



Epping Planning Review

Discussion Paper

June 2017

How do I make a submission?

This Discussion Paper is being exhibited from Wednesday, 21 June 2017 to Wednesday, 19 July 2017. You can make a submission during this time.

Please quote reference no. **F2017/000210** in your submission.

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City of Parramatta Council
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WHAT HAPPENS TO MY SUBMISSION?

All submissions will be carefully considered by senior staff and reported to Council in August 2017, prior to commencing Stage 2. Letters of acknowledgment will be provided for written submissions.

WHAT IS ON EXHIBITION?

The Discussion Paper is being exhibited in conjunction with the following supporting information:

1. Technical Studies:

- a. Heritage Review (prepared by City Plan Services).
- b. Commercial Floorspace Study (prepared by SGS Economics & Planning).
- c. Social Infrastructure Study (prepared by Council's Social Outcomes team).
- d. Interim Traffic Modelling Report (prepared by EMM).

2. Phase 1 Consultation Report (prepared by Straight Talk).

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Due to the introduction of new planning controls in 2014 coupled with a strong housing market, the Epping Town Centre is experiencing unprecedented levels of redevelopment and change, particularly on its northern and eastern sides. This redevelopment impacts residents significantly, particularly with regards to view impacts, reduction in tree canopy, parking and traffic, and construction noise.

New development is changing the amount of commercial floor space available within the Epping Town Centre, creating uncertainty for existing businesses who want to remain in the centre. This is not an ideal outcome for current and future residents.

New development is also increasing the centre's residential population. At the current rate of development, approximately 10,000 new residents will move into the centre in the next five to seven years. This new population will rely on the commercial and community offerings of the Epping Town Centre, putting pressure on existing infrastructure. While the train station is a major asset and the North West Metro Line will be installed in the first half of 2019, access into, out of and through the centre for private vehicles continues to be an issue.

These changes are impacting on local residents, who see the character of their local area changing rapidly. Some of these impacts are temporary – like construction traffic and noise – while others will be more permanent. The positive elements of density, such as economic diversity and infrastructure investment, are not occurring at the same rate as the redevelopment.

On 12 May 2016, the council amalgamations process saw the Epping Town Centre fall entirely within the jurisdiction of the new City of Parramatta. This presents an opportunity to address these pressing issues and plan for the function of the centre over the next 20 years.

1.2 Strategic context

The most recent strategic planning document with implications for Epping is the Greater Sydney Commission's *Draft West Central District Plan* (Draft District Plan). The Draft District Plan was published in late 2016, and adopts a timeframe of 2016-2036 for planning for the West Central District. The Draft District Plan makes numerous references to the Epping Town Centre:

- *Examples of significant concurrent investment in growth and renewal opportunities include...the renewal and revitalisation of Epping Town Centre* (pg.31)
- *In the West Central District, Epping and Merrylands are examples of local centres that, with the right planning and investment, could reach their potential as emerging commercial and retail nodes* (pg.48).
- The Draft District Plan recognises that the Epping Town Centre Priority Precinct is forecast to deliver up to 3,750 dwellings in the next 5 years after its rezoning in March 2014 (pg.93), although this figure has since been revised to 5,500 dwellings.

- City of Parramatta will *progress the delivery of Epping Town Centre urban renewal with the Greater Sydney Commission and Department of Planning and Environment* (pg.99).

The Draft District Plan identifies two distinct centre hierarchies: Local Centres and Strategic Centres (as detailed in the Department's *A Plan for Growing Sydney*). Epping is identified as a Local Centre as per the comments above; however, the Local Centre category is somewhat ambiguous with 30 to 40 local centres identified within the West Central District. Aside from the points above, there is very little about what the Epping Town Centre might become in 2036 in this document.

Please refer to Appendix 1 for a more detailed discussion of Epping's role within the metropolitan strategic planning framework.

1.3 Purpose of the Discussion Paper

This Discussion Paper is the major milestone for Stage 1 of the Epping Planning Review. The purpose of the Discussion Paper is to:

- explain the background and context around the need to undertake the Epping Planning Review;
- propose appropriate options, recommendations, and suggest principles for adoption, taking into consideration both technical study findings and community opinion; and
- invite comment on the Discussion Paper so the community can assist Council to develop new planning controls for the Epping Town Centre and immediate surrounds.

1.4 Study area

Figure 1 illustrates the extent of the study area for the Epping Planning Review. Despite the boundaries in Figure 1, Epping residents utilise community facilities situated outside the study area; these social infrastructure assets have been considered as part of the Epping Planning Review project.

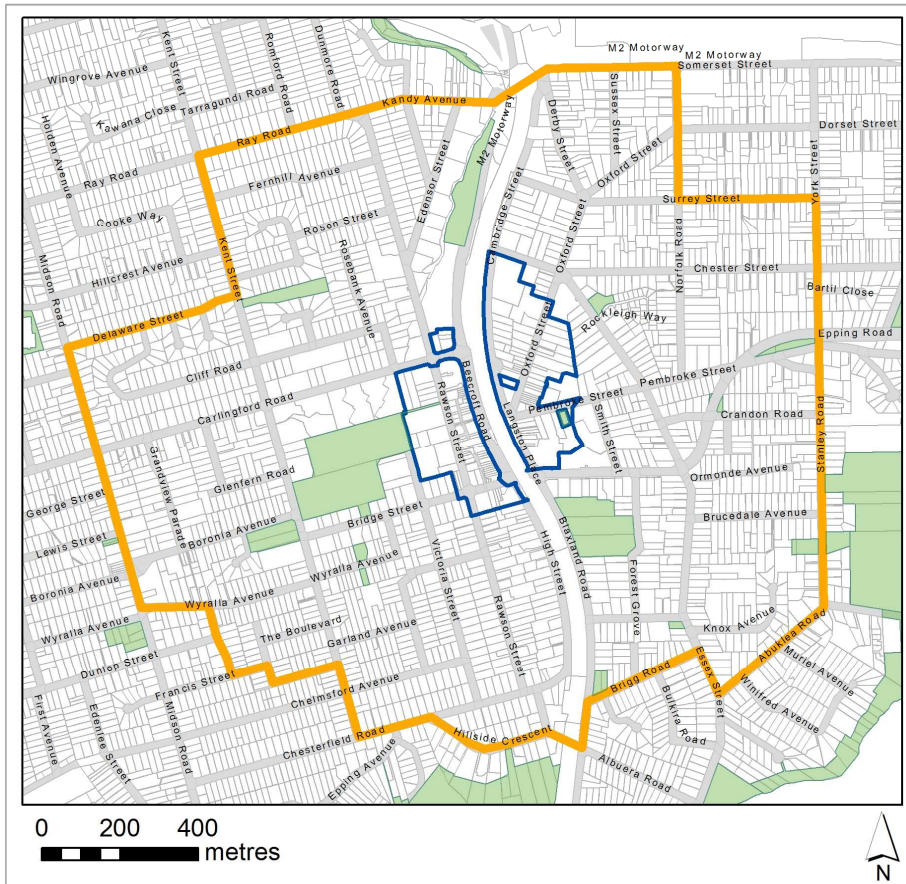


Figure 1 Epping Planning Review study area showing the town centre and immediate surrounds

1.5 Structure of the Discussion Paper

This Discussion Paper is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 2 Background**
This chapter explains some background including the NSW Department of Planning's (the Department) Priority Precinct process and the new planning controls of March 2014.
- **Chapter 3 Why is the Epping Planning Review needed?**
This chapter explains why the Epping Planning Review is being undertaken by the City of Parramatta.
- **Chapter 4 What is the Epping Planning Review?**
This chapter details what the Epping Planning Review involves.
- **Chapter 5 Community Engagement**
This chapter summarises the community consultation undertaken since the public forum (held on 14 December 2016) to the present, including the Phase 1 community workshops held in May 2017.
- **Chapter 6 Introduction to the Technical Studies**
This chapter introduces the technical studies and supporting analyses which have informed this Discussion Paper.
- **Chapter 7 Heritage Review**

This chapter presents the findings from the heritage review (prepared by City Plan), summarises findings from the Phase 1 community workshops, and presents options and recommendations that seek to resolve the tensions between the technical findings and community opinion.

- **Chapter 8 Commercial Floorspace Study**
This chapter presents the findings from the Commercial Floorspace Study (prepared by SGS Economics), summarises the findings from the Phase 1 community workshops, and presents options and recommendations to resolve issues around how commercial land uses will evolve in this centre over the next 20 years.
- **Chapter 9 Social Infrastructure Study**
This chapter presents the findings from the Social Infrastructure Study (prepared by Council's Social Outcomes team), summarises the findings from the Phase 1 community workshops, and presents options and recommendations to resolve social infrastructure capacity issues over the next 20 years.
- **Chapter 10 Public Domain Analysis**
This chapter acknowledges public domain issues that emerged from the technical studies and from the Phase 1 community workshops, and presents urban design recommendations for the public domain.
- **Chapter 11 Traffic and Land Use Options Study**
This chapter presents interim findings from the traffic and land use technical study, acknowledges feedback on traffic and land use issues that emerged from the Phase 1 community workshops, and presents guiding principles for further consultation.
- **Chapter 12 How to Make a Submission and Next Steps**
This chapter explains what the next steps are in the Epping Planning Review project including what happens after the exhibition of the Discussion Paper.

1.6 Supporting information

The following supporting information is being exhibited with this Discussion Paper:

- Heritage Review (prepared by City Plan Services).
- Commercial Floorspace Study (prepared by SGS Economics & Planning).
- Social Infrastructure Study (prepared by Council's Social Outcomes team).
- Interim Traffic Modelling Report (prepared by EMM).
- Phase 1 Community Consultation Report (prepared by Straight Talk).

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Epping Priority Precinct

In 2011, the former Hornsby Shire and Parramatta City Councils jointly prepared the *Epping Town Centre Study* in order to explore the potential for more dwellings and jobs around the Epping train station. The study was funded by the NSW Department of Planning and Environment's (the Department) Planning Reform Fund.

The *Epping Town Centre Study* was exhibited in late 2011. As a means of implementing this study, Hornsby Shire Council nominated the precinct as a Priority Precinct. This was endorsed by the NSW Government in October 2012, and meant that the State Government took full carriage of the planning process from that point.

As part of the Priority Precinct process, studies addressing urban design, traffic and economic feasibility were undertaken. These studies informed new planning controls for the town centre which concentrated growth close to the railway station. These controls came into effect in March 2014.

2.2 March 2014 planning controls

The new planning controls which came into effect in March 2014 are detailed in Appendix 2. In summary:

- For the former Hornsby Shire Council (north and eastern) portion of the town centre and surrounds, the B2 Local Centre and R4 High Density Residential zones were expanded with their respective building height and density controls increased. Also, three new Heritage Conservation Areas were created (Rosebank Avenue, East Epping and Essex Street).
- For the former Parramatta City Council (western) portion of the town centre and surrounds, the B2 Local Centre zone became the uniform zone with accompanying height and floor space ratio controls increased. There were no changes to the surrounding R2 Low Density and R4 High Density zones, including no height and density changes, and no changes to nearby Heritage Conservation Areas.

The March 2014 planning controls enabled development of up to 10,000 dwellings if all sites were to be developed to their total capacity. Whilst this is the theoretical capacity, it is unlikely that all sites would be developed to their maximum capacity, so the theoretical capacity is unlikely to be reached.

Initial Department of Planning projections suggested that 3,750 dwellings would be achieved within 5 years (assuming a 37.5% take-up rate of the 10,000 dwellings). However, the Department has recently revised this figure, indicating that 5,550 dwellings will be achieved within 5 years (a 55% take-up rate of the 10,000 dwellings). This revised figure may still be an underestimate as recent analysis undertaken by Council suggests that the take-up rate for redevelopment sites in Epping has been unprecedented. If applications continue to be lodged at the rate they have been since the new controls came into force, it may be that more than 5,550 dwellings will be achieved in this timeframe.

3.0 WHY IS THE EPPING PLANNING REVIEW NEEDED?

A number of factors have led the City of Parramatta to undertake the Epping Planning Review. These factors are explained in this chapter.

3.1 Council amalgamations

Council amalgamations in May 2016 saw the Epping Town Centre and immediate surrounds fall wholly within a new jurisdiction - the City of Parramatta Council.

Prior to this, the Epping Town Centre had been split between the former Parramatta City Council (PCC) to the west and the former Hornsby Shire Council to the north and east. This historic dual structure resulted in a complex planning control framework currently in place for the centre, including:

- two local environmental plans (*Parramatta Local Environmental Plan 2011* and *Hornsby Local Environmental Plan 2013*);
- two development control plans (*Parramatta Development Control Plan 2011* and *Hornsby Development Control Plan 2013*);
- three development contributions plans with different contributions rates across each development type (a Section 94A plan applying to the former PCC area, and a Section 94 plan and Section 94A Plan applying to the former Hornsby Shire area); and
- one public domain plan for the former Hornsby Shire Council area, with no corresponding public domain plan for the former PCC side.

The amalgamation between the former PCC and Hornsby Shire councils did not change or unify any planning controls, so an exercise of bringing all of the controls into a single framework is required to deliver consistency. (As an example, one difference is that *Hornsby LEP 2013* does not contain floor space ratio controls in residential zones, while *Parramatta LEP 2011* includes floor space ratio controls in these zones.) The objective of this exercise will be one LEP, one DCP, one development contributions plan, and one public domain plan applying to the entire town centre and immediate surrounds. These planning policy documents will also be informed by traffic and transport management analysis and Council's Social Infrastructure Strategy, which are being prepared in conjunction with this Discussion Paper and will continue to evolve in parallel with the planning policies described above.

3.2 Developer interest

The level of interest from landowners within the Epping Town Centre and immediate surrounds is one factor driving the Epping Planning Review. This interest is evident in Development Applications, Planning Proposals (requests for rezoning and/or density changes) and preliminary discussions regarding undertaking a Planning Proposal process.

Assuming that the Development Applications currently under construction, approved, under assessment or at a pre-lodgement stage are all constructed and fully occupied, they are expected to deliver **4,735 units (10,890 people** assuming a household size of 2.3 persons). This indicates a very rapid delivery of the Department's projected 5,500 dwellings over the next five years. If this rate of development activity continues, it is expected that more than 5,500 dwellings would be delivered in this centre. This unprecedented pace of redevelopment presents challenges for Council and the State

government in delivering the required infrastructure to accompany that population growth.

In addition to the Development Application activity, there is also a lodged Planning Proposal, two preliminary Planning Proposals, and two additional sites where landowners have expressed an interest in a Planning Proposal process.

Current Development Application and Planning Proposal activity in Epping is discussed in further detail at **Appendix 3**.

3.3 Poor built form transition – Epping Town Centre north and east

The new planning controls which came into effect in March 2014 rezoned some R2 Low Density Residential zoned land located to the north and east of the town centre to R4 High Density Residential. These changes resulted in:

- portions of the newly identified Rosebank Avenue and Essex Street HCAs (zoned R2) abutting land zoned R4 where the R4 sites were permitted a building height of 17.5 metres (5 storeys), and
- residential blocks of R2 zoned land located in the vicinity of Rose Street and Rockleigh Streets abutting land zoned R4 where the R4 sites were permitted a building height of 17.5 metres (5 storeys).

Redevelopment in these areas where there is an interface between R2 and R4 zones across a property boundary has resulted in new 5 storey residential flat buildings directly overlooking low-density residential properties located within Heritage Conservation Areas.

In order to better understand these interface issues, Council commissioned a Heritage Review and undertook its own analysis to assess these interface and other heritage matters raised by the Epping community since 2014. The findings are discussed in Chapter 7.

3.4 Loss of commercial floor space

In 2011, the Epping Town Centre had 4,512 jobs with 55,000sqm of office floor space and 13,000sqm of retail floor space. However, since 2014, new development within the B2 Local Centre zone has reduced the amount of office floor space. Developers are replacing existing large scale office towers and small scale (2 and 3 storey) office development with **shop top housing**.

Shop top housing means development comprising apartments located above ground floor retail or business premises.

This trend is occurring despite the Hornsby DCP controls requiring non-residential uses on the first two to three floors of development in the B2 Local Centre zone. Parramatta's DCP controls are worded to allow a developer to provide "up to" 4 storeys of commercial development, but only for development on Beecroft Road. This wording leaves the choice of how many storeys between 1 and 4 in the hands of the developer and does not mandate a minimum floor area. This poor application of the planning controls needs to be better understood.

The Department's position on the reduction of commercial floor space is that, based on market analysis, demand for commercial floor space is expected to reduce as other

centres such as Macquarie Park and Norwest Business park become more attractive. However, the City of Parramatta does not accept this view.

In order to understand whether the loss of floor space is a positive trend, and to understand other commercial land use elements that may create a more successful town centre, Council commissioned SGS Economics to undertake a Commercial Floorspace Study. This is discussed in Chapter 8.

3.5 Social infrastructure

With unprecedented population growth occurring within the town centre and immediate surrounds, an understanding of the pressures on local infrastructure is urgently required. In 2016, Council commissioned consultants to undertake analyses of both open space and recreational facilities across the entire City of Parramatta. Council's Social Outcomes team has subsequently prepared the *Epping Social Infrastructure Study* which excises the Epping content from both analyses to create an infrastructure analysis for the Epping suburb. This analysis identifies Epping's existing social infrastructure, the potential infrastructure shortfalls arising from growth, and methods to address these shortfalls; it is discussed in Chapter 9.

3.5.1 Funding infrastructure

Following the Department's Priority Precinct process, Parramatta and Hornsby Shire Councils each received \$2.5 million from the NSW Government's Precinct Support Scheme to fund improvements to Boronia Park, West Epping Park, and other public domain assets.

The Hornsby and Parramatta development contribution frameworks have not yet been aligned into a single City of Parramatta framework. Currently, developers within the former Parramatta City Council area pay 1% of the cost of development for purposes of funding local road upgrades, open space and community facilities. In the former Hornsby Shire Council area, the Hornsby Shire Council Section 94 Plan currently collects around \$10,000 to \$20,000 for each new apartment for a range of local road upgrades, open space and community facilities (including an upgrade to Epping Library and new Epping Community Centre) and for other infrastructure identified in the Hornsby plan.

The increase in population will place additional pressure on infrastructure within the town centre. As such, the current development contributions framework requires review. To this end, Council is preparing a new draft Development Contributions Plan to address these issues. Before this plan can be implemented there will need to be further consultation and negotiation with Hornsby Council prior to it coming into force.

3.6 Traffic and access

The planning controls of 2014 focus new development within walking distance of Epping Railway Station and commercial town centre core. Providing higher density development in a town centre with excellent public transport connections encourages more efficient use of public transport services while also encouraging new residents and workers to walk between shops and services.

However, Epping also experiences significant traffic congestion and this was a consistent theme raised by community during the public exhibition of the Urban Activation Precinct and subsequent community consultation carried out as part of the

broader Epping Planning Review. There are significant concerns from the community around the impacts of the additional residential densities permitted under the 2014 planning controls given the additional population envisaged and the subsequent impacts on an already congested and constrained road network. There is also increasing developer pressure to increase residential densities (through Planning Proposals) beyond that permitted under the existing planning framework.

The purpose of the Epping Traffic Study is to provide an evidence-based approach to the assessment of existing and future traffic conditions under different development scenarios for the Epping Town Centre and surrounds, including potential infrastructure improvements.

3.6.1 Road infrastructure

The Epping Town Centre is located approximately 25 km north west of the Sydney CBD and 10km north east of the Parramatta CBD. The Epping Town Centre is located south of the Beecroft Road exit off the M2 Motorway. The Road network consists of several major roads, which serve as part of the regional network, including Beecroft Road, Ray Road, Carlingford Road, Bridge Street and High Street on the western and on the eastern side, Epping Road, Oxford Street and Blaxland Road. A number of these major roads including Beecroft Road, Carlingford Road, Blaxland Road and Epping Roads are owned and managed by the State Government (Roads and Maritime Services or RMS). Figure 2 illustrates some of the major roads through the town centre.

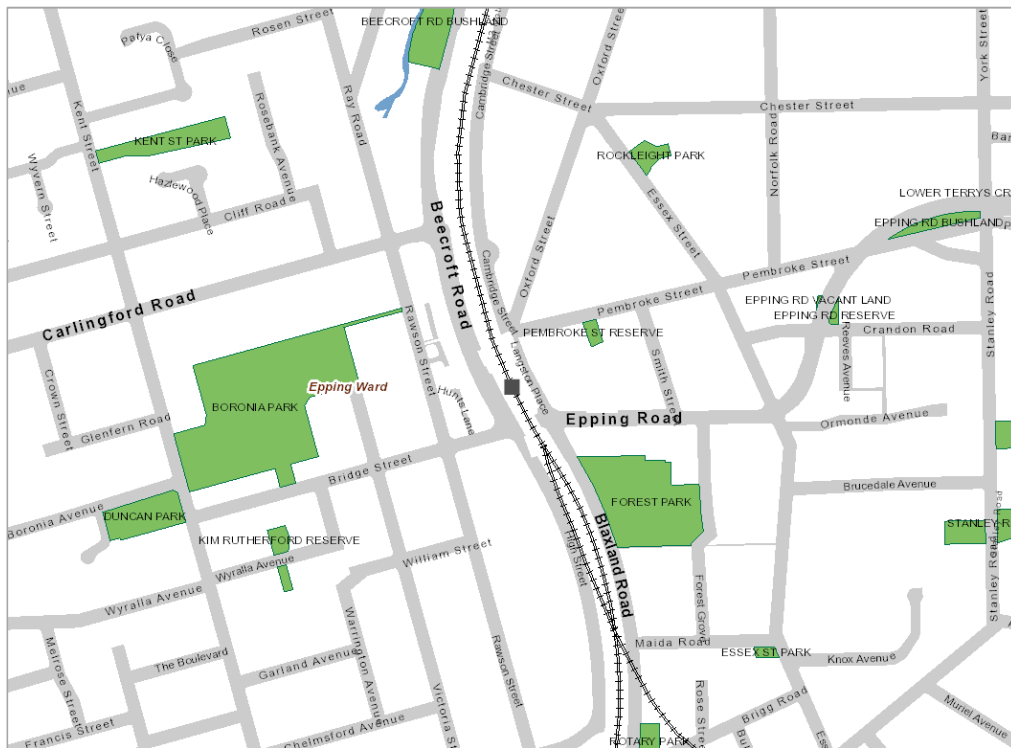


Figure 2 Road network map

Traffic congestion in peak hours is a significant issue in the town centre. Vehicle queues typically extend for significant distances in peak periods along Carlingford Road, Beecroft Road and Epping Road as people try to access, or more typically pass through, the town centre. In particular, there is a high volume of through

traffic in the Epping Town Centre with 89% of all AM and PM peak traffic on the Rail Bridge having the origins and destinations of their trips outside the Epping Town Centre and surrounds (Halcrow 2011). This has flow on effects for local streets such as Rawson Street and Langston Place

Traffic and transport impacts were considered as part of the UAP process for Epping and was informed by a Transport Study prepared by Halcrow in 2011 for Hornsby Shire Council, former Parramatta City Council and NSW Department of Planning. The Study recommend a series of works to assist with managing traffic congestion in the Epping Town Centre.

The NSW Government Housing Acceleration Fund has since allocated funding for three intersection upgrades (Carlingford Road/Beecroft Road, Essex Street/Epping Road, and Epping Road/Blaxland Road) and widening of Epping Road to address the performance of intersections, travel times, congestion, pedestrian facilities and road safety. Construction of the Carlingford Road/Beecroft Road intersection started in late April 2016, with work expected to be completed by September 2017. The other traffic works will start on Monday 12 June 2017 and take 15 months to complete. The work will include the widening of Epping Road westbound between Essex Street and Blaxland Road and upgrading of the Epping Road and Essex Street intersection.

The proposed railway bridge widening is supported by the RMS, however further work still needs to be carried out to determine its feasibility due to current engineering constraints and funding implications.

3.6.2 Railway infrastructure

Epping train station is located on the T1 North Shore, Northern and Western Line with regular services to Central via Chatswood and Strathfield, Hornsby and Central Coast. Train services will improve with the introduction of the Sydney Metro Norwest project (scheduled for completion in 2019) and will further improve accessibility into Epping, particularly from the north west of Sydney (refer to Figure 3). Sydney Metro Northwest is an integrated transport initiative from Rouse Hill through to Chatswood. It will integrate directly with the existing Epping to Chatswood railway corridor to allow the new trains to operate a distance of 36km between Rouse Hill and Chatswood. In peak hours, it is expected that there will be a train at least every 4 minutes/15 trains per hour and they will run in both directions between Epping and Chatswood during the peak – almost four times the number of trains currently running in the peak times.



Figure 3 Chatswood to Epping and North West Metro lines (extract: Sydney Trains network map)

As part of converting the existing suburban line between Epping and Chatswood to accommodate the new Metro Service, upgrades will be needed to reconfigure existing stations (such as Epping) to include new cabling, power and signalling systems and platform screen doors to enable Metro integration.

From late 2018, buses will replace trains for around seven months between Epping and Chatswood whilst the line is converted to metro operations.

3.6.3 Buses

Epping is currently well served by buses with bus terminals located on both sides of the train station. Most of the buses that traverse Epping also feed passengers to and from the station with the exception of those services that now remain on the M2 Motorway since the widening work was carried out on the M2 Motorway.

Epping residents have access to a range of regular bus services travelling to both the Sydney CBD and Parramatta CBD. Bus routes also service other employment, education and shopping precincts such as Macquarie Park, Macquarie University and Chatswood as well as services to Carlingford and Eastwood local centres.

4.0 WHAT IS THE EPPING PLANNING REVIEW?

The Epping Planning Review project is identified in Council's *Operational Plan 2016/2017* under Action 2.4 "Review of Epping Town Centre Planning Controls". Council's current draft *Operational Plan 2017/2018* sees Council continuing to work with stakeholders on key precincts such as Epping. The *Draft West Central District Plan* also foresees that Council will progress the delivery of the Epping Town Centre urban renewal with the Greater Sydney Commission and the Department of Planning and Environment (pg.99).

The Epping Planning Review project involves two stages which are summarised in the sections below.

4.1 Stage 1 of the Epping Planning Review

Commencing in December 2016, the Epping Planning Review was launched via a public forum at the Epping Arts Centre (14 December 2016). Stage 1 involves the preparation of technical studies, community consultation, and the preparation of a Discussion Paper for public comment. Figure 4 below illustrates the structure and various components of Stage 1 of the Epping Planning Review.

