EPPING TOWN CENTRE URBAN ACTIVATION PRECINCT
Planning Report
Disclaimer:
While every reasonable effort has been made to ensure that this document is correct at the time of publication, the State of New South Wales, its agents and employees, disclaim any and all liability to any person in respect of anything or the consequences of anything done or omitted to be done in reliance upon the whole or any part of this document.
Executive summary

This planning report has been prepared in support of the rezoning of parts of the Epping Town Centre Urban Activation Precinct. It is proposed to rezone approximately 165 hectares of land within the precinct out of a total of 247ha.

The NSW Government has endorsed the precinct as an Urban Activation Precinct. The Urban Activation Precinct program was announced as part of the 2012-13 Budget and applies to important areas that the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure considers have a wider social, economic or environmental significance for the community or have redevelopment significance of a scale that is important to implementing the state’s planning objectives.

Identifying redevelopment opportunities within the precinct is important in responding to the housing pressures in Sydney by locating new homes in close proximity to public transport with excellent access to employment opportunities. This approach is consistent with the strategic directions of the Metropolitan Plan for Sydney 2036.

The proposal

The rezoning process seeks the establishment of a site specific planning regime for the precinct by way of amendment to the Parramatta Local Environmental Plan 2011 (LEP 2011) and the Hornsby Local Environmental Plan 1994 (LEP 1994). In addition the structure plan contains a suite of site specific development controls that are recommended to be adopted by the respective councils.

The Urban Activation Precinct process will establish land use zones, building height, and floor space ratios to facilitate the ultimate redevelopment of parts of the precinct for a mix of residential, commercial, retail and community uses. The process will also revise and strengthen the heritage conservation of large areas of traditional low scale residential development located in the precinct.

Detailed analysis of site opportunities and constraints has been undertaken to establish a proposed planning structure for the site. In summary we propose:

- Land use zones – the majority of the precinct is proposed to remain as low density residential R2 with some new area of R3 Medium Density Residential (within the Hornsby LGA). Within the town centre core areas there are several small areas to be to be zoned for residential land use (R4 High Density Residential) with the vast majority of the core to be rezoned for mixed uses (B2 Local Centre).

- Heights – areas of new medium density residential will range from three to six storeys in height. Within the town centre core maximum building heights will range from five storeys up to a maximum of 22 storeys (72 metres). The taller buildings are located closer to the railway corridor and Beecroft Road to reduce potential visual and overshadowing impacts.
The proposed zones and development controls provide significant opportunities for accommodating additional growth within the precinct. These growth opportunities reflect the precinct’s public transport accessibility (existing and future) and the strategic role of Epping Town Centre.

A small number of residential intensification areas have been identified outside the town centre core. These areas effectively limit the expansion of medium density residential flat buildings into the existing low density parts of the precinct. Furthermore, defining a selection of intensification areas means the important heritage and conservation values that the Epping precinct is known for can be further protected.

There will be a reduction in the amount of commercial floor space as a result of the increases in residential and retail space. This is considered to be an appropriate response given Epping Town Centre is located in close proximity to the Macquarie Park Corridor, one of the most significant commercial centres in metropolitan Sydney.

Assessment

The following key issues have been assessed in order to establish the rezoning proposal for the precinct:

- **Heritage** – heritage and conservation values are enhanced and further protected by accommodating growth in the town centre core and adding a small number of residential intensification areas. A review of the heritage items and conservation areas has confirmed the level of significance and appropriateness of the conservation area proposed.

- **Traffic and transport** – growth identified by the structure plan for the precinct is within the range contemplated by the analysis undertaken for the 2011 study. The recommendations for short term road upgrades are being pursued by the state government. Delivery of these intersection works is anticipated to occur over the next two to three years subject to Roads and Maritime Services completing detailed planning and design work.

- **Overshadowing and visual impact** – built form controls cap development heights well below the level that would have any significant overshadowing impacts. Taller buildings will have minimal visual impact from the existing low density residential areas due to topography and the significant amount of mature tree cover in the low density residential areas.

- **Economic impacts** – the structure plan will guide development to meet demand for additional and more diverse dwelling types. Development controls have taken into account the financial viability of development. Additional population that comes from residential growth will increase demand for, and the financial viability of, retail activity in the town centre core which will benefit both existing and future residents.

Next steps

Following exhibition of the rezoning proposal and structure plan the matters raised in submissions will be assessed and where required, the rezoning proposal will be amended.
Contents

Executive summary .................................................................................................................................. i
The proposal ..................................................................................................................................... i
Assessment .......................................................................................................................................ii
Next steps .........................................................................................................................................ii

Part A – Introduction .......................................................................................................................... 1

1 Background ...................................................................................................................................... 3
1.1 Overview .................................................................................................................................... 3
1.2 Background .............................................................................................................................. 3
1.3 Project objectives ....................................................................................................................... 4
1.4 Report structure ........................................................................................................................ 4

2 Precinct description ............................................................................................................................. 5
2.1 Location ...................................................................................................................................... 5
2.2 Existing land uses ....................................................................................................................... 6
2.3 Surrounding road network .......................................................................................................... 7
2.4 Surrounding area ........................................................................................................................ 7

3 Urban Activation Precincts .................................................................................................................. 8
3.1 Consistency with state, regional and local strategies .............................................................. 8
3.2 Use of existing and planned infrastructure ............................................................................. 11
3.3 Importance for local government area .................................................................................. 11
3.4 Environmentally, socially and economically sustainable ..................................................... 12
3.5 Consistency with market demand ........................................................................................ 12
3.6 Summary .................................................................................................................................. 13

4 The structure planning process ......................................................................................................... 14
4.1 Initiation of the structure planning process ........................................................................ 14
4.2 Epping Town Centre Study 2011 ............................................................................................ 14
4.3 Epping Town Centre Study 2011 review ............................................................................. 15

Part B – The rezoning proposal ........................................................................................................ 17

5 The vision ......................................................................................................................................... 19
5.1 Vision for Epping Town Centre ............................................................................................. 19

6 The structure plan ............................................................................................................................. 20
6.1 Role of the structure plan ........................................................................................................ 20
6.2 Amendment to existing local environmental plans ............................................................. 20
6.3 Land uses and built form .......................................................................................................... 20
6.4 Existing and proposed zones .................................................................................................... 21
6.5 Floor space ratio ....................................................................................................................... 26
6.6 Building height ......................................................................................................................... 26
6.7 Heritage ...................................................................................................................................... 29

Epping Urban Activation Precinct Planning Report ▪ Page iii
List of tables
Table 1 – Proposed zones and land use – Parramatta LEP 2011 ................................................................. 24
Table 2 – Proposed zones and land use – draft Hornsby LEP ........................................................................... 25
Table 3 – Potential heritage items ........................................................................................................ 31
Table 4 – Residential growth comparison for the town centre core ............................................................... 35
Table 5 – Surrounding road network ........................................................................................................ 43
Table 6 – Comparison of existing and proposed residential parking rates .................................................... 47
Table 7 – Comparison of commercial and retail car parking rates ................................................................. 48
Table 8 – Existing and proposed retail parking rates .................................................................................... 48
Table 9 – Site infrastructure requirements ................................................................................................ 50
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBD</td>
<td>Central Business District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCP</td>
<td>Development Control Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>department</td>
<td>Department of Planning and Infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EEC</td>
<td>endangered ecological community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECRL</td>
<td>Epping to Chatswood Rail Link</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSR</td>
<td>floor space ratio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GFA</td>
<td>gross floor area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEP</td>
<td>Local Environmental Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGA</td>
<td>local government area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minister</td>
<td>Minister for Planning and Infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPC</td>
<td>Macquarie Park Corridor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSL</td>
<td>Office of Strategic Lands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMS</td>
<td>Roads and Maritime Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEPP</td>
<td>State Environmental Planning Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIA</td>
<td>Social Impact Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STA</td>
<td>State Transit Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TfNSW</td>
<td>Transport for NSW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TMAP</td>
<td>Traffic Management and Accessibility Plan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part A – Introduction
1 Background

1.1 Overview

The Epping Town Centre Urban Activation Precinct Planning Report is a supporting document for the Epping Town Centre Urban Activation Precinct Structure Plan. Both documents have been prepared by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure.

In 2011, the Department of Planning and Infrastructure, in conjunction with Transport for NSW commenced investigations and structure planning for the North West Rail Link station precincts. The department wrote to the general managers of Parramatta City and Hornsby Shire Councils in December 2011 advising them of the project and the establishment of an inter-agency working group to consider station precincts for the North West Rail Link project.

The Urban Activation Precinct program was announced as part of the 2012-13 Budget. The program applies to areas in New South Wales that the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure considers have a wider social, economic or environmental significance for the community, or have redevelopment significance of a scale that is important for implementing the state’s planning objectives.

On 15 October 2012, the NSW Government endorsed the Epping Town Centre as an Urban Activation Precinct. A key factor in the decision was the presence of a 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 Epping Town Centre is highly accessible to a large number of key employment centres across Sydney via extensive rail links. By 2036, an estimated 900,000 jobs will be within a 30 minute, high frequency train ride of the town centre. This figure excludes Sydney CBD jobs as that journey is closer to 35 minutes. Locating residential growth for new homes in close proximity of the station will maximise the use of existing and proposed infrastructure, reduce car dependency for journey to work trips as well as helping to address housing pressures in Sydney.

The planning process required to realise these goals includes the rezoning of parts of the Epping Town Centre, refinement of existing built form controls, development of a concept-level public domain strategy and traffic infrastructure improvements.

1.2 Background

The precinct comprises about 247 hectares of largely privately-owned land around Epping Railway Station (see Figure 1 for the precinct location). The strategic location of the precinct provides an opportunity to respond to Sydney’s housing pressures by locating new homes in close proximity to public transport and employment opportunities, consistent with NSW Government strategies, plans and policies.
The precinct is located close to the Epping to Chatswood Rail Link (ECRL), which is a high quality underground rail link connecting Epping to the Macquarie Park employment area and the metropolitan city rail network. Services on the ECRL commenced on 23 February 2009. The Rail Corporation NSW Annual Report 2009-2010 states that more than 11,500 commuters use the ECRL stations each weekday, exceeding original commuter patronage expectations.

The North West Rail Link is a new 23km rail link that will connect to the ECRL at Epping, and provide eight new stations to north western Sydney, including the Castle Hill town centre and Norwest Business Park. It will serve an estimated 300,000 rail customers once opened. Planning approval for the civic works was granted on 25 September 2012, with the application for railway station design, operations and signalling currently under assessment by the department.

In 2011 a joint study was prepared by Hornsby Shire Council and Parramatta City Council. Funded by the department’s planning reform fund, the Epping Town Centre Study was released in July 2011 and is the key background document to the structure plan.

