

Newcastle City Council Wickham Master Plan

Technical Stakeholders Workshop



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Executive Summary

This report presents the results of research conducted by Hunter Research Foundation (Hunter Research) on behalf of Newcastle City Council (Council) to provide input into the Wickham Master Plan.

The Wickham Master Plan project aims to guide the redevelopment of Wickham in the context of Council's strategies and long term vision for the Newcastle City Centre. A review of the existing controls was undertaken and the *Wickham Master Plan Discussion Report (April 2016)* prepared to provide an overview of the project context and identification of some of the key challenges and opportunities. Council then proposed a series of workshops to engage stakeholders to explore the challenges and opportunities further, and refine the vision for Wickham.

This report provides an outline of a 2 ½ hour workshop conducted on 18 May 2016 with 37 State agencies representatives and Council staff.

Workshop Process

Workshop participants contributed through a series of facilitated tasks to:

- consider potential development options outlined in the Discussion Report and the outcomes from a workshop held with landowners (April 2016)
- identify further actions required to refine preferred options
- discuss steps to implement or enable the preferred options with the aim of establishing an improved urban structure in Wickham.

Discussion of the preferred options were undertaken across seven key Focus Areas identified during the Landowners Workshop: Pedestrians and cycleways; Road hierarchy and traffic flow; Parking; Public domain; Wickham Park; Harbour side use; Infrastructure provision.

Workshop Outcomes

Future measures of success identified by participants for the effective implementation of the Wickham Master Plan supported three broad goals:

- A diverse community in an activated mixed-use village
- Strong connectivity with an emphasis on pedestrians
- Growth through positive development and infrastructure.

Issues requiring further consideration to achieve priorities and initiatives in the Wickham Master Plan included:

- Addressing the role of cars in Wickham
- A review of Section 94 contributions
- Timing of the Wickham Master Plan and Section 94 Plan given increasing interest in the area; concepts plans for roads should be a priority
- Continuing to engage landowners and the broader community in the development of the Wickham Master Plan.



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1. Introduction

This report presents the results of research conducted by Hunter Research Foundation (Hunter Research) on behalf of Newcastle City Council (Council) to provide input into the Wickham Master Plan. The background to, and objectives of, the research are outlined below, Section 2 describes the workshop methods used, and the detailed results are discussed in Section 3.

1.1 Background

The Newcastle City Council Wickham Master Plan project aims to guide the redevelopment of Wickham in the context of Council's strategies and long term vision for the Newcastle City Centre.

In recent times there has been renewed interest and investment in Wickham. Influences resulting in an increased focus on the area include:

- relocation of the city centre to Newcastle West
- development of the Wickham transport interchange
- availability of larger land holdings and land not within mine subsidence areas
- changing demographics and increased demand for inner city residential apartments.

The Wickham Master Plan will take into account these influences and deliver revised planning controls that reflect the opportunities and envisaged character of the area.

A review of the existing controls was undertaken and the *Wickham Master Plan Discussion Report (April 2016)* prepared to provide an overview of the project context and identification of some of the key challenges and opportunities. Council then proposed a series of workshops to engage stakeholders to explore the challenges and opportunities further, and refine the vision for Wickham.

This report provides an outline of the workshop conducted on 18 May 2016 with technical stakeholders.

1.2 Workshop objectives

The primary objectives of the workshop were to:

- consider potential development options outlined in the *Wickham Master Plan Discussion Report (April 2016)* and the outcomes from the workshop held with landowners (April 2016)
- identify further actions required to refine preferred options
- discuss steps to implement or enable the preferred options with the aim of establishing an improved urban structure in Wickham.

Discussions of the preferred options were undertaken across the seven key Focus Areas identified during the Landowners Workshop:

- Pedestrians and cycleways
- Road hierarchy and traffic flow
- Parking
- Public domain
- Wickham Park
- Harbour side use
- Infrastructure provision.



2. Workshop Process

The workshop was held at Newcastle City Hall and scheduled for 2½ hours. It was facilitated by Ruth McLeod from Hunter Research Foundation.

