

NEUTRAL PRECINCT MINUTES

Tuesday 11 July 2023, commenced at 7:00 pm

1. The Neutral Bay Village Update – MT-J Convenor,
Neutral Bay & Cremorne Progress Association:

MJT presentation covered:

1. Current Neutral Bay Planning Proposals (Spot Rezoning) covering: PP 1/23 1-7 Rangers Road & 50 Yeo Street (Woolworths); PP 4/23 183-185 Military Road; DA 42/23 12-14 Waters Road, Neutral Bay Land & Environment Court Proceedings; DA 404/22 165-173 Military Road, Neutral Bay Land & Environment Court Proceedings and the establishment of the Neutral Bay Alive Community Consultation Group. Presentation slides are at Attachment A.

Attendees were encouraged to make their views known through submissions to the Department of Planning and North Sydney Council. A handout with contact details was tabled. Copy at Attachment B.

Discussion points:

PP 1/23:1-7 Rangers Rd

- Would like to see a stepped building across the site to improve solar access to residential properties
- Noted the planned new supermarket would be underground and comparatively the same size as the retail space of the existing supermarket allowing for access ramps to parking.
- Issues regarding building height, parking access from Yeo Street, and traffic will be identified in the DA process.
- The Sydney North Planning Panel will review the current planning proposal and make a recommendation to the Department of Planning – quite possibly for Gateway determination. Once the public exhibition process is closed there may be a public meeting. The process through to gazettal is relatively lengthy and Woolworths may decide to submit a DA to Council before this process is completed.
- The height of adjacent Muse building on the corner of Rangers Rd and Yeo Street is 19.2 meters at its highest point, approved under the LEP height limit of 16 metres with a variation.

PP 4/23:183-185 Military Road

- 12 storeys would be visually dominant and overshadow the Woolworths plaza.
- Noted positively proposal to include a community centre on Level 1
- Like the idea of enlarging the proposed Woolworths plaza onto this site but concerns about opening the area to noise from Military Rd.

- Questioned the number of car parking spaces being adequate for the non-residential uses and assume the developer is thinking Woolworths proposed public carparking will support their needs.

12-14 Waters Rd

- Currently there is approval for a 5 storey building
- The developer has Gateway approval from the Department of Planning for a maximum building height of 22 metres + 2 metres for rooftop facilities. This is yet to be gazetted. The developer has in the meantime submitted a DA for an extra storey and has lodged an appeal with the Land and Environment Court based on a deemed refusal.
- A conciliation public meeting is to be held on site on 14 July at 9:30am. Everyone encouraged to attend as it demonstrates to the Commissioner the public interest in the development.

DA 404/22: 165-173 Military Road

- The developer has lodged an appeal with the Land and Environment Court against deemed refusal of DA, by North Sydney Council, for a six storey mixed use building containing a ground level retail and twenty one (21) apartments.
- A site inspection with Commissioner of the Land & Environment Court for s34 conciliation conference has been scheduled for Thursday 27 July at 9.15 am for 9.30 am. Again, everyone was encouraged to attend to demonstrate public interest in a development outside the LEP.

Neutral Bay Alive Community Consultation Group

- This is “the Voice” for Neutral Bay. The Group can listen to the community and make recommendations but has no decision making power.
- Letters have gone out to successful / unsuccessful nominees.

2. A brief history of the Grosvenor Lane Plaza and the current indicative proposals by Coles and Arkadia for the council owned car park site. Presentation slides are at Attachment C.

Coles has indicated publicly that they will submit a DA to Council in July for development on the supermarket site and to provide a plaza with underground parking on the car park site. Arkadia has written to Council seeking Owners’ Consent to develop the current car parking area

Discussion points:

- Noted with interest the history of the carpark from 1967 to present.
- Noted the 2014 planning study of the site identified 3 strategies to upgrade the site: (low intervention, Council go it alone and Council work with an adjacent landowner). Council endorsed working with a landowner and this remains Council’s current position.

- Noted that Coles has indicated they will lodge a DA in July for their site and for creation of a plaza with underground parking and some at grade parking. We will have an opportunity to make submissions. Coles have also indicated they are willing to return to Neutral Precinct present the details of their DA.
- Businesses around the car park site are in favour of retaining as much at grade parking as possible giving access for loading and for customers. Traders are used to the convenience of direct access to stores but maybe traders need to get used to arrangements in most other commercial areas where trolleys are used to deliver goods to shops/businesses.
- Arkadia have asked Council for a similar “Owners Consent” to that given by Council to Coles. The Owners Consent for Coles is to allow Coles To submit a DA for development of their supermarket site and provide a plaza with an underground car park.
- Arkadia, it is understood, are only planning to reconfigure the current carpark into a combined at grade carpark/plaza with a landscaped area on the south side of the carpark and a reduction in carparking. It is understood Arkadia does not at this stage want to develop their land holdings along the southern and western ends of the current car park.

EC thanked MTJ for her presentation and continued support to Neutral Precinct. MJT left the meeting.

2. Apologies - nil
3. Nil additional items to be added to the Agenda.
4. Business from minutes of meeting held 9 June 2023:
 - i. Following review, the minutes were moved as correct by GC and seconded by CP.
 - ii. Council responses to Precinct motions.

