Executive summary

This Finalisation Report has been prepared in support of the rezoning of the Epping Town Centre Urban Activation Precinct. It is proposed to rezone approximately 54 hectares of land (or 22%) of the 247 hectare precinct for increased dwelling density.

The NSW Government has endorsed the precinct as an Urban Activation Precinct. A key reason for the endorsement of the precinct is the significant level of existing transport infrastructure in the precinct, as well as additional connectivity that will be provided once construction of the North West Rail Link is complete.

The precinct also has significance for the draft Sydney Metropolitan Strategy for Sydney to 2031, which is planning for 545,000 new homes for the wider Sydney region over the next 20 years to accommodate an extra 1.3 million people. The draft strategy is planning for the growth to be distributed across the greater Sydney metropolitan area.

The rezoning of the precinct provides an opportunity to respond to housing pressures in Sydney, in a location where new homes will be close to public transport with excellent access to employment opportunities. By 2036, it is predicted that residents of the precinct will be able to reach 900,000 jobs within 30 minutes by public transport (not including jobs in the Sydney CBD which is 35 minutes away).

The NSW Government is committed to ensuring the provision of necessary infrastructure and a high quality urban environment to support the growth of the precinct.

The proposal

The proposal involves a rezoning process to establish specific planning controls for the precinct, by amending the Parramatta Local Environmental Plan 2011 (Parramatta LEP 2011) and the Hornsby Local Environmental Plan 2013 (Hornsby LEP 2013).

The key features of the proposal are:

- mixed use commercial/residential buildings in the town centre core (generally within a 400m radius of the railway station) permitting buildings up to 22 storeys in height, and floor space ratios up to 6:1

- five residential intensification precincts within the Hornsby local government area, allowing residential apartment buildings up to 5 storeys in height

- new and expanded heritage conservation areas, which will apply to 30% of the precinct area.
**Structure Plan and Planning Report**

The Epping Town Centre Urban Activation Precinct Structure Plan and Planning Report were prepared by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure for the precinct proposal. These reports were the result of a Department of Planning and Infrastructure led review of previous studies prepared for the Epping Town Centre. These studies included the 2011 Epping Town Centre Study (a joint study prepared by Hornsby Shire Council, Parramatta City Council and the Department of Planning and Infrastructure), an independent peer review of the 2011 study and associated specialist reports covering heritage and economic feasibility.

A vision for the precinct was developed, including preferred land uses and built form, as well as a public domain strategy. These elements were underpinned by an economic feasibility analysis to provide confidence that the growth and vision can be achieved. The necessary infrastructure upgrades required to support the future growth were also identified, which have been summarised in the Infrastructure Schedule at Appendix A of this report.

**Exhibition**

The precinct proposal was publicly exhibited from 16 March 2013 to 19 May 2013. Notification letters were sent to 4,299 landowners. A total of 749 submissions were received during the nine week exhibition period, with the key issues raised in the submissions relating to:

- traffic
- height and density controls in the town centre core and residential intensification precincts
- proposed new heritage items and heritage conservation areas
- open space
- public domain improvements and accessibility
- provision of additional services for the additional population (school, health services etc)
- parking
- infrastructure and service provision.

**Key changes**

The department’s assessment of the issues raised in submissions, and the recommended changes to the exhibited maps and controls for the precinct, are detailed in this Finalisation Report.

The key recommended changes to the exhibited maps and controls include:

- an increase in the maximum height for several properties within the Cliff Road and Forest Grove residential intensification precincts, from 12 metres (3 storeys) to 17.5m (5  storeys)
- residential zones, heights and FSR controls within the Hornsby local government area to be amended to be consistent with the Hornsby Local Environmental Plan 2013
- proposed heritage listing of properties in Cliff Road, Epping Road and Bridge Street not to proceed.

As a result of the recommended changes, the estimated dwelling yield for the precinct has increased from 3,600 to 3,750.

This Finalisation Report will be used for the preparation of a recommendation to the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure for the endorsement of the rezoning and planning controls for the precinct.
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1 Consultation summary

1.1 Community consultation

The department engaged in an extensive program of consultation for the precinct. This followed from consultation undertaken for the 2011 Epping Town Centre Study, which was exhibited by Hornsby Shire Council in October and November 2011.

Community Reference Group

A Community Liaison Group was established prior to the public exhibition and consisted of 16 participants, who met on 27 March 2013 and 26 May 2013.

Representatives from eight local community groups were invited, as were four school students from local schools. The remaining four members were selected following a public nomination process and were not members of the local community groups.

Public Exhibition

Letters notifying the community of the public exhibition of the precinct were distributed to 4,299 surrounding properties, including advertisements in local and metropolitan newspapers. The exhibition period was extended for three weeks in response to the level of community interest, with the material available for public inspection for 64 days, from 16 March 2013 until 19 May 2013.

Community Drop in Sessions

Two community drop in sessions were held during the exhibition period, at the Epping Club, Rawson Street, Epping. These were held on:

- Saturday 6 April, 10am to 1pm
- Wednesday 10 April, 5pm to 8pm.

The sessions allowed the community to view material over a few hours, with department staff available to answer questions concerning the Epping Town Centre Urban Activation Precinct.

Approximately 200 people attended the Saturday session, with about 160 attended the Wednesday session. Feedback forms were provided to assist people in making a submission.

Epping Civic Trust meeting

The Epping Civic Trust organised a meeting on the evening of 18 April 2013 at the Church of Christ Hall, Bridge Street, Epping. Approximately 500 people attended the meeting. Staff from the Department of Planning and Infrastructure delivered a presentation on the Epping Town Centre Precinct Structure Plan and took questions from the audience. The local member, the Hon Greg Smith MP also attended and addressed the meeting.
1.2 Number of submissions

A total of 749 submissions were received by the department in response to the exhibition of the Epping Town Centre Urban Activation Precinct. A total of 614 properties were represented, with another five submissions received from community interest groups, and a submission from a business not associated with a specific property in the precinct.

![Bar chart showing number of submissions and properties represented](chart.png)

**Figure 1  Number of submissions received**

A total of 13 authors made more than one submission, however these were collated and considered as a single submission from each author.

A total of 16 submissions did not provide a name and/or address. As these details are required to be provided to the department, these submissions were unable to be considered.

1.3 Submissions location by Local Government Area

Of the 749 submissions, 34% were from properties within the Hornsby Local Government Area part of the precinct, and 16% from the Parramatta local government area part of the precinct. A further 20% were received from properties within the suburb of Epping, but outside the precinct boundary, 6% were from North Epping, and 23% were from outside of the suburbs of Epping or North Epping, and include suburbs such as Carlingford, Seven Hills and Chatswood.
1.4 Submission type

Of the 749 submissions received, 70% were form letters. The remainder were either submissions written by individuals or households, or were from small groups comprising five or less people.

The most common form letter, comprising 40% of all submissions, was prepared by the Epping Civic Trust, with a copy placed on their website. Other form letters were variations of the Epping Civic Trust form letter. The exception was a form letter that relates to the Cliff Road residential intensification area, although only 10 of these letters were received.

Some of the form letter submissions included additional points, or crossed out points from the letter.
1.5 Stakeholder groups

Submissions were also received from the following community groups:

- Epping Civic Trust
- Common Good Group
- Transition Epping
- Boronia Park Committee
- Epping Public School Parents and Citizens.

A submission was received by Woolworths which does not refer to a specific property in the precinct.

1.6 Views

The views represented in the submissions were varied although mostly related to a few key issues relating to potential impacts from the increased population and density of the precinct. The key issues raised are identified in the table below:

Figure 4   Most common issues raised in submissions
2 Issues raised in submissions

2.1 Overview
The most common issues raised in the submissions, were:

- traffic impacts
- height and floor space ratio controls (town centre core)
- height and floor space ratio controls (residential zones)
- heritage items and heritage conservation areas
- open space/parks
- public domain improvements
- schools and other services
- parking
- other infrastructure/utilities.

Issues raised less frequently included:

- zones
- accessibility
- change to the character of Epping
- reduction in commercial floor space
- minimum lot size
- consultation.

These are discussed in detail below.

2.2 Traffic impacts

Issues Raised
The most common concern raised in response to the proposed growth in the Epping Town Centre Urban Activation Precinct was traffic, as it was seen that the additional population in the precinct would result in increased traffic volumes, and exacerbate existing traffic congestion in the precinct.

Comment
The Epping Town Centre Urban Activation Precinct is providing for new dwelling growth within a 10 minute walk of the Epping Railway Station and commercial town centre core. Providing higher density developments in a town centre with excellent transport connections will encourage more efficient use of public transport services. Increasing public transport use, as well as more walking and
cycling, can reduce traffic congestion and result in a more economically productive, and more liveable city.

