

Recollections differ

Wow, Adam Prior (NGT Nov 07). You are so good at twisting the truth, you should be in politics.

Seppi Edmunds
Nimbin Candles

Community Scholarships

We are a collection of people who have chosen to live outside of the mainstream, city-centric world, rejecting many societal norms and attitudes, often with the intention of finding a better way. While many among us, myself included, feel that we have indeed found a better life here, there are many men, women and children who still struggle on a daily basis.

I have sat on the committee of Nimbin Community Preschool for two years and I am keenly aware that there are parents within our community who are unable to afford fees for daycare and preschool, and that many parents and students cannot afford the continuing education of their choice. This is a very real barrier to many when it comes to pursuing educational or vocational opportunities. It is also a disadvantage for children who would benefit from exposure to structured care in a social or educational context.

My idea of community suggests that those of us with strength and means feel an obligation to provide assistance and support to those of us who are weak and vulnerable – as we have all been weak and vulnerable at some time in our lives. I believe that collectives of people can be instrumental in improving the lives of those around them through actions which show they recognise the value and potential in the lives of another.

I propose that, as a community which places high importance on self determination and acceptance, we collectively focus our strengths on enriching the lives of those around us. I envisage a modest fund or scholarship which opens the doors of opportunity for women with children, by making available to them, quality care for their children, whilst they pursue educational or vocational opportunities. Ultimately, we will be impacting positively upon the lives of the children in our community. After all, as anyone with children knows, a happy parent makes for a happy child.

I am interested in hearing from any individuals or organisations who feel they can offer me some assistance

About us

Editor: Bob Dooley
Assistant: Sue Stock
Layout: Bob Dooley
Photographers: Sue Stock, Pam Bourne, Garry Mimlich, Thorsten Jones
Proofing: Williamina Bowers
Distribution: Ben, Angus, Jeff & Terry, Alex Charles
Bookkeeper: Lisa Yeates
Website: David McMinn
www.nimbingoodtimes.com

NGT is auspiced by the Nimbin Community School Co-operative Ltd.
Best wishes for the festive season to all our readers, contributors and advertisers.

Next deadline:
Wednesday 26th December
Email: nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com or put stuff in the ComSchool's pigeonhole at the Nimbin Community Centre.

in this endeavour. This may be in the form of small, regular donations of money, or time and enthusiasm in the coordination of fund raising initiatives. This would be a long-term initiative.

To put your investment into perspective:

- Fifty people, committing \$2 per month would fund two days per week at preschool for a beautiful little person;
- Fifty people committing \$1 per week, over eight years (a total investment of \$416 each) would fund a full scholarship to receive eight years of primary Steiner education at Rainbow Ridge school;
- Fifty people, committing \$1 per week, over six years (a total investment of \$312 each) would fund a full scholarship to attend six years at Trinity Catholic College in Lismore.

Haven't you always wanted to live in a world where each individual is valued, and encouraged to seek their truth? This is an opportunity to change the world, one step at a time. We may not have it within our power to help everyone in need, but surely we can help just one individual?

I can be contacted by mail at PO Box 144 Nimbin 2480 or by phone on 6689-7227. I look forward to hearing from anyone who feels they have something to offer to this cause.

Rebecca Ryall
Nimbin

Notices

Summer Lunch

Nimbin Community Gardens from 1pm, Friday 7th December 2007. We would love everyone to come! Bring a plate - Bring your instruments.

Qigong and Tai-Chi Network

A North Coast Qigong and Tai-Chi network has been formed for all practitioners and teachers to meet, close to solstices and equinoxes. Summer Solstice get-together at Coorabel Hall on 9th December from 2-4pm.

Find out about workshops, festivals and classes around the area. For more info ring Astrid 6622-4604 or Suzanne 6687-5636.

Carols by Candlelight

Wednesday 12th December, from Sunset at Nimbin Central School COLA. Yummy food and drinks available, also glowsticks and lots of great singing.

Christmas Present Auction

7pm Thursday 13th December at Nimbin Oasis Café. Bid on that quirky unusual present and raise funds for the 2008 Performance Poetry World Cup; bring your old gifts for recycling.

Auctioneer: Archie, with performances by Pepa Rose and Nimbin Oasis poets. A fun night of sharing!

