

straight Talk



Hear every voice
Know where you stand

Consultation strategy

To support community consultation for Part 3A Concept
Plan, Shepherds Bay Urban Renewal, Meadowbank

DATE

14 October 2010

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1 Introduction

Straight Talk, an independent consultancy specialising in community consultation, has been appointed by Robertson Marks Architects, on behalf of Holdmark Property Group, to guide the consultation as part of a Concept Plan for the Shepherds Bay Urban Renewal project in Meadowbank. The project team is currently preparing an Environmental Assessment Report to support a Concept Plan and Stage 1 Project Application for redevelopment of foreshore lands. The proposal will be determined under Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act.

This communication and consultation strategy has been prepared by Straight Talk for inclusion in the Environmental Assessment Report to document a thorough, robust and inclusive process of consultation to fulfil the Director General's Requirements (DGRs) for the planning process. Straight Talk will work as part of the project team to deliver the consultation activities outlined in this strategy.

1.1 Consultation purpose and objectives

The purpose of consultation is to inform all relevant stakeholders about the proposal through a robust and inclusive process that allows for two-way communication between the project team and relevant stakeholders, including local residents. Through consultation, it will be possible to understand and address possible key issues of stakeholder interest which may relate to visual amenity, traffic and transport, remediation of land or foreshore access. As such, the consultation process will help the project team to understand and where possible incorporate stakeholder views into the proposal with the aim of it being broadly acceptable to and supported by relevant stakeholders.

Accordingly, the objectives of the consultation are to:

- Fulfil the DGRs for the provision of consultation during the environmental assessment process
- Engage with the full range of stakeholders, including residents, local businesses, relevant community groups and government authorities to support the lodgement of the proposal during the public exhibition
- Create and maintain stakeholder awareness of the proposal and proposed mitigation measures to manage impacts
- Identify and understand stakeholder issues, values and concerns related to the proposal
- Incorporate stakeholder feedback into the planning and development process to improve the proposal through possible design, construction and operational measures that could mitigate environmental, economic and social impacts.

1.2 Overview of consultation approach

The community consultation approach will be a two-way process that seeks to provide information to stakeholders who may be interested in, or impacted by, the proposal and invite their feedback to inform the planning and development process. The process will

provide clear, unambiguous information about the proposal and the views, issues and concerns of affected residents and stakeholders will be identified and recorded. The project team will then be in a position to consider and respond to issues of stakeholder interest through the balance of the environmental assessment process. The consultation approach will ensure that:

- Local residents, businesses and stakeholder groups, who may either be impacted by or have an interest in the proposal, have the opportunity to 'have a say'
- Consultation activities are held locally at a time and venue most convenient to local participants
- Invitation to participate in the consultation process is widely promoted using direct distribution to households in the local area and via local newspaper/s
- Information about the proposal is clear, accurate and presented in a balanced way that neither promotes or detracts from the project's benefits or impacts
- Participants can provide feedback in a number of ways including verbally, via feedback form, email or reply paid post
- Reporting of issues identified through the consultation process is accurate and reflects the issues raised by participants.

1.3 Project timing

The assumed planning process for the Shepherds Bay Urban Renewal project involves the following steps and approximate timing:

Timeframe	Table heading
May - August 2010	Finalise consultation strategy for inclusion in Environmental Assessment Report
Sept- Oct 2010	Lodge Environmental Assessment Report to support Concept Plan and Stage 1 Project Application with Department of Planning
Oct - Nov 2010	Adequacy check and public exhibition by Department of Planning
Nov - Dec 2010	Respond to issues raised through public exhibition and post-lodgement consultation and lodge Preferred Project Report (if required) with Department of Planning
Early 2011	Assessment by Department of Planning and determination by Minister for Planning
Mid 2011	Construction planning and commencement of Stage 1 works

2 Overview of the project

The proposed redevelopment of land at Shepherds Bay at Meadowbank is primarily for residential and open space purposes. The project plans to fulfil the objective of renewal of the Meadowbank foreshore area, providing high quality housing in an existing fully serviced middle ring suburb of Sydney and to improve public domain and stormwater infrastructure to the area.

