



GREENWICH COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

NEXT PUBLIC MEETING

We warmly invite you to attend the next public meeting on Wednesday, 21 June 2017, in the Greenwich Community Centre, 46 Greenwich Road, at 7.30 pm. We have lots to talk about over a hot cuppa, so please join us.

FIRST, A GOOD NEWS STORY

SafeWork NSW has proposed to facilitate a meeting between Viva and various community and council representatives in order to set up a new approach to community engagement for issues associated with the terminal at Gore Bay.

This first meeting is to be held on 28 June at Lane Cove Council, and it is suggested that the participants be: SafeWork NSW, Lane Cove Council, the EPA, FRNSW, Viva and two representatives from both the GCA and the fence line community group that has been meeting since 2015.

Subsequent meetings would cover issues that we have been discussing in our GCA meetings, with relevant representatives from other authorities invited to attend as required. This is very good news as it shows that at last the authorities are sitting up and taking notice of our concerns. Two such issues are: the lack of clarity around plans for management of emergencies at or impacting on the terminal, and the safety of Viva's high pressure pipeline from the terminal to Clyde.

The former was illustrated at New Year when a product spill occurred the day before the fireworks, and apparent confusion about who was responsible meant that no one told Lane Cove Council or the community until several days later. The EPA investigation into the incident is ongoing and we await the findings.

THEN IT ALL GOES BELLY UP...

Given that the pipeline is the only pipeline carrying petrol, diesel and jet fuel from Gore Bay to Clyde, that it is over 60 years old and passes under Greenwich Road and Shell Park, the GCA is keen to find out more about what Council does to satisfy itself as to its safety.

We applied to Council several months ago under Freedom of Information for all the documents on the pipeline, only to be told that Council requires payment of a significant amount before it will release the 70 plus documents it has identified.

It seems to us unreasonable to ask a volunteer community group to pay for information which should be clearly available, which would cost Council almost nothing to provide in soft copy form. We will discuss this at the meeting.

BIKE TRAVEL BECOMING EASIER AND SAFER



With the predicted massive increase in population and changing family demographics, Lane Cove's Bicycle Advisory Committee has been focusing on developing shared user

pathways (SUPs), to reduce traffic congestion and car dependence and enable safe cycling for local journeys. From the Smoothey Park Bridge [Wollstonecraft Station] you can ride through the reserve to Greendale Street. From River Rd to the Greenwich Community Centre an RMS grant enabled the footpath to be widened to a SUP. This links with the wider footpath to the Greenwich shops, where bike and scooter racks were installed outside the school last year. A SUP now extends along River Road from Greenwich Road, past the school to the cliff. Council has also applied for an RMS Active Transport Grant to remedy the cliff section and widen the footpath to a SUP up to the entrance to the golf club.

NOTE: Mark Sunday 17 September in your diary for the 5th Big Family Fun Ride. Details in the August newsletter.

BATHS LEASE TERMS STILL NOT FINALISED

The lease for Greenwich Baths comes up for renewal on 1 July. In April GCA representatives met with senior Council officers to express concerns that commercial priorities, such as the consumption of alcohol on the premises, may take precedence over public amenity and safety. We have yet to hear if Council will respond to our requests but have been promised a written response before our meeting.

TO THE NSW GOVERNMENT –

DON'T SACRIFICE OUR WILDLIFE AND BUSHLAND

The final details of the NSW Government's tree clearing legislation are now on public exhibition and we have until 21 June to express our opinion. Unfortunately this is the night of our meeting so we won't be able to discuss it before the deadline, but you the community will still have time to make your own submissions if you feel strongly enough about this issue.

Let us spell it out. Under the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme people wishing to clear native vegetation will be allowed to compensate for the impacts of such clearing on the habitat of our precious native fauna and flora by offsetting it in one of several ways. This principle of offsetting appears to be a good idea, but a closer examination of the ways in which the offsetting is to be achieved shows up serious flaws in the proposal, which we have identified.

For example, a person proposing to undertake land clearing will only have to take "reasonable" (not in any way specified) steps to identify a "like for like" offset. Further, the offset is not even required to be located near the proposed clearing site; it can be located up to 100 kilometres away. This will result in there being absolutely no protection for local endangered species in the proposed area, and will make it difficult to maintain biodiversity of any given species.

We are even more concerned this person proposing to clear land would be allowed to make a cash payment to the Government's Biodiversity Trust. This payment has absolutely no legal requirement to be used to purchase offsets that would protect local threatened and endangered species; it could be used for any other purpose at the Trust's discretion.

Due to development, the vegetation offsets remaining in the Lane Cove local government area are fast diminishing, thereby placing remaining habitat under threat. We contend that as a consequence, the cash payment option will become both a highly likely and very attractive offset mechanism in our local area, and in its current form has the potential to support and facilitate development rather than to protect threatened species and maintain our local habitats.

If you wish to contact Anthony Roberts, as both the Minister for Planning and our local member, bring up these key points: urge him to formally oppose the proposed offsets in their current form, particularly the

use of any cash payments to offset the clearing of native vegetation. Urge him also to act to ensure that any vegetation offset is required to be of the same ecological community and habitat value as the vegetation to be cleared and in close proximity to the site.

More info on this topic can be found at the Better Planning Network website – bpn@betterplanningnetwork.org.au – and Facebook and Twitter - subject: **URGENT** Our trees and wildlife are not for sale. You can also find there phone numbers and email addresses for Minister Roberts, the Premier, Environment Minister Upton, as well as tips about what to say. We will also give you phone numbers here:

Premier's office – (02) 8574 5000;
Minister Gabrielle Upton (02) 8574 6107;
Minister Roberts (02) 8574 5600.

PARKED TRAILERS TO BE DISCUSSED

In response to residents' concerns Lane Cove Council has asked us to comment on the issue of long term parking of trailers in our area. We understand that it is more an issue of detriment to residents, but other, related, concerns have also come to light.

We don't have figures on how much space trailers take up that could be used by others, but it is clear that some trailers are parked badly. A particularly bad example is Greenwich Road, which is a dedicated cycle route, where some parked trailers take up the whole cycling lane on both sides of the road, so forcing cyclists out to the road, dicing with buses and cars.

This is clearly a safety issue, and perhaps our focus should be widened to try to ensure that LCC controls safe, cyclist and commuter friendly parking of all vehicles, rather than focusing on trailers and how long they are parked.

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Owing to some great teamwork in our membership drive at the Greenwich shops last month, the GCA has 25 new members.

Our treasurer will report in detail on 21 June but things are looking brighter on the finance front. We extend a huge thank you to the community for responding to our pleas for help.

STAY IN TOUCH

We encourage all residents to stay in touch with regular visits to our website, www.greenwich.org.au, and that of Lane Cove Council, www.lanecove.nsw.gov.au

If you register your address on the GCA website you will also receive newsletters and updates electronically.

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