

Online Webinars – Questions & Answers

This is a summary of questions and answers from our webinar sessions, combined for simplicity and grouped into themes.

Business and Innovation

How do the proposed land uses support innovation and business?

The existing E3 Productivity Support and E2 Commercial Centre zones permit business land uses that support innovation including a mix of specialised industry and commercial floorspace.

The Stage 1 rezoning introduces the MU1 Mixed Use zone to three key sites which enables residential and retail development within the Precinct.

New open space improved public domain areas, walkability, and access to public transport are critical to support the new residential population as well as making the precinct an attractive and desirable location for innovation and business growth.

Through public exhibition, we sought industry feedback on the attractiveness of Macquarie Park for emerging innovative industry uses, the type of floorspace needed for the industries to thrive, and landowner support to deliver these spaces including options to incentivise them.

There is concern from Ryde Council, Macquarie University and MPID business groups that the Build-to-Rent component of this plan will drive a wholesale shift over time from an innovation district to a residential district. Could this aspect be explained in more detail?

Build-to-rent is currently permissible in the E2 Commercial Centre zone, under the State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021 policy which intends to deliver a mixture of uses.

We will continue to review rates of BTR housing being progressed in the Precinct and review the levels of commercial floorspace to support an innovation precinct as part of the Stage 2 rezoning of Macquarie Park.

Data Centres

By which mechanism are data centres going to be prohibited in the E2 zone and is this going to be rolled into the Land Use Table in the Ryde LEP and impact all E2 land in the Ryde LGA, or will it be just confined to just the Stage 1 area?

Data centres are proposed to be prohibited from the E2 Commercial Centre zone across the LGA under the Ryde Local Environmental Plan 2014.

What consultation was undertaken in relation to the proposed E2 zone change to prohibit data centres?

Council and key state agencies were consulted in the preparation of the Stage 1 Rezoning. The proposed prohibition of data centres is proposed based on several factors, including:

- the lack of employment and activity generated by these uses;
- the importance of ensuring the benefit of key transport infrastructure including the metro station and upgrades including cycling and pedestrian facilities can be fully utilised; and
- ensuring that the vision of the Place Strategy and Master Plan can be implemented by ensuring Waterloo Road can become a vibrant centre inviting innovation and collaboration into Macquarie Park.

Following on from the data centre question, edge computing data centres are small data centres that can be found in the basement of mixed-use buildings and could support the vision and realisation of an innovation precinct, especially for users that need secure and high impact computing. Could there be some provisions to allow small scale DCs (as opposed to hyperscale)?

The Explanation of Intended Effect proposes to prohibit data centres from land zoned E2 Commercial Centre to ensure residential and higher activity commercial uses benefit from infrastructure enhancements, amenity, and proximity to transport hubs.

Through the webinar discussion, we welcomed feedback on innovative approaches to data centres as part of any submission. In addition, the Explanation of Intended Effect invited industry feedback on the attractiveness of Macquarie Park for emerging innovative industry uses, the type of floorspace needed for the industries to thrive, and landowner support to deliver these spaces and will review suggestions received through our review of submissions process.

Open Space & Recreation

Will the principle of increased densities and heights surrounding open space come through the Stage 2 rezoning as well?

A critical element of planning for Macquarie Park is the introduction of residential development in areas with access to infrastructure and open space. The Stage 1 rezoning proposal includes new public open space, a fine-grained road network, enhanced amenity and connectivity through improved continuous cycling and pedestrian paths, a large multi-purpose indoor facility for the community and active recreation open space to support the existing and future population of Macquarie Park.

The principle of ensuring high density residential development has access to open space is an important planning consideration for the Stage 2 master plan and rezoning.

The southern most area currently has forested land adjacent to Epping Road. Is there a reason that this can't be left a recreation area?

No change is proposed to the land use zone applying to the forested area referred to and adjacent to Epping Road. However, a landscaped setback in addition to the current forested area is proposed.

Are there any plans for public outdoor and indoor swimming pools?

There are no new swimming pools proposed as part of the Stage 1 rezoning.

Introducing additional people will make the area undesirable and there will be less parkland for people to enjoy and unwind. Have you thought about this?

The Stage 1 master plan seeks to improve placemaking in Macquarie Park by introducing residential density with additional open space connected through a series of pedestrian and cyclist pathways.

The rezoning will deliver 8 hectares of new and improved open space, a large new active recreation park (3.1 hectares on Wicks Road), 2.4 hectares at Shrimptons Parklands, new multi-purpose indoor facility as well as improved pedestrian/cycle pathways.

Timeframes for Rezoning

What is the anticipated timeline for adoption of the 3 neighbourhood plans, and will their implementation overlap with the bringing forward of the next neighbourhood plans - or will they be done one after the other?

Following public exhibition, we will carefully review and consider submissions received as part of any post-exhibition changes to the proposed rezoning package. We will prepare a What We Heard report, outlining feedback received following a review of submissions in Q1 2024. It is anticipated that rezoning for Stage 1 will be finalised by mid-2024. Timing for Stage 2 is set out below.

What is the timing for Stage 2 exhibition?

The Stage 2 neighbourhood master plan and rezoning public exhibition is anticipated by Q3 2024.

Given that AJC has master planned all of Neighbourhood 4, is there is a rationale as to why this is not included in the Stage 1 rezoning? If it can't now be included is there a timeframe for the Stage 2 rezoning to complete the Place Strategy?

The Stage 1 boundary and neighbourhoods were prioritised as enablers to the most place making opportunities, as the area is in the heart of the precinct, connects through to the Herring Road precinct, has the greatest opportunity to catalyse development and provides a significant quantum of open space.

