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**PE6**                      **STRATHFIELD TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN - PROJECT METHODOLOGY, ENGAGEMENT AND PROBITY PLAN**

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

1. Endorse the Strathfield Town Centre Master Plan project plan and communication and engagement strategy (attachment 1) and that it be placed on the project website when available as a publicly accessible document.
2. Endorse the Strathfield Town Centre Master Plan Probity Plan as submitted.
3. Endorse the project title of 'Strathfield Town Centre: Our Place, Our Future' and associated logo for use on the project.
4. Approve the allocation of \$50,000 of funding at the next quarterly budget review to support the initial phases of the Strathfield Town Centre Masterplan preparation.
5. Request that the Project Team progress with preparation of the Strathfield Town Centre Masterplan and that a further briefing be brought to Council in accordance with the project plan.

## **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report is provided to offer an overview and seek endorsement of the below key documents. These documents will form key guidance in the overall delivery and governance of the project:

- Strathfield Town Centre Masterplan – Project Plan and Communications and Engagement Strategy
- Strathfield Town Centre Masterplan – Probity Plan
- Recommendation regarding project logo and project branding.

## **REPORT**

The Strathfield Town Centre Project Plan and Communication and Engagement Strategy has been prepared as a combined document recognising that the technical delivery of the Masterplan must be prepared in conjunction with community engagement and feedback. The hybrid approach has been developed to ensure that both streams of work are integrated and embedded in the project. The document includes:

- A major risk assessment,
- Stakeholder list and
- Outline of roles and responsibilities for the project team.

Separate to this a Probity and Governance Plan, the final draft of which has been prepared by probity advisers, Noble Shore.

## Masterplan – Project Methodology

The Masterplan needs to fulfill a number of objectives which span physical, economic and community-based themes. The term Master Plan is often focused on development and construction-based outcomes. In the context of the Strathfield Town Centre Masterplan we believe there needs to be a broader remit. It will still cover future built form and planning outcomes but will also encompass economic outcomes, place based and destination experiences and serve to foster collaboration between business, community and government groups.

The Masterplan methodology has been tailored to capture and consider these issues and provide Council and the community with a visionary document that is supported by a clear implementation plan.

The approach, scope and activities that are proposed under the Masterplan methodology will provide an evidence-based strategy that will touch upon these themes. Further, the Masterplan, will include an Implementation Strategy that will serve as a platform to deliver future public realm works, planning policy amendments and other initiatives to support the growth, prosperity, and user experience of the Strathfield Town Centre.

The key stages and tasks within the methodology include:

- **Stage 1 Background Review and Analysis:**

This stage will focus on establishing strategic policy alignment for the project and undertaking data gathering to understanding the dynamics and function of the town centre:

- Task 1 Background Document Review
- Task 2 SWOT Analysis

The Deliverable for Stage 1 will be an issues and options paper that will accompany the Community Vision and Principles. It will outline the focus areas for the masterplan. This document will be returned to Council for endorsement before being placed on public exhibition.

- **Stage 2: Master Plan Preparation**

Using the evidence base and community vision the project team will progress the master plan through a series of potential scenarios to arrive at a preferred strategy. This stage will include a mid-point community check in to outline the big moves for the Masterplan.

- Task 1 Council Visioning Workshop
- Task 2 Ideas testing and prioritisation.
- Task 3 Master Plan options and scenarios
- Task 4 Technical Studies
- Task 5 Refined Place Strategy and 'Big Moves'

The preliminary Place Strategy and Big Moves will be returned to Council for endorsement before being placed on public exhibition.

- **Stage 3: Draft Master Plan & Adoption**

Following consultation on the Big Moves, feedback received will be used to refine the Masterplan and move forward for adoption. It is expected that the Masterplan will be a highly visual and engaging document, supported with high quality graphics.

- Task 6 Option Refinement and Draft Masterplan preparation.
- Task 7 Master Plan adoption following public consultation.

The Draft Masterplan will be presented to Council for endorsement to proceed to public exhibition. A

consultation report will be provided to Council and resolution sought to adopt the final Masterplan.

- **Stage 4: Post Masterplan Adoption:**

It is anticipated that amendments to the Strathfield Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plan will arise from the Masterplan. A further report will be provided to Council seeking endorsement of a planning proposal for progression to Gateway determination with NSW Government.

- Task 8 Planning Proposal for SLEP Amendments
- Task 9 Draft Amendments to SDCP
- Task 10 Council report seeking endorsement of SLEP and SDCP amendments

As outlined below, throughout the technical delivery of the Masterplan there will be overlapping community consultation and engagement activities.