The Epping Town Centre Urban Activation Centre Structure Plan focuses on integrating land use and transport to improve access to the station and overall connectivity within and throughout the precinct, realising the full potential of Epping Railway Station for the benefit of existing and future residents.

1.3 Project objectives

The key objectives of the project are to:

- develop a planning framework that can facilitate the delivery of a compact, high density, town centre core
- provide for a wider range of housing options in close proximity to public transport and employment opportunities
- provide for an improved public domain in the town centre for new and existing residents
- improve pedestrian and cycle connections within and through the precinct
- recognise and protect the heritage conservation values of the precinct.

1.4 Report structure

This planning report comprises the following sections:

- **Part A – Introduction**: following this introduction, Chapter 2 provides a description of the precinct and Chapter 3 provides an overview of the nomination of the site as an Urban Activation Precinct and how the study requirements have been addressed.

- **Part B – The Epping Town Centre rezoning proposal**: provides a description of the proposal including the proposed land uses and built form. Provides an assessment of the proposed change in land use including the potential economic, environmental and social impacts of the proposal.

The planning report is supported by specialist consultant reports provided in the appendices. These technical studies were undertaken to inform the proposed land uses, urban structure and built form, and its environmental assessment.
2 Precinct description

2.1 Location

The precinct is generally located within an 800 m radius from Epping Railway Station, which is equivalent to about a 10 minute walk. The railway station is located on the Main North Line and Epping to Chatswood Rail Link, and will also provide a connection to the North West Rail Link.

Figure 1 – The Epping Town Centre Urban Activation Precinct
Carlingford, Beecroft and Epping Roads pass through the precinct and are classified as regional roads. Each of these roads is under the jurisdiction of Roads and Maritime Services. There is a connection to the M2 motorway approximately one kilometer north of the railway station.

The precinct is located across two council areas – Parramatta City Council and Hornsby Shire Council (a blue line identifies the LGA boundary, refer to Figure 2). Land west of the rail line and south of Carlingford Road is in the Parramatta local government area (LGA); the rest of the precinct is in Hornsby LGA. Currently each council has its own set of planning controls that apply to its part of the precinct.

### 2.2 Existing land uses

Existing retail and office activity is generally concentrated within a 400m radius from the railway station (see Figure 2). Within this commercial area, some residential dwellings are located in mixed use buildings with retailing on the ground floor. Existing building heights range from single storey to eight and nine storeys.

![Figure 2 – Existing land uses](source: 2011 Epping Town Centre Study)
There are two existing small scale commercial business parks located within the precinct. The Epping Business Park is located between Beecroft Road and Ray Road on the western side of the rail line. The Cambridge Office Park is located between Oxford Street and Cambridge Street on the eastern side of the rail line.

There are residential flat buildings adjoining the town centre core, mostly in the form of three-storey walk-up style buildings. The exception is an eight storey building situated in Victoria Street on the western side of the rail line.

The remainder of the precinct is predominantly low density, detached dwellings. These are well established residential areas, large parts of which have consistent character and built form. This has been recognised by both councils through the establishment of heritage conservation areas and heritage items.

There are also a number of parks, churches and community facilities in the precinct. A street level council car park is located in Rawson Street. To the west of the car park is the 4.9 hectare Boronia Park, the largest area of open space in the precinct which contains a sporting field, children’s playground and mature vegetation.

2.3 Surrounding road network

A number of arterial roads converge on and pass through the precinct, influencing effective pedestrian and bicycle movements to the station, accommodating a high number of regional network trips and constraining access to a several potential development sites. These roads include:

- Epping Road which enters the precinct from the east before joining Beecroft Road, which then bisects the town centre core heading to the north
- the M2 Motorway just beyond the northern edge of the precinct
- Carlingford Road which enters the precinct from the west before intersecting with Beecroft Road.

2.4 Surrounding area

The precinct is located within the global arc economic corridor, which stretches from Sydney Airport and Port Botany in the south through the major employment centres of the Sydney Central Business District, North Sydney, Macquarie Park and Parramatta.

The Macquarie Park Specialised Centre, comprising Macquarie University, Macquarie University Research Park, Macquarie Centre, Macquarie Park and Riverside Corporate Park, is directly accessible by rail from Epping Railway Station, and is predicted to provide about 55,000 jobs by 2021. Macquarie University is also a significant educational facility with approximately 38,000 students.

Immediately surrounding the precinct to the north, west and south is predominantly low density residential development. The M2 motorway is located approximately one kilometre north of the railway station, with the Lane Cove National Park 2-3 km further to the north and north west.

Further to the north west of Epping are the established centres of Castle Hill, Norwest Business Park and the North West Growth Centre. Connections to these areas will improve significantly following the opening of the North West Rail Link.
3 Urban Activation Precincts

In October 2012, the NSW Government endorsed the precinct as an Urban Activation Precinct. The Urban Activation Precinct Guideline, prepared by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure, includes criteria for the selection of sites as Urban Activation Precincts. This section provides an overview of the assessment against the criteria.

3.1 Consistency with state, regional and local strategies

Urban Activation Precinct criteria 1 - Is the precinct consistent with state, regional and/or local strategies, particularly relating to housing, employment or urban renewal?

The Epping Town Centre Urban Activation Precinct Structure Plan is consistent with the aims and objectives of the relevant strategies. It provides for an increase in dwelling numbers and improved liveability within the town centre. The precinct is close to a significant railway station that provides excellent public transport access to key employment centres in the Sydney metropolitan region.

A summary of the relevant state and regional strategies, and how they relate to the Epping Town Centre Urban Activation Precinct has been reviewed below. A detailed assessment of the precinct against this specific criteria is included in Appendix A.

NSW 2021

NSW 2021 is the government’s 10 year strategic business plan to guide policy, state government investment and budget allocation to deliver on community priorities for public services and the provision of infrastructure.

There are a number of goals in NSW 2021 specifically aimed at improving access and transport across Sydney. One of those goals is to grow patronage on public transport by increasing the percentage of the population living within 30 minutes by public transport of a city or major centre in metropolitan Sydney. Another key goal is to make public transport an attractive modal choice to reduce traffic congestion, improve travel times and achieve significant economic and environmental benefits.

Epping is located within 30 minutes by public transport of a number of major centres and is situated within the global economic corridor (Figure 3). Accommodating growth in close proximity to the station and providing a high quality public domain and pedestrian connections will assist with growing public transport patronage and making it a more attractive modal choice. Epping Town Centre is able to meet these goals.
The Metropolitan Plan for Sydney 2036 is the 20 year plan to build liveable places across Sydney. It provides an integrated, long-term sustainable planning framework for Sydney to guide future planning and investment decisions covering housing, economic development and jobs, open space and the transport needed to connect Sydney.

The metropolitan plan plans for a city of more than 1.3 million more people by 2031, that will need 545,000 new jobs and 625,000 more homes to accommodate this growth.

The NSW Government is developing a new metropolitan strategy that will become the overarching plan to manage this growth over the next two decades. The new metropolitan strategy is being prepared concurrently, and in alignment with the government’s State Infrastructure Strategy and Long-Term Transport Master Plan, with the same 20 year framework. The new metropolitan plan is due for release in early 2013.

Until the new metropolitan strategy is finalised, the metropolitan plan will continue to apply as the basis for land use and infrastructure planning.

The metropolitan plan identifies a number of land use and transport-related strategic directions and policy settings that are of particular relevance to the Epping Town Centre including to:

- ensure more jobs are located closer to home by increasing the percentage of people living within 30 minutes by public transport of a major or strategic centre to 77 per cent by 2036
- build at least 80 per cent of all new homes within walking distance of existing and planned centres with good public transport
• enable residential and employment growth in areas where there is available or planned public transport capacity
• support key economic gateways with integrated land use, infrastructure and transport planning
• plan for centres to grow and change over time, including focusing activity in accessible centres
• improve local opportunities for walking, cycling and using public transport
• strengthen the NSW Government’s lead on best practice urban renewal for improved liveability.

State Infrastructure Strategy
Infrastructure NSW released the 20 year *State Infrastructure Strategy* in October 2012, which identifies and prioritises the delivery of critical public infrastructure for NSW in sectors such as transport, water, electricity, health and telecommunications. The strategy states that enabling residential development in those areas most assessable to employment is critical, and that new high density communities should be located in easy reach of the CBD.

The Epping Town Centre provides access to the CBD within 35 minutes by rail. By 2036 up to 900,000 non-CBD jobs will be within a 30 minute train trip from Epping Town Centre. Locating growth in close proximity to the station is clearly consistent with the strategy.

NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan
The *NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan* acknowledges that transport planning is closely aligned to land use planning. In order to improve public transport and cut congestion to improve the liveability of greater Sydney, Transport for NSW is supporting transit-oriented urban renewal across the greater metropolitan area. This includes provision of higher density developments in centres to ensure the efficient use of public transport services.

To realise the vision for greater Sydney as a liveable, global city, the plan focuses on connecting strategic centres to drive economic growth and productivity, reducing journey times, and ensuring more people live closer to services and to where they work.

It is considered that the Epping Town Centre can contribute to achieving these goals by locating growth in close proximity to well-connected rail infrastructure.

Subregional strategies
Epping is located in two subregional strategies. Part of the precinct is within Hornsby Shire Council, which is a component of the *North Subregional Strategy*, and part is within Parramatta City Council, which is a component of the *West Central Subregional Strategy*. However, Epping is only discussed in the *North Subregional Strategy* to avoid duplication.

The subregional strategy identifies Epping as a town centre, although it also states that the convergence of rail lines at Epping places it in a strategic position as a critical hub with access to major employment locations. The subregional strategy notes that Epping’s excellent access and close proximity to the specialised centre of Macquarie Park indicates that Epping may accommodate increased residential and commercial development in the future, which will in turn create a more vibrant, liveable centre. Since the subregional strategy was released, the North West Rail Link proposal has been announced, further increasing the strategic importance of the Epping Town Centre.
3.2 Use of existing and planned infrastructure

_Urban Activation Precinct criteria 2 - Does the precinct support or maximise the use of existing and planned infrastructure, especially transport?_

Epping Railway Station is located in the heart of the precinct on the Main North Line and Epping to Chatswood Rail Link. Epping is a key railway station on these lines and provides connections to various employment areas in the Sydney metropolitan area.

Epping Railway Station will also connect to the North West Rail Link, providing even greater connections across Sydney, including Castle Hill, Norwest Business Park and North West Growth Centre.

Accommodating additional housing growth in the Epping Town Centre will allow greater numbers of people to be in walking distance of the railway station to maximise the use of public transport, particularly for journey to work trips. This is consistent with the objectives of the NSW planning strategies discussed above.

Improved pedestrian and cycle connections through the centre can improve access to the railway station from surrounding parts of the centre, and improve the amenity of the centre as a whole.

