

INNOVATIVE

ITEM NUMBER	6.1
SUBJECT	Planning Proposal for 163-165 George Street, Parramatta (St Ioannis Greek Orthodox Church)
REFERENCE	RZ/3/2018 - D06797190
REPORT OF	Project Officer
LANDOWNER APPLICANT	The Hellenic Orthodox Community of Parramatta and Districts Think Planners Pty Ltd

PURPOSE:

To seek the Local Planning Panel's (LPP) endorsement of a Planning Proposal to:

- Increase height of building controls for a part of the site; and
- Include a clause which allows car parking on the site to be used for paid parking by the general public during periods of low demand by the church;

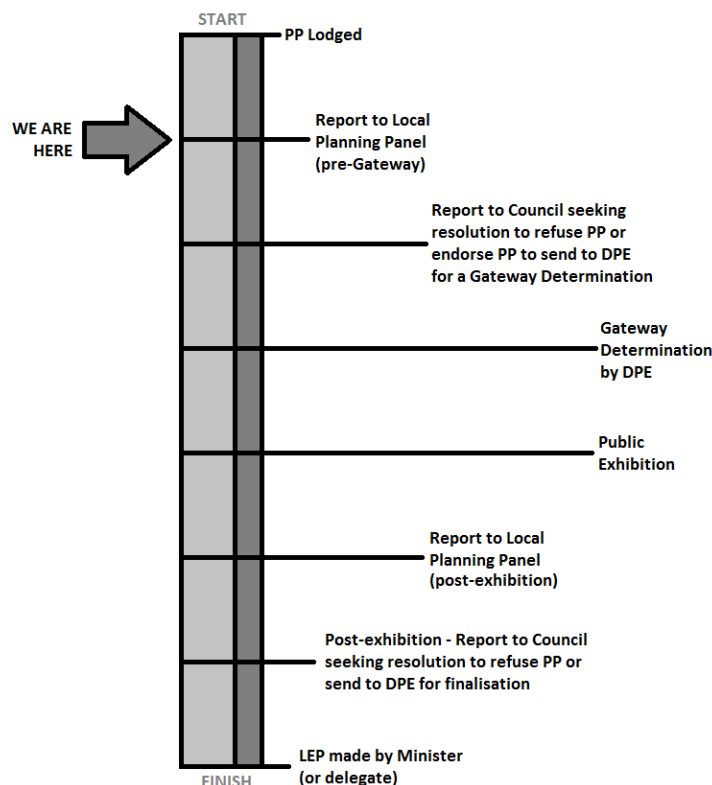
for the purposes of requesting a Gateway Determination from the Department of Planning and Environment.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Local Planning Panel recommend to Council:

- a) **That** Council endorse the Planning Proposal at **Attachment 1** for land at 163-165 George and 1 Purchase Streets, Parramatta, which seeks to:
 - i. Amend the control on the Height of Buildings map from RL 14 metres to RL 21 metres, but only on the part of the site at which the proposed Cathedral is to be built;
 - ii. Insert a clause so that the Height of Buildings control on the site can be exceeded for the purposes of a steeple or similar, but only if the consent authority is satisfied that the heritage impact is acceptable and the height is no greater than RL 40m (allow a steeple up to RL 34m and cross upon it up to RL 40m); and
 - iii. Add car parking as an additional permitted use on the site.
- b) **That** the Planning Proposal be forwarded to the Department of Planning and Environment to request a Gateway determination be issued.
- c) **That** Council advise the Department of Planning and Environment that the Chief Executive Officer will be exercising the plan-making delegations for this Planning Proposal as authorised by Council.
- d) **Further, that** Council authorise the Chief Executive Officer to correct any minor anomalies of a non-policy and administrative nature that may arise during the plan-making process.

Planning Proposal Timeline



SITE DESCRIPTION

1. The subject site is located at 163-165 George and 1 Purchase Streets, Parramatta and has an area of 13,425 square metres (Refer to **Figure 1**). The site was formally used as the Parramatta Workers Club and contains a large two-storey building and associated at-grade car parking. The site is currently owned by The Hellenic Orthodox Community of Parramatta and Districts and the existing building has recently been repurposed as a Place of Public Worship with community facilities and a child care centre.
2. The site is a corner lot and fronts George Street to the north and Purchase Street to the east. A heritage listed dwelling and Robin Thomas Reserve adjoin the site to the west and 1-2 storey medium-density dwellings adjoin the site to the south.

