

Minutes of the Westmead Community Voice Panel Meeting held at Westmead Domain Community Room, 1 Oakes Street, Westmead on Wednesday, 20 September 2023.

1. Open of Meeting and Acknowledgment to Country

The Meeting was opened by Council Officers at 6:40pm.

Acknowledgement of the traditional owners of this land – the Darug People and pay my respects to their elders past and present.

2. Record of Attendance and Apologies

In Attendance:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>
Larissa Hubner, Coordinator Urban Strategy and Planning Kaitlin McCaffery, Senior Strategic Planner Will Wang, Senior Strategic Planner Amruta Kumbhari, Strategic Planner	Cumberland City Council
Thirteen (13) Community Representatives	Community Voice Panel

Apologies:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>
Two (2) Community Representatives	Community Voice Panel

3. Confirmation of Minutes

Nil to Report

4. Action items from previous session

Council officers responded to the Action item from Session Two:

Council Officers to provide updates on Westmead South strategic planning work and timeframes on the Westmead South and Community Voice Panel 'Have Your Say' page.

Council Officer, Ms Amruta Kumbhari advised that Council Officers seek to produce a video recording explaining the above and upload it on the Westmead South and Community Voice Panel 'Have Your Say' page.

5. Agenda items

Introduction

Council Officer, Ms Larissa Hubner welcomed the panel to the third Community Voice Panel (CVP) session for 2023. Ms Hubner outlined the purpose of the workshop and housekeeping rules.

Review of Previous Sessions

Two CVP sessions have taken place since its establishment in early 2023.

Session One took place on 9 May 2023, with a focus on understanding how the community perceives the future of Westmead, the transformation of Hawkesbury Road, and brainstorming open space functions.

Session Two took place on 29 June 2023, building on the above topics to further understand the existing and future character of areas across the precinct, and brainstorm opportunities for different user groups.

Ms Kumbhari provided a review of the previous two sessions, outlining what was heard, key takeaways and outcomes. Grouping the activities into four key themes, Ms Kumbhari provided a detailed account of key takeaways in each theme:

Density Distribution

Council sought to understand where the panel believed the most appropriate locations for additional housing should be located to accommodate the projected population growth.

Takeaways from these discussions were:

- Concentrate density along the northern, eastern and southern boundaries of the precinct, closer to transport infrastructure and amenity (metro, train, t-way, and existing open spaces)
- Some additional density near Sydney Smith Park

Character and Uses

Council was keen to understand how the panel would define the character of Westmead South today and into the future. Building on this, outlining potential uses that are desired by the community.

Takeaways from these discussions were:

- Westmead South has a unique identity and strong sense of community.
- There is a strong desire to see the following improvements across the precinct:
 - Improved public domain quality and greener spaces.
 - Improved social benefits and facilities.
 - Improved accessibility and connectivity
 - Improved safety
 - Providing a variety of public spaces for all age groups
- Diverse variety of residential and non-residential uses to accommodate the community of Westmead South.

Public Domain Quality and Function

Council sought to further understand potential gaps in the public domain that have been recognised by the residents of Westmead South. In doing so, officers asked the panel, about what public space functions are beneficial, however are not currently available now.

These discussions identified a desire to see the following uses in Westmead South:

- Children and adult play facilities
- Community facilities such as BBQ areas, public toilets, and amenities
- Outdoor spaces such as off leash dog parks, walking and cycling tracks.
- Need for a Community Centre or facility.
- Public Art
- Sports Facility

Key Places

With regards to the transformation of Hawkesbury Road, Council sought to understand what key changes are considered to be the highest priority in the community. Through this exercise Council was able to determine:

- Improved community spaces and walking and cycling links were considered the highest priority.
- Providing more tree canopy was considered to be a medium priority.
- Increased bus services and reducing the speed limit to 30km/h were considered as lower priorities.

When discussing opportunities for the Oakes Centre, Sydney Smith Park, and MJ Bennett Reserve, the panel highlighted a desire to see:

- Greater public amenities
- Increased safety
- Improved access to these spaces
- Water features
- Community facilities
- Promotion of walking and cycling

Proposed Approach

Council Officers, Ms Kaitlin McCaffery and Mr Will Wang provided an overview of the proposed approach for Westmead South. This included discussion around how the inputs from the CVP, alongside recommendations from the project consultants, have factored into our considerations for the planning of Westmead South.

