

CULMINATION OF 3½ YEARS' WORK:

Darling Point Plan Adopted

"Here we have a plan which takes into consideration, and gives force to, the opinions expressed by the various resident groups, and in this way I think this detailed plan is unique." Ald. A. L. S. Teece was speaking to Woollahra Council at its meeting last week when it adopted the detailed plan for Darling Point.

Ald. Teece, who is vice-chairman of the council's local planning committee, said he was glad to have brought before the council the first of the detailed plans—that the council moved to have implemented some three and a half years ago.

"There have been no plans in this State which have had such an aim as has been expressed here—to preserve the character of Darling Point," he said. Preservation, as he pointed out, was the keynote of the plan.

The main features of the plan are:

- Preservation of historic buildings, such as the area around St. Mark's Church, and on the northern tip of the point and on areas on which Babworth House is built down to the Swifts, Bishopscourt, Lindsey and other buildings on the north-east corner of the point.

- A reduction in the 2 (d) redevelopment zone.

- A reduction in plot ratios. By doing this, the council seeks a reduced incentive to develop and its aim is to make it unattractive to redevelop.

- It aims to keep low buildings on the slopes so that outlooks on Darling Point are kept and preserved by all.

- It aims at producing buffer zones when the noisy commercial area near Edgecliff comes into full operation, so that the residential area is mainly at the base of the peninsula.

- On the question of traffic, the plan's aim is to preserve the environment. This will be done by improving the existing roads through widening, and a one way system (one of these) Ald. Teece pointed out was not favoured by the Police Traffic Branch.

- In other suggestions put forward by the residents had been one for wharfways which was considered another means of preserving the amenity of Darling Point.

In outlining the main points of the plan, Ald. Teece said he hoped it would become the instrument by which the council would guide its policy for Darling Point.

Residents Consulted

The scheme was first evolved in 1959 when an interim code for Darling Point was brought down by Clarke Gazzard.

In preparing the final code, he said, considerable time had been given to consulting the community and residents of Darling Point.

"Their views were sought and considered by the consultants and later on by officers of the council.

"After the plan was accepted early in 1971, officers of council revised the plan and incorporated in it a number of requirements and opinions of the local residents.

"We have a code that offers final preservation of Darling Point through the community's views."

Ald. Teece also pointed out that the aim was to group the higher rise buildings closely to the Edgecliff Railway Station, which would be in operation in 1974 or 1975.

"There has been no attempt made, especially in view of the residents' wishes, to put "through traffic" through Darling Point. There have been some suggestions about improving the parking codes to get cars off the streets.

"I recommend this as a good plan for preserving the amenity of Darling Point which is very much in line with the expressed wishes of the residents in the area," he added.

Bad Features Preserved

Ald. T. J. White, however, although he congratulated the officers for presenting this plan and the effort and time that had been put into it, felt that although it was a plan for preservation, it preserved all the bad features of Darling Point.

"In other words, Darling Point will stay virtually as it is, unless some developer or some enterprising people want to build without the benefit of the bonuses that went to a lot of the people that preceded them," he said.

"Nevertheless, I feel that some developers will find a way to get around this."

He said the Darling Point plan called for a bold approach.

The position of Darling Point in relation to the Edgecliff Centre and along the side of Darling Point would always be and continue to be a bypass, he said.

To divert traffic away from New South Head Road, he suggested this area was the obvious place to consider some major traffic diversion from New South Head Road and from Edgecliff, and did not know whether it could be in the form of a tunnel or an overhead road.

"The situation, traffic-wise, in Darling Point is bordering on the chaotic now," he said.

Ald. G. J. J. O'Neill said it was not a dull, unimaginative plan but one in which there were "firsts" in N.S.W. in the planning fields.

"The only criticism that was made tonight said nothing in the way of real criticism," he said.

The plan, Ald. O'Neill said, had been written about in journals on architecture and had set a precedent, with the result it was being copied by other councils in N.S.W.

