

## **Kingston Barton Residents tell government to get involved in Manuka project**

The Canberra Times April 7 2016 John Thistleton

Inner-south residents fear the proposed \$800 million Manuka Green project would lead to traffic chaos, and are demanding the ACT government take a lead role in the community consultation process.

The group says Greater Western Sydney Giants and builder Grocon's "massive proposal" will bring an extra 4000 traffic movements a day to an already congested area. It says only 1000 car parks will be provided for an estimated 2400 residents in new units to be built as part of the mixed-use development.

A GWS spokesman says Manuka green draws on expert consultants' extensive traffic engineering and planning. Traffic flow issues will be addressed by event parking management and park-and-ride facility.

"Significant modelling has been undertaken around issues like queuing requirements, arrival and departure movements, sustainable transport methods, road network entries and a range of other aspects related to traffic flow in the Manuka precinct," the spokesman said.

Total basement parking would be in excess of 1350, and 450 of them would be for public car parking.

Kingston residents' spokesman Peter Moore says the government, and all ACT political parties, are sitting back allowing the Sydney and Melbourne proponents to take the criticism, and must release Manuka's master plan.

"Residents groups all over Canberra seem to go through immense hurt when these proposals crop up," Mr Moore said. "Particularly where a proposal emerges out of the blue, or when residents get an inkling but can't find out about it because the government clams up and doesn't release any information."

Mr Moore says Kingston, Kingston Foreshore, Manuka and the Realm in Barton will be saturated by a fifth new retail and business precinct. GWS says the retail component will be delivered in stages over 10 years.

Mr Moore said residents' distress worsened when people who were not residents, not voters, nor ACT taxpayers, seemed to know more about what was going on than did the community.

"We need to have the Manuka master plan so we know where the whole thing is going, people who are shop keepers, residents who use Manuka as a retail space, can plan what is going to happen to themselves," he said.

The ACT government's response did not mention a Manuka master plan. A spokesman said the Manuka Oval master plan consultation process began in 2009 and the plan is publicly available and has been for some time on the government's economic development web site.

"The ACT government has for almost 10 years been discussing the redevelopment of Manuka Oval to create a boutique venue capable of hosting regular AFL content and international Test cricket. All of these discussions will help inform future upgrades to the oval, and the government does not expect there to be any major work at the venue in the next 12-18 months," a spokesman said.

GWS says community groups including Manuka business community's feedback is extremely encouraging.

"Many people have voiced their support for this proposal given that it seeks to properly link Manuka Oval to the business district and the Kingston Foreshore," he said.

Mr Moore says residents all over Canberra welcome the co-operative, final process for Yarralumla brickworks redevelopment, which should be the gold standard on sensitive public land.

"We are not a bunch of old-fart NIMBYS. People in Canberra are not funny little people, we are not dumb, we make considered decisions, and we want consultation any time public land is considered for annihilation.

"Because it is an issue of converting the land from a benefit for all, to a benefit for a few. They have to be convinced the benefit for all does maintain that in some way."