

# Ocean Street Project Community Newsletter



Issue No. 2, May 2007

## Where are we up to?

Most older people would prefer to live as independently as possible in their own homes. However, the design and location of those homes can sometimes make this very difficult when people become less mobile or develop dementia. Unsuitable housing may force people to move to a nursing home or hostel. It may mean having to move away from the area they've lived in for years, away from their friends and familiar shops and services.

Our vision for the Ocean Street Project is for a complex of carefully designed apartments where older people would be able to stay for the rest of their lives, living independently but with the support of care services when needed. We are aiming for at least 95% of residents to be able to stay in the same apartment (i.e. their own home) for the rest of their lives.

Local residents would be free to walk through the site. Historic Scarba House would remain and the area around it improved, to bring it back to some of its former glory.



Residents whose health declines would be supported in their own apartments by visiting care services. Family, friends, neighbours and other residents would also be encouraged to support each other.

## Dear Resident

This is the second in a series of newsletters to keep you informed about The Benevolent Society's Ocean Street Project. As you may know the Society is currently developing ideas for our site between Ocean and Wellington Streets. We have had a presence in the area since 1917 and over the years have run many different services there, including a children's home in Scarba House, and accommodation for older people.

This newsletter outlines what we are trying to do and where our plans are up to. We are really keen to hear the views of the local community – what you do and don't like about our ideas. Our contact details are overleaf.

Sincerely

Richard Spencer  
Chief Executive Officer

We aim to make the complex attractive both to people in earlier retirement and those who may need some support and care. The apartments would be designed for varying degrees of ability and for the changing needs of individual residents.

We also want to make the apartments affordable for older people with different financial circumstances, including low income older people with modest property assets and low income older renters on the pension who do not own a home.

The complex could include facilities such as a café, meeting rooms, a 'men's shed' and a wellness centre that would be open



for use by people in the local community as well as by residents of the site.

The Ocean Street project is based on encouraging and valuing older people's participation in the community and on making it more 'age-friendly'.

### **Benefits for the local community include**

- An enriched and strengthened local community that is more connected, healthy and safe.
- More opportunities for older people to be connected with each other and become involved in community activities based in and around the site.
- Support for community initiatives, leadership and skills development.
- Local older people are considered as primary partners in the planning, development and implementation.
- Some new community facilities currently lacking in the area, available for use and accessible by local community members of all ages.
- Formalising access into and through the site.

### **Benefits for those who live there**

- Residents can live fuller and more meaningful lives with a greater sense of autonomy, independence and purpose.
- A better quality of life than in residential aged care and better than being housebound and isolated 'at home'.
- Residents can participate in and are seen as full members of the broader community.
- Most residents, at least 95 percent, can stay for the rest of their lives, living as independently as possible with the support of community care services, with help to navigate the health and care systems, assistance from neighbours and families, and appropriate design and technology.

## **Consulting with the Community**

It is vital that we engage with the local community so that we get the best possible results. We are encouraged by the many positive comments and suggestions received so far. We have also heard the matters that are important to the community in relation to the site. They include preservation of heritage character; ensuring the site is accessible; the location, scale and height of buildings; traffic and car parking; and importantly that the accommodation is available to people with more limited means. We are listening and are taking these matters into account in our planning.

We have not yet submitted a Development Application (DA) with Council as the project is still in the early stages of planning.

Before submitting a DA, we will hold a Community Information and Feedback Session later this year. This will enable us to introduce our plans and help you to understand what we propose. Those attending will have the opportunity to offer feedback and air any issues. We will take all of this into account when finalising our plans.

**You may also visit our website [www.bensoc.org.au](http://www.bensoc.org.au). For additional copies of this newsletter please ring 9339 8000.**

- Residents who develop dementia can stay in familiar surroundings and thus cope better.

## **Contacting Us**

Sarah Fogg, The Benevolent Society, 9339 8000 or [oceanstsite@bensoc.org.au](mailto:oceanstsite@bensoc.org.au)  
Susan Peterson, Elton Consulting, 9387 2600 or [consulting@elton.com.au](mailto:consulting@elton.com.au)