

ITEM 3. CITY PLAN 2008 - STATUS OF URBAN DESIGN STUDIES**FILE NO: S052459; S051678 and S042639****SUMMARY**

The City is undertaking a programme of technical studies and reviews to inform the City Plan 2008 draft LEP and DCP. These reviews include a number of urban design studies of the "neighbourhood" areas of the Local Government Area (LGA) to identify the existing built form character and make recommendations about the desired future character.

The urban design studies are just one component of the extensive programme of work that is being undertaken to inform the City Plan controls. Other studies and reviews include a review of listed heritage items, heritage conservation areas, land use zoning, integrated transport and parking, particular provisions for the Green Square Urban Renewal Area and design excellence. The urban design studies will be considered along with these other studies and reviews aim to create consistent controls, and urban design guidelines for the study areas, which are currently subject to the controls of a range of existing planning controls.

The urban design studies have been initiated to:

- assess the performance of the existing controls;
- identify existing built form character and desired future character;
- recommend revised planning controls (where necessary) for incorporation into the City Plan LEP and DCP; and
- ensure a consistent and informed approach in height and floor space ratio control.

The main recommendations of the reports relate to changes in the permitted height, FSR, planning and design of the study areas, and to provide design guidelines specifically devised to the built form context of the study areas.

The purpose of this report is to provide a status update on the urban design studies and summarise the key recommendations and implications for the City Plan 2008.

In total, 10 urban design studies have been initiated since 2005. Four studies (Glebe & Forest Lodge, City East, Waterloo & Redfern and Surry Hills) have been completed and previously reported to Council. Another three studies have recently been completed (Paddington, Centennial Park & Moore Park, Chippendale, Camperdown, Darlington, West Redfern & North Newtown and Green Square Urban Renewal Area) and the key recommendations are included in this report.

The remaining three studies are either nearing completion or are expected to be completed by mid 2008. These studies are; Erskineville, Alexandria (West) & Newtown (South); the western edge of Central Sydney; and the Southern Industrial Area.

The urban design studies will be placed on Council's website in order to facilitate on-going community engagement. This report recommends an informal public consultation process for the consideration of issues prior to the finalisation of the City Plan draft controls. The studies have all had extensive community involvement which included 2 community forums. Although there is no formal (or statutory) requirement to exhibit the urban design studies, this consultation process will provide the community the opportunity to have further input into whilst still allowing the City Plan 2008 timeframe to be met. It is also recommended that all submitters and attendees at the Stage 1 and Stage 2 workshops be advised of Council's resolution and the opportunities for ongoing engagement for the studies and the proposed draft planning controls.

Any written submissions made by the community in relation to the urban design studies (including the identification of errors or matters of contention) will be taken into consideration and addressed in the City Plan Council report.

RECOMMENDATION

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council note the status of the urban design studies in the subject report;
- (B) Council note that the completed urban design studies will be placed on the City Plan website, and hard copies will be available at the One Stop Shop and Neighbourhood Service Centres, and that copies of the reports will be sent to community groups and selected significant stakeholder organisations for comment; and
- (C) all submitters and attendees at the Stage 1 and Stage 2 workshops will be advised of Council's resolution and the opportunities for ongoing engagement for the studies and the proposed draft planning controls.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Paddington, Centennial Park and Moore Park Urban Design Study Report – Stage 2. (Note – this attachment will be circulated separately from the Agenda Paper and to Councillors only).

Attachment B: Built Form Controls and Desired Future Character for Chippendale, Camperdown, Darlington, West Redfern and North Newtown – Urban Design Report. (Note – this attachment will be circulated separately from the Agenda Paper and to Councillors only).

Attachment C: Green Square Built Form Review – Final Report. (Note – this attachment will not be circulated with the Agenda Paper. The document is available on the City's website and can be accessed via the following link:
<http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/Development/UrbanRenewal/Projects/GreenSquare/GreenSquareBuiltFormReview.asp>).

Attachment D: Key Recommendations of Urban Design Studies.

