

**ACTIVE AND CONNECTED**  
**RETIREMENT COMMUNITY FOR OVER 55's**  
**TERRITORY PLAN VARIATION AND DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION**  
**CONSULTATION SUMMARY REPORT**



Prepared for Mbark & the Federal Golf Club

February 2018

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## Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Reviewer	Approval	Date	Notes
0.1	14.02.18	TP	RWS	AS, JR, BC, SE		Draft 1 for Mbark/FGC review
0.2	16.02.18	TP	RWS	AS, JR, BC, SE		Updated for consistent titles

### Disclaimer

This report has been prepared with due care by the consultants, who believe the contents to be fair and accurate.

However, neither Tania Parkes Consulting nor individual authors of the Report accept any responsibility for any error or omission, nor for any application of its contents.

Photographs in this report are sourced from Federal Golf Club, Mbark, Saturday Studio and Tania Parkes Consulting

# 1 Executive Summary

The Federal Golf Club is an 18 hole championship course located adjacent Red Hill Nature Reserve and the suburbs of Garran and Hughes, accessed from Gowrie Drive.

The Club is operationally sound and membership numbers are in the top 6% of golf courses nationally.

The Active and Connected Retirement Community for over 55's proposal is a response to the Club's need to diversify its ongoing revenue streams to enable replacement and maintenance of essential irrigation infrastructure, and to provide its members with more contemporary facilities.

The proposal incorporates a seniors living village that will:

1. Integrate into and complement the existing golfing activities and operations
2. Provide the capital needed to complete necessary upgrades to the water security and storage
3. Diversify the Club's ongoing income sources
4. Introduce additional members to the Club
5. Achieve excellent environmental outcomes for the community
6. Underpin the tenure of the Federal Golf Club to ensure its longevity is secured for the community.

Specifically, the proposal includes seniors' housing of up to 125 residences that are purpose designed and built. A mixture of freestanding homes, apartments (maximum three stories set into the natural fall of the topography) and townhomes will be incorporated in a mix of one, two and three bedroom options. It is expected that the completed village would comprise around 200 residents.

Mbark & the Federal Golf Club are committed to engaging with the community over the period it will take to realise the staged development of the proposed retirement village. The proposed location for the retirement village within the Club's lease area has been moved and the concept adjusted approximately nine times from the original position contemplated as a result of stakeholder and community feedback.

A significant number of interactions have occurred in developing the concept with stakeholders, the local community and interest groups who have sought information and participated in a range of consultation activities over the past two years.

Consultation activity	Number
Letterboxed residential, commercial and community premises	8,000
Community drop-in sessions	123
Community Panel (3 meetings)	20
Face-to-face meetings	22
Website (unique visits)	7,354
Social media	52
Written communications	33
Telephone inquiries	42

There have been three phases of consultation during the past two years:

- Preliminary key stakeholder engagement
- ACT Government hosted Community Panel and consequent 10 Commitments
- Broader community consultation.

The key themes raised by stakeholders were:

- Direct and indirect impacts on the endangered woodland, important wildlife, and a nature reserve from infrastructure, fire mitigation, and other works required for the development
- Impingement and restriction on use of land much utilised and loved by the community
- Impacts to wildlife by having new development adjacent to a core part of the reserve currently relatively remote (>200m) from existing houses
- Alterations to current road arrangements, including possible connection to Brereton Street, creating a 'rat run' from Woden to South Canberra
- The possibility that the proposed development is just the 'thin end of the wedge' creating the precedent for even further development in the future
- Increased hazards to wildlife, cyclist and pedestrian users of Red Hill Nature Reserve resulting from increased traffic and speed on Gowrie Drive and Red Hill Drive generated by the construction and operation of the development
- Loss or damage to historic 1917-1920 red flowering plantings by Charles Weston
- Serious adverse impact on the amenity of existing residents abutting the golf course.

Additional matters raised during the Community Panel meetings were:

- Financial viability about whether the proposal will solve the Club's current water and future infrastructure problems and provide financial sustainability?
- Environmental impact
- View amenity impacts to nearby residents
- Strategic discussion about whether more age appropriate housing is required and whether infill in areas like the Club are suitable locations
- Cumulative impacts of the proposal when considered in the context of other proposals or developments in the area, with a focus on environmental and traffic congestion.

During the broader community consultations, community members welcomed the retirement housing choice proposed by the over 55's village and the additional amenity it offers residents and locals:

- 24% were potential purchasers and wanted to know when they could move in
- 63% arrived interested in what may happen in their neighbourhood or with anecdotal information they had heard. Several of these attendees had been misinformed about the proposal but left with accurate information and a more favourable view about the proposal
- 13% arrived with negative views about the proposal and left with more accurate information but with their views unchanged.

Positive commentary included:

- The need for retirement living housing choices to age in place and retain existing community connections
- The lack of retirement living products in the ACT
- The aging population and retirement housing options not responding
- The need for urban infill to better utilise existing infrastructure

- The owner/operator model where the proponent remains involved
- Protection of woodland, trees and wildlife habitat
- Continued access to the golf course for passive recreation.

A further two new questions were raised during the broader community consultation:

- Access to continuing electricity supply at times of power failure particularly for critical facilities such as lift access to apartments
- Additional noise generation from the clubhouse potentially impacting local residents.

Full responses to all matters raised are provided in Section 4.0 of this report.

## 2 Introduction

### 2.1 Background

#### The site

The Federal Golf Club is an 18 hole championship course located adjacent Red Hill Nature Reserve and the suburbs of Garran and Hughes. The course is accessed from Gowrie Drive, at the intersection with Melbourne Avenue, Stonehaven Crescent and Mugga Way.

The Club is operationally sound and membership numbers are in the top 6% of golf courses nationally.

