

Preliminary Planning Proposal



Forest Park

Epping and Blaxland Roads, Epping

Submitted to Hornsby Shire Council

On Behalf of Austino Property Group

December 2015 ■ 14470

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This report has been prepared by:



Robert Sark

8/12/2015

This report has been reviewed by:



Bernard Gallagher

8/12/2015

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A	Urban Design Report <i>PTW Architects</i>
B	Design Concept Drawings <i>PTW Architects</i>
C	Epping Town Centre Future Connectivity Plan <i>Taylor Brammer</i>
D	Economic Impact Assessment <i>HillPDA</i>
E	Traffic Impact Assessment <i>GTA Consultants</i>
F	Preliminary Contamination Assessment <i>Environmental Investigation Services</i>

Executive Summary

The site is located in the suburb of Epping, approximately 15 kilometres north-west of the Sydney CBD and 9 kilometres north-east of the Parramatta CBD. The site itself is located less than 200 metres to the south of the railway Station, on the south eastern corner of the intersection of Epping and Blaxland Roads. It includes all land bounded by Epping Road, Blaxland Road, Forest Grove and Forest Park.

The subject site is located at a strategic location between the soon to be rejuvenated town core and the under-appreciated Forest Park. Previously burdened with fragmented ownership and an area of open space that was in fact exclusively used as a works depot, the potential of the site has now been unlocked.

A rigorous urban design methodology was applied by the specialist consultant team, led by PTW Architects, to capitalise on the opportunities presented by the site. A development concept was then been prepared that responds to the context of the site and embodies the urban design principles developed by the specialist team.

A key component of the development concept is that it allows for the delivery of the following public benefits:

- Dedication at no cost to Council of 6,665m² of land for public open space;
- Embellishment of this open space to a high standard, including the urban plaza and the extension to Forest Park;
- The maintenance of this open space at no cost to Council for five years;
- Improvements to the existing Forest Park, ensuring that it is attractive and functional for a broad section of the community;
- A monetary contribution towards a community facility, such as a swimming pool, to be built at a location to be determined by Council.

An assessment of the concept demonstrates that it has positive social and economic benefits, and will not result in any significant detrimental environmental impacts. The LEP amendments described in this planning proposal are necessary to ensure that the proposed public benefits can be delivered via the realisation of the development concept, resulting in a very positive outcome for the Epping community.

1.0 Introduction

This report has been prepared by JBA on behalf of Austino Property Group (the proponent) in relation to 'Forest Park' (the site), located at the corner of Blaxland and Epping Roads, Epping and less than 200 metres to the south of Epping Station.

The context of the site is changing, with significant development occurring within the Epping Town Centre and surrounds. The site is located at a crucial point between the increasingly vibrant core of the town centre, a significant area of open space (Forest Park) and residential areas undergoing a substantial uplift in density.

The proponent has developed a vision for the site that seeks to harness the opportunities presented by the site's location and context, providing an urban plaza that completes the link of public connectivity from the finer grained urban spaces surrounding the rail station and town core to the more recreational space that is Forest Park.

This vision increases the quantum of the 'public open space' on the site by 6,665m². Part of the site is zoned public open space, but has always been in private ownership and used for private purposes – most recently as a works depot. The proposal will provide this space to the public at no cost to the Council.

Complementing this open space strategy is the proposed built form. This provides slender tower forms in the west, delivering a visual accent consistent with neighbouring sites, before tapering to lower forms that reflect the desired future residential character to the east of the site.

The increase in development potential on the site does not result in any significant inappropriate amenity impacts, and facilitates the embellishment of the surrounding open spaces and the provision of a monetary contribution towards a new significant community facility, such as a swimming pool. These public benefit contributions are outlined in accompanying offer to Council to enter into a voluntary planning agreement.

Housing is in high demand in the locality. The proposed apartments are suitable for a variety of households, including older people who wish to remain in the area when their current housing is no longer suitable for their requirements.

The site is subject to the Hornsby Local Environmental Plan 2013 (Hornsby LEP). Under the Hornsby LEP, the site is currently zoned partly as R4 High Density Residential and partly as RE1 Public Recreation. In order for the site to be redeveloped as envisaged by the proponent, amendments to the LEP are required. These changes would most effectively be implemented by:

- Reconfiguring the layout of the existing R4 High Density Residential and RE1 Public Recreation zones; and
- Permitting a maximum building height of up to 75 metres for the western portion, stepping down to a maximum of 17.5 metres for the eastern portion of the site.

This Planning Proposal has been prepared in accordance with section 55 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act). Specific matters that address the statutory guidelines for the rezoning are:

- Objectives and intended outcomes;
- Explanation of Provisions;
- Justification;
- Community Consultation.

The Planning Proposal has had regard to the physical characteristics of the site and the social context of the surrounding area and canvasses the key planning issues associated with the site to a level of detail appropriate to support a LEP Gateway determination by the Department of Planning & Environment (DP&E).

This planning proposal describes the site, the proposed changes to the Hornsby LEP and provides an environmental assessment. The report should be read in conjunction with the urban design study and design concept plans prepared by PTW Architects at **Appendices A** and **B** respectively, and specialist consultant reports appended to this proposal (refer Table of Contents). The report is written in accordance with the (former) Department of Planning and Infrastructure's published *A guide to preparing a Planning Proposal* (October 2012) and *A guide to preparing Local Environmental Plans* (April 2013).

2.0 The Site

2.1 Site Location

The site is located in the suburb of Epping, within the Hornsby Local Government Area (LGA), approximately 15 kilometres north-west of the Sydney CBD and 9 kilometres north-east of the Parramatta CBD (see **Figure 1**). Epping broadly has two precincts, as follows:

- **Town Centre Core** – the area immediately surrounding the railway station, currently developed for retail, office and shop top housing purposes, with key community facilities and services within the centre.
- **Residential Areas** – the areas surrounding the Town Centre Core and predominantly developed for residential purposes. This area includes a mix of residential densities and currently accommodates apartments, townhouses and single houses. The areas closer to the core are currently undergoing significant redevelopment

Epping Railway Station is strategically located at the junction of the Main Northern and Chatswood-Epping lines. Direct services are provided to the City, Central Coast, Newcastle, Penrith and Richmond. In 2019, Epping will become part of the Sydney Metro Northwest line between Chatswood and Cudgegong Road.

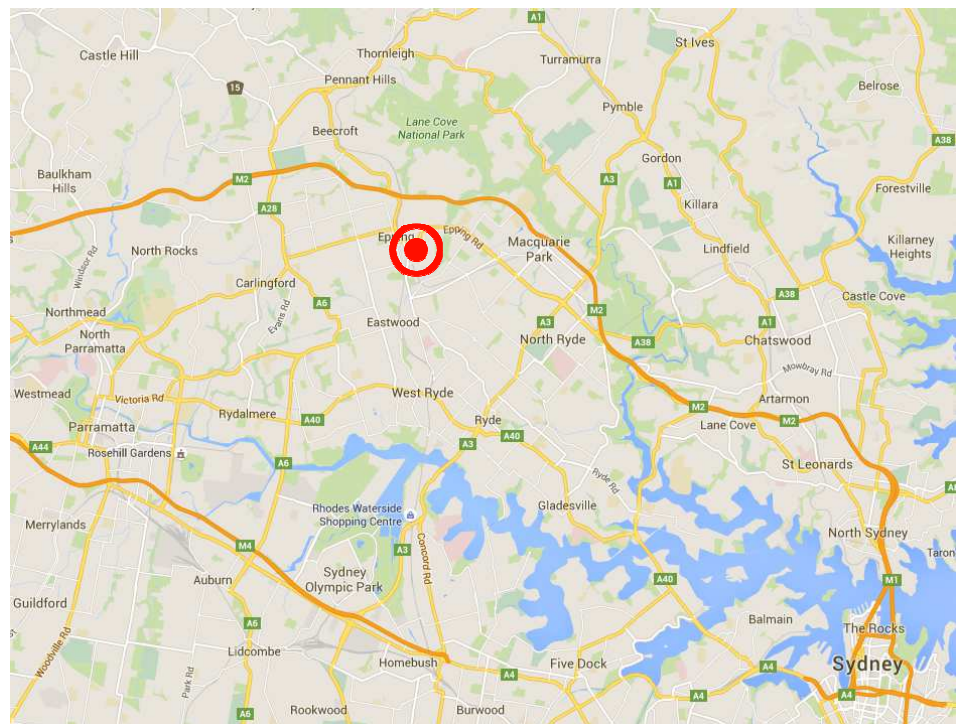


Figure 1 – The site is located in the heart of Epping, which lies 15 kilometres to the north-west of the Sydney CBD and 9 kilometres to the north-east of the Parramatta CBD

Source: Google Maps

The site itself is located less than 200 metres to the south of the railway Station, on the south eastern corner of the intersection of Epping and Blaxland Roads. It includes all land bounded by Epping Road, Blaxland Road, Forest Grove and Forest Park. The street addresses of the properties that make up the site are:

- 2-18 Epping Road;
- 2-4 Forest Grove; and
- 725 Blaxland Road.

An aerial view of the site is provided in **Figure 2**.

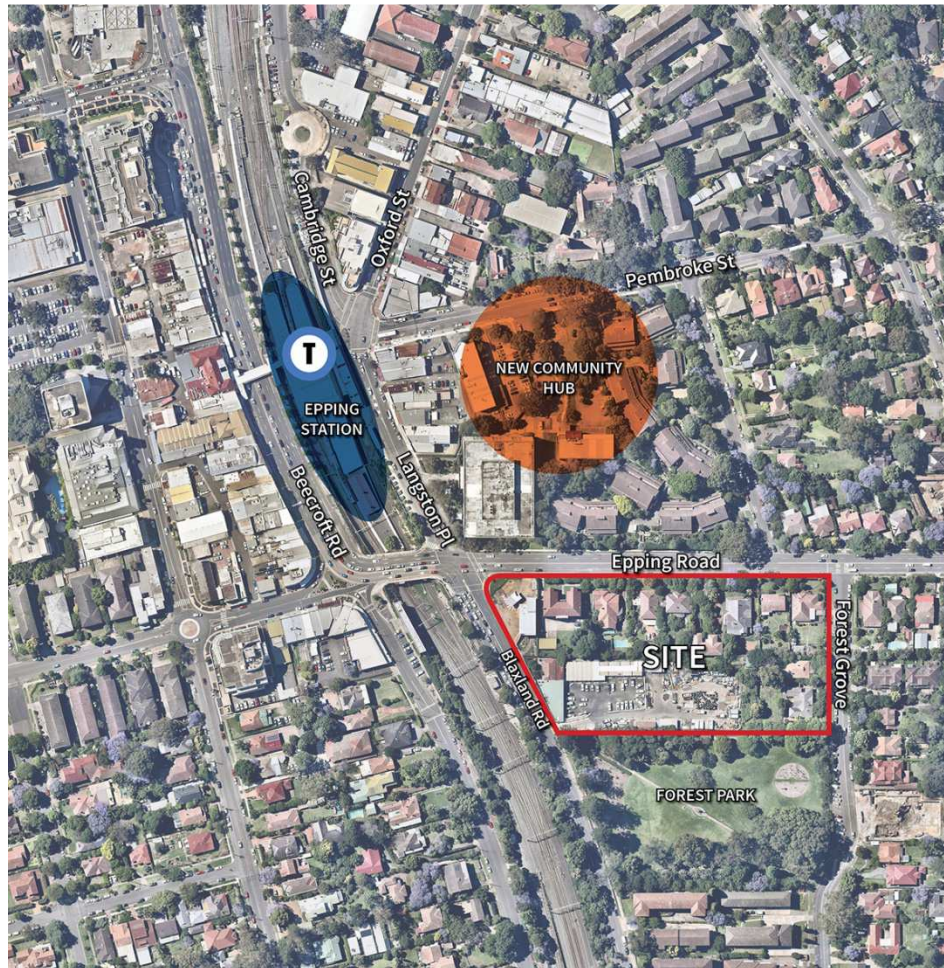


Figure 2 – An aerial photo of the site, demonstrating its proximity to the railway station and Council's new community hub
 Source: NearMap

2.2 Site Opportunities

The site is unique in that it has a number of opportunities that are not collectively present on any other site in Epping:

- The site is immediately adjacent to the core of the Epping Town Centre;
- The site is immediately adjacent to an area of open space, Forest Park;
- The site area is in close proximity to Epping Railway Station;
- The site is at the intersection of two major roads, Epping and Blaxland Roads. These are busy, regional roadways that can accommodate taller scale development;
- The site is a large amalgamated site with three street frontages, with the potential for greater residential density; and
- The site is elevated and gently sloping, with opportunity for southerly views out across the adjoining park and the broader region. Elevated views of vegetated ridge-lines to the north and west are also available.

