

WAVERTON PRECINCT MEETING

4 July 2023

MINUTES

The meeting commenced at 7.35pm at the Waverton Uniting Church Community Hall.

Chair: IG

Minutes: DL

Attendance: 34

WELCOME AND APOLOGY

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting, and also welcomed Katie Xia, Community and Stakeholder Engagement for Transport NSW and Cameron Weller, consultant and manager for Acciona who will be addressing the meeting on the current situation in regards to the Western Harbour Link project.

Apologies received from KA, IL, KR and JB.

CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

The confirmation of previous minutes was moved by VY and seconded by DS "That the June 2023 Minutes be accepted".

Carried unanimously.

WESTERN HARBOUR LINK

Cam Weller addressed the meeting He noted there has been an amendment to the Environmental Impact Statement to build the entire tunnel underground, and this has been a positive development for the Waverton community. Originally, they needed to dredge the harbour floor to place immersed tubes between Birchgrove Wharf and the Coal Loader in Waverton, similar to the structure of Sydney Harbour Tunnel - but recent technological developments have meant that a Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) is now possible and this has altered the entire development, particularly the impact on Waverton. The biggest change to the project in a general sense from the TBM is that the tunnel can now be taken lower.

TBM's allow the tunnel to be lower than the harbour floor and therefore not disturbing the toxic sediments at the former slipway sites As a result, cofferdams are no longer needed at the Coal Loader, as originally planned. These difficult, significant and visible impacts are now completely unnecessary at the Coal Loader. Now, everything can be built underground. There will also be less noise impacts.

The Launch Chamber for the TBM will be at Birchgrove. Once it has done its job, it cannot be pulled back out again, making "burial" at Waverton a necessary step. The "burial chamber" will be under the flat, currently fenced off section.

The Berrys Bay Masterplan for the 3 parcels of land can now be brought forward and delivered much sooner than the original plan.

The slurry treatment plant at Birchgrove will reuse about 98% of waste material.

At North Sydney, the tunnel goes over the top of the Metro tunnel.

The exit point at North Sydney remains the same. The alignment of the tunnel remains the same. You will be able to drive from the M4 in Western Sydney and get to North Sydney without using a surface road. The idea of the tunnel in the first place are: that the City can be avoided for many motorists; to facilitate a broad connection through Sydney and; provide further simple access to the new Sydney Airport at Badgerys Creek.

Geo checking investigations are still going ahead in the Waverton area to determine rock conditions to inform the design of the TBM.

It was asked how large the TBM is. It is 16m in diameter and as large as a 4 storey building.

Commencement depends on approval of the modifications. A process of community consultation has to take place and in a few weeks, a public display will be available with a request for submissions. The Department of Planning and Public Space will be the approving body. The target to complete this consultation process is October this year. If this occurs, then the Balmain to Birchgrove section of the tunnel will be scheduled to finish in 2025, then the TBM team will take over with the under-harbour section completed in 2026, and an overall completion time for the entire project of 2028.

The exact alignment near the Balls Head and Bay Roads and other foreshadowed alignment details are not confirmed but this information will be placed onto the website when it is determined. The website will also provide a "tunneling tool" - residents who live within about 50m of the tunneling can enter their home address and see how deep the tunnel is around their home. This facility should be available to the public on the website at the end of this year or early next year.

The off-ramp will still be at Falcon Street/Crows Nest with a portal at Ernest Street taking motorists via bridge onto the Warringah Freeway.

There are no proposed changes to the Berrys Bay Masterplan. The two guests could not take any questions regarding the status of that masterplanning exercise or any about maritime issues at Berrys Bay- the issues beyond the shoreline. They will make inquiries at their end to find someone who can speak at a future meeting. They know that there is a commitment to a Park but not any details.

A question was asked regarding the traffic management and flow into North Sydney CBD. There will be a strong impact to traffic flow within North Sydney from this project and these changes will be permanent - in particular the impact on Berry St and from neighboring suburbs in the morning peak hours. It was noted by the resident that Zoe Baker, North Sydney's Mayor, has been trying to engage with the new government at this important juncture to open dialogue about the impact at the North Sydney CBD and the main on-ramp at Berry Street will be significant. Additionally, the Falcon Street intersection is already extremely busy. It was noted to the guests that every intersection from the top of Bay Road, McMahons Point, and into and along Berry Street has been assessed by the project's own experts to be at failure state (letting only 2 or 3 cars through per light change) in the morning peak hours. Numerous submissions have been made and all requests to engage regarding this issue over the last four or five years have been ignored by the State government. The guests responded, saying that the State government needs to weigh up the interests of the local community, the interests of motorists and all communities. Meeting attendees responded that the formulaic responses by the State government and Transport NSW and the unwillingness to meet are not helpful but noted this comment was not intended to be directed personally at our guests.

