**Local Matters Forum – Ashfield/Djarrawunang 28 February 2023**

On Tuesday 28 February, 35 Djarrawunang ward residents gathered at Ashfield Civic Centre to discuss local matters that were of key importance to them. The agenda for the group discussion was driven by residents.

**Below is a summary of the discussion:**

| Subject/issue | Discussion and response from Council | Further action if required |
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| De-amalgamation |
| Update on de-amalgamation process | * Resident asked why the Inner West Council has not been returned to the original Ashfield, Leichhardt and Marrickville Councils.
* The Inner West Council de-amalgamation business case was submitted to the Minister for Local Government in December 2022. The Minister has confirmed that the business case has been sent to the NSW Boundaries Commission for assessment.
* Inner West Mayor Darcy Byrne has written again to the Minister for Local Government reiterating the concerns around costs and administration.
* Council now has to wait until the Boundaries Commission and Minister determine if Council will remain amalgamated or decide to de-amalgamate.
 | No further action. |  |
| Development and planning |
| Acquisition of land following WestConnex works | * Resident asked about Council’s involvement in the soon to be decommissioned and sold off WestConnex tunnelling and ancillary, owned by Transport for NSW (TfNSW).
* Council has had no discussions with TfNSW or the contractor about the future of M4-M5 Link Tunnels residual sites at Haberfield/Ashfield since the May 2022 M4-M5 Link Tunnels Residual Land Management Plan was publicly released.
* Council will make its own enquiries about implementation of this plan, and any member of the community can enquire with WestConnex directly via 1800 660 248 or info@westconnex.com.au
* In dealing with this matter, Council will strive to ensure that impacts on the community are minimised and benefits are maximised. Future negotiations will involve various staff from different teams across Council, depending on the issue at hand.
* Council’s Customer Service Centre can direct you to relevant staff dealing with any particular issue associated with these residual sites – call 9392 5000 or send an e-mail to council@innerwest.nsw.gov.au
 | No further action. |
| Maintaining freestanding homes in the Inner West | * Resident stated that well-serviced suburbs of freestanding homes are preferable; density should be limited.
* A diversity of housing types helps cater to the housing needs of people at different stages of their lives, and of an increasingly diverse range of household types e.g. older people may not be able to look after the backyard in a freestanding home. Multi-unit dwellings give the opportunity for ageing in place.
* High rise apartments allow more people to walk to the shops and to the railway station, leading to less reliance on cars as the primary form of transport, reducing climate change impacts.
* Council must account for a range of housing preferences.
* Housing diversity assists towards affordability.
 | No further action. |
| Housing affordability and preferential treatment of developers | * Resident asked whether Council would support residents’ wishes to afford their own homes and agitate for public housing in the Ashfield-Djarrawunang ward.
* It is Council's priority to expand social, community and affordable housing across the Inner West, focusing on very low, low and moderate income earners. Council's Affordable Housing Policy (AHP) retains an affordable housing target of 15% of new residential floor space, with respect to planning proposals relating to development sites, subject to feasibility testing.
* The Inner West Local Housing Strategy estimates that 571 social and affordable dwellings, or other rental accommodation such as boarding rooms available at an affordable rent, would need to be delivered every year to meet all housing needs in Inner West by 2036.
* Given Council’s limited capacity to fully address this affordable housing supply gap, another important element involves advocacy with the NSW and Federal Governments to substantially increase and facilitate social and affordable housing supply.
 | No further action. |
| Status of the proposed redevelopment of Dulwich Hill, Ashfield and Marrickville | * Residents asked for an update on the status of the proposed changes to the LEP in Dulwich Hill, Ashfield and Marrickville.
* Work is currently on hold as we are awaiting feedback from the State Government regarding the options available to Council to achieve the outcomes in the local housing strategy.
* One aspect being investigated is to focus on an LGA wide approach (Council’s preference) although we are awaiting further advice at this stage.
* Early engagement showed residents had a clear preference to continue work on the heritage studies in Dulwich Hill, Ashfield North and Marrickville. Council officers are currently working with Councillors to come up with a strategy to continue this work.
 | No further action. |
| Ashfield Town Centre master plan | * Resident asked whether there is a master plan for the Ashfield town centre.
* Council has rolled out some ‘quick wins’ in the Ashfield town centre including upgraded footpaths in recent years and street tree planting including fairy lights over the past few months.
* Council has also recently endorsed a plan to partner with businesses to activate public spaces through an Expression of Interest process. As part of this process Council will source an external expert to assess partnership offerings.
 | No further action. |
| Green areas and cultural spaces in Ashfield | * Resident stated that they were pleased to see grassed areas being opened to the public in Ashfield, but more green areas and cultural spaces (theatres, arts spaces) are needed in the area.
