

# **SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

**West Gables Rezoning**

**Dharug Country**

**Prepared for Stockland and Allam Property Group  
11 January 2023**



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# **1.0**

# **INTRODUCTION**

# 1.1 INTRODUCTION

## Purpose of the study

This Social Infrastructure Assessment has been prepared by Urbis Pty Ltd (Urbis) on behalf of Stockland and Allam Property Group (Allam) to accompany a planning proposal for a site in the suburb of Gables in Sydney's North West, referred in this report as the 'West Gables' site. The proposal includes primarily residential uses on the site.

The purpose of this study is to provide recommendations for social infrastructure and open space to support the needs of the future population of the proposal site (the 'incoming population').

