

**Neutral Bay Alive Community Consultation Group
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday 12 September 2023
6.00pm start, Supper Room**

Neutral Bay Alive Community Consultation Group

In Attendance (in-person):

- Anna Summerhayes (AS)
- John Lucas (JL)
- Kristina Kazmer (KK)
- Meredith Trevallyn-Jones (MTJ)
- Peter Marshall (PM)
- Peter Moor (PMo)

In Attendance (online):

- Alison Bentley (AB)

Apologies:

- Candice Tabone (CT)
- Fiona Gracie (FG)
- Rob McKay (RM)

North Sydney Council (NSC) Staff

In Attendance (in-person):

- Neal McCarry (NMc), A/Manager Strategic Planning
- Jing Li (JLi), A/Team Leader Design
- Wendy Lam (WL), A/Senior Strategic Planner – Urban Design

Councillor

In Attendance (in-person) - Observing:

- Councillor Gibson

Presiding: Peter Marshall (PM)

The meeting started at 6.00pm

1. Acknowledgment of Country

PM opened the meeting by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which the meeting was held.

2. Introduction

PM welcomed all members of the Neutral Bay Alive Community Consultation Group ('the Group' or NBACCG) and Councillor Gibson to the meeting.

3. General Update

i. Minutes of Previous Meetings

- PM enquired if there were any concerns or objections regarding the minutes from the preceding meeting, and no issues were brought forth.
- PM discussed the NBACCG position (as detailed in Item 3 of the Meeting 2 Minutes), and there were no objections raised regarding the statements of objectives.
- PM also addressed The Economic Analysis & Financial Feasibility Test Report (as outlined in Item 5 of the Meeting 2 Minutes), and there were no objections to the statement of objectives.

Neutral Bay Alive Community Consultation Group
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday 12 September 2023
6.00pm start, Supper Room

ii. **Business Arising**

PM enquired if there were any matters or business arising, and none were raised.

4. **Neutral Bay Town Centre Planning Study**

i. **Status Update**

NMc (NSC) provided an update that Council staff are working with the appointed Traffic Consultant, Stantec, to conduct modelling and testing. Additionally, Council is working with the appointed Landscape Consultant, SMM, who are in the process of preparing the draft Stage 2 detailed concept design. Council staff are scheduled to deliver a briefing to Councillors on Monday, September 18, 2023, to present the latest Study updates.

ii. **Specific Site Focus vs Broader Area Assessment**

- PM enquired about the correlation between feasibility, building height uplift, and the provision of public benefits. Furthermore, PM questioned the rationale behind concentrating the building height allowances on specific 'key sites', as opposed to distributing them more evenly across the broader area.

NMc (NSC) provided clarification that the selection of key sites is driven by various factors, such as the impact on solar access, lot sizes, built form considerations and the capacity of certain sites to potentially deliver public benefits under different development scenarios. Another significant factor is zoning considerations, as the identified key sites are situated within the B4 mixed-use zone. Additionally, the decision to concentrate height allowances in specific areas is deliberate, as dispersing height increases across the broader area would dilute the intended height concentration within the town centre.

JLi (NSC) further clarified that the selection of key sites for height uplift was based on their potential to effectively address the Study's primary objectives. The Study's first objective is the protection of the existing commercial space, wherein the Economic and Feasibility Study analysis helps to inform the required supply and demand dynamics for safeguarding an appropriate quantum of non-residential land user. The second objective is to facilitate the provision of public benefits.

- The Group questioned why the rescinded Military Road Corridor Planning Study (MRCPS) identified Site 2 to deliver the plaza instead of Site 1.

NMc (NSC) provided clarification by explaining that the indicative staged plan presented in the MRCPS was conceptual and did not contain specific directives mandating that Site 2 must be the one to deliver the plaza.

Action: NSC to share with the Group the supporting information, including shadow analysis and built form modelling, for the selection of key sites for height uplift at the next meeting.

iii. **Best Practice Case Studies – Mixed-Use Development**

JLi (NSC) presented examples of mixed-use development precedents. These included 'East Village' at Zetland, 'The Pacific' at Bondi and 'The Albany' at Crows Nest.

The Group offered feedback, acknowledging the effectiveness of these examples in demonstrating that refined architectural design can mitigate the perceived scale of buildings. They expressed the view that despite the Study area's small lot sizes, adopting a holistic

Neutral Bay Alive Community Consultation Group
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday 12 September 2023
6.00pm start, Supper Room

approach akin to the presented examples would yield a more impressive overall outcome.

NMc (NSC) noted that achieving the right balance between collective public domain results and growth, in the context of the need to achieve lot consideration is challenging.

Action: NSC to share the Development Application plans of ‘The Albany’.

5. Young Street Plaza Update

NMc (NSC) spoke to the Council Resolution dated 26 April 2022.

“3. THAT the Mayor meet with Transport for NSW to discuss alternate options within the Military Road corridor including alternative options for Young Street.

4. THAT Young Street be reopened and that the funding for the reopening be sourced from either the existing Transport for NSW funding which funded the temporary closure of Young Street in the first place or from the existing Engineering Budget.”

NMc (NSC) explained that obtaining approval from Transport for NSW is a prerequisite for the potential reopening of Young Street. Furthermore, NMc (NSC) clarified that Young Street Plaza is highlighted as an opportunity in the Study.

The Group expressed their general support for Young Street Plaza and believes it would be advantageous to keep Young Street closed, as it would complement the new Grosvenor Plaza proposed in the Study.

Additionally, the Group requested an update regarding the Australia Post building adjacent to May Gibbs Place.

