

Draft Mona Vale Place Plan Community Meeting Outcomes Report

Mona Vale Memorial Hall
4.00 – 6.30 pm 29 October, 2016

Client:
Northern Beaches Council

Date:
4 November 2016

Introduction

The meeting was attended by approximately 190 local residents. The purpose of the community meeting was for:

- Northern Beaches Council representatives to explain the proposal in more detail
- The range of community perspectives regarding this proposal to be ascertained
- Issues regarding the draft Place Plan to be identified.

The following is a summary of:

- Presentations made by Northern Beaches Council staff
- Questions and comments raised by community members
- Responses to questions raised.

Opening remarks – Dick Persson, Council Administrator

The Council Administrator opened the community meeting and acknowledged the traditional owners of the land on which the meeting was held. He introduced Mark Ferguson, General Manager and Brendan Blakeley the meeting facilitator before making the following opening observations:

- » Staff from the previous Pittwater Council worked with community members to develop the draft Mona Vale Place Plan (the draft Plan)
- » A key goal was that the draft Plan would provide a people and place oriented outcome rather than developer-led outcome
- » The project team within the previous Pittwater Council put the draft up to the councillors one week prior to the formation of the Northern Beaches Council
- » Marcia Rackham of the Mona Vale Residents Group suggested that due to complexity of issues within the plan, a forum be convened to provide an opportunity for the community to ask questions about the proposals outlined in the plan.
- » Today's community meeting is another stage in the engagement program that has guided the evolution of the draft Plan and opportunity to learn more about the proposals from the team that prepared it. It is important that people read the draft Plan in detail as it is of great significance for the future.

Presentations

Mark Ferguson, General Manager

- » This project dates back several years – the then Pittwater Council developed a vision for Pittwater as a vibrant sustainable community of connected villages inspired by bush, beach and water. In 2013, the Imagine Mona Vale project commenced a focussed community discussion about aspirations for the future of Mona Vale. Mona Vale was chosen because:
 - > It is the town centre for the then Pittwater Council
 - > Changes envisaged by the proposed B-Line project
 - > Mona Vale Road being upgraded
 - > A low level of housing diversity
 - > A lack of night-time activity and a view that Mona Vale could be more of a dining lifestyle destination.
- » An extensive engagement program from September 2014 included presentations from a range of speakers involved in successful towns and villages
- » In January 2015 additional engagement occurred around how to make Mona Vale economically sustainable and a more vibrant place for people
- » This engagement process received a highly regarded award for excellence in local government
- » Using the outputs of this engagement process, a project team worked hard on developing the draft Plan
- » It is an ambitious vision for the future of Mona Vale as the town centre and urban heart of the northern peninsula
- » Housing diversity is a critical issue in this area. Pittwater had the second lowest diversity of housing in Sydney. This presents a challenge for current and future generations of young people to access housing in their communities
- » The draft Plan is an attempt to address the affordable housing issue
- » A major discussion point in developing the draft Plan is intensity of development
- » The draft Plan creates intensity and activity that should translate into a boost for the local economy.

Question: How many residents were involved in the community engagement?

Response: Thousands of people in the community were involved – not all at one time – but cumulatively. A wide range of people from this community have been part of the process.

Andrew Pigott, Executive Manager Strategic Land Use Planning

- » The drivers of Sydney's growth and housing needs are:
 - > Falling numbers of people leaving the state
 - > Continuing to migrate to NSW due to job availability
 - > A baby boom with more children being born
 - > Net domestic and overseas migration.
- » Projecting forward, this growth trend is staying similar for some time
- » Household types are also changing due to:
 - > a trend from bigger households to smaller

