

## Neutral Precinct

North Sydney Council's Community Precinct System



### Minutes of Meeting: Tuesday 10 February 2026

Commenced at 7.00 pm

Chair: GC (Co-Convenor) Minutes: CP (Secretary)

Attendance: 41

Apologies: Nil

Concluded: 8:45pm

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<https://www.facebook.com/NeutralPrecinct/>

1. The State Government Low to Medium Housing Policy assessment process.  
Guest speaker: Meredith Trevallyn-Jones, Community Member North Sydney Local Planning Panel and Chair Willoughby Bay Precinct.

GC welcomed and introduced Meredith.

Meredith conducted a presentation with slides and answered questions on the process for assessing development applications under the Environmental Planning Assessment Act, highlighting the roles of local and state planning panels, and referencing specific applications such as Carrabella St Kirribilli and Bydown St, Watson St, and Barry St Neutral Bay.

**Planning Legislation Overview:** Meredith explained that the Environmental Planning Assessment Act and associated instruments, including local environmental plans and state policies, set out the matters to be considered for development consent, such as environmental, social, and economic impacts, site suitability, and public submissions.

**Consent Authority Determination:** The consent authority for a project depends on its value: projects under \$30 million are decided by the local planning panel convened by Council, while those over \$30 million are handled by the Sydney North Planning Panel.

**Application Case Studies:** Meredith reviewed several local development applications, including Carrabella St (approved), Bydown St (refused), Watson St, and Barry St, discussing issues such as height, heritage, affordable housing, setbacks, landscaping, and community objections.

**Affordable Housing Provisions:** Affordable housing requirements were explained, including eligibility based on income levels, rent limits, and the bonus provisions for developers who include affordable housing in their projects.

**Community Engagement and Submissions:** Meredith and GC emphasised the importance of community submissions, noting that ten or more individual submissions allow affected parties to address the panels, and emphasised the

importance of individual submissions spelling out the specific concern or amenity impact rather than just referring to breaches of numerical controls.

**Technical Issues in Development Proposals:** Meredith discussed and answered questions on the technical aspects of development proposals, including boundary setbacks, building separation, solar access, landscaping, and compliance with the Apartment Design Guide (ADG), with specific reference to Watson St and Barry St applications.

**Community Concerns and Legal Issues:** A Laycock Street resident, raised concerns about access easements, construction impacts, and legal issues related to development proposals. Meredith suggested obtaining legal advice with regard to easements and asking for conditions to address specific construction concerns.

GC thanked Meredith and said that the Precinct Committee would circulate the presentation slides with the minutes of the meeting

2. No additional items were added to the Agenda
3. The December 2025 minutes were endorsed by CB, seconded by TM.
4. Updates:

- i. Proposed Special Rates Variation

GC outlined the Council's proposed special rate increase, including the rationale, community consultation results, financial implications, and criticisms regarding methodology and community engagement.

JL spoke to the proposal indicating Council's submission to IPART was unlikely to meet three of IPART's criteria for the following reasons:

- There was no demonstrated financial need. There was no mention of what projects/activities could be stopped or halted temporarily. If a cost savings target of \$100m (\$10m p.a. or 9% of the controllable operating costs) was applied, then this would fund renewal investment required over ten years. The target proposed is just \$23m.
- No mention that the number of Council staff (437) could be reduced to help achieve this target, particularly those working on non-core services. There are 93 initiatives planned in the Delivery Program over the next three years which could be considered 'non-core'.
- Council did not identify core activities/services that need to be done rather than would like to do which could be temporarily stopped until finances improved
- The Mayor publicly stated after IPART refused the first submission that Council would consider asset sales but there

is nothing about this in the submission. The Council owns 2 roads and 2 carparks which could be considered for divestment

- The community consultation did not test the communities willingness to pay additional rates. Furthermore the survey carried out did not use 'trade-off' methodologies to give respondents the choice of paying more rates for or eliminating non-core services.

JL recommended Council should focus on only core services until finances improved and encouraged residents to make their objections known to IPART.

