

BHA newsletter early July

Greetings from what seems to be a very cold Barwon Heads.

Our BHA memberships are now due – a form is attached, or you can pick up from the Barwon Heads Post Office and Starfish.

### **SAVE THE BARWON HEADS LIBRARY**

**Thank you all for your support to keep the library open. We are wary of what will happen and encourage all to continue to participate.**

**Brett Luxford** Director Investment & Attraction CoGG sent out the following message:

“At the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 27 June 2017, Council resolved that Chilwell, Highton and Barwon Heads Libraries continue to operate until at least 30 June 2018.

In addition, Council resolved to review its Social Infrastructure Plan, which will determine the service requirements and models of service delivery at the local, district and regional levels across Greater Geelong, including the role of libraries.

There will be broad community participation in this review. A progress report of the review will be presented to Council by March 2018 so that it can be considered in the new Council’s plan.

The current Social Infrastructure Plan 2014-31 will be publicly released in its entirety on the Geelong Australia website by the end of this week, as this had not been released by the previous Council.

We’d like to thank everyone who provided invaluable feedback as part of this process.

Please visit the Geelong Australia website for further details (<http://www.geelongaustralia.com.au/libraryfuture>) or follow the links to see our [media release](#) or read the [Council Meeting Agenda](#).

**Please use the library**

**Please transfer your membership from other libraries to Barwon Heads**

**Join if you are not a member**

### **DRAFT STRUCTURE PLAN**

We have put in a submission to the plan. Our submission reflects discussion amongst some members, and at our meeting with the Planners, and will hopefully give us the basis to argue for lower height restrictions and a more transparent planning process before the panel that will be established.

We do not accept that more intense development in town will protect the settlement boundaries. We are confident that location, geography and common sense will do

that.

**Here is an extract from our submission which is on our website.**

**KEY INFLUENCES** - We note the extent of these influences.

### **1.1. Policy Context**

**Not a designated growth zone** - We know that Barwon Heads is not a designated growth zone, however there has been little apparent assessment of the impact of the 2 major growth centres, Armstrong Creek to the west and Ocean Grove to the east, on Barwon Heads, its community and its facilities. There are daily impacts of heavy through traffic, and an significant increase in visitors to our beaches and vibrant shopping centre.

**Town Centre classification** – We accept that the growth will reflect the current retail hierarchy of small to medium businesses; however wonder how many cushions can be sold and nails painted in our little village. The IHDA is extensive and has been identified due to its close proximity to the town centre. There are a number of assumptions that don't apply to our little coastal village, that increase the risk of over development and contribute to the slow wearing down of the coastal village culture and the evolution of "new suburb" style development. How do we reclassify the IHDA?

**No intense commercial or industrial development** – we strongly support this and will rigorously defend this principle.

**State and Local Planning Policy** - One needs extensive expertise in planning to understand the complex web of Federal, State and Local Government policies and procedures.

**State Policy** for residential development seems to override the protections for coastal and sensitive environments in other legislation. There are obviously conflicting policies with different agendas. We repeat our view that the IHDA model does not work in a small coastal village which is a not a growth zone. It might be a tool that works for inner city suburbs on transport networks. The scale of development, the potential height of 11m in the IHDA DDO and the 400m radius from a town centre do not allow a proper transition zone from the town centre commercial 1 zone down to the neighbourhood residential zone. Can the radius be reduced to a 100m radius from the town centre to better reflect the coastal nature of the town?

**Local Planning Policy** relies on a complex maze of planning schemes, reviews, plans and the CoGG planning administration structure, can be a real burden to small towns like ours, and organisations like the BHA trying to protect our coastal amenity. We have expressed our concern at the considerable risk of negative impacts from the statewide residential zones; and are still concerned that our small, low lying coastal town does not have the capacity to embrace these changes. The BHSP2017 has recognised that Barwon Heads is not a growth area and that we do have constraints in regard to our fragile environment, together with flooding and stormwater issues. The non negotiable requirements, even with a restatement of the residential zones is still considerable with heights of 11m, & 3 stories appearing to be possible in the General Residential Zone 1. If CoGG doesn't have the authority to limit the height we request that this are is reclassified to the Neighbourhood Residential Zone.

The complexity and opportunity for application of a range of policy and statutory controls requires simplification. The complexity results in significant confusion in the community and seems to have empowered Building Surveyors who have the authority to sign off on buildings and developments with little apparent scrutiny.