* Council is committed to improving the public domain. Artwork in the town centre has been a priority. Money has been spent on the Ashfield town centre in the last few years to achieve ‘quick wins’ including footpath upgrades, street tree planting and fairy lights.
* Master planning for the town centre is now underway. Public domain master planning takes a long time – this is why we pair a long-term plan with short-term quick wins.
* Council is also undertaking an accelerated tree planting program across the LGA.
* Council is always open to specific suggestions.
 | No further action. |
| North Ashfield Urban Design Study freedom of information request | * Resident asked for an update on the Freedom of Information request regarding draft versions of the North Ashfield Urban Design Study.
* This specific matter is currently before the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT).
 | No further action. |
| Economic development |
| Economic Development Strategy | * Resident asked whether there is an Economic Development Strategy and how it’s linked to community engagement initiatives.
* Council is in the early stages of preparing an Economic Development Strategy to be completed this year. This will be preceded by an Economic Summit in a few weeks’ time to help us gain a better understanding of local business needs.
* The focus of the strategy will be on community wealth building.
* The staff member responsible for Economic Development is the Team Leader, Billy Cotsis.
 | No further action. |
| Environment and climate change |
| Loss of Council staff affecting the GreenWay vision | * Resident noted that the chief engineer on the GreenWay project is under private contract. Resident asked what Council is doing to ensure achievement of the GreenWay vision.
* It is a common arrangement for Councils to have such projects as the GreenWay under a design and construction style contract due to the magnitude of the project. External experts assist in helping ensure the right outcomes are achieved .
* The project requires a Review of Environment Factors to appropriately consider the environment including bush care. Impacts to environmental factors will be reviewed during the design process.
* The project is also being quality-assured by NSW Public Works.
 | No further action. |
| Maintenance of planted areas along the GreenWay | * Resident asked how Council plans to maintain the planted areas of the GreenWay.
* Council’s operations teams will take over responsibility for maintenance and upkeep from the Principal Contractor following the expiry of their contractual obligations to maintain the new areas of plantings post completion.
* Resident stated that the existing planted areas are in a bad state/have been poorly maintained and that it has been a waste of Council money.
* Likely that the contractors are ignoring the site until the handover phase.
* Resident asked why Council hasn’t been doing the weeding throughout the maintenance period?
* There are areas not in Council control e.g. transport corridors. Council will review the areas under Council control.
 | Council officers to review the state of planted areas in Council’s control along the Greenway |
| Potential damage to Hercules Parkland due to GreenWay bike path | * Resident asked for assurance that Hercules Parkland natural creek lines would not be damaged as a result of GreenWay construction.
* The natural creek bed adjacent to Hercules Street will not be deliberately damaged. Works around this location of the GreenWay relative to the current approved alignment of the pathway are under review.
* Resident stated that they are not concerned with deliberate damage, more that contractors and subcontractors will take shortcuts.
* Council will certainly review this as construction commences and appropriate safeguards be put in place.
 | Council to ensure contractors understand importance of not cutting corners; construction methodology to be reviewed. |
| Reg Coady Reserve rehabilitation | * Resident asked when the truck turning lane at Reg Coady Reserve will be removed, and when it will be rehabilitated as a community reserve.
* The turning lane or ‘G-loop’ within Reg Coady Reserve at Haberfield is subject to a construction lease that was compulsorily acquired by Transport for NSW (TfNSW) in 2021, ending on 31 December this year. This part of the reserve is Crown Land but Council has a care, control and management role. The G-loop was used for WestConnex Stages 1 (M4 East) and 3A (M4-M5 Link Tunnels). Given both stages are now complete, Council assumes the land is not needed and can now be rehabilitated and handed back to Council’s care.
* Council will be advocating for reacquisition of this land.
* At this stage, Council is not aware of the timing of the rehabilitation and handover but will enquire with WestConnex to this end. In addition, any member of the public can make enquiries to WestConnex on 1800 660 248 or info@westconnex.com.au
 | No further action. |
| Rehabilitation of Hawthorne Canal | * Resident asked about Council’s involvement in the rehabilitation of the Hawthorne Canal along Reg Coady Reserve and Dobroyd Parade.
* Council is investing in significant environmental improvements in the land it manages along the Hawthorne Canal including bushcare and natural areas management, gross pollutant traps, recreating wetlands and saltmarsh, and the construction of the Greenway. This will improve the quality of stormwater entering the canal and eventually entering the Parramatta River at Iron Cove.
