

# Deciding how high buildings could go

## EDITORIAL

By **JACKSON D'ELBOUX** and **BAILEY JOBSON**

MAYOR Jeff McCloy has opened the debate about raising the height restrictions for development at the urban regeneration summit held last month.

According to an interview in the *Newcastle Herald* last month, Cr McCloy said: "Newcastle needs to lift 'ridiculous' height restrictions, stop worrying about view corridors to Christ Church Cathedral and embrace high-density living in order to become a truly vibrant city."

But how high do we go and who gets to decide? On the one hand you have developers wanting to cash in on building high-rise apartments on prime real estate. You also have the unemployed who are looking for such opportunity to gain work.

Then you have residents and members of the community who want to see the foreshore preserved and accessible for all to use and enjoy the views.

The Christ Church Cathedral is a highly valued icon. Giant skyscrapers known for blocking and ruining beautiful views cannot fall into this same category.

It is a case of values or a case of

money always talks?

Either way you look at it it's a gamble that needs thinking through from all points of view.

But here are some additional points for consideration. High-rise buildings are generally more expensive to build and operate per square metre than low-rise buildings. They are colder in winter and hotter in summer therefore needing more heating and more cooling. They are more expensive to clean and maintain and block out the sun.

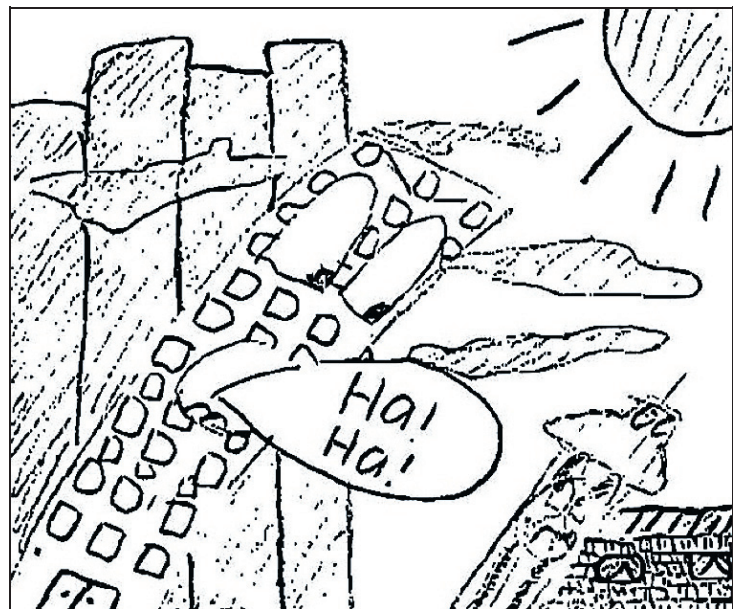
Do we want our city to look like New York?

We have beautiful beaches and a beautiful harbour that should be visible for all to see, not just the wealthy minority.

Cr McCloy said that he felt it was important that the city welcome development and not put up barriers. His reference to "an element in our city that doesn't want change" is a simplistic and narrow view as there are many more sides to the argument.

Dr Tim Williams made an important point when he stated that there needs to be discussion on how to accommodate lower socio-economic groups. This cannot and should not be treated like a one-fits all policy that is quickly approved and passed.

A long healthy community discussion with all views debated with future plans tabled and transparent is what is required.



Cartoon: Lily Ramsay



FIT: Parkrunners take off around Throsby Creek each Saturday.

# Parkrun pace is picking up

By **MAHALIA CURTIS, ALLIRA CURTIS, CHLOE KEENAN** and **DRUE SHOESMITH**

DESPITE the chilly winter mornings, hundreds of people are still braving the cold to complete the Newy Parkrun.

Held every Saturday at 8am, the event begins at Arnold Street, Carrington.

This free 5-kilometre run was originally held at Bushy Park, London, in October 2004 and is now held in more than 280 locations around the world.

The first Australian event was launched by Parkrun Australia manager Tim Oberg in April 2011, at Main Beach on the Gold Coast, with

the 38th Parkrun in Australia commencing at Blackbutt Reserve on August 3.

The Newcastle run started on June 9, 2012, and the quickest time on that course is by local elite marathoner Scott Westcott with a time of 14 minutes, 51 seconds.

But it is not just about speed.

Newy Parkrun director Dave Robertson said: "I really enjoy Parkrun and am very passionate about spreading the word about how great it is for improving our health."

"One of the great things about Parkrun is literally anyone can participate from babies in prams, kids, mums, dads and grandparents. Even dogs can get involved," Mr Robertson said.

# Fire safety education is essential

By **MOLLY DURIE**

A RECENT house fire in Merewether Heights serves as a reminder of how important fire safety is.

