

# Apartments for Life at Ocean Street Community Newsletter



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## Dear Resident

The Benevolent Society has been working for some time on plans for a new form of housing for older people on our site between Ocean and Wellington Streets, Bondi.

This is an exciting project for older people in Waverley. The Board and Staff of the Society are fully committed to making this initiative a reality for older people, especially those requiring suitable affordable housing,

The Society continues to discuss its Development Application with Waverley Council.

This Newsletter features plans for the heritage-listed Scarba House that will be a focal point of the new development.

Sincerely

Richard Spencer  
Chief Executive Officer



## The project in a nutshell

The Apartments for Life at Ocean Street project will be a new form of housing, care and support for older people.

The apartments will be designed for older people's needs. In addition there will be a range of facilities on the site for the use of residents and the local community. There will be a care advisor to help residents arrange to have health and care services come to their apartments, when needed.

The aim is that virtually all residents – 95 percent – will be able to stay in their home to the end of life and avoid the need to move again to a nursing home.

There will also be a focus on maintaining residents' connections with the local area and on preventing people from becoming socially isolated.

Forty percent of apartments will be priced so that they are affordable by local older people in a range of financial circumstances. Ten percent will be for disadvantaged older people who do not own a home.

## Important local heritage

Scarba House and its surrounds are key features of the site and will be a focal point of the new development.

Scarba House and the remnants of the original garden are listed as items of local heritage significance.

Scarba House is also of social significance for many local people. It holds memories and associations



Nurses airing babies outside Scarba House, c 1925

for people who lived there as children, or worked there as adults, during the time it operated as Scarba Welfare House for Children.

The restoration of Scarba House and its opening up for the use of residents and the local community is an important part of the project.

Scarba House is described as an outstanding late Victorian Italianate or “boom style” mansion, one of Waverley Council area’s best surviving Victorian mansions and one of the few to retain some of its original grounds and setting.

The house was constructed in the 1880’s, incorporating an earlier cottage erected in 1858. Although it has been altered and added to over the years, it retains the majority of its original or early fabric. Features include typical design characteristics of Victorian Italianate style architecture – bay windows, verandas, decorative window sills, French doors and cast filigree balustrades.

The proposals for Scarba House involve returning the overall form of the house to its early 20th century configuration. Various later additions which have diminished the architectural qualities of the main house will be removed, including the external stair to the east and upper floors to the north east.

The verandas to the north-west and north-east will be reinstated.

Some necessary modern features will be added. For example, a chair lift will be added on the western

‘What attracts me about this project for my mother? She wouldn’t have to move again. You want things to be reassuring at this stage of life, not all the confusion, things getting lost etc that can happen if you have to move again. And the apartments would be designed with the necessary equipment for when she needs it.

‘I also think that all eyes will be on this project because it is a new model. That gives me comfort that it will be well run. Sometimes you just never know with other places.’

**Daughter of local resident**

Details supplied



side so people with mobility difficulties can get easily to the ground floor, and a lift will be installed for access to the upper floors where health professionals’ rooms are proposed.

The carriageway in front of Scarba will be re-aligned to be closer to the 1880s configuration and the garden levels will be dropped slightly (the build-up of later years removed) so that the house will sit proudly in the landscape as it did in the early 20th century.

Cars will be banned from the carriageway, making the area safer and more pleasant for pedestrians.

A comprehensive Conservation Management Strategy has been prepared for Scarba House and its surrounds and was submitted to Waverley Council as part of the Society’s Development Application. A copy can be viewed on The Benevolent Society’s website at [www.bensoc.org.au](http://www.bensoc.org.au).

‘I am very interested In this project. I have a health condition that’s probably going to get worse and so I am thinking ahead. I own my one-bedroom unit in Bondi and have limited finances.’

**Local resident**

Details supplied

**For more information see [www.bensoc.org.au](http://www.bensoc.org.au) and click on Apartments for Life at Ocean Street or contact Sarah Fogg, The Benevolent Society: 9339 8000 or [oceanstsite@bensoc.org.au](mailto:oceanstsite@bensoc.org.au)**