* Sydney Water controls other aspects of water quality in the canal and is also Council's partner in the Parramatta River Catchment Group, where we pool our resources to get better results for long term planning and better water quality for the whole river.
 | No further action. |
| Living in a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as a human right | * Resident noted that the UN General Assembly has voted to declare the ability to live in a clean, healthy and sustainable environment a human right. Resident asked if this could be publicised locally, and if Council could draw community attention to impervious pavement.
* The first chapter of our community strategic plan is dedicated to sustainability and the ways we want to improve the natural environment for our residents. This reflects our local commitment to those broader national and international environmental goals.
* Council staff work along our rivers every day in litter prevention programs, native plant and habitat restoration projects, and fauna surveys. We try to design our major new Council projects with the environment as central element so that we link our natural assets together. A great example of this is the Greenway which will provide a north-south link between the Cooks and Parramatta Rivers.
* Impervious pavement is tricky because we have to balance our environmental goals with the need to make sure all our footpaths are accessible for wheelchairs and prams and ensure they will last over time, which often can't be achieved with impervious paving. What we do is make sure that at the edges of our pathways and parks we are designing things like raingardens, for example at Steele Park.
* Council is doing a lot in this area: Councillor Drury is chair of the Parramatta River Catchment Group; Council has recently created a Catchments Officer role to maintain focus on the health of water catchments; IWC won the LGNSW peak environment award last year; Council is 100% divested from fossil fuels; all power is off the grid; FOGO continuing to roll out in 2023. Council will continue working in this space and promoting these efforts.
 | No further action. |
| Loss of staffing to Urban Ecology team | * Resident asked for an updated on staff shortages in the Urban Ecology team.
* A review of the Urban Ecology team has been recently completed and we hope to hire new staff in this area soon. Staffing in the team managing nurseries, bushcare areas and native restoration contractors has not been significantly impacted by the current shortage. The changed resourcing has been in the policy and planning area. Council aims to have this forward planning and environmental science aspect of the service up and running again in earnest in 2023.
* Operational staff (bushcare and other volunteers) have only lost 1 position which will be replaced.
* The independent service review identified a Catchment Management Specialist and Environmental Scientist to support new and ongoing policy, strategy and planning and creating these new positions is the first focus of a recruitment strategy.
* The appointment of a Senior Manager Environment and Sustainability is providng direction to the team, and he can also assist in resolving concerns as recruitment gets underway. .
* Resident noted that staff shortages have meant poor communication around bushcare working bees – people haven't had enough notice to turn up.
* Council understands that the standard has not been maintained and is committed to improving this.
 | Senior Manager Environment and Sustainability to contact community member regarding staffing changes.Council to follow up on maintenance of bushcare sites and communication with community. |
| Improvements to Cooks River waterway in 2023 | * Resident asked what Council has planned for improving the Cooks River waterway this year.
* Council works closely with the Cooks River Alliance on strategic planning for the long-term health of the Cooks River. Current projects include bushcare restoration sites along the foreshore of the river and in nearby catchment sites such as Dibble waterhole, Council parks and the Greenway.
* Council continues to build and manage raingardens in our parks to improve the quality of urban stormwater and with our regional partners we are undertaking litter prevention programs along the Cooks River catchment.
* Council is collaborating with Sydney Water on opportunities to improve water quality in the Cooks River. This year we will take the first important step in remediating the dangerous sheet piling by installing safety fencing along large stretches of the riverbank mostly around the Marrickville Golf Course.
* Council’s Senior Manager Environment and Sustainability is Council's representative on the Cooks River catchment group, providing representation at a high senior level.
 | No further action. |
| Removal of plants on Fred Street by Inner West Council contractors | * Resident noted that recently planted trees and shrubs along Fred Street have ben removed by Council contractors. Resident asked why this occurred and when they will be replaced.
* Based on assessment of the plants in the garden beds, landscape maintenance crews removed foliage to allow for selected species in the gardens to fully establish (removal based on plant density and plant size as well as maintenance needs of plants). In short, Council removed the larger dominant species to allow for the smaller ground cover species to establish.
* Resident noted that the trees were in good condition.
 | Council to investigate the situation and get back to community member. |
| Roads and footpaths |
| Elizabeth Street, Ashfield footpath repair and crossing improvement | * Resident noted that the Elizabeth Street footpath is in need of repair and a safe, accessible north-south crossing is needed between Frederick and Charlotte Streets.
* Council has adopted a Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan (PAMP) which has identified as a high priority the need for accessible crossings at the Alt Street, Bland Street and Charlotte Street intersections. Council is currently programming the $8million worth of high priority improvements identified in the PAMP, to be delivered over the next 4 years (current FY included).
* Council has also noted stormwater issues and road pavement issues in this area. Council is looking to do a holistic project in this area.
* Resident noted that an east-west crossing was installed a year ago but not a north-south crossing
* Council is aware of this issue.
