

**WILLOUGHBY BAY PRECINCT**  
**PART OF NORTH SYDNEY COUNCIL'S COMMUNITY PRECINCT**  
**SYSTEM**



**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD**  
**THURSDAY 13th March 2025**  
**COMMENCING AT 7.30 PM**

**MEETING CHAIR:** MTJ  
**ATTENDANCE:** 16 people attended the meeting  
**APOLOGIES:** 7 were recorded

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Minutes for the 13th February 2025 meeting were adopted

***Motion carried: 9 in favour, 7 abstentions, 0 against***

**Guest Speaker: Councillor Christopher Holding**

**Background**

Lives locally.

Helped to reactivate Brightmore Precinct in 2016 and was Co-Convenor of the Precinct for 5 years.

Attending Combined Precincts Committee meetings provided a wider understanding of the issues throughout the LGA.

A founding member of the Cremorne Conservation Group and worked over the last four years on the heritage listing of the Hayden Orpheum Cinema and the Parraween Street cottages.

Asked by Cr. Baker to run on her ticket on the 2021 local elections and supported her campaign.

Campaigned on the new ticket for Mayor Baker in the September 2024 election and was elected to Council.

A strong supporter of North Sydney Council's Precincts.

CH considered the Special Rates Variation was needed to put Council's finances on a sustainable basis. Council has now downsized the bureaucracy, eg only three directors instead of seven.

**Cr Holding answered questions from Precinct members**

Q: What are some of your personal priorities as a Councillor?

A: Heritage is a key priority. CH's first Motion raised in the last Council meeting; looking into possible heritage listing for certain heritage pubs like *The Rag and Famish*, *The Oaks* and *The Blues Point Hotel*. Concerned about the impacts of the State Government's TOD (Transport Oriented Development) and LMR (Low and Mid-Rise Housing) changes which will result in a huge uplift in density in the LGA. The policies identify train stations and town centres which are transport hubs where there can be higher density residential development.

Q: Why has Cremorne been selected? It isn't a transport hub.

A: The Department of Planning identified criteria that were applied: range of services eg banks, pharmacies, doctors, supermarkets, and availability of public transport - Military Road is a major arterial road with B-Line buses on it.

Q: Can Cremorne being nominated a town centre be challenged?

A: Doesn't think so; the State Government has made the decision.

Q: What is the time line on the Pathways Housing development in Parraween Street?

A: The Independent Planning Commission will assess the submissions and make a decision. There were 5 really good verbal submissions including by Mayor Baker. Criticisms related to parking, building height, the building right behind the heritage cottages. CH suspects it will probably go ahead but in what size and shape it is difficult to know.

Q: What is happening to the MLC heritage listed building in North Sydney?

A: This in the hands of the Department of Planning. CH believes this is a good example of 1950s International Style architecture. There are two designs CH is aware of: one is to keep it as it is; the other is to put a large tower on the back of the building.

Q: What is the latest with the Cammeray Golf Course?

A: It is still with the State Government at the moment but eventually it should come back to Council because Council manages the Crown land and then there will be a management plan for it. Council will consult with the community and ultimately it will be up to the community.

Q: What is happening at Young / Grosvenor Streets Neutral Bay where the roundabout has been removed?

A: This work has been planned for some time. Council is putting in a bike lane in Young Street and there are two wombat crossings also going in.

Q: Would there ever be a likelihood of the roundabout formerly at Young St / Grasmere Rd being reinstated?

A: Does not believe so.

Q: Is the Young St Plaza exit onto Military Rd still going ahead?

A: Yes. CH vigorously opposed the Plaza and the closure of Young Street while at Brightmore Precinct.

Q: What about Mayor Baker's proposal for Transport for NSW to suspend the tolls on the Military Road off ramp - is that likely?

A: Council was told a flat "No". However people who were experiencing extreme hardship were told they could make a claim.

Q: Is there further kerb and guttering going to be done at Denos Lane at Primrose Park?

A: Does not know the full extent of the work.

(Chair noted stormwater pipes have been installed to direct water away from the playing fields to the harbour.)

Q: What's happening with the Environmental Reference and Sustainable Transport Group meetings?