Nimbin Hemp AGM

4pm Friday 14th December at Nimbin Hemp Embassy.

Bush Dance

Saturday 15th December from 7.30pm at Tumble Community Hall.

Music by the 8-piece Tumble Folk Orchestra, food and refreshments available.

Special Christmas Market and Party

Saturday 22nd December, all day at Rainbow Lane Saturday market

Music, Magic, Picnic, Entertainment. Enquiries phone Cat Anderson 0429-194-248.

New regular events

Deckchair Screenings

Mondays 8-10pm at Nimbin Oasis Café.

Brackets & Jam

Every third Thursday night of the month at Nimbin Oasis Café. Contact Biskit for more info 6689-1461.

Sunday Night Dinner

Presented by the Outsider Artists' Cult of Nimbin every Sunday night in December at Tumble Community shop.

For Sale

1976 Bedford bus, 25-foot, fully-fitted mobile home, rustic design, solar equipped, unregistered. All reasonable offers considered. Phone Samira 0409-937-202.

Wet, warm Remembrance Day observance



Group Om under the peace pole.

On a rain-soaked Remembrance Day, Nimbin residents of diverse backgrounds joined together in a solemn expression of peace.

The Aquarius Foundation's peace pole in the Nimbin Community Centre grounds was the focus for the observance. At 11am, one minute's silence was observed for all those killed in wars, followed by a group Om, sung to the accompaniment of a digeridoo and drizzling rain on the walkway roof.

Following the short ceremony, a light lunch was served by Katie Cawcutt of the Nimbin Aquarius Foundation, who has been involved in organising Remembrance Day events in Nimbin for several years.

"It's important to keep it going, you know?" she said. "To remember."

The Nimbin Aquarius Foundation will celebrate the 35th anniversary of the Aquarius Festival next year.

Vale Simon Cass 18th November 1953 - 7th November 2007



Beloved of Linnet. Dear former husband of Jan (dec.). Cherished father and friend to Jade and Max. Adored Leader of the Pack and Papa to his grandchildren Ruby, Mala and Otis. Precious son of Tony and Barbara (dec.), who unconditionally set him on the path to follow his own heart. Best big brother who can sort it out for Samantha and Mark and whimsical Uncle Chicken to all their children.



Good mate to Arthur (Aba). Conspiring brother-out-law to Neil and inspiring Bush Legend to his nephews Chilo and Romany.

A kind laughing gentle man who touched so many lives and was very loved and cherished by his family, friends and community.

We are in a very dark place without you Siborg, but your shining sweet spirit lights our way.

Trash & Treasure Sale

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Department of
State and Regional
Development

Council's VIC hosts first official function



Mayor King (right) opening the Centre

It was standing room only at the newly-refurbished Nimbin Visitor Centre for its official opening in November. Lismore mayor Merv King wished the Council-funded centre well, adding, "I've always had a soft spot for Nimbin, as I grew up not far from here."

The capacity crowd of local businesspeople and community representatives were treated to a range of beverages and hors d'oeuvres from the adjoining Spangled Drongo restaurant.

The event was billed as a 'Nimbin networking function', with more to follow.

New welfare worker

Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre welcomes the new Community Welfare Worker.

Teena Ann is wearing a new hat in the community as the new Community Welfare Worker at the Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre. You may have already known her through being a community member whilst at the Oasis Cafe for approximately 10 years.

Instead of coffee, Teena Ann is offering the welfare services in a private and confidential manner. Feel free to 'pop in' or make an appointment to see her on Mondays, Tuesdays and every alternate Wednesday and make yourself aware of all the Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre services available.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a bright and happy New Year from Teena Ann and all the members and staff of the Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre.



Teena Ann

Safe Communities Project

16 Days of Activism is an international event to Stop Violence Against Women. It begins on 25th November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and ends on 10th December, World Human Rights Day. 16 days was established to highlight the connection between violence against women and human rights. Australia is one of 130 countries that take part in the 16 days of campaigning.

Here in Nimbin the local Domestic Violence Committee holds the Annual Nimbin Women's Dinner to take part in the campaign and to raise awareness about issues of violence against women. The Women's dinner is a fabulous social event and fun, but at its core there is a more serious message, that violence against women is never acceptable, it is criminal and women should not have to endure it.

