Ashfield Council – Report to Ordinary Meeting held on Tuesday 12 August 2014 CM10.3

Subject ASHFIELD EAST - PLANNING PROPOSAL

File Ref SC570

Prepared by Ron Sim - Manager Strategic Planning & Projects

Reasons Matter requires Council determination and also responds to a

previous Council resolution

Objective Progress the Planning Proposal (LEP Amendment) for 'Ashfield

East'

Overview of Report

This report outlines the outcome of community engagement associated with a Planning Proposal (LEP Amendment) for the 'Ashfield East' area. It is recommended that Council proceed with the planning proposal and forward it to the Department of Planning & Environment for a 'Gateway determination' so that the LEP plan-making process may commence. It is also recommended Council seek authorisation to exercise appropriate delegation to progress the Draft LEP.

1.0 Background / Executive Summary

Council previously resolved (May 2014) that Council officers carry out preliminary community engagement dealing with a **Planning Proposal** to rezone land at:

- 2-6 Victoria Street
- 90-108 Liverpool Road
- 124-127 Carlton Crescent
- 1-3 Prospect Road

from a low density R2 residential zone to a B4 mixed use zone (this latter zone currently applies to the West's Club site opposite and to the remainder of Ashfield Town Centre).

Note: A *Planning Proposal* is a document that explains the intended effect of a proposed Local Environmental Plan (LEP) amendment and the justification for proceeding.

The area to which the Planning Proposal applies is referred to as Ashfield East. The comprehensive Planning Proposal report for Ashfield East previously considered by Council in May 2014 and accompanying (self-explanatory) Council report which detail the rationale for the Planning Proposal are included at **Attachment 1.** Council's recommendation arising from the consideration of the above reports was as follows:

1/2 Council resolve to undertake community engagement in accordance with current notification policies to obtain preliminary feedback concerning a proposed planning proposal/possible future amendment to Ashfield Local Environmental Plan 2013 for the Ashfield East area comprising the following properties:

- 2-6 Victoria Street
- 90-108 Liverpool Road
- 124-127 Carlton Crescent
- 1-3 Prospect Road

2/2 A further report be submitted to Council following the engagement process detailing feedback received and recommending appropriate action.

2.0 Planning Proposal - Preliminary Community Engagement Process

(a) Timeline/details

This was carried out between 9 June and 11 July 2014. The relevant Council protocols, i.e. Council's community engagement toolkit and community engagement policy were referenced as part of this process.

A copy of the letter sent to property owners within and adjacent to the Ashfield East Planning Proposal area is included at **Attachment 2**. The proposal was also notified on Council's web site and in Council's newspaper column. The website contained links to the Planning Proposal report, previous Council Reports and a town planning contextual analysis. State Environmental Planning Policies and Ministerial Directions relevant to the planning proposal process were also exhibited (**Attachment 2**). All of this information was also made available to the public in hard copy at Ashfield Council's Customer Service Centre, at Ashfield Library and in order to facilitate convenient after hours access by residents, it was also exhibited at Wests Leagues Club - 115 Liverpool Road, Ashfield.

(b) Community Response

Written submissions comprised three (3) objections and seventy (70) letters supporting the proposal. Letters were received from directly affected owners, owners living in close proximity to Ashfield East and also from owners of properties within various locations throughout the Ashfield LGA. Submissions supporting the Proposal were also received on behalf of two (2) property owners outside the study area requesting that their properties be included within the Planning Proposal in order that LEP 2013 is amended to permit more generous development standards (increases in height and floor space ratio) on their properties. A supportive submission was also received from Wests Leagues Club also asking that the maximum permitted height and floor space ratio be increased within the designated Planning Proposal area.

Copies of all submissions are included at Attachment 3.

(c) Summary of submissions/officer comment

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A. supportive submissions -- Summarised below together with officer comments:

Submissions received were primarily in the form of pro-forma letters (a number from people living outside the study area) expressing general approval of Council's initiative. Most comments expressed general support for the Planning Proposal without providing other reasons. Additional officer comment on these submissions is unnecessary. Specific reasons advanced in support of the Planning Proposal are adequately detailed in the previous report to Council (**Attachment 1**).

There were also 2 submissions from consultants representing owners of properties outside the planning proposal area asking that development standards for their properties be augmented and that these changes be incorporated into the current Planning Proposal. One additional submission from Wests Leagues Club supported the proposal and also requested changes to (increase) development standards within the study area. These are addressed below.

