



BLACKBURN VILLAGE RESIDENTS GROUP

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BULLETIN No 26

NOVEMBER 1997

A NIGHT OUT FROM PLANNING *

Your Committee extends a cordial invitation to join us - at your expense! at -

THE BVRG DINNER

to be held at

The Jumbo Restaurant

Blackburn

FRIDAY 21 NOVEMBER

7.00 for 7.30

A section of the restaurant has again been reserved and a banquet meal arranged for \$20 each but with alternatives available by individual choice. Liquor and BYO licences.

Plan for a relaxed social evening in the company of others who share the good fortune to live in Blackburn. Invite friends or neighbours who also value our local environment.

RSVP Sunday 16 November : Angela Taylor 9877 4074 Ron Grainger 9877 3348

* Or an evening when we won't talk too much 'shop' - although we will give you a brief update on the Planning Scheme and the BVRG's continuing role - and welcome your comments.

THE YEAR SO FAR...

Exhibition of the draft Scheme was the most significant event in this year's planning reform programme, coming as it did hard on the heels of one of the local government reforms - the return of an elected Council. That Council had barely three months in which to get to grips with the requirements of the planning reforms and to decide on the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) and other local documents which went on public display in July. In the circumstances they are to be commended for recognising many of the key interests of residents - although we believe the Scheme needs reinforcing if it is to provide a sound basis for protecting those interests.

Some 250 submissions were lodged with Council by 17 September. Over half are site specific, that is to say, relate to a particular concern about the future of a specific area of land (such as the proposed reclassification of the Middleborough Road industrial zone or the proposed zone overlay at the rear of some Jeffery Street properties).

There are relatively few submissions from groups and associations, private firms and referral authorities [eg. utilities and government agencies], the rest coming from individual residents, including a number from Blackburn. Our thanks to those who gave us copies.

The response is not insignificant, given that town planning is a complex subject, only becoming a consideration for most people when their home environment is threatened by some new development.

The BVRG submission included a number of recommendations (see attached summary) and we added an appeal to maintain the office of Strategic Planner, an office which during the last several years has often been left unfilled. Preparation of our submission was considerably assisted by hearing the views of residents who attended the Workshop on 9 August, arranged jointly with the Blackburn and District Tree Preservation Society.

... AND THE DAYS AHEAD

At the time of writing we await the Officer's report and recommendations to Council and the decisions on which matters are to be referred to a Panel, which will presumably hear submissions some time in the first half of next year.

The individual resident is the most vulnerable player on the urban development stage. It is important that those of you who made submissions take every opportunity to personally present your views to Council and/or the Panel. And whether or not you lodged comments, to encourage and support the BVRG and other resident submitters by attending Council meetings or public hearings when issues are debated or submissions made.

Whatever Scheme is finally adopted, Council will not always have the last say, and we must remain uncertain how far residential amenity will be protected from the sort of medium density and commercial developments which have been the subject of recent articles and letters to the Press. That situation can only improve when such publicity, augmented by personal contacts, convinces enough politicians - at all levels and of all persuasions - that people are genuinely concerned about maintaining residential character.

Note: The Victorian Planning Provisions (VPP) have been reviewed and a revised version approved for inclusion in the Whitehorse - and all Victorian - Planning Schemes.

HELPING US TO HELP YOU

We need contributions of time, facilities and money if we are to adequately represent the interests of residents and thank those who subscribed to our July appeal for 1997/8 funds.

If you haven't done so yet, please write your cheque **now** (Single or family \$10/ concession \$5), made payable to BVRG, crossed "Not Negotiable" and send it, together with your name and address, to the **Hon. Treasurer, BVRG, 3 Railway Road, Blackburn 3130** by **15 November**.

BVRG SUBMISSION ON WHITEHORSE PLANNING SCHEME 1997
SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) ***Enhancing Residential Character***; MSS 4.2. - to improve relationships between residents and Officers and agents of Council by requiring consultation and dispute resolution ; to include the *Tree Policy* as an incorporated document.
- 2) ***Protecting Areas of Special Significance***; MSS 4.3 - to avoid a three year delay in adopting appropriate measures for special areas; to educate all stakeholders on relevant planning provisions.
- 2A) ***Heritage***; MSS 4.3 - to avoid a three year delay in adding to the Schedule
- 3) ***Accommodating New Housing***; MSS 4.4 -to defer designation of Blackburn as an Urban Village or high density housing site pending outcome of heritage investigation and Housing Strategy.
- 5) ***Transport Strategy***; MSS 4.11 - to consult the local community on *Bicycle Strategy* proposals; to investigate improvements in crossing Blackburn Road.
- 6) ***Better Urban Design***; MSS 4.12 - to seek greater authority over siting of lines and cables, with stated preference for undergrounding; to include the *Residential Street Tree Strategy* as an Incorporated Document; to expand the definition of recreational Open Space; to preserve lanes as Open Space.
- 7) ***Blackburn Office Zone***; DPO 3 - to review the feasibility of introducing specific design controls appropriate to the area.
- 8) ***Special Residential Zone 5***; VPO 1 & DDO 1 - to correct the various errors and omissions; to clarify meaning of Overlay provisions and their common link.
- 9A) ***Local Guidelines for Medium Density Housing (MDH)*** - to seek Local Variations; to amend document to reinforce the main thrust of the *Guidelines*.
- 10) ***Lapsed Amendment L77***; to rezone former development site Residential 1
- 11) ***Central Blackburn: Design & Development Control Overlay***; to review initial response and define attitude in case of rejection or substantial revision of *Local Guidelines for Medium Density Housing*.
- 12) ***Maps and Plans***; to correct and/or redraw Maps and Plans as indicated.
- 13) ***Permits***; to use the term 'planning permit' in documents prepared by Council