

The Plan of Management (PoM) and associated Masterplan for the 'Church Point Reserve and surrounding precinct'

Update on progress

Introduction

The following update is provided in relation to the **Plan of Management (PoM) and associated Masterplan for the 'Church Point Reserve and surrounding precinct'**.

This update on the progress of the PoM provides a summary of completed projects; projects currently under investigation; and those still to be done.

Having recently successfully completed the Commuter Wharf upgrade, the current project under detail investigation is the new seawall, boardwalk and carpark at McCarrs Creek Road immediately to the west of the Mini Mart and through to the Cargo Wharf.

Consistent with Pittwater Council's resolution, two design options are being assessed – one being the adopted PoM and the other recently submitted by a newly formed group the Friends of Church Point. To help facilitate this process a Working Party has been re-established which includes 2 x representatives from the 4 x local Associations as well as the Friends Group. Independent specialist consultant advice has also been obtained to provide more detail design, costings and a critique of each option.

The Working Party has met on two occasions with another meeting to occur within the next month. The 2nd Meeting provided the opportunity for each Group to make a verbal submission (a précis provided as separate notes) and subsequently further written submission(s).

The following also includes some running commentary on the two options so far as well as the recommended forward path.

Background – adopted PoM – extensive consultation and process

The Plan of Management (PoM) and associated Masterplan for the 'Church Point Reserve and surrounding precinct' was adopted by Pittwater Council in 2009. This marked the culmination of many years of toing and froing as to what should occur at Church Point to address the often competing demands as well as to address the specific requirements of the Lands Department of NSW.

The PoM process included extensive consultation that involved offshore and mainland community groups as well as the broader community; Pittwater Council staff and State Government Agency staff and the elected Council along with specialist input. The PoM was an iterative process and includes a number of options that were considered as well as detail sufficient to provide preliminary costings for the recommended works associated with each precinct along with funding and indicative user pays. The PoM includes the technical input from a number of specialists and was independently peer reviewed.

The Church Point PoM represents the distillation of what are often competing views and hence provides a balanced outcome within an adopted PoM framework to progress improvements for the overall Church Point precinct. Both Pittwater Council (owner as well as Care, Control & Management) and the Department of Lands (owner of Crown Land) agreed to the PoM.

For convenience, the Masterplan has identified three interconnected precincts.

Important issues being addressed as part of the PoM and current status include:

Across the whole Precinct

- **User pays car parking scheme** - adopted and Annual pass with fee introduced for longer term commuter parking at Church Point - this recognises this ongoing commuter use need on a daily basis; satisfies the Lands Department requirement for a fee for such use on a Crown Reserve; provides a form of demand management for carparking; and with these proceeds along with Pay & Display income can be used to provide carpark improvements.
- **Local land sales required to fund components of the PoM outcomes** including matching funding for grant applications to expand use of those funds - land sales are currently being investigated and process underway. This involves a reclassification and rezoning of the land along with a Public Hearing. Note, the land in question is not part of the Historic Church Point Cemetery.

Precinct One – McCarrs Creek Road

- **Renewed and expanded Commuter Wharf** to improve safety and amenity - completed - this has significantly reduced the former multi-stacked dinghy tie-ups
- **User pays commuter wharf scheme** - adopted and annual fee introduced - this helps to repay part of the loan to provide this expanded facility as well as a contingency to fund future works such as relocation of the gantry.
- **McCarrs Creek Road carpark and footpath safety improvements west of Ross Trevor Reserve** - completed - this has provided a safer parking configuration (removes vehicle overhangs on to road) and footpath space
- **McCarrs Creek Road foreshore stabilisation with new seawall on new alignment including foreshore walkway (boardwalk) between Mini Mart and Cargo Wharf** – this is currently under detail investigation
- **Provision of a carpark area on McCarrs Creek Road between the Mini Mart and the Cargo Wharf** - this is to provide additional carparking for the overall precinct - this is currently under investigation in conjunction with seawall project
- **Relocation of Commuter Wharf gantry** - once adjoining roadworks have been completed the gantry will be relocated to a more central location
- **Connection of eastern end of Commuter Wharf to central wharf precinct** – this is a future option to improve amenity by providing a more direct connection with the main carpark and remove the need to access around the roadside of the Mini Mart.

