

City Services

Meeting Date 06/03/2002

Item Number: CS11
Subject: COOKS COVE DRAFT REP NO. 33 MASTERPLAN AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PLAN
File Number: T17/0137
Report by: MUP (ALEX SARNO), MLS (JOHN BRANDENBURG) MT&I (RICHARD JARVIS), D-CIT (DIANE CUTHBERT) & A/GENERAL MANAGER (KEVIN CASEY).

Financial Implications :

Precis:

Draft REP No 33 - Cooks Cove, the Masterplan for the proposal with supporting documentation and the Traffic Management Plan have been placed on exhibition by Planning NSW for public comment. In order to aid the consultation process, Council also conducted two community information sessions to allow residents to gain a better understanding of the proposal and to raise issues of concern.

This report outlines the various components of the proposal, assesses the documentation and provides responses to the issues raised at the community meetings. While the proposal is generally considered acceptable, some areas of concern, particularly in relation to traffic management are raised and recommendations have been made accordingly.

The submission period closes on Friday 15/03/02 and it is recommended that Council make a submission as detailed in the recommendation.

Council Resolution :

RESOLVED on the motion of Councillors Hedge & Brennan

1 That the report on Draft Regional Environmental Plan No 33 - Cooks Cove, the Masterplan and Traffic Management Plan be received and noted.

2 That Council make a submission to the Regional Coordinator, Planning NSW expressing support in principle for the development of Cooks Cove subject to the following amendments to the proposal:-

- The provision of on-site parking should be limited in proportion with the floor space occupied at any given time of the development.
- Provision of the circuiting public bus service by the developer at the frequency proposed in the Traffic Management Plan commencing at the first occupation of the site. It is recommended that the bus service be funded by a parking fee to be levied on all off-street parking on the site.
- Provision of bus stop lay-bys on both sides of Marsh Street with crossing facilities at the signals;
- Construction of the extension of Gertrude Street from Levey Street to Marsh Street, plus
- Alignment of the Cooks Cove internal access road with the Gertrude Street extension;
- Subject to RTA requirements, construction of a 4 way Gertrude and Marsh Streets intersection with right turn bays and left turn lanes in Marsh Street;
- Subject to RTA requirements, closure of the median in Marsh Street at Flora Street;
- Subject to RTA requirements, closure of the median in Marsh Street at Innesdale Road;
- Subject to RTA requirements, construction of left turn lanes in Marsh Street into and from the access roads of the Cooks Cove site.
- Provision of temporary parking on the site equivalent to the site floor area occupied plus a limited provision for construction operations.
- Clearance under the bridges over the waterways must maintain the clearances for vessels provided by the adjacent road bridge that will be passed in navigating to the location.
- Provision of bus priority at intersections where transport improvements can be achieved..
- Off street parking provision to a maximum of 4,610 spaces. However to discourage the use of

private cars to access the site, greater limits need to be applied to the on-site provision of parking.

- Covered walkways along commuter pedestrian routes where exposed to the weather.
- Cycle path connections as proposed across the site.
- Road access to the golf club to commence from West Botany Street, away from dwellings and other intersections.
- The traffic capacity of Levey St should not be increased, but it should remain a secondary access with constrained conditions to discourage its use.
- Investigation of the removal of the platform premium for the International Terminal station.
- Open space requirements should be based on area per population rather than a needs criteria unless the needs criteria is explained.
- There is a definition relating to "significant wetlands" but there is no indication as to what, if any, insignificant wetlands occupy the site.
- Heritage issues must be addressed in terms of the Eve Street Wetlands and the old sewer carrier. In addition the intended use of the market garden must be clarified.

Committee Recommendation :

RECOMMENDED on the motion of Councillors Hedge & Moselmane

That the matter be deferred to the next meeting of Council and further information be provided on the changes to the open space and playing fields and a plan showing the bicycle paths.

Officer Recommendation :

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- The provision of on-site parking should be limited in proportion with the floor space occupied at any given time of the development.

