

Item No: ELPP037/18

#### PLANNING PROPOSAL REQUEST AND VPA FOR 4-12 RAILWAY STREET, LIDCOMBE – PRELIMINARY PUBLIC EXHIBITION AND TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT

Responsible Division: Officer: File Number: Environment & Infrastructure Manager Strategic Planning PP-4/2017

Lodged	21 September 2017		
Proponent	Lidcombe Property (NSW) Pty Ltd		
Owners	Lidcombe Property (NSW) Pty Ltd		
Description of Land	4-12 Railway Street Lidcombe comprising: Lot 100 DP793305; Lot 38 DP222712; Lot 1, 5, 6, 7 and 8 of DP387 (7 lots and 1 laneway). All lots have previously been developed under the previous industrial zoning.		
Site area	The total site area is approximately 6,500m <sup>2</sup> : B4 zoned land (5,625m <sup>2</sup> ); RE1 zoned land 875m <sup>2</sup> .		
Proposal summary	Increase the maximum FSR and building height (as described below). Indicative development concept envisages approximately 380 apartments and 900m <sup>2</sup> commercial/retail floor space. The proposal is accompanied by a public benefit offer of the dedication of the RE1 Public Recreation zoned land to Council.		
Existing Zoning and Planning Controls	Land Use Zoning	B4 Mixed Use RE1 Public Recreation 32 m on B4 zone	
	Maximum Building Height Maximum Floor space	Nil on RE1 zone 5:1 on B4 zone	
	Ratio (FSR)	Nil on RE1 zone	
Draft Lidcombe Town	Land Use Zoning	no change	
Centre Strategy Zoning and Planning Controls as exhibited	Maximum Building Height	45m on B4 zone Nil on RE1 zone	
	Maximum Floor Space Ratio (FSR)	5:1 on B4 zone Minimum 0.5:1 non-residential Nil on RE1 zone	
Requested Zoning	Land Use Zoning	no change	
and Planning Controls	Maximum Building Height	62m on B4 zone Nil on RE1 zone	
	Floor Space Ratio (FSR)	5.65:1 on B4 zone Nil on RE1 zone	
Recommended	Land Use Zoning	no change	



Zoning and Planning Controls	Maximum Building Height	45m on B4 zone generally 55m on limited area in NE of site Nil on RE1 zone
	Floor Space Ratio (FSR)	5:1 on B4 zone Nil on RE1 zone
Heritage	Nil	
Disclosure of political donations and gifts	Nil	
Previous Considerations	Nil	

#### SUMMARY:

A Planning Proposal Request was lodged with Cumberland Council for 4-12 Railway Street Lidcombe, on 21 September 2017 that sought to amend the planning controls under the Auburn LEP 2010 for the site as follows:

- to increase the maximum height of buildings from 32m to 62m
- to increase the FSR from 5:1 to 5.65:1

Preliminary community consultation was undertaken in relation to the Planning Proposal Request between 10 October and 7 November 2017. A total of six (6) submissions were received.

A strategic merit assessment and testing of the proposed controls has been undertaken. The findings are as follows:

- There is merit in increasing maximum building height on this site.
- An increase to 45m would enable the FSR potential to be realised.
- An increase in FSR above the current 5:1 is not necessary, nor warranted in the circumstances.
- There would be an increase in yield that could be realised (approximately 30 dwellings and 1,100m2 commercial GFA) just as a result of increased height controls.
- There would be benefit in having a limited portion at a higher height of 55m in the north-eastern quarter to enable a reduction in the south-west quarter of the site, improving sunlight access to Friends Park.
- The requested proposal and proposed VPA offer appear to represent more benefit to the proponent than the public.



## **REPORT:**

## 1. Background and Context

The site is located on the southern side of Railway Street in Lidcombe and is bound by Railway Street and the heavy rail (passenger and freight) lines (to the north), Raphael Street (east), Davey Street (south) and properties to the west. The subject site comprises the properties as identified in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Property details of lots (red) within overall subject site (blue outline)

The site area is approximately 6,600m2; of which:

- 5,720m2 is zoned B4 Mixed Use (parcel references 1-6 inclusive).
- 890m2 is zoned RE1 Public Recreation (parcel references 7 and 8). This portion is currently used as a car park.

