Introduction

The Department of Planning and Environment has been working closely with City of Canada Bay Council to investigate opportunities to revitalise Rhodes East.

The Rhodes East Investigation Area includes land on the eastern side of the Northern Rail Line in the Rhodes peninsula within walking distance of Rhodes railway station.

The long-term vision for revitalising Rhodes East will be staged over 15-20 years.

The Department has undertaken a range of consultation activities with the local community to understand what they like about the area and how it could be improved in the coming years.

Previous community feedback was used to help inform the draft precinct plan.

A full copy of the draft plan can be found at: planning.nsw.gov.au/rhodeseast

Rhodes East

A walkable, accessible and high amenity community which builds upon the existing character and heritage of the area. It will provide more high quality housing choice, close to public transport and catering for a variety of household types. It will be supported by connections to the water, and local streets will be redesigned to support walking, cycling and use of public transport. Improved amenity will encourage residents and visitors to spend time and continue to take pride in the area.

Key benefits:

- Encouraging walking, cycling and public transport use
  Streets are designed to prioritise walking and cycling, and new streets are proposed to provide alternative routes to public transport.

- Increasing access to the water
  Enhanced public access to the Parramatta River includes a foreshore promenade and plaza. A potential boardwalk, river pool and other foreshore enhancements are proposed adjacent to McIlwaine Park.

- More housing options
  A range of housing types, from terraces to apartments are proposed across the precinct. The range of building types will result in more open space, more sunlight into buildings and privacy.

- Affordable rental housing
  5% affordable housing provided for key workers in the area, for example people working in occupations such as teaching, child care, policing or nursing.

- Improving connections between public spaces
  New east to west walking and cycling connections are provided across the railway, Concord Road and linking the station to McIlwaine Park.

- Working with the local council
  Working closely with City of Canada Bay Council to ensure the necessary infrastructure is planned and delivered in a coordinated way.

Planning timeline

- NOVEMBER 2014: City of Canada Bay Council nominated Central Rhodes for investigation.
- AUGUST 2015: Department of Planning & Environment approved precinct investigations.
- SEPTEMBER 2015: Draft vision and objectives endorsed by City of Canada Bay Council.
- AUGUST 2015 – ONGOING: Precinct investigations are ongoing.
- LATE 2017: Review submissions and address issues raised.
- EARLY-MID 2018: Finalise details of the infrastructure requirements and developer levy.
- MID 2018: Precinct plan approved by Minister for Planning and SEPP amendments published.
Proposed changes to land use

The draft plan for Rhodes East identifies the area between the railway line, Concord Road and Parramatta River as suitable for accommodating growth. The key features include:

1. New mixed use areas for the community – providing a range of shops, services, restaurants and cafes

2. New primary school

3. Increased access to the foreshore and new public open space

4. New local streets, cycle paths and pedestrian bridges to improve access, walking and cycling

5. Mixed use corners and plazas as locations for cafes, wine bars, art gallery or office space and seating

6. Taller residential buildings are proposed closest to the station and along Leeds Street

7. Landscape improvements to Concord Road

8. Reduced parking provision for buildings within two blocks of the station. Reduces reliance on cars and cost.

Rezoning to allow new homes with 150-200 affordable rental homes for key workers

Low rise and 2-3 storey terrace houses
Community benefits

Increasing access to the water
1. New foreshore plaza
2. Better pedestrian links to the foreshore
3. Potential river pool and foreshore enhancements
4. New ferry wharf

Improving walking and cycling options
5. Upgraded cycle path along Blaxland Road
6. New pedestrian bridge options across the railway line
7. Wide pedestrian and cyclist landscaped bridge from train station to McIlwaine Park
8. New pedestrian bridge across Concord Road

Enhancing community, environment and quality of life
9. Range of shops, restaurants and cafés
10. Community facilities and/or upgrade to existing Rhodes Community Centre
11. New primary school
12. New corner plazas for community use
13. New local neighbourhoods and streets
14. Landscaping improvements along road corridors

More housing options and affordable housing
15. Around 150-200 affordable rental homes for key workers
16. Reduced construction costs for developments near the station without car spaces could result in lower sale prices
18. A variety of new homes from terraces to apartments
Ground floors in some homes designed to allow use as office space
Open space

The draft plan includes a new network of open spaces, facilities and walking and cycling connections for the local community to use and enjoy. The open space strategy aims to promote outdoor recreation, nature conservation and public gatherings.

