

The NSW State government's vision to accelerate the delivery of housing supply, choice and affordability to accommodate the growth in the South Subregion involves the identification of suitable locations, with input from Councils. Potential areas considered for housing intensification and urban renewal includes the following areas:

- Employment agglomerations in particular Priority Precincts;
- Areas in established and new centres; and
- Areas along key public transport corridors including the Illawarra Line, South Line and Sydney Rapid Transit along the Bankstown line.

Once the areas are identified for growth, local and State government have the onus to deliver housing stock that aligns with market demand and minimum household projections. It is important to formulate policies that address affordable housing and the provision of appropriate housing stock for people at different stages of their lives.

Local Councils in unison with the NSW State government seek to identify suitable locations for the development of housing and employment as outlined by the Plan for Growing Sydney. The subject sites are at an integral location within the Bexley Town Centre to provide for such visions with the proposed land use, height and FSR amendments directly aiding in achieving this goal. Through these amendments they will strengthen the economic vitality of the existing Bexley Town Centre as well as allowing for the increase in residential availability and diversity within an already well-connected area of high amenity.

2.2 South District Plans

New South Wales is currently undergoing major planning changes with the formation of The Greater Sydney Commission, which will be a governing body that overlooks metropolitan planning. The Greater Sydney Commission has the duty to form partnerships with state and local government to plan for the areas currently identified as subregions in *A Plan for Growing Sydney*.

These individual subregions are in the process of being reclassified as districts. Each district is governed by a Commissioner and a District Plan that is tailored to suit each district's vernacular. The District Plans will elaborate on the objectives of *A Plan for Growing Sydney* on a local level, and influence the delivery of housing, employment and infrastructure. The subject sites proposed for rezoning are located in the South District of Sydney and includes the local government areas of Canterbury, Hurstville, Kogarah, Rockdale and Sutherland.

The District Plan for the South District is yet to be developed and legislated. In the interim, preliminary objectives have been identified to guide planning outcomes. The planning objectives specific to the subject sites can be found in documents that Rockdale City Council considers fundamental in directing strategic planning. Rockdale City Council cites the following documents as significant documents for local strategic planning and urban design strategies:

- *Rockdale City Plan : Community Strategic Plan 2013 -2025;*
- *Rockdale City Urban Strategy 2010; and*
- *Capacity Analysis and Built Form Study September 2010*

Some of the planning objectives in the aforementioned documents have been superseded by current strategic planning work by the NSW state government, but the majority are still relevant in driving strategic planning. The local character of the South District will remain as the key driver in formulating planning priorities. Amidst the change in the structure of local state and local government bodies, there will always be the universal need to provide a growing population with well connected communities that have adequate housing, employment and infrastructure.

3. Local Planning

3.1 Rockdale City Plan: Community Strategic Plan 2013 -2025

The Rockdale City Plan 2013-2025 was adopted by Council in April 2013. It comprises a number of plans that seek to deliver on the community's aspirations. The Community Strategic Plan 2013-2025 seeks to achieve the following four outcomes that cover social, environmental, economic and community leadership issues. These are summarised as follows:

Outcome 1 -Rockdale is a welcoming and creative City with active, healthy and safe communities.

Rockdale City Council endeavours to promote strong social values and a community that is inclusive of all socio-economic groups. Council aims to offer a well-designed neighbourhood and public spaces that facilitate safety, connectivity and social activity. The urban design strategy responds directly to Outcome 1 as it will facilitate:

- enhanced linkages and consolidation in an existing centre enhancing the range of activities available in the centre
- a strategic, rational and sustainable approach to intensification and growth within the Bexley Town Centre in that it considers the relationship between multiple sites.
- revitalisation and expansion of an existing centre increasing the potential services and employment availability in close proximity to existing residents.
- A greater range of housing availability and options to facilitate for a wider range of residents and families.

Outcome 2 - Rockdale is a City with a high quality natural and built environment and valued heritage in liveable neighbourhoods. A City that is easy to get around and has good links and connections to other parts of Sydney and beyond.

Council aims to provide a balance between the LGA's built environment and natural habitat. The cultural heritage of the local area will be protected to achieve a balance between its past influences and present built environment. Effective links serve to connect residents from one destination point to another. The built environment will be planned with a sense of 'place' to reflect the needs of the local population. The urban design strategy will directly deliver on Outcome 2 as it will:

- facilitate improved connectivity and permeability within the Bexley Town Centre; and
- enhance connectivity, service availability and employment opportunities on a public transport route.