2.3 The Changing Character of Epping

In 2014, the Minister for Planning approved plans for the revitalisation of the Epping Town Centre. The plans enable growth in an area close to transport and existing amenities, providing for up to 3,750 additional dwellings with building heights up to 22 storeys.

The town centre is divided between the Hornsby and Parramatta local government areas. It was the second Urban Activation Precinct to be finalised (the first being the North Ryde Station Precinct in late 2013).

There are a number of significant developments underway in the precinct, including residential developments within the town core by Poly, CBUS and Grocon, and the revitalisation of the Epping Library with a new library facility, community centre and town square.

As envisaged by the urban activation precinct plans, the core of Epping is being rejuvenated with a north to south pedestrian spine emerging (refer **Appendix C**). This spine will ultimately link Forest Park in the south to the Library in the north, and is illustrated in **Figure 3** overleaf.

Beyond the town core, the traditional character of detached dwellings is also changing, with numerous residential flat building construction sites and development proposals underway.



Figure 3 – The new pedestrian spine (white) emerging through the core of the Epping Town Centre
Source: PTW Architects and Taylor Brammer

2.4 The Changing Context of the Site

Further to the changes described above that have resulted from the implementation of the urban activation precinct plans, the site specific circumstances of the site are also evolving.

During the preparation of the Urban Activation Precinct plans, significant consolidated landholding sites in Epping were identified. These are sites that, by virtue of their size and ownership, were targeted as the sites most likely to deliver significant development outcomes.

When the urban activation precinct studies were being undertaken, the ownership of the subject site was fragmented. Furthermore, the bowling club land was earmarked for use as a railway works depot for the foreseeable future. Given these factors, the site was not identified as a 'significant consolidated landholding'.

The *Epping Town Centre Urban Activation Precinct Finalisation Report* provided the following conclusion in relation to the former bowling club land:

Due to the history and complexities of this site, the department considers it is more appropriate to retain the open space zoning for this site as part of the Epping Town Centre precinct. The proponent could enter into negotiations with the council at a future date for a planning proposal for the site once the is no longer required for the North West Rail Link project, which could involve a planning agreement to developing the site whilst still providing a community benefit.

Since the finalisation of the urban activation precinct plans, two significant events have occurred:

- Austino have secured control over the majority of the site, eliminating the fragmented ownership issue;
- The Epping to Thornleigh Third Track Project is approaching completion (mid 2016), meaning that the works depot will not be required indefinitely.

These events mean that the vast majority of the site is now a significant consolidated landholding (refer **Figure 4**) and the development potential identified in the Finalisation Report can be unlocked. In fact, **it is the largest significant consolidated landholding in Epping**. Combined with the characteristics of the site, this presents a once in a generation opportunity to deliver a development that generates significant public benefits that will contribute to the long term vitality of Epping.

It should be noted that if the bowling club land was not consolidated into the larger site but rather was developed independently, then only a portion of it could be provided to the community as public open space. The development concept and proposed public benefit offer see the full area of the bowling club land, 6,665m², provided as public open space at no cost to Council.

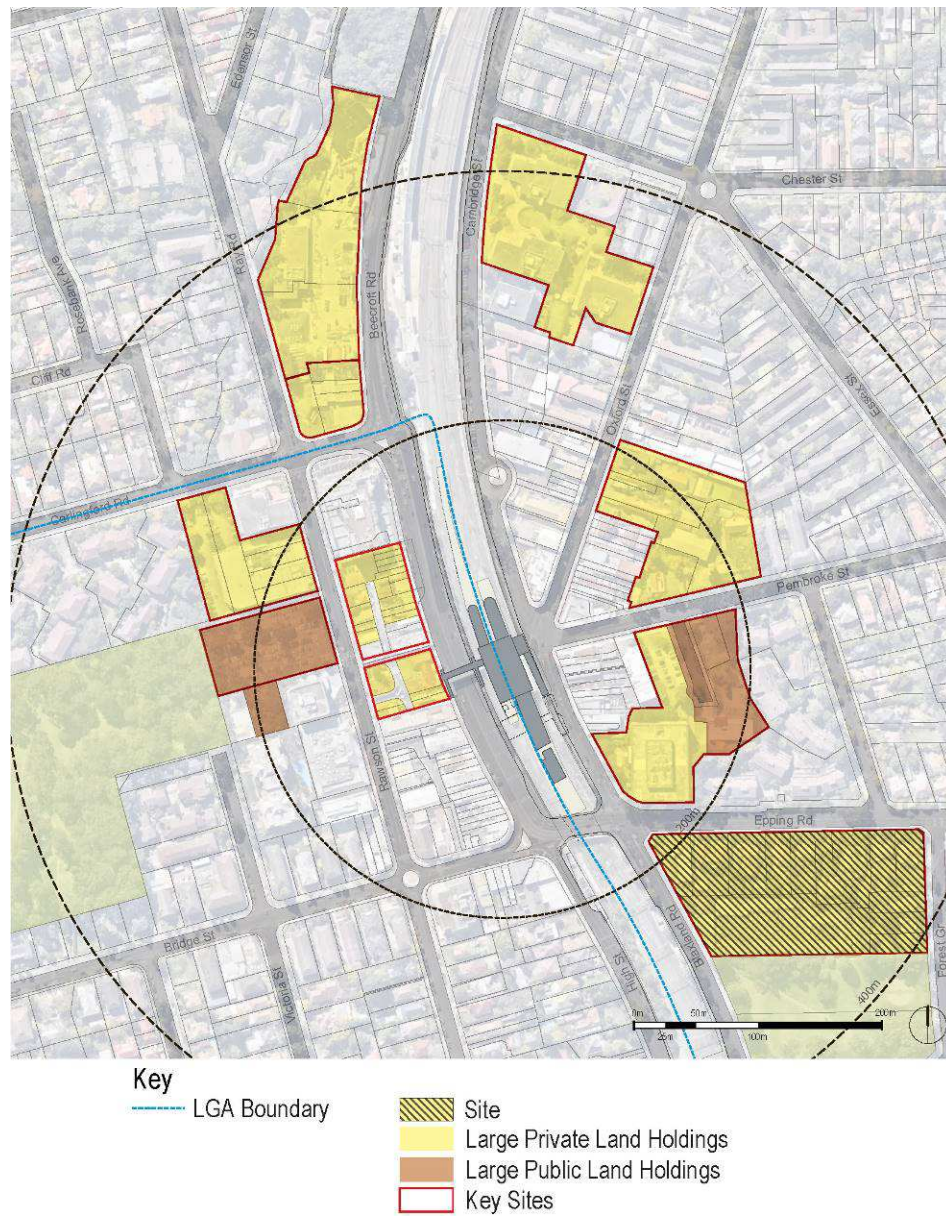


Figure 4 – The site is now the largest significant consolidated landholding in the Epping Town Centre

Source: Department of Planning and Environment and JBA

2.5 Surrounding Development

The uses fronting each aspect of the site have a markedly different character. To the north of the site is Epping Road, a classified road (refer **Figure 5**). Beyond this are a range of uses that make up the core of the Epping Town Centre, including the Railway Station (refer **Figure 6**), the future Pembroke Street multi-purpose community hub (including a new library), a development site slated for a mixed use residential development of 22 storeys, and Pembroke Gardens, a residential flat building set behind established gardens that act as a buffer to Epping Road (refer **Figure 7**).



Figure 5 – Epping Road, looking west towards Blaxland Road



Figure 6 – Langston Place, looking north towards Epping Railway Station (left)



Figure 7 – Pembroke Gardens residential development, on the northern side of Epping Road

To the west of the site is located Blaxland Road (refer **Figure 8**), another classified road, with the Northern Rail Line located immediately adjacent in a cutting (refer **Figure 9**). The area beyond this transport corridor is characterised by detached residential dwellings in established gardens. The land beyond the rail line to the west of the site is within the Parramatta LGA.



Figure 8 – Blaxland Road, looking north towards Epping Road



Figure 9 – Northern Railway Line looking south, as viewed from the road bridge. The site is on the far left, significantly separated from existing residential development on the far right.

To the south of the site is located Forest Park (refer **Figure 10**). This has an area of approximately 15,650m² and includes the following facilities:

- Rose garden;
- War memorial;
- Playground;
- Picnic tables; and
- Toilets.



Figure 10 – Forest Park, with Rose Garden, War Memorial and children's playground

The area to the south of the park is characterised by older-style three storey walk-up residential flat buildings, as shown in **Figure 11**.



Figure 11 – Walk-up residential flat buildings to the south of Forest Park

To the east of the site, across Forest Grove, are a number of detached dwellings interspersed with the occasional medium density development. This area has been up-zoned to allow high density residential development of around five storeys in height. In response to the rezoning, a number of residential flat building projects are currently under construction as shown in **Figure 12**.



Figure 12 – Residential flat building construction site to the east of Forest Grove

2.6 Existing Development

The existing development of the site falls into three categories, being residential, mechanics' workshop and former bowling club land.

Residential Development

The existing residential development addresses Epping Road and Forest Grove. The western most property, 4 Epping Road, contains a circa 1920s residential flat building with 8 strata units (refer **Figure 13**). The remaining properties accommodate detached houses in established garden settings. Each dwelling (and the flat building) has a separate driveway to Epping Road or Forest Grove, and all buildings are located behind significant vegetation that provides a buffer to the busy road.



Figure 13 – Circa 1920s residential flat building at 4 Epping Road



Figure 14 – Typical existing detached dwelling on the site (6 Epping Road)

Workshop

2 Epping Road previously accommodated a mechanics' workshop and weighbridge (Tuffy Auto Centre), as shown in **Figure 15**. The business has recently relocated to Eastwood.



Figure 15 – Former Tuffy Auto Centre workshop

Former Bowling Club

The former Epping Bowling Club site has not been used for bowls since 2004. Since late 2013, the site has been used as a site office, storage and lay-down facility for the Epping to Thornleigh Third Track Project (refer **Figure 16**). This use is anticipated to conclude on the site in mid-2016. The site is identified in the Hornsby Local Environmental Plan for acquisition by Council for public open space. The land was acquired by Austino in 2014 via an open tender process.