(i) West Leagues Club

Strongly support the proposal but request an amendment to increase maximum height from 20 metres (5 storeys) to 30 metres (8 storeys) and maximum floor space ratio (FSR) from 1.5:1 to 2:1.

Officer comment:

The outcome of Council's Urban Planning Strategy processes and concurrent workshops associated with the extended community engagement process and subsequent Community Plan was that the Ashfield community wished to focus more development within the core of the Town Centre.

A recent study carried out by the Department of Planning prior to Ashfield LEP 2013 being gazetted also confirmed that the current height and FSR controls in the Town Centre were adequate to encourage economically viable redevelopment.

It was also agreed by the Department that Council could fulfill its housing and employment targets under the Metro Strategy with the controls included in Ashfield LEP 2013. The current LEP permits additional height and floor space within the commercial "Core" area of the town centre between the railway line and Liverpool Road in the general vicinity of Hercules Street closer to important public transport nodes and a wide range of community facilities This contrasts with the fringes of the Town Centre where the range of business/retail/community facilities may be less extensive and/or lower scale dwellings begin to predominate.

The area covered by the planning proposal is proximate to existing low rise low density dwelling zones. The transition in height from these areas to higher buildings will be ameliorated by Council's adjacent depot area to some degree. However, there is a higher degree of sensitivity in this locality to issues of building height and FSR and their impact on nearby single dwellings as opposed to the core area of the Town Centre where managing built form relationships at the interface with lower density zones is arguably less critical. Maintaining an appropriate built form interface between taller buildings and low rise dwellings in the vicinity using appropriate

building height and FSR controls and taking advantage of the presence of buffer areas such as the Council depot to provide adequate building separation is very important. Careful surveys of the planning proposal area and environs were also carried out to inform the town planning contextual/urban design analysis (see **Attachment 1**). These surveys indicated that a maximum 20 metre building height limit would minimise the scale and overlooking impacts of taller buildings on nearby low density areas whilst still allowing reasonable development potential.

Contextually, the Planning Proposal will permit a generous increase in development potential within the Ashfield East area compared to current low density residential planning controls and should provide an adequate incentive for redevelopment. In the circumstances, it is considered that the proposed 20 metre height limit (lift access mandatory) and 1.5:1 FSR control for the Planning Proposal area are appropriate and should not be increased.

Finally, any change to development standards of the magnitude requested would necessitate re-exhibition of the planning proposal as issues of height, bulk and scale would all need to be revisited by way of further studies. Nearby residents would also need to be advised if Council decided to support these significant changes. This would mean the rezoning process would be significantly delayed.

(ii) Planning Consultant acting for property owner 138-158 Liverpool Road

Supporting the Planning proposal and requesting extension of 2 floor height bonus for affordable housing to apply to properties 138-158 Liverpool Road and an increase in maximum FSR from 2:1 to 3:1. The consultant submission is included at **Attachment 3.**



138-158 Liverpool Road

Officer Comment:

The above properties are outside the Planning Proposal Area. Part of the nominated site was recently developed for the 'First Choice' liquor outlet with commercial space above.

There is no nexus between the Ashfield East planning proposal and properties the subject of this request. The properties at 138-158 Liverpool Road already benefit from higher floor space ratios (maximum 2:1 FSR permitted in comparison with the proposed FSR of 1.5:1) proposed for the Ashfield East area. In addition, re-exhibition of the planning proposal would be necessary if this request was to be agreed to because the changes to development standards and details of the properties in question were not publicised. Any proposal to increase permissible height/FSR for **Ashfield Council**

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these sites would also require the geographical scope of the current Planning Proposal area to be extended and could lead to similar requests for other nearby properties.

It is also premature to determine this matter at this time. Important issues relating to zoning, appropriate height and floor space ratio should not be determined on an ad hoc basis. If housing targets for Ashfield are significantly increased to meet State Government requirements at a future date it follows that Council will need to identify ways of augmenting development potential within the Ashfield LGA.

However, the approach to be taken and study parameters for this task will require a high level strategic focus and a supportive policy framework to be agreed with Council and the Ashfield community. In the circumstances it is suggested that in a future scenario, if housing targets were to be increased, further action concerning 138-158 Liverpool Road be reconsidered as part of a co-ordinated urban planning approach to identify additional development potential across the whole of the Ashfield LGA.

