

Minutes of the Mill Hill Bondi Junction Precinct Meeting held at Waverley Library on Wednesday 23 August 2023



Chaired by Simon Rowell with Stephen B. Cohen taking minutes.
The meeting opened at 6.35 pm

Present

Mayor Paula Masselos and 13 others.

Apologies

Councillor Angela Burrill.

Acknowledgement of Indigenous heritage

Waverley Council acknowledges the Bidjigal and Gadigal people who traditionally occupied the Sydney coast.

We acknowledge all elders past and present and extend this respect to all Aboriginal people living, working or visiting Waverley.

Matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting on 1 May 2023

Public access through the buildings on Oxford Street, Bondi Junction

Council's Executive Manager of Infrastructure and Compliance are aware of this issue. Each building has different requirements as part of their DA consent. Council is working through the matter and will arrange for signage to be placed on the relevant buildings.

The cycleway

It appears to be complete, however there is no direction signage at the western end to direct cyclists heading west to continue into Centennial Park rather than continue along the footpath (some cyclists cross over the garden bed to the cycleway and vice versa 100 metres from the end of the cycleway). There is also an issue at the Paddington Gates end of the cycleway for cyclists heading east where some don't realise they need to ride into the park and continue along the narrow footpath.

This area of the cycleway sits within Randwick Council's LGA. Waverley Council's team has requested that Randwick Council install directional signage – awaiting a response.

A crossing at York Road gates

As this section of road is on a bend, a pedestrian crossing is not suitable in this area as sight lines would be limited.

Traffic signals could be an option however Council has not investigated this, nor has funding been allocated.

Recommend raising with your Ward Councillors to put to Council.
Please note, a pedestrian crossing further up the street is also proposed for Moriah College's Upgrade (pending approval).

Oxford Street Mall

What improvement works are being carried out? Is there any planning occurring to try and transform the area into a destination (even at night) rather than just a thoroughfare we must quickly walk through. Now that the cycleway is open, can something be done about cyclists in the mall? Can they be forced to walk their bikes through the mall if they need to visit a business there?

As per the Council Motion from October 2021 - CM/8.5/21.10 Oxford Street Mall Upgrade
DECISION:

That Council:

1. Requests officers to monitor the level of activity in Bondi Junction over the Christmas period and report to Council in February 2022, at which stage Council is to undertake the following:
 - (a) Consult residents, businesses, and other stakeholders to develop a master plan for the recreation of Oxford Street Mall with a vision for the centre to become an attractive, flourishing destination for day and evening activities.
 - (b) Seek new funding sources for the upgrade and revitalisation of the Oxford Street Mall that would enable the re-creation project to be brought forward with an accelerated timetable.
 - (c) Address the replacement of shade structures and improvements to the paving.
 - (d) Expedite safety measures, such as cyclist prevention, with a report to come to Council as soon as possible.
2. Notes that the upgrade of the Oxford Street Mall is listed on the Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) for \$6 million over 10 years, with \$1 million in 2022–23 and the balance falling in 2026–2032.
3. Notes that there is no current strategy or plan for the upgrade of the mall and the shade structures are in very poor condition and are overdue for replacement.
4. Notes that new garden structures and bike parking is planned to be installed at both ends of the mall in 2021–22.
Project will start in the next financial year.

Council also just held Global Table on Oxford Street Mall which was well attended, and there will be some free music activations in June as part of Make Music Day.

Re: Bikes -

Under the current signage, Oxford Street Mall is an official shared zone which allows the area to be used by bikes. At this stage all Rangers do is try to inform people to use the cycleway.

Council is planning to run a campaign to encourage riders to use the Spring St Cycleway, however this will need to be further discussed with the Waverley Council Cycling Advisory Committee for their recommendation on 5 July.

New on-site signage will also be required to ensure the communications are clear.

Mill Hill Road sign

The street sign for Mill Hill Road at Oxford Street went missing a couple of years ago when the power poles were renewed. Motorists driving along Oxford Street need to stop their cars, climb out and look at the signs embedded in the footpaths at the corner in order to check the name of the street.

Request lodged under ID 2321582.

Moved by Georgia Koutsandrea and seconded by Ilana Cohen

Mayors Address

The Boot Factory

The Boot Factory is one of the last remaining examples of Victorian industrial architecture in Waverley. Shoes were manufactured there for the retailer David Jones.

