

Randwick Community Park Committee

Submission to

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works

Site Remediation and Construction of Infrastructure for the

Defence Site at Randwick Barracks, Sydney NSW

1. We are pleased to accept the invitation to comment on the Statement of Evidence (the Statement), and compliment the Federal Government on its on-going policy of community consultation at all stages of this major development within the City of Randwick.
2. This Submission will address three sections of the Statement, namely **Paragraph 6 Historical Background, Paragraph 40 Construction of a New Community Facility and Paragraph 80 Heritage Considerations.**

Paragraph 6. Historical Background

3. We note that this section of the Statement jumps from 1901 straight to 1990, completely bypassing the very circumstances which allowed the development to take place!
4. Late in 1975 it was announced that the Australian Government was to set up a Randwick Community Study Group under the leadership of Mr Leo Forster, the purpose of which was to inform the community of plans by the Department of Defence to vacate a large area of land adjoining Bundock Street, and to seek suggestions for the future use of this land. It was no doubt assumed that developers and commercial groups would be the major parties to respond to this initiative, but in fact it soon became obvious that there was considerable interest from many sections of the community.

5. Surveys and questionnaires were circulated, leading to a well-attended meeting at the Randwick Town Hall, when the broad outline of the plan was aired. Two more meetings followed, and on January 28th 1976 the public meeting elected a Committee to prepare a Submission to the Federal Government. Thus was born the Randwick Navy Park Community Committee (later dropping the word “Navy” from its title)
6. Complete plans were drawn up and presented to a further public meeting, which attracted some 75 local groups representing an estimated 50,000 people, and which authorised the Committee to make a Submission emphasising the public’s complete opposition to many of the proposals from developers, and stressing that it was the overwhelming desire of the local community to see the entire 28 hectares of land devoted to active and passive open space, community facilities and some low density housing.
7. Realising that these were long-term objectives, the Committee set out to achieve the limited objective of establishing a Community Centre in the first four buildings (Administration Offices) to be released by the Navy.
8. After great efforts by the entirely voluntary Committee and lengthy negotiations with the Federal Government, their efforts were rewarded by an offer to lease the four buildings and surrounding areas to the Committee. Trustees and Guarantors were appointed by the Committee to satisfy the legal requirements. The Lease was signed, and in March 1978 the first tenants moved in to the Community Centre.
9. For the next 25 years the Committee, with a number of its original members still actively involved, provided affordable facilities to a huge range of community groups. Its charter was to charge rents based on the ability of each group to contribute according to its means; a policy which proved to be most successful. All were non-profit organisations performing valuable community service, and it can truthfully be said that Randwick City Council and its ratepayers were relieved of the burden of generating tens of thousands of dollars over the years to provide support and infrastructure for community uses.
10. Throughout its history the Committee was almost entirely self-funded. The local State Government member gave a small donation towards the running of the Centre and Randwick City Council assisted with several small grants for specific projects such as a Spring Fair and a new computer.

11. Although many Community Centres were set up at about the same time as the Randwick Community Centre, we believe that this Centre is the only one to have survived. Surely, this is a tribute to the dedication and ability of the Committee members, who have devoted endless hours of voluntary service.
12. As time went by and the range of activities grew, a Centre Co-Ordinator was employed to assist with programmes and groups wishing to avail themselves of the facilities. A part-time Maintenance Officer was also employed. We have been extremely fortunate to find tenants who have actively participated in the Management Committee and enthusiastically devoting their time and energy.

Paragraph 40. Construction of a new Community Facility

13. When the new Community Centre, envisaged in the present development, is built and handed over to Randwick City Council, the work of the Randwick Community Park Committee will come to an end. The original proposal will have almost been fulfilled with this redevelopment of the site (which comprises an environmental park, open space, community facilities and housing).
14. It is intended that the Centre's records be preserved and eventually archived in a suitable institution as part of the social history of New South Wales. A full history will eventually be written.
15. The Committee feels that its achievements on behalf of the local, and indeed the wider community, should be recognised, and we therefore propose the following recommendations for consideration by the Standing Committee:-
 - i. That the work of the Randwick Community Park Committee over the past 28 years be recognised in a permanent way in the new Community Centre by the installation of a plaque within a public section of the Complex.
 - ii. That a public function be organised to mark the opening of the new Community Centre which would include representatives of the retiring Committee and associated persons.

Paragraph 80. Heritage Considerations

16. The site is bounded by the suburbs of Randwick, Kingsford, Coogee and Maroubra. Whilst the previous uses of the site have been recognised by the naming of the physical features on the redeveloped site, for example Musket Street, the development appears to have been left without a suitable name.

16. Bundock Street adjoins the majority of the site. This street was named after an eccentric local councillor who placed a unique mark on the Randwick area. “Bundock Street” has also been used to refer to the Community facilities and a local community group. The general area is well known under the “Bundock” banner. The following recommendation is proposed for consideration by the Standing Committee:-

- i. That the newly created suburb be named “Bundock” in honour of the local councillor, the proximity of the current street that also bears his name and the fact that the Bundock Street area is a well known landmark in the Randwick City Council environs.

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