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**Proposal:** Alterations and additions to Stockland Wetherill Park Shopping Centre comprising 5,664m<sup>2</sup> of additional gross leaseable floor area (GLFA) located at ground level and three (3) levels of deck car parking above, and associated works (Stage 2).

**Location:** Lot 102 DP 1034345 and Lot 1 DP 867772, No. 561-583 Polding Street, Prairiewood

**Owner:** Stockland Trust Management Limited

**Proponent:** Justin Travlos– Stockland

**Capital  
Investment**

**Value:** \$31,488,000

**File No:** DA 533.1/2012

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Fairfield City Council

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**RECOMMENDATION**

1. That the application proposing alterations and additions to Stockland Wetherill Park Shopping Centre comprising 5,664m<sup>2</sup> of additional gross leaseable floor area (GLFA) located at ground level and three (3) levels of deck car parking above, and associated works (Stage 2), be approved subject to conditions as outlined in Attachment G of this report.

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**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

<b>AT-A</b>	Architectural Plans	12 page(s)
<b>AT-B</b>	Statement of Environmental Effects	31 page(s)
<b>AT-C</b>	Acoustic Reports	21 page(s)
<b>AT-D</b>	Traffic Reports	45 page(s)
<b>AT-E</b>	Economic Reports	12 page(s)
<b>AT-F</b>	Submissions	12 page(s)
<b>AT-G</b>	Draft Conditions of Consent	23 page(s)

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On 24 October 2011, the Sydney West Joint Regional Planning Panel (JRPP) resolved to approve Development Application No. 1253.1/2010 for alterations and additions to Stockland Wetherill Park Shopping Centre comprising an additional 11,955sq.m of gross leaseable floor area (GLFA) which incorporates 58 additional retail shops, new gymnasium, relocation of existing medical centre, refurbishment of cinema foyer, and associated basement level, grade level and deck car parking.

Development Consent No. 1253.1/2010 was subsequently modified with Council issuing approval on 26 September 2012 for minor internal and external alterations including the reconfiguration of the internal floor layout resulting in a reduction in GLFA of 956sq.m to 11,039sq.m.

This application proposes a further expansion to the shopping centre comprising 5,664m<sup>2</sup> of additional gross leaseable floor area (GLFA) located at ground level and three (3) levels of deck car parking above, and associated works. These works are identified as 'Stage 2' and are located directly adjacent to the works approved pursuant to Development Consent No. 1253.1/2010, which are now known as 'Stage 1'.

The approved Stage 1 development consisted primarily of filling in the northern half of the existing at-grade car park with ground level shops and 2 levels of parking above. Similarly, the Stage 2 development consists primarily of filling in the southern half of the existing at-grade car park with ground level shops and 3 levels of parking above.

The proposed Stage 2 works also include: the removal of the existing food court and construction of a new 'open-air' food court comprising thirteen (13) food kiosks and associated seating; the construction of new retail space consisting of three (3) mini-major tenancies and thirteen (13) specialty retail shops; three (3) levels of above-ground parking resulting in an additional 227 car parking spaces.

The Stockland Wetherill Park Shopping centre currently has a gross leaseable floor area (GLFA) of 46,495sq.m. The proposed increase in gross leaseable floor area (GLFA) of 5,664sq.m results in a combined increase in GLFA of 16,703sq.m (Stages 1 and 2 combined) and a total GLFA of 63,198sq.m at the shopping centre.

There are currently 1941 on-site parking spaces available at the shopping centre. To accommodate the proposed additional 5,664sq.m floor area, an additional 227 car parking spaces are proposed to be provided. This represents 1 car space per 25sq.m of GLFA, as required by the Fairfield City-Wide DCP 2006. Combined with the 480 additional parking spaces approved for Stage 1, the total car parking spaces available at the site would increase to 2648 spaces.

The subject site is expansive with an overall area of 12.2 hectares, and is bounded by Polding Street to the north, Restwell Road to the south, the Liverpool to Parramatta Transitway to the west and Prairiewood High School to the east.

The site is zoned District Business Centre 3(b) under Fairfield Local Environmental Plan 1994. The proposed expansion to the existing shopping centre is considered to be permissible within the zone and is consistent with the objectives of the zone.

In response to the public exhibition of this application, two (2) written submissions were received raising concern in relation to operational issues at the centre, noise generated from additional car parking areas, and pedestrian safety within the centre. These issues are addressed within this report and it is considered that they have been satisfactorily resolved.

A third submission, prepared by Fairfield City Council, was forwarded directly to the Joint Regional Planning Panel (JRPP), and forms an attachment to this report. The Council, as a stakeholder on behalf of the community, has objected to the proposed development as it considers that the economic assessment submitted by the applicant is deficient and underestimates the likely impacts on the established retail centres within the City.

An economic analysis was submitted with the application and has been assessed by an independent economic consultant commissioned by Council. The consultants advice concludes that the cumulative economic impact of the Stage 1 and Stage 2 expansion on the surrounding sub-regional centres of Fairfield, Cabramatta and Bonnyrigg will be in the order of -8%. Impacts in the range of -5 to -10% are considered to be low to moderate impacts.

Having regard to the findings contained within the economic impact assessment prepared on behalf of the applicant, as well as the peer review undertaken by Council's economic consultant, it is considered that the low to moderate impact envisaged to be experienced by nearby centres is unlikely to threaten their on-going viability, and this will be far outweighed by the economic and social benefits of the proposal, such as increased shopping choice, increase in employment opportunities and the reduction in escape expenditure from the City of Fairfield.

It is considered that the proposed additions form the logical expansion of the shopping centre, which is located in a town centre that is identified in the NSW Department of Planning's Draft West Central Subregional Strategy as a 'Potential Major Centre'. The Stage 2 expansion reinforces and facilitates two of the key aims of the Prairiewood Town Centre Masterplan, which is to activate the north-south spine road, and maintain and enhance the pedestrian linkages running north-south and east-west through the site.

The application is referred to the Sydney West Joint Regional Planning Panel for consideration pursuant to Part 4 of State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011 and Schedule 4A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, as the development has a capital value in excess of \$20 million.

This report summarises the key issues associated with the development application and provides an assessment of the relevant matters of consideration in accordance with the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, the Fairfield Local Environmental Plan 1994 and the Fairfield City-Wide Development Control Plan 2006.

