

HOW TO RESTRUCTURE A COUNCIL DEPOT AND INCORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY, SAFETY AND IMPROVED PRODUCTIVITY WITH SOUND STAFF CONSULTATION.

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Paper Summary

Penrith City Council has operated a depot in Kingswood for many years. The current depot is a combination of its original depot and a depot purchased from an Electricity Authority when they relocated to a new site during the 1980s. As a result the depot has grown over the years in a reactionary manner with duplicated facilities and improvements were made incrementally. The result is mirrored in many such Council depots but has meant that no single master plan was used to strategically develop sound management objectives over the years. The Council management have decided to adopt such a strategic approach to guide the development of the depot in an efficient, safe and sustainable manner with focussed attention on input from Council's operational staff, the real users.

Introduction

Penrith City Council has a large and somewhat dated works depot in an industrial Estate in the suburb of Kingswood.

The existing depot is located centrally within the Council area and its location is ideal for Council's operations, however the depot is at capacity due to poor layout and piece meal development over the years and the poor condition of some of the buildings.

It also has poor site security, site access and wayfinding.

It currently houses Council's 3 main operation departments along with building maintenance, workshops and stores.

In October 2012, COMPLETE Urban were commissioned by Penrith City Council to undertake the options analysis and masterplanning for upgrading the depot facility in close cooperation with Council.

Key Objectives

Key Strategic Objectives

Sustainability

Penrith City Council want to incorporate sustainability principles into the depot masterplan so that the benefits can be realised during the implementation of the depot re build.

Elements of stormwater reuse for truck washing and solar arrays and solar hot water facilities will be considered for use on the expansive roofs. An overall objective is for the depot to achieve self sufficiency for non potable water use and energy use.

Work Health and Safety

Works Health and Safety is also foremost in Council's mind. The improved safety of staff will be improved as a result of the improved safety pathways. While the proposed plant roof structures will protect the larger plant, the mechanic staff will not only be able to work on the larger fleet plant but will also be out of the sun and elements. The security system and "on entry" induction will also greatly assist in overall depot safety.

Site Analysis

Staff Consultation

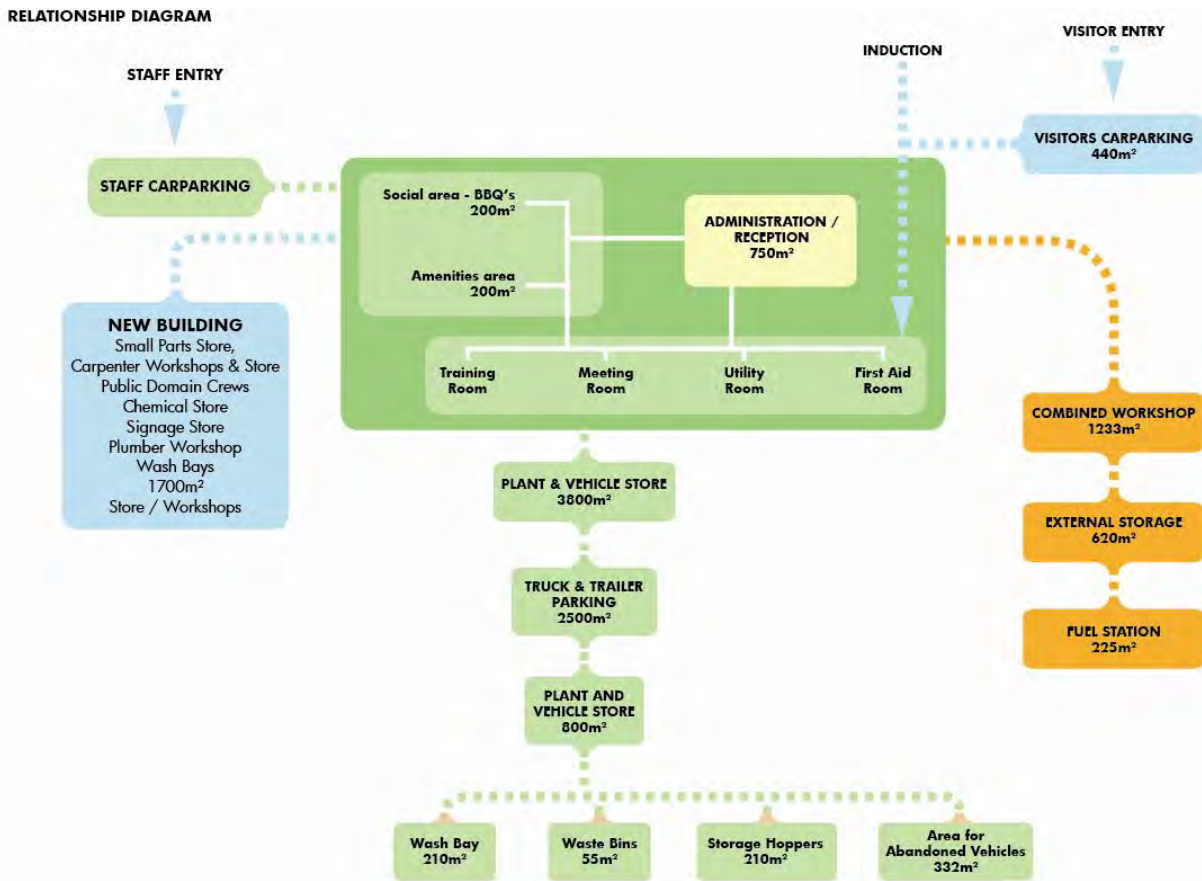
Penrith City Council is extremely aware of Staff wellbeing and values their input. Council therefore incorporated an open and detailed Staff Consultation process in the early stages of the master plan process. Key staff were involved in the early site inspections and were given a good opportunity to contribute ideas and communicate perceived problems with the depot operation. Discussions were held with the Managers, Coordinators and Supervisors and the main issues were then included in the development of options.

