



REPA NEWSLETTER

RURAL ENVIRONMENT PLANNING ASSOCIATION INC.

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September 2006

We have had some very welcome rain recently, but it has hardly helped our water storages at all. Two weeks ago, we drove past Wivenhoe dam and the water level was so low that we could clearly see the old Brisbane Valley Highway along its earlier alignment, before it was flooded by the dam.

THECA Calendar

THECA, The Hut Environmental and Community Association Inc., is producing a calendar for 2007, which we, REPA, and the Moggill Creek Catchment Group are supporting. The theme is "Brisbane's Wild West". The calendar is to be in A4 format with one photograph for each month and a box layout for the dates. The photographs are lovely and are all of local wildlife or views, ideal for sending interstate, overseas, or to enjoy at home. The cost will be \$12.50 (plus postage if necessary) and they should be available in mid-October. An order form is attached/enclosed or contact Jenny Hacker on 3374 1468 or email jbhacker@powerup.com.au.

Gap Creek Road

Brisbane City Council considers that Gap Creek Road is unsafe in its present condition and is therefore considering plans to upgrade it and to seal the dirt portions. This has created much concern amongst residents of Gap Creek Road and also of The Gap. Many people are of the opinion that the road should be closed to through traffic because of noise, dust and traffic hazards as well as fears that it may become a "*de facto*" western bypass.

There are also serious concerns regarding the effect of any upgrade on local wildlife. Gap Creek Road is the only road that traverses Mt Coot-tha Forest Park. It cuts across the linkage between Mt Coot-tha and the main portion of the Forest Parks. This linkage provides connectivity between these protected areas and allows fauna to travel between them. Upgrading Gap Creek Road, with the concomitant increase in traffic, will almost certainly lead to increased numbers of road-kills and possible isolation of fauna communities in the Mt Coot-tha section of the Park.

Local residents agreed that, if the road is not to be closed, any upgrade should have as little impact as possible and reluctantly supported the option with narrow (2 m) shoulders and a 50 km/hr speed limit. The other options were for a) 50 km/hr and 10 m shoulders and b) 60 km/hr also with 10 m shoulders. The local residents also asked for measures to protect the wildlife and for traffic calming to be included in any upgrade.

REPA has recently written to the Lord Mayor about Gap Creek Road, with copies to Cr de Wit; Cr Graham Quirk, Chair, Roads, TransApex and Traffic Committee, BCC; Cr Knapp, The Gap Ward, and Tony Barker, Hon. Secretary, The Gap Community Association. The letter included the above concerns and requested that, if council is not prepared to close the road, rigorous traffic calming measures should be incorporated together with appropriate measures for minimising the impact on wildlife. Cr de Wit has subsequently assured me that positive consideration is being given to the inclusion of such measures.

Proposed closure of Mercury Street, Moggill

REPA has been advised that an application for the closure of Mercury Street, Moggill has been refused by the relevant State department (DNR, M & W). REPA objected to this proposed road closure in March this year on the grounds that the road, although undeveloped, provides the only public access to the Brisbane River for approximately 1 km in both the upstream and downstream directions from Mercury Street.

Development Applications

Moggill Country Club. Council advised REPA in August that they had not received any response to their request for further information in February. No decision can be made until this further information has been provided by the applicant. It is understood that the property is on the market, but it is not known whether or not it has been sold.

130 Livesay Road, Moggill. Council has approved the application for “Preliminary approval to override the planning scheme [Bellbowrie Local Plan] to allow for 10 Dwellings Per Hectare where in accordance with Plan No. dated 22/03/06 and to change the level of assessment to Code Assessable for a future subdivision application where in accordance with Plan No. ... dated 22/03/06”.

REPA objected to this application for subdivision of 2.481 ha into 26 lots in May this year on the grounds that the subdivision is incompatible with the Bellbowrie Local Plan and for environmental and amenity considerations.

REPA has decided not to appeal this decision as a) the land is within the SEQ Plan ‘Urban Footprint’ and would therefore be very difficult to challenge and b) would require a huge commitment from REPA both in terms of time and money.

REPA regrets this decision by Council and only hopes that the lack of sewerage provision in the area of 130 Livesay Road will delay the progress of development on the site.

Gold Creek Dam walk

About 15 people enjoyed the walk around Gold Creek Dam in July, which was a shared outing between REPA and the Moggill Creek Catchment Group.

Rafting Ground Park

REPA has applied for funding from the State Department of Communities for the provision of Signage for the split-rail fence that was reinstated early this year. The fence was originally constructed in 1961 to mark the centenary of separation of Queensland from New South Wales in 1959 and to commemorate the pioneers of the district.

EDO Community Litigants’ Handbook

The Environmental Defender’s Office has produced a Handbook to assist Community Groups through the legal complexities involved in Appeals to the Planning and Environment Court. REPA has purchased a copy.

Brisbane City Council contact

Members are reminded of the Council Call Centre telephone number, 3403 8888. The Call Centre is operational for 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Complaints are logged by the Centre and a reference number is usually given so that matters can be followed up if necessary. It is an effective way to report on any problems that may be occurring.

Feral Dogs and Deer

Glen Alchin, BCC’s Pest Management Officer, has agreed to speak about new plans to address the problems of feral dogs and deer at the Moggill Creek Catchment Group’s AGM on 15 November (7:30 pm, Brookfield Hall). REPA members are welcome to attend.

Membership

Membership renewal forms are attached or enclosed for those whose memberships are still outstanding for 2006.

Jenny Hacker Secretary, REPA, 41 Gap Creek Road, Kenmore Hills, 4069

Website www.repa.org.au

Phone 3374 1468 Fax 3374 0609

Email jbhacker@powerup.com.au