

Item No: C07/19-131

PLANNING APPROACH FOR WOODVILLE ROAD CORRIDOR

Responsible Division: Environment & Planning
Officer: Director Environment & Planning
File Number: S-57-48
Community Strategic Plan Goal: *A resilient built environment*

SUMMARY

The former Parramatta City Council prepared the Draft Woodville Road Planning Strategy in 2015 in response to ongoing community requests to up-zone land along Woodville Road. This strategy was publicly exhibited in early 2016 by the former Parramatta City Council and transferred to Cumberland Council as part of the amalgamation process.

More recently, the Woodville Road corridor has been identified in the *Draft Cumberland 2030: Our Local Strategic Planning Statement* as a strategic corridor to provide land use opportunities for housing and jobs, supported by government investment.

A staged planning approach has been identified to progress land use planning for the Woodville Road corridor, aligned with growth forecasts, market demand and infrastructure requirements. This approach enables Council to progress targeted initiatives in the short term while continuing our longer term strategic planning along the corridor.

Endorsement is sought from Council on targeted changes to planning controls that can be progressed in alignment with the new Cumberland Local Environmental Plan. These include zoning designation for 264 Woodville Road, Merrylands (John Cootes site), and planning controls for existing medium and high density residential development along the Woodville Road corridor.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Endorse the land use planning approach for the Woodville Road corridor; and**
- 2. Endorse that Stage 2 initiatives are included in the preparation of the new Cumberland Local Environmental Plan.**

REPORT

Background

The former Parramatta City Council prepared the Draft Woodville Road Planning Strategy (the Draft Strategy) in 2015 in response to ongoing community requests to up-zone land along Woodville Road. The Draft Strategy (Attachment 1) was publicly exhibited in early 2016 by the former Parramatta City Council. The Draft Strategy was transferred to Cumberland Council in 2016 as part of the amalgamation process.

The Woodville Road corridor is identified in the *Draft Cumberland 2030: Our Local Strategic Planning Statement* as a strategic corridor to provide land use opportunities for housing and jobs, supported by government investment.

Planning Approach

A staged planning approach has been identified to progress land use planning for the Woodville Road corridor, aligned with growth forecasts, market demand and infrastructure requirements. This approach enables Council to progress targeted initiatives in the short term while continuing our longer term strategic planning along the corridor.

Stage 1: Continue with current initiatives

For the initial stage, work will continue on progressing planning proposals along the Woodville Road corridor that have previously been considered by Council. These planning proposals include:

- Planning Proposal for 100 Woodville Road, Granville

Proposal to rezone the site to R3 Medium Density Residential and apply a Floor Space Ratio (FSR) control of 1:1 and a Height of Building control of 12m. The intended outcome of the proposal is to facilitate redevelopment of the existing convent and allow part of the site to be developed for medium density townhouses.

- Planning Proposal for 264 Woodville Road, Merrylands (John Cootes site)

Proposal to rezone the site to B4 Mixed Use; increase the maximum permissible height of buildings to 31 metres or 9 storeys; and increase the FSR to 2.25:1. The intended outcome of the proposal is to facilitate the development of a neighbourhood centre on this site with up to 260 dwellings, 7,750m² of retail and commercial floorspace and a community hub of 600sqm.

Stage 2: Initiatives as part of the new Cumberland Local Environmental Plan

The second stage of land use planning for the Woodville Road corridor is to focus on targeted changes to planning controls that can be progressed within the timeframes of the new Cumberland Local Environmental Plan. These initiatives include:

- Zoning designation for 264 Woodville Road, Merrylands (John Cootes site)

On 20 February 2019, Council resolved to proceed with the proposed B4 Mixed Use zone as discussed above, and to rezone the site to B2 Local Centre and RE1 Public Recreation as part of the preparation of the Cumberland Local Environmental Plan. This zoning designation reflects Council's strategic approach to local centres and objectives of the Central City District Plan.

- Planning controls for existing medium and high density residential development along Woodville Road corridor

There are a number of sites along the Woodville Road Corridor that are zoned R2 Low Density Residential but are already developed as medium or high density residential (Attachment 2). It is recommended that such properties fronting Woodville Road be rezoned to either R3 or R4 to reflect their existing and approved use, with height controls of 11m and Floor Space Ratio controls of 0.7:1 (R3) or 0.8:1 (R4), consistent with similar developments in the area.

Stage 3: Further strategic planning

The third stage is for Council to continue detailed planning for the Woodville Road corridor, align with NSW Government strategies and plans. These include the *Greater Sydney Region Plan*, *Central City District Plan* and *Future Transport 2056*.

Council will also consider future planning proposals along the Woodville Road corridor that align to strategic outcomes identified in *Cumberland 2030: Our Local Strategic Planning Statement*.

Next Steps

Subject to Council endorsement, the targeted initiatives identified in Stage 2 of the land use planning approach for the Woodville Road corridor will be progressed as part of the new Cumberland Local Environmental Plan. There will be an opportunity for further consideration of these initiatives by the Cumberland Local Planning Panel and by the community through the public exhibition of the new Cumberland Local Environmental Plan.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The former Parramatta City Council exhibited the Draft Woodville Road Strategy from 24 February 2016 to 25 March 2016. In response, a total of 25 submissions were received, including three public authority submissions. Five submissions including a petition with 15 signatures expressed strong opposition to the draft strategy. A further 13 landowners expressed support for the draft strategy and requested that their land be included in any future up zoning.

Subject to Council endorsement, targeted land use initiatives identified in Stage 2 of the land use planning approach for the Woodville Road corridor will be placed on public exhibition as part of the new Cumberland Local Environmental Plan.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Policy implications are outlined in the main body of the report.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

There is minimal risk for Council associated with this report, with the recommended staged approach enabling further investigation and consideration by Council.



FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are minimal financial implications for Council associated with this report.

CONCLUSION

This report recommends a staged approach to progress land use planning for the Woodville Road corridor. Endorsement is sought on Stage 2 of the planning approach for targeted changes to planning controls as part of the new Cumberland Local Environmental Plan. Council will also progress further strategic planning for the corridor and consider planning proposals that align to strategic outcomes.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Woodville Road Planning Strategy [↓](#) 
2. Existing Medium and High Density Residential Developments fronting Woodville Road [↓](#) 

**DOCUMENTS
ASSOCIATED WITH
REPORT C07/19-131**

**Attachment 1
Draft Woodville Road Planning
Strategy**



Woodville Road Planning Strategy

Adopted by Parramatta City Council on 23
November 2015

Disclaimer

Please note that this Strategy does not alter or change the zoning or planning controls of any land. Any actions relating to rezoning or changing planning controls put forward in this Strategy need to go through their own statutory amendment process in accordance with the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

Whilst the actions in this Strategy may be used to inform future Planning Proposal in the Woodville Ward of the Parramatta Local Government Area, they will not be used in the assessment of development applications. Development applications should refer to current planning controls or any relevant Planning Proposals which have been the subject of community consultation under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

DRAFT

Contents

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Background
- 3 Strategic Planning Context
- 4 Woodville Road Today
- 5 Strategic Advantages
- 6 Challenges
- 7 The Woodville Road Strategy
- 8 Council's Role in Guiding the Vision
- 9 The Vision & Guiding Principles
- 10 Planning Framework – Key LEP & DCP Controls
- 11 Implementation

1 Introduction

The purpose of this Strategy is to inform a Planning Framework that will promote the revitalisation and renewal of Parramatta's portion of Woodville Road in the current and future development market.

Parramatta's portion of Woodville Road extends for four kilometres from Parramatta Road and the Auto-Alley precinct in the north to the water supply pipeline at Guildford in the south. It is a six lane, 25 metre wide arterial road managed by the New South Wales Roads and Maritime Services. Woodville Road functions as a major north-south connection, servicing 40,000 vehicles per day.

