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### **DV 377 - Draft Variation to the Territory Plan - Dairy Road Fyshwick**

The Canberra Ornithologists Group (COG) wishes to provide comments on DV 377. COG is 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 a large housing and commercial complex proposed on the reserve's boundary.

COG is a volunteer-based community group with around 500 members whose mission includes the 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.

The Jerrabomberra Wetlands is the premier wetlands bird habitat in the ACT, with significant biodiversity values. It is of national importance, an important drought refuge for water-based species, and a critical seasonal habitat for threatened, migratory bird species. 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 habitats. It is the most important habitat in the ACT for Latham's Snipe, a migratory wader protected under International and Commonwealth threatened species legislation. The wetlands also provide habitat for other bird species on Commonwealth, ACT and NSW threatened species lists.

The wetlands already have significant people use/visitation, and this is expected to increase very significantly over future years, with various proposed housing developments adjacent to the reserve and in the immediate area, such as the units development subject to DV 377, as well as future plans for housing in East Lake/Kingston.

In summary, if the DV is approved to re-zone the land for these uses, it should 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. This should include best-practice standards of environmental provisions and controls to avoid adverse ecological impacts, and other measures to appropriately mitigate increased human impacts on the nature reserve. The Plans must also be consistent with management plans applying to the Jerrabomberra Wetlands Nature Reserve, such as the Jerrabomberra Wetlands Plan of Management 2010.

It is noted that DV 377 requires various Plans to address or mitigate various direct and indirect impacts, that are to be prepared and approved by the Conservator of Flora and Fauna, and that are to cover a range of matters such as light spill, drainage/run-off, interface and other design.

The mitigation of significant impacts from large numbers of people/residents living next to the nature reserve, who will seek recreational outlets in the nature reserve, must be held to high standards and requirements for any approval, for example:

- The interface design should be of best-practice environmental standards for a buffer area protecting a significant and sensitive wetlands nature reserve, and habitats for threatened species.
- The boundary of the development with the nature reserve must be carefully planned in terms of appropriate landscape barrier or fencing. Access points into the reserve, if any, must be implemented in consultation with the ACT Parks and Conservation Service, and sited to minimise impacts on the nature reserve.
- Within the development envelope, there should be appropriate amenities provided for residents, including adequate open or green space and other recreational infrastructure.
  - o It is important to discourage inappropriate activities occurring in the adjacent nature reserve which is meant for passive, low-impact activities like walking and nature enjoyment.
- Matters to be addressed include intrusion into the reserve by roaming dogs, control of pests (e.g. building/infrastructure which does not attract roost pests like non-native Rock Pigeons or Common Mynas, which compete with native birds for resources), and appropriate plantings which do not spread undesirable/weed species into the nature reserve.

COG strongly supports cat containment for this site (page 9 reference in DV 377 for consideration of cat containment), in accordance with the ACT Government's policy for cat containment in developments abutting nature reserves.

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

Yours sincerely



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