



## Community of Nicholls Residents Group

Secretary CNRG  
5 Hutcheon Place  
Nicholls ACT 2913

Dear .... (*Political Party & Yerrabi Candidates*)

With the 2020 ACT Election fast approaching, the Community of Nicholls Residents Group (CNRG) is seeking your views on an issue of significant concern to the community we represent.

First, some background and context to this request:

- In April 2018, the Nicholls community became aware of proposals by the current Lease holder, Gungahlin Golf Investments (GGI), to “Re-imagine the Gold Creek Country Club”;
- In public material issued by GGI, their stated intention was to “compress the Back 9 of the Gold Creek Golf Course into the Front 9, thereby releasing 49 hectares of land for development”;
- GGI also stated, without any caveats, that it was their intention to lodge an Application “to vary the Territory Plan to change the use of the area of land from a golf course”;
- The potential for large tracts of green space, currently occupied by the Gold Creek Golf Course, to be redeveloped for further housing and commercial units is of great concern to the community because:
  - residents face significant loss of amenity and value as a result;
  - the potential loss of wildlife habitat and corridors (between Percival Hill and Hall) that contributes to the unique character of Nicholls;
  - the need to protect green spaces to address ‘heat island’ issues in the Gungahlin area; and
  - golf courses and their associated green spaces have proven their value as ‘social distancing’ exercise venues during periods of COVID 19 lockdowns;
- Redevelopment could not proceed unless amendments were made to the ‘primary purpose clause’ of the current Lease and to the existing zoning in the Territory Plan, with such applications being subject to extensive regulatory and Legislative Assembly processes.

As a result, CNRG was formed to represent the views of the community to GGI, as well as to relevant regulatory bodies and MLAs:

- GGI set-up a consultation process, including the establishment of a People’s Panel to garner the views of the community. This process resulted in the community’s overwhelming view that there be “no change to the Golf Course”;
- In keeping with this view, CNRG campaigned to oppose redevelopment of any part of the Gold Creek Golf Course and its surrounding green space, other than that which is allowed under the current Lease;
- To this end, CNRG held two Community Meetings in April and September 2018, which were attended by more than 1100 residents

- the latter meeting involved participation by all then-current Yerrabi MLAs, a Green spokesperson and the President of the Gungahlin Community Council, and
- culminated in the Leader of the ACT Liberals and Yerrabi members of the ACT Labor Party formally and publicly registering, in writing, their intent to oppose any GGI-sought rezoning amendment to the Territory Plan, should one ever come before the Legislative Assembly. Copies of those letters – along with one received subsequently from Deepak-Raj Gupta MLA – are attached for your information.

To date, GGI has never released the final results of its community consultations, despite assurances it would do so. Accordingly, the uncertainty about GGI's intentions remain, but there is no uncertainty about the degree of community opposition to any proposal to redevelop any part of the Gold Creek Golf Course and/or its surrounding green space.

In the lead-up to the ACT Election on 17 October 2020, we believe it is important for electors to be fully informed about the attitudes and policies of each Political Party, as well as those of all Yerrabi candidates, regarding any proposed redevelopment of the Gold Creek Golf Course and its surrounding green space. Accordingly, CNRG seeks your response to the following specific questions.

- 1. What is your view regarding the protection of existing pristine green spaces in Canberra from development by developers?*
- 2. More specifically, if an Application to amend the current Purpose Clause in the Gold Creek Country Club Lease and/or to amend the zoning of the Block & Sections encompassing the Gold Creek Golf Course and its surrounding green space were to come before the Legislative Assembly, would you oppose them?*

Out of an abundance of caution surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, CNRG will not be holding any Community Meetings in the lead-up to the Election. Instead, it is our intention to use CNRG's extensive social media presence to inform the community of your responses to these questions, so that resident electors can take them into account when casting their ballot. We appreciate that the final seat in the Yerrabi Electorate will be hotly contested. CNRG has an active Facebook presence with substantial Nicholls, Gungahlin and Canberra-wide membership and friends. Moreover, it has an email database covering more than 1100 Nicholls households, representing up to 5000 electors. CNRG is also working with the Gungahlin Community Council to ensure extensive publication of each Political Party's policies and all candidate's attitudes regarding this issue.

To ensure that the community can be informed of your responses in time, I look forward to your email reply to [samuels1@tpg.com.au](mailto:samuels1@tpg.com.au), and/or letter to the Secretary, by **no later than 31 August 2020**.

Yours sincerely,  
Gary Samuels  
President, CNRG