

## **PLANNING SUBCOMMITTEE : Extracted from Management Committee Meeting Papers December 14 2011**

### **Neil Macindoe, Planning Convenor, 15 November 2011**

This is a revised and updated version of the Planning Action Plan endorsed in April 2003, taking account of the passage of time and the new members on the Management Committee. The Table lists the Actions. The Background gives some history and explains how some aspects of the Objects (or Policy) listed in the Constitution are carried out by the Planning Subcommittee, for the information of Committee members who may be unfamiliar with current procedures.

Under Part 2 of The Society's Constitution, under Objects, we find two sections relating to Planning:

iii) opposing (by lawful means) development detrimental to heritage values or contrary to community interests;  
and

(b) to preserve and enhance the natural and architectural character of Glebe, and to encourage sound town planning, architectural and conservation practices;

These Objects have been pursued from the Society's foundation, originally through opposition to inner-urban expressways and planning laws that allowed extensive demolition and high-rise development.

In 1974 The National Trust classified Glebe as an Urban Conservation Area, and also separately listed a number of buildings to be preserved.

In 1983 these were extended and given the force of law in a new Leichhardt Town Plan. Since then every planning instrument has been required to publish a map of the Conservation Area, and to list items that have a special significance, as Items of Environmental Heritage. This list can be examined on the City website. The ordinary controls in a planning instrument such as a Town Plan are there to control new development. What already exists is covered by the Conservation controls.

From its inception the Society created a Planning subcommittee to oversee these objects or goals of the Society. The preservation and continued survival of Glebe depends on the pursuit of these goals.

### **Conservation Area**

A Conservation Area is one where most of the original development has been preserved. In the case of Glebe this includes, in addition to residential buildings, its shops, historic parks and public works, even its stone kerbing. Essentially it is a mid-to-late Victorian streetscape of high quality.

Under the proposed CityPlan there is an extra refinement. All buildings are labelled according to their status within the Conservation Area. Those that preserve their

original characteristics are 'Contributory'. Those that do not add any conservation value are 'Neutral', and those that reduce the conservation value are 'Detracting'.

### **Items of Environmental Heritage**

The listing of buildings or other structures as Items of Environmental Heritage within a Town Plan, gives these items the highest levels of legal protection. Any change to these items requires Council consent, and the normal expectation is that they be preserved. In Glebe these items are mostly within the Conservation Area, but some are outside, such as the Tramsheds. They are mostly buildings, but can be anything built or natural that has a special significance. The Items for each Council area are required to be listed in a schedule accompanying each town plan. The Items from the entire State are listed on a database which is accessed through the City's website – see Heritage – Heritage Database.

However there are many types of significance (a place could be associated with a particular historic person or event, for example) and because of its age and centrality Glebe has several hundred. It is not uncommon for previously unrecognised significant places to be identified, and it is the work of the Heritage Subcommittee to identify and research these.

Because of their significance these identified Items are the most highly protected. Not only the Items themselves but any development in their vicinity has to be carefully assessed.

### **Wider Issues**

Apart from the local town plan there are many other matters, including legislation and Government policies, that may affect planning in Glebe, and these must be monitored and commented on where necessary. Matters that are concerned with the Bays and Foreshores, which are controlled by different planning instruments and are outside the town plan, are dealt with by the Bays and Foreshores Subcommittee, which was formed for that purpose.

### **Interviews**

From time to time a wide range of people seek information on planning issues. These can include the media, applicants and objectors, academics and students. Normally the Convenor, as the person with the greatest knowledge, handles these interviews, although if they are sufficiently general they could sometimes be dealt with by the President.

### **Summary**

As can be seen from the above, the work of the Planning Subcommittee is continuous, extensive and complex. Every application and planning instrument is assessed for its likely impact on Glebe.

The role of the Convenor is to pull all these different elements together, and with the aid of extensive local knowledge, aided where possible by other members, to estimate what the various impacts are likely to be.

The authority to respond to applications has to be delegated to the Convenor because there are time constraints. Most do not require a response at all. However, there are occasions when a matter is sufficiently major or controversial to be brought to the full Committee. Ultimately the responsibility for Planning issues rests with the Committee, and it is essential that the more important decisions are made with their knowledge and input.

The following table lists the main actions of the Subcommittee:

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>OUTCOME</b>	<b>REMARKS</b>
Review all development applications affecting Glebe and respond as appropriate.	Report actions to the Management Committee and keep members informed via the <i>Bulletin</i> . Large developments may require campaigns.	Ongoing
Report on unauthorised work and breaches of conditions.	As above.	Ongoing
Review planning legislation and planning instruments (LEPs, DCPs) affecting Glebe and respond as appropriate.	As above. May require campaigns through contacts, resident groups, committees, media and public meetings.	Ongoing
Monitor operation of Townplan 2000 and proposed CityPlan 2010.	Respond to exhibitions. Respond to or generate amendments and reviews.	Ongoing
Liaise with appropriate Society subcommittees.	Joint activities and actions where appropriate.	Heritage, Bays and Foreshores, Environment, Traffic and Transport.
Establish and maintain contacts with consent authorities	As above	City of Sydney, Leichhardt Council, Department of Planning Heritage Branch
Establish and maintain contacts with conservation and planning groups	As above	National Trust, Burley Griffin Society, other resident groups.