



Community & Environment Committee

Agenda: *Community & Environment Committee*

Date: *Monday 17 November 2008*

Time: *6.00pm*

Outline of Meeting Protocol & Procedure:

- The Chairperson will call the Meeting to order and ask the Committee/Staff to present apologies or late correspondence.
- The Chairperson will commence the Order of Business as shown in the Index to the Agenda.
- At the beginning of each item the Chairperson will ask whether a member(s) of the public wish to address the Committee.
- If person(s) wish to address the Committee, they are allowed four (4) minutes in which to do so. Please direct comments to the issues at hand.
- If there are persons representing both sides of a matter (eg applicant/objector), the person(s) against the recommendation speak first.
- At the conclusion of the allotted four (4) minutes, the speaker resumes his/her seat and takes no further part in the debate unless specifically called to do so by the Chairperson.
- If there is more than one (1) person wishing to address the Committee from the same side of the debate, the Chairperson will request that where possible a spokesperson be nominated to represent the parties.
- The Chairperson has the discretion whether to continue to accept speakers from the floor.
- After considering any submissions the Committee will debate the matter (if necessary), and arrive at a recommendation (R items which proceed to Full Council) or a resolution (D items for which the Committee has delegated authority).

Delegated Authority (“D” Items):

- Community Services and Programmes.
- Health.
- Liquor Licences.
- Fire Protection Orders.
- Residential Parking Schemes (surveillance and administration).
- Traffic Management (Traffic Committee Recommendations).
- Waverley/Woollahra Process Plant.
- To require such investigations, reports or actions as considered necessary in respect of matters contained within the Business Agendas (and as may be limited by specific Council resolution).
- Confirmation of the Minutes of its Meeting.
- Any other matter falling within the responsibility of the Community and Environment Committee and not restricted by the Local Government Act or required to be a Recommendation to Full Council as listed below.
- Library Services
- Licensing.
- Regulatory.
- Waste Minimisation

Recommendation only to the Full Council (“R” Items):

- Such matters as are specified in Section 377 of the Local Government Act and within the ambit of the Committee considerations.
- Matters which involve broad strategic or policy initiatives within responsibilities of the Committee.
- Matters requiring the expenditure of moneys and in respect of which no Council vote has been made.
- Matters delegated to the Council by the Traffic Authority of NSW.
- Matters not within the specified functions of the Committee, or which are not the subject of a Business Agenda (current or past).
- Matters reserved by individual Councillors, in accordance with any Council policy on "safeguards".
- Parks and Reserve Plans of Management (Strategies, Policies and Objectives)
- Residential Parking Schemes - Provision and Policies

Committee Membership:

7 Councillors

Quorum:

The quorum for a Committee meeting is 4 Councillors.

WOOLLAHRA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

Notice of Meeting

13 November 2008

To: His Worship The Mayor, Councillor Andrew Petrie ex-officio
Councillors Peter Cavanagh (Chair)
Anthony Boskovitz
Susan Jarnason
Greg Medcraft
Ian Plater
Isabelle Shapiro
Susan Wynne (Deputy)

Dear Councillors

Community & Environment Committee Meeting – 17 November 2008

In accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1993, I request your attendance at a Meeting of the Council's **Community and Environment Committee** to be held in the **Council Chambers, 536 New South Head Road, Double Bay, on Monday 17 November 2008 at 6.00pm.**

Gary James
General Manager

Additional Information Relating to Committee Matters

Site Inspection

Other Matters

Meeting Agenda

Item	Subject	Pages
1	Leave of Absence and Apologies	
2	Late Correspondence	
3	Declarations of Interest	

Items to be Decided by this Committee using its Delegated Authority

D1	Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting held on 3 November 2008	1
D2	Woollahra Traffic Committee Minutes 4 November 2008 – 595.G 2008	2
D3	Woollahra Traffic Committee Extraordinary Meeting Minutes – 7 November 2008 – 595.G 2008	9
D4	Roads Act Application – 643 New South Head Road, Rose Bay – D138/07/21	11
D5	Encouraging Small Native Birds Back to Woollahra – 900.G	15
D6	Library Quarterly Report 1 July 2008 to 30 September 2008 – 48.G / 48.G (Strategic)	27

Items to be Submitted to the Council for Decision with Recommendations from this Committee - Nil

Item No: D1 Delegated to Committee
Subject: **Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting held on 3 November 2008**
Author: Les Windle, Manager - Governance
File No: See Council Minutes
Reason for Report: The Minutes of the Meeting of Monday 3 November 2008 were previously circulated. In accordance with the guidelines for Committees' operations it is now necessary that those Minutes be formally taken as read and confirmed.

Recommendation:

That the Minutes of the Community and Environment Committee Meeting of 3 November 2008 be taken as read and confirmed.

Les Windle
Manager - Governance

Item No: D2 Delegated to Committee
Subject: **Woollahra Traffic Committee Minutes 4 November 2008**
Author: Warwick Hatton, Director – Technical Services
File No: 595.G 2008
Reason for Report: For the Committee to consider the recommendations of the Woollahra Local Traffic Committee.

Recommendation:

THAT the Recommendations Y1-Y5 contained in the minutes of the Woollahra Traffic Committee, and as signed by the members of the Committee, held on Tuesday 4 November 2008 be adopted.

Warwick Hatton
Director – Technical Services

Woollahra Local Traffic Committee Minutes

The meeting of the Woollahra Local Traffic Committee was held in the Council Committee Room, Double Bay, on Tuesday 4 November 2008 at 10.00am.

1. Attendances

Committee Members:

Present:	Mr Warwick Hatton (Chairman)	(Woollahra Municipal Council)
	Snr Const Janna Brisby	(Rose Bay Police - Traffic)
	Ms Robyn Attuell	(Clover Moore MP Representative)
Staff:	Mr Frank Rotta	(Woollahra Municipal Council)
	Mr Daniel Pearse	(Woollahra Municipal Council)
	Ms Armodee Reece	(Woollahra Municipal Council)
Apologies:	Mr Navin Prasad	(Roads and Traffic Authority)
	Mr John Giblin	(Peter Debnam MP Representative)
Observer:	Mr E Graham	(State Transit Authority)
	Ms S Fuchs	(Resident – Item Y1-2)
	Mr G Judge	(Resident – Item Y1-2)
	Ms M Ibrahim	(Darling Point Society – Item Y2)
	Mr J McDonagh	(Harbourview Resident Group)

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of Meeting No.9/08 held in Council Chambers, Double Bay, on Tuesday 7 October 2008 were confirmed by Snr Const J Brisby.

3. Matters Arising from Minutes of Previous Meetings

Nil

4. Local Traffic Committee recommendations not adopted or amended by Woollahra Council Community & Environment Committee

Nil

5. Extraordinary Meetings

Nil

6. Late Correspondence

Nil

7. Traffic Matters on Local Roads – Recommendation to C&E for Consideration

Item No: Y1 Traffic Matters on Local Roads – Recommendation to C&E for Consideration

SUBJECT: **Parking Restrictions Changes**

Author: Frank Rotta – Traffic Engineer

File No: (Refer to Table 1)

Reason for Report: Various parking restriction changes throughout the Woollahra Council area.

Item Y1-1: Kambala Road, Bellevue Hill – Provision of Parking restrictions

Committee Vote: Unanimous Support

Recommendation:

1. That the matter be deferred to the December Local Traffic Committee Meeting to consider alternative treatments.

Item Y1-2: Northland Road, Bellevue Hill – Traffic Devices for road safety

Committee Vote: Unanimous Support

NOTE: Ms Fuchs and Mr Judge addressed the Committee in relation to this item

Recommendation:

1. That this matter be deferred for further discussion with the affected residents before being reported back to the December Local Traffic Committee.

Item Y1-3: Marathon Mews, Double Bay – Request for No Stopping restrictions

Committee Vote: Unanimous Support

Recommendation:

1. That “No Stopping” restrictions be installed on the northern side of Marathon Mews, Double Bay from the western kerb line in Ocean Avenue, in a westerly direction for a distance of 10 metres.

Item Y1-4: Heeley Street, Paddington – Alteration of Traffic restrictions

Committee Vote: Unanimous Support

Recommendation:

1. That 15 metres of “15 min Parking, 7.30am-10.30am, 3.00pm-6.00pm, Mon-Fri, 2P Residents Permit Parking, 10.30am-3.00pm, 6.00pm-11.00pm, Mon-Fri, 8.00am-11.00pm, Sat & Sun, Pgtn 2”, be installed on the western side of Heeley Street, just north of the statutory No Stopping zone just north of Olive Street, Paddington.
2. That the parking on the northern side of the above location revert to “2P, Residents Permit Parking, 8.00am-11.00pm, Pgtn 2”.

