

THE PADDINGTON SOCIETY • YOUR RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

NEWS BULLETIN

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November, 2001

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This Bulletin is devoted exclusively to the Society's Strategic Plan for the future of Paddington. Forgive us for repeating our vision of how we envisage Paddington in the future, but we feel it needs to be read in conjunction with the Strategic Plan. This Draft Plan will be a working document to help us achieve this shared vision and has been workshopped at two advertised public meetings reflecting the outcome of that consultative process.

If you have any further comments we would love to hear them, if not we would really appreciate your endorsement by filling in the form on the last page and faxing or mailing it to us.

We look forward to seeing you at our Christmas drinks on Sunday 2nd December, 5pm at Juniper Hall. This year we will be entertained with Christmas Carols by a select group of singers after they have performed at the Scottish Hospital and Five Ways.

Robyn Attuell

OUR VISION FOR PADDINGTON

The people of Paddington appreciate that they live in a heritage suburb. They support the limits that this imposes on the built environment and the extent to which they can develop their properties. They also value a high quality public domain that reflects the urbanity and heritage of the place.

As a consequence the heritage qualities of both the private and public domain have been protected and enhanced through the efforts of the Paddington community and its local government. The design controls for the suburb reflect these heritage objectives and are supported and applied in a fair and honest manner.

The result is an overall coherence but not one that requires absolute adherence to uniformity.

Although Paddington is essentially a built environment, the tree planting in the 1960s and 70s gave it a green cover. This has been carefully managed with some more appropriate plantings and the excellent design and management of open spaces. Some vistas of key building groups have been enhanced by selective removal of poor tree specimens.

Steps have been taken to manage water flows so as the natural drainage lines were not further disrupted.

The design of the public domain has not only enhanced the heritage values but has made Paddington a suburb where residents and visitors prefer to walk rather than use cars.

Besides favouring pedestrians, priority is given to public transport, emergency and service vehicles. While private car movements are not banned, drivers are conscious that the motor vehicle shares the road space with all categories of users. The management of traffic respects the urban environment.

In redesigning the streets to reflect the relative priorities afforded to the different users, the opportunity has been taken to substantially enhance their design quality and safety.

Overhead lines have been undergrounded, foot-paths have been fixed, and low-level pedestrian lighting has been installed. The streets are kept clean.

As a consequence walking has become a pleasure

CHRISTMAS DRINKS

Juniper Hall rear garden

Sunday 2nd December, 5 pm

\$10 donation (\$5 concession)

Bring a friend

Phone Mary J de Merindol 9331 5777

for people of all ages. With further improvements in the availability of other forms of transport, more residents are finding it not necessary to own a motorcar.

The continuing pressure on inner city housing markets, not to say the successful management of the suburb, has done nothing to limit the attraction of Paddington as a place to live. This has continued the rise in property values and limited still more the affordability of the suburb.

Positive steps have been taken nonetheless to keep as mixed a community as possible. The suburb has not become a high-income enclave, a retirement village or a heritage theme park. It remains a vital, living and changing community, united in a love of the area and what it offers.

The suburb therefore has retained its mixed use atmosphere with encouragement given to traditional local activities and enterprises, rather than global chains. The community accepts that the suburb is a part of Sydney's tourist infrastructure. Pubs, galleries and restaurants remain, attracting locals and visitors, with the latter accepting the restrictions on behaviour the residential nature of the area requires. Some corner shops have survived and are supported.

Families with children have been encouraged with excellent facilities and a safe environment. Older people also feel welcome despite the attractions of the suburb to a wide range of different lifestyles. There remains a tolerance of difference.

Given the need to counter the loss of community connections in modern life, community organisations and the Paddington local government have adopted a range of mechanisms to encourage good neighbourhood relationships and a sense of responsibility for the suburb and how it is managed.

The local government of Paddington, which covers both South and North Paddington, is effective, transparent and efficient. The community has accepted that it is essentially its responsibility to ensure that the infrastructure of the suburb is restored and maintained in manner that is fair to future generations.

As a consequence, Paddington has both a heritage integrity that is world famous and is a wonderful place in which to live.