Domestic Violence in Australia is rife; a 2004 survey showed that 57% of Australian women had experienced some level of physical or sexual harm during their life. Australian women are most at risk of being hurt in their own home and domestic violence is the greatest health risk to women between the ages of 15 and 44. Domestic violence is an abuse of power that impacts on women's mental, emotional and physical health. It affects women across all social, economic and cultural groups.

Everybody can help to stop domestic violence. Always call the police if you see or hear violence happening. If a friend tells you she is experiencing violence believe her and find out what you can do to help. If you feel out of your depth and need help to help your friend then

call a service that can assist you such as the 24 hour Domestic Violence Hotline on 1800-656-463. Encourage your friend to seek help and offer to go with her if she is feeling vulnerable. Often women feel ashamed about what is happening to them and think they'll be judged if they tell others. But there are services set up to help, both locally and at a state wide level.

If you are experiencing violence talk to someone you trust, or if you prefer, talk to a total stranger on the end of the telephone, just make sure you talk to someone. Believe that they will help you not judge you and believe that getting help can make a difference. Drop in to see a worker at the Neighbourhood Centre on 6689-1692 or make an appointment to see a counsellor at the Lismore Women's Refuge 6621-2685 or phone the state wide 24 Domestic Violence Hotline on 1800-656-463. All of these services will assist you to take the steps you need to take to feel safer. Finally, if you have been assaulted or are in danger call the police on 000. Ask them to take the violent person away and ask them to take out an AVO for your protection.

If you are physically or verbally aggressive or controlling or violent to your partner you can get some help to change your behaviour. Contact Relationships Australia on 1300-364-277 or the Men and Family Centre on 6622-6116.

The Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre's Safe Community Project is funded by the Commonwealth Attorney General's Community Crime Prevention Program and is steered by the Nimbin Domestic Violence Committee.

Lismore Council Jottings

by Cr. Jenny Dowell
6625-2206 email Jenny.
Dowell@lismore.nsw.gov.au

November Meeting

A religious statue, a car park sign, the bocce club, social impacts and tenders were just part of the huge agenda at the November meeting. These topics demonstrate the breadth of the Council's areas of interest and why I find being a Councillor so wonderful.

Wide debate ensued as we considered the offer from St Cathages to construct a religious statue at the Dawson St roundabout near the cathedral. This would be the first 'privatised' roundabout and led to a suggestion that we could sell off all of them as a new income stream. In the end it was agreed that Council and the church work together to devise a design.

I voted against the proposal as I consider roundabouts and their design to be a form of public art that need to be considered in conjunction with our policy and procedures to ensure we don't end up with a lot of 'plonk art' with little thought of the whole.

One of the most serious issues of the evening was a debate on the removal of 410,000 cubic metres of fill from 58 hectares in the South Lismore floodway. Fill is a valuable resource that Council often sells to those who purchase lots such as the Bruxner Hwy airport industrial land so they can construct building pads above the flood line. Removal of fill alters the flow of flood water and while computer modelling has been done on the proposal, the effects of the real thing may well differ.

Gungas Rd and SIA

Council also decided to prepare a draft amendment to the Lismore Environmental Plan that would allow a development of 32 rural residential lots at 237 Gungas Rd. The next step is for the draft amendment and finalised planning agreement to go on public exhibition for 28 days. I would encourage Nimbin residents to look at the proposal and submit your comments.

Also on exhibition is the new Social Impact Assessment policy and guidelines. This policy tells developers what Council expects in the content and



process of preparing a SIA on any significant development of a specified type or size. It is a very good step forward and again I urge residents to have a look at it and let us know what you think. I have requested that Council consider exhibiting relevant DAs and draft policies at a location in the village in future and will keep readers informed of the response.

Demons

Council approved its rural and urban sportsgrounds grants also at the November meeting. Among the list was the Nimbin Demons Ausie Rules club who receive \$20,000 to redevelop Bellevue Park. Unfortunately the application by the NCDA for a shade structure in Peace Park was unsuccessful but there was a suggestion that the Community Sun Protection Strategy Program may be a source of future funding.

Bocce Club

Regular visitors to Lismore will know the Continental Music and Recreation Club on the corner of Dawson and Uralba Streets. Commonly called the Bocce Club, the building was erected by the local Italian community but has been derelict now for some years. An assessment has shown it is not cost effective to repair the building so it will be removed but we will acknowledge the significance of the site for the Italian community with the placement of some form of marker.

