

COMMUNICATIONS

Community Consultation Report La Perouse Museum Curatorial Review & Upgrade Framework

16 February 2021

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1. Summary

Randwick City Council and the La Perouse Museum have worked with leading curatorial experts Betteridge Consulting to conduct an extensive assessment of the La Perouse Museum; its history, the current collection, its displays, programs and key themes.

This review, along with ideas for exciting potential future directions and opportunities to bring our varied and ever-expanding stories alive, is contained in the comprehensive report La Perouse Museum Curatorial Review and Upgrade Framework.

The following report outlines the consultation program undertaken to exhibit the review and invite feedback from the community.

The Your Say Randwick webpage received 248 unique visits and 126 downloads of the Curatorial Review and Upgrade Framework. Overall, 8 submissions were received.

All community feedback will be considered, and the final review will be published on Randwick City Council's website.

2. Community engagement strategy

2.1. Background and objectives

A community consultation program was undertaken to publicly exhibit the La Perouse Museum Curatorial Review and Upgrade Framework and gather community feedback on the policy.

The consultation program aimed to:

- Inform the community about the Curatorial Review and Upgrade Framework
- Gather community feedback on the review.

2.2. Consultation period

The consultation was open 25 November 2020 to 31 January 2021.

The project was assessed as having a low-level city-wide impact.

The community were asked to read the policy and make a submission to provide their feedback.

2.3. Consultation activities

Community engagement activities undertaken:

- Dedicated consultation website to read the review and make a submission
- Randwick News (weekly email): 2 December 2020 and 13 January 2021
- Listing on Randwick City Council's *Current Consultations* webpage
- Email to all precincts
- Councillor notification
- La Perouse Museum and Headland Trust: tabling and minuted at December 2020 meeting

3. Consultation outcomes

3.1. Your Say Randwick website

A dedicated Your Say Randwick website was created to exhibit the review and take submissions from the community: <https://www.yoursay.randwick.nsw.gov.au/museumcuratorialreview>

The website was launched on 25 November was open for 68 days, closing on 31 January 2021.

During this time, the consultation experienced the following:

- 248 unique visits to the Your Say Randwick webpage
- 8 submissions
- 126 document downloads

3.2. Submissions

8 submissions were received and are outlined in the following table.

	Submissions
1	I would strongly recommend that Council actively promotes its exhibitions at its La Perouse Museum with all the local Primary Schools in its city and arrange bus tours for the children to view the excellent displays.
2	I feel more research needs to be done into the Indigenous icon the Mission church used in this consultation -there is positive icons that represent the past and the present such as the boomerangs burnt by the Timbery family. I feel the suggested icon needs more research with the community and young people in the community about how they wish to be represented. First Hand Solutions Aboriginal Corporation were interested in running a cafe, retail in this space providing the opportunity for employment and training of local Aboriginal community and retail of Aboriginal products and display of its culture 7 days a week. First Hand have demonstrated their ability by their native plant nursery which employs 5 young Aboriginal people . A retail cafe space would provide real opportunities for the new boom in tourism, which was reinvigorated by the Blak Markets when it started on Bare Island over 7 years ago, and will again be reinvigorated again with the ferry.
3	It looks reasonably good so far. Concerned about some comments about parking near the building which will significantly affect the amenity of the site.

