

MANLY COMMUNITY FORUM

A community led monthly newsletter for Manly residents

November 2025



Manly Life Saving Club DA Lodged — But

Will It Ever Be Built?

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Northern Beaches Council has submitted DA2025/1424 for the Manly Life Saving Club, describing it as the **demolition and construction of a community facility, recreation facility (indoor), and kiosk, with a Cost of Works listed at \$19.85 million.**

It's been a long road for the Club with the building long recognised as being inadequate in terms of access and utility for both Council employed Lifeguards and Club members alike. Back in 2014, the MLSC secured development approval after a protracted Land & Environment Court process that forced a reduction in the proposed building height. At the time, some funding trickled in from members and the State Government, and a lease with the former Manly Council allowed the Club to retain kiosk and hall hire income to support rebuilding. (Manly Council kept control of bookings and fees for community spaces at both North Steyne and Queenscliff Surf Clubs.) But there was never enough money to go ahead.

By 2018, a report to Council confirmed no capital improvements had been budgeted for the MLSC building, though a list of possible grants was identified — from modest \$20,000 community grants to the Greater Sydney Sports Facility Fund offering up to \$5 million, each requiring matching or partial contributions. But no applications for any of these grants were made for the MLSC. Then in 2019, the then Prime Minister Tony Abbott announced a \$5 million Federal Government grant for improvements to the Club — funds that reportedly remain available.

AGENDA

- Darley Road and North Head update (Staff presentation)
- Special Entertainment Precinct (SEP) report
- Manly Life Saving Club DA update
- 2025 priorities Council updates

editor: Cathy Griffin

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Save the Date
Christmas celebrations
15 December 2025



7pm
Little Manly Beach

Show us the money....

In 2021, despite still not having adequate funding, the NB Council called for design expressions of interest, quoting a \$15 million budget for the project. This was followed in 2022 by the appointment of design consultants under RFT 2021/130, and in 2024, approval of \$414,000 for Phase 4 — the DA documentation and approval process. (funded by NB Council rates). There are 157 Surf Clubs in NSW, including 21 on the Northern Beaches, and over the past seven years, the NSW Government has invested \$23 million in surf club upgrades across the state, with another \$5 million announced in the 2023/24 Budget — the majority of these grants to individual Surf Clubs is below \$100,000, but so far, none earmarked for Manly except in December 2022 the State Member for Manly provided NB Council \$1million toward the redevelopment of the MLSC. This funding came from the State Office of Sport. However, Council has recently noted that construction cannot commence until all funding is secured, and that there are no funds in the current or future budgets for the project.

So while the DA moves forward on paper, with the current application process unlikely to conclude before June 2026, the community may still be waiting a long time before the crumbling Life Saving Club and tired public amenities get their long-promised rebuild.

OUR NEXT MEETING IS ON MONDAY 17 NOV 25 AT 7PM AT THE MANLY YACHT CLUB

New gap in the heritage stone wall behind the Bella Vista North Head

According to the North Head Sanctuary Masterplan adopted by the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust (SHFT) in 2024 the SHFT intends to enhance pedestrian safety and the sense of place by separating vehicles and pedestrians to enhance safety and retain and adaptively re-use heritage assets at North Fort.

Even though in their own words in the Masterplan *the entry condition for vehicles is narrow off Scenic Drive and there appears to be limited scope to alter or remove heritage fabric to change the road entry condition* they have brutally removed two meters of the heritage stone wall to create a pedestrian entry.

The SHFT however has gone ahead and done this with little or no consultation and failed to take into consideration its own policy that calls for *the necessity for detailed design options that must include civil and road design and review of heritage fabric tolerance for change. The design phase should examine significant public domain improvements to the zone between the existing buildings with a view to separating vehicles and improving pedestrian safety.*

Let's hope they have plans and the funds to redirect and pave the worn out trip hazard dirt track across the grass from the Bella Vista to the new opening and the carpark beyond.

Improved landscaping (including the removal of the stinging nettles from the grass) in the area would also assist in mitigating the destruction of the Heritage gate entry to North Fort.



Outdoor dining on the Corso

Outdoor dining on The Corso will now be a permanent feature with new approvals going through a 6-month trial period. Outdoor dining on The Corso follows extensive community consultation as part of the Manly Place Plan which was adopted by the NB Council in August 2024. There was broad support for these changes. Application requirements are outlined in the Council's 13 page Outdoor Dining and Merchandise guide. Applications are reviewed by Council staff from, Transport, Environmental Health, Property Commercial, and Place before final approval. Currently there are 15 businesses on The Corso eligible to install outdoor dining.

Outdoor dining fees are set according to Council's adopted Outdoor Dining Fees & Charges, established by an independent valuation. This ensures fairness and transparency for all participating businesses.

A new Application Fee is \$450

The rental fee which applies to all businesses with furniture on the Corso is \$900 Per Square Meter, Per Annum

The Annual Fee is payable quarterly and there is also a refundable security bond, equivalent of one quarter's fees.



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Accessible amenities are difficult to locate

Improving the accessibility of Council facilities, public areas and programs is a fundamental component of Council's project and service delivery and is supported by our [Disability Inclusion Action Plan \(DIAP\) 2022-2026](#).

Under Focus Area 2.08 of this DIAP, Council has committed to improve access to unisex accessible toilets in public spaces and Council assets.

In February 2025 Council committed \$350,000, in the budget and developed a plan to remove the current accessible amenity from the front of the heritage listed public amenities block at West Esplanade. A concept plan to build a new compliant facility behind the current building on the side of the entry to the old Waterworks was exhibited, however, following feedback, the project has now been delayed while Council finds another more suitable location in the area and prepares updated plans.