The Active and Connected Retirement Community for over 55's proposal is a response to the Club's need to diversify its ongoing revenue streams to enable replacement and maintenance of essential irrigation infrastructure, and to provide its members with more contemporary facilities.

The Club faces the risk of an extended drought period placing such high demand on potable water use that the Club can no longer sustain the expense required. Efforts to reduce this risk over the last 15 years have focused on trying to minimise the reliance of the course on potable water. Increased water storage, laying of more drought tolerant turf and introduction of additional bore water are all strategies that have been effectively implemented and have made a material difference, helping the Club through some difficult weather patterns.

Despite this, the course remains susceptible to drought conditions. Further steps can be taken to strengthen the Club's position and increase its immunity to adverse weather patterns, in particular a broadening of its income streams.

Being a public access course, the Federal Golf Club is a community asset which the Club's Board and management believes should be maintained and protected for all Canberrans and visitors to enjoy.

#### The proposal

The Active and Connected Retirement Community for over 55's proposal incorporates a seniors living village that will:

1. Integrate into and complement the existing golfing activities and operations
2. Provide the capital needed to complete necessary upgrades to the water security and storage
3. Diversify the Club's income sources
4. Introduce additional members to the Club
5. Achieve excellent environmental outcomes for the community
6. Underpin the tenure of the Federal Golf Club to ensure its longevity is secured for the community.

Specifically, the proposal includes seniors' housing of up to 125 residences that are purpose designed and built. A mixture of freestanding homes, apartments (maximum 3 stories set into the natural fall of the topography) and townhomes will be incorporated in a mix of one, two and three bedroom options. It is expected that the completed village would comprise around 200 residents.



DWELLING TYPE	NO OF DWELLINGS	NO OF BEDROOMS
Perimeter Houses	62	3
Apartments West	9	1
"	12	2
" (incl. 6 penthouses)	18	3
Townhomes	12	2
"	12	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>	

The proposal includes a new clubhouse building to replace the existing aging and capital intensive facilities and provides a social hub for Club members, seniors residents and the broader community.

In addition, the Club has committed to returning some 12 hectares of Club land (marked in pink below) back to the Red Hill Nature Reserve.

The seniors village proposal is sited in and around the existing clubhouse and car park precinct of the course.





The model of care at the seniors village will be active independent seniors living with services and support connected on or off site allowing residents to age in place until such time they need to move to higher care arrangements. This includes membership of the Club and access to all its facilities as well as a swimming pool, village bus, electric share car and much more.

In terms of physical works:

1. All works would be governed by a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) with particular focus and consultation on any areas or interfaces with increased environmental sensitivity
2. All existing access points to the Club would be maintained and improved
3. Early works will focus on improving water security and distribution as a priority
4. Civil works and housing are likely to be delivered on a staged basis
5. Construction of the new clubhouse would be delivered on a staged basis to allow the Club to continue as close to normal operations as possible
6. An opportunity exists to construct a safer intersection between Gowrie Drive and Red Hill Drive with improved sight lines and dedicated turning bays
7. Similarly, the safety of Gowrie Drive can be improved within the existing road alignment. Since widening the road is likely to encourage greater vehicle speeds, a strategy of localised periodic widening to continue to limit speeds but allow safe passing is preferred
8. Emergency vehicle access would be augmented via a proposed gated link from Brereton Street into the Club.

## 2.2 Planning framework

For a seniors living proposal to be successful, the Mbark & the Federal Golf Club must follow the process required by ACT planning legislation, which can be summarised as follows:

1. Seek to deconcessionalise only that part of the existing Club lease which is required for construction of the seniors living village and facilities
2. Variation to the ACT Territory Plan (TPV) to add the uses of retirement living and supportive housing— importantly the Club will only seek to add the use of a seniors living village to the existing Plan colour, and not seek to change the underlying classification of the land
3. The Lease Variation Charge will be applicable and will be followed, including seeking any remissions which may be applicable and available to the proposal and to any other development proposals being assessed by the ACT Government through the legislative framework
4. A standard Development Application (DA) submission and assessment process under the ACT legislation.

The ACT Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) has responsibility for planning decisions relating to the Federal Golf Club site and any changes to the approach road Gowrie Drive is the responsibility of the National Capital Authority.

An ACT Legislative Assembly resolution passed on 25 October 2017 makes the proposal subject to an integrated plan for the Red Hill Nature Reserve and surrounding residential areas.

The proposal falls within the bounds for pre-DA consultation by the developer which is required under Section 138AE of the Planning and Development Act 2007 (the Act) for prescribed developments. A prescribed development (under Section 20A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2008) is:

- a building for residential use with 3 or more storeys and 15 or more dwellings
- a building with a gross floor area of more than 5000m<sup>2</sup>

- a development with more than 1 building and the buildings have a total gross floor area of more than 7000m<sup>2</sup>
- a building of structure more than 25m above finished ground level
- triggered by a variation of a lease to remove its concessional status.

## 2.3 Purpose of this report

The purpose of this report is to document the extent of stakeholder engagement and community consultation for the Active and Connected Retirement Community for over 55's proposal undertaken by the proponent consistent with ACT Government's *Pre-DA Community Consultation Guidelines for Prescribed Developments (October 2017)* and *Engaging Canberrans; a guide to community engagement (2011)*.