Figure 1 – Site location map (site shown outlined in yellow)

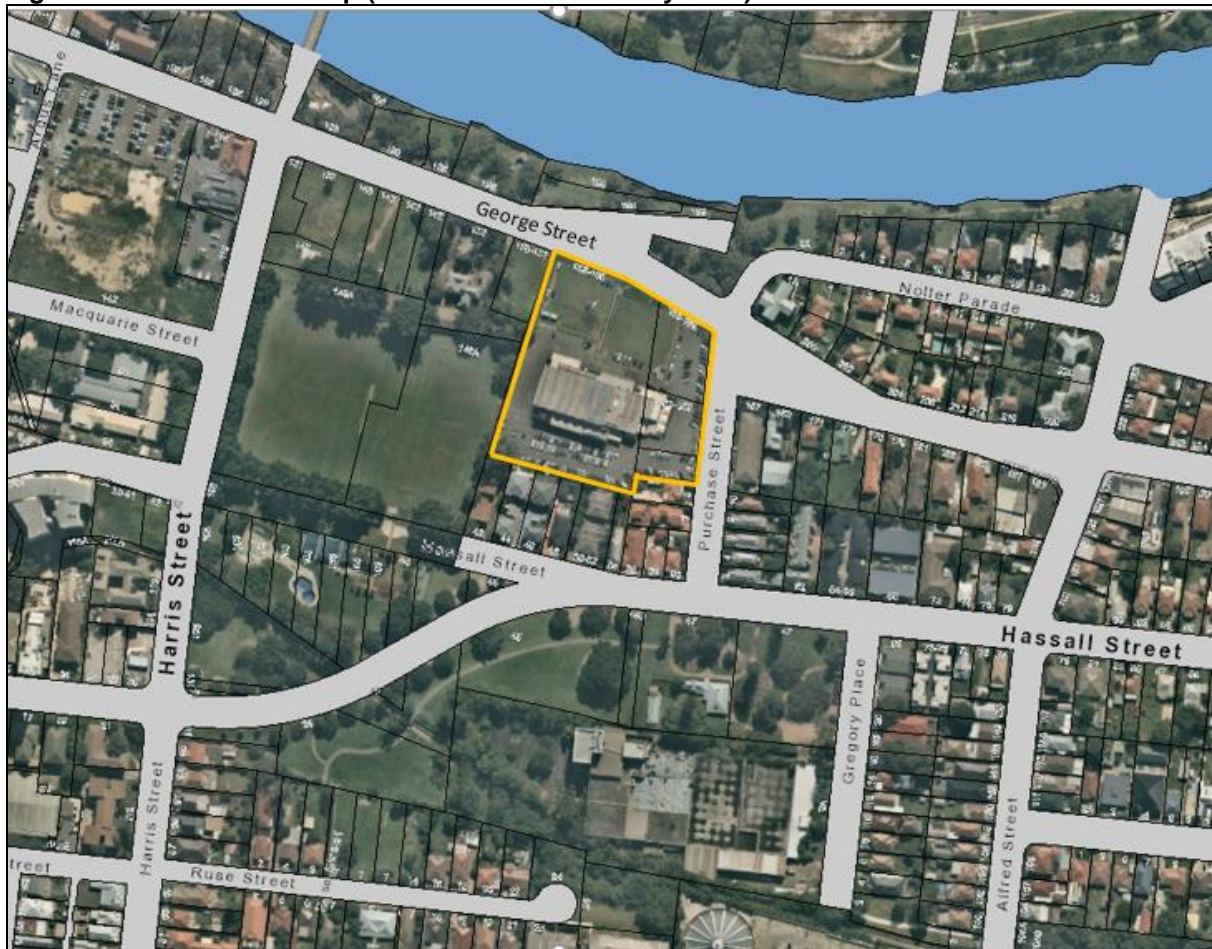


Figure 2 – The site viewed from the corner of Argyle and Marsden Streets



CURRENT PLANNING CONTROLS

3. Under the Parramatta Local Environmental Plan 2011 (Parramatta LEP2011) the site is subject to the following controls:
- Land Use Zoning - SP1 Educational Establishment/Place of Public Worship;
 - Height of Buildings - RL 14 metres;
 - Schedule 1 Additional Permitted Uses - centre-based child care facilities, community facilities, function centres, office premises and restaurants or cafes;
 - Heritage - the site is not listed as an item of heritage significance and is not within a Heritage Conservation Area, but is in the vicinity of several heritage items;
 - Flooding - the site is affected by the Probable Maximum Flood and 100 Year Annual Recurrence Interval; and
 - Floor-space ratio - no floor-space ratio (FSR) control applies to the site.

