

HORNSBY SHIRE COUNCIL REPORT/NOTES FROM WAITARA COMMUNITY FORUM - 13TH August 2019

Introduction

Council was represented at the Community Forum by Mayor Phillip Ruddock and by Councillors, Warren Waddell, Robert Browne, Janelle McIntosh, Mick Marr, Joseph Nicita, and Emma Heyde.

Apologies were received from Deputy Mayor Vince del Gallego and Councillors Nathan Tilbury, and Michael Hutchence.

The Forum was independently facilitated by Ms Libby Darlison from the Miller Group and the note taker was Ms Luca Chudleigh also from the Miller Group.

Approximately 20 community members attended the Forum.

In his Introduction Mayor Ruddock explained that, as with the previous community forums Council has been holding, this was not a decision-making forum, rather it was an opportunity for community members to express their views on issues of concern for their community.

Key Issues

There was no *one* priority issue raised by participants as there had been in several of the previous Community Forums held by Council, however participants did have a range of issues and questions for Councillors to address.

Proposed Heritage Review

The Heritage Review had initially been proposed a year ago and Councillors were asked about its progress. The Mayor responded and explained that:

- Consultants have submitted the Action Plan which is on the Council website
- There were 900 items to be reviewed so this took considerable time
- The Heritage Review is Also taking into account items that may have been missed in the 1990s Review
- The Draft Heritage Action Plan is on the Council Website:
<https://www.hornsby.nsw.gov.au/yoursay>.

Documenting memories of living in Hornsby

Councillors were asked if they were going to document memories of living in Hornsby. Councillors explained that the following currently exist or can be contacted for more information and are documenting Hornsby's history.

- The Hornsby Shire Historical Society - <http://www.hornsbyhistory.org>
- The Chief Librarian
- Hornsby Shire recollects <https://hornsbyshire.recollect.net.au/>
- Facebook page 'you grew up around Hornsby... if you remember'.

While acknowledging the work being done by these different groups a participant asked whether Council could coordinate the documentation of peoples' memories and photographs? e.g. the old site of Hornsby, provision of structure and framework to remember how the shops were run, the uses of the shops etc.

Planning and development

There was some concern about the publicity surrounding defective apartment buildings across Sydney. The following question was asked:

'Is Council confident that its planning documents will be able to prevent the disasters that have occurred in other parts of the city?'

The Mayor responded by stating that:

'Council is very unhappy with the current arrangements for private certification. Removing certification from independent Council certifiers has meant that standards have been seriously eroded and processes impeded so that the result of these changes has meant that developers can choose the certifiers.'

The Mayor stressed that *'Council is doing all it can within its powers to ensure buildings are of high quality.'*

A related question was asked by a community member who had heard that some councils were running workshops for strata owners to inform them of their rights and responsibilities and wondered if HSC could run such meetings. The Mayor said if this could be done at no cost to Council they would run them.

Another forum participant said that Hornsby Library runs some strata programs.

Climate change, congestion and cycling

Question: What can Council do about congestion? e.g. making it safer for walking and cycling. As an example Balmoral St to the North is difficult for both pedestrians and drivers and some cycle paths don't go anywhere. They just finish rather than linking up with other paths. Council priorities need to be about how to create a liveable city.

Councillor responses:

Council is well aware of the impact of climate change and what it is able to do at the local level to ameliorate that impact. Over and above continuing to 'green the Shire' Council staff are dealing with a range of cycling plans and strategies. Current and future initiatives include:

- Pennant Hills to Epping bike path (budgeted for)
- Trying to connect bike paths
- At the local level
 - Preparing the community for climate changes
 - Ensuring the building of 'greener' buildings
- Development of a new Active Living & Working Strategy
- Council is resolved to adopt a new shared bicycle/pedestrian footpath model which includes linking Hornsby and Pennant Hills.

There was also a related question asking why footpaths can't be made wider to accommodate shared and greater usage.

Another resident asked that, when considering what sort of bike part to construct, Council consider the growing number of older people who are using motor scooters on footpaths?

Councillors explained that they are aware of all of these issues and that they are being taken into account in the planning for shared bike paths. However they did agree that there was a need, as these issues gain greater importance to hold a community information session to discuss and explain to the community what actions Council is taking in this area.

The Mayor also confirmed that Councillors and staff are aware of the need to promote active transport and reduce the use of cars and traffic congestion as important components in both ameliorating climate change and improving walkability and liveability.

Disabled parking at Pennant Hills Station

Question: Currently there are only 2 spaces – what is Council doing?

Council is currently looking at the problems with parking in Pennant Hills.

The person who asked this question also suggested a change which might assist with these problems i.e. Restrict right hand turns in & out of Hill St. The Mayor indicated that he would send a note to the General Manager to look at this suggestion.

Waste collection

A community member said that they had been told that if the green waste bins, are unserviceable or stolen a private collector needs to be engaged. Is this true?

The General Manager explained that there were different arrangements for commercial and domestic waste services, units, single dwellings etc. and that he would clarify the situation. Councillor McIntosh confirmed that greater clarification was required, and people are confused about the different arrangements.

Another resident asked why can't Council have a bulk waste pick up a few times a year? It was explained that Council is currently developing a new waste strategy.

Bushfire plans, storms etc. in relation to climate change, and weed control on private property

Councillor Marr explained that flood planning is currently being looked at and is now in the hands of the 'experts'. He also explained that:

In NSW the administration of noxious weed control is the responsibility of the Minister for Primary Industries under the Noxious Weeds Act 1993. The Act is implemented and enforced by the Local Control Authority for the area, usually local government. Local government can enforce the control of noxious weeds on private land.

Councillor Marr said that a report on weed infestation is going to Council shortly. This report will have a list of noxious horticultural weeds but these are not necessarily domestic weeds. Privets are considered to be serious environmental weeds throughout Australia (in response to a related question).

There was a number of short and quite specific questions with an individual focus asked of Councillors. These are no less important than other questions. They have been set out below.

Question: When will there be lights on corner of Bellamy, Victoria and Boundary Rds.?

Council response: while this is not currently on Council's priority list but there is an argument to suggest that it should be – especially since the new owners of the aged care facility are not interested in progressing the realignment of the intersection

Question: Why is there a disparity between state and local registered heritage items?

Response: Local heritage register is gazetted by the Minister, Council does not have any say in State significant items.

Question: Hornsby High School is selective – Are there any other local schools that are not selective?

Council response:

- a. Asquith girls' (and Asquith boys') high schools are local and are not selective
- b. The Local member prior to the last election ran on needing a co-ed high school in the Hornsby area.

Question: Are there new guidelines about how trees are trimmed?

Council response: Councillor Waddell explained that he is a member of a working party to assist Ausgrid to undertaken more sensitive tree trimming. At the moment contractors are only obliged to get trees away from power lines. This can often be swift and sever but not sensitive or aesthetic tree trimming.

Question: Does Council have a position on leaf blowers?

Council response: This is a civil issue should a resident want to take action.

The meeting finished at approximately 8:15pm.