

Gateway

Newsletter of the Brooklyn Community Association, Inc

August 2014

President's Report



At the Council meeting on Wednesday September 3, Hornsby Council will address the Brooklyn Master Plan and a recommendation that:

1. Consultation be undertaken with the community in accordance with the consultation strategy outlined in Group Manager's Report No. PL47/14.
3. Council accept receipt of written submissions in addition to feedback provided in the survey.

The Group Manager's Report recommends an "internet based survey of all ratepayers and business owners in Brooklyn, ratepayers of the Lower Hawkesbury River Settlements and a number of randomly selected residential ratepayers in other areas of Hornsby Shire will be invited by letter to respond to the survey" .. "to identify community and visitor attitudes and priorities". A "number of randomly selected peak-time visitors to Brooklyn will also be surveyed".

The Brooklyn Community Association has supported the need for a longer term strategic plan for Brooklyn, to progressively improve the amenity of the town, to reduce the risk of inappropriate development, and to improve the unacceptable parking situation. The BCA supported the Mayor's original motion on the Master Plan, and has prepared a preliminary report on parking, already presented to Council.

Hornsby Council have not recognised the Brooklyn Community Association or any other community group in their recommendation for the Master Plan, preferring to direct their consultation to individual residents and business owners. The Council's approach does go partway to addressing the BCA's request that:

- All Brooklyn residents are notified in writing about the Master Plan, including its objectives, management and processes.
- The community are active participants in establishing the approach to the Master Plan and defining the consultation and engagement processes.
- The community has active membership of the control group.

However, while all residents will be invited to contribute, the community has no active role in the governance of the Master Plan. Already, there could be more transparency, and there is concern in the community that the Council might control the scope and outcomes.

Accordingly, we have again invited more than 20 community groups to attend the BCA meeting on Saturday 6 September. Only through a strong and active coalition of community groups can we ensure that the Master Plan addresses all our requirements today and into the future.

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Brooklyn Community Association's unauthorised Master Plan logo was designed by Janet Lucas graphic designer, in conjunction with Matt Glendenning artist, both of Brooklyn

Brooklyn Community Association General Meeting
Saturday, 6 September, 10am - noon, Paden Powell Hall

The Brooklyn Master Plan & the Peat Island Rezoning Proposal

Meeting Schedule 2014: Saturday 11 October, Saturday 6 December (AGM)

Peat Island Rezoning Proposal

Whatever the merits of the recently released Peat Island Concept Plan, transparency and trust in Government has taken another hit. At a time when the Central Coast is reeling with developer-friendly disclosures at the ICAC, a seemingly developer-friendly and community-ignored proposal has been announced for Peat Island.

The Government's Media Release states that:

"The team at Government Property NSW have been working closely with the local community, stakeholders and council to determine the best possible uses for the land ..."

But, as far as local community groups know, there has been no consultation with the community since the failed 2010/11 Labour Government Proposal. And the Consultation Report in the current Rezoning Submission is the one that was prepared by Key Insights in August 2011 on a very different proposal.

The Government should have realised from the extensive community responses to the 2010/11 proposal that Peat Island is a key concern for the whole Hawkesbury community. Leaders of four community groups met with Gosford and Hornsby Members of Parliament and Gosford and Hornsby Mayors at Peat Island in August 2013, to express their strong interest in participation in the planning process, with little positive outcome. And it isn't only the community being ignored, as we understand that the announcement was released without any input from Hornsby Council, and without their knowledge.

Clearly, a substantial amount of work has been done to develop the proposal and the submission. But is it what the community might want. Residential properties dominate the proposal, on sides of hills and beside freeways, some at 5 stories high not sympathetic to the local area. A marina sits on a mud flat. Very limited community and recreation area remains. No input has been sought from the general community and community groups on the Concept being proposed, and previous input seems to have been ignored.

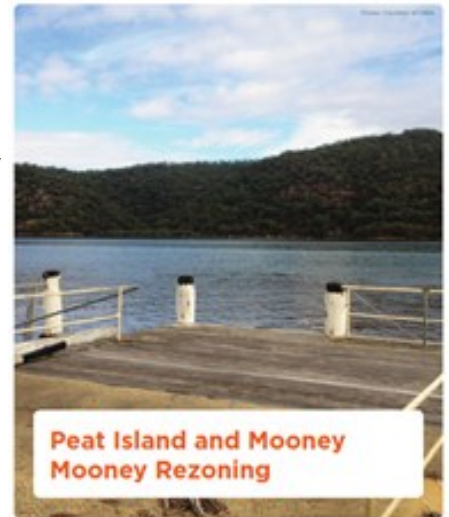
From Brooklyn's point of view, while Peat Island is in Gosford Local Government Area, services for the new Peat Island population will be provided from Brooklyn and Berowra within the Hornsby LGA. In early 2012, the Brooklyn Community Association provided feedback to the Government and to the (then) State Property Authority on the 2010/11 Proposal:

On the whole the community is excited by the prospect of an environmentally and socially sensitive, well thought out residential and tourist development on the Peat Island site and the surrounding areas of Mooney Mooney. The Brooklyn Community Association welcomes more residents in our river community. Support for the Peat Island redevelopment by the Brooklyn Community Association is conditional upon the incorporation of integrated critical improvements to parking, station access, improved transport and road safety in Brooklyn for the use of residents of the wider river communities.

With increased cooperation between the Councils, and consideration of Peat Island in the Brooklyn Master Plan, perhaps these critical improvements might happen and Brooklyn will benefit from the proposal. And not all is lost. At first glance, the Aboriginal and European Heritage Assessment is comprehensive and its conclusions fair and reasonable. Many elements of the proposal have merit and will be well-regarded by the community.

The community needs to be given the chance to participate and to contribute. And the Government just needs to listen to the community now and then!!!

Rezoning Proposal: <http://www.gosford.nsw.gov.au/about-council/governance-and-strategy/access-to-information/gipa-documents-listing>



NSW Government Property NSW

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