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# Mosman Parks & Bushland Association

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Mosman Council  
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26<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Attention: Evan Matthews, Strategic Planner  
Joe Vertel, Senior Planning Advisor

## **DRAFT MOSMAN BAY AND LITTLE SIRIUS COVE FORESHORE RESERVES PLAN OF MANAGEMENT**

Mosman Parks & Bushland has viewed the Draft Plan of Management (POM.) and considers it comprehensive and balanced.

### **The planning context**

We particularly appreciate the excellent section on Planning Context. The planning legislation and context, permitted uses etc. are clearly set out, well explained, and illustrated. Thank you.

### **Climate change**

One point that we consider is lacking, is a reference to climate change and the extinction crisis in the Objectives. Perhaps it is stating the obvious to say that parks, bushland, and trees have a part to play in ameliorating climate change and adapting to it, and there are certainly references to it in the planning context, but it is so fundamental to the purpose of parks and bushland that we think it needs to be given a more prominent place.

### **Community consultation**

Mosman Parks & Bushland made preliminary comments at the early stage of community consultation prior to drawing up the draft Plan of Management for the Mosman Bay and Little Sirius Cove Foreshore Reserves (Reid Park, Sirius cove Reserve, Harnett Park and Curraghbeena Park).

Our earlier comments were on the whole about the parks' values and the principles that we considered should be observed in their management. We are happy to see that those values are shared by others in the community and reflected in the draft POM.

- Bushland
- Green open space
- Scenic qualities
- Tranquillity

**Bushland:** The draft POM in recognising the bushland qualities of the parks, accords a high conservation priority to two endangered ecological communities – Littoral Rain Forest and

Estuarine Swamp Oak Forest. It is noted that weed control is good, but there continues to be scope for further removal.

Green open space: Recognition that the reserves are part of the network of the open spaces of Sydney Harbour foreshores

Scenic qualities: They lie within the Scenic Protection Area of Mosman and are part of the Bondi to Manly walk which is enjoyed by the wider community.

### **Use of the parks by residents and others**

This is where the potential for conflict arises. The parks are situated in residential areas. The open space and flat areas are small. The demands upon them for use by different sections of the community are many. The PoM while allowing flexibility for changing future needs has to recognise the parks' limitations for use and ensure that the values appreciated by the community are respected and maintained.

A point that Mosman Parks & Bushland continues to make is that repairing and upgrading existing features such as park furniture is preferable to the provision of additional features. Water bubblers and waste bins are exceptions. Toilets and disability access are further possible exceptions. If provided they should be discrete and not impair the park's natural qualities.

Additional walks should not damage bushland or biodiversity corridors. Cycleways should not diminish natural qualities or interfere with other uses.

### **Guidelines for future uses**

We understand that these cannot be predicted with certainty, but we are delighted to note that nature-based recreation is included in the guidelines for preferred activities. "Informal "nature play", such as bush or adventure play, exploring, watching small animals (insects or lizards), and the like will be encouraged (especially those that foster children's appreciation of nature) ....."

### **A few comments on The Action Plan**

#### **RECREATION ACTIONS**

**Off leash dogs:** Dogs are important to their human companions, and they need areas to run. We agree that their needs should be balanced with other park values including those of the natural areas. Extra fencing would not enhance the visual and scenic qualities of the parks, but flora and fauna should be protected.

**A point on dog waste:** Council is supplying compostable corn starch bags. This is excellent, but dog owners need to be made aware that it is still necessary to place the used bags in bins so that they can be correctly disposed of in waste facilities. Perhaps some dog owners believe that leaving used compostable bags around the bush will not harm the environment!

**Watercraft storage:** We note that Council will investigate upgrading kayak and dinghy storage facilities within the existing footprint at Harnett Park. Our earlier comments reminded Council of our opposition to the kayak sheds proposal (2015-16) that would have diminished the tiny amount of open space of this appreciated harbourside park.

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In our earlier comments, we said then that we would not oppose a reconfiguration of storage racks in the park so long as they did not intrude further on the public open space.

Storage for kayaks and dinghies at Sirius Cove is to be investigated: We withhold comment until there is further information showing impact on other values of area.

**Children's play spaces:** The Reid Park playground is a proposed capital works project. Its current orientation intrudes upon the scenic view from park to water. The investigation of a different orientation is welcome. Different materials could also ameliorate the intrusion.

#### **Construction of CHILDREN'S BIKE TRACK at Reid Park if agreed:**

This is another proposed capital works project.

MPBA made the following suggestion to Mosman councillors prior to their consideration of children's unauthorised bike track construction in various locations during lockdown.

*"Reid Park: Part of Reid Park is being used as a temporary bike area now. The temporary area could be used in an evaluation process for consideration of a permanent area. Even as a temporary area, criteria need to be applied and observed.*

*The environment must be respected. No access tracks to the main bike area through the bushland slopes*

*Public access for residents must be maintained. The beautiful rocky bushland beyond the bike area must continue to be safely accessible to walkers. (Bush regeneration teams have been awarded for their work in this area). For safety, bike and walking areas will need to be separated, dogs should be on leads in this section of the park, and safe and separate residential access needs to be respected."*

We note that in the location currently proposed by Council, that bushland areas will not be impacted, that no tree will be removed, and that the walking path and bike area will be separated by a chain wire fence. We are pleased with this sympathetic approach, but we continue to suggest a trial period prior to approval.

There is no suggestion as to the materials to be used for the bike track.

**Fitness equipment:** Popular with some park users, but it is yet another visual intrusion in a scenic area.

#### **ACCESS ACTIONS**

**Wayfinding signage:** approved.

**Lighting in parks and on paths:** We note the intention to investigate lighting options in reserves and pedestrian paths in some of the reserves – Harnett, Reid, Sirius. Lighting is a form of pollution and affects the biodiversity that we wish to preserve in our parklands and bushland corridors. Safety for park users is necessary, but the use of lighting should be kept to a minimum. It should not be used unnecessarily, and it should never be considered for merely decorative purposes. Where lighting *is* used spillage should be minimised.

**Bush walking tracks and shared bike paths:** Further consideration is needed as suggested. Environmental damage should be avoided.

## **NATURAL/ENVIRONMENTAL/VISUAL ACTIONS**

MPBA is mindful and appreciative of the high value placed on preserving these qualities of the foreshore parks.

## **CULTURAL HERITAGE ACTIONS**

There may be opportunities for further interpretation and appreciation of both First Nations and other heritage in other reserves as well as Sirius Cove e.g., Reid and Harnett Parks.

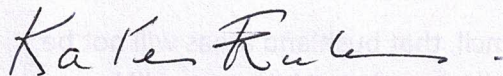
## **MANAGEMENT ACTIONS**

**Community Engagement in management of the reserves:** Approved

**Community Engagement with residents adjoining bushland reserves:** This list could include advice to residents about the spread of invasive non-native plant species.

## **CONCLUSION**

Mosman Bay and Little Sirius Cove Foreshore Reserves are important parts of Mosman's and Sydney Harbour's network of natural places. Their continuing natural value and appreciation by the public will depend upon their protection and good management. The Mosman Parks & Bushland Association appreciates the work that has gone into producing this Draft Plan of Management.



Kate Eccles OAM  
President  
November 2021