

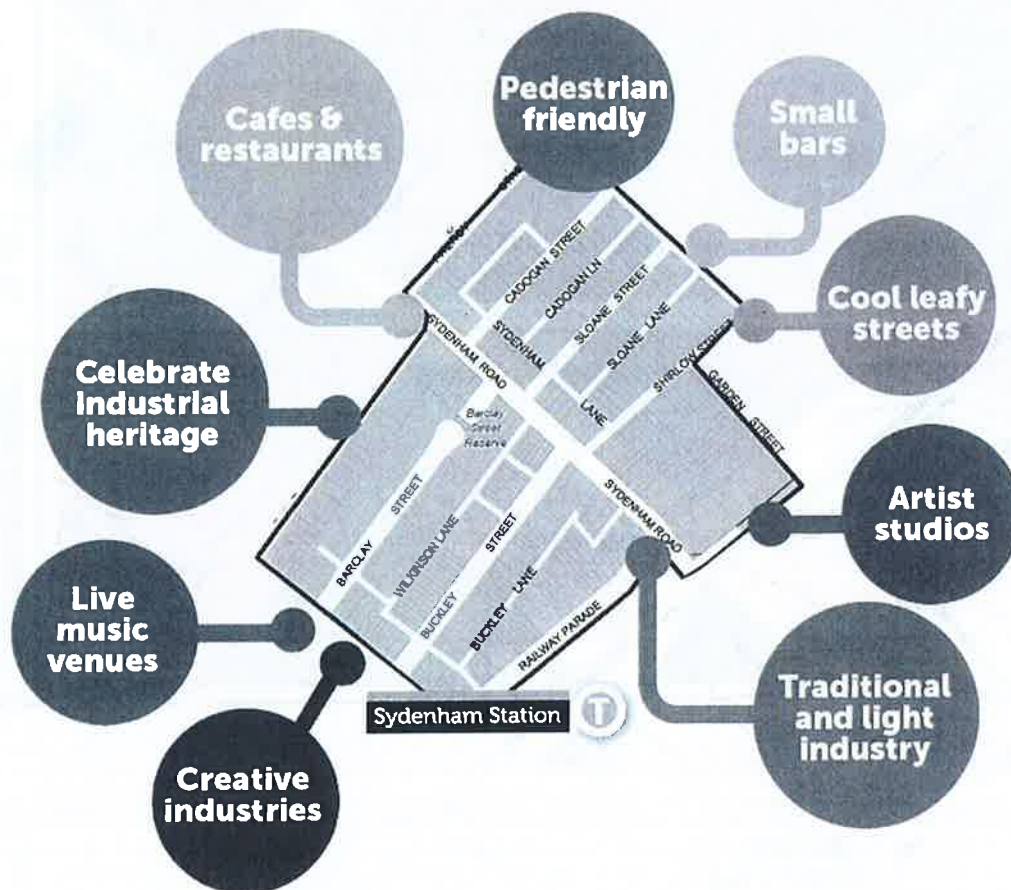


INNER WEST COUNCIL

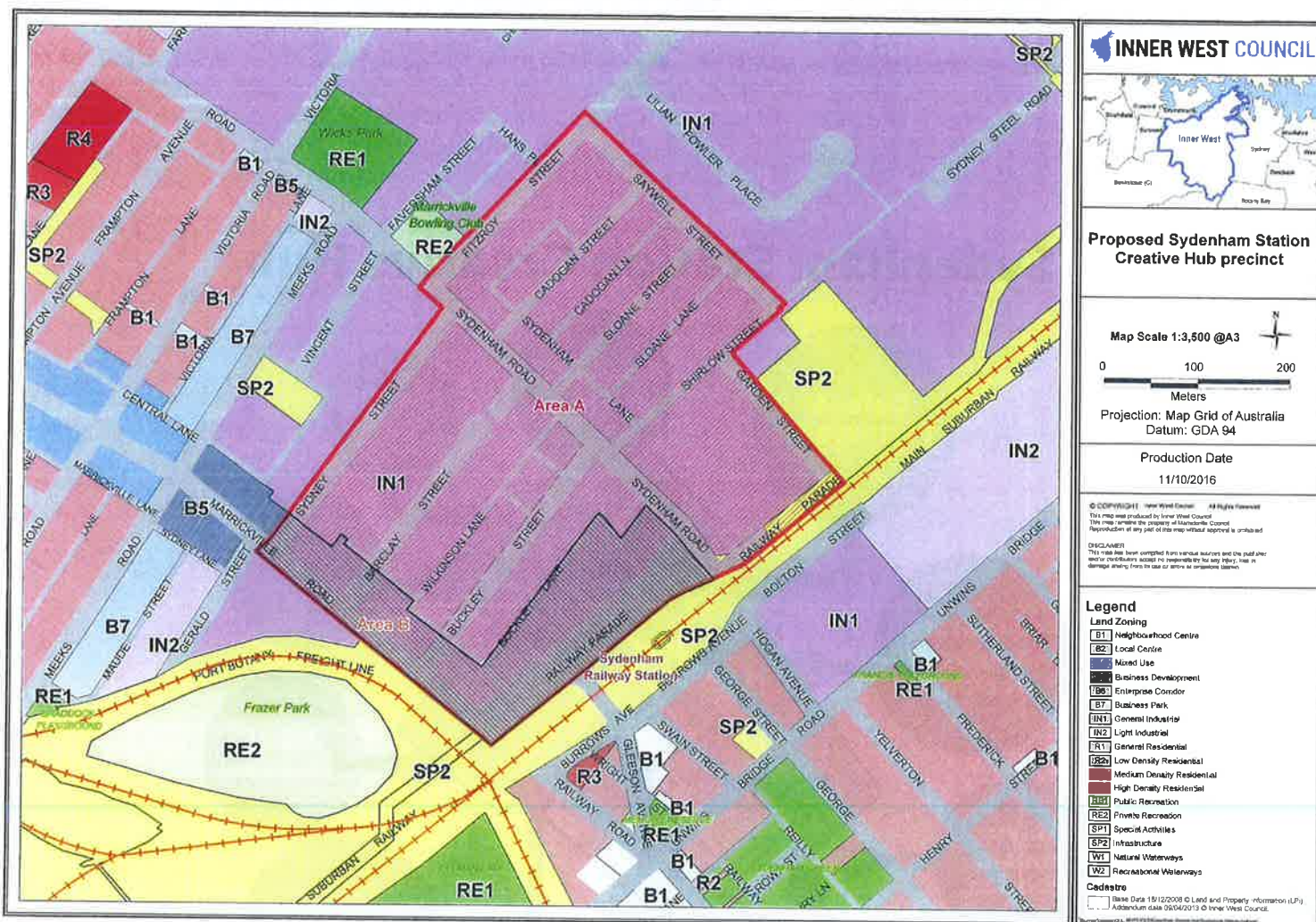
SYDENHAM STATION CREATIVE HUB

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

Sydenham Station Creative Hub



October 2016



Background

The (former) Marrickville Council developed a vision for the evolution of the Sydenham Station industrial lands over time into the Sydenham Station Creative Hub - an entertainment and employment space where live music venues, small bars, restaurants and cafes thrive alongside traditional and creative industries.

In phase one of the project Council considered whether to rezone land around Sydenham Station from IN1 to Light Industrial as a pre-requisite to the long-term vision of a creative hub.

Purpose

The purpose of the engagement was to determine stakeholder support for the vision, and obtain feedback on the boundaries of the precinct, which along with technical assessments would enable Council to decide whether to progress to the development of a planning proposal to rezone the land within the precinct accordingly.

Project stages

Initial engagement (non-statutory) was undertaken in two stages.

1. Broad community engagement to inform and obtain feedback via a survey and interactive map hosted Council's (then) *Your Say Marrickville* website – 12 Apr-17 May 2016
2. Additional targeted stakeholder engagement (business operators and landowners in the precinct), to provide an opportunity for one-on-one meetings with relevant Council staff to answer questions about specific properties within the precinct. Business operators and landowners were invited to make submissions directly to Council – August 2016.

Stakeholders

Stakeholders included:

- Business operators and landowners in the precinct
- Local residents in areas surrounding the precinct
- Business operators in areas surrounding the precinct
- Commuters
- Creative industry business operators
- Live Music reference group and industry contacts
- General community

Information provided

Information available to stakeholders included

- Map of the precinct
- Relevant Council business papers
- Future Cities Study Tour background information
- Social impact assessment report (undertaken during the stage one engagement)
- FAQs
- Online Q&A tool.

