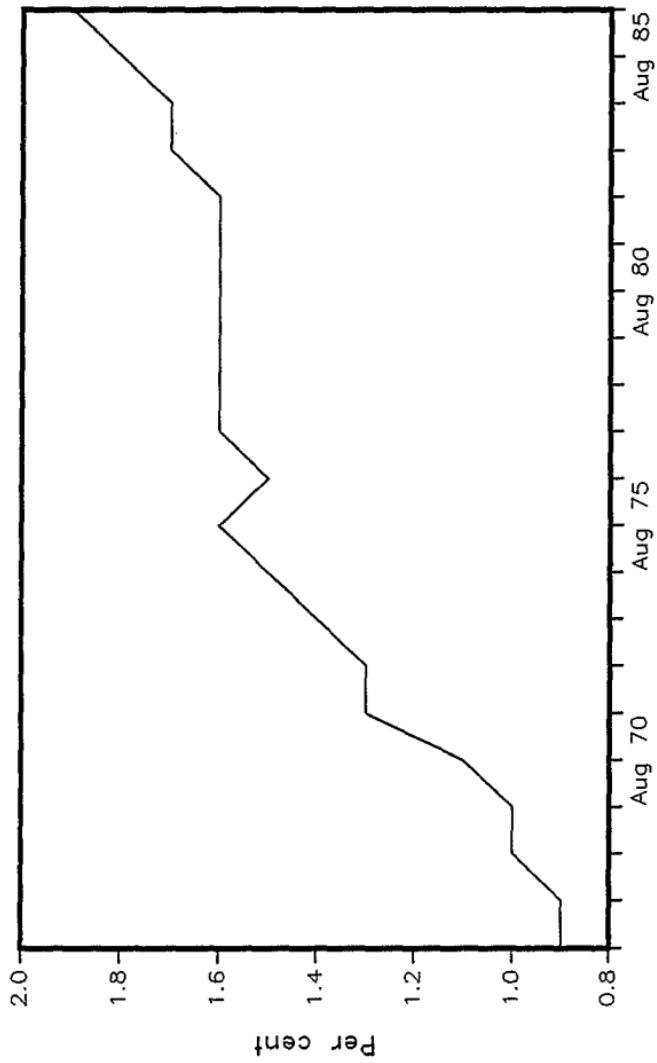


TABLE 2

Statistics Group
Department of the Parliamentary Library

INDEXES OF EMPLOYED PERSONS, AUGUST 1966 TO AUGUST 1986

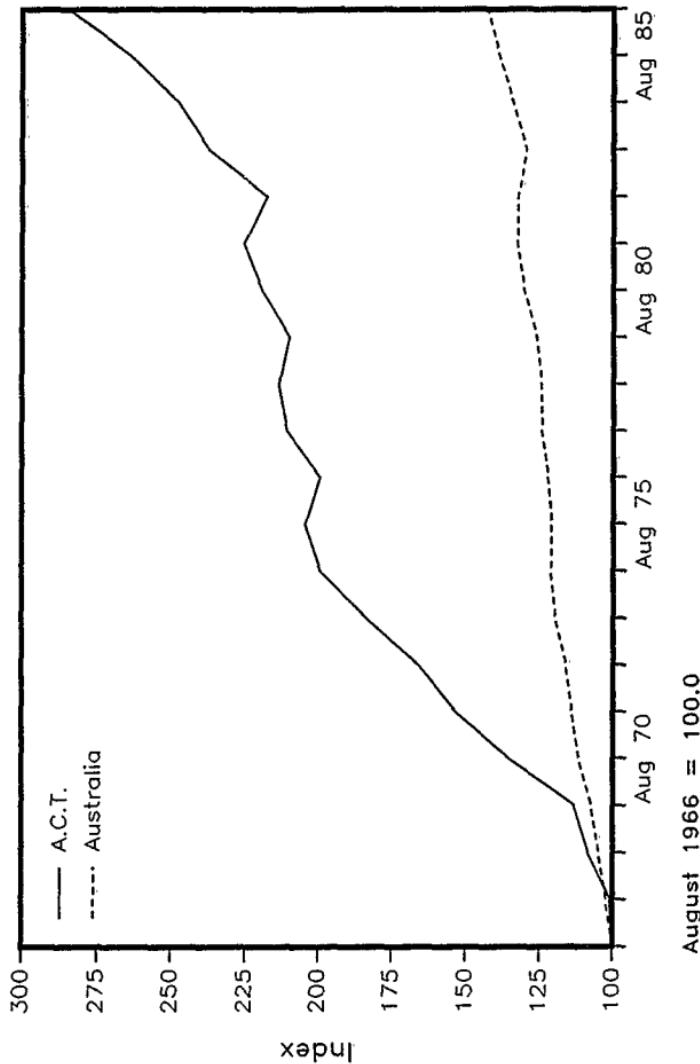


TABLE 3
POPULATION AND LABOUR FORCE STATISTICS, A.C.T.

Unemployment Rates, A.C.T. and Australia February 1987		
Unemployment Rate		
	A.C.T.	Australia
--- per cent ---		
15 to 19 years old	18.4	23.5
Total	7.3	9.1

Source: Statistics Group
Department of the Parliamentary Library

2.8 The high level of youth unemployment is a product of lack of experience and skills. It is also influenced by Canberra's industrial structure which requires high skill levels (transcript pages 36 and 37). Recruitment levels changed greatly from the 1970's to the 1980's with a marked drop in public service vacancies for young school leavers as a result of changed public sector employment practices. The traineeship scheme will have an impact on the recruitment of young people into the public service and the Government traineeship policy is a response to the increase in youth unemployment and should provide better employment opportunities.

2.9 Due to circumstances relating to slowdowns in growth in the ACT economy and the dependency in the ACT of employment levels on government programs and initiatives, it has not always been possible to forecast population trends within town centre areas. Evidence of this can be seen in Tuggeranong and Civic

where projections and expected population unemployment levels have not been met. The NCDC has experienced a degree of conflict in the extent to which it has been prepared to allow Civic to develop as a major commercial centre in Canberra at the expense of development in new town centres. This will be developed in greater detail in the following Chapters.

2.10 An employment survey in Civic carried out by the NCDC in January 1986 showed labour force figures in the Civic area of 23 416. As a result of the Committee's investigations of the 89th Series of Variations to the City Plan which dealt with the commercial development of Section 38 in Civic, the NCDC provided the Committee with labour force figures which indicate that this employment level is likely to increase dramatically within the next 12 to 18 months. The result is that the Commission's original estimates for employment in Civic of between 25 000 and 27 000 have been revised upwards by 1990 to reach 30 000 to 32 000. This has major implications for traffic and transport and will be discussed in Chapter 6.

Population Trends

2.11 As at June 1986, the Canberra population was estimated at 263 250 and Queanbeyan at 27 500. The population is projected to increase to 304 400 by 1991 and 436 400 by 2005. These figures are set out in Table 4. Since 1975, the rate of population growth has fallen considerably. Between 1971 and 1975 the average annual population increase in the ACT was 11 000 of which about 75% was a result of net migration. Between 1976 and 1982, net migration averaged only 1 000 per annum.

TABLE 4

Resident Population: Actual, Projected and
Growth Rates, A.C.T.

June	Population	Growth Rate	
	persons '000	per annum (a) per cent	
1986	264.4	4.3	
1987	269.2	1.8	
1988	277.9	3.2	
2.	1991	304.4	3.1
	1996	350.8	2.9
2.	2001	398.5	2.6
	2005	436.4	2.2

(a) Average annual growth rate where the population values are more than one year apart.

N.B. (1) The June 1986 population value for A.C.T comprises:

Canberra	263,250 persons
Jervis Bay	750 persons
Remainder of A.C.T.	350 persons
Total	264,350 persons

(2) The June 1986 Census values for A.C.T. are:

Canberra	247,975 persons
Jervis Bay	624 persons
Remainder of A.C.T.	808 persons
Total	249,407 persons

Resident Population, Queanbeyan
June 1986

Persons	'000	22,500
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Source: Statistics Group
Department of the Parliamentary Library

2.12 The population of central Canberra has declined from a population peak of 83 000 in 1967 to 63 000 in 1986 reflecting the impact of out migration and mortality.

2.13 Compared to the Australian age pattern the age structure of the ACT population has a much lower proportion aged over 65 years, a low proportion in age groups aged over 45 years, and a higher proportion of those aged 0 to 14 years.

2.14 Canberra's age structure is projected to change substantially during the application of the Metropolitan Plan. The population over 60 years of age is predicted to increase from 15 100 in 1981 to about 37 000 by the turn of the century. These figures are set out in Table 5. The ageing of Canberra's population will result in increased demands for health and medical services. Leisure and recreational requirements will alter, as will the type of housing required. The absolute increases in school age population will require additional educational investments to be made. The altered age structures, particularly at a district level, will result in changes in expenditure patterns, particularly in relation to retail goods and services.

TABLE 5
Aged Population (b), A.C.T.

June	Persons
1971	6,700
1981 (c)	15,100
1986 (c)	20,100
1996 (d)	36,500
2001 (d)	45,500

(b) Aged 60 or more years.
 (c) Census results.
 (d) Maximum projection.

Sources: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)

The Labour Force, Australia (ABS 6203.0).

Estimated Resident Population: Suburbs of Canberra Statistical District (ABS 3205.8)

Projections of the Populations of Australia, States and Territories, 1984 to 2021
 (ABS 3222.0)

Age and Sex of Persons in Statistical Local Areas and Statistical Divisions, Australian Capital Territory (ABS 2461.0).

Statistics Group
 Department of the Parliamentary Library

2.15 The pattern of Canberra's suburban development, characterised by rapid population build-up, has resulted in concentrations of populations of specific age groups. This has produced short term demands for age specific facilities such as schools. However, as population in the established areas have declined, schools tended to become underutilised. Future use of such school buildings and community facilities will be discussed in Chapter 5 relating to urban consolidation. Another factor relating to ageing of the population and social change is that

over the past 20 years the average household size in Canberra has declined from above four persons to about three persons per dwelling. This reflects both the ageing of the population and social changes including smaller family size and more recently the greater incidence of single parent families and single person households. The NCDC is responding to this trend to smaller household size by examining the need for increased numbers of non standard dwellings such as town houses, flats and aged persons units (transcript page 41) and its policy on dual occupancy. It is the view of the Committee that there should be a greater emphasis on aged persons units reflected in the Government's Housing Policy to reinforce and respond to this trend.

Social Planning

2.16 The Committee welcomes the establishment of the Social Planning and Development Branch of the NCDC in response to the recommendations of the July 1983 report of the Committee of Review of the Role and Functions of the NCDC. This branch is charged with responsibility for developing and implementing appropriate structures and methods to ensure that social aspects are given greater prominence in planning, therefore enhancing the Commission's ability to represent the community and to achieve community goals. The branch is responsible for the gathering of population and demographic analyses relating to social and community requirements, to undertake assessments of public housing and community facilities, to assess the social impact of planning proposals and to establish strong links with the rest of the NCDC in the planning process (transcript pages 1135 and 1136).

2.17 The Committee supports this important aspect of the Commission's work and would like to stress that it sees progress in the development of social indicators and needs assessment to be as important in the planning equation as physical and engineering standards. While the Committee was assured that the work of the Social Planning Branch did not necessitate a radical

revision of the proposed Metropolitan Plan it was acknowledged that it would influence some individual policies such as in relation to changing housing demands and that this would have some impact on the percentage of medium density housing provided in the future (transcript page 301).

Employment Trends

2.18 As set out in the Metropolitan Canberra Policy and Development Plan, the extent to which Canberra will grow will be determined largely by the number of new jobs which will be created. The level and composition of Canberra's existing population indicates that over the next 20 years natural increase alone will add some 60 000 people and if these people are to remain in Canberra employment opportunities will have to expand.

2.19 Two factors indicate that the rates of growth in population employment prior to 1975 will not be repeated. These are:

- Completion of the Public Service transfer program and relocation of government offices in Canberra; and
- Requirements for government office buildings, land, housing and associated facilities being met.

2.20 Future growth in demand for office space by government departments will probably occur at a more constant lower level. It should also be borne in mind that completion of major construction works such as the new Parliament House will lead to a downturn in the construction industry in the ACT and although commencement of other national projects such as the Museum of Australia would ensure a limited degree of construction activity this would be at a much lower level than is presently being experienced.

