



## NEWSLETTER Vol. 53 June 2025

GNCA newsletters have traditionally been printed and distributed by our dedicated volunteers to all dwellings in Griffith south of Canberra Avenue and Narrabundah west of Sturt and Jerrabomberra Avenues.. This tradition will continue, with the next printed newsletter out after our raffle (scheduled for late September to end of October). This electronic version is being emailed to our members, primarily because of the absence overseas of several committee members and challenges in arranging physical distribution.

Because of the important items below on planning issues, we would encourage you to distribute this newsletter widely to friends and contacts.

If you feel you could spare a couple of hours at the warmer end of the year to help distribute newsletters, please let us know at [info@gnca.org.au](mailto:info@gnca.org.au). Many hands make light work, and it will help you maintain your fitness level, even before making a New Year's resolution.

### VALE MARGARET FANNING



Members might be aware that Margaret Fanning, the GNCA's inaugural President, died on Sunday 23 February.

Margaret was a tireless worker for the Association before her retirement from the Presidency in 2011. After organising community pressure to save what is now Blaxland Park, Margaret led the GNCA through several other battles against ill-considered development proposals in our area. She was an enthusiastic advocate for her local community, and we will miss her. See the article on [www.gnca.org.au](http://www.gnca.org.au).

### ANNUAL RAFFLE

Unfortunately, it was not possible to hold the raffle in February/March as in previous years due to the unavailability of key volunteers.

If you can give an hour or two on our raffle sale stands at the Griffith shops and in Manuka in September and October/ or are happy to sell a book of raffle tickets, please email [info@gnca.org.au](mailto:info@gnca.org.au). Online ticket sales will be available via the GNCA website prior to September, once our prizes have been confirmed..

The raffle stands will take place on the dates listed on the following page:



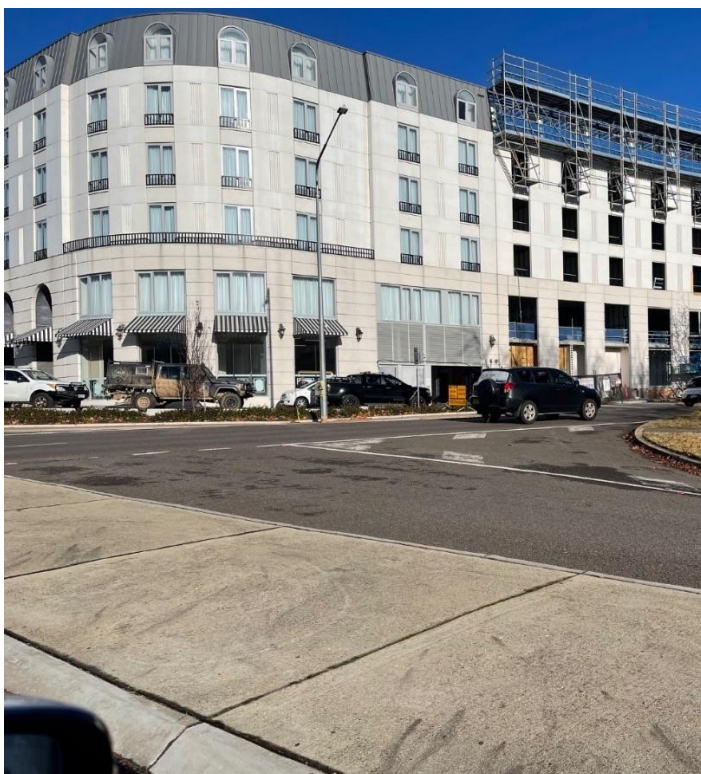
Saturday 27 September Griffith shops	Sunday 28 September Manuka shops
Saturday 11 October – Manuka shops	Sunday 12 October - Griffith shops
Saturday 18 October Griffith shops	Sunday 19 October Manuka shops
Saturday 25 October – Griffith shops	

## NEW CAPITOL HOTEL UNLIKELY TO HAVE ANY PUBLIC CINEMAS

The Capitol Hotel on Franklin Street now under construction in Manuka was initially to have five public cinemas in its basement level, as approved on 21 June 2021.