The open space network will enable Rhodes East to interconnect with existing outdoor areas nearby, such as Sydney Olympic Park, Meadowbank Park and Memorial Park.

Gateway Plaza and landscaped pedestrian bridge
The new plaza incorporates new retail frontage along the proposed pedestrian landscaped bridge, providing approximately 7 basketball courts of public space. This is an important connection between Rhodes West, through the station concourse, and McIlwaine Park.

Leeds Street Foreshore Plaza
This will include a variety of new open spaces along the foreshore including a terraced waterfront promenade linked to Rhodes West. A focal point will be the 4,500m2 of village green plaza creating a multi-use space for events with pedestrian connections to the new ferry wharf and existing boat ramp and jetty.

Mixed-use corner plazas
Three new corner plazas are proposed within the mixed-use corners, to provide a focal point for activity and seating areas.

Upgrades to existing parks
In addition to the new areas, upgrades are proposed to Blaxland Road terminus area, Uhrs Reserve and McIlwaine Park.

River pool
The proposal includes a potential new river pool for swimming and recreational purposes. The City of Canada Bay Council is undertaking studies to determine the suitability and quality of the river to ensure it is safe for use by the community.

Public art
Permanent public art will be integrated within the open space areas such as Leeds Street Foreshore Precinct, corner plazas, pedestrian links, and existing parks. Public art may include interactive sculpture and lighting installations.
Local character

Local character is what makes a place unique. Earlier community feedback highlights waterfront access, housing choice and public transport access as important parts of the local character. Our planning for Rhodes East will carefully consider which areas of local character should be retained or enhanced.

**How will existing character be retained?**

Important character elements in Rhodes East will be retained and incorporated into new development. This includes all currently listed heritage items. Existing heritage street trees will be retained and enhanced with new trees to make a consistent environment.

**What’s not changing?**

No changes are proposed east of Concord Road. This decision will retain the character of the existing low-density neighbourhood. The eastern foreshore at McIlwaine Park will be retained and enhanced.

**New development respecting local character**

The pattern of development will respect the local character by having a smooth transition from low-rise east of Concord Road, predominantly mid-rise in Rhodes East and larger development in Rhodes West.
New school infrastructure is being planned to meet the needs of a growing population

The Department of Education is planning for new school infrastructure solutions. A new compact urban primary school at Rhodes East is one of the options being considered. Before any decisions are made, we are keen to hear your views.

A new primary school could be located within the Rhodes East Gateway area, close to the railway station. The Gateway area offers great accessibility for students via train and new safe pedestrian / cycling linkages within the local community.

Planning for an innovative and creative future for education

Governments all over the world are increasingly investing in compact urban schools as land values increase and inner-city space becomes sparse. A new school in the local area could alleviate enrolment pressures in the local area, and has the potential to become a great focal point for families who will have out-of-hours access to some of its facilities.

St Andrew’s Cathedral School in Sydney marked the beginning of this trend in Australia as far back as 1976. Anzac Park Public School in Cammeray, Sydney, is a more recent example. Ferrars Street Primary School in South Melbourne will open next year, and will house 525 students over 6 levels of modern high-tech facilities.

Going forward, well designed and innovative compact urban schools will play an important part in our social and cultural life. We propose to embrace this welcome trend in Rhodes East.

Open space choice

A variety of well-designed and safe open spaces will be designed and catered for within any new school building. In addition, the new school could also utilise the generous McIlwaine Park as an on-ground open space. Safe and easy access to this park would be provided from the school via a new, wide pedestrian and cyclist bridge which runs between the station and the park.
**Transport and movement**

The draft plan brings together transport, urban design, landscape and placemaking. Rhodes East is set to become a vibrant community with a local walking lifestyle and a strong metropolitan connection.

**New streets**

Three new streets are proposed between Cavell Avenue and Blaxland Road. This proposal will improve connections and provide high pedestrian activity with access to shops and amenities across the precinct.