- Provision of the circuiting public bus service by the developer at the frequency proposed in the Traffic Management Plan commencing at the first occupation of the site. It is recommended that the bus service be funded by a parking fee to be levied on all off-street parking on the site.

- Provision of bus stop lay-bys on both sides of Marsh Street with crossing facilities at the signals;

Construction of the extension of Gertrude Street from Levey Street to Marsh Street, plus

Alignment of the Cooks Cove internal access road with the Gertrude Street extension;

- Subject to RTA requirements, construction of a 4 way Gertrude and Marsh Streets intersection with right turn bays and left turn lanes in Marsh Street;

- Subject to RTA requirements, closure of the median in Marsh Street at Flora Street;

- Subject to RTA requirements, closure of the median in Marsh Street at Innesdale Road;

- Subject to RTA requirements, construction of left turn lanes in Marsh Street into and from the access roads of the Cooks Cove site.

- Provision of temporary parking on the site equivalent to the site floor area occupied plus a limited provision for construction operations.

- Clearance under the bridges over the waterways must maintain the clearances for vessels provided by the adjacent road bridge that will be passed in navigating to the location.

- Provision of bus priority at intersections where transport improvements can be achieved ..

- Off street parking provision to a maximum of 4,610 spaces. However to discourage the use of private cars to access the site, greater limits need to be applied to the on-site provision of parking.

- Covered walkways along commuter pedestrian routes where exposed to the weather.

- Cycle path connections as proposed across the site.

- Road access to the golf club to commence from West Botany Street, away from dwellings and other intersections.

- The traffic capacity of Levey St should not be increased, but it should remain a secondary access with constrained conditions to discourage its use.

- Investigation of the removal of the platform premium for the International Terminal station.

Report Background

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Cooks Cove site is an area of approximately 106Ha. It is located 10km from the Sydney CBD on the banks of the Cooks River near the Kingsford Smith Airport International terminal.

The site lies within Australia's important economic development hub of Sydney south, an area which performs the role of what is termed Sydney's "gateway" to the world economy. The proximity to the airport and Port Botany gives Cooks Cove unique exposure to significant economic growth and power. The site is also within a ring of development around the airport which is undergoing redevelopment and re-energising the local and State economy.

The development concept envisages a unique opportunity to promote the new economy of advanced technology business in an environment highly conducive to export. Complementing the commercial activity the site will provide opportunities for recreation, public access to the Cooks River, wetland protection, cycling and walking paths, improved public transport and a development which will showcase Ecological Sustainable Development principles.

OVERVIEW OF THE PROPOSAL

The proposal involves a site of 106 ha which is owned by several bodies and is currently occupied by the Kogarah Golf Course, transport and engineering infrastructure (being the M5 East Tunnel, SWSOOS and East West runway landing light emergency power house), wetlands, market gardens and sports fields. Management of the overall site is fragmented which has had led to environmental neglect, minimal maintenance and consequently provides less than optimal recreational value.

The proposed land use strategy divides the site into three components.

Employment Area

This is the built portion of the development (20 ha) which will comprise primarily the Advanced Technology uses. This is defined as industries whose primary function is research into microelectronic, information technology, pharmaceuticals, telecommunications and ecological sustainable practices. The zone also makes provisions for some ancillary uses such as 5000m² of support services (cafe, restaurants etc.) 15,000m² hotel uses, and 5,000m² office space. In total the proposal will contain 270,000m² of floor space and provide 11,000 jobs.

Development will be configured in a series of buildings in a horse shoe layout linked by landscaped roadways and pedestrian access ways. Buildings will range in height from 3 - 6 storeys with only one building proposal at 11 storeys.

Golf course

The Golf Course (62 ha) will contain 18 holes, a driving range and new club house facilities. The course will stretch from the employment area across the SWSOOS to Bestic Street and will include the land currently occupied by the West Botany Street market garden. Two of the existing wetlands will be protected and included in the layout of the new golf course.

