



Excellence in Renewal



THE MASTER PLAN - OCTOBER 2000

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In January 2000, EPRA became the responsible authority for the redevelopment of the land above and adjacent to the Graham Farmer tunnel, known as Northbridge, The Project. Since then EPRA has undertaken the following key planning and design tasks:

- a review of previous proposals;
- the preparation of an initial concept plan for the project area;
- a comprehensive community consultation program;
- extension of the East Perth Redevelopment Scheme across the Northbridge Project area;
- the preparation of a master plan and associated documentation;
- acquisition of the land owned by the Western Australian Planning Commission and Main Roads Western Australia within the project area; and
- the consideration of a number of important issues including traffic, parking, heritage, tunnel covenants, infrastructure provision and public housing.

Objectives

Inner city redevelopment is a complex process, and involves finding and achieving a balanced result that takes into account many social, economic and environmental requirements.

EPRA's primary objective is to efficiently and effectively redevelop the land within the project area.

Specifically, the project's objectives are to:

- undertake the renewal of land affected by the Graham Farmer Freeway;
- enhance and protect the heritage and cultural values of the area;
- optimise returns; and
- provide land and property redevelopment opportunities.

Consultation

Following an assessment and review of the prevailing land market, current land uses and urban form, a concept plan was prepared and released for community comment between April and July 2000.

Open days, the production and widespread distribution of printed material, presentations to both community and government groups, and a presence at a



The Project area

community information office were all used to introduce the concept plan to as many interested people as possible. At the close of the consultation period 33 written submissions were received, six of them from State or Local Government agencies.

The Master Plan

Of the submissions received, some qualified their support for the project with concerns about issues such as traffic, streetscape design and heritage. EPRA, in formulating the master plan, has taken these concerns into consideration.

The master plan provides greater detail regarding the completed built environment, the location of specific public facilities (car parks, public open space), the proposed subdivision, the buildings to be retained and upgraded, and the resolution of a number of associated issues such as heritage, traffic, parking and the redevelopment scheme and policies. A summary of the key issues follows.

Land Use

The master plan provides for approximately 52 per cent of the land being available for residential and mixed-use residential/commercial purposes, 16 per cent for commercial purposes, 9 per cent for new roads and accessways, 4.5 per cent for car parking, in excess of 11 per cent for public open space, and the existing private properties forming the remaining 7 per cent of land.

The project area has been divided into five distinct planning precincts.

1. The Russell Square Precinct at the western end of the project area is to be predominantly residential with mixed-use buildings along Newcastle Street.
2. The Lake Street Precinct incorporates residential sites, but is essentially a commercial precinct that incorporates a large public car park. Plans for this precinct recognise and build on the developing commercial/entertainment nature of both Aberdeen and William Streets.
3. The Museum Street Precinct will be predominantly mixed-use with a significant residential component, and provides for the growth of both the St John's Church and Central TAFE should the need arise.
4. The Lindsay Street Precinct uses the high land and aesthetic values of Lindsay

and Money streets for predominantly residential purposes. Buildings fronting Newcastle Street would be commercial and mixed-use in nature.

5. The Parry Street Precinct at the eastern end of the project area will reinforce the existing residential streetscape, and includes new mixed-use infill buildings along Newcastle Street.

Streetscape and Parks

The project includes the creation of several new public open spaces in Northbridge, and the revitalisation of existing streets that traverse the area. The streetscape design provides a balance that ensures safe and easy access by workers, visitors and residents to facilities in the project area, whilst also establishing an environment in balance with current and planned future activities.

Aberdeen Street will become an important east/west route for cyclists, pedestrians and public transport. The street's new role will be emphasised with a double avenue of trees, improved pavements, safer pedestrian crossings and better delineation of parking, while still accommodating two lanes of traffic.

Newcastle Street is seen as a commercial/mixed-use boulevard. Redevelopment of the streetscape will encourage new business and residential activity. Newcastle Street will be narrowed to two lanes with embayed parking on each side.

Public open space has been located strategically across the project area from west to east:

- Piazza Nanni on Fitzgerald Street at the western tunnel entrance (completed);
- Russell Square on Aberdeen Street between Shenton and Parker streets;
- Lake Street Plateia (Plateia being the Greek word for plaza or broad street, pronounced 'Plat-ee-a') on Lake Street between Aberdeen and Newcastle streets (new);
- Museum Street Precinct Park opposite Central TAFE on Aberdeen Street (new); and
- Weld Square bounded by Parry, Stirling, Newcastle and Beaufort streets.

Each of the new public spaces proposed for the redevelopment would provide appropriate and accessible settings for a range of community activities.