The low amenity generated by the high volume of traffic is a significant challenge in determining the most suitable land use alongside a busy transit corridor. This challenge prompted the zoning pattern to be revised within previous planning frameworks over the past two decades as attempts were made to determine the most suitable type of development for the corridor, and redefine the future strategic direction of Woodville Road.

The different approaches to planning along Woodville Road has resulted in a disjointed streetscape which ranges from established commercial uses, aging single detached dwellings, and newly constructed four-storey mixed use developments and residential flat buildings. Mixed use developments are in various locations on Woodville Road. Their bulk and scale is in excess of other existing development and appear as visually obtrusive infill development. The ground floor commercial and retail premises' have a high vacancy rate suggesting the demand for strip retail and commercial uses in this locality are minimal.

Woodville Road has the opportunity to become a distinct 'Southern Entry' into the Parramatta CBD through the implementation of a new planning framework that considers and is responsive to the corridor's strategic advantages, challenges and opportunities. The implementation of a suite of tailored planning controls informed by an urban design, traffic and economic analysis will ensure a suitable land use and density pattern is introduced that delivers a built form and development outcome that is successful in revitalising the area steadily overtime.

2 Background

In 2014 Parramatta City Council engaged Roberts Day Consultancy to lead a multidisciplinary urban design and planning study of Parramatta's portion of Woodville Road to inform the most appropriate land use pattern for this section of the corridor. The study was in response to Action Priority A5.4 in the Parramatta City Council Corporate Plan 2013/2014 – 2016/2017 which is to review and prepare new planning controls for Woodville Road.

The study aimed to:

- Review the land use pattern & built form
- Conduct a high level traffic and economic analysis
- Identify the strategic advantages, opportunities, constraints, property economics and market conditions
- Recommend development scenarios for the future built form, design and amenity that are feasible in the short and long term market.

A preliminary traffic and economic study was conducted by GTA Traffic Consultants and Hill PDA Economic Consultants to inform the overall study recommendations prepared by Roberts Day Consultancy.

The core recommendations of the study have been considered, refined and formulated into this Strategy.

Study area

The Parramatta portion of Woodville Road extends for four kilometres from the Western Railway line near Parramatta Road to the water supply pipeline at Guildford in the south (refer to Figure 1). Throughout this Strategy, the term 'Woodville Road' is used to describe only the Parramatta portion of the Woodville Road corridor.

Woodville Road in its entirety extends through three Local Government Areas including Parramatta, Fairfield and Bankstown. It begins at the end of Church Street in the Auto Alley Precinct and travels through to the Hume Highway in Liverpool.

The area used for the purposes of the study extends between one and two blocks east and west of Woodville Road and traverses the suburbs of Granville, Merrylands and Guildford. This was to capture an area large enough to conduct a comprehensive review of the corridor, and provide options for an appropriate and complementary transition into the adjoining R2 Low Density Residential zoned neighbourhoods.

The Strategy primarily recommends changes to the planning controls along the properties fronting Woodville Road. However, the broader review enabled by this wider study area allowed Council to identify areas for further detailed investigation to ensure future development is appropriate and complementary to the growth of the existing Village Centres of Guildford and Merrylands and to the recommended higher density along Woodville Road. This will assist in facilitating the sustainable growth of the Woodville Ward within the Parramatta Local Government Area.



Figure 1 – Study Area

3 Strategic Context

Strategic Planning Context

The overarching policy framework for this strategy is informed by the State Government's Metropolitan Plan, *A Plan for Growing Sydney*, released in 2014.

The Plan includes relevant employment and housing targets. The plan sets a target for 664,000 new dwellings by 2031. With regard to jobs targets, the plan indicates Greater Parramatta (which includes Westmead, Camellia, as well as the CBD) has the potential to reach 100,000 jobs over the next twenty years.

The *West Central Draft Subregional Strategy* released in 2007 provided more specific employment and dwelling targets for the region, however recently it has been superseded by sub-regional targets within the Metro Plan. The population of the West Central subregion is projected to grow by more than 478,600 people over the next 20 years generating the need for an additional 183,750 new homes.

The Metropolitan Plan recognises Parramatta as Sydney's Western CBD with the centre identified to provide high density commercial and residential development (to assist with meeting the targets indicated above) in close proximity to transport, services, and recreational facilities to service the population of Greater Western Sydney. The significance of Parramatta provides the adjoining precincts and neighbourhoods with an important role in supporting Parramatta's growth.

One of the Metropolitan Plan's principles in managing Sydney's growth is the importance of increasing housing choice around all centres through urban renewal in established areas. Whilst the Woodville Road corridor is not referenced specifically, the Woodville Road Strategy recognises the potential for the area to provide an increase in housing choice in an infill area in close proximity to the Parramatta CBD and a number of other local centres.

The Woodville Road Strategy is consistent with the key principles of the Metropolitan Plan relating to housing renewal and supply in infill areas, and specifically the following directions:

- Accelerate housing supply across Sydney
- Accelerate urban renewal across Sydney – providing homes closer to jobs
- Improve housing choice to suit different needs and lifestyles
- Revitalise existing suburbs

At a more local level, Council's Community Strategy Plan, *Parramatta 2038 – Community Strategic Plan (2013)* aims to provide 50,000 new jobs in the Parramatta Local Government Area between 2013 and 2038 to support the needs and growth of Western Sydney. The study area therefore has the ability to contribute to housing to support this future employment growth.

The Parramatta City Council Corporate Plan 2013/2014 – 2016/2017 includes a list of principle activities and key actions to be delivered in the financial years listed

above. Under Action 5 Urban Vitality, Priority A5.4 is to review and prepare new planning controls for Woodville Road. The study and strategy is in response to this action priority and was initiated to inform the most appropriate land use pattern for the length of the corridor in Parramatta.

The Woodville Road Strategy recognises Woodville Road's role in supporting Parramatta's growth as Sydney's Western CBD and its potential in transforming into a future inner-city neighbourhood providing dwellings for future workers within Parramatta.

DRAFT

4 Woodville Road Today

... In the Western Sydney Subregion

Woodville Road in its entirety extends for approximately 7.5 kilometres through three Local Government Areas including Parramatta, Fairfield and Bankstown. It begins at the end of Church Street in the Auto Alley Precinct and extends through to the Hume Highway in Liverpool. It is a Classified State Road managed by the Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) carrying approximately 40,000 vehicles a day. The road is a popular route for heavy vehicles transporting goods to and from South-West Sydney.

The corridor is an important north-south connection, providing access from South West Sydney through to the M4 Motorway to travel to Greater Western Sydney, the Sydney CBD, and Sydney Airport. It also provides a connection north through to James Ruse Drive linking parts of the South West to the North West Growth Centre. It will also provide a connection from South West Sydney to the future WestConnex Motorway which will commence at Parramatta Road.

The Woodville Road Strategy carefully considered the corridor's role as a heavy vehicle route and an important north-south connection to other parts of Sydney when devising its recommended planning controls. The RMS has indicated that Woodville Road will continue to operate at its current capacity (if not greater) in the future, with future plans for development along the corridor needing to mitigate the amenity constraints and not interfere with traffic flow. Alternative vehicle access arrangements needed to be considered as part of the Strategy to encourage and facilitate access off local roads where possible, to minimise the interruption of traffic. In addition, consultation with RMS informed the future landscaping controls for the corridor, with street verges needing to remain clear to ensure no interference with traffic lights and signage and minimise safety issues should vehicles leave the road.

... In Parramatta

Parramatta's four kilometre portion of Woodville Road is the main vehicular corridor servicing the existing network of town and village centres within the Woodville Ward of the Parramatta Local Government Area. These are shown in Figure 2 and include Granville Town Centre, Merrylands and Guildford Village Centres, and a number of Local Centres such as Delwood Shopping Centre and Blaxcell Street shops. These centres all have differing characters and provide a range of services to the surrounding predominantly low density residential neighbourhoods.

