2.3 OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION

Key open spaces within the study area includes

- Two large greenfield sites in the north east
- Bella Vista Farm, in the south-east corner of the Study Area
- A green Link connecting these two spaces which is an important biodiversity corridor.

Despite its highly urbanised character, there remain areas of biodiversity importance within the Study Area. Dispersed pockets of significant vegetation are located in the north and north-west of the Study Area. Of these, the largest concentration is located east of Old Windsor Road and contains large areas of Cumberland Plain Woodland, classified as a Critically Endangered Ecological Community (EEC) under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1995*. A number of these areas are contained within government-owned land, thus representing an opportunity to protect the vegetation and provide public open space. Further large concentrations of the Cumberland Plain Woodland EEC are located west of Old Windsor Road and the Bella Vista Farm site.

Detailed ecological studies will be required to identify impacts on native vegetation and threatened flora and fauna as part of any future rezoning investigations within the Study Area.

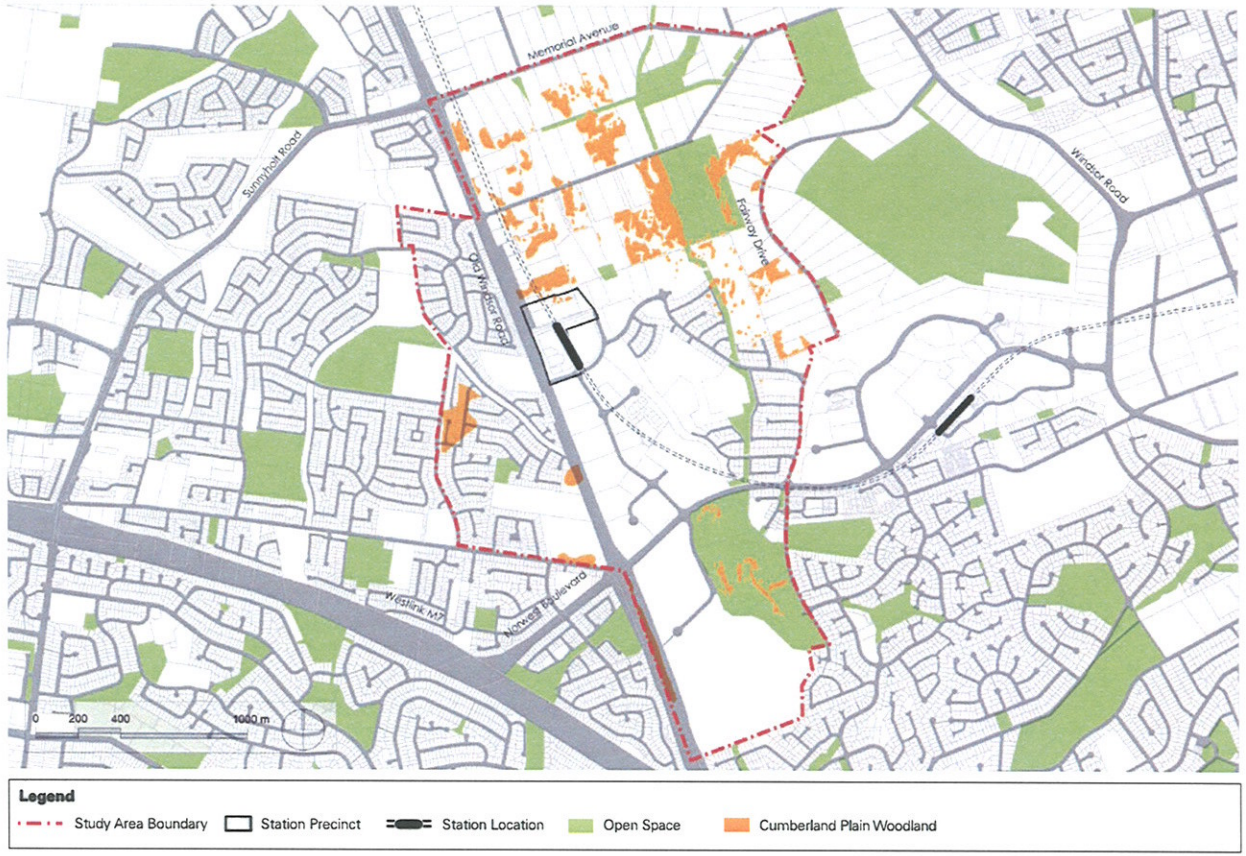

Figure 7: Open Space & Conservation within the Study Area

2.4 HERITAGE & SPECIAL USES

Figure 8 shows that within the Study Area a number of sites are identified as special use and of heritage value. These include Bella Vista Farm in the south, which is designated as a Conservation Area. A single residential property located in the west of the study area is designated as a general heritage item, and Old Windsor Road is classified as an Archeological Heritage Item.

The Draft Structure Plan seeks to retain and reinforce the heritage items identified in *Figure 8: Heritage & Special Uses within the Study Area* as they form an important part of the character of the Study Area.

