

ITEM 8. LEGIBLE SYDNEY – SYDNEY’S NEW WAYFINDING SYSTEM – DESIGN MANUAL AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**FILE NO: S087392****SUMMARY**

The City’s Wayfinding Strategy (Legible Sydney) provides the framework to deliver clear and consistent wayfinding information in a variety of formats including signage, mapping, websites, digital technology and marketing materials that will encourage people to walk more, and ensure that residents, workers and visitors can confidently find their way around the city.

On 10 December 2012, Council adopted the Wayfinding Strategy and approved progression of the design development of the signage and mapping elements.

The design development process for the signage and mapping elements have included production of full scale mock ups to test various formats, focus group sessions, and a site testing trial of signage proposals at Circular Quay that allowed opportunity for community and stakeholder input and comment.

The next proposed phase of the project is implementation of the signage system.

This report provides a discussion of community and stakeholder feedback, the recommended signage and map design manuals, a project implementation staging plan and budget estimates for approval prior to implementation and rollout.

RECOMMENDATION

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve the Legible Sydney Manual as shown in Attachment B to the subject report, as the guiding document to inform capital works planning and project implementation of the Legible Sydney wayfinding system;
- (B) Council proceed with Implementation Plan as shown in Attachment C to the subject report, as the basis for a staged rollout program of wayfinding signage, which will be subject to Council approval of the annual capital works program budget; and
- (C) Preliminary Project Costings, being Attachment E to the subject report, remain confidential in accordance with section 10A(2)(c) of the Local Government Act 1993.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Wayfinding Signage Kit of Parts

Attachment B: Legible Sydney Manual

Attachment C: Wayfinding Signage Implementation Plan and Pilot Project

Attachment D: Circular Quay Signage Testing Consultation Summary

Attachment E: Preliminary Project Costings (Confidential)

(As Attachment E is confidential, it will be circulated separately from the Agenda Paper and to Councillors and relevant senior staff only).

BACKGROUND

1. On 10 December 2012, following a public exhibition period, Council endorsed the 'Legible Sydney – Wayfinding Strategy' and approved the progression of design development and consultation of mapping and signage elements, prior to seeking Council approval of a recommended final design.
2. The Strategy will guide the development and delivery of wayfinding information to ensure that the Liveable Green Network routes are clearly defined, encourage people to walk more and ensure that visitors can confidently find their way around the city.
3. Minale Tattersfield was engaged to prepare the wayfinding strategy and to progress design development of wayfinding signage elements and mapping. Sub consultants John Everden and Chueng Access Consultants provided key advice and guidance in the development of accessibility and tactile signage components for the project.
4. It is intended that the City's signage systems for wayfinding, bicycles, parks and regulatory information will be compiled into a Sydney Signs Design Code that will be part of the City's public domain design code suite that also includes Sydney Streets, Sydney Lights and Sydney Parks.

Strategic Framework

5. The principles that have underpinned the development of the Strategy are:
 - (a) **Consistency** – ensuring the system has a recognisable identity with consistent graphic style and typefaces, hierarchy of information structure and signage placement;
 - (b) **Accessibility** – ensuring wayfinding information is presented and delivered in a variety of formats to cater for people of various abilities and backgrounds;
 - (c) **City Legibility** – ensuring public domain improvements contribute to people's understanding of the city structure to support intuitive wayfinding; and
 - (d) **Sustainability** – ensuring that materials used are robust and cost effective, and that information is able to be updated to ensure accuracy of information content to promote ongoing use.

Wayfinding System Components

6. The Strategy envisages a multi modal approach to the delivery of wayfinding information. These include:
 - (a) signage;
 - (b) wayfinding map;
 - (c) print – brochures, pocket maps;
 - (d) digital/web applications;

- (e) Visitor Information Centres/ People Ambassadors; and
 - (f) public domain improvements.
7. The current project consultancy will advance the design development of the signage and map components. Development of the digital, web and print applications recommended by the Strategy will involve a separate project development process.

Wayfinding Signage Kit of Parts

8. The proposed family of wayfinding signage elements (see Attachment A) include the following:
- (a) pylon – either free standing or surface mounted;
 - (b) flag signs and finger signs on Smartpole / existing pole;
 - (c) surface mounted map signs;
 - (d) tactile indicators;
 - (e) destination marker for City community buildings and other key destinations; and
 - (f) pylon for interpretative information.

