



## **MEDIA STATEMENT – KIPPAX GROUP CENTRE MASTERPLAN**

Today the ACT Government has released the long awaited Kippax Group Centre Master Plan Engagement report. We wrote to ACT Planning Minister Mick Gentleman on 12 March seeking access to the outcomes of this lengthy consultation process and its impact on the final Master Plan; the result has been somewhat of a mixed bag for the West Belconnen community.

The Belconnen Community Council held a number of meetings throughout the consultation process to garner feedback and identify concerns our residents, workers, business owners and students had about the draft Master Plan. When consultation concluded in early 2017 we were satisfied that all the feedback was satisfactorily captured for every stakeholder and reflected their concerns while respecting the principle that expansion was absolutely necessary for the continued growth of the area. With 30,000 residents flowing into West Macgregor and Ginninderry over the next few decades it is vital we have infrastructure and services to meet the demand this growth will bring.

What was particularly disappointing was the re-opening of that process months after consultation had officially closed to facilitate the Kippax Fair owners' new plans for redevelopment of the centre; this appeared to be counter to the long-standing principles of consultation and process integrity the ACT Government have been renowned for. When a Community Reference Group was formed to deal with the challenges this new proposal posed, the Belconnen Community Council participated in good faith with a view that the significant concerns around loss of green space, reductions in available sporting and recreational facility and the creation of heat island effects, would be heard and ameliorations put in place to deal with those significant matters.

A full year after the final consultation period closed, we now have a report that has not sufficiently addressed those concerns.

We acknowledge the many great results that are reflected in the report:

- Upgrading parking facilities in and around the centre
- Upgrading of local ovals to account for the loss of facility at Kippax
- New access arrangements for public/private road transport
- Better shopping facilities and greater choice for the community

However, relying on a single online poll and the use of a minority of suggestions relating to these concerns does little to negate the significant feedback collected by the Council over the last four years. The simple principle of losing 30% of your nett green space then upgrading 30 percent of what is left does not return your overall state back to 100%; this is a pure false economy and one which our community has been urging the ACT Government to recognize.

We call on the ACT Government to identify new green space in the West Belconnen and Ginninderry developments to rebalance the 16000 square metres lost at Kippax. This process should operate in tandem with any redevelopment activity to ensure that as people come into our district and the West Belconnen area, we have capacity and facility to accommodate their needs.

The Belconnen Community Council acknowledges the hard work of the ACT Government public servants who have participated in this process and provided great support to our community over the last four years. We will continue to work with them in a respectful and courteous environment to get the best possible result on this and the many other challenges facing the Belconnen District and our community.

STATEMENT ENDS

Glen Hyde  
Chair  
Belconnen Community Council  
Ph. 0438 458 220  
[chair@belcouncil.org.au](mailto:chair@belcouncil.org.au)

