

Epping Civic Trust Submission - June 2014

Draft amendments to the Hornsby Development Control Plan (DCP) relating to the Epping Town Centre UAP

The Epping Civic Trust has read and considered the draft amendments to the Hornsby Development Control Plan (DCP) and wishes to make the following submission:

The draft DCP appears to conform closely with NSW Planning (the Department) requirements as detailed in the Epping town centre zoning 'Finalisation Report' (FR), the approved LEP amendments, relevant SEPPs and government guidelines and with Hornsby Shire Council's approved DCP for the area of the Shire outside the Epping town centre precinct. However, the Trust believes there are some inconsistencies and omissions and some areas where the presentation of the draft DCP could be improved.

Item 1: Part 3. Residential

The Trust is concerned that the Key Development Principles Diagrams (KDPDs) provided in the draft DCP for the Epping town centre appear to be very basic and lacking in detail when compared with the diagrams provided for the rest of the Shire.

For example there is far more detail in the Bouvardia Street Asquith diagrams. The diagrams for the Epping precincts have very little detail that is specific to the sites.

Consequently the Trust does not have much confidence that future development applicants will be fully informed about the unique features of each site (also see Item 3: Part 9. Heritage below).

Item 2: Part 4. Business

The Trust is particularly concerned about the absence of any guidance for future developer applicants on the issues that will arise for developments on the Barren Ridges Sawing Establishment site straddling Oxford Street. It was considered in the FR that it would be appropriate to identify this site in the DCP and yet it has not been dealt with in the draft DCP.

Also the Trust does not believe that the draft DCP deals adequately with the Pembroke Civic precinct proposal. The concept has great merit but the Council has not provided the detail that is needed to support the proposal. The Trust would like the Council to commit to a master plan for this precinct and provide some guiding detail in the DCP. It would also be useful if the KDPDs for Langston Place and Pembroke Street were to be merged so that the concept of a civic place could be visualised.

There is a lesson to be learnt from the mess that Parramatta City Council has inherited with respect to their potential civic place in Rawson Street (currently the council car park) with the planning being taken over by the Department and being subject to pressure by developers for spot rezoning.

Another issue in the business precincts is the matter of commercial space. The draft DCP is proposing limitations on the size of commercial floor spaces. This is completely contrary to the guidance in the Department's FR that there should be no set limits. The Department's position is fully supported by the Trust, which believes the issue of the size of commercial spaces should be dealt with on merit at the development application stage.

The provision of through walkways between development blocks is a concept strongly supported by the Trust. The walkways shown in the draft DCP are fine but there appears to be some omissions.

For example, there is already a walkway between the Anglican Church and the residential flats to the east, and another walkway between Forest Park (at the bend in Forest Grove) and Essex Street, neither of which are shown on the plans in the draft DCP. These walkways need to be added to the relevant precinct plans and integrated with the new walkway proposals.

Item 3: Part 9. Heritage.

The Trust was very unhappy with the rezoning plan (as approved) where the 'transition in heights' principle had been disregarded in a number of significant locations. In these locations new high rise will tower over existing developments and heritage items.

Prime examples are:

- the heritage zone in Essex Street which backs onto the five storey development zone in Forest Grove and
- the heritage zone in Norfolk Road which does the same with the five storey development zone in Essex Street.

It is now essential that built form guidelines be provided to manage the external impacts on these heritage areas. As stated in the FR, special provisions for increased setbacks and deep soil plantings will be required.

Again the Trust has noted that the prescriptive measures and KDPDs in the heritage section of the draft DCP appears to be of a much lower standard than those delivered for say, the Beecroft heritage precinct.

General Comment

The infrastructure plan that has been tacked onto the end of Part 3 Residential is totally inadequate. Infrastructure should be a separate part of the DCP and should include real design, costing and implementation detail. It is the Trusts understanding that the integration of land use and infrastructure planning is Government policy.

Summary

The Epping Civic Trust requests that the Hornsby Shire Council address the omissions, inconsistencies and improvements referred to above before submitting the draft DCP to the NSW Department of Planning for approval.

*Graham Lovell
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26 June 2014*