Precinct Two - Thomas Stevens Reserve and wharf/foreshore surrounds

- **Provision of expanded foreshore access around Pasadena** - negotiated with Lands Department - completed
- **Upgrade to Thomas Stevens Reserve forecourt** - To be done (Tbd) subject to funding from local land sales
- **Replacement of former dilapidated fixed Church Point Wharf** with new structure in keeping with historic context - completed - this has injected a whole new lease on life for this important local icon

- **Expanded wharf curtilage** to provide added amenity and safer connection to McCarrs Creek Road precinct - Tbd subject to funding from local land sales & grant funding
- **Relocation of pontoon wharf** once expanded wharf curtilage is provided
- **Public art and landscape treatment**

Precinct Three - Church Point Reserve / Main carpark

- **Main carpark safety and amenity** - funding from user pays and Pay & Display income
 - Improved lighting - completed
 - pavement repairs - carried out & ongoing
 - provision of motor cycle parking area - space provided
 - support for shared use car scheme - support & space provided
 - improvements to disabled parking area - completed
- **Church Point reserve foreshore stabilisation and scenic walkway extension** - To be done (Tbd) subject to funding from local land sales and grant funding
- **PoM previous deliberations on car parking options**
 - In compiling the PoM for Church Point a number of carpark options were considered. The assessment was facilitated by a Working Group that included representatives from the following resident associations as well as Council and State agency staff and specialist input:
 - Bayview Church Point
 - Church Point Reserve
 - Scotland Island
 - West Pittwater
 - **Carpark options previously considered included:**
 - Decentralised carparking at Rowland Reserve, McCarrs Creek Reserve and Mona Vale Town Centre - these were not supported having regard to the conflict with current users, the aversion of more remote locations and the need for yet another transport modal change for users including the possible need for a mini bus connection
 - Decking of the main reserve carpark at Church Point either below ground, partially above/below and at grade/above - although more cost effective to build over the top of the existing carpark, this has more of an impact on local resident amenity and has a significant displacement of carparking during its construction - hence this facility was not supported at the time and instead on balance the McCarrs Creek Road facility was adopted – is there now support for a deck over the main carpark ????
 - Expanded private carpark arrangement within Holmeport Marina - this is on a Lands Department leasehold and was explored with the lessee but not able to be progressed
 - A new carpark area on McCarrs Creek Road between the Mini Mart and Cargo Wharf - various carpark layouts were considered for this location as part of the PoM process (including different carpark configurations not dissimilar to the current alternate option) along with the merits of each. Following this critique the adopted PoM included a carpark arrangement for 60 vehicles at current road level with future scope to place a single deck over for an additional 60 vehicles. This carpark arrangement has 90 degree carparking on both sides of a one way service aisle that can allow vehicles to pass. It should be noted that the current road edge is badly deteriorated in part and hence requires a new seawall on a new alignment

even if the carpark does not proceed. Each of the car park configuration variants also requires a new seawall on a new alignment. The PoM alignment is on an arc and this still allows the majority of dinghy berths to occur on the inner face of the newly constructed Commuter pontoon facility.

The current focus is on the following projects:

- **Current Project - Precinct One - McCarrs Creek Road foreshore stabilisation including new carpark facility between Mini Mart and Cargo Wharf**
 - McCarrs Creek Road replacement seawall / foreshore stabilisation and foreshore walkway - Tbd
 - Provision of a carpark area on McCarrs Creek Road between the Mini Mart and the Cargo Wharf - tbd - this is to provide additional carparking for the overall precinct

- **Current status of current project – alternate option vs adopted PoM layout**
 - Following a design submission by a Group known as the 'Friends of Church Point', Pittwater Council resolved to further examine their alternate design option for the carpark and compare this with the adopted PoM design.
 - The Friends Group design initially involved parallel parking on both sides of a single lane, one way service aisle with a primary aim of reducing the overall extent of road realignment and reclamation and with additional landscape treatment. The objective is to reduce extent and cost.
 - This carpark configuration as presented was shown to be too tight with technical deficiencies/non compliances, access and user amenity difficulties, safety concerns and reduced carpark numbers. This has subsequently been iteratively amended by the Friends Group to other variants with the latest design including a combination of parallel parking and angle parking along a marginally wider one way service aisle with pathway and landscaping treatments.