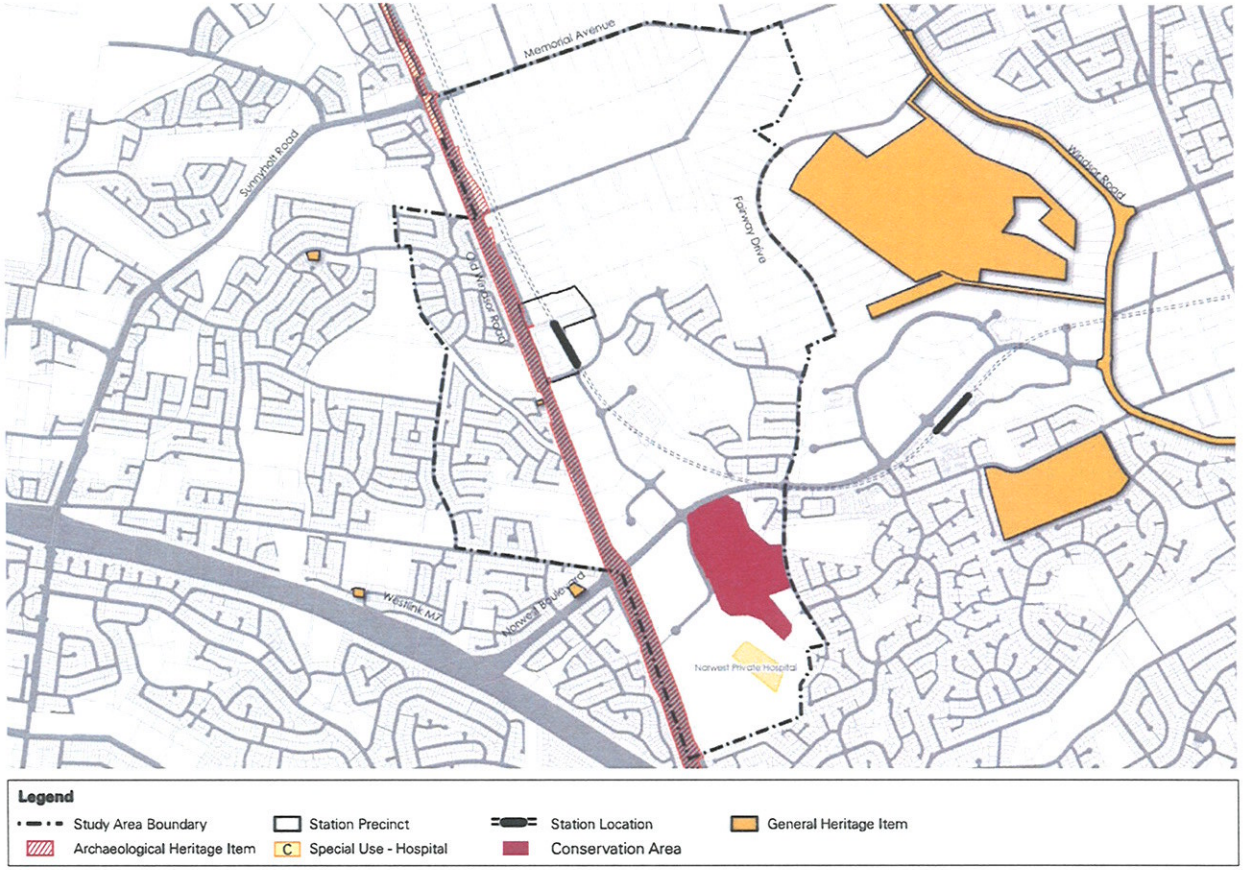

Figure 8: Heritage & Special Uses within the Study Area

2. Opportunities & Constraints Analysis

2.2 TRANSPORT, TRAFFIC & ACCESSIBILITY

The Study Area is accessible from three major routes - Norwest Boulevard to the south, Old Windsor Road to the west and Balmoral Road and Burns Road from the north. While providing direct access to the M7/M2 and the wider Sydney Orbital Network, Old Windsor Road and Norwest Boulevard are also barriers which divide the Study Area in to three distinct precincts, south of Norwest Boulevard, east of Old Windsor Road and west of Old Windsor Road.

Pedestrian and cycling infrastructure is limited within the study area. Pedestrian crossings are provided as part of the traffic signals at the intersection of Celebration Drive and Old Windsor Road across the southern and eastern legs of the intersection, although no pedestrian crossing is provided for the northern leg of Old Windsor Road and Celebration Drive. A segregated cycle path is provided along Old Windsor Road. Key routes such as Norwest Boulevard are hostile cycling/pedestrian environments, lacking in adequate crossings and public lighting.

Bus services at Bella Vista are currently largely confined to the North West Transitway, with two services providing connections from Norwest Boulevard to Lexington Drive and Brighton Drive. Figure 5 below demonstrates the 5, 10 and 20 minute walking catchments from the proposed station location.