On the question of over-preserving, as Ald. White had suggested, Ald. O'Neill said if anybody were to ask the people of Darling Point, the indication would be for sensible preservation.

"The feeling is that things have gone a bit too far, and that preservation has come a bit too late, but thank goodness it has come," he said.

"Ald. White spoke of a dogleg bypass and mentioned a tunnel or an overhead road. I know he wouldn't be serious about this, because anybody could imagine the chaos or the cost. This matter was considered and considered.

Eight-lane Freeway

"It is planned that there will be an eight-laned freeway bypass in that area of Darling Point and it will prevent congestion, and it will make it uneconomical for traffic to enter Darling Point."

Ald. O'Neill said there was no major congestion in Yarranabbe Road. There was off street parking in other areas, because the council's codes for off street parking were so high that one would very rarely see a parked car in Thornton Street.

He pointed out that the public participation was another "first," as it had not happened in N.S.W. before. There had been surveys, group discussions and explanations at the council.

Representations from residents about the 2(d) zone in Etham Avenue with cogent reasons, resulted in the change of zoning.

He said that although it cost a lot of money, it really only cost what amounted to "half a chance room" at Double Bay Park (Ald. O'Neill was referring to the amount being spent on the alterations to the change rooms there).

"Planning is a dynamic thing and we have a qualified planning officer here," he added.

Ald. D. L. Parker said Darling Point had particular significance for the council as it was one of the first areas of Sydney to be systematically attacked by developers.

This, he said, had been to such a point that people became very angry and it resulted in the complete alteration of the structure of the council.

"I am glad we have a plan for Darling Point at last, and we should be thankful to the people who had the persistence to get us to do it," he said.

"It is a matter of great concern to me that this council has probably been in the limelight among all councils in N.S.W., and probably in Australia, because of the persistent pressures put on it by certain people wishing to develop Darling Point for their own private gain.

"This council has laboured under the difficulty of not having its own plan and not having any real basis to work on.

"We all know the difficulty this has presented to the council. I am sure that the people will be pleased

when the whole of the Woollahra Plan is promulgated, yet it still rests with the Minister.

Up to Council to Apply It

"We won't see fine houses ripped down for private gain and public loss. We might see modern buildings put there in the right place and in the right way. It is up to the council now to apply the plan.

The Mayor, Ald. J. W. O'Brien, said as this was an occasion, he wanted to say that this was local government at its best.

"The people of Darling Point have put a great deal of effort into this and Miss Harvey Sutton (the principal planning officer) has concentrated all her efforts on it," he said.

"The Double Bay plan is next and the people are anxious to see this one emerge. There will be a special meeting on this tomorrow night.

"We are doing our best to bring it before the people soon. However, they do take time and all representations have been amassed and detailed."

The Mayor also noted that the code booklet for the Darling Point plan would be available after Tuesday, April 4.

The plan would also be on exhibition for the public.

CAMPAIGN CONTAINS DISEASE

The campaign conducted by the Anti-Tuberculosis Association has been highly successful in containing this disease, Waverley Council's chief health and building inspector, Mr. K. H. Toner, said last week.

Mr. Toner was replying to a question by Ald. M. H. Jolly on his report to the council's meeting on March 28.

In his report, Mr. Toner said that in the five weeks ended March 24 three cases of infectious disease had been reported to the council.

There was one case of pulmonary tuberculosis and two were of infectious hepatitis.

All necessary steps had been taken to deal with these and prevent the spread of the diseases, he said.

Ald. Jolly said in all his years on council he could not remember having seen pulmonary tuberculosis mentioned in a health report.

"I thought the campaign conducted by the Anti-Tuberculosis Association had wiped out this disease," he said.

Mr. Toner said that it was correct that the disease had not previously been reported to the council.

"This is because of the success of the mass X-ray campaign."

"However this only prevents the disease but does not rid us of it completely.

"There are still isolated cases from time to time," he said.

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