2.21 There are other factors however which are likely to influence future population and employment forecasts. These include a reduction in the number of retirees leaving Canberra for the south coast and other areas with reduced levels of medical and other support services, a greater propensity for older people to move to Canberra to join relatives and the effects of deliberate policies to attract private enterprise investment, with consequent diversification of employment, creating new jobs and providing better opportunities for local people to remain in Canberra.

2.22 Combined with these, the potential for growth in the tourism industry in Canberra has not yet been fully exploited and 1988 provides a focus for the development of greater tourist initiatives in the ACT. The potential that future tourism growth offers and the structural change required to maximise the benefits conferred are addressed in detail in the Committee's report on the Hospitality Industry in the ACT. The Committee welcomes the establishment of the new Development Board and hopes that it will assist in contributing to the economic base of Canberra.

2.23 There is also continued strong growth in the south-east region of New South Wales, particularly in areas close to the ACT and the south coast and this is likely to lead to increased demands for Canberra based goods and services. The issue of the impact of the future growth of Canberra upon the south-east region of New South Wales is examined in greater detail in Chapter 9 of the report.

2.24 The Commission's forecast of government employment growth from 1981 to 2006 is an increase of 33 000 jobs. This estimate is based on the long term relationship between government activity and national population growth. The forecast for the private sector employment growth over the same period is an increase of 37 000. It is expected that the private sector's relative contribution to Canberra's economy will increase marginally.

2.25 These forecasts and trends in population have meant that original planning intentions for the growth and development of new towns in relation to Canberra Central have changed. The decline of population levels in central Canberra and the development of Tuggeranong, which was initially not envisaged until after Canberra had reached a population of 240 000, have affected movement in settlement patterns of Canberra's population to a marked degree. The effects of the altered population distribution are exemplified in the distribution of retail floor space. While Civic has not grown as predicted, Belconnen and particularly Woden town centres have built well beyond the levels originally calculated for a city of 240 000 population (transcript page 731).

2.26 Because of these changes in the distribution of population and retailing there are several consequences, such as longer journey to work, lower population densities with the city more dispersed, lower housing occupancy ratios than expected, greater levels of expenditure being outlaid on new works such as roads and land servicing in new suburbs and a higher propensity for car useage causing increased car mileage. As well, it will result in the cost of public transport being higher with far lower densities than those required to justify a rapid transit system, and existing services such as roads, public transport, schools, water sewerage drainage being utilised below capacity. Many of these services were constructed in anticipation of the population levels predicted by the Y Plan.

2.27 Thus because of factors largely outside planning controls the original Y Plan structure has now been modified and the changed circumstances were supposedly accounted for in the publication of the new Metropolitan Plan of 1984.

3. OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

3.1 The July 1983 report of the Committee of Review of the Role and Functions of the NCDC recommended that a restructured Commission should undertake a closer objective reassessment of the various aspects of the Y Plan. As there was generally perceived to be a need for greater public debate and discussion about future metropolitan planning, and a subsequent reluctance by the private sector to develop in a climate of uncertainty due to the lack of a published metropolitan structure plan, the NCDC released its Metropolitan Canberra Policy and Development Plan in July 1984. This revision of the 1970 Y Plan developed a preferred strategy for the future growth of Canberra from a population of 240 000 to 400 000 within a period of 15 years.

3.2 According to the report, there were constraints on the development of alternative plans to the Y structure. Opportunities to depart from the immediate form of the Y Plan were long term and would not occur, according to the NCDC, until the population level reached 400 000 to 450 000. The Commission's planning work also established that until these population levels were approached, the Y Plan was as valid as any alternative urban structure and on environmental grounds had certain distinct advantages.

3.3 Work undertaken in 1976 indicated that development opportunities had significant environmental and other constraints in areas of the ACT in which it was envisaged in earlier plans that urban development may occur such as the Molonglo, Majura and Jerrabomberra Valleys. These constraints were:

Molonglo Valley - the Molonglo River is a valuable recreational resource and urban development might degrade its water quality and cause pollution of the Murrumbidgee River;

Majura Valley - development is constrained by the Canberra Airport and its approaches and a field firing range for the Department of Defence. NCDC has indicated that Canberra Airport is in an excellent location and that there are no plans to relocate.

Jerrabomberra Valley - only a small area for urban development is available constrained by the location of the naval establishments at Harman and Bonshaw.

3.4 As a result of these constraints, planning work concentrated on refining and evaluating various options for the location of metropolitan facilities within the framework of the Y Plan.

3.5 The options for future development were to be tested against the following aims:

image - to provide a distinctive setting for Canberra as the National Capital and Seat of Government;

social and economic need - to provide sites in appropriate locations for the social and economic activities of the present and forecast population;

environment - to satisfy community needs by creating safe, healthy, attractive and convenient surroundings for living, working, shopping, education and recreation;

choice - to provide people with a wide choice for housing, convenient shopping, recreation and employment opportunities, and to provide the opportunities for private businesses;

conservation - to conserve and protect important natural and man made features of the ACT and to implement new development in such a way as to cause least disturbance to the existing urban, rural and natural areas;

movement - to ensure that the plan's landuse and transport system enables people to travel conveniently and efficiently around the metropolitan area;

flexibility - to be adaptable so that the plan can cope with variations and circumstances; and

implementation - to ensure that the plan can be carried out effectively.

The Two Plan Option

3.6 The Commission in its Metropolitan Canberra Policy and Development Plan report detailed two alternative options for development based on the following assumptions:

- that Queanbeyan was part of the metropolitan study area for the purpose of the plan formulation and testing;
- that employment was projected to rise to 185 600 by 2005, an increase of 75 000 on the existing level;
- that population was projected to grow to 408 000 in the next 20 years with the following distribution of population;
 - inner Canberra - population stabilising at about 62 000. Woden - Weston Creek - population stabilising at 60 000. Belconnen - population settlement completed and stabilising at 83 000. Tuggeranong - population of 89 000 (excluding west Murrumbidgee). Gungahlin - fully settled with a population of 84 000. Queanbeyan - progressively settled to a population of 30 000;
- that retail provision would be 585 300 m² by the population level of 408 000, representing an increase of about 180 000 m² on the current provision;

- that the existing form of transport system, including standard of road provision, would be retained and extended to the new towns of Tuggeranong and Gungahlin. Overall the mode split between private and public transport was assumed to remain the same, although it was assumed that greater use would be made of public transport in peak hour for travel to town centres;
- that financial resources were assumed to be within the limits of past budgetary trends and adequate to meet the basic provision of infrastructure and future needs at standards slightly lower than current conditions;
- that the environmental conditions of the existing city would be retained in extent to new areas; and
- that high standards of water treatment and water pollution control measures be continued.

3.7 Within the constraints outlined previously, particularly the retention of the Y Plan model, two plan options were generated for evaluation to establish the preferred future metropolitan plan. The two options considered were:

- a) The Concentrated Plan - In the concentrated plan, a significant level of employment and retail floor space was concentrated in the central area and in the Woden and Belconnen town centres. The essential features of this plan were:
 - i. employment in the central area growing by about 33 000 to 78 000 with employment in Civic centre growing by 19 000 to 35 000 and retail space of the centre increasing by almost 50 000 m².

- ii. employment at the Woden and Belconnen centres growing by about 8 000 and 1 000 respectively, with retail floor space increasing by 22 000 m² in each centre; and
- iii. Gungahlin and Tuggeranong new towns not receiving significant levels of comparison retailing or employment. These districts would be provided with expanded group centres of 18 000 m² and 21 000 m² respectively.

b) The Dispersed Plan - The dispersed plan continued dispersal of employment and retail opportunities along the lines envisaged by the Y Plan and carried out in Woden and Belconnen. The main features of the dispersed plan were:

- i. town centres with significant retailing and employment established in both Tuggeranong and Gungahlin. Tuggeranong town centre would include employment of 17 000 and retail floor space of 50 000 m² and Gungahlin town centre would include 9 000 employment and 47 000 m² of retail floor space;
- ii. employment in the central area would grow by 20 000 to 64 000. Civic's employment would grow by 9 000 to 25 000 and the retail space in the centre would increase by 15 000 m²;
- iii. employment at the Woden town centre would grow about 2 200 and at Belconnen town centre by 5 800. Retail floor space at each centre would increase by 2 500 m²; and
- iv. the central area would remain dominant in relation to employment and retail opportunities. The town centres in Belconnen, Woden, Tuggeranong and Gungahlin would primarily serve their respective town catchments.

3.8 The alternative plans evaluated by the NCDC were very similar in that each included the development of north east Tuggeranong, Lanyon and Gungahlin and assumed the same distribution of population growth. The differences between the plans were that only expanded group centres would be provided in Tuggeranong and Gungahlin under the concentrated plan (with a consequential substantial expansion of Civic, Woden and Belconnen) compared with the provision of large town centres at Tuggeranong and Gungahlin under the dispersed plan (with the consequence that Civic, Woden and Belconnen would not grow significantly). Given the constraints and assumptions under which alternative plans were developed, it is not surprising that the alternatives were so similar.

3.9 The reality is that the planning which has occurred to date has been a mixture of concentrated and dispersed strategies. An examination of employment and population levels in the town centres, with estimates of predicted levels in 1996 and comparing these with predicted levels in the Metropolitan Policy Plan reveals major discrepancies in employment patterns. These are set out in Table 6 and indicate the emergence of a 3rd Plan option which concentrates commercial development in Civic Centre..

TABLE 6

POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT LEVELS 1986, 1996 AND METROPOLITAN POLICY PLAN

	1986		1996		METRO POLICY				
	(1)	(3)	(2)	Population	Employment	Population	Employment	Population	Employment
Canberra Central Civic	63000		21000	62100	40000	62000	40000	62000	25000-27000
Belconnen T.C.	85000		9800	80500	12600	83000	13000	13000-15000	
Woden-Weston Creek Woden T.C.	61000		12700	56600	13000	60000	11000-13000		
Tuggeranong Tuggeranong T.C.	52500		-	87800	4000	89000	12000	12000-17000	
Gungahlin Gungahlin T.C.	-		-	-	750	84000	7000	7000-12000	

Source: NCDC Urban Economics Canberra's Population Forecasts 1986-1996;
 NCDC Urban Economics Employment Studies - Canberra Overview 1986 (draft);
 NCDC Metropolitan Policy Plan Development Plan 1984 p. 181 - 182.

(1) Subject to revision from ABS 1986 Census

(2) Total employment

(3) Population counts at place of enumeration on 30 June 1986 were:
 Canberra Central 57500; Belconnen 81200; Woden-Weston Creek 57600; Tuggeranong 49400

Evaluation of Alternative Plans

3.10 The Committee is not able, on the basis of data made available to it during the Inquiry, to independently evaluate and make a full assessment of the difference between the alternative plans proposed by the Commission.

3.11 The two alternatives were evaluated by the NCDC particularly in relation to their effects on transport and town centres and generally in relation to the Commission's metropolitan aims.

i) Transport

3.12 Particular attention was paid to the transport evaluation because, as the Metropolitan Plan report notes, research has shown that the total infrastructure and operating costs of the transport system have about four times the impact of other urban systems on the urban structure of a city (page 22). Thus evaluation of the transport system was seen to provide useful quantitative and qualitative measures of a range of social, environmental and economic indicators of the functioning of the city. The Metropolitan Plan report continues the emphasis, dating back to the Vorhees report, of an efficient transport system as the major influence on the structure of the city and the lifestyle of its inhabitants.

3.13 The Commission claim that their evaluation of the alternative plans indicated that the dispersed plan would confer the following substantial transport benefits relative to the concentrated plan:

- less physical impact, as it would not require the construction of a third crossing of Lake Burley Griffin and a lower level of road capacity would be required;

- lower concentrations of air pollutants, a lower incidence of noise pollution and lower traffic volumes in residential streets;
- a more efficient use of a road system with reverse higher loading on roads and fewer congested traffic links;
- a 12% saving in fuel costs;
- a saving of at least \$120 million on the investment required for urban arterials and parkways;
- fewer structured carparks producing a saving of \$80 million to \$100 million;
- a lower public transport deficit, as peak hour demand would be lower and the dispersed plan would more evenly balance directional flows; and
- the dispersed plan proposes a more equal provision of retailing, employment and community facilities. In doing so, it would reduce the length and cost of journeys by the residents of all towns, in particular, those of Gungahlin and Tuggeranong.

