



NEWSLETTER - JULY 2020

Dear Members and Supporters

Welcome to our July Newsletter.

We wish to notify you that the Annual General Meeting will be on the Tuesday 25th August at 7pm Henley and Grange Community Centre. We will provide a detailed Agenda and reminder prior to the AGM.

Please enjoy our Newsletter with reports on -

- On The Buses (Govt proposal to change Bus Services)
- Torrens River - Breakout Creek (3rd final stage of Wetland)
- Proposed Planning and Design Code
- Coastal Management (Securing the Future of our Coastline)
- Protection for Trees
- Illegal extraction of groundwater BAJU/H2O Development – Letter to Branch Head of Department Environment and Water (DEW) and response
- Climate Emergency Group (CEG) - Report



As you are aware by now, the Government has announced there will be no changes to our bus services, following their consultation process.

During the consultation period many of our members and supporters expressed their concerns, verging on alarm, at the proposed changes to our bus services. WACRA's primary concern was the lack of information being circulated.

We questioned several concerns including;

- How many bus stops in Colton were to be abolished or have their status changed?
- How many new bus stops would be created?
- Would some services no longer have timetables but simply be advertised by frequency of service?
- Had there been any consideration given to people with physical mobility limitations who may have much further to go to get to their nearest bus stops.

We sought clarity using the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure (DPTI) information on line, but had been unable to resolve these questions.

Peter Schultz provided WACRA with extensive research into the current and future proposed bus routes, identifying the deficiencies of the bus plan. WACRA supported Peter's sound evidence, allowing to us to submit our opposition to the plan. Many thanks for Peter's hard work and research. We would also like to thank Erica Jolly who was very active in lobbying for no change to the bus stops.

Following an announcement by the Premier on Monday 29th June, the proposed changes were dropped following a groundswell of complaints.

WACRA would also like to express our appreciation to Matt Cowdrey MP - Member for Colton, for acknowledging our concerns and addressing our views in Parliament.

Many thanks to our members and supporters who contributed with the rest of the community to ensure common sense prevailed.

Power to the people!



TORRENS RIVER – BREAKOUT CREEK WETLAND

The recent announcement that the 3rd and final stage of the Torrens River Wetland is fully funded and will commence by December 2020 has brought joy to the hearts of our community.

Over 20 years of lobbying by WACRA to the Federal, State and Local Governments to complete the final section of the much needed significant wetland to improve water quality and biodiversity will happen.

A recent meeting between WACRA executive members, representation from the reformed Green Adelaide (NRM) and the consultant team met on the river bank to discuss possibilities in designing a Concept Plan.

Our objectives centered around slow flow water settlement to reduce sediment and pollutant loads entering Gulf St Vincent, cleansing of storm water on either side of the river being directed into 'on bank' mini settlement basins, substantial plantings of native biodiversity, recreation opportunities, horse agistment, art works and Kaurna First Nation recognition.

We greatly appreciate being invited to be part of the broad community consultation and the additional opportunity to attend a Cultural Training Workshop on the planning process.

We were excited to hear that the Concept Plan should be ready to go out to community for consideration by end of July and that providing agreement can be achieved the construction work should commence by December this year.

We thank the funding bodies sincerely for making this happen and we look forward to the celebration when the first sod of dirt is turned over and the Wetland becomes a model of environment excellence.

PROPOSED PLANNING AND DESIGN CODE

The SA Government are reviewing the present Planning Act and are proposing a significant change by compressing over 60 Development Plans into one document named the Planning and Design Code.

The new Code could better be known as a 'one size fits all' future planning requirements that mostly cuts out opportunity for input by Local Government and appeals process for community.

WACRA have serious concerns with the content and process as it fails to address major aspects of sustainable design, the protection of character homes in historic zones, Heritage homes and buildings, traffic management and pedestrian safety.

What we fear is massive urban infill, multi-story units, greater energy use, unsuitable and inappropriate and ugly design.

What this also means is that significant trees, open space forests can be uprooted and chopped down destroying the heat protection canopies and bird life habitat.

The Charles Sturt Council boundary presently has the highest number of character homes and historic conservation zones of all councils and WACRA have made submissions raising our serious concerns about the future planning process.