The entirety of Neighbourhood 4 was master planned to ensure the consideration of both sides of Lane Cove Road and the holistic application of development outcomes set out in the Place Strategy.

Transport and Infrastructure

Has there been consideration of road infrastructure, given the increase in people coming into Macquarie Park?

The Transport Study, prepared by Transport for NSW, recommends a multi-modal transport response to Macquarie Park's current and future transport needs.

Proposed development has been strategically located in proximity from the Metro Stations and buses, to make walking, cycling and public transport competitive and attractive travel choices and reduce private vehicle trips.

Assuming carparking for residents will more likely be in basement car parks, are EV charging in basements going to be a safety risk for these large towers?

All developments will have to comply with National Construction Code requirements which have recently been updated to respond to concerns around EV charging safety.

Is there an upgrade planned for the pedestrian/cycle bridge across Epping Road outside the Optus Campus as it is too narrow for shared use?

The active transport bridge across Epping Road outside the Optus Campus has not been identified as requiring an upgrade.

What can be done to alleviate traffic on Lane Cove Road?

A critical element to managing the road network is giving people more choices in how they travel, to make walking, cycling and public transport more attractive by being more convenient and safer.

What EV charging infrastructure will be available?

The NSW Government has recently increased funding for EV charging. The City of Ryde has information on EV charging on its website.

Any impacts on previous rezoning around the Herring Road priority precinct?

There are no changes proposed to the Herring Road Priority Precinct as part of the Stage 1 rezoning.

Housing

Has there been consideration or allowance in planning for hybrid residential/commercial apartments (e.g. a recording studio, production and workspace, equipment storage etc)?

Development in the MU1 zone will require a minimum commercial floor space, which can support the delivery of Single Owner Home Office (SOHO) living – which are effectively home offices. Such

development allows for ground floor commercial with the tenant, landowner or homeowner residing above.

An important focus for the public exhibition was to seek industry feedback on the attractiveness of Macquarie Park for emerging innovative industry uses, including the type of floorspace needed for innovation to thrive and mechanisms required to encourage provision of these spaces. This includes the hybrid residential / commercial apartment typology.

Cultural Interest, Designing with Country

There is a profound history to this place that remains undiscussed, instead of the names of places, before 1788. It is crucial to acknowledge and understand this history, especially through the perspective of the traditional owners who have lived here for generations, rather than relying on the perspectives of those who are not from this land. Could there be more communication of First Nations people?

We worked with design consultants from the indigenous community from in preparing the Macquarie Park Innovation Precinct Place Strategy to embed Country-centred design and an understanding of Wallumattagal Country and heritage of the Darug nation.

Building on that work, we engaged with members of the indigenous community and the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council in developing plans for the Stage 1 rezoning of the Precinct. We undertook a 'Walk on Country' with Darug Elders within this engagement, to provide input into the Stage 1 draft master plan and rezoning package.

Developer Contributions

Proposed changes to developer contributions to cover projects identified in SISA etc - will these funds be administrated by local gov or another mechanism?

The new Housing and Productivity Contribution (HPC) funds will support delivery of regional infrastructure in the Stage 1 Precinct. Development contributions collected towards the Housing and Productivity Contribution fund will be administered by the NSW Government.

Local infrastructure to support the growth of the Stage 1 Precinct will be partly funded through Council's Development Contribution Plan. Development contributions collected through this plan will be administered by Council.

Other

Some of the concerned parties have requested extensions to submission date (which is very tight) and at least one party has secured an extension to February. Will the timeframe be extended for parties on request?

Community and landowner submissions were required to be received within the public exhibition period. Council has been granted an extension of time due to their council meeting schedule not allowing consideration of a staff report during the exhibition.

Will there be a decrease to the property values in the area?

The rezoning proposes improvements to the amenity of Macquarie Park through a series of placemaking opportunities, such a new open space and a community facility. The improvements the proposal presents benefit both new and existing residents.

Could you please discuss Key Site 2? What kind of improvements are planned next to the park – commercial or build-to-rent (BTR)?

The Stage 1 master plan and rezoning package proposes two new streets and a large local park within Key Site 2. Taller building heights and increased densities are proposed to help deliver these public benefits. Both Commercial and Build-to-Rent are permissible.

Who is funding the build-to-rent projects? If those build-to-rent properties are privately owned, will they hold it indefinitely to support the housing shortage? Is there a rental price cap for those build-to-rent properties?

BTR housing is large-scale, purpose-built rental housing that is held in single ownership and professionally managed. These developments are privately funded. The dwellings and common land that comprise the build-to-rent property must be held within a unified ownership structure. In the E2 Commercial Centre zone, BTR housing development cannot be subdivided into separate lots.

Are there any plans to include the residential area between the precinct currently identified for redevelopment and Herring Road where the university borders?

The Herring Road precinct was rezoned in 2015 and there are no further plans currently for this area.

Did the assessment of the demand for commercial space in Macquarie Park cover Grade A commercial only, or did this include demand for alternate developments such as small-scale manufacturing, warehousing, showrooms etc. (e.g. assets that would support startups, scale ups and small-to-medium businesses within an innovation ecosystem)?

Master planning for Stage 1 looked at the various floorspace types and indicated a reduced demand for commercial floorspace across Macquarie Park in the short to medium term.

We are interested to receive feedback on the type of spaces that are wanted to drive innovation or missing in Macquarie Park. The Department has started discussions with Macquarie University. Connect MPID and Investment NSW.

Any development plans to 3 storey old residential building along Cottonwood Crescent, Lachlan Avenue and Peach Tree Road?

The residential buildings along Cottonwood Crescent, Lachlan Avenue and Peach Tree Road are outside the Macquarie Park Innovation Precinct boundary. This area was rezoned as part of the Herring Road precinct.