

**NEUTRAL PRECINCT MINUTES**  
**Tuesday 14 October 2025, meeting commenced at 7:00 pm**

1. **Apologies** – TM, PW, PE.
2. **Additional items added to the Agenda**
  - i. E-bikes in high pedestrian traffic areas particularly bus stops. ( See 5.)
3. **Business from September minutes:**
  - i. September 2025 minutes endorsed by CB and seconded by EW.
  - ii. Council responses to Precinct motions - nil
4. **Updates:**
  - i. Warringah Freeway Upgrade - Permanent on-street parking on Alfred Street North, Neutral Bay and North Sydney

GC advised that there is a proposal to make North Alfred Street one way traffic to allow the creation of 20 parking spaces towards the northern end of the street. GC attended a recent consultation and observed a 50% -50% split of residents for and against the proposal. Generally those residents with on-site parking wish to retain two way traffic and those residents relying on street parking support a one way street with parking spaces provided.

The Precinct Committee will discuss further with the aim of assisting an early compromise/solution and make contact with affected residents.

It was noted that Felicity Wilson MP had responded to the Precinct's representations regarding community consultation on the provision of parking spaces and that she had met with the Minister for Transport seeking improved communication with residents. The Ministers office had advised Ms Wilson that community consultation was now underway with options to provide parking spaces.

GC also advised that access to Merlin Street, Upper North Alfred Street, Rose Avenue and Wyagdon Street was substantially changing again on Thursday 16 October due to the WFU. Previously access when coming from the west (say Crows Nest) along Military Road was either take Tramway Lane, jump across four lanes and then into Merlin Street. This was very dangerous and during peak hours allowed one to two cars to exit every traffic light change, which in themselves aren't frequent on a major arterial road.

The second option and the one favoured by many for safety, was turn into Watson Street under traffic lights, then proceed via Winter Avenue into the names streets.

WFU Project Team is closing the Winter Ave access for two to three months, claiming this will add up to eight minutes to residents' journeys. This is far from the actual facts as it doesn't take in to account the new difficulty in getting to the entrance to these streets, especially if coming off the freeway (north or southbound) or west from Crows Nest, Cammeray, North Sydney, etc. One can either risk the Tramway approach, with associated risks and the limit of one to two vehicles every light change or proceed in to Watson Street and do a 3 point turn over double yellow lines and lines in one of the four driveways there (again not safe or great for traffic flow on a busy street). The final option is to proceed in to Watson then in to Neutral Bay proper via Yeo and Ben Boyd adding a (tested) 12 minutes to the journey and adding to the traffic in Neutral

Bay. This last and safe option means that residents could be adding twenty minutes to their journey from when they pass Merlin St to when they reach their home.

As there are some question marks over the WFU Communications section and dealing with complaints, the ability to contact the mediator and their forthrightness in some communication it was unanimously resolved to write to the minister and ask are they aware of this and do they believe it is safe? Do they have better solutions?

ii. PP4/24 Arkadia 166-188 & 198-214 Military Road

GC reported on Council's decisions of 22 September:

1. THAT, consistent with the independent planning assessment and the recommendation of the North Sydney Local Planning Panel of 26 August 2025, Council not support the Planning Proposal proceeding to a Gateway Determination.
2. THAT Council reaffirms its support for a maximum building height of 21 metres adopted in the Neutral Bay Village Planning Study;
3. THAT, should the Planning Proposal progress via an alternate approval pathway, it be required to be amended to resolve the key issues raised in the detailed assessment report (by Ingham Planning) and by the North Sydney Local Planning Panel, including:
  - i. the proposed height and FSR controls also apply to 180-182 Military Road, Neutral Bay;
  - ii. a mechanism be included to exclude additional heights above 8 to 12 storeys through the application of Clause 4.6 or any bonus provision in any other planning instruments;
  - iii. the indicative concept scheme be amended to resolve key issues raised in this report, including the inconsistencies with the Neutral Bay Village Planning Study;
  - iv. the location, width and form of the proposed through-site links;
  - v. compliance with the NSW Apartment Design Guide building separation requirements and undesirable reliance on blank walls to satisfy these;
  - vi. the location, size and tenure of the proposed community centre; and
  - vii. the building setbacks generally on the ground floor.
4. THAT any letter of offer to enter into a Voluntary Planning Agreement with Council be amended to provide a new community centre, publicly accessible through-site links, Military Road footpath widening, public domain improvements, and landscaping that are consistent with Council's adopted Neutral Bay Village Planning Study (NBVPS), and that any revised Voluntary Planning Agreement offer be reported to Council. In addition, that consideration be given to the provision of affordable housing.
5. THAT Council immediately implement a moratorium on provision of landowner's consent to any owner of land adjoining the Grosvenor Lane Carpark precinct pending consideration and determination of Council's Expressions of Interest process for a future Grosvenor Plaza currently underway, and any subsequent tender process that may follow.
6. THAT Council urge the Proponent, in the interests of the orderly and economic use of land, to avoid isolation of adjoining sites and pursue site amalgamation by negotiating and collaborating with the sites currently isolated by virtue of the current proposal.
7. THAT Council withdraw landowner's consent to lodge a Development Application issued to Arkadia in September 2023 as Arkadia did not subsequently lodge any Development. Application and circumstances have changed, including State

Government planning reforms and Council's current Expressions of Interest process for a future Grosvenor Plaza.

8. THAT affordable housing be included in perpetuity and as part of the maximum building height.

Discussion:

- Agreed it was an ambitious, disjointed DA that added nothing to the retention of the village atmosphere of the Neutral Bay centre.
- There was a suggestion that Council could consider selling or leasing the airspace above the community centre. This would bring considerable income to the Council either in a lump sum or a lease agreement providing an income stream, while allowing the developer improved site consolidation. It would allow the community centre to remain at ground level with accessible access and in a central location relative to the Grosvenor Lane carpark.
- It was also suggested that Council explore the possibility of "leasing" to Arkadia access to the underground carparking via the proposed new underground Grosvenor Lane carpark.

iii. Barry Lane & Yeo Street corner – traffic blister

GC reported that Council at its meeting on 22 September decided that the matter be referred to the General Manager to consider available options under the Local Area Traffic Management Action Plan.

iv. Young Street Plaza Upgrade

Council has advised that work will commence in mid-October for the planned reopening of Young Street Plaza, safety improvements on Grosvenor Lane with a left only exit at Young Street and the permanent pedestrian space in Young Street Plaza. The Upgrade works will include new storm water drainage, footpath paving, street & decorative lighting, street furniture, improved landscape areas & new trees, passive entertainment spaces, & a weatherproof pergola.

v. Liveability Census results for North Sydney

The results of the 2025 Liveability Census, conducted by Place Score between 30 March and 30 June are now available. With a Place Experience (PX) score of 75/100, North Sydney ranks in the top 10% of council areas nationally. Council says this is a clear reflection of our community's strong connection to place and quality of life.

The 2025 Liveability Census marks the third time North Sydney residents have contributed to this national initiative, helping shape a clearer picture of what makes a neighbourhood truly liveable. The results will inform Council's ongoing work to enhance public spaces, improve infrastructure, and support community wellbeing.

5. E-bikes in high traffic pedestrian areas particularly bus stops

CB related incidents on two occasions of e-bikes forcing their way through bus queues on Military Road and said this was an inconsistent policy compared with ferry wharfs or railway/metro station.

Other residents related similar encounters with e-bikes in high traffic pedestrian areas.

**MOTION:**

**The Precinct write to the Minister for Transport requesting that signage be erected at each end of the bus stops in Military Road ( Watson and Young Streets and Wycombe Road) indicating the bus zone is a bike free zone and riders must dismount in the bus stop zone.**

**VOTE: Unanimous (10)**

6. Development Applications

- i. DA310/2025/1 27-37 Bydown Street Neutral Bay. Demolition of existing structures and construction of an 8 storey residential flat building comprising 25 apartments with 6 affordable units above three levels of basement car parking, landscaping and associated site works. Submissions close 17 October.