The Woodville Road Study identified a 'gap' in this established network of centres within the middle of the Parramatta portion of Woodville Road which has been considered in formulating the Strategy. There is a broader precinct bound by the rail line in the north and west, Duck Creek to the East and the water pipeline in the south. Given that all these barriers in the landscape have limited crossings (i.e.

bridges) Woodville Road is a significant north-south spine that many residents within this area use to access other parts of Western Sydney.

Granville Park is a large regional open space located within the Woodville Road Study Area. It is located at the northern end of Woodville Road and provides passive and active recreational opportunities for the wider community.

Whilst there are areas of open space to the east and west of the study area Granville Park is the only significant open space directly accessible from Woodville Road. The central and southern parts of the study area have no open space in close proximity to residents. More than 50% of the properties along the Parramatta portion of Woodville Road are not within walking distance of a park.

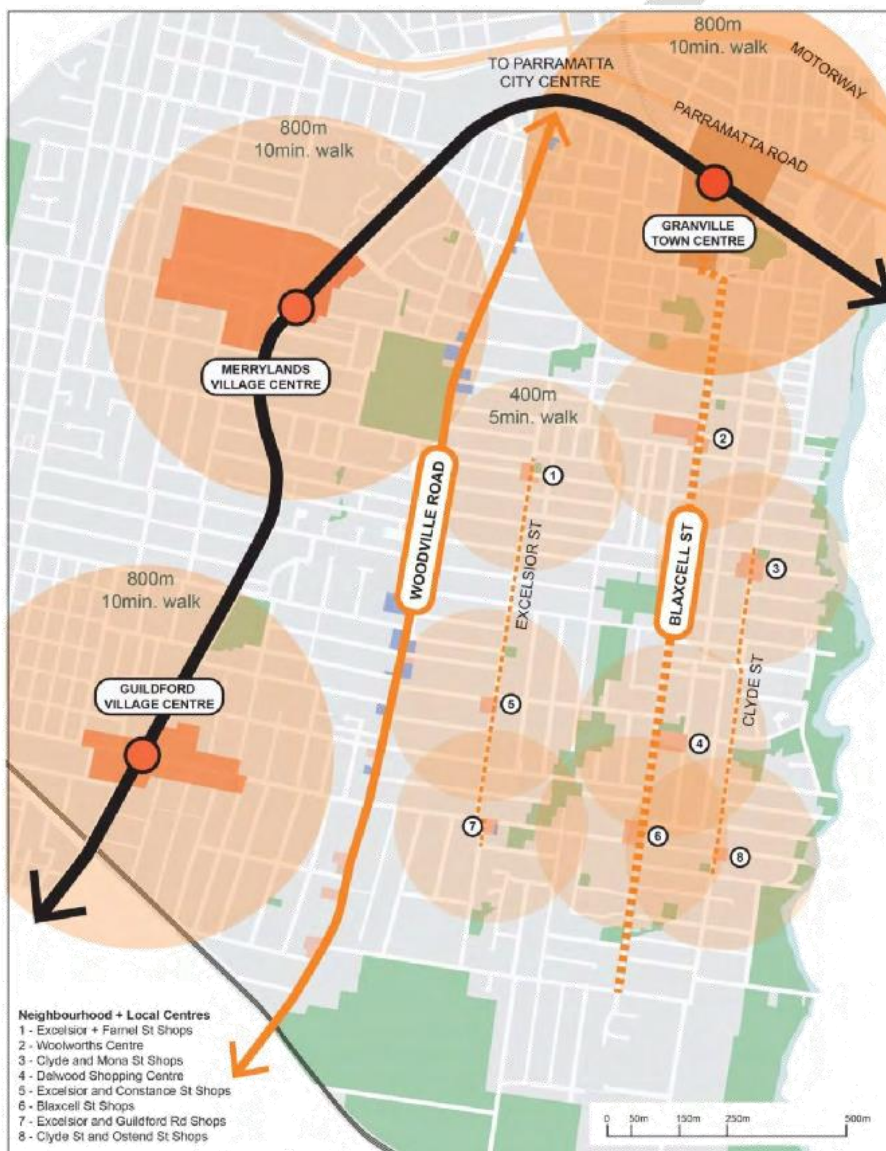


Figure 2 – Woodville Road Existing Neighbourhood Structure

The different approaches to planning in the past have resulted in an inconsistent built form and streetscape along Parramatta's portion of Woodville Road. Prior to the previous Local Environmental Plan - Parramatta LEP 2001 - the majority of the corridor was zoned low density residential (Residential 2(a2)), which resulted in a pattern of low scale detached dwellings. Woodville Road's role as a significant arterial road has made it an attractive location for highway based businesses such as service stations, fast food outlets, car sales yards and other business activities. Many of these remain along Woodville Road with some operating under existing use rights as they are not currently permitted or encouraged.

In 2001, the Woodville Road corridor was rezoned to allow for an increased residential density ('Mixed Use 10' under the PLEP 2001) to stimulate development and revitalise the corridor. However, different land uses were subject to different planning controls resulting in the inconsistent built form, building setback, separation, and streetscape seen along Parramatta's four kilometre stretch of the corridor.

In 2011, the corridor was rezoned back to a low density zoning (R2 Low Density Residential under the PLEP 2011) to provide Council with sufficient time to conduct its planning study to inform a new strategy.

The previous controls have left a legacy of various development types dispersed in an ad-hoc pattern. These are shown in Figure 3 and include:

- Single detached dwellings
- Mixed use developments
- Residential flat buildings
- Multi dwelling housing
- Light industrial uses
- Clusters of older employment/commercial uses including hardware and building supplies and car yards
- Retail showrooms and services
- Vehicular dominated uses such as fast food restaurants and service stations.

The low amenity generated by Woodville Road's function as a major arterial road has resulted in a hostile pedestrian environment with limited pedestrian crossings and low legibility along the corridor. The RMS has guidelines on the location of trees near arterial roads which has resulted in few street trees along the verge contributing to the lack of vegetation along the corridor. The area has limited public transport connectivity. One bus route services commuters along Woodville Road between Parramatta and Bankstown, which operates 7 days a week generally in 30 minute intervals in each direction. As a result existing residents use private vehicles to access their place of work and other services.



Figure 3 – Woodville Road Today

5 Strategic Advantages

Despite the amenity challenges imposed by the traffic along Woodville Road, the Parramatta segment of the corridor benefits from a number of strategic advantages. These have been considered in the formulation of this strategy.

Close to Parramatta CBD

The northern end of Woodville Road is located approximately 1.5 kilometres from Centenary Square, a central reference point within the Parramatta CBD. The beginning of the Woodville Road corridor connects almost directly to the proposed extension of the City Centre within the Parramatta CBD Planning Strategy. This makes it a desirable location to accommodate current and future workers and students who currently commute to Parramatta on a daily basis. As Parramatta continues to grow as Sydney's Western CBD and provide more employment opportunities, Woodville Road becomes a sound location for housing close to employment opportunities.

Proximity to Existing Centres

The suburbs surrounding Parramatta's segment of the Woodville Road corridor contain an established network of Town and Village Centres. This includes Granville Town Centre, Merrylands and Guildford Village Centres, and Local Centres such as Delwood Shopping Centre and Blaxcell Street shops. The corridor is strategically positioned to grow and support the viability of these centres, with future residents on Woodville Road further connecting and reinforcing their role within Parramatta's urban centres hierarchy.

Significant Renewal Opportunities

Significant opportunities exist for redevelopment and renewal along Woodville Road with landowners along the corridor considering changes to their current land use. The owners of the John Cootes Furniture Warehouse site at 264 Woodville Road have indicated to Council their desire to redevelop the site for mixed use development. The site is approximately 2.6ha and is strategically located in the centre of Parramatta's portion of the corridor. The fact that it is a large site under single ownership means there are opportunities to accelerate redevelopment on the corridor that can act as a catalyst for development up and down the corridor.