Epping Town Centre is the meeting point of four major arterial roads. Traffic volumes create significant queuing on each of these arterial roads during peak periods. Significantly, almost 90 per cent of the traffic passing through Epping is through traffic.

The NSW government has committed to providing funding to support the additional growth in the precinct and address short term regional traffic growth. Funding has been allocated from the 2012-13 Budget for road upgrades which could include:

- Epping Road/Essex Street intersection
- Epping Road/Blaxland Road intersection
- Carriageway widening – Epping Road
- Carlingford Road/Beecroft Road intersection
- Pedestrian/cycle footbridges over the rail line.

3.3 Importance for local government area

_Urban Activation Precinct criteria 3 - Is the precinct important to more than one local government area and/or has support from the local council?_

The precinct is located within both the Parramatta and Hornsby local government areas. This provides some additional complexity for establishing a planning framework for the precinct, as the two councils currently have different planning instruments and development controls for their respective parts of the precinct. The Epping Town Centre Urban Activation Precinct represents a strategic opportunity for a single planning exercise for the entire precinct.

There is also the potential to further leverage the advantages that come from the precinct being located at the convergence of a number of existing and proposed railway lines. The precinct is considered to have potential to accommodate additional growth for housing that is accessible to employment opportunities located in the Sydney metropolitan area.
The potential housing growth is of significant importance to the wider Sydney region as it will provide homes close to jobs and transport infrastructure.

3.4 Environmentally, socially and economically sustainable

_Urban Activation Precinct criteria 4 - Is the precinct environmentally, socially and economically sustainable and viable?_

Environmental sustainability will be addressed though increased public transport usage by reducing vehicle trips to employment centres, as well as trips to services within the precinct.

Social sustainability will be delivered through the provision of increased housing choice in a location highly accessible to jobs, services and public transport. Furthermore, opportunities are being investigated to provide for improved public domain and additional or improved community facilities.

Economic sustainability will be delivered through providing as many as 3,000 new homes close to jobs and services, which will help meet Sydney’s growing housing demand. Provision for retail and small scale office space in the town centre core will provide goods and services to meet the demand of the existing and new population. Public domain improvements will ensure that the centre becomes an attractive place to live and visit, ensuring its long term economic health.

3.5 Consistency with market demand

_Urban Activation Precinct criteria 5 - Is the development of the precinct financially viable and consistent with market demand?_

An economic assessment was prepared as part of the 2011 study, which is discussed in detail in Section 12. The report found there is demand for additional dwellings in this precinct. This should include high density dwellings adjoining the railway station. One of the issues identified in the assessment is that existing controls in the centre do not tend to provide for enough floor area on sites in order for redevelopment to be financially viable.

Further economic analysis identified a minimum amount of floor space (between 4.5:1 and 6:1) that will need to be provided for key sites in the town centre core to provide for financially feasible development. This was used to refine the controls that have been incorporated into the structure plan.

The report found that Epping does not play a large employment role within the region but is highly accessible to employment centres including Macquarie Park, Chatswood and the Sydney CBD. Demand for large floor plate commercial offices in Epping is not as great as in these other centres, with a prediction of a fall of between 30,000-47,000m$^2$ of commercial floor space by 2036 from an existing 55,000m$^2$ in 2010. The remaining commercial floor space will be within walking distance of the railway station and transport interchange, and more likely to serve the needs of the local population.

The economic analysis also found there is room for further expansion of retailing activity in the precinct due to population growth and increased spending per person. Demand for a supermarket and specialty stores can be accommodated on the eastern side of the rail line, which is currently not as well serviced by retail premises as the western side.
3.6 Summary

The precinct is considered to meet each of the five Urban Activation Precinct criteria. In particular the proximity to excellent public transport, market demand and ability to establish development controls that allow for feasible development, reinforce the suitability of the precinct to accommodate additional growth.
4 The structure planning process

4.1 Initiation of the structure planning process

Two key factors led to a structure planning process for Epping Town Centre. Firstly, the announcement by the NSW Government to proceed with the planning and delivery of the North West Rail Link and secondly, the gazettal in late 2011 of the Parramatta Local Environmental Plan 2011 that included some planning controls that were different to those recommended by the Epping Town Centre Study 2011.

The structure planning process was informed by a peer review of the Epping Town Centre Study 2011. This included a review of the recommendations, consideration of issues raised following public exhibition, and consultation with Parramatta City Council, Hornsby Shire Council and state agencies.

The review informed the development of the structure plan for Epping’s future role and opportunities.

4.2 Epping Town Centre Study 2011

The Epping Town Centre Study 2011 was jointly initiated by the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure, Hornsby Shire Council and Parramatta City Council. Following a detailed preparation process, the report was released in July 2011. The study explored the potential for the Epping Town Centre precinct to accommodate increased residential and employment growth by identifying future development options, planning controls and investment needed to accommodate such growth. This was to be consistent with the town centre role for Epping, as identified in the subregional strategies, and to maximise the benefits of state government infrastructure investment, in particular the rail lines converging at Epping.

The 2011 study also considered traffic impacts, and the economic feasibility and potential benefits from growth. It identified that the centre could support 3,200-4,300 new dwellings over the next 20 years. The final growth figure was a range as it was dependent on the take up rate for development. A range of 50-80% of the theoretical growth potential was adopted, acknowledging that not every site in the town centre core would be redeveloped in this timeframe.

The study found most of the dwelling growth could be accommodated in the commercial core, the area within 400m of the station. Demand for additional retail premises and services could also be generated as a result of the residential growth. A built form was proposed that would both accommodate increased dwelling numbers, but also result in vibrant and pleasant streets at ground level. Improvements to the public domain including new civic spaces and pedestrian connections were also recommended.

The Epping Town Centre Study 2011 was publicly exhibited from 28 September to 28 November 2011 by Hornsby Shire Council. Approximately 375 submissions were received including 130 form letters and four petitions. Submissions objecting to the study raised issues relating to heritage and conservation, built
form and traffic. The responses, however, were varied with regard to how planning for the town centre should proceed.

Landowners in the Parramatta LGA section of the study area were notified by Hornsby Shire Council, however only submissions related to the Hornsby LGA were taken into consideration by Hornsby Shire Council. Parramatta City Council resolved not to exhibit the study until commitments were made by state government agencies for essential infrastructure upgrades.

4.3 Epping Town Centre Study 2011 review

Built form peer review

The department engaged Architectus during 2012 to peer review the *Epping Town Centre Study 2011*. The aim of the peer review was to take a back-to-basics look at the potential of the town centre from an urban design perspective. The scope of the review also considered the built form approaches adopted by the 2011 study and Parramatta City Council’s existing planning controls.

The peer review generally supported the key recommendations in the 2011 study including concentrating residential growth close to the railway station. The preferred form for this growth is tall, slim towers above street level podiums. Shops and businesses would be located on the lower podium levels to maintain the precinct’s village character with buildings high enough to provide views and amenity for future residents without having unacceptable overshadowing impacts.

The peer review recommendations included some key differences from the 2011 study including:

- potential for increased floor space in buildings closest to the railway station to provide for additional commercial floor space
- potential for up to 27 storeys for key sites in the town centre core to maximise growth potential while meeting solar access requirements
- residential units above the two storey podium in Oxford Street to be set back a greater distance from the street (12 m) to maintain the existing streetscape character
- greater range of building options in residential areas preferred for growth, including smaller residential flat buildings on single lots.

More detailed discussion of the built form issues is contained in Section 7.

Public domain concept, development control guidance and 3D visualisation

As part of the peer review of the 2011 study, the department also engaged Architectus to provide a public domain concept, development control guidance and a 3D visualisation.

The public domain concept provided principles for improving the public domain including improved footpath treatment, tree planting, and improved pedestrian connections through the precinct. This would help create high quality public spaces in the town centre and support additional growth. The two councils helped prepare a number of options for works to be undertaken. A more detailed discussion of the public domain concept, including opportunities for packages of works to be undertaken to support the growth identified, is contained in Section 8.

Development control guidance was sought to help achieve the built form and public domain principles in the structure plan.
A 3D visualisation, in the form of a computer video animation, was prepared based on the built form and public domain concept detailed in the structure plan. The animation is a ‘walk through’ style that provides the perspective of someone travelling through the town centre core after it has been redeveloped to convey the likely future appearance.

The 3D visualisation for the Epping Town Centre is available from the Department of Planning and Infrastructure website [www.planning.nsw.gov.au](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au).

**Feasibility testing**

The department engaged Hill PDA to undertake an economic feasibility analysis of key sites within the precinct. The aim of the analysis was to determine the controls needed to achieve economically feasible development, to provide greater certainty that the planned growth could actually occur. The work also supplemented the economic assessment undertaken in the 2011 study.

The report identified minimum gross floor areas, and thereby floor space ratios, needed to achieve economically feasible development on these sites, based on various assumptions. These have been incorporated into the floor space controls in the structure plan.

Further discussion of economic feasibility matters is contained in Section 12.

**Heritage review**

The department engaged Perumal Murphy Alessi to review three proposed heritage conservation areas within the Hornsby LGA part of the precinct, as requested by Hornsby Shire Council. The three areas are the proposed Rosebank Avenue, East Epping and Essex Avenue conservation areas. The review considered the extent of the conservation areas to be protected and appropriate planning controls for adjoining sites to protect the heritage qualities of those areas.

The heritage review also considered the heritage significance of 22 potential heritage items in the Hornsby LGA, and whether they should be listed as heritage items in the Hornsby LEP. A group item at 2-14 Bridge Street in the Parramatta LGA was also considered. The areas and items recommended for inclusion in heritage schedules of each council’s LEP have been incorporated into the structure plan.

The department also engaged Archaeology and Heritage to undertake a review of a potential archaeological item in Oxford Street, which is the site of an early colonial timber getting establishment. This study was to investigate the potential significance of this site and potential for archaeological relics to be located on the site. This would determine whether the site should be listed in the Hornsby LEP and if considered to be significant, how future development on this site should be managed.

The results of the heritage reviews are discussed in Section 6.
Part B – The rezoning proposal
5 The vision

5.1 Vision for Epping Town Centre

The Epping Town Centre Structure Plan generally endorses the vision and key recommendations in the 2011 study and the 2012 peer review by Architectus. The vision for the centre includes:

- a compact, high density town centre core
  - the majority of new dwellings in the core
  - taller buildings above podium levels set back from key streets
  - a range of retail and commercial activities at lower levels including fronting the street to serve the local population

- increased residential densities adjoining the town centre core to allow for
  - 2-6 storey apartment buildings in five new residential areas close to the town centre core
  - Retention of the existing high and medium density residential areas and the low density areas in the remainder of the precinct

- heritage conservation areas and heritage items not to be subject to increased dwelling density

- revitalised public domain to create a lively centre where people enjoy spending time
  - improvements to Rawson and Oxford Streets
  - potential new public plaza in Rawson Street
  - potential new civic plaza in Pembroke Street near existing Epping Branch Library

- improved connections, especially for pedestrians and cyclists
  - clearer, safer connections through blocks to the station
  - improved connections across the railway in the longer term
  - better connections to Boronia Park
  - safer routes for cyclists.