Nimbin Visitor Info Centre

It was wonderful to see so many locals at the recently opened Nimbin VIC. It is a bright welcoming space with great staff, good information and some lovely gift items.

I bought two sets of the nostalgic black and white postcards and sent one set to my Canberra-based uni-student son to give him a reminder of our diverse

region. I'm sure the VIC will add to the tourist experience and ensure that all the wonders of the area are well promoted.

Goolmangar Forum

About 25 locals attended the recent Council community forum at Goolmangar hall. Five Councillors and three staff fielded the many questions on roads, roads, roads and a couple of other topics. The Roads Manager gave a run-down of 07/08 works including the sealing of the final section of Stony Chute Road and the repair of Nimbin Rd from Swift Road to Smiths Bridge and 400m of Blue Knob Rd approaching Salkeld Rd.

In addition, the Blakebrook Bridge is scheduled to be replaced commencing April or May at a cost of \$2.2 million. Bishops Creek Bridge and Smith Bridge being commenced, weather permitting, in February or March.

Cycleways

Also in November, Council considered the cycleways plan for future links in the Lismore and Goonellabah areas.

Many of us look forward to the day when Lismore has a network of good cycleways to assist those who live in town and those who want to ride around town once they get here by car or bus.

Tenders

To end on a really positive note, Council has re-examined its tender process and is building in new criteria that consider social and environmental impacts in all tender specifications and assessments. Such criteria consider things like the tenderer's local employment practices, social benefit and procedures for reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

This is a real breakthrough and provides Council and tenderers with good guidelines to ensure everyone knows we are looking at triple bottom line outcomes.

Each month I try to give an overview of Council. It is by no means comprehensive. For more information please go to the Council's website on www.lismore.nsw.gov.au or contact me. As this is the last NGT for 2007, may I wish all readers a very happy holiday season- see you in the new year.

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Nimbin HEMP Embassy AGM
Friday 14th
December
4pm at the Embassy.

Post-Election comment by Michael Balderstone Nimbin HEMP Embassy

Clearly by not taking Big Joint to Bennelong we helped Maxine. She didn't reply, but everyone else did, saying please don't come! We will be taking the Big Joint to Canberra soon though.

Now the race is over and the new PM ("Never, never, never, I'm in John Howard's camp on this one!") and his Health and Agriculture ministers will be targeted by Hempsters hungry to be heard.

We've been vilified for a decade by Howards 1950's approach to drug use. The Pharmaceutical Companies are waiting in the wings with medical cannabis preparations yet we are criminals. Still there has never been any official trial of medical cannabis in Australia and we who find pain relief from pot are treated like lepers.

Despite Rudd's inexperience, we reckon he's much more of a new age boy, open-minded and compassionate, by comparison with Howard's mean-spirited government. We will hold him to the promise of representing all Australians, which of course includes the four million or

so regular pot smokers.

In fact we reckon he ought to have a Drug Summit in Canberra along the lines of Bob Carr's 1999 Sydney one. We know he has a lot on his plate for now and no doubt underestimates the consequences of the "war on drugs", but we know it has had an enormous impact on the Australian psyche and encourages discrimination against another minority.

We have record jail numbers yet the disrespect and violence just keeps growing.

If he'd spend just one day in Nimbin understanding what the drug war has caused, I know he'd change dramatically. As participants did in Bob Carr's summit when they visited rehab centres.

Politicians don't get enough time on the streets, but with teenage boys himself, I reckon Kevin should find out for himself what a culture prohibition has created.

Making our best pain-relieving herbs illegal has clearly now been proven to be ridiculous. Will Rudd make time to understand? Who knows, but we are overripe for some sane attention on cannabis as a medicine and federal support for an industrial hemp industry.

Forum supports industrial hemp



Candidates for the Federal seat of Richmond gave their unqualified support for the development of a hemp industry on the North Coast at a forum in Nimbin during the election campaign.

The candidates, representing all major parties except Labor, said their parties would support the removal of impediments to growing the crop for food and fibre throughout Australia.

Examples of foreign-made commercial hemp goods were on display, and speakers included agronomists Dr Keith Bolton and Klara Marosszeky, who spoke of their experimental work with the cultivars that are now grown world-wide.

