

ATTACHMENT C

**SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT
FOR THE ASHMORE PRECINCT, BY CRED**



SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT FOR THE ASHMORE PRECINCT

City of Sydney



Social Sustainability Assessment for Ashmore Precinct, City of Sydney

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The purpose of this report is to identify and address the potential social impacts relating to the proposed new residential development in the Ashmore precinct. The Ashmore precinct is a 17-hectare former industrial area. It is part of the suburb of Erskineville within the King Street Village Group, which includes the suburbs of Newtown as well as part of Camperdown and Erskineville, and is also immediately adjacent to the suburb of Alexandria. This report provides direction to Council to inform the finalisation of the planning controls in the amendment to the "Draft Amendment South Sydney Development Control Plan – Urban Design 1997 – Part G Special Precinct No. 7 – Ashmore Precinct" (Draft Ashmore DCP). This report aims to aid Council in meeting the social needs of the future Ashmore redevelopment, and delivering a socially sustainable community. Social sustainability can be broadly defined as the maintenance and improvement of well-being for both current and future generations.

Local people

The local residential community within and around Ashmore is characterised as: a large number of families; a high Gay Lesbian Bi and Transgender (GLBT) community; creative and cultural; environmentally aware; welcoming and accepting; and a high proportion of workers and inner city/CBD workers. There are also pockets of disadvantage in the social housing estate in Erskineville. The demographics of the existing Ashmore population demonstrate similarities with the suburb of Erskineville including high proportions of working age residents, with fewer older people (60+) and young people (12 to 24 years). There were a similar number of children in Ashmore to the larger Erskineville area (which has one of the highest proportions of children aged 0 to 4 years in the City of Sydney Local Government Area), but also more couples without children than in Erskineville. The majority of residents were high-income earners. A significant amount of residents utilised public transport, cycling and walking to get around with over twenty percent not owning a car. By 2027 and the completion of the redevelopment, it is forecast that the population will increase from the 769 people living in Ashmore in 2011 to over 6,007 people.

Local place character

The Ashmore precinct and its surrounding suburbs have a local character defined by history, culture, the arts, environmental consciousness and vibrancy. Ashmore has a rich history as an industrial area, and plans have been made to reflect this heritage. Erskineville has a well-established hub of cafes, retail and services. Much of the neighbouring suburb of Alexandria is transitioning from light industry to residential and creative spaces. Ashmore is conveniently located near two train stations and good cycling connections. The Ashmore industrial redevelopment has the opportunity to harness these assets, and create a highly socially sustainable place to live – whilst respecting the existing character of the site and surrounding area.

Community facilities and services

Quality community infrastructure and services play an important role in supporting and facilitating community harmony and connectedness. There are currently 23 community facilities and services located within 800 metres of the Ashmore precinct site including schools, childcare centres, community centres, town halls and theatres. However, local childcare centres are at capacity and Erskineville Public School is also reaching capacity. Demographic forecasts indicate the need for more childcare centres, and a plan for accommodating increased numbers of primary school aged children. A variety of quality program space and services for working aged people will also be required. A key concern of local residents is the ability of the existing transport infrastructure to handle the increased population (in particular poor bus services in Alexandria) and the impact of increased cars on the roads.

Public open space

Quality, well planned local open space has a multitude of benefits for a community including creating place and connecting residents. Currently, there is around 70,000m² (24 open space areas) of public open space accessible within 800 metres walking distance of the site. However, large parts of both Erskineville Oval and Sydney Park are outside this distance. While the area is well served with district and regional open space, it needs a quality local park to create community connections and link other areas to Sydney Park. The proposed open space will address this requirement, and McPherson Park will provide a needed local open space area providing a variety of uses and possibilities for residents for both passive and active recreation.

Identified community issues

The amendment to the Draft Ashmore DCP was exhibited from 16 December 2011 to 29 February 2012, and generated 375 submissions, with the issues raised broadly covering:

- Traffic impacts;
- Lack of adequate transport and social infrastructure;
- Insufficient open space;
- Urban design impacts including overshadowing; and
- Social impact and loss of "village character" in surrounding suburbs.

Identified social impacts and recommended strategies

A unique set of social sustainability principles were developed for the Ashmore Precinct. These were based on a robust evidence base including best practice case studies and benchmarking, demographic analysis, engagement outcomes, community facilities audit and mapping, and local character mapping. The following is a summary of identified social impacts and recommended strategies to address each of the identified social sustainability principles.

Principle 1 : A range of housing options are available to support a socially and economically diverse mix of people to live and build their future here.	
Social impact	Recommendation
Increased housing for CBD and inner City workers that could lead to less car dependency.	Encourage live/work units.
The Draft Ashmore DCP makes no provision for affordable housing potentially resulting in lack of social diversity.	Identify potential location for affordable housing.
Lack of housing diversity in terms of number of bedrooms could result in lack of age diversity.	Include additional objective in the Draft Ashmore DCP to provide a mix of housing to support a diverse residential community.
No provision in the Draft Ashmore DCP for universal design principles impacting on ability to age in place.	Encourage residential development to incorporate universal design principles.
Draft Ashmore DCP provides well or the transition of existing areas into neighbouring sites.	The Draft Ashmore DCP already provides for this through a range of building types and heights.
Medium density living and high numbers of one bedroom apartments can impact on the development of community connections.	Encourage community activation programs and social media to connect residents.
Principle 2: Movement within and through the precinct is pedestrian and cycle friendly, provides a positive user experience, and connects to key activity hubs.	
Social impact	Recommendation
Improved pedestrian and cycle links connecting to other areas.	Include a provision to ensure that there are safe and accessible pedestrian/cycle routes within the site and

	connecting to existing networks.
Increased car ownership could mean increased traffic on roads.	Encourage reduced car ownership and use by: including minimum bicycle parking requirements; including provisions for Car Sharing Schemes; advocating for improved bus services and train services; improving pedestrian and cycle links to Erskineville and St Peters Stations; and designing the public domain for an improved experience for cyclists and pedestrians.
Principle 3: High quality, accessible and safe open space and public domain areas are provided to encourage a socially inclusive shared use of public spaces, supporting community cohesion, local health and well-being.	
Social impact	Recommendation
Additional open space will provide space for Ashmore precinct and neighbouring Erskineville and Alexandria.	Plan the proposed open space in consideration of the overall network and clearly define the role of each space. Activate the new open space areas with a range of facilities including bbqs, community gardens, play and exercise equipment, public art, variations in levels.
More use of public domain creates a safer place.	Ensure strong relationships between public and private space.
Open space provides opportunities for markets, pop ups, and local events.	Encourage temporary uses in the public domain and parks.
A range of people will live in Ashmore and must have equitable access to space.	Design paths, entrances and infrastructure (seats, bins) to reduce physical barriers.
Improved diversity of local indigenous flora and fauna.	Plant with indigenous flora and fauna.
Accessibility is framed within the Draft Ashmore DCP as an issue of connectivity only.	Considering revising the Draft Ashmore DCP to provide commentary on accessible design.
Buildings with a direct interface to significant open spaces have active non-residential land uses.	This should be encouraged through Draft Ashmore DCP.
Principle 4: There will be equitable and linked access to a range of community facilities that respond to a changing community.	
Social impact	Recommendation
High numbers of one and two bedroom apartments could lead to lack of community cohesion.	Encourage provision of communal private spaces within buildings; encourage the design of entry and congregation points to support chance encounters; encourage provision of rooftop gardens.
Some local public schools are at capacity.	Camdenville Public School and Alexandria Park high school are below capacity and can accommodate growth. Encourage local enrolments only at Erskineville public school.
Local childcare centres are at capacity.	Encourage provision of an additional 210 childcare places.
Increased development provides opportunities for temporary community facilities.	Until new facilities provided, the Draft Ashmore DCP should encourage temporary use of disused sites.
The Draft Ashmore DCP specifies that community facilities should be provided in a coordinated way.	Draft Ashmore DCP may benefit from a statement linking to relevant Council planning documents. Consider providing indicative locations for community facilities such as childcare.
Principle 5: An activated place with its own unique identity reflecting the history and character of the place but one that is also part of the wider Erskineville place story and linked with neighbouring villages.	
Social impact	Recommendation
Provision of a retail precinct complementing existing	A focus on the local (butcher, fresh grocer) links with existing

retail and in line with identified community needs.	objectives.
Development provides the opportunity to renew the industrial area to reflect its unique character.	Public art and street names reflect history and character. Foster local artists through creative opportunities.
Park and retail area are designed to create a focal point for the new estate to provide a defined meeting space and enable community gathering and social enterprise.	Ongoing community engagement to build a sense of ownership. Define role of open space areas to create a variety of experiences. Recommend dedication of social enterprises as part of possible future VPAs.
New residents will need support to be connected to their place.	Include a clear statement at start of Draft Ashmore DCP about what the future place character is. Consider a place management approach that may include the appointment of a Community Building Officer. Include notice boards as part of developments and social media.
Development creates opportunities to reflect the environmentally aware local community and cultural personality.	Identify opportunities for herb gardens within developments; Promote Smart Green Apartment Program; Encourage temporary environmental and cultural projects.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The City of Sydney Council (Council) is planning a new residential neighbourhood in the Ashmore precinct. The precinct is a 17-hectare former industrial area in the suburb of Erskineville, and part of the City's King Street Village. As a result of forecast change and growth in the population, there are likely to be both positive and negative social impacts. This report provides an assessment of the likely social impacts and makes recommendations on how the Ashmore precinct can develop to achieve social sustainability, create its own sense of place, and respect the existing character of the site and surrounding area. The transition of the precinct commenced approximately seven to 10 years ago, from an area dominated by industrial activities to a mixed precinct of residential, such as Motto, industrial, and commercial landuses. This urban renewal has resulted in the evolution of the place character.

