



## BLACKBURN VILLAGE RESIDENTS GROUP INC.

Protecting the distinctive features of Blackburn since 1987

# BULLETIN

**Bulletin 87**

**July 2015**

### **2015-2016 Subscriptions now due.**

BVRG have maintained the low annual subscription rate of \$5 partly because of generous donations and partly through the take up of Life Membership, references to both of which are included on the attached/enclosed renewal form.

It would be appreciated if you made your payment promptly and save us the time and expense involved with the issue of reminders.

### **End of year Function.**

**Diary Note:** 15<sup>th</sup> November, 12:00 to 15:00 - BVRG end of year members and friends BBQ at The Blackburn Lake visitors Centre.

### **Plan Melbourne Revisited.**

On 2 April, as Whitehorse and other Councils waited for Standing Advisory Committees to make pronouncements on community concerns about the suspension of proposed Neighbourhood Residential Zone Schedules and while residents endured a rash of inappropriate development applications, triggered by the unexpected delays, the Planning Department issued the following brief announcement:- *The Government is giving [Plan Melbourne](#) a refresh to ensure it delivers the kind of city the community needs.*

It is disappointing that there was no explanation of how or when further comments on the Plan might be made or what process would follow receipt of any submissions. If the present government really needed to know what the community thought about the Plan, it could review the comments made since release of the document back in 2014, including the criticism by those Advisory Committee members who disassociated themselves from it following publication.

In May a more positive and informative announcement appeared. Evidently the Ministerial Advisory Committee charged with informing the original draft Plan has been reconvened in order to address a number of issues and matters omitted from *Plan Melbourne*. The Committee had already started its work and was due to provide initial advice to the Minister in June 2015. We await further announcements with interest.

## **Parking Overload.**

The almost inevitable component of every new planning application concerning the building of anything larger than a single dwelling is seeking parking dispensation from the scheduled number of parking spaces.

As with the old Caltex site proposal the new application only tends to force drivers to park in the rapidly diminishing spaces on-road, or illegally on reserves, often at a considerable distance from their destination and further impeding sight lines and flow of traffic.

BVRG has made a special appeal to Councillors not to endorse more reductions in car parking schedules and to request the Council's traffic engineers to consider the cumulative effect of supporting requests which seek to avoid those schedules.

Unfortunately Councils response was dismissive, citing a recent survey carried out at Blackburn that conceded that *'there are certain areas that are highly utilised at all times of the day but it is considered there is generally appropriate levels of available parking in the area...'* The issue ignored in the response is that there is significant redevelopment and change of use occurring in the centre that will progressively add to the 'highly utilised' space making parking even more difficult for locals and encouraging them to instead travel to nearby larger centres with adequate parking.

## **C174 Review of Schedules that support New Zones.**

New residential zones that came into effect in the City of Whitehorse on 14 October 2014 were gazetted as Amendment C160 to the Whitehorse Planning Scheme but had the accompanying schedules excluded.

The C174 panel hearing held between 7th and 9th April 2015 was to review the Neighbourhood Residential Zone schedules proposed in Amendment C160. Submissions were made by community groups including BVRG, residents, business and owners of large institutional sites.

The report was due in early May, almost 3 months ago. We remain concerned with the absence of the report providing guidance on the rules that should apply when Council considers a planning application in Neighbourhood Residential Zones in Whitehorse.

## **Lodging Objections; Some User Friendly Initiatives.**

Back in 2005 your BVRG representatives urged Council to put the Planning Permit Applications Register on-line as had then become possible, in order to avoid the need to visit Council or make phone enquiries during weekday business hours, not always easy for working residents. We might have had to wait nine years but Council is nevertheless commended for finally doing so, as they are including details of **Planning Permit Applications on Public Notice.**

If you wish to establish whether or not a development is proposed on a particular site you may go to the Council's Planning and Building web page and click on to the Planning Portal and link to **Planning Register and Advertised Plans**. Select Planning **Register - at Advertising** to access details of applications recently submitted.

<https://epweb.whitehorse.vic.gov.au/ePathway/Production/Web/GeneralEnquiry/EnquiryLists.aspx?ModuleCode=LAP>

You will also be able to study certain of the documents relating to the application on-line. These may not, of course, include **all** the design plans and associated correspondence which can only be viewed by attending Council and inspecting the relevant files, a somewhat difficult task for many.

A further aid in interpreting applications would be for documentation to incorporate 'overlay outlines' of the proposed buildings superimposed on photographs or scaled drawings of the subject site. Such graphic representations, now used by some applicants, allow viewers to more readily assess the relationship of the proposed development to site coverage, to neighbouring properties and to the streetscape.