### Required documentation

Where pre-DA community consultation is required the developer must submit a report to the planning and land authority as part of the DA documentation that, at a minimum:

1. Attaches the approved form declaring that consultation was undertaken in accordance with these guidelines and that the proposal was notified on the ACT Government's pre-DA community consultation website prior to the start of consultation and for the entire consultation period
2. Provides accurate details of the nature and extent of consultation undertaken
3. Demonstrates that the consultation process targeted a diverse demographic (age, gender, race, religion and/or physical abilities as appropriate), including how these demographics were targeted
4. Provides copies of what the community was shown during the consultation process
5. Provides a summary of how the community responded to the proposal and the main comments
6. Details how the submitted design responds to the community's concerns and, in particular, the main issues raised, with meaningful changes highlighted
7. States whether the proposal submitted to the planning and land authority for assessment is substantially the same as that shown to the community. If not, provides detailed reasons for how and why the proposal is different. Where there are significant changes that do not respond to community feedback, further pre-DA consultation is recommended and may be required
8. For development applications to remove the concessional status of a Crown lease, the consultation report must encompass the requirements of the *Social Impact Assessment Guidelines*.

The *Social Impact Assessment Guidelines (February 2011)* require community and stakeholder consultation reporting to include:

- "who was consulted and what is their interest/relevance
- dates and locations of meetings – how was the meeting publicised
- if you produced information for the consultation – please attach
- summary of issues raised – pro's and con's
- if you refined your proposal as a result of the consultation
- follow-up / feedback
- outcomes
- a summary of all consultation undertaken
- an analysis of the consultation
  - identify any unresolved issues and why the proposal cannot address them."

## 3 Consultation Methodology

### 3.1 Who was consulted

Mbark & the Federal Golf Club are committed to engaging with the community over the period it will take to realise the staged development of the proposed retirement village.

The extent of stakeholder engagement and community consultation undertaken for this proposal has been long and comprehensive. The process has been informed by consultations undertaken for previous proposals put forward by the Club with an understanding that these unsuccessful attempts may have coloured the openness with which the community may view the current proposal.

Over the past two years of developing the current proposal there has been engagement with:

- Club membership
- Neighbouring property owners
- Representative environmental, resident and interest groups
- Indigenous Elders
- ACT Government Community Panel
- Broader community.

#### **Club membership**

Club membership approval for the way forward in assuring water security was essential to progressing this proposal. Members have been kept informed and their views sought throughout development of the proposal through briefings, displays, website information, online channels and face-to-face meetings. Importantly, this engagement has occurred in advance of discussion with outside parties.

In June 2016 a proposal was presented to the members of the Club and a vote taken on whether to proceed with progressing a seniors living proposal with chosen partner Mbark. This vote was passed with a strong (85%) majority.

#### **Neighbouring property owners**

Brereton Street, Garran residents living adjacent to the Club were contacted twice by letter to inform them of the proposal, offering to meet and work with impacted residents on view analyses and foreground landscaping approaches.

#### **Representative environmental, resident and interest groups**

Extensive engagement through face-to-face meetings, website information and correspondence has occurred over the past two years with key stakeholders such as the Red Hill Regenerators and the Garran and Hughes Residents Action Group.

Email information was sent to the Red Hill Regenerators, Friends of Grasslands, Conservation Council ACT, Woden Valley Community Council, Inner South Community Council, Garran and Hughes Residents' Action Group, Deakin Residents' Association, Hughes Residents' Association, Ngunnawal Indigenous Elders, Property Council (ACT), Council on the Ageing, Heart Foundation, Canberra Business Council and the National Capital Authority. These organisations were also members of the ACT Government Community Panel (see page 11).

There have also been face-to-face meetings with the Conservation Council ACT, National Capital Authority and Council on the Ageing.

The Council on the Ageing has consistently supported the proposal as it responds to Canberra's rapidly aging population (as discussed in the ACT Government's Housing Choices discussion paper) and proposes choice in retirement dwellings in this location.

The National Capital Authority has been briefed individually and also through the Community Panel. The NCA will engage on road improvements which is its main interest in this proposal.

### **Indigenous Elders**

A presentation was made on 14 December 2017 to the United Ngunnawal Elders Council (UNEC), a significant Aboriginal body providing advice to the ACT Government in relation to heritage and connection to land matters for the Ngunnawal people. UNEC members will undertake a Club site visit on 23 February 2017.

Ngunnawal Elder Matilda House has made a site visit to inspect the site for Aboriginal tree markings of which she found none.

### **ACT Government Community Panel**

EPsDD ran a Community Panel from August to October 2017 with broad community, business and government representation ([https://www.planning.act.gov.au/topics/your\\_say/panels/federal-golf-club-community-panel](https://www.planning.act.gov.au/topics/your_say/panels/federal-golf-club-community-panel)).

Membership included:

- ACT Government
- ACT Government Architect
- National Capital Authority
- Federal Golf Club
- Mbark
- Conservation Council ACT
- Friends of the Grasslands
- Red Hill Regenerators
- Cultural heritage representative (Indigenous Elder)
- Inner South Community Council and Red Hill Residents Association
- Garran and Hughes Residents Action Group
- Deakin Residents Association
- Hughes Residents Association
- Council on the Ageing
- Canberra Business Council.

The three Community Panel meetings held at the Club, at which Mbark and the Club made presentations, were arranged to allow a broader stakeholder group to make comments and ask questions about the proposal and help shape the process it was likely to follow. The timing of the Panel (Pre DA preparation) was to ensure the groups were able to raise concerns and give aspirations for any proposal before it was formulated and feedback could be meaningfully incorporated.

### **Broader community**

The consultation commenced with stakeholder mapping to understand the diverse demographics of the area and the different interests these population groups may have in the proposal. A range of activities and communication methods were used to inform the community about the proposal and their seek feedback:

- Three face-to-face drop in sessions staffed by the project consultant team on different dates and times of the day at the Hughes Community Centre which is fully accessible and convenient to public transport
- Website with detailed information
- Letterbox drop to a surrounding radius of 1.5 kilometres (over 8,000 households and businesses) and social media and radio promotion to alert a broad demographic to the opportunities to engage
- Social media channels
- Canberra Times and community newspaper advertisements

- Email alerts and information to a strong database of representative organisations and registered individuals
- Free 1800 number directly to project social planner
- Post consultation feedback and maintenance
- Offers to brief the Inner South Community Council and Woden Valley Community Council were not taken up pending an ACT Government's response to the October 2017 ACT Legislative Assembly resolution making the proposal subject to an integrated plan for the Red Hill Nature Reserve and surrounding residential areas.