PP 1/23: 1-7 Rangers Road (Woolworths) update 25 May 2023

Council at its meeting of 22 May 2023 considered Item 10.05, the assessment report of PP 1.23 and resolved:

1. THAT Council resolves to not support the Planning Proposal proceeding to Gateway Determination, for the following reasons:

- *the Planning Proposal challenges Actions L1.5 and L3.2 of the North Sydney Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS), which requires Planning Proposals to be underpinned by an endorsed placed-based strategy;*
- *the Planning Proposal is inconsistent with Council’s rescinded MRCPS and the objectives of Council’s renewed Study for the Neutral*

Bay Town Centre, as it would facilitate an overly intense and visually dominant built form in its context and prevent the

delivery of identified high-quality public open space by limiting the capacity of the adjacent site (183-185 Military Road) from contributing to the public domain;

- the height sought by the proposal is excessive given its stated objectives of achieving a part six-storey and part eight-storey building and would result in unacceptable overshadowing impacts to residential dwellings to the south;*

- the bulk, scale and massing of the proposed built form is excessive in its context and does not provide an appropriate interface and transition to the low-scale residential areas immediately to the south of the site;*

- the proposed publicly accessible plaza and pedestrian through-site link is of compromised amenity and reduced public benefit; and*

- the quantum of proposed on-site parking is excessive and not justified in the context of the site's highly accessible location and cumulative impacts to the surrounding area.*

2. THAT Council notifies the applicant of Council's determination in accordance with section 9 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021.

3. THAT if a Planning Proposal were to progress for the subject site via an alternate approval pathway, that an amended site-specific Development Control Plan be prepared addressing the matters of concern identified in the Council Officer's assessment report and NSLPP recommendations. This includes:

- reduction of podium height and overall building height;*
- removal of two-storey retail structure;*
- demonstration of adjacent site integration;*
- reconsideration of plaza design;*
- provision of through-site link open-to-sky;*
- reduction of on-site parking provision;*
- maintaining the proposed 1.8:1 non-residential FSR; and*
- provision of key worker and affordable housing components.*

PP 4/23: 183-185 Military Road, Neutral Bay (next to Woolworths)

Motion: Neutral Precinct objects to the 12 storeys in the planning proposal for 183-185 Military Road. Additionally, the proposal offers inadequate community benefit for the proposed height above the current LEP. The proposal should be considered within the current LEP or wait for the report of the new Neutral Bay Town Centre Planning Study.

Noted by Council's Senior Strategic Planner.

Transfer of 139-173 Military Road/152-156 Wycombe Road), currently in Brightmore Precinct, to Neutral Precinct –

Motion: Neutral Precinct agrees to the realignment of the boundary with Brightmore Precinct. Vote: Unanimous (15)

Council's Manager Corporate Planning & Engagement has advised that this request is to be actioned in context of the related boundary adjustments requested by Brightmore and Harrison Precincts. A further update will be provided in due course.

5. Report from Combined Precincts Committee June meeting: Warringah Freeway Upgrade

GC outlined the Q&As with the CPB Downer Project team (contractor for the Warringah Freeway Upgrade)

Q: Can the current access to the bridge from the Ernest Street On Ramp be reinstated?

A: No

Q: The stanchions proposed for the Falcon Street Bus Ramp are 2.1m which contribute to the height of the new ramp impacting negatively on the visual and noise amenity of residents in Merlin Street. The stanchions on the existing Falcon Street crossover the freeway are 1.2m. Can the size of the stanchions be reduced to lower the new ramp?

A: Standards have changed since the existing Freeway overpass was built. The new stanchions are the current standard.

Q: Can the landscape plan include planter boxes, similar to those installed recently at the Rozelle Interchange, be installed along the boundary of the bus ramp?

A: Feedback from the community is being sought on the landscape plan and this suggestion can be made through the interactive feedback web site.

Q: The temporary ramp to the Ridge Street pedestrian bridge is narrow not allowing two people to pass, which is causing issues for residents.

A: The ramp is temporary for two years during construction. The new access to the Pedestrian bridge will meet standards.

Q: Can the platform at the top of the access to the Pedestrian bridge on the Ridge Street side be made larger to accommodate the many people who access the area to enjoy the unique and splendid views of the harbour?

A: We will consider the request.

Q: Residents are very concerned about the changes to vehicle access to North Alfred Street and Merlin Street and the significant reduction in on street parking. Can you offer solutions?

A: We are looking at the issue.

Q: The results of the Freeway upgrade are a significant downgrade for local residents with previously well used active transport routes removed. E.g. The pedestrian/cycle underpass from Merlin St South to Merlin St North causing a detour of approx. 700m.

A: We have looked at this but there is insufficient space to restore the access

6. Development Applications

- i. DA404/2022: 165-173 Military Road Neutral Bay (cnr. Wycombe Road). Demolition and Construction of a six storey mixed use building containing a ground level retail and twenty one (21) shop top housing over three levels of basement parking and associated works.

The meeting noted correspondence from Council solicitors advising proceedings have been listed for a s 34 conciliation conference before a Commissioner of the Land and Environment Court on 27 July commencing on site at 9:30am.

Everyone was encouraged to attend the conference as the Commissioner will note the number of local residents there. Two local business impacted by the development have registered to speak.

