

## **President's report to NPA AGM – April 2019**

The last year through to April 2019 has been another challenging period as we have been involved in representing the community on a number of issues.

Probably one of the most significant issues has been the proposal arising from Roads and Maritime Services to construct the Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link, with the preferred dive sites for the Beaches Link tunnelling to be either the Flat Rock baseball diamond or the revegetated area immediately on the other side of Flat Rock Drive. With an anticipated construction time of six years, this project could have huge detrimental impacts on traffic, health, real estate values and the environment, so the NPA has opposed the options offered so far and requested information as to why these options are regarded as the only ones viable. It is anticipated that further information will become available once the EIS is released, expected late 2019.

The developments being approved in the St Leonards/Crows Nest area are of concern as there are a number of buildings being constructed which most residents would regard as too high, with excessive bulk and scale and insufficient green space. Both directly as NPA and also through representations by the Naremburn Action Group, a series of submissions have been made seeking downscaling of these proposals as they will degrade the amenity of the adjacent Naremburn Conservation Area. Whilst we will continue to push for reduced heights etc, these developments are generally in neighbouring LGAs so our ability to influence is lessened.

A move by Willoughby City Council (WCC) to disband virtually all of the long-standing Advisory Committees during 2018 aroused much uncertainty amongst the community, as residents saw this as an attempt by Council to distance itself from the community, a claim rejected by Council Officers. Councillors themselves were also unclear as to the objectives of this initiative, but after much debate it was resolved to leave this matter in abeyance until after the 2020 Council elections.

WCC have been active in developing a series of Concept Plans to address future strategies for both Housing and Local Centres across the LGA over the past 18 months. Several Drop-In sessions and Design Roundtable sessions have been held for identified Local Centres within the Willoughby LGA, Naremburn being one of those Local Centres. It is important that the community engages on these matters in order to provide proper feedback during the consultations, and Naremburn residents have been very vocal in identifying any concerns with the concepts presented thus far. A strong desire to preserve the village atmosphere and fine-grained character of the shops area has been very prevalent, but further feedback and discussion is encouraged.

There are numerous other issues that could be noted within this report, but limited space precludes such description. What I did want to do is, on behalf of all the members of the NPA, express our sincere thanks to the other members of the Committee for their continued and generous support over an extended period. A number have expressed a desire to step back from Committee duties but have continued on rather than leave the group further short-handed. We would still welcome any offers of assistance, as 2019 shapes as yet another challenging year for the Naremburn community.

Roger Promnitz

President, Naremburn Progress Association.