



BEECROFT CHELTENHAM CIVIC TRUST INC

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BULLETIN 2

August 2014

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50 Years of Community Action Get Active and Fight to Protect your Community

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Your Trust delivers these bulletins regularly – many thanks to our dedicated team of 40 volunteer distributors! You might also check our website and weblog at www.2119.org.au. If you would like more regular monthly updates – and give your opinions on emerging issues, please join some 600+ Trust members and friends, who receive concise Trust emails. Just email comment@2119.org.au and we will keep in touch!

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Your New Committee

At the BCCT AGM the following people were elected and subsequent appointments made.

President: Kent Ross

Vice President: Ross Walker

Secretary: Colin Johnston

Treasurer: Peter Hewitt

Committee: Barbara Davis, Julianne Lynch, Peter Snelgrove, Michael Stove, Carolyn Watt, David White.

BCCT Spring Walk Sunday 17 August 2 – 4pm

Meet at the end of Day Road Cheltenham by 2pm. We will walk up the track to the playing fields at Pennant Hills Park, then along the fire trail, with its stunning views of Sydney, to Lane Cove River and Devlins Creek then back on the track beside Devlins Creek to Day Road, passing Whale Rock. Afternoon tea will be provided at the end of the walk at about 4 pm. It has been a few years since we did this favourite and the wildflowers should be abundant. All are welcome. Please wear sturdy shoes, bring water and wear a hat if needed. The start of the walk involves a small creek crossing and fairly steep walk up to Pennant Hills Park.

Busy Times for your Trust

The Trust has been kept busy over the past few months with major infrastructure projects as well as the many significant local development proposals for Beecroft. Representations have been made on your behalf to Council and our MPs, Philip Ruddock and Greg Smith. Matters raised include noise, pollution, traffic, especially with the ETTT construction, the NWRL and ETTT and a lift at Beecroft Station.

Controversial Development Applications in Beecroft

The Trust has been actively involved in opposing inappropriate Development Applications (DA) over the past few months. We have spoken at hearings of the Joint Regional Planning Panel (JRPP) and the Land and Environment Court. The ones listed below are just some of them. We are particularly concerned by the proposal to demolish, in a heritage conservation precinct, the historic 2 storey house at 81 Beecroft Rd and to surround the heritage listed 83 Beecroft Rd with 5 storey units. Residents can apply to speak at the JRPP which is open to the public.

7, 7a, 7b, 7c Chapman Avenue and 81 and 83 Beecroft Rd (DA 81/2014) for the construction of 92 residential units in four 5 storey towers is due to go before the JRPP on **August 14**. This most contentious DA directly impacts on the suburb's local heritage. While the heritage listed house at 83 Beecroft Rd (the Garden Clinic) is proposed to be retained, its rear yard containing a very large and healthy White Mahogany, home to much wildlife, will be destroyed when the rear yard is subdivided off and the building will be surrounded on 3 sides by 5 storey units.

The historic 2 storey house adjoining at 81 Beecroft Rd is proposed to be demolished for units. It was considered for heritage listing in 2008 but Council withdrew its listing when the property was being considered for rezoning. The National Trust was approached by our President and as a result has made a submission to Council that this property is worthy of heritage listing. This opinion is shared by an independent heritage architect BCCT consulted. The National Trust knew of no other case where a council had rezoned an area within a Heritage Conservation Precinct for high density development requiring the demolition of a house that is likely to contribute to the significance of the heritage precinct. BCCT is questioning the process used by Council to remove it from consideration for heritage listing in 2008. 81 Beecroft Rd has heritage significance, is worthy of retention and must be fully assessed by a qualified heritage consultant before any demolition is considered.

88 Malton Rd, Beecroft (DA 94/2013) for the construction of a new house and removal of a large Angophora costata (Sydney Red Gum) was refused by Council because the 200 year old tree should be preserved. The Trust supported council in this. The applicant appealed to the Land and Environment Court and was successful in obtaining consent to remove the tree. This is a most disappointing result for the Trust and many residents who actively opposed it.

186 Beecroft Rd, Cheltenham (DA 1394/2013) for the construction of 10 units under the Seniors Housing State Planning Policy involves the removal of about 550 square metres of Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest (STIF) community. This DA is yet to be determined, however currently a draft Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) to offset the expected tree loss, is on display inviting comment. This VPA involves planting similar trees elsewhere in the Shire. However STIF only occurs on the ridges and there are few if any alternate areas where the offsetting can occur. This specific grove of Turpentine creates a strong ecological statement as you travel up Beecroft Road. It is also an integral part of the local wildlife corridors in this lower part of Cheltenham. Over the years there has been a significant and incremental loss of STIF in our local community and the removal of these 100 year old trees must not be allowed. They should be preserved as a vital part of our Heritage Conservation Precinct.

