

Lavender Bay Precinct Committee

Minutes of Meeting

Thursday, 31 March 2022  
Starting at 7pm (via Zoom)



Sketch by renowned local artist Peter Kingston AM

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

**Chair:** RRS [rrs@7thfloor.com.au](mailto:rrs@7thfloor.com.au)  
**Secretary:** BPS [lavenderbayprecinct@gmail.com](mailto:lavenderbayprecinct@gmail.com)  
**Minutes:** CT

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**1. Welcome / Apologies / 24 February minutes**

The meeting was held via Zoom due to COVID. There were 18 registered attendees and 8 apologies. The meeting accepted the minutes of the 24 February meeting.

**2. Chair's report**

**(a) McMahons Point ferry wharf:** The Chair reported that the harbourfront foreshore area is continuing to deteriorate as cars continue to drive up on what was once grass and is now a large muddy expanse. There must be measures to deter cars from driving on iconic parkland perhaps one of the most iconic views in Australia. It's a bad look for the LGA to allow a prime harbour foreshore locale to become so degraded.

The meeting discussed that lack of maintenance of green space is leading to serious compaction and that there are safety issues at Sawmillers Reserve. A child fell recently just missing by millimetres to her face exposed rusty-old bolts (remnants of the site's past that are now exposed). Safety is a real issue due to compaction not dissimilar to the issues at the foreshore due to lack of upkeep.

**(b) Blues Point Reserve:** The Chair wished to draw to the attention of Council that numerous complaints have been received by phone about a leaking bubbler pipe at the Blues Point Reserve upper grassy area and local residents would be grateful if Council could fix the problem that is creating large muddy areas.

**(c) Sculpture at Sawmillers:** Precinct reiterates its support of Sculpture at Sawmillers, with the quality of the work being of very high standard with impressive crowds in difficult circumstances. Precinct thanks Elsa Atkins for a very successful event.

- (d) Harbour Bridge cycle ramp:** The Chair reported that there have been a number of meetings held about the cycle ramp, including one with a representative of Minister Stokes, and a further community submission. See further discussion below.
- (e) Cammeray Park:** The Chair also wished to keep Precinct up to date on Cammeray Park and actions by the State government now wishing to [occupy](#) all of the park, noting the lack of regard for much needed public open space for the community.

### 3. State Government items

- (a) Harbour Bridge cycle ramp (further discussion):** The meeting heard that the meeting with a Senior Advisor to Minister Stokes revealed that for any ramp to be successful four items must be met: public open-space maintained, design excellence, heritage paramount, and accessible by all.

The community responded with a 125-page report demonstrating the paucity of TfNSW's preferred design. The Bradfield Park Central design meets all four of the Minister's points and is compliant with Australian standards. There is a lot of back-and-forth with the Minister and TfNSW.

TfNSW has now [released](#) its response to questions received during the December/January consultation on concept designs and the community submission.

The Chair questioned why the cycleway is being permitted to impinge on the heritage of the Bridge, and cited an Engineers Australia comment that the linear option will be 'a scar across the Mona Lisa' and that the Bradfield Park Central is preferred.

- (b) Infrastructure contributions/developer levies:** The State Government is [proposing](#) a Regional Infrastructure Contribution (RIC) charge on development in Greater Sydney and adjoining coastal areas to help fund State and regional infrastructure across NSW. Council is concerned that the LGA would bear the burden of new development with a reduced capacity to improve public open space and community facilities.

The meeting heard that this would gouge funds from metropolitan LGAs that can be distributed to other parts of the state, depriving the North Sydney LGA of funds that currently go towards the upkeep of assets and parklands.

The meeting considered the proposal to be very disturbing especially when the political party in power will be determining where the funds go.

The meeting discussed whether there is anything we can do to prevent the diversion of LGA revenue streams away from the actual LGA they are generated from, and what the local State Member's views were.

#### 4. Council items

(a) **Merrett Playground Upgrade, Waverton:** Council proposes to revitalize this 20-year-old playground within the existing boundary. [Feedback](#) closes on Sunday 10 April. The meeting noted the proposal.

(b) **Draft Playground Plan of Management:** The draft plan sets out Council's land management objectives, current issues and required work in Council's parks. [Feedback](#) closes on Tuesday 12 April. The meeting noted the draft plan.

#### 5. Development applications (click on link, accept terms to continue and click on link again)

(a) **131 Blues Point Road, McMahons Point (64/22):** Internal alterations to retail premises, including removal of internal stairs, changes to walls and doors. Comments due Friday 1 April.

The meeting heard that the plans show removal of internal walls and original elements of the shop/terrace's architecture to alter the upstairs footprint, and that there would be disruption to the bookshop placing at risk a space that is important to the local community. The meeting questioned whether the bookshop owner has a view.

The meeting also heard that the DA notification sign was found upside-down in the gutter in the back lane behind the premises. The Secretary has advised Council and suggested an extension of time.

**Motion:** The Lavender Bay Precinct Committee requests the time for objection to this DA be extended. Carried without objection.

(b) **107 Mount Street, North Sydney (58/22):** Demolition of existing structures, construction of 37-storey commercial building with an 8-level basement and associated works. Comments due Friday 15 April.

The meeting heard that the height and size of this proposal is far greater than neighbouring properties and that there will be overshadowing down Walker Street.

**Motion:** The Lavender Bay Precinct Committee opposes this development on the grounds that it creates an unacceptable precedent for the North Sydney CBD. Carried without objection.

(c) **73 Miller Street, North Sydney (80/22):** Illuminated business identification sign on south-eastern elevation of commercial building, not to be illuminated between 1am and 7am. Comments due Tuesday 19 April.

The meeting heard that business identification signs allocated to a major tenant are limited to one per building. The meeting noted the application.

(d) **Floating dry dock, 6 John Street, McMahons Point (57/19):** An operational management plan, capability statement, heritage response, navigation issue response, marine ecology impact assessment and environmental impact assessment addendum have been lodged with Council. Additional comments due Friday 29 April.

The meeting heard that the marine specialist has surfaced specific issues that are quite technical and that the LEC hearing is scheduled for 2 May. The Chair will be supporting Union Precinct again at the hearing.

- (e) **6 Warung Street, McMahons Point ([361/21](#))**: Precinct resolved last November to oppose the proposed top storey on the original application, as it was not in keeping with the rest of the area. Amended plans were lodged on 23 March. The meeting noted the amended plans.
- (f) **1 Warung Street, McMahons Point ([379/21](#))**: Precinct resolved last November to oppose the application as being out of character with the area, additional bulk, reduced landscaping, cutting into the heritage wall and the close proximity of the garage entrance to an intersection. A geotechnical tunnel report was lodged on 1 March. The meeting noted the additional report.
- (g) **24 East Crescent Street, McMahons Point ([5/22](#))**: Precinct discussed this application in January and heard concerns about construction traffic in Middle Street and potential excavation impacts on adjoining properties. A geotechnical report was lodged on 25 February and Design Excellence Panel minutes added on 24 March.

The meeting heard that the DA still requires serious attention as there are highly technical and complicated matters which will impact Middle Street's other heritage buildings. The site adjoins a heritage conservation area which has not properly been addressed.

The meeting heard that the DEP review was very high-level and that community submissions, of which there were 20 (including expert opinion and general community concern), do not appear to have been supplied to the DEP.

**Motion:** The Lavender Bay Precinct Committee asks Council to ensure that protocols are put in place for the Design Excellence Panel to respond to matters raised in community submissions and explicitly address non-compliances with planning controls. Precinct asks that the DEP reconsider this application. Carried without objection.

- (h) **100 Walker Street, North Sydney ([32/22](#))**: Precinct commented in February that the impacts of the proposed building on the local community are negative, including shadows cast, with no benefit to the community and lack of a positive contribution to the LGA at street level. Design Excellence Panel minutes were added on 24 March.

The meeting agreed that publishing the DEP minutes earlier would be a good step forward for the community to comment. The meeting noted the DEP minutes.

## 6. Community items

**Wendy's Secret Garden:** The next gardening mornings are Saturdays 2 April and 7 May. Please RSVP to [Ian C](#) by the previous Wednesday.

## 7. General business

- (a) Precinct Committee AGM:** Council requires in-person voting for Precinct AGMs. We deferred our 2021 AGM due to COVID. Office-bearers are limited to four years, so we need to start thinking about nominations for suitable replacements. Anyone interested should contact one of the existing office-bearers for more information.

The meeting agreed that our next meeting would be face-to-face, with masks for those who choose to wear them, and then to conduct the AGM at the following meeting.

- (b) Lavender Bay-McMahons Point Community Centre Usage:** The meeting discussed the utilisation of the Lavender Bay-McMahons Point Community Centre, compared to other community centres in the LGA which have active programs and staff.

The meeting heard that, apart from a small number of regular activities on Tuesday nights and Fridays, the Community Centre is unused. Local groups such as choirs and sole traders who would like to run, for example, after-school/school holiday sessions cannot afford the hourly rate they are quoted of \$87 per hour.

The meeting discussed activating the Community Centre to scale the Pop-up Creative Space currently operating out of an empty shop at 182 Blues Point Road, McMahons Point, directly opposite the Community Centre. Concern was raised about exclusive use of the Community Centre by one entity.

The meeting heard that the Pop-up Creative Space is accessible, lowers barrier to entry, is a sustainable initiative in all three pillars (social, environmental and economic) and is a progressive concept.

**Motion:** The Lavender Bay Precinct Committee supports an increased utilisation of the Centre and encourages Council to explore ways of doing so, including the Creative Space's community activities. Carried without objection.

- (c) Managing Council's Parks:** Council deferred a decision on new booking arrangements and proposed fees in Council's parks last [October](#). Precinct asks Council for an update.
- (d) MLC Building ([147/20](#)):** The meeting heard that the DA for the 1950s heritage-listed MLC building is still with the Land and Environment Court, with a directions hearing scheduled for 3 May.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.

Next meeting: 7pm, Thursday 28 April.