

# MINUTES

## Strathfield Residents Meeting



Held on 8 December 2016 at UrbanGrowth NSW, level 12, MLC Centre, 19 Martin Place, Sydney

	Gary Caldorada, property owner
	Maria Ianotti, property owner
	Theva Surendra, property owner
<b>Attendees</b>	Kelly van der Zanden – Associate, JBA
	Stephen Driscoll - Head of CBD Projects, UrbanGrowth NSW
	Stephanie Ballango - Assistant Development Director, UrbanGrowth NSW
	Kate Sheehan - Senior Development Manager, UrbanGrowth NSW

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<b>Apologies</b>	Nil
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### 1. Opening

- Introductions of meeting attendees and welcome.
- Gary outlined purpose for meeting.
- The home owners advised they are not willing to embark on renovations and upgrades to their homes due to the uncertainty not only about the future of their own properties, but the character and quality of living within the Precinct in the future, particularly during future construction periods. UrbanGrowth NSW was advised that there is uncertainty amongst the community, and people do not know where to enrol their children in schools, whether to invest significant money into their homes etc., and generally feel that they are putting their lives on hold indefinitely. This has created stress and a high degree of anxiety within the community.
- Since the release of the final *Parramatta Road Urban Transformation Strategy* (the Strategy) there has been uncertainty among residents who live between Allen & Conway Streets in North Strathfield because they don't understand the reasons for the changes identified on this land from the draft Strategy to the final Strategy.
- Uncertainty among some residents has led to dissatisfaction in the area. There is uncertainty around the likely timeframes that change could occur in this location.
- Stephanie asked for further clarification on what uncertainty the home owners had. Maria explained that uncertainty related to what people wanted to do with their future and their homes. She explained her personal situation relating to her family home not being fit for purpose for safe living resulting in her currently holding off on major renovations and moving back home with her mother. Gary also added that they believe the original minority of owners opposed to the plan believed it was an "all or nothing" approach. i.e. if they oppose there would be no increased density in all the precinct. However, as they have come to realise this was not the case and many of the opposers are now for inclusion as they do not want to be surrounded by increased density.
- Landowners are seeking UrbanGrowth NSW's advice to obviate the current uncertainty and help inform decisions regarding their properties.

### 2. Discussion

- Stephanie provided an overview of what had informed decisions and what had changed between the draft Strategy and final Strategy. Stephanie added that the Homebush Precinct Plans in the draft Strategy were good planning logic and were prepared for the purpose of seeking stakeholder feedback.

- The consultation process began in late 2013 with design charrettes. More than 100 key stakeholders attended and identified the precincts and locations for growth along the Parramatta Road corridor.
- The preliminary draft Strategy was released for feedback in November 2014 through to February 2015. This was a high level Strategy which identified the precincts and locations for growth as well as initial forecast population growth. Feedback received on the preliminary draft Strategy was used to inform the draft Strategy.
- UGNSW has worked closely with councils during the preparation of the Strategy which included secondment of council staff to the project team at UGNSW.
- The draft Strategy was prepared during 2015 and publicly exhibited from September to December 2015 for the purpose of seeking feedback.
- More than 3,700 responses were received which were analysed and informed the final Strategy.
- The final Strategy was released on 9 November 2016 and includes more detail than what was in the draft Strategy including a staged release of land contingent on the timing of infrastructure.
- Key feedback received on the draft Strategy in the North Strathfield area included concerns about heritage/character, traffic and flooding and transport and light rail in particular.
- Following feedback received during the exhibition of the Strategy and representations made by local MPs we were asked by the Planning Minister to engage specialist consultants to do further analysis and studies of the North Strathfield area.
- SJB and Godden Mackay Logan (heritage consultants) undertook further analysis and found that while the area is not listed as a heritage area, the whole area has character which in its entirety should be considered for protection.
- Jacobs traffic consultants undertook further analysis. The area is congested and major upgrade works would be required to be done. RMS does not have any plans currently to construct a major road connection to the north which would be required to support the previously densities in North Strathfield.
- Flooding can be overcome with engineering and drainage infrastructure in place.
- The Parramatta Light Rail is one of the biggest defining factors in the changes made to the Homebush Precinct in the final Strategy. Transport for NSW (TfNSW) are working on four preferred route alignments and at the point in time when UGNSW was finalising the Strategy, TfNSW had asked us to move away from the route alignment we had previously shown until a preferred route had been selected. This meant there was uncertainty on the location of density in the Homebush Precinct.
- Kelly asked why heavy rail wasn't sufficient. Existing limited capacity on the Northern Line would accommodate existing planned growth including the Concord West Master Plan. Heavy rail stations south of Parramatta Road at Homebush, Strathfield and Flemington are outside a reasonable walking catchment to support North Strathfield. Maria noted that if other areas such as Concord West are increasing in density, all people are leading to the Bakehouse Quarter which is a funnel point for traffic. Stephanie responded that Concord West is an adopted masterplan and is a staged release of land and supported by an infrastructure schedule which proponents are required to contribute towards as part of development to unlock traffic congestion. Also, UrbanGrowth NSW could not support increased densities in Concord West and North Strathfield, given the potential cumulative impacts.
- Gary asked if there was any indication of when TfNSW would release the preferred light rail route. Stephanie responded that a range of preferred options are expected to be released early next year in the first instance before narrowing to a single preferred alignment. Steve added that following any announcement, if the preferred route was through the Homebush Precinct, the Strategy should be revised as is outlined in the Strategy and Implementation Tool Kit documents.
- Kelly asked whether UGNSW would be involved in the assessment of any future planning proposal prepared for the land. Steve replied that it is likely UGNSW would only be involved in an advice capacity, but not as a statutory authority. Stephanie added that the Strategy has informed the draft District Plans, which when finalised, will be statutory plans and will prevail over the Strategy. It is anticipated that the final Central District Plan would include a preferred light rail alignment.
- Kelly asked what the difference was between the land identified for R3 zone to the west of Powells Creek and the land identified for R2 zone east of Powells Creek between Allen and Conway Street.

