

Post Exhibition - Haymarket and Chinatown Public Domain Plan

File No: X004285

Summary

This report seeks Council's adoption of the Haymarket and Chinatown Public Domain Plan (the Plan) as amended.

The Plan study area is generally bound by Liverpool Street to the north, Darling Drive to the west, Broadway and Eddy Avenue to the south and Elizabeth Street to the east. The Plan analyses the existing public domain, strategic and development context, and recommends the scope, location, and extent of public domain improvements over the short, medium and long term.

Council approved the public exhibition of the draft Haymarket Public Domain Plan on 21 August 2023. The draft Plan as well as the draft Haymarket and Chinatown Revitalisation Strategy was placed on public exhibition from 22 August to 25 September 2023. Across both documents 26 written submissions were received as well as 251 surveys, 31 comments pinned to the interactive map, 76 comments gathered through the Lord Mayoral Forum on 19 September 2023 and pop-ups located at Campbell Street and Dixon Street markets.

The Engagement Report at Attachment B provides a summary of issues raised relating to the draft Haymarket and Chinatown Revitalisation Strategy and the draft Haymarket Public Domain Plan.

The schedule of submission and responses at Attachment C summarises and responds to the issues raised relating to the draft Haymarket Public Domain Plan.

The Plan has been reviewed and amended following consideration of external and internal feedback. The amended Plan recommended for adoption, with additional text shown underlined in red and deleted text shown in strikethrough, is provided at Attachment A. A summary of changes to the Plan is provided at Attachment D.

The next review of the 10-year long-term financial plan will need to consider the revised priorities from the community feedback and the affordability of delivering all identified projects in the Haymarket and Chinatown Public Domain Plan within that period.

It is intended that the Plan will supersede the existing Chinatown Public Domain Plans 2010 and 2015 and Public Art Plan for Chinatown 2010 and 2015, given that the draft Plan provides a more up to date status on precinct context, future change and community priorities.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council adopt the Haymarket and Chinatown Public Domain Plan with amendments, as shown at Attachment A to the subject report, as a guiding document to inform capital works planning, negotiations with government and developers, planning proposals and development applications;
- (B) Council note the public domain projects outlined in the current long term financial plan, including Dixon Street, Sussex Street, Belmore Park, Harbour Street, Quay Street, Goulburn Street and Creative Lighting, and that in the review of the long-term financial plan, consider the inclusion of Campbell Street and Ultimo Road;
- (C) Council rescind the Chinatown Public Domain Plan 2010 and 2015 and Chinatown Public Art Plan 2010 and 2015, which are replaced by the Haymarket and Chinatown Public Domain Plan;
- (D) Council note that the next review of the ten year long term financial plan will need to consider the revised priorities from the community feedback and the affordability of delivering all identified projects in the Haymarket and Chinatown Public Domain Plan within that period; and
- (E) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to make amendments to the Haymarket and Chinatown Public Domain Plan in order to correct any minor drafting errors and finalise design, artwork and accessible formats for publication.

Attachments

- Attachment A.** Haymarket and Chinatown Public Domain Plan (with amendments)
- Attachment B.** Engagement Report - Draft Haymarket and Chinatown Revitalisation Strategy and Draft Haymarket Public Domain Plan
- Attachment C.** Schedule of Submissions and Responses Relating to the Draft Haymarket Public Domain Plan
- Attachment D.** Summary of Changes to the Haymarket and Chinatown Public Domain Plan

Background

1. From August to September 2022, the City undertook a community engagement process to help create a vision and community themes for Haymarket.
2. From this engagement, A Community Vision for Haymarket 2022 was prepared which informed the preparation of the draft Haymarket Public Domain Plan (the draft Plan), and the draft Haymarket and Chinatown Revitalisation Strategy (subject to a separate Council report).
3. Council approved the public exhibition of the draft Haymarket Public Domain Plan and draft Haymarket and Chinatown Revitalisation Strategy on 21 August 2023.
4. The draft Plan also built on the public domain improvements undertaken over previous years informed by previous Council adopted Chinatown Public Domain Plans 2010 and 2015. These include:
 - (a) George Street South transformation, including improvements to intersections at Ultimo Road and Hay Street as well as footpath widening along Hay Street between Sussex Street and Harbour Street;
 - (b) Barlow Street closure and installation of the permanent Barlow Street Forest;
 - (c) Thomas Street new public space including public artwork "The Garden of Cloud and Stone" by Lindy Lee and Jane Irwin Landscape Architecture;
 - (d) Sussex Street paving and poles upgrade;
 - (e) Little Hay Street, Factory Street and Kimber Lane upgrades;
 - (f) Public artwork "In Between Two Worlds" in Kimber Lane by Jason Wing; and
 - (g) Red Lantern Information Kiosk including artwork "Pao Cha" by Pamela Mei-Leng See.
5. The study area expands the previous Chinatown Public Domain Plan 2015 area eastward of George Street to encompass Belmore Park and the core Thai Town area, in response to the transformation of George Street South and the new opportunity to unite the precinct east and west and reinstate the historic connection between Chinatown and Belmore Park.

