



NEWSLETTER November 2014

There has been much happening since the last YRA newsletter so it is time for a summary of the events of the last few months. No doubt all of you have been keen downloaders of the YRA website: www.yatala.info and have taken the time to keep yourself up to date on what has been posted so we have tried to keep this newsletter brief.

PHOENIX POWER RECYCLERS – BIOMASS PLANT APPROVAL

Well it happened! In early May this year, the Planning and Environment Court approved the go ahead of the Biomass Power Plant at 126 Sandy Creek Road, Yatala – as part of a redevelopment of the site occupied by Phoenix Power Recyclers. The approval process was negotiated between The Gold Coast City Council, Department of Environment and Heritage (this State Government body currently has the role of overseeing Phoenix's operations – more about that later), Phoenix Power Recyclers PLUS various experts commissioned by both the GCCC and the company owning the site.

You will all recall the massive fight that the residents of the surrounding areas, as well as many workers and business owners who have grave fears for their safety, put up against the Biomass Power Plant being built in this area. 6000+ people signed the petition against the plant, all the GCCC Councillors voted NO and still this development will go ahead. While the approval has a number of conditions attached there are still many unanswered questions in regard to the final process.

A public meeting was arranged by Councillor Donna Gates (GCCC Division 1 Councillor and Deputy Mayor) on the 21st May 2014 to advise the community of the reasons behind the approval. The GCCC's Solicitor addressed the meeting and outlined why the process could not have been stopped and he and Cr Gates fielded many questions from the outraged audience of close to 100 people. Your YRA Committee compiled a number of questions that were to be answered on the night as well as two pages of questions to be answered by Cr Gates once she had the opportunity to speak to the GCCC staff whom were involved in the approval process. That list of questions was placed on the www.yatala.info website so everyone could have access to the list and the subsequent reply.

Cr Gates replied to YRA on the 4th of July 2014, saying that Council would not be giving out copies of the Solicitor's Powerpoint presentation made on the night, not providing the copies of Experts' reports – not even providing the Experts' names, citing confidentiality reasons. She did, however, give answers to question 1 (Council's Reasons) and question 4 (Noise) and in reference to all the rest of our originally-posted questions, her reply to YRA is as follows - actual words reproduced below:

“DEHP related questions – There were a number of questions raised by the YRA Residents Association (YRA) in the lists of questions provided to me. In particular, questions 2,3,5,6,8 and 9 predominantly fall within the jurisdiction of the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection (DEHP) jurisdiction (and perhaps Queensland Health). Given that this information remains outside of the Council's jurisdiction, I am unable to provide a response to those questions. However, I will, on behalf of the Yatala community, provide a list of the questions to the State member and also to the Minister for the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection for comment.”

YRA has no doubt that Cr Gates would have done exactly what she said she would do in providing a list of the questions to those persons named. No further communications have been received from either the State Government Departments named OR the local State Member for Albert, Mr Mark Boothman, on the matter, however.

A reminder regarding these questions was sent to Mr Boothman in a letter emailed to himself and Cr Gates on 17th September 2014, with an offer of forwarding the questions to him again for his convenience, but while the email was acknowledged, no answers were given to the DEHP related questions from the meeting in May. A follow-up on the matter occurred on 25th September 2014, with a specific email to Mr Boothman, asking that he and/or the relevant State authorities respond to the questions on the attached questions list in regard to Phoenix – namely questions 2 (Contaminant

Emission Monitoring) / 3 (Further Emission Reductions / 5 (Power Plant Capacity) / 6 (Composting – Odours & Aerosols) / 8 (Green Waste Shredding) / 9 (Asbestos). While the email received an automatic reply by Mr Boothman's office, **no answer regarding the issues raised by the BIOMASS PLANT approval has been forthcoming from a State level at all**, at this stage . . .

DUST / ODOURS / SMOKE

While the **Dust** issue has been exacerbated by the current works on Stanmore Road, an enormous area of concern for potential creation of dust relates to the land clearing works which have been undertaken on the **Darlington Park site**, which appears to have no on-going dust minimisation efforts being made to address this matter – something that both the developers of the Industrial Site and the monitoring bodies (Council/DEHP) appear to be ignoring.

Dust as well has increased from the **Quarries** in the area and this matter is one of great concern to the residents of Ormeau and Yatala. So much so that Cr Gates and Mr Boothman have been informed that there is a decided health risk to the community from crystalline SILICA particles in dust from the quartz in the rocks being quarried.

Worthy of note also at this point is the recent notification of **proposed extensions to Hanson's existing Wolffdene quarry** – details & options are being posted to YRA's webpage and all interested are encouraged to have a look at what's proposed & have your say SOON, as the closing date for submissions is 4th December 2014. (sample submission)

Odour problems continue unabated with little seemingly being done about this ongoing and serious issue. It is interesting to note the time and the day of the week of a number of complaints logged on the www.yatala.info website. It is very unfair that the nearby community is expected to put up with an ongoing odour without complaint. The Complaints Line has been a revelation - YRA is quietly but methodically monitoring the situation. **456 complaints over a 2 year period** demonstrate that there **IS** an issue that needs addressing. For every one person complaining there are 10-20 people suffering in silence. For how long people are prepared to suffer in silence remains to be seen but the best way to help is to KEEP REGISTERING COMPLAINTS.

Smoke: Who keeps burning off rubbish after 6pm? Curious that it is coming from YEA but just where is the question?

GCCC DRAFT CITY PLAN 2015

There have been numerous communications between the YRA committee and YRA Members on this matter and all are documented on the website so refer you to that or more information. Submission numbers have been HUGE and from our area alone (Division 1) well over 600, in fact! Keep a good eye on what is happening as IT AFFECTS YOU and you are responsible for your own wellbeing NOW and into the FUTURE.