- **To facilitate this alternate design comparison:**
 - The Working Party has been reconvened with 2 x representatives from each Association mentioned above along with two representatives from the Friends Group. Note the Friends Group is not a residents association.
 - The Working Party has met on two occasions with a third meeting to be held within the next month
 - To facilitate the critique of options an independent consultant, Hyder, has been engaged to provide a more detailed analysis and assessment of the Friends option vs the adopted PoM design incorporating updated Geotechnical and survey information along with structural detailing, costings, methodologies and overall critique of safety, amenity and constructability.
 - The Hyder report has been presented and discussed at the 2nd Working Group Meeting and is included on Council's web page.
 - Each Association along with the Friends Group has been provided the opportunity to make verbal and written submissions and each has utilised this opportunity. The notes from the 2nd Working Group Meeting have been distributed to the Working Group
 - An initial meeting with SIRA & Western Foreshores has been convened to discuss user fees for the various options to repay the loan(s) required.

Summary comparison

As mentioned previously, either of the carpark options requires a realigned seawall and infill behind and involve a similar cost. The seawall is the most expensive works item and hence it is vitally important to get this alignment right for both now and to provide flexibility into the future. It is again noted that a new seawall and walkway is required at least over the failed section of foreshore

- The net estimated cost of the carpark options are as follows:
 - Friends Option – straight alignment – 54 cars – net cost \$4.1M
 - PoM Option – curved alignment – 60 cars – net cost \$4.1M
 - PoM Option with deck – 120 cars – net cost \$6.1M.
- Both car park options involve a similar seawall construction and amount of reclamation and both have a similar overall cost - the estimated net cost with half cost of seawall and public boardwalk cost removed (to be funded by Council) is \$4.1M.
- **For the adopted Church Point PoM option:**
 - Being on a continuous arc (similar to the Commuter Wharf) this layout compared to the Friends option has marginally more width of reclamation in the central portion and less at the ends
 - The PoM road alignment provides significantly improved sight distance for the current sharp bend in the road at the Mini Mart resulting in a smoother transition
 - Has sufficient carpark footprint to facilitate the provision of an upper deck with landscape screening treatment in front
 - McCarrs Creek Road can remain open under 2 way traffic for most of the seawall and construction activity and then swap over - hence far less disruption to the travelling community, in particular Pittwater residents and bus users to the west of this part of Church Point along McCarrs Creek Road
 - Provides for 60 spaces 'at grade' with the future option of 60 more spaces on an upper deck - hence potential 120 car spaces in total - this provides for future flexibility, maximises potential use of footprint already created and hence adds to the total spaces and cost effectiveness of those spaces.
 - Provides for a conventional 90 degree carpark layout on each side of a driveway aisle of 5.8 metres that still allows vehicles to pass each other through the facility – hence safety concern of possibility of vehicles extending on to McCarrs Creek Road at entry is removed
 - The net cost of \$4.1M for 60 spaces equates to \$68,000 per car space
 - With the deck option at \$2M extra equates to \$33,000 for each additional car space on the deck
 - Average cost for each of the 120 spaces is \$50,000 per space.
 - Inner face of dinghy berthing can be retained however there may be a need to provide some short 'fingers' to replace some loss near the main gantry – it should however be noted that the PoM design did not have any berthing on the inner face and the Commuter Wharf alignment was adjusted so that inner berthing which is a more effective use of the pontoon facility could be accommodated and it was always recognised that the spaces around the drop off area were temporary only.

- **For the Friends latest option:**
 - Being a straighter run it has tighter radius bends at each end and hence the sight distance improvement is less at the Mini Mart bend
 - The run off the seawall and extent of infill in the central portion is marginally narrower and conversely wider at the ends
 - This narrower configuration requires McCarrs Creek Road to be placed under traffic management for most of the seawall and construction activity - hence significantly more disruption to the travelling community, in particular Pittwater residents and bus service users to the west of this part of Church Point along McCarrs Creek Road
 - The resultant carpark footprint is too narrow to facilitate the provision of an upper deck in the future - as such the option for an additional 60 spaces as per the PoM is not possible/foregone for what is a marginally narrower configuration
 - This option has wider landscape strips adjacent to the carpark and between the roadway and the foreshore path
 - This option provides parallel parking on one side of a 4.2m aisle with 45 degree parking on the opposite side. Whilst technically compliant this results in a mixed carpark layout with an aisle that is too narrow to pass - this may become a safety issue at the carpark entrance which is just around the corner at the Mini Mart bend should a vehicle seeking to enter the carpark be left overhanging onto the roadway
 - This option provides fewer spaces - 54 once 2 x disabled spaces are included. This equates to \$76,000 per space with no opportunity to use this same footprint for future additional spaces in a single deck addition - hence rules out flexibility for future 60+ additional spaces
 - This option would require a higher user pays given the fewer spaces achieved
 - Some of the suggested landscape / artistic treatments would impact on current uninterrupted views of the waterway
 - More of the inner face berthing can be retained – see also comments above regarding PoM adjustment of the Commuter Wharf