Social sustainability can be broadly defined as being the maintenance and improvement of well-being for both current and future generations. It aims to balance social diversity, inclusion, stability, interaction, pride, and safety in the context of urban development. It refers to finding ways to make places that are inclusive and cohesive, and adaptable in the face of changing circumstances. There is strong relationship between the quality of our local social relationships – how many people we pass time with on the street, how well we know our neighbours, how easy it is to access facilities or services – and how connected and happy we are with where we live.

This social sustainability assessment has been completed using principles that have been specifically developed to reflect the unique social needs, aspirations and character of the Ashmore precinct and neighbouring suburbs. The proposed development provides an opportunity for Council to deliver a high quality built environment and integrate best practise community development policy and planning outcomes, to create innovative and socially sustainable outcomes for residents of Ashmore and neighbouring areas.

1.2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide:

- Council with a Social Impact Assessment prior to finalising the planning controls in the amendment to the Draft Amendment South Sydney development Control Plan – Urban Design 1997 - Part G Special Precinct No. 7 – Ashmore Precinct" (Draft Ashmore DCP); and
- A robust analysis to understand the future social needs likely to be generated by the redevelopment of Ashmore precinct and offer recommendations to ensure that these local needs can be met through the appropriate mechanisms

The overall focus of the social sustainability assessment is to address the social impact issues raised in relation to the Draft Ashmore DCP and make recommendations. Mitigation measures will be identified to address negative impacts and enhance positive impacts in order to meet the likely future social needs of the Ashmore precinct community as the development occurs. The intention is for the redevelopment to:

- Have minimal impact on the amenity of the existing local community and immediate local area;
- Provide new facilities to the newly created neighbourhood as well as serve the existing surrounding areas; and
- Achieve social sustainability, develop its own character and sense of place, while respecting and contributing to the village character of Erskineville.

1.3 METHODOLOGY

The following methodology has been undertaken in the delivery of this study:

1. Document review of existing relevant Council plans, strategies and studies including:
 - Sustainable Sydney 2030
 - Current NSW Government's Metropolitan Plan Sydney 2036
 - Draft Ashmore DCP
 - City of Sydney Draft Integrated Community Facilities Plan
 - Social Impact Assessment Guidelines
 - 2030 In Your Village King Street Village Plan and community consultation outcomes
 - Social Impact Assessment Guidelines
 - Draft Social Sustainability Framework
 - The Social Plan and Policy 2006-2010
 - Draft Social Sustainability Strategy and outcomes of community engagement
 - Homelessness Strategy
 - Cultural Diversity Strategy
 - Safe City Strategy
 - Affordable Housing Strategy
2. Outcomes of the Household Survey relevant to the Ashmore Precinct Analysis of the current and forecast populations of the suburb of Erskineville and Ashmore precinct
3. Analysis of the demographics of comparative developments including Sydney Park Village and Victoria Park
4. Review of best practice case studies of social sustainability planning in urban renewal areas (2 x Australian and 1 x international)
5. Review of summary issues raised in community submissions to the public exhibition of the Draft Ashmore DCP
6. Identification of the planning implications of the current and future local community demographic character
7. Audit and mapping of community facilities located within 800m of the Ashmore Precinct
8. Audit and mapping of public open space areas located within 800m of the Ashmore Precinct
9. Analysis of the unique character of the Ashmore precinct and neighbouring areas
10. Assessment of community facilities and public open space demand against benchmarks and standards
11. Audit and mapping of social connectors located within or adjacent to the Ashmore site
12. Meetings with City of Sydney Officers
13. Workshop with the Ashmore Precinct Reference Group

2 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1 THE ASHMORE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PLAN

The South Sydney Amendment: Urban Design 1997 – Part G Special Precinct No.7 – Ashmore Precinct defines the planning and design provisions for the redevelopment of the current Ashmore industrial Estate. The overall aim of the Draft Ashmore DCP is to provide:

'an appropriately scaled new, vibrant, creative and livable village with a commercial and retail precinct at its heart. Such a village would accommodate new residents attracted to the unique qualities of the area, including the open space of Sydney Park and the cultural life of Erskineville Road and King Street' (pg2).

The precinct's new development must be consistent with the stated planning objectives, which are provided at Appendix 1. The Draft Ashmore DCP also provides specific planning and design provisions to guide the redevelopment and ensure consistency with the overarching objectives and aims for the new precinct.

2.2 SITE LOCATION

The Ashmore Precinct is located in the suburb of Erskineville, and is shown in Figure 1. It is approximately 17 hectares in size, with approximately 14 hectares still to redevelop over the next 20 years.

Figure 1 Ashmore precinct site map



2.3 SITE DESCRIPTION

Ashmore precinct contains a number of landholdings, including owner-occupied strata industrial units as well as residential strata developments. Currently, the predominant use is light industrial activities, which have limited tangible community benefits for the existing community. It is an active industrial area with very few vacancies; therefore, it is expected that the redevelopment of the industrial land holdings will occur in an ad hoc manner over many years with individual land parcels redeveloping separately.

The key land use objectives for Ashmore precinct is to provide an appropriate mix of land uses to meet the needs of the existing and future population as well as integrating with the wider area. The Draft Ashmore DCP sets the planning framework in relation to the location of streets, public open spaces, community and activity nodes, and mix of dwelling types. The Draft Ashmore DCP provides for a mix of dwelling types within the precinct, including apartments, terraces /townhouses and duplex apartments, to meet a range of future residents.

2.4 PROPOSED BUILDING DESIGN AND FORM

The key social objectives relating to building design and form is to 'encourage a diversity of housing type and flexibility, to reflect the needs of 21st century living', 'respect the unique character of the surrounding areas' and encourage safe streets via passive surveillance from the private domain. Specific development planning controls in this section of the Draft Ashmore DCP amendment provide for a FSR range of 1:1 to 1.75:1 across the site. The height of buildings range from a maximum of eight storeys, located mainly around open spaces, to two-storey terraces fronting the northern edge of the study area, providing a general transition of building heights with lower scale buildings closest to the surrounding conservation areas.

2.5 FORECAST POPULATION

Upon completion (post 2027) internal forecasts for the City of Sydney show a population of between 6,007 and 6,274 depending on the maximum allowable FSR as shown in Table 1 (1.75:1 for some sites). Approximately 3,500 dwellings are forecast with a household size of 1.8 persons per household. This would indicate a total population of around 6,300 by 2027 and beyond. City of Sydney has provided the following population forecasts for Ashmore. The Draft Ashmore DCP amendment outlines a desired dwelling mix to 'cater for the needs of the resident population and to encourage a diverse population'. The Draft Ashmore DCP requires that all developments with more than 10 dwellings are to provide the following percentage mix of dwellings:

- i. Studio: 5-10%
- ii. 1 bedroom 10-30%
- iii. 2 bedroom 40-75%
- iv. 3+ bedroom 10-100%

The Draft Ashmore DCP has a further provision allowing for an increase to the maximum percentage of 1 bedroom dwellings, provided the total number of studio and 1 bedroom dwellings combine does not exceed 45% of the total dwellings proposed.

Table 1 Forecast population Ashmore Precinct

	Projected population	
	Max FSR: 1.75:1 Efficiency: 75%	Max FSR: 1.85:1 Efficiency: 75%
By 2017	2,363	2,509
By 2022	3,624	3,820
By 2027	5,032	5,308

Beyond 2027	6,007	6,274
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3 THE PEOPLE

3.1 BACKGROUND

Ashmore precinct is part of the suburb of Erskineville within the King Street Village Group, which includes the suburbs of Newtown, as well as part of Camperdown and Erskineville and is also immediately adjacent to the suburb of Alexandria.

Research and engagement completed by the City of Sydney for the King Street Village "In Your Village" Plan talks about some of the characteristics of local people as being: a large number of families; a high Gay Lesbian Bi and Transgender (GLBT) community; creative and cultural; environmentally aware; welcoming and accepting; a high proportion of workers and inner city/CBD workers; high use of public transport and bikes to get around. There are also pockets of disadvantage in the social housing estate in Erskineville.

