

NOVEMBER 2020

MANLY COMMUNITY FORUM

A community-led monthly newsletter for Manly residents.

Activate Manly

The Council 'Activate Manly' plan is set to roll out next month. This major reworking of The Corso and part of Darley Rd is designed to share the street, giving bike riders and pedestrians access to space which was previously reserved for cars.

The biggest change is that The Corso and Darley Rd between Whistler St and the Wentworth St intersection will become one-way only heading north. This will create a dedicated two-way path for cyclists and more space for cafes. It's an ambitious plan, and while it's getting support on the Council's Your Say page, there are plenty of concerns as well. Twenty short-term parking spots will go from The Corso and Darley Rd. This is a worry for locals needing to access essential services such as chemists and banks as well as for businesses relying on drop-in trade.

Access for returning traffic to the Eastern Hill will be reduced from three routes to two. If an accident or a major event closes one of the other routes, we will be in a bad way. And already there are plans for major work at No. 6 The Corso and No. 50 East Esplanade which will involve hoarding and large trucks, adding to the congestion.

Routine services, such as garbage collection, deliveries for shops in The Corso and funeral vehicles at St Matthews may also be problematic. Cyclists are also uncertain about the bike lane configuration, which will require crossing from the far left lane to the right side of the road, and back to the far left again.

Zali's Climate Change Bill

Local Federal MP Zali Steggall presented her much-anticipated Climate Change Bill to Parliament this month. Action to address climate change and at the same time help our economy was one of Zali's main platforms in her landslide win in last year's Federal election. Read the proposed Climate Act at climateactnow.com.au.

North Head's Recent Fire

Many people were horrified by the huge flames on North Head last month after a scheduled hazard reduction burn got away. Now there's shock at the amount of blackened bushland and disbelief that things seem to have gone so wrong. The burn on Saturday 17th October was planned for 9 hectares, but in the end 65 hectares (160 acres) were burned. Including the earlier 20-hectare burn in September, one quarter of the entire bushland area has now been affected. (The full story is on the Forum website.)

Bower Street Parking Restrictions

In a big win for Fairy Bower residents, new weekend parking restrictions in Bower St are likely to apply only during summer. The new restrictions were trialled last holiday season to ease traffic congestion on the narrow road, which is the only traffic access to Fairy Bower beach. While traffic flow improved, residents lost valuable street parking spots. Although Council initially said the weekend restrictions would be in place all year round, residents argued they were only needed during December and January. It is expected this arrangement, using flip style signs, will be approved at this month's Traffic Committee meeting.

Is Council Financially Secure?

A controversial article in the *Sydney Morning Herald* suggested several amalgamated councils including Northern Beaches were less productive than previously and may not be financially secure. Council strongly denied the allegations saying the article used "flawed analysis", such as comparing 12 months of rate income with 13.5 months of expenses in one case, and with 10.5 months of expenses in another. The article also included all expenses, but not all income: it excluded grants and ignored improvements to services and debt reduction. For the full Council response go to manlycommunityforum.com.

NEXT MANLY COMMUNITY FORUM ZOOM MEETING IS MONDAY 16TH NOVEMBER 4:30 - 6PM.
TO TAKE PART PLEASE EMAIL [KANDYTAGG@GMAIL.COM](mailto:kandytagg@gmail.com)

Save our Ferries

The Manly ferry isn't going down without a fight. Community groups are rallying to save the iconic Freshwater class ferries after a threat from the State Government to replace them with smaller inner-harbour craft. While it is sensible to run the smaller, faster Emerald class boats in some situations, this already happens for quiet midweek services. And the NRMA Fast Ferries already provide a great commuter service with boats every 10 minutes in peak hour. But nothing can replace the stately Freshwater ferries as a travel experience in their own right, and a world-class drawcard for visitors to Manly and Sydney as a whole.

One million international visitors came to Manly in 2019 on the Freshwater ferries, and 80,000 people on Australia Day alone. That's just not possible with the smaller boats. NRMA data shows the Freshwater ferries have 47% of total ferry business from Manly, but only 2% of the tourist trade. Clearly visitors don't care about saving 10 minutes on a thirty minute trip, and prefer to view our spectacular harbour from a suitably stately vessel.

The Freshwater ferries hold 1100 people, while the Emerald ferries take only 400. And ferry expert Graeme Taylor from Action For Public Transport says the actual number may



Credit Haig Gilchrist

Save our Ferries continued...

be much less in rough conditions. These ferries are catamarans which sit low in the water. In a rough sea, passengers may have to travel inside, cutting numbers to as low as 250 if they have to have seats. Based on engine capacity and hull construction data, Mr Taylor says the ferries are likely to gain only a 1D Maritime Safety classification, meaning they can't operate in swell above 2.5m. So it will be back to the buses.

Freshwater ferries are double-ended and don't need to turn around, while the Emeralds do. Circular Quay is already congested with ferries backing out, turning, or waiting their chance to dock. The Government has said the new Emerald ferries would provide a service every 10 minutes, but this just doesn't seem possible at the Circular Quay end, Mr Taylor has also scrutinised the \$1.3 billion 9-year contract between Transport NSW and the private company Transdev who runs and maintains the Government's ferry fleet. He says the promised saving of \$6M in annual maintenance costs will not go to the public, but wholly to Transdev.

