

NEUTRAL PRECINCT MINUTES & ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS FOR 2025 Tuesday 10 December 2024, commenced at 7:00 pm

1. GC welcomed the 40 residents to the meeting.
2. Business from minutes of meeting held November 2024:
 - i. November minutes were confirmed as accurate, proposed by CB and seconded by TM.
 - ii. Council responses to Precinct motions at November meeting

Warringah Freeway Works Upgrade

Motion: Precinct requests the Council remove the six parking places along the eastern side of Watson Street to support improved traffic flow during the closure of the Alfred Street (North Sydney off ramp)

Response: Sent request to Council's Traffic Committee

New parking meters in LGA

Motion: The key issue remains the 8½% loading on the cost of parking when using the App. and new meters. This should be made clear in signage and on the App.

Response: The Manager of Parking Meters is reviewing the signage with Parking meters.

Motion: Clarification sought regarding surcharge

Response: Customers can avoid the surcharge by using the standing 'traditional' parking meters boxes Locations marked with "P". The surcharge applies to the 'Touch N Go' small blue boxes and the PayStay App.

Food Delivery Riders on footpath in Neutral Bay

Motion: asking North Sydney Council to take action to ensure the safety of residents.

Response: Riding a bike or e-bike on the footpath is currently illegal, unless the person riding a bike is under 16 years old, is supervising someone under 16, or the path is marked as a share path. In all other instances, cycling on the footpath is illegal. Enforcement of the Road Rules 2014 is the responsibility of the NSW Police and the road rules are developed by the NSW Government. For any immediate hazards or unsafe behaviours observed, please report them to the North Sydney Police Station at 273 Pacific Highway, Crows Nest, or by phone on 02 9956 3199, as they are tasked with enforcing the road rules. Council rangers would be unable to enforce this rule as they do not have powers to regulate moving vehicles.

North Sydney Council recently provided a submission to the NSW Upper House Inquiry into the Use of e-scooters, e-bikes and related mobility options. Council's submission identifies the issues related to E- Bike use

on the footpath, particularly for delivery riders, and calls for greater resourcing for police to regulate this issue. The submission is available on the NSW parliament website. Council delivers and will continue to deliver road safety campaigns promoting compliance with the road rules in the Road Safety Action Plan which includes rules and safety around and bikes on the footpath and pedestrian safety. We also encourage residents and the Neutral Bay Precinct to directly contact the delivery rider companies, such as Uber Delivery, of their concerns.

Drivers exiting to Falcon Street via Warringah Freeway Bus Lane

Motion: asking North Sydney Council to contact TfNSW to see if anything can be done to mitigate the situation, such as a 'Caution, pedestrian crossing' sign when turning left.

Response: Motion forwarded to the Network and Safety Officer at Transport for NSW who will look into it.

Note: Agenda items 3. (Coles) and 4. (Arkadia) were backgrounded and discussed together.

3. The amended Development Application 41-53 Grosvenor Street (Coles DA258/223).
4. Planning Proposal P4/2024 Arkadia Property Services 166-178, 184-192, 198-214 Military Road & 75 Grosvenor Lane were discussed together.

Background

Coles

GC provided an update on the development. Coles has lodged a revised Development Application (DA) for a 4-storey building with no work proposed on a plaza. Coles has also advised that they would consider refurbishment of the existing supermarket as an alternative to redeveloping the site if no decision was forthcoming on the DA. The Woolworths' lease on the Coles site ends in February 2025.

CP added that the original Coles DA had sought a height increase above Council's current Development Control Plan (DCP). Council's preference is for height increase requests to be made through the Planning Proposal (PP) process and not the DA process.

In simple terms, a PP is essentially a request to re-zone the development controls on a site, including maximum building height, and if approved, to amend the DCP for that site. A DA essentially describes the proposed specifications for a building development.

Grosvenor Lane Council Carpark

GC advised that the original 2023 Coles DA had included a Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) to underground the Grosvenor Lane Council Carpark and create a plaza on the space, in return for being granted additional building height on their site.