Outcome 3 - Rockdale is a City with a thriving economy that provides jobs for local people and opportunities for lifelong learning.

A strong and diverse economy for the local population ranks highly in Council's growth agenda. A range of employment, products, services and lifelong learning are identified as key factors in driving the local economy. The urban design strategy directly responds and delivers on Outcome 3 as it will:

- facilitate expansion and renewal of an existing centre creating greater service availability, employment opportunities and facilitating investment locally;
- promote investment by a motivated land owner and ongoing catalytic economic and multiplier effects; and
- enable the development of a motel, which will provide for visitation in the region.

Outcome 4 - Rockdale is a City with engaged communities, effective leadership and access to decision making.

Rockdale City Council values a high level of community engagement to help with the decision making of issues. Effective governance is achieved through the democratic process of elected representatives who will advocate for the community. Residents are encouraged to participate in planning decisions that influence the delivery of outcomes. The urban design strategy will directly deliver on Outcome 4 as it will:

- create opportunities for economic growth and transformation to assist in achieving Council's revitalisation and urban renewal goals for its town centres; and
- enable the community to be involved in the decision making process relating to planning issues through subsequent exhibition and feedback processes.

3.2 Rockdale City Urban Strategy 2010

Rockdale City Urban Strategy 2010 has been listed by Council as an important document used to inform the planning decisions conveyed in the *Rockdale Local Environmental Plan (RLEP) 2011* and *Rockdale Development Control Plan (RDCP) 2011*. This urban strategy reviews and proposes amendments to the land use, height and FSR in consistency with the planning principles of the *Rockdale City Urban Strategy 2010* as it will facilitate:

- improvement of residential amenity by improving the variety and quality of new housing;
- revitalisation of villages and neighbourhoods, in particular the Bexley Town Centre; and
- Ensure opportunities for future employment and growth by providing an increase in critical mass through the inclusion of greater residential opportunities within a mixed use development format.

Rockdale City Council recognises the need for growth in the LGA to attract commercial activity and future residents. One of the urban strategies to direct growth in the LGA is to concentrate future developments around the LGA's villages and local centres. Focused growth around the Bexley Town Centre will serve to enhance activation, vibrancy and economic vitality enabling better local access to amenities for the local community, without the need to travel to major centres.

Rockdale City Urban Strategy 2010 identifies Bexley as a smaller centre or village of unique character that can service the surrounding community. Redevelopment is encouraged to increase density and improve built form outcome near public transport within Bexley. Rockdale City Council proposes for the provision of additional open space and pedestrian connections within what is identified as Bexley Town Centre. The approximate location of Bexley Town Centre core is on the Albyn Street car park. Activation around the proposed core, particularly along Albyn Street is encouraged. The *RLEP 2011* proposes development incentives for the provision of connections to Bexley Town Centre core through Forest Road, and the consolidation of sites within Bexley. The main objective is for new developments within the local centres such as Bexley Town Centre to be more compact whereby a range of activity can be easily accessed.

The urban design strategy and amendments to land use, height and FSR mapping for the subject sites to allow for expansion of business and residential uses, as well as the consistent application of building bulk within the Bexley Town Centre, is in direct aligned with the visions outlined within the *Rockdale City Urban Strategy 2010*. In particular, the proposed amendments are aimed at supporting the

revitalisation and activation of the Bexley Town Centre to allow for greater diversity and to build on the existing economic strengths of the centre, being motel type accommodation, that currently service the visitation and accommodation market.

3.3 Capacity Analysis and Built Form Study September 2010

The *Capacity Analysis and Built Form Study* was prepared to test the development potential of Rockdale LGA through maximising building height and FSR. The study was used to inform the formulation of the draft *RLEP 2011* and draft *RDCP 2011*. It is concluded that Rockdale LGA has the capacity to increase its density to provide housing and employment for its growing population.

The study cites Bexley as a precinct that is mainly residential in character. It recognises the Bexley Town Centre as having opportunity for revitalisation due to its accessibility through public transport and high visibility from the busy Forest Road. Rockdale City Council's significant land holdings, in particular the Albryn Street and Forest Road car parks, offer significant potential to be transformed through place making enhancements into appealing civic, community and cultural destinations.