Figure 16 – Works depot for the Epping to Thornleigh Third Track project, located on the site of the former Bowling Club

2.7 Site Description

As previously described, the site is bounded by Blaxland Road, Epping Road, Forest Grove and Forest Park, and has an area of approximately 20,040m². The street addresses and legal descriptions of the properties that constitute the site are as follows:

▪ 2 Epping Road	Lot 10 DP 1204058
▪ 4 Epping Road	SP 16921
▪ 6 Epping Road	Lot 4 DP 1204059
▪ 8 Epping Road	Lot 7 DP 1204060
▪ 10 Epping Road	Lot 8 DP 1204060
▪ 12A Epping Road	Lot 11 DP 1204061
▪ 14 Epping Road	Lot 12 DP 1204061
▪ 16 Epping Road	Lot 15 DP 1204602
▪ 18 Epping Road	Lot 9 DP 10385
▪ 2 Forest Grove	Lot 10 DP 10385
▪ 4 Forest Grove	Lots 11 and 12 DP 10385
▪ 723-725 Blaxland Road	Lot D388783

Austino currently controls all of the above lots, with the exception of 18 Epping Road. 18 Epping Road is part of the site that is the subject of this planning proposal. However, due to the separate ownership it is not part of the development concept detailed in Section 3 of this report. It should be noted that Austino has made multiple offers to purchase 18 Epping Road, however agreement is yet to be reached.

18 Epping Road on its own is capable of being developed in accordance with the existing planning controls relating to the site, which allow for a five storey residential flat building.

2.8 Key Planning Controls

The Hornsby Local Environmental Plan 2013 (Hornsby LEP) sets out the local planning controls across the Hornsby LGA, including the site. This planning proposal seeks to amend the Hornsby LEP to facilitate the proposed development on the site.

Land Use Zoning

The site is partly zoned R4 High Density Residential and partly RE1 Public Recreation under the Hornsby LEP (refer to **Figure 17**).

The land to the east is also zoned R4 High Density Residential. Forest Park, to the south, is zoned RE1 Public Recreation. The land to the north, across Epping Road, is partly zoned B2 Local Centre and partly zoned R4 High Density Residential.

The land to the west of the site, across Blaxland Road and the railway line, is partly zoned B2 Local Centre and partly R2 Low Density Residential under the Parramatta Local Environmental Plan 2011.

The permitted land uses for the R4 High Density Residential and RE1 Public Recreation zones under Hornsby LEP are presented in **Table 1**.

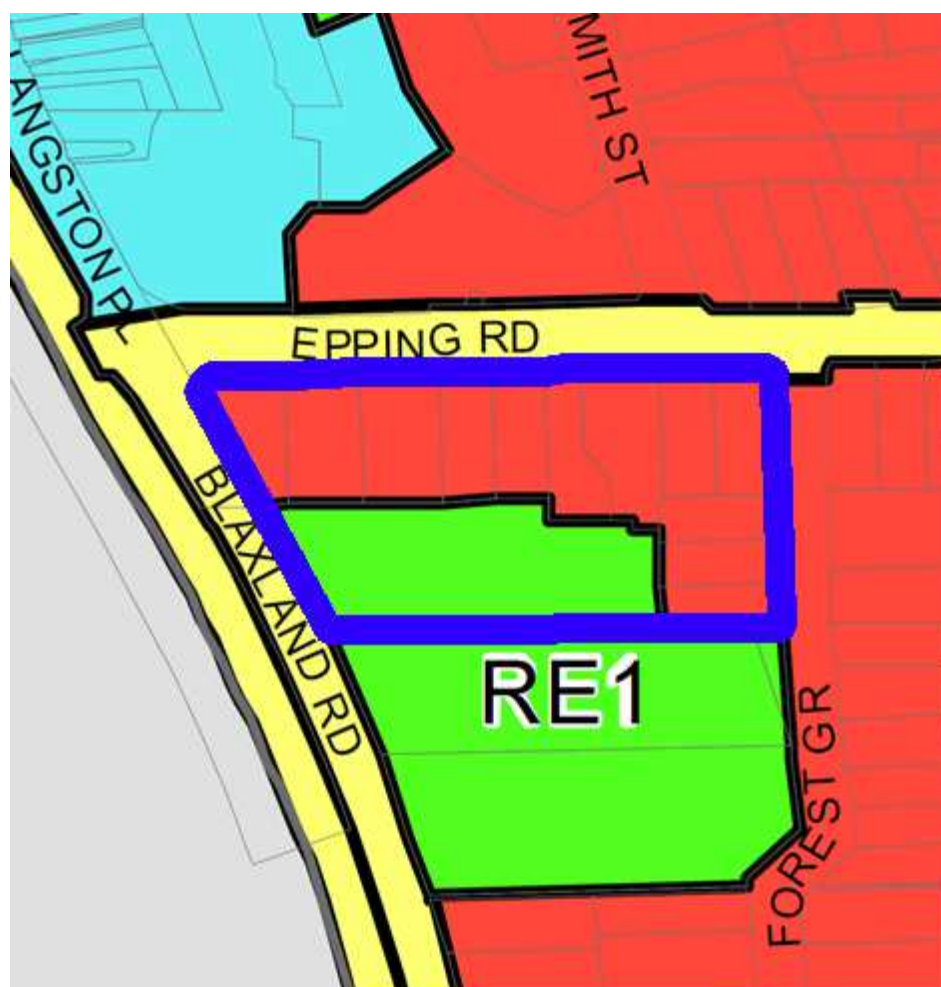


Figure 17 – Extract of Hornsby LEP 2013 Land Zoning Map, with site shown in blue

Table 1 – Permitted land use zones

R4 High Density Residential Zone		Permissible Land Uses
2. Permitted without consent		Environmental protection works
3. Permitted with consent		Boarding houses; Building identification signs; Business identification signs; Child care centres; Community facilities; Dwelling houses; Emergency services facilities; Flood mitigation works; Home-based child care; Home occupations; Neighbourhood shops; Places of public worship; Recreation areas; Recreation facilities (indoor); Recreation facilities (outdoor); Residential flat buildings ; Respite day care centres; Roads; Shop top housing; Water reticulation systems
4. Prohibited		Any development not specified in item 2 or 3
RE1 Public Recreation Zone		Permissible Land Uses
2. Permitted without consent		Environmental protection works
3. Permitted with consent		Building identification signs; Business identification signs; Camping grounds; Car parks; Caravan parks; Cemeteries; Child care centres; Community facilities; Emergency services facilities; Environmental facilities; Flood mitigation works; Kiosks; Public administration buildings; Recreation areas ; Recreation facilities (indoor); Recreation facilities (major); Recreation facilities (outdoor); Respite day care centres; Roads; Water reticulation systems
4. Prohibited		Any development not specified in item 2 or 3

Building Height

The Hornsby LEP prescribes a range of maximum building heights on the site. An excerpt from the Height of Buildings map is presented in **Figure 18**. It should be noted that no maximum height is prescribed for the land zoned RE1 Public Recreation.

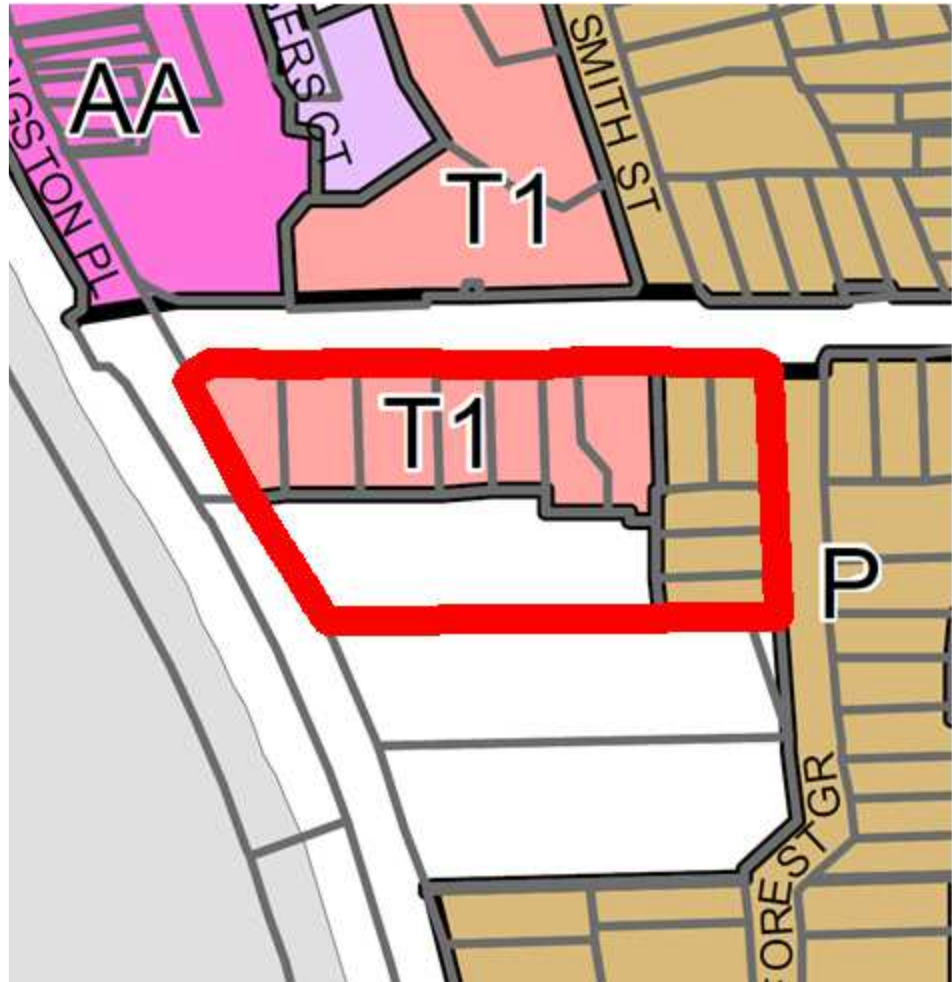


Figure 18 – Extract of Hornsby LEP 2013 Height of Buildings Map, with site shown in red

Floor Space Ratio

The Hornsby LEP does not provide a maximum floor space ratio for the site.

Heritage

The Hornsby LEP does not list any items of environmental heritage on the site. The neighbouring Forest Park is listed in the LEP as a landscape heritage item.

3.0 The Development Concept

A development concept has been prepared by PTW Architects and the consultant team, as detailed in **Appendix B** and illustrated in the photomontages at **Figures 19 to 24** below.

This concept relates to the land controlled by Austino, being the entire site other than 18 Epping Road which currently remains in separate ownership. 18 Epping Road on its own is capable of being developed in accordance with the existing planning controls relating to the site, which allow for a five storey residential flat building.

3.1 The Concept

The development concept for the site reflects the best urban design outcome for the site, and seeks to deliver significant public benefit through the dedication of public open space, embellishment works to these spaces and to Forest Park, and a monetary contribution towards a community facility off the site, such as a swimming pool. The proposed public benefits are detailed in Section 3.2 below.

The Urban Design Report by PTW Architects at Appendix A provides the following project design summary:

Consideration has been given to the likely changes to the area in regard to new residential mixed uses and associated urban form to the southern edge of Epping's Town Centre; and being in close proximity to Epping railway station and the bus routes along Epping Road.

This proposal recognises urban change in close proximity to Epping railway station and the Town Centre of Epping. Being a unique and amalgamated site, the opportunity to consider the urban potential of this site through greater development and the realignment of the former Bowling Club as a new open space will provide greater public benefit. Impacts from traffic volumes in the area, along with impacts from railway noise and traffic noise from Epping Road and Blaxland Road necessitates careful consideration of the balance between increases in density and building heights and the likely impacts of new residential uses and public domain amenity in the potential redevelopment of this site.

Consideration of potential redevelopment of the adjoining CBUS site, on the corner of Epping Road and Blaxland Road, can assist also in an understanding of how the southern edge of the Town Centre is being redeveloped.

An understanding of these elements, both within and surrounding the site, provides a basis for defining urban design principles and key objectives in the redevelopment of the site.

