



## *Jerrabomberra Residents Association Inc.*

PO Box 132  
Jerrabomberra NSW 2619

Mr Paul Freeman  
Queanbeyan Panel Secretariat  
Queanbeyan Land Release Inquiry  
GPO Box 3415  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Freeman,

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the Queanbeyan Land Release Inquiry.

The Jerrabomberra Residents Association (JRA) is an active and vocal community member in the Queanbeyan City Council area. We represent the residents most directly affected by the land release proposals.

This submission was compiled by the JRA Executive after seeking input from all JRA members and further feedback from the Jerrabomberra community broadly. We believe it to be representative of the views of the Jerrabomberra community, and a responsible attempt to contribute to the development of the region.

It is not simply a document that focuses on the immediate needs or parochialism of local residents.

We hope that our submission proves useful, and that long-term, benefits for Jerrabomberra and Queanbeyan as a whole, emerge from your work.

We would also like to meet with you and the panel to make a presentation to support this document and other relevant matters on June 27<sup>th</sup>.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require further information or input on any of the matters we have raised, or you desire our views on.

Yours sincerely,

**Ms Margot Sachse**  
JRA President

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## WHAT IS THE JRA?

The Jerrabomberra Residents Association (JRA) is one of the most active and vocal community organisations in the Queanbeyan City – Canberra region.

We were formed by volunteers from the newly established Jerrabomberra community in the early 1990s, to help foster community spirit and develop caring relationships between local families.

Over time, the JRA became increasingly involved with advocacy and lobbying for the particular needs of our community, at a Local, State and Federal level.

We now represent around 7000 residents in the Queanbeyan City Council area, who reside in the 2619 postcode.

While we maintain our ‘community’ focus and desire to make Jerrabomberra a special place to live, we now also draw on the collective experience, qualifications, and skills of our JRA members to ensure infrastructure and resourcing concerns are addressed by Governments.

From the organisation of Christmas ‘Carols by Candle Light’, to the campaigning for a much-needed school, the JRA has been the foundation for creating our unique and harmonious community.

Regular monthly meetings, democratic elections, and a large, inclusive membership mean we represent all community views. We deliver on a broad community agenda, and work for all residents in Jerrabomberra.

Many years of having a single entry and exit point has resulted in a harmonious, ‘village’ environment and it is one of the great attractions of living in Jerrabomberra. We have developed a very strong sense of ‘community’ and it is this ambiance that we wish to preserve.

However, we acknowledge that future development is inevitable. We wish to work with you to meet the challenge in balancing the benefits brought by new residential developments, and minimising the loss of ‘community’ that may come with it.

The JRA will do all it can to build and retain the community environment. We hope the Queanbeyan Land Release Inquiry panel can assist us in helping deliver future development that complements our work.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The JRA recommends that future residential development in the Queanbeyan area include and consider:

- Road upgrades and construction to meet increased traffic volume – especially Lanyon Drive and Monaro Highway
- The retention of Edwin Land Parkway as a residential access road, and not a thoroughfare to future development, or Queanbeyan by-pass
- A new high school in the proposed developments
- A new primary school, or upgrade of Jerrabomberra Public School
- Equitable access to water for NSW residents
- A base for emergency and police services within the new developments
- Upgraded electricity and communications services within Jerrabomberra and new developments
- An 11pm-6am curfew for Canberra International Airport

We further call on the NSW Government and Queanbeyan Councils to strongly negotiate and advocate for NSW residents when negotiating with the ACT Government, who appear determined to curtail any development outside of their borders.

## TRAFFIC

Traffic congestion and safety is one of the largest concerns held by Jerrabomberra residents.

Current road infrastructure, and traffic management, will not be capable of coping with the additional traffic that will develop from the proposed rezoning of the Poplars, Tralee, Environa and Googong.

Currently 65% of the Queanbeyan and Jerrabomberra workforce – some 10,000 people - commute to work in the ACT.

It would be safe to assume that a comparable percentage, or at least 50% of the prospective residents, will also commute to work in the ACT.

With the majority of Jerrabomberra residents commuting to the ACT using the direct route of Tomsitt Drive (NSW), Lanyon Drive (NSW) - becoming Tharwa Road (ACT) over the railway bridge - and the Monaro Highway (ACT); these roads are therefore of significant importance to not only current NSW residents, but also for the proposed developments.