* Resident noted that there are a lot of vehicles, pedestrians and trucks on this street causing congestion. Is Council looking into traffic lights at Frederick/Elizabeth for right hand turns?
* Agree that this area needs attention. Council’s transport team have advocated for traffic lights as suggested, however the owner of this decision is TfNSW.
* Resident asked if congestion has worsened since the M8 opened? TfNSW should have investigated this before and after the opening of the M8 link.
* Director Infrastructure stated that this has been raised with TfNSW counterparts. TfNSW is claiming that a full investigation will only be carried out after the Rozelle interchange is complete – Council is opposing this approach.
 | No further action. |
| Dulwich Hill railway station works | * Resident asked when the Dulwich Hill railway station works would be complete.
* IWC have completed the majority of works north of the Station on Wardell Road and a large portion of the new footpath paving on the west side of Wardell Road, south of the Station, however we have experienced further issues with service works which has impacted the program.
* The delivery of these works has been impacted by the unprecedented wet weather, unexpected conditions in some of the areas of excavation, utility provider and COVID issues.
* A lot of the upgrade work is electrical (power poles being moved underground). Ausgrid network shutdowns scheduled for December were cancelled which has led to time extensions and flow on effects on the whole program.
* The works are now anticipated for completion in April/ May 23, weather permitting and conditional on the completion of remaining services works. Council officers are working hard to complete the works which will deliver an enhanced public domain environment that will complement the upgrade of the Dulwich Hill Station.
* Resident stated they are surprised and dismayed by the quality of work in an WHS sense.
* Council is working with the contractor to improve the conditions including rationalising barricades and improving parking options.
 | No further action. |
| Florence Street, Hurlstone Park footpath repairs | * Resident asked when required maintenance to Florence Street footpath would be undertaken.
* Council undertook an audit of all Council footpaths in 2021 and noted that the footpath was in overall fair condition, however we will have the street inspected in the next week for any localised maintenance needs.
 | Council to investigate state of footpath with community member. |
| Insufficient street signage across the Inner West | * Resident asked why street signs are only provided at one end of the street in the Inner West.
* Resident asked whether Council would do an audit of street signs across the LGA.
* Council can arrange the replacement of missing street signs or the consideration of new street signs on a case-by-case basis. Please advise Council of the requested locations for further investigation.
 | Council to work with community member to identify specific locations where signage is required. |
| Use of street sweepers and verge mowing | * Resident asked why street sweepers are not regularly used in the streets bounded by Holden, Armstrong, Owen, Minter and Canterbury Rd.
* Council street sweepers are highly utilised pieces of plant. Currently all main street shopping centres are swept daily and main roads done weekly. All of the streets may be listed on the verge mowing 20-day cycle program.
* Specifics of the sweeping cycle can be reviewed.
* Resident noted that street sweepers don't collect the rubbish or leaves falling off trees - all this gets washed into drains and blocks drains.
* Council will review the coordination of verge mowing and street sweeping schedule. Specific locations should be reported to Council.
* Resident stated that no mowing happens in this area from November - February
* Council will review. Verge mowing is monthly over the summer months and every 8 weeks during winter. IWC is one of the only councils to continue mowing verges.
* Resident noted that people in Ashfield mowed their own verges before the merger. Money spent by IWC on verge mowing should be spent on the street sweepers.
* Maintaining verge mowing post-amalgamation was a policy decision and service standard that can be discussed.
* Resident thank Council for the verge mowing service.
* Resident suggested working with community to encourage verge gardening.
 | Council to review verge mowing, leaf blowing and street sweeping cycle in specified locations. |
| Noise limits on leaf blowers | * Resident asked if there is a noise limit on leaf blowers, specifically in units/stratas.
* Leaf blowers are manufactured to standards. Electric blowers are used when possible to reduce noise. Council is not able to regulate noise in units/stratas – this is an EPA matter.
* Resident stated that the noise of leaf blowers is unbearable in their street.
* This sort of noise is a challenge of living in a built up area - trucks don't fit on many IWC streets so leaf blowers are used instead.
* Resident asked why Council doesn’t use street sweepers instead.
* Council will review the practice in problem areas.
 | Council to review leaf blowing practice in specific locations. |
| Worn linemarking at Knox Street, Ashfield | * Resident noted an area of worn line marking at Knox Street, Ashfield. Could Council rectify.
* Council is undertaking a review of line marking across the LGA. Will review the areas noted. Aware of the risk factor when these aren't attended to.
 | Council to review linemarking in specified locations. |
| Management of myna birds | * Resident asked whether noisy miner birds can be shot.
* This is not permitted.
 | No further action. |
| Waste and recycling |
| Renters dumping rubbish in Ashfield | * Resident stated that there is a significant increase in household dumping in Ashfield streets.
