



CITY OF CANADA BAY

**Response to
SOPA Masterplan 2030
(2016 Review)**

Prepared 15 November 2016

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. **Regional Development:** The cumulative impact of the development within the region is not clearly addressed within the documentation – lack of recognition of the significant impact of surrounding densification (i.e. Parramatta Road Urban Renewal, Camelia, Rhodes West, Rhodes East, Wentworth Point, Carter Street, Concord West, Meadowbank etc)
- 1.2. **Hierarchy of priorities for the precinct:** There is mixed messaging in the prioritization for SOPA – is the priority residential and community management or a nationally significant events precinct? This has long term asset management and local stakeholder management implications.
- 1.3. **Community Facilities:** There is a need to provide additional publically accessible community facilities (meeting rooms etc) which are benchmarked with local government fees and charges (i.e. a meeting space for \$120/hr is not affordable for locally based community groups or strata committees). Many of the current venues in SOPA have meeting rooms, but they are inaccessible by the public due to their location within the venues (and many are at capacity currently).

There is also concern at the lack of commitment for the provision of a Library or Multi-use Community Centre

- 1.4. **Urban Design:** There is a need to provide good urban design practice via solar access to parks and open space areas. There is also a need to ensure that street frontages are to human scale and that the street frontage podium is not overbearing.
- 1.5. **Affordable Housing:** To meet the requirements of *A Plan for Growing Sydney* provision for affordable housing needs to be mandated within the Master Plan
- 1.6. **Open Space:** Throughout the documentation a number of parcels of open space are identified as having capacity to provide for the additional residential population proposed, however when reviewing the detail of these spaces, many are either/both at capacity currently or unsuitable for public use (due to elite sporting use and/or a significant commutable distance from the development). An example of this is Bicentennial Park is close to capacity in peak season now, and unable to support local level increase in population demand.
- 1.7. **Local Amenities:** Provision of local amenities is only briefly mentioned within the documentation – our experience in Rhodes has shown the need for higher levels of amenities provided for new populations e.g.:
 - higher use due to apartment dwellers utilising public space more frequently than in lower density areas
 - need for dog parks, cycleway connections, local scale parks, play equipment etc

- On the basis of the experience of CCBC, SOP is encouraged to include additional local sports fields and recreational facilities in the Master Plan to allow for the proposed growth within the SOP area.
- 1.8. **Transport:** Inadequate provision of information about transport options and long term network load planning. Road network and connections, Homebush Train station, ferry wharf, lack of detail about light rail proposal, etc. It is also noted that the Western Sydney Metro has now been announced. Any proposals should include an assessment of the effects of this infrastructure.
- 1.9. **Traffic:** Lack of detail surrounding the need for upgrading the road network. In particular the intersection of Australia Ave/Homebush Bay Dr/ Underwood Rd, and also the need to upgrade Hill Rd.

Council again reiterates its' longstanding opposition to any change in usage of the Bennelong Bridge from its' current status as a **public transport only link**.

2. THE CONTEXT OF THE CITY OF CANADA BAY

This section briefly describes the location, character, history and expected growth rates for the City of Canada Bay Council Area.

2.1. The City of Canada Bay

2.1.1. Location

The City of Canada Bay Local Government Area (LGA) is located in the inner-western suburbs of Sydney, about 6-12 kilometres from the Sydney GPO, and is bounded by the Parramatta River in the north and east, the Inner West Council, the Burwood and Strathfield Council areas in the south and the Parramatta City Council, and Olympic Park in the west. The City encompasses a total area of 20 square kilometres, including many parks, reserves and foreshores.

The City of Canada Bay includes the suburbs of Abbotsford, Breakfast Point, Cabarita, Canada Bay, Chiswick, Concord, Concord West, Drummoyne, Five Dock, Liberty Grove, Mortlake, North Strathfield, Rhodes, Rodd Point, Russell Lea, Strathfield (part) and Wareemba (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1: Canada Bay Council Area Source: profile.id, 2015

2.1.2.Character

The CCBC is a predominately residential area, but also has significant retail, commercial, industrial and open areas with the water of the Parramatta River proudly the backdrop to the LGA. The features in the LGA include Birkenhead Point Shopping Centre, Rhodes residential areas and Shopping Centre, Yaralla Estate (Dame Edith Walker Hospital), Concord Repatriation General Hospital, Concord Golf Club and many parks and reserves. The City is served by the Western Motorway, Parramatta Road and the main northern railway line.