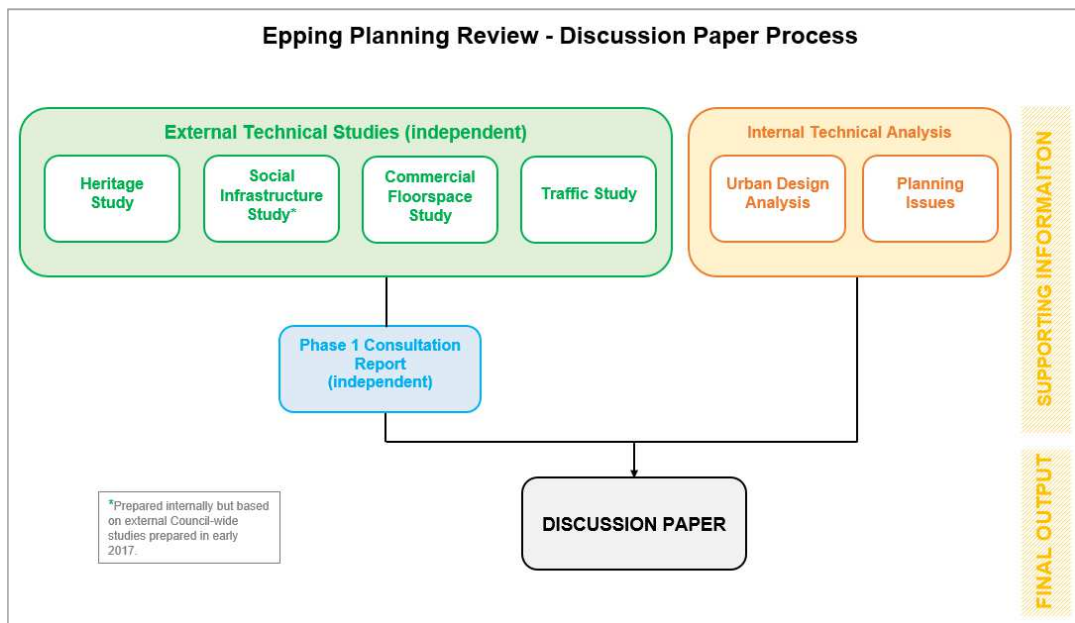


Figure 4 Process structure for Stage 1 of the Epping Planning Review

4.2 Stage 2 of the Epping Planning Review

Commencing in 2018, and relying on principles determined in Stage 1, Stage 2 will involve preparing a single set of planning controls for the town centre and immediate surrounds; this will include a new LEP, DCP, development contributions plan and public domain plan.

4.3 Stage agency buy-in

To ensure delivery of the Epping Planning Review, Council has established the Epping Planning Review State Agency Steering Group which has representation from the

Greater Sydney Commission, the Department of Planning and Environment, Transport for NSW and Roads and Maritime Services.

4.4 What the Epping Planning Review will not be addressing

The scope of the Epping Planning Review is limited to better managing the impacts of new development generated from planning controls that came into effect in March 2014 and allowing Council to assess other proposals for growth in the town centre. It is also intended to allow Council to progress decisions made by Hornsby Shire Council on specific heritage matters when it governed part of the Epping suburb.

The Epping Planning Review does **not** review the appropriateness of the 2014 planning controls (i.e. to reduce densities that were introduced in the planning controls of 2014 across the centre and surrounds).

5.0 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Council has undertaken targeted engagement on the Epping Planning Review since its inception in December 2016. The aim has been to provide high-quality and extensive community engagement, and to build capacity and understanding of planning concepts within the community. Consultation with a broad range of stakeholders has extended the project's reach to all cross sections of the community, including:

- Epping suburb residents,
- local businesses and their employees,
- local community organisations,
- State and local political representatives, and
- Epping visitors.

This chapter details the key engagement activities which have occurred to date.

5.1 Public forum (December 2016)

The Epping Planning Review commenced with a public forum held on 14 December 2016. Over 300 residents attended, along with State member for Epping, Damien Tudehope, West Central District Commissioner of the Greater Sydney Commission, Ed Blakely, and City of Parramatta Council's Administrator, Amanda Chadwick. During the forum, residents provided feedback on their concerns for Council's consideration. In early 2017, a summary of feedback from the forum was forwarded to those attendees who provided an email address. A summary of the resident feedback from the public forum is available at Appendix 4.

5.2 Project E-Newsletters

The attendees at the public forum were asked to provide their email address if they wanted be part of the mailing list to receive regular updates about the project and opportunities to participate. The e-newsletter list currently includes close to 400 recipients, and consists primarily of forum attendees.

5.3 Presence at Australia Day and Lunar New Year

Council held an information tent at the 2017 Australia Day event in Parramatta Park and Lunar New Year celebration in North Rocks on 28 January 2017. A total of 36 flyers were given out, including ten flyers in Chinese and one in Korean. Residents were also invited to sign up for email updates.

5.4 Imagine Epping

Council also ran a four-week online engagement campaign focusing on ideas for immediate improvements at Epping. From 3-29 March 2017, the "Imagine Epping" campaign asked residents, visitors and workers to submit their ideas for improving their experience of place and community in Epping. Participants could also vote and comment on ideas submitted on the website. 115 ideas were received via this platform, and included placing historical images of Epping around the town centre, improving traffic, and bringing back the suburb's leafy character in key locations. At the end of the campaign, an interdisciplinary panel of Council staff assessed the submissions. The winning submission was an idea to connect parks with walking routes, supported by landscaping, outdoor exercise equipment and a jogging and walking trail. This will be implemented in 2017/2018.

5.5 Project webpage

A dedicated project webpage was established in February 2017 and by early June 2017 had received 1,075 page views in its first three months of operation. The webpage allows the community to keep up-to-date with the Epping Planning Review, and includes information on the project context and timeline, description of the four technical studies, and downloadable information documents including flyers (English, Korean, Chinese) and presentations from Phase 1 community workshops.

5.6 Other correspondence from residents

Since last year's public forum, other correspondence has been received by Council via email, letter or phone call. Some of the matters raised in this correspondence are being addressed through Stage 1 of the Epping Planning Review. Appendix 5 provides a detailed summary of this correspondence, where it related to land use issues covered in this Discussion Paper. Issues raised by the community via this channel have been incorporated in this Discussion Paper where appropriate or responded to separately.

5.7 Community workshops (May 2017)

Prior to the release of the Discussion Paper, a number of community workshops were held in May 2017 to inform the technical studies prepared on heritage, social infrastructure and commercial floor space. The main purpose of the workshops was to discuss and gather information around community values in each of the respective technical areas. Each workshop included presentations from Council and the respective technical consultants, before workshop participants were asked to provide their input through facilitated table work.

The consultation workshops are summarised in Straight Talk's *Epping Town Centre: Phase 1 Community Consultation* which supports the Discussion Paper. Where participants provided preliminary submissions at the workshops, these were forwarded to the respective consultant for consideration in their respective reports.

5.7.1 Heritage Review Workshop

Two Heritage Review Workshops were held with regards to HCAs within the former Hornsby Shire Council area. One workshop was held for landowners within a HCA and the other was a general workshop held for any interested residents; these had 101 participants and 71 participants, respectively. The workshops explored potential land use scenarios and associated impacts in the HCAs. A detailed summary is contained in Straight Talk's *Epping Town Centre: Phase 1 Community Consultation*, and key issues arising are discussed in Chapter 7.

5.7.2 Social Infrastructure Workshop

The community workshop on the Social Infrastructure Study had 91 participants, which included residents and representatives from local interest groups. A detailed summary is contained in Straight Talk's *Epping Town Centre: Phase 1 Community Consultation*, and key issues arising are discussed in Chapter 9.

5.7.3 Commercial Floor Space Workshop

The community workshop on the Commercial Floorspace had 41 participants, which included local residents, business landowners and developers. A detailed summary is contained in Straight Talk's *Epping Town Centre: Phase 1 Community Consultation*, and key issues arising are discussed in Chapter 8.

5.8 Online survey

The workshops were supplemented by two online surveys to reach those who could not attend a workshop. The surveys related to Epping's heritage, social infrastructure, and commercial floor space respectively. The survey was also undertaken in person around Epping Town Centre and the train station during late May.

5.9 Exhibition consultation

Three Information Sessions will be undertaken during the exhibition of the Discussion Paper. The purpose of the workshops will be to further engage with the community on the options and recommendations raised in the Discussion Paper, and will focus on:

- Social infrastructure and commercial floor space
- Heritage
- Traffic

Details of the times and location for the workshops are available on Council's website (<https://www.cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au/about-parramatta/precinct-planning/epping-planning-review>) and have been forwarded to Epping Stakeholders in letters notifying them of the release of this Discussion Paper.

5.10 CALD-based consultation

In line with Council's commitment to engagement, the Epping Planning Review sought to engage with Epping's Korean and Chinese communities, these being the largest cultural and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities in the suburb. The CALD-based activities included:

- Epping Planning Review flyer translated into Korean and Chinese; and
- The Imagine Epping campaign received one submission in Korean. Communications and promotions for Imagine Epping were undertaken in Korean and Chinese. The website could also be translated into Chinese, Korean, and Hindi.

During the Discussion Paper exhibition, one workshop each will be conducted in Korean and Chinese. The CALD workshops are being promoted via public notices in local Korean/Chinese newspapers, flyers (in Korean and Chinese) available at the Epping Library, Council's Customer Service Centre, the YMCA and the Epping Baptist Church. Information on these workshops will also be promoted via the Epping Project website, the Your City Your Say contact list and social media presence.

6.0 INTRODUCTION TO THE TECHNICAL STUDIES

As shown in Figure 4 (pg. 16), a series of technical studies were commissioned as part of Stage 1 of the Epping Planning Review. Three of these studies respectively address **heritage**, **commercial floor space** and **social infrastructure** issues. These three studies are being exhibited with this Discussion Paper as supporting information, and are discussed in further detail in Chapters 7, 8 and 9, respectively.

Public domain and planning analysis has also been undertaken by Council officers. This analysis aims to test a range of options responding to the technical study on heritage and community views heard before and during Phase 1 consultations, and to advance recommendations from the commercial floor space and social infrastructure technical studies. These analyses are discussed in the respective chapters of this Discussion Paper, as well as in Chapter 10. It is also noted that additional detailed urban design and planning analysis will need to be undertaken in Stage 2 of the Epping Planning Review to inform centre-wide development standards and progress some of the technical studies' findings.

A study on **traffic and transport** has also been commissioned, but has not yet been completed. However, interim findings from this study have been prepared and are also provided in support of this Discussion Paper. The key issues arising are discussed in Chapter 11 of this Discussion Paper.

The following chapters (7-11) summarise the technical findings from each study, present community feedback, and propose options and recommendations to address various technical issues identified during Stage 1 of the Epping Planning Review. In each chapter a series of questions are posed and feedback is sought on all of those questions to inform Phase 2 of the Epping Planning Review, where policy changes will be drafted prior to further community consultation. The response will also inform Council's position in response to applicant-initiated Planning Proposals that Council is asked to respond to.

7.0 HERITAGE STUDY

Council commissioned City Plan Services to undertake the *Epping Town Centre Heritage Review* (the Heritage Review), which is being exhibited in conjunction with this Discussion Paper, and which:

- Reviews the existing Heritage Conservation Areas (HCAs) incorporating East Epping, Essex Street and Rosebank Avenue located within Epping suburb (which became part of the City of Parramatta as a result of the Council boundary changes in May 2016).
- Investigates concerns raised by various landowners and residents about the value and significance of the HCAs and of properties located within the HCAs which interface with R4 and R3 zoned areas (higher density residential zones).
- Reviews current controls that apply to the areas that have an interface with these HCAs.
- Reviews various properties located within the Study area which are:
 - currently listed as Heritage Items, to advise on whether the listing should be retained,
 - currently located on the edges of the HCAs, to determine whether they should be removed from the HCA, or
 - currently not Heritage listed but were identified by Hornsby Shire Council as sites that could be considered for listing.

The scope of the Heritage Review responded in part to resolutions from Hornsby Shire Council from 8 October 2014 and January 2016 (which was when the eastern part of the Epping Town Centre was located within the former Hornsby Shire Council LGA Boundary) which proposed to undertake a review of various heritage matters.

7.1 Technical findings

The recommendations from the Heritage Review are as follows:

- a) **Retain the current boundaries of the Essex Street and Rosebank Avenue HCAs.**

Despite the new R4 redevelopment (in the form of 5 storey residential apartments) flanking a portion of each of the two HCAs, the Heritage Review found that these two HCAs retain the same level of integrity and significance as identified in Hornsby Shire Council's 2013 *Heritage Study*. See Figures 5 and 6 below.

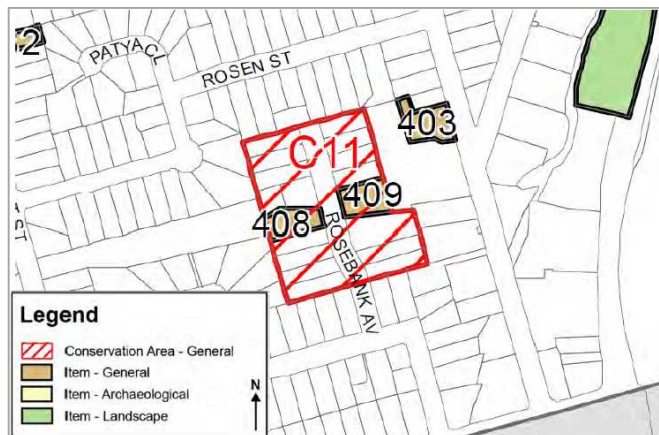


Figure 5 Rosebank Avenue HCA (extract from City Plan Services report, May 2017)

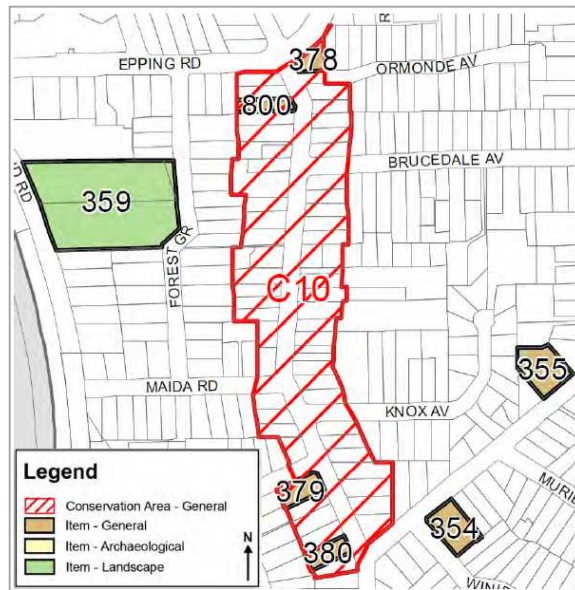


Figure 6 Essex Street HCA (extract from City Plan Services report, May 2017)

The Heritage Review also recommends that where sites in these two HCAs are located directly adjacent to an R4 zoned sites with higher density development, that those sites be permitted to undertake sympathetic 2 storey extensions to the rear of the site as long as they do not reduce the contribution of the dwelling to the HCA, or result in removal of mature trees or reduce the streetscape character.

A further recommendation is made that future planning controls should require archival photographic recordings to be taken of dwellings in the HCA if a substantial change is being made to the dwelling.

b) Adjust the south-west boundary of the East Epping HCA to remove properties at 25 Pembroke Street and Nos. 1, 3 and 3A Norfolk Road

The Heritage Review recommends the removal of these properties from the East Epping Heritage Conservation Area because Nos. 1, 3 and 3A Norfolk Road are not in keeping with the Federation and Inter War characteristics of the East Epping HCA, whilst 25 Pembroke Street (a contributory building) will soon be isolated from similar properties of Federation and Inter War periods as a result of rezoning of the southern side of Pembroke Street. Refer to Figure 7 below in point d). Sites discussed in this paragraph are outlined in blue in Figure 7.

c) Retain individual heritage items requested for removal by property owners at No.3 and 42 Essex Street

The Heritage Review reassessed the heritage value of these two properties and supports retaining the heritage listing currently in *Hornsby LEP 2013*, because the heritage significance of both properties is still intact.

d) Rezone removed properties from East Epping Heritage Conservation Area (as per b) above), as well as Nos. 5, 7 and 7A Norfolk Road and identified properties within 'Rockleigh Park' to R3 Medium Density Residential with 12 metre height limit

The Heritage Review recommends rezoning the removed properties from the East Epping HCA (as recommended in b above), as well as Nos. 5, 7 and 7A Norfolk Road and 'Rockleigh Park' from the R2 Low Density zone to the R3

Medium zone with a 12 metre (4 storey) height limit, so as to provide a smoother transition between the low and high density zones. These lots are shown in Figure 7.

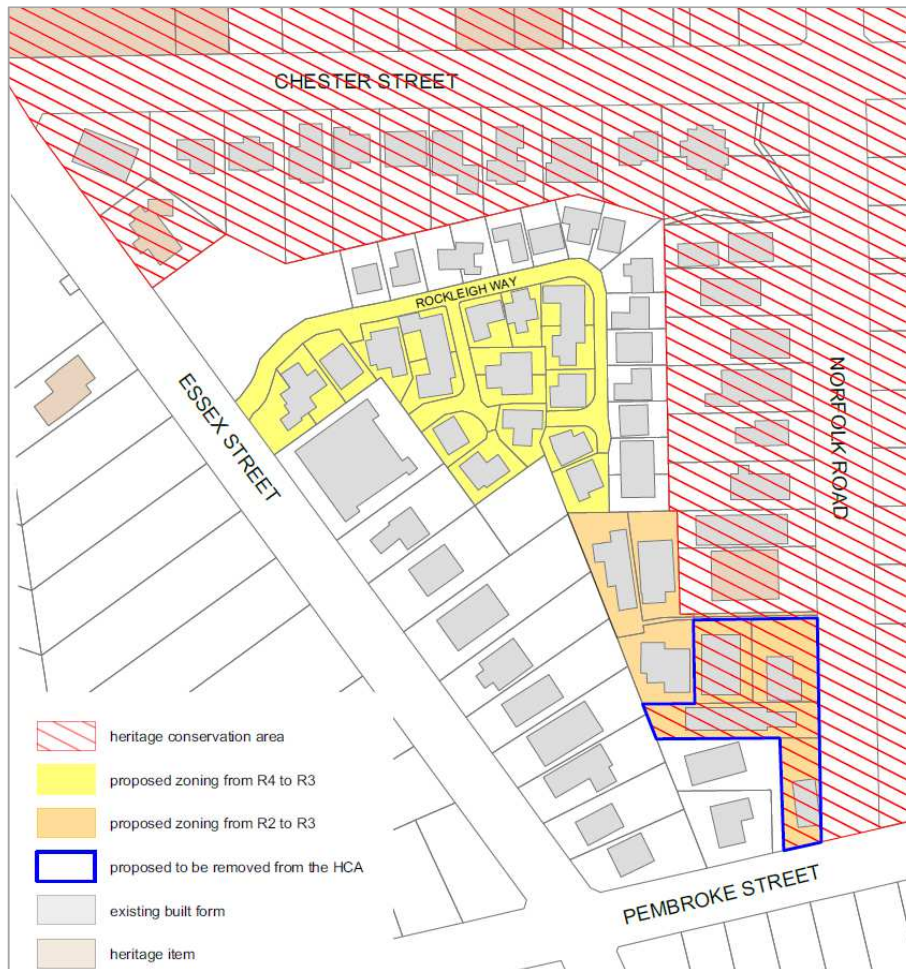


Figure 7 Sites recommended for HCA removal or rezoning at 'Rockleigh Park' and southern East Epping HCA

- e) **Amend Interface Guidelines of the Hornsby DCP (Section 9.4.1) to improve the transition the R4 High Density development Hornsby DCP**
The Heritage Review recommends increasing the setbacks and areas for deep soil planting on R4 zoned land at the interface with a HCA to help retain landscape character.
- f) **Maintain current height limits for the R4 and R3 zones**
The Heritage Review recommends that the 17.5 metre (5 storey) height limit in the R4 zone and 12 metre (4 storey) height limit in the R3 zone be maintained, as they create an appropriate transition in height.
- g) **Rezone R2 land to the R3 zone in Rose Street and Briggs Road**
The Heritage Review recommends this rezoning in order to respond to 4 storey residential flat buildings being located immediately to the north and to better transition down to 2 storey development on the southern side of Brigg Road. This area is shown in Figure 8 below.



Figure 8 Rose Street and Briggs Road precinct (hashed blue)

h) **Hornsby Heritage Study issues**

In response to a previous Hornsby Shire Council resolution, the Heritage Review makes recommendations related to various sites identified as part of Stage 6 of the Hornsby Shire Council Heritage Study Review. Please refer to Section 13 of the Heritage Review that accompanies this Discussion Paper for detailed discussion of these recommendations.

Options and recommendations where appropriate related to each of these recommendations are discussed further in this chapter.

7.2 Community feedback

Community feedback was sought on the HCAs via two workshops held on 1st and 3rd of May 2017. Information and/or submissions were also provided at, or after, each workshop. During the workshops, participants were asked about what they valued about the neighbourhood, their experiences around development, and concerns around their neighbourhood. The participants were also specifically asked to nominate what Council should take into consideration when reviewing planning controls.

The participants valued Epping's aesthetics, particularly the green and leafy nature of the suburb which was seen to contribute to the feeling that the area is protected and has a good sense of community. The participants also reflected that the low-density buildings are perceived to add space and safety, adding to the family-friendly character of the suburb. Easy access to public transport is also highly valued.

Traffic and parking was perceived to be a major issue. Other concerns included privacy and overshadowing from increased building heights; and increase in traffic, noise and rubbish from over-development.

In regard to planning controls, there were differing views. Some participants believed that building and planning controls need to be stricter, while other participants believed that the development controls should be lifted entirely as the HCAs are already compromised. However, there was agreement that future planning and development should be consistent and appropriate for each section of the local area.

Some landowners within the HCA considered that the impact of a 5 storey apartment building located close to their rear yard was unsatisfactory and that this should be taken into consideration in determining whether their sites should remain in the HCA. They perceived that, even if they were to “sell up” and move to avoid amenity impacts, they would suffer financially as the amenity impact has devalued their property. Other landowners within the HCA's indicated that they valued the characteristics of their street that resulted in the HCA protection and that it should be retained for those reasons. There was no clear spatial pattern to differentiate those for and against retention of the HCA.

7.3 Guiding principles

After considering the technical report and the public consultation the principles and themes identified by Council staff to guide the development of options and recommendations presented in this Discussion Paper are:

- from a technical point of view, the adjoining development does not have sufficient impact on the HCAs to warrant the HCA designation being removed;
- controls should seek to retain the existing character of these areas which are valued by the community (the key characteristic being the relatively low building scale surrounded by spaces for significant landscaping and large trees);
- residents are concerned about the impact of higher density development in terms of traffic, noise, overlooking and overshadowing; and
- residents in interface areas between the R2 HCA sites and R4 apartment building sites suffer from amenity impacts and options to ameliorate these impacts should be considered.

There is no single option presented in this chapter that achieves all these principles; instead, options give differing weights to each of these principles.

7.4 Heritage issues – options, recommendations and questions

This section seeks to reconcile the recommendations a., e., and f. of the Heritage Review, community feedback and further urban design and planning investigations on the impact of alternate development on the character of the area. There are tensions between the technical findings and some community members who would like to see the HCA designations removed (particularly in the Essex and Rosebank precincts). Council officers acknowledge that the amenity of some rear yards within the HCAs has been compromised, so it was considered that other options should at least be canvassed as part of this Discussion Paper process. The amenity issues associated with the interface between the R4 zoned sites and adjoining HCA sites is a planning issue that should also be given some weight. It is also important to note that, whilst a critical component of Council's consideration, heritage matters are not the only consideration in play at Epping.

The heritage options below constitute analysis undertaken by Council officers in response to tensions between the recommendations in the *Heritage Review* and some

community feedback received. The options attempt to resolve poor transition in land use from 4 and 5 storey development to 2 storey development which was not appropriately addressed when the new planning controls came into effect in March 2014.

7.4.1 Rosebank Avenue and Essex Street HCA interfaces with R4 zoned land

A total of seven options are presented below for both the Rosebank Avenue and Essex Street heritage conservation area (HCA) interfaces with land zoned R4 High Density residential.

Option 1 – Maintain current HCAs

Option 1 protects and maintains the current Rosebank Avenue and Essex Street HCAs as shown previously in Figures 7 and 8, i.e. this will maintain the status quo. Figure 9 is an indicative diagram which illustrates the retention of the building form in each of the two HCAs (residential flat buildings on the left on adjoining R4 zoned land and single detached dwellings on the right on the R2 zoned and HCA land).



Figure 9 Option 1: Maintain current HCAs

Strengths:

- Consistent with findings from *Heritage Review*. The HCAs remain intact and are protected for current and future generations.
- No additional traffic or parking impacts arising from this area.
- Does not require Council to consult with the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH), as current HCA is maintained.
- A sensitively designed 2 storey extension to the rear could still be considered by the owner.

Weaknesses:

- Some land owners may feel aggrieved about the loss of amenity at the rear of their properties, and feel they are left with two options: to either stay and endure the decreased amenity, or suffer a financial loss when selling the property to move away.

Guiding principle: That the impact of RFBs at the interface areas of the HCA do not have significant impact on the significance and intactness of the HCA, and that the impact of the apartment building on the amenity of adjoining properties is within acceptable limits. The HCA should be retained.

Option 2 – Landscaping at interface with R2 and R4 zoned land

Option 2 involves a Council-funded/managed tree planting initiative (of appropriate tree species). The tree planting would occur in the rear yards of the land owners to assist in mitigating the visual impact and loss of visual amenity from the 5 storey residential flat building development. This initiative would be managed as part of Council's Heritage Grants Program, but would require a review of the Heritage Grants Guidelines and for Council to allocate additional funding to support this program.

This option is centred around managing the issue of visual impact alone. Figure 10 is an indicative illustration of how tree planting can assist in managing the visual impacts on privacy between the 5 storey residential flat building development (shown at left of the diagram) and largely single storey residential development (shown at right of the diagram). Photographs in Figures 66 and 69 in the *Heritage Review* also illustrate how mature tree planting can mitigate visual impacts.



Figure 10 Option 2: Council-funded/managed tree planting initiative

Strengths:

- Consistent with findings from *Heritage Review*; the HCAs remain intact and are protected for current and future generations.
- The neighbourhood will see an increase in green tree cover and canopy as the trees grow and mature over time which are elements of Epping the community value.
- No additional traffic or parking impacts arising from this area.
- Does not require Council to consult with the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH).
- A sensitively designed 2 storey extension to the rear could still be considered by the owner.

