

LEADING

ITEM NUMBER	13.8
SUBJECT	Epping Town Centre Traffic Study and other Epping Planning Review Matters
REFERENCE	F2017/00210 - D06023116
REPORT OF	Snr Project Officer
PREVIOUS ITEMS	11.3 - Epping Planning Review - Completion of Stage 1 and Commencement of Stage 2 - Council - 14 Aug 2017 6:00pm 12.5 - Update on Epping Planning Review and Related Matters - Council - 12 Feb 2018 6.30pm 13.4 - Outcomes of Public Exhibition - Draft Amendments to Hornsby Development Control Plan 2013 - Tree and Vegetation Preservation - Council - 26 Feb 2018 6.30pm

PURPOSE:

This report details the progress of the Epping Town Centre Traffic Study and updates Council on the implications for the findings of the Epping Planning Review, as well as several related planning matters relevant to the Epping Town Centre.

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) **That** Council note this update on the Epping Planning Review and related matters.
- (b) **That** Council exhibits the Epping Town Centre Traffic Study and supporting documentation to enable comment from major stakeholders in accordance with the consultation plan described in the body of this report.
- (c) **That** despite recommendation (b) above, that Council adopts the position that it does not support any:
 - i. Planning proposal or preliminary planning proposal that applies to sites situated within the Epping Planning Review Study Area which seek to deliver extra housing in addition to what can be achieved under the current planning controls, unless the planning proposal is seeking to address a planning issue identified in Council's Epping Planning Review process related to heritage interface controls, commercial floor space or resolving open space issues at Forest Park.
 - ii. Development applications seeking an increase in residential density via clause 4.6 of the *PLEP 2011*and that Council write to the Department of Planning and Environment (DP&E) advising them of this position.
- (d) **That** in relation to the Austino Planning Proposal that Council write to the DP&E to:-
 - i. Object to the Planning Proposal in its current form and density proceeding; and
 - ii. Request that Council be re-instated as the RPA so that Council can pursue a Planning Proposal that would retain the current controls that

apply to the site with the exception of the former Bowling Club portion of the site which would be rezoned from RE1 Public Recreation to R4 High Density Residential with a maximum Height of Building control of 17.5m and FSR of 1.5:1.

- (e) That should Council be re-instated as the RPA (on the basis that it will pursue a Planning Proposal as per (d)(ii) above) Council officers be authorized to commence discussions with the Austino PP applicant about the form of the Planning Proposal and whether there are any opportunities for some contribution to additional open space as part of the Planning Proposal. The outcome of these discussions should be reported to Council.
- (f) **That** Council write to the Minister for Planning and the Greater Sydney Commission and request the State Significant Development currently being progressed for 240-244 Beecroft Road be placed on hold until:
- i. the supplementary work on a new road link has been completed; and
 - ii. that the relevant approval authority agrees to the provision of commercial floor space equivalent to a 1:1 FSR.
- (g) **That** a further report is brought to Council on the options for the Rawson Street carpark site as a site for future civic space and community facilities and analysis on whether any EOI process should be commenced to seek partners to redevelop the site and realise the FSR available on the site.
- (h) **That** a further report is brought to Council on the outcome of the consultation on the Epping Town Centre Traffic Study and the results of the supplementary traffic analysis discussed in this report on:-
- i. Reopening of the former M2 bus tunnel link; and
 - ii. A new east west road link through 240-244 Beecroft Road
- (i) **That** a Planning Proposal including all necessary background studies and analysis be prepared to progress the recommended LEP amendments detailed in this report relating to:-
- i. Rosebank Avenue HCA, Precinct;
 - ii. 1, 3, 3A, 5, 7, and 7A Norfolk Road and 25 Pembroke Street;
 - iii. Essex Street HCA Precinct;
 - iv. Rose Street Precinct; and
 - v. Rockleigh Park Precinct;

and that the Planning Proposal and associated material be reported to Council for endorsement before it is forwarded to the Department of Planning and Environment seeking any Gateway Determination for the planning proposal.

- (j) **Further, that** a Planning Proposal including all necessary background studies and analysis be prepared to progress the recommended LEP amendments detailed in this report relating to new controls to require the provision of commercial floor space in the centre and that the Planning Proposal and associated material be reported to Council for endorsement before it is forwarded to the Department of Planning and Environment seeking any Gateway Determination for the planning proposal.

BACKGROUND

1. This report is a progression of a Council report deferred from the 12 February 2018 Council meeting (Item 12.5) provided at **Attachment 1**. This report also relates to a Council assessment of the Austino planning proposal.
2. As noted above, Item 12.5 from the 12 February 2018 Council meeting which sought to provide an update on the status of the Epping Planning Review and associated matters was deferred. It resolved as follows:

That consideration of this matter be deferred for the following reasons:

1. *Consultation with Ward Councillors.*
 2. *That Council write to the Department of Planning seeking clarification around the decision of 1 December 2017 to appoint the Sydney Central Planning Panel as the relevant Planning Authority, meaning that Council no longer has relevant planning Authority Status for this proposal. Council is seeking this clarification particularly around the fact that the Department of Planning and Environment will be referring the outcome of the Traffic Study to make their determination which is the reason for our Council delaying a recommendation to the Council.*
 3. *Upon receipt of the valuation for the former Epping Bowling Club site, the formal valuation be the subject of a Briefing to Ward Councillors and any other interested Councillors prior to the Austino Planning Proposal or any update on the Epping Planning Review being reported back to Council.*
3. In response to the resolution of 12 February 2018:
 - a. A Workshop was held with Councillors on 16 February 2018 so that the applicants of two preliminary planning proposals – Oakstand consortium and Lyon Group – could present their respective preliminary planning proposals. These preliminary planning proposals are detailed later in this report.
 - b. A Councillor briefing session was held with Ward Councillors on Wednesday, 28th March 2018 which provided an update on the Epping Planning review including the draft findings on the Epping Town Centre Traffic Study and valuation report on 725 Blaxland Road.
 - c. A meeting was held with the Member for Epping, Damien Tudehope on Thursday, 29th March 2018 which also provided an update on the Epping Planning review and included a discussion on the draft findings on the Epping Town Centre Traffic Study and valuation report on 725 Blaxland Road.
 4. Consistent with resolution 2 above, on 1 March 2018, Council Officers wrote to the Department of Planning and Environment (DP&E) seeking clarification on the removal of the relevant planning authority role from City of Parramatta council. The DP&E's response is attached to this report at **Attachment 2**.

OVERVIEW OF EPPING PLANNING REVIEW AND STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

5. The Epping Planning Review (EPR) was initiated as a review of planning controls for the Epping Town Centre and immediate surrounds (refer to the

area delineated orange in the figure below) to address the issues of land use conflicts. These conflicts were raised by the Epping Community following from the DP&E's Priority Precinct process which increased the density controls in March 2014. The EPR Study Area is shown in Figure 1.