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

9. The design development process has involved assessment of various options for fonts, colours and graphic and information layout for signage at full scale, to test effectiveness, design composition and legibility.
10. Design development of the tactile location indicators have been subject to specific focus group development with representatives from Vision Australia and Guide Dogs NSW/ACT.
11. Tzannes Architects (the City's public domain furniture designer) were engaged to collaborate with Minale Tattersfield to develop the industrial design of the signage elements, including material selection and profiling to ensure that the signage is co-ordinated with the City's public domain furniture design project.
12. An on-site trial of full scale mock ups of the pylon, flag, finger and tactile signage elements was carried out at Alfred Street Plaza Circular Quay between 19 June and 1 July 2013. The trial included three pylon sign mock ups with different type of fonts and sizes, flag and finger signs attached to an adjacent Smartpole and three versions of tactile indicators.
13. The objective of this trial was to user test at full scale in an external environment the legibility and clarity of the information provided on the signage. Feedback was gathered by on-site meetings with stakeholder groups, survey sheets located at the test site as well as on the Sydney Your Say website.

DESIGN REFINEMENT

14. Feedback and assessment from the trial has resulted in further design development being undertaken, including review of font sizes and simplification of information content and map colours. With regard to the tactile indicators, a new prototype was developed to provide more rounded edges on the signage plate in response to stakeholder feedback.
15. Attachment D provides a summary of comments and stakeholder input that have informed the design refinement process.

Tactile Indicators

16. Tactile indicators (see Attachment A) are signs that will be placed adjacent to the pedestrian crossing push buttons to allow touch reading by people who are blind or reading at close range by people who have low vision. The signs carry the street name and property numbers in raised lettering and in Braille.
17. The signs comprise of a photopolymer membrane that is charcoal black in colour with encapsulated white lettering and Braille on an aluminium mounting plate with end caps. The diameter of the mounting plate will vary to suit attachment to a S1 Smartpole, S2 Smartpole or standard RMS signal pole.
18. An additional option using a bronze colour plate with white text is also proposed for application with the bronze S2 Smartpoles that are located along village main streets.
19. It is proposed that allowance be made to provide space to accommodate QR codes at the bottom of each tactile indicator in order to improve accessibility and broaden the available information on each of these signs. Use of this technology will enable people who are blind or have low vision to access additional information using smart phones equipped with QR Code scanner apps to provide voice output or large print formats.

Pylon Signage and Mapping

20. Pylon signs are either free standing or wall mounted structures 2700 millimetres high and 430 millimetres wide (see Attachment A). These signs will be placed at arrival points near transport hubs, important decision points and at major destinations. The graphic layout consists of:
 - (a) information symbol visible from a long distance;
 - (b) location reference that is either a suburb, precinct or street;
 - (c) directions to major destinations;
 - (d) detailed map featuring five minute walking circle and highlighted pedestrian and public spaces;
 - (e) contact details in Braille and tactile lettering for blind and vision impaired users;
 - (f) overview map showing larger section of the city for ease of orientation and 15 minute walking circle;

- (g) digital and media download options; and
 - (h) City of Sydney watermark logo.
21. Fabrication will include provision for removable panels to allow for information and mapping to be updated without need to replace the entire sign.

Flag and Finger Signage

22. Flag and finger signs (see Attachment A) are fixed to poles and provide place references and directional information. Finger signs also provide information on the time it takes to walk to a destination. Colours and fonts relate to the graphic standards used for the pylon signs.
23. Flag and finger signs will be the most commonly used signage element for the wayfinding system. The use of existing poles will minimise clutter and allow removal of existing signage when required messages are able to be accommodated on one signage panel.

DESIGN MANUAL

24. Based on the design refinement process, a design manual for the tactile indicators, pylon, mapping and flag/finger signs has been prepared that sets out guidelines for usage and placement, graphic conventions, information layout and industrial design (see Attachment B). This manual will be a “living” document that will be updated as improvements to the system are identified during project roll out.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

25. Attachment C outlines the approach, extent and staging of project implementation.
26. Rollout of the pylon, flag and finger signage will entail site identification and location assessment, message information development, site audits to ensure the right message at right location and that the minimal amount of signage is employed. This process will also involve the removal of unnecessary old signage with a goal to de-clutter the environment.
27. The implementation of the tactile indicators is more straight forward, given that these elements will only be located on signalised pedestrian crossing poles and that the information provision consists of street names and property block numbers rather than directional or destination information.
28. The following proposed staged implementation plan is recommended:
- (a) **Stage One - Pilot Project**
 - (i) A pilot project is recommended to be developed and implemented to further test and refine the scheme.
 - (ii) The pilot project will include fully fabricated prototypes with site specific wayfinding and mapping information to allow further feedback to assess effectiveness and ease of use.

