

Minutes of Waverton Precinct meeting

Tuesday 1st November 2022

The meeting commenced at 7:35pm at Uniting Church Hall, Waverton

Chair : IG

Minutes : IG

Attendance : 18

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting, plus the representatives of various arms of Transport for NSW who had come to present on issues of concern raised by the Precinct.

Guests from other Precinct areas who had come to hear the presentation were also welcomed.

An apology had been received from BD

2. Previous Minutes

It was decided to leave consideration of the previous Minutes until after the presentation and related Q and A session.

3. Existing Business

- Western Harbour Tunnel / Dilapidated wharves and vessels

Representing Transport for NSW were:

Mark Russell Senior Environment Manager, WHT and Warringah Freeway

Sarah McKay Senior Project Manager, Infrastructure and Place

David Bohm Traffic and Transport Lead , WHT and Beaches Link

Zoe Rourke Community & Stakeholder Relations Engagement Manager, WHT

Mark Scali Director Environment, Industry & Assets, Maritime

On behalf of all the presenters, the Chair welcomed them and conveyed the appreciation of the community for this commitment from Transport for NSW. To clarify any potential confusion about the use of the word "Masterplan", a coloured diagram had been circulated among attendees which showed in red the land already converted from its former industrial use and run now by Council and covered by the Council's local Masterplan for both the Bays in Waverton and the surrounding lands - and showed in green the 3 zones which are still directly State owned land at the western end of Berrys Bay and are which subject to the Masterplan for these zones which is currently being developed as an element of the WHT project.

That document is attached to these Minutes.

It was suggested by Sarah, and agreed, that the presenters each talk first and then answer questions about their segment before moving on to the next speaker.

Sarah McKay and Mark Russell went first. Key points were:

- * Woodleys was still an operating facility when the current Masterplan was formulated and so, either way, there remains a need to clarify the ongoing use of the shed, office building, and land. NSC is not running any parallel process to do this.

- * The project is required to provide an increase in open space and to create a continuous foreshore path link (from Carradah Park to Balls Head Reserve).

- * They have run a set of initiatives to get a feel for the local community preferences and concerns – a Working Group including a range of community members; a Community Values Survey; and creation of a draft Masterplan which has been on public exhibition for community comment. They noted the preference for public open space and protecting and improving the natural environment has been the clear and consistent message they have been receiving, all the way along.

- * They have decided to improve access to the water as well as a focus on complementing the nearby open park spaces; and have added a youth adventure playground in the Bund Wall area.

They note they will extend the foreshore path near the bund wall across and at level around the water side of the Woodleys shed, to link to the beach.

- * They see opportunities to improve tinny, sailing dinghy, and kayak storage at the beach area, to complement and facilitate better general public use of the actual beach and natural swimming area which is already there.

It was noted by the meeting that the tinnys there are often the working commuting vessels of people who live on the yachts (so racking some of these may be difficult as the engines will remain on the boats), but a defined 'parking zone' concept might work.

- * The meeting asked for more information about the future of the marine leases in the Bay. It was noted by the presenters that these are not part of the Masterplan that is being developed.

In response, the meeting noted that from about 2006 to 2017 the major community action in this suburb was to stop successively larger marina proposals in the western arm of Berrys Bay - not 'on land' issues - and in the end the Premier had to decide to resolve the issue by cancelling the tender arrangements and publicly supporting the land area becoming public open space.

For these reasons, the community sees resolving the future of the Bay therefore needs to include – and indeed synchronise – whatever is decided for the on land and the in water components. It was strongly suggested by the meeting that either the current master planning process be widened to achieve this integration, or that the decisions on the marine leases at least be consciously dealt with in a parallel process.

Mark Scali went next. Key points were:

- * There is no current plan, timing, or funding to remove any of the derelict wharf of marina structures in Waverton. Such decay in former industrial sites is common and widespread.

It was noted by the meeting that they have long understood BP paid the government the money to remove its wooden wharves in Berrys Bay when decommissioning the site in 1999.

* Maritime also want to see if the WHL contractor will want to use, or remove, any of the derelict infrastructure as a part of the project, before deciding on a remediation project of their own.

*Superyacht Marinas runs the dolphin wharf on contract to Maritime – and many other sites too. It was clarified that the floating work shed, and the former Catalina restaurant are technically not vessels (they have no independent means of movement) and so are not subject to marine controls such as seaworthiness or vessel survey or maintenance. Maritime does sight the insurance certificate and collects the berthing fees on an annual basis.

The meeting noted the 'Baragoola' was subject to all of these - and it sank at the wharf and now there is an investigation to see if it was actually insured. The cost of breaking it up and removing the wreck was in the order of \$5m. to Maritime.

David Bohm went next. Key points were:

* North Sydney CBD is a critical point for all types of traffic modes – road users; heavy rail; metro line rail; busses; cyclists; pedestrians.

* It is not expected that people coming from Neutral Bay, Cremorne, Mosman, etc. will access the WHT by being routed into Falcon St, down Miller St, then back along Berry St. It is expected they will instead use the existing routes across the Harbour and Anzac bridges.

* The traffic in Berry St is already fairly heavy in peak hours, but it was decided to continue to use the State Road network (Pacific Hwy, Berry St, Arthur St) to route traffic across the CBD as the access route to the Tunnel, rather than burden another access street. He noted that Berry St is already seen and used as the link to everywhere else for all the traffic coming from suburbs immediately west or south of the CBD and so is the natural route to also access the WHT for these commuters.

* He has heard rumours about the B Line busses being re-routed to terminate at North Sydney instead of Wynyard; but has checked and cannot source this from any part of Transport for NSW. He thinks it is a ridiculous concept and without foundation.

* The WHL is to facilitate options for commuters in the North Sydney, Mosman, and Willoughby Council areas and so the planners want to keep the exit and entry points where these are currently suggested. He noted they would not relocate them even if the Beaches Link project does not proceed. They see the current access points as excellent feeder points for all of the lower North Shore suburbs.

*The meeting was incredulous about the observation that it is expected the WHL will effectively not be utilised by residents in Cremorne, Mosman etc. There was consternation about the complete lack of any alternative to Berry St being considered – not by ruining another street, but to construct a tunnel access and allow North Sydney CBD to have far less traffic in it, trying to go to other places.

By acclamation, the audience thanked the presenters for coming and speaking so candidly to the meeting and for the dialogue and interaction.

After the Transport for NSW presenters left, given it was 9:30, the meeting decided to defer all other matters on the Agenda to the next meeting in December - and so the meeting closed at 9:35pm.