As advised at the November Precinct meeting, Council resolved on 11 November 2024 to adopt a tender process to deliver the plaza and underground carparking of the Council owned Grosvenor Lane public car park.

Council has not indicated when the tender will be let. The main landowners bordering the Council car park are Coles and Arkadia. It is reasonable to expect these landowners will consider lodging a tender response.

Arkadia

GC advised that Arkadia, a major landholder in Military Road, has lodged a PP to amend the Local Environmental Plan (LEP) to increase the maximum building height on three sites: The Grove Arcade site: 42m (11 storeys); The Neutral Bay Community Centre site: 45m (12 storeys); and Theos Arcade site: part 36m (9 storeys) and part 45m (12 storeys).

Arkadia's plan proposes to leave the Blue and White Dry Cleaners as an isolated site between Site 2A-1 and 2A-2. As a result, Arkadia wants to be given exclusive use of Council land for vehicular access across or under the Grosvenor Lane Council car park to private parking on the Neutral Bay Community Centre Site.

Discussion points:

- We absolutely want a plaza with underground, not on-grade, parking to maximise badly needed green space for the Neutral Bay village centre.
- We have already expressed the view to Council that this is a 'once in a lifetime' opportunity to create a village centre plaza, 'Jewel in the Crown', for Neutral Bay.
- It was noted that Coles developer, Titanium Property Investments, has twice briefed the Precinct and participated in Q&As on their proposal. The Precinct had not reacted negatively to the additional height request and had applauded key features of the development design that would maximise solar access into a plaza; the vehicle lift for supermarket delivery trucks to enter and exit the site from Grosvenor Street minimising noise impact on adjacent dwellings; and the VPA offer from Coles to underground the Council carpark and create a plaza.
- The parking for the whole area should be underground and integrated. It should include public parking, the Coles customer and residential parking, and parking for the proposed Arkadia development.

- The Arkadia proposed development does not identify underground retail parking but rather on-grade car parking. This is not supported. The proposed plaza should be fully pedestrianised and not impacted by car parking.
- The tender specifications for the re-development of the Council carpark should be made available to the community.
- Noted the proposed building heights for the three Arkadia far exceed the recently Council endorsed Neutral Bay Village Planning Study. The Council should assess all proposals against the endorsed NBVPS.
- The description /diagrams of the proposal do not improve the overall look of the commercial/retail centre of Neutral Bay. It is too 'bitty'. The Blue & White drycleaners site should be incorporated into the development
- Demolition and construction access for the proposed Arkadia development should not be via the current Council carpark proposed to be developed into a plaza with underground parking.
- The Arkadia proposal includes positioning a new community centre on a high level in the building. It would be better located on a lower level to facilitate access.
- It was suggested that Council require all the key developments in the Centre of the Village to be staged so demolition/construct does not occur at the same time. GC advised the Precinct has previously raised this issue with Council in relation to the multiple same time developments along Kurraba Rd/Kurraba Point. Council responded that it does not have authority to direct developer's time frames but can require a developer to put in place appropriate traffic /pedestrian management arrangements.

MOTION 1: Neutral Precinct supports the creation of a fully pedestrianised plaza with underground parking to replace the Grosvenor Lane Council Car Park to provide the 'Jewel in the Crown' for the Neutral Bay Village centre. We request Council to:

- i. **Ensure the underground parking for the village centre is fully integrated with both the Coles and Arkadia sites.**
- ii. **Ensure the design of the proposed plaza maximises green space**
- iii. **Be transparent with the community on the tender specifications for the Grosvenor Lane car park development**

VOTE: Unanimous - 40

MOTION 2: Neutral Precinct requests the Council to:

- i. **Reject the Arkadia Planning Proposal P4/2024 as the proposed heights far exceed the 2024 Council endorsed Neutral Bay Village Planning Study;**
- ii. **Require the Arkadia development to provide retail parking, not just private parking**

VOTE: Unanimous – 40

Residents were encouraged to make their own submissions to Council for: DA258/223 by 10 January 2025. DA details can be viewed through the following link:

<https://masterview.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/Application/ApplicationDetails/010.2023.00000258.001/>

PP4/2024 asap. PP details can be viewed through the following link:

<https://masterview.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/application/ApplicationDetails/009.2024.00000004.001/>

5. Re-zoning decision & Concept Development Application 1-7 Rangers Road & 50 Yeo Street (Woolworths)

GC advised that there is good news but still more advocacy needed with this development.

