



Dear Community Member

#### OUTCOME OF COUNCIL'S EXTRAORDINARY MEETING ON 2 AUGUST

**31 COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN PUBLIC FORUM PLEAD WITH COUNCILLORS TO REVERSE THEIR SUPPORT OF A SYNTHETIC BCO**

**4 OF OUR 8 COUNCILLORS REFUSED TO REVERSE THEIR SUPPORT FOR SYNTHETIC**



#### **On Monday 2 August Council voted 4-4 (with Mayor using her casting vote) to pursue its synthetic BCO**

With all the pressures of evenings and COVID, 31 community members made time on Monday night to plead with 4 of our Councillors to reverse their support of a synthetic ground at BCO.

These speakers had clearly spent time preparing what they wanted to say and their messages were clear, well-reasoned and heartfelt.

Only 2 speakers spoke in favour of the synthetic surface.

4 of 8 Councillors rejected a motion to trial a natural turf pitch for 5 years (moved by Councillor Brooks-Horn and seconded by Councillor Vissel). Councillors Brooks-Horn, Vissel, Morris and Zbik supported the motion and Mayor Palmer and Councillors Brent, Bennison and Strassberg voted against the motion.

And Mayor Palmer and Councillors Brent, Bennison and Strassberg then voted to support a motion to allow the General Manager to

With a 4-4 vote, Mayor Pam Palmer used her casting vote to ensure the second motion was carried.

It was apparent in the Council debate that none of the Councillors who support synthetic had had a change of heart despite the doubling of Council's estimated cost of the synthetic ground, lights and boundary fence, the need to supplement, subject to Councillor approval the project shortfall of at least \$ 2 million from Council rate payer funds or a small pool of Section 7.11 developer contributions and clear evidence that an improved natural grass pitch and all the Master Plan elements **could be delivered with the grant funds from the Department of Planning.**

It was disappointing to hear the Mayor's comments in the meeting in which she suggested that speakers were against "progress".

At the very time when Council has on exhibition its Draft Climate Resilience Plan, it is regrettable that community members who were brave enough to speak in public forum about their concerns about health and environmental impacts of synthetic turf should be depicted as against progress.

Many of the speakers on Monday night were new to Council meetings.

Addressing Council is not something people do lightly.

Some speakers were soccer players with children who are also soccer players and who are truly concerned about the impacts of synthetic turf on their children.

Others cherish the bushland environment of BCO and fear that a synthetic ground will cause irreversible damage.

We would have hoped that our Councillors would have welcomed the opportunity to hear from their fellow community members.

These community speakers would not have expected to be criticised from the chair as to their motives, given that the Mayor's comments are now on the public record and they had no opportunity to respond.

And we were surprised to hear, after the Mayor's consistent defence of the merits of synthetic turf, her statements that if another field appears within close proximity within 5 years (such as at the golf course), **"we could return Bob Campbell Oval to grass"**.

The BCO project has been and remains a distressing episode for hundreds of community members.

A huge amount of state public money is to be poured into BCO, not to mention the minimum \$2 million of Council funds needed to complete the BCO Master Plan,

If Council seriously thinks that a return of BCO to grass is an option in 5 years, **surely the time to look at other fields is now.**

Council's Recreation Action Plan is 13 years old.

The forecast high demand of SLS residents is several years away.

And, with a synthetic Gore Hill Oval close by, they may prefer natural grass at BCO.

There is time **now** for Council to do a full review of open space and sporting fields within and adjacent to the Lane Cove LGA.

### **Where to from here?**

We now await Council's release of its revised Review of Environmental Factors (REF).

This REF will be made available to the community.

The REF will then be assessed by Council as part of its mandatory environmental approval process.

It is only after this process has been completed that Council must decide whether it will proceed with the contract that the General Manager has been authorised to sign.

The 2 August resolution provides that no compensation will be payable to the contractor if Council decides not to go ahead.

### **Natural Grass at Bob Campbell Inc**

In a previous broadcast we advised the community of the formation of Natural Grass at Bob Campbell Inc, an association of concerned community members with a single focus – the preservation of an improved natural grassed BCO.

It contains extensive information about Council's BCO proposal and includes details of how you can become involved in the Natural Grass at Bob Campbell campaign.

[Natural Grass at Bob Campbell Association – Natural Grass at Bob Campbell Association \(naturalgrassbco.com\)](http://naturalgrassbco.com)

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### **DA on exhibition for a huge development in SLS**

It was only a question of time.

The first DA for an SLS development is on exhibition.

21 Canberra Avenue

Development:	Construction of five residential flat buildings
Applicant:	Top Spring Property & Development Services Pty Ltd
Application #:	<a href="#">DA99/2021</a>
Advertised:	02/08/2021 Expiry: 30/08/2021

The GCA has not had time to look at this proposal in detail to ensure that it complies with Council's LEP and DCP conditions and the requirements of the 2036 plan for St Leonards and Crows Nest.

But we can see that the development is huge.

East Ward (which includes all the high rise towers on the Greenwich side of Pacific Highway from the rail-line to Oxley Street) is certainly the epicentre of development in the Lane Cove LGA.



Kind regards

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