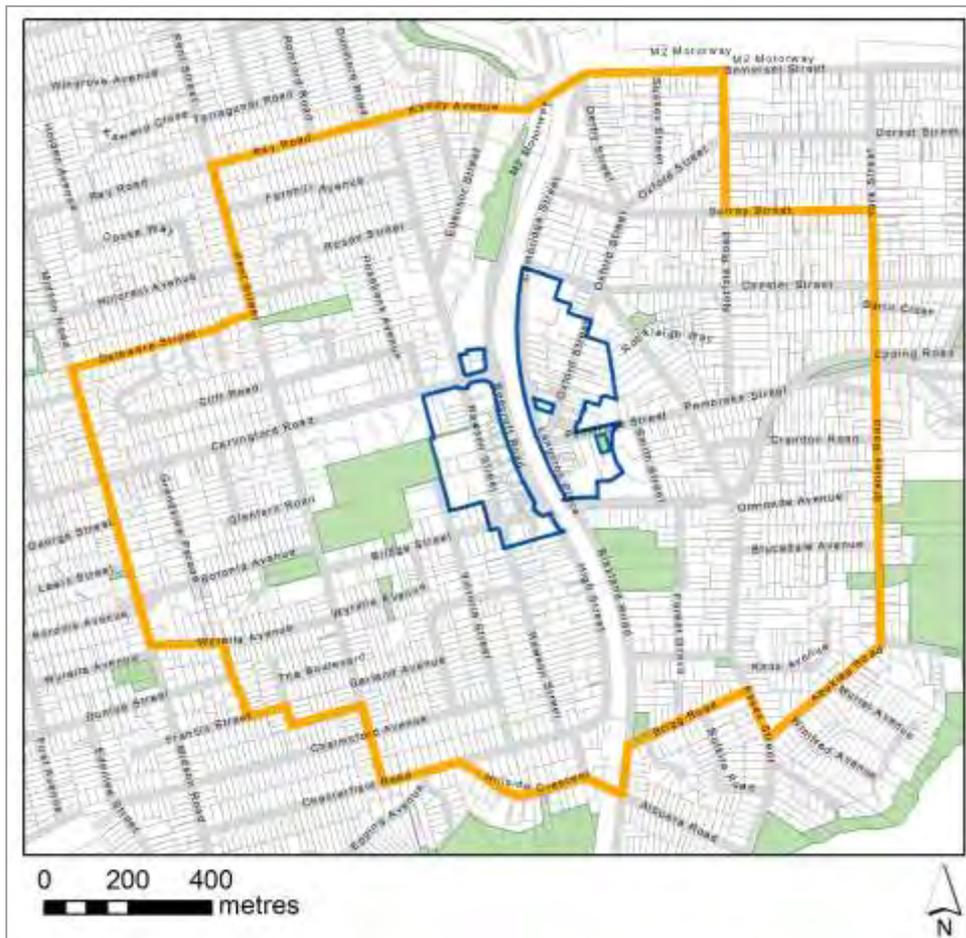


Figure 1 - Epping Planning Review study area showing the town centre and immediate surrounds

6. The EPR has also followed the Council boundary changes occurring in May 2016 under which the Epping Town Centre came to be entirely contained within the City of Parramatta (having previously been split between Parramatta City and Hornsby Shire Councils).
7. One objective of the EPR has been to create a unified planning framework for the Epping Town Centre and its immediate surrounds, including one set of LEP and DCP controls, a unified development contributions framework and one public domain plan. Council has already developed a single development contributions framework for the Epping Town Centre and Council's formal LGA-wide Harmonization Process will have a role in bringing some further consistency to the planning controls.
8. The EPR has two stages. The first stage has involved undertaking technical studies and community consultation to inform planning control amendments to resolve land use conflicts or issues. The last remaining element of this stage is the completion of traffic analysis and the major element of this is the Epping Town Centre Traffic Study.
9. The **Epping Town Centre Traffic Study (ETCTS)** is the key component of this report, as its findings have major implications for the Epping Town Centre in the

short to mid-term. The implications of the ETCTS are also discussed with regards to:

- a. Updates on the status of **LEP and DCP amendments** affecting land within the Town Centre with a small section of the report discussing the release of the final **Central City District Plan** in March 2018 and relationship with the EPR.
 - b. the State Significant Development proposal affecting NSW Government owned land at **240-244 Beecroft Road, Epping**.
 - c. The **Austino Planning Proposal** and **Preliminary planning proposals** affecting land within the Town Centre.
10. This report makes recommendations on:
- a. the **interface areas** at Rosebank Avenue, Rockleigh Park, Pembroke Street/Norfolk Rd, Essex Street and the Rose Street Precinct;
 - b. **commercial floorspace** within the centre; and
 - c. potential **social infrastructure** provision on the Rawson Street Car Parking site.

RELATED PLANNING POLICY MATTERS

11. A series of recent policy amendments (LEP, DCP and development contributions plans) are complete which apply to land within the EPR study area and relate to:
- a. Housekeeping Amendment to Hornsby LEP 2013 recently coming into effect.
 - b. Fast Tracked Amendments to Parramatta DCP 2011 involving footpath widening recently coming into effect.
 - c. Amendment to Hornsby DCP 2013 - Tree Preservation and associated matters raised by Council in its resolution from the 26 February 2018 Council meeting pertaining to tree removal in Forest Park and the potential impact of Austino planning proposal on trees in the north of Forest Park are detailed in **Attachment 3** to this report.
 - d. Section 94 and 94A Developer Contributions Plans applying to the EPR area recently coming into effect.
12. These matters are further detailed in **Attachment 3**.

Greater Sydney Region Plan and Central City District Plan

13. In March 2018, the Greater Sydney Commission (GSC) released the final *Central City District Plan (CCDP)* and its metro-wide level plan *Greater Sydney Region Plan - A Metropolis of Three Cities*.
14. In both plans, Epping is identified as a 'Strategic Centre' for 2036. However, in the earlier iterations of the District Plan and Metro Plan, Epping was identified as a "Town Centre" or "Local Centre". Thus the role of the Epping Town Centre has been elevated to a higher-order centre without any corresponding dialogue or justification. Also, the 'Strategic Centre' category is still not clearly defined in the Final Plans. The change has also occurred ahead of completion of the Epping Town Centre Traffic Study.
15. The CCDP establishes dwelling targets for the five year period from 2016 to 2021 for the Parramatta LGA and jobs targets for lower and higher scenarios

for 2036 for Epping, specifically. In the context of the Epping Planning Review and recent development forecast, these are discussed below:

- a. With regards to **dwelling targets** for that period, the CCDP sees 21,650 additional dwellings for the 2016-2021 period for the Parramatta LGA. Analysis contained in this report on recent dwelling growth within the Epping Town Centre demonstrates that recent growth patterns mean this centre can meet a substantial proportion of this target.
 - b. With regards to the **jobs targets**, the Epping Town Centre is identified as a Strategic Centre for 2036 with a jobs target of 1,900 additional jobs (2036 baseline) to 2,400 additional job (2036 higher target). These are on top of the 5,100 jobs that the CCDP sees as the baseline for 2016. Further discussion about the provision of commercial floorspace is provided further in this report.
16. Furthermore, a series of actions (both direct or indirect) across a number of the CCDP's Planning Priorities apply to the Epping Town Centre and largely involve collaboration with the DP&E and GSC.

EPPING PLANNING REVIEW - STAGE 1

17. The major elements of Stage 1 of the EPR were spelled out in the 12 February 2018 report (Item 12.5) which noted that Stage 1 of the Epping Planning Review was largely completed with the exception of a Final Traffic Study. This was precluded by a report of Council at its meeting on 14 August 2017 which reported the Discussion Paper and its supporting technical studies.
18. An **Interim Traffic Modelling Report** (dated June 2017) was prepared by EMM for the purposes of the Epping Planning Review Discussion Paper which was exhibited in June/July 2017. The Interim Report formed preliminary analysis in order to consult the Epping community on traffic and access in and around the Town Centre.
19. At the 14 August 2017 Council meeting, Council endorsed a suite of principles to guide Stage 2 of the Epping Planning Review. The issues discussed in this report directly affect many of the principles.

Epping Planning Review Steering Group

20. To ensure delivery of the Epping Planning Review, in February 2017, Council 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.
21. The Steering Group is also consistent with the Central City District Plan where:

Parramatta City Council is leading the review of planning controls and the Commission is collaborating with Council and other State agencies to address social infrastructure, traffic, heritage and commercial land issues (p.21).
22. Given the recommendations within this report, the role of the Steering Group in providing further direction on the Epping Planning Review process is paramount.

BACKGROUND TO EPPING TOWN CENTRE TRAFFIC STUDY

23. The principal traffic study underpinning the existing planning controls which is now outdated is the **Halcrow Study** of 2011 commissioned by Hornsby

Council, the then Parramatta City Council and the DP&E prior to the Priority Precinct process formally commencing. The Epping Town Centre Traffic Study (ETCTS) replaces this analysis.

24. The Halcrow Study tested the short term and long term land use scenarios:
 - a. The short term (2016) land use scenario was based on a forecast of additional 900 dwellings and additional 3,000sqm of retail uses; and
 - b. The long term (2026) land use forecast a further 2,100 dwellings and another 3,000sqm of retail uses.
25. In total, this tested the impact of 3,000 additional dwellings and 6,000sqm of additional retail within the Town Centre by 2026. As is discussed further in this report, the Halcrow assumptions on residential land use have substantially underestimated the development trends.