(iii) Planning Consultant acting for property owner 84-88 Liverpool Road

Supports the Planning Proposal and requests an increase in maximum permitted height from 13 metres to 20 metres and permitted FSR from 1:1 to 1.5:1. The consultant submission is included at **Attachment 3**.



84-88 Liverpool Road

Officer Comment:

Many of the comments provided above in relation to 138 – 158 Liverpool Road are also relevant to these properties. The sites are not part of the Ashfield East area and a comprehensive study has not been carried out to validate whether additional height and floor space for this current B4 mixed use zone is warranted.

The sites are located close to the intersection of Liverpool Road and Grosvenor Crescent which is a signal controlled intersection. One of the sites (corner lot position) was previously used for business purposes and reserved for road widening (widening is no longer necessary). All of the sites were subsequently rezoned via LEP 2013 to a B4 Mixed Use zone to reflect the semi-commercial character of this corner area.

It is considered that current planning controls closely reflect the capacity and development of the corner (former commercial) property if it were developed in isolation. Assuming a larger (amalgamated) site is available as shown (no separate written evidence has been supplied from adjoining owners indicating a willingness to support changes to development standards) this will increase development potential because better design and access outcomes can be achieved. However, this option needs to be considered as part of a comprehensive planning approach that also looks at a number of other sites in the vicinity of this property.

B. Objections – These are summarised below together with officer comments: See also **Attachment 3** for more detail.

- Area will lose much of its village character. Concern is the loss of character in the area developers will be destroying our history to feed their 'ferocious appetites'.
- Ashfield has a high percentage of units and if new proposals are introduced there will be more overcrowding.
- Starts with a few isolated addresses but before we know it, greed will take over and the streetscape will consist of five storey buildings.
- Visual, acoustic pollution, traffic congestion and parking undersupply.
- Current height restrictions in place should remain.
- Increased density & height would cause an unacceptable overshadowing of surrounding properties (including those on Norton Street). One has only to look at the properties surrounding the large development on Norton Street (near Queen) to see how unpleasant changes are to neighbouring residents. Don't want to be living in shade, house will be dark and cold just because a developer will profit from higher development. Depot does not overshadow property but new development will. Shadowing impact will affect our well-being, enjoyable balcony gardening, ability to line dry clothes, general sunny disposition.
- Developments will reduce value of my property.
- Additional commercial and residential space would further add to the difficulty in parking in the area which is will soon become even worse when the resident parking scheme pushes commuters to park in the area.
- Trains from the area are already operating at (and sometimes beyond) capacity meaning that additional residents and businesses would further add to the strain on the limited infrastructure.
- Traffic in peak hour and on a Saturday makes leaving the area all but impossible.
 Further increasing the density of the area is only going to make the problem worse.
- Car parking undersupply and traffic pressures will be exacerbated parking is already at a premium.
- Do not put the needs of developers and hypothetical future residents above the local residents and keep Ashfield the wonderful location it currently is.
- Loss of views will occur.
- Difficult to exit Prospect Road and turn right onto Carlton Crescent and vice versa, due to this difficulty there is a convex street mirror installed but undoubtedly it's still a dangerous traffic corner and blind spot.
- Currently large trucks, freighting vehicles and general traffic contribute to congestion along Prospect Road as they try to avoid the Hume highway and Liverpool Road.
- Associated acoustic pollution not just through the building and construction of such a large building proposal but also associated with the proposed high number of residents to be accommodated cannot be ignored. There needs to be an

- environmental impact study of the proposal and its projected noise levels to be consulted with affected neighbouring properties for consultation.
- There is not adequate and wide enough street access to accommodate the size of large construction vehicles needed to access the proposed developments.

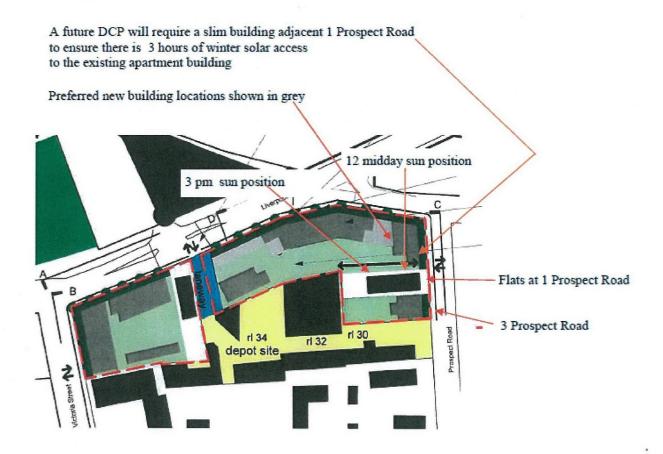
Officer comments addressing substantive issues raised:

