

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Seaplanes](#)
Subject: Public consultation submission
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I am writing this submission to the National Capital Authority in good faith with expectation that it will be received in a similar manner.

As a regular user of Lake Burley Griffin and a long time citizen of Canberra I was incredulous when I heard of the proposal to have seaplanes on the lake. After reading the background paper I am astonished that two companies have been given encouragement to cater for such a venture.

As a consequence of much public discussion, many years ago, the lake was established as a place for mixed-use recreation that does not include motorised watercraft with minimal, mostly safety, exceptions. This has allowed for the freedom of use by locals and visitors. The idea of now violating this long and established tradition cuts across the cultural heritage of the ACT.

I am extremely concerned that there are many regular users of the lake who will not be aware of this proposal and so will not have expressed their opinions. On the other hand, businesses behind this outlandish idea will be able to lobby the NCA, National cultural institutions, Canberra businesses and members of the legislative assembly to push for their desired outcome well beyond the context of community consultation. If such is the case, the weight of the few could seem to be greater than that of the many, and unfortunately this could undermine the fairness and ultimately the integrity of the current process.

The unspoiled beauty of Lake Burley Griffin and its surrounds, especially that west of Commonwealth Avenue bridge is one of the most remarkable attractions of the ACT. Not only is it beloved by Canberrans but it belongs to the people of Australia and should not be privatised nor seen as a greenfield site for development. The Australian bush like environment of the west side of the lake is breath taking and nourishing within the design of our national capital. It is also an important habitat corridor for a multitude of native species both on and off shore. A priceless and irreplaceable asset that needs protection.

In considering the proposal the NCA must maintain the pillars of Heritage, free and equitable access to the lake, environmental sustainability and common sense. It also should keep the area between Scrivener Dam and Commonwealth Avenue Bridge for unimpinged water recreation – the swimmers, sailboaters, kayakers, sail borders, rowers, scullers and others who use the area without restriction. Although the consultation paper claims proposed landing and takeoff time would be theoretically brief there would need to be much lead time to clear who are swimming or on watercraft for a lengthy period either side. A seaplane would be incompatible with the safety of these users. Speaking from experience, even a small wash can tip rower out.

Should ask itself what is the balance of benefit here? Those who can afford tickets for a seaplane will be very few. There is mention in the consultation papers of seaplanes being used for commuting which seems ridiculous. QPSeaplanes are not very good as planes and commuters would find that the current choice of aeroplanes, buses, trains and cars provide much more flexibility and surety. The photographs in the consultation paper show Lake Burley Griffin as glassy and smooth on a windless day. The lake is very often choppy and it is very changeable, going in a few minutes from one condition to another. This is exploited by sailcraft but having to make safe allowance for the effect of turbulence on a light plane would be impossibly restrictive for all other users. The lake is a free recreational resource for everyone under the current established tradition and regulation, it should not be subsumed to the whim of a few who can pay for a ticket on a seaplane.

Should be in accord with the ACT government in its national leadership in creating a

sustainable carbon reducing legislature. A seaplane brings to mind a bygone era, and even the sleek modern model shown in the consultation papers is still driven by non-renewable fuel. In addition, although there were copious measurements of noise levels in the consultation papers, the sound would still carry well across the water and be bounced back off Black Mountain. The proposal is anachronistic.

The NCA does not seem to have considered what effect a service such as this could have on activities on and around the west end of the lake. Generations now of young people have learned to be safe around water and on water craft in the Yarralumla and Black Mountain/ Yarramundi reach areas. Sailors and swimmers of all ages take advantage of the lake and others simply appreciate being beside the lake enjoying its tranquillity and restorative qualities. It is a delight to see the skill of the sailors or to see a swimmer come back after reaching Spinniker island. it would be okay travesty to have the area cleared of swimmers and watercraft just so a seaplane could land or take off.

The question of whether a seaplane service could help to raise awareness of Canberra as the nations capital and thereby serve the nation is absurd and ranisableand reasonable and reasonable. Anyone who is in the market to catch a seaplane to Canberra would know where it is and what it is. It would not create greater awareness of Canberra.

Sarah Burns

