

Facebook Live Q&A Transcript – Tuesday 5 May 2020

The following is a summary of the questions received and responses provided during the Facebook live Q&A session. Where similar questions are asked requiring the same response, they have not been repeated.

1. ***Where is the removal of the Floor Space Ratio mentioned in these DCP Amendments? What is the current FSR limit for this site and if it isn't mentioned in these Amendments, is this FSR limit not being removed?***

To clarify, the floor space ratios are provided within the Wagga Wagga Local Environmental Plan (Wagga Wagga LEP 2010).

The current floor space ratio for this site is 4:1.

The floor space ratio was proposed to be removed for this site in the original Planning Proposal. Following concerns raised by the community and Councilors this provision was deferred pending the development of site-specific development controls in this Draft Amendment to the Wagga Wagga DCP.

2. ***Where are the jobs being created? What is Council doing to create these extra 8000+ more jobs? What is the expected workforce growth rate at Bomen over this period?***

The NSW Government and Wagga Wagga City Council recognise the importance of employment and investment to facilitate population growth. This is supported by current, planned and future investment in the Bomen Business Park and most notably the Special Activation Precinct (SAP). The Wagga Wagga SAP is a key initiative of the NSW government to recognise the value and importance of Wagga as a regional capital city and to the Riverina region. The Bomen Business Park will provide for employment over the next 30 -40 years of up to 6000 people. Other key employment areas include the health and knowledge precinct and central business district areas that will continue to grow and respond to demand of our changing population and the region and cities requirements.

3. ***Why totally remove the floor space ratio. How will Council assess what the developer puts forward in their Development Application(s) for this site if the floor space ratio is completely removed?***

The floor space ratio is not necessarily the best way to achieve or manage bulk and scale on a site. There are better outcomes that can be created without strict design by numbers approach. If development is reliant on the FSR then poor design responses may be the result. More specific design outcomes, as sought by the proposed DCP amendments will emphasise that the design response needs to focus on the key outcomes. Council will use these controls to assess any future development proposal if the changes are adopted by Council.

4. *Could you possibly take parking underground in a multi-level car park with both private and public parking space?*

Yes, the concept design includes a mix of basement and above ground parking.

5. *How much is this going to cost Council?*

Increased development across the City attracts infrastructure contribution charges which relate to the increased demand from different forms of development. Where there are additional upgrades or specific works required for a development the Council may seek to recover these directly from the developer.

The development may incur additional costs for upgrading of infrastructure for this site and the wider area. Council will seek to recover the costs of upgrades to infrastructure both directly, up front and over a longer period.

6. *If you want it to be part of the CBD then shouldn't it be up with the river side development and other high-rises. Part of the main street. Not drawing people away from the center of wagga?*

This site is an existing mixed-use site, including existing retail and office components. The proposal is not seeking to create a new mixed-use precinct rather it is supporting an improved opportunity and better outcomes for the site.

The site is within walking distance to the CBD and the Health and Knowledge precinct. The increased residential components across the site will provide strong linkages for pedestrians and commuters to both precincts as well as across the wider networks and locations through active travel paths and main road networks. The site is very well located linking back into the basic fabric and network of the city and particularly the spine of the CBD at numerous points.

7. *Will we be seeing solar panels and other environmentally friendly features in the development?*

Environmentally sustainable features are now a minimum standard for most development forms in NSW. This includes multi storey residential development and commercial retail or office space.

Some of the sustainability requirements include options like solar panels, water re-use, energy consumption, sunlight etc.

8. *Is the parking going to be free?*

That detail will come through when the parking and traffic management strategy is developed having specific regard to the final development proposed.

9. ***The developer has already confirmed that the towers would be constructed on a when-needed basis. How will Council ensure this site doesn't become another The Mill site as current sales of high-rise apartments in The Mill site, and other similar sites, have been extremely slow?***

The staging of development and provision of infrastructure and finishes is something that Council can influence and control. However commercial choices about commencement and progression of construction is a separate decision of the proponents. Council will consider potential impacts of development and any staging to minimise negative impacts and protect current and future residents.

10. ***How can Council ensure we do not end up with another example of the current "best practice" seen at the Nexus Building, in Morgan Street, with only 30 car parks provided for 250 staff?***

Council acknowledges that there are concerns as a result of the way parking is being managed on specific sites. Council do not want to repeat issues from the past. We want to make sure the parking that is provided is available for those that need it and this meets the demand of any future development on site. We want to see an active parking strategy that we can assess and determine if it fits our site-specific controls and in return will be able to hold any developer to account for any future parking outcomes on the site.

11. ***Is the Council going to upgrade the roads around the site?***

Consideration will be given to maintenance and upgrades of roads as part of Councils ongoing network and road maintenance program. Specific upgrade works may be identified in response to the submission of a future traffic management strategy.

12. ***How can they provide enough water to support this large development?***

The Riverina Water County Council is the local water supply authority covering the Wagga Wagga area and they have a long-term strategy to ensure that adequate water supply is available to cater for future growth and development of Wagga Wagga. This includes infill development across the City centre and existing urban areas.

13. ***Who determines how tall each building will be and what guarantee do the surrounding residents have that the whole site will not have a height of 32 meters?***

The proposed amendments to the Development Control Plan set out the application of height controls across the site. This includes transition from the center to the edges of the site. When a development application is lodged it will be assessed against those controls. One of the objectives in the controls is that the development must show and demonstrate how it has a consistent relationship with the surrounding area. Council's town planning team will assess what is proposed and determine whether the height being proposed across the site is consistent with the draft controls and the surrounding area.

14. *What controls are being put in place for the medical precinct? Why should this proposal be negatively impacted by vehicles not utilised by tenants of the proposed development?*

Parking in and around the Health and Knowledge Precinct is acknowledged as a concern and this has an impact on the wider area. The requirement for a parking management strategy for any future development on this site will include consideration of the wider area and existing conditions. Council is continuing to work with NSW Health Infrastructure and other major service providers to manage parking across the wider Health and Knowledge precinct.

15. *Why cannot Council ask the developer for the required Parking Strategy and Traffic Impact Assessment now?*

Council has proposed that the details for parking and traffic impacts are best assessed when the final development details and design are known rather than at a concept stage. This will give more authenticity to the traffic and parking assessment and any proposed responses. There may be changes to the design that alter the outcomes and change the impacts which are best assessed when these details are finalised.

16. *Why would Council not accept that 16 meters is an appropriate maximum height of the complete site as it is surrounded by single and two-story buildings and is smack bang in the middle of a residential suburb?*

We have a proponent that is seeking to redevelop the site which comprises almost a whole city block separated from surrounding residential areas by wide streets and setbacks. This provides a significant opportunity that can be better managed as a whole development rather than a piecemeal urban infill approach and therefore warrants specific consideration on its merits.

The height controls can provide adequate design responses and hence the development controls being proposed lend themselves to increasing the height on this site. We want to recognise that there will be changes within the city. There will be changes to the type of housing throughout city, the ageing population, increasing number of single person households as well as key employment areas we will need to provide accommodation for. It is desirable for the City in the medium to long term to have residential accommodation in a central location that is close to the CBD, the health precinct and education facilities.

17. *Why is this needed?*

There is a need to provide more diverse housing choice in the City, in a centralised location that provides greater choice, liveability and meets the needs of a changing population. This will create better outcomes for Council and the community. This also allows the complete site to be developed rather than in a piecemeal approach.