Following two amendments to the plan, the hotel will now have space for only one cinema. If a cinema is installed, its use will be determined solely by the owners, but the word on the street is that it is unlikely to be open for public use.

Manuka's cinemas appear to be a thing of the past. Understandably, some residents will be disappointed by this outcome.



## CARS DRIVING ON BLAXLAND PARK

Over the past several months there have been instances of unauthorised vehicle access to, and parking on, Blaxland Park. The entry point appears to be at the rear of Blaxland House (M16).

We have raised this issue with Access Canberra, which was already aware of the problem. We have suggested that the most effective approach would be to install bollards restricting access from behind Blaxland House to Blaxland Park. A chain and padlock could control use of any gap required to permit authorised access to the park from that area. Access Canberra is considering this option.

## DRAMATIC PLANNING CHANGES TO AFFECT ALL CANBERRA RESIDENTS

The Government is introducing changes to suburban zoning and new design requirements which it believes will deliver an increased supply of housing types across Canberra. These so-called "missing middle reforms" aim to dramatically increase dwelling densities in established suburbs in areas zoned RZ1. Other zones, including RZ2, will also be affected. In its current form, the proposal will result in fundamental changes to the character of Canberra's suburbs.

"Missing Middle" means low-rise multi-occupancy homes (2-3+ homes on a block): townhouses; terrace homes; and low-rise apartments in existing RZ1 and RZ2 zoned residential areas. RZ1 is the low rise separate dwelling areas characterising most of Canberra's suburbs. RZ2 is the areas where dual and triple occupancies have been permitted, mostly within walking distance of a local or group shopping centre and near a bus (or light rail) route.

Individually the changes might appear minor, but, when combined, they will result in:

- large developments of townhouses and unit complexes throughout residential areas
- developments that occupy more of the available land and with tall walls built along and close to neighbours' boundaries
- existing residences being overshadowed by townhouses and apartments
- less privacy from upper floor windows
- more cars parked in front of dwellings and on the street
- less garden and green space in front of new buildings, which will further erode streetscapes

Two key documents are:

- Missing Middle Housing Reform: Snapshot (see the Comparison Table).
- ZS1 – Residential Zones Specifications Consultation Version.

The proposals to change RZ1 rules to:

- remove minimum block sizes for additional dwellings; and the 120m<sup>2</sup> limit for a secondary dwelling; and
- permit block subdivisions; and the building of townhouses, terraces, and low-rise apartments of up to two storeys in height;

would seem to remove most of the differences between RZ1 and RZ2.

The table below outlines the proposed changes for RZ1 zones, based on documents and other information provided at

<https://yoursayconversations.act.gov.au/missing-middle-housing-reforms>

Proposed change	Impact on existing RZ1 residential blocks
Removing restriction on the <b>size, number and type of dwellings</b> that can be built on RZ1 blocks (see ZS1, pp. 7-8).	New townhouses, units, boarding houses and apartments will be allowed on blocks of all sizes. This was previously limited to two house type dwellings on blocks over 800m <sup>2</sup> .  Large blocks will no longer be limited to 2 dwellings – 3 or more houses will be allowed.
Allowing <b>apartments in RZ1</b> (see ZS1 p. 8).	Apartments and boarding houses with 3 storeys (basement parking + 2 storeys) will be allowed on residential blocks.
Changing the Subdivision Policy to make it easier to <b>consolidate blocks</b> (see Draft Major Plan Amendment to the Territory Plan 04, p. 9).	It will be much easier for developers to combine blocks to create large complexes of townhouses and apartments.
Increasing the height of the <b>building envelope</b> from 3.5m to 4m (see ZS1 p. 13).	New buildings will be noticeably taller near the boundaries of a block.
Reducing the <b>secondary street frontage setback</b> for multi-unit houses on corner blocks from 3m to 2m (see ZS1 p. 17).	New townhouses, units and apartments on corner blocks will be built extremely close to one of the boundaries – there will be almost no landscaping between footpath or public land and these buildings.
Eliminating the requirement for <b>side setbacks in the primary building</b> for multi-unit houses (see ZS1 p. 20).	New townhouses, units and apartments will be built right up to the neighbour's boundary. Combined with the change to the building envelope, this will result in 4m walls along the block boundaries.