2.1 Participants

Council coordinated the workshop invitations to technical stakeholders including NSW State government agencies and Council business units. In total, 37 technical stakeholders participated in the workshop. Agencies and Council business units represented included the following.

State Government Agencies

- Department of Planning and Environment
- Families and Community Services
- Hunter Development Corporation
- Mines Subsidence Board
- Roads and Maritime Services
- Urban Growth.

Council Business Units

- Development and Building
- Facilities and Recreation
- Information Technology
- Infrastructure Planning
- Strategic Planning.

2.2 Process

The workshop process was developed to guide participants in discussing:

- Measures of success for the Wickham Master Plan
- Preferred options to achieve an improved urban structure
- Potential conflicts in implementing the preferred options.

Johannes Honnef from Newcastle City Council provided an overview of the Wickham Master Plan project as outlined in the Discussion Paper, and the key Focus Areas identified during the Landowners Workshop. A description of the subsequent tasks for the Technical Stakeholders Workshop is provided in Table 1.

Table 1 Workshop Tasks

Task 1 Future Measures of Success

Participants were asked:

In 2026 how will we know the 2016 Wickham Master Plan has been successful in guiding the redevelopment of Wickham?

Individual responses were provided on cards and collated on a display board.

Task 2 Actions to Achieve Improved Urban Structure

Participants worked in small groups to discuss the seven Focus Areas for Wickham. Each group was hosted by a volunteer "champion" while other participants were free to move around and participate in any or all of the group discussions. A pro forma was supplied to each group to capture a summary of the discussion including:

- (1) the priority for the Focus Area being discussed
- (2) actions or initiatives needed to achieve the priority
- (3) location where the action would happen
- (4) what is needed to make the action happen
(resources or mechanism, lead agency, timeframe).

Printed maps of the Wickham Master Plan area were also distributed on tables to assist with discussions and encourage participants to provide additional detail regarding possible actions or initiatives.

Task 3 Potential Conflicts

Following discussion of the Focus Areas in Task 2, participants were asked:

What do you see as possible conflicts between identified priorities, actions, initiatives and locations?

Issues raised by participants were captured on a whiteboard.



3. Workshop Outcomes

3.1 Future Measures of Success

Participants identified a range of outcomes in considering the future effective implementation of the Master Plan in guiding the redevelopment of Wickham.

Table 2 contains the proposed measures of success grouped in three broad categories:

- A diverse community in an activated mixed-use village
- Strong connectivity with an emphasis on pedestrians
- Positive growth through development and infrastructure.

Table 2 Measures of Success

Diverse Community - Activated Mixed-use Village

- A well-known café "village"
 - Activation
 - Activity and amenity
 - An activated urban village
 - Funky and hip night time scene
 - Hip and happening
 - Increase visitation by a variety of user types
 - Increased activation of public spaces for legitimate uses
 - People want to visit for recreational/social
 - Safe and vibrant
 - Vibrant mixed use
 - Wickham is a destination and not a train station
 - Multi-use Wickham Park
 - Civilisation city
 - Community feeling; pride of place
 - Increased public presence
 - Diverse population
 - Greater local population
 - Increased population density with decreased anti-social behaviour
 - Safe area
 - "Success" is subjective ... could/will lose cultural producers as it becomes too expensive
 - 20% of dwellings classified as affordable
 - Accessible village; village life; shops, streets, parks, recreation accessible to diverse users; ageing population, pram users, people using assistive equipment for mobility such as wheelchairs or walking frames
 - Desirable place to live
 - Local residents are happy
 - Local services for residents
 - Retained/enhance (and defined) village character
 - Retention of mixed use, residential, commercial and industrial uses; not just residential
-

