

Griffith/Narrabundah Community Association Inc.

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What's making news

Government retreats on MOCCA land swap

On 12 August 2015 the Legislative Assembly passed a motion calling on the Government to:

- “(a) continue to engage with the wider Canberra community over future development of the Manuka precinct;
- (b) decide as quickly as possible on any replacement site for MOCCA, noting the mix of community concern and support about possible sites;
- (c) ensure that MOCCA will not move from its current site until new facilities are constructed; and
- (d) ensure that the lease for the site of the Telopea Park tennis courts is returned to school and community use.”

These words were adopted after a motion by Steve Doszpot on the Manuka Occasional Child care Association (MOCCA) was amended by Shane Rattenbury and finally amended by Andrew Barr. The Chief Minister's words in the Assembly are worth quoting:

“I want to be clear that if this amendment is accepted by the Assembly today, the land that has been identified as a potential new childcare site behind the Griffith shops will need to go through a further series of processes. The preliminary investigation indicates it would be feasible, but there is a long way to go on that journey if that land is to be made available for a new childcare centre. The advice I have is that that process will take some time—a number of years would be the expectation. It would then take a number of years to construct new facilities. It would be reasonable to conclude that, should this amendment pass this morning, Mocca, if it were to move at all, would not be moving until towards the end of this decade.”

(see <http://www.hansard.act.gov.au/hansard/2015/links/download.htm> for the full debate)

The GNCA's policy on the MOCCA, Telopea Park School, Canberra Services Club land swap proposed earlier by the government is that:

- The land currently zoned for Community Facilities or Urban Open Space in Manuka should not be re-zoned;
- MOCCA should not be forced to move from its current site; and
- There should be full, open and transparent consultation with community groups and all other involved parties to resolve this and any future planning proposals in Manuka.

We will have to monitor any proposed development behind the Griffith Shops, but at least MOCCA will not be forced to move yet (supposedly not until 2020) and the Telopea Park tennis courts will not be bulldozed during the summer holidays. Whether the lease for the tennis courts will be returned to the school is unclear as yet. A new site for the Canberra Services Club, which burned down in April 2011, now appears to be finalized because the Canberra Times has reported that the Club is planning to buy the Rugby Union Club

clubhouse at 51 Blackall Street, Barton. This would seem to remove the need for the Government to provide a new clubhouse site for the Canberra Services Club.

Re-development of Stuart Flats and Gowrie Court

The ACT Government is planning to re-develop Stuart Flats and Gowrie Court as part of a program to generate sufficient income to revitalise the ACT's public housing portfolio. Extensive public consultation was organised by the government and the Draft Variations to the Territory Plan were released for comment on 1 July 2015.

For the **Stuart Flats** the current proposal (DV 333) is to increase the number of dwellings from 146 to 500; to zone the whole precinct RZ5, which is high density residential, and to construct six storey buildings in the 'c' areas in Figure 1; four storey buildings in the 'b' areas and three storey buildings in the 'a' areas. Furthermore 860 m² has been removed from the urban open space in Section 43 (see Fig. 1 below).

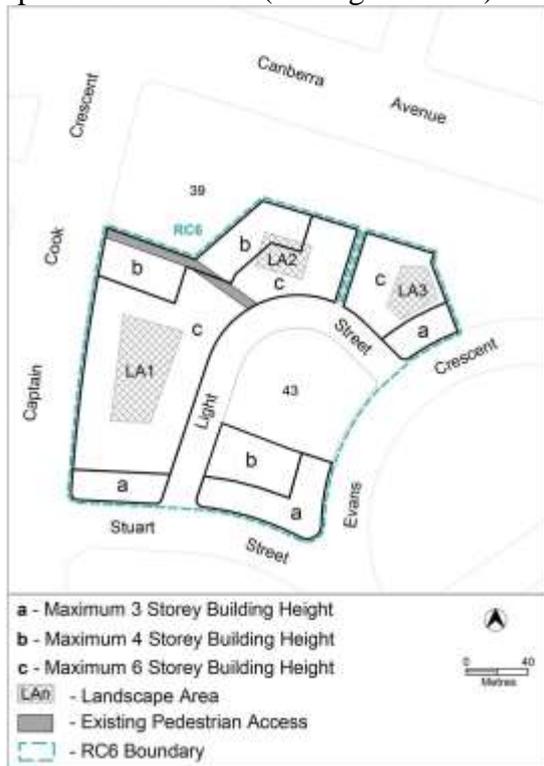


Fig. 1 Plans for the new Light Street precinct

The GNCA has objected to these proposals and our complete submission is on our website. The main points are:

- The 860m² open space should not be removed; there should be more open space to cater for the increase in population.
- The 'b' area on Light Street should be reduced accordingly in size and rezoned 'a'.
- The maximum number of dwellings should not exceed 400.
- All the buildings in the 'a' areas and the 'b' area on Light Street should be restricted to two storeys to fit the desired local character.
- The traffic impacts were not endorsed by ACT Roads and did not take account of the

current and future developments along Stuart Street and in Manuka. A new holistic study must be done.

