



Sketch by renowned late local artist Peter Kingston

**North Sydney Local Government Area
Lavender Bay Precinct
MINUTES**

Thursday 28 November 2024

Starting at 7.00 pm

**McMahons Point Community Centre
165 Blues Point Road, McMahons Point**

Chair: Robert Stitt KC Robert@stittqc.com.au
Secretary: Joan Street lavenderbayprecinct@gmail.com

1. WELCOME

The Chair welcomed 44 people to the meeting and recorded 12 apologies. In particular, the Chair welcomed the Mayor, and two Councillors.

2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 October were read and approved.

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere in these minutes.

4. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

Election of Office Bearers for the period January to December 2025

The following officers were elected:

Chair: Robert Stitt KC
Secretary: Joan Street
Treasurer: Bernard Smith.

5. REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

The Chairman spoke to two issues:

- i) Long-term temporary closure of Alfred Sreet North off-ramp (Refer Item 8 below)
- ii) Development Application for 1 Warung Street, McMahons Point (Refer Item 9.4 below)

6. NORTH SYDNEY COUNCIL: PROPOSAL FOR A SPECIAL RATE VARIATION

North Sydney Council at its meeting on 25 November agreed to undertake community consultation for a proposed special rate variation (SRV) from 27 November 2024 to 10 January 2025.

This came as a surprise to ratepayers as Council in its 2023/24 Annual Report advised a net operating profit of \$13M. However, in November ratepayers were advised that Council's

financial position was weak, and Council was considering applying for an SRV) which would see minimum residential rates rise by 81% and minimum business rates by 84%.

The following points were raised in a general discussion:

- **Commonwealth and State Funding:** North Sydney Olympic Pool is a Sydney icon, built in 1936 for the Empire Games and its use is not confined to North Sydney ratepayers.
 - 1) The Commonwealth Government initially contributed \$10M. As ratepayers are advised the pool cost has doubled, Council should request additional funds.
 - 2) Council should also seek funds from the State Government as the pool is a key state asset e.g. it is a tourist attraction.
 - **Appropriate funding mechanism:** The pool, a long-term asset, should be funded through long-term borrowing, not one-off rates.
 - **Comparable Councils:** Comparing North Sydney to Mosman and Hunters Hill and claiming that North Sydney has lower rates is inappropriate due to differing characteristics. However, a comparison with the City of Sydney is valid as both have a similar business/residential mix. Currently, North Sydney's residential rates are higher than those of the City of Sydney.
 - **Two questions:** The Mayor stated the revenue shortfall isn't just due to the pool, prompting two questions from Precinct:
 - 1) Despite financial struggles, Council is promoting new projects, via eight "Informing Strategies" identifying additional projects for inclusion in the "2025 – 29 Delivery Program". This is irresponsible given the backlog of existing projects.

Question 1: Why not complete current projects first before burdening ratepayers with new ones at ADDITIONAL cost?
 - 2) - In April 2023, the pool's cost was forecasted at \$90M.
- In June 2024, the 24/25 Operational Budget omitted any financial crisis or need for financial restructure.
- In November, ratepayers learned of a \$122M budget blowout, leading to a SRV effective July 2025.
- The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) Guidelines advise Councils usually consult ratepayers between June and December the year before the SRV application is made.

Question 2: Why were ratepayers not informed of this situation before the election?
- The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the two Councillors did not answer Precinct's questions.
- **Questionable financial justification:** Council's projected \$67M surplus over the next decade to justify an SRV is questionable and may not be agreed upon by ratepayers.
 - **Additional issues need to be considered:** Council is proposing a financial restructure by increasing rates. Before proceeding, other issues such as expense review, underperforming asset review, and asset sales consideration need to be examined. Additionally, greater transparency is required.

Following the general discussion, the Chairman advised that Lavender Bay Precinct is a conduit for residents to communicate with Council. Hence the Chairman invited residents

to submit their views on this issue to the Secretary by 11 December. The Secretary would then compile a response to Council on behalf of Lavender Bay Precinct.

7. NOISE DISTURBANCE FROM MODIFIED CARS AND MOTORBIKES

This issue was raised at Precinct in June 2024. At that time Senior Constable Dom Trevor, Crime Prevention Officer, North Shore Police Area Command advised:

This issue is the collective responsibility of an intra agency working group comprising Environment Protection Authority (EPA), NSW Police and Roads and Maritime Services (RMS). Residents are advised to report all instances (include evidence photographs, videos etc) to the EPA <https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/your-environment/noise/vehicle-noise/noise-camera-trial> and, request the installation of noise cameras and issue of defect notices. The more people who complain, the better the chances of a positive response from the EPA.

Despite ongoing issues with noise in Milsons Point, Lavender Street, and McMahons Point, the Mayor advised the EPA had declined Council's request to join the current Noise Camera trial. However, Council is willing to again request installation of noise cameras, especially if there is strong community support. It was reported that an online petition, 'Stop Hooning on Blues Point,' had been launched on November 12, 2024, to advocate for Noise Cameras on Blues Point Road.

