

Fremantle Inner City Residents Association
Presentation for Fremantle Network meeting

May 22, 2017

“VISION AND PRIORITIES FOR THE WEST END”.

Background - FICRA

The inaugural meeting of *Fremantle Inner City Residents Association* was held **8 March 1995** at the UNDA as a response to the need to represent concerns and local issues and also to support and build community in the inner city. FICRA is not an incorporated body but is facilitated by a Committee of which I am the Convenor and I have been involved for nearly 20 years.

It is also a **Precinct** of the City of Fremantle comprising that area bounded by Parry Street to the north-east, by Norfolk Street to the South East, and by the Indian Ocean to the west. It is a slightly larger area than the West End, taking in the more modern Eastern area of the CBD, the markets and Kings Square.

The estimated number of residents in the inner city is 800 – 1000.

FICRA has an extensive email communication data base, the committee meets regularly and we hold general meetings as needed, visits to local organisations (the Port, MSC, Flying Angel Club) and occasional social events. For some years a resident and FICRA member organised a group ‘Friends of Bathers Beach’, most of the vegetation present on Bathers Beach was planted by residents and others as part of planting days held by FoB.

This presentation went out to approx. 100 people on the FICRA mailing list

The Inner City and the West End.

The West End is considered to constitute the early settled area of Fremantle west of Market Street, all of which has been listed as being of significance for heritage purposes by the state, and has been nominated for listing by the Commonwealth.

VISION

FICRA seeks to preserve the significant heritage of the West End and supports compatible development, including by the University, which would enhance the vibrant nature and character of the area, including its natural, historic, maritime, cultural, artistic, and educational and community aspects.

FICRA Priorities for the West End

The following are the suggested priorities listed in order of priority:

1. Heritage preservation and restoration.

FICRA favours the preservation and restoration of the heritage buildings and character of the entire West End, including of course the area of the Roundhouse and Arthur Head. FICRA does not oppose development but demands that any development be compatible with the existing heritage buildings, in particular as to height, and that it represents quality, not quantitative, design.

2. Preservation of green and public open space.

Fremantle is recorded as having amongst the lowest percentage of green space of any municipality in the country, and suffers from constant pressure from development. FICRA seeks the preservation, care and enhancement of the existing green space, trees and public open space, not its diminishment.

This is why for some 4 years now we have been 'fighting' to preserve the public open space at Arthur Head and opposing the Sunset Events companys' intention to impose a large Tavern/Brewery on Arthur Head. It is also why we are keen to preserve the general passive recreation space on the Esplanade Park.

3. Support for Notre Dame of Australia University and the Port of Fremantle.

Notre Dame of Australia University has been crucial in the preservation of heritage buildings in the West End and their active use. FICRA supports the presence and activities of Notre Dame of Australia University in the West End and their general activation of the West End provided of course that any new UNDA developments are compatible with the existing heritage buildings.

FICRA also supports the other large employer in the West End of Fremantle – the Port.

4. Support for unique and distinct Fremantle enterprises and businesses

FICRA also supports a multi-use concept for the West End, as represented by enterprises such as Lance Holt School, J Shed Artists, Roundhouse Volunteer Guides, the Circus School, The Fremantle Herald, Harvey Beef, and small iconic Freo businesses such as Bodkins, New Editions Bookshop, Record Finder, Carriage Café, Sewing Shop, Compendium, Remedy, Boustows, Warrens, Home Providore, Blink, Culleys, and Office Choice.

They are all central to a 'sense of place' and neighbourhood

5. Support for commercial development and uses.

FICRA supports commercial development and use of new and existing buildings in the West End. But any development or redevelopment must provide quality sensitive design compatible with the existing heritage buildings. The MSC building is a great example of quality commercial development along with Bread in Common, Bathers Beach House, and The National!

The type of commercial developments and uses FICRA particularly favours are those such as shipping offices, media, services, historical an heritage, professional offices, and cultural and arts oriented enterprises such as museums and galleries, which provide employment and bring visitors to the West End. FICRA is not particularly supportive of further entrenchment of a monoculture of cafés, and definitely not supportive of the development of more large taverns. FICRA does not favour new development driven primarily by profiting from the sale of alcohol.

6. Sensitive planning.

FICRA favours development that is compatible with the heritage of the West End and that is compliant with the existing city of Fremantle planning schemes and bylaws. Consideration of development applications should balance the interests of all stakeholders, including residents, tourists, businesses, students and workers. It should also take account of traffic problems in the West End, (for example, traffic gridlock on Mother's Day 2017 though there was no special events) and the impact upon visitors and emergency services.

7. Security and public order.

FICRA seeks to ensure that developments do not have a harmful impact on public order and security, and favours consideration of such elements in any applications for liquor licences. Impacts on public order and security also of course discourage visitors to the West End.

Process of implementation of vision and priorities.

1. Compliance with planning guidelines and bylaws

FICRA believes that The City should not offer waivers and approvals to developments that do not comply with existing guidelines and bylaws which are designed to protect and preserve existing heritage in the consideration of developments. There needs to be much more effective and accomplished Design Advisory Committee which recognises the need to preserve the heritage of the West End.

Accordingly FICRA does not support approvals granted to development applications which do not comply with the City's existing guidelines and bylaws and which would bring about substantial harm to existing heritage and amenities. FICRA does not support "activation" which runs counter to planning guidelines and bylaws. Such an approach, fails to give due weight to the properly considered existing guidelines and bylaws, as demanded by the Western Australian Planning Commission (see the case of the application by Sunset events at Arthur head – J shed).

2. Genuine consultation and engagement

FICRA supports genuine consultation by the city with the residents of the West End, such that, if the residents provide a well supported considered view, the city and its councillors should give such a view substantial regard. Where the West End community hold strong views regarding a proposed development which would have a significant impact on the community those views should be respected not ignored.

3. Clear and co-ordinated policy targeting anti-social and disorderly behaviour.

Such a policy would include a more effective Community Policing Policy, including 24 hour fully staffed police station.