

THE PADDINGTON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2026



Dear Subscriber,

Welcome to 2026 and the first edition of The Paddington Society Quarterly Newsletter for the year.

Our AGM was held at the EJ Ward Centre Monday 17th November. We had a huge turnout and robust discussion on the anticipated Oxford Street East Cycleway, 160 Oxford Street, and much more.

If you are interested in attending our events and finding out more about local matters please **become a member**. You will be kept informed while receiving advance invites to events and discounted tickets. Exciting evenings coming up include a talk with Mark Skelsey author of **Views to Die For** - The untold and inside story of how a scheme to turn Sydney's inner-east into a future Manhattan was driven by greed, secrecy and incompetence. The dates are to be confirmed.

There is so much happening locally including the controversial proposed multi-storey development at **160 Oxford Street**. We anticipate that the opportunity for everyone to lodge a submission will be open soon. Opposition to this development, including from The Society, has been strong and led by Council members and local residents. If you want to make a difference ensure that you **lodge a submission** and get more involved by emailing **preservingpaddington@gmail.com**

The Sydney Morning Herald recently announced the divestment of **Victoria Barracks in Paddington**. Excerpt below:

"A dramatic sale of 35,000 hectares of defence real estate – including some of the nation's most historic barracks – is expected to raise almost \$2 billion to be ploughed back into new military equipment and upgrades to essential bases. Islands, golf courses, rifle ranges, office buildings and training depots across the country will be sold under the Albanese government's long-awaited response to a sweeping audit of the nation's defence estate portfolio."

This will be of huge significance to our local community, together with both past and present Defence Force personnel. We maintain that the best outcome for the site is to retain Defence ownership and usage, with the option of community access to its open areas and the adaptive reuse of appropriate buildings, if this works for Defence needs. We also maintain that any development and change must be led by a thorough, peer reviewed Conservation Management Plan which assigns levels of significance and, importantly, establishes appropriate curtilage, significant views to and from the site, and appropriate scale.

The City of Sydney report: *Victoria Barracks Guiding Principles*, **available from our website** gives some insight into how the local community responded to the CoS invitation to share ideas for the site.

Please also take this opportunity to join the fascinating **free tour of Victoria Barracks** from the Corps of Guides. Tours take place every Thursday from 10am to 12pm. This is a great chance to see what lies behind the sandstone walls before the changes begin. Kids are welcome too.

We'll continue sharing local updates via our website as they unfold. In the meantime, you can track other local development applications via the **City of Sydney** and **Woollahra Municipal Council** websites and please help to spread the word by keeping your neighbours informed.

We trust that you will find this issue interesting and useful. Please **forward this newsletter** to friends, family, and neighbours. Everyone is welcome to **subscribe or join**. The more engaged we are and the more voices we have, the stronger our community becomes.

Esther Hayter
President
The Paddington Society Inc



Victoria Barracks Announcement

Some of the nation's most historic defence properties – including Victoria Barracks in Sydney, are set to be sold and opened to the public. **The Federal Government has released a response to the audit** of the 3 million-hectare defence estate portfolio. Read our **submissions to Defence and CoS** outlining our reasons for Defence retaining the site.

[MORE INFO](#)


160 Oxford Street Redevelopment

A proposal for a State Significant Development at **160 Oxford Street** has been declared by the DPHI. The community is still waiting for the proposal to be finalised and formally lodged, with the exhibition dates to be announced. The Society will be preparing a submission outlining our many concerns about the proposal. To learn about the community campaign and to stay informed contact **preservingpaddington@gmail.com**

[LEARN MORE](#)


Oxford and Verona Street Proposed Development

The submission period for the proposed Verona development has now closed. The submissions will now be considered as part of the formal assessment of the proposal by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure. Read submissions and learn more on our website.

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Chauvel Cinema Oxford Street Closes

In another blow to our once-thriving retail and entertainment strip, the last of three Palace cinemas in Oxford Street, Paddington, has closed. The arthouse chain, whose lease in the historic Paddington Town Hall expires in March, is shutting the increasingly rundown Chauvel. City of Sydney has announced their commitment to revitalising Oxford Street, including "significant building refurbishment" to Paddington Town Hall.

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WMC Residents First Councillor Merrill Witt's Concerns

WMC has resolved to support amendments to the Woollahra LEP 2014 to insert provisions to prevent net dwelling loss. Read WMC Residents First Councillor Merrill Witt's Report on activity and development proposals in the Vaucluse Ward and elsewhere in our LGA. There will be major flow-on effects for Paddington if even a portion of these proposals come to fruition.

[READ MORE](#)

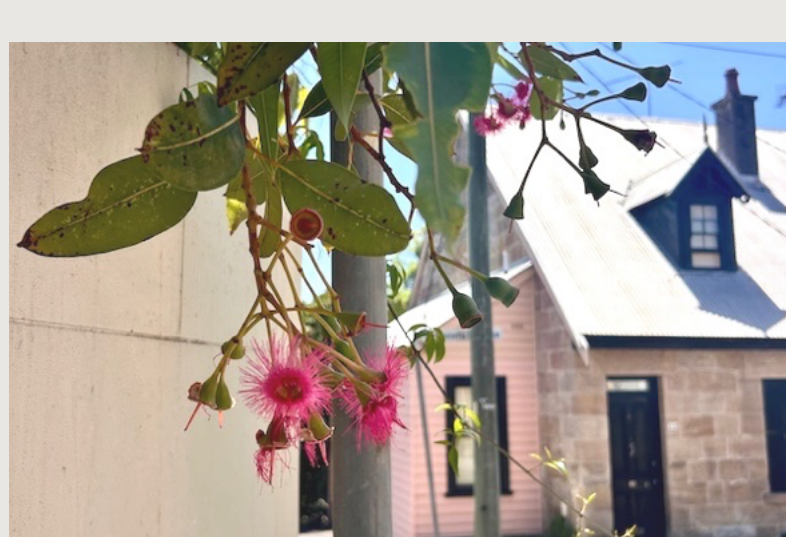

WMC Dog Walking Map Updated

Following extensive community consultation in 2023, WMCs dog walking locations have changed with even more places to walk your dog on a lead and off-leash. These changes take into account both the needs of dog owners and other community members.

[MORE INFO](#)


Treasurer and Accounting Help Needed

Do you have some free time to help with The Paddington Society's accounts? By getting involved, you can share ideas, help shape local projects, and play an active role in keeping Paddington vibrant and distinctive. It's a rewarding way to connect with locals and make a real difference.

[CONTACT US](#)


WMC Development Control Plan

WMC have resolved to re-exhibit the Draft Woollahra Development Control Plan (Amendment 37) (Draft DCP). The Draft DCP will be on exhibition until 9 Feb 2026. We encourage anyone who made a previous submission to the Draft DCP to resubmit or make a further submission. These submissions will then be considered by WMC. **Read our initial submission.**

[MORE INFO](#)


PPPG New Website Launched

The Potts Point Preservation Group (PPPG) is a community-driven organisation committed to protecting the unique heritage and social fabric of Potts Point, Elizabeth Bay, and Rushcutters Bay. As locals with no political bias, they advocate for responsible progress that respects the area's rich architectural and cultural history.

[MORE INFO](#)


Local History: The Sydney Dance Company

The Sydney Dance Company was conceived in Paddington by dancer Suzanne Musitz and her husband Frank Davidson. In 1967 when the couple bought their small terrace in Norfolk Street the suburb was rapidly becoming a home for the arts. Many streets were still working-class while others were filling with young teachers, artists, dancers and architects.

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