

Eye on Caulfield South: new hub being created

LISA DAVIS

THE streets around Princes Park in Caulfield South will soon be abuzz with building activity: a new "hub" is being created. It seems to have come about by happy coincidence; several separate developers have had their eye on the area for a while and now all the pieces seem to have fallen into place.

Construction on a new development that will include shops and apartments has just begun, while work on a second apartment development starts any day now, as will development of a new community centre and synagogue. Combined, the works are sure to inject new life into an established area that already had the benefits of the huge park as well as a great location, with established

schools and public transport, not to mention the beach and multiple shopping and dining opportunities within easy driving distance.

Caulfield South in a nutshell

Caulfield South is a neat, rectangular suburb bound by Glenhuntly Road to the north, Booran Road to the east, North Road to the south and Kooyong Road to the west. Buses and trams service the area. The suburb includes the distinctive, turreted Caulfield Primary School, which was the first school to open in the Caulfield area, in 1860. Heritage listed, the building is considered architecturally, socially and historically important. Unexpectedly, the Japanese School of Melbourne, where children of Japanese expats can continue their education in their native tongue before returning home, is also found within the suburb, in Ellington Street.

The huge Princes Park is the largest stretch of green in the region, and the eastern section is popular with dog-owners, being a designated off-leash area. The park is home to many sports clubs, including the Armadale Bowls Club, a popular venue for functions. Readers paying attention will wonder at the club's name, given that Armadale is four suburbs over; the club was originally located there but decided to keep its name when it moved to its current location 10 years ago.

The equally misleadingly named Brighton Cemetery is also included within Caulfield South's borders. With a long history, some of its more famous residents include artists Arthur Merricks Boyd and Frederick McCubbin, as well as former Victorian premier Sir Thomas Bent, who lent his name to the nearby suburb of Bentleigh, as well as Bent Street, off Booran Road.

The suburb has a significant Jewish

population, with more than 35 per cent of residents listing Judaism as their religion on the 2006 census; slightly less than neighbouring Caulfield. ABS data lists both Hebrew and Yiddish in the top five non-English languages spoken in the area.

Maple on the Park

Taking its name from the nearby street, Maple on the Park will be a mixed use development at 449 Hawthorn Road, designed by the award-winning CBG Architects. With retail on the ground floor and three levels of apartments above, offering configurations of one, two, or three bedrooms, they are presently priced from \$429,000. The Maple Apartments will all come with large outdoor terraces, the smallest of which is about 16 square metres, to really give each home some outdoor space to enjoy (to help put it into perspective, developer Max Schachter points out that a conventional single-car garage is about 15 square metres in area).

The quality of the homes, combined with the size of the terraces, leads Schachter to expect the residences to appeal to a variety of owner-occupiers, from families with young children who can play out there, to empty-nesters who have been used to having plenty of room.

Schachter bought the seven shops formerly on the site 10 years ago and has been waiting for his ducks to line up properly before developing the land. He says the spacious apartments have been laid out to make the most of every square metre, with some offering beautiful views over the park. He said that he wanted to bring a real "New York vibe" to the area.

"I instructed the architects that I didn't want a building that looked like apartments



Artist's impression of Maple on the Park

over shopS"; I wanted a building of apartments with shops on the ground floor. When you look at the building itself, the strongest element there is the building, not the ground floor ... We wanted to distinguish this, because it's a different type of building for the area that's not normally found outside an activity centre, given the number of apartments that are there, and the height of the building. I wanted the plans of the building to be quality and provide good amenities for the occupiers."

With some of the shops leased already, Schachter says that the retail mix will focus heavily on food, including a bakery, a cafe and an organic food store already in the works. A beauty solan has been lined up as well.

- The Maple apartments are being marketed by Century 21 Wilson Pride. Completion is expected near the end of 20 12. Visit www.mapleapartments.com.au for more details.

Elle

I witness a friendly sort of competition between Schachter and David Besser, who, along with partners Yoel Rosenwald and Gaby Amira, is developing Elle almost across the road from Maple on the Park. Besser argues that in this particular instance, their developments will complement each other rather than detracting, because it will create a mini-village when before there was none: "Max asked me if I was worried that he was building apartments across the road, and I said 'No way! It creates more for both of us! Go, baby!'"

The developers of Elle, at 462 and 464 Hawthorn Road, have been working to realise their vision for the site for over two years. Architecturally designed by Terry Harper, construction on the blocks is due to start next month. They look set to include 25 very solidly built one- and two-bedroom apartments with varying floorplans (only one one-bedder

remains unsold). Prices start from \$449,000 and each block will have its own lift.

Eagle-eyed PRW readers will have noticed that Elle started life as "four6four", back when only 464 Hawthorn Road was due to be developed. Besser says that the original plan changed when the chance came up to secure the neighbouring block; they couldn't resist the opportunity. They still wanted to retain the boutique feel of the development, however, and also ensure that each residence would have plenty of light, so he and his partners decided to create two separate buildings that will share a basement for parking and storage.

"That way, you've got the benefits of two individual smaller buildings ... it's nicer than one big building and it's aesthetically better as well."

- The Elle apartments are being marketed through Besser & Co in conjunction with Woodards TBM. Completion is estimated near the end of 20 12. Visit www.elleapartments.com for more information.

The new synagogue and community centre

Central Shule Chabad is set to commence works next month on a new synagogue and community centre, at its existing site in Maple Street. After five years of planning, the development is due to include a double-storey synagogue with seating for 800, as well as offices, a hall, a kitchen and a boardroom.

Zionist youth movement Beter is also set to make the site its future base, occupying a fully self-contained section of the community centre.

Both Besser and Schachter express happiness over the new centre, as they feel it will help contribute to the amenity and sense of community in the area near their own developments.

- With Dalia Sable



Artist's impression of the Elle development

Median house prices over the last five years, by quarter

	Melbourne Metro	Caulfield South
2011,02	\$590,000	\$905,000
2011,01	\$560,000	\$974,500
2010,04	\$601,000	\$958,000
2010,03	\$562,500	\$1,075,000
2010,02	\$558,000	\$899,000
2010,01	\$520,000	\$1,002,000
2009,04	\$535,000	\$861,750
2009,03	\$468,900	\$918,250
2009,02	\$441,000	\$789,500
2009,01	\$405,000	\$785,000
2008,04	\$420,000	\$662,500
2008,03	\$450,000	\$807,500
2008, 02	\$450,000	\$851,000
2008,01	\$430,000	\$780,000
2007,04	\$472,250	\$871,750
2007,03	\$420,000	\$780,000
2007,02	\$407,000	\$660,000
2007,01	\$381,000	\$731,000
2006,04	\$393,000	\$628,000
2006,03	\$376,000	\$568,500
2006,02	\$376,100	\$625,000





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