Connectivity with an Emphasis on Walkability

- Green pedestrian streets and spaces
- Increased pedestrian and cycleway access
- Increased street activation through pedestrian and cyclist use and other events
- More bikes than cars
- No cars; cars have moved out of the area to make way for people, cyclists and trees
- Number of pedestrians and cyclists significantly increased
- Pedestrian amenity increased
- Pedestrians and cycleways; diversity of mobility is acknowledged, planned for and delivered
- See pedestrians at 10pm walking freely on the streets
- We can walk/ride directly and easily from the waterfront to Wickham Park (east-west) and from Albert St to Hunter St (north-south)
- All modes of transport coexist
- Connected and accessible
- Connected spaces functionally and digitally
- Connecting park to harbour
- Easy to navigate
- Ferry terminal operating; connecting with city
- Harbour to park connectivity
- Has successfully implemented alternatives to encourage travel via cycle, electric vehicles, etc
- Roads will make sense; directions are clear
- The connectivity is improved
- No on street parking; solved by autonomous vehicles and Uber

Positive Development and Infrastructure

- Increased investment
- Strong property values
- Coordinated development outcomes
- No mine subsidence issues; impact on infrastructure and community
- Has accurately taken into account rising sea levels; critical of IPCC documents
- Updated infrastructure
- Thriving technology innovation cluster
- Innovative CBD centre; fringe/support
- Digital innovation hub

3.2 Actions to Achieve Improved Urban Structure

Possible actions and initiatives to be included in the Wickham Master Plan were discussed for each of the seven Focus Areas including resources required, lead agencies and timing required to implement. Summaries of the discussions are provided in the following tables.

Table 3 Parking

Priority for Parking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in private car ownership • Flexibility for parking and/or alternatives 		
Actions / Initiatives	Where	What is needed to make this happen
Viable alternatives for car ownership; convenience, marketable. e.g. share parking spaces from another site. Enable "titling" that does not link parking to a unit; increase flexibility to meet demand.	Car share company to serve the area	Resources/Mechanisms: DCP to enable Lead Agency/Department: Market driven Timeframe:
Maximum parking rates to allow flexibility.	Entire study area	Resources/Mechanisms: LEP/DCP Lead Agency/Department: NCC Timeframe: Short timeframe
More efficient use of parking e.g. smart parking on-street and on private; smart car sharing schemes.	Entire study area	Resources/Mechanisms: Budget Lead Agency/Department: Consortium including NCC Timeframe: 5 years
Park and Ride.	e.g. Jemena, Woodville Junction	Resources/Mechanisms: Section 94 allows funding and flexibility for development Lead Agency/Department: NCC, NSW Government, Developers Timeframe:
Consolidate parking on certain sites. Need to have regard to desired traffic and pedestrian routes; don't encourage cars into high pedestrian areas.	Southern precinct	Resources/Mechanisms: LEP incentives for private sites Lead Agency/Department: NCC Timeframe:

Table 4 Pedestrians and Cycleways

Priority for Pedestrians and Cycleways		
Actions / Initiatives	Where	What is needed to make this happen
Integrated approach to traffic management and parking management such that cycle lanes/ cycleways/ shared pathways can be introduced along key streets to enhance accessibility, permeability and safety for people and cyclists.	Throsby St in association with redevelopments on north side Church St where consolidated blocks likely to redevelop Railway St	Resources/Mechanisms: Define acquisition layers in LEP for wider street spaces to enable cycleways, footpaths and shade trees. Higher FSRs and HOBs provide development returns that can fund land dedications for footpaths, cycleways, trees, pocket parks. Lead Agency/Department: NCC Timeframe:
Wickham cycling; full integration into broad city strategy; acknowledge commuter and family cycling.	Over the precinct and beyond	Resources/Mechanisms: Lead Agency/Department: NCC Timeframe:
Pedestrian access into village life; accessibility in mixed use precinct. Building access under DDA not always compliant.	Commitment reaffirmed in the Master Plan	Resources/Mechanisms: Public domain plans etc to review accessibility early. DCP to strengthen building access. Lead Agency/Department: NCC Timeframe:
Cycle connections at Maitland Rd to Hamilton business area.		Resources/Mechanisms: Review cycle strategy to check for Maitland Rd. Lead Agency/Department: NCC - Infrastructure Timeframe:

Additional input on maps - Pedestrians and Cycleways

- Bike storage at transport interchange
- Major cycleway from interchange, down Railway St, edge of park, old railway corridor to Branch St, onto Carrington or right onto Foreshore path past the Marina
- Acquire SRA land for shared pathways (not sacrifice parkland)
- Link Wickham Park to Selma St (under or over railways tracks at Hunter St and Selma St intersection)
- Shared pathway from transport interchange, down Station St, to Wickham Park parallel to tracks, through Wickham Park to lights corner Maitland Road and Albert St
- Better connectivity within park; shared pathways
- Avoid internal conflict with internal park paths, especially where proposed paths meet (east-west from the interchange to lights at Wickham Park Hotel, proposed Selma St path and path north up to Carrington)
- Shared pathway from railway land around to sporting fields to the main road entrance into the park off Albert St
- Shared pathway along Albert St
- Street edge to park on eastern side of the park off Albert St, linking with Church St
- East-west shared pathway along lane between Throsby and Church Sts (Option A) or along Throsby St (Option B)
- Shared pathway access from Throsby St across to the Foreshore (beside the Mariners)
- New ferry wharf at the Marina
- Shared pathway along length of Marina and Foreshore to Nobbys.

Table 5 Road Hierarchy and Traffic Flow

Priority for Road Hierarchy and Traffic Flow <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep through traffic at the perimeter of the area 		
Actions / Initiatives	Where	What is needed to make this happen
Traffic modelling and assessment of the area. LATM study for Wickham. Detailed public domain plan.	All areas in Wickham	Resources/Mechanisms: Lead Agency/Department: NCC Timeframe: Completed by end 2016
Bishopsgate St remain two-way between Charles and Hannell Sts. Introduce load limits on Station St and surrounding smaller streets such as Bishopsgate St.	Bishopsgate St	Resources/Mechanisms: Lead Agency/Department: Timeframe:
Assess road network as part of Wickham Park; road or cycleway only. Identify road hierarchy network inside the area.	Wickham Park	Resources/Mechanisms: Lead Agency/Department: NCC – Recreation and Planning Timeframe:
Union St to be investigated in detail. Section 94 contributions to remain in Wickham to upgrade works recommended in Wickham.	Incorporate into Master Plan	Resources/Mechanisms: Lead Agency/Department: NCC Timeframe: Immediate
Engagement with stakeholders on the formation traffic study.	Incorporate into Master Plan	Resources/Mechanisms: Lead Agency/Department: Timeframe:
Investigate connection of cycleway through the park and Bullock Island route.	Incorporate into Master Plan	Resources/Mechanisms: Lead Agency/Department: NCC Timeframe:
Investigate study area compared to suburb area.		Resources/Mechanisms: Lead Agency/Department: Timeframe:

Additional input on maps – Road Hierarchy and Traffic Flow

- No access, no right hand turn from Hannell St (heading north) onto Honeysuckle Drive
- Two-way traffic on Bishopsgate St between Hannell and Charles Sts
- Park entry on Maitland Road: slip lane type arrangement might be most desirable for traffic heading from Islington; should be limited to left in only
- Park entry on Maitland Road: no right angle turn for traffic from Hunter St; may obstruct traffic flow from intersection and efficiency of Maitland Road.

Table 6 Public Domain

Priority for Public Domain • Pedestrian connectivity and hierarchy		
Actions / Initiatives	Where	What is needed to make this happen
Main traffic flows at edge.		Resources/Mechanisms: Lead Agency/Department: NCC, RMS Timeframe:
Legibility of road network; narrowing intersections.	Core pedestrian zone	Resources/Mechanisms: Public domain plan Lead Agency/Department: NCC Timeframe:
Accessibility audit of mixed use areas.		Resources/Mechanisms: Lead Agency/Department: NCC, RMS, Developers Timeframe: Ongoing
New public domain plan. Need to identify who is the priority: people, bikes, cars, trees, safety.		Resources/Mechanisms: Public domain plan (18 months), Detailed design (2-3 years) Lead Agency/Department: NCC, Community Timeframe: 5 - 8 years

