SUBMISSION FROM ANNANDALE PRECINCT TO THE BAYS PRECINCT TASKFORCE.

ISSUES AND NEEDS FOR THE BAYS PRECINCT, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO ROZELLE BAY.

The Bays Precinct, which consists of White Bay, Blackwattle Bay, and Rozelle Bay, is a very large area of Sydney Harbour and is surrounded by suburbs of Sydney that are now almost totally residential in nature, and much of that is of high density living. Like many areas of Sydney, it has been witness to the shift from industrial and port activities to non port uses, accelerated by various governments’ sale of public land and approval of numerous high-density residential sites with the result that now over 60,000 residents inhabit the precinct.

These densities continue to rise as more units are constructed and with this expanding population comes the needs for improved open space and infrastructure to service this increased population. The Bays Precinct, with its extensive foreshore and current potential open space, provides opportunities for all of these to be realised.

The foreshores of these bays are valued land to all in the surrounding inner-city areas and, as such, should be for public amenity and enjoyment.

The issue of significant toxic sediments of the bays, especially Rozelle Bay, and the need for remediation of the adjoining land infill areas—as was necessary for the creation of the Bi-Centennial Park, located on the southern side of the bay—needs addressing. (see details in previously provided reports by Knott and Johnson, and by Prof. Gavin Birch)

All future planning decisions must now recognise the foreshore as an area for public access and include the provision of a pedestrian and cycle path.

Development must be of a bulk and scale that is non-intrusive to the adjoining residential areas.

It is of great importance that Sydney Harbour’s “Bay Precinct” remains in public ownership. Opportunities exist to provide passive open space, sports playing fields, health and community welfare facilities, as well as access for the many passive water-based recreational activities. These must be realised now.

Suitable local native plantings of trees and shrubs would encourage wildlife to return to the foreshore.

PROBLEMS WITH THE BAYS

1. POLLUTION LEVELS

Pollution levels are extremely high, especially in both Rozelle and Blackwattle Bays (refer previously provided docs—Knott + Birch) and, as such, should not be disturbed, by any uses, such as those of motorized craft.
TRAFFIC

Major problems already exist with increased traffic generated by growing population and increased development on some areas of the Bays. Rozelle Bay sites, in particular, cause major problems with vehicles entering the City West Link from James Craig Road.

FORESHORE

Large areas are currently alienated from the public. This is especially so in Rozelle Bay, at the Head of Blackwattle Bay, and for most of the length of White Bay. This is a totally unacceptable situation which necessitates prompt rectification.

The current ‘users’ of the sites do not respect the environment, on land or sea. They show no appreciation for it, or for the rights of the residents of the surrounding areas to have access to their foreshore and to have operations on the sites that respect the total environment, and adhere to all regulations governing such uses.

FUTURE PLANS FOR THE BAYS PRECINCT

All future plans should:

a) Consider the current toxic pollution levels of the Bays sediment and any use should be of such a nature that does not disturb this. Ensure the very toxic sediment of Rozelle and other bays in the Precinct is not disturbed by any permitted development.

b) Ensure public access to foreshore is delivered. Access was promised in the now outdated Rozelle Bay Master Plan, but was never realized.

c) Maintain public ownership;

d) Limit development in its extent and its bulk and scale (height);

e) Create uses compatible with surrounding high density residential areas;

f) Provide amenities necessary for quality of life for the rapidly increasing inner-city population;

g) Create environmental benefits to the Harbour foreshore and marine habitat;

h) Should be climate positive;
i) Respond to the existing geography and built forms along points, headlands, valley cuttings, bridge structures etc. and maintain view corridor sharing;

j) Include the reopening, especially at peak hour intervals, of the Glebe Island Bridge, for pedestrians and cyclists;

k) Contaminated sites are to be remediated and readapted for non-contaminating uses;

l) Increase provision for public transport, especially ferries and light rail, to more areas of the Bays Precinct;

m) Must not result in significant increase of private vehicle usage;

n) Include the provision of strict enforcement of development controls and subsequent compliance on an on-going basis (unlike what currently is not in place);

o) Not have a negative impact on the health, safety and overall quality of life of residents and the marine and land eco-systems;

p) Include adaptive re-use of existing structures, eg: the former White Bay Power Station, disused silos etc, and development of these should be actively pursued by the Government and relevant Government Departments as a joint initiative;

q) Include development of the air space over the Rozelle Goods Yards, and be in keeping with surrounding residential areas;

r) Include publicly accessible art, and creative ‘industries’;

s) Recycling of materials and means of on-site rain water retention and use;

t) Acknowledge and reflect the history of The Bays.

**ROZELLE BAY**

Significant levels of toxins in the sediment of this bay and its surrounding land infill, limits and controls any development on both land and water.

Rozelle Bay has sea depths of 2-5 metres and is extremely shallow at the Head of the Bay. At low tide there is some 10-15 metres of exposed mud/sludge.

Johnston and White Creeks, which flow into this area of the bay, carried, for over 100 years, toxic industrial pollutants into these waters. This still occurs to a lesser extent. Additional pollution, over the same period of time, came from the abattoirs, soap factories, and tanneries, which operated on the foreshore sending...
toxic waste into the bay. In more recent times these industries were replaced by
timber storage businesses, which treated the timber on-site with pesticides.
Surface run off sent some of this into the bay, and other was absorbed into the
soil. This necessitates remediation of both land and water prior to any
development being approved, or as a condition of approval.