EMM's Interim Traffic Study (2017)

26. The preliminary analysis carried out by EMM in 2017 as part of the Interim Traffic Modelling report for the purposes of the EPR Discussion Paper allowed discussion of the issues as part of the Discussion Paper process. Specifically, the preliminary study identified the following key issues:
 - a. The east west Carlingford Road/Epping Road and north south Beecroft Road/Blaxland Road are sub-regional routes that converge at the Town Centre mixing with local traffic.
 - b. Approximately 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.
 - c. The through trips are a significant barrier to improving the traffic flow around the Epping Town Centre. (Note: Centres are usually structured in a way that separates local traffic from through-traffic, but the Epping Town Centre is not).
 - d. The widening of the rail bridge will not be a "game changer" given the time it will take motorists to cross the bridge. In other words, the expansion of the bridge will be an improvement, but will not be a *significant* improvement in providing relief to congestion.
 - e. Traffic routes and intersections are currently operating at over-saturated traffic levels for both the morning and afternoon peak hour, and 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.

Local road upgrades

27. The Roads and Maritime Services' (RMS) program of main road improvements within the town centre have been factored into the ETCTS. They are:
 - a. Widening of Epping Road from two lanes to three lanes involving:
 - i. Removal of the right turn movement from Langston Place into Epping Road,
 - ii. Removal of the right turn movement from Epping Road into Smith Street and Forest Gove;

- iii. New dedicated right turn lanes from Essex Street into Epping Road; and
 - iv. New traffic light controlled pedestrian crossing for Epping Road and Essex Street.
- b. Upgrading the Beecroft Road and Carlingford Road intersection in Epping involving:
- i. New traffic light controlled pedestrian crossing for Carlingford and Beecroft Roads;
 - ii. Additional right-turn lane from Beecroft Road into Carlingford Road; and
 - iii. New pedestrian path to link with the exiting path to Epping Station.
28. A critical factor is that the traffic modelling undertaken since 2011 all factor in a widening of the rail bridge carriageway on Epping Road to accommodate an additional westbound lane. In a letter from the DP&E to Council dated 7 November 2017, it notes that “Transport for NSW is investigating several options for widening this overpass and the Council would be informed of the results when the investigation concludes” but the letter did not provide a timeframe. Since the receipt of the letter, Council Officers have not been provided with an update.

Dwelling forecasts since 2011 and actual dwelling growth

29. In order to understand the significance of the findings from the ETCTS (covered in the next section), it is important to understand recent (actual) and anticipated dwelling growth in the context of the growth predicted by the DP&E as part of the former Epping Priority Precinct process completed in March 2014. This must be understood so that infrastructure providers (Council and the State government) can ensure the delivery of appropriate infrastructure at the right time.

Dwelling forecasts

30. During the progression of the DP&E’s Priority Precinct process, dwelling growth forecasts were reviewed from **3,000 additional dwellings** for 2026 in the Halcrow Study to **3,750 additional dwellings** for the year 2036 as per the Department of Planning and Environment’s (DP&E’s) *Finalisation Report* (November 2013). However, shortly after the City of Parramatta commenced the EPR process, in early 2017, the DP&E revised its forecast figure of 3,750 additional dwellings to **5,500 additional dwellings** by 2036 and set a maximum dwelling yield of **10,000 additional dwellings** at a 100% take up rate.

Actual dwelling growth

31. The Epping Planning Review Discussion Paper (June 2017) noted that Council Officers had reviewed recent development applications and approvals to track actual growth against the dwelling forecasts undertaken by the DP&E and/or during the Priority Precinct process. This reviewed all of the pre-lodgments, DAs under assessment and determined (both under construction and not yet under construction) that have occurred since March 2014 when the new Priority Precinct controls came into effect and found that **4,735 additional dwellings** could be delivered in the short to mid term (assumed to be as early as 2023), if all DAs are constructed and fully occupied in that time. This equates to an

additional **10,890 people** within the centre assuming a household size of 2.3 persons per household (Source: Council's Social Outcomes Unit).

32. Then again, for the purpose of this Council report, on 19 April 2018, Council Officers tracked this figure to **5,553 additional dwellings** by 2023. This is made up of 3,940 approved dwellings and 1,613 dwellings under assessment. Again, applying an occupancy rate of 2.3 persons per household, this means an additional **12,771 people** in the town centre by 2023. With no signs of the Town Centre's residential market slowing down, Council Officers conclude that within 4 years of the new planning framework being in place, the DP&E's revised 5,550 additional dwelling target for 2036 is well on its way to being met well before 2036.

What does this growth mean?

33. The tracked growth is well above what was forecast and planned for by the DP&E during the Priority Precinct process. In effect, the 2036 revised forecast of last year by the DP&E (of 5,500 dwellings) will already effectively be met within 4 years of the new planning controls if the development detailed in existing approvals and applications are realised.
34. The rate of this growth has significant implications for the amenity and function of the centre including infrastructure provision in the short and mid-terms. For example:
- a. The widening of the rail bridge carriageway on Epping Road to accommodate an additional westbound lane is yet to be delivered by the State Government.
 - b. Education infrastructure such as schools managed by the Department of Education (public schools) as well as private schools will be under more pressure.
 - c. The significant loss of commercial floorspace spelled out in the *SGS Commercial Floorspace Study* and the *Epping Planning Review Discussion Paper* exhibited in mid 2017 means the future amenity and function of Epping as a centre is at stake.
 - d. The provision of local infrastructure (libraries, community facilities, open space and recreational facilities) is under pressure to be enhanced and improved.

Conclusions

35. Comparing the Town Centre's growth with the CCDP's dwelling targets for the Parramatta local government area (LGA) for the 2016-2021 period which is (21,650 dwellings), the 5,553 additional dwellings represents a substantial proportion of the dwelling target although some of that growth has occurred post March 2014.
36. In addition to the tracked dwelling growth since March 2014, there is substantial interest from developers and land owners within and around the town centre seeking an increase in residential yield above what the current controls allow via a planning proposal process.
37. Council must ensure that the amenity of the centre as well as the long term social, environmental and economic aspirations of the Epping community are not undermined. Both the Greater Sydney Commission and the DP&E have a critical role in this.

EPPING TOWN CENTRE TRAFFIC STUDY

38. Council Officers commissioned EMM Planning and Environmental Consultancy in March 2017 to revise the traffic analysis work done as part of the DP&E's Precinct Planning process.
39. The Epping Town Centre Traffic Study (ETCTS) effectively replaces the 2011 Halcrow Study which formed the basis for the current planning controls within the Town Centre. It also replaces other applicant-prepared traffic analysis from 2015. A copy of the ETCTS is provided at **Attachments 4 and 5** (Attachment 4 comprises the Traffic Report and Attachment 5 comprises the Appendices).

The EMM Epping Town Centre model

40. The traffic model was developed by Transport Modelling for EMM. The base model report was completed in December 2017 and forwarded to the RMS for authorisation which was received in February 2018. In its response, RMS stated that the consultant's 2017 base model is suitable for traffic assignment analysis (traffic distribution) for the assessment of any future proposals within the study area.
41. The ETCTS models the co-ordinated operation of a chain of linked intersections. It does this for four existing and future traffic network model and land use scenarios which are:
 - a. Existing actual peak hour intersection traffic volumes which were surveyed in March 2017;
 - b. Modelled base case 2017 intersection traffic volumes from the EMME model;
 - c. Modelled +5,000 dwellings growth scenario intersection traffic volumes from 2026; and
 - d. Modelled +10,000 dwellings growth scenario intersection traffic volumes from 2026.
42. To develop a base year for the network traffic model, in March 2017 the following peak hour surveys, travel time surveys and traffic queue length observations were undertaken:
 - a. Peak hourly intersection turning movements at 17 intersections;
 - b. Morning/afternoon peak hour travel time surveys across the full study area;
 - c. Morning/afternoon peak hour maximum traffic queues for traffic signal operations on Beecroft Road, Carlingford, Epping and Blaxland Roads.
43. The model then tests two future residential growth scenarios in the study area as follows:
 - a. A 2026 land use scenario tests 5,000 additional dwellings
 - b. A 2036 land use scenario tests 10,000 additional dwellings.

