



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON PLANNING, TRANSPORT AND CITY SERVICES**  
Jo Clay MLA (Chair), Suzanne Orr MLA (Deputy), Mark Parton MLA

Submission No 24 -

Ms Veneta Amies

Inquiry into Giralang Shops

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Submission to Petition No 4 -21 Giralang Shops

Veneta Amies  
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April 2nd 2021

The community in Giralang has been subjected to a level of disrespect and disregard by the ACT Government and developers who have, since 2004 deprived Giralang residents of access to basic community facilities which other Canberrans enjoy as a matter of course .

Prior to the closure in 2004, we enjoyed our local shopping centre which catered to a wide range of needs; a newsagent, supermarket, hairdresser, takeaway food, bakery and social hub in the local tavern.

The closure of these community facilities has had long reaching, many and varied outcomes, only some of which I mention here.

We can no longer walk to our local shop, we cannot send our children on simple errands, as the closest shopping centre is in Kaleen, which is a 35 minute walk away, or we get our cars out and drive there. This is not a good outcome for a Government who constantly voices the need for residents to adopt environmentally friendly transportation modes.

We have raised a generation of children who have not been exposed to the experience of walking to access community facilities, rather their experience is of travelling in a car to buy a loaf of bread or 'pint of milk'.

During the negotiations by the developer to attract a national supermarket chain to the as yet unbuilt premises, we were flabbergasted by the attitude of Superbarn at Kaleen, who challenged what they saw as a threat to their livelihood through the possible loss of customers which might have resulted from a rival retailer Woolworths, and further flabbergasted when Superbarn was then able to open another outlet at Crace, which meant that the two supermarkets nearest to Giralang were owned and operated by a company with a virtual monopoly. This strongly suggests an attitude of self interest by Superbarn, and a lack of regard for the residents of Giralang. This was compounded by the move by Superbarn away from Kaleen to make way for Cole's to take over the site.

Residents of Giralang have no option other than to drive to access all community facilities, we have no social hub, no coffee shop, no medical providers, the list is endless. What we do have currently, and have had since 2004, is a derelict, unsightly and frankly dangerous wasteland on the doorstep of our primary school. Building residential units on this site would not enhance the Giralang Community, rather, such a measure would confirm the perception that we continue to be overlooked in favour of the financial interests of developers. The question of vital community resources being held to ransom by vested private interest is of course untenable.

I am happy to read that the Kaleen shops will be undergoing an upgrade, I sincerely hope that the experience of Giralang will not be repeated.

I appeal to the members of the ACT Legislative Assembly to act in such a way that the amenity heart of the Giralang community be restored without further delay. Take back control and serve the needs of our community as is your obligation as our elected leaders. Furthermore, that you take whatever steps are needed to prevent this situation from ever arising again in the future, to other members of the Canberran community.

Many thanks