

**ITEM 3.6. DRAFT CITY PLAN - ASHMORE URBAN RENEWAL AREA****FILE NO:****MINUTE BY THE LORD MAYOR**To Council:

Council and the Central Sydney Planning Committee endorsed the draft City Plan for public exhibition in September and October 2010. The draft City Plan - the *Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2011* (LEP) and *Sydney Development Control Plan 2010* (DCP) - is a single set of planning controls to guide future development throughout the City.

Before placing the controls on public exhibition, the NSW Department of Planning directed the City to make significant changes to the planning controls for two sites in the Ashmore Estate, a 17 hectare urban renewal site in Erskineville.

Those changes:

- increased the floor space ratio (FSR) from 1.75:1 to 2.75:1;
- increased building heights from 35metres (in three key locations) to 60metres; and
- changed the zoning from B2 Local Centre to B4 Mixed Uses for the lot at 57 Ashmore Street.

I was extremely concerned about the impacts that increased height and density would have on the local area and the process by which the changes were made. This is an example of State intervention in local planning that eroded community confidence in the planning system.

The City allocated significant resources to responsibly plan redevelopment of the Ashmore precinct. The planning controls endorsed by Council were based on the *Erskineville, Alexandria (West) and Newtown (South) Urban Design Study 2009* which involved the local community and addressed *Sustainable Sydney 2030* and the State Government's planning strategies.

I hosted a community briefing at Erskineville Primary School on 29 March 2011 to explain the impacts of the draft controls to the community. It was attended by 360 residents who were justifiably concerned about the changes. The City also extended the public exhibition so that residents could make informed submissions.

We received over 500 submissions from residents raising serious concerns about the changes to the planning controls. The vast majority of submissions objected to:

- height of buildings out of scale with the surrounding area;
- overshadowing impacts on existing residential properties;
- insufficient justification and detail from the landowner;
- traffic and parking impacts;

- lack of adequate infrastructure;
- over-development;
- poor design quality; and
- development that appears to focus on profit rather than sustainable urban design.

The City has assessed those submissions and carried out more technical studies and analysis to understand the impacts of the planning controls.

Because of the extreme level of community concern about the proposed changes, and the way in which those changes were made, it is important to update the community on our progress.

City staff tell me that increasing the floor space ratio above the 1.75:1 endorsed by Council will result in:

- unacceptable traffic impacts on the road network and inadequate public transport services to cater for an increased population;
- high cost of alternative flood management options which limit the redistribution of development floor space; and
- significant urban design issues that cannot be addressed, particularly overshadowing.

***Staff tell me that, following their further work, they consider the original controls approved by Council in September and October 2010 are appropriate for the site.***

The City's investigation into the changed planning controls and the concerns raised by the community has reaffirmed the comprehensive planning work that informed the City Plan proposals for the Ashmore precinct. Thorough, responsible and consultative planning is essential to balance the concerns of local communities with the need for sustainable urban renewal.

Staff are continuing to assess all submissions received on the draft City Plan and are talking further with many individuals and groups to clarify and resolve concerns where possible. When this review is complete, Council will receive for consideration a report on the submissions with a recommendation on adoption of the draft City Plan, including the controls for Ashmore Estate.

## RECOMMENDATION

It is resolved that:

(A) Council note:

- (i) the summary of issues raised in submissions relating to the Ashmore Estate; and
- (ii) City's planners have determined that the original controls approved by Council in 2010 are appropriate for the site; and

- (B) the City's website will be updated with information about the further work undertaken in response to the submissions about the Ashmore Estate.

**COUNCILLOR CLOVER MOORE MP**

Lord Mayor