This approach is consistent with the NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan which supports increased densities in centres with good transport connections, so that Sydney can evolve into a more compact, connected city with a more efficient transport network. It is noted that the Australian Government Bureau of Transport and Regional Economics estimates that traffic congestion cost Sydney’s economy $3.5 billion in 2005, and on current trends this will rise to a cost of $7.8 billion in 2020. (“Estimating Urban Traffic and Congestion Cost Trends for Australian Cities” Working Paper No. 71, prepared by the Bureau of Transport and Regional Economics, published 2007).

Epping is very well connected for public transport with:

- train services to the Sydney CBD, Macquarie Park, Chatswood, Strathfield, North Sydney, Central Coast and Newcastle
- future connection to Norwest and Bella Vista Business Parks and Castle Hill by the North West Rail Link
- the Department of Planning and Infrastructure is working closely with Transport for NSW to ensure bus services increase with demand.

The NSW Government has committed funding to local road and intersection upgrades within the Epping Town Centre precinct to address short term regional traffic growth. Three intersection upgrades which have been planned for are:

- the Essex Street/Epping Road intersection, including providing 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
- the Carlingford Road/Beecroft Road intersection, providing additional right turn lanes from Beecroft Road into Carlingford Road.

These works are expected to provide additional capacity at pinch points in the Epping Town Centre precinct. Concept design work has been completed and it is expected that these works will commence before the end of 2014, and be open to traffic before the end of 2015.

Transport for NSW is in the process of investigating options for widening the Bridge Street rail overpass, including design, integration and staging options, to provide additional capacity on the bridge, and complement the intersection upgrades.

The traffic report prepared by Halcrow for the 2011 Epping Town Centre Study found that 80% of traffic in Epping is through traffic, and this is predicted to rise as Sydney continues to grow, and car use remains high. The increased population of the centre after 20 years will only result in a five per cent increase in the total traffic volumes, as most people will live within a short walk of public transport, and local shops and services.

Therefore addressing traffic congestion in Epping requires a broader, regional approach, in addition to planned local traffic measures. Works to help address regional traffic and congestion issues include:

- $550 million upgrade to the M2 including additional lanes and improved access ramps will provide improved links between the north west region to Macquarie Park, lower north shore and Sydney’s CBD, which were completed in August 2013
- the North West Rail Link which will provide greater opportunities for people to travel across Sydney by rail rather than by car
• the Epping to Thornleigh third track will provide 6 kilometres of new and upgraded track to provide additional capacity which will result in fewer delays for passengers and improved reliability.

The redevelopment of the Epping Town Centre precinct provides opportunities to improve cycle networks through the precinct to encourage the use of bicycles in the precinct, and provide safer paths of travel for those using these paths. Indicative bicycle paths were shown in the Structure Plan and this will inform planning for bicycle paths by the councils.

Councils may also carry out traffic calming work on local streets where it is considered necessary and appropriate.

**Recommendation**

No changes to the structure plan are recommended in this regard. The approach to land use planning for the precinct reflects the need for more efficient movement in cities, which in the long term results in greater sustainability, and increased economic productivity and liveability. However it is acknowledged that regional traffic management is an ongoing issue and will need to be reviewed over time by Transport for NSW.

## 2.3 Height and floor space ratio controls (town centre core)

**Issues raised:**

- 22 storeys buildings are too high for Epping and will change the suburb
- heights should be reduced to reduce the number of dwellings
- heights up to 22 storeys will overshadow properties
- floor space ratio controls need to provide for economically feasible redevelopment
- detailed design controls for these buildings should be included in council’s Local Environmental Plans
- the number of storeys should be specified in addition to height in metres
- design controls should be the same for Rawson Street and Oxford Street.

**Comment**

*Proposed heights and floor space ratios*

More dwellings are being planned for the precinct to benefit from the excellent public transport connections to jobs throughout Sydney and to meet demand for new housing.

New dwelling growth will be concentrated in the Epping Town Centre commercial core around the railway station to benefit from the proximity to transport, shops and services. The highest floor space ratios (the ratio of a building’s gross floor space area to the site area) have been provided in the town centre core to achieve this outcome. Concentrating the development in the core also means that 78% of the precinct will not change in density or built form under this proposal.

The way floor space is distributed across a site determines the built form, and the resultant impacts on surrounding streets, the amenity of residents in the developments, and residents of adjoining properties. Distributing the floor space in more vertical forms (22 storeys buildings with floor plates up to 700m² gross floor area, above a 4 storey podium), results in a small number of slim towers in the town centre core that can be well set back from the street, and set well apart from each other.
This results in reduced impacts of wind and shade on the streets below. The amenity for those living in these apartments and their neighbours in adjoining buildings is also better as views and solar access are greater.

Distributing the floor space in lower buildings, in a range of 8 - 15 storeys as suggested in several submissions, would mean that buildings would need to be much bulkier to accommodate the floor space ratio and will result in poorer amenity in terms of solar access, privacy, and building separation. As the floor space of these buildings will not be reduced, the number of dwellings would also be similar.

**Economic feasibility**

Landowners of the larger sites within the commercial core made submissions raising concerns that the maximum FSR and height controls are not high enough to provide for economically feasible redevelopment of these sites. Additional FSR, generally in the range of 2:1 to 2.5:1, was requested.

Economic feasibility has been one of the factors considered by the department in the determination of appropriate height and FSR controls for the precinct, with economic feasibility reports prepared to support the proposed controls in addition to those prepared for the 2011 study. The feasibility of redevelopment is essentially determined by developer costs (including design and construction costs, land purchases, developer contributions and development margins) and returns (sales and leases).

A further economic feasibility review of key sites was undertaken to address the issues raised in submissions. The review found that the current income being generated by landowners, as well as restrictions due to long term leases, is increasing the cost of redeveloping several sites in the town centre core in the short term. This is due to costs associated with loss of rental income, and/or early termination of leases. As a result, development of these sites may not be feasible today, but in the medium to longer term, once leases expire, redevelopment will become more viable.

When determining the appropriate FSR for the town centre core, the department not only considered economic feasibility, but also the following:

- the type of centre Epping is identified as in the draft Metropolitan Strategy for Sydney
- overall dwelling yield for the precinct to be similar with the dwelling yield forecast in the Halcrow traffic study of about 3000 new dwellings
- locating the greatest dwelling density around the railway station
- bulk, scale and amenity impacts in the precinct.

It is noted that the 2011 study recommended a maximum FSR of 6:1 in the precinct, with an average FSR of the Rawson Street/Beecroft Road block of approximately 5.3:1.

Therefore, increasing the FSR above 6:1 in the town centre core to enable all sites to develop in the short term is not supported.

Part of the precinct which is being recommended for increased height and floor space controls are the properties at 2-18 Bridge Street. The properties at 2-14 Bridge Street were exhibited as a potential group heritage item. The property at 16-18 Bridge Street adjoins these properties (refer to figure 5). To reflect to the proposed heritage listing of 2-14 Bridge Street, the controls for these properties were proposed to be reduced from 21 metres in height, and a floor space ratio of 3.5:1 under the current Parramatta LEP 2011, to 18 metres in height, and a floor space ratio of 1.5:1. As the department is not recommending the heritage listing of 2-14 Bridge Street (refer to section 3.5), it is recommended that the existing height and FSR controls for these properties under the Parramatta LEP 2011 be retained.
The second site where changes to height and FSR controls are being recommended is 50 Oxford Street, the site of Arden Anglican School. The owners were concerned that the part of the site to be zoned B2 Local Business was allocated height and FSR controls used for the R4 High Density Residential zone (18m and 1.5:1), rather than the B2 zoned land on the same side of Oxford Street (48m and 4.5:1). It is considered appropriate that the height and FSR controls for the B2 zone on this side of Oxford Street are consistent to encourage orderly development, and therefore it is recommended that the height and FSR controls for the B2 zoned land on this site be changed accordingly. It is considered that as this site is to the south of existing residential apartment buildings, the potential impacts are not considered to be significant, and the design of buildings on this site will be subject to future development applications which will need to minimise the impacts on these properties.
Overshadowing

Testing of building heights was undertaken by Architectus and found that buildings of up to 27 storeys could be located in the town centre core and meet solar access requirements under State Environmental Planning Policy No. 65 - Design Quality of Residential Flat Development (SEPP 65). A maximum of 22 storeys is being recommended as this is considered to provide for sufficient height to accommodate the maximum floor space ratio on most sites, whilst still achieving a pleasant environment for people in the streets below.

Shadow diagrams have been prepared by Architectus in response to concerns raised in submissions, and these have been included in Appendix C of this report. The shadow diagrams demonstrate that the SEPP 65 requirements with regard to impacts on adjoining properties are able to be achieved.

