

Bulletin No 97

Date March 2019



Dear APA Community

In putting together this newsletter for the first time, and being a new member of the Committee, I'd like to say that I am completely in awe of the amazing people who make up the APA Management Committee and who have worked tirelessly for our Avalon community in many capacities over decades. They are all incredibly skilled & respected individuals in multiple disciplines, and give so much of their time freely. On the committee we have town planners, flora and fauna experts, business specialists, communications & company directors, artists, writers, editors, government advisors, historians - and the list of expertise goes on. These clever, articulate, hardworking, passionate people, lobby Council re the issues that are important to Avalon residents. During the writing of this short Bulletin, so many urgent matters came up that required an immediate response from the Committee - either by way of emails, written submissions, giving practical assistance or advice, attendance at Council meetings or phone hook ups. They drop everything to help our community. You may think that Avalon is just a sleepy coastal village - Well, I can tell you otherwise!! -Many concerning issues arise daily re development proposals, public land encroachment, bush clearing, road management, planning issues, and general maintenance matters etc. We are so fortunate to have this committee advocating for the Avalon community - and I feel privileged to now be a part of the team. Chelsey Baker

1. CREATIVE ART SPACE

As you may recall, in May 2017, the former NBC Administrator Dick Persson committed \$1M from the Merger Savings Fund for a Creative Arts Space at either Newport or Avalon. NBC has been conducting studies including community engagement to discover what options there were and what the community wanted. In September 2018 NBC agreed to exhibit 2 site options for Public Comment viz the Scout Annexe Dunbar Park and the Unused areas of the Avalon Golf Club House. There were limited scope options \$1.2Million and Full scope \$2.2Million. 80% of respondents (214) preferred the Avalon Golf Club Site. Suddenly in late February a staff proposal was included on the Council agenda for 26 February, 19 (without any community consultation) that A Creative Art Centre be located at Mona Vale in the Civic Centre with a Budget of \$3.5-4Million. A minor amount (\$260k) was recommended for some small studio facilities in the lower level of the Avalon Golf Club. This proposal came as a great shock to APA and seems to fly in the face of NBC's own processes. APA has emailed a strong protest to the Mayor and the CEO with copies to Councillors in Pittwater & Narrabeen Wards. Unfortunately, the motion was passed by Council at the meeting on 26/2/19 to build the Art Space North at Mona Vale Civic Centre with a token amount of \$260,000 to go to Avalon Golf Club for the small studio facilities. There are many disappointed artists from Newport north after that decision. The APA feels it was a slap in the face and made a farce of the whole public consultation process. At the Council meeting both the CEO & the Mayor spoke briefly & excluding specifics about the next 12 months of planning at the Avalon site as well as the possibility of additional funding. At the APA walk around with the CEO (see Item 11), he once again spoke about the possibility of additional funds to create something more significant.

The Creative Art Space Advisory Group is meeting 14/3/2019 with NBC staff at both sites. Watch this space.

2. WHAT DOES OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY VALUE? - AND THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATING WITH COUNCIL & POLITICIANS

As members of the APA, we are all generally on the same page regarding our passion for Avalon and the Pittwater area.

There is value in knowing and caring for our area, and appreciating what it takes to maintain and improve our patch. No-one cares about Avalon as much as locals do! We currently have a merged mega-council that is responsible for 55 (!!!) suburbs (including western foreshore communities) with 266,000 residents, and covers a huge geographical area. We, in Avalon, have little or no representation now. Very few people on the new Council know or care for our beautiful suburb as much as we locals do. Avalon is just a tiny cog in a 55 suburb wheel that is the NB Council behemoth. We need to make our voices heard regarding what we value & what are important issues in Avalon. There's

nothing wrong with being a NIMBY! - because there are so many things that we DON'T want in our back yards - especially regarding the revising of LEPs (Local Environment Plans) and DCPs (Development Consent Plans) in the next few years (see #8 below). So if you feel strongly about an issue relating to Avalon or the immediate area, please participate in the "Have Your Say" section of the Council website or just write to Council (email: <u>council@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au</u>) and respectfully outline the issue and ask what can be done to remedy the situation. If they don't know about an issue, or realise how strongly we feel about something, there's no way it's going to be fixed, so start writing & also talking to your neighbours and friends about what they love about Avalon & what needs fixing - It's cathartic! This also applies to politicians, and particularly our local Member, currently Rob Stokes (email: pittwater@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