Funding of Carpark improvements

The financial contribution from Council to the overall project is as follows:

- \$800,000 representing half the estimated cost of the seawall construction noting that the existing seawall is currently non-existent between the Cargo Wharf and the Commuter Wharf gantry and in need of modification over the remaining length. This is made up of \$500,000 from the former EI Levy and \$300,000 from the RMS handover funds
- \$500,000 representing the cost of the public boardwalk which is a precinct pedestrian upgrade outside the core of the carpark project - this is intended to be funded from local land sales and grant funding.
- Total financial contribution by Council is \$1.3M.

Removing the Council contribution, the net cost of the carpark options are as follows:

- Friends Option – straight alignment – 54 cars – net cost \$4.1M
- PoM Option – curved alignment – 60 cars – net cost \$4.1M
- PoM Option with deck – 120 cars – net cost \$6.1M.

The proposed funding for precinct carpark improvements is from a loan to be repaid by the carpark user fees, including Sticker parking as well as a share of the Pay & Display income. A specific financial reserve has been established which is accumulating funds that can be used for that purpose.

User Pays

Preliminary financial modelling has been carried out which indicates that the loan of \$4.1M over 20 years for the at-grade carpark can be accommodated for a user fee of approximately \$350 p.a. indexed (about \$1 per day) and would be subject to detail design and updated cost estimates/tender prices.

With the deck option with an added construction cost of \$2M and with a higher user fee for the 60 allocated spaces (say min \$4,500 pa) the general user fee for all other spaces would be less. However, as part of the current carpark demand management it would not be intended to drop the fee below the current fee. Hence the fee would be \$300 p.a. indexed.

As an alternative use arrangement, for the deck option but with no permanent spaces and hence no premium rates the user fee is likely to be approx \$560 p.a. for all sticker parking (about \$1.60 per day) which is about double the current fee

It should be noted that it is more cost effective and far less disruptive to construct the whole carpark including upper deck at the one time, otherwise if done separately the upper deck foundations would need to be retrofitted and the users of the carpark displaced for the duration of the construction period.

Mainland carpark comparisons

- **DA requirement for two car off-street parking**

As a further comparison, it is noted that for most properties on the mainland there is a development consent requirement that carparking for two cars be provided with the development and in most cases this needs to be located behind the building line (6.5 metres setback).

At Church Point, in this general vicinity this requires the construction of either individual or shared driveways in generally steep terrain with excavation/retaining structures or suspended structures – this can involve significant driveway crossings plus internal driveways plus carstand/garage structure - the cost of which can be an expensive proposition when converted to a cost per car space achieved (leaving aside the value of the land involved).

- **'Multiple vehicles access driveways' over public land**

In addition, some properties also rely on 'multiple vehicles access driveways' over public land that collectively services a number of properties – these are deemed to be private accesses that are the collective responsibility of the users to directly provide and maintain. In this context, and as a more specific local example, immediately to the south and above the proposed Precinct 1 carpark facility are the upper properties off McCarrs Creek Road. These 7 or so properties, in addition to separate driveway and carparking also require a separate multi-vehicle access driveway that runs parallel to McCarrs Creek Road on public reserve land. This deemed private driveway on public land is some 300 metres long with an average width of 3.5 metres plus some limited passing/parking has a combined area of almost 1,000 sqm to service about 8 houses /16 cars, not including internal private driveway and parking arrangements (some which in turn can involve long lengths of private driveway/ROW).

With private driveways and carparking/garaging the combined area of land involved is on average approx. 3,000sqm or 187 sqm per car. The estimated cost to provide such carparking is of the order of \$50,000 per vehicle or \$100,000 per property.

