



F R I E N D S O F
K U - R I N G - G A I
E N V I R O N M E N T I N C .

October 2009

Dear *FOKE* Members

URGENT

EVERY ONE! PLEASE ASK MINISTER KENEALLY FOR CONSISTENCY: INVOLVE THE MEDIA
See FOKE Newsletter page 4 for the reasons given by Minister Keneally for her recent refusal of the Stamford Plaza development in Double Bay. *Similar reasons* support the refusal of the Ku-ring-gai Town Centres Plan, now with the Minister. See below for *additional* reasons – the Australian Council of National Trusts listing of the Ku-ring-gai Town Centres in Australia's 2009 Top Ten Heritage Places at Risk.

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Our Heritage at Risk 2009 Announced – National Top Ten

The Australian Council of National Trusts has released its 2009 List of Australian Top Ten Heritage Places at Risk. This list highlights a number of major issues threatening Australia's built, cultural and natural heritage.

- Development pressures in urban and rural landscapes
- Redundancy, neglect and disposal of particularly of institutional and industrial buildings
- Land planning issues associated with capital cities and development pressure to cater for growing populations at the expense of heritage and liveability

National Top Ten Ku-ring-gai Town Centres and the Jim McDougall House.

Imminent risk of destruction

- Threats to Jim McDougall House are symptomatic of the threats to Ku-ring-gai
- Ku-ring-gai has highly significant aesthetic, architectural, social and historic heritage values including endangered Blue Gum High Forest remnants
- The five town centres of Ku-ring-gai are in National Trust Conservation Areas for their high integrity and village character
- Whole garden streetscapes are being lost including that of the former home of Annie Wyatt who founded the National Trust in Australia

Ku-ring-gai is a model for garden suburbs design which has created a unique heritage character. A number of individual heritage listed places and streetscapes have already been demolished. The McDougall house and its grounds contain critically endangered Blue Gum High Forest face demolition for a six storey residential development.

THREAT: Loss of settings and entire garden streetscapes. Loss of trees and bushland, demolition of many individual outstanding heritage homes and replacement by six storey apartment blocks, and loss of community under insensitive development and unsympathetic rezonings.

DESIRED OUTCOME/VISION: Town Centres should be listed as statutory conservation areas, individual heritage items, including McDougall House, and their settings should be protected and new development designed sensitively to complement the character and identity of the conservation areas.

FATE/OUTCOME: Strongly suffering. Ku-ring-gai's Heritage is being smashed and shattered.
(Source: The National Trust's quarterly publication "trust news" November 2009.)

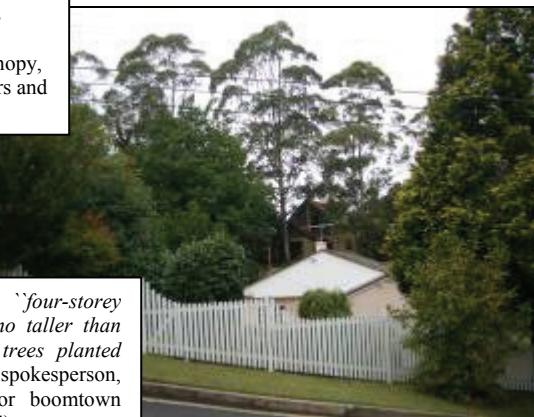
2009 NATIONAL TRUST HERITAGE AWARDS HIGHLY COMMENDED
2008 NSW GOVERNMENT HERITAGE VOLUNTEERS AWARD

2000 FOKE, WINNER, NSW HERITAGE OFFICE CULTURAL HERITAGE CONSERVATION AWARD,
"HERITAGE WATCH OVER OUR PLACE OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE -KU-RING-GAI"
KEEP AUSTRALIA BEAUTIFUL COUNCIL (NSW) METRO PRIDE AWARDS.

2009 GREENS BAD DEVELOPER AWARDS – EXCERPT FROM FOKE’S NOMINATION FOR CRIMES AGAINST AMENITY...



Ku-ring-gai's valued amenity is being destroyed – its natural environment, its mature tree canopy, its wildlife habitats and corridors and its garden suburbs character.



Ideal developments would be "four-storey garden apartment buildings, no taller than the mature height of native trees planted around them" (Government spokesperson, "Treetops to be the limit for boomtown apartments" SMH July 19, 2005).



Sydney's finest interwar housing is being bulldozed; blocks are moonscaped; Sydney's model garden suburbs are being decimated; 692 homes of some heritage significance are to be demolished, 373 of which lie within National Trust Conservation Areas and which will be, or already have been torn down.



Before

I can't believe we are knocking down such quality houses – Bulldozer driver.



After

.....AND OTHER CATEGORIES. SEE FOKE WEBSITE www.foke.org.au FOR MORE TELLING IMAGES.