- > Increasing lone-person and single-parent households
- > Demand for smaller housing products
- > Empty nesters are creating demand for diverse housing products.
- » Overall growth projections for Sydney is from 4.6 million to 6.4 million (1.6% per annum) by 2036
- » The Northern District will have a change of 910,000 to 1.2 million
- » This presents a local average annual increase of 1.1% for sometime
- » Mona Vale Town Centre is part of the larger international city, in which there is a hierarchy of centres:
 - > Sydney CBD
 - > Regional cities – Newcastle or Wollongong
 - > Specialised centres – St Leonards
 - > Major centres – Dee Why/Brookvale
 - > Town centres – Mona Vale
 - > Villages – Newport and Avalon
- » Mona Vale is the town centre and urban heart for the former Pittwater area
- » Mona Vale town centre is a mixed use zone with a variety of land uses – retail, residential commercial and office with light industrial to the north
- » Education areas, village parks and recreational precincts are also in the town centre
- » West of the town centre is low density residential
- » Mona Vale services the needs of the local community and is an important centre for the local economy
- » It has quite a distinct nature when looked at in the context of other locations along the northern beaches:
 - > Dee Why allows for buildings up to 19 storeys – major centre
 - > Manly has an 8 storey limit
 - > Newport village is a lower order centre at 3 storeys
- » The draft Plan for Mona Vale outlines increasing height in some locations from 3 to 6 storeys
- » This is because Mona Vale:
 - > Is strategically positioned at a major intersection, has access to transport corridors and a high rate of job containment (60%)
 - > Requires more diversified housing stock.
- » Affordable housing is required. Recently the median house price reached \$1.29 million for the area and no suburb in Pittwater has a median price below \$1m
- » Only 1% of properties are available for low income householders and this is a problem because key workers (teachers, nurses etc.) can't afford to live here
- » People aged 24 – 34 years that have grown up on the Northern Beaches cannot afford to live here. Young people are leaving in high numbers because of the affordability issue
- » How do we address this? By:
 - > Designing a wide range of housing types and balancing this with need for infrastructure, employment and access to facilities
 - > Employing a centres based approach rather than having new housing types distributed across the whole local government area
 - > Ensuring access to transport and services

- > Limiting rezoning pressures on wider area.
- » There is also a strong community desire to improve the centre – making it more amenable for cycling, walking and lifestyle opportunities and increasing vibrancy for residents and visitors
- » The trade-off to achieve this has been an increase in height to deliver affordability while maintaining amenity on the street
- » We don't like upsetting people and we are not involved with developers
- » We want to create a good town centre for the community with the prime motivator being affordability and activity
- » The draft Plan is on exhibition at the moment and when it closes we will review submissions and a report will go to Council early next year
- » Council will then make a decision on adopting the draft Plan
- » Then other processes will be required including changes to Local Environment Plan (LEP) and Development Control Plan (DCP) each of which will be subject to community consultation. These documents will set the rules for any future development
- » A final report back to Council is expected late next year.

Administrator Dick Persson made the comments:

- » Some time back Pittwater Council left Warringah Council and rightly so because Warringah Council had lost its way and was accused of working in the interest of developers.
- » This allowed for smaller players and interests associated with Council to profit
- » There was no plan for Dee Why with development being ad hoc. This is not the case here
- » This draft Plan has been developed by people of highest integrity – opposite to what was happening in Warringah in those days. People who are genuinely working to meet the needs of the future
- » You may not like it but let's be fair – this is not a developer-driven plan
- » It is important that this draft Plan is not talking about six storey buildings straight up. From the third floor the building is set back from the street, so people will enjoy the streetscape experience it as a three storey environment.

Evy Anwar, Urban Designer

- » The engagement process to date has included a village economic summit; pop ups and quick wins, series of urban talks (February-June 2015). Engagement outcomes included 1,300 submissions
- » On the website there is a document summarising the engagement outcomes highlighting that people wanted more:
 - > Cafes
 - > Later opening times
 - > Alfresco dining
 - > Gathering spots
 - > Outdoor entertainment
 - > Relocated playgrounds
 - > Trees and greenery etc.
- » A large amount of community feedback centred around the need for housing diversity and improvement of the Mona Vale experience
- » The draft Plan looks at the area within a 400m radius of the Mona Vale centre and examines:
 - > Urban design

- > Street improvements and place making
- > Traffic and parking
- > Viability of development.
- » The place plan is based on the idea of “streets for people not for cars”
- » Widening footpaths and slowing cars will help make better and safer connections within the town centre
- » The plan is underpinned by a live/work mixed use opportunity
- » A diversity of housing types will assist in providing more affordable housing options for all people
- » The plan looks at focussing sustainable centre based growth with six storeys proposed for only a part of the town centre (approximately 25% of town core area)
- » Set backs of upper levels will avoid both overshadowing and a sense of buildings dominating the streetscape
- » Bungan Street has mix of four and six storey buildings in the draft Plan to maintain solar access to the public domain
- » Harkeith Street will feature housing of five to six storeys
- » Overall the plan aims to deliver:
 - > Better, safer and more active public spaces
 - > Transport options
 - > More people walking
 - > Housing choices.

