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Ground hog day at Federal Golf Club as rejected development rolled out yet again

The Red Hill Regenerators are bitterly disappointed that the Federal Golf Club has dusted off failed development applications to yet again seek inappropriate development on their lease. The latest proposal is large with up to 150 freestanding buildings and apartments.

The first stage of the development is in the same area as a previous proposal that was rejected in 2010 by the then Planning Minister (Mr Barr) and a 1999 proposal rejected by the Legislative Assembly. However, this time, the proposed development is much larger with more than 70 freestanding buildings and would require tens of hectares of clearance within the adjoining Red Hill Nature Reserve for fire management, road works and other infrastructure. It would also require bulldozing at least 300 native trees and nationally important endangered woodland.

The proposed future stages are not publically released but Red Hill Regenerators understands that they involve a further 40 plus dwellings on the Clubhouse site. This project would be bigger than those previously refused permission by both Liberal and Labor governments and which outraged Woden and South Canberra residents.

It is unclear why the golf club has dusted off this seventh development attempt. The environmental and social impacts remain the same. The proposal would significantly degrade one of Australia's most significant temperate woodlands, and place accommodation for the aged in a fire prone, lengthy cul de sac, remote from any facilities, where the car will be the only form of transport and traffic flow will be increased on roads already too busy. It is little wonder that authorities have repeatedly labelled past proposals as poor planning and unsupportable.

Over the last 18 months, Red Hill Regenerators have had informal discussions with executives of the Federal Golf Club and suggested other ways of addressing the Club's financial challenges. However, the club has chosen to pursue inappropriate housing development and ignore previous government and community opinion.

The Red Hill Regenerators hopes that Golf Club members will perceive the folly, waste of scarce resources and community angst that resurrecting past doomed rejected proposals will cause.

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