3. INCREASE IN TREE FELLING. SOLUTION: PLANT ENDEMIC CANOPY SPECIES.

Our canopy trees are the essence of Avalon. If you ask most residents why they chose to live here, many would probably say "the beaches, Pittwater - and our trees". Until recently, if you stood in Avalon village and looked around in any direction, our beautiful native canopy gums completely covered the Avalon/Bilgola/Whale Beach hillsides and blocked out most traces of development - it was very special. Our bushland and particularly, our canopy trees need to be protected, and currently, since the state government's 10:50 tree clearing laws were enacted, and with the current government's push for development, and the granny flat explosion; there has been a frightening increase in the number of trees being felled. Ugly new houses & extensions are starting to pop out of the hillsides due to tree clearing to selfishly improve views. This completely changes the feel & unique character of our suburb. More careful decision making with DA tree removal requests is essential, or we will lose the very thing that makes Avalon so unique & beautiful. We should also be encouraged to plant more trees, particularly endemic canopy trees, to encourage native birds and wildlife and replace felled or fallen trees. APA has made a submission to NBC on its Draft Urban Tree Canopy Plan, which is now being considered by Council staff. When you next drive south through the suburbs to Dee Why and up to North Curl Curl headland, look south, or across Dee Why to see the absolute wasteland as you look over ugly rooftops and seas of concrete, where almost every tree has been removed to improve views - or because their leaves are a little inconvenient. Is that what we want for Avalon? We fear we're going to end up being completely in "harmony" with the ugliness of those southern suburbs, if we don't make a stand for our trees!

Re Avalon Photos below:

There are houses, units, a high school, three primary schools, and a town centre down there amongst the trees - with virtually all available land in Avalon Beach already built on, we are still surrounded by nature. As you can see in 2nd photo though, there are now houses - 3 & 4 storeys -popping out of the hillsides - their views might be better now their trees are gone, but for those who have to look back at them - the views certainly aren't!



4. MAINTENANCE ISSUES AROUND AVALON

APA has been concerned for some time about overlooked maintenance issues around Avalon. (See attached detailed list at the end of this bulletin, of specific issues sent in a letter from APA to Council last month). Council responded that they will get back to us regarding this list. We note that work has started on some of the outlined problems. Please have a look at this list, so as not to duplicate, but feel free to write to Council with any of your own maintenance issues around Avalon that have slipped through the Council cracks.



5. SOUTH AVALON HEADLAND FOOTPATH & COASTAL WALKWAY PLANS

Council received many objections from residents to the original proposal by Council of the Coastal Walkway being placed directly on the cliff edge (with accompanying fences) at the South Avalon Headland carpark area. The objections came from a wide range of community members, including from APA, individual surfers, elderly and young residents, who objected to the fact that the path and fence design significantly blocked views to the ocean by those who enjoy sitting in their cars to take in the view. We are particularly concerned regarding the formalisation of the cliff top areas from Bilgola to North Avalon and especially the plans to fence the cliffs and obviously increase the numbers of people using this environmentally sensitive cliff walk. Many people suggested viable alternatives to the path & fence along the cliff at South Avalon. It seems the Council has listened to the Avalon community and according to Ray Brownlee, the NB Council CEO, an alternative

location for the path on the opposite (western) side of the South Avalon headland parking lot has now been confirmed, but specific plans are yet to be finalised. We'll keep you posted.

It shows that residents need to make their voices heard in Council when there are proposals that are not in the interest of the majority of residents, and that Council needs to better publicise its plans and undertake ongoing consultation with Avalon Beach residents.

6. THE SCOURGE OF PRIVATE CERTIFIERS

Peninsula Living article Page 28 Issue 387 Dec 2018

Interesting excerpt from above article "Northern Beaches Under Siege" "95% of current development on the NB is managed by private certifiers. There is a conflict of interest in that the developing owner chooses their own Certifier. Control needs to be given back to local Councils. NB Council have called for the State government to give Councils back control for development and building process. Currently the certifier has become a shaper of local character and Council has lost control over the feel of the area". This is particularly important for our area, as we want to maintain our uniquely beautiful canopy treed environment and our low key village feel, with low density, small houses on larger treed blocks. - This is usually in direct opposition to developers' ideas, so there is a constant battle to balance development with conservation of the trees and bushland on our narrow peninsula. We support the NB Council's request to give back control to the individual Councils.