To gain a better understanding of the people who may live in Ashmore precinct as it develops, and the potential impacts of the changing population on neighbouring areas such as Erskineville and Alexandria, this chapter provides a profile of the existing people living in the suburb of Erskineville and the Ashmore precinct as well as a comparative analysis of the people living in similar developments such as Sydney Park Village and Victoria Park.

3.2 ERSKINEVILLE'S CURRENT POPULATION

Erskineville is a close-knit community and neighbourhood with a village atmosphere. Erskineville has a higher proportion of males to females and a prominent GLBT community. There are many young families (having the highest proportion of children aged 0 to 4 years in the LGA). There are also public housing tenants.

Current population: Erskineville suburb

In 2011, 6,847 people lived in Erskineville in 3,585 private dwellings with an average 2.1 persons per household. The median age was 34 years. There was a slightly higher proportion of males to females (51% or 3,501 as compared to 3,347) and this was higher in the 30 to 54 year age group. A recent household survey completed for the City of Sydney identified that 23 out of 119 Erskineville residents surveyed identified as gay male (or 20%). Between 2006 and 2011 there were a number of significant changes in the Erskineville area:

- An increase in the number of young children aged 0 to 4 (+97);
- A decrease in the number of 18 to 24 year olds (-208); and
- An increase in the number of 35 to 59 year olds (+459)

Table 2 Erskineville population change 2006 to 2011

	Year	%	Year	%	City of Sydney	City of Sydney
	2011		2006		2011	2006
		%		%	%	%
0 to 4	411	6.0	314	4.8	3.6	3.3
5 to 11	254	3.7	262	4.0	2.6	2.8
12 to 17	192	2.8	176	2.7	2.0	2.6
18 to 24	528	7.3	736	11.2	14.8	16.3
25 to 34	2230	32.6	2324	35.4	32.6	30.6
35 to 49	2123	31.0	1801	27.5	23.1	22.9
50 to 59	653	9.5	516	7.9	9.5	9.9
60+	483	7.1	429	6.5	11.7	11.6
TOTAL	6,847		6,558			

There were 1,769 families living in Erskineville in 2011. The average number of children per family was 1.5 children. Compared with the City of Sydney, Erskineville had higher proportions of family households and higher proportions of couple families with children (37.9% compared with 32%), and lower proportions of lone person households (30.6% compared with 42.1%).

Table 3 Household type

Family type	Erskineville Number	Erskineville %	City of Sydney %
Family households	1,769	54.2	46%
Single/lone person households	989	30.6	42.1
Group households	493	15.2	11.8

Education

23.1% of people were attending an educational institution. Of these, 15.1% were in primary school (239), 8.7% in secondary school (140) and 48.3% of those studying were in a tertiary or technical institution (or 610).

Employment

2011 data is not available for employment for the area. However, in 2006 only 3.5% of the population was unemployed (lower than City of Sydney at 5.1%). 37.3% of all employed persons were professionals (higher than the City of Sydney at 14.7%).

Ancestry and language spoken at home

In 2011, the most common ancestries in Erskineville were: English (25.4%), Australian (19.5%), Irish (11.1%), Scottish (8.0%) and Chinese (3.6%). 349 people were from Chinese ancestry. 21% of people only spoke a language other than English at home (slightly lower than the City of Sydney at 23%). The main non-English speaking languages spoken at home included: Cantonese (1.5%), Mandarin (1.1%), Spanish (1.1%), Vietnamese (1.0%) and Greek (1.0%).

Income

The median weekly incomes for Erskineville in 2011 were considerably higher than NSW comparisons. Household incomes were \$2,290 compared with \$1,237 in NSW and personal incomes were \$1,196 compared with \$561 in NSW. While there are pockets of economic disadvantage in Erskineville at the Social Housing Estate, a lower proportion of households (10.2%) have low household incomes (under \$500 per week) than the City of Sydney as a whole (18.5%).

Dwelling – dwelling structure

Of occupied private dwellings, 5.0% were separate houses, 41.8% were semi-detached, row or terrace houses, 53.0% were flats, units or apartments and 0.2% were other dwellings.

Table 4 Erskineville dwelling structure

Dwelling structure	Erskineville 2011	%
Separate house	161	5.0
Semi-detached, row or terrace house, townhouse	1,351	41.8
Flat, unit or apartment	1,716	53.0
Other dwelling	7	0.2

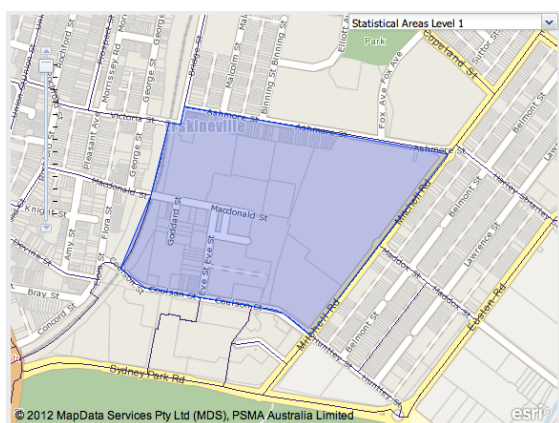
Car ownership

23% of occupied private dwellings did not own a car. This was slightly lower than the City of Sydney at 29% and most likely due to the higher proportion of separate and terrace houses in the area.

3.3 ASHMORE PRECINCT

Key demographics of the Ashmore precinct, based on 2011 ABS census data for the statistical area (SA1) 1133002 depicted in Figure 2, are:

Figure 2 Ashmore Precinct (SA1 1133002)



- In 2011, there were 769 people living in the Ashmore precinct in 404 dwellings equivalent to 1.9 persons per household.
- Due to recent redevelopment in the industrial area, Ashmore precinct had higher proportions of medium density dwellings with 78% flats or units. However, 21% of dwellings were still semi-detached and 1% (or 4 houses) were separate houses. In the Ashmore Precinct there was a slightly higher proportion of males than females (52% or 400 people compared with 48% or 369 people). The median age was the same as Erskineville at 34. The age group profile

was younger than Erskineville in terms of higher proportions of people aged 24 to 44 years, and a lower proportions of people aged 45 to 59 and 60 years and over. There were significantly lower proportions of young people in Ashmore precinct – as would be expected in high density area. However, there were similar proportions of children aged 0 to 4 and 5 to 11 which supports the trend of more families choosing to forego the traditional backyard to live in high density inner city apartments with more accessibility to amenities and work.

- 56% of all households were family households (total 226 family households), which was similar to Erskineville. However, a high proportion (74%) of all family households were couples without children (Erskineville 59%) with 23% of all family households having children and 17% of all families having children under 15 years. Trends in other areas, such as Port Melbourne in Victoria, have shown that couples are moving into apartments whereas in the past they may have moved into larger housing as they started to have children or their children reached primary school age. They are choosing to stay, and this has implications for child and family services and facilities. However, Ashmore was consistent with the trend that people do leave when their children reach high school age. 31% of all households were lone person households, 53% two person households and 16% three or more persons. The median weekly household income was high at \$2,608. 9% of residents (or 69 people) were studying, and median rents were \$504 per week, which makes it unaffordable for most students.
- In Ashmore there was higher car ownership than Erskineville with 1.2 cars per household. However, 23% of all households had no car; this was a lower proportion than the City of Sydney (29.4%), but a much higher proportion of no car ownership than the greater Sydney Statistical Division (12.6%)
- 81% of residents spoke English only at home. Of those people who spoke a language other than English, the Chinese languages were the most common with 24 people in the area.

3.4 COMPARATIVE POPULATIONS

By comparing the population trends in new developments nearby, we can make some assumptions about what the future population of the Ashmore precinct might look like, and therefore assist in the planning of the landuses, facilities, and spaces will be required to create a socially sustainable community. Ashmore was compared to the larger suburb in which it is situated (Erskineville), a development directly south of the Precinct (Sydney Park Village), and a comparable development in nearby suburb (Victoria Park in Zetland). Table 5 provides an overview of the age breakdown in 2011 of the following areas:

- The suburb of Erskineville;
- Ashmore Precinct;
- Sydney Park Village, Alexandria; and
- A sample area of Victoria Park, Zetland.

