

17 September 2009

Mr Joel Northcott
Urban Renewal Brisbane
City Planning Branch
City Planning & Sustainability Division
Brisbane City Council
GPO Box 1434
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Dear Joel,

SOUTH BRISBANE RIVERSIDE RENEWAL STRATEGY

Business South Bank (BSB) is pleased to offer its comments on the final draft of the South Brisbane Riverside Renewal Strategy (SBRRS) as part of Brisbane City Council's public feedback process.

We understand that this is the final strategy to be developed before incorporation into the town plan.

Overall Principles

BSB supports BCC's vision for the area.

BSB would particularly like to support BCC's aim 'to avoid homogeneity', however BSB has concerns that much of the Strategy, specifically relating to Precinct 4, is forcing the amalgamation of sites which may encourage CBD-type single towers.

Preservation of character will be achieved through the mix of high and low rise built form.

BSB encourages BCC to incorporate the CitySmart goals and Ecologically Sustainable Development principles as the guidebook for new development in the precincts.

BSB supports and commends Council for its proposed Catalyst Projects, but believes timeframes need to be attributed to these to ensure they are committed to.

Movement & Access

BSB supports the introduction of the CityGlider service; however, as mentioned in our February 2008 response, we would recommend an increase in public transport particularly in Precinct 4.

Additionally, we would recommend a bus loop service that services the north – south route of the peninsular.

The City Cat service to South Bank terminal is a great asset to the precinct, however during week day mornings and afternoons, the service is geared towards the CBD, and does not take into consideration the current (and future) working population in the South Bank area.

BSB would welcome an additional CityCat stop at Victoria Street, which would provide much needed additional public transport access to this isolated area.

BSB is supportive of the CityCycle Bike Hire Scheme, and believes it will be well utilised by businesses in the area, and therefore it is disappointing to see that only four CityCycle bike stations have been allocated in the Strategy area (all within West End).

Melbourne Street is a major impediment to the connectivity between the precincts, and in particular the corner of Grey and Melbourne Streets. Movement and access is greatly restricted at this important junction due to its current configuration.

Public Realm and Green Space

BSB supports BCC's view that public realm needs to be the focus of the strategy "as visible evidence of character and community".

One of the area's biggest opportunities to improve public realm and green space is the maximisation of Musgrave Park. We note that the Strategy simply notes Musgrave Park is "with State Government". Given it is such a big asset to the area, this simplistic explanation is not sufficient.

BCC should also consider the development of more civic spaces like King George Square, not just parks.

BSB supports the Council's plans to regain access to the Kurilpa reach of the river.

The Strategy area contains many tourism/educational facilities which are visited by bus charter companies – and yet there are limited bus parking and layover facilities.

BSB believes some of the industrial space needs to be maintained to ensure the entire character of the area is not lost. The industrial space can be redesigned for other uses, as in the case of the Refinery in New Farm. One particular industrial space that needs to be preserved is the indoor sports stadium on Ferry Road.

Land Uses and Activity

BSB strongly recommends the introduction of mixed use developments throughout all of the precincts.

Built Form

The Strategy should encourage quality and diverse architectural design.

Owners should be encouraged to share resources including driveways, easements, bins, sprinklers etc.

Built form should be determined by sustainability.

The plan does not address the issue of setbacks.

Additionally, further consideration needs to be given to the end user when considering the density and site coverage percentage.

Social Infrastructure and Community Benefit

The increase in residential and commercial density will lead to an increased demand for public services including schools, child care, grocery outlets, banks, health care and police stations. Suitable locations for suburban centres need to be identified.

BSB supports BCC's recommendation for the social infrastructure required. Additionally, as the future trend of apartment living indicates that 'families' will be an increasing market, BSB would recommend the list be expanded to include child-friendly infrastructure.

Heritage and Character

BSB supports BCC's comments.

Flooding & Infrastructure

BSB supports BCC's comments.

Environmental Sustainability

BSB would like to reintroduce the heading of '**Environmental Sustainability**' that was originally included in the Kurilpa Structure Plan.