## **Local Planning Issues.**

### **The Old Caltex Site.**

Following the recent trend towards excessive, ambit style proposals, we face an application at the Old Caltex site (22 Blackburn Road) for a three storey building with five retail tenancies at ground level and ten two bedroom units on the upper floors. And, it might almost go without saying, one which seeks dispensation on the provision of parking spaces.

The Caltex service station ceased operation in 1997 and has remained an eyesore in Blackburn ever since. Ground water contamination by leaked petroleum has prevented redevelopment until now. EPA checks recently have provided the go ahead for development.

A series of planning applications were made between 2004 and 2006. The first two plans consisted of a two storey building with a mix of retail and residential dwellings and the third a single storey building with seven retail premises. BVRG was involved in long discussions on all three and concerns in our submissions were basically on amenity for nearby residents, a design which blended with the rest of the shopping centre buildings and, above all, adequate parking. With the exception of parking, the final application met most of our concerns and was approved providing construction could commence by May 2008. Site contamination prevented the development from proceeding.

For years BVRG has opposed the granting of parking dispensation for planning applications in the shopping centre. We note that local traders now share our concerns that insufficient car park spaces and the consequent inconvenience will slowly but surely deter potential users from patronising the centre. We have urged both traders and local residents to join us in formally opposing this proposal which fails to acknowledge these and related concerns.

## **Rail Crossing Removal.**

BVRG has continued discussions with the VicRoads project manager and Council regarding progress of the rail crossing project. An announcement is expected shortly from VicRoads regarding the preferred contractor for the project.

Despite recent articles in the local press indicating the completion date has been shifted, VicRoads has confirmed with BVRG that completion date will be mid-2017. Preparatory work will be carried out ahead of the rail closure over the 2017 Christmas period when the major work will be done.

BVRG will be calling a public meeting for affected residents in the near future and VicRoads will be invited to address the meeting.

In the meantime BVRG has formalised the need for community consultation and its concerns and suggestions about impacts on residents during and after construction with a letter to Council, Vic Roads and local member, Robert Clark, who has agreed to raise our concerns with the transport minister.

## **Seventh Day Adventist Retirement Village Development.**

New plans have been prepared which address modifications recommended by the VCAT Tribunal in its rejection determination issued on 21 May to the original plans outlined in the March hearing.

The Tribunal, while accepting the use of the site for the purposes proposed, noted that this did not take precedence over achieving a desired future character through adoption of a layout and built form subservient to the landscape character and their recommendations included a number of building set-backs and height reductions and other measures designed to protect the high value of the Valley Heathy Forest EVC.

The seven day VCAT hearing that started 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2015 heard the application for six 3 and 4 storey aged care residential apartment blocks with underground carpark on the old Seventh Day Adventists campground.

## **60 Main Street.** - Back to VCAT for a second time!

You may recall that VCAT refused an application for 3 double storey dwellings and tree removal at a hearing held in August 2014.

The applicant prepared another application with some changes. The new plans still represent an overdevelopment and Council rejected the application. The developer will again argue the matter at a VCAT hearing on 14 December 2015. Residents who have objected have until 11<sup>th</sup> August to submit form A to VCAT if they wish to provide a submission.

## **8-10 Queen Street.**

The application seeks approval for a five storey building of fifty-one apartments with the usual reduction in specified car parking space. We await the Council decision.

### **35 Main Street Blackburn.**

Redevelopment of the site with a large house requiring the removal of 2 significant trees was proposed. Amended plans which included the retention of Trees 1 and 2 were later received by Council and these formed the basis of discussion at the forum meeting held on 14th April.

The Council recently granted a permit for the plans submitted on this site subject to conditions mainly relating to landscaping. The 2 trees now standing on the block are to be retained; the house considered by Blackburn residents to be inappropriate for this site is largely unaffected apart from varied colours and/or materials at ground and upper level. At least one additional upper canopy tree capable of reaching 15 metres in height is required to be planted in the front setback and a variety of substantial shrubs and other vegetation species including a smaller tree are to be planted on the northern and southern setbacks.

### **208 Canterbury Road.**

BVRG submitted an objection to the construction of 8 apartments and Council on 20th February refused the permit application. The matter will be heard at VCAT 25<sup>th</sup> September 2015.

### **3 Whitehorse Road Laburnum.**

BVRG and local residents objected to an application for a 118 unit development ranging in height from 2 to 5 storeys. This site is to the north and east of the Shell service station located on the corner of Middleborough and Whitehorse Roads.

