



## BLACKBURN VILLAGE RESIDENTS GROUP

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## BULLETIN No 36

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### TWO IMPORTANT EVENTS

### NEW RESIDENTS WELCOME

AGM

THURSDAY 2 NOVEMBER 7.30



We realise that BVRG members have a wide range of interests, town planning being only one. For that reason, and because we also have to hold a committee meeting the same night, our AGM will be of short duration.

local planning issues or any business relating to the group. And it allows us to report on the year's events and finances, leaving more time for less serious matters at the dinner (see below). Please join us for the meeting, to commence promptly at 7.30pm at the Victorian Field Naturalists Hall, 1 Gardenia St., Blackburn.

DINNER

FRIDAY 17 NOVEMBER 7.15 for 7.30



Reserving this venue for our sole use proved popular last year. But we aim to improve on that by allowing more time for socialising – and again there will be no long speeches – 10 minutes maximum for our mystery speaker.

*La Promenade Blackburn* at 21 Salisbury Avenue has a BYO licence and we have arranged for a four-course menu with alternative dishes, for \$22.00. You will appreciate that as space is limited we can again only accept bookings in order of receipt – so please ring early to avoid disappointment

*RSVP by Sunday 12 November Ron Grainger 9877 3348 or David Morrison 9894 2531*

## THE HOUSING STUDY AND A STEERING COMMITTEE

In mid July Council announced details of their long awaited Planning Scheme commitment - preparation of a Housing Strategy. Appointment is expected next month of a Steering Committee, composed of one representative each from HIA, RESI and SOS and two representatives from the general community together with Crs. Allan, Anderson and Millane. They will be assisted by support staff and advisors and will be bound by a confidentiality agreement not to divulge business under discussion until formally reporting back to Council with recommendations on the Strategy.

At the same time, studies of special character areas and of existing overlay boundaries will establish whether further amendments or variations should be sought.

**Community input is essential. Watch out for opportunities to record your views on Housing generally and on the review of the Significant Landscape Overlay border areas - see below.**

## SPECIAL CHARACTER AREAS

Council's studies of special character areas will include a review of those bordering the Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO) - previously known as the Special Residential Zone (SRZ). At Council's request we have submitted our views on this exercise, recommending that each distinctive area be separately analysed and, where appropriate, relevant planning controls specified, formal application for any controls being dependant on the support of those living there.

As an associated project the BVRG intends to contact those residents in the area of central Blackburn which we surveyed in 1997 and on whose behalf we then submitted a recommendation for planning controls to protect residential character.

## COMMUNICATING WITH YOU

We try to keep in touch with members through this Bulletin but sometimes also by letter or phone. And while we value your response through those media (and better still by personal contact e.g. by attendance at the AGM!) we are considering supplementing these by requesting advice of email addresses. Your response would help us decide if we should have our own email address.

If we went ahead we certainly wouldn't use the facility to bother you with superfluous junk - but it could prove of real benefit as an alternative means of contact - both ways.

We also believe that a lot of like minded newer residents might be happy to join us if they were only aware of our existence. Another way of reaching them (and of giving you an additional reference point) could be through our own web site. We are investigating both these options and welcome your views as well as any offers of 'technical' advice or support. And while 'online' you might care to note that the new email address for SOS is [www.ozdaily.com/sos](http://www.ozdaily.com/sos)

## THANK YOU

To all those who made prompt payment of their year 2000-2001 subscriptions and also made generous donations. For those who requested and still await a receipt, that is enclosed with this Bulletin. If you overlooked payment, a reminder form is included.

## BROCHURE FOR SLO

We had hoped that by now those of you living in the Blackburn Special Landscape Overlay (SLO) area - the old SRZ - would have received a copy of a brochure outlining the relevant objectives and planning provisions which apply in the area.

Going back through the mists of time many of you will recall the Nunawading Council's brochure *A Special Place to Live* was available to all residents and that for those in the SRZ there was a supplement, including a map. It is an updated version of this that we and other groups, including the Tree Preservation Society, have repeatedly requested, particularly for the information of the many householders who have moved into the area in the last ten years.

## RESCODE 2000

Advisory Committee public hearings concluded last month and their report is due by 24 November.

As expected, the draft proposals drew flak from many in the development camp, impatient with any criticism of their output and an obligation to meet community expectations. The need for recognition of existing character was emphasised by a respondent to a previous letter in *The Age* complaining about 'vexatious' appeals against medium density developments. Giving examples close to home, he wrote "*Such proposals are usually speculative projects, where a non resident developer builds, sells at a big profit and moves on, while the residents, whose objections have been passed over, are left to live with a structure that in their view mars the area in which they live. Is it the developer's right to make a profit and go on his way superior to the right of existing residents to live in the environment of their choice?*"

While developers frequently dismiss objections and appeals as vexatious and too easy to institute, the truth is that it takes a great deal of time, effort and courage for the ordinary citizen to enter this process. It is one with which, unlike the developer, they are unfamiliar and is why we prepared for members facing that situation the *BVRG:INAPPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT OBJECTORS GUIDE*.

It should be added that, also unlike the developer, residents are unable to recoup any costs by means of claiming business expenses or charging a client.

## GRASS ROOTS

Despite disclaimers this recent TV series - like many good stories - included enough real life situations to register with those having at least a passing familiarity with the local government scene.

Of course, no one would suggest that our council bore any resemblance to that of Arcadia Waters, still less to any of its characters. And we trust that the new CEO, Noelene Duff, who commenced duty on 14 August, will ensure that none of her staff attempt to emulate the machinations of their fictional counterparts, especially in relation to urban planning matters!

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