The development is considered to be satisfactory with regard to car parking, traffic generation, traffic safety, acoustic noise, potential economic impacts, loading and unloading, and site landscaping. It is considered that the proposed development is appropriate for the site and for the locality and is unlikely to cause significant impact to the surrounding environment. In this regard, the proposed development is recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

#### SITE DESCRIPTION AND LOCALITY

The subject site is located within the Prairiewood Town Centre and is bounded by Polding Street in the north, Restwell Road in the south and the Transitway in the west, as shown below.



**Locality Plan** (Source: Fairfield City Council)



The land is described as Lot 102 in DP 1034345 and Lot 1 in DP 867772, No. 561-583 Polding Street, Prairiewood. The subject site has a frontage to Polding Street of 305 metres, a frontage to Restwell Road of 280 metres and a frontage to the Transitway of 415 metres. The site has an overall area of 12.2 hectares.

The site consists predominantly of a large shopping centre constructed in a 'C' shape around a large at-grade car park. The shopping centre consists of 2 supermarkets, 2 discount department stores, approximately 140 specialty stores, cinema and medical centre. A north-south spine road provides a vehicular link through the centre between Polding Street and Restwell Road.

Surrounding the main shopping centre complex is a McDonalds Restaurant and sports store located in the north-western corner of the site, a service station located adjacent to Polding Street in the north, an Italian Restaurant in the north-eastern corner, community facilities in the eastern part of the site, and a tyre-repair outlet in the south-eastern corner of the site.

The total gross leaseable floor area of the site, including all abovementioned buildings is 46,495sq.m, while the gross leaseable floor area of the retail space is 38,973m<sup>2</sup>.

The majority of on-site car parking is contained within the at-grade car park on the eastern side of the shopping centre and within the basement / undercroft car park located underneath the southern part of the shopping centre. However, there are also parking spaces located at the rear, or western side, of the shopping centre adjacent to the centre's main loading facilities, which are accessed via Restwell Road. In total there are 1,941 parking spaces located on the site.

The shopping centre was opened in 1983 and in 2000 underwent a refurbishment comprising an increase in gross leaseable floor area of 6,785m<sup>2</sup>.

The immediate locality consists of single and two-storey residential development to the north, single and two-storey residential development to the north-east (small public housing estate), Prairiewood High School to the east, recreational and community facilities to the south and south-east, and the Liverpool to Parramatta Transitway to the west. Further to the east, beyond the high school, is Fairfield Hospital and further to the west, beyond the Transitway, is more single and two-storey residential development.

## DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

- On 24 October 2011, the Sydney West Joint Regional Planning Panel (JRPP) resolved to approve Development Application No. 1253.1/2010 for alterations and additions to Stockland Wetherill Park Shopping Centre comprising an additional 11,955sq.m of gross leaseable floor area (GLFA) which incorporates 58 additional retail shops, new gymnasium, relocation of existing medical centre, refurbishment of cinema foyer, and associated basement level, grade level and deck car parking. This approval is now known as Stage 1. This development has not yet commenced construction.
- Development Consent No. 1253.1/2010 was subsequently modified with Council, pursuant to s96(1A) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. Approval was issued on 26 September 2012 for minor internal and external alterations including the reconfiguration of the internal floor layout resulting in a reduction in GLFA of 956sq.m to 11,039sq.m.
- On 17 April 2012, Council at its Comprehensive LEP Committee, considered a submission from Stockland which requested that the FSR of 0.55:1 contained within the Draft Fairfield LEP 2011, be increased to a ratio of 1:1. The Committee resolved to recommend that the maximum FSR, as shown on the LEP maps for the Stockland site, be increased from 0.55:1 to 0.57:1, to reflect the level of development approved for Stage 1.
- On 22 June 2012, a Planning Proposal was lodged with Council seeking to increase the FSR of 0.55:1 contained within the Draft Fairfield LEP 2011 to a ratio of 1:1.
- On 24 July 2012, Council resolved not to approve the increase in FSR, as it was considered that there were a number of deficiencies in the MacroPlanDimasi report, as identified by Norling Consulting. In addition, it was considered that the applicant had not provided an overwhelming compelling case to support such an increase.
- On 3 August 2012, Stockland lodged Development Application No.533.1/2012 proposing alterations and additions to the Stockland shopping centre an expansion comprising 5,664m<sup>2</sup> of additional gross leaseable floor area (GLFA). This application is identified as Stage 2 of the Stockland redevelopment, and is the subject of this report.

## PROPOSAL

The application proposes alterations and additions to Stockland Wetherill Park Shopping Centre comprising 5,664m<sup>2</sup> of additional gross leaseable floor area (GLFA) located at ground level and three (3) levels of deck car parking above, and associated works (Stage 2).

Specific details of the proposed development are as follows:

### *Demolition and Excavation Works*

- Demolition of the southern part of the existing at-grade car parking area, located in the centre of the site, to enable the construction of additional retail space at ground floor level.
- Demolition of the existing food court located adjacent to the western entrance to the shopping centre.
- Demolition of existing awnings along the existing frontage and pedestrian entrances into the shopping complex.

### *Building Works*

- An extension to the existing shopping centre comprising an additional 5,664m<sup>2</sup> of gross leaseable floor area (GLFA). The extension is located over the southern portion of the large at-grade car park that is located in the centre of the site. This extension is proposed to accommodate 13 new specialty retail spaces, 13 new food and beverage tenancies and 3 new mini-majors (major chain retailers that do not require large floor space).
- Construction of three (3) levels of deck car parking above the ground level retail space. Whilst some existing car parking spaces are proposed to be removed to make way for the new development, it is proposed to provide an additional 227 spaces as part of Stage 2.
- Construction of a new 'open-air' food court comprising thirteen (13) food and beverage kiosks and associated seating.
- The proposed maximum height of the new building works is 15.5 metres (or 4 storeys), which is slightly higher than the approved Stage 1 works, which incorporate a height of 14.5 metres. However, this increase is due to the existing slope of the land. It is noted that the existing cinema building stands at 17 metres.

### *Car Parking*

- There are currently 1941 on-site parking spaces available at the shopping centre. To accommodate the proposed additional 5,664sq.m retail floor area, an additional 227 car parking spaces are proposed to be provided. This represents 1 car space per 25sq.m of GLFA, as required by the Fairfield City-Wide DCP 2006. Combined with the 480 additional parking spaces approved for Stage 1, the total car parking spaces available at the site would increase to 2648 spaces.

### *Gross Leaseable Floor Area*

- The Stockland Wetherill Park Shopping centre currently has a gross leaseable floor area (GLFA) of 46,495sq.m. The proposed increase in gross leaseable floor area (GLFA) of 5,664sq.m will mean a combined increase in GLFA of 16,703sq.m (Stage 1 and Stage 2 combined) and a total GLFA of 63,198sq.m at the shopping centre.

