

HARRISON-BENNETT PRECINCT

Minutes of General Meeting

held on Thursday, 5 June 2025 at 6 pm

at the Parraween Street Early Childhood Centre, Cremorne.

Attendance	18 attendees + 2 guests 7 apologies: KD, GW, AP, LP, JT, PM, GL
Previous Meeting Minutes and SOA	<p>Minutes of 1 May 2025 meeting were confirmed by BD and seconded by GB.</p> <p>Council's Statement of Actions (SOA) were reviewed by the convenors with meeting attendees. The following are the responses received from Council to our May Minutes:</p> <p><i>Cabramatta Road: The kerb, guttering and concrete footpath is showing wear and tear but it is still functioning and low risk therefore not scheduled for replacing - minor paving repairs will be scheduled by footpaths roads and drainage team - leaning signposts will be straightened - paving will be cleaned once minor repairs are complete - parks and gardens team have scheduled weeding and tidying as part of there regular maintenance works. Please note any urgent/dangerous issues please contact Council on 9936 8100 with details and exact area (for example between 1-4 Cabramatta Rd there are damaged pavers).</i></p> <p><i>Request sent to Traffic for a guest speaker to attend one of our meetings.</i></p> <p><i>Pavement outside 74 Spofforth Street: This is private land and Council would not be able to take any regulatory action, you will need to contact the strata committee of the building for advice on how best to manage this. Please contact Council if you need more information regarding the Strata. If anyone is blocking the footpath, please call Council directly on 9936 8100 to report to the Rangers.</i></p>
Guests	<p>Councillors Jessica Keen and Efi Carr were special guests at this meeting.</p> <p>In response to questions from the floor they provided information about their background, what drove them to stand for Council and what were highlights of their time on Council to date.</p> <p>Councillor Carr said that her experience on Council so far was positive and exciting. One of the challenges was having to consider the SRV proposal, along with a significant volume of related material, which was presented to Councillors only a few weeks after they were elected. She would like to see more transparency and better community consultation and welcomes any resident to contact her with any matter they wish to discuss.</p> <p>Councillor Keen said the highlight of her time on Council so far included getting to know Council staff, and also seeing the IPART determination on Council's recent SRV proposal. She said the result had been a win for the community. Cr Keen said she would like to be an advocate for the community and wanted more debate, conversation and would like to see more people come to participate at Council meetings (not an empty chamber).</p>

Special Rate Variation (SRV)	<p>SK gave a well received presentation on the reasons for IPART's decision to refuse NS Council's application for a SRV.</p> <p>Background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six Councils applied for an SRV this year. Four got their SRV proposals fully approved, including Federation Council (69.94% increase over 2 years). Northern Beaches Council secured a partial approval (25.2% over 2 years). NSC was the only Council to get its SRV proposal of (87.05% over 2 years) rejected in its entirety. • IPART received 1,648 survey responses and 322 written submissions (mostly critical of the NSC proposal). • NSC was assessed to satisfy only 2 of the 6 IPART assessment criteria: a) Integrated Planning and Reporting documentation, and b) other relevant matters that IPART consider relevant (including prior SRV compliance) • NSC was assessed to fail 4 of the 6 IPART criteria. <p>The criteria not satisfied were:</p> <p>1. Financial need not demonstrated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of transparency on reserve accumulation and SRV fund usage. (Data provided by NSC to IPART showed that NSC had planned to use SRV funds to accumulate \$97 million of unrestricted reserves by FY35) • A misunderstanding in the community that SRV was primarily for Olympic Pool • Alternatives to an SRV were not adequately explored. • No baseline provided during consultation. <p>2. Community awareness not demonstrated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community engagement materials did not provide sufficient information to enable the community to be fully aware of the need and extent of the proposed SRV • Lack of transparency around internal reserves accumulation. • Need for SRV was not disclosed during the May–June 2024 'Informing Strategies' consultation - the community were asked for input on new projects without being told an SRV would be required to pay for them. • Results of community consultation not appropriately considered <p>3. Unreasonable Impact on Ratepayers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity-to-pay assessment based on 2021 data (year of Covid pandemic when interest rates, inflation and rents were at an all-time low), and was not reflective of current economic conditions and higher cost of living • Scale of increase over a short 2 year period was found not to be reasonable; a significant burden on fixed-income households. • Hardship policy ineffective: eligibility criteria almost impossible to meet. Council records showed that no one was eligible in the last 5 years. • Impact on business ratepayers was not adequately considered.
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4. Productivity and Cost Containment Inadequate

- Cost savings presented by NSC was found by IPART to not be “genuine cost savings” (e.g.\$2.3M saving that Council stated it achieved via an organisational restructure was found to have been reallocated to another area within Council and hence not truly a saving)
- No clear productivity or cost containment strategies identified.