* Council offers a booked clean up service and this is promoted to the community (even on the side of trucks). This is aimed to minimise the amount of dumped rubbish.
* Resident noted that renters don't utilise this service.
* Council has a range of strategies to deal with illegal dumping. Officers track dumping. We also have officers who drive around in trucks and clear dumped rubbish.
* Council is conscious of this problem and we're working on solutions. For example, Council used to turn down collections if they were too big but now there is no limit.
* Council has also worked with real estate agents and strata to report dumping. Appreciate that there are diligent people around to help with reporting.
* If there are dumping hotspots let Council know so they can be included in regular patrols/hotspot runs.
* Resident asked whether it’s more economical for Council to regular patrolling compared to clean up days.
* Research shows that patrolling is the more economical method. Illegal dumping has reduced since this initiative was introduced.
 | No further action. |
| Collection and recycling of soft plastics | * Resident asked what plans Council has to ensure the sustainable collection and recycling of soft plastics.
* The recent collapse of the sofplastics recycling system has created a significant gap.
* The Australian Competition and Consumer Commision has recently approved the three major supermarkets to work together toward a joint request for tender and a single solution.
* Soft plastics continue to be collected for recycling via Council’s partnership with RecycleSmart, they are currently being batched and stored.
* Soft plastics are identified as a producer responsibility - this means Council has an advocacy role. A key issue is that there is not a great capacity for recycling soft plastics or a demand for the recycled product.
* Resident noted that the RecycleSmart collections are every 8 weeks.
 | No further action. |
| General |
| Local Matters Forum attendance not representative of the community | * Resident noted that the demographics of attendees did not represent the wider community.
* Council will take this on board. Questions can also be asked at fortnightly customer service stalls across the LGA.
 | No further action. |
| Policy on community batteries | * Resident asked about Council’s policy regarding acquiring community batteries.
* Policy development is underway.
 | No further action. |
| GreenWay master plan community engagement | * Resident asked when the community can expect to see the GreenWay master plan design documents.
* An information piece will be coming out in April 2023 which will involve presenting updated designs and asking for community comment. Questions and insights will be considered for the final design.
 | No further action. |
| Funding from WestConnex | * Resident asked whether Inner West Council will be receiving any money from WestConnex.
* IWC has received no money but have been advocating for this.
 | No further action. |
| Cars left for months on residential streets | * Resident noted that streets with no parking limits have cars left for months without moving.
* The Public Spaces (Unattended Property) Act 2021 gives new powers to Council to deal with unattended vehicles. Residents may report any unattended vehicles to Council to progress.
 | No further action. |

**Not all submitted questions were able to be addressed on the night due to time constraints. Responses to questions that were submitted but not discussed during the Forum have been prepared:**

| Subject | Response from Council |
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| Development and planning |
| Regarding the soon to be Decommissioned and sold off, WestConnex Tunnelling and ancillary, owned by Transport for NSW TfNSW sites in Haberfield & Ashfield - what does Council know, which Council team and Officers have responsibility to track developments, and how does Council propose to claim part, or all of these vacant sites from the TfNSW and State Government for future community development and use?  | * Council has had no discussions with Transport for NSW (TfNSW) or the contractor about the future of M4-M5 Link Tunnels residual sites at Haberfield/Ashfield since the May 2022 M4-M5 Link Tunnels Residual Land Management Plan was publicly released. Council will make its own enquiries about implementation of this plan, and any member of the community can enquire with WestConnex directly via 1800 660 248 or info@westconnex.com.au In dealing with this matter, Council will strive to ensure that impacts on the community are minimised and benefits are maximised. Future negotiations will involve various staff from different teams across Council, depending on the issue at hand. Council’s Customer Service Centre can direct you to relevant staff dealing with any particular issue associated with these residual sites – call 9392 5000 or send an e-mail to council@innerwest.nsw.gov.au
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| How can protected bike lanes be added to reach nearby suburbs, parks, and light rail?Ashfield needs more protected bike lanes, especially connecting the suburb to its parks, neighbouring suburbs, and light rail. The Green Way is not far away, but is dangerous to access via bike due to lack of bike lanes. Haberfield is nearby but also dangerous to access via bike. Same with Ashbury, Summer Hill, Ashfield Park, and Pratten Park. We need protected bike lanes leading from the centre of Ashfield to these suburbs, parks, and transport options. This would encourage people to leave their car for short trips, which would increase patronage to local businesses and decrease our carbon emissions. | * Council recognises the need for safe and appropriate cycling infrastructure in the LGA. This was considered as part of Council’s Bicycle Strategy and Action Plan which was exhibited late 2022. The final draft strategy is expected to be presented to Council in the first half of 2023 and will lead to future cycleway infrastructure.
