

# **PLATEAU PRECINCT MEETING**

**Tuesday 25 February 2025, Start 6.30pm**

**St George Community Housing Common Room**

**Amherst Street Cammeray**

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## **MINUTES**

**ATTENDANCE:** 14 people attended the meeting:  
LK, KB, RP, PT, ELS CH, JA, FG, JG, JC, SW, KM

**GUEST SPEAKER:** Tim James MP State member for Willoughby

**VISITORS:** SW, Secretary of Anzac Precinct

### **1 WELCOME TO ATTENDEES**

### **2 GUEST SPEAKER INTRODUCED:**

Tim James listed possible speaking topics:

- WFU & WHT
- Pressure on local high schools
- Pressure on RNSH to cope with increase in population particularly the aged community
- Eager to listen to concerns of locals and to take questions

### **1 WFU & WHT**

TJ noted that Warringah Freeway is the widest, busiest freeway corridor in Australia and has not been upgraded since the 1960s apart from the Sydney Harbour Tunnel; Acknowledged that scale of work has caused and will cause huge disruption to our community both in construction phase and until completion in 2028.

The current projects (excluding the Beaches Link project which has been cancelled by this government) are overdue responses to address problems: overuse, traffic jams, entry and exit problems, unused bus lanes, unsafe lane merging, no safe provision for pedestrians and cyclists.

The biggest reason for WHT project (which he inherited from predecessor Gladys Berejiklian in 2022), as established in EIS, is to change the pattern of traffic crossing Sydney Harbour. Currently 60% of traffic using the Harbour Bridge and SHT cross the CBD to access another part of Sydney. The WHT will divert traffic away from the CBD and connect to the WestConnex interchange at Rozelle and other freeway systems.

TJ said his response is to listen, consult and voice the concerns of the community and to ensure the project adheres to the conditions of the contracts.

The biggest concern to the community is the loss of trees and green space. Cammeray Park has gone, but 1.8ha will be 'coming back' to the community as public, green, open space at the completion of the works. The type and use of this space will be announced at the end of 2025 when the community will be asked again to discuss and evaluate the proposals. TJ will ensure the voice of the community is heard in the process.

TJ read his submission to WHT Stage 2PDLP enquiry.

## **TJ: SUBMISSION to TfNSW Place Design Landscape Plan (PDLP) Stage 1**

Main focus: the Cammeray facilities and the landscape design. In particular, the report lacked significant reference to the return of landscaped open space as part of the project.

The PDLP did not appear to meet the ministerial conditions for landscaped areas, i.e. that the project must result in a net increase in landscaped area within walkable distance to the project. The new landscape area at Berrys Bay does not meet this condition. It is not 'right or reasonable' to include this area.

.ELS: Q: is the landscaped area of 1.8ha a concrete figure?

TJ: A: Yes, it is a firm commitment.

KB: Q: the walkway over Ernest Street should not really be included in landscaped area.

TJ: Yes, It is a bit 'cheeky'.

While the previous government proposed to investigate the business case for a wider landscaped walk (currently 10m wide) along Ernest Street to link Cammeray and Anzac parks, this government has shown no interest in the proposal. There must a commitment to the 2:1 tree replacement

SW: Tree planting fails because TfNSW and their contractors do not plant or manage the process properly. Monitoring their work is left to locals.

TJ: Acutely aware of community concern about trees and has taken part in community tree planting as well as personally monitoring the 2:1 tree planting. In this regards TfNSW is meeting its commitment.

JA: Planting tube stock has a better chance of survival than advanced plants.

TJ: The challenge, as confirmed by Council, is to meet the tree planting commitment within the 1.8ha area given the competing interest for use of the site. It may be necessary to plant elsewhere e.g. Anzac Park and other parks and verges. This will be considered in the second part of the PDLP at the end of 2025.

SW: Tree corridor along the side of the freeway which acted as a pollution barrier has been lost. The suggestion of including a green wall on new(Miller St) on ramp similar to BI car parks has been rejected by project team

KM: Biggest concern is the failure by TfNSW to meet the ministerial conditions of the project and their lack of accountability. 40 Breaches of the conditions have been documented by Cammeray Voices and raised at 2 Senate Estimate hearings. An Environmental Officer has been appointed but it appears their findings might not be favourable to TfNSW.

Q: How do we hold TfNSW accountable?