- (iii) The pilot project will also provide the opportunity to test the system against different streetscape conditions and contexts, various footpath widths and gradients so that flexible design solutions can be developed and tested to suit site conditions.
 - (iv) The recommended route for the pilot stage is from Wynyard to Walsh Bay as shown in Attachment C, with pilot rollout for the tactile location indicators extending further along York Street to Town Hall, so as to provide a viable route for testing by blind and visually impaired stakeholders.
 - (v) Outcomes from the pilot project will provide the opportunity to further refine the design manual prior to embarking on an ongoing rollout program.
- (b) **Stage Two - City Centre**
- (i) This will be the most complex component of the wayfinding system in terms of the concentration of destinations and co-ordination with Transport for NSW transport wayfinding system, as well as other land agencies such as the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority and Barangaroo Delivery Authority.
 - (ii) The City Centre will be in a state of flux in terms of light rail construction activity that will probably entail regular temporary pedestrian diversions and access arrangements. Staging and rollout of wayfinding elements in the City Centre will need to be co-ordinated with the Light Rail project to ensure relevance of messages at the time of installation.
- (c) **Stage Three - Village Main Streets and Liveable Green Network Connectors**
- (i) This stage will set up the main structure of the wayfinding system outside the city centre and will focus on village main streets and Liveable Green Network pedestrian connections to provide inter wayfinding information to guide pedestrians from Village to Village, Village to City Centre and to major open space / recreation facilities.
 - (ii) Along these routes are usually the main concentration of desired destinations and transport hubs that require wayfinding information. These streets would be the only areas that may require pylon type signage at the main entry/ decision points and transport hubs.
- (d) **Stage Four - Village Precincts**
- (i) This stage undertakes the intra wayfinding arrangements within each village precinct area. This stage will provide a finer grain of information to particular destinations and attractions that are located away from the main activity streets. It is anticipated that the majority of the signage types used will be flag and finger signs attached to existing poles and infrastructure.

(e) **Stage Five – Urban Renewal**

- (i) Urban renewal areas such as Green Square and Ashmore Estate will include an assessment of wayfinding information needs at various stages of development. The timing for rollout will be co-ordinated as part of the construction of new streets and public domain delivered by the City or developers.

TRANSPORT FOR NSW AND AGENCY CO-ORDINATION

29. Transport for NSW are currently trialling a new system of public transport branding and wayfinding signage for their bus, rail, ferry and light rail network. Currently, a trial is underway around the Martin Place and Circular Quay rail / bus interchange areas.
30. The City's signage testing will include use of Transport for NSW proposed graphic standards for public transport in order to provide compatibility and consistency across the systems.
31. The City is also co-ordinating with Transport for NSW on the development of signage use protocols that define when the City's kit of parts will provide directional information to public transport modes and the circumstances when the Transport for NSW signage system is used in the City's public domain.
32. Similar negotiations and discussions have been undertaken with Barangaroo Delivery Authority and Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority on co-ordination between signage systems with regards to information provision and placement.
33. Co-ordination between agencies will avoid doubling up on unnecessary signage and provide a user focussed approach to wayfinding across the City with a seamless transition across the systems. The goal is to have a co-ordinated system that focuses on the user and avoids multiple / duplicate arrangements regardless of land ownership. The Ministries of Transport and Planning have also been briefed on this and support this approach.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030

34. *Sustainable Sydney 2030* is a vision for the sustainable development of the City to 2030 and beyond. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the City, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. The new wayfinding system is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
- (a) Direction 1 - A Globally Competitive and Innovative City – the provision of a pedestrian wayfinding system will assist visitor orientation and movement and enhance Sydney's reputation as a tourist friendly destination and place for business.
- (b) Direction 3 - Integrated Transport for a Connected City – the wayfinding system will reinforce pedestrian connections to bus, train, light rail and ferry transport nodes, as well make walking a more attractive transport option for people to access the City Centre, village centres and other attractions.

- (c) Direction 4 - A City of Walking and Cycling – the wayfinding system will support the Liveable Green Network by providing the directional information to encourage more pedestrian activity and help people to conveniently find their destinations.
- (d) Direction 5 - A Lively and Engaging City Centre – the wayfinding system assists people to explore and access confidently the attractions of the City Centre.
- (e) Direction 6 - Vibrant Local Communities and Economies – the wayfinding system aims to encourage visitors to access and explore the attractions and retail offerings located in the village centres, as well as provide information to residents on the location of community and recreational facilities.
- (f) Direction 9 - Sustainable Development, Renewal and Design – the development of the wayfinding system has been co-ordinated with the public domain furniture design project. The new wayfinding system and the new public domain furniture will aid in improving the legibility and design cohesiveness of city streets.