1-5 Chapman Avenue, Beecroft (DA 1432/2013) for the construction of 60 residential units in two 5 storey towers was deferred when it went before the Joint Regional Planning Panel (JRPP) recently, even though Council has recommended approval. The deferment related to the loss of the remnant indigenous vegetation from the site (mainly Sydney Blue Gums) when there appeared to be possible design options that could preserve the trees. This DA is due to go back to the JRPP on August 14 at Hornsby Council Chambers.

The Module Shopping Complex at the corner of Hannah St and Beecroft Rd was refused unanimously by the JRPP because it failed to meet the intent of Council's DCP. This means that the developer cannot submit amended plans and has to submit a new DA. We were most impressed with the speeches by local business people, residents, Councillor Michael Hutchence and MP Greg Smith at this hearing. The Trust understands that the owner is preparing a new DA which hopefully will address the deficiencies but unfortunately, it is unlikely that the developer will significantly reduce the number of 1 bedroom units in the complex.

The North West Rail Line

The NWRL project has managed to destroy about 1 ha of pristine bushland with some of this bush critically endangered. All for a temporary haulage road adjacent to the M2 to allow access to the infrastructure facility on the former netball courts at Cheltenham Oval.

Implications of the NWRL Metro for the rest of the Rail Network

The Trust continues to oppose the NWRL as a metro system which fails to integrate with the existing heavy rail network. The NSW Government seems to want to destroy the very efficient Sydney heavy rail system. Their decision ignores firm evidence that the lighter carriages will be less safe for passengers in a derailment or collision than the existing double deck trains. It is claimed that "single deck trains can accelerate more quickly" and "climb steeper

grades" than existing double deck trains. While the first statement may be theoretically true, the factors that limit the acceleration of any train, independent of its weight, are (a), the tolerance of passengers to the train's acceleration and (b), the adhesion of the wheels to the tracks. All existing suburban trains are capable of achieving acceleration in excess of passenger tolerance while the second statement is simply false since the grade that any vehicle can climb is independent of the weight of the vehicle. In persisting with plans to introduce light weight single deck trains, the NSW State Government has ignored advice from acknowledged experts, has ignored evidence from overseas where double deck carriages are being introduced and has ignored the large scale opposition of residents.

The tunnel boring machines will soon be in operation, with the tunnels only 40 cm too small with the current safety requirements for double decker carriages. We are also concerned at the lack of a safety walkway, such as in the Epping to Chatswood line. We have been informed that double decker trains could use the tunnels if the Government assumed all responsibility for accidents.

The Metro will cause great disruption for commuters on the Northern line who will have to change trains at Epping to travel to Chatswood or go via Strathfield to Central Country platforms then change to the City Circle line. The Trust Committee has received disturbing information that the future operation of the proposed metro will create a knock-on effect on the whole of the Sydney rail network. We have been told that services as far as the Western and South Western lines as well as the Central Coast services will need to be altered, slowed down and even reduced. Commuters can expect a medium to long term reduction in overall rail services for Sydney. This is a detrimental change that is not needed. Our many attempts to change this Metro decision have fallen on deaf ears and the Minister's response was 'get used to it!' And the Government promotes that the public comes first!

ETTT Operational Noise and Vibration Report (ONVR)

The Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust (BCCT) was briefed by ETTA on this report and we categorically reject it. It is based on a flawed mathematical model which underestimates the impact noise will have on the community. Of the 432 properties along the rail corridor in Beecroft and Cheltenham which were assessed in the report, only 131 triggered the standard set to be noise affected but only some 47 of these will benefit from proposed noise mitigation measures. Clearly all properties along the rail corridor and many in nearby streets which were not assessed, will be and are already affected by rail noise. Many properties, including those in Sutherland Rd south of Copeland Rd, known already to be above the acceptable noise level of 65 dBA, were not identified as noise affected.

Proposed noise mitigation measures are clearly inadequate. They are:

- Low height barrier 1 m high between approx. Copeland Rd and Chapman Ave along eastern side
- Conventional barrier 5m high from approx. 87 Wongala Cres to Pennant Hills on western side
- Conventional barrier 5m high along eastern side south of Pennant Hills to between Azalea Grove and Cassia Grove
- 'At Property' noise treatments will be offered to only 33 affected properties which are not behind noise walls.

