

PO Box 361  
Brookvale NSW 2100

Ph: 02 9905 0095  
Fx: 02 9939 6454

Email: admin@shoroc.nsw.gov.au  
Web: shoroc.com



16 March 2012

The Hon Barry O'Farrell, MP  
NSW Premier  
GPO Box 5341  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Premier O'Farrell

### **SHOROC priorities for NSW2021 Northern Beaches Regional Action Plan**

SHOROC is a partnership of Manly, Mosman, Pittwater and Warringah councils led by a Board of the council Mayors and General Managers. Collectively we represent a population of over 275,000 residents who contribute over \$20 billion annually to the NSW economy, and a region of over 288km<sup>2</sup>.

I write to formally provide input to the NSW 2021 Northern Beaches Regional Action Plan on behalf of the four SHOROC councils and our communities. We welcome the opportunity to provide input and appreciate involvement in the recent community forum hosted by The Hon Jillian Skinner MP.

Our councils have collaborated through SHOROC to analyse the major issues for the region now and for the future. We developed and agreed the *Shaping Our Future* strategy to address the priorities.

We all agree the biggest priorities for our region are undoubtedly transport and health services. In particular, *Shaping Our Future* outlines the priorities for NSW Government investment are:

- Immediate construction of the level 5 Northern Beaches Hospital at Frenchs Forest while maintaining and upgrading Mona Vale Hospital in a long term complementary role.
- Constructing a Bus Rapid Transit system for fast reliable public transport from Mona Vale to the city and from Dee Why to Chatswood.
- Road upgrades for Warringah Road particularly the intersections with Wakehurst Parkway and Forest Way, for Mona Vale Road and for the Wakehurst Parkway.

The attached submission responds to the *Northern Beaches Regional Action Plan Community Discussion Paper* by outlining in more detail what we consider the priorities are for the Northern Beaches region, as outlined in *Shaping Our Future* and our council Community Strategic Plans.

We look forward to your response on this issue and would welcome a meeting with the Minister responsible for finalising the action plan. In addition we request SHOROC is represented on the Regional steering committee responsible for the plan's development and implementation.

Yours sincerely

Jean Hay AM  
SHOROC President, Mayor of Manly

cc. The Hon Jillian Skinner MP, The Hon Brad Hazzard MP, The Hon Mike Baird MP, The Hon Rob Stokes MP, The Hon Jonathan O'Dea MP

# NSW 2021 Northern Beaches Regional Action Plan Community Discussion Paper Submission

March 2012

## Introduction

SHOROC is a partnership of Manly, Mosman, Pittwater & Warringah councils led by a Board of the council Mayors and General Managers. We collectively represent a population of over 275,000 residents who contribute over \$20 billion annually to the NSW economy. Our region covers an area of approximately 288km<sup>2</sup> in north east Sydney and is characterised by its outstanding natural environment, vibrant community and large influx of tourists and weekend visitors.

As a partnership SHOROC and the councils have conducted significant analysis of the major issues for the region now and for the future. SHOROC developed the *Shaping Our Future* strategy to address the priority regional issues and this strategy has been formally adopted by all four partner councils.

SHOROC notes the NSW 2021 Northern Beaches Regional Action Plan will be aligned to NSW 2021, guiding policy and budget decision-making by identifying a regional vision, priorities and actions that will be delivered in the coming years.

As such, we consider it vital that the regional priorities and actions are aligned to the regional priorities identified by councils due to their responsibilities for landuse management and role in growing the economy, protecting the natural assets and building and maintaining vibrant, connected and safe communities.

It should be noted that SHOROC considers the Mosman Council area should be included in the *Northern Beaches Regional Action Plan*, in particular due to the strong relationship between landuse and transport impacts between the Mosman LGA and the Warringah peninsula. This is particularly evident in planning for solutions to the heavily congested Spit/Military/Pittwater road corridor.

