

Griffith/Narrabundah Community Association Inc.

PO Box 4127, Manuka ACT 2603

Website: www.gnca.org.au

Email: info@gnca.org.au

NEWSLETTER Vol 37 April 2017

Whats making News

1. Government's building compliance regime seriously flawed

It should have been a straightforward knock-down rebuild. Demolish an existing dwelling and construct a new two-storey house. When the Development Application (DA) was approved by the Government in July 2016 it should have meant that the building complied with the planning rules. However, it wasn't long before the neighbours realised something was wrong. The southern boundary wall looked to be far too high (see below).

According to the planning rules, the height of the wall should not have exceeded 2.6 m to allow reasonable solar access. However, the approved plan indicates a height of 3.4 m and in fact what has been built is 4.3 m high. The neighbour's solar access has been severely compromised. The mandatory 50% plot ratio has been exceeded because the covered Alfresco (outdoor kitchen area) and the covered entry should have been included in the plot ration calculations but was not.

On closer examination it turned out that, not only was the wall too high, and the plot ratio exceeded, but the building envelope on the approved DA was exceeded at both the northern and southern boundaries and set-backs at the rear and the front of the block are also non-compliant by up to 1.5 m.



The 4.3 m high wall on the southern boundary of 16 Landsborough Street. It has severely restricted solar access to the neighbour's house (Image courtesy Fairfax Media).

To compound the problems, when the GNCA and the neighbours complained to Access Canberra (the government's regulator), all that happened was the builder was asked to submit a revised DA to account for the deviations between the approved plan and the what has been built. (A decision on the revised DA has still not been made.) There was no suggestion that the builder should comply with the approved plans or with the planning rules. To rub salt into

the wounds, the government has legislated to ban any appeals to the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal for most single residential dwellings.

The GNCA considers that the community should be able to rely on the government to ensure that new buildings comply with all the planning rules and that what is being built does not degrade the neighbours' amenities.

2. Public Housing

Under the Public Housing Renewal Program public housing tenants are being moved from old run-down complexes in the inner city, as well as in Griffith, Narrabundah and Red Hill. According to the government, the land from the old sites is being sold to pay for newly built or specifically purchased modern properties that are more appropriate, eco-friendly and energy-efficient. Some community groups have complained about not being consulted about the selection of new sites.

The GNCA considers that the management of public housing is very important. We aim to lobby the government, together with other community groups, so that all re-developments will be more successful than some of the current public housing complexes. We are arguing for a three-pronged approach.

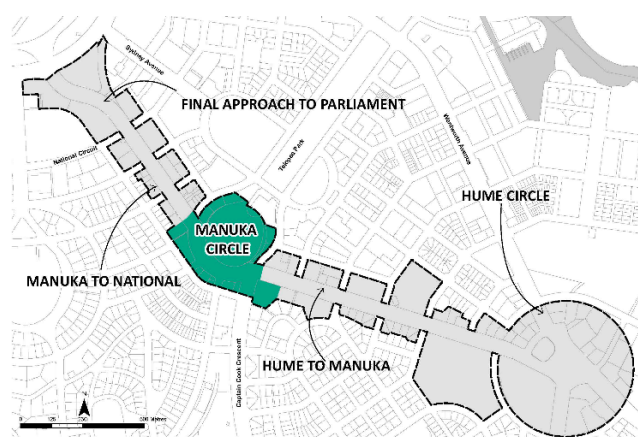
The government must: Articulate its plans for the placement of public housing residences on a consistent Territory-wide, suburb-specific basis, to obtain an improved distribution throughout the ACT. This will avoid concentrations within particular streets and suburbs and provide an integrated and balanced approach across the Territory. This plan must be made public, following genuine consultation with the whole Canberra community.

Ensure that public housing meets appropriate minimum standards. The housing should blend into the surrounding dwellings, be close to shopping centres and bus routes, have adequate parking and meet the latest energy efficiency standards.

Maintain public assets and enforce the provisions of its tenancy agreements, especially those covering property presentation and personal behaviour, through regular inspections, to improve the lives of its tenants, their neighbours and the wider community.

We will be actively interacting with government to achieve these goals.

3. Look what's happening in Manuka



Development in the shaded area is controlled by the National Capital Authority (NCA). This map indicates the location of the Manuka Circle Precinct

a. The Government is losing enthusiasm for a Master Plan for Manuka

Before the 2016 Election Mr Barr made a commitment that “a re-elected Labor government will use a community panel process to work through any planning changes in the Manuka precinct.” He also stated that “The Community Panel to be established will be similar to the processes undertaken for both the Canberra Brickworks Precinct and West Tuggeranong”.

Since the election, the government appears to have lost interest and nothing appears to have happened. The GNCA and Inner South Canberra Community Council are pressing the Government to fulfil its commitment, because development is ongoing in the Manuka area and there is still no Master Plan.

b. NCA produces a Development Control Plan (DCP) for Manuka Circle

The planning and urban design provisions in this draft DCP relate to building height, setbacks, landscape character, access and parking. It points out that Development Applications made to the ACT government must be consistent with these provisions. It is unfortunate that the ACT Government appears to have abandoned its Master Plan commitment. The NCA proposals and the ACT government plans should be developed together.

