

LEADING

ITEM NUMBER	11.5
SUBJECT	Update on Epping Planning Review and Related Matters
REFERENCE	F2017/00210 - D05739808
REPORT OF	Project Officer

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the Epping Planning Review, as well as several related planning matters relevant to the Epping Town Centre.

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) **That** Council note this update on the Epping Planning Review and related matters.
- (b) **That**, with regards to the Planning Proposal at 2-18 Epping Road, 2-4 Forest Grove and 725 Blaxland Road, Epping, Council endorse the following principles to be applied when assessing and preparing a future formal submission to the Central City Planning Panel on this matter:
 - i. No more than 50% of Forest Park should be overshadowed in midwinter between the hours of 10am-2pm.
 - ii. In the case that there are open space dedications to Council, these should be at grade, contain deep soil zones and should be unencumbered with basement car parking.
 - iii. The proposal shall step down across the site from Epping Road to Forest Park, both in levels and in scale to demonstrate a respect for the interface between the site and Forest Park.
 - iv. Building heights should better respond to the surrounding residential zoned land context and respect proximity to Forest Park.
 - v. Linked residential towers with large floor plates shall be avoided to minimize cumulative bulk and scale impacts.
 - vi. The design efficiencies of residential Gross Floor Area (GFA) should be based on a Gross Building Area (GBA) x 75%.
 - vii. A design excellence competition process should be put in place in addition to the site specific DCP.
 - viii. Any roads/pedestrian links provided through the site should:
 - Provide public address and surveillance;
 - If they relate or link to Forest Park, they should resolve levels and scale along the park interface;
 - Be embellished with paving, bollards, furniture and street lighting; and
 - Be dedicated to Council and delivered via VPA with the relevant public domain guidelines to inform the quality of the finishes.
 - ix. VPA contribution/effort could also be directed to upgrading existing degraded facilities in the park (amenities, playground equipment, furniture, paving etc).
 - x. No net loss of public open space.
 - xi. The proposal should provide a suitable area of public open space which is appropriately sized and located.
 - xii. The proposal should not be finalized until the Epping Traffic Study is

completed.

- (c) **That** Council objects to progression of the proposed State Significant Development at 240-244 Beecroft Road until:
 - i. There is a significant increase in the quantum of commercial floor space provided on this site; and
 - ii. The Epping Traffic Study is complete.
- (d) **Further, that,** following completion of the Epping Traffic Study, a further report to commence Stage 2 of the Epping Planning Review be prepared for Council's consideration.

OVERVIEW OF EPPING PLANNING REVIEW AND STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

1. The Epping Planning Review involves undertaking a review of planning for the Epping Town Centre and immediate surrounds. The review follows on from new planning controls introduced in March 2014 through the Department of Planning and Environment's (DPE) Urban Activation Precinct (UAP) Process, as well as Council boundary changes occurring in May 2016 under which Epping Town Centre came to be contained within the City of Parramatta (having previously been split between Parramatta City and Hornsby Shire Councils).
2. The intended outcome of the Epping Planning Review is to create a unified planning framework for the Epping Town Centre and its immediate surrounds, including one set of LEP and DCP controls, a unified development contributions framework and one public domain plan.
3. The Epping Planning Review has two stages. Stage 1 has involved undertaking technical studies and community consultation to inform Stage 2, which will involve preparing the aforementioned unified planning framework.
4. Following two briefings with the Epping Ward Councillors in October 2017 in relation to the Epping Planning Review, it is considered timely to present to Council an update on the Epping Planning Review project, as well as several interrelated planning matters happening concurrently in Epping Town Centre. This includes:
 - a. Current development activity in Epping Town Centre;
 - b. Regional/District planning matters;
 - c. LEP matters;
 - d. DCP matters; and
 - e. Developer Contributions framework matters.

EPPING PLANNING REVIEW - STAGE 1

5. Stage 1 of the Epping Planning Review involved:
 - a. A public launch in mid-December 2016;
 - b. Preparation of four technical studies on Heritage, Social Infrastructure, Commercial Floorspace and Traffic (Interim) by consultants;
 - c. Urban design and planning analysis undertaken by Council;