## 3.2 Methods used

Stakeholder mapping of the five surrounding suburbs of Garran, Hughes, Red Hill, Deakin and Forrest to better understand the interests of critical demographic cohorts and how best to engage with them was undertaken prior to commencement of the consultation.

A significant number of interactions have occurred with stakeholders, members of the local community and interest groups who have sought information and participated in a range of consultation activities over the past two years.

Consultation activity	Number
Letterboxed residential, commercial and community premises	8,000
Community drop-in sessions	123
Community Panel (3 meetings)	20
Face-to-face meetings	22
Website (unique visits)	7,354
Social media	52
Written communications	33
Telephone inquiries	42

### Letterbox distribution

A Postcard (see Appendix 1) inviting recipients to participate in the consultation activities and contact information to register for community meetings was distributed to 8,000 residential and commercial premises within a 1.5km radius of the Club site on 20, 21 and 22 November 2017. The Postcard was also distributed electronically to Red Hill Regenerators, Friends of Grasslands, Conservation Council ACT, Woden Valley Community Council, Inner South Community Council, Garran and Hughes Residents' Action Group, Deakin Residents' Association, Hughes Residents' Association, Ngunnawal Indigenous Elders, Property Council (ACT), Council on the Ageing, Heart Foundation, Canberra Business Council be forwarded to their broader interest groups.

Those who responded to the Postcard were invited to attend community meetings and were added to the email distribution list of individuals and organisations for future information.

### Advertisements

The community meetings were advertised in the public notices of the Canberra Times on 25 November and 2 December 2017 and in the Chronicle on 28 November and 5 December 2017.

Copies of print media advertisements were placed on shopping centre noticeboards in Garran, Hughes, Red Hill and Deakin and the Woden Library; and distributed to local schools and the Hughes Community Centres.

### Website

The Active & Connected Federal Golf Club Retirement Community for over 55's website (<https://www.activeandconnected.com.au/>) was established to provide current and accurate information about the proposed development including consultation opportunities, presentations made at the Community Panel meetings, responses to comments and contact information.

Between April 2017 and January 2018, the website had 7,354 unique visitors. The highest website traffic occurred in April 2017 (1,044 unique visits) when there was media coverage about the proposal and in July and August 2017



(3,340 unique visits) when invitations to the Community Panel were issued. There were 1,191 unique visits over the duration of the broader community consultations.

### Media

Social media (Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn) was used extensively to promote consultation activities and to converse, exchange ideas and answer questions. Fifty two social media exchanges took place.

FM Radio community notices were also used to promote engagement opportunities targeted to a younger demographic.

### Face-to-face meetings

There were 22 meetings with individuals and groups in developing and refining the Over 55s Lifestyle village proposal including adjacent Brereton Street residents, Red Hill Regenerators, Conservation Council ACT, Garran and Hughes Residents' Action Group, Ngunnawal Indigenous Elders, Property Council (ACT), Council on the Ageing and Heart Foundation.

### Community drop-in sessions

In addition to the letterbox distribution and print media advertisements, three community drop-in sessions were promoted through direct emailing to the individuals and organisations on the project email distribution list and through referral by these residents to their broader contacts.

The three community drop-in sessions were held at the Hughes Community Centre on Wednesday 6 December 2017 10.00am-12 noon and from 5.30pm-8.00pm, and on Thursday 7 December 2017 from 1.00pm-3.00pm. There were also corresponding Club displays, presentations and newsletter updates for Federal Golf Club members.

The community drop-in sessions contained detailed information in three posters (see Appendix 2) with knowledgeable staff to describe concepts and answer questions. The format allowed for group discussion and deeper exploration with the design team of ideas such as the importance and value placed by various segments of the community on retirement housing choices, landscape and built form. The issues raised are in Section 4 of this report.

In total 123 people attended the drop-in sessions:

6/12/17	10am-12noon	27
6/12/17	5.30pm-8pm	67
7/12/17	1.00pm-3.00pm	29

### Site visits

As a public access golf course, residents in the surrounding suburbs are familiar with the site and its amenity. The Community Panel meetings were held at the Club providing members the opportunity to view the site. Site visits are also being provided to Indigenous Elders.

### Written communication

Email communications were received from 39 individuals and organisations, of which most were general inquiries from individuals (29) and businesses and organisations (10). The issues raised are in Section 4.0 of this report.

### Telephone contact

A telephone 1800 number direct to the project's consultation consultant was available for those who preferred to speak directly to the project social planner.

There were 42 telephone contacts ranging from simple information requests to detailed discussions about the proposal. The issues raised are in Section 4.0 of this report.



*“An Over 55s is a great proposal. It’s a good option to maintain the viability of the Club for the long term. The Woden Valley has already lost too many amenities. We need the golf course to remain otherwise developers will turn it into ‘Hughes Heights’!”*

## 4 Key Themes

### 4.1 Overview

The focus of the consultation process was to provide participants with sufficient information and access to the project team to allow informed discussion and feedback from the community into the concept.

The residents, businesses and representative organisations who participated in the consultations were generous with their time and considered in their contributions. The spirit and energy with which the local community participated was very much appreciated by the project team, who listened to all the issues raised and comments made, and where possible and practical, have sought to address them.

Over the two year period some matters were raised that could not be answered fully at the time as studies were still being conducted. Community members understood that these matters were part of work underway by the proponents, that there would be future opportunities for consultation as the project progresses and participated constructively.

