

# PLACE BASED INTEGRATED LAND USE AND TRANSPORT PLANNING

## Key lessons learnt

Place based integrated land use and transport planning can help inform the benefits associated with transport infrastructure, and establish appropriate land use outcomes to support the project. Proper care is needed in developing realistic and well informed land use scenarios which are supportable across Government, and to ensure that the process used to quantify the attribution of the benefits of land use to the project is defensible.

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## Current as of

February 2019

## Introduction

There is no 'one size fits all' approach when it comes to land use and infrastructure planning. With corridors of differing sizes and carrying capacities, different physical impacts, and potentials for land use change, there is a definite need for integrated land use and transport planning. This approach should consider all areas of land use and transport planning, so the cost of investing in major infrastructure can be properly leveraged through change in land use, which facilitates jobs, population, and urban renewal.

## Key considerations

- ▶ Development of land use outcomes considering the proposed infrastructure.
- ▶ Stakeholder engagement, to ensure cross agency support and understand any land use outcomes that already exist in the absence of the project.
- ▶ Any independent place-based analysis of potential land use change or uplift should follow agreed and established methodologies. This includes approaches to urban design, and respecting and enhancing local character (see Planning Circular PS 18-001).
- ▶ Feasibility of development, as planning does not always result in change on the ground.
- ▶ City shaping benefits as opposed to only traditional transport benefits and wider economic benefits.
- ▶ The allocation of the project benefits must be a true representation of capacity unlocked by the project and avoid 'double counting' where dual projects exist.
- ▶ The allocation of benefits needs to be evidence based and professionally undertaken exercise, but should also be cognisant of the highly theoretical nature of such exercise.

- ▶ Provides the opportunity to show non-project based benefits like improved public domain, improved amenity, and contribution to affordable housing.

## Developing scenarios considerate of infrastructure investment and State land use planning policy

It is common to prepare project-specific land use outcomes to identify city shaping and planning outcomes alongside the options for transport infrastructure. Scenarios are developed which consider how the proposed project can influence land use change and assist the city achieve its broader strategic goals. This involves interdependencies between land use and the infrastructure options being considered, while considering the capacity (and growth potential) that is associated with these outcomes.

First, a realistic 'base case' land use scenario must be developed which identifies the likely level of growth that could occur without introduction of the project. Note that without the introduction of major transport infrastructure, growth potential is likely to be limited, and the aspirations outlined in State and local government strategic planning policies may not be realisable. Notwithstanding, there are examples of major re-zonings (past and planned) with a lack of suitable transport infrastructure.

Best practice would involve the development of 'intervention case' land use scenarios which would be cognisant of planning and design, transport economics, local character and market considerations. There are likely to be competing interests from a range of stakeholders, and the potential densities facilitated by infrastructure investment may not be palatable to

the relevant land use planning agencies (such as local government). Similarly, urban design considerations may not suggest densities are appropriate near those suited for the transport infrastructure.

These matters and others should arise during a detailed planning based constraints and opportunities analysis. The constraints and opportunities process will provide the consideration of lot level constraints to development such as heritage, contamination, and strata titles, and opportunities such as lot pattern and ownership.

Care is required to develop realistic and informed land use scenarios which can be supported across government, and that the process used to attribute the benefits of land use to the project are defensible. This requires consultation with land use planning agencies such as the Department of Planning and Environment and/or Local Councils. Where changes to planning controls are proposed in support of the project, the approach should align with the relevant planning authority. This includes approaches to urban design and respecting and enhancing local character (see Planning Circular PS 18-001).

The development of appropriate land use scenarios is one step in the process, the likely speed and level of development also needs to be factored into business case assessments. Providing increased land use densities through planning control changes may not have a significant effect if proposed land use controls are not attractive to the market (i.e. feasible). The introduction of the project is likely to increase the speed of population and employment growth in early years close to the introduction of the project, as the area becomes more desirable. This is beneficial for business case development which are typically focused on benefits which occur earlier.

## Properly allocating benefits

The development of land use outcomes through an integrated land use and transport planning process will identify 'base case' and 'intervention case' outcomes. The land use outcomes under an 'intervention case' are

not necessarily all attributable to the project. A thorough attribution analysis is needed to be undertaken to ensure that land use benefits likely to have occurred without the project are not being attributed to the project.

Whilst 'project case' land use scenarios may develop under consideration of transit-induced capacity uplift, there is the potential that some of this growth may already be being planned for by government. It needs to be asked whether some or all of this planned growth is likely to take place with or without the introduction of the project. An example is major urban renewal precincts which have not yet been rezoned. These arguably should be included in the 'base case', although there is likely to be justification that yields could be increased under an 'intervention case' even further. Engagement with a range of Government agencies is important in this phase to avoid questions on attribution being given after business case analysis has been undertaken.

There are also cases where more than one major infrastructure project is being planned for the same corridor, which has been witnessed recently in Sydney. It is critical to develop a consistent 'base case' so the 'project case' growth can be easily quantified and compared. A cross-agency approach is required to determine and agree how these benefits are attributed and shared with an ultimate aim of supporting all projects. In these instances, it may also be worth developing an additional intervention case scenario which considers land use changes for more than one project, given the land use outcomes resulting from the introduction of any/all projects is likely different from that considered from the introduction of only one. In part, this is along the lines of what the Greater Sydney Commission has been working to preparing through their Growth Infrastructure Compacts.

## Source Material

Department of Planning and Environment 2018, PS 18-001 *Stepping up planning and designing for better places: respecting and enhancing local character*. [https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/~/\\_media/Files/DPE/Circulars/local-character-planning-circular-2018-01-16.ashx](https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/~/_media/Files/DPE/Circulars/local-character-planning-circular-2018-01-16.ashx)

### ► About the author:

Ben Hendriks is the Managing Director of Mecone ([www.mecone.com.au](http://www.mecone.com.au)), a boutique planning firm with offices in Sydney, Parramatta, Melbourne and Brisbane. Ben has 20 years of planning experience and has worked on many integrated land use and transport planning projects in NSW including Parramatta Light Rail, Sydney Metro West, and the Western Sydney Rail Needs assessment.