Draft Strategic Plan

OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

1. HERITAGE

Although the National Trust has listed Paddington, it is not in any legislative list.

Heritage listing would require a Conservation Plan to be prepared and would strengthen the statutory protection of the suburb. It would also enhance its reputation nationally and globally.

The recent Development Control Plan (DCP) of Woollahra Municipal Council was intended to significantly increase the protection of Paddington's heritage and traditional urban design.

Evidence from some recent approvals would suggest that this DCP is not performing well or that there is a difficulty with the administration of the controls.

There is an urgent need to review the performance of the DCP and its administration and take such remedial action as may be required.

Objective

To protect and enhance the heritage and urban design qualities of Paddington and its natural environment

Strategy

1. Have Paddington listed as a Heritage place

Actions

- Find funds for inventory of heritage and environmental assets
- Prepare a Conservation Plan for Paddington – North and South
- Prepare case for listing on State Heritage list
- Pursue listing of Paddington on World Heritage list
- Enlist the aid of Councillors and others in inventory and listing processes

Strategy

2. Prepare conservation plans for all significant major sites

Actions

- Identify any major development sites
- Fund preparation of conservation plans and draft site specific DCPs

Strategy

3. Monitor performance of DCP

Actions

- Photograph selection of recent approvals and compare with objectives and controls in DCP
- In cooperation with Council officers conduct an audit of DCP performance to date and identify inadequacies

Strategy

4. Amend DCP following audit

Actions

- Councils and Paddington Society to prepare amendments to DCPs where shown to be necessary

Strategy

5. Improve the notice given of DA and rezonings

Actions

- Get Council to include in notices of DAs and proposed rezonings details the nature of the development and the extent of proposed change from the present situation
- Get Councils to affix adequate notices of DAs and spot rezones to outside of property
- Get Council to provide organizations such as the Paddington Society notices of DAs and proposed rezones similar to those that go to neighbours
- Increase range of neighbours that get sent notices of proposed developments

Strategy

6. Improve the transparency and fairness of decision-making

See objectives and strategies under Governance

2. COMMUNITY

As the Vision for Paddington recognizes, there has been a considerable loss of community spirit in recent years. In addition, the rapidly increased house prices have resulted in major changes in the population profile.

While little can be done about these economic influences, policy initiatives can be taken to reduce the extent to which Paddington becomes a rich enclave of non-family housing with little of the rich mix of activities that have so distinguished it from other suburbs. At the same time, non-residential activities do need to respect the rights of residents.

Objective

To maintain and enhance Paddington as a vibrant, living and working place with a social mix

a) Facilities

Strategy

1. Identify existing public housing, community centres, schools, childcare, hospitals, and retail spaces

Actions

- List existing facilities

Strategy

2. Assess viability

Actions

- Conduct study into financial and patronage viability and current land use constraints and opportunities of listed facilities

Strategy

3. Develop action plans for retention and addition to community and other facilities

Actions

- Use Council's Social Plan process to facilitate action-planning work
- Council Planners to consider zoning controls to encourage retention and addition to mixed use activities

Strategy

4. Support local community and businesses, e.g., corner shops

Actions

- Conduct publicity program highlighting advantages of using local shops
- Provide assistance to local shops to market advantages

Strategy

5. Retain PCYC as a facility for kids, or obtain a substitute in the area

Actions

- Council to prepare and implement kids policy and program

b) Community Cohesion

Strategy

1. Council and community groups to undertake a range of community building exercises

Actions

- Organisations such as the Paddington Society to conduct a regular program of social events open to a wide range of participants, e.g., Paddington Picnic, dinners, lectures, etc.
- Council to facilitate street parties etc
- Council to encourage service partnerships that involve members of the community in local support activities

Strategy

2. Public education program about living in Paddington

Actions

- Prepare a welcome pack information about Paddington for new residents
- Prepare a simple guide to DCP for distribution to residents

c) Local Entertainment Business

Strategy

1. Ensure local entertainment businesses are good neighbours

Actions

- Review behaviour issues for residents of entertainment businesses
- Prepare plans and programs to address issues, including codes of conduct, hours of operation, noise attenuation, parking enforcement, etc

3. ACCESSIBILITY

The number of motor vehicle seeking to park in the streets of Paddington is a major concern. In many circumstances, it is possible to access Paddington without using a private vehicle. While policies should discourage private vehicle access, the real answer is to encourage real alternatives.