The Government bodies responsible for management of these public foreshores
has permitted the development and expansion of sites occupied by the ‘Super
Yacht’ facility, the Heritage Fleet, the barge maintenance company, and the three
operations on the Head of the Bay--Seawind Catamarans, NSW Maritime and
Devine Marine. Adding to these problems is the apparent approval of a 630 plus
boat storage facility on this Bay.

The relevant authorities have failed to ensure that the plans, which were
designed to ensure foreshore land and the bay were better managed to achieve
orderly planning outcomes, and reduced pollution, have not been implemented.
The Master Plan is not out of date and the situation has deteriorated over the ten
years since the plan was developed. The Head of Rozelle Bay is particularly
worrying as it is overcrowded and polluted on land and water, and there has
been a significant increase in operations, while there has been a failure to
implement the DA allegedly designed to better manage operations and pollution.

**PROBLEMS ARISING FROM THESE FOR ROZELLE BAY ARE:**

- Disturbance of toxic sediments by the increased size and numbers of
  motorized watercraft;

- Decreasing of the area for passive water based activities; rowing;
  kayaking; dragon boats etc;

- Health and safety issues within these sites and their surrounding areas;

- Encroaching by ‘Super Yachts’ onto areas previously occupied by the
  Heritage Fleet;

- No current public access to Annandale foreshore, which, given the
  suburb’s history in the development of Sydney’s architecture, planning
  principles and government, is totally unacceptable.

- Traffic increase due to current uses, causes congestion at the intersection
  of City West Link and James Craig Rd., making it very difficult in morning
  peak hours for vehicles to exit from Annandale into the flow for both the
  Anzac Bridge and Victoria Rd. heading towards Drummoyne. This will be
  significantly worse should further development be approved and the boat
  storage facility be built!

- Head of Rozelle Bay is a very small section of infill land approximately
  150 metres wide on the Bay and at maximum width to the adjoining roads
of 35 metres, and, due also to the extremely shallow polluted waters, is not suitable for any development.

**SUMMARY FOR THE NEEDS OF ROZELLE BAY**

- The Head of Rozelle Bay must be re-zoned as Open Space. The historic suburb of Annandale is the only Sydney Harbour suburb whose residents do not have access to their foreshore. View corridors of the harbour and its bridges, should be re-instated.

- Retain the Heritage Fleet on its Rozelle Bay site, (with some expansion achieved by lessening the area occupied by the Super Yachts---they were to go after the 2000 Olympics!) as it does not generate traffic or add to the pollution of the bay. Its heritage nature is a positive for the residents in the surrounding suburbs.

- Abandon the proposed 630 plus boat storage facility;

- Retain---but clean up---the current barge operation site.

- Sydney Slipways P/L to develop as planned, and sited under the Anzac Bridge.

- Lessen the overall impact of the Super Yacht site, by reducing the size of the operation on both land and the sea. It just continues to expand, and now has an increased number of very large motorized craft which anchor further into the bay, and further along the foreshore, thus increasing the negative impact on the environment.

**OVERVIEW**

- Develop The Head of Blackwattle Bay in such a manner as to maintain its current ‘show boat’ maritime usage but to restore the open foreshore views flowing through to Wentworth Park.

- Re-develop the Sydney Fish Markets on their current site

- Cease building the White Bay Cruise Ship Terminal as there are other options, as delineated in The Hawke Report.

- Retain the Glebe Island Bridge as a functioning thoroughfare for bikes, pedestrians etc, especially in peak hours. A functioning heritage item!

- Actively seek developers for adaptive re-use of heritage buildings such as White Bay Power Station

- Utilize airspace of the Rozelle Goods Yards, in a manner appropriate to the surrounding area.

- Improve public transport—particularly expand areas serviced by ferries and extend the light rail into the area of White Bay.

- Open the foreshore to the public for pedestrian and cycle paths
- Create areas for passive and active recreation in recognition of the extremely low open space ratio to residents in adjoining LGA’s.

- The vision for the future needs to take into account the growing population of the Bays Precinct.

- Land use decisions must serve more than just financial outcomes

- Development must adhere to the best practice of urban design and must be sympathetic to the scale and character of surrounding residential areas.

- Focus on providing public domain

- Protect and preserve the natural and built heritage of these bays

- Protect the passive uses of the bays

**SUMMARY**

- An immediate moratorium must be put on all DA’s approved and on those awaiting consideration

- No leases should be renewed or new ones negotiated while the Taskforce develops a Strategic Plan, which is then followed by a Master Plan, or a framework.

- There is to be no more ad hoc planning decisions by the State Govt. or other planning authorities.

- Community consultation is of prime importance in the continuing process of deciding how the Bays Precinct needs to be utilized.

- Public ownership of the Precinct must be retained.

- Greater provision for Open Space and infrastructure in an area of Sydney which is experiencing an ongoing increase in population densities and ever diminishing facilities.

- Improved means by which residents of adjoining suburbs can connect. Currently main roads, City west Link etc. isolate residents in the LGA suburbs.

This document is to be read in conjunction with The Over Lay plans Nos. 1-10 prepared by architect David Boddam-Whetham, and the accompanying document known as “Bays Precinct Community Needs” (4/4/2012 Pyrmont Community Group). These were developed by several groups from around the B P, of which we, the Annandale Precincts Committee, were one such group.

Gretchen Gamble –( Annandale Precincts’ rep. for community input to the process of The Bays Precinct Taskforce.)