- The feasibility of having part of the southern part Section 43 allocated for a child-care centre should be considered.

The proposals for **Gowrie Court** are summarised in Figure 2. The whole precinct is zoned as RZ5, which is high density residential. This zoning is supposed to be used near town centres or major public transport routes and can accommodate buildings of six or more storeys. Gowrie Court is 700 metres from the nearest local shops and is nowhere near a town centre or a major transport route. Therefore RZ5 is totally inappropriate for the whole site.

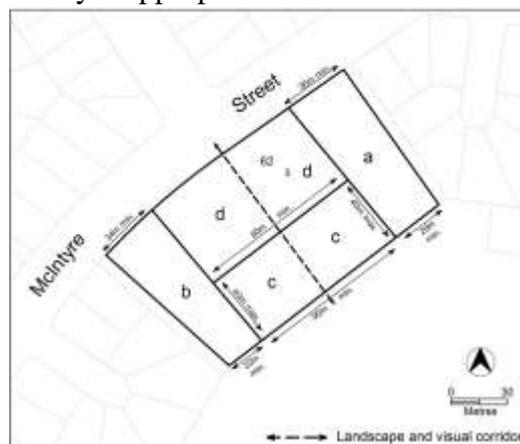


Fig.2 Plans for Gowrie Court. The legend is the same as in Fig. 1.

Consequently GNCA requires the current proposals be amended so that the new precinct will retain the attractiveness of the surrounding buildings.

The main recommendations are that:

1. zones 'a', 'b' and 'd' are zoned RZ2 (two storey maximum) and buildings in the 'c' areas be no higher than four storeys (see Figure 2);
2. the number of dwellings does not exceed 180, at present there are 72;
3. the landscaped areas, including the dimensions of the landscape corridor, be included in the Precinct Code and

Mr Fluffy, Draft Variation 343 to the Territory Plan

DV343 would apply only to surrendered Mr Fluffy residential blocks in RZ1 suburban zones, which are 700m² or larger. Key changes include the reduction of the minimum block size for dual occupancy development from 800m² to 700m² with associated changes to the plot ratio. Unit titling will be permitted for dual occupancy. A single storey building height limit is proposed for dual occupancy development to which a 35% plot ratio will apply.

Draft Variation 343 was tabled for comment on 8 July 2015 and of the 124 submission we could only find eight in favour and most of these contained some reservations.

GNCA considers that DV 343 m² is at variance with current ACT Planning Strategy, because it would result in random spot re-zoning. It will degrade the Garden City values and principles essential to maintaining the character of older suburbs. It would also provide one law for the government and another for Mr Fluffy owners and their neighbours (who will not be allowed to unit title their blocks). These people have suffered enough without being discriminated against by the government. We called on the government to withdraw the Variation. Our submissions are on our website and we will have appeared before the Legislative Assembly's Planning Committee, to which the DV has been

4. the traffic study be revised to account for the impacts of the 160 bed Baptist-Care facility next to Griffith shops and the re-development of the Stuart Flats. There is one fundamental flaw in both of these proposals. This is that the government is trying to build too many dwellings on the each parcel of land.

referred, by the time this Newsletter is distributed.

The ISCCC

The GNCA participates in and supports the Inner South Canberra Community Council, which represents seven separate Community Associations in Canberra's Inner South (of which GNCA is one). Have a look at the website <http://www.isccc.org.au/> to see its current activities.

The ISCCC has a seat at the government's high level Planning Development Forum and is a member of the Combined Community Councils of the ACT. It provides a voice to government for the whole of Canberra's Inner South and has been very active on the MOCCA issue, the re-development of the Stuart Street, Gowrie Court and Red Hill sites; the Yarralumla brickworks re-development and many others. Read Chairperson Gary Kent's regular contributions to the Canberra Chronicle for more information. The ISCCC meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at the National Press Club and local residents are very welcome to be there and raise any issues of concern.

Blaxland Park

The Concept Plan has been produced and we will meet soon with the ACT Government and our landscape architect to obtain the Government's endorsement of the plan and enable us to make it a reality.

Griffith Party: Saturday 2 April 2016 - mark your calendar!

Stalls, a cake competition, activities for the kids and more. Don't miss out on this community event at the Griffith Community Hall. More details soon.

And come to our AGM at the Griffith Community Hall at 7:30 on 22 October 2015

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members we have, the greater our influence will be with Government and in the community.

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