

The Glebe
Society

BULLETIN

No.2 of 1976. (Feb)

P.O. Box 100, Glebe, 2037. Phone 660-0026

THE '76 PLAN?

The 1971-74 Leichhardt Council, with an open people's participation Planning Committee devised a new Municipal Plan which attempted to set objectives for the whole development of the communities of Leichhardt, incorporating as well some restrictions on residential development which effectively precluded high-rise, high density unit development. The Plan was submitted in August 1974 to the State Planning and Environment Commission.

The advent of the new Council in September 1974, saw a move to have the Plan withdrawn, but the Commission sought grounds for this and proposals for change from the Council. It had never been clear what objections the Labor Councillors had (except clear animosity from one quarter). In any event the Consultant Town Planner was set the task of "revising" the Plan. His approach was to take the old Council's Plan, and interpolate its text with amendments which either reduced requirements or increased "discretion of Council".

In general he has effectively doubled the allowable population densities and floor space ratios for Residential Zonings and reducing minimum land areas required for one dwelling by 30%. In addition, business zoning floor space ratios have been at least doubled.

The effect on residential zonings will be to allow - by The State Planning and Environment Commission's definition for 500 persons/hectare - high-rise and high density NOT the town houses and two storey flats indicated in the "Statement of Intent" in the Plan.

These changes can only be viewed as a return to ideas which were (mistakenly) in vogue ten years ago (see the SPA Glebe Plan of the sixties) and which have since been repudiated and discarded as out of keeping with what people will put up with. (Not everyone now thinks any block of units is lovely). Indeed, the changes

will mean a reduction in the present standard, and, as funds become available, a unit-developers invasion. The only favourable comment one can make is that Mr. Kenna has persisted with the 1974 Plan's refusal to admit the expressways into the community's future development.

Jim Coombs

THE GLEBE ESTATE

The future of the Glebe Estate restoration project is in jeopardy, according to Canberra reports which indicate that the new Liberal Government is planning to cut or eliminate expenditure on the scheme. The Glebe Project is one of a number of programmes initiated by the Labor Government which now appear highly likely to be heavily pruned or cancelled by the Fraser administration.

The expected decision to cut back the Glebe Project is understood to fall within two basic guidelines of the new Government in its review of Labor programmes: that the States should be responsible for affairs within their own boundaries, and as an area of expenditure which is not regarded as essential for the material prosperity of the country.

Effects of the proposed cuts on the Glebe Project are difficult to assess at this stage. Many of the houses are partially restored and a sharp cutback in expenditure before completion of essential work would leave them in danger of deterioration or demolition. The possibility also exists that the Government may decide to sell the houses, either singly or in groups, to private owners or developers. Such a decision would put an end to a

project unique in Australia: the complete restoration of an important 19th century townscape. Glebe residents who regard the Project as worthwhile are urged to write to the Prime Minister as soon as possible and request that the implied commitment to restore the houses be honoured.

Ian Evans

Footnote from the Editor: We have all noticed the welcome changes as work is carried out in the Glebe Estate and a recent edition of "Community" reports:-

As one of the spin-offs from the renovation of the houses in the Glebe lands, the lower part of Glebe Point Road, between Parramatta Road and Mitchell Street has spun back to life as a shopping centre. A nice new addition is Cafe 99 specialising in home cooking. The very latest is a shop specialising in kitchenware; while the last twelve months have seen the opening of The Magic Mushroom to sell ladies' wear, Glebe Greenery, and a shop selling Victoriana.

TRAIN RIDE



GOOD NEWS - GLEBE RAILWAY BUFFS !

Following the issuing of Monograph No. 2 - "A Northwestern Railway Instead of the Expressway" (copies still available at 30¢) a proposal was made to the then Transport Minister (Fife) that the Society be allowed to arrange an outing on the railway line through Glebe (which the monograph proposed for up-grading to commuter standard). Fife refused, but we reapplied to Max Ruddock and he has AGREED if we do it with one of the Railways Historic Societies. Mr. Oliver of the Railways Historical Museum has agreed and only a date is to be set.