Item No: Y2 Traffic Matters on Local Roads – Recommendation to C&E for Consideration

Subject: **New Beach Road, Darling Point – Alteration To Traffic Conditions**

Author: Daniel Pearse – Traffic Engineer

File No: T327

Reason for Report: Implementation of Darling Point Traffic Study Action Plan.

NOTE: Ms Ibrahim from the Darling Point Society addressed the Committee in relation to this item

Committee Vote: Unanimous Support

Recommendation:

- A. That plan number 15010 – Sheet 1 to 4 contained as attached in Annexure 1 of this report be approved in principle.
- B. That no further action be taken to alter the roundabout at the New Beach Road /Yarranabbe Road intersection.
- C. That Sydney Buses be consulted in relation to swept paths, angle parking, bus zones and speed humps and the results of this consultation be brought back to a future Traffic Committee Meeting.
- D. That residents, property and business owners on New Beach Road and the Darling Point Society be consulted and invited to comment about the proposal and the results of this consultation be brought back to a future Traffic Committee Meeting.

Item No: Y3 Traffic Matters on Local Roads – Recommendation to C&E for Consideration

Subject: **Temporary Road Closure Of John Street, Between Dwyer Lane & Victoria Avenue, Woollahra – Local Christmas Party**

Author: Frank Rotta – Traffic Engineer

File No: T256

Reason for Report: Request from Mr Andrew Rowland on behalf of all residents in this section of John Street for a temporary road closure of John Street between Dwyer Lane and Victoria Avenue from 4.00pm to 8.00pm on Sunday 7 December, 2008 for a neighbourhood Christmas Party.

Committee Vote: Unanimous Support

Recommendation:

- A. That approval be granted for the temporary road closure of John Street, Woollahra from Dwyer Lane to Victoria Avenue for a neighbourhood Christmas Party from 4.00pm-8.00pm on Sunday 7 December, 2008.
- B. That the above special event be categorised as a category 3 event.
- C. That the approval of the above event and the associated road closure be subject to the following conditions :
 - i) The applicant must obtain approval for the event from Police by completing a “Notice of Intention to Hold a Public Assembly” form.
 - ii) The applicant must submit a Traffic Management Plan prepared by an RTA accredited traffic consultant to Council for approval. Council will then provide this approval to the Event Organiser prior to the event. Council must then send this TMP to the RTA’s Sydney Transport Management Centre (TMC) for notification.
 - iii) The applicant must inform all business proprietors, residents and other occupants in the vicinity of the proposed activities, at least fourteen (14) days before the event via a letterbox drop.
 - iv) The applicant must supply and erect any barriers and traffic signs necessary for the road closure and remove them at the completion of the event.
 - v) Council must be indemnified against all claims for damage or injury that may result from either the activities or from the occupation of part of the public way during the activities. A copy of Public Liability Insurance Cover to the value of \$10,000,000 shall be provided to Council prior to the event and Council must be listed as in interested party on the insurance.
 - vi) Council must be reimbursed for the cost of repair of any damage caused to Council property as a result of the activities.
 - vii) The applicant must inform all Emergency Services of the proposed road closure (that is Fire Brigade, Ambulance and the RTA) and must maintain a four-metre emergency vehicle lane at all times, with all services (eg. fire hydrants) remaining free of any obstruction.

- viii) Noise created by use of equipment or activity must be controlled as required by the “Protection Of The Environment Operations (Noise Control) Regulation 2000”.
- ix) The applicant must make arrangements to remove all waste from the site at the end of the event.

Item No: Y4 Traffic Matters on Local Roads – Recommendation to C&E for consideration.

Subject: **No.68 Goodhope Street, Paddington – Works Zone**

Author: Frank Rotta – Traffic Engineer

File No: 407.G Pt12

Reason for Report: Request for a Works Zone

Committee Vote: Unanimous Support

Recommendation:

- A. That approval be granted for a Works Zone to be temporarily installed to service No.68 Goodhope Street, Paddington. The proposed Works Zone is 7 metres long and is to be located on the western side of Goodhope Street, Paddington across the Goodhope Street driveway crossing servicing the site and is subject to the following conditions:
- i. Any directive provided by the NSW Police Department is to be complied with.
 - ii. The Works Zone is to operate between the hours of 7.00am-4.00pm Mon-Fri and Saturdays from 7.00am-1.00pm for a period of 8 weeks from November, 2008.
 - iii. Suitable traffic control measures are to be put in place to manage truck movements to and from the construction site, and if necessary to and from the adjacent street system, in accordance with the RTA’s Traffic Control at Works Sites manual.
 - iv. Unrestricted parking is to be maintained outside of the Works Zone hours of operation.
 - v. The applicant must ensure that the traffic lanes, footpaths and driveways, adjacent to the Works Zone, remain free of obstruction at all times during the construction.
 - vi. The applicant must inform Council’s Traffic Engineer when the project is completed and the Works Zone can be removed.
 - vii. This Works Zone is in an area zoned as Residential 2(a). The fee payable shall be in accordance with Council’s adopted fees and charges (parallel parking rate) applying to the period for which the approval is given, and must be paid prior to the Works Zone being installed. Should the Works Zone be required for a shorter period, application may be made for a pro-rata refund.
 - viii. Failure to comply with any of these conditions may result in the cancellation of the Works Zone at Council’s discretion.
 - ix. Should the Works Zone be required for a period longer than the approved period, permission from the Director of Technical Services is required to extend the Works Zone.

- x. Should the Works Zone be required for additional hours of operation on any particular day, any amendment will require the approval of the Woollahra Traffic Committee.
- B. That the applicant notifies all residents and businesses whose property frontage is within 50 metres of the Works Zone.
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Item No: Y5 Traffic Matters on Local Roads – Recommendation to C&E for Consideration

Subject: **Paddington Pamp Projects**

Author: Frank Rotta – Traffic Engineer

File No: 445.G

Reason for Report: Proposed alteration of 3 Paddington PAMP Project Designs

Committee Vote: Unanimous Support

Recommendation:

- A. That the pedestrian crossings and associated kerb blisters and signposting at the following locations:
- i Queen Street just east of its intersection with Victoria Avenue. (Annexure 2)
 - ii Queen Street just west of its intersection with Holdsworth Street. (Annexure 4)
 - iii Glenmore Road/Campbell Avenue intersection. (Annexure 6)
- be approved for construction.
-

8. Late Items

1. Military Road, Watsons Bay – Illegal parking in bus turning circle

2. “Lighthouse Bus Shelter” on eastern side of Old South Head Road, Watsons Bay – Sight Distance

Letters received from Sydney Buses in relation to the above items after the meeting Agenda was finalised. Both matters will be reviewed and referred to an Extraordinary Traffic Committee Meeting in November, 2008.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 11.15am.

Warwick Hatton
Chair

Item No: D3 Delegated to Committee
Subject: **Woollahra Traffic Committee Extraordinary Meeting Minutes -
7 November 2008**
Author: Warwick Hatton, Director – Technical Services
File No: 595.G 2008
Reason for Report: For the Committee to consider the recommendations of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Woollahra Local Traffic Committee.

Recommendation:

THAT the Recommendations Y1-5 and Y1-6 contained in the minutes of the Woollahra Traffic Committee, held by email and phone on Friday 7 November 2008 be adopted.

Warwick Hatton
Director – Technical Services

Woollahra Local Traffic Committee Minutes

An extraordinary meeting of the Woollahra Local Traffic Committee (Meeting No.10a/08) was held by email and phone on Friday 7 November, 2008.

9. Attendances

Committee Members:

Present: Mr Warwick Hatton (Chairman) (Woollahra Municipal Council)
Mr Navin Prasad (Roads and Traffic Authority)
Snr Const Janna Brisby (Rose Bay Police - Traffic)

10. Traffic Matters on Local Roads – Recommendation to C&E for Consideration

Item No: Y1 Traffic Matters on Local Roads – Recommendation to C&E for Consideration

SUBJECT: PARKING RESTRICTIONS CHANGES

Author: Frank Rotta – Traffic Engineer

File No: (Refer to Table 1)

Reason for Report: Various parking restriction changes throughout the Woollahra Council area.

