

TO:

Access Canberra

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Phone: (02) 6207 1923

FROM:

Downer Community Association (DCA)

RE: **Development Application:** 202138825

Address: MELBA STREET AND BRADFIELD STREET

Block: 13 **Section:** 61

Proposal: PROPOSAL FOR MULTI UNIT DEVELOPMENT - proposal is for lease variation and design and siting works, comprising construction of four buildings of total four storeys in height. One level of basement car parking, construction of driveway crossing, removal and replacement of trees and associated landscaping and site servicing works. Subdivision of the block into two blocks, variation of the Crown lease to reduce the maximum number of dwellings permitted to 130 and increase the maximum gross floor area permitted to 17,736sqm and associated works.

Period for representations closes: 24/09/2021

The Downer Community Association (DCA) makes representations on development application (DA 202138825) (the Goodwin DA). A summary is provided in this letter, with further detail provided in the attachment. The letter and the attachment together comprise the DCA submission.

Context for the DCA comments

The Goodwin DA is the last stage in a three-stage development on the former Downer primary school site – which was zoned as Community Facilities CZ public land until 2016 after the school closed in 1988. The area comprised carparking and school buildings to the east (towards Frencham and Bradfield Streets) and a large playground with green space and many trees to the west (towards Melba and Bradfield Streets).

Independent retirement units are a good use of the land. Such a development has been recommended by the community for many years through the various planning processes undertaken for the site.

The entire school site was sold to Community Housing Canberra Ltd (CHC) on 29 June 2017 by direct sale by the ACT Government for an amount of \$8m. The total area of the site comprised 31,972 m². As public land is not open to public tender, the sale had to be notified on the Register of Public Land Sales maintained by the Economic Development Directorate

The Land Development Agency (LDA) who took control of the site in preparation for sale run a three-year master planning process for the site setting out the public good and infrastructure that would be returned to the community through the sale and development of this community land.

This LDA masterplan has been overlooked or forgotten as stages 1 & 2 have been delivered. The lack of implementation of the LDA masterplan has failed to deliver on the commitments to the community.

Over the past 17 years, at each and every stage of the development – (i) The ACT Former Schools Downer Site Investigation, Purdon and Association 2004 (ii) the master planning process both ACTPLA 2007 and LDA 2012, (iii) the DV 322 process that rezoned the former primary school site, (iv) stage 1 CHC development of the 37 townhouses, and (iv) the stage 2 CHC development of 127 apartments – the DCA has been consistent in its representations that the site could only cater for a maximum of 250 dwellings.

The Precinct Plan contemplates the Downer renewal area, with Stages 1, 2 and 3 to be done on a coordinated basis – but nowhere in the Goodwin DA is there any indication of consideration of the broader issues for the adjoining Downer urban renewal sites and the local shops precinct, such as giving back to the community.

The other important context is that Stage 1 and 2 were brownfield sites – meaning that buildings demolished have been replaced by new buildings. Stage 3 was always going to be difficult site to develop being predominantly a greenfield as the site of the primary school playground. After the closure of the school the Goodwin site was leased by the DCA as a community bike track and jump facility. The lease had to be handed back in the early 2000s with the insurance premium crisis made the cost of running the facility beyond our means.

Development of stage 3 will see the loss of this greenspace to the Downer community forever.

The above context is important when considering the more specific DCA comments below.

The DCA submission in summary

- Issue #1: the lease variation proposed in relation to the Gross Floor Area (GFA) is not justified or warranted
- Issue #2: 130 units is an overdevelopment of the available land space
- Issue #3: the financial viability of the Goodwin DA is not the responsibility of the Downer community
- Issue #4: no commensurate investment in the Downer community or public infrastructure
- Issue #5: north (Bradfield Street) and west (Melba Street) setbacks should not be reduced to accommodate the Goodwin DA
- Issue #6: south boundary setbacks abutting the Downer oval should not be reduced, rather it should be increased to 9 metres.
- Issue #7: all of the existing pin oak trees on Melba Street should be preserved
- Issue #8: proposed four-storey building heights are too high
- Issue #9: parking provision is inadequate
- Issue #10: absence of robust parking and traffic impact analysis
- Issue #11: hardening of the internal area = concrete heat island
- Issue #12: integration of the Goodwin with the Downer village and surrounds
- Issue #13: replanting of removed trees demonstrably unsuccessful
- Issue #14: steps to recover the Downer Primary School time-capsule buried in 1988