The area around this facility is often inaccessible to everyone as it is used as a carpark and loading zone, and more recently a construction zone. We have been seeking an update from TpT for NSW and Council as to the future plans for the area.



Manly Special Entertainment (SEP) Plan of Management coming soon

The NSW Government has introduced a new tranche of Vibrancy reforms which came into effect in September this year enabling the NSW Government's vision for the State's 24 hour economy which is to cement NSW as a world class nightlife destination for visitors, locals and workers alike.

The Manly Special Entertainment Precinct Project Working Group (PWG) met again this month for a detailed discussion on the implications of these new Vibrancy reforms which effectively dictate trading hours for the proposed Special Entertainment Precinct (SEP). These will be articulated in a Precinct Management Plan which will outline maximum sound levels and maximum trading hours and how compliance will be ensured. this will be placed on public exhibition in early 2026.

The Manly SEP is proposing trading hours that will allow all outdoor dining to open till 11pm seven days per week and in venue trading hours 5am till midnight Sunday to Wednesday and 5am till 2am Thursday to Saturday. See slide below for current hours within the SEP. Whilst not everyone will be happy with the outcome of these workshop and the establishment of the SEP the Council staff working on this have been knowledgeable and thorough in interpreting the State Government' directions.

Trading hours – existing controls/regulations

Codes SEPP

Trading between 6am-10pm in the Manly commercial centre is allowed without approval/modifying the development consent. Excludes pubs, registered clubs and small bars.

Manly DCP - "Manly Town Centre Entertainment Precinct"

- Hotels & Nightclubs: 5am-2am with a restricted entry policy for nightclubs after 12:30am
- Restaurants & Food Outlets: 4am-1am
- Balconies, verandahs, any roof top areas and any external access: 8am-10pm

Proudly funded by:

NSW 24-Hour Economy

cobalt engagement



To follow the proceedings of the these workshops click on the QR code and follow the links to the Agendas and other papers presented at the workshops.

THE AGENCY

Considering Selling?

Jake and his team have a proven track record of successfully selling properties across Manly and the lower Northern Beaches. From entry-level apartments to luxury homes, they handle sales across all price points.

If you're thinking about selling or would like a property appraisal, call Jake.



Jake Rowe

jakerowe@theagency.com.au

0414 612 546

Shop 1, 22 Darley Rd, Manly NSW 2095

Experience sells



8 Upper Gilbert Street, Manly Auction



45 Pine Street, Manly Auction

Brickbats and Bouquets

• **Brickbat** verbatim from an email to the secretary. Please add this to your Brickbats section and take a moment to reflect on your own real concerns around the community, which seem to be misplaced. It was almost funny to read your glowing description of Felons "making Manly Wharf more welcoming." These days, the walkway to the ferry is either completely blocked or forces locals to weave between waiters and wobbling drinkers. They've closed every affordable place to eat and turned the wharf into a high-end playground for visitors. Let's not pretend the kids' corner is about family fun rather than keeping parents buying another round. So here's a challenge: dare to print this Brickbat :)

- **Bouquet** to all the volunteers who are out there caring for our local environment; the Friends of Cabbage Tree Bay Aquatic Reserve, the Manly Penguin Wardens, North Head bushcare teams, and the Surfrider Foundation #adoptabeach volunteers keeping our beaches litter free.
- **Brickbat** to Council for refusing to extend the submission period for the MLSC on the basis that it doesn't want to be treated any different from any other applicant and therefore should have the same exhibition period of 21 days as everyone else putting in a DA.



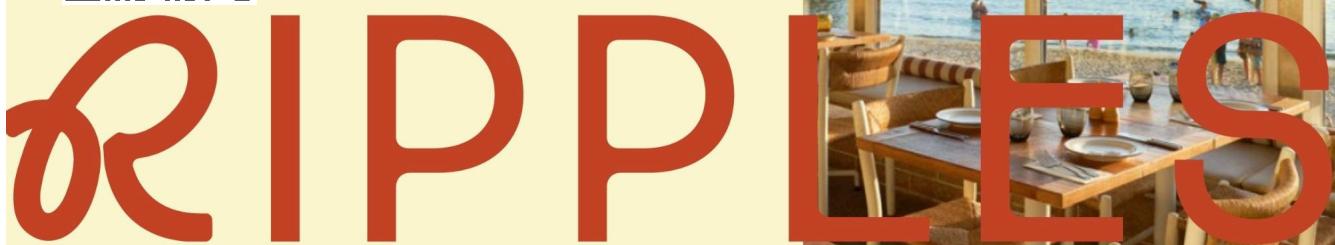
- **Bouquet** to Felons for installing double glazed glass barriers around the walkway on the eastern walkway, reducing the sound impacts and proximity of patrons to the walkway.
- **Brickbat** to Council for not replacing the tourist 'you are here' map on the walkway at Shelly beach near the ramp. The map is unreadable, how much longer do we have to wait?

Save South Steyne Change.org petition



- **Bouquet** to Council for finally starting work, or least putting up the fencing for a work compound, at Hinkler Park, for the new cycle bridge over Manly Lagoon next to Pittwater Rd. Council reckons it will be finished by April next year. And at the Queensie end of the lagoon fencing for a work compound has also been erected in anticipation of the start of repairs to the Stuart Somerville Bridge.

Winner of the Best Café Dining & Best Casual Dining of the Year in Australia for 2024 at the National Restaurant and Catering Awards!



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