

**ITEM 5.1                    MAYORAL MINUTE - RHODES WALKER STREET PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE****Attachments:**            **Nil**Submitted by:            Councillor Michael Megna (Mayor)

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**MOTION**

That Council

1. Note the content of the Mayoral Minute
  2. Staff provide a detailed presentation on this matter at a future Councillor Workshop
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**BACKGROUND**

I bring to your attention the ongoing discussions and recent developments concerning the Walker Street Pedestrian Footbridge in Rhodes.

This proposed pedestrian bridge, between the upper level of the Billbergia Rhodes Central shopping complex west of the railway line to the upper-level concourse of Rhodes Station, has been a topic of discussion within our community, and I would like to take this opportunity to provide clarification on, and seek to progress the matter.

In 2018, Council granted landowner's consent for the lodgement of a Development Application for the Walker Street footbridge. Development consent was granted in 2019, enabling Billbergia to proceed with construction.

Negotiations between Council and Billbergia on the construction and ownership of the bridge has been ongoing for several years. It is now clear that a planning proposal is the most likely pathway for delivery of the bridge. In these circumstances a planning proposal would typically involve additional floor space for the developer in order for the infrastructure to be provided.

Over the past few years residents in Rhodes have certainly expressed concerns to Council about rising density, and the NSW Government has made it clear over the past 12 months they do not wish to see changes to development controls in the area, making the negotiation of a planning proposal difficult to achieve.

However, having met with the community over previous months, there does appear to be appetite for looking further at this piece of infrastructure, acknowledging that some increase in density is a likely offset. On that basis, I believe we need to assess the current options and investigate a way forward.

Outside this proposal, it is important to note that Council is expecting major infrastructure works in the Rhodes Station Precinct over the next 12 months, including but not limited to pedestrian crossings, footpath renewal and widening on Walker Street, and new bus interchange facilities. These proposed infrastructure works are intended to support and enhance connectivity and safety within the Rhodes community, ensuring that key places and essential services are easily accessible to all residents.

As we continue discussions with Billbergia to achieve an optimal and balanced outcome, our priority remains the best interest of our residents and the sustainable development of the Rhodes area.

I recommend that Council staff provide a detailed presentation on options for the Station Precinct at an upcoming Councillor Workshop with a view to progressing this important matter for the benefit of the Rhodes community.

**Michael Megna**

MAYOR