

HEALTH ISSUES for the Elderly

NEWCASTLE 500

WHAT'S AT STAKE? The health and well-being of large numbers of elderly residents.



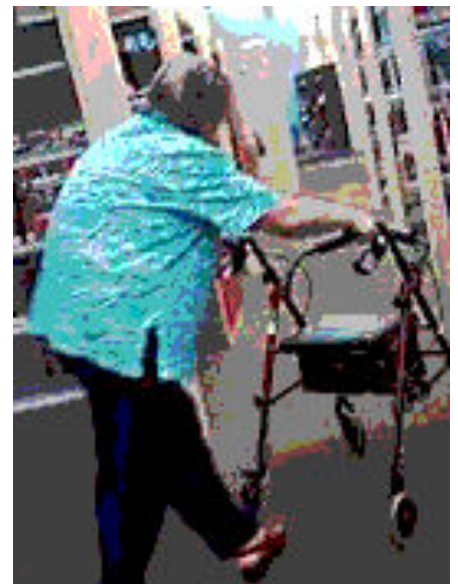
Newcastle East has a **higher-than-average** number of elderly residents. Some are in Public Housing for the Aged. Many more are in private homes and apartments. All will be severely affected by the race. For the vast majority, **leaving the precinct** during the event (as suggested by Supercars and NCC) is not an option.



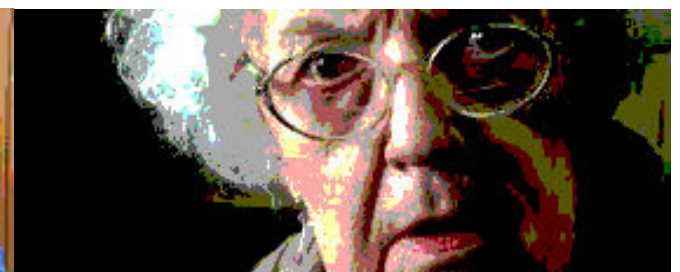
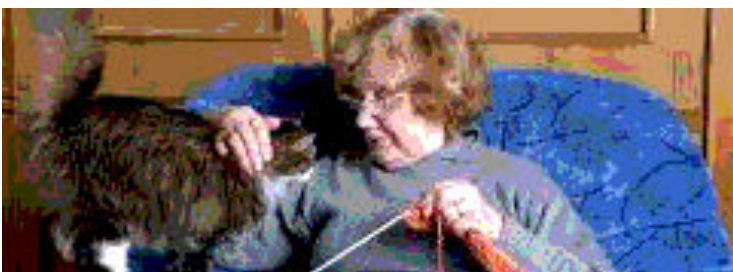
A community health survey shows that a large number of elderly residents **require daily assistance** to live independently. Home care nursing, meals-on-wheels, grocery deliveries, ambulance call-outs, pharmaceutical deliveries, doctor visits, hospital transport services and taxis are just some of the services visiting Newcastle East on a daily basis. Many rely on family visits for their social interaction.

A large number have **mobility issues**. Many have mental health issues exacerbated by stress, interruption to daily routine and excessive noise. Some are suffering early and more advanced symptoms of dementia. **The noise and crowds will be intolerable for those who have reduced awareness or understanding of the event. High levels of anxiety are already in evidence. Some will not cope.**

People are anxious about how their pets will cope with such loud and sustained noise for up to 10 hours each day, for 3 days.



During the 3 days of racing, access into the precinct will be via three temporary bridges. The bridges will be located a great distance from the homes of elderly residents. Many will not be able to use these - only one has a lift...the rest have stairs. Some will be confined to their homes. Cars must be parked outside the precinct at an undisclosed location, away from residents' homes.



WHAT ABOUT AN EMERGENCY?

To date, residents have not received specific information about emergency procedures in the case of: a fire, a crash, a spill, a resident emergency, an injury or an escaped pet. Given the site difficulties, its location on a peninsula, and the large residential population, an emergency management plan should have been developed by now, giving residents adequate time to review it and make appropriate arrangements. The organisers' projected crowd numbers (hundreds of thousands) crammed into such a small area is a significant concern.