### *Vehicle Access and Servicing*

- Stage 2 retains the roundabout that, as proposed in Stage 1, provided vehicular access to the southern portion of the large at-grade car park. However, this roundabout will now provide ingress and egress to the three levels of deck parking above.
- Upgrading / modification of the existing loading dock and waste facilities located on the western side of the building to service the expanded food court.

### *Pedestrian Access*

- The existing east-west pedestrian link will be further improved through the construction of a large open-air food court. This will facilitate pedestrian access from the school through the shopping centre to the T-way located in the western part of the site.

### *Miscellaneous*

- Due to the existence of a stormwater overland flow path running south along the north-south spine road, there is a level difference between the shops located on the proposed new eastern façade and the adjacent ground level. This level difference ranges between 500mm and 950mm. As a result, the design as initially submitted did not facilitate direct access into the shops from the north-south spine road. However, the applicant has now added a ramp providing direct pedestrian access to these shop fronts, thus activating this space.
- In addition to the new entranceway feature located along north-south spine road proposed to be built in Stage 1, a second new entranceway feature will be built in the south-eastern corner of Stage 2, providing a large new pedestrian entrance in the centre.



- Given the proposed deck level parking is a highly visible component of the overall façade for Stage 2, the car park has been architecturally treated using partial height perforated steel screening.

### *Operating Hours*

- The core hours of operation for the centre will not change as a result of the proposed development. In this regard, the core hours of the shopping centre will remain as follows:
  - Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday: 09.00am – 5.30pm
  - Thursday: 09.00am – 9.00pm
  - Saturday: 09.00am – 5.00pm
  - Sunday: 10.00am – 4.00pm

It is noted that the Woolworths, Franklins, McDonalds, the Hoyts cinema complex and a number of cafes operate outside of these core hours.

### *Amendments*

Since the lodgement of the initial application, some components of the proposed development have been amended slightly. These are discussed below:

- The proposed ground floor layout has been slightly altered, as follows:
  - ‘Mini-Major 4’ has been reduced in size to accommodate additional back-of-house storage.
  - The angle of one of the internal retail malls has been slightly altered.
  - To overcome the level difference between the shops located on the eastern façade and the adjacent ground level (due to the conveyance of overland flow along the north-south spine road), a ramp has been incorporated to provide direct access to the shops on the eastern façade, thus activating this space.
  - The entranceway connecting the shops to the T-way has been widened from 3.0 metres to 3.5 metres.
- At the request of Council, a number of changes have been made to the pedestrian entrance located on the western side of the shopping centre adjacent to the T-way. These changes are noted as follows:
  - As mentioned above, the entranceway connecting the shops to the T-way was widened from 3.0 metres to 3.5 metres.
  - In addition, a new entranceway structure has been incorporated into this pedestrian entranceway, as well as an overhead awning and lighting.
  - Additionally, Stockland committed to opening this entrance until 9.00pm, seven (7) days a week, for a trial period of three (3) months.

**NB** The above changes are considered minor and do not result in any adverse impact to adjoining properties or related stakeholders. As such, it was considered unnecessary to re-exhibit the application.

## **STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS APPLICABLE TO THE SITE**

### **1. Draft West Central Subregional Strategy**

The Draft West Central Subregional Strategy forms part of the Sydney Regional Strategy “*City of Cities: A Plan for Sydney’s Future*”. The Draft West Central Subregional Strategy provides direction to Councils for public and private investment in existing and emerging centres for the creation of employment and housing. Local Councils are directed to plan for employment generating and residential development in the preparation of strategic planning policies.

The draft strategy places existing commercial and industrial centres into various categories where employment growth and redevelopment is planned to occur. The Prairiewood Town Centre is identified as a ‘Potential Major Centre’, alongside the Town Centres of Cabramatta and Fairfield. The draft strategy provides a strategic basis for the development of the Prairiewood Masterplan, adopted by Fairfield Council in December 2005. The Masterplan provides urban design principles and planning controls for development within the Prairiewood Town Centre.

### **2. Fairfield Local Environmental Plan 1994**

The subject site is zoned 3(b) District Business Centre as stipulated in Fairfield LEP 1994. The proposed alterations and additions to an existing shopping centre are permissible within the zone.

Objectives of the 3(b) zone are provided as follows:

- (a) *to provide for and encourage the provision of a wide range of goods and services which will contribute to economic and employment growth within the City of Fairfield,*
- (b) *to encourage the development of Cabramatta Town Centre as a specialist cultural, retail, tourist and entertainment centre, and*
- (c) *to encourage the District Centres located in Prairiewood and Bonnyrigg to provide residents with major food, clothing and small item shopping opportunities.*

Clause 8(2) of Fairfield LEP 1994 provides as follows:

- (2) *The Council must not grant consent to development on land within a zone unless it is of the opinion that the carrying out of the development would be consistent with one or more of the objectives of that zone.*

It is considered that the proposed expansion to Stocklands Wetherill Park Shopping Centre is consistent with Objective (a) and (c) as it will generate employment and contribute to the economic development of Prairiewood and the City of Fairfield, and will provide residents with greater variety of retail opportunities.

### **3. Draft Fairfield City Council LEP 2011**

The subject site is proposed to be zoned B4 Mixed Use pursuant to the Draft Fairfield LEP 2011. The proposed alterations and additions to an existing shopping centre are permissible within the zone.

The objectives of the B4 Mixed are provided as follows:

- *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.*
- *To support the development of Prairiewood, Fairfield and Cabramatta as the principal location for specialist cultural, retail, business, tourist and entertainment facilities and services*

It is considered that the proposed development would meet all of the proposed objectives of the B4 zone.

Clause 4.3(2) of the draft LEP, entitled '*Height of buildings*,' states that the height of the building on any land is not to exceed the maximum height shown for the land on the '*Height of Buildings Map*'. In this case, the proposed maximum height designated for this site is 18 metres. The proposed height of buildings in Stage 2 is 15.5 metres, and as such, were the draft LEP in force, the proposed height of the development would be compliant.

Clause 4.4(2) of the draft LEP, entitled '*Floor space ratio*,' states that the floor space ratio of any building is not to exceed the floor space ratio shown for the land on the '*Floor Space Ratio Map*'.

When the draft LEP was first exhibited, the floor space ratio (FSR) for the subject site was identified on the *Floor Space Ratio Map* as 0.55:1. Whilst the FSR of 0.55:1 is still shown on the *Floor Space Ratio Map*, Council at its Comprehensive LEP Committee meeting on 17 April 2012, resolved to recommend that the FSR be increased to 0.57:1, in order to reflect the increase in gross floor area recently approved as part of the Stage 1 expansion.

