



Friends of Willunga Basin inc.

PO Box 710, Willunga. Chair: Geoff Hayter Secretary: David Gill, Tel 08 85562289 info@fowb.net

Welcome to our Autumn 2014 Newsletter.

BIG TICKET ITEMS

The focus of the Friends is to protect and enhance the living and working environment of the Willunga Basin for the benefit of its broader community, with the passage of the McLaren Vale Character Protection Act last year being a giant step in this direction.

This newsletter outlines some of the major issues that have come before FOWB since we last wrote.

Willunga Basin Walking Trail

Work on the proposed Willunga Basin Walking Trail continues, led by Chris Davies and his team of keen walkers and workers.

The route identified extends for 100 km or so, providing a complete loop around the Basin, from the top of the range to the coast. Our immediate objective is to have the project recognized in the City of Onkaparinga's strategic planning documents in order to progress the prospects of its becoming a reality.

Recent progress has included liaising with members of the SA Walking Federation concerning access to closed road reserves and the development of accurate maps to enhance route planning. We are delighted to hear of support from members of Friends of Aldinga Scrub after Chris gave a presentation to them.

An introductory presentation to full Council is planned soon.

Aldinga Airfield & Associated Activities

As yet there have been no further developments regarding licensing of the Aldinga Airfield by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA), the need for which was triggered by the fact that it is presently recording in excess of 40,000 aircraft movements per annum. We are eagerly awaiting further news on this front.

There is increasing concern about the growing use of the airfield by the flying school, which would not appear to have been anticipated by the original specifications of the Land Management Agreement (LMA) for the use of the land between the airfield and Council. The vast bulk of movements at the airfield now are those of the flying school and there are fears that this activity will continue to increase. Residents have also raised concerns about apparent breaches of the curfew for takeoff and landing movements. This concern was exacerbated by two crashes over the last twelve months, the most recent being last November which, fortunately, did not cause any damage to the adjacent property on which it occurred.

FOWB Chairman, Geoff Hayter, and the Secretary, David Gill, will be have requested a meeting with the CEO of Council and the Mayor to attempt to reach an understanding of any ramifications of an EPA license on the future use of the land from a Council viewpoint.



Left: Walkers on Kings Hill Road, Willunga



Willunga Basin Landscape Biodiversity Plan

In our last newsletter we reported on the first steps in a partnership between FOWB and the McLaren Vale Grape Wine & Tourism Association (MVGWTA), via the McLaren Vale Sustainable Winegrowing Programme, initiated by our Chair Geoff Hayter. The objective is to improve biodiversity across the district, with the Sustainable Winegrowing Programme having clearly revealed that there is work to do in this area.

Geoff, Jock Harvey and others have since met with Federal Environment Minister Greg Hunt and, following that meeting, FOWB has joined with MVGWTA to present a funding proposal to the Minister. The proposal seeks funding of \$6m over 6 years to address woody weeds – most notably olives – in creeklines and along roadsides.

The Minister was invited to view – and was clearly impressed by – the extensive creek line rehabilitation work undertaken on the Chair's own property, with a view to increasing the native flora and fauna of the area through re-establishment of natural habitat and adding to potential habitat corridors. This is seen by the science world as best practice for the management of pests and diseases in an agricultural environment.

While we still await the Minister's response, this is potentially a most exciting programme that could not only result in an excellent environmental outcome, but would display the huge benefits of a group like FOWB working constructively with industry.

It will also generate opportunity for the participation of members on on-ground work across the district. Stay tuned!

Proposed Marina at Maslin Beach

Alarm bells rang for the old hands of Friends of Willunga Basin when news seeped out of a proposal for a marina development at Maslin Beach.

It appears that, with barely a ripple of public awareness, the owners of land within the old sand quarry site had succeeded in incorporating into Council's advance works agenda a request for future re-zoning of their land to permit marina development. They were also seeking access over the Crown Land that lies between their property and the beach, presumably as a site for a dredged channel and rock groynes for marina access.

