



NORTHBRIDGE
PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

Working for the advancement of Northbridge since 1919

ABN 733 956 702

PO Box 357 Northbridge 2063

December 16 2009

Ms Julie Whitfield
Open Space Manager
Willoughby City Council
PO Box 57 CHATSWOOD 2057

Dear Julie

Re: Draft Northbridge Park Masterplan

Thank you for agreeing to speak to a General Meeting of the Association at 8pm on February 24 2010 about the draft Northbridge Park Masterplan. We will be in touch with you closer to the date to make final arrangements.

The Committee of the Association welcomes Council's initiative in generating a Masterplan for Northbridge Park and also supports many of the recommendations included in the draft Masterplan.

However, the Committee has some questions about the draft Masterplan, which probably reflect the questions which will also be asked by Northbridge residents.

If you are agreeable, we believe it would be very helpful if you could respond to our questions before the February 24 meeting. These are set out in the same order as Council's Report.

Active recreation

- We note the plan to re-surface Northbridge Oval with a synthetic material and to improve the lighting. We understand that the cost will be about \$1.5 million.
 - Has Council carried out any analysis to show that this expenditure is the most cost-effective way to cater for the increased sporting demands in Willoughby? Have other options been investigated?
 - Would a synthetic surface prevent use of the oval by certain activities (such as the local churches' Carol Singing or Rotary's big annual fireworks display)?
 - Recognising that floodlighting is a sensitive issue for nearby residents, what are Council's plans to consult with nearby residents about the impact of new or improved lighting for the oval?

- The locations are shown on the plan for two new Futsal fields on the 1st fairway of the golf course.
 - Is this proposal workable? How would play by children on the Futsal fields during golfing hours be prevented and vice versa? Will there be a need for safety fencing around the fields?
 - Has the Golf Club agreed with the development of these fields? Will the several hundred playing members of the Golf Club be consulted?
- In regard to the BMX track:
 - Is it proposed that the BMX track will be retained? Why is the BMX track being fenced?
 - What does “its development as an adventure play area for youth” mean? What other facilities for youth are proposed for this area and what additional noise would they generate? Is there a plan for a skateboard ramp, for example?
 - Won't the proposed work on the BMX track and the Men's Shed expansion impact on the Platysace noted in the Report as rare or threatened?
- We note that it is proposed to change the use of the two public tennis courts in favour of basketball/volleyball/handball. A number of residents has already expressed concern about this potential loss of a public tennis facility.
 - What is Council's evidence that the demand for basketball is greater than that for tennis?
 - If the change were to go ahead, are there plans to replace the two tennis courts, say at Warners Park, or elsewhere in Northbridge or Willoughby?

Facilities

- We note that the report recommends development of a major new three-storey (including two level car park) sports complex east of the golf clubhouse.
 - What evidence is available to demonstrate that there is a need for the proposed complex and that it would be viable?
 - How will this sports complex be integrated within the site? At three storeys, won't it tower over the single storey, heritage-listed golf clubhouse; close off the present views over the golf course; and be an architecturally obtrusive structure within the park?
 - What work has been done to demonstrate that a new sports complex won't impact on attendances at Willoughby Leisure Centre?
 - What work has been done on the impact on traffic and parking in Sailors Bay Rd of a major new sports complex and car park, in addition to traffic generated by the two schools, golf course, baths and sailing club?
- We note that in the past the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides have insisted that their leaseholds be maintained and have strongly resisted any proposal to rationalise the area at the western end of the park, as recommended by the draft Masterplan.

- Have both organisations now accepted in principle the need for a rationalisation of facilities?

Access, aesthetic, biodiversity and sustainability

- We note the Report's proposal to develop Sailors Bay Rd as a boulevard.
 - What type of road calming is planned? Is there a plan to consult local residents about the use of these devices and the noise that the devices may generate?
 - How many street parking places will be lost because of the "planting bays" proposed along the north side of Sailors Bay Rd opposite the park?
 - Is there a plan to consult individual local residents about the potential loss of parking spaces outside their homes?
- The Report recommends lighting the car park.
 - Recognising that floodlighting is a sensitive issue for nearby residents, what are Council's plans to consult with them about the impact of new or improved lighting for the car park?
- We note that the Report recommends a new pathway through the northern section of Northbridge Park.
 - How will it be safe for walkers on the proposed new pathways through the golf course? (For example, we note that one path crosses the 1st fairway, directly in front of golfers hitting off from the 1st tee.)
 - Has Council considered the Butterworth Report, which never clarified rights of way across the golf course because it was thought at the time too dangerous to encourage walkers amongst the golfers?
- The Report recommends a new path from the Golf Club depot sheds down to the waterfront.
 - Is this justified by demand, as its construction will require the destruction of native bushland, some of it probably original?
- At Bonds Corner, the Report plans show that the existing bus stop will be relocated and a new pedestrian crossing will be located opposite the bottle shop. We note that westbound traffic passing a parked bus will not be able to see oncoming traffic due to the left hand bend. Furthermore, trees to the west would produce a serious visibility problem for pedestrians crossing from south to north. Planting bays proposed for the three corners of the Bonds Corner intersection would further reduce visibility for traffic.
 - Are you satisfied that the draft Masterplan adequately addresses traffic safety issues at the Bonds Corner intersection?
 - Is there a need for a much more detailed traffic study carried out around the difficult Bonds Corner intersection?

- We note that the Report recommends three main entries to control access into the park – in the Pavilion area, at the golf clubhouse and at Bonds Corner.
 - Has the Report recognised that there are other entries to the park at Dorset Rd, Weemala Rd, Roche Park and from footpaths at the end of Upper Cliff Rd and at Tunks Park? What will be done about these entries?

We are also concerned about the potential loss of bushland if all the recommendations are implemented. We note that any development in the upper park along the ridge top will affect bushland areas below in the lower park, through run-off, weed propagules, human incursions, etc.

Yours sincerely



Peter McNair
President

Copy: Mr Greg Woodhams
Mr Steven Head
Sailors Bay Ward Councillors