



Heart Foundation
New South Wales
ABN 95 000 253 289

Level 3, 80 William Street
East Sydney NSW 2011

Telephone (02) 9219 2444
Facsimile (02) 9219 2424

www.heartfoundation.org.au

28 March 2014

Re: Newcastle City Centre Development Control Plan

The Heart Foundation welcomes this opportunity to comment on the draft Newcastle City Centre Development Control Plan (DCP). We believe the revitalisation of Newcastle City Centre is a significant opportunity to create a more supportive environment for walking and cycling; foster greater social connection and interaction; and also benefit the local economyⁱ. We base this view on the growing body of evidence of the link between active living, physical activity and the design of the built environment.ⁱⁱ In this submission we have responded selectively to Planning Controls that are clearly linked to healthy built environment outcomes, in line with our area of expertise.

We are broadly supportive of the objectives, performance criteria and many of the 'Acceptable solutions' proposed in the draft Planning Controls and strongly endorse the very clear intent to enhance pedestrian connectivity and amenity within the city centre. Notwithstanding this, we believe some improvements can be made, and have noted these specifically in the tables within this submission.

We make particular mention of the timely opportunity to evaluate the proposed improvements to Hunter Street Mall. There are very few Australian case studies of shared spaces that effectively accommodate pedestrians, bikes and vehicles and contribute to retail vitality. We would be happy to discuss this issue further with you.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Ms Michelle Daley on 02 9219 2549 or by email michelle.daley@heartfoundation.org.au

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julie Anne Mitchell".

Julie Anne Mitchell
NSW Director of Cardiovascular Health Programs

Newcastle City Centre DCP: Submission

The Heart Foundation

The Heart Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation committed to improving cardiovascular health in Australia. The Heart Foundation's vision is for Australians to have the best cardiovascular health in the world. Through its research, health promotion programs and policy development, the Heart Foundation promotes healthy public policy to support better health for all Australians.

Cardiovascular disease

Cardiovascular disease is the term used for a group of diseases including heart disease, stroke and blood vessel disease. It affects more than 3.3 million Australians and is one of Australia's leading causes of death – more than 47,000 Australians die each year due to cardiovascular disease.

In the following section of this submission we have responded selectively to the Planning Controls and proposed Performance Criteria under the Public Domain section, in accordance with our expertise in healthy urban planning. Recommendations are included where we believe the 'Acceptable solutions' can be strengthened to encourage more walking, cycling and public transport use, as stated in the Performance Criteria.

We also assert that the Overall Principles listed on page 12 of the draft DCP should include a principle 'to encourage walking and cycling and improved public transport linkage.'

Control name/number: B1. Access Network

Performance criteria/number:

B1.01

Comments/Recommendations:

- We strongly endorse the objective of prioritising pedestrian, cycling and public transport users.
- We endorse the solution that streets and lanes are connected and encourage pedestrian use, but assert this is not the only design solution required to meet the objective of the performance criteria.
- We recommend an expansion of the 'Acceptable solutions' to better meet the performance criteria, specifically outlining a more comprehensive range of design solutions that exemplify a 'complete street' that prioritises walking, cycling and public transport. Useful resources for this purpose are the compendium titled [*Streets for People*ⁱⁱⁱ](#) and *Healthy Active by Design*: www.healthyactivebydesign.com/
- The indicated Figure 6.01-17 (pg. 36) does not correspond with these performance criteria.