The Boot Factory is currently being restored as a civic innovation hub by Schiavello Constructions (NSW) and should be reopened in early 2024.

Safe Routes to School

The Safe Routes to School Program aims to make walking safer and easier, and encourage parents and children to choose walking, scooting, or riding to school.

Council may improve footpaths, install raised crossings, and identify alternate routes that bypass main roads.

The benefits of walking to school include increased physical activity, better concentration in class, and improved well-being through a degree of independence. This is in addition to reducing car congestion around schools.

Bronte Surf Club

A DA for the replacement building has been submitted and is on public exhibition. Although the new building looks quite large, it is smaller than the existing building.

Overdevelopment

Developers are buying up whole blocks of houses and consolidating the land to construct large buildings. Our infrastructure including roads and public transport cannot cope with the additional residents. We need more medium density housing rather than high rise.

55 Grafton Street is currently a commercial tower. The building that is proposed to replace it will be a 19-story residential building.

Waverley War Memorial Hospital Redevelopment

The Waverley War Memorial Hospital is currently only locally heritage listed. Council is trying to secure State Government heritage listing.

The proposed buildings are up to 25 metres in height. During the redevelopment, 150-year-old trees are to be felled and 52 people in affordable housing will be relocated to Normanhurst. The developers would like the area to be gated, however Council wants public access, including green space and thoroughfares.

Oxford Street Mall

There has been some new works in the mall, some of which has already been dug up and replaced. This is part of a requirement to include various hostile vehicle mitigation devices to protect pedestrians in the mall. Some existing bollards are being replaced by retracting bollards and damaged sails are being replaced or repaired. More works over the long term are planned to beautify the Junction.

Community Planning Advocate – Alana Novak

Alana Novak has recently been appointed as the Community Planning Advocate (CPA) at Waverley Council. It is a newly established position within the Executive Services Team.

This role is focused on providing support and education to residents and community members regarding Planning and Regulatory matters. Key responsibilities include assisting Precinct Committees, educating residents about the NSW Planning System, local environmental plans, and development control plans, as well as developing metrics to assess the impacts of development.

The CPA will also offer support to residents preparing for the Waverley Local Planning Panel (WLPP) or other courts or panels, facilitate community education through webinars and workshops, and assist with Development Application (DA) inquiries, planning proposals and other planning matters.

However, it will not review DA decisions, assess applications, write submissions, or objections for residents, Precinct Committees, or groups.

Dogs Off Leash

There has been an increase in the number of dogs off leash in and around Bondi Junction. Larger dogs are scaring children near child care centres and there have been reports of residents being pounced on and bitten by off leash dogs in areas where they are required to be on leash.

Motion

Georgia Koutsandrea moved the following motion:

The Mill Hill Bondi Junction Precinct calls on Waverley Council to launch an awareness campaign against the growing presence of off-leash dogs in Bondi Junction's streets and parks, particularly in zones frequented by children near day care centres and schools. The motion also calls for enhanced signage to clarify where off-leash areas are and stricter enforcement by rangers to ensure dogs are leashed where necessary.

The motion was seconded by Aaron Spencer.

The motion was carried unanimously.

Update on Public Transport in Bondi Junction

Sydney City Council is supporting a proposal to return trams to Oxford Street from the City to Bondi Junction.

Improved access to Bondi Junction Railway Station and bus interchange from Oxford Street Mall is still planned. This should reduce the conflict between buses and pedestrians at the Eastern and Western ends of the interchange.

DA updates

There was a discussion on the Grand Hotel and the recent submissions to extend trading hours. Apparently, residents in the tower above the hotel are restricted from lodging any objections to these submissions.

General business

There was a request from a resident to have the crossings at the intersection of Bronte Road / Grosvenor Street and Oxford Street Bondi Junction made more pedestrian friendly.

At present there are only short phases of the traffic lights in favour of pedestrians and there is a barricade at the south-eastern corner in front of Kathmandu which prevents pedestrians from walking diagonally across the intersection which is the quickest way when heading towards the interchange. All traffic is stopped when pedestrians have right-of-way so there is no reason why the intersection could not be converted to a scramble crossing and this barricade removed.

Also at this crossing, cyclists often fail to stop when they face a red light and are a danger to pedestrians crossing during the "walk" phase. This dangerous behaviour is rarely policed.

The meeting closed at 8.00 pm.

The next meeting will be held at 6.30 pm on Monday 27 November 2023.