

**ITEM VICTORIA ROAD URBAN DESIGN REVIEW
EXHIBITION OUTCOMES**

Department Community and Environmental Planning

Author Initials: AW

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Victoria Road Urban Design Review was initiated to identify opportunities to revitalise the Victoria Road Drummoyne shopping strip through improvements to building controls and the public domain.

Following extensive engagement with the community, the Victoria Road Drummoyne Urban Design Review Report (the Report) was prepared. The Report outlines the current context, the process undertaken to prepare the review and the initiatives that Council could implement to improve the quality of development and experience of residents and visitors to Drummoyne.

At the meeting of 17 September 2019, Council resolved that the Report be placed on public exhibition. The Report was exhibited from 1 October 2019 to 29 October 2019 during which time 17 submissions were received.

It is recommended that the outcome of the public exhibition be noted, and that Council resolve to proceed with investigation/implementation of the recommendations of the Review.

STRATEGIC CONNECTION

This report supports YOUR future 2030 Outcome area:

.FF 4.2.1 Provide Strategic and Land Use Planning to ensure the built and natural environment is highly liveable with quality and sustainable development incorporating best practice design.

EGA 3.3.1. Deliver Traffic and Parking infrastructure that supports the use of active and public transport and safe use of roads.

This report also relates to the Canada Bay Local Environmental Plan and the Canada Bay Development Control Plan.

REPORT

Background

A Mayoral Minute was tabled at the Council meeting of 10 July 2018 concerning the revitalisation of Victoria Road, Drummoyne. The Mayoral Minute raised

concerns in relation to parking, traffic congestion and the decline in the appearance and appeal of the shopping strip.

At this meeting, Council resolved, *inter alia*:

3. *THAT the Council commence a process to engage with land owners, residents and business owners to identify the desired future character of the Victoria Road, Drummoyne shopping precinct.*
4. *THAT following consultation, a report be prepared in relation to opportunities to improve planning outcomes and place activation for Victoria Road.*
5. *THAT any recommendations resulting from the investigation be reported back to Council for consideration.*

Council engaged Studio GL to consult with the community and prepare the Urban Design review. Studio GL is a design focused architecture, urban design and strategic planning consultant.

At the Council meeting of 4 December 2018 a Mayoral Minute was tabled concerning parking in the Victoria Road Precinct. The Mayoral Minute was aimed at gaining an understanding of parking demand in the centre, improving parking efficiency, better managing the parking demand and looking to long term solutions for parking supply.

At this meeting, Council resolved:

1. *THAT a parking study be prepared for the Victoria Road centre in Drummoyne, comprising the B4 Mixed Use zone.*
2. *THAT the parking study consider:*
 - (a) *the current supply and demand for public car parking in Drummoyne;*
 - (b) *opportunities for additional car parking and how the available parking can be managed;*
 - (c) *other initiatives that can be implemented to reduce the demand for parking (i.e. encouraging walking, cycling and use of public transport).*
3. *THAT where a demand for additional parking is demonstrated, a strategic business case be prepared to articulate the likely benefits and costs of providing additional parking.*
4. *THAT the study also include discussions with Birkenhead Point to consider opportunities for both parties to implement strategies to improve parking and traffic flow in East Drummoyne.*

An urban design review and parking study were undertaken and presented to the Council meeting of 17 September 2019 where Council resolved:

1. *THAT Council note the outcome of the Victoria Road Urban Design Review.*
2. *THAT the Victoria Road Drummoyne Urban Design Review be placed on public exhibition for a period of 28 days.*
3. *THAT following the public exhibition period, the outcomes of the exhibition be reported back to Council.*
4. *THAT the Drummoyne Commercial Parking Study and Assessment along with the Birkenhead Point Area Parking and Traffic Study and Assessment be noted and the recommendations be further investigated in consultation with stakeholders and then reported back to Council via Traffic Committee where appropriate.*

Study Area

The study area for the Urban Design Review generally follows the boundary of the B4 Mixed Use zone and is depicted in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1: Study area boundary

Public Exhibition

In accordance with the Council resolution of 17 September 2019 the Report was placed on public exhibition from 1 October 2019 to 29 October 2019.

Council received 17 submissions and although a number of the submissions supported many of the recommendations of the Review, a number of concerns were also raised. A summary of all submissions with comments in response to each submission is provided as an attachment to this report. An overview of the primary issues raised in submissions is provided below.

Increase in building height on western side of Victoria Road

The primary issue raised in submissions was in relation to the proposed increase in building height on the western side of Victoria Road.

The Urban Design Review recommends increasing the maximum building height on the western side from 15.0m (4 storeys) to 20.0m (6 storeys) for land on the western side of Victoria Road, between Lyons Road and Church Street.

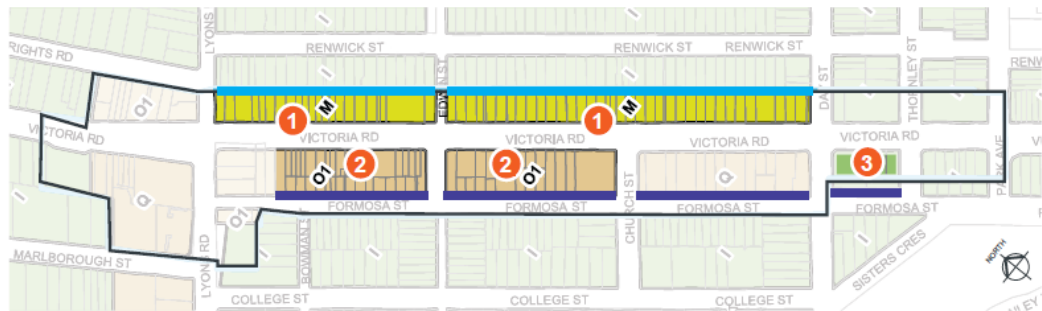


Figure 42 Blocks with proposed amendments to the building height limits

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|---|---|
| <p>1 Recommended reduction of maximum building height to 11m</p> <p>2 Recommended increase of maximum building height to 20m</p> <p>3 Recommended increase of maximum building height to 14m or 20m if amalgamated</p> | <p>█ Recommended 12m deep transition zone with a reduced maximum building height of 8.5m and a 3m landscape buffer</p> <p>█ Recommended 15m deep transition zone with a reduced maximum building height of 8.5m for 6m with 11m for the remainder</p> <p>— Study area boundary</p> |
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It is recommended that Council endorse the proposed increase in height for the following reasons:

- The proposed 20.0m (six storey) height limit is consistent with the maximum height limit of other sites on the western side of Victoria Road – south of Church Street and north of Lyons Road.

A consistent maximum building height along the western side of Victoria Road will facilitate development that follows the topography rather than emphasising taller buildings on the ridges.

- Separation exists between the land fronting Victoria Road and the houses on the western side of Formosa Street, due to the location of Council car parks and the width of Formosa Street.
- Six (6) storey buildings are not proposed across the entirety of the street block extending from Victoria Road to Formosa Street. A height limit of 8.5m for a length of 6m is proposed from the Formosa Street boundary, with a further 9m having a height limit of 11m. This building envelope will enable a sensitive transition to lower scale areas, limit overshadowing and deliver a “human scale” along the Formosa Street frontage.

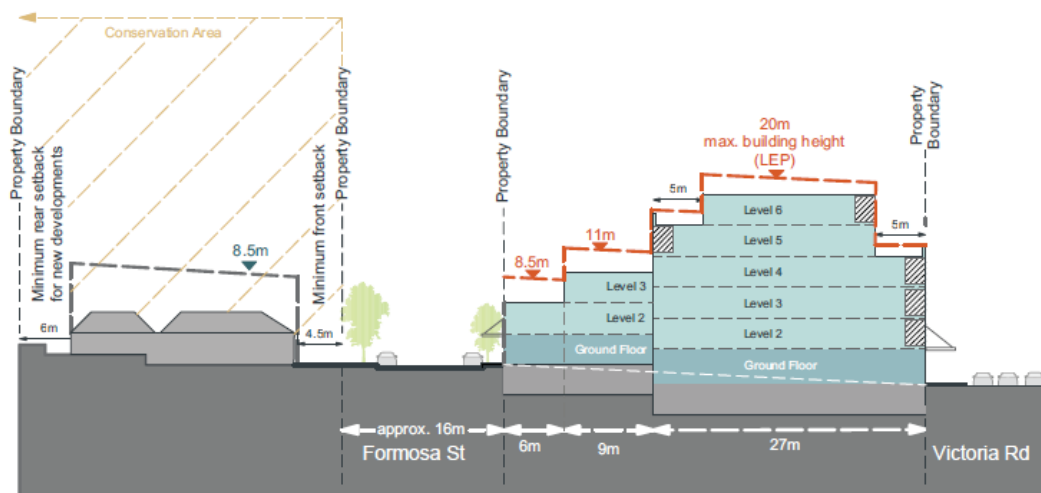


Figure 47 Sectional view showing proposed LEP and DCP maximum building height controls on the western side of Victoria Road

- The bulk and scale of new development is proposed to be further reduced by changing the existing 3.0m upper level set back on the sixth floor on the Victoria Road frontage to 5.0m and applying it to both fifth and sixth levels. It is also proposed to increase the upper level setback on the sixth floor from 3.0m to 5.0m.
- The proposed envelopes will ameliorate impacts in relation to overshadowing and privacy.

Given the context of Victoria Road and the proposed building envelope, it is considered appropriate to proceed with the amendments to the maximum building height for the identified sites. Should Council be of a mind to endorse this aspect of the Review, a Planning Proposal and draft Development Control Plan will be prepared and future consultation undertaken with landowners and the community.

Decrease in building height for certain sites on the eastern side of Victoria Road

An individual submission raised concern in relation to the proposed reduction in building height on the eastern side of Victoria Road and the associated recommendations for transition zones and deep soil areas restricting development potential of the affected properties.

The Review recommends reducing the maximum height of buildings for land on the eastern side of Victoria Road from 12.0m (three storeys) to a maximum height of 11.0m (three storeys). Recommendations were also made to improve deep soil planting at the rear of properties to mitigate privacy impacts as well as through the introduction of balcony and planter box controls.

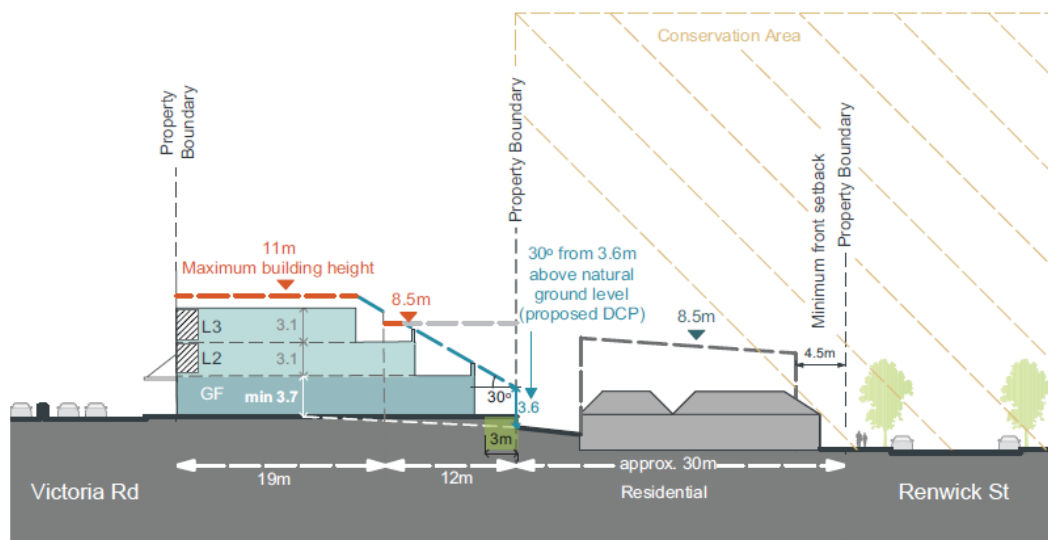


Figure 43 Proposed changes to DCP and LEP maximum building height controls on the eastern side of Victoria Road

This recommendation was informed by extensive engagement throughout the preparation of the Urban Design Review that revealed significant opposition to any increase in building height for land on the eastern side of Victoria Road. The community was particularly concerned about breaches of the existing 12.0 m (three storey) height limit as well as privacy and visual impacts that have occurred following the recent development of land that had occurred on the eastern side of Victoria Road.

It is recommended that Council endorse the proposed building envelope for land on the eastern side of Victoria Road for the following reasons:

- The proposed reduction in height limit from 12.0m to 11.0m does not reduce the total number of storeys that are permitted under the Canada Bay Development Control Plan. Three storey buildings will continue to be possible, however proponents will now be expected to construct three storey buildings as opposed to four storey buildings accompanied by a departure to the height control.
- Properties on the eastern side of Victoria Road are relatively shallow (approximately 31m deep) and back directly onto low density houses within a heritage conservation area.
- The introduction of a 3m rear setback and slight reduction in ground floor and first floor balcony and floor depths will assist in reducing privacy and bulk and scale impacts to the dwellings that back onto these sites.

Should Council be of a mind to endorse this aspect of the Review, a Planning Proposal and draft Development Control Plan will be prepared and future consultation undertaken with landowners and the community.

Potential traffic issues associated with road closures.

A number of submissions were in support of the proposed road closures to facilitate the provision of public open space within the Drummoyne centre. However, there were also submissions concerned about potential short term impacts to businesses during proposed works and long term impacts of increased traffic upon the surrounding street network.

The Review recommended that Council consider new public spaces on Church Street and Formosa Street. These spaces would provide sufficient space for trees, seating, public art and encourage activation and improve the amenity of the area.

Closure of any roads and/or works to the public domain will require careful consideration and planning to ensure that impacts on vehicular and pedestrian movements and amenity is minimised. Should these initiatives proceed, Council will liaise with residents and businesses prior to any construction commencing.

It is recommended that further analysis be undertaken to determine the impact of the proposed public spaces (road closures) on the movement traffic before any decision is made in relation to these initiatives. Should the traffic analysis identify particular concerns, alternative street configurations for the part closure of Church Street and Formosa Street will be investigated and reported back to Council for further consideration.

Increase in parking restriction times.

The Review identified the potential for 2 hour parking restrictions on Renwick Street and Formosa Street between the hours of 8:00am and 8:00pm, Monday to Saturday.

A submission was received in relation to the need for these restrictions and the impact/inconvenience for visitors to residents should restrictions apply to 10:00pm. Whilst the Review advised that an 8:00pm limit may be suitable, this matter would require further discussion with the community and implementation through the parking study and Local Traffic Committee.

Pedestrian/vehicle conflicts and safety.

Specific concern was raised in relation to safety of pedestrians crossing Victoria Road, particularly at the intersection of Lyons Road and Victoria Road. Concern was also raised in relation to conflicts between vehicles turning into Victoria Road from Lyons Road and those wishing to travel across Victoria Road.

The primary recommendation from the Review was to install a pedestrian countdown timer at the intersection of Lyons Rd and Victoria Rd, however it is noted that conflicts also occur at other intersections.

The operation of the traffic lights at intersections along Victoria Road provide an important function for vehicle and pedestrian movements in east Drummoyne.

Whilst Council acknowledges the importance of safe vehicle movements, the traffic lights are under the jurisdiction of Transport for NSW. Council's Traffic Committee will continue to monitor this issue and advocate for improvements to intersections with TfNSW.

Planning Proposal for 53-69 Victoria Road, 45 Day Street and 46 Thornley Street, Drummoyne.

Planning Proposal (PP2016/0002) is currently being assessed by Council. The Planning Proposal relates to 53-69 Victoria Road, 45 Day Street and 46 Thornley Street, Drummoyne. The Proposal seeks to rezone a portion of the site from R2 Low Density Residential to B4 Mixed Use, increase the maximum building height from 8.5m to between 14m and 20m and increase the floor space ratio across the entire site to 2:1 with a bonus to the eastern half of the site capable of achieving 2.5:1 if consolidation of all of the sites is to occur. The Planning Proposal is located within the study area.

One submission was from a resident who raised concerns in relation to the proposed increase in height and the consequential privacy impacts.

Given the height proposed, it is possible that some overlooking may occur from future development on the eastern side of Formosa Street. To minimise potential for overlooking, additional controls may be imposed. It is recommended that Council introduce a requirement for deep planters and solid balustrades at the outer edge of balconies or terraces to the rear of developments on the eastern side of Victoria Road as part of any future DCP for Victoria Road.

Two other submissions were received from the developer and architect for the site. These submissions queried the recommendations of the Review, insofar as they relate to their Planning Proposal and argued that the proposed envelope was excessively elaborate and inflexible.

The matters raised in the submissions have been reviewed by the Urban Designer responsible for the preparation of the Urban Design Review and the following comments were provided:

It is accepted that the steep fall across the site increases the challenge of designing a built form that effectively transitions from taller buildings to the north down to lower building to the south east, south west. This does not mean that future development should ignore the slope of the land as building height is intrinsically linked to the existing ground level.

It is hard to comprehend why a development that responds appropriately to the slope is not possible on this large site.

The ADG identifies that a key consideration for residential apartment development in local centres is the relationship with adjacent low-density residential uses. A breach of the magnitude shown would create an

unbalanced streetscape interface across Formosa Street, between the predominantly one storey existing houses and a 3-4 storey apartment form, which is not desirable nor is it what is envisaged in the current or proposed planning controls.

The additional height controls in the VRUDR have been created to define the scale of the street and step the building down along the sensitive interfaces to the south east and south west.

Extensive community engagement and a review of recent developments as part of the Victoria Road, Drummoyne Urban Design Review highlighted concerns that DCP controls were being overlooked and this was creating poor outcomes for neighbouring dwellings. To address these concerns it has been recommended that height controls at key interfaces are identified in the LEP.

It is agreed that as stated by Bonus the “VRUDR proposed building envelope contains numerous steps.....across the site to accommodate transitions” however it is considered that these controls will be important to ensure that the proposed development is responsive to the topography and local context.

Council’s consultant has not recommended any changes to the Review in response to these two submissions. A full copy of the comments provided by the Council’s Urban Designer are provided as an attachment to this report.

It is important for Council to have a coherent and consistent vision for the Victoria Road shopping strip and this includes land between Thornley and Day Streets on Victoria Road. Once finalised, the Victoria Road Urban Design Review will be used as the framework to guide the preparation of LEPs and DCPs and the assessment of site specific Planning Proposals. The subject Planning Proposal will be reported to Council separately, at which time Council will make a determination of the application.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The Victoria Road Urban Design Review identifies a variety of initiatives that will require funding. These initiatives primarily relate to improvements to the public domain comprising:

- New Street Trees;
- Formosa Street upgrade;
- Victoria Road upgrade;
- Public spaces on Church Street and Formosa Street;
- Smart light poles; and
- Public Art.

Prior to progressing the implementation of the above works, a Public Domain Plan is required. The Public Domain Plan will enable works to be adequately costed and sequenced. The estimated cost of the Public Domain Plan is \$300,000 and may be funded by the Canada Bay 7.11 and 7.12 Development Contributions Plans.

Funding of \$643,591.00 is currently included in the 2019/20 budget for the repair of certain sections of the footpath along and in the immediate vicinity of Victoria Road. It is important to prepare the Public Domain Plan before undertaking significant improvements to the public domain so as to ensure that a coordinated outcome for the corridor is achieved. Where footpaths require immediate maintenance, this funding may be used to undertake priority works to ensure the safety of pedestrians in the short term.

In addition to the Canada Bay 7.11 and 7.12 Development Contribution Plans, it is recommended that Council also investigate whether there is scope to fund the delivery of infrastructure through a base and bonus scheme or similar value capture arrangements. This will involve determining whether new development can make a contribution towards local infrastructure based on the value of new floor space or building height delivered through proposed changes to planning controls.

Conclusion

The Victoria Road Urban Design Review has been informed by extensive consultation with the community and by technical input by the urban design consultant.

Victoria Road is the local centre for the surrounding community, providing convenience retail and local services. The community values the centre for its heritage charm and character and the convenience it provides for access to the city and surrounding areas. However, significant concerns were raised in relation to quality and scale of recent development and the quality of the public domain in and within the immediate vicinity of the Victoria Road.

The Drummoyne Urban Design Review identifies opportunities for improvements to both the public and private domain and initiatives proposed by the Review should be implemented to assist in revitalising the Victoria Road Drummoyne shopping strip.

It is recommended that the Victoria Road Urban Design Review be adopted and work commence on updating the Canada Bay Local Environmental Plan 2013 and Canada Bay Development Control Plan to implement the relevant actions. It is recommended that funding be allocated to enable the preparation of a Public Domain Plan to inform future works in public spaces.

RECOMMENDATION

1. THAT Council note the outcome of the Victoria Road Urban Design Review public exhibition.
2. THAT the Victoria Road Urban Design Review be adopted.
3. THAT a Planning Proposal be prepared to proceed with the LEP modifications recommended by the Victoria Road Urban Design Review and that the Planning Proposal be reported back to Council prior to seeking a Gateway determination.
4. THAT amendments to the Canada Bay Development Control Plan be prepared to implement the recommendations of the Victoria Road Urban Design Review and that the draft Development Control Plan be reported back to Council concurrently with the associated Planning Proposal.
5. THAT the draft Development Control Plan include the following controls:
 - a) deep planters and solid balustrades be required on the outer edge of west facing balconies or terraces for buildings on the western side of Victoria Road and also south facing balconies or terraces for buildings between Victoria Road, Day Street, Thornley Street and Formosa Street, Drummoyne.
 - b) clarify that balconies are to be contained wholly within the proposed building envelopes.
6. THAT a traffic analysis be undertaken for the proposed public spaces on Church Street and Formosa Street to determine:
 - a. the impact on the movement of local traffic arising as a consequence of the new public spaces;
 - b. whether there are alternative street configurations for Church Street and Formosa Street that will improve the pedestrian experience and the public domain whilst also mitigating any identified traffic impacts.
7. THAT \$300,000 be allocated from the Canada Bay 7.11 and 7.12 Development Contributions Plans for the preparation of a Public Domain Plan to inform the upgrade of public spaces identified in the Victoria Road Urban Design Review.
8. THAT investigations be undertaken to determine whether there is scope to fund infrastructure through a base and bonus scheme or similar value capture arrangements when the Planning Proposal is reported to Council for consideration.

Attachments:

1. Victoria Road Urban Design Review Report (*distributed under separate cover*)
2. Victoria Road public exhibition submissions summary (*distributed under separate cover*)
3. Response to submissions Victoria Road Urban Design Review (*distributed under separate cover*)

ATTACHMENT 1 – Victoria Road Urban Design Review Report

(distributed under separate cover)

ATTACHMENT 2 – Victoria Road Public Exhibition Submissions Summary

(distributed under separate cover)

ATTACHMENT 3 – Response to Submissions Victoria Road Urban Design Review

(distributed under separate cover)