These scenarios are additional dwellings realized after the new DP&E planning controls came into effect in March 2014.
44. The ETCTS also includes preliminary analysis of two local road network options:
 - a. The reopening of the former M2 bus tunnel link to Epping Station as a one way westbound link with left turn egress only at Beecroft Road and

- b. A new east west road link connecting between Ray Road and Beecroft Road, through the NSW Government site at 240-244 Beecroft Road on the western side of Beecroft Road.
45. These two road network options are only explored in a preliminary sense for the 2026 and 2036 future traffic network models. This seeks to determine the potential future extent of the likely road network traffic delay benefits for locally based traffic accessing the major road network at Epping. Refer to Sections 7.3 and 7.4 of the ETCTS provided at **Attachment 4**.

ETCTS Findings

46. The broad findings from the ETCTS are summarized below.

Findings from Survey Counts

47. For the **March 2017** surveyed morning and afternoon peak hour traffic conditions the findings are as follows:
 - a. Up to four of the six key intersections on the four major traffic routes (via Beecroft Road, Blaxland Road, Carlingford Road and Epping Road) are operating at over saturated (level of service F) traffic conditions respectively with an average 5 minute waiting time.
 - b. During the morning peak period the combined eastbound and southbound traffic queues on Carlingford Road and Beecroft Road can reach a combined total length of approximate 1.5 km.
 - c. The most widespread traffic queuing effects on all areas of the road network are considered to occur at approximately 8:40 am and 5:40pm, consistent with the Sydney regional major road traffic conditions.
 - d. The increasing road traffic congestion occurring in the Town Centre area, is adversely affecting both the regional through traffic movements and local traffic accessibility to the major road network.

Future years of 2026 and 2036

48. The findings of the +5,000 and +10,000 dwellings growth scenario intersection traffic volumes for the 2026 and 2036 are as follows:
 - a. Future peak hour traffic conditions continue to worsen even when the full programs of the identified RMS and Council road improvements have been implemented.
 - b. In the road networks, five to six of the assessed intersections will have traffic conditions operating at oversaturated (level of service F) during both the morning and afternoon traffic peak periods. As an example, in 2026, the Carlingford Road/Beecroft Road intersection has an average delay which equates to 70.5 minutes (morning peak) and 23.5 minutes (afternoon peak). In 2036, this increases to 77 minutes (morning peak) and improves to 10.5 mins in the afternoon peak.
 - c. In 2036, over 3,300 vehicles cannot enter the network.
49. The average intersection delays are predicted to improve by 2036 from the 2026 base scenario as a result of Council proposed road improvements which are anticipated to be implemented during this period. However, the most crucial intersection – Beecroft Road – actually experiences a higher average delay in 2036 than for the 2026 case (p.41).

50. The ETCTS also finds that *the afternoon performance of the network for the base 2036 is such that it is unlikely that there will be any spare capacity for additional vehicles* (p.41).

Additional westbound lane on Epping Bridge

51. The additional westbound lane on Epping Bridge would primarily benefit the afternoon peak hour westbound regional traffic movements travelling through the Town Centre. However, if the bridge were to operate with future tidal flow traffic conditions such as four lanes eastbound during the morning peak periods with two lanes westbound and three lanes in each direction during the afternoon peak periods, this future improvement could provide significant travel flow benefits during both these peak periods.

Additional road network options

52. The findings from preliminary testing of two additional road network options, are as follows:
- a. **Reopening of the former M2 bus tunnel link:** the envisaged number of vehicles that would use the tunnel would result in equivalent peak hourly traffic reductions for certain southbound right turning traffic and westbound traffic movements. These *“would probably have significant network traffic benefits in terms of reducing the future peak hourly intersection traffic delays at these intersections”* (ETCTS, p.45).
 - b. **A new east west road link through 240-244 Beecroft Road:** the envisaged number of vehicles that would use the through link would result in equivalent peak hourly traffic reductions for the other traffic movements using the Carlingford Road intersections with Beecroft Road or Ray Road and Rawson Street which *“could have significant network traffic benefits in terms of reducing the future peak hourly intersection traffic delays at these intersections”* (ETCTS, p.45).
53. However, further SIDRA intersection analysis is required of the above two road network options, this analysis is currently underway.

Implications

54. The findings from the ETCTS has major land use and infrastructure implications for town centre and surrounds. Therefore, Council Officers see that the role of the ETCTS is to:
- a. Inform planning policy affecting the Study Area particularly in relation to:
 - i. Certain proposals seeking an increase in residential yield; and
 - ii. State Significant Development applications.
 - b. Provide a basis for Council to take to the DP&E, GSC and the Minister for Planning seeking support for:
 - i. a position on residential development that indicates that any growth in residential development should only be permitted to resolve planning issues in Epping rather than just to permit additional residential development above what can be achieved under the current controls; and
 - ii. a coordinated approach to infrastructure delivery consistent with actions within the CCDP.

- c. Inform changes to the principles adopted by Council on 14 August 2017 that relate to:
 - i. Heritage interface;
 - ii. Commercial floorspace; and
 - iii. Open space and community infrastructure.

Consultation

55. The ETCTS and any associated traffic analysis as part of the overall ETCTS brief should be placed on exhibition so that the major stakeholders (such as RMS, Transport for NSW (TfNSW), DP&E, GSC, landowners and the wider community) have an opportunity to comment on the documentation. Consultation will occur via:
 - a. Formal invitation to State agencies represented on the EPR Steering Group which are RMS, TfNSW, DP&E and GSC.
 - b. Formal invitation to major land owners formally seeking density residential density uplift such as Austino, Oakstand and Lyon Group.
 - c. Notification e-newsletter to the 440 residents and businesses registered on the EPR project mailout database. This will include local residents and business as well as planning consultants acting for Epping landowners.
 - d. A public notice in the *Northern District Times*.
56. The ETCTS and associated supporting material will be made available on the EPR project website.

IMPACT OF ETCTS ON STATE SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT AT 240-244 BEECROFT ROAD

57. The State government owned site at 240-244 Beecroft Road (refer to Figure 2) once used for the Sydney Metro Northwest project is subject of a State Significant Development (SSD) application.

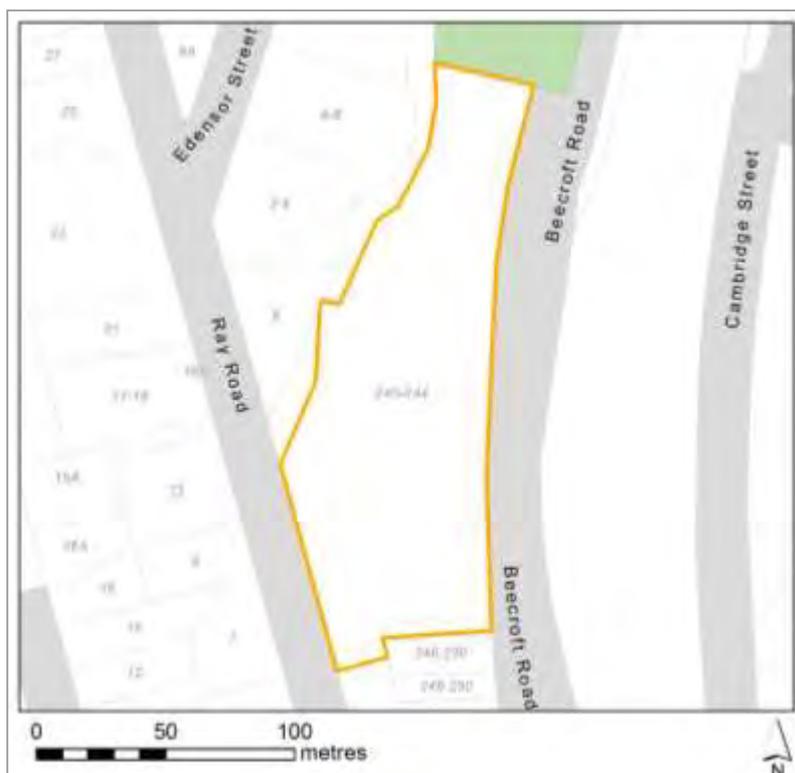


Figure 2 - State government owned land at 240-244 Beecroft Road, Epping

58. The background to his SSD application up to January 2018 is contained within the deferred Council report of 12 February 2018 (**Attachment 1**). However, the role of the site in the future development of the Town Centre is key in two ways: from both land use and traffic/access perspectives.

