

(ITEM 108/22) UPDATE ON THE PREPARATION OF THE BURWOOD NORTH PRECINCT MASTERPLAN AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING POLICY

File No: 22/37460

REPORT BY DIRECTOR CITY STRATEGY

Summary

This report provides an update on the appointment of the consultants who will be undertaking the work relating to the preparation of the Burwood North Precinct Masterplan and the Burwood Affordable Housing Policy and Contributions Scheme.

Operational Plan Objective

- A.31 Prepare Planning Proposal for 2021 Local Environmental Plan (LEP) Amendment
- A.39 Develop an Affordable Housing Policy
- A.63 Research plans and opportunities for the creation of public open spaces as part of the planning of the Burwood North Precinct
- A.76 Undertake initiatives that support new economic growth in the Burwood North Precinct and Burwood Town Centre
- A.98 Undertake comprehensive community engagement programs to seek community input on Council projects, operations, initiatives and major decisions

Background

Council, at its meeting on 26 April 2022 considered a report on the preparation of the comprehensive review of Burwood Local Environmental Plan.

The comprehensive review includes a number of components, including the review of the planning controls for the Burwood North Precinct, which forms part of the Parramatta Road Corridor Urban Transformation Strategy (PRCUTS). It also includes the delivery of a planning framework to ensure that a proportion of housing delivered across the Precinct is affordable rental housing.

The report outlined the importance of understanding the key issues within the Burwood North Precinct and preparing an evidence base to ensure that the development of the future Planning Proposal is supported by a robust and strong framework.

In this regard, Council, at its meeting resolved (in part) to proceed with the appointment of suitably qualified consultants to prepare the relevant studies informing the preparation of the Planning Proposal for the Burwood North Precinct as part of the comprehensive LEP review, and that an update report be presented to Council.

PRCUTS - Burwood North Precinct

In November 2016, Urban Growth NSW released the Parramatta Road Corridor Urban Transformation Strategy (PRCUTS) together with a package of implementation and reference documents. PRCUTS aims to renew Parramatta Road and adjacent communities through investment in homes, jobs, transport, open space and public amenity. It presents significant urban renewal opportunities for land within defined development precincts.

Since the release of the PRCUTS, the NSW Government has announced Sydney Metro West and construction has commenced. Sydney Metro West, with a station in the Burwood North Precinct is due to open in 2030 and will connect the Precinct to existing and emerging industry and employment hubs to the east (Sydney CBD) and west (Parramatta CBD).

The represents a fundamental change to the planning assumptions used to inform the original PRCUTS study. Sydney Metro is a significant catalyst that dramatically alters the development potential and viability when considered against the original NSW Government vision for the Parramatta Road Corridor.

The future access to high frequent mass rapid transit provided by Sydney Metro allows the density and yield outcomes for the Burwood North precinct to be reviewed. This would also allow the changes in land use economics in Burwood, and Greater Sydney more generally, to be addressed by testing planning controls that offer an economically viable outcome. This is also recognising that new development in the Burwood North Precinct must make a positive contribution to the attractive lifestyle offerings of the Burwood Town Centre and the Burwood LGA more broadly.

Although some background work has already been undertaken, the PRCUTS Implementation Plan requires that Council understands the key issues in the Precinct. Importantly, it requires a robust evidence base to support the development of the future planning framework within the Burwood North Precinct.

This work has now commenced and is summarised below.

Studies to inform the planning framework for the Burwood North Precinct

Burwood North Precinct Masterplan

Council in July/August 2022 undertook an open tender process for the appointment of a consultant to assist preparing the Burwood North Precinct Masterplan. A total of fourteen submissions were received in response to the Consultant Brief from a wide variety of consultants of a high calibre and track record.

Following evaluation, Cox Architecture Pty Ltd were appointed on 23 September 2022 to undertake the Burwood North Masterplan.

Master Plan Team, will draw on the expertise of a number of sub-consultants to provide advice and design review throughout the process. The project team is identified in the table below, along with the key role of each consultancy and key deliverables.