Action: NSC to provide an update on the Australia Post building next to May Gibbs Place

6. Public Domain Design Options

i. Grosvenor Lane Plaza

- NMc (NSC) provided an update on Arkadia’s concept and their recent request for owner’s consent.
- NMc (NSC) provided an overview of the Grosvenor Lane Plaza options:

i. Arkadia’s Proposal

NMc (NSC) outlined that this proposal included the following key features:

- Grosvenor Lane remaining opened.
- The reconfiguration and reduction of public parking.
- Implementation of restricted timeframes for loading and servicing arrangements.
- Design considerations for a public plaza located to the south.

The Group expressed the view that this scheme didn’t appear to provide significant public benefits.

ii. Coles’ Proposal

NMc (NSC) explained that this proposal included the following key features:

- Grosvenor Lane remaining opened.
- The allocation of 17 surface-level car parking spaces arranged horizontally along Grosvenor Lane.

Neutral Bay Alive Community Consultation Group
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday 12 September 2023
6.00pm start, Supper Room

- Implementation of restricted timeframes for loading arrangements.
- Design considerations for a public plaza located to the south.
- Design has been presented by the applicant as a 'placeholder' and open to Council to provide input on preferred design.

The Group conveyed concerns regarding the absence of trees in this scheme, particularly to the south, where there is a thoroughfare road. They also noted that while the proposal includes underground basement car parking, recent survey results for the Study indicate that half of the area/town centre users walk and do not drive, underscoring that parking is only part of the conversation.

The Group collectively shared the view that the Coles proposal resembles the existing scheme and appears to be attempting to cater to the preferences of all stakeholders.

Furthermore, the Group enquired about the availability of a model for the proposal, given that it is a Development Application (DA) proposal.

Action: NSC to investigate the availability of a model for the Coles Proposal. Note – a physical scale model is available to view in the Customer Service Area of Council's administration building.

iii. Alternative Option

NMc (NSC) outlined that this proposal included the following key features:

- Grosvenor Lane being closed.
 - The provision of 12 surface level car parking spaces to the east.
 - Implementation of restricted timeframes for loading arrangements.
 - Design of a fully pedestrianised plaza.
- The Group unanimously agreed that the closure of Grosvenor Lane and the creation of a fully pedestrianised plaza would result in a positive outcome. They collectively expressed strong support for this option, favouring it over the Arkadia and Coles proposal.
- NMc (NSC) sought the Group's feedback regarding the closure of Grosvenor Lane, considering the recently contended role of vehicles in enhancing safety and surveillance. It was noted that while a fully pedestrianised plaza is appealing during daylight hours, there may be safety concerns that arise during the nighttime that need to be addressed.

The Group provided their response, emphasising the importance of adequate lighting. They also noted that the presence of the Coles supermarket facing the future plaza could contribute to safety and activity. Additionally, they noted 'The Forum' at Cammeray as a relevant example, highlighting the effectiveness of passive surveillance, particularly with apartments situated above.

- The Group raised the issue of pedestrian access from the basement car park to the plaza. They suggested that it would be preferable for visitors to ascend and feel like they've entered a public space, rather than directly entering the Coles

Neutral Bay Alive Community Consultation Group
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday 12 September 2023
6.00pm start, Supper Room

site. They also recommended the inclusion of other associated retail tenancies to ensure it doesn't feel like an entrance solely into the Coles area.

JLi (NSC) provided an explanation that the proposed placement of the escalators and lift has been thoughtfully arranged outside the Coles supermarket. The orientation of the escalators has been designed so that individuals ascending will more directly enter the public plaza.

- The Group provided feedback regarding the size of the eastern surface-level car park, suggesting that it should be reduced to avoid encroaching on the proposed plaza area. They also pointed out that while 12 surface-level car parking spaces are mentioned, 8 of these spaces are identified as being for loading and technically not available for public parking.

ii. Rangers Road Plaza

- NMc (NSC) presented an overview of the Woolworths proposal for Rangers Road Plaza, along with the alternative design option.
The Group expressed support for the alternative design option.
- The Group asked if the alternative design option for Rangers Road Plaza could be presented separately for comments. NMc (NSC) explained that the vision and preference for the alternative design option would be presented to the Council during the upcoming Councillor Briefing.
- The Group enquired about the potential pedestrian crossing indicated leading to Rangers Road Plaza. NMc (NSC) clarified that it is depicted as an opportunity on an indicative basis but implementing it would be challenging and come with substantial operational costs.

7. Proposed Development Update

NMc (NSC) provided an update of the following proposed developments:

- 1-7 Rangers Road & 50 Yeo Street
- 41-53 Grosvenor Street (DA 258/23)
- 183-185 Military Road
- 165-173 Military Road
- 12-14 Waters Road

Action: NSC to share/email outcome of the Rangers Road Rezoning Review.

8. General Business

The Group raised the opportunity to relocate the existing pedestrian crossing fronting, 146 Military Road, further east to line up with Young Street and May Gibbs Place.

Further, the Group raised the potential for installing a pedestrian overpass over Military Road, considering the road's high traffic volume. NMc (NSC) clarified that constructing a pedestrian overpass would necessitate substantial structures on both sides, and it would diminish the focus on pedestrian movement at street level.

Action: NSC to seek advice from Council's Traffic Team (Eoin Cunningham) and Stantec regarding the implications of relocating the existing pedestrian crossing to align Young Street and May Gibbs Place, and implementing a pedestrian overpass on Military Road

Neutral Bay Alive Community Consultation Group
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday 12 September 2023
6.00pm start, Supper Room

9. Next Meeting

Potential dates for the next meeting:

- Tuesday 26th September 2023; or
- Tuesday 17th October 2023.

Meeting closed at 8:15pm.