Stephanie replied that these are different areas of character and have different traffic issues. The area west of Powells Creek is better able to access Parramatta Road than the area east of Powells Creek. UGNSW has worked closely with City of Canada Bay Council who, through their submission to the draft Strategy, had asked for the Concord West Masterplan to be implemented through the Strategy. The light rail alignment is one of the single biggest determining factors determining where density would be located through the Homebush Precinct.

- Stephanie added that even if the heights and densities proposed in the draft (exhibited) Strategy had been retained in the final Strategy, this area would not have been included in the short-term release area in the first seven years as identified in the Implementation Plan 2016-2023.
- Maria noted that since the draft Strategy was released residents have been approached by a number of developers to the point of not wanting to answer the door during the day or wanting to make a submission to the draft Strategy. Stephanie responded that throughout the consultation period UGNSW had consistently encouraged people to make a submission through the many channels available including online, in writing or by telephone which could also be done anonymously. In addition, stakeholders were assured that individual feedback received would not be published nor would people who made the submissions be publicly identified. In addition, UGNSW reported the details of developers who were providing false information to residents to Fair Trading. UGNSW also consistently encouraged community members who were feeling harassed to also report developers/agents to Fair Trading and most importantly to seek own independent advice before making any decisions relating to their property.
- Gary said that he has worked with his neighbours to put together 23 homes on the block to sell as one site to a developer and submit a planning proposal using the 'out of sequence checklist'. However, he acknowledged that it has been challenging to find a buyer because the land is located outside of the short-term implementation area, even though the land is still within the Precinct boundary; this has (in Gary's view) created uncertainty for owners and buyers alike.
- Kelly added that a lot of these homes are at the end of their life and need considerable investment to maintain the dwellings and asked how long this part of the Precinct would be on hold for the sake of preserving character which won't be kept in the long term. Steve responded that the light rail alignment informs the decisions taken in this location and at this point decisions around a final preferred alignment and funding are still required. Until these decisions are made, certainty will be significantly reduced. Steve reiterated that once the preferred alignment of the light rail has been announced the Strategy should be revisited as it is live document.
- Stephanie added that councils will be required to consider the Strategy also and that the process for LEP amendments has not changed and will be required to undergo public exhibition.
- Theva asked how the community can take control of their future. Steve suggested the community continue to provide feedback and stay involved in community feedback processes such as the Greater Sydney Commission exhibition processes and public exhibition of planning proposals. Steve added that after the preferred alignment of the light rail has been announced there would be an opportunity to understand the impact to the Homebush Precinct.

### **3. Closing**

The meeting attendees agreed that UGNSW will circulate meeting minutes for confirmation of an accurate record before circulating a final copy to the meeting attendees, Planning Minister's office, Premier's office and relevant councils.

### **4. Next Meeting**

The meeting attendees agreed to meet as required, no date has been scheduled.