Haymarket and Chinatown Public Domain Plan 2023

6. The draft Haymarket Public Domain Plan was prepared internally by City Design in collaboration with Strategic Planning and City Access teams.
7. The Plan (Attachment A) provides recommended improvements for streets and public spaces in the precinct that are informed by the vision and community themes, in particular the importance of identity, history and culture as well as the principles and directions set out in Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision and Public Space Public Life 2020. The Plan also covers public art directions to be integrated into the public domain.

Current projects underway

8. The Haymarket and Chinatown Public Domain Plan includes several projects that are currently underway. These include:
 - (a) Dixon Street and the Chinatown Ceremonial Gates - a public domain upgrade that will include creative lighting, restoration of the Gates, improved seating and event services, and paving treatments. The draft concept was on public exhibition from 18 October to 15 November 2023 and will be the subject of a future report;
 - (b) Goulburn Street - rollout of city palette granite paving and smart poles; and
 - (c) Ultimo Road - installation of the Ultimo to Surry Hills cycleway. The project provides an opportunity for future footpath widening to Ultimo Road between Thomas and Quay Streets.

Project Opportunities and priorities

9. The draft Plan included public domain project opportunities for consultation with the community and stakeholders.
10. Based on consultation feedback, strategic potential and feasibility, the identified project opportunities include:
 - (a) Dixon Street - revitalise the historic place of cultural memories at the heart of Chinatown. This project is underway;
 - (b) Belmore Park - improve safety and create a welcoming city centre park that encourages events, community gatherings, and everyday use;
 - (c) Campbell Street - welcome people to Thai Town with a street of lights, food and events;
 - (d) Creative Lighting Master Plan - develop a range of deliverable projects that reinforce the precinct's cultural identity and night time destination;
 - (e) Sussex Street - create a green city spine that balances all uses;
 - (f) Harbour Street - create a generous, green, pedestrian space that supports events and draws people into Chinatown;
 - (g) Goulburn Street - rollout granite paving and smart poles. This project is underway;
 - (h) Hay Street West - create a softer, greener street for everyday use and welcome event and cultural celebrations;
 - (i) Quay Street - create a high-quality connection between Central and Darling Harbour;
 - (j) Ultimo Road - include footpath widening with the cycleway installation; and
 - (k) Laneways - support precinct identity with more public art, creative lighting, and pedestrian amenity in lanes.

11. Capital works budgets and detailed scoping reports will be provided to Council for endorsement prior to any project being progressed to implementation stage. All projects would be subject to community and stakeholder engagement, statutory planning assessment, exhibition, and approval processes.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

12. Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision renews the communities' vision for the sustainable development of the city to 2050. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the city, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. This plan is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
 - (a) Direction 1 - Responsible governance and stewardship - the Plan guides long term public domain investment and improvements to the City's public domain assets and services, as well as guiding investment by others through development.
 - (b) Direction 2 - A leading environmental performer - the Plan will implement the Greening Sydney Strategy and significantly increase tree canopy throughout the precinct. It helps to deliver planned regional cycling connections to support active transport.
 - (c) Direction 3 - Public places for all - the Plan will balance all public space uses and identify opportunities to reallocate road space in response to an increased demand for more space for pedestrian movement and street life.
 - (d) Direction 4 - Design excellence and sustainable development - the Plan responds to the distinct character, topography and history of the precinct, opening up opportunities to celebrate water and heritage through project development.
 - (e) Direction 5 - A city for walking, cycling and public transport - the Plan will improve pedestrian amenity by creating an attractive, comfortable, and safe environment with improved connections to a busy public transport interchange.
 - (f) Direction 6 - An equitable and inclusive city - the Plan outlines projects which will make space for all city users, including improving access and amenity for people of all abilities and cultures.
 - (g) Direction 7 - Resilient and diverse communities - the Plan aims to increase the amount of flexible public space that can be activated by different uses to attract foot traffic and improve business continuity through various shocks and stresses.
 - (h) Direction 8 - A thriving cultural and creative life - the Plan integrates community feedback to identify new opportunities for public art and to provide event infrastructure to support cultural programming by the city and others.
 - (i) Direction 9 - A transformed and innovative economy - the Plan supports businesses to activate the public domain, encouraging people to stay and enjoy the City and supporting a diverse 24-hour precinct.