Figure 3 – Current Land Use Zoning Map

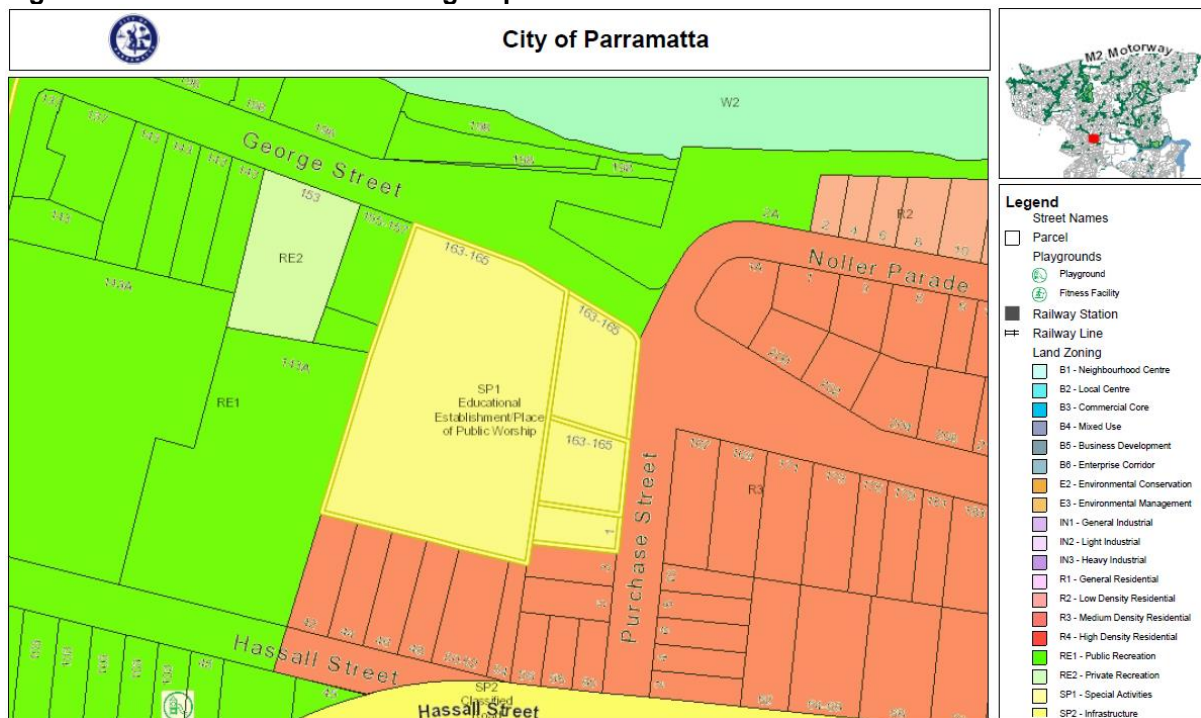