It is important to note that, the current and prevailing Environmental Planning Instrument governing the site, the Fairfield LEP 1994, contains no FSR provisions. In this regard, the application may be determined in accordance with the provisions of the Fairfield LEP 1994. Notwithstanding this, some consideration should be given to the controls contained in the draft instrument.

Since the increase in the FSR to 0.57:1, Stockland lodged a Planning Proposal to increase the FSR from 0.57:1 to 1:1, arguing that an FSR of 0.57:1 does not provide any scope for future expansion, and such a restriction places the current approved redevelopment (i.e. Stage 1 works) at financial risk due to the centre having a perceived no growth potential.

Accompanying the Planning Proposal was a report prepared by MacroPlanDimasi (MPD) entitled *'Fairfield Retail and Commercial Centre Strategy – Review and Update'*, dated June 2012, which sought to provide planning justification for the proposed increase in FSR from 0.57:1 to 1:1. This document was peer reviewed by economic consultants Norling Consulting Pty Ltd, who provided Council with expert advice on whether an adequate case had been made for the increase in FSR.

Whilst a number of shortcomings were identified by Norling Consulting with the MacroPlanDimasi report, Norling concluded that they were largely supportive of increasing or removing the FSR for successful higher order shopping facilities such as Stockland Wetherill Park for the following reasons:

- There is substantial leakage of retail expenditure out of Fairfield LGA.
- It is likely that some level of population growth and or rejuvenation will occur within the catchment area for Stockland Wetherill Park.
- The planning documents identify Stockland Wetherill Park as a potential major centre within Fairfield City.

Norling indicates that an increase in FSR does not in itself lead to an increase in gross leaseable floor area or result in a significant impact to other centres. Any proposed increase would be subject to a development application accompanied by a rigorous environmental impact assessment. Norling recommended a maximum of 0.8:1 in his concluding comments based on the size of the centre, the anticipated 10 year life of the planning control and the nature of current approvals.

Council when considering the Planning Proposal, at its meeting on 24 July 2012, to increase the FSR to 1:1 was presented with a number of options which ranged from no increase to the requested 1:1 increase. The resolution of Council was not to permit any increase in FSR (above the 0.57:1 previously agreed to). Whilst Council did not provide any reasons for this decision the report indicated that this option was available if Council was of the view that the applicant had failed to justify an increase.

The Stage 2 expansion results in an FSR of 0.61:1. Whilst this is higher than the 0.57:1 prescribed within the draft LEP, this is considered to be a minor non-compliance, particularly when viewed in the context of the overall size of the centre. Notwithstanding, as identified above, there are currently no FSR restrictions in the Fairfield LEP 1994, and in this regard, whilst consideration should be given to the FSR control as proposed in the draft LEP, such would not have determining weight.

As indicated by Norling, an increase in FSR would not in itself result in significant impact to other centres. Any increase in GLFA would require further economic analysis at the development application stage.

In this regard, an assessment of the potential economic impact to nearby centres of the proposed increase in GLFA is discussed in the following sections.

#### **4. Draft State Environmental Planning Policy (Competition) 2010**

The draft policy aims to promote economic growth by removing any anti-competitive barriers to commercial development, particularly barriers within the planning system that could restrict or prohibit commercial growth.

Clause 9(1) of the draft SEPP states that the likely impacts of a proposed commercial development to the viability of competing commercial centres is not a matter for consideration when determining an application. However, Clause 9(2) indicates that any such impact shall be taken into consideration if the proposed commercial development is likely to have an overall adverse impact on the extent and adequacy of facilities and services available to the local community.

The public exhibition period for submissions on the draft SEPP concluded quite some time ago, and it is unclear if or when gazettal of the policy will occur.

The applicability of the draft SEPP in the current circumstances is somewhat irrelevant, as the development controls and policies implemented by Fairfield City Council currently do not restrict the growth of commercial centres. Council's position is consistent with the aims and intent of the draft SEPP, in that competition between competing centres is not a planning consideration, but that the level of impact on the range and services provided in other centres, particularly in this case other sub-regional centres, is not unacceptable.

This position is identified in the Fairfield Retail and Commercial Centres/Activities Policy No.1-203, which is discussed below.

#### **5. Fairfield Retail and Commercial Centres/Activities Policy No.1-203**

Council's Centres Policy was adopted in July 2006 and therefore predates the Draft West Central Subregional Strategy (which identifies Prairiewood as a potential Major Centre). The Centres Policy establishes a hierarchy of retail centres within the City of Fairfield and sets out a framework for assessment of commercial development within these existing centres.

Fairfield City currently has four sub-regional centres (Fairfield, Cabramatta, Bonnyrigg and Prairiewood). Sub-regional centres within the City of Fairfield are characterised by the following:

- *the provision of retail and commercial services to a sub-regional within Fairfield LGA (usually about 50,000 persons)*
- *the presence of one (or more) Discount Department Store (DDS) and one (or more) full-line supermarket*

- *their location on major public transport networks*
- *generally containing between 20-80,000 sq.m of retail floor space together with a wide range of non-retail services including cinemas, community services and office space*
- *providing for higher order and comparison goods shopping as well as the provision of specialist, professional and personal services serving the sub-region.*

The following evaluation criteria apply to proposed commercial development within the sub-regional centres:

- *that the development proposal will not result in an unacceptable level of impact on the range and services provided in other existing sub-regional centres in Fairfield*
- *that the development proposal will not result in a reduction in the range of services provided in nearby local centres*
- *whether the development proposal will introduce types of retail services likely to reduce escape spending from Fairfield*
- *whether the proposal will improve the viability of the sub-regional centre by strengthening key retail functions – for example, the provision of or upgrading of discount department stores and supermarkets*
- *whether the development proposal demonstrates that a net community benefit will flow from the proposed expansion of retail floor space*

To determine whether the proposed development complies or is consistent with the above criteria, an economic impact analysis was commissioned by the applicant and undertaken by MacroPlanDimasi, dated July 2012.

Whilst a response to each of the above evaluation criteria can be found on pages 12 – 13 of the MacroPlanDimasi report, the main findings of the report are that there will be very minimal trading impacts expected at the three other sub-regional centres of Fairfield, Cabramatta and Bonnyrigg. Retail impacts are expected to range from between 1 and 3.4%.

