

## Dept Planning and Environment (now DPHI) analysis –Independent Rapid Assessment of the Parramatta CBD Planning Proposal for DPE (prepared by Bennett and Trimble) March 2022

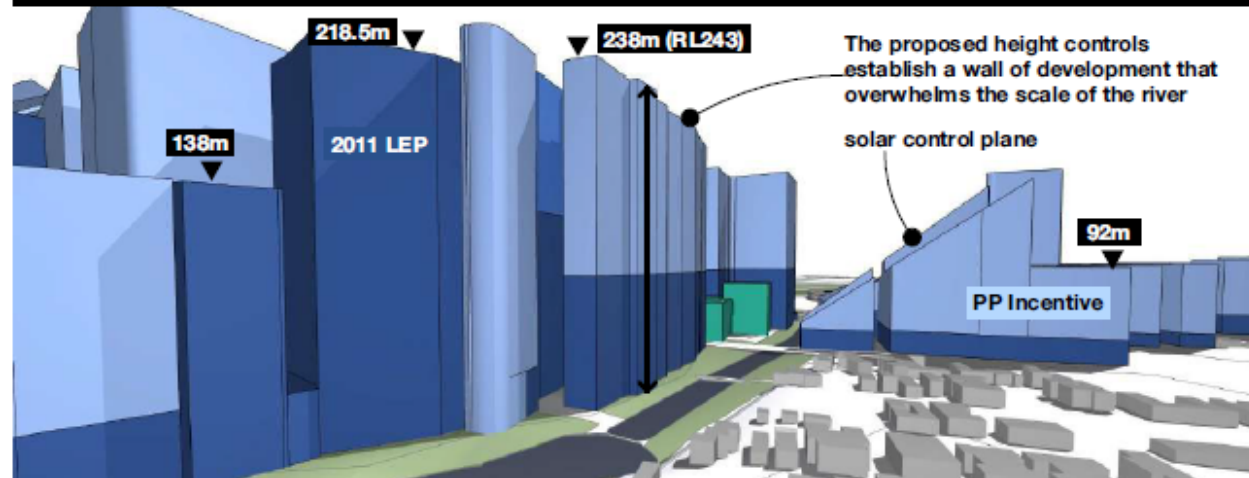
### Summary of Analysis

Purpose: *The review was undertaken as a rapid assessment to determine if the proposed controls:*

- *result in urban design and built form outcomes that will assist in growing a stronger and more competitive Greater Parramatta.*
- *respond to and consider qualities such as open space, public domain, heritage, bulk, scale and transition.*
- *should proceed to finalisation as proposed or with minor changes that would not trigger further exhibition.*

The proposed controls for height incentives, opportunity sites, and the solar access controls for Parramatta Square have loaded height on the southern edge of the Parramatta River foreshore. The resulting massing controls could result in urban form that overwhelms the river that is so central to its landscape and history. It would impact Parramatta's identity, and its desirability as a place to live and work. The relationships between the recently completed tall buildings and the river is unconvincing. They appear to commercialise the foreshore and visually dominate the river corridor. This type of development is similar to Southbank in Melbourne or Barangaroo in Sydney and may not offer the most sensitive or place-specific response that Parramatta deserves. The relationship between the Sydney CBD and its harbour, and Parramatta and its river, are substantially different in scale, aspect and siting, and yet the proposed controls encourage the same building

