

## **Frequently Asked Questions: Wallsend Local Centre Public Domain Plan and Traffic Plan**

### **Why has this plan been developed?**

- On 24.11.15 Newcastle's elected Council resolved to develop a public domain plan for Wallsend.

### **What is the scope of the plan?**

- The plan includes public land including streets and public open spaces within Wallsend Local Centre, which is zoned B2 in the Newcastle LEP 2012.

### **What is out of scope?**

- Privately owned land - Council cannot make improvements to privately owned land, although it can make recommendations and work with owners, particularly when land is redeveloped
- Flooding issues in Ironbark Creek are being dealt with as part of a separate project

### **What is the purpose of the plan?**

- The purpose of the plan is to identify and resolve public domain issues within Wallsend Local Centre.

### **What are public domain issues?**

The public domain issues dealt with include:

- transport safety, access and parking (vehicle, cycle, pedestrian, buses and taxis),
- infrastructure (roads, drainage, trees, street furniture, lighting and public utilities),
- legibility, way finding and useability (connectivity, signage, landmarks, design cues, opportunities for place making and outdoor dining)
- aesthetics and environment (trees, mass planting, public art, heritage interpretation, quality of design)
- crime (graffiti, vandalism, theft etc)

### **Cowper Street has high traffic volumes and a 60km/h speed limit. It is difficult for pedestrians and cyclists to cross safely. How will this be resolved?**

Proposals include:

- Reduction of speed limit to 40km/h High Pedestrian Activity Area (HPAA) between Bulkara St and Newcastle Rd, with associated speed control devices.
- New traffic signals at the Kokera St/Cowper St intersection to facilitate traffic movements and safe crossing for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Additional crossing phases for the existing traffic signals at the Nelson St/ Cowper St intersection to facilitate safe crossing for pedestrians and cyclists.

**A section of the R5 cycle route is either missing or poorly resolved between Kokera St and John St. How will this be provided?**

- The missing section of the R5 will be provided along the northern side of Cowper St as a shared path.
- It will be off road, a minimum of 2.5m wide and used by pedestrians and cyclists.

**The existing footpath along the northern side of Cowper St is narrow and cluttered with signage, a bus stop and utilities. How will the proposed R5 shared path fit?**

- Adjustments will be made to the road way.
- Between Nelson St and Newcastle Rd the parking lane will be used for the shared path, resulting in the loss of parking spaces.
- The existing bus stop on the northern side of Cowper St adjacent Kemp St car park will be moved closer to the Nelson St/Cowper St intersection.
- The existing picnic shelter will be removed to make space for the shared path to divert around the back of the relocated bus stop.

**How will users of the proposed R5 shared path cross Nelson St safely at the Nelson St/Cowper St intersection?**

- An additional crossing phase across Nelson St is proposed at the existing Nelson St/Cowper St traffic signals.

**How will additional traffic congestion at the Nelson St/Cowper St traffic signals be dealt with?**

- A roundabout is proposed at the Newcastle Rd/Cowper St intersection to make it easier for traffic to enter the Local Centre via Tyrrell St. This will reduce pressure on the Nelson St intersection.
- It is proposed to make Council St one way northbound to reduce the amount of traffic turning into Nelson St from Dan Rees St.
- Future upgrades to Longworth Ave are intended to divert heavy truck volumes off Cowper St.

**How will gateways into Wallsend Local Centre be improved?**

Gateways to Wallsend Local Centre will be accentuated using design cues and signage. These include:

- Newcastle Rd/Cowper St intersection: new roundabout with tree and ground cover planting, banner poles, entry signage and entry feature such as relocated heritage tram.
- Nelson St/Cowper St intersection: banner poles and new shelter to relocated bus stop which incorporates entry signage and maps of Local Centre.
- Kokera St/Cowper St intersection, new traffic signals with tree and ground cover planting, banner poles and entry signage.
- Bridge entries on Tyrrell St, Nelson St and Boscawen St, as part of the separate bridge raising project, treat bridges as gateways highlighted with paving treatments, lighting, banner poles and art works.

### **How will the aesthetic appeal of Wallsend Local Centre be improved?**

- If existing street trees are failing to thrive they will be replaced
- Additional street trees will be planted in appropriate locations
- Gateways to the Local Centre will receive special treatment - see gateways question above.
- Footpaths within the local centre will be plain concrete with an ashlar pattern.
- Coloured concrete and other decorative treatments will be used for distinctive places such as outside heritage buildings.
- New street furniture will be installed
- Modern Smart lighting which can change colour and project images is proposed.
- Council will provide assistance to the local business association in making improvements such as the installation of flag poles and planter boxes.