Specialist economic advice was sought from Norling Consulting with respect to the proposed Stage 2 expansion. This advice is provided at Attachment E. In summary, the advice indicates that, whilst there are a number of criticisms that could be levelled at the Economic Impact Assessment (EIA) lodged with the Stage 2 application, the EIA has adopted an appropriate methodology, assessed the necessary issues and reached appropriate conclusions which may be summarised as:

- (a) Represents a relatively minor increase in retail floor space;
- (b) Results in net beneficial outcomes to the Fairfield community;
- (c) Causes minor economic impacts upon surrounding centres;
- (d) Reduces escape expenditure from Fairfield City;
- (e) Increases the convenience and accessibility of retail facilities for Fairfield City residents; and
- (f) Satisfies local and state government policies by expanding retail and employment activities within an established higher order centre.

Norling estimate that the impact on the Fairfield Town Centre as a result of the Stage 2 development would be an additional 5% above those estimated by the applicant. This would then increase the impact from -2.9% to -3.0% in terms of reduction in retail expenditure within the Fairfield Town Centre by 2015/16. Norling considers the economic impact associated with the Stage 2 development as minor.

Norling does however advise that, given the cumulative impact of the Stage 1 approved works (Previously assessed as a -5% impact on the Fairfield Town Centre), Council may wish to give consideration to imposing a condition that separates the timing of Stages 1 and 2, such that the expected economic impacts would be staggered over time.

The overall economic impact of the Stage 1 and Stage 2 expansion on the Fairfield Town Centre are in the order of -8%. Impacts in the range of -5 to -10% are considered to be low to moderate impacts.

The suggestion by Norling that Council consider a condition that separates the timing of Stages 1 and 2 is one that is not considered feasible and would also be opposed by the applicant. The applicant has confirmed that, after the Norling advice was received, the decision to proceed with Stage 2 will be made based on market conditions, and for this reason a time separation condition between Stages 1 and 2 would be opposed.

With regard to economic impact, in the context of the overall size and impact of the existing shopping centre combined with the already approved expansion, it is considered that the additional impact associated with the proposed Stage 2 expansion will not be significant. This is also the case in terms of the cumulative impact associated with Stages 1 and 2 combined.

Having regard to the economic analysis undertaken by MacroPlanDimasi, the projected cumulative impact to nearby centres due to the proposed expansion to the Stockland Wetherill Park Shopping Centre is not significant enough to warrant refusal of the application, and the benefits identified to occur as a result of the expansion significantly outweigh the impacts. As such, from an economic point of view, the proposed expansion is considered to be satisfactory.

## 6. Prairiewood Town Centre Masterplan 2005

As identified above, Stockland is located within the Prairiewood Town Centre. Development within the town centre needs to be consistent with the Prairiewood Town Centre Masterplan. The Masterplan provides strategic vision and guidelines to enable Prairiewood to develop as a vibrant, multi-use town centre.

Any significant redevelopment of the Stockland site is subject to the key aims, objectives and controls contained within the Masterplan. These are detailed below.

- *2.8 Retail Uses*

The Masterplan does not envisage any significant increase in total retail floor space. Proposals that seek increases in retail floor space but do not achieve any of the following objectives will not be supported.

- *new retail uses are proposed which effectively would assist in retaining escape expenditure which is flowing out of Fairfield to other areas.*
- *retail development will act as a catalyst for the renewal/redevelopment/refurbishment of an existing centre.*
- *new retail formats cannot be accommodated within existing floorspace.*
- *new retail development is appropriate in terms of achieving desired urban design outcomes such as creating "active street frontages".*

Both the Economic Impact Assessment undertaken by MacroPlanDimasi and the subsequent peer review undertaken by Norling Consulting have demonstrated that the proposed expansion will lead to a significant reduction in escape expenditure.

With regard to the last point, the application proposes to provide active retail frontages along the north-south spine road, which is envisaged within the Design Objectives for Phase 2 of the Prairiewood Masterplan, as detailed below.

- *5.0 Design Objectives Phase 2*

The principles for the Stockland site are identified in Figure 18 of the Masterplan, with the relevant principles detailed below:

- *Develop east-west and north-south pedestrian links through the site*

The existing east-west and north-south pedestrian links through the site are maintained and enhanced.



- *Provide active building frontages*

As indicated above, the application proposes to provide active retail frontages along the north-south spine road.

- *Possible residential mixed use building located along Polding Street*

Whilst Figure 18 shows a perimeter building along the Polding Street frontage, this building is envisaged to be a mixed use building (e.g. commercial ground floor and residential above). However, in order to achieve residential development in the Town Centre, the Prairiewood Masterplan also states that, *"...the introduction of residential development on the site will require at a minimum, amendment to the objectives of this zone which currently do not mention residential development"*.

Notwithstanding the above, the area designated within the Masterplan for the future mixed use building is substantial in size and comprises most of the site's frontage to Polding Street, where a number of buildings are currently located.

Whilst there are works proposed to occur in this part of the site (Stage 1 works), these works involve only the demolition of a service station building and conversion of this area to civic space. It is considered that such works would not compromise the ability to provide for a mixed use building in this location in the future.

With regard to the Stage 2 expansion, given that the large, centrally-located at-grade car park will effectively become retail shops, the active frontage envisaged under the Prairiewood Masterplan will change slightly, in that instead of being internal, the centre's main facade will be pushed outwards and will now front the north-south spine road. This change however, is still consistent with the Masterplan.

In addition, it is considered that the provision of a large open-air food court through the middle of the new retail area will facilitate pedestrian access from the school located in the east, through the shopping centre, to the T-way located in the west.

Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposed expansion of the Stockland Shopping Centre is consistent with the key aims, objectives and controls contained within the Prairiewood Masterplan.

## **INTERNAL REFERRALS**

During the assessment process, comments were sought from a number of sections within Council, as detailed below:

<b>Building Control Branch</b>	No objection, subject to standard conditions
<b>Prairiewood Place Manager</b>	No objection, subject to standard conditions
<b>Traffic and Road Safety Branch</b>	No objection, subject to standard conditions See below for a more detailed assessment
<b>Environmental Management Section</b>	No objection, subject to standard conditions See below for a more detailed assessment
<b>Development Engineering Branch</b>	No objection, subject to standard conditions
<b>Community Health Section</b>	No objection, subject to standard conditions
<b>Open Spaces Branch</b>	No objection, subject to standard conditions

### *Traffic and Road Safety*

To determine the potential impact of the proposed development, the applicant's traffic consultant undertook traffic surveys of the site itself and all surrounding intersections.

