

Yarralumla Recreational Hub
Submission to National Capital Authority
from
Yarralumla Residents' Association
August 2008

Introduction

The Yarralumla Bay and Orana Bay area has been identified as a development node in the Griffin Legacy Plan.

It is proposed that the public domain be improved while existing rowing, sailing and athletics activities be reinforced, and additional tourist and recreation facilities be provided.

It is also proposed that wetlands or ponds be created to improve water quality.

The Yarralumla Bay development node differs from all the other development nodes in two ways:

- it has an existing set of uses for active recreation which is not duplicated in Canberra.
- it has residential streets on its boundaries

For this reason we believe, and we understand that the NCA believes too, that development should be limited to features that are compatible with a residential setting and should maintain the outdoor recreational use of the area.

One of the things most important to us is the feeling that our suburb is connected to the lake. It is connected by the sight lines from the school through the oval and the open green space, which is part of the proposed recreational hub area, down to the lake itself. It is also connected by the fact that the lake is accessible along the foreshore, and that there are relatively few barriers.

Land uses and ACT leasing system

The land uses for the area are as follows:

Permitted uses

- recreation and tourism activities
- rowing and sailing club boatsheds
- kiosks, refreshments, restaurants
- entertainment
- hire facilities e.g. bicycle, boat, paddle boat

Not permitted

- private licensed clubs
- tourist accommodation

We see no reason to include any more land uses.

The boat shed leases are concessional leases and the lessees have the right to renew those leases. We were assured by a spokesperson for the ACT government who was at the community consultation meeting that if any of those leases were to be sold on the open market they would pass to another community group. Also we understand that any entities who approach current leaseholders to use their premises have to comply with existing lease purposes. We also understand that some new leases will be drawn up as a result of the plan for the recreational hub, and that they will be granted by the ACT Government for the purposes designated on the plan

People represented by this submission

YRA members (100 households), Yarralumla residents present at the public meeting, residents who were given the opportunity to comment at a Saturday morning information session held on Saturday 26 July at Yarralumla shopping centre (about thirty households).

Our views on the proposed options

Alexandrina Drive

- The unanimous view of all responses was that residents are opposed to any straightening of the road.
- However, it could be suggested that the road could curve further away from the head of the Bay, the aim being to then maintain Alexandrina Drive as a scenic, winding road while at the same time enclosing a greater passive recreation area closer to the lake.

Yarralumla Bay

- Responses from residents opposed any narrowing of the Yarralumla Bay.
- The west side of the Bay as shown in Option A is preferred.

Cycle path

- We consider that the proposal for the cycle path as shown in Option B is a good one, and are not in favour of that as shown in Option A.
- Such a commuter bike path should go on the lake side of the car park to avoid bike traffic crossing cars in an area where cars are coming in and out.
- We do not consider that a cycle path around Yarralumla Bay itself is necessary or desirable, but prefer that this area be maintained for pedestrian use only.

Pedestrian path

- Yarralumla residents were uniformly enthusiastic about a pedestrian path around the edge of the lake (also see cycle path above)
- The plan for a pedestrian path as shown in Option A seems preferable (i.e. not shared with a cycle path).
- Occasional seating along the pedestrian path would be welcome, and some residents suggested that some weather cover (for some seating) would be desirable,

Parking

- We prefer that parking solution suggested in Option B, because the parking is on the lakeside of the road. This avoids having to bring boats across the road, and also provides overflow parking on the other side of the road. As boat traffic increases, this seems the safest option.

Stormwater drain and wet ponds

- We like the proposal to have efficient, high-quality water control and smart ponds following the course of the existing stormwater drain,
- We suggest that possible dredging out the head of the bay should be considered; presently it is very shallow owing to deposits of silt.
- There is interest in the community for developing a wetlands area

Cafés

- There was a mixed response from residents as to the desirability or otherwise of cafes.
- Overall, there was a positive reaction to the idea of some cafes, but residents were opposed to large franchises such as MacDonal'd's.

Accommodation

- All residents canvassed are totally opposed to any form of accommodation being built or offered.

In conclusion, we would like to thank the National Capital Authority for the opportunity to respond to their draft plans for Yarralumla Bay Recreational Hub. Representatives of our Association would be glad to discuss any aspect of this submission with you.