

ITEM NO: 12

SUBJECT: SPRINGWOOD TOWN CENTRE PROJECT PROGRAM PLAN

FILE NO: F04400

Recommendations:

1. *That the Council endorse the preferred Program Plan as outlined in this report for proceeding with the Springwood Town Centre Project.*
 2. *That a report be presented to the Council with the results of the broad consultation by mid 2009.*
 3. *That information is communicated to the public through a variety of media on the status of the Springwood Town Centre Project and the program plan.*
 4. *That in principle the term of the Springwood Town Centre Advisory Committee is to be for the duration of the adopted program plan noting that the Committee and its membership will be considered for reappointment by the new Council.*
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Report by Group Manager Community and Corporate:

This report proposes a Program Plan for the next stage of the Springwood Town Centre Project. This plan outlines a program for investigation of major issues, development of detailed requirements for the town centre and community and civic facilities and services, and for consultation with the community and major stakeholders.

The project to date

In the past there has been concern expressed by some members of the Springwood business community that the economic viability of the town centre is suffering and that action needs to be taken to facilitate a positive future for Springwood. There have also been a number of representations made to the Council by different business interests, requesting consideration of sale or lease of public land within the Springwood Town Centre for redevelopment.

The Council has periodically considered the opportunities available for raising funds to upgrade public facilities within Springwood through use of Council owned and /or managed sites. For example a number of redevelopment scenarios were considered in the development of the Springwood Town Centre Master Plan (reference: *Springwood Town Centre Master Plan* prepared for the Council by Conybeare Morrison and Partners and Context Landscape Design in November 1995).

The current project was initiated at the Council meeting of 30 January 2007 where the Council considered the possibility of using public land as a catalyst to assist the further development of the Springwood Town Centre. The land under consideration in the project comprises three key sites within the town centre, identified as the “Southern Car Park Site”, the “Northern Car Park Site”, and the “Civic Centre Site”. The Department of Lands, as owner of a parcel of land on the Northern Car Park site, is participating in the project.

A number of initial studies were undertaken including parking provision, traffic circulation, economic development and a check was undertaken on the status of the property involved. A community workshop was undertaken to identify issues and discuss ways to test for market interest in the land.

An Options Report, which outlined the context of the project and different options for presentation of the sites to the market, was developed and was placed on public exhibition seeking comment over the period 13 August to 24 September 2007. One hundred and forty five submissions (145) were received during this period, and the Council considered these submissions on 12 October 2007.

A two stage procurement process was developed for the Council to follow being:

- Stage one: Call for Expressions of Interest (EOI); and
- Stage two: Request for detailed Proposal (RDP).

The structure and intention of the procurement process is to allow Council to decide to proceed or to withdraw from the process at various stages of the project.

The Council resolved on 12 October 2007:

- “1. *That the Council accept and note the submissions received.*
2. *That the Council receive a report presenting the documentation and process to be followed for the Call for Expressions of Interest (EoI) on three specific Council owned or managed sites within Springwood Town Centre being the Northern Car Park, the Southern Car Park and the Civic Centre Sites. That opportunities and suggestions outlined in the Options Report are amended in the EoI documentation as detailed in this report.*
3. *That where practical the criteria used for assessment of the EoI recognise the issues raised by the public submissions including, but not limited to:*
 - i. *Relevant previous experience;*
 - ii. *Financial capacity;*
 - iii. *Conformance with LEP 2005;*
 - iv. *Net community benefit of the Initial Proposal;*
 - v. *Attention to triple bottom line outcomes.*
4. *That consideration be given in the preparation of the 4 year Management Plan 2008-2012 for resources to undertake a review of strategic plans relating to Springwood Town Centre Master Plan; Springwood Town Centre Parking; and for the preparation of a city wide parking strategy.*
5. *That expressions of interest be called for members of the community to take part in an Advisory Committee for Springwood concurrent with the Expression of Interest process. This committee would be comprised of eight members and be selected to be as representative as possible of interested community members and groups such as the Springwood Chamber of Commerce. This Advisory Committee meet on a monthly basis or as required at the time and place that the Committee shall decide. The Advisory Committee be chaired by the Mayor or nominee and that the first meeting discuss a “terms of reference” and guidelines for meeting procedure.*

6. *That the Council will, if there is adequate available facilities on the nominated date, conduct the Council Meeting that considers the EoI within Springwood.”*

(Minute No. 289, 12/10/08)

A Call for Expressions of Interest (EoI) was made over the period 5 November to 14 December 2007. The Call was conducted as a tender process in accordance with NSW Government Guidelines and the Procurement and Tendering Policies of the Council. The Call document allows the Council to proceed with the procurement process or to withdraw without penalty.