BSB believes BCC's initiatives in relation to sustainability need to be interwoven into the Strategy. There is no mention of the CitySmart objectives in the document – these should be incorporated and interpreted in the plan.

The Strategy should ensure developers provide the most energy, water and resource efficient buildings.

As per our March 2009 correspondence, we will focus our comments on Precincts 1, 2, 4 as our prime areas of interest.

BSB is a strong supporter of BCC's CitySmart program. BSB's goal to become Australia's most sustainable business precinct will directly support the aim of CitySmart to:

- reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 10 tonnes per household per year by 2012; and
- make Brisbane carbon neutral by 2026.

BSB recommends that the SBRRS be used as the catalyst for change in planning attitudes. By applying the CitySmart objectives and the principles of ecologically sustainable development (ESD) as the guiding principles for new development in the area, BCC and the South Bank precinct could set new benchmarks for modern planning.

Rather than seek to achieve built form outcomes solely through the setting down of specific lot sizes and plot ratios, the requirement for ESD principles to determine a building's design or a Development Approval application should lead to outcomes specific to a new, world city.

The Lord Mayor has stated that Green Heart CitySmart is about dealing with climate change by offering residents and businesses practical and affordable ways to reduce their environmental footprint by:

- working with the community to achieve a “house by house, street by street and suburb by suburb” climate action that will help Brisbane become the most ecologically diverse and sustainable city in Australia; and
- helping residents and businesses adopt practical and affordable ways to reduce carbon emissions, while becoming more energy and water efficient.

There will be no better opportunity to entrench those goals into a planning vision than through the SBRRS. BSB encourages BCC to strongly reference the CitySmart campaign and its principles in the final version of the SBRRS and the new neighbourhood plans.

Precinct 1 – South Brisbane Reach

We agree that it is important to improve the link via Russell Street under the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre to South Bank Parklands; however it is **critical** that the intersection of Melbourne and Grey Streets be improved.

Not only does this intersection act as a ‘significant barrier to good pedestrian connectivity’, it is, quite simply, a dangerous intersection which has contributed to several deaths.

The (stalled) joint initiative between South Bank Corporation and Brisbane City Council, ‘the Grey Street Boulevard’ needs to be incorporated into the Strategy.

Precinct 1D/2B would make an appropriate location for a suburban centre, given its proximity to the public transport nodes.

Precinct 2 – Musgrave

Activating the park and the space around the park is critical. The possibility of small commercial/ retail development either publicly owned, or on a PPP arrangement should be investigated.

The 2B area adjacent to the South Bank train station should be considered for more height (in ratio to site coverage) to support TOD principles.

Precinct 4 – Kurilpa

BSB supports the higher density allocation of Precinct 4, but offers the following comments.

When approving 30 storey buildings it is important to question the following:

- How does the building meet the street?
- Can the road cope?
- Does the public realm support it?
- Is there public transport to suit?

As mentioned above, BSB has some concerns that the Strategy ‘forces’ the amalgamation of sites to achieve heights – and that this forced amalgamation may lead to a loss of character of the area.

The Precinct may become ‘sterile’ and a clone of the CBD.

There is a disincentive for smaller lots and residential development.

Precinct 4 is critical as it links the cultural precinct with the higher density residential area of 5A/5B and therefore it is imperative that some residential components exist in Precinct 4.

BSB strongly recommends buildings be mixed use to avoid the 'North Sydney' scenario, ie dead at nights and weekends. Mixed use developments help to provide 'eyes on the street', 24 hours a day.

There should be no distinction that a residential building be limited to six storeys and a commercial building be 12 storey (in the case of <999m² and every case thereafter). Residential heights should be at least comparable to commercial given commercial floor to ceiling heights are greater by approximately 15% - 20%

We trust the above comments have been of assistance. We look forward to working with Council in achieving the best outcomes for this very exciting and developing area.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Barton Green', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Barton Green
Chair