



ORDINARY COUNCIL

ORD01

SUBJECT: POST EXHIBITION REPORT - CAMDEN TOWN CENTRE URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

FROM: Director Planning and Environment

TRIM #: 17/278945

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider the submissions received from the public exhibition of the draft Camden Town Centre Urban Design Framework (the Framework).

The report recommends Council adopt the Framework subject to minor post-exhibition amendments. A copy of the Framework, as amended, is included as an **attachment** to this report.

BACKGROUND

The Camden Town Centre Strategy was adopted by Council in 2008. The aim of the Strategy was to *'manage and maintain the character of the town centre while making provision for modern planning and development requirements'*.

With the Camden LGA experiencing rapid urban growth since 2008, the role and context of the town centre has changed with developing urban centres at Narellan and throughout the Growth Centre.

In 2013, Council undertook a series of studies and community engagement to inform a revised vision for the town centre. The Camden Town Centre Vision (the Vision) was endorsed by Council at its meeting of 14 April 2015.

The intent of the Vision is to protect and strengthen the town centre's valued and distinct character whilst at the same time facilitating appropriate change and growth. The Vision contains a series of initiatives, several of which have been combined into the Framework, including:

- Prepare an urban design framework to establish objectives for the town centre and to identify development opportunities and associated controls for selected catalyst sites;
- Preparation of a public domain and streetscape plan;
- Preparation of a place focused, performance based DCP;
- Investigate current planning controls;
- Undertake master planning for the John Street Precinct;
- Preparation of a wayfinding and signage strategy; and
- Commencement of detailed investigation for a new public square.

In June 2016, Council engaged McGregor Coxall, urban designers to undertake the project along with a team of specialists including heritage experts and engagement specialists. Figure 1 below shows the study area of the Framework.



The draft Framework was publicly exhibited from 24 April to 6 July 2018. During the exhibition Council officers offered and met with key stakeholder groups including the Camden Historical Society and the Camden Resident Action Group.

Councillors have been briefed on the progress of the Framework with the latest briefing on 10 July 2018.

MAIN REPORT

Structure of the Framework

The Framework is structured around six key principles or 'place vitality criteria'. These include;

- Natural Environment
- Economics
- Access and Movement
- Public Domain
- Built form; and
- Culture.

Central to the key principles has been engagement with the community of Camden.

Informed by the community engagement and investigation of key principles, a series of initiatives were developed under each of the key principles. If adopted, these initiatives will inform an implementation plan to deliver the outcomes of the Framework.

In addition to the initiatives, the Framework considered four catalyst precincts within the town centre including Larkin Place, John Street, Murray Street and the Nepean River Link.

Key Findings and Initiatives

The Framework recognises that the town centre has a unique and distinct heritage character that is highly valued by the community and should be retained. The Framework does not propose radical change, but rather it considers opportunities for minimal change to the built form and uses within the town centre, with a focus on enhancing the attributes that make Camden unique.

Zoning

The Framework reviewed the current B2 Local Centre and B4 Mixed Use zonings within the town centre and recommends that the current zoning be retained. However, the Framework does recommend a review of the permissible uses within these zones and consideration of reinstating "dwelling houses" as a permissible use.

Built Form – Height

The Framework reviewed the current height restrictions within the town centre, as well as considering the height of existing buildings and preferred architectural style. The

Framework does not recommend amending the current 7m height limit throughout the town centre. Rather, the Framework identifies opportunities for further investigation of specific sites and recommends reviewing controls to provide greater consistency in the consideration of development applications.

The Framework identifies that, in some circumstances, the height restriction reduces the ability to achieve pitched roofs which complement the existing heritage buildings. The Framework found there is an opportunity to investigate controls that restrict the number of storeys combined with height restrictions to achieve the desired urban design outcomes.

The Framework also recommends further investigation be undertaken regarding height, including developing criteria for when variations may be considered. The Framework identifies some opportunities for minor height increases where improved architectural and urban design outcomes can be achieved, and where it is clearly demonstrated that there is no impact on key view corridors to and from the town centre.