3.14 However, the Committee does not consider that all of these claims can be substantiated on the basis of evidence provided by the NCDC. For example, the Committee is not convinced about achieved or achievable levels of self-containment underlying these assumptions. Moreover, specific claims such as dispersed planning conferring environmental quality improvements and savings in construction of fewer structured carparks have certainly not been realised in Civic Centre. It is the view of the Committee that the Commission should now abandon its relentless justification of an idealised Metropolitan Plan and come to terms with developments which have modified this view of future development.

ii) Town Centres

3.15 The levels of employment and retail floor space at Civic Centre, and Woden and Belconnen town centres were evaluated in relation to the two alternative plans. According to the report, under the dispersed plan, employment in Civic and the Woden and Belconnen town centres would increase by 17 000 in total whereas under the concentrated plan the centres would grow by 37 000. At their existing development densities these centres were said to be able to accommodate an additional employment of 10 000 to 14 000.

3.16 The intensity of development at the centres, particularly Civic Centre and Woden town centre, were stated to need to be increased considerably by large scale redevelopment if the employment proposed in the concentrated plan were to be accommodated. It was considered, however, that the employment associated with the dispersed plan could be accommodated with only limited redevelopment occurring in Civic Centre and Woden town centre.

3.17 It was further stated in the report that the existing road networks could handle the total additional employment of 30 000 at the three centres and an extra 43 000 employment if the mode split to the centres doubled, which was considered unlikely. Civic Centre and the Woden town centre were not designed for the levels of employment proposed in the concentrated plan. As a consequence both centres would require modifications to their road networks to enable the concentrated plan to be pursued.

3.18 The dispersed plan, by proposing retail centres in Tuggeranong and Gungahlin at a level comparable to the other towns, would improve accessibility by residents to these districts and retailing opportunities. The provision of a Tuggeranong town centre was also stated to reduce pressures on Woden thereby assisting Civic's function as the main metropolitan centre.

iii) Aims Achievement

3.19 The two plans were also evaluated by the Commission in relation to its metropolitan aims. The evaluation was aimed at a broad overview of the impacts of the alternative plans to ensure that adequate consideration was given to the effects of the two plans on other aspects of the city besides its transport and town centre systems. However, this evaluation relies in part of the earlier transport and centre assessments although additional qualitative assessments of issues relating to the social economic and environmental impacts of the plan were made.

3.20 The aims achievement evaluation, like the transport and centres evaluations indicated that the dispersed plan would perform better than the concentrated plan in achieving the stated aims.

The Preferred Plan

3.21 Following these evaluations, the dispersed plan was selected as the preferred plan by the NCDC. The Metropolitan report discusses the advantages of the preferred dispersed plan listing few of its disadvantages. On the other hand the concentrated plan is discussed largely in terms of its disadvantages with little indication of any benefits. Furthermore, the broad similarity of the two alternative plans based on the continuation of the Y Plan model meant that significant alternative possibilities were not evaluated.

3.22 This seems striking as the report notes that, in submissions made to the NCDC's Metropolitan Issues Report (1980) by business organisations, community groups and residents, the overwhelming view expressed was that consolidation should be made a higher priority because of energy costs, declining school enrolments, transport and other reasons. These groups and individuals recommended several older areas for redevelopment so that increased use could be made of existing shops, schools and

community facilities (page 39). The Report does not address itself to these issues other than to the difficulties that have been experienced with redevelopment in suburbs such as Kingston (page 59).

3.23 The Report refers to difficulties that will arise in implementing the dispersed plan, as noted on page 167. "In terms of plan implementation, the dispersed plan requires greater co-operation of the private sector, the Department of Administrative Services and other Government Departments, as the concentrated plan better meets the current location of preferences. These important decision makers need to be convinced of the merits of the dispersed plan, not just in the lower investment levels required by the Commonwealth, but also the opportunities that provides to both the private sector and government administration".

3.24 These difficulties, although referred to in the Report, are not highlighted as disadvantages of the dispersed plan. However, in selecting the dispersed plan the Commission has balanced these disadvantages against the higher transport and social costs, particularly for the residents of Tuggeranong and Gungahlin, and the higher levels of government investments in terms of roads, carparking and public transportation posed by the concentrated plan.

3.25 A major disadvantage with the Metropolitan Plan document, as the Committee sees it, is the absence of a compromise option which seeks to maximise utilisation of the existing urban area. Several organisations who have made submissions to the Committee during its inquiry such as the Royal Australian Institute of Architects, Canberra Chamber of Commerce and the Canberra Association for Regional Development have recommended that the NCDC's preferred option be rejected.

3.26 CARD rejects the Commission's argument that continued dispersal planning will have positive results in transportation and has set out its key argument in a document entitled 'Choice of Futures'. In this document CARD suggests that Civic should not be restrained to a level of 25 000 but rather should be promoted as Canberra's major commercial centre. This is now occurring largely by default of the Commission's planning process and intentions in relation to the Metropolitan Plan.

3.27 CARD also states that the Commission should encourage inner city residential intensification by way of redevelopment, multi-use indicative zoning, higher density housing and land pooling. This view is also supported in evidence to the Committee provided by the Canberra Chamber of Commerce. (transcript pages 698 - 705). It is the view of the Committee that the NCDC has a responsibility and the means to encourage greater diversity and opportunities for inner area residential development and that this is essential for balanced development in Civic. The Committee would welcome this in the NCDC's revised policy plan for Civic Centre.

3.28 One of the major arguments used by the Commission to justify its dispersal planning is the concept of "self containment". This refers to a situation where an individual works and lives in the same town centre area thus reducing journey to work times and achieving other transport and economic benefits to himself and the rest of the community. Although the concept of self containment is a preferred aim of the Commission's policies it is very difficult to achieve in practice. According to CARD and the Commission's own figures current patterns of travel in Canberra cast doubt on the likelihood of approaching the degree of containment favoured by the Commission stated to be 60% of the population. (transcript page 537).

3.29 These sentiments are also reinforced by other groups such as the Royal Australian Institute of Architects who question the continuation of the present form of dispersed development in Canberra and support the need to increase the working and living population of Civic, the town centres and creating a more efficient public transport system. (transcript pages 582 ~ 583).

3.30 A weakness in the Commission's assessment and presentation of its two options is that there is a shortage of aggregate public sector costs associated with each option such as for land development, public utilities and infrastructure, transport services and community services. In order to make a proper evaluation of the two options presented and to canvass in broad terms other alternatives, it is necessary to have a rigorous basis on which to make economic assessments of the costs and benefits of these proposals. The Committee endeavoured to obtain figures from the Commission and the Department of Territories in relation to the current and predicted costs of the alternatives and to costing an intermediate option which would incorporate elements of both the dispersed and concentrated plan and these are presented in the following Chapter.

3.31 The former ACT House of Assembly in its report on the Metropolitan Plan for Canberra recommended, in relation to the NCDC's two options, that a metropolitan strategy be adopted which is a compromise between the Commission's preferred dispersed plan and the centralised option in which the proposed new town centres would not be allowed to proceed. It further recommended that this new strategy encourage increased residential densities in existing suburbs and new release areas, give support to the development of Tuggeranong and the release of land at Gungahlin, with a proviso that areas of higher density be set aside, and support for the development of Gungahlin and Tuggeranong town centres, although with lower levels of employment particularly office employment than the levels set out in the dispersed option (transcript page 760).

3.32 The Committee finds it difficult to understand the NCDC's lack of enthusiasm for potential reductions in per capita costs, reduction of infrastructure costs and savings associated with increasing residential density. A policy of increasing residential density would also provide a potential for greater access to established town centres and confirm the Commission's self-containment policy. An example of a successful strategy to achieve this is the policy on aged persons' housing which provides convenience and access for residents to services and facilities.

3.33 The Committee recommends that the NCDC and the Department of Territories make the provision of aged persons' units one of the highest priorities on the public housing program as one strategy of achieving increased residential density in established areas.

4. FUNDING OF THE PLAN

4.1 The Metropolitan Plan, involving extensive public sector work programs, will require a substantial commitment of continuing annual appropriations from the Budget if it is to be implemented. It will also require substantial funding support from private enterprise, particularly in terms of new housing, offices and retail facilities.

4.2 The Metropolitan Plan report claims that the preferred dispersed plan will require lower levels of infrastructure investment by the Commonwealth than the concentrated plan. However, private sector costs for the construction of offices may be more expensive in that the private sector would prefer to build at existing centres, particularly Civic, as these are proven investment locations.

Location of Government Offices

4.3 One of the major aims of the Commission's dispersed plan option is to create decentralised job opportunities in its system of town centres with an equitable distribution of shopping opportunities and other facilities across the metropolitan area. The location of office employment has been the major mechanism in creating town centres and Commonwealth office employment location has been particularly important as this constitutes between 70% and 90% of all office space in Canberra (transcript page 1346).

4.4 Decisions relating to such office accommodation are guided by advice from the Property Directorate of the Department of Local Government and Administrative Services which is responsible for the provision of office accommodation to meet the needs of the Commonwealth Government. One of the aims of the Property Directorate is to minimise rental costs by improving the ratio of government owned land to leased office accommodation

and, whenever possible, to avoid leasing accommodation in high rent precincts in central business districts. The Department of Local Government and Administrative Services, in accordance with the objectives of the Metropolitan Policy Plan, has located Commonwealth accommodation in several broad functional groupings such as central policy and administration departments in the national areas of Parkes and Barton, ACT and Civic administration in Civic Centre, Social Welfare Departments in Woden town centre and Science, Technical and information based departments in the Belconnen town centre.

4.5 During its appearance before the Committee, DOLGAS referred to restrictions imposed by the NCDC in developing the Belconnen and Woden town centres in order to revitalise Civic and that because of this there was little locational choice other than Civic for office accommodation. The NCDC in countering criticisms regarding the lack of opportunities for providing office accommodation in town centres away from Civic, stated that the occupation of privately built offices in Civic by government tenants has occurred for several reasons.

4.6 One of these is that present government policies prevent Commonwealth funding of government offices. DOLGAS therefore has to negotiate with private enterprise on the basis of precommitment leasing or other ways allowed by government policy restraints to encourage construction of such buildings by the private sector. Private enterprise, for its part, is understandably reluctant to enter into investment decisions involving risk capital unless these are secured by the best possible location and for the past five years that has been Civic. This partly explains the reason for the increased construction activity in Civic to date.

4.7 It is obvious that key future decisions about location of government offices will have to be made in order to encourage other commercial interests from taking up land and contributing to the business activities in town centres. Examples of this are

expressed intentions to locate the Department of Education and the Health Insurance Commission in the Tuggeranong town centre. In a summary of strategy proposals and cost implications for government relating to Commonwealth office accommodation from 1987 to 1991, DOLGAS has provided the Committee with figures indicating that a total of \$273 million will be required up to and including 1991 (transcript page 1267).

4.8 A further development occurred during the Committee's investigations of proposals to construct further office and retail accommodation on Section 38 in Civic Centre. The Committee was able to secure a commitment from the NCDC that in future, after negotiations commenced in January this year, the Department of Local Government and Administrative Services and the Commission have reached an understanding that no further Commonwealth office space will be provided in Civic and that alternative sites for development will be provided in Belconnen, Tuggeranong and elsewhere outside Civic, as required. The Committee strongly endorses this agreement and the resulting plans for increasing office space in other town centres.

4.9 An indication of the spread of commercial space leased to the private sector in major town centres is as follows:

TABLE 7

Location	% Floorspace total	% Commercial Space (includes retailing)
Civic Centre	36	51
Belconnen Town Centre	7	53
Woden Town Centre	11	50

4.10 It is clear from this table that the preferred location for private office space is in Civic Centre but also indicated is the potential for increasing these levels in other town centres, where incentives are provided, such as competitive rentals. The

responsibilities for achieving a better balance for office development resides with the NCDC and the Department of Local Government and Administrative Services.

Residential Land Development

4.11 Residential land servicing costs, traditionally a major area of Commission expenditure, are estimated to be at similar levels to current land servicing costs in the next 15 years. Based on these servicing cost estimates, the total cost from 1985 to 1990 is approximately \$280 million while from 1990 to 2000 it will be in the order of \$430 million. Private sector expenditure and development over these periods is estimated to be \$37 million and \$54 million respectively.

4.12 Private sector investment in residential land development is indicated as being the provision of between 10% - 15% of total blocks. However, the Commission has indicated that there is now a trend for greater private sector involvement in land development and that private developers are encouraged to take a larger share in the level of involvement in land development (transcript page 79). The NCDC is also allowing private developers to bid for larger block. Evaluation of the costs and benefit of allowing more private land development should improve when a land development account has been established.

4.13 The expenditure on housing, which is primarily undertaken by the private sector, follows the land servicing sequence. On average, total expenditure on housing (both public and private) is expected to approach \$240 million per annum over the next five years, comprising about \$175 million on new private sector housing development, about \$35 million on alterations and additions and about \$30 million on public housing. This is a substantial increase on recent years and is a direct response to demands generated by population growth and change.

