

## **49 Newcombe Street Development**

Members will be aware that your Association has been resolutely campaigning against the construction of a proposed multi-level residential and retail complex on the former post office/public gardens site on the bay-side of our main street:

- The Victorian Government has made much of its "Bellarine Distinctive Areas and Landscapes (DAL)", which is designed to limit overdevelopment
- Under the DAL, Portarlington (pop 3,600) is not designated as a growth centre and the stated intention is to preserve its small coastal township look and feel including views to and from the bay
- The controversial bulky 5 storey residential and retail complex would block out the seascape from land that was a former public garden on the bay-side of our town's main street
- Our townsfolk have previously successfully persuaded the Planning Minister to block a similar development on the same site - including through a 2000+ signatures petition that was tabled in parliament
- Our members are particularly aggrieved that the subject land fell into private ownership through a series of missteps by Commonwealth Government agencies (PMG/Australia Post)
- We are calling on CoGG to refuse a permit - and more importantly for the federal and state governments to work together to buy the land back from the developer and return it to public open space - a coastal park
- We see this case as a test of the *bona fides* of promises by the local federal and state parliamentarians to protect the Bellarine from inappropriate development - and particularly the first test of the much-heralded DAL!

To pursue our objectives the last meeting of the PCA decided to establish a dedicated sub-committee, which has been very active. They have successfully achieved publicity for our aims in the *Geelong Advertiser*, *Bellarine Times* and our own *Port Report*.

The sub-committee has produced a leaflet, which it is intended to letterbox throughout our town and is encouraging concerned members and residents to write to our local MPs and CoGG councillors. Also included with this report are draft *pro-formas* that such letters could be based upon. The relevant contact email addresses are:

- ⇒ CoGG Planning Department (quote PP-1065-2022) – [contactus@geelongcity.vic.gov.au](mailto:contactus@geelongcity.vic.gov.au)
- ⇒ Libby Coker MP - [Libby.Coker.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Libby.Coker.MP@aph.gov.au)
- ⇒ Alison Marchant MP - [Alison.Marchant@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:Alison.Marchant@parliament.vic.gov.au)
- ⇒ Mayor Trent Sullivan - [tsullivan@geelongcity.vic.gov.au](mailto:tsullivan@geelongcity.vic.gov.au)
- ⇒ Cr Jim Mason - [jmason@geelongcity.vic.gov.au](mailto:jmason@geelongcity.vic.gov.au)
- ⇒ Cr Stephanie Asher - [sasher@geelongcity.vic.gov.au](mailto:sasher@geelongcity.vic.gov.au)

Our sub-committee is also in the process of establishing a social media presence on Facebook to publicise our views. They are also seeking volunteers to help with the letterboxing. If you can spare an hour or so, please contact the sub-committee Secretary, Dr Anne Whisken on [port.olive.62@outlook.com](mailto:port.olive.62@outlook.com) or 0433140139

We believe this campaign is now reaching a critical stage. Unless the subject land is returned to public ownership, sooner or later a new development will be built on it – and we will lose forever the opportunity to recreate an open space cascading from our main shopping strip down to the waterfront. The time to act is now!

## A COASTAL POCKET PARK FOR PORTARLINGTON – WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Our historic heritage park link from Newcombe Street to the bay is under threat.
- A multi-story building is planned for 49 Newcombe Street – a site which used to be a public park.
- We must **ACT NOW to STOP the building**, buy back the site and make a new coastal pocket park

### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

#### To STOP the building application:

- write or send an email to
  - State MP Alison Marchant
    - G066, Gateway Plaza Leopold,  
641-659 Bellarine Highway,  
Leopold, Victoria, 3224  
[alison.marchant@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:alison.marchant@parliament.vic.gov.au)
  - City of Greater Geelong Councillors
    - Trent Sullivan, [tsullivan@geelongcity.vic.gov.au](mailto:tsullivan@geelongcity.vic.gov.au)
    - Jim Mason, [jmason@geelongcity.vic.gov.au](mailto:jmason@geelongcity.vic.gov.au)
    - Stephanie Asher, [sasher@geelongcity.vic.gov.au](mailto:sasher@geelongcity.vic.gov.au)
- Make an objection at CoGG planning
  - [contactus@geelongcity.vic.gov.au](mailto:contactus@geelongcity.vic.gov.au) or: PO Box 104, Geelong, Vic 3220