Figure 4 – Current Height of Buildings Map

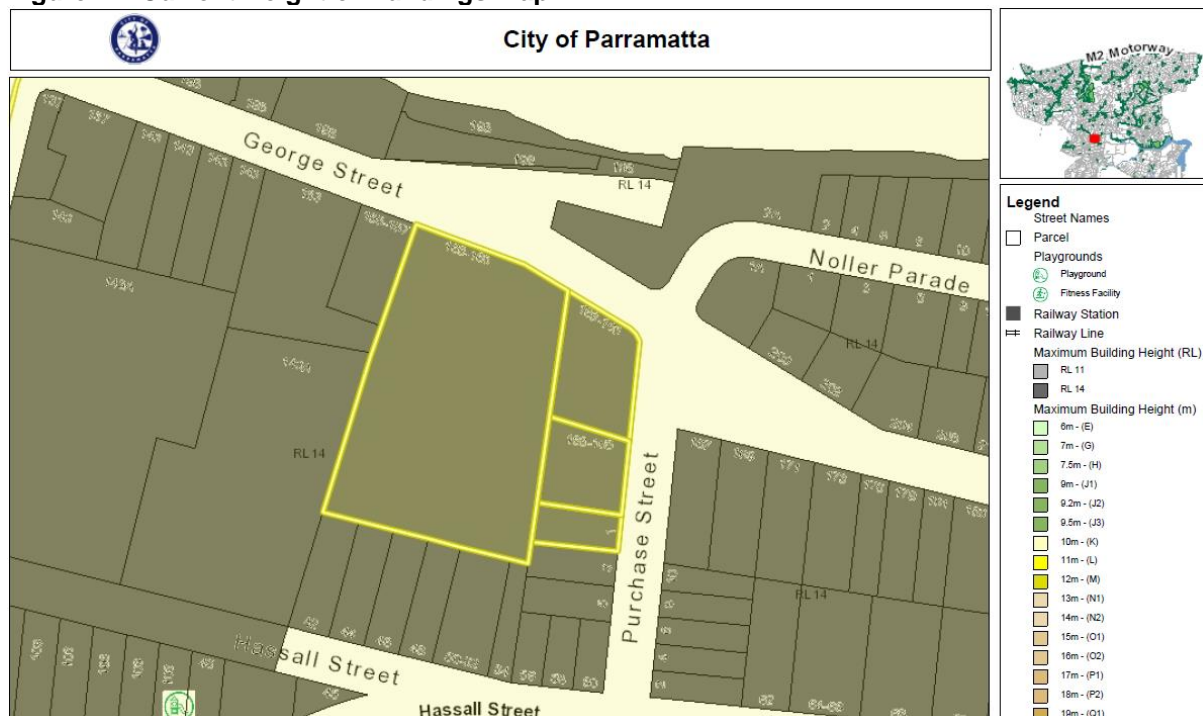


Figure 5 – Current Heritage Map

