

GIRALANG PRESCHOOL SITE
LOCAL CONSULTATION – 1ST SESSION
(25 OCTOBER 2007)
INITIAL SUMMARY

1. Introduction

On Thursday 25 October 2007 a community information display was held from 4.30pm – 7.30pm at the Giralang scout hall to discuss possible options relating to the sale for the former preschool site.

These notes summarise the key outcomes from discussions held throughout the consultation. It should be noted that participation in the consultation was premised on the qualification that that it did not signify support for preschool closure or sale of the site.

2. Background

In 2006 the ACT Government announced that 23 primary schools and preschools would be closed as part of its Schools Revitalisation Policy.

ACT Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS) is managing the project and have appointed a consultant team to undertake detailed site specific technical studies and local community consultation in order to identify optimal uses for each site.

The consultation process is staged and provides opportunity for residents and other interested members of the community to attend local information displays to provide feedback and discuss issues relevant to each of the former school sites. Technical findings together with feedback received through the consultations will be used by the consultant team to assess and make recommendations to TAMS about future uses for the former school sites.

TAMS have indicated that the Giralang site is to be sold. Therefore the session was structured to invite input from the community regarding what uses the site should be sold for.

3. Approach

The consultation session included a community information display held from 4.30pm to 7.30pm.

A series of plans and information relating to the Giralang site formed the display. The information included:

- Metropolitan Context Plan
- Project Timetable Flowchart
- Project Objectives
- Options Workshops (District) Outcomes
- Building Condition Summary
- Population Characteristics
- Social Infrastructure Plan
- Territory Plan Extract (Community Facility)
- Territory Plan Extract Map
- Planning Processes Flowchart
- Typical Development Types'
- Site Air Photo
- Suburb Air Photo
- Site Analysis Plan
- Site Photos
- Development Option Plans

4. Attendance

Approximately 23 people attended the display.



5. Key issues

The key issues that were raised at the Giralang consultation included:

Current and future community needs

- The majority of participants expressed preference for the site to be sold for community use with general consensus for the site to be re-used as an early childcare centre.
- There was majority support to sell the site under the existing 'community facility' land use zoning, with restrictions for future use to be limited to early childcare purposes.
- Many participants expressed concern about the lack of consultation around the government's decision to sell the site.
- Members of the Giralang Parents and Citizens Association voiced concern that their recommendation to lease the building to a childcare provider was not taken up. The childcare/early childhood centre would help to 'feed-into' Giralang Primary School, ensuring its long term viability. This would also support the community interest to see local shops and a medical centre in Giralang.
- Some participants also noted that Giralang needed its local shops and that it was difficult to comment on future uses for the site given the uncertainty of the planning for the shopping strip which is run down and being considered for development.

Potential use of former preschool site to meet community needs

- Given the condition of the building and its architectural heritage values, most participants stated a preference for the building to be retained for adaptive reuse to benefit the community.
- A limited number of participants noted that some form of redevelopment would be preferable, to allowing the building to degrade to a state similar to that of the local shops. For these people preference was for either shopping facilities or low density housing.
- A number of not-for-profit community based childcare providers could use the site but are not in a position to purchase it at a commercial rate and therefore could only access via a subsidised or supported leasehold arrangement in partnership with government.
- Some participants suggested the government should prioritise community benefit and explore the feasibility of selling the site for a minimal notional amount to enable some form of community use, such as a day care centre. Interest was shown on the night from service providers.
- Some of the groups which showed interest on the night included: childcare providers, playgroups and after school care providers.
- Some participants voiced concern about the impact of any potential redevelopment on the children attending the primary school and noted that these impacts should be fully assessed.

These notes reflect key issues and ideas raised during discussions with the consultant team during the course of the Information Display and are not intended to reflect all of the comments made, nor does it include any of the comments written on 'Feedback Sheets' provided to persons who attended the session.

Information from feedback sheets and other submissions will be analysed and incorporated into the site evaluation process by the consultant team and included in the final report to Government.

7 November 2007