- d. Community consultation in December 2016 and Council Officer attendance at various community events such as Australia Day and Lunar New Year in early 2017 to inform the community of the review being undertaken;
 - e. Community consultation in March and April 2017 which informed the technical studies and Discussion Paper;
 - f. Preparation and public exhibition (21 June 2017 – 19 July 2017) of the Epping Planning Review Discussion Paper, informed by the steps described above; and
 - g. Additional community consultation (workshop series) during public exhibition of the Discussion Paper.
6. Stage 1 of the Epping Planning Review was largely completed (with the exception of a Final Traffic Study, as discussed further in this report) by way of a report to Council at its meeting of 14 August 2017 (Item 11.3). At this meeting, Council endorsed a suite of principles to guide Stage 2 of the Epping Planning Review; the endorsed principles are included at **Attachment 1** and are discussed in more detail in the next section of this report.
7. Council's full resolution from 14 August 2017 in relation to the Epping Planning Review is included at **Attachment 2** of this report. An update on the action items from this resolution is provided below.
- a. Consistent with part (c)1 of the resolution, the Epping Ward Councillors were briefed on the Epping Planning Review via two briefing sessions held on 17 and 23 October 2017. At these briefing sessions, there was discussion relating to the traffic implications of some of the endorsed principles and additional information being provided regarding this. In response to discussion at these briefing sessions, and to provide further information in relation to traffic and other matters, this update report is provided for Council's consideration.
 - b. Part (c)2 of the resolution requires that a report to Council be prepared to commence Stage 2 of the Epping Planning Review once the Councillors have been briefed. This future report is discussed in further detail in the "Next Steps" section of this report.
 - c. Consistent with Part (e) of the resolution, Council wrote to the community thanking them for their feedback and advising them on the outcome of Stage 1 and next steps.
 - d. Consistent with Part (f) of the resolution, Council wrote to the Minister for Planning, Greater Sydney Commission, Department of Planning and Environment, Transport for NSW and Roads and Maritime Services to provide an update on the project and next steps.

EPPING PLANNING REVIEW - ENDORSED PRINCIPLES TO GUIDE STAGE 2

8. As discussed above, an extensive suite of principles to guide Stage 2 of the Epping Planning Review were endorsed by Council at its meeting of 14 August 2017. The endorsed principles are included in full at **Attachment 1** of this report, and are summarised in the following subsections. Status updates on actions currently being undertaken are also provided.

9. The principles endorse for two (2) of the heritage areas in question (being Rosebank Avenue and certain properties at Norfolk Road/Pembroke Street) and for the Rose Street precinct (located adjacent to the Essex Street Heritage Conservation Area) that facilitating development of 2 storey manor homes be pursued in response to existing heritage interface issues, but that 3 storey residential flat buildings with appropriate DCP controls also be tested through further work. The principles also endorse removal of the Heritage Conservation Area (HCA) notation at Rosebank Avenue and at No.s 1, 3 and 3A Norfolk Road and 25 Pembroke Street.
10. For the Essex Street area, the endorsed principles envision that the HCA notation be removed, that planning controls on the western side of Essex Street be amended to permit redevelopment to 2 storey manor homes, and that planning controls on the eastern side of Essex Street remain unchanged.
11. For Rockleigh Park, the endorsed principles envision that the component of Rockleigh Park zoned R4 be rezoned to the R3 zone, and that further urban design work be undertaken to determine other appropriate controls.
12. For all of the abovementioned areas (excluding Rockleigh Park) the principles state that the recommendations contained in the principles could proceed prior to completion of the Traffic Study, as they seek to urgently deal with existing unintended heritage interface issues.

Status update: This work has progressed and taken into account the following:

- a. **The need to brief Ward Councillors who have requested further information be provided these options; and**
- b. **It is acknowledged that the principles relating to these heritage precincts endorsed proceeding with these changes ahead of the Traffic Study. However, Council has statutory obligations when preparing any new planning controls to consider the traffic/transport impacts of any proposed changes, therefore, Council is not able to formally advance a Planning Proposal to change these planning controls without consideration of a traffic assessment. Once the Traffic Study is complete, Council may wish to prioritise advancing these amendments based on the further design work that Council officers have undertaken. Council does have the discretion to prioritise these changes ahead of others based on potential traffic impacts, but it must provide an assessment of the traffic implications.**

The progress on this work has been limited by the need to advance competing priorities for resourcing arising to assist new Councillors upon their election to Council.

13. The principles also endorse recommendations of the Hornsby Heritage Review Stage 6 relating to altering various heritage listings as well as preparation of a Planning Proposal to reflect these recommendations.

