



REPORT

NOVEMBER 2020

It is a regret that we have not seen our wider membership at an AGM or other gatherings during the year. We appreciate members' patience and we hope you are well. One thing the pandemic has brought with it is an increased awareness of the value of our parks and bushland and why they are worth fighting for.

Your committee has continued to do so and I thank them for their support and work.

I shall start with our submissions since our AGM in May 2019, some of which seem rather a long time ago

Mosman Council

Mosplan Revised Delivery Program 2018 -21
Mosman Rowing Club and the Harnett Park Lease
Mosman Local Strategic Planning Statement
Mosman Community Participation Plan
A DA affecting triangle of green space on Burran Avenue
Plans of Management – Reid, Harnett, Sirius Cove, Curraghbeena
Road Reserves Sale, Leasing and Consent Draft Policy
Tree Removal on Public land at Coronation Avenue
Support for the creation of an E4 Environment Living Zone in the Mosman Scenic Protection Area

Harbour Trust

Harbour Trust Draft Management Plan Amendment, Drill Hall Precinct, and DA for lighting the outdoor Netball Courts

NSW

NSW Independent Inquiry into the 2019-20 Bushfire Season

Federal Government

The Harbour Trust Review
The Independent Review of the EPBC Act (Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act) – discussion paper

We have been in touch with our Federal MP over the Harbour Trust Review and the EPBC Act and our State MP over various matters. We appreciate their interest in our views.

Harbour Trust

Harbour Trust Review and draft legislation

The Harbour Trust Review was outlined briefly in our last newsletter
The exposure draft amendment bill is now available.

<https://haveyoursay.awe.gov.au/exposure-draft-shft-amendment-bill-2020>

Submissions are open until 13th November, 2020

And government actions in response to the Review here.

<https://www.awe.gov.au/about/reporting/obligations/government-responses/sydney-harbour-federation-trust-review-recommendations>

10 Terminal, Middle Head

You will have received a letter from the Harbour Trust about its ideas and planning for 10 Terminal at Middle Head. Further consultation will take place. Further thought will be needed about the demolition of *all* of the three heritage barracks buildings to create parkland, about whether the office and public use mix in the 10 Terminal brick building strikes the right balance, and whether the opportunity for interpretation is being seized.

The Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act (EPBC) (Federal)

The interim report by Graeme Samuels on this Federal Act found that the environment was in a state of decline, flora and fauna being lost and their habitats cleared. Graeme Samuels recommended an independent “cop on the beat” to enforce new standards. However, even before the final report has been made, the government pushed a bill through the lower house which would delegate its environmental powers to the states. The bill is still not passed as it hasn’t been through the senate yet. We want strong laws to protect our environment and native species.

MPBA is grateful to the member for Warringah, Zali Steggall for her response to our concerns, for her letter to the minister and for her speech in parliament on 27th October.

Climate Change Bill (Federal)

Zali Steggall’s Climate Change Bill will be presented to parliament on November 9th. I am aware that there are climate change sceptics among our membership, but believers may wish to support the bill by writing to the Prime Minister. My personal belief is that jobs will be created by renewable energy. Digging up the country, destroying farmland, damaging aquifers to provide fossil fuel energy is not the only way to create jobs.

Scenic Protection Area

Members will remember that we advocated for continued protection from inappropriate development on the slopes of Mosman and were pleased that Mosman was granted an extension of time for its Scenic Protection Area. The aim of the Scenic Protection Area is to maintain the dominance of landscape over built form, thereby protecting the natural and visual amenity of Mosman and Sydney Harbour. At the expiry of the term for the Scenic Protection Area, development proposals will not have to go to Council for approval. MPBA continues to argue that Mosman’s location on Sydney Harbour makes scenic protection important to Mosman, NSW, Australia and for international appreciation. Council is hoping to maintain its current controls by introducing a new environmental zone. We hope this move will be successful.

GRANTS

Council’s grant for our website

This year we are very pleased to have received the grant from Mosman Council for our website. Once up and running we hope it will bring a better understanding of our activities, our aims and objectives to members, the Mosman community and the broader community. (As detailed in the letter accompanying this report, we would very much appreciate your donations to supplement the grant.)

3.

Council’s grant for archiving our records

Thanks to our team of archivists (Rosie Adams, Anne Cook, Angela Lenning, Libby Manuel, Sue Wagner, Susan Winterton) led by Marg Woodforth, we completed the

archiving of the Association's records of its first 20 years. They are all beautifully sorted and filed, with the digitised researchable version deposited with the Mosman Library along with a paper on our early history, by Anne Cook. We have a few more years to go!

The Federal Government's grant to Council for the Rawson Oval slope

A grant received by Council for the creation of a bush corridor on the slope below Rawson Oval was contingent upon the participation of MPBA volunteers. When the appeal went out members responded valiantly. A Covid compliant roster was drawn up and the difficult slope was planted. Members enjoyed themselves, despite or perhaps because of, the outing during Covid restrictions. We were delighted to have been joined by some Mosman Primary School parents whose young knees scaled the slopes with enviable agility.

The NSW Government grant for Nesting Boxes

Sad to say, we can't announce the presence of pygmy possums or feathertail gliders in the Mosman area as yet, but we haven't given up hope, and we believe the microbats at Sirius Cove are flourishing.

Council Application for a NSW 'Greening our City' grant

With our support Mosman Council has applied for a grant from the NSW government in the 2020 Greening Our City Program. The grant will be applied to expanding the native tree canopy in Mosman's urban bushland. We haven't heard yet whether the application has been successful.

EXTRA ACTIVITIES

Mosman Public School's Kitchen Garden

Our friends from Mosman Public School invited us to help prepare for a kitchen garden at the school. Once again, our valiant members rallied to the call and we put our backs into a morning's work. The area is now called the 'Green Grove'. Garden beds are ready to be planted, composted and irrigated and there are plans for a bush tucker section and possibly a native beehive.

Biala Aboriginal Hostel for Girls

Another call for help came from Zali Steggall's Warringah office. Biala provides accommodation for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander high school girls who wish to attend a Sydney high school to receive a broader education than is available in their home communities. The Warringah community responded with offers of extra tuition, sporting equipment and furniture. Rotary was helping with the oversight of the outdoor areas and needed help with a makeover for the garden. As the garden borders bushland we volunteered our assistance. Organisational difficulties due to the continuing Covid restrictions, meant that we limited our personnel to committee members. The committee team, assisted by the Northern Beaches bushcare officer got to work with some heavy weeding, mulching, native plantings and last of all some flower power. Thanks indeed to this little team and especially to Yolande Stone who was indefatigable in her efforts.

4.

A disappointment

My last annual report expressed delight over the failure of an enlarged Childcare Centre at Balmoral to receive bush fire risk approval. We expected the area to be grassed over. However, in a Council survey to discover how residents would like the area used, green space was not the outcome. Instead a sports court was approved.

Riparian repairs to the watercourse behind have been excellent and there is vegetation behind the court, but my advice to anyone visiting that space is to wear your sunglasses! The court is bright blue and as far as I can see there will not be much chance to diminish its visual obtrusiveness with further plantings. So far, I have not been able to discover why a sports court needs to be bright blue.

Committee news

We are pleased that our secretary, Rosie Adams has been selected to the Mosman Council Climate Action Community Consultative Committee.

We are waiting to hear whether our nominated members have been selected for Mosman Council's Environmental Foundation Trust.

Bush Regeneration

Remembering that the origins of the Mosman Parks & Bushland Association lie with the Bradley sisters and the development of their system of Bush Regeneration, we continue to support the hands-on efforts of our members. Those who came to our end of year gathering at Wyargine Reserve last year will have seen the results of our work in that reserve. The iconic Bradley Bushland is the other reserve in which we are involved, particularly now that its area has been extended to the slopes below Rawson Park – formerly weeds, now a potential bush corridor. Our members work in other areas including The Lawry Plunkett Reserve and steps, Government Road and in the Sydney Harbour National Park area of Chowder Head. They will agree, I think, that their work has not only benefited the bushland but also themselves in this strange and difficult year.

Appreciation

We appreciate the accessibility of Mosman Councillors and staff and their efforts. We may not always agree with all of them, but we thank them for their attention to our concerns.

Sorrows

We are saddened by the loss of a loyal supporter, **Pam Poland**, one of our members.

Jack Mundy. All environmentalists will miss this incredible campaigner. What a time it was – the era of the Green Bans and saving The Rocks. When he joined the battle for Kelly's Bush which Joan and Eileen Bradley, Audrey Lenning, June Gram and others from our Association were part of, a special alliance was formed. He also supported the Headland Preservation Group and the formation of the Harbour Trust. He remains an inspiration to us all.

Finally

Sincere thanks to you, our members for your continued support. We hope to see you in person before too long.

Kate Eccles, President