



Lane Cove Bushland & Conservation Society Inc

P.O Box 989, Lane Cove NSW 1595

ABN 50 518 833 556

Email: lanecove_bushland@yahoo.com

Web. www.lanecovebushland.org.au

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Mr Craig Wrightson,

The General Manager, Lane Cove Council

Cc: The Mayor, Cllr Pam Palmer and All Councillors

LCBCS Submission: Bob Campbell Oval Draft Masterplan- 'SU8090'

The Lane Cove Bushland & Conservation Society forwards our Submission to the General Manager and all Councillors on the Bob Campbell Oval Draft Masterplan. The LCBCS has been advised by its members, an architect and town planner, bushland experts and other professionals.

This Draft Master Plan is only a 'sketch' and is not sufficient for Council to commit large funds in an accountable way or for the community to make a proper assessment of this proposal. There is an absence of fundamental detailed information required to inform proper decision making or community consultation. This is a major impediment for the community and Council to achieve a mutually satisfactory outcome, in order to diffuse the divisions and concerns the proposal has engendered within the community.

Recommendations (overarching)

- The LCBCS and the community needs more detailed information, including a detailed Masterplan and sections through the site to ensure all the various components can fit comfortably together – as currently they look squeezed in.
- The more detailed Masterplan needs to be accompanied by a Survey Plan showing all existing features prepared by a surveyor, showing rock formations, tracks, pathways, trees, parking etc.
- Fully scaled and dimensioned Design Drawings prepared by a qualified landscape architect, based on the Survey Plan are also required as a basis for decision making.

In the absence of this detailed information, which is fundamental, we have the following comments and questions about the Draft Masterplan. *Please note we have used the same numbering system as on the Draft Master Plan.*

Specific comments and recommendations

1. New Synthetic field (90m x 50m):

The field appears too large for the space; can it be further reduced as it is not a FIFA standard soccer field anyway?

The proposed field occupies so much of the space that there appears little space left over for other users, whereas when the field was open grass, it was available for everyone, to be used informally for

all sorts of play and activities. In addition there will be the retaining walls and fences which will further impinge on the remaining left over areas outside the field's fence.

The Council's landscape architect should also mark up the junior cricket layout which does not appear to be adequate by any standard. The cricket field is reduced from the existing and appears too small even for junior cricket. In the absence of further information, the cricket field appears to be included as 'window dressing'.

Recommendations

- That the field be further reduced to say, 45m as it is not a FIFA standard soccer field anyway.
- The landscape architect should review the adequacy of the field's buffer zone with reference to the standards, which indicate 5 meters in part, whereas the current design appears to show 3 metres all around.
- The various organisations that will be using the field should be identified and should sign off that the layout and dimensions are adequate for their purpose.
- We want more information about the materials for a synthetic playing surface as there are huge environmental and health considerations, whether the field will be elevated or not, the type of infill chosen and their health impacts for kids etc.

2. Existing Bushland

Recommendation

- We totally reject any intrusions into the adjacent bushland reserve, for eg. a track over the other side of the creek, as a way of increasing the footprint of the oval. The existing bushland is protected wildlife habitat and should not be reduced; it provides many ecological services for residents, such as soil stabilisation, shade & mitigating pollution & climate change.
- The bushland is habitat that must be protected and considered during any upgrade, according to the 'Bushland Plan of Management for Lane Cove' and SEPP 19, and which should guide all decisions for the adjacent bushland. Council's Bushland Management should be consulted.

3. New fitness track

Please refer to our comments below for Area 4 and 7.

4. Enclosed off-leash dog area

It is contrary for good wildlife habitat protection that the enclosed off-leash dog area is situated near the entrance to the Gore Creek bushland and track, encouraging off-leash dogs into bushland, endangering local wildlife.

Recommendations

- We recommend that the Gore Creek track entrance be well signed, with much larger than usual font stating 'Wildlife Sanctuary - Dogs Must Be on Leads' and the penalty. Rangers should enforce this until the message gets through, as to this day, a large percentage of dog owners ignore the very tiny signs and take their dogs off-leash into Lane Cove bushland reserves.
- We want more information as to how the fencing would work to separate dogs from the BCO.