The urban importance of the subject site is demonstrated in the way the site is located as a 'gateway' site to the township of Epping and edged by historic Forest Park. Through amalgamation this unique and prominent site has the opportunity to support greater development yield including the reconfiguration of an existing privately owned open space – a former Bowling Club.

The Town Centre of Epping is defined by a number of streets: Langston Place, Pembroke Street Oxford Street and Cambridge Street.

These streets are generally edged by low rise mixed use commercial retail and community uses that are more suburban in character. This character is currently undergoing change and new taller mixed use residential developments are currently being proposed. The urban vision of this will present new urban streets that will promote an active urban environment consistent with the aims of Sydney as an international and sustainable city. The proposal recognised this evolution of the Epping Town Centre.

The proposal allows for differences in the built form interface with minimum set back provision to new urban open spaces. To the northern and western portions of the development a new urban plaza is proposed with ground floor retail uses while to the southern portions residential uses will have minimal setback provisions while set above adjoining ground levels to ensure privacy. As presented here in this study is the analysis of the existing urban setting leading to an understanding of the future desired urban character within the Town Centre of Epping.

The urban vision of the concept of aligns with strategic planning goals for metropolitan Sydney (as detailed in Section 5.2. This vision seeks to:

- Provide significant additional residential dwellings in close proximity to an existing major public transport hub;
- Reconfigure the existing quantum of land zoned for open space into a new and dynamic configuration that is the most appropriate response to the context of the site, providing an active urban square that is commensurate with the growing importance of Epping as a metropolitan centre; and
- Commit a portion of the uplift from the additional dwellings towards real and significant public benefits, including the embellishment of the dedicated open space and a monetary contribution towards a regionally significant community facility such as a swimming pool.



Figure 19 – Photomontage of development concept looking west along Epping Road
Source: PTW Architects

The key to this concept is not just the architectural quality of the proposed apartment buildings, but the quality of the proposed public domain. The site presents a unique opportunity to connect the existing passive recreation area of Forest Park to the emerging finer grain laneways through the town core.

This concept will not only provide a much needed direct connection between the rapidly expanding residential area to the south east of the site and the Town Core, but will also provide a new urban plaza of approximately 2,240m². The plaza is a place for people to dwell and interact. It will be utilised by all sectors of the surrounding community, including by office workers as a pleasant place to have lunch and as a convenient meeting place well serviced with cafes adjoining vibrant

spaces. The materials and finishes, planting, street furniture and lighting will all combine to deliver a quality space unprecedented in Epping. Although there are no existing plazas of this type in Epping, there are a number of examples in important centres across metropolitan Sydney that make a valuable contribution to the surrounding community.



Figure 20 – Photomontage of development concept looking south across Epping Road from an elevated position
Source: PTW Architects

The development concept has been underpinned by the following urban design principles.

Provision of Open Space

The proposal provides open space of a size and location to allow new public domain connections with Epping Town Centre. The proposal allows a distinct spatial progression from a more open sequence of landscape spaces at the southern portion of the site to a more urban character at the northern portion of the site. The area of additional open space proposed, 6,665m², is equivalent to the area of the bowling club land (which is zoned for public open space but is privately owned and not accessible to the public).



Figure 21 – Photomontage of development concept looking north across Forest Park
Source: PTW Architects



Figure 22 – Photomontage of development concept looking north across Forest Park from an elevated position
Source: PTW Architects

Massing and Building Height

Taller buildings, up to 72m and acting as urban markers, are proposed to define the Blaxland Road and the northern eastern edge of the site. The building height is consistent with the development proposed to the north across Epping Road, and together the proposals will serve to highlight this important urban location.

Modulation in building height is provided across the site, providing lower buildings along the southern and eastern portions of the site a transition to the adjoining park and low rise buildings.



Figure 23 – Photomontage of development concept looking north along Blaxland Road
Source: PTW Architects

Building Address

Each residential apartment building will be designed to provide an urban address with clear pedestrian entries off Epping Road and Blaxland Road. The vehicle entry will be located off Forest Grove.



Figure 24 – Photomontage of development concept looking west along Epping Road
Source: PTW Architects

Views and Vistas

The site has high visual exposure to the southern edge of Epping Town Centre, is clearly visible from Epping Road, and will have visual connection with the other key redevelopment sites within the town centre. Taller urban markers are located at the corner of Epping Road and Blaxland Road, and frame views across the site and new urban spaces between Epping Road and Forest Park.

The development will provide elevated views overlooking Parramatta River valley to the south, the rolling hills of Ryde to the east and Carlingford to the west. Elevated views to the north will allow views of the vegetated ridgelines of Pennant Hills.

Built Form Interface

A variety of building interfaces will be provided that spatially define and contribute to the character of the adjoining public spaces. Privacy and amenity of both uses will be maintained through the provision of appropriate setbacks and design measures as detailed in Section 4.3.2 of this report.

3.1.1 Numerical Summary

The numerical parameters of the development concept are provided in **Table 2** below.

Table 2 – Indicative numerical parameters of the development concept

Component	Proposal
Site area of development concept ¹	18,859m ²
GFA	70,035m ²
FSR	3.71:1
Site coverage	33%
Number of apartments	
▪ 1 bedroom	150
▪ 2 bedroom	366
▪ 3 bedroom	138
▪ Total	654
Number of retail tenancies	8
Car parking spaces	860
Bicycle parking spaces	201
Motorcycle parking spaces	17
Estimated construction cost	\$363m

¹ Development concept site area excludes 18 Epping Road property

3.2 Public Benefit Incentives

The proposed public benefits are commensurate with the scale of the development concept, and will make a significant contribution to the ongoing amenity of Epping. The proposed benefits will be crystallised within a voluntary planning agreement, and are as follows:

- Dedication at no cost to Council of 6,665m² of land for public open space;
- Embellishment of this open space to a high standard, including the urban plaza and the extension to Forest Park;
- The maintenance of this open space at no cost to Council for five years;
- Improvements to the existing Forest Park, ensuring that it is attractive and functional for a broad section of the community;
- A monetary contribution towards a community facility, such as a swimming pool, to be built at a location to be determined by Council.

Further to the above, the development of the site as a single project allows all the driveways accessing Epping Road to be removed together, greatly facilitating the required road widening works.

3.3 Proposed Amendments to Hornsby LEP

To facilitate the delivery of the public benefit contributions and the development concept, the following amendments are required to the Hornsby LEP.

Zoning and Permitted Uses

The site is currently zoned partly R4 High Density Residential and partly RE1 Public Recreation. It is proposed to retain these zones, but to reconfigure their layout to reflect the proposed concept design as shown in **Figure 24**.

Importantly, the quantum of land on the site zoned RE1 Public Recreation will remain the same as existing at 6,665m². This reconfiguration will ensure that the land, currently in private ownership, is actually used as public open space.

It is also proposed to allow retail uses and food and drink premises within the buildings that address the proposed urban plaza. Currently within the R4 zone, only neighbourhood shops² are permissible. Neighbourhood shops, due to their size and use restrictions, will not deliver the activation required to make the urban plaza a vibrant and attractive space.

To facilitate the removal of access driveways from Epping Road and to ensure that the site is appropriately integrated with the surrounding road network, the proposed concept design includes vehicular access ways and car parking under the proposed urban plaza (which will be zoned RE1 Public Recreation). Although car parking on its own is a permissible use in the RE1 zone, it would not be permissible when it is ancillary to a residential flat building or business use.

The proposed mechanism to allow retail premises, food and drink premises and underground car parking on the site is to include them as 'additional permitted uses' within Schedule 1 of the Hornsby LEP.

² **Neighbourhood shops** means premises used for the purposes of selling general merchandise such as foodstuffs, personal care products, newspapers and the like to provide for the day-to-day needs of people who live or work in the local area, and may include ancillary services such as a post office, bank or dry cleaning, but does not include restricted premises.

The LEP restricts the floor area of these shops to a maximum of 100m² of area.

Building Height

To accommodate the proposed concept design, the maximum permitted building heights require amendment as shown in **Figure 25**. In terms of number of storeys, these heights range from five storeys (same as existing controls) in the east of the site to 22 storeys in the west.

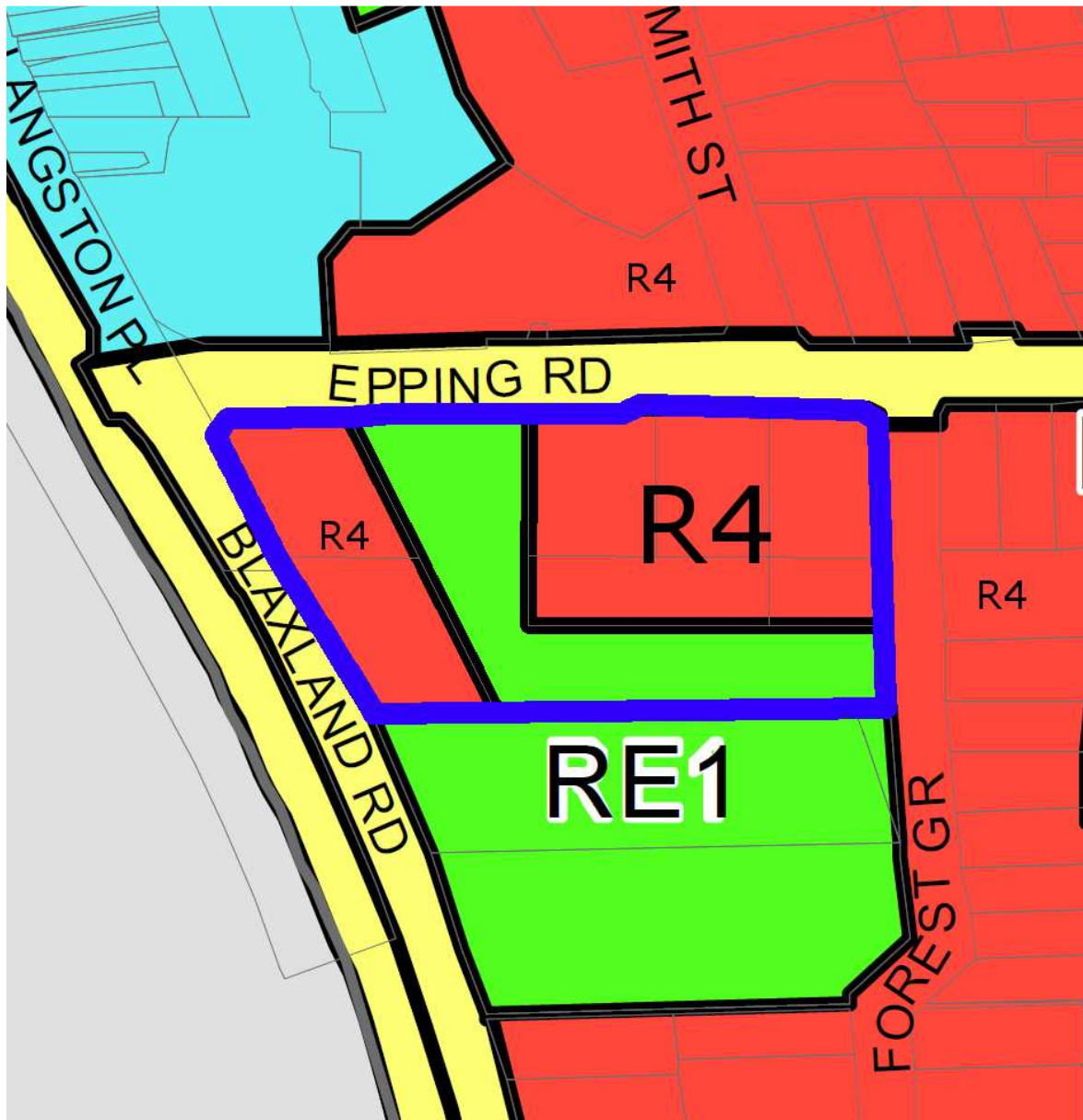


Figure 25 – Proposed amended Land Zoning Map, with the site shown in blue, illustrating the proposed RE1 Public Recreation and R4 High Density Residential zones

