

NEUTRAL PRECINCT MINUTES
Tuesday 13 February 2024, commenced at 7:00 pm

1. Apologies – JMcl

2. Additional item added to the Agenda:

- i. DA 288/23: 59 Undercliff Street Neutral Bay. Minor demolition, additions and alterations to semi-detached single-storey dwelling with new first floor, and first floor studio. The application has not been determined.

*“Neutral Precinct MOTION November 2023: Neutral Precinct objects to the proposed bulk and scale of the proposed development resulting in the loss of privacy and outlook from the attached cottages; and objects to the proposed changes that will alter the streetscape.
Vote: Unanimous (12)”*

Resident CB attended an onsite meeting with, Council’s Assessment Officer responsible for this DA.

3. Business from minutes of meeting held 12 December 2023:

- i. 12 December 2023 minutes were confirmed by EC and seconded by HW

ii. Council responses to Precinct December motions.

(6.i) Neutral, Hayes & Kurraba Precincts merger proposal -

The Mayor will attend a meeting of residents from Hayes, Kurraba and Neutral Precincts on 27 February 2024, commencing at 7:00pm, at the Neutral Bay Club 3 Westleigh Street Neutral Bay. The agenda is:

1. Welcome (Chair: Council’s Community Engagement Specialist)
2. Guest speaker: Councillor Zoe Baker, Mayor of North Sydney
3. About the Precinct System
4. The role of office bearers
5. Presentation of first consultation results
6. Call for office bearers in Hayes and Kurraba
7. Re-establishment and/or merger of precinct areas

A Council flyer advising of the meeting will be letterboxed to all residents in the 3 precinct areas the week before 27 February.

(6.iii) DA 230/2022: 112-114 Wycombe Road - Residents

Neutral Precinct requested that the Appeal to be dismissed

Allocated to Council Executive Assessment Planner. Awaiting a decision.

See additional information at 4v. below.

4. Updates:

i. DA 258/23 Coles Supermarket and Grosvenor Lane Public Car Park

CP advised that Mr Tim Atkins, Director Titanium Property, representing Coles and Mr Ric O'Donnell, CEO of Arkadia, another landowner bordering the Grosvenor Lane Car park attended the Council meeting 12 February. Both spoke to a new draft Neutral Bay Town Planning Study.

Mr Atkins congratulated the council on the new plan but said that to wait for the Plan's ratification could add extensive delays to Coles timetable given Woolworths is vacating the site in November 2024. Coles would like to move forward now with their DA assessed against the new plan and not have to submit a planning proposal which could add further delays and the potential to leave the site without a supermarket for four to five years.

Mr O'Donnell also welcomed the new Plan as addressing the issues such as access and amenity, that the proposed Coles development might cause, for small shopkeepers around the Car Park. Mr O'Donnell also said the plan to retain the mature trees and above ground access in Grosvenor Lane during Coles construction were a good outcome.

Speakers from the Willoughby Bay and Brightmore Precincts also spoke and praised the Council staff for a very well presented new Plan which had taken into account residents' concerns about the first plan.

The Council endorsed the Plan going on public exhibition for 35 days and for public feedback to be available through the 'Have Your Say' portal on Council's website.

When received, Neutral Precinct will send a copy of the new Plan to members and place on the March agenda for discussion and feedback to Council.

ii. DA 339/04/4 1-7 Rangers Road.

(Amend condition I1 so that the Rangers Road Store can continue operation when the temporary closure of the supermarket at 45-43 Grosvenor Street occurs for redevelopment of that site which includes a new supermarket.)

CP advised that in the absence of a Precinct meeting before the deadline for submissions the Precinct Committee had made a submission to Council based on issues raised by residents at previous Precinct meetings. The submission supported the continued trading of the Woolworths Rangers Road supermarket, but requested the following conditions be applied to any approval:

- Woolworths stop using the Rangers Road Supermarket as a hub for home deliveries; and
- Woolworths reinstate car parking spaces currently used for trolley storage, back to public car parking spaces.

iii. Young Street Road Closure

GC advised that Council staff have developed a Concept Plan for partial reopening of the Street to Military Road which will be further developed by Council through formal engagement and community consultation. It is understood the concept includes providing one traffic lane on the eastern side to enable access for existing driveways. Council is having ongoing negotiations with the Department of Transport which needs to approve any re-opening of Young Street onto Military Road. It is not yet clear whether the Concept Plan will be for an entrance or exit from/to Military Road.

