

Dear Mayor, Deputy and Councillors of Woollahra Council,

We write to you to convey concerns with the proposed Rushcutters Bay Park Skate board facility. Whilst understanding the desire to provide recreational facilities for young people in our community, there are several matters that make this Proposed Facility inappropriate in the proposed location.

Loss of green space

Rushcutters Bay Park has been a haven of tranquility for the last 135 years and is the only significant green space for residents living in Darling Point, Edgecliff, Paddington, Rushcutters Bay, Kings Cross and Potts Point. The Park is heavily used by schools (ie Sydney Grammar) and the surrounding community seven days a week and by organised sport at the weekend. When both football fields are in use during the winter and the cricket field is in use during the summer, and boot camp and dog walking and exercise clubs the location of the Proposed Facility will remove a significant portion of the remaining space for all we other park users.

The Proposed Facility will significantly reduce the amount of green space available at a time when the population in the area is increasing with so many continual new residential developments. It will also have a significant detrimental effect on the aesthetics of the park by spoiling the vista, particularly through to the bay.

The Proposed Facility will be close to large established trees that could also be affected, especially by covering the open ground adjacent to them.

Location

There are a significant number of backpacker facilities in the Kings Cross area and it is likely that this Facility will attract backpackers. This is an older demographic than your Proposed Facility is aimed at and there is the potential for older, more experienced skaters and basketballers to take over the facility, to the detriment of your local target demographic. I regularly witness examples of this type of behaviour when Reg Bartley Oval is closed because of heavy rain and backpackers ignore the 'Oval Closed' signs and proceed to play football to significant detriment of the playing surface.

Conflict with other park users

The Park is a designated 'off-leash' area within allocated times (currently 4.30pm to 8.30am, which is 67% of a day). Skateboard and basketball activities typically don't mix well with dogs. The park is also heavily used by parents with babies and small children, also not a good mix with skateboard and basketball activities.

Noise implications

There will be significant noise produced by the Proposed Facility from skateboard wheels, skateboards landing from jumping activities and the basketball area. This noise is likely to impact the quiet enjoyment of the Park by other users, as well as residents who live less than 200 meters from the Proposed Facility and for whom the majority have a balcony facing onto the Park.

I believe the site will be floodlit which implies that the Proposed Facility will be able to be used 24 hours a day. I would strongly object to any lighting which would enable the Proposed Facility to be used 24 hours a day. In fact, I have concerns that in its present proposed location,

it could be used 24 hours a day regardless of new lighting being installed as part of the Proposed Facility by utilising the existing Park and road lighting.

Late night anti-social behaviour and security

It has been proven on many occasions that Skate parks often attract anti-social behaviour and also result in graffiti to the facility and surrounding areas. They are invariably difficult to monitor from a security and safety perspective. There is no mention of security, which would potentially be required 24 hours a day.

Summary

We have given council's proposal a great deal of thought and have serious objections to this facility being located in Rushcutters Bay Park and the statements made by Councillor Marano. We hope that common sense prevails and the Skate Park does not proceed in Rushcutters Bay Park.

Sincerely.

The Taylor Family