It will be a GALA, picnic event - tickets probably between \$3-\$5. We will be inviting celebrities (e.g. our local member Les McMahon). Ring Jim Coombs (660.0026) to book your seat now!

GLEBE POINT EAST

Mr. Sampson (of Parkes) left the 3rd February Leichhardt Council meeting satisfied. The application for 178 units was approved subject only to the concurrence of the Police Traffic Branch, and "the receipt of proper survey plans". Members of the Society in attendance left the meeting despondent. The Society in December proposed to Council the following grounds for objection:-

1. The development, comprising mostly blocks of flats is quite out of keeping with the character of the area.
2. In particular, the style of architecture of such a development, of which there are other sad examples in the area, can ultimately only detract from the overall amenity of Glebe.
3. This development will add, using the developers' conservative ratios, some 427 people to the population at a density per occupied acre of about 100 which is higher than almost anywhere in the suburb. No previous planning has foreseen such crowding on Glebe Point.
4. This is a prime site, with views unequalled in the rest of Glebe, yet only a band of water frontage is to be available to all for the enjoyment of it. Indeed, access to the water will be difficult and not easily seen by residents not occupying the better placed flats or units.
5. Apart from the restoration of "Venetia", which so far has had a mistaken commencement of demolition undertaken by agents of the developer, there is little offered to the community of Glebe by the development. Present residents, let alone the future denizens of the development will have no provision here for their cultural or recreational activities - yet we are asked to accept an enormous increase in the population of the area.
6. In view of other authorities' attempts to preserve the social character of the area, we would urge Council to seek ways to ensure that the development makes some provision for low income housing, especially for old residents and pensioners. If such a large development cannot assist the objective of maintaining the unique social character of the Glebe, why should the undoubted change it will bring be welcomed.
7. A petition is presented with 212 signatures seeking to have the development at least varied to provide the site part bordered by Glebe Point Road and Mary Street designated as Public Park,

being the part most accessible to all people of Glebe, and with the best view.

8. The road access to the site via Leichhardt and Stewart Streets is inadequate for the volume of cars which the units will house.

These objections summarise the very real reservation we have for the development.

The Consultant Town Planner (Mr. Arthur Kenna) reports on objections as follows:-

"Objections are summarised as follows:-

- (a) Architectural and environmental incompatibility
- (b) Overdevelopment
- (c) Interference with privacy
- (d) Site coverage and population density should be stringently restricted
- (e) Sub-standard in terms of landscaping and architectural design generally
- (f) Buildings should not exceed 2 storeys in height
- (g) Inadequate provision for off-street parking
- (h) Alternative accommodation required for (1) resident. Relocation of accommodation is arranged for near future.
- (i) That 'Venetia' No. 57 Leichhardt Street, Glebe be preserved
- (j) Restriction of traffic generation within the area.

"In deference to those who objected on traffic grounds, the matter has been referred to the New South Wales Police Department (Traffic Branch) and to Council's Engineer for an expression of views and comments and under the circumstances, the Company should be required to comply with any conditions required in this regard."

Not only does the Consultant Town Planner's listing do little justice to the objections reply is only offered to two objections (one of ours).

It is a great shame that the Council has not looked harder at the possibilities for the site - they have not even considered to what community use the promised restored Venetia will be put. The questions of social character, amenity and architectural merit have been avoided. This Council will probably not have such an opportunity again.

It is my personal view that the development will within a few years of completion be regarded as a blot on the development of Glebe - a sadly misused opportunity.

Attempts to show Aldermen an alternative scheme developed in 1974 by UNSW Architecture Students fell on deaf ears.

Requests for prior consultation between residents, Council and Parkes was ignored and sidestepped.

Sad.

Post-script: In the light of Mr. Kenna's "new Planning Scheme" (the 1974 one with all the effective numbers deleted or changed) this development may in fact be small-scale and inoffensive by comparison with what will be allowable.

Jim Coombs

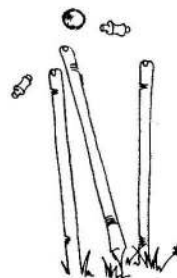
GROUP NEWS

The Planning group needs committee members and especially anyone who is able to spare time during normal office hours to inspect plans currently before Council. Please contact Eric Sandblom on 660.6593.