Increasing the angle of the <b>solar building envelope</b> for multi-unit houses (see ZS1 p. 21).	New townhouses, units and apartments will be allowed to significantly overshadow neighbouring blocks.
Reducing the <b>planting area</b> for multi-unit houses (see ZS1 p. 26).	New townhouses, units and apartments will occupy more of the block and will have less garden and green space.
Reducing the number of required <b>carparking spaces</b> per dwelling from 2 to only 1 (see ZS1 p. 36).	This will result in less off-street parking and much more parking on the street – the impact of this will be amplified when there is an increase in the number of dwellings per block.

The GNCA has been urging the Government for some years to hold an enquiry into RZ2 to determine how effective the zoning has been, what the challenges are, and how the RZ2 zoning rules could be improved, and possibly the RZ2 zones expanded. The Government has chosen not to adopt this approach of identifying what the problem is and developing a problem specific solution, but instead seems to prefer a shotgun approach of changing a large number of things at once in the hope that at least some of these lead to the hoped for outcomes.



Residents have until 5 August 2025 to comment (or up to 22 July on the [HaveYourSay Conversations website](#)). There are a large number of proposed changes to be considered, but the GNCA hopes to be able to lodge a submission.

We encourage anybody who is interested to read the background documents referred to on the previous page and to make a submission.



*Upper photo: Sturt Ave – two storeys with all trees, plants and shrubs removed and no gardens*

*Lower photo: Wells Gardens - all block trees, plants and shrubs removed and limited gardens and green space*

## CANBERRA SERVICES CLUB



The signs have been up on the corner of Manuka Circle for months, announcing that the Canberra Services Club (CSC) would be returning to its old site. The site currently houses a decommissioned Leopard tank, and the iconic Kokoda Memorial Sculpture.

Fire destroyed the old clubhouse in 2011, and the CSC has sought unsuccessfully since 2018 to deconcessionalise its Crown lease. The then Minister for Planning decided in 2018 that deconcessionalisation would not be in the public interest, but this decision was overturned by the courts. In May this year, the Territory Planning Authority approved removal of the property's concessional status. Unfortunately, it is possible that a future use of the site could just be a hotel, or other commercial developments by entities other than the CSC.

However, the GNCA understands that the CSC proposes to rebuild its club house on the site. We would welcome the return of the CSC, but trust that any redevelopment fits in well with the existing character of Manuka and the surrounds of the oval.

We also have concerns that the deconcessionalisation fee should accurately reflect the market value of the block. This was not the case with the CSC's earlier application.

## PROPOSED GRIFFITH SHOPS UPGRADES AND NEW HEALTH CENTRE

In our last Newsletter in September 2024, we advised that the Government announced on 1 July 2024 that an Inner South Canberra Health Centre will be located behind the Griffith shops.

An ACT 2025-26 Budget announcement issued on 14 June 2025 includes proposals for 'upgrades at the Griffith shops', 'female-friendly changeroom upgrades ...to sports facilities' in Griffith and other suburbs, and 'a new Health Centre for the Inner South in Griffith'.

We have no further details, but will advise members via our website or the next newsletter when we learn more.

## GOVERNMENT ATTEMPTS TO REMOVE THIRD PARTY APPEAL RIGHTS IN PLANNING DECISIONS

In February this year, the Government introduced legislation to automatically classify public housing and public health facilities as Territory Priority Projects, thereby removing appeal rights by third parties.