#### To get FUNDS TO BUY BACK the site for public use and restore the parkland:

- Write or send an email to
  - Federal MHR Libby Coker
    - 26/500-540 Torquay Road,  
Armstrong Creek, VIC, 3217  
[Libby.Coker.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Libby.Coker.MP@aph.gov.au)
  - Federal Senator Sarah Henderson
    - PO Box 821,  
Geelong, VIC, 3220  
<https://sarahhenderson.com.au/contact/> OR [senator.henderson@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.henderson@aph.gov.au)
  - State MP Alison Marchant
    - G066, Gateway Plaza Leopold,  
641-659 Bellarine Highway,  
Leopold, Victoria, 3224  
[alison.marchant@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:alison.marchant@parliament.vic.gov.au)
  - State MLC Gayle Tierney
    - Ground Floor, 1 Yarra St,  
Geelong, Vic, 3220  
[gayle.tierney@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:gayle.tierney@parliament.vic.gov.au)

### WHAT SHOULD YOU SAY?

Use the sample letters for ideas (see below)

### WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO?

Write letters to our local papers:

- Geelong Advertiser
  - [yoursay@geelongadvertiser.com.au](mailto:yoursay@geelongadvertiser.com.au)
- Bellarine Times
  - [editor@timesnewsgroup.com.au](mailto:editor@timesnewsgroup.com.au)

## SAMPLE LETTERS

### Letter 1 Heritage focus

Dear

I/We would like to express our objection to the proposed multi-storey development at 49 Newcombe Street Portarlington.

We are well aware that this town is growing, and newcomers to the town need options for secure long term housing. We fully support the growth and development of regional towns such as Portarlington.

What we are asking is that the developers seek land that doesn't compromise the quality of the Newcombe St retail area, a unique community environment that people come specifically to enjoy.

How does a coastal town retain its character and heritage when developments such as this pay no heed to the impact their buildings will cause? This development will result in a loss of view from Newcombe Street down to the pier and across to the bay, which locals and visitors alike have enjoyed for well over 100 years. How much of our little town's important history and past are we willing to lose so that a few people may have a prime view?

Yours etc

-----

### Letter 2 Tourism focus

Dear

We write in opposition to the proposed development at 49 Newcombe Street Portarlington. Tourism is vital to regional economies. One of the tourist attractions in Portarlington is the unique streetscape in Newcombe St.

The recent restoration of the Grand Hotel in Newcombe Street is a great example of a development which is in keeping with the history and character of the town. The views from the south side of Newcombe street with outdoor tables and other seating looking directly out to the ferry, pier and bay beyond will disappear.

By all means create residential options in Portarlington but not on this site. Let's not destroy a unique streetscape at the heart of Portarlington's charm and appeal as an attractive tourist destination.

Yours etc

-----

### Letter 3 Community focus

Dear

I would like to express my opposition to the proposed development of 49 Newcombe Street Portarlington for the following reasons.

1. It will change the character of Newcombe Street forever.
2. It will rob visitors and locals of the unique attraction and appeal that distinguishes Portarlington from other towns on the Bellarine Peninsula.
3. It sends a signal that inappropriate development is preferred by Local and State Government authorities over Regional Tourism Development and Employment.

I am not opposed by any means to multi-unit development. I recognise that Portarlington will continue to grow.

But an inappropriate development on this particular site will block out views of the bay and foreshore for a few owners at the expense of the community and visitors who delight in the experience of the unique character of Newcombe street.

Yours etc

-----

Letter 4 Coastal Park Focus

Dear

I have recently learned of a proposal by the Portarlington Community Association to encourage state and federal government authorities to purchase a piece of land on Newcombe street, previously under public ownership, that will help make Portarlington's main street an even more stunning example of village coastal beauty than it already is.

What a fantastic opportunity to reclaim what was originally in public ownership and at the same time ensure that the Bellarine's Distinctive Area Landscape(DAL) Policy is being implemented. The DAL states "Significant views within the landscape – manage the development of infrastructure to maintain views to the hinterland and/or coast".

The current development in planning is a proposed piece of infrastructure that would definitely not maintain a view to the coast. It would block a current view which enables local people and visitors to see directly to the pier, ferry and the bay beyond. This is a feature of Newcombe street which encourages life and commerce along the street as people shop, eat and appreciate the aspect.

I hope the Portarlington community embrace this forward thinking proposal – the economic and social benefits to the entire community of a beautiful coastal park far outweigh that of an inappropriate housing development for a few who can afford such a prime view.

Yours etc