

Brooklyn Community Association

Submission General Manager's Report: GM31/21 Brooklyn Place Planning



The Brooklyn Community Association (BCA) wishes to convey our thanks to Council for the opportunity to engage during the production of the Discussion Paper and the Feedback from the Survey and the Exhibition. The BCA would like to provide the following feedback on the General Manager's Report and its conclusions and recommendations.

Executive Summary & Recommendations

- The BCA, in collaboration with Dangar Island League (DIL), has strongly advocated that “the community’s focus [on car parking in Brooklyn] is clear and unequivocal”, and supports the recommendation that “Council address car parking in Brooklyn in the first instance before proceeding with the place planning process”.
- The BCA welcomes the Council’s recommendation to establish a *revised “working version” of the vision for Brooklyn*, to enable the vision to be tested (and potentially adjusted) in the future.
- The BCA appreciates, as pivotal, the point made in the Executive Summary “*it is recommended that Council work with the community to produce a “consultant’s brief” for the next stage of works*”.

The BCA acknowledges that continued collaboration between Council and community stakeholders is essential for an outcome that is acceptable to the community, and welcomes this recommendation. We are concerned that the recommendation is not included under the heading Recommendations, but the BCA accepts in good faith that this collaboration will take place.

- The BCA requests that participation, or at the very least input, into the workshop with Councillors be extended to include representatives from BCA and DIL.

General Comments

The General Manager's Report seems biased towards visitors (mentioned 23 times), over residents (19), river residents (7), and local businesses (7), which might indicate Council's intentions for the future Brooklyn Place Plan. The economic vitality of Brooklyn necessarily includes visitors and tourism, and Brooklyn is uniquely placed for this opportunity. That said, the BCA would encourage Council to maintain the momentum and faith with the communities to collaboratively define a clear vision and the pathway forward with residents and businesses.

The BCA considers that Brooklyn residents have a long and proud history of being welcoming to visitors. This having been demonstrated in recent times by the generosity of time given by volunteers at our community hub, The Cottage at 10 Dangar Road. The Cottage is a community and cultural facility that welcomes hundreds of visitors each month. The point of tension with visitors to Brooklyn is suitable parking options, which is strongly reflected in the comments received to the Guiding Principles.

The Survey

- The BCA reiterates the point made in earlier feedback that the guiding principles in the survey did not recognise Brooklyn “as a location for those people who have chosen to make Brooklyn their home” as the primary principle.
- The BCA acknowledges comments from residents that this is a significant deficiency in the principles, and that many respondents to the survey were guided only by the principles listed, as the survey mechanism made it difficult to add additional items. In short, they said that you cannot respond to principles that weren't there.
- The *elements and feedback point 3*, which states *Brooklyn is for residents and visitors*, immediately ignores residents and focuses on visitors and Brooklyn-as-a-destination.
- However, the BCA recognises that these points might have triggered the revised “working version” of the vision for Brooklyn and look forward to it being *further tested [and potentially adjusted] with stakeholders as the Brooklyn place planning process continues*.

- Adjustments to the vision might include the following:
 - If the term *liveable place* is to be used, it should be in the context of those who live here, the residents.
 - As a port and transport interchange, Brooklyn village already assists transition between river, road and rail. By mandating that Brooklyn will support all river communities (underlined in the Report) draws attention to river communities' having unique status above and beyond access by any other parties. More appropriate wording will be required for the vision to be acceptable to the Brooklyn community.

Actions to proceed with

- All parties have agreed that the priority action is to resolve the approach to car parking, and accordingly, we suggest that the sequence of actions in all subsequent documents should be re-ordered to recognise this priority.
- The BCA and the Brooklyn community would appreciate a clear definition/description of Council's thinking as it relates to *the Dangar Road activation strategy*. That strategy causes considerable angst in the community, which believes it is Council's code for redevelopment, particularly when the parallel Community and Cultural Facilities Plan proposes to de-commission and potentially sell Brooklyn's existing community facilities.
- The BCA recognises that some compromise will be necessary to achieve sustainable parking solutions, and requests Council clarify their intentions in a transparent way to the community about the activation of Dangar Road.

Car Parking and River Communities

This heading has been omitted in the General Manager's Report. The BCA strongly believe that if Tourism and Visitation deserves a section with 400 words, then Car Parking and River Communities deserves at least an equivalent amount.

- The General Manager's Report recognises that *visitation to Brooklyn seems to be a point of tension because of the demand for car parking*, but dismisses the *competition for parking in the Brooklyn village centre from river residents* because it was not specifically articulated in the survey results. That was a failure of design of the survey, not the result of responses to the survey (and possibly to minimise controversy in the process).
- Competition for parking in the Brooklyn village centre, insufficient parking for river residents and, to a lesser extent, car and trailer storage, are the major issues for parking. Issues with visitor parking are secondary (except for local businesses) and are exacerbated by river resident and car storage. We reiterate, the point of tension is suitable access to parking options for all users, which is strongly reflected in the comments received to the Guiding Principles.
- The BCA has frequently (and formerly) requested the Council to establish comprehensive and accurate statistics of car parking, storage and movements of resident, river resident, commuter, and visitor vehicles, but we believe that the figures have not been adequately collected and analysed, and shared with the community.

Tourism and Visitation

This section of the General Manager's Report seems to have been written to meet Council's requirements, and not the communities' interests, although we acknowledge the following:

- Visitors to Parsley Bay could contribute to the economy if they were charged parking fees (and those fees subsidised Brooklyn maintenance), particularly for major events.
- Brooklyn businesses are constrained by lack of availability of visitor parking, caused by a variety of reasons.

Future Engagement

The BCA acknowledges and appreciates the Council's intention to continue to *collaborate with the community and be responsive to feedback*.

The BCA will continue to collaborate positively with the Brooklyn community, Council, DIL and other Stakeholders and looks forward to working with Council Officers to produce the "Consultant's Brief" for the next stages of this critical project.



Di Bowles
President Brooklyn Community Association