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| How will Markham Place and Cavill Ave be reworked to allow for higher car traffic once the new apartment complex at 333 Liverpool Road is done?This apartment complex backs up onto The Esplanade/Markham Place, and it will result in many more cars in an already cramped and small partially one-way street.Can The Esplanade be made fully 2-way to allow access to Brown St? Can a traffic light be added at Cavill Ave and Liverpool Rd to allow residents to turn right onto Liverpool Rd? Can Cavill Ave be made 2-way? How could this series of streets be reworked to be more efficient for the many residents living there? | * The development at 333 Liverpool Road is not expected to generate a significant increase in traffic in Markham Place and Cavill Avenue and hence no changes to the road network are proposed with the development. Council has introduced traffic facilities including road narrowing and one-way restrictions in these streets previously to ensure appropriate traffic flow and access – these one way streets are too narrow to be made two-way. Council will arrange for the street network to be reviewed to ensure the existing restrictions are clear for motorists and pedestrians and improve safety outcomes. With regard to traffic signals, these are under the jurisdiction of TfNSW however it is noted that the intersection of Cavill Avenue and Liverpool Road is too close to the existing set of signals at Thomas Street to allow additional signals to be installed.
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| Major renovations are planned soon, but what is the plan to keep Ashfield Mall in a usable state day-to-day?Ashfield Mall has severe damage everywhere. Escalator has been broken for over a year. Several shops have holes in the ceiling. How has the ventilation been improved since COVID hit? What can been done to make it more open air and covid safe? How can we be sure it isn't going to fall apart? | * The state of repair of the Ashfield Mall is a matter for the owners of the building the broken escalator has been an issue for a considerable time and has been followed up on several occasions and Council have been advised that they are waiting on parts to repair the escalator.
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| Most residents are against new apartment development, but with housing shortage, an option is to encourage and incentivises house owner to consider duplex development. Council can help by changes to duplex double storey development requirements in terms of minimum lot size , Floor Space Ratio and etc. Do we really need house with 400 to 600 sqm? | * Houses that are on large lots such as 400-600sqm are relatively rare in the Inner West. Most lots are much smaller 100-400sqm max so the impact would less than in other parts of Sydney. Secondary dwellings (granny flats) are able to be built in many areas as an alternative to duplexes in tight inner city areas. Council is reviewing its development control plan to harmonise controls, particularly in relation to subdivision to have a consistent approach to the Inner West.
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| Environment and climate change |
| Petrol is so expensive, and air pollution from cars is far worse for us than previously thought (see link below).People in the Inner West want to be able to walk or ride a bike safely.Auckland City Council has a new transport strategy that plans a real modal shift to walking and bikes (from 2 to 16% by 2030), which will be far better for every resident, and also lower congestion for people who have to drive.Paris, Barcelona, London, Mexico City, Leicester, and more cities around the world have far better bike lanes now than before covid - and they have rolled this out at low cost and quickly. When will we have more accessible, safe streets? https://thedriven.io/2023/02/24/new-study-reveals-catastrophic-health-impacts-of-petrol-and-diesel-cars/ | * Council recognises the need for safe and appropriate cycling infrastructure in the LGA and has continued delivering permanent cycling infrastructure over the Covid period including Livingston Road cycleway and Regional Route 7.
* Council’s Bicycle Strategy and Action Plan was also exhibited late 2022. The final draft strategy is expected to be presented to Council in the first half of 2023 and will lead to future cycleway infrastructure.
* Council’s Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan outlines $8m of high priority works which will be rolled out over the next 4 years in conjunction with our Local Area Traffic Management Studies which seek to improve pedestrian and traffic conditions through traffic calming and provision of pedestrian facilities.
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| Parking and traffic |
| It's has been previously discussed at council Traffic meetings the issue of Ashfield Aquatic Centre staff parking in nearby streets all day to avoid the 2 & 4 hour limits in that Aquatic Centre car parks. Local residents in Elizabeth Street, Etonville Parade and Bastable St Croydon struggle on a daily basis to find street parking at any time of the day Monday through Sunday. We again ask that a Residents Parking scheme be implemented along Elizabeth Street, Etonville Parade and Bastable St Croydon and sign post a 4 hour limit on these streets to discourage Aquatic Centre staff and patrons from parking all day in these streets and instead use the Aquatic Centre parking that was built for their use. In addition to this we ask that the Aquatic Centre parking limit be increased to 8 hours to accommodate the staff that work full time to park uninhibited. | * In 2019/20, Council completed the Croydon Parking Study which reviewed the location, supply, demand and distribution of both short and long stay parking, residential, employee and commuter parking. The work consisted of examining existing conditions including parking data, community submissions, and examining on-street as well as private off-street parking. A community survey was also undertaken to gauge the parking issues faced by different users.