Figure 4 – Vision for Rawson Street
6 The structure plan

6.1 Role of the structure plan
The structure plan identifies the future land uses, built form, public domain and infrastructure for the precinct. Amendments to both councils’ local environmental plans (LEPs) will rezone parts of the precinct and establish controls for floor space ratio and height. These amendments will also identify heritage conservation areas and heritage items.

The structure plan also provides more detailed built form controls for each council’s development control plan (DCP) for the town centre core area of the precinct. In addition, it provides a public domain concept and identifies infrastructure improvements to help achieve the desired outcomes and vision of the precinct.

6.2 Amendment to existing local environmental plans
It is proposed to rezone parts of the precinct by way of amendment to the Parramatta Local Environmental Plan 2011 and the Hornsby Local Environmental Plan that is in force at the time. Currently this is the Hornsby Local Environmental Plan 1994.

Under Section 37 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 the minister can recommend that the Governor make a State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) that will amend the Parramatta LEP 2011 and Hornsby LEP 1994.

A draft Hornsby Local Environmental Plan 2013 has recently been exhibited and will eventually replace Hornsby LEP 1994. Hornsby LEP 2013 will be amended if it is made prior to the proposed SEPP being made.

Following exhibition of this structure plan, the matters raised in submissions will be assessed and where required, the rezoning proposal will be amended and reflected in the SEPP. A description of the intended effect of the SEPP amendment is provided in Appendix B. The SEPP will include amendments to the Parramatta LEP 2011 and Hornsby LEP 1994 land use zones, height of buildings, floor space ratios and heritage maps to accommodate the proposed changes to the precinct.

6.3 Land uses and built form
A constraints and opportunities analysis was undertaken for the precinct at the start of the structure planning process to confirm suitable land uses, opportunity sites and the potential capacity of the precinct. The results of this analysis have been incorporated into the structure plan.

Key constraints include:

• existing traffic delays on the road network
• heritage items and conservation areas restricting opportunities for redevelopment
• fragmented ownership patterns and strata title in the town centre core
• existing controls restricting economically feasible development in the core.

Key opportunities include:
• connections to employment centres via the existing rail lines
• access to employment centres via the North West Rail Link
• some large sites in single ownership in the core with a desire to redevelop
• public domain upgrades and pedestrian links to improve connections through the centre, and to each side of the railway line.

The determination of appropriate land uses and built form was also informed by a number of key considerations including:
• accessibility to public transport and traffic constraints
• urban design and amenity
• solar access
• visual impact
• development feasibility
• environmental constraints.

Details of the findings of the land use and built form investigations are outlined in Section B of this report and the relevant specialist studies included as appendices.

6.4 Existing and proposed zones

Existing zones
The Parramatta LEP 2011 and Hornsby LEP 1994 currently apply to the precinct. The existing zones that apply to the precinct are shown in Figure 5.

Proposed zones
The structure plan adopts land use zones for the precinct generally consistent with those recommended in the 2011 study and review of the 2011 study. These zones are generally consistent to those in the draft Hornsby LEP and Parramatta LEP 2011.

The town centre core, which includes the areas adjoining Beecroft Road, Rawson Street and Oxford Street, will be zoned for business uses. The zone will permit a range of uses suitable for the core including retail such as cafes and restaurants at lower levels. Commercial uses will also be encouraged, and residential dwellings will be permitted on the upper floors. Other uses suitable for the zone include community facilities, education facilities and indoor recreation facilities, generally consistent with the sorts of uses already in this zone.

Higher density residential zones will adjoin parts of the town centre core that will permit residential flat buildings.

Medium density zones will be located in five residential intensification areas in the Hornsby LGA. As envisaged, a range of higher density development will be permitted in these areas, including residential flat buildings and dual occupancies.
The controls for the remaining parts of Epping within the town centre will be for low density, low rise development, generally consistent with existing planning controls.

Figure 6 and Table 1 and Table 2 show the proposed new zones for the precinct. The existing land use tables in the Parramatta LEP 2011 and draft Hornsby LEP 2013 are considered suitable for the proposed rezoning and will apply to the precinct.

Figure 5 – Existing land use zones
Figure 6 – Proposed land use zones
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed zone</th>
<th>Permissible uses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R2 Low Density Residential</td>
<td>Bed and breakfast accommodation; Boarding houses; Building identification signs; Business identification signs; Community facilities; Dual occupancies; Dwelling houses; Educational establishments; Emergency services facilities; Environmental facilities; Environmental protection works; Exhibition homes; Exhibition villages; Flood mitigation works; Group homes; Health consulting rooms; Home-based child care; Home businesses; Home industries; Hospitals; Hostels; Neighbourhood shops; Public administration buildings; Recreation areas; Recreation facilities (indoor); Recreation facilities (outdoor); Roads; Seniors housing; Water recycling facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R4 High Density Residential</td>
<td>Attached dwellings; Bed and breakfast accommodation; Boarding houses; Building identification signs; Business identification signs; Child care centres; Community facilities; Dual occupancies; Dwelling houses; Educational establishments; Emergency services facilities; Environmental facilities; Environmental protection works; Exhibition homes; Flood mitigation works; Home-based child care; Home businesses; Hostels; Information and education facilities; Multi dwelling housing; Neighbourhood shops; Places of public worship; Public administration buildings; Recreation areas; Recreation facilities (indoor); Recreation facilities (outdoor); Residential flat buildings; Respite day care centres; Roads; Semi-detached dwellings; Seniors housing; Shop top housing; Water recycling facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2 Local Centre</td>
<td>Boarding houses; Building identification signs; Business identification signs; Child care centres; Commercial premises; Community facilities; Educational establishments; Entertainment facilities; Function centres; Hostels; Information and education facilities; Medical centres; Passenger transport facilities; Recreation facilities (indoor); Registered clubs; Respite day care centres; Restricted premises; Roads; Seniors housing; Service stations; Shop top housing; Tourist and visitor accommodation; Water recycling facilities; Any other development not listed as prohibited development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RE1 Public Recreation</td>
<td>Boat launching ramps; Boat sheds; Charter and tourism boating facilities; Community facilities; Environmental facilities; Information and education facilities; Jetties; Kiosks; Markets; Recreation areas, Recreation facilities (indoor); Recreation facilities (major); Recreation facilities (outdoor); Restaurants or cafes; Roads; Take away food and drink premises; Water recreation structures; Water recycling facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP2 Infrastructure</td>
<td>The purpose shown on the Land Zoning Map, including any development that is ordinarily incidental or ancillary to development for that purpose; Environmental protection works; Flood mitigation works; Recreation areas; Roads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W1 Natural Waterways</td>
<td>Environmental facilities; Roads</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 2 – Proposed zones and land use – draft Hornsby LEP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed zone</th>
<th>Permissible uses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R2 Low Density Residential</td>
<td>Boarding Houses, Building identification signs; Business identification signs; Child care centres; Community facilities; Dwelling houses; Educational establishments; Emergency services facilities; Exhibition homes; Flood mitigation works; Group homes; Home based child care; Home businesses; Information and education facilities; Places of public worship; Public administration buildings; Recreation areas; Recreation facilities (indoor); Recreation facilities (outdoor); Respite day care centres; Roads; Tourist and visitor accommodation; Veterinary hospitals; Water reticulation systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R3 Medium Density Residential</td>
<td>Attached dwellings; Boarding houses; Building identification signs; Business identification signs; Child care centres; Community facilities; Dwelling houses; Emergency services facilities; Flood mitigation works; Group homes; Home based child care; Home occupations; Multi dwelling housing; Neighbourhood shops; Places of public worship; Recreation areas; Recreation facilities (indoor); Recreation facilities (outdoor); Residential flat buildings; Respite day care centres; Roads; Semi detached dwellings; Seniors housing; Water reticulation systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R4 High Density Residential</td>
<td>Boarding houses; Building identification signs; Business identification signs; Child care centres; Community facilities; Dwelling houses; Emergency services facilities; Flood mitigation works; Home based child care; Home occupations; Neighbourhood shops; Places of public worship; Recreation areas; Recreation facilities (indoor); Recreation facilities (outdoor); Residential flat buildings; Respite day care centres; Roads; Shop top housing; Water reticulation systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2 Local Centre</td>
<td>Boarding houses; Child care centres; Commercial premises; Community facilities; Educational establishments; Entertainment facilities; Function centres; Group homes; Hostels; Information and education facilities; Medical centres; Passenger transport facilities; Recreation facilities (indoor); Registered clubs; Respite day care centres; Restricted premises; Roads; Service stations; Shop top housing; Tourist and visitor accommodation; Water reticulation systems; Any other development not listed as prohibited development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RE1 Public Recreation</td>
<td>Building identification signs; Business identification signs; Camping grounds; Caravan parks; Car parks; Cemeteries; Child care centres; Community facilities; Emergency services facilities; Environmental facilities; Flood mitigation works; Kiosks; Public administration buildings; Recreation areas; Recreation facilities (indoor); Recreation facilities (major); Recreation facilities (outdoor); Respite day care centres; Roads; Water reticulation systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP2 Infrastructure</td>
<td>The purpose shown on the Land Zoning Map, including any development that is ordinarily incidental or ancillary to development for that purpose.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extracts from the Parramatta LEP 2011 and the draft Hornsby LEP, showing the full land use schedules for each of the relevant zones are provided in Appendix G and Appendix H.
6.5 Floor space ratio

Floor space ratio (FSR) is expressed as the quantity of floor area that can be provided as a ratio of the area of a site. The higher the FSR, the greater the amount of building floor area to site area.

One of the aims of Urban Activation Precincts is to plan for growth. This requires that built form controls can provide for an appropriate scale of development that is also financially viable. This includes the consideration of development expenses such as demolition and construction costs, and revenue from sale prices.

The maximum FSRs within the precinct have been selected after considering a range of issues including:

- maximum size or density of a building after consideration of design factors
- minimum amount of floor space required to allow feasible development to occur.

The FSR allocated to the residential intensification areas ranges from 1.0:1 to 1.5:1. The FSR allocated within the town centre core ranges from 4.5:1 or 6.0:1 (see Figure 7).

The structure plan allocates the highest FSRs in the precinct to the town centre core, which is generally consistent with the allocation of FSR in the 2011 study and the study review. This is the most appropriate location for higher density development, particularly to benefit from the proximity to the railway station and retail centre.

6.6 Building height

The maximum building heights for the precinct have been selected after considering a range of issues including:

- the most appropriate built form to accommodate the floor space ratio
- impacts on amenity including overshadowing.