This submission is based on the regional vision, priorities and actions identified in the *Northern Beaches Regional Action Plan Community Discussion Paper* and the outcomes from the 29 February 2021 Community Forum at Dee Why RSL hosted by The Hon Jillian Skinner MP. The submission is structured to provide comments as follows:

1. The regional vision, overview and local priorities
2. Major Regional priorities – transport and health services
3. Comments on the other local priorities
  - a. Growing the economy
  - b. Protecting the environment – bushland, beaches and waterways
  - c. Liveable communities – improving education services, youth services, reducing alcohol-related crime and addressing affordable housing

## 1. The regional vision, overview and local priorities

The SHOROC region is a unique area with a vibrant community that values our natural environment and lifestyle and contributes strongly to the economy of global Sydney.

The biggest issues for our region are undoubtedly transport and health services, with significant road congestion, limited and inefficient public transport as well as the lack of equitable access to an appropriate and accessible high quality health service.

Liveability and sustainability are valued highly by the SHOROC community and councils. The principles underpinning SHOROC's *Shaping Our Future* strategy are to maintain and enhance these characteristics as the region grows including:

- Maintaining and enhancing quality of life, wellbeing, the high proportion of jobs close to home and access to social services, recreation, infrastructure and transport.
- Increasing engagement, involvement and connectedness of community members and development of social capital.
- Seeking to improve housing choice in response to demographic changes such as the availability of affordable housing for a diversity of households, including key workers.
- Creating more sustainable communities with more appropriate management of the region's water, energy, waste and natural resources including greater residential and business conservation and re-use and investigation of the viability of providing water, energy and waste recycling services within the region.
- Maintaining the biodiversity and quality of bushland and waterways.

### Vision

As such, the regional vision presented in the Discussion Paper with its focus on accessibility and infrastructure provision is on the whole supported. However there are elements that could be strengthened particularly in regard to the stated vision elements of accessibility, jobs and infrastructure:

- *More accessible:* Should include a clear focus on 'increased, faster, more frequent and more reliable public transport'
- *More jobs closer to home:* Based on the development of council economic development plans, this should focus on "supporting and strengthening small to medium business to increase local economic activity and jobs within the region, including an increase in tourism, professional services, creative industries and the health and wellness sectors".
- *Better access to quality infrastructure:* The focus on healthcare is supported and this should also include the provision of infrastructure for education, aged and youth services.
- *Protected natural environment:* supported.

### About our region

The ageing population across our region is important to note in regard to the SHOROC regional overview as the region has a higher proportion of residents aged over 65 years than the rest of Sydney, bringing with it a greater need for enhancement of acute and community health services, access to carers, health and community care services, housing and residential care options.

### Local priorities

Based on the priorities identified in the Discussion Paper, at the Dee Why Community Forum and on the *Shaping Our Future* strategy, council experience and Community Strategic Plans, it is considered the local priorities should be:

- Transport – improving transport to, from and across the region by removing congestion and improving public transport.
- Healthcare – building the Northern Beaches Hospital with Mona Vale Hospital in a complementary role, improving aged care and mental health.
- Growing the local economy.
- Protecting the environment – bushland, beaches and waterways.
- Liveable communities – improving education services, youth services, reducing alcohol-related crime and addressing affordable housing.

## **2. Major Regional priorities – transport and health services**

The biggest issues for our region are undoubtedly transport and health services, with significant road congestion, limited and inefficient public transport as well as the lack of equitable access to an appropriate and accessible high quality health service.

The focus in the Discussion Paper on these services is strongly supported.

The priorities that should be delivered for the SHOROC region are outlined in more detail below.

### Transport

Numerous studies have shown the SHOROC region has the slowest major roads in Sydney if not Australia. Travel around and in and out of our region relies heavily on private vehicle patronage because of our slow and unreliable public transport system. This has again been supported by the recent NSW Transport Masterplan Discussion Paper which identifies Pittwater/Spit/Military Rd as one of the top five highly constrained corridors in Sydney facing the greatest congestion pressure now, and in 20 years time, without additional capacity.

Our residents continually tell us that transport is the biggest issue across the SHOROC region, particularly the lack of efficient and reliable public transport and ongoing road congestion. Despite this our region has been overlooked for decades in plan after plan.

*Shaping Our Future* was designed to address this issue by taking the lead and developing an integrated regional strategy, bringing together major directions for housing, employment, transport and health.