Table 5 Comparative age profile

	Erskineville		Ashmore Precinct ¹		Sydney Park Village ²		Victoria Park ³	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
0 to 4	411	6	42	6	99	5	16	6
5 to 11	254	3.7	22	3	49	3	15	6
12 to 17	192	2.8	7	0.9	25	1	7	3
18 to 24	528	7.3	43	6	149	8	26	10
25 to 34	2230	32.6	296	38	857	45	73	28
35 to 49	2123	31.0	260	34	568	30	92	35
50 to 59	653	9.5	57	7	111	6	10	4
60+	483	7.1	42	5.9	35	1.8	23	8
	6847		769		1893		263	

Sydney Park Village

- The Sydney Park Village development had a total population of 1,893 in 2011. As with other comparative developments in this area, Sydney Park Village had a higher proportion of male residents (1,029 or 54%) compared with female residents (866 or 46%). 100% of the 1,003 dwellings were flats or apartment and the average household size was 1.9 persons per household. The median age was young at 31 years. Sydney Park Village had only a slightly lower proportion of young children aged 0 to 4 years and 5 to 11, but had a very low proportion of young people aged 12 to 17 years as would be expected in medium/high density living environments. Sydney Park Village had a slightly smaller household size than Erskineville at 1.9 persons per household. However, household composition was similar with 53% of total households being family households (52.4% Erskineville). However, Sydney Park Village had a much higher proportion of couple families without children (71% compared to 59.2% of all families in Erskineville). Of the family households, 27% of families had children.
- Sydney Park Village had a lower proportion of lone person households (34% compared with 42.1% in Erskineville). 34% of households were one-person households, 49% two person and 17% three or more persons. 17% of households did not own a car and 64% owned one car only. 22% of households spoke a language other than English at home and, as with Erskineville, the Chinese languages were the most common with 73 people in Sydney Park Village.
- The median weekly household income was high at \$2,279 - similar to Erskineville. In Sydney Park, 9% of residents (or 168 people) were attending a university or tertiary institution.

¹ Statistical areas used for this area were SA11133002

² Statistical areas used were SA11133031 + SA1 1133032 + SA11133021 + SA11133001

³ Statistical areas used was SAI 133810

Victoria Park

A section of Victoria Park was used (2011 ABS census statistical area SA1 1133810 depicted in Figure 3).

Figure 3 Victoria Park sample area (SA1 1133810)



In the sample area of Victoria Park, in 2011 there were 263 people; 53% were male and 47% were female. As with similar developments nearby, the majority of residents were of working age. But interestingly, there was still a similar proportion of children aged 0 to 4 years, but a higher proportion of children aged 5 to 11 years. This is in keeping with the trend toward families living in the inner-city to be close to services and work. While there was a higher proportion of older people, the majority of these were in the 60 to 69 year age group. Similar to the other comparative sites, medium weekly household incomes were high at \$2,360 per week as were median weekly rents at \$600 per week. 100% of dwellings were high density (123 dwellings) and average household size was 2 persons per household - higher than the other areas and the proposed household size of Ashmore Estate. Only 21% of households were lone person households. There were 75 families living in Victoria Park, and 22% of these families were couple families with children. A higher proportion of households had cars with only 9% of dwellings not owning a motor vehicle. 36% of the population spoke a language other than English at home, and 46% of these (44 people or 16.7% of the total population) spoke Chinese languages.

3.5 FORECAST POPULATION

Forecast total population

As shown in Table 6, City of Sydney forecasts for Ashmore precinct show a population of approximately 6,007 people (based on a 1.75:1 FSR and assuming 1.8 persons per household). The forecast population for Erskineville post development of the Ashmore precinct would be approximately 12,854 people. The effect on the population of a 1.85:1 FSR (this assumes that developer will access the additional floorspace available through design excellence) would be slightly higher at 13,121 people.

Table 6 Estimated dwelling mix - Max FSR 1.75:1

	Total residents	Total dwellings	Studio	1br	2br	3br
2017	2363	1312	103	450	668	91
2022	3624	2013	158	691	1025	139
2027	5032	2795	221	959	1423	192
Total beyond 2027	6007	3337	263	1145	1699	230

The density of the Erskineville-Eveleigh area – which includes the Ashmore precinct – in 2011 was 53.5 persons per hectare. The density of Newtown area in 2011 was almost double that of Erskineville-Eveleigh at 101.2 persons per hectare and is a highly connected and vibrant community.

Population assumptions

The following population assumptions are based on the existing populations in Erskineville and in new developments in Ashmore precinct, Sydney Park and Victoria Park and proposed dwelling mix in Ashmore precinct.

- The population of the Ashmore precinct post-development will be around 6,007 and will almost double the current population of the suburb of Erskineville.
- Due to higher proportions of medium and high-density dwellings, household size will be lower than Erskineville at around 1.8 to 1.9 persons per household.
- The average household income will be high at more than \$2,200 per week.
- There will be a reasonably low car ownership for around 1 car per household, but a reasonable proportion of residents will own no car and utilise public transport, bikes and walking to get around and will depend on good links to do this.
- The area will have a high GLBT community.
- While Erskineville currently has higher proportions of children than the City of Sydney averages, the majority of households in Ashmore precinct will be couples without children or lone person households. However, as there are around 237 three bedroom apartments planned and 1699 two bedroom apartments planned, and there are similar proportions of children in Erskineville as in Ashmore precinct, Sydney Park Village and Victoria Park, we can assume that there will be a reasonable number of children living in the area. Based on the current rate of children living in Erskineville of 6% for 0 to 4 years and 3% for 5 to 11 years, there could be around 360 children aged 0 to 4 years and 180 children of primary school age.
- Numbers of young people attending high school will be low at around 120 young people.
- The number of 18 to 24 year olds, due to the high rents in the area, will also be reasonably low with around 420 young people aged 18 to 24 years. This can impact on an area's vibrancy and economy with a loss of local creativity and energy. This means that the needs of a range of users must be considered in public spaces and community facilities provided.
- The majority of residents will work and be of working age. They will need after hours activities/venues and also will want places to exercise and walk their dogs.
- There will be a much smaller proportion of older, retired age residents than in Erskineville at the moment.

Table 7 provides some assumptions of the forecast age ranges post development.

Table 7 Forecast age groups post development

Age range	Assumed proportion of total population	Assumed total population 2027 and beyond
0 to 4	6%	360
5 to 11	3%	180
12 to 17	2%	120
18 to 24	7%	420
25 to 34	37%	2,223
35 to 49	32%	1,923
50 to 59	7%	420
60+	6%	360
TOTAL		6,007

4 THE PLACE

4.1 BACKGROUND

This section looks at the unique and diverse character of the Ashmore precinct and the neighbouring areas of Erskineville and Alexandria and nearby Newtown. Ashmore currently has a number of characteristics that are unique from neighbouring areas, but also some that are similar. Ashmore precinct started as an industrial area and, importantly, was one the headquarters of the Metters Factory producing ovens and boilers. This industrial history of the site has shaped the physical structure of the site and plays an important part to understanding the character of the place.

The Draft Ashmore DCP starts to define a character for the future place as being "an appropriately scaled, new, vibrant, creative and livable village with a commercial and retail precinct at its heart. Such a village would accommodate new residents attracted to the unique qualities of the area, including the open space of Sydney Park and the cultural life of Erskineville Road and King Street" (2011:2). This starts to define the key elements of the desired future place character for the Ashmore Precinct.

4.2 LOCAL ECONOMY

Erskineville's main economy is based on retail and services, with Alexandria's industrial past changing to a more residential development with an emerging media presence such as the influence of the Channel 7 offices located at the Australian Technology Park. Also located in this area are numerous creative industries (photography, design, advertising) within former warehouses. Erskineville, Alexandria and Newtown are increasingly café and bar cultures. Erskineville village shopping strip is also a much loved retail node for locals. Nearby Newtown is strongly associated with fashionable shopping and dining experiences. The predicted growth of the nighttime economy in these areas is both an opportunity and challenge to the area. The economic sustainability for Ashmore for convenience and café services that cater to the local and do not compete, but complement, the Newtown and Erskineville economy.

Outcomes of the City's recent household survey identified that residents' main needs in terms of services were for village type retail such as a butcher, baker, fruit and vegetables, and opportunities for creative industries.

