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KBRG SUBMISSION ON DRAFT EAST LAKE PLACE PLAN APRIL 2023

The Kingston & Barton Residents Group Inc. (KBRG) is an incorporated, voluntary, not for profit, non-political, community organisation that seeks to promote and protect the interests of our local community and the environment. We are very interested in planning proposals affecting our local area, which includes a substantial part of the East Lake study area (ie. the Causeway Housing area and the Canberra Railway Station) and the area generally north of Canberra Avenue. Our Constitution says: “The aim of the KBRG is to ensure the Kingston and Barton area is a great place to live, and to do this by promoting:

- High quality planning, urban design and construction
- The preservation and recognition of the area’s unique heritage character
- The provision of adequate green public open spaces
- Effective transport planning including traffic and parking management, & access for pedestrians & cyclists
- A strong community spirit, and
- Other quality of life matters such as public safety and noise management”

The KBRG Committee is pleased that the Draft Place Plan refers to some of the key issues we believe our community is concerned about, particularly:

- The need to protect the Jerrabomberra Wetlands
- References to the importance of WSUD and sustainability
- Recognising and protecting the heritage significance of this area and assets such as the Causeway Hall, the limestone fossil area, Cargills Cottage, the Rail Museum and Locomotive 1210, the remnant rail lines, the Dairy Farmers Co-operative buildings, and The Causeway (street) itself, a Walter Burley Griffin’s plan principal axis. We strongly support the intention that the heritage assets should be used as community facilities. Adaptive reuse is the best form of protection.
- ‘Potential’ primary school site (although we wonder why this is not close to the ‘potential’ oval shared with the community proposed on the Former Landfill area?)

- The need for an east-west road connection through to Dairy Road. Although this is termed 'long-term' without any indication of when, it needs to be as early as possible to help cope with significant population growth in the area and be co-ordinated with the Dairy Road development, which is providing a new public road through their site and which would enable a convenient local bus service. The implications for increased traffic on Wentworth and Canberra Avenue and enhanced access to Fyshwick and the Monaro Highway also need to be considered.
- 'Delivering Diverse Housing' short or medium term Implementation Actions:
 - Promote housing mix to support a diverse and multi-generational community
 - Establish targets for affordable housing inclusion in estate design and delivery, land sales processes and deed conditions

However it seems to us there are still fundamental issues left unresolved in this high level and rather superficial 'Place Plan', particularly:

1. **The future of the existing (many long-term) residents of the Causeway public housing.** The only specific mention in the draft plan is the Recommended Implementation Action (under 'Delivering Diverse Housing' – "Continuously work with existing residents in the Causeway precinct and in Mildura Street about future opportunities for housing that will best meet their individual needs". Given there has apparently been very little contact by government with these residents over recent years this would be nice, but the likely outcomes are very unclear, despite commitments given some years ago that existing residents who wish to stay in the area will be accommodated there. The historical significance of this settlement to the very early days of Canberra and the links back to those times of some of the current residents must be respected. The Causeway social housing community is special because of its strong and supportive nature. This is a valuable resource that has a massive beneficial value and should not be destroyed.
2. **The lack of any clear commitment to actually relocating the railway station to allow the suggested extension of The Causeway through to Mildura Street.** We also note that the apparent space provided for co-locating the Rail Museum with the new railway station and 'multi-modal transport hub' is very restricted – what analysis has been done on how this would all work? In our view the Railway Museum would be best left in its current location because of the potential synergies with the Wetlands visitors' centre and the history and heritage hub at Cargill's Cottage. Together these would form a special cultural precinct.
3. **No apparent commitments to upgrading transport linkages to the surrounding area** – eg. real and effective east-west connections, much better public transport, dealing with congestion on the existing road network and improving access to and from the Monaro Highway.

We sincerely trust that all of the above matters will be given serious consideration and that East Lake will become a truly exemplary high-quality and sustainable urban renewal project.

Richard Johnston President, Kingston & Barton Residents Group Inc.

1 May 2023