Precinct Planning update

Precinct Planning has progressed and is now at a detailed master planning preparation stage. This Community Update answers some of your questions raised at the June landowner workshops.

Enquiry by Design Workshops

Thank you to all who attended the workshops in June. Overall, 144 people attended and provided valuable feedback about work that has been done to date and ideas about the future of the Riverstone East Precinct.

This information has been collated and is available to view on the Riverstone East web page at www.planning.nsw.gov.au/growthcentres. The presentation that was given on the night is also available on the Riverstone East web page.

The Project Team is working with the ideas and feedback from these sessions as well as the detailed findings from technical studies to create a draft Indicative Layout Plan (ILP) for the Riverstone East Precinct. The Indicative Layout Plan will show the proposed locations of different land uses.

Thank you also to the 42 attendees who completed an evaluation form at the workshops. The feedback gathered was generally very positive. On the whole respondents felt that it was a useful and informative workshop (100%) and that their opinions were listened to and valued (88%). 85% of respondents also felt that the discussion paper was helpful.

Your workshop questions answered

How are creeks identified?

• The flood lines are initially informed by the NSW Office of Water and Council flood data and are further investigated during the detailed riparian corridor assessment undertaken by the Department’s technical contractor. Creeks are assessed based on their order of significance which takes into account the volume of water they convey and their linkage to higher order creeks. Buffers are proposed on either side, known as riparian corridors, which aim to:
  o stabilise the bed and bank of the creek and reduce erosion,
  o protect water quality,
  o provide habitat diversity and connections,
  o convey and control flood flows,
  o act as an interface or buffer between developments and waterways, and
  o provide opportunities for passive recreation.
How will flooding be addressed at the development stage? Will it look like The Ponds?

- The Department has a responsibility to ensure flood risk is not increased when development happens. For this reason, land is identified for the future construction of drainage basins. Blacktown City Council will acquire the land that is needed for drainage basins when those basins are needed to support surrounding urban development.

How is land shown as ENV on the constraints map ‘validated’?

- A combination of methods is used. Where access was permitted, consultants carried out site inspections. Where site access was not granted but vegetation on the site could be viewed from the road or property boundary, consultants made a remote assessment from those locations. Where it was not possible to utilise either of these methods, aerial photography interpretation using geographic information systems was used.

What will happen to the land within the transmission easement?

- Land within transmission easements is usually not suitable for intense residential uses and buildings are generally not permitted in the easement.
- Appropriate uses for land like this can be playing fields or very large lot residential use, or non-habitable uses such as car parks associated with a retail centre. Land in the easement will only be acquired by Council if it is needed for a public purpose like a park or drainage infrastructure.
- The Precinct Plan for the Riverstone East Precinct will consider the most appropriate use for this land.

What are the reasons for proposing large lot sizes for some residential blocks?

- Large lot sizes are sometimes proposed in areas which are suitable for residential use but are constrained in some way.
- Constraints can be things such as view corridors from important landmarks or proximity to transmission easements.

What will happen to the land near Rouse Hill House and the Regional Park?

- Rouse Hill Regional Park is a significant area of open space and will remain an important regional recreation facility.
- There is no intention to change the current zoning of Rouse Hill Regional Park.
- Land around Rouse Hill House will be considered for suitable land uses, as well as perimeter roads.

Will there be a design panel that will govern what future houses can look like and what materials can be used?

- No. Some large developments sometimes utilise design panels to control the look and feel of a development, however this is not intended for the precinct planning of the Riverstone East Precinct.
• Development in the Riverstone East Precinct will be guided by a comprehensive Development Control Plan as well as the State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Region Growth Centres) 2006.

Who is doing the study on the European heritage of the Riverstone East Precinct?
• Archeological & Heritage Management Solutions (AHMS).

What will happen to land that is needed for sports fields?
• Land that is required for sports fields will be acquired by Blacktown City Council when it is needed and when sufficient funds are available to purchase it.

If the North West Rail Link is extended west, will the stabling yard be moved?
• The stabling yard is planned to be constructed in its present location, at the southern part of the Riverstone East Precinct. A transport corridor has been identified to continue west from the North West Rail Link, commencing from Cudgegong Road Station and continuing to the Marsden Park Precinct in the west of the North West Growth Centre. The alignment of the transport corridor is within the stabling yard area which will not require a shift in location. A mode (such as rail or bus) for the transport corridor has not been decided.

Will the bus interchange at Rouse Hill Town Centre be moved closer to the Cudgegong Road Station?
• No. The North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy identifies a location for a station at Rouse Hill Town Centre, which builds upon the existing public transport capacity created by the bus interchange.
• Precinct planning for the Riverstone East Precinct is considering the issue of public transport accessibility and connectivity throughout the local and regional area.

Why will some areas of the precinct be serviced with electricity sooner than others?
• Endeavour Energy has prepared a preliminary servicing strategy for the Riverstone East Precinct, which includes the identification of an early activation precinct, as published in the Riverstone East Discussion Paper. Endeavour Energy will need to invest in additional infrastructure to support future population growth in the Precinct and broader region and discussions are continuing between the Department and Endeavour Energy. Infrastructure will be delivered to meet the needs of development and it is not economical to service the entire Precinct at once, when development will take a number of years.

Will there be some employment and light industrial land to the north and east of the stabling yard to act as a noise buffer?
• The assessment of noise impacts within the Riverstone East Precinct is currently being finalised. This will help to inform the decision about the most appropriate use for land surrounding the stabling yard.
How many new dwellings and new residents will the precinct cater for? Does this reflect the North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy for Cudgegong Road?

• Preliminary estimates show that Riverstone East could cater for up to 5,300 new dwellings and approximately 15,000 new residents.

• Part of the Riverstone East Precinct is located in the Cudgegong Road study area, which is within the North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy. Planning for future land uses will consider proximity to Cudgegong station.

What can I do if I am not happy with the proposed zoning of my property?

• Proposed land uses are based on the most appropriate use of the land in the context of future urban development.

• If you disagree with the zoning that is proposed for your land, we request your feedback during exhibition of the draft Precinct Plan. It is important when you make a submission to state the reasons why you disagree with a proposed zoning or other control, and if you can, suggest an alternative that you think would be better.

When will the draft plan for the Precinct be exhibited?

• The draft Precinct Plan will be placed on exhibition following the completion of all technical studies and finalisation of the Precinct Planning Report.

• Exhibition is scheduled to start in late 2014, subject to completion of necessary investigations and obtaining Ministerial approval. During exhibition, the Department encourages all landowners and interested community members to have their say by making a submission.

• Details about how to make a submission will be made available closer to the date of exhibition.

Fieldwork continuing

Fieldwork for many of the technical studies being conducted for the Precinct has now concluded. The Department wishes to thank landowners who provided contractors access to their property. Fieldwork for some remaining technical studies is still progressing and will soon conclude, enabling the Project Team to refine the draft plan for the Precinct.

Next Steps

The Department of Planning and Environment is continuing to work closely with Blacktown City Council and state agencies to refine the draft Precinct Planning Package.

The Department is working to exhibit the draft plan and all technical studies for the Riverstone East Precinct later this year.

Further information: phone 1300 730 550 or email community@planning.nsw.gov.au