

Ku-ring-gai Council has prepared a response in the form of a **Draft Housing Strategy**, which is also currently on display at Council and libraries, and which is open for comment by 15th November, 1996.

Council has also arranged a **Public Meeting on Tuesday, 29th October, 1996, at 7.00pm Council Chambers**, to discuss the Draft Housing Strategy.

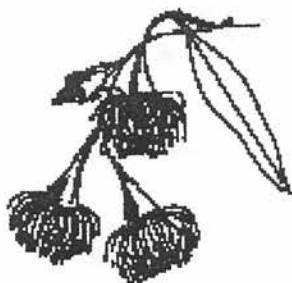
STEP has prepared a more detailed outline of the various documents, which is available on request (Hugh 9144 1353 or Bruno 9449 1985).

STEP's position on medium density policies is well known, seeing it as inevitably leading to degradation of our natural and built environment.

However, faced with the proposed planning instruments, STEP's first reaction is to urge the State Government to stem population growth in the metropolitan area, but recognises that some additional housing will be needed, even if the State Government moves to set limits on growth in the metropolitan area.

In this context on first reading it appears that Council's strategy is a valid approach to the problem. The details of the strategy will require further consideration.

The STEP Committee will prepare a submission to Council to comment upon the strategy in due course, but members should, if at all possible, form their own view, attend the public meeting and make comment. Since this has the potential to affect the future of the municipality profoundly it is too important a matter to ignore.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE AGM

The following is an abbreviated version of the President's Report:

Activities

Three bushwalks were conducted, Bouddi National Park led by John Martyn, Browns Field led by Andrew Jennings and Wallalong Crescent to De Burgh's Bridge led by Jennifer Schwarz.

Four talks were organised, Yvonne Langshaw/John Martyn at the last AGM, Dr. Lin Sutherland on Volcanoes, Andy Skidmore on Computers and Environment, and Durno Murray on Wandering Albatross.

Clean-up Australia Day was again supported, very effectively, with teams covering several locations in South Turrumurra. Our information and sales display stand was set up at various public events through the year.

Our **Membership Survey** provided some grassroots feedback about members concerns and priorities.

Sales of Publications

The Field Guide continues to sell steadily, and we have received the second print run. It will require some promotional effort during 97. Maps continue to sell slowly.

Newsletters

Seven Newsletters were published, from No. 73 in August, 1995 to No. 79 in June/July 1996. a variety of articles were included.

Pam Morse Bequest

The bequest received in the previous year has now been invested in an interest bearing deposit, but a suitable way in which the interest can be used to promote the objectives of STEP is still to be found.

Committee

The Committee has met regularly to deal with business at hand.

Jim Mitchell and Andy Skidmore resigned from the Committee during the year, and Hugh Roberts was appointed as Treasurer in accordance with the constitutional powers of the Committee.

John Burke did not stand for reelection at this AGM, to allow him to devote more time to his family and his business interests. For many years John has been unstinting and very effective in his efforts to promote the interests of STEP within the community, in providing leadership as President, and guidance as "elder statesman", and he has been largely responsible for establishing the status and widely held respect which STEP enjoys in the community.

We, the Committee and members of STEP, owe John a great deal, and we wish him well, and of course we hope that at some time in the future he may see his way clear to rejoin the Committee with new vigour.



I would also like to thank other Committee members for their contributions: John Martyn as talks and walks organiser, Jennifer Schwarz as delegate to the Total

Catchment Management Committee, Sue Jones as Membership Secretary, Geoff Suggate as delegate to the Parks and Reserves Committee, Neroli Lock as Wildflower Gardens delegate and Helen Wortham as Publicity Officer.

Representation

STEP was represented on: Ku-ring-gai Council's Bushland Management Working Party, Wildflower Gardens Committee, Parks and Reserves Advisory Committee and the Residential Environment Advisory Committee, as well as on the Lane Cove Valley Total Catchment Management Committee and the Union of Lane Cove Valley Conservationists.

STEP has also maintained participation in the Coalition Against Lane Cove Valley Freeways and the advisory committee for the access road to the UTS campus at Lindfield.

STEP is also a member of the NSW Nature Conservation Council.

STEP has made submissions on many issues through its delegates or direct.

Issues

The issues identified by the membership survey have been variously addressed.

On the transport scene, the official abandonment of the B2/B3 options of the Lane Cove Valley Freeway has been welcomed.

STEP's efforts on the M2 Tollway are now confined to minimising the impact through the LCTCMC.



Since STEP is not directly involved in bush regeneration, the issues of weed infestation, water pollution and feral animal impact are also confined to action through various committees and dissemination of STEP's views about these matters.

Urban consolidation and residential development controls are matters of concern which STEP is trying to influence.

In the matter of **communications towers** we welcome the abandonment of the Optus tower at West Pymble.

Finances

STEP's financial position continues to be sound as reported by the Treasurer.

Challenges Ahead

These fall into categories of transport, urban consolidation, residential development and Mona Vale Rd.

The effects of the M2 Tollway on the adjacent road system are emerging in the West Chatswood and Lane Cove areas.

Other proposals in the Dundas Valley/Eastwood area are now also causing concerns, and the problems of heavy traffic on the Pacific Highway's northern section will continue to cause residents and

commercial interests to agitate for solutions in transport.

The threat of a link between the F3 at Wahroonga and the M2 Tollway at North Ryde, although officially abandoned, is still in the background and cannot be ignored.

The challenge for STEP is to continue to provide information so that the detrimental effects of further road developments on our local and metropolitan environment can be understood, and to support efforts to change the planning culture.

The potential development of a bus depot in the Mona Vale Rd. corridor would irrevocably change the nature of the corridor. Since the bushland adjoining the road forms the last remaining link between the bushland of Garigal and Ku-ring-gai Chase National Parks, it has special significance for the future of both these parks.

The urban consolidation strategy and the preparation of a new Residential Development Control Plan are two challenges in which STEP will be endeavouring to achieve satisfactory outcomes. In all these issues we see our role as being proactive and forward looking.

Finally, we must not forget to promote the enjoyment and appreciation of our natural bushland, and we are planning to provide suitable activities for the coming year. I thank you for your support in the past year.
Bruno Krockenberger.