Item Y1-5: Military Road, Watsons Bay – 24 Hour Clearway

Committee Vote: Unanimous Support

Recommendation:

1. That “24 hour Clearway” restrictions be installed on the northern and eastern sides of Military Road, Watsons Bay from 3 metres west of the western edge of the driveway serving “The GAP Bluff Centre” in an easterly and southerly direction for 51 metres, to the end of the bus turnaround area.

Item Y1-6: Old South Head Road, Watsons Bay – Extension of Bus Zone

Committee Vote: Unanimous Support

Recommendation:

1. That the Bus Zone on the eastern side of Old South Head Road, Watsons Bay in the vicinity of Village High Road be extended by 10.4 metres in a northerly direction.

Warwick Hatton
Chair

Item No: D4 Delegated to Committee

Subject: **Roads Act Application - 643 New South Head Rd, Rose Bay**

Author: Alan Opera – Manager Engineering Services

File No: S138/07/21

Reason for Report: To report on public response to a Section 138 Roads Act Application to extend an existing indented parking bay.

Recommendation:

- A. That the Section 138 Roads Act Application for the extension of the existing indented parking bay outside No. 643 New South Head Road by approximately 13 metres, as detailed in Annexure 1 of this report, be approved.

Background:

A Section 138 Roads Act Application has been received from N & J Stavrou Pty Ltd of 643 New South Head Road, Rose Bay, seeking to extend an existing indented parking bay on the southern side of New South Head Road across the frontage of No. 637 New South Head Road, a distance of approximately 13 metres (See Annexure 1). The applicant is the owner/operator of the ‘Jewels of the Bay’ Restaurant at 643 New South Head Road and wishes to extend the parking bay, at his cost, in order to increase public parking in this location.

Council’s records show that this proposal has been floated in the past by the same applicant, initially in 1998 and subsequently twice since. On each occasions no objection was raised on traffic grounds but the applicant was referred to the Roads and Traffic Authority as New South Head Road is a State Road under the care and control of the RTA. Although the applicant has twice received in principle approval from the RTA for the proposal, the applicant did not pursue the proposal during the reconstruction of the Rose Bay Promenade in 2007/2008.

This proposal has generated considerable public reaction in the past and therefore when the current S138 application was received it was decided to circulate the proposal to local residences, businesses, and owners.

An assessment of these responses and of the technical issues involved in this proposal has now been completed and is the subject of this report. It should be noted that S138 applications are not normally reported to Council, however, there is considerable opposition expressed to the proposal by residents of an adjoining property of which Councillors need to be aware.

Public Consultation:

In 1998, and again in 2002, the applicant was advised by Council that the concurrence of the RTA as the responsible roads authority would be necessary. The applicant has with this current application submitted to Council two separate letters from the RTA dated 28 July, 1998, and 8 March, 2006, raising no objection to the proposal subject to standard conditions. One of these conditions is that appropriate consultation with residents be carried out. The current RTA representative to the Traffic Committee has been contacted and has advised that the RTA’s position has not changed since 2006.

In July 2008 Council sent letters to properties in the street block from O'Sullivan Road to Balfour Road inviting comment on the current proposal. Closing date for submissions was 11 August 2008.

Council has received letters from the six residents, or on behalf of the residents, of 637 New South Head Road, the immediately adjoining property, and 1 petition which is stated to contain the signatures of "956 Rose Bay Owners and Residents" who oppose the proposal.

On examination, this petition contains a total of 924 signatures of which 391 are in response to the current application. The remaining 533 signatures are attached to a previous petition against the former application in 2001. Of the 391 signatures on the current petition, 153 (39.1%) are from residents of Rose Bay, 275 (70.4%) are from residents of the Woollahra municipality, and 116 (i.e. 29.6%) are from non-residents of the municipality from as far afield as Willoughby, Hurstville, Katoomba, Jindabyne, Caulfield, Victoria, Bendigo, Victoria and Austin, Texas, USA. It should also be noted that the manager of the adjoining business premises at 641 New South Head Road has signed the petition.

These submissions oppose the proposal predominantly on the grounds of loss of amenity, namely the loss of the four trees and grassed nature strip, and state that additional parking is not required in this location.

Technical Advice:

The RTA has no objection to the proposal on traffic or engineering grounds, subject to standard conditions relating to Construction and Traffic Management during construction.

An assessment has been completed by the relevant Council departments as to the merits or otherwise of this proposal, as follows:

- Council's Traffic Engineer has found no grounds for refusal but has recommended that the two new parking spaces which are proposed should be introduced as unrestricted parking similar to other nearby parking (the existing parking in front of the shops is ½ Hr during business hours weekdays and Saturday mornings..
- Council's Tree Officer has noted that the four trees are hedged Lilly Pilly, which appear to have been planted by a resident. At this stage, the Officer states, they are small shrubs, they are not in character with other Hills Fig trees planted in New South Head Road, and their removal would lead to little loss of amenity.
- Council's Engineering Design Section has assessed the civil engineering aspects of the proposal (i.e. stormwater, road pavement, etc.) and no grounds have been found for refusal.
- Council's Heritage Officer has found that whilst the indented parking on the southern side of New South Head Road is not in itself heritage listed, the setting and relationship of these bays should be considered to be an 'extension' of the heritage listed seawall on the northern side of the street. The Heritage Officer states that: "*The proposed modifications to extend the parking bay would result in an uncharacteristically larger parking bay than those surrounding the subject project area.*" The Heritage Officer recommends against approval of the proposal.

Appraisal:

No engineering or traffic grounds exist for refusal of this application.

The proposal to introduce two new on-street parking spaces has merit, in terms of Council policy to support local business with appropriate facilities, and it is considered that provision of parking adjacent to this small group of shops would be benefit to the general public. On this basis, however, it is considered that time restricted parking would be more appropriate than unrestricted, to encourage turnover and prevent all day use.

The heritage conservation assessment is questionable. Existing indented parking bays on the southern side of New South Head Road vary in length between 8 and 18 metres, so they are not consistent; the subject parking bay is already 27 metres in length and therefore is already uncharacteristically larger than the other parking bays along the Rose Bay foreshore. While the existing indented parking bays in New South Head Road are part of the character of the Rose Bay promenade, the extension of this one bay on the opposite side of a five lane road is considered to have little or no impact on the heritage values of the promenade.

The adjoining residents of 637 New South Head Road are of the view that the extension of this parking bay will impact heavily on their amenity, and they have been able to attract considerable support from others, as demonstrated by 324 petitioners (including 153 Rose Bay residents) signing the current petition against the proposal.

On balance it is considered that the application has merit and it is recommended that it be approved. Approval for works in a road under S138 of the Roads Act is normally dealt with under delegation. However, noting the extent of community opposition expressed the matter is referred to Council for determination.

Warwick Hatton
Director Technical Services

Alan Opera
Manager Engineering Services

Annexures:

1. Plan of proposed extension to indented parking bay.

Item No: D5 Delegated to Committee
Subject: ENCOURAGING SMALL NATIVE BIRDS BACK TO WOOLLAHRA
Author: David Sheils - Manager Public Open Space
File No: 900.G
Reason for Report: To respond to a Notice of Motion

Recommendation:

- A. That Council supports the installation of interpretation / education signs which promote birds and *bird friendly* landscape treatments in association with the Gap Park Masterplan works and Cooper Park Pond rehabilitation project.
- B. That Council notes the *bird friendly* public education and participation programs being undertaken to raise awareness of, and methods to, enhance bird habitats within Woollahra.

Background:

Council at its meeting of 26 November 2007, adopted the following Notice of Motion (NoM):

- “1. *Notes with concern that there has been a dramatic reduction in our small native bird species in Woollahra over the last three decades;*
2. *Recognises that to facilitate both the preservation and re-establishment of small native bird species will require improved landscaping and planting practices on both private and public land;*
3. *Undertakes, in consultation with the community, to identify at least three significant roadside, or other under-used public sites, in Woollahra for adaptation as model sites and to then plant them with an appropriate range of native species for the preservation and re-establishment of small native birds in the Municipality;*
4. *To provide educational signs at each model site to inform residents about how to preserve and re-establish small native birds in Woollahra;*
5. *To develop a model landscaping/planting regime that encourages the preservation and re-establishment of native small bird species in the Municipality for use in all of Council civil works that allow for significant plantings ;and*
6. *To report on what, if any, model landscape/planting regimes can be supplied to local property owners in the DA process, including specific professional advice by appropriate council officers, to encourage the preservation and re-establishment of native small bird species in the Municipality.”*

This report responses to the NoM in two parts.

