

At any one time the Belmont Council is working on a range of projects designed to improve the health & well-being of its residents. Part of this process involves community consultation. It needs an informed and responsive citizenry to do this effectively. Part of our role is to monitor this process and provide feedback.

Don't blame the messenger!

In a recent article ‘Wrong Way’ by Sarah Brookes (Southern Gazette, 3 Oct. 2019) regarding the vehicle rat run through Redcliffe to the domestic airport, it was stated that ... “The City of Belmont wants Google Maps to change its software to stop a small suburban street from being used as a rat run by drivers accessing Perth Airport and DFO shops”.

These are fine sentiments but the issue is **not about Google's useful service**. The question should be why, after major upgrades to Great Eastern and Tonkin Highways, are local, residential streets “the quickest route for drivers travelling from the west”.

The City of Belmont and Main Roads have acknowledged there is a problem but asking Google Maps to amend their software won't help. The cat is out of the bag! Traffic calming measures will make a difference and should be considered now.

“The City, as part of the Development Area 6 (DA6) planning works, will be assessing feed-in roads such as Epsom, Durban and Stanton to determine whether any additional traffic treatments may be required in the future.” (p.12, Southern Gazette)

Seems as though they're waiting for a software fix.

Whilst all District Distributor and Local Roads come under the control of local councils the final decision on signage, speed barriers and traffic lights rests with Main Roads.

Historically transport planning & traffic engineering departments have primarily focused on keeping vehicular traffic flowing, facilitating the movement of people & goods. Reacting to safety & congestion issues as they arise rather than ‘planning’ for their prevention. Gridlock, pollution and fatalities demanding prioritisation of limited funding when they occur.

These days planning is now being influenced by a different approach called the **Movement and Place Framework**. This recognises that roads are not only for the movement of people & goods (including pedestrians & cyclists) but are also places for people to engage with.

Most roads run through neighbourhoods where the well-being and amenity of residents should be of paramount concern for local government. A more proactive approach needs to be taken. Shifting the blame is a cop out. A balance needs to be found between transit requirements and community needs. Local residents are the major stakeholders here and should have a greater say in transport infrastructure.

Rat runs inevitably involve speeding and more accidents, creating unsafe places. They are an indicator that the framework is out of balance!

For further information on Movement & Place framework thinking refer to the Austroads Guide to Traffic Management Part 5, and the ‘Movement and Place in Victoria – Transport for Victoria’ link below:

[file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/Movement%20and%20Place%20in%20Victoria%20-%20February%202019%20\(5\).PDF](file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/Movement%20and%20Place%20in%20Victoria%20-%20February%202019%20(5).PDF)

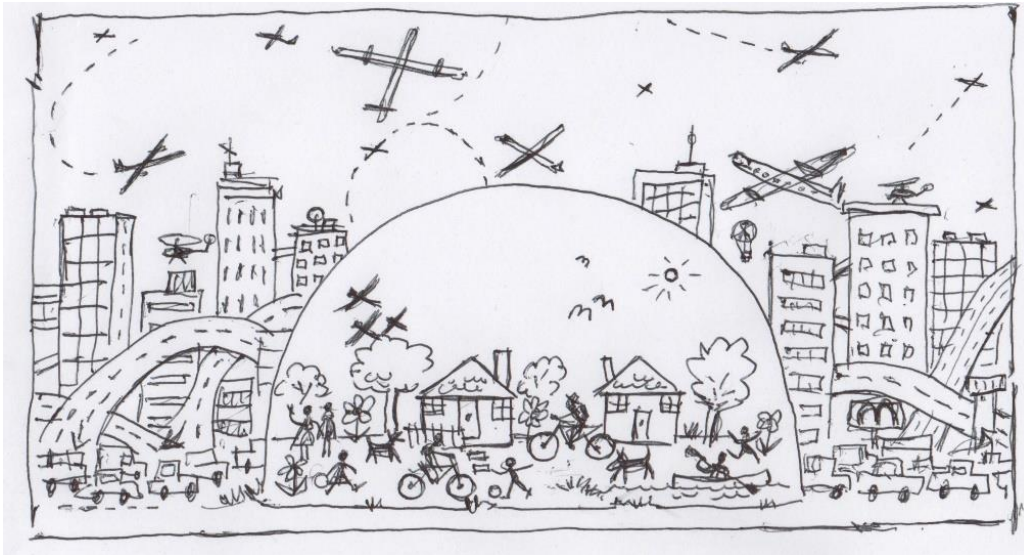
The old ‘short cut’ over Stanton Road overpass was actually a way for local residents to remain connected with each other, and to Belmont proper, when the Tonkin Highway first divided the suburb in two. The recent upgrading of this route occurred with the opening up of Central Avenue to Second Street a year or two ago.

For a brief history of this issue refer to BRRAG newsletter No. 7 (March 2019).

In a bubble ...

It was recently announced that Perth Airport has set aside a 15 hectare site in the Airport West Precinct for the **Australian Biome Project**, which will comprise 5 large, dome structures showcasing Western Australia's unique natural environments and our aboriginal cultural heritage. It will both entertain and educate visitors. Aircraft noise will be mitigated by the design of the domes.

It is also designed to provide a snapshot of what our large state has to offer to those overseas tourists who are time constrained when they arrive here for a holiday. Rather than travel long distances to remote sites they can grab a ‘selfie’ snap shot simulacrum instead, in a comfortable, climate controlled, conveniently located environment.



Don't recall this non-aviation development proposal being mentioned in the "Perth Airport Preliminary Draft Master Plan 2020" which was made available for public comment a while back. Presumably a case of commercial confidentiality or a last minute accommodation.

It is hoped that the Biome Project will become a major tourist attraction, encouraging repeat visits and boosting job creation and economic activity.

What is also hoped is that no existing Banksia Woodland will be destroyed during the construction phase; and the traffic management on opening day will be better managed than the previous retail opening experience next door; and with an expected opening in 2023 there should be sufficient time for our council to take measures to mitigate increased traffic congestion on our local streets.

Recommended reading:

Wild Politics: Feminism, Globalisation, Bio/Diversity. Susan Hawthorne, Spinifex Press, 2002.

Your feedback. If you would like to submit an article that is relevant to the residents of Belmont, or you would like to join our group, refer contact details below.