

ITEM 10. NEWCOMBE STREET, PADDINGTON – PARTIAL ROAD OPENING AND CLOSURE**FILE NO: S111243****SUMMARY**

Newcombe Street runs perpendicular to Oxford Street and is adjacent to the Paddington Uniting Church, the location of the popular weekend Paddington markets. At the southern end, the street is currently a two-way, no-through road off Gordon Street. The northern portion of Newcombe Street, where it intersects with Oxford Street, was closed as a public road in the 1980s and is currently a paved plaza space.

In May 2012, the City gave conditional approval for a development at 1 Newcombe Street which included residential apartments, retail premises and associated car parking. In response to residents' concerns about increased traffic accessing this site directly from Gordon Street, Council endorsed a proposal to close the southern end of Newcombe Street, and reopen the northern end at the intersection with Oxford Street.

The change in access arrangements provides the opportunity to renew Newcombe Street, Paddington. A new paved plaza with trees, planting and a larger grassed area will be created at the southern end. The northern end will become a slow-speed street opening to Oxford Street, providing access to the development from Newcombe Street via Oxford Street. Newcombe Street (north), between the private lane and Oxford Street, will be opened to vehicular traffic.

This report recommends that Council agree to permanently close Newcombe Street (south) between Gordon Street and a new cul-de-sac just south of the private lane.

RECOMMENDATION

It is resolved that Council approve the closure of Newcombe Street (south), Paddington between Gordon Street and a new cul-de-sac just south of the private lane.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Location Plan

Attachment B: Roads and Maritime Services Approval - Traffic Management Plan, Stage 2 Road Safety Audit, and Community Consultation Report.

Attachment C: Concept Design Exhibition Boards

BACKGROUND

1. In May 2012, the City gave conditional approval for a development at 1 Newcombe Street, Paddington which included residential apartments, retail premises and associated car parking. In response to residents' concerns about increased traffic accessing this site from Gordon Street, Council endorsed a proposal to close the southern end of Newcombe Street, and reopen the northern end at the intersection with Oxford Street.
2. A proposal to reclassify the north end of Newcombe Street, from 'Community Land' to 'Operational Land' (by amendment of the LEP), was submitted to the Department of Planning and Infrastructure. The Minister approved the Gateway determination on 17 September 2012. This initiated progress to detailed design.
3. The process for the reclassification of the proposed closure of southern end of Newcombe Street, under Section 34 of the Roads Act 1993 (via the Department of Primary Industries – Crown Lands Division), is expected to take over two years to complete. Therefore, a closure for Newcombe Street under section 116 of the Roads Act 1993 is required to permit the commencement of the project construction works.
4. The recommendation to award the tender for the construction works was approved by Council on 21 March 2016. The approval of this road opening and closure report represents the last step in the formal process prior to signing of contracts with the recommended head contractor.
5. The private laneway midblock along Newcombe Street is in use by commercial properties along Oxford Street that back onto the lane. The entry into this private laneway will become accessible from Oxford Street and will be paved at the entry to improve pedestrian priority along Newcombe Street at this location.
6. The Traffic Management Plan (including reference to the stage 2 Road Safety Audit and the Community Consultation Report) to permanently close Newcombe Street at the Gordon Street end has been approved by Roads and Maritime Services.
7. The Stage 2 Road Safety Audit was completed and all comments taken into consideration as part of the detailed design.
8. The proposal was endorsed by the Local Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee on 16 December 2015.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

9. The planning proposal to reclassify the northern end of Newcombe Street from 'community' to 'operational' land has been supported on the basis that it would provide a better outcome in terms of safety, traffic and amenity.
10. The road closure and opening will reduce the requirement for traffic to use Gordon Street and other local residential streets
11. Relocation of parking from Oxford Street to Newcombe Street and from Newcombe Street to Gordon Street has been accommodated in the new design. There will be no net parking loss.
12. The private lane access will be maintained to the rear of the commercial properties and access for deliveries will be via Oxford Street, not Gordon Street.

13. Access to the 1 Newcombe Street development will be from Oxford Street.
14. Vehicular access to the 1 Newcombe development and the laneway will be partially across designated pedestrian paving. This design gives priority to pedestrian users.
15. Planning approval has been awarded and works have commenced at the 1 Newcombe Street development. Should opening of Newcombe Street not proceed, there would be significant impact to the development.
16. The impact of opening Newcombe Street onto Oxford Street, via the existing Oxford Street kerbside bus lane during the AM peak times, is predicted to be minimal as vehicles turning into Newcombe Street are anticipated to be less than one per minute during peak hour.
17. The Roads and Maritime Services traffic management plan approval requires the impact of the Newcombe Street changes to be monitored after project completion, to allow the impact of the fully operational road opening to be assessed.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

18. Section 116 of the Roads Act 1993.
19. Section 34 of the Roads Act 1993.
20. Roads and Maritime Services is legislatively responsible for the regulation and control of traffic on all roads in New South Wales, but has delegated to Council certain functions to regulate traffic on local roads.

CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES

21. The section 116 closure of Newcombe Street is required prior to the commencement of the City's works.
22. Commencement of construction late April/ early May 2016.
23. Construction completion is anticipated in December 2016.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

24. Public consultation was undertaken between 14 March and 10 April 2015, with a public hearing on 12 May 2015. The exhibition included the concept designs and the planning proposal (refer Attachment C for concept design exhibition board drawings). Consultation activities included a range of online consultation and printed documentation to facilitate community and stakeholder feedback.

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