Ms McCaffery outlined the how the outcomes of future character activities in previous CVP sessions have been considered in the planning of the northern and southern edges of the precinct (Slide No.17). Particularly:

- Mixed use development proposed along Hawkesbury Road, consistent with previous plan.
- Medium high to high density development proposed at this location, consistent with previous plan.
- Proposed high-density mixed-use development on metro block, consistent with previous plan.
- Further investigations into the blocks adjacent to the metro site for increased density, following feedback from the Community Voice Panel and Phase 1 Early Engagement submissions.
- After further investigations and in response to community feedback, no change in planning controls in the eastern edge of the precinct, consistent with previous plan.
- Medium high-density mixed-use development proposed along Great Western Highway, consistent with previous plan.

CVP activities highlighted a desire to concentrate density along the northern, eastern, and southern edges of the precinct (Slide No.18). Ms McCaffery noted that along the western edge of the precinct, Council is considering:

- Low density development to be retained in this area.
- Two options identified for character investigation area (black dashed line), consistent with previous plan:
 - Special Character Area
 - Heritage Conservation Area.

Mr Wang outlined the proposed approach for the central area within the precinct (Slide No. 19), noting that the previous Concept Land Use Plan identified medium and high-density development in this area. Mr Wang explained that Council is considering further investigation into this area, including:

- Considering submissions received objecting to proposal.
- Confirm specific areas as either medium density and/or high density.
- Opportunities to improve access to Sydney Smith Park, following feedback from the CVP.

Questions and Open Discussion

Ms Hubner provided the panel with the opportunity to ask questions and discuss the topics covered at the CVP sessions to date. Queries raised by the panel are summarised below:

1. How will the updated plan differ from the previous Concept Land Use Plan?

Ms Hubner advised that further information regarding detailed changes to the precinct, as well as supported studies will be provided as part of the exhibition materials during Phase 2 Early Engagement. Ms Hubner advised that exhibition will take place in Q4 of 2023.

2. Local News have reported potentially stalling the Sydney Metro West project. Will this have implications on the strategic planning of the current Metro Site?

Ms Hubner advised that Council has not been advised of any changes to the Sydney Metro West Project. Council is progressing under the existing assumptions until advised otherwise.

3. Since strategic planning work began in Westmead, there has seen an increase in the number of demolitions and rebuilds, particularly along the western side of the precinct. Will this cause any complications for the planning of this area?

Ms Hubner advised that new development will not have an impact on the strategic planning of the precinct. Ms McCaffery added that the western edge of the precinct is proposed to remain low density, so the demolition and construction of new dwellings will not present any issues to Council's plans for the area.

4. How will the proposed extension of the Toohey's Palms Estate Heritage Conservation Area affect future development adjacent to the palm trees, considering the landscaping along Moree Avenue is of heritage significance?

Ms Hubner took this query on notice and advised that Council officers will provide a response following further investigation.

5. How will Council balance the level of density around schools?

Ms Hubner advised that Council has been investigating potential overshadowing impacts around schools to ensure that proposed development will not cause excessive overshadowing to the schools.

6. What will the Green Link look like when developed?

Ms Hubner advised that the Green Link seeks to improve connectivity between existing open spaces and improved walkability towards Mays Hill/Parramatta Park. Once executed, it is envisioned to be a connected link of green spaces along the north-western

edge of the precinct, and a high-amenity route towards the east of the precinct. This may be a mix of improved paths, parks, and wayfinding/signage.

7. How will placing density in the centre of the precinct impact the sense of openness in Westmead?

Ms Hubner advised that there are urban design techniques put in place to ensure that there is an appropriate transition and relatability between existing buildings and new medium-high density developments.

Action: Council Officers to confirm the potential impact of proposed uplift to the proposed Tooheys Palm Estate HCA.

Public Exhibition and Next Steps

Mr Wang provided an overview of where we are at in the timeline of our masterplanning process, noting that Council will be undertaking further community engagement prior to submitting the Master Plan and planning proposal to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment.

Phase 2 Early Engagement

Mr Wang provided information about upcoming phase two early engagement that will take place in Q4 of 2023. Activities that are expected to take place in during this engagement include:

- Pop up stalls (face-to-face)
- Drop in sessions (face-to-face)
- Have Your Say webpage updates (online)
- Letters and local newspapers
- Phone service (speak to a planner)
- Online survey (online)

Phase 2 Early Engagement will see the following materials placed for review and comment:

- Draft Masterplan
- Various supporting technical studies

Council officers thanked the panel for their attendance and inputs and advised they may be contacted for a follow up session in 2024.

6. General Business

There was no general business raised.

7. Next Meeting

To be confirmed.

8. Close of Business

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:00pm.

Signed