Productivity

The elements used to achieve improved productivity included:

- Link like functions.
- Link related activities.
- Centralise staff amenities.
- Rationalise truck movements.
- Organise logistics for staff movements.

To achieve this a space analysis diagram was used as an important tool to link users, functions and travel distances when developing the options.



Site Specific Objectives

The site specific objectives derived from the strategic objectives associated with improvements to the current facility at Copeland street are as follows:

- The masterplan should strive to achieve a single entry/ exit at current site entrance if appropriate, with a full auto gate and electronic surveillance, linked to an office to control all entry and exit movements. There should be a formal induction area with a waiting room.

- The current administration building will be too small to accommodate project growth of at least 8 additional staff. This should be accommodated in the current administration building situated on the north eastern corner of the site. The Council's plan is to convert the current upstairs training room to office space to accommodate the extra staff. The current downstairs parking area is proposed to be converted to a new training room (which will provide better disabled access at ground level) and possibly some extra office space (This will involve lowering the current parking area floor to gain the required head height).

Council has also looked at other possible alternate locations for a depot as part of this process. It is possible other options are available however the existing depot had been determined as the permanent depot site due to its central location. Other sites may be utilised as alternate sub depots for ancillary functions in the future.

Community Services occupy a site on the southern side of the site including community bus parking (3 more years on the lease). This will then be planned to be taken over by Depot Operations.

- Close the secondary administration office driveway, or secure it separately for visitors to administration only.
- Improve vehicle and pedestrian flow to reduce congestion and wasted travel.
- Need to place more Council plant under cover to protect assets.
- Staff amenities are poorly laid out and needs to be rationalised. Provide improved staff facilities including some recreation space, BBQ facilities and some green space. (Approximate numbers are 200 staff plus approximately 14 in workshop plus 5 in stores.)
- Need to rationalise depot functions to reduce travel from like functions as well as to improve WHS by channelling all pedestrian movements in and across the depot.
- Assess the condition of all buildings with a view to remove/refurbish older buildings. (circa 1960's).
- Account for wash bay and current GPT in western side. Oil and water treatment must be taken into account.
- Investigate incorporation of sustainable initiatives such as water recycling tanks and solar power in concept design. Sustainability could be implemented in stages.

The resolution of the above issues will provide Penrith City Council with a functional, efficient and safe depot facility that will improve depot operations, reduce running costs and protect and

prolong the life of assets for many years.

In October 2012, Council undertook a Community Safety Audit of the works depot.

This Report examined safety and security of the Depot and identified measures to improve safety and minimise opportunities for crime, with the aim of improving perceptions of safety for all Depot staff and visitors. The key findings relate to:

- Improved access control
 - Signage to assist with way finding
 - Yard surface quality
 - Improved surveillance (especially lighting)
- Where applicable, the findings of the Community Safety Audit have been incorporated into the redevelopment options. (These are highlighted in blue)

Site Description

The existing depot site is located on Copeland Street, Kingswood- approximately 150m North from the Great western Highway and adjacent to the Northern Road. The area of the Depot is 27,900m²

The site is has a gentle slope from northwest to southeast of approximately 5 meters and bounded by commercial buildings, a school, and outlets including a fuel station and fast food outlet.

