

# YARRALUMLA RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

## ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY

July 2008

### RECREATION HUB MEETING

About 130 people – residents, lake users, and interested parties – attended the National Capital Authority's information session on the Yarralumla Bay Recreation Hub master plan at the YMCA Sailing Club on 25 June. It was a well-conducted meeting, chaired by Claire Middleton, with time for questions and comments from the floor on issues such as Alexandrina Drive, proposed wetlands and pond to replace the stormwater drain, the bike path, accommodation, cafes, boardwalk, boat rigging facilities, environmental concerns including climate change, traffic and noise. Not a great many answers were provided at this stage by the consultant HBO+EMTB. But Todd Rohl of the NCA gave assurances that a further public meeting would be held to discuss a preferred option before the Authority considers it.

**No timetable has yet been fixed. However, people have until Friday 29 August to comment on the three options presented to the meeting – or to raise any other matter concerning the area, including a wish to maintain Yarralumla Bay as is.** The three options can be seen at the NCA web site [www.natcap.gov.au](http://www.natcap.gov.au). Written submissions can be made to Ms Christine Ognjenovic at the NCA, GPO Box 373, Canberra ACT, or through the YRA web site [www.yra.org.au/feedback.htm](http://www.yra.org.au/feedback.htm).

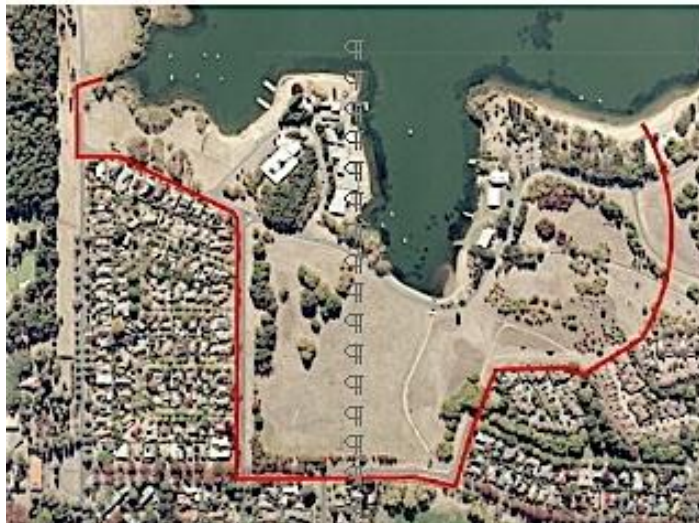


Figure 2.1.—AREA OF STUDY

Representatives of the NCA at the meeting made it clear that aspects of the various options presented are completely interchangeable, and would welcome input from the community about such changes or additions or about any detail of the options. In an informal straw poll the majority of people present at the meeting indicated by a show of hands that they preferred Option B of the three options presented by the consultants. However the YRA has not formed an opinion about any of the options presented and will be developing a submission. We urge you to consider the options and express your opinion to us or to the NCA at the addresses above.

Key questions to be resolved from the various Options include:

- **Alexandrina Drive.** Should it be realigned somewhat to the south to remove the hairpin bend near Hopetoun Circuit, but maintaining a curve to prevent it becoming a speedway? The meeting was told there have been 23 accidents in the past five years – none involving pedestrians, with 10 single vehicles running off the road.
- **Cycle path.** Should it be relocated on the lake side of the road, to remove the two existing crossings over Alexandrina Drive?
- **Parking.** Should there be increased parking at the service loop on the western side of the bay, and some new parking to assist boat-launchers behind the YMCA and Girls Grammar sites on the lake side of the realigned road, with overflow parking?
- **Drain.** Should there be a form of wetland and ‘smart pond’ following the course of the existing drain between Schlich Street and Alexandrina Drive, to filter stormwater before entering the lake? Concerns about mosquito breeding were raised at the meeting and will be addressed by the consultant. Dr Kevin Frawley said stormwater was the main cause of pollution to the lake.
- **Café.** Should there be a new lease to include a café, restaurant, bike hire and/or other facilities possibly on the east side of the bay, near the Girls Grammar rowing club? Option C, which proposed some short term rowing accommodation and buildings of up to three storeys, attracted little support at the meeting. The consultant suggests some opening up of the view towards Black Mountain.
- **Pedestrian.** Should there be a pedestrian pathway around the foreshore from the beach, and a boardwalk with pontoons and perhaps a ferry terminal on the Yarralumla Bay?
- **Open space.** One of the consultants, Mr Geoff Baker, gave assurances that the open recreation land near Schlich and Novar Streets was not proposed for development. And the areas of grassland inhabited by the endangered sun moth on the east and west sides of the drain would be protected.

**COSTS.** Mr Rohl said that the options had not yet been costed. This would be done when a preferred option had been developed. As to who would pay, he said the NCA was currently responsible for works around the lake edge. The remainder of the project would have to be in collaboration with the ACT Government.

As mentioned, people have until 29 August to make comments on any of the ideas as the consultant develops the preferred option. Cultural and Environmental Impact Statements will be prepared, and further discussions held with users on boat rigging and launching needs. It is anticipated the next public meeting to discuss specific proposals in the preferred option will be held later this year.

## **YARRALUMLA BRICKWORKS**

The Land Development Agency is expected to proceed to the next stage in the redevelopment of the Yarralumla Brickworks project later this month. The Evaluation Panel’s report on the various Expressions of Interest has been considered, and the LDA advises that Respondents should be told by mid-July whether they have been selected for Stage 2 of the process.