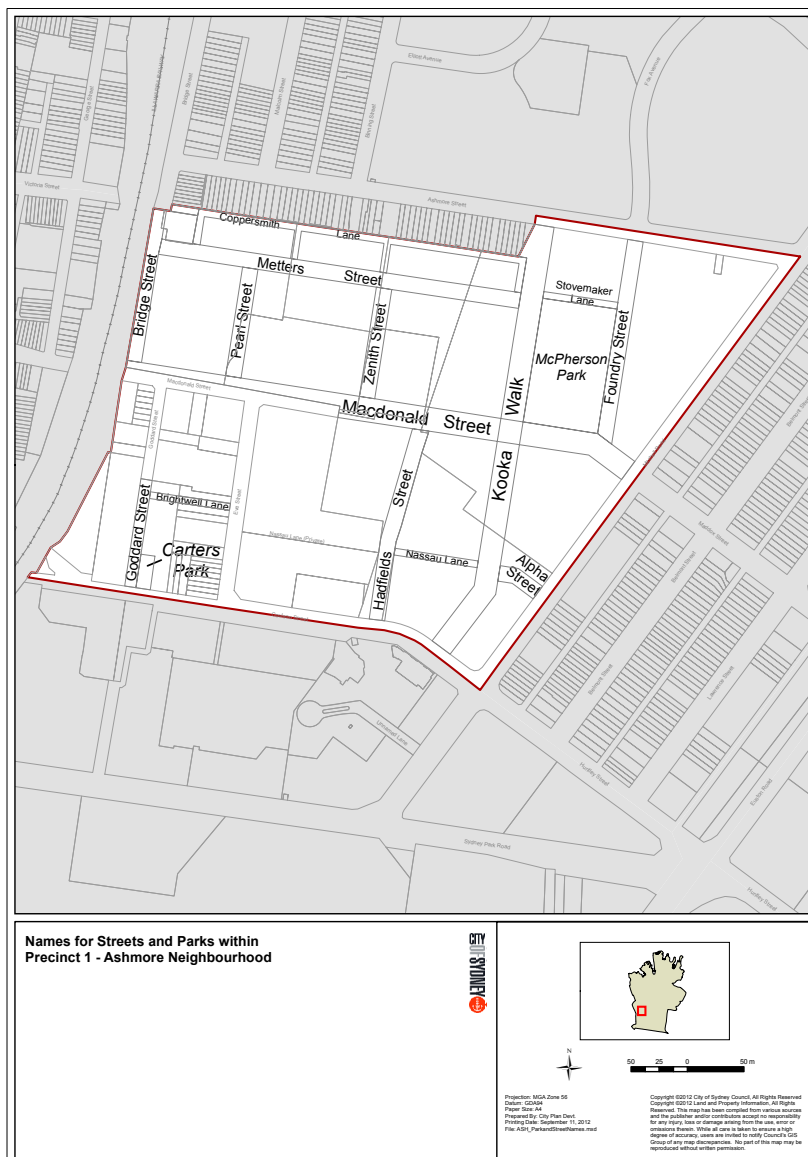
4.3 HISTORY AND HERITAGE

The Ashmore precinct, like neighbouring Alexandria, Waterloo and Zetland, is experiencing urban renewal through de-industrialisation and an increase in residential redevelopment. The City of Sydney has adopted names for new streets and parks within the precinct that will help the area retain some of its history. The new streets and parks will be created when redevelopment of the precinct takes place.

Ashmore was the site of Metters Ltd (an Australian manufacturer of cast iron stoves, enamelled bathroom, sanitary and kitchenware). It was also the site of major steel engineering companies McPherson's Pty Ltd and Hadfields Steel Works. Names evocative of the workers and products of these industries are proposed for the streets and parks. Some examples of the names include:

- Street 1, Kooka Walk – Named after the most famous brand of Metters Stove – the Early Kooka stove;
- Street 2, Metters Street – Named after Metters Limited, which was located on the site from 1907 – 1974;
- Park 1 – McPherson Park – Named after McPherson's Ltd, which was established in Victoria in the 1860s; and
- Park 2 – Carters Park – A nod to H Brightwell and Sons whose family have been involved in carting and transport for over 100 year.

Figure 4 Names of streets and parks in Ashmore



The proposed future residential use of Ashmore provides an opportunity to retain the 'story' of this industrial past through wayfinding markers and elements within the public domain and, where appropriate, the reuse of existing buildings. While the use of the site has historically been dominated by industrial activities, the number of residential cottages also provides an insight into the residential history of the site. The built heritage provides as an important part of the unique place character of the precinct and therefore provides a sense of identity for the area. The Ashmore Precinct is a new neighbourhood within the wider Erskineville suburb.

4.4 SOCIAL CONNECTORS

Development in Ashmore has started - with developments such as Motto and the Glo apartments. There are currently 769 people living here amongst a small number of heritage cottages and newer medium density dwellings. A number of social connectors exist for this population already. These connectors show how people who currently live in the area can get around, where they can recreate and socialise, where they can meet, and where they can shop. Key social connectors are:

- Erskineville and St Peters train stations;

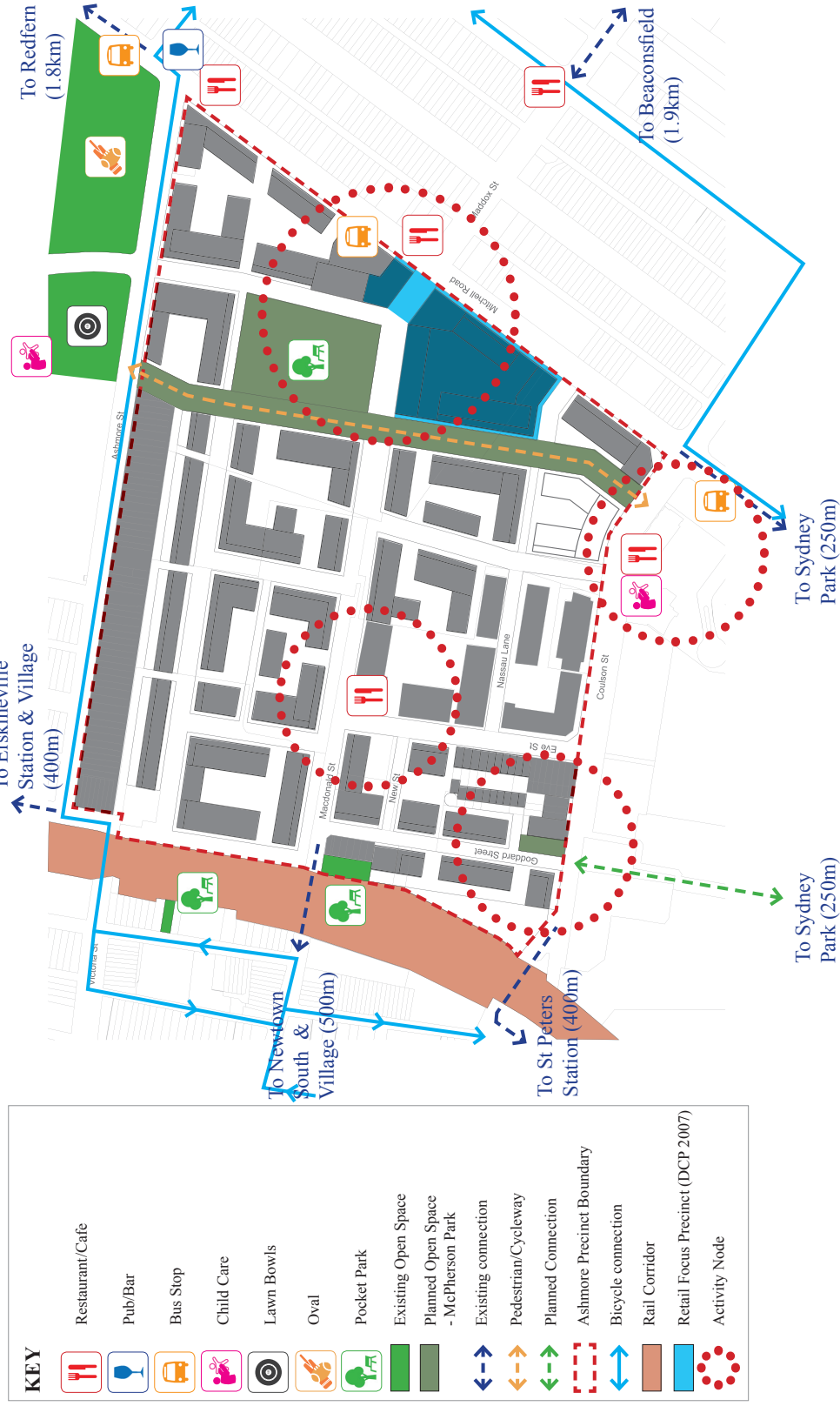
- Cafes such as the café located at Motto;
- Pocket parks such as Kirsova Parks;
- Erskineville Oval and Harry Noble Reserve;
- Sydney park;
- Bicycle connections such as the route along Ashmore Street;
- Local bars/pubs such as the Imperial Hotel;
- Childcare centres such as the centre at Sydney Park Village; and
- Proposed social connectors – a local park, a lineal park/green link, a pocket park, a retail/community precinct.

The graphic overpage identifies the key social connectors of the Ashmore precinct.

