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PROPOSED PLANNING SCHEME AMENDMENT - ESPLANADE HOTEL SITE

1. OPTIONS

- 1.1 Council has been requested by Becton Construction Group to commence a Planning Scheme amendment process for the Esplanade Hotel site by placing their proposed amendment on public exhibition. Council must decide whether or not the format and content of the amendment is appropriate to place on public exhibition.
- 1.2 Becton's request for the amendment was made on the 23 June. Some further information was requested and provided in draft form on the 31 July and the 7 August. Becton agreed at the last meeting with Council officers on the 7 August to undertake further work on some aspects of the proposed amendment. Clearly, there remain a number of outstanding issues that need to be resolved in respect of the format and content of the amendment. ***Placing the proposed amendment (in its current form) on public exhibition is not a recommended option.***
- 1.3 It is clear that the proposed amendment and supporting documentation require further work before being suitable for public exhibition and, ultimately, a Panel process. ***The preferred option is for Council to continue its role as the planning authority and place an amendment to the Esplanade Hotel site on public exhibition, provided that further work is undertaken to improve the proposed amendment prior to exhibition.*** In summary, this involves:

Format

- Formatting the amendment to be consistent with the transitional arrangements for the new Planning Scheme.
- Zone
- Defining the Esplanade Hotel uses and establishing the type and scale of proposed retail uses to assist in determining an appropriate zone for the site.

Heritage

- Establishing an appropriate heritage protection mechanism for the site which offers an equivalent level of protection as the existing controls.
- Identifying and assessing the issues associated with the proposed demolition of the Baymor flats, the east wing and the red brick section of the west wing of the Esplanade Hotel.

Concept Development Plan

- Investigating an appropriate siting, scale, mass, form and proportion for any new building envelope(s) located in the central area of the site having regard to the site's context, off-site and on-site amenity impacts, current planning controls and policies and the preliminary findings of the Review of Development Controls.
- Providing guidelines in respect of how development in a building envelope in the central area of the site will be visually and functionally integrated with existing buildings remaining on the site and a possible podium around part of the site's perimeter.
- Establishing to what extent the building envelopes should represent an actual building form and footprint.
- Providing a frontage setback that contributes to the streetscape and street activity along the Upper Esplanade.

Design Guidelines and Schedule

- Broadening the scope of the design guidelines and items to be included in the schedule to reflect the outcomes of the above investigations and discussions to date and, ultimately, to ensure an appropriate development outcome for the site.
- 1.4 The Regional Manager of the Department of Infrastructure has offered to assist on format and structural issues associated with the amendment. Council officers will continue to work with Becton to resolve other issues associated with the amendment. The preliminary findings of the Development Controls Review will also be incorporated into the discussions.
- 1.5 ***A report should be put to the September cycle of Council outlining the result of these discussions.***
- 1.6 The Council can also ***abandon the amendment. This is not a recommended option*** as it is considered that further discussions may assist in improving the amendment and it is important that Council maintain its planning authority role in the amendment process.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That Council will re-consider Becton Construction Group's request to place an amendment to the Esplanade Hotel site on public exhibition once the outstanding issues associated with the amendment have been discussed with the proponent. These issues include:

Format

- Formatting the amendment to be consistent with the transitional arrangements for the new Planning Scheme.

Zone

- Defining the Esplanade Hotel uses and establishing the type and scale of proposed retail uses to assist in determining an appropriate zone for the site.

Heritage

- Establishing an appropriate heritage protection mechanism for the site which offers an equivalent level of protection as the existing controls.
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Design Guidelines and Schedule

- Broadening the scope of the design guidelines and items to be included in the schedule to reflect the outcomes of the above investigations and discussions to date and, ultimately, to ensure an appropriate development outcome for the site.

And further, that Council require a report to be put to the September 1998 cycle which outlines the results of these discussions.

- 2.2 The Council notes that it has major concerns with the proposed building envelopes in the central area of the site; in particular, the envelope that could accommodate a building up to 38 storeys in height, and the demolition of several 'A' graded buildings.
- 2.3. The Council notes the high level of community concern and interest in the Esplanade Hotel site and commits to an open and transparent community consultation process. Accordingly, an amendment with a higher degree of detail and clarity is required.

- 2.4. The Council accepts the offer from the Regional Manager, Department of Infrastructure, to assist with format and structural issues associated with the amendment.