Question: Was the solar access shown for mid-winter?

Evy: Yes it is the solar access illustration shown is for mid-winter.

Steve Wellman, Traffic Consultant:

- » Mona Vale is a well-defined commercial centre and with an industrial area – surrounded by low density housing
- » Pittwater Road splits the town centre
- » There needs to be a change in focus to de-emphasise cars and parking in the town centre
- » Redistribution of traffic from Pittwater Road to Darley Street is proposed to achieve this goal and modelling indicates this is the best solution
- » An extensive study with surveys of all intersections, parking use was undertaken and community consultation
- » Traffic modelling included growth assumptions and delivery of new developments across the peninsula
- » It found that all intersections would provide acceptable levels of service considering growth in the area to 2021
- » In terms of parking there will be a net gain of 150 parking spaces in centre and through improved management available parking will be better utilised
- » Recommendation are included in our report included:
 - > 40km/hr hour zone along Pittwater Road
 - > Upgrades to intersections
 - > Removal of Park Street roundabout
 - > Changes in signage to redirect the traffic.

Marcia Rackham, Mona Vale Residents Association

- » The Mona Vale Residents Association supports public exhibition and further community discussion as there are challenging changes proposed within the Place Plan
- » The association requested the opportunity for the community to ask questions prior to the end of the exhibition period and believes that community involvement should not be restricted
- » The Urban Talks process was well received. At these meetings people worked together to look at what could improve Mona Vale. Many ideas came to light about how to create pride in the place and a good urban environment
- » It is difficult to see a connection between the place plan and what was discussed in earlier workshops. Did we really say six-storey?
- » Mona Vale needs to be a low-rise village landscape with low key tourism
- » Six storeys are not part of the character we envisage for our centre
- » Developers will take over whole precincts and real estate agents are already hungry
- » There is no evidence of affordable housing in the draft Plan or discussion of the cost of population growth?
- » Neither is there any reference to increasing infrastructure or to the cost of infrastructure except the bus line
- » With the Warriewood and Ingleside developments and the increase in secondary dwellings we need to acknowledge the capacity of our region to accommodate more housing.
- » The Village Park should not feature four storey development
- » Commercial and industrial activities must be protected
- » Workable community facilities are not envisaged
- » The draft Plan does not represent the community's desires
- » The process is being run by an unelected Council representative
- » The draft Plan will result in over development, poor infrastructure and service, loss of sense of place and business stress
- » Better planning, respect for the community and adequate infrastructure are required – we are not Manly, Dee Why or Frenchs Forest.

Simon Dunn, President, Chamber of Commerce

- » The passion and enthusiasm people in the room are showing it is wonderful
- » The Chamber of Commerce is about unifying business and community
- » The Chamber of Commerce serves the community. We want to make sure Mona Vale is vibrant and works for everyone – business needs people
- » In 2010, we looked at other areas and then looked at the Mona Vale Town Centre and we saw ad hoc development
- » The idea that this draft Plan has only arisen since Council amalgamation is not correct. The draft Place Plan was due to go before Pittwater Council when the amalgamation occurred
- » This draft Plan is a product of Pittwater Council. We thank Council staff for their efforts in the process
- » It is not a closed door process and we are glad you are here to discuss it
- » I grew up in Newport where there was paddock with horse in it down the road. Is that the way Newport should have stayed forever? If development had stopped then, how many of you here today wouldn't have a house?

- » Affordability and worker housing is a critical issue for the Pittwater region. Business is impacted and has difficulty getting staff because there is no affordable housing in the area. The only shire in our region that has housing that is relatively affordable is Hornsby
- » Only now has the issue built up to this level of pressure and we are at a difficult turning point
- » Mona Vale is the best place within the Pittwater area to achieve affordability
- » Streetscape and street life is also a very important consideration. We have to make Mona Vale about people not cars by uncoupling the parking from the development and promoting living and working in Mona Vale
- » The draft Plan is not the end of the process but we need a great vision for Mona Vale and we need to keep working together on the journey ahead.

Previously registered questions

How does the plan address diversity, such as for the disabled and older people in the community?

It delivers a diversity of housing stock suitable for a range of people. As previously mentioned in the presentations there is a very low diversity of housing stock in the former Pittwater local government area (LGA) at present.

There is a growing housing need among older members of our community, who currently reside in large family houses and are looking to downsize. The Mona Vale Place Plan will provide much more diversity of housing and will enable them to stay in the community in which they have resided for many years in suitable housing.

