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COMMUNITY CONSULTATION REPORT

STRATEGIC COMMUNITY CONSULTATION REPORT

Green Square Library & Plaza

Concept Refinement: August 2013

Summary

The City of Sydney undertook community consultation as part of the concept refinement phase of the Green Square Library and Plaza project. A series of targeted workshops were hosted by the City and its architects Stewart Hollenstein in June 2013.

The workshops, hosted in collaboration with the City Life team, included:

- City of Sydney Library staff;
- Chinese community representatives;
- Weave Youth Group participants; and
- Green Square residents/community representatives.

An online discussion forum was also hosted on the City's consultation hub at SydneyYourSay.com.au.

Key themes that were identified during the consultation included:

- Ensuring there is a flexible range of spaces and furniture for both group activities and individual work, including quiet space as well as more active areas;
- Including an exhibition space in the library;
- Transport and access considerations, including library loading zone and delivery operations;
- Consideration of later opening hours, booking systems, and functionality of the amphitheatre;
- Consideration of toilets in the Plaza;
- Consideration of managing anti-social behaviour in the plaza;
- Integrating the plaza with other surrounding shops and cafes.

Community feedback is being considered by the City and its architects as part of finalising the return brief for the Green Square Library & Plaza.

Outcomes which related to future programs will also be considered by the City as part of planning for future operations when the Library & Plaza opens in 2017.

1. Introduction

The design for the Green Square Library & Plaza was determined through an international design competition. The winning architects, Stewart Hollenstein in association with Colin Stewart Architects, have been appointed by the City of Sydney to deliver their winning design for Green Square. The project is being managed by the City Projects and Properties Division for their client, the Green Square Project Team.

A community engagement plan was developed to identify the objectives, scope and activities for involving the community in the concept refinement and design development phases of the Library & Plaza. This plan was consistent with the Green Square Communications & Community Engagement Strategy & Action Plan. It also encompassed the philosophy of the 'open design' process envisaged by the architects, whilst assisting to achieve the City of Sydney's vision for an active, engaged and connected community in Green Square.

2. Consultation Objectives

The following objectives were determined for this phase of community consultation on the Green Square Library & Plaza.

1. To respect the integrity of the winning design throughout the ongoing concept refinement and consultation process, with participation from the community to provide feedback on how spaces will work for the community, including indoor spaces and outdoors in the plaza. This is an opportunity for the architects to test design assumptions with the community;
2. To understand and reflect back to the community how this design responds to the key design criteria they suggested during early community consultation;
3. To inform the community of the winning design chosen for the Green Square Library & Plaza and its context and relationship to other projects in the Green Square Town Centre;
4. To reflect the architects' commitment to an open design process – building community excitement and ownership during the design and construction process and at key milestones and “moments”, including potential for early activation; and
5. To involve and reflect different groups in the community and different cultures, recognising the broad range of people who will in future use the Library & Plaza.

3. Consultation scope

As the Library & Plaza design was selected through an international design competition, a key part of the engagement was to respect the integrity of the winning design throughout the concept refinement and design development phase. Therefore, the consultation did not seek feedback on what people liked or didn't like about the winning design, or seek to change and key aspects of the scheme.

However, there was scope in the design program and commitment by the City of Sydney and its architects to further community engagement throughout the design development, which was focused on seeking input in the following areas:

3.1 Feedback on how indoor spaces will work for the community

- Functionality, users, staff, look and feel of indoor spaces, including materials, finishes, fit-out, furniture and access, layout and requirements for different uses

3.2 Testing design assumptions - Plaza

- Reflecting how the community's input shaped the design;
- Look and feel of outdoor spaces, including materials, finishes, fit out, furniture and access;
- Testing the design assumption of the plaza as an outdoor library – e.g. how do you want to use the plaza's rooms or zones for
 - Play and green space, events and programs, outdoor library, bleachers/furniture, markets and café;
- Confirm the technology required to enable these uses; and
- Confirming how the Library & Plaza fits in with other aspects of the public domain strategy and other neighbouring developments.

3.3 Celebrating key moments and milestones, including opportunities for early activation and prototyping

- Inviting the community to key milestones, just as turning the sod etc.; and
- Involving different community groups in events.

The level of the City of Sydney's spectrum of participation is "Consult". Key consultation and discussion questions were used to focus the community engagement activities for each of these areas.

4 Key Stakeholders

The key stakeholders for this stage of consultation included groups representing the key future users of the library, which include:

4.1 External

- Local residents (Green Square Urban Renewal Area)
- Key community & cultural groups;

- School students;
- Young people;
- Local businesses;
- Developers whose properties will interface with the Library & Plaza, including the Green Square Consortium (LML);
- Neighbouring residents who will use the library;
- City of Sydney residents and ratepayers who will be keen to see how the project progresses; and
- The design community involved in or observing the library & plaza design competition).

4.2 Internal

- Green Square Steering Committee;
- Green Square Buildings & Open Space Project Control Group;
- Green Square Library & Plaza Key User Reference Group (KURG)
- Library Managers and staff; and
- City Life staff – Facilities, place-making and culture.