Additional input on maps – Public Domain

- Wickham Park community events, gardens, new infrastructure for events
- Shared pathway Railway Lane and into Wickham Park
- Shared pathway Holland St and into Wickham Park; possible car access
- Potential development on old bowling club site
- Railway St traffic, avenue tree planting
- Setbacks and street trees on the corner of Railway and Lindus Sts
- Ferry at Marina (near Carrington or on the Foreshore at the Honeysuckle Drive end)
- Trees on Lindus and Throsby Sts
- Union St wider footpaths if one way, pedestrians, minor
- Grey and Bishopsgate Sts pedestrians, minor
- Transport interchange traffic: Hannell, Bishopsgate, Charles, Station Sts
- Tree of Knowledge Park
- Setbacks on the corner of Hannell and Station Sts.

Table 7 Wickham Park

Priority for Wickham Park		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve safety through design and activation • Better utilisation of open space areas 		
Actions / Initiatives	Where	What is needed to make this happen
Acquire RMS land to implement future planning via boundary changes.		Resources/Mechanisms: Lead Agency/Department: NCC, RMS, NSW Government Timeframe: 5-10 years
Establish ownership of entire facility.		Resources/Mechanisms: Lead Agency/Department: NCC Timeframe: 5-10 years
Make perimeter inviting.		Resources/Mechanisms: Lead Agency/Department: NCC Timeframe: 5-10 years
Create shared pathway from Holland St to Maitland Road with interesting landscaping.		Resources/Mechanisms: Lead Agency/Department: NCC Timeframe: 5-10 years
Mechanisms to encourage informal and formal activities and events e.g. exercise stations, concerts, etc.		Resources/Mechanisms: Lead Agency/Department: NCC Timeframe: 5-10 years
Redesign outer grounds to accommodate multi-use and access off Holland St. Increase day to day access for local residents via Albert St.		Resources/Mechanisms: Lead Agency/Department: NCC Timeframe: 5-10 years
Revisit leasing arrangements with Crown Lands of bowling club area when lease expires.		Resources/Mechanisms: Lead Agency/Department: NCC, Crown Lands Timeframe: 5-10 years

Additional input on maps – Wickham Park

- Extend park boundaries to incorporate the SRA land in southern corner
- Provide access from Holland St and access beside park (extension of Railway St where cars parked/stored)
- Provide parking and new amenities on SRA land at new Holland St access
- Flatten slope in bottom corner to incorporate SRA land
- Main oval to be a district sports ground, fenced, with formed car park between ground and Croatian Wickham Sports Club
- Improve two outer grounds, no fencing around outer grounds, enable major events
- Cycleway between main ground and outer grounds, linking Holland St to Albert St
- Improve sight lines from Maitland Road, clear vegetation
- Incorporate existing markets along Albert St
- Toilets for outer grounds at main entrance on Albert St
- Increase accessibility at Croatian Wickham Sports Club; review licence (events/parties)
- Resume leased area from Crown
- At the gardens include: Bbq, garden, informal recreation/playground, hardcourt, toilets.

Table 8 Harbour Side Use

Priority for Harbour Side Use		
Actions / Initiatives	Where	What is needed to make this happen
Review planning controls to suit / enable future character of Wickham.	Foreshore precinct	Resources/Mechanisms: LEP / DCP Lead Agency/Department: NCC Timeframe: 2 years
Ferry main wharf at Marina. Potential ability as a public wharf. Needs to integrate with overall transport interchange planning.	Main / marina wharf; or further south	Resources/Mechanisms: Planning for the transport interchange Lead Agency/Department: HDC, NCC, TNSW Timeframe: 2 years
Increased recreation activation in Fig Tree Park; Stages 1 and 2 already planned (passive and active). Extend park into the harbor i.e. wet and dry activities.	Fig Tree Park	Resources/Mechanisms: Associate with redevelopment of Throsby Creek area Lead Agency/Department: HDC Timeframe: 2 years
Public amenities, toilets on the Foreshore.	Fig Tree Park	Resources/Mechanisms: Part of City Centre public domain planning Lead Agency/Department: NCC Timeframe: 5 years
Pedestrian connectivity across Hannell St.	Greenway and Albert Sts	Resources/Mechanisms: Traffic calming infrastructure Lead Agency/Department: NCC / RMS Timeframe: 5 years
Potential night time cluster (Marina focus).	Marina foreshore	Resources/Mechanisms: Incentives for night time activation to avoid existing enclave (yachts/dwellings) Lead Agency/Department: NCC Timeframe: 5 years