Land Use issue

59. The SSD application applies to 10,120sqm of the 13,342sqm total site area and proposes 39,000sqm of GFA (450 residential units) and 15 storeys which equates to a 3.8:1 FSR. Of that, the SSC proposes 2,000sqm of commercial FSR which equates to 0.2:1 *to be located at ground level on Road (could be general store, childcare, gymnasium, café, small offices)*.
60. The Commercial Floorspace Study by SGS prepared for the purposes of the EPR Discussion Paper saw that there has been a loss of commercial floorspace estimated at about 63%. Further internal analysis undertaken by Council Officers in early February 2018 has identified that that approximately **8,200sqm retail** and **35,200sqm office** floorspace needs to be “replaced” within the Town Centre. Given its scale, this site plays an important role.
61. From a planning perspective, the SSD process presents Council with an opportunity to negotiate an outcome because:
- The site’s current zoning (R4 High Density Residential) does not require any commercial floorspace however, a **neighbourhood shop** use (max. 100sqm) is permissible within the zone.
 - The site’s previous zone (B4 Mixed Use) would still have allowed the commercial office building on that site to be demolished and replaced with a building that had retail and commercial at lower levels and residential on higher levels. Returning the site to its previous zoning would not require the owner to replace the previous commercial floor space that historically existed on that site.
 - The timeframe around the SSD process is much faster, than a rezoning process; in the latter, Council can seek a higher amount of commercial floorspace on the site, but this would take some time. The SSD can approve commercial floorspace even if it is not permitted in the zone so there is a mechanism for addressing the floorspace in a timely manner if agreement can be reached.
62. Therefore, a 1:1 FSR (10,120sqm) for commercial uses is a balanced negotiating position that maximises the chances that commercial can be achieved on the site and contribute to Epping’s role as a Strategic Centre as identified in the CCDP.

Local Traffic/Access issue

63. Also, as already noted in this report, a road link through the SSD site is being tested to determine whether it can alleviate some of the traffic pressure at the intersections of Carlingford Road with Ray Road and Beecroft Road. Preliminary testing shows it can take of some pressure of peak hour traffic. However, more detailed analysis is progressing with a supplementary report due shortly which will form supplementary analysis to the ETCTS.

Recommendations

64. Council Officers therefore recommend:

- a. That Council not support the application until:
 - i. A 1:1 FSR of commercial land uses can be delivered on the site; and
 - ii. A supplementary report on an east west through link is completed.
- b. That Council write to the Minister seeking that he not support the proposal until the two criteria listed in a. immediately above are achieved.

IMPACT OF ETCTS ON AUSTINO PLANNING PROPOSAL

Introduction

65. Council Officers were intending to undertake a detailed assessment of the Austino PP. However, on account of:
 - a. The Town Centre having effectively reached the DP&E's revised 2036 dwelling target; and
 - b. the findings from the ETCTS;

Council Officers consider that a detailed assessment of this proposal is no longer required. Instead the assessment method emphasises the significance of the findings of the ETCTS and recognises the critical importance of the RMS and JRPP's comments on traffic matters at the earlier stages of the planning proposal (discussed in the "Traffic" sub-section, below). In short, the traffic impacts associated with the faster than anticipated dwelling growth is the guiding principle informing the outcome of this proposal.

Background

66. The Austino Property Group are the applicant for a Planning Proposal affecting land at 2-18 Epping Road, 2-4 Forest Grove and 725 Blaxland Road (the latter site being the former bowling club site – refer to Figure 3).



Figure 3 - Land affected by the Austino Planning Proposal denoted in solid red line (from applicant's Urban Design Report)

67. The planning proposal – resubmitted to the DP&E in January 2018 seeks to:
 - a. Reconfigure the existing R4 and RE1 zones resulting in no net loss of open space;

- b. Increase the building heights over the reconfigured R4 zone from 26.5 metres to a maximum of 65.5 metres along with 5 other building heights; and
 - c. Increase the density on the site from an equivalent 2.1:1 to a combination of 7.5:1, 4.6:1, and 1.75:1.
68. The above proposed changes seek to deliver a predominantly residential development comprising two towers on Blaxland Road with smaller towers on Epping Road accommodating estimated 794* units. (Note this calculation relies on Council's standard practice of applying an efficiency unit rate of 85sqm per unit whereby the applicant relies on a rate of 100sqm). Under the current controls (ie R4 zoning, maximum height of 26.5 metres) on the sites fronting Epping Road), the Austino landholdings would realise a total of approximately 308 units according to Council Officer analysis.
69. A VPA dated 4 December 2015 accompanies the planning proposal which proposes 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. However, much of the area proposed to be zoned public open space contains underground car parking below it which is generally not acceptable to Council.
70. This PP has a complex history. Details of the process and the proposal are provided at **Attachment 6**.

Petition

71. Between February and March 2017, Council Officers received a petition which containing nearly 600 signatures. The petition requested a number of actions including that Council purchase the site at 725 Blaxland Road. Other actions related to concerns on the impacts of the planning proposal on Forest Park in terms of traffic and urban design.
72. The petitions were tabled at the Council meeting held on 13 February 2017 where Council resolved:
- That the petition be received and referred to the appropriate Council officer for report.*
73. In response to the resolution, the appropriate time for the consideration of the petition was always intended to be undertaken as part of the assessment of the Austino planning proposal. This section in this report forms that assessment.

Traffic Analysis

74. The applicant's Traffic Impact Study prepared by GTA in 2015 tested the traffic impacts of the proposal based on the Halcrow Study's 3,000 additional dwellings for 2026. However, as identified in the Halcrow Study, the 3,000 dwellings for 2026 falls well short of the likely growth of 2025 (5,553 dwellings) based on current and expected development activity.
75. In March 2016 having reviewed the applicant's traffic analysis the RMS wrote to Hornsby Shire Council when it was the RPA noting the following:

Should Council support a recommendation for gateway determination, the exhibited proposal must also ensure that the Transport Impact Assessment traffic includes detailed Network modelling results (ie. phasing, queue lengths/delays for all movements, intersection details) for [six] key intersections for all modelled scenarios.

76. At that time, RMS also noted that *the total Residential Parking requirements being restricted to no greater than the minimum parking rates applicable for a total of 327 apartments* on the entire site (ie. Limited to approximately half the amount being sought under this proposal)*. (Note: it is not clear what assumptions the RMS has relied to determine this number of units. Council's assessment suggests the figure is closer to 308 units).
77. In February 2018, the brief for the Epping Traffic Study was extended so that an impact assessment of the Austino planning proposal on traffic and access around the site could be undertaken. This was decided given the findings from the modelled base case 2017 intersection traffic volumes from EMME software based counts.
78. The Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) prepared by EMM (provided at **Attachment 6**) concludes that the proposal would generate an additional 768 daily vehicle movements on Forest Grove. It also sees that because the impacts of the 2026 and 2036 additional dwellings on the network are so severe, that the actual intersection performance deterioration due to the Austino development either with or without the planning proposal is relatively small.
79. The ETCTS and recent TIA by EMM updates the Austino TIA because the TIA findings were based on a slightly lower future baseline year 2026 additional dwelling forecast than the forecast which has been used in the ETCTS. That said, the general findings within the EMM TIA are still valid. All the same, with regards to the Austino planning proposal impacts, the ETCTS concludes the:
- ...significant intersection performance deterioration from the 2017 base to the 2026 future base traffic situation renders any further traffic generating development in this location unacceptable without further capacity improvements to the locality major road and local road network capacity, in particular at the Epping Road/Blaxland Road intersection, and to a lesser extent at the Epping Road/Essex Street intersection. (p.42)*
80. When the (then) Sydney East Joint Regional Planning Panel (JRPP) assessed the planning proposal as part of its initial review, it stated, as one of the seven (7) actions, that:
- The proposal on this site should be part of the current Council traffic review of the whole of Epping Town Centre and the outcomes that review shall inform the final decision on Floor Space Ratio for the site.*
81. Because of this, a detailed assessment of the planning proposal is considered unnecessary as the fundamental determinant for deciding whether the Epping Planning Review Study Area can take any more residential development is the ETCTS.
82. It is also worth noting that in March 2014, the zoning and density controls for the parcels fronting Epping Road and Forest Grove were amended enabling higher residential yields as part of the DP&E's Priority Precinct process. With the controls having only been in place for 18 months, the applicant seeks further uplift through this planning proposal process. As noted elsewhere in this report, this planning proposal for additional residential development represents housing development simply to increase housing.