4.14 The private sector is expected to commence about 3 000 dwellings per annum over the period with annual expenditure levelling out at around \$170 million by 1989 to 1990. In addition, expenditure and alterations and additions is expected to contribute a further \$30 to \$40 million to private sector housing activity by the end of the period.

4.15 The private housing sector in 1986 comprised 70% of private sector building and construction investment. It is responsive to changed levels of population and economic growth. There are likely to be variations in the level of investment in the private housing sector around this long term projection. In recent figures provided to the Committee the NCDC has indicated that the total investment in building and construction activity which commenced in the ACT in 1986/87 is estimated at \$998 million. Private sector investment is estimated at \$438 million or some 44% of the total. More than three quarters of private sector investment was in the housing and office sectors.

4.16 Total expenditure on housing by the public sector over the next five years is estimated at an average of \$165 million and \$150 million in each of the subsequent five year periods. Expenditure by the private sector is estimated at \$1060 million, \$1000 million and \$1000 million respectively in each of the five year periods from 1985 to 2000 (transcript pages 82 to 83).

4.17 The NCDC has provided a summary of required expenditure for public and private works up to and including the year 2000 which takes account of land and housing, retail requirement, industry requirements, offices, community facilities, education, leisure, recreation and tourism, public utilities including water supply, waste water, surface water, electricity and public utilities, transport and national works and the estimates for public and private sector expenditure between 1985 to 2000 is set out in the following tables:

TABLE 8

TABLE I
ESTIMATED PUBLIC SECTOR
EXPENDITURE 1985 - 2000

		1985 - 90	1990 - 95	1995 - 2000
(i)	Population - Generated Needs	\$1030M	\$750M	\$680M
(ii)	Accommodation Needs of the Commonwealth Government	\$170M	\$110M	\$110M
(iii)	National Capital Works	\$660M	\$310M	\$310M
Totals		\$1860M	\$1170M	\$1100M

(transcript page 246)

TABLE 9
ESTIMATED PRIVATE SECTOR
EXPENDITURE 1985 - 2000

		1985 - 90	1990 - 95	1995 - 2000
(i)	Population - Generated Needs	\$1540M	\$1160M	\$1180M
(ii)	Accommodation Needs of the Commonwealth Government	\$165M	\$65M	\$65M
Totals		\$1705M	\$1225M	\$1245M

(Transcript page 246)

TABLE 10
PUBLIC AND PRIVATE
EXPENDITURE 1985-2000

	Total	Av Per Annum	Public Share
1985 - 90	\$3565M	\$713M	52%
1990 - 95	\$2395M	\$479M	49%
1995 - 2000	\$2345M	\$469M	7%
Totals	\$8305M	\$554M	30%

(transcript page 346)

4.18 It should be remembered when looking at these figures that they are indicative of possible orders of expenditure and are not designed to be reliable estimates. It should also be noted that capital expenditure is recovered to some extent although it is difficult to provide detailed cost recovery on items such as sale of serviced land and commercial sites because this money is lost to consolidated revenue a situation which would be remedied by the proposed land development account. Moreover, expenditure on a wide range of municipal services and infrastructure works are fully recovered through general water and sewerage rates by the Department of Territories.

4.19 It should also be remembered that, in the States, services provided for education, health, roads etc are undertaken largely on the basis of general and specific purpose Commonwealth grants which are not provided to the ACT. Another implication for expenditure and availability of housing finance is the imminent signing of the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement which will put the ACT on a more equal footing with the States.

4.20 Another problem experienced by the Commission, in terms of its program scheduling and planning for new construction activities, is the lack of certainty of Government commitment to

planning initiatives. A proposal to achieve better planning and programming has been proposed by the Commission in its five year planning schedule. The Committee considers that the NCDC should be supported in its concept of longer term planning and programming, particularly for major capital works. The construction industry and much of the private sector in the ACT are very dependent upon the movements of the public sector. These movements have in the past been quite dramatic in that changes in policy have resulted in the private sector having to adjust rapidly from positions supportive of construction activity to ones causing major downturns in activity. As a result, the private sector has had difficulties in securing a stable base upon which to rely when undertaking planning and programming.

4.21 The Committee is of the view that a longer time frame for planning would, in the end, result in cost savings and a more efficient allocation of resources and therefore recommends that the Minister for Territories supports the NCDC in its proposal to adopt a Five Year Planning Schedule.

Levels of Business Activity

4.22 Another factor which has to be taken into consideration in relation to current development pressures in certain parts of Canberra and in certain industries, is that current levels of activity experienced particularly in the construction industry, are not likely to be maintained after 1988. With completion of the New Parliament House project, the White Industries project and several other major construction activities in and around Civic there is likely to be a downturn in activity which will be reflected in demand for services and in the ACT economy generally. It is important that consideration be given to this now so that contingencies can be worked out so as not to repeat the great upheavals which were experienced in the 1970's when the construction industry wound down for a considerable period. Once again, the Committee would support greater emphasis on long term planning with longer term commitments by the Government for future funding.

Levels of Maintenance

4.23 The Department of Territories, in evidence to the Committee, stated that the Metropolitan Plan does not give full recognition to the importance of recurrent funding for the achievement of planning goals. They further stated that details of operational and maintenance costs should be included in proposals for capital expenditure. This would enable the Government to be aware of these costs when making decisions on construction programs. Maintenance costs of the dispersed plan should be a major consideration. This inquiry has stimulated serious evaluation of such costs and a recognition that maintenance will increasingly become a major item of expenditure in the Territory. The Committee is concerned about the lack of co-operation between the Department of Territories and the NCDC in this regard and considers it imperative that maintenance schedules be prepared and costing details provided before major policy proposals are finalised.

4.24 The further point is made that administering bodies are generally unable to readily vary recurrent costs to meet particular budgetary policies. Although it may be possible to defer maintenance work, this is likely to ultimately result in significantly greater long term recurrent costs. In the ACT at present, maintenance costs are low due to the newness of the physical infrastructure but this will alter significantly as Canberra ages. Additionally, considerable capital investment will be required in established areas as facilities and services require replacement.

4.25 The Department goes on to say that the data base used in the Commission's Metropolitan Plan is a questionable basis on which to undertake the planning task as it no longer represents a number of relevant current trends. As an example of this they suggest that where Civic's employment level was predicted to be 25 000 to 27 000 by 2006 the Commission's own estimates are now much higher. The Department's ability to maintain overall

standards of service to the community is stated to be in part determined by the trade-off made between the volume of new facilities and infrastructure provided and the operating costs of existing resources. The Department believes that insufficient opportunity exists to consider the costs and benefits in the trade-off decisions that have to be made.

Costing of Other Options

4.26 The Department, both in its submission and its evidence to the Committee, is very critical of the NCDC's preferred dispersed option. The Department states in evidence that it considers both options to be essentially dispersed and as the residential pattern proposed by both options is identical, the likely impact of either option on the Department's operations will be fairly similar. The Department goes on to provide some analyses of the impact of the dispersed and concentrated options on services such as the bus service and alleges that ACTION's capital costs under the concentrated option involving construction of new interchanges in Tuggeranong and Gungahlin would be in the vicinity of \$6 million. (transcript pages 363 - 365).

4.27 Similarly, the Department states that considerable savings and efficiency could be achieved in a closer form of development. As such, the Department initiated and costed a more concentrated plan which involved greater utilisation of existing infrastructure in central areas of Canberra, combined with a slowing down of urban expansion into new areas and produced a new model which attempted to indicate potential cost savings in its adoption. Particular cost implications relating to transport issues and the National Capital Open Space System in relation to this new proposed model will be discussed in later Chapters.

4.28 The Department, in a subsequent appearance before the Committee, tabled documents relating to a new plan for development which assumed the possibility of housing an additional 30 000 people within areas of existing development. On the basis of this

premiss, the achievement of several savings were claimed. These are set out on pages 812 to 814 of the transcript of evidence. The NCDC does not support the Department's model and questions some of the assumptions made but recognises that there are possibilities of achieving a greater density of population in established areas by employment of strategies which are encompassed within the general framework of urban consolidation.

4.29 The Committee has examined the question of urban consolidation and the implications of this for transport and land use patterns and the provision of open space.

PART B - PLANNING ISSUES

5. URBAN CONSOLIDATION

5.1 One of the major issues raised during the inquiry was that of urban redevelopment and consolidation. As mentioned previously, many organisations who appeared before the Committee argued that due to the declining population of inner areas and consequential underutilisation of services, shops and community facilities, consolidation strategies should be given a higher priority. The NCDC, in responding to increased pressure for reversing population decline in inner areas and in response to questions from the Committee regarding a more concentrated form of development in Central Canberra, prepared a second submission which specifically addressed the issue of urban consolidation.

5.2 Whereas the original Metropolitan Plan report gave less weight to the potential for urban consolidation, the second submission of the NCDC to this inquiry indicated that some serious consideration has now been given to urban consolidation strategies with a recognition that such strategies, if carefully implemented, could increase levels of self containment, increase the proportion of jobs in Central Canberra taken by residents of the area, and prevent further inner city population loss.

5.3 While the Commission's submission on urban consolidation qualifies its support for urban consolidation options by referring to the unsuccessful infill program of the mid 1970's and perceived opposition by the community to changes which would alter the social and physical amenity of existing residential areas, it does propose ways of achieving a greater residential density and social mix in central Canberra. In the Committee's view, the NCDC, as an initiator of change, has a responsibility through its consultative mechanisms to ensure that full account is taken of the social implications of its plans.

5.4 In the Commission's examination of urban consolidation, it commissioned a paper by Neilson Associates Proprietary Limited on the principles of such urban consolidation. This paper, dated March 1985, makes several important points relating to urban change and development.

5.5 In discussing the principle of urban consolidation in general it states that the time frame for implementation and evaluation of urban consolidation policies are likely to cover 10 to 20 years and quotes a report carried out by the Australian Institute of Urban Studies which states that "programs for urban renewal will normally require a judicious mix of private enterprise, government planning, and public participation... They should recognise that the face of the city cannot be transformed overnight, and an urban renewal policy must incorporate a planning time scale of perhaps several decades" (transcript page 932).

5.6 Pressures for urban consolidation in Canberra, according to the Neilson report, arise directly from two concerns. The first of these is population decline in inner Canberra and its potential consequences for business activity and the second is concern about the character of Canberra as a city, reflected in the demand by commercial interests for increased concentration of employment, housing and population around Civic as Canberra's major commercial centre.

5.7 Neilson concludes that in purely physical terms, the potential for implementing urban consolidation principles in Canberra is considerable. The report goes on to say that there are large areas of older housing, both government and private, much of which is not substantial in terms of long term building life as well as a sound network of established infrastructure and services. There are also few intrusive non-residential uses in the residential areas of Canberra Central and only modest pressure for expansion of such uses which might lead to large losses of dwellings. Therefore redevelopment on a considerable scale is considered to be feasible.

5.8 The report stresses that consolidation initiatives should be:

- selective in location, scale and timing;
- well planned and publicised and promoted within an accepted context of wider, metropolitan or district planning strategies;
- offering identifiable benefits to affected groups;
- of a scale which can be readily implemented in a short time period, and
- attractive to private investors and to end users (transcript page 1040 to 1041).

5.9 The Commission further asserts that another qualification in relation to the acceptability of urban consolidation is that the housing preference of most people remains single residential dwellings and that this housing preference justifies continued broad acre development in new areas. Whilst it may be argued that the majority of households prefer standard housing and quarter acre blocks, there is an increasing market demand for other kinds of accommodation and an updated study of housing preference and affordability is urgently required in Canberra. A need for an examination of current housing preference is also acknowledged by CARD in their second submission to the inquiry (transcript pp. 1579 and 1582).

5.10 The Committee, taking account of views expressed in evidence, recommends that the NCDC initiate an updated study of housing preference and affordability in Canberra to assess the demand for different kinds of accommodation.

Strategies for Consolidation

5.11 The Commission is currently pursuing two major policies which are aimed at promoting urban consolidation in Canberra. The first is the planning policy for aged persons' accommodation which is now being successfully implemented. This aims to encourage the provision of a range of accommodation in Canberra to enable aged persons to move into housing which meets their specific needs, permitting, among other things, the conversion or redevelopment of existing housing for aged persons' accommodation. The Commission recognises, however, that while the demand for aged persons' accommodation is still increasing, particularly in the inner areas, it is still a relatively small proportion of the total housing market (transcript page 884).

