

League Committee Report: Sept 2014 – March 2015

1. Brooklyn Planning

This is progressing very slowly. In late 2014, HSC commissioned a survey of Brooklyn and river residents as well as visitors. The survey was not about 'solutions', but rather about identifying 'issues' and views. The results are on the HSC website

(<http://www.hornsby.nsw.gov.au/council/major-projects/brooklyns-future-a-community-survey>). Not surprisingly parking, maintenance of environmental values and cultural heritage, and station access came out on the top of the issues list.

At HSC's meeting of 11 March, Council resolved that:

A project brief for a planning strategy for Brooklyn be prepared that addresses the key findings of the survey as well as project scope, issues, resources and governance arrangements including, but not limited to, key stakeholder and community reference groups.

The project brief be reported to Council by August 2015.

DIL clarified this process with Council staff. In essence:

- HSC staff will prepare a brief for Council consideration at its 12 August meeting. This will outline the scope, process and associated costings for the development of a 'Master Plan' for Brooklyn.
- This brief will be online and circulated to community members (those who participated in the survey, as well as key community groups, including DIL) about 10 days prior to the meeting.
- Community members can make representations to Councillors on the project brief prior to the meeting.
- If Council endorses the brief at this meeting and schedules funding, the planning process will commence.

The DIL Committee will keep an eye on this process and engage as appropriate.

2. Peat Island

On 9 Dec, Gosford City Council endorsed the preparation of a planning proposal that could see key land in the area rezoned. This proposal is now being prepared, and Council maintains that "the preparation of a planning proposal for this rezoning will include public exhibition". Once finalised, the rezoning proposal will have to go through the State Government 'Gateway' process which may involve further consultation. If the re-zoning is approved, long tender and development application processes will follow.

What happens at Peat Island and what happens in Brooklyn are connected. On both of these subjects the River Communities are

combining into a River Coalition for lobbying. The first meeting of this Group was end November and, at our request, Bronek acted as our representative. As the work progresses, Dangar interests will be represented through the League by Bronek and Trevor Kanaley. We will keep everybody up to date as this gathers momentum in 2015.

3. IPART

The Independent pricing and regulatory tribunal (IPART) completed its review of Private Ferry Operations, and this includes the Brooklyn-Dangar service. This time IPART review took a different approach. Rather than to consider only cost inflation, they went back to basics and calculated for each route a fare required to ensure long-term sustainability based on likely traffic and efficient operation. In the case of our service, the operations were found to be efficient but the fare level below the economic level. Consequently they determined a fare increase of 30c of which 20c is covering increasing costs and 10c towards reaching the long-term level needed. Unfortunately, this increase will still leave fares below the economic level calculated by IPART. Following review of the draft PART determination and discussions with Rick, the DIL made a brief submission to IPART commenting on this increase. In this we encouraged IPART to consider in future determinations the 2014 study outlining the so-called "bus model". In this model, future increases are moderated by increased Government subsidy reflecting environmental and social benefits. We will work with IPART in 2015 to minimise future increases in line with this model.

4. Wildlife signage

This project is nearing completion. David Bolton (HSC's Catchment Remediation Education Officer) reports:

Signs are currently in fabrication stage (i.e. milling of timber) with the finishing detail to be completed in the local industrial estate.

The designer will be contacting me when they arrive in Hornsby for routing and sign attachment, so I am hoping this will occur sooner rather than later.

Upon delivery I will be handing the signs over to Phil Murdoch to coordinate site preparation and installation.

Many thanks to DI community members for their input and persistence with this project.

5. Jetty signs

There's a free paddle pop (or alternative shop item of a value not exceeding that of a paddle pop) for those who put their signs up within 2 weeks from the date of this meeting (see VOK). No retrospective paddle pops – sorry to those who complied early.

6. RFS cat's eyes

The island RFS has installed 'cat's eyes' on the island. They indicate a fire hydrant, and they are very visible at night, when the most dangerous fires occur.

Headlights and torches pick the cats eyes out easily. The RFS has about 3 minutes worth of water on board the truck, so finding a hydrant quickly is vital. These cats eyes used to be standard on the bitumen.

In addition to the cats eyes, the RFS are maintaining and upgrading signage, pruning, painting, testing, ordering essential maintenance, and maintaining a database of the hydrants with status updates and a residents' Adopt-a-Hydrant program. This is an entirely voluntary effort towards keeping our community safer.

The brigade would prefer cats eye wherever the road surface allows, but if residents are concerned about them, they want to work out a solution that suits all.

The Brigade is seeking advice on any 'cat's eyes' issues affecting DIL members.

We have updated the Dangar Island Rural Fire Brigade Facebook page, and members are welcome to comment there, or contact Jonathon Sykes, Senior Deputy Captain DIRFB directly (jonathan.sykes.globe5@gmail.com)

7. Internet access

There has been little progress on this issue, and there is unlikely to be in the short to medium term.

An alternative option is to approach Telstra to discuss the option of installation of a signal relay station. The fire shed would be the logical position to service the black spot. We stress the importance of reliable access for not only residential customers, but also RFS and CFR inter-officer communications during emergencies.