There is an opportunity in the Development Control Plan (that would accompany any changes to the LEP should the plan come to fruition) that could provide a certain percentage of dwellings be accessible to address mobility issues (known as accessible housing). We will be looking at this in the planning process.

We noticed that there will be a change to the industrial areas north of Mona Vale? What is the reasoning behind this and will this result in a loss of employment area?

No downzoning of these areas is proposed as the retention of local jobs remains a key focus. The idea in the draft Plan is to allow residential development above light industrial floor space. Industrial top housing has worked in other parts of the world and we are exploring this possibility.

How does the place plan deliver affordable housing?

There are two aspects to affordable housing. Affordable housing is a term used in planning policy documents that defines housing where no more than 30% of people's incomes go towards paying housing costs (ARHSEPP). This delivers housing for key workers such as teachers, nurses and police. This housing stock is often managed by accredited housing providers and available for rental only.

Our Plan would be to "salt and pepper" this type of housing throughout the town centre, and not concentrate it in one area.

The NSW Government has recently signalled they may be targeting 5-10% of dwellings in renewal areas to be affordable housing. The Northern Beaches Council hopes to pursue that kind of target to provide a meaningful difference and provide social benefits to the wider community.

Affordability is another aspect and as discussed in an earlier part of the presentation there is a low diversity of housing that prevents different types of housing stock such as apartments that may have greater affordability than those currently on offer.

What were the percentage of residents attending the workshops and other parts of the community consultation program that supported the six storey height?

The issue of six storeys was not directly discussed because this was not the focus of these initial activities. The focus was on developing the vision for Mona Vale, improving connectivity and vibrancy.

The workshops included discussion around diversity of housing and the potential for increased density.

The draft Plan has taken that vision and input to translate it and develop a viable option that can be delivered and provides impetus for renewal of the area. This community meeting today is part of the process to receive community input on the draft.

Can the meetings and documents around the community consultation including submissions be made publicly available?

All details regarding the community consultation activities (including those from the Pittwater Council period) are on the Northern Beaches Council's website.

The "Imagine Mona Vale" document summarises the consultation activities. This can be found on the Northern Beaches Council's website:

http://www.businessinpittwater.com.au/uploads/files/ECM_5199024_v1_Imagine%20Mona%20Vale%20pdf.pdf

We have concern that this will set a precedent for more development around Mona Vale and other localities in the former Pittwater LGA?

Mona Vale is nominated as a higher order town centre compared to other localities such as Newport and Avalon which are villages. What may be right for Mona Vale is not right for a village.

The Newport master planning was undertaken using a similar process, and has been adopted. Mona Vale is going through this current community consultation process in a similar way. If Avalon is master planned it will go through the same process but the scale will be consistent with its status as a village.

It appears that this is a lot of window dressing for densification. All it seems to be is trade-offs?

The draft Plan is a response to the outcomes of the issues, and is a product of that. There are trade-offs to achieve improved vibrancy of the town centre and affordable housing. Height is one of these trade-offs.

Why is there four storey development in the park precinct?

The building around the park is noted as four storeys in the height map but in actual reality it will appear 3 storeys due to the topography. This 3 storey building is 7% of the total area of the triangular space of Civic Precinct and occupies the built-up services area. The green space is being left green space.

Will Council be buying buildings to redevelop?

No, it is not the role of Council to purchase property and redevelop it. Council controls the Local Environment Plan and the Development Control Plan that informs development. It is up to the market and respective property owners to redevelop within the parameters of these plans. If they don't want to, they don't have to.

The B-Line is being built and the upgrade to Mona Vale Road is happening but what about all the other infrastructure that would be required?

The draft Plan envisages improvement to the public domain, the pedestrian and cycleway network, better access throughout the town centre;

Improvements to open space areas is also envisaged. For example, the new skate park has proved popular.

What community infrastructure is being built and what will it mean for the community groups that currently use that infrastructure?

The draft Plan is a vision document and includes concepts about infrastructure such as the auditorium and knowledge hub. If the draft Plan was approved it would form the basis on which the design options would be further explored.

It is a 10-15 year vision document. If the Memorial Hall, for example, was removed to build an auditorium there would be arrangements made to ensure community groups can transition to other spaces during that time.

What would be the financing arrangements for the civic works?

Funding would be looked into in much more detail should the draft Plan be approved.

