

Redfern North Eveleigh

Clothing Store Charette –key summary

November 2022



The NSW Government is transforming one of the most well-connected areas of Sydney, the Redfern North Eveleigh Precinct, into a great new place.

The vision for Redfern North Eveleigh is to be a connected centre for living, creativity, and employment opportunities that support jobs of the future. It will be an inclusive, active, and sustainable place for everyone, where communities gather.

The NSW Government investment in the renewal of the Redfern North Eveleigh Precinct will create a unique mixed-use development, located within the important heritage fabric of North Eveleigh.

The revitalisation of Redfern North Eveleigh (RNE) will create a place that celebrates the rich industrial, Aboriginal and creative roots of the Precinct, and where everyone feels welcome both day and night.

The Clothing Store Sub-Precinct at the western entry point to the Precinct, will have a residential character that is integrated with community uses to create a vibrant inner-city place designed for living.

Plans include:

- renewal of the Clothing Store building and possible community uses and facilities
- delivery of over 3,000 sqm of new and improved public open spaces including parks
- approximately 500 -600 new apartments for diverse 'Build to Rent' housing across buildings between 4 and 12 storeys in height.

The project team are commencing the market engagement process in mid November as they work to secure a development partner to redevelop the Clothing Store Sub-Precinct site. Your valuable feedback on future open spaces, streetscapes, possible community uses and facilities from these sessions will help inform the future development of the site and ensure the successful delivery of the Sub-Precinct on behalf of NSW Government.

The community will have further opportunities to have their say prior to any development on the site.

What we heard - General Feedback

A number of consistent themes emerged from the discussions throughout the two sessions.

- Open space and facilities in the Clothing Store Sub-Precinct should be **distinctive and not seek to replicate** what is already in Carriageworks and proposed for the Paint Shop.
- Uses and activities should be **low key, inclusive and compatible with the primarily residential character** of the Clothing Store Sub-Precinct and surrounding neighbourhoods. In effect, the Clothing Store should function as **a communal backyard**.
- **Resolve issues around ongoing management, maintenance and operation** of streets, parks and community facilities within the Clothing Store Sub-Precinct prior to operation and practical completion.
- The development partner needs to **engage and work with the surrounding community** from refining plans through to construction.
- Ensure the Clothing Store redevelopment provides **amenity for new residents as well as the neighbouring community**.
- More needs to be done to connect the Clothing Store Sub-Precinct into surrounding neighbourhoods, particularly to Iverys Lane and through to Macdonaldtown Station and up to Wilson Street.
- Look at what is possible to **expand the main park area to the west** and increase its overall size.
- Look at **resolving challenges relating to level changes** across the Sub-Precinct to create a unified and accessible public domain.
- **Be creative and think laterally** – footpaths, streets and carparks can also support different informal activities and uses, for example skateboarding and ball play.
- While it was acknowledged that built form is beyond the scope of the workshops, **design quality and the considered relationships between buildings and public domain** will be critical to the success of the precinct.
- Aim for **greater integration of private open space and the public domain and through-site connections** than what the existing planning controls seem to indicate.
- **Don't over-commercialise** the Clothing Store building. If any businesses are to be located there, they should provide services for the local community or assist community facilities to be self-sustaining.
- Preserve an opportunity for RNE **to receive a bridge from Eveleigh at some point in the future** (noting that the bridge was not included within the scope of the charette discussions).
- **“Do heritage” meaningfully and properly**. There is a strong community interest in learning about the extensive and varied history of the site in an imaginative and creative way – “not just plonking industrial items around the place.”
- Investigate opportunities to **deliver the park and other community amenities in the early stages of redevelopment** rather than at the end.

What we heard - Thinking About Open Space and the Public Domain

Heritage, culture, and interpretation

- Authentically and creatively reveal the immense heritage of this location – from First Nations’ connections with country and culture, through to the general strike and the growth of rail.
- Create a meaningful and integrated heritage journey across all of RNE that is more than plaques and placing industrial items in key spaces.
- Involve younger people in telling the stories so heritage remains relevant to current generations.
- Use public art to tell the stories of this place.
- First Nations people need to be actively involved in “Connecting with Country.”

Integration and connections

- Resolve level differences across the park site and up to Wilson Street to ensure the park is readily accessible.
- There will be a need for diagonal paths within the park to link into Iverys Lane/Wilson Street and Iverys Lane through to Macdonaldtown Station.
- Create a buffer/transition zone between the parks and surrounding residential buildings to clearly delineate between private buildings and public domain, which could take the form of a pedestrian walkway.
- Create visual linkages through to private open space to amplify the sense of green across the sub-precinct.
- Look at removing the street that defines the western edge of the main park. Alternative access to the rail line could be provided down the street between the Clothing Store and the Platform Apartments. Doing this may enable the park area to be extended.
- Create a pedestrian through site link behind the Clothing Store and the Platform Apartments to make the overall Sub-Precinct more permeable.
- Investigate ways to connect the park with the Clothing Store, so that any community activities within the Clothing Store could spill out into the public domain.
- Consider safety issues with a park that is surrounded by roads on three sides.

Connecting with nature

- Ensure the precinct is green and leafy to connect with nature, soften the development, deal with heat island effects, and provide habitat for wildlife.
- There needs to be a balance between green spaces and harder areas made of natural resilient materials to ensure that areas can withstand high levels of use in all weather.
- The park could be a unique hybrid between natural and urban.
- Plant edible landscapes in some sections of the precinct – these don’t need to be formal community gardens as such.
- While there is a need for active play for kids, make this more nature play/wild play rather than a traditional “playground.”
- Address flooding issues across the site by incorporating Water Sensitive Urban Design and using plants to treat run off.

