

Resolution of Council

12 December 2022

Item 11.5

Accessibility Upgrade – Need for Lift at McElhone Stairs

Moved by Councillor Gannon, seconded by Councillor Jarrett –

It is resolved that:

(A) Council note:

- (i) the topography of Potts Point and Woolloomooloo is challenging, with access from Woolloomooloo to Potts Point only possible via steps or steep hills;
- (ii) the much-loved McElhone Stairs have served the community well since 1904. The steps were the subject of a Sali Herman's 1944 Wynne Prize landscape, and the site of espionage activities by Russian *persona non grata* during the Cold War;
- (iii) there is an undeniable need to improve accessibility between Potts Point and Woolloomooloo via lift access. Woolloomooloo is home to a public school, community facilities, playgrounds, and is the connection from the east to the CBD, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney Modern and the Royal Botanic Gardens;
- (iv) the demographic of Potts Point and the surrounding suburbs is rapidly changing, with the latest census data showing the number of families and elderly people in the area on the rise;
- (v) people with different accessibility needs, such as people with mobility issues or families with young children and prams are prevented from accessing Woolloomooloo from Potts Point directly;
- (vi) the Premier is committed to “enhanc[ing] the liveability of our city, promot[ing] more people actively exploring the city and develop[ing] a drawcard which is on everybody’s bucket-list” through the Sydney Great Walk policy. A lift here would fix the missing link of equitable access; and
- (vii) the area next to the McElhone Stairs offers the best available space for a lift;

- (B) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to investigate the feasibility of installing a lift alongside the McElhone Stairs and report back to Council its costings and findings;
and
- (C) subject to the feasibility investigations and report outcomes, the Lord Mayor be requested to write to the Premier and Alex Greenwich MP expressing Council's desire to improve accessibility between Potts Point and Woolloomooloo via a lift at the McElhone stairs and the need for State Government support.

Carried unanimously.

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