That is, residents' associations would be precluded from appealing to the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal (ACAT) if they considered a project defective. For example, the GNCA argued successfully in ACAT recently against a Government Supportive Housing proposal where disabled tenants would have been compelled to live in houses where they might not be able to turn their wheel chairs around, or use the bathroom, toilet or kitchen.

The ACT Assembly referred the amending Bill to the Standing Committee on Environment, Planning, Transport and City Services, which decided to hold an inquiry into the new Bill.

GNCA President, John Edquist, gave evidence to the Inquiry in March (see [www.gnca.org.au](http://www.gnca.org.au)) arguing that the Planning Authority should do its job properly and correctly identify and refuse to approve non-compliant Development Applications, rather than banning appeals to ACAT.

In its 5 May report, the Standing Committee recommended that the Assembly not pass the Bill, noting that the Government already has the power to make any individual health or ACT Housing project a Priority Project.

## **PARTICIPATING IN THE INNER SOUTH CANBERRA COMMUNITY COUNCIL**



Inner South Canberra Community Council

The Inner South Canberra Community Council (ISCCC) is a federation of Community Associations in Canberra's inner south, including the GNCA.

The ISCCC provides a representative voice to Government, and has been active on many issues affecting our area. Visit the website (<https://www.isccc.org.au/>) for more details of its activities.

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE GRIFFITH NARRABUNDAH COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION (GNCA)**

The Annual General Meeting of the GNCA will be held on **Wednesday 22 October at 7.00pm** at the East Hotel, 69 Canberra Ave, Kingston ACT 2604.

We are delighted that Thomas (Tom) Emerson MLA will be our guest speaker. Elected as an

Independent for the ACT electorate of Kurrajong in October 2024, Mr Emerson is the Chair of the Social Policy Committee, and a member of the Economic, Industry and Recreation Committee in the Legislative Assembly.



Our current committee consists of the following: John Edquist (President), Wayne Arthur (Vice-President), Deborah Price (Secretary and Public Officer), Leo Dobes (Treasurer, Newsletters), Jane Carter (Website Officer, Raffle), and Paul Russell and Sue Ross (Inner South Canberra Community Council representatives).

Please record the date in your diary now, and come along to support your local community association. Consider joining the committee – we always welcome new members.

## PLEASE SUPPORT OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS

### GRIFFITH SHOPS

**Essence Salon & Spa:** 6295 0276, <http://www.essencebeauty.com.au>  
**Gryphons:** 0419 618 679, <https://gryphons.com.au>  
**Macka's Griffith Newsagency:** 6295 8332  
**Mountain Creek Wholefoods:** 6295 1474, <https://mountaincreekwholefoods.com.au>  
**NatureArtLab:** <https://natureartlab.com.au/>  
**No 8 Thai on Griffith:** 0435354795, <https://www.facebook.com/no.8thaiongriffith>  
**Organic Energy:** 6295 6700, <http://www.organicenergycanberra.com.au>  
**Perform Australia:** 1300 908 905, <https://www.perform.edu.au>  
**Pro Thais Massage:** 61564755, [www.thaimassagecanberra.com.au](http://www.thaimassagecanberra.com.au)  
**Shop-Rite Griffith:** 6295 0781; <https://griffith.shop.localliquor.com.au/>  
**Sonamu Korean Restaurant:** 0406 223 513, [www.facebook.com/sonamukoreancbr/](https://www.facebook.com/sonamukoreancbr/)  
**Studio Skye Hair and Make Up:** 0415 880 149  
**Sweet Little Café:** 6239 7554, [sweetlittlecafe12@gmail.com](mailto:sweetlittlecafe12@gmail.com)  
**The Hierophant:** 6295 6939, <http://www.thehierophant.com.au>  
**Your Discount Chemist:** 6295 6725, [www.yourdiscountchemist.com.au](http://www.yourdiscountchemist.com.au)