Organisational Impact

- 35. Implementation of the wayfinding system will require dedicated staff resources to undertake project implementation and ongoing asset management and maintenance of the system.
- 36. Internal processes will be required to be developed to co-ordinate the asset management of City signage systems for pedestrian wayfinding, cycling, parks and regulatory signage with regards to ongoing maintenance, information management and removal of redundant signage.

Risks

- 37. Inability to co-ordinate between State agencies may result in inconsistent and confusing wayfinding information provided in the city.

Social / Cultural / Community

- 38. The Wayfinding Strategy proposes provision of wayfinding information in a variety of formats to assist people of different abilities and backgrounds to access the city and find their destinations. The design development stage has included testing with a range of user groups such as people who are blind, have low vision, are deaf or mobility impaired.
- 39. The provision of heritage and cultural interpretative information is not considered a prime function of the wayfinding signage system. However, if required, this information could be provided on a separate signage element included in the kit of parts.

Environmental

- 40. Encouraging people to walk has proven health outcomes, can help reduce carbon pollution and improve air quality, complement the role of public transport and reduce demand off congested road systems.

41. The delivery of a more co-ordinated and coherent wayfinding system will allow for out of date signage to be removed, which will minimise street clutter.

Economic

42. Research by Gehl Architects highlights that improvements to the public domain as well as the provision of consistent wayfinding information generates more pedestrian activity, which can increase spending in the local economy.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

43. The current 10 year capital works program has budget provisions for the implementation and rollout of wayfinding signage, including the undertaking of pilot projects.
44. The Implementation Plan (see Attachment C) recommends a staged rollout approach that will guide future capital budget allocations for wayfinding information over the next eight to 10 years.
45. Preliminary financial estimates for the staged implementation plan are included in confidential Attachment F. These estimates are within the current 10 year Works Program budget allocations.
46. Development of wayfinding products such as digital apps, print brochures and web based applications will be subject to future project development and scoping to ascertain budget requirements.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

47. Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.
48. A development application may be required in some circumstances for the pylon signs if located adjacent to identified heritage items.
49. Attachment E to this report is to remain confidential in accordance with section 10A(2)(c) of the Local Government Act 1993, as it contains information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business.

CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES

50. Critical timeframes for implementation relate to the delivery of major renewal/ infrastructure projects that will require wayfinding information. This includes Wynyard Walk (2015), Barangaroo (2015 to 2018), Darling Harbour Live (2017) CBD and South Eastern Light Rail (2017 to 2018) and Green Square Town Centre and urban renewal areas (2015 to 2019).

OPTIONS

51. The impact of not proceeding with the proposal will delay identified visitor and tourist wayfinding needs including providing information accessible to the blind and visually impaired.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

52. The Wayfinding Strategy was placed on public exhibition from 13 August to 7 September 2012, prior to adoption by Council on 10 December 2012.
53. An External Reference Group consisting of representatives from Transport for NSW, Tourism & Transport Forum, Physical Disability Council of New South Wales, People with Disability Australia, Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority, Barangaroo Delivery Authority, Vision Australia and Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust have provided valuable input and guidance for the project.
54. Workshops with Vision Australia, Guide Dogs NSW/ACT and other relevant stakeholders were undertaken to guide the design development of the tactile indicators.
55. The wayfinding system has been presented to the Design Advisory Panel, Retail Advisory Panel, Disability (Inclusion) Panel for advice and feedback.
56. Key stakeholder and agencies were kept informed on the progress of the project through letters from the Chief Executive Officer.
57. A trial of the wayfinding signage elements was undertaken at Alfred Street plaza, Circular Quay from 19 June to 1 July 2013, which included three pylon sign mock ups with different fonts types and sizes, flag and finger signs that were attached to an adjacent smartpole and three versions of Braille/ tactile plates.
58. The trial included a questionnaire available on site and on the Sydney Your Say website to gather public comment. During the trial, members of Design Advisory Panel and Disability (Inclusion) Advisory Panel visited the trial to provide feedback and advice.
59. A summary of issues raised and responses is provided in Attachment D. The main issues included the need to increase font sizes, simplify information content and reduce the intensity of map colours for improved legibility. With regard to the tactile indicators, stakeholder feedback has resulted in modifications to the design with more rounded edges on the signage plate.
60. The proposed stage one pilot project will provide further opportunity for community feedback to refine the system prior to undertaking ongoing rollout of the program.
61. It is also envisaged ongoing consultation with community and stakeholders will be required during implementation of the scheme to ensure that message design and signage placement is appropriate for each locality.

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