

# Friends of Port Willunga Autumn update

By Stephanie Johnston, Chair, Friends of Port Willunga and Spokesperson, Southern Community Coalition

## Special points of interest:

- \* Feasibility study on the proposed UNESCO World Heritage bid
- \* New Minister for Planning
- \* Seaford Heights
- \* A year of local focus

Gosh, where do I start?

What a great couple of months it has been for those of us who love the Willunga Basin, Adelaide's rural surrounds in general, and for those who make a living from them.

First we have four councils coming on board (lead by our own City of Onkaparinga) with funding for a feasibility study on the University of Adelaide's proposed UNESCO World Heritage bid to list a series of agricultural landscapes from Clare to the Fleurieu.

Then we have Premier Rann's appointment of John Rau as Deputy Premier, Minister for Planning and Minister for Food Marketing, adding to his tourism and attorney-general portfolios.

Next are the Premier's instructions to Minister Rau to create the protection legislation we have been asking for so long.

And then, Gaia Almighty, we have the Deputy Premier coming to talk to us to see what we think, before he proceeds with that legislation!

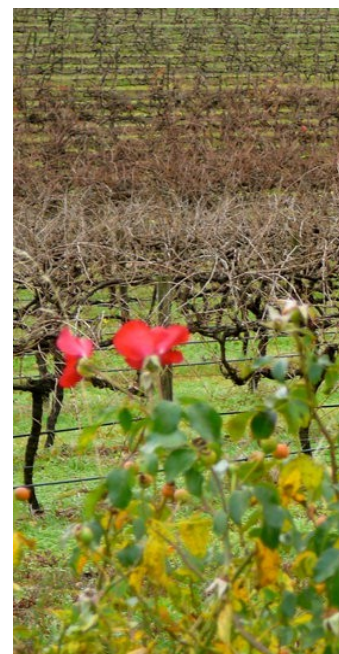
There has been a line drawn in the sand along the way, however.

Minister Rau will not consider reversing any existing residential zoning, so the Seaford Heights development will go ahead, albeit with proper consideration given to buffers and sightlines.

This will be to avoid the development being seen from the Victor Harbor Road gateway, and to avoid unsightly commercial development along Main South Road.

***We have also put forward that an urban-zoned 500m buffer between Seaford Heights and the current waste dump, not currently up for development, be rezoned back to rural.***

The Southern Community Coalition (the SCC), of which Friends of Port Willunga is a founding member, continues to question the proposed location of a future commercial centre on the south east corner of Main South Road and Wheaton Road, in the



McLaren Vale vineyards

absence of any railway station opposite.

We believe that this land ought to become a transition zone to the rural area, given that it is unlikely that a railway extension to Seaford Heights will occur in the foreseeable future.

We also continue to lobby the Minister and Council to allocate budget for landscaping and vegetated buffering of the suburban edges of our gateway areas on Main South Road, Victor Harbor Road and Pedlar Creek.

## Autumn 2011 update continued

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### World Heritage bid

On another exciting front, the SCC's relations with our counterparts in the Barossa are cementing.

We attended a forum at Peter Lehmann's Wines on 1 April entitled "Can we have it all?" which was staged by Regional Development Australia Barossa Inc.

Guest speakers included Professor Randy Stringer, the proponent of a World Heritage bid, Tim Horton the recently appointed Integrated Design Commissioner, and developer Michael Hickinbotham.

We are now communicating with key community and industry representatives in the Barossa.

The SCC hopes to stage a similar forum later in the year, with the McLaren Vale Grape Wine and Tourism Association and the City of Onkaparinga, to encourage input from the community into the proposed protection legislation and the World Heritage Bid.

### Local issues

Closer to home we are working with local councillor Yvonne Wenham to get our local heritage walk up the ladder on Council's budget priority list.

After the January AGM the FOPW committee vowed to make 2011 our 'year of local focus'.

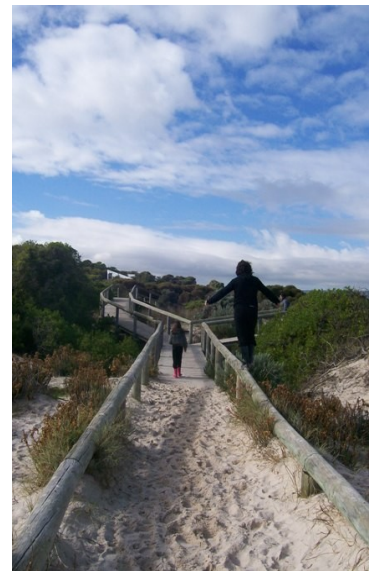
We have been putting lots of energy into the big picture and will continue to do so, but after fifteen years as a local community group we would like to see progress on planning for local projects to benefit locals and tourists alike, and that have been on the agenda for a long time.

Local projects such as:

- Rehabilitation of the former caravan park site so that it can be used by the public safely once again – ie a combination of weed removal, some revegetation and low key landscaping of usable public open space with picnic tables or similar.
- Creation of a heritage walk identifying key Aboriginal and European history landmarks around Port Willunga foreshore, including the Howe family fishing lookout, Star of Greece etc.
- Resurfacing of the walk track from Mindarie Street to the northern boardwalk with a surface that can be walked on in bare feet (ie some kind of soft dolomite).
- Linking the former caravan park site rehabilitation and heritage walk into Council's long-term plans for development of a recreational trail from Port Willunga to Willunga via the Aldinga Arts Ecovillage.



The existing hard surface of the Mindarie Street walking track is difficult to walk on in bare feet



Develop a recreational trail for horses, bikes etc as well as walking

Finally we need to inform FOPW members that the SCC Chair and FOPW committee member Jim Hullick OAM is moving to town.

Jim will be missed in the region, but the good news is that he will continue his involvement with FOPW and the SCC from his new city base.

So watch this space!