Conclusion

Stage 3 is the last opportunity for the ACT Government to deliver on its commitments it made to the Downer community in the masterplan, and address the cumulative and indirect impacts of the stage 1 and 2 developments.

Whilst the DCA appreciates the Goodwin consultation process, they haven't meaningfully adjusted their proposal to respond to DCA feedback.

Whilst the DCA appreciates the Goodwin DA as a good quality development, with pleasing architecture and high-quality design, it remains an over-development for the site, and should be reduced in bulk and site coverage.

Given the overall loss of green space in Downer arising from this development, internal service areas should not be hardened. This can be accommodated if fire access is granted to the adjoining road in the stage 2 CHC apartment development.

The Precinct Plan allows for the site to accommodate up to a maximum of 300 dwellings – but there is no obligation to build that amount. Over the past 17 years, the DCA has consistently put the proposition that the entire three sites can only reasonably accommodate 250 dwellings. It is the DCA's proposition that the Goodwin DA should be limited to no more than 90 residential units.

The existing setbacks on Melba and Bradfield Streets should be kept, and not reduced to accommodate the overdevelopment arising from the Goodwin DA. The setback against the Downer oval on the south side should be increased to 9 meters.

All the pin oak trees on Melba Street should be kept.

The DCA is willing to discuss any aspect of its submission, and can be reached via return correspondence to downerassociation@gmail.com.

Downer Community Association

23 September 2021

Attachment to DCA submission on DA 202138825

Issue #1: The lease variation proposed in relation to the Gross Floor Area (GFA) is not justified or warranted

The current lease allows for a gross floor area – 15000 sqm, which Goodwin has sought to increase to 17780 sqm. The increase in the gross floor area facilitates the building footprint being sought in the DA.

This equates to a 14 per cent increase, which the DCA objects to as being excessive.

By comparison, stage 2 of CHC has 130 units with a gross floor area of 11,974 sqm. And while some of the development will be taken up with communal space (eg, kitchen and community areas) this is still a lot of building for the site.

In comparison to CHC development next door, the Goodwin DA is not only inconsistent with the lease provisions, but also overdone.

Issue #2: 130 units is an overdevelopment of the available land space

The Goodwin DA suggest that the Downer community should be happy with only 130 units, when strictly speaking current planning provisions allows it to build 140 units.

The DCA notes that 140 unit is a maximum number – it's not mandated to do so.

The DCA were adamant all through the original master planning process and DV 322 that rezoned the site that the site could only cater for 250 dwellings. The DCA has been consistent on this point at every stage in the rezoning and development process over the past 17 years. In essence, there are 50 units too many.

The Goodwin DA should be limited to no more than 90 residential units. 130 units represents an over-development of the available land space.

Issue #3: the financial viability of the Goodwin DA is not the responsibility of the Downer community

Goodwin has indicated to the DCA that it requires a minimum number of 130 residential units on the site in order to achieve certain yields and ensure the development is viable from a financial perspective.

The financial viability of the Goodwin DA shouldn't be borne by the Downer community.

Nor should the Downer community give up more green space and established trees to address Goodwin's inadequate due diligence processes.

Records show that entire Downer Primary School site of 31,972 sqm was sold by the ACT Government to CHC in 2017 for \$8m. CHC completed the stages 1 and 2 development of townhouses and apartments.

In 2017, CHC sold stage 3 (31,972m²) for the same amount it originally acquired the entire site – being \$8m.

It was always clear that the stage 3 site was the most constrained from a development perspective, as it was the site of the former primary school playground, with the most trees and the greatest setbacks per area. The fact that CHC purchased the whole 3 hectares of RZ5 high density zoned land at a relative low market price showed the constraints on the land that affected the valuation.

