



Marino Residents Association

Incorporating Kingston Park

Helping to build a better Community

City of Marion Housing Diversity Development Plan (DPA) Amendment Marino Community Forum, 1 November, 2017

Notes from the night -

Thank you to all of those 50+ people who attended our DPA forum on Wednesday night (1-11). It was a highly successful, engaging and informative forum.

We had three representatives from Marion Council presenting and Councillor Tim Guard was in attendance.

In addition to David Melhuish, Senior Policy Planner, City of Marion, two local consultant building professionals presented their perspectives on the changes; Angela Davison - Principal of Town Planning HQ and Geoff Alexander, Principal of Alex Star Building Design and Certification. Mr Jason Cattonar, Manager of Council's Development and Regulatory Services, also provided invaluable information and responded to many of the questions posed. All are highly experienced, qualified and expert planners

Ric Bierbaum (MRA Committee) was the convenor and facilitator for the evening and we anticipated he would need all his skill on this topic.

The Council set out an overview of the broad City wide changes for this extensive DPA and followed up with some more specific comparisons between the current rules and the proposed rules. They highlighted the fact that the change was to provide a consistent approach to the whole of the southern area, where previously there were 3 policy areas before. David presented the changes in respect of block sizes, frontages set-backs and heights, designed to allow more subdivision and the potential for smaller and more diverse housing options including the idea of 'ageing in place' e.g. by way of subdividing a large block, building 2 houses, selling one to help fund the development and living in the other. There were of course other scenarios presented as well.

The City of Marion also provided some analysis of the impact of the changes, including highlighting that in sheer numbers of dwellings, the current proposal would allow up to 450 new homes over the whole of the southern area or an increase of 5% beyond the current potential. There were some recent statistics from DPTI specifically relating to Marino which have not yet been verified and therefore could not be shared.

It is difficult to extrapolate precisely, but Marino has some 4000 homes currently. In simple terms that would equate to approximately 200 extra homes; however, with adjustment for Marino topography, the amount could be closer to say 100-150)

The Council's representatives made it clear that the DPA was not yet completed and that they welcomed and needed to hear from the community on the proposal and were open to changes that better reflect community needs.

Angela Davison's presentation made it very clear why she chose Marino and the parallels to the South of France were well received!! She was in favour overall for housing diversity and the need for change with some reservations about the details. She suggested that perhaps the parameters on block sizes could be reviewed and finetuned to better reflect the Marion context and pattern of current subdivision, particularly the block widths.

Changing the proposed minimum block width from 20m to 17m would result in more blocks being eligible than currently proposed and maintain some consistency of streetscaping as a result. She estimated up to 50 % of the blocks in Marino could be subdividable in that scenario., significantly more than the DPTI yield analysis would suggest.

She did also make it very clear that the current DPA proposed rules did not really reflect or respond to the true characteristics of Marino, in terms of amenity and what makes Marino special. Nor does it address the issues that residents are naturally protective of e.g. views and nature. She was advocating for higher quality design with materials and construction that better reflects the beachside character of Marino. For this to happen there the DPA would need to have alterations to the quantitative provisions and the Desired Character Statement and Principles of Development Control.)

Sustainability and the environmental impacts of the DPA were touched upon briefly by Angela's colleague Kinda (MRA committee member, Architect/Landscape Architect) stressing that with increased diversity and density it was important to develop better community connections via establishing more shared spaces and facilities for people to interact in support of the increased density, such as parks, community gardens and public buildings.

Geoff Alexander provided another perspective. Whilst he was in favour of the principle of housing diversity and the need for change he was very concerned that the changes would be seen as an opportunity for developers to capitalise on the change disproportionate to individual owners and to exploit the system to maximise the capacity of the sites to generate profit whilst being detrimental overall to residents' amenity.

Geoff made a good case for, back to basics, in terms of what the DPA is attempting to achieve it.

It is evident that the purpose of development control—to manage risks and avoid negative impacts to neighbours and future generations—has been lost. Current assessment practice is disproportionately focussed on micro-level details that do not warrant such levels of attention. (Quote from Planning SA doc)

He went on to demonstrate that in terms of the sometimes intangible need by all residents for their "amenity" to be protected. The current DPA provides no device to really protect those aspirations and if the new rules were followed the resulting building envelope (3D

form) would comply but would seriously impact on the very amenity we wish to protect. He noted that in the adjoining council area (Holdfast Bay) they do have provisions for amenity to override the basic rules, so why not in this City of Marion DPA?

