

MONA VALE

B-Line addition sparks fears over fate of trees



Mark Edwards, Lyn Illingsworth, John Illingsworth and Phil Walker are worried about the fate of trees at Village Park. Picture: Troy Snook

Activists afraid plan for bus stop will destroy green sanctuary around Village Park

Robbie Patterson

PLANS to add B-Line services to Mona Vale have raised concerns that mature trees around Village Park could be destroyed to make way for a bus stop.

Friends of Mona Vale have handed a petition with 180 signatures to Pittwater state Liberal MP Rob Stokes calling for all trees and the Village Green mound they surround to be preserved.

The group's spokesman Phil Walker said the trees were a barrier around the park, creating a sanctuary-like atmosphere.

"That mound and trees were put in 1975 by Warringah Council's landscape architect," he said. "It is something that was designed to separate the Vil-

lage Park from six lanes of traffic in Barrenjoey Rd

"Without it the park is exposed to traffic noise and is unsafe for children. It really destroys the value of Village Park."

Mr Walker said adding B-Line services and a 74-space commuter carpark in Mona Vale "won't solve anything", while filtering cars to the carpark would only increase congestion.

He said it would cause more people to drive into the city when they could not get one of the spaces available.

But Mr Stokes said that after community consultation the number of trees to be removed was reduced by seven, with more planted.

"The original proposal involved the removal of up to 33 trees, to be offset by plant-

ing 140 new trees," he said. "The revised proposal involves the removal of up to 26 trees, to be offset by planting 118 new trees."

Another Friends of Mona Vale member John Illingsworth criticised the artist's impressions provided by Transport for NSW as "deliberately misleading".

He said the plans would cut into Village Park to create the B-Line bus stop, which was not indicated on the artist's impressions.

The Friends also expressed concerns over existing bus stops at Park St to the north and Waratah St to the south.

Mr Walker said it would force residents to walk further to get on to a mode of public transport.

But Mr Stokes said the

aim of the B-Line was to decrease dependence on cars.

"A new, smaller bus stop for local services that continue towards Bayview and Church Point is proposed to be introduced around the corner on Pittwater Rd – near the intersection of Bungan Lane," he said.

"The overall objective of the B-Line is to provide more frequent and reliable bus services between Pittwater and the city, and make it easier for more commuters to choose public transport."

He said Northern Beaches Council would be given \$2.5 million to assist with other parking improvements.

Mr Stokes said the new bus stop would "consolidate all east-west and north-

south bus stops into the one interchange, reduce congestion and provide better access to parking and businesses within the Mona Vale CBD".

A Transport for NSW spokesman said construction was approved and a building program was being finalised.

"Up to 26 trees and shrubs will need to be removed to carry out construction work and to make space for the new northbound indented bus bay at Village Park," he said.

"However, these trees will be replaced and we are working with Northern Beaches Council on plans to plant mature replacement trees in their new location prior to the removal of any existing ones."