

SOPER PLACE REVITALISATION - STAGE 2

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – APRIL 2022

BACKGROUND

Q. WHAT IS HAPPENING AT SOPER PLACE?

Council is transforming the City Centre to create new opportunities for businesses to grow and thrive in Penrith.

Soper Place Revitalisation forms part of Council's larger city-shaping vision that will see the City Centre through to the Nepean River connected with beautiful parks and places for people to live, work and enjoy.

The proposed new development at Soper Place will provide 600 additional multi-storey car spaces, new mixed-use commercial premises and public green space to help combat rising urban heat.

A Development Application (DA) for the project was submitted by Council for assessment in December 2020 and this DA will be determined by the Sydney Western City Planning Panel.

Q. HOW WILL SOPER PLACE BE TRANSFORMED?

The proposed transformation of Soper Place will occur in two stages:

- Stage 1 – involved enabling works to prepare the site ahead of the proposed development. This work started in August 2020 and was completed in November 2021.
- Stage 2 - involves the construction of the new development at Soper Place. Work will commence following Development Application determination and is expected to start in 2022.

Q. WHY NOT JUST BUILD A NEW CAR PARK AT SOPER PLACE?

The proposed development mix was reached through a Design Excellence Competition led by the Office of the Government Architect NSW. Council wanted to ensure the transformation of Soper Place would deliver broad outcomes for Penrith, instead of just creating parking solutions.

The rooftop garden and the ground level multi-use space will provide the community with new passive and active recreational spaces. The commercial office space will deliver new business and local employment opportunities to help revitalise the City Centre. The proposed development will also actively contribute to reducing urban heat and Cooling the City, which will help further enhance Penrith's liveability.

Q. HOW DOES THIS DEVELOPMENT FIT WITH COUNCIL'S ENABLING WORKS AT SOPER PLACE?

To prepare for the proposed development, Council needed to relocate ageing underground services at Soper Place.

These Stage 1 preparation works included relocating and upgrading storm water infrastructure, as well as relocating sewer and electrical cabling. This work began in August 2020 and was completed in November 2021.

DEVELOPER INFORMATION

Q. WHAT DOES THE PROPOSED NEW DEVELOPMENT INCLUDE?

Soper Place Revitalisation proposes to deliver:

- Multi-storey car parking with 600 additional car parking spaces - including 11 accessible car parking spaces, 24 x motorbike parking spaces and 44 x bicycle parking spaces - responding directly to projected demand for City Centre parking.
- An A-Grade four storey office building with approximately 6,204m² of commercial floor area.
- Multi-use community space – the public room – 931m² of floor space.
- Public rooftop garden and green building facade, contributing to cooling the city.
- Public domain works at the ground level and extensive planting on the public rooftop garden – 2,600m².

Q. WHO CREATED THE DESIGN FOR THE PROPOSED NEW DEVELOPMENT?

Guided by the Office of the Government Architect NSW, a Design Excellence Competition was held in late 2019 to invite the best industry professionals to compete and submit design ideas to create a car park, public recreational space and office development at Soper Place.

The winning design was created by the joint team of Durbach Block Jagers Architects and Sue Barnsley Landscape Design.

Q. HOW MUCH WILL THIS DEVELOPMENT COST?

The estimated cost of the DA lodged is \$106 million. This may sound like a lot but it's important to remember that Soper Place Revitalisation brings a whole range of benefits to Penrith beyond just extra parking, so it's an investment by Council in our City.

This cost was rationalised by a group of industry recognised quantitative surveyors to ensure it was cost efficient considering the scale and complexity of the project. The project team are also working hard through value management and engineering to bring down project costs wherever possible.

Q. WHEN WILL THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT START CONSTRUCTION?

The proposed development is currently scheduled to start construction in 2022. However, this scheduled commencement date is dependent on the outcome of the DA assessment process and the determination processes of the Sydney Western City Planning Panel.

Construction of the proposed development is projected to be completed in 2024. However there a range of variables that will potentially affect this timeline. Council will update the community as the project progresses and the DA is determined.

Q. WILL THERE BE ROAD CLOSURES AT SOPER PLACE DURING CONSTRUCTION?

Details of how construction will affect local traffic in Penrith will be clarified in the project's Construction Traffic Management Plan. Council will work hard to mitigate the impact on the local community and to continue to provide access to local businesses. Council will keep the local community updated as the project progresses and the DA is determined.

Q. HOW MUCH PARKING WILL BE UNAVAILABLE IN SOPER PLACE DURING CONSTRUCTION?

Council anticipates that 120 parking spaces will be unavailable during the transformation of Soper Place; this number will be further clarified once the construction contractor is engaged.

Alternative nearby 9-hour parking to Soper Place is available at North Street car park (243 parking spaces), located at the corner of Henry and Doonmore Street, approximately five minutes walking distance from Soper Place.