5.12 It is the view of the Committee that the provision of aged persons' units should have a much higher priority as it would free up existing housing stock and is considered to be a particularly appropriate way of developing vacant land in established areas close to retailing and other community services. The Committee reiterates its recommendation that the NCDC give a high priority to meeting the demand for aged persons' units and develop suitable areas close to shops and district centres.

5.13 The second policy is the planning policy for dual occupancy of detached house blocks. This policy was prepared in response to the need to increase the supply of rental accommodation, provide a wider housing choice in terms of type and location, encourage additional use of existing open space, services and utilities, and provide more housing opportunities for special housing groups.

5.14 This policy allows for more intensive use of otherwise underutilised buildings and space by permitting, subject to certain design and siting standards, the development of two

dwellings on a single residential block. Performance criteria have been established to govern plot ratio and setbacks, architectural character, building height, carparking, landscaping and open space and to minimise impacts on the privacy of residents and on the streetscape of residential areas.

5.15 The response to both of these policies has been reassuring. As at 14 April 1987, 170 applications for dual occupancy dwellings have been received by the Commission since introduction of the policy last year. 115 have received design and siting approval and 3 were refused for non-compliance. The remaining 52 applications are presently in the process of being assessed. The average processing time for approval is 3 weeks. It should be noted, however, that of these approvals only approximately 5% are public initiated dual occupancies. Some requests have been received from newly developed areas and this trend has also been evident in other cities such as Melbourne and Sydney.

5.16 Another major way of achieving consolidation in existing areas is through policies of redevelopment and provision of high quality medium density accommodation in inner areas of Canberra, particularly located close to employment. The Neilson report concluded that there appears to be sufficient developed interest in medium density housing in Canberra Central to attract the necessary private investment, and that recent private projects have demonstrated that there is a market for the final product.

5.17 Neilson Associates also noted in their report that in purely physical terms, the potential for implementing urban consolidation measures in Canberra is considerable, for the following reasons:

- there are large areas of older housing, both government and private;
- there is a sound network of established infrastructure and services;

- the existing residential development close to Civic Centre is of low intensity and sites for redevelopment projects could be assembled with only minor losses to the existing dwelling stocks; and
- there is considerable scope for more intensive development of currently underutilised residential blocks through techniques which emphasise conservation and upgrading in preference to replacement (transcript page 889).

5.18 A variety of ways in which redevelopment can be pursued in established areas of Canberra include selective replacement of old public housing with new medium density housing e.g. Causeway and Narrabundah, redevelopment of private housing by lessees in conjunction with private developers, co-operative redevelopment schemes by lessees in partnership with the Government using land pooling, and large scale comprehensive redevelopment of older public and private housing with development by the Government or private enterprise.

5.19 There is considerable scope for private and public sector initiation of redevelopment projects and a variety of partnership proposals for joint ventures involved in redevelopment. One such scheme is the Joint Venture for More Affordable Housing which the Committee supports and which aims to:

- promote more efficient use of land without any reduction in residential quality;
- provide greater variety in the overall provision of housing types in residential environments;
- plan, design and construct sub-divisions which are cost effective;

- establish the projects in a way which allows performance to be evaluated on a total life cycle cost basis, and
- monitor, assess and report on findings independently in conjunction with the joint venture project.

5.20 The Commission through its experience with the Joint Venture Program is aiming at providing opportunities for a greater proportion of more intense residential development in new settlement areas and to provide a wider range of dwellings. The Commission has acknowledged that increases in the numbers of non family households, declining household size and declining household affordability may result in increased demands for dwellings such as courtyard houses, town houses and flats (transcript page 861).

5.21 The other major means of achieving a reversal in declining population levels in central Canberra is to pursue a strategy of housing development on vacant land. The Department of Territories has provided the Committee with detailed information about how this could be achieved on a selective basis. This certainly does not mean that all vacant land in Canberra Central will or should be developed. Obviously, consideration must be given to the National Capital Open Space System which is discussed in Chapter 7 of the report and which is an integral part of the Metropolitan Plan for Canberra.

5.22 Nevertheless, the Committee recognises that land which has been identified in the past for future development and which has over a period of time assumed in the minds of local residents the status of recreational space for the suburb, must in some cases be used to meet the needs of an expanding residential population.

Benefits of Urban Consolidation

5.23 Despite a general shortage of quantitative data, some studies of the benefits of urban consolidation are available. Studies that have been done in Sydney indicate that cost savings of between \$3 000 and \$10 000 per medium density unit can be achieved by redevelopment in comparison with development of comparable units on the fringe.

5.24 Similarly, a pilot study of urban consolidation policy and its application to Metropolitan Melbourne carried out by Travers Morgan Proprietary Limited for the Victorian Minister for Planning and Environment, has indicated that in terms of economic costs there is a large net advantage for consolidation in terms of resources used and benefits for the community as a whole. They found this to amount to be around \$29 000 per additional household located in the present value terms, which was equivalent to \$3 000 a year per household.

5.25 Cost savings for provision of utility infrastructure housing and roads was set to total some \$15 000 per household located and savings in resources used in the provision of transport and other public services was stated to involve a saving of \$2 250 per household. As a result, costs incurred by producers was stated to be \$17 000 lower per household.

5.26 This study by Travers Morgan, carried out in August 1986, showed the single biggest item to be the potential improvement in accessibility for households whose residential location is altered by consolidation, amounting to \$16 000 per household. The second assessment made, of financial repercussions of consolidation for public sector agencies showed that a consolidation policy could enable an overall reduction in public sector net expenditure outlays of some \$3 500 per household, comprised very largely of savings in capital outlays.

5.27 In Canberra, higher levels of population density in existing suburbs of Canberra could confer similar benefits. In terms of existing infrastructure such as roads, public transport, water, gas, sewerage and electricity, these could be used at closer to optimal capacity, bearing in mind that Canberra Central supported a population of over 82 000 some 20 years ago. The ACT Electricity Authority, when appearing before the Committee, indicated that existing networks would support a greater population level in Canberra Central (transcript p. 1383).

5.28 Unused or under utilised land with zero or low economic value can also be utilised to generate public or private economic returns. For example, it is possible that certain attractive parcels could be auctioned to the private sector for residential development with part of the return targetted for cheaper forms of public housing. Much of inner Canberra's housing stock exists on standard residential blocks but is currently underutilised due to low occupancy rates. Economic and/or social incentives to increase occupancy levels in the existing housing stock, such as the policy of dual occupancy, would appear particularly desirable under conditions of undersupply and overpricing, which has applied until recently.

5.29 Consolidation policies can also improve the mix and diversity of housing in areas to better cater for the increasing range of household types. It should be borne in mind that with the change in the social mix of incoming residents such families are often dual income earners with high work force participation levels, ideally suited to increasing the level of self containment and local job participation, minimising lengthy journeys to work and providing other community benefits.

5.30 It is recognised that certain aspects of urban consolidation policies would be resisted by existing residents in areas identified for consolidation but there is little doubt that significant opportunities do exist in Canberra for more intensive use of existing suburbs.

Scope for Large Scale Suburban Redevelopment

5.31 During the course of the inquiry, the Committee was made aware that opportunities exist for substantial development of areas presently occupied by the Defence Department and the CSIRO which could be better utilised for residential purposes, as these sites are no longer considered appropriate for the use for which they were originally intended. The Committee has attempted to follow this up with the Department of Defence particularly looking at the Belconnen and Jerrabomberra defence telecommunications facilities and the Harman Bonshaw area.

5.32 The Committee is extremely critical of the lack of co-operation from the Defence Department. The Department declined to appear before the Committee on the basis that decisions regarding future use of these sites had not yet been finalised. As no evidence was given to the Committee to justify continued use of the area by the Department of Defence and because of the high opportunity costs of continued use by the Defence Department, the Committee recommends that the Department relocate from the areas of Belconnen, Jerrabomberra and Harman Bonshaw thus releasing these valuable sites and redressing the high cost in lost opportunity for this land.

5.33 It is important to note that there is currently a proposal to reequip these defence installations and that because of the cost involved it would be uneconomic to propose relocation of facilities after this has been carried out. For this reason the Committee is very strongly of the view that these facilities should be relocated as soon as possible to allow for additional residential land in prime locations in the Territory. This will enable the release of a large number of residential sites with proximity to the city and with some infrastructure services already in place.

Gungahlin

5.34 The next major area identified for future expansion and development as a town centre is the area of Gungahlin. The NCDC has stressed the necessity of preliminary planning and commitment to the development of this area in order that problems previously experienced with an undersupply of serviced land should not recur. The Committee is of the view, however, that a proper examination of urban consolidation options and the potential for maximising residential densities in existing areas will mean that Gungahlin should not have immediate priority.

5.35 The Committee considers that the Commission should fully examine options for development in existing areas as well as continuing preliminary work on suburbs in new areas of development. It is acknowledged that preliminary consultations and work on the development of Gungahlin must proceed and the Committee welcomes the Gungahlin External Transport Study and recommends that development of Gungahlin not proceed until transport links have been fully evaluated and approved by the Committee.

5.36 The question of land availability is further complicated by the Committee's desire to safeguard areas surrounding the Lanyon homestead and west of the Murrumbidgee River from development and urban expansion. In the Committee's report on the Murrumbidgee River the Committee recommended that the Minister for Territories and Local Government formalise a decision that there will be no urban development south of Lanyon or along the western bank of the Murrumbidgee River. The Committee would welcome a commitment by the present Minister for Territories regarding this recommendation as it believes that these areas, because of their historic and natural qualities, should be preserved from future development.

6. TRANSPORT

6.1 The provision of a transport system is one of the most expensive components of urban infrastructure. Decisions relating to road capacity, the level of parking provision and the level of service and quality of the public transport network, all influence the efficiency and distribution of costs within a city.

6.2 The NCDC, recognising the major influence transport has on the structure of the city and the way the physical distribution of travel is related directly to the location of land uses within the metropolitan area, prepared a third submission to the Committee's inquiry on the subject of transport costs and the distribution of population and employment. According to the Commission, these aspects are directly related to the implementation of the Metropolitan Plan, as transport issues determine, to a significant degree, the performance of the Metropolitan Plan (transcript page 1276).

The Present Road Network

6.3 Canberra's road system has been planned on a hierarchical basis consisting of local access streets, distributor roads, parkways, and highways and rural roads. This system has a number of important advantages which are referred to in the Metropolitan Plan. These include:

- improved residential amenity achieved by attracting non essential or through traffic to the main road system and reducing traffic intrusion into residential areas, resulting in improved safety and reduced traffic related environmental impacts such as noise, air and toxic pollutants;

- reduced traffic accidents. The ACT has slightly more than half the Australian average of fatal injury related accidents and considerably less than any other State or Territory (as shown in table 42 on page 40 of the Metropolitan Plan report);
- improved accessibility and reduced travel times to major employment, retail and recreation opportunities, and
- reduced energy consumption and air pollution due to the high operating speeds associated with the road network.

6.4 An important feature of the Metropolitan Plan is the parkway system. The Plan retains the principle that large traffic volumes between each of the urban districts or towns will be diverted to the peripheral parkway system which is specifically designed to cater for through traffic. It is intended that as traffic volumes continue to grow, the existing parkway system will be extended. The first priority in this regard is to progressively build and upgrade the Eastern Parkway so as to connect new suburbs in south Tuggeranong to major employment areas in Civic and Parkes, Barton and Russell.

6.5 In the past, metropolitan roads have been built at relatively high standards, in terms of design and capacity, and were often constructed to cater for the expected eventual traffic demands. This has resulted in some short term, inefficient use of resources and some justifiable criticisms. In recent times, however, economic and political pressures have resulted in the NCDC reassessing its planning and design standards and its implementation strategy. For example, roads which previously may have been designed and constructed as parkways may now be designed as urban arterials with a subsequent reduction in designs, speeds and standards of intersection control but considerable savings in terms of land take and capital costs. (Metropolitan Plan report p. 81)

Public Transport

6.6 The dispersed nature of Canberra has resulted in a great reliance on private transport at the expense of transport provided by the public sector. The rate of car ownership in Canberra increased rapidly after the 1950's. Since the mid 1970's the average car ownership in Canberra has remained fairly stable changing from 0.38 cars per person in 1976 to 0.40 in 1981 (transcript page 1301).

6.7 When compared to other capital cities, Canberra has fewer non car owning households and a higher average number of cars per household, which is primarily a product of relatively high income and wage structure. The rapid increase in ownership and use of private motor vehicles has resulted in improved accessibility over a much wider area than can be matched by improved public transport operations. This had encouraged land use patterns where access to jobs and services are more difficult for people without cars and the overall effect has been to increase the cost of public transport operations.