Photo above: Fabulous volunteers from Pittwater Natural Heritage Assoc at Clean Up Australia Day at Careel Bay Mangroves



Left: Tawny frogmouth on Av Golf Course. Below: The treeless wasteland looking south along Curl Curl headland.

7. HELPFUL PLANNING ALERT SYSTEM

With the scourge of private certifiers, and the difficulty in keeping up with new DAs in our area, as well as the fact that DA Applications are no longer published in the Manly Daily, we were pleased to find that a Planning Alert subscription service is available. It is free and easy to sign up to receive the latest planning



DAs in your immediate area (or whatever area you select). Just go to <u>planningalerts.org.au</u>. Bear in mind, it is a free service, and it is constantly gathering information from hundreds of councils, so is not always 100% accurate.

8. REVISED LOCAL ENVIRONMENT PLAN (LEP) & DEVELOPMENT CONSENT PLAN (DCP) FOR NB COUNCIL

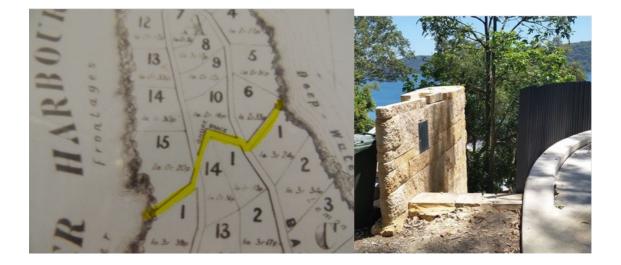
As part of Council's Planning Our Sustainable Future, and as a "logical extension of amalgamation", the NB Council has commenced its push to rationalise the LEP's (Local Environment Plans) & DCPs (Development Consent Plans) of the previous 3 council areas - Pittwater, Manly, and Warringah into one. LEPs & DCPs are policies put in place by Council to administer the way our area's development is controlled and to effectively plan for the future growth of an estimated 45,000 more people to the Northern Beaches over the next several decades (Mayor Michael Regan statement). We think this assumed massive growth is another issue entirely, and a conversation that the Australian people need to have with

its government. This local revision process has just begun, and it's important that residents contribute, so that strong Locality Statements can be written into the LEP for Avalon, otherwise we fear we will be lumped into a 'one size fits all' policy - that covers Manly, Dee Why, Frenchs Forest & Palm Beach - and everywhere in between. There is currently an SRG (Strategic Reference Group) - that has reps from many community groups, including the APA, and we will be putting forward ideas for the locality statement which recognises what is particularly special about Avalon, so we are able to maintain its unique character and recognise the fact we are an environmentally sensitive area on a narrow peninsula with limited access, that restricts development potential. This is a great opportunity for Avalon residents to get involved and protect our local interests and encourage friends and family to join local community groups like APA, because, as Alex McTaggart (Pittwater Ward Councillor) says "It's good for individuals to make submissions, but there's nothing like the strength that comes with a submission from a large group." A Call to Action!

9. SAGA OF SHORE BRACE WEST RESERVE & ENCROACHMENT BY ADJOINING PROPERTY OWNER

The Management Committee of Avalon Preservation Association has, for some time been concerned about an encroachment on Shore Brace public reserve which adjoins 173 Riverview Road and should provide public access to the Pittwater Foreshore. In effect, the historic Shore Brace public reserve which is part of the Avalon remnant spotted gum forest, has been taken over by the owner of 173 Riverview Road.

On Shore Brace Reserve there is now a driveway, a set of steps, a large structure including a letter box and a retaining wall, blocking access to the Reserve, which has been planted to look like the garden of 173 Riverview. In the original DA, the owner was given permission to use part of the reserve for driveway access, but regrettably subsequent building has resulted in the effective privatisation of Shore Brace. The APA has joined with a number of the local residents to urge NBC to ensure that the owner removes the unapproved encroachments, restores public access to the reserve, remediates the reserve and erects a sign indicating that Shore Brace is a public reserve.



10. COUNCIL'S PLACE PLANNING - SPOTLIGHT ON AVALON

The third Avalon Place Planning Meeting by the Council's Community Reference Group (CRG) was held on 28/2/19 with 2 Councillors, Council staff & 10 community members and was attended by Conrad Grayson from APA. There are several stages involved & the Council are quite far along in the process - currently developing a Draft Plan.