Meadowbank is a suburb of Sydney, located 17 kilometres west of the Sydney central business district, in the local government area of Ryde and part of the northern suburbs area. Meadowbank is on the northern bank of the Parramatta River.

The location of the proposed residential development is within the former Meadowbank Employment Area and includes Bowden, Belmore, Church and Waterview Streets, Nancarrow and Rothesay Avenues, Constitution Road and Hamilton Crescent West in the suburbs of Meadowbank and Ryde South.

The project site is conveniently located with excellent access to road, rail and ferry networks and is close to both the Sydney and Parramatta central business districts and employment nodes at Homebush and Macquarie Park. The site is close to the Meadowbank railway station and ferry wharf and near the Concord Road-Church Street Bridge. There is parkland located at the ferry wharf which links to the existing riverside walking/bicycle/open space network.

The area adjoining the project site includes a mix of land uses. Within the Meadowbank Employment Area the predominant building stock is old, unoccupied and dilapidated one to two storey light industrial buildings interspersed with new multi storey medium density residential developments. There are a range of regionally significant land uses in proximity to the site, including Meadowbank TAFE to the northeast and the newly built Rhodes Shopping Centre with IKEA, to the south on the opposite side of the river. Residential development in surrounding streets is characterised by older three storey walk up flat buildings and one to two storey detached houses.

Over recent years there has been significant urban renewal in the area that has been marked by a shift from industrial development to more mixed use development with medium and high density housing and other employment generating land uses. A large number of units have recently been developed and there are plans for additional medium and high density housing in the area and within the immediate proximity of the project site.

2.1 Planning strategy context

The NSW Government's Metropolitan Strategy forecasts that Sydney's population will grow by a further 1.1 million between 2004 and 2031, requiring an additional 640,000 homes by 2031. The Metropolitan Strategy is supported by a number of regional strategies that identify opportunities for accommodating this growth in a managed and sustainable way.

The Ryde local government area is in the Inner North Subregion. The Inner North Subregional Strategy aims, amongst other things, to strengthen employment hubs, improve

housing choice, create liveable and sustainable communities, encourage public transport use and protect and promote the harbour.

The Subregional Strategy also sets a dwelling target for the Ryde local government area of 12,000 and an employment target of 21,000. The proposed Shepherds Bay development is synergistic to the Metropolitan Strategy's focus on development around transport hubs and will go a long way to achieving the housing targets set for the Ryde local government area.

2.2 Project process

In early 2010 Robertson and Marks Architects, on behalf of Holdmark Property Group, submitted a Preliminary Environmental Assessment to the NSW Department of Planning, with the request that the project be considered a Major Project under Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, as the capital investment value of the proposed development is in the order of \$800 million. The DGRs for the project were issued in May 2010 and require that "an appropriate and justified level of consultation in accordance with the Department's *Major Project Community Consultation Guidelines October 2007*" be undertaken.

In response to the DGRs, detailed technical studies have been undertaken and documented in an Environmental Assessment Report to support a Concept Plan and Stage 1 Project Application, which will be lodged with the Department of Planning. The Department of Planning will then coordinate the statutory public exhibition.

In accordance with direction provided by the Department of Planning, the project team will manage a consultation process during the public exhibition period to provide an opportunity for interested stakeholders to get information and provide feedback about the proposal. Accordingly, the Environmental Assessment Report will include a consultation strategy to outline the approach for consultation that the project team will undertake to support the exhibition of the Concept Plan and Project Application.

Issues identified through consultation will be documented by the project team in a consultation outcomes report, which will form part of the Preferred Project Report to be submitted to Department of Planning following exhibition. The Preferred Project Report will also outline the project team's response to issues identified in formal submissions received by the Department of Planning through the public exhibition. As such, the Department of Planning will be able to undertake a thorough assessment with a full understanding of stakeholder issues pertaining to the proposal.