IPART recommendations to NSC

- If Council requires additional rates revenue in future, it can reapply to IPART, addressing the shortcomings identified.
- Before any future SV application, Council should:
 - Complete a service level review in consultation with the community.
 - Consider alternatives to an SRV, including service reductions and appropriate use of debt for long-term assets (e.g. North Sydney Olympic Pool).
 - Develop an ongoing framework to identify and implement productivity and efficiency savings.
 - For long-lived assets like the Olympic Pool, IPART determined that the use of debt is consistent with intergenerational equity principles.

Council’s response to IPART decision: Revised draft Delivery Program 2026-2029 and Operational Plan and Budget 2025-2026

Council has indicated it will consider the following:

- Reduce strategic operational funding
- Targeted Financial Repair Program (service cuts and new income generating opportunities)
- Reduce infrastructure renewal
- Review assets and divestment opportunities
- Borrow from externally restricted reserves
- External loan
- New Financial Modelling and Community Engagement
- New SRV application


Discussion

There were concerns expressed about the way in which NSC had prepared and lodged the SRV proposal, including a lack of transparency and inadequate consideration of community concerns. Issues were also raised regarding the Revised draft Delivery Program and Operational Plan, now on public exhibition. In particular, **these documents continue to include the Informing Strategies**, despite these being unfunded and rejected by nearly 80% of respondents in the SRV consultation. Further, no individual project costings have been provided and concerns were expressed that the community is being asked to support a significant suite of new projects with

	<p>no transparency on costs. It was also noted that the inclusion of unfunded projects in the Delivery Program is inconsistent with s404 of the Local Government Act, which requires activities articulated in a Delivery Program to be “within the resources available under the resourcing strategy”.</p> <p>Precinct submission</p> <p>It was agreed that the Precinct would make a submission on the Revised Draft Delivery Program 2025-29 and Operational Plan 2025-26 that outlines the Precinct’s concerns regarding the inclusion of the unfunded and uncosted Informing Strategies.</p>
Development Updates	<p>The following information was provided to attendees:</p> <p>1-7 Rangers Road and 50 Yeo Street (Woolworths) -</p> <p>It was noted that this development has been declared a State Significant Project: a Residential Flat Building with shop top housing and several levels of basement parking - indicatively 90 units.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Now waiting for Woolworths to provide its detailed proposal to DPHI. · Woolworths previously secured an increase in maximum building height to allow a part 6 and part 8-storey building (March 2025). The latest proposal is likely to be taller. <p>It was noted by a resident that overshadowing on Yeo Street was based on roof level - not on ground level impacts.</p> <p>Coles: 41-53 Grosvenor Street</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · A 4 storey DA was approved by SNPP on 15 May 2025. · Coles has since lodged a PP seeking to increase maximum height to 31m (8 storeys). · Coles is expected to lodge an amended DA (for 8 storeys) once its PP is approved. · PP Process can be lengthy – will take at least a year, involves many steps. · PP is currently being reviewed by NSC planning officers – they will prepare a report for the NSLPP who will make a recommendation to NSC. · The Process that follows will be: If NSC approves it, the PP will go to DPHI for “Gateway Determination”. If NSC rejects it, Coles can progress the same proposal via a “rezoning review” (via Sydney North Planning Panel). If endorsed by the SNPP, the PP will proceed to DPHI for “Gateway Determination”. Then there will be a public exhibition, another round of NSC review, and final determination by DPHI.