Open space

Open Space (17 ha) will be dealt with in greater detail below. However in terms of the strategy, open space will be provided in the form of new neighbourhood parks, a pedestrian cycle way within a riparian landscape along the foreshore, pedestrian access ways throughout the site and wetlands.

A DRAFT REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN NO . 33 - COOKS COVE

Draft REP33 is a statutory plan proposed by the Minister and will replace LEP 2000 with regard to the area to which it applies. The document provides the broad framework / principals within which development can occur. The plan will create three land use zonings being Trade & Technology Zones (being the employment area), Open Space Zone (containing the golf course and all other open space) and a Special Use Zone (to accommodate the SWSOOS, M5 East and future F6

freeway corridor.

Planning principals contained in the draft REP which must be satisfied include :-

- ecological sustainability
- encouraging advanced technologies
- optimising use of public transport
- good urban design
- protection of wetlands
- co-ordinated pedestrian and cycling networks
- energy efficiency
- water quality
- heritage conservation

Development Standards relating to total floor space, amount of floor space for certain uses and building heights are provided in the plan. A safeguard is provided in the plan that specifies that SEPP No.1 does not apply to these standards.

The draft REP also contains a number of special provision which are dealt with individually below .

Consent & Approval Authorities

The REP provides that Minister for Planning approves the Masterplan and Council is the Consent Authority for DA's Council cannot grant consent to a DA unless there is a Masterplan in place and Council must take into account the provisions of that Plan.

Relationship to Other Planning Instruments

The REP displaces the Rockdale LEP for the Cooks Cove site.

Masterplan

The draft REP requires a masterplan to be prepared and the Minister is nominated as the approval authority. Prior to the masterplan being approved it must go through a consultation process which includes the Council, community and relevant government authorities. Subsequent masterplans may also be prepared but must go through a similar consultation process .

The draft REP also specifies a lengthy list of matters which must be addressed by the masterplan .

Management plan

Prior to consent being granted for any development, the draft REP requires a series of management plans to be prepared in order to overcome adverse impacts. These include:-

- Comprehensive Transport Management Plan. Such a plan has been prepared and is being exhibited with this proposal;
- Plan of Management for Open Space, prepared in accordance with the Crown Lands Act;
- Wetlands Environmental Management Plan;
- Water Management Plan;
- Green and Golden Bell Frog Management Plan.

In terms of the latter 3 plans, the Council is the approval authority. The draft REP specifies the criteria which must be addressed and also requires the plans to be served on the N.P. & W.S., Department of Fisheries and Commonwealth Department of the Environment.

Heritage protection

The draft REP identifies the West Botany Street Market Garden as a heritage item and contains provision to deal with the assessment of their significance . This requires consideration of a statement of heritage impact or a conservation plan.

The Market Garden is included in the proposal and it is understood that a draft conservation plan has been lodged with the Heritage Office for its consideration .

B MASTERPLAN

OPEN SPACE

Open space, its reconfiguration, enhancement, usability and accessibility is a significant feature of the Cooks Cove masterplan. The provision of open space ranges from structured recreation to areas of remnant and constructed wetlands, foreshore access, landscaped links and parkland. Specifically, the masterplan provides for the following public open space:

The Foreshore

The foreshore zone will provide continuous public access within a 24-30m wide riparian zone that will encourage unstructured recreation along the river's length. The access way will accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists and link to the regional bike way .

Park at the confluence of Muddy Creek and Cooks River

One of the possible neighbourhood parks along the foreshore will be located at the confluence of Muddy Creek and the Cooks River. The park will also accommodate the intersection of a pedestrian and cycle pathway over Muddy Creek (0.25 ha).

Park at Firmstone Gardens

A portion of Riverine Park at the corner of Firmstone Gardens and West Botany Street, including the existing playground equipment will be retained under this masterplan (0.6 ha)

Soccer Stadium

The existing soccer stadium and surrounds, under licence to the St George Budapest Soccer Club, will remain within this masterplan (5.9 ha)

Marsh and Eve Street Wetlands

These existing wetland habitat areas will be conserved as a significant ecological asset with controlled public access under this masterplan .

