

**Submission  
No 188**

**INQUIRY INTO PLANNING SYSTEM AND THE IMPACTS  
OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND  
COMMUNITIES**

**Organisation:** Queanbeyan Landcare Group

**Date Received:** 3 November 2023

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I am writing on behalf of members of Queanbeyan Landcare Group, in relation to the Legislative Council's Inquiry into the planning system and the impacts of climate change on the environment and communities.

Planning is critical to our response to Climate Change which is now very broadly considered to be underway and evidence suggests the possibility of acceleration of atmosphere temperature rise and all the global effects that flow from that.

1. Improved planning for Climate change is ultimately in the public interest in every situation .
2. In Queanbeyan, the assessment and approval of the 'Jumping Creek' housing development was taken out of the hands of the Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council: that project has seen the total reshaping of the natural landscape and spread of housing into natural areas with attendant increasing fire risk and loss of habitat.
3. In Queanbeyan, the approval of a relatively benign subdivision at Googong Townsouth Queanbeyan is now rapidly spreading through successive new approvals, into natural habitat, fire prone areas and now entering the catchment of the Googong Dam.

In both those developments have had adverse impacts on connectivity, loss of mature trees (stepping stones) and serious erosion / siltation from earthworks & building works - we have similar outcomes for the construction of the Ellerton Drive Extension by pass road, the ongoing building in Googong and at Jumping Creek Estate.

It is no longer practicable to rely on populations to change their behaviour accordingly, because of the inability of a large percentage of the population to invest in change and because of the prevalent and deep seated mis-information campaigns still being promulgated in relation to this global issue. Local Government requires the latitude to make decisions which accord with Climate Change Response strategies. There is nothing clearer.

Climate change responsive Planning is not only critical but changes needs to be implemented in conjunction with the provision of better information on the rationale (including the utilisation of the many clear indicators of trends in climate change) together with real incentives to encourage people to understand and also embrace changes in planning. The best, and at the same time the worst aspect of Climate change is that this is intimately linked with all , resource extraction, air and water pollution, risk of wildfire and its consequences on property, humans and biodiversity, land clearing and water security. There is everything to gain, including less air pollution from fossil fuels.

**HOUSING:** This is the largest investment we make as individuals and encapsulates most of our activities.

Populations are growing and housing demand is continually placing pressure on land, so there is a need for financial and other incentives to ensure that 1. more houses are fully occupied, through boarders, sharing incentives 2. New models of housing, given the huge issue of affordability, particularly cooperative models.

The second area of housing policy: we advocate, is to require that all housing constructions make allowance for solar energy and passive energy. This ultimately is in everyone's interest. The practicality of means tested financial incentives needs to be investigated, as a productive potential investment of public money in the public interest.

The third area of housing is the level of investment by many in excessively large investment in private housing far beyond the needs of households. This is a waste of natural resources when there are many pressures on resources. . Huge investment in residential homes impacts on the extraction of resources as well as direct use of energy. There are also many other repercussions in the building industry arising from over-investment in housing, including the current clear impacts on the cost and supply/availability of building supplies and many services.

- Financial disinvestments are required to reduce this level. This can also become a potential source of funding for climate change amelioration/adaptation programs.

Finally, members of Queanbeyan Landcare Group Inc strongly support the findings and recommendations of the recent Ken Henry- led independent review of the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016, which was instigated by the NSW Minister for Environment and is now under consideration. It says, without equivocation, that the current system of planning and development is broken and not fit for purpose, and that we need to adopt a "nature-positive" ethos in everything we do going forward

<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/animals-and-plants/biodiversity/overview-of-biodiversity-reform/statutory-review-of-the-biodiversity-conservation-act-2016>

Ian Johnson

Chairperson

Queanbeyan landcare Gropup

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