North Street car park was strategically delivered by Council in 2019 ahead of any work starting to transform Soper Place.

Q. HOW MANY NEW CAR PARKING SPACES WILL THERE BE AT SOPER PLACE ONCE THE DEVELOPMENT IS COMPLETE?

Soper Place Revitalisation aims to deliver 600 additional car parking spaces in the City Centre. The DA proposal includes 11 accessible car parking spaces, 24 x motorbike parking spaces and 44 x bicycle parking spaces - responding directly to projected demand for parking in the City Centre.

The development aims to offer parking spaces that meet different user needs, such as accessible parking, bicycle and motorbike parking, as well as parking with electric chargers.

Council will update the community with further parking information as the project progresses and the DA is determined.

BENEFITS OF SOPER PLACE REVITALISATION

Q. WHAT ARE THE KEY BUSINESS BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT?

Soper Place Revitalisation will attract new businesses to the Penrith City Centre; provide local employment opportunities, as well as to bring significantly more foot traffic to local businesses.

Q. WHAT ARE THE KEY COMMUNITY BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT?

The rooftop garden and ground level multi-use space will provide the community with new passive and active recreational spaces to enjoy in Penrith.

The multi-use space will be able to be used for community based activities such as markets, movie nights, functions, events and concerts.

The green elements of the proposed development will also contribute to reducing urban heat and Cooling the City, which helps enhance Penrith's liveability.

Soper Place Revitalisation forms part of Council's larger city-shaping vision that will see Penrith connected from the City Centre through to the Nepean River with beautiful parks and places for people to live, work and enjoy.

Q. WHAT ARE THE KEY GREEN BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT?

The project aims to deliver a significant area of living green façade and an extensive rooftop garden. The project team is also exploring water mining solutions from the underground stormwater culverts. These green measures work together to contribute to Council's Cooling the City strategy and also aim to help reduce negative impacts during construction.

Q. HOW WILL THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT REINVIGORATE THE CITY?

The project will attract new businesses to the Penrith City Centre, provide local employment to the community and will bring significantly more foot traffic to local businesses. As the building exhibits design excellence, Council anticipates it will become a landmark development that significantly contributes to revitalising and reinvigorating the City Centre.

Soper Place Revitalisation also forms part of Council's larger city-shaping vision that will see Penrith connected from the City Centre through to the Nepean River with beautiful parks and places for people to live, work and enjoy.

DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION (DA) ASSESSMENT

Q. WHY DID COUNCIL'S ENABLING WORKS START BEFORE DA SUBMISSION?

The relocation of ageing infrastructure to prepare for the new development at Soper Place means that Council can deliver a dynamic development solution for Penrith which actively contributes to Cooling the City, instead of just providing more parking. These upgrades to infrastructure would have been needed for the City regardless of the development.

Q. WHO DECIDES IF THIS COUNCIL DA CAN PROCEED?

Due to the capital investment value of the proposal, this DA will be reported to and determined by the Sydney Western City Planning Panel, which is a state government managed determination panel. Information on the Sydney Western City Planning Panel can be found here: <https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/planning-panels/about-planning-panels>

Q. HOW IS COUNCIL ABLE TO LODGE A DA AND ALSO ASSESS AND DETERMINE THAT DA?

The assessment of any DA whether lodged by Council or a private land owner must be assessed under relevant legislative provisions of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (EP&A) 1979.

The assessment of the DA is managed by Council's Development Services Department which is independent from the project team in Council's Property Department that prepared and lodged the application.

To ensure transparency in the process, any assessment where Council has a vested interest (such as land owner) is undertaken or reviewed by an external planning consultant prior to the matter being reported for determination.

Due to the capital investment value of the proposal, the DA will be reported to and determined by the Sydney Western City Planning Panel, which is a state government managed determination panel.

Q. WHEN CAN I MAKE COMMENT ON THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT?

Public Exhibition of the DA proposal for Soper Place Revitalisation occurred from 18 January to 16 February 2021 with comments able to be received during that period. Public Exhibition has now closed.

You can view the DA for Soper Place Revitalisation by searching for DA20/0858 here: <https://www.penrithcity.nsw.gov.au/building-development/development/application-tracking>. The DA tracker allows you to track the progress of a DA from lodgement to determination.

MORE INFORMATION

Q. HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE ABOUT SOPER PLACE REVITALISATION?

To find out more about the transformation of Soper Place, you can visit: www.yoursaypenrith.com.au/soperplacerevitalisation

To find out more information on the DA status for Soper Place Revitalisation you can view it on Council's online DA tracker by searching for DA20/0858 here: <https://www.penrithcity.nsw.gov.au/building-development/development/application-tracking>

For general enquiries about the project, please contact Council's Property team on 4732 8229 or email: soperplacerevitalisation@penrith.city

For questions about the preparation works, please contact Council's Design and Projects team on 4732 8099 or email: soperplacerevitalisation@penrith.city