Commercial Floor Space

14. The principles endorse further work being undertaken to ensure that minimum 3 storey commercial podiums are delivered on all land zoned B2 (except at 240-244 Beecroft Road, as discussed further in this report), and acknowledge that this work may include investigation through the Traffic Study of additional residential floorspace and height to facilitate delivery of this commercial floorspace. The principles also endorse use of the technical study on commercial floorspace (which informed the Discussion Paper) to be used as an interim assessment measure for future Development Applications until more formal controls are in place.

Status Update: Council's Land Use Planning officers have been attending DA pre-lodgment meetings with Council's DA assessment officers and applicants in order to advise them of the need to provide appropriate levels of commercial floor space within the town centre in accordance with the Commercial Floorspace Needs Study.

15. The endorsed principles envision rezoning of the site at 240-244 Beecroft back to the B2 Local Centre zone (as was in place prior to DPE changing the zoning to the R4 High Density Residential Zone) to ensure an appropriate commercial floorspace contribution is made. This site is discussed in further detail later in this report. The principles also call for Council Officers to meet with Transport for NSW to discuss opportunities for the Epping rail station site to provide commercial floorspace.
16. The endorsed principles call for investigation of Council-owned sites in relation to both their potential capacity for commercial floorspace and their potential social/community role.

Status Update: The delivery of commercial floorspace and community facilities on Council-owned sites is still being investigated and Council officers will continue to work to better understand the community needs and commercial opportunities of these sites, as well as work with the proponents of any future Public-Private Partnerships to determine whether the Planning Proposal process can deliver an appropriate development outcome. Regardless, any future development scenarios for Council-owned sites (whether this is Council-led or through a partnership) will need to ensure that the traffic impact is tested as part of the Traffic Study.

Social Infrastructure

17. The endorsed principles call for Council to investigate multiple detailed options to ensure that open space needs in the area are met, and that various other Council planning activities relating to open space consider the community's feedback provided during the Epping Planning Review.
18. With regards to the Austino Planning Proposal, which includes the former bowling club site, the principles endorse progressing the Planning Proposal with Council as the Relevant Planning Authority (RPA), subject to the Traffic Study being completed prior to finalising densities. The principles also state that Council will negotiate with the developer to ensure that a suitable area of open space is provided. An update on this Planning Proposal is provided elsewhere in this report.

19. The principles state that there will be no net loss of community facility floorspace overall. Providing community infrastructure and civic focal points on both sides of the town centre is endorsed, with a community hub on one side, with adjunct uses on the other. Further feasibility testing should be undertaken to develop options for funding and delivering community facilities.

Status Update: Council's Social Outcomes unit will do this in conjunction with other relevant business units as part of the annual Operational Plan/Delivery Plan review process; this process would determine prioritisation and budget for future community facilities in Epping.

20. The endorsed principles call for preparation of a master plan for Dence Park in 2018/2019, and that this include a base assumption of an aquatic facility with 50m pool, consideration of multiple options for the Epping Aquatic Leisure Centre, as well as increasing the overall recreation uses of the site and adjoining sensitive bushland.

Status Update: Council's Place Services Unit has commenced the master plan process, beginning with preparing a brief for consultants.

Public Domain

21. The principles endorse preparation of appropriate DCP controls and a public domain plan that delivers through-block links and wider footpaths.

Status Update: Please refer to a later section of this report relating to a fast-tracked DCP amendment to provide wider footpaths.

Traffic

22. Several of the endorsed principles relating to traffic provided direction in relation to progressing current development proposals, as follows:
- a. The principles endorse completion of the Traffic Study prior to finalization of proposals seeking development uplift, so that traffic impacts can be properly understood. Furthermore, the principles state that unless innovative solutions or initiatives are found to significantly curb or restrict car ownership/traffic movements, that proposals from parties seeking uplift will not be able to progress. These solutions should be assessed once the Traffic Study is complete.
 - b. The principles endorse completion of the Traffic Study prior to finalization of current preliminary Planning Proposals and any future Planning Proposals, and also state that landowners seeking to pursue additional development uplift need to proceed through a formal Planning Proposal process (rather than as part of the Epping Planning Review Process)
 - c. With regards to the Austino Planning Proposal, the principles state that Council will seek to retain its RPA status for this proposal on the basis that the proposal cannot be finalized until the traffic study is complete. (Please refer to a later section of the report where the current status of this proposal is discussed in more detail.)
 - d. The endorsed principles call for a Councillor briefing in relation to the Rawson Street Car Park, in order to progress preliminary Planning Proposals involving this site (refer to later section of this report).

