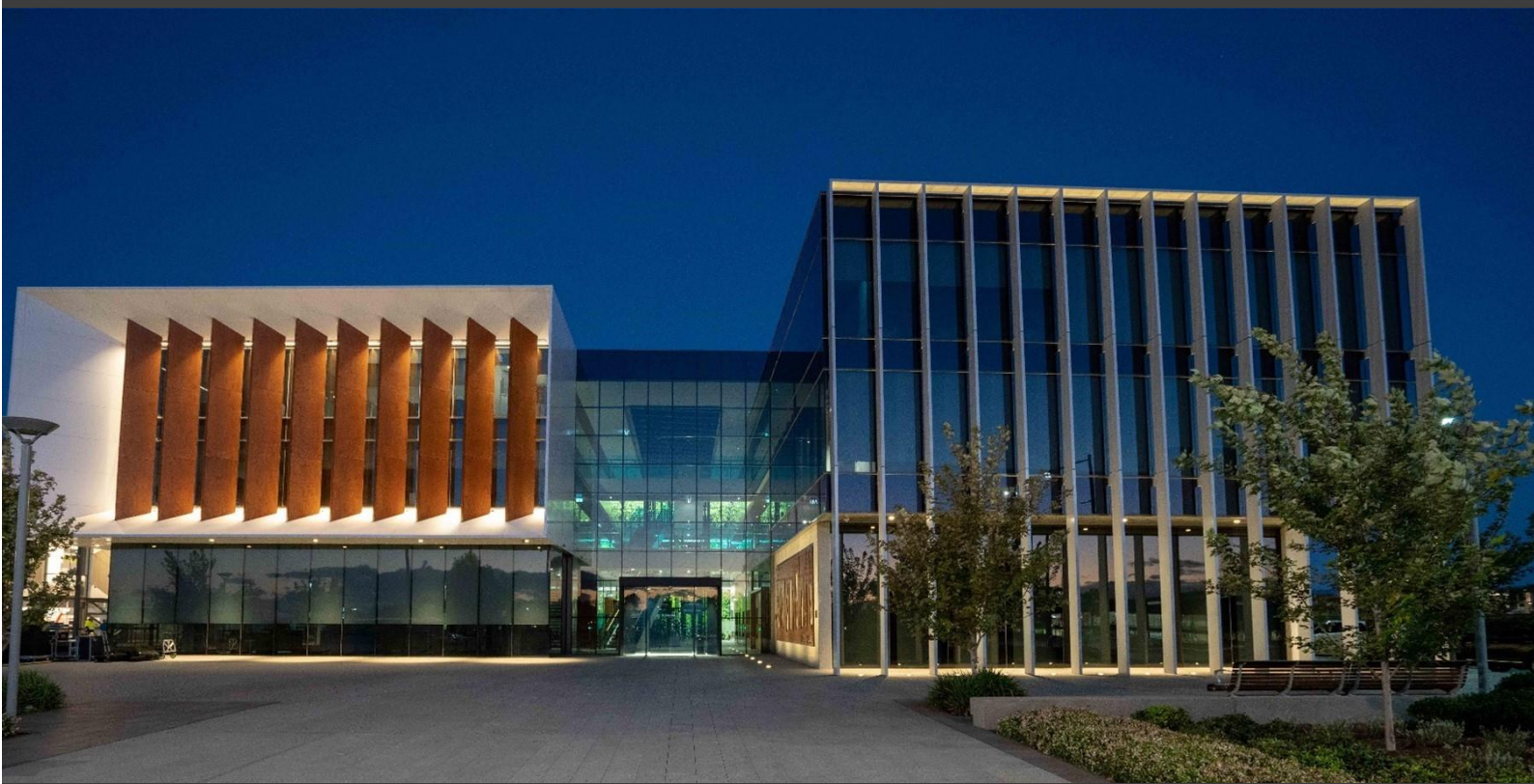


# Business Paper

## Ordinary Council Meeting

Camden Council  
Administration Centre  
70 Central Avenue  
Oran Park

11 April 2023



The public can also view the meeting via Council's webcast. A link to this webcast can be found on Council's webpage – <http://webcast.camden.nsw.gov.au/video.php>

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**SUBJECT: CAMDEN GREEN AND BLUE GRID VISION - POST-EXHIBITION**  
**FROM:** Director Planning & Environment  
**EDMS #:** 23/9874

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### PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider the draft Camden Green and Blue Grid Vision (the draft Vision), including amendments recommended in response to submissions received during the public exhibition.