It is understood that a short list of about three proposals will be selected and developers asked to tender for their particular development. These proposals will then go to the community for comment. **When this occurs, the YRA will call a public meeting to discuss the projects and obtain residents' views. We will also letterbox the suburb to inform people of the date, time and place of the meeting.** Keep an eye on our noticeboard in the First Choice dry cleaners at the Yarralumla shops.

**YRA SUBMISSION.** The YRA committee made a submission to the LDA, acknowledging the significance of the preservation, conservation and maintenance of the Brickworks, and stating that a satisfactory resolution to the long-term use of the increasingly dangerous site was long overdue.

The committee believed that the project should be based on three general principles:

- 1 **Heritage.** The Brickworks' heritage is important, both the land and buildings. Provided heritage aspects of the Brickworks are preserved, the YRA would not object to a small development within the Brickworks.
- 2 **Open space.** Section 94, Block 3 should be retained as a recreational area. This reflects the strong preference of those residents who responded to our circular. The area is a public amenity used by a large number of local and out-of-suburb residents, including clubs, on a daily basis for walking, running, cycling, riding, the recreation of local children and the exercise of pets. Many much-used walking tracks crisscross the area.

The open area incorporates a large number of mature trees, which provide habitat for a considerable diversity of wild life, in particular native birds. This green belt acts as a windbreak and as a visual, auditory and aesthetic buffer between Woden Valley and the inner city suburbs. Moreover, retaining trees supports the ACT Government's policy on climate change, including the scientific consensus amongst the international community that carbon emissions must be reduced. Maintaining green open space in Yarralumla is important and is increasing in significance due to the amount of development and redevelopment that has occurred, and is expected to continue, in Yarralumla

- 3 **Traffic.** No new development should exacerbate the traffic congestion that currently exists in the suburb. Yarralumla is already under pressure from peak traffic diverting from Adelaide Avenue and Cotter Road through the suburb. Future proposed development in areas around Yarralumla will add further stress to existing peak hour traffic problems in Yarralumla.

We believe at least two new traffic studies are needed, firstly on current traffic flows and secondly on the projected traffic impact of all proposed developments in Yarralumla and surrounding suburbs. It is important that pedestrian and cyclist requirements be included in these studies. Increased traffic will also impact on existing parking and pedestrian access difficulties, especially for the many elderly residents, at the Yarralumla shopping and services precinct.

**CONCLUSION.** The YRA will 'argue strongly for the preservation, conservation and maintenance of the heritage listed buildings in the Brickworks, together with any heritage landscape features. Of paramount importance is the concern that residential or other development proposals will exacerbate the existing traffic congestion and parking problems in the suburb. Finally, the YRA support residents' strong preference that Section 94, Block 3 be retained as a recreational area. The YRA requests both active engagement and extensive public consultation in all aspects of the development process, together with a timeline.'

## 43 HAMPTON CIRCUIT

The YRA has objected to the proposal to erect 19 units on a single block of land at 43 Hampton Circuit (Block 18, Section 32). We are advised that some neighbouring residents have also objected to the high-density development application. No date has been given as to when the ACT Planning and Land Authority will make a decision. In its submission, the YRA committee said it viewed the application with concern. ‘We believe that a five-storey building in Yarralumla would set an unwelcome and unfortunate precedent in this residential suburb.’

The objection was based on three main grounds:

- **Planning restrictions and guidelines.** At present the area is zoned for a maximum of two-storeys under the ACT Territory Plan. But it also falls within the NCA Development Control Plan proposing high-density development on either side of Adelaide Avenue in this vicinity. It was another example of planning by the NCA that overrides planning by the ACT Government.

The block is one of six adjacent blocks in Hampton Circuit identified under the Control Plan. ‘If all were developed in this way, it would create a wall of buildings along Adelaide Avenue,’ the YRA submission said. ‘We believe the ACT planning authorities should give most careful consideration as to whether this is what is wanted in one of Canberra’s most important arterial roads... Yarralumla has no residential or commercial buildings of this height, and we would further argue that a five-storey building has no place in this old established garden suburb.’

- **Traffic concerns.** The proposal would allow 19 households where at present there is only one. While underground parking is proposed for residents, the YRA believes there is inadequate parking proposed for visitors. Already cars are frequently parked on land reserved for the Sri Lanka diplomatic site. Additional traffic could also add to existing problems at peak period of cars making the ‘dog leg’ turn into Weston Street, and also accessing the Adelaide Avenue traffic ramps.
- **Environmental.** Questions were raised about the retention of several mature trees at the rear of the block, and concerns expressed about set backs of the three townhouses, the proposed ‘green roofs’, and the impact the large footprint of the development would have on the near by area.

**WIND TUNNEL OPEN DAY.** Residents are invited to an Open Day on Saturday 2 August, to see a bushfire wind tunnel the CSIRO is building at the Yarralumla campus in Banks Street. The wind tunnel is one of only two in the world, and will be used to study bushfire behaviour. During tests some smoke will be emitted for about 20 minutes. The Open Day is to inform residents of the facility, and will start at 12.30 pm at the bushfire wind tunnel building, near the CSIRO vehicle compound, at the Schlich Street end of the campus. Contact: Andrew.Sullivan@csiro.au

### Yarralumla Residents Association contacts:

Web site: [www.yra.org.au](http://www.yra.org.au)

Email: [info@yra.org.au](mailto:info@yra.org.au)

Address: PO Box 7123, Yarralumla, ACT 2600

Membership: \$15 per household. Treasurer: Les Landau. President: Vacant