23. The other endorsed principles regarding traffic relate to parking and congestion issues. These principles endorsed the following:

- a. a review of the car parking rates across the relevant Hornsby and Parramatta DCPs in order to determine appropriate lower parking rates, which are to be tested via the Traffic Study.
- b. a further report to Council in relation to amending the Hornsby DCP (which relies on minimum parking rates) to be consistent with the Parramatta DCP (which relies on maximum rates).

Status update: This DCP amendment process has not commenced due to the potential for the Traffic Study to recommend changes to the parking rates in order to better encourage public transport usage. Changes to Council's parking DCP are subject to completion of the Traffic Study.

- c. to not proceed with a policy of providing an enhanced commuter car parking facility in the town centre.
- d. to further investigate the potential for a resident parking scheme.
- e. introduction of a car share scheme, and the potential for similar schemes to be provided form part of Stage 2 of the Planning Review.

Status Update: Council installed six (6) car share spaces in the Epping Town Centre between 15-25 November 2017. Further car share policy and implementation options can be considered following completion of the Traffic Study.

- f. that Council trial a "stop/go" traffic controller at the pedestrian crossing of Rawson Street.

Status Update: Planning for the trial has progressed, and the trial will proceed once school resumes in Term 1 (as it was considered that undertaking the trial during holidays when traffic patterns and pedestrian volumes are different would not provide reliable information upon which to evaluate the trial).

24. As noted above, several of the endorsed principles relate to finalisation of the Traffic Study, as discussed in more detail in the next section of this report.

EPPING PLANNING REVIEW - FINALISATION OF TRAFFIC STUDY

25. The remaining element of Stage 1 of the Epping Planning Review to be completed is the Traffic Study. It is acknowledged that the timelines for the completion of the Traffic Study have been amended to reflect delays in finalising the base traffic network model, which Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) needs to authorize before testing of the land use scenarios identified in the Epping Planning Review are carried out (i.e. Heritage Interface areas, additional commercial FSR, etc.) The major milestones and expected timeframes in relation to finalising the Traffic Study are now as follows:

- a. February 2018: RMS validation of final component of base model.
- b. February 2018: Scenario testing completed.
- c. March 2018: Draft Final Traffic Study to Council and RMS for review.
- d. April 2018: Final Traffic Study completed.

e. May 2018: Council report on Final Traffic Study with recommendations.

26. As confirmed in the Ward-based Councillor briefing sessions, the Traffic Study must be completed before Council Officers progress any Planning Proposal – whether Applicant-led, site-specific Planning Proposals or a Council-led Planning Proposal to amend controls in the Epping Town Centre (i.e. Stage 2 of the Epping Planning Review). It is acknowledged that the principles relating to heritage precincts endorsed proceeding with some changes ahead of the Traffic Study. However, as noted above, Council has statutory obligations when preparing any new planning controls to consider the traffic/transport impacts of any proposed changes, therefore Council is not able to formally advance a Planning Proposal to change these planning controls without consideration of a traffic assessment. Once the Traffic Study is complete, Council may wish to prioritise advancing these amendments based on the further design work that Council officers have undertaken. Council does have the discretion to prioritise these changes ahead of others based on potential traffic impacts, but it must provide an assessment of the traffic implications.

CURRENT DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY IN EPPING

27. Simultaneous to the Epping Planning Review project, there has been significant development activity via Planning Proposals (PPs), Development Applications (DAs) and construction of approved DAs underway in Epping Town Centre and surrounds since late 2014. The following subsections provide updates on this activity.

Austino Planning Proposal

28. A Planning Proposal for land at 2-18 Epping Road, 2-4 Forest Grove and 725 Blaxland Road (former bowling club site) was initially lodged with Hornsby Shire Council in 2015, but came to be located within City of Parramatta Council following the May 2016 Council boundary changes. Figure 1 shows the land affected by this PP.



Figure 1: Land affected by the Austino Planning Proposal denoted in solid red line (from applicant's Urban Design Report)