	<p>Arkadia: 166-178, 184-192 and 198-214 Military Road</p> <p>Arkadia has lodged a PP seeking to increase height to 45m. The Concept includes two 12-storey, one 11-storey and one 9-storey tower. This PP is currently under review by NSC planning officer who will prepare a report for the NSLPP. The same process as above applies to the Coles PP.</p> <p>It is expected that Arkadia will lodge a DA once it has its PP approved. Alternatively Arkadia could lodge a proposal to the Housing Delivery Authority (to achieve State Significant Development status, similar to Woolies), although this could be challenging due to the Arkadia development being dependent on securing agreement with Council and adjacent landholders for use of the land under the Council car park.</p> <p>40 Spofforth Street, Cremorne: This development for a childcare centre (“Dashing Ducks”) catering for 89 students on the ground floor of an existing residential flat building has been approved via a Conciliation Conference of the Land and Environment Court (subject to conditions being met).</p> <p>Cr Keen commented that Council briefings no longer include information on Land and Environment Court proceedings.</p>
<p>Low and Mid Rise Housing Reforms (LMR)</p>	<p>There was further discussion about the inclusion of Cremorne and Neutral Bay as town centres under the Low and Mid-Rise Policy and the impacts on our community.</p> <p>Meeting attendees again expressed severe disappointment and frustration at NSC’s nomination of Neutral Bay MU1 Zone as a Town Centre under the Low and Mid Rise Policy (a nomination that was later rescinded). This nomination was submitted by NSC in writing to DPHI on 15 May 2024 during the formal State Government Town Centre Selection Process. This nomination was contrary to a lawful Council resolution made on 12 February 2024, when Council had resolved to refrain from identifying MU1 zones as Town Centre precincts under the policy.</p> <p>This resolution was specifically aimed to exclude areas like Neutral Bay and Cremorne, which have MU1 zones.</p> <p>Unfortunately, it seems that the rescission of the nomination of Neutral Bay MU1 Zone had no effect as significant swathes of both Cremorne and Neutral Bay have been declared subject to the LMR policy. The policy affects all land within 800 metres walking distance of a nominated MU1 Zone.</p> <p>Two days after NSC submitted the nomination, on 17 May 2024, NSC officers participated in a workshop with DPHI, the stated aim of this workshop (according to section 3.2 of the DPHI Policy Refinement Paper dated 29 April 2024) being to “establish a consensus on a list of suitable station and town</p>

	<p>centre precincts". Given the above timing, while NSC held an extraordinary meeting on 18 June 2024 to rescind the nomination, it was likely too late.</p> <p>Meeting attendees considered possible options to seek the reversal of Neutral Bay and Cremorne's inclusion in the LMR.</p>
Traffic	<p>Spofforth Street</p> <p>A summary of issues was relayed to Councillor Keen and Carr:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Acute safety concerns for pedestrians crossing Spofforth Street. A pedestrian refuge is acutely needed, possibly near the Holt Avenue bus stop. - Spencer Road intersection: there has been a major increase in vehicle movements due to congestion in Holt Ave - pedestrian safety is now a major issue. - Speeding vehicles on Spofforth Street remains an on-going issue with no monitoring by Police. - The Dashing Ducks childcare Centre (40 Spofforth St) includes a condition of consent requirement to install a pedestrian safety refuge in the roadway. This needs cooperation between NSC and Mosman Council. - The impact of all the new developments and cumulative increase in traffic has major impacts on Spofforth St, Rangers Rd and feeder streets. <p>Cr Keen welcomed Convenors and Precinct members to contact her regarding traffic issues. She also offered to communicate (via the Traffic Committee) with Mosman Council to gain inter-Council collaboration regarding Spofforth Street issue</p> <p>There was also a suggestion that the Precinct write directly to the Minister for Transport with its concerns.</p>
YOUR SAY	<p>Revised Draft Delivery Program 2025-29 and Operational Plan 2025-26 Consultation closes Tuesday 24 June 2025</p> <p>Action: That the Precinct make a submission Unanimous</p> <p>Draft Community Engagement Strategy 2025-2029 Consultation closes Wednesday 11 June 2025</p> <p>It was noted that NSC is proposing to set up a series of working groups drawn from statistically significant community groups. Existing committees would be abolished - a question was asked why was this necessary given existing committees and the roles of precincts.</p>

<p>Streetscape</p>	<p>Cnr Holt Ave - Stop sign damaged. It was reported that the stop sign at the intersection of Holt Avenue and Spofforth Street on the NSC side had been pulled out of the ground and was no longer visible to drivers.</p> <p>Bannerman Street - curb buildout at roundabout A resident had reported an issue with negotiating the curb buildout (wheel damage) at the corner of Bannerman Street and Murdoch Street. It was suggested that perhaps blue reflective lights would be of assistance at this spot.</p> <p>74 Spofforth Street A section of concrete outside 74 Spofforth St is cracked and is a trip hazard. Whilst this area may be private property (as stated in our most recent SOA), this area for pedestrians is a direct continuation of the adjacent public footpath and therefore presents a public safety issue. It would be appreciated if Council officers could inspect the site personally and liaise with the land owner accordingly.</p>  <p>Note: It was brought to the attention of the guest Councillors that there is no longer an active Streetscape committee operating in Cremorne.</p>
<p>Meeting close</p>	<p>The meeting concluded at 8.40 pm.</p>
<p>Next Meeting</p>	<p>The next meeting will be held on 3 July 2025.</p>