2.1.3.Early History of CCBC

The indigenous inhabitants of the Canada Bay area were the Wangal clan of the Eora Aboriginal people. European settlement dates from 1793, with land used mainly for farming. The Longbottom Stockade on Parramatta Road was used for Convict work gang accommodation. Residential growth took place during the late 1800s and early 1900s, aided by improved access and industrial growth. Significant development occurred during the post-war years.

2.1.4.Predicted Population Growth

Recent growth has been largely due to the redevelopment of previous industrial sites for residential developments, particularly medium and high density housing. Population growth is expected to continue, especially in the Rhodes and Mortlake Peninsula Areas and the Parramatta Road Corridor. Between 2015 and 2036, the population for the CCB is forecast to increase from 87,241 in 2015 to 120,761 in 2036 (see Figure 2). This is an increase of 33,520 persons or 38.42% growth. Council is very aware the increased population will generate greater demand on all current services and recreational areas as well as local and regional transport links. This population projection is independent of the expected growth in SOP, Carter St Precinct, and Strathfield and Burwood Council areas.

FIGURE 2: Forecast Population Growth Canada Bay Council Area Source: profile.id, 2015

3. SOPA MATERPLAN 2030 – CCBC RESPONSE

This Section provides City of Canada Bay’s response to the 2016 Review of the SOP Master Plan 2030.

3.1. Community Facilities Strategy

3.1.1. General

The Master Plan and supporting documents identify many future issues, e.g. population growth, limited open space, Bicentennial Park already being near capacity, the impact of events on SOP workers and residents and the lack of current private open space.

However, the solutions provided make assumptions that, in many cases, will not be feasible.

Example 1: Providing access to and the affordability of elite sporting facilities including parking and entry costs is not practical. Further these facilities are closed for major events at various times throughout the year.

Example 2: Access to facilities and open space during major events such as the Royal Easter show is not practical.

Example 3: Access to major sporting facilities such as the stadia and the Hockey facilities is not available to the general public and should not be included in the calculations of available recreation space.

The document makes assumptions that the residents will be able to use the facilities in adjoining LGA's. The facilities in CCBC are already at capacity. Council is rebuilding amenities and adding lights to gain further use but this is to cater for existing growth in our city. Further, Bicentennial Park is currently at approximately 95% capacity and is not in a position to accept the level of growth proposed.

3.1.2. Number of Facilities

In Council's opinion the Master Plan understates the recreational needs of a residential population of 23,500 and a workforce population of 34,000. It is also noted that SOP is surrounded by areas of growth.

The plan does not allow for a standalone community centre. It assumes that the existing meeting rooms in the various sports facilities will be adequate. These rooms are neither accessible to the public nor affordable in terms of community use. The provision of a library and Multipurpose Community Centre are identified at 2,400 sqm and 1,200 sqm respectively. However, it is also identified that if combined there could be a reduction of 900sqm. This is disproportionate to the expected efficiencies gained. It should also be remembered that the former Auburn Council had found that "there is a severe undersupply and high level of demand for multipurpose community space within the LGA". And "there is an undersupply of library space in the LGA". Further to this it is unclear if the current Newington Library would continue with the new Wentworth Point Library under construction. The plan does not allow for any new indoor sports courts. It assumes that the existing sports courts in the various sports facilities will be adequate. These courts are neither accessible to the public nor affordable in terms of community use.

The Master Plan assumes existing playing fields within 5km of the site will be adequate. It also assumes that there will be capacity within the Carter St precinct and the Wentworth Point Precinct. These assumptions are marginal at best and do not meet current guidelines. The existing CCBC facilities identified include Powells Creek (1 sports field, 4 Courts) and Ron Routley Oval (1 sports field). Both these sports fields are at capacity already and are being upgraded to allow for current growth within CCBC.