	Submissions
4	The La Perouse Museum Curatorial Review and Upgrade Framework have failed to address the lack of identity problem with the La Perouse Museum and the Five Pillars will exacerbate this problem even further. The La Perouse Museum is currently a great disappointment because it tries to please too many people by displaying too many displays from too many different cultures from various periods of history, resulting in a confusing experience for its visitors. In my submission, (supported by the results of the survey showing that most local people believe that the Indigenous history is the most important part of the museum) I would like to suggest that instead of continuing with the Five Pillars that we reduce the La Perouse Museum into two main sections covering: 1. 60,000 years of Indigenous History – Australia’s First Nations Museum and Educational Centre 2. The last 250 years of White Settlement including Cook, Phillip, La Perouse, Local History and Science- La Perouse Museum This would give the La Perouse Museum the clear Identity that it so desperately needs and would put La Perouse on the “Must Visit” list of every visitor to Sydney. 1. Australia’s First Nations Museum and Educational Centre Randwick Council has a unique opportunity to create Australia’s First Nations Museum and Educational Centre run by local Indigenous People which has the potential to bring the following benefits to La Perouse and Randwick: a) It would be a “must see” tourist destination for any visitor to Sydney providing customers to businesses all year round b) Increase employment opportunities c) Educate students and families on how we can live in harmony with the land and reduce our waste by learning from Indigenous Australians La Perouse was Indigenous land even before the sea levels rose 7,000 years ago dating back at least 60,000 years. Australians and International visitors are crying out for more knowledge and information about our First Nations history and there is no better place than the La Perouse Museum to display this history right on the shores of Botany Bay where Captain James Cook first drew Indigenous blood forewarning of the invasion that would soon inevitably follow. I have been told that there are many Indigenous artefacts including canoes, weapons, tools, artworks etc. taken from La Perouse Museum that are being held in storage by the Australian Museum which could be returned to La Perouse and be displayed here. 2. La Perouse Museum The last 250 years of White Settlement including Cook, Phillip, La Perouse, Local History and Science could then be clearly displayed in the second section of the Museum. There is a monument to Captain Phillip in Yarra Bay Bicentennial Park located in between the carpark and the amenities which should also be relocated as part of this Review. Statues placed around the headland could tell the story of the history of the area starting with the Indigenous people and how they tried to defend their land from invasion. In conclusion, I hope that the Council will take this opportunity to give La Perouse Museum the clear identity that it so desperately needs and that it will listen to the results of the survey that showed most local people believe that the Indigenous History is the most important part of the museum. It is important to keep 60,000 years of Indigenous occupation versus 250 years of occupation in perspective.
5	The Aboriginal History of La perouse , Botany Bay & the Wallangang Tribe must be incorporated into the museum the correct identity of Aboriginal people is very important the Randwick Council has been for many years trying to remove the Aboriginal people from there own Land for many generations now & it has to stop WE ARE NOT DHARAWAL PEOPLE.

Submissions

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Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the subject document. I think the report is highly professional and comprehensive. However, I respectfully make the following comments to better present some of the facts.

Specifically:

Page 2

The acknowledgement ascribes the Kameygal and Gweagal peoples as the traditional occupiers of the locality whereas confusingly the Council acknowledgement ascribes the Bidjigal and Cadigal as the traditional occupiers.

Page 7 last line and anywhere else in the document.

The suburb of La Perouse is not generally known as Guriwal let alone accepted as such. Guriwal is a recent business name developed from Goorawahl, a street name in La Perouse so named about 100 years ago. Goorawahl is probably yet another of the many derivations of the word Dharawal as is Thurawal from which Thirroul is derived. The G in earlier times was often sounded as a J as in George and D sometimes is also pronounced as a J as in duration making Goorawahl and Dharawal sound the same. Dharawal is the name of a language group not a place name. Anyhow as it is the policy of the NSW Government to not allow the dual naming of any street, suburb or town Randwick Council should desist from using Guriwal in its documents wherever the suburb is referred to in a modern day context. Ref Geographical Names Board website.

Page 12 Recommendation 23

Enquiries with the Geographical Names Board have revealed that Kamay has not been put forward as a name for the body of water called Botany Bay. The GNB have indicated that it should not be used for that purpose. Furthermore, the Bay is not generally known or referred to locally as Kamay. In keeping with GNB requirements and NSW Government policy the use of the word Kamay in lieu of Botany Bay or in association with Botany Bay should be eliminated from anywhere it appears in the document.