3 Stakeholder analysis

Stakeholders - those with an interest or 'stake' in the project - will have a range of issues of interest. Therefore, the consultation process needs to be tailored to provide information about specific issues to meet stakeholder needs. Some of the stakeholders that have been identified for the project are noted below. The project team will seek further advice from Ryde City Council about other stakeholders who may have an interest in the project to ensure they are targeted through the consultation process.

Political stakeholders

- Ryde City Council, including local councillors
- Mr John Alexander, MP, Federal Member for Bennelong
- Mr Victor Michael Dominello, MP, State Member for Ryde.

Community groups and stakeholders

- Meadowbank-West Ryde Progress Association
- Meadowbank TAFE
- Meadowbank Park Bushcare Group
- Meadowbank Chinese Neighbourhood Group
- Meadowbank Public School
- St Michael's School
- TAFE NSW - Northern Sydney Institute
- Aldi
- Chamber of Commerce
- Nearby industrial operators, such as the steel roofing supply centre, timber centre, kitchen centre and the distribution centre
- Business operators such as the gym and local takeaway food outlets
- River City Church
- St Michael's Catholic Church.

Individuals

- Local residents, both adjoining the project site and in surrounding areas, including across the river on the Rhodes peninsula
- Previous and current owners.

3.1 Demographic profile

The proposed development is located in two 'small areas' in the Ryde local government area, Ryde South and Meadowbank- Melrose Park. These areas have different demographic profiles. The following information is based on the 2006 Census data.

Ryde South has a higher level of people aged 65 or over and a lower level residents aged 18 to 64 than the local government area. The dominant non-English speaking country of birth in Ryde South is China (2.6%). Approximately 97% of residents are employed, 38% speak only English, 50% speak English as well as another language and 11% speak another language and speak English not well or not at all.

There is a larger proportion of high income households (those earning \$1,700 per week or more) but a smaller proportion of low income households (those earning less than \$500 per week) than across the Ryde local government area.

Compared to the local government area as a whole, more households in Ryde South earn a high income, and less are low income households. A smaller percentage of people hold a bachelor or higher degree than the average in the Ryde local government area, although that percentage increased significantly between 2001 and 2006, with a corresponding drop in the number of people with no qualifications.

Meadowbank-Melrose Park has a lower level of people over 65 than the local government area with 76% in the 18 to 64 year old bracket. The dominant non-English speaking country of birth in Meadowbank-Melrose Park is China (6%). The percentage of people from South Korea and India is higher than the local government area (4% and 3% respectively) with a strong increase in the number of residents from South Korea between 2001 and 2006. Over 60% of the residents in Meadowbank-Melrose Park speak English as well as another language, 25% speak only English and 13% speak another language and speak English not well or not at all.

Compared to the local government area as a whole, Meadowbank-Melrose Park has a smaller proportion of high income households as well as a smaller proportion of low income households.

Between 2001 and 2006 there was a significant increase in the number of Meadowbank-Melrose Park residents holding bachelor or higher degrees, with a drop in the number of people with no qualifications.

This demographic information means that consultation activities need to be planned taking into consideration accessibility both in terms of time (to allow people who work to participate) and having materials available in plain English (to ensure people who do not speak English as a first language have access to information). Accordingly, consultation activities need to be held outside of working hours and Chinese and Korean translation will potentially be necessary to ensure all local residents are well informed.

4 Issues for consideration

4.1 Overview of issues

Across Sydney proposals to increase housing density are being fiercely opposed by local residents who feel threatened by change and the potential impacts associated with perceived overdevelopment. Recently a number of new high density housing proposals in the surrounding area have received sustained media attention and strong community interest.

The existing site has been subject to some new development, so there is likely to be awareness that the remainder of the site will be further developed. However, given the scale of the proposed redevelopment, it is highly likely that there will be a strong level of interest in the proposal from across the community. Accordingly, a number of project issues will be of interest to stakeholders:

- Heights, compared to the existing and approved developments surrounding the project site
- Design of buildings in terms of scale, bulk and massing across the project site
- Increased density and impact on character and amenity of surrounding areas
- Transport and accessibility
- Views from existing and approved buildings in close proximity to the project site and to/from surrounding areas
- Drainage and stormwater management
- Solar access and overshadowing to buildings in close proximity to the project site
- Construction impacts
- Concerns around potential remediation of contaminated land
- Protection of riparian land along the River
- Provision of/enhancement of public open space and retention of public access to the foreshore.

