



Theatre site rezoning approved



The State Government Department of Planning has allowed a re-zoning of the land that the Avoca Beach Picture Theatre occupies as well as the adjoining lot which is currently also in the same ownership.

This re-zoning will now allow mixed use commercial and residential development on the land. The current theatre building was constructed prior to the existing residential zoning coming into force and thus has existing use rights to continue in that role. The new zoning confirms the validity of the current use as a "place of assembly" and allows further development according to the provisions of the new plan.

The new zoning plan does not constitute an approval of the concept design submitted as part of the rezoning process. When a development application is submitted it will have to comply with the specific requirements laid down in the legislation as part of the approval process. The concept design in its current form would not comply with these requirements.

In particular the plan sets a height limit of

10 metres (relative to the natural ground level) for development on the site. The concept design included areas with an overall height in excess of 13m. Whilst the plan does allow for rooftop type elements to exceed this limit effectively the use of space above this height for habitable purposes such as residential units would not be allowed.

There is also a provision that the existing theatre building must be retained in any future development and also that any proposed development will compliment the heritage qualities of the existing theatre building.

The concept design attracted criticism in relation to the overall height and bulk and also the relationship of the new structure to the existing building. Both these points have thus been acknowledged in this plan.

Another area of criticism of the concept design related to the impact of the proposed building on the adjoining public park and the coastal environment generally. The plan requires the consent authority (Gosford Council) to only allow

development on the land where it is satisfied that there is a "high standard of urban design and architectural quality" and that it is an appropriate development to be included in the coastal zone.

It takes this process one step further however by making a requirement of the zoning that any development application be referred to an Independent Design Review Panel (appointed in consultation with the Dept. of Planning). The Council is required under the zoning to then consider the report of this panel.

An additional layer of approval has now been added as the rezoning plan now requires the report of the review panel to be referred back to the Department of Planning prior to a development approval being granted. Unless the Director-General of Planning certifies otherwise the Department of Planning will thus have the final say in assessing any future development applications on the land.

The full text of the plan is reproduced on page 3.



president's message

IAN ESPLIN

Welcome to our December Newsletter which is the final one for 2007. Generally it has been a relatively quiet year for the Association and Avoca generally which in some ways is a good thing.

We have had some upheavals with changes of committee members, members travelling overseas and also settling in to our new meeting place in the Surf Club which has taken some time to get established as a permanent venue in people's minds after such a long time at the old CWA Hall.

There has also been the distraction of the Federal elections and the resulting major change to the political landscape. Locally the biggest story is the release of the rezoning decisions regarding the Theatre land and the adjoining block. In both cases we now have a definite result after a long period of uncertainty.

It is interesting to see the role that Independent Design Review Panels are increasingly playing in the planning process. I think it reflects a desire to remove some of the political interference from the process that has often characterised it in the past. We simply can't afford bad planning.

Unfortunately good urban planning on the Central Coast has been rather lacking in the past which has left a burden on the future since once zonings and land subdivisions are made they are almost impossible to undo.

The past mistakes in the planning of Sydney City are now slowly being realised with yet another attempt to right past wrongs by removing the Cahill Expressway and other freeways and trying to make the place a more people friendly environment. The extent to which this is possible will remain to be seen however past experience does not look positive – it's just too expensive and difficult to replan major elements of infrastructure.

The rezoning appears to present a reasonable balance between

the desire to retain the old building and provide new facilities whilst minimising the impact on the local environment. We hope that it does provide a structure for the successful future continuation and development of the theatre which has been a feature of Avoca for over fifty years.

The Bushcare article indicates the continuing success of this program especially with the government funding that is being currently provided. I attended the celebration barbeque marking the end of the first year's work and was very impressed with the progress.

It's hard for us to imagine what this place was like before European settlement however there are these little patches left which are being slowly regenerated and represent a fantastic asset to the community. It was good to see a few new faces there and also hear about new groups being established. It's something that anyone can do.


If you live in an area adjoining significant bushland the council will help with resources and you can set up your own project. What better investment could there be in the future.

We are continuing to press on with efforts to lobby for appropriate development and planning in public areas in Avoca and have invited Councillor Vicki Scott to come to our February meeting. Vicki is the Chairman of the Council's Playground Committee and played a large part in the successful development of the new Ross Park playground.

We are keen to talk to her about this success and also talk about what might be done in the remaining areas in the future. You are invited to come to this meeting and join in what might be a lively discussion.

Finally, I'd like to wish you all Merry Christmas and hope that 2008 will be a good year for Avoca Beach.

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**IAN ESPLIN
ARCHITECT**
4381 1894
www.esplin.com.au



Theatre site rezoning – new LEP

The text of the new LEP is shown below – non relevant information has been deleted for clarity.

12 October 2007 OFFICIAL NOTICES 7773/NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT GAZETTE No. 146

New South Wales Gosford Local Environmental Plan No 456 under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

I, the Minister for Planning, make the following local environmental plan under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. (CC0000020/PC-1)

FRANK SARTOR, M.P.,
Minister for Planning

1 Name of plan

This plan is Gosford Local Environmental Plan No 456.