- Part A. Outlines the status of small birds in Sydney and what actions can be done to encourage small birds.

Part B. Outlines what Council is doing and can do to encourage small birds within the Local Government Area (LGA).

Much of this report relies upon the detailed research and publications associated with the *Best Practice Guidelines for Enhancing Urban Bird Habitat*, prepared by Holly Parsons from the Birds in Backyards Program, commissioned by Birds Australia. The author of this report has a keen interest in ornithology, being a member of Birds Australia and leads bird watching walks in Southern Sydney on behalf of NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service.

A brief presentation will be provided to the Committee which summaries the Report.

Part A. Status of small birds in Sydney and what actions can be done to encourage small birds.

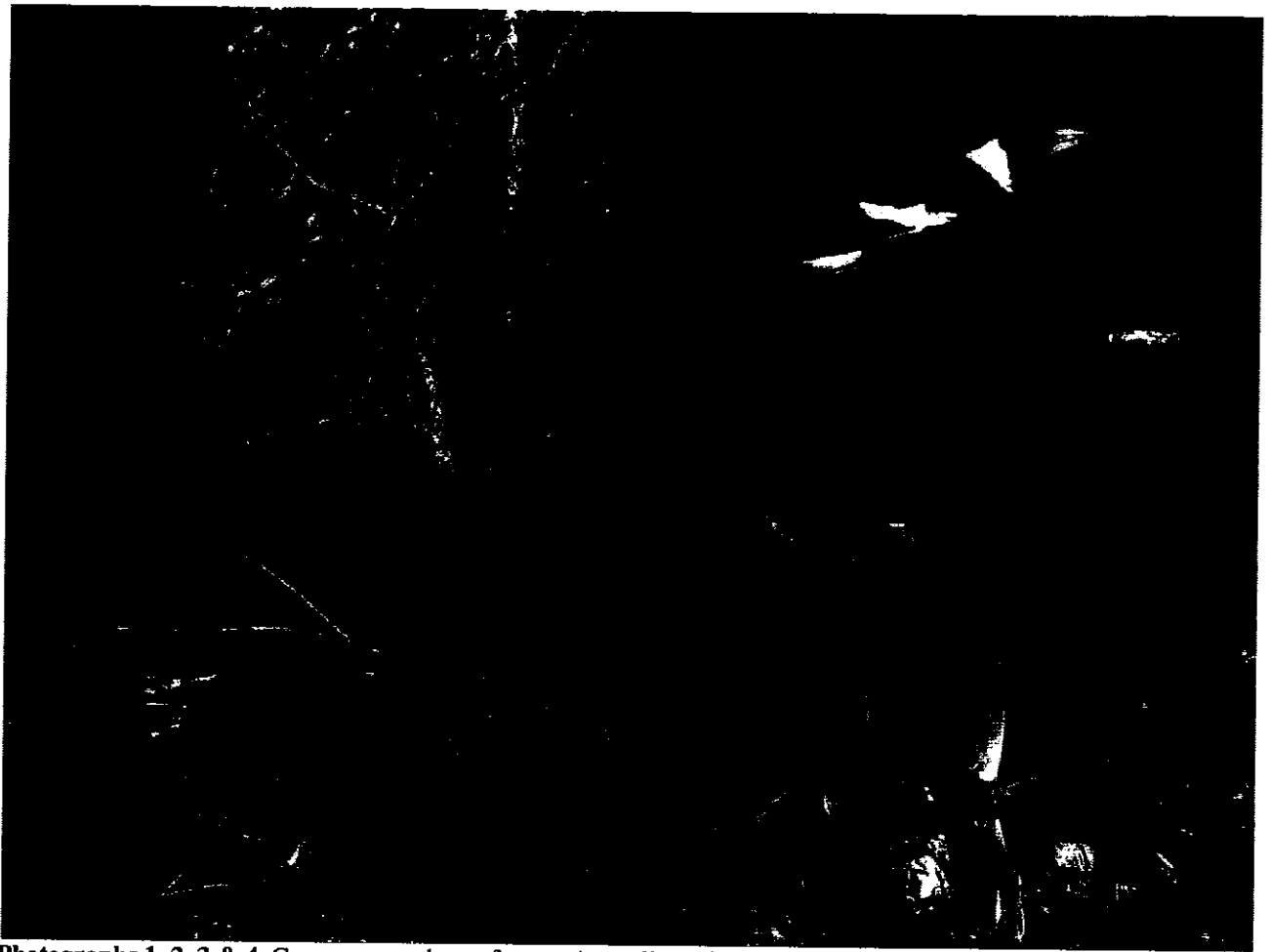
"1. Notes with concern that there has been a dramatic reduction in our small native bird species in Woollahra over the last three decades;

Birds are often used as indicators of the health of ecosystems (i.e. bio-indicators). Since an appropriately diverse ecology is needed to support a healthy number and range of species, a lower than expected number or range of species in an environment indicates poorer ecological health.

Sydney is a highly urbanised city and the rate of urban development continues to increase. Today over four million people live within Sydney and their suburbs. As Sydney developed, natural vegetation was cleared and replaced with roads, buildings and related infrastructure, leaving much of our native wildlife unable to adjust to this new habitat. The relative close proximity of Woollahra's LGA to the centre of Sydney resulted in much of the areas original bushland being removed to make way for agriculture and subsequent housing. Today the Woollahra LGA maintains some of the most density populated regions in Australia.

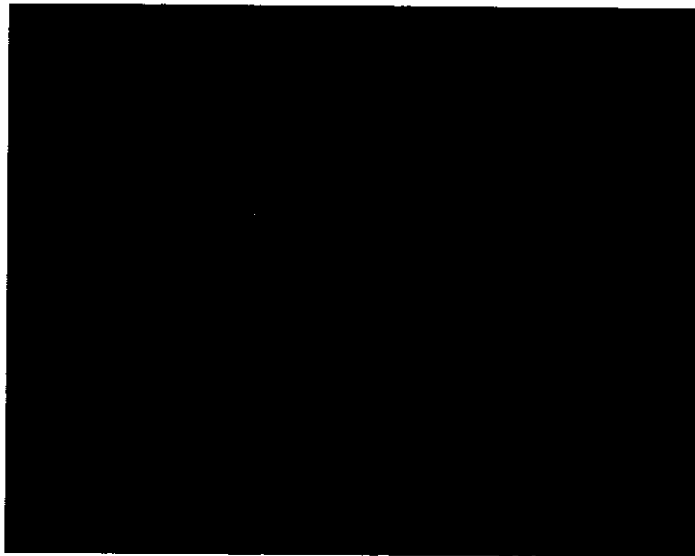
Studies of bird populations across Sydney using records from the Australian Museum confirm the gradual decline, or disappearance, of some native bird species, otherwise referred to as the 'losers' and the increase of others, otherwise referred to as 'winners'.

Typical 'winners' have been medium and large bodied-species such as the Pied Currawong *Strepera graculina*, Australian Magpie *Gymnorhina tibicen*, Rainbow Lorikeet *Trichoglossus haematodus* and Noisy Miner *Manorina melanocephala* are increasing in number in urban habitats (see photographs 1- 4). The popular urban park and garden design of open lawn space and tall trees is most reminiscent of natural woodland habitats and the addition of exotic plants in gardens that produce large crops of edible berries has created ideal food sources for some birds, but fails to provide an appropriate vegetation structure required for many others.



Photographs 1, 2, 3 & 4. Common members of many Australian urban bird communities which have been 'winners'. Clockwise from top left: Pied Currawong *Strepera graculina*, Australian Magpie *Gymnorhina tibicen*, Noisy Miner *Manorina melanocephala* and Rainbow Lorikeet *Trichoglossus haematodus*. Photographer: R. Major, Australian Museum.

The 'losers' have been the variety and number of small birds which appear to be in decline. Changes to vegetation structure, vegetation composition, distance to natural vegetation and interactions with other birds have all previously been shown to influence the composition of the bird communities of urban habitats in Australia and are suggested to be contributing towards the decline of our smaller natives. Many of our native birds require a shrubby understorey or the presence of remnants of natural forests near urban areas to survive. Only through such restoration of these habitats can we halt the loss of our native birds.



