

Summary record of Information Session on Girl's' Grammar School proposal for Latrobe Park, Thursday 12 May 2016.

About 70 people were at the school on the evening of **Thursday 12 May** for an information session presented by the school Principal, Ms Anne Coutts. In summary, she said that:

- This is a draft proposal
- The school is seeking preferential use between 0800 and 1700 on school days , through a 30 year lease, or possibly licence
- The school would upgrade the park with a playing field and 300m running track around it and some small terraces on one side, possibly surrounded by a low fence
- The school would also restore the toilets and construct a small changing shed
- It is proposed that the school take over the maintenance sheds currently used by ACT Government staff

Following the presentation, representative of the school answered questions. The main questions and answers are summarized below:

1. What did the school contribute to the Deakin community?
 - *Year 10 students undertake community projects in the area and the school lets out facilities (school hall, music rooms, swimming pool) to community groups)*
2. What will happen to the playground
 - *The school does not plan to renovate playground. Proposes to upgrade barbecue area, ensure toilets maintained and locked at night if residents want that. TAMS depot would be used for maintenance purposes*
3. Could safer pedestrian access be included?
 - *A matter for the ACT Government but the school is concerned about safety of students.*
4. Would the park be used by the school on weekends? Increased use of the park by the school at extended times might raise safety and access issues, particularly for nearby residents.
 - *Usage expected occasionally on a Saturday, but not planning for weekday usage outside of normal 8:30-5pm hours.*
5. Does the school propose to install lights as part of the upgrade?
 - *No, that is not part of the plan*
6. A 30-year lease could subsequently be converted to a commercial lease What guarantees can be provided that the land will remain public land with unfettered access as available under the current Plan of Management? A fenced lease would not be consistent with the Plan of Management. What will happen at the end of the lease/licence?
 - *Up to government of the day to decide on future at end of lease, but clauses could be written into the lease to clarify community use during the term.*
7. The history of the Phillip pool and the Soccer Club in Deakin are examples where public land and facilities had passed from public recreational use step by step into private hands, depriving the community of access even when this was a condition of a lease. Term of the lease is irrelevant as ACT gives automatic renewals.

- *The school doesn't have a set view on a lease or licence -will seek to be transparent on this. There would have to be further consultation at renewal time. Intends park to remain public facility*
8. What precise area did the school propose to include in the lease/licence?
 - *This is yet to be determined, but restricted to the area immediately surrounding the expanded oval and possibly the maintenance depot. Current plans are preliminary. Some excavation will be needed to increase the size of the oval. One or two trees may be affected. Wildlife impact not yet assessed.*
 9. It was noted that parking by students in Bedford Street is a problem. Parking on the street and in the Latrobe Park carpark already reduces access for others to the park, playground, and Pre-School pickup and setdown.
 - *CGGS is aware of the parking issue and regrets inconvenience to nearby residents. The girls using the park for sport would walk to it from the school.*
 10. Why does the school need a lease/licence? Why not make arrangements to use the Soccer Club field during school hours?
 - *The school plans to make a significant investment in upgrading the grounds of the park and would need to protect its investment.*
 - *Students would need to be bussed to the Soccer Club, not feasible in timetabled lessons.*
 11. The school's investment would be very little compared to the value of the land now and in future. Why can the school not use its own grounds?
 - *1000 girls on the current site, no room for adequate physical education for all students.*
 12. How does the arrangement where the Boys' Grammar uses Flinders Park work?
 - *CGGS does not know what arrangements CGS has with ACT Government. Apparently the arrangement works smoothly.*
 13. Could the planned facility operate without the construction of a fence that establishes proprietorship and inhibits public freedom of use?
 - *CGGS would need to protect its investment in oval surface from misuse and vandalism. Something like log fences used by the government might be sufficient.*
 14. Has the school conducted a survey of current use of the Park?
 - *Not yet.*
 15. Will dogs continue to be allowed to run in the park, off lead?
 - *CGGS does not propose any change to dog exercise conditions in Latrobe Park.*
 16. What about public liability insurance? Tree hazards, falls etc? Who would cover costs and risks?
 - *A detail to be sorted between the school and the Government.*
 17. How will a proper valuation of the land be established? The transaction with the government amounts to a commercial deal.
 - *School doesn't propose to "buy" the land. School groundsmen and arborists would maintain the facilities by arrangement with ACT Government. School would pay for irrigation.*
 18. What other means to upgrade the facilities in Latrobe Park?
 - *(DRA president) DRA has tried to get the Government to upgrade facilities but the government is reluctant to spend any money on it. DRA will not take a position on the CGGS proposal until plans and conditions are clarified.*

19. How do we know the proposal is the best value use for the land in the long term – eg there is demand for aged care residential facilities.

- (DRA) *DRA will continue community consultation on this and related issues such as Hopetoun Circuit traffic issues and pedestrian crossings. Refer to DRA website.*

Deakin Residents' Association, Inc
31 May 2016