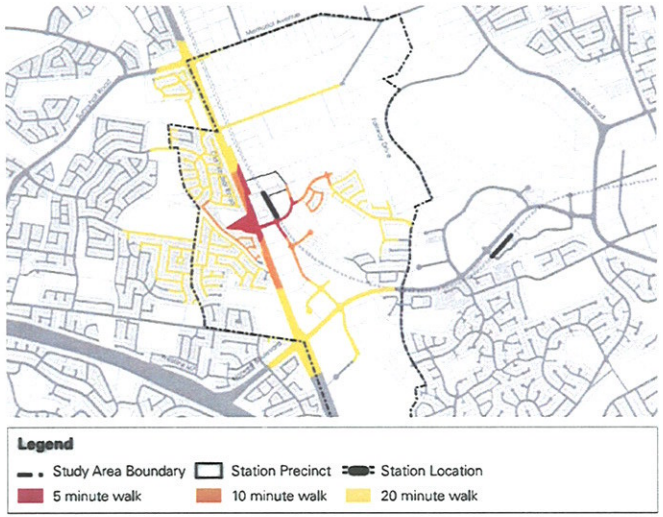

Figure 5: Walking Catchment within the Study Area

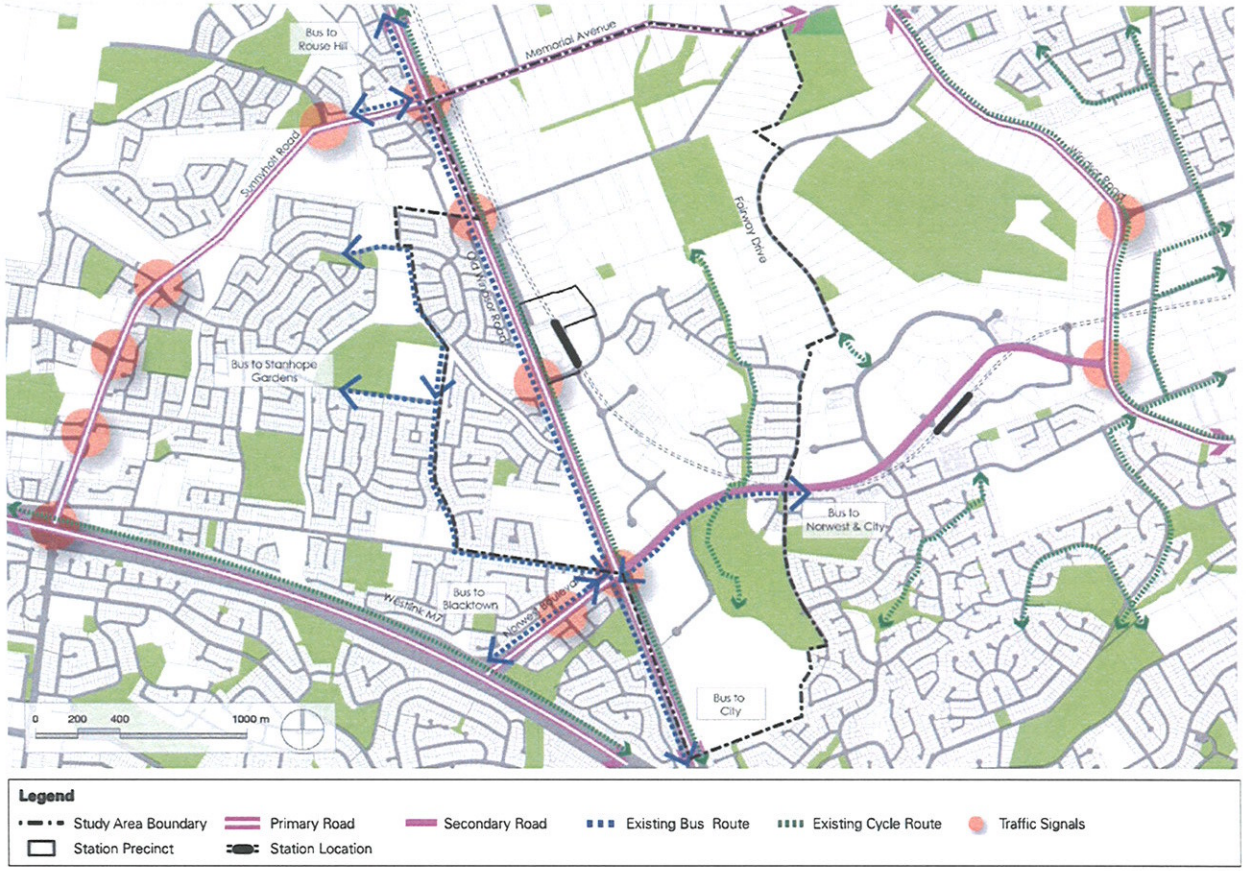

Figure 6: Access & Movement within the Study Area

2.5 TOPOGRAPHY

The topography within the Study Area is characterised by a high point that gently falls from the ridge lines of Old Windsor Road, Norwest Boulevard and north to Burns Road towards Elizabeth Macarthur Creek. Heights within the Study Area range between approximately 56-108 metres above sea level. The high point within the Study Area is located within the Bella Vista Farm Park which affords regional vistas to the north, west and south.

Slope analysis of the Study Area shows that land levels are highest in the south around Norwest Boulevard and Lexington Drive.

To the north and west, lie moderately undulating areas. In contrast, to the south, levels fall steeply from Bella Vista Farm towards the private hospital and Circa retail centre. The development of these slopes could require alternative development and construction techniques and may limit the types of buildings that can be constructed.

Figure 9: Topography within the Study Area