There are a number of options that would be explored such as developer contributions, grants and Council budget. Like for all projects, full due diligence would need to be undertaken.

Questions from attendees at the community meeting

Question from the President Artists and Craftsmen of Pittwater. This Memorial Hall is part of this community and our organisation uses this hall. It is almost 50 years old and is a versatile and spacious building. Will it be demolished? What alternatives are there to demolishing the hall? The building could be made even better by re-imagining it such as fabulous murals on the walls by local artists.

Response from Mick Darda, Executive Manager - Place Management, Northern Beaches Council

- » With regard to the replacement of the hall, we would be carefully examining the most cost-effective way of delivering what the community wants. This draft Plan is a vision of what could occur. If we were to go down the path of changing the hall there would need to be a detailed planning and consultation program for this as a project
- » Part of the issue is to better connect the civic precinct with the rest of Mona Vale and improve traffic movement.

Mark Ferguson, General Manager, Northern Beaches Council added:

- » There would be a range of design issues and cost implications that would need to be carefully examined. Any changes would take a long time to come to fruition and would include analysing community use of the hall and carefully looking at the financial feasibility of what is any proposal.

What are the arrangements regarding traffic being diverted into Darley Street?

Response from Steve Wellman, Traffic Engineering Consultant

- » The intersection referred to was labelled intersection 6
- » Currently the traffic comes down through intersections label 5, 4, 3. The draft Mona Vale Place Plan aims to redirect traffic to Darley Street diverting through flows away from the town centre
- » The exact changes would need to be further developed and the configuration of the signals would need to be considered in detail at the right point. Modelling indicates this arrangement can readily work.

The draft Plan provides for 150 extra car parking spaces in the town centre, which is the same number as the B line proposal. Are these the same 150 car spaces? Or are there additional spaces being created in Mona Vale. Also, with 330 new units in the town centre where would residents park.

The meeting facilitator indicated that Steve Wellman was filling in for the traffic engineer who had completed the project who was not able to attend today because of family commitments.

The question was taken on notice. A detailed response has been provided here as part of these notes:

The place plan provides 125 parking spaces under the Civic Square, excluding the B-Line Park and Ride (see page 39). The nett gain of parking is 29 spaces. The traffic study shows there is parking available within the centre. The removal of some ground level parking is in keeping with the objective for making 'pedestrian friendly streets' and providing better cycle links.

Executive Manager Strategic Planning, Andrew Pigott added:

- » There are three types of parking in general – private, on-street, and public
- » Residential and visitor parking will be required in any future development
- » The draft Plan though is questioning if the level of provision of parking for each dwelling as they will have direct access to shops and services in the town centre as well as the new B-Line bus service
- » In terms of affordability, parking does put a significant burden on the price and this is problematic when people are struggling to be able to buy or rent homes.

Regarding six storey development, is this actually required to deliver affordable housing? The community member cited an example in Warriewood for affordable housing that was two storey (but noted that a new Development Application had been submitted). Why does it need to be six storey?

Executive Manager Strategic Planning, Andrew Pigott:

- » At present there is no mechanism for an affordable housing requirement under the existing controls. We have no way of enforcing a percentage of housing being delivered as “affordable housing” without changing the existing controls.
- » There is no driver or incentive to provide affordable housing under the existing controls. There has to be a trade-off between incentivising redevelopment with affordable housing
- » In MacPherson Street, Warriewood, affordable housing was due to a specific legislative requirement. The legislation changed and they were then able to develop without affordable housing. It was not an outcome Council was pleased about.

Why is the plan not more radical? Why has a proper plaza not been proposed and not for an absolute walking precinct? Liked the idea as Mona Vale for people and not cars but feels more should be done. I applaud the proposal for Darley Street being used to divert traffic but the town centre is quite divided and we need more integration.

Evy Anwar, responded regarding the plaza:

- » There is a plaza proposed and outlined the location on the map. We refer to this as the Urban Heart
- » The aim would be to slow down traffic on Pittwater Road, widen the footpath to enable alfresco dining
- » The thinking behind the draft Plan is to integrate the two sides of the town centre and this is the key reason why the traffic is being diverted
- » The urban designer also outlined that the traffic consultant’s presentation also showed that one of the main deficiencies in the town centre was its currently divided nature due to Pittwater Road.

Steve Wellman, the Traffic Consultant, concurred.