Heritage

EPRA consulted with the Heritage Council of Western Australia in preparing a brief to conduct a heritage study of the project area.

Specialist heritage architects were subsequently commissioned to undertake the study and provide an analysis of relevant heritage issues, with particular reference to the State Government Property Disposal Policy.

There are 88 EPRA owned buildings within the project area. Forty-six of these buildings are to be retained, including all of the buildings within the 'exceptional' and 'considerable' significance categories and many of those within the 'some' significance category. Some key buildings will be upgraded to form an integral part of the project. For example, the cottages at 56 to 66 Aberdeen Street, which are of State Heritage significance, are currently being upgraded and will eventually be sold with heritage agreements in place. Some 42 other buildings are to be removed, all of which fall into the 'some', 'little' or 'none' significance categories.

The report also identifies a number of heritage precincts (areas of cultural heritage significance) within the project area: Aberdeen Street Precinct, Parry Street Precinct and Lindsay Street Precinct.

Traffic

EPRA believes that controlling traffic flow within the project area is essential to the project's success. Because of this, the following changes will be made to the project's road system.

- *Narrowing the road width of Newcastle Street to two lanes and creating embayed parking.* This will allow for new street tree planting and traffic calming of the street environment, improvements that will encourage new uses such as residential development on Newcastle Street. The reduction to a single lane in each direction on Newcastle Street east of Fitzgerald Street can be supported, provided that interruptions to the through-traffic flow are minimised through appropriate design.
- *Narrowing the road width of Aberdeen Street and creating embayed parking.* This will improve the pedestrian environment, slow traffic speeds and deter unnecessary traffic movements through the area.
- *Encouraging the use of public transport throughout the project area.*

All proposals for streetscaping will take the location of bus stops into account to ensure they are accessible and user friendly. The CAT bus system will continue to operate in the area.

- *Creating a more pedestrian and cyclist friendly environment in the project area.* Plans for defined bikeways and appropriate facilities will encourage cycling throughout the area.

Parking

The medium to long-term strategy involves the development of a 550-600 bay car park north of the Aberdeen Hotel. The car park will be located on Newcastle Street and supported by a mixed-use development fronting the street.

This large multi-storey car park is central to the commercial demands of Northbridge, including Central TAFE, and will draw vehicular traffic from both streets. Vehicle exits will be to Newcastle Street only. Pedestrian traffic access to and from the car park will be provided by two, ten metre wide pedestrian traffic accessways extending from Newcastle Street through to Aberdeen Street. With traffic concentrated mainly on Newcastle Street, secure and attractive access can be created for pedestrians entering the car park from Aberdeen Street.

Other parking facilities will also be provided on street, including a 40-50 bay car park next to the Museum Street Precinct park.

Development Control

All development within the Northbridge project area requires the approval of EPRA.

Applications will be guided by the decisions of the *East Perth Redevelopment Scheme* and the design guidelines prepared for each precinct.

Provisions within the scheme, together with the design guidelines, will be used to reflect the intended character for development within each precinct, through the control of building height, setbacks, uses and the presentation of buildings to streets and public spaces.

The majority of buildings will be limited in height to ensure consistency with the existing built environment of Northbridge. Key landmark sites will be identified for their special contribution to the project area and will have particular requirements identified in the design guidelines.

Public Housing

EPRA has agreed to sell a number of residential properties to the Ministry of Housing for public housing. These include existing residential properties in Newcastle and Parry streets.

Preliminary discussions have been held with Cyrenian House and Women's Health Care House with a view to establishing a Lotteries House.

Passages Resource Centre has approached EPRA with a view to purchasing its premises in Aberdeen Street and EPRA has agreed to grant an option to purchase the site.

Public Art

Public art commissioned for Northbridge, The Project will be functional, interactive and 'people oriented'. It will be an integral part of the new urban environment, and blend into the existing architecture.

Public art will be developed within the overall context of the history, culture, and current and future functions of the area. Consultation with local residential, business, and education communities will be essential to the development of briefs for public art and the selection of suitable artists to undertake the commissions.

Project Implementation

A detailed implementation program has been developed using information supplied by the consultant team and EPRA. The program outlines the necessary planning tasks, EPRA approvals, and the required design and construction activities.

The program identifies four major construction stages for the project. It should be noted, however, that this staged approach may be subject to change due to sales and demand fluctuations that could arise during the project's life. The program is therefore subject to ongoing refinement for the duration of the project, and is considered flexible in the eyes of EPRA.

Conclusions

EPRA is confident that the master plan for Northbridge, The Project represents

best practice in delivering the many economic, social and environmental outcomes desired by the community.

The master plan will be delivered through the use of effective staging, land sales and development controls, and with high levels of communication and minimal disruption to the community.

