

DISCUSSION PAPER

BROOKLYN PLACE PLANNING OVERVIEW



Brooklyn

Established on the banks of the Hawkesbury River, Brooklyn is a small waterfront village, home to <750 people in addition to hosting river residents from Dangar Island and other nearby river communities.

Brooklyn performs many functions for many different users: a transport interchange between river, rail and road; a working port; a launching area for water-based activities; a recreational destination; and, a place to live and work.

Vision and principles

As a Council, we are committed to doing the best for our Shire to make it the place we want it to be. The village of Brooklyn holds a special place in all of our hearts and we want to make Brooklyn better for generations to come.

To achieve this, we've developed a discussion paper for the Brooklyn place plan – a road map to prepare Brooklyn for a vibrant future.

Through this discussion paper, we offer a vision and principles for consultation- seeking feedback and agreement to guide our future decisions.

We know many attempts have been made to shape the future of the river communities. With an agreed vision and principles, we will create a framework together by which future decisions can be measured and agreed. We understand the Brooklyn and river communities and we are listening.

“ *Everyone has the right to live in a great place.
More importantly, everyone has the right to contribute to
making the place where they already live great.* ”

Fred Kent, Project For Public Places

A checkered past

Brooklyn has a rich history and a passionate community. Let's be honest, though: it is not living up to its potential. The village functions as many different things for different people and Brooklyn isn't serving any of these functions successfully at present.

To date, Council has made decisions related to the use of space that have been geared towards supporting Brooklyn's function as a transport interchange for river residents. This means a significant amount of public land is used for parking and boat trailer storage, and this dominates the village centre and areas closest to the river.

This is neither good nor bad, but rather a function that Brooklyn needs to fulfil. It does, however, constrain Brooklyn's potential.

Brooklyn – it's time to change

There has been ongoing debate within the community, for many years, around the preferred uses for Brooklyn's limited space. This is a natural reaction, as each group within the community has different priorities and expectations for the functions Brooklyn needs to serve.

In the past, Council, along with the community, has been unable to make changes or trial solutions without alienating one group or another. And so, we still have a Brooklyn village centre with public spaces that don't fully meet anyone's needs.

Compromise, collaboration and joined-up thinking will help us to unite and develop solutions that enable more wins for everyone to create long-term change and success — not just a few isolated wins that do not have the betterment of the whole village at heart.

Getting the balance right

Now it's time to come together as a community. We have an opportunity to build on Brooklyn's unique location and create a vibrant, active village centre everyone can enjoy. Through creative planning and cooperation, we have an opportunity to find a solution that addresses the village centre's needs.

When we look at other successful villages, we see they have a diverse mix of uses and activities. While Brooklyn's situation is complex, there are great opportunities within the village centre. The only way we'll realise a better Brooklyn is to put Brooklyn first and to find a compromise.

High priority actions

The following suggested actions set up a process pathway for resolving issues and formulating a place plan for Brooklyn using joined-up thinking.

1. A clear place vision for Brooklyn

One of our first priorities is to seek feedback and review the discussion paper's draft vision and guiding principles for Brooklyn. Council will collaborate with stakeholders (and an independent facilitator if required) to steer, inform and prioritise future actions to improve the village centre based on this vision.

2. A functionally laid-out village centre (Brooklyn Urban Design Footprint)

We envisage a well-designed, well-considered village centre for Brooklyn, taking a place-based approach driven by grass-roots community engagement.

3. An economically sustainable and resilient village centre

To fully understand the economic tipping points for viability and ensure success, it's essential to evaluate the economic sustainability of Brooklyn's village centre.

4. Dangar Road activation strategy

A key activity is to consider opportunities to activate Council-owned, public property holdings on Dangar Road. This would create an active link between the pub and the marina.

5. A resolved approach to village centre parking

Within the context of a functionally laid-out village centre and using the best practice principles adopted by Council as a starting point, resolve an approach to managing parking within Brooklyn village centre.

Have your say

For further information on the discussion paper and place planning for Brooklyn, and to provide feedback, please visit hornsby.nsw.gov.au/place