Paddington is very well served with public transport. It can be further improved, with increased access to non-CBD locations, especially to North/South locations.

The University of NSW recently prepared a transport impact study that has led to significantly improved access to the University by public and other forms of non-private car means. There is an

opportunity for all Eastern suburbs schools and similar institutions to improve student access.

Objective

To have fewer private motor vehicles in Paddington

Strategy

1. Provide excellent alternatives to private motor vehicles for getting to or from Paddington

Actions

- Contribute to STA bus review to raise service levels on existing routes
- Encourage STA or whomever to provide a quarter hour North South route connecting Edgecliff and Double Bay with Paddington Town Hall
- Require all schools in catchment to provide Transport Access Plans and take responsibility for increasing alternatives to driving individual students to school

Strategy

2. Discourage parking in Paddington

Actions

- Review any controls that require on-site parking for commercial activities
- Publicise the lack of parking in Paddington for visitors
- Raise the cost of additional residential parking stickers in Paddington and use funds to pay for improved pedestrian environments

See also policies to improve pedestrian access under 4. Public Domain

4. PUBLIC DOMAIN

Paddington is a wonderful place in which to walk. The public environment however is not always conducive to walking.

Traffic management and road design have essentially been based on the needs of the private motorist – for example, roundabouts and road design that encourages driving at speed. Those in charge of traffic management and road design generally have throughput of vehicles as their main criteria, rather than priorities that are set to be suitable to the needs of particular places.

In addition to the wrong priorities in traffic management, the failure to adequately maintain the public domain has ensured that it is often

dangerous and unpleasant to use the roads and paths for walking. Safety and attractiveness needs to be enhanced.

The recent success of the up-grade to Five Ways demonstrates that improvements to the public domain can encourage the development of excellent community spaces. There are further opportunities.

Objective

To provide a safe and pleasant walking environment while still providing for other road users

Strategy

1. Design and manage roads and footpaths to give priority to:

- i. Pedestrians and cyclists*
- ii. Public transport & emergency services*
- iii. Private vehicles*

Actions

- Woollahra Council, RTA, STA and other relevant agencies and community groups prepare open consultative pedestrian and traffic plan for Paddington through the Paddington Traffic Working Party
- Investigate setting up a similar Working Party with South Sydney Council

Strategy

2. Reduce traffic speeds in Paddington

Actions

- Introduce a 40K speed limit generally
- Reduce to 30K and 20K in streets and lanes where houses open close to streets
- Identify streets and lanes to be converted to pedestrian priority spaces

Objective

To safeguard and improve the visual quality and complex texture and patterning of the public domain

Strategy

1. Design a comprehensive public domain suitable to Paddington as a Heritage Suburb

Actions

- Following work on pedestrian and traffic plan a Council/Community group to prepare a comprehensive public domain plan including

landscaping, under grounding of lines, road and footpath finishes, street furniture and signs

See also 6. Infrastructure

Strategy

2. Maintain the public domain to a high standard

Actions

- Clean up and repair all pedestrian pathways
- Increase effectiveness of street cleaning services
- Support comprehensive graffiti removal service

Objective

To create more public gathering spaces

Strategy

1. Identify and develop opportunities for additional public gathering spaces

Actions

- Council to identify opportunities for additional public gathering spaces and conduct consultations on possible action plans

5. PRIVATE DOMAIN

Being a high-density low-rise suburb, developments and actions by people can impact on adjoining properties.

Those living in Paddington should be aware of the limitations it imposes on what can be done with and on one's own property.

Objective

To protect privacy, solar access and other aspects of neighbourhood amenity

Strategy

1. Ensure that the Paddington DCP is properly implemented

Actions

See above under 1. Heritage

Strategy

2. Inform community of obligations

Actions

- Undertake public information campaign concerning good neighbourly behaviour.