The shadow diagrams were also prepared to detail the potential impacts on public space in the town centre core. The shadow diagrams show:

- the alignment of Rawson Street ensures that it receives very good levels of direct sunlight on both sides of the street between 1pm-2pm in the middle of winter (June 21)
- the alignment of Oxford Street ensures that it receives very good levels of direct sunlight on both sides of the street between 12pm-1pm in the middle of winter (June 21th)
- during autumn and spring both Rawson Street and Oxford Street receive excellent solar access during the key lunchtime hours of 12-2pm
- the potential Rawson Street Plaza would be able to receive direct sunlight between 12-2pm in the middle of winter to approximately 40% of the plaza between 12-2pm in the middle of winter (June 21). This is a good outcome for a high-density area
- the potential Pembroke Street Plaza would be able to receive excellent solar access between 12-2pm in the middle of winter (June 21), with over 80% of the site area having direct sunlight during this time.

Detailed design controls

SEPP 65 and the Residential Flat Design Code provide controls such as building separation (which is to be greater where buildings are higher), and solar access requirements.

The Parramatta City Council and Hornsby Shire Council Development Control Plans (DCPs) will provide detailed design controls for future development in the precinct. It is recommended that the councils update their DCPs to reflect the built form detailed in the Epping Town Centre Urban Activation Precinct Structure Plan and Planning Report.

No additional design controls in the councils LEPs are recommended.

Height expressed as storeys

Some submissions requested that the maximum height controls be expressed in storeys or both storeys and metres. The primary control for height will be in metres as per the Standard Instrument for Local Environmental Plans.

Different controls for Rawson and Oxford Streets

The controls recommended for the tower setbacks in Oxford Street and Rawson Street are 12 metres and 6 metres respectively. Oxford Street has a number of heritage items fronting the street which is not the case for Rawson Street. Lots facing Oxford Street also tend to be deeper than those in Rawson Street and can accommodate a greater setback. Therefore the difference in setbacks is considered to be reasonable and no changes are recommended.
Recommendation

No changes are recommended for the height and FSR controls in the town centre core, other than 2-18 Bridge Street (recommended to be 21m in height and an FSR of 3.5:1 because it is not supported as a heritage item), and 50 Oxford Street (recommended to be 48m height in height and an FSR of 4.5:1 to reflect B2 controls on adjoining properties).

2.4 Height and floor space ratio controls (residential zones)

Issues raised

- The properties identified for three storey development in Cliff Road and Forest Grove residential intensification areas should be increased to five storeys to ensure viable redevelopment
- A group of nine property owners in Norfolk Road and Pemroke Street requested an increase in height for their properties from the existing two storeys to five storeys
- Other submissions (73% of all submissions) raised objections to the increase in dwelling density and height in some or all of the proposed residential intensification precincts
- FSR controls should not be applied in residential zones in the Hornsby local government area
- Heights in the Hornsby local government area should be consistent with the heights used in the Hornsby LEP i.e. 17.5m rather than 18m, and 26.5m rather than 28m.

Comment

Five residential intensification areas were identified in the Hornsby local government area part of the precinct to provide for medium density development in residential zoned land that will adjoin the town centre core. These five areas are similar to the areas identified in the 2011 Epping Town Centre Study.

Cliff Road Residential Intensification Area

There were 21 submissions received from residents in the Cliff Road residential intensification area requesting that the maximum height for their properties be increased to allow five storey development rather than three storeys as publicly exhibited. The main reason provided in the submissions for the increase in height was to increase the feasibility of redevelopment.

Almost all of these properties were identified in the 2011 study to provide for five storey apartment buildings. However, the Perumal Murphy Alessi heritage review of the Rosebank Avenue heritage conservation area recommended that properties on the northern side of Cliff Road, be reduced from five storeys to three storeys to reduce the impact on the proposed heritage conservation area (which is discussed in more detail in section 3.5 of this report).
Figure 7 Proposed height controls in the 2011 study (left) and exhibited controls (2013 UAP) for the Cliff Road residential intensification precinct (right).

Figure 7 compares the maximum heights proposed for the Cliff Road residential intensification precinct in the 2011 study and the Epping Town Centre precinct as exhibited. The “P” and “P1” areas provide for five storey apartments. The “M” areas, largely on the northern side of Cliff Road and in Hazlewood Place, provide for three storey apartments.

Although the heritage review recommended that buildings should be limited to three storeys near the Rosebank Avenue Heritage Conservation Area, the department considers that the visual and amenity impact of five storey apartment buildings on adjoining properties in Cliff Road and Hazlewood Place can be managed through the adoption of appropriate built form controls in the council’s DCP. These could include increased setbacks to boundaries of properties in the heritage conservation area, and for deep soil planting in the setback area to help screen the buildings and soften the built form. Controls were recommended in Appendix G of the Epping Town Centre Precinct Planning Report.

Another benefit of five storey apartment buildings compared to three storey buildings in these areas is that these buildings are more likely to include a lift compared to a three storey building. Providing more mid rise apartment buildings in the Epping Town Centre precinct with lifts increases the accessibility of these buildings for the elderly, disabled and others with reduced access who would prefer to live in an apartment with a lift outside the town centre core, and therefore provide greater housing choice. It is also noted that the 2011 census recorded that 18.6% of the Epping population was over 60.

Forest Grove Residential Intensification Area

There were five submissions from property owners in Forest Grove requesting that the eastern side of this street, within the Forest Grove residential intensification area, be increased to allow five storey development rather than three storeys as exhibited, for similar reasons as those raised by residents in the Cliff Road residential intensification area. Like the Cliff Road area, this area was identified for five storey apartment buildings in the 2011 study.
The department considers that the Forest Grove residential intensification area has the potential to provide additional five storey residential flat buildings to improve housing choice and benefit from the proximity to the town centre core. As for the Cliff Road residential intensification area, the DCP controls for these sites should include sufficient setbacks and provision for deep soil planting where they adjoin low density development, so that the impacts of these developments are minimised.

**Epping Road properties**

Submissions were also received from properties fronting the southern side of Epping Road requesting that properties proposed for 5 storey buildings be increased to 8 storeys.

The heights along both sides of Epping Road provide for a range of buildings from 22 storeys to five storeys. Generally, the building height reduces from the 22 storey height proposed for the B2 Local Centre zone, down to two storeys in the low density zones further away from the town centre core. The heights proposed are considered to provide a suitable transition in building heights between the highest and lowest buildings across the precinct, and also reflect the location of the proposed Essex Street Heritage Conservation Area, and to minimise impacts on Forest Park.

**Norfolk Road/Pembroke Street Properties**

A group of nine property owners from 1, 3, 3A, 5, 7, & 7A Norfolk Road and 23, 23A and 25 Pembroke Street requested that their properties be rezoned to R4 High Density Residential, with maximum heights of 18m.

The properties are currently zoned R2 Low Density Residential under the Hornsby LEP 2011. These properties were also proposed to be zoned low density residential 2011 Epping Town Centre Study.

It is proposed that the low density zone be retained for seven of these nine properties, with 23 and 23A Pembroke Street proposed to be zoned R3 Medium Density Residential, up to three storeys in height. It is also proposed to include four of the properties (25 Pembroke Street, and 1, 3 and 3A Norfolk Road) in the East Epping Heritage Conservation Area.
The proposed East Epping Heritage Conservation Area includes all properties fronting Norfolk Road (including some battle-axe subdivisions) from Pembroke Street to the south and Somerset Street to the north. The Perumal Murphy Alessi heritage review considered Norfolk Road to be the main spine of the proposed conservation area, which features wide, dual carriageways, wide grassed verges and several trees and other plantings lining the streets. Although there are some late 20th buildings in this street, it was considered that this road generally typifies the character of the area. Epping Public School, located on the eastern side of Norfolk Road, is an existing heritage item, and 9 Norfolk Road, adjoining the northern boundary of 3 and 3A Norfolk Road, and the eastern boundary of 7 Norfolk Road is also an existing heritage item. To preserve the significance of the proposed heritage conservation areas, and the existing heritage items, it is considered that the low density zoning for the properties fronting Norfolk Road is appropriate.

Development up to three storeys in height is proposed for some properties between the Essex Street residential intensification area and the East Epping Heritage Conservation Area to provide a transition from high density residential areas to low density areas further east. This includes 23 and 23A Pembroke Street. The properties at 5, 7 and 7A Norfolk Road have not been included in the 3 storey development area due to restricted access to these properties from the street, and proximity to the existing heritage item at 9 Norfolk Road. It is considered that the proposed medium and high density residential zones proposed for the precinct are sufficient to support the future growth targets for the precinct and providing more housing choice, while limiting the impact on heritage conservation areas, and other areas of low density development further away from the railway station.

The nine properties owners also requested the additional height for their properties due to the potential amenity impacts of the future development in the Essex Street residential intensification area. The department considers that the visual and amenity impact of five storey apartment buildings in Essex Street on adjacent properties can be managed through the adoption of built form guidelines in Hornsby Shire Council’s DCP, in the form of increased setbacks and deep soil planting. Therefore no changes to the proposed zones and height controls for these properties are recommended.

