



Monica Wright and Ashleigh Gardner together in 2024; and (top) Georgia Voll with Gardner. Picture: Liam Kidston

Conflict row hits Planning Minister

My bad, says Kilkenny

EXCLUSIVE
Carly Douglas

Embattled Planning Minister Sonya Kilkenny is caught in a conflict-of-interest furor having admitted she should have delegated a decision to approve a new development zone just metres from her Bayside investment property.

Ms Kilkenny (inset) conceded the "oversight" only after the Saturday Herald Sun put questions to the minister about her decision to greenlight a Moorabbin apartment hub across the road from her Hampton house.

But the Liberals are calling for new Premier Ben Carroll to axe Ms Kilkenny from his cabinet, saying the failure to excuse herself from the approval process was a blatant breach of the ministerial code of conduct.

Ms Kilkenny acknowledged she had not alerted then-premier Jacinta Allan before signing off on the "activity centre" boundaries.

Under the code, a minister must approach the premier and ask them to delegate decisions that have the potential to become conflicts of interest.

Ms Kilkenny said: "Although my property was not affected by the decision and sits entirely outside the boundary of the activity centre, I should have delegated; it was an oversight."

"No land I own has been rezoned or changed as a result of any decision I have made."

"Nor have I received any benefit or avoided any detriment as a result."

She insisted that "at all times I acted in accordance with expert departmental advice".

The minister's decision



paved the way for apartment blocks of up to four storeys across the road from her property, while her side of the street was unchanged.

A government spokesman said if departmental advice had recommended the inclusion of the property "it would have been included".

Under planning changes signed off by Ms Kilkenny, tens of thousands of residents across 60 Melbourne areas have been stripped of third-party appeal rights as the government aims to squeeze 300,000 extra homes into established suburbs.

In those locations, called activity centres, developers can build apartment towers of eight to 20 storeys next to train stations and tram stops, up to six storeys in neighbouring streets and three to four storeys in the outer catchment.

Liberal MP James Newbury, who has led protests against the activity centres in his seat of Brighton, accused Ms Kilkenny of breaking the ministerial code of conduct.

"Ben Carroll claims he has integrity," he said. "He is now facing his first big test. If she stays in the job, Ben Carroll proves he has no integrity. Sonya Kilkenny must be sacked today."

According to Ms Kilkenny's parliamentary reporting, she owns three properties. The others are in Seaford and Carrum.

Ms Kilkenny re-secured her roles as Attorney-General and Planning Minister in a cabinet reshuffle this week.

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“What I can’t understand is why Cricket Australia hasn’t said anything publicly

Monica Wright

including making headlines in the New York Post.

Following the pair's break-up, Gardner returned to their four-bedroom home in Davidson on Sydney's northern beaches and removed all of her possessions.

However, she left her wedding rings, cricket trophies and Australian baggy green cap in their shared home.

They are now going through divorce proceedings, which legally cannot be finalised until November, 12 months after their official split.

Last month Gardner and Voll went head-to-head in a clash in the British Hundred league in Cardiff, Wales.

Gardner, captain of the Trent Rockets, and Voll, who opened the batting for Welsh Fire, came up against each other in the match at Sophia Gardens and afterwards were spotted laughing together and talking with teammates.

When they were asked by the Saturday Herald Sun about their affair, neither would answer questions.

Gardner told the Saturday Herald Sun: "I'm not going to do chats with you off the cuff", while Voll said: "I'm not doing any media".

The Sydney Sixers were contacted for comment.

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the men's game, and it should be," she said.

"That includes the same level of accountability when something like this happens."

Warne, who died in 2022, was removed as vice-captain of the Australian team in 2000 when a British newspaper published claims he had sent lewd messages to a nurse.

He denied the texts were un-

wanted, maintaining in his biography it was "explicit talk between two consenting adults".

There is no suggestion that Gardner has sent any unwanted messages to Voll.

Leaked board minutes from a meeting when Warne's dismissal was discussed stated that Australian cricket officials believed "leadership brings other responsibilities".

The affair between Gardner and Voll, who are now a couple, was recently made public after a story was published detailing the off-field indiscretions.

Wright responded to the article by sharing an image of Voll on her Instagram account and wrote: "This is who my wife cheated on me with."

The story went global

Trust alarm is building

Accountants are sounding the alarm at Labor's planned trusts overhaul, after the nation's peak builders industry warned it could exacerbate the housing crisis and undermine consumer protections.

The federal government is facing backlash over its plan to impose a minimum 30 per cent tax on discretionary trusts from July 2028, which it argues will make the tax

system more sustainable.

A three-year restructure rollover will be available from mid-next year, but accountant Joshua Robertson said it would cost small builders tens of thousands of dollars and take up to a year to execute.

The partner at Xact Accounting, specialising in construction, says more than 70 per cent of his clients will be captured by the changes.

One Nation renews call on ABC funding

Andrew Banks

One Nation is renewing calls to scrap public funding to the ABC, slamming the broadcaster for taking "too long" to apologise to Gina Rinehart over a segment that graphically depicted her assault and sodomy.

The push comes after two weeks of public backlash forced ABC Managing Director Hugh Marks to apologise to

Ms Rinehart over content aired on the broadcaster's Race Around the World program.

The offending segment has since been edited out on all ABC platforms – despite the broadcaster's internal Ombudsman finding no breach of editorial policy.

One Nation Senator Sean Bell said the "absolutely disgusting" saga proved the ABC needed major reform.

"I mean, the ABC took too

long to apologise, as they always do," Senator Bell told News24 on Friday.

"And I mean this goes to exactly why One Nation is of the opinion the ABC needs to be turned into a subscription pay service. Everyday Australians don't want to see their taxpayer dollars being used to fund disgusting material like that."

One Nation is pushing to scrap the ABC's more than \$1.2bn in annual taxpayer

funding and shift the broadcaster to a subscription model.

Nationals Senate leader Bridget McKenzie branded the apology delay "ridiculous".

"I think the more concerning issue is that the editors at the ABC thought it was okay to put to air in the first place," Senator McKenzie said. "The ABC is not some punk rogue operation. It's our national broadcaster and needs to be for all Australians. It was appalling."