A Council planning forum to bring residents and developer together to discuss issues was held on 23 July.

### **1-5 Sergeant Street Blackburn.**

Another large apartment development application has angered residents of Sergeant Street, a short dead end street running from Whitehorse Road to the railway line near Laburnum.

The application for 4 and 5 storey apartment buildings with 111 units, over 3 consolidated blocks had already been headed to VCAT before BVRG became aware. Mike Taafe was able to have BVRG become a party to the hearing and attended a VCAT compulsory conference on 9<sup>th</sup> July.

At that conference The Developer and Council agreed on some changes that residents could not accept. The matter was heard at a VCAT hearing on 3 Aug 2015 where residents argued against Council and the developer.

### **199 Canterbury Road Blackburn.**

BVRG along with nearby residents submitted an objection to the commercial planning application for a Long Stay Child Care Centre and tree removal at 199 Canterbury Road, Blackburn. The site is located in a residential zone classified as

Bush Environment character precinct and protected by a Significant Landscape Overlay. Council has yet to consider the allocation.

### **55-65 Railway Parade Blackburn.** (NAB to Mexican Restaurant)

By way of information Council has issued a planning permit for the erection of a 3 storey building with sunken basement and mixed use incorporating provision for apartments and commercial premises.

### **2 Walsham Road Blackburn.**

An application for a subdivision of in this sensitive area has generated resident concern. The matter is being heard at VCAT 25 November 2015 and BVRG will be making a submission.

### **20 Vine Street Blackburn.**

BVRG have lodged an objection to a planning application for 17 apartments at 20 Vine Street, Blackburn. The 4 storey development with basement car parking is outside of the zone designated for such buildings.

## **Blackburn & District Environment Protection Fund.**

**A good local news story.** The Blackburn Environment Fund has been operating successfully since 2008. BVRG provided early support for the establishment of the fund and it is gratifying to see the continuing support provided by the community. The fund has received significant community donations and continues to make grants to worthwhile environmental projects in Whitehorse for environment education, bushland regeneration and retention of remnant indigenous vegetation.

More information and Tax Deductable donations can be made through the Fund's website: [www.blackburnenviro.wordpress.com](http://www.blackburnenviro.wordpress.com)

## **Dealing with a planning issue in your area?**

Encourage neighbours to join BVRG to ensure that the community retains its voice. See First Time Member Application attached.

### **Committee Members**

President	Mike Taafe	Ph 0409 800 422	16 Eustace Street, Blackburn
Vice President	David Morrison	Ph 9894 2531	49 Glen Ebor Ave, Blackburn
Secretary	David Morrison	Ph 9894 2531	49 Glen Ebor Ave, Blackburn
Treasurer	Peng Lee	Ph 9878 4350	5 Patterson Street, Blackburn
Committee	Ron Grainger	Ph 9877 3348	25 Main Street, Blackburn
	Anne Payne	Ph 9878 1152	81 Central Road, Blackburn
	Kelly Papadopoulos	Ph 9878 4804	15 Cromwell Court, Blackburn
	Brad Hogan	Ph	127 Central Road, Blackburn
	Lyn Smith	Ph 8812 2282	2 Parkside Street, Blackburn



# BLACKBURN VILLAGE RESIDENTS GROUP INC.

*Protecting the distinctive features of Blackburn since 1987*

Email: [bvrg@ymail.com](mailto:bvrg@ymail.com)

Post: PO Box 406, Blackburn. 3130

Phone: 9894 2531

## First Time Member Application

*More than one family member can join.*

**Each applicant pays \$10 (\$5 Joining Fee and \$5 Annual Membership.)**

I/We. (Print full name(s).....

Address ..... Postcode.....

Phone ..... Mobile.....Email.....

wish to be member(s) of the Blackburn Village Residents Group Inc. (A0049305U). If my application is accepted, I agree to be bound by the rules of the BVRG.

Signature of Applicant (1) ..... Date...../...../.....

Signature of Applicant (2) ..... Date...../...../.....

**Post or deliver with \$10 for each applicant, to:**

Blackburn Village Residents Group, PO 406, Blackburn 3130

**Checklist (tick)**

\$10 Joining/Membership Fee applicant 1  .....

\$10 Joining/Membership Fee applicant 2  .....

Sub-Total .....

\$ Donation  .....

Total .....

Official use only.

We ..... members of the BVRG support nomination

Signature of Nominator..... Date ...../...../.....

Signature of Seconder ..... Date ...../...../.....