- ii. DA 101/23: Military Road Neutral Bay. Installation and operation of a freestanding advertisement structure for the purposes of Council communication and third-party advertising at Military Road, Neutral Bay. The meeting noted that this DA has been withdrawn by applicant.
- iii. DA 158/2023: 'Rawson Street' Bus Shelter, Kurraba Road Neutral Bay. Replacement of a static advertising display with new static digital display sign. Noted.
- iv. DA 159/2023: 'Anderson' Bus Shelter, Clark Road Neutral Bay. Replacement of a static advertising display with new static digital display sign. Noted.
- v. DA 195/2023: 601/20 Premier Street Neutral Bay. Installation of louvered roof system to existing terrace area of an apartment on the top level of an existing apartment building. Noted. No affected resident attended the meeting.
- vi. DA196/2023: 602/20 Premier Street Neutral Bay. Installation of two (2) louvered roof system to terrace areas of an apartment on the top level of an existing apartment building. Noted. No affected resident attended the meeting.
- vii. AP 1/23: Heritage Assessment 53 and 55 Yeo Street Cremorne EC provided an update indicating that Council, after placing an Interim Heritage Order (IHO) on the two federation houses, commissioned a heritage assessment. Council considered the Heritage Assessment

Report on 10 July which showed the properties do not meet the requirement for individual heritage listing but could be considered for inclusion in the adjacent Cremorne Conservation Area. Council has deferred their decision pending further advice on inclusion in the conservation area.

7. Community consultations

Precincts Photo & Story Sharing Portal - get involved

CG reminded the meeting that the North Sydney Precinct System has been in operation for 50 years. Council is inviting Precincts to share their stories, memories and photos as part of the celebration and recognition of the Precinct Committees' contribution to the North Sydney community. The meeting was encouraged to share with the Council when and why they first got involved; was it the opportunity to meet people in your local area or was it because of a particular issue? Stories can be shared through: www.yoursay.northsydney.nsw.gov.au The Precinct will ask MTJ to forward the historical photos of Neutral Bay, that were included in her presentation slides, to Council. MB, a lifelong resident, also has some historic photos that she will forward to Council.

Draft Warringah Freeway Update Place, Design and Landscape Plan - closes 11 July

As part of the WFU design process, TfNSW are asking for feedback from the community on the draft Place, Design and Landscape Plan (PDLP).

GC advised that the Precinct had sent a reminder email to all members to explore the interactive map and provide feedback. The opportunity for feedback has now closed.

Western Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway Upgrade - Tree Replacement Strategy

The meeting noted that TfNSW has updated its Tree Replacement Strategy for the North Sydney local government area. The Strategy was publicly exhibited from 7 December 2022 to 5 February 2023. Over 100 people and groups made submissions. The Strategy has been updated, incorporating feedback from the community, stakeholders and Council. Two trees will be planted in the project areas for every tree removed, as required by planning approvals. For more information email whtbl@transport.nsw.gov.au or phone 1800 931 189.

8. Upcoming meetings were noted

- i. Neutral Precinct – 9 August www.neutralprecinct.com
(Presentation and Q&A: Ausgrid power pole mounted EV chargers – Frank Roberson)
- ii. Council – 24 July www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au

The meeting closed at 9:05 pm

ATTACHMENT A

Neutral Bay Planning Proposals (Spot Rezoning)

