



## GCA PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2022

Prior to the 2022 AGM, Lane Cove Council Elections were held with several new Councillors elected, including 2 in East Ward:

These were Councillor Merri Southwood (previously President of the GCA) and Councillor David Roenfeldt. They joined the re-elected Councillor David Brooks-Horne.

Over the last two years or more, the GCA has been a strong advocate for the re-creation of Bob Campbell Oval (BCO) with natural grass, and the tight control of developers involved with the massive high density St Leonards South (SLS) residential development. With the election of the new LC Council, the GCA concerns have been taken up directly by Councillors with the following results:

- For the BCO, the contract previously entered into by Council (on a 5 to 4 majority with the Mayor using her additional casting vote), was cancelled. Council then accepted and proceeded with the design of the Natural Grass proposal with a view to starting site works this year (2023)
- For SLS, the Councillors have become aware that the original DCP's produced by developers (and approved by Council), could not allow these developers to construct and to maximise the built areas as allowed under the LEP. This meant that drawings originally produced by developers as DCP's were amended to allow building lines to move outward particularly along the critical green spine lines. This has come as a shock to us all, including the newly elected Councillors, who, are attempting to limit the expansions within allowances dictated by law. We do not yet know how successful this has been with more recent Development Applications.

At this state, I don't propose to discuss or highlight every activity undertaken by the GCA but will touch on the highest profile or most concerning subjects.

**At our April meeting**, we were addressed by representatives of Hammond Care. They explained their Development Proposal for Greenwich Hospital in more detail. Whilst there are always concerns with major developments, the GCA was generally happy with the overall concept, density, and usage of the plans. Hammond representatives took on board some constructive comments offered from the floor.

**At the June meeting**, two new major developments were discussed.

The first was the new Sport & Rec Facility proposed for the Lane Cove Golf Club site. Second was about Council entering into an agreement with Australian Unity for a 99-year lease for the construction of a Seniors Living & Residential Aged Care Facility at 266 Longueville Road, Lane Cove, with a cash value to Council of \$32.5 million.

Whilst the 266 Longueville Road deal was done (despite some strong residents push back), the Sport & Rec Facility has continued to be of some concern to the community in terms of costs versus benefit; limited increased facilities; building and operating risks; and doubts about the proposed location.

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The GCA has met with the Mayor and local Councillors and correspondence has been exchanged. But concerns still exist, particularly as the project uses most of Council's available funding (for any works), and this has an impact on some existing residents of SLS – which I will mention later in this report.

Also, at our June meeting we held our Annual Membership Drive at the Greenwich shops. This was very successful, incorporating for the first time the opportunity of EFT payments via a 'square' technology. This was much simpler and easier in our now 'cashless' society.

**The October meeting** noted the confirmation that Council proposed to move forward with the Sport & Rec Facility on the Lane Cove Golf Club site. Council gave residents until late January 2023 to comment. The GCA and a number of residents have made formal submissions to Council.

In addition, at the October meeting, the proposal by Hammond Care to adjust/amend the plans for their development of Greenwich Hospital was discussed.

This brings me to the **December meeting** where we concluded the year with a glass of wine and some Christmas Cake. Apart from the Sport & Rec Facility and the SLS concerns, two new issues were discussed.

Firstly, the transfer of the 266 Longueville Road lease to the Pathways Group and then this group's request to change the proposal to an enlarged Seniors Living Complex rather than the approved Seniors Living & Residential Aged Care Facility. The GCA and members of the public have written to the Council, pointing out why this requested change should not be allowed.

The second issue is the plight of landowners who own properties to be acquired by Council for parkland within SLS. This cannot occur until levies are received by Council from the developer. Council has no funds for these purchases. These residents have been forced into a difficult situation where they cannot sell their homes because one day in the future, when funds are allowed, Council has the right to acquire their properties.

Would it not be a more moral approach to use funds from the 266 Longueville Road transaction for Council to buy these properties so that residents are not caught in this terrible limbo through no fault of their own.

These will be issues for residents and the GCA to consider this year (2023).

For my part I sincerely thank my fellow Committee Members: Alan Winney, Karen Macalister-Hohnen, Julia Sharpe, Peter Staveley, Don Murchison, Candy Anstee, and Patricia Quealey, including John Southwood for their input. You have been a great group to work with – proactive and hardworking, but also with an approach that has made tasks enjoyable and interesting.

Finally, I thank our Mayor, Andrew Zbik and Councillors Merri Southwood and David Roenfeldt for always being available and open for discussions even though our views have differed at times!

Thank you,

Peter Deane