Consultant	Role	Outcome
Cox Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Lead Community and Stakeholder Engagement Urban design Land use planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Masterplan Implementation Plan Visioning Charrettes Outcome Report Community Summary Report Collateral for Community Newsletters
Jones Lang Lasalle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development feasibility analysis Economic assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feasibility Report Economic Analysis and Strategy
Dominic Steele Consulting Archaeology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Nations engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal Design Principles Report
Mott MacDonald	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engineering Sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESD Due Diligence Report and Sustainability Statement Drainage and Flood Management Strategy

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Geotechnical Assessment Strategy ▪ Preliminary Contamination Assessment ▪ Infrastructure and Servicing Strategy (services utility report)
Oculus	Landscape and public domain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Landscape and Public Domain Analysis Report ▪ Landscape and Public Domain Strategy ▪ Landscape and Public Domain Implementation Plan
SCT Consulting	Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Place based transport strategy

The Burwood North Masterplan will provide a thorough and tested evidence base which informs the delivery of the planning framework and will consider a diverse range of planning, economic, social, design and environmental challenges. As part of the project brief, Council sought to appoint a lead consultant who could pull together a multi-disciplinary team to deliver a comprehensive Masterplan with a clear vision and urban design framework for the public and private domain.

When completed, the Masterplan will provide the tools to improve the amenity and quality of the built environment and public domain at Burwood North.

Stakeholder Consultation

As the consultant has only recently commenced the project, a progress briefing will be made to Council in November 2022 providing updating on the project scope, work undertaken and feedback from preliminary stakeholder engagement.

As part of the preparation of the Masterplan the City Planning Team will be working closely with key stakeholders and the community. The consultant will undertake various consultation and engagement activities throughout the preparation of the Master Plan. This will involve a range of activities, including workshop sessions, targeted stakeholder meetings, drop-in information sessions, online and social media presence and newsletter updates. These are outlined in the community engagement plan currently under preparation.

One of the first engagement activities that will occur is a Visioning Charrette. This is collaborative workshop tool that is intended to bring together the collective knowledge and perspectives of Council, Department of Planning and Environment (DPE), Transport for NSW (TfNSW) and wider stakeholders in a participatory design process. It will inform the guiding principles, sustainability strategies, planning parameters and initial concepts, to be tested in the development of Masterplan scenarios.

Connecting with Country

Engaging with our First Nations community is an important process and consistent with Burwood 2036 strategic direction 1.1: *“Acknowledge, respect and engage First Nations peoples, their culture and heritage”*. This project will deliver an Aboriginal Design Principles Report, developed with First Nations community groups and individuals that is specific to the Burwood North Precinct. The objectives and scope of this report will:

- Provide an understanding of the Aboriginal history and heritage of the area

- Identify potential design principles that could be further explored during design phases within developments
- Identify opportunities that Council can further investigate for connecting to Country within the Burwood North Precinct and Metro Station Precinct
- Recommend opportunities for future indigenous participation, including potential LEP and DCP provisions

The Connecting with Country work will be fundamental in informing how First Nations voices are represented in the future planning for Burwood North and Burwood more generally. This includes understanding the history and sensitivities of the area for First Nations people.

Affordable Housing

To support the work being undertaken in relation to the Burwood North Master Plan, Council has engaged SGS Economics and Planning to prepare an Affordable Housing Policy and Contributions Scheme. This will provide recommendations on affordable housing delivery both for Burwood North and LGA wide in addition to advising on options to improve housing diversity outcomes.

Affordable Housing is a key issue identified in the Greater Sydney Region Plan: A Metropolis of Three Cities (Region Plan), Eastern City District Plan (District Plan) and PRCUTS. Under the Region and District Plan a target of between 5 – 10% of new housing is to be provided as affordable rental accommodation for low and very low income earners, subject to it being commercially viable.

Housing is generally considered to be 'affordable' when households that are renting or purchasing can meet their housing costs and still have sufficient income to pay for other basic needs such as food, clothing, transport, medical care and education. 'Affordable housing' has a statutory definition under the NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, as being housing for very low income households, low income households or moderate income households. There general definitions applied to the income level include:

- 'Very low-income' households are defined as those on less than 50% of median household income,
- 'low-income' households' as those on 50-80% of median household income, and
- 'moderate-income' households as those on 80-120% of median household income for Sydney Statistical Division.