A 63-year-old Flowerdale Drive resident left his electric blanket on when he went fishing. When he came back at 5am his whole house had burnt to the ground.

Mrs Horton from a neighbouring property said she woke up to the sound of explosions and said the inside of her house was all orange. "It looked as though my whole backyard was on fire ... I could see flames beyond our trees, it was very frightening."

Mrs Horton praised the actions of the firefighters and said "without the quick action of the fire brigade a lot more houses could have been lost and people could have been seriously injured".

The importance of educating and protecting people from the dangers and injuries that can be caused by fires is taken very seriously by the NSW Fire Department.

Statistics show that in NSW between 2001 and 2005, 16,723 fires were started by children. Most of which could have been prevented by education.

The Intervention and Fire Awareness Program teaches children, parents and teachers about how to prevent fires and what to do if there is one.

# Tennis courts bounce back into full swing

By **EBONY MELOURY** and **MADDI THRIFT**

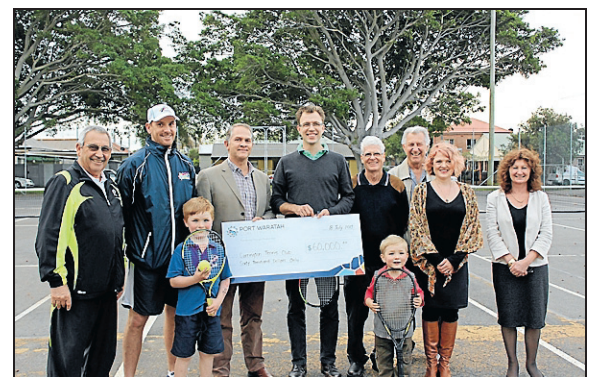
CARRINGTON tennis courts are going full steam ahead thanks to the \$60,000 sponsorship by Port Waratah Coal Services.

According to Hot Shots tennis coach Greg Burgess, it has taken six years to get to this stage but it has been well worth the wait. With the recent sponsorship, they will now have enough funds for a fully synthetic court, new nets and new seating.

Mr Hennie du Plooy,

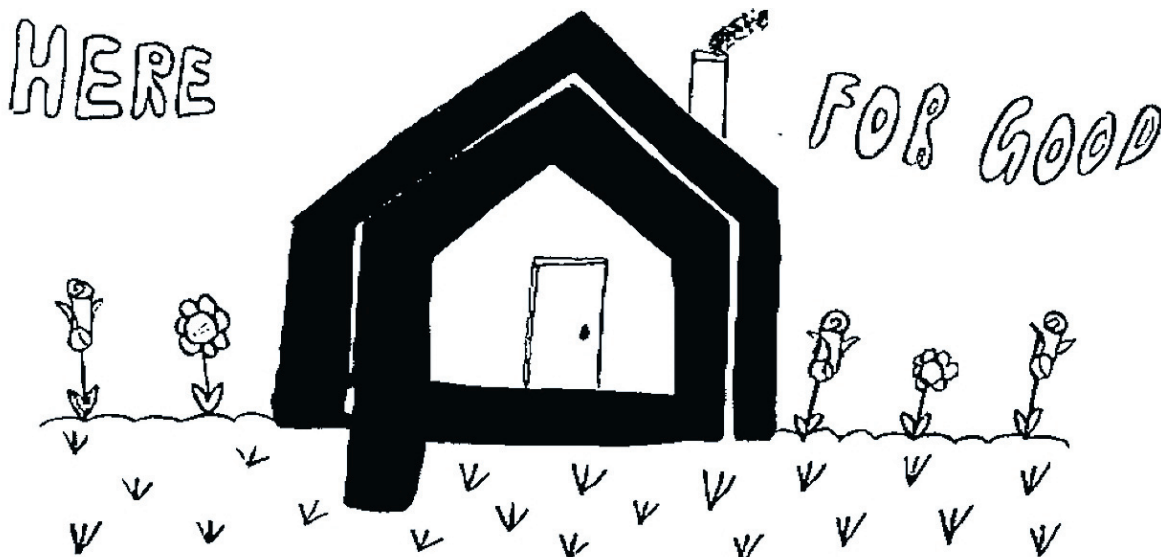
CEO of Port Waratah Coal Services said they "are proud to be able to help Carrington Tennis Club resurface the Carrington Tennis Courts. This project will not only be of benefit to local tennis players, but also assist in creating a strong community hub in the Connolly Park area."

Situated next to the Carrington Bowling Club and the Carrington Community Garden, the courts are available for private hiring as well as group and individual coaching.



GRAND SLAM: Port Waratah Coal Services representatives present a cheque to Lucas Junker, president of the Carrington Tennis Club.

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