Safety

- Safety was raised as a concern, particularly along Macdonaldtown Lane. If safety can be improved, there will likely be a significant increase in foot traffic to Macdonaldtown Station.
- Improving activation, openness, transparency, and accessibility will lead to greater safety. Planting needs to consider visibility and passive surveillance.
- Look at ways to bring visibility and access into areas such as along the railway line, this may assist in lessening graffiti and antisocial behaviour.
- Good sight lines from the new apartment buildings should be considered as this could provide passive surveillance and an improved sense of safety.
- Provide good lighting to the park and along streets and footpaths.
- Using high quality and durable materials will also improve safety.
- It was noted that safety and accessibility could be an issue if the park has roads along all three sides.
- Safety barriers could be created through dense planting rather than fencing off areas.

A place that's inviting and easy to use

- Provide basic facilities such as bins, BBQs, racks for bikes and e-scooters, some unobtrusive shelters and well maintained toilets.
- Places for small events and music performances.
- Create a terraced or grassed seating bank along the edge of the park and Carriageworks Way. This could form a natural amphitheatre for performance and people watching.
- Keep some spaces reserved for quiet use.
- There were mixed views about the need for a café within the Clothing Store fronting the main park.
- There is a need for toilets and baby change rooms. It was suggested that these could be placed within the Clothing Store for security and ready access.

The right balance of active and passive uses

- Don't be too fixed in the way the space is designed – flexibility will enable people to use it in different ways.
- The park should have a predominant community feel and focus – it can't provide for the full range of uses expected in a larger park.
- Not everything needs to be provided in the park itself – with safety treatments parts of the streets and the traverses could be used for skating and informal ball games.
- There were mixed views on catering for more organised sports and ball games. Reservations were expressed about how these activities could dominate the use of the park and present safety and amenity concerns.
- Younger kids are usually well catered for in parks, it would be good to better understand and respond to the needs of young people who are over 13.
- While the precinct should be dog friendly, there were differing views about whether the park could be used as an off-leash space as the park's small size may cause people who are uncomfortable with dogs to not feel safe.

What we heard - Thinking About the Clothing Store Building

Securing the right balance between financial sustainability and community purpose

- As a community space the Clothing Store building should not be too commercialised, although many noted that some business use would be supported if it made the community facilities within the Clothing Store self-sustaining.
- Consistent with the residential “feel”, usage should support the community as opposed to the business focus that the Paint Shop is likely to have.
- Cultural and creative uses were also strongly supported.
- An appropriate management and funding model needs to be established upfront. It was noted that while spaces should be affordable, a key consideration would be to ensure that the site was able to generate a steady income stream to maintain itself.
- The facility should be affordable for a wide range of community users.
- It needs to be flexible to evolve over time.
- Where it is used for a commercial purpose, it would be good if this was affordable rental for commercial tenants who could provide an amenity or service to surrounding community. For example, maker spaces, craft or learn to sew classes, and community health and fitness.
- The building should be linked to the park so that exhibitions, performances, and community activities can spill out into the open spaces.
- While childcare is needed in the area there were mixed views on the suitability of a heritage building for this purpose and whether childcare is a commercial use for somewhere else in the overall RNE precinct.
- While a café was seen as a way to service and activate the park, some reservations were noted about the need for and viability of a café in this location.
- Activation of the Clothing Store building throughout the day and evenings by both community and commercial use would make the area safer and also maximise the contribution the facilities could make to local community life.
- Don’t duplicate community facilities proposed for the Paint Shop.

Ideas for creative spaces

- Affordable studios for artists who can’t pay inner city rents.
- Affordable exhibition spaces.
- Learn to make classes.
- Rehearsal rooms.
- A small-scale recording studio for making podcasts.
- Small flexible performance venue for local schools to hire.

Ideas for places to work

- Consider providing affordable working spaces for local people working from home. An example of this is the Flour Mill at Summer Hill which has study/workspaces and congregation areas with good Internet where people can come to relax and meet.
- Low-cost spaces for start-ups and social enterprises – however this would need to consider any overlap with Tech Central. It was also noted:
 - that start-ups often need more space than what could be available in the Clothing Store to allow for rapid expansion.
 - part of the Clothing Store could be an overflow space for business “graduating” from the nearby Cicada Incubator.
- Rooms and equipment for online meetings and presentations.
- Including businesses with usages that suit evening operation (such as cafes/bars) to help to activate the area and improve safety.

Ideas for community use

- Affordable meeting rooms of different sizes with good equipment and storage areas for frequent users.
- Affordable spaces for “Learn to classes” targeting the general community.
- Party and events spaces for families living in apartments.
- Flexible performance / meeting spaces for local schools to use.
- Pop-up spaces for stalls, which are easily accessible from the park.
- Tying into the cycleway and providing supporting services for cyclists in the area, such as a bike repair workshop.

Suggestions for improving amenity

- Providing shading around and good ventilation in the Clothing Store will be important for the comfort of occupants.
- There is a need for toilets and baby change rooms. It was suggested that these could be placed within the Clothing Store for security and ready access.

Ideas for securing the heritage values of the building

- The curtilage around the buildings is an important feature but currently it is not very useable. With some creativity this area could be designed as a place where community activities can occur outdoors.
- The historic façade facing the future park is a key marker for the precinct and should be preserved.