Ready for Renewal

Woodville Road is ready for renewal. Many of the buildings along the corridor are at the end of their economic lifespan. This coupled with the low quality streetscape and minimal public domain indicates that the area is in need of investment and revitalisation. Whilst there are some pockets of newer development, the current state of aged and low scale development along the corridor increases the likelihood of the Strategy being realised as the majority of the corridor could benefit from redevelopment under the provisions of any new planning framework. The application

of sound urban design principles and some investment in the public domain could deliver a more consistent streetscape and design outcome delivering new dwellings that comply with the Apartment Design Guideline and benefit from a relatively high level of amenity.

Culturally Diverse Community

Woodville Road and its surrounding area is culturally diverse with the top four backgrounds being Lebanese (27.8%), Australian (12.0%), English (9.9%) and Chinese (7.8%). The existing village and local centres provide speciality goods and services to provide for the needs of the community. There is the opportunity for the proposed new centre on Woodville Road and the key intersections of mixed use development to provide a unique cultural offering with goods and services to meet the needs of the community.

DRAFT

6 Challenges

The redevelopment and renewal of Woodville Road is faced with a number of challenges which have been considered in the formulation of the Strategy.

Amenity Constraints

Woodville Road's function as a major arterial road servicing 40,000 vehicles per day generates a high volume of traffic, noise, and pollution. This creates a hostile pedestrian environment and potential residential amenity impacts for the land along Woodville Road.

Limited Legibility and Wayfinding

Woodville Road today appears as one continuous freight route. There are no clear markers or points of identity within the built form which indicate to motorists where they are positioned along the corridor in relation to the broader network of surrounding centres. As a result, motorists are not signalled to the close proximity of Woodville Road to Guildford, Merrylands, and Granville Centres which can all be accessed via key intersections off Woodville Road.

In addition, there is poor pedestrian access along and across Woodville Road, limiting the connectivity and permeability of residents through surrounding streets and suburbs in the area.

Limited Public Transport

The corridor is serviced by limited public transport. Whilst Guildford and Merrylands Stations are located to the west of the corridor, they are not easily accessible from properties along Woodville Road. Most parts of the area considered within the Strategy are not within a 10 minute walk of either station. One bus route runs along Woodville Road between Parramatta and Bankstown which operates 7 days a week generally at 30 minute intervals in each direction.

The public transport limitations of the area are reflected by the journey to work data which shows that 72% of residents within the area commute to work by private vehicle, either as a driver or passenger, while 21% travel by public transport (19% train and 2% bus). The area's low accessibility to public transport is a major challenge that needs to be considered when planning for a change in land use.

Parking and Vehicular Access

Consultation with RMS indicated that Woodville Road will continue to operate at its current capacity (if not greater) in the future. New development needs to be planned as to not interfere with traffic flow. The Strategy proposes mechanisms for new developments to provide access off local streets, with the current road network providing this opportunity due to the number of local streets intersecting Woodville

Road. This should assist in limiting the number of access points onto Woodville Road and in ensuring new developments have a limited impact on traffic flow. This will also assist in improving congestion and pedestrian safety.

In addition, encouraging public transport use through the provision of additional bus services in the interim before the Western Sydney Light Rail project is delivered will assist in reducing the number of residents using Woodville Road to access their place of employment or study.

Current Development Market

The existing development market is currently a major challenge to renewing the corridor. At the time the Study was completed, the Economic Analysis found there has been low market activity. The sales information available at the time indicated that it had been lower than anticipated sales prices. This is attributed to the low amenity of the area and the previous downzoning of the corridor, which halted the development market.

Economic modelling has shown that an increase in FSR and a change in zoning is required to make development feasible in the current market. However this needs to be carefully considered to ensure that appropriate density and built form is provided in the context of a major arterial road.

Existing Development Pattern

The inconsistent development pattern along Parramatta's portion of Woodville Road resulting from the previous planning framework as discussed in Chapter 4 provides an additional challenge in planning for the area. Many of the existing mixed use developments and residential flat buildings built in the last decade that contribute to the ad-hoc development pattern are unlikely to be redeveloped in the immediate future. In addition, there are some remaining development approvals that are yet to be completed, contributing to the inconsistent built form.

The Strategy recommends controls that will deliver development that integrates or 'stitches in' with this existing and evolving development pattern, while delivering an improved design outcome.

Impact on Existing Communities

The previous planning frameworks aimed at stimulating renewal and revitalising the corridor generated concern amongst the community due to the scale of development permitted under the planning controls, and the lack of transition to the existing low density neighbourhoods. Residential flat buildings and mixed used developments with a height of 4-5 storeys are now scattered along the corridor with minimal setbacks to the adjoining single storey residential dwellings.

7 The Woodville Road Strategy: Building on the Strategic Advantages & Responding to the Challenges

After considering the Strategic Advantages (or strengths) and Challenges detailed in the previous Section a series of Strategic Objectives were identified to draw upon the existing advantages already present in the Woodville Road study area whilst responding to the challenges faced in regenerating this corridor.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: Creating a New Neighbourhood Centre

The analysis undertaken as part of the Woodville Road Study suggests there is 'gap' within the walkable catchment of the existing network of centres. This represents an opportunity to create a new centre in the middle of Parramatta's segment of Woodville Road. The provision of a new centre would provide new residents within the area identified in the 'gap' on Woodville Road access to commercial and retail facilities and services within walking distance.

The need for a new neighbourhood centre corresponds with another opportunity identified within the Study. The John Cote Furniture Warehouse (264 Woodville Road, Guildford) is a significant landholding (2.6ha) under a single ownership. The owner has indicated to Council their intention to redevelop which is opportune and timely in formulating this strategy. It provides the opportunity to master plan a significant portion of the corridor to create a new centre without the need for amalgamation, enabling a well-considered and efficient built form outcome. If the creation of a new centre relied on the amalgamation of a significant number of properties in a timely and coordinated way it would be unlikely that a workable and efficient neighbourhood centre would eventuate to deliver the strategic purpose identified.

Strengths Supported:

- *Complements the **existing network of centres** in close proximity to Woodville Road by providing a new neighbourhood centre in the area identified as the 'gap' in retail and commercial services and facilities. This will ensure all residents along Woodville Road have appropriate access to services and facilities.*
- *Appropriately plans for the **redevelopment of a large development site** that is reaching the end of its current economic function and lifespan to be consistent with the strategic needs identified for the corridor.*

Challenges Addressed:

- *Contributes to the improvement of the **amenity, public domain, and pedestrian experience** by introducing a new centre at the middle of the Woodville Road corridor. The new centre with new services and facilities will make Woodville Road a more desirable place to live. The market for unit development along the corridor is uncertain given the current zoning. The*

strategy proposed is to allow unit development on the John Coote site where this form of development is considered most viable to act as a catalyst for redevelopment along the remainder of the corridor.

- *Assists with the improvement of **legibility** along the corridor by introducing a point of identity to deconstruct Woodville Road's current reading as one continuous freight route. The new centre signals to motorists where they are located on the length of the corridor, which should assist with **wayfinding** to the surrounding centres.*

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: Enhancing Connections to Established Centres

There is a well-established grid road network throughout the Woodville Road area that provides access to Guildford and Merrylands Town Centres and the series of smaller local centres east of the corridor. However there is the opportunity to enhance these connections and provide greater legibility to these centres through the design and treatment of the key intersections of Woodville Road and Merrylands Road and Woodville Road and Guildford Road. This will better direct current and future residents to the village centres where a number of services and transport options are available.

The existing village and local centres provide speciality goods and services to provide for the needs of the community. There is the opportunity for the proposed new centre on Woodville Road and the key intersections of mixed use development to provide a unique cultural offering with goods and services to meet the needs of the community.

Strengths Supported:

- *Complements the **existing network of centres** by emphasising linkages to the well-established centres located to the east and west of the corridor through the built form treatment of key interactions.*
- *The promotion of mixed use development at key intersections provides scope for promoting **culturally diverse** goods and services to residents and commuters.*

Challenges Addressed:

- *Improving **legibility and way finding** by creating points of difference (by promoting higher buildings and retail at ground level) to signal the connection of these key intersections to village and local centres to the east and west of the corridor.*

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: Design Quality

There is the opportunity to improve the design, amenity and pedestrian experience along Woodville Road. The formulation of the Strategy enabled an appropriate level of site analysis and testing to be conducted by Council to inform a suite of planning controls that will deliver suitable building envelopes that comply with the Apartment

Design Guidelines, integrate with the new and existing developments, allow for a better transition into the existing low density neighbourhood, and address the amenity constraints.

