

**The Hunters Hill Hotel**

In the decade long saga of the redevelopment of the Hunters Hill Hotel site the Council is currently considering the Section 96 application lodged by the developers of the hotel site to vary their original development approval. The Trust has lodged a detailed submission opposing the proposal. We have also lodged two FOI requests asking for information about Council's legal advice on the status of the Section 96 aspect of the proposal. Council's response to our first application was that they had not received any written legal advice. It is our understanding that Council subsequently did receive advice. We believe they will claim that this advice is privileged information.

Our objections to the latest proposal include the following:

- *The approved DA did not comply with the planning controls set out in DCP 27 for Hunters Hill Village. The proposed changes to the approved DA increase that level of non-compliance.*
- *There is no additional public benefit by way of increased public space or landscaping or anything else as a result of the amendments.*
- *The proposed changes to the approved application will have an additional adverse impact on,*
  - *The desired character of the Hunters Hill Village core as set out in DCP 27 for Hunters Hill Village*
  - *The hotel itself, which is a heritage item.*
  - *The heritage item at No 62 Gladesville Road.*
  - *The amenity of the village core and the surrounding area because of the increased level of traffic generated and because of the changes to existing roadways, traffic lights and bus stops. There will also be an increase in non-resident on-street parking.*
  - *Gladesville Road and the heritage item at No 62 Gladesville Road through overshadowing.*
  - *The amenity of houses in Avenue Road and Joubert Street through increased noise from the beer garden and overlooking from the units on the new fourth floor.*
- *The submission of a Section 96 application to modify the development consent is not applicable in this case and a new DA should be lodged and then assessed under DCP 27 for Hunters Hill Village.*

**Sustainability of the Hotel proposal**

On July 27, 2010 the NSW Premier's Award for Sustainability Excellence was given to the Sydney Theatre Company. Their Artistic Directors and Hunters Hill residents, Cate Blanchett and Andrew Upton were singled out for their contribution in initiating the Greening the Wharf program, which introduced rainwater harvesting and solar power to the theatre. The plan will make The Wharf carbon neutral by 2011.

This prompted The Trust to ask Council in an additional submission *How environmentally sustainable is The Hunters Hill Hotel's latest proposal* and in particular:

- How sustainable is it to excavate around 35,000 cubic metres of sandstone from the bedrock of Hunters Hill at a cost of around five million dollars before the construction of the building is even started?

- How sustainable is it to have the major retail tenant located completely underground thus having to rely entirely on artificial light and ventilation?
- How sustainable is it to have so many units so poorly served by natural light and ventilation that they will be relying on air-conditioning and artificial light for much of the time?
- How sustainable is it to have units facing south onto Gladesville Road, which means no direct sunlight and the necessity to have windows closed against traffic noise and fumes and shutters closed for privacy?
- Where are the solar panels?
- Where is the solar hot water system?
- Where is the roof-water collection re-use system?
- Is there a plan to make the building carbon neutral?

Hunters Hill Council makes great store of its membership of the Cities for Climate Protection program and is actively promoting "things you can do to help us move towards a sustainable Hunters Hill". Where is the Hunters Hill Hotel in all of this and what measures will Council be taking to ensure that any development of the Hunters Hill Hotel site will be environmentally sustainable?

We believe there is a great opportunity here for Council to make a stand on behalf of the whole community and insist that the development of the Hotel site complies with the planning controls that the community signed off on. The first action of Council should be to reject the notion that these modifications can be covered by a Section 96 modification and insist on a whole new DA. This will send a clear message that the community will decide what gets built in Hunters Hill, rather than avaricious developers.

**Public housing in Salter Street – some good news**

All things being considered I think this development has turned out quite well. The Conservation Advisory Panel had quite a bit of input into the selection of the design from two alternatives and into the selection of the materials. The building helps break up the unrelieved mass of Blandville Court and its interesting broken massing helps lessen its impact in this location. It also is a much better architectural solution than the more upmarket private units across the street.



Salter Street Public Housing Hunters Hill

## STORMWATER & SEWAGE - OUT OF SIGHT OUT OF MIND?

Brigid Dowsett

### Sydney Water's wet weather overflow abatement planning in Lane Cove catchment - in particular Tarban Creek

Committee members represent the Trust on a range of Advisory Committees and other fora where there is a matter of public interest to which we can usefully contribute. Sydney Water has recently recommenced a strategic planning phase to improve their understanding of how to manage wet weather overflows in the Lane Cove sewerage catchment. Not everyone's cup of tea, but as the area covered includes parts of Ryde, Lane Cove, Ku-ring-gai and Willoughby Local Government Areas and all of Hunter's Hill LGA, it was important to accept the request to participate.

The project is part of Sydney Water's \$560 million SewerFix Program and involved attending each of three consultation workshops with local community groups and Council officers from each LGA. The aim was to develop knowledge of best management of wet weather sewerage overflows and identify preferred strategies to reduce overflow frequency and environmental impacts and to protect public health.

