



## MINUTE OF THE MAYOR

Dated: 23 March 2020

### **RE: Western Harbour Tunnel & Warringah Freeway Upgrade Environmental Impact - Protecting our Open Space**

The Western Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway Upgrade project will reduce Council's open space temporarily and permanently. This harsh truth needs to be looked at within the context of another equally harsh truth, which is that North Sydney has more people per hectare of open space than any of the other six councils in the Northern Suburbs Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC).

North Sydney has 557 people per hectare while our NSROC neighbours range from just 85 people per hectare in Ku-ring-gai through to 220 in Willoughby. (This does beg the question: why couldn't the interchange be located in Willoughby?). Incredibly, we even have more residents per hectare than the densely populated City of Sydney across the bridge.

In short, we need our open space and it must not be sacrificed to road infrastructure. The loss in St Leonards Park (equivalent to approx. one soccer field) is temporary, but the loss on the Cammeray Golf Course (equivalent to approx. five soccer fields) will be permanent.

Some of the land that will be returned to open space will have two operational buildings on it. I think we can all be tolerant of temporary structures above ground when we know the area is returning to public use, but permanent structures in the midst of open space is untenable. These structures must be placed underground.

More importantly, the land that is alienated by the project should be replaced. One option is to build a connection bridge between Anzac Park and the Cammeray Golf Course across the Warringah Freeway. This is not a new concept. A few years ago I proposed the same thing further south to link the western and eastern halves of the North Sydney CBD.

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to redress some of the negative impacts of the Warringah Freeway on the North Sydney community. The price tag for building Cammeray Connection, as I am calling it, won't be cheap, but it is eminently affordable in the context of the tunnel project. More importantly, it is the right and fair thing to do.

#### **I therefore recommend:**

- 1. THAT** Council write to the NSW Premier asking her to attend a meeting with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, General Manager, Georgina Taylor, Paul Walter, Brian Emanuel and Ian Grey (or their nominated substitutes) to discuss how the open space permanently alienated by this project can be replaced; and
- 2. THAT** Council write to the NSW Premier asking her to guarantee that there will be no permanent structures on any of the land returned to public space.

**COUNCILLOR JILLY GIBSON  
MAYOR**