PP 1/23 **1-7 Rangers Road & 50 Yeo Street (Woolworths)**

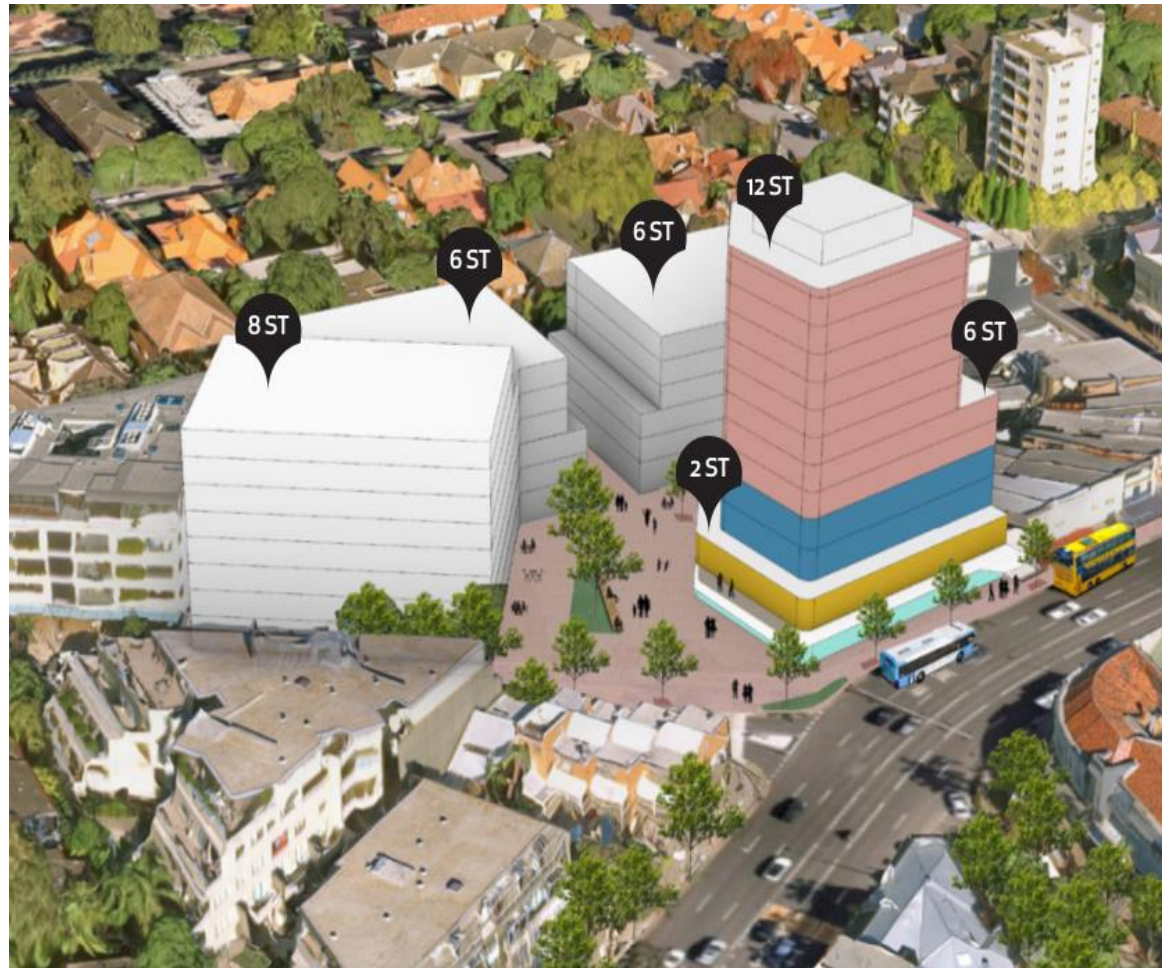
PP 4/23 **183-185 Military Road**

PP 1/23 (white) with suggested improvements:

- better plaza
- reduced height

PP 4/23 (pink)

- 12 storeys
- Retail, B & GF
- Community centre L1
- 2 office levels
- 21 cars for non- residential use



Woolworths

PP 1/23 1-7 Rangers Road, Neutral Bay

22 May 2023 Council voted not to support Woolworths proposed rezoning in its present form. If it is to proceed it should address:

- reducing height (Yeo St from 27 m to 21 m, Rangers Rd from 33 m to 28 m)
- reducing bulk, scale and massing,
- providing a more generous and better proportioned plaza with an open-to-sky through site link to Yeo St,
- providing pedestrian link to Military Lane
- deleting the 88 public car spaces due to traffic concerns.

Council resolved to prepare a site specific DCP if Woolworths asks for a Rezoning Review – which Woolworths has now requested. The Association supports Council's position and encourages residents and Precincts to make a submission to the Department of Planning: information@planning.nsw.gov.au

DA 42/23 12-14 Waters Road, Neutral Bay Land & Environment Court Proceedings



9.15 am for 9.30 am Friday 14 July 2023

Site inspection with Commissioner of the Land & Environment Court for s34 conciliation conference - appeal against deemed refusal of DA to add a sixth storey before rezoning is finalised. All welcome!

**DA 404/22 165-173 Military Road, Neutral Bay
Land & Environment Court Proceedings**

9.15 am for 9.30 am Thursday 27 July 2023

Site inspection with Commissioner of the Land & Environment Court for s34 conciliation conference - appeal against deemed refusal of DA for a six storey mixed use building containing a ground level retail and twenty one (21) apartments.

Neutral Bay Alive Community Consultation Group

Over 20 applications to join proposed group of 7-10 members.

Letters have been sent out to those who expressed an interest and have been selected to join the group.

First meeting scheduled for 25 July 2023.

ATTACHMENT B

NEUTRAL BAY PLANNING PROPOSALS UPDATE 10 July 2023

The Combined Precincts Committee meeting held on 20 June endorsed Willoughby Bay Precinct passing on to the Combined Precinct Committee and individual Precincts information regarding:

(1) PP 1/23 Woolworth's revised planning proposal for 1-7 Rangers Road Neutral Bay **Woolworths have asked the Department of Planning for a Rezoning Review.**

(2) PP 4/23 Planning Proposal for 183-185 Military Road, Neutral Bay (adjacent to Woolworths site at 1-7 Rangers Road). **Now being assessed by North Sydney Council.**



ABOVE: The two planning proposals. 183-185 Military Road in pink and blue.

The Woolworths planning proposal is shown in white **with suggested improvements:** reduced maximum building heights, an open-to-sky through site link to Yeo Street; removal of the 2-storey structure proposed by Woolworths on the boundary with 183-185 Military Road to allow a larger integrated public plaza.

If the current Woolworths proposal proceeds, the 6 storey building will be 6 metres (about 2 storeys) higher than shown above, and the 8 storey building will be 5 metres (nearly 2 storeys) higher than shown above. For context, the existing 5 storey building

at 9-11 Rangers Road can be seen just to the left of the 8 storey building on the Woolworths site.

The 12 storey building at 183-185 Military Road is shown as 43 metres high, the maximum building height as sought by the developers.