The highest buildings will be permitted in the town centre core, transitioning to lower heights closest to the areas of low density, two storey dwellings (see Figure 8).
Figure 7 – Proposed floor space ratio controls
Figure 8 – Proposed maximum building heights
6.7 Heritage

Independent heritage advice was sought by the department to consider a number of proposed heritage conservation areas and items, and whether these should be included in the relevant council’s LEP (refer to Figure 9).

Hornsby local government area

Within the Hornsby Shire Council area a review of heritage conservation areas and heritage items had been contemplated, but deferred until housing targets for the LGA were delivered. Therefore it was considered beneficial to undertake a review of these heritage areas and items as part of the structure planning process.

Three proposed conservation areas were reviewed including:

• East Epping Heritage Conservation Area
• Essex Street Heritage Conservation Area
• Rosebank Avenue Heritage Conservation Area.

A review of 22 potential heritage items within the Hornsby part of the precinct was also undertaken to recommend whether these should be included as heritage items in the draft Hornsby Local Environmental Plan 2013.

Parramatta local government area

The Parramatta LGA within the precinct boundary includes two existing heritage conservation areas, the Epping/Eastwood and the Wyralla Avenue Conservation Areas. The planning process for the Parramatta LEP 2011 included a proposal to extend the Epping/Eastwood Conservation area to connect to the Wyralla Avenue Conservation Area. In addition, a new Boronia Park Conservation Area was proposed.

These new and extended areas in the Parramatta LGA were deferred and not gazetted as part of the Parramatta LEP 2011 due to the continuing work for the Epping Town Centre. The department supports these additional heritage conservation areas and as a result no additional density is proposed for these areas.

A new heritage item in 2-14 Bridge Street was also deferred from the Parramatta LEP 2011, and was therefore considered as part of the heritage review undertaken for the structure plan. The proposed item is a group of shops located within the town centre core. It was important to review this site as recommending it for listing would have an impact on the planning controls proposed for this site.

Heritage review recommendations

The heritage review made a number of recommendations for the proposed conservation areas and heritage items. The report found that the East Epping Conservation Area contains a number of heritage items as well as large number of contributory items. It was recommended that this conservation area remain as previously proposed, with some changes to the boundary to reflect the location of contributory items. Parts of the recommended conservation area extend outside the precinct boundary, however these can still be considered as part of the rezoning process for the structure plan.

The heritage review recommended that the Essex Street Conservation Area, which includes one existing heritage item and several contributory items, should remain as previously proposed, with a minor increase to the south to reflect the location of contributory items including two existing
heritage items. This also extends outside the precinct boundary but, like the East Epping Conservation Area, can still be considered as part of the rezoning process for the structure plan.

The extent of the Rosebank Avenue Conservation Area was endorsed due to the contributory items in this section of the street. Recommendations were provided to restrict development of properties to the west and south to minimise the impact of future development on the significance of this conservation area.

The heritage review considered that all but one of the proposed heritage items (10 Chester Street) are of heritage significance and should be listed as local items. The list of properties reviewed, and the recommended listing is identified in Table 3.

Figure 9 – Existing and proposed heritage conservation areas
### Table 3 – Potential heritage items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Property description</th>
<th>Local heritage listing supported</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 Surrey Street</td>
<td>Lot A DP 327719</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Surrey Street</td>
<td>Lot 1 DP 104104</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 Surrey Street</td>
<td>Lot A DP 408315</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 Oxford Street</td>
<td>Lot 1 DP 203268</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91 Oxford Street</td>
<td>Lot 1 DP 603589</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39 Norfolk Street</td>
<td>Lot D DP 100750</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 Norfolk Street</td>
<td>Lot 7 DP 5910</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43 Norfolk Street</td>
<td>Lot 6 DP 5910</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83 Norfolk Street (outside Epping Town Centre precinct)</td>
<td>Lot 3 DP 27874</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Essex Street</td>
<td>Lot 25 Sec 4 DP 758390</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42 Essex Street</td>
<td>Lot B DP 300119</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86 Essex Street</td>
<td>Lot 43 DP 6719</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 Dorset Street (outside Epping Town Centre precinct)</td>
<td>Lot Y DP 417304</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 2011 study submission nominations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Property description</th>
<th>Local heritage listing supported</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 Chester Street</td>
<td>Lot 15 DP 8487</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Cliff Road</td>
<td>Lot 29 DP 12051</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Cliff Road</td>
<td>Lot 30 DP 12051</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Cliff Road</td>
<td>Lot 31 DP 12051</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Cliff Road</td>
<td>Lot 32 DP 12051</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Cliff Road</td>
<td>Lot 33 DP 12051</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38 Oxford Street</td>
<td>Lot 1A DP 102387</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Epping Road</td>
<td>SP 16921</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Essex Street</td>
<td>Lot C DP 334777</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The department supports the recommendations in the report and have included the recommended heritage conservation areas and heritage items in the structure plan.

A copy of the detailed heritage assessment is provided in Appendix E.
**Archaeological assessment**

In addition to the heritage review, an archaeological report was obtained to consider a potential archaeological item in Oxford Street. This was the site of the Barren Hills Sawing Establishment, a timber getting establishment which operated during the early 19th century.

The report recommended that it is highly likely that archaeological remains are located on the site, within an area identified in figure 10. This is a buffer zone as the exact location of remains is not certain. The report recommended that due to its early colonial history and rarity, the site should be listed as a State significant item.

The listing of the site as an archaeological item is supported by the department, however the listing of the site as a state significant item needs to be endorsed by the Heritage Council of NSW, following listing of the item in the Hornsby Council LEP.

It is noted that although the sites are recommended as archaeological items, the primary reason for listing is to ensure any archaeological items found during excavation of these sites are appropriately reported and catalogued. This will be in accordance with the requirements of the Heritage Office with an Archaeological Management Plan required to be prepared following the listing of this item.

A copy of the archaeological report is also provided in Appendix F.

![Figure 10 – Site of Barren Hills Sawing Establishment (suggested buffer zone in red)](image-url)
7 A built form to accommodate growth

This section looks in more detail at the built form controls and outcomes that will allow the growth opportunities to be realised. This includes the built form for the town centre core and the residential intensification areas as well as a comparison of the proposed growth compared to existing planning controls and previous studies.

7.1 Urban design and built form controls

The structure plan establishes detailed development controls and standards to guide the future development of the precinct including building envelopes, setbacks, overshadowing, public domain, landscaping, access arrangements and car parking rates.

Design principles were established based on a consideration of the urban design studies previously undertaken for the precinct and relevant guidelines including State Environmental Planning Policy 65 – Design Quality of Residential Flat Development (SEPP 65), the Department of Planning & Infrastructure’s Draft Centres Design Guidelines and the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.

The development controls for the precinct were prepared to:

- create human-scale shopping streets in Rawson and Oxford Streets using podiums
- improve laneways and streets for better pedestrian connections including through block links
- provide a wide range of housing choice
- ensure no additional growth in the existing and proposed heritage conservation areas
- consider plazas at Pembroke Street and the existing street-level car park in Rawson Street
- minimise overshadowing of existing and new open space and residential areas.

Various urban design options were prepared to test their performance and feasibility, which in turn informed the preparation of the development controls for the precinct. This ensures the underlying objectives of the established planning and development controls can reasonably be achieved in the ultimate development of the site.

7.2 Built form – residential intensification areas

The structure plan identifies five residential areas outside the town centre core for increased density. These areas are all within walking distance to the station. The height of developments within these areas will be two to six storeys. A range of building types will be able to be built in these areas including four to six storey ‘big house’ style apartment blocks, duplexes on lots as small as 800 m², and three to five storey apartment buildings by consolidating two or three existing lots.
Each of the five residential intensification areas has its own set of unique characteristics and constraints and as such development controls are required to ensure each area is appropriately integrated with the surrounding areas including some conservation areas. In these cases, more detailed controls will be required to ensure appropriate setbacks and heights to transition between medium and low density areas.

The residential intensification areas play a dual role. They will provide a significant quantity of new dwellings located in walking distance of the station and allow for the preservation of the existing density and residential character of the remainder of the precinct, particularly the heritage conservation areas.

7.3 Built form – town centre core

The built form in the town centre core is for the first two storeys to be built to the street in the form of a ‘podium’ containing retail and commercial uses. By addressing the street, there is perception of a ‘human’ scale of development when walking along the street, which will increase activity in the street.

Above the podium, an additional two storeys can be provided for residential uses, but with increased setbacks from the street and side boundaries. This acts as a transition to the upper residential levels, which will be tall, slim towers, well-spaced and set back from the street.

The proposed built form will result in buildings higher than permitted under the existing controls, but with greater opportunities for achieving views between buildings to the sky, greater amounts of sunlight reaching the street, and a more human scale and perception of ‘openness’ when walking along the streets. It also avoids a canyon-like appearance and associated wind tunnelling effect.

The impacts of overshadowing from taller buildings have been tested by Architectus. The results showed that the nominated tall building areas could achieve heights of up to 27 storeys while still meeting the relevant sunlight access standards.

7.4 Accommodating additional residential growth

The structure plan provides for significant opportunities to meet housing demand. An overall increase in dwelling numbers will assist in addressing the current strong demand factors. There will also be a wider variety of dwelling types available in the precinct to meet different housing preferences. More apartments in the precinct will provide for different household types such as one and two person households including younger people and empty nesters who no longer seek to live in a large detached house.

Growth potential comparison

The previous studies have all provided estimates of future residential growth in the precinct. In arriving at the structure plan growth levels comparisons were undertaken against these earlier studies.

The 2011 study identified 4,155 existing dwellings in the precinct, based on 2010 data, with 65 per cent single houses or dual occupancies, eight per cent townhouses or villas, and 27 per cent apartments.

Table 4 illustrates the comparison between the previous town centre core growth scenarios and the structure plan.
Table 4 – Residential growth comparison for the town centre core

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>LEP</th>
<th>2011 study</th>
<th>2012 Architectus review</th>
<th>2013 structure plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parramatta</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hornsby</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1,800</td>
<td>1,800</td>
<td>1,650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,050</td>
<td>2,900</td>
<td>2,600</td>
<td>2,450</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the additional dwellings estimated for the precinct by 2036, under each study most will be located in the town centre core.

The 2011 study calculated the highest dwelling yields across both LGAs as it assumed more sites would be developed including recently developed sites, heritage items, and churches. The later review and structure plan have excluded some of those sites as there is now more certainty around future development opportunities.

The structure plan results in a lower yield in the Hornsby LGA compared to the 2012 Architectus review. This is due to lower FSRs in the structure plan for sites on the western side of Oxford Street and the sites adjoining Beecroft Road north of Carlingford Road. The department has also excluded the northern portion of the recently acquired North West Rail Link site in Beecroft Road from dwelling yield calculations. The northern part of the site will be used for construction access and in the longer term for a services facility. The future development potential of the remainder of the site is also unclear and will be subject of more detailed master planning once the short and long term requirements of the rail project are confirmed.