The Framework recommends a further study be undertaken to establish criteria where variations could occur. Matters that need further investigation include building design, built form, topography, view corridors and impact on the human scale of Camden.

Public Domain – Signage & Materials

The Framework includes a Public Domain Manual that establishes a street hierarchy and provides a standard palette of materials to guide future public domain works.

The manual also considers wayfinding and signage within the town centre as integral elements to the success of the public domain and recommends that Council undertake further work to develop a suite of heritage signs and a wayfinding strategy that minimises ad hoc signage in the town centre.

Access and Parking

The Framework identifies that while the town centre is dependent on vehicular traffic, it is a highly pedestrianised centre with most of the town centre contained within a 400m walkable radius.

The Framework includes initiatives that emphasise the pedestrian nature of the town centre and provide opportunity to increase cycle access into the town centre.

The Framework also recommends investigation into parking restrictions within the town centre that will create a greater turnover of parking and encourage long stay parking to the outer edges.

Key Precincts

The Framework identified and investigated four key precincts within the town centre to test the proposed strategies.

Larkin Place

Larkin Place is well positioned to connect to the John Street Precinct and other civic uses, such as the Camden Library and Museum.



The Framework identifies Larkin Place as having the potential to provide a flexible (temporary) town square and civic space for events, whilst still functioning as a public carpark.

The Framework also identifies opportunities to improve the interface with the rear of buildings facing onto the Larkin Place carpark, providing opportunities for infill development for small commercial or retail use.

In doing this, the Framework reviewed the Camden Town Centre Strategy (2008) which recommended a formal Town Square in John Street. The Framework concludes that Larkin Place has the potential to become a flexible town square, providing opportunities for more commercial and social activity and recommends that the proposed John Street Town Square not proceed.

John Street

The Framework identifies John Street as the cultural hub of the town centre. Given its existing strong heritage character and existing civic uses such as the Camden Library, Museum and the Alan Baker Art Gallery this precinct could further be developed as a cultural and community precinct. The Framework recommends investigating public domain works including signage and lighting, and other small-scale facilities to support public performance and enhance the civic amenity.

Murray Street

Murray Street plays an important role as a gateway entry point into the town centre. The Framework identifies the Murray Street precinct as an opportunity for re-imagining as an eat-street with a program of public domain improvements to increase pedestrian amenity and traffic calming.

The Framework also identifies Murray Street as being potentially viable for a minor increase in height, subject to demonstrating design excellence and undertaking further analysis with regards to key view corridors.

Nepean River Link

The Nepean River Link provides an opportunity to better connect the river and rural floodplain with the town centre. The establishment of a river pathway could provide linkages with existing pathways and the Camden Town Farm.

Public Exhibition Process

The draft Framework was placed on public exhibition from 24 April to 6 July 2018. Copies of the document were placed in Council's administration centre and in the Camden and Narellan libraries.

During the exhibition period Council staff conducted information kiosks at:

- Camden Library – 6.00 to 8.00pm, Tuesday 1 May 2018.
- National Australia Bank corner Camden – 10.00am to 12.00 noon, Friday 4 May 2018 and Saturday 5 May 2018.

A total of 15 submissions were received. Copies of submissions are provided as a **supporting document**. A summary table outlining the issues raised in submissions and Council officer response is provided as an **attachment** to this report.

Summary of key issues raised and responses

A list of key issues and officer responses is provided below.

1. Building Height

Several submissions raised concerns regarding the potential to increase the height limit of 7m within the town centre. Submissions also called for Council not to consider variations to this control. Concerns were also raised regarding the review of heights in the Murray Street Precinct.

Officer Response

The Framework does not recommend changing the existing 7m height limit throughout the town centre. Rather, the Framework identifies that the height control combined with a storey control could be used to achieve better urban design outcomes, including the ability to have pitched roofs.