Purchase of 725 Blaxland Road (former bowling club) site

83. Part of the site (the former Bowling Club site) is zoned RE1 Public Recreation. The City of Parramatta became responsible for the Planning Controls that apply

to the subject site when the amalgamation occurred in May 2016. Therefore, the City of Parramatta became the acquisition authority for this public recreation land.

84. However, Hornsby Council did not have a funding strategy to acquire the site at 725 Blaxland Road. When the bowling club site became available for sale (ie the transaction that resulted in the current land owner acquiring it). The then Hornsby Council, had the opportunity to purchase it but made a decision not to yet still retained both the RE1 Public Open Space zoning on the Land Zoning Map, and the "Local Open Space Reservation" on the Land Reservation Acquisition Map, over the site.
85. Currently, there is no City of Parramatta Council funding strategy for its acquisition. The revised Section 7.11 and 7.12 (formerly 94/94A) Contributions Plans for Epping which came into effect in November 2017 does include collection for some open space provision. However, the advice in the Epping Planning Review was that Council would be better served by acquiring open space in different parts of Epping where growth is occurring rather than spending a substantial proportion of any funding available (via Section 94 or from other sources) on this portion of land which adjoins an existing substantial piece of open space. This recognises that spending funds to acquire this site would reduce Council's capacity to invest in other open space to meet the needs of growth in other parts of Epping as well as other community needs.
86. An initial internal valuation of the site was undertaken in mid 2017. The ERP Discussion Paper concluded that for the reasons described above the purchase of the site did not represent value for money and this position informed the subsequent adopted principle which was that Council not purchase the site and instead:

That Council should seek to progress the planning proposal with Council as the RPA subject to the Traffic Study being completed before FSRs for the site can be finalised. That Council also negotiate with the developer for the provision of public open space in a way that ensures there is a suitable area of open space which is appropriately sized and located.
87. Council Officers have subsequently commissioned an independent valuation for peer review purposes. The valuations remain Commercial in Confidence and confirms that the purchase of the site by Council is not a viable financial option.
88. With regards to the adopted principle above, Council Officers suggest that the opportunity to negotiate with the landowner to have them provide an equivalent amount of open space has changed because of the result of the ETCTS and is in part depended upon the decision made by the current RPA for the Austino Planning Proposal.
89. As already detailed above in this report the DP&E has chosen to remove the Council as the Relevant Planning Authority (RPA) for the Austino Planning Proposal and so it will need to make the next key decision. If despite the ETCTS the RPA now in place for the Austino PP (ie the Central Sydney Planning Panel) decide to proceed with the Planning Proposal then the Council should seek to enter into further discussions with the applicant and the RPA to seek to achieve some dedication of an equivalent amount of open space at no cost to Council as part of the Planning Proposal. If the DP&E allows the further growth despite the problems with the road network they should also be seeking to broker appropriate open space outcomes to help deal with the growth proposed.

90. However, if the RPA decides not to proceed with the Planning Proposal then Council and the applicant will still need to resolve what will happen to the former bowling club site as it will remain zoned RE1 Public Recreation. Whilst this zoning is retained Council remains the acquisition authority.
91. Council options for the former bowling club site in this case will be:-
- a. To commit to the acquisition by retaining the RE1 zoning. As detailed above this option is not recommended by Council Officers as is not considered to be an efficient use of Council funds.
 - b. Alternatively, rezone the site so Council is no longer the acquisition authority. In this case the appropriate zoning would be R4 High Density Residential with a maximum height of 17.5m (which permits 5-6 storeys) (Note the *Hornsby LEP* does not include FSR controls for sites zoned R4 High Density Residential but Council's Urban Designers indicate that this would allow approximately 162 units to be built on this site under the controls that would apply under the Hornsby DCP with an FSR equivalent to 1.5:1).
92. It is acknowledged that allowing the site to be rezoned to allow more residential development will be inconsistent with the ETCTS conclusions but Council has two conflicting issues that need to be managed. Council will need to balance two potential negative impacts:-
- a. the traffic impact
versus
 - b. the sub-optimal financial and open space outcomes if it commits to remaining as the acquisition authority for the former bowling club site.
93. Council Officer consider that rezoning the former bowling club site to R4 High Density Residential with a height of 17.5m and FSR of 1.5:1 is the preferred approach because:-
- a. The density that would be permitted is much less than that proposed in the applicants PP so the traffic impact would be mitigated by comparison.
 - b. Council will not be forced to expend resources acquiring the former bowling club site in a location Council Officers consider is not optimal use of available funds.
 - c. The building height is consistent with the height applied by the DP&E to transition areas when it put in place the existing planning controls in Epping. It will see a stepping down of permitted height as you move away from Epping Road and down to Forrest Park.
94. It is acknowledged that the density permitted on the former bowling club site is the most significant factor driving its valuation and as the density decreases so will the cost of acquiring the site. If Council and the DP&E accept that a R4 High Density Residential Zoning with a height of 17.5m and FSR of 1.5:1 are the appropriate alternate controls to the current RE1 zoning then it maybe possible to have further discussions with the owner about the implications of this for the redevelopment of the site and the delivery of open space outcomes.

Recommendation

95. That Council object to the Planning Proposal in its current form and density proceeding and request that Council be re-instated as the RPA so that Council

can pursue a Planning Proposal that would retain the current controls that apply to the site with the exception of the Bowling Club portion of the site which would be rezoned from RE1 Public Recreation to R4 High Density Residential with a maximum Height of Building control of 17.5m and FSR of 1.5:1.

IMPACT OF ETCTS ON PRELIMINARY PLANNING PROPOSALS

96. As has been noted during Stage 1 of the Epping Planning Review process, two preliminary planning proposals were lodged with Council in late 2014 which affect land within the town centre (western side). Refer to Figure 4. Both proposals have been on hold on account of the ETCTS being completed as per adopted principles of 14 August 2017. When combined, the preliminary planning proposals seek more than **2,000 dwellings**. This equates to an additional 1,000 dwellings above what can currently be achieved across both sites.
97. Each proposal seeks a partnership with Council to develop their sites in conjunction with the Council car park. Figure 4 below shows both the Oakstand and Lyon Group land holdings as well as Council's land holdings. The details of each proposal are provided in **Attachment 7**.

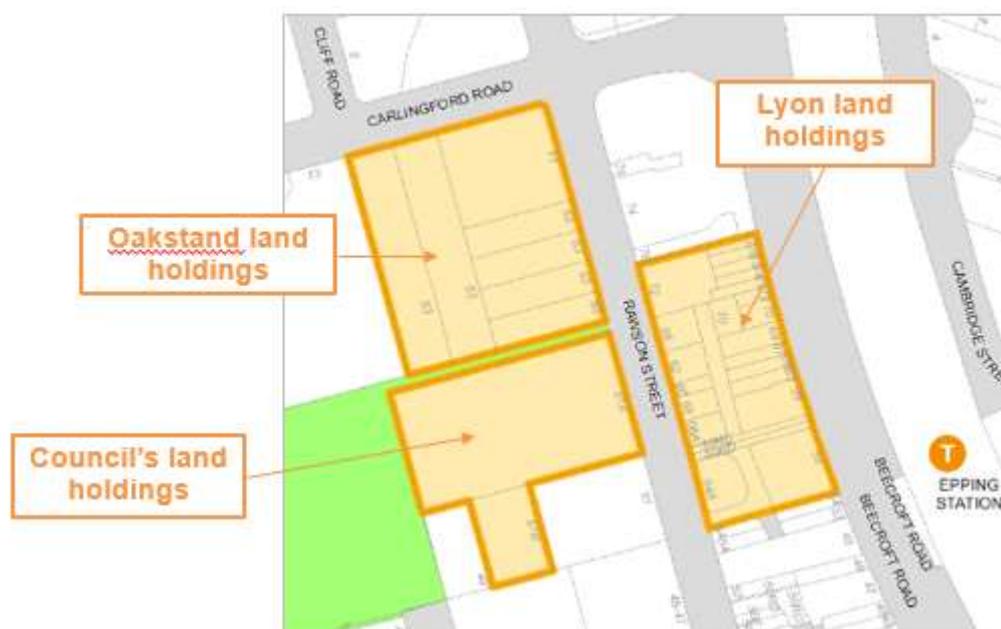


Figure 4 – Applicant owned land for preliminary planning proposals as well as Council's Rawson Car Park sites

