

WILLOUGHBY BAY PRECINCT
PART OF NORTH SYDNEY COUNCIL'S COMMUNITY PRECINCT
SYSTEM



MINUTES OF MEETING HELD
THURSDAY 14th August 2025
COMMENCING AT 7.30 PM

MEETING CO-CHAIR: MTJ
ATTENDANCE: 13 people attended the meeting
APOLOGIES: 3 were recorded
GUEST SPEAKER: Councillor Efi Carr
INVITEE: RM - Co-Chair Brightmore Precinct

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes for the 10th July 2025 meeting were adopted

Motion carried: 7 in favour, 6 abstentions, 0 against

GUEST SPEAKER

- Councillor Carr has been a Councillor for 11 months
- Has a PHD in nutrition.
- Her career was in the food industry, responsible for R&D and regulatory issues as well as stakeholder engagement strategy.
- Worked in Asia for 17 years, based in Bangkok and Singapore.
- Responsible for the Asia Pacific region, then responsibilities expanded to include Europe and then Latin America as well.
- Returned to Sydney, lived in Killara then moved to North Sydney.
- Whilst working in the food industry worked with vulnerable communities, providing programs to help these communities create their own small businesses and found this very rewarding.
- In Sydney decided to get involved with the local community, helping migrants with their applications so they could find jobs.
- Co-chaired the Neutral Precinct for 5 years and has been Chair of the Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre for some years. The Neighbourhood Centre is operating very successfully.
- Decided to run for Council believing Council needs greater transparency, better processes and better community engagement.
- With the SRV having been rejected, Council will need to deal with issues regarding services and infrastructure and a second attempt for an SRV. There is a survey on services and infrastructure on Council's website closing 29 August.
- Another concern is proposals to rezone land for residential developments in the North Sydney CBD, replacing current commercial space.

Questions from Precinct members

Q: Will the working from home paradigm affect the need for business space in North Sydney CBD?

A: We need to preserve employment space for the future. However, developers are focussed on building large-scale residential projects.

Q: What do you think of the transport changes in the North Sydney LGA?

A: The Metro has had a significant and positive impact on North Sydney.

Q: What about the Warringah Freeway Upgrade?

A: Cr Carr thinks that the WFU has not been good for this area. The congestion will continue to cause traffic problems even when it is finished. She is glad the Alfred Street exit has been reopened.

Q: What about the land we have lost in Cammeray Park?

A: There are some challenges. It is good that we are now going to have a new open space and community facility at Berrys Bay.

Q: What is the current feeling about Cammeray Park's future?

A: Cr Carr doesn't know what is going to happen there; hasn't seen anything come through from Council.

Q: Is the Ernest Street exit after the Bridge and the Tunnel going to be closed off sooner or later?

A: Does not know.

Q: What are your thoughts about how we find or provide more open space?

A: Cr Carr's view is Council should be pushing the developers to provide more open space. Developers really need to provide more services for residents. Cr Carr not sure this is really happening.

Q: Developers provide minimal contributions for needed infrastructure by way of Voluntary Planning Agreements in relation to rezonings – for example 12-14 Waters Road. Is there anything to prevent North Sydney Council from adopting a policy such as that adopted by Parramatta requiring payment of a fixed percentage of uplift?

A: Interested in exploring this further. Would Precinct be interested in discussing further?

Precinct happy for Chair to discuss further with Cr Carr.

Q: Are there any more State Significant Developments happening at the moment apart from Woolworths Rangers Road?

A: Yes, there are quite a few. Council has been totally bypassed and not in the equation at all. Council still has to provide a report so that when the plans go in, Council officers have to assess it and put in a report (with only a minimal amount of time to do it). The report carries very little weight because the decision will be made at State Government level.

BRIGHTMORE PRECINCT CO-CHAIR REPORT ON ARKADIA'S PLANNING PROPOSAL FOR 9-12 STOREYS ON MILITARY ROAD

An apology from Arkadia was read to Precinct by Chair after Arkadia was unable to attend to make a presentation to Willoughby Bay Precinct.

RM, Co-Chair of Brightmore Precinct reported on the presentation made by Arkadia to Brightmore Precinct on its Planning Proposal.

Issues with Arkadia's Planning Proposal

Sites are not contiguous - either because Arkadia was unable to do a deal with neighbouring property owners or neighbouring sites are owned by Council. Therefore, Arkadia is somewhat compromised as to how it can develop their land holdings.

