



Community engagement S94A Contributions Plan October 2016

The main objective of Mosman Parks and Bushland is the protection of Mosman's natural environment and public land.

Having regard to this we make the following comments regarding the draft S94A contributions plan

Plan needs a greater focus on Bushland

The plan is very focussed on active open space and includes only \$800k for bush regeneration projects (Item 7). This has a medium to low priority which is a 3-10 year horizon and represents just over 5% of the total budget.

Increasing population in Mosman is putting more pressure on existing bushland and therefore more need for protection and regeneration. The plan needs to have a greater focus on bushland and allocate more funds to it. Increasing urban development is putting pressure on our bushland areas (from increased runoff/weed invasion, impact of private gardens on adjacent bushland etc). **The need to protect bushland and the fauna that it supports has never been greater.** In addition much of the bushland in Mosman is harbourside bushland which is of regional if not national significance. There is a strong argument for more funds for bush regeneration. There should also be funds for interpretive material at bushland sites and for community awareness programs about bushland health and private property impacts.

Allocation of funds in this way aligns with Mosman Council's own vision. Mosplan 2013-2023 for Healthy Environment includes the following 2 strategic statements.

1. enhance community knowledge and awareness and foster long-term sustainable behaviours through engagement programs; and
2. Preserve and enhance biodiversity on both public and private land including Mosman's urban forest, bushland, reserves, open space, beaches, intertidal zone and the marine environment.

Middle Head Oval

The plan identifies \$4.25M for Middle Head oval. This represents more than a quarter of the funds to be collected in this S94A plan. **We have concerns about both the Pavilion (\$2.25M) and the oval playing surface (\$2M), as follows:**

1. **The Pavilion-** We consider a better solution for the pavilion at Middle Head Oval, to include in this S94A plan, would be to beneficially reuse one of the Barracks building near Middle Head Oval and demolish the existing pavilion. The Barracks building closest to the oval is well located and there are real advantages in using one of the barracks buildings for a new pavilion.

This approach would not only enable improved pavilion facilities to be provided but also protect the heritage listed barracks building. The Barracks buildings are part of the existing Commonwealth Heritage listing for the site (10 Terminal and ASOPA) The barracks buildings are important as part of the Headland

Park's collection of army accommodation facilities and in their own right as part of the early 50s response to the constrained circumstance of that period.

2. **Middle Head Oval Playing Surface.** In its submission to Council dated 28 August 2015, MPBA indicated its strong opposition to any proposal for artificial turf/synthetic grass on Middle Head Oval. A copy of this submission is attached. That submission concluded that:

"Given the ecological arguments in favour of natural grass and the potential loss of enjoyment of public land by the wider public, Mosman Parks and Bushland supports increased and improved maintenance of natural turf surface rather than the installation of synthetic turf. We are aware that this may not solve all the problems of those using the ovals for sports. However we believe that conservation and protection of the natural environment is in the interest of all, including those who play sport now and into the future."

MPBA made this same argument to the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust earlier this year when it sought community views on future planning for Middle Head. It is noted that in the feedback about that engagement process the Trust indicated strong community sentiment opposing artificial turf on the oval. **The S94 A plan should propose these funds be allocated to "maintenance and improvement" of the oval's grass playing surface,**

Allan Border Oval and Balmoral Reserve South

Both of these projects involve building and redevelopment. MPBA recognises the important community benefits from these projects. However, such projects should not involve increased building footprints and further incursions into the surrounding open space which must be protected during both construction and operational phases.

Other works identified

Any other on ground works outlined in the plan such as playgrounds (item 3) and accessibility works (items 5 and 10), need to be undertaken in a manner that does not prejudice the integrity of surrounding bushland and open space areas.



For Kate Eccles
President
21 October 2016