Promotion of engagement

The first stage engagement was promoted through:

- A letter mailed to all business operators and landowners in the precinct
- A flyer distributed to approximately 8,000 homes and businesses in the area around the precinct
- Emails to live music, and creative industry contacts
- Media releases
- Social media
- Council's e-news
- Your Say Marrickville e-news

The second stage engagement was promoted through:

- A letter mailed to all business operators and landowners in the precinct

Engagement questions

The survey was hosted on Council's online engagement hub, *Your Say Marrickville*. Four questions were asked:

- What are your thoughts on the vision for Sydenham Station Creative Hub? What do you love or hate about the concept?
- The map shows which streets we think should be in the Sydenham Station Creative Hub. What are your thoughts on the streets that make up the hub? What would you change, if anything?
- The first step in creating the vision for Sydenham Station Creative Hub is rezoning the land. Do you have any comments on the rezoning proposal? Refer to the FAQs for more detail if necessary.
- Do you have any further comments?

Participants were also able to make comments via a pin on an interactive map, or ask a question and have it answered by engagement staff on the Q&A tool.

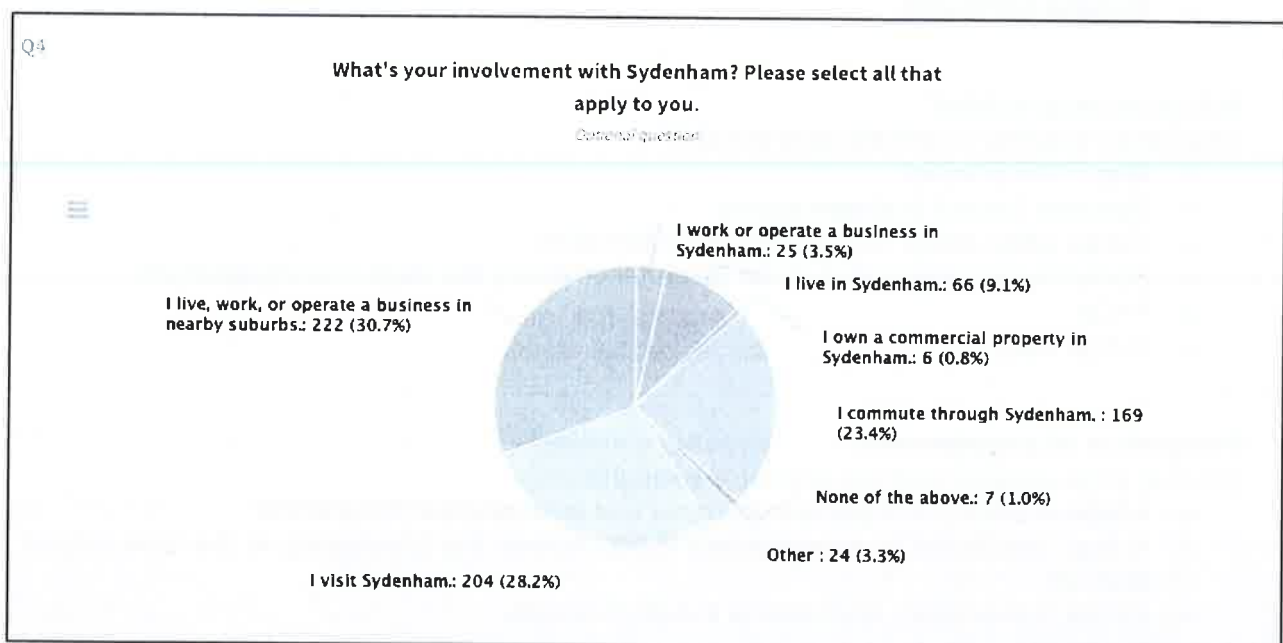
Participants were also asked to select a description for their connection to the Sydenham Station precinct.

Analysis of responses

ONLINE VIA YOUR SAY MARRICKVILLE

During the first engagement stage, 3,674 visitors clicked on the project page, of whom 1,528 downloaded a document or other information, and 375 were actively engaged either by the survey (374), through the Q&A tool (10) or via a submission on the interactive map (7).

Approximately 60% of respondents lived, worked or operated a business in nearby suburbs, or visited the area, while nearly a quarter commuted through Sydenham Station.



Question responses

1. What are your thoughts on the vision for Sydenham Station Creative Hub? What do you love or hate about the concept?

There were 358 responses to this question. The vast majority of respondents (over 90%) were supportive, with seven respondents opposed. A minority had mixed feedback.

Respondents were mostly positive about the concept, the idea of building on the creativity that is already in the area, of revitalising the precinct, support for arts and live music, the proximity to transport, the opportunity for greening, the improvement to pedestrian safety, the potential positive impact on Sydney's cultural life.

