

North Head Consultative Committee

Adopted Minutes of the 2nd meeting, 6:00 Tuesday 30th Jan. 2001

a. Attendance

Present:

David Barr MLA, Nina Burridge, Steve Crawford, Brian Hamer, Sharon Jones, Ray Mathieson, Jenny Minifie, Armstrong Osborne, Douglas Sewell, Ian Shields Brown, Jeff Thompson

Geoff Bailey, Nick Hollo, Bob Clark, Jane Silcock, Colin Menzies

Apologies:

Tony Abbott MHR, Christopher Branson, Mayor Jean Hay, Jack Newton, C'lr Sue Sacker

b. Minutes of the last meeting

The revised draft minutes of the first meeting had been circulated and were tabled, incorporating amendments proposed by Consultative Committee members (with additions underlined and omissions ~~struck through~~). These revised minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the first meeting.

c. Activity since last meeting

New members

After receiving the advice of the Consultative Committee, the interim Trustees invited Judy Reizes, Coordinator of the Manly Environment Centre, to join the Consultative Committee. Judy has accepted.

Site visit

Most of the Consultative Committee enjoyed the tour of the site in December.

Legislation

The progress of the legislation was discussed. The revised Bill was to be presented shortly to the Senate with positive signs of an agreement being reached. North Head would not be included in the Schedule of lands to be handed to the Trust due to uncertainty over ownership. It was hoped that, once legislation was enacted, an agreement could be reached with the State Government that would allow Management Plans to be finalised.

Doug Sewell recorded that he was a member of the Defenders of Sydney Harbour Foreshores Committee that had resolved that Trust lands including North Head should remain in public ownership even if transferred to the State.

Gymnasium

The interim Trust advised that it was exploring making the gymnasium in the Artillery School available to community group usage. The Artillery School gym is in much better condition

and would require only limited expenditure to make it useable, and representations have been made from some sporting clubs. Advice was sought from the Consultative Committee.

Comments included:

- ◆ Any use should follow a formal process of seeking expressions of interests from community groups, rather than favouring those “in the know”.
- ◆ The letting and managing process would use time of limited Trust staff when planning was the priority. It was felt that the planning should not be fettered by expectations from interim users.
- ◆ There was a danger to bandicoots in uses that attracted evening / night traffic.
- ◆ Considering details of community use was not the purpose of the committee.
- ◆ There was a need for a consistent approach to leasing across all sites.
- ◆ The insurance coverage would need investigation since the lands remain a responsibility of the Department of Defence.
- ◆ There could be problems with short-term users expecting longer-term use, once sporting contests dependent on the gym had been organised.
- ◆ There should be guidelines for interim use before making facilities available.

It was agreed that it was not a priority to give use of the site at this stage of the planning, but the issue should be re-visited at a later stage.

d. Planning Progress

Planning Report

Nick Hollo reported on the current state of the management planning process. He said that since the committee had last met before Christmas there had not been a lot of new work on North Head. Key ideas were:

- ◆ The main direction was to support integrated management of the delicate “island” ecology.
- ◆ The sanctuary concept would be advanced to protect flora and fauna and requires further investigation.
- ◆ The fragmented pathways would be consolidated.
- ◆ Structures would be pulled back to the Artillery School core where most significant cultural assets are, removing peripheral structures and revegetating. There were questions about the best treatment for hard paved surfaces which would be difficult to revegetate.
- ◆ Contracts have been let to investigate infrastructure services.
- ◆ Access was being considered through the former Police Wharf to avoid sea-grasses and fairy penguins. Committee members commented that the penguins bred near the old wharf site and their numbers seemed to be declining.
- ◆ Early thoughts on uses were keeping the parade ground as a civic space; having a mix of uses to ensure public access; possibly having a research centre; using the school for institutional uses that needed accommodation.

Comments by committee members included:

- ◆ Could the Police College (now part of Charles Sturt University) be included in management plans? Geoff Bailey responded that the Act would allow the Trust to plan for any Commonwealth land so that could become possible.
- ◆ **It was agreed** that the Police site should be included in the Trust’s Management Plan for North Head.
- ◆ The Natural Heritage Fund could provide funds to enhance the fairy penguin habitat.

- ◆ There was concern about the Quarantine Station possibly attracting 50-100,000 visitors annually. More generally, the committee felt it was critical that the State Government worked in conjunction with the Trust on North Head planning.
- ◆ There was discussion about reconvening the S.22 Committee as a forum for integrated planning of North Head. It was thought that the Trust could take up the place on the Committee formerly held by Defence. Geoff Bailey said the Trust would be happy to cooperate but it was up to Council and the State Government to determine the future of the S.22 Committee.
- ◆ The North Head Sewerage Treatment Plant (STP) provided an important sanctuary for bandicoots because it was fenced. However, the NPWS Bandicoot Recovery Plan Team (which was a condition of the STP EIS) had not met for 12 months.
- ◆ In response to a question about hazardous substances, Geoff Bailey advised that Defence had done a survey that found little contamination except for fuel tanks.
- ◆ John Thompson advised that Manly Council had digitised the map of North Head and would make that available to the Trust.
- ◆ There was discussion over Aboriginal issues. Bob Clark showed a map of Aboriginal sensitivity compiled from an earlier report by Helen Brayshaw. The Trust was seeking a copy of the report by Emma Lee on North Head for the NPWS.

e. Future activities

Public participation

Nick Hollo reported that the Trust aimed to have Concept Plans for the sites available for public consultation during May / June. Customs House has been booked as an exhibition venue. The aim was to attract many people so it is recognised that the trust sites were a never-to-be-repeated opportunity for Sydney. A variety of participatory activities to involve people from across Sydney in the sites were planned over the exhibition period. Ideas from the Consultative Committee were sought. Suggestions included:

- ◆ Using libraries to promote the exhibition.
- ◆ Using Council's Precinct forums – these will want information in a digestible form.
- ◆ Council has been doing a survey of community attitudes to heritage, which may reveal useful information for the Trust.

Open Day

There was strong support from the committee for an Open Day. It was suggested this might first be targeted at the local community as a test event.

It was agreed that the Consultative Committee would help plan the day by setting up a working group. Judy Reizes, Nina Burridge, Ray Mathieson, Armstrong Osborne, Jenny Minifie, Sharon Jones and David Barr offered assistance. Steve Crawford offered information on his open day planning.

Next meeting

The next meeting was set for **Thursday 1st March** from 6:00 to 8:00 pm.

The meeting closed at 8:15 pm.