



ZIG ZAG ROAD NORTH NEIGHBOURHOOD GROUP

Update #3 – April 28 - Planning Application for 16 Wombat Drive (136 Zig Zag Rd North)

Like all good planning decisions, it is best we get the right decision at the beginning.
It is very difficult and costly to change a bad decision.

The planning application was discussed at Nillumbik Council's Planning and Building Committee meeting on Tuesday 12 April 2005. The Council's planning staff had recommended:

"The Low Density Residential Zone provides scope for use and development of a place of worship, subject to approval from a planning permit. A careful analysis of the proposal in the context of the features of the site and surrounds, with particular regard to the existing pattern of residential development and vehicular infrastructure, finds that, subject to conditions, the proposal is consistent with the relevant planning controls, including the providing sufficient protection of residential amenity.

Conditional Approval Recommended".

The meeting was attended by approximately 60 members of the public, split roughly 50/50 between neighbourhood residents and members of the Brethren, who in this case are also known as the Exclusive Plymouth Brethren. The Mayor, Greg Johnson, and the new Nillumbik CEO, Bill Forrest, also attended. Approximately 10 residents spoke against the recommendation while members of the Brethren and the present owners of the site spoke in favour of it.

The key objections continue to centre on:

- The adverse impact on the immediately neighbouring residents of car headlights and other lighting and noise, particularly in association with the 6am – and likely earlier – start on Sunday mornings.
- The intrusion into the privacy of immediate and near neighbours.
- The adverse effect on neighbourhood character, particularly due to the laying of approximately 1000 square metres of bitumen on the property and the position of the proposed place of worship effectively on the ridge line. Our judgment is that both these features will result in the proposed development dominating the local landscape from a variety of vantage points.
- The adverse impact on traffic in the immediate neighbourhood. Our opinion is that Zig Zag Road North is inadequate for the even the current level of traffic so the aim should be to reduce the traffic – not increase it!
- The view that – because of the exclusive and private nature of the Brethren – the proposed place of worship would effectively be built for the private use of the Brethren and would not serve any wider community purpose. It seems few of the Brethren are presently Nillumbik residents.
- The fact there are sites in the Shire characterised by more mixed forms of land use that are better suited for a place of worship than the proposed site. This was one of the reasons given by Council staff for recommending rejection – accepted by the Committee – of a proposed place of worship in Everleigh Drive, Diamond Creek. The alternative options include the redevelopment of land on Wattletree Road, opposite Eltham North Primary School, to provide for a car park that could be used jointly by the Brethren and for the drop-off and pick-up of school children.
- The opposition to this proposal is very widespread, with some 70 formal objections lodged at last count. Given that, it is hard to see how approving the proposal would deliver a "net community benefit", which is the overriding aim of planning decisions in Victoria as set out in the *Planning and Environment Act* and *The Nillumbik Planning Scheme*.



ZIG ZAG ROAD NORTH NEIGHBOURHOOD GROUP

Councillor Warwick Leeson (Chairperson) noted the social tension on the issue and the Brethren's plan to seek a total of nine church sites in the Shire. He indicated it would be useful to find a means of avoiding the repetition of the same debate with every planning application by the Brethren. Recognising the still large gap between the positions of the applicants and the residents, Councillor Bronnie Hattam proposed a 4 week delay to the Committee's decision to allow for another consultation meeting. The Committee accepted Councillor Hattam's proposal.

The consultative forum is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday 18 May, so decisions on the proposal will not be made until Council's June meetings. The forum will be advertised to the wider community.

Objectors to the Zig Zag Road North proposal should remember we have a *specific interest* in that proposal in addition to our *general interest* in how Council might best deal with the Brethren's other applications.

What we need you to do, please:

- If you have not done so already, to ensure you are counted as an objector, **lodge a formal objection** to the proposal addressed to the Manager Planning and Building Services at Nillumbik Council. **It is not too late** and it is important we show the weight of resident opposition to this proposal.
- If you have not done so already, **contact all Councillors** (contact details below) to indicate your objection so all Councillors are aware of the community objection. The one letter will do both jobs.
- **Attend the consultative forum** to show support in numbers at the meeting.
- If you know anyone who can assist from a planning perspective please provide us with their name.
- Please tell us if you know of anyone (planner, architect, computer guru) who may be able to help prepare visual perspectives of the proposed development. It has been difficult to gauge the visual impact of the proposed church on our neighbourhood because drawings prepared by the Brethren have not presented views from the perspectives of Zig Zag Road North street level, Regina Court and Wombat Court.

Council Contacts

Greg Johnson (Mayor) – Wingrove – Greg.johnson@nillumbik.vic.gov.au P: 9439-4236 M: 0438-277-425 F: 9439-4236

Warwick Leeson (Deputy Mayor) – Yanakie – Warwick.leeson@nillumbik.vic.gov.au P: 9712-0842 M: 0439-347-797

Bill Penrose – Allwood – Bill.penrose@nillumbik.vic.gov.au P: 9719-7468 M: 0438-277-427 F: 9719-7370

Bronnie Hattam – Coleman – Bronnie.hattam@nillumbik.vic.gov.au P: 9439-5743 M: 0437-460-363 F: 9439-5743

Peter Yates – Cottle – Peter.yates@nillumbik.vic.gov.au P: 9714-8698 M: 0437-581-360 F: 9714-8698

Michael Young – Edendale – Michael.young@nillumbik.vic.gov.au P: 9431-1972 M: 0437-840-866 F: 9431-1972

Bo Bendtsen – Ellis – Bo.bendsten@nillumbik.vic.gov.au M: 0437-455-064 F: 9438-5756

Helen Coleman – Lenister – Helen.coleman@nillumbik.vic.gov.au P: 9439-0063 M: 0437-940-930 F: 9439-0063

Howard Bulmer – Sutherland – Howard.bulmer@nillumbik.vic.gov.au M: 0439-347-351 F: 9438-4835

The mailing address for all Councillors is: Nillumbik Shire Council, Civic Drive, Greensborough, VIC 3088

If you have any questions or comments please contact any of the representatives of Zig Zag Road North Neighbourhood Group below.

Henry Haszler (Wombat Drive)
9439-4352; haszler@bigpond.net.au

Mike O'Halloran (Nathan Road)
9431 2750; mmk.ohalloran@bigpond.com

Mike Berryman (Zig Zag Road North)
9272-9940; berrymam@atlasmetals.com.au

Ken Le Hunt (Regina Court)
9431-0228; lehunt@iprimus.com.au