



BLACKBURN VILLAGE RESIDENTS GROUP

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NEW RESIDENTIAL CODE

The Code is a bold attempt to remove some of the worst features of existing regulations, directing new development to be more respectful of its surroundings, recognition of Neighbourhood Character taking precedence. At the risk of oversimplification, site analysis will be the prerequisite for all new dwellings but if the (mainly single) dwelling satisfies certain mandatory requirements it will not need a planning permit. In a multi dwelling proposal, a planning permit will be required to meet certain 'standards' (replacing the misnamed 'techniques' of the Good Design Guide).

Comments on the draft code are sought by an independent Advisory Committee by 11 August. The enclosed leaflet explains how to obtain a copy of the draft code package and gives details of the information sessions being held this month and early August. Now is the time to have your say on this important proposal - please send us a copy of your submission.

PLANNING - CORPORATE AND URBAN

Along with other members of the community we welcomed the recent opportunity, through the medium of a Corporate Planning Workshop and subsequent review, to comment on the framing of Council's Corporate Plan. Unfortunately, while the community had some input on the framework it has as yet had little influence on performance indicators. We realise that the timing of all projects is subject to budget constraints but it is worth noting that those listed for 2000/2001 not only fail to include any major Planning Scheme commitments (e.g. Adopt a Housing Strategy) but, in an exercise of which Sir Humphrey would be proud, provide only for 'satisfaction' ratings and for the sort of action which should be undertaken by any self respecting council, regardless of any corporate plan.

On a more positive note, we attended Council's successful Good Design Symposium in May, one of the events listed for repeat next year. It attracted a representative cross section of the development industry and residents. The large number present attested to the high level of interest on the topic. As amateur players on the urban planning stage we were somewhat disconcerted to find out how unfamiliar some professionals (architects, builders, estate agents, etc.) were with the play (admittedly one being constantly revised) but more so by the selfish attitude of the few who seemed prepared to ignore the script. Nevertheless, this sort of public forum should help for better understanding all round.

HERITAGE

Council has decided to split the Heritage Amendment to help expedite the inclusion of all properties not subject to an objection, requesting that an independent panel hear submissions on the few others. All owners should be advised of the revised arrangements and of the formalities to be completed.

GOING, GOING, GONE ???

When his Cycle Shop was listed as a heritage building George Robinson, himself a cherished local institution, said that that would '...make it even more special'. Sadly, unless an imaginative lateral thinker now purchases the building, its place in Blackburn's history will only be marked by a plaque.

As mentioned in a previous Bulletin, despite being cited as a Heritage building, the future of Rob's Cycle Shop has been under threat due to its poor state of repair. It is disappointing that although both Council and agents acting for George Robinson's family were long aware of this situation, no serious attempt was made to canvass options which would capitalise on its heritage value, nor was any submission made when the Heritage Amendment was on exhibition.

PLEASE NOTE !

Our Annual General Meeting will commence at **7.30 pm. Thursday 2 November** and our Dinner at **7.15 pm. Friday 17 November** - more details about both in the next Bulletin - and while you have pen in hand please complete the enclosed **subscription notice**. Subscription rates remain unaltered since 1987 - and with no GST ! On a more serious note, it is thanks to your support that we are in a reasonably healthy financial position. However, we remain conscious of the fact that this situation could change dramatically were there an urgent need to pay for professional advice or services - so we need your continuing help to maintain a healthy reserve.

TIDYING UP THE PLANNING SCHEME

Under this heading in a previous *Bulletin* we reported on discussions with Council about the need to amend the new Scheme where anomalies had occurred or errors appeared. Nine months after that meeting, Council has agreed to prepare one of those amendments - in this case to rectify the Department's incorrect translation of some of the former Special Residential Zone conditions into Significant Landscape Overlays. Can we hope to see other corrections follow in short order ?

EXCEPTIONS PROVING THE RULE ?

Amendment C13 proposes to rezone a single Station Street property for an office building/car park. If approved, we hope it is strictly a 'one off' event and does not see a return to the piecemeal take-overs which once threatened most of the residential area north of the line. Many of you opposed those speculative moves and will recall Council's 1993 decision to restrict the 'Office Zone' to the area east from Albert Street while retaining a 'housing precinct' west to Station Street.

A hundred year flood is about as exceptional as you want to get but Amendment C4 rightly suggests that a special building overlay require particular treatment for building work on properties situated in the 100 year flood areas which are shown on the overlay maps.

Copies of C13 and C4 are available for inspection in the Blackburn Branch Library.

<p>NEW NEIGHBOURS INTERESTED ? SHARE THIS BULLETIN WITH THEM - ARRANGE FOR US TO CONTACT</p>
