

Copy Letter

12th June 2008

PO Box 2317
KEW 3101

The Hon. Justin Madden
Minister for Planning
PO Box 500
East Melbourne 3002.

Dear Minister,

Re Main Drive Former Kew Cottages.

We wish to advise our increasing concern for the future of the above roadway and its adjoining parklike environs. As you maybe aware the existing Main Drive was the original entrance road to the Kew Mental Hospital built in 1868 – 1872 and lately refurbished as private housing known as the Willsmere Apartments. Although the entrance road to this building is from Yarra Boulevarde the original entrance was via Main Drive which terminated in a looped carriageway at the Hospital entrance. We consider that reinstatement of this carriageway as nearly as possible to its original alignment is quite feasible and that the work could be carried out at comparatively little cost. If the proprietors of Willsmere are not interested in this proposal then a strong case can be made to link Main Drive directly to Yarra Bend Park.

As well as re- establishing and preserving an important historic link, Main Drive with its avenue of double oaks and elms and ornate concrete lamp posts is a unique and valuable example of the landscape treatment of approaches to public buildings current at the time. It would also provide an aesthetically pleasing and interesting approach to Yarra Bend Park from Princess Street, the present access to this park being from the corner of Wills and Redmond Streets Kew with little or no historic importance. To complete the landscape and historic integrity of Main Drive it would also be desirable to reinstate the original gateway as near as possible to its original location at the Princess Street entrance to Main Drive. At present the gateway is located at the entrance to Victoria Park, Kew and could be moved back to the entrance to Main Drive with the City of Boroondara's consent. If that is not possible then a copy of the gateway could be rebuilt at the entrance to Main Drive.

OUR MAIN CONCERN

Our principle concern is that if the layout proposal for Stage 2 of the KRS development is approved in its present form and the necessary permits issued for the work to proceed, there is a strong possibility that the landscape quality and historical significance of Main Drive will be seriously compromised if not completely destroyed. The proposed subdivision plan for Stage 2 shows the southern boundary of the development intruding into what we understood was to be nominated as a reservation running the complete length of Main Drive and linking up with Yarra Bend Park. If no reserve is created we believe there is a strong possibility that the future of many of the splendid old oaks and elms forming this magnificent avenue will be short lived as they will then be located on private property and could be badly damaged or destroyed due to future building operations. WE STRONGLY

REQUEST THEREFORE THAT THIS BE NOT ALLOWED TO HAPPEN AND THAT A SPECIAL RESERVE BE CREATED ALONG THE FULL LENGTH OF MAIN DRIVE TO PROTECT THIS MAGNIFICENT AVENUE OF OAKS, ELMS, MORTON BAY FIGS and BHUTAN CYPRUSES. We also respectfully suggest that any southern boundary for the proposed Stage 2 development be established and pegged professionally by licensed surveyors, so that there can be no doubt as to where any southern boundary and these trees really are located, and checks on the ground can then be readily made.

In conclusion we would like to advise that some of the above matters have been raised previously with Heritage Victoria and we are still waiting for a formal reply from that Department.

Yours faithfully,

D.F.Anderson
Hon. Secretary,
Kew Cottages Coalition