Page 8 point 7

Residents have played a major role in the formation of the history, development and character of the suburb including for example the successful lobbying for and later the enlargement of the National Park. Residents also lobbied successfully through personal contact and numerous submissions to establish or enhance most of the development of the suburb such as the formation of Cann Park, the landscaping of the Loop and Anzac Parade, undergrounding of power lines along the verges of the National Park, development of Frenchmans Reserve, establishment of a playgroup in the Cable Station and many, many more initiatives. A comprehensive list can be provided. Residents are major builders of one of the five pillars on which the Museum is founded. As major stakeholders and in acknowledgement of their role in the development of the suburb residents should be firmly included in the strengthening of links recommendation and should be given an ongoing voice in relation to the management of the Museum.

Page 9 first line of the paragraph should include the word historic after the word natural to read that "site interpretation of major features of natural historic and cultural"

Page 12 recommendation 24 does not make sense.

Page 18 2nd last sentence. The first known usage (early 1900s) was Goorawahl as per the street name. Up to the early 1980s no one [locally at least] knew what Goorawahl meant. It was then that it began to be adopted as a place name. Guriwal came later as a business name. Guriwal has no depth in time or general use and its use as a substitute for La Perouse is not justified. See note above in relation to Page 7.

Page 22 section 2.2.2

La Perouse has been a place of refuge and land grants for our Aboriginal community exemplified by the Mission, the orphanage in the Yarra Bay House Cable Station and the

Submissions

refuge use of the La Perouse Cable Station. Of late several land grants, numerous financial, business encouragement and opportunities have been made. This aspect should be emphasised.

What should also be included in this section so as to enhance the Aboriginal cultural traditions content is early local Aboriginal business development exemplified by the fact that Maroot the Boatswain prior to 1845 would hire Europeans to crew his boats from his leased land for whaling can be found in records of the Select Committee on the Conditions of the Aborigines which in turn are found at page 32 in the publication "Aboriginal People of the East Coast of Sydney" RDHS 2001 which was donated to the Museum a year or so ago. The extensive souvenir crafting boomerang and spear making and their sales on roadway stands should also be mentioned in this section. Also should be included is the commercial net fishing and lobster trapping which have also been conducted by our Aboriginal community over a long period of time to the present.

Page 25 top line describes La Perouse as becoming a place of refuge for Aboriginal people. It should be presented more widely in this manner reflecting the underlying social harmony and interracial friendships, partnering and families that are prevalent. It should be acknowledged that the local resident group was highly significant if not pivotal in having the original tin shacks of the mission replaced by modern housing.

General comment

Families in which the parents are of mixed racial origin are not only prevalent in the locality but are becoming increasingly so. For the Museum to emphasise past grievances and characterise La Perouse as a place of oppression would create a stigma which the suburb does not deserve or want. It would not only cause ongoing interracial resentment but create division in families especially so amongst children who have parents of different race. Even now some of those children by what they are taught in school feel compelled to align themselves to a particular parent and race group. To create a better future I think the Museum should be careful to avoid guilt politics and emphasise the harmony and friendship which exists within the suburb not historical inequities.

Thank you for taking into account comments previously submitted in relation to the Museum.

I would of course be happy to further discuss any of my comments or to try to assist with anything to do with the locality.

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Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the subject document. Overall, the Friends consider the document as highly professional and comprehensive. We however respectfully put forward the following comments to better present some of the facts.

Generally:

The Laperouse expedition had nothing to do with the establishment of colonialism at La Perouse or anywhere else. The King's published Navigation Orders for the expedition neither mentioned nor referred to it and the ships were not equipped for it. In fact, colonialism came to La Perouse many years after Laperouse left. Intermingling the Laperouse expedition with colonialism in the same pillar presents a false association which the French community and residents would resent given that colonialism is often presented as less than desirable. French people especially are proud of the fact that Laperouse treated the local inhabitants kindly as instructed in his navigational orders and they find insulting an association of Laperouse with colonialism. Colonialism would better be placed in the pillar associated with local features.

Laperouse and the First Fleet sailed into Botany Bay not Kamay. To use Kamay instead of Botany Bay in modern day context is not only confusing but historically inaccurate given that Botany Bay is known as such throughout the world and appears in all history books and maps as Botany Bay not Kamay. Also, Kamay in relation to Botany Bay is not recognized by the NSW Geographical Names Board.

