

17 May 2016

Dear Mr Coe,

Please make an election pledge to do everything you can to give Giralang residents their approved 1,500m centre with Woolworths that is half built. We have waited over 10 years for this and the vast majority of Giralang want this. It has only been stopped by commercial interests.

Supabarn in Kaleen is now a Coles (albeit currently closed... leaving those in Giralang with nowhere local to shop at all let alone within walking distance). There is an Aldi in Casey just opened. What possible argument is there that a Woolworths could not happily exist and indeed compete and help bring down prices nearby a Coles in Kaleen and an Aldi in Casey. All these supermarkets live side by side all the time and are not in the business of losing money. And if Supabarn in Casey can exist right beside an Aldi charging a fraction of their prices for basic staples, how is a Woolworths in Giralang going to put them out of business? And residents in Casey will still have an Aldi to shop at if they do... what is the argument for denying us our local shopping centre anymore when the surrounding suburbs all have one? When I bought my house in Giralang, it had a local shopping centre and that is one of the reasons I bought it, it is unfair that the government is now seeking to deny me that shopping centre. Further during the whole Giralang shops debacle, Supabarn had been bleating about competition if Woolworths in Giralang should end up replacing him via sending him out of business, he has since gone to the ACCC and successfully argued to them that it wouldn't harm competition if his supermarket was sold to Coles??? The exact opposite of what he has been saying this whole time, he has successfully sold his supermarkets at presumably a huge profit to Coles, and is still dragging out legal action to prevent Giralang from having their shopping centre?

Since the Giralang shops debacle began, we have had a whole new suburb of Casey emerge and now Lawson, all of whom would probably like the choice of shopping nearby at one of the major supermarkets. Perhaps Woolworths in Giralang if they like Woolworths. Why shouldn't they, and us, be able to shop there if Woolworths want to open a supermarket there and compete against the other majors?

The current ACT government is not even talking to us about this issue. Further I have information that Jon Stanhope had a personal relationship or contact with those involved in supabarn and it may have influenced things with the Giralang shops and with the decision to hand certain sites to Supabarn on a platter denying the fact that Coles and Woolworths have been proven to have cheaper prices than Supabarn thus lessening completion. This should be investigated, and they be held accountable.

The only thing the current ACT government has done about this issue is to remove our protest signage from the suburb...

I have also heard from Giralang Residents Action Group that after our 1,500m supermarket was approved, the ACT government introduced a law that local centres could only be 1,000m. It didn't even tell the residents of Giralang. The law was retrospective and unfair to both residents and the owners and developers.

Mr Coe, if you want to get the votes of a suburb, pledge to do something about this ridiculous mess.

From a Giralang resident since 1999