Weaknesses:

- Regardless of tree species recommended, the trees will take many years to grow to a sufficient height to mitigate the impacts. Therefore, current owners will have to endure ongoing amenity impacts for some time.
- Some land owners may feel aggrieved about the loss of amenity at the rear of their properties, and feel they are left with two options: to either stay and endure the decreased amenity, or suffer a financial loss when selling the property to move away.

Guiding principles: The impact of RFBs at the interface areas of the HCA do not have an adverse impact on the significance and intactness of the HCA and the HCA should therefore be retained. However, the visual and amenity impacts at the rear boundary is recognised with tree planting to be put in place to ameliorate the impact.

Option 3 – Dual Occupancy (addition at the rear)

Option 3 involves permitting a second attached dwelling to the rear of the dwelling resulting in an attached dual occupancy scheme which would not be visible from the street. Technically, this would be similar to a second storey alteration and addition recommended as appropriate by the independent Heritage Review. Figure 11 is an indicative illustration of Option 3 (refer to the orange colouring showing a ground floor extension and additional second floor at the rear).



Figure 11 Option 3: Dual Occupancy (addition at rear)

Strengths:

- Largely consistent with findings from *Heritage Review*, the HCAs remain largely intact and are protected for current and future generations.
- The current land owners who feel aggrieved about the loss of amenity at the rear of their properties are being offered an opportunity to re-develop their sites in a low impact fashion and realise an economic benefit.
- Results in a more efficient use of a large residential block.
- Provides an alternative type of housing stock (**dual occupancy**) with proximity to the Epping Town Centre and public transport.

Weaknesses:

- Requires Council to consult with the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) owing to numerous amendments to the *HLEP 2013* regarding zone permissibility and heritage controls.

- Residents of the new dual occupancy development at the rear will still experience amenity issues with the adjoining 5 storey residential flat buildings.
- Likely to involve tress loss at the rear of the site and thus reduce the landscape buffer between the adjoining R4 zoned land and current R2.
- Some increase in traffic and on-street parking associated with additional dwellings.

Guiding principle: The impact of RFBs at the interface areas of the HCA do not have an adverse impact on the significance and intactness of the HCA and the HCA should therefore be retained. However, this option recognises that landowners can economically benefit from minor redevelopment opportunities.

Option 4 – Dual occupancy (side by side) redevelopment

This option involves demolishing the existing detached dwellings on a lot and replacing it with new **dual occupancy (attached)** in a side by side pair (i.e. both have street frontage). It would involve removal of the HCA. Figure 12 provides an indicative diagram of Option 4.



Figure 12 Option 4: Dual occupancy (attached) side by side redevelopment

Strengths:

- Represents a sound transition in density from the interface with 5 storey residential flat buildings, to 2 storey medium-density, then 1/2 storey low-density across the street.
- Efficient use of large residential blocks for two households with proximity to the Epping Town Centre.
- Provides an alternative type of housing stock (**dual occupancy**) with proximity to the Epping Town Centre and public transport.
- Introduces a more affordable housing option to that of a detached dwelling on a large lot.
- The current land owners who feel aggrieved about the loss of amenity at the rear of their properties are being offered an opportunity to re-develop their sites in a low impact fashion and realise an economic benefit.
- Trees are retained at the rear of the properties.

Weaknesses:

- Inconsistent with findings from *Heritage Review*; the HCA is not being protected for current and future generations.

- Alters the building form within the streetscape rather than having a predominant, uniform building type.
- Requires Council to consult with the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) owing to numerous amendment to the *HLEP 2013* on permissibility and heritage.
- Some increase in traffic and on-street parking associated with additional dwellings.

Guiding principle: That the impact of RFBs at the interface areas of the HCA has such an adverse impact on the amenity of these properties in the HCA that the HCA designation should be removed and that alternate planning controls that still allow for 2 storey development should be introduced.

Option 5 – Town house re-development

This option involves demolishing the existing detached dwellings and replacing them with a town house development. This option requires the amalgamation of two residential sites for this option to occur. It would involve removal of the HCA. Figure 13 provides an indicative diagram of Option 5.



Figure 13 Option 5: Town House redevelopment

Strengths:

- Represents a sound transition in density from the interface with 5 storey residential flat buildings, to 2 storey medium-density, then 1/2 storey low-density across the street.
- More efficient use of large residential blocks for multiple households with proximity to the Epping Town Centre.
- Provides an alternative type of housing stock with proximity to the Epping Town Centre and public transport.
- Introduces a more affordable housing option to that of a detached dwelling on a large lot.
- The current land owners who feel aggrieved about the loss of amenity at the rear of their properties are being offered an opportunity to re-develop their sites in a low impact fashion and realise an economic benefit which is likely to be a higher benefit to that of Options 3 and 4.

Weaknesses:

- Inconsistent with findings from *Heritage Review*; the HCA is not being protected for current and future generations.

- Alters the building form within the streetscape rather than having a predominant, uniform single dwelling building form.
- Requires site amalgamation.
- Likely to add to the traffic and parking pressures on the street.
- Requires Council to consult with the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) owing to numerous amendment to the *HLEP 2013* on permissibility and heritage.
- Significant tree removal likely with limited opportunity for deep soil planting.

Guiding principles: That the impact of RFBs at the interface areas of the HCA has such an adverse impact on the amenity of these properties in the HCA that the HCA designation should be removed and that alternate planning controls that still allow for 2 storey development should be introduced.

Option 6 – Manor home re-development

This option involves demolishing an existing detached dwelling and replacing it with a **manor home**. This option does not require the amalgamation of lots. It would involve removal of the HCA.

Note: a **manor home** means a 2 storey building containing 4 dwellings, where:

- a) each storey contains 2 dwellings, and
- b) each dwelling is on its own lot (being a lot within a strata scheme or community title scheme), and
- c) access to each dwelling is provided through a common or individual entry at ground level, but does not include a residential flat building or multi-dwelling housing.

(This definition is contained within *SEPP (Sydney Region Growth Centres) 2006*).

Figure 14 provides an indicative diagram of Option 6.

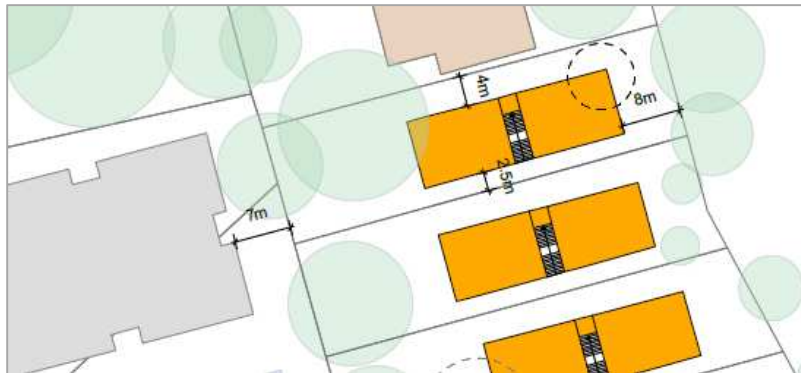


Figure 14 Option 6: Manor Home redevelopment

Strengths:

- Represents a sound transition in density from the interface with 5 storey residential flat buildings, to 2 storey medium-density, then 1/2 storey low-density across the street.
- More efficient use of large residential blocks for four households with proximity to the Epping Town Centre.

- Provides an alternative type of housing stock with proximity to the Epping Town Centre and public transport.
- Introduces a more affordable housing option to that of a detached dwelling on a large lot.
- Does not require site amalgamation.
- The current land owners who feel aggrieved about the loss of amenity at the rear of their properties are being offered an opportunity to re-develop their sites in a low impact fashion and realise an economic benefit which is likely to be a higher benefit to that of Options 3, 4 and 5.

Weaknesses:

- Inconsistent with findings from *Heritage Review*; the HCAs would not be protected for current and future generations.
- Significant change to streetscapes in Rosebank Avenue and Essex Streets in terms of building form and lot sizes.
- Will add to the traffic and parking impacts.
- Requires Council to consult with the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) owing to numerous amendments to the *HLEP 2013* regarding permissibility and heritage.
- Significant tree removal likely for rear on-site parking and with limited opportunity for deep soil planting if basement parking not feasible.

Guiding principle: The impact of RFBs at the interface areas of the HCA has such an adverse impact on the amenity of these properties in the HCA that the HCA designation should be removed and that alternate planning controls that allow for 2 storey development should be introduced

Option 7 – 3 storey residential flat building re-development

This option involves demolishing the existing detached dwellings, site amalgamation and construction of 3 storey residential flat development. It would involve removal of the HCA.

It should be noted that in order to deal the issue of transition to adjoining low-density residential areas, the maximum height Council Officers are willing to identify as an option is a 3 storey apartment building. Permitting any 4-5 storey apartments on the western side of Essex Street is not considered appropriate as it would result in unbalanced streetscapes in Essex Street which can only be addressed by extending the higher density zones to the eastern side of Essex Street. This is not considered appropriate or consistent with community sentiment about the character of the area.

In the case of the Rosebank Avenue HCA, a 3 storey apartment building form is considered to be the maximum height that still allows for an appropriate transition, and also an appropriate height to deal with transition to the two heritage items located mid-block in this precinct.

Specifically, this option requires the amalgamation of two residential sites. Figure 15 provides an indicative diagram of Option 7.



Figure 15 Option 7: 3 storey residential flat redevelopment

Strengths:

- Represents a sound transition in density from the interface with 5 storey residential flat buildings, to 3 storey medium-density, then 1 and 2 storey low-density across the street.
- More efficient use of large residential blocks for two households with proximity to the Epping Town Centre.
- Provides an alternative type of housing stock with proximity to the Epping Town Centre and public transport.
- Introduces a more affordable housing option to that of a detached dwelling on a large lot.
- The current land owners who feel aggrieved about the loss of amenity at the rear of their properties are being offered an opportunity to re-develop their sites in a low impact fashion and realise an economic benefit which is likely to be a higher benefit to that of Options 3 to 6.

Weaknesses:

- Inconsistent with findings from *Epping Town Centre (East) Heritage Review*; the HCAs would not be protected for current and future generations.
- There would be significant change to streetscapes in Rosebank Avenue and Essex Streets in terms of building form and lot sizes.
- Likely to have the most noticeable traffic and parking impact on the street.
- Requires Council to consult with the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) owing to numerous amendments to the *HLEP 2013*.
- Amalgamation of at least two lots will be required.
- Due to the necessity for basement car parking, this option would need to be tested for economic viability.

Guiding principles: The impact of apartment buildings at the interface areas of the HCA has an adverse impact on the significance and intactness of the HCA and the HCA should therefore be removed; and that transition between the R4 and R2 zones is better addressed; so that landowners can economically benefit from upper scale redevelopment.

Council Officer Recommendation

Council officers recommend that Council investigate 3 of the above options further. These are options are:

- Option 4 – Dual Occupancy (dwellings side by side) development

- Option 5 - Town House development
- Option 6 - Manor Home development.

These options recognize the unacceptable impact of adjoining development on the amenity of dwellings in the HCA, whilst allowing a transition to a built form that is 2 storeys in character and allows sufficient space for planting of significant trees.

Options 1 - Retain Existing Arrangements, 2 - Retain Existing Arrangements plus institute tree planting to screen and 3 - Dual Occupancy to the rear of existing dwellings all allow for the retention of the HCA. However, they do not sufficiently address the failures of previous planning processes (the outcome of which has been dwellings in a HCA have significantly reduced amenity with limited redevelopment options) to allow them to respond to the new adjoining apartment building development.

A sound planning process would have better balanced the desire for density with the impact on the amenity of the adjoining development. The independent Heritage Review recognises the impact of the adjoining apartment developments on the dwellings in the HCA by recommending increased setbacks and deep soil planting zones. However, neither of these options are feasible given that most of the adjoining sites where these measures might be implemented have already been developed or approved for development. Therefore, the setbacks and deep soil planting zones which might have been included as appropriate measures to protect the amenity of adjoining properties are no longer feasible.

Option 7 – 3 storey residential flat building redevelopment is not recommended as the other options provide for a more consistent 2 storey scale and more opportunity for significant tree planting. Both of these aspects are issues that residents indicated they valued in their local area during the consultation.

It is considered that Options 4, 5 and 6 should be further analysed (including financial feasibility) as preferred options for those sites that:

- fall within the Essex Road HCA and are located on the western side of Essex Street between Epping Road and Briggs Street.
- are located within the Rosebank HCA (where it is possible that different options might be applied to different parts of the HCA, i.e. higher density Manor Homes being more appropriate at the southern end and dual occupancy being more appropriate at the northern end).

Consultation Question:

Council is seeking your feedback on the preferred option. Council officers recommend that the options Council should consider further are options 4 - dual occupancy development, 5 - town house development and 6 - Manor Home Development, as these options recognize the impact of adjoining development on the amenity of dwellings in the HCA whilst allowing a transition to a built form that is 2 storey in character as well as sufficient space for planting of significant trees.

7a. What is your preferred option and why?

7.4.2 Zoning issues – interface with the East Epping HCA

Rockleigh Park comprises 36 small subdivided lots which are zoned R4 High Density Residential with a R3 zone edge to the north and east. It contains relatively new detached or attached cottages which front onto a small, narrow laneway system under community title. The average lot size is 280sqm. Figure 16 illustrates the Rockleigh Park area.

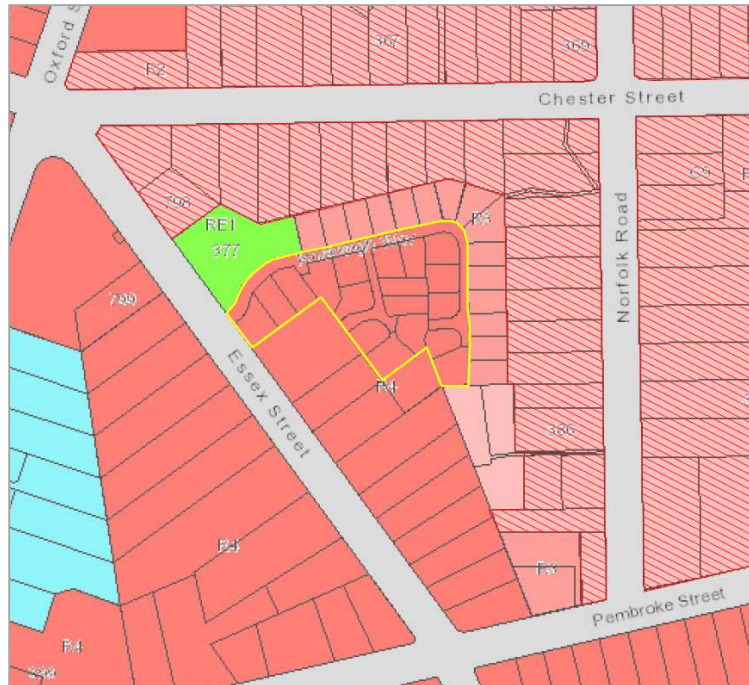


Figure 16 Rockleigh Park area (yellow outline)

The Heritage Review recommends down-zoning the Rockleigh Park parcels from the R4 High Density Residential zone which has a 17.5 metre (5 storey) building height to the R3 Medium Density zone which has a 12 metre (or 4 storey) building height. Council officers have undertaken a preliminary assessment of this recommendation (see following section).

Council officers also saw the need to undertake an assessment of parcels zoned R2 Low Density Residential at 1 to 7A Norfolk Road and 25 Pembroke Street. These parcels are situated south of “Rockleigh Park” and at the Southern end of the East Epping HCA (Refer Figures 17-19). The Heritage Review recommends these be rezoned to the R3 Medium Density Residential zone; Council Officers also present additional options for feedback in the following sections.

Council Officer Recommendations and Options

Rockleigh Park:

Down-zoning the site from the R4 High Density zone to the R3 Medium Density zone, enabling a reduction in the permissible density, is supported. However, to determine the appropriate density controls (height and floor space ratio), it is recommended that Stage 2 of the Epping Planning Review involves the preparation of a master plan to determine the most appropriate outcome. The area shown outlined in yellow in Figure 16 is the area to rezoned from R4 to R3.

Consultation Question:

7b. Do you agree with the above recommendation for Rockleigh Park?

Zoning Options: 1, 3, 3A, 5, 7 and 7A Norfolk Road and 25 Pembroke Road

Option 1 - Recommendation of the Heritage Review

As indicated in Section 7.1, the Heritage Review recommends that the HCA designation be removed from 1, 3, 3A Norfolk Road and 25 Pembroke Street, and that these sites, together with 5, 7 and 7A, be rezoned to Residential R3. This would allow them to be developed for apartment buildings to 4 storeys. It is noted that amalgamation of the lots would be necessary for these sites to be viable for this form of development. Figure 17 illustrates this option. Strengths and weaknesses of this option from Council Officers' point of view are:

Strengths

- Addresses the transition issues for Nos. 1, 5 and 7A Norfolk Road, as these properties have a rear boundary with sites fronting Essex Street which are zoned Residential R4 (and allows the construction of 5 storey apartment building).
- Addresses concerns of these landowners about the impact of the adjoining development on their amenity by allowing them to redevelop.

Weaknesses

- From an urban design viewpoint, Nos. 3A, 5, 7 and 7A have no road frontage. This makes designing apartment buildings that manage amenity impacts problematic in terms of setbacks and building separations, and will result in sub-optimal urban design outcomes.
- Will impact on traffic and parking issues in the street as a result of additional density.

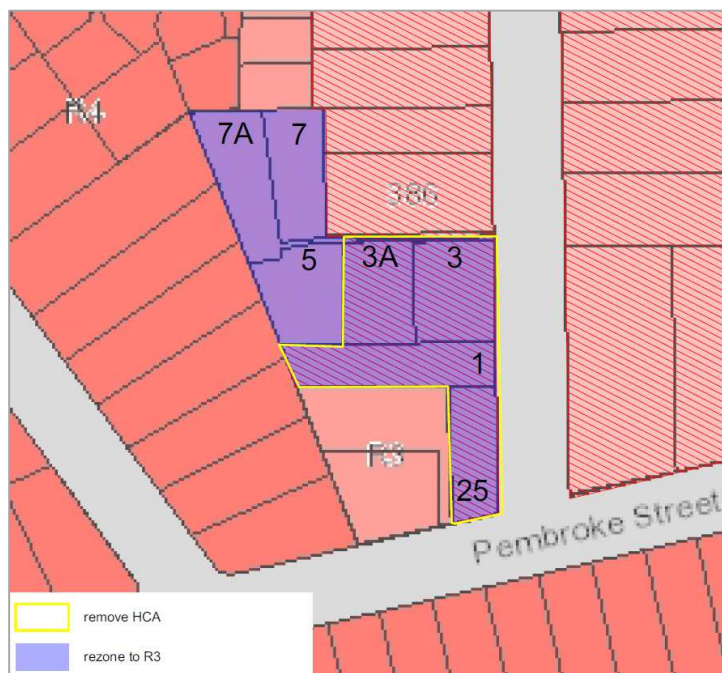


Figure 17 Option 1 – Recommendation of the heritage review

Option 2 - Rezone 1, 3, 3A, 5, 7 and 7A Norfolk Road and 25 Pembroke Street to Residential R3, but restrict development on 3, 3A, 5, 7, and 7A Norfolk Road to a 2 storey Manor Home.

As indicated above, rezoning all of these sites to Residential R3 would allow for a 4 storey development. One option for managing the design issues related to the isolated nature of Nos. 3A, 5, 7, and 7A Norfolk Road (as discussed in the weaknesses for Option 1 above) is to limit the redevelopment of these sites to a 2 storey Manor Home. In this case, there may be scope to introduce different design controls that would potentially produce better built form outcomes than those that would be result from a 4 storey apartment building under SEPP 65. This option would also involve removing the HCA designation from 1, 3, 3A Norfolk Road and 25 Pembroke Street. Figure 18 illustrates this option. Strengths and weaknesses of this options from Council Officers' point of view are:

Strengths

- Allows the owners of Nos. 3, 3A, 5, 7 and 7A Norfolk Road a redevelopment opportunity that they would not be able to achieve under the Residential R2 zoning (noting that it would require amalgamation of these into two development parcels)
- Allows for design options that better manage the transition between the building form on the Residential R4 on the adjoining site.

Weaknesses

- From an urban design perspective, Nos. 3A, 5, 7 and 7A have no road frontage. This makes designing apartment buildings that manage amenity impacts problematic in terms of setbacks and building separations, and will result in sub-optimal urban design outcomes.
- Will impact on traffic and parking issues in the street as a result of additional density, but not as greatly as Option 1 due to the lower density.

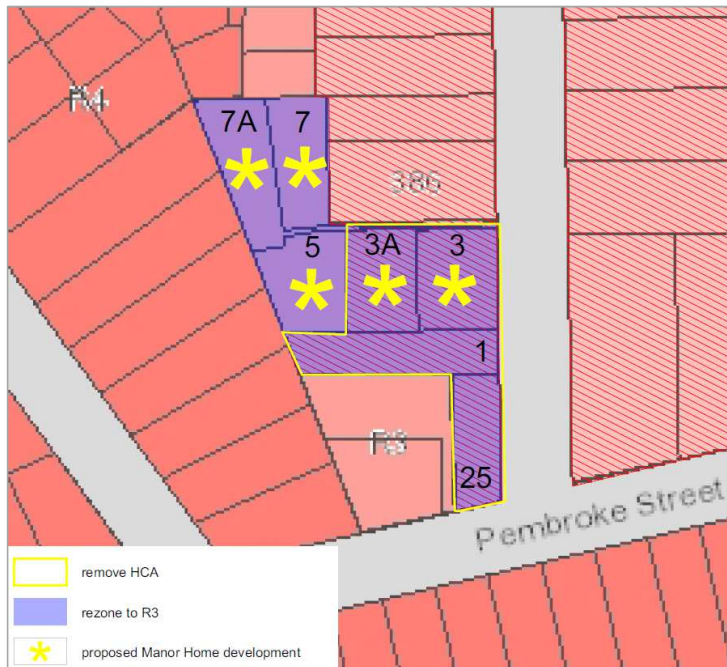


Figure 18 Option 2 involving 1-7A Norfolk Road and 25 Pembroke Street

Option 3 - Allow 1 Norfolk Road and 25 Pembroke Street to be rezoned to Residential R3 and retain Residential R2 zoning on 3, 3A, 5, 7 and 7A Norfolk Road

This option recognises that it may be possible to easily amalgamate 1 Norfolk Road and 25 Pembroke Street with 23 and 23A Pembroke Street (which are already zoned Residential R3) to create a suitably-dimensioned development site where a 4 storey development building can be accommodated with high-quality urban design outcomes. Due to concerns the design outcome from any amalgamation this option would see, Nos. 3, 3A, 5, 7 and 7A Norfolk Road would retain the Residential R2 zone which allows for no increased density. This option would also involve removing the HCA designation from 1, 3, 3A Norfolk Road and 25 Pembroke Street. Figure 19 illustrates this option. Strengths and weaknesses of this options from Council Officers' point of view are:

Strengths

- Addresses concerns about the urban design outcomes of redeveloping Nos. 3A, 5, 7 and 7A, given that they have no road frontage and are surrounded by other residential development sites.

Weaknesses

- Does not address the transition in built form issues of the owners of Nos. 5 and 7A who share a boundary with Residential R4 sites and may be concerned about the potential impact on the amenity of their property.
- Will impact on traffic and parking issues due to the additional density for 1 Norfolk Road and 25 Pembroke Street, but the impact would not be as significant as Options 1 and 2.

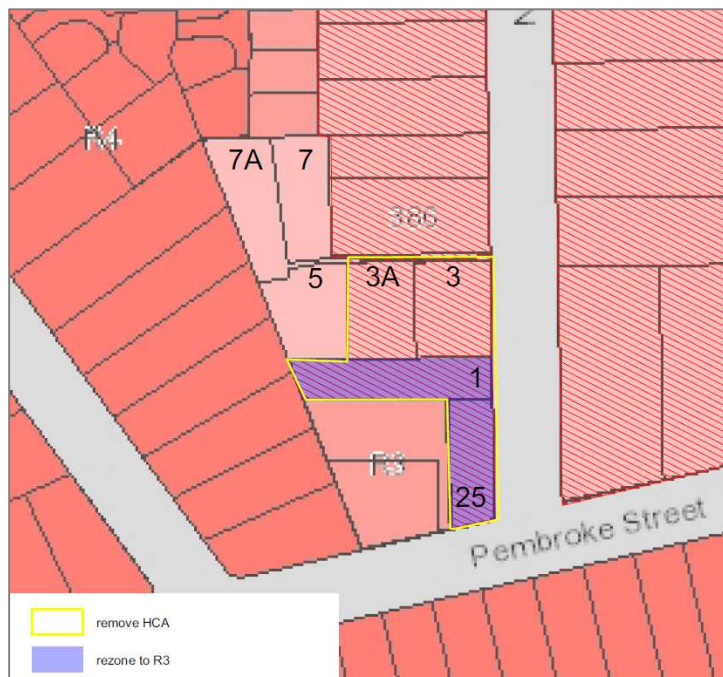


Figure 19 Option 3 involving 1-7A Norfolk Road and 25 Pembroke Street

Consultation Question:

7c. In the case of 1, 3, 3A, 5, 7, and 7A Norfolk Road and 25 Pembroke Street, what is your preferred option and why?

7.4.3 Rose Street precinct

The Rose Street precinct is zoned R2 Low Density Residential and includes properties that have frontage to Blaxland Road (comprising Nos. 705, 707, 709 and 711), Rose Street (comprising Nos. 1 to 5), and Brigg Road, northern side only (comprising Nos. 5-11 and 15-27). It excludes Essex Street properties. This land is zoned R2 Low Density Residential in *HLEP 2013*. Refer to the land shown hashed blue in Figure 20.



Figure 20 Rose Street precinct (land hashed blue)

In 2014, land immediately to the north of the precinct which has frontage to Maida Road was rezoned from the R2 zone to the R3 Medium Density Residential. The R3 zone in *HLEP 2013* permits residential flat buildings and has an accompanying 12m (4 storey) height limit. Recently approved Development Applications are seeing 4 storey residential flat building development realised on these sites.

The Heritage Review reviewed the appropriateness of the R2 Low Density zone over this precinct and has recommended up-zoning to the R3 Medium Density Residential zone. Council officers have reviewed this recommendation and concur with the conclusion, but also sees the need for further analysis to determine the appropriate density (height and FSR) controls.

Council Officer Recommendations

Council officers recommend rezoning this precinct from R2 Low Density to R3 Medium Density, thereby enabling a clear transition from the R4 zone on the northern side of Maida Road, to the R3 zone from the southern side of Maida Road to Brigg Road, and to the existing R2 zone on the southern side of Brigg Road. (Refer to Figure 21).