Before Photo KHS

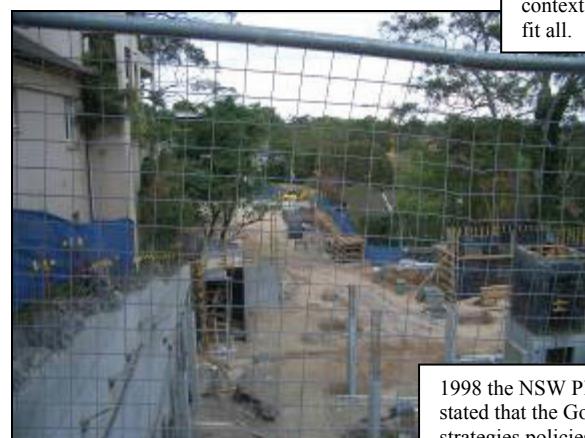


After

The NSW State Government's imposed LEPs residential strategies Stages 1 and 2, its stonewalling of and inadequate recognition of conservation areas are destroying Ku-ring-gai's amenity, valued key features, its natural and built character and its heritage.

Since 2004 under the NSW Government imposed Residential Strategy Stage 1, 3000 mature trees have been felled and mulched, including specimens from critically endangered ecological communities of which only 5% remains. The endangered communities' seed-bank soils are excavated and carted off to oblivion. Ku-ring-gai's nationally significant mature tree canopy has been "shredded".

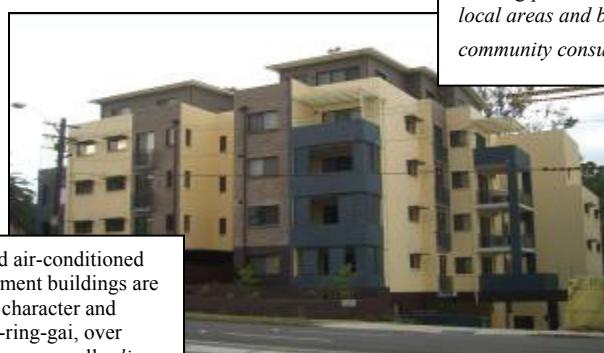
The Tragedy of Planning in
NSW AIUS 22.7.09
Instead of designing for
context, one size will now
fit all.



1998 the NSW Planning Department stated that the Government's residential strategies policies involve development of housing policies which are "*tailor made to local areas and backed by high levels of community consultation.*" !!



Bulky, slab-sided air-conditioned high rise replacement buildings are intrusive on the character and built form of Ku-ring-gai, over look neighbours, are overall *alien* to their context, *anti-environment*, *anti-heritage*, *anti-social* and are destructive of Ku-ring-gai's valued amenity and landscape quality .



DEATH OF DEMOCRACY CORTÈGE/ RALLY ON 27TH SEPTEMBER 09.

There has been widespread media coverage of this community action which attracted groups from across NSW.

FOKE objects to the corrupted planning policies and processes inflicted on Ku-ring-gai by the State Government which, over the last 9 years, has:

- rejected LEPs based on studies (which provided for development to be graded in accordance with the landscape and surrounding development);
- used ill-informed, incorrect reasons for so doing with untrue claims and outrageous statements;
- stonewalled recognition of conservation areas;
- changed the planning goal posts;
- ignored basic planning for context;
- misrepresented facts; and
- ignored the State Government's own planning documents and advisers.

These actions have caused unnecessary, irreversible destruction of Ku-ring-gai's character, amenity and heritage – both built and natural, and destruction of the natural environment despite thousands of submissions, thousand of petitions, thousands in attendance at rallies and meetings passing unanimous resolutions – all actions seeking protection of these things and calling for development to be appropriate to the context of the LGA. FOKA also sees the State Government's actions as unacceptably violating basic principles of sustainability.

► THE GREENS BAD DEVELOPER AWARDS 2009

On 15th October FOKA's video “Ku-ring-gai for Sale” had its world premiere at the Greens Bad Developer Awards presentation night with the video being screened as the “curtain raiser.”

The winner of the “Golden Toaster Award for Crimes against Amenity” was Mr Graham Richardson. The Worst Agency or Department Award went to the Department of Planning despite some strong competition from the Department of Transport, the Treasury and The Hon Joe Tripodi's portfolio.

See “Ku-ring-gai for Sale and other information on FOKA's website www.foke.org.au. Please spread the word. Newsletter Pages 2 & 3 provides excerpts from FOKA'S various nominations for the Bad Developer Awards.

► RECLASSIFICATION OF COMMUNITY LAND TO OPERATIONAL LAND – COUNCIL MATTER

Councillors, let us not forget the UTS meeting on 27th May and the overwhelming rejection of the Town Centre Plans. That meeting, that anger, the way submissions from all comers, *including Council's own submission* were rejected are hardly an endorsement for Council to now go ahead and classify 39 parcels of land – **without** careful "place by place", and "all of place" consideration. The Planning Panel's Plan **grossly over-plans**. And what about the traffic, particularly on the Pacific Highway? See NRMA www.mynrma.com.au December 2008 for the NRMA Ku-ring-gai submission.

► PLEASE ASK MINISTER KENEALLY FOR CONSISTENCYfrom page 1

On 30th September 2009 Minister Keneally issued a press release refusing the development at the Stamford Plaza Hotel site in Double Bay. The reasons articulated in the Minister's press release are equally applicable to Ku-ring-gai's Town Centre LEP 2008 – namely: that the benefits do not outweigh its impact; that it is grossly intrusive on the character and built form; not in keeping with the context, inappropriate bulk and scale impacts and that it would have a detrimental impact on the character of Double Bay. With Ku-ring-gai there are additional heritage grounds for refusal – see Top Ten in Australia ..Page 1

Sincerely FOKA Committee

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