

Members –

Several issues have arisen this year that you might like to hear the latest about. Most of them have been spoken about at general meetings while others we have alerted you about in emails. Your Committee hopes that you find this news roundup informative and helpful. If you have any comments or would like to know more, then please email us and we will be in prompt contact.

BANJUP AND JANDAKOT RESIDENTS NEWS ROUNDUP

DECEMBER 2016

1. Water Corporation to withdraw 1.5 GL more

- 1.1. The Department of Water authorised the Water Corporation to withdraw a further 1.5 gigalitres from the Jandakot Mound, making 4.4 GL in all.
- 1.2. Using publicly available data, your Committee is monitoring the water table to see what effects the extra withdrawals have. Lacking real expertise, though, we might have to rely upon the Department of Water's interpretation of the data.
- 1.3. The Water Corporation plans to have 50% of its supplies coming from groundwater by 2022. Resisting increased withdrawals from the Jandakot Mound will become more difficult as Perth's population increases and the dams dry up.

2. Cockburn Strategic Community Planning

- 2.1. In May, Cockburn prepared a 10 year strategic plan for the development of the City and sought community reaction to it.

The BRG made a fulsome response, saying that the Plan was unimaginative and had:

- no measures by which ratepayers can assess progress
- no financial or other constraints

The Plan provided no criteria by which ratepayers could assess progress in the achievement of the Plan.

- 2.2. **Within 6 hours** the City's strategic planners dismissed our submission out of hand. They said that none of the 1,000 other responses mentioned our concerns.
- 2.3. Subsequently, your Committee met with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and councillors to demonstrate how the Strategic Plan could be improved, citing Wanneroo's strategic plan as an example.

Some minor changes were then made to Cockburn's Plan but accountability for the success or failure of its content remains comfortably (for the Administration) ambiguous.

3. Aircraft Noise

- 3.1. The BRG remains engaged with Jandakot Airport's Community Aviation Consultation Group (CACG) but it is a trying experience that has caused 2 of our Committee members to resign from it in frustration. We now have 3 Committee members attending in rotation.
- 3.2. The CACG is a toothless talking shop that the noise nuisance makers can ignore. We have asked them to change their habits but they say they were here first. We reply that if they would go back to 1963 aircraft traffic, then we would not have a problem. They need to get into today's world and accommodate close neighbours, just as Cockburn Cement has, which too, was there first.

4. Traffic Calming on Liddelow Road

- 4.1. Heavy trucks of all sorts continue to use Liddelow Road to by-pass the Freeway and its junction with Armadale Road. With the new section of the widened Freeway now open, general truck usage of Liddelow Road might reduce but the sand trucks from Wattleup will most likely still find their way through Banjup on their way to Piara.
- 4.2. As part of its traffic calming plans, the City of Cockburn will construct a roundabout at Liddelow and Gibbs beginning in April 2017. Some land acquisition is required and native title concerns to be resolved.

5. 341 Beenyup Road

- 5.1. Work on the talking point of Banjup continues. The 2 storey mansion in Chinese '*Siheyuan*' style - "*a courtyard surrounded by buildings on all four sides*" is now roofed and dominates the corner of Beenyup and Coffey. The building will measure 50 metres by 40 metres and occupy almost all of its building envelope. It will have 10 bedrooms, 10 bathrooms with 13 toilets, 5 staircases, and 4 lifts.

- 5.2. Work has started on the second lot at the site. It will be a 4 bedroom, 5 bathroom single storey '*Siheyuan*' style residence. The building will also measure 50 by 40 metres.
- 5.3. The owner of the 3 lots, Mr Tan of Applecross, has made applications to build a large single storey residence on the third lot on the site of the old house that will be demolished.

The first application was for a 10 bedroom, 10 bathroom single storey '*Siheyuan*' style residence, again occupying 50 by 40 metres. The application was rejected by the Department of Water because of concerns about over-loading the groundwater in the immediate area with the outflow from 28 toilets.

The second, current, application is for a building of the same size and design as the first application but some of the bedrooms have been combined into 'Home Theatre', 'Sauna', 'Study', and 'Granny Flat'. There will be 5 bedrooms and 8 toilets. Whether this development will be approved by Cockburn remains to be seen.

- 5.4. Planning rules require that these residences be for the accommodation of one family each. The definition of a 'family' is not clear.

Your Committee remains concerned that these buildings might not be used by single families. It is unclear how the City of Cockburn will ensure compliance with the rules once they are all built and in use.

6. Rates Increases

- 6.1. In June, the City of Cockburn proposed to raise property rates for the year 2016/17 by 3% and to continue raising them by that amount for the next 10 years. The City Administration seemed to be making no attempt to constrain its own costs. The long term plans adopted by Council made no mention of any cost savings. Council seems to think that all cost increases can be passed onto ratepayers, who will just have to pay.
- 6.2. The BRG urged the City of Cockburn to find 2% savings from its operating expenses annually. Out of a \$100 million budget and 500 staff this should not be onerous. The very modest savings would give the City the opportunity to limit rates increases to just 1% each year.
- 6.3. Your Committee met with the Mayor, councillors, and the Finance, Planning, and Engineering directors of the City of Cockburn to seek better value for money and hence lower rates increases. They said that they were already providing value for money and that benchmarks prove it. We said, 'no you are not – look at these comparisons'. They said 'but we are different'. They want it both ways.