(i) Urban Character and possible precedent: None of the properties affected by the planning proposal have identified heritage significance. Many dwellings have been significantly modified. An important objective of the proposal is to improve the character of this gateway entry to Ashfield by encouraging high quality infill urban development to complement the scale of the Wests development currently underway opposite the site. The planning proposal is also confined to specific properties.

There are no proposals to rezone properties in low density residential zones in close proximity to Ashfield East. A Draft Development Control Plan (to be prepared and approved by Council prior to exhibition) is intended to be displayed with the planning proposal and will require developers to provide new footpaths with substantial setbacks to Liverpool Road in order to allow planting of substantial trees to create a landscaped boulevard effect. This initiative will complement anticipated public domain initiatives for the remainder of the Town Centre (see **Section 3** of this report).

(ii) Overshadowing: Specific properties likely to be impacted by overshadowing from new development are limited to existing flats at 1 Prospect Road. These flats are unlikely to be redeveloped and will be affected by any new building located to the north at 124-127 Carlton Crescent. DCP controls will be prepared to outline built form and siting requirements to ensure these existing flats retain 3 hours of winter solar access to their windows (see diagram below). Note: because the 3 storey flats to the north of 3 Prospect Road are unlikely to redevelop there will not be any additional overshadowing of this property.

As previously recommended, it is intended to prepare a 'SIMURBAN' computer simulation model to be exhibited with the Planning Proposal. This will illustrate potential building forms and their shadow impacts.



Extract—Town Planning Contextual Analysis Document May 2014

(iii) Traffic/Parking/Access:

The proposal is expected to improve traffic conditions in the area rather than exacerbate them. In particular, as redevelopment occurs, it should be possible to reduce the number of multiple dangerous crossovers to Liverpool Road because of potential property amalgamations. Currently, many property owners have to reverse their vehicle (a dangerous exercise at peak hours) directly on to Liverpool Road as there is inadequate manoeuvring space on their property. In addition, when residents access their property they need to slow down and this can cause traffic on Liverpool Road during busy periods to stop or slow down markedly.

All new developments will be required to provide adequate off street car parking in accordance with **Part C11** of Council's Interim Development Policy. In reality, developers will no doubt wish to maximise the amount of off street on-site car parking given existing clearway car parking restrictions on Liverpool Road.

Permanent access arrangements will depend on property amalgamations. Preferred vehicle access points and suggested property amalgamations will be incorporated in a Draft DCP document to be approved by Council for concurrent exhibition with the Planning Proposal. Construction access may be practicable from either Victoria Road or Prospect Road depending on the configuration of future development proposals and property amalgamation patterns.

(iv) Public Transport

The area is close to excellent public transport. The proposal will potentially result in additional public transport patronage. The frequency of the rail/bus network can be increased to meet additional demand if required.

(v) Overcrowding/increased population density

Ashfield has relatively high population density in comparison with many other areas of Sydney. However, this planning proposal fits with Council's wider strategy of protecting existing low density residential areas and is confined to a main road locality in close proximity to the core area of Ashfield Town Centre and public transport facilities. Council's Urban Planning Strategy - a precursor to Ashfield LEP 2013 – also clearly identified the locality as being suitable for a B4 Mixed use zoning as a logical extension of the current mixed land use zoning applied to Ashfield Town Centre and Ashfield West.

(vi) Property values

Property values in the area are not expected to decrease. Rather, the reverse is likely to be the case as older dwellings within the planning proposal area with poor vehicle access are replaced with newer, better quality dwellings specifically designed to address the current local environmental context. The value of properties within the study area is likely to increase significantly due to increased development potential and mixed use development opportunities.

(vii) Noise/acoustic pollution

Little ongoing noise is expected to be generated by developments within the planning proposal area other than during construction work. Buildings may be entirely residential in use (unlikely) or may comprise apartments with ground floor business uses. New apartments can be designed with a 'cross through' layout so that they have a quiet living area whist maximising solar access and natural ventilation.