Figure 9 The 9 properties in Norfolk Road and Pembroke Street (in red boundary).
Figure 9 above shows the nine properties at 1, 3, 3A, 5, 7, & 7A Norfolk Road and 23, 23A and 25 Pembroke Street within the red boundary. The “P” area represents a maximum height of 17.5m (5 storeys), the “M” areas represents a maximum height of 12m (3 storeys) and the “I” area represents a maximum height of 8.5m (2 storeys). The orange properties are existing heritage items, and the red shaded overlay represents the proposed East Epping Heritage Conservation Area.

**Objections to residential intensification areas**

A number of submissions objected to the increased heights and densities proposed in the residential intensification precincts.

The residential intensification areas have been chosen due to their proximity to the railway station and the town centre core, and to provide for additional housing growth and choice in the precinct. The extent of these areas has been limited so that the dwelling yields for the centre are generally consistent with the yields estimated in the 2011 traffic study. It is also considered that the additional growth in dwelling numbers in the precinct is balanced by the increased size of the heritage conservation areas, which will see approximately 30% of the precinct within heritage conservation areas. It is also recommended that the councils update their DCPs to provide for adequate setbacks and design controls to reduce the impact of apartment buildings on the low density areas within the precinct.

**Heights consistent with Hornsby LEP 2013**

Hornsby Shire Council requested that the residential zones not be provided with FSR controls, to be consistent with the Hornsby LEP 2013. The department supports this request and the maps have been amended accordingly. Recommended height controls in the Hornsby local government area have also been reduced from 18m to 17.5m, and from 28m to 26.5m to be consistent with the height controls in the Hornsby LEP 2013.

**Recommendation**

The recommendation changes to the residential zoned areas are as follows:

- increase the number of properties in the Cliff Road and Forest Grove precinct where five storey apartment buildings are permitted
- remove the FSR controls in the residential zones in the Hornsby LEP maps
- amend heights in the Hornsby local government area to be consistent with the Hornsby LEP 2013 i.e. from 18m to 17.5m (5 storeys), and from 28m to 26.5m (8 storeys).

2.5 **Heritage items and heritage conservation areas**

**Issues raised**

- Concerns were raised from owners of the following existing and proposed heritage items:
  - 9, 11, 15, 17 and 19 Cliff Road
  - 34 Carlingford Road
  - 2-14 Bridge Street
  - 4 Epping Road.

- Submissions on the Rosebank heritage conservation area were mixed, including support of the proposal, requests for expansion, and requests for a reduction in size of this area.
• Concerns were raised about the implications of being included in a heritage conservation area, and what this means for the future development potential of properties within these areas.

• Views on the existing and proposed heritage conservation areas were mixed although about 90% of the submissions with views about heritage were in support.

• Management of the Barren Hills Sawing Establishment archaeological site in Oxford Street.

Comment
As part of the planning for the Epping Town Centre precinct, the department undertook consultation with both Parramatta City Council and Hornsby Shire Council as to whether additional heritage items and heritage conservation areas within the precinct should be added to each council’s heritage schedules. Both councils provided a list of potential heritage items and heritage conservation areas to be considered for listing, or to be reviewed by a heritage consultant to confirm that listing was appropriate. The department engaged Perumal Murphy Alessi to review these items, and a report was prepared (Appendix E of the Epping Town Centre Urban Activation Precinct Planning Report). The heritage items and heritage conservation areas supported by the heritage consultant were identified on the heritage map exhibited for public comment.

Nos. 9, 11, 15, 17 and 19 Cliff Road
These five adjoining properties (note there is no No.13 Cliff Road), are single storey Inter-war brick bungalows and were recommended for heritage listing in the Perumal Murphy Alessi report.

All five owners of these opposed the proposed heritage listing of their properties, raising concerns that the heritage significance of these properties is not high, and that the height controls proposed for the block, allowing 5 storey residential flat buildings, would leave these sites isolated and surrounded by apartments. There were also submissions received from other owners within the precinct supporting the heritage listing of these properties.

The heritage report prepared by Perumal Murphy Alessi for the precinct states that individually these five properties have no particular social significance and incorporate standard construction materials and techniques. The recommendation for listing was based on the contribution the group of buildings has on the streetscape.

Figure 10 Nos. 9, 11, 15 Cliff Road (top row) and 17 and 19 Cliff Road (bottom row)
These five properties are also within a block between Cliff Road and Carlingford Road which has been identified as being a part of one of the five residential intensification areas within the precinct. These residential intensification precincts will provide for mid-rise apartments within walking distance of Epping Railway Station, and provide a transition from the highest buildings in the town centre core to low density dwellings further out.

The department has considered the importance of these potential heritage items versus the benefits of increased residential dwellings in the precinct. These five properties are not rare or unique examples of their type, and will not be within a heritage conservation area to protect their setting and context. There are much better examples of these types of dwellings in the precinct, often in existing or proposed heritage conservation areas. Allowing these five sites to be redeveloped for mid rise apartments close to the station and town centre core, to provide more dwelling types and choice in the precinct, is considered to be a positive outcome.

The property at 34 Carlingford Road is part of the same block between Cliff Road and Carlingford Road and is an existing heritage item. This is a Federation period weatherboard house. Concerns were raised by the owner about the potential impacts of five storey buildings surrounding this site.

Figure 11  No. 34 Carlingford Road

The removal of the heritage listing for 34 Carlingford Road is supported as this site is likely to become isolated and lose its context and setting. It may also reduce the capacity for existing sites to develop to achieve the desired outcomes for these residential intensification areas.

The loss of the five potential heritage items and one existing item in the Cliff Road residential intensification area is also considered to be balanced by the 17 new heritage items recommended for listing, and the new and expanded heritage conservation areas recommended for the precinct.

No. 2-14 Bridge Street

The owners of these properties engaged a heritage consultant, Robert Staas of NBRS and Partners, to review the potential heritage listing of these properties following the recommendation in the Perumal Murphy Alessi heritage review.
The Staas report provides a detailed analysis of the extent of alterations and new building work that has occurred at these properties. Although the facades originally date from the 1920s and 1930s, there have been extensive changes to the shop fronts dating from the 1960s onwards. The awnings have been replaced, and alterations made to windows and finishes on the first floor. Of note is the corner property of 2 Bridge Street, the most visually prominent part of the site, which is a recent development from the 1990s although it replicates the older built form of the adjoining shops.

Although the site reflects the historic built form character of the town centre, there have been substantial changes over time which reduces the heritage significance of this site. The context and setting of these items is also likely to also reduce over time as the other properties within the town centre core are developed. For this reason the heritage listing of this site is not recommended. It is also recommended that the height and floor space ratio controls in the Parramatta LEP 2011, of 21m and 3.5:1 respectively, apply to this site, as well as the adjoining property at 16-18 Bridge Street.

**No. 4 Epping Road**

This property is an Inter-war brick building with Old English and Art Deco detailing, and a rare example of a small scale Interwar residential walk-up flat building in the local area. Council did not identify the property for heritage listing however, the Perumal Murphy Alessi heritage review recommended the building be heritage listed. The building was assessed to have local historic and aesthetic significance.
The department assessed the heritage review and recommends that while this property was identified as a possible heritage item, the heritage listing should not proceed. While the building type is rare in this part of Epping, it is not considered sufficient to list the building as a heritage item. The site is strategically located close to the intersection of Epping and Blaxland Roads, and adjoining sites along Epping Road are zoned R4 High Density Residential. If these properties are redeveloped to their full potential under the proposed controls, a heritage listing on 4 Epping Road will reduce the quality of the setting of this building, and may affect the ability of adjoining sites to redevelop. Road widening proposed by Roads and Maritime Services is also likely to further reduce the heritage significance of this building.

**Rosebank Ave Heritage Conservation Area**

The Perumal Murphy Alessi heritage review confirms findings in previous reports prepared for Hornsby Shire Council, finding that Rosebank Avenue features a good and highly intact group of Inter-war period dwellings, original subdivision pattern, consistent setbacks, and mature trees and garden plantings. A water course and treed creek line also remains visible and provides evidence of the early character of the area. Although some higher density development has occurred to the east, the pattern of development in the street remains highly intact.

A range of views was received in the submissions about this proposed heritage conservation area. These ranged from not proceeding with the listing of the heritage conservation area, for the southern half of properties within the proposed heritage conservation area boundary to be excluded from listing, and for the listing to proceed and even expanded in size. Concerns were also raised about the impact of existing and proposed high density dwellings adjoining the conservation area on its heritage significance.