29. This PP has a complex history, which is summarised as follows:

- a. **December 2015:** The original PP was lodged with Hornsby Shire Council (HSC).
- b. **January 2016:** Parramatta City Council (PCC) was formally invited to prepare a submission which HSC would have regard to in making a decision to support or refuse the application.
- c. **March 2016:** PCC endorsed a submission to HSC (refer **Attachment 3**) which established seven planning principles that this PP should address; these principles are discussed in further detail below.
- d. **April 2016:** HSC refused the PP. The applicant subsequently sought a pre-Gateway review process through DPE.
- e. **May 2016:** Council boundary changes occurred, and the site came to be located in City of Parramatta. DPE also formally notified Council that the applicant had sought a pre-Gateway review.
- f. **November 2016:** DPE wrote to Council to advise that the PP could proceed to Gateway determination “subject to further consideration as indicated in the advice provided by the [Joint Regional Planning] Panel” as part of its pre-Gateway review. This advice included that the proposal “be part of the current Council traffic review of the whole of Epping Town Centre and that the outcomes of that review shall inform the final decision of the Floor Space Ratio for the site”.
- g. **December 2016:** In response to letter from DPE, Council wrote to DPE requesting to be the Relevant Planning Authority (RPA) for this PP. This request was on the basis that the Gateway would be issued after the exhibition of the Epping Planning Review Stage 1 materials (Stage 1 had just commenced at that time).
- h. **March 2017:** DPE appointed Council as the RPA on the basis described above.
- i. **June-July 2017:** The Epping Planning Review Discussion Paper and associated technical studies (including interim traffic study) were exhibited for a four-week period.
- j. **August 2017:** Principles to guide Stage 2 of the Epping Planning Review were endorsed by the Administrator.
- k. **September 2017:** Following a request from the applicant, DPE wrote to Council requesting Council to provide its reasoning as to why an alternate RPA should not be appointed, or to advise that it would submit the proposal for Gateway based on the information available at that time.
- l. **October 2017:** Council responded to the above letter, stating its reasoning for remaining the RPA, as summarised below:
 - i. RMS’s support for the density sought in this PP was only on account of amendments being made to the PP regarding the number of car parking spaces on the site and additional traffic modelling being carried out;
 - ii. The progression of the PP is dependent on the outcomes of the Epping Traffic Study (consistent with the JRPP’s recommendation).

- iii. The Epping community expects that traffic matters will be well understood before any decision is made on proposals seeking uplift within and immediately around the town centre.
 - iv. The issue of precedent that would be created should the RPA role be removed from this planning proposal.
30. On **1 December 2017**, Council received a letter from DPE advising that it had appointed the Sydney Central City Planning Panel as RPA, meaning that Council no longer has RPA status for this proposal. This is not consistent with the endorsed principles discussed in this report, which sought to retain Council's RPA status.
31. DPE has advised Council that it anticipates that any Gateway determination for this proposal would require completion of the Traffic Study and any necessary amendments to the Planning Proposal prior to exhibition.
32. DPE has also advised Council that there will be formal consultation with Council on this Planning Proposal as it proceeds. Therefore, this report seeks Council's endorsement of principles to guide assessment and preparation of a future formal submission on this matter. Council officers have prepared principles for Council's consideration as follows; these principles align with PCC's original submission to HSC on this Planning Proposal (refer **Attachment 3**), as well as relevant principles established through Stage 1 of the Epping Planning Review:
 - a. No more than 50% of Forest Park should be overshadowed in midwinter between the hours of 10am-2pm.
 - b. In the case that there are open space dedications to Council, these should be at grade, contain deep soil zones and should be unencumbered with basement car parking.
 - c. The proposal shall step down across the site from Epping Road to Forest Park, both in levels and in scale to demonstrate a respect for the interface between the site and Forest Park.
 - d. Building heights should better respond to the surrounding residential zoned land context and respect proximity to Forest Park.
 - e. Linked residential towers with large floor plates shall be avoided to minimize cumulative bulk and scale impacts.
 - f. The design efficiencies of residential Gross Floor Area (GFA) should be based on a Gross Building Area (GBA) x 75%.
 - g. A design excellence competition process should be put in place in addition to the site specific DCP.
 - h. Any roads/pedestrian links provided through the site should:
 - i. Provide public address and surveillance;
 - ii. If they relate or link to Forest Park, they should resolve levels and scale along the park interface;
 - iii. Be embellished with paving, bollards, furniture and street lighting; and
 - iv. Be dedicated to Council and delivered via VPA with the relevant public domain guidelines to inform the quality of the finishes.

- i. VPA contribution/effort could also be directed to upgrading existing degraded facilities in the park (amenities, playground equipment, furniture, paving etc).
 - j. No net loss of public open space.
 - k. The proposal should provide a suitable area of public open space which is appropriately sized and located.
 - l. The proposal should not be finalized until the Epping Traffic Study is completed.
33. Council is mindful that applying the above principles is likely to bring a reduction of built form, yield, height and density when compared to the proposal considered by Hornsby Shire Council.
34. Council officers are also progressing a formal valuation of the former Epping Bowling Club site, which forms part of this Planning Proposal.