Recommendations

98. Given the current growth rate from tracked DAs and the findings from the ETCTS, Council Officers conclude that in the short to mid term, there is no justification for further residential development simply to increase housing. That said, there is an opportunity for an expression of interest (EOI) process with landowners within the Town Centre to transfer some of the floorspace on Council's car park sites to another land owner/s site/s. The EOI process would, at the minimum, stipulate public benefits around a community hub facility, underground car parking, an east-west connection between community hub and the Epping Rail Station, and the like.
99. The outcome of this approach would mean that there is there no net increase in residential floorspace above what can currently be achieved. Effectively Council would be "trading" off the FSR from the carpark site to other sites to generate

funding to provide community facilities on the site of the current car park. It should be noted that any redevelopment would also include retention of carparking on site as it is recognised that this is critical to the operation of western part of the Epping Town Centre.

100. This process would be the subject of a further Council report before any further action is taken explaining the process and potential outcomes. The alternative is to retain the current carpark site and seek to redevelop it independent of other landowners sites. In this case Council would find it difficult to realise the full FSR that currently applies on the site and at the same time provide a significant piece of civic space within current height limits. The viability of achieving the FSR of 4:1 and community facilities and a civic space on the site as a stand alone redevelopment would also be covered in the report should Council request a further report be provided.

IMPACT OF ETCTS ON AREAS WITH INTERFACE ISSUES

101. With regards to the heritage interface areas at Rosebank Avenue HCA, part of the Essex Street HCA, land parcels and Pembroke Road and Norfolk Street and the Rose Street Precinct, the principles adopted at the 14 August 2017 Council meeting recommend further planning analysis that tests higher residential densities such as *manor homes* or 3 storey *residential flat buildings* which would replace existing detached dwelling development.
102. The interface issues are a result of land use conflicts occurring as a result of the DP&E's Priority Precinct process and require resolution where possible. It is acknowledged that the ETCTS identifies significant traffic impacts on the EPR study area and increasing densities at interface areas will have an increase on the traffic impacts. However, the interfaces put in place where 5-6 storey building look onto the backyards of sites zoned for single dwelling development and covered by a Heritage Conservation Area designation are unacceptable and need to be addressed in some format. This issue was discussed in detail in the Epping Planning Review documents.
103. A copy of the EPR Discussion Paper and the report considered by the Council on 14 August 2017 have been attached (refer to **Attachments 8 and 9**). The details on each HCA and background on the recommendations for these areas is available in this background material. The report below details just the recommendations made previously and options discussed with Councillors at Ward Councillor Briefings to allow Council to determine whether it should proceed with the previous recommendations.
104. Council officers are of the opinion that if growth is to be permitted which will impact on the road network that it should be to resolve these types of planning problems rather than to just increase density on a site for the sake of additional housing numbers. It is for these reasons that Council Officers recommend that changes to the planning controls proceed despite the findings of the ETCTS.
105. Furthermore, in March this year, the DP&E released its *Low Rise Medium Density Housing Code* which comes into effect in July 2018. This establishes planning controls on some forms of medium density housing and provide further guidance on the recommended outcomes in this section.

Rosebank Avenue HCA

106. With regards to Rosebank Avenue HCA, in the 14 August 2018 Council report, Council Officers recommended:
- a. Removing the HCA notation but keeping heritage items.

- b. For the area south of the heritage items: allow 3 storey **residential flat buildings (RFBs)**.
- c. For the area north of the heritage items: no change.
- d. That the changes occur ahead of completion of ETCTS.

107. Council subsequently resolved that it pursue 2 storey **manor homes** along full length of Rosebank Ave but test benefits of 3 storey **RFBs**.

Recommendation

108. Council Officers recommend proceeding with the original recommendations to remove the HCA notation, enable 3 storey **RFBs** south of the heritage items with no change north of the heritage items. Refer to Figure 5.



Figures 5 – Council Officer recommendation for Rosebank Avenue HCA

1, 3, 3A, 5, 7, and 7A Norfolk Road and 25 Pembroke Street

109. With regards to properties at 1, 3, 3A, 5, 7, and 7A Norfolk Road and 25 Pembroke Street, in the 14 August 2018 Council report, Council Officers recommended:

- a. Remove HCA notation but keep heritage items.
- b. R3 zone of area edged black but limit No.s 7 & 7A Norfolk Rd to **manor homes** (current zoning is shown in Figure 6).
- c. Enable 3 storey **RFB** on No.s 1, 3, 3A and 5 Norfolk Rd and 25 Pembroke St.
- d. Changes occur ahead of completion of ETCTS.

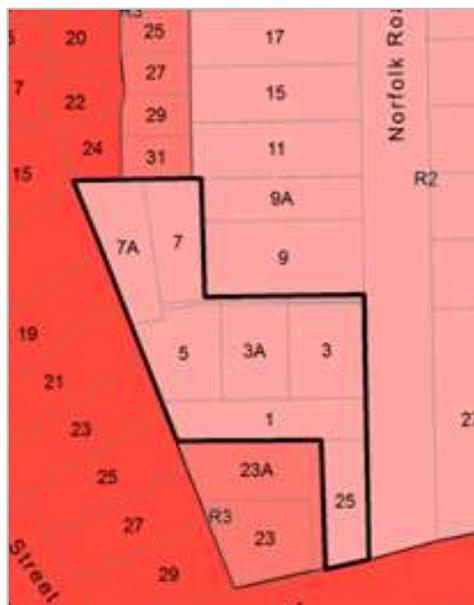


Figure 6 – Current zoning of 1, 3, 3A, 5, 7, and 7A Norfolk Road and 23, 23A and 25 Pembroke Street

110. Council subsequently resolved that it pursue 2 storey **manor homes** but test benefits of 3 storey **residential flat buildings**.
111. At the Ward Councillor Briefings discussed above the option of making no change to the controls in this area was discussed. Should Councillors wish to proceed with this option then Council should resolve to take no further action to change the planning controls for this precinct.

Recommendation

112. To ensure consistency with new Complying Code and subsequent analysis as part of the LEP Harmonisation process, Council Officers propose a new recommendation - **Part 'no change', part RFB**:
- No changes to battle-axe blocks at No.s 7 & 7A (ie. maintain controls for **detached dwellings**) because this conflicts with the DP&E's Complying Code on battle-axe blocks.
 - Rezone No.s 1, 3, 3A & 5 to R3 zone to enable 3 storey **RFB** subject to amalgamation controls being put in place to create 1 super lot.
 - No.25 Pembroke cannot develop of itself and should retain its existing zoning.

Refer to the Figure 7.

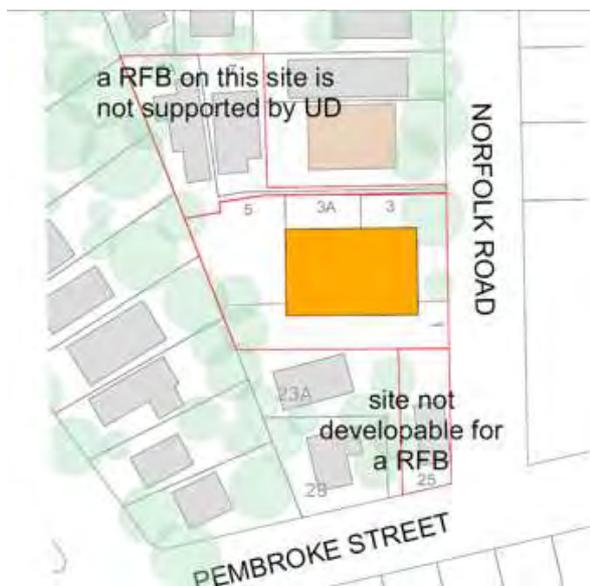


Figure 7 – Council Officer recommendation for 1, 3, 3A, 5, 7, and 7A Norfolk Road and 23, 23A and 25 Pembroke Street

Essex Street HCA

113. With regards to the Essex Street HCA, in the 14 August 2018 Council report, Council Officers recommended:

- a. Remove HCA notation but keep heritage items.
- b. Allow **manor homes** on western side between Epping Road and Maida Road only with no change on eastern side.
- c. That the changes occur ahead of completion of ETCTS.