(viii) Open space (private and public)

LEP 2013 zoned Council's depot for open space purposes. If this land use does eventually replace the current depot use then developer contribution funds can be channeled into landscaping works, etc. Alternatively, developer contribution funds can be expended on upgrading Allman Park which is only a short distance away. New development will also be required to have adequate private and communal open space.

3.0 Draft Development Control Plan

If Council agrees to progress the Ashfield East Planning proposal it is intended to also concurrently exhibit a Draft Development Control Plan. Key issues that will be addressed in any DCP document will include the following:

- Wall height/building height/number of storeys
- Preferred access arrangements/road layout
- Indicative/desired property amalgamation patterns
- Built form guidelines including 3D computer modelling to assist interpretation
- Universal accessible design requirements

- Apartment design principles to maximise solar access yet minimise noise penetration
- Site specific provisions following technical studies
- · Housing mix and affordability
- Open space concept plan
- 'Gateway' determination requirements

In addition, it is intended that the following additional town planning information will be placed on exhibition during formal exhibition of a Draft LEP amendment:

- SIMURBAN simulation (a diagrammatic representation of possible future development outcomes to show building bulk and height and scale relationships, shadowing impacts, Liverpool Road wide verge improvement with street trees).
- SEPP 55 preliminary Contamination Investigation (consultant engaged by Council).

4.0 Next Steps

If Council resolves to proceed with the Planning Proposal the next steps are to follow the Department of Planning & Environment's LEP plan making process (refer explanatory diagram at **Attachment 4**).

To summarise:

- 1) Council considers whether to initially support the Planning Proposal and commence the LEP plan making process (**current stage of process**).
- 2) Planning Proposal is submitted to Department of Planning and Environment.
- 3) Department of Planning and Environment undertakes an assessment and, if supportive of the Proposal, will issue a "Gateway Determination" which will give Council the authority to continue the process and specifying whether any additional studies are required.
- 4) Council exhibits the Planning Proposal including a Draft Development Control Plan.
- 5) Council considers submissions received and following community engagement decides whether or not to amend/re-exhibit the proposal and submit it to Department of Planning and Environment to undertake a final assessment or Council can choose to submit the Planning Proposal (LEP document) directly to Parliamentary Counsel if the plan making function is delegated to Council.
- 6) The plan is then notified and comes into effect.

The main document to support any LEP amendment is the Planning Proposal (**Attachment 1**) which explains the intended effect of the proposed LEP amendment and justification for making the LEP. The attached Planning Proposal document has been prepared in accordance with NSW Planning and Environment 'A Guide to Preparing Planning Proposals' and 'A Guide to Preparing Local Environmental Plans'.

5.0 LEP (Plan-Making) Delegation

In November 2012 the Minister for NSW Planning & Infrastructure delegated certain plan making powers to make and determine an LEP back to councils. Delegations can be issued by the Department of Planning & Environment which enables Council to exercise the Minister's Plan making functions after "Gateway Determination" stage (i.e. to draft and make the LEP in addition to the standard steps). The delegations operate when Council requests NSW Planning and Infrastructure to issue a 'Written Authorisation to Exercise Delegation' (the Authorisation). This Authorisation can be issued to Ashfield Council as part of the Gateway determination.

Ashfield Council previously resolved to apply for delegation provided the General Manger exercises the delegation only with prior approval from Council. The delegation was subsequently granted. It is therefore recommended Council authorise the General Manager to apply for an authorisation to exercise the relevant delegation.

Council will of course be kept fully informed as part of the plan-making process including future submissions and agreement on the final form of the LEP amendment. Assuming the delegation is available it will significantly streamline the plan-making process as the need for multiple primarily administrative referrals to the Department of Planning at various stages of the process will be unnecessary. Exercising the delegation also means that Council will have greater autonomy and control over the plan-making process.

Financial Implications

If the proposal proceeds there will be some upfront costs associated with:

- Undertaking SIMURBAN built form computer simulation modelling.
- SEPP 55 preliminary soil contamination investigation.

Public Consultation

A preliminary Stage 1 Council consultation process has been completed to align with current Council notification policies. A comprehensive second stage consultative process will be undertaken as part of the statutory Planning Proposal process.

Referrals

Internal referrals have taken place. Further internal and external referrals will be undertaken if Council resolves to progress the Planning Proposal.