Risks

13. All project priorities recommended will require a project scoping and feasibility assessment process that will identify risks and mitigation measures prior to any implementation stage proceeding.
14. Many of the recommendations require Transport for NSW approval and ongoing collaboration for a successful outcome.

Social / Cultural / Community

15. The Plan recognises the importance of the public domain to bring people together, to express cultural identity, and to support collaboration between the community, businesses and government to activate the city. Together with the draft Haymarket and Chinatown Revitalisation Strategy, the draft Plan seeks a partnership between the City, other levels of government, community, and private property owners in a co-ordinated response to revitalisation.

Environmental

16. The Plan is aligned with the City's environmental actions, in particular the need for more space to increase tree canopy and greening and improving pedestrian amenity across our city.

Economic

17. The Plan focuses on delivering public domain quality and liveability which has been proven to be a key contributor to the competitiveness of cities to do business and attract investment.

Financial Implications

18. The next review of the 10-year long-term financial plan will need to consider the revised priorities from the community feedback and the affordability of delivering all identified projects in the Haymarket and Chinatown Public Domain Plan within that period.
19. The City's current long-term financial plan has capital works budget allocations for Dixon Street, Sussex Street, Belmore Park, Harbour Street, Quay Street, Goulburn Street and Creative Lighting.
20. Dixon Street south is currently underway and funded in the long term financial plan with the concept design recently exhibited in November 2023.
21. The Ultimo Road cycleway is currently funded. Additional footpath widening between Thomas and Quay Streets will need consideration in the long term financial plan.
22. The Campbell Street upgrade will need consideration in future capital works program and the long term financial plan.
23. Laneway projects will require further exploration and integration with the allocations within future iterations of the long term financial plan.
24. The Plan also presents a series of recommendations, many of which are already business as usual actions incorporated in the City's long term financial plan. This includes granite paving, public domain furniture, wayfinding, and greening.

Relevant Legislation

25. Project delivery will be in accordance with relevant planning and approval legislation and regulations including Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and Roads Act 1993.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

26. Adoption of the Plan will inform existing cycleway works as well as public domain works associated with private development, both under Voluntary Planning Agreements and standard consent conditions.

Options

27. Not proceeding with the Plan will miss the opportunity to support the revitalisation of Chinatown and Haymarket, and negatively impact community and stakeholder good will and collaboration gained during the engagement phase of the project. This is not recommended.

Public Consultation

28. Early engagement was undertaken in August to September 2022 to develop A Community Vision for Haymarket 2022. Key themes arising from the public consultation were used to guide public domain project opportunities identified in the draft Plan.
29. The draft Haymarket Public Domain Plan and draft Haymarket and Chinatown Revitalisation Strategy were placed on public exhibition concurrently for four weeks from 22 August to 25 September 2023.
30. This City's Design Advisory Panel and Public Art Advisory Panel were briefed on the proposed update on 31 August 2023 and 15 August 2023 respectively. Both Panels expressed their support.
31. Key consultation activities during exhibition period included:
 - (a) Sydney Your Say web page and online survey provided in English, Traditional and Simplified Chinese, Thai, Korean, and Indonesian, and viewed 1,867 times;
 - (b) Lord Mayor Forum held on 19 September 2023, attended by 138 people;
 - (c) three pop-up consultation sessions at Sydney Town Hall, Dixon Street and Campbell Street;
 - (d) online interactive map;
 - (e) Individual briefings with key stakeholders on the Chinatown Historic Thematic Study and draft Haymarket and Chinatown Revitalisation Strategy.
 - (f) community notification distributed to 14,709 property owners, residents, and businesses;