A: Should be returning, but the format for the groups may change as CH this is the case for the Streetscape Committees.

Q: Do you know whether motorists will be able to continue to access the Harbour Bridge from Ernest Street?

A: This is up to Transport for NSW. It is very confusing for everyone.

Q: Can you provide an update on the Coles supermarket site?

A: There has been much wrangling between Coles and Arkadia centred on the Council car park. The current Expressions of Interest process is to force them to put forward proposals which can be reviewed against Council's objective to achieve a plaza.

Q: What is the story on the Lime Bikes?

A: The bikes are not controlled by Council. The Mayor did a Mayoral Minute on Lime Bikes at the last Council Meeting. They have the right to come into the LGA but any bike which has been in the same place for 3 days has to be moved.

## **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

### **Woolworths Rangers Road – 1-7 Rangers Road & 50 Yeo Street**

Chair reported that Council's planner has advised as follows:

Woolworths lodged two appeals to the Land and Environment Court for the concept DA and DA 281/24 on the basis of deemed refusals. Council is preparing for a Land and Environment Court case. At the same time, Sydney North Planning Panel is requiring Council to continue to assess the DAs so that the Panel can be in the position to determine them. Woolworths has also applied to the new Housing Delivery Authority Sydney for the project to be declared a State Significant Development. The HDA has recommended to the Minister that the project be declared an SSD subject to the applicant withdrawing its appeal from the Land and Environment Court on the basis that a project should not be assessed on two concurrent pathways. (The third pathway through Sydney North Planning Panel was not mentioned by the HDA.) Council officers held a meeting with Woolworths on 12 March 2025. Woolworths did not indicate whether it would be withdrawing the appeals. Council's planner noted that the medical centre use is a separate use from commercial office space and parking would need to be separate.

Chair noted if Woolworths withdraws the appeals and the project follows the SSD approval pathway, the process will be similar to that followed by the Pathways Cremorne Seniors Housing project. The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure will issue a standard set of Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs), Woolworths will lodge an application. There will be a public exhibition of the SSD before it is determined.

The criteria for a project to be eligible to be considered by the HDA are the project must be a high-yield residential project, with a development cost of over \$60 million, not exceed development standards by more than 20%, be well-located for transport and services, and contribute to the supply of affordable housing.

The Woolworths DA 281/24 included 70 apartments and made no provision for affordable housing. The project recommended to be a SSD includes 90 dwellings (indicative).

**MOTION: That Willoughby Bay Precinct make the following further submission with respect to Woolworths 1-7 Rangers Road & 50 Yeo Street (Concept DA 162/24 and DA 281/24):**

- **The car parking for the medical centre should be fully separated from retail and commercial parking with a separate vehicular entrance and exit to a public road AND a condition should be included requiring that the medical centre car parking spaces must not be alienated from serving the medical centre and must not be used as retail and commercial customer parking contrary to the DCP provision.**

***Motion carried: 15 in favour, 1 abstention, 0 against***

### **15 Richmond Avenue, Cremorne – Illegal Work**

Chair reported that Council has written to the Precinct advising there has not been a break in the chain of appointed Principal Certifiers. The current Principal Certifier (the fifth on the project) is Mr Sam Osman. Council has issued penalty notices for non-compliance with requirements to notify a change of Principal Certifier and some issues have been referred to the NSW Building Commission.

Council has advised the unauthorised piles and beams were constructed by an unknown builder but Council repeatedly advised “all parties” the piles and beams would have to be demolished. It appears part of the development may rely on the soil retained by the unauthorised piles and beams for support. Council has asked the owner to submit a certificate confirming the dual occupancy does not rely on the unauthorised piles and beams.

Council has issued multiple penalty notices with respect to unauthorised storage of materials on the road reserve. A stop work order remains in place.

Neighbours report that construction work is continuing on site.

**MOTION: That Willoughby Bay Precinct thanks Council's Executive Compliance Officer for the update and requests that Council continue to keep the Precinct informed of the compliance review through the Chair.**

***Motion carried: 15 in favour, 1 abstention, 0 against***

### **Brothers Park and Fifth Avenue**

Two Precinct members asked whether the trees and bushes in Brothers Park be pruned to maintain the view from the bench next to the memorial.