On considering the views of Hornsby Shire Council, which indicated general support the heritage conservation area as proposed, and the findings of the Perumal Murphy Alessi heritage review, the department considers that this proposed heritage conservation area proceed to listing as exhibited. The multi-storey development is not considered to result in significant impacts on the heritage values due to the slope of the land and landscaping.

![Figure 14 Rosebank Avenue Heritage Conservation Area (in red shaded area).](image)

Figure 14 above shows the Rosebank Avenue Heritage Conservation Area, and heights recommended for adjoining properties. These include 17.5m (5 storeys, “P” area), 26.5m (8 storeys, “T1” area) and 8.5m (2 storeys, “I” area).
Some concerns were raised that the heritage value of properties in the Rosebank Avenue Heritage Conservation Area could suffer if adjoining properties are permitted to be five storeys in height. This issue was discussed previously in section 3.4 of this report, and the department recommends that the impact can be reduced by the setbacks recommended in Appendix G of the Epping Town Centre Urban Activation Precinct Planning Report. Deep soil planting is also encouraged in the setback area to screen these buildings, which should be contained in Hornsby Shire Council’s DCP.

**Implications of heritage conservation area listing and identification of contributory items**

Some concerns were raised in submissions that parts of the proposed heritage conservation areas would restrict redevelopment of properties in the future, and that the boundaries of these areas should be reconsidered due to the impact of recent development. Heritage conservation areas are largely character areas, which comprise features such as street trees, setbacks, and overall built form, and have fewer restrictions than would apply to heritage items. It is also recognised that in the proposed areas there may be some dwellings that are modern, however it is the overall character of a streetscape which is important for these areas rather than individual properties.

The Perumal Murphy Alessi heritage review identifies a number of ‘contributory items’ within the proposed heritage conservation areas. The contributory items were identified by the heritage consultant as part of the consideration of the extent of the heritage conservation areas.

**Management of the proposed archaeological item in Oxford Street**

An archaeological report was prepared to consider a potential archaeological item in Oxford Street. This is the site of the Barren Hill Sawing Establishment, an early colonial timber getting site that operated circa 1821-1831.

![Figure 15](image.png)

**Figure 15  Barren Ridges Sawing Establishment buffer area**

The report identified a number of properties in Oxford Street that could contain archaeological items from the sawing establishment, although the exact location of relics will not be known until any excavation takes place. The site was proposed to be an archaeological item in the Hornsby LEP 2013, however due to the lack of certainty of the location of relics and the difficulty of preparing a plan of management at this stage, it is considered more appropriate to identify this site in the DCP. If relics are found during the redevelopment of these sites, the Heritage Act 1977 specifies procedures for excavation permits that need to be followed.
Other issues

Properties at 50 Dorset Street and 86 Essex Street were proposed to be heritage items. These properties, which are outside the precinct boundary, were not notified as part of the exhibition of the precinct, and therefore the department does not consider it appropriate to proceed with the listing of these properties as part of the Epping Town Centre precinct rezoning. The listing of these properties is supported by Hornsby Shire Council, and there are opportunities to progress the listing of these properties through an amendment of the Hornsby LEP 2013.

Recommendation

It is recommended that:

- the proposed heritage items at 9-19 Cliff Road (odd numbers only), 2-14 Bridge Street, 4 Epping Road, 50 Dorset Street and 86 Essex Street, and the existing heritage item at 34 Carlingford Road, not be included as heritage items

2.6 Open space/parks

Issues raised

Concerns raised in submissions related to insufficient areas of new open space and parks being provided to cater for the new population, as well as the condition of the existing open space.

Comment

As part of the planning for the Epping Town Centre Urban Activation Precinct, both councils provided the department with options for public open space provision, which could be considered for Precinct Support Scheme funding or funded by Section 94 or Section 94 contributions. Parramatta City Council requested an increase in the Section 94A local contributions levy applying to the Epping Town Centre to cover the cost of providing the proposed local infrastructure works.

Parramatta City Council is considering upgrades to Boronia Park including improved pathways, playing surface, seating, playground extension, and picnic and BBQ areas.

Hornsby Shire Council is considering an extension and upgrade to Epping West Park to become the Epping Cultural and Recreational Hub. Although the park is just outside the precinct boundary, at approximately 1km west of Epping railway station, it is still accessible to many of the future residents, and is to provide facilities such as an improved sports ground, playground, urban plaza area, WMCA indoor facility, and parking.

Funding for the provision of open space to meet the needs of new populations is usually provided in a council’s Section 94 or 94A local contributions plan, however other funding sources can include the Precinct Support Scheme (funding specifically for Urban Activation Precincts) and grants.

Recommendation

No changes to the current plans are recommended. On going discussion with the councils regarding Precinct Support Scheme funding, and S94A local contributions levy in Parramatta City Council, are recommended.
2.7 Public domain improvements

Issues raised
There was an overall positive response to proposed improvements to the public domain within the precinct including improved footpaths and furniture through the town centre core, new public plazas, street tree planting and through-block pedestrian links.

Comment
The redevelopment of the Epping Town Centre precinct provides opportunities to significantly improve the public domain to create a more vibrant and pleasant centre. These works could include improved footpaths, street furniture, tree planting, lighting and awnings, as well as improved pedestrian links between blocks, and new public plazas.

As for opens space, the works will be largely funded from the Precinct Support Scheme and Section 94 and Section 94A local contributions from developments.

Both councils submitted proposals to the department for Precinct Support Scheme funding for public domain work. The proposals, in brief, are as follows:

- Parramatta City Council: Works focussed in Rawson Street, but also extend to Bridge Street, Carlingford Road and Beecroft Road. Plans include improved footpath paving, street trees, improved Rawson Street pedestrian crossings, way finding signage and public toilets. Improvements to Boronia Park were also suggested.
- Hornsby Shire Council: A public domain works plan for the town centre which could include works such as improved kerb and gutters, footpaths, landscaping, street furniture, lighting, public spaces, and way finding signage.

Recommendation
No changes to the current plans are recommended. On going discussion with both councils regarding Precinct Support Scheme funding, and S94A local contributions levy in Parramatta City Council, are recommended to address concerns raised by the councils.

2.8 Schools and other services

Issues raised
Concerns were raised that the increased population will lead to an increase in demand for schools and other services such as health care, and these need to be addressed as part of the rezoning.

Comment
The Department of Education and Communities, NSW Health and other government service providers will use the work undertaken for the Epping Town Centre precinct to plan for additional services to accommodate increased demand for these services as a result of increased population growth.

Recommendation
No changes are recommended to the rezoning plans in this regard.
2.9 Parking

Issues raised
Parking was often raised in submissions alongside concerns about traffic impacts. Key concerns were:

- parking rates in new developments need to be sufficient so they do not increase demand for on street parking
- current demand for on street parking around the station by commuters is likely to get worse
- a commuter car park should be constructed to alleviate demand for on street parking
- the future of the council car park in Rawson Street unclear.

Comment

Residential parking rates

A residential parking rate of an average of one car space per apartment is recommended for the town centre core. This strikes a balance between meeting demand for car parking spaces, and encouraging travel other than by privately owned vehicles. It also provides options for residents who wish to forgo car ownership due to the high level of accessibility in the precinct, and simultaneously reduce the cost of their dwellings by not having to pay for a parking space. As detailed in the Hill PDA reports prepared for Epping Town Centre Urban Activation Precinct, average construction costs for basement car spaces are about $40,000 each.

Other centres in Sydney that already have high density dwellings built close to railway stations tend to experience much lower rates of car ownership than in Epping. Table 1 below provides a number of examples of such centres, in comparison with Epping.

Table 1  Households with one or no vehicle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Centre</th>
<th>1 vehicle</th>
<th>No vehicle</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Epping</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artarmon</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhodes</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waitara</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Leonards</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2011 Census

Parking rates for apartments outside the town centre core, in the R3 Medium Density Residential and R4 High Density Residential zones, are recommended to be the same as in each council’s DCP. These rates are slightly higher than the rate recommended for the town centre core, but reflect the greater distances of these dwellings from the station. The rates in the Parramatta DCP and Hornsby DCP are in the following Table 2.
Table 2  Residential parking rates in DCPs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Council Rate</th>
<th>Rate per dwelling type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parramatta (within 400m of a railway station)</td>
<td>1 or 2 bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>visitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.2 space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.25 spaces per dwelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parramatta (greater than 400m from a railway station)</td>
<td>Studio unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 bedroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 bedroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 bedroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 bedroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.6 spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.25 spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.5 spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.25 spaces per dwelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hornsby (within 800m of a railway station)</td>
<td>0-1 bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 bedroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3+ bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.75 spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.5 spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 space per 7 dwellings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Car share schemes are encouraged to be included in new apartment buildings.

Commercial car parking rates

With regard to commercial car parking rates, the Parramatta DCP 2011 requires 1 space per 50m² of commercial gross floor area plus 1 loading bay per 400m² of commercial gross floor area.