Local Precincts have concerns about each of the proposal (outlined below) and are encouraging residents and Precincts with concerns to make submissions:

- in the case of the Woolworths proposal, to the Department of Planning, and
- in the case of 183-185 Military Road, to North Sydney Council.

WOOLWORTHS PP 1/23 1-7 RANGERS ROAD NEUTRAL BAY

Please email a submission to: information@planning.nsw.gov.au Subject: **No Gateway Approval for Woolworths 17 Rangers Road**

Give your name and address and state you are writing to request that the Department of Planning **not proceed** to **Gateway Determination** for Woolworths Planning Proposal at 17 Rangers Road, Neutral Bay due to excessive height, traffic congestion and a poorly designed public plaza. If the proposal proceeds you would like to see:

Reduced maximum building heights

- > 21 metres on Yeo Street & not 27 metres. This reduced height is enough for the 6 storeys which Woolworths say they want. They don't need an extra 6 metres.
- > 28 metres on Rangers Road & not 33 metres. This reduced height is enough for the 8 storeys which Woolworths say they want. They don't need an extra 5 metres.
- > Zero metres on the public plaza & not 27 metres. Woolworths say this is to be public open space. The height limit should reflect this.

Better public benefits

- > Deletion of the extra 88 car parking spaces sought by Woolworths. These spaces are shown as part of the Woolworths supermarket parking and will draw traffic from a wide area causing traffic congestion on local roads. Woolworths should provide a significant contribution for community infrastructure instead of unwanted extra car spaces.
- > A better designed public open space which allows for integration with a future development of the adjacent site at 183-185 Military Road. The proposal for the adjacent site lodged with North Sydney Council should be taken into consideration.

PLANNING PROPOSAL 4/23 183-185 MILITARY ROAD, NEUTRAL BAY

Please email a submission to: council@northsydney.nsw.gov.au Subject: **Planning Proposal 4/23 183185 Military Road, Neutral Bay**

Give your name and address and set out your concerns.

Too much height and too much traffic

- > The proposed building height of 43 metres is excessive and will destroy the village atmosphere of Neutral Bay. A 12 storey building in this location will overshadow the proposed public plaza on the adjacent Woolworths site throughout the afternoon.
- > The increased density will result in unacceptable traffic congestion on local roads.

Poor public benefits

- > The proposed relocation of the Neutral Bay Community Centre from its current site to the first floor of the 12storey building is a grossly insufficient public benefit and should be subject to community consultation and should not be a developer's decision.
- > The public plaza should be designed to minimise noise from Military Road and with an open to sky through site link to Military Road near the bus stop.

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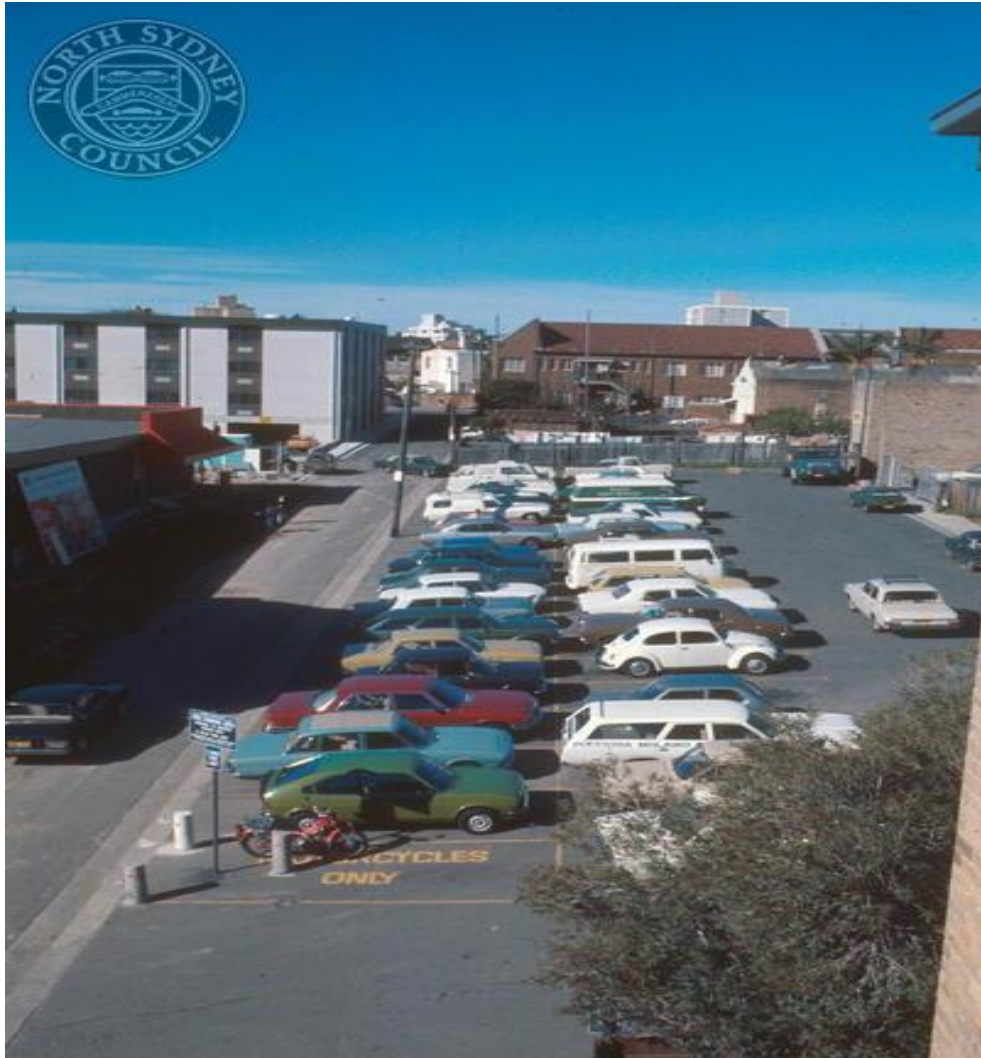
ATTACHMENT C