The Downer community should not have to sacrifice its green space or sound planning principles to ensure a financially viable proposition for a commercial entity.

Issue #4: no commensurate investment in the Downer community or public infrastructure

In 2017, CHC purchased the former school site, including the Goodwin lands being a three-hectare zone Residential RZ5 site, at a value of \$8m following a preferential tender process. This may be considered a financial windfall benefit in itself because if CHC on-sold the land to Goodwin at market value in 2019, then they essentially received the initial allotment of land for the stage 1 and 2 development for nothing.

Goodwin DA documents show that by letter dated 11 June 2021 from MMJ Canberra, show that Goodwin will also likely receive an estimated \$200,000 uplift in the land valuation arising from the lease variation, from \$8.4m to \$8.6m.

Goodwin DA documents also reveal that the development will cost an estimated \$40m+.

With Goodwin having already received a series of financial windfalls, where is the value to the Downer community of this development, and investment in public infrastructure?

Spending \$20k on the adjoining public footpath restoration doesn't count as a meaningful contribution to the community given the size and scale of the development, and the impost on suburb.

Issue #5: north (Bradfield Street) and west (Melba Street) building setbacks should not be reduced to accommodate the Goodwin DA

The current Precinct Code provides for the setbacks on Melba and Bradfield Streets to be 30 metres, with criteria to allow for variation.

For additional context around the width of the setbacks, the DCA makes the following points:

- The width of the heritage significant area varies between the Bradfield and Melba Street frontages. This is depicted by Biosis SHE report, Figure 3, which shows the indicative Heritage Item area as 18 m wide on Bradfield St and 30 metres wide on Melba Streets. Before redevelopment commenced on the former school site there was only one line of pine trees left at the eastern end of Bradfield Street, where the stage 1 CHC townhouse development occurred.
- There are currently two lines of pine trees on Melba Street
 - i.e. the row of pines is wider on Melba Street
- Additionally on Melba Street there is a single row of established pin oaks, planted at the same time as the pine trees.
 - i.e. the combined two rows of pines and one row of pin oaks is wider again.
- The pine trees and the pin oaks are located in the setback.
- The pine trees are heritage listed
- The pin oaks on Melba Street are inexplicably not heritage listed

By way of comparison, the CHC development at stage 1 (two storey townhouses) sought and obtained a setback on Bradfield Street of only 16 metres – this reflected that there was only one row of pine trees at that site. The CHC development stage 2 (the four storey apartments) sought and obtained a setback on Bradfield Street of 20 metres. This setback also responded to the condition of the pine trees in that location.

In contrast, the Goodwin DA proposes:

- on Bradfield Street, 18 metre building setback and Melba Street a mere 24 metre building setback

That is, the Goodwin DA proposes:

- **a greater encroachment** into the setbacks than the existing CHC development
- **with taller building** heights than the stage 2 CHC apartment development (16.7 metres for Goodwin, as opposed to the 15 metre height for the stage 2 CHC apartments)
- **into a space which has a wider established tree-scape** with two rows of pine trees **and** a row of pin oak trees on Melba Street

The DCA asserts that the building setbacks for the Goodwin DA should be in excess of 24 metres on Melba Street, large enough to protect all the Pin Oak trees and 20 metres on Bradfield Street consistent with adjoining 4 storey CHC development.

The importance of trees is expanded upon at Issues #7 and 13.

Further, the subdivided land to be handed back to ACT Government on Melba Street should be increased from the 14 metres proposed to at least 20 metres. It already greater on Melba Street.

Issue #6: south boundary setbacks abutting the Downer oval should not be reduced from code requirements, rather it should be increased to 9 metres.

Whilst the Downer Precinct Code is silent on the issue of setbacks other than for the major frontages of Melba and Bradfield Streets, the Residential multi-unit code applies to the stage 3 development site, for which the applicable rule requires that four storey buildings should have a setback of at least 6 metres.