State Significant Development at 240-244 Beecroft Road

35. There is a large site at 240-244 Beecroft Road which, until recently, was used as a tunneling and works site for the Sydney Metro Northwest project. The endorsed principles call for an appropriate amount of commercial floorspace to be provided as part of redevelopment of this site (whilst retaining current residential floorspace capacity).

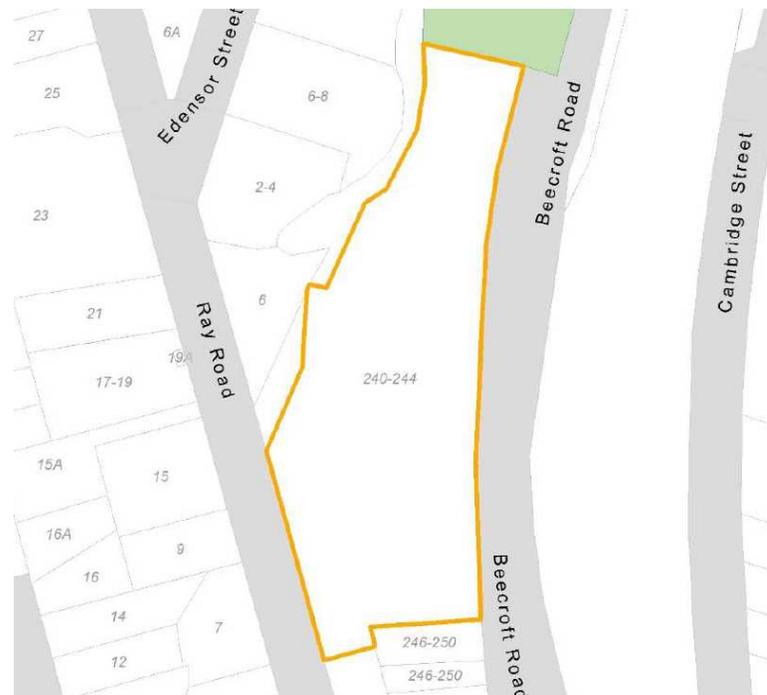


Figure 4: UrbanGrowth site at 240-244 Beecroft Road

36. On 27 September 2017, a State Significant Development (SSD) application for a predominantly residential development at this site was lodged with DPE. The application contains an indicative development yield of 450 units.
37. On 9 October 2017, Council endorsed a Lord Mayoral minute outlining Council's objection to the progression of the SSD application until:
- a. *"There is a significant increase in the quantum of commercial floors space provided on this site; and*

- b. The traffic study currently underway for the Epping Town Centre is complete.”*

Council also resolved to write to the Local MP, Minister for Planning and DPE requesting support for Council’s position on this matter.

38. On 24 October 2017, Secretary’s Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) were issued for this project. Council was given the opportunity to comment on the SEARs, and raised three in-principle issues with the project, summarised as follows:
- a. The Traffic Study is not yet complete, and will likely include a proposal that will make use of part of this site to improve traffic conditions and the public domain. The proposed development of the site could make this impossible to achieve. Furthermore, the potential for confusion arising from the concurrent public release of the Traffic Study and the SSD would be a poor outcome.
 - b. Future controls from Stage 1 of the Epping Planning Review would require that this site provide significantly more commercial floor space than is currently proposed in the SSD application.
 - c. Council welcomed further discussion with DPE regarding the validity of the SSD pathway for this project.

Council also provided feedback on the SEARs, requesting that several of these were strengthened to achieve improved outcomes in matters such as social and environmental sustainability, public domain and design excellence. On 8 December 2017, revised SEARs were issued with minor changes.

39. On 1 December 2017, Landcom (the body responsible for the site disposal process) wrote to the Lord Mayor after having conducted a stakeholder engagement with Council, Mr Damien Tudehope MP, the Epping Chamber of Commerce and Epping residents to advise that Landcom will defer the release of the Expressions of Interest (EOI) for the site from early December 2017 to early 2018. The letter advised that this will allow Landcom and Transport for NSW to investigate the possibility of increasing the proposed commercial floorspace on this site from 700sqm to 2,000sqm.
40. As stated previously, the Epping Planning Review Stage 1 principles call for an appropriate amount of commercial floorspace to be provided as part of redevelopment of this site. It is Council officers’ view that 2,000sqm is not an appropriate amount, and that additional commercial floor space should be provided. This is based on the following:
- a. the site was previously zoned B2 and had commercial uses on site;
 - b. the Epping Planning Review Stage 1 principles endorse a minimum 3-storey podium for other land zoned B2 in the Epping Town Centre; and
 - c. the site area is approximately 13,342sqm, meaning that the proposed 2,000sqm constitutes only about 0.15:1 FSR for commercial uses.
41. It is recommended that Council reiterate its resolution of 9 October 2017 on this matter, specifically, that Council objects to the progression of this SSD application until:
- a. There is a significant increase in the quantum of commercial floor space provided on this site; and

- b. The Epping Traffic Study is complete.