New design controls have been formulated that provide for an improved level of amenity, a more attractive streetscape, and appropriately landscaped setbacks between neighbouring properties. These amenity improvements will increase the viability of redevelopment along the corridor, and assist in stimulating the development market. It will also allow for more appropriate transitions to adjoining properties to the east and west and assist in stitching together the existing diverse character and streetscape along Woodville Road.

The height of the proposed development is the same as the mixed development previously permitted under the Mixed Use 10 zoning under Parramatta LEP 2001. As discussed in Chapter 4 local residents were concerned about the impact of the mixed use development permitted under the Mixed Use 10 zoning which resulted in Council downzoning the corridor to allow time for the redevelopment options to be reconsidered. However, there are some significant differences between the controls being considered as part of this strategy and those previously in place to ensure the previous concerns are addressed. These include:-

- The previous controls strongly encouraged shops on ground level, which limited the opportunity to minimise footprints of the buildings. The proposed development along the greater majority of the corridor in this strategy is to only permit residential which allows for a greater setback at ground level and less impact in terms of parking and loading/unloading zones than shops
- The proposed controls will require the fifth level to be setback so that it will not be visually prominent from the adjoining property so the development will appear of a four storey scale
- There will be provision for a minimum 8m setback (which is 2m greater than what would be permitted under the Apartment Building Design Code) between any apartment building and the rear boundary to ensure sufficient space for landscaping to soften the impact on any apartment building development.

It is considered that the urban design controls proposed in this strategy provide a balance between allowing sufficient development to promote regeneration of sites along the corridor whilst still maintaining appropriate levels of resident amenity.

Strengths Supported:

- *Provides planning controls that will encourage the integrated and well-designed renewal of a large number of sites along Woodville Road which have reached the end of their economic lifespan. The redevelopment of these sites which are **ready for renewal** increases the likelihood of the design vision being achieved as they will collectively be redeveloped under the same planning framework which emphasises design quality.*

Challenges Addressed:

- *Provides appropriate planning controls to mitigate the **low amenity** (generated by the noise and pollution associated with traffic on Woodville Road) and improve the quality of the streetscape.*

- *Assists in stimulating the **suppressed development market** by offering a higher-quality product which in turn will make redevelopment of the corridor more feasible.*
- *Manages the impact of new development on **existing communities** by facilitating well-designed building envelopes that deliver appropriate setbacks and transition in built form to the adjoining low density neighbourhoods.*

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4: Provide New Housing

The Metropolitan Plan for Sydney emphasises the importance of increasing housing supply and choice around all centres through urban renewal in established areas to accommodate for a range of households. The Economic Analysis conducted as part of the Study determined that only 8.2% of dwellings in the area are classified as high density compared to the Greater Sydney average of 20.7%.

There is the opportunity along Woodville Road to provide an increase in housing and choice in an infill area in close proximity to the Parramatta City Centre and a number of other local centres. A change in land use and density will facilitate the creation of Parramatta's future inner city neighbourhoods, co-locating employment and housing. In addition, the Strategy presents the opportunity to improve housing choice to suit different needs and lifestyles, and revitalise existing suburbs.

Strengths Supported:

- *Provides new housing **close to the Parramatta CBD** supporting its growth as Australia's next great city, Sydney's Western CBD, and prominent regional centre in Western Sydney. New dwellings will assist Council in reaching the dwelling targets stipulated within the Metropolitan Plan for Sydney.*

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5: Managing Woodville Road as a Key Transport Route

Woodville Road is located in close proximity to the M4, Parramatta Road, and the South-West Railway line. This provides scope to improve the corridor's connection to these key transport routes for residents to access the Parramatta CBD, Western Sydney and the Sydney CBD through both public and private transport.

Future development along Woodville Road must not impede on traffic flow, with Woodville Road set to function at its current capacity of 40,000 vehicles per day (if not greater). Planning and design measures must be introduced to ensure traffic flow continues as efficiently as possible. Alternative vehicle access arrangements need to be considered as part of the Strategy to encourage and facilitate access off local roads where possible in order to minimise the interruption of traffic. In addition, encouraging lot consolidation will reduce the number of driveways requiring access into the existing road network.

Locating density in appropriate locations and promoting other measures (such as identifying road widening along Woodville Road at bus stops to ensure they work

safely and efficiently without impacting on the flow of traffic) are opportunities to promote higher frequency bus routes along the corridor as well as between the network of centres. In addition, an increase in density along Woodville Road provides sufficient justification to the State Government for the provision of additional bus services to cater for the needs of future residents and to increase public transport connectivity within the area.

At the time of formulation of this Strategy no announcement had been made on a preferred route for the Western Sydney Light Rail network. One of the four options being considered was a connection from Parramatta to Bankstown, with a route likely to run parallel to and in close proximity to Woodville Road. Whilst this option is not Council's preferred option for the initial stages of the proposed light rail network the development of Woodville Road should still recognise the potential for a light rail network to be constructed between Parramatta and Bankstown in the longer term. The promotion of short terms improvements (as discussed above) to bus services along Woodville Road and east west connections are measures that promote integration of future bus and light rail services in the future.

Strengths Supported:

- *Improves public transport connectivity for future residents along Woodville Road and within the surrounding neighbourhoods supporting the **growth of the Parramatta CBD**.*

Challenges Addressed:

- *Addresses the **limited public transport** servicing the area by planning for light rail and additional bus routes to increase connectivity.*
- *Assists in managing traffic congestion and flow through the provision of controls that address the **parking and vehicular access** constraints imposed by Woodville Road's function as a major arterial road. The promotion of lot consolidation and the encouragement of access off local roads will minimise the number of driveways accessing directly onto Woodville Road.*
- *Assists in stimulating the **suppressed development market** by making higher density development more feasible due to the improved connectivity and accessibility offered by public transport improvements.*

DEVELOPING A PROPOSED NEIGHBOURHOOD STRUCTURE PLAN

Section 1 discusses the planning controls that have been applied under different planning frameworks in the past as Council attempted to redefine the future strategic direction of Parramatta's portion of Woodville Road. The key learnings from the previous attempt to revitalise Woodville Road as a Mixed Use Corridor under the PLEP 2001, and the Strategic Objectives discussed above are key in formulating a Draft Vision for the corridor. Consideration of these factors will assist in the successful implementation of the Strategy as the recommended planning controls were formulated using an evidence based approach. This will increase the likelihood of their realisation along the length of the corridor.

Three potential Urban Structure Plans were considered as part of the Woodville Road Study. This was to determine the most appropriate and suitable approach to achieving the Strategic Objectives which are key to the effective renewal of Woodville Road.



Urban Structure Plan 1 - Mixed Use Corridor

- Consistent mixed use zoning to permit a range of commercial, retail, and residential land uses

Advantages

- Broad 'all-encompassing' zoning allows market flexibility

Disadvantages

- Mixed use previously trialled under PLEP 2001 and not successful in stimulating renewal.
- Market not receptive to strip retailing, with ground floor retail tenancies remaining vacant
- Uniform approach does not facilitate variation in built form, provide legibility or points of identity along the corridor.



Urban Structure Plan 2 - Multiple Centres or Nodes along the corridor

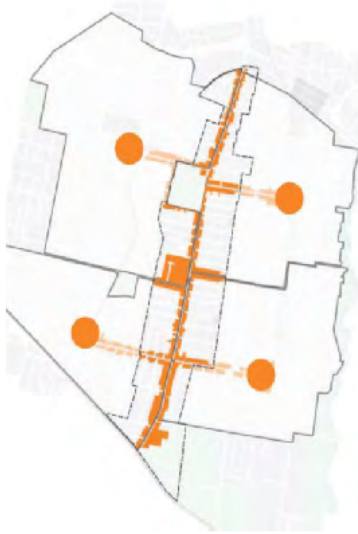
- Multiple new centres resulting in higher density mixed use development at multiple nodes.

