



## BELCONNEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Building a stronger community

### **Belconnen Community Council Welcomes Planning Act Amendments and Calls for Comprehensive Evaluation of the Outcomes-Based System**

The Belconnen Community Council (BCC) welcomes the amendments to the new Planning Act, which effectively address our primary concerns surrounding community consultation and the inclusion of pre-DA consultation in the final Bill. These changes mark a significant step forward in ensuring that the voices and input of our community are given the utmost priority in the planning process.

While we express our satisfaction with the amendments made to the new Planning Act, we acknowledge that there are still concerns within the Belconnen community regarding the operation of the outcomes-based system. In this regard, we wholeheartedly welcome the built-in review mechanism, which will allow for a thorough evaluation of the system's effectiveness and the potential need for further reforms. While not required by the Planning Act, the government should be proactive and consider a continuous evaluation and review process of the planning system. We firmly believe that this evaluation will ensure that the local community can continue to actively participate in shaping the planning outcomes that directly impact our neighborhoods.

The BCC is disappointed that the reform of governance arrangements was not a core component of the planning reform project from the beginning, but we welcome the amendment requiring an independent review of the governance arrangements within 12 months of the Planning Act's passage. This comprehensive review should examine the effectiveness of the ACT's independent planning body and investigate the potential of local design panels, both of which the BCC requested in our submission on the draft Bill. We firmly believe that these measures will contribute to a more inclusive and community-centric planning framework.

The BCC remains committed to advocating for genuine and transparent community engagement in planning, and for a fit-for-purpose territory plan, district strategy, and design guides that deliver for the Belconnen community. We express our gratitude to the ACT Government, the Opposition and all stakeholders involved for their efforts in addressing our concerns and taking meaningful steps towards creating a more consultative and inclusive planning framework.

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