Affordable housing is a very desirable outcome. Council should look at changing the mix of apartments and explore the idea of a greater number of smaller dwellings without parking in a lower rise form than the proposed six storeys. The mix and the size of dwellings should be the trade-off, not the height. He also asked the question why the tree in the roundabout had been taken out (Intersection 5) and that this tree is significant to locals and is paired by a similar tree down the road.

Evy Anwar noted:

- » Roundabouts create a smoother traffic flow but are not pedestrian-friendly
- » She suggested that further planting of trees would occur in the town square.

Brendan Blakeley, asked the community members attending if there preference was to keep the tree. There was general agreement to keep the tree.

More development means more people which means more traffic, we can't move now and any increased traffic will make the situation even worse.

Andrew Pigott noted:

- » In terms of the overall region traffic management, improved public transport was the key requirement
- » He acknowledged that public transport in the region has always been poor, but that the B-Line would reduce congestion. He outlined that wider road inevitably attracts more cars
- » The answer is to promote greater use of public transport. There needs to be change from over-reliance on the car.

Steve Wellman, Traffic Consultant added the following:

- » The local traffic modelling had taken into account all future growth to 2021, including Ingleside and other new developments
- » The modelling clearly indicated that the local network will work to a standard level of service if the modification recommendations are implemented.

When was the modelling undertaken? In the summer months the traffic is at its worst due to the level of visitation to the area.

Why has an underground car park been proposed in Mona Vale if the aim is to reduce traffic within the town centre?

In regards to Darley Street which services industry, can we mix people in cars and large trucks on this road?

Steve Wellman, Traffic Consultant responded:

- » That the traffic modelling was undertaken in September, taken on an average day as per standard practice
- » That Darley Street is a public road and heavy vehicles and cars already use this road
- » Redirecting traffic to this road will be a change in people's perception of the road network in the area.

The public domain proposals need more work to create a civic centre as well as more detailed design? I think parts of the plan are back to front and may actually deactivate the streets.

Evy Anwar responded:

- » The amphitheatre with a restaurant would be located in the middle of the civic area
- » This will activate the town square addressing some of the problems related to a lack of night time activities
- » Key improvements such as the expansion of the library as a modern facility, open at night with off-campus learning opportunities would create a multi-use activated atmosphere
- » There also needs to be significant place programming of the facilities to ensure success.

The questioner made comment that there needs to be a greater convergence of activities, where things come together.

Comment: The community engagement forums were very well attended. It is a serious issue for the region when you see the demographic evidence that 24-34 year olds are not living in Pittwater/Northern Beaches. We do need to provide housing for younger people, our children and our carers in the community. There is too much of a focus on the height issue at the expense of talking about the quality of the development. There have been lots of poor quality two, four and six storey buildings. This should be the focus of further discussions. Perhaps there should be a further workshop on quality of built-form.

What is the next best option to provide affordable housing? Are there other options other than six storey?

Executive Manager Strategic Planning, Andrew Pigott responded:

- » Other options were explored however if affordable housing is to be provided in the town centre then heights will need to be increased. If six storey was not able to be delivered this is an issue as presently it looks as though six storeys is only just feasible.

Dick Persson, acknowledged the concerns people have about height within Mona Vale and as a precedent for other areas. He noted the following:

- » Height is about activating redevelopment
- » He acknowledged that at first he was uncomfortable with six storeys due to his perception that this may raise community concern, although he felt that the way it is being proposed addresses many of these concerns
- » Advice from economist suggest that you need a certain level of uplift in development so that property owner and developers will have the incentive to redevelop and that further incentives such as bonuses for the sensible amalgamation of blocks to ensure good development outcomes are required
- » Bungan Street, where four storey is currently permissible, has had only a few new developments in recent times. This is because there is a lack of incentive to renew. Property owners won't redevelop unless there is a return
- » He will spend further time with an economist to review the feasibility aspect of the draft Plan – it is a critical point. Following this discussion, if it looks as though it is necessary to have six storeys to trigger redevelopment then another forum will be organised to explain this in further detail
- » The administrator then asked for a show of hands of people who would support:
 - > 5 storeys – only a few people indicated they would;
 - > 4 storeys and approximately half the room indicated they would;
- » Dick noted that there were already controls permitting four storeys in Mona Vale that nothing will change if the planning rules are not change.

The early workshops were great and the participants were enthusiastic. Why are workshops participant notes and submissions regarding the draft Plan not available on the website? There were almost 1,000 responses, which a community member obtained under a freedom of information request from Council and that these should be put on the website?