The yield calculations for the structure plan are based on assumptions about which sites are more likely to develop by 2036, and the distribution of floor space across sites to reflect the built form in the structure plan.

Those sites excluded from the dwelling yield calculations include sites that have been recently developed, have significant heritage constraints, or are used for infrastructure or community uses.

The structure plan provides for built form and uses which include:

- ground floor retail uses in the town centre core
- a two storey podium containing retail, commercial and other non-residential uses on sites adjoining the main streets of the core, where economic activity will be concentrated (Rawson Street, Oxford Street, and Beecroft Road between Bridge Street and Carlingford Road)
- residential dwellings above the podium tower elements to have footprints limited to 700m² GFA.

Within the residential intensification areas in the Hornsby LGA, a similar yield was estimated in the 2011 study and the Architectus review (between 1,295 and 1,350). The structure plan estimates about 100 less dwellings due to the reduced development potential around the Rosebank Avenue heritage conservation area, as recommended in the heritage review report.

The growth anticipated to occur as a result of the structure plan is greater than the existing controls but not as significant as some of the previous studies. This is due to further refinement to the estimates of the sites that are unlikely to be developed. Furthermore, it also illustrates that the structure plan controls are more a redistribution of development potential (into taller slimmer built form) than is immediately apparent if a direct comparison of existing and proposed heights or floor space ratio is undertaken.
The figures provided at this stage are only estimates. The final yield will be dependant on several factors over the next 20 plus years including economic conditions, employment patterns, social trends and housing preferences, and immigration levels.

**Summary of the proposed residential and commercial growth**

Under the proposed zones and development controls, total additional yields of residential and commercial development across the precinct are estimated to be:

- 3,650 total dwellings within the precinct of the next 20 years
- 2,450 residential dwellings within the town centre core
- 1,200 dwellings in five residential intensification areas located in the Hornsby LGA
- 5,000-7,500 m$^2$ retail gross floor area (which could include a supermarket on the eastern side of the town centre core)
- Commercial gross floor area will reduce by between 30,000-47,000 m$^2$ (from existing capacity for 55,000 m$^2$) as a result of the reallocation to residential and retail uses over time.

**7.5 Existing visual and view analysis**

The Epping Town Centre precinct is generally well vegetated, featuring mature trees in areas of open space, residential streets, residential properties and parts of the railway corridor. The town centre core is less vegetated although some street tree planting has been undertaken in recent times.

The eastern side of the rail line is generally higher than the western side, with Oxford Street along one of the highest ridges. Bridge Street on the western side of the rail line, and the western part of Carlingford Road, are also elevated. These areas have the capacity to provide for extensive views beyond the precinct, although this is limited by existing LEP controls that set maximum building heights to generally less than five storeys.

Due to the topography and built form, most view lines are along streets rather than to natural landmarks or iconic locations.

**Potential views towards the precinct**

The structure plan will create a built form that is seen as having:

- tallest buildings on the higher parts of the town centre core reinforcing the topography and town centre core location
- views between the towers to the sky
- increased opportunities for tree planting to reinforce the vegetated character of the precinct.

While development on the site will be visible to some surrounding areas as outlined above, the draft DCP includes controls in relation to future location and design of buildings to reduce visual impacts including:

- limiting the footprint of taller buildings to 700 m$^2$
- separation requirements for taller buildings
- requirements that taller buildings are on sites greater than 2,000 m$^2$. 
Views from residential areas

In relation to the views from within the precinct, taller buildings in the core are unlikely to take away any significant views. Residential areas tend to either be in lower parts of the site or some distance from the core. This, combined with the extensive mature vegetation in the residential areas, means that views towards the town centre core will generally be restricted.

The controls for the residential intensification area will have regard to views to and from future development sites. There could be greater impact in these situations, however the establishment of appropriate height and setback controls should be sufficient to ensure any impacts are acceptable for an urban environment.

Development controls to reduce overshadowing

The structure plan development controls aim to reduce impacts on open space during lunch time hours and limit overshadowing on adjoining residential areas as far as practical.

The structure plan development controls will require future development applications to provide detailed overshadowing studies. It will be necessary to demonstrate that proposed open space and landscaping is well designed to ensure acceptable levels of solar access to preserve the amenity of these spaces. This will make these spaces inviting and encourage residents and visitors into the space.
8 Public domain

This section presents a public domain concept plan for the precinct developed in consultation with staff from each council. The public domain represents a key element of the structure plan that can ensure the growth opportunities are supported by high quality streetscapes and public areas.

8.1 Overview

The public domain concept plan seeks to build on the opportunities identified by the 2011 study and complement the built form outcomes sought by the structure plan.

The public domain is defined as any publicly owned land, streets, lanes, pathways, right of ways, parks, publicly accessible open spaces, and any public and civic building and facilities. There is typically a hierarchy of public places.

High quality public spaces are necessary to successfully create environments where existing and future residents will want to live, work and play.

High quality public domains can be a key factor in attracting investment and attracting new residents. Increases in density to accommodate growth should be accompanied by an increase in amenity which must include the public domain.

There are significant opportunities to improve the appearance and function of the public domain in the Epping Town Centre to achieve a vibrant and lively place that people will enjoy spending time in. The public domain concept plan and strategy provides the principles and aims for future detailed work for the public domain.

A consolidated version of the public domain concept plan and strategy is contained in an Appendix to the Epping Town Centre Structure Plan.

8.2 Public domain concept plan

The public domain concept plan is provided as part of the structure plan. The key principles identified are to:

- develop a centre-wide concept while maintaining elements of each council's approach
- improve the sense of place through improved streetscapes and pedestrian connectivity
- improve traffic, pedestrian and cyclist facilities
- create a variety of public spaces and amenities
- encourage clear wayfinding signage
- increase street tree planting for cooler streets, better air quality and more attractive streets.
Rawson Street and Oxford Street are intended to be the main shopping streets in the precinct. Along with built form controls requiring shops to address the street, a pleasant environment in the street can be created through features such as footpath design, tree planting, lighting, street furniture and awnings. Improvements have already been made to Oxford Street in particular, including road narrowing and tree planting, however there are still more opportunities for improvements.

New and improved pedestrian links through the precinct can result in more pleasant and safe environments and encourage greater activity and movement. Improved paths and laneways could improve connections from Boronia Park to Rawson Street, Rawson Street to the railway station, and through larger development site blocks on the eastern side of the centre.

Improved bicycle paths can also be included, such as designated on-road routes.

Figure 11 – Public domain concept plan

In addition to the overall streetscape improvements, opportunities also exist for major improvements to public open space including:

- **Rawson Street** - the existing street level council car park is located between Boronia Park and Rawson Street. Parramatta City Council has previously looked into the possibility of reconfiguring the car park. Subject to investigations and endorsement by Council a new civic square could be constructed at ground level on part of the site creating a significant civic space for the local community over time.

- **Pembroke Street Town Square** - the Epping Branch Library is located in Pembroke Street along with a park and access road. There is potential for the redevelopment of this site as a cultural hub in an improved civic space and town square for the community.

- **West Epping Park** - the park is located north of Carlingford Road and Epping West Public School. Its location close to the LGA boundary means the park effectively serves both Parramatta and Hornsby residents. The park is currently used for a mix of sporting activities, including tennis, soccer, cricket and a YMCA facility. With Hornsby Shire Council’s recent purchase of the adjacent
bowling club, an opportunity now presents itself to investigate opportunities to increase the size and amenity of the park and improve its sporting facilities.

The funding for future public domain works can come from Section 94 development contributions and potentially through the Precinct Support Scheme, available through the Urban Activation Precinct process.

8.3 Opportunities to realise the concept plan principles

There are a range of options that could be implemented to upgrade the public domain and realise the principles in the concept plan. Precinct Support Scheme funding is available to fund some of these works although it is unlikely that all works could be funded in the short term. Community feedback from the public exhibition will be considered when determining which works should be the priority.

Public domain works could include:

- upgraded footpaths and opportunities for outdoor dining
- high quality and robust street furniture including seats, bins and bicycle racks
- high quality lighting to encourage evening use and improve safety
- increased street tree planting
- retained and enhanced pedestrian links
- public art in appropriate places.

Short term public domain improvement opportunities

As part of the Urban Activation Precinct process and Precinct Support Scheme, a number of short term public domain improvement opportunities have been identified that can benefit Epping Town Centre:

- Coordinated public domain works for Epping Town Centre - The Urban Activation Precinct process presents an opportunity for councils to collectively enable a coordinated and integrated implementation program of public domain improvement works. The package of works will deliver on the public domain concept plan and address a range of improvement initiatives such as: paving, wayfinding / signage, landscaping, street furniture, lighting and town centre identity / branding. There is potential for funding to be provided under the Precinct Support Scheme.

- Place making and Intersection improvements - A short term public domain improvement opportunity exists for the upgrade of the intersection of Pembroke Street, Oxford Street, Langston Place and Cambridge Street that all lead to Epping Rail Station entrance

- Pembroke Street Town Square and cultural hub - The Pembroke Street Town Square has the potential to establish a mix of community activities that could be part of a Hornsby Shire Council ‘cultural hub’. The opportunity needs to be further investigated to establish options for the location, access and design form within the site and the block.

Broader public domain opportunities – Epping District Park

The potential future upgrade of West Epping Park as a local recreational hub at the district level is a public domain opportunity that can provide many benefits to nearby communities.
West Epping Park is located less than 1km from Epping Town Centre and easily accessed via Carlingford Road. Local pedestrian connections are also good and the park already serves a range of local users from both Hornsby and Parramatta Council areas.

With the acquisition of the former bowling club lands by Hornsby Council, the increased size of West Epping Park provides a significant opportunity to both improve and expand existing sporting facilities and broaden the appeal of the park to a wider range of activities and users. There is also potential to work in partnership with both Epping West Public School and the YMCA, to ensure that the full potential of the park is achieved.

West Epping Park, in the short to medium term, has the potential to evolve as an important local activity and recreational hub that can provide a sporting and cultural focal point for the community. Potential uses for a revitalised West Epping Park may include: contemporary sportsfields for soccer and cricket, a grandstand, tennis and netball courts, upgraded YMCA facilities, urban wetland areas and informal parklands, a children’s playground, a skatepark, play spaces, an outdoor café and plaza, a community garden and event performance space.

To investigate the full potential of this project, in the short term, it is recommended that a Concept Plan for Epping West District Park be prepared. The concept plan process will need to engage with and appreciate the needs and aspirations of the key sporting and local community stakeholders.

The Public Domain Strategy, including the Public Domain Concept Plan, is located in an Appendix to the Epping Town Centre Structure Plan.