A copy of the draft Vision (as amended) is provided as an **attachment** to this report.

### BACKGROUND

In March 2018, the Greater Cities Commission (previously Greater Sydney Commission) released the *Greater Sydney Region Plan – A Metropolis of Three Cities* (Region Plan) and the *Western City District Plan* (District Plan). The Region and District Plans set planning priorities and objectives to enhance the Green and Blue Grid across the Greater Sydney region (region-scale) and the Western Parkland City (district-scale).

On 26 June 2018, Council resolved to participate in the NSW Government's Accelerated LEP Review Program and accepted funding from the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) to prepare the Camden Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) and undertake various supporting studies. The Camden Green and Blue Grid Analysis (the Analysis) was one of the studies identified to be undertaken as part of this program.

In 2020, Council officers engaged consultants to undertake an analysis of the Camden Green and Blue Grid network and identify opportunities to connect the Green and Blue Grid across the Camden Local Government Area (LGA).

Based on the key findings and recommendations in the Analysis, Council officers have prepared the draft Vision. The draft Vision was publicly exhibited from 1 November 2022 to 28 November 2022 (28 days), and eight submissions were received from public agencies. A response to submissions is provided as an **attachment** to this report.

Councillors were briefed on the draft Vision on 17 May 2022 and 28 March 2023.

### MAIN REPORT

#### **Draft Camden Green and Blue Grid Vision Summary**

The 'Green and Blue Grid' is a network of high quality green open spaces, biodiversity corridors, riparian land, waterways, natural bushland, tree-lined streets, pedestrian paths, cycleways and recreational trails. A connected Green and Blue Grid is an important feature of a sustainable, liveable and healthy community – enabling people to move comfortably between places and access key destinations such as open spaces, schools, workplaces, town centres and public transport hubs.

The Green and Blue Grid provides health and wellbeing benefits by delivering walking and cycling trails for exercise and leisure and providing opportunities for people to interact with nature and wildlife. Enhancing the local Green and Blue Grid is necessary for cooling the urban environment, restoring and reconnecting habitat and biodiversity corridors, and supporting ecological resilience.

The Region and District Plans set planning objectives and priorities to enhance green and blue links, which aim to:

- link parks, open spaces, bushland and walking and cycling paths (Region Plan - Objective 32);
- increase urban tree canopy cover and deliver Green Grid connections (District Plan – Priority W15);
- protect and improve the health and enjoyment of waterways (District Plan – Priority W12); and
- identify the South Creek corridor as a key landscape feature within the Western Parkland City (District Plan – Priority W13).

Transforming the Camden Green and Blue Grid can positively impact the Greater Sydney (region-scale) and Western Parkland City (district-scale) Green and Blue Grid networks.

The draft Vision provides a long-term goal to create an accessible, connected, healthy, maintained and valued Green and Blue Grid across the LGA. It outlines the approach to joining and enhancing Camden’s open spaces, biodiversity corridors, riparian areas, and natural bushland (the Green Grid) using creeks, rivers, lakes and waterways (the Blue Grid) as the spine for these connections.

The draft Vision identifies potential opportunities for further consideration, including:

- New east-west biodiversity corridors to connect Nepean River and South Creek;
- Revegetating riparian land along waterways;
- Leveraging existing natural assets such as the Nepean River and Scenic Hills to create open space and recreational trails; and
- Opportunities for green links between town centres, open space, sports fields, employment areas, schools and public transport hubs.

It is recognised that these opportunities require further investigation and may be varied in the future subject to detailed planning and funding opportunities.

The draft Vision also provides:

- Guiding Principles for Green and Blue Grid projects;
- Key initiatives to be implemented by Council; and
- Suggestions for how Council, State Government, community groups and landowners can work together to achieve the vision for greener neighbourhoods and healthier waterways.

### **Public Exhibition and Community Engagement**

The draft Vision was exhibited for 28 days from 1 November to 28 November 2022.