The majority of respondents were generally pleased with the level of engagement and information provided and with their overall contribution to shaping the concept. They were particularly pleased that learnings from previous consultations had informed aspirations for the project.

The proposed location for the retirement village within the Club's lease area has been moved and the concept adjusted approximately nine times from the original position contemplated as a result of stakeholder and community feedback.

Given the extensive consultation period, what follows is a three stage breakdown of the comments raised and responses provided during the preliminary key stakeholder engagement, the ACT Government hosted Community Panel, and the most recent December 2017 broader community consultation.

### 4.2 Preliminary stakeholder engagement

During these early discussions a summary of concerns was represented in a letter to the Minister for Planning and Land Management signed by 10 community groups. These matters along with responses are provided below.

- Direct and indirect impacts on the endangered woodland, important wild life, and a nature reserve from infrastructure, fire mitigation, and other works required for the development.

**Response:**

*The proposed location for the village within the Club's lease area has been moved and adjusted approximately nine times from the original position contemplated as a result of specific feedback received.*

*The current location sees the village concentrated around the existing golf club operations, at a significant distance from the Red Hill Nature Reserve. Due to its centralised location around existing golf course infrastructure, the potential impacts on the Reserve are dramatically reduced. In particular, there is no need for any off-site fire mitigation.*

*The only infrastructure being constructed near the Reserve is a proposed upgrade to the Gowrie Drive access and a possible new (and safer) intersection between Gowrie Drive and Red Hill Drive. Both of these activities can be carried out in a manner that minimises impacts during construction and ultimately results in improvements over the current status for wildlife and the Reserve.*

- Impingement and restriction on use of land much utilised and loved by the community.

**Response:**

*The Federal Golf Course area is a public access area and this will continue to be the case without any additional restrictions arising from this proposal.*

- Impacts to wildlife by having new development adjacent to a core part of the reserve currently relatively remote (>200m) from existing houses.

**Response:**

*The proposed footprint has been fundamentally revised to address this point and now there is no proposed village development within 200m of the Reserve area.*

- Alterations to current road arrangements, including possible connection to Brereton Street, creating a “rat run” from Woden to South Canberra.

**Response:**

*The proposal has been clear from the outset that it has heard resident feedback and has never at any stage proposed an access arrangement via Brereton Street or a connection between Brereton Street and Gowrie Drive.*

*Instead, an upgrade to Gowrie Drive to manage speed and improve safety, along with a possible improvement to the intersection arrangement has been a focus.*

*A Brereton Street access would be very acceptable to the proposal and would remove entirely any environmental impact concerns raised in respect of the proposed road upgrades. That said, it is not what the local residents want and the proponents have worked hard to deliver solutions, at significant cost to the project, that respect resident views and can be delivered with sensitivity to the local environment.*

*A Brereton Street access would also serve to remove any contribution the proposal may make to cumulative traffic impacts in the Deakin area, which are currently being evaluated and may result in a Brereton Street access being presented as an option.*

*The proponent will continue to respect the views of local residents on Brereton Street and maintain a preference for the upgrade and improvement of current access arrangements.*

- The possibility that the proposed development is just the ‘thin end of the wedge’ creating the precedent for even further development in the future.

**Response:**

*The proponents have proposed the following to address these concerns:*

- 1. This proposal is only arising because of Club’s need to address its water issues and aged infrastructure. They do not want to do it, they have to and it is certainly not being done for enrichment. The commercial arrangements have been structured in such a way that the proposal will contribute to the long term financial sustainability of the Club, thereby removing any future need for further development.*
- 2. Only the village site will be deconcessionalised, not the entire Federal Golf Club lease area.*
- 3. Planning permission will be sought only for the village nominated area and no permissibility will exist on other Federal lease land.*
- 4. Excess land within the Federal lease to be dealt with in a way that removes parcels capable of development. The largest of these is the proposed 12Ha parcel to be dedicated to the Red Hill Nature Reserve and the other area along Gowrie Drive to be developed as the Club practice facility.*
- 5. The Club has also gone on record regarding its willingness to accept any restrictions on the remainder of its land that would ensure the community is comfortable that no further development is possible.*

*The proposal has taken every step available in an attempt to satisfy the community that there will be no further development by the Club following the proposal.*

- Increased hazards to wildlife, cyclist and pedestrian users of Red Hill Reserve resulting from increased traffic and speed on Gowrie Drive and Red Hill Drive generated by the construction and operation of the development.

**Response:**

*Villages are low impact, low intensity places by their nature. The traffic generated is generally less than a residential precinct and the traffic movements tend to be off peak. We do not believe that the proposal will result in any material change to the current traffic movements generated by FGC and its operations. Having said that, we have made commitments around how the traffic generated by the proposal will be assessed, including ensuring the appropriate local context is provided.*

*What is proposed in terms of access and intersections represents a significant improvement in terms of speed control, sight lines and overall safety for all road users. Such improvements have for some time been acknowledged as necessary and this proposal represents the opportunity to see safety improvements actually delivered.*

- Loss or damage to historic 1917-1920 red flowering plantings by Charles Weston.

**Response:**

*No parts of the proposal impact these plantings. Options always exist that important features, environmental or otherwise, could be adequately managed through design and management arrangements.*

- Serious adverse impact on the amenity of existing residents abutting the golf course.

