

29th April 2021

Mr Brett Whitworth
Deputy Secretary – Infrastructure and Place
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
Bays West draft Place Strategy Submission
Locked Bag 5022
PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

On-line submission

Dear Mr Whitworth

Re: draft Bays West Place Strategy

I write regarding *draft Bays West Place Strategy* (Draft Strategy) prepared by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (the Department).

The Urban Taskforce is broadly supportive of the release of the draft Strategy and the 6 proposed “Big Moves” to help the precinct to realise its vision for “a *connected, vibrant and activated precinct – a new kind of Sydney urbanism that respects and celebrates Country, drawing on natural, cultural, maritime and industrial stories to shape an innovative and sustainable new place for living, recreation and working*”.

In particular the proposed directions to “deliver a range of housing” and “capitalise on the new Metro Station” are very much supported.

Notwithstanding this broad support, the Urban Taskforce is concerned the Draft Strategy may fall short on realising all available opportunities in terms of the precinct being “*connected, vibrant and activated*”. The **Urban Taskforce opposes the limited catchment of the Strategy and the proposed timing of its delivery**. We assert that the limited scope and proposed timing **misses a significant opportunity – to link the renewal of Bays West and surrounds to Blackwattle Bay to realise the full scope of public domain improvements and benefits**. Further it is logical that for the timing of delivery, for both the precincts across ‘The Bays’, to be together.

An integrated and broader strategic planning framework

Historically, the planning framework and governance for the harbourfront areas west of the CBD have been inconsistent, disjointed, unpredictable and fraught with political interference. As a result, for decades, nothing has happened at Bays West and surrounds. This must change.

The Urban Taskforce encourages the Government to be bold in the catchment and the approach in delivering a Strategy for the entire Bays area. Boundaries should seek to maximise development and public domain opportunities (and not be limited to arbitrary lines on a map or State Government controlled land).

The Structure Plan needs to connect with the Blackwattle Bay Precinct to realise and benefit from the \$20Billion investment in the Metro line, the imminent significant renewal of Blackwattle Bay, the development of the new Sydney Fish Market and the subsequent significant opportunities for public domain and access improvements including harbourfront linkages and crossings.

Logical extensions to the boundaries to be covered by the 'linked' Strategy include modest areas to the north and a much larger area to the south of the Bays. This wholistic and strategic approach will best place industry and Government to work together to realise The Bays area's full capacity for "living, recreation and working".

Accordingly, to provide a more integrated approach which reflects both the proximity and connection afforded by the new and existing Metro stations, re-development at Blackwattle Bay; and recreation, pedestrian linkages, housing and job opportunities, **Urban Taskforce recommends** the draft Strategy boundary be extended:

- North to include industrial zoned sites north of Robert St, Rozelle, and
- South of Rozelle, down to the Light Rail Route through Glebe and around to include/join with the Blackwattle Bay Precinct.

Accelerated precinct planning and rezoning

Development across the precinct should be brought forward to align with that occurring in Blackwattle Bay to enable the planning, funding and early delivery of considerable public domain benefits, particularly those near the Metro - way beyond what is currently anticipated. This would avoid the Government having a new Metro station completed with only modest public domain and community benefit evident, or worse, the perception of a white elephant investment that, once established, is difficult to overcome.

Urban Taskforce recommends precinct planning is accelerated with a view to aligning development delivery and public domain works to the timeline at Blackwattle Bay. An acceleration of development would enable early delivery of public benefits, a strong contribution to the making of a viable "place", and the simultaneous delivery of new commercial, community and residential built form before or as the new metro service is provided.

Further, in light of the logical opportunities for linkages east back to the renewal of Blackwattle Bay **Urban Taskforce recommends** that priority be given to the expeditious rezoning of development ready Rozelle Bay sub-precincts.

The scale of proposed development and feasibility

To realise the vision and deliver considerable public benefits will require considerable investment, suggesting significant development contributions from developers of key sites. The private sector investment needed to deliver this level of prescribed design and place outcome will be dependent on each of the key sites and sub-precincts having the right development controls.

Urban Taskforce recommends that in finalising the plans and controls for sites and sub-precincts, including infrastructure contributions, the feasibility of development is considered and tested.

Jobs and Housing Targets

The Draft Bay West Place Strategy, unlike other Place Strategies, does not include housing and job targets. Instead, an action within the Strategy is to develop these.

This is inconsistent with the leadership required by the private sector from Government. The development of a vision and detailed urban design outcome has progressed in isolation of the capacity for much needed new homes and jobs. Such an approach runs counter to the strategic planning framework set by the Greater Sydney Region Plan – A Metropolis of Three Cities and the Eastern City District Plan.

Urban Taskforce recommends the final Strategy is explicit in identifying jobs and housing targets for the Bays precinct.

Assessment Framework

The economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have given even greater impetus for clear planning frameworks and streamlined, certain development approval and planning processes. A fit for purpose rezoning and assessment process is critical to ensure projects can obtain consent and commence as quickly as possible.

Given that the renewal of Bays West is such a significant opportunity for Greater Sydney, and consistent with the suggested alignment of planning process for Blackwattle Bay, the **Urban Taskforce recommends** that the precinct not only rezoned via a (State-lead) State Significant Precinct Planning process, that DAs, subject to a certain capital investment value, are also classified as 'State Significant Development' with the Department of Planning and Minister for Planning being the consent authority.

This assessment pathway for the Bays will avoid confusion and ensure that the valuable economic opportunity presented is not squandered by local Councils.

Table 1 includes a summary of all Urban Taskforce recommendations

The Urban Taskforce is always willing to work closely with the Government to provide a development industry perspective on proposed policy and planning changes.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Forrest', with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Tom Forrest
Chief Executive Officer

Table 1:

Summary of Urban Taskforce recommendations

	Urban Taskforce recommendation
1.	To provide a more integrated approach which reflects both the proximity and connection afforded by the new and existing Metro stations, re-development at Blackwattle Bay; and recreation, pedestrian linkages, housing and job opportunities, Urban Taskforce recommends the draft Strategy boundary be extended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North to include industrial zoned sites north of Robert St, Rozelle, and • South of Rozelle, down to the Light Rail Route through Glebe and around to include/join with the Blackwattle Bay Precinct.
2.	Urban Taskforce recommends precinct planning is accelerated with a view to aligning development delivery and public domain works to the timeline at Blackwattle Bay.
3.	In light of the logical opportunities for linkages east back to the renewal of Blackwattle Bay Urban Taskforce recommends that priority be given to the expeditious rezoning of development ready Rozelle Bay sub-precincts.
4.	Urban Taskforce recommends that in finalising the plans and controls for sites and sub-precincts, including infrastructure contributions, the feasibility of development is considered and tested.
5.	Urban Taskforce recommends the final Strategy is explicit in identifying jobs and housing targets for the Bays precinct.
6.	Urban Taskforce recommends that the precinct not only rezoned via a (State-lead) State Significant Precinct Planning process, that DAs, subject to a certain capital investment value, are also classified as 'State Significant Development' with the Department of Planning and Minister for Planning being the consent authority.