



Draft Mona Vale Place Plan Public Exhibition and Consultation Outcomes Report

June 2017



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IMAGINE MONA VALE

D R A F T
M O N A V A L E
P L A C E P L A N

SEP 2016

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1. Introduction

1.1 BACKGROUND

On 3 June 2013 former Pittwater Council resolved that Mona Vale town centre would undergo a place planning process.

From early 2014 Council staff undertook a comprehensive engagement and research process, which captured input from over 5000 stakeholder groups and individuals. These findings are captured in a separate publication, 'Imagine Mona Vale - Engagement Summary for Mona Vale Place Plan' which was presented to Council at its 17 August 2015 meeting.

Building on the community aspirations captured in the Engagement Summary, the draft Mona Vale Place Plan articulates key priorities and next steps for Mona Vale town centre. Between August 2015 to January 2016, TfNSW was working together with Council to look at scenarios for Park and Ride commuter parking sites. During this time, on November 2015, TfNSW and Council conducted a joint engagement session to discuss B-Line, Active Travel and draft scenarios for the town centre. By May 2016, expert consultants finalised supporting analysis for development feasibility including affordable housing, traffic flow and parking strategy. These studies have provided the data and analysis to substantiate the concepts put forward in the draft Mona Vale Place Plan.

The draft Mona Vale Place Plan was scheduled for a Council meeting on 16 May 2016 however Council amalgamation took place on 12 May 2016 and the report was put on hold. The draft Plan was reported at a Northern Beaches Council meeting on 27 September 2016. In this meeting, the Administrator resolved that the Draft Mona Vale Place Plan was to be placed on public exhibition for 48 days.

This report brings together the feedback and opinions that were collected only during the public exhibition of the draft Plan.

1.2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

In summary, this stage of engagement covered:

- Four drop in sessions: 5 October, 14 October, 29 October and 6 November Mona Vale Market Day

- A large public event: a community meeting 29 October with attendance from the Administrator, General Manager, Executive Managers, Council staffs and consultants.
- Promotion via direct invitation/letter drop, e-newsletters, social media and local press
- Meetings, discussion and feedback from residents, business chambers, and community groups
- Direct conversation with Council staff via phone or email with interested parties who seek some more information about the draft Plan.

The feedback contained in this report is reflective of the responses received and should not be construed as being statistically representative of opinion within the local community.

The report summarises the feedback according to the format through which it was received. Due to issues of comparability of data across different formats this data cannot be meaningfully aggregated.

The report is best used as snapshot of:

- the various perspectives within the community regarding the potential future of Mona Vale
- the range of issues raised.

While in places the report may provide quantitative information, it is cautioned that the information in this report should not be used as a straw poll for a particular position for the following reasons:

- some of the feedback received provides more nuanced or qualified responses than outright support or opposition
- where a general view on the nature of responses is quantified it does so within the context of a single format/data set that cannot be validly compared or aggregated
- the primary intent of the report is to identify and explore rather than quantify the range of issues and perspectives within the community.

1.3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FEEDBACK

The consultation period generated a significant response with feedback received as follows:

- Approximately 190 attendees at a community meeting
- Approximately a total of 300 attendees at various drop-in sessions
- 14 hard copies submission sheets
- 98 email submissions
- 7 letter submissions
- 2 online submissions via 'Your Say'
- A petition with 186 signatories
- Social media and Manly Daily comment page.

2. Executive Summary

As noted in the introduction, the consultation process generated significant community debate and a large volume of feedback was received. While the feedback presented divergent views some common themes consistently emerged. These were:

- general opposition to the increase of height limit from 4 storeys to 6 storeys in a fear of building bulk and overshadowing
- concern over increase in traffic and population
- fear over the suburb looking like Dee Why or Manly
- concern over losing trees and green space at Village Park
- the feeling that the amalgamation was causing the Council to disregard community wishes.