Seventy people attended the forum, and were invited to sample a range of hemp seed cakes and biscuits.

The forum developed into a good-humoured canvassing of a surprisingly wide range of federal issues by the four candidates and three actors representing absent parties, entertainingly chaired by former HEMP Senate candidate Michael Balderstone.

On the issue of decriminalising recreational use of cannabis, the candidates were much less unanimous, with only the Democrats having a policy for it, while the Greens are supporting a harm minimisation approach.

Sue Page said, "As a doctor, I can't endorse recreational drug use, as it would breach the creed of 'Do no harm,'" but agreed the federal government could liberalise the medical prescription of oral cannabis through the Therapeutic Goods Act.

Perception, either 'under the influence' or not, is a fine thing

by Binnah Pownall

This was a letter originally sent (not printed) to the Sydney Morning Herald newspaper regarding an article SMH 1/11/07 p. 5: "Ice users say drug improves driving."

The report quoted a survey carried out by the Australian Drug Foundation (ADF) where "...more than half.." of users were saying ice or methamphetamine improves their driving skills. This was treated as 'delusional' by the experts.

The author of the study and Director of the ADF, Doctor Jane Mallick said the problem was that most drug users did not feel impaired behind the wheel ".....when obviously they are..." then goes on to say "...we need carefully crafted messages for these people so they are aware of the dangers."

Most drug users have a chuckle at the usual government messages in regard to drugs, because they are usually inaccurate in their facts or just plain wrong. Doctor Mallick has reinforced that view. I find her perceptions naive and insulting of the users' intelligence to know exactly what is going on when they use their drug of choice.

Why is the theory at least not entertained that on Speed and Ice and perhaps Cocaine, one of the main effects of the drugs are that senses and awareness are heightened and that this may in reality, contribute to more finely tuned driving skills? Don't governments give jetfighter pilots (and others) speed to assist with response times?

Are the researchers' conclusions influenced at all by the fear-based assumptions of the west regarding illegal drugs which are beyond the institutionalised and 'socially acceptable' drugs, alcohol and tobacco?

At present, any positive effects of illegal drugs experienced by the user that are found in studies must be buried, and the truth is the first casualty in the great 'Drug War' it seems...and there lies the underlying problem.

At least if it was truthful information, users may listen and trust the info next time.

Binnah is a former Outreach Youth Worker, Crisis Centre Manager and Drug Counsellor.

Commonsense Human Values

Eighth in a series by Laurie Stubbs



Now at the eighth article, let's summarise the ground we've covered up to here.

We started with the idea there'd be a 'trial' new self-consistent set of human values. That's still the longer term focus though there's more background to fill in.

Along the way we've looked at behaviour we share with animals, and where our human values branched off. We've seen how genetics call the basic shots; though built in adaptiveness, and different climates and locations has changed those original behaviours. So there is unity in diversity – right across the board of races and places, human values are similar in effect though very different in detail.

That prompted a look at the big sweep of the 4.8 billion years Earth has been around. We saw that we can't answer some of the really big questions – like "Where did life start?" and "Where's it going?" We saw that Life Developed

Itself, and that maybe its aim – so far – has been to develop intelligence and self awareness – like ours. So we handle concepts, control the environment and some of the conditions of human life, but can take no credit for those achievements.

Life did it, not us. But – this turns out to be a critical fact, one that humanity hasn't taken account of – so far: Life Developed Itself is an unrecognised self evident fact. We'll come back to that axiom again and again as we go.

Last article we looked at only two or three cases of western values at work in our lives today. The conflicts are/were obvious. Yet we didn't even touch on Asian, middle eastern or African values.

So that's the way it is across the globe – a huge mish-mash of ideas. No wonder we can always find a 'value' to let us do whatever we want!

Now we need to take a careful look at the basic capacity of our species, and what we are able to do. You can't talk human values without knowing the nature of the beast today and the potential way our natures may develop.

We have inborn skills – but our social codes deny them. Intuition, 'sight' without eyes, ability to foretell

weather, sensing the presence of people, knowing where North is, sense of being watched by others, water divining, 'dowsing' in general, the gypsy ability to 'know' about others; that's just the start of a random collection. There are many, many more. Beyond these are telepathy, teleportation, prescience, awareness of past lives, psychokinesis, levitation, astral travel, spirit contact, materialisation, and so on and on.