**Response:**

*Villages and their residents do not adversely impact on amenity. They often represent terrific examples of social infrastructure allowing their residents to thrive and continue to make the enormous contributions to their local communities that many have made throughout their lives.*

*Villages are often governed by a set of rules established by the residents and the operators with the specific aim of ensuring that amenity is maintained.*

*Therefore, it is difficult to understand on what exactly this concern is focussing. Will there be some disturbances as the village is created? No doubt, but these will be limited in time and no doubt managed in a way that golf club operations are maintained so the impacts are unlikely to be significant issues for local residents. The major elements of construction nearby to the residential interface will be the golf clubhouse which will occupy a very similar footprint to the existing club house. The Club is allowed to refurbish or rebuild this element at any time regardless of the proposal. That said, the proposed new clubhouse will represent a significantly more attractive building to be viewed by or used by local residents.*

*Regarding the more direct views of residents nearby to the clubhouse, there is substantial tree coverage near to the boundary that adjoins most houses and that will not be modified as part of the proposal. The proponents believe there will be a couple of homes that have their current views changed but they do not believe that this change will be detrimental and wish to demonstrate this to those owners. Mbark have written to 15 homes on Brereton Street on two separate occasions (February 2016 and July 2017) and offered a specific and tailored view analysis (at their expense) so that actual view changes can be understood and landscaping or screening preferences can be discussed with each of the residents involved. To date, only 2 residents have responded to allow the proponent access to do this. It has been difficult for the proponent to reconcile this response rate with view impacts being tabled as a major issue however they will continue to make requests to work with any residents who believe they will be impacted.*

### 4.3 Community Panel

Mbark & the Federal Golf Club are committed to running a genuine consultation process where all views, including those that are supportive of the proposal and want input into housing choice and affordability, are taken on board and to the extent the proposal is able to, modifications are made to improve community acceptance.

Not all community groups in attendance at the panel sessions are supportive of the proposal but their feedback and concerns have been heard. It was not the Panel's role to assess the merits of the proposal and act as a consent



authority. Rather, the feedback received needs to be incorporated into any applications made for formal assessment and approval and there is a legislated process under which that next stage will take place.

A group of six interest groups: Conservation Council ACT, Deakin Residents Association, Friends of Grasslands, Garran and Hughes Residents Action Group, Hughes Residents Association, Red Hill Regenerators were dissatisfied with the ACT Government hosted process and authored a report stating their concerns.

Following the Panel sessions and the provision of further details relating to the proposal, the concerns seem to be concentrated into a few key areas:

- Financial viability – will the proposal really solve the Club's current water and future infrastructure problems and provide financial sustainability?

**Response:**

*The proposal and its commercial arrangements have been structured to ensure this is achieved. The Club has demanded that this proposal solve these long running issues once and for all.*

*During the Community Panel the ACT Government committed to appoint an independent financial advisor to:*

- a) Verify that the Club is not able to financially solve the issues it is facing through other financial mechanisms; and*
- b) Provide an opinion on the commercial arrangements and the proposal being satisfactory to expect that the issues are being dealt with and the future financial sustainability can be delivered.*

- Environmental impact.

**Response:**

*Over the two years of consultative discussions the proponent has undertaken with a significant environmental focus, many modifications and amendments to the proposal. These amendments have resulted in environmental impacts being avoided or substantially mitigated.*

*Any environmental impacts are likely to be minimal and the proponent is continuing to do everything possible to refine design and approach to take these impacts as close to zero as possible. On balance, the proponent believes the proposal will be considered more than satisfactory (even positively) when a full environmental assessment is undertaken as part of the development application.*

*The proponent will continue to consult on the finer details of environmental matters with relevant community experts as the proposal progresses. Following lodgement, the proposal will be subject to extensive statutory processes relating to environmental assessment and will need to satisfy this process of its merits before it can be approved.*

- Traffic impact.

**Response:**

*Similar to the environmental matters, traffic generation is required to have a full expert assessment performed. The proponent has made commitments in terms of how this assessment will be carried out.*

*As retirement village operators, Mbark's experience is that the low intensity, low impact nature of villages such as that being proposed do not materially alter traffic conditions. This is due to relatively fewer traffic movements per dwelling and the ability (and preference) of residents in the village to travel during off peak periods. Additionally, a private village bus and car share arrangement also contribute to lower movement numbers by aggregating trips.*

*That said, the traffic assessment will be done and subject to statutory assessment that it will need to pass in order for the proposal to be approved.*

- View amenity impacts to nearby residents.

**Response:**

*The village will be barely visible from Red Hill Lookout and the proponent will be providing computer generated renders to show exactly what it will look like from this point.*

*Nearer views such as those from nearby residences is something we continue to work through with residents interested in understanding what changes, if any, are likely from the proposal. We have written to 15 adjoining homes, on two separate occasions, with an offer to conduct a specific view study from their properties at our expense. The purpose of this is that it would allow us to sit down with each resident and ensure that preferences in terms of landscaping, screening or changes to building design, facades or treatments within the village can be incorporated. Only 2 residents at this time have accepted the offer made.*

- Strategic context – do we need more age appropriate housing and are in fill areas like FGC suitable locations for it.

**Response:**

*The proponent believes it is entirely unsatisfactory for villages such as that being proposed to be pushed to urban fringes or marginal land because they simply do not stack up when compared to residential as the highest and best use.*

*It is therefore important when Clubs, churches or other community groups have an ability to more efficiently organise their activities and create surplus land, that it can be used to create social infrastructure that will serve local communities now and into the future.*

*This is an opportunity to do exactly that and improve the efficiency of the Club land and infrastructure to support a broader use for the community.*

*The proposal has a very strong alignment with the stated strategies being implemented within the Territory.*

- Cumulative impacts of the proposal when considered in the context of other proposals or developments in the area – with a focus on environmental and traffic congestion.

**Response:**

*Cumulative impacts are difficult to assess without the necessary details of certain proposals.*

*A motion was recently passed in the Legislative Assembly to explore the environmental and traffic cumulative impacts of a number of known proposals in the area and ensure Red Hill Nature Reserve is appropriately protected.*

*The proponent will do all they can to provide information and support so that this process can be undertaken.*

## **Commitments**

The Community Panel has been instrumental in shaping the proposal, the approach and specifically the following commitments made by the proponent.