One of the more contentious proposals is to increase the height of the built form on the south side of Manuka Circle, where the Cinema is, from 18 m to 22 m.

No reasons have been given for this blanket change in height increase along Canberra Avenue.

The heights should surely be dependent on character and use of the buildings rather than a boring one size fits all approach. The GNCA's comments on these proposals are available on our website and the NCA's proposal is available at: <http://www.nca.gov.au/index.php/media-centre/4517-manuka-circle-precinct-draft-development-control-plan-open-for-consultation>.

c. \$9.9 million media centre planned for Manuka Oval

Meanwhile, the ACT Government is proposing to build a media centre to meet the International Cricket Council's (ICC's) requirements. It will be situated at the southern end of the Oval, provide ~1400 m² of floor space, be 19 m high and comprise four levels. The design of the building shown at: (https://www.yoursay.act.gov.au/application/files/2914/9030/7661/Community_Engagement_Mtg_2_presentation_low_res.pdf). The GNCA supports improvements to the Oval and welcomes the Chief Minister's recent statement that implies that the government will be financing these improvements. How a Media Centre of this size stacks up in terms of cost effectiveness against having more covered areas and more permanent seats at the Oval or other government priorities, we are not told. The GNCA response to this proposal are shown on our website. Once again, the government appears loath to engage in any realistic consultation.

4. The ISCCC

The GNCA participates in and supports the Inner South Canberra Community Council, which represents eight 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 Environment and Planning Forum and is a member of the Combined Community Councils of the ACT. It provides a representative voice to government for the whole of Canberra's Inner South and has been very active on many issues affecting this area. The ISCCC meets at 7 pm on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at Eastlake Club in Griffith and local residents are very welcome to attend and raise any issues of concern.

5. Blaxland Park

We have made good progress in planning and developing Blaxland Park and 21 trees were planted in late 2015 at the southern end of the Park. We are now in talks with the government to advance the planting program and are advocating, large deciduous trees at the southern end of the Park and several eucalyptus trees at the northern end of the Park near Blaxland Crescent.

Our Meetings

The GNCA meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 pm in the East Hotel, 69 Canberra Avenue. These meetings are open to the public so, please come along to participate. The next dates are: 10 May, 14 June, 12 July, 9 August, 13 September, 11 October, 8 November & 13 December. **Our AGM, will be held at East Hotel at 7:30 pm on 25 October 2017.**

A big thankyou to our sponsors during 2017

- Aubergine:** A local favourite in Canberra, at 18 Barker Street, Griffith, well known for its consistently high levels of food and service; tel: 6260 8666; www.auberginerestaurant.com.au
- Café Societea:** Not just the high tea specialist, come and have a coffee or lunch with Joseph and his team at 12 Barker St, Griffith; tel: 04 1376 1758.
- East Hotel & Apartments:** 69 Canberra Av, Griffith. Studios, apartments and meeting facilities combined with a great location and excellent service; tel: 6295 6925; www.easthotel.com.au.
- Organic Energy:** run with a passion to give people access to the best organic fruit and vegetables available, as well as house-made organic raw food products. Visit our shop at 8A Barker Street, Griffith, or we deliver to your door. tel: 02 6295 6700; <http://www.organicenergycanberra.com.au>.
- Fox Antiques,** 51 Collie Street, Fyshwick. The best range of French antique furniture and Australian original landscape art; tel: 0409 111 723, charliealliot@outlook.com
- Gryphons:** A chic venue with a relaxed atmosphere, at 16 Barker St, Griffith, offering a quality dining experience for breakfast, lunch and dinner – or just a snack at any time; tel: 0419 618 679, <http://gryphons.com.au>.
- Polit Bar:** More than cocktails, award winning party & entertainment venue at 8 Franklin Street, Manuka, with comfy lounges to relax with friends. Delicious drinks, authentic Italian pizzas, and much more; tel: 0410 931 008, www.politbar.co.
- Rubicon:** One of Canberra’s most exquisite dining experiences, renowned for its multi-award winning Australian Cuisine. 6a Barker St, Griffith, tel: 02 6295 9919 <http://www.rubiconrestaurant.com.au>.
- Shop-Rite:** Provides all your grocery and liquor needs, at 2 Barker St; tel: 6295 0781.
- Your Discount Chemist, Griffith:** At 12 Barker St, Griffith. Over 11,000 products online at www.yourdiscountchemist.com.au; tel: 6295 6725.

Membership Application / Renewal Form

If you are not already a GNCA member, please consider becoming one. The more members we have, the greater our influence will be with the Government and in the community.

Membership Application: **New Member ()** **Renewal ()**

Name:

.....

Full Address:

.....
.....

Phone:(h).....(m)

Email Address:

Membership Fee: \$.....\$10 per person for Annual Financial Membership

Donation: \$.....**Total amount:** \$.....(When using EFT, please add your name to the payment form. Bank: Westpac; BSB 032 722; Account 134058; Name: Griffith/Narrabundah Community Association.

Signature: **Date:** **Please**
send completed form to PO Box 4127 Manuka, 2603 or scan & send to info@gnca.org.au