The community consultation included the following:

- Information on Council's website (including Quick Poll);
- Stakeholder notification letters (neighbouring councils, public agencies and key stakeholders);
- Promotion in Council's eNewsletters (Camden Kids eNews, Camden Business eNews, and Our Waterway Health eNews)
- Social media posts; and
- Copies available at Council's Administration Building and libraries.

A total of eight submissions were received from public agencies, including seven providing support and one objection. A copy of the submissions is provided as an **attachment** to this report.

### Summary of Public Agency Submissions

A summary of the key issues raised in the submissions is provided below. A detailed consideration of submissions is provided as an **attachment** to this report.

#### 1. *WaterNSW – Objection (resolved post-exhibition)*

The WaterNSW submission objected to the use of the Upper Canal for public recreation, active transport and to a lesser degree for urban greening projects. This objection is due to potential risks posed to the delivery of Sydney's drinking water supply.

No objection was raised to using land *adjoining* the Upper Canal for revegetation projects, provided tree planting does not negatively impact on the operation of the Upper Canal or pose any safety and security risks. The submission requests that the narrative and certain Key Findings, Key Recommendations and Project Opportunities are amended to reflect this position.

The submission notes that any Green and Blue Grid projects on land identified as 'affected land' on the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021* maps, must be consistent with WaterNSW's *Guideline for Development Adjacent to the Upper Canal and Warragamba Pipelines*.

The submission requests Council remove the image of the Upper Canal as a 'Blue Grid' feature, consult WaterNSW on revegetation programs proposed on land adjoining the Upper Canal, that the colour of the Upper Canal on Figure 2 is shown as 'grey', and that a different colour is used to show the 'New Urban' area on Figure 4.

#### *Officer comment*

The Western City District Plan identifies the WaterNSW Upper Canal as a project for the Western Parkland City, for both protecting drinking water infrastructure and making use of the space along the canal for open space, urban greening and an active transport corridor.

The following changes are recommended in response to this submission:

- Remove the image of the Upper Canal under the heading 'Blue Grid';



- Amend the commentary to clarify that green links are to be provided on land adjoining the Upper Canal, and acknowledge the need to protect Greater Sydney's drinking water infrastructure and supply; and
- Amend the colour of the Upper Canal on Figure 2 from 'blue' to 'grey'.

WaterNSW has been consulted on proposed post-exhibition amendments related to the Upper Canal. They have offered in-principle support for the suggested amendments. Council officers will continue to engage WaterNSW on Green and Blue Grid initiatives that may impact the Upper Canal.

## 2. *Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) – Support*

The submission is generally supportive of the draft Vision and recommends the following:

- Reference the *Cumberland Plain Conservation Plan*, the *Interim Green Infrastructure and Public Spaces Framework*, the *2022 Independent Flood Inquiry Report*, and the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021*;
- Expand commentary on waterways support of farming practices, health benefits and healthy ecosystems, the interplay between increased tree canopy and flood and bush fire risk and water management in the urban environment;
- Highlight Council's partnership with DPE on Green and Blue Grid initiatives such as the Greener Neighbourhoods Program; and
- Minor text changes including using the term 'green infrastructure' and providing additional examples for capturing and retaining water in the urban environment (i.e., 'detention basins and ponds and rain gardens on residential land').

### *Officer comment*

The following changes are recommended in response to this submission:

- Add commentary on the *2022 Independent Flood Inquiry Report*, the *Cumberland Plain Conservation Plan* and the *Interim Valuing Green Infrastructure and Public Spaces Framework*;
- Add commentary to acknowledge the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021* and the identification of 'strategic conservation areas' within parts of Camden LGA;
- Expand commentary to acknowledge the improved physical, social and physiological outcomes and support of healthy ecosystems benefits from an enhanced Green and Blue Grid;
- Update the 'key recommendations' section to include the benefits of revegetating land along the Nepean River and South Creek;
- Expand commentary on aspirations for rural settlement areas to acknowledge the valuable role rivers and creeks play in enhancing farmland and farming practices (such as irrigation);
- Reference 'detention basins' as an additional example of how water can be captured and retained in the urban environment;
- Expand commentary to acknowledge the need for Green and Blue Grid connectivity and potential flood and bush fire risks to be considered during precinct planning;

- Clarify that Council officers will continue to guide development (via planning controls) to require consideration of Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) principles, appropriate management of water and increased tree canopy cover;
- Amend the 'How to Get Involved' section to encourage residents to install ponds, water fountains and rain gardens in addition to planting suitable trees, vegetation and gardens in yards; and
- Add commentary about Council's collaboration with the State Government on Green and Blue Grid initiatives.

