

**Deputation by Mrs Margaret Sandford Re: UP24/29 POS The Esplanade, Mt Pleasant**

**"I'M BECOMING A PARK!"** - proclaimed the banners at each end of The Esplanade and Kishorn Road park site for months. **"I'M BECOMING A PARK"** - remains the heading to the online public engagement page for 13 The Esplanade Open Space.

Since the Council resolutions of April and July 2023, the public reasonably believed this to be true. People have since based decisions on whether to live or invest in the CBAC area on the City's commitment to the park being completed by the end of 2024, as evidenced by the City's unanimous amendments to the CBACP, which includes the two parks, submitted to the WAPC last year.

Then late last week came the secretive, 11<sup>th</sup> hour, rescission motion. Whilst the rescission motion has just been withdrawn, the consequent reputational damage to, and lack of trust in, this Council is **immeasurable**. People have rightly been very angry and distressed. One cancer sufferer I know has barely been able to eat and sleep since.

Given the number of glaring errors in the withdrawn rescission motion, and my understanding that another rescission motion is contemplated, I urge elected members to abide by their duty under clauses 4 and 6 of CoM Code of Conduct for Elected Members to: *"act with reasonable care and diligence; base decisions on factually correct information; act with honesty and integrity, avoid damage to the reputation of the local government; and to be open and accountable to, and represent, the community in the district"*.

Know that the **only** way this Council and mayor can restore any confidence in its processes is to approve the budget amendment and Cr Ross' Alternate motion for The Esplanade park tonight.

The stated purpose on The Esplanade park engagement page is: *"to understand how our community will use the new public open space for years to come and to seek feedback on design elements"*, **not** to provide excuses for councillors to bring rescission motions to, yet again, explore **"various development options"** for the Esplanade and Moreau Mews sites. Been there/done that!

Whilst an undisclosed number of participants in the relatively small survey did raise parking as an issue, the real problem appears to be that the City itself has been unaware of how many available car bays there are in the Ogilvie Precinct, so how can the public know? The Officers' Advice note states there are **20** public car bays on Ogilvie Road, Mt Pleasant, with 5 more due on completion of Cirque 2. In fact, there are **110** car bays on, or accessible from, Ogilvie Road! There is no need for parking at 13 The Esplanade and 64 Kishorn Road. We need to maximize its size.

The DBCA's approval of The Pavilion pub at the rowing club was based on City officers' advice that no additional parking was required, as the 40 bays on site were surplus to planning requirements. Change the policies, don't retain parking on the park so people can more easily drink and drive!

Given the officers confirmed at last week's ABF that there is no shortage of parking, then to remove parking bays from the Kishorn Road reserve should reduce the budget needed to install the car bays, and make for a safer, less obstructed, greener, parkway through to The Esplanade.

The April and July 2023 resolutions to convert Moreau Mews and The Esplanade to 100% POS were made by Council, including the Mayor, knowing full well the estimated budgets required, as these

were disclosed in the Agendas. The budget figures to be approved tonight should not come as any surprise. Delay, however, will undoubtedly lead to significant cost increases, so delay should be avoided at all costs.

As some new councillors are unfamiliar with the sorry history of The Esplanade Park site, I will briefly summarise the key points derived over my last 4 years on this Council:

1. The site was the location of the Canning Bridge Senior Citizens Club for decades.
  2. On 17 March 2015 Council resolved to demolish the Club building, with no prior community engagement on the proposed demolition, apart from discussions with the Senior Citizens Club itself.
  3. In 2018, without any prior public consultation as to alternative uses for this site, the City engaged Colliers International to run an extensive Request for Proposal process for the sale or commercial ground lease and redevelopment of the site.
  4. Throughout 2019 and into 2020 the City engaged Element Consultants to undertake the “At Canning Bridge” social research and place planning process, which concluded that there needs to be 2 urban piazzas (to act as) central spaces for events, social activities and informal gatherings (1 north and 1 south of Canning Highway). That plan that was never disclosed to Council until 2022.
  5. Meanwhile, as a result of Collier International’s process, Council proceeded to consider a proposed long-term ground lease of the site with an aged care provider.
  6. At its meeting held 19 April 2022 Council resolved 11 votes to 2 not to proceed with the lease because, after 14 months of lease negotiations with the proposed lessee, the terms of the draft lease remained unfavourable to the City. People were also concerned about the parking and extra traffic which would be generated by such a development on this site.
  7. At the February 2022 Annual General Meeting of Electors, Mr Barry Jones of Mt Pleasant moved a motion to rezone The Esplanade Site to POS; and Mrs Fay Kenny of Applecross moved a motion to rezone the Moreau Mews and Kishorn Rd site to POS. Both motions were overwhelmingly carried.
  8. At the June 2022 OMC Mrs Joanne Cicarelli of Mt Pleasant presented a petition and multi-signature letter to Council amounting to some 1,300 signatures seeking the conversion of The Esplanade site to POS. The proposal to convert the 2 sites to POS was strongly supported by the Melville City Climate Action Network ; and the CBACP Council Reference Group.
  9. The April and July 2023 Council resolutions to convert 100% of the two sites to POS were made following several Council resolutions which required extensive, lengthy and ultimately unsuccessful, investigations into alternative sites for POS, and other uses for CBAC POS sites. The merits of including parking, and other options for the site, have already been
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exhaustively examined, and debated on, by Council in the public arena and should not be reopened. There are other income generating sites, such as the former Melville Bridge Club, plus block at the corner of Stock Rd and Canning Hwy, which Council should focus on.

10. Of the record number of 588 submissions received during the CBACP review consultation period, 496 people or 84% specifically referenced concern about lack of green public open space and supported the CRG Report. The Hatch Roberts Day recommendations adopted the CRG position that the City must contribute to the public realm in order to improve local amenity, attract quality development, and reach density targets by making the area much more appealing to buyers and businesses alike.
11. The CBAC area falls far short of the Department of Local Government's "**Public open space strategy guide for local governments**" recommendation that: "*For infill developments that are much denser than typical, 6.5m<sup>2</sup> of active open space per resident should be set aside as active open space*". Given density targets in Canning Bridge, this would require 6.7 hectares of open space. These two parks make up only 10% of that target.
12. The Minister for Planning, Mr Carey, has recently met on 2 occasions with City planning officers, the Deputy Mayor, and members of the CRG. Mr Carey expressed glowing approval for the proposed POS as being vital to the success of the Activity Centre. He was staggered that no provision for POS was made by Council at the inception of the CBACP in 2013.

To vote against Cr Ross alternate motion, or the Officer's Recommendation, will result in a waste of at least 5 years of Council's and officers' time, and hundreds of thousands of dollars paid to consultants, such as Element and Hatch Roberts Day, upon whose reports Council has based its decision that these two sites be developed as 100% POS.

Will the Department of Local Government view any deferral of this motion as an improvement of the Council's track record of delayed delivery of fair and timely decisions?

After already waiting 11 years since the 2013 inception of the CBACP, it is untenable for the community to wait indefinitely for the delivery of POS. Orderly and proper planning requires a decision tonight, to provide certainty to both developers and the public alike, and to maintain the integrity of the decision-making process that followed and reflected proper community consultation.

Ian Peacock will briefly speak to the City's climate policies and the need to approve Cr Ross' alternate motion urgently to address tree canopy loss and heat island effects.