Photographs 5& 6. Lawn provides important foraging locations for many species including Red-browed Finches *Neochmia temporalis* (left) and Superb Fairy-Wrens *Malurus cyaneus* (right). Granivorous birds such as finches particularly like grass that has been allowed to go to seed. Despite urban areas providing lawn, these small species numbers have declined as they require suitable shelter provided by dense shrubs. Photographer: Nicholas Hunt

The appreciation of birds can help achieve environmental education outcomes throughout the community. Many of the bird species that visit urban areas are highly valued by the general public and there is a collective sense of responsibility to ensure their survival. Species such as the Superb Fairy-wren *Malurus cyaneus*, are a particularly iconic and can be readily identified by the public. Programs to aimed at maintaining bushland, with community participation, or private landscape treatments using native plants, encourage people to become involved in conservation in urban areas.

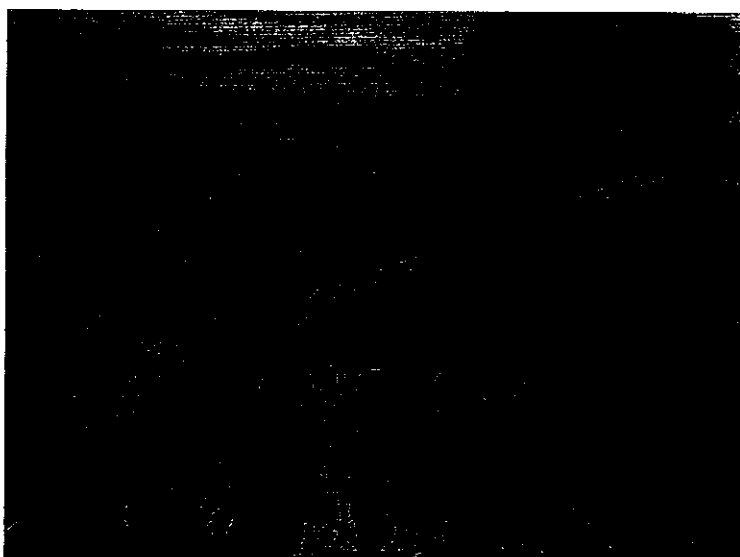
Part B. Outlines what Council is doing and can do to encourage small birds within the Local Government Area (LGA).

2. *Recognises that to facilitate both the preservation and re-establishment of small native bird species will require improved landscaping and planting practices on both private and public land;*
3. *Undertakes, in consultation with the community, to identify at least three significant roadside, or other under-used public sites, in Woollahra for adaptation as model sites and to then plant them with an appropriate range of native species for the preservation and re-establishment of small native birds in the Municipality;*
4. *To provide educational signs at each model site to inform residents about how to preserve and re-establish small native birds in Woollahra;*
5. *To develop a model landscaping/planting regime that encourages the preservation and re-establishment of native small bird species in the Municipality for use in all of Council civil works that allow for significant plantings ;and*
6. *To report on what, if any, model landscape/planting regimes can be supplied to local property owners in the DA process, including specific professional advice by appropriate council officers, to encourage the preservation and re-establishment of native small bird species in the Municipality."*

In order to maximise bird diversity, regardless of whether it is remnant bushland, park or domestic garden, selecting native vegetation (preferably local to the area) and creating habitat with a high degree of structural complexity (at the ground, shrub and canopy levels) is required.

Local vegetation (native plant species that naturally occurred in the area) is usually best suited to the soil and climatic conditions at the site and therefore is likely to establish relatively easily.

Structural complexity (the availability of vegetation at a variety of different heights) is considered to be more influential on the bird community than whether the vegetation is native or exotic and is therefore vital to the establishment of bird friendly habitat. The structure and complexity of diverse plantings of vegetation provides habitat suitable for foraging, moving, nesting (see Photograph 7) and avoiding predators.



Photograph 7.
Superb Fairy-Wrens *Malurus cyaneus* utilise the Bougainvillea located adjacent to the Redleaf kiosk for nesting and shelter from larger predators. The Wren's domed nest is illustrated.

Whilst the Bougainvillea is not a native species, its dense structure provides a suitable substitute to a native plant.

What opportunities exist to preserve and re-establish small native birds?

1. Public Land

Maximising this structural complexity by revegetating with native trees, shrubs (of various heights), herbs, ground covers and grasses, will increase the numbers of different bird species that can be supported by the site. Creating patchiness in areas with open space as well as dense shrubby areas provides a range of different microhabitats that a variety of birds can use.

Much has already been done and continues to be developed to encourage birds through Council's Bushcare program. Our largest areas of bushland, or similarly vegetated areas include:

Reserve	Vegetated area (hectares)
Harbourview	0.9
Cooper Park	12.0
Parsley Bay Reserve	2.9
Gap Park	4.2
Trumper Par	4.15

The size of bushland reserves will influence what birds are found in it. Research concludes that reserves smaller than 2 ha such as Harbourview Park will likely only support common urban birds. At least 4 ha is required for many of the urban generalist species that are less prevalent in urban

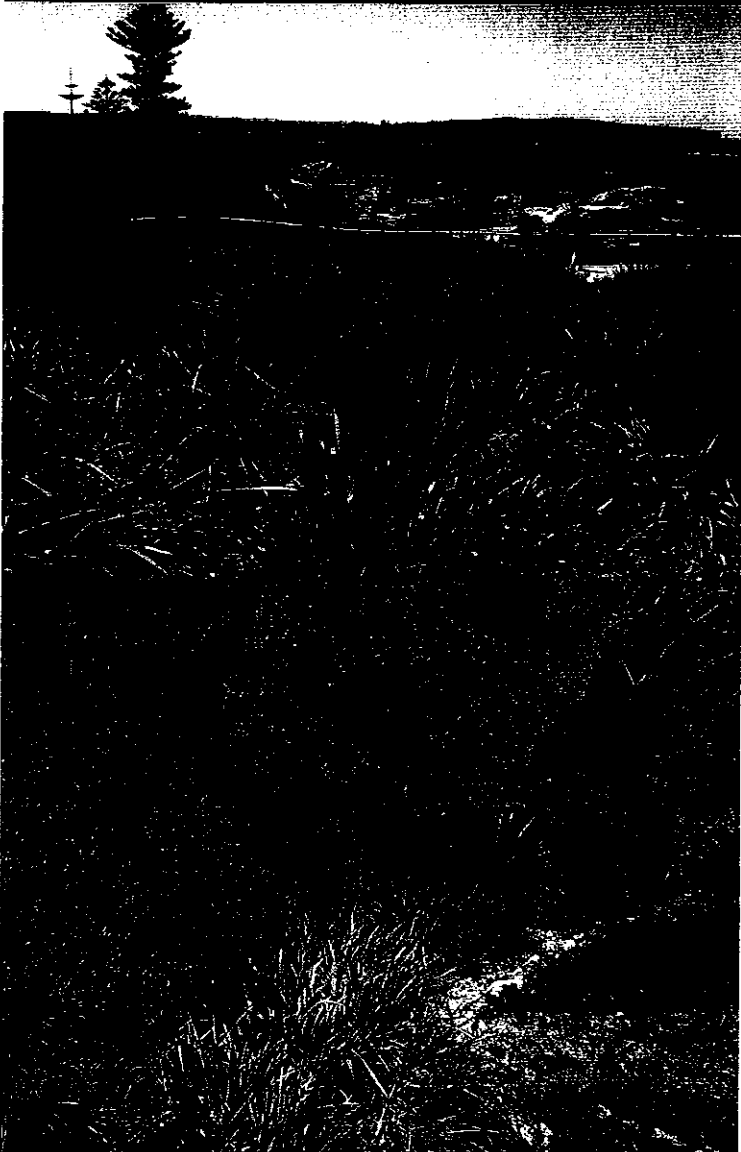
habitats and at least 50 ha is needed for those birds usually unable to live in the urban landscape. One of our LGA's largest natural areas is Neilsen Park which is 20 ha in size.



Photograph 8. Lower Cooper Park (adjacent to Bunna Place)

In 2003, a mixed grass and weed covered slope adjacent to Bunna Place was weeded, mulched and planted with a range of native groundcovers, shrubs and trees.

Now the slope maintains habitat highly suited to small birds.



Photograph 9. Gap Park (Jacobs Ladder entrance)

In 2004 & 2005, a large expanse of eroded turf and exposed soil was replaced with a low shrub layer. This area now supports Superb Fairy-Wrens.

Photograph 10. Gibsons Beach Reserve, Watsons Bay. A diverse range of native groundcovers, shrubs and trees provides a backdrop to the park. Staff have, over time, increased the width of the planting and thus increased small bird habitat.

A balance is now established between providing public access / passive use to the park and scenic landscape / *'bird friendly'* treatment.

