

15 April 2024

Ms Barbara Stack
Senior Asset Management Officer
Northern Beaches Council

By email: barbara.stack@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au

Dear Barbara,

Thomas Stephens Reserve Revised Design

We have reviewed the updated proposed upgrade to Thomas Stephens Reserve and have the following comments.

We are very concerned with the removal of all but one tree as well as the proposed replacement species and size of the trees, especially the casuarinas which are quite a hardy tree and provide shade and amenity in the reserve.

We are also concerned with the planning of the central space and the relationship of the different functions.

The primary users of Thomas Stephens Reserve, those residents who use the reserve on a daily basis, are from both offshore and the Church Point - Bayview locality. The primary functionality of the reserve must be geared towards these users.

The current design gives primacy to weekend bike riders by putting a very long bike rail directly adjacent to the mailboxes as well as locating the garbage bins in this area.

This will cause conflict between residents getting their mail on a daily basis and intermittent weekend visitors. Bicycles are vehicles and they should not enter the pedestrianised reserve. The prioritisation of vehicles over people is inappropriate and recognised as a very poor urban design outcome that does not put people first.

The other impact of the current design is that it has shrunk the available space within the reserve itself. This will impact the use of the space, especially for civic functions historically held in the reserve (eg Anzac Day ceremonies).

We ask that Council rethink the extent of removal and replacement species of the trees in the reserve.

We also ask that Council reconsider the design of the reserve specifically the bike rail and bin location and a low seating wall as shown on the attached sketch that will allow a ledge for people to use when accessing the mailboxes. This will locate the bicycles where they belong, outside the reserve away from people with direct access to the road. The proposed seating ledge will provide structure and legibility to the reserve enclosing and defining the space.



As a member of the Church Point AAG, Michael Wiener, President of the WPCA is happy to meet with Council and Council officers to assist in achieving the best outcome for this very important space.

Yours sincerely,



Michael Wiener
President

Copy:

- *Northern Beaches Mayor and Councillors*
- *Member for Pittwater, Rory Amon MP*
- *Todd Dickinson, Director Environment and Sustainability, Northern Beaches Council*
- *Jeremy Smith, Project and Asset Manager, Northern Beaches Council*
- *Andrew Johnston, Community Liaison Coordinator, Northern Beaches Council*