114. The above recommendations were supported by the Council in August 2017.

Recommendation

115. Council Officers recommend maintaining the above recommendations and develop DCP controls that protect larger setbacks to ensure the protection of the tree canopy at rear setbacks.

Rose Street Precinct

116. With regards to the Rose Street Precinct, in the 14 August 2018 Council report, Council Officers recommended:

- a. Allow **residential flat buildings** development (R3 zone) with urban design analysis to step down height to Brigg Rd to 2 storeys.
- b. That the changes occur ahead of completion of ETCTS.

117. Council subsequently resolved that it pursue 2 storey **manor homes** but test benefits of 3 storey **residential flat buildings**.

118. At the Ward Councillor Briefing Councillors the issue of the topography of this area and the drainage implications of allowing more density were raised. Council Officers consider that this issue could be investigated as part of the redevelopment options but if Councillors are of the opinion that this should be investigated upfront the recommendation should be amended accordingly.

Recommendation

119. Council Officers recommend allowing **residential flat buildings** with associated urban design analysis and DCP controls that enable the stepping down of the building height to 2 storeys at the Brigg Road/Rose Street

frontages and that the four (4) sites fronting Blaxland Road also be included in the precinct. Refer to Figure 8.



Figure 8 – Council Officer recommendation for Rose Street Precinct but include the 4 properties fronting Blaxland Road

Rockleigh Park

120. With regards to the Rockleigh Park, in the 14 August 2018 Council report, Council Officers recommended:

- a. The area zoned R4 (edged with yellow line) be down-zoned to R3 to be consistent with R3 zone boundary to north and east.
- b. That further urban design analysis to determine best height and FSR controls.

121. The above recommendations were supported by the Council.

Recommendation

122. Council Officers recommend reinstate original recommendations. But ensure that **residential flat buildings** are prohibited from this area (R3 zone in HLEP permits 4 storey RFBs). Refer to Figure 9.



Figure 9 – Council Officer recommendation for Rockleigh Park

IMPACTS OF ETCTS ON COMMERCIAL FLOORSPACE

123. Recent pre-lodgments and development applications within the centre continue to erode the volume of commercial floorspace within the centre as developers

are 'opting out' of applying the existing DCP provisions that require delivery of 2, 3 and 4 storey podiums of commercial floorspace in mixed use proposals. This is because of the weak 'statutory weight' that DCP controls have over an environmental planning instrument such as a LEP.

124. As discussed in the section entitled "Impact of ETCTS on State Significant Development at 240-244 Beecroft Road", Council Officers have identified that approximately **8,200sqm of retail floorspace** and **35,200sqm of office floorspace** needs to be "replaced". To deliver this, Council's Urban Designers determine that three storey commercial podiums (comprising one floor of retail and two floors of office premises) on remaining sites can deliver the required floorspace.
125. With regards to traffic, the associated traffic impacts from commercial land uses (retail and office premises) may well be greater than those associated with residential development. This is because commercial uses tend to generate a greater number of trips per square metre of floor area. This is another area where Council Officers consider that it may be necessary to allow additional development to resolve a planning issue not related solely to housing delivery. In this case allowing additional density that may detrimentally impact on traffic outcomes should be considered.
126. Given this conflict around the need for more commercial floorspace within the centre to protect its economic viability and amenity, with its associated traffic impacts, a delicate balancing exercise is required that meets the of commercial floorspace needs of the centre whilst acknowledging the potential traffic impacts.
127. In light of the above, Council Officers have identified the following potential options:
 - a. **Option 1 – No change:** This option involves no change to the current controls. Because the market favours residential development and the pace of that development recently, this option is highly likely to encourage DAs that deliver only ground floor commercial that will undermine centre's amenity and economic viability. This has no traffic impact compared to current controls.
 - b. **Option 2 – Require minimum level of commercial FSR provision to be provided without amending the maximum FSR or Building Heights:** This option involves increasing the commercial FSR requirements but this occurs at the cost of residential FSR. It means that the heights or densities of buildings will not change, but there will be a higher proportion of commercial floorspace within any development and less residential than would currently be permitted. In other words, it equates to a net decrease in residential FSR but will improve centre's amenity and economic viability. This will potentially result in a detrimental impact on the local traffic network.
 - c. **Option 3 – Require minimum level of commercial FSR provision to be provided but amend the maximum FSR or Building Heights to seek to retain where possible an FSR for residential equivalent to existing levels** This will mean increases in overall density and building heights but it makes delivery of more commercial (retail/office) uses more viable which will improve the centre's amenity and economic viability. The detrimental impact on the local traffic network will be greatest with this option.

Recommendation

128. Of the above options, Council Officers recommend **Option 3 - Increase Commercial FSR and density/building heights** because of the strong residential market and the way the planning system operates, if Option 2 was pursued, Council would receive a flood of DAs seeking mixed use development with only the ground floor allocated to commercial uses. These would all have to be considered and potentially approved under the current planning rules and the opportunity to provide the commercial floorspace Epping needs will be lost forever. Without sufficient commercial/retail floorspace the future function and amenity of the Town Centre is significantly impacted.
129. Whilst Option 3 is the Council Officer preference at this point in time this scenario needs to be run through the traffic modelling and if the outcome is unacceptable it may be necessary to fall back to Option 2. A further analysis and report to Council will allow Council to determine which option it will ultimately pursue via a Planning Proposal.

CONCLUSION

130. The reported rate of growth compared to the growth envisaged by the DP&E in 2013 demonstrates the Epping Town Centre has been doing a lot of the “heavy lifting” for dwelling growth and that the impact on infrastructure means that further housing growth for the sake of increasing house supply in Epping is not necessary.
131. This report provides a basis for Council to take to the DP&E, the Minister for Planning and the GSC seeking support for a strategic approach to future planning in Epping where any growth seeks to solve existing planning problems rather than just increasing density for the sole purpose of providing additional housing supply.

NEXT STEPS

132. The next steps are:
- a. Progressing supplementary traffic analysis on new through link through 240-244 Beecroft Rd; and re-opening of former M2 bus tunnel link.
 - b. Exhibiting the ETCTS documentation for major stakeholder comment.
 - c. Council Officers to arrange EPR Steering Group meeting with State agencies about proposed policy change and revisiting infrastructure delivery.
 - d. Council Officers prepare further Council reports that seek to:
 - i. Provide advice on provision of community facilities on the Councils Rawson Street Car park land and whether an EOI process should be pursued to enter into partnerships with other landowners.
 - ii. Report on the outcome of the consultation on the Epping Town Centre Traffic Study and the results of the supplementary traffic analysis discussed in this report on:-
 1. Reopening of the former M2 bus tunnel link; and
 2. A new east west road link through 240-244 Beecroft Road.

- e. Planning Proposal processes inclusive of background and technical study preparation commence on:
- i. The heritage interface areas; and
 - ii. The provision of commercial floor space in the centre.

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Jim Stefan
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ATTACHMENTS:

1 ↓	ATTACHMENT 1 - Council Report of 12 February 2018	16 Pages
2 ↓	ATTACHMENT 2 – April 2018 and November 2017 responses from DPE on RPA matter	3 Pages
3 ↓	ATTACHMENT 3 – Related planning policy matters	3 Pages
4 ↓	ATTACHMENT 4 - ETCTS Report	51 Pages
5 ↓	ATTACHMENT 5 - ETCTS Appendices	192 Pages
6 ↓	ATTACHMENT 6 - Austino PP Traffic Impact Assessment undertaken for Council	39 Pages
7 ↓	ATTACHMENT 7 - For 28 May 2018 Council Report on EPR - Detail of Planning Proposals	6 Pages
8 ↓	ATTACHMENT 8 - EPR Discussion Paper	111 Pages
9 ↓	ATTACHMENT 9 - Council Report of 14 August 2017	59 Pages

REFERENCE MATERIAL