Park at Marsh Street

A new neighbourhood park is to be created on the former Kogarah Golf Course adjacent to the Marsh Street and M5 East intersection. This park will provide unstructured recreation opportunities and enhance existing pedestrian links to Eve Street and to Valda Street via an existing pedestrian underpass. The park will have additional links to the foreshore (1.0 ha).

Bestic Street Linear Park

A new linear park is to define the southern edge of the masterplan site. Average width off Bestic Street boundary: 20m.

East West Recreation Pathway

A new east west pedestrian and cycle connection is to be provided north of the SWSOOS and the M5 East motorway. This pathway is to be curvilinear in plan and is to link the new neighbourhood park at Marsh Street with the foreshore and the 'horseshoe' boulevard (Road Type R3) of the development site, through a landscape of water quality ponds and vegetation habitat. Minimum width of corridor: 10m.

Quantity of Open Space

The City of Rockdale contains approximately 414 ha of open space. Approximately 60 ha not all of which is Council owned, are located within the Cooks Cove site. However, it should be borne in mind that this includes the Spring Creek Wetlands, Landing Lights Wetlands and the land occupied by the East-West Runway landing lights. In addition much of the area is also restricted being largely subject to lease and licence agreements to sporting clubs with restrictions on public access .

Under the Cooks Cove proposal, 17 ha of land will be available for public use. This land will be

landscaped, managed and much more accessible and usable to a broader cross section of the community.

Quality of Open Space

The masterplan area comprises 106 hectares of land which comprises a diverse range of uses, functions and occupations. In terms of the quality of open space, the current situation is featured by limited public access, fragmentation of management, environmental neglect, poor habitat maintenance and less than optimal recreational value.

Through the provision of the open space facilities quoted above, open space while less in quantity will be superior in quality. This is expressed in terms of a higher standard of facilities, better maintenance and management, accessibility and usability.

In addition to the facilities quoted above, a major positive feature of the masterplan is that it will create a framework for a more co-ordinated approach towards the management of the site's ecological and hydrological values.

Accessibility and Linkages

Accessibility to the foreshore is vastly improved through the provision of a pedestrian / cycleway along the length of the foreshore. This pathway will link to the Homebush Bay to Botany Bay cycleway through a connection under Marsh Street and a proposed bridge over Muddy Creek. Linkages are also proposed through the site with connection at Valda Street and Eve Street. Potential also exists for a future link over the Cooks River to the airport and its rail system.

Public access to the four existing wetlands will remain. However, access to the Spring Creek and the Landing Lights wetlands will need to be co-ordinated with the management of the golf course for the safety of the public and to limit impact on the migratory birds. It is a requirement of the masterplan that a Wetlands Environmental Management Plan be prepared. Access to the wetlands is to be made a component of this plan.

Ongoing Management of Open Space

Prior to approval being granted for the reconfiguration of the golf course which will be the first physical step in the development of this site, the REP requires a Plan of Management to be prepared under the provisions of the Crown Lands Act 1989 for all land zoned open space or proposed to be accessible to the public within the Cooks Cove site.

ECOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT

Prior to the preparation of the masterplan, a study was undertaken by Biosis Research to identify issues relating to the natural regimes existing at Cooks Cove and to forecast likely constraints on development. A number of issues relating to fauna, vegetation and wetland habitat were identified. The study went on to make a number of recommendations in order to guide development and minimise impact. The masterplan has incorporated these recommendations as follows:

- Four wetland habitats have been identified. These lie adjacent to Eve Street, Marsh Street, and Spring Creek and under the landing lights of the east west runway. Under the proposed masterplan, the habitats of the Eve and the Marsh Street Wetlands will remain unchanged and conserved while the Spring Creek and Landing Lights Wetlands will be conserved within the reconfigured Kogarah golf course.
- Other significant features of the masterplan include the strategy for the rehabilitation of the estuary foreshore, the possible creation of new constructed wetlands and stormwater quality management areas, and the use of new vegetation habitats.
- A Wetlands Environmental Management Plan shall be prepared. The Plan is to identify the extent of the remnant wetlands and rate the ecological, hydrological, recreational, educational, water quality, cultural and natural heritage values of the remnant and proposed constructed wetlands. It will then propose a strategic plan to address the protection and conservation of all existing wetland habitats and design criteria for the new constructed wetlands.
- Any new constructed wetlands and stormwater management ponds are to be offline from the

existing system of wetlands and drainage corridors.