Advantages

- Creation of points of identity/legibility along the corridor

Disadvantages

- New centres would be in addition to the existing network of centres, making the commercial viability of the new centres low.
- The low amenity and the access and parking constraints reduce the viability of the growth of multiple centres in such close proximity.



Urban Structure Plan 3 – Supporting the existing network of centres

- Support the growth of the existing network of centres surrounding Woodville Road

Advantages

- Maintains retail and commercial viability of existing centres
- High density residential development along the corridor will support the function of the existing centres
- Mixed use development at key intersections will assist in increase legibility and connectivity to existing centres
- Opportunity to create new centre to fill the ‘gap’ in the walkable catchments and to stimulate investment

Disadvantages

- Potential for high density development to be unsympathetic to adjoining low density neighbourhoods.
- Traffic and access limitations for new developments.

The key objective of the draft Strategy is to deliver land uses and a built form that complements the well-established network of town, village, and local centres that surround Woodville Road. *Urban Structure Plan 3 – Supporting the Existing Network of Centres* evolved into the proposed neighbourhood structure indicated in Figure 4:

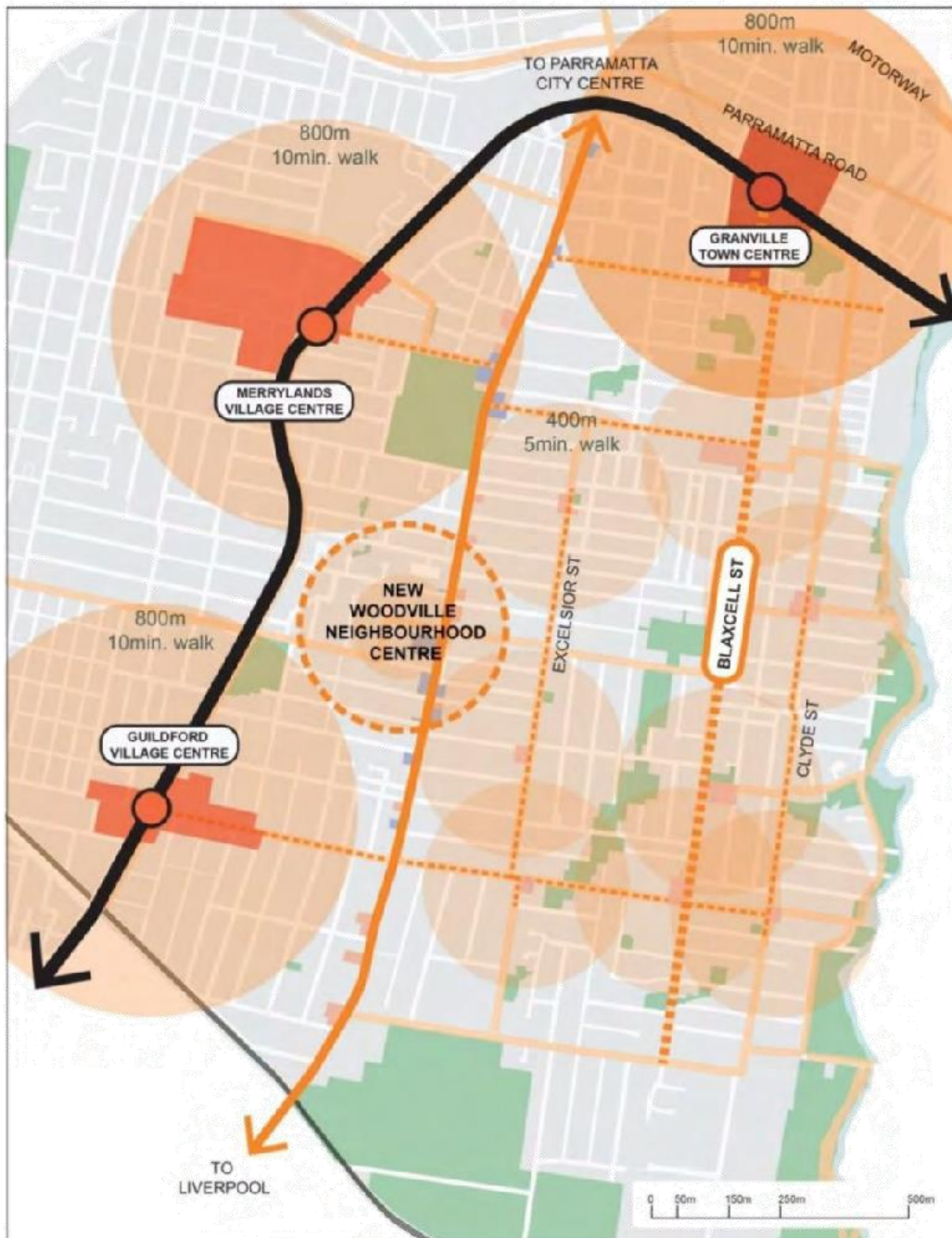


Figure 4 - Proposed Neighbourhood Structure

8 Timing for Implementation of the Strategy

Consultation with Council has occurred as part of the strategy preparation process. A series of workshops involving all Councillors and smaller working group meetings involving Ward Councillors plus other interested Councillors have been held to allow suggestions from Councillors to be incorporated into the Strategy.

The vision and strategic direction of the Woodville Road Planning Strategy has evolved as a result of consultation within Council. Section 1 explains how a broader study area was adopted to capture an area large enough to conduct a comprehensive review of the Woodville Road corridor, and provide options for an appropriate transition into the adjoining R2 Low Density Residential neighbourhoods.

Feedback received from Councillors was that consideration should be given to allowing the strategy to evolve over time.

Urban Structure Plan 3 – Supporting the Existing Network of Centres, discussed above sets a longer term vision that would see redevelopment along the Woodville Road corridor together with redevelopment of sites along key strategic corridors to the east and west.

Feedback from Councillors was, given the problems with the planning controls in the past, that redevelopment of the Woodville Road Corridor (in accordance *Urban Structure Plan 2 - Multiple Centres or Nodes Along the Corridor*) should be the first priority and that Council could then evaluate the redevelopment outcomes before deciding to proceed with the wider Strategy (in accordance with *Urban Structure Plan 3*) once the effectiveness of the Strategy in regenerating Woodville Road can be assessed.

The acknowledged advantage of this approach is that it will allow Council to monitor the effect of the new urban design controls proposed along the Woodville Road corridor before they are rolled out in other areas. For this reason the Strategy recommends changes to the planning controls along the properties fronting Woodville Road, with variation to the built form concentrated in three points:

- The intersection of Woodville Road and Merrylands Road to create a node of mixed use development.
- The John Cootes Furniture Warehouse site at 264 Woodville Road, Guildford for the creation of a new neighbourhood centre.
- The intersection of Woodville Road and Guildford Road to create a node of mixed use development.

This approach will assist in facilitating the sustained and progression renewal of the Woodville Ward by ensuring future development is appropriate and complementary to the higher density proposed for the properties fronting Woodville Road within this Strategy, and to the growth Guildford and Merrylands Centres.

9 The Vision & Guiding Principles

“Provide renewal opportunities that improve the amenity of the Woodville Road Corridor and provide development that is complementary to the growth of the existing network of centres”



Guiding Principles

The strategy will achieve this vision through the application of the following guiding principles, which are shown in Figure 5:

New Neighbourhood Centre

Create a **New Neighbourhood Centre** and place of activity and services for new residents along Woodville Road not within the walkable catchment around the existing centres. The centre will help stimulate the market in the short term and facilitate the progressive renewal of the corridor in the long term.