The existing site consists of the following facilities and buildings:

- **G** - Amenities building
- **A**- Office and administration building
- **B**- Vehicle workshop & parts store
- **WB**- Wash bay
- **RB** - Re-fuelling Bay
- **VC** - Visitors carpark
- **SC** - Staff carpark
- **VP** - Vehicle parking area
- **S** - Storage
- **SS** - Street Sweepers



Options Report

The Options Report assesses the facilities, which involves the following:

- Improvement of security, site access and way finding
- The upgrade of the current administration and office building to develop additional space to accommodate project growth of at least 8 additional staff
- Secure the secondary administration office driveway separately for visitors to administration only. New automatic security gate
- Improvement of vehicle and pedestrian flow to reduce congestion and wasted travel through the improvement of linemarking and wayfinding
- Rationalization of staff amenities with new layout
- New building on eastern part of the site to accommodate all shipping containers, vehicle workshops, trades stores and wash bay
- Retain separate entry and exit to street sweepers enclosure
- New asphalt surface and linemarking to staff car park. Additional parking spaces and 4 new disabled access parking spaces
- New asphalt surface and linemarking to yard areas
- Relocate existing fence and gate to the northern part of the site
- Re- open truck gate on Cox avenue with automatic security gate
- New social area with BBQ and pergola
- New site induction security office
- New lift to make administration building accessible

Future Stages are allowed for in the site layout and concept masterplan, but are not part of this assessment.

From all of these inputs two main options were developed.

These included the following:

Site Layout Options

Two layout options have been developed for the site as follows:

Option A

- Reconfiguration of building A to include 8 additional staff
- Smaller social area/ staff courtyard and Lunch Room adjacent to building A
- Existing gate and fence on the northern part of the site can remain as is
- Use of rain water tanks and solar roof on the new building
- The site induction security office is adjacent to existing entry without any widening of the road.

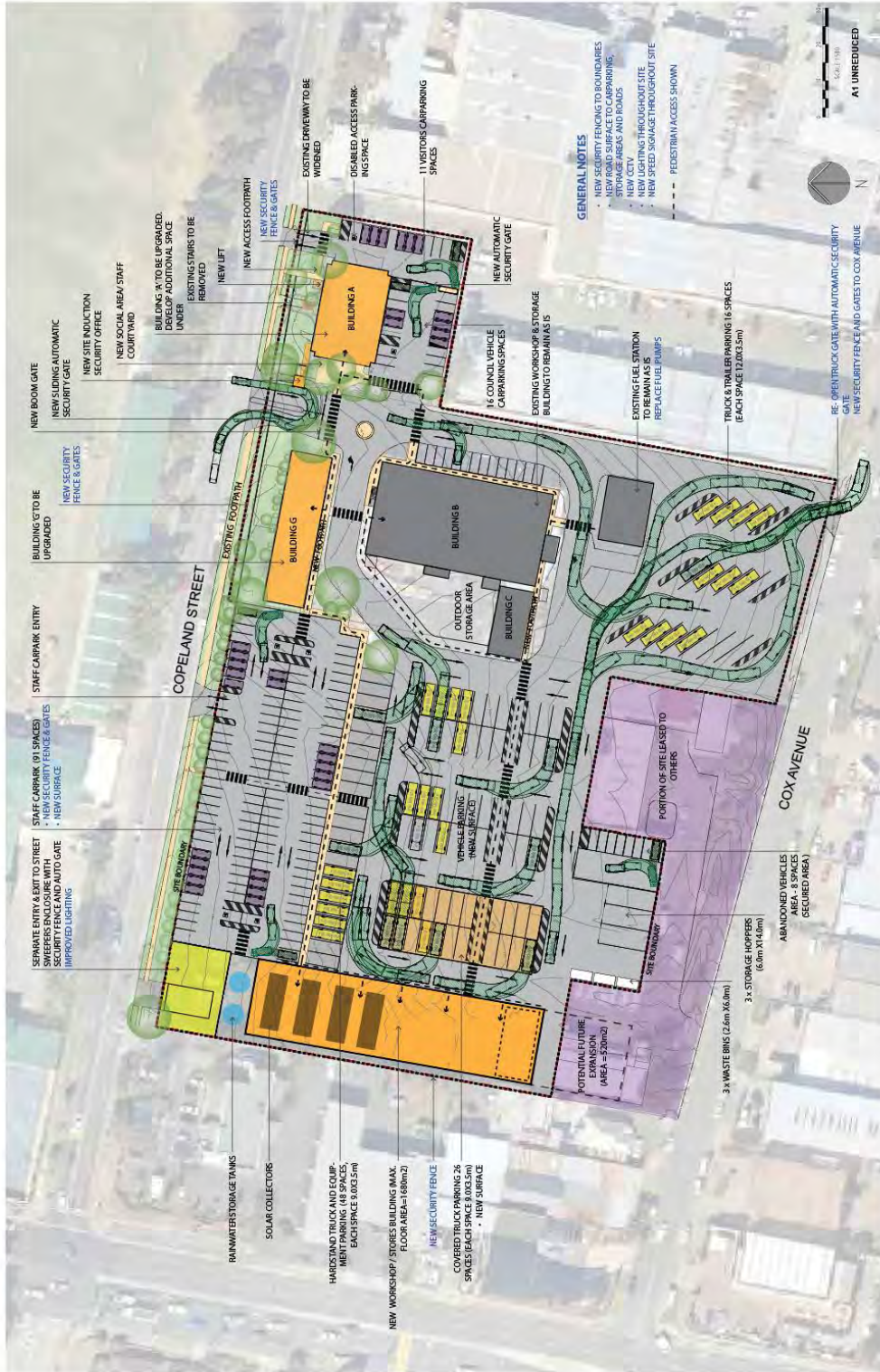
- This option includes 4 training rooms separated in building A and G