Other planning and development activities in Epping Town Centre

- 42. Development Applications (DAs) in Epping Town Centre continue to be processed.
- 43. There are also two preliminary Planning Proposals involving Council-owned sites (inclusive of Council car park) at 51A and 51B Rawson Street. Consistent with the endorsed principles, Council has advised these applicants that current preliminary proposals will not be finalised prior to completion of the Traffic Study.

REGIONAL/DISTRICT PLANNING MATTERS

- 44. The Greater Sydney Commission (GSC) released new draft Region and District Plans in late 2017 for public consultation. In the draft *Central City District Plan*, Epping is identified as a 'Strategic Centre' for 2036, with a jobs target of 1,900 to 2,400 additional jobs for 2036.
- 45. Epping was not identified as a higher-order centre in either of the two previous draft subregional/district plans (the draft *West Central Subregion Draft Subregional Strategy 2007* and the draft *West Central District Plan 2016*). These plans identified Epping as a "Town Centre" and "Local Centre", respectively. Thus the role of Epping appears to have been recently elevated from a lower-order to a higher-order centre. However, the 'Strategic Centre' category is not clearly defined in the 2017 draft plans, and no explanation or justification has been provided for this change. The change has also occurred ahead of completion of the Epping Traffic Study, which will guide the centre's capacity for further growth.
- 46. Council's submission to the GSC on the draft Region and District Plans supported the relevant Action identified in the draft District Plan, which was to "*continue the review of planning controls for Epping in collaboration with State agencies*". Council's submission also offered feedback on the vision expressed for Epping, as summarised in the following points:
 - a. Council considers that Epping is less advanced in terms of its development as a strategic centre, and requests stronger guidance from GSC relating to the role of strategic centres (and Epping in particular);
 - b. Council notes that the vision for the centre expressed in the draft *District Plan* requires a genuine commitment from State government in all its respective areas of responsibility (including evidence-based policy making, policy implementation, infrastructure investment and governance) to ensure that any expanded role of the centre is a successful one;
 - c. Council strongly believes that with the support of improved transport, social and recreational infrastructure and public domain investments, the role of Epping as an important business precinct could be heightened; and
 - d. Any review of the planning controls for Epping must closely involve the community likely to be affected by the outcomes of the review.

47. Council's submission made the following recommendations relating to Epping:

- *That the final plans provide stronger guidance on the role of strategic centres, and Epping in particular.*
- *That the GSC, DPE and UrbanGrowth NSW work with Council to ensure that any review of planning controls for Epping closely involves the community.*

48. Council officers also note that the draft District Plans work to a timeframe of 2036, and the Region Plan presents a vision to 2056. These longer-term timeframes suggest that strategic centres could develop incrementally over the medium- to longer-term. This contrasts with the intense level of development that Epping has experienced in the past few years, and which is forecast for the next few years (as discussed previously in this report).

LEP MATTERS (HORNSBY LEP 2013 – HOUSEKEEPING AMENDMENT)

49. A Housekeeping Amendment to Hornsby LEP 2013 (which was commenced by Hornsby Shire Council prior to council boundary changes in May 2016) was notified on 29 September 2017. This Amendment included some minor changes applying to land in and around Epping Town Centre, as follows:

- a. Minor boundary adjustments to the zoning map to align with land parcel boundaries;
- b. A change of attribution for the 72m height limit from "AA" to "AA2" (the 72m height remains as is); and
- c. Amendment of some minimum lot size requirements at land zoned R3 and R4 (generally around Hazelwood Pl, Essex St, Derby St and Maida Rd) to correspond with previous changes to related planning controls.

This Housekeeping Amendment was administrative in nature, and does not impact the Epping Planning Review.

