



30th July 2020

Dear Community Member

“As our State grows and changes, there is an increasing need for green infrastructure – our trees, parks and green links – as well as high quality and accessible public spaces.

Well-planned green infrastructure is fundamental in fostering healthy, happy communities that are sustainable now and into the future. “

These are the words of Rob Stokes, Minister for Planning, in his foreword to the Government Architect’s draft Greener Places document:

<https://www.governmentarchitect.nsw.gov.au/resources/ga/media/files/ga/design-guides/framework-document-greener-places-2020-06-02.pdf>

We could not agree more....

So why is our Council so determined to pursue its plans to do the **exact opposite** in East Ward?

Council has voted to proceed with its own St Leonards South (SLS) Plan to add up to 5,000 new residents to East Ward.

The green open space in the SLS Plan is woefully inadequate.

The community has told Council this.

So have the Independent Planning Commission and Department of Planning.

(Only 3,500 sqm of new open space is being created in SLS ie < 1 sqm per new resident! - and that won't occur until the last unit is approved for occupation).

But Council voted on 11 May 2020, in the middle of COVID public gathering restrictions, to approve this inadequate SLS Plan.

What we now know is that, by the time of the 11 May vote, Council officers had well advanced plans to appropriate existing green open space in East Ward **outside the SLS**

And, even worse –

- the plans will **take "natural grass" out of much of the green space available to the community**
- **or make currently accessible space, inaccessible**
- and the use of space will be far more structured around organised or commercial activities than it is now. We have, for too long, been left out of planning processes until projects are so advanced that community consultation is really just a "tick the box" exercise.

If ever there was a time to have a full community discussion about how best to use our valuable green open space, it is now.

Council should put on hold its plans for the Golf Course site and Bob Campbell Oval and engage the community from the outset in the planning of green open space in East Ward and Lane Cove generally.

And we need to tell Council this.

Golf Course Project (Sport and Recreation Precinct)

The Golf Course Project is open for community consultation now.

<http://www.lanecove.nsw.gov.au/CouncilConsultations/Pages/SportandRecreationPrecinct.aspx>

If Council's plans go ahead for the precinct, the community will lose 12,450 approx square metres of green open space to a commercial driving range and a putt-putt course.

Council has provided no details of the estimated cost of the elements of the project, specific funding sources or an update of the August 2013 feasibility study. Let alone an economic feasibility statement.

This is essential information to assess the merits of the project, given that Council may need to make some hard choices about priorities in these uncertain economic times.

The community's experience of community consultation has been frustrating, but this is no reason to give up on submission writing now – we hope that, eventually, Council will start to listen more to what people have to say and engage with them about their responses.

Council will be hosting an information session at the Clubhouse of the

We hear that there was a lot of lively discussion at the session held last weekend.

Council has included an online survey on its website. The General Manager has also confirmed that Council has engaged a company to conduct telephone surveys.

But surveys are limiting so we hope that many community members will make written submissions to Post: PO Box 20, Lane Cove NSW 1595; or
Email: service@lanecove.nsw.gov.au

The closing date for submissions is 16 August.

Bob Campbell Oval

Council has now voted to put its plans for Bob Campbell Oval on exhibition for a period of 6 weeks.

This is somewhat ironic given that the Department of Planning has already approved a \$3.6 million grant for the project and that one of the criteria for assessment of the grant application was that “*appropriate consultation **has occurred** within the community*”.

It seems even our own Councillors did not know until recently that Council had applied for the grant.

The proposed plan for the oval is dictated by the use of the sporting field for limited team sport – this has forced an outcome that overlooks the interests of all the other stakeholders who enjoy the flexibility that Bob Campbell Oval currently offers.

We look to our Councillors to ensure that their final decision in respect of Bob Campbell Oval will reflect all stakeholder needs.

Council will hold two drop in sessions during exhibition and will mark out the boundaries of the proposed synthetic surface and dog enclosure for the exhibition period.

It is pleasing that Council has agreed to upload copies of all submissions (with identifiers removed). It would be great if this happened for all consultations.

We have no date for the exhibition but note that Council’s grant application to the Department says that work will commence in July!

Our next general meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 19th August at 7.30 pm

We hope that we will be able to gather in the Community Centre - but 3 weeks is a long time in a health crisis.

Please keep an eye out for our newsletter that will appear a week beforehand.

And please do not hesitate to contact me or other GCA Committee Members (see www.greenwich.org.au) if you want more information regarding any of the above.

And....please - have a say on these issues. If the Councillors don't hear from us they don't know your thoughts.

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Kind regards

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