Figures 2 and 3 illustrate the location of the subject site and surrounds. The site is within the Lidcombe Town centre (eastern edge) and is in proximity to the Rookwood Cemetery State Heritage Item. The subject site is located approximately 200m from Lidcombe Station.





Figure 2: Subject site and locality

# 2. Planning Controls

The following provides a summary of the planning controls which apply to the site.

# 2.1 Existing LEP Planning Controls for Site

The existing planning controls that apply to the site under the Auburn LEP 2010 are as follows:

Zoning:	B4 Mixed Use	
(refer figure 3)	RE1 Public Recreation	
Maximum height of buildings:	32m - for the B4 Mixed Use zoned land	
(refer figure 4)	No value - for the RE1 zoned land	
Floor Space Ratio (FSR):	5:1 - for the B4 Mixed Use zoned land	
(refer figure 5)	No FSR - for the RE1 Public Recreation zoned	
	land	
Land Reservation Acquisition	Over two (2) lots – those lots zoned RE1 Public	
(LRA): (refer figure 6)	Recreation	





Figure 3: Existing land use zoning of subject site (Auburn LEP 2010)





Figure 4: Existing maximum height of buildings control for subject site





Figure 5: Existing floor space ratio (FSR) control for subject site



Figure 6: Existing land reservation for acquisition (LRA) map (Auburn LEP 2010) showing subject site (bound in blue)



## 2.2 Auburn Development Control Plan 2010

The Auburn Development Control Plan (DCP) 2010 currently applies to the site. In addition to the relevant residential and commercial controls, specific controls relating to the Marsden Street Precinct also apply, as outlined below.

The DCP objectives for the Marsden Street precinct include to widen Raphael Street and to ensure development is sensitive to areas of open space including Friends Park and the Jewish Reserve (Local Centres Part – section 15.12).

An associated control of this section (Control D4) states that Raphael Street is to be widened by 2.5m on the western side of that street so as to provide for a widened carriageway and a new pedestrian footpath. This land is to be dedicated to Council. A further control (D5) states that new buildings are to be set back a minimum of 4m from all open spaces – in this case being Friends Park - and the new boundary of Raphael Street created after the dedication per D3. This requirement will directly affect the area of the subject site available for redevelopment and would need to be incorporated into all building designs.

## 2.3 Draft Auburn and Lidcombe Town Centres Strategy

The Draft Auburn and Lidcombe Town Centres Strategy (draft Strategy) dated December 2016 applies to the Auburn and Lidcombe town centres, including the subject site. Under the draft Strategy the developable portion (zoned B4 Mixed Use) of the subject site is located within Precinct 3, and the park portion is located within Precinct 4.

Under the draft Strategy, the subject site (B4 zoned portion) has a recommended maximum building height of 45m. In terms of the FSR, Council resolved that the draft Strategy proceed to public exhibition with a number of other precincts across both town centres (including Precinct 3 in Lidcombe, containing the subject site) with a non-residential component FSR of 0.5:1 (Council minutes of 21 December 2016).

The draft Strategy is currently being reviewed in light of the submissions received during the public exhibition period, and it is anticipated that the draft Strategy will be reported to Council later this year.

## 3. The Proposal

# 3.1 Planning Proposal Request

The Planning Proposal Request seeks two key changes to the existing controls of the Auburn LEP 2010 for that portion of the subject site zoned B4 Mixed Use:

- increase the maximum height of buildings from 32m to 62m.
- increase the FSR from 5:1 to 5.65:1.

The proposal does not seek to amend either the land use zoning or the lots identified for acquisition (LRA) under the Auburn LEP.

The proposal includes a public benefit offer and nominates that a planning agreement may be entered into for the dedication of the RE1 Public Recreation zoned land to Council. The proponent also seeks to the transfer of FSR, being 0.65:1, from that land onto the B4 Mixed Use zoned portion of the subject site and so available for use by the proponent in the future development.

Following an initial review of the planning proposal request, Council sought further information on a number of matters, and updated information was subsequently provided by the proponent. The planning proposal request documents are provided at Attachment 1 and a copy of the Council letter is provided at Attachment 2.