WACRA is a foundation member of a broader Planning action group, Community Alliance SA, and we would urge you to find out more from their web site <https://communityalliancesa.org.au/>.

The Government have advised (against strong opposition) that they intend to introduce the new Code by the end of September or soon after. Use of the Code will be via an online "portal". This has been in development for some time, but has been severely delayed after most of the staff and the Project Director quit. One trial some months ago found lots of problems and confusion.

WACRA says "scrap it and start again"

For more information on what the Code is all about go to the SA Planning

Commission Web site <http://www.saplanningcommission.sa.gov.au/news?a=678865>.

COASTAL MANAGEMENT

In June, WACRA representatives Bert Brown, Jim Douglas and Geoff Short attended two further Zoom information sessions of the Community Reference Group on “Securing the Future of Our Coastline”, sponsored by the Department of Environment and Water (DEW) and the Coast Protection Board (CPB). The sessions focused on the history of the Adelaide Living Beaches 2005-2025 Strategy up to and including the current CPB strategy of removing sand from Semaphore and Largs to replenish West Beach. In addition, DEW has formed a working group to commission an independent assessment of impacts on the Northern beaches. WACRA is also a member of that working group.

In view of the dissatisfaction with current DEW/CPB strategies expressed by communities up and down the coast, WACRA has formally called for the CPB to recommend that the SA Governor proclaim a Coast Protection District covering all of the metropolitan coast. Under the Coast Protection Act, this would require the CPB to conduct a comprehensive investigation and to develop a formal management plan for the coast.

This process should ensure that a comprehensive plan is developed for the metropolitan coastline, properly informed by scientific, Council and resident input, including an Environmental Impact Statement, with appropriate consultation and transparency. It will ensure that detailed consideration of the economic, social and environmental consequences of the available options is undertaken. The response of the CPB will be notified when known. Meanwhile, WACRA supports immediate action to secure West Beach.

PROTECTION FOR TREES

Through the Climate Emergency Group (CEG) and the CCSA (now renamed Conservation SA <https://www.conservation.sa.org.au/>) WACRA has been working to increase protection for trees. This is important as the City of Charles Sturt is one of the 4 Council areas in urban Adelaide with least tree canopy cover and also has one of the highest rates of tree removal due to urban infill. While the Council policies have adequate greening programs like Living Green and Adapt West we continue to lose too many irreplaceable big mature trees.

Large trees play a major part in increasing local biodiversity by providing food and habitat, they add to property values and health benefits by enhancing the aesthetics of urban areas and they mitigate the impacts of climate change. The climate change benefits of large trees include the several degrees of cooling provided by shade, reduced wind velocity, they are carbon sinks and soil stabilizers. Trees reduce run off and erosion during heavy rainfall, reduce noise and dust impacts, and produce oxygen.

The threats to trees are due to rapid infill development supported by the current planning Acts many faults and these are not rectified in the proposed new digital planning code.

Large trees are protected as significant or regulated depending on trunk diameter but a developer can make application to remove them and plant 3 or 2 new trees to replace them. Where there is no room for new big trees the developer can insult the old tree they remove by paying \$94 per tree, not planted, to a Council fund.

Almost no protection is granted to most street trees in the Act; within 10 metres of a building only certain gum trees and willow myrtles are protected if they are large enough to be classified regulated or significant. This means the Norfolk Island Pines, London Plane Trees, Lemon Scented, Spotted and Red Flowering Gums, Jacarandas and many more species have no protection close to houses no matter how important old and large they are.

The CEG has prepared a document that suggest how the Act needs to be changed and highlights measures the City of Charles Sturt could take now to protect the Norfolk Island Pines that dominate our streets. The CCSA has run a series of meeting with interested people to fight to improve the new legislation and to increase

the public awareness of the value of trees. Pedro has been active on this group and organised WACRA's contribution to the Adelaide wide tree banner program in April (see image below - River Red Gum on Henley Beach Road).