The Hornsby DCP 2013 has a range of parking space requirements for different types of commercial premises within and more than 800m of a railway station.

Commuter car parking

Demand for commuter car parking is an existing issue. The Epping Town Centre precinct is providing housing close to transport to prevent these residents from having to drive to the station to travel. Providing a commuter car park is not necessary to support growth in the town centre.

There are other options available to manage local parking issues which are the responsibility of council, such as time restricted parking and parking meters in streets within at least a 5-10 minute walking distance of a station.

Existing Rawson Street car park

Concerns were raised in some submissions regarding the future plans of the Rawson Street car park. This car park is owned by Parramatta City Council and the future use of this site will be a matter for the council to determine. The car park site is proposed to be zone B2 Local Centre with a maximum height of 48m and FSR of 4.5:1.

Recommendation

A car parking rate of an average of 1 space per dwelling, and 1 visitor space per 10 dwellings is recommended to apply to all properties in the B2 zone in both council areas within the precinct, and should be included in each councils DCP. This rate should be a maximum rate.
Parking rates for other residential development in the precinct are recommended to be the same as the controls in each council’s existing DCP.

2.10 Other infrastructure/utilities

Issues raised
Concerns raised about infrastructure provision covered a range of infrastructure services including transport, and utility services such as electricity, water and gas.

Even where submissions were generally in support of the planned growth in the precinct, concerns were still raised that this growth be managed appropriately and infrastructure and services are upgraded where necessary.

Comment
Utility providers continually review demand for these services, and where upgrades need to occur. This issue is addressed at development application stage, as it is a requirement that developers obtain approval from utility services providers that these services are available.

2.11 Zones

Issues raised
Some submissions proposed changes to the zones of some sites, which included:

- the owners of the site at 43-55 Oxford and 2-4 Chester Street requested the zoning of this site change from R4 High Density Residential to B2 Local Centre, but with seniors housing being an additional permitted use
- the owner of the properties at 3-5 Pembroke Street requested the zoning of this site change from B2 Local Centre to R4 High Density Residential
- the owner of 725 Blaxland Road (the former Epping Bowling Club) requested the zoning of this site change from RE1 Open Space to a zone permitting residential development
- concerns were raised about the application of the R4 High Density Residential and R3 Medium Density Residential zones in the Hornsby local government area compared to the use of the zones in the Hornsby LEP 2013, especially how this relates to maximum building height.

Comment

43-55 Oxford Street and 2-4 Chester Street
The B2 zone is being applied to the town centre commercial core to maintain a commercial and retail character at ground floor level. The owners of 43-55 Oxford Street and 2-4 Chester Street, which is used for aged care services, requested that the zoning of this site be changed from R4 High Density Residential to B2 Local Business, but with seniors housing permitted as an additional use in the zone.
The department does not support additional residential uses in the B2 zone as this is not consistent with the Hornsby LEP 2013. The R4 zone, which permits seniors housing, is considered more appropriate for this site, as the land opposite this these properties is also zoned R4. The R4 zone also provides for a built form and land uses that transition from the B2 zone in Oxford Street to the low density residential zones to the north and east.

3-5 Pembroke Street
The owner of this site requested that the zoning for these properties changed from B2 Local Business to R4 High Density Residential.

Given the heritage listing of the churches at 3-5 Pembroke St, it is unlikely that there will be any redevelopment fronting Pembroke Street, and therefore built form envisaged for the B2 zone in the precinct is unlikely to be achieved on these sites. An R4 zoning on these lots is supported as high density residential may occur at the rear of the heritage items, subject to meeting requirements in the council’s DCP.
725 Blaxland Road

The owner of this site requested that the zone for this property be changed from RE1 Public Recreation to a zone to enable residential flat buildings, albeit with some community open space.

![Map of Blaxland Road](image)

Figure 18  No. 725 Blaxland Road (in dark red boundary)

The owner advised the department that the site is leased to Transport for NSW for the next four years for the North West Rail Link project and therefore no redevelopment of the site could occur before then. The council has zoned the site for open space, and has considered purchasing the property to expand the council’s open space provision, reflected in the identification of the site on the Land Acquisition Map for the Hornsby LEP 2013.

Due to the history and complexities of this site, the department considers it is more appropriate to retain the open space zoning for this site as part of the Epping Town Centre precinct. The proponent could enter into negotiations with the council at a future date for a planning proposal for the site once the is no longer required for the North West Rail Link project, which could involve a planning agreement to developing the site whilst still providing a community benefit.

240-242 Beecroft Road

This site is owned by Transport for NSW (TfNSW) and the northern most lot will be used for the construction of a services facility for the North West Rail Link. To ensure that potential future transport orientated development opportunities are being fully considered for this site, TfNSW have undertaken some initial master planning work. The height and floor space ratio controls as exhibited for this site are supported, however TNSW are requesting that that the zoning for the site be changed from B2 Local Centre to R4 High Density Residential. TfNSW obtained a retail analysis which identified only limited opportunities for ground floor retail on this site due to the distance of this site from the railway station, limited pedestrian traffic in this part of the precinct, and constrained vehicular access from Carlingford Road.
The department has reviewed the issues raised by TfNSW and supports the change in zone from B2 to R4. It is also considered that the R4 zone would have less impact on residential properties to the west of the site especially as the lack of retail on the ground floor means that no podium level will be required. This also means that setbacks to buildings from the street can be greater, and provide greater opportunities for landscaping to help reduce the visual impact of the development.

**Application of R3 and R4 zones in the Hornsby local government area**

The use of the R3 Medium Density Residential and R4 High Density Residential zones in the Hornsby local government area have been reviewed to ensure that the application of the zones is consistent with the Hornsby LEP 2013 and Hornsby DCP 2013. The department has recommended that the R4 zones will apply to all residential areas with maximum heights above 12 metres, although will still include some areas where the maximum height is 12 metres, but where apartments are encouraged. Where the maximum height is 12 metres, and where a mix of low to mid rise apartments and townhouse style development is encouraged, the R3 zone will be applied.

**Recommendation**

The following changes are recommended:

- the zoning of 3-5 Pembroke Street be changed from B2 Local Business to R4 High Density Residential
- the zoning of 240-242 Beecroft Road to be changed from B2 Local Business to R4 High Density Residential
- The R4 High Density Residential zone is to apply to all residential areas in the precinct where maximum heights exceed 12m (3 storeys), and some areas where the maximum height is 12 metres, where apartments are encouraged
- The R3 Medium Density Residential zone will apply to all residential areas in the precinct where the maximum height is 12m (3 storeys), but where a mix of low to mid rise apartments and townhouse style development is encouraged.
2.12 Accessibility

Issues raised
Issues raised relating to accessibility included:

- access to the station for less mobile needs to be improved, as station lifts are often out of order
- safety for children
- provision of public toilets.

Comment
These issues are not able to be resolved through the rezoning process, however the councils are currently planning to improve the public domain with regard to footpaths, lighting, pedestrian crossings and public toilets. Transport for NSW is responsible for access to the railway station.

Recommendation
No changes are recommended to the rezoning plans in this regard.

2.13 Change to the character of Epping

Issues Raised
Concerns were raised in submissions that the Epping Town Centre precinct will change the character of Epping, which will become more busy and crowded, and will lose its sense of community.

Comment
Sydney is continuing to grow, and Epping is becoming an important centre on the regional rail network. Increasing dwelling densities around railway stations provides more people with viable options to travel without relying on private cars. The redevelopment of the precinct will also provide opportunities for improvements to public spaces and street, through Precinct Support Scheme and local developer contributions, so that Epping becomes a more enjoyable place to spend time in. A more vibrant centre with more shops and services, and more vibrant café and dining environment can also help create a safer centre by increasing pedestrian activity in the streets, especially in the evening.

An improved public domain, new civic plazas and improved local services can increase the ability of people to meet and gather, and encourage an improved sense of community and pride of place.

2.14 Reduction in commercial floor space

Issues raised
Concerns were raised in submissions that the rezoning will result in a reduction in commercial floor space in the precinct, impacting on employment opportunities.

Comment
The department does not support the inclusion of controls to specify minimum or maximum floor space for commercial uses. The B2 zone in the town centre core permits commercial uses, but also provides for other uses such as shop top housing (with residential dwellings on upper floors). The actual uses proposed in a development will be driven by market demand, which determines the best
and highest use of a site. Forcing a development to provide uses where there is insufficient demand may render developments unviable, or result in empty commercial spaces which can reduce the vibrancy of the centre.

The economic studies prepared to support the Epping Town Centre precinct have identified that the demand for large floor plate commercial uses in Epping is likely to fall as other centres like Macquarie Park and Norwest Business Park are more attractive, although it is still expected that there will be demand for smaller plate commercial premises in the precinct.