By way of comparison, the adjoining stage 2 CHC development set its building back 9 metres from the southern boundary, which is responding to same setback provisions and criteria from the code.

The Goodwin DA, however, is proposing a mere 4.5 metre setback.

The Goodwin DA proposed 4.5 metre setback is grossly inadequate:

- for the health of the established trees that exist along the southern boundary, as a 4.5 metre setback will encroach on the trees dripline – especially the established pistachio tree and the yellow box eucalypts
- for the amenity of those walking on the footpath – the shadow diagrams of the Goodwin DA show the footpath as permanently in shadow, even during the height of summer
- for the amenity of those using the adjoining Downer oval – not only with part of the oval being cast in permanent shadow, but with a looming 16.7 metre wall imposing over the otherwise open landscape
- for the consistency of setback aesthetics with the adjoining CHC stage 2 apartment development
- to mitigate a future state where tenants complain about the noise emanating from the organised sports on the adjacent oval
 - as is the case with Appleby Court further round on Downer Oval on numerous occasions
 - as is also the case with noise issue from the existing use of the Gang Gang Café music program. This has already caused complaints from the adjoining CHC units in the short time they have been occupied.

The DCA proposes a minimum 9 metre setback for any development on the southern boundary abutting the Downer oval, consistent with the CHC development.

Issue #7: all of the existing pin oak trees along Melba Street should be preserved

The long row of pin oak trees on Melba Street were planted in the late 1930's. They are large, established trees – and in many respects, the quintessential essence of Downer's character as a garden suburb. The run in contiguous and parallel to the pine trees, for the majority of the Downer oval precinct western boundary.

The Downer Precinct Code provides clear direction in this regard in s2.2 Desired Character Statement C5 Criteria “that the Downer urban renewal area is in accordance with the desired character” which includes for the site “maintaining and enhancing the heritage listed trees and other mature trees onsite”.

The DCA acknowledges that (inexplicably) the pin oak trees are not heritage listed, but even the Biosis SHE report acknowledges that the pin oak trees were planted at the same time as the pine trees. The pin oaks have been there since 1939.

The Goodwin DA proposes:

- to reduce the setbacks (noted above) which potentially compromises the pin oak trees
- to remove four (4) of the pin oak trees, to facilitate building and driveway access from Melba Street.

The DCA vigorously opposes the removal of **any** of the pin oaks for the following reasons:

- the continuity of the pin oaks, as a long line of trees along Melba Street, will be disrupted with the removal of four of the trees
- for 15 years after the removal of the pine trees, the pin oaks will be the only established greenery to look at
- the DCA has consistently signalled (most recently at stage 2 CHC apartment development) that **all** of the pin oaks should be retained. Along with the pine trees it was the number one issue raised in the previous community consultation exercises on the development parameters for the site
- RedboxDesignGroup – who did the original LDA Masterplan and rezoning tree assessment – had previously indicated that the pin oaks were part of the medium/good quality trees onsite and worthy of retention
- the Desired Character Statement from the Precinct Plan indicates that heritage trees and significant other trees should be kept – even if the pin oaks are not heritage listed, they satisfy the requirement as ‘significant other trees’ having been planted in parallel with and at the same time as the pine trees which are heritage listed
- Previously (as part of the stage 2 CHC development) the Conservator of Flora and Fauna provided entity advice for the report which assessed the whole site 3 hectare site that “the trees onsite of medium quality do not meet the criteria for removal and therefore not supported for removal” – refer page 16 Notice of Decision DA 20173104 which would **include** the pin oaks

- The original heritage council report Boden 1996 identified that the Pin Oaks in this area as having potentially an additional 60 years' lifespan were an important part of the treed landscape of the site.
- Now at stage 3, this seems to have been forgotten or ignored by the ACT Government and Goodwin in the pre-lodgement DA discussions.

The development of the former school site has failed to deliver on the commitments to the Downer community.

Issue #8 – proposed four-storey building heights are too high

The current Precinct Code allows for four storeys.

