



Robert Corowa and Darren Coyne at the Sexton Road protest
Photo: Omega Breakspear

Plateau protests

by Omega Breakspear

Over 50 people came together on the morning of 17th May to show their solidarity with local Wi-abul people in their struggle to save the Bunindj mountain.

The protest started with a sacred fire at the end of Sexton Rd in North Lismore. There was a smoking ceremony with Uncle Mickey Ryan and Auntie Marie Delbridge.

The sacred fire brought from the Aboriginal Tent Embassy was then walked to the top of the Bunindj mountain by Uncle Mickey accompanied by 20 of the defenders. It was a peaceful action and although the police came there were no arrests.

The planned 255ha development of North Lismore Plateau (NLP) by Winton Property Group will damage the Bunindj mountain. This is a significant indigenous sacred site for the creation of all life around Lismore. It contains a number of endangered species and habitat including 90% of what is left of thorny pea grass worldwide.

The developer has already started planned massive earthworks with a huge pit to be dug on the mountain and used to backfill the floodplain below. This will have critical impacts on flood mitigation in the North

Lismore area as well as on the Bunindj mountain.

Uncle Mickey Ryan, Chairperson of the Bundjalung Elders Council, has been challenging Lismore City Council and the Winton Property Group in the Land and Environment Court. This follows continued breaches and failures regarding cultural heritage assessment and native title.

In 2012, a cultural heritage assessment identified at least four sacred sites on the proposed development.

Lismore City Council was advised that there could be a legal and financial risk in approving the NLP development. Council is already spending over \$3 million of ratepayers' money. A further \$32 million is reported to be spent by the Lismore council on this housing and shopping mall development.

The council voted 7-1 in favour of paying for the roads, water and wastewater infrastructure in July, 2015. Cr Vanessa Ekins has voted against the council's involvement in the development.

The next trial dates in the courts are set for February, 2020.

"We've been fighting this for eight years," said Uncle Mickey. "Our mob are tough. We grew up on the floodplain. We never give up."

Discussing options on secondary dwellings

by Jenny Martin

Secondary dwellings are a win-win option, with a much better return on investment than currently offered by banks on long term deposits, with the bonus of housing someone.

Thirty-seven people attended the Building and Renting a Secondary Dwelling workshop held in Nimbin in late April, exploring the creation of secondary dwellings, dual occupancy and tiny homes.

The workshop was offered by the Nimbin Affordable Housing Initiative facilitated by Nimbin Health & Welfare Association. The aim: to support an increase in the local housing stock to provide urgently needed affordable secure rented homes.

Information was shared on Council requirements, options for design, construction and investment return, and drawing on the lived experience of those already building these innovative dwellings. Guest speakers presented on a range of issues and included:

John McKenna, CEO, North Coast Community Housing (NCCH) explained that NCCH offer owners head-leasing options, where NCCH are guarantors for the rental and manage the lease, the tenants and property maintenance, taking all the stress out of renting for the owners. If you have local rental property, you may want to consider this option.

John acknowledged that Nimbin people in need of rental accommodation want to stay in Nimbin and not be offered accommodation in Lismore or further afield. John referred to the NCCH Housing Needs Study in Northern Rivers available at: www.ncch.org.au NCCH Lismore Branch: 6627-5300.

Paula Newman, Strategic Planning Co-ordinator, Lismore City Council gave a very clear definition of a secondary dwelling or 'granny flat: total floor area 60m² or less (excluding decks), or no more than 25% of total floor area of the main dwelling (excluding parking area); must be within the RU5 Village Zone (see map, page 3).



KoHo Tiny House

If outside this area, building a larger Dual Occupancy dwelling is an option (up to 115m², 1-2 bedrooms, no infrastructure contributions). Benefits of secondary dwellings were discussed, including affordability, rental potential, maximising use of infrastructure while limiting spread of development, support for people seeking homes, etc.

Considerations such as Council rules and regulations, the need for harmonious design and minimal environmental impact were covered. A key incentive is Council's lifting of infrastructure contributions (for roads, sewer and water) for dwellings in Council sewered areas, savings of between \$10,000-\$12,000 for a two-bedroom secondary dwelling.

People interested in building secondary dwellings or dual occupancies should contact the Duty Planner at LCC or visit Council's website to start the ball rolling. Lismore City Council, 43 Oliver Ave, Goonellabah. Phone 1300-878-387, web: www.lismore.nsw.gov.au

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