Additional input on maps – Harbour Side Use

- Ferry at Carrington end or Honeysuckle Drive end of Marina
- Honeysuckle end of harbour edge for mixed use community/recreational space overlapping water
- HDC Figtree Park Stages 1 and 2
- Retain medium density housing at Mariners
- Potential crossing across Hannell St at Greenway St and/or Albert St
- Access to fish co-op from harbour side
- Ferrys and commercial at corner of Hannell and Cowper Sts
- Perception of Cowper St underpass as not being safe.

Table 9 Infrastructure

Priority for Infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mine investigation and strategy • Flooding • Innovation / technology (WIQ) • Underground powerlines • Funding for investigation • Asset management • Sustainability • Awareness and education 		
Actions / Initiatives	Where	What is needed to make this happen
Mine investigation and strategy; MSB to immediately start investigations; high importance / high risk.	Majority of Wickham Park and station areas	Resources/Mechanisms: Funding required, technical team, coordination with NCC re: height of buildings and structures Lead Agency/Department: MSB Timeframe: 6-12 months to start investigations 6 months for strategy
Risk management analysis for flooding and potential impact on subsidence from flooding; needs immediate focus.	Generally within MSB areas	Resources/Mechanisms: Funding /coordination NCC Lead Agency/Department: NCC, MSB, Hunter Water Timeframe: 6-12 months
Flooding from ocean rise; impact on streets and local drainage to be investigated.	Most areas	Resources/Mechanisms: Technical team, Coordination Lead Agency/Department: NCC, Hunter Water Timeframe: 12-24 months
Investigate road network, levels (GL). Inform road design for the future, infrastructure planning, drainage.		Resources/Mechanisms: Lead Agency/Department: NCC Timeframe: ASAP
Strengthen the policy for digital connectivity (fibre). Expand out if needed to plan for the future (provide allowance; be flexible).	LGA Wickham	Resources/Mechanisms: DCP, developers, NCC, planning for the future Lead Agency/Department: NCC, services authority, providers Timeframe: ASAP, continuous progress
Powerlines, underground. Street lighting.	LGA Wickham	Resources/Mechanisms: Budget, planning processes DA's Lead Agency/Department: NCC, Ausgrid, other service providers Timeframe: ASAP, continuous progress
Asset management and data storage / sharing. Policy for assets and data sharing.	LGA Wickham	Resources/Mechanisms: Policy preparation, broad scale communication, access to data storage and technology Lead Agency/Department: NCC, services authority, Timeframe: 6-12 months

Additional input on maps – Infrastructure

- WIQ covering the area of Lindus, Throsby, Church, Greenaway Sts (between Hannell and Railway Sts).

3.3 Potential Conflicts

Following discussion of the priorities and initiatives required in each of the Focus Areas, participants were asked to consider the potential for conflict between identified actions.

Issues raised by participants that may require further consideration include the following.

- While the development of actions and initiatives has focused on the seven different areas identified in the Landowners Workshop, there are many complementary actions. Council should seek to coordinate these opportunities to maximise the outcomes for the Wickham area.
- The role of cars in Wickham needs to be addressed; current and future role. The perceptions held as a result of planning in Wickham for future car use will be important.
- Section 94 funds will be required to support some of the identified actions and initiatives to achieve an improved urban structure in Wickham. A review of Section 94 contributions for developments in the Wickham area is a priority.
- Timing of the Wickham Master Plan and Section 94 Plan is becoming a key factor in discussions given increasing developer interest in the area. Currently there are several development applications under consideration for Wickham with the potential for more. Early concepts plans particularly for roads should be a priority.
- Council to continue engaging landowners and the broader community in Wickham in the development of the Wickham Master Plan. This will also provide a basis for ongoing collaboration in the implementation of actions and initiatives in the area.