

# BERALA HIGH RISE IS STILL A POSSIBILITY

Following the overwhelming public outcry against the proposed high-rise next to Berala railway station, Council staff are negotiating with the owner of the property to reduce the height significantly. **The applicant however, is still proposing a high tower as part of the development.** Surveys undertaken in Berala show that the community, generally, only supports low rise buildings, even in the shopping centre.

A Town Centre study is currently being undertaken for Berala, yet despite this, the majority of councillors have recently approved two developments in the Berala Shopping Centre that are higher than council's own current controls. These are a part 4/part 5 storey development in Woodburn Road and a 4 storey development in Burke Avenue.

# REGENTS PARK IS NOW ALSO UNDER THREAT

In June this year, a request was lodged to rezone the old railway land on Park Rd, Regents Park (between the old service station and the commuter car park). The applicant proposes to build 3 L-shaped buildings, containing retail and community space, and 186 dwellings. Two towers are to be built to 10 storeys, and a third built to 12 storeys (max). As this proposal is well outside the current height limits (and nowhere near the existing shopping centre) **it should NOT have got past first base, but it did!**

Crs Mohamed Saddick (Ind) and Patrick Curtin (Labor) moved that this request be considered when the Regents Park Town Centre Study (due this year) is being undertaken. This was supported by the majority of councillors. **Once you approve a development of this type, how do you stop others!**

While both the Berala and Regents Park developments offer some community space, it must be emphasised that this comes at a cost....high rise flats!

RAGAA opposed ALL of the developments listed above, because we believe that these proposals are NOT in the public interest and they are all outside council's own development controls.

*We are true to our election promise..... to be a voice for the residents!*

For more information on just what is happening regarding developments in the Auburn Council Area visit our website at [www.ragaa.org](http://www.ragaa.org)

With the term of the current Council due to end with the Local Government Election on March 27th 2004, it seems appropriate to review what is happening in the Auburn Local Government Area.

As predicted in a previous newsletter, the skyline of all our suburbs is changing dramatically. Numerous developments are in the process of being built and the 9 storey development near the railway line in Auburn (*the subject of so much controversy*) will soon be dwarfed by the development of Auburn Central, in Queen Street. This project will have many buildings with the highest reaching 14 storeys. **While the addition of shops, such as Big W and Woolworths, should be good for Auburn, there are serious concerns about the 471 flats which are to be built above these shops. After all, neither Bankstown Square nor the Westfield complexes have residential above them.**

Recent outbursts in the gallery by those who have come to observe Council meetings, are a sign that many residents are frustrated with Council & its Councillors. A number of petitions, Letters to the Editor and the formation of several community groups, such as the Residents for a Better Berala, are further evidence of this.

**RAGAA has always promised to be a voice for the residents, and we do not deny the right of people to develop. We do maintain, however, that this development should not come at the expense of neighbours. They have a right to privacy, sunlight and protection from inappropriate development.**

Overdevelopment leads to other pressures on our infrastructure...schools, hospitals, parklands, traffic, parking and other community services.

The reality is that most development in our area is 'infill', that is, pushed into existing built areas.

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**COLLEX:** RAGAA has been opposed to this waste plant since the application first came to Auburn Council's notice.

Many of our members attended the recent rally outside Parliament House. Cr Irene Simms (RAGAA) and the mayor met with Michael Richardson (*the shadow minister for the environment*) on Dec 1st. They also met with the NSW upper-house cross-benchers on December 2nd (*with John Drake, Allan Brzoson and Cr Maureen Walsh from Parramatta*) to try to convince them why they should oppose the bill introduced by Labor to overturn the Land and Environment Court win by John & Allan.

As residents would be aware, the bill was passed, although it was opposed by the Liberal party and, we are pleased to say, nearly all of the cross-benchers who had been lobbied. **It should be noted that both our state member, Barbara Perry and Granville's, Kim Yeadon, voted for the waste plant.**

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**ENVIRONMENT:** Following an invitation from SOPA, Irene Simms (RAGAA) is on the Sydney Olympic Parklands Authority Parklands Advisory Committee, which advises the SOPA board regarding the Millennium Parklands.

Several of our members work on various Duck River committees, and are involved in the local environment group, Auburn Greenspace.