The newly formed General History group had a successful meeting on the 3rd February. See the next issue of the Bulletin for their first activity.

At the meeting of the social activities group on 28th January, Dorothy Perkins was unanimously elected as convenor. A future activity will be the long awaited railway trip on the goods line running through Glebe. See elsewhere in the Bulletin. See 'For Your Diary' for other events.

CRICKET



MORE VOLUNTEERS needed for the cricket match. Especially for the champagne drinking supporters group for whom our victories are a constant intoxication. Ring Jim Coombs with ideas to brighten the cricket.

Would anyone like to donate a trophy for our annual cricket match with the Balmain Association? There could be a yet undiscovered silversmith in the area.

FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday, 28th February, 8.00 p.m. Welcome to New Members - come and meet other members at a wine and cheese supper, to be held at Peter Manning's, 66 Toxteth Road.

Saturday, 6th March. Coffee, tea and biscuits will be served at Kate and Bernard Smith's, 23 Avenue Road from 10.30 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.

Saturday, 13th March, 10.00 a.m.-3.30 p.m. Market day at Glebe Primary School. Our white elephant stall needs all those surplus Christmas presents, these can be taken on the day or delivered to Dorothy Perkins, phone 660.7623. Dorothy would also like to hear from anyone who could help on the stall for an hour or more.

Monday, 15th March, 7.45 p.m. The Gardening group will meet at Sally and Bill Nelson's, 21 Alexandra Road. Please note the earlier start.

Saturday, 3rd April. A combined coffee morning and gardening group meeting at Pat Moore's, 12 Alexandra Road. Usual refreshments will be served from 10.30 a.m.-12.30 p.m. Price 20 cents.

Saturday, 1st May - Your diary can be noted well ahead for this combined coffee morning and gardening group meeting to be held at the Robertson's, 148 Hereford Street. 20 cents will buy you tea, coffee and biscuits from 10.30 a.m.-12.30 p.m.

WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS

Anne and Tom Gibson
Jan Hancock
Janice Jones
David Siboni
David and Mairead Browne
Mr. and Mrs. J. Hoddinott
Caroline Harvey
Bernard and Michelle de Tarle
Cathy Wherry
Jim Burrell
Miss J. E. Martin
Ms W. Taylor
Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Grice
Stephanie Knox

GARDEN - IN

The National Trust of Australia (N.S.W.) Junior Group, is conducting a series of lectures entitled:

The Australian Garden

The lectures are to be given at 7.30 p.m. in The Law School Hall of Assembly, 173 Phillip Street Sydney, on succeeding Wednesdays in March. Each lecture, allowing time for questions from the audience, is expected to run for a little over one hour. Entrance fee, payable at the door, is \$1.00 for members of The National Trust, and \$1.50 for others.

The titles of the lectures, and the persons delivering them, are as follows:-

March 3rd - "The International Landscape Scene" - Howard Tanner
March 10th - "Colonial Gardens" - James Broadbent
March 17th - "Late Nineteenth Century Gardens" - Kate Hattam
March 24th - "The Early Twentieth Century" - Howard Tanner
March 31st - "The Twentieth Century Reaction: A Re-evaluation of a Natural Environmental Heritage" - Wesley Stacey and Eleanor Williams.

MISCELLANY

LOPPERS BEWARE!

A preservation order exists on all trees in the Leichhardt Municipality and permission must be obtained from the Council before felling. Let's keep Glebe green.

Two landscape architects have been employed to beautify Wentworth Park, and the Management Committee hope they will be giving consideration to some of our suggestions.

The Presbyterian Church and adjoining Manse in Bridge Road are once again up for sale. Can't someone save this beautiful landmark? The Church seem to have lost interest in it.

Helen Antcliff at the Glebe Community Care Centre (660.5455) would like to hear from any lawnmower owners who are willing to mow pensioners' lawns for them.

Childbirth classes, run by the Childbirth Association of N.S.W., are starting at the Glebe Community Care Centre. The course of eight weeks costs \$25 and should be completed three months prior to birth.