Another Precinct member reported she had is written to Council asking for the schedule and scope of work for Brothers Park and Fifth Avenue maintenance and to ask whether the refurbishment of the Memorial on the capital works program.

CH advised he would follow up on these issues with the relevant Council Director.

## **CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED**

### **1. Council Summary of Actions - Council's response to Feb 2025 Minutes**

- **Boat trailers in Richmond Avenue** Request has been forwarded to the Rangers, who have investigated.

Please note that the Rangers need to know the exact location and details of the trailer including number plate (if available).

- **Precinct MOTION: Willoughby Bay Precinct Objections to Arkadia Planning Proposal 4/24.**

**Council Response.** In December 2024, Council engaged an external planning consultant to undertake an independent assessment of the PP4/24 (Arkadia PP). The proposal is still being assessed by the consultant. Council will refer the Willoughby Bay Precinct motion to the consultant as a 'submission' for consideration in the assessment of PP4/24.

Once the assessment has been completed, the proposal will be referred to the North Sydney Local Planning Panel (NSLPP) for advice before Council makes a determination on whether the proposal should be supported or not to a Gateway Determination.

At this stage, Council do not have a date for when the proposal will be considered by the NSLPP but will advise the precinct when a date is tabled.

- **Bushes overhanging footpaths.** The tree management team have assigned a reactive team for pruning.
- **Fifth Avenue and Brothers Park.** The site has now been handed back to Parks and Gardens and is maintained as resources allow.

### **2. Development Applications**

- **3 Ellalong Road Cremorne**, submission approved for alterations & additions subject to some conditions.
- **44 Ellalong Rd Cremorne**, Section 4.55(2) modification to approved development including alterations & additions & amendments to conditions DA 142/2022/7.
- **15 Richmond Avenue Cremorne - DA326/16 - Precinct's submission in Council.**

Letter received from NSC Executive Compliance Officer re appointment of Principal Certifying Officers; Unauthorised Construction of Piles & Beams; Unauthorised Occupation of Road Reserve and Stop Work Order.

- **Of Interest.** Personal submissions (reported last meeting) regarding the Pathways Seniors Housing development on Parraween/Gerard closed 12 March 2025.

Willoughby Bay Precinct made a submission reflecting Precinct's concerns.

### 3. Traffic Committee

- Committee meeting 7 Feb 2025 – covered last meeting.
- Committee's Next Meeting 21 March 2025

### 4. Council Meetings

#### Meeting 24 Feb 2025

**10.7 Code of Conduct** - draft submission re “ A new model code of meeting practice”.

**10.10 Tender** 19/2024 accepted by Council – Supply, delivery, installation, commissioning & maintenance for gym equipment for NSOP.

**10.11 NSOP Update**

**11.1 Notice of Motion 6/25** – Rugby World Cup 2027 – opportunities for North Sydney.

#### Meeting 10 March 2025

**10.1 Community Strategic Plan – eight key strategies for draft CSP 2025-35, community feedback sought, draft available online 12 Mar – 9 Apr 2025 and Public Exhibitions at Council HQ.**

**10.7 Loan funding for NSOP** -a further \$10M approved for a total of \$61M of external borrowing (Loan One Feb 2022 of \$31M and Loan Two July 2024 of \$20M)

**MM01** Impacts of bus privatisation. Appeals to State Govt, Min for Transport

**MM02** Impacts of E-Bike share on local streets, Council to continue to lobby Min Transport and investigate MOU with bike contractor.

### 5. Combined Precinct Meeting 18 February 2025

A Precinct member who attended the CPC meeting reported Council's CEO gave a presentation on the SRV. Precinct members should noted that the proposed rate rises vary according to whether a property currently pays the minimum rates or pays rates ad valorem (in proportion to the value of the property).

Next CPC meeting – 15 April 2025

### 6. NSC Precinct eNews

Young & Grosvenor Street Intersection Upgrade – two raised pedestrian crossings.