### MANUKA SHOPS

**Abell's Kopi Tiam:** 6239 4199, <https://www.abellskopitiam.com.au>  
**Antica Ricetta:** 6190 0914, [www.anticaricetta.com.au](http://www.anticaricetta.com.au)  
**Bambusa Restaurant:** 6295 1036, [www.bambusaasiancuisine.com.au](http://www.bambusaasiancuisine.com.au)  
**Belluci's:** 6238 7424, <https://www.bellucis.com.au>  
**Caph's Cafe Bar & Restaurant:** 6295 9783, [www.caphscanberra.com.au](http://www.caphscanberra.com.au)  
**Chomolungma Nepalese:** 6188 6800  
**East Hotel & Apartments:** 6295 6925, [www.easthotel.com.au](http://www.easthotel.com.au)  
**French Flair Cellar Door:** 9695 7722, <https://www.frenchflair.com.au>  
**Gelatissimo Manuka:** 6193 3039, <https://gelatissimo.com.au>  
**Grill'd, Manuka:** 6239 6111, <https://www.grilld.com.au/restaurants/australian-capital-territory/canberra>  
**Jewel of India:** 6295 6277, <https://jewelofindia.com.au>  
**Joanne Flowers:** 6295 0315, <https://www.joanneflowersofmanuka.com.au>  
**Kismet Turkish Gourmet:** <https://kismetgourmet.com.au>  
**L'Orange Patisserie:** 6295 3897, <https://lorangepatisserie.com.au>  
**Manuka Steak House:** 6181 8292, <https://www.manukasteakhouse.com.au>  
**Manuka Veterinary Hospital:** 6295 6089, <https://www.manukavet.com.au>  
**OHNO!:** 5112 2497, <https://oh-no.com.au>  
**1 OR 2 Café:** 0402 928 813  
**Paperchain Bookstore:** 6295 6723, <https://paperchainbookstore.com.au>  
**Patissez Cafe:** 0402 808 191, <https://www.patissez.com>  
**Public Bar Manuka:** 6161 8808, <https://www.publicbar.com.au>  
**Thai Cornar Restaurant:** 6295 6131, <https://thaicornar.com.au>  
**Typica Manuka:** [www.typica.com.au](http://www.typica.com.au)  
**WOOF Dog Grooming Manuka:** 6169 6116, <https://www.woof.com.au>

### RED HILL SHOPS

**Red Hill Butcher Shop:** 6295 6854, <https://www.redhillbutchershop.com.au>  
**Red Hill SupaExpress:** 62959 867, <https://www.facebook.com/redhillsupaexpress>



## GNCA MEMBERSHIP

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

Please complete this form then scan and forward to [info@gnca.org.au](mailto:info@gnca.org.au) OR mail to PO Box 4127, MANUKA ACT 2603. Enquiries or questions, contact the Secretary at [info@gnca.org.au](mailto:info@gnca.org.au)

Name(s): .....

Full Address: .....

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

Email Address: .....

Membership Fee: \$.....\$10 *per person* for Annual Calendar Membership

Donations are appreciated Donation: \$..... Total amount: .....

Signature:..... Date: .....

**The GNCA has four (4) Membership payment methods. Your support is highly valued!**

1. Online EFT payments to Griffith/Narrabundah Community Association, BSB 032-722; Account 134058 (please add your name to the payment description so we know who has paid).
2. Pay by credit card at our website <https://www.gnca.org.au/gnca-membership-and-donations/>
3. Cheques addressed to the GNCA & posted to PO Box 4127, MANUKA ACT 2603.
4. In Person at a Westpac Branch - please provide your *telephone number* to the teller, Westpac cannot process your name when paying in person.

**Membership Renewals** can be done by any of the above four payment methods. Providing you have identified yourself via the *payment description*, we do not require a Form. Please inform the GNCA Secretary if your contact details change.