The Chairman, IG informed the meeting that the NSW Government Response document published in June makes it abundantly clear that the Northern Beaches Link will not go ahead. It has not been formally canceled but it is unfunded and unprogrammed - which means it will not happen. In contrast, the Western Harbour Tunnel is supported by the new State government. There may be some scope for communities such as ours to make small amendments but the Government are not committed to changing a great deal. There is a contract to build it, which means there will now be monetary penalties on the government for any changes. The task for communities affected, such as ours, is to now see what we can fine tune.

The attendees thanked the guests for their time and detailed responses to the community's questions.

EXISTING BUSINESS:

Coal Loader Cafe:

Colliers International have put together a marketing plan for the lease and will invite formal expressions of interest, expected to start this week.

Cycleway exit at Milsons Point:

There is now approval for the linear ramp, despite opposition from North Sydney Council, by the Heritage Council and also around 7,000 signatures on a petition. An alternative design was put forward some time ago by Bicycle NSW and North Sydney Council (around 2013) but this was ignored and it seems the Transport NSW design will now go ahead.

Former Waverton Bowling Club site:

No movement on this issue. The Chairman, IG has invited the Aboriginal Land Council to discuss this with Precinct representatives, and once there is a firm proposal has invited them to address a Waverton Precinct meeting, but there has been no response. It is understood Council are similarly trying to organise an initial 'meet and greet' meeting as well.

North Sydney Olympic Pool:

Councillor Ian Mutton has provided an update on this project. Completion date is April 2024. The variance to the project budget is \$8 million more than expected. By the close of the project it is expected to over run by up to \$25 million. Surprisingly, this may not have a very significant impact, perhaps some Council plans may be delayed. North Sydney Council had a healthy operating surplus, plus has income from some Council owned commercial property so there is some optimism that the impact may be not as significant as once thought.

Warringah Freeway Upgrade project:

The lead engineer was a guest speaker at a recent Combined Precinct meeting. This is a different project to the Western Harbour Tunnel, and is principally tasked with re-aligning the lanes. It needs to be built within the confines of the existing footprint as the State government does not own any further adjacent land. The project will take another 12 months and is currently tracking on time and on budget but there will be no community consultation on the design, though probably on the replacement tree planting and other remediation work.

Parraween Street Cremorne, update:

The campaign to save the Orpheum Cinema may have been successful but the effort to save the worker's cottages in Parraween Street, behind the cinema is still ongoing. North Sydney Council is supporting the campaign to retain this streetscape. A judgment from the Land and Environment Court is expected shortly.

Crows Nest development update:

The matter of development in the stretch between St Leonards Station, along the Pacific Highway towards North Sydney, and down Falcon Street to North Sydney Boys High School is the next big issue. A decision relating to the "triangular site"(at Falcon Street and Pacific Highway and Alexander St) is currently in court in relation to height limits.

IG, Chairman, suggested to the meeting that MO, the Director of North Sydney Council's Community, Planning and Environment Division be invited to address the Precinct regarding these matters and the changes being made by the new State Government and this was agreed to by the meeting.

DA's:

DA 154/23

The bus shelter advertising board already exists but the application for its installation is currently before Council.

DA 88/21 and Section 4 55 Application 88/21/4

The DA for 20 Larkin Street is to demolish the existing structure and build a 2 storey dwelling with a garage and basement, has been approved.

OTHER BUSINESS:

- It was noted that North Sydney Council updated the signage at the Bay Road community noticeboard, following our request last meeting. Community announcements are generally left alone but all other notices are still removed by an unknown party.
- A resident informed the meeting that there have been two physical attacks on community members by a man in his 40s or 50s. Both attacks have been thwarted by other local residents intervening. The attacks have occurred when the victims have been using footpaths around the Bay Road area. The attacks have been quite aggressive and it is thought maybe by the same person. Both victims have made Police reports. Meeting attendees were advised to remain vigilant and to provide information to Police if they know anything further.
- The Waverton Park drilling/access point is a tripping hazard as it is elevated above the grass and could be a dangerous obstacle for anyone using this recreational area. This will be discussed further at the next meeting.
- This meeting identified the Aboriginal Land Council and also Council's Director Community, Planning and Environment as possible speakers for future meetings plus the Waverton Precinct is still seeking invitations for a NSW Transport Maritime representative to address the Waverton community to discuss the waterways aspects that are not addressed in the Berrys Bay Masterplan.
- A resident raised that various issues are ongoing in regard to road surface hazards around Waverton. Principly, these exist at the station end of Crows Nest Road near the intersection with King St, where there seems to be underground water issue, and also on Bay Road outside number 79 , and the poor quality of the resurfacing on Balls Head Rd. The Precinct Committee will suggest a walk around with a North Sydney Council representative.

The meeting closed at 9.35pm. The next meeting for the Waverton Precinct Committee will be on Tuesday, August 1st, 2023 at the Bay Road Uniting Church Hall, 75 Bay Road, Waverton.