Access problems – there is no vehicular access from Military Road because it is a State road, so access has to be from the rear. Because the Grosvenor Lane Council car park is likely to go underground, it appears Arkadia believe it is at a disadvantage. Therefore Arkadia want to keep the Grosvenor Lane car park at grade or at least a part thereof. This will be a contentious issue.

Another contentious issue is Arkadia wants to push the limits of height. Arkadia has not done a lot of development of their own – the firm is more a property owner than a developer.

RM advised since the presentation to Brightmore Precinct last February, Arkadia has made some additional submissions to their Planning Proposal including: the Council-owned Community Centre which was originally included has been removed and the Blue and White Dry Cleaners site has been included – at least in the discussions, if not the designs. Further, they have expanded on their proposal for the form of the Grosvenor Lane car park. Arkadia's Voluntary Planning Agreement proposes a new Community Centre which would be owned by Arkadia, not Council.

RM expressed the view that Coles, Arkadia and Council have not been working together effectively despite Arkadia saying it would like to work with Coles and Council to have a full and satisfactory outcome. Arkadia says redevelopment is not financially feasible at the current building height limit or at the 6 storeys in the Council-endorsed Neutral Bay Village Planning Study.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

15 Richmond Avenue, Cremorne – Illegal Work

Co-Chair reported Council's Executive Compliance Officer has advised that Council has completed its investigation and lifted the stop work order on the site but is continuing to monitor the site. Council recently observed workers using a drop-saw to cut bricks on the Council verge. This unsafe and not permitted. Council issued a fine and notified the Building Commission and SafeWork NSW.

Council has passed over its compiled evidence on the site to the NSW Building Commission and understands the Commission is undertaking a full investigation into the site, including investigation of two Private Certifiers and of licensing practices with respect to nominated builders. Council officers identified numerous defects, including inconsistencies with the Construction Certificate documents and inconsistencies with the Building Code and has also passed this information over to the Building Commission. The NSW Building Commission has the power to issue rectification orders. Council understands that the Commission is undertaking a review of structural issues with a view to issuing a rectification order based on structural engineering advice. It will be up to the Certifier to determine whether an Occupation Certificate is issued in the context of any order issued by the Building Commission.

Co-Chair reported that the owner of a downstream property has advised that contractors for 15 Richmond Avenue are undertaking excavation on the downstream property to determine if a stormwater pipe is located within an easement.

MOTION: That Willoughby Bay Precinct thanks Council for keeping the Precinct informed.

Motion carried: 11 in favour, 2 abstentions, 0 against

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

Council Summary of Actions Arising (SOA) Willoughby Bay Minutes JULY 2025

Summary of Actions Arising (SOA) Willoughby Bay 2025 – 14 August 2025

July Primrose Park Disabled Access

That Willoughby Bay Precinct thanks Council for the work done to Primrose Park which has resolved the issue of disabled access and improved access for park users generally.

Thanks have been forwarded – Closed for Council.

June 15 Richmond Avenue, Cremorne

Willoughby Bay Precinct thanks Council for the update by Council's Executive Compliance Officer and reiterates its request that Council continue to keep the Precinct informed of the compliance activities through the Chair.

Thanks and request have been forwarded to compliance – Closed for Council.

DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

39 Wonga Road Cremorne – Demolition of an existing dwelling and construction of a dwelling house with a double garage, landscaping works and a swimming pool. DA188/2025/1

36 Tobruk Avenue Cremorne – Demolition of existing buildings, construction of an attached dual occupancy, swimming pools, new driveway crossing associated site excavation and related landscaping, DA228/2025/1

Neighbours of the subject site gave a presentation and endorsed the following Motion.

MOTION: That Willoughby Bay Precinct objects to DA 228/25, 36 Tobruk Avenue, Cremorne for the following reasons:

- The height is excessive to the extent it is inconsistent with the objectives of the NSLEP that seek to promote development that reflects the natural gradient, that retains views, and is an appropriate scale in accordance with the character of the area. The Precinct notes that 3 and 4 storey buildings are appropriate in this area and that some exceedence of the height limit is reasonable. However, the proposed “V” shaped footprint with two “fingers” protruding to the west, results in most of the top floor being above the height limit. The Precinct would like the building form to be redesigned to eliminate the protruding fingers and reduce the height exceedence.
- The “V” shaped footprint results in reduced side setbacks and living area windows of the two new dwellings facing each other. The building form should be redesigned so that the side setbacks are consistent with the NSDCP provisions and windows of the two new dwellings do not look into each other.
- The swimming pool is oriented east-west and cantilevered above the natural ground. The Precinct notes the Commissioner in *Etherington v North Sydney Council [2025] NSWLEC 1444 19 June 2025* observed that a raised swimming pool on a similarly sloping site would have a detrimental effect on the rear yard of the neighbouring property because the proposal was unsympathetic to the topography of the site and, as a consequence, it would be a visual intrusion when viewed from the neighbour's rear yard. The Precinct would like the swimming pools to be deleted. The deletion of the swimming pools would also reduce the site coverage.