Some issues need to be considered include:

(a) Removing weeds

Many weed species such as Lantana provide valuable habitat in the absence of native vegetation and the removal of tracts of such vegetation is likely to disturb a bird community, remove their main cover and protection and make it more difficult to encourage them to return. Therefore the gradual removal of weeds and establishment of new plantings/regeneration is recommended and this approach has been adopted by Council staff working in bushland reserves.

Whenever shrubby weed removal is being undertaken, to minimise the impact on the birds utilising them, only relatively small patches are treated at a time. By leaving patches of weeds untreated, birds and other fauna have areas of refuge to avoid the disturbance. It is also the practice of Council's Bushcare staff work in the areas with the greatest proportion of native vegetation (and presumably lightest weed infestation) and work towards the heaviest infestation. This not only allows valuable bird habitat to remain but also reduces the chances of reinfestation of the weeds and allows natives to regenerate.

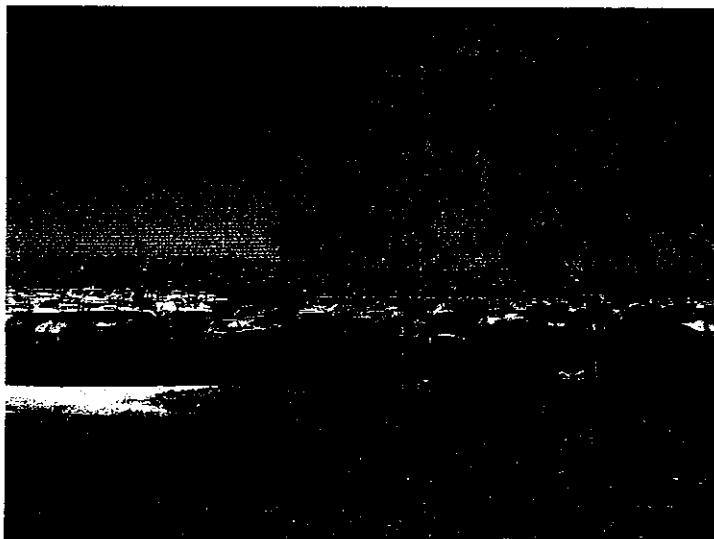
(b) Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)

CPTED is a crime prevention strategy supported by NSW Police that focuses on the design, planning and structure of cities and public spaces. Some of the design principles promoted by CPTED include ensuring shrubs do not obscure sightlines of public spaces and not planted too close to public footpaths. In other words, in the interest of maintaining public safety, it supports maintaining trees and very low plantings.

However, where sufficient space exists, shrub planting adjacent to walls and other flat, vertical structures is supported as a tool in combating graffiti.

(c) Views

Many of our foreshore parks and elevated viewing areas (eg Johnston's Lookout) maintain open view lines for the public. Whilst we endeavour to maintain and enhance native tree canopy, we limit the use of shrubs so as not obstruct views or access.



Photograph 11.

Rose Bay Park predominantly maintains an indigenous tree canopy (She-oaks and Banksias), as well as large figs.

Staff are currently weeding and establishing a native shrub layer around the edges of the park which are steeply sloped and inaccessible to the public. When established, this planting along the slopes will provide suitable habitat for small birds.

However, it is not considered practical, or appropriate to introduce a structured shrub layer within the lower sections of the park as there is a need to maintain open view lines and physical access between the shaded picnic areas of the park and the beach.

(d) Heritage

Many of our heritage public landscapes use non-native species and use planting schemes typically developed in Europe. Notwithstanding this, these landscapes do provide suitable habitat for small birds as they often maintain a large variety of plant species and the preferred mix of groundcover,

shrubs and trees, required by small birds. Examples of this landscape treatment can be seen at Blackburn Gardens and McKell Park.



Photograph 12. Blackburn Gardens and some adjoining properties contain some of the more significant concentrations of cultural plantings in the Municipality. These plantings possibly date to the time of the development of the “Redleaf” estate.

To ensure protection and integrity of living cultural heritage items we maintain the dominate use of exotic ‘period era’ species.

(e) Potential conflict with park uses

The establishment of dense, shrubby vegetation preferred by small birds effectively restricts physical public access from the landscaped area. Therefore, the establishment of landscape treatments aimed at encouraging small birds needs to ensure existing public recreational uses are not unduly displaced.

In some circumstances we believe we have successfully struck a balance by enlarging the landscape beds within parks to cater for larger shrub planting, whilst maintaining the effective useable open space (see Photograph 10).

1.2 Opportunities for the future

(a) Public education

Community-based education programs are some of the best ways to initiate change in our urban landscape, whether through identification of iconic species or simply through recognising and enjoying the every day native birds in our backyards.

Last month Council’s Environmental Education Officer, Jane Lewis, together with a speaker from Birds Australia, facilitated a free public lecture concerning *Birds in your Backyard*. The session attracted over 25 people and covered topics ranging from:

- Different species of birds and their habitats
- Bird watching, bird listening and bird identification
- Marking your garden bird-friendly
- Interactions between humans and birds and why birds are good for you!

Given the high level of interest, in the New Year we plan to facilitate a guided walk for the public through one of our bushland reserves, or undertake a joint walk with the National Parks and Wildlife Service in Neilsen Park.

(b) Community-based bird survey programs

The surveying of bird population in our larger reserves would allow Council to monitor the success, or otherwise of our Bushcare program in enhancing the diversity of bird species.

Birds Australia, through the *Birds in Backyards Program*, promote a simple 20-minute bird survey which can be used for this monitoring purpose <http://www.birdsinbackyards.net/surveys/>. Adjoining residents and Bushcare volunteers can be encouraged to participate in the survey program. Not only would this assist to obtain valuable information, but it would also spark public interest and enthusiasm for landscaping for birds.

We plan to explore further the opportunity to promote regular bird surveys of our reserves next year.

(c) Continue to promote Bushcare volunteer participation

Council's Bushcare staff typically have very detailed knowledge of native flora and for many, a great understanding of fauna, including birds. Bushcare staff working with volunteers assist to train members of the public in native plant propagation and bird identification / appreciation.

Since 2005, our Bushcare volunteer membership has grown five fold, with now 55 active members. Our efforts to enlarge the volunteer membership will therefore have a flow-on effect of increasing public awareness of birds and their landscape / habitat requirements.

(d) Interpretive signage

This financial year we are programmed to undertake substantial native vegetation restoration works (which provides small bird habitat) at:

- **The Gap**, which includes landscape / bush regeneration works as well as strategies aimed at minimising self harm. In conjunction with these landscape works, we seek to install interpretive signage which can also include information regarding small bird habitat and use of native coastal plants in domestic landscape treatments.
- **Cooper Park**, in association with the rehabilitation of the pond and riparian regeneration. A tender report concerning this project is currently being prepared for the next Corporate and Works Committee. Interpretive signage is proposed to be installed which outlines the environmental qualities of the pond and the associated *bird friendly* native landscape treatment surrounding the pond.

We believe these projects, which are located at high public visitation sites, are more effective and cost efficient in showcasing and educating to the community on how to encourage small birds, than the proposal outlined in Part 3 of Council's resolution.

2. Private land

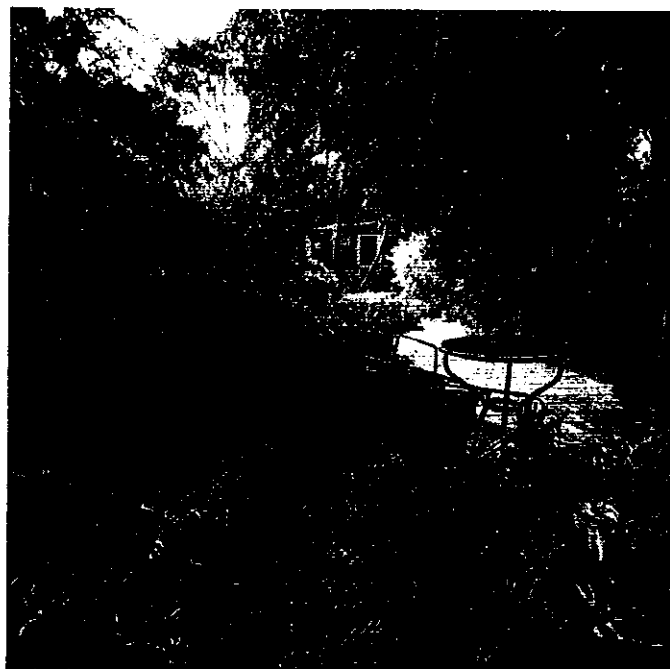
Urban areas are not devoid of suitable bird habitats and many of our eastern suburbs provide vegetation available for birds. The predominant habitat of our suburban gardens with lawns that require watering and mowing, a few scattered trees and some shrubs, in suburbs intersected with concrete, roads and houses, bears little resemblance to the original bushland. Even the plants are different; exotic and a select few native plants (especially hybridised species and cultivars) replacing the local natives. As a direct result of these major changes, our suburban gardens support a bird community that is very different from those in natural habitats. While the specific species might differ depending on location, the big winners in suburbia are the introduced birds, especially the Common Myna (*Acridotheres tristis*), Common Starling (*Sturnus*

vulgaris), Common Blackbird (*Turdus merula*) and the Spotted Turtle-dove (*Streptopelia chinensis*). High densities of these exotic and generalist native species have successfully adapted to the new habitats created by domestic gardens. They feed on prolific fruit producing plants like privet (*Ligustrum spp.*), nectar-rich hybrid natives, the well-watered and fertilised open lawn space that are available year-round.