Five EOIs were received and an assessment of these proposals was reported to the Council on 11 March 2008. The Council resolved:

- “1. *That the Council receives the report on the results of the tender evaluation of the Springwood Town Centre Project Expressions of Interest and records that it is encouraged by the scope and potential of the Expressions of Interest received.*
2. *That a report be presented to the Council which provides a program plan for proceeding with the Springwood Town Centre Project. This report is to contain options and recommendations for the engagement of required consultants and community consultation. This will include consultation with interested local residents and businesses, and relevant government and non- government and community organisations, in the development of detailed requirements for the Town Centre and the community and civic facilities and services.*
3. *That Coles Group, Woolworths Limited and Jamieson Property Group Pty Ltd proceed to stage two, and be invited to submit detailed proposals for further evaluation at a time yet to be determined.*
4. *That the proposals of A. Calkos Pty Ltd and Silverton Group Pty Ltd and Broad Holdings Group Pty Ltd do not proceed further to stage two on the basis of the stage one evaluation.*
5. *That this report and associated documents remain confidential as per the relevant provisions of section 10A of the Local Government Act 1993 and the original Call for Expressions of Interest, noting that, subject to the consent of the short listed proponents, aspects of the proposals will be made public as part of the proposed community consultation process.*
6. *That the Council seek advice from the Department of Local Government whether the project or any aspects of the project fall within the scope of the NSW Government Public Private Partnership Legislation and Guidelines.*
7. *All major Councillor briefings on Springwood Town Centre be held in Springwood.”*

(Minute No. 441, 11 /3/08)

Subsequently the summaries of the successful proposals were made public through the Council website and media releases.

Advisory Committee:

Nominations were sought for an Advisory Committee and the Council appointed a Committee of 14 community members and 4 Councillors in December 2007. This Committee has met four times to date. The Committee has experienced operational problems largely resulting from the size of the group, expectations of members differing to the terms of appointment, and the phase of the project. However both the Councillors and community members of the Committee have stated that they wish to continue and believe that their role as a reference group will be valuable should the Council proceed with the program plan presented in this report.

The draft Program Plan has been referred to this Advisory Committee and was discussed at a meeting on 16 June 2008. The Program was well received and a number of modifications have been made to the draft program in response to issues raised by members of the Committee.

The Committee was initially appointed to the end of June 2008. As the project has continued beyond this time it is recommended that the term of the Committee is extended for the duration of the Program Plan as adopted noting that reappointment of the Committee and its membership is to be considered by the new Council in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act.

Scenarios for redevelopment of public land in Springwood:

A number of broad scenarios for redevelopment of the three sites were identified as part of the early project investigations, and in the Options Report of March 2007. It is proposed that the impact of these different scenarios is assessed as part of the investigations undertaken. This will assist with identification of preferred scenarios. The scenarios are summarised below:

Civic Centre site:

- Redevelopment of the whole Civic Centre Site for commercial &/or retail &/or residential mix with new civic and community facilities constructed on Southern Car Park site; OR
- Upgrade &/or modification of the Library, Civic Centre and Neighbourhood Centre with potential relocation of Early Childhood Health Centre; OR
- Development of the rear of the site for commercial &/or retail &/or residential and multilevel parking; AND/OR

Northern car park site:

- Development for parking &/or commercial &/or retail mix; OR
- Development for parking &/or commercial &/or retail &/or community mix; AND/OR

Southern car park site:

- Development for tiered parking &/or commercial &/or retail &/or residential mix; OR
- Development for tiered parking &/or community facilities.

Options to proceed

A number of options for the next stage of the project have been investigated and these are broadly outlined below together with a summary of the implications of each.