Conrad outlined the APA's desire to have a range of experts review the long list of very good points the CRG has made with a view to provide a brief, with expertise from numerous professions/disciplines including Heritage, Urban Design, Aboriginal Culture, Environment amongst others. In addition, the desire to incorporate the many other important projects currently being considered including the Golf Course, Arts Space, Coastal Walk etc. Other members shared the view that we needed to get down to the specifics rather than generalist statements. Dunbar Park was discussed, particularly how it could be improved. There was no plan presented, however there was a good discussion focused primarily on the playground and to a lesser degree Patterson Lane which had strong support for improvement, as well as activation of other laneways in Avalon ie. Wickham Lane North (between community centre & RSL) & Simmonds Lane (beside Westpac Bank)

Another topic discussed was provision of netball courts and where they will be situated current proposal is for 4 courts behind the sand dunes, on both sides of "Poo Creek". APA is concerned regarding the extent of public green space that will be lost and the removal of many trees. In summary, the mood was positive at the meeting but there was consensus that much more needed to be done.



Photos above: Increase in moorings on Pittwater and peregrine falcon at Bangalley Headland

11. APA WALK AROUND WITH COUNCIL CEO, RAY BROWNLEE

The APA Management Committee met with NB Council CEO, Ray Brownlee & Trish Chaney (Community Liaison Coordinator) on 12 March, for a walk & drive around the Avalon Village and local area, so they could more fully appreciate the unique character of our beautiful suburb and see places of environmental and cultural significance. The APA also brought up many issues of concern to Avalon residents including; the Creative Art Space North (see #1 for more details), issues relating to Council's 'Avalon Place Plan' that will be crucial to Avalon's future, the proposed location of the Coast Walk footpath around West side of South Avalon headland carpark (not hugging the cliff as originally proposed), maintenance issues and ensuring that the Avalon Golf Course remains a public golf course for many years to come while welcoming the sharing of the Golf Course club house building with the Creative Art Space North & whatever future opportunities that may bring.



Photo above: APA Management Committee with Ray Brownlee (2nd from left)

12. MOUNTAIN BIKE RIDERS DESTROYING BUSHLAND & PARKS

We have been advised by many residents that there has been a significant increase in the destruction of bush and parkland in the Avalon area by teenagers constructing bike tracks through the local reserves. There have been serious incidents of bush destruction at Toongari Reserve, Stapleton Reserve, Avalon Golf Course, and Palmgrove Park. These are all beautiful wild areas, with either pristine native bushland or remediated bush that has been cared for by community bush care groups. The APA & local residents have been speaking to Council in an effort to find a designated location for the kids to ride their

bikes and the APA agrees that it's far better for kids to be outside on their bikes than in front of a screen - but kids also need to be taught to respect and appreciate the laws that protect our nature reserves for the good of our community and future generations.

13. MONA VALE HOSPITAL RALLY: SAT 16 MARCH, 2PM, MV VILLAGE GREEN

This Saturday, 16 March, 2pm, Mona Vale Village Green, there will be a rally to protest the planned demolition of Mona Vale Hospital. The Government's intention is to pull down the existing hospital to make at least half the site available as a money making private medical campus, from which the government & health entrepreneurs profit. Please make your voice heard and presence felt at The Rally. Our community needs to retain a proper Emergency Department on the Mona Vale Hospital site.

14. AVALON & BILGOLA BUSHCARE

Our bushland makes this such a lovely place to live. However, bush needs looking after. Bush care volunteers work on fixed days of the month for about three hours. Starting times vary in summer. Check meeting place with the contact person. Morning/Afternoon Tea and a chat is an important part of the work!

RESERVE	DAY OF MONTH	CONTACT
Algona Reserve	First Saturday 9-12	Paul Webb 0449 894 811
Angophora Reserve	Third Sunday 8.30-11.30	Geoff Searl 0439 292 566
Avalon Dunes	First Sunday 8.30-11.30	Marita Macrae 0439 409 202
Avalon Golf Course	Second Wednesday 2.30-5	Geoff Searl 0439 292 566
Bangalley Headland Reserve	Second Sunday 8.30-11.30	Marita Macrae 0439 409 202
Bilgola Beach	Third Monday 8-11	Paul Webb 0449 894 811
Careel Creek	Fourth Saturday 8.30- 11.30	Karin Nippard 0417 040 945
Old Wharf Reserve	Third Saturday 8-11	Jan Koltai 9918 2986
Plateau Park	First Friday 8.30-11.30	Ken Hughes 0417 287 320
Toongari Reserve	Third Saturday 8.30-11.30	Robyn Hughes 0403 927 588

To get the bush healthy, mostly only weeding is needed. The bush needs you to help keep those weeds at bay. Why not give it a go?