The remainder of the feedback could be categorised below:

- the need to improve the infrastructure
 - » increase public transport including the lack of service to the west (ie. Chatswood, Ryde, new hospital precinct)
 - » better pedestrian and bicycle network
 - » more car parking or better parking strategy
 - » more road as a solution to relieve traffic congestions
 - » more schools and parks
- maintain and improve the 'village' atmosphere
 - » local community shopping, no large shopping centre
 - » more pedestrian areas, less through traffic, pedestrian only streets
 - » low rise or no development at all
 - » maintain and increase green spaces
 - » concern over night-life, transient population and anti-social behaviour

- concern over affordable housing
 - » protection over employment generating area
 - » how to maintain affordability, not developers making profit scheme
- scepticism around active transport and B-Line
 - » undulating topography is considered as a challenge
 - » most people prefer the convenience of driving their cars
 - » uncertainty around the timing and delivery of the B-Line project

When considering the future of Mona Vale Town Centre and its continuing relevance to its future generation, a wide range of needs and views to be accommodated. Presently it would appear that much of the feedback and debate is based on maintaining the existing lifestyle and uncertainty of the infrastructure augmentation.

From the feedback Mona Vale Town Centre is valued as a local centre which has a 'village character'. Most agree that Mona Vale Town Centre has some development opportunities and can be uplifted, therefore 'placemaking' activities and 'enlivening' the centre are generally supported. To support the viability of the uplift and to take advantage of the potential infrastructure improvements, a certain number of developments and population are required to guarantee consistent patronage within the centre. However, for a large number of people who provided feedback to this process there remains some uncertainty around the ability for the existing infrastructure to cope with the additional population. For this group of respondents there is the view that if Council retains Mona Vale Town Centre as is or with limited change, the following can occur:

- safeguards for the current lifestyle and community amenity are secured
- protection against anti-social behaviour and transient population

Significant feedback stated the 'forced amalgamation' tried to push through the Plan to benefit developers agenda, therefore suggested for the new elected Council to decide on the Plan.

3. Detailed Feedback

This section provides an overview of the feedback received in various formats as follows:

- A Petition with 186 signatories
- 98 email submissions
- 14 hard copies submission sheets
- 7 letter submissions
- 2 online submissions via 'Your Say'

Approximately 300 people at various drop-in sessions and 190 people also attended a public meeting convened by Council to discuss the draft Mona Vale Place Plan. Notes of this meeting can be found in Northern Beaches Council Your Say webpage.

3.1 PETITION

A petition was received supported by 186 signatories. Signatories were described as being residents within the vicinity of Mona Vale and people who frequent Mona Vale Town Centre. The introduction to the petition notes the importance of protecting the current lifestyle and suggests the need for further community discussion. The petition stated the following:

- Mona Vale Place Plan is out of character for community village style, there is no need for another Manly.
- The Plan is for developers to make a profit and will cause a traffic gridlock.

3.2 SUBMISSIONS: BY EMAIL, YOUR SAY AND HARD COPY

About the submissions:

- 98 email submissions
- 14 hard copies submission sheets
- 2 online submissions via 'Your Say'

The majority of these forms were received in October and November (84%). Of the 114 respondents, 30% of respondents were concerned about the increased building heights and 11% predicted more congestion.

Seventy two percent (72%) were not supportive of the Plan and the remaining 28% were supportive of the Plan.

Some quotes illustrating the views of respondents who object to the Draft Mona Vale Place Plan:

"The Mona Vale Place Plan has some positive features including cultural and recreation facilities but has not attempted to solve many problems but in fact would create more congestion. The redesigning of Bungan Street gives a false impression as the construction of residential and high rise along this and other section of Mona Vale could only lead to more traffic congestion."

"It is hard not to be left with the impression that the fundamentally undemocratic move to force council amalgamations, the moves of the unelected officials to try to drive through the plan and some questionable pieces of legislation making it easier to privatise crown land are fundamentally just efforts to cover up the fact that government on a state and local level have no strategic vision how the population growth they oped can actually be handled. We do not believe forcing Sydney inhabitants to accept the same lifestyle and quality of life no matter which suburb they live in is the right approach."

"The US inspired 'Place Planning' template used to prepare the Draft Place Plan appears inconsistent with Australian protocols relating to urban design, community participation and better planning. As critic James Russell and others have argued 'Placemaking' dogma is 'largely bogus' and not really evidence based as claimed by its followers."