2 Aims of plan

The aims of this plan are:

- (a) to enable the land to which this plan applies to be developed for a mixed-use commercial and residential development, and
- (b) to ensure that any future development of that land retains the existing Avoca Beach theatre building, and
- (c) to provide for the establishment of an independent panel to provide advice to the consent authority about development applications relating to the land.

The plan goes on to state that the LEP is to be amended to include the following items.

- (2) Development may, with development consent, be carried out on land to which this clause applies for the purpose of a residential flat building, a place of assembly, an art gallery or a restaurant.
- (3) The maximum floor space ratio for the land to which this clause applies is 1:1.
- (4) The maximum height for a building erected on the land to which this clause applies is 10 metres, except as provided by subclause (5).
- (5) The consent authority may consent to development that exceeds the maximum height specified in subclause (4) if it is satisfied that any part of a building that is to exceed the maximum height:
 - (a) is to be used for cinema or theatre purposes, and
 - (b) is an integral part of the design of the building.
- (6) Strata subdivision is permissible, with development consent, on the land to which this clause applies.
- (7) The consent authority must not grant development consent to development on land to which this plan applies:
 - (a) unless the development application has been referred for assessment to an Independent Design Review Panel appointed in consultation with the Director-General of the Department of Planning, and
 - (b) except with the concurrence of the Director-General.
- (8) The consent authority must not grant development consent to development on land to which this plan applies unless it has taken into consideration the following:
 - (a) the assessment of the Independent Design Review Panel

- of the development application,
- (b) whether the proposed development retains the existing theatre building,
- (c) whether the design of the proposed development complements the heritage qualities of the existing theatre building,
- (d) whether the proposed development provides a high standard of urban design and architectural quality, including the interface between the development and the adjoining public park,
- (e) whether the design of the proposed development is appropriate for the location of the land in the coastal zone,
- (f) whether adequate car parking is provided,
- (g) whether the proposed development provides measures to conserve water usage and to increase water efficiency.

(9) Before granting concurrence under this clause, the Director-General must consider the assessment of the Independent Design Review Panel in relation to the following:

- (a) whether the proposed development retains the existing theatre building,
- (b) whether the design of the proposed development complements the heritage qualities of the existing theatrebuilding,
- (c) whether the proposed development provides a high standard of urban design and architectural quality, including the interface between the development and the adjoining public park,
- (d) whether the design of the proposed development is appropriate for the location of the land in the coastal zone.

(10) The consent authority is not required to comply with subclauses (7) and (8) (a) if the Director-General certifies in writing that the development is of minor significance.

(11) This clause has effect despite any other provisions of this Ordinance.

(12) In this clause: coastal zone has the same meaning as in the Coastal Protection Act 1979.





Bushcare celebrates and expands in Avoca

Celebration

22 bushcarers and supporters met at Eve Mahon's beautiful home in Reynolds Road on 11 November to celebrate the NSW Environmental Trust's grant's 2nd year to Bulbararing Reserve.

There were many apologies, due to clashes with overseas friends' visits, overseas holidays, and the Walk against (Global) Warming. However, there were enough of us, old and new bushcarers and children, to enjoy the walk through our precious Reserve.

We were led on the walk by the bubbly and ever-helpful Robyn Urquhart, Gosford City Council's Bushcare Officer.

We were also pleased she was accompanied by Damien Moey, leader of Bangalow Bushcare Management. Bangalow won the contract to assist this extension of the bushcare along the riparian area of the reserve. We were particularly thankful that Damien was able to leave his new firstborn child and wife to be with us that day, so we could personally thank him for the splendid work he and his team are doing for us!

After the walk Eve treated us to a marvellous barbeque, with gourmet sausages, veggie burgers and stupendous salads. Her backyard gives us an excellent view of the wonderful regeneration taking place on the north western side of the reserve.

The regular bushcarers able to be present that day thank Avoca Beach Community Association very much for sponsoring and funding the barbeque, and hope that more of the community will join us at the end of next year when we celebrate the winding up of the three year grant.

Expansion

We are excited to tell you of the expanded opportunities now being offered to learn and use bushcare skills in Avoca. Carol and Peter Gumley, who established the first bushcare group behind their home in Reynolds Road in 1996 which is supervised by Jane Gye, have inspired the formation of two new groups over the past year.

Anneke and Neville Kingham have taken responsibility for forming a group behind their home at 8 Willdenow Road since

November 2006. They have chosen the second Monday of the month for their regular two hour work day, supervised by Jenette Bringolf, also paid for by Gosford City Council. Those of us who have worked at or visited that part of Avoca are amazed at the secret beauties hidden around this marvellous home of ours.

Eve Mahon has responded to requests by some Bulbararing Reserve neighbours to host a weekend group, and has chosen the first Saturday of the month beginning in February 2008.

So look at the dates for 2008 on the back page of this newsletter and you will see you have three options each month between February and November (if it's not too hot, wet or windy) for giving Avoca's bush two hours of your time to assist its abundant regeneration.

