

Save Our Toronto Foreshore

What we know

Community and service groups within the Toronto area are strongly opposed to LMCC's proposal to develop the Toronto foreshore – Bath Street land for commercial and tourist operations.

Seven options were put forward by LMCC's Property Investment Committee on April 9th including doing nothing, building 2, 4 or 6 levels of accommodation/retail, a joint venture with RMYC and allocating the land for community purposes as part of the foreshore masterplan redesign.

On 23/4/18 Council adopted the option for 6 level apartment/tourist facility (probably 2 separate buildings) with underground car parking.

This is at odds with the original recommendation of Property & Investment Services to go for 4 levels with no car parking and it's at odds with Council's own DCP and LEP (2014) which indicates 2 levels in this heritage area. Council is prepared to significantly modify their own guidelines using clause 4.6 (Exception to development standards (compulsory)).

How close to the waterfront any buildings would go is unknown at this point as documents are not being released under 'commercial In confidence'.

Only the blocks, currently designated 4 Bath Street and 1B Victory Row (designed 'public' and 'operational') are being considered for development at present. However, the whole strip (Victory Row), except for 4 blocks in front of the old train station and except for a narrow strip of land directly on the foreshore [this is some combination of community and crown land], is currently designated public, operational; therefore, at some point in the future, Council could proceed with a tourist cabin development plan.

Council also adopted to proceed with planning for an extension of Arnott Street to Victory Parade and extending cycleways/footpaths.

Proceeding to DA stage is anticipated to cost around \$1M. Only then is Council planning to consult with the community.

The Toronto Foreshore Protection Group preferred option is to not proceed with any redevelopment and allocate the land for community purposes of consolidation into their overall foreshore masterplan redesign in 2018/19.

The reasons supporting the community option are

Historical Intent

- Previous elected Councils of Lake Macquarie (and most of the State) have worked hard to acquire foreshore land for the establishment of Parkland in these sensitive waterfront areas. Council's own policies and State Government Legislation is aimed at protecting the immediate foreshore zone.
- Lake Macquarie Council acquired a significant number of private foreshore properties in this nominated area (many of these displaced people still live nearby) on the understanding that the land acquisition was for the betterment of the Community and to become Parkland.

- The acquisition of land by Council from landholders up to 35 years ago and the designation of purchased land as 'operational' (though not thought so by some individuals at the time) does not reflect the changed circumstances in Toronto and the need to cater for increase population size with more green space especially on the foreshore.

Community Service

- Council is the only agency that has the legislative capacity to acquire and provide for community parkland. If this land is developed it will be lost to the community.
- The Community, through Landcare and Local Service Clubs with grants from public monies has worked hard to improve this subject area as Parkland.
- The Foreshore Park is regularly utilised by the community, for markets special events and increasingly active recreation. The overcrowding and associated car parking problems experienced at the events, detract from the benefits of the community experiences.
- The \$1million of rate payers money to develop LMCC's proposal to DA stage would be better spent on improving community services and supporting existing businesses instead of increasing the pressure and demand on existing infrastructure
- The Toronto Foreshore Master Plan has not yet been completed. Considerable uncertainty exists as to how this plan and proposed development will be integrated, and which sections of land would be considered.

Parking for recreational activities

- Access to Toronto Foreshore is already difficult and will become more so, especially when there are events on the Foreshore. The community at large makes use of the Bath Street area as overflow car parking, especially for special events on the foreshore, in the Town Centre and at Toronto Public School
- It is also used on regularly on weekends by the visitors and the community who are recreating in the park, along the cycleway and on the lake – sailing / fishing and power boating. If the intent is to make the foreshore area a recreational and boating precinct, then the need for this area to accommodate recreational users, becomes greater.
- Toronto currently suffers from an inadequate number of car parking spaces and a section of the subject land on Bath Street, located well back from the waterfront, provides informal parking for residents visiting and working in the Toronto Township and utilizing local facilities.
- Throughout Lake Macquarie where boat ramps exist there is provision for parking. The informal parking currently provided at Bath Street supports the local community to pursue aquatic and recreational activities and untimed parking.
- Parking along Victory Parade is very limited. With DAs in process for 151-155 Brighton Ave (37 units) and 114-120 Cary St (120units) support for non residential parking needs to be considered

Provision for Population growth

- Council's figures show Toronto will experience a 20% growth in population to an estimated 36,899 by the year 2030. LMCC's Development Contributions Plan for Toronto (p31) states the future population will "generate additional demand for open space and recreation facilities and this demand will require additional open

space and embellishment of existing facilities to cater for the increased pressures on those existing facilities.”

- The Toronto Town Centre Plan (p5) states that Toronto “is not served well by pedestrian connection or adequate gathering places”.
- In comparison to other lakeside townships Toronto has one the least amounts of public foreshore available for recreation with approx. 200m sealed and 300m of track for pedestrians.
 - Warners Bay has 8.9km of pedestrian - bike track from Eleebana to Booragul
 - Belmont has 440m of constructed lakeside path
 - Rathmines has 1.8km of track and path along the foreshore
 - Wangi has more than 4km foreshore publically accessible
 - Morisset peninsula is well catered for with more than 6km of public foreshore
- As a major service centre with a higher than average age limit, flat accessible walking surfaces are key to positive ageing and maintaining mobility.
- Significant issues with traffic in and around the proposed development site are very likely to occur. No studies have yet been undertaken.

Non compliance with DCP Town Centre Area Plan

- LMCC plans include putting a road across the railway/cycleway to connect Arnott Avenue to the Victory Pde roundabout. This would deactivate the public land and create a barrier at the entrance to Toronto’s Public land and runs contrary to LMCC’s Town Centre Area Plan which states “development proposals must not disturb or otherwise alter the landform related to the construction and operation of the Toronto-Fassifern rail line
- If the development proceeds then views from and surrounding Bath Street (including the yacht club and Victory Pde) will be significantly impacted. This contravenes the Town Centre Plan.
- The vista from Victory Parade and Bath St according to LMCC’ Toronto Centre Area Plan ‘should not be detracted from’ by the scale height and form of future development. LMCC’s 6-level proposal is not compatible with the residential scale of historical development along the lake foreshore a requirement of the DCP Area plans for Toronto (p11).

Community Consultation

- The community had no warning of Council’s proposal to redevelop its Foreshore land. Councillors were satisfied that adequate ‘consultation’ will occur when the Development Application is lodged, after \$1million is spent on developing the application.
- The Toronto Foreshore masterplan is to be developed in 2019 at a cost of \$80,000. Integrated planning should be undertaken to ensure that there is no conflict between various council departments and the community’s vision for the foreshore land.