Strategy

3. Improve enforcement

Action

- Improve Rangers' responses to complaints

6. INFRASTRUCTURE

The roads, drains and footpaths of Paddington are generally poorly maintained, although the infrastructure of South Paddington does appear to be in better shape than that in North Paddington.

In North Paddington, Woollahra Council has estimated it needs about \$90 million to bring its infrastructure throughout the Council area up to a reasonable standard. It has about \$20 million in liquid assets, but its annual income is not such as to allow it to catch up the back log and remain on target.

Being the oldest major suburb in Sydney it is highly probable that Paddington's infrastructure is in worse shape than any other in Sydney. At the same time, given the relatively small representation of Paddington on the two Councils, there is less likelihood of resources being made available to meet the required expenditure.

The true picture of the infrastructure situation needs to be discovered and the options for achieving the Objective below need to be explored.

Objective

To maintain and improve the infrastructure in a way that is fair to future generations

Strategy

1. Properly account for the state of Paddington's infrastructure

Actions

- Form a community Task Force to work with Council resources to implement the above strategy.

Strategy

2. Have community take responsibility for sustainable infrastructure funding program

Actions

- Communicate recommendations to make all stakeholders aware of their responsibilities and benefits

7. GOVERNANCE

A number of the issues facing Paddington are difficult to address because of the present forms of government.

There are several problems:

- North and South Paddington are split between two Councils with Oxford Street being the dividing line.

- In both Councils, the residents of Paddington are considered to be outside the respective main streams of the two Councils and the suburb therefore lacks political power. Little if any action is likely on the Sproats Inquiry recommendations but research should still be conducted into better forms of local government for both sides of Paddington.

- The accounting systems of the councils do not provide clarity on what is raised from, and what is spent in, the two areas nor does it provide the overhead costs of service delivery.

- The organizational design of both Councils is traditional. Separate divisions of staff represent the separate professionals traditionally employed by councils. As a consequence staff are either responsible for inputs or specialized outputs. Nobody below the General Manager is responsible for complex outcomes and therefore no one on either Council's staff has clear responsibility and accountability for Paddington as a place.

- The role of Council in the decision-making on development applications is confused between the reality of Council's political or representative role and its legal duty to make decisions in a way that is proper and fair between the parties and the public interest. As a consequence, development decisions can be seen as lacking in transparency, unfair and, at times, even subject to undue influences.

Objective

To ensure that Paddington has an effective, transparent and efficient and effective government

a) Place Manager

Strategy

1. Develop a Council organizational model based on the clear allocation of responsibility and accountability for Paddington as a place

Actions

- Reporting direct to the General Manager, each Council to appoint a Place Manager (salary scale say \$60-70,000) for its geographical area of Paddington. The Place Manager is to be responsible for doing whatever is necessary to deal with all issues arising in the place.
- Establish coordination of Place Management across both Councils

b) Independent Hearing and Assessment Panel (IHAP)

Strategy

1. Provide an independent hearing panel that can conduct hearings into difficult DAs

Action

- Appoint the IHAP already operating in two Sydney Councils and endorsed by Cripps Inquiry to conduct hearings and report with recommendations to Council on the following development applications:
 - Where there are unsatisfied objections
 - Where there are departures from the standards in the controls
 - Where the Council or other public body is the applicant.
 - Where a rezoning is involved

c) The future local government for Paddington

Strategy

1. Review new forms of local government for a

united Paddington

Actions

- Establish a research group to review options for modern local government structures and amalgamation options for a united Paddington and involve the communities in discussion

d) Increase political power of Paddington

Strategy

1. Marshal political and community support behind this Strategic Plan

Actions

- Publicise Strategic Plan and make it an issue at Council elections
- Involve widest number of people in implementation of the Plan

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I/We endorse the Paddington Society’s Draft Strategic Plan for Paddington

Signed _____ Names/s _____

Address _____

phone _____ fax _____ email _____

Comments _____

I am willing to help in actioning:

Please complete and fax to 9362 4723 or mail to PO Box 99 Paddington 2021