**Recommendation**

No changes are recommended to the rezoning plans in this regard.

### 2.15 Minimum allotment size

**Issues Raised**

Concerns were raised in submissions that a minimum allotment size of 2000m² in the town centre core could unfairly restrict development of some sites within the town centre core.

**Comment**

A minimum lot size was proposed to encourage smaller sites to amalgamate. However unless smaller sites amalgamate to a reasonable size, it is unlikely that any redevelopment proposal will be able to maximise the height and floor space ratios available to achieve a financially viable development, and meet the built form controls in the council’s DCP. It is therefore recommended that this control no longer be included for the precinct.

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the minimum allotment size of 200m² in the town centre core is not included as part of the rezoning of the precinct.

### 2.16 Consultation

**Issues Raised**

Some submissions raised concerns about the adequacy of the consultation for the Epping Town Centre precinct.

**Comment**

The consultation strategy has been discussed in section 1 of this report, and involved:

- 4,299 letters distributed to advise the community about the public exhibition of the precinct
- advertisements placed in local and metropolitan newspapers
- extension of the exhibition period for three weeks in response to the level of community interest, with the material available for public inspection for 64 days, from 16 March 2013 until 19 May 2013.
- establishment of a Community Liaison Group consisting of 16 participants, who met on 27 March 2013 and 26 May 2013.
- two community drop in sessions were held during the exhibition, at the Epping Club, Rawson Street, Epping. These were held on Saturday 6 April and Wednesday 10 April, 5pm to 8pm. Approximately 200 people attended the Saturday session, with about 160 attended the Wednesday session. Feedback forms were provided to assist people in making a submission.
3 Comments by Councils

3.1 Hornsby Shire Council

Hornsby Shire Council raised a number of issues in their response to the exhibition. The issues raised in the submission are discussed below:

Zones, heights and floor space ratio controls

- The R4 High Density Residential zone should be applied where the maximum height is 5 storeys to be consistent with the Hornsby LEP 2013.

- Maximum heights in the precinct should be revised to be consistent with the Hornsby LEP 2013 i.e. 17.5m rather than 18m, and 26.5m rather than 28m.

- FSR should not apply to residential zoned land to be consistent with the Hornsby LEP 2013.

The department supports these changes and the recommended maps have been amended accordingly.

Access

- A footbridge crossing over Epping Road should be provided to enable easy access to planned open space parkland at 725 Blaxland Road (on the northern side of Forest Park).

- The access lane in the structure plan should be relocated on properties at 4-18 Epping Road, rather than the open space land adjoining at 725 Blaxland Road.

The footbridge is noted as an indicative structure, however the department will not include this structure on the rezoning maps. Further investigations can be undertaken by council regarding the location, funding, and design of this structure.

The access lane will also not be included on the rezoning maps. It is acknowledged that rear lane access to the properties on the southern side of Epping Road, between Blaxland Road and Forest Grove, is most likely to be required as access from Epping Road, an arterial road, will be constrained. The exact location of such a laneway should be included in the relevant DCP.

Redevelopment of 4-18 Epping Road may require alternative access if access is not possible from Epping Road. Alternate access could be in the form of a rear access lane as shown in the Structure Plan. This detail would need to be considered further as part of any DA for redevelopment of those sites.

Land Acquisition and Open Space

- A Land Reservation Acquisition Map be prepared to acknowledge any change to the existing land reservation and acquisition strategy contained in the draft Hornsby LEP 2013.

- Investigate West Epping Park as part of consideration of public domain opportunities.
The department does not support the preparation of a land reservation acquisition map for the Hornsby LEP 2013, as this is not considered to be necessary.

West Epping Park has potential to provide important open space for the local area. The site is outside the precinct boundary and therefore will not be part of the rezoning of the Epping Town Centre. However council may investigate the redevelopment of this park as part of their open space planning.

**Development Control Plan**

- Hornsby Shire Council proposes to amend their DCP following the rezoning of the precinct.

The department has provided copies of the draft maps to the councils prior to the rezoning to assist the councils with preparing the DCPs for the precinct.

**Parking**

- There should be a single set of parking controls for the Epping Town Centre precinct. This will need to be jointly negotiated with Parramatta City Council and considered as part of Hornsby Shire Council’s preparation of a DCP.

The parking rates recommended by the department for the town centre core are considered to provide a suitable balance of meeting demand for car parking spaces, encouraging travel other than by privately owned vehicles, and providing greater choice and affordability. It will be up to Council to adopt these parking rates (or different rates, if they wish) into their DCP.

**Road upgrades**

- Progression of the SEPP should not occur until the design details of the proposed road upgrades by RMS have been finalised and provided to Council for its consideration.

Transport for NSW has advised the department that planning for the three intersection works is well advanced and work is expected to be completed in 2015. Work is continuing regarding options for the bridge. Therefore a delay in the commencement of the SEPP is not supported.

**Heritage**

- Concerns were raised about the recommendations in the heritage report and its impact on the Cliff Road residential intensification precinct, and the impact on achieving the objectives of the Urban Activation Precinct program.

The department recommends that the proposed heritage items in Cliff Road not proceed. This issue is discussed in detail in section 3.5 of this report.

**Commercial floor space**

- A floor space requirement (between 0.5:1 to 2:1) be required for commercial development to ensure active street frontages.

The department does not support the inclusion of minimum or maximum floor areas for commercial uses. The quantity of commercial and retail uses provided in a development will be largely dependant on the market demand for these uses, as requiring developments to provide more commercial than there is demand for reduces the feasibility of redevelopment. It is noted that residential development other than shop top housing in the B2 Local Business zone is prohibited.

**Master plan controls**

- Master plan controls should be included similar to the Manly LEP 2013 as there are concerns the DCP does not have enough statutory weight to ensure these outcomes.
The department recommends that the DCP should identify the location active street frontages, which is standard practice. DCPs still have statutory force under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and provide guidance on how the objectives of zones should be achieved.

### 3.2 Parramatta City Council

Parramatta City Council raised a number of issues in their response to the exhibition. The issues raised in the submission are discussed below:

**Dwelling yields**
- Council is concerned that dwelling yields could be higher than estimated, especially if all sites are able to be developed in the 20 year timeframe.

The dwelling yield estimates prepared by the department are considered to be reasonable, and generally consistent with the methodology used in the 2011 study, and the 2011 study review by Architectus. The department acknowledges that the actual dwelling yield after a 20 year timeframe will be dependant on numerous factors. This includes local and global economic conditions including the availability of credit, changing demand for dwelling types and size, demand for different land uses, difficulty in amalgamating smaller sites etc. The pace of this growth may also vary over time. Therefore ongoing planning to supporting infrastructure and support services to respond to the growth will need to be continually reviewed by relevant agencies, which is the currently the case for managing growth across Sydney.

If more dwellings are produced, additional Section 94A levies would also be collected by the council to assist in meeting the additional demand for services created.

**Precinct Support Scheme funding**
- Council supports the Precinct Support Scheme funding and seeks the maximum finding available to be spent within the Parramatta local government area

The department will continue to liaise with both Parramatta City Council and Hornsby Shire Council regarding the allocation of Precinct Support Scheme funding after the SEPP is made.

**Development Control Plan**
- Council is seeking to ensure that a mechanism will be in place for DCP controls to be adopted and in effect in conjunction with the rezoning.

The department has provided copies of the draft maps to both councils prior to the rezoning to assist the councils with preparing the DCPs for the precinct.

**Heritage**
- Council supports the proposed heritage items and heritage conservation areas. Council also requested that an additional site at 9 Bridge Street (the Epping Presbyterian Church) be considered as a local heritage item.

The department has adopted the heritage conservation areas proposed by council, which will result in 49% of the Parramatta local government area of the precinct being within heritage conservation areas. The department is not supporting the heritage listing of 2-14 Bridge Street due to the extent of changes that have occurred since 1960 (refer to section 3.5 of this report). The department is also not supporting the listing of the property at 9 Bridge Street. This property was not identified in the studies undertaken for the Parramatta LEP 2011. It is also located within one of the blocks identified
for the highest density redevelopment, and there are much better examples of churches in the precinct that will have their surrounding area maintained.

Built Form, urban design and overshadowing

- Council is seeking to have a planning mechanism in place to ensure high quality design outcomes in the precinct. This could be achieved with the requirement for a design competition in the Parramatta LEP 2011.

The department considers that although design competitions are one way of encouraging improved design outcomes, the additional cost to the development process can be significant. There are provisions for design competitions for development of certain values and/or locations within the Sydney CBD and the Parramatta CBD, however the Epping Town Centre precinct is not considered to be a comparable centre (Epping is not identified as a major centre draft Sydney Metropolitan Strategy for Sydney). It is considered that the DCP controls recommended for the precinct, as prepared as part of the structure plan, and the controls in SEPP 65 will provide for sufficient design controls to result in positive design outcomes for the precinct.