5 Consultation tools and activities

Consultation under Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act needs to demonstrate that stakeholders likely to be impacted by the proposal have had the opportunity to express their views and that these issues have been considered and responded to through the environmental assessment process.

The consultation activities outlined in this strategy, centre around a series of targeted discussions with key community stakeholders who are potentially affected by the outcomes of the proposal. These discussions will serve the purpose of identifying issues of concern to be addressed during the balance of the environmental assessment process. The mix of activities will allow the project team to target relevant stakeholders but also provides opportunity for broader community input.

It should be noted that the project team has worked closely with agencies that may have a role in determining the project throughout the environmental assessment process to identify regulatory requirements. For example, the project team has had pre-lodgement meetings with stakeholders such as the Waterpoint Strata Manager and with Council.

As such, the consultation activities in this strategy are directed towards fulfilling requirements for consultation with the community.

5.1 Activities

Display and discuss sessions

Two display and discuss sessions will be held early in the public exhibition period. The display and discuss sessions will be held at the Shepherd's Bay Community Centre which is very close to the project site. The sessions will be held over several hours allowing interested stakeholders to drop in at a time that suits them. A series of display boards will provide information about the proposal and outline the findings of technical studies undertaken through the environmental process. Project team members will be available to have one-on-one discussions to talk about issues and answer questions in an informal environment. The sessions will be more suitable than a traditional public meeting because they will provide a non-threatening environment where all stakeholders get the chance to be heard, not just those comfortable speaking in front of a crowd. Furthermore, the informal format will allow stakeholders to obtain information about specific issues of interest to them and to stay only as long as it takes them to read the information and have their questions answered.

To promote the sessions a flyer will be distributed and an advertisement run in local paper/s. The catchment area for the distribution of the flyer will be agreed by the project team and may include approximately 5,500 properties in the area identified below.

All members of the project team will take notes to record issues of interest identified through their one-on-one discussions with stakeholders. A reply paid feedback form will be available at the display and discuss sessions for stakeholders to provide written feedback. There will be a two week period in which feedback forms will be able to be returned.

Targeted stakeholder briefings

Briefings will be coordinated to support the public exhibition, giving stakeholders an opportunity to get information to assist them to prepare submissions to the Department of Planning.

The table below identifies in more detail the consultation activities that will be undertaken:

Activity	Details
Advertising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1/8 page advertisement, in the news section of local newspapers, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General information about the project Details of session times Venue details Contact details for further information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Northern District Times <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Readership 82,000 Published weekly on Wednesday and/or The Weekly Times <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribution 53,000 Published weekly on Wednesday
Promotional flyer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distributed to local residents/businesses, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General information about the project Details of session times Venue details Contact details for further information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 4,500- 5,500 properties in defined catchment close to the project site
Two display and discuss sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One held on a weekend morning and the other on a weekday evening Display of 12 to 15 storyboards detailing the project components and findings from technical studies Distribution of a feedback form for community comment with two week return period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shepherd's Bay Community Centre, Meadowbank (adjacent to project site)

Activity	Details
<p>Up to four stakeholder briefings with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council and/or MPs • Special interest groups <p>These will be conducted on an as needs basis – with particular emphasis on liaison between those with a demonstrated interest in the proposal and members of project team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ryde Councillors to be offered a briefing • Briefings to be offered to other groups as required
<p>Webpage</p> <p>Basic nesting text and links to all relevant project documentation to provide access to information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linked to Roberston Marks Architects or Holdmark Property Group website • Platform for downloading project documentation and providing feedback
Submissions/feedback receipt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of results
Consultation outcomes report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report to inform Preferred Project Report and identify issues raised through consultation