Goodwin's DA proposes a building height of 16.79 metres. The Goodwin DA further asserts that it is responding to DCA's comments about the need for a pitched roof.

The DCA did suggest a pitched roof, which would be consistent with the Downer Community Centre (and the view from the Downer oval) and sympathetic to buildings in the surrounding area.

However, the DCA notes that:

- the Goodwin design is not a genuine pitched roof
- the adjoining stage 2 CHC apartment development demonstrated that a four-storey design with a genuine pitched roof could be achieved within a 15 metre height limit.

On this basis, the DCA objects to the proposed building height of the Goodwin DA, and proposes they be limited to no more than 15 metres in height, consistent with the stage 2 CHC apartment development. This would be more sympathetic to the surrounding areas in Downer.

Issue #9 - parking provision is inadequate

The development application does not provide any details of onsite parking to be provided other than a consultants' broad statement that 110 spaces meets the parking codes requirements for retirement villages. The DCA notes that the Goodwin DA has used the same consultant as was used for the stage 2 CHC apartment development.

DCA contends that the provided spaces do not meet the calculated parking requirements of the Parking and Vehicular Access General Code being some 14 spaces short. 110 for independent living units, 10 for the supported units and the four surface spaces for staff. It is noted that specific spaces visitor parking are not required to be provided for “retirement villages”.

The code provides objectives for retirement villages if any short fall is to be considered of

i) adequate parking and access is provided on-site for community residential uses for the residents, visitors, workers and carers and for operational and commercial vehicles servicing the facilities

ii) parking provided on-site is consistent with the likely demand generated by the residents of the community residential uses, particularly the residents of special dwelling

It is unclear how adequate parking is to be provided. Four visitor car parks for staff and visitors would seem inadequate.

Notice of Decision DA 20173104 for the adjoining stage 2 development provided a note for any development on the Goodwin site Page 5. *“That the additional car parking provided in Bradfield Street has been counted towards visitor parking for Stage 2 approved in this Notice of Decision and any reliance on these spaces in future Stage 3 (this development) is not likely to be supported.”*

The Goodwin DA does not provide information on whether the basement is to be used for visitor parking. Presumably the 106 spaces would be required for 110 independent units. The multi-unit code requires visitor car parking complies with one of the following: a) is located outside of any security barriers b) an intercom and remote barrier release system allows access to visitor parking located behind security barriers. It is not clear if this is the case for the Goodwin DA.

Once again, the masterplan seems to have been overlooked or forgotten as stages 1 and 2 have been delivered. Now at stage 3, it is even more important that the Goodwin DA also provide sufficient visitor parking, and not rely on offsite parking.

It is useful to make a comparison with the stage 2 CHC apartment development, to illustrate the inadequacy of the Goodwin DA:

- Stage 2 CHC apartment development comprises 127 units, for which it provides 182 car park spaces
 - The Goodwin DA comprises 130 units, for which it proposes only a total of 110 car park spaces – noting that even this figure is not actually demonstrated from the documents provided in the basement plan (which supposedly provides for 106 underground car parking spaces, and four surface car parks).
- Stage 2 CHC apartment development provided 31 surface car parks for visitors
 - The Goodwin DA only provides for four visitor parks

The DCA asserts the parking proposed is grossly inadequate for the scale and size of the development proposed:

- This cannot be explained away by the high care units, which only need 0.5 car park spaces – as there are only 20 high care units proposed by the development.
 - There will still be at least 110 independent and active residents who can reasonably be expected to require at least the same amount of parking as CHC.
 - There will be staff on site who also require car parking
 - With 127 units, it can reasonably be anticipated that more than four visitor parks will be required at any given time.
- Parking code requires one space per unit – and the Goodwin DA does not provide for one space per unit.

The Downer community public car parking spaces are near constantly full (lockdown excepted), negatively impacting access to local businesses and activities at the Downer community centre. This is because residents of the stage 1 and 2 CHC developments are using this area as flow-over carpark, due to the inadequate parking provision in those earlier developments. Parking is also overflowing into the neighbouring Downer streets.