Action to obtain an Interim Heritage Order

GC advised that both he and CP spoke at the Council meeting on 13 October in support of a motion by Councillors Keen & Carr at Monday's to speak on action to secure an IHO on 27-37 Bydown Street.

The decision of Council was to engage an independent heritage advisor to report on whether the cottages at 27-37 Bydown Street met the threshold for an IHO.

The considerable historical research of the cottages undertaken by community members has been collated by the Precinct Committee and will provided to the Council.

Response to the DA

CP declared a personal interest as a resident impacted by the DA. Her request to speak on the proposal was endorsed by the meeting.

6 residents impacted by the DA attended the meeting.

It was noted that the developer has purchased one of the cottages at an above market rate and it is currently tenanted. The other 5 owners have entered into an agreement giving the developer a right to purchase the remaining properties within a 2 year period.

Discussion and objections raised to the DA:

**Height and bulk:** The proposed 27 m height exceeds both the 12 m Local Environmental Policy (LEP) control and the mid-rise scale envisaged under the State Government's Low and Mid-Rise Housing Policy (LMR). Providing affordable housing apartments in this development should not give automatic approval to the additional height of 2 storeys.

**Heritage and Character:** The scheme fails to respond to the Federation-era cottages and narrow-lane fabric of Neutral Bay. Its bulk and materials disregard the village atmosphere acknowledged in the Neutral Bay Village Planning Study (2024);

**Overshadowing, loss of solar access:** Modelling shows a significant loss of northern sunlight to nearby dwellings, including 20-24 Yeo Street, compromising living areas, garden and balcony amenity.

**Traffic & Parking impacts:** Olive Lane is 3 metres wide at the start, 4.7 metres at its widest. This development would require the gifting of the four car spots on Olive Lane to the developer to allow access to the new development's carpark. The site is located less than 20 metres from the

intersection of Bydown Street and Yeo Street, directly opposite Neutral Bay Public School and a patrolled pedestrian crossing. This is already a point of gridlock at school drop-off and pick-up times due to the combination of east-west peak hour Yeo Street flows, turning vehicles from Bydown Street (South), and heavy pedestrian movements across the crossing. Traffic gridlock is compounded because the Bydown Street (North) location of the proposed development is very narrow at only 7.5 metres wide, only accommodating two parking lanes and a single traffic lane, causing a choke point for access to nearby Yeo Street.

**Outlook, Privacy and Overlooking:** The North Sydney DCP 2013 requires that new development “minimise visual intrusion” and “respect existing view corridors where possible”. The Bydown Street (North) location of the proposed development is very narrow at 7.5 metres, only accommodating two parking lanes and a single traffic lane. Consequently, residents at 28–34 Bydown Street, located directly opposite, will see their previously open outlooks replaced by an 8-storey concrete façade. For these households, the loss of light, air, and visual relief directly undermines their right of quiet enjoyment of their homes and neighbourhood. Placing an 8-storey building on Military Road (a six-lane road) would not be as harmful to the opposing neighbours, as placing it opposite neighbours living on a three-lane street.

It was agreed that the DA has very little merit, it is probably non-compliant and unsympathetic in design to the streetscape. The Precinct will submit these objections to the Council.

- ii. **DA340/2025/1 17 Anderson Street Neutral Bay 2089.** Major alterations and additions to an existing seven storey residential flat building, including the reduction of 5 units to 31 units, basement parking, landscaping, BCA upgrades, new lift and associated works. Submissions close 24 October.  
No resident impacted by the DA attended the meeting.

7. Upcoming meetings were noted:

- i. [Neutral Precinct](#) – 11 November
- ii. [Council](#) – 27 October, 10 November

The meeting ended at 8:45pm