

End is nigh for smelter

DEMOLITION of the former Pasminco Cackle Creek lead and zinc smelter at Boolaroo will probably be complete by the end of next year.

A \$6 million demolition plan for the site was lodged with Lake Macquarie Council last week.

More than 360 people lost their jobs when the plant closed in September last year.

The smelter began operations in 1907 and closed as a result of the parent company's \$2.8 billion collapse.

While many were sad to see it go, even more were glad to see the back of it.

Pollution from the smelter over

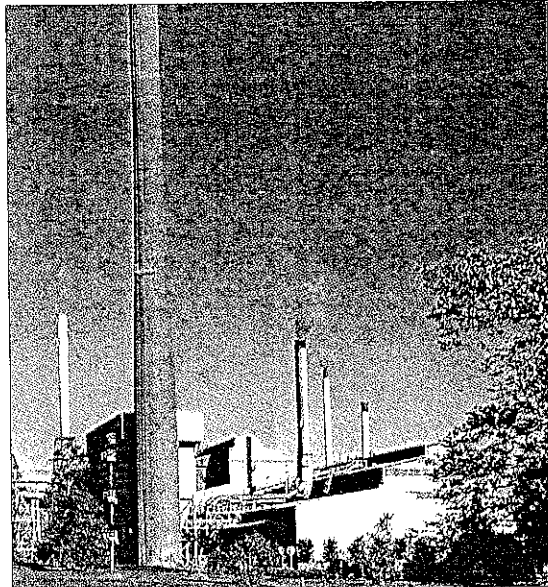
many years was enormous, poisoning the land, water and air over a wide area.

However it had provided employment for thousands of people over the years, with many generations of the same family spending their working life there.

The smelter was also a major sponsor of many community events and a source of income for many contractors.

Once the site is cleaned up it is expected to be used for light industrial purposes.

The Pasminco company was placed into administration last year.



GOING, GOING: Demolition plans for smelter.

BRIEFLY

Upgrade for shops

NEWCASTLE councillors have approved a \$130 million redevelopment of the Kotara shopping centre. Westfield amended its application three times, mainly in response to people's concerns about extra traffic and noise.

Christmas appeal

ANZ Bank Toronto is encouraging residents to bring in gifts and non-perishable food for a Christmas collection to be donated to Salvation Army.

Canine calendar

THE 2005 Guide Dogs calendar is available for just \$1 at Home Timber and Hardware stores at Blacksmiths, Charlestown, Glendale and Warners Bay. Every cent raised goes to the Guide Dog Association.

Computer courses

BASIC computer and Internet courses are available free in 2005 for people on Centrelink benefits. The courses are organised by the Salvation Army. Details on 4959 8235.

Charity concert

SWANSEA and Caves Beach Delta Club held a successful fundraising concert, with the proceeds to East Lake Macquarie Dementia Service Inc.

Better roads

IMPROVEMENTS will be made to a busy Charlestown intersection. A double right turn will be provided at Charlestown Rd and Hillsborough Rd for motorists turning into Charlestown Rd.

\$31m development for Charlestown

A \$31 million development at Charlestown is set to be given the green light by Lake Macquarie Council before Christmas.

Council officers have recommended the two eight-storey, mixed-use buildings to be known as Sky Central be given the go-ahead. The council's last committee meeting of the year, held on Monday night, was expected to approve the development, with the decision ratified at next week's full council meeting.



Peter Hodge

There will be an elevated pedestrian bridge across the Pacific Hwy linking the two buildings.

The proposal has come before council on several occasions since it was first mooted in November 2002.

Amendments have been made and the plans re-exhibited twice.

A report to the council on Monday night from council development assessment and compliance manager Peter Hodge said the current design was a superior outcome to the previous proposals.

The plan envisages two levels of basement parking, two levels of retail, a level dedicated to cafes and restaurants, a level allocated to commercial offices, four levels of residential apartments (7 in

total), plus 210 car parking spaces and landscaping.

The application was placed on public display during September and October, and two submissions were received objecting to it.

Earlier proposals had resulted in 21 submissions, with 16 of those in support.

The main issues for objection were traffic congestion, insufficient parking, overshadowing and buildings considered too high.

Mr Hodge's report said the issues raised were not considered sufficient to warrant refusal of the application.

The Sky Central proposal is the latest in a list of new developments for Charlestown.

A number of other major devel-

opments, totalling several millions of dollars in value, have recently been approved by the council.

This has led to bitter complaints from the Charlestown State Labor MP Matthew Morris, who is concerned many urban guidelines for the area are not being met.

He has blasted the independents-controlled council as being too pro-development.

Bids by the council's five ALP councillors have failed to stop the proposals going ahead.

At Monday night's meeting, as the News went to press, it was expected a review of the existing urban guidelines for Charlestown would be announced by Mayor Greg Piper.

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