



Urban  
Growth  
NSW

Community Panel

Meeting Five

Central to Eveleigh

Urban Transformation and Transport Program

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On 29 November 2016, UrbanGrowth NSW held a meeting with its Central to Eveleigh community panel. The panel is part of a larger program of community engagement associated with the Central to Eveleigh Urban Transformation and Transport Program.

This report provides a summary of the meeting.

### **Background to community panel**

The community panel is a group of residents who are broadly representative of the people who live in the Central to Eveleigh area. Panel members were selected at random. Initially there were nearly 40 panel members, but membership has declined since the panel was established in April 2015.

Over time, panel members have developed in-depth knowledge of the Program. This has enabled them to provide considered feedback about planning issues. While not a decision making body, the panel has been established to provide valuable feedback to the project team during the planning process.

### **Workshop agenda**

Ten panel members attended the meeting. The agenda covered:

- program update and outline of Urban Transformation Strategy (presentation)
- reflection on panel process (discussion).

### **Program update**

Duncan Read, Program Director for the Redfern and Eveleigh project, provided an update on the Central to Eveleigh Program. He noted that after more than two years of studies, analysis and consultation UrbanGrowth NSW had finalised an Urban Transformation Strategy for the area.

He noted that the Strategy will help guide future renewal of around 50ha of government-owned land in five precincts along and around the rail corridor between Central, Redfern, Macdonaldtown and Erskineville stations. The Strategy sets out a vision to create some of the world's most liveable neighbourhoods in the Central to Eveleigh area and provide new homes and jobs for people who want to enjoy the benefits of living close to the city.

The Strategy has informed the Greater Sydney Commission's draft Central District Plan and will be a key reference document to guide future local masterplanning. The Greater Sydney Commission is seeking feedback on district plans until March 2017.

It was noted the Strategy had been prepared in a dynamic environment and that a number of Government announcements had influenced the document, including:

- establishment of the Greater Sydney Commission

- announcement of a new Sydney Metro station at Waterloo
- release of the Future Directions for Social Housing in NSW strategy.

The Program will enter a new phase as three projects:

- Central to be delivered by Transport for NSW
- Waterloo to be delivered by Land and Housing Corporation, with UrbanGrowth NSW providing masterplanning services
- Redfern and Eveleigh to be jointly delivered by Transport for NSW, Land and Housing Corporation and UrbanGrowth NSW.

Masterplans will now be prepared for each precinct of government-owned land, in consultation with communities.

Abbie Jeffs, Community Engagement Manager, outlined the core themes that had been identified through consultation and reflected in the Urban Transformation Strategy.

Abbie noted that UrbanGrowth NSW will hold a number of stalls, briefings and a drop-in session in early 2017 to promote release of the Strategy and provide an opportunity for people to get information.

### **General discussion**

A number of panel members expressed concern about the NSW Government's direction. They noted objections to the sale of government land and questioned a range of Government decisions, including the Powerhouse Museum, ATP, Wentworth Park and WestConnex.

One panel member noted concern about the Mirvac proposal for ATP. Specific comments included that works had started before a planning determination had been made, that the proposal exceeded permissible development controls and that the proposal for Commonwealth Bank would reduce the innovation and technology focus of the park. Duncan clarified that Council and the Department of Planning and Environment were consent authorities to approve works. He noted that the UrbanGrowth NSW Development Corporation is responsible for the public positive covenants for two years until the City of Sydney take on the role, and that the Development Corporation has provided approval for Mirvac to make temporary changes to enable construction.

Given Mirvac's proposal for ATP comments, reflected concern that applications made by developers within Central to Eveleigh could exceed height controls. Comments also reflected concern about building standards being managed to ensure private sector developers construct new buildings to an acceptable standard with minimal subsequent defects.

Panel members questioned the Government's commitment to renewal of Redfern Station. Duncan described that no formal decision had been made, but feasibility analysis by Transport for NSW was underway to inform development of a business case.

Panel members questioned whether a bridge across the railway corridor was still being considered and emphasised how important they felt it was to improve connectivity to support the area's transformation. Duncan agreed and noted the engineering complexity and need for whole of government coordination. He stated that the Development Corporation had a contributions plan that identified the bridge as a potential project.

Panel members suggested a design competition for the bridge and quick wins to re-establish a southern exit from Redfern Station or to reopen the tunnel under the railway corridor. Moore Park bridge was identified as a good example of a bridge that accommodated level changes.

Panel members noted concern about proposed densities at Waterloo and noted the need for affordable housing throughout the Central to Eveleigh area. They also sought clarification about the rumoured purchase of 30 units at North Eveleigh by the Commonwealth Bank. Duncan clarified this was not the case and that existing Affordable Housing at North Eveleigh was managed by City West Housing for low and middle income households. He advised that the proposal for additional development at North Eveleigh had not yet been lodged with the Department of Planning and Environment and no commercial arrangements had been entered into for new housing on the site.

### **Reflection on panel process**

Abbie led a discussion on the panel process and noted UrbanGrowth NSW's intent to establish a broadly representative group of people early in the planning process to work with the project team over an extended period of time to give informed feedback.

Given the masterplanning on three projects and the falling group membership it was noted that the panel process would wrap up. Abbie encouraged all members to stay actively involved as masterplanning progresses for each precinct.

Reflecting on the panel process, the following points were discussed.

- The difficulty of getting people, particularly young people, involved given the competing priorities on their time
- The impact the transient nature of the local population may have on people's willingness to get involved
- A perceived lack of trust in Government and the influence this has on people's willingness to participate in projects led by individual agencies
- The value of feedback on technical information and how to make it clearer
- How committed many members were to the process with many engaging with information and actively participating beyond the panel process
- The need to provide more follow through and report back on consultation issues to address feedback received
- The mistrust generated from active community groups who thought the panel had a remit to make decisions
- Mismatched expectations about potential building heights, despite a clear understanding that the Program was focused on how to create highly liveable, higher densities neighbourhoods.

Members said the process was generally well organised and a worthwhile experience and said it was a transparent and a highly participatory way of consulting.