Option B

- Reconfiguration of building A to include 8 additional staff
- Larger lunch room/ social area/staff courtyard with BBQ and pergola, adjacent to building G
- Relocation of existing fence and gate on the northern part of the site to allow space for the social area
- Use of rain water tanks and solar roof on the new building
- 3 training rooms with operable walls on building A
- Site Induction Security Office near main entry with road widening to allow for car inspections.

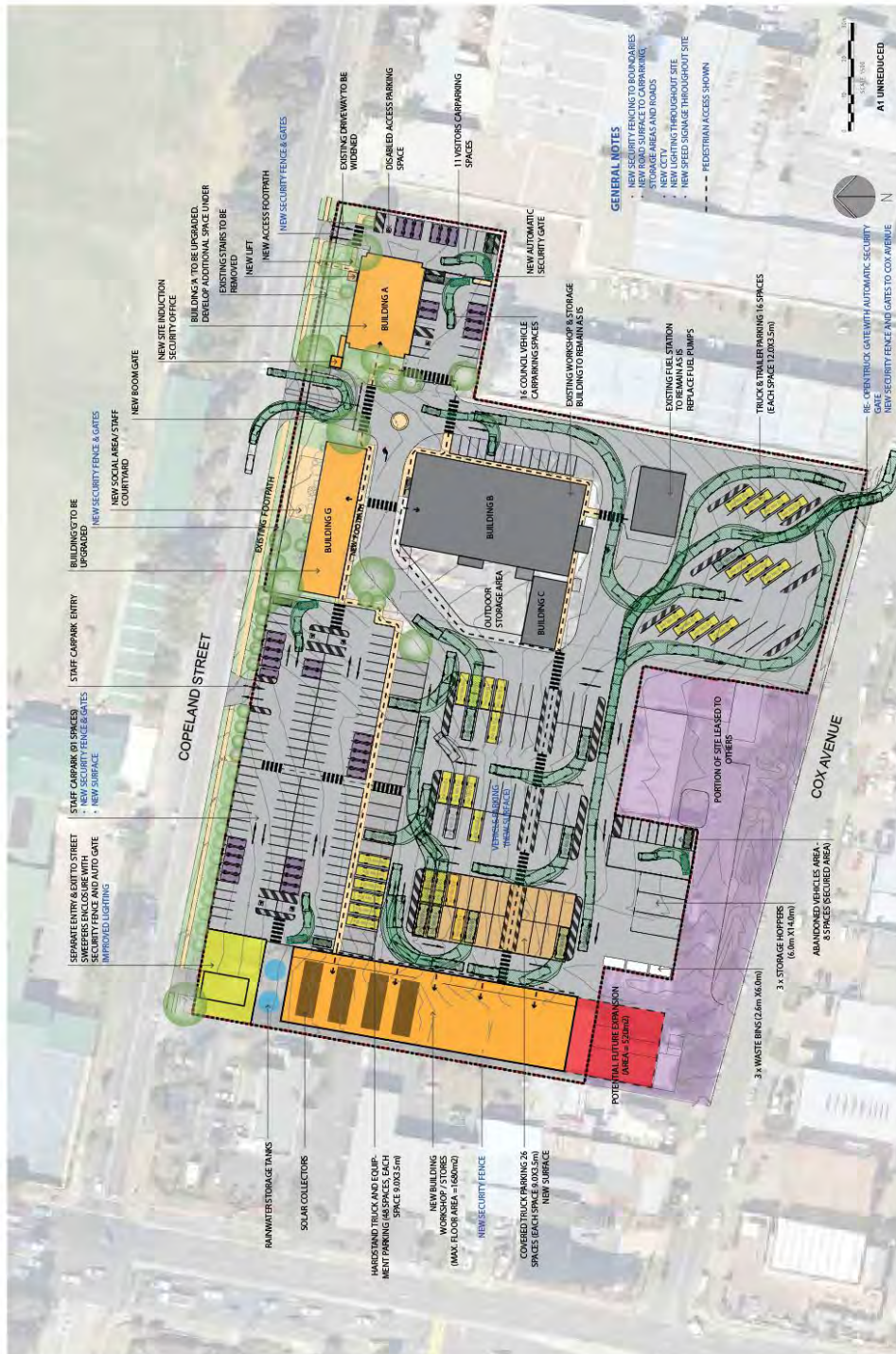
See next for Options A & B

Option A



COMPLETE
 13 Penrith Depot Concept Design

Option B



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 17 Penrith Depot Concept Design

Staff Workshop and Consultation

On the Tuesday 5th March 2013 a staff workshop was held in two parts, each with approximately 20 staff each.

The first one mainly included Manager, Coordinators and Supervisors.

Council Management Staff introduced the topics and objectives. A description was then provided of the main features of the rationalisation masterplan options. The workshop was then facilitated to ensure all input and suggestions were captured. It was heartening to see lively debate and serious input by the supervisory staff. All ideas were captured to provide an amended proposal to Council.

Following the supervisors meeting a second workshop was held and included many staff who work in the depot and depend on the depot for their work in the field. This included mechanics, Parks staff, Public Domain, City Works, Trades staff and drivers. Again there was spirited input provided addressing various practical suggestions as to how the depot could be configured to improve Sustainability, Safety and Productivity.

Some 50 separate suggestions and fine tuning issues were raised.

36 and 14 suggestions were recorded respectively from the two workshops.

No main objections were made to the two options however the suggestions were all valid and easily incorporated into the context of the draft masterplan.

This provided three main benefits. The Option plans were accepted in principle, the suggestions provided fine tuning of the plan and lastly, the staff involved took ownership of the outcome.

Questionnaires

Separate questionnaires were also distributed to each group and replies were to be received by Friday 15th March.

A total of 7 replies were received. This is considered a good result as the staff were confident we captured the ideas discussed at the workshop and the questionnaires complemented the issues raised at the workshop.

