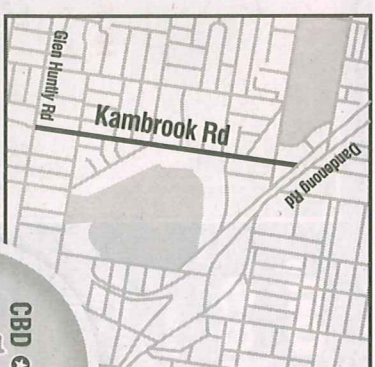




YOUR STREET

ISSUES AFFECTING YOUR NEIGHBOURS

KAMMBROOK RD
CAULFIELD NORTH 3161



POPULATION:
15,400
MEDIAN HOUSE
PRICE: \$1,073,000



Bets on crowding



GRAEME HAMMOND
YOUR STREET EDITOR

BIG CHANGES

SIX years after buying into the close neighbourhood community in their end of Kambrook Rd, Robert Currey and his wife are contemplating their future in a suburb that is about to be radically changed.

A \$750 million Melbourne Racing Club land development will transform wide areas of vacant land north of Caulfield Racecourse into a bustling housing and business area with 1200 residential units, offices and a shopping centre.

The Caulfield Village project will include clusters of buildings of at least six storeys, with one possibly rising to 20 storeys.

Glen Eira Council approved rezoning for the project a month ago despite neighbourhood objections. The decision to start the decade-long building works now rests with state Planning Minister Matthew Guy.

For Mr Currey and his partner, it will mean vacant land behind their house —



Angry: Caulfield North residents, including this protest group, are opposed to the Caulfield Village project. Pictures: ROB LEESON

cleared of homes more than 10 years ago after they were bought by the racing club — will be occupied by 270 new properties, including six-storey residential blocks. There are still no drawings of how the neighbourhood skyline will change, but he can guess. "This development will

put 2500 people at my back door," Mr Currey said. "It's an incredibly intense concentration of retail, commercial and residential buildings and I'll look out the back and see every one of them."

He said the centre would dramatically increase traffic congestion in Kam-

brook Rd and the surrounding streets.

"The beauty of this area is that within 15 minutes' drive we have Chadstone Shopping Centre, St Kilda, Glen Huntly Rd and Glenferrie Rd," Mr Currey said.

"The area is already well catered for by retail. We don't need this. It is

physically and visually wrong here.

"I'm not against development, but it has to be reasonable and practical. With every decision our council makes, they show they do not listen to residents and don't care. We voted them in, but they are not representing us."

'Level' the playing fields

WHAT'S good enough for the Melbourne Racing Club should be good enough for everyone, budding entrepreneur Noam Rosen says.

Mr Rosen supports high-rise development in suburban areas and considers the Caulfield area as ideally placed to become a residential and business hub, capable of housing many more people.

But he said: "If I wanted to demolish this house and build a six-storey complex I think I'd be knocked back. Why did the Melbourne Racing Club get approval? There should be a level playing field so everyone has the chance to do sensible property development."

PLANNING

Mr Rosen, who spent 11 years studying in Israel and now studies entrepreneurship at RMIT, said he was struck by the contrast between the two countries in the way they embrace innovation.

He said that while Israel had visionary, progressive ideas about urban development, forced upon it by lack of space, Australia seemed scared of change when it comes to long-term urban planning.

He said councils should take a stronger lead in building communities. They should embrace higher-density housing in suburbs, but provide better services for residents, such as greywater services, high-speed internet and more frequent garbage collection. He said streets should be widened to improve traffic flow and a series of one-way brick-paved streets built to slow traffic in back streets.

And he said councils should also set up neighbourhood TV channels to improve community links.

Mr Rosen said he saw little in the MRC proposal that benefited local residents.

"This development will fill their pockets, but it gives nothing back to the community," he said.



Budding entrepreneur: Noam Rosen at home.

Reaching
for the
heights

GROWTH

TOWERS of concrete and glass will soon dominate the skyline at Caulfield North.

The features that for more than a century have attracted residents there — proximity to the beach, major shopping precincts, excellent road, rail and tram services and a university — are also a magnet to property developers who still see a vast potential for growth.

As well as the \$750 million Caulfield Village development, Monash University has plans for towers of more than 16 storeys.