BACKGROUND

1. The City of Sydney Local Government Area (LGA) currently has a number of Local Environmental Plans (LEPs) and Development Control Plans (DCPs) which apply to different parts of the LGA as the result of boundary changes and an amalgamation. The City of Sydney is currently undertaking a programme of technical studies and reviews, known as the City Plan programme, which will result in a new City Plan including a comprehensive LEP and DCP applying to the whole LGA.
2. The urban design studies are projects within the City Plan programme. The studies undertake detailed analysis of each study area, taking account of its built form and urban character and make recommendations for character strategies for neighbourhoods and also appropriate building heights, floor space ratios (FSRs) and built form guidelines.
3. The areas subject to urban design studies which have been completed are:
 - (a) Glebe and Forest Lodge;
 - (b) City East (Woolloomooloo, Potts Point, Kings Cross, Elizabeth Bay, Rushcutters Bay, Darlinghurst and East Sydney);
 - (c) Surry Hills;
 - (d) Waterloo and Redfern; and
 - (e) Green Square Urban Renewal Area.
4. The areas subject to urban design studies in 2007/08 which have recently been completed are:
 - (a) Paddington, Centennial Park and Moore Park; and
 - (b) Chippendale, Camperdown, Darlington, West Redfern and North Newtown.
5. The finalisation of the Erskineville, Alexandria (West) and Newtown (South) study has been delayed due to unforeseen circumstances. It is anticipated it will be completed by mid 2008 and inform City Plan.
6. The studies have generally been undertaken in two stages:
 - (a) Stage 1 (completed for all studies) involved background research, a review of current planning controls and detailed field surveys including the collection of information regarding existing land use, urban structure and built form; and
 - (b) Stage 2 involves the production of an urban structure plan, development of future neighbourhood character strategies and recommendations for the appropriate height and floor space ratio (FSR) controls.
7. Community workshops were undertaken at the conclusion of Stage 1 and Stage 2 to present the preliminary findings of each stage and to engage local residents in formulating an understanding the desired future character of the area.
8. This report provides a summary of the key recommendations for the City Plan 2008 from the studies recently completed including:

- (a) Paddington, Centennial Park and Moore Park;
- (b) Chippendale, Camperdown, Darlington, West Redfern and North Newtown;
and
- (c) Green Square Urban Renewal Area.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

9. The recommendations of the urban design studies will play a significant role in informing the key planning controls in the City Plan 2008. The urban design studies provide an analysis of the existing character of the neighbourhoods and identify those areas where changes to the existing planning controls may be warranted where it is consistent with the desired future character of a locality.
10. The urban design studies propose new consistent controls that are premised on what the community desire for the future and detailed urban design analysis. At present in all the study areas there are disparities between the controls and the development that actually exists. In addition, the studies seek to bring consistency in how height and FSR are to be measured. These studies seek to rectify a number of disparities and propose sensitive controls that respond to community desires and provide for surety in change and enhancement.
11. The urban design studies propose a range of provisions to inform the new City Plan. While height and FSR controls are proposed it must be noted that the achievement of a maximum height or FSR is subject to compliance with a wide range of other planning, urban design and/or heritage controls. Height, FSR and site coverage controls are addressed in each report, but are not the only factors which contribute to the built form outcomes of a development. The draft DCP will contain many provisions which influence built form outcomes, such as building setbacks, private open space and parking requirements, minimum unit sizes, and residential amenity controls which relate to overshadowing and visual privacy.
12. Heritage issues in all of the study areas are also an important consideration as most of the study areas include or are part of Heritage Conservation Areas (HCAs). The consultants for the studies have taken the heritage values of buildings and HCAs into consideration when formulating appropriate height and FSR controls.

Urban Structure

13. The urban structure in the studies acknowledges the existing higher density residential neighbourhoods, and distinguishes between the likely future built form of small-scale, established residential neighbourhoods and of local centres. However, there are differences resulting from the detailed analysis, from recognition of the heritage items and contributory buildings, and from community and stakeholder input.

Precinct Character Statements

14. The character statements set an overall goal or intention for the future of each precinct in a study area. The draft DCP will include character statements as a guide to the preferred urban form, landscaping and local character.