An indicative development concept was provided as part of the Planning Proposal Request. This indicative concept indicates an 18-storey and a 12-storey building fronting Railway Street with a 16-storey and 2-storey building to the rear. All buildings are located on the B4 zoned portion of the site (refer to figures 7 and 8).

The development concept also shows the future extension to Friends Park – being the portion of the site zoned for Re1 Public Recreation.



Figure 7: indicative concept site plan (source PPR Plans page 9)





Figure 8: indicative concept – potential massing (source PPR Plans page 10)

## 3.2 Laneway within site

There is unnamed laneway located approximately half way along Raphael Street and which extends into the site but does not connect with any other street (Figure 1 "portion 4"). The indicative concept design indicates that the laneway would be required as part of the development site. This laneway does not appear to be owned by Council or the proponent. The proponent and Council officers have been in discussion regarding this laneway and the proponent has indicated they may seek to acquire this lane.

If the laneway was not acquired, this would affect the future design of the buildings and public accessway within the site and may also need to accommodate the use of that laneway by vehicles. This is not considered critical to this Planning Proposal process and can be resolved separately.

## 3.3 Requested Controls

The request seeks to amend the Auburn LEP 2010 (LEP) planning controls for the maximum building height and FSR for the B4 Mixed Use zone portion of the site only as shown below. No change is proposed to the RE1 Public Recreation zoned land portion and no change is proposed to the identified area of land reserved for acquisition (by Council) also being the RE1 Public Recreation zoned parcel. Table 2 below compares the existing and proposed LEP planning controls applying to site.

	Existing ALEP 2010 Controls	Planning Proposal	
B4 Zone	Lot 38 DP222712; Lot 100 DP793405; Lot 1 DP397; Lot 5 DP397; Lot 6 DP397; laneway		
Height of Building	32m	62m	
Floor Space Ratio	5:1	5.65:1*	
RE1 zone	Lot 7 DP397; Lot 8 DP397		
Height of Building	nil	No change	
Floor Space Ratio	Nil	*Proposes to transfer FSR from RE1 portion of the site to the B4 portion of the site	

Table 3: Requested changes to Auburn LEP 2010 maps and controls for the site.

Figures 9 -10 show the proposed planning controls for the site, sought by the proponent.







# Figure 13: proposed maximum building height

Figure 14: proposed FSR controls

# 3.4 Public Benefit offer

The planning proposal request included a public benefit offer and associated land valuation for the portion of the land zoned RE1 Public Recreation (lots 7 and 8 of DP 397). The offer proposes to dedicate that area of land (currently zoned RE1 under Auburn LEP 2010) identified for the future park, to Council. Relatedly, the proponent seeks to redistribute the density (FSR) of that RE1 zoned land onto the remainder of their site (the B4 Mixed Use zoned land). The proponent argues that had the RE1 zoned land not been identified by Council for a future park extension, it would otherwise have been zoned B4.

The proponent states that the increase in FSR that would be provided/transferred is completely offset by the proposed dedication of the RE1 Public Recreation zoned land to Council. As such Council would not need to pay any funds to the proponent as would be required if the land was acquired by Council. The proponent also indicates this dedication could be formalised through as planning agreement.

The proponent's offer does not seek exemption from s7.11 development contributions under the Auburn Contributions Plan. However, it proposes that no contributions under Council's VPA Policy would be provided given the community



benefit that will be received through the dedication of the land for the park. The VPA Policy seeks 50% of the value of the uplift to be provided as public benefit. This does not appear to be achieved and further valuation advice will be obtained for the purposes of negotiation.

Council has previously nominated the specific lots for acquisition to extend the park under Auburn LEP 2010, and the land in question is currently zoned RE1. There is no FSR attributable to the RE1 zoned portion of the land. However, it is noted that the RE1 zoned land has an acquisition value which is generally based in the adjacent zone.

It is noted that under Council's current contributions plan, contributions are generally offsets on a like-for-like basis. For example, dedication of land for local open space may result in agreement to offset contributions for local open space; however contributions for traffic work and regional open space would still be required.

