

Childcare Centre Concerns Community

by Barry Thompson and Helena Ho

Posters in east-side streets decry the arrival of 'big business' in the form of a development application for an 86 place childcare centre where Muttama and Stafford Roads meet Mowbray Rd.

An earlier proposal brought community response in early 2014 and was withdrawn. The current concept involves three residential properties, rather than two, and allows access from all three streets mentioned.

Council has received over 100 letters from surrounding residents concerned about traffic, safety and amenity issues. APA executive member and architect/planner, Plamen Bassarov, has reviewed the proposal before Council and suggests that it meets planning and regulatory controls, including those related to the Artarmon Conservation Area within which the dwellings lie.

The developer has taken the unusual step (for a Willoughby CC DA) of applying to the Land and Environment Court for its intervention, on the basis of 'deemed refusal' since Council



Houses proposed for conversion to childcare centre; / Photo B. Thompson

has not reached a decision or sought additional information from the applicant within the statutory period of 40 days.

If you have a view on this issue, write to Council, to the APA, or send a letter to the Gazette. The Officer's Report on this matter is expected to come before Council in late March at which time the community will have an opportunity to voice its views.

Leadership in the Year of the Goat

by Barry Thompson

There seems to be some confusion in the press about which Chinese Year we have entered – Sheep or Goat. I'm hoping that two developments that happened on the cusp of the New Chinese Year will have neither Goatlike nor Sheeplike characteristics.

The first of those developments was the Queensland election outcome. Not only was another woman elected premier but she went on to choose a cabinet containing a majority of women. So far, I've heard no reports of changes at the senior levels of the Executive but I'll be watching the

gender balance there too. I suspect Queensland is heading into most unusual leadership territory!

Closer to home, the not-so-recent election of a female mayor in Willoughby has been complemented



by the appointment of a female General Manager. **Debra Just** joined the Council on February 2.

While North Sydney had a very successful female duo in that role during Genia McCaffrey's time, this combination is new to Willoughby. Of course, the Clover Moore/Monica Barone combination at City of Sydney is the pinnacle of aspiration and I hope their achievements can be emulated.

We have asked Debra to speak at an upcoming APA Public Information Meeting. We hope by then she will have had time to assess and agree the priorities for her administration and will share them with us.

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