

Mosman Parks & Bushland Association Inc.

Mosman Council
Attention: Urban Planning
7th August, 2019

council@mosman.nsw.gov.au

DRAFT MOSMAN LOCAL STRATEGIC PLANNING STATEMENT

In commenting on the Draft Mosman Local Strategic Planning Statement, Mosman Parks & Bushland will, in the main, restrict its suggestions to the areas of particular concern to the Association over its 55 year lifetime – the preservation and protection of parks, bushland, open space and the natural environment.

The Association's aims and objectives that are relevant to the Draft Mosman Local Strategic Planning Statement (Draft MLSPS) are as follows:

1. The natural environment of Mosman and its foreshores, including lands managed by the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust (SHFT), by National Parks & Wildlife (NPWS) and Taronga Zoo has a ***national*** significance. Planning in Mosman must recognize this significance and ensure that the natural environment of all foreshore land is protected, preserved, and where possible, enhanced.
2. Bushland: Mosman's remnant bushland has its own intrinsic value of enhancing biodiversity and providing wildlife corridors for flora and fauna. Visually it enhances the beauty of Sydney Harbour as a whole, as well as adding to the unique character of our suburb.
3. Small pockets of public open space, some of which are unmade roads and contain remnant bushland, should never be alienated by sale, leasing or development.
4. Parks: An increase in housing density makes the relevance of parks for residents more important than ever. With the increasing demands of active recreation, it is essential to preserve green space for passive recreation. Recent research in Australia and abroad is confirming the importance of quality green space to the mental, cognitive and physical wellbeing of the very young, of adolescents and of the ageing.
5. A balance between the natural and built environment should be preserved throughout the municipality. Rising temperatures due to climate change make this objective increasingly urgent. The balance in favour of the natural is, of course, particularly important in the Scenic Protection Area.

Mosman's Planning Priorities and Proposed Actions

We have not commented on every priority.

Priority 2: Working with Government agencies and stakeholders

We support the three proposed actions.

- 1) Collaboration with NPWS, SHFT and Taronga Zoo to ensure that public lands and assets remain in public hands and are managed for the benefit of the Mosman and wider public.
- 2) A Community Participation plan is particularly important. Genuine public engagement throughout a planning process is vital. Without adequate time to consult, the community loses, and the planner also loses if there is a feeling that the planner is not genuine in its public engagement process. We would recommend the use of the International Association for Public Participation Spectrum for the process.
Advertising a community consultation opportunity should be as broad as possible and not reliant on a single publication such as The Mosman Daily.

Priority 3: Providing a range of facilities

We support the proposed actions.

- 1) Access to bushland for those with a disability: We suggest that existing concrete paths should be maintained and upgraded before the construction of new paths is considered. If additional concrete paths are considered desirable, they should be constructed where the ecological integrity of the bushland will not be compromised – in parks or alongside bushland.
- 2) We support collaboration with Aboriginal communities to better recognize their relationship to land use in Mosman's LEP. Additionally, interpretation, guided tours and a possible permanent display of Aboriginal history in the Mosman area would be desirable.

Priority 4: Housing choices for changing demographics in the right locations

We support the proposed actions

The local housing strategy should consider the balance between the built and natural environment.

Numbers are not the only consideration. Where land size, topography and location permit, smaller dwelling units may be a more suitable option than a single large dwelling unit.

Priority 5: Building design and construction to be high quality and maintain resident amenity

We support the three proposed actions

The planning controls in the LEP and the DCP could be developed to enhance the much loved "village" character of Mosman.

Priority 6: Enhancing local neighbourhood centres while maintaining the village atmosphere

We support the three proposed actions

In addition to considering planning controls for neighbourhood centres to ensure a village atmosphere is maintained, we suggest that street characteristics could be better maintained with additional provisions in the LEP and DCP.