TJ: A: TFNSW has control over the whole process and is a 'law unto themselves.' The minister John Graham is the only person who is accountable. Despite continual letter writing to the minister there appears to be a failure of government at the executive level to hold the bureaucracy to account.

SW: TfNSW does not give accurate information about current activities.

TJ: Ventilation

Recommendations for the design of the ventilation stack: soften appearance with greater use of natural materials to blend in with natural landscape. Design is too stark, gold and modern.

Advocates filtered stacks to meet community expectations and to compensate the community for the impact caused by the project. Filtration of the stack should comply with best practice guidelines.

Feedback from the Department and minister: there are no stacks in Sydney with filtration, but air quality will be monitored. If it falls below acceptable levels, filtration will be installed.

When Lane Cove Tunnel was being constructed residents and the current MP Gladys Berejiklian lobbied for filtered stacks without success. Since then, air quality has been monitored and found to be safe.

Cost of filtration \$50m (2022) is small compared to the project total (\$14b) and is money well spent to gain the trust and confidence of the public.

CH: Cost of filtration after completion considerably higher...\$250m

While being realistic about the chances of filtration he will be guided by the report from the (independent) Chief Scientist in the hope that it will recognise the impact of the tunnel on the community and recommend in favour of filtration.

KM: At 18 km long with six lanes of traffic, the WHT will be the longest tunnel in Sydney. The tunnel only has one ventilation stack which will emit all the exhaust in a heavily populated, polluted area near many schools.

TJ: Modelling shows that electric vehicles will reduce pollution; however, brakes and tyres also emit particle pollution.

SW: Ella Adoo Kissi Deborah a young girl in London died as result of pollution.

ELS: Q how can we get (filtered) stacks happening?

TJ: A: The government is going to follow the advice of the independent eminent expert on this matter.

In conversation with experts, the reason given for no filtration is that the fans in the tunnels are so strong that particles will be pushed very high and dispersed over a wide area. There are claims, which he does not necessarily support, that the air next to the stacks will be cleaner than it is today.

KM: the height of the stacks has been reduced which could result in pollution closer to the ground

TJ: Yes, stacks will be 30m high

SW: There was a report years ago that high rise would not be built within 300m of stack because stack exhaust may interfere with air conditioning systems.

TJ: Is not aware of the 'lived experience' of people near Rozelle stacks.

Like the Lane Cove tunnels, air quality monitors will be installed at key points near schools. However, TfNSW will have to be very confident that the level of pollution warrants filtration of the stacks.

SW: Request for pollution level readings has been ignored by TfNSW.

TJ: Will request the release of the readings.

## Parking

TJ: Aware that parking is a big issue for locals. NSC could issue tickets for parking infringement

KM: Fines are issued however most of the area has unrestricted parking and workers from many parts of Sydney use these streets for free parking.

TJ: Thanked KM for the comprehensive work she has done in documenting parking problems and for highlighting issues through Cammeray Voices

SW: Allocation of parking in local streets is actively managed by the contractor.

KM: The Contractor is fully aware of the problems this causes locals but ignores requests to address the issue. When they do monitor parking it is usually before or after a shift.

TJ: Will observe parking himself.

KB: Restricted parking is the only tool in the box but residents have decided against this option.

SW: While workers use transport like the Metro, there is no car park for those coming from outside the area. Streets are always full of cars from elsewhere.

## Motorway Facilities

TJ: Has consistently advocated for Motorway Facilities to be located underground with community green space above. However, this government has dismissed the proposal for engineering and cost reasons, despite the small additional cost in the overall scheme.

## 2 LOCAL HIGH SCHOOLS

FG: Q: The general understanding is that no state school can refuse a student so why is Cammeraygal HS turning students away?

TJ: A: Cammeraygal HS is at capacity with no room for demountables or possible change to school design. The Dept of Education has confirmed that no new students will be accepted.

Chatswood HS, the third largest HS in NSW is at capacity, despite recent works and has been forced to accommodate 80 local additional students in demountables.

Mosman High is the only other possibility for students.

There are no plans for new schools in the electorate.

At a recent Budget Estimates hearing in the education portfolio it was revealed that 1) the proposed primary school at the Chatswood dive site will not proceed and 2) a new education precinct, proposed by the previous government in St Leonards using Gore Hill Tafe site for a preschool, primary and high school will not proceed, despite the projected increase in population.