Space is the limiting factor as to what can be shown at the Museum very much so because of the diversity and range of its proposed themes. As the Museum now has a sophisticated recording and real time security system with offsite visibility and shortly will have the addition of broad area surveillance cameras the need for a resident caretaker should be seriously reconsidered. For example, the Prince Henry Centre which has a similar security system does not have a resident caretaker. The Museum space allocated to the caretaker is also being used as a staff residence for activities not associated with Randwick City Council or the National Parks & Wildlife Service.

Specifically:

Page 7 para 3 line 5: First Contact did not occur at La Perouse although first contact by French with Aborigines probably did. Documented First Contact occurred at Kurnell as described at 2.2.3 between the British and Aborigines during the Cook expedition. This should be made clear at this place in the Curatorial document because there it reads that First Contact occurred between the French and Aborigines.

Page 14 para 3 first sentence: Receveur actually did die so "probably died" is incorrect. The sentence should read ...died probably from.....

Page 14: para3 last sentence explanatory note: while the two ships were found wrecked at Vanikoro it is not known if Laperouse died at sea. There is strong evidence that some of the ships' contingent made it to shore. It is suggested the last sentence be replaced by "The Laperouse expedition set sail from Botany Bay on 10 March 1788 never to be heard from again. In 1826 the wrecks of l'Astrolabe and la Boussole were located on the reefs of Vanikoro in the Solomon Islands. The fate of Laperouse is still a mystery.

Page 18 3rd para from bottom same comment as immediately above about the fate of Laperouse.

Page 15 last para 7 lines down. The correct name for our group is Friends of the Laperouse Museum Inc. Please note that Laperouse is spelt one word.

Page 42 top line states that the museum was opened on 23 January 1988. It was opened on 23 February 1988.

Page 46 para3 denotes some ambiguity about the provenance of the Anchor whereas in

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fact it has been established it came from the l'Astrolabe. Ref: documentation from the French Navy ship that transported it to Sydney provided by the Friends to the curator about 12 months ago.

Thank you for considering our past submissions and the many subsequent changes which we acknowledge are reflected in the current review document.

Friends of the Laperouse Museum Inc.

	Submissions
8	The following is a comment concerning the above Review. We would like to thank the Council for the enormous amount of work and dedication that this review represents as well as for the considerable dedication which has gone into the Museum since its assumption of management. There are two main concerns we would like to share with you, and would appreciate their consideration and review: · The Third Pillar “The French Connection” It is with great concern that we read in page 109 that “Colonialism” is listed as part of this pillar. France’s National Orders being the Légion d’Honneur and the Ordre National du Mérite, as well as as other representative French related organisations are of course deeply involved with the long and cherished navigational exploration by the French of Australia and the Pacific as well as our strong military historical alliances. One thing that we are proud of is the fact that “colonialism” was never the object of Laperouse when he visited Botany Bay for six weeks prior to his tragic aftermath. That we find this item listed under “The French Connection” pillar is extremely distressing to the signatories, as well as to the Friends of the La Perouse Museum. We respectfully suggest that the very important subject of “colonialism” would be better in the final Pillar on “Social History”. · French Exhibits at the Museum We would also like to add, that in this modern world, much of the historical exhibits have been found and displayed in the various museums around the globe. This should nevertheless not preclude the La Perouse Museum from accepting and or acquiring identical reproductions of items displayed elsewhere. Both our Orders and no doubt the Friends of the Laperouse Museum are keen that the Museum should continue to seek to acquire and display such identical reproductions, that would add to the vitality of the Museum and to the stories told. The worst thing that can happen to any collection is its fossilisation through lack of growth. We hope that you may accept these comments in the spirit in which they are made and that is the ever increasing of value for both Randwick City, the suburb of La Perouse and the Australian French community of this valuable centre of knowledge that touches the long friendship tradition between France and Australia as well as between French and Australian citizens.

4. Next Steps

All community feedback will be considered, and the final La Perouse Museum Curatorial Review and Upgrade Framework will be published on Randwick City Council’s website.

