

**REPORTS TO COUNCIL - FOR COUNCIL DECISION**

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<b>ITEM NUMBER</b>	13.8
<b>SUBJECT</b>	Preparation of the Epping Town Centre Master Plan (Scope)
<b>REFERENCE</b>	F2024/00282 - D09496350
<b>REPORT OF</b>	Team Leader City Projects

**CSP THEME:** Accessible, Green, Thriving and Welcoming

**WORKSHOP/BRIEFING DATE:** N/A

**PURPOSE:**

To seek Council's endorsement of the high-level scope for the preparation of a Master Plan for the Epping Town Centre.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council approves the high-level scope detailed in this report for the preparation of a master plan for the Epping Town Centre.

**BACKGROUND**

1. At its Meeting on 13 May 2024, Council resolved:
  - a. *That Council note the draft DPOP 2024/25 identifies a project to review the Epping Town Centre laneways.*
  - b. *That Council note the Epping Town Centre has undergone significant change since the introduction of new planning controls by the NSW Government in 2014.*
  - c. *That the CEO develop a high-level scope for the preparation of a master plan for the Epping Town Centre that considers the following:*
    - i. *Laneways, access, and circulation within the precinct, including between Beecroft Road and Rawson Street and consideration of broader connections to public open space and amenity.*
    - ii. *Opportunities to address common issues, such as traffic and accessibility and the interplay with built form and public domain interfaces.*
    - iii. *The potential future role of Council's Rawson Street car park site in achieving Council's objectives and requirements for Epping, such as the provision of affordable housing, commercial uses, community facilities and/or public car parking, and how this sits within the broader town centre context.*
    - iv. *That Officers investigate the potential for the Masterplan to inform a review of the existing planning controls with a view to the scope including costs and programming of the planning controls.*

- d. *That the high-level scope, including cost and timeframe, be provided to Council for its consideration by the end of August 2024.*
2. Council has existing strategic priorities for the Epping Town Centre, including:
    - a. **Parramatta LSPS 2036** – which identifies Epping as one of the two strategic centres in Parramatta LGA and sets priorities and actions for the precinct.
    - b. **Parramatta DCP 2023** – which defines a vision for Epping Town Centre and establishes a set of design controls that guide all developments to align with this vision.
    - c. **Community Infrastructure Strategy 2020** - identifies Epping as one of the 12 high growth areas and focusses on Epping's growing population and recommends social infrastructure for the growing precinct.
  3. In 2017-18, Council undertook the Epping Planning Review project which addressed community concerns raised about the new planning controls for the Epping Town Centre, implemented by the Department of Planning and Environment in March 2014. These concerns included traffic congestion, reduced commercial space, high-density development near heritage areas, and a lack of open space and community facilities. The Epping Planning Review also identified incompatibility between the height and FSR controls in the LEP.
  4. In 2021, Council supported a Council-led planning proposal to facilitate an increased quantum of commercial floor space in Epping. However, the then Department of Planning & Infrastructure did not support the proposal due to traffic impacts from increased floor space.

## **PROPOSED EPPING TOWN CENTRE MASTER PLAN**

5. A Master Plan for Epping Town Centre will seek to improve pedestrian connections and respond to traffic conditions, create vibrant and accessible laneways, and improve access to public open space and amenity.
6. The proposed boundaries for the Epping Town Centre Master Plan are nominated as the 'Master Plan Extent'- refer to Figure 1 below. Recommendations in the Master Plan report will be limited to this area, which is characterised by several large landholdings in single ownership and older buildings which have not been developed to their maximum potential. The urban fabric and public domain are degraded in quality and in need of renewal. These characteristics mean that the area is most suitable for impactful master plan initiatives to guide future development.