#### Perspective View Looking West Along Parramatta River - Proposed

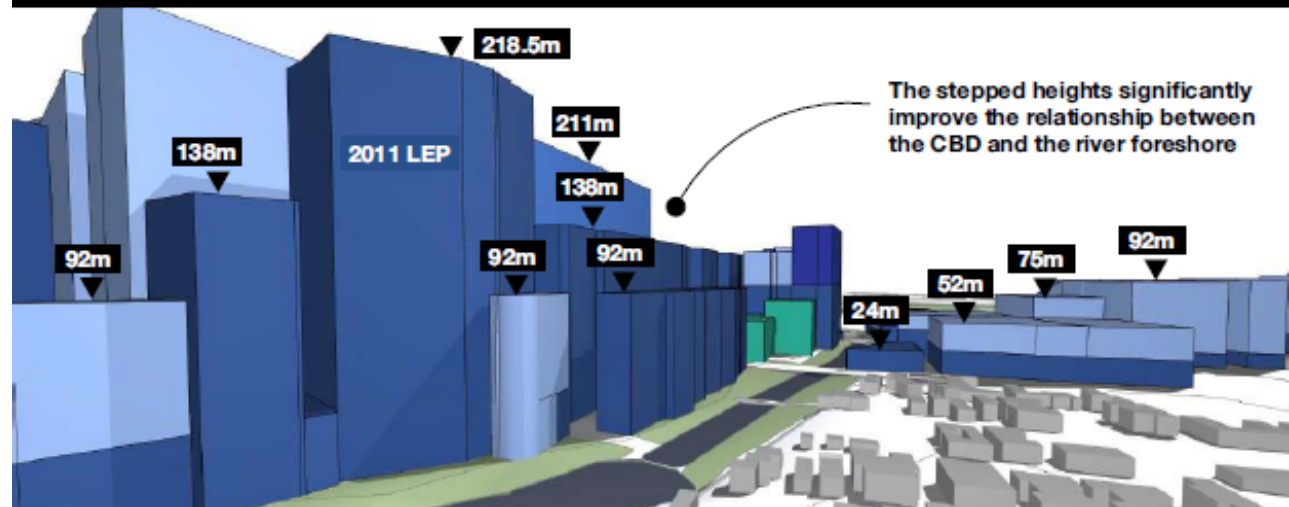


Draft Height controls under the then Parramatta CBD Planning Proposal (as at March 2022)

typologies, heights and relationship to the water's edge. The scale of development these controls permit risks overwhelming the scale of this important natural, historical and cultural asset.

As the metropolitan centre of the Central River City, the relationship between the river and the CBD will be critical to its future cultural identity and its desirability as a place to live and work. Recommendation: Reduce the proposed height incentives for buildings along the Parramatta River foreshore to protect the natural, historic and cultural qualities that are so central to the identity of Parramatta and its place within the Central River City. The permissible building envelopes should be commensurate with the scale of the river rather than a harbour.

### Perspective View Looking West Along Parramatta River - Recommended



**Recommended Height Controls**

### Outcome

This work informed the DPHI's (then DPE) consideration of the finalisation of the Parramatta CBD Planning Proposal. Parramatta Local Environmental Plan 2011 (Amendment 56) was subsequently notified on 6 May 2022 and took effect on 14 October 2022. The Phillip Street block was excluded from the new controls and the existing density controls remain for the site at an FSR of 6:1 and HOB of 80 metres. The DPHI (then the Department of Planning and Environment) Finalisation report noted that in consideration of Council officer comments and submissions, the Department's built form modelling and the findings of the independent design study, the Department recommended that the Phillip Street Block not progress as part of the CBD PP and that the block retains its current controls.

