



Mr Andrew Barr MLA
Chief Minister
barr@act.gov.au

Dear Mr Barr

Thank you for meeting me and the Presidents of the Kingston and Barton Residents' Group (KBRG) and the Griffith Narrabundah Community Association (GNCA) on 26 May. The meeting was organised as a follow up to the well-attended public meeting organised by the ISCCC and held on 28 April, at which a number of motions were passed in relation to proposed developments at Manuka Oval.

We thought it might be helpful to confirm in writing our understanding of the outcomes of our meeting with you. My colleagues from the KBRG and GNCA have written to you about MOCCA, so we will focus on the situation in relation to Manuka Oval.

It might be useful at the outset to make our position clear. Residents' groups in inner south Canberra may support refurbishments at Manuka Oval which enhance the conditions of players and supporting bodies such as the media, or improve the spectator experience, provided such enhancements have no impact outside the Oval itself. However, the ISCCC firmly believes that any activity or development at Manuka Oval needs to be appropriately assessed in terms of its potential impact on identified heritage values, both within and adjacent to the oval and on the immediate neighbourhood and wider area in terms of noise, light, crowds, parking, detriments to traffic, etc.

The delegation emphasised the view that there was a pressing need to undertake a full Master Plan for Manuka Oval and its surrounds. It has become clear following the recent GWS/Grocon proposal that development at Manuka Oval would have flow-on effects across Canberra Avenue affecting the Manuka Group Centre, as well as the Kingston Group Centre to the north-east. Development would also impact on Kingston Foreshore (in that spectators at Manuka Oval may be encouraged to park in parking areas at the Foreshore provided for patrons of Foreshore businesses).

The ISCCC envisages the development of a Master Plan for Manuka Oval and surrounds prepared by the Environment and Planning Directorate in conjunction, and after consultation, with the community. This Master Plan would become part of the Territory Plan after its acceptance by the community, the Government and the Assembly. The current consultative arrangements with respect to the Canberra Brickworks development are a good example of cooperation between government

agencies and the community. This approach could provide a model for preparation of a Manuka Oval and surrounds Master Plan.

You suggested at the meeting that a Master Plan is usually only developed when it is intended to increase the density of development in an area. While this may be a frequent purpose of a Master Plan, we do not think this requirement is necessary in this case. We would see the master planning process including an assessment of what is currently permitted in the areas specified above, and what is already in train or under active consideration. This might lead to the identification of anomalies that could be easily resolved through remedial changes.

You asked us to indicate the approximate boundaries of any such Master Plan. We recognise that Manuka, Kingston and other areas will not remain completely unchanged over timescales measured in decades. We suggest the Minister for Planning might ask his officials to contact the ISCCC to arrange an in-depth discussion on appropriate boundaries of a Manuka Oval and surrounds Master Plan.

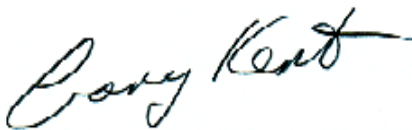
In conclusion, we note that you commented that some of the improvements proposed in the GWS/Grocon proposal go beyond the needs identified at the Oval in the Government's own plans. In addition, you commented that there is some debate about the extent to which the proposal is innovative or unique.

The ISCCC reiterates the profound concerns of the community that such a proposal could proceed in the absence of appropriate planning. Many of our members and members of the wider community believe that the linking of possible improvements at the Oval with a major property development within the Oval precinct is simply bad policy, as neither the Government nor the public would ever know the true value of the improvements at the Oval nor the value of the public land provided in exchange.

Consequently, the ISCCC strongly urges the Government to reject the GWS/Grocon proposal, and to announce that it is not prepared to consider other proposals for the Manuka Oval precinct until a comprehensive Master Plan for the area has been prepared in consultation with the inner south Canberra community and incorporated into the Territory Plan.

Again, many thanks for meeting with us on this important matter.

Yours sincerely



Gary Kent
Chair

25 June 2016