### **FUTURE DEVELOPMENT RESTRICTED:**

- Commitment in writing the Club's acceptance of no future development of the site beyond this proposal.
- Only the area required for the village development will be deconcessionalised and a Territory Plan variation sought.
- Mbark will commit to the land use as proposed in the plans discussed during the Community Panel meetings which restrict future development on any part of the site.
- Commitment to adjustment of Club boundary resulting in significant additions to the Red Hill Nature Reserve.

WATER:

- Commitment to deal with the issue upfront and include the upgraded irrigation system as part of Stage 1 works within the application, requiring completion before further works can continue.
- Commitment to integrate the village stormwater into the Club storage and needs.
- Commitment to maintain (or improve) pre development hydrology conditions post development.
- Commitment to required on course storage capacity of 40ML and target zero potable water usage.

ENVIRONMENTAL:

- Commitment to the boundary adjustment that extends the Red Hill Nature Reserve as outlined above resulting in material environmental and community benefits.
- Commitment to maintain the current proposed development footprint which avoids bushfire management / fire mitigation works near the Red Hill Reserve boundary.
- Commitment to mitigate and manage impacts of infrastructure design and construction methodology consulting Red Hill Regenerators (and other relevant community groups).

BUSHFIRE:

- Application to contain improvements / upgrade to existing emergency egress point at the end of Brereton Street.

TRAFFIC:

- Commitment to use localised content in the traffic assessment and consider the cumulative traffic impacts of other known developments in the area.

ACCESS (VEHICLE):

- Commitment to the application containing no through road connections with Brereton Street and preserving the current vehicle access arrangements.
- Commitment to include intersection and vehicle access arrangements in proposal that address the safety concerns for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.

ACCESS (COMMUNITY):

- Commitment that there will be no restrictive changes to the current public access of the FGC lease area.
- Scale and design

SUSTAINABILITY:

- Commitment to minimise FGC reliance on potable water using a comprehensive and integrated water design, storage and distribution network across the site.
- Commitment to meet and exceed ACT government statutory requirements for the village proposal including electronic village transport.
- Commitment to minimise carbon footprint of club and village operations by targeting an 'off grid' electricity network.

LANDSCAPE:

- Commitment to consult with RHR (and other relevant community groups) through development of landscaping strategy.
- Commitment to no net tree losses on site and species improvement in replacement program.

VILLAGE RULES:

- Commitment to lodge a copy of the proposed village rules with the application that specifically address the items where the village rules will be used as a tool in the ongoing regulation. These would include the prohibition of cats in the village and the control of landscaping areas, species and palettes for example.



## 4.4 Broader community

Overall, community members welcomed the retirement housing choice proposed by the over 55's village and the additional amenity it offers residents and locals.

- 24% were potential purchasers and wanted to know when they could move in
- 63% arrived interested in what may happen in their neighbourhood or with anecdotal information they had heard. Several of these attendees had been misinformed about the proposal but left with accurate information and a more favourable view about the proposal
- 13% arrived with negative views about the proposal and left with more accurate information but with their views unchanged;

Positive commentary included:

- The need for retirement living housing choices to age in place and retain existing community connections
- The lack of retirement living products in the ACT
- The aging population and retirement housing options not responding
- The need for urban infill to better utilise existing infrastructure
- The owner/operator model where the proponent remains involved
- Protection of woodland, trees and wildlife habitat
- Continued access to the golf course for passive recreation.



*"A very good proposal. Well thought out. Very good improvements to central holes and improved water catchment capture and storage. Good separation for new residents, Garran residents, golfers and clubhouse bookings."*

New questions included:

- Access to continuing electricity supply at times of power failure particular for critical facilities such as lift access to apartments.

### **Response:**

There is no technical building code requirement to have an operable lift in the event of a power failure. In a managed residential environment like a retirement village, we would operate under a management policy which guided the actions of staff in the event of a power failure to ensure the well-being of residents.

There is a battery operated lift on the market that could be a feasible option for a proposal such as this that can be made compliant with current accessibility codes. There are very few options such as this currently on the market and some limitations regarding size and travel distances, but appears to be feasible for something like the Federal proposal.

Finally, there are alternative power options such as generators, but these solutions have their challenges in implementation and are generally not particularly environmentally friendly.

- Additional noise generation from the clubhouse potentially impacting local residents.

### **Response:**

*The function rooms will be located away from Brereton Street residences and will not cause any disturbance.*

Repeated comments that have been previously answered included:

- View corridors from Brereton Street residences
- Cumulative traffic impacts
- Bushfire protection
- Access to shops and public transport
- Reasons for the over 55's village and whether this project will resolve them
- What community benefits there are from a private development on currently government owned land
- Construction period disruption



- Long term viability of Club finances
- Extension of Brereton Street
- Solar and water usage in the development.

More general suggestions and commentary included:

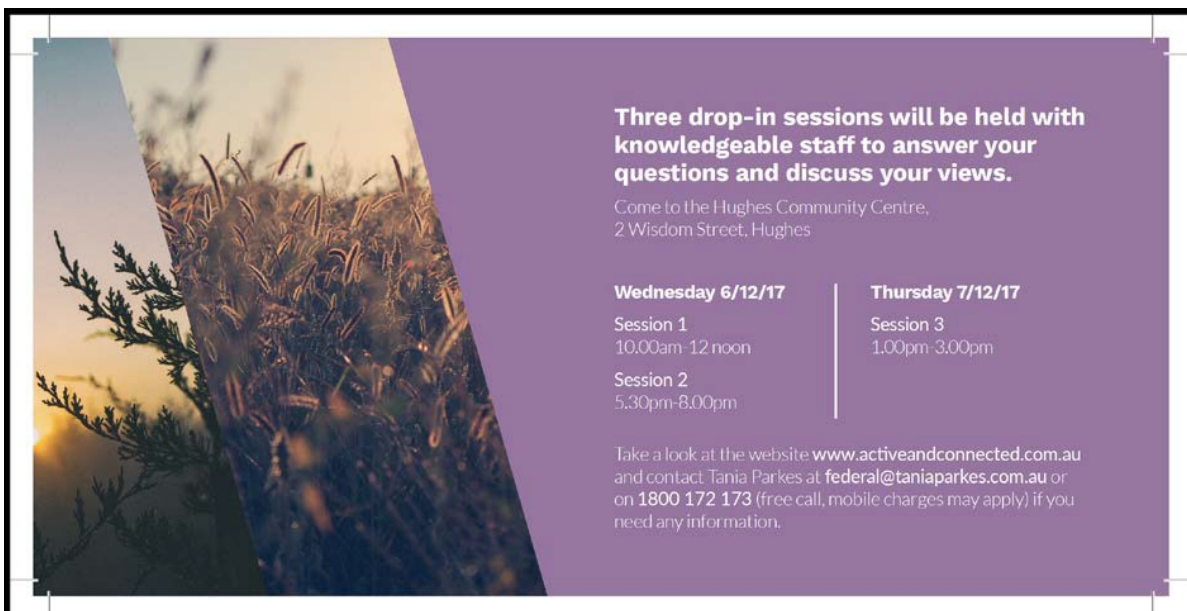
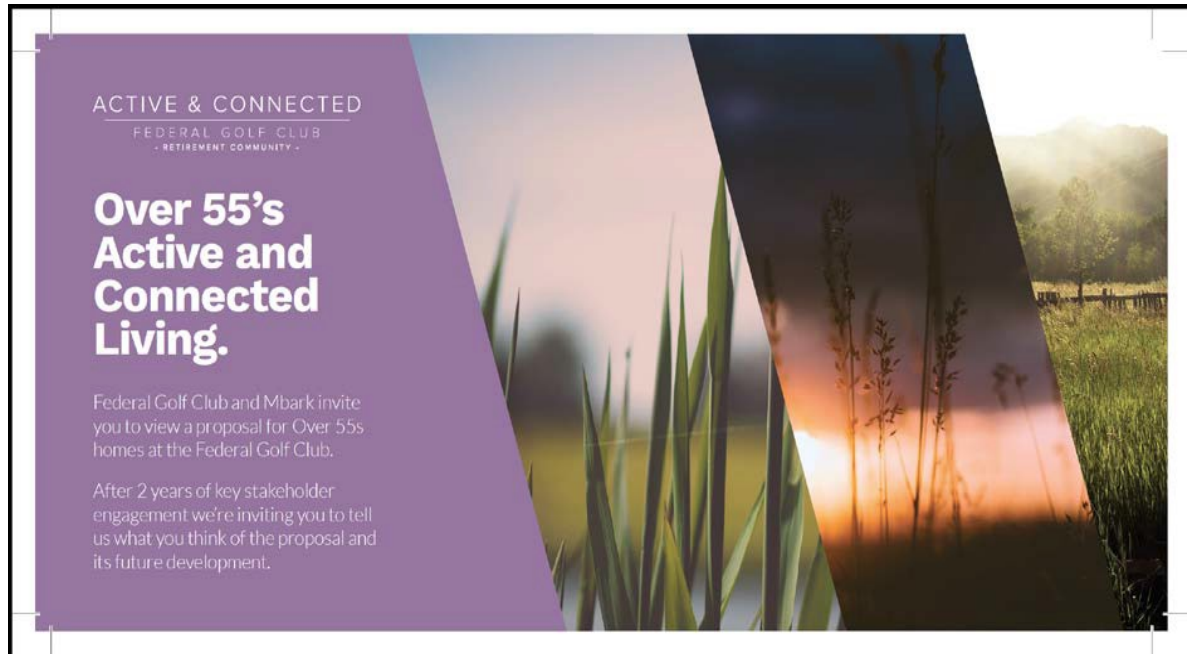
- The proposal must be consultative with all interested parties (community groups, government, and Federal Golf Club) and be part of the integrated plan that will address/meet the needs of all interest groups.
- Access off Gowrie Drive for construction.
- Main bedroom wardrobe is too small and space next to the ensuite appears to be dysfunctional.
- Consider making the pool 25 metres and adding tennis courts.
- People who are older prefer to have something nice to look at if they are in bed for any length of time, either through view or landscaping.
- Ideally, cellar storage for wine on a shared but secure basis would be great (or essential!).
- Need to ensure safety for walkers crossing entry road to the Club.
- Concern over view and distance/noise from Club entry boulevard for Brereton Street residents.
- Why not a second vehicular road to access the northern residential section (from the entry avenue)?
- What happens if the ACT Government decides to close Gowrie Drive?
- Golf Club wide wifi servicing all residences.
- Common vegetable garden for residents.
- Watering systems for all garden areas.
- Common barbeque area with covered area.
- Central lake: will attract pest birds and their droppings; safety issue for children. Best to leave as open ground for vegetable gardens, barbeque area or Bocce court.
- Clothes drying should face north.
- Motor bikes currently shortcut through Brereton Street and dodge the bollards through emergency access. Please consider preventing this shortcut.
- Note the wildlife during building, 33 different types of parrots use the vegetation in this area.



*“Public access through or around the village needs to be facilitated in a way that respects resident privacy but also enables continued access by other local residents – we currently walk around the edge of the practice fairway.”*

## 5 Appendices

### Appendix 1: Letterbox postcard



Appendix 2:  
Consultation  
posters







*The Federal*  
GOLF CLUB



SECTION 1



SECTION 2



SECTION 3



MATERIALS SELECTION



APARTMENT BUILDING SECTION