For general bush care enquiries contact Michael Kneipp, Northern Beaches Council bush care coordinator on 9942 2766.

15. APA WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK

Many people have lamented that they used to get their news about what was happening in the area from the Manly Daily. The reduction to just two editions per week has certainly limited the dissemination of information. Visits to both the <u>Avalon Preservation</u> <u>Association website</u> and the <u>APA Facebook</u> will ensure that you are kept up to date on what is happening. <u>Pittwater Online News</u> is also a valuable source of information about the local community.

16. APA MEMBERSHIP AND RENEWAL

The \$10 membership fee is due on 30 June each year. Many of you have paid for a number of years in advance. Details of your subscription, including expiry date, are emailed to you. Please note if you still require your bulletin to be mailed to you, you will sadly receive the cut down version without photos because of the cost of printing. The expiry date of your subscription is printed on your envelope.

Your APA membership number makes it easier for people to pay by direct deposit. Include your APA number so that the APA treasurer knows the identity of who has paid by direct deposit. **Renewals can be paid online to Westpac: Avalon Preservation Association Incorporated BSB 732-095 Account 07-0127. Please include your name and/or APA membership number to ensure I know who you are!** You can still renew your membership by mail (or in person) to PO Box 1 Avalon

To save additional postage, your receipt will be mailed to you with the subsequent bulletin or via email.

Please encourage your local family members and friends to join APA.

Please consider donating to our Fighting Fund to support campaigns. Simply select the amount you wish to donate and add to your annual member fee when renewing, or donate at any time. Please specify whether the money is for membership renewal or for the FF (Fighting Fund).

The Avalon Preservation Association thanks Avalon Beach Community Library for their support.

⊱.....

APA membership

The cost is \$10.00 per family renewable on 30 June annually at **Westpac Avalon Preservation Association Incorporated BSB 732-095 Account 07-0127 or to** PO Box 1 Avalon Beach.

I/We:.....Phone:.....Phone:.....Address:....Address:.... hereby apply for membership in the Avalon Preservation Association. I/We agree to abide by the provisions of the APA Constitution if accepted.

Email::....

We are happy for our bulletin to be emailed rather than mailed. Yes No

Signed:Date:

I wish to donate \$ to the APA Fighting Fund. I understand that the purpose of the Fighting Fund is to allow members and others to support specific campaigns of concern to Avalon residents.



Photo above: King parrot on Avalon Golf Course and pod of dolphins at Avalon

Re: Item #4 MAINTENANCE ISSUES:

BELOW IS A RECENT LETTER WRITTEN TO COUNCIL BY ROGER SAYERS (APA Committee)

Mr Ray Brownlee

CEO Northern Beaches Council

Dear Ray

While the Avalon Beach Place Plan process is underway, separate to this there are a number of relatively minor works that are urgently required in Avalon Beach. Council's attention would be appreciated on the list of items below, compiled by the Avalon Preservation Association.

Some items simply reinstate what the community had previously, eg replace infrastructure that Northern Beaches Council has removed, provide regular maintenance and service, and some items are community improvements at minor cost.

Avalon Beach postcode 2107 has a population of approximately 12,000, and hosts many thousands of visitors all year round, particularly over the summer months - besides day visitors, there are now 300 + residences in Avalon Beach offering AirBandB accommodation to tourists. A great majority of residents and visitors would at various times use/enjoy the facilities referred to below.