**Train upgrades**

Timetable upgrades are proposed in 2018 which will provide an extra two limited stop suburban services during peak times. Network changes related to Sydney Metro projects may provide further service improvements at Rhodes.

**Bus upgrades**

TfNSW is also studying alternatives to increase the bus service frequency along Concord Road. Rhodes East aims to promote better connections with surrounding areas such as Ryde, Macquarie Park, Wentworth Point and Sydney Olympic Park.

**New ferry wharf**

A new ferry wharf will provide an additional transport connection to the CBD and Parramatta. When combined with foreshore improvements, this will help link the broader Rhodes peninsula.

**Station to McIlwaine Park landscaped bridge**

A proposed landscaped pedestrian bridge at the Rhodes East Gateway to allow safe and convenient pedestrian connection between Rhodes West, Rhodes Station and McIlwaine Park, where the river pool location is currently being studied.

**Additional pedestrian bridge**

A pedestrian overpass is also proposed to link Rhodes East and West. The combined bridge solutions will increase connections within the peninsula and will provide integration and safe access to the major transport hubs. Local community inputs will determine the final location of this bridge.

**Parking and car share provisions**

Private car parking is not proposed for developments within two blocks of the train station, which may result in lower sale prices. The parking policy will also be coupled with increased bicycle parking rates as well as car share provisions. The proposal aims to promote a more active lifestyle, while reducing car congestion.

**Intersection upgrades**

The proposal identified improvements in three key intersections across the precinct: Concord Rd / Averill St., Cavell Av. / Averill St., and Cavell Av. / Leeds St. Five additional upgrades have been identified on Concord Road in the wider area.
Building heights

Building height and density has a role in shaping the character of neighbourhoods. Changes to height and density can increase housing availability and provide choice in housing types in vibrant, pedestrian focused neighbourhoods.

How high will buildings be?
Building heights will vary with over 60% of buildings being 9 storeys or lower. Only 4 buildings in Rhodes East are proposed to be 25 storeys or higher.

Why have the building heights and densities been chosen?
Varied building heights protect views and sunlight and provide a diverse streetscape. Taller buildings near the station and waterfront will provide more housing close to existing transport connections, and vibrant community spaces.

How does Rhodes East compare?
The maximum building height in Rhodes East will be lower than Rhodes West. The Rhodes East waterfront is much lower than other waterfront developments in Sydney,
Housing solutions

Planning for Sydney’s growth in a coordinated way is central to the Rhodes East vision. The precinct has great potential to provide additional homes which offer choice and affordability alongside new infrastructure and community facilities. The draft plan provides a blueprint for a growing, vibrant walkable community with better access to the river foreshore.

Looking to the future, the new population projections identify that Canada Bay’s population is expected to increase by over 35% or 32,000 people by 2036. The over 65 age group is expected to increase by over 70%.

5% Affordable rental housing to be provided
Approximately 150–200 affordable rental dwellings will be provided to meet the affordability gap for renters. The City of Canada Bay’s Affordable Housing Policy includes an income assessment. Applicants working in the City of Canada Bay Council area in key worker professions e.g. health, education, emergency services, public transport, retail, labouring, manufacturing and hospitality occupations, will be given priority.

Addressing the housing affordability challenge in Rhodes East
Housing prices will vary across the precinct and be influenced by the type and size of home, the number of bedrooms, bathrooms, access to parking, aspect and views. To address affordability, the draft precinct plan allows for a mix of different types of homes, where currently there is very little choice. Reduced parking for apartments near the station is likely to be reflected in lower prices.

Integrating housing within mixed-use areas, close to infrastructure and facilities
An important feature of the draft Precinct Plan is the integration of housing with local shops and facilities and ensuring that apartments are located closer to the station. This approach takes advantage of Rhodes East’s good public transport connections and reduces car dependency.

• Currently, within the Rhodes Peninsula, over 90% of the population live in Rhodes West.

• Over 70% of the housing stock in Rhodes East is detached houses. The draft Precinct Plan proposes to increase housing choice in the central area while retaining the low density character on the eastern side of Concord Road.