**Dept Planning and Environment (now DPHI) analysis –Parramatta CBD Transition Area Review (Hassell) December 2022**

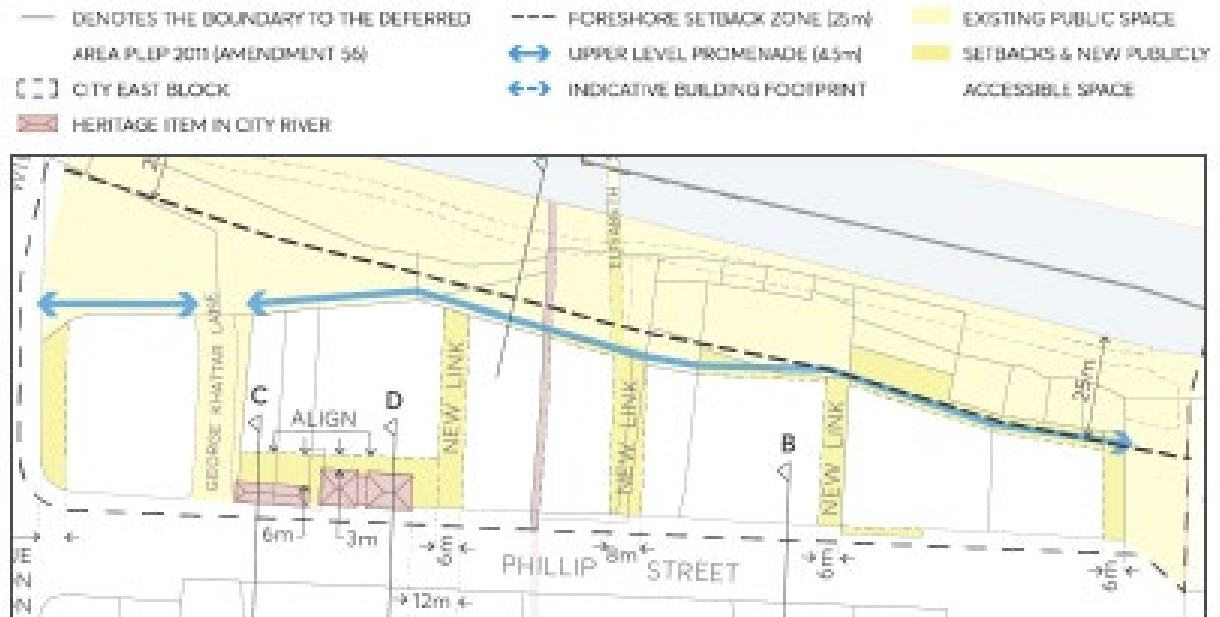
## Summary of Analysis

*Purpose: Review HOB and FSR for the area excluded from the LEP Amendment no. 56. Encourage redevelopment that responds to the importance of the precinct for the character, amenity and resilience of Parramatta as a whole and to ensure the CBD remains attractive to investment.*

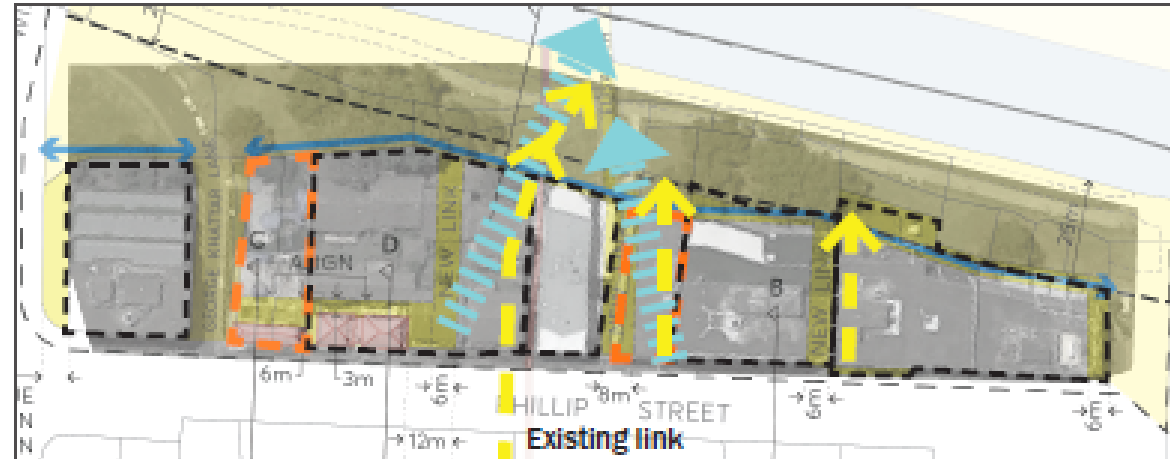
Bulky or overscaled buildings facing the river corridor must be avoided and a generous building separation should be sought.

Given the sites are highly constrained, additional FSR may result in a significant volume of above ground parking which could undermine all amenity objectives for the riverfront as well as Phillip St.

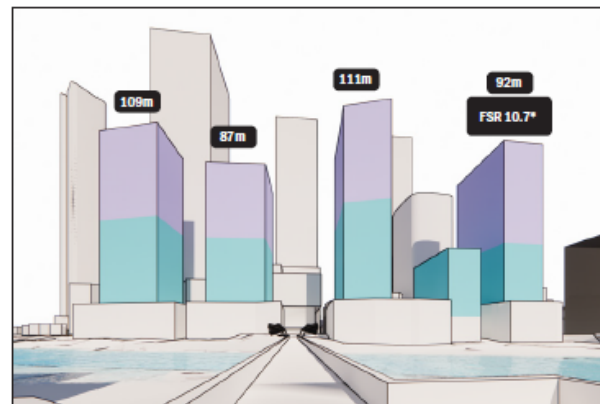
Providing additional links open to the sky and an appropriate ratio of height x separation of buildings facing the river is essential to allow airflow and avoid further urban heat impacts across the whole CBD. Additional FSR and redevelopment provides opportunities.