Of course this is not ideal for internet access – users would have to be with Telstra, and the cost is ~\$60/mth for 8GB download. Not ideal, but better than nothing???

Member thoughts welcomed.

8. Mullet Mail

Reminder that closing date for contributions to the next edition is cob 9 March

9. Wharf upgrade

Following the discussions at the last DIL General Meeting - August 2014, Bronek (then President) confirmed that we would on behalf of the residents push hard to ensure the verbal promise (from the HSC) that a community meeting would happen.

This need was born out of large community concern with regard to the proposed design clearly not having taken into account some basis disability/invalid/elderly access within the design eg., Excessive length of Jetty, Stable Structure/secure, No protection from elements, Ferry operations could be curtailed in bad weather, Lighting.....

It was suggested that a 'Ferry Users' Group get a case together for the meeting to highlight some fundamental missing elements.

On 10 Nov 2014 Bronek was contacted by Council engineer Alan Boyd who proposed an initial meeting with a limited number of DI community attendees and the wharf designer to discuss issues that had been raised with Council. He was of the view that such a meeting might iron out issues and identifies possible compromises with the design, prior to Council holding a public meeting with all interested islanders to discuss their upgrade proposal.

Bronek referred the request to the League, and the DIL Committee agreed at its meeting of 15 Nov to attend the meeting and suggest to Council a small group to represent interested parties/concerns.

A meeting was held on 20th November 2014 at HSC with the following islanders: Terry Dorrough (representing residents, in particular the disabled and frail ferry passengers), Rick Stockley (ferry owner/operator), Cybele Shorter (RFS Captain), Peter Wolfe (DIL), and Ant Schinckel (DIMC).

At the meeting Council tabled a revised design with a shorter jetty (18m shorter) for discussion. At that meeting Council agreed to:

- Undertake additional studies into the wave, wind and current forces and impacts on ferry operations;
- Ensure unimpeded access for the fire boat at low tide;
- Further explore surfacing and other safety options, and;
- Consider amending the design to incorporate a wind break on the western side of the pontoon

Council then asked those in attendance to consider the proposal and get back to them with their views.

The island group met again soon thereafter to discuss further and prepare a consolidated response, which was sent to HSC in the form of a letter on 23 Dec 2014, and endorsed by Rick, Terry, Cybele, Peter and Vanessa. This letter is tabled at today's meeting. In brief, the letter:

- Recognised and supported the efforts of HSC to provide 'triple

benefits' to the community through the design of a jetty with disability access, casual berthing and small boat mooring objectives in mind, recognising the 2013 majority decision of DIL members in favour of an 'integrated' solution.

- Sought clarification from HSC on the relationship between HSC's disability access work and that of the proposed mooring cooperative, in particular: The details of the DIMC development application process in terms of steps and likely timing; the risks associated with having an extended ramp and pontoon structure in the absence of the proposed mooring facility, and; the availability of HSC funding for disability access at a later date if, to avoid the risk of compromising disability access in the event of the mooring facility not proceeding, HSC construction was delayed until a determination is made on the DIMC DA.
- Strongly encourage direct engagement by Council with the broader island community prior to any final decision being made, and
- Offered to meet again with HSC, NSW Roads and Maritime, and RFS district management to further explore and refine the options and issues prior to any public meeting.

Council replied in a letter dated 15 January 2015, included an updated "Wave Climate Report" from the engineers SMEC (both tabled at today's meeting), and agreed to another small group meeting prior to an open community forum. In brief, their reply stated that:

- The proposed layout is only a 'concept plan' and can be modified to ensure unimpeded RFS access, and to incorporate design modifications to provide the highest quality facility for public pontoon users.
- The DIMC would need to submit a planning proposal for 'rezoning' of the river at that location. This would be considered under the State Government 'Gateway' process. If the re-zoning is successful, a DA would then need to be lodged and 'determined' by Council. This process is likely to take 12-18 months.
- No such re-zoning or DA process is required for the public wharf upgrade.
- The pontoon has been designed to operate as either an integrated solution or stand alone (partial build), and to be fully stable without support or protection from the mooring facility.
- There would be no compromise on disability access if a 'partial build' solution were constructed, and that disability users should be adequately catered for and generally should have a better level of service than is provided by the existing stepped wharf.

The second meeting took place on 17 February 2015, with representatives from the original interests and RFS district command. At that meeting, the interested parties expressed their ongoing concerns, particularly with respect to the updated wave climate report and it's

implications for ferry operations, and the RFS boat access. HSC said they can envisage the 3 options (below), and agreed that further consideration by island residents would probably be required in an attempt to resolve which option to proceed with. HSC indicated that although a tender has been called to construct the pontoon no action to construct it would be taken until all substantive issues raised were resolved.

- 1) Minimal solution with the pontoon close to end of existing wharf.
- 2) Proceed with current concept design
- 3) Do nothing

As a result of the meeting, HSC has undertaken to:

- Have SMEC prepare a response to the concerns about the wave climate report
- Consider the RFS concerns in the next concept design review
- Have SMEC source additional costing information for options

HSC will undertake broader community consultation, but has yet to advise a date for this.