Based on a thorough evidence-based spatial analysis and planning process conducted by experienced council staff in partnership with expert planning consultants, *Shaping Our Future* outlines that the priorities for the Northern Beaches and Mosman are as follows:

1. East-West corridors

The priority for investment in the East-West corridor is between the major centres of Dee Why/Brookvale and Frenchs Forest to Chatswood, Macquarie and beyond to take pressure off the North-South corridor including:

- Fast public transport links to Chatswood, Ryde and CBD with an initial focus on priority median-strip bus corridors using a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system which is adaptable to light rail or other greater capacity transport in future years as needed.
- Grade separation at the intersections of Wakehurst Parkway and Warringah Road, a critical part of the construction of the Northern Beaches Hospital, and Warringah Road and Forest Way.
- Mona Vale Road upgrade to a divided dual-lane carriageway for its full length through to Mona Vale to improve safety and efficiency, and enable Warriewood/Ingleside growth.

2. North- South corridor

The priority for North/South, linking the major centres with the north of the region as well as North Sydney and the CBD, is:

- Improving north/south public transport for SHOROC and Sydney's North West:
  - A Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system on the north-south corridor from Mona Vale using a peak hour co-located median bus lane to the city or preferably to a new modal interchange at Neutral Bay.
  - A new underground Neutral Bay interchange to also serve buses from Sydney's North West, linking to a metro-style rapid transit service to Wynyard using the Harbour Bridge and redundant tram tunnels.

3. Region-wide:

- Public transport service improvements to improve travel times and accessibility.
- Unclogging road pinch points including along the Spit-Military Road corridor.
- Strategic planning and more investment in park and ride facilities.
- Greater use of community bus services and integration with each other and commercial operators.

The NSW Government has taken a great positive step in conducting a pre-feasibility study into a Northern Beaches BRT system. In addition, we acknowledge that the NSW Long-term Transport Masterplan is currently under development and should also detail the major transport infrastructure priorities to be implemented for this region.

However we consider that as the major 'business plan' for the NSW Government, as NSW 2021 has been described, the *Northern Beaches Regional Action Plan* should clearly outline the NSW Government's priorities for this region and commit to:

1. Constructing a Bus Rapid Transit system for fast reliable public transport from Mona Vale to the city and from Dee Why to Chatswood.
2. Undertaking the road upgrades for Warringah Road particularly the intersections with Wakehurst Parkway and Forest Way which are a critical part of the construction of the Northern Beaches Hospital.
3. Completing the planning and undertaking the upgrade to Mona Vale Road to a divided dual-lane carriageway for its full length through to Mona Vale, as well as upgrading the Wakehurst Parkway for flood-free emergency vehicle access to the Northern Beaches Hospital.

### Health

Quality health services and the long-awaited Northern Beaches Hospital at Frenchs Forest are major issues for the SHOROC region.

The priorities for the health services of the SHOROC region as outlined in *Shaping Our Future* are as follows:

- **Northern Beaches Hospital:** Immediate construction of the level 5 Northern Beaches Hospital and ancillary and private services at Frenchs Forest as well as the major road infrastructure required:
  - grade separation at the intersections of Wakehurst Parkway and Warringah Road to avoid gridlock around the hospital
  - upgrades to Wakehurst Parkway to provide flood-free access.
- **Complementary Hospital at Mona Vale:** upgrade and confirmation of the complementary role of Mona Vale Hospital, networking effectively with the new Northern Beaches Hospital.
- Improved ambulance services that respond to and serve the redistribution of the health services to Frenchs Forest.
- Improved public health, mental health and related services to the broad community need including nursing homes and geriatric services.
- Retaining the Manly Hospital site for community and education services.

As such, the priority actions in the Discussion paper are fully supported.

In addition, it is considered that greater emphasis should be provided to improving aged care and mental health services and ensuring appropriate ambulance services associated with the reconfiguration of the local hospital network.