However, to determine the appropriate detailed controls, it is also recommended that Stage 2 of the Epping Planning Review involves the preparation of a master

plan to determine the subdivision pattern, the amalgamation pattern and the appropriate setbacks.



Figure 21 Rose Street precinct interface showing the proposed area to be up-zoned

Consultation Question:

**7d. Do you agree with the recommendations for the Rose Street precinct?
Please comment.**

8.0 COMMERCIAL FLOORSPACE STUDY

Council commissioned SGS Economics and Planning to prepare a Commercial Floorspace Study in order to analyse the loss of commercial floor space occurring within the centre and determine the town centre's potential role and whether specific planning controls need to be in place to meet future demand. The Study is being exhibited as supporting information to this Discussion Paper.

Note: In this chapter “commercial” refers to **office, retail and other non-residential floor space**. When a specific subset of commercial floor space is referred to – i.e. office floorspace – the specific term is used.

8.1 Technical findings

The Commercial Floorspace Study (CFS) identifies that Epping has or will have a number of competitive advantages. First, Epping is expected to have a high rate of growth over the coming decades, which will result in more residents than other suburban centres such as Hornsby, Pymble, and Pennant Hills. Epping is also expected to be competitive with Macquarie Park, as it will have a larger population and a “comparable level of highly educated and professional people to draw on” (pg.57). Epping also ranks well in terms of transport accessibility, exposure for retail spaces and foot traffic.

The CFS also identified two of Epping's competitive weaknesses. The first is poor accessibility to major infrastructure such as hospitals, universities. The second is that Epping lacks the prestige of other nearby centres, such as Macquarie Park, Rhodes and Chatswood.

In light of the above strengths and weaknesses, the CFS details three possible scenarios for the Epping Town Centre:

1. Epping as a **population servicing centre (low scenario)** where office uses service the population of Epping.
2. Epping as a **local centre (medium scenario)** where office uses service the surrounding population (e.g. a 5 to 10 minute catchment).
3. Epping as a **district centre (high scenario)** where office uses service a wider population and attract strategic employment uses (e.g. a 20 to 30 minute catchment).

Note: The Greater Sydney Commission's Draft District Plans define a District Centre as having one or more of the following characteristics:

- the scale of retail activity, generally over 50,000 square metres of floor space
- the presence of health and education facilities that serve the district and the local community
- the level of transport services
- generally between 5,000 to 10,000 jobs.

In terms of the likely future scenario for the Epping Town Centre, the CFS concludes that the low scenario as not a realistic outcome as the Epping Town Centre has the potential to play a more significant role. The CFS therefore recommends that the preferred scenario is somewhere between the local centre (medium) and the district

centre (high) scenarios, and can be described as a **sub-district centre (a medium-high scenario)**.

The sub-district centre scenario would meet the forecast demand for **55,616sqm of office floor space** and **13,000sqm of retail floor space** in Epping Town Centre to 2036.

As shown in Table 1 below, the forecast demand is very close to the amount of office and retail floor space located in Epping Town Centre estimated through the 2011 Census data. However, as noted previously in this Discussion Paper, some office and retail floor space has been “lost” to residential uses through current redevelopment.

Type of commercial floor space	Provision 2011 (Census data estimates)	Demand 2036 (forecast in technical study)
Office	55,000sqm	55,616sqm
Retail	12,900sqm	13,000sqm

Table 1 2011 provision and 2036 demand for commercial floor space by type

8.1.1 Retail floor space

The CFS outlines demand for 13,000sqm of retail floor space in Epping Town Centre. It identifies that redevelopment should allow for a greater range of retail premises (i.e. variation in size of premises) to be provided for local shops, more supermarkets, cafes and restaurants, and everyday services such as banks, dry cleaners and hairdressers.

Retail uses should be located on the ground floor as part of any redevelopment, achieve a fine grain at the street level and promote an active street frontage. Figure 22 illustrates the location of these uses within the podium element of a mixed use development within the town centre.

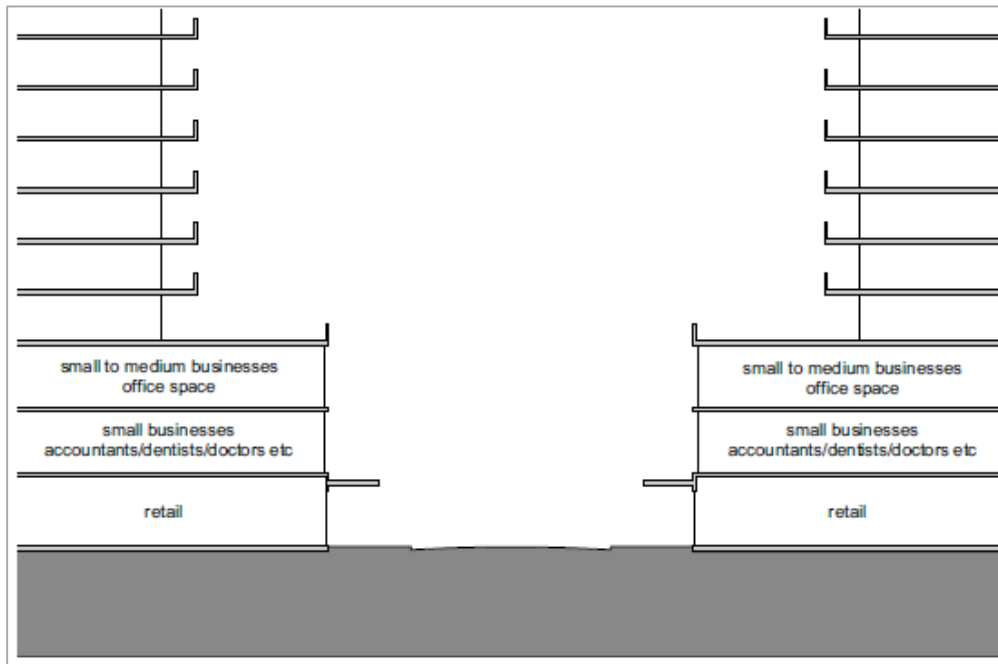


Figure 22 Location of retail and office uses within a 3 storey podium

8.1.2 Office floor space

The CFS outlines demand for 55,616sqm of office floor space in Epping Town centre, and recommends that this comprise the following types of office floor space:

- Small to medium enterprises across a range of industries located above the ground floor.
- Medical services for the local population (residents and workers) located on or above the ground floor.
- Other non-residential uses (such as Educational uses, child care centres and gyms) located on or above the ground floor.

8.1.3 Approaches to deliver the commercial floor space

The study looked at three approaches to addressing the demand for commercial floor space, as follows:

1. **Standalone commercial:** This approach requires office building development only, while prohibiting residential uses. The study generally recommends that this approach not be relied upon, but does identify some potential for large sites.
2. **True mixed-use development:** This approach requires commercial floor space for the first few floors of a mixed-use development. This can be achieved by having a minimum non-residential floor space ratio control.
3. **Development of government-owned sites:** This approach identifies that, where local or state government-owned land could incorporate commercial floor space to support the 30-minute city vision.

Note: The Greater Sydney Commission's Draft District Plans envision a **30-minute city**, in which people can access a wide range of job, services and other opportunities within 30 minutes from their place of residence. The 30-minute city vision will improve the quality of life of Greater Sydney residents and improve accessibility and transport outcomes across the metropolitan area.

8.1.4 Other strategies for delivering commercial floor space

Because the market still favours residential development, the CFS recommends planning policies that would help deliver commercial floor space within the Epping Town Centre. These include:

- Introduce a **minimum non-residential floor space ratio control** on both sides of the town centre. (The report sees this as the most effective measure to maintain commercial floor space.)
- **Maintain residential development** on all B2 zoned land to maintain feasibility of non-residential development.
- Address the above two matters via **stronger planning controls** (LEP/DCP) that deliver podium-style commercial development with residential towers, along with a **prohibition of serviced apartments** in this zone
- **Explore car parking initiatives that reduce private car ownership.** This recognises the current impact that cars are having on the centre and the high level of public transport accessibility.
- With regards to **Government-owned sites**, Council should explore ways to include office, retail and other non-residential floor space which draws

residents to the centre. It proposes that the Ray Road/Beecroft Road sites previously zoned for business purposes (acquired by the State government for the purposes of the Sydney Metro project) be explored in this regard.

8.2 Community feedback

As noted previously, a community workshop focusing on commercial floor space was held on 22 May 2017. Feedback from this forum is summarised as follows:

- People are enthusiastic about the possible future of Epping. They want their town centre to reflect the vibrant, friendly, community which they are familiar with.
- There is a strong sense of community within Epping which is centred on having a retail and business hub which can offer a range of services and activities for the local community to access.
- There is a wide range of services available in the town centre which most participants enjoy using.
- There are some essential uses that do not exist or are not sufficiently provided within the town centre; this forces community members to visit other centres and suburbs. Workshop participants identified that the following broad range of uses which one might expect in a centre like Epping were not sufficiently provided:
 - Fresh food (butchers, greengrocers, etc.); there is only one supermarket
 - Larger format and big brand shops (discount department stores or hardware store)
 - A wide range of clothing retail
 - Medical services (e.g. x-ray services)
- There is little resistance to increasing the amount of space available for new businesses and offices spaces. Many participants wanted Epping to grow and wanted to see development of a new heart for the town centre.
- There is a noticeable lack of professional job opportunities in Epping at present. As such, there were many and varied suggestions around having flexible office or retail spaces, as well as room for business start-up spaces and for larger companies to make Epping their home (i.e. architectural, engineering or building companies).
- Parking and transport are seen as a barrier to those wanting to use Epping as a retail centre.

The community feedback is detailed in full in the Straight Talk Phase 1 Consultation Report which is being exhibited alongside this Discussion Paper.

8.3 Council analysis – commercial floor space issues

Council's analysis of commercial floor space issues, taking into account the findings from both the CFS and community consultation, is summarised in this section.

The Hornsby DCP controls which currently require a 2 to 3 storey podium for commercial uses have been applied weakly. As a result, only 50% of approvals to date are delivering a ground floor non-residential element. The Parramatta DCP controls require "up to" a 4 storey commercial podium for development along Beecroft Road but no retail or commercial on the other B2 Commercial zoned sites. The use of the words "up to" means the applicant can choose the height as long as it is no greater than 4 storeys. Furthermore, under current planning legislation, the role of the DCPs have been weakened relative to their historical role. DCPs now provide a guide, which can be varied as part of the Development Application process. In order to achieve a greater

provision of commercial floor space via the DA process, Council would have to strengthen its planning controls to mandate a minimum amount of commercial floor space in the LEP.

The lack of connectivity between the east and west portions of the centre was recorded indirectly in the feedback received at the consultation sessions. One of the options put forward was the desire to see a link between the two sides activated with shops. The suggestion was that a shopping centre linking both sides could be built over the train station. Whilst the achievement of a high-quality activated link is highly desirable, there is still a need to make sure that each side of the railway line is able to achieve a high level of amenity to minimise the distance people have to travel to meet their needs. In addition to a link, it is also desirable that both sides have a retail focus in the form of a supermarket, minimising the distance people have to travel to meet basic needs and providing an economic focal point on each side of the train station.

The ability of the centre to provide large floorplates was analysed. Given the lot sizes and the potential for site amalgamation, there is greater opportunity on the western side of the rail line for larger sites to be redeveloped to provide a variety of premises to support a mix of commercial uses. On the eastern side there are fewer options where amalgamation of multiple sites has already occurred. Council should investigate whether it is feasible to put in place planning controls that promote amalgamation of sites in strategic locations, so that a mix of commercial uses can be achieved on both sides of the rail line.

The rail line at Epping is a significant barrier to mobility; significant east, west, north and south routes of the arterial road network meet in Epping and cross over this barrier at the Epping Rail Overbridge. The preliminary traffic assessment (see Chapter 11) suggests that there is little that can be done to alleviate the arterial road traffic and that increasing private vehicle access into Epping represents a significant challenge for which there is not a feasible and cost-effective solution. The implications of this for commercial activity is that Epping should be a centre where the accessibility focus is on public transport and active transport options like walking and bicycles. This is also consistent with the recommendation in the SGS study which promotes initiatives to minimise private car ownership.

8.4 Guiding principles

The future planning controls for the Epping Town Centre should:

- seek to establish Epping as a Sub District Town Centre with a target of 13,000sqm of retail and 56,000sqm of office floor space by 2036.
- seek to ensure that each development site in Epping approved under any new controls makes a contribution to the retail and office targets in the centre and that consideration be given in preparing planning controls to:
 - ensure that residential is still retained at the maximum feasible level to maximise the feasibility of commercial floor space; and
 - provide an incentive for developers to amalgamate sites as this provides the best opportunity to provide a mix of retail and office floor space in their development.
- seek to ensure that the broadest possible range of retail and a range of small to medium office and service uses are can be accommodated in the Epping Town Centre
- seek to ensure that connectivity between the eastern and western parts of the Epping Town Centre is maximised to provide the broadest range of access for

all future users, whilst still seeking to ensure that key uses (i.e. a supermarket) are easily accessible to provide a high level of access to key services and facilities (minimising the distance anyone needs to travel within the centre to meet their daily needs).

- focus on Epping's relative accessibility advantage which is public transport and active transport, rather than relying on private vehicle transport where there are already constraints. These measures should seek to ensure Epping plays a role in providing residents in the region with a 30-minute city.

8.5 Questions for feedback

Council is seeking your feedback on the following questions and options.

8.5.1 Should Epping seek to evolve into a Sub District Centre with regards to commercial floor space?

Based on the Development Applications already approved, the Epping Town Centre will not achieve the recommended commercial floor space targets without some sort of planning intervention. Without intervention, Epping is likely to operate in the future as a dormitory suburb rather than a sub district centre. At the consultation session, there was general support for retail and office floor space being retained and provided in the Epping Town Centre. To test this premise amongst the broader community, feedback is sought on the following question.

Guiding principle: seek to establish Epping as a Sub District Town Centre with a target of 13,000sqm of retail and 56,000sqm of office floor space by 2036.

Consultation Question:

8a. Should Epping seek to evolve into a Sub District Town Centre with a target of 13,000sqm of retail floor space and 56,000sqm of office floor space?

8.5.2 Options for amending controls to deliver retail and office floor space targets

Council and the CFS identify that, if there is a desire to achieve the commercial floor space targets described above, then minimum non-residential floor space controls must be introduced. In order to have certainty on delivering this floor space, it is recommended that these controls be included in the LEP (as the existing DCP controls have not been an effective mechanism).

The technical study acknowledges that residential development on all B2 zoned land should be maintained in order to maintain the feasibility of non-residential development. This is also consistent with the Council and NSW Government objective of increasing activity around the Epping public transport hub.

Urban design analysis suggests that sites within the B2 zone (assuming a 60% take-up rate) would need to provide 3 storeys of commercial floor space in order to achieve the 2036 targets.

On the eastern side of the rail line, the current DCP controls requires 2 storeys on the majority of sites (with a small number of sites near the station required to provide 3 storeys). In this case, new controls would require an increase in the commercial floor space provided on site.

On the western side the land between Beecroft Road and Rawson Street, there is no clearly enforceable requirement to provide a commercial podium beyond retail at the ground floor. In this case, requiring 3 storeys of commercial across all these B2 zoned sites will give a net increase in the total amount of commercial floor space.

The way that Council implements any new controls will play an important role in the centre's viability and the delivery of commercial floor space.

Option 1 – Retain existing floor space controls and replace existing residential floor space with commercial floor space targets

When reformulating the planning controls, Council could retain existing FSR controls and introduce minimum requirements for non-residential floor space as well. This means that the development would reduce the amount of future residential floor space (the number of apartments that can be achieved) to accommodate the minimum non-residential floor space.

This would also potentially change the height controls, though it is not possible to say how these will change without site-specific testing. However, it is possible that the height controls would need to be maintained or increased because the floor to ceiling height for commercial storeys are higher than for residential storeys. In other words, mandating more commercial floor space at lower levels could result in slightly taller tower buildings, especially if a slender tower with a smaller shadow impact (which is a desirable building form) is to be achieved.

Strengths:

- Allows for delivery of commercial floor space targets and seeks to ensure Epping is able to achieve a Sub District Centre role and contribute to this part of Sydney becoming a 30-minute city.
- Delivers on the community's desire for a greater mix of goods services and jobs to be provided in the centre.
- Assist with managing traffic and parking issues by not resulting in a net increase in floor space in the town centre (especially if it is supported by other measures to limit private vehicle ownership for residents living close to the Epping Town Centre and to promote workers arriving at work via public transport).

Weaknesses:

- Reduces the number of residential units that can be achieved close to Epping Station, which was a key objective of the Epping UAP process; this may not be supported by the Department of Planning.
- Unlikely to be supported by landowners as it makes redevelopment less financially attractive (commercial floor space is much less valuable in the current market).
- Potentially encourages a "rush" of Development Applications under the current controls to avoid future planning controls that would limit residential units achievable.

Guiding principle:

- seek to establish Epping as a Sub District Town Centre with a target of 13,000sqm of retail and 56,000sqm of office floor space by 2036.

- seek to ensure that each development site in Epping approved under any new controls makes a contribution to the retail and office targets in the centre and that consideration be given in preparing planning controls to:
 - ensure that residential is still retained at the maximum feasible level to maximise the feasibility of commercial floor space; and
 - provide an incentive for developers to amalgamate sites as this provides the best opportunity to provide a mix of retail and office floor space in their development.

Consultation Question:

8b. Should Epping evolve as a Sub District Centre achieving the commercial floor space targets without any increase in Net Floor Space on Business B2 zoned sites?

Option 2 – Allow additional floor space on B2 Business zoned sites to allow for the commercial floor space targets to be achieved.

There are a number of sites where there would need to be more commercial floor space than envisaged under the existing DCP controls in order to meet the targets. In these instances, if the amount of floor space permitted was increased to accommodate the additional commercial floor space, then there would be no net loss in residential development permitted on these sites. The impact of this is that the height of the buildings would need to increase to accommodate the additional floor space.

Strengths:

- Allows for delivery of commercial floor space targets and seeks to ensure the Epping is able to achieve a Sub District Centre role and contribute to this part of Sydney becoming a 30-minute city.
- Delivers on community's desire for a greater mix of goods services and jobs to be provided in the centre.
- Has less impact on housing targets, and is more likely to be supported by the Department of Planning.
- More likely to be supported by landowners as the impact on financial returns associated with any redevelopment are significantly lower than Option 1.

Weaknesses:

- Will make managing traffic and parking issues more difficult by allowing a net increase in floor space in the town centre. This could potentially be offset if it is supported by other measures to limit private vehicle ownership for residents living close to the Epping Town Centre and to promote workers arriving at work via public transport. However, these measures would need to be even more strictly applied compared to Option 1.
- Allows for taller buildings with greater shadow and potential visual impacts compared to those permitted under existing controls.

Guiding principle:

- seek to establish Epping as a Sub District Town Centre with a target of 13,000sqm of retail and 56,000sqm of office floor space by 2036.
- seek to ensure that each development site in Epping approved under any new controls makes a contribution to the retail and office targets in the centre and that consideration be given in preparing planning controls to:

- ensure that residential is still retained at the maximum feasible level to maximise the feasibility of commercial floor space; and
- provide an incentive for developers to amalgamate sites as this provides the best opportunity to provide a mix of retail and office floor space in their development.

Consultation Question:

8c. Should Epping evolve as a Sub District Centre achieving the commercial floor space targets by allowing for an increase in density permitted so the commercial can be delivered with no loss of residential floor space capacity?

8.5.3 Role of Government-owned sites

The technical study has identified a role where Government-owned sites could be used as part of a deliberate strategy to support the Government's 30-minute city strategy by:

- Providing commercial floor space to offset the loss when other sites are developed; and
- Providing floor space to allow businesses that are displaced when their existing building is being redeveloped to relocate within the centres.

This section below discusses the Government-owned Sites that have been identified as opportunities to make a contribution to the 30-minute city strategy.

Site 1 – State Government Owned Site at 240 – 244 Beecroft Road, Epping

This site (see Figure 23) has previously accommodated a commercial office development. The site was acquired by the State Government and has been used as a works site for the North West Metro Project.

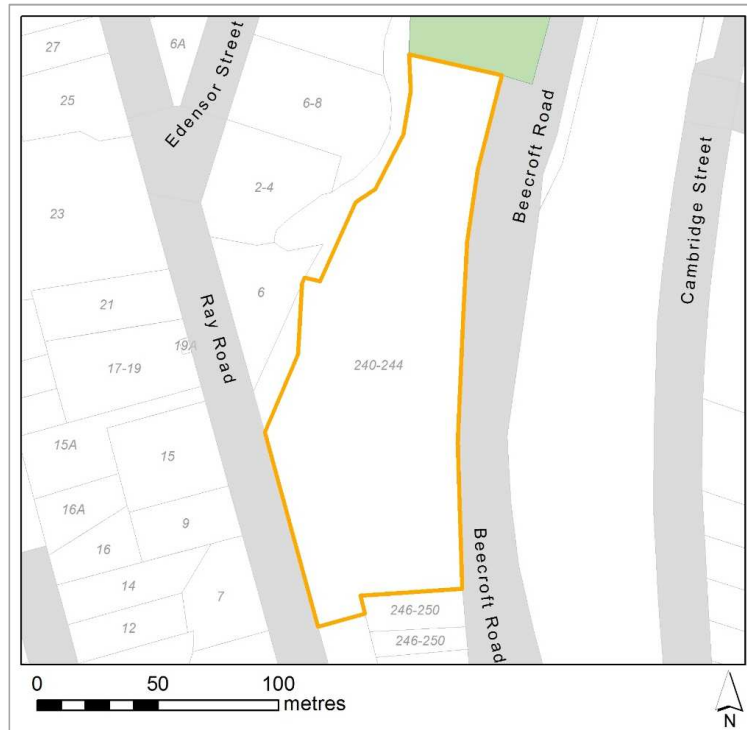


Figure 23 State government owned land at 240-244 Beecroft Road, Epping

As part of the 2014 Planning Controls coming into force, this site was rezoned to R4 High Density Residential with a maximum height of 48m. Once the construction of the Sydney Metro is completed and the site is no longer required for a works site, it is expected that it will be redeveloped in accordance with the existing zoning for largely residential purposes. The R4 zone allows for shop top housing and neighbourhood shops on the ground floor but would not permit any retail or commercial development above the ground floor.

As indicated above, the commercial floor space targets can be achieved in the existing B2 zone with a 60% take-up rate without any commercial floor space being developed on this site. If the zoning of this site changed to permit more commercial floor space, and this was taken up, it would be possible to reduce the retail commercial requirement on other sites. One advantage of encouraging commercial development on this site is that the size of the site would allow for larger floorplates than could be achieved on most sites in the B2 zone.

The technical study recommends that Council should explore ways that this site might be used for non-residential uses. Options for this site include:

- **Option 1a** - Retain the existing zoning.
- **Option 1b** - Rezone the site and allow a mix of retail and office on the site (similar to what is being considered in Section 8.5.2).
- **Option 1c** - Amend the planning controls to require commercial development and prohibit residential development.

The more commercial floor space that could be accommodated on this site, the less pressure there would be to maximise commercial floor space on B2 zoned sites closer to the station. However, unless the height of building also increases, Option 1b and 1c will result in a reduction in housing close to the Epping Station

which is inconsistent with the Epping UAP objectives put forward by the State Government.

Guiding principle:

- seek to establish Epping as a Sub District Town Centre with a target of 13,000sqm of retail and 56,000sqm of office floor space by 2036.
- seek to ensure that each development site in Epping approved under any new controls makes a contribution to the retail and office targets in the centre and that consideration be given in preparing planning controls to:
 - ensure that residential is still retained at the maximum feasible level to maximise the feasibility of commercial floor space; and
 - provide an incentive for developers to amalgamate sites as this provides the best opportunity to provide a mix of retail and office floor space in their development.

Consultation Question:

8d. What contribution should 240-244 Beecroft Road make to the provision of commercial floor space in Epping?

Site 2 – Epping Station Site

As part of the consultation a number of stakeholders put forward a proposal for a development over the top of the Epping Station. The perceived advantages of the proposal included:

- The opportunity to provide a high-quality activated link between the east and west side of the Town Centre; and
- The opportunity to provide commercial floor space to support the town centre

The critical conversation for this site is with the relevant Government transport agencies who may have a position on what can feasibly be constructed over the rail line/station.

Guiding principle:

- seek to establish Epping as a Sub District Town Centre with a target of 13,000sqm of retail and 56,000sqm of office floor space by 2036.
- seek to ensure that each development site in Epping approved under any new controls makes a contribution to the retail and office targets in the centre and that consideration be given in preparing planning controls to:
 - ensure that residential is still retained at the maximum feasible level to maximise the feasibility of commercial floor space; and
 - provide an incentive for developers to amalgamate sites as this provides the best opportunity to provide a mix of retail and office floor space in their development.
- seek to ensure that connectivity between the eastern and western parts of the Epping Town Centre is maximised to provide the broadest range of access for all future users, whilst still seeking to ensure that key uses (i.e. a supermarket) are easily accessible to provide a high level of access to key services and facilities (minimising the distance anyone needs to travel within the centre to meet their daily needs).

Consultation Question:

8e. What contribution should the Epping Station Site make improving connectivity and provision of commercial floor space?

Site 3 – Council Car Park site – Rawson Road Epping

The Council carpark site located in Rawson Street (see Figure 24) represents an opportunity to utilise Council-owned land to benefit the community (as identified in Appendix 3). Council has already been approached by adjoining developers seeking to enter into an agreement with Council to include this land in a redevelopment that would see car parking provided underground and the site developed above ground with a mix of community open space, commercial facilities and residential development (see Appendix 3 for further discussion).