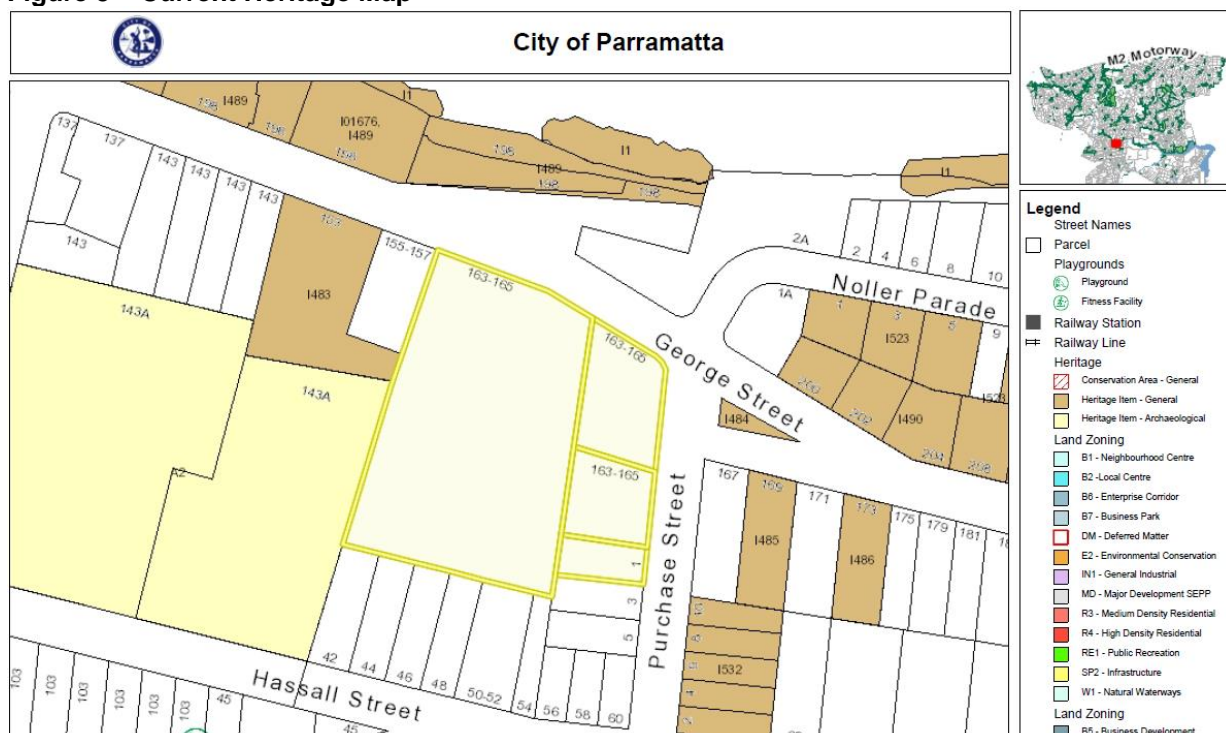
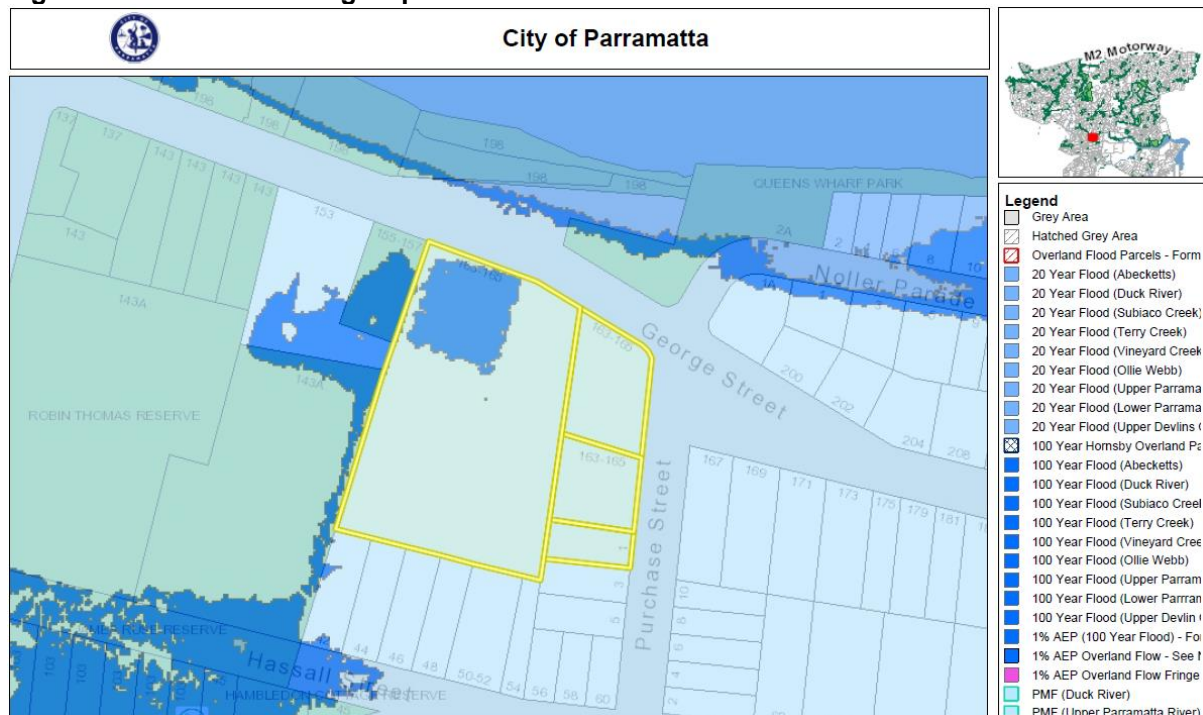


