



BLACKBURN VILLAGE RESIDENTS GROUP

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BLACKBURN VILLAGE RESIDENTS NEWSLETTER No. 10

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Blackburn Shopping Centre – new panel hearing upon us

The Panel Hearing on the second proposal to build a new shopping centre in Blackburn will begin on **Monday 9 July**. It is likely to continue for several days (and evenings) throughout that week and into the next. During that time an independent Panel of three persons appointed by the Minister will hear submissions on the proposed rezoning under Amendment L9 (previously RL125). It is **essential** that all residents who wish to put their views be present at the **Nunawading Arts Centre** during the Hearing.

PLEASE NOTE THE DATE AND VENUE NOW AND ARRANGE TO BE PRESENT

Background

You will recall that the concept for this proposal was presented at our public meeting in March 1989, and that the meeting endorsed the concept in principle, subject to the satisfactory resolution of design, economic and – especially – traffic issues. These are the matters which the Panel will take up. A major recent development is that Nunawading Council has at last released a **Structure Plan** for central Blackburn. This Plan is designed to provide a context in which the shopping centre will be discussed at the Panel Hearing. The BVRG has serious reservations about several features of this Structure Plan – see below.

What to do

If you lodged a written submission on the shopping centre proposal, you should have received notice of the Panel Hearing. In case you did not receive notice, or if you did not make a written submission and now wish to appear before the Panel you should plan to be at the Hearing on the morning of 9 July before 10.00 a.m. You should contact Nunawading Council's Manager, Strategic Planning, Mr G. Rundell, who may arrange for you to be heard, so far as possible at a mutually convenient time. If you are unable to be there on the first morning, or if you have no one who could represent you at that time, contact Mr Rundell on 813090.

Your Presentation

The Panel will be most concerned with your sincerity and your personal view of the issues. Ability as an orator or barrack room lawyer is **not** a requirement. It will be of advantage if you cite your own specific concerns rather than to generalise. It will also be helpful if you commit your views to paper and can give a copy to the Panel. If you cannot be present in person for your submission, you may be represented by another to speak on your behalf. In that case you should record your views in writing. **You must also give written authority for another person to represent you.**

Your Presence at the Hearing is Important

It is essential that you demonstrate your concern and interest in the outcome of the shopping centre application. Whether or not you are making a presentation, the longer you are able to remain at the Hearing the better. Your presence will give support and encouragement to other residents addressing the Panel.

Getting there . . .

The Arts Centre is at the rear of Nunawading Municipal Offices, 379 Whitehorse Road, Nunawading. It is not very far from Nunawading station. Off-street parking is available. However, should you have problems getting there, ring Mrs Maree Harrison (877 4351) who may be able to arrange a lift for you with a volunteer.

After the Hearing (1) . . .

Nunawading Council is now the Responsible Authority in this matter; and the Panel will, after considering the submissions, report to Council with its recommendations. Council will use these as the basis for their decision. But the Minister for Planning and Urban Growth, The Hon Andrew McCutcheon, must then approve the decision before announcing the Amendment in the Government Gazette.

After the Hearing (2) . . .

COUNCIL'S STRUCTURE PLAN PROPOSES 45,000 SQUARE METRES OF OFFICE SPACE.

The shopping centre will not be the last of the major planning issues facing Blackburn's residents. Council's Draft Structure Plan is now published, and it contains many ideas for Blackburn that most residents will applaud. It is certainly the kind of document to which we have all looked forward for some time. It does, however, provide for 45,000 square metres of office development on what is now residential property. This exclusive office zone is within the area bounded by Whitehorse Road, Railway Road, Chapel Street and Station Street and is to be developed over the next ten years.

It is argued that this space will be needed to take the spillover from a saturated Box Hill, and that it will be necessary to market the zone by providing 'a visually strong and dramatic image'. What that means in practice is **individual** office buildings of two and three storeys with up to 4000 square metres of floor space. To give you an idea, 45,000 square metres is ten times the size of the proposed shopping centre. Could the character of Blackburn survive its 'office identity'? Can Blackburn cope with the traffic?

Council's General Purposes Committee voted on 17th June to reconstitute the Blackburn Working Party and to receive a further report on the Structure Plan in October. So now is your chance to think about and take a constructive part in planning the next stage of Blackburn's future. There is a copy of the Structure Plan in the Blackburn branch Library. Please read it and let the BVRG know what you think and how you would like to help.

Your Support

The BVRG has again been able to prepare a major submission to the Panel Hearing, thanks to the support and assistance of the many individual residents who have helped with publicity, research and the various administrative tasks. We record our grateful thanks to them and to those who responded to our call for funds in this our fourth year of operation. (If you haven't contributed, but now wish to, send your cheque [\$10 family, \$5 single] with your name and address to our Hon. Treasurer, Mr G. Brown, 63 Laburnum Street, Blackburn.

As we saw above, planning in Blackburn will not end with the forthcoming Panel Hearing. Have your chance to play a close and active part in keeping Blackburn like Blackburn. We are looking for old and new members of the BVRG to serve on the Executive. Ring Ron Grainger (877 3348) or Gordon Taylor (877 4074).

AGAIN, NOTE NOW THE DATE OF THE PANEL HEARING: MONDAY 9 JULY