Bexley also presents some development constraints that need to be overcome to achieve good planning outcomes. The precinct is largely comprised of fragmented lots and strata titles that require consolidation in order to allow for a more logical and systematic approach to land use planning. Vehicular and pedestrian circulation proves to be an obstacle with the main road networks heavily congested and poor quality pedestrian links. Lack of rear lane access into properties also poses challenges in gaining access to properties. The PP seeks to facilitate improvement to some of the issues by encouraging the consolidation of land, focusing on traffic access to fewer crossovers and the improvement of the public domain.

Bexley is also classified by Sydney Airport Corporation Limited (SACL) as a zone that has strict height limits as it is located under the flight path. Rockdale City Council has proposed for Bexley Town Centre to ideally have an FSR of 2:1 and a height of 16m (4 storeys) if land parcels are up zoned to the maximum B4 Mixed Use zone. Council has also proposed a development incentive to encourage site amalgamations whereby bonus FSR and building heights are granted. Final proposed building heights cannot obstruct the airspace and to be approved by SACL and DIRD. The following incentives applies to Bexley Town Centre:

Table 4: Bexley Town Centre development incentive

Site Area	Maximum height	Maximum FSR
Under 1,200m ²	4 storeys (16m)	2:1
Over 1,200m ²	5 storeys (19m)	2.5:1

Source: *Capacity Analysis and Built Form Study September 2010* (section 3.5 Bexley Planning Precinct – Page 21)

The *Capacity Analysis and Built Form Study* also classifies Bexley Town Centre under the village typology. Villages are proposed to have a zone of B4 Mixed Use to provide a greater range of uses than a local neighbourhood centre. Bexley Town Centre has the capacity to house 2,500 dwellings, a small supermarket and additional specialty retail commercial operations.

In this regard, the subject sites' location adjacent to the Bexley Town Centre boundary offers potential to be rezoned to allow for some additional development generally in the form of shop top housing with some increase in permissible height and FSR to meet residential targets.

3.4 Rockdale Local Environmental Plan (RLEP) 2011

The RLEP 2011 is the key planning instrument used by Rockdale City Council. The subject sites are currently zoned in a fragmented manner, and there is the capacity to achieve a more consistent approach to land use planning and the interrelationship between business and residential land uses within the Bexley Town Centre. As demonstrated in this urban design strategy the amendment of existing land use zones, FSR and building heights controls applicable to the subject sites will assist the Rockdale Council to deliver on their intended vision of diversifying and enhancing the Bexley Town Centre as a vibrant and interconnected community destination.

3.4.1 Zoning

The subject sites are currently zoned as follows under the RLEP 2011:

Table 5: Land Use Zoning of subject sites

Site Number	Site Address	Existing Buildings	Land Use Zones
Site 1	467 Forest Road, Bexley	Forest Inn Hotel	B4 – Mixed use
Site 2	1 Kingsland Road, Bexley 3 Kingsland Road, Bexley 5 Kingsland Road, Bexley	Single storey dwelling Single storey dwelling Vacant lot	R2 – Low Density Residential
Site 3	1 and 3 Abercorn Street 7, 9 and 11 Kingsland Road South 6, 8, 8A, 10, 12, 14, 16 and 18 Stoney Creek Road, Bexley	Single storey dwelling Single storey dwelling Single storey dwelling	R2 – Low Density Residential