Height

15. The definition of height is mandated by the *Standard Instrument (Local Environmental Plans) Order 2006*. The standard definition measures height as “the vertical distance measured in metres between the ground level and the topmost point of the building” - including roof ridges, plant and lift overruns, but excluding communication devices and architectural roof features. This definition is applied in the urban design studies.
16. Currently, under the South Sydney Development Control Plan 1998 (SSDCP), which applies to the majority of the study areas, height is measured as “the vertical distance between the natural ground level and the ceiling of the top most habitable floor” and does not include attics, part floors within a 36° roof height plane, plant and lift overruns.
17. In this regard, a translation of the Standard Instrument definition of height is required to be applied to most of the study areas and this will result in a change to the applicable height control to reflect the difference in the current definition (although in most cases, there will be no change to the actual height or development capacity of the buildings themselves as it is only an exercise in having to impose a different way of defining how building height is measured).
18. The urban design studies generally envisage a more even distribution of heights across higher density neighbourhoods, and distinguish between the likely future built form of small-scale established residential neighbourhoods and of more intense activity centres and mixed use areas.
19. While there are areas of consistency (notably rows of terraces) there is also considerable diversity. The recommended height controls are more detailed than existing controls and take into account Heritage Conservation Areas and future character strategies.
20. On sites where, either because of heritage listing or because development is very recent and unlikely to change, the existing height becomes the height control. Where heritage status means that a street frontage height is to be maintained, vertical additions to the rear may still be permitted where they will not compromise the streetscape character.
21. Proposed height increases are recommended where it is considered contextually appropriate with respect to topography, existing built form, community comments and the overall structure plan recommended for the future development of the area as a whole. It is important to note that these actual changes relate to a small proportion of the study area and are generally moderate in scale.

Floor Space Ratio

22. The recommended FSR controls are grounded in a detailed analysis of existing development in the study area and are related to the recommended building heights, and respond to recommended neighbourhood character strategies and character statements that set the desired future character as well as an appropriate scale of built form.

23. There are also numerous cases where existing buildings far exceed the FSR that they are allocated by the controls (for example, many existing two and three storey terrace houses exceed the existing 1:1 FSR control). Therefore, there is a need to better match FSRs to both existing development and proposed height controls. The implication is that FSRs across the area generally are recommended for increase, however, this is mostly due to a matching of the recommended FSRs with the recommended height controls. Some actual increases in FSRs are recommended to match the recommended increases in height and only where these changes are considered contextually appropriate with respect to the same considerations as height increases.

Land Use Zonings

24. Some of the urban design studies also make recommendations about land use zonings in the study area. These are recommendations based on urban design analysis and have been subject to further consideration with respect to zoning. A separate report on the translation of the existing land use zones into the Standard Instrument zones has been prepared for Council.

Key Recommendations

25. The table provided at **Attachment D** summarises the key recommendations from the urban design studies recently completed which will inform City Plan.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

26. The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000* (as amended).
27. The urban design studies have no statutory weight in terms of the matters for consideration under Section 79C of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. The exhibition of the urban design studies via Council's website is only for the purposes of public consultation.
28. The recommendation is for Council to note the status of these reports, not to endorse as this may lead to misinterpretations regarding their status. Also, they are just one component of an extensive programme of studies and reviews to inform the City Plan 2008.

CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES

29. The relevant parts of the urban design study reports will be incorporated into the work being undertaken for the preparation of the City Plan 2008 (draft LEP and DCP). It is proposed that the draft City Plan 2008 package will be submitted to the Department of Planning in late 2008 under Section 64 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* following a resolution from Council.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

30. The urban design studies will be placed on Council's website in order to facilitate on-going community engagement. This report recommends an informal public consultation process for the consideration of issues prior to the finalisation of the City Plan draft controls. The studies have all had extensive community involvement which included 2 community forums. Although there is no formal (or statutory) requirement to exhibit the urban design studies, this consultation process will provide the community the opportunity to have further input into whilst still allowing the City Plan 2008 timeframe to be met.
31. Any written submissions made by the community in relation to the urban design studies (including the identification of errors or matters of contention) will be taken into consideration and addressed in the City Plan Council report.
32. As indicated, community workshops were undertaken at the conclusion of Stage 1 and Stage 2 of each urban design study to present the preliminary findings of each stage and to engage local residents in formulating an understanding the desired future character of the areas. All submitters and attendees at the Stage 1 and Stage 2 workshops will be advised of Council's resolution and the opportunities for ongoing engagement for the studies and the proposed draft planning controls.
33. The recommendations of the urban design studies that inform the City Plan 2008 including future character statements, height and FSR controls and other relevant provisions will be publicly exhibited as part of the City Plan 2008 in accordance with the requirements of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000* (as amended). The associated statutory process will provide another opportunity for the public to comment on the draft controls resulting from the studies.

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