

ITEM 3. WOOLLOOMOOLOO ACCESSIBILITY AND PEDESTRIAN NETWORK STUDY**FILE NO: S049666****SUMMARY**

In August 2007, Council endorsed the Woolloomooloo Improvement Plan. The Plan recommended a number of initiatives including *'Improved safety in the public domain through increased accessibility, wayfinding and lighting'*.

The City subsequently commissioned consultants to carry out an Accessibility and Pedestrian Network Study for Woolloomooloo. The study includes three levels of recommendations to address access and wayfinding issues in Woolloomooloo:

- (a) recommendations for capital works and maintenance programs to improve accessibility throughout Woolloomooloo;
- (b) recommendations for wayfinding improvements in and through Woolloomooloo; and
- (c) recommendations for further studies to address more complex urban design issues in Woolloomooloo.

The recommendations of this study have been assessed for their alignment with the City's strategic directions and other projects. Priorities for implementation have been identified, which will assist the City in the formulation of future capital works budgets.

RECOMMENDATION

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) receive and note the Woolloomooloo Accessibility and Pedestrian Network Study prepared by Jahn Associates, as shown in Attachment B to the subject report;
- (B) endorse the priority one works identified in Attachment A to the subject report, noting actions already underway or to be implemented by 2011/12; and
- (C) consider the priority two and three works, identified in Attachment A to the subject report, when formulating future capital works programs.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Implementation Action Plan

Attachment B: Woolloomooloo Accessibility and Pedestrian Network Study, Volumes 1 and 2, prepared by Jahn Associates

Attachment C: Alignment with Sustainable Sydney 2030

BACKGROUND

1. On 6 August 2007, Council endorsed the Woolloomooloo Improvement Plan and the recommendation to carry out a range of initiatives. One of these was to:

“Improve safety in the public domain through increased accessibility, wayfinding and lighting.”
2. The City subsequently commissioned Jahn Associates to carry out the Woolloomooloo Accessibility and Pedestrian Network Study (refer Attachment A), to identify the key accessibility and wayfinding issues and to recommend solutions.
3. The study has been undertaken using the following methodology:
 - (a) identification of existing access and wayfinding conditions and physical characteristics of the public domain;
 - (b) fieldwork studies including observational studies, intercept surveys and pedestrian counts;
 - (c) review of community consultation undertaken previously; and
 - (d) identification of key issues and recommended solutions.
4. The following key strategic documents, among others, have been used as references in preparing the study:
 - (a) Sustainable Sydney 2030;
 - (b) 2007 Local Action Plan – City East;
 - (c) Woolloomooloo Improvement Plan 2007; and
 - (d) Woolloomooloo Safety Plan 2007.
5. The study has identified the following key accessibility issues:
 - (a) access into and out of Woolloomooloo is limited due to barriers such as the Eastern Distributor and the existing topography of cliffs and steep grades. The railway viaduct creates a series of poorly functioning open spaces below the structure;
 - (b) a high proportion of residents are families with young children and elderly people. In addition, approximately one third of households in Woolloomooloo do not have a car and rely on walking, cycling and public transport;
 - (c) public transport north of William Street is generally poor and limited. Cycle access will improve with the construction of the Bourke Street cycleway and the proposed recreational route along the foreshore;

- (d) much of central Woolloomooloo is owned and managed by Housing NSW, including several streets and lanes. This complex ownership pattern has resulted in a relatively disconnected pedestrian network with cul-de-sacs and narrow laneways; and
 - (e) many footpath surfaces present trip hazards due to tree roots and uneven pavements. Other obstructions include elements such as telegraph poles or non-complying pram ramps.
6. The study also included pedestrian observations and a physical review of the existing urban environment to identify primary pedestrian routes within Woolloomooloo and make recommendations for wayfinding improvements.
7. The report includes three levels of recommendations to address these access and wayfinding issues:
 - (a) recommendations for capital works and maintenance programs to improve accessibility throughout Woolloomooloo (listed under CAP and A in "Key outcomes" in the Executive Summary, pages 7-9, Attachment B);
 - (b) recommendations for wayfinding improvements in and through Woolloomooloo (listed under W in "Key outcomes" in the Executive Summary, pages 9-10, Attachment B); and
 - (c) recommendations for further studies to address more complex urban design issues in Woolloomooloo (listed under S in "Key outcomes" in the Executive Summary, pages 10-11, Attachment B).
8. The study recommendations have been assessed for their alignment with Sustainable Sydney 2030 (refer Attachment C), as well as existing upgrade programs, projects and policies.
9. Recommendations are either consistent or complementary to those included in the adopted Local Area Traffic Management Plan – City East. Some recommendations, such as the introduction of shared zones, would require further detailed design and Roads and Traffic Authority approval.
10. An Implementation Plan has been developed which identifies the following priorities for implementation (refer Attachment A):
 - (a) Priority 1 – to be implemented within three years (by 2011/12). This category includes works which are already underway and those which are most urgent to address immediate safety issues;
 - (b) Priority 2 – to be implemented in three to 6 years (by 2014/15). This category includes projects which require more pre-planning or feasibility assessments or which are already identified in existing policies or plans to be implemented in this timeframe; and
 - (c) Priority 3 – to be implemented from 2015 onwards. This category includes projects which require longer pre-planning and consultation with owners.

11. The study has identified some key areas where larger scale urban design changes are necessary to address the existing complex issues. To identify the opportunities and constraints for these 'big picture' improvements, it is recommended to undertake further detailed feasibility studies. The key areas include:
 - (a) the extension of the existing timber boardwalk on the western side of Woolloomooloo Bay to provide continuous foreshore access and a connection to Andrew Boy Charlton Pool;
 - (b) the exploration of options for the Forbes Street open space (between Cathedral and Nicholson Street) to address the current issues such as limited sightlines, insufficient access for emergency or maintenance vehicles and overall limited use of the space;
 - (c) investigating options for minimising the impact of the Eastern Distributor which is currently a major access barrier;
 - (d) the potential village centre along Cathedral Street between Bourke and Forbes Street. This area is heavily impacted by the railway viaduct and associated poor quality open space;
 - (e) a potential new cycle and footway attached to the railway viaduct, providing a direct connection from Kings Cross to the Domain; and
 - (f) access from Woolloomooloo to the Domain and the interface with the Domain Carpark.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

12. **Strategic Alignment** – The study relates to a range of actions identified in Sustainable Sydney 2030 (refer Attachment C).

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

13. Funding of existing maintenance programs may need to be extended.
14. Sufficient funds are proposed in Council's forward estimates for priority one works.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

15. NSW Roads Act 1993.
16. Local Government Act 1993.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

17. Extensive consultation was carried out prior to the adoption of the Woolloomooloo Improvements Plan. This included consultation with a broad range of Woolloomooloo residents and business owners/operators through a three-stage consultation process. Participants have included local school children, young people, older people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, local business, workers, residents and visitors.

18. To coordinate the implementation of the Woolloomooloo Improvement Plan, the City holds regular meetings with authority stakeholders such as NSW Housing, NSW Police and RailCorp, and has established a Community Reference Group of key community service providers and community groups.
19. A community consultation was held on 9 August 2008 to provide an update on the status of the various actions and projects the City had identified in the Woolloomooloo Improvement Plan. A broad overview of the findings of the Woolloomooloo Accessibility and Pedestrian Network Study was also presented.

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