GC advised that the community will be able provide feedback directly to IPART during their consultation process. Feedback opens on 17 February on the IPART website: [ipart.nsw.gov.au](http://ipart.nsw.gov.au)

The meeting discussed and re-endorsed Council's proposal to introduce usage charges for schools and large groups using public parks, highlighting the impact of private schools on local amenities and the rationale for the new charges.

ii. Warringah Freeway Upgrade

GC gave a brief update on the Freeway upgrade including closures this coming weekend and the opening of the Ridge St Overpass, noting ongoing roadworks and their impact on local residents.

iii. Barry Lane / Yeo Street corner – no stopping area

TM backgrounded and updated the Precinct's request for a traffic blister to be installed. The Council has painted a yellow line along the curb which is only partially working. A semi-permanent solution is still sought, such as a raised triangle that can be screwed into the road surface. Further representations have been made to Councillor Welch who has agreed to follow-up again with Council's Director of Open Space. TM will follow-up before the next meeting.

iv. 27-37 Bydown Street

GC provided an update including the refusal by the North Sydney Local Planning Panel (NSLPP) of the Bydown St. DA. The NSLPP refusal was primarily due to the Interim Heritage Order on the site but also due to the recommendations of design, landscaping and waste management issues raised by the Council Planners Report.

The key reasons for refusal by the Council's Planners were: The Interim Heritage Order; excessive height, bulk and scale; it does not provide a sympathetic response to the existing or desired future character or context of the area (noting it will set the LMR precedent);

inadequate setback from Bydown Street; inadequate landscaping; and impacts on amenity of adjacent properties.

GC and CP spoke at the NSLPP meeting on 4 February in support of the NS Council Planner's report recommending refusal.

On behalf of the Precinct Committee GC thanked everyone who signed and contributed to the Change.Org petition supporting a heritage assessment of the six cottages. They are the last remaining terraces like that within 800 metres of the Neutral Bay Village Centre.

GC encouraged those impacted by a DA, that is referred to the NSLPP (building value under \$30M and 10 or more objections received) or the Sydney North Planning Panel (Building value \$30M+ and 10 or more objections received), to address these meetings. If you make a submission to the Council on a DA you should receive information about when a Panel is meeting on that DA and an invitation to register to speak.

v. Young Street Plaza

CB spoke to, and the meeting discussed, the impacts of the permanent installation of the Young Street Plaza and associated works in the vicinity including ongoing traffic and access issues, the implementation of no-stopping zones, traffic calming devices, and changes to access routes to the Grosvenor Lane Carpark. As has been discussed at previous meetings there are those that are opposed to the development of the Plaza. Points of view identified were:

- Impacting residents on the south side of Military Road travelling by car to access Council's Grosvenor Street Carpark, all Grosvenor Lane Traffic must now turn left into Young Street to be confronted by four "Give-way signs to bicycles" on each corner at the intersection of Young and Grosvenor Streets which is confusing. These cars will then need to enter Council's carpark at Waters Lane.
- Alternatively, they must stay on Ben Boyd Road and turn right into Grosvenor Street, turn right into Young (through the 4 way give way signs) and then left into the carpark.
- All this only serves to force more traffic onto Grosvenor Street and will be exacerbated when the Rangers Road Woolworths Closes for redevelopment, for two years or more.
- The shared pedestrian/traffic zone in Grosvenor Lane remains unsafe for pedestrians because of the volume of traffic using the Lane. A footpath should have been included with the original design to improve pedestrian safety instead of the planter box zigzag.

- The installation of a children's play area in the Plaza next to a traffic lane will pose safety issues, with traffic queuing to exit onto Military Road, waiting for a change of lights and busses lined up at the bus stop

5. Development Applications:

DA 12/2026/1. 54-64 Barry Street Neutral Bay

The key issues raised by residents attending the meeting were: height, bulk and scale; incompatibility of the proposed development with the existing and likely future development in the area; the material impact on solar access; the material loss of visual and acoustic privacy; and the additional traffic movements impact on an already narrow street with parking along one side of the street.

**MOTION:**

**Neutral Precinct objects to the height, bulk and scale of the building proposed in DA 12/2026/1 54-64 Barry Street Neutral Bay. The Precinct requests:**

1. **Building setbacks be increased to align with the Apartment Design Guide for buildings of 25 metres, 9 storeys + in order to reduce the impact on solar access and material loss of visual and acoustic privacy of neighbouring properties; and**
2. **The proposed 56 car spaces be reduced by 10 spaces. This 10 space floor area has not been included in the Gross Floor Area.**

**VOTE: 41 for (unanimous), Against Nil, Abstain Nil**

6. The following upcoming meetings were noted:

- i. [Neutral Precinct](#) – 10 March
- ii. [Council](#) – 23 February, 9 March