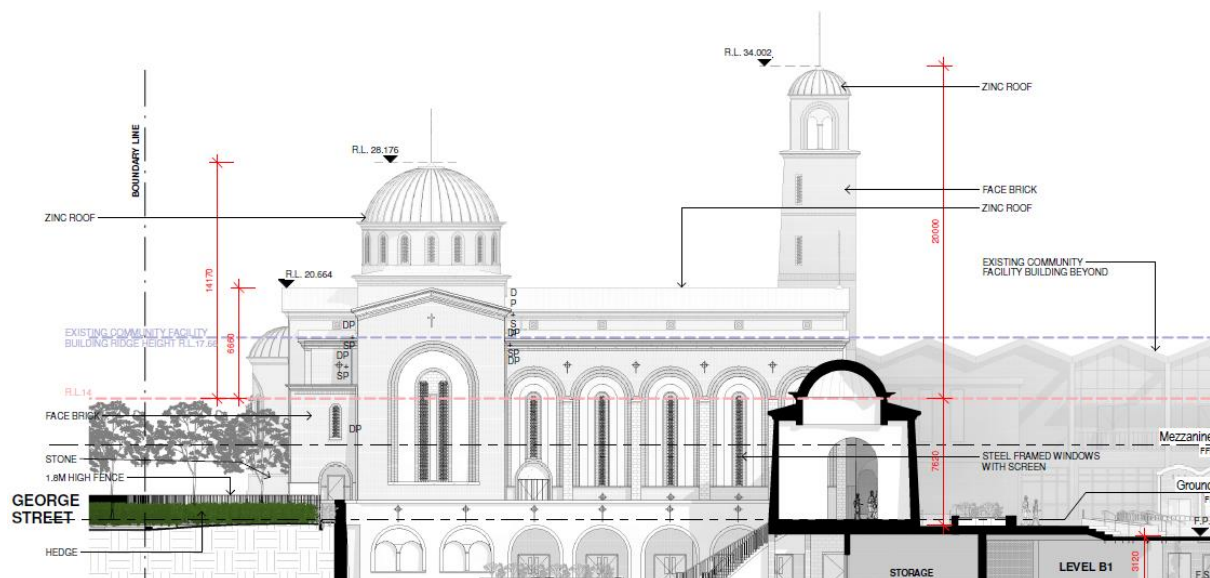
Figure 6 – Current Flooding Map

BACKGROUND

4. On 18 September 2015, the Parramatta Local Environmental Plan 2011 was amended to rezone the subject site from RE2 Private Recreation to SP1 Special Activities (Educational Establishment/Place of Public Worship) following a Planning Proposal lodged by Think Planners consultants on behalf of the landowner. The amendments also included the site in Schedule 1 – Additional Permitted Uses to permit centre-based child care centres, community facilities, function centres, office premises and restaurants or cafes on the site.
5. On 20 April 2016, development consent was issued by Council for the change of use and fit out of the former Parramatta Workers Club to operate as a place of public worship, childcare centre, school community hall, function centre, community rooms with minor external façade and landscaping works.
6. In March 2018, the applicant lodged a Planning Proposal seeking to amend Schedule 1 subclause 10 of the Parramatta LEP 2011, which permits additional uses on the subject site to permit a 'car park'. The purpose of this Planning Proposal is to permit the commercial pay car parking operation when the place of public worship experiences low parking demand i.e. during weekdays.
7. A Development Application was lodged in July 2018 for the construction of a Grand Cathedral, public forecourt space, multipurpose hall and associated basement car parking. The proposed height of the Cathedral steeple is RL 34 metres, not including the spire on the dome.

8. As the current height control for the site is RL 14 metres, the applicant's Development Application included a Clause 4.6 variation seeking exemption from the height control. **Figure 7** indicates the extent of the height of building control variation, with RL 14 metres shown by the red dashed line.
9. Other issues identified by Council staff during the assessment of the Development Application which need to be resolved during the development application assessment process include:
 - Flooding and Engineering related matters – particularly regarding flooding and the location of rooms below ground;
 - The number of car parking spaces proposed – to ensure compliance with relevant DCP car parking rates; and
 - Vehicular access off George Street – as concurrence is required from Transport for NSW in relation to the Parramatta Light Rail.