Additional recommendations further to the actions in the Discussion paper are as follows:

- Ambulance services: Complete a review of ambulance services on the Northern Beaches and commence augmentation of services to coincide with the opening of the new Northern Beaches Hospital.
- Aged care: develop a regional ageing strategy in conjunction with the councils/SHOROC to build on work being commenced by councils, expand community transport services to provide greater access for older people and people with a disability.
- Mental health services: Increase early intervention with mental health services on the Northern Beaches including the potential of a 'Headspace' type model specific to the region.

### 3. Comments on the other local priorities

#### a. Growing the economy

The focus on the local economy in the Discussion Paper is supported. However it is considered that this priority can be better focussed, as identified at the Community Forum, on supporting and growing local business and jobs as well as local tourism.

Based on the development of local economic development plans and numerous discussions with residents and the business community, recommendations are as follows:

- The focus should be to 'grow' the local economy.
- The first paragraph of the economy page in the Discussion Paper, should outline that "*There is also an opportunity to increase the tourism, professional services, creative industries, and health and wellness sectors in the region*".
- The priority actions to *drive economic growth and business investment* should be:
  - Improve support for new small businesses including through the establishment of a Business Enterprise Centre type model on the Northern Beaches
  - In partnership with councils/SHOROC and TAFE examine the opportunity to establish a Northern Beaches Business Accelerator
  - Support local business networks to provide business mentoring programs.
- The first action to *build awareness of coastal Sydney as a tourist and event destination* should be to
  - Support SHOROC and councils to develop a Regional Tourist and Visitor Strategy appropriate for the region.

#### b. Protecting the environment – bushland, beaches and waterways

The focus on protecting our natural assets and the environment is supported.

The focus on waste management should be greater targeted to the local area where the SHOROC councils are at the forefront and in a unique position to sustainably manage the waste of our region for many years to come.

The councils have together formed Kimbriki Environmental Enterprises Pty Ltd (KEE), with the four councils as the shareholders, to operate and maintain the Kimbriki Resource Recovery Centre in Terrey Hills. KEE is a leader in waste management education and practice, and is set to transform waste management as it builds new facilities to introduce advanced waste treatment technologies

to maximize recycling and re-use of the domestic wastes from the region. The four councils have agreed that from 2014/15 a new collection system will be introduced to make the most of these new facilities at Kimbriki, to increase our recycling and keep costs to ratepayers down.

The strong partnership between the councils and formation of KEE suggests that it would be more appropriate the NSW Government work to support the councils implement a SHOROC regional waste avoidance and resource recovery strategy specifically for this region.

c. Liveable communities – improving education services, youth services, reducing alcohol-related crime and addressing affordable housing

The focus on reducing alcohol related violence and antisocial behaviour outlined in the discussion paper is supported.

However, it is considered this priority should be broadened to some of the key focus areas required for supporting liveable communities, including improving education services, youth services and also seeking to address the affordable housing issue as raised at the Community Forum.

As such it is considered this priority should be titled “Liveable communities – improving education services, youth services, reducing alcohol-related crime and addressing affordable housing”.

Specific recommendations relating to actions under this priority area are as follows:

- In regard to alcohol-related violence, add an action to “Increase the level of commuter policing available to reduce anti-social behaviour on the public transport network particularly on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights”. (noting the NSW Government recently announced such an initiative).
- In regard to education services and infrastructure the focus should be on addressing the growing demand for education on the Northern Beaches, with actions including:
  - Review the ageing public school infrastructure and its capacity to meet future demand.
  - Develop a plan to enhance the viability of the local state high schools to ensure future projected demand is able to be accommodated locally.
  - Develop with councils/SHOROC and local business networks a proposal for access to a University campus on the Northern Beaches.
- In regard to youth services the focus should be on providing positive opportunities for young people to participate in the community, with priority actions including:
  - Develop with councils/SHOROC a regional youth strategy
  - Support the development of a Police and Community Youth Club (PCYC) on the Northern Beaches.

## Further information

For more information visit the SHOROC website [www.shoroc.com](http://www.shoroc.com) or contact SHOROC:

Ben Taylor, Executive Director SHOROC  
P: (02) 9905 0095 | F: (02) 9939 6454  
PO Box 361, Brookvale NSW 2100  
E: [admin@shoroc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:admin@shoroc.nsw.gov.au)