The term '*green infrastructure*' is used by public agencies however the draft Vision has been written in plain English for a broader community audience. Council officers do not recommend changing the draft Vision to incorporate this recommendation in the draft Vision.

### 3. *Endeavour Energy - Support*

The submission notes that the draft Vision aligns with Endeavour Energy's Sustainability Strategy 2022.

Endeavour Energy request collaboration with Council to identify, design and implement Green and Blue Grid projects within or adjoining electricity easements, and to develop a tree specification list to alleviate potential risks to the electricity distribution network.

The submission provides additional information relating to standard conditions, design specifications and maintenance requirements for vegetation management that assist to ensure the safe and reliable operation of the electricity network.

#### *Officer comment*

Council officers will work with Endeavour Energy on Green and Blue Grid initiatives within, or in close proximity to, electricity easements. Some of the additional information provided in this submission is technical and will be addressed as part of future planning proposals, development applications or implementation of Green and Blue Grid projects.

Council officers are currently developing an Urban Forest Strategy that seeks to review current and future trends in tree species suitability. Endeavour Energy will be consulted as part of the development of this strategy.

This submission will be addressed as part of the draft Vision's implementation and other Council projects. No amendments to the draft Vision are proposed in response to this submission.

### 4. *Liverpool City Council - Support*

This submission offers support for the draft Vision and recommends that health outcomes should be a significant consideration in Green and Blue Grid projects.

It suggests Healthy Active By Design (HABD) principles be considered in the detailed project scoping for Green and Blue Grid projects and in future reviews of existing planning controls.

*Officer comment*

Council officers recommend amendments to the draft Vision to clarify that Council will consider HABD principles in Green and Blue Grid projects.

The recommendation for HABD principles to be embedded in planning controls has merit however is out-of-scope for this project. HABD has broader considerations beyond green and blue grid connections and may be considered as part of a future review of existing planning controls.

5. *NSW Health – South West Sydney Local Health District (SWSLHD) - Support*

The submission offers support for the draft Vision and notes the following:

- There are positive links between increasing trees and providing new walking and cycling paths, and improving physical and mental health outcomes;
- New research relating to the 3:30:300 rule for greener cities – people can see at least 3 trees from their home, there is a minimum 30% tree canopy cover in urban areas and green open spaces are located within a maximum 300m distance of people's homes;
- The use of electricity easements as green links is an innovative opportunity to increase walking and cycling in residential areas;
- Support for the Western Sydney Parklands Scenic Hills green link;
- Support for the Macarthur Regional Recreational trail green link; and
- Commends Council's "Adopt the Street Tree Outside Your Home" project.

SWSLHD supports the key recommendations within the vision as they will provide improved infrastructure and amenity to support people to walk and cycle.

*Officer comment*

The submission is generally supportive of the draft Vision and the potential health outcomes generated by enhancing the Camden Green and Blue Grid.

The new research related to the 3:30:300 rule is noted. Council officers will consider the applicability of this principle in future reviews of planning controls.

The following changes are recommended in response to this submission:

- Add commentary to acknowledge the positive physical and mental health outcomes associated with trees; and
- Amend Figure 1 – Benefits from trees and healthy waterways, to note that trees offer protection against harmful ultraviolet radiation (UV).

Council officers will continue to work with NSW Health and seek their advice during the draft Vision's implementation (as appropriate).

6. *NSW Rural Fire Service - Support*

The submission requests Council consider the *Planning for Bush Fire Protection (PBP) 2019* requirements in the implementation of this Vision, and in associated planning proposals and development assessment.

*Officer comment*

Council officers acknowledge the interrelationship between increasing tree canopy cover and potential bush fire risk. The need to balance increased tree planting and bush fire risk will be considered during the planning, design and implementation of Green and Blue Grid projects.

Council will continue to work with the NSW Rural Fire Service on ensuring compliance with *Planning for Bush Fire Protection (PBP) 2019* requirements as part of future precinct planning, development assessment and implementation of Green and Blue Grid projects.