As a commonly used rule of thumb, housing is considered to be affordable where households pay no more than 30% of their gross household income on rent or mortgage payments. This is often regarded as the point at which such households are at risk of having insufficient income to meet other living costs and deemed to be in 'housing stress'. Those paying more than 50% of gross income are regarded as being in 'severe housing stress'.

In the context of Burwood North, PRCUTS mandates that 5% of new housing is to be provided as affordable rental accommodation for low and very low income households. The work being undertaken will provide Council with a recommended affordable housing policy, contributions plan and delivery mechanisms.

The Affordable Housing Policy and Contributions Scheme will include:

- An Affordable Housing Policy that applies across the entire LGA
- A Contributions Scheme that applies to Burwood North (as a minimum), facilitating the delivery of a minimum 5% of affordable rental housing
- A summary report suitable for community engagement

As this project progresses, briefings will be made at suitable milestones to ensure Councillors remain informed on the project direction. By November 2022, the consultant should have completed the first phase of the review, which includes background and literature review, feasibility testing, and options for delivery mechanisms.

This information will be presented to the Councillors at a Briefing in November 2022.

Probity and Oversight

To ensure that there is a rigorous governance framework and transparent processes around the preparation of the Masterplan and stakeholder/community engagement, Council has also appointed Centium Pty Ltd as an independent probity advisor.

Centium are currently preparing a Probity Plan for the project, along with providing advice on our draft stakeholder engagement plan. This is a critical component of our work and will ensure that there is a consistent process around all project functions, particularly where engagement with stakeholders is concerned.

As part of the project, Centium will also provide ongoing advice and a probity report at the conclusion of the project. The purpose of the probity report is to close the loop by advising how probity issues or risks have been considered, managed and mitigated if necessary, during the preparation of the Masterplan.

Community Engagement Plan

Initial engagement undertaken with the community on the Burwood North Precinct was reported to Council at its meeting of 26 April 2022. Our early engagement identified that the Burwood North Masterplan is of interest to a broad range of stakeholders, within and outside the Burwood LGA. As the project progresses, the identification of stakeholders will continue to ensure that all those with an interest are engaged with.

Council has prepared a draft Engagement Plan to guide consultation and engagement up to the exhibition of the planning proposal. The draft Engagement Plan is currently being reviewed by our probity advisor, Centium.

It is important to recognise that the draft engagement plan is an iterative document and will be updated to respond to project needs as required. For this reason, it remains a high level plan, retaining the ability to adapt to new or alternative communication methods to suit the information needs of the community and stakeholders. The engagement plan also seeks to balance engagement between those stakeholders with a direct or close interest in the Burwood North precinct, and those broader community members who simply want to access information on the process, recommendations and likely outcomes.

An overview of the draft engagement plan, with milestones identified is included at Attachment 1.

Council staff are currently updating the information on Participate Burwood with respect to the work being undertaken to ensure that it reflects the current project status. New content will be rolled out in the next week, supported by regular social media updates.

Planning or Policy Implications

Once the draft Masterplan, affordable housing study and other associated studies have been completed a Planning Proposal will be prepared to deliver the outcomes and embed them into the planning framework (Burwood LEP). There will also be development objectives and provisions which will form part of Council's comprehensive Development Control Plan.

Work will commence on both the Planning Proposal and draft DCP in early 2023. Once prepared, the planning proposal will be reported to the Burwood Design Review Panel and Burwood Local Planning Panel (BLPP) for its advice. BLPP's advice will then be reported to Council for a decision

as to whether the planning proposal will be endorsed for submission to DPE for a Gateway Determination.

The public exhibition of the Planning Proposal, associated studies and draft DCP will take place following a Gateway Determination from DPE.

Parallel to the LEP/DCP review we will also be undertaking a review of the local infrastructure contributions framework to ensure that there is a funding framework for the delivery of identified infrastructure in the Burwood North Precinct.

Financial Implications

The preparation of the evidence based studies which will inform the development of the planning proposal requires significant resources.