The CCSA has a long list of recommendations to improve things and is implementing this while WACRA will concentrate on the City of Charles Sturt including checking every application to remove a large tree



ILLEGAL EXTRACTION OF GROUNDWATER BAJU/H2O DEVELOPMENT – LETTER TO BRANCH HEAD OF DEPARTMENT ENVIRONMENT AND WATER (DEW) AND RESPONSE

"As you will be aware, WACRA has been concerned about the situation with illegal extraction of groundwater at the Bajju/H2O building at Henley Beach for a number of years. Minister Speirs acknowledged the problem in a letter to WACRA August 2019. He advised us that although: *the timeframe for completion (of an engineering solution) has been delayed. I am committed to ensuring that a safe and appropriate solution to this matter is implemented as quickly as possible.*

As we approach the first anniversary of that assurance we are also now into the 10th year that groundwater has been illegally extracted and pumped on to Henley Beach. We are aware that the Department has now taken action to require the developer to implement the agreed engineering solution and that following his failure to do so, the matter is now before the ERD Court. Our members would greatly appreciate an update on what steps the Department is taken to ensure action is, as the minister

would say, implemented as quickly as possible. Can you please advise exactly what is being done to ensure prompt resolution and when you expect action on the ground."

Please find response from the Department below:



Government of South Australia
Department for Environment
and Water

DEW Reference Number: D0013728227

Western Adelaide Coastal Residents' Assoc.
Mr. Bert Brown
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Henley Beach SA 5022

Water Licensing Branch
81-95 Waymouth Street
Adelaide
GPO Box 1047
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Australia
Ph: +61 8204 9000
www.environment.sa.gov.au

Dear Mr. Brown

RE: Groundwater ReInjection System – Henley Beach

Thank you for your letter of 2 July 2020.

Whilst a resolution of the matter did reach an advanced stage with an agreed design and Development Approval being issued for a groundwater reinjection system, matters have reached an impasse. Accordingly, the Department for Environment and Water is now progressing the matter through compliance action under the Landscape South Australia Act 2019 (which replaced the Natural Resources Management Act 2004 on 1 July 2020).

I can assure you the Department will continue to pursue this matter through to resolution, either through voluntary compliance or using its legal powers under the Landscape South Australia Act 2019.

I appreciate that you have come to me with your query and I will provide you with more information in future, when I am in a position to do so.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mike Fuller', written over a faint circular stamp.

MIKE FULLER
General Manager - Water Licensing,
Water and River Murray Division, Department for Environment and Water

07/07/ 2020



CLIMATE EMERGENCY GROUP (CEG)

CEG have identified some key areas to focus on this year - a brief description follows. If you have any ideas to contribute or want to be involved please contact any of the members of the CEG – Julie Whitehead , Andrea Rankin, Alan Goldsmith and Peter Schultz.

1. Work with AdaptWest

The City of Charles Sturt has been taking some leading roles in acting on climate emergency. This has included joining Cities Power Partnerships and declaring a climate emergency in late 2019, and recently becoming a founding funder of a new national local government group Climate Emergency Australia that was established to lobby on climate change issues. CEG are keen to support Council's endeavours, in particular by working with AdaptWest to implement their plans to prevent and adjust to our changing climate. Our collaboration with Council will become clearer after forthcoming Council meetings.

2. Trees

(see article Protection for Trees)

CEG is considering other initiatives to enhance awareness of the importance of trees including establishing a 'My Tree' competition where people are invited to submit a photo of their favourite local tree with explanatory text; and a 'Tree loss awareness raising' project. Various sites have also been identified for nature redevelopment (eg Grange Railway Station, Lexington Road land).

3. Verges and Feature Street

Another way CEG would like to work with Council is by piloting the development of garden verges – planting on the local nature strips including raised gardens and produce. We are considering developing a 'feature street' of planted verges and encouraging community involvement.

4. Climate and Jobs Forum

We are preparing to liaise with Council to conduct a forum examining ideas for meaningful climate action that will support economic development, social inclusion and well being.

**A reminder to you all that it is
important to remain a financial
member of WACRA and to share with
us your ideas in helping the
Association to meet our collective
objectives in Building a Healthy Community.
If your membership has lapsed please contact
Anne Wheaton - Membership Officer by return email
(Membership forms are available on our
website - see 'Join')**



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