A developer has plans for a three-storey, 18-unit student residence at the corner of Kambrook and Balclutha roads, though continuing delays over the project mean the collection of dilapidated buildings on the site remains an eyesore and a source of frequent complaints from neighbours.

And further down Kambrook Rd there are signs that developers are preparing to ride the wave of urban renewal if the Melbourne Racing Club development gains government approval.

One developer bought two big properties confiscated by police. A house was removed from one property, stables were demolished on another and replaced with a big two-storey property.

Neighbours believe the owner wants a residential development across three house blocks, though plans have been stymied by the refusal of one owner to sell their semi-detached home.

Two houses on the same block went on sale this week and more residents are also preparing to sell.

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1

LOCATION

Caulfield North is a suburb of the City of Glen Eira, about 11km from the CBD via Dandenong Rd. The area was settled in the mid-1800s and still has many 19th century mansions. The suburb is dominated by nearby Caulfield racecourse and Monash University's Caulfield campus, though both are in Caulfield East.

2

MIGRATION, RELIGION

About a third of residents were born overseas, with most migrants coming from Poland, South Africa, the UK and Israel. At the 2006 Census almost half of all residents nominated Judaism as their religion; Catholicism was a distant second place with 11 per cent.

3

BUSINESS

The name of the Kambrook brand of electrical appliances was taken from Kambrook Rd, where company founder Frank Bannigan set up a backyard workshop in the early 1960s. Kambrook is credited with inventing the power board, electrical timer switches and the plastic kettle.

4

HOUSEHOLDS

Median household income is about 12 per cent higher than for Melbourne as a whole. Fewer than half of all homes are separate houses; a third of them are flats or units and one in five is semi-detached or a townhouse. One in three homes in the suburb is rented.

NEXT WEEK
Ocean Grove

It's a losing race

TRAFFIC FEARS

GEOFF and Mary Healy describe themselves with pride as "racing people".

They were born into racing families — Mary's grandfather C. Cooper rode the 1900 Caulfield Cup winner Inglisdon — they met at the races and live in a house that still has stables at its rear.

But Mrs Healy fiercely opposes the club's Caulfield Village development which she says will look like Docklands in the suburbs.

She said she feared the proposal would worsen traffic and parking problems, saying there are already gridlocks.

She said the plans bore little resemblance to the original 1996 concept of Caulfield Village.

"It just keeps growing. We'll have another 10,000 people working and shopping here, but they're providing only 2000 parking spots," she said.