Control name/number: B1. Access Network	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of 'Acceptable Solutions' ensure that the improved and new pedestrian connections are within comfortable walking distance to public transport nodes to ensure convenient mode change. • As part of the design solutions, ensure 'way finding' signage is incorporated and clearly defined, so connections are easier to navigate. • In line with the comments above, we assert that design solutions for streets should also ensure safe speed limits (<40km/h, with best practice 30km/h) to effectively prioritise walking and cycling.^{iv} An exception to this is the shared spaces component of Hunter St Mall, which should retain the existing 10km/h limit.
Performance criteria/number: B1.02	Comments/Recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We endorse all proposed improvements to ensure that lanes, through-site links and pedestrian paths are retained, safe and enhanced to promote access and public use. • Under 'Acceptable solutions' we explicitly discourage blank walls/solid fencing as they inhibit natural surveillance and encourage graffiti, both of which lessen the perception of safety for pedestrians. This is particularly important in lane ways. • Under point d), if dead ends or cul-de-sacs are used because they are unavoidable, they also need to include 'way finding' signage. • Explicitly acknowledge the use of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design principles, under acceptable solutions. • Improved lighting is important and should be retained, but there are additional design elements that can enhance existing pedestrian paths/links and should be more explicitly detailed under design solutions. This includes shade provision (eg. through the use of appropriate street trees), improved seating and other amenities, and clear way finding signage. • Our own research confirms that neighbourhood aesthetics, increasing land-use mix and active street frontages are important to promote an interesting and safe pedestrian environment which in turn, encourages more walking^v

Control name/number: B1. Access Network	
Performance criteria/number: B1.03	Comments/Recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The indicated figure 6.01-17 (pg. 37) does not correspond with this performance criteria- it appears to have been mislabelled. • We endorse all proposed improvements to pedestrian permeability and accessibility. • Under b) the accepted term is 'Crime Prevention through Environmental Design' principles (CPTED), rather than 'safer by design'. • Include an additional solution that specifies that pedestrian crossings should be located to enable a direct line of travel for pedestrians.
Performance criteria/number: B1.04	Comments/Recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We endorse the objective to integrate public transport facilities into the access network, but recommend greater clarity is provided of design solutions to deliver 'convenient, safe and accessible' access (point a). • What is considered 'within walking distance' under b)? • Does the City Centre Technical Manual (cited in b) detail the specifications for seating, lighting and shelters at both light rail and bus stops? • We advocate that CPTED principles should also apply to the design of public transport facilities and be listed under 'Acceptable solutions'.
Performance criteria/number: B1.05	Comments/Recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We endorse the objective to ensure that cycle routes are safe, connected and well-designed. • The indicated figure (6.01-16) on page 29 does not correspond with the performance criteria B1.05. • Are separated cycleways only going to be provided on Hunter Street? It would be better to include an illustration in lieu of Photo 6.01-42 (pg. 41) that illustrates the design standard specified in the technical manual. For example, is there going to be a physical separation between the cycle lane and vehicle lanes and will they be wider than the example shown? • Beyond Hunter Street, what are the acceptable solutions for

Control name/number: B1. Access Network

	<p>other cycle way or cycle route upgrades in the city centre?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As part of 'Acceptable Solutions' ensure that the cycleway connections are accessible to public transport nodes to ensure convenient mode change.• Street signage will need to be reviewed and upgraded to ensure it provides information along cycle routes about availability and location of key destinations, transport stops, bicycle parking/amenities, travel times and distances.
--	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Control name/number: B2: Views and Vistas

Performance criteria/number: B2.01	Comments/Recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We endorse the objective to protect view corridors and sight lines to key public spaces, the waterfront etc. Our own research confirms that neighbourhood aesthetics encourage more walking, especially for recreation.^{vi} Clear sight lines are also an important navigational tool to orient those on foot or bike.
Performance criteria/number: B2.02	Comments/Recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The final dot point under b) seems to be incomplete.

Control name/number: B3. Active Street Frontages

Performance criteria/number: B3.01	Comments/Recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We strongly endorse the objective of promoting active street frontages to promote and interesting and safe pedestrian environment in the precincts shown in Figure 6.01-25, pg. 44.• Under 'Acceptable solutions', we suggest to explicitly discourage blank walls, as they inhibit natural surveillance and encourage graffiti, both of which lessen the perception of safety for pedestrians.
---------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Control name/number: B4: Addressing the Street**Performance
criteria/number:****B4.01****Comments/Recommendations:**

- We endorse objective of requiring buildings to positively address the street.
- Make explicit reference to the use of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles under 'Acceptable solutions'.
- Explicitly discourage blank walls or solid fencing in new development, as they inhibit natural surveillance and encourage graffiti, both of which lessen the perception of safety for pedestrians.
- As part of the design solutions, ensure entrances are clearly defined, face the street and provide clear sightlines.