If you have never experienced the joy of bushcare, 2008 will be a great time to learn. Council will assist by providing a hands-on "Introduction to bushcare" 3 hour workshop if you contact Carol, Anneke or Eve whenever you are ready to join their groups.

Council bushcare news

Robyn Urquhart is now the only Bushcare Officer remaining, until Geoff Bakewell's former position is re-filled.

Those of you who worked with him over the past six years will be pleased to learn that Geoff has a new and challenging job in Sydney. He is one of two new Environmental Officers with Transgrid and has an important role in educating their workers in preserving bush under the powerlines which transport NSW electricity.

Eve and Romaine were happy to catch up with Geoff, as well as Robyn, at Council's free thankyou barbeque for all Gosford bushcare volunteers. Though numbers were down this year, because the date clashed with the federal election at which many regulars were assisting, the food was extra special here too. An encouragement to all Avoca bushcarers to put Council's end of year celebration in your 2008 diaries early next year!

This project has been assisted by the New South Wales Government through its Environmental Trust.

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Avoca Beach Surf Lifesaving Club provides assistance to Thai surf club

On 26 December 2004 a magnitude 9.3 earthquake struck the west coast of Sumatra. As a consequence a Tsunami occurred in the Indian Ocean devastating communities in Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Thailand, and affected many other countries along the Indian Ocean rim. Approximately 300,000 people were killed in the Tsunami; eight thousand in Thailand of which half were Thai nationals and the other half foreigners and tourists. The worst hit areas in Thailand included the province of Phuket and Phi Phi Island.

Kathy Glinsky a young woman from Sydney was one of the victims of the Boxing Day Tsunami. Kathy was on holidays visiting her sister and family on Phi Phi Island when the tidal wave hit, both she and her young niece, Sasha, lost their lives whilst walking on the beach close to their family's business.

In memory of Kathy, her employer Australand, kindly donated a fully equipped surfboat to Avoca Beach Surf Life Saving Club. Prior to her death, Kathy had been organising with Tiffany Braund, a member of Avoca Beach Surf Club, to sponsor a new set of oars. After the tragedy, Australand felt it appropriate to substantially increase the donation to include a surfboat, trailer and oars.

The sweep of the "Kathy Glinsky" surfboat, John Mitchell, life member and keen supporter of surf life saving in the local community of Avoca Beach, is constantly reminded of the tragic circumstances that arose from the Boxing Day Tsunami when he takes his crews out for training and competition on the water. The loss of life that occurred on that fateful day and the ongoing drownings that continue to take lives in Thailand has inspired John and the Avoca Beach Surf Club to start a program to introduce surf awareness and the culture of surf life saving to the communities of Phuket and Phi Phi.

Alistair (Slim) Peebles, Life Member of Avoca Beach Surf Club kindly investigated the feasibility of taking the concept of surf life saving and surf awareness to Thailand and through his tireless efforts he secured a grant from the Australia-Thai Institute to assist members of the club to introduce, up-skill and train the Thai people in first aid, surf awareness and water safety.

In the Year of the Life Saver (2007), a dedicated team of twelve members of Avoca Beach Surf Lifesaving Club left for Phuket in July to work with members of the Thai marine police, lifeguards, school children, tour operators and the Thai people to introduce the concept of surf life saving to their community.

In December four Thai lifeguards visited Avoca to receive training and were given accommodation at Rileys Bed and Breakfast. Two members of the Avoca Club are currently in Thailand and have included a meeting with the Thai and Australian ambassador as part of the trip.

A demonstration Surf Life Saving carnival is planned at Patong Beach, Phuket in April next year and the Surf Club is currently inviting members to participate. Further trips to Thailand in the future are planned by Avoca Beach Surf Club with the aim to build the idea of fun and community service through surf life saving to the Thai people and to bring John and Slim's dream to fruition to build these people a surf club and culture to support themselves in the promotion of surf awareness and water safety.

This project has been fully supported and endorsed by Surf Life Saving Australia, Surf Life Saving NSW and Surf Life Saving Central Coast.

For further information contact Slim Peebles 0428 434 223 or John Mitchell 0418 485 689 or check the clubs website www.avocabeachslsc.asn.au

HELP PLEASE!

Slim Peebles has been working tirelessly contacting surf life saving clubs up and down the east coast of Australia, looking for donations of surf life saving equipment from other clubs. He has had a great response, with offers of rescue boards, skis and surfboats to send to Thailand.

With all the equipment to go to Thailand, the Avoca Beach Surf Club is appealing to anyone who has contacts in the shipping container business who might like to sponsor a container to Thailand for this worthy cause. Slim Peebles or John Mitchell can be contacted through the Avoca Beach Surf Life Saving Club on 4382 1514

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ABCA meets at 7.30pm on the first Monday of every second month.

The Association's newsletter The Avoca Beach Review is published every three months.

It is financed by advertisements from local businesses who can show their support for the community and promote themselves to the community through the advertising. Rates \$40 for 6cm x 6cm.

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