**Figure 12 – Examples of high quality street furniture**
9 Traffic and transport

9.1 Integrating housing delivery with existing transport infrastructure

The close proximity of the precinct to public transport infrastructure makes it a suitable site to respond to Sydney’s housing need without generating undesirable additional demands on the road network. This is consistent with NSW Government policy of locating housing in areas with good access to public transport infrastructure.

To reduce additional demands on the road network and to make use of the existing public transport infrastructure, the proposed rezoning and draft DCP have been based on creating a ‘Transport Orientated Development’ (TOD). This reduces the need for the use of a private car and makes public transport and active forms of transport realistic alternatives.

Residential and retail growth will be located within a walkable distance from the established and planned rail and bus infrastructure. The structure plan aims to develop a network of well-designed, walkable connections focusing on improving access to the station and overall connectivity within and through the precinct.

9.2 Existing transport infrastructure

Public transport

The precinct is well serviced by rail and bus services. Figure 13 shows public transport services available in the precinct with 400 and 800m walking catchments (straight line distance) from Epping Railway Station.

Epping Railway Station, located at the centre of the precinct, is served by the Main North Line which links the station to the Sydney CBD via Strathfield inbound as well as Hornsby, Central Coast and Newcastle outbound. The Epping Chatswood Rail Link (ECRL) provides services to the Sydney CBD via Macquarie Park. The North West Rail Link will connect to the ECRL and provide services to north-western Sydney including Castle Hill, Norwest Business Park and the North West Growth Centre.

Approximately 8 bus routes serve Epping, operated by the State Transit Authority (STA) and Hillsbus. The majority of routes connect to Macquarie Park and Sydney CBD to the east and Parramatta to the west. These bus routes are shown as coloured dashed lines in Figure 13. All these buses provide connections to the railway station.
Figure 13 – Public transport within close proximity to the precinct area

Road network
The road network in the vicinity of the precinct consists of a high number of state roads.

Table 5 – Surrounding road network

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Road</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Relevance to the precinct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M2 Motorway</td>
<td>Motorway</td>
<td>Access to/from Western Sydney and Sydney CBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epping Road</td>
<td>Arterial</td>
<td>Access to Macquarie Park, connects to Beecroft &amp; Blaxland Roads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beecroft Road</td>
<td>Arterial</td>
<td>Provides access to the M2, connects Epping &amp; Carlingford Roads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlingford Road</td>
<td>Arterial</td>
<td>Access to the precinct and Western Sydney including Parramatta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blaxland Road</td>
<td>Arterial</td>
<td>Access suburbs south to Ryde, connects to Epping Road</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The M2 Motorway is currently being widened with work scheduled for completion in the first half of 2013. The new east-facing ramps at Herring Road are now open to traffic. This new connection is expected to reduce demand for Epping Road by allowing some Macquarie Park traffic to use the motorway and Lane Cove Tunnel without having to travel on Epping Road. The widening should attract more traffic to the motorway, protecting Epping Road from the full extent of future traffic increases.

### 9.3 Capacity of the road network

The traffic study prepared for the 2011 study identified a number of issues with the existing road network including some substantial delays in peak times from queuing at intersections. The study looked at traffic growth over the short term (to 2016) and the long term (to 2026). It predicted an increase in traffic resulting from development to account for only five per cent of all traffic predicted in Epping in the long term.

**Proposed upgrades**

The NSW Government has committed funding to address short term regional traffic growth. Funding has been allocated for road upgrades identified in the 2011 study, which are:

- Epping Road/Essex Street intersection
- Epping Road/Blaxland Road intersection
- carriageway widening – Epping Road
- Carlingford Road/Beecroft Road intersection
- pedestrian/cycle footbridges over the rail line.

The traffic study acknowledges that although these works will assist traffic flows, strategies to manage demand by reducing car usage will be more critical than strategies to increase capacity of existing roads. Encouraging people to use alternative modes of transport in order to relieve congestion is a priority, given the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics estimates the cost of avoidable congestion in Sydney at $5.2 billion in 2011, rising to $7.8 billion in 2020.

**Strategic review of traffic and transport in the Macquarie Park Corridor**

The report by Halcrow confirmed that traffic problems in the area are mostly related to wider network and background traffic growth. Therefore a broader strategic review of the traffic and transport issues for the entire corridor is required to address the longer term through traffic issues.

As part of the State government endorsement of the precinct as an Urban Activation Precinct undertaking a strategic review of transport issues in the MPC was also endorsed. This strategic review will be a whole of government exercise to ensure co-ordination of planning for growth and transport infrastructure upgrades in the entire corridor.

### 9.4 Capacity of public transport network

**Rail**

Development of the precinct can be expected to increase patronage of the Epping Railway Station and the ECRL. *Sydney’s Rail Future* announced the intention of the government to increase train frequencies following the construction of the North West Rail Link and a second harbour crossing. These initiatives will assist in accommodating the increased patronage resulting from development of the precinct in the medium to long term.
Bus services
The Halcrow report identifies that the bus network around the precinct is already well-established, however not all areas are serviced equally, with the North West, including Cherrybrook and Castle Hill, particularly underserviced. This will be less of an issue once the North West Rail Link is operational in 2019.

9.5 Capacity of the pedestrian and cycling facilities
To achieve a transport oriented development and to work towards alleviating traffic congestion resulting from the development, improvements to the pedestrian and cycling facilities are proposed. This includes creating connections between areas within the precinct that are separated by busy arterial roads and the rail line, and by enhancing access to the station.

Pedestrian and cycle network
The majority of streets have footpaths on both sides and intersections provide at-grade crossing facilities. A pedestrian overbridge is provided across Beecroft Road for access to the station. The footbridge contains lifts to improve accessibility. Laneways and an arcade are provided through the block between Beecroft Road and Rawson Street.

Bicycle routes through the precinct are largely on-road, unmarked routes. The routes are generally easier on the eastern side of the rail line due to road layout, traffic volumes and ease of crossings. Bicycle lockers and racks are provided at the station.

Figure 14 – The bicycle network

Source: Epping Town Centre Study 2011
9.6 Car parking provision

Off street parking will be required to provide spaces for the uses within each development. The required parking rates need to consider a range of factors including non-car alternatives, the market for car parking spaces, and costs to development.

A comparison of each council’s parking rates is outlined in Both the Parramatta DCP 2011 and draft Hornsby DCP 2013 have lower parking rates for dwellings closer to railway stations compared to their standard rates. However, the lower rate in the Parramatta LGA is applied within a 400m distance, while in the Hornsby LGA it is applied within an 800m distance.

The rates in the structure plan will apply to all residential flat buildings and shop-top housing in the precinct, and will be used to determine the overall provision of parking for a development. For all other types of residential dwellings, the existing parking rate for each council area will apply.

The rates for 1, 2 or 3 bedroom units are to be calculated as an average per number of units. The final allocation of spaces for each unit can be determined by the proponent at the strata subdivision stage to take into account market demand. For example, some one bedroom units may not be provided with a car parking space, and some two bedroom units may be provided with two spaces.

The parking rates for the precinct require slightly less parking than the Parramatta DCP 2011 and draft Hornsby DCP 2013. The parking rates are appropriate given the proximity of future residential development to public transport routes, and the retail and other services in the town centre core.

If the parking rate were based only on the public transport accessibility and evidence from other similar transport node centres, the rates could in fact be even lower. However, as noted elsewhere in the report, the parking rate must also have regard to market demand for car parking spaces in new residential developments.

Table 6. The department considers the proposed parking rates are appropriate given that future residents and employees will have good access to transport infrastructure including:

- a modern train station providing high levels of access to employment centres across Sydney
- high-frequency bus services providing access to key employment locations not accessible by rail
- improved pedestrian and cycle access as new development is delivered.

In addition, for those dwellings not provided with a car space, a car share scheme serving residents and businesses within the precinct would give access to a vehicle when it is the most appropriate means of transport. It is also recommended that on-street parking be time limited and allocated for visitors and people with special needs. These matters would need to be resolved with council at the development application stage.

Reduced car parking rates where alternative transport options are available can make development more viable. The economic assessment for the 2011 study found that in most of the cases examined, the construction of basement car parks based on existing rates hindered feasible development.

Due to congestion on the road network and the range of other travel options for accessing Epping Railway Station, it was determined that commuter parking would not be appropriate.

Details of existing and proposed residential, commercial and retail parking rates are provided below.
Residential car parking rates

Both the Parramatta DCP 2011 and draft Hornsby DCP 2013 have lower parking rates for dwellings closer to railway stations compared to their standard rates. However, the lower rate in the Parramatta LGA is applied within a 400m distance, while in the Hornsby LGA it is applied within an 800m distance.

The rates in the structure plan will apply to all residential flat buildings and shop-top housing in the precinct, and will be used to determine the overall provision of parking for a development. For all other types of residential dwellings, the existing parking rate for each council area will apply.

The rates for 1, 2 or 3 bedroom units are to be calculated as an average per number of units. The final allocation of spaces for each unit can be determined by the proponent at the strata subdivision stage to take into account market demand. For example, some one bedroom units may not be provided with a car parking space, and some two bedroom units may be provided with two spaces.

The parking rates for the precinct require slightly less parking than the Parramatta DCP 2011 and draft Hornsby DCP 2013. The parking rates are appropriate given the proximity of future residential development to public transport routes, and the retail and other services in the town centre core.

If the parking rate were based only on the public transport accessibility and evidence from other similar transport node centres, the rates could in fact be even lower. However, as noted elsewhere in the report, the parking rate must also have regard to market demand for car parking spaces in new residential developments.

Table 6 – Comparison of existing and proposed residential parking rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LGA</th>
<th>Rate per dwelling type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parramatta (within 400m of a railway station)</td>
<td>1 or 2 bedroom unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 bedroom unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 bedroom unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>visitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parramatta (greater than 400m from a railway station)</td>
<td>studio apartment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 bedroom unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 bedroom unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 bedroom unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 bedroom unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>visitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hornsby (within 800m of a railway station)</td>
<td>0-1 Bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3+ bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>visitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hornsby (greater than 800m from a railway station)</td>
<td>0-1 Bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3+ bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>visitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure plan rate</td>
<td>Studio units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1, 2, or 3 bedrooms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4+ bedrooms | 2 spaces visitors | 1 space per 10 dwellings

Commercial car parking rates
The commercial car parking rates that apply to the Parramatta and Hornsby LGAs (existing and draft rates) were considered for the precinct, as detailed below.