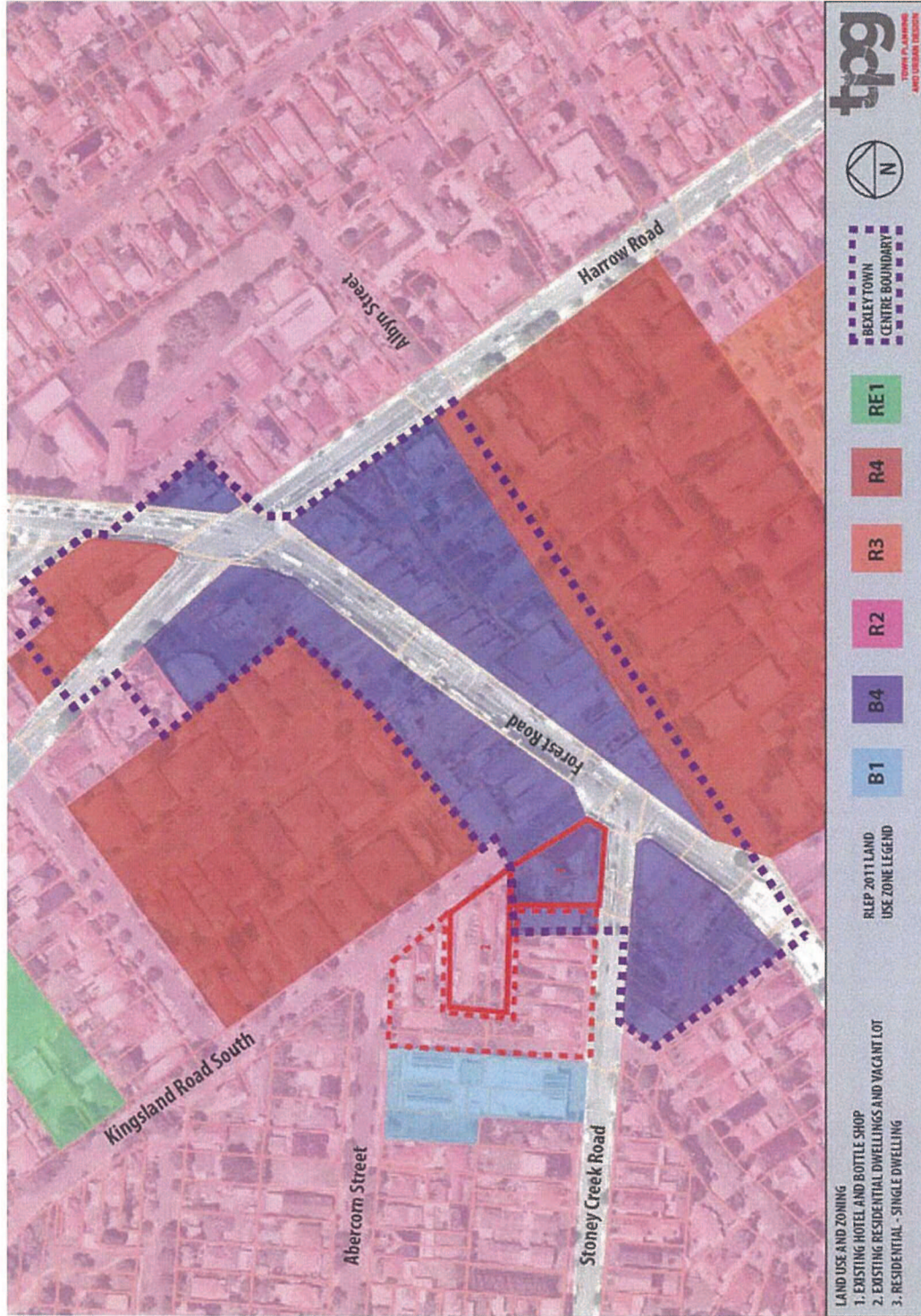


Figure 2: Subject Sites in red outline and their current land use zoning

Subject Site 1 (Forest Inn Hotel) is zoned B4 Mixed Use under RLEP 2011. The objectives of B4 zone are:

- To provide a mixture of compatible land uses.
- To integrate suitable business, office, residential, retail and other development in accessible locations so as to maximise public transport patronage and encourage walking and cycling.

Under RLEP 2011, the permissible land uses for the B4 zone are as follows:

Permitted without consent

Home-based child care; Home businesses; Home occupations; Roads

Permitted with consent

Boarding houses; Child care centres; Commercial premises; Community facilities; Educational establishments; Entertainment facilities; Function centres; Hotel or motel accommodation; Information and education facilities; Medical centres; Passenger transport facilities; Recreation facilities (indoor); Registered clubs; Respite day care centres; Restricted premises; Seniors housing; Shop top housing; Any other development not specified in item 2 or 4

Prohibited

Agriculture; Air transport facilities; Airstrips; Animal boarding or training establishments; Attached dwellings; Boat building and repair facilities; Boat launching ramps; Boat sheds; Camping grounds; Caravan parks; Cemeteries; Charter and tourism boating facilities; Crematoria; Depots; Dual occupancies; Dwelling houses; Eco-tourist facilities; Exhibition homes; Exhibition villages; Extractive industries; Farm buildings; Forestry; Freight transport facilities; Heavy industrial storage establishments; Highway service centres; Home occupations (sex services); Industrial retail outlets; Industrial training facilities; Industries; Jetties; Marinas; Mooring pens; Moorings; Multi dwelling housing; Open cut mining; Port facilities; Research stations; Restricted premises; Rural industries; Rural workers' dwellings; Secondary dwellings; Semi-detached dwellings; Sex services premises; Storage premises; Transport depots; Truck depots; Vehicle body repair workshops; Vehicle repair stations; Waste or resource management facilities; Wharf or boating facilities; Wholesale supplies.