



26 May 2016

**ACT GOVERNMENT MUST REJECT
GWS/GROCON 'MANUKA GREEN' BID**

The ACT Government should heed the call of inner south residents and reject the Greater Western Sydney/Grocon revised unsolicited bid to develop the Manuka Oval precinct, according to the Inner South Canberra Community Council (ISCCC).

A delegation from the ISCCC is to meet today with the Chief Minister, Mr Andrew Barr MLA, to present the community's views on the revised bid. The delegation comprises:

- Gary Kent, Chair, Inner South Canberra Community Council
- Rebecca Scouller, President, Kingston and Barton Residents Association
- John Edquist, President, Griffith Narrabundah Community Association

Mr Kent said that a packed public meeting of 400 people on 28 April had voted unanimously to ask the Government to reject the initial bid, and instead commence a master planning process for the Manuka Oval precinct and surrounding areas.

“Contrary to the Government’s claims, there has not been a proper master planning process for the precinct. So far no proper studies and consultation have taken place with regard to crucial urban planning issues of population density, transport, parking, green space and the valued and sensitive heritage nature of the Manuka Circle Park, Telopea Park and Telopea Park School.

“The Government must initiate a comprehensive planning process for this valued part of Canberra in full partnership with the community and relevant stakeholders. The fact that the proponents have scaled down their original bid in no way compensates for the fact that it has been developed in the absence of a master plan – in fact, in the eyes of the community, this doomed the proposal from the beginning”, Mr Kent said.

Ms Scouller said that she would ask Mr Barr to accept the call by the public meeting to review the current arrangements for all sporting events at Manuka Oval, including for parking, transport and access. “Sporting events at the oval are increasingly impacting on local families in terms of residential amenity and quality of life and a review of current arrangements, including options for developing a new ground elsewhere, such as Phillip, is urgently required”, she said.

Mr Edquist said that the Government has a golden opportunity in the next two years to develop a Master Plan before the Test Match in 2018/19. “It should seize the moment and do a proper job” he said.

“The Government should also address rising public concern about the transparency with which development proposals are considered by the ACT Government. In addition, community input should be sought as soon as possible and there should be a stop to the cynical sacrifice of valued public open space to solve short term budgetary issues”, he said.

The motions passed by the public meeting are attached.

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Motions passed by public meeting hosted by ISCCC on 28 April 2016

1. Ensure that any proposal restricts development to sporting facilities and other improvement of Manuka Oval, and not include shops, residential or other development.
2. Reject the GWS/Grocon unsolicited proposal to redevelop the Manuka Oval precinct.
3. Initiate a comprehensive planning process for the Manuka Oval precinct and surrounding areas, in full partnership with the community and relevant stakeholders. It would take into account adjacent heritage and precinct plans, and would seek to agree on:
 - (a) Objectives for any future development;
 - (b) Strategies for achieving those objectives; and
 - (c) Mechanisms for continuing community involvement.
4. Review the current arrangements for any events at Manuka Oval, including for parking, transport and access.
5. Revise the guidelines for unsolicited proposals with a view to strengthening transparency and to ensure the publication of reasons for decisions.

In addition to these motions about the Manuka Oval precinct, the continuing concern for the future of MOCCA was highlighted, which prompted another motion as follows:

6. Ensure that MOCCA, a longstanding community based child care centre, is taken care of financially. [This motion was moved in the context of the Government's proposal to move MOCCA from its current site in Manuka and MOCCA's disinclination to be forced into debt as a consequence of any such move resulting from redevelopment of its current site.]