## **GENERAL BUSINESS**

### **Pathways Cremorne Seniors Housing**

The Cremorne Conservation Group has advised the Independent Planning Commission public meeting was held on 5 March 2025 with 60 members of the public attending and five local speakers including Mayor Baker, the Co-Convenor of Brightmore Precinct and FG of the

Cremorne Conservation Group. Written submissions closed on 12 March 2025. The Commission Chair noted the Commission is bound to consider the concerns outlined in public submissions.

### **Low and Mid Rise Housing Reforms**

Chair reported the NSW Government published the text for its Low and Mid Rise Housing Policy in the State and Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) Amendment (Low and Mid Rise Housing) 2025 on 28 February 2025 effective immediately. A new statutory map – the Town Centres Map – was approved. Neutral Bay, Cremorne and Spit Junction are identified as town centres. Crows Nest Metro, Milsons Point Station, Victoria Cross Station, Waverton Station and Wollstonecraft Station have also been identified as nominated railway stations. This covers almost all of our LGA.

The aim of the policy is to fast track higher density in areas within walking distance of a town centre. The distance is measured from the edge of the town centre zone along a route that may be safely walked by a pedestrian using, as far as practicable, public footpaths and pedestrian crossings. There are no statutory maps setting out the boundaries of the new areas. It is not clear what happens if only part of a site is within the walking distance.

In the Inner Area, which is within 400 m walking distance, in R3 (the medium density residential or townhouse zone) and R4 (the high density residential zone) apartment buildings up to 22 m and shop-top housing up to 24 m, maximum 6 storeys, will be allowed. In the Outer Area, which is 400 – 800 m from the edge of the town centre, apartment buildings of up to 17 m, maximum 4 storeys, will be allowed.

The SEPP fails to exclude underground car parking storeys. This will lead to disputes unless the Department revises the SEPP.

In R2 (low density residential areas) 9.5 m high dual occupancies, terrace housing (minimum lot size 500 m<sup>2</sup> and minimum frontage of 18 m) and residential flat buildings (minimum lot size of 500 m<sup>2</sup> and minimum frontage of 12 m) are permitted.

The Department has released the following advice:

*Projects will not be automatically approved. Council must still conduct a merit-based assessment. Nothing stops council from assessing heritage significance [in a heritage conservation area] as well as matters like building materials and colours, front and side setbacks, amount and location of landscaping and gardens, streetscape character location of car parking, subdivision pattern and the bulk and scale of buildings. These are all matters that would be part of a merit assessment and if the impact of new development was unacceptable council can refuse a DA ... If the DA meets all the standards and there are no unacceptable impacts, then it should be approved.*

It has also advised:

*It remains the case that any DA proposal, including changes to existing buildings, must maintain or enhance the heritage value of the [heritage conservation area] in order to be approved.*

However, Chair noted this is only advice. The normal approach of the consent authority is to consider the effect of the proposed development on the heritage significance of the item or area concerned. It will be open to the developer to argue that greater weight should be given to the aim of Chapter 6 of the Housing SEPP (to encourage the development of low and mid rise housing in areas that are well located with regard to goods, services and public transport). No doubt cases will end up in the Land and Environment Court – with Councils having to foot the legal bills.

Helm Properties has lodged a DA for a site at 118-124 Benelong Road & 72 Gerard Street which is within the Low and Mid Rise zone. It is unclear if Helm will proceed, or a project of increased size will be proposed.

Ray White Real Estate is marketing a 2,355 m2 site in Cowles Road and Wudgong Street Mosman as suitable for up to 22m m in height.

Residents are reporting being contacted by real estate agents seeking to put together development sites.

### **Pedestrian Crossing at Corner of Macpherson Street**

A Precinct member raised whether Precinct could ask Council whether speed humps could be installed to slow traffic.

### **Press Report on Councils Lagging Behind on DA Targets**

North Sydney Council is one of six of NSW's slowest councils to consider development applications. The NSW Planning Minister Paul Scully has told the six sluggish councils they have three months to "swiftly improve" housing approvals or face being stripped of their assessment powers.

Meeting closed at 10.00pm

Next Precinct Meeting: 10 April 2025

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