That said, it has been noted that both the State Gov and GCCC have made substantial adjustments to their rhetoric on this matter SINCE the closure of the public submission period, and that needs your close attention. Specifically, changes have been (and in some cases are **still being**) made to the **BUFFERS** referred to in the PLAN 2015, around both quarries and industrial areas.

Key Recent Communications:

1. Councillor News of September 2014: Cr Gates' Newsletter to Division 1 Community, regarding:
 - "Draft 2015 Planning Scheme – Buffer quarry concerns", including that: *"the State has agreed to re-open discussion on permitting indicative internal buffers to quarries throughout the City"* (direct quote).
2. Email & Letter of 17th September 2014: YRA to Mr Boothman & Cr Gates, regarding:
 - progress on buffer discussions, regarding both quarries and industrial areas;
 - generally requesting feedback on other key issues raised during the public submission process; and
 - reminding them of the outstanding status of the answers to the PHOENIX BIOMASS PLANT questions.
3. Email of 17th September 2014: Cr Gates to YRA (CC: Mr Boothman, *et al.*), regarding:
 - that submissions were being reviewed as part of the DRAFT CITY PLAN 2015 process;
 - that the matter has been reassessed by the State Government as part of its second State Interest Check;
 - that the completion of this process *"may well be midway into next year."* (direct quote);
 - on-going input from the State Planners *"advising Council that the State has an expectation of how Council will deal with certain issues"* (direct quote), including **ZONING TRANSITIONS** and **BUFFERS**; and
 - that the **HEALTH** issues we referred to *"are matters to be addressed by the State, as Council has no qualified officers nor jurisdiction in this regard"* (direct quote, emphasis added).
4. Email & Letter of 7th October, 2014 [: YRA to Mr Boothman & Cr Gates, regarding:
 - possible changes to Industrial Buffers;
 - the handling of the Enkelmann Farm site; and

- the previously submitted list of questions regarding the PHOENIX BIOMASS PLANT approval.

5. Email of 8th October, 2014: Cr Gates to YRA (CC: Mr Boothman), regarding:

- processing of community submissions to the DRAFT CITY PLAN 2015;
- impact of the State Planning Policy guidelines on the DRAFT CITY PLAN 2015; and
- subsequent requirements of the State Government requiring Council to further investigate and address the State interest regarding "Emissions and Hazardous Activities".

So, where are we now? Waiting for the State Government / GCCC to investigate, digest the comments from the community and finally come up with a finalised PLAN. All we can HOPE is that they will listen to us all, as none of us put in submissions without considering the outcomes for the community – both residential and industrial.

ORMEAU PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

YRA is no longer a member of OPA, as of 14th July, 2014. The change of direction at OPA back to a traditional mode of monthly meeting attendance mode of operation made it very difficult for YRA committee. YRA prides itself on immediate feedback from its Members to the Committee by email and / or the Website or Facebook page so waiting for monthly meeting directions was not considered to be acceptable, as matters needing attention tend to move quickly. What we could see was any direction and /or approvals would / or could take up to 2 months to action. SO we are our own identity again and we welcome your input to continue in this vein. Be part of the community – have your say in a confidential manner – help when you can.

YATALA NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH – HOW GOOD ARE THEY!!!!

Gosh how good are these people in our community whom keep us all on the watch out for each other! YRA and Yatala Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) send each other messages for distribution between databases and we are both sure that our help between each other has been a key in trying to keep incursions to our properties at a lowest rate. YES more can be done but looking after your neighbour is the key. So many of Yatala residents are in both organisations as we all know that communication is the key to success for the safety of us all and that includes those very GOOD business operators in YEA as they play a huge part in this communication strategy with the local Police and Government Agencies.

HOONING

Hooning has increased dramatically in the Yatala/Ormeau area this year. Concerns have been raised with both Mark Boothman & Donna Gates and it is hoped that they can collectively help to bring the situation under control. With hoons vastly out-numbering available police, it's possible that there will need to be increased video surveillance in the hot-spot areas. The issue was raised at the NHW meeting on 22nd October, 2014, and they are probably best placed to stay on top of this issue. In the meantime residents are urged to report any evidence of hooning to PoliceLink on 131444 or they can choose to lodge an on-line complaint (along with photos) to <http://www.police.qld.gov.au/apps/reports/hoonOnline>

STATE ELECTIONS

Be aware that the State Government Elections are coming up soon. YRA is DEFINITELY NON POLITICAL (never has been and never will be as it is your own choice), so we are now asking for you to give us your KEY QUESTIONS for the Candidates whom wish to put their hand up for election in the electorate of ALBERT. Send those questions to YRA by email to: yra@yatala.info and we will add them to an already expanding list of NON- ANSWERED questions we have already registered.

FINALLY

Coming up to the Christmas break, your YRA Committee would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a peaceful, joyous, stress-free break, and look forward to working with you into the New Year and beyond!

Stay safe, watch the website www.yatala.info, be involved and make your SAY MATTER.

Issued by YRA Committee – NOV 2014



MISSION STATEMENT: "A Community voice surrounding topics which impact the lifestyle, health and environment of residents near commercial and industrial developments in the Yatala Enterprise Area"

Disclaimer:

No warranty is given as to the accuracy of this information, and persons who rely on it do so at their own risk. To the extent permitted by law, neither Yatala Residents Alliance (YRA) nor its members, employees and agents, is liable for any claim, loss, damage cost or expense sustained or incurred by any person directly or indirectly arising as a result of reliance on an opinion, advice, recommendation, representation of the information expressly or impliedly contained in this document notwithstanding any error or omission including negligence. If you require any further information in relation to this document or its contents, please contact the YRA committee via email on yra@yatala.info