This submission will be addressed as part of the Vision's implementation. No amendments to the draft Vision are proposed in response to this submission.

*7. Western Parkland City Authority (WPCA) - Support*

The submission commends Council for preparing the comprehensive draft Vision. WPCA notes the draft Vision's potential to deliver substantial positive outcomes for the community and natural environment, and its synergies with the Western Parkland City Blueprint (October 2022).

The WPCA recommends the draft Vision be amended to note carbon emission reductions, the protection of climate refuge areas for fauna, and endangered and other ecological communities which may be enhanced by additional tree planting.

The submission suggests Council incorporate Caring for Country practices (e.g., cultural burning practices) and adaption requirements, such as species choices for street trees that are resilient to changing climate conditions.

*Officer comment*

The draft Vision, as exhibited, acknowledged Caring for Country practices in the 'Place Based' Guiding Principle and under the 'Learning, supporting and partnering' section.

Council recognises the need for ongoing knowledge exchange and learning from the local Aboriginal community relating to Caring for Country practices. In response to this submission, additional commentary is recommended to acknowledge that Council will engage with local Aboriginal stakeholders to learn about Caring for Country practices.

Environmental resilience, including the selection of suitable tree species, will be considered during scoping of Green and Blue Grid projects. The draft Camden Urban Forest Strategy (currently under development) will provide an updated tree species list to assist with tree species selection.

The request that endangered species and ecological communities (that may benefit from an enhanced local Green and Blue Grid) be noted in the draft Vision is considered out of scope. Endangered ecological communities and animal and plant species that could benefit from healthy and sustainable biodiversity corridors are discussed in complementary Council strategies such as the Sustainability Strategy (2020) and the Biodiversity Strategy (2023).



The following changes are recommended in response to this submission:

- Amend WPCA images under 'The Strategic Context' section;
- Insert new commentary to clarify that 'Council will' engage Aboriginal stakeholder groups on the planning, design and implementation of Green and Blue Grid projects; and
- Add carbon emission reduction as a data source to measure impacts of increased tree planting at specific project sites.

8. *Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust (The Australian Botanic Garden Mount Annan)*

The submission acknowledges the Australian Botanic Garden Mount Annan (ABGMA) is a contributor to the local and regional green grids and references the intention to connect existing and proposed lakes within the ABGMA (i.e., the 'lakes precinct' project).

The Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust (The Trust) notes support for green grid connections between the southern portion of the ABGMA through Gundungurra Reserve and William Howe Regional Park, and the northern portion of the ABGMA to the Scenic Hills. The Trust requests further information about the proposed 'green' link between the ABGMA and Leppington via the Scenic Hills prior to providing support for this project.

The submission also states that connecting the ABGMA to the Nepean River catchment and riparian land will protect and enhance the health and character of the waterway.

The Trust offers general support for riverside walks and notes their broader organisational commitment to creating regional cycleways, native vegetation corridors, biodiversity connectivity, and restoring critically endangered species such as the Cumberland Plain Woodland.

The submission recommends Council officers work with the ABGMA to expand the recycled water network and to manage noxious weeds such as the African Olive.

The submission recommends the following change to the draft Vision:

- Investigate planting trees along Narellan Road to encourage greater use of pedestrian and cycle paths.

*Officer comment*

Council officers will engage The Trust on the scoping and design of projects that propose connections to the ABGMA.

Council officers agree there is merit in exploring opportunities to plant trees and vegetation along Narellan Road as an extension to the proposed The Northern Road Green Boulevard project. As part of Narellan Road is in State Government control, Transport for NSW (TfNSW) will be engaged in any proposed project along Narellan Road.

The following changes are recommended in response to this submission:

- Include Narellan Road as a potential green boulevard.

### Summary of post-exhibition changes

A copy of the final Vision including changes (in red) is provided as an **attachment** to this report.

Post-exhibition amendments are proposed to the following parts of the draft Vision, based on matters raised in the submissions:

- The narrative;
- 'Blue Grid' images and Figures;
- The 'Natural & Sustainable' Guiding Principle;
- Certain Green and Blue Grid project opportunities;
- 'Council will' commitments;
- Certain Actions of the Green and Blue Grid Action Table; and
- Monitoring and Review data.