Concerns included increased congestion, pedestrian safety, parking, potential for increased rents that could drive out existing creative businesses and venues, increased development nearby, loss of employment lands, the impact on existing businesses, particularly access for loading and pedestrian conflicts, and concern that residential development may result.

Indicative comments include:

"It will bring many new businesses and cultural activities to the area. Great idea."

"It's getting increasingly difficult to find affordable art space to work in the inner west - so the Sydenham area is ideal. Close to the station is perfect and the flight path noise works well with events and music. A precinct would also allow greater creative collaboration which is always hugely beneficial for a city's wider culture and innovation."

"Love it! A perfect way to support local artists, activate the area and create vibrancy. The precinct is perfectly located in proximity to a major transit hub, and makes good use of aircraft affected land."

"It's perfect for the future of manufacturing and music."

"Love it. Especially the greening, traffic calming, pedestrian priority and attracting more music venues. Sydenham should be the place the whole of Sydney comes to see live music..."

"My only concern is that current artists who are there are pushed out due to the new development and increase in rents"

"I love the idea of nurturing live music in the city, while still retaining industrial use. Sydenham is ideally placed between Newtown and Marrickville to be a creative and industrial hub in the inner west. Retaining industrial usage is important, as these businesses have been squeezed out of similar areas in the city that have been gentrified"

"I think it's a good idea although it gives me major concerns that it will lead to the changing in residential zoning to the residential areas around it. "

"Great idea, love it. Will bring lots of small business and vibrancy to Marrickville/Sydenham, building on existing trends for live music and art in the area while keeping the important inner Sydney industrial facilities."

"The whole concept is impracticable & will have a serious effect on the viability of many of the businesses in the area. There already is a severe shortage of industrial land in the south of Sydney to service the massive expansion of apartments in the area."

"All you are doing is meddling in something that as you have stated in your introduction is already working very well, so leave it alone. If you make pedestrian access and plant trees in industrial allies that were originally designed for horses and carts you are going to shut down numerous businesses and dramatically increase vacancy rates. You need to

improve the access for heavy vehicles so these businesses can increase distribution networks and grow."

2. The map shows which streets we think should be in the Sydenham Station Creative Hub. What are your thoughts on the streets that make up the hub? What would you change, if anything?

There were 261 responses that related to the boundaries of the precinct. Of these 70% were supportive of the proposed boundaries, 26% supported expansion (to Victoria Road, to Marrickville Metro/Enmore/Factory Theatre, to Marrickville Road, and to the other side of the railway station). Five respondents preferred relocation, and three preferred a reduction in the precinct boundaries. Indicative comments include:

"Wouldn't change a thing. It uses the space around Sydenham station really well. "

"I'd push this over the railway line/bridge into neighbouring Sydenham and Tempe which seem to be neglected suburbs relative to the attention that the suburb of Marrickville receives"

"No I think this is the right area to be focusing on. Keeping it all within walking distance of the station and creating a 'hub'-like space is the best way to be doing this. "

"No this is a good area as low housing so less people to disturb with the noise if there is live venues. We all know how the Inner city Families love to live in the City but expect the quiet of the Suburbs. So best not to have open up for complaints which has shut down so much of this city "

"Seem about right. There's always a danger of spreading these ideas too thin. The delineation of a compact, coherent, walkable precinct with a diversity of entertainment and food/drink venues will also help in recognition by, and attractiveness to non-local users."

"I would really like the Creative Hub to be expanded to include the area around Marrickville Public School. This would create an amazing link between local creativity and education. I hope there is potential for the rezoning to be expanded should the demand increase in the future. "

"I strongly recommend that the hub precinct be extended up to include Faversham Street. This would capture and apply the intent of this area and zoning to the Marrickville bowling club and the Red Rattler. These are currently well established businesses that truly match the intent of this initiative "

"There are some live music, creative and food manufacturing premises in nearby streets which would contribute to the vision of the precinct. Even if these streets were not included in the rezoning, it would be beneficial to include these streets when undertaking public domain works or promoting the precinct."

"Needs to extend all the way to Victoria St, as there are many venues and potential venues not captured by the zone above."

"I would stop prescribing where people choose to Be Creative."

"2044 feels like the forgotten / isolated part of the council area."

"It's a considerable size and development of this kind would surely take a long time, so I'm not sure it needs to be so big - the danger is that enclaves form at opposite ends of the district and the central area remains unchanged, As you would know there are already small bars and live venues at the Sydenham station end of the area."

Q3. The first step in creating the vision for Sydenham Station Creative Hub is rezoning the land. Do you have any comments on the rezoning proposal? Refer to the FAQs for more detail if necessary.

