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### **Draft Development Control Plan 21/01 – Part Block 11 Section 38, Fyshwick (Dairy Road Precinct)**

The Canberra Ornithologists Group (COG) wishes to provide comments on DCP 21/01. COG understands the DCP relates to a part of a larger area (Blocks 11 and 12) proposed for units housing/commercial development adjacent to the Jerrabomberra Wetlands Nature Reserve, and that the part which abuts the Monaro Highway comes under NCA planning control. COG has already provided comments to the ACT Government in relation to Draft Variation 377 to the Territory Plan relevant to development over Blocks 11 and 12.

The Jerrabomberra Wetlands is the premier wetlands bird habitat in the ACT, with significant biodiversity values. More than 80 species of waterbirds have been recorded in the wetlands, and around 170 bird species in total have been recorded using the wetlands habitat. It is the most important habitat in the ACT for Latham's Snipe, a migratory wader protected under International and Commonwealth threatened species legislation, and also provides habitat for other bird species on Commonwealth, ACT and NSW threatened species lists. Jerrabomberra Wetlands is therefore of national importance as an important drought refuge for water-based species, and a critical seasonal habitat for threatened, migratory bird species.

COG is a volunteer-based community group with around 400 members, with a mission that includes conservation of native birds and their habitats in Canberra and the surrounding region. COG plays an active role in advocating for protection of native vegetation/bird habitats and for the mitigation of threats to and impacts on native birds. COG undertakes surveys of birds, including long-term monitoring projects, which can usefully inform land use and land management actions, and has undertaken bird surveys in the Jerrabomberra Wetlands over many decades. COG is therefore a long-standing community stakeholder in the Jerrabomberra Wetlands Nature Reserve, and considers it important to provide its views in relation to potential impacts on the nature reserve and its birds/biodiversity, from the proposed large unit housing and commercial complex on the reserve boundary.

The key issues for COG are:

- the need for high standard/best practice design and environmental provisions, and
- minimisation of human impacts on, and avoidance of inappropriate recreational activities in, a sensitive nature reserve.

COG generally supports the principles outlined under Parts 2 and 3 of the DCP, which appear broadly consistent with DV377. The COG response to DV377 included that any development on Blocks 11 and 12 be on the basis of a high-quality design in keeping with the visual and aesthetic values and landscape context of the neighbouring nature reserve, and should include best-practice standards of environmental provisions and controls to avoid adverse ecological impacts.

Specifically, COG strongly supports measures to effectively mitigate increased human use and impacts on the Jerrabomberra Wetlands Nature Reserve, and would like to see this reflected explicitly in the planning principles.


These sensitive wetlands already have significant people use through quiet visitation by nature enthusiasts for walking, nature study and enjoyment. However, without proper planning, adjacent development could increase the numbers of people seeking exercise and recreational outlets in the reserve. High-impact activities such as jogging, cycling, and playing games have detrimental impacts in, and are not appropriate for, a nature reserve that is dedicated to protect environmental values and to limit disturbance to birds and other fauna, and for which low-key, passive pursuits are appropriate. The impacts from large numbers of people seeking recreational outlets in the nature reserve will become a key concern with proposed housing and other developments adjacent to the reserve.

The planning principles could therefore usefully specify that proposals for housing and other developments include adequate provision of exercise and recreational amenities and facilities for residents on the development site, together with sufficient open or green space, infrastructure such as wide, well-connected walking paths, a variety of sitting and picnic areas, and facilities for more active activities such as ball courts, exercise areas and equipment on the development site. Developments with these attributes will reduce impact on the Jerrabomberra Wetlands Nature Reserve through a reduction in the proportion of residents seeking recreational activities in the reserve.

The planning principles could also usefully specify that access to the Jerrabomberra Wetlands Nature Reserve occurs only through established entrance routes, as part of visitor management planning, and that 'back-door' access to the reserve is not deliberately or inadvertently provided from the development.

COG can be contacted on [cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au](mailto:cogoffice@canberrabirds.org.au).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke, likely representing the name 'Steve Read'.

Dr Steve Read  
Vice-President, Canberra Ornithologists Group  
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