

re Adoption of Final version of Plan of Management for Boronia Park

Introduction

Speaking on behalf of the Hunters Hill Trust, tonight I plead for Council to reconsider the amendments to the original Draft Plan, and to adopt a PoM that is in the interests of our whole local community.

I'll be addressing some of the amendments proposed in the Report on Consultation Outcomes (1 Dec), and some proposals that were not been accepted as amendments.

As The Trust has stated previously, both here and in our previous submissions:

- We support the original Draft Plan of Management (Nov 2014), which included improvements to sporting facilities while also protecting the built and natural environment of Boronia Park.
- We are unhappy with many of the changes incorporated into the Updated Draft Plan (July 2015), and included in the Final Plan.

Our main concerns are associated with changes which favour some sporting groups at the expense of:

- other users of the Park
- other sporting groups, currently excluded from Boronia park, and
- the environmental requirements of this bushland.

Basis for concerns

Our main objections to the amendments are that they are not based on a fair analysis of the evidence identified in the Report on Consultation Outcomes.

For example:

- The analysis seems to give no more weight to the 40 individual submissions than to the 103 form letters received
- The analysis seems to give as much weight to submissions by non-residents as to those from residents of Hunters Hill
- Of the 40 individual submissions from the local community, 36 (90%) were opposed to vehicle access and parking within Boronia Park, and only 4 (10%) were 'supportive of community sport'.

Now to some specific concerns!

Long term tenure (Item 3.1.2)

We oppose the concept of long-term tenure for particular sporting clubs. The rugby and cricket clubs have used Boronia Park for many decades, and it is inconceivable that they might lose access as long as they remain viable organisations. But fashions in sport change, and in the next decade or so it is possible that these sports might lose their attraction (in the way that bowls has declined) and be replaced by others. We believe it would be unwise for Council to bind itself legally to the status quo.

Parking in Princes St (Item 3.2.6)

We are disappointed at the decision to allow private cars into the park via Princes St. As we have stated previously, there is ample parking in Park Rd and High St on most days of

the year. For the few occasions, such as Moocooboola, when these are inadequate, there is plenty of parking in the adjoining streets, as is the way Joeys copes for its major sporting days.

Princes St would provide only a small increase in the total amount of parking, but creates hazards and confusion in what would otherwise be a quiet pedestrian precinct.

Control of the locked entry gate to Princes St

If, against our recommendation, parking in Princes St is permitted we support the note in the **Report on Consultation** that the entry gate 'be opened and closed by council officers only'.

But this powerful wording has not made it into the Final Plan, which reads '**opening and closing of the Park St locked gate to be managed by council**'.

The difference is important because if Council issues keys to non-council employees, even under council management, the park becomes susceptible to the type of abuse that occurred during the redevelopment of Oval #3, when keys held by non-employees allowed unauthorised dumping of rubbish within the park.

Suggested drop-off/pick-up zone in Park Rd (Item 3.10.12)

We are at a loss to understand the rejection of our proposal for a school-type drop-off/pick-up zone in Park Rd (near the existing carpark), which could be installed immediately, at little cost. The alternative, as written in the Final Plan, for a drop-off/pickup zone between Ovals #2 & #3 would not be available for some time, and would be available only during the limited hours the gate is unlocked.

Regular Stakeholder meetings (Item 3.3.18)

We like the proposal for six-monthly stakeholder meetings, but there needs to be an explanation of the purpose of the meetings, and how organisations or individuals can be identified as stakeholders, both now and in the future.

And Finally

Disabled access

We are disappointed that the Final Plan does not include hard-surfaced paths between ovals to permit wheelchair access. This is particularly puzzling today, when there is general acceptance of the need to provide for less-able people. Such paths would also enable the use of trolleys to move sporting equipment around the site.

We hope you will agree that it is more important to get the Final Plan right, than to adopt it tonight.