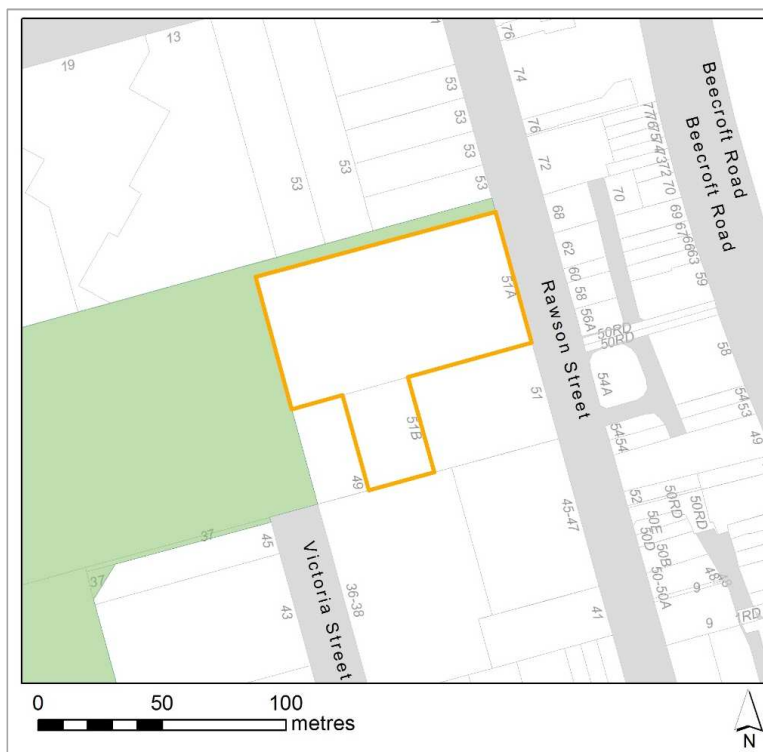


Figure 24 Council car park sites at 51A and 51B Rawson Street, Epping

The role that this site can play as a potential location for a community hub incorporating a civic space and potential community hub facility incorporating a mix of community uses is discussed further in Chapter 9. Consequently, it is recommended that this site not be identified as a site where significant commercial or retail floor space should be contemplated. If redeveloped, this site will more likely play a role ensuring that there is sufficient social infrastructure provided in the town centre.

Site 4 – Current Epping Library site – Chamber Court Epping

The existing Epping Library Site (see Figure 25) was previously identified by Hornsby Shire Council as a potential redevelopment site. Hornsby Shire Council had previously undertaken an Expression of Interest (EOI) process that sought a partner to redevelop a site with a view to the site being redeveloped with residential uses and a new library facility located on the lower levels. A partnership approach was proposed with the objective of delivering a new library funded by the developer.



Figure 25 Epping Library site, Pembroke Street, Epping

The role this site could play in the provision of community open space and community facilities is discussed in more detail in Chapter 9. As part of that development, Council could consider what contribution the site should make to the provision of commercial floor space in the Town Centre.

Council could also require the site to provide for three levels of commercial floor space (equivalent to adjoining site), but use the lower levels for a community facility and/or office space that might accommodate Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and other community service providers (instead of commercial floor space that would be leased in the open market).

Alternatively, Council could seek to make a greater contribution by providing more levels of office space than adjoining equivalent sites that could then be leased to both NGO/Community Service Providers and private tenants depending on demand and the funding model required.

Guiding principles:

- seek to establish Epping as a Sub District Town Centre with a target of 13,000sqm of retail and 56,000sqm of office floor space by 2036.
- seek to ensure that each development site in Epping approved under any new controls makes a contribution to the retail and office targets in the centre and that consideration be given in preparing planning controls to:
 - ensure that residential is still retained at the maximum feasible level to maximise the feasibility of commercial floor space; and
 - provide an incentive for developers to amalgamate sites as this provides the best opportunity to provide a mix of retail and office floor space in their development.

Consultation Questions:

8f. Should the Epping Library and Council car park sites play a role in providing for commercial floor space in the centre?

8g. Should the floor space allocated to community uses and commercial floor spaces be equivalent to or greater than the levels required on adjoining equivalent sites?

8.5.4 Delivering the right mix of retail uses in Epping Town Centre

Issue 1 – Delivering a Supermarket on the Eastern Side of Epping Town Centre

One issue that will impact on the liveability of Epping Town Centre will future residents' and workers' ability to access daily needs in a convenient manner. To this end, there would ideally there will be a supermarket provided on both sides of the rail line. Supermarkets tend to be an anchor use that then encourage other smaller and medium enterprises to locate nearby, providing a wider range of local uses for daily needs. A supermarket already operates on the west side of the centre but there is no supermarket on the eastern side.

Ultimately the planning system cannot mandate the operation of any business. The planning controls allocate floor space areas and set in place planning controls that seek to create an environment for the business community to operate these types of businesses. Council cannot guarantee a supermarket be provided, but it can put in place planning controls that promote or incentivise desirable outcomes and apply economic development initiatives to attract a supermarket tenant.

Supermarkets require large floorplates. On the eastern side of Epping Town Centre, the existing lot pattern with multiple small shops requires significant lot amalgamation to occur to get an appropriate site. Having considered the pattern of Development Applications already in place and the possible locations for a supermarket, there remains one key site identified by Council Officers as ideal for a supermarket to service the eastern side of the Town Centre. The landholding (see Figure 26) consists of 7 sites – 38-48 Langston Place and 2 Pembroke Street – which together have a site area of approximately 2,900sqm.

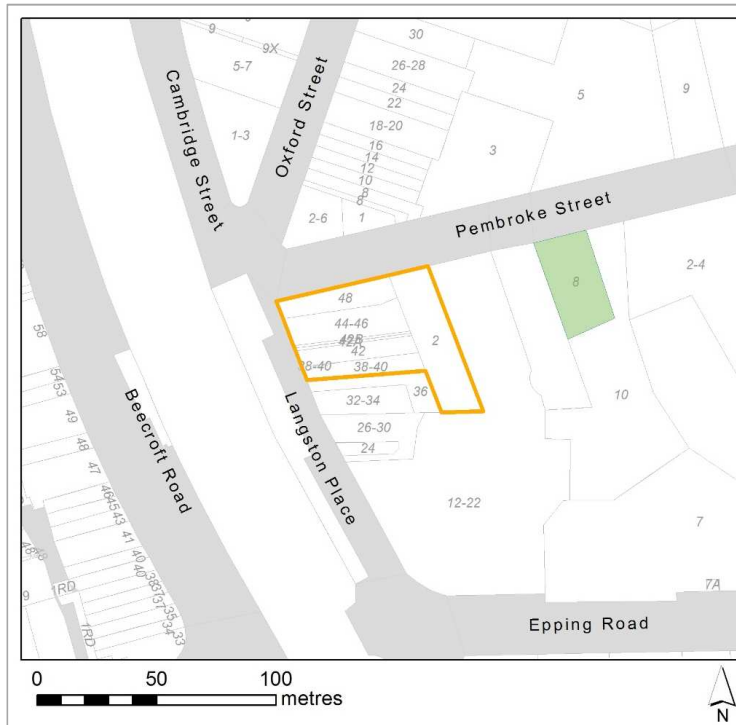


Figure 26 Potential supermarket site – Eastern side of Epping Town Centre

This site is located directly opposite the station and is considered the ideal site for a supermarket to service the eastern side of the Epping Town Centre, if supported by community and the market. However, the amalgamation of all of these sites to achieve a supermarket floorplate cannot be mandated by Council. Instead it may be possible to provide these landowners with an incentive to amalgamate these sites by providing them with additional floor space and height in any new planning controls to provide a financial incentive for amalgamation and the delivery of a supermarket.

Guiding principle:

- seek to ensure that the broadest possible range of retail and a range of small to medium office and service uses are can be accommodated in the Epping Town Centre.
- seek to ensure that connectivity between the eastern and western parts of the Epping Town Centre is maximised to provide the broadest range of access for all future users, whilst still seeking to ensure that key uses (i.e. a supermarket) are easily accessible to provide a high level of access to key services and facilities (minimising the distance anyone needs to travel within the centre to meet their daily needs).

Consultation Question:

8h. Should Council seek to actively encourage a supermarket site on the eastern side of the Epping Town Centre by providing floor space and height bonuses to incentivise the site amalgamation necessary to achieve a supermarket?

Issue 2 - Ensuring Delivery of Large Floorplate Retail Options on the Western Side of the Rail Line

As discussed in Appendix 3, Council has two Preliminary Planning Proposals seeking to increase FSR and height on sites on the western side of the Epping Town Centre. The two sites are shown in Figures 27 and 28 below.

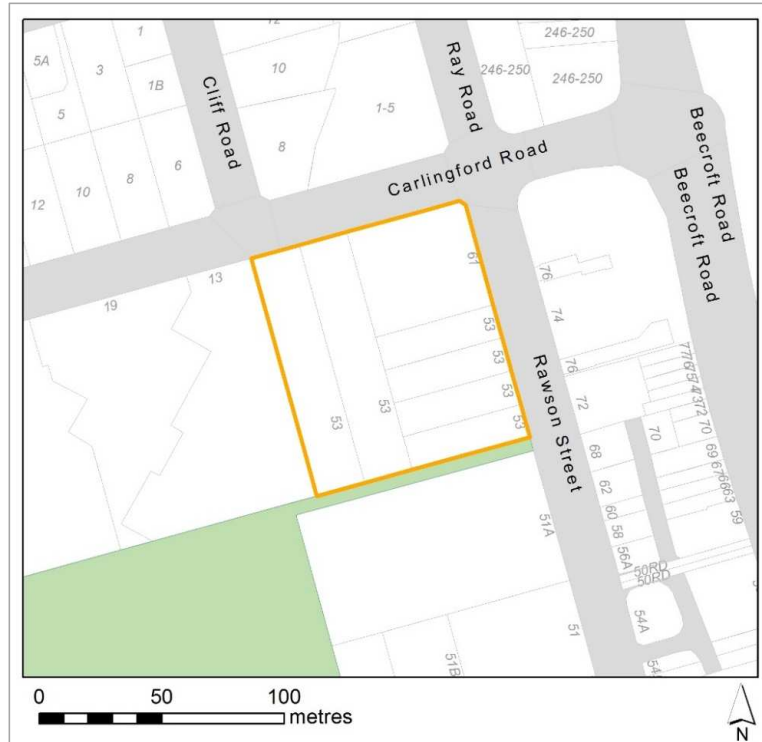


Figure 27 Potential large floorplate supermarket site – Western side of Epping Town Centre, 53 & 61 Rawson Street, Epping

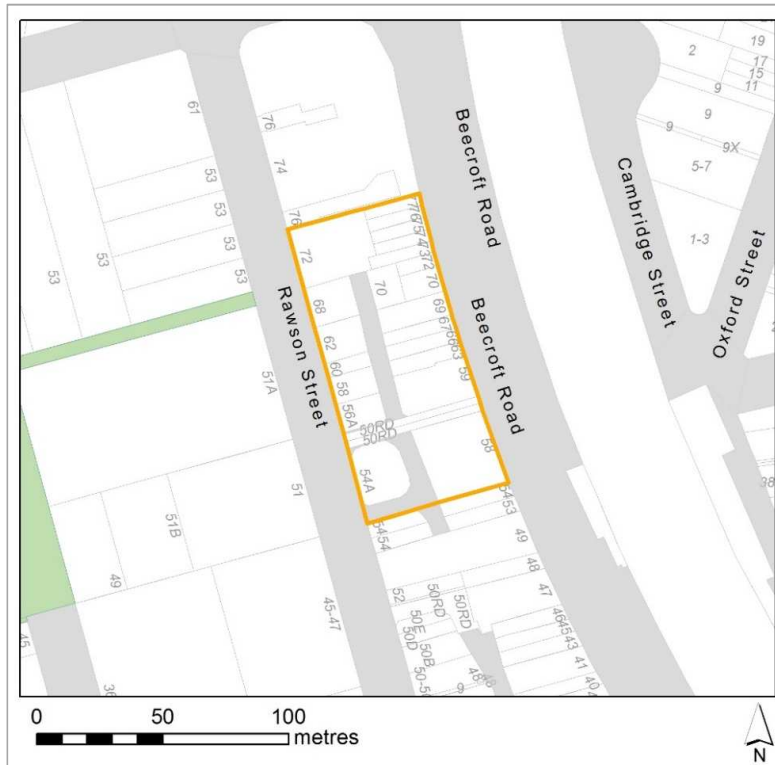


Figure 28 Potential large floorplate supermarket site – Western side of Epping Town Centre, 59 & 77 Beecroft Street, Epping

In both the proposals submitted there are large floorplate shops provided for in the lower levels.

In order to achieve a role for Epping as a sub district centre, it is critical that these sites provide commercial levels in a podium and that larger floorplate shops are retained within it. The DCP currently requires up to a 4 storey podium be provided for the Beecroft Road Site. However, the current planning controls do not contain any provisions that require the applicants to retain large floorplate outlets. There are also no controls that require a supermarket site be retained for the site on the western corner of Rawson Road and Carlingford Road

It is recommended that Council strengthen its DCP controls to specify that large floorplate retail should be provided. However, this sort of control has traditionally not been specified in a DCP and instead it has been left to the market to determine the mix of retail shop sites on a development in Parramatta LGA.

The circumstances for these sites are different to those discussed above in relation to providing a supermarket in the east. These sites have effectively already been amalgamated so there is no incentive required to promote amalgamation.

However, in both cases the applicants via their preliminary Planning Proposals are seeking additional density on these sites over and above what is permitted under the current controls. There are various other issues, particularly traffic management and urban design considerations that need to be considered before any decision about whether these sites will be able to be developed at higher densities.

However, a position Council could take is that any additional density on these sites (subject to Council being satisfied it is satisfactory from a traffic and urban design point of view) would be conditional upon large floorplate shops being provided.

Guiding principles:

- seek to ensure that the broadest possible range of retail and a range of small to medium office and service uses are can be accommodated in the Epping Town Centre.
- seek to ensure that connectivity between the eastern and western parts of the Epping Town Centre is maximised to provide the broadest range of access for all future users, whilst still seeking to ensure that key uses (i.e. a supermarket) are easily accessible to provide a high level of access to key services and facilities (minimising the distance anyone needs to travel within the centre to meet their daily needs).

Consultation Question:

8i. Should Council consider floor space incentives on this site to seek to ensure larger floorplate retail shops on these sites?

9 SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE STUDY

Following council boundary changes in 2016, Council commissioned Suter Planners and Elton Consulting to prepare studies of Council's social infrastructure across the City of Parramatta Local Government Area. The analysis relevant to the Epping suburb has been extracted and presented in the *Epping Social Infrastructure Study*. This is being exhibited as supporting information to this Discussion Paper.

Section 10.1 summarises the technical findings from the Epping Social Infrastructure Study while Section 10.2 summarises the community feedback from the Phase 1 workshops that took place in May 2017. Section 10.3 specifically addresses open space provision, which is a key issue for consideration. Section 10.4 then develops a set of guiding principles that inform the recommendations made in Section 10.5.

The role of this Discussion Paper is to identify principles that will guide future decision making. Any future decisions on provision of any social infrastructure will be guided by the outcome of this Discussion Paper process, but will also need to be informed by project feasibility and financial analysis prior to Council making any decisions on exactly how and where social infrastructure changes are pursued in the future.

9.1 Technical findings

The *Epping Social Infrastructure Study* (the Study) makes recommendations on each Council-owned social infrastructure facility; these are summarised in the following sections. Section 10.1.1 deals with Community Facilities, Section 10.1.2 deals with Open Space, and Section 10.1.3 deals with other Indoor and Outdoor Facilities.

The Study notes that the following types of social infrastructure were not audited as part of the study:

- school facilities used by the community;
- facilities owned and/or operated by other Councils that are outside City of Parramatta borders, but are likely to be used by Parramatta residents; and
- facilities not owned by Council, but used by the community for meetings and functions, such as churches and YMCA venues.

However, these types of social infrastructure were included when considering options for future provision of social infrastructure.

Important note on benchmarking of social infrastructure (continues on next page)

The Study relies on population benchmarking as a basis to compare and understand the provision of social infrastructure across various geographical areas in the Parramatta LGA. Benchmarking compares the amount of floor space available of various types of social infrastructure (e.g. library floor space and community meeting rooms) per 1,000 residents. This process can then be applied to identify current gaps in provision, as well predicting future needs to adequately service a local catchment as the population fluctuates.

While benchmarking is useful and widely used by government as an analysis tool, the Study is clear to point out that it is only one factor that should be considered as:

- It does not assess the useability or quality of the floor space being provided, so is therefore not a useful tool to assess the suitability of the space provided to meet the specific needs of the local community.
- It does not take into account the different ways that different communities live. For instance, the needs of residents living in high-density environments are different to those living in suburban settings, and provision of social infrastructure may need to change accordingly.
- It does not assess the practical elements that affect the way we plan for social infrastructure. For example, large parcels of land for additional sports fields are often not available in an urban or infill environment.
- Other approaches, such as using school grounds for org sport on weekends may create better outcomes for the community, rather than Council acquiring additional land to expand its sporting facilities assets. In other words, considering community needs within their own context is critical.

There are other factors that Council must consider when providing social infrastructure. Different areas of the City have different levels of provision when benchmarked. Council will need to prioritise available funding to make improvements to local social infrastructure. Whilst Section 94 developer contributions will assist in funding infrastructure, they will not cover the full cost of the infrastructure upgrades required; therefore, funding from other sources will need to be factored in when assessing the feasibility of delivering new social infrastructure.

9.1.1 Community facilities

The table below lists the Council-owned community facilities in Epping.

Facility	Address	GFA (sqm)	Zoning	Management
Epping Community Centre (School of Arts)	9 Oxford Street, Epping	1,157	B2 Local Centre	Unstaffed, Council management
Epping Library	1 Chambers Court, Epping	550	B2 Local Centre	Council management
Epping Leisure and Learning Centre	1 Chambers Court, Epping	389	B2 Local Centre	Council management
Epping Creative Centre	26 Stanley Road, Epping	460	RE1 Public recreation	Managed by NGO tenant – subsidised lease
West Epping Community Centre	15 Ward Street, Epping	622	RE1 Public recreation	Unstaffed, Council management
B. Parker Memorial Guide Hall	1-3 Briggs Road, Epping	190	RE1 Public recreation	Managed by NGO tenant (Girl Guides Association NSW) – exclusive lease

Table 2 Council-owned community facilities within the Epping suburb

The Study identified the following strengths and weaknesses with regard to community facilities in the Epping suburb:

Strengths:

- The community facilities generally benefit from good access to public transport, especially those close to the Town Centre, including Epping Community Centre and Epping Library.

- The community facilities generally benefit from good integration with other services and facilities.
- Benchmarking indicates that the current population of Epping (24,530 residents) is currently well-serviced with community space when compared with other parts of the Parramatta LGA. Epping has the highest community facility provision in the LGA (116sqm per 1,000 people in Epping, compared with 61sqm per 1,000 people across the LGA).
- On the assumption that the population of Epping increases to 37,271 residents in 2036, benchmarking indicates Epping will only have a very small shortfall in community facility floor space to service a larger population (81sqm per 1,000 residents) even if no new facilities are provided.

Weaknesses:

- In many cases, existing community facilities are not adequately staffed and have limited programming available, making much of the space unusable to the community and underutilised.
- The quality of the floor space across many of the community facilities is poor.
- The current dispersed “branch network” of community centres in and around the centre reinforces their underutilisation and poor useability. A best practice model that enables Council to efficiently resource, staff and program to meet the needs of local residents would be a large, flexible multipurpose community facility.
- Inadequate parking creates barriers to use, especially for facilities that do not benefit from public transport connectivity (e.g. West Epping Community Centre).
- Some community facilities lack visual prominence. Facilities such as the Epping Creative Centre and West Epping Community Centre lack good access. More prominence could provide increased value for the community.
- Epping Leisure and Learning Centre is in relatively poor condition, provides limited access, and is significantly underutilised.
- B. Parker Memorial Hall and Epping Creative Centre have limited access.
- Library floor space is unlikely to be inadequate to meet community needs by 2036 – see discussion in following paragraphs.

Epping Library

The Study identifies library space as Epping’s most significant shortfall in the area of community facilities (refer to site at Figure 25). It does not meet the existing needs of the community in its current form. The current facility provides approximately 550sqm of library space, and requires an additional minimum of 1,000sqm to meet current needs using the benchmarking approach. Specifically, it was identified that there is a particular lack of space for the library to offer lifelong learning programs, and to provide adequate seating and study areas. It was also found that some events (such as Storytime) are often oversubscribed. Demand for library floor space and the services provided are forecast to continue to increase in line with population projections.

To service the needs of Epping residents to 2036, the Study identifies that 1,000sqm of additional floor space is required. However, some floor space efficiencies could be gained by co-locating the library with other community facilities using a multi-functional community hub model. Potential options on how Council might meet the needs of Epping residents, including through a community hub model, are further explored later in this chapter.

9.1.2 Open Space - sports fields and recreation parks

The study identified a total of 16 open space reserves and parks within the Epping suburb. They range from major sports fields, including the recently upgraded West Epping Park and Boronia Park, through to smaller passive outdoor recreation spaces such as Discovery Park and Kim Rutherford Reserve. This section summarises the findings of the Study with regards to sports fields and recreation parks, as well as the recreation facilities available within these settings (e.g. picnic areas, play spaces and exercise stations).

Strengths:

- The Epping suburb has adequate provision of outdoor recreation facilities for unstructured recreation (such as paths, play spaces, exercise equipment, and youth-oriented facilities) to meet the needs of the expected population at 2036.
- Epping Town Centre and suburbs benefit from a significant provision of natural areas, and a number of good-quality larger parks.
- Access to sports fields and parks by public transport is an overall strength, though this varies depending on proximity to the Town Centre.

Weaknesses:

- Many of the open space areas in Epping are not universally accessible, particularly at Dence Park and the Epping Aquatic and Leisure Centre, as access grades (the slope of the path) are not consistent with current building code requirements for universal accessibility.
- Open space provision is low for the current population (24,530 residents), with a particular lack of sports fields for organised activities. This shortage will only be exacerbated by growth in Epping. Specifically, additional open space will be required to provide for additional tennis and netball courts, as well as fields appropriately sized to allow for organised sport including rugby league, touch football and soccer.
- There are limited walkable connections between recreation facilities and spaces.
- While *generally* there are adequate recreation facilities to meet the needs of Epping residents to 2036, the Study identifies that by 2036 there will be some shortages in specific facilities like in playgrounds, youth skate and bike facilities, and dog parks. The study also identified that the diversity and quality of these facilities was generally lacking, particularly for older children and young adults.

Other observations:

Council officers also make the following observations regarding sports fields and recreation parks:

- By upgrading parks and open spaces, there is an opportunity to enhance the quality and function of the public spaces adjoining parks and sports fields. An example of this is the interface between future redevelopment in Epping Town Centre with Boronia Park, where redevelopment of surrounding sites offers the opportunity to improve the interface with the park.
- There is potential to increase the value and useability of smaller parks.

9.1.3 Aquatic and indoor recreational facilities

Aquatic and indoor recreational facilities are:

- The YMCA sports centre at West Epping Park (the only indoor recreation facility within the Epping suburb)
- Epping Aquatic and Recreation Centre provides a 50m outdoor pool with a smaller kids play pool at Dence Park.

The Study identified the following strengths and weaknesses with regard to aquatic and indoor recreational facilities in the Epping suburb:

Strengths:

- The YMCA Sports Centre has been recently upgraded and provides good quality facilities, including multi-use courts (with 4 badminton courts), separate gymnastics arena, multipurpose program rooms and a fitness centre. The Centre provides the flexible space model Council envisages for the area.
- The study indicates current flexible indoor court provision could be adequate to meet the needs of the expected population at 2036.

Weaknesses:

- The YMCA lacks car parking and connection with other West Epping sports facilities.
- Epping Aquatic and Recreation Centre is ageing and not close to the majority of expected population growth.
- There are limited walkable connections between recreation facilities and spaces.

9.1.4 Epping Town Centre Civic Focal Point

Epping Town Centre lacks a clear focal point for civic activity, with community facilities being dispersed across the centre and suburb. Epping Town Centre should have a focal point consistent with its strategic importance and size.

9.1.5 Social infrastructure needs analysis

The following is a summary of the needs identified in the analysis above:

- Library:
 - An additional minimum of 1,000sqm is required to meet current needs – i.e. a facility of approximately 1,500sqm.
 - To meet the needs of the future population at 2036, benchmarking indicates a library facility of about 2,000sqm. Efficiencies could be gained by co-locating the library with other community facilities in a multi-functional community hub (a best practice model).
- Community space:
 - There is only a small shortfall of community space across Epping anticipated for 2036. However, the configuration of the existing centres makes staffing and programming difficult. This limits the accessibility and usability of these facilities.
 - Current provision and programming of existing community facilities does not reflect best practice, and could be better provided through a larger flexible multi-purpose community space based on a community hub model.
 - The spread of community centre functions across a number of smaller locations is likely to confuse some residents.

- Epping Leisure and Learning Centre is in relatively poor condition and hence appears to be significantly underutilised.
- Open Space:
 - There is a need to address the provision of open space and its quality and usability to respond to increasing population pressure.

9.1.6 Recommendations of the Social Infrastructure Study

The Study makes the following recommendations across **community facilities and open space and recreation**:

- Improve Council's centralised bookings system
- Identify opportunities for greater utilisation by the community of all of Council's assets, including a review of Council's leases and licenses.
- Seek to include non – Council spaces for hire in Epping in Council's centralised booking system
- Seek to develop formal partnerships with organisation and groups in Epping and the wider catchment to increase community access to existing facilities

The Study makes the following recommendations in relation to **community facilities**:

- In the short term seek to convert the Epping Leisure and Learning Centre into an expanded multipurpose space for Epping Library to address some of the current shortfall in library space.
- In the longer term, review Epping Creative Centre design and uses as part of a master planning process for the entire Dence Park area to increase recreation and leisure uses on the site.
- With a medium to longer term view work now to identify opportunities to deliver a new community hub in Epping of 3,500 square metres.
- Seek to facilitate delivery of affordable rental housing in Epping.
- Seek to promote and work with developers and other stakeholders to realise increased provision of quality long day care.
- Seek opportunities to increase provision of low cost leasable office space for not for profit community service providers.

The Study makes the following recommendations in relation to **open space and recreation**:

- Work with councils bordering City of Parramatta LGA to understand the capacity of sports fields and recreation facilities close by to Epping to cater for Epping residents.
- In the medium to longer term, upgrade existing larger parks to establish them as major recreation destinations.
- Upgrade:
 - existing smaller parks within Epping to establish them as high quality recreation and open spaces.
 - existing sports fields within Epping to increase the community value of existing facilities.
 - existing sports facilities that are located nearby Epping to support the needs of Epping residents.
- Assess the condition and capacity of the Epping Aquatic and Leisure Centre to address local aquatic needs longer term and options for development of

- alternate or enhanced aquatic offerings including water play and indoor facilities.
- Maximise appropriate use of Epping's natural assets by creating quality recreational settings linked to natural areas.
- Pursue land acquisition to increase open space recreation parks and plazas.

9.2 Community feedback

9.2.1 Social infrastructure workshop

The community workshop on social infrastructure in Epping was held on 15 May 2017 and focused on open space and 'bricks and mortar' facilities. A total of 91 participants attended the workshop.

Participants were asked to consider the strengths and weakness of the local parks and indoor and outdoor recreation facilities and how to increase their accessibility and usage, as well as to provide direction on the future of the Epping pool. Feedback on other social infrastructure, including infrastructure not in Council ownership (e.g. childcare, affordable rental housing, youth facilities, over 55's facilities) was also covered.