Improve Amenity

Improve the amenity of the public domain through the **Greening of Woodville Road**. Large landscaped setbacks with appropriate trees and vegetation are to be introduced to mitigate the pollution and noise generated by the traffic along Woodville Road, and contribute to a sense of place and identity.

Sustainable and Long Term approach

Create **Sustainable Neighbourhoods** that provide the urban structure, built form and capability to support an increase in density over time which eventually could be serviced by rapid bus or light rail transit. In the meantime, provide pedestrian and

cycle pathways to connect residents to centres and focal points of activity along the corridor.

Identity

Introduce mixed use development in strategic locations and intersections to **Improve Legibility and Way Finding** along the Woodville Road corridor.

Site Consolidation

Encourage **Site Consolidation** to promote the efficient use of land, achieve suitable site access, and achieve best practice built form outcomes.

Sensitive Transition

Provide controls that enable the **sensitive transition of new development to the existing neighbourhoods** by providing appropriate building envelopes with generous setbacks and landscaping. This will ensure the concerns relating to bulk and scale expressed by the community under the previous planning framework are addressed.

Improved Housing Choice

Provide additional housing and a range of residential built forms, including Residential Flat Buildings in an infill area in close proximity to the Parramatta City Centre and a number of other local centres, co-locating employment and housing.



Figure 5 – Woodville Road Planning Strategy Guiding Principles

10 Planning Framework – Key LEP Controls

The recommended planning framework has been informed by the vision and guiding principles. A tailored approach has been adopted in formulating the draft planning controls, with Parramatta's portion of Woodville Road being split into three precincts:

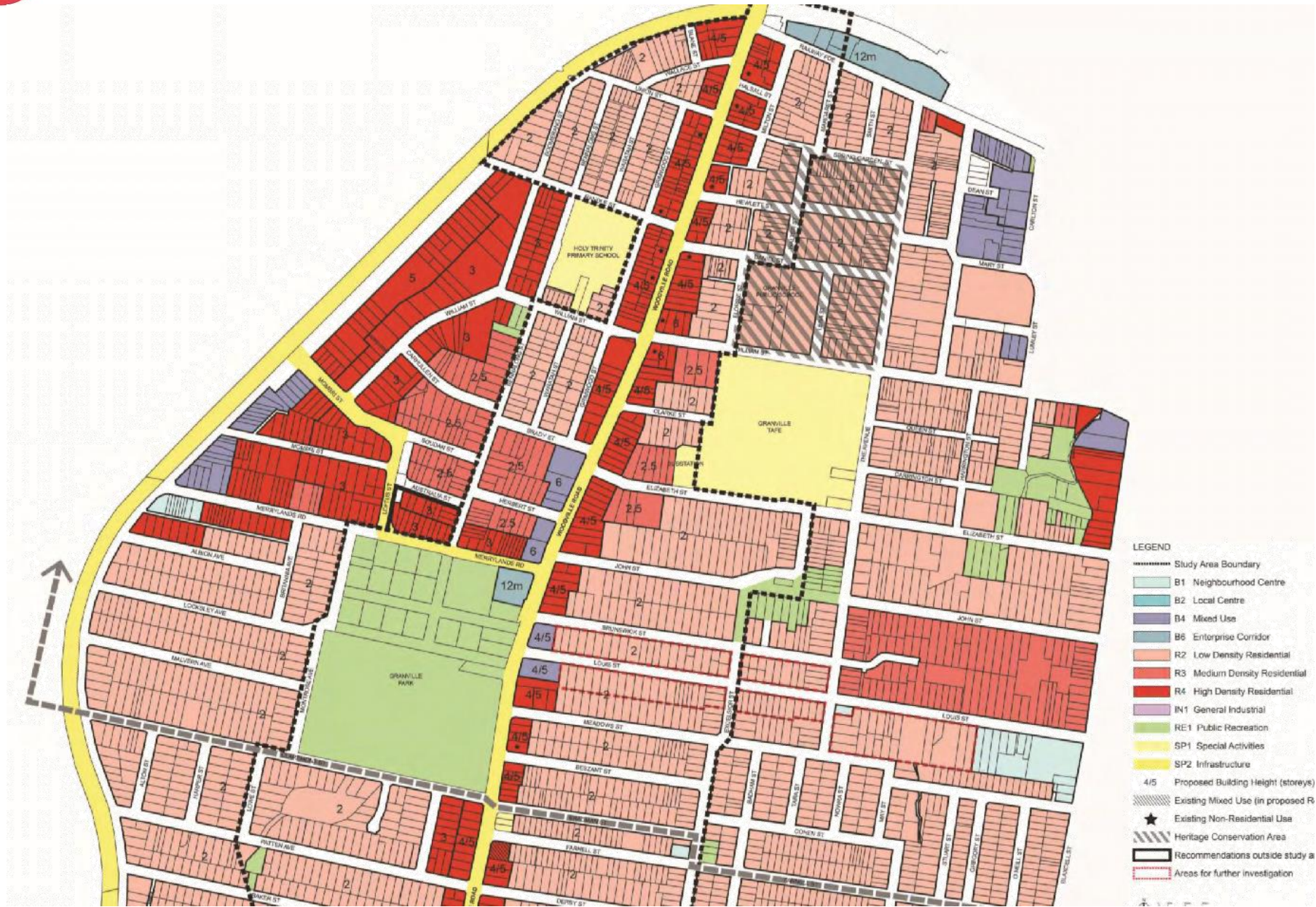
- Woodville North
- Woodville Centre
- Woodville South.

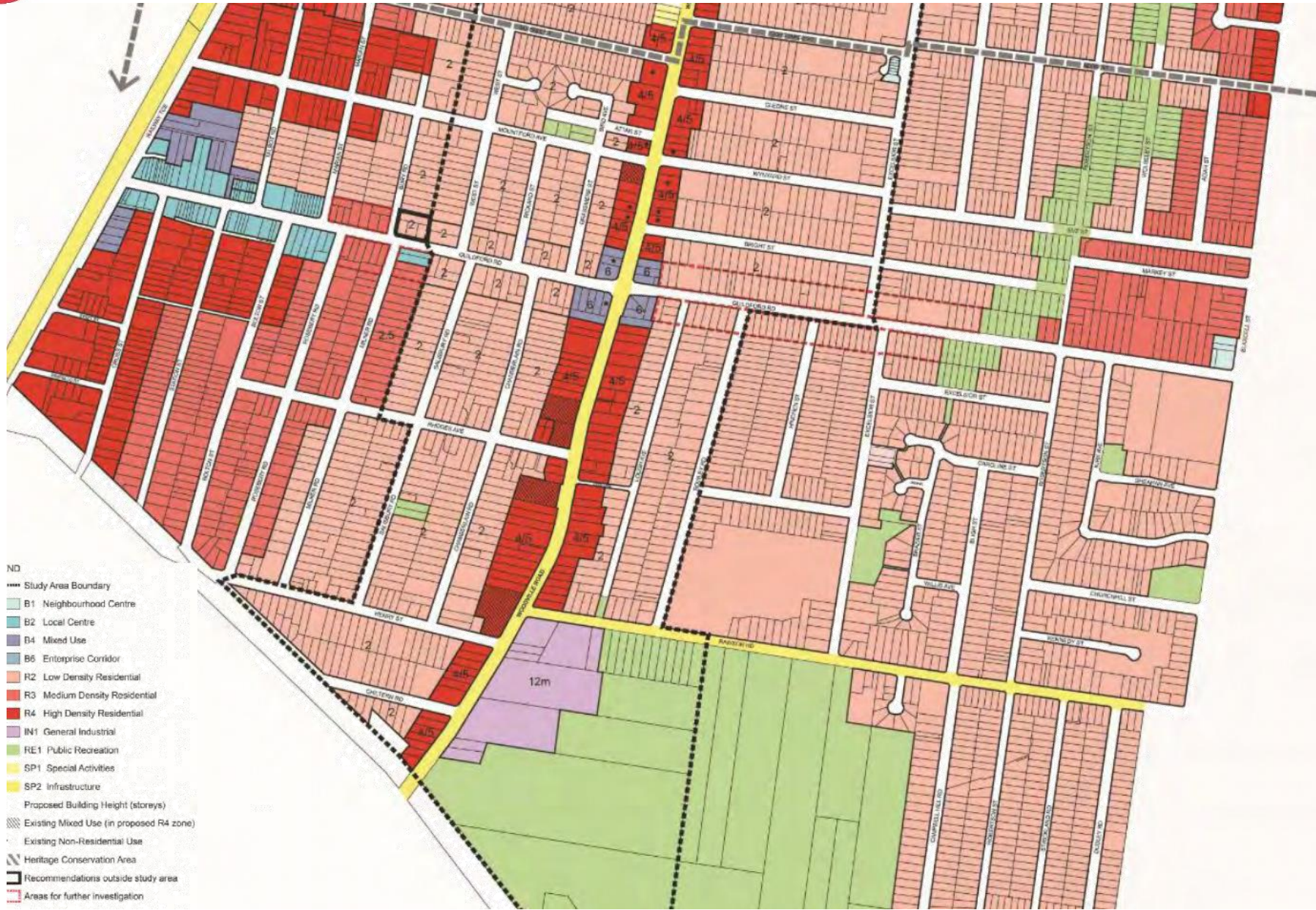
The draft built form maps on Pages 33, 34, and 35 show the recommended zoning and height (in storeys) for each precinct. The table below summarises the key sets of zoning and density controls shown on the built form maps:

Location	Zoning	FSR	Height
Majority of properties fronting Woodville Road	R4 High Density Residential	1.4:1	4-5 Storeys
Key nodes: Intersection of Merrylands & Woodville Road Intersection of Guildford & Woodville Road	B4 Mixed Use	1.5:1	6 Storeys
Neighbourhood Centre (John Cootes Furniture Warehouse Site)	B4 Mixed Use	2.25:1	3-9 Storeys

The draft planning controls have been devised in response to each precinct's current development pattern, lot configuration, road access, market constraints, and the built form and design considerations of the guiding principles. This tailored approach will contribute to the viability of the recommendations and provide a practical approach to managing new development. These controls will be supported by detailed DCP controls (discussed in more detail in subsequent sections) in particular setbacks that will seek to provide separation between new apartment buildings and adjoining single dwellings to address issues that previously arose when significant redevelopment of Woodville Road properties was permitted.

The controls will be subject to further refinement following community feedback received during the recommended public consultation period of the Strategy. The recommended controls within the built form maps will be used to inform the zoning, height and FSR maps within the Parramatta LEP 2011 as part of the Planning Proposal process, which is explained in further detail in Section 11.





Planning Framework – Key DCP Controls

The Woodville Road Development Control Plan to be inserted into the PLEP 2011 will be prepared for the length of the corridor to guide development in line with Council's vision for Parramatta's portion of Woodville Road and the built form indicated within the maps on Pages 30, 31, and 32.

A series of building envelopes were modelled to determine the most appropriate built form for the land fronting Woodville Road, which is recommended to be rezoned to R4 High Density Residential. This is to manage the transition of new development to the adjoining lower density neighbourhoods; and to address the Strategic Objectives of the Draft Strategy (such as managing amenity issues).

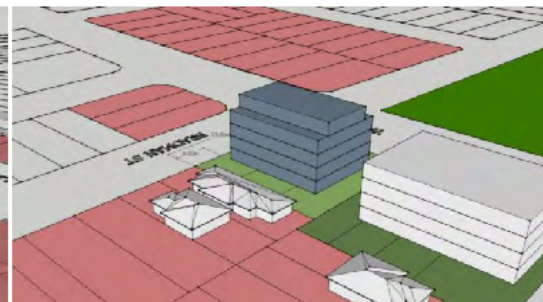
The two most common lot configurations (deep and shallow lots) were used to test how the planning controls would translate to a building envelope on the differing lot depths along Woodville Road.

The following building envelopes are recommended for sites zoned R4 High Density Residential:

Deep Lots (45m) fronting Woodville Road



Shallow Lots (33m) fronting Woodville Road



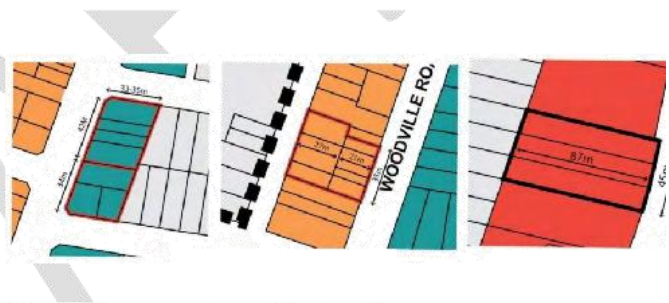
**Note: the indicative building envelopes will be subject to lot consolidation*

Under this option all properties will be subject to:

- FSR of 1.4:1
- Building height of predominantly 4 storeys, with a 5th storey orientated along Woodville Road and setback back further from the rear of the building envelope enabling a more effective transition to the adjoining properties.
- Front setback of 6.5 metre to manage amenity constraints
- Rear setback of 8 metres to enable a transition to adjoining properties



The DCP for Woodville Road will introduce controls that require site consolidation to encourage development that has direct access to local streets to limit the number of vehicular access points onto Woodville Road. This will be achieved by implementing a minimum site frontage requirement. Figure 6 provides details of what Minimum Site Frontage requirements will be required in different parts of the corridor. The proposed Minimum Site Frontage required to develop along the length of the corridor has been carefully devised to provide a site area sufficient to deliver a well-designed building that can be accessed from a side street rather than directly from Woodville Road. This will assist in preventing new development interfering with the function of Woodville Road as a major arterial road.



Legend (all dimensions shown are minimum requirements)





-  WOODVILLE NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE - REFER TO SITE SPECIFIC D
-  MIN. 30m SITE FRONTAGE (after amalgamation)
-  MIN. 30m SITE FRONTAGE W/ REAR STREET ACCESS (after amalgamation)
-  MIN 45m SITE FRONTAGE (after amalgamation)

figure 6 – Proposed Minimum Site Frontage Controls

In addition, controls will be drafted relating to the introduction of rear laneways in locations where site consolidation might create sites with no frontage to a local street.

The proposed neighbourhood centre at the John Cootes Furniture Warehouse Site will be subject to its own Site Specific DCP which apportions density and height across the site to ensure there is an appropriate transition to the surrounding neighbourhoods.

DRAFT

11 Implementation

The Strategy will inform changes to the Parramatta Local Environmental Plan 2011 (Parramatta LEP 2011) through the Planning Proposal process required under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. It will also inform associated changes to the Parramatta Development Control Plan 2011.

The following steps will need to be undertaken by Council prior to Development Applications being determined:

- Exhibition of this Strategy followed by consideration of the issues raised during the exhibition by Council. At this time Council would determine exactly which controls it would like to see implemented to guide future redevelopment of sites along Woodville Road.
- A Planning Proposal would need to be prepared to allow Council's proposed controls to be incorporated into the Parramatta LEP 2011. The Planning Proposal Process requires:-
 - Council's decision to be endorsed by the Department of Planning (i.e. A Gateway Determination needs to be issued).
 - A further consultation process where the community as well as State Agencies such as the Roads and Maritime Service could again provide feedback
 - Council to consider the submissions received and to send the final Planning Proposal to the Department of Planning so the new controls zoning FSR and height controls would legally come into force.
- It is anticipated that the amendments to the Draft DCP would also be endorsed by Council and that the Draft DCP controls would be exhibited at the same time as the Planning Proposal.

It is anticipated that this process would progress throughout 2016.

**DOCUMENTS
ASSOCIATED WITH
REPORT C07/19-131**

**Attachment 2
Existing Medium and High
Density Residential
Developments fronting Woodville
Road**

**Existing medium and high density developments
to be rezoned R3/R4**

