

WAVERTON PRECINCT MEETING

2 April 2024

MINUTES

The meeting commenced at 7.35pm at the Waverton Uniting Church Community Hall.

Chair: Ian Grey

Minutes: Deborah Lloyd

Attendance: 39

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGY:

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting, and guest speakers: Simon Cooper, Project Director from Transport NSW and Mark Russell, the Environment and Sustainability Manager from the Western Harbour Tunnel project. Megan Reynolds, the Senior Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Manager for the Western Harbour Tunnel was also present. There were no apologies.

2. GUEST SPEAKERS:

(Note that relevant website links are provided at the end of these Minutes as Item 2.)

Mr Cooper commenced the talk by saying he will provide an overview of the project to date, and what is coming up.

He said that tunneling has already commenced on the western (Birchgrove) side and in the Cammeray area. The tunnel will tie in with the Rozelle interchange, then go under the harbour, through North Sydney and then rising up to join the Warringah Freeway. A lot of the surface works are enabling works such as widening the freeway to create new access points. After the tunneling at Birchgrove is complete, the project is then handed over to what is called the Package Two contractor. This team uses the TBM (tunnel boring machine) to go underneath the harbour and that work finishes just around the Waverton area, where it meets the tunneling coming from the north side.

The Tunneling Equipment and the switch to a TBM

Mr Russell then explained that it was originally intended that the tunnel was to be created using an immersed tube tunnel.

The reason why during the EIS that an immersed tube tunnel was desired was to cross the Harbour as shallow as possible to improve the gradient and the alignment up to North Sydney because there's a fair grade difference between those two points. The use of a TBM at that point they thought it would involve digging a lot deeper than was originally wanted.

However, Mr Russell said that since that point in time Sydney Metro has crossed the harbour with a TBM and so they decided to use two much larger TBMs for this project. Sydney sandstone is a particularly good material for this kind of boring method, and it also means that all the works will be taking place underground - we will not see much on the surface.

It is essentially a large excavator with a pineapple shaped boring device on the end of it and it just grinds the sandstone away, making a "bread loaf" kind of shape, ideal for a flat bottomed road and a curved roof. The tunnel is around 7-10 metres in height.

Mr Cooper said that on the northside, the project is currently about 20 metres below the surface of the freeway, eventually turning right at around the St Leonards Park location, then heads towards Pacific Highway to align roughly with Bay Road and then meet the other end of the tunnel at the vacant land near Carradah Park in Waverton.

Here the depths along that alignment do change because whilst the tunnel is is reasonably linear, the ground above it goes up and down.

The Tunnel Tool

While Mr Cooper said he cannot individually tell residents exactly the depth of the tunnel relevant to their house, the Tunnel Tool is currently live on the internet, and has been created to do exactly this. The alignment is now pretty much locked in but it has undergone some change previous to this so Mr Cooper urged all residents to go to this Tool to update their knowledge.

Any houses that are within 50 metres of that alignment will be offered a free property condition survey.

You can click on your house or put in your address and the Tool will tell you the depth at the top of the tunnel in relation to your property. It is important to note, said Mr Cooper, that Transport NSW acquire a 10 metre profile *around* the tunnel to protect it, so nobody can excavate and go through it and because they use rock bolts and these can vary in length depending on the ground type so these need to be protected as well.

Property condition survey.

Surveys will be free of charge for homes that are 50m from the alignment. A letter will be sent to each home and the resident will need to arrange access to your property for the purpose of making the survey. Both Mr Cooper and Mr Russell urged every resident to take up this offer. They will typically be done around 12 weeks before the tunnel comes through, so it is a very accurate record of what state your property is in before the tunnel comes through. While it will take a while for these surveys to be commencing in Waverton, so letters will not be coming to homes in Waverton just yet, they are already underway in Cammeray.

The survey will consist of photographs inside and out, and they will also work with any strata organisation that is necessary to gain access to common areas. The resident receives a copy of the final report.

Mr Russell said that in the unlikely event of anything happening to your property, there is full and comprehensive record of before and after the works. The homeowner would put in a property damage claim. An appraisal team, which is an independent panel, will look at what has taken place and may well rectify any issue if the survey clearly shows an effect, but it will be much harder for the resident if no survey was conducted. There is an escalation process if the homeowner is not happy with that initial outcome but Mr Russell and Mr Cooper thought any change to properties would be very unlikely at all.

Mr Cooper said that in addition to a letter they will also do a door-knock as well. A special property team is managing the process and can talk through the process in more depth to any resident, when the tunneling is closer to Waverton.

