

WRA Report from the Chair: Mike Duigan February 2025

Good evening all and welcome to the Walkerville Residents' Association Annual General meeting 2025. We welcome mayor Melissa Jones, and acknowledge our local Member of State Parliament, Lucy Hood, both of whom have been active in supporting the aims of our association over the past year.

- The Walkerville Residents Association was originally established in 2001, with the primary aim “To advance, retain and improve the ‘village’ character of Walkerville.”
- The current WRA was reconstituted in February 2024 following a period of a few years of inactivity.
- The impetus for its reestablishment came out of the need to formalise an initial small group of residents from Walkerville Terrace who, by September 2023, realised that there needed to be a strong community voice to address local concerns about the proposed re-development at the Buckingham Arms site. Developers, Citify had proposed to build a 3 x 10 story towers construction, consisting of 185 small apartments in a very bulky and significantly dense and inappropriate build **that would in no way sit comfortably alongside the local heritage environs.**
- The work of this small group and its expanded supporters, by then connected to the newly reconstituted WRA (as well as their financial donations that enabled professional advice to be provided by Planning Consultant Phil Brunning) led to a successful rejection of that original design proposal by developers Citify by the State government’s Planning Assessment Panel (SCAP) in March 2023.
- 8 persons were elected in to form a Management Committee at the AGM held in this room on February 5, 2024
- The Management Committee has now been meeting every 6-8 weeks with high attendance from all members.
- **Our principle focus this past year has been addressing the new proposals for the development of the Buckingham Arms hotel and**

we have tried to keep in touch with all of you through group emails and via regular contributions to the e-newsletter of the Walkerville Council

- A report on the Buckingham Arms development will be given shortly by our public relations officer, Heidi Kneebone, but in short, we were not successful in persuading the State Commission Assessment Panel to reject the latest high level, high density proposal on the third and latest SCAP hearing on 22 January 2025. Despite our significant efforts and those of many individual submission writers to the Panel, we were disappointed by the process, as well as the result. I'd like especially to thank Phil Brunning, and the many WRA members and local supporters who made written and verbal submissions to the Planning Commission
- In 2025 we will be paying close attention to the building and construction process to ensure that it complies with the approval the developers have now received.
- Throughout the past year we have had close contact with the Walkerville Council and have welcomed their support. The planning consultant engaged by Council, Mr Greg Vincent spoke to a general meeting of our association in July which was attended by 60 members, and he presented a spirited submission to SCAP as did our own Planning consultant, Mr Phil Brunning which was well received.
- We have had two rounds of fundraising, and I would like to thank all of you who donated so generously and ensured that our views were presented to SCAP professionally and competently.
- The WRA web site walkervilleresidents.org is up and running due in no small measure to the work of our committee member Cathryn Hamilton, Thank you Cathryn.
- The web site now contains copies all the presentations to SCAP that have been made as well as various press statements and other information relevant to our activities. Please take the opportunity to visit the site and leave any comments or suggestion that you think might assist the Association better meet its objectives.
- As your Chairperson I wish to formally thank our local Mayor, Melissa Jones and our local MP Lucy Hood who both continue to support our work.

- One issue we are still trying to get better organised is our membership and supporters lists and our recording of your involvement. There are currently 120 members' friends and supporters.
- You will have found on your seats tonight a notice with information about how to join or renew your membership and make your payment into our account. We ask that you complete this at your convenience and include all the details required.
- We have also recently agreed to join Community Alliance which is an umbrella group of residents' organisations who have regularly scheduled meetings with the Chair of the SA Planning Commission
- I have appreciated the opportunity of being able to serve as your chairperson in 2024 and have advised the Management Committee that I am prepared to continue in the role for a further 12 months.

Thank you for attending tonight. I'm sure you will enjoy David O'Loughlin's address as our guest speaker and I am pleased that David is able to be with us this evening.