Other feedback received at the workshop included:

- Local facilities are well-known and residents are mostly satisfied with the range of services available to them.
- Operation and maintenance is important (e.g. contactable administration, good lighting and proper signage).
- There was a view that creating mixed-use spaces which cater to many different types of people could enhance usage (e.g. sports fields with picnic areas, local parks with adult facilities or multipurpose indoor recreation).
- Epping Pool is a beloved community asset. Developing different types of activities on-site such as improving gym facilities or incorporating a café may make it more appealing to use, bringing in more money for its maintenance.
- Participants believe that future infrastructure planning needs to 'enable liveable town centres' as an overarching principle.

9.2.2 Other community consultation and feedback

In addition to social infrastructure workshop that was part of the Epping Planning Review, Council undertook extensive community engagement across the whole City of Parramatta area throughout 2016. Through these processes, the Epping community told Council that:

- Epping has a great sense of community, and residents value the village feel of the suburb, which is "at a distance" to busier and denser suburbs. Residents feel a sense of belonging and connection to their neighbours.
- Residents value the "family feel" of the Epping area, which they see reflected in the preservation of family-oriented homes, as well as community-oriented facilities that cater to group activities and children.
- Residents value local parks and open space.
- Residents value public transport connections, but want to see improvements to traffic, transport and parking, with congestion recognised as a growing problem.

- Residents want to see the impacts of growth effectively managed, and are concerned by the perception of “overdevelopment” in the area.

9.3 Council assessment of key issue – open space

A key issue emerging from the previous sections is **the viability of applying strict benchmarks to open space provision**. Community feedback and the technical assessment both highlighted concerns about the need for additional open space to service the growing population.

Having considered the outcome of the technical assessment and the community feedback, Council officers have analysed this issue further to develop guiding principles. The key question is: how can Council respond and what would be the impact of that response?

There are practical issues that need to be considered before Council determines the appropriate strategy. Hypothetically, a strict application of the benchmark would require 56 additional hectares of open space within the Epping suburb, raising the following issues:

- **Character impacts:** The Epping suburb is 680Ha in area the town. It would not be possible to insert 56Ha of additional open space into this established urban area without significantly impacting on the suburb’s predominantly low-density residential character.
- **Displacement of the community:** acquisition of 56ha of land which is close to the Epping Town Centre would require acquisition of a significant number of private homes.
- **Land Costs:** land values in this area are such that acquisition of 56Ha of land is not a feasible financial option for Council.
- **Flow-on density changes:** If 56Ha of land was rezoned to open space, densities on these sites would be very low (effectively zero). In order to maintain dwelling target numbers, densities on sites *not* zoned for open space would need to increase significantly to compensate. This would dramatically change the character of Epping.

In summary, to simply apply the benchmark in this established area would be inappropriate and impractical. This means that Council must consider what is the next best alternative. The key information to take away from the benchmarking exercise is that more open space is required and that the open space opportunities for residents need to be addressed via a series of strategies rather than simply meeting the numerical benchmark. Consideration also needs to be given to services and facilities that meet the community’s needs, but which are not owned by Council or are located in adjoining Local Government Areas.

9.4 Guiding principles

After considering the technical report and the public consultation, the principles and key themes identified by Council staff which guide the development of options and recommendations included in this Discussion Paper are:

- Council should investigate a series of options to ensure that all its open space needs are met for the growing Epping population.

- A move toward a multi-function community hub model will deliver a best practice response for the residents of Epping in relation to community facilities by:
 - Allowing Council to co-ordinate staffing and programming resources efficiently to the benefit of the local community;
 - Encouraging diverse users;
 - Having a sufficient size and scale to have flexible and multipurpose spaces that respond and adapt as the needs of the community change; and
 - Being prominently located to encourage use and promote the role these facilities play in serving identified social and community needs (ideally on a main street with ground floor street frontages).
- Investment in upgrading of facilities needs to be prioritised in locations that are accessible both in terms of public transport, and are capable of achieving universal access requirements.
- There needs to be a balance between the needs of diverse communities, including young people and the elderly and frail.
- Facilities also need to balance family and non-family needs, as well providing options for people of diverse cultural backgrounds and preferences (active, passive open space; range of facilities – Barbeque, playground, fishing and other scout things and the like).
- By upgrading parks and open spaces, there is an opportunity to enhance the quality and function of the public spaces adjoining parks and sports fields.
- A civic space integrated with other community facilities and services should be provided in Epping Town Centre to provide a focal point for civic activity.

Given the range of role and function of social infrastructure in the local community, there are a number of options that are available to Council to provide the facilities, spaces and services to meet the needs of Epping residents now and to 2036. This is presented in the next section.

9.5 Questions for feedback

This section seeks to reconcile the recommendations of the Study with community feedback. In moving towards a best practice model of social infrastructure delivery, there will inevitably be tensions between the technical findings of the Study, the views of community members who have strong interests in particular community facilities, and the recommendations of Council officers which aim to deliver the best outcome for the community.

The issues presented in this section arise from a synthesis of the Study findings and the community feedback received during the consultation process. Feedback from the community is sought on policy areas to:

- help resolve potential inconsistency or conflict between the study and consultation findings;
- help resolve potential inconsistency or conflict between different parts of the Epping community; or
- assist Council to prioritise different options available to improve community facility and open space provision in the area.

Feedback in these areas will assist Council to develop strategies that balance the technical findings and community sentiment.

9.5.1 Issues regarding improving open space provision in Epping to 2036

Issue 1 - Assessing where new land should be acquired for open space

The strategic acquisition of land to increase the size of existing open space will be considered but the recommendation is that Council look at opportunities to expand the size of existing parks. In short, strategic purchases to create new parks would be a secondary consideration. This strategy is considered the most feasible approach to improving the role open space will have for all Epping residents. For instance, concentrating on a single new park will see a significant contribution to those within the catchment of the new park, but little impact elsewhere.

Also, expanding existing parks is considered to be a process where open space improvements can be realised in a shorter time period for reasons discussed in the next section. It is easier to acquire one or two sites to expand a park than it is to acquire multiple properties to create a new park.

Guiding principle: Council should investigate a series of options to ensure that all its open space needs are met for the growing Epping population.

Consultation Question:

9a. Do you support an approach of expanding existing parks in and around Epping ahead of the creation of a new park in the area around Epping Town Centre?

Issue 2 – Acquisition of former bowling club site

As discussed in further detail in Appendix 3, there is a Planning Proposal for a land holding between Epping Road and Forest Park (referred to as the Austino Planning Proposal). The site the subject of that Planning Proposal contains the former Epping Bowling Club site (725 Blaxland Road) which is currently zoned RE1 Public Recreation zone and owned by Austino. Figure 29 shows the former bowling club site and its location within Austino's overall land-holding.



Figure 29 Land affected by the Austino Planning Proposal (from applicant's Urban Design Report)

Council is the acquisition authority and could acquire the land subject to funding being available to finance the acquisition. The owner of the site is seeking to amend the planning controls for their land and as part of the proposal they are intending to dedicate an equivalent amount of open space to Council.

In carrying out the original assessment of the Planning Proposal, Hornsby Shire Council did not have a funding strategy to acquire 725 Blaxland Road and had concluded that the purchase of the site for the purpose of expanding Forest Park is unlikely to represent value for money when compared with alternative open space options within the locality (Hornsby Shire Council, 13 April 2016, Item 8). Given that the site was not formally purchased by the former Hornsby Shire Council, the site is currently not available to the community despite RE1 Public Recreation zoning. The applicant is therefore seeking to provide public open space as part of their redevelopment of the site, albeit in a different spatial structure than would have been achieved if Council had purchased the site subject to additional residential density being supported.

The trade-off that the community is being asked to consider in response to this Discussion Paper is whether it is willing to continue considering this trade-off as part of the Planning Proposal process or whether it should purchase the Open Space zoned land separately from the process, recognising that this would reduce Council's capacity to invest in other community needs.

It should be noted when providing this feedback that it will assist Council in assessing the Planning Proposal but:

- this trade-off is not the only consideration in the assessment of the Planning Proposal. The other impacts of the additional density must also be considered;
- even if Council was to purchase the bowling club site the applicant would still be able to pursue an application to increase density of the remainder of the site;
- feedback has been received from some local residents indicating the Planning Proposal should not be supported;
- the Sydney West Central Planning Panel have considered the matter and determined that it should at least be considered by Council. The Panel has the power to alter Council's future decisions on this Planning Proposal if they consider it appropriate.

The purpose of this section of the Discussion Paper is to test the community position on this trade-off so Council can decide whether it will seek funding to acquire the existing open space zone land or continue to consider the applicant's proposal. Council's decision will impact significantly on how the Planning Proposal progresses. In this regard advantages and disadvantages of accepting additional density in return for open space without Council having to formally purchase it include:

Advantages

- This option has the least financial impact for Council and the community. At this point in time, there is no designated funding for the acquisition of this site. The Section 94 Contributions Plan for Epping does not collect any funds for acquisition of this site. The more general revenue funding that Council

has to allocate to purchase this site, the less funding available for other infrastructure in Epping.

Disadvantages

- There will be impacts associated with the additional density the scale of which will depend on the scale of the additional density permitted proposal.

Guiding principle: Council should investigate a series of options to ensure that all its open space needs are met for the growing Epping population.

Consultation Question:

9b. Should Council purchase the Bowling Club site separate from the current Planning Proposal process or continue to consider the Planning Proposal option that it be provided to Council subject to additional density being permitted on the existing landowners site?

Issue 3 – Process for acquiring open space

Land in Epping is expensive and existing parks generally adjoin residential properties, which means any future expansion of existing parks or fields would require Council to acquire private residential properties. The potential acquisition of private residences would need to be undertaken very sensitively, considering the impact that this could have on the occupants/owners of the land. Despite this, Council will continue to investigate options for acquisition of land where it will improve existing open space. This may also involve the purchase of land outside of the immediate Epping area, but is accessible by residents from the Epping area.

Council will, as part of future phases of the planning process initiated by the preparation of this Discussion Paper, commence the feasibility analysis for identifying potential residential sites that could be acquired to expand existing parks. Consultation with land owners will precede any rezoning because in most instances they will comprise of private homes. It will be necessary to explain to the occupants/owners the impacts on their property value, their ability to sell their site and the ability to stay on the site.

Once the properties are zoned Council can legally acquire the properties via **compulsory acquisition** or via **negotiated agreement**. Traditionally Council has been reluctant to compulsorily acquire properties as this forces people out of their homes. Instead a process of negotiation at a time when the current owner is happy to consider moving is preferred. The disadvantage of this approach is that it can take many years for a piece of open space to be acquired, delaying the provision of additional open space. Using negotiated acquisition can take more time, but this process is more sensitive to impacts on the owners of those sites.

Feedback is required from the community on the importance of delivering open space acquisition in the short to medium term to determine which approach Council should take.

Guiding principle: Council should investigate a series of options to ensure that all its open space needs are met for the growing Epping population.

Consultation Question:

9c. Do you support Council pursuing a process where acquisition of land for open space is done on the basis of negotiated acquisition rather than compulsory acquisition?

Issue 4 – Utilising existing land more effectively

There are a number of factors that determine the level of intensity of use a local park or sports field can accommodate to ensure it can be used by the community without degrading. Two key factors are the amount (or type) of landscaping on the site, and the level of maintenance required.

As an example, re-configuring landscaping in existing parks could enable more active uses (including both unstructured play and organised sporting activities) while also accommodating for the needs of residents who want to use parks to passively enjoy the outdoors.

Another option could be to provide a different surface treatment to playgrounds and sporting fields to accommodate a higher level of use, such as the use of synthetic sporting surfaces.

Guiding principle: Council should investigate a series of options to ensure that all its open space needs are met for the growing Epping population.

Consultation Question:

9d. Are you supportive of Council investing in improved landscaping and equipment in parks and sporting field, including investigating synthetic surfaces for sporting fields to cater for more intensive use?

Issue 5 – Establishing partnerships to make better use of existing facilities

Large institutional landowners, including government and non-government schools, provide opportunities for Council to facilitate partnerships with local community organisations (such as amateur sports clubs) to make better use of existing facilities for the local community. In the case of schools, many children within the Epping community use their school's open space areas during the week, but are unable to use the same fields on the weekend in organised sporting activities by non-school groups. The way in which schools are fenced off, and the way landscaping is used to prevent access is important to ensure the safety and supervision of students during school days, however there is an opportunity to consider the flexible use of schools' sporting fields.

Council considered a report on 13 June 2017 where it resolved to enter into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Department of Education (DOE). The associated Investigation Program identifies seven action areas that together form the basis of Council's initial work with DOE:

- Increase community access to sports fields.
- Establish formal arrangements between DOE and Council to continue use of Carlingford High School sports fields.

- Increase community access to school halls and related facilities.
- Increase community access to library facilities.
- Proactive joint planning for the growth of Telopea and the shared use of school facilities and community assets.
- Proactive joint planning and preparation to support the opening of Wentworth Point Public School.
- Proactive joint planning of a primary school in the Carter Street Precinct.

Feedback is sought from the community on how this MOU should be pursued in the Epping area.

Guiding principle: Council should investigate a series of options to ensure that all its open space needs are met for the growing Epping population.

Consultation Question:

9e. Which schools should Council pursue in the Epping area to progress the MOU between Council and the Department of Education to improve the availability of sporting fields?

9.5.2 Location of potential future Civic Focal Point

In order to meet the needs of a larger population living in a higher density environment by 2036, the Study recommends the provision of a 3,500sqm multi-purpose facility based on the Community Facility Hub model (involving library and community facility floor space). This could include the co-location of an expanded library offering, as well community meeting rooms, study areas, community programming facilities and the like.

Investigating the delivery of such a facility is consistent with the guiding principles *“to effectively deliver community programming and services”, “investment in upgrading of facilities ... prioritised in locations that are accessible both in terms of public transport and universal accessibility”* and *“to make our community facilities relevant and valued resources ... they need to be clustered/co-located to encourage a diversity of users”*.

Ideally, the Community Facility Hub would be co-located with the Civic Space (i.e. plaza) that has been identified elsewhere in this Discussion Paper as required in the Epping Town Centre. This Community Facility Hub would be provided in integrated manner as a Civic Focal Point (comprising both the facilities hub and an urban plaza) for the centre. The options investigated below consider where a Civic Focal Point could be delivered.

Important Note:

Different terms are used in this section to describe and differentiate options for civic facilities as follows:

Community Facility Hub: A facility incorporating a library and community facility floor space.

Civic Space: A public urban plaza.

Civic Focal Point: A location combining both of the above elements.

Option 1 – Rawson Street Council car park site

The advantages and disadvantages of locating a Civic Focal Point on this site are discussed below together with some options for how this might be delivered on this site. The key reason for choosing this site is that it is already in Council's ownership.

Council currently owns the car park site along with an adjoining site at 51A and 51B Rawson Street (refer to Figure 24). The site currently plays a key role in providing car parking for this part of the Epping Town Centre. This option is put forward on the basis that the site will continue to play a role as a car park with parking transferred into a basement.

The strengths and weaknesses of this site as the location for a hub are detailed below.

Strengths:

- The site has a 55m primary street frontage to both Rawson Street and Boronia Park, which could allow Council to achieve one of the recommendations of the study which is to provide prominent visual exposure to a valued community asset (Boronia Park).
- The site is large enough to potentially provide for an integrated Civic Focal Point that meets both community facility requirements and a contiguous civic space with a good interface with Boronia Park thereby providing integration of 3 key civic assets.
- The site is more physically separated from sensitive land uses such as lower density residential development.
- There is an opportunity to enhance the quality and function of Boronia Park (including treatments of the edges), as well as the public domain along Rawson Street and a potential future town square.
- The proposed pedestrian network in the current DCP indicates an intent to create/improve upon pedestrian links between the station and residential zoned land to the west so the site would expect to have significant pedestrian traffic activating it and assisting with the visual exposure of the site.
- This site would be served by excellent public transport connectivity.
- Locating the Civic Focal Point here would strengthen the role of the town centre.

Weaknesses:

- The site is less accessible to residents/ workers located on the eastern side of the rail line.
- The development permitted under the planning controls for the site immediately to the north (containing the Coles supermarket) will mean that providing a Civic Space with a high level of solar access would be a challenge.

Option 2 – Epping Library site

The Epping Library site at 10 Pembroke Street also contains a Council carpark whilst Pembroke Reserve at 8 Pembroke Street adjoins the library site (refer to

Figure 23). Option 2 would see the park formalised into more of a civic space rather than its current role of a traditional park.

Chapter 10 of this Discussion Paper shows a future potential through link that is being considered for the street block that contains the current Epping library site. The comments on the strengths and weaknesses have had some regard to the impact of that proposal on the suitability of the site.

Strengths:

- The site is large enough to potentially provide for an integrated Civic Focal Point that meets the requirements for community facilities and for the conversion of the adjoining park into a more formalised Civic Space but the site is smaller than the Rawson Street Car park site.
- The site has good access for residents on the eastern side of the rail line.
- If the potential proposed new road network discussed in Chapter 10 can be delivered the road/pedestrian linkages are proposed to be improved which will improve pedestrian activity in this vicinity.

Weaknesses:

- The road network proposed for this street block will provide more road frontage but will split the site in two separating the civic space from the facilities building.
- The Library site is located mid street block and despite the creation of the new streets would have poorer visual prominence and exposure compared to the other option.
- In terms of its location, relative to existing and pedestrian pathways which are important for giving the hub prominence and activating any civic space the pedestrian desire lines that cross this site are weaker than the other option.
- Converting Pembroke Reserve into a more formalised Civic Space would result in loss of its existing local park functions diminishing the availability of local open space on the eastern side of the rail line.
- The site has poorer access for residents on the western side of the rail line.

Option 3 – Two Civic Focal Points with a range of services

This option would see the sites in Options 1 and 2 each turned into Civic Focal Points with a Community Facility Hub and Civic Space enabling Council to provide different community facilities on both sides of the rail line (for instance, a library facility on one side and a community centre on the other). It is worth noting that this option could have been realised if the Council amalgamation had not occurred in 2016. Given the severance issue with the town centre with the railway line, there is no reason why the Epping Town Centre cannot have more than one Civic Focal Point, with each activated with different community facilities.

Strengths:

- It retains a presence for community facilities on both sides of the rail line so residents have easy access to a civic space and some community facilities on their side of the rail station.
- It strengthens the role of each side of the town centre.

Weaknesses:

- This option is not consistent with the recommendations of the Consultant Study, which recommends consolidating community facilities into a single site (this consolidation provides the chance to share spaces and create efficiencies and ongoing operation costs, rather than having to staff and run programs over two separate sites).
- It does not create a single Civic Focal Point for the Epping Town Centre
- There is significant additional cost in creating two Civic Focal Points.
- There would be a loss of open space on the eastern side if Pembroke Reserve is converted into a more formalised civic space.

Council Officer Recommendation

Of the three options for the location of potential future Civic Focal Point/s, Council officers consider the Rawson Street Car Park site (presented as Option 1) to be the preferred option for a single Civic Focal Point, as the site is better able to accommodate a Community Facility Hub and Civic Space in way that can be integrated into the broader pedestrian network and town centre. This option does not result in the loss of any existing community facility given that the public car park can be located underground below the new Community Facilities Hub whereas the Epping Library Site and Pembroke park would result in the loss of local open space if Pembroke park was converted into a more formalised Civic Space.

Guiding principles:

- A move toward a multi-function community hub model will deliver a best practice response for the residents of Epping in relation to community facilities by:
 - Allowing Council to co-ordinate staffing and programming resources efficiently to the benefit of the local community;
 - Encouraging diverse users;
 - Having a sufficient size and scale to have flexible and multipurpose spaces that respond and adapt as the needs of the community change; and
 - Being prominently located to encourage use and promote the role these facilities play in serving identified social and community needs (ideally on a main street with ground floor street frontages).
- Investment in upgrading of facilities needs to be prioritised in locations that are accessible both in terms of public transport, and are capable of achieving universal access requirements.
- A civic space integrated with other community facilities and services should be provided in Epping Town Centre to provide a focal point for civic activity.

Consultation Questions:

9f. Where is your preferred location for a Civic Focal Point incorporating a Community Facilities Hub and some form of Civic Space?

9g. Why is this your preferred location?

9.5.3 Options for funding and delivering a potential future Civic Focal Point

Community feedback is required on the mechanisms that might be used to develop a Civic Focal Point regardless of the site. The Study suggests that one method to assist funding of a new central facility would be potentially to sell off some of the dispersed sites that currently accommodate these facilities to fund the new facility.

Another option is for Council to enter into partnerships with developers to realise the development potential of sites it currently owns to fund the provision of community facilities.

There is precedent in this regard. Prior to the Council boundary changes of May 2016, Hornsby Shire Council had commenced an expression of interest (EOI) process that sought partners interested in working with the Council to redevelop the library site for a mixed use development that would have seen residential units constructed above the library site to assist with the funding of the new facility. This process had not been completed when the boundary changes that unified the Epping Town Centre within the new City of Parramatta LGA occurred. The EOI has been placed on hold until this strategic planning review can be completed.

There are also similar mechanisms being proposed involving the Rawson Street car park site. As discussed in Appendix 3, two preliminary Planning Proposals have been lodged with Council which both put forward the proposition that the Rawson car park site might be included in a broader redevelopment with adjoining sites. Both of these development proposals incorporate some civic space and community facilities and are discussed in more detail in Appendix 3.

This Discussion Paper is not seeking feedback on the particular details of these preliminary proposals. The proposals if they proceed will require further negotiation and resolution with selected partners to confirm exactly what is being delivered with further public consultation required in some form before final decisions are made. The question that is being posed in this Discussion Paper is: should Council consider entering into partnerships with adjoining landowners to assist with funding community infrastructure in Epping Town Centre?

There are three options for Council, which are discussed below.

Option 1 – Selling land that becomes surplus to requirements if a single Civic Focal Point is built

As indicated above, all Council-owned sites located within the town centre have some development potential for which Council could realise value by selling the site for redevelopment. In Chapter 8 the role of Council's sites in providing for commercial floor space was discussed. Council could seek to sell any number of sites it currently owns to provide funding for delivery of the community infrastructure discussed in this section.

The purpose of selling sites would not be to reduce the level of services. Instead, the strategy would be to provide improved services in a more efficient way on a consolidated site.

Guiding principles:

- A move toward a multi-function community hub model will deliver a best practice response for the residents of Epping in relation to community facilities by:
 - Allowing Council to co-ordinate staffing and programming resources efficiently to the benefit of the local community;
 - Encouraging diverse users;
 - Having a sufficient size and scale to have flexible and multipurpose spaces that respond and adapt as the needs of the community change; and
 - Being prominently located to encourage use and promote the role these facilities play in serving identified social and community needs (ideally on a main street with ground floor street frontages).
- Investment in upgrading of facilities needs to be prioritised in locations that are accessible both in terms of public transport, and are capable of achieving universal access requirements.
- A civic space integrated with other community facilities and services should be provided in Epping Town Centre to provide a focal point for civic activity.

Consultation Question:

9h. Would you support existing community facilities sites being sold to assist with funding a new consolidated single community hub to provide a higher quality community facility somewhere else within the Epping Town Centre?

Option 2 – Maximise the development potential of sites to assist with funding a Civic Focal Point

One option for funding the provision of Community Infrastructure is for Council to realise the value of land holdings in a way that provides the community with a financial return that can be used to assist with funding the new Civic Focal Point. In relation to both the options being considered for a new Civic Focal Point there is a history of these sites being considered for redevelopment in ways that would allow for new facilities to be delivered as part of the process.

The Expression of Interest (EOI) process that Hornsby Shire Council undertook before the Local Government Boundary changes that saw Epping included in the City of Parramatta is an example. The intention of the EOI was to find a partner so that together Council and the development partner could develop the site with a building incorporating the library on lower levels and residential development on higher level. If it had gone ahead the residential development would have effectively funded the new library component.

Another option is discussed in Appendix 3 where two Preliminary Planning Proposals are detailed that both seek to include the Rawson Street Carpark in the redevelopments. Both of the Preliminary Planning Proposals envisage Council's Rawson Street Carpark site being included in redevelopment processes with the benefits to the community/Council being the car parking being retained in a basement plus the delivery of other community infrastructure.

The redevelopment of Council owned sites in partnership with other partners can deliver significant community benefits that will allow the delivery of community

infrastructure in a more financially sustainable manner. The Discussion Paper seeks feedback on whether the community is comfortable with this approach.

Guiding principles:

- A move toward a multi-function community hub model will deliver a best practice response for the residents of Epping in relation to community facilities by:
 - Allowing Council to co-ordinate staffing and programming resources efficiently to the benefit of the local community;
 - Encouraging diverse users;
 - Having a sufficient size and scale to have flexible and multipurpose spaces that respond and adapt as the needs of the community change; and
 - Being prominently located to encourage use and promote the role these facilities play in serving identified social and community needs (ideally on a main street with ground floor street frontages).
- Investment in upgrading of facilities needs to be prioritised in locations that are accessible both in terms of public transport, and are capable of achieving universal access requirements.
- A civic space integrated with other community facilities and services should be provided in Epping Town Centre to provide a focal point for civic activity.

Consultation Question:

9i. Should Council seek to develop Council-owned sites to maximise the funding available to deliver a new Civic Focal Point?

Option 3 – Allowing additional density to secure a new Civic Focal Point

The two preliminary Planning Proposals, discussed in Appendix 3, for sites adjoining the Rawson Street Carpark Site both propose an increase in the overall density permitted on their site and both proposals seek to underground the carpark, and provide community facilities and a civic space.

Again the community is being asked to consider a trade-off between timely provision of community facilities against additional density being permitted in the town centre. This is similar to the trade-off discussed earlier in the Chapter related to the acquisition of the Bowling Club site as open space.

In this case, feedback is sought from the community on whether the community benefit that might be generated in terms of funding for a Community Focal Point should be given any weight in the process of determining whether additional density should be permitted in or around the centre.

Guiding principles:

- A move toward a multi-function community hub model will deliver a best practice response for the residents of Epping in relation to community facilities by:
 - Allowing Council to co-ordinate staffing and programming resources efficiently to the benefit of the local community;
 - Encouraging diverse users;

- Having a sufficient size and scale to have flexible and multipurpose spaces that respond and adapt as the needs of the community change; and
- Being prominently located to encourage use and promote the role these facilities play in serving identified social and community needs (ideally on a main street with ground floor street frontages).
- Investment in upgrading of facilities needs to be prioritised in locations that are accessible both in terms of public transport, and are capable of achieving universal access requirements.
- A civic space integrated with other community facilities and services should be provided in Epping Town Centre to provide a focal point for civic activity.