There were 180 responses that related to rezoning of the precinct. Of these approximately 60% were supportive of the rezoning proposal, 30% made general comments, most of which expressed concern about potential residential development in the precinct or the potential negative impacts on existing businesses, ten were opposed and two suggested amendments to protect venues from noise complaints, and protect existing businesses. Indicative comments include:

"As long as existing businesses aren't affected then the proposal looks to only benefit the area."

"Are there any concessions available to the existing general industry businesses? Light industrial land is usually more expensive than general industry land and the costs may force existing businesses out."

"The rezoning proposal is the right one. Existing use conditions are essential - the light industrial character of the area is its DNA. If that gets lost the next thing is someone will come along and build apartment towers."

"Sounds great small bars and restaurants as opposed to large venues which can attract a negative element and drinking and violence. Love it."

"Main concern is that the existing factories are not pushed out of the area."

"Rezoning is needed. This area will become derelict if rezoning doesn't take place. I want to see rezoning that can enhance people's experiences of living close to the city not just for residential development, which is becoming more prevalent. People need areas that promote community and self-expression so a cultural hub is a great idea."

"I would just reiterate that whatever the zoning changes, I would not want to de-incentivize the businesses (e.g. food/produce/speciality cheese-small goods/bakery/light industrial that are already in the area)."

"I'm good with any plan that uses the area for the cultural benefit of all residents and has more imagination and creativity than simply building more apartments. I think this is a great idea, really good to see council actually trying to do something for live music rather than shutting venues down."

"As long as its not rezoned as residential."

"I think it is a good idea to phase out the freight transport facilities, general industries and vehicle body repair workshops. The noise and emissions of these industries currently make the area unwelcoming and unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists."

"The area around Sydenham road always made me nervous and i feel pretty unsafe walking through there at night. Rezoning this will make more foot traffic and will be brighter with more people which makes this okay with me!"

"I don't want to see soulless 4+ storey apartments which will destroy industrial character of area."

Q4. Do you have any further comments?

An additional 218 comments were made, many of which expressed general support and some opposition. Comments ranged from greening of the area, safety, residential development, transport and traffic, retention of industrial character, concern about rent and property values, and concern about protecting traditional industries.

Interactive map responses

The following comments related to specific locations on the map, marked with a digital pin by participants.

This area is already known to street artists. I think more awareness of this part of Sydenham should be made.

This area could be closed to traffic and become pedestrian only allowing outdoor dining, outdoor live music, event space, art space etc. It is perfect for live music as it is not very close to residential areas. Adding trees and art would make the space inviting and versatile. Given the close proximity to Sydenham station, people would travel to this location which would be great for the economy. As long as it is safe and is not a spot for late night drinking, it could be a very family friendly spot for everyone to enjoy.

The new pedestrian only King St. This area be home to cafes, bars, restaurants and boutique shops. Cycle only lanes would allow bike riders easy and safe access.

The Marrickville LGA has a high proportion of dog owners. For anyone who is a dog owner, dogs are equal members of the family. When the family goes out together, they often bring their dogs along, however have to tie them outside any venue they enter. It would be great to see some dog friendly venues where people and their dogs can enter and enjoy the activities together.

Open up the area around this waterhole to the public. Beautify the area and make it a 'destination' within Marrickville. Tell the story of its living history. Build cafes/bars overlooking the water. Perhaps create water-based artworks or even water sports e.g. paddling, fishing?

Planting & vegetation important to screen train noise, reduce pollution, provide shade and improve nature corridors.

Community Garden is another option... a place for locals to plant, cafes to grow local ingredients and tying into local history.

Council identified the potential of Sydenham Station industrial lands as a great place to nurture live music in its Live Music Action Plan. But Council also identified the Victoria Road precinct as an already thriving live music, performance and artists' area.

There are literally 100s of artists whose studios and performance spaces thrive in the Victoria Road precinct. There may already be at least one successful music venue operating in the Sydenham area but there are dozens operating in the Victoria Road precinct. The Victoria Road precinct warehouse parties are known throughout Sydney, from Bondi to Bankstown, and amongst young people and those who follow the music culture.

You can't "force" creative industries. They grow organically and they have been and are still growing and thriving in the Victoria Road precinct. If you don't recognise this and capitulate to developers' rezoning demands, the creatives, artists, musicians, boutique breweries and food industries will be lost to Marrickville forever, as will our industrial heritage.

- THIS REPORT INCLUDED ~~THE~~ COPIES OF SUBMISSIONS WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN
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