- **McCarrs Creek Road centralised carpark facility**

In comparison, the centralised and consolidated hardstand of the proposed carpark facility immediately below on McCarrs Creek Road has an area of approximately 1,800 sqm for 60 cars which is approximately 30 sqm per car or with the deck option included with another 60 cars is approximately 15 sqm per car (plan view). Hence the McCarrs Creek Road carpark facility is less than half to one quarter the public land take per car facilitated and hence a far more effective use of space albeit involving some infill.

The remoteness of the offshore properties with no practical way of accommodating and transporting cars offshore means that the default is mainland carparking - hence the proposed collective facility on McCarrs Creek Road was adopted in the PoM as the preferred centralised and convenient carpark extension in a location that can be tucked against the rock cutting and suitably landscaped.

What this comparison shows is that mainland carparking consumes a considerable amount of land with costly construction to accommodate 2 x cars off road and as such a centralised car park facility for a significant number of cars is not an unreasonable proposition. It also shows that users of such a facility should pay a reasonable cost for its provision and user pays indicates that the rates are also not unreasonable.

Compatible Landscape treatments

As a further note, the Bayview to Church Point scenic walkway which takes in a number of kilometres of foreshore has long lengths with limited separation and no landscaping between the road edge and the path. Where landscaping is provided this is generally only 1 to 2 metres in width with low shrub plantings. This recognises that the great appeal of this foreshore route is being able to take in the spectacular views of the waterway vista not only as a pedestrian but also as a cyclist, bus passenger or motorist/passenger – i.e. a clear line of sight.

The proposed McCarrs Creek location is no different given that there is no current landscape separation and the retention of the current uninterrupted view is vitally important. Landscape screening of the carpark from the path / waterway can be achieved by specific plantings as already proposed in the PoM. Landscape treatment between the road and the pathway needs to be in keeping with the current amenity/view retention. In this context the suggestion of a high 'art' wall barrier separation is not recommended.

The road edge treatment proposed is a special profile kerb that is used along medians e.g. along the central median at Newport Shops. Some low key fence on the carpark side may also be incorporated to direct pedestrians to the central crossing point to the carpark

Some further notes:

- The Council resolution was to investigate the alternate 'CP Friends' option as presented to Council at that time and compare that with the already adopted PoM option and not embark on a continuous iterative approach for a range of alternate options.
- The PoM only requires a reduction in cars from the main Church Point Reserve carpark if an agreement can be reached with Holmeport to provide carparking on that site – as indicated this has not been possible to date. This proposed reduction is not associated with the McCarrs Creek Rd facility
- Some carparking will be lost next to the Cargo Wharf on the eastern side however this could in part be replaced with a reconfiguration of parking on the western side as identified in the PoM
- Irrespective of carpark options there is a pressing need for a new seawall and foreshore walkway along the subject section of McCarrs Creek Road that still needs to be provided
- The mention in the Hyder report of further options involving a deck over the main carpark (Options 4a & 4b) was for benchmark comparative costings only. It must be noted that decked carparking over the main carpark was considered as part of the PoM process and was rejected. Attempts were also made to have partially or fully underground however this was significantly more expensive to construct (excavation cost & disposal, perimeter retaining works, ongoing dewatering, added servicing costs) and had a massive displacement of existing carparking during its construction. From our understanding, the Church Point Reserve Association was particularly against this as an option given the more direct impact on adjoining residents and possibly a major reason why this Association formed.

Where to from here:

- A third meeting of the Working Party will be held - this will allow the additional submissions received to date to be further discussed and critiqued along with likely fees & charges with a view to compiling into a report back to Council, consistent with Council's resolution.
- Once the carpark design layout has been decided by the elected Council, including confirmation of the user pays obligations to fund the works involved, Council will be in a position to provide detail estimates; to source loan funding; to complete Part V and REF assessments, compile tender documents and go to tender with a view to construction in a future Delivery Plan.
- The land sales process is to be further progressed through the established asset conversion process. As mentioned the land sale proceeds provide vital funding for a number of the PoM improvement outcomes, in particular foreshore and recreational improvements. This converts the current land that has very little public utilisation to outcomes that will have extensive and continual utilisation and high community benefit.