



Sketch by John Ellison and used as part of 2001 campaign to promote appropriate use of public space.

## **Katoomba Railway Goods Yard and Parking**

(Notes and History of Railway Goods Yard and Parking)

Senior Council Staff have been determined to install a carpark in the **Railway Goods Yard** since at least 1993.

**December 1994** the Department of Transport commissioned a study of **Railway Goods Yard** with a view to installing a carpark on the site. Unfortunately, the report recommended against it due to:

- Small space
- Irregular size
- Problems with egress and access on a blind corners – considered dangerous

**July 1996** - Mayor Jim Angel ran a story in the Gazette inviting people to join a carparking committee for Katoomba. It was apparent that prior discussions between Cllr Terri Hamilton, Real Estate Agent, Bob Yates, and President of Katoomba Small Business, John Heath and the Railway Goods Yard was to be the focus of the town's parking plans.

**August 1996** – Carparking Committee met for first time and community representatives Peter Nicol, Ian McMillan and Warren Ross made a case that any carpark should **be part of a plan for the town** rather than a carparking becoming the plan for the town.

Bob Carr announces plans to revitalize Echo Point, Bondi and Manly (prior to Olympics).

**September 1996** – Katoomba Town Centre Concept Plan developed and presented to and endorsed by

Carparking Committee. Meeting between community representatives and policy advisor for Brian Langton Minister for Transport. This plan included plan for the **Railway Goods Yard** as a public park.

**December 1996** – Carparking Committee renamed Katoomba and Echo Point Planning Advisory Committee (Clr Hamilton insisted on term Advisory being added)

**February 1997** – Katoomba Town Centre Concept Plan brought to Council and endorsed as basis for State Government funding. The same week Bob Debus announces, “We have all grown dizzy watching the succession of reports come out of Blue Mountains City Council. Next Tuesday and report will come before Council that will be the basis for State Government funding.”

**June 1997** – Council staff caught with no plan for Katoomba, Council provided secret brief to Conybeare Morison who present **Katoomba Town Entry Study** at public meeting. John Heath had previously attended a stakeholders meeting but had not advised Katoomba Taskforce. This concept plan contradicted all previous plans and promoted strip development along highway.

Public meeting condemns this plan and it is never heard of again.

**January 1998** – State Government appoints project officer John Newbery to address competing visions. John is unsure of which way to go. Nigel Bell urges a Charrette. We (community members) are reluctant to support this as it would mean starting the planning process all over again.

**April 1998** – Main St held its early public meetings. Formed largely in opposition to Katoomba and Echo Point Advisory Committee. Headed by John Heath with support of Robert Greenwood. Later led by Steve Fowler of Mission Employment.

**June 1998** – Winter Magic uses Carrington forecourt for first time and invites bus company (pre shuttle) to run from station to Echo Point for \$2.

**October 1998** – Katoomba Charrette takes place and plan is developed for town. Paul Grimson at the centre of process. Plan includes **Railway Goods Yard** public park and parking on north side Gearins Precinct with at-grade crossing.

**100 car spaces** - Charrette Outcomes Report also proposed 72 parking spaces in RSA site on north-eastern side of railway and a further 28 in Goldsmith Place. \$100,000 budgeted for this.

**November 1998** – Katoomba Future Directions document outlines key Charrette initiatives.

**1999**- Terri Hamilton placed in charge of process and Advisory Committee renamed Katoomba and Echo Point Taskforce.

**July 1999** – Project Officer appointed (Geoffrey Knox) to manage implementation.

**November 1999** - Department of Public Works (Infrastructure Partnerships – Ms Larissa Ozog) develops a masterplan for **Railway Goods Yard** that includes plans for additional shops and public park. Refers to Ray Christison Heritage Report.

**January 2000** – Bob Carr comes to Carrington and makes formal announcement of monies allocated to Katoomba Project \$8m Echo Point, \$2m Katoomba St, \$1m Civic Centre.

**January 2001** – Cultural Centre funding announced \$5m

**May 2001** – Internal Council document stated. Report outlines plans for north of rail line including 72 spaces on RSA site and 28 spaces in Goldsmith Place. Acknowledges this was part of Charrette but that was ***on the assumption that RSA would be willing to move.***

**July 2001** – Council begins campaign to concrete **Railway Goods Yard** and build multi-storey carpark on site

**August 2001** – Peter Nicol and Warren Ross call public meeting and call for Action Group (Katoomba Action Group formed).

March on **Railway Goods Yard** by 50 members of local community and photo shoot / Gazette story.

Council calls public meeting to support its expensive carpark promotion on **Railway Goods Yard** and is strongly condemned by public meeting. Meeting is advised that Robert Mifsud had kept Consultants' Brief away from Taskforce. Howard Tanner who is supposed to be a Heritage architect makes no reference to site's heritage value. **THIS PROJECT IS UNFUNDED. Project is never heard of again.**

**February 2002** – Charrette team (Wendy Morris) invited back to have another go at planning **Railway Goods Yard**. Come up with multi use plan (carparking and public space).

**July 2006** – Representatives of Katoomba Chamber of Commerce and Community raise idea of carpark on **Railway Goods Yard** to Chamber Annual General Meeting.

**Warren Ross**  
**9<sup>th</sup> August 2006**