Grosvenor Lane Plaza: a Brief History

1967 Council purchased part of a number of Military Rd properties to build a public carpark.



*Early 1970s
looking east*



1970 Blue & White Dry Cleaners –property purchase

Late 1970s Woolworths built Grosvenor Lane supermarket which included customer car parking.

(Photograph at left)

1980s

Theo Karedis redeveloped his store into Theo's Arcade (with no customer parking)

The Grove Arcade built (with no customer parking)

The Lulic family purchased the properties now housing Priceline Pharmacy

April 2000 Masterplan & Urban Design Study

Masterplan Report
NEUTRAL BAY SHOPPING CENTRE
URBAN DESIGN STUDY

April 2000



Neutral Bay Chamber of Commerce

Neutral Bay Mainstreet Co-operative

Masterplan to Revitalise Neutral Bay

1997 Steering Committee: Councillors, Council officers, Chamber of Commerce & Precinct representatives.

The Chamber of Commerce then established Neutral Bay Mainstreet Co-operative to fund the Masterplan study (Nick Andrews was President, Colin Croll was Vice President).

Aimed to find ways to make Neutral Bay more pleasant for shopping and more commercially successful.

- Constraints: limited access from Military Road to side streets, lack of 2-hour free parking
- Objectives: Improve accessibility, parking, pedestrian access and safety
- Create public places for community events, outdoor activities, improve amenity

April 2000 Masterplan: a vision for a plaza



Pedestrian plaza to replace existing surface parking with improved pedestrian access from Military Rd

Upgraded shop fronts to improve pedestrian amenity

Underground parking to go under the plaza (cost \$1 million)

Masterplan updated in 2011: "explore opportunities for plaza"

2014 Council's *Grosvenor Lane Planning Study*



Acknowledged Council's long-standing objective (from 2002 DCP) of creating a public plaza.

- Identified 3 strategies:
- 1) low intervention
 - 2) Council go-it-alone
 - 3) with a land owner

Endorsed working with a land-owner and nominated Site 1 and Site 2 as "*opportunity sites*".

2014 Grosvenor Lane Planning Study



Council go-it-alone >

Rejected due to estimated cost of \$13 million (including desired additional 100 public car spaces)

< Low intervention

Public domain improvements to southern side of the carpark

Rejected due to loss of public car parking and lack of access to loading zones



2014 Grosvenor Lane Planning Study

High intervention >

Creation of plaza and undergrounding of car parking with participating landowner and "relatively minor increases in yield".

Council gave **unanimous support** for this high intervention option.

Councillors included Jilly Gibson (the Mayor), Zoë Baker & MaryAnn Beregi.

Six submissions with two from Karedis firms saying objectives "could not be realised with only minor increases in yield" and "buildings of more than 7 storeys" should be considered.



2021 Military Road Corridor Planning Study



Pedestrian plaza to be developed in conjunction with Site 2

Underground parking to be built on Site 2

Site 2 landowners to be given height incentive, i.e. increased building height (12 storeys) to encourage amalgamations and redevelopment

Proposed plaza looking west (Coles' site on right)