With any new development porous land disappears and stormwater run-off increases, leading to all the problems we

now recognise. However there is still resistance to the logic of finding sustainable solutions to these problems, such as capturing rainfall as a resource and keeping it out of sewers. At the same time, in Sydney's established suburbs, sewer infrastructure is aging and the terracotta pipes are increasingly porous. Hence the inevitability of sewerage overflows after heavy rain.

There are 130 designed overflow points in the Lane Cove catchment and the goal is a limit of 40 discharges in 10 years at key overflows. During this planning phase the focus was on two of the worst - Gloucester Avenue on Lane Cove River and Tarban Creek in Hunter's Hill. While construction works are not scheduled until 2015, at least by the final workshop the best option for the Tarban Creek overflow was identified.

Issues raised at meetings included population pressures, over-development and planning failures, treating stormwater as a resource, re-use schemes, pollution impacts on receiving water quality and the integrity of local bushland, as well as repairing the system rather than building massive infrastructure such as the Northside Storage Tunnel that runs from Boronia Park to North Head. The importance of protecting the high value Lane Cove River, its tributaries and ecology was strongly emphasised by participants.

## DEATH BY A THOUSAND CUTS - TREE CARNAGE CONTINUES APACE

Sally Gaunt

Australia's "Oldest Garden Suburb" is at risk of losing its heritage tree canopy. Hunters Hill Council's draft Community Plan paints a vision of the suburb in 2030 as "being renowned for, among other things, its magnificent tree canopy. Under the heading GOALS for Heritage and Built Environment it includes "To ensure the preservation of our heritage buildings, garden areas, views, streetscapes, open space and tree canopy", with a direction to itself to "retain the existing ... trees and leafy landscapes" by developing "comprehensive tree management and preservation strategies".

Yet the reality on the ground is very different. A couple of years ago Council quietly disbanded its Park and Trees Advisory Group, which provided informed community input on contentious tree matters and gave some protection. Since then, tree loss has accelerated alarmingly. Now there is even more need for such a body as, increasingly, newcomers move into the area with little appreciation of the treescape or understanding that each tree removed renders the canopy more ragged and takes away some of Hunters Hill's magic ambience.

Trees are removed by various means – poisoned and left to die, chopped down when Council's not looking, removed illegally

in direct contravention of DA conditions with the knowledge that the penalty will be paltry, protected in DA but undermined by development and rendered unsafe, or removed by-the-book with (far too readily obtained) Council approval.

Examples of the destruction aren't hard to find. Margaret Christie reports that in Alexandra Street so many Jacarandas have been removed that, where once she looked out on a sea of purple in November, now all she sees is a sea of roofs. Of the five beautiful specimens that graced the properties across the road from her house, four have gone including two in the last month. Margot Child told me that, of the stand of three magnificent Hoop Pines in Ellsmere Ave that were specifically protected in the terms of a DA, two have been chopped down and the other has been butchered. In Toocooya Road a large street tree has been poisoned and is slowly dying.

The Trust's brief is to try to protect our heritage, both built and natural. Our tree canopy is a vital part of our heritage. We challenge Council to not only hold to the demands of its own LEP and its new Community Plan, but also to respect the expectations of its committed residents that our treasured treescape be given the protection it deserves.

## COMMUNITY GARDEN IN HUNTERS HILL

The Trust has long been in support of the proposal to establish a community garden in Hunter's Hill local government area. Over a decade ago our then President Gil Wahlquist put forward a plan to develop one on land in front of The Priory, on the site of the historic market gardens and vineyards of the Marist Fathers.

The idea has been raised again recently. Discussions between Council and interested residents have taken place and there are already well developed plans in place for small native and community gardens to be commenced as soon as a site is agreed.

A recent suggestion was for it to be sited in Figtree Park. This came up during the community consultation process managed

by consultants regarding Council's concept plan and business feasibility study for the re-development of 40-48 Gladesville Road. Several Trust members were present, concerned that this central public space should remain as accessible green space and not be over-developed. A community garden, together with a children's play area and picnic area, would be ideally placed here and has since been promoted as part of the Sesquicentenary celebrations for next year, but Council apparently has other ideas for the site and rejected the plan.

The latest idea being investigated is for a garden at the old Henley Bowling Club.

However nothing has been finalized.



### HUNTERS HILL TRUST CHRISTMAS PARTY



The Trust's Christmas cocktail party is coming up.  
Please come to our annual get-together.

**When:** Wednesday 1 December, from 6pm

**Where:** The Priory,  
Riverglade Reserve, Salter Street

**Speaker:** Kate Clark,  
Director of the NSW Historic Houses Trust

**Cost:** \$45.00 a head

RSVP with cheque to The Secretary, PO Box 85, Hunters Hill, 2110,

OR

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