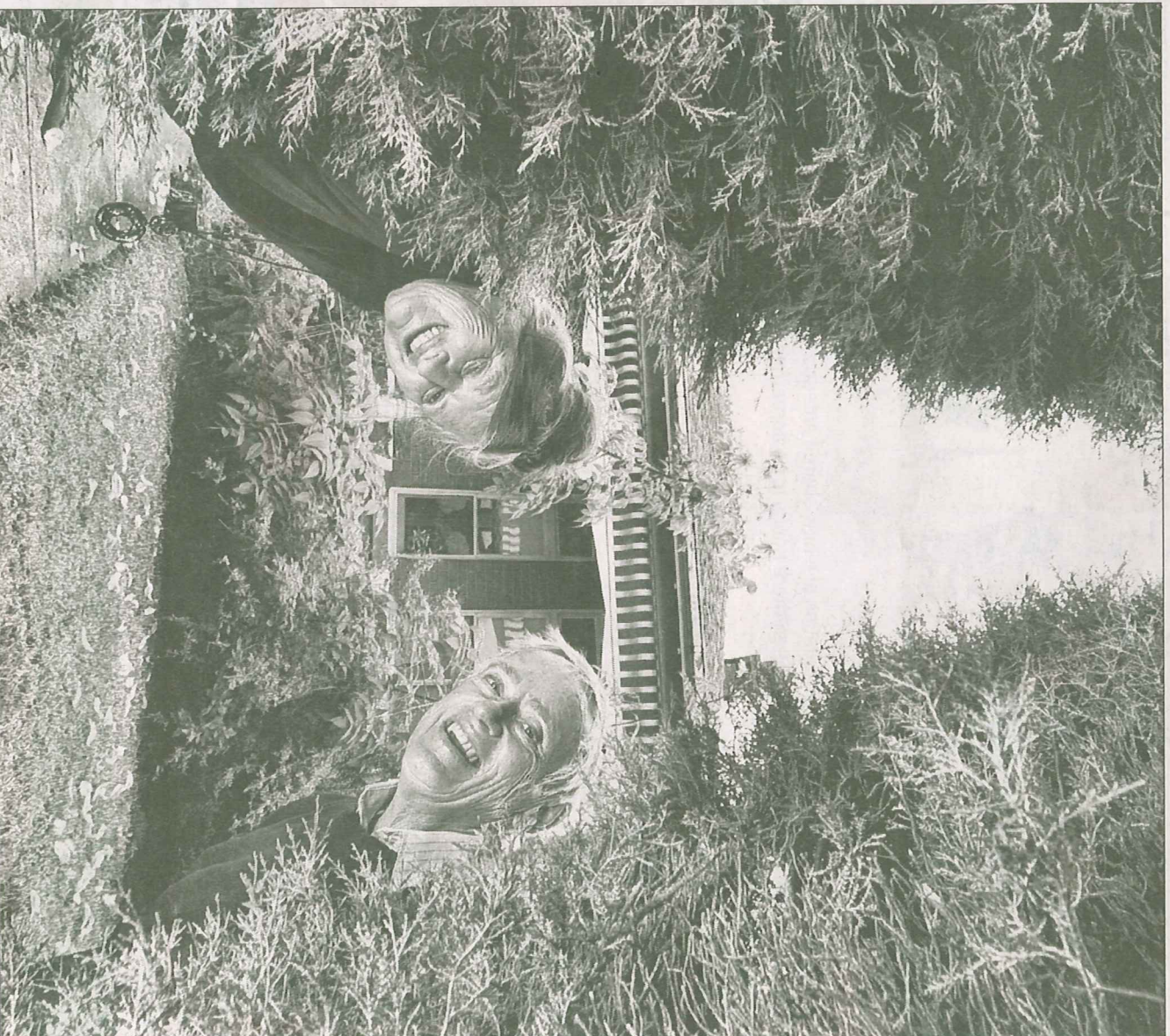
Mrs Healy said Camden ward residents had elected councillors opposed to the project, but Glen Eira council had ignored their views and few councillors had attended a state planning panel's six-day set of hearings.

"It's one of the biggest planning decisions ever made in the state, but they showed no interest," she said. "They have effectively disenfranchised the voters."

Mrs Healy has led a fight to force the club to open the centre of the racecourse — which occupies Crown land — to public use and claims residents have been cheated by the deal struck with council, saying the club has gained much but given little.

But Alan Wilson, who has lived in the street for 15 years, said the Village development, incorporating a 200-home over-55s area, was welcome, because it would probably attract medical centres, doctors and other services.

Mr Wilson said the high-rise buildings might also block the sound of trains on the nearby railway.



Docklands in the 'burbs: Mary and Geoff Healy oppose the Caulfield Village development. Picture: ROB LEESON

CHARACTER

Legacy of grandeur

IT was the character of Caulfield North that attracted Lisa to the area: the elegant Victorian and Edwardian homes, autumn leaves and the rich history that embraces its racecourse. Many of the old homes still have wooden stables on their properties, a legacy of the 90-odd years that racehorses were stabled on private properties in streets surrounding the historic racecourse.

The double-fronted Victorian house Lisa and her husband bought three years ago was built in 1885 and through careful renovation stands as a beautiful example of the grandeur of 19th-century homes.

Next door, there's an even bigger home on a much bigger block of land, but it's in pretty poor shape, a shadow of its past splendour. Lisa says there is rarely a week when real estate agents don't knock on its door, imploring the aged occupant to sell.

The owner has never budged, though Lisa wonders how long before nature takes its course and the home succumbs to the wrecker's bulldozers.

She fears for what will replace it. That pocket of Kambrook Rd is a trove of architectural heritage, with its mix of family homes and cottages, but she says Glen Eira City Council has little interest in protecting that heritage.

"None of these homes are heritage-listed," she said.

"It doesn't make much sense.

"We should be preserving these homes, but there's nothing to stop them being knocked down."

Herald Sun

Sunday

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