Figure 5 Social Connectors Map

ASHMORE PRECINCT

SOCIAL CONNECTORS MAP



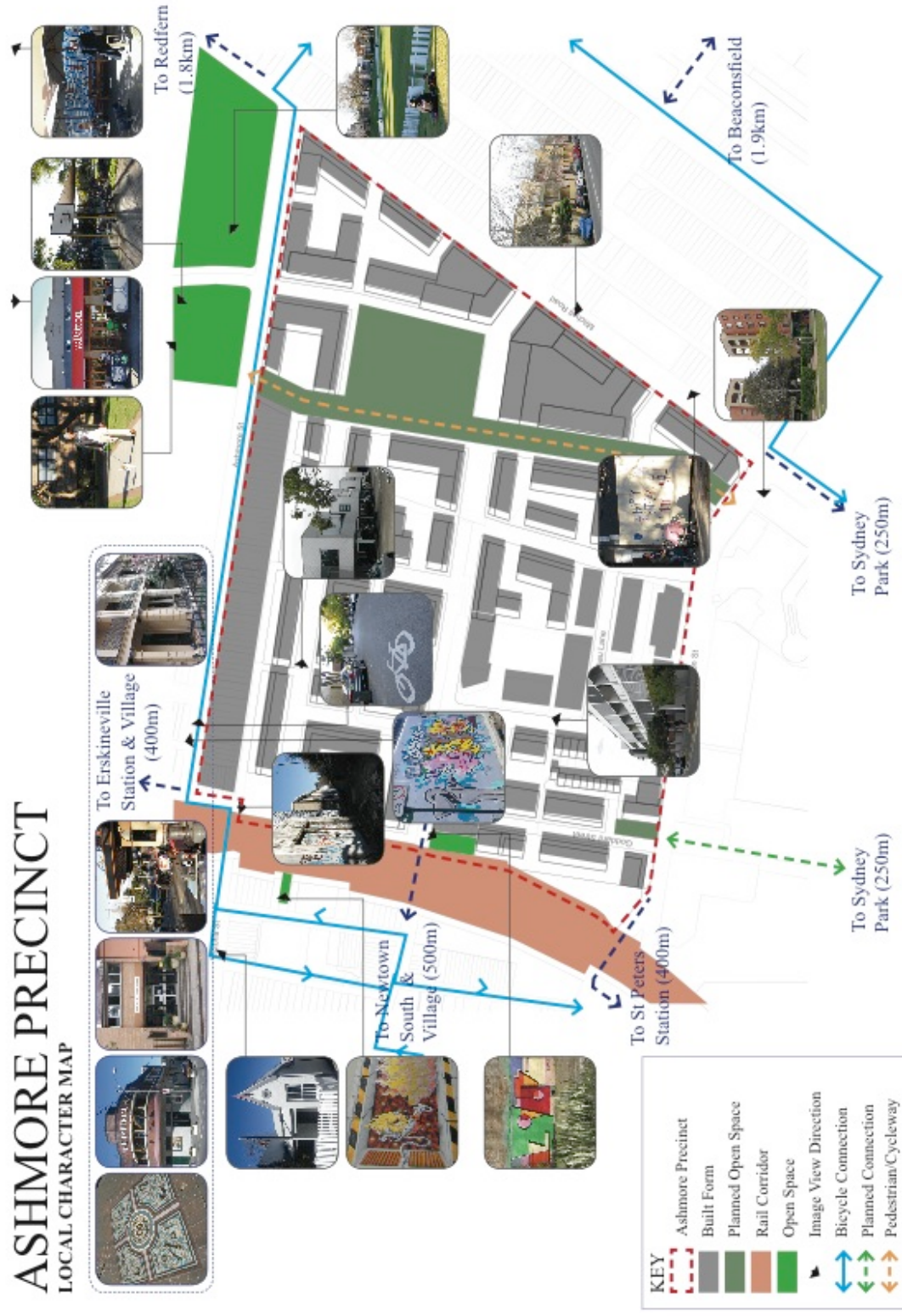
4.5 LOCAL CHARACTER

The transition of the Ashmore precinct from a light industrial estate to a residential area has already commenced. Figure 6 shows the diverse and unique local character within Ashmore precinct and the neighbouring suburbs of Erskineville and Alexandria. It shows an eclectic mix of people, uses, activities, built form. Ashmore precinct is a mixture of heritage housing, industrial past, warehouses and modern apartment and creativity and culture. There is not one particular style that characterises the area:

- There are different types of housing and streets that reflect the area's history and its future. Alexandria offers tree-lined streets with rows of cottages, as well as warehouses next to multi-storey developments. While some of the warehouses are making way for new residential development sites, the south-west area will continue to feature industry and enterprise as dominant activities. Heritage terrace homes sit alongside modern apartment buildings in Newtown, Camperdown and Erskineville.
- The area is typified by regional and district parks: Sydney Park, Erskineville Oval and Harry Noble Park as well as a number of pocket parks.
- Street art is highly visible throughout the Ashmore precinct, Erskineville and Alexandria, and is a colourful and creative asset in the area.
- Funky cafes and bars are prominent. They have started to emerge already in the Ashmore precinct, are well established in Erskineville, and becoming increasingly common in Alexandria.
- Ashmore precinct has an industrial character, and this is demonstrated in the design of local pocket park Kirsova Park. It has a unique history as the Metters Sewing Machine Factory, and this history is reflected in public mosaic art in Erskineville.
- Cycling and walking are common ways of getting around and, with the desire to reduce car dependency, provides an opportunity for this to be a walkable place predominantly for pedestrians and cyclists.

A graphic showing the local character of the area is shown overpage.

Figure 6 Local character Map



4.6 GETTING AROUND

The Ashmore precinct, particularly on the western section of the precinct, is located in close proximity to Erskineville and St Peters Stations. People in the area are high users of public transport, walking and cycling to get around. 40% of residents of King Street Village use public transport to travel to work – double the Sydney average. The area also has the highest proportion of people who travel to work by bike (3.2%) – almost five times the Sydney average. 13.8% walk to work, and 26.3% are train commuters. There has been 45% growth in cycling in this area over the past 24 months.

However, bus travel is not as sufficient. There is only one bus that travels along Mitchell Road with irregular service times and no service after 6pm, and this is a common community complaint in local consultations. Residents have also commented on the Erskineville and St Peters train lines being very packed at peak hours. There is a bus service (the 355) that connects the area to Marrickville metro, Surry Hills, Centennial Park and Bondi Junction.

4.7 HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

There is a range of housing types and affordability for buyers and renters in the King Street Village Group, and in the suburb of Alexandria – from terrace houses to modern apartments. The suburb of Erskineville, while mostly Victorian terraces with some modern apartments, also has some social housing. The area of Alexandria that is the closest to the Ashmore precinct provides a mix of small terraces, modern townhouses, and warehouse conversions and some low scale apartments. Currently in the Ashmore precinct 78% of housing is flats or units, and 21% semi-detached. There are remnants of former worker terraces at the intersection of Eve St and Couslon St (1% of dwellings in the precinct).

As the local area continues to gentrify and the industrial areas redeveloped, housing is becoming more unaffordable in the area. Housing in the Ashmore precinct will be expensive to buy and to rent, with a median rent in 2011 of \$500 per week compared to \$425 per week in Newtown, and \$350 per week in Waterloo. The 2011 median rent of \$500 in Ashmore is a 37% increase from the 2006 median rent of \$365 per week.

At present, there is no affordable housing planned for the Ashmore precinct. Affordable housing refers to housing (that can be rented or purchased) for very low-income, low-income and moderate-income households. Housing is defined as being affordable when households, renting or purchasing, are able to pay their housing costs and still have sufficient income to meet other basic needs such as food, clothing, transport, medical needs and education⁴.

Affordable Housing is different to social housing as it provides the opportunity for low-income and key worker households to rent or purchase housing, either through a private or public structure in areas that they may not ordinarily afford, particularly in inner city locations. By comparison social housing is provided for people who do not work and are on government benefits and managed solely by the Department of Housing.

Where the private market alone does not provide sufficient affordable accommodation, as will be the case in Ashmore precinct, housing that is designated as affordable becomes particularly important. In many inner city locations, individuals working in key services on low-to-moderate incomes – such as those working in childcare and aged care, police, ambulance personnel, nurses, community development workers and transport workers – are finding it increasingly difficult to find affordable housing close to their work places. Over time, the risk is that these individuals will choose not to work in high cost areas that are too far from their accommodation. By increasing access to affordable housing, we work towards integrated and sustainable communities that function in a way that benefits the whole community. Ashmore is a

⁴ Parramatta City Council Affordable Housing Policy May 2009

well located neighbourhood for key workers due to its proximity to public transport and employment opportunities (such as Central Sydney, RPA, the universities and Prince of Wales Hospital).

Currently the City's affordable housing levy only applies within Green Square and Ultimo Pyrmont. Local Government is not allowed to introduce mandatory affordable housing provisions and it is the NSW Government that would need to approve the introduction of the levy to other areas of the City such as Ashmore. Council has advocated for an increase in the supply of affordable housing across the LGA and continue to do so. In Ashmore, the provision of Affordable Housing would be the result of an Affordable Housing provider deciding to develop in the area.

5 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

5.1 BACKGROUND

For a healthy, liveable and sustainable community, housing needs to be within walking, cycling, or close public transport distance to employment, education, good parks, shops, and community services and facilities. Quality community infrastructure and services play an important role in supporting and facilitating community harmony and connectedness.

This section reviews the existing community facilities and servicing that are located within 800 metres of the Ashmore precinct and assesses demand for community facilities that will be generated by the incoming community of 6,007 people. The City's Draft Integrated Community Facilities Plan has been used as a strategic guide for future community facility requirements.

For the purposes of this study, community facilities are those indoor (built form) spaces for individuals and organisations to conduct and engage in a range of community development, recreational, social and cultural activities that enhance the community's wellbeing.

Public community facilities are those facilities that are accessible by the general public including community centres and childcare centres. Private community facilities are those facilities located within medium and high-density buildings and are specifically created for the private use of those tenants.