Photos are in the link here:

https://photos.app.goo.gl/bcYoc7cfXNwY73qD9

Please:

1. Replace the pedestrian bridge across the Careel Creek Canal, from the 'Yellow Brick Road' footpath, towards Central Road. It has been closed by Northern Beaches Council for 6 months and a projected new bridge is not expected till mid 2019. A year is too long for replacement of a simple pedestrian bridge and for the inconvenience caused to Barrenjoey High School students and residents walking and cycling to and from Central Road to school or the beach. Younger people are resorting to going down the bank to cross near the bridge while elderly people are inconvenienced daily. It needs to be replaced now. See photos 1, 2. 2. Replace the pedestrian bridge across Careel Creek Canal near Woolworths carpark, which was removed by NBC 6 months ago. Despite its removal and Council's apparent preference not to replace it, the worn track area down the canal bank adjacent to the old bridge location since removal, clearly shows the preference of residents on this matter. See photo 3.

3. Area south of the surf club.

Please

a. replace the grass in the park, and water it

b. install two plaques or interpretive signage to inform residents and visitors of Avalon Beach's role in the history of 1) modern surfing and 2) surf lifesaving. Wording of both was agreed previously by the surf club, local surfers and Avalon Beach Historical Society, and the proposal agreed to in principle some years ago by the former Pittwater Council. Contact Roger Sayers

c. interpretive sign for the remains of the locally historic tea house - previously agreed by Council and Avalon Beach Historical Society. Contact Geoff Searl

d. a whale sculpture to be provided by sculptor Richard Stutchbury

e. exposed section of aboriginal claypit on hill - liaison required on preferred treatment with local Aboriginal representative. Contact Neil Evers?

These individual items were all grouped together by Northern Beaches Council for consideration, but nothing has happened to date.

It is time to progress these local initiatives either individually or all at once.

4. Beachfront slope under pine trees south of the surf club to rock pool path is currently unsightly and unstable. In accordance with best practice coastal management principles and methods, the slope could be reconfigured to make a small sand dune in front of the Norfolk Pines and cover the rocks adjacent to the pool path. These 'mini' dunes should be planted with dune grass to promote accumulation of windblown sand to stabilise the area, protect public land, and improve the aesthetics and amenity of the area... as was a draft proposal in the previous Council's plans. An hour or two with a bobcat should be sufficient. See photos 5, 6, 7.

5. Replant banksias for shade on the grass hill west of the surf club carpark, and water these. The advanced banksias that Council planted died through lack of watering. See photos 8, 9.

6. Re-colour the surface of the 'Yellow Brick Road' walking path which connects North Avalon to South Avalon, to restore its original local reddish sand colour. This colour blended in more with the natural environment than stark white concrete which is starting to show through in patches all along the path now. See photo 10.

7. Replant banksias that Council planted for shade and were healthy until ringbarked by grass cutters/ removed along the southern edge of Des Creagh Reserve park North Avalon, and water these. See photo 10.

8. Fix drainage of showers in front of North Avalon carpark so the water runs onto the grass and not down the steps making them slippery and dangerous for the elderly and

children. A small adjustment to the front of the concrete is all that's required to drain water to the west. See photos 11, 12.

9. Replenish sand on the beach access path adjacent to the western end of pedestrian area at the front of North Avalon carpark. The current 0.5 metre drop could break someone's leg. See page 13.

10. Fix potholes in Avalon's streets. The example in the photo is located at the corner of North Avalon Road and Binburra Ave. It was 'fixed' by Council just prior to Christmas.

11. Fix broken guttering in Avalon streets. The example in the photo, cnr Bareena Rd and Binburra Ave has had the warning barrier in place for 6 months already. See photo 15.

12. Fix the uneven surfaces of footpaths in Avalon that create trip hazards - a number of residents who have fallen to the ground incurring injuries can attest to this. The examples in the photos are in Old Barrenjoey Rd, west and east sides, in the vicinity of the Community Centre/ Dunbar Park, and Woolworths carpark. They need to be fixed without interference to adjacent shade trees. See photos 16, 17.

13. Remove seaweed from Avalon Beach rockpool on a more regular basis. The weed makes the pool unusable for the hundreds of residents who normally use it daily, and a health hazard for those that risk it.

And also restore the paving beside the pool.

14. Commission Dunbar Park watering system, and water dying plants.

15. Clean out various grated drains in Avalon, eg rear of Woolworths.

16. Clean street gutters more regularly.

The individual cost of these works is minor, while the benefits to many residents of and visitors to Avalon Beach are considerable.

It would be appreciated if you could have them expedited please.

Please contact if further clarification is required.

Thank you Kind regards Roger Savers

Management Committee AVALON PRESERVATION TRUST Incorporated as AVALON PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION P.O. Box 1 Avalon Beach 2107