"Building density more so than building height was discussed (at the community engagement sessions). I supported the suggestion the some increase in housing density within the 400m zone from the Mona Vale CBD should be considered. I never once though heard any proposal for the increase on building height from the existing 13 to a 23m height limit."

"I am concerned about the prospect of social housing tenants being housed in affordable housing projects (constructed by social housing providers) located within an industrial area or as suggested in the Draft Place Plan actually on top of industrial uses and activities."

"The transition planning will be key to any successful update or replacement of the current hall. Community group such ourselves are intimately connected to place, and might never recover from the loss off continuity that could happen in a traditional two year demolition and replacement timeframe."

"So why are we contemplating such a grandiose makeover for our village if the social benefit could be provided with much lower impact? Can we make some relatively low cost improvements that would deliver the same benefit. These and other options were not even given air in the Place Plan. And amazingly there was virtually no reference to sustainability as a prime focus."

"I for one never wanted to amalgamate with Warringah and Manly because I did not want Mona Vale and the other suburbs of the Pittwater area to look like Collaroy, Dee Why and Manly. Nothing above four stories should be acceptable North of Narrabeen Bridge."

Some quotes illustrating the views of respondents who support the Draft Mona Vale Place Plan:

"As a resident, the Place Plan is not just about jobs it is also about creating a vibrant creative arts and culture hub in Mona Vale. For the local residents and business community having theatre and conference facilities right here in Mona Vale will be a major boost for sustainable tourism events and art creative enterprises I believe it is an "urban myth" that we have to lose our natural beauty of the beaches and Pittwater by adopting the Place Plan."

"The Heart Foundation supports the general intent to transform Mona Vale into a more vibrant, well connected, livable and sustainable urban heart through place planning, creating walking and cycling friendly environments, improving access to public transport and local employment and enhancing public space. We commend Northern Beaches Council for the progressive consideration of active transport infrastructure within the draft plan, but emphasis that supportive communications strategies and behaviour change program needs to be linked to supportive built environments."

"The node is strongly justified by the continual lament regarding lack of employment in the area; and by the need for (slightly) more affordable housing. Higher density development can support higher capacity of transport, as I suspect even our poor excuses for busways - not even reaching copper standard - require more patronage than is possible with current densities."

"I am 30 and have grown up in Mona Vale, I was really looking forward seeing the changes proposed by the plan. Mona Vale was going to be brought to life and activated through great planning principals!"

"Thank you for a factual reminder about the reality and impact of projected population growth and for a very comprehensive draft plan. Change will occur. An increase in population means more accommodation, employment generation, entertainment, community spaces - together with a transport network that provides bus and train nodes and interchanges - one day perhaps. But it will be needed. The draft plan is a good reality check."

"NSW Northern Sydney Local Health District agrees with the view put forward by the proponent that Mona Vale Town Centre is divided by wide, busy streets and roads (Bungan, Park and Pittwater) which segment it, making it difficult for pedestrians and cyclist to negotiate safely. The strategies in this plan to prioritise pedestrians over motor vehicle is commendable, as is reactivation of Mona Vale Town Centre and linking it to Mona Vale Beach and Mona Vale Hospital."

"The concept of people not cars is wonderful - we need to support a culture shift out of cars and to walk just a little further."

"The Mona Vale Place Plan is a document that addresses the change for Mona Vale in the context of growth in the region. Without such approach, we will be subject to a plan imposed upon us by government agencies with no context about the needs of the community."

3.3 LETTERS

There were seven (7) letter received in total, three of which are in support of the Plan.

In summary, these three letter commend:

- the progressive approach to planning and focus on pedestrian and cyclist
- affordable housing provision
- activation and livability of the town centre

The rest of the letters have issues with:

- potential traffic generated by additional people
- increased building heights
- the feeling that Mona Vale will become another Manly or Dee Why.

