

UPDATE Nelson Bay Development Control Plan (DCP)

NELSON BAY - IN TRANSITION & UNDER SIEGE.

BACKGROUND: In 2007/08, Port Stephens Council engaged consultants Rohan Dickson Associates to prepare a new draft Nelson Bay DCP. This was quickly, and somehow, elevated to an ambitious 2030 Strategy to replace an existing DCP no longer meeting the town's need for a transition to sustainability.

Delivered in June 2008, the Rohan Dickson Draft Nelson Bay 2030 Strategy had lost its way among several issues including over-ambitious proposals that, thankfully, were not ever likely to happen.

The 2009 Patrick Partners Background to Design Codes & Draft Development Control Plan -
A 'different' approach for a new Nelson Bay DCP was apparently conceived with the Council's engaging of consultant Mike Cullen of Patrick Partners.

This draft outcome was initially delivered as a Business Breakfast preview when it immediately became obvious that, once again, an over-ambitious and extreme make-over of the town is being proposed. This includes 'European-style' themes totally out of context and character with the unique bay-side town we must nurture and guide through transition to sustainable outcomes.

Download at PSC website: <http://portstephens.local-e.nsw.gov.au/planning/89002/164168.html>
Unfortunately, the font is far too small to be read on screen thus requiring download of its 42 pages. The public exhibition period is expected to begin in February through to March.

WHAT WILL THE PATRICK PARTNERS DRAFT DO?

Among a raft of unacceptable proposals are those intended to physically connect the town to the foreshore as in the following:

- The extension of Stockton Street to Victoria Parade with two-way traffic access to and from Victoria Parade.
- Pedestrian access across Apex Park to be expedited via a Teramby road overhead walkway and steps to the foreshore.
- Proposes a town business connection to the foreshore, the construction of business premises to five storeys on Apex Park.
- The construction of five storey buildings on the foreshore.
- No priority for traffic and parking management, other than to keep on directing more traffic volumes to the town centre and foreshore as in the preceding Rohan Dickson Draft.

Now, as part of the recently formed Nelson Bay Town & Foreshore Advisory Group, EcoNetwork, along with other Group members, opposes the above five draft proposals,.

Traffic lights at main intersections are the key traffic control measures proposed. The Advisory Group is now calling for holistic traffic and parking management as part of a future DCP.

Please read on about the Advisory Group, its activities, what it means for future community engagement, and a sustainable future for Nelson Bay.

THE NELSON BAY TOWN & FORESHORE ADVISORY GROUP

The Advisory Group was formed on 19th October to better address new draft Development Control Plan (DCP) proposals. The Advisory Group comprises two representatives each from the Nelson Bay & District Business Chamber, Nelson Bay Town Management Committee, Port Stephens Tourism Limited, Tomaree Ratepayers & Residents Association and EcoNetwork - Port Stephens.

An 8 point Guideline determines the Group's modus operandi,.... *"providing a combined and unified advisory voice on matters of current and future importance to the town and its foreshore.....to evolve in an atmosphere of goodwill and co-operation"*.

The Guidelines and the outcomes from the Advisory Group's consensus decision-making and recommendations are available on request and later on a proposed website.

A SNAPSHOT OF NELSON BAY ADVISORY GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

- No more than 2 storeys at the Marina site and 3 at the western end of Teramby Rd.
- Stepping back of building heights through the township maintaining the natural amphitheatre.
- High rise development south of Dowling St to remain below the skyline as viewed from the Bay.
- Building setbacks for 3rd and subsequent storeys.
- Identification of a suitable space for a town square.
- Landscaping of the Victoria Parade South Reserve Portion 567, DP1033413.
- A professional holistic traffic and parking management study to include bypass options.
- Clear estimates of resident and visitor population and dwelling demand.
- A clear aim of maintaining the Australian coastal township character of Nelson Bay.
- Use of all planning tools including zoning where appropriate.

SOME BAY-RELATED ECONETWORK INITIATIVES IN 2009

- **March 11th** -To Council, "Local Steps to Sustainability".
- **May 6th** - To Council, Opposition to 8 to 10 storey development on Donald St east car-park.
- **June 18th** - "Nelson Bay Dialogue for a Sustainable Town Future".
- **August 15th** - "Contribution to Discussion - Nelson Bay 2030 Strategy".
- **November 23rd** - To Patrick Partners, " 10 Questions to Mike Cullen of Patrick Partners".
- **December 10th** - To Council, "For Improved Community Engagement & Consultation".

These documents are available on request.

WHAT NOW CAN I DO?

- **Begin by consulting EcoNetwork's August 2009 (5p doc) "Contribution to Discussion".**
- **Prepare notes for a letter to Council on what you oppose / agree with.**
- **Be aware of the recommendations of the Town's Advisory Group.**
- **Inquire about EcoNetwork's independent stance on a potential high-rise hotel/conference development in the town centre, and about those traffic lights!**
- **Invite an EcoNetwork rep. to address your next meeting on what's involved.**
- **Request Council to provide a 3 months public exhibition period..**
- **Attend, and invite friends to attend. a Special March EcoNetwork Meeting on this controversial Draft Development Control Plan. (Meeting details yet available)..**