Military Road Corridor Planning Study: Staging

Stage 1(a): Site 2 (east) develops first



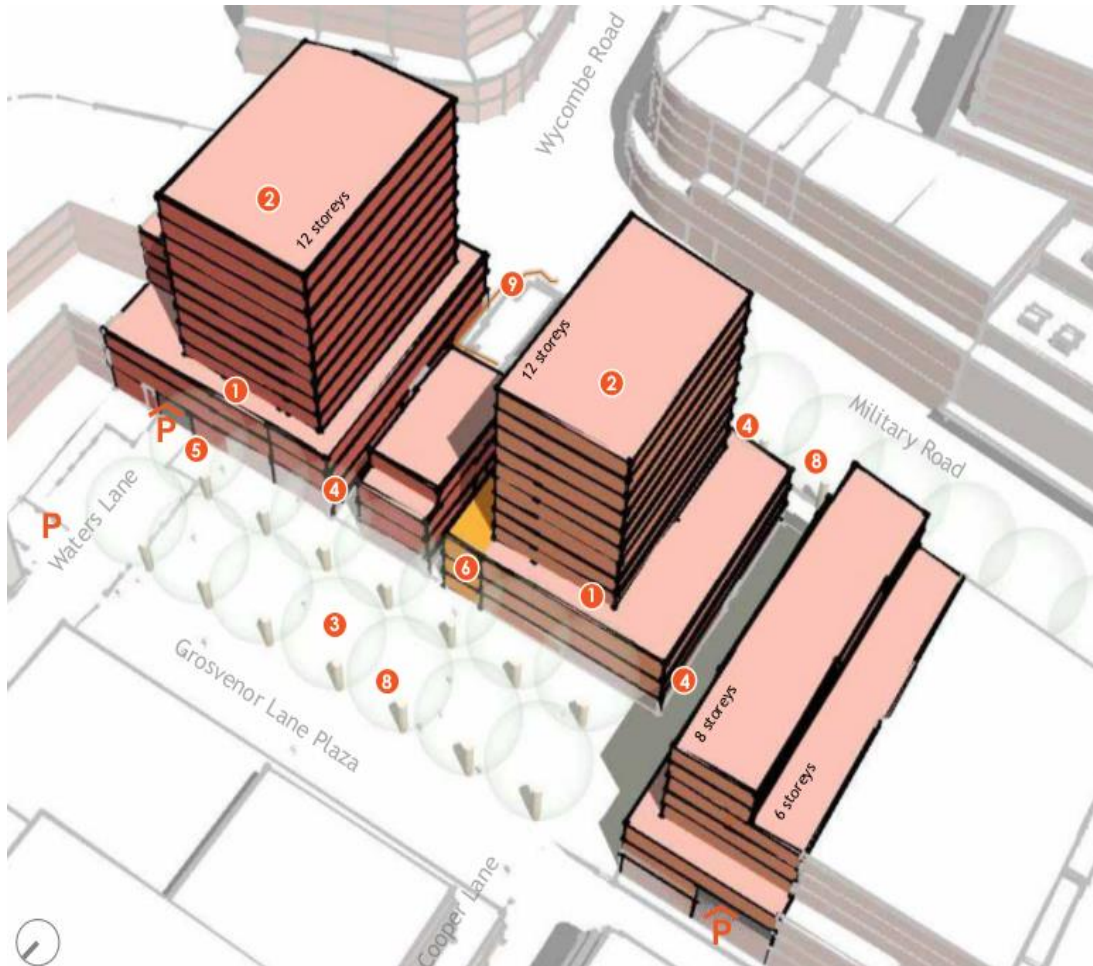
Stage 2: Site 2 complete



Stage 1(a): Site 2 (west) develops first



Military Road Corridor Planning Study: Outcome



Councillors were divided. Only adopted after Mayor Gibson used her casting vote.

Crs Zoë Baker & MaryAnn Beregi voted against.

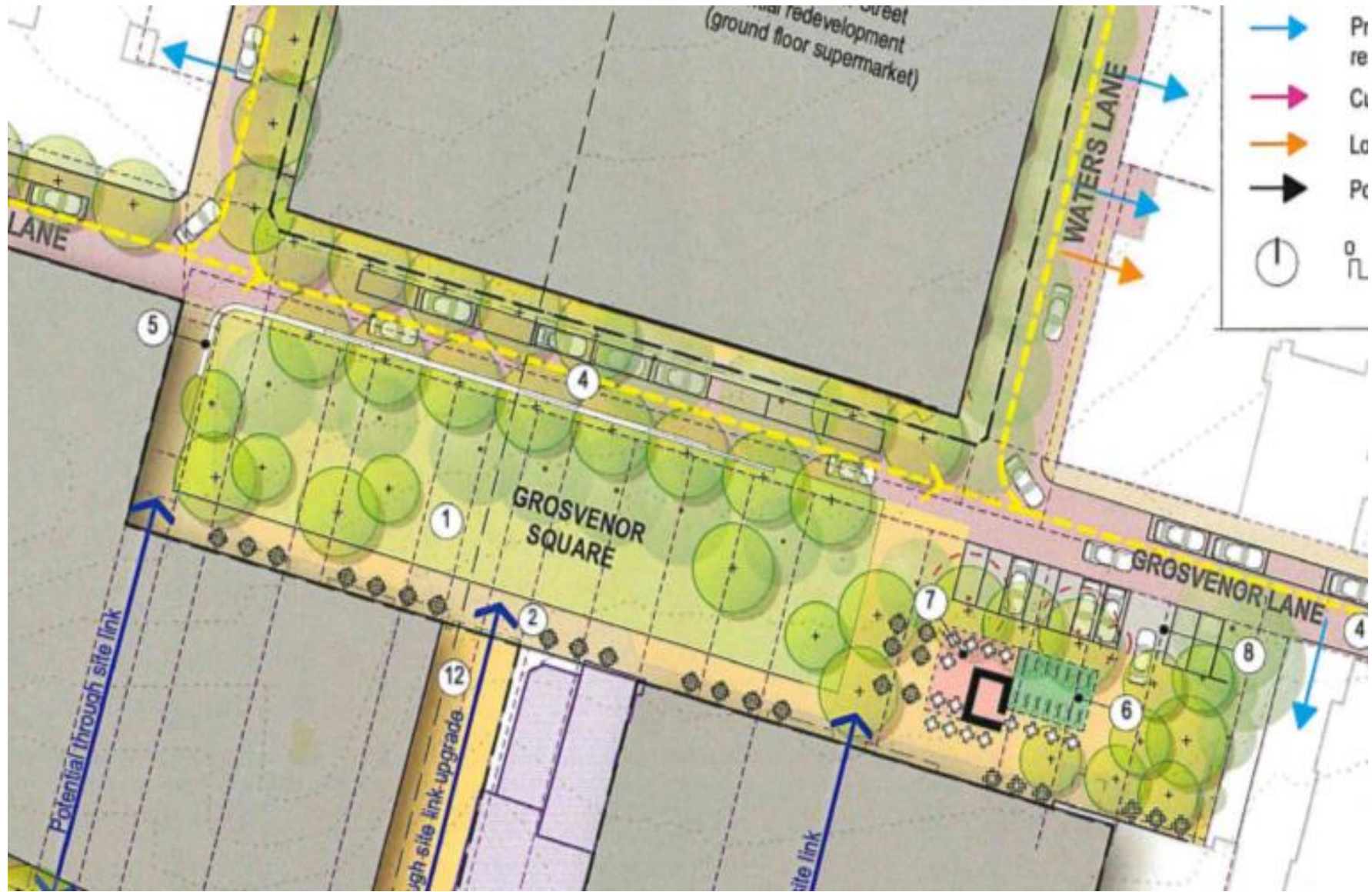
Rescinded by new Council January 2022 – revised planning study to be prepared.