FG: (having taught there) noted that there is no room for additional buildings on that site

ELS: Q: Has the Liberal Party committed to new schools? Vertical schools should be considered as part of new TOD developments.

TJ: A: Agrees with the concept. The Crows Nest TOD zone will include 3,250 new homes for and 10,000 additional people who will require new school, hospitals, road policing etc.

SW: Few local children gain entry to NS Boys and Girls HSs.

TJ: The catchment area for single sex schools is arbitrary and there are few options particularly for boys. Girls at least have Willoughby girls High. .

SW: The policy on catchment areas can be changed.

CH: Noting that many buildings are underutilised outside of school hours, suggested using school buildings around the clock similar to use in Asian countries.

TJ: Previous government under Dom Perrotet trialled a few schools with staggered hours in response to changing needs of the community.

SW: This would also affect transport use.

### **3 BUSES**

SW: Highlighted problems:

Cut back in bus services has resulted in long queues at Cammeray shops often around the corner of Miller and Amherst Streets.

School bus frequency due to increased school numbers and matching school start times has failed to be aligned to reality; this is made worse by not tapping on/off so the records on any given day are not accurate. Heavy school bags also restrict walking as an option.

TJ: Reasons for poor service:

Not enough buses

Willoughby depot is down 13 buses - 10% of fleet

86 bendy buses in Sydney are out of service with maintenance issues,

The previous government's commitment to buy zero emission buses has not been possible because of supply issues so old buses and diesel buses, often subject to breakdown, are still in use.

The electrical capacity of Willoughby depot is inadequate and requires a complete rebuild to run more electric buses.

The driver shortage while not as acute as post covid is still an issue.

Brief discussion on power and demands of train unions.

KM: there is not enough investment in infrastructure

TJ: agreed that investment is not keeping pace with population increase. Without proper investment in all services, the quality of life we enjoy will decline.

The claim that franchising of bus services is the cause of the current problem is not valid. The government is still responsible for supply of buses and timetables

### **4 RATES**

PT: increase in rates is concerning.

TJ: increase in rates of 87% over 2 years will be permanent and will generate \$500m over a ten-year period. As tabled in his speech to parliament this increase does not make sense:

\$50m of this is for the pool overrun. This cost could have been raised in other ways

\$140m will go to Council Reserves for no particular purpose.

Increase is a cash grab. This Council has not been careful with money and could making savings (like a household) and utilise assets more effectively.

There will be no return on the money Council is raising.

Suggested that residents make a submission with objections to IPART before 24 March.

FG: A: how binding are the findings of IPART

TJ: A: Council is not bound to accept IPART recommendation.

SW: update on recent Combined Precincts Meeting: Terese Cole (CEO) gave reasons for increase:

Federal tax contribution reduced 1% to 1/2%

10% of landowners in LGA do not pay rates eg private schools which are valuable businesses.

Rate breakdown: 90% by residents, 10% by business

Breakdown of \$544m increase: repairing the deficit, building reserves, upgrades, community infrastructure, operating costs and infrastructure backlog.

Council cannot dip into reserves

She encouraged the community to write to IPart with concerns.

CH: does not want to give up services. NSC rates have been historically very low despite having 'gold standard services'. This is an affluent area and 'In a real world' these must be paid for if we want to maintain the current services.

FG: Perhaps increases should be gradual.

SW: Therese Cole noted by having a steeper rate increase Council would avoid higher interest charges by repaying loans in a 10 rather 20-year time frame.

Increase in rates would be over two years starting in 2026.

KB: 70% of rates paid by unit owners are very low.

SW: Presentation was open and transparent.

TJ: Do residents need fortnightly waste collections?

SW: Green waste makes money; general waste collection encourages waste. Most Councils have restrictions on the amount of rubbish and the number of cleanups.

CH: Q Why is there a \$1 surcharge on Uber and other taxi services?

TJ: When Uber started operating, taxi license plate fell by 75%. To compensate the government allowed a \$1 levy on every fare.

#### **5 PREVIOUS MINUTES – 29 October 2024**

MOTION: The minutes of the general meeting held on 29 October 2024 were confirmed as read and correct.

MOVED BY: SW

SECONDED BY: PT

CARRIED: unanimously.

Chair thanked Tim James and those present for attending.

#### **6 NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 22 April 2025**

Meeting ended at 8pm.