The Framework recognises that many existing buildings within the town centre do not meet the 7m height limit and recommends that clear criteria be prepared for how and when variations to the height control will be considered.

The Framework also identifies Murray Street for possible further consideration in relation to height. The Framework recognises that the typography and location of the Murray Street Precinct may facilitate a minor height increase subject to detailed design and analysis with regards to key view corridors.

Any change to height in the town centre would be subject to a separate planning proposal to amend the Camden LEP 2010 and this would require further investigation and community engagement.

2. Signage and Wayfinding

Concerns were raised regarding the general suite of signage within the town centre, and that it detracts from the heritage of the town centre.

Officer Response

The Framework recommends the preparation of a heritage suite of signage for the town centre. This will be undertaken in conjunction with a wider wayfinding strategy for the town centre.

3. Heritage and its role in the Framework

Concerns were raised that the heritage significance of the town centre was not prominent enough within the Framework, and that heritage should be strengthened in terms of the overall document and, more specifically, within the economic principles, as heritage has a key role in the economic viability of the town.

Officer Response

The draft Framework recognises the importance of heritage in the town centre and the need to preserve and enhance heritage in the future. There is no objection to amending the Framework to further recognise and support this.



4. Zoning

Concerns were raised regarding the zoning of the town centre and the St Johns Church Precinct.

Officer Response

The Framework does not recommend changing the current zoning within the town centre, however it does recommend a review of the current permissible uses within the B2 Local Centre and B4 Mixed Use zones as they currently prohibit dwelling houses.

With regards to the St Johns Church precinct, this was not included within the scope of the Framework, however zoning will be considered as part of the broader review of the Camden LEP 2010.

5. Arrival experience

Concerns were raised regarding the need to improve the entry points into the town centre.

Officer Response

The Framework identifies potential initiatives to improve the arrival experience into the town centre. These include investigating the opportunity to underground power infrastructure (where possible) and reinforcing tree lined avenues on the approaches to the town centre.

6. Public Art

The need for a public art strategy was raised, including the opportunity for public art to emphasise the history and significance of the town centre.

Officer Response

The Framework identifies an initiative to develop a public art strategy for the town centre.

7. Traffic and Parking

Concerns were raised with the speed of traffic in the town centre and a need to reduce the speed limit. Concerns were also raised regarding the availability of parking close to the town centre.

Officer Response

The Framework doesn't review traffic or parking, however, it includes initiatives to further improve access and movement within the town centre, including initiatives to improve walkability and cycle access into the town centre.

In relation to parking, the Framework recommends Council undertake monitoring and investigate parking restrictions within the centre and promote long stay parking on the outer edges of the town centre.

8. Development in the Floodplain

Concern was raised with potential future development within the floodplain surrounding the town centre and the need to preserve the floodplain.

Officer Response

The Framework doesn't consider or promote development within the floodplain surrounding the town centre. Any future proposals within the floodplain would need to take into consideration all relevant planning controls.

Proposed Changes to the Framework

Minor post-exhibition changes are recommended to the draft Framework resulting from the submissions. These are listed in the table below.

Reference	Proposed Amendment
Page 15	Add the following sentence to the last paragraph: <i>'In addition, the entire Camden Town Centre is within a heritage conservation area.'</i>
Economics Place Principle - Page 57	Replace the existing place principle with the following: <i>'Maintain and evolve the local retail, commercial and residential economy by creating a range of opportunities that complement the heritage fabric of the Town Centre.'</i>
Outcome 04 Page 87	Replace with the following wording: <i>'Allow small scale (2 storey with pitched roof) residential development facing Larkin Place.'</i>
Outcome 03 - Page 95	Replace with the following wording: <i>'Any built form, or modification to existing facades on Murray Street is to engage with the streetscape and provide enclosed outdoor space.'</i>

Where to From Here?