Rawson Street car park

- Any future redevelopment of the car park is subject to endorsement of the council.

The future of the car park will be the responsibility of Parramatta City Council, and the zoning and height controls provide for flexibility for council to redevelopment this site if proposed. The department is working with the council to provide assistance with the planning for this site.

Economic Feasibility

- Council is of the opinion that economic feasibility not be relied upon in isolation to inflate height and densities at the expense of appropriate design outcomes

The economic feasibility reviews prepared for the department shows that owners are experiencing very good returns on their leases, and/or have long term leases which would require even higher FSRs than proposed to redevelopment in the short term. It is not simply a case of owners seeking an above-market price for their properties which is responsible for the selling prices, but the need to compensate for the loss of rental income and/or termination of leases which is driving up costs.

The department has recommended the FSRs proposed represent a balance between achieving economic feasibility development, albeit in the medium to long term for some sites, and maximising the number of dwellings close to the railway station and commercial core

Traffic

- Council is seeking the NSW government to commit to funding the full suite of regional and local road upgrades, including the railway bridge, and provide a timetable for these works

The department has responded in writing to this request from council previously. Transport for NSW had advised that funding for the three intersection works is available and concept design work is complete. It is expected that these works will be completed by the end of 2014. Details are provided in the Infrastructure Schedule at Appendix A of this report.

Rawson Street/Carlingford Road intersection

- Council requests that the intersection of Rawson Street/Carlingford Road be provided with a right turn signal phase, as well as surrounding local road upgrades to ensure intersection capacity is adequate. The council requests that RMS include these works into their traffic model. Council also
asks that the NSW government fund the costs of land acquisition and construction of a new laneway behind the Coles building in the event that traffic work is deemed appropriate.

RMS has advised the department that it is looking at this intersection. As Carlingford Road is a state road, RMS will need to approve changes to signals or changes to intersections on this road.

**Car Parking Rates**

- Flexibility is sought for the parking rates in the town centre core to enable the market to determine the parking provision provided.

The department recommends a residential parking rate of an average of one car space per apartment and 1 visitor space per 10 dwellings for the town centre core, and should be included in each council’s DCP. This rate is to be a maximum rate.

Parking rates for other residential development in the precinct are recommended to be the same as the councils DCP at the time that the SEPP is made, as the department recognises that these properties are further away from the station and may have some increased demand for off street parking.

**Infrastructure funding**

- Council requests that the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure enacts a mechanism allowing a S94A development contribution rate greater than 1% of the development cost to be applied to all development within the Town Centre Core.

An increase in the 1% levy is not proposed as part of the SEPP for the Epping Town Centre precinct. The department has been in consultation with council about this issue, and will continue to consult with council to assist in reaching a suitable outcome for contribution rates for the precinct.
4 Comments from Government Agencies

4.1 NSW Land and Housing Corporation

- Support opportunities for LAHC to renew and realign its portfolio of sites, as well as contribute to the supply of public and private housing and improved urban form through the UAP process.
- Consider sites owned by LAHC to be incorporated into planned growth of the precinct

Comment
Support is noted. The properties owned by LAHC are outside the areas of planned growth as exhibited.

4.2 NSW Health

- Support the implementation of healthy design guidelines to help create active, healthy, sustainable communities, such as a well connected town centre

Comment
Comments by NSW are noted. Although Epping Town centre precinct is planning for improved pedestrian and cycle connections, and a more accessible centre, many of the suggestions raised by NSW Health apply more to the detailed controls for DCP and place making by councils. There is limited role within the rezoning process to specify these.
5 Consultation strategy

The Epping Town Centre Urban Activation Precinct included a consultation strategy. The key elements included:

- objectives to guide engagement with the community and stakeholders throughout the public exhibition process
- a targeted, proactive approach to engaging the community, in addition to the department’s consultation with councils and government agencies, including Transport for NSW, on a range of project matters
- gain focused input on public domain elements and supporting community and social infrastructure
- two key communication methods— a Community Reference Group (CRG) and community drop in sessions
- identification of high level key messages to guide communications on the proposal.

A copy of the strategy is at Appendix B.

The consultation undertaken for the Epping Town Centre precinct included:

- 4,299 letters distributed to advise the community about the public exhibition of the precinct
- advertisements were placed in local and metropolitan newspapers
- the exhibition period was extended for three weeks in response to the level of community interest, with the material available for public inspection for 64 days, from 16 March 2013 until 19 May 2013.
- a Community Liaison Group was established consisting of 16 participants, who met on 27 March 2013 and 26 May 2013.
- two community drop in sessions were held during the exhibition, at the Epping Club, Rawson Street, Epping. These were held on Saturday 6 April and Wednesday 10 April, 5pm to 8pm. Approximately 200 people attended the Saturday session, with about 160 attended the Wednesday session. Feedback forms were provided to assist people in making a submission.
- the Epping Civic Trust organised a meeting on the evening of 18 April 2013 at the Church of Christ Hall, Bridge Street, Epping. Approximately 500 people attended the meeting. Staff from the Department of Planning and Infrastructure delivered a presentation on the Epping Town Centre Precinct Structure Plan and took questions from the audience. The local member, the Hon Greg Smith MP also attended and addressed the meeting.
# 6 Recommended changes

The recommended changes to the exhibited maps and controls are summarised below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended change</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Zoning</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Change the zone of 3-5 Pembroke Street, on the northern side of Pembroke Avenue, from B2 Local Centre to R4 High Density Residential.</td>
<td>This is considered a more appropriate zone given the heritage items on this site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Change the zone of 240-242 Blaxland Road from B2 Local Centre to R4 High Density Residential.</td>
<td>This is considered a more appropriate zone given the location of this site from the town centre core.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 The R4 zone to apply to residential land with maximum heights of 17.5m (5 storeys) in the Hornsby local government area.</td>
<td>This is so the zones are consistent with the Hornsby LEP 2013.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Building heights and floor space ratios</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Reduce 18m maximum heights in the Hornsby local government area to 17.5m, and 28m to 26.5m.</td>
<td>This is so the height controls are consistent with the Hornsby LEP 2013.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Delete FSR controls in the residential precincts in the Hornsby local government area.</td>
<td>This is so the application of FSR is consistent with the Hornsby LEP 2013.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Increase the height of several properties in the Cliff Road and Forest Grove residential intensification areas from 12m to 17.5m (or 3 storeys to 5 storeys).</td>
<td>This is to provide for more 5 storey apartment buildings close to the station to provide additional dwelling growth and housing choice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Reinstate height and FSR controls under the Parramatta LEP 2011 for 2-18 Bridge Street.</td>
<td>Maximum 21m height and maximum FSR of 3.5:1 retained in Parramatta LEP 2011, as heritage listing of 2-14 Bridge Street is not recommended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 The B2 zoned land at 50 Oxford Street (Arden Anglican School) to have a maximum height of 48m and maximum FSR of 4.5:1.</td>
<td>This is to maintain consistency of height and FSR controls in the B2 zone on the eastern side of Oxford Street.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recommended change</strong></td>
<td><strong>Comment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heritage</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Heritage listing not recommended for 9, 11, 15, 17, and 19 Cliff Road.</td>
<td>The heritage significant of these individual items is not high, and the listing would conflict with the objectives of the residential intensification area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Remove 34 Carlingford Road as a heritage item.</td>
<td>The property is likely to be isolated and lose its context as it is part of a block with controls for 5 storey apartment buildings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Heritage listing not recommended for 2-14 Bridge Street.</td>
<td>The heritage significance of these properties has been reduced due to extensive changes since the 1960s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Heritage listing not recommended for 4 Epping Road</td>
<td>Although a rare building in the area, the overall heritage significance is not considered high, and conflicts with development proposed for surrounding properties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Heritage listing not recommended for 50 Dorset Street and 86 Essex Street</td>
<td>These properties are outside the precinct boundary and were not notified of the proposed listing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Archaeological item in Oxford Street to be removed from the heritage map and heritage schedule.</td>
<td>Location of relics on the site have not been confirmed. Controls can be included in the DCP. State legislation provides procedures for relics that may be unearthed during exaction of properties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Car parking</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Parking rates for apartments in the R3 and R4 zone to be the same as each of the councils’ Development Control Plan.</td>
<td>The demand for car parking may be higher for these developments as they are further away from the railway station.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Parking rates in town centre core.</td>
<td>Recommend Council’s DCP adopt average 1 space per unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minimum allotment size</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum allotment size of 2000m² in the town centre core not recommended</td>
<td>A minimum allotment size is not considered necessary to achieve the desired outcomes for the precinct.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix A   Infrastructure schedule
Appendix B  Consultation strategy
Appendix C  Shadow diagrams study