



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON PLANNING AND URBAN RENEWAL

Ms Caroline Le Couteur MLA (Chair), Mr Mark Parton MLA (Deputy Chair)

Mr Michael Petterson MLA

## Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into Planning for the Surgical Procedures, Interventional Radiology and Emergency Centre (SPIRE) and the Canberra Hospital campus and immediate surrounds.

**Submission Number:** 19 - Bischoff

**Date Authorised for Publication:** 26 February 2020

The Committee Secretary  
Standing Committee on Planning and Urban Renewal  
GPO Box 1020  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

### **Inquiry into Planning for the SPIRE and the Canberra Hospital Campus - Submission**

My submission is most directly relevant to the Committee's following Terms of Reference:

- 1.a Site selection ; and
- 1.g Impact on surrounding residences , school and community facilities.

In brief, my submission is that the Garran Primary School should be moved to either the other side of the Garran oval or, more ideally, to the site at the southern end of the Federal Golf course that the government has recently agreed would be suitable for an over 55s development.

#### **Background – the Federal Golf course development**

The golf course, because of its proximity to the Red Hill Nature Reserve, has an exceptionally high ecological value.

However, for many years the golf club has faced substantial financial issues. To deal with this the course has considered a number of development proposals for part of the golf course land. I understand that the proposals have each been for a retirement or over 55s village. Each has met with opposition, from the community and/or the Territory government. The last was discussed at some length in the government's Draft Integrated Plan for Red Hill Nature Reserve released November 2019.

At least in part the golf club's financial issues have come from its need to make the course substantially water self sufficient. The course has no immediate source of naturally occurring water, so has relied in great part on potable water. To help deal with this, the club has replaced the then existing fairway grass with a more water efficient variety and has dug at least two dams on the course. However, there is a clear need for the club to do more to drought proof the course. The club clearly recognizes this, and it has been at least in part the reason for the development proposals.

## **Background - Garran Primary School**

I understand that this has been dealt with in a submission to the Standing Committee from the Garran Residents' Association (the GRA).

## **My Submission**

I have informally discussed what I am proposing with a number of members of the GRA and there appears some general agreement with the proposal.

It is readily agreed that Garran Primary School is an excellent school. However, it has clearly outgrown its site – there are currently a number of demountable classrooms on the site and yet more are apparently needed.

And the hospital has clearly outgrown the school site. Among other issues the traffic and parking are concerning and the helicopter noise is clearly disruptive. And the school is sadly dwarfed by tall hospital buildings looming over it. Standing looking from the oval edge of the school, I'm reminded of similar sites in inner city Melbourne. It seems a shame that Canberra, with all of its space, can't offer better.

The opposite - Kitchener Street - side of the oval would indeed be better – although I understand that there may be some issues with possible flooding in the area.

However, it seems to me that a much more ideal option would be to relocate the school to the site at the southern end of the Federal Golf Course.

It would provide Garran Primary children with a unique opportunity to learn and develop at a school sited at an area with exceptional ecological value – with an abundance of indigenous and native wildlife and plants. It would also provide the school with the opportunity to watch and learn from decisions and work by the golf club to drought proof its land.

Both of these opportunities would, in my view, provide a unique and exceptionally valuable learning experience for children at the school.

Finally, and just briefly, there may be a reciprocal opportunity in what I am proposing - the site vacated by Garran Primary would make an excellent one for a retirement or aged care facility.

It seems to me that looking a little more widely at the use for each site would allow the government to offer excellent facilities and services – most importantly in primary education but also in aged care.

Roslyn Bischoff

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