5. New amenity building - Further details are required.

6. **Approx. 50 space Car park**

Recommendation

- The landscape architect should review the layout of the parking area as the Draft Masterplan design is inefficient and it is also difficult to see how it can be used as a netball area.

7. **Link to existing bush track**

The main link to the Gore Creek track and bush reserve is along the western side of the field and adds to our argument (following) for the need to enhance the natural assets on this western side, and so reflect the beauty of some part of the entire Gore Creek Reserve.

The Gore Creek foreshore track that links from the carpark to Ford Street is another bush walking track that is not marked on the plan. The drawing does not detail this access pathway.

Recommendations

- The space on the western side of the field, on the rock escarpment, should not be fenced and be left in a natural state as it is the link to the Gore Creek bushland track
- The Gore Creek foreshore track should be considered and marked on the plan
- Please see also our comments for Area 16.

8. **New native vegetation area**

10. **New playground and fitness equipment**

11. **New BBQ picnic area**

Areas 8 - 11:

There is far too much crammed onto the foreshore, a most scenic area (Areas 8 - 11), particularly for residents. Only a tiny percentage of the entire Masterplan's open space is dedicated to passive enjoyment of the actual Gore Creek Reserve, so the BBQ - picnic area is totally inadequate. The area, being right on the waterfront, should be for passive enjoyment, a tranquil green recreation area to enjoy the scenic beauty, not an unsympathetic, unnatural, possibly noisy playground and with gym equipment.

Recommendations

- Increase the passive picnic area on the foreshore, maintaining native vegetation and a scenic quality. All these areas (8-11) should be kept as one natural, green, scenic foreshore area to enjoy passive recreation, for BBQ-picnics, children playing on sympathetic natural 'wild space' landscaping such as rocks, while native vegetation is a must.
- **The preservation of these scenic qualities must be a top priority.**
- No structured exercise or playground equipment should be on or near the foreshore- it should be the one place left for quieter relaxation; Council is trying to squeeze too many elements into a limited space. In contrast Blackman Park is large enough to accommodate more activity.
- The pathway is crammed too close to the rock face, and shouldn't be there- there should be a separation between the rock face and the activity areas to maintain a natural setting and maximum the visual beauty and experience.

12. **Existing vehicular access road and shared user path (SUP)**

13. New shared user path (SUP)

We require more detail about the existing vehicular access, and about the SUP, in particular about the loss of trees.

14. Upgraded lighting

Recommendation

- Lighting must not shine into the adjacent bushland reserves as it may affect nocturnal animals in their wildlife habitat and also have a devastating impact on the ecology of the bushland. Extended hours should be considered in relation to these impacts and the 'Bushland Plan of Management' for LC must be consulted.

15. New netball training court for off-peak times

16. Perimeter fence

We are concerned that all of the small, remaining areas adjacent to the field are all fenced off for off-leash dogs. There should be some place for passive enjoyment, such as sitting, reading or walking.

We are particularly concerned that the western side allows off leash dogs as it is the main access to the Gore Creek bushland reserve. It should allow people to exercise and passively walk without being bothered by dogs. The fence appears to run into the rock face here.

Recommendations

- That the area on the west of the field should not be for off-leash dogs.
- Do not place a fence to the western side rock face - the fence should end at the fields corners, not extend to the rock face, for aesthetic reasons, as this destroys the beauty of the area and the experience of visitors.
- Furthermore, the pathway on the western side should not be close to the rock face as there are some particularly beautiful trees on this side.
- Vegetation along the rock face needs to be preserved and enhanced.
- Ugly things such as the brick practise wall and lighting poles should be removed
- There should be some hours where dogs must be on leash in the Reserve (as Blackman Park).

Our recommendations highlight the need to ensure that the current users of the Gore Creek Reserve- other than sport groups and dog owners can share the space for activities equitably. This is especially important since the Reserve and BCO is the only large open space parkland in Greenwich.

Due to its unique setting, intrinsic value and the scarcity of green open space, the preservation of the natural and scenic qualities of the parkland must be a top priority.

We require further community exhibition of this proposal that provides a detailed Master Plan, a Survey Plan with fully scaled and dimension Design Drawing Sections, as we have requested.

We request a written response to our Submission that answers our questions and responds to our Recommendations.

Yours sincerely,
Shauna Forrest, President,
on behalf of the Lane Cove Bushland & Conservation Society