* As a result of the study, it was proposed that an expansion of the Resident Parking Scheme (RPS) into a number of streets in Croydon be considered, including Edwin Street. However, following community engagement on this proposal it was noted that there was a low support from the community for the expansion of the RPS. Hence, no changes to the parking restrictions was approved at the time.
* However, Council did commit to monitoring parking conditions in the area. As per this commitment, Council has undertaken recent parking occupancy surveys of the area and this is currently assessing the results to determine the next steps forward. Should parking occupancy levels be sufficiently high, Council will prepare a proposal for reconsideration of an RPS.
* Council has also introduced sections of 4P parking in the car park which provides longer stay parking, however, it should be noted that the car park is intended for use by Pool patrons, staff are encouraged to take public transport and active transport where possible.
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| Are there plans to turn The Esplanade into a shared pedestrian zone like nearby Fox's Lane? This is in the area between Ashfield Mall and Ashfield station.It's currently a 40kph street but has a blind turn right in front of a pedestrian walkway and is very dangerous. It has high pedestrian traffic and is a local road for a few apartment blocks, and facilitates a lot of foot traffic from Liverpool road to more northern parts of Ashfield, so it would be safer and easier as a specifically shared zone with pedestrians, ideally with markings on the road to indicate to drivers to slow down and yield to pedestrians. | * Shared Zones are introduced to safely manage pedestrian and vehicle conflict where adequate separation cannot be provided. In this instance, The Esplanade has been provided with pedestrian footpaths to cater for pedestrian activity in the area which provides a better road safety outcome then encouraging pedestrian activity in the carriageway. However, it should be noted that the corridor of The Esplanade/Markham Place/Cavill Avenue is being reviewed for opportunities to improve pedestrian safety.
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| Can the green light length for Elizabeth Street at the intersection of Elizabeth and Frederick St be lengthened?Currently, it doesn't stay green long enough for Elizabeth Street to go, causing many cars to get stuck unable to turn left. This causes massive backups all the way down Elizabeth Street, blocking the roundabouts and wreaking havoc for local residents trying to leave their homes. | * Traffic Signals are under the jurisdiction of TfNSW. Council officers have previously raised concerns with the intersection directly to TfNSW and we are awaiting feedback.
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| Parks and sporting grounds |
| Will IWC introduce a system for the maintenance of reserves, parks and playgrounds whereby mowing, weeding, trimming etc and any other general maintenance is the responsibility of a single team. Council would have several of these across the LGA and each such team would be responsible for a specific geographic area. We need our council to again be the empoyer, not have all services outsorced. | * Mowing, weeding and trimming are currently undertaken by council internal teams and are generally not outsourced. Crews are set up within specific areas.
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| Roads and footpaths |
| Firstly I need to declare a personal interest in this query.I am wondering if there is anything that can be done by Council to improve the street view of the small block of land adjacent to 627 Darling Street, Rozelle?This small block of land has remained vacant since the Rozelle Fire in 2014, the actual wall facing the street doesn't present well, though it is an improvement on when the gate was left permanently open & the site was used for the storage of garbage bins. It appears to be unused & detracts from the streetscape & pays little respect to what occurred on that block in 2014.Whilst I understand that the block may be privately owned I was wondering if there was anything that Council could do to improve the look of it? | * A number of approaches have been made to the owner of the property since the tragedy, to ensure that the land is kept clean of vegetation and not an accumulation for vermin. The property owner has only been willing to undertake these minimal requirements. Without owners cooperation there is little more that Council can do to improve the streetscape at this location.
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| Trees |
| What type of research has been done into the root system of the trees that are being planted? The trees that have been previously planted have caused damage to a number of footpaths and in some cases the roadways. | * There are a number of scientific journals, research papers, and articles published by industry leaders such as ISA (International Society of Arboriculture) and IACA (Institute of Australian Consulting Arborists) regarding the most appropriate species of trees to be planted in constrained urban environments. Nevertheless, tree roots are opportunistic in nature, and will move through the soil in search of water, air and nutrients which are essential requirements for root expansion. The construction of footpaths include screeding a layer of road base across the soil profile, and constructing the footpath using concrete or asphalt. The road base underneath the footpath has large pore space and allows the movement of air and water, which creates ideal conditions for tree root growth. Street tree selection is undertaken using the guidance of the adopted Street Tree Master Plans which nominates tree species which are known to be successful municipal trees, which are able to survive the harsh conditions of the urban environment while providing environmental, social, economic and aesthetic benefits to the community. In the meantime however there are trees that were planted decades ago, when such tree management iassues were less well understood that are causing problems today and do require specific consideration and management.