5.2 COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Council has two key strategic plans for future provision of community facilities. Sustainable Sydney 2030 and the Draft Integrated Community Facilities Plan. Sustainable Sydney 2030 states that the City will provide a rich layer of accessible community-led social infrastructure, services and programs across the City. The Integrated Community Facilities Plan aims to "develop a linked network of accessible and complementary facilities and services." This aim is to be carried out by having each Village group:

- Provide community facilities and services within walking distance;
- Service current and future populations;
- Retain and develop its distinct character and culture; and
- Offer equitable access to resources and activity, without being duplications.

5.3 EXISTING COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

There are currently 23 public community facilities and services located within 800 metres of the Ashmore precinct site. Appendix 1 provides an audit of these facilities. These community facilities can be broadly summarised as:

- Two general community centres/rooms;
- Six childcare centres (335 places) + 1 indigenous specific centre (39 places). All centres are at capacity with long waiting lists;
- Three primary schools with Out of School Hours Care;
- Three seniors/community centres;
- Three community office spaces;
- Two community halls – both Alexandria Town Hall and Erskineville Town Hall have capacity for increased use. They are also utilised for community office space;

- Three theatres + two creative arts spaces; and
- Two youth centres/services.

The community facilities map, Map 1 overpage shows the location of community facilities servicing the Ashmore precinct. The majority are within 800metres walking distance of the Ashmore precinct, however those just outside this distance are noted in the audit. The audit of facilities is shown below.

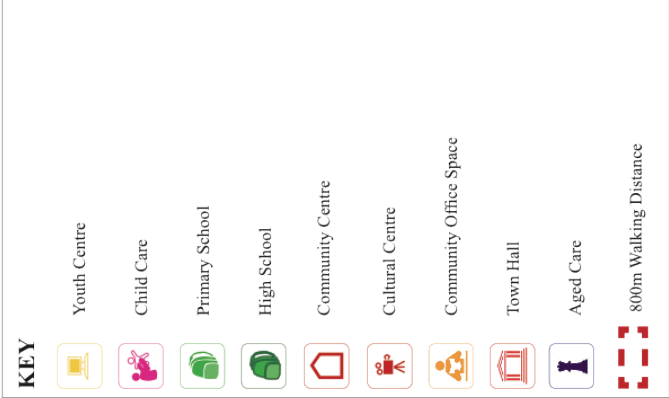
Figure 7 Map legend - community facilities servicing Ashmore precinct

LOCAL FACILITY		DISTRICT FACILITY	
1.	Sydney Park Community Room + CARES Facility	12.	Cliff Noble Centre
2.	SDN Erskineville Children's Education and Care Centre	13.	Wunanbiri Pre-School
3.	Gowrie Childcare Centre	14.	Tom Foster Community Centre/Care
4.	Sydney Park Childcare Centre	15.	Alexandria Park Community School and Community Centre (not in 800m radius)
5.	Erskineville Public School + OSHC	16.	Newtown High School of the Performing Arts (not in 800m radius)
6.	St Mary's Primary School + OSHC	17.	Pact Youth Theatre
7.	Alexandria Childcare Centre	18.	Sydney Park Brick Kilns and Chimneys
8.	KU Sunbeam Kindergarten	19.	Tom Bass Sculpture School
9.	Camdenville Public School + OSHC (not in 800m radius)	20.	Huntley Industrial Estate/Wrap with Love
10.	SDN Linthorpe Street Children's Education and Care Centre	21.	Joseph Sargent Centre,
11.	Newtown Primary School + OSHC	22.	Erskineville Town Hall
		23.	Alexandria Town Hall
		24.	Alleena Home Care
		25.	King Street Theatre
		26.	New Theatre
		27.	Twenty10 (not in 800m radius)

Map 1 Community Facilities & Services Map

ASHMORE PRECINCT

COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES MAP



5.4 PROPOSED COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The Draft Ashmore DCP no new community facilities are specifically defined as being required; however, providing community facilities and services at the appropriate time is a stated objective and the provisions specifically require that public and community facilities must be provided in a timely manner and to an appropriate standard. The only reference to community facilities is that childcare facilities must be provided in accordance with the City's Childcare DCP 2005.

To ensure the provision of community facilities and services will be appropriate to the local community, Council should consider the identification of the indicative locations preferred within the Draft Ashmore DCP for the childcare centres and other community facilities within the Ashmore precinct to support the projected future population. An additional objective or requirement should also be considered for inclusion within the Draft Ashmore DCP that will encourage the planning and provision of community facilities and services to demonstrate that they are catering to the local needs of the community (through demographic analysis etc), are flexible to allow for change over time and that they have considered the wider provision of community facilities within the area.

The Draft City of Sydney Community Facilities Plan for the King Street Village plans for:

- A multipurpose community centre with creative space;
- Additional childcare; and
- Additional out of school hours care.

5.5 DEMAND FOR COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Public community facilities

An additional 6,007 residents will have an impact on access to existing community facilities and increase demand for particular services. Based on the forecast population, the following priority demand for community facilities is expected:

Children aged 0 to 4 years

Considering the high working population, an additional 360 children aged 0 to 4 years will impact on access to local childcare services which are already at capacity. Based on the City of Sydney Childcare DCP for a total of 3,500 dwellings, an additional 210 places would be required to be provided through development. Currently, local centres are at capacity so the provision of additional childcare places, particularly for children aged under 2 years should be considered a priority.

Children aged 5 to 11 years

An additional 180 primary school aged children will impact on access to local primary schools. Erskineville and St Marys primary schools are at capacity. Camdenville Public School has capacity for an additional 400 primary school aged children, and is located more than 800 metres walking distance of the site. While all existing primary schools have an Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) services, given the high working population, there will be demand for additional places and this could potentially be accommodated at Camdenville Public School.

Young people aged 12 to 17 years

The proportion of local young people is expected to be low. However, they will impact on access to local high school. Currently, Alexandria Park Community School is under capacity and can absorb the growth in young people in the area.

Working aged people

One of the main age groups who will be living in Ashmore precinct will be working age people. This group will need community space outside of their homes to meet, participate in local health and wellbeing programs, form

neighbourhood connections, hold club meetings, and have local get-togethers. Macpherson Park will be a very convenient space to facilitate many of the social and health connectors.

Older people

A very low proportion of older people are expected to live in the area, but through good housing design there is potentially for people to age in place and for this population to increase. The area is well serviced in terms of seniors' centres and there is not undersupply in this area.

Creative people

The area is typified by creative people, and across the City of Sydney demand for artists' studios and creative spaces is high. The incoming population will increase demand for additional places to participate in creative activities. The area has a number of theatres (King Street Theatre, New Theatre, PACT Theatre), but there is a lack of facilities to participate in other creative arts. This need has been planned for as part of the Cities Integrated Community Facilities Plan with locations currently being considered.

General community space

There is currently sufficient meeting room and general community space available to service the community including at Erskineville Town Hall, Alexandria Town Hall, Joseph Sargent Centre and the Community Meeting Room at the CARES facility. However, given the high proportion of people who will be living in apartments, there will be demand for a community space for residents to meet, participate in local programs, create local events, hold playgroups or store equipment. A new multipurpose community centre is proposed in King Street Village this should have a cultural and family focus and after hours activities to support the new community. The Community Services Plan should ensure that it has considered the proposed future population in Ashmore to support the existing and future population of the area. A general community space should also be considered as a priority to provide at the early stages of the development for community development activities.

Private community facilities

A high proportion of residents living in apartments indicates a demand for internal community facilities. Communal internal spaces are becoming more common within private developments: providing spaces for neighbourhood gatherings, book clubs and children's parties. Best practice is to locate these spaces near high activity areas (such as near the pool or garden). A recent study by the I.B Fell Housing Research Centre⁵ identified the importance of quality and accessible community spaces within apartment buildings. The Social Isolation in Residential Flats study identified that communal facilities should be "welcoming, activated and stimulating, as such spaces are more likely to be used. Such places are likely to contain elements, which are perceived by users as:

- Useable;
- Spacious, or a size adequate to suit likely resident demand;
- Adaptable, providing spaces in which a range of activities can be taken, public and private;
- Accessible and inclusive to all;
- Safe (during the day and the evening);
- Activated by the presence of activity generators, such as movement paths, gardening, fitness uses;
- Stimulating and enjoyable;
- Accounting for climate and amenity; and
- Encourage ownership of space through quality of design".

⁵ Social Isolation in Residential Flats, Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning, The University of Sydney, 2012

6 OPEN SPACE

6.1 BACKGROUND

The provision of public open space within neighbourhoods provides many benefits to a community. These include:

- Personal - improved physical and psychological health;
- Social and community – strengthened family and community ties, and reduction of crime and anti-social behaviour;
- Environmental – contrast to urban development, access to natural settings, improved visual landscape, and improved air quality from presence of trees; and
- Economic – attracts new residents to an area, property prices are higher adjacent to parks, and savings in health costs from increased physical exercise.

