

Hi Gary.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with my position on the possible rezoning of 49 hectares of the Gold Creek Golf Course for potential development by the KGroup, the current owners of the Gold Creek Golf Club.

I'll provide you with a brief summary of my understanding of the situation to ensure I have the correct snapshot, and I will provide an answer to my position on the two questions you have asked.

When the KGroup purchased the golf course from the ACT Government in 2006, the sale contract did not include a requirement for a minimum spend on the golf course, and the contract included that the new owner could develop 1500 square metres of the site, which is 0.15 hectares.

Since then, the KGroup has claimed to have lost \$8 million between 2006 and 2018, and it wants to have 49 hectares of the course rezoned so that it can build residential and commercial developments to make the company more profitable.

Residents who purchased homes backing into the golf course are deeply concerned that the proposed 49 hectare development will negatively affect their property prices, and residents in Nicholls more broadly are concerned about losing such a large portion of green space.

1. What is your view regarding the protection of existing pristine green spaces in Canberra from development by developers?

As Canberra is growing every year, we are losing more and more green spaces as the ACT Government is too reliant on land sales for its primary source of income. What makes this more of a problem is that the ACT Government is allowing developers to control what these developments look like - which mostly goes against the wishes of the community. The ACT Government will conduct consultations with a small number of people, and then claim that it has *consulted with the community*. However, the voices of the community are not heard. As a result, not only is the ACT losing more of its green spaces, but when these spaces are developed, they do not have adequate green spaces, as developers try to shove as many properties into the area as they can fit to achieve more profit. These areas with their masses of concrete generate a lot of heat, and newer suburbs can be up to 8 degrees higher than older, more leafy suburbs of Canberra.

As the climate becomes hotter and more erratic, it's important that the green spaces that are left are preserved, so that we continue to be the 'Bush Capital' and not the 'concrete lego capital'.

2. More specifically, if an Application to amend the zoning of the Block & Sections encompassing the Gold Creek Golf Course and its surrounding green space (to allow further residential and commercial development thereon) were to come before the Legislative Assembly, would you oppose it?

In looking at the details surrounding the contract of sale pertaining to the land that was permitted to be used for development, the 49 hectares that the KGroup would like to rezone

for development is significantly higher than the 0.15 hectares that was agreed to in the contract for sale.

The KGroup is seeking to change the terms of the original contract, so that it can develop a large section of land that was not agreed to in the original contract. This to me, is not acceptable, because the KGroup is seeking to gain benefit from changing a contract that it knowingly entered into, and agreed to the terms and conditions of that contract. My view is that if you enter into a contract, that if the subsequent benefits of the sale are not forthcoming, then it is '*Caveat emptor, quia ignorare non debuit quod jus alienum emit*'.

The buyer had access to information surrounding the number of memberships and the cost of upkeep for the golf course. It is the buyer's responsibility to understand the details of the financials before purchasing the property. If the property isn't making as much money as the owners had thought, in my view, it can't just come back with it's hand out and expect the government to change the terms of the contract, especially in such a significant way. It is not the government's responsibility to ensure that the owners of the golf course make huge profits, and it is not acceptable for the KGroup to expect the government to change the terms of the contract to allow it to make money.

This is notwithstanding the effects that such a development would have on the community. Home owners who purchased land adjacent to the gold course would have paid a premium, and should rightfully expect their properties to appreciate in value because of the investment that they made. And, removing such a large tract of green space would impact on the wildlife and have a huge ecological impact on the area. These are all effects that would be highly detrimental to the Nicholls community.

I base every decision I make on evidence, fairness and ethics. My opposition to the rezoning and potential redevelopment of 49 hectares of the Gold Creek Golf Course is purely based on the information I have read, which does not compel me to share the views of the developer. So if elected, I will be opposing any rezoning of any parts of the Gold Creek Golf Course for development.

Warm regards,

Bethany Williams
Canberra Progressives candidate for Yerrabi