Option 1: 6 month time frame:

- a. Assess different scenarios for opportunities to deliver project objectives and outcomes;
- b. Prepare detailed brief for community facility requirements;
- c. Prepare documentation for Request for Detailed Proposals (RDP) concurrently with studies; and
- d. Report to Council with brief and documentation for RDP

Implications:

- Staff with necessary expertise are not available during this period to manage the overall project and the different components of the project;
- Insufficient time is available for community consultation;
- Studies would need to be undertaken concurrently;
- Studies may be more costly due to tight timeframe; and
- Insufficient time is available for subsequent review of Town Centre requirements.

Option 2: 12 month time frame:

- a. Investigate issues and needs of Springwood Town Centre;
- b. Prepare detailed brief for community and civic facility requirements;
- c. Assess different scenarios for opportunities to deliver project objectives and outcomes;
- d. Review Springwood Town Centre Master Plan;
- e. Exhibit results of studies and undertake coordinated consultation on these studies; and
- f. Report to Council on results of consultation.

Implications:

Sufficient timeframe available for:

- Specific consultation during studies;
- Review of Town Centre Master Plan;
- Broad consultation on overall results of studies;
- Development of detailed information to inform documentation for stage two of the procurement process should the Council resolve to proceed; and
- Information would also be available for consideration in the new citywide LEP currently programmed for completion in 2011.

Option 3: 18 months and plus time frame

- a. Undertake investigations as per Option 2 on longer time frame

Implications:

- May lose focus of project over longer time frame;
- May not provide any better information or outcomes;
- Proponents may withdraw from project; and
- Longer period for studies and consultation could be more costly

Option 4: Abandon or modify the tender process:

- a. Notify proponents that the procurement process is not to proceed;
- b. Further studies could be undertaken and a review of the Town Centre Master Plan developed together with a brief for Community and Civic facilities;
- c. A new procurement process could be considered at this stage.

Implications:

- This action is available to the Council at any time;
- It would remain unknown if the existing proponents and the current project may have resulted in gains in better community facilities as well as stronger retail and commercial functions within the town centre.

Option 2 is the preferred option and a program to proceed with Option 2 is outlined below. This presents a program to proceed to broad community consultation on future requirements for the town centre and the provision of community and civic facilities.

Proposed program plan July 2008- mid 2009

The following table outlines the proposed program plan.

<i>Tasks</i>	<i>Timing</i>
<p>Request to Department of Local Government re Public Private Partnership status</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise DLG of project details to date and request advice as to PPP status and government requirements to proceed 	<p>July – September 08</p>
<p>Memorandum of Understanding with Department of Lands</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek Memorandum of Understanding with Lands for studies and to proceed to Stage two • Continue to liaise with Lands 	<p>July – September 08</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Community consultation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide regular Councillor updates through Working Parties and full briefings in Springwood as appropriate • Continue with Advisory Committee as reference group for studies and to discuss consultation approach and program • Provide Community Information on work program • Develop detailed brief for provision of community and civic facilities • Undertake assessment of impacts of different scenarios • Undertake review of Town Centre Master Plan • Broad consultation bringing different studies together • Report to the Council on results of the consultation 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Study / issue specific consultation and information distribution ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>As appropriate within studies</p> <p>As appropriate within studies</p> <p>As appropriate within studies</p> <p>Around March 2009</p> <p>Mid 2009</p>

