

Mr Tom Duncan  
Clerk  
ACT Legislative Assembly  
London Circuit  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

29 July 2025

Dear Mr Duncan

Thank you for your letter concerning petition E-PET 001-25 regarding Harry Hopman Circuit traffic.

Christmas light displays occur all across Canberra and there are multiple streets where this creates some delay to traffic, challenging parking conditions and reduced access to properties. The negative impacts of festive lighting displays only occur for a few hours each day, with the most impact occurring usually in the week leading up to Christmas.

The Harry Hopman Circuit Christmas lights are one of the larger displays in Canberra and attracts larger attendance numbers.

The City and Environment Directorate has investigated the request for a one-way system on Harry Hopman Circuit and has determined that this is not a feasible proposal for the following reasons:

- Harry Hopman Circuit is approximately a kilometre long, and half of the residents on the street will likely wish to enter the street from the opposite direction to the one-way system.
- Some of the residents off Harry Hopman Circuit are not involved in the Christmas lights display and the additional distance they will need to travel is an unnecessary impost.
- There are 11 cul-de-sac streets that run off Harry Hopman Circuit, which by design, have only one entry/exit point. Imposing a major change to traffic conditions in the area will have a disproportionate impact on these residents.
- One-way streets, unless properly designed tend to encourage poor driver behaviours and illegal manoeuvres. One-way streets tend to lead to increased traffic speeds, because there is no opposing traffic, and can lead to an unsafe road environment. For those residents living at the wrong end of the one-way system there is often a temptation to travel the wrong way, which for other drivers is unexpected and can lead to an increased possibility of a crash.

The need for any traffic control at Christmas light displays, is short lived, a few hours each day for a few days leading up to Christmas, so imposing a full-time one-way system is not warranted.

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Christmas light displays create a low-speed environment, as a result of increased on-street parking and pedestrian movements. The displays often extend outside the property boundary onto the verge, further reducing the opportunity for pedestrians to walk on the verge. This can cause more pedestrians to be in the roadway.

Whilst pedestrians and drivers can be distracted by the light displays, the travel speeds are generally very low and there is no reported history of injury or property damage being caused by the increased traffic demand.

Roads ACT has an existing program of supporting organisers of charity and community events. Under the scheme, Roads ACT prepares the appropriate temporary traffic management plan, but it is typically the event organisers responsibility to manage and cover the cost of implementation.

Roads ACT's initial review of potential temporary traffic management requirements at this location identified a need for quite an extensive plan, requiring up to 12 traffic controllers on site each night. The size of the site and the number of intersections in the corridor only adds to the complexity.

A one-way temporary traffic management scheme of this scale is expensive to implement, requiring physical elements such as barriers to ensure compliance. On this basis, I regret to advise that it would not be appropriate for the cost of such a large temporary traffic management scheme to be imposed on the community.

Roads ACT welcomes further discussions with Harry Hopman Circuit residents with Christmas light displays on whether there are other ways through which support can be provided.

Thank you for raising this matter. I trust this information is of assistance.

Sincerely



Tara Cheyne MLA