Ground movement and vibration noise

Mr Russell said that residents can be assured that any movement on top or below is being monitored around the clock. Engineers are always checking and the information is returning to managers in real time. If anything changes, the project team are aware of it. Survey teams monitor any changes to the ground above daily as the tunnel is being carved out. They put temporary indicators on street furniture and may even ask homeowners for permission to put one on their property. They noted the ground is constantly moving - but they are looking for anything out of what would be ordinary movement.

They are tunneling between 1 to 3 metres in a session. So if it's a split shift you might get up to about 6 metres in really good rock over a 24 hour period. They take the curved part at the top and then the side walls and then they'll do what's called the benching, which is essentially taking the floor out as well. They look at the face of the rock. They then map the rock face. They look at any defects and all that information comes back to the project and engineering team who look at that everyday. Mr Russell said that residents in homes right above the tunnel may notice something as they tunnel through. This is called "ground borne noise". This noise only occurs during the construction phase, as the boring occurs. The vibration travels through the ground, through the rock. It essentially then comes into a building and this is very low level vibration and regenerates itself as noise. Sometimes, Mr Russell said, it is compared to an old air conditioner, or an old refrigerator - a very low frequency hum which then disappears as the boring moves on away from the property. However, sometimes people cannot hear anything. It depends on the individual and also the property itself.

It is generally thought that when the tunnel is around 20 to 30 metres away is generally the time people might hear it. Mr Russel noted that they are currently 55 metres off the Rozelle interchange and nobody has reported any noise.

To wrap up the tunnel construction, Mr Russell said that the website's tools will enable residents to see where the project is up to, and urged residents to get the survey done as there is a full and independent process if people feel their property has been adversely affected by the tunneling process. There are other links and hotlines on the website for residents if they have questions.

Berrys Bay Park project: derelict wharves (aka "orphaned assets")

Mr Cooper said that the derelict wharves were considered 'orphaned assets' left by past leaseholders and handed over to Transport for NSW.

The assets identified have been inspected by Transport NSW Maritime Division and are deemed to pose no immediate threat to the environment or other vessels in the water.

Whilst Transport NSW appreciates their removal would improve the visual amenity, they are currently prioritising other projects ahead of doing this work. There is no current plan or funding available to facilitate their removal.

A resident expressed dissatisfaction with this response as BP already paid Maritime to remove these derelict wharves - funds which have never been used for that express intended use.

In regards to the landside part of the new Park, Transport NSW is planning to commence the Landscape plan later this year. Mr Cooper explained that the Masterplan is now done but they next need to develop the detailed design, which is then provided to the State Design Review Panel for feedback, This is a separate entity to Transport NSW and they, independently, will seek further feedback from the community as a part of their process.

The landscape planning process will take place later this year. This goes into a lot more of the design elements than the initial Masterplan, and details the final finishes and this goes out to community consultation. Mr Cooper assured residents that Transport NSW have been working very closely with North Sydney Council to make sure their needs are met. This process occurs for all critical state significant infrastructure projects.

Finally, the finished detailed plan goes to the government architect for further review. Once all parties are in approval, the last step is it then gets approved by the Department of Planning.

A resident asked what the budget for the project was. Mr Cooper was unable to answer but reassured the resident that the park was a requirement and would be built and they are making sure that the community gets a very good outcome.

A resident asked when the park would be completed. Mr Cooper said it would be underway before the opening of the Western Harbour Tunnel, adding that any project near water is a complex one, and all feedback needs to be taken into consideration.

Air quality/pollution

A resident asked why it was that the pollution was being funneled out where his grandchildren go to school?

Mr Russell responded by commenting that the question was asked frequently. There was an independent air quality committee of scientists that was appointed to plan the filtering system and they have produced a paper on why they made the decisions that they did. Mr Russell urged all interested residents to read it.

He said that Norway and Japan are two countries who use filtration but not stacks. Norway has a lot of studded tyres and these produce a particular type of particles that we will not have. Another reason is because they have built tunnels a lot longer than the one being built in Sydney. They use portal emissions which span all of the emissions in the tunnel and is ejected via a portal. We will use a ventilation outlet, which shoots out at about 500 cubic m per second. The air disperses very high and over a large area. Surface traffic does and will continue to be the main source of pollution in northern Sydney. The tunnel outlet will not be the major source of pollution. Filtering would not provide any benefit.

As for pollution as well as noise during the building process, Mr Russell says this is being monitored all the time. The impacts on the Rozelle side have been minimal. This data is being taken all the time and is live, and available to the public.

Additional Questions

The following questions were put to the guests from residents attending:-

- 1. What are the possibilities of coming across old coal mines?*

Mr Russell said they are aware of the coal mine and the tunnel will not be impacted.