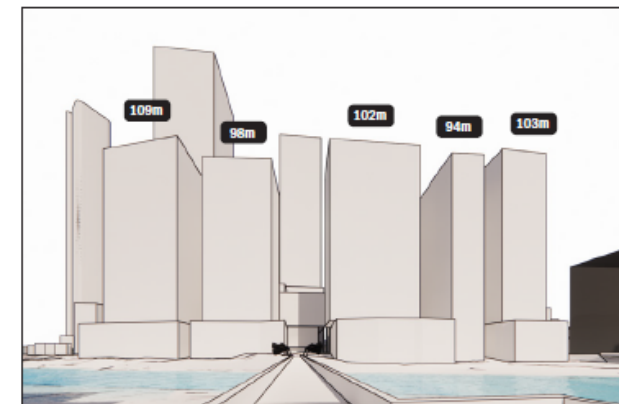
-  strata ownership     options for links open to the sky
-  single ownership     options for view corridors through built form (in addition to links)



The total recommended maximum FSR is 9:7:1 including all bonuses but is only considered acceptable subject to conditions. This translates to bonus FSR on subject site of 2.5:1. Conditions for subject site include a maximum tower length when viewed from river of 35 metres.

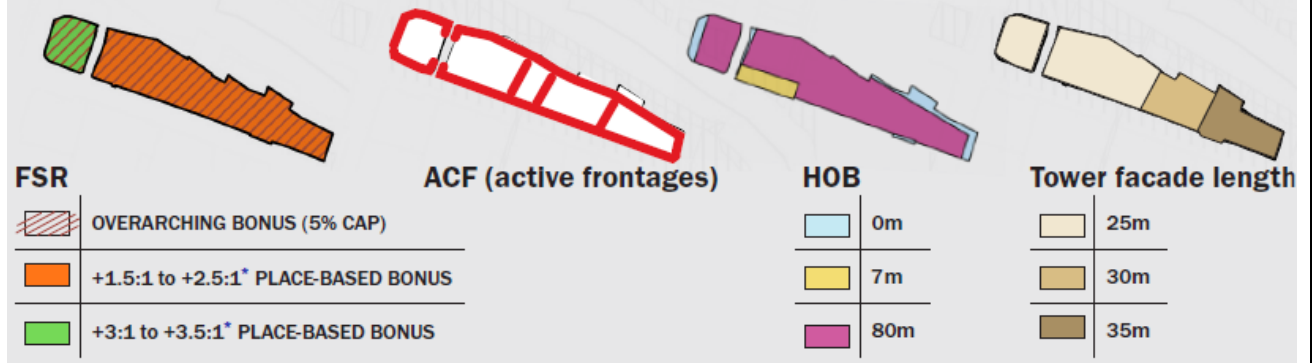


FSR 9.7\*



Undesirable outcome (FSR 12.1 and current floorplate controls)

## Implementation



## Outcome

The DPHI made further changes to the Parramatta CBD planning controls through State Environmental Planning Policy Amendment (Parramatta CBD)(no. 2) which was notified on 16 December 2022. The State Environmental Planning Policy Amendment (SEPP Amendment) introduced controls to facilitate growth in employment uses within certain B3 Commercial Core and B4 Mixed Use zone sites within the Parramatta CBD as well as uplift for the Phillip Street Block, subject to certain provisions being met. In this regard, Clause 7.28A permits development in the Phillip St block (including the subject site) to exceed the floor space ratio limit by 2.5:1 and height by 13 metres subject to conditions.

## Council Officer analysis of implications of SEPP 2 – June 2023

### Summary of Analysis

#### Purpose:

- Investigate the opportunity for delivery of the upper-level promenade within the planning controls introduced by SEPP 2
- Highlight any observed risks embedded in the SEPP2 for realising Council's vision for the Phillip Street Block
- Document the differences between the CBDPP (used to create the City Centre DCP) and SEPP2

PLEP 2011 (Amnd 56) gave the site:

- FSR of 6:1 (7.2:1 incl DEX and HPB bonuses)
- HOB of 80m (92m incl DEX)

SEPP 2 gave the site:

- Additional FSR of 2.5:1 and HOB of 13m provided certain conditions are met including max. tower width of 35m (when viewed from River). Provides for maximum FSR of 9.7:1 and HOB of 105m.

SEPP 2 inconsistent with PDCP 2023 which provides for maximum tower width of 45m.