Budget has been allocated in the 2021-2022 financial year. Further budget will be required in 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 financial years. Ongoing work to conduct further reviews of the BLEP, the Burwood DCP amendments and local infrastructure contributions plans accompanying implementation of the updated Burwood LEP, will require additional staff resources.

Council is also trying to secure additional funding from DPE to undertake additional traffic assessment, which is a requirement of TfNSW. Updates on this funding allocation will be included in future reports.

Conclusion

Consultants have now been engaged to undertake the work on the preparation of the Burwood North Precinct Masterplan and Affordable Housing Policy. The work will be informed by a number of supporting studies along with feedback from key stakeholders and the community.

The City Planning Team will continue to engage with key stakeholders and the community to ensure that they are kept informed of the process as we move through the project stages. The first stage which includes the preparation of the Masterplan and Affordable Housing Policy is anticipated to take 6-9 months. We will also be briefing the Councillors as we work through the process to ensure they are kept informed and have an opportunity to provide feedback.

Recommendation

1. That Council receive and note the content of this report.
2. That the General Manager organise a Councillor Briefing to be held in November 2022 to provide an update on the progress of the Burwood North Masterplan and Burwood Affordable Housing Strategy and Contributions Plan.

Attachments

- 1 Burwood North Precinct Indicative Engagement Program

Attachment 1: Burwood North Precinct Indicative Engagement Program

Task	Description	Why	Indicative time
Appointment of Probity Advisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a probity plan Review and advice on engagement strategy 	Independent advisor to ensure council's processes are conducted in an open and transparent manner, preventing any perceived or actual conflict of interest	September 2022
Report to Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on the appointment of consultants; project overview; project timeframes Proposed engagement & communications strategy 	Seeking endorsement from Council of the Engagement Strategy (no conflict issues)	October 2022
Community Update 1	Informing and advising of opportunities for getting involved and future workshops	To generate interest and address the community expectations for the renewal of Burwood North	October 2022
Consultant led workshops	<p>Visioning and Aspirations charrette exercise. The details of the workshops will be developed with the consultant and council</p> <p>Workshops will be tailored to specific audiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillors Executive team/ managers Key Stakeholders Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify a vision for the Burwood North Precinct and five key priorities. To develop an oral history of the areas, in addition to other creative techniques to understand the past, present and future, and how this translates into opportunities. 	October – December 2022
Council briefing 3	Outcomes of Visioning/Update on Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on the outcomes of the Visioning & Aspirations workshops – based around the key themes Update on consultant's work and discussion around any preliminary outcomes Where to from this point? 	November 2022
Community update 2	Keeping the community informed	Update to the community on the outcomes of the workshops and next phase of the project	December 2022
Council briefing 4	Preliminary Findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of the preliminary key findings of work undertaken by consultant, including key recommendations based on the project guiding themes. 	February 2023

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Burwood North Precinct Indicative Engagement Program

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This briefing would provide some detail with respect to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of the place; - Opportunities for open space/green connections/public domain - Options for traffic and car parking - Options for the delivery of affordable housing/housing for key workers - High level built form scenarios – scale, context, uses 	
Community update 3	Informing, educating and engaging	Pop up Community engagement ideas fiesta: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Week-long engagement – shopfront - presentation of information discussed at Council Briefing 4 with opportunities for community to provide feedback. 	Early March 2023
Council briefing 5	Pulling everything together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of the completed masterplan and associated studies Recommended options for proposed zoning, heights, FSR 	Late March 2023
Council briefing 6	Informing of the Planning Proposal	To provide an overview of the planning proposal for endorsement by Council	April 2023
Community update 4	Reporting back	Summary of the Pop Up and notification of reporting of Planning Proposal to April Council meeting	April 2023
Report to Council	Planning proposal and Masterplan consideration by Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council endorsement of Planning Proposal Engagement strategy for exhibition of Planning Proposal 	April 2023
Public Exhibition	Exhibition requirement of the planning proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statutory requirement to exhibit a planning proposal and seek community views. Exhibition of planning proposal – subject to separate Engagement Strategy which will be endorsed by Council. To commence following issue of Gateway Determination 	May – July 2023 Dates dependent on DPE processes and subject to change