The common assumption that simply by planting a few native nectar-bearing cultivars, bird diversity will increase and that birds found in forests will start to appear in the garden is simply not true. Birds need abundant resources that cannot be provided by such a small area. Therefore suitable habitat cannot be managed simply at the garden level but must occur across numerous patches at the broad landscape scale, with structure as well as the variety of plant species taken into account. We would need to change the culture of gardening in Australia to make changes across the landscape.

Gardens located close to bush remnants normally have a higher probability of being visited by a diverse range of birds than those gardens that are further away from the bush. Education programs discussed earlier in this report can target those areas where the bird community is likely to benefit from changes to gardens.

There is a common perception that native gardens need to be messy to provide good bird habitat but this is not necessarily true. Shrubs and trees can be grown in garden beds, leaving patches of open grass available in other parts of the garden. Creating pockets of dense shrubs can be achieved in two ways. Firstly, by growing plants close together in garden beds. Secondly, by pruning and shaping shrubs as they grow, allowing the gardener to have control over the shape of the shrub and encouraging dense coverage (see photograph 13).



Photograph 13. This garden shows multilayered structure and space that can still be used by people. Photographer: Simon Griffiths from *The Australian Garden* by Diane Snape (Blooming Books 2003).

2.2 Opportunities for the future

(a) *Community Environmental grants*

Since 2006 we have facilitated the Environmental Grants Program. During this time we have contributed funding to a number of schools and community groups to establish, or enlarge native

gardens. As part of this program we have also provided 'in-kind' support with technical advice concerning native garden establishment and in some circumstance free leaf mulch delivery.

These projects assist to expand bird friendly landscapes throughout the LGA.

(b) Website

The opportunity exists to improve our website to summarise and provide links to the wealth of well researched information already collated which promotes actions aimed at increasing bird diversity in urban areas such as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1. Bird types, typical food source and habitat preference.

Bird Type	Food Source	Habitat Preference
Large Nectarivores (nectar feeders) Honeyeaters and some terns e.g. Noisy Miner, Red and White Wallbirds, Rainbow and Sulphur crested Cockatoos	<i>Banksia</i> , <i>Callistemon</i> (Bottlebrush), <i>Eucalyptus</i> , <i>Gravillea</i> , <i>Hakea</i> , <i>Melaleuca</i> (Paperbark)	Shrubs and trees for foraging perching and nesting. Some require hollows for nesting.
Small Nectarivores Honeyeaters e.g. Eastern Spinbill, New Holland Honeyeater, Brown Honeyeater	<i>Banksia</i> , <i>Callistemon</i> (Bottlebrush), <i>Eucalyptus</i> , <i>Gravillea</i> , <i>Hakea</i> , <i>Melaleuca</i> (Paperbark), <i>Epacris</i> , <i>Correa</i>	Spend most time foraging and perching in shrubs but also use trees. Generally nesting in dense shrubs.
Granivores (Seed Eaters) Parrots, finches and pigeons e.g. Eastern Rosella, Pale-headed Rosella, Galah, Sulphur-Crested Cockatoo, Common Bronzewing, Red-Browed Finch, Double Banded Finch, Chestnut-breasted Manikin	Trees and shrubs: <i>Acacia</i> (wattle), <i>Casuarina</i> (she-oak), <i>Leptospermum</i> (tea-tree) Grasses: <i>Lomandra</i> , <i>Themeda</i> , <i>Poa</i>	Utilise shrubs and trees for perching, nesting and foraging but also forage on mature grasses.
Fruktivores (fruit eaters) Pigeons and ducks e.g. Wonga Pigeon, Common Kook, Silvereye, Satin-Bowerbird	<i>Ficus</i> (figs), <i>Syzygium</i> (lillipillies), <i>Eleocharis</i> (Quandong)	Shrubs and trees important habitat.
Insectivores e.g. Super Fairywren, Eastern Yellow Robin, Spotted and Striated Pardalotes, Willie Wagtail	Insects and other invertebrates either on the bark and foliage of shrubs and trees or on the ground	Dense shrubs important for protection and nest sites as well as some open areas for foraging.
Carnivores (Meat Eaters) e.g. All species of Currawongs, Laughing Kookaburra, Grey and Pied Butcherbirds, Powerful Owl, Black-shouldered Kite, Peregrine Falcon	Other birds, reptiles, frogs, mammals, invertebrates	Tall trees for perching, roosting and nesting. Some require hollows for nesting.

Useful website links regarding bird friendly gardens include:

<http://www.birdsinbackyards.net/>

[http://www.fnpw.org.au/Backyard Buddies/Backyard Buddies_home.htm](http://www.fnpw.org.au/Backyard_Buddies/Backyard_Buddies_home.htm)

<http://www.austplants-nsw.org.au/index.htm>

Over the next few months we plan to redesign the *environment* section of our website to improve its content and navigation. As part of this process we will provide these useful links and where possible highlight local examples of residential landscapes which successfully provide *bird friendly* gardens.

(c) Garden Competition

Every two years we conduct the Woollahra Spring Garden Competition which aims to promote and reward residents who maintain gardens which supports the 'leafy' character of the area as well as civic pride. In promoting native gardens (which are also waterwise), we specifically maintain a category for the best native garden. The opportunity exists to potentially showcase native garden entries which are *bird friendly*.

(d) DA advice

Council's Tree and Landscape Officers currently provide DA application advice on all matters regarding tree and landscape treatments on development sites. Staff maintain the skills to be able to inform customers of plant species and landscape treatments which encourage small birds.

(e) New Woollahra Development Control Plan.

The opportunity exists for some of the landscape treatments that are *bird friendly* to be incorporated into the new Woollahra Development Control Plan (DCP) which is currently being drafted. This may help guide future development proposals on *bird friendly* gardens.

Conclusion:

While we cannot replicate a large, continuous, natural areas of vegetation, and therefore cannot encourage all birds into urban habitats, we can maintain habitat that can be used by a wide variety of native birds. Our Bushcare program and ongoing landscape enhancement of our parks minimises disturbances to the birds already present and provides them with ongoing and enhanced habitat. However, the development of suitable habitat that provides a diverse range of vegetation structures and different species needs to occur at the broad landscape scale rather than the individual garden scale. Nevertheless, in order to change the culture of gardening in Australia and initiate the necessary landscape scale changes, individual residents can be encouraged to make their gardens *bird friendly*. The more residents that create these gardens, the better the neighbourhood will be for birds.

We plan to 'dovetail' *bird friendly* habitat information into interpretation / education signs planned to be installed in conjunction with the Gap Park Masterplan project and Cooper Park Pond rehabilitation project.

Involving residents and the community in bird surveys, specialist presentations and habitat restoration projects as proposed in this report also provides the opportunity to educate them on a wide range of issues which can be applied at home.



David Sheils
Manager Public Open Space



Warwick Hatton
Director Technical Services

Annexures:

Nil

Item No: D6 Delegated to Committee
Subject: **Library Quarterly Report 1 July 2008 to 30 September 2008**
Author: Vicki Munro, Manager, Library and Information Services
File No: 48.G / 48.G (Strategic)
Reason for Report: To review the operations of Woollahra Library and Information Service for the quarter, 1 July to 30 September 2008.

Recommendation:

1. That the report of the Library and Information Service for the quarter 1 July to 30 September 2008 be received and noted.