6.8 In the ACT, the responsibility for operating and managing the metropolitan bus system (ACTION) lies with the Department of Territories. The public transport strategy is based on a line-haul and feeder concept in which local bus services or feeders provide a basic transport service between each suburb and the closest town centre. High speed express buses provide a line-haul service between the centres.

6.9 The Committee conducted discussions with transport authorities in Brisbane and Sydney in order to make comparisons and discuss alternative ways of addressing problems experienced in the ACT. However, on balance it was found that Canberra's bus system performs efficiently and patronage is continuing to rise in absolute numbers. Subsidies in the ACT are at the low end of the range for capital cities of Australia with subsidy per passenger being lower only in Hobart and Melbourne. These point

were confirmed in the Efficiency Audit Review of ACTION by the Joint Committee of Public Accounts in November 1986, although reservations were expressed about data collection and difficulties in making this data comparable to that of other operators.

6.10 *Loder and Bayly, a firm of planning and design engineering and landscape consultants were asked by the Commission to investigate alternative public transport options for Canberra. The report produced by the consultants advocated that the line-haul/feeder concept should continue to form the basis of Canberra's public transport system in the short to medium terms. To cope with increased congestion on the arterial road system, Loder and Bayly suggested that, on the line-haul system, articulated buses be given priority access to freeways and special lanes to bypass intersection queues.*

6.11 *In summary, it was felt that the public transport system should remain a bus service only as the use of fixed track public transport in Canberra could not be supported on current population levels and density.*

6.12 *The Commission also maintains that the Metropolitan Strategy provides significant savings in terms of transport while the Department of Territories in their assessment of the Commission's dispersed and concentrated options for development identified cost savings in a more concentrated form of development. In the Department's proposed urban consolidation model capital savings for buses were estimated to be of the order of \$4.5 million (transcript page 813).*

6.13 *However, such savings may not be realised in view of problems experienced with a rapid expansion of employment levels in Civic Centre. This continuing expansion is resulting in peak load problems for the existing bus service and creating peak demands which cannot be met by the existing bus fleet.*

6.14 The Department is at present conducting a strategic analysis of the bus system in the ACT. This is being carried out with the NCDC to examine the provision of services to new and existing areas, involvement of private transport companies and other organisational and management options which will structure the bus system for the next 10 years (transcript p. 826). The Committee awaits the outcome of this study with interest.

Car Parking

6.15 Until recently, unrestricted parking has been available throughout Canberra. Accompanying the commercial boom in Civic and associated growth in commercial activities and employment levels, Civic Centre is presently experiencing a severe parking shortage for people who work there. While Civic is not the only area experiencing problems with a shortfall of parking space it serves best to illustrate planning principles in relation to the provision of car parking facilities.

6.16 Pay parking around Civic has now been implemented for short and long term parking. The introduction of long stay parking charges to modify parking demand will also assist in the financing of new facilities.

6.17 One of the ways of alleviating the present parking shortage is to include the requirement for construction of parking structures in the leasing conditions for large scale developers which has occurred with the development of Sections 38, 53 and 56 in Civic Centre.

6.18 In evidence to the Committee, the Commission stated that whereas in the past it was envisaged that public funds would be provided for the construction of public parking structures, the Commission's view now is that future private developers should provide an adequate supply of parking to suit their particular demands. This must be complemented by competent traffic management by the Department of Territories in and around

Civic to ensure that the traffic problem does not extend outside the city area and also to determine the climate which will make future parking structures economic in Civic (transcript page 1628).

6.19 The Commission also referred to the possibility of introducing a parking trust fund where money from parking controls and contributions from developers and new developments could go towards a central fund which would then be directed into the construction of public parking structures. The Committee reiterates the recommendation in its Report on the 89th Series of Variations that a trust fund account be set up and administered by the Department of Territories by the end of 1987 to enable revenue generated from parking fees to be redirected to the policing of parking restrictions, provision of further parking facilities and/or expansion of the ACTION bus fleet. Regulations governing the trust fund should provide for its termination three years from commencement unless there are specific reasons for its continuation beyond this period.

6.20 In relation to extending the traffic problem to suburban areas surrounding Civic, the Commission is presently engaged in a local area traffic management study in Reid which will be expanded to Braddon and Turner to investigate the problems of traffic and the impact of Civic in those areas (transcript p. 1629).

6.21 The Commission is confident that as Civic develops and the necessary infrastructure is provided to catch up with the employment growth the situation will improve. While the pressures exist at present levels however, the Commission is imposing a pause in the growth of Civic. The nature of this pause is an understanding entered into by DOLGAS and the NCDC that no more Government offices will be located in Civic Centre until the situation has been thoroughly reviewed and a revised Policy Plan for Civic has been produced. The Committee supports this moratorium on further development in Civic Centre.

7. LEASEHOLD SYSTEM

Leasing Conditions

7.1 As well as parking and transport problems referred to in the previous Chapter, another issue has arisen in relation to the recent rapid expansion of Civic. Because the amount of residential accommodation available in and around Civic has diminished with replacement of previous housing sites by commercial office developments, the resident population has declined, thus placing greater strains on transportation systems and subsequent loss of the benefits which would have been available through self containment. The level of demand for office space in Civic has given the Commission ample opportunities to encourage developers to include a residential component in some of these developments.

7.2 The Committee believes the Commission has a key role in encouraging developers to utilise the benefits of its planning expertise and urges the Commission to look closely at residential bonus systems and the possibility of mixed use leases in situations where this could be a benefit to community and result in savings in the level of services provided.

7.3 The Committee, in its previous planning report, made reference to the importance of lease agreements in implementing town planning decisions and this now has implications for land use policy and general planning for metropolitan Canberra.

7.4 The Committee has also been aware of problems experienced in areas such as Fyshwick where lease purpose clauses have not been adhered to and the situation which has arisen where retailing activities are being conducted out of premises which are zoned for wholesale, industrial and manufacturing purposes. The Commission has acknowledged that this is a major problem and is currently conducting a review of leases in Fyshwick with a view to alleviating the present situation and to bring leases into line with those operating in the rest of the ACT.

Review of Leasehold System

7.5 It has become apparent to the Committee that the leasehold system, while it has served the Territory well in its first phase of development, is experiencing problems in the redevelopment period of the city's growth. In the course of the Inquiry, reference was made, by one witness in particular, to some of the shortcomings and problems being experienced in leasehold administration. (Transcript pages 1497 - 1551). The Committee is not in a position to conduct its own inquiry into the leasehold system but has commissioned a paper to be prepared setting out the essential features of the system and possible ways of overcoming some of its present problems. This paper and the Committee's response to its findings will be made public at a later date.

8. NATIONAL CAPITAL OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

8.1 An important principle of urban structure, as defined by the Metropolitan Plan, is the National Capital Open Space System (NCOSS). This system includes river corridors, hill areas, mountain and bushland areas, pine plantations, rural landscape foreground areas and special interest sites.

8.2 The Open Space System exists to provide tourist and recreation areas, to protect water catchments, to provide areas of scientific and cultural value and to enhance the natural landscape setting of Canberra. It is thus intended to have multiple uses, with different parts of the system having different planning and management policies reflecting the characteristics of the land.

8.3 The National Capital Open Space System must be seen within the context of leisure and recreation activities for the residents of Canberra as well as its function in providing environmental protection of the ACT river system. Also included within the system are other areas maintained by the ACT Parks and Conservation Service of the Department of Territories.

Provision of Open Space

8.4 The Commission provides municipal open space (active sports areas, parkland and floodway easements etc) on the basis of a minimum of 4.0 hectares per 1 000 population. In suburbs where there are extensive floodways and other engineering open space the municipal open space provision may rise to 6 or 7 hectares per 1 000 populations.

8.5 Given a projected annual population increase of around 7 000 spread throughout Canberra, the net open space growth will need to be at a minimum rate of 28 hectares per annum. Current landscape development costs for open space average around

\$425 000 for a suburb to accommodate 3 500 - 4 000 people, and this would normally include open space of 20 to 25 hectares.

Population growth will require development of two suburbs needing landscaping development each year. The projected cost of capital works for suburb landscaping is therefore approximately \$850 000 per annum. (transcript pages 98 - 99.)

Management of Open Space

8.6 As previously described, the ACT Parks and Conservation Service is responsible for the management of open space on a Territory wide basis, including urban parks and gardens, sports grounds, Namadgi National Park, the ACT Nature Reserve System, water catchments, lakes, springs, commercial pine plantations and the Australian National Botanic Gardens. According to the Department, the distinction made in the Metropolitan Canberra Report between Municipal Open Space and NCOSS is not consistent with the classification of open space into the categories of municipal, territorial and national as required for the purposes of allocating expenditures for the ACT budget. (transcript pages 353 - 355.)

8.7 As the administering body for the Open Space System the Department considers that the Commission's exclusion of approximately 737 hectares of road verges and median strips understates the current level of municipal open space by 800 hectares. Therefore, the Department believes that, as well as management of an excess of 5 000 hectares of non municipal open space, the City Parks Section also has responsibility for 2 500 hectares of municipal open space. In calculating the costs for implementing the Metropolitan Plan at current design standards and levels of resources, the Department estimates that the total cost of maintaining open space in Tuggeranong, North Lanyon and Gungahlin will be \$5.2 million per annum.

8.8 While the Department states that NCOSS is primarily a planning concept with little impact on the day to day management of the particular parcels of land, it supports the system in its

aims to facilitate an integrated approach to the setting of standards and the allocation of management costs. For example, the Department states (transcript page 358) that where the planning standards exceed what the local community reasonably might be expected to pay in order to achieve an objective commensurate with Canberra's National Capital role, the cost should be borne by the Commonwealth. It further states that it will be essential to support the NCOSS concept with adequate management resources if it is to achieve current standards.

8.9 The Committee supports this view and is of the opinion that the funding of the National component of the National Capital Open Space System should be the responsibility of the Commonwealth Government.

Comparative Costs of Maintaining Open Space

8.10 The Department of Territories was asked to provide comparative costs of open space maintenance in the ACT with other urban areas. A comparison between open space maintenance in the ACT with Melbourne and Sydney shows the ACT, with a cost of \$2 950 per hectare, comparing reasonably well with other councils. The average for five councils in Sydney was \$2 867 per hectare. However, compared on the basis of cost per head per annum, ACT costs are generally higher than those of other cities. 1985 figures showed costs in the order of 21% more and 1983 figures show some 13% - 20% more for the ACT.

8.11 The reason for this has already been debated as part of the Grants Commission Inquiry Into ACT Finances and the major disabilities identified as being:

- the relatively harsh environment for horticultural development and maintenance, as exemplified by high evaporation rates with associated irrigation costs; and

the very high provision of open space due to national capital landscaping requirements (estimated to increase management costs by approximately 25%) (transcript page 801).

8.12 The NCDC and the Department of Territories are presently undertaking a joint study to review space provision with the aim of establishing means of further reduction of ongoing maintenance costs. The first stage of this study is to use the Gungahlin planning exercise to address the issues relating to open space provision.

8.13 The Committee supports the National Capital Open Space System as a major structural element of the Y-Plan and urges the Department and the Commission to examine the possibilities for reduced maintenance costs while maintaining present levels of open space of an order that is not less than comparable municipal areas in other cities. Where situations of very large provision of open space exist such as Belconnen, consideration should be given to encouraging a diversity of use for some of this open space. This includes areas adjacent to Lake Ginninderra where conditions are ideal for mixed use development such as open air eating facilities and a mix of low density recreation and residential developments.

8.14 Similarly, foreshore areas around Lake Burley Griffin can, in appropriate locations, be developed to provide a range of recreational and outdoor uses. Some consideration has been given to expanding uses of the Lake Burley Griffin foreshore by the NCDC in a draft policy plan for the Lake, due to be released in August 1987. The Committee supports making greater use of this resource in a sensitive and sympathetic way in appropriate locations and recommends that the Commission give serious consideration to the development of foreshore areas of Lake Burley Griffin as a matter of urgency.

Promotion of NCOSS

8.15 It became apparent to the Committee, during its investigations, that to date the National Capital Open Space System has not been promoted to the extent that would enable its benefits to be fully appreciated by local residents and visitors. The Committee has been informed that the Department and the Commission are currently working on sets of promotional and interpretive materials which will be widely distributed, giving people information about the benefits of the system and the range of activities it offers.

8.16 In conjunction with this, a system of signposting the various areas that comprise the system is currently being undertaken. The Committee welcomes this and considers that funds should be allocated for the promotion of the system locally, nationally and internationally.