On the basis of the experience of CCBC, SOP is encouraged to include additional local sports fields and recreational facilities in the Master Plan to allow for the proposed growth within the SOP area.

3.2. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

3.2.1. Urban Parks & Open Space

There appears to be a reasonable spread of local parks throughout the Master Plan Area to allow a diversity of size and function. However, it should be noted that many of these will be subject to overshadowing and will not receive sunlight during the important 11:00am till 2:00pm timeframes, thus significantly reducing their capacity for regular use.

With the level of growth proposed by the Master Plan, and the comparatively limited open space, a high level of importance should be placed on the quality of those spaces. There needs to be particular requirements for solar access and natural light to be protected in the winter months to those limited spaces.

3.2.2. Affordable Housing

A Plan for Growing Sydney seeks to improve housing choice to suit different needs and lifestyles and recognises that more needs to be done to meet the housing needs of people on very low, low and moderate incomes. To address ***Direction 2.3, Action 2.3.3 Deliver more opportunities for affordable housing***, the Master Plan should mandate the delivery of affordable housing within the future development of SOP.

Action 2.3.3 of A Plan for Growing Sydney states that the Government will:

- Develop a comprehensive approach to this issue that involves all stakeholders – the Government, local councils and the private and community sectors;
- *Provide affordable housing in Government-led urban renewal projects and on Government owned sites to meet the shortfall in affordable housing;*
- Require local council's to include affordable housing in their local housing strategies, to respond to local demand.

3.3. Education & Health Services

A Plan for Growing Sydney seeks to plan for education and health services to meet Sydney's growing needs.

Direction 1.10, Plan for education and health services to meet Sydney's growing needs,

Action 1.10.1 Assist the Department of Education and Communities, the Catholic Education Commission and the Association of Independent Schools of NSW to identify and Plan for new School Sites throughout Sydney.

It is understood that the nearby Newington Public School (primary school) accommodates primary school children from the areas of Newington, Sydney Olympic Park and Wentworth Point and is reaching capacity. It is also understood that a new primary school is being provided as part of the Wentworth Point Community. Again it is unclear if this school is already at capacity with the development at Wentworth Point. Therefore, consideration needs to be given to the provision of additional education facilities to support the growing population. The provision of education facilities needs to be given priority with confirmation and delivery of this infrastructure determined upfront and delivered in conjunction with residential growth.

3.4. Urban Design

It is impossible to achieve both density, and good urban design outcomes which focus on creating a comfortable space for pedestrians at street level. Future tower development should have a human scale at street edge. A maximum of 6 storey podiums should be advocated by the Master Plan and any future design guidelines for buildings at the street edge. This would provide an improved relationship between buildings and pedestrians.

3.5. Timing and Delivery of Infrastructure

New Development should be staged/phased and only permitted to proceed where appropriate infrastructure is in place to support the development, particularly public transport (light rail connecting the precinct to Strathfield and Parramatta) and schools.

3.6. Access and Transport

It is noted that maximum car parking rates are not proposed for change under the Master Plan 2030 (p18, Summary of Proposed Planning Changes).

“The review aims to increase the proportion of non-car trips made by people working in the Park to 40%” and is expected to be facilitated through major public transport improvements, including a Light Rail Connection, Street Upgrades, increased Bus Services, upgrades to Lidcombe and Concord West stations, using event bus timetabled bus services.

“The review does not propose amending the existing maximum vehicle parking rates. It is proposed that parking rates will be continually monitored and reviewed.” The strategy states that “Additional traffic impacts of changes to land uses are anticipated to be managed through the key initiatives already identified within Master Plan 2030.”

With such increases in density, improvement to transport and access, as well as increased employment, services and facilities within close proximity, it is an opportune time to limit maximum car parking spaces to a maximum of one space per dwelling. This will encourage the use of public transport and minimise impact on the surrounding road network. Using a strategy of '**monitoring and review**' is ineffective and will result in the same number of car spaces being generated with little to no chance of reducing car use within the precinct moving forward and will not encourage pedestrian activity or the use of public transport.

