

Frequently Asked Questions

85-91 Thomas Street, Parramatta: Planning Proposal, draft Site-Specific Development Control Plan (DCP) and Planning Agreement.

What is a "Planning Proposal"?

A planning proposal (also known as a rezoning application) is a document that explains proposed changes to land use planning controls that are found in a Local Environmental Plan (LEP). A planning proposal details how the controls are proposed to change, for example by increasing building heights or floor space ratios to allow for more development in a particular area.

It also sets out the justification for why these changes are suitable for the site and an assessment of the potential impacts of the proposal and how they should be resolved if it is approved. Planning proposals are usually supported by extensive technical information to help with the assessment such as studies on flooding, traffic, urban design, and social impact assessments. A planning proposal can be prepared by anyone, but usually it is either a landowner, developer, or Council.

What is a "Development Control Plan"?

A "Development Control Plan" (DCP) is a planning document that provides detailed planning and design rules to support the Local Environmental Plan (LEP). These rules are often referred to as 'controls' and includes standards such as storm water drainage, landscaping, parking, access and urban design. For some planning proposals such as 85-91 Thomas Street, a Site-Specific DCP is prepared to ensure the controls are tailored to the specific needs of the site and local context.

What is a "Planning Agreement"?

A "Planning Agreement" is a legal document that is created under the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979* between developers and government agencies (including councils) for the provision of funds or works by the developer for infrastructure, services, or other public amenities. A planning agreement enables the opportunity for Council to negotiate local items such as community facilities and other infrastructure as part of the Planning Proposal process. Planning agreements are a more flexible mechanism to fund or deliver public benefit to an area and can be tailored to the specific needs of where redevelopment is proposed.

What is a Local "Environmental Plan"?

A local environmental plan (LEP) is a legal document that guides planning decisions by local governments. It is prepared by Council and approved by the State Government. The LEP is an important planning tool that helps shape the future of our area and ensures development is done appropriately. Controls in an LEP include such things as land use zones, building heights, floor space ratios, heritage, flood risk management controls and environmental protection.

How many new units are proposed to be built?

Approximately 59 dwellings could be constructed as part of this proposal. This will be refined as part of the Development Application (DA) process.

How tall will the buildings be?

Building heights up to 22 metres (6 storeys) are proposed within the site.

Why is an amendment to the development control plan on exhibition?

Given the nature of redevelopment proposed on the site, a site-specific Development Control Plan (DCP) will be required to support any future development on the site. The existing Morton Street Precinct, Parramatta DCP 2011 is proposed to be amended to identify a new 'Area 5' (85-91 Thomas Street) location. Site-specific controls for 'Area 5' are also on exhibition which seek to amend the existing Part 4.1.9 of the Morton Street Precinct, Parramatta DCP 2011 with the addition of site-specific controls to guide the redevelopment of the site through the new 'Area 5', which will have regard to the local context and detailed design requirements for the site.

Does the planning proposal seek additional residential density on the site?

The proposed controls seek to recoup the developability achievable on the site prior to the notification of Parramatta LEP 2011 – Amendment No.20 on 28 July 2017 which resulted in 2,496sqm of land at the rear of the site being identified as undevelopable land to ensure environmental protection. The proposed amendment to the planning controls ensures that the same developability applying to the site prior to Amendment No.20 can be achieved subject to additional design considerations to manage the impacts of the proposed development. No other changes are proposed as part of the Planning Proposal.

What will the Planning Agreement do?

The Planning Agreement will facilitate the dedication of 2,496sqm of privately owned land to Council within the undevelopable part of the site at the south at nil cost which comprises of:

- 1,296sqm of privately owned land zoned RE1 public recreation and identified for land acquisition for open space at No.85 Thomas Street,
- 1,200sqm of privately owned land identified under the Natural Resources – Biodiversity map and proposed for RE1 Public recreation zoning as part of this Planning Proposal.

Why isn't the Planning Agreement in line with Council's Planning Agreement Policy of 50% of the value of the land uplift?

It is acknowledged that Amendment 20 to the Parramatta Local Environmental Plan 2011 reduced the development potential on the site by identifying part of the land to the south of the site as undevelopable to ensure environmental protection. The planning proposal is only seeking to recoup the development potential applying to the site under the planning controls in place prior to this amendment. Council therefore did not consider it necessary to seek a planning agreement achieving 50% land value uplift, as there is effectively no increase in overall development potential of the site and the proposal is considered to have addressed the infrastructure needs resulting from redevelopment through the dedication of open space and environmentally significant land at the rear through the Planning Agreement.