Conditioning begins at birth, or before. Socialisation begins in the first week. Language carries with it fixed perceptions. Role models build in attitudes and outlooks which, often, are never challenged through a lifetime.

Almost the whole agenda of a lifetime is written into subconscious mind within the first several years. People who got conflicting messages in this early life, spend their lives working out those conflicts.

So it goes – society norms are usually quite rigid, and you conform – or suffer. All this is overlaid on the genetic plan – but underneath we human beings homo sapiens have a much more cheerful character.

Next article will suggest a basic human nature that's overlaid by denial and conditioning.

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Reflections on Nimbin's development

by Graham Irvine

Recently I attempted to read the Development Application for the Rivendell eco-village proposal. The hundreds of pages of dense jargon reminded me of the difficulties this places on neighbours and the community in finding out just what is proposed on the ground.

I am not opposed to the Rivendell development as such and I commend the developers' apparently thorough community consultation and some of its innovative features. My misgivings focus more on the broader issues of population growth, gentrification and preserving Nimbin's unique demographic character.

Rivendell claims, "There is no reason to suggest that the future occupants of the eco-village would not have a similar demographic profile as the existing population of Nimbin." (Appendix B, p. 45) No evidence is provided and indeed there is every reason to suggest it will not. We only need to look up the prices of the houses on Rivendell to see that few Nimbin people could afford to buy them. There are already plenty of houses available at around these prices – just look in the estate agent's window – and what is needed in Nimbin is low-cost housing not potentially gated communities as enclaves for gentry.

According to the DA, Nimbin's population is 319 and this development would add 147 with overnight accommodation for 58 guests. (p22), 205 more. If many of these are wealthy enough to afford a Rivendell house, how can it be claimed that this would not decisively tip the balance towards gentrification. This invasion may forever destroy the unique demographic character of our village and cause price inflation since these gentry could afford to pay more for local goods and services.

There is also much left unsaid or buried in the Rivendell DA. For example, unlike the blurb on the Rivendell website, the DA says little about a proposed "Guest House/ café/ wine bar/ restaurant/ ...corner store ... gift shop/book store/ craft shop/art gallery ...". (Rivendell website) which would compete with the already large number of such businesses in the village. And while there is provision of open space areas for residents I could not find any details of what recreational facilities will be provided or mention of the fact that the large open space area is adjacent to flood-prone land which may make it unusable in prolonged wet weather.

On the topic of weather, a graph on page 7 of Appendix F1 seems to suggest that there would be no need to irrigate plantings on the land between February and July, which

RIVENDELL MASTERPLAN
www.rivendellvillage.com



ignores the erratic nature of our rainfall in this climate-challenged era.

Although it is of course up to the purchasers of these houses as to what level of amenity is acceptable, I fear the development could unwittingly be setting up the residents for future problems with their neighbours. The DA admits that, "Dwelling allotment sizes are less than required in village allotment areas but conform when the open space allotment and roads and landscaping is included." (page 34).

Whilst the development's independent water supply initiative is to be welcomed and congratulated, it is a pity that it has not provided a waterless toilet system in this age of water scarcity, especially since, on their own figures, toilets are among the biggest users of water. The stated reasons for not adopting composting toilets are essentially trivial, e.g. users would have to tip a scoop of wood shavings into the toilet after use.

Potentially one of the greatest dangers to the harmonious interaction of the residents comes from what appears to be an untried legal structure based on incorporated associations which are more usually the legal vehicles for charities, clubs and community groups. I am not aware of the Associations Incorporation Act 1984, (the AIA) being used as the legal basis for enforcing agreements among landowners in this way and wonder what the Fair Trading Department's attitude will be when they find that they are being nominated as the adjudicators of neighbours' disputes on such developments.

The DA claims that a community title legal structure does not allow for the appointment of a manager and that their proposed system under the Associations Incorporations Act would be more enforceable, enabling stricter adherence to the wishes of residents. Well that is not my reading of the AIA or the Community Titles Development Act 1989 or the Community Titles Management Act 1989, the last two of which regulate the operations of community title developments, but I suppose time will tell if it is to work.

I trust these reflections will be seen as the constructive comments they are intended to be, and that they will encourage fruitful discussion between the developers and the Nimbin community.