### **How will Wallsend Local Centre be made more user friendly?**

- The terminus bus stop outside Stockland Mall will be upgraded
- The bus stop on Cowper Street adjacent Kemp St car park will be upgraded with a shelter, seating and signage
- Street furniture will be upgraded throughout the Local Centre
- Footpaths in poor condition will be replaced
- Footpaths in Nelson St will be widened
- Pedestrian and cycle connectivity to and within the Local Centre will be made safer and easier
- The missing section of the R5 cycle route will be provided as a shared path
- More shade trees will be planted
- Smart lighting is proposed, in addition to lighting the poles can provide mobile phone top up points and free WiFi
- Traffic flows around and within the Local Centre will be improved
- Gateways to the Local Centre will be highlighted with design cues
- Council car parks will be redesigned and upgraded
- Additional short term parking will be provided on Council St
- Crime will be discouraged through good environmental design
- In the long term improvements to Longworth Ave will reduce heavy vehicle traffic on Cowper St
- In the long term improvements will be made to Ironbark Creek Channel with increased public access and naturalisation where possible. This will take place in conjunction with private landowners such as Stockland Mall

### **How will connectivity and wayfinding be improved between Stockland Mall and Nelson St?**

Options include:

- Create a more direct link to Nelson St via Stockland staff car park and Council St by opening up a short cut through a shop front

- Improve the existing pedestrian connection via Dan Rees St with wider footpaths, provision of missing footpath sections and improved sightlines.
- Improved wayfinding signage throughout Wallsend Local Centre

#### **How will pedestrian access be improved in Nelson St?**

- Provide new concrete footpaths to resolve trip hazards.
- Investigate widening footpaths to provide improved access and outdoor dining opportunities.
- Provide a continuous footpath treatment across the Kemp St/Nelson St intersection to provide an at grade link between Kemp St car park and Nelson St shops.
- Remove pram ramps from the bend between Tyrell St and Boscawen St to discourage unsafe crossing.
- Provide a new pedestrian crossing and pedestrian refuge at the Boscawen St/Nelson St intersection.
- Standardise no stopping distances at the existing pedestrian crossing to improve sightlines for oncoming traffic.

#### **How will pedestrian access be improved in Cowper St?**

- The speed limit will be reduced to 40km/h (HPAA) between Bulkara St and Newcastle Rd, with associated speed control devices.
- The R5 shared path will be provided at a minimum of 2.5m wide on the northern side of Cowper St.
- There will be signalised crossing phases at the Kokera St/Cowper St and Nelson St/Cowper St intersections and pedestrian refuges at the proposed roundabout at the Newcastle Rd/Cowper St intersection.
- On the southern side of Cowper St kerb extensions will be provided at the Murnin St and Metcalfe St intersections and the pedestrian refuge at Brooks St will be retained.

#### **How will crime prevention be addressed through design?**

- Level change and sightline issues at the Nelson St/Cowper St intersection will be rectified by removing the existing picnic shelter and activating the corner with a bus shelter and shared path.
- Low hanging vegetation in Council owned car parks and around TPI house to be uplifted as required to open up sight lines.
- Over the long term provide pedestrian access along Ironbark Creek channel to activate the area and discourage graffiti.
- Improve lighting throughout Wallsend Local Centre, including street lighting, lighting of footpath connections and lighting in Council owned car parks.

#### **How will Council Car Parks be improved?**

- Relocate the heritage tram - (potentially for use as a gateway feature) to make space for Dan Rees St car park to have a separate entry and exit.
- Redesign Dan Rees and Kemp St car parks for improved vehicle flow, pedestrian access, lighting and tree planting.

- Retain existing large trees in Kemp St car park by using the Cowper St parking lane for the proposed R5 shared path.
- Retain timed parking in Dan Rees St car park.
- Investigate the need for timed parking in Kemp St car park.

#### **How will pedestrians and cyclists connect to Wallsend Local Centre from Wallsend Park?**

- A 3.0m wide shared path with a bridge across Ironbark Creek is proposed through Wallsend Park, between Cowper St and Thomas St
- The shared path will link to the proposed traffic signals at the Kokera St/Cowper St intersection.

#### **When will all this occur?**

- Improvements to Wallsend Local Centre will be broken up into stages which will be integrated into Council's infrastructure renewal program
- When the Wallsend Local Centre Public Domain Plan has been finalised the next step will be detailed design of the first stage.
- Detailed design for the first stage is programmed to take place this year subject to Council resourcing.
- The delivery of staged on ground works is subject to funding and future programming.
- Council will come back to the community with more information when detailed design and planning for on ground works has been undertaken