The Downer community already has a parking problem, without the inadequate parking provision in the Goodwin DA exacerbating the issue.

Issue #10 – absence of robust parking and traffic impact analysis

The Goodwin DA is not supported by current and robust parking and traffic analysis.

The parking code requires an independent report if an application proposes less than one for one parking arrangements.

And by the DCA's count, the Goodwin DA is a minimum of 14 parking spaces short.

The Goodwin DA refers to a 'updated' report by Selleck consultants, asserting that the parking is adequate, however, the DCA notes there is no supporting evidence of that 'updated' assessment in the Goodwin DA.

By way of background, Selleck Consultants were engaged as part of the stage 2 CHC apartment development. At that time, the Selleck report indicated that the CHC development could access the parking at Downer shops, because at that time, the parking at the Downer shops was underutilised. This report also anticipated that there would be a 100% increase in traffic in stages 1 & 2 on Melba Street. The unaddressed issue is whether stage 3 is going to generate similar increases in traffic, and if so, would that be even more significant with the access and egress directly on to Melba Street a main connector road? It is likely it would cause significant queuing in this critical area between the Swinden St intersection and the Melba Street roundabout – but without a robust traffic analysis, which is not contained in the Goodwin DA, this issue is unresolved, but potentially significant.

Consideration should be given to a pedestrian crossing at the Goodwin southern boundary public footpath. This would allow pedestrians to get across the increasing busy Melba Street. It would also give access towards the Swinden Street light rail stop, which has been identified as a major desire line in the pedestrian and cycling plans for the area.

The DCA acknowledges, at the time of the Stage 2 CHC apartment development, the Downer community carpark was underutilised. That was **before** the redevelopment of the Downer shops, and the completion of stages 1 and 2 of the CHC development.

But as noted above, that is very much not the case now. The Downer community carpark already exceeds its current capacity. It is therefore disingenuous for the Goodwin DA to seek to rely on a previous parking report

that is at least 4 years out of date and does not take into account the current situation.

The Goodwin DA fails to provide a sufficiently independent, robust and vigorous analysis of the impact of parking on the development site and the traffic impact on the surrounding area. The Goodwin DA does not demonstrate that a current and wider areas assessment has been done.

Further, the DCA contends there is already a significant shortfall in public spaces available to the Downer shops and the community.

This particularly affects the clientele which is elderly, which is already affecting the operation of the community centre, and which can also expect to be exacerbated with the introduction of an independent living village into the area.

- There is no traffic survey that considers the impact of creating an access/egress on Melba Street for a 127-unit development – which can reasonably be anticipated to have an impact, particularly considering Melba is one of the main thoroughfares through Downer
- Nine car parking spaces which belong to the stage 2 CHC development is already located on Goodwin site – it is both unreasonable and inconsistent to assert that the space cannot be repurposed for fire-truck access and egress to the Goodwin site

A detailed parking assessment and traffic impact assessment on the surrounding area should be addressed and made public prior to any further consideration of the application.

Issue #11: hardening of the internal area = concrete heat island

The Goodwin DA effectively asserts that all surface areas need to be ‘hardened’ (i.e. concrete) because the Entity advice from ACT Fire Brigade need to get the Bronto fire truck onto the site and to be able to manoeuvre it internally around the buildings.

Further, the Goodwin DA effectively asserts that regulations and approval prevent them from using the access road adjoining the CHC site. Because of this, the Goodwin DA seeks to build an access road from Melba Street, and ‘harden’ most of the internal surfaces to support the fire truck.

There are several aspects that the DCA suggests warrants further exploration by Goodwin and consideration by the ACT Government planning and development approval authorities:

The original masterplan contemplated an integrated, three stage development of the former Downer primary school site. The Goodwin DA is the third stage of that 'integration', and as such, it should be possible for the ACT Government planning authorities to work harder with Goodwin to facilitate access to the site from Bradfield Street CHC access road. The hardened parking space next to Building A are already on Goodwin land although if used by the CHC development on agreement.