Subject to Council adopting the Framework, an implementation plan will be prepared. A summary of some of the key initiatives and broad delivery timeframes are provided below:

Short Term

- Further investigation into the LEP and DCP provisions.
- Prepare a signage and wayfinding strategy.
- Review and monitor Camden Town Centre parking restrictions.
- Prepare a public art strategy.
- Explore use of Larkin Place for future events.

Medium Term

- Public domain works, including pedestrian crossings on John Street and Murray Street.
- Investigate opportunities to enhance cycling experience.
- Investigate planning for a cycleway along the Nepean River.
- Investigate Water Sensitive Urban Design in parking areas with increased permeability of surfaces.



Long Term

- Physical works in Larkin Place car park to improve its usability for events.
- Investigate underground power (where possible) to strengthen entry experience to the town centre.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications for Council from this report.

There is funding currently available for the preparation of strategic studies, including studies as part of the LEP/DCP review. Specific initiatives will be subject to consideration in the preparation of future budgets.

CONCLUSION

The Framework builds on the initiatives from the Camden Town Centre Vision. Consistent with the Vision, the Framework recognises the unique and distinct heritage character of the town centre and provides a series of initiatives which aim to protect and strength the future of the town centre.

The community has been engaged throughout the process and have assisted in the preparation of the Framework. Having considered the submissions received, it is recommended that Council adopt the Framework.

RECOMMENDED

That Council:

- i. adopt the Camden Town Centre Urban Design Framework (as amended);**
- ii. publicly notify the adoption of the Camden Town Centre Urban Design Framework; and**
- iii. advise submitters of the outcome of this report.**

ATTACHMENTS

1. Camden Town Centre Urban Design Framework
2. Table of Submission responses - Camden Town Centre
3. Submissions - *Supporting Document*



Camden Council Minutes

Ordinary Council Meeting
14 August 2018

**Camden Council
Administration Centre
70 Central Avenue
Oran Park**



ORD01 POST EXHIBITION REPORT - CAMDEN TOWN CENTRE URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

AMENDMENT

Resolution: Moved Councillor C Cagney, Seconded Councillor Morrison that Council:

- i. adopt the Camden Town Centre Urban Design Framework (as amended);
- ii. publicly notify the adoption of the Camden Town Centre Urban Design Framework;
- iii. advise submitters of the outcome of this report;
- iv. revisit the concept of residential development in Larkin Place in 12 months' time; and
- v. remove Outcome 04 – *'allow small scale (2 storey with pitched roof) residential development facing Larkin Place'*.

ORD151/18 THE MOTION ON BEING PUT WAS **CARRIED**

(Councillors Sidgreaves, Symkowiak, Fedeli, C Cagney, A Cagney, Farrow, Mills and Morrison voted in favour of the Motion. No Councillors voted against the Motion.)

ORD02 RMS ACQUISITION OF COUNCIL OWNED LAND

Resolution: Moved Councillor Sidgreaves, Seconded Councillor Fedeli that Council:

- i. agree to the compulsory acquisition of land and easement – part of Lot 1730 DP 1032925, part of Lot 1701 DP 1034645, part of Lot 233 DP 843696, part of Lot 240 DP 852594 and part of Lot 5740 DP 873263, being the areas highlighted in pink and brown on the attached plan;
- ii. agree to a reduction in the Proposed Acquisition Notice (PAN) period to seven days, with Council reserving the right of appeal should Council not agree with the Valuer General's determination;
- iii. note that a further report will be brought back to Council if the Valuer General's determination is to be appealed; and
- iv. make the appropriate budget adjustments for the provision of compensation, as determined by the Valuer General, for the acquisition and note that all necessary documentation, including acceptance of the Valuer General's determination, will be executed under delegated authority by the General Manager or his nominee.

ORD152/18 THE MOTION ON BEING PUT WAS **CARRIED**

(Councillors Sidgreaves, Symkowiak, Fedeli, C Cagney, A Cagney, Farrow, Mills and Morrison voted in favour of the Motion. No Councillors voted against the Motion.)