The traffic report expects additional traffic generation in the order of 315 vehicles per hour in both directions during the Thursday afternoon peak and 345 vehicles per hour in both directions during the Saturday midday peak. This information was then analysed using SIDRA modelling. The model also included the additional traffic expected as a result of the Stage 1 expansion. All surrounding intersections were found to be able to operate with a good-to-satisfactory level of service (LOS).

The traffic report found that, during the Thursday afternoon peak, the Polding Street and Prairie Vale Road intersection would operate at LOS D (Satisfactory but operating near capacity) with Stage 2 traffic in place, which was the same as for the existing situation (modelled for Stage 1) with only minor increases in average delays of about one second per vehicle.

The report found that the internal roundabouts on the north-south spine road would operate with average delays per vehicle of less than 20 seconds for both peak periods, which represents a LOS B (Good with minimal delays and spare capacity).

The traffic report concluded that the road network could cater for the traffic generated by the proposed Stage 2 extensions.

Council's Senior Traffic Engineer reviewed the SIDRA modelling and concluded that there were no issues with regard to the traffic impact on adjoining intersections, and thus no objection was raised to the proposed development, subject to standard conditions of consent.

The application was also referred to the Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) for their comments, as required by State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007. The RMS raised no objection to the proposed development, subject to standard conditions of consent.

### *Parking*

Council's required rate of car parking for retail facilities is 1/25m<sup>2</sup>. The applicant has demonstrated that parking at the centre complies with this rate. This is demonstrated in the below calculation.

- Existing GLFA = 47,913m<sup>2</sup>
- Proposed additional GLFA (Stage 1) = 11,039m<sup>2</sup>
- Proposed additional GLFA (Stage 2) = 5,664m<sup>2</sup>
  
- Total GLFA = 64,616m<sup>2</sup>
  
- Required parking (64,616m<sup>2</sup> / 25m<sup>2</sup>) = 2585 spaces
  
- Total parking provided (incl. Stages 1 & 2) = 2648

Notwithstanding the above, in order to determine current and future parking demand, the applicant's traffic consultant undertook parking surveys of the shopping centre during the two peak operating days of Thursday (8am to 8pm) and Saturday (8am to 4pm), which found the following:

#### Thursday:

Parking demand ranged from a low of 318 spaces (at 8am) to 1,596spaces (at 12pm). Peak parking demand was 83% of available parking.

#### Saturday:

Parking demand ranged from a low of 241 spaces (at 8am) to 1,677spaces (at 12pm). Peak parking demand was 87% of available parking.

There are currently 1,941 parking spaces existing on site. Based on the parking survey, the report indicates that, at its peak operating period, the centre still has in excess of 250 available spaces. This indicates that the current level of demand is 1 space per 28m<sup>2</sup> of gross leaseable floor area (GLFA), thus compliance with Council's retail rate of 1 space per 25m<sup>2</sup> is not necessary. Notwithstanding this, parking for the proposed additions complies with Council's car parking rate, as does the centre as a whole (i.e. existing and proposed GLFA combined).

Based on the report, Council's Senior Traffic Engineer considers the proposed level of additional parking to be satisfactory to accommodate the projected increase in parking demand.

### ***Environmental Management***

Council's Environmental Management Section has assessed the development with regard to acoustic noise and has indicated that noise generated both during construction and during the on-going operation of the shopping centre was found to be satisfactory during the assessment of the Stage 1 expansion of the centre. In this regard, given the minor nature of the Stage 2 works, and the location of these works toward the middle of the site, the noise generated would not be beyond that which was assessed during Stage 1.

Council's Environmental Management Section considers that noise generated during construction and operation of the shopping centre will comply with the relevant environmental noise guidelines, and as such, raises no objection to the proposed alterations and additions, subject to the implementation of the measures and recommendations detailed in the applicant's acoustic reports.

### **EXTERNAL REFERRALS**

During the assessment process, comments were sought from the following external authorities, as detailed below:

#### **Roads and Maritime Services**

As the proposal is identified within State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007 as shops with a floor area of greater than 2000sq.m (Column 2 of Schedule 3 – Traffic Generating Developments), the application was referred to the Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) for their comments. The RMS raised no objection to the proposed development, subject to standard conditions of consent.

It is noted that, as part of the Stage 1 expansion, the RMS required a number of design changes to be made in relation to vehicular access within surrounding the centre before the authority would support the development. It is noted that the requested changes have been incorporated into the design. This may be the reason why no issues were raised by the RMS with regard to Stage 2.

## **Fairfield Police**

The Crime Management Unit of Fairfield Police assessed the application and made the following comments:

*“A check via the Police computer system (COPS) on 11 September 2011 regarding the subject premises and the applicant revealed no recent incidents of concern*

*Police have no concerns regarding the alterations and additions to Stocklands Wetherill park Shopping Centre”.*

### **PUBLIC NOTIFICATION**

In accordance with the Fairfield City-Wide Development Control Plan 2006, the application was notified to adjoining and surrounding owners and occupiers, as well as all surrounding and nearby commercial centres, and a notice placed in the local newspaper for a period of twenty-one (21) days, from 22 August to 12 September 2012.

During this time, Council received one (1) submission raising a number of concerns primarily with the day-to-day operation of the centre. A further submission was received quite late in the assessment process. This submission raised concern with the safety of school children walking through the centre. These two submissions were assessed in detail and a response to each issue raised is provided below.

A third submission, which was prepared by Fairfield City Council, was forwarded directly to the JRPP. Fairfield City Council, as a stakeholder on behalf of the community, objects to the proposed expansion on economic grounds. In particular, it is considered by Fairfield City Council that the economic assessment submitted by the applicant is deficient and underestimates the likely impacts on the established retail centres within the City.

In accordance with JRPP Guidelines, this report does not address the relative merits of the arguments raised by Fairfield City Council in its submission, however, but only acknowledges that an objection by the Council has been made. A copy of the Council's submission is provided at Attachment F.

The concerns raised within the two (2) written submissions are summarised below followed by a response addressing the issue. It is noted that the applicant was given an opportunity to address the following issues, and in this regard, a written response was provided to Council. Each submission is addressed in turn.

## **Submission No. 1**

- 1. Traffic is a concern with the increased flow not only along Polding Street but also Conrad Street. We hope that Council, Stockland and the RTA will implement procedures to even the flow of traffic and look at the installation of red light cameras at the intersection of Polding and Conrad Streets. Perhaps there is a possible need for blisters to be placed in Conrad Street to slow the speed of drivers as they race the lights to avoid stopping and accidents.**

### *Applicant's Response*

*The Stage 2 DA was accompanied by a Traffic and Parking Assessment which demonstrated that the proposed development traffic associated with Stage 2, including the scenario where Stages 1 and 2 were considered cumulatively, can be comfortably accommodated within the existing road network.*

*The issues raised are generally broader traffic management issues which are not related to the Stage 2 development, but rather the overall performance of the wider road network near the Stockland Wetherill Park site.*

Council notes that traffic calming devices were recently implemented in Vidal Street near Conrad Street, consisting of speed cushions, planter boxes and rumble bars, and such measures could also be introduced to Conrad Street. This has been raised with Council's Senior Traffic Engineer.