9. REGIONAL CO-ORDINATION

9.1 At the Committee's original briefing on the Metropolitan Plan, the NCDC discussed the implications of restricting development of certain areas (such as west Murrumbidgee) within the ACT on the issue of growth across the border, as Canberra's population levels increased beyond 400 000. The issue of urban consolidation has already been discussed in this report but it is recognised that at some stage, in the next two decades, there may be increases in population levels to the extent that the question of expansion across into New South Wales will have to be addressed.

9.2 The issue is not just one of how Canberra may expand in the long term but also about more immediate questions concerning the impact of Canberra's development on the region generally. For example, only a small section of the Murrumbidgee River is able to be protected in the ACT. Full protection of the river would require joint Commonwealth, State and Local Government action through a planning mechanism to protect water quality downstream of the ACT (transcript pages 85 - 89).

Regional Organisation and Interaction

9.3 While there is considerable interaction between Canberra and the South East Region of New South Wales, the main exchanges is with those shires and settlements in the area known as the ACT sub-region. In addition to the ACT, the ACT sub-region includes the shires of Gunning, Yass and Yarrowlumla and the City of Queanbeyan.

9.4 Canberra dominates the sub-region in terms of non rural employment opportunities, retail, medical, educational, cultural and entertainment facilities.

9.5 Canberra's hospitals provide a full range of general and specialist services previously only available in Sydney. The three public hospitals in the ACT provided, in the latest available figures, services for 23% of non-ACT resident patients, (as at 30/6/85). There are also a number of private nursing homes within the ACT which, in part, serve the needs of the sub-region. As well as medical services there is also a full range of educational and cultural facilities providing a range of opportunities for residents throughout the region.

9.6 In 1976, a Commonwealth-State initiative led to the preparation of a strategy plan of the South East Region with particular emphasis on those parts of the region adjacent to the ACT and coming within the economic and social influence of Canberra. A report by this Joint Commonwealth State and Local Government Committee was published in September 1976. Many of its recommendations proposed new co-ordination arrangements and implied the need for co-ordinating mechanisms within the Commonwealth Departments whose functions are of some significance in the planning and development and administration of the South East Region.

9.7 NCDC supported the establishment of a regional consultative council to address the questions of Canberra's long term development and its effects on the region. However, no formal links have been established and current arrangements for consultation are ad hoc and informal. This lack of regional co-operation means that development can take place across the border in Queanbeyan which may not be compatible with the urban environment of Canberra. Similarly, developments in Canberra may not be compatible with the surrounding New South Wales environment.

9.8 Queanbeyan also suffers by not receiving the benefits it should from the development of Canberra. The Commission has pointed out that it is not empowered by its act to provide planning assistance and advice to the Queanbeyan Council and according to the Commission it is a lack of political will that has not allowed adequate mechanisms of regional co-operation and consultation to develop. (transcript page 88).

9.9 It appears that some progress has now been made in that some involvement across the border with Queanbeyan is being undertaken by the Commission because of that city's integration into the Metropolitan area. The Commission's relationship with the other local authorities are through essentially informal contacts. This should be rectified in order to improve regional planning where Canberra's impact is of major importance to local councils. (transcript page 262)

Development Pressures

9.10 Two of the most significant regional issues over the next 15 years are related to water supply and quality and transport connections.

9.11 The water resources of the ACT are limited in terms of their capacity to supply water and assimilate waste consistent with the protection of recreational use and the maintenance of environmental quality. There is, therefore, a need to allocate the resource across a number competing demands.

9.12 The ACT Water Use Policy Plan provides a comprehensive statement of the allocation of water resources of the ACT across competing uses. It constitutes a basis for:

- co-ordination of land and water use planning and management;
- co-ordination of the allocation of water resources across a range of competing uses; and
- co-ordination between the ACT portion of the Murrumbidgee basin and the New South Wales portion of the basin.

9.13 Under the Seat of Government Acceptance Act 1909 the Commonwealth has paramount rights to the waters of the Queanbeyan and Molonglo Rivers. There is increasing pressure for the supply of ACT water to the sub region for domestic purposes. The limitations on the use of Canberra's water beyond the ACT will need to be continued during the next 20 years in order to preserve this limited resource and forestall major investment and headworks infrastructure.

9.14 The ACT Committee noted in its report on the Murrumbidgee River that apart from the Googong Catchment Management Working Party, the ACT has no official participation in the preparation of water use plans by the New South Wales Water Resources Commission for waters upstream of the ACT. The Committee stressed that such water use plans should be drawn up in close co-operation with the Commonwealth.

9.15 It is noted that the Water Resources Commission has given an undertaking to refer water use plans for the Queanbeyan and Molonglo Rivers to the relevant sub-Committee of the Commonwealth inter-Departmental Committee on Environmental Quality in the ACT.

9.16 The current standards and approaches to water quality management in the ACT will be maintained in the future development of the City according to the NCDC. As the population in the region grows, it will become increasingly important for developments in New South Wales to adopt similar standards and approaches. (transcript pages 149 - 151).

Roads

9.17 Transport connections between Canberra and the region are assuming greater significance as the influence of Canberra on the region and the number of visitors to Canberra increase. A number of major transport links to the ACT are being upgraded to

co-ordinate with works being undertaken by the New South Wales Department of Main Roads. Further improvements to the regional road network will be required with the growth of the regional population and increasing visitation by Canberra residents to the South Coast. The impact of heavy vehicles on the regional road network will increase with increasing demands on the material resources such as sand and gravel in the region.

9.18 The Committee, in conducting its investigations, took evidence from surrounding councils who listed as a major priority the condition of roads from their centres to the ACT. The point was made that the deterioration in road standards and necessity for upgrading was largely accentuated by the number of ACT residents using their roads.

9.19 The Tallaganda Shire, for instance, provided a list of roads between its shire and the ACT including two major trunk roads; namely trunk road 92 from Braidwood to Nowra and trunk road 51 from Canberra/Queanbeyan to Batemans Bay; two main roads used extensively by ACT based traffic from Braidwood to Captains Flat and from Braidwood to Araluen and Moruya as well as several other shire roads used heavily by ACT residents and made a strong plea for Federal Government funding for upgrading these roads.

9.20 The Council argued that roads surrounding and serving the ACT are roads of strategic and economic importance to the ACT and therefore that the Federal Government has some responsibility to meeting, at least in part, the cost of upgrading these roads and maintaining them at a reasonable standard. (transcript pages 1456 - 1459).

9.21 The Committee acknowledges these arguments and considers that the Federal Government does have some responsibility for maintaining adequate transport links to and from the Territory either through special funding or through arterial road allocations for which the New South Wales Government is responsible for priorities. One road in particular,

namely trunk road 92, linking the ACT with the official port for the Territory, Jervis Bay, should receive priority as Jervis Bay does form a part of the ACT and there is some commitment to provide adequate transport links between the two areas.

9.22 Another road which should receive priority is trunk route 51 to the South Coast. The argument for this is also supported by the Yarrowlumla Shire Council and the Bungendore Residents and Ratepayers Association submissions (transcript pages 451 - 455 and page 664). This road is largely used by Canberra residents and has suffered severe deterioration of the road surface primarily caused, according to Yarrowlumla Council, by the extraordinary volume of heavy vehicles carting materials to Canberra. Growth of Canberra will increase this problem.

9.23 Water supply and quality and transport connections are important considerations as Canberra and the region develop. The need for a central co-ordinating body within the ACT to bring together disparate Commonwealth interests is becoming more apparent. The NCDC has indicated to the Committee that it recognises the importance of such regional relationships and is prepared to undertake whatever planning work is necessary in the interests of regional co-operation. (transcript page 151).

9.24 The Committee recommends that priority be given to the formation of the organisation proposed in 1976, referred to as the Commonwealth and South East Region Advisory Committee. The need for such a regional planning body is now becoming acute as problems related to the expansion of Canberra and its increased population levels will have greater and greater impact on the region as Canberra continues to expand.

PART C

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

10.1 In the Committee's investigations of the NCDC's Metropolitan Plan for Canberra, it became evident that the full range of options for development had not been canvassed sufficiently by the Commission in its public documents. By limiting the choice of development alternatives to the so called dispersed and concentrated options, the Commission was not giving adequate scope for an alternative form of development which would maximise the potential for redeveloping and consolidating central Canberra.

10.2 This lack of a consolidation option for development became the focus for debate during the Inquiry between the NCDC and the Department of Territories and other organisations representing business and community interests who appeared before the Committee. In terms of providing costings and predicting levels of public and private sector investment necessary for the maintenance of existing services and the development of future services in Canberra, the Committee was unable to make absolute judgements. This was made more difficult by the lack of early consideration of a more concentrated form of development in inner city areas.

10.3 The Committee considers that a crucial step in overcoming this shortage of essential data on which to base informed planning decisions is the establishment of a land development account. This has been recommended in previous inquiries both by this Committee and other review bodies. It is encouraging that some progress has been made in this direction and the Committee recommends that such an accounting system be established as soon as is practicable. This should also allow judgements to be made concerning the costs and benefits of urban consolidation as opposed to further peripheral expansion.

10.4 The Department of Territories was also very critical of the Commission's two alternatives and indicated that after a preliminary assessment, made by the Department, considerable savings and cost efficiencies could be achieved in a more compact form of development. The Department's findings in this regard are detailed in Chapters 4 and 5 of the report.

10.5 The Committee recognises that the NCDC's development process is hampered to some extent by a lack of commitment by Government for longer term planning initiatives. At present, while the Commission conducts assessments on the basis of 12 month and 3 year programs, the lack of certainty regarding continuing commitment to long term construction programs has implications for the private sector in terms of investment potential and maintenance of predictable levels of construction activity in the ACT.

10.6 The Committee is of the view that a longer time frame for planning would, in the end, result in cost savings and a more efficient allocation of resources and therefore recommends that the NCDC should be supported in its proposal for longer term planning and programming, particularly for major capital works. Where the Government has agreed to a particular planning initiative which requires the expenditure of funds over a longer period than one financial year, consideration should be given to a five year program of commitment.

10.7 Another issue related to accountability for planning decisions raised during the Inquiry is the present lack of self-Government for the ACT. The Committee has adopted a de facto role as the major public consultative mechanism in the planning process and is seen as such by residents of the ACT. It therefore recommends that all future Policy and Development Plans prepared by the NCDC be referred to the Committee for its possible consideration. Thus the Committee can comment on planning initiatives where this is considered appropriate in the public interest.

10.8 During its Inquiry, the Committee was pleased to note that a media statement issued by the Minister for Territories on 26 June 1986 relating to a Conference of Australian and New Zealand Planning Ministers gave support for the concept of urban consolidation. In the media statement the Minister said:

"I believe that in Canberra we have initiated changes consistent with these directions (urban consolidation initiatives). The National Capital Development Commission's dual occupancy policy provides opportunities for people to redevelop their residential blocks to provide additional and different forms of housing; granny flats can be built; residential leases are available in a range of sizes to permit courtyard houses, medium density developments and flats; developers are actively encouraged to build a variety of housing types in response to demand; the Commission has developed prototypes of different forms of housing to encourage private developers in this regard and with considerable success ... I should add that aged persons units and public housing are being built by the NCDC in established areas close to existing services like buses, shops, medical facilities, schools etc and have proven to be very popular, often freeing up other Government houses for use by families."

10.9 The Minister said that he would "watch with interest the development of urban consolidation concepts and techniques in other States and Territories and would point to Canberra as an excellent model where it's being done and done well".

10.10 The Committee welcomes this statement and in line with the report of the former House of Assembly recommends that the NCDC and the Department of Territories implement an urban consolidation strategy with community consultation which seeks to increase residential density in existing suburbs and

that detailed information be made publicly available regarding the costs and benefits of such a strategy. One way of achieving this increased density in the public housing sector is to make the provision of aged persons' housing one of the highest priorities on the public housing program and this is a further recommendation of the Committee.

10.11 The Committee also considers that there should be a greater range of housing types available to maximise use of land and recommends that the NCDC responds to changes in demand and conduct regular consultations with appropriate bodies to ensure that the monitoring of market demand is up to date. The Committee further recommends that areas presently occupied by the Defence Department and other Government organisations in the ACT and which could be better utilized for residential purposes be released and made available for housing. In order to strengthen the commitment to pursue urban consolidation, the Committee also recommends that development of Gungahlin not proceed until transport links to this new area have been fully evaluated.