6.0 Conclusion

The planning proposal is supported in principle and it is considered there is sufficient justification to proceed with the rezoning. If supported by Council, the next stage in the process will be to forward the proposal to the Department of Planning and Environment for a 'Gateway Determination'. This is the first step in the rezoning process under the Act.

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It is recommended Council now endorse the Planning Proposal and request the Minister to issue the relevant "Gateway Determination" to allow the process of preparing an LEP to commence and proceed to formal community engagement. Council will also note that it is proposed that a DCP Part be prepared and exhibited for the Ashfield East area subject to prior approval by Council. In addition, it is recommended that Council seek authority to exercise the appropriate delegation in order to streamline the plan-making process and that Council authorise the General Manager to use the delegation as part of the Ashfield East plan-making process.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1	Planning Proposal, Previous Council Report and	51 Pages
	Town Planning Contextual Analysis	
Attachment 2		7 Pages
	map + extract from Council's website with links to	
	data	
Attachment 3	Copies of submissions	87 Pages
Attachment 4	Explanatory Diagram - LEP/Plan Making Process	1 Page

RECOMMENDATION

1/6 That Council resolve to support the Planning Proposal to commence the process to amend Ashfield Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2013 to rezone the Ashfield East area comprising properties:

2-6 Victoria Street, 90-108 Liverpool Road, 124-127 Carlton Crescent & 1-3 Prospect Road

from a low density R2 residential zone to a B4 mixed use zone with a maximum permitted building height of 20 metres and a maximum permitted floors pace ratio of 1.5:1.

- 2/6 That Council resolve to forward the Planning Proposal to NSW Planning and Environment for "Gateway Determination" to allow the LEP plan making process to commence under Section 56 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP &A Act).
- 3/6 That Council resolve to request NSW Planning and Environment to issue written authorisation to Council's General Manager to exercise and implement delegations in accordance with Section 23 of the EP& A Act 1979 to facilitate the plan making process following the Gateway determination.
- 4/6 That following "Gateway Determination" a report be submitted to Council detailing the determination requirements and specified community engagement methodology.
- 5/6 A Draft Development Control Plan Part be prepared with the general content of the plan to be as indicated in Section 3 of this report and the Draft DCP Part be submitted to Council with the "Gateway Determination" details for endorsement prior to being placed on public exhibition concurrently with the Ashfield East Planning Proposal.
- 6/6 That everyone who made a submission responding to the community engagement process be advised of Council's decision and thanked for their input.

PHIL SARIN
Director Planning and Environment

ASHFIELD EAST - PLANNING PROPOSAL.

CM 10.3

Members of the public addressed the meeting.

Mr Tom Likinaris addressed Council at 7.34pm and concluded at 7.35pm.

RESOLVED Drury/Mansour

1/6 That Council resolve to support the Planning Proposal to commence the process to amend Ashfield Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2013 to rezone the Ashfield East area comprising properties:

2-6 Victoria Street, 90-108 Liverpool Road, 124-127 Carlton Crescent

& 1-3 Prospect Road

from a low density R2 residential zone to a B4 mixed use zone with a maximum permitted building height of 20 metres and a maximum permitted floors pace ratio of 1.5:1.

- 2/6 That Council resolve to forward the Planning Proposal to NSW Planning and Environment for "Gateway Determination" to allow the LEP plan making process to commence under Section 56 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP &A Act).
- 3/6 That Council resolve to request NSW Planning and Environment to issue written authorisation to Council's General Manager to exercise and implement delegations in accordance with Section 23 of the EP& A Act 1979 to facilitate the plan making process following the Gateway determination.
- 4/6 That following "Gateway Determination" a report be submitted to Council detailing the determination requirements and specified community engagement methodology.
- 5/6 A Draft Development Control Plan Part be prepared with the general content of the plan to be as indicated in Section 3 of this report and the Draft DCP Part be submitted to Council with the "Gateway Determination" details for endorsement prior to being placed on public exhibition concurrently with the Ashfield East Planning Proposal.

6/6 That everyone who made a submission responding to the community engagement process be advised of Council's decision and thanked for their input.

Councillor Stott left the Chambers at 7.50pm and returned at 7.53pm.

A division was called and the voting was as follows:-For the Motion

Councillors Mansour, Wang, Lofts, Drury, M Raiola, Raciti and Passas.

Against the Motion

Councillors Stott, Wangmann, and McKenna OAM.

The Motion was carried.

Councillor Stott left the meeting at 7.55pm and returned at 8.00pm.