Consultation Question:

9j. Are you willing to accept further increases in density in the town centre if it would assist with funding a new Civic Focal Point?

9.5.4 Dence Park - Epping Aquatic Centre

Through the community consultation process, it was clear to Council that Epping Aquatic and Leisure Centre is a beloved community asset to sections of the Epping Community. However, despite this impassioned position, usage levels of this facility have been in decline over the longer term.

The technical report acknowledges that the facility is aging and has accessibility issues which means it does not meet modern day standards for this type of facility. At the time the pool was the responsibility of Hornsby Shire Council, reports to council considered the option of closing down the centre.

As part of the development of a community facilities strategy, Council will need to determine what role the Epping Aquatic centre might play within the new City of Parramatta entity. For instance, should the centre be redeveloped or modernised as an aquatic centre, or put to an alternate community use.

The strengths and weaknesses of the site are detailed below.

Strengths

- Council owns the land.
- Council will open the pool for October 2017 summer.

Weaknesses

- The Aquatic Centre is aging and needs significant upgrading
- It lacks visual prominence.
- It is in a bushfire-prone site.
- Is not heated and is underutilised.
- The topography of the site makes modernising the site a relatively expensive exercise.

Council is seeking feedback from the community on what it considers is the appropriate future community and social use for this site.

Guiding principles:

- Council should investigate a series of options to ensure that all its open space needs are met for the growing Epping population.

- Investment in upgrading of facilities needs to be prioritised in locations that are accessible both in terms of public transport, and are capable of achieving universal access requirements.

Consultation Question:

9k. What should be the future use of the Dence Park Aquatic Site?

10.0 PUBLIC DOMAIN ANALYSIS

The intense growth within the Epping Town Centre presents Council with the opportunity to review aspects of the centre's public domain, identify opportunities for improvements and present these to the community for discussion. This will also assist Council in advising Development Application and Planning Proposal applicants until new planning controls can be formulated. Council officers have identified that the areas requiring immediate attention are pedestrian connections and footpath widths.

10.1 Community feedback

While there has not been a community workshop held specifically on urban design issues, numerous urban design themes have been consistently raised throughout the consultation process to date. Some recent feedback received at the workshop pertaining to the way the centre will redevelop over time included:

- **Pedestrian connections:** The view emerged in all workshops that pedestrian connections should be:
 - created or improved either between or through blocks;
 - improved between different land uses and attractors (i.e. the centre and open space areas);
 - created at mid-block where block lengths were long; and
 - improved to form linkages from one side of the centre to the other.
- **A vibrant centre:** Participants are enthusiastic about the possible future of Epping. They want their town centre to reflect the vibrant, friendly, community which they are familiar with (from the commercial floor space workshop).
- **Enable liveability:** The community believe that future infrastructure planning needs to "enable liveable town centres" as an overarching principle (from the Social Infrastructure Workshop held on 15 May 2017).

The recommendations in this chapter seek comment on proposed amendments to the design controls to improve the public domain in Epping Town Centre.

10.2 Guiding Principles

After considering the outstanding public domain design matters and the broad public consultation feedback, the guiding principles identified by Council staff are:

- to provide a well-connected town centre with footpaths, laneways and arcades that maximise the walkability of the town centre, and
- to make sure that the design of footpaths, laneways and arcades provides for high quality urban environments that feel safe and attractive for pedestrians.

10.3 Through-block connections, streets, laneways and arcades, and shareways

In urban precincts, the greater the density the greater the requirement for high quality streets and **fine-grain** street blocks. This is because streets and laneways provide access and address to buildings, as well as choices in how pedestrians and cars move through a precinct.

Fine grain means a network of small or detailed streetscapes which take into consideration street type hierarchies, physical links and movement between locations, and transport modes.

Streets and laneways also expand retail opportunities because they increase the range of rental possibilities.

Whilst streets, laneways and arcades are shown in current DCP and public domain controls, these are out of date and require review.

Below are objectives and design controls to inform new through-block links for the Epping Town Centre. Through-block links can be provided in the form of laneways, arcades or shareways. Shareways are spaces that are shared by vehicles and pedestrians, where vehicle speeds are low (around 10km per hour) and where pedestrians have right of way.

Proposed pedestrian links proposing laneways, arcades and shareways are illustrated in Figure 30. It is intended that these would be included in the future consolidated Development Control Plan for the town centre. The feedback sought from the community in this Discussion Paper is whether those proposed are appropriate and whether any additional connections should be considered.

Objectives

All Through-Block Connections

- Optimise choice and connectivity
- Create fine grain street blocks
- Provide addresses and frontages for buildings
- Provide an edge for public parks and spaces.

Pedestrian Laneways

- Provide ease of access and convenience between two locations.
- Pedestrian laneways are well designed.

Arcades

- Provide ease of access, convenience and protection from inclement weather between two nearby destinations.
- Pedestrian arcades are well designed.

Design controls

All Through-Block Connections

- Connections must increase the permeability of the overall street block in a logical way that reflects desire lines.
- Connections must have clear straight sight lines through the link.
- Connections must align with other streets, laneways and arcades where possible.
- Connections must provide links to public transport, streets and open spaces.
- Connections must create an edge for public open spaces.
- Connections must be generous, well-lit and fit for purpose.
- Connections must display signage at street entries indicating public accessibility and the street to which the through site link connects.

Laneways

- Pedestrian laneways must be a minimum width of 3m clear of all obstructions.
- Pedestrian laneways must be open to the air and to be publicly accessible at all times.
- Pedestrian laneways at ground level ideally would be dedicated to Council

Arcades

- Arcades must be a minimum width of 5m clear of all obstructions (including columns, stairs, escalators).
- Arcades must provide public access at all business trading times and be available to allow access 18 hours a day seven days a week even if some of the businesses are not operating
- Arcades must be at least 2 storeys high.
- Arcades where practical, have access to natural light for at least 50% of their length.
- Arcades must incorporate clear glazed entry doors comprising at least 50% of the entrance where the arcade is air conditioned.

Shareways

- Shareways be a minimum width of 6.5m clear of all obstructions.
- Shareways be open to the air and to be publicly accessible at all times.
- Shareways be built on the ground (without car parking underground).
- Shareways be dedicated to Council.
- Shareways meet RMS Standards

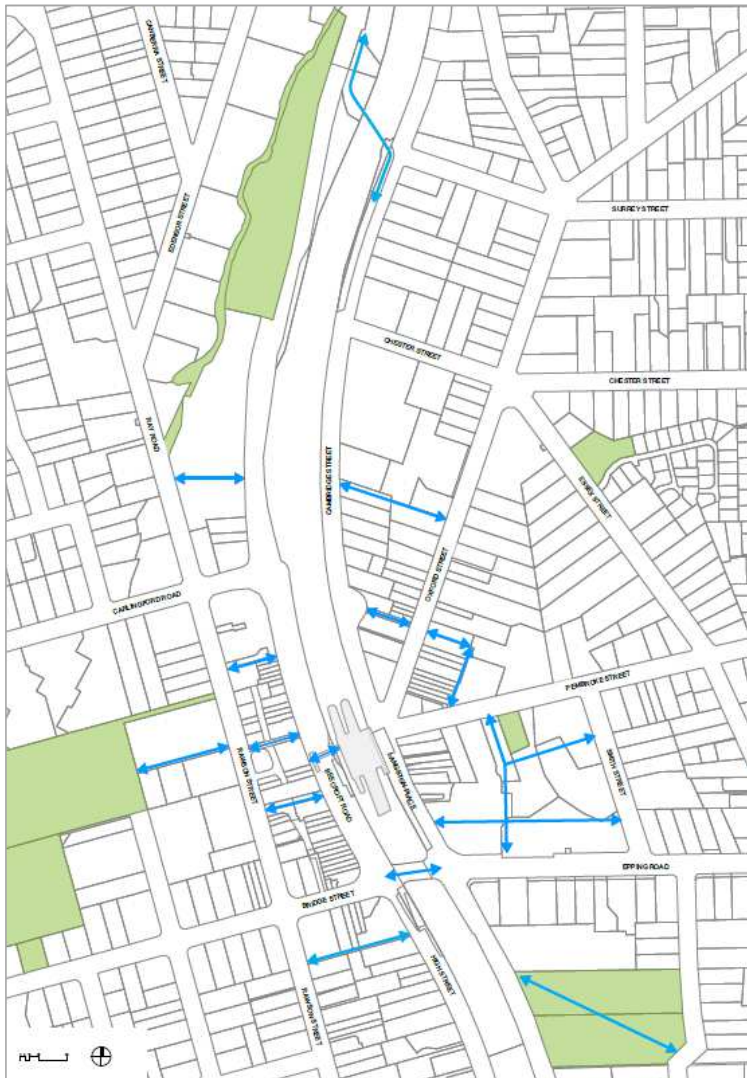


Figure 30 Existing and proposed through-block connections

Guiding principles:

After considering the outstanding public domain design matters and the broad public consultation feedback, the guiding principles identified by Council staff are:

- to provide a well-connected town centre with footpaths, laneways and arcades that maximise the walkability of the town centre, and
- to make sure that the design of footpaths, laneways and arcades provides for high quality urban environments that feel safe and attractive for pedestrians.

Consultation Question:

10a. Are there any other through site links outside of those that are already proposed in Figure 30 that should be considered by Council?

10.4 Wider footpaths

To provide more capacity for pedestrians, allow space for tree planting and street furniture that add to the amenity of the footpath changes could be made to the DCP controls that apply to sites in Epping. Figure 31 below illustrates the proposed setback for lower levels of the future buildings within the Epping Town Centre. This setback would apply to the lower levels of the building known as the podium.

Objectives:

- Increase the width of the existing footpath to provide generous footpaths and clear passage ways for pedestrians particularly to major destinations
- Enable light and sun to the street
- Reduce impacts from overshadowing
- Increase the width of the footpath so that it relates to the taller buildings
- Enable tree planting and awnings
- Enable outdoor dining and other street activities.

Design controls:

- Buildings be setback from street boundaries as indicated in Figure 29
- The footway interface, where the footway is being widened, must:
 - Provide a seamless level connection with the existing footpath
 - Be paved as per Council's Public Domain Guidelines
 - Be built on the ground (without car parking under)
 - Be dedicated to Council.



Figure 31 Proposed ground floor setbacks

Guiding principles:

After considering the outstanding public domain design matters and the broad public consultation feedback, the guiding principles identified by Council staff are:

- to provide a well-connected town centre with footpaths, laneways and arcades that maximise the walkability of the town centre, and
- to make sure that the design of footpaths, laneways and arcades provides for high quality urban environments that feel safe and attractive for pedestrians

Consultation Question:
 10b. Do you think the new ground floor setbacks proposed in Figure 31 for Epping Town Centre are appropriate?

11.0 TRAFFIC AND LAND USE OPTIONS STUDY

11.1 Background

Council commissioned EMM Consulting to prepare a Traffic and Land Use Options Study (the Traffic Study) to provide an evidence-based approach to the assessment of existing and future traffic conditions with different development scenarios for the Epping Town Centre and surrounds, including potential infrastructure improvements.

A traffic study was carried out previously by Halcrow in 2011 on behalf of Hornsby Shire Council, the former Parramatta City Council and the Department of Planning as part of the proposed new planning controls implemented by the Department of Planning in 2014. This report recommended a series of works to address traffic issues. These works were detailed earlier in this report in Section 3.6.1.

It is noted that the Halcrow report was based on a long-term development scenario of 3,000 additional dwellings up to 2026. As noted previously, current Development Application activity indicates delivery of 4,735 residential units over the next few years. Work undertaken by Council suggests there is an ultimate capacity for 10,000 dwellings under the planning controls currently in place.

11.2 Development pressures

Appendix 3 describes three separate Planning Proposals or preliminary Planning Proposals which propose additional density in Epping Town Centre on top of the current controls. The preliminary Planning Proposals for the two sites with frontage to Rawson Street were accompanied by a Joint Traffic Study that has recommended additional traffic works (supplementary to works identified by Halcrow) that impact primarily on the western side of Epping. These works include:

- Provision of three eastbound lanes along Carlingford Road between Rawson Street/Ray Road and Beecroft Road;
- Provision of an additional (third) northbound through lane at the Carlingford Road/Beecroft Road intersection;
- Application of a double-cycle signal phasing at the Carlingford Road/Beecroft Road intersection;
- Provision of a new left-turn slip lane from Rawson Street into Carlingford Rd (part of the Oakstand site); and
- Victoria Street extension between Carlingford Road and Bridge Street.

A Planning Proposal for the site known as the Austino Site located on the eastern side of Epping (at the corner of Blaxland Road and Epping Road) is also described in Appendix 3. It should be noted that this proposal was previously considered by Hornsby Shire Council prior to the eastern part of Epping becoming part of the City of Parramatta. As part of the report considered by Hornsby Shire Council, the Roads and Maritime Service (RMS) raised concerns about the significant peak hour delays and queues in the locality, but ultimately raised no objection to the additional density on this site, subject to a number of amendments to the proposal (including the number of car parking spaces on site being capped to the number currently permitted on the site under the existing controls and additional traffic modelling being carried out prior to exhibition).

11.3 Draft technical findings

Council has engaged EMM Consulting to identify the traffic and transport network planning implications of different potential changes to the Epping Planning Controls.

There are scenarios detailed in previous sections of this Discussion paper which talk about the option to change planning controls, which would potentially increase the density of development in Epping by:

- Allowing bonus floor space as an incentive to have commercial floor space constructed
- Allowing bonus floor space to incentivise provision of large floor plate shops and retail
- Changing planning controls in existing HCA areas which may increase the density of development

A traffic model is being prepared and it will be used to assess the land use and road network improvement options that Council deems appropriate after considering this Discussion Paper.

In a transport modelling context, the objectives of the study are:

- To identify the through (regional) traffic volumes and their effect on the traffic network, and
- The quantification of the local area road network impacts from local and through traffic growth.

Once these are completed the land use scenarios Council may seek to pursue as a result of the exhibition of the Discussion Paper will be modelled using the following traffic models.

11.3.1 Traffic models

The **Sydney Traffic Model (STM)** belongs to the RMS and provides details of the morning and afternoon peak hour regional traffic movements travelling through the Epping area via RMS roads including Carlingford Road, Beecroft Road, Blaxland Road, and Epping Road.

The **Epping Town Centre Local Network Model (LNM)** on the other hand is currently being built for this project by the consultant team. The LNM (sometimes also referred to as the base model) provides a much finer grain level of analysis and includes details of local trips within the local traffic network (validated by traffic counts and surveys to validate journey times) as well as factoring regional routes identified in the STM so that Council has a detailed picture of the current traffic conditions in Epping. Once a base model is built and calibrated, this model can be manipulated to test various land use scenarios and the impact this will have on the traffic network. This model also has the capability to test and model the impacts of various traffic improvements/ infrastructure within Epping under a range of land use or development scenarios to determine the efficiency of potential infrastructure improvements. The development and calibration of the base model/LNM is often the most time consuming aspect of traffic modelling, however this approach is considered to be the most comprehensive approach for evaluating the impacts of various development scenarios within an existing network.

Due to the short timeframe between the engagement of EMM Consulting to carry out the Epping Traffic Study and the release of the EPR Discussion Paper, the base model is in the process of being finalised. Once the model is completed, the RMS will validate this base model before testing of the land use scenarios can occur.

In order to inform the Guiding Principles and Options detailed later in this report EMM Consulting have been asked to prepare an *Interim Traffic Modelling Report 2017* based on:

- the modelling carried out to date using the STM Model (note the Epping Traffic Model);
- local intersection based analysis (such as SIDRA analysis or similar tools); and
- their experience of the potential issues given the preliminary findings and data available to date.

11.3.2 Preliminary advice

The purpose of the preliminary analysis carried out as part of the Interim Traffic Modelling report is to provide an indicator of the issues and options available to allow discussion of these issues as part of the Discussion Paper process.

The preliminary advice received is that regardless of what land use density options or road work improvements are put in place there is little scope for significant improvements to the way the road network operates in the Epping Town Centre without new and additional policies to reduce car usage and shift more trips that currently come through the centre by car onto public transport modes.

The consideration of options for managing local traffic considered to date concludes that:

- Preliminary findings suggest the widening of the rail bridge will not be a “game changer” given the time it will take motorists to cross the bridge – the expansion of the bridge will be an improvement, but will not be a *significant* improvement in providing relief to congestion, and the benefit will only be felt in one direction (westbound). However, the addition of an additional lane could open up more options for the operation of the bridge to manage morning and evening peak traffic through changes to tidal flow conditions. This type of tidal flow arrangement would potentially enable a single lane of additional traffic capacity at the bridge to provide additional peak hour capacity for both the morning peak hour eastbound and the afternoon peak hour westbound traffic flows.
- Putting in place a ring road requiring traffic to ‘go around the block’ (Bridge Street, Kent Street, Carlingford Road prior to continuing north along Beecroft Rd), will potentially increase travel times and distances, and that through trippers may seek to take a shorter path - i.e. “rat run” via Rawson Road.
- The proposed Victoria Street link to Carlingford Road will provide an additional north-south link between Carlingford Road and Bridge Street for local trips. However, the modelling carried out to date is not sensitive enough to model the impact of this connection and its impacts on local traffic. This will need to be modelled through the LNM as part of the final Traffic Study.

Even improvements already underway or proposed in the Halcrow Report will not result in significant long term sustained improvements to the way traffic flows through or within the Epping Town Centre. The reason for this lies primarily in the fact that two major arterial road routes converge at the Epping Bridge. The east west Carlingford Road/Epping Road and north south Beecroft Road/Blaxland Road routes converge at the Epping bridge. This is the reason that 89% of trips that cross the bridge are through traffic trips where the origin and destination of the trip is outside the Epping Town Centre.

These traffic routes and intersections are currently operating at over-saturated traffic levels for both the morning and afternoon peak hour. It is considered that the increased intersection traffic delays are already displacing some of the previous regional through traffic movements away from the Epping Town centre to other parallel traffic routes such as the M2 Motorway for east-west traffic and Midson Road for north-south traffic. While there may be some improvements that could be made to improve capacity to Epping Bridge and the adjacent group of intersections, it is likely that this improved capacity will be taken up by the currently displaced through traffic.

The through trips are a significant barrier to improving the traffic flow around the Epping Town centre for the following reasons:

- Any improvement to the intersection will be primarily to the benefit of the through traffic rather than local traffic.
- If intersection management is changed to make access from local streets onto the arterial roads easier, it will cause significant delays and even further queuing on the arterial road network.
- There are no other feasible points where these routes can cross the Rail line in the vicinity of Epping to alleviate the pressure that through traffic places on the Epping Town Centre
- If a technical solution was found to improve the flow of traffic through Epping, then it is likely that more people would make a choice to avoid M2 tolls and go through Epping as the congestion at Epping is one of the factors that makes the choice to take the M2 more appealing (see above).

11.4 Community feedback

Unlike the Heritage Study, Social Infrastructure Needs Study and Commercial Floor Space Needs Study community consultation workshops carried out previously, there has been no pre-exhibition consultation workshop carried out specifically for Traffic. The timing of those community workshops meant that the results of the interim work relating to Traffic were still too preliminary to be of value to the community at that early stage. Accordingly, a traffic workshop has since been organised for the 12 July 2017 to discuss the findings of the work carried out to date and to allow the community to ask questions in order to inform their submission.

Notwithstanding the above, traffic congestion and access issues have been a consistent theme raised as part of the other pre exhibition workshops including written correspondence received throughout the preparation of this Discussion Paper (refer to Appendices 4 and 5 for further discussion). Common concerns are:

- The level of density proposed in Epping will only exacerbate already significant levels of congestion and that the densities proposed should never have been permitted;

- It is difficult to access service and facilities for those outside the walking catchment of Epping because of traffic congestion and lack of parking;
- The community feel that the failure to upgrade the Epping Bridge (which was a recommendation of the Halcrow report and a proposed work to support the UAP density) is unacceptable because the development is occurring but the infrastructure improvements are not being delivered;
- A number of stakeholders suggested that Council should either provide or lobby the State Government to provide commuter parking near the Epping Station. The argument put forward by proponents is that this would clear surrounding streets of commuter parking and improve access to local shops for local people.
- One of the issues raised during the consultation was a proposal for a crossing guard to regulate the pedestrian flow on the pedestrian crossing in Rawson Street to potentially improve traffic flow.

11.5 Epping's role in managing Sydney's transport issues

Given the high level of public transport access available in the Epping Town Centre it will have to make a significant contribution to help manage Sydney's Transport issues. The key recommendation to come out of the preliminary transport analysis to date is that traffic congestion can be managed but it is likely to continue to increase in Epping unless broader policies are put in place to encourage public transport usage instead of private vehicle trips.

Given the access to public transport in Epping its most important transport role is to make sure that as many people as possible are encouraged to take public transport rather than use their car. This is the principle that underpinned the additional density being proposed around Epping as part of the UAP and is one of the reasons why additional density remains a feasible option in this discussion paper despite the traffic congestion issues.

The RMS and Department of Transport are key partners in setting the policy frameworks that seek to manage the balance between increasing density around any train station whilst maintaining the amenity of the area for existing and future residents who live around that train station. This balance needs to recognise that if density is not focused on public transport nodes like Epping that general traffic congestion across Sydney becomes even more difficult to manage.

In order to continue to manage congestion existing and future public transport nodes must be used as efficiently as possible and so places like Epping have to evolve into places where the first choice made by residents is public transport or active transport options (walking or cycling) ahead of using the private motor vehicle.

Previous chapters of this discussion paper have noted the desire for Epping to become a more vibrant place where locals can access all the services and facilities they need. Proposals in the commercial floor space chapter to improve access to services and facilities measures in the Urban Design chapter to make Epping easier to walk around are all part of the evolution of Epping into a transit oriented centre. The consultant who provided advice on the future retail and office floor space needs of the centre felt the need to make a recommendation on parking recognising that transport related policy issues would impact on the success of Epping as a town centre.

Part of that evolution is looking at other transport policy options that take into consideration the findings of the traffic model being prepared to best manage local congestion but to more strongly driven by policies that:

- Discourage car ownership and usage
- Promote public transport and

The guiding principles discussed in the next chapter seek to put forward options that enable Epping to evolve in this way.

11.6 Interim guiding principles

The interim guiding principles for traffic considerations at Epping are:

- Advocate for road network improvements acknowledging that these measures are not the sustainable answer to reducing traffic congestion but are an important tool to mitigate traffic congestion.
- Do not support any additional uplift within the Epping Town Centre above and beyond current UAP densities until Council has the opportunity complete the Epping Traffic Model so any measures that help to best mitigate congestion can be best understood.
- Review car parking policies to ensure that they are calibrated to:
 - Minimise local car ownership
 - Decrease motor vehicle use (or alternatively promote active and public transport options) through and within Epping

11.7 Questions for feedback

11.7.1 Proposals for additional uplift

Given the above interim findings, Council recommend adoption of the principle that Council does not support any additional density (via Planning Proposals) within the Epping Town Centre above and beyond that which the current planning controls permit until the impact of such densities can be modelled through the completion of the Epping Traffic Study and until car parking and other policies are resolved to ensure the impact of the density is clearly and transparently understood.

Given that the Austino Planning Proposal discussed in detail in Appendix 3 has been subject of consideration by the Sydney West Central Planning Panel Council would also have to request that the State Government defer any progress on this Planning Proposal until the Epping Traffic Study is complete.

Guiding principles:

Do not support any additional uplift within the Epping Town Centre above and beyond current UAP densities until Council has the opportunity complete the Epping Traffic Model so any measures that help to best manage congestion can be best understood

Consultation Question:

11a. Should Council delay the processing of current and future Planning Proposals within the Epping Town Centre and surrounds until the Traffic Study is completed?

11.7.2 Car parking rates review

Car parking rates across on both sides of the Epping Town Centre are currently inconsistent. The Hornsby DCP contains minimum car parking rates while the Parramatta City DCP has maximum rates. These rates should be made consistent and a maximum rate should be applied so that development provides less car parking to discourage local car ownership and use.

As well as ensuring the parking rates are consistent it is also proposed that they be reviewed (and potentially further reduced) to further encourage residents to use public transport and other active transport modes.

Guiding principles:

Review car parking policies to ensure that they are calibrated to:

- Minimise local car ownership
- Decrease motor vehicle use (or alternatively promote active and public transport options) through and within Epping

Consultation Question:

11b. Should Council consider further reducing car parking rates as a means of reducing traffic within the Epping Town Centre and encourage public transport usage?

11.7.3 Commuter parking

A number of stakeholders suggested that Council should either provide or lobby the State Government to provide commuter parking near the Epping Station. The argument put forward by proponents is that this would clear surrounding streets of commuter parking and improve access to local shops for local people.

Commuter parking at train stations is a complex issue that depends very much on local context. It is acknowledged that allowing people to drive to stations to use public transport is decreasing the length of vehicle trips and increasing the length of public transport trips which is to be encouraged. However, the provision of commuter car parks can have other unintended impacts unless it is implemented sensitively and in appropriate locations. Council Officers and the consultants undertaking the traffic modelling exercise do not consider that Epping is an appropriate location for a commuter parking station for the following reasons:

- It will attract additional trips into the Epping Town Centre for the sole purpose of utilising the car park which will have a further detrimental impact on local traffic conditions and increase traffic congestion.
- It will encourage local employees to drive to the centre rather than arrive via public transport due to the increase access to day long parking options.
- Experience in other centres suggests that the availability of day long parking encourages more commuters to make the choice to drive to the station because of the increased likelihood they can find a park within reasonable walking distance to the station. So parking availability on local streets is not improved.
- An integrated transport system would see people take the bus from close to their home to the station to continue their public transport journey. This is most efficient and effective if regular bus services are feasible. The more commuter parking is provided the greater the negative impact on the

feasibility of running regular bus services especially given the number of buses that provide access to Epping.

Council Officers consider that commuter parking stations do play an important role in promoting public transport but do not consider that Epping is an appropriate location for a commuter parking station.

Guiding principles:

Review car parking policies to ensure that they are calibrated to:

- Minimise local car ownership
- Decrease motor vehicle use (or alternatively promote active and public transport options) through and within Epping

Consultation Question:

11c. Is there a suitable site for which Council should lobby the State Government to have a commuter parking station provided near Epping Station?

11.7.4 Policies to manage local parking and access to private motor vehicles

Option 1 – Resident or controlled parking schemes

A commonly expressed concern when any proposal is put forward to decrease parking rates on site is that residents will still own a car they will just park in local streets. Should Council consider introducing maximum rates or reducing car parking rates below the “maximum rates” identified in the PDCP2011 in order to influence mode shift, it is considered that additional measures could also be investigated to discourage residents purchasing into new high density development do not end up parking in local residential streets.