Geoff believes the change is very “pro-developer” and not about “appropriate development” within the context of Marino. It should undergo substantial changes to better reflect the local context and include a more performance based framework to enable development to be modulated to balance the need for diversity with the need to reduce impact on amenity.

Given Geoff’s portfolio of work, which includes many residential developments he should be applauded for his courage to speak out so passionately.

Geoff and Angela were not that far apart in their views and managed to highlight the complexity of this DPA and to stress the need for sensitivity to the local amenity and character.

Q&A

We then moved on to Questions from the community for the panel made up of the speakers facilitated by Ric.

As always there are more questions than answers, as many people rose to make very thoughtful and impassioned statements and posed considered and diverse questions including:.

- Detailed questions on the application of the current and proposed rules - *workshopped and answered by the panel as well as possible.*
- Statements about the negative impacts of increasing population and the impression that this was a political pre- election debacle – *noted as a comment*
- Concerns about the increased traffic and parking – *discussed in terms of issues with "battle axe blocks" but not really addressed*
- Several case studies, questions and concerns around the development process and the ability of Council to truly control development and not impact on the amenity of neighbours. Many questions and examples cited about developments that were eventually approved but appeared to have flouted the rules with significant impact on the amenity of adjoining owners. *The extreme, well known example was mentioned as testimony to the planning approval process being far from perfect.*
- Recognition from residents, one in particular, that they would like to see immediate community members involved in the approval process regardless of the statutory requirement to consult. – *noted as a comment*
- Several concerns over the need to rush the process for something as significant as this not only for Marino but the whole city. – The timeframes for DPA consultation and development are *driven by the State government.*
- Questions also related to the level of influence the community could expect to have in the feedback process, particularly given the degree of concerns and the limited time Council has to review, adopt and amend the DPA by the deadline of Dec 1, and that it will need to get through a general council meeting on Nov 27? – *State Government has given little room for manoeuvre!!*

- Can we/council push the State Government at a political level to amend the timeframe and extend the process in the light of the concerns and the limited consultation process? - *State Government have given little room for Council to manoeuvre!!*, so we could try
- Other specific questions were asked in regard to the Council's views on 'hammerhead' developments, the level of consideration in calculating housing density in the Marino area that was given to the impact that the Cement Hill development will also have on increased housing numbers and densities etc

David Bagshaw brought the session to a close with a summation of what he had heard and his professional view as an architect. In essence, he noted how big and complex the task was and how hard it was to truly imagine the impact of the changes as the information provided was very generic. As thorough as the presenters were, more case studies or live examples are needed to help people understand the impact in Marino. He noted that there needed to be more modelling of the impact beyond "statistical yield". He recognised the DPA has little emphasis on "amenity" and "essential character" of Marino. He suggested that Marino needed to be treated as a "Special Area" and its essence protected and enhanced through the DPA; it needs more guidelines not only for individual development but zones to ensure the character of streets and neighbourhoods are consistent rather than haphazard development with little regard to neighbourhood. Overall it is seen as a good idea but it is too little too soon, and too early to be decisive about whether it is good or bad in its current or slightly amended form?

Ric thanked residents and the speakers for their time and effort in presenting their views and that it had been a most useful and full discussion on the impacts and issue facing the community. He emphasised the complexity of the issues raised and the challenges faced in accommodating the wide ranging needs expressed by the audience in further revisions off the DPA. He also noted that there is a lot for community members to absorb and respond to and that they should accept the offer by the Council to direct their concerns and suggestions to them before 14 November. Public submissions can be made via a survey. <http://www.makingmarion.com.au/housing-diversity-dpa>

Ric then reminded all participants to make sure they fill in the 'MRA Have Your Say' on line survey by November 5 to ensure that their views about the key issues confronting Marino are known and reflected in the strategic plan being developed. An overview of the key results of this survey will be presented at the Annual Public Meeting (AGM) on Thursday 16 November at 7.30pm at the new Kauri Community & Tennis Centre Seacliff. All Marino and Kingston Park residents are most welcome to attend

Glenys Brokenshire reminded us all at the end of the Fund My Neighbourhood campaign which includes several local community projects, but most importantly the Marino Community Hall proposal to revamp the hall and make it even more flexible and attractive to the community