It is also noted that the Western Sydney Metro has now been announced. Any proposals should include an assessment of the effects of this infrastructure.

3.7. Traffic Capacity Issues

The Traffic and Transport Strategy indicates that the intersection of Australia Avenue/Underwood Road/Homebush Bay Drive is currently under investigation by the RMS as part of Olympic Peninsula Regional Transport Investigations with the potential that the existing roundabout be removed and 2 signalised intersections installed in its place.

This intersection has long been a significant pinch point in the road network with on flow impact to this Councils area however despite this and previous reviews by the RMS, the matter has not been satisfactorily addressed to date. Additional information is requested from SOPA/RMS as to the design of the proposed upgrade, current and anticipated future intersection performance, how this would incorporate potential light rail, etc.

The analysis of the intersection must include the impact of other significant future development proposals in the area and broader network flow changes. This includes the Homebush precinct of the Parramatta Road Urban Transformation plans, the Concord West Rezoning Masterplan, etc.

The proposed significant increase in development within SOP should not progress further until an all-inclusive and thorough analysis of the "Australia Avenue/ Underwood Road/ Homebush Bay Drive" intersection has been undertaken to ensure sufficient capacity can be realised at the intersection to provide a good level of service.

3.8. Public Transport Opportunities

With respect to Traffic and transport the area is already saturated. The proposed significant increase in development within SOP should include allowance for improved public transport connections, preferably via a commitment to the Parramatta-Strathfield light rail or some other high volume rapid transport system.

It is noted that SOP and Wentworth Point are currently under represented in terms of car share vehicle services. Consideration should be given to the provision of car share spaces both on-street and off-street within future developments. Such an arrangement has been successfully implemented by Council in the redevelopment of Rhodes West and assists in reducing private car ownership and hence parking demand.

Council reiterates its' longstanding resolution that notwithstanding any demand from the Wentworth Point or SOP, Bennelong Bridge is to remain exclusively for the use public transport services. Council would not support any proposal for it to be made available for the use of privately operated vehicles on either a temporary or permanent basis.

4. SUMMARY

The Masterplan must address the many positive or negative indirect impacts of Sydney Olympic Park (SOP) on the City of Canada Bay (CCBC) and vice versa. Due to proximity alone it is expected that SOP and CCBC residents and workers will use the others facilities. CCBC has planned for growth within the city with facilities such as The Connection at Rhodes and the installation of lights and improved amenities at many playing fields is providing for this growth. However, CCBC cannot provide for the needs of other adjoining areas with current the expansion of services. Further, it is unlikely that other surrounding areas will be capable of accommodation this growth either.

The cumulative impact of the development within the region is not clearly addressed within the documentation – lack of recognition of the significant impact of surrounding densification (i.e. Parramatta Road Urban Renewal, Camelia, Rhodes West, Rhodes East, Wentworth Point, Carter Street, Concord West, Meadowbank etc)

The Master Plan sets out a number of Planning Principles to be met. However, it does not appear to ensure that the human scale is catered for at the street frontage of the various podiums, nor is solar access between the hours of 11:00am and 2:00pm mandated for the various local parks. This makes the provision of an acceptable and pleasant urban form very difficult. ***A Plan for Growing Sydney*** also requires the provision of various forms of housing that are accessible for very low, low, and middle incomes. The Master Plan does not appear to meet this requirement.

With respect to Traffic and transport the area is already saturated. The proposed significant increase in development within SOP should include allowance for improved public transport connections, preferably via a commitment to the Parramatta-Strathfield light rail or some other high volume rapid transport system.

In this respect Council reiterates its' longstanding resolution that the Bennelong Bridge should remain exclusively for the use of Public Transport Services. Council will not support any proposal for this bridge to be made available for the use of any privately operated vehicles.

In relation to the various proposals CCBC also notes the need to further develop proposals to improve the intersection of Australia Ave/Homebush Bay Drive/Underwood Road. This intersection is a significant pinchpoint that must be resolved.