Table 7 – Comparison of commercial and retail car parking rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LGA</th>
<th>Rate commercial (offices)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parramatta (CBD)</td>
<td>1/100m² GFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parramatta (Granville and Harris Park)</td>
<td>1/70m² GFA (min) - 1/50m² GFA (max)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parramatta (general)</td>
<td>1/50m² GFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hornsby (draft DCP)</td>
<td>1/48m² GFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure plan rate</td>
<td>1/70m² GFA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is considered that a suitable rate for the Epping Town Centre would be similar to that in the Granville and Harris Park Town Centres. Both of these centres are located around railway stations.

The proposed maximum parking rates for the uses discussed above, along with requirements for car sharing schemes have been incorporated into the draft DCP controls for the precinct. The department recognises further assessment of parking requirements and access arrangements will be required at development application stage and this has also been reflected in the structure plan.

Retail car parking rates
The 2011 study found that retail activity in Epping is, and will continue to be, largely convenience or service retail shopping. Larger, established centres such as Macquarie Centre and Carlingford Court will attract a greater share of shopping and purchasing activity.

Most of the new demand for shops in Epping will be from the existing and proposed residential development in the town centre core. Development in the core will be above or within walking distance of the retail development and capable of being reached without the need for a car.

Existing and proposed retail car parking rates in the Parramatta and Hornsby LGA were considered and are detailed below along with the proposed rate for the precinct.

Table 8 – Existing and proposed retail parking rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LGA</th>
<th>Rate shops/retail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parramatta CBD</td>
<td>1/30 m² GFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parramatta (Granville and Harris Park)</td>
<td>1/60m² GFA (min) - 1/30m² GFA (max)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parramatta (general)</td>
<td>1/30m² GFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hornsby (draft DCP)</td>
<td>1/29m² GLFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure plan rate</td>
<td>1/60m² GFA (min) – 1/30m² GFA (max)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Parramatta LEP 2011 and the draft Hornsby DCP 2013 provide parking rates for retail uses of 1/30m² GFA and 1/29m² GLFA respectively. The structure plan rate will range from a maximum of 1/30m² GFA to a minimum of per 60m² GFA.

The rates proposed for Epping are the same as adopted rates for the town centres of Harris Park and Granville in the Parramatta LGA. Both provide a minimum / maximum rate given their proximity to well serviced railway stations and public transport.
10 Infrastructure requirements

10.1 Site infrastructure requirements

Table 9 summarises the infrastructure that has been identified as required to service the site. With the exception of works to the regional road network, future development will generally be responsible for delivery of site infrastructure requirements and augmentation within the precinct.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trunk drainage</td>
<td>Drainage infrastructure would be required across development sites in the precinct to address stormwater runoff. The relevant council DCP specifies stormwater management guidelines that will apply to future development applications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td>The electricity infrastructure supplying the portion of the precinct to the west of the main railway line that is within the Parramatta LGA is nearing capacity. Individual lot requirements will be identified and service provision addressed at future development stages across the whole of the precinct.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>There is no recycled water program in the vicinity of the precinct. Pipe amplifications and/or changes to the system may be required for water and waste water to meet the requirements for higher density buildings. This will be determined at the detailed development stages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Direct consultations has not yet been undertaken, however any required augmentation of communications services will be the responsibility the developer at the future DA stages.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10.2 State infrastructure upgrades – Growth Infrastructure Plan

Infrastructure upgrades will be required to facilitate the development of the precinct. These works will also provide regional road benefits in addition to capacity for growth within the precinct. Funding for these initial works will be addressed through a Growth Infrastructure Plan for consideration by government and existing budget allocations.

Upgrades to various intersections have been identified to address the additional traffic movements which would be generated by the proposal. The 2011 study included detailed modelling and assessment of traffic issues and identifies the following upgrade works required to accommodate the precinct’s development and address existing regional traffic issues:

- Epping Road/Essex Street intersection
• Epping Road/Blaxland Road intersection
• carriageway widening – Epping Road
• Carlingford Road/Beecroft Road intersection
• pedestrian/cycle footbridges over the rail line.

Funding for the initial works listed above has been provided as part of the NSW Government’s Housing Acceleration Fund. This is discussed in more detail in Section 9 of this report.

The Growth Infrastructure Plan will be used to inform the state government’s budget allocation process to ensure coordinated delivery of state infrastructure required to achieve the proposed growth in the precinct. The department will continue to liaise with relevant government agencies in finalising the Growth Infrastructure Plan for the project.

10.3 Local development contributions

In addition to the infrastructure requirements required to service future development in the precinct, the new residents will require local infrastructure ordinarily provided by the respective councils and funded by development contributions.

This infrastructure would be provided within the site and within the wider LGAs. To contribute to each council’s provision of this infrastructure, local Section 94 development contribution requirements will be imposed on all future development within the precinct.

The councils’ existing Section 94 Development Contributions Plans apply to their respective parts of the precinct. These plans are required to be regularly updated to reflect changes in planning frameworks and changing community needs. The Department is seeking to assist the Council’s (as required) to undertake any necessary reviews of existing plans so that they can reflect the future requirements of the centre.

The additional growth that is expected to be accommodated by the structure plan rezoning will be required to make contribution under the relevant plan in force at the time of the determination of a specific development application.
11 Consultation

11.1 Consultation processes

An extensive program of consultation has been undertaken throughout the precinct investigations and structure plan development. The consultation program is designed to continue throughout the public exhibition process and beyond.

Full details of the proposed consultation activities and issues raised to date can be found in the consultation strategy contained in Appendix I.

Consultation to date includes:

- individual briefings with Parramatta and Hornsby councils and government agencies
- establishment of an agency working group consisting of staff from the department, Parramatta City Council, Hornsby Shire Council, TfNSW and RMS. The group met periodically during the investigation process to identify, discuss and resolve issues relating to the proposal
- establishment of a steering committee consisting of Parramatta City and Hornsby Shire councillors and staff as well as staff from the department and key agencies (TfNSW and RMS). To date the steering committee has met on two occasions and is expected to meet again during and/or after the public exhibition meeting
- establishment of a community reference group, which will comprise representatives from local environmental, heritage, land owner and business groups. This group will provide detailed, ongoing feedback on the proposal and will meet during and following the public exhibition period.

11.2 Key issues raised

The key issues raised during the consultation process relate to the future built form, status and timing of infrastructure works and extent of public domain improvements proposed under the rezoning proposal. Key issues are:

- concerns regarding traffic congestion and accessibility for both the regional and local road network
- concerns regarding the scale of the future built form (density and height)
- the adequate provision for and embellishment of open space
- flexibility required in relation to the future development of key development sites
- the ability of the structure plan to assist with improving connectivity through and within the precinct.
12 Economic assessment

The economic assessment has considered the demand for and feasibility of new dwellings, retail and commercial uses in the precinct, and ultimately the economic viability of the precinct as a whole.

12.1 Residential demand

The Metropolitan Plan acknowledges that housing will need to be provided for workers within strategic centres. It also focuses on the delivery of housing within close proximity to public transport. A key action of the plan is the aim to locate 80 per cent of all new housing within walking distance of centres with good public transport (Action B1.3).

The precinct is in close proximity to public transport infrastructure servicing key employment centres. It is therefore considered a suitable location to respond to the housing need without generating sustainable additional demands on Sydney’s road network.

The Metropolitan Plan focuses on providing for higher density living, indicating that while Sydney’s population is growing, the average household size is falling, creating demand for smaller, and more affordable homes.

Currently, 65 per cent of dwellings in the precinct are detached houses. The structure plan provides for an increase in the number of new dwellings in close proximity to Epping railway station which will provide for more housing choice in the precinct, including households who cannot afford to purchase a detached dwelling on a large block, those who want to live in smaller dwellings requiring less maintenance, and those who seek more compact dwelling styles in return for increased proximity to transport and services.

12.2 Residential feasibility

The economic assessment prepared for the 2011 study tested the viability of new residential development in mixed used buildings in the town centre, based on existing and proposed development controls. The analysis took into consideration existing land values, unit sales and size of comparable developments, construction costs, council fees and charges, and other miscellaneous costs. A sufficient profit margin is also required, with the industry standard at 20 per cent.

A number of sites within the precinct were tested. Sites tested included:

- 38-48 Langston Place
- 56a-72 Rawson Street and 56-77 Beecroft Road (land between the Epping Hotel site and Genesis building adjoining Carlingford Road)
- 3-9 Bridge Street and 46 Rawson Road
- 1a-1b Bridge Street and 33-38 Beecroft Road.
For each site tested, it was found that the controls did not generally provide for feasible development and therefore it was unlikely to be redeveloped. The most significant controls that affected feasibility were floor space ratio and car parking requirements. Different scenarios were tested by Hill PDA using greater floor space ratios and reduced car parking provisions for these site which demonstrated that this would make developments more viable.

Further testing was undertaken as part of the 2011 study review. The department engaged Hill PDA to test controls for four key sites in the precinct, chosen because they are large and in single ownership which makes redevelopment more likely in the short to medium term. The sites tested were:

- Epping Business Park, between Beecroft and Ray Roads
- Cambridge Office Park, between Cambridge and Oxford Streets
- Epping Hotel site on Beecroft Road
- church owned land in Pembroke and Oxford Streets.

The findings of the testing were considered and assisted in the determination of floor space, height and car parking controls in the structure plan, along with the preferred built form outcomes discussed in this report.

### 12.3 Retail uses

The precinct currently has about 13,000m² GFA of retail floor space. Most of the retail floor space is in the form of small specialty shops, with the majority of retail premises, including a Coles supermarket, on the western side of the rail line.

The Hill PDA report prepared for the 2011 study found there are existing constraints for successful retail activity in the centre. This includes poor access to the western side of the centre for those residents living on the eastern side. The attractiveness of the centre is also affected by busy arterial roads and poor appearance and functionality of the commercial centre.

The Hill PDA study found that residents in the precinct generally travel to centres such as Carlingford Court and Macquarie Centre to make large purchases, with small and more day to day service shopping in the Epping town centre. It is unlikely the town centre could redevelop to compete with the larger centres, however there would be enough demand from existing and future residents shopping in the town centre to grow, although its main role would still continue to be for more service retail.

It was estimated that a supermarket and additional specialty shops could be provided on the eastern side of the rail line on one of the larger development sites. The character of this street as an ‘eat street’ could be reinforced for it to become an attractive retail street.

The structure plan provides for approximately 5,000-7,500m² GFA of retail development, mostly within the B2 zoned town centre core. There may also be additional neighbourhood shops within the R4 zone, as these are a permissible use in this zone.

### 12.4 Commercial office space

There is currently 55,000m² GFA of commercial office space in the precinct. This includes the two office parks in Cambridge Street and Beecroft Road in the Hornsby LGA.
The 2011 study raised concerns that demand for office space in Epping is falling due to competition from specialised centres such as Macquarie Park and Norwest Business Park.

It is highly likely that the demand for floor office space will fall in the centre as it becomes increasingly important for residential and service retail activity. Demand for commercial office space is therefore likely to reduce and predominantly serve the local residential community.