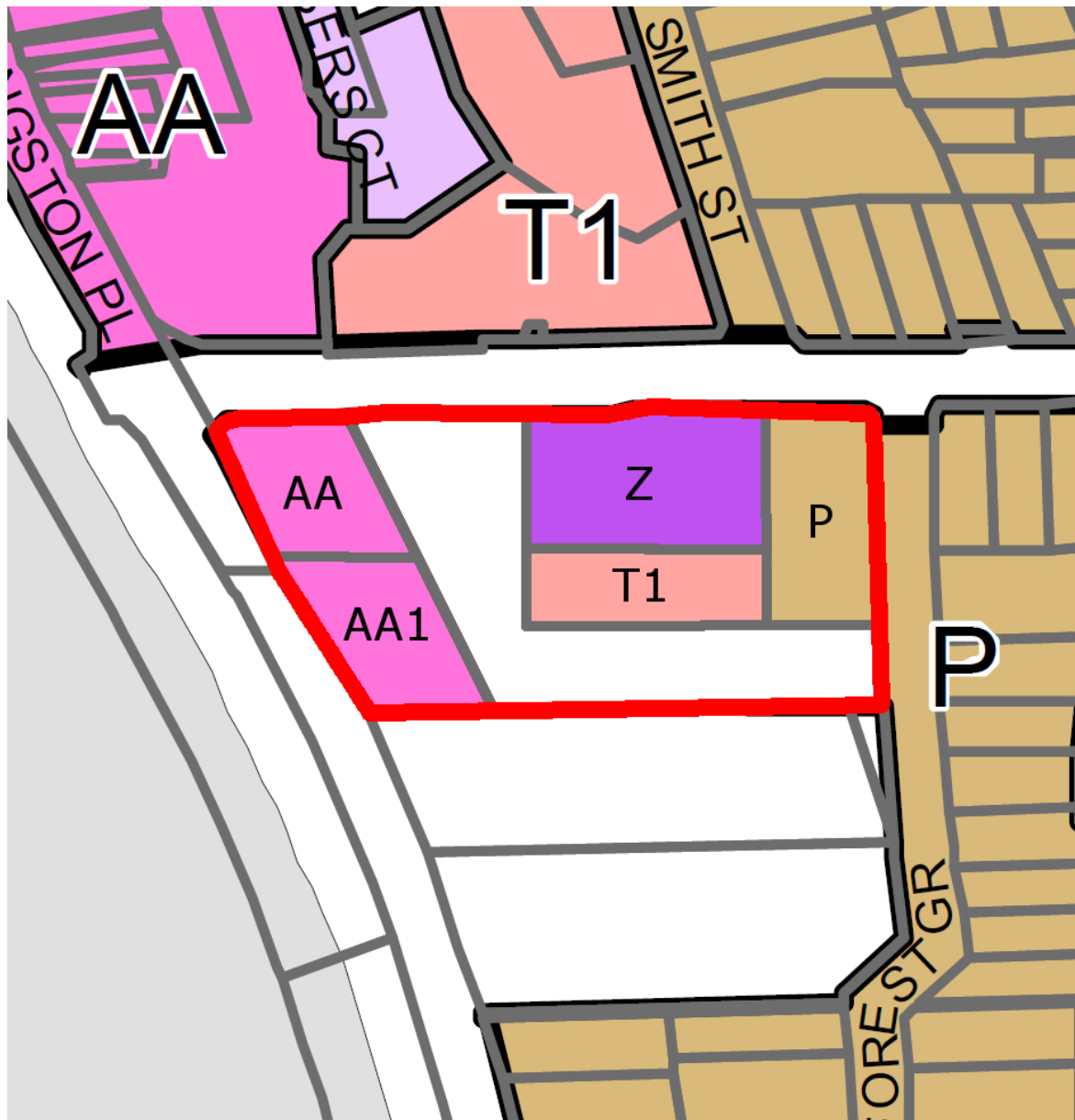


Figure 26 – Proposes amended Height of Buildings Map, with the site shown in red

AA:	72 metres (22 storeys)
AA1:	65 metres (20 storeys)
Z:	58 metres (18 storeys)
T1:	26.5 metres (8 storeys)
P:	17.5 metres (5 storeys)

3.4 Proposed Site Specific DCP

To ensure that the realised development is delivered consistently with the design concept presented in this planning proposal, it is anticipated that a site-specific development control plan (DCP) will be developed. This will be drafted and agreed with Council post-Gateway determination but prior to the formal public exhibition of the planning proposal. This will allow the DCP and the Planning Proposal to be exhibited together.

The draft DCP is anticipated to be incorporated into Hornsby DCP 2013 and to have the following structure:

- Introduction
 - Land to which the plan applies
 - Relationship with other plans
- Structure Plan
 - Objectives
 - Urban structure
 - Public domain
 - Movement network
 - Land use mix
 - Built form
 - Active frontages
 - Staging
- Controls
 - Public domain
 - Built form
 - Pedestrian and vehicular access
 - Parking

The provisions of the draft development control plan will be developed by the proponent in close consultation with Council, ensuring that the intent of the development concept can be imposed on any future development application.

4.0 Environmental, Economic and Social Analysis

This chapter of the Planning Proposal draws on the work undertaken by the Proponent's specialist consultants. An assessment of the key social, environmental and economic issues associated with the Planning Proposal is provided below.

4.1 Social Impacts

4.1.1 Public Amenity Benefits

In addition to the land dedication, works in kind and monetary benefits, the future development will also provide potential for:

- a wide range of important public domain improvements around the site, enhancing pedestrian connectivity and activation;
- high-density residential accommodation of an excellent architectural standard, close to public transport, employment and public amenities;
- increased pedestrian activation of the future urban plaza and town centre more broadly to deliver a vibrant and lively town centre 24 hours a day, seven days a week;
- removal of all driveway access from Epping Road, reducing traffic impacts;
- high density residential accommodation immediately adjacent to heavy rail infrastructure, in support of current government initiatives and sound urban design principles to improve public transport use and reduce vehicle dependence; and
- enhanced connectivity between Forest Park, the site and important locations to the north (such as the railway station and new library) through a network of public spaces activated by new retail tenancies and cafes.

Open Space

The proposal would allow for a total of approximately 13,629m² of open space to flow down from Epping Road. Of this open space, 6,665m² will be new public open space dedicated at no cost to Council. This new space would provide a positive visual impact to the locality creating an important community and civic focal point at the centre of Epping. There are also social benefits that well located and equipped open space offers to the local community and society more broadly.

The proposal therefore offers an opportunity to promote a healthy, active resident population through a more efficient and effective use of space. This is particularly important in the context of the expected population growth within Hornsby LGA and resulting constraints to the provision of new open space into the future

Community Cohesion and Civic Place

The proposed urban plaza and extension to Forest Park will provide a mix of open spaces and recreational opportunities, facilitating a greater level of social cohesion and amenity than the land currently zoned open space on the site.

The development proposes significant visual and amenity improvements to the public domain by way of renewed urban form, increased connectivity, the creation of a new public area and associated landscaping.

A potential footbridge over Epping Road would support connectivity through the centre, improve access to Epping Rail Station, increase the permeability of the urban form and provide additional activity that would support passive surveillance and the sense of security and safety for visitors to the centre.

4.1.2 Housing Supply and Affordability

Australia faces a national housing affordability and supply crisis. There is predicted to be a shortfall of more than 200,000 homes in Australia by 2013 and more than 1 million Australian families are in housing stress. This number is expected to grow in the short to medium term.

Recent pronouncements by all levels of Government agree that the contributing factors to the housing affordability crisis are inadequate housing supply in the market, complex planning systems and high infrastructure levies.

The NSW State Plan provides a commitment to partner with local councils to ensure that targets for housing and growth are reflected in relevant Planning Proposals and local planning instruments. It also commits to promote expanded supply of land for housing by continuing to set local targets for each LGA.

The draft North Subregional Planning Strategy, which covers the LGAs of Hornsby and Ku-ring-gai, sets the broad direction for additional dwelling and employment growth. The target for the North is 21,000 additional dwellings by 2031. The draft subregional strategy provides for the Hornsby LGA to accommodate an additional 11,000 dwellings in this timeframe. The development concept would make a significant contribution to housing supply in Hornsby LGA, representing 5.9% of Hornsby's 11,000 dwelling target.

The proposed dwelling mix would enhance housing diversity and choice in a highly accessible and sustainable location, well situated in relation to public transport, community services and retail.

The provision of housing within a Town Centre (located approximately 4.5km and 11.5km respectively of major employment nodes Macquarie Park Business Park and Parramatta) also creates opportunities to live and work within close proximity, reducing travel times and limiting additional traffic congestion.

The co-location of residential uses, services and public transport increases opportunities for walking. Higher levels of public transport usage as well as walkable access to services increases levels of physical activity, resulting in significant health benefits.

4.2 Economic Impacts

In general, investment in major projects can only be justified if the benefits of doing so exceed the costs. Such an assessment must consider all costs and benefits, and not simply those that can be easily quantified. As a result, the EP&A Act specifies that such a justification must be made having regard to biophysical, economic and social considerations and the principles of ecologically sustainable development.

In addition, one of the key objectives of the EP&A Act is to encourage "the promotion and co-ordination of the orderly and economic use and development of land". This and the other objectives of the Act recognise that the planning system needs to enable and facilitate the redevelopment of land in an economic manner, while balancing environmental and social impact and the public interest.

The economic and social benefits of the proposal are interrelated, as with economic prosperity comes social cohesion. The provision of residential land uses within the site is intended to activate the centre which will provide economic and social benefits through the delivery of valuable housing in a location close to public transport, community facilities and jobs.

The following provides a summary of the Economic Impact Assessment prepared by HillPDA (refer **Appendix D**).

Retail Expenditure and Town Centre Benefits

It is estimated that the 654 apartments to be provided as part of the development could accommodate approximately 1,635 new residents within the Epping locality. This would generate \$22.8m in retail expenditure per annum once the development was complete and occupied. Whilst not all of this expenditure would be directly retained within Epping Town Centre a notable portion would be available to existing and potential retailers, services and other businesses.

In addition to expenditure generated by new residents, \$0.2m per annum would be injected into the Epping locality as a result of non-resident workers employed on the site (i.e. in the shops and cafes).

A further \$2.4m per annum over the construction period in retail expenditure would be generated as a result of the needs of construction workers on the site. Food and beverage businesses in particular would benefit from this additional expenditure through the construction phase.

Employment Generation

The proposed development would generate 1,034 job years directly in the construction industry over the course of the construction period. Upon completion of construction and complete occupation, the proposed retail and café uses could accommodate 84 full time and part time jobs.

Furthermore, 72 residents are likely to use their own dwellings as their main place of work (excluding home duties). Combined with the estimates above, the development would result in 156 on-site jobs.

Economic Multiplier Benefits

The proposed development would generate an additional 2,766 jobs indirectly by way of multiplier benefits with a total of 3,799 job years being generated directly and indirectly once these flow-on economic multipliers are included; and

The estimated construction value of \$363m would generate \$1.2bn in total output – being direct, production induced and consumption induced output.

4.3 Environmental Impacts

The development concept detailed in Section 3 has been designed to respond to the context of the site and to ensure that the site emerges as a key contributor to the vitality of the Epping Town zone in the future. The proposal has been designed to respond to the existing and desired open space and pedestrian connectivity network of the precinct, as well as the existing building heights and densities in the immediate locality.