## **1.2. Natural & Urban Environment**

There is an urgent need for better coordination between all the agencies in order to actually protect the environment. Currently there is no example of any agency being particularly effective.

A principle of the 2010 Structure Plan was to protect the landscape character of the town and it was directed to encourage retention and enhancement of existing vegetation.

We support this principle and directions of the BHSP2017 which include the direction to “encourage retention and enhancement of existing vegetation on roadsides and reserves using locally indigenous plantings that respects the informal coastal qualities of the town”. Retention of existing vegetation should not be limited to roadsides and reserves.

The existing principle of encouragement of retention and enhancement of existing vegetation should be strengthened to provide planning control over existing significant trees on private land.

The need for better co-ordination with public landowners and agencies was recently highlighted with the advertising process for the new drain that CoGG is planning to build into the Barwon River.

There is growing concern about the impacts of developments upstream on the ecosystems and the impacts on the Barwon Estuary. Our geography is vulnerable to climate change; our coastline includes a broad estuary system, fragile dunes, long surf beaches with significant Aboriginal and European heritage. Our beach is now every ones beach and must be protected and preserved.

## **1.3. Demographics And Social Profile**

Our age structure has changed over recent years with a significant increase of younger families living in town. We are no longer considered to be a retirement village and holiday destination. The local school will reach 500 students this year. This energy and youth was reflected recently in the campaign to keep the library open. Our reputation has changed to being a great place to live and bring up children. The requirements of young families and teenagers should be mentioned in the BHSP2017.

## **1.4. Township Facilities & Services**

The recent decision by CoGG to close the Barwon Heads Library has highlighted the level of reliance by locals on walking and cycling to the library and school. Instructions to get on the bus or go by car do not fit with the community profile.

The message from the community to CoGG is “don’t take away existing community services at time of significant growth and change”

## **1.5. Transport And Physical Infrastructure**

The BHSP2017 does not cater for the increase in traffic resulting from the major growth zones on our boundaries.

Traffic is and will continue to be a significant issue for the community. The Council appears to have ignored the Traffic Management and Parking Plan 2010 and abandoned any serious attempt to achieve significant improvements. It is a Council responsibility in conjunction with Vic Roads to monitor and control traffic. There is a considerable increase in very heavy vehicles going through town, and squeezing around the very tight Golf Links Rd/Bridge Rd corner. It is not acceptable to rely on the community to liaise with Vic Roads on these matters.

There is acknowledgement that Public Transport is limited at best with little to support the frail and elderly. The summer free shuttle bus is organised by Barwon Coast Committee of Management "BCCM" with support from CoGG and local businesses. This service could be greatly improved with better communications, signage and partnering with CoGG.

#### **1.6. Village Centre Growth, Residential Lot Supply And Further Development**

We agree that the Barwon Heads town centre is appropriate to cater for growth to 2031. We are concerned that commercial interests are keen to creep into residential areas, and expect the BHSP2017 to inhibit this.

We have put in an objection to the proposed development for 66-68 Hitchcock Ave is a large development in the heart of the village CBD and proposes to add 4 shops and 8 dwellings to replace 2 heritage style homes and their established gardens, it will impose a significant change upon the village.

We suggest our members look at the development. Objections will be received by the council up to the time of a decision is made.

Our July meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm at the Senior Citizens does not have a major topic at this stage, ideas welcome.



**Membership Renewal Form 2017 - 2018**

**please re-join/join us**

**Names .....**

**Email - for all correspondence, and up to date information**  
.....

**Barwon Heads Address .....Barwon Heads 3227**

**Subscription**

- \$30 for a family sharing the same address willing to receive one notice**
- \$20 for individual membership**
- \$10 concession**

**Acknowledge that I/we are residents or ratepayers in Barwon Heads**

**Signed: ..... Date.....**

**Contact number .....**

**Subscription: \$..... Donation: \$.....**

**Total \$ .....**

**Please leave this form and cash/cheque payable to  
Barwon Heads Association Inc.**

**Barwon Heads Post Office, Barwon Heads, VIC 3227**

**Or pay directly into our bank account with your name on the payment**

**Account Name – Barwon Heads Association**

**Bendigo Bank BSB 633-000 Account Number 130256704**

**(please complete this form and take it back to post office)**

**\*If you have joined since 1<sup>st</sup> April your membership wont expire until 30 June 2018.**