- 2. Boring underneath the Waverton Bowling Club - do they have permission and when will that happen?*

Probably around 2025 but the online tool should tell you when that happens.

- 3. Regarding substratum acquisition - how will that affect property values and residential buildings with underground car parking?*

Mr Russell noted the depth of the tunnel directly underneath a property will go on the title, so anyone purchasing or building on a site will know where the tunnel is. He added that most car park levels are around 3 metres or slightly taller and by comparison most of these tunnels were at least 40 metres below ground level. Builders will not be permitted to come within 10 meters

around the tunnel. If there are any approvals now or into the future for blocks of units or office buildings they already are or will be made aware of this limitation.

To be even possibly affected it would take a very large building or huge footings to even come close to the tunnel. At the Rozelle side, it has not been an issue.

4. *Will there be a ferry wharf included in the Berry's Bay plan?*

The answer is no.

5. *Is Woodley's Shed considered part of the Berry's Bay park and plan? The community is concerned that the Shed is in danger of collapsing.*

Mr Cooper did not have any specific information on the plan for Woodley's Shed.

The Chair ascertained that there were no further questions.

Mr Russell and Mr Cooper were thanked for their generous responses and for taking the time to present the information and respond to questions. Mr Cooper offered to take any further questions that might come up and provide a response and he emphasised that they wanted to be transparent and to communicate with all residents.

3. NEW BUSINESS:

Delays to the new Berrys Bay Park

The information from our speakers that the Berrys Bay Park is some way from commencing caused some concern from residents. The Chair pointed out that the Park was originally due to commence late 2024, then it slipped slightly into 2025. Now they're hoping it will coincide with the opening of the tunnel which is approximately 2028. We've been through a master planning process and things are becoming unclear for such a non-contentious project. The Chair voiced concern of the state of Woodley's Shed, and the Precincts' and the Council's continued desire to create a community centre from this historical site. We don't understand why they can't just get on with that aspect of it. BD suggested that we ask the Minister responsible that Woodley's be separated from the wider Park project, as a stand alone public open space project. And why is Transport NSW being given the project of building a public park? Woodley's Shed ceased to be used in 1997, so it is 25 years of neglect. The dilapidation report done by Transport NSW was shared to the Council on the condition of secrecy. This is not good enough. If Maritime can do the basics such as make it safe, get water and electricity to the site then the Council can take it up and run with it.

It was also pointed out the absurd situation of the derelict wharves and redundant vessels ruining the effect of the brand new park when it is built. When one wharf collapsed recently, the publicity was all about the impromptu artwork that was placed there, not the fact that the

collapse occurred or the state of the bay in general. It is not good enough for Transport NSW and Maritime to simply say that it is not on their schedule to do anything about it.

The Chair pointed out the difficulties in getting any traction on the issue of cleaning up Berrys Bay, including Dolphin Wharf, and in the past this effort has included reaching out to Maritime, working through our State MP, through the Ministry of Transport

Dolphin Wharf has a shed on it, but has not been actively used for at least 20 years and the money BP provided for its demolition has never been used. The wharf serves no useful purpose. There is no chance of the Flannigan's Afloat vessel being used for anything - nobody is allowed on board because it is not safe. The ferry may currently be in better shape but there is no reason why it needs to be in Berry's Bay. It was suggested that Dolphin Wharf be included in this conversation regarding the dilapidated wharves.

It was decided to move a Motion for the issue to be given more consideration at Council, and to determine a strategy with Council.

Motion

Residents are not satisfied that the commencement of Berrys Bay Park, which is not at all controversial, has been delayed again. There is no reason for any delay, and we also question why Transport NSW are involved in the building of this project. Further, residents remain very concerned about the condition and delay to the restoration of Woodley's Shed.

Moved by KA

Seconded by DA

"The Precinct asks Council to approach Transport NSW to promptly give care, control and management of Berrys Bay Park, including Woodleys Shed, to the Council in order to deliver it to the public in a timely manner, and for Transport NSW to provide North Sydney Council with the funding to implement this project."

Carried.

Motion

The Dolphin Wharf, dilapidated piers and items within Berrys Bay, relocation of vessels is an important step in the delivery of the Berrys Bay Park. Further, Transport NSW has already received funding to remove Dolphin Wharf by BP.

Moved by DA

Seconded by DL

"That North Sydney Council approach Transport NSW, and other relevant parties, to remove the Dolphin Wharf, all dilapidated piers and former marina piles and related items within Berrys Bay, and to relocate vessels as part of the delivery of Berrys Bay Park."

Further, that North Sydney Council request the funding that was passed to Transport NSW by BP be provided to Council to be used for this purpose.”

Carried.

