

20 May 2021

Andrew Barr  
Chief Minister  
ACT Legislative Assembly  
GPO Box 1020  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Chief Minister,

**Re: Parking in Dickson during the Coles/TP Dynamics redevelopment of Block 21 Sec 30 and future group centre changes**

We are writing to you to seek your urgent assistance to deal with parking issues that will arise when the new Coles/TP Dynamics development begins in Dickson.

As you know Dickson Residents Group, Downer Community Association and North Canberra Community Council have been closely involved for several years in negotiating with Coles to deliver an acceptable redevelopment of the former main public carpark, Block 21 Section 30 Dickson, after ACAT overturned ACTPLA's approval in 2018.

We are confident that the project is much improved and will contribute a second supermarket with additional small shops and underground parking that residents of the inner North have long been waiting for.

We are writing to you now because we believe there will be very significant problems with a shortage of accessible parking when the existing primary parking area for the group centre is closed.

We have held useful discussions with the developer, TP Dynamics, but we understand that the problems that will arise are outside their responsibility or capacity to manage.

It is essential to explore other, better temporary parking strategies with the community in order to mitigate major impacts on the most vulnerable members of the community and the businesses and service providers based here. That can happen in tandem with the project starting and should not act as a brake on construction.

Reliance on distant private carparks, one of which was previously condemned before being sold to Wilsons, will not be effective. Those cannot be expected to operate effectively as a solution for the shopping centre's regular users. They will create access problems due to being difficult to locate, distances, poor pathways and lighting, and numerous other barriers to pedestrian access, especially for those with disabilities or reduced mobility.

We have not seen the full construction period parking plan. What we have been shown, that we understand has been endorsed by TCCS and signed off by EPSDD, appears to us to be unworkable.

We will be calling for public information to be made available by the end of June as to how the government intends to mitigate the excessive and unreasonable adverse impacts on:

- the wider and local communities that rely on this shopping centre;
- individuals who are vulnerable, disabled, frail and elderly, or sick, and their carers - who depend on convenient access to local services (doctors, allied health practitioners, chemists, the Walk-in Health Centre, postal and banking services, the library);
- the public facilities of Dickson Library and Dickson Walk-in Health Centre;
- group centre businesses and their staff, the many service providers, and nearby restaurants and premises on Woolley Cape and Badham Streets;
- Antill and Cowper arterial roads: commuter and commercial traffic and buses;
- nearby residential streets, those properties, and their road users;
- nearby schools, their staff and students' families: Daramalan and Emmaus;
- Dickson Pool, their staff and patrons;
- child care centres on Rosevear Place and the families that use them.

The temporary parking plan shown on <https://www.dicksonvillage.com.au/#Parking> consists of a website, that shows a map of what already exists. We understand that a similar map is proposed to go on Access Canberra's website. No additional temporary parking has been created for the public other than to designate 22 spaces east of Rosevear Place (past the Dickson Pool and tennis club) as free long stay parking, and convert what are currently 20 free spaces in the library carpark (used by employees, owners, and medical patients) into metered "short stay" spaces, displacing some of the people who work in the centre.

We have been advised that the current strategy relies on existing parking spaces that are under-utilised, with some minor adjustments to parking signage. This approach does not allow for the difficulty in finding and accessing those car parks, their distances from the shops, the exposure to weather, the weight and bulk of shopping bags or trolleys especially at the outer edges of the wider parking zone, and the traffic congestion that will arise from the increase in movement of vehicles hunting for parking and moving to and from alternative parking locations.

Loss of 237 car spaces (including 10 disabled), plus a further 6 drop-off/pick-up spaces and 4 loading vehicle spaces means that 247 spaces are out of action until the construction on Block 21 Section 30 Dickson is complete. That places massive pressure on the remaining two carparks that service the centre, and the carpark across Cowper Street that services Dickson Pool. The two remaining centre carparks are regularly close to full, an issue exacerbated because the new Dickson Walk-In Health Centre and the new Dan Murphy's generate additional traffic and parking demand, and because the population in the catchment has grown. Diverting traffic and overflow onto local residential streets, and creating additional congestion that chokes intersections at extended peak periods, will not work. It impacts on the efficiency of the road network for cars and buses, and blights the area for residents, pedestrians and cyclists.

It is vital to prepare a coordinated parking strategy that is capable of handling successive waves of construction effectively. It is critical that the strategy address disabled parking, pick up and drop off areas, short stay parking, routes to and from parking for vehicles and pedestrians (a web site is not a suitable solution to this issue for most users of the area), loading/unloading, and safety/accessibility issues especially at night. Active travel infrastructure and way finding initiatives that complement the overall parking strategy will be particularly important.

Given that these issues cross portfolios in the government we seek your urgent assistance in ensuring they are dealt with urgently and effectively, in consultation with the community.

Kind regards,

(signed)

Jane C. Goffman, M.U.R.P. University of Sydney 1989, BA cum laude Growth & Structure of Cities Bryn Mawr, USA 1984  
President, Dickson Residents Group  
email: [president@dickson.org.au](mailto:president@dickson.org.au)

cc:

Minister for Transport and City Services, Chris Steel  
Minister for Planning and Land Management, Mick Gentleman  
Minister for Active Travel, Rebecca Vassarotti  
Minister for Business, Tara Cheyne

Members for Kurrajong: Rachel Stephen-Smith, Shane Rattenbury, Elizabeth Lee