- The existing water regime to the existing wetlands is to be preserved until further assessment is carried out. The nutrient status is to remain unchanged with possible techniques such as point source control, distance attenuation, or physical barriers used to minimise any new impacts.
- Appropriate vegetative buffer zones are to be created to balance wetland values and minimise direct and indirect impacts on the Cooks River, Muddy Creek and existing significant remnant wetlands.
- Tidal links/stream flows and hydrological regimes of the existing remnant wetland habitats shall be maintained and protected.
- Provide and rehabilitate the 'vegetation connections' along the estuary foreshore and between the existing wetland habitats across the site. These new vegetated corridors will provide a diverse range of habitat types while enhancing the habitat value of the site. There will be opportunities to extend and link these corridors to areas off site and to Sydney's Green Web.
- To provide new wetland habitats wherever possible across the site in areas not constrained by development or other constraints (e.g. creation of new wetland habitats between new golf course fairways).
- Provide land and water management practices that improve the water quality across the site while providing an opportunity to integrate wildlife habitat. Wetland design shall incorporate features suitable for the Green and Golden Bell Frog, wetland avifauna and reed dwelling birds.
- To re-create a mosaic of natural estuarine environments. Planting shall include floodplain forest, freshwater and brackish swamps, heath, mangroves and saltmarsh plant communities local to the area, where modified landform accommodates or can be modified to suit.
- The plan goes on to make specific provisions for habitat conservation within each of the wetlands.

LAND USE/BUILT FORM

As previously outlined the Masterplan proposes a range of buildings ranging from 11 storeys in height to 3 storeys. The 11 storey building is located at the northern section of the site. In the central section of the site is located a 6 storey building, with all others being 3, 4 or 5 storeys.

The Masterplan sets down urban design principals which must be followed and also pays particular attention to the design and relation of buildings to the foreshore of Cooks River and the future golf course.

Comment

The form and scale of these buildings is considered acceptable in the local context and compatible with the developments in the Wolli Creek redevelopment area.

The land uses proposed will complement those in Wolli Creek and the Cooks Cove proposal will provide a focus for the future development of the northern sector of the Rockdale local government area.

TRANSPORT AND ACCESS

SEPP 66 requires all development proposals of a medium scale and larger proposals to prepare plans for land use and transport integration. The intent of the policy is to ensure that medium scale and larger developments have a choice of transport modes, particularly public transport, available to service the transport needs of the development. The Cooks Cove Master Plan includes a Transport Management Plan to address this requirement.

Cooks Cove is well serviced by several modes of transport. It is immediately adjacent to a main road of major regional significance and a bus route. It is sited immediately adjacent to the interchange with the M5 East Motorway, a component of the Sydney Orbital motorway ring. One regular bus route (400) passes the site along Marsh Street. Three stations on the Illawarra and East Hills rail lines are located within moderate distances. Sydney Airport is adjacent, and Port Botany is about 8 kilometres distant. Therefore the site is well located for commercial purposes, and has opportunities that can be developed to provide ready access to the regional public transport network..