The resident raises an important issue of drivers speeding up to beat the red light, and in many cases travelling through the intersection whilst the light is red. This issue plagues most intersections, and is not isolated to the intersection of Conrad and Polding Streets. It is hoped that the changes to this intersection that were devised during Stage 1 will address this issue somewhat. In the interim, Council's Senior Traffic Engineer has indicated that he will raise with the RMS the possibility of incorporating a red light camera at this intersection.

- 2. Shopping trolleys are left scattered along Conrad Street and include rubbish which is dumped on Conrad Street.**

### *Applicant's Response*

*This issue is not directly related to the proposed Stage 2 development and is more an issue in terms of the day-to-day management of the Centre. Nevertheless, Stockland's Centre Management Team oversee the regular collection of trolleys from within and around the site and Stockland will give a directive to those trolley collectors that any rubbish within a trolley is to be disposed of within the Stockland site.*

**3. General noise is an issue especially with McDonalds on Polding Street in terms of people who congregate in the car park with stereos.**

*Applicant's Response*

*This issue is not related to the proposed Stage 2 development. Nevertheless:-*

- Traffic, car parking and mechanical plant noise issues have been investigated for the Stage 2 expansion and the noise impact from each activity is expected to comply with the project noise criteria; and*
- Stockland's Centre Management Team works diligently alongside Council's Place Managers, Tway representatives and Stockland's retailers to address amenity impacts on surrounding properties.*

**4. There has been an increase in litter from McDonalds and KFC. More needs to be done to clean up the area.**

*Applicant's Response*

*This issue is not related to the proposed Stage 2 development. It is an issue in relation to the day-to-day operation of the shopping centre and a broader issue in relation to car drivers and passengers throwing rubbish from cars.*

**Could consideration be given to, if the car park at McDonalds is to be extended, with the demolition of the sport store, to having the car park locked overnight to discourage loitering, car stereos and disruption to residents? Will the removal of the sports store and addition of parking alleviate or add to parking problems in Conrad Street.**

*Applicant's Response*

*An extension of the McDonalds car park and demolition of the existing sports store are not part of the proposed Stage 2 development, nor the approved Stage 1 development.*

**5. Car parking noise will increase across the centre and be a problem unless steps are taken to alleviate this, such as concrete barriers.**

*Applicant's Response*

*Traffic, car parking and mechanical plant noise issues have been investigated for the Stage 2 expansion and the noise impact from each activity is expected to comply with the project noise criteria.*

Council notes that, with the exception of the issue regarding motorists speeding down Conrad Street and running red lights, most of the issues raised by the resident are operational matters. In this regard, the applicant was requested to address these issues in an attempt to raise the awareness of such issues with Stockland Shopping Centre Management.

With regard to the last point raised, being the potential increase in noise from car parking, Council's Environmental Management Section has indicated that noise generated during operation of the shopping centre will comply with the relevant environmental noise guidelines, and as such, raises no objection to the proposed alterations and additions, subject to the implementation of the measures and recommendations detailed in the applicant's acoustic reports.

## **Submission No. 2**

- 1. The P & C Association of Prairiewood High School are concerned, not only for our students, but also the traffic travelling through the Stockland car park.**

**Our students leave the school at approx. 2.40 pm, and many cross from the back entrance through the current car park to go to the shopping centre. Our concern is that with the entrance to the car park just south of the crossing, our students will cause major congestion as cars give way to them.**

**We are also concerned that this may also cause some frustration to the traffic as the students slowly stream across. Would it be possible to consider some sort of 'walk signal' so that both the students and the traffic can be accommodated?**

### **Applicant's Response**

*In relation to the traffic crossing, Stockland recently met with the P&C, and in response has had preliminary discussions with our traffic engineer to understand the implications of putting a walk signal at the crossing, which is essentially a push button for use during the 15 minute afternoon period when the crossing is in greatest use. In theory, this would be acceptable, but that there is likely to be a significant regulatory impact, as the works fall under RMS signalised intersections.*

*Stockland's Traffic Engineer will provide further advice after discussing with RMS, but this is likely to have both time and cost impacts on the project. As an alternate approach, which was also discussed with the P&C, and is supported by our traffic engineers, will be to take a management approach, being either a 'lollipop man', or Stockland security, to 're-train' people into road crossing for a period of time post completion.*



*Also discussed at the P&C meeting was the minimisation of crossing points under the proposed scheme, when compared to current, which seeks to minimise the risk of pedestrian / vehicle conflict.*

It is noted that, since the above meeting between Stockland and the P&C Association, the RMS has indicated that they do not support traffic signals on private property, and that the amount of pedestrian and traffic flows at this crossing would not meet the warrants required for the implementation of signals. The RMS also advise that a 'lollipop person' would also not be supported.

As an alternative, the applicant has suggested that a 'children crossing' sign could be installed, which would state the relevant times that children would be using the pedestrian crossing before and after school, and this could be combined with centre security.

Council's Senior Traffic Engineer has assessed the situation and considers that the installing of rubber speed humps or rubber speed cushions may be the best solution, but would also support the applicant's suggestion with regard to the installation of appropriate signage. Council's Senior Traffic Engineer is hesitant about incorporating a signalled crossing, as he is concerned that when the light is green for vehicles, school kids may attempt to cross anyway, and this could cause conflict.

The suggestion put forward by the applicant has been included as a condition within the draft conditions of consent, contained at Attachment G.

- 2. The P & C Association are also concerned that unfavourable activities may occur in the stairwells of the carpark, mainly being drug activity, where suppliers may target the youth in our area (not just our students). This has been seen in other major carparks in and around the Fairfield area, and we would not like to see our wonderful community being involved in this situation.**

#### *Applicant's Response*

*In relation to the issue of drugs and other nefarious activity in stairwells, the P&C Associated was informed of the inclusion of CCTV, lighting and CPTED design done to date, as well as the security patrols undertaken by the centre's security team. Safety and security at the centre are paramount both to on-going customer satisfaction and the on-going community perception of the centre. This will be part of the on-going operational management of the centre.*

Council notes that the Stockland Development Manager attended the recent meeting of the P & C Association of Prairiewood High School at their request, in order to discuss the abovementioned issues. It is noted the above responses were also forwarded to the representative of the P & C Association, who was appreciative of the time taken and the responses provided.