- » Council would explore releasing that information on the website if there were no privacy issues with such a release.

The community is being held to ransom over the six storey issue as essentially if the community does not allow this height then the community does not get what they want. There will be other development sites such as the Mona Vale Hospital, sites associated with the B-Line and Ingleside. All these put pressure on the Northern Beaches. What is stopping Westfield or Stockland buying whole block in Mona Vale to do a Stockland's Balgowlah or Westfield at Hornsby style development?

Response from Executive Manager Strategic Planning, Andrew Pigott:

- » There is a significant issue in the Mona Vale town centre of quite small allotments in individual ownership
- » For a big service provider, this presents a significant issue as much work would need to be done to amalgamate sites in order to achieve cohesive, quality design
- » The draft Plan and resultant LEP would still guide the overall extent of development allowed

There needs to be a green link between Winnererremy Bay, through the town centre, Darley Street and Mona Vale Beach to get quality connection. The Plan needs to address the disjunction between the town centre and local waterways to the beach. These need to be linked. There needs to be an innovative funding model for affordable housing as 10% is not enough (the present proposed plan this only equates to approximately 32 dwellings which is not enough for the key workers we need in the community).

Will the opinions of the community be taken into account as opposed to the Council amalgamation issue? Will this process be a waste of time?

Mark Ferguson, General Manager, responded:

- » The community views will be taken into account and that this draft Plan had been the result of an extensive consultation program as an investment in building trust
- » He noted that the Council amalgamation was handled by the State Government.

I have concerns about that the traffic modelling ignored some of the most important issues including:

- » ***narrowing Pittwater Road to one lane.***
- » ***traffic congestion and safety for vehicles coming out of Woolworths***
- » ***no left turn into Park Street.***

Andrew Pigott and Steve Wellman responded:

- » The traffic study looked at all intersections and micro-simulated the performance of each intersection with the growth assumptions
- » The future of Pittwater Road needs to be looked at in context of the proposed changed to role of Darley Street
- » The convenors of the meeting suggested that further discussion with Mark Horton should be had regarding his comments with the traffic engineer
- » a thorough traffic study and modelling had been undertaken to ensure the plan would work.

Comment: The current height limit is 13m and this allows for up to four storeys but the proposal was changing the height limit to 23m. Would this allow for up to seven storey buildings? This process has been rushed and that this should not be under the control of one person – the Council Administrator - during the Council amalgamation process. The community member expressed that there needs to be a democratic process in place so that community members can approach elected Councillors on the issues. He said the community do not

apologise for being passionate about where they live and it should not be in the power of one person to change it.

» Dick Persson, Council Administrator: I don't think it should be either.

We have a unique environment and that Pittwater Council had done a good job in preserving the special qualities of our environment. Will the planning rules (LEP) have to be changed and if they do, will the changes only be limited to Mona Vale?

Mark Ferguson, General Manager stated:

- » That within the former Pittwater area only Mona Vale is classified as a higher order town centre. The villages in the area are of a different character
- » The changes within the draft Plan would only apply to Mona Vale, as this was the only higher order town centre in the Pittwater region
- » If there is to be a master plan for a village such as Avalon this would require a separate process and the masterplan would reflect its specific status as village
- » Any change to the LEP would be required to go through a Planning Proposal, which would also have its own consultation/exhibition process.

I am still concerned that changes to the LEP in Mona Vale would not set a precedent for increased development in villages up and down the peninsular?

Mark Ferguson, General Manager noted:

- » Extensive community engagement, ministerial and council sign off would be required for any amendment to the LEP
- » The rules applying to Mona Vale would be specifically tied Mona Vale and not elsewhere.

Dick Persson, Administrator added:

- » What happens in Mona Vale could not be used in Land and Environment Court as a precedent for other development outside the town centre.

The Newport Master Plan encouraged consolidation of the sites and concessions to achieve that. However, Development Applications had been approved without the consolidation and in Mona Vale, the community is being asked again to give concessions. How can they have faith in this?

Mark Ferguson responded:

- » This was not the case in Newport
- » There had been extensive consultation and evaluation of DAs with all going before Council
- » However, some developments did go to the Land and Environment Court and were approved in that process.