Image: Aerial view of plaza and 12 storey towers

Neutral Bay Town Centre Planning Study workshop

OPTION B: Linear Plaza





Street redevelopment
(ground floor supermarket)

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LANE

WATERS LANE

GROSVENOR SQUARE

GROSVENOR LANE

Potential through site link

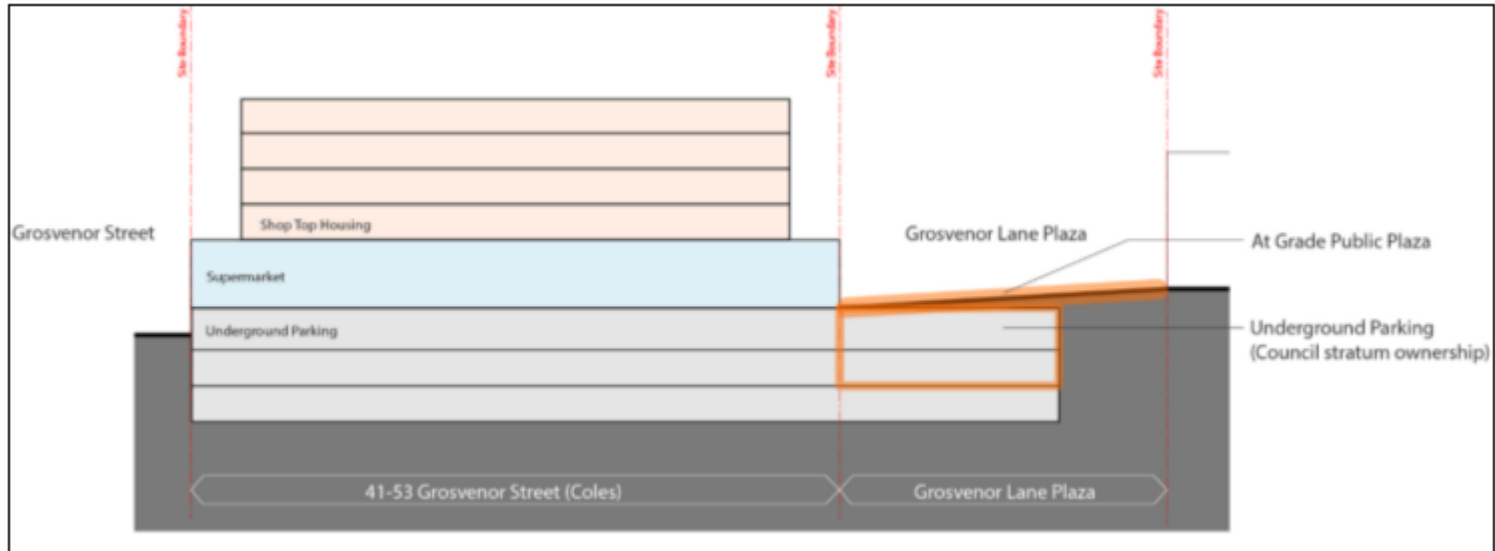
High site link upgrade

site link

Option C: Pedestrianised Plaza



April 2023: Coles Development Application



Council has given Coles Owner's Consent allowing Coles to lodge a DA affecting the Grosvenor Lane Carpark. As per the 2014 DCP amendment, development in the vicinity of the carpark shall *"create a public plaza"* and *"relocate public parking underground"*.

Coles proposes an integrated supermarket / public carpark extending underneath the existing carpark land with a plaza above designed in collaboration with Council.

July 2023: Arkadia's Grosvenor Lane Plaza proposal



Arkadia (owned by the Karedis family), owns much of Site 2, but not:

- Blue & White Dry Cleaners
- Community Centre
- Priceline Pharmacy
- Bay Coffee

July 2023: Arkadia's Grosvenor Lane Plaza proposal



Image: North Sydney Sun

Arkadia are seeking Council's consent to lodge a DA for a

plaza very similar to the low-cost, low intervention option unanimously rejected by Council in 2014. Involves public domain works to the southern side of the carpark and loss of about 30 parking spaces.