Key precincts: Hunter Street Mall**General comments**

There is significant opportunity to evaluate the outcomes of the proposed changes to Hunter Street Mall, especially in terms of changes to travel mode to/from and within the precinct, customer and business owner perceptions of the improvements and impacts on shopper spend, number of visits, retail vitality and other measures of interest. There is a distinct lack of well evaluated Australian case studies of the benefits of promoting a more walking and cycling friendly main street on the economic outcomes for local businesses. The timing of proposed urban renewal presents an opportunity for data collection both before and after the changes take place, which would also be ideal. In 2011, The Heart Foundation released the discussion paper titled ***Good for Business^{vii}***, which largely drew from international examples of successful main street/retail precinct improvements that encouraged more walking and cycling. The proposed changes to Hunter Street Mall align clearly with this theme.

www.heartfoundation.org.au/active-living/Documents/Good-for-business.pdf

We are keen to consult & collaborate with NSW Planning and Infrastructure, Newcastle City Council, landowners and other key stakeholders to pursue this idea further.

Objectives (pg. 54)**Comments/Recommendations:**

- The objectives need to be more explicit that pedestrians, then cyclists are the two priority modes in the shared space of Hunter Street Mall. To ensure Hunter Street Mall functions as a safe and welcoming shared space, vehicular access should be the lower priority on the user hierarchy.

Performance criteria/number: B.01	Comments/Recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We endorse all proposed improvements to pedestrian permeability and amenity
Performance criteria/number: B.02	Comments/Recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We endorse the preservation of the view corridor to Christ Church Cathedral
Performance criteria/number: B.04	Comments/Recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hunter Street Mall has great potential as a place of activity and a destination in its own right, and encouraging safe, comfortable and welcoming pedestrian activity has to be the main priority to achieve this. • While we support the Mall operating as a shared space and thoroughfare for pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular movement, we advocate that providing vehicle parking in the Mall is counterproductive to the goal of making the space a place of activity that truly prioritises pedestrians. • We recommend against the inclusion of short stay parking within the Mall, with the exception of limited accessible spaces for people with disability parking permits. • Design and traffic calming elements should ensure that speed limits are kept to the existing 10km/h in the shared zone. • Under c) bicycles should be able to travel both ways. • In addition to the streetscape improvements described under section h) we strongly recommend inclusion of a legible way finding system and signage (including estimated walking time to connections and destinations/points of interest), and facilities for comfort and convenience, such as drinking fountains & public toilets. • Ensure the lighting improvements also cover safe connections from the shopping area to public transport connections.
Performance criteria/number: B.05	Comments/Recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We agree with the proposed solutions to minimise conflicts with pedestrians.

References

-
- ⁱ Good for Business Discussion paper
- ⁱⁱ Healthy Built Environment Literature Review
- ⁱⁱⁱ Streets for People- Compendium for South Australian Practice. An initiative of the SA Active Living Coalition. Available at: www.saactivelivingcoalition.com.au/resources/s4pddocuments/ (Accessed 28 March, 2014)
- ^{iv} National Heart Foundation of Australia, Healthy By Design SA- a guide to planning, designing and developing healthy urban environments in South Australia, 2012.
- ^v National Heart Foundation of Australia, 2009. *The built environment and walking*, Position Statement prepared on behalf of the National Physical Activity Program Committee (Chief authors: Gebel, K., Bauman, A., Owen, N., Foster, S., Giles-Corti, B.)
- ^{vi} National Heart Foundation of Australia, 2009. *The built environment and walking*, Position Statement prepared on behalf of the National Physical Activity Program Committee (Chief authors: Gebel, K., Bauman, A., Owen, N., Foster, S., Giles-Corti, B.)
- ^{vii} Tolley, R, 2011, Good for Business. <http://www.heartfoundation.org.au/support-us/Whats-On/Pages/good-busine-discussion-paper.aspx> (Accessed 26 March 2014)