It should be noted that the site is not located in proximity to a waterway to the extent that redevelopment poses a risk, or land of high biodiversity, and accordingly will not adversely affect the natural environment.

There are two key environmental issues to consider: the first is to ensure that the proposed development promotes a high level of internal amenity, and the second is that the proposed development does not have an adverse or unreasonable impact on the amenity of the adjoining properties. Each of these are discussed in the following sections of this Report.

4.3.1 Internal Site Amenity

While internal site amenity is important to consider in this context, the detailed residential amenity issues associated with this site are more appropriately dealt with in detail at the Development Application stage. At a high level, the development concept provides that:

- The proposed residential towers have been designed in accordance with the principles of SEPP 65 and the associated Apartment Design Guidelines, minimising opportunities for overlooking and establishing privacy between residential buildings;
- Residential apartments will receive appropriate levels of solar access and natural ventilation;
- An appropriate dwelling mix can be accommodated within the residential buildings;
- Future residents will enjoy district views from within the site, given the topography of the site; and
- The proposed urban plaza and upgraded Forest Park will enable the creation of a strong sense of community within the site and enable residents to capitalise on the benefits of living within a mixed use development.

As such, the internal amenity of the residential apartments will comply with Council's requirements and the Apartment Design Guidelines at the DA stage.

4.3.2 Amenity Impacts on Surrounding Land

The potential impact on external amenity is more important to consider at the planning proposal stage, as it is the planning proposal that will establish the development standards upon which any future development will be based.

While each of the specific requirements, such as setbacks, overshadowing and overlooking will be addressed in greater detail in the following sections of this report, it is important to consider the overall impacts of the proposal.

As previously detailed, the existing buildings on the site fall well short of the potential development capacity, and do not have a good relationship to the neighbouring park. It is considered that the proposed scheme will have particular benefits in terms of improving amenity to the surrounding land as it will:

- Consolidate the existing driveway crossovers to single points on Blaxland Road and Forest Grove, eliminating all crossovers from Epping Road entirely;
- The carpark will be placed underground thereby reducing vehicular movements within the site;
- The buildings will be designed 'in the round', with no unsightly rear facades addressing Forest Park or the new urban plaza;
- Building heights step down to the east, providing an appropriate transition to the adjoining future development across Forest Grove;
- The proposed buildings will provide an improved design outcome, commensurate with the urban transformation that Epping is undergoing.

Setbacks to Open Space

Each element of the development concept addresses a different type of adjoining land, meaning that a variety of interface treatments are required. This has resulted in a variety of setback typologies being developed, as detailed in the Urban Design Report (refer **Appendix A**). The key setback typologies are summarised below.

The setbacks to the urban plaza allow for active uses to directly address the public space. Retail and café uses will be within a colonnade, providing weather protection and allowing outdoor seating right at the edge of the plaza but within the property line. Above the colonnade, the buildings will have a minimal setback for maintenance. This approach is entirely typical for commercial and residential buildings in urban areas that address urban plazas, such as Hornsby, Chatswood and Waterloo.

The setback between the proposed residential buildings and the extension to Forest Park is required to achieve a different outcome, providing an appropriate separation between the residential and recreational uses whilst still allowing appropriate levels of casual surveillance of the latter. To achieve this, several elements are envisaged. These will be embodied in the site specific development control plan outlined at Section 3.4 to ensure that they are enforced. The elements include:

- Providing a 3 metre wide walkway zone along the boundary in the park, encouraging park users to utilise this space for circulation rather than sitting
- Setting the level of this walkway at least 1.2 metres below the floor level of the apartments to provide additional privacy;
- Setting the level of the park a further 1.2 metres lower, reinforcing the territorial boundary; and
- Setting the entire building 1 metre off the boundary for maintenance requirements.

Overshadowing

The shadow study prepared by PTW Architects illustrates the shadow impacts of the proposed development (refer **Appendix B**). This study includes shadows cast by the future tower development on the northern side of Epping Road. A summary of the shadow impacts is provided below:

- Even at mid-winter, the new urban plaza receives full sunlight from noon to 2pm. This makes it a very attractive place for workers to have their lunch break, and will ensure that the plaza is well patronised all year round.
- The location of the proposed tower forms at the western end of the site mean that Forest Park will continue to have good access to mid-winter morning sun, with the shadows from the towers predominantly falling on the road and railway corridor to the west. The significant building separation proposed across the urban plaza means that a broad shaft of sunlight swings across Forest Park in the afternoon.
- The entire open space precinct, including the new urban plaza, the extension to Forest Park and Forest Park itself, will receive more sunlight at mid-winter than Council's minimum requirement. The requirement is a minimum of 50% of the open space receiving at least two hours of sunlight between 9am and 3pm, and the development concept achieves an average of 55% across each hourly interval. This is achieved despite the proposed buildings being located to the north of Forest Park.

Overlooking

The introduction of taller residential land uses onto the site does have the potential to raise privacy concerns for adjoining land uses. In many respects, this issue is more appropriately addressed at the Development Application stage as the impacts of overlooking can often be overcome through careful and considered design solutions and appropriate landscaping. In a broad sense, however, it is worth noting that the site does not adjoin any particularly sensitive land uses, such as a school or child care centre.

Furthermore, the locational context of the site is such that it is significantly separated from adjoining residential uses. Due to the surrounding roads, rail lines and park, the site does not share a boundary with any adjoining residential properties.

The design outcome has positive benefits as residential land uses will enjoy long distance views to the surrounding districts from the hilltop location, providing an excellent amenity outcome on what is a very busy road intersection.

4.3.3 Traffic, Parking and Access

A Traffic Impact Assessment has been prepared by GTA and is included at **Appendix E**. The findings of this assessment are provided below.

Background

Hornsby Shire Council, Parramatta City Council and Department of Planning and Infrastructure jointly commissioned a urban planning study to identify opportunities to accommodate additional residential and employment generating developments within the Epping Town Centre. The study area included the subject site.

The study developed and recommended a structure plan to support additional developments. This resulted in a portion of the subject site being rezoned with a R4 zoning permitting high density residential developments.

The urban planning study was supported by a traffic study. The traffic study assessed the traffic implications arising from the increase in development density over two scenarios – short term (2016) and long term (2026).

The study calculated an increase in traffic volumes of 261 residential trips and 54 retail trips per hour for the short term scenario and 677 residential trips and 84 retail trips per hour for the long term scenario.

The analysis found that in the future some intersections would operate satisfactorily, while the Epping Road intersections with Blaxland Road and Essex Street, and the Blaxland Road intersection with Maida Road intersection would experience capacity stress during the peak periods.

Traffic Generation

The estimated additional traffic arising from the development concept is provided in **Table 3** overleaf.

Table 3 – Estimated additional traffic arising from development concept

Proposed Use	Morning Peak	Evening Peak
Residential	62 vehicles per hour	49 vehicles per hour
Retail	19 vehicles per hour	74 vehicles per hour
Total	81 vehicles per hour	123 vehicles per hour

Traffic Modelling

The anticipated additional traffic generation was incorporated into a traffic model, which examined how the previously established short and long term scenarios would be affected by the additional traffic generated by the development concept.

The analysis also found that the additional traffic from the proposed development uplift does not further exacerbate traffic performance of the nearby intersections. The nearby intersection would continue to operate with similar conditions to those found when the intensification of the Epping Town Centre is completed without the development concept.

Car Parking

Applying Council's parking rates, a minimum of 779 residential car parking spaces and 79 retail car parking spaces would be required for the proposed development. The minimum permissible car parking spaces is inclusive of accessible car parking spaces and any requirement for car share parking spaces.

In terms of accessible car parking requirements for high density residential developments, Council's HDCP 2013 also requires one accessible parking space to be provided for each proposed accessible unit. In addition, Council's HDCP 2013 also requires 10 per cent of all units to be provided with an accessible space. In this case, 66 accessible parking spaces are required.

In terms of car share spaces, the DCP requires that a minimum of one car share space should be provided for residential developments containing 50 or more dwellings.

Additional loading and service vehicle bays will be required. The requirements for these will be assessed at the development application stage.

4.3.4 Site Contamination

Environmental Investigation Services have prepared a Preliminary Site Investigation to determine the suitability of the site for the proposed development. This Report is provided at **Appendix F** to this Report. The report concludes that the site "can be rendered suitable for the proposed mixed-use development." It is understood that further detailed investigations may be required post-Gateway determination and/or prior to the submission of a development application. This would include details on the proposed site remediation and validation processes.

5.0 Strategic Justification

This section demonstrates the need for the proposal and its relationship with the strategic planning framework. The environmental, social and economic impacts of the proposal were demonstrated as being acceptable in Section 4.0 of this report.

5.1 The Need for the Proposal

The key strategic drivers for the Planning Proposal are as follows:

- The site's context and size mean that it has significant development potential, providing much needed housing stock adjacent to a major public transport hub;
- The position of the site between the Town Core and Forest Park is a significant opportunity to connect these spaces with new pedestrian connections;
- The scale of the proposed development is such that very significant public contributions can be provided, including:
 - 6,665m² of new public open space dedicated at no cost to Council;
 - Embellishment of this new space and improvements to Forest Park;
 - A monetary contribution towards a new community facility, such as a swimming pool; and
- The previous obstacles to development, being fragmented ownership and the use of part of the site as a railway works depot, have been resolved.

5.2 Relationship to Strategic Planning Framework

5.2.1 Relevant Legislation and Regulations

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (the EP&A Act) and the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000* (EPA Reg) set out, amongst other things, the:

- requirements for rezoning land;
- requirements regarding the preparation of a local environmental study as part of the rezoning process;
- matters for consideration when determining a development application; and
- approval permits and/or licences required from other authorities under other legislation.

This planning proposal has been prepared in accordance with the requirements set out in section 55 of the EP&A Act in that it explains the intended outcomes of the proposed instrument. It also provides justification and an environmental analysis of the proposal.

Section 117 Directions

Ministerial directions under Section 117 of the EP&A Act require Councils to address a range of matters when seeking to rezone land. A summary assessment of the planning proposal against the Directions issued by the Minister under Section 117 of the EP&A Act is provided in **Table 4** below.

Table 4 – Assessment against Section 117 Directions

Ministerial Directions	Consistent		N/A	Comment
	YES	NO		
1. Employment and Resources				
1.1 Business and Industrial Zones			✓	Not applicable
1.2 Rural Zones			✓	Not applicable
1.3 Mining, Petroleum Production and Extractive Industries			✓	Not applicable
1.4 Oyster Aquaculture			✓	Not applicable
1.5 Rural Lands			✓	Not applicable
2. Environment and Heritage				
2.1 Environment Protection Zones			✓	Not applicable
2.2 Coastal Protection			✓	Not applicable
2.3 Heritage Conservation			✓	Not applicable
2.4 Recreation Vehicle Areas			✓	Not applicable
3. Housing, Infrastructure and Urban Development				
3.1 Residential Zones	✓			The proposed amendment would see the delivery of new dwellings that are located in close proximity to public transport, employment opportunities and day to day services. The proposal will therefore make more efficient use of this existing infrastructure and will reduce the consumption of land for housing and associated urban development on the urban fringe.
3.2 Caravan Parks and Manufactured Home Estates			✓	Not applicable
3.3 Home Occupations			✓	Not applicable
3.4 Integrating Land Use and Transport	✓			The Planning Proposal, through unlocking the development potential of the site, will concentrate critical mass to support public transport, and improve access to housing and jobs and services by walking, cycling and public transport. In light of this it is expected that the proposal will reduce travel demand including the number of trips generated by the development and the distances travelled, especially by car.
3.5 Development Near Licensed Aerodromes			✓	Not applicable
3.6 Shooting Ranges			✓	Not applicable
4. Hazard and Risk				
4.1 Acid Sulphate Soils	✓			Hornsby LEP contains acid sulphate soils provisions and this proposal does not seek to amend them. Acid sulphate soils investigations and analysis will accordingly be undertaken as part of

Ministerial Directions	Consistent		N/A	Comment
	YES	NO		
				any future development of the land in accordance with the requirements of the LEP.
4.2 Mine Subsidence and Unstable Land			✓	Not applicable
4.3 Flood Prone Land			✓	Not applicable
4.4 Planning for Bushfire Protection			✓	Not applicable
5. Regional Planning				
5.1 Implementation of Regional Strategies			✓	Not applicable
5.2 Sydney Drinking Water Catchments			✓	Not applicable
5.3 Farmland of State and Regional Significance on the NSW Far North Coast			✓	Not applicable
5.4 Commercial and Retail Development along the Pacific Highway, North Coast			✓	Not applicable
5.8 Second Sydney Airport: Badgerys Creek			✓	Not applicable
5.9 North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy			✓	Not applicable (only applies to new stations to the north west of Epping)
6. Local Plan Making				
6.1 Approval and Referral Requirements	✓			No new concurrence provisions are proposed.
6.2 Reserving Land for Public Purposes	✓			No new road reservation is proposed.
6.3 Site Specific Provisions	✓			The planning proposal does not require the imposition of any zones or development standards that are not contained elsewhere in the LEP.
7. Metropolitan Planning				
7.1 Implementation of the Metropolitan Plan for Sydney 2036	✓			Refer to Section 5.2.2 below.

5.2.2 NSW State Plan 2021

The New South Wales State Plan sets the strategic direction and goals for the NSW Government across a broad range of services and infrastructure. The Plan nominates one of the key challenges for the State as being the planning challenges that arise from continued population growth.

The redevelopment of the site is consistent with the State Plan as it will provide new housing in an area which is highly accessible to public transport infrastructure and social services.

5.2.3 NSW Long Term Transport Plan 2012

The NSW Long Term Transport Plan 2012 has the aim of better integrating land use and transport. The Draft Metropolitan Strategy has been prepared to integrate with the Long Term Transport Plan.

The Planning Proposal will serve the objectives of the Transport Plan by locating both residential and employment generating uses close to an existing railway station. This will promote the use of public transport and reduce reliance on private motor vehicles.

5.2.4 A Plan for Growing Sydney

'A Plan for Growing Sydney' (the Metropolitan Plan) was released in December 2014 and is the current strategic plan for the Sydney metropolitan area and is intended to guide land use development in Sydney for the next 20 years.

The Plan also recognises the need to enable the future population to move more easily between home and their place of work, and make a wider variety of housing available to suit the changing demographics of the population.

The Plan for Growing Sydney contains overarching visions, with four key goals, which are:

Goal 1: A competitive economy with world-class services and transport

Goal 2: A city of housing choice, with homes that meet our needs and lifestyles

Goal 3: A great place to live with communities that are strong, healthy and well connected

Goal 4: A sustainable and resilient city that protects the natural environment and has a balanced approach to the use of land and resources.

(A Plan for Growing Sydney, NSW Planning and Environment)

'A Plan for Growing Sydney' is intended to sit within a hierarchy of plans that will guide the development of Sydney over the next 20 years. It sets the priorities and directions for the planning of Metropolitan Sydney and will be supported by a newly established Greater Sydney Commission, who will be charged with coordinating and ensuring the delivery of all of the actions in the Plan. Each of the above goals is supported by a suite of directions, actions and principles.

Table 5 overleaf provides an assessment of the relevant components of 'A Plan for Growing Sydney' as it relates to the subject planning proposal. It is considered that the planning proposal is consistent with the broad objectives in the new Metropolitan Plan which reiterates many of the initiatives within the earlier Metropolitan Plans, which have now been superseded, while providing new directions for growth.

Table 5 – A Plan for Growing Sydney Planning Assessment

Goal/ Direction/Action	Comment
Goal 1: Sydney's Competitive Economy	The redevelopment of an underutilised site adjacent to a major public transport interchange to provide residential accommodation for Sydney's growing workforce is consistent with this Goal.
Direction 1.6 – Expand the Global Economic Corridor	The provision of retail facilities within the subject site and the incorporation of residential and community land uses will improve the viability of the site and enable it to contribute towards the global economic corridor.
Goal 2: Sydney's housing choices	Sydney is currently facing a housing supply crisis which will be exacerbated unless more homes are provided in both greenfield locations and established urban areas. In the immediate vicinity of the subject site, significant urban renewal is currently underway. The planning proposal seeks to provide opportunity for residential development in a mixed use setting. This is considered appropriate for the site.
Direction 2.1 – Accelerate housing supply across Sydney	The planning proposal seeks to introduce residential land uses on the site with 649 new apartments proposed in the design concept. The residential development will be supported by the creation of a public open space plaza, community facilities and retail land uses.
Action 2.1.1: Accelerate housing supply and local housing choices	The subject site is suitable for urban renewal as Epping is an existing centre that is close to jobs and public transport. The provision of housing within the core of Epping will improve the viability of the town centre and achieve the objectives of the Plan through increasing housing supply
Direction 2.2 – Accelerate urban renewal across Sydney – providing homes closer to jobs	The subject site enjoys walking connections to the Epping town centre, and public transport connections to Macquarie Park, the CBD and greater Sydney. This Direction recognises that additional housing can stimulate new communities and the subject planning proposal is intended to allow residential land uses on a site that is highly suitable for renewal and will improve the overall attractiveness and viability of Epping as a local centre.
Direction 2.3: Improve housing choice to suite different needs and lifestyles	This Direction recognises that Sydney's population is changing. Epping as a suburb has traditionally been recognised as a locality dominated by detached housing. The ongoing introduction of land zoned for medium to high density housing in the town centre will aid in providing housing diversity. It is proposed that the subject site will further contribute to the availability of housing choice.
Goal 3: Sydney's great places to live	The development concept will allow for the delivery of substantial public benefits that will reinforce the attraction of Epping as a great place to live. If realised, the development will have excellent amenity, immediate access to public transport, connections to the heart of Epping's civic core, and be immediately adjacent to a variety of quality public spaces that provide a range of active and passive recreational opportunities.
Goal 4: Sydney's sustainable and resilient environment	Detail design will be provided at the Development Application stage, which will demonstrate how the proposal will satisfy sustainability objectives and requirements.
Sydney's Subregions	Final Subregional strategies have not yet been released to demonstrate how the targets within the Plan for Growing Sydney will be achieved. The subject site lies within the North Subregion. The draft priorities for this sub-region are addressed below.
North Subregion	A number of priorities are identified, including the identification of suitable locations for housing and employment around established centres and key public transport corridors, including Epping Station. The site is ideally placed for renewal based on these criteria. The planning proposal seeks to contribute to the revitalisation of the centre of Epping and promote housing supply and affordability in a highly desirable location. The planning proposal will also contribute to the provision of open space to cater for a growing population.

5.2.5 Subregional Planning

Subregional plans will build on the actions set out in *A Plan for Growing Sydney*. Priorities for each subregion in Sydney are set out in the Plan, along with further investigations that are needed to shape the subregional plans.

The site is located within the North Subregion, which includes the Hornsby, Hunters Hill, Ku-Ring-Gai, Lane Cove, Manly, Mosman, North Sydney, Pittwater, Ryde, Warringah and Willoughby LGAs. The North subregion will continue to be an attractive place to live, work and visit, with a thriving economy. Increases in the supply of housing will be focused on centres with good public transport, such as Epping.

Future subregional planning will consider a range of priorities. Of relevance to this planning proposal is the need to accelerate housing supply, choice and affordability, and to build great places to live.

The planning proposal is consistent with this priority, in that it proposes to facilitate residential development that is responsive to its context and close to existing public transport links. The proposal represents a unique opportunity to provide a public access linkage between the town centre core and Forest Park, providing significance amenity for the existing and future population.

The proposed site configuration is consistent with desired outcomes of the plan in that it will:

- Reconfigure an area of underutilised open space to create a vibrant urban plaza and to complete the north-south pedestrian link;
- Provide housing types that are in significant demand close to railway stations; and
- Provide building massing that respects the built forms envisaged on adjoining sites, making a positive contribution to the character of the area.

5.3 State Environmental Planning Policies

It is considered that the planning proposal is consistent with applicable State Environmental Planning Policies. **Table 6** provides a summary of the consistency of the planning proposal with each applicable SEPP.

Table 6 – SEPPs – Statement of Consistency

SEPP	Comment
SEPP 32 – Urban Consolidation (Redevelopment of Urban Land)	It is considered that the planning proposal satisfies the objectives of this Policy through enabling suitable residential development. The subject site is ideally placed in a location with existing public infrastructure, transport and community facilities.
SEPP 55 – Remediation of Land	A Preliminary Site Investigation accompanies this planning proposal and is provided at Appendix F .
SEPP 65 – Design Quality of Residential Flat Buildings	The site concept plans, prepared by PTW Architects at Appendix B , provides an urban design outcome for the site, which has been prepared in accordance with the key principles and guidelines within this SEPP. Any future DA would be required to demonstrate consistency with this SEPP.
SEPP (Affordable Rental Housing) 2009	It is considered premature in the planning process to commit to the provision of Affordable Housing, however, within a development of this scale, with excellent proximity to public transport, there is no reason to suggest that Affordable Housing cannot be accommodated within the site in the future. This level of detail is more appropriately addressed at the detail design and DA stage.

SEPP (Infrastructure) 2007	The Infrastructure SEPP applies to development applications with a frontage to a classified road. It is proposed to remove all driveway access to and from Epping Road.. A Traffic and Parking report is provided at Appendix E and demonstrates that traffic and parking can be appropriately managed as a result of the proposed increased density. Any future DA will be required to further address the requirements of this Policy. Further, the proposed development would be considered as Traffic Generating Development and therefore, any DA would be required to be referred to the Roads and Maritime Service.
SEPP (Building Sustainability Index: BASIX) 2004	Any future DA will require compliance with this Policy.
Draft Competition SEPP (2010)	The draft Competition SEPP 2010 was publically exhibited, but never finalised. It is no longer a matter for consideration in the assessment of DAs. The broad objectives of the SEPP was to ensure appropriate competition, responding to market forces, and stated that an EPI should not restrict the number of retail premises within a certain area. Although the SEPP has never been finalised, its objectives are considered to be sound. The planning proposal seeks to enable the revitalisation of an important site close to the core of Epping.

5.4 Local Statutory Framework

5.4.1 Hornsby Local Environmental Plan

Consistency with Overall Aims

The proposal's consistency with the overall aims of the Hornsby LEP is demonstrated in **Table 7** below.

Table 7 – Consistency with overall aims of Hornsby LEP

Aim	Proposal	Consistency
(a) to facilitate development that creates: (i) progressive town centres, thriving rural areas and abundant recreation spaces connected by efficient infrastructure and transport systems, and (ii) a well-planned area with managed growth to provide for the needs of future generations and people enriched by diversity of cultures, the beauty of the environment and a strong economy,	The proposal will directly facilitate a development that will make a significant contribution to the vitality of the Epping Town Centre, as well as providing additional recreation spaces, all in a location adjacent to existing transport infrastructure. The proposal will facilitate the delivery of much needed additional housing stock to meet the needs of the existing and future community.	✓
(b) to guide the orderly and sustainable development of Hornsby, balancing its economic, environmental and social needs,	The development concept and public benefits will together deliver significant economic and social benefits to the people of the Hornsby LEP, without resulting in any significant detrimental environmental impacts. The evolving context of the site means that this is the appropriate time to progress such a proposal.	✓
(c) to permit a mix of housing types that provide for the future housing needs of the community near employment centres, transport nodes and services,	The development concept allows for a variety of apartment types adjacent to a major public transport hub. The proposed open space areas will provide amenity for all surrounding residents.	✓

Aim	Proposal	Consistency
(d) to permit business and industrial development that meets the needs of the community near housing, transport and services, and is consistent with and reinforces the role of centres within the subregional commercial centres hierarchy,	The development concept includes a retail component to activate the urban plaza and provide employment.	✓
(e) to maintain and protect rural activities, resource lands, rural landscapes and biodiversity values of rural areas,	The site is not near any rural lands.	N/A
(f) to provide a range of quality passive and active recreational areas and facilities that meet the leisure needs of both the local and regional community,	A key element of the proposal is the provision of a variety of active and passive recreation areas, as well as facilitating a significant monetary contribution towards a substantial community facility such as a swimming pool.	✓
(g) to facilitate the equitable provision of community services and cultural opportunities to promote the wellbeing of the population of Hornsby,	The proposed public open spaces are located a short walk from Epping Station and are within a walking catchment of a large resident and worker population. The proposal therefore can be seen to provide these spaces in an equitable manner.	✓
(h) to protect and enhance the scenic and biodiversity values of environmentally sensitive land, including bushland, river settlements, river catchments, wetlands and waterways,	The site is not environmentally sensitive land.	N/A
(i) to protect and enhance the heritage of Hornsby, including places of historic, aesthetic, architectural, natural, cultural and Aboriginal significance,	The proposal does not negatively impact on the heritage significance of Forest Park. By improving the amenity and accessibility of the park, the proposal will make it more attractive and hence more people will visit and be able to appreciate its heritage qualities.	✓
(j) to minimise risk to the community in areas subject to environmental hazards, including flooding and bush fires.	The site is not subject to environmental hazards such as flooding or bush fire.	N/A

Consistency with Zoning Objectives

The indicative scheme's consistency with the zone objectives under the Hornsby LEP is demonstrated in **Table 8** below.

Table 8 – Consistency with Zone objectives of R4 and RE1 zones

R4 Zone Objectives	Proposal	Consistency
To provide for the housing needs of the community within a high density residential environment.	The proposal will facilitate the delivery of a development that provides a variety of apartment types, consistent with the demands of the existing and incoming community.	✓
To provide a variety of housing types within a high density residential environment.	The variety of apartment types will ensure that there is a range of aspects, views, private open space and affordability provided.	✓
To enable other land uses that provide facilities or services to meet the day to day needs of residents.	It is proposed to allow for retail and café uses at ground level to activate the urban plaza and provide for the day to day needs of the residents.	✓

RE1 Zone Objectives	Proposal	Consistency
To enable land to be used for public open space or recreational purposes.	It is proposed to retain the quantum of land zoned RE1, but to reconfigure it into a more valuable arrangement and ensure that it is accessible to the public. The land zoned RE1 is currently privately owned and not publically accessible.	✓
To provide a range of recreational settings and activities and compatible land uses.	The proposal will facilitate a range of public open spaces that will cater for a variety of active and passive recreational uses.	✓
To protect and enhance the natural environment for recreational purposes.	The site does not contain any significant remnants of the endemic environment.	N/A
To protect and maintain areas of bushland that have ecological value.	The site does not contain any significant remnants of the endemic environment	N/A

Consistency with Height of Buildings Objectives

The proposal's consistency with the objectives for height of buildings under the Hornsby LEP is demonstrated in **Table 9** below.

Table 9 – Consistency with height of building objectives in Hornsby LEP

Objective	Proposal	Consistency
To permit a height of buildings that is appropriate for the site constraints, development potential and infrastructure capacity of the locality.	The indicative scheme provides an appropriate transition between the future higher built forms to the north, to the future lower built form to the east. This transition is proposed to be reflected in the height of buildings control. The proposed heights will not interfere with views, privacy or solar access to exiting dwellings.	✓

6.0 Assessment of the Planning Proposal against NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure Guidelines

The following section includes an assessment against the requirements in *A guide to preparing planning proposals* published by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure in October 2012.

6.1 Part 1 – Objectives and Intended outcomes

The objective of the planning proposal is reconfigure the area of public open space on the site and to increase the permissible density of development on the site, through an amendment to the LEP zoning and height, as outlined in **Section 3.0** of this Report.

6.2 Part 2 – Explanation of Provisions

The proposed outcome will be achieved through an amendment to the Hornsby LEP 2013 height and zoning mapping, as described in **Section 3.3**. **Section 5.4** of this report demonstrates the ability of the proposal to comply with the existing aims and objectives of the height provisions.

6.3 Part 3 – Justification

6.3.1 Need for a Planning Proposal

Q1 – Is the planning proposal a result of any strategic study or report?

The planning proposal is not the result of any strategic study or report, but rather aims to take advantage of the latent development potential of the site. The strategic direction for the planning proposal comes from the Metropolitan Strategy, 'A Plan for Growing Sydney', which recognises that additional housing can stimulate new communities. Action 2.2.2 of the Plan states, "*Undertake urban renewal in transport corridors which are being transformed by investment, and around Strategic centres.*"

In the Metropolitan Strategy, the Government is supportive of, '*local efforts to lift housing production around local centres, transport corridors and public access points.*' (Action 2.2.1: *Use the greater Sydney Commission to support Council-led urban infill projects*).

The Epping Town Centre Urban Activation Precinct Finalisation Report provides the following about the Bowling Club portion of the site:

Due to the history and complexities of this site, the department considers it is more appropriate to retain the open space zoning for this site as part of the Epping Town Centre precinct. The proponent could enter into negotiations with the council at a future date for a planning proposal for the site once the is no longer required for the North West Rail Link project, which could involve a planning agreement to developing the site whilst still providing a community benefit.

As the use of the site for rail infrastructure (the Epping to Thornleigh Third Track Project rather than the North West Rail Link) is drawing to a close, and given that the proponent has successfully brought the majority of the site under a single ownership, it is now appropriate to revisit the zoning and built form controls applying to the site. This planning proposal seeks to amend the planning controls that apply to the site with the aim of allowing development which responds to the opportunities and constraints, provides a public benefit, and is fiscally responsible.

Q2 – Is the planning proposal the best means of achieving the objectives or intended outcomes, or is there a better way?

The planning proposal is the best means of achieving the intended outcome of the development, which is facilitate the redevelopment of the subject site. The current zoning and height controls do not respond to the inherent opportunities within the site. The proposed increase in development standards will provide for an appropriate built form, having regard to the site context, and provide opportunities for significant upgrades to the surrounding public domain.

Unlocking this development potential will allow for the provision of significant public benefit, including the dedication of land for public use, embellishment of open spaces, and a monetary contribution for a new significant community facility (such as a swimming pool).

6.3.2 Relationship to the strategic planning framework

Q3 – Is the planning proposal consistent with the objectives and actions of the applicable regional or sub-regional strategy (including the Sydney Metropolitan Strategy and exhibited draft strategies)?

Consistency with the strategic planning framework has been addressed in **Section 5.2** of this report.

Q4 – Is the planning proposal consistent with a council's local strategy or other local strategic plan?

Your Community Plan 2013-2023 sets the strategic goals for Hornsby Shire, identifying the community's main priorities and aspirations for the future. The planning proposal accords with the established goals relating to environment, community, lifestyle, property and Council services.

The proposal is also consistent with the key aims of the *Hornsby Shire Housing Strategy*, which seeks to concentrate new housing in planned precincts rather than dispersed throughout urban areas. Furthermore, the proposal will facilitate the delivery of housing choice in the form of multi-unit housing, which will assist older persons to downsize and young couples to enter the property market.

Q 5 – Is the planning proposal consistent with applicable State Environmental Planning Policies?

Consistency with applicable SEPPs has been addressed in **Section 5.3** of this report.

Q6 – Is the planning proposal consistent with applicable Ministerial Directions (s. 117 directions)?

Consistency with the applicable Ministerial Directions has been addressed in **Section 5.1** of this report.

6.3.3 Environmental, social and economic impact

Q7 – Is there any likelihood that critical habitat or threatened species, populations or ecological communities, or their habitats, will be adversely affected by the proposal?

The planning proposal will not result in any impact on critical habitat or threatened species, populations or ecological communities or their habitats, given the site's urban location.

Q8 – Are there any other likely environmental impacts as a result of the planning proposal and how are they proposed to be managed?

A detailed assessment of the environmental impacts of the planning proposal is provided in **Section 4.3**. No unacceptable impacts will result from the proposal.

Q9 – Has the planning proposal adequately addressed any social and economic effects?

The proposed development will result in positive economic and social flow-on effects for the local area. This is discussed further in **Section 4.1** and **4.2** of this report.

Q10 – What are the views of State and Commonwealth public authorities consulted in accordance with the Gateway determination?

State and Commonwealth authorities will have the opportunity to provide comment on the planning proposal as part of its formal exhibition. Any future DA will be referred to relevant authorities as required.

6.4 Part 4 - Mapping

Maps of the proposed amendments to the LEP zoning and height of buildings controls are provided at **Section 3.3**.

6.5 Part 5 – Community Consultation

It is noted that confirmation of the public exhibition period and requirements for the planning proposal will be given by the Minister as part of the LEP Gateway determination. It is anticipated that in addition to this required consultation, Hornsby Council will elect to exhibit this preliminary planning proposal soon after lodgement.

Any future development application relating the site would also be exhibited in accordance with Council requirements, at which point the public and any authorities would have the opportunity to make further comment on the proposal.

7.0 Conclusion

Epping is currently experiencing unprecedented growth that is seeing it swiftly becoming one of Sydney's more dominant metropolitan centres. This growth is enabling significant investment in urban design and the public domain, delivering quality spaces to be enjoyed for generations to come.

The subject site is located at a strategic location between the soon to be rejuvenated town core and the under-appreciated Forest Park. Previously burdened with fragmented ownership and an area of open space that was in fact exclusively used as a works depot, the potential of the site has now been unlocked.

The opportunities of the site are evident:

- The site is immediately adjacent to the core of the Epping Town Centre;
- The site is immediately adjacent to Forest Park;
- The site area is in close proximity to Epping Railway Station;
- The site is at the intersection of Epping and Blaxland Roads, which are busy, regional roadways which can accommodate taller scale development;
- The site is a large amalgamated site with three street frontages, with the potential for greater residential density.

A rigorous urban design methodology was applied by the specialist consultant team, led by PTW Architects, to capitalise on these opportunities. The key elements of the approach are as follows:

- Reconfigure the privately owned open space area into true public open space (dedicated at no cost to Council)
- Provide a modern urban square for enjoyment by workers and residents in the area, commensurate with Epping's growing importance as a metropolitan centre;
- Provide an extension to Forest Park, ensuring that the park and future built form appropriately relate to each other;
- Facilitate towers at the western end of the site, partnering the tower already envisaged on the northern side of Epping Road and in a location that has minimal impact on any adjoining properties or public open spaces;
- Modulate the building heights down from the towers to the existing neighbouring height controls; and
- Allow the (much needed) increased housing supply to fund the embellishment of the associated public open spaces, as well as contributing to new community facility (such as a swimming pool).

A development concept has been prepared that embodies these urban design principles. An assessment of the concept demonstrates that it has positive social and economic benefits, and will not result in any significant detrimental environmental impacts. The LEP amendments described in this planning proposal are necessary to ensure that the proposed public benefits can be delivered via the realisation of the development concept, resulting in a very positive outcome for the Epping community.