With the proposed access road from the Poplars, Tralee and Environa merging onto the Jerrabomberra Circle roundabout and the proposed Edwin Land Parkway extension, the current congestion will only be exacerbated unless the current infrastructure is upgraded, and new roads constructed.

The current traffic planning, management and infrastructure is insufficient for present traffic volumes, and will be unable to cope with the large increase in vehicles that new developments will bring.

### Lanyon Drive / Monaro Highway

Recent years has seen Lanyon Drive upgraded to dual lanes. However there appears to be no plans to upgrade Tharwa Drive (ACT) or its intersection with Monaro Highway (ACT).

Both are the responsibility of the ACT Government.

Lanyon Drive and Tharwa Road are already the major route from southern Canberra to the NSW coast; the major ACT bypass for NSW traffic to the snowfields, and the major northern access road to the ACT industrial suburb of Hume.

The roundabout at the intersection of Tomsitt and Lanyon Drives is dual lane and with southern bound traffic moving on Lanyon Drive/Tharwa Road, this narrows to two lanes and crosses a narrow railway bridge on the ACT/NSW border all of which are able to flow at 80 km/h.

In their current form, the Lanyon Drive/Tharwa road junction and Monaro Highway intersection are not adequately coping with the current traffic flow to and from NSW residents. The additional vehicle traffic from the Poplars, Tralee, Environa and Googong would only add further congestion.

The recent 'Have a Say Day' held at Jerrabomberra highlighted priorities for Jerrabomberra residents, and included improved local access through improved traffic

management; the upgrade of the Monaro Highway intersection, and the linking to the new growth areas and the ACT.

It is therefore critical that the traffic infrastructure is developed and prepared in conjunction with the ACT, and in place to accommodate the envisaged growth that these developments will bring to the existing traffic network.

Recent NSW-ACT Government costing estimates for the duplication of Tharwa Drive and the upgrade of the Monaro Highway intersection was placed at about \$25 million. In its present state, the road is unsafe, and an inhibitor to residential and economic development in the proposed land release area.

However, due to the geography of the road – approximately three of the four kilometres of road in question are in the ACT, but with the railway bridge and crossing falling under NSW responsibility – intergovernmental cooperation is vital to the road's upgrade.

Further adding to the problem of upgrading this road is that approximately 80% of the ACT road's use is by NSW residents.

It must also be remembered that the burden on this road will only increase over the next two to three years, regardless of future Queanbeyan developments, because of the construction of the Defence Force's Command Centre near Bungendore (approximately 17 km from Queanbeyan CBD and in Palerang Shire).

The JOC will house approximately 750 fulltime staff, most of whom will be commuting to the facility in regular peak hour traffic times.

Recent Defence Department and RTA surveys revealed a significant basis for major upgrade works on regional roads – including Lanyon Drive and the Monaro Highway - specifically as a result of the JOC's construction.

The Defence Department Survey of personnel reveals:

- 63% of employees with dependants will live in Canberra's inner south;
- 14% of employees with dependants will live in Queanbeyan;
- 13% of employees with dependants will live in Canberra's inner north;
- 12% of employees with dependants will live in Bungendore; and
- 74% of employees without dependants will live in Canberra.

That means that several hundred vehicles could be using Lanyon Drive as the main route to work, in addition to current congestion.

Defence and the RTA have identified four particular pressure points placed directly on the local roads system because of the Defence Headquarters.

These are:

- the Queanbeyan CBD, possibly extending as far back as to the ACT border on Canberra Avenue, and Lanyon Drive;
- the roundabout at the intersection of Yass Road and Bungendore Road in Queanbeyan;
- the Captains Flat Turnoff on the Kings Highway; and
- the Primary Turnoff into the HQ on Kings Highway (yet to be built).

The Defence Department and Federal Government have stated that they will not be funding any of these road upgrades because they are not classified as a federal responsibility.

### **Edwin Land Parkway**

Concerns have been raised by JRA members regarding the development of Edwin Land Parkway.

The highest concern regards the proposed plan to further develop this road into the Queanbeyan by-pass, which will literally cut Jerrabomberra into two.

Attached, is a copy of an early plan (see Appendix A) presented to prospective residents of Jerrabomberra that depicts the proposed Parkway as a major road. However, it does not suggest the introduction of a multi-lane highway or a Queanbeyan by-pass.

While the proposed extension of Edwin Land Parkway will provide residents with another route into and out of Jerrabomberra, it will also act in segregating our community facilities.

The school, post office and community centre will be on one side, and the main shops, medical centre and petrol station on the other.

A few years ago, it was proposed by the JRA to have a load limit applied to this road, but Queanbeyan City Council advised that the RTA would not fund a weight-limited road.

This means that heavy vehicles will use this road to and from the quarry, and the noise and pollution that these trucks will cause will be unbearable.

People purchased land and houses in Jerrabomberra as they were enticed by the prospect of a quiet, peaceful and clean community in which to live and raise their families. We believe Queanbeyan City Council will be doing this community a great disservice if they allow Edwin Land Parkway to become a derivative of the Monaro Highway.

A large number of children travel by foot from 'The Heights' to the public school in 'The Park' and have to cross this road.

Children and a four-lane highway do not mix and provision must be made for their safe passage to and from school.

A significant number of elderly and frail people in disabled scooters regularly cross this road, so there must be a safe way for these residents to access the shopping and community centres.

We suggest that Edwin Land Parkway remain in its current form, with its primary purpose of a residential access road retained.

However should this road be further developed, consideration *must* be made for the safe travel of pedestrians by installing overpasses between the rear of Rosewood Glen across to the shopping centre and possibly another one from Stringybark Drive across to the Halloran Drive oval.

The JRA is very concerned that the Edwin Land Parkway will become the primary road network for the majority of people in the proposed suburb of Googong to access the ACT (estimated to be more than 15,000 people). There will be significant impacts on traffic safety and congestion in Jerrabomberra unless an alternative around Jerrabomberra is planned.

The main road infrastructure in the Queanbeyan/Jerrabomberra to the ACT will need to be addressed in a way that adds value to the existing communities. The inquiry must satisfy itself that there is adequate planning for road access when these proposed developments are fully completed to service the needs of the communities they propose.

This will be somewhat difficult given the hostility of the ACT government to any further growth and therefore rate-base loss to the Queanbeyan City Council. The goal should be to grow the region for all - as *one region* – without borders.

The inquiry should encourage the NSW Government to assert itself with an aim to achieve this outcome of behalf of the NSW residents.

## WATER

As a result of the nation wide drought, one of the most pressing issues facing communities across the country has been the issue of the provision of water for urban communities.

This has resulted in the imposition of restrictions on water used, and the pursuit of practices for the more efficient used and reuse of limited water supplies.

A number of JRA members have questioned the capacity of the region's water supplies to service additional residential development in Queanbeyan.

The Association is aware that the proponents of both Googong and Tralee have outlined ambitious programmes for the efficient use of potable water, the recycling of grey water and the capture of stormwater.

The JRA is also aware that the ACT and NSW Governments have reached agreement for the supply of water to new residential developments in Queanbeyan.

The Inquiry must satisfy itself that there is a sustainable supply of water, which does not reduce the supply available to current residents.

While current disputes around water usage are centred on arguments between the ACT and Queanbeyan Council about where future residential development can occur, the JRA is strongly of the opinion that all local residents – regardless of which side of the NSW/ACT border they live on – are *equally* entitled to water.

Everyone in the Canberra-Queanbeyan district is entitled to choose where they will live. This should not be restricted by a superficial argument about the supply of the *same* water to the *same* resident because of the particular suburb or town they wish to make home.

## Sewerage

In a recent advertisement in the *Queanbeyan Age* (23 May 2006), Councillor Steve Stavreas outlined his concerns about the adequacy of the Queanbeyan sewerage system.

He speaks of sewage discharge into the Queanbeyan River, the possible doubling of costs for the augmentation of the Morrissett St Pump Station and allegations of serious deficiencies in the treatment works.

These comments suggest that the existing system does not have the capacity to service the needs of the proposed residential developments.

The Association is aware that both Googong and Tralee propose to establish on site sewerage treatment plants that will treat sewage to a point of high quality effluent.

The Inquiry must satisfy itself that there is adequate sewerage capacity to service the needs of any new residential development.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

Planning for future community needs should be a high priority for the Queanbeyan City Council.

This should include the need for more schools, childcare, additional community centre facilities, indoor sporting facilities, a chapel and other religious venues including function/community halls and meeting places, Council and Government shopfronts, bus services, playing fields, cycle and walking paths.

Whilst it may be axiomatic to say that all of the above are obvious requirements that will be available to new residents, our experience tends to show otherwise. The JRA is concerned that the required infrastructure needs of the southern residents of the Queanbeyan region will again be overlooked or will not be available in a timely manner.

Of particular concerns are:

### Education

#### High School

The recent Queanbeyan City Council Vision project *'Have a Say Day'* highlighted priorities for Jerrabomberra residents.

The major issue for Jerrabomberra residents (24%) is the need for a high school in the area.

Jerrabomberra and Queanbeyan parents of school age children have expressed a great deal of support for the plan to build an Anglican Secondary School in the proposed Tralee development.

More high school students leave Queanbeyan to further their education than stay in the city.

According to bus transport figures, 3444 Queanbeyan area students travel to Canberra everyday to attend government and non-government schools.

All but 590 of them go to high schools. About 1950 attend non-government high schools; 671 government high schools, and 231 ACT government colleges. NSW Department of Education figures say 1569 students residing in Queanbeyan are enrolled at Queanbeyan and Karabar High schools.

The ACT Government has stated that they have enough capacity to cater for Queanbeyan students, and that currently 4340 children travel daily from NSW to attend ACT schools - about 1590 attending government schools and the rest attending non-government schools.

Queanbeyan parents are making a conscious and financial decision to send their children across the border to ACT schools. This needs to be addressed and reversed as it will continue to affect the Queanbeyan community in a number of social and economic ways.

The Queanbeyan region has demonstrated a strong requirement for, and could easily accommodate a non-government high school. Additionally, the NSW government should consider an investigation into the viability of a third government high school for the

Queanbeyan region or at least a significant upgrade to the two existing high schools to make them more competitive to their ACT counterparts.

It is imperative that with any increase in development / population, that current issues and problems be dealt with prior to, or concurrently with, any new residential developments.

If this issue is not thoroughly considered, and solutions found, the current system will fail to cope and the exodus of students across the border will continue.

### Primary School

The Jerrabomberra Public School had its first intake of students in 2003 and was officially opened in 2004.

The school has well and truly surpassed its infrastructure capacity, as it was originally designed as a '14 core' school, and as of June 2006, is now a '29 core' school with over 700 students.

The school took ten years to be established, mainly due to Department of Education forecasts that it would not be viable for twenty years and was therefore not required.

The permanent section of the school - library, canteen, administration building, toilets etc - was originally designed for a 14 core school. Significant investment is now required to upgrade Jerrabomberra Public School. The development of North Tralee/Poplars - opposite the school - will put further pressure on a primary school that is already stressed to its limits. Due to the lack of space the school is already unable to accept students from North Terrace.

### Future Educational Requirements

Jerrabomberra is a young suburb with a large number of young families. There are also a large number of Defence families. When they move on these families are generally replaced with another young Defence family. This makes Jerrabomberra demographically unusual; instead of the community gradually ageing it is continually being regenerated. This situation is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future.

It is therefore imperative that educational requirements are thoroughly investigated prior to approval of any further residential development, particularly in the Poplar, Tralee and Environa areas.

### Emergency Services

The geographic and demographic centre of Queanbeyan has moved southwards with the establishment of the suburbs of Letchworth, North Terrace and Jerrabomberra.

However, the Police/Ambulance and other emergency services have not been located in this region. This move south will become greater if the new developments of Tralee, the Poplars, Googong and Environa are approved.

With the southwards move of the centre of Queanbeyan, consideration should also be given to the co-location within the proposed residential developments of sub-branch or off stations for police, health and emergency service facilities.

The JRA is concerned that the required infrastructure needs of the southern residents of the Queanbeyan region will again be overlooked or will not be available in a timely manner.

### **Electricity**

The electricity infrastructure at Jerrabomberra is strained. We frequently suffer from outages, with the last one being 10 days ago. It is clear that the current infrastructure cannot handle the current capacity.

The Inquiry must satisfy itself the electricity infrastructure can meet the requirements for each of the proposed developments ensuring that it does not impact on current residents.

### **Communications**

Access to modern tele-communication services are a crucial part of modern life.

Negotiations are underway for the location of the 3G communications towers in our suburb, which will provide us with the latest telecommunication facilities. However, Jerrabomberra has limited ADSL capacity due to the current communications infrastructure.