This report outlines the Library and Information Service's activities and projects for the quarter July to September 2008, including detailed statistical analysis and the progress in implementing the Library Strategic Plan, "The Way Forward".

1.0 Library Usage

To gain a better understanding of the Library usage, this report compares statistics from July to September 2008 with the same quarter for the previous year, July to September 2007. See Annexure 1 for all statistical figures.

Significant points to note include:

1.1 Lending Services

- There are positive results in the Library's circulation, with an overall increase in circulation across all service points by 2%. This is an improvement on the results from the July to September 2007 quarter, where there was an overall decrease of 7% compared to the same period for 2006.
- Double Bay's total circulation figures are unchanged for the quarter. Paddington's total circulation increased 8%, while Watsons Bay's total circulation decreased by 6%. Staff advised that the latter results could be either seasonal or due to the need for more new material and larger premises.

All Library service points reported increases in circulation for their Audio Visual collections, with figures ranging from an 8% increase at Watsons Bay to a 40% increase at Paddington.

The total circulation of the Periodical collection also increased by 16%, due to large increases at Paddington (11%) and Double Bay (22%). The increase in Periodical circulation is pleasing and can be attributed to a review of collection, and a focus on holding a collection which meets members' expectations and needs.

- During the quarter, there was an average of 47.55 loans per hour with 71,851 visits to Double Bay and Paddington Libraries. Watsons Bay Library does not have a people counter.

- As at 30 September 2007, there were 15,202 active members of the Library Service. Active membership is defined as borrowers who have used the service within a two year period. This is a reduction in comparison to the previous year.

New memberships increased by 12% across all service points for this quarter, with increases in all categories, except for new Junior memberships at Paddington branch.
- As a percentage of active borrowers to population of 50,161 residents in the Woollahra LGA (2006 ABS census), the figure is 30.30%. The general Library benchmark is for 49% of borrowers to be active members. As outlined in the Library Strategic Plan, the Library will be undertaking a targeted membership drive in 2009.
- The Home Library Service provides material to 194 individual borrowers and 4 institutions. Six volunteers currently assist in the provision of this service. Circulation within the Home Library Service has decreased 20% this quarter, largely due to problems with the implementation of a new bulk loan system. These issues have been addressed and in anticipation of the outcomes of the Home Library review, it is expected that the service will increase.

1.2 Reference and Information Services

- The number of Reference enquiries received is similar to the same quarter last year, while Local History enquiries have decreased by 23%. It is felt that the decrease could be due to increased use of online resources for genealogy, the reduction in property searches due to changes in the economy and increasing difficulties parking at the Centre.
- There was a 67% increase in the number of electronic information searches conducted within the Library. This can be attributed to improved staff knowledge and confidence with these resources. However there was a reduction in the number of searches conducted remotely (at home).
- As reported previously, the online databases will be reviewed in early 2009. This review will include an analysis of usage/ community needs as well as promotional strategies and the use of targeted information literacy training for library members.

1.3 Library programs

- The children's story time program has increased by 16% this quarter over the same quarter in 2007/08. The majority of the increase has been at the Double Bay Friday playgroup session with a 36% increase, an 18% increase in toddler story time at Paddington and a 47% increase in attendance at the Holdsworth Community Centre Tuesday story time. The increases can be attributed to Andrew Taylor's story telling and musical skill which attracts an ongoing audience.
- The Children's story time review is nearing completion. It will be implemented in February 2009. The main changes will be the introduction of age categories and play time sessions at Double Bay and Paddington Libraries and the anticipation of a weekly story time session at Watsons Bay Library, once in its new location.

- The Children’s Library celebrated Children’s Book Week, across all service points, with the theme “Fuel your mind” from 18 August to 29 August, 2008. The library hosted 38 school /pre school classes with an attendance of 822 children. Special “Book Week” story-time sessions were held at all three Library service points with local author Vashti Farrer with a total of 164 children attending.
- Of special note were the school holiday activities held in July 2008 in conjunction with a celebration of NAIDOC week. Les Saxby, indigenous dancer and performer entertained 30 children at Double Bay. Overall 117 children took part in the holiday activities.
- The Library Service continued with its highly successful Writers and Readers Series hosting:
 - Susan Wyndham on her book “Life in his hands” on 17 July with 65 people in attendance.
 - Jacqueline Kent on her biography “An Exciting Heart” on 7 August with 70 people in attendance.
- Other key events held included:
 - The 15th annual Woollahra Youth Photographic Award was held on 3 September with close to 100 people in attendance. 91 photographic entries and 18 short films were received for this competition.
 - The monthly Tea Topic series covering topics such as tea leaf reading, encouraging children’s love of reading and a session with John Konrads on success in sport, business and life. A total of 102 people attended these events.

2.0 Library Strategic Plan – Progress update

The Library Strategic Plan “The Way Forward” was adopted by Council on the 17 December 2007. Progress on the key strategies is as follows:

- **Library Restructure:**
The Library introduced a new structure, effective 14 July 2008, to support the implementation of the Library Strategic Plan. The restructure occurred after extensive consultation with all Library staff. It was based on a philosophy of best utilising the skills of existing staff, no redundancies and creation of interesting and varied jobs.
- **Buildings:**
Reports were presented to Corporate and Works Committee on 3 March 2008 and 2 June 2008 in regard to the relocation of Watsons Bay Library from Dunbar House to the nearby Watsons Bay Tea Gardens. It is intended that the Library be converted into a “Community Lounge room” with collections tailored to the needs of local residents with an emphasis on younger children and recreational material for older residents. A development application for the relocation has been submitted and is currently being processed.

Planning for the renovation of the entrance, front desk area and audio visual area at Double Bay Central Library is underway. Cecilia Kugler has been commissioned to develop a master plan for the renovations. These renovations will include the introduction of self check in/out terminals for use by the public and a security system.

- **Collection:**
Letters have been sent to two library suppliers to commence the selection and processing of all new book material for the Libraries in December 2008. This process will result in items being delivered quickly and ready for distribution to all Library service points.
- **Process improvements:**
A review of the reservations process has commenced. This review will be completed by December 2008.

Story time review has been completed and will be implemented in early 2009. The review has involved a survey of current attendees, consultation with staff, and visits to best practice libraries. A communication strategy is currently being developed to advise the community of the changes.

The role of the Woollahra Library Friends has been reviewed and the outcomes presented to its AGM held on 30 October 2008. The review reaffirmed that objectives of the Friends, clarified categories of membership, set new fees for membership and events and transferred the secretarial duties from staff to the Executive.

3.0 Community Information

3.1 What's On

- A new look 'What's On' Calendar of Events was launched in August 2008 which has been well received by the community. Much of the positive feedback was in regards to the improved layout which is easier to read and more attractive to readers.
- A survey was conducted on the new look via a feedback form which was distributed to 320 subscribers in the September edition. A high response rate of 24% was achieved for the survey, which is an excellent result. This can be largely attributed to the incentive of a free library pack being offered for completing the survey along with a reply paid envelope. The library pack giveaway had the added benefit of driving 'What's On' readers back into the library.

3.2 LINCS – Online Community Information Database

- Overall, total searches on LINCS fell by 8% for the quarter when compared with the same quarter last year.
- A slight increase of 8% was experienced in July, before falling by 37% in August and then increasing again in September by 53%.
- A review of the presentation, location and promotion of LINCS on the website will be reviewed in the coming months with the aim of improving prominence and increasing the number of searches conducted.

3.3 New Resident's Kits

- Prior to September 2008, new resident's kits were only distributed on verbal request by new residents.
- An online New Resident's Kit request form was introduced in September 2008 and was placed as a related item on pages of the website identified as high traffic areas for new residents (i.e. rates, parking permits etc.). This has resulted in 7 requests for the kits in September since the online request form went live. This is compared with 0 requests in the period July – August 2008.
- A survey will be conducted on the new resident's kits in coming months to identify areas of improvement and to ensure it is meeting the needs of new residents to the area.

Conclusion:

The Woollahra Library and Information Service continues with its diverse range of programmes which have been well utilised by the Woollahra community. The implementation of the Library Strategic plan is well underway with progress on many key strategies.

Staff look forward to meeting the challenges outlined in the report and participating in moving the Library forward to become a more dynamic and essential community hub.

Vicki Munro
Manager – Library and Information Services

Kylie Walshe
Director Community Services

Annexure 1 – Library Statistics for Quarter 1 July-September 2008

POLITICAL DONATIONS DECISION MAKING FLOWCHART FOR THE INFORMATION OF COUNCILLORS