Motion carried: 11 in favour, 2 abstentions, 0 against

COUNCIL MEETINGS

Meeting 28 July 2025

8.2. MM02: Rate-exempt schools and educational institutions

Private schools own approximately 152,566m² of land in the LGA. If rated as a business, it would result in additional rate revenue of over \$1 million. On 9 December 2024 Council resolved:

2. THAT Council invite private schools and the Australian Catholic University to voluntarily pay rates (or an equivalent in-kind contribution) on their property holdings within the North Sydney local government area to contribute to maintenance of Council assets including roads, footpaths, and open space.
3. THAT Council publish a “Roll of Honour” on Council’s website and social media platforms recording those educational institutions that voluntarily contribute.

The Mayor wrote to institutions and received responses from Catholic Schools NSW; Sydney Catholic Schools; Redlands; St Aloysius’ College; SHORE – Sydney Church of England Grammar School; and Wenona.

Each of the schools cited s83C of the Education Act 1990 (NSW) and/or clause 26 of the Australian Education Regulations 2023 (Cwlth) as a restriction on their capacity to voluntarily contribute in cash or in kind. That is, they politely declined and expressed a commitment to continuing to work with Council to support the community they are an important part of.

Council resolved:

1. THAT Council calls on the State Government to implement the recommendations of the recent Upper House Inquiry into the ability of local governments to fund infrastructure and services, particularly an urgent review of rate exemptions and concessions under the Local Government Act 1993 and, if necessary, urgently amend the Act to exempt voluntary contributions to councils from operation of s83C of the Education Act 1990; and
2. THAT Council seeks to refresh and reinvigorate the Memorandum of Understanding with Australian Catholic University.

10.4. Draft Community Engagement Plan: North Sydney - Towards a Sustainable Future

Consultation on the Council approved the 2025-2029 Delivery Program, and the 2025-2026 Operational Plan and Budget. Survey on Council's website will close on 29 August 2025.

10.12. New Year's Eve - Introduction of Ticketing Managed Access

Council resolved on ticketed access to Blues Point with the intent to support partial cost recovery of New Years Eve event expenses (traditionally fully subsidised by Council).

Meeting 11 August 2025

10.2 Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy.

Council will move forward on adopting a policy of fees/charges for the use of public space within NSC jurisdiction which will eventually include legislative cover.. Continuing study & development over next few years.

9.1 Traffic Committee Minutes – 18 July 2025

Road closures for Sydney Marathon on 31 August 2025. Event expected to attract 35,000 participants. Traffic changes related to the event will occur between 7am 30 August to 12pm Sunday 31 August.

Combined Precinct Committee

Next Meeting 19 August 2025. Agenda not yet received.

Council/Precinct News

- a) Council have opened an Online Rates Portal where residents can review their rates history and administration of their property.
- b) Notification re EOI for Sydney North Planning Panel (the regional planning panel currently chaired by Peter Debnam, not the local planning panel).
- c) "Have Your Say" promotion regarding joining a Precinct Committee.

Tim James MP Willoughby Community E-Update July 2025

“... my consistent advocacy for safety improvements at the intersection of Gerard and Macpherson Streets has paid off with Transport for NSW now working with Council on the installation of traffic lights. The proposed design will include pedestrian crossings that effectively separate pedestrians and vehicles, reducing conflicts between them.”

Precinct members expressed appreciation this issue appears to be moving forward.

Precinct requests an update from Council.

Correspondence

Email from Council's Executive Compliance Officer to Co-Chair MTJ dated 17/7/2025.

GENERAL BUSINESS

A Precinct member asked whether local roads are to be sold to schools.

Cr Carr indicated that the General Manager has been authorised to negotiate with the schools. However there has been no final decision as yet.

A Precinct member asked when the pool would be finished.

Cr Carr indicated work on the pool is scheduled to finish this year. It will open early 2026.

Meeting closed at 9.15pm

Next Precinct meeting: 11 September 2025

Council Contact Details:

Phone: 9936 8100

Fax: 9936 8177

Ranger Services 9936 8100

WEB: www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au