

Epping Town Centre Urban Activation Precinct



Planning &
Infrastructure

Frequently Asked Questions

March 2014

WHAT HAS BEEN APPROVED FOR THE EPPING TOWN CENTRE?

- The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure has approved the precinct rezoning and the relevant council Local Environmental Plans have been amended.
- A finalisation report produced by NSW Planning and Infrastructure is available at www.planning.nsw.gov.au/epping
- About 54 hectares of the 247 hectare precinct has been rezoned to provide about 3,750 additional homes.
- Mixed commercial and residential use zones, with building heights of 8 to 22 storeys, within a 400 metre radius of the railway station.
- Building heights up to 5 storeys in selected residential areas within the Hornsby local government area.
- Four new heritage conservation areas, an expanded Epping/Eastwood heritage conservation area and 17 new heritage items.

WHAT IS THE EPPING TOWN CENTRE URBAN ACTIVATION PRECINCT?

- The 247 hectare Epping Town Centre Urban Activation Precinct is located within the Hornsby and Parramatta local government areas within a 10-minute walk of the Epping Railway Station.
- The revitalised precinct will provide for around 3,750 new homes and has been rezoned to allow a mix of residential, retail and commercial development. Uses could include new cafes and restaurants, retail shops and more local community services.
- The rezoning is supported by the \$550 million Hills M2 upgrade which was recently completed and the \$8.3 billion North West Rail Link due for completion in 2019. Local intersection upgrades are due to be completed by the end of 2015.

WHAT COMMUNITY CONSULTATION HAS BEEN UNDERTAKEN?

- A community reference group made up of representatives from eight local community groups and two local schools was established to provide community feedback.
- During the nine-week exhibition period in 2013, Planning and Infrastructure ran two community drop-in sessions attended by 360 community members.
- Planning and Infrastructure presented at a meeting organised by the Epping Civic Trust which was attended by 500 community members.
- Letters notifying the community of the public exhibition were distributed to almost 4,300 surrounding properties.

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WHAT WERE THE MOST COMMON ISSUES RAISED IN SUBMISSIONS?

- The more common issues raised were:
 - traffic congestion and adequacy of public transport in the precinct
 - overall support for heritage conservation, with opposition to some proposed heritage items
 - the need for improved public space including parks, footpaths and trees to ensure the town centre is a pleasant place to live and visit
 - appropriateness of proposed building density and height (a range of contrasting views)
 - provision of schools to meet increased demand.
- These are discussed in detail in the finalisation report which can be viewed at www.planning.nsw.gov.au/epping

WHAT IS BEING DONE TO ADDRESS TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT ISSUES?

- The NSW Government has committed funding for the following intersection upgrades which are expected to be completed by the end of 2015:
 - Essex Street/Epping Road intersection, including additional right turn lane from Essex Street into Epping Road
 - widening Epping Road between Essex Street and Blaxland Road, including intersection works and removal of the right turn from Langston Place
 - Carlingford Road/Beecroft Road intersection, provide additional right turn lanes from Beecroft Road into Carlingford Road.
- The \$550 million Hills M2 upgrade which was recently completed and the \$8.3 billion North West Rail Link due for completion in 2019 will help address transport and traffic concerns.
- Residential growth within a 10-minute walk of the station will encourage use of public transport to travel to Sydney CBD, Macquarie Park, Chatswood, Strathfield, North Sydney, Central Coast and Sydney's north-west.
- Transport for NSW is investigating options for widening the Bridge Street railway overpass.

WHAT ABOUT THE HERITAGE CONSERVATION AREA AND ITEMS?

- The total heritage conservation area, including the four new conservation areas and the expanded Epping/Eastwood conservation area, now covers about 30 per cent of the precinct, up from 11 per cent previously.
- There are now an additional 17 heritage items in the precinct due to their heritage significance.
- Seven properties have been excluded as heritage items and one existing heritage item has been removed as a result of objections from landowners about the proposed heritage listings and a review of the heritage significance of the properties.

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WILL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES BE CREATED AS A RESULT OF THE REZONING?

- Yes, it is expected there will be an increase in retail shops in the town centre core as part of the rezoning of Epping Town Centre Precinct.
- Although this is what is predicted, the mix of land use (office, retail, residential) will be decided by the landowner when site development occurs.
- Economic analysis indicates that market demand for commercial development is higher in larger centres including Macquarie Park and Norwest business centre.
- Due to this demand it is anticipated that commercial office space will decrease in the Epping Town Centre allowing the precinct to grow as a residential and retail centre with excellent access to the larger commercial centres.

WHAT ABOUT PUBLIC SPACE?

- Public space improvement works will be funded from the Precinct Support Scheme (approximately \$2.5 million for each council) and Section 94 and Section 94A local contributions from developments.
- As part of the planning for the precinct, both councils are looking at options for public space improvements:
 - Hornsby Shire Council is considering works including an extension and upgrade to West Epping Park
 - Parramatta City Council is considering a range of upgrades to the public domain
- The redevelopment provides opportunities for new public plazas and to significantly improve streetscapes and pedestrian and cycle links.

HOW WERE CONCERNS ABOUT BUILDING DENSITY AND HEIGHT ADDRESSED?

- There were many contrasting opinions about building height and density in submissions – some submissions urged for greater height and others for a reduction in height.
- Taller buildings and higher density are concentrated around the Epping Railway Station to benefit from the proximity to transport, employment, shops and community services.
- Concentrating the development in the core means a large area of the precinct does not change in density or built form.
- Within the Cliff Road and Forest Grove residential areas, 46 properties have had building heights increased from the proposed three storeys to five storeys as a result of landowner requests and due to the close proximity to the railway station.

WHAT ABOUT SCHOOLS?

- Planning and Infrastructure will continue work closely with the Department of Education and Communities to ensure future student enrolments can be accommodated.

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WHAT CHANGES HAVE BEEN MADE SINCE EXHIBITION?

- A selection of properties within the Cliff Road and Forest Grove residential areas have been increased from the proposed three storeys to five storeys as a result of community feedback and due to their close proximity to the railway station.
- Seven properties have been excluded as heritage items and one existing heritage item has been removed.
- Other minor changes to zoning and planning controls which are provided in more detail in the planning report.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION?

- You can view the approved plans, all the submissions and the finalisation report which includes an analysis of the submissions at www.planning.nsw.gov.au/epping