No details have been provided as to the type and effectiveness of the proposed noise walls. If it does not absorb noise, it could create a reverberation chamber. The modelling and assessment were performed before major earth works and removal of sandstone and vegetation occurred along the corridor. These works have resulted in many residents experiencing increased rail noise and vibration in their homes which they had not previously experienced. The report fails to adequately address vibration issues by denying it will be increased.

The measures proposed are sheer tokenism and fail to address what may well be an insoluble problem of noise and vibration which will affect the health of residents, cause significant disruption to sleep, reduce residential amenity and cause structural damage to homes. Community feedback was discouraged with only the identified noise affected properties issued with feedback forms. These only required comment on proposed measures. The report is totally inadequate and must be rejected. The health and wellbeing of our community is at risk.

Water Main Breaks Near Cheltenham Railway Station

On Friday 18 July, residents heard rock breaking noise at 2.55am and awoke to find a broken water main at the corner of The Crescent and Cheltenham Road. Water was pouring down to the Day Road watercourse. Many, concerned for the stability of their homes, wanted to know if this broken main was the result of several months of sandstone removal and vibration in the vicinity for the ETTT. Complaints to ETTA were not answered and the Civic Trust wrote to Sydney Water asking for information on the cause of the breakage. Their response on 22 July was

astounding. We were told that they have so many documents that we would have to apply under the Government Information (Public Access) which will cost \$30 for the application and \$30 an hour for the investigation. This is totally unacceptable that smacks of bureaucracy gone mad. It's so ridiculous. All the residents wanted to know was if it was due to the ETTT construction or simply to the age and structure of the pipe. They were concerned about possible damage to their houses. We have asked Greg Smith to bring this to the attention of the relevant Minister.

National Tree Day - Sunday 27 July

The Trust has been informed by Councillor Bernadette Azizi that Council is working with schools to provide indigenous trees for planting in their school grounds. 25 schools are participating. The plants are selected on their suitability for the area and include trees, shrubs and ground covers with information on growth habit and care.

Beecroft Community Bank

A group of residents have formed a steering committee to establish a branch of Bendigo Bank in Beecroft. Apart from offering a complete range of banking services, the community bank distributes part of its profits to community organisations such as schools, sporting groups and community organisations. They would like more representatives of the business community on the committee. If you would like more information or are interested in joining the group, please email bendigo2119@gmail.com.

Beecroft Garden Club

Beecroft Garden Club invites you to enjoy the social side of gardening, learn and share knowledge. They meet at Beecroft Bowling Club on the first Friday of the month with a guest speaker. They also have trips and garden visits. Enquiries: 9980 6781, 94847895.

Resident Feedback on 2119 Environment

Householders expressed very high overall levels of negative or very negative environmental impacts (Q.1) caused by:

- 92% Epping to Thornleigh Rail Link.
- 88% Loss of trees for subdivision of large blocks
- 86% Loss of trees for new houses
- 85% North West Rail line

Householders' comments on *support for a good environment in Beecroft & Cheltenham*:

- 92% Poor or Very Poor support by NSW Government (Q.5)
- 89% Poor or Very Poor support by NSW EPA staff (Q.7)
- 87% Poor or Very Poor support by NSW MPs (Q.7)
- 83% Poor or Very Poor support by Federal MP (Q.7)

Full details of residents' feedback and Trust analysis is in our report to the NSW Parliamentary Enquiry on the Environmental Protection Authority at www.2119.org.au [Recent Submissions]

Join the Trust and Support your Community - memberships are our income. Renewals are now due.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL/APPLICATION FORM 2014

Fees are \$20 household (two adults), \$10 individual

Surname (1)..... First name (1)

Surname (2)..... First name (2)

Address

Phone Number Mobile No.....

E-mail address

Membership fees \$ as noted below. Method of payment please mark appropriate box:-

Post ☐ with cheque to PO Box 31 Beecroft 2119

Deposited in bank ☐ BSB 062 113 Commonwealth Bank Beecroft Account No 10068238.

Electric Funds Transfer ☐ EFT from your bank account via computer

BSB 062 113 Commonwealth Bank Beecroft Account Number 10068238 and use your name as reference.

So we know your details, please send a copy of this completed form to The Treasurer, PO Box 31 Beecroft 2119 OR email your name, address, phone no and email address to treasurer@2119.org.au