The JRA understands that we are unable to be connected to the TransACT network due to the limitations of the underground wiring. All the proposed developments must have access to modern communications infrastructure.

### **Environment**

Jerrabomberra Creek is considered a significant natural asset and has significant environmental values that warrant its restoration, protection and enhancement.

The creek flows through the nationally significant Jerrabomberra Wetlands in the ACT and lies within the Molongolo River Catchment, which in turn feeds the Murrumbidgee River.

The proposal in North Tralee and the Poplars developments to regenerate and restore Jerrabomberra Creek and provide landscaped areas on the banks of the creek for community recreation is a positive step for the environment that will benefit Queanbeyan and Canberra residents as a whole.

## AIRCRAFT NOISE

Jerrabomberra residents are all too familiar with the impact aircraft noise has on their daily lives.

This has become a major problem since December 1995 when, at the request of the ACT Government, the flight path was changed and all planes were funnelled down the high noise corridor and over some parts of western Jerrabomberra.

The Instrument Landing System (ILS), or the flight path centre line, goes from Church Creek along the western parts of Jerrabomberra and the proposed Poplars development to the end of the runway.

With approximately 600 houses currently falling outside the current noise abatement zone, aircraft noise is a regular concern.

To add to this, the airport is currently operating in excess of its 'pre-Ansett' jet capacity, with some flights arriving prior to 6am in the morning with the last jets arriving as late as 11pm.

Flight numbers are projected to almost double by 2025, and unlike Sydney, Canberra airport does not have a legislated night time curfew. Establishing an 11pm – 6am curfew at the Canberra International Airport is one of the key priorities for the JRA.

For many years, the JRA has worked closely with the Canberra International Airport to seek noise relief for Jerrabomberra residents. We have been successful as takeoffs to the South now turn right and track down the high noise corridor, over the proposed Tralee and Environa developments.

However, the biggest relief will come in September this year when Qantas starts flying into Canberra using Required Navigation Performance (RNP) procedures at Canberra Airport.

This means that the Qantas 737-800s will fly an offset approach that takes them to the west of Jerrabomberra finally providing real noise relief to residents. It also allows the planes to land safely from the north, which means more flights will land on the northern runway.

The JRA understands that this technology is available for use by the VIP and Virgin fleet and in the long term would be standard in any plane. Therefore, it is highly likely that all future planes will use the offset approach when landing on the southern runway.

The JRA understands the importance of the Canberra International Airport to the future economic development for the Canberra region, and the consequential increased number of predicted aircraft movements of mainly general aviation and larger jet aircraft.

Regardless of the debate on the magnitude of the increase in aircraft movements, any increase in the number of movements means an increase in aircraft noise in areas within the vicinity of the airport.

The proposed rezonings may prevent any respite for western Jerrabomberra residents in the high noise corridor, as they may remove the possibility of a western offset approach flight path.

The airport has stated that the noise abatement areas could be completely abolished immediately if the developments are approved, which would severely affect all Jerrabomberra residents.

## OVERDUE COMMITMENTS TO JERRABOMBERRA RESIDENTS

When Jerrabomberra was being sold to the public in the early 1990's, a map (attached – Appendix A) was provided, detailing the land that was being set aside for community facilities like business precincts, cafes and sporting facilities and parks.

However, since that time, the Queanbeyan City Council has approved the development of residential housing in nearly all of these areas resulting in very limited area for community use, or for open space. There is no new land available for the promised indoor pool or expansion of the tennis courts.

Residents who bought in the area at this time feel extremely misled.

The JRA are concerned that whilst the developers of many of the proposed areas in this Inquiry have highlighted areas that are being set aside for community use, such as an indoor aquatic centre, that these may not come to fruition.

We hope that the Queanbeyan City Council has learnt from the Jerrabomberra experience and that the developers adhere to their promises.

### Developer Covenants

The developer of Jerrabomberra attached detailed covenants to each block of land sold.

The covenants described what the developers saw as the setting and design for this suburb.

Once the developer had sold all of the blocks of land, enforcement of the covenants was the responsibility of the Queanbeyan City Council.

From time to time, the JRA has taken up covenant issues/disputes on behalf of members with Council. However the Council has made it clear that they do not enforce covenants.

The JRA has concerns, based on our experience, that some of the covenants described by the current proposed developments will not be enforceable by Council once the land has been sold and the specifications will be disregarded and any challenge will need to be pursued through the courts.

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