- (g) e-mailout to 670 registered stakeholders;
 - (h) door-knocking 28 businesses on Dixon Street;
 - (i) advertising on community screens throughout the precinct;
 - (j) Sydney Your Say e-news sent to over 7,000 subscribers; and
 - (k) media announcement.
32. At the close of the public exhibition over 350 pieces of feedback were received.
33. Submissions were supportive of project opportunities with particular support expressed for:
- (a) Dixon Street - strong support for revitalisation including refurbishment of the Chinatown Ceremonial Gates;
 - (b) Belmore Park - support for measures to increase activation, community use and improving safety;
 - (c) Campbell Street - strong support for the creation of a distinct Thai Town destination;
 - (d) Laneways - support for more art and activation in lanes, particularly around Thai Town;
 - (e) Creative Lighting Masterplan - lighting was identified as a key part of the precinct's identity;
 - (f) Harbour Street - a public artwork aligned with Little Hay Street that could draw people into Chinatown was particularly well supported;
 - (g) Quay Street - public domain improvements were well received, and
 - (h) Ultimo Road - public domain improvements were well received and the opportunity for expansion of the markets into this street also identified.
34. Additional public domain opportunities were suggested for consideration, including:
- (a) laneways and streets around Thai Town, including Cunningham Street, Parker Street and Parker Lane, as well as Thomas Lane in Chinatown.
35. Key areas of concern expressed in the submissions include:
- (a) Respecting tradition and history is important.
 - (b) Supporting business is important. Respondents said that on-street loading was essential to the operation of many small businesses.
 - (c) Many respondents emphasised the importance of pick-up and drop-off zones for people with mobility impairments including elders and families.
 - (d) Sussex Street plays an important role in precinct servicing. There was notable opposition to any reduction to on-street loading on Sussex Street. However, twice as many respondents supported the proposed cycling improvements.

- (e) Proposals for Campbell Street need to ensure consideration of vehicle access and servicing, including pick-up and drop-off.
 - (f) Hay Street West upgrade is not considered a priority to revitalise Chinatown however more trees and greening for this space was supported.
 - (g) Boost the cultural offering and improve access to community spaces. The City supports the aspirations of the community and will work with current facility operators to explore maximising meeting community needs. A new action has also been added to the Haymarket and Chinatown Revitalisation Strategy to explore opportunities to work to landowners to deliver community and cultural space.
 - (h) Affordable and authentic. Respondents wanted to keep Chinatown affordable and to support small and independent businesses. We note the community's desire to keep the precinct affordable and the Public Domain Plan will continue to support the creation of more spaces that are accessible, free, and that welcome all users.
36. Many of the above issues raised are noted for future design development of the individual projects.
37. Responses to submissions received are outlined in Attachment C - Schedule of Submissions and Responses Relating to the Draft Haymarket Public Domain Plan.
38. Key amendments to the Plan to address issues raised in submissions include:
- (a) change to title of the Plan to Haymarket and Chinatown Public Domain Plan to reflect the importance of Chinatown;
 - (b) update to Community Engagement to reflect the public exhibition outcomes;
 - (c) inclusion of more historical storytelling and heritage interpretation;
 - (d) additional pages on the Chinatown Ceremonial Gates to include details of refurbishment;
 - (e) update to Events and Activation to reflect support for markets at Belmore Park, Campbell Street, Little Hay Street, Thomas Street and Ultimo Road;
 - (f) update to Dixon Street to reflect the latest concept design;
 - (g) update to Campbell Street to reflect the key issues identified by the community;
 - (h) update to Sussex Street to emphasise the importance of loading and drop-off;
 - (i) update to Harbour Street to reflect feedback on bus drop-off;
 - (j) additional pages on Laneways, including Thai Town lanes; and
 - (k) update to on-street parking to investigate opportunities to meet the needs of short-stay parking.

39. The proposed changes do not substantially change the strategic directions of the Plan or are for the clarification of the draft and the correction of typos and graphics or of a nature.

KIM WOODBURY

Chief Operating Officer

Bridget Smyth, City Architect / Executive Manager City Design and Public Art

Edwina Morris, Urban Designer