The Council has unanimously voted to work to save the ferries. It has called for an urgent meeting with the Transport and Tourism Ministers and local MP James Griffin. Together with the Manly Business Chamber, it will assess the financial hit to Manly and Sydney's tourist economy if the ferries are scrapped. Council Deputy Mayor Candy Bingham says she is passionate about saving our ferries and is working with multiple stakeholders to prepare a Sydney wide campaign.

Resident Parking Permit Anomalies

Council is still struggling with the occasional anomaly that it doesn't appear to be able to satisfactorily resolve with a commonsense approach. There are matters before the CEO at present that should and could be rectified without compromising the scheme.



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Principal **Anthony Mete** (centre) with Consultant Lawyer **Damon Hall** (formerly of Spooner & Hall) & Lawyer **Nicholas Jarosz**

Little Manly Master Plan Developments

The Boat Ramp. The wire baskets holding the supporting rocks have been badly damaged by heavy weather and tide surge. The repairs to the ramp will be a priority given the potential public liability.

The “Ripples” kiosk/café/restaurant. Below is the architect’s illustration of how the kiosk will look post-renovation.



We still have real concerns with the takeaway food and coffee area and its proximity to the men’s toilet. We also have a small concern with the “waiters’ station”, which appears to restrict access to the ladies toilet. Overall we are concerned that this public kiosk facility is being redeveloped around public toilets. Other concerns centre on the current reduced actual opening hours, with no opening at all on many days. And despite assurances that there will be no liquor license, many residents still believe that this facility will morph into a night-time restaurant with the resultant noise and traffic issues.

The Harbour Tidal Pool. This is an outstanding job by Council with excellent quality work to build a facility to be proud of. As a bonus swimmers have discovered that they don’t need a ladder to climb on to the boardwalk as they can use the rocks on the SE side. We understood from Council presentations before the renovation that the netting would be cleaned every two months, but nearby residents have not seen this happening. The issue has been raised with Council.

Little Manly Master Plan Developments Contd...

Rebuild of beach concrete retaining wall and new pathway. The new tiered seating and retaining wall and the relocated concrete path to Little Manly Point will be delayed. Council says it will try to complete the pathway relocation this financial year: “At the moment, the design is being prepared by our internal engineers and we have tentatively booked its construction in for next March.” The design for the sandstone bleachers (tiered seating wall) leading down to the beach and the boat ramp should be ready by mid 2021, and go to tender shortly afterwards. “The boat ramp works will be conducted in winter/spring 2021 and the bleachers in the winter of 2022 as previously advised. The other minor landscaping works in the vicinity of Ripples will be undertaken in winter/spring 2021.”

40 Stuart Street. The house at 40 Stuart St is slated for demolition with the land to be added to Little Manly Park. This means the zig zag access ramp can be straightened out, and extra land added to the popular park. Council says design preparation for this project will soon start, with work “scheduled for winter of 2022 as previously advised.” You can also have your say on the reclassification of No. 40 from operational to community land at <https://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/reclassification-council-land-40-stuart-street-manly>. Submissions close 1st December.

Playground Little Manly Point. Council says the design of the playground has started using input from parents and carers. The concept design should go on public exhibition early next year with construction to start next Spring.

Little Manly Point Car Parking. Parking restrictions have changed from “No Camping/Parking Overnight” to a 4P limit. Council advises that it was being used for permanent parking, but has agreed to cover signs in the interim and go out to public consultation.

Little Manly Point Toilet Block. It will be some time before we get the much-needed toilet block with no timeline available from Council.

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East Esplanade Park & Amenities Block

Although work has clearly been slow on the new amenities block, Council says it is still on track to finish by the end of this month. The temporary toilets will then be removed, the grass replaced and sandstone edging completed. And, for the suffering residents of East Esplanade, the fencing and rubble will also be removed and the showers repaired. The excellent garden work around the ramp that was neglected after completion will be rectified and, hopefully, with Ausgrid support, the lighting of the ramp entry will be renewed. We asked Council why repairs to the storm water retention tanks along the pathway have not been done as promised, with broken lids and damaged pipes still exposed. Staff agreed work should have been done, and will follow this up.

Council Car Parks & Parking Generally

The Forum asked Council whether the car park conditions could be altered to help residents who drive to the CBD more than once a day, especially if Council is changing street parking around The Corso and Darley Rd to a maximum of 15 minutes. Council's response was to reiterate the current conditions as follows: "You cannot re-enter another Northern Beaches carpark within 3 hours of exiting, regardless of your length of stay. If you do re-enter, then you are charged from 2 – 2.5 hrs." Definitely not a total of 2 hours across the day then! Not the consideration we expect.

Isthmus & Fairy Bower Parking Permits

Don't forget that you can now apply for the new resident parking permits if you are a resident of the Isthmus and Fairy Bower Precincts. New permits are valid from 1st December - 30th November 2021.

Cliff Street Pedestrian Refuge

Another pedestrian refuge is likely for Cliff St near the intersection with Reddall St.

While this is a busy route for locals walking to the beach via Reddall St steps, residents say the crossing is not dangerous and the loss of street parking spots is unjustified.

Parking is a fraught issue on Cliff St which is a parking hotspot on the weekend, and is already set to lose street parking due to a separate pedestrian refuge to be built at the Darley Rd end.

Residents say a drop in speed from 50kph to 40kph would be a better solution, especially as the east end of Cliff St is already a 40kph zone.

It is the Council's Traffic Committee that approves these sort of changes.

A much bigger problem is that this Traffic Committee does not have any local representation, either from community members or from elected Manly Ward Councillors.



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