Whilst in the past the amount of public open space per person has been used as a guide for the provision of open space, recent trends focus on the provision of quality public open space rather than quantity. Quality public open space, as opposed to large tracts of land, provides numerous benefits to communities, particularly diverse ones such as Ashmore as:

- They provide opportunities to participate in a number of different activities in the one place. For example, exercising on outdoor exercise equipment, walking or cycling on tracks for older people, playing in playgrounds for families with children, and courts and hang out spaces for young people;
- They provide places for a diverse range of people from different backgrounds to participate in different activities in the one park;
- They are well planned and designed, have good facilities, and are therefore more highly used than empty open space and much safer;
- They offer greater opportunities for accidental/spontaneous interactions, community building and creation of place. This is particularly important when there are high numbers of residents living in apartments who will seek access to public open space and a sense of community; and
- They provide a physical and social focal point for the community and a meeting place.

For the purposes of this study, public open space includes parks, outdoor courts, and playgrounds. Public open space is that open space which is publicly owned, accessible to the public, and that can be planned and managed by local, state or federal government.

Private open space is on private property, which is not always accessible to the public. Examples of private open space include communal gardens and green spaces within a development and only accessible to residents of that development.

6.2 CREATE PLACE THROUGH PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

A variety of quality open spaces offers the new residents opportunities to build local networks and friendships and provides places for people to plant a tree, create an artwork, grow some vegetables and contributes to building strong ownership of a new place.

From a social sustainability perspective, quality, well planned local open space has a multitude of benefits for a community. Planned elements – such as natural features and playgrounds – provide an outdoor community amenity to complement indoor facilities that are often more structured and provide opportunities for adventure, creative play and intellectual interest. Open space gives the community the opportunity to engage and build upon, the planned elements

and allow for the place to evolve as the community does. Public open space allows the community the freedom to make it their own.

It is important however, that the public open spaces are designed understanding their specific role and character. Providing a variety of different open space areas – both in terms of type, size and function – allows for different activities to occur, while minimising the possible conflicts of multi purpose open spaces. Therefore, considering the provision as a connected network of open spaces, can offer areas for active recreation (ie. Sports, running, cycling etc), intimate, landscaped spaces for passive activity (ie. reading, picnic), areas specific for dog walking and public spaces within the retail area for meeting, and other temporary activities (ie. Busking/performance space or weekend markets).

This report provides a greater understanding as to what the future Ashmore community profile may be and what their social needs are likely to be. This information, in turn provides a basis for Council to define the role and function of each public open space area within the precinct to reflect the desired place character and provide residents with appropriate spaces to engage in a variety of activities, thereby enhancing the social sustainability and connection within the community. It also allows for the integration of the open space within the Ashmore precinct within the wider networks of the surrounding area.

6.3 EXISTING PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

Public open space can include both passive (such as small parks such as Kirsova park) and active space (such as larger ovals and sports grounds such as Erskineville Oval). While access to informal parks is open to all people at all times, some of the spaces used for active sports have limited accessibility to the general public (including Erskineville oval and some parts of Sydney Park and Alexandria Park) – especially at key times such as evenings and weekends when formal sporting competitions are being held.

Currently, there is around 70,000m² of public open space accessible within 800 metres walking distance of the site. However, large parts of both Erskineville Oval and Sydney Park are outside 800 metres walking distance.

Appendix 3 provides a detailed audit of this open space, which has been broadly categorised as:

- Local: Small neighbourhood parks (generally between 0.5 and 1 hectare) which are used by a range of community members for social activities or informal leisure activities. Local parks may have some small equipment such as a playground or fitness equipment;
- District: Larger parks which incorporate a range of recreational facilities and settings, and which service a suburb or suburbs. They may include playing fields or courts; and
- Regional: A large park of significance to the City of Sydney local government area, and which attracts visitors from further afield.

Although large parts of Sydney Park and Erskineville Oval are more than 800 metres walking distance from the site, there are, within 800m of the site, 24 public open space areas that can be accessed:

- 19 local parks including 1 community garden and 11 playgrounds and 1 fitness station;
- Four district parks including 3 ovals, two tennis courts, off-leash dog areas, indoor and outdoor basketball courts; and
- One regional facility (Sydney Park) including a large playground, public art, oval and club house.

Figure 8 Legend for map 2, public open space servicing Ashmore precinct

LOCAL		DISTRICT		REGIONAL	
1.	Alexandria Park Community Garden	20	Harry Noble Reserve & Erskineville Oval	24	Sydney Park
2.	Ethel Street Playground	21	Alexandria Park & Oval (not in 800m radius)		
3.	Flora & Knight Reserve				
4.	Harry Noble Reserve Playground	22	Perry Park (not in 800m radius)		
5.	Kirsova 2 Playground	23	Vice Chancellors Oval		
6.	Kirsova 1 Playground				
7.	Pinkstone Playground				
8.	Rochford Street Playground				
9.	South Sydney Rotary Park				
10.	Camdenville Park (not in 800m radius)				
11.	Simpson Park (not in 800m radius)				
12.	Renwick Street Playground				
13.	Park Street				
14.	Lillian Fowler Reserve				
15.	Green Ban Park				
16.	Amy Street Park				
17.	Matt Hogan Reserve (not in 800m radius)				
18.	Salmon Playground (not in 800m radius)				
19.	Wells Street St Peters (not in 800m radius)				

Map 2 overpage shows the location of public open space within 800metres of the site and includes the public open space shown below.

Map 2 Ashmore precinct public open space map

ASHMORE PRECINCT OPEN SPACE MAP



Currently, existing public open space in the area is mostly district or regional level (Sydney Park, Erskineville Oval) and meets the needs of a much wider population than the Ashmore precinct. While these larger parks are in close proximity to the site, they will not provide the benefits and social connectors that the proposed McPherson Park will have for the incoming community. Some of these benefits include:

- A space for meeting/chance encounters with more immediate neighbours;
- A space residents can associate with the Ashmore precinct;
- A more intimate setting than the large-scale parks;
- Opportunities to connect with residents from adjacent suburbs such as Alexandria; and
- A venue for local small-scale events and gatherings.

6.4 PROPOSED PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

The Draft Ashmore DCP identifies the importance of public open space within the wider precinct. Approximately 15,900m² of additional space is proposed for the Ashmore precinct. Due to the area's close proximity to significant regional and open space areas, the public open space proposed is local open space and is to provide quality green links between the existing Sydney Park and Erskineville Oval. This is part of the Green Liveable Network that the City is committed to.

Proposed public open space includes:

- 1 local park approximately 7,400m². (McPherson Park);
- 1 x 7,500m lineal park or north south green link connecting Erskineville village to Sydney Park; and
- 1 pocket park of around 1,000m².

6.5 DEMAND FOR OPEN SPACE

Public open space

An additional 6,007 residents, a high percentage of whom will be living in apartments, will create demand for additional open space. MacPherson Park and the lineal park and pocket park will provide useable open space for some active and passive recreation within this new precinct. For the Southern Precinct of the City of Sydney, there is currently a rate of 6.6m² of open space per capita. Applying this rate to the new population would mean that the area would require 39,000m² of open space for the forecast population.

Within the Ashmore precinct there is already around 70,000m² of open space accessible within 800 metres and an additional 15,900m² of open space is proposed. However, there is no quality local park located within the precinct and the area is not well linked to district and regional parks.

Therefore the proposed 15,900m² of open space planned would provide the best outcomes for the incoming and existing resident community. Based on the forecast age range of residents the following priority target group needs should be considered:

Children and families

An additional 540 children aged 0 to 11 years will increase demand for playgrounds, parks to run around and kick a ball, and play elements in the public domain. Spaces where families can meet and gather, have bbqs and hang out away from their apartments will also be important.

Working aged people

A high proportion of working people will require local spaces to relax, exercise, meet their friends and family, and walk their dog before and after work and on weekends. Given the proportion of studio and one-bedroom apartments, local open space should also provide opportunities for people to meet and form connections with neighbours. The local space should also be usable for community gardens, markets, artworks and points of interest, as well as local events that build community, and create a sense of place.

Neighbouring residents

A new local park and lineal park will provide further benefits and opportunities for existing residents from neighbouring Erskineville and Alexandria to partake in informal activities and improve their access to Sydney Park and Erskineville Oval.

Semi-private open space

Private open space within medium and high-density developments is becoming more common, including passive green spaces, kickabout spaces, and community fruit, vegetable and herb gardens. In some apartment buildings, community gardens are an informal arrangement, with residents setting up committees to help keep the lawns and garden beds around their buildings in shape. But for an increasing number, communal gardens are being planted explicitly for residents to grow fruit, vegetables and herbs.

HASSELL has been designing several complexes, including Victoria Park's 206-apartment East Village, where developer Payce is cultivating 6,500 m² of gardens. The garden will have a series of raised planters for an orchard and below those will be space for growing vegetables and herbs. A trend in inner city living is for more families and young children wanting access to edible gardens. There are provisional plans for communal gardens at Mirvac's Harold Park development, and there are also plans for communal gardens on top of the new 139-apartment Harbour Mill in Pyrmont. While at the 209-unit Panorama in Crows Nest, there will also be space on the roof for residents to grow herbs and vegetables and reap the benefits of their labour on an honesty system.