+15% Design Excellence Bonus

+5% High Performing Buildings (if additional GFA is used for residential)  
or

+5% Wholly Commercial Buildings (cannot apply HPB)



\*when viewed from Parramatta River



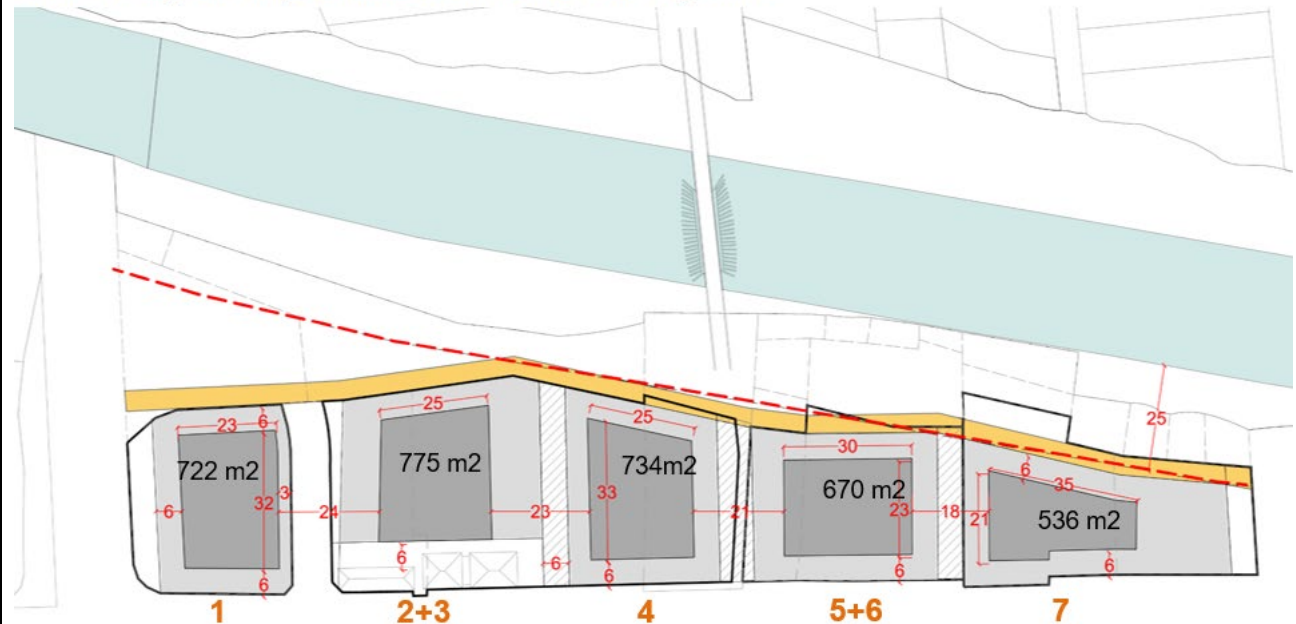
**Challenges from current controls:**

- No incentive for the site to deliver the upper level promenade.
- Site can achieve HOB of 105m, however cannot achieve FSR of 9.7:1. Can only achieve FSR of 7:1 (Mixed Use) under 105m height control due to limitations of tower width.

## Scenario 1 Amalgamation Pattern (DCP)

SEPP2 Height, FSR and Building Frontage +

DCP Amalgamation, Setbacks and Promenade Alignment



NB: floor area noted is tower GBA (not GFA)

**Benefits:**

- The limited tower frontage encourages generously distributed space between towers.
- Reduced height limit and FSR (as compared to the CBDPP) results in a skyline which steps down from the commercial core to the River.
- 0m height limit assists in rationalising of the foreshore alignment, and 7m height limit reinforces heritage setbacks.

**Challenges:**

|                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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|                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For most of the sites, there is <b>no incentive to deliver the upper-level promenade</b> as the permissible FSR is not achievable or there is no additional space under the height controls</li> <li>• The SEPP control related to maximum tower width “as seen from the river” is ambiguous, and has primarily been derived from separation objectives.</li> <li>• Tower floorplates resulting from tower frontage controls are too large for residential development and only suitable for commercial. (This comment relates to the other sites within the Phillip Street block and does not relate to 90-96 Phillip Street).</li> <li>• If towers are residential, floorplates will need to be reduced to meet ADG and amenity requirements – further impacting ability for development to achieve permitted FSR within the height limit.</li> <li>• Large podiums are only suitable for commercial tenancies or above ground parking, noting that any above ground parking will further diminish the ability to realise the permissible FSR.</li> <li>• Tower width controls will limit the number of units facing the River / north.</li> <li>• There is a conflict between the SEPP2 and City Centre DCP controls, whereby sites are often unable to achieve the permissible FSR within the height limit. This tension could lead to compromised setbacks or separation controls.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Outcome</b> | <p>The analysis identified issues with the current PLEP 2023 controls for the subject site. The Planning Proposal, in seeking to amend the HOB and FSR controls, may also wish to seek to amend Clause 7.28A of the PLEP 2023 relating to the maximum building width for No. 90-94 Phillip Street.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |