

9 December 2025

Mr Chris Eldred
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Housing Delivery Authority SSD Assessments

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RE: Major Projects – SEARs Request – Leppington Civic Centre at 173-183 Rickard Road, Leppington (SSD-99319962)

Reference is made to the above-described Request for SEARs that is currently being considered by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (Department) and the Planning Focus Meeting (PFM) that occurred on Wednesday 3 December 2025.

Below is a summary of the points discussed at the meeting and additional comments that form Camden Council's response to the request for SEARs:

The Proposal

- The subject site is currently zoned B3 Commercial Core and as part of the Leppington Town Centre State Assessed Rezoning Proposal (LTC SARP) the site is proposed to be rezoned MU1 Mixed Use.
- While still being finalised, it is anticipated that the site will be subject to a maximum building height of 96m and a maximum FSR of 5:1 under the LTC SARP.

Concurrent rezoning

- As part of the Scoping Report submitted with the SEARs request the applicant proposes a concurrent rezoning for the following:
 - Rezone the site from B3 Commercial Core to MU1 Mixed Use;
 - Amend the height of buildings development standard from 24m to 96m;
 - Introduce a FSR development standard of 7.47:1; and
 - Incorporate a site specific provision requiring a minimum of 6,500sqm of public open space.
- It is submitted that the proposed rezoning (as described above) should not be considered in isolation and should be considered as part of the finalisation of the LTC SARP (which is due to be completed by March 2026).
- It is noted that when the Housing Delivery Authority considered the SSD EOI request for this site, the members noted that *"the proposal should align or respond to the Leppington Town Centre Review Planning Proposal (PP-2023-284) and that a merit assessment may result in development standards lower than proposed in the EOI application"*.

Transport for NSW

- TfNSW is an adjoining landowner with a commuter car park located to the north of the site.
- As DPHI is aware, an alternative proposal for this site (hotel and shopping centre) has recently been considered by the Land and Environment Court.
- During the consideration of the Appeal, TfNSW raised potential concerns with the impact that the development may have on the operation of the commuter car park.
- TfNSW also raised concern with the conflict that the proposed extension of Byron Road (west of Rickard Road) would have on the existing driveway entrance to the commuter car park.
- To resolve these concerns, the Applicant removed the previously proposed connection of Byron Road (west) to Rickard Road with an alternate access proposed further south (via a service lane).
- This outcome is/was less than desirable and the completion of all public domain works, including the extension of Byron Road (west of Rickard Road), should be completed as part of any proposed development.
- The applicant should consult with TfNSW (early and ongoing) to ensure the Byron Road (west) extension is completed and access to the commuter car park is provided from this new road.
- The road geometry of the Byron Road extension (west of Rickard Road) should also align with the site specific provisions ultimately established in the finalised LTC SARP (to ensure bus access is available to the bus interchange).

Public Open Space

- The Scoping Report proposes to incorporate a site specific provision requiring a minimum of 6,500sqm of public open space.
- It is unclear if this 'public open space' is separate from, and in addition to, the 'communal open space' that must be provided for the development.
- Being an important Civic Centre site, the development should provide the public open space required by the site specific provisions ultimately established in the finalised LTC SARP.

Cumulative impact

- The draft Leppington Town Centre Planning Proposal as exhibited, was justified by a Housing Demand Analysis, which projected demand for around 10,500 dwellings by 2041
- To date the Minister has declared nine projects in the Leppington Town Centre as being State Significant Development. Based on the Scoping Reports, these developments seek to create a combined 6,971 dwellings.
- The cumulative impact that the SSD declared projects may have on the development of the wider town centre must be considered as part of any future application(s) (i.e. provision of sufficient public open space, traffic modelling and operation of intersections, provision of social infrastructure, maintaining sufficient employment opportunities etc.).

Active transport

- A key part of the vision for Leppington Town Centre is that it develops as an active transport-focused precinct that prioritises public transport, cycleways and pedestrian pathways. The focus of 173-183 Rickard Road is to be a collector to facilitate active transport access to Leppington Station. It is not clear how the proposed site plan would facilitate this, particularly as it appears that the proposed Town Centre Street/Linear Plaza has been removed.

- As pointed out above, being an important Civic Centre site, the development should provide the public open spaces required by the site specific provisions ultimately established in the finalised LTC SARP.
- Any EIS should provide detailed analysis of how the site layout will facilitate, encourage and welcome pedestrian and cycling movements to Leppington Station from the east, south and west.

Design Excellence

- The draft Leppington Town Centre Planning Proposal as exhibited includes detailed provisions for Design Excellence.
- Any EIS should include a detailed response to the design excellence provisions detailed in the draft LTC PP and should be considered by the SDRP or the DPHI's internal urban design team.

Shadow diagrams

- The Civic Plaza provided on the subject site provides a critical function as a gathering point, identifying the "heart" of the Leppington Town Centre Precinct, particularly for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users.
- Any EIS should include a detailed shadow analysis (for the winter solstice) that demonstrates how solar access (to at least 50% of the Civic Plaza) will be maintained between 12.00 Midday and 2.00pm.

Public domain strategy

- The applicant has indicated that open spaces may be provided as public open space and/or publicly accessible open space.
- Any EIS should provide a detailed public domain strategy, which explains how publicly accessible open space will be made available to the public, under what conditions (if any) and for what time periods (ideally 24/7, 365 days).

Civic Plaza

- The draft Leppington Town Centre Planning Proposal (as exhibited) envisaged that Civic Plaza should be 70m in width for the entire depth of the subject site.
- The SARP team has proposed that the width of the Plaza be reduced from 70m to 35m.
- It is understood that the applicant is proposing to reduce that width further, to as narrow as 10m (in parts).
- Any EIS should provide a detailed explanation of how the proposed layout for the Civic Plaza meets the design principles for Civic Plaza drafted by the SARP team as part of its finalisation process.

Deep soil

- The draft Leppington Town Centre Planning Proposal as exhibited, envisages significant allocation of deep soil on the subject site, particularly in the areas planned for public open space, to provide for canopy vegetation and to reduce the impacts of the Urban Heat.
- Any EIS should provide a detailed analysis of how the subject site will allow adequate deep soil to support sufficient canopy trees on site so that the subject site can fulfil its function as a gathering point at the heart of the Leppington Town Centre Precinct.



For your consideration and please give me a call (02) 4653 3700 should you require clarification on any of the above-raised points.

Yours sincerely,

Jamie Erken
MANAGER STATUTORY PLANNING