## SECTION 94 CONTRIBUTIONS

It is considered that there are no outstanding Section 94 contributions applicable for this site and the proposed development does not generate the need for any additional facilities and infrastructure.

However, it is considered that the S.94A Levy applies and the fee applicable would be \$314,880 being 1% of the \$31,488,000 estimated cost of construction.

## SECTION 79C CONSIDERATIONS

The proposed development has been assessed and considered having regard to the matters for consideration under Section 79C of the Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979 and no issues have arisen that would warrant the application being refused on planning grounds. The following is a brief assessment of the proposal with regard to Section 79C.

### (1) **Matters for consideration—general**

In determining a development application, a consent authority is to take into consideration such of the following matters as are of relevance to the development the subject of the development application:

#### *(a) the provisions of:*

##### *(i) Any environmental planning instrument*

Pursuant to the Fairfield Local Environmental Plan 1994, the proposed development is permissible within the 3(b) District Business zone and is considered to be consistent with the objectives of that zone.

##### *(ii) any proposed instrument that is or has been the subject of public consultation under this Act and that has been notified to the consent authority (unless the Director-General has notified the consent authority that the making of the proposed instrument has been deferred indefinitely or has not been approved), and*

The proposed development is considered to be consistent with the Draft West Central Subregional Strategy and Draft SEPP (Competition) 2010.

Pursuant to the draft FLEP 2011, the site is proposed to be zoned B4 Mixed Use, and the proposal would be permissible within that zone and would be consistent with the proposed zone objectives. Whilst the proposed development complies with the height controls contained within the draft LEP, the proposal would not comply with the maximum FSR control. However, the provisions of the draft LEP have limited weight as the LEP has not yet been gazetted, and there is no evidence available that would suggest the increase in floor area would result in an adverse planning outcome.

*(iii) any development control plan*

The proposed development has demonstrated general compliance with the requirements of the Prairiewood Town Centre Masterplan, and is considered to be satisfactory.

*(iiia) any planning agreement that has been entered into under section 93F, or any draft planning agreement that a developer has offered to enter into under section 93F, and*

N/A

*(iv) the regulations (to the extent that they prescribe matters for the purposes of this paragraph),*

There are no specific matters prescribed by the Regulations that apply to this development.

*(b) the likely impacts of the development, including environmental impacts on both the natural and built environments, and social and economic impacts in the locality*

The proposed development has been assessed in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements, paying particular attention to potential impacts such as economic, acoustic noise, traffic generation and traffic safety, and the adequacy of parking.

As identified throughout this report, the above issues have been assessed as being satisfactory. In this regard, it is considered that the proposal is unlikely to result in any adverse impact upon the amenity of the locality.

*(c) the suitability of the site for the development*

The site is considered suitable for the proposed development. There are no known constraints which would render the site unsuitable for the proposed development.

The applicant's traffic consultant has demonstrated to the satisfaction of both the RMS and Council that the surrounding road network and intersections can accommodate the increase in traffic as a result of the proposed expansion.

Having regard to the above, it is considered that the site is suitable for the proposed development.

*(d) any submissions made*

In response to the public exhibition of this application, two (2) written submissions were received raising concern in relation to operational issues at the centre, noise generated from additional car parking areas, and pedestrian safety within the centre.

As indicated above in the *Public Notification* section of this report, these issues have been addressed.

A third submission, prepared by Fairfield City Council, was forwarded directly to the JRPP, and forms an attachment to this report. The Council, as a stakeholder on behalf of the community, objects to the proposed development as it considers that the economic assessment submitted by the applicant is deficient and underestimates the likely impacts on the established retail centres within the City.

*(e) the public interest*

Based on the above, it is considered that the proposed development is in the public interest.

## **TOWN PLANNING ASSESSMENT**

The proposed alterations and additions to the Stockland Wetherill Park Shopping Centre are permissible within the 3(b) District Business Centre zone, and are considered to be appropriate for the site and the locality.

From an assessment of the application, it would appear that there are no significant issues that would preclude a recommendation for approval.

Whilst the Stockland centre is considered to be a significant generator of traffic in the locality, it has been demonstrated that the surrounding road network can accommodate the increase in cars that will frequent the locality. In addition, the number of spaces provided is greater than the current level of parking demand and is on par with Council's requirements.

With regard to noise, the applicant has demonstrated that noise generated during construction and during on-going operation of the centre can comply with the relevant noise guidelines for day-time and evening activities.

The Stage 2 expansion, which involves the conversion of the southern portion of the large at-grade car park located in the centre of the site, is a logical next step in the redevelopment of the shopping centre. Stage 1 involved primarily the conversion of the northern portion of this car park and provided a built form consistent in height with the existing four-storey cinema complex. Stage 1 brought the retail component of the shopping centre out to meet the north-south spine road, partially activating this vehicular and pedestrian thoroughfare.

Stage 2 provides a similar built form and street edge to the north-south spine road, further activating this space with retail shopfronts. Visually, Stage 1 and Stage 2 provide the link between the four-storey cinema complex at the northern end of the spine road with the three-storey shopping complex at the southern end. Whilst four-storeys in height, the façade of Stage 2 is architecturally treated using shopfront glazing, painted masonry and perforated steel. Overall, from an architectural point of view, the Stage 2 addition will enhance the overall presentation of the shopping centre, which is quite dated in its appearance, and will complement the design approved for Stage 1.

With regard to economic impact, in the context of the overall size and impact of the existing shopping centre combined with the already approved expansion, it is considered that the additional impact associated with the proposed Stage 2 expansion will not be significant. This is also the case in terms of the cumulative impact associated with Stages 1 and 2 combined.

Having regard to the findings contained within the economic impact assessment prepared on behalf of the applicant, as well as the peer review undertaken by Council's economic consultant, it is considered that the low to moderate impact envisaged to be experienced by nearby centres is unlikely to threaten their on-going viability, and this will be far outweighed by the economic and social benefits of the proposal, such as increased shopping choice, increase in employment opportunities and the reduction in escape expenditure from the City of Fairfield.

Overall, the proposed development is considered to be satisfactory and is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That the application proposing alterations and additions to Stockland Wetherill Park Shopping Centre comprising 5,664m<sup>2</sup> of additional gross leaseable floor area (GLFA) located at ground level and three (3) levels of deck car parking above, and associated works (Stage 2 works), be approved subject to conditions as outlined in Attachment G of this report.