The good news is that, after significant submissions, from local residents, and a recommendation from the Northern Sydney planning Panel (NSW Dept. of Planning), North Sydney Councillors have voted unanimously to amend the North Sydney Development Control Plan affecting the Woolworths Rangers Road development to include:

- i. a new provision limiting the number of retail and commercial customer car parking spaces to 180 (down from a potential 276);
- ii. a revised overshadowing provision saying that the living areas of all the dwellings in Yeo Street should receive a minimum of 2 hours sunlight in mid-winter (improved from only 70% of dwellings); This accords with the Northern Sydney Planning Panel's recommendation to the Council; and
- iii. new provisions limiting the carpark entrance in Yeo Street to one driveway in and one driveway out (Woolworths wants two driveways out) and requiring Woolworths to demonstrate the carpark entry won't create adverse conflict with traffic flow on Yeo Street.

These are important decisions because Woolworths will now have to revise its plans to comply with the new provisions, or try to argue why their current DA plans should be approved.

Woolworths has submitted two DAs that remain undetermined. The first, DA 162/2024 was submitted as a "Concept DA" to try to set the controls for the development to override the North Sydney DCP.

The second DA 281/2024 is a standard DA and covers the redevelopment of the land including demolition and construction of a mixed-use development comprising 70 residential units, commercial spaces including a supermarket,

public plaza, and basement parking for 326 vehicles and associated site works associated with Concept DA 162/2024.

Discussion points:

MOTION: The Precinct requests the Council to require the developer of 1-7 Rangers Road & 50 Yeo Street to:

- i. Revise the drawings to comply with the provisions of the NSDCP as voted for by Council in relation to overshadowing of dwellings in Yeo Street and the impact of the carpark entrance in Yeo Street on pedestrian safety and traffic flow.**
- ii. Reduce the number of retail and commercial customer car parking spaces to no more than 180, and reduced the exit lanes**
- iii. Demonstrate the development will not cause any adverse conflict with traffic flow on Yeo Street.**

VOTE: Unanimous (40)

Residents were also encouraged to make their own submissions to Council.

Email to: council@northsydney.nsw.gov.au

6. Warringah Freeway Upgrade – Alfred Street Off-Ramp closure

Following the Precinct motion at the November meeting, GC confirmed that the Precinct Committee had written to the State Government Roads Minister requesting:

- i. Removal of the toll from the Falcon Street exit ramp from the North to Falcon Street/Military Road for the duration of the closure of the Alfred Street Off-Ramp**
- ii. Updating the ‘Mosman’ sign directing vehicles to the Falcon Street Off-Ramp so that vehicles for Neutral Bay don’t miss the off ramp and continue into the City thus incurring both inconvenience and the Harbour Bridge toll.**
- iii. Ensure there is adequate turning time at the Falcon Street Off-Ramp traffic lights to clear the waiting lanes. Also to ensure there is adequate waiting area in the two lanes exiting the freeway, otherwise we will end up with stopped vehicles on the freeway. People don't expect stopped vehicles on a freeway and accidents will ensue.**
- iv. Increase the turning time for vehicles at the traffic lights from Military Road into Watsons Street. The turning time is already often inadequate at peak times to clear the two waiting lanes in Military Road. The Precinct has requested North Sydney Council temporarily remove the 6 parking spaces on the Eastern side of Watsons Street which will remove the necessity for two lanes to merge into one in Watson’s Street and improve traffic flow.**
- v. Ensure that the Navigation Apps. e.g. Google Maps, Waze are advised of the closure of the Alfred Street Off-Ramp**
- vi. Provide a letterbox drop of the changes for all residents in the affected area.**

The letter was copied to: Felicity Wilson MP, Tim James MP, and Natalie Ward Shadow Minister for Roads. GC advised that:

- The Minister has acknowledged the letter
- Felicity Wilson has responded saying she had already made representations to the Minister but not acknowledging our suggestions.
- Tim James has acknowledged receipt of our letter
- Natalie Ward has written to the Minister on our behalf and noted to the Minister that we had made some very constructive and helpful suggestions.

Discussion Points:

- Residents have been inconvenienced for a long time now and we are facing 2 more years of significant disruption.
- Residents believe the roadworks and consequent traffic issues are contributing to dropping property values in Neutral Bay
- Residents are aware of at least two residents who have received a personal exemption from paying tolls from the Department of Transport.

MOTION: The Precinct write to Transport for NSW requesting the criteria for obtaining an exemption from paying tolls.

VOTE: Unanimous (40)

7. Council's Proposed Special Rate Variation

GC reported on the briefing held on 3 December by the Mayor and the General Manager for Precinct Committees.

- Parlous state of Council's finances not just impacted by the overblown cost of the Pool and necessary borrowings - \$50M
- Backlog of maintenance on Council assets: North Sydney Oval, Stanton Library, Council Chambers, Work Depot and other assets.
- Council is now seeking feedback on a number of draft strategies that articulate the projects and services that Council needs to deliver to meet the current and future priorities of the community. We recommend Precinct members review and provide feedback through 'Have Your Say' by Friday 10 January.

Copies of the Council Fact Sheet were handed out to support discussion.

Discussion points:

- With the minimum option we will be paying 4 times what we pay today in 10 years, in 7 years on the 111% option.
- The change in the minimum rateable amount will move from \$700 to \$1300 which will have a huge impact particularly on apartment owners. Understood that 76% of dwellings in the LGA are apartments.
- Why can't the Council sell some assets to assist the financial bottom line? The community wants greater detail on the need for the proposed rate increase.
- Why don't schools pay rates? Private schools are a business and should

- pay rates. E.g. The Catholic University has an annual income of around \$600M. Recently, the Council spent \$2-3M on amenities around the campus.
- GC advised that a Mayoral Minute was endorsed at the 9 December Council meeting. The minute is to ask these educational businesses to voluntarily pay rates. It also addresses use of Council owned open space by these businesses. The Local Government Association has made a request to the NSW Government that educational businesses pay rates.
 - The Council's 'Have Your Say' Survey on the proposed special rate increases is unfair. Before moving from Q7 to Q8 you must agree one of the rate increase options. This is manipulation of the consultation and the result. Precinct should complaint to the Council that it is unethical and trying to steer an outcome

MOTION 1: The Precinct finds all three of the proposed options for a Special Rate Increase to be outrageously excessive.

VOTE: Unanimous (40)

MOTION 2: The Precinct objects to the "Have Your Say" survey not allowing progress from Q7 to Q8 without agreeing to a minimum of a 65.38% increase in rates. This is steering an outcome of the survey, unethical and not genuine community consultation where alternative options/suggestions are sought..

VOTE: Unanimous (40)

8. The following upcoming meetings were noted:

Neutral Precinct – 11 February 2025 www.neutralprecinct.com

Council – 2025 dates to be advised www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au

Meeting concluded at 9:00pm.

9. Election of Office Bearers for 2025

GC closed the meeting and handed over to Nea McCulloch, Returning Officer, to conduct an election for Committee positions.

There were 3 nominations for Co-Convenor and the meeting unanimously decided to create a third Co-Convenor position. Glen Curyer, Chris Boseley and Tim Moon were elected to the positions of Co-Convenor.

Cathy Peters was elected to the position of Secretary and Amy Kennedy was elected to a new position of Assistant Secretary.