**Figure 1: Master Plan Extent**

7. Key components/ deliverables of the Master Plan will include:
  - a. Community consultation
  - b. Epping Town Centre Master Plan
  - c. Epping Town Centre Desktop Transport Review
  - d. Urban Design principles for the potential future role of Council's Rawson Street car park site in achieving Council's objectives and requirements for Epping
  - e. Review of planning controls and recommendations for any future amendments to the planning framework.
8. This Master plan will clearly define a vision for the Epping Town Centre, along with clear mechanisms to achieve that vision. The Master Plan will also ensure strong integration with the planning controls. This will effectively guide future development, including principles for the Rawson Street car park, focused on achieving Council's desired outcomes.
9. The expected benefits of this Master Plan include achieving:
  - a. A cohesive Epping Town Centre
  - b. Improved pedestrian connections
  - c. Urban design principles for the Rawson Street car park site
10. This Master Plan will draw insights from the previous studies of Epping Town Centre, to ensure that the new plan builds upon the knowledge gained from those studies.
11. The proposed process will engage with the Epping community to understand their aspirations for the town centre. This community input will inform the development of the Master plan's vision and urban design principles.
12. The following indicative program lists the main tasks identified in the scope for the master plan.

<b>High Level Scope - Main Tasks</b>	<b>Indicative Completion</b>
<u>Preparation</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Seek technical advice amongst relevant Council officers</li> <li>- Develop a community consultation strategy to incorporate consultation at an early stage of the master planning process.</li> </ul>	September 2024
<u>Precinct Analysis</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Undertake comprehensive analysis of planning controls and policies, previous master plans and supporting reports and undertake detailed precinct analysis.</li> <li>- Summarise into a precinct analysis study with supporting drawings and images to inform the vision for the precinct.</li> </ul>	September – October 2024
<u>Community Engagement Round 1</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conduct preliminary consultation with the community and Epping Ward Councillors to inform the vision and urban design principles for the Epping Town Centre.</li> </ul>	November/December 2024
<u>Vision and Urban Design Principles</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Based on the precinct analysis and community and Epping Ward Councillors feedback, develop a draft vision for the precinct, including urban design principles.</li> <li>- Summarise into key urban design principles with supporting drawings and images to engage with the community and inform the master plan.</li> </ul>	November 2024 - January 2025
<u>Community Engagement Round 2</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conduct a second round of consultation with the community and Epping Ward Councillors to test the draft vision and urban design principles for the Epping Town Centre and request feedback.</li> </ul>	March 2025
<u>Epping Town Centre Desktop Transport Review</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Analysis of existing transport studies.</li> <li>- Consider various transport scenarios in concert with the master plan.</li> </ul>	September 2024 – March 2025
<u>Rawson Street Car Park Site</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Detailed site analysis and review of planning controls.</li> <li>- Develop urban design principles to establish public domain, connections and interfaces within and around the site.</li> <li>- Embed these principles within the master plan to guide interim adjoining development and inform a future detailed master plan for the site.</li> </ul>	February - March 2025
<u>Draft Epping Town Centre Master Plan</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop the draft master plan including all necessary imagery and diagrams to demonstrate desired future built form and public domain outcomes</li> <li>- Through built form testing, identify any LEP controls which are misaligned (height/FSR), and develop recommendations to calibrate these controls in a potential future stage.</li> <li>- Identify objectives and controls to guide interim development and inform potential future DCP amendments.</li> </ul>	February - May 2025
<u>Draft Master Plan Exhibition and Consultation</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consider any changes to the draft Master Plan following exhibition and further community consultation.</li> <li>- Note: Councillors will be briefed prior to seeking Council's endorsement to place the draft Master Plan on exhibition.</li> </ul>	June 2025
<u>Final Master Plan for Council Endorsement</u>	August 2025

## **CONSULTATION & TIMING**

### Stakeholder Consultation

13. The local community will be consulted at key stages of the master plan and during public exhibition prior to finalisation. No stakeholder consultation is required to be undertaken to date.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNCIL**

14. There are no legal implications for Council associated with this report.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNCIL**

15. If Council resolves to approve this report in accordance with the recommendation, the preparation of the master plan would commence. The proposed community engagement and consultation will be arranged by Council officers and funded from the allocated 2024/25 City Planning and Design budget.

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### **ATTACHMENTS:**

There are no attachments for this report.

### **REFERENCE MATERIAL**