DCP MATTERS (FAST TRACKED AMENDMENTS TO PARRAMATTA DCP 2011 – PUBLIC DOMAIN)

50. The Epping Planning Review Discussion Paper undertook preliminary analysis identifying the need for amendments for ground floor setbacks in parts of the Town Centre. As part of the suite of principles endorsed on 14 August 2017, Council endorsed the following relevant principle:

That as part of Stage 2 of the Epping Planning Review, that Council prepare appropriate DCP controls and a public domain plan that deliver through-block links and wider footpaths.

51. Since the new planning controls were introduced in March 2014, most DAs in Epping's B4 Mixed Use zone have affected sites on the eastern side of the Town Centre (formerly Hornsby Shire Council area). However, during late 2017, several major land owners on the western side of the Town Centre commenced development proposals (or discussion about potential proposals). Whilst wider footpaths on the eastern side of the Town Centre have largely been delivered through the planning framework and DA processes, widening the footpath on the western side of the Town Centre is now of critical importance in light of significant developer interest and expected increases in pedestrian volumes.

52. The current DCP controls contained within Parramatta DCP 2011 are not considered adequate to deliver the desired outcome of wider footpaths. Council considered a report on this matter on 18 December 2017 which proposed to increase the full building setback from 0m to 1.5m along Beecroft Road (as well as parts of High and Bridge streets). In relation to this matter, Council resolved:
- (a) **That** the Council resolves the proposed changes to amend the Parramatta DCP 2011 by preparing a public exhibition as outlined in this report.
 - (c) **That** the CEO be given delegation to authorise the DCP exhibition material prior to proceeding to public exhibition in early 2018.
 - (d) **Further, that** a report be considered by Council on outcomes of the public exhibition of the DCP amendment.
53. Exhibition of these amendments commenced on 24 January 2018, and the exhibition outcomes will be reported back to Council in March/April 2018.

DCP MATTERS (AMENDMENTS TO HORNSBY DCP 2013 RELATING TO TREE PRESERVATION)

54. On 10 July 2017, Council resolved to prepare draft amendments to Hornsby DCP 2013 for public exhibition that have the effect of applying the tree preservation controls in Section 5.4 of Parramatta DCP 2011 to land now contained within City of Parramatta which was previously within Hornsby LGA. The draft amendments also update the controls so they are consistent with the new Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 and State Environmental Planning Policy (vegetation in non-rural areas) 2017. These draft amendments were exhibited from 18 October – 17 November 2017. Council officers are currently preparing a briefing session for Councillors and subsequent report to Council regarding the outcomes of this exhibition; this report is planned for February/March 2018, once a Councillor briefing session has taken place.

DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS MATTERS (NEW CONTRIBUTIONS PLANS RELATING TO EPPING TOWN CENTRE)

55. At its meeting of 13 November 2017 (Item 11.6), Council adopted new Section 94/94A Plans for the area transferred from Hornsby to City of Parramatta as part of council boundary changes in May 2016. These plans were predominantly required to support infrastructure demand resulting from the growth occurring in Epping Town Centre and will ensure that funds collected within the area now located in City of Parramatta are spent in that area. These plans came into effect on 6 December 2017.

EXPECTED NEXT STEPS

56. Expected timeframes for the individual matters discussed in this report have been provided where possible. It is expected that the outcomes of Council's consideration of a future report to begin Stage 2 of the Epping Planning Review (consistent with part (c)2 of the resolution outlined earlier in this report) will provide more clarity as to the direction for Stage 2 of the Epping Planning Review, as well as other related matters. The timing of this future report depends on the finalisation of the Traffic Study which, as noted previously, is currently expected in May 2018.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

57. As evidenced in this report, there continues to be a significant number of interrelated planning and development matters underway at Epping Town Centre, affecting the formal completion of Stage 1 and commencement of Stage 2 of the Epping Planning Review.
58. It is recommended that Council note the updates on various matters provided in this report and that, following completion of the Traffic Study, a further report to commence Stage 2 of the Epping Planning Review process is prepared for Council's consideration.

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Director Strategic Outcomes and Development

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A/Director City Services

ATTACHMENTS:

- | | | |
|---|--|-------------|
| 1 | Endorsed Principles - Stage 1 Epping Planning Review | 8
Pages |
| 2 | Council resolution - Epping Planning Review - Completion of Stage 1 and Commencement of Stage 2 - 14 August 2017 | 3
Pages |
| 3 | Submission to Hornsby Shire Council - Planning Proposal - Epping and Blaxland Roads, Epping - March 2016 | 23
Pages |

REFERENCE MATERIAL