What is the guarantee that all affordable housing units built will remain affordable forever? Also this proposal will increase traffic as:

- » ***people in affordable housing will have cars***
- » ***the B-Line will not deliver the traffic improvements it promises***
- » ***more car parks need to be built to service growth.***

Response from Executive Manager Strategic Planning, Andrew Pigott:

- » Regarding the affordable housing issue, provisions would be made in the LEP to require that the housing remains as affordable housing possibly under the management of a community housing association
- » There are different legislative frameworks for affordable housing. In this case, this would be under the LEP

- » The B-Line would streamline the current bus arrangements, with higher frequency of services and that there will be augmented parking at Pittwater Road.

I thank Council and staff for working on the draft Plan but feel that it contains contradictions and is based on circular arguments. This is all due to pressure from the State Government to increase housing stock and that other models of development should be explored. Some development types in Canberra and Amsterdam put housing in certain areas away from the town centre and protected the town centre. You do not get diversity with high rise in the town centre – it's through small-scale local development. Options outside the centre should be explored.

- » Andrew Piggott noted that a whole range of options were looked into but the key reason for this option being chosen was that if people live in the centre, they have ready access to services and facilities. It is a more sustainable model that reduces the need to drive everywhere.

Clearly there is a lot more research needed through workshopping. I suggest that you look at the methods used by the Princes Foundation Symposium and the "beauty in my backyard" process. The process for Mona Vale mustn't be hurried.

- » Mark Ferguson undertook to look at the Princes Foundation process.

I am 35 years and with a young family. I have lived here all my life. With the recent sale of a 3 bedroom townhouse for \$1.6 M I am realising that we can no longer afford to live in the area. If you are family on a moderate income, how can you afford a property in these six storey apartments?

Also I do not believe the B-Line is going to be effective as it was essentially just a double-decker bus conversion and that any bus was only as fast as the slowest cyclist also using that lane. The area is crying out for public infrastructure and is constrained by the three roads. Wakehurst Parkway floods for a small proportion of it and would not be difficult to fix – and the hospital will be on the other side of this.

- » Dick Persson acknowledged that the questioner's family is in a difficult position because they probably cannot afford to live here with dwellings at that price and this is part due to a lack of mix of housing being available
- » He noted that:
 - > the Pittwater area missed a big opportunity to provide more affordable housing over a long period of time
 - > there were some positive indications from the State Government about inclusionary zoning being provided
 - > The draft Plan is proposing some solutions for affordability in the area. However, if the community do not accept the plan, then the situation is not going to change. The challenge is acute and it does need change
 - > The proposal for six stories in parts of the town centre is related to the feasibility of delivering affordable housing. It will also provide an impetus to get development happening and bring people back into the centre. This has other advantages in terms of safety and business activity.
- » Planners have to plan for the future and this draft Plan attempts to do this
- » The draft Plan has not been a rushed process. This plan was not exhibited for 5 months following the creation of the new council, so there has been no rush
- » He wished the community members in the room had engaged earlier. There are a number of questions for staff and the project team and the community meeting had been a worthwhile process
- » He remarked that with the Mona Vale Hospital going that Mona Vale does need a plan to stay vibrant and active and a place for jobs.

Comment: Public transport is a joke. Considering there will be thousands more people living near the new hospital and there is no upgrade to Wakehurst Parkway, the plan should be postponed until the B-Line is up and running to see if it makes a significant difference.

Comment: There is insufficient infrastructure to cope with this development. The proliferation of granny flats is putting pressure everywhere. There are simply too many people in the area for the roads and other infrastructure to cope – one road in and one road out. More and more trees are coming down and there are more cars.

Will the LEP change as a result of the District Plans being prepared by the Greater Sydney Commission?

- » The Greater Sydney Commission is preparing District Plans, which are expected to be released in November
- » The Commission can nominate specialised centres or activation precincts for growth and become involved in the planning
- » Northern Beaches Council has no knowledge of interest in any area from this perspective.

Antisocial behaviour from hotel patrons is a problem for residents in proximity to the Mona Vale Hotel. More nightlife means more issues with noise and vandalism. What time would the town centre close?

Mark Ferguson, General Manager noted:

- » There would be more opportunity for restaurants, a better diversity in the retail offer and availability to local people
- » Antisocial behaviour from venues is a problem and is a policing issue as well as a planning issue.

Closing Comments

Dick Persson noted:

- » the presentation from the community meeting will be downloadable from the website
- » his appreciation to all those attending the meeting
- » the current due date for submissions was 13 November, but that Council will extend this for another month.

The meeting closed at 6.30 pm.