In addition, Council officers have proposed the following post-exhibition amendments to the draft Vision:

- Update census data;
- Amend certain Actions of the Green and Blue Grid Action Plan; and
- Minor text changes to improve readability.

The proposed post-exhibition amendments are consistent with the intent of the publicly exhibited draft Vision and do not warrant re-exhibition.

### Next Steps

The recommended LGA-scale Green and Blue Grid project opportunities will be investigated by Council officers. Not all projects may be achievable, and some may need to be varied to respond to planning and funding opportunities. Detailed project planning and implementation of identified short-term priority projects will commence, as funding becomes available.

The draft Green and Blue Grid Vision will be used to support future grant applications that enable the delivery of greener places and healthier waterways across the LGA.

The draft Vision has recently assisted Council in securing approximately \$4.5 million in funding for 'Green and Blue Grid' projects such as the John Oxley Reserve Trail that proposes new walking and cycling trails and tree planting (Places to Roam Grant 2022/23); the Nepean River Corridor Study that aims to examine 'Green and Blue Grid' opportunities along the Nepean River and adjacent land (Metropolitan Green Space Program 2022/23); and the Camden Community Nursery, which will produce local native plants for 'Green Grid' revegetation and restoration projects (WestInvest 2022).

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The implementation of priority Green and Blue Grid projects will be funded through existing Council budgets or by external future funding such as grants.

### CONCLUSION

The draft Green and Blue Grid Vision sets a strategic direction to connect green open spaces, biodiversity corridors, riparian land and natural bushland across the LGA using creeks, rivers and waterways as the spine for these links.

The draft Vision was placed on public exhibition from in November 2022 and eight agency submissions were received. The matters raised in these submissions have been considered and some changes are recommended to the draft Vision. The proposed amendments do not change the intent of the draft Vision, and as such do not warrant re-exhibition.

It is recommended that Council adopt the revised draft Vision (as amended).

### RECOMMENDED

**That Council:**

- i. adopt the draft Camden Green and Blue Grid Vision (as amended); and**
- ii. notify submitters of Council's decision.**

### ATTACHMENTS

1. Camden Green and Blue Grid Vision
2. Public Agency Submissions - Camden Green and Blue Grid Vision
3. Public Agency Response Table - Green and Blue Grid Vision

# Minutes

## Ordinary Council Meeting

Camden Council  
Administration Centre  
70 Central Avenue  
Oran Park

11 April 2023



camden  
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**ORD02 DELIVERY PROGRAM PERFORMANCE REPORT - JULY TO DECEMBER 2022**

Motion: Moved Councillor C Cagney, Seconded Councillor A Cagney that Council note and endorse the attached Delivery Program Performance Report for the period July to December 2022.

ORD49/23 THE MOTION ON BEING PUT WAS **CARRIED**

Councillors A Cagney, C Cagney, Campbell, Dommaraju, Farrow, Fedeli, McLean, Symkowiak and Zammit voted in favour of the Motion.

No Councillors voted against the Motion.

**ORD03 CAMDEN GREEN AND BLUE GRID VISION - POST-EXHIBITION**

Motion: Moved Councillor A Cagney, Seconded Councillor Zammit that Council:

- i. adopt the draft Camden Green and Blue Grid Vision (as amended); and
- ii. notify submitters of Council's decision.

ORD50/23 THE MOTION ON BEING PUT WAS **CARRIED**

Councillors A Cagney, C Cagney, Campbell, Dommaraju, Farrow, Fedeli, McLean, Symkowiak and Zammit voted in favour of the Motion.

No Councillors voted against the Motion.

**ORD04 PUBLIC EXHIBITION - PUBLIC SPACES LEGACY PROGRAM**

Motion: Moved Councillor Zammit, Seconded Councillor A Cagney that Council:

- i. endorse the Masterplan for the Public Spaces Legacy Program – Nepean River Connect, included as an attachment to this report; and
- ii. advise submitters of the outcome of this report.

ORD51/23 THE MOTION ON BEING PUT WAS **CARRIED**

Councillors A Cagney, C Cagney, Campbell, Dommaraju, Farrow, Fedeli, McLean, Symkowiak and Zammit voted in favour of the Motion.

No Councillors voted against the Motion.