The Master Plan documents contain several inconsistencies of major significance to the transport planning for the proposed development and inadequacies in relation to support for the use of public transport. These are detailed in Attachment A. However the recommendations in relation to these matters can be summarised as follows:-

- The provision of on-site parking should be limited in proportion with the floor space occupied at any given time of the development.
- Provision of the circuiting public bus service by the developer at the frequency proposed in the Traffic Management Plan commencing at the first occupation of the site. It is recommended that the bus service be funded by a parking fee to be levied on all off-street parking on the site.
- Provision of bus stop lay-bys on both sides of Marsh Street with crossing facilities at the signals ;
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- Off street parking provision to a maximum of 4,610 spaces. However to discourage the use of private cars to access the site, greater limits need to be applied to the on-site provision of parking.
- Covered walkways along commuter pedestrian routes where exposed to the weather.
- Cycle path connections as proposed across the site.
- Road access to the golf club to commence from West Botany Street, away from dwellings and other intersections.
- The traffic capacity of Levey St should not be increased, but it should remain a secondary access with constrained conditions to discourage its use.
- Investigation of the removal of the platform premium for the International Terminal station ;

PUBLIC DOMAIN

General Principles

The REP seeks to create a high quality public domain made up of streets, open space and landscaped areas that will combine to identify the site as an attractive work place and local resource. This is to be achieved through a comprehensive network of pedestrian/cycleway/vehicle links and landscaped space .

Access and Connectivity

The public domain shall be integrated with urban design by providing view corridors within the development area, running east-west and north-south. Connectivity is to be achieved through a network of pedestrian/cycleways and roads in conjunction with the view corridors .

Access networks through the site include combined pedestrian and cycle pathways within the foreshore parks, with bicycles using the road network within the development site . The amenity of the public domain will be enhanced by taking advantage of view corridors to the river and the relocated golf course beyond wherever possible. In addition, pedestrian pathways within the site and parallel to the foreshore are to be along elevated sections of land. The design and location of accessways also considers safety and convenience.

Landscape Character and Development

The public domain is to be characterised by a visually consistent landscape treatment creating a "campus-style" environment within the development site with a strong emphasis placed on visual amenity.

Treatments throughout the site are designed to enhance a specific location, for example, the proposed creation of a forest environment corridor along Marsh Street. Landscaping features include street tree planting, pedestrian area planting and open areas seeded with grass or

integrated with the adjacent remnant golf course. Landscape treatment will be used to frame views, with view corridors providing opportunity for water ponds and structured recreation facilities. Screen planting will be used to unify and integrate buildings, service areas and basement parking ramps. The existing fig trees are to be retained wherever possible subject to advice from an arborist, and the possibility of relocation is to be explored where this may be required. Design also gives consideration to public safety and security.

Street Typology

The REP establishes a road hierarchy aimed at maintaining the envisaged character of the development with consistent design parameters and detailing across the site.

The street pattern includes a main boulevard "of civic proportions to the site" lined with large native street trees. The road network integrates with the landscaped areas by adopting safety measures for pedestrians and cyclists. These include limiting the number of intersections by limiting access points, and avoiding the use of roundabouts which are pedestrian unfriendly.

Stormwater Management

A sustainable water management strategy across the site is to be established, integrating public open space with advanced stormwater management techniques including on-site detention and off line stormwater detention ponds. The REP also includes provision for stormwater quality management systems to be integrated with wildlife habitats and unstructured recreation opportunities. The topography of the site is to be regraded to ensure floor levels are above the 100 year ARI flood level.

Signage and Lighting

Signage and lighting will be used to further enhance the public domain. Signage will be carefully positioned to avoid vehicle/pedestrian conflict, and integrated with the built form so as not to detract from the visual amenity eg. roof signs will not be permitted.

Lighting will be used to distinguish different areas of the public domain, and to provide accent to feature buildings and key locations such as foreshore buildings.

Community Consultation

The draft REP, Masterplan and Traffic Management Plan were placed on public exhibition on 21/01/02 and will extend until Friday 15/03/02. Exhibitions were mounted at several locations including the foyer of the Council chambers, Rockdale and Arncliffe libraries. As this is a draft Regional Environmental Plan, Planning NSW was responsible for the exhibition and notification.

Notwithstanding this, Council arranged two community information sessions to give residents a greater opportunity to understand the proposal and make comments. In total 86 interested persons, 7 Councillors, 9 Staff and 5 representatives of Planning NSW and SHFA attended.

Issues raised at the meetings were recorded and are attached to this report as Attachment B along with responses to those comments.