Petition to clean up Sydney Harbour

(Note: the Petition wording is provided at the end of these Minutes, as Item 1)

Ms Curran, a Committee member from the Euroka Precinct addressed the meeting and advised she is in early stages of lodging a Petition to Parliament to Clean up Sydney Harbour (please see a copy below).

The presenter/sponsor of this petition will be Kobi Shetty, member for Balmain, and the petitioner is Mary Curran.

When launched 20,000 signatures are required. It is an ePetition. The current plan is to launch the petition in July as there are only 90 days to get the signatures and a few months planning is required.

See link for general details here:

<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/la/petitions/pages/about-petitions.aspx>

Sample of current link here:

<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/la/Pages/epetitions-list.aspx>

Ms Curran requested the petition be circulated to members and a resolution to support be tabled at the next meeting.

Residents are invited to contact Mary on 0411 178 181 or contact via email at curranmary207@gmail.com

4: CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

Copies of the March 2024 Minutes were sent to those present at that meeting, and 30 copies were made circulated as a print out at the April 2024 meeting.

It was

Moved by Kevin Alker

Seconded by Ian Grey

“That the March 2024 Minutes be accepted”.

Carried unanimously.

5: EXISTING BUSINESS:

Mailing List

The Chair explained to the residents that our mailing list has been deleted and that the Secretary is in the process of building a new database. This process has been benefitted by co-operation and assistance from North Sydney Council but residents gathered can assist by ensuring their latest details are on the attendance sheet.

We are confident that this mailing list can be re-built fairly quickly. The Secretary also noted that copies of past Minutes will be available on the new website.

Upgrade of Merritts Playground

The Chairman said that we asked NSC for an update on the Merritts Playground upgrade in February because our information was that it would be commencing in the early part of 2024. Council have informed the Precinct that the tender process has been finalised and the recommendations are going up to the Council at their next meeting so we expect that work will commence on the upgrade to the Merritts Playground in the next few months.

Coal Loader Cafe

NSC have informed the Precinct that a leaseholder has been engaged, and will be re-opening soon. Residents said that they have seen activity in this location.

Treasurer's message

The Treasurer explained to the residents that we have signed the Memorandum of Understanding with the Council. We receive \$1500 from NSC every year as does every Precinct. Not many Precincts have a website but we do and are overhauling it at the moment. Given the expense of this, we have asked NSC to print and distribute our flyers at their expense for this year whilst we work on the new website with the agreement that we would be able to provide support to other Precincts that want to set up their own website.

Noakes Boatyard - noise and pollution

The Chairman told the residents that we received a Memo dated 28th March 2024 from NSC giving us an update on ongoing regulatory action at the Noakes boatyard. They are not satisfied with the way Noakes are dealing with fire safety, noise, air and water pollution issues, notwithstanding the EPA standard and the Council has a more stringent standard for the boatyard. The Council are imposing certain requirements on Noakes to install the new fire safety system by 30th June 2024. The Memo was available for residents to read.

Possible venue change

The Chair presented to the residents that projectors and the internet at our meetings can help facilitate more thorough presentations and aid the spoken information with visuals.

The Secretary conveyed that connectivity (wifi) and projector equipment has been requested by the Hall owners but rejected. There are a number of rooms at the Coal Loader that do have these facilities that we can use and we would like the residents to consider a venue change.

Some residents felt that this location on a regular basis would not be suitable as it is out of the way for most attendees, a less convenient location. A resident informed the meeting that The Hub has a portable projector which there may be a possibility we can borrow.

It was decided to maintain the Uniting Church Hall as our venue.

Sub-committee system

The Chair said that the Precinct Committee has already mentioned the idea of sub-committees to move projects forward and that we would like to formalise this process. People who have nominated to commence one of these will be approached for a discussion. Anyone can join one and start one if there is a particular issue or initiative they would like to champion.

6. NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will take place at 7.30pm at the Uniting Church Hall, Bay Road, Waverton on Tuesday May 7th. We will welcome a presentation from a local resident who is seeking some support for a kayak marina and public beach around the Badangi Reserve/Berry Island Reserve area, so we will look forward to hearing his ideas.

The meeting closed at 9.35pm.

7: ADDITIONAL NOTES TO THE ABOVE - 2 ITEMS:

ITEM 1:

PETITION TO THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

CLEAN UP SYDNEY HARBOUR

To the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly,

We the undersigned citizens of NSW request that the Legislative Assembly consider and act

on the following:

Facts

1. Sydney Harbour is one of the world's greatest harbours. In the recent Stannards Marine case, Chief Justice Preston found that "protection of the natural assets of Sydney Harbour has precedence over all other interests".
2. Redundant and derelict vessels, jetties and piles exist in Sydney Harbour waters,