10.12 In view of the future problems relating to land availability, the Committee recommends that the Minister for Territories give a commitment to the preservation of areas to the South of Lanyon and along the Western bank of the Murrumbidgee River from future development. This is a matter which the Committee has already reported on in its inquiry into the Murrumbidgee River.

10.13 The Committee recognises the serious nature of traffic and parking problems in and around Civic and to avoid compounding the problem recommends that the Commission and the Department of Local Government and Administrative Services provide greater impetus for the development of other town centres by locating Government departments and authorities not already placed in central locations in the new town centres. It is noted that some of the problems experienced with the explosion of office development and associated employment levels in Civic are a

result of reluctance on the part of these authorities to actively pursue a policy of decentralised office location. This also has implications for the continued growth and role of Civic Centre and the Committee has received an undertaking from the NCDC that a review of the Civic Centre Policy Plan will be completed by June 1987.

10.14 The Committee further reiterates the recommendation in its Report on the 89th Series of Variations that a trust fund account be set up and administered by the Department of Territories by the end of 1987 to enable revenue generated from parking fees to be redirected to the policing of parking restrictions, provision of further parking facilities and/or expansion of the ACTION bus fleet. Regulations governing the trust fund should provide for its termination three years from commencement unless there are specific reasons to justify its continuation beyond this period.

10.15 The Committee supports the National Capital Open Space System as a major structural element of the Y Plan and urges the Department and the Commission to examine the possibilities for reduced maintenance costs while maintaining present levels of open space of an order that is not less than comparable municipal areas in other cities. Where situations of very large provision of open space exist such as Belconnen, consideration should be given to encouraging a diversity of use for some of this open space. This includes areas adjacent to Lake Ginninderra where conditions are ideal for mixed use development such as open air eating facilities and a mix of low density recreation and residential development.

10.16 Similarly, the Committee considers that greater use can be made of appropriate foreshore areas around Lake Burley Griffin and recommends that the Commission give this some priority. In relation to the promotion of the National Capital Open Space System the Committee recommends that the Department of Territories and the NCDC be provided with greater resources for the promotion of the system locally, nationally and internationally.

10.17 During the Inquiry, the Committee was alerted to problems relating to the system of land tenure in the ACT and the administration of the leasehold system. The Committee has decided to pursue this by commissioning an independent study of the system.

10.18 Any discussion of regional coordination and consultation should include the impact of Canberra's development on the surrounding region of New South Wales and the Committee notes that the recommendation of a report by a Joint Commonwealth State and Local Government Committee in September 1976 that a Commonwealth and South East Region Advisory Committee be set up has not been acted on. The Committee recommends that priority be given to the formation of the organisation proposed in 1976 realising that the need for such a regional planning body is now becoming acute as problems relating to the expansion of Canberra and its increased population levels are already having greater and greater impact on the region as Canberra continues to expand.

10.19 The Committee considers that the major issue underlying this Inquiry is that of urban consolidation as opposed to continued expansion of the built up area. It is imperative that both the planners and administrators address this realistically and in the light of accurate and detailed information and in a spirit of co-operation.

10.20 It is hoped that this report will encourage this process.

May 1987



ROS KELLY
(Chairman)

LIST OF WITNESSES

Australian Capital Territory Electricity Authority

Mr Edward Andrew John Quinlan, Acting Chairman,
ACT Electricity Authority, Canberra,
Australian Capital Territory

Mr John Michael Kain, Chief Engineer,
ACT Electricity Authority, Canberra,
Australian Capital Territory

Australian Capital Territory House of Assembly

Mrs Beverley Mary Evelyn Cains, Deputy Chairman,
Standing Committee on Planning and Development,
Australian Capital Territory House of Assembly,
Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Mr Kevin Joseph Gill, Member,
Australian Capital Territory House of Assembly,
and, Member, Standing Committee on
Planning and Development of the House of Assembly,
Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Australian Capital Territory Schools' Authority

Dr Anthony William Butterfield, Acting Senior
Director (Resources), ACT Schools' Authority,
Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Dr Edward Joseph Murtagh, Principal Executive
Officer, Planning and Research,
ACT Schools' Authority, Canberra,
Australian Capital Territory

Mr Michael Francis Wilson, Principal Executive
Officer, (Properties), ACT Schools Authority,
Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Australian Institute of Landscape Architects

Mr Geoffrey Stuart Sanderson, President,
Australian Institute of Landscape Architects,
PO Box 1646, GPO, Canberra, Australian Capital
Territory

Canberra Association for Regional Development

Dr Darrel Killen, Chairman of Economic and Planning Committee and Member of Executive, Canberra Association for Regional Development, 71 Constitution Avenue, Campbell, Australian Capital Territory

Mr Herbert Gordon Roberts, Member of Economic and Planning Committee and Treasurer, Canberra Association for Regional Development, 71 Constitution Avenue, Campbell, Australian Capital Territory

Mr Robert Winnel, Member of Economic and Planning Committee and Member of Executive, Canberra Association for Regional Development, 71 Constitution Avenue, Campbell, Australian Capital Territory

Canberra Chamber of Commerce

Mr Lou Vant Westende, President, Canberra Chamber of Commerce, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Mr Robert Wilbur Rowell, Executive Director, Canberra Chamber of Commerce, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Department of Local Government and Administrative Services

Mr John Bruce Gilchrist, Acting Senior Assistant Secretary, Department of Local Government and Administrative Services, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Mr Peter Edwin Westaway, Chief Property Officer, ACT, Department of Local Government and Administrative Services, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Department of Territories

Mr William John Harris, Deputy Secretary, Department of Territories, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Mr Michael Colin Woods, Assistant Secretary, Resources Policy Branch, Department of Territories, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Mr James De Berigny Wall, Assistant Secretary, Liaison Branch, Department of Territories, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Mr Anthony Robert Hedley, First Assistant Secretary,
Community Affairs Division,
Department of Territories, Canberra,
Australian Capital Territory

Ms Linda May Webb, First Assistant Secretary,
Community Services, Department of Territories,
Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Mr Bruce George Dockrill, First Assistant Secretary,
Transport and Works Division, Department of Territories,
Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Mr Raymond Joseph Donnellan, Acting First
Assistant Secretary, Australian Capital Territory
Parks and Conservation Service,
Department of Territories, Canberra,
Australian Capital Territory

Mr Victor Frank Martisius, Acting First
Assistant Secretary, Development Division,
Department of Territories, Canberra,
Australian Capital Territory

Mr John Sidney Brigg, Assistant Secretary,
Public Transit Branch, Department of Territories,
Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Mrs Catherine Anne Parsons, Assistant Secretary,
Department of Territories, Canberra,
Australian Capital Territory

Mr Ronald James Murray, Acting First Assistant
Secretary, Parks and Recreation Division,
Department of Territories, Canberra,
Australian Capital Territory

Mr Walter Francis Davis, Director,
Residential Lease Sales, Department of Territories,
Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Mr Robert Patrick Gee, Assistant Director,
Public Policy Section, Department of Territories,
Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Mr Robert John Pegler, Director,
Public Policy and Co-ordination, Department of Territories
Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Fyshwick Chamber of Commerce

Mr Barry John Whyte, President, Fyshwick Chamber
of Commerce, PO Box 540, Fyshwick, Australian
Capital Territory

Mr John Douglas Reynolds, Vice-President, Fyshwick
Chamber of Commerce, PO Box 540, Fyshwick,
Australian Capital Territory

Mount Ainslie and Mount Majura Protection Association

Mr Richard Miller, Convenor, Mount Ainslie and
Mount Majura Protection Association, 13 Richards
Street, Hackett, Australian Capital Territory

National Capital Development Commission

Mr Malcolm Macgregor Baxter Latham, Commissioner,
National Capital Development Commission,
Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Ms Jill Lang, Associate Commissioner,
National Capital Development Commission,
Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Mr Geoffrey John Campbell, Chief Planner,
National Capital Development Commission,
Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Mr Hans Ernst Sommer, Head, Metropolitan Planning,
Section, National Capital Development Commission,
Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Mr John Arthur Giles, Assistant Secretary,
Urban Economics Branch, National Capital
Development Commission, Canberra, Australian
Capital Territory

Mr David Leigh Daverin, Acting Chief Engineer,
National Capital Development Commission,
Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Mr Terrence Norman Upton, Senior Transport Planner,
National Capital Development Commission,
Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Dr Robert Frank Care, Chief Engineer,
National Capital Development Commission,
Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Mr Malcolm Phillip Smith, Principal Town Planner,
National Capital Development Commission,
Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Mr Michael James Quirk, Acting Head,
Metropolitan Planning Section,
National Capital Development Commission,
Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Private Citizens

Mr Phillip Denny Day, Department of Regional and
Town Planning, University of Queensland, St. Lucia,
Queensland

Mr Edward George Wensing, 164 Maribyrnong Avenue,
Kaleen, Australian Capital Territory

Queanbeyan City Council

Dr David Michael Madew, Mayor of Queanbeyan,
Queanbeyan City Council, 257 Crawford Street,
Queanbeyan, New South Wales

Mr Hugh Anthony Percy, Deputy Town Clerk and
Development Promotion Officer, Queanbeyan
City Council, 257 Crawford Street, Queanbeyan,
New South Wales

Mr Robert Charles Ogilvie, Town Planner, Queanbeyan
City Council, 257 Crawford Street, Queanbeyan,
New South Wales

Reid Residents' Association

Mr John Grantley Tucker, President, Reid
Residents' Association Inc.,
32 Booroondara Street, Reid,
Australian Capital Territory

Mr Michael Moore, Secretary, Reid Residents'
Association Inc., 32 Booroondara Street,
Reid, Australian Capital Territory

Mrs Donna Stewart, Treasurer, Reid Residents'
Association Inc., 32 Booroondara Street,
Reid, Australian Capital Territory

Royal Australian Institute of Architects

Mr Barry Malcolm Cameron, President, ACT Chapter,
Royal Australian Institute of Architects,
2A Mugga Way, Red Hill, Australian Capital
Territory

Mr Geoffrey Thomas Butterworth, Immediate Past
President, ACT Chapter, Royal Australian
Institute of Architects, 2A Mugga Way, Red
Hill, Australian Capital Territory

Mr Roger Kirk Hayes Johnson, Life Fellow, Royal
Australian Institute of Architects, 2A Mugga
Way, Red Hill, Australian Capital Territory

Tallaganda Shire Council

Mr Rowland Geoffrey Hassall, President,
Tallaganda Shire Council, Braidwood,
New South Wales

Mr Sid Jenkins, Planning Officer, Tallaganda
Shire Council, Braidwood, New South Wales

Mr Rodney Leon Wallace, Shire Engineer,
Tallaganda Shire Council, Braidwood,
New South Wales

Mr Raymond Bruce Boon, Shire Clerk,
Tallaganda Shire Council, Braidwood,
New South Wales

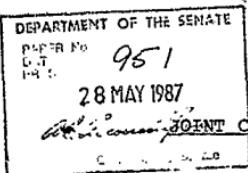
Mr Alexander Duncan Black, Councillor,
Tallaganda Shire Council, Braidwood,
New South Wales

Yarrowlumla Shire Council

Mr Howard George Doust, Shire Engineer, Yarrowlumla
Shire Council, Farrer Place, Queanbeyan, New
South Wales

PERSONS AND ORGANISATIONS WHO MADE SUBMISSIONS
BUT DID NOT APPEAR AT PUBLIC HEARINGS

Bungendore Residents' and Ratepayers' Association
Canberra Office Accommodation
New South Wales Department of Environment and Planning,
South East Regional Office
New South Wales Department of Regional and Town Planning
Mr G M L Quayle, 4 Davison Place, Holt, ACT
Mr Peter Sekulless, Canberra Liaison Pty Ltd, 17 Murray
Crescent, Manuka, ACT
Mr Charles Winter, 12 Mayo Street, Weetangera, ACT
Professor J Zubrzycki, Department of Sociology, The
Faculties, The Australian National University, GPO Box 4,
Canberra City, ACT
Yass Shire Council



THIRTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT

28 MAY 1987

JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

No. 7

FRIDAY, 31 MAY 1985

at Canberra

PRESENT: Mrs Kelly (Chairman)
Mr Snow
Mr Langmore

Senator Reid

1 The committee met at 4.45pm.
2 METROPOLITAN PLAN:

The Committee deliberated on a letter from the Minister for Territories referring the Metropolitan Canberra Policy and Development Plan to the Committee for examination and report.

Resolved - On the motion of Mr Langmore -
That the Committee accept the terms of reference
for its inquiry into the Metropolitan Plan.

3 Meeting closed at 4.55pm.

Confirmed



Reo Kelly

Chairman