When the Concept Plan is released the Precinct forward to Precinct members and place on a meeting agenda for discussion

iv. Neutral, Hayes & Kurraba Precincts merger proposal
(Public meeting for Hayes & Kurraba residents 27 February 7:00pm at Neutral Bay Club)

See 3ii above for details.

v. DA 230/2022: 112-114 Wycombe Road

BH advised that a number of residents and CP from the Precinct Committee attended the Land & Environment Court site meeting on 29 January. Residents impacted by the development were alarmed when they received a letter, in December 2023, from Council's solicitor, Marsdens Law Group, advising a revised Council decision not to object to the DA. Residents are very angry that an agreement seems to have been reached prior to the Land & Environment Court hearing and decision on this DA.

In particular, the Council's support for the use of Barry Lane for access for demolition and construction is unfathomable to residents. Despite the proposal for a traffic management plan of large trucks and other vehicles entering/exiting Barry Lane from Yeo Street it will be a 'nightmare' for residents trying to access their property from Barry Lane.

Discussion:

- It was suggested, but unconfirmed, that the decision may have been influenced by not wanting to remove the sandstone wall along the Wycombe road frontage of the property to provide truck access. If this is the case, there is a precedent for removing and replacing sandstone walls at 54-58 Wycombe Road (the Lansdowne Aged Care facility).
- TM reminded the meeting that residents and the Precinct have been requesting Council, for some years, to reduce the speed limit from 50km/h to a 10km/h shared zone. These requests have been somewhat ignored with the only action being to erect signs to warn motorists of children about. The most recent request was to Councillor Welch in December which was referred to Council staff who

acknowledged the request and advised that it would be responded to in the new year. A reply is awaited.

- Barry Lane measures 4.9 meters from gutter to fence with a narrow 60cm footpath on one side. The Lane has a number of parking spaces that service both the community and those residences that do not have off-street parking. Pedestrians using the Lane need to walk on the road surface as the footpath is too narrow. Local children also play and socialise in the Lane.
- The Precinct meeting expressed extreme disappointment that residents' concerns were not properly considered when agreeing to the use of Barry Lane for demolition and construction of 112-114 Wycombe Road.

5. Current Community consultations

i. NSW Government Housing Reform proposals

CP outlined the key elements of the reform proposals and the meeting viewed a slide presentation prepared by Sarah Kock of the Brightmore Precinct. The slides compared the current building height zones with the proposed reform zones.

Discussion:

- A blanket approach to planning in NSW is not sensible nor acceptable. North Sydney Council's 'placed based' planning works well recognising the distinctly different demographic sections of the LGA. These being the North Sydney CBD, the larger commercial areas of St Leonards and Crows Nest and the villages such as Neutral Bay and Cremorne, Cammeray and Kirribilli that are primarily residential with small commercial areas consisting of local shops.
- Residents expressed concern that the Council's draft response to the State Government's planning reforms appears to identify the village of Neutral Bay for increased housing density. The 'villages' of Neutral Bay and Cremorne have inadequate access to public transport for the existing population let alone providing for an increase in population.
- Residents see a very high turnover of the rental population in Neutral Bay. Young professionals rent for a short time then when deciding to have a family move to locations with free-standing more affordable homes and with space for children to play. Where is this accounted for or considered in the State Government modelling?
- It was noted that the Council meeting on 12 February agreed to remove 'Town Centre' in relation to Neutral Bay in future documentation and replace with 'Village'. This decision is supported.
- The State Government needs to better define what constitutes a 'Town Centre'.

The meeting expressed their thanks to Sarah Kok for her research and informative presentation slides.

The Precinct Committee will make a submission to the Council based on feedback from residents. Residents were also encouraged to submit their views by 23 February both to the Council:

<https://yoursay.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/housing-reform>

and directly to the State Government portal:

<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/draftplans/exhibition/explanation-intended-effect-changes-create->

ii. Heritage Strategy for NSW

GC advised that the NSW Government is developing a Heritage Strategy to set a new direction and vision for protecting heritage in the State, ensuring it responds to community aspirations in delivering a better future for our heritage.

The Precinct has discussed heritage protection at previous meetings and residents have been asked to identify existing properties within the Neutral Precinct boundaries and not already listed on the State Heritage Register or situated in a Conservation Area. A list of identified properties will be sent to the Council so they can be considered when development applications are received and assessed.

Residents were encouraged to submit their views to the State Government portal by 31 March. <https://www.haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au/nsw-heritage-strategy>

6. Upcoming meetings were noted:

i. Neutral Precinct 12 March www.neutralprecinct.com

ii. Council –26 February, 11 March www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au

Meeting concluded at 8:15pm