Lavender Bay Precinct resolved:

- I) Encourage residents to sign the petition and submit it to Council.
- II) Request Council to make a submission to the EPA for noise cameras in Milsons Point, Lavender Street, and McMahons Point.
- III) Request increased police presence on Friday and Saturday nights to enforce noise and speeding laws.

UNANIMOUS

Please sign the petition and distribute to neighbours, residents etc

Online at

Or scan the QR code

8. LONG-TERM TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF ALFRED STREET NORTH OFF RAMP

The Chairman advised he had responded to Transport for NSW's proposal for the long-term temporary closure of Alfred Street North.

An email had been sent to residents on 6 November requesting feedback by 17 November for a closure on 22 November. Such timing could only be interpreted as window dressing. This obdurate behaviour by Transport for NSW clearly demonstrates their complete disrespect for the community.

9. DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

9.1 4 Alfred St (Aqua Dining), Milsons Point

DA 328/24

Restaurant fit out.

Noted by Precinct

9.2 38 Middle+57 Blues Pt Rd

DA 303/24

Alterations and additions incl new addition at rear

Noted by Precinct

9.3 20 Bayview Street, McMahons Point

DA 275/2004

Demolish the existing dwelling and rebuild a new dwelling comprising 5 levels, a basement level plus 3 living levels plus a rooftop terrace.

Lavender Bay Precinct resolved:

THAT it is not opposed to development on this site but objects to the current Development Application as the scale and bulk of the proposed dwelling is an overdevelopment that will adversely impact the amenity of those living nearby including:

- I) overshadowing and loss of sunlight
- II) loss of privacy - the very large terrace is oversize compared with adjacent properties and, despite screening in some areas, will adversely affect the privacy of adjoining properties
- III) as the dwelling is on the high side of Bayview Street, there is potential noise disturbance from the large terraces
- IV) the purpose of the "rooftop terrace" is unclear and may be the subject of an amended DA in the future.
- V) the site coverage is excessive
- VI) the landscaping area is reduced by the large garage turntable area, which it seems is contrary to Council requirements.
- VII) the proposed excavation of 4.5 m is contrary to Council's DCP which requires excavation should be no greater than 500mm from the finished ground floor
- VIII) the wall height on the northern elevation exceeds Council's DCP limit of 7m
- IX) the Sandstone facade should be maintained to make it consistent with other adjacent properties in the street.

UNANIMOUS

Post Meeting Note: Council has extended the notification period for this DA to 17 January 2025 due to unadvertised architectural plans. Residents now have until this new deadline to make submissions

9.4 1 Warung Street, McMahons Point

DA 85/24

On 4 December, the North Sydney Local Planning Panel (NSLPP) will conduct a site inspection in the morning and hold a meeting via Microsoft Teams at 2.00pm to discuss and determine the application.

Residents may request to attend the site inspection, subject to the NSLPP Chair's discretion.

To register for the Microsoft Teams meeting, email xxx with your name, relationship to the application, and contact number by 5pm, 2 December 2024.

The Council officer's report is available on [xxx](#)

10. GENERAL BUSINESS

10.1 ***Parking in West Crescent Street, McMahons Point.***

Council is considering removing two small parking spaces between 2 and 6 West Crescent Street, McMahons Point. Residents respectfully request that these spaces not be removed, as their removal would negatively impact their access to parking within a reasonable distance from their homes.

Lavender Bay Precinct resolved:

To request Council not to remove these parking spaces due to the negative impact on residents.

10.2 ***Support the Wendy Whiteley Secret Garden Trust***

North Sydney Rotary Club are conducting a Christmas Dinner in the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron on 10 December at 6.30pm with Wendy Whiteley as guest speaker. All funds raised will be donated to the Wendy Whiteley Secret Garden Trust. Details are attached to these minutes.

10.3 ***Wendys Secret Gardening***

The next volunteer gardening day is on Saturday 7 December. Please RSVP by email to lxxx by Weds 4 December.

10.4 ***Vote of thanks to Acting Secretary***

Precinct thanked Mr xxx for his excellent support as Acting Secretary during the Secretary's two-month absence.

10.5 ***Save Our Sydney Harbour Campaign***

Please sign the petition to remove dilapidated structures from the harbour if you haven't already. Thank you.

Online at

Or scan the QR code

10.6 ***Welcome Deputy Mayor***

The Chairman welcome the Deputy Mayor who had joined during the meeting.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

Thursday 30 January 2025

12. CLOSE OF MEETING AND ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.15pm and invited members to join Precinct's annual Christmas celebration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Stitt", written over a horizontal line.

Robert Stitt KC
Chair, Lavender Bay Precinct

2 December 2024