In the case of the current public benefit offer, it is recommended that Council continue negotiations with the landowner as to both the extent of public benefit, and the mechanism for any dedication of the RE1 zoned portion of the site to Council. It is noted that both Council and the proponent have received valuations for this portion of land to assist in these negotiations and further valuation advice will be received in relation to value uplift. It is also noted that Council's new draft contributions plan for Cumberland is substantially progressed, and is expected to contributions rates appropriate to funding the necessary infrastructure in this area and to be more equitable across the LGA as a whole.

## 4. Preliminary Exhibition of Planning Proposal Request

The preliminary public exhibition occurred between 10 October 2017 and 7 November 2017.

## 4.1 Matters Raised in submissions

Six (6) submissions were received in response to the preliminary public exhibition. The key issues raised in the submissions, and a response to these, is provided below (refer to Attachment 3 for a more detailed summary):

- overdevelopment of site, scale of development not appropriate to location, visual impact to area;
- amenity impacts –overshadowing, wind tunnel, visual, heritage items;
- benefit to developer at detriment of local community;
- reliance on the draft Auburn and Lidcombe Town Centres Strategy; and
- increased pressure on infrastructure especially schools and public transport.

The following comments are made in response to the concerns raised in the submissions:



- The assessment report has considered the proposal against the recommendations of the draft Auburn and Lidcombe Town Centres Strategy as exhibited. It is recognised that the proposed height of 62m is significantly higher than is currently permitted, and is also higher than that recommended in the draft Strategy as exhibited. Further, the proposed height is not consistent with the objectives of the draft Strategy relating to a transition of height from the town centre core, stepping down towards the edges of the centre. The strategic merit assessment undertaken by Council's planning officers reflects consideration of this draft Strategy.
- An urban design assessment of the proposed height in relation to the FSR has also been undertaken as is provided in the assessment report. This assessment also considered the broader issues of amenity, overshadowing, and the scale of the development.
- While the potential for wind tunnel effects generated by taller buildings is acknowledged, this aspect is better addressed at development application stage, when actual building designs are assessed. Drawings provided at planning proposal stage are indicative concepts only. The development would also need to take into consideration the SEPP65 and its guidelines that consider building separation distances.
- An area of communal open space for residents will need to be provided within the development. The RE1 zoned land within the site is for the planned future expansion of Friends Park, and this need for additional public open space was recognised under previous council strategic planning and hence this zoning allocated. The expansion of the park is not intended to 'offset' this proposal.
- Council recognises the growth occurring in Lidcombe and other town centres and is future planning to provide additional facilities and spaces where these are needed and of an appropriate type.
- While Council can highlight potential demand for infrastructure such as schools and public transport, these are the responsibility of the State Government. The relevant state Government agencies will be notified of the proposal and provided an opportunity to comment as part of the subsequent public exhibition following the gateway determination (should the proposal proceed). Furthermore, state agencies are in communication with the Department of Planning and Environment and with Council on planning proposals and related development in the area so as to take this into account in their future demand planning for respective infrastructure.

The recommendations made in this report reflect due consideration of the concerns raised in the submissions.

# 5. Merit Assessment of Planning Proposal Request

The following provides an overview of the key aspects of the strategic merit assessment undertaken on the Planning Proposal Request. The detailed



Assessment Report is provided at Attachment 4. The key elements of this assessment are summarised as follows:

- At 62m this building would be higher than currently permitted or envisioned in the core of Lidcombe Town Centre, and would be almost double the maximum height of buildings of the nearby properties to the east and south (having maximum height controls in the order of 32-38 metres).
- The heights nominated in the draft Strategy reflect the planning principle of creating a transition in building height and form from the core of centres where higher density is expected, down to a lower scale of development at the edges, creating a transition to typically lower scale density in the surrounding area beyond the town centre. The proposal conflicts with this intent by seeking significantly higher building heights on the edge of the centre.
- The FSR increase is nominated as the transfer of FSR from that portion of the site zoned RE1, and is proposed as a public benefit offer to dedicate the portion of the site zoned RE1 to Council. However as the RE1 zoned portion of the site has no FSR currently under Auburn LEP 2010. It is recommended that Council continue to negotiate with the landowner regarding the extent of public benefit and the mechanism for transferring the RE1 zoned portion of the site to Council ownership.
- At a proposed height of 62m and a proposed FSR of 5.65:1 the modelling provided with the proposal demonstrates there will be significant overshadowing impacts on Friends Park and the future extension of this park. Retention of the existing maximum FSR under Auburn LEP 201 of 5:1 would somewhat minimise this impact, noting that the FSR control is a maximum not a minimum control. A lower height of 45m is recommended, consistent with Council's draft Strategy. The proponent has demonstrated that building massing will have a key influence on the overshadowing impact on Friends Park (including the extension of this park). Maintaining the current FSR of 5:1, along with careful building massing could reduce potential overshadowing to both the park and properties to the south. Indicative testing by Council officers as part of the assessment process has found that a taller element on the north eastern corner of the site, offset by a corresponding lower building height on the south western part of the site (B4 zoned land) could achieve reduced overshadowing impacts on Friends Park, whilst still broadly in keeping with the principle of transition of building heights. It is recommended that more detailed modelling and testing be undertaken to confirm the reduced overshadowing impacts resulting from the recommended heights, and appropriate DCP controls.
- Although the Council resolution preceding public exhibition of the draft Strategy included an additional requirement for a minimum 0.5:1 non-residential FSR component for a number of precincts within both centres (including the subject site), analysis undertaken during the assessment of the planning proposal request found that enforcing this requirement would likely result in unsatisfactory design outcomes at ground level. Further, a minimum 0.5:1 non-residential FSR in an edge of centre location is not considered critical. Analysis of this during the assessment has indicated that a minimum 0.4:1 non-



residential FSR could be achieved on this site, without having adverse consequences for detailed design at ground level.

#### CONCLUSION:

Council has undertaken a preliminary public exhibition followed by an assessment of the planning proposal request (Proposal) for the property at 4-12 Railway Street Lidcombe. The proposal seeks to amend the planning controls for the B4 Mixed Use zoned portion of the site:

- to increase the maximum height of buildings from 32m to 62m
- to increase the floor space ratio control (FSR) from 5:1 to 5.65:1

Six submissions were received during the preliminary exhibition period, raising concerns around the appropriateness of the height and FSR at this location, overdevelopment, impacts on amenity, the additional demand on infrastructure, and the reliance on the draft Auburn and Lidcombe Town Centre Strategy. Responses to these concerns are provided in this report and these concerns have been considered in the strategic merit assessment and the resulting recommendations.

The assessment of the proposal has identified a number of issues with the proposal, including the proposed height and FSR, how the draft Strategy has been referenced to justify those proposed controls, inconsistency of the proposal with the planning direction for the centre, the bulk and scale of the resulting building and associated issues of overshadowing, and amenity. The public benefit offer has also been reviewed and recommendations made accordingly.

For these reasons it is recommended that the planning proposal request as proposed (62m maximum building height and 5.65:1 maximum FSR) not be supported, and instead a lower height and FSR be pursued.

#### CONSULTATION:

There are no further consultation processes for Council associated with this report.

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no further financial implications for Council associated with this report.

#### **POLICY IMPLICATIONS:**

There are no policy implications for Council associated with this report.

#### **COMMUNICATION / PUBLICATIONS:**

There are no communication / publications implications for Council associated with this report.

#### **REPORT RECOMMENDATION:**



It is recommended that:

- 1. A maximum FSR of 5.65:1 not be supported, and the existing maximum FSR of 5:1 under Auburn LEP 2010 be retained for the B4 zoned part of the subject site.
- 2. A maximum building height of 62m not be supported, and instead the following maximum building heights be proposed for the B4 zoned part of the subject site:
  - i) A maximum building height of 45m for the site generally;
  - A taller element up to 55m for a limited (33m x 33m) portion in the north eastern corner of the site to be shown on the LEP Height of Buildings Map;
  - iii) The taller element be offset by a corresponding area in the south western part of the site having a lower maximum building height to minimise overshadowing of Friend Park and properties to the south, via a DCP control; and
- 3. More detailed modelling be undertaken prior to any submission for a Gateway Determination, to confirm the building heights approach outlined in 2. above and to determine the DCP controls to minimise overshadowing of Friend Park in mid-winter.
- 4. That the proposal include a minimum non-residential FSR component of 0.4:1, and this be considered in more detail with further modelling and testing and further work on the draft Strategy.
- 5. That Council continue negotiations with the landowner as to both the extent of public benefit, and the mechanism for any dedication of the RE1 zoned portion of the site to Council.

## ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Planning Proposal Request (revised concept)
- 2. Council Letter to Proponent April 2018
- 3. Table of Submissions received during the preliminary consultation period
- 4. Planning Proposal Request Assessment Report
- 5. Scenario Analysis Summary



## b) Replacement of condition 4a) as follows:

Prior to the commencement of any works on the site, all tree protection measures detailed in the Tree Protection Plan approved under deferred commencement condition DC1 shall be implemented.

#### c) Replacement of condition 35 as follows:

A right-of-way for vehicle access in favour of lots 1 and 2 shall be created over the access handle (which shall form part of lot 3). In this regard:

- a) Cumberland Council shall be nominated as the authority to vary or modify the rights-of-way;
- b) The relevant document shall be approved by the Manager Technical Services, Cumberland Council **prior to issue of the subdivision certificate**.

#### d) Insertion of new condition 49 as follows:

The proposed planting of a row of Lilly Pilly's along the eastern boundary of the subject site and northern boundary adjoining the rear of No. 66 Cleone Street shall be planted prior to the issue of the Subdivision Certificate

For: Julie Walsh (Chairperson), Brian Kirk, Larissa Ozog and Paul Moulds AM

#### Against: Nil

#### Reasons for decision:

The Panel generally concurs with the reasons and recommendations in the Council Officer's report.

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#### RESOLVED

The Panel recommends that:

1. A maximum FSR of 5.65:1 not be supported, and the existing maximum FSR of 5:1 under Auburn LEP 2010 be retained for the B4 zoned part of the subject site.



- 2. A maximum building height of 62m not be supported, and instead the following maximum building heights be proposed for the B4 zoned part of the subject site:
  - i) A maximum building height of 45m for the site generally;
  - A taller element up to 55m for a limited (33m x 33m) portion in the north eastern corner of the site to be shown on the LEP Height of Buildings Map;
  - iii) The taller element be offset by a corresponding area in the south western part of the site having a lower maximum building height to minimise overshadowing of Friend Park and properties to the south, via a DCP control; and
  - 3. More detailed modelling be undertaken prior to any submission for a Gateway Determination, to confirm the building heights approach outlined in 2. above and to determine the DCP controls to minimise overshadowing of Friend Park in mid-winter. The Panel recommends that a better mix of dwellings be incorporated into any future development modelling.
  - 4. That the proposal include a minimum non-residential FSR component of 0.4:1, and this be considered in more detail with further modelling and testing and further work on the draft Strategy.
  - 5. That Council continue negotiations with the landowner as to both the extent of public benefit, and the mechanism for any dedication of the RE1 zoned portion of the site to Council.
  - 6. That Council give consideration to a lower FSR on sites on the periphery of the Lidcombe Town Centre as the maximum FSR of 5:1 is difficult to achieve having regard to appropriate built form outcomes. This would achieve a better transition from the commercial core to the periphery of the Lidcombe Town Centre.

For: Julie Walsh (Chairperson), Brian Kirk, Larissa Ozog and Paul Moulds AM

#### Against: Nil

#### Reasons for decision:

The Panel generally agrees with the reasons in the Council Officer's report. The Panel has ammended the officers recommendation as follows:

1. The addition of the following words at the end of paragraph 3; The Panel recommends that a better mix of dwellings be incorporated into any future development modelling.



2. The addition of paragraph 6; That Council give consideration to a lower FSR on sites on the periphery of the Lidcombe Town Centre as the maximum FSR of 5:1 is difficult to achieve having regard to appropriate built form outcomes. This would achieve a better transition from the commercial core to the periphery of the Lidcombe Town Centre.

The closed session of the meeting here closed at 3:05p.m.

The open session of the meeting here opened at 3:08p.m.

The Chairperson delivered the Cumberland Local Planning Panel's resolutions to the Public Gallery.

The meeting terminated at 3:10p.m.

Signed:

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Julie Walsh Chairperson