Final Master Plan Development.

Development of final Depot Master Plan. This project has substantially commenced however it is a work in progress. The main elements are locked in and incorporated in the Options produced to Council.

The final recommended Master Plan will be presented at the Conference in Terrigal.

Conclusion

By carefully setting clear objectives and including the principles of Sustainability, Safety, Productivity and including the main operatives at an early stage, a seamless process has developed into a workable masterplan that will see Penrith City Council realise a practical and far reaching development plan for the use of the depot for many years to come. Investigations of ways to realise the benefits of the masterplan earlier rather than later are also currently on going.

References

- **Penrith Depot Concept Design Report – February 2013.**
- **Community Safety Audit Council Depot– October 2012**

Author Biography



Hans Meijer, City Works Manager, Penrith City Council, NSW, Australia

Hans Meijer has 25 years of local government experience in both planning and delivery of works, with the most recent 18 years experience gained at Penrith City Council; the past four years as City Works Manager responsible for Building construction and maintenance, Civil Construction and maintenance and Fleet and Plant maintenance. Hans holds a degree in Civil Engineering and a Diploma of Management.

Hans has as a strong interest and extensive experience in Asset Management with a focus on road and building assets. In his previous role as Asset Systems Engineer at Penrith City Council Hans has implemented software packages and systems to improve Asset Management as well as developing his team of staff.

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Author Biography



Bill Woodcock, General Manager, Government and Business Services, NSW, Australia.

Bill Woodcock has been in the Local Government Industry for in excess of 40 years. Bill has held senior managerial positions in a number of Councils as well as being involved in many substantial projects. Bill has also been the National Project Manager for the IPWEA AUS-SPEC construction, contract documents and maintenance specification series. Bill has chaired the IPWEA Combined Metropolitan and Southern Metropolitan Groups for the past 20 years. Bill is also a Director on the NSW IPWEA Board looking after the Events portfolio. Bill holds a degree in Civil Engineering and a Diploma of Management as well as being an accredited Mediator.

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