- 6.4. They said that Cockburn's 'Perceptions Surveys' show that they do deliver value for money. We said 'how do respondents know?'. How do we know if the bins could be emptied more cheaply, roads maintained for less, or rates notices issued by less staff? Perceptions surveys are fanciful and self-serving.
- 6.5. In the end, councillors voted for a 2.5% increase, with the reduction coming from the stationery budget and contingency fund. No mention of proper cost savings.

7. Value for Money from Local Government

- 7.1. Frustrated by our experience with Cockburn's administration, your Committee met with directors of the Department of Local Government to understand if anything could be changed in the Local Government Act to require councils to provide better value for money and report performance against real, measurable objectives.
- 7.2. It all comes down to political will by the government of the day. There would be great resistance from the cartel of local governments to disturb their fat and happy status quo (*our words, not theirs*). Your Committee resolved to press the candidates at the March election for resolute action by the 2017 government.

8. Treeby

- 8.1. Treeby is the name of a pioneering family who first settled in the Banjup area in the 1890s. Joseph and Emma Treeby, their three sons and three daughters, cleared land and successfully established a market garden, which they worked seven days a week.

The three Treeby sons went to war in 1916. Sadly, Frederick was killed, Harold was wounded, and Ernest survived. They are commemorated at the Banjup Memorial at the corner of Armadale and Warton Roads. 100 years after their sacrifices it is fitting that WA and Cockburn honour their memories by naming after them the new urban locality between Armadale and Jandakot Roads.

9. Rezoning North of Armadale Road

- 9.1. In July 2015, with the overwhelming support of local residents, the BRG submitted to the WA Planning Commission that the rural residential land between Armadale Road and the Airport be zoned for Urban use. This would enable residents there to escape the planning blight sandwich of the dense housing of Treeby (Calleya etc) and the commercial development of Jandakot City.

- 9.2. The BRG submission was made as part of the state's [Perth@3.5million](#) planning initiative. The final report was expected to be published in mid 2016 but as yet it remains under wraps. Your Committee understands that the report is with the Minister for Planning.

We have been lobbying hard for the Minister to ensure that Jandakot rural is rezoned. Our guess is that the [Perth@3.5million](#) plan will be announced in the lead up to the March election.

- 9.3. Meanwhile, Schaffer Corporation that owns the Urban Stone site at on Jandakot Road near Berrigan Drive has applied to the City of Cockburn and thence the WA Planning Commission to have an 'Alternative Use – warehousing and showrooms' declared for the 26 hectares of adjoining bush land that they own going up Jandakot Road.
- 9.4. If Jandakot rural is rezoned Urban, then so will be the Schaffer land and local residents would have no objection. However, if Jandakot rural remains unchanged, then the BRG will submit that Schaffer not be permitted the Alternative Use unless all of the other Jandakot rural landowners are similarly permitted.

10. Richgro

- 10.1. In August, the owners of the Richgro fertilizer plant at the end of Acourt Road applied to the City of Cockburn for permission to build 3 more large sheds on their property. This was advertised to neighbours and caused some consternation.
- 10.2. From time to time there is an unpleasant odour arising from the plant and some dust from the plant is alleged to drift over neighbours' houses. These concerns were raised with the City of Cockburn who performed an environmental audit of the operation and identified remedial action to be taken on a dozen matters.
- 10.3. Richgro is currently performing the remedial action and anticipate that their planning application will be considered by Cockburn Council in February.

11. Warton Road Sand Mine

- 11.1. In August, Hanson Corporation applied to the Environmental Protection Authority for permission to re-open the old sand mine at the corner of Jandakot and Warton Roads. The site has been 'Bush Forever' land for over 10 years.

- 11.2. Hanson wants the sand because its own other local sand mines are exhausted and it is having to truck sand from Ellenbrook to its concrete plants in Canning Vale and Kwinana.

Hanson could, of course, buy sand locally from the mines in Wattleup but they did not mention this in their application to the EPA.

- 11.3. The BRG submitted to the EPA that a public review of Hanson's application be held. The EPA agreed and we expect the review to begin by March 2017.

12. Cockburn Ward Boundaries

- 12.1. In October, the City of Cockburn sought public comment on proposals for changing its ward boundaries. Your Committee reviewed the document published by Cockburn and found that it was beset with arithmetic errors that invalidated its written conclusions.

- 12.2. Your Committee brought the errors to Council's attention, wondering how such basic errors could have been allowed to get into a public document.

Graciously, the City of Cockburn acknowledged the errors and thanked the BRG for their vigilance.

- 12.3. The BRG supports continuing a 3 ward arrangement but with the east ward boundary to be the Freeway and then Hammond Road south of Beeliar Drive.

13. Lobbying Candidates before the State Election

- 13.1. Your Committee will lobby candidates for the March election to seek their support for resolving local issues.

We shall press them on:

- Fixing Armadale Road and the Freeway junction
- Rezoning Jandakot rural properties as 'Urban'
- Getting local governments to deliver much better value for money

14. AGM on Sunday 12 March

- 14.1. The BRG Annual General Meeting will be held on Sunday 12 March from 3:00pm to 5:00pm at the Banjup Hall, Oxley Road. We shall remind you again closer to the date.
- 14.2. In the meantime, would you think about volunteering to serve on the BRG Committee for the coming year? It will keep you in touch with current developments in Banjup and Jandakot but only take up 3 or 4 hours a month, attending a meeting and responding to emails.

15. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

- 15.1. Your Committee wishes all our members a very merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.