Priority 7: Protecting and conserving heritage in Mosman

We support the proposed actions

5) The protection of Aboriginal heritage sites identified in the Aboriginal Heritage Study 2005 is of the utmost importance. We suggest that, following consultation with relevant Aboriginal organisations, a more overall picture of how Aboriginal people lived in Mosman could be gained through interpretation of the evidence left behind of their occupation. Heritage could be explained at a series of significant locations. For example, there could be interpretive signage such as that at the Balmoral midden at other critical Mosman sites. Other appropriate means of interpretation could be walking tours, or a brochure with illustrations and a marked trail to various sites – Sirius Cove, Balmoral and Middle Head, or perhaps an app.

Priority 10: Protecting, conserving and enhancing Mosman's urban tree canopy, landform, waterways and bushland

All the actions in this priority are strongly aligned to Mosman Parks & Bushland's own aims and objectives. Due to its position, Mosman's bushland has a *national* significance.

- 1) Council needs to be strict in applying the LEP and DCP planning controls relating to maintaining the dominance of landscape over built form and should work to see them also applied by the MLPP
- 2) The development of further habitat links is highly desirable.
- 3) The Association is committed to achieving a permanent exemption from the Exempt and Complying Code SEPP in the Scenic Protection Area of Mosman's Harbour foreshores. The Exempt and Complying Code SEPP should not be applied in these areas.
- 4) The Association is very pleased that Council will continue to upgrade the zoning of unmade roads where these have achieved and will achieve sufficient bushland merit. As a further protection for the unmade roads, Council should have a policy that public land will never be compromised by sale, lease or development.
- 5) Reviewing the flora and fauna. We thank Council for its achievements in increasing the native vegetation in Mosman and we appreciate its ongoing bush regeneration programs and its support of volunteer groups.

And in addition –

- 6) In enhancing the urban tree canopy Council should consider the following when planting trees on public land
 - i. Species should be chosen that will not result in illegal tree vandalism from neighbours
 - ii. For street planting, species should be selected that do not interfere with utilities such as sewerage thereby causing a health hazard.
 - iii. Interference with electric wires and the often brutal and visually unattractive pruning could be avoided if the wires were underground
- 7) Mosman allows the pruning of trees on public land. This is sometimes a matter of safety or promotion of good growth. Where pruning is requested by a neighbour, Council permission should be obtained, and the pruning should be performed by an approved tree surgeon to Council specification.

4.

Priority 11: Protecting, preserving and enhancing the qualities of Mosman's Scenic Protection Area and the views to and from the foreshore slopes

The Association is in total agreement with the two proposed action and is willing to support Council in achieving a good result. The exclusion from the Codes SEPP should be permanent.

Priority 12: Providing recreational opportunities to meet the needs of residents of and visitors to Mosman

Proposed action 1. is supported

Proposed action 2. is supported with the qualification that upgrades to facilities must be environmentally sustainable. For example, we are determinedly opposed to the use of plastic turf for playing surfaces. Night-time lighting in some locations and circumstances would be considered with conditions.

Proposed action 3. is supported where it will not compromise ecological integrity and the preservation of remnant urban bushland, creek lines and adjacent vegetation.

Priority 13. Managing energy, water and waste efficiently to ensure a sustainable urban environment

The three proposed actions are supported.

Regarding Action 3. We would like to suggest that storm water could be harvested to supply water for playing fields and that the domestic use of grey water could be planned for use on domestic gardens.

A further matter for stormwater is that regular cleaning of pits is good for the environment, preventing the transfer of polluted stormwater into receiving water and into bushland. It would also mean that in large rain events, the stormwater system would operate optimally, reducing the risk of flooding. This will become more important with greater population density.

Priority 14. Adapting to the impacts of hazards and climate change

The three proposed actions are supported.

- 1) i. As we know, bushland, trees and parks create heat relief for the surrounding areas, thereby contributing to the amelioration of the increasing temperatures that we are experiencing – yet another reason for protecting our bushland and natural areas
- ii. The Street Tree Program should be continued with an emphasis on trees that will provide shade while not impinging on services.
- iii. The undergrounding of power lines would prevent the hazard of fire to street and nearby trees while allowing the trees to fulfil their potential without ugly pruning.

The Association would like to thank Council for its preparation of a well-considered Planning Statement, its information evening for the community and for the opportunity to comment.



Kate Eccles
President

7th August, 2019