<p>Social and Cultural Services and Facilities Needs Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete needs assessment to provide priorities for provision for services • Document facility requirements • Assess opportunities of different scenarios • Include transitional arrangements to ensure continuity of services and facilities during any construction period 	<p>August to December 08 Stakeholders consulted in preparation of needs assessment and facility requirements</p> <p>Information exhibited as part of broader consultation March 09</p>
<p>Review of Parking Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking study undertaken • Assessment of different scenarios • Review of parking policy to be undertaken within the context of a review of citywide parking policy to inform the Citywide LEP and DCP currently programmed for completion by 2011 	<p>August to October 08</p> <p>Information exhibited as part of broader consultation March 09 Amended with Citywide LEP/ DCP 2011</p>
<p>Reclassification of land on Southern Car park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider reclassification of 3 parcels from community to operational land • N.B. If this action is endorsed by the Council this could be pursued through seeking a spot amendment to LEP 2005 or through the new Citywide LEP currently programmed for completion by 2011 	<p>Initiate with report to the Council</p>
<p>Review of classification of Braemar and Civic Centre sites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review classification of whole or part of Braemar and Civic Centre land parcels from operational to community 	<p>Report to Council after decision on proceeding to RDP tender is made / OR after decision of outcome of RDP tender is made</p>
<p>Traffic Impact Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highway access improvements: discuss with RTA • Link Road update with investigation of extension of David Road • Assess impact of different scenarios <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assess access for large trucks and impact on roads ○ Assess impacts on key intersections ○ Assess increase in traffic volumes at peak periods 	<p>Meet with RTA on Highway and Link Rd in July-August 08</p> <p>Pursue opportunities for upgrade of access</p> <p>October to December 08</p> <p>Information exhibited as part of broader consultation March 09</p>
<p>Retail and Commercial Impact Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scenarios assessed • Identify preferred scenarios 	<p>Dec 08 to Feb 09</p> <p>Information exhibited as part of broader consultation Mar 09</p>

Sustainability Assessment (Triple Bottom Line Reporting):

The Springwood Town Centre Project is guided by the 25 year Strategy for the City of Blue Mountains and seeks to maintain an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable town centre. This focuses upon improving the economic viability of the town centre together with maintaining the centre's viability as a place for delivery of the community facilities and services, both public and private.

The Options Report and the Call for Expressions of Interest listed the project objectives and the economic, social and environmental outcomes for delivery by the project. Both these documents are available for viewing on the Council's website.

One of the assessment criteria for the Expressions of Interest was "attention to triple bottom line outcomes" and all proposals were assessed on this basis.

The draft program plan presented in this report has been developed to ensure attention is paid to triple bottom line outcomes. The program proposes studies to investigate the advantages and disadvantages of the different scenarios with special attention being paid to parking, traffic circulation, retail and commercial viability, and town centre requirements and the provision of facilities and services to meet the social, cultural and civic needs of the community.

Financial implications for the Council

In the Management Plan for 2008-12 the Springwood Town Centre Project has been identified as a major project for the Council. Funding of \$70,000 has been allocated in 2008-09 to the project. A request for additional funding has been made and is to be considered within the overall group budget once fuller costs become available.

It is proposed that this funding is used to seek consultant advice on parking, traffic, social, cultural and civic facility requirements and for analysis of the different scenarios available. The funding will also support community consultation on these issues and in the review of the Town Centre Master Plan. It is proposed that this will provide the basis for the brief for Stage two of the procurement process should the Council resolve to proceed with this.

Legal and risk management issues for the Council

The Council has indicated to three of the proponents that it proposes to invite them to proceed to submit detailed proposals at a time yet to be determined. The Council is not bound to accept any of these proposals and has made no other commitments for redevelopment of any of the sites.

Communications have been maintained with representatives of the Department of Lands regarding the project and a memorandum of understanding with the Department of Lands is progressing.

Advice is to be requested from the Department of Local Government regarding the status of the project under the Guidelines for Public Private Partnerships (PPP). However it is believed that none of the proposals currently present as a PPP.

The program plan proposed provides the Council with a realistic timetable and work plan to progress with the project. The program has taken into account other priorities and commitments of the Council and the resources available within the Council to dedicate to this

project. It is proposed that regular progress reports will be provided to the Council and the community as the timeframe presented in the program plan is optimistic and may need to be varied as the work progresses.

Consideration of reclassification of a number of parcels of land is also suggested should the Council continue to stage two of the procurement process: the RDP. This would involve consideration of reclassification under the requirements of the Local Government Act of:

- Operational land to community on the Braemar and Civic Centre sites to recognise Braemar and community facilities; and
- Community land to operational land on the Southern car park site. This would not include the Town Square area.

External consultation

The program plan outlines a number of mechanisms for consultation with the local residents and businesses, and relevant government, non-government and community organisations. These would occur over a nine month period as appropriate to the different studies and would then culminate in broad community consultation around March 2009.

Conclusion

This report presents for endorsement by the Council a program plan for proceeding with the Springwood Town Centre Project in a timely and consultative fashion and within the resources available.

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