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| Who is responsible for ensuring the maintenace of the trees that have been planted in nature strips? In some areaes there are branches overhanging the footpaths and this could cause injury to the head or eyes of pedestrians, not only in the daytime but more so during the darkness. Over the last two years there seems to be less maintenance carried out on the trees in this area [Hurlstone Park]. | * Council is responsible for the maintenance of trees in nature strips & parks and manages these assets by undertaking proactive and reactive maintenance. For proactive maintenance, Council has scheduled a tree inventory audit which will commence mid-2023 which includes an individual assessment of approximately 80,000 trees to determine the health of the tree, the risk it presents and any recommended works. These works are then scheduled in accordance with their priority rating which is based on the risk the tree presents. For reactive maintenance, residents are able to contact Council to request an assessment of a tree to ascertain if pruning works are required which is determined by Council’s street tree pruning guidelines. There has been a significant increase in rainfall over the last 3 years, which has resulted in higher growth rates and increased maintenance requirements.
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| Amsterdam adopted Donut Economics for future planning in 2020. I remember one innovation, stopping trees from being reduced to woodchips. Woodworkers were able to purchase logs, and there were plenty of takers. Schools TAFE's furniture makers wood turners hobbyists might be interested. Urban forest can't be just isolated trees in lawns, it needs rotting logs and leaf litter and much biodiversity in them to enrich the forest floor. It can be done in locked off areas like railway corridors and motorway nature strips. We have a few examples but could Council reduce the mountains of woodchip waste by organising the distribution of logs branches and leaf litter to fenced off areas, and sections of local parks and river sides? | * At present Council does reuse fallen trees and other natural materials wherever possible, in our natural areas and bushcare sites to provide natural barriers and provide habitat. In appropriate sites, dead and hollow-bearing trees are retained instead of being removed as they provide habitat for birds and other wildlife in keeping with good environmental practice.
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| Waste and recycling |
| When will the previous Ashfield Council area be provided with separate re-cycling bins for paper and bottles/tins as per prev. Leichhardt area? | * All of the inner west will have commingled recycling in a yellow lid bin this calendar year.
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| General |
| I would like to know why the 461 bus going along Parramatta Rd doesn't pick people up at ALL bus stops - apparently there are some stops they don't have to pick people up at. It is hard enough catching buses as it is, and getting to a bus stop sometimes, but to get to a bus stop and then the bus drives past you without stopping is very demoralising and disheartening, and then you have to walk to the next bus stop. It is ridiculous that this is the situation. I realise that people in afternoon peak-hour want to get home as soon as possible, but it's just not good enough for the rest of the community.Thankyou,Heather Utber | * The 461X route is an express bus service and has limited stops which allows it to better service patrons travelling a significant way along the route, and is supplemented by other bus services on Parramatta Road - to plan your trip we suggest you visit transportnsw.info for the most current timetables and route information. It should be noted that Public Transport including Buses falls under state government jurisdiction but Council does play an advocacy role. In this respect, Council's Integrated Transport Plan calls for the preparation of a Public Transport Position Paper which will be developed.
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| In the matter of Amended DA 200300504.1, approval issued 24th April 2018 to increase Student numbers from 1200 to 1350 Students.The then Manager Development Assement ( Mr J Erken )included several Conditions to be fulfilled by the Applicant.Two ( 2 years ) passed without the Applicant meeting any listed Conditions then Covid struck.A further 2 years and 2 months, a follow up with IWC Compliance and presentation to the Shared Ombudsman Service, of non Compliance had 2 responses sent to me...of further communication with ( Ombudsman Service )“ may not be answered “ and my “ being referred “ on the imposed not met Conditions referred to The NSW Ombudsman.Is it Council’s Policy to enforce all Conditions imposed in DA’s or a liberal application to excuse certain individuals or organisations of non compliance to part or all Conditions.I believe the imposed Conditions were to relieve any impacts to neighbours and address any concerns to lifestyles and property. | * The Environmental Planning & Assessment Act is the facilitating legislation that enables enforcement of conditions imposed under a DA, through the Notices & Orders regime of the Act. This specific matter have been investigated and re-investigated with the Ombudsman office and responses have been provided. Investigation into new issues may occur following a report to Council via a customer request
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| Why does council waste ratepayers money on thing like the voice, when it is not councils business. Why does council waste money on things like Pride week when only a very small % of inner west are LGTQTI+? Why does council waste money on "climate change? | * Council’s priorities are decisions of the democratically elected body of Council.
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15 specific issues have been lodged through Council’s Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system for staff to follow up.

Ends.