Access to the Goodwin site via Bradfield Street will avoid so much 'hardening', thereby reducing the heat island effect.

Issue #12 – integration of the Goodwin DA with the Downer village and surrounds

The Downer Precinct Plan contemplated a high degree of integration into the Downer community, and specifically with the Downer village.

Stages 1 and 2 of the CHC developments have failed to deliver on that integration. There are still no readily accessible footpaths to and through the site to the Downer Village. This is an outstanding deliverable from CHC.

And now we are at the third and final stage of the redevelopment of the Downer Primary School site. Likewise, the Goodwin DA fails to demonstrate how its development will facilitate integration and ready access to the Downer Village. While the Goodwin DA contemplates \$20k to fix southern footpath, it is not clear:

- what is proposed or if it is to extend all the way to the Downer Village on the southern boundary, now that the TCCS public access road from the Downer shops will not be built?
- what is the nature of the landscaping to be done on the southern boundary now that the access road from to the Downer shops will not be built?

There have been recent instances of mobility scooters being stuck in the bog that exists between the Goodwin site and the Downer shops. It is incumbent upon Goodwin to demonstrate in its DA how it will facilitate access from their retirement village to the Downer centre and surrounds.

The Precinct Code requires that the area to be integrated, but the Goodwin DA, as the last of the three stages of development and presumably the last chance to get it right, fails to demonstrate how that will be achieved.

This is as much a failing of ACT Government planning as it is of the Goodwin DA.

Issue #13 – replanting of removed trees is demonstrably unsuccessful

The Goodwin DA contemplates the removal of the heritage listed pine trees, and a replanting program with Canary Island pines at the conclusion of the development. This was the methodology adopted for the Stage 1 and 2 CHC developments.

The Biosis SHE report contents on page 11, *“The Monterey Pines removal and replacement plan for Block 21 Section 61 Downer follows the successful management strategy established on the neighbouring CHC site where the row of Monterey Pines along Bradfield street have undergone a similar removal and replacement process.”*

This has been wholly unsuccessful. To suggest this methodology is successful is an exaggeration and a misleading statement.

More than two years since the trees were removed for the stage 1 and 2 CHC developments, no replacement “heritage” trees have been replanted. The residents of CHC have expressed their dissatisfaction to the planning authorities and also to the DCA.

The DCA understands that the Heritage Council has yet to release its decision on the Statement of Heritage Effects (SHE) and provide approval to Goodwin removing the heritage pine trees. In this regard, the Goodwin DA still lacks entity approval.

Related to this is the assertion in the Goodwin DA that it will replant more trees than is currently on the site – having done its own assessment that the site only currently has 37 per cent tree coverage, it is proposing to replant 40 per cent coverage. This fails to take into account:

- the replanted trees will not be deep rooted trees
- once a large tree is removed, it takes up to 15 years before equivalent foliage coverage is restored
- being the previous school oval, this is a greenfield site – construction on the site removes greenspace from the community and replaces it with buildings, notwithstanding how many shrubs are replanted
- that lost greenspace will never be restored. Removal of deep-rooted trees only exacerbates the loss.

(Retention of the **all** of the pin oaks will mitigate the impact.)

Separately the DCA notes that it intends to file an FOI request in relation to the Goodwin DA seeking:

- any advice of the Conservator of Flora and Fauna
- any advice from the Heritage Council
- any other formal comment relating to this DA not otherwise disclosed in the DA itself.

The Goodwin DA lacks a detailed plan for the replacement of deep-rooted trees along Bradfield and Melba Streets.

Issue #14 – steps need to be taken to recover the Downer Primary School time-capsule buried in 1988

In 1988, the Downer Primary School reburied a metal time capsule to celebrate the Bicentenary. Anecdotal advice is that it was buried near the Sequoia Californian Big Tree, which has since died and been removed. However, it is known that the tree was on the original Downer Primary School playground site, which is now part of the Goodwin land.

This is an important part of Downer history and needs to be located before any works on the site commence, and returned to the Downer community.