A rollout of restricted/time limited parking zones within residential streets adjacent higher density development could be investigated along with a resident parking scheme to enable existing residents within lower density residential zones up to a 3 storey apartment building to have the opportunity to apply for a permit to enable residents and their visitors to continue to have on-street parking albeit in limited and controlled manner. Such an initiative would also discourage commuters from parking within local streets close to Epping Station and depending on the nature of the restricted parking roll out, may encourage commuters to catch a bus to the Epping Station.

Notwithstanding the above, there are also a number of limitations and resourcing issues associated with any rollout of a resident car parking scheme. These issues include:

- Impacts on existing commuters and workers who currently park in local streets and walk into the centre who could be displaced.
- Setting a precedent that may then apply in future to other railway stations on the Northern and North Shore railway lines, further reducing commuter parking.
- Permit parking schemes can be difficult to manage in the transition areas on the edge of resident permit parking zones, as it transfers parking impacts to

areas immediately outside the permit parking precinct, including areas that would otherwise be unaffected by on-street parking issues.

- Affecting visitors to residents within the restricted areas.
- This scheme would require the consent of the RMS who monitor and can override any proposals that may impact on the availability of commuter parking.
- Any such scheme would be resource-intensive to implement and administer for both Council (who have to administer and enforce the system) and residents as they need to go through the process of obtaining and retaining permit. Accordingly, any such scheme would need to be appropriately resourced to ensure effective rollout and enforcement, particularly if it was seen as a precedent that saw it rolled out in other areas. Enforcement in particular can be problematic as the residential component means enforcement will be required at night.
- The perception of equity (or rather inequity) where Council would need to make a decision on who is and who is not entitled to a parking permit including the number of permits to be allocated. For example, residents on the fringes of the high density areas who have parking on-site, depending on the criteria, may not be deemed eligible for a permit and they may perceive this to be fair unfair as they are an original resident. The process for determining how the system operates can be very controversial.

Guiding principles:

Review car parking policies to ensure that they are calibrated to:

- Minimise local car ownership
- Decrease motor vehicle use (or alternatively promote active and public transport options) through and within Epping

Consultation Question:

11d. Would you support the introduction of a Resident Parking Scheme where owners of new units would not be permitted to park on local streets as a way to discourage car ownership and manage parking on local streets?

Option 2 – Car sharing schemes

Car sharing enables more sustainable travel habits by making more efficient use of a parking space either on street or within a private development. A single car share vehicle can replace up to 12 private vehicles that would otherwise compete for local parking (source: www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/live/residents/car-sharing). Car share schemes provide flexibility to residents or businesses who either do not own a car, cannot justify car ownership given close proximity to public transport or lack a parking space. Resident and businesses can book a car online when they need one and pick it up from a car share space.

Car share users are charged by time and distance, at a rate set by each operator (e.g. GoGET, Hertz24/7). Costs associated with fuel, vehicle maintenance and insurance are usually included in the operator's hire fees. Car share spaces can be located on street with the agreement of Council or within development for larger scale developments.

At the 13 June Council Meeting, Council considered a report on the Minutes of the Parramatta Traffic Committee held on the 25 May 2017. Council resolved the following in relation to the recommendation to provide car share spaces on Council streets in Epping:

“2. That, in regards to six (6) car share spaces in Epping, Council notes that car share may be an important element of creating a less private car dependant town centre, and that car share arrangements be considered as part of the current traffic and land use study for Epping. No further action be taken on car share spaces in Epping until this study is complete.”

In accordance with the above resolution, car share arrangements will be considered as part of the Epping Traffic Study and will also consider feedback received from the community during this process on this issue.

Guiding principles:

Review car parking policies to ensure that they are calibrated to:

- Minimise local car ownership
- Decrease motor vehicle use (or alternatively promote active and public transport options) through and within Epping

Consultation Question:

11e. Do you support car sharing schemes as measures to decrease vehicle ownership and the potential impacts of decreasing parking rates for sites within walking distance of Epping Station?

11.7.5 Policies to manage local traffic congestion

An issue raised during a previous consultation event at Epping indicated that there is concern over the amount of traffic backing up on Rawson Street near the pedestrian crossing in front of Council’s car park. During peak time the traffic backs up with a constant stream of people on the crossing, and associated safety issues are a concern.

In order to address the above, Council could implement a “Stop/Go” traffic controller on the crossing during peak times to control pedestrians (similar to a School zone crossing). A minimum shift is 4 hours and 2 people would be required. It is estimated that this would cost up to \$100,000 per year inclusive of all on costs.

Guiding principles: Advocate for road network improvements acknowledging that these measure are not the sustainable answer to reducing traffic congestion but an important tool to best manage traffic congestion.

Consultation Question:

11f. Do you think Council should employ crossing attendants during peak conflict periods at the Rawson Street pedestrian crossing to manage the flow of pedestrians and vehicles to best manage congestion in Rawson Street?

12.0 HOW TO MAKE A SUBMISSION AND NEXT STEPS

12.1 Future Epping

The Discussion Paper and background reports that were prepared to inform this Discussion Paper all make suggestions about how Epping should evolve into a centre that provides the highest possible quality of life for existing and future residents of Epping.

The “Future Epping” envisaged in this Discussion Paper is an Epping that:

- operates as a sub-regional centre that provides for local jobs in businesses that meet all day to day needs of the Epping community with a high quality public domain incorporating safe and interesting streets and pedestrian connections;
- balances recognition of Epping’s heritage and the impact of new development on the owners/occupants of developments within the Heritage conservation areas;
- provides for improved quality community facilities and open space and recreation opportunities for the local community than those currently available; and
- seeks to maximise the role Epping will play in managing Sydney’s congestion problems by focusing on maximising public transport and active transport options whilst best managing local traffic congestion.

The Discussion Paper sets out how the evolution could occur but there are policy decisions to be made and potential trade-offs between further growth and provision of community facilities that will impact on how the evolution to a Future Epping will proceed. To help inform these decisions this Discussion Paper asks a series of questions around different policy themes and Council is seeking feedback on these Questions from the local community and other stakeholders.

12.2 How can I make a submission?

SUBMISSIONS CAN BE POSTED TO:

Epping Planning Review (F2017/000210)
City of Parramatta Council
PO Box 32
PARRAMATTA NSW 2150

SUBMISSIONS CAN BE EMAILED TO:

placeservices@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au

YOU CAN ALSO CALL US:

Lily Wang, Place Manager – 9806 5347
Jacky Wilkes, Senior Project Officer – 9806 5496

If you have accessibility concerns, please contact the National Relay Service on [http://relayservice.gov.au/](http://relayservice.gov.au) and provide them with the City of Parramatta number you want to call.

In preparing your submission, please quote the number of any questions from this Discussion Paper to which you respond (e.g. 9a).

WHAT HAPPENS TO MY SUBMISSION?

All submissions will be carefully considered by senior staff and reported to Council in August 2017, prior to commencing Stage 2. Letters of acknowledgment will be provided for written submissions.

12.3 What are the next steps?

Following exhibition of the Discussion Paper, the expected next steps for the Epping Planning Review are as follows:

1. **14 August Council Meeting:** Council to consider the responses received as part of the Discussion Paper process to allow the Administrator to adopt some guiding principles and directions that will guide development of Stage 2 of the Epping Planning Review.
2. **Late 2017 - early 2018:** A Draft Planning Proposal accompanied by a Draft Development Control Plan and Developer Contributions Framework which will incorporate changes to the existing Planning Controls consistent with the guiding principles will be prepared for consideration by Council. If these are endorsed by Council, the following process will be pursued:
 - a. The Draft Planning Proposal will be forwarded to the Department of Planning who need to endorse the potential new changes;
 - b. Once endorsement from the Department of Planning is received the Draft Planning Proposal, Development Control Plan and Developer Contribution Framework will be placed on public exhibition to allow the Epping community to provide further comment on the detail of the proposed changes to the planning controls; and
 - c. The results of this further consultation will be reported to Council and if the new controls are endorsed by Council the new planning controls would come into force once the Draft Planning Proposal changes are legally finalised and a notice indicating they have been finalised is published in the Government Gazette.

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Appendix 1 – Strategic context

This appendix discusses in more detail the role of the Epping Town Centre within the Sydney metropolitan context across the various metro-wide and sub-regional level plans over recent years.

Draft West Central District Plan (2016)

The Greater Sydney Commission's *Draft West Central District Plan* (Draft District Plan) is the draft subregional strategic planning document for the West Central District to 2036. The Draft District Plan makes numerous references to the Epping Town Centre:

- *Examples of significant concurrent investment in growth and renewal opportunities include...the renewal and revitalisation of Epping Town Centre* (pg.31)
- *In the West Central District, Epping and Merrylands are examples of local centres that, with the right planning and investment, could reach their potential as emerging commercial and retail nodes* (pg.48).
- The Draft District Plan recognises that the Epping Town Centre Priority Precinct is forecast to deliver up to 3,750 dwellings in the next 5 years after its rezoning in March 2014 (pg.93), although this figure has since been revised to 5,500 dwellings. (As discussed elsewhere in this Discussion Paper 4,735 of these units are anticipated to be delivered in the next 5 to 7 years.)
- *City of Parramatta will progress the delivery of Epping Town Centre urban renewal with the Greater Sydney Commission and Department of Planning and Environment* (pg.99).

The Draft District Plan identifies two distinct centre hierarchies: Local Centres and Strategic Centres (as detailed in the Department's *A Plan for Growing Sydney*). Epping is identified as a Local Centre as per the comments above; however, the Local Centre category is somewhat ambiguous with 30 to 40 local centres identified within the West Central District. Aside from the points above, there is very little about what the Epping Town Centre might become in 2036 in this document.

Towards our Greater Sydney 2056 (2016)

This short 16-page document prepared by the Greater Sydney Commission in November 2016 constitutes a draft amendment which updates the 2014 *A Plan for Growing Sydney* released by the Department in 2014 (and discussed below).

One of priorities expressed within this document is the concept of a 30-minute city, which aims to increase the range of jobs, services and other opportunities for people to access within 30 minutes from their place of residence. The 30-minute city concept and Epping's opportunity to fulfil this role is detailed in the Commercial Floorspace Study which supports this Discussion Paper and is discussed further in Chapter 8.

A Plan for Growing Sydney (2014)

The Department's *A Plan for Growing Sydney* is the principle vision for the Greater Sydney to the year 2031 with four principle goals to deliver new housing and employment across Sydney.

A Plan for Growing Sydney identifies the Epping Town Centre as one of ten Priority Precincts – a process which was initiated by Hornsby Shire Council and finalised in March 2014 when new planning controls came into effect. The Epping Town Centre is also identified as part of the North West Rail Link corridor (now referred to as Sydney Metro North West), which focuses on increased housing, economic activity, social infrastructure and accessibility to Sydney's Global Economic Corridor.

West Central Subregion Draft Subregional Strategy (2007)

Prepared in December 2007, the West Central Subregion Draft Subregional Strategy (WCDSS) establishes a clear centres hierarchy, and identifies Epping as one of eight Town Centres within the West Central Subregion. Town centres are defined in the WCDSS as having “one or two supermarkets, community facilities, medical centres, schools, etc. containing between 4,500 – 9,500 dwellings” (pg.61).

The WCDSS sees the eight Town Centres as important subregional anchors of retail, services and community facilities which service catchments of two or three surrounding suburbs (pg.60). This strategy presented a clear vision for the centre and its role within the West Central Subregion. However, since the release of the WCDSS in 2007, the Department has not released a centres hierarchy at the local centre level. Instead, it has focused on the higher order centres (Strategic Centres, GPOP, etc.).

Appendix 2 - Explanation of changes to planning controls that came into effect in March 2014

Changes to the planning controls that came into effect in March 2014 as part of the Department's Priority Precinct process are detailed below.

For the former **Hornsby Shire Council (eastern) portion** of the town centre and surrounds:

- Land zoned B2 Local Centre was slightly expanded and accompanied by substantial increases in building heights from 12 and 16 metres (3 to 4 storeys) to 48 and 72 metres (12 and 22 storeys) and floor space ratio (FSR) controls (from 0.5:1, 1:1 and 2:1 to 4.5:1 and 6:1).
- Land zoned R2 Low Density Residential was substantially rezoned to R4 High Density Residential, with a small portion rezoned to R3 Medium Density. The new R4 zone was accompanied by increases in the height controls from 8.5 and 12 metres (2 and 3 storeys) to 12, 17.5 and 26.5 metres (3, 5 and 8 storeys).
- Three new Heritage Conservation Areas were created (Rosebank Avenue, East Epping and Essex Street).

For the former **Parramatta City Council (western) portion** of the town centre and surrounds:

- The Council-owned car park site was rezoned from SP2 Infrastructure to B2 Local Centre, and its accompanying height controls increased from no height control to 48 metres (12 storeys) and FSR controls increased from no FSR to 4.5:1.
- There were no other changes to the area of land zoned B2 Local Centre, however, in existing B2 Local Centre zones applying to the town centre, the height controls increased from 11, 18, 21, 25, 28 and 40 metres (2 to 11 storeys) to 18, 48 and 72 metres (5 to 22 storeys) and FSR controls increased from 0.8, 2:1, 3:1, 3.5:1 and 6:1 to 1.7:1, 4.5:1 and 6:1.
- There were no changes to the surrounding R2 Low Density zones, including no height and density changes.
- There were no changes to the area, height or density controls of R4 High Density Residential zones, with the exception of the R4 zone applying to a small frontage of land on Bridge Street. Its height controls increased from 11, 18 and 25 metres (2, 5 and 7 storeys) to 18 and 48 metres (5 and 12 storeys) and its density controls increased from 0.8:1 and 2:1 to 1.7:1 and 4.5:1 to 4.5:1 and 6:1.
- No changes occurred to nearby Heritage Conservation Areas.

*

Appendix 3 – Development Application and Planning Proposal activity in Epping

Development Applications

Since March 2014 when the new planning controls came into effect, a number of Development Applications (DAs) have been lodged, either with Hornsby Shire Council (prior to the amalgamations on 12 May 2016) or with the City of Parramatta Council (since 12 May 2016). As at 19 June 2017, Development Application activity is summarised as follows:

- **Pre-lodgements:** two pre-lodgement DAs are proposed to deliver **621 units**.
- **Under assessment:** four DAs currently under assessment propose to deliver **917 units**.
- **Approved but not under construction:** 11 approved DAs which are not yet under construction will deliver **879 units**.
- **Under Construction:** 28 developments that are under construction will deliver **2,318 units**.

Assuming these DAs are all constructed and fully occupied, they are expected to deliver **4,735 units (10,890 people** assuming a household size of 2.3 persons).

The current Development Application activity indicates a very rapid delivery of Department's projected 5,500 dwellings over the next five years. If this rate of development activity were to continue, it is expected that more than the 5,500 dwellings would be delivered in this centre.

Exponential growth and change: This forecasted dwelling/population growth indicates that growth is actually occurring more rapidly than in forecast scenarios undertaken by the Department and by id.Forecast (which Council typically relies on). This unprecedented pace of redevelopment presents challenges for Council and the State government in delivering the required infrastructure to accompany that population growth.

Planning Proposals

Austino Planning Proposal

Austino Property Group has lodged a Planning Proposal for land at 2-18 Epping Road, 2-4 Forest Road and 725 Blaxland Road, Epping (refer to Figure 32). This Planning Proposal seeks to increase height and density controls. Planning controls for this site were only recently amended in March 2014 as part of the Department's Priority Precinct process, at which time they changed from predominantly R2 Low Density Residential zoning and an 8.5 metre height control, to predominantly R4 High Density Residential zoning and a 26.5 metres height control. The RE1 Public Open Space zone over the former bowling club site was not altered.



Figure 32 Land affected by the Austino Planning Proposal (from applicant's Urban Design Report)

The Planning Proposal seeks to:

- reconfigure the R4 and RE1 zones across the site to enable an open space connection from the Epping Town Centre and the site;
- increase the building height over the reconfigured R4 zone from 26.5 metres to 72 metres (22 storeys), 65 metres (20 storeys), 58 metres (18 storeys) and 17.5 metres (5 storeys) with a small portion of the site to retain the 26.5 metres (8 storeys) building height;
- increase the density on the site to realise a predominantly residential development comprising two towers on Blaxland Road, accommodating estimated 654* units (please refer to box at end of this section for further discussion of this estimate); and
- deliver a public urban plaza through the proposed development providing a pedestrian connection between Epping Road and Forest Park, with an area equivalent to the area of land currently zoned RE1 Public Recreation (6,665sqm), so there will be no net loss in open space.

In January 2016, PCC was invited to comment on the applicant's Planning Proposal and on 14 March 2016, resolved to adopt a submission on the matter which requested further analysis against 9 principles identified in Council's submission. On 13 April 2016, Hornsby Shire Council resolved not to support the proposal (just prior to the Council amalgamation on 12 May 2016).

In response to Hornsby Shire Council's resolution, the applicant lodged a Pre-Gateway Review with the Department in late April 2016. This placed the handling of the Planning Proposal in the hands of the Department. As part of the Pre-Gateway review process, the Joint Regional Planning Panel (JRPP) considered the proposal in September 2016 and recommended a range of issues be considered before the proposal is submitted for a Gateway Determination.

With regards to the Epping Planning Review process, the relevant issues related to this Planning Proposal are:

- The proposal being subject to Council's traffic review for the Epping Town Centre to inform the final floor space ratio;
- Clarification of public benefits and heights of buildings, and addressing overshadowing of Forest Park; and
- No retail being permitted.

In November 2016, the Department wrote to City of Parramatta seeking whether Council would elect to be the Relevant Planning Authority (RPA). This would enable City of Parramatta Council to have more influence over the process. Council accepted the RPA role on the condition that the Gateway Determination is issued after the exhibition of the Discussion Paper and supporting technical studies, so that this information and community views can be taken into account.

What additional dwelling growth would the Austino proposal bring to the Epping Town Centre?

The current controls would result in the site delivering **630 dwellings**.

Council officers estimate that the applicant's request for uplift would result in an additional **129 dwellings** (total **759 dwellings**).

***The reason for the difference between Council officers' estimate of 759 dwellings and the applicant's estimate of 654 dwellings is that Council officers' analysis is based on 85sqm/unit size.**

Preliminary Planning Proposals

This section discusses two preliminary Planning Proposals which have been lodged with Council with regards to Council's car park sites at 51A and/or 51B Rawson Street (see Figure 33). Both of these preliminary Planning Proposals are on hold until two things occur: first, that feedback from the Discussion Paper has been reported to Council, and second, that the Traffic Study prepared by EMM has been finalised.

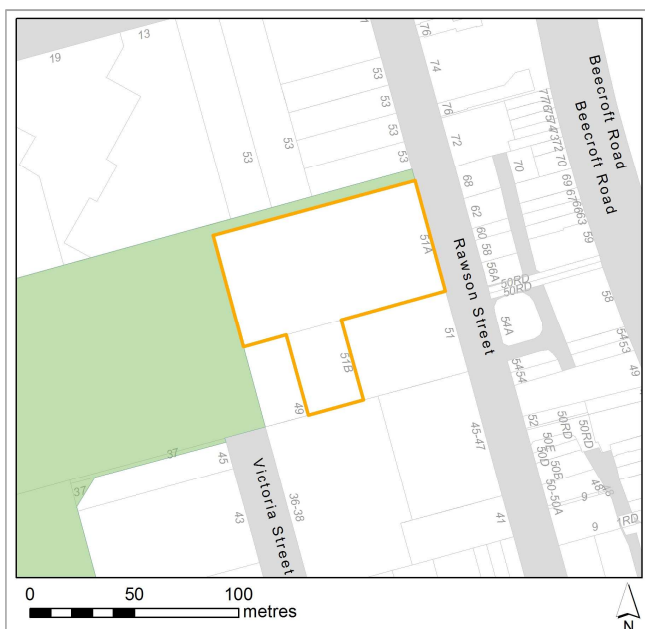


Figure 33 Council Car Park Sites – 51A and 51B Rawson Street, Epping

Both of the applicants' sites (discussed further below), as well as Council's car park site, received height and density increases as part of the new planning controls introduced in March 2014. The Council car park site was rezoned from SP2 zone to the B2 Local Centre zone when the new controls came into effect.

Important Note: While both preliminary schemes propose redevelopment of Council's car park site, Council has made no decision regarding redevelopment. Council's decision is that it will wait for the completion of Stage 1 of the Epping Planning Review before making any decision on the car park site. This has been communicated to both applicants.

Preliminary Proposal affecting 53 and 61 Rawson Street

A preliminary proposal by the Oakstand Group applies to land at 53 and 61 Rawson Street, Epping (refer to Figure 34).

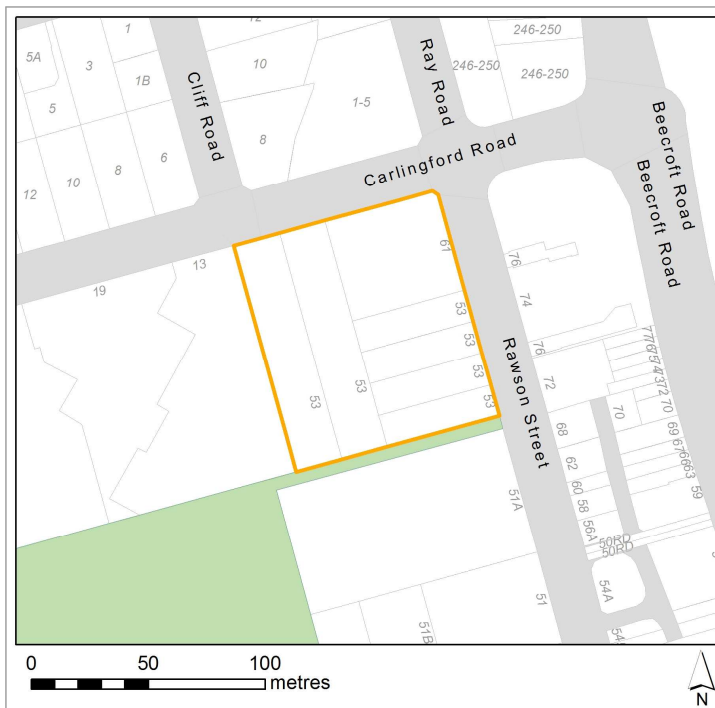


Figure 34 Oakstand site – 53 & 61 Rawson Street, Epping

The preliminary proposal seeks a partnership with Council to develop their site in conjunction with the Council car park. It seeks to amend planning controls to increase height and density achievable on these sites to enable:

- **674 units** over its site at 53 and 61 Rawson Street; and
- **520 units** over the Council car park site

It also proposes rezoning the entire site from B2 to B4 zoning, which would likely reduce the amount of commercial uses at the site. Whilst the proposal does currently propose 10,000sqm of retail and 4,923sqm of other non-residential uses, the risk that Council needs to consider is that introducing the proposed B4 zone could result in the site being redeveloped entirely for residential flat buildings with no commercial uses on the site, unless controls are put in place to mandate a minimum provision of commercial floor space.

The proposed public benefit elements included in this proposal include a range of traffic upgrades, creation of a new 3,430sqm town square, a new civic memorial, activation of Boronia Park, amenity improvements to Rawson Street, through-site links, and 200 underground Council car parking spaces.

What additional dwelling growth would the Oakstand proposal bring to the Epping Town Centre?

The current controls would result in the site delivering approximately **272 dwellings**.
The applicant's proposal for uplift would result in an additional **922 dwellings** (total **1,194 dwellings**).

Preliminary Proposal affecting 59-77 Beecroft Road and Masonic Hall Site (49 Rawson Street)

A preliminary proposal by the Winton and Lyon Groups applies to land at 59-77 Beecroft Road, Epping (refer to Figure 35).

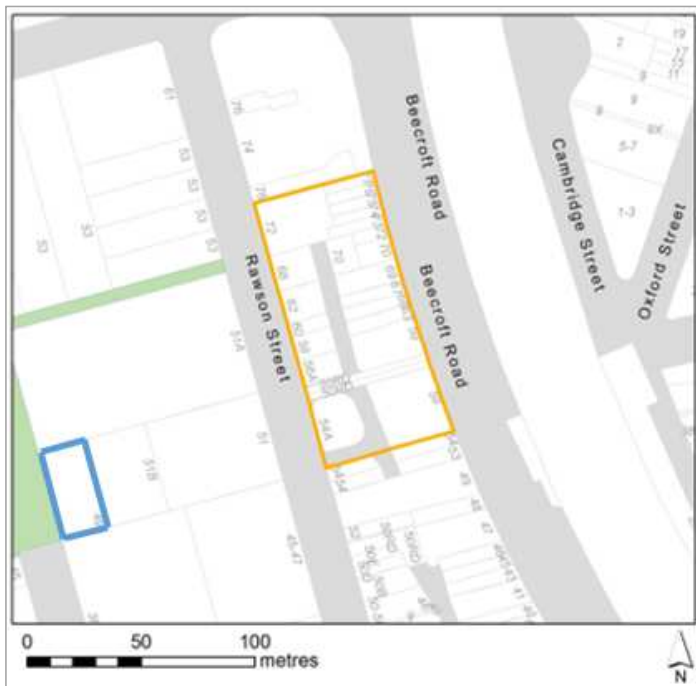


Figure 35 Winton/Lyon groups site – 59-77 Beecroft Road (orange outline) and Masonic Hall Site (blue outline), Epping

The preliminary proposal seeks a partnership with Council to develop their site in conjunction with the Council car park. It seeks to amend the planning controls to increase building height and density controls achievable at this site to enable:

- **700 units** over its site at 59-77 Beecroft Road; and
- **200 units** over the Council car park sites and the Masonic Hall site (49 Rawson Street).

This proposal also includes retail and commercial uses, as well as proposed public benefits including 2,000sqm of community facilities and infrastructure, a civic plaza area of over 3,700sqm which will create a “green spine” from east to west through the

site, and improved pedestrian connectivity between Boronia Park and the Epping transport interchange.

What additional dwelling growth would the Winton/Lyon groups proposal bring to the Epping Town Centre?

The current controls would result in the site delivering approximately **317 dwellings**. The applicant's proposal for uplift would result in an additional **584 dwellings** (total **901 dwellings**).

Other land owner interest

The owners of two additional large sites in the vicinity of Ray and Beecroft Roads have also expressed interest in redevelopment to Council. Whilst details are not yet known, this suggests that landowners continue to perceive development opportunities in the centre.

Appendix 4 - Summary of feedback from public forum

[This Appendix is provided in a separate attachment]

Appendix 5 – Summary of feedback pertaining to land use issues received after the public forum

[This Appendix is provided in a separate attachment]