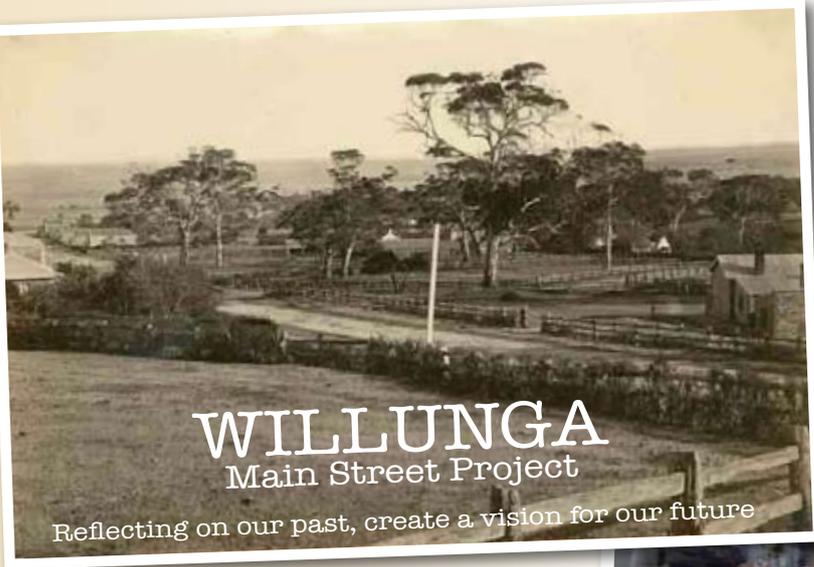
Since that time, thanks to a zealous Councillor, Council has fortunately rescinded the motion that had included recommending a Development Plan Amendment to this effect in its forward planning agenda.

A local action group has formed at Maslin Beach to oppose any such developments and is keen to work with FOWB to ensure that the community doesn't have to go through another major fight to prevent the disastrous damage that a marina cut into a sandy beach would cause. It is possible that the proponents, Nobletech, may now take up the option to appeal directly to the State Government. We will continue to monitor the situation.



Willunga High Street Development

Below: Artist's impression for cafe pavement use



As many of you will know, there have been many meetings and plans presented for consideration by the Willunga Community over the last couple of years for enhancing the presentation of High Street in Willunga. Willunga FOWB Committee member Jerry Keyte has been a key member of a steering group involved in advising Council on this project and providing important visual images that highlight the current problems and potential solutions.



Following widespread disappointment at the preliminary plans presented to the community by Council, the Steering Committee and Council Staff now appear to have reached some level of agreement that the re-development of the High Street should require minimal interventions, leaving the guttering as it is and designing simple features to be aesthetically complementary to the handsome stone buildings.



We believe that there needs to be a focus on a walkable High Street and surrounds, which should become a desirable pedestrian destination, not just a thoroughfare. It has also been suggested that the Plan should extend to the Recreation Park on Main Road, to just beyond the CFS depot on Aldinga Road and to the bottom end of St Peters Terrace.



The next iteration of the plans is awaited with keen anticipation!

Right and above right:
Artist's suggestion for creation of a more pedestrian friendly environment

Proposed New Cellar Door Development for Willunga

As reported in the last newsletter FOWB challenged a proposed cellar door development in a prominent position on the Main Road just north of Willunga, on the grounds that it was not in accord with the Character Preservation Bill for the region.

We considered this as something of a test case for the legislation and were pleased that Council's Development Assessment Panel did reject the application.

Revised plans, for a single storey development have since been submitted, but the proposed changes would seem to fall short of the mark in terms of the best siting, the overall design and scale of the building and the need for improved planting of screening vegetation.

FOWB has lodged a further representation on this matter

Bulky Goods Zone at Seaford Road Corner

Council recently resolved to rezone land at the intersection of Main South Road and Seaford Road for Bulky Goods.

With some disappointment we report that the detailed modifications proposed in our submission on the rezoning – mainly relating to the amelioration of visual effects through sensitive siting, articulation of facades and proper landscape treatments – were rejected in a very tight vote at Council.

We wish to thank Cr Don Chapman for his very active role in promoting our proposed guidelines for future development at this significant entry site to the Willunga Basin.

We anticipate seeing an application for a new Bunnings store in this location in the not too distant future. While we will not be able to object to a permitted development, we still hope to see some sensitivity in its design and siting.



Mobil Service Station Development at Aldinga

FOWB recently made representations against an application to redevelop the existing service station at Aldinga on the grounds of its scale being excessive and out of character in a historic conservation area.

While this development was rejected 6-0 by Council's DAP, the proponents may appeal to the ERD Court to overturn this decision. Discussions are underway between FOWB and other representors to explore options should this happen.

We are very grateful to Stephanie Johnstone of the Southern Community Coalition for her extensive work in preparing an objection to the Development Application.

Membership Application

You are invited to joins us.

Our annual membership fee for individuals is only \$8.00 (\$6.00 concession).

*Please post to: P.O. Box 710,
Willunga 5172*

I hereby join as a FRIEND OF WILLUNGA BASIN and declare my support for retaining the natural and rural character of the Willunga Basin as stated in the objectives.

Title Name: (First Name).....

(Surname):

Address:

.....p.code

email (optional)

Payment enc. \$.....

FOWB gives its assurance that your email will not be disclosed to anyone.

Tick if you wish us to post you a receipt.

Please let us know of any particular interests or concerns that you may have.

Please print, cut out, complete and post to join, or visit fowb.net