3.4 SUMMARY OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND MEDIA CLIPPINGS

The majority of the social media postings and media clippings were not in favour of the Draft Place Plan. The main concerns were:

- building height increase from four storeys to six storeys
- the possibility for increased traffic and loss of parking
- community scepticism around affordability
- council amalgamation in favour for developers making profit

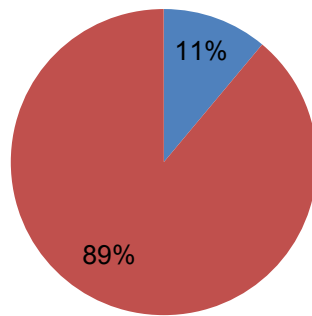
The remaining postings mentioned a wide range of topic, such as:

- highlighted potential improvements in transport options and more pedestrian and cycle path to ease congestion
- the double standard after amalgamation. An amalgamated council is meant to form unity. Why does Dee Why have different rules than Mona Vale?
- A revitalised heart would allow Mona Vale to be a major hub on the northern beaches.

4. Snapshot

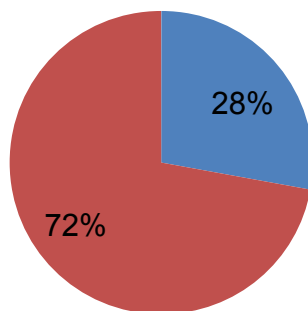
Support of DMVPP

■ For: ■ Against:



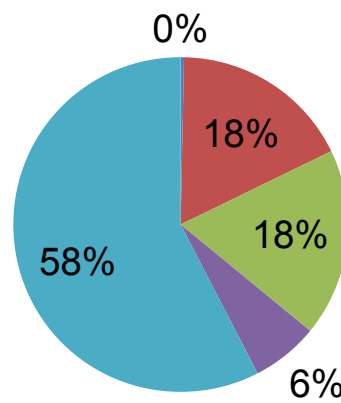
Support of DMVPP (excludes petition)

■ For: ■ Against:



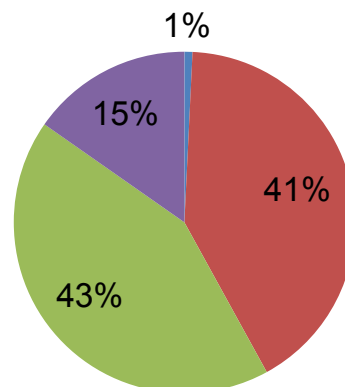
Submissions

- Received in September: ■ Received in October:
- Received in November: ■ Received in December:
- Received in January:



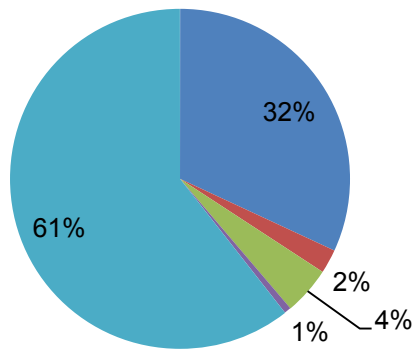
Submissions (excludes petition)

- Received in September: ■ Received in October:
- Received in November: ■ Received in December:



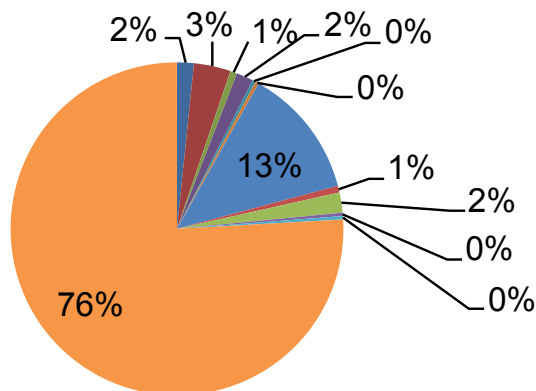
Format of Submission

■ Email
 ■ Letter
 ■ Submission sheet
 ■ Online - Your say
 ■ Petition



Location

■ Avalon
 ■ Bayview
 ■ Church Point
 ■ Clareville
 ■ Elanora
 ■ Manly
 ■ Mona Vale
 ■ Narrabeen
 ■ Newport
 ■ Warriewood
 ■ Willoughby
 ■ Not Specified





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