Nightcap Village objections

by John Donvito, President, Caldera Residents Action Group (CRAG) Inc.

Caldera Residents Action Group recently responded to the Re-exhibition of Nightcap Village Development Application in a second submission to Tweed Council.

This is a summary of their principal objections.

1. Water and Sewerage Issues

The scale of the development is very large: 170 Detached Housing Lots, up to 4 people; 130 Semi-Detached/Townhouse Lots; 108 Semi-Detached/Townhouses/Unit Lots; and a Backpackers/Motel, capacity 200, making a total population estimate of 1,460 people.

This town will be three times the size of Uki, and its placement right alongside the Tweed River is highly questionable. Water supplies for our towns are taken directly from the Tweed River via flows from Clarrie Hall Dam. River water that is contaminated by sewerage overflows from this development will flow downstream towards Uki and Murwillumbah.

The DA states that there will be "effluent runoff which does find its way into the Tweed River" and that "there is a substantial distance between the site and the water supply extraction point which will...serve to mitigate any potential deleterious impacts". On what research is a "substantial distance" based upon?

There is real and unprecedented potential for this development to contaminate water in the Tweed River, and severely exacerbate the existing water quality problems within the river itself.

2. Changes to Minimum Block Size

We are totally opposed to any changes being sought in the minimum block size of 450 m² to a minimum size of 200 m². The DA states that the requested changes to the existing minimum block size is a "fundamental ingredient of a 'village'".

This may be so where there IS an existing village but this is a RURAL location: a paddock site, totally surrounded by farmland,

rural amenity and forest/ National Park and there is no pre-existing town/village on this site where consolidation of available space may be required to contain that existing town/village.

We are also totally opposed to the requested lot sizes for detached housing of 500-600 m². This is completely inadequate for detached housing block sizes where the average size is 700-800 m². There will be no backyards for families.

We would suggest that in reality the requested changes to the current minimum block size is being purposefully sought to maximise economic return and to ensure that the project is financially viable by squeezing as many dwellings onto the site as possible.

Any accepted changes to minimum block size by Council will give a green light to any applicant with 2D zoning in rural locations to construct more towns within highly unsuitable sites like this one being proposed.

3. Visual Impact

Three storey unit housing is totally out of character in this rural location, and not at all within keeping of the surrounding region. This kind of development will ensure that there is significant visual impact on the surrounding region by day and night. The town will be visible from the road, and it will be visible from Mt Warning/Border Ranges during the day and night.

This is not congruent with Council's visual amenity policy and therefore, should not be supported.

4. Traffic Issues

This town will generate an extra 4,500 vehicle movements per day. The DA suggests that any impacts on Kyogle Rd from this

increase in traffic movements as a direct result of the construction of this new town, are not "quantifiable at this time and that any remedial works should therefore be addressed by transport related development contributions such as the Tweed Road Contribution Plan" Given the amount of daily traffic travelling on Kyogle Rd now, we would argue that estimates on the level of remedial work that will need to be carried out, can be quantified and that these impacts will be significant.

5. Flora and Fauna

The DA clearly indicates that there is inadequate investigation into the threatened species of flora and fauna on the site, and those adjoining sites.

It is essential that a full study is undertaken to determine the full impact of this DA on crucial koala habitat.

As it is noted in the original DA, this area is a known koala habitat, and by law, the Applicant is required to undertake these studies when it comes to rare and endangered species.

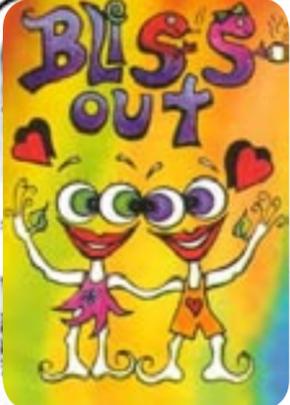
In Conclusion

This DA has the potential to alter our caldera landscape forever, given that its allowance to proceed will create unprecedented pressure on the hinterland for more of these towns to appear out of paddock sites, and in most unsuitable locations with no pre-existing infrastructure.

CRAG strongly urges Council to reject this application in its entirety and to contest this DA in the Land and Environment Court.

To contact CRAG, phone 6679-7273 or visit <www.crag.asn.au

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