### **Communications and Engagement Plan**

It is recognised that there needs to be a strong focus on community engagement early within the project. As will be outlined it is proposed to undertake community, user and stakeholder engagement early in order to establish a community-based vision and principles. These will be used to guide and inform the direction of the Masterplan as it is progressed, combined with a midway check-in with the community to test the key ideas that are developed to support the implementation of the Masterplan.

Throughout the project there is a focus on making as much information as possible available to the community. To support this a website project page will be established outlining the project, providing background resources, information and ability to give live feedback.

This in turn will be supported by newsletter information, social media campaigns, face to face community sessions, pop up information stalls and other activities to ensure a broad section of the community are engaged on the project. The key stages and tasks in the communication and engagement plan include:

- **Stage 1: Understanding the issues and Setting the Vision.**

The purpose of this phase of the engagement process would be to gather data from a cross section of the community regarding their experiences and impressions of the town centre.

- Task 1: Project Branding and Launch
- Task 2: Create web-based project information
- Task 3: Visitor, user, and community survey via online survey, pop up events and face to face survey
- Task 4: Stakeholder Meetings with key landowner, community groups and external stakeholders.

The findings from the community stakeholder events will be used to develop a community-based vision and principles for the Masterplan. This will be a community-based statement as to the future outcome and aspiration for the town centre. This document will be presented to Council for endorsement before being placed on public exhibition.

- **Stage 2: Masterplan preparation and testing**

This focus would be on testing the key moves that emerge from the Masterplan process and demonstrating that they relate to the Community Vision and Principles

- Task 1 Council Vision Workshop would be a Council and invited attendees to establish the level of ambition and test outcomes for the project.

- Task 2 Refined place strategy – the big moves check in community consultation
- Task 3 Public Exhibition of draft Masterplan

Throughout the project, community engagement activities will be recorded, documented and presented to Council in the form of a consultation report.

### **Probity Plan**

To support the delivery of the Masterplan from a probity perspective, Noble Shore have been engaged to provide independent advice to this regard. The probity plan and project plan (Attachment 2) have reviewed and provided recommendations made in relation to appropriate methodology and probity steps.

In terms of project governance, the plan steps out a framework that is designed to support the following aims for the project:

1. Build a common sense of ownership of the project between all stakeholders.
2. Create an environment of trust between the dedicated Council Steering Committee, Project team, the Reference Group, the Council, and the wider stakeholder community.
3. Set out lines of responsibility and accountability for the delivery of the project.
4. Support the Project Team to deliver the required outcomes by providing resources, giving direction, and providing timely decision making.
5. Provide a structure for issue resolution.
6. Set out the process by which independent expert advice is procured, as required.
7. Enable the appropriate retention, storage, and dissemination of information by reporting to stakeholders so that they can effectively fulfill their roles; and
8. Provide a framework for project disclosures and communication channels.

The plan outlines the general probity requirements, communication protocols and actions required if a perceived or actual conflict of interest arises.

### **Project Branding and Logo**

To support the overall community recognition and brand association with the Master Plan, it is recommended that a project logo and branding tag line be adopted for the project. This can be used to brand associated engagement collateral and create an association between Council, the Masterplan, and future outcomes for the project.

To this end it is recommended that 'Strathfield Town Centre: Our Place, Our Future' be adopted and the circulate 'S' motif be incorporated as the project logo. (Refer Attachment 3).

### **Project Timeline**

A project timeline has been developed and it is expected to take 18 months to complete, commencing in the first quarter of 2024. The program has been broken down to provide community-based touch points throughout. This is to ensure that there are clear and externally visible outcomes that demonstrate progression on the Master Plan. These steps would include:

- Community Vision and Principles Document – within the first 6 months – May/June 2024

- Strathfield Town Centre Master Plan – Big Moves Document – at approximately 12 months – October / November 2024
- Draft Strathfield Town Centre Master Plan – at approximately 18 months April / May 2025.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Proposed Expenditure: \$50,000 for expenditure during FY23/24

To support the early phases of the project a funding amount of \$50,000 in FY23/24 is required to support:

- Communication and engagement activities
- Probity and governance advice
- Early technical advice and background studies.

It is anticipated that some external consultant support will be required for the project, and this will be to respond to the technical aspects of the Master Plan. This will be scoped following the completion of the initial background study and community vision. It is expected that additional expenditure will occur in the next financial year (FY24/25).

Options are being considered to fund the additional studies including internal budgets and external grant funding.

## ATTACHMENTS

1. Strathfield Town Centre Masterplan - Project Plan and Communication and Engagement Strategy - *Circulated in Attachments document*
2. Strathfield Town Centre Masterplan Probity Plan - *Circulated in Attachments document*
3. Strathfield Town Centre Masterplan Project Branding and Logo - *Circulated in Attachments document*