A key stakeholder list for Green Square is included in the Green Square Communications and Engagement Strategy & Action Plan (2012).

5 Consultation Activities

5.1 Library Staff Key User Reference Group

Wednesday 22 May 2013

5.2 Youth Workshop

Tuesday 11 June 2013, 3.30pm – 5.00pm

Weave Family Centre, Waterloo Oval, Cnr Elizabeth and Allen Streets, Waterloo, 10 participants

5.3 Green Square Residents workshop

Wednesday 12 June 2013, 6.00pm – 7.30pm

Green Square library and customer service @ the Tote, 100 Joynton Avenue, Zetland, 15 participants

5.4 Green Square Chinese community workshop

Wednesday 19 June, 6.00pm – 7.30 pm

Green Square Library and Customer Service @ the Tote, 100 Joynton Avenue, Zetland, 16 participants

5.5 SydneyYourSay.com.au

Due to the broad interest in the Green Square Library and Plaza, an opportunity for the community to provide feedback was also made available online at the City's consultation hub, SydneyYourSay.com.au.

Copies of the floor plans for the Library & Plaza were available on SydneyYourSay.com.au/greensquare) as well as a live discussion forum which attracted:

- **1391** unique visitors
- **17 comments** in the discussion forum and **644 views**
- The Library & Plaza Floor Plan was downloaded **221 times**
- The Plaza Concept Plan was downloaded **181 times**

6 Consultation Outcomes

The following table outlines the key issues raised by the community during the consultation and includes an initial assessment by the Project Team as to how this feedback will be considered and/or addressed.

Community feedback	Current status
Exhibition space for (local) art and large installations	Included
Clear communication about where the library will be, what it will include and when it will be open in community languages; also communicate opportunities for the community to be involved as the library project develops	Included and to be addressed by City Life
Access from train station – underground?	Not included
How will flooding issues (for an underground facility) be resolved?	To be resolved
A range of seating options, formal and less formal (e.g. pods, lounges, cushion)	Included
Make sure some quiet space is available for those who want it (and to do the more “traditional library activities”	Included
Toilets, consider the plaza as well, facilities for parents (change rooms,	To be resolved

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make bottles, sit with new babies etc.)	
Personal space (e.g. pods, hammocks) as well as group space (lounges, cushions)	Included
Workshop places (Might need to clarify that this is for more social workshops not an actual workshop space e.g. it's for group activities, community meetings, etc.)	Included
Books, DVDs, iPads, Free Wi-Fi	To be considered as part of operations planning – City Life
Consider booking systems for rooms and equipment	City Life to consider
A place for visitors	Included
Workbenches	Included
Functionality of the amphitheatre – change room, prop storage etc.	To be resolved
Open in the evenings	City Life to consider
Sounds proof rooms to practise musical instruments	To be investigated
A great (privately operated) café	Included
For plaza: a mix of shops, open after hours (until 9pm), including (licensed) cafes and places to eat, alcohol could contribute to a lively atmosphere but would need to be managed	To be addressed by LML
Lighting and acoustics should be sensitive to nearby residents	Included
Use warm 'Sydney' colours – avoid "grey"!	To be resolved
Consider the role of dogs in the Plaza	To be resolved
No palm trees	To be resolved
Security and anti-social behaviour– CCTV and/or small police station in town centre	To be resolved – Greg Martin
Suggestions for programs (which are outside the scope of this consultation	City Life to consider

<p>but can be passed to the Library programs team: Zumba, Chinese language classes, English classes, cooking classes, painting, projections, TAFE short courses, showcase community gardens and wicking beds, green roofs, history stories/films, Borrow iPads</p>	
<p>Using local schools and HSC students to run annual competitions for the plaza (music, dance and digital media) – build the constituency</p>	<p>City Life to consider</p>
<p>How do you get to the library and plaza – public transport, private vehicle</p>	<p>To be resolved</p>

The architects prepared a visual representation of the feedback from the consultation. The Project Team also established a Project Issues Log. All feedback will be considered as part of concept refinement.

Conclusion & Next Steps

Targeted workshops with key user groups and the architects were an effective way to seek focussed feedback as part of the concept refinement for the Green Square Library & Plaza. The addition of the online discussion forum on SydneyYourSay.com.au assisted to broaden the reach of the engagement to other interested residents and community members. The participation of the architects and the project team in the consultation sessions meant they could listen to the feedback first hand and consider any necessary response in the design.

A report on the key outcomes from the consultation will be made available to the participants and on SydneyYourSay.com.au. The project will be reported to the City's Design Advisory Panel in 2013.

The next engagement milestone will be the lodgement and exhibition of the Development Application in April 2014. An event to update the community on the final concept design will be included during this phase.

Early activations and community participation is being planned as part of the art strategy with Jess Scully (Green Square Library & Plaza) and Amanda Sharrad, Green Square Public Art Advisor.

Ongoing communication and engagement about the project will be important to building a sense of ownership and excitement ahead of the opening in 2017.