Figure 7 – An elevation plan of the proposed Cathedral development with heights shown



10. The consent authority for the Development Application on the site will be the Sydney Central City Planning Panel. Council Officers have briefed the Panel on the proposal. The Panel advised Council Officers that the height variation cannot be supported by the Panel.
11. The Panel's position was relayed to the applicant and Council Officers advised the applicant that if they wished to pursue a building with the proposed height, a Planning Proposal seeking to amend the relevant height control is the most appropriate pathway forward.
12. The applicant submitted an addendum to their original Planning Proposal seeking an amendment to the Parramatta LEP 2011 to allow for the Cathedral development, as per the Development Application, through either a written clause to permit the additional height, or an amended site-specific height of buildings control.

KEY ISSUES

13. Following the addendum, the applicant's current Planning Proposal seeks to permit a commercial car park operation as an additional permitted use, and amend the maximum building height controls applicable to the site in order to allow the Development Application for the site to proceed.

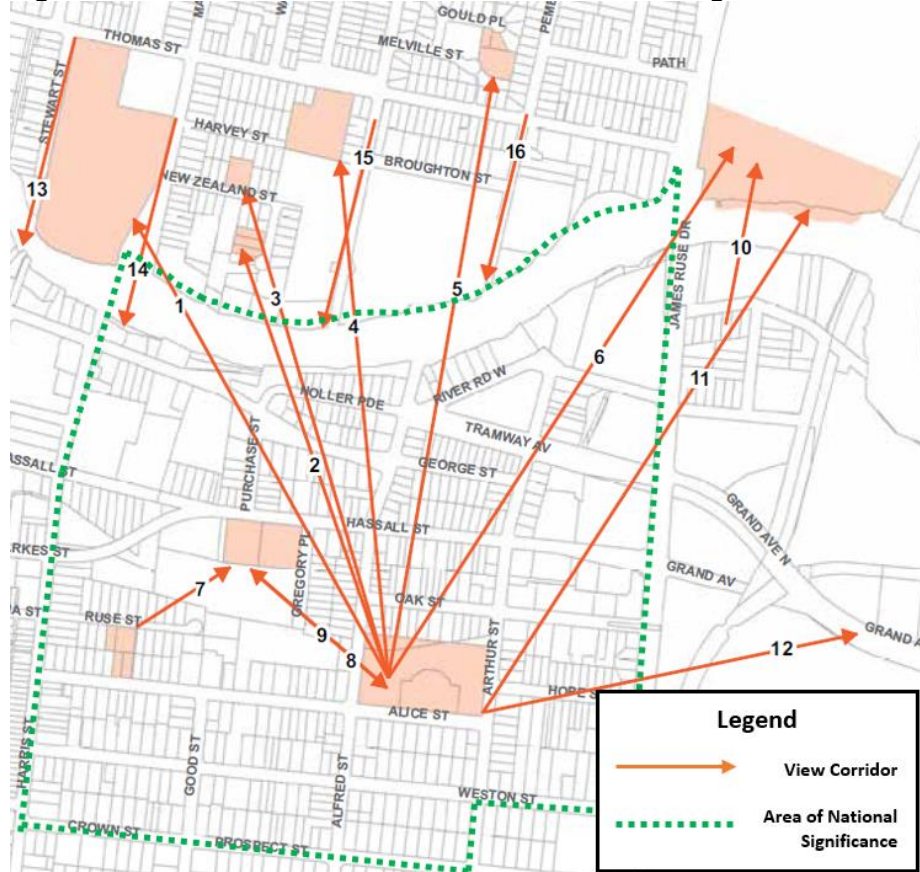
Car parking

14. Council's 2011 Car Parking Strategy encourages car parking on the periphery of the CBD in certain satellite locations. A review of this strategy is currently underway and a shift from locating parking stations on the periphery of the CBD near the inner Parramatta CBD ring road is being considered, given the commitment to Light Rail and announcement of Metro have occurred since 2011. Options being considered include locating car parking close to the outer ring road near public transport nodes so the last part of the trip into the Parramatta CBD can be undertaken on public transport.
15. However, the intent of the car parking strategy is not to encourage property amalgamation in residential areas just outside of the CBD or to have landowners approach Council for a commercial car parking station in an adjoining residential area. Any parking station should be appropriate to the context and not impact on residential amenity.
16. Concern would be raised about the creation of a standalone commercial parking station on the site due to the precedent that could result in unsatisfactory amenity impacts in the form of increased noise and traffic. However, allowing dual use of church parking so it can be used by the public at times of low church demand (i.e. weekdays) is considered appropriate.
17. Maximising the efficiency of use of the car park is appropriate as the subject site is in close proximity to a future Parramatta Light Rail stop. Due to this, the public can avoid driving into the core of the CBD as the proposed public car park fosters park-and-ride options and helps to reduce congestion in the CBD core.
18. A clause that allows for efficient use of church parking in periods of low use by the church can be supported by Council's Traffic and Transport Engineers and Transport Planners. However, this proposed clause will not allow additional parking in excess of what is needed to meet the peak needs of the church.
19. A Development Application will determine the number of car parking spaces on site to meet the needs of the church (and ancillary activities such as childcare, etc.). The clause proposed in this Planning Proposal will allow the applicant to lodge a further Development Application to allow the spaces already approved to be used for pay parking available to the general public at periods when church usage is low.

Height Controls

20. The subject site lies within the Harris Park 'Area of National Significance' adopted by the former Sydney Regional Environmental Plan 28 – Parramatta, now forming part of the Parramatta Development Control Plan 2011. Furthermore, as shown by **Figure 8**, the site is affected by Historic View Corridor 'Number 1'. This view corridor relates to views from Elizabeth Farm to the ridgeline of hills, river basin and trees along the Parramatta River.

Figure 8 – View Corridors within the Area of National Significance



21. Most of the Harris Park 'Area of National Significance' north of Hassall Street, including the subject site, have a Height of Buildings control of RL 14 metres in order to preserve view corridors from Elizabeth Farm. However, the height of the current building on the site is RL 18 metres and exceeds the height control by approximately 4 metres or 29%.
22. The height of the proposed roof ridgeline above the Nave of the Cathedral is approximately RL 21 metres. However, the proposed dome and steeple elements of the Cathedral have heights up to RL 34 metres, with that height not accounting for the spire element on top of the steeple.
23. During the assessment of the applicant's Development Application, Council's Heritage Advisor did not object to the height protrusions, as the tall and narrow form of the steeple and the relatively small footprint of the building are suitable for a height variation and do not negatively impact Historic View Corridor 'Number 1'.

24. In order to ensure that any height increase on the site is consistent with the heritage comments, Council Officers recommend that the Parramatta LEP 2011 be amended to permit additional height by:
 - i. Amending the control on the Height of Buildings map from RL 14 to RL 21, but only on the part of the site at which the proposed Cathedral is to be built;
 - ii. Amending Clause 4.3 so that the Height of Buildings control on the site can be exceeded for the purposes of a steeple or similar, but only if the consent authority is satisfied that the heritage impact is acceptable and the height is no greater than RL 40m (allow a steeple up to RL 34m and cross upon it up to RL 40m).
25. Under this proposed amendment, the risk of developing a building of a larger scale is mitigated and resulting building envelope would be acceptable from a heritage point of view.
26. The proposal does not require an amendment to the Parramatta Development Control Plan 2011.

CONSULTATION

27. The matter will be reported to Council to seek adoption of the Local Planning Panel's recommendation. If Council resolves to proceed with the Planning Proposal, it will be forwarded to the Department of Planning and Environment for a Gateway Determination.
28. If the matter proceeds to public consultation, a report on the outcomes of the public exhibition will be provided to the Panel addressing any objections received. If no objections are received, the matter will be reported directly to Council seeking approval to finalise the Planning Proposal.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION FOR COUNCIL

29. There are no financial implications related to this matter. There is no Planning Agreement associated with the Planning Proposal as the matter does not increase the residential density of the site.

Marko Rubcic
Land Use Project Officer

Jonathon Carle
Land Use Planning Manager

Jennifer Concato
Executive Director City Strategy and Development

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1 Planning Proposal

FOR ACTION

LOCAL PLANNING PANEL

18/06/2019**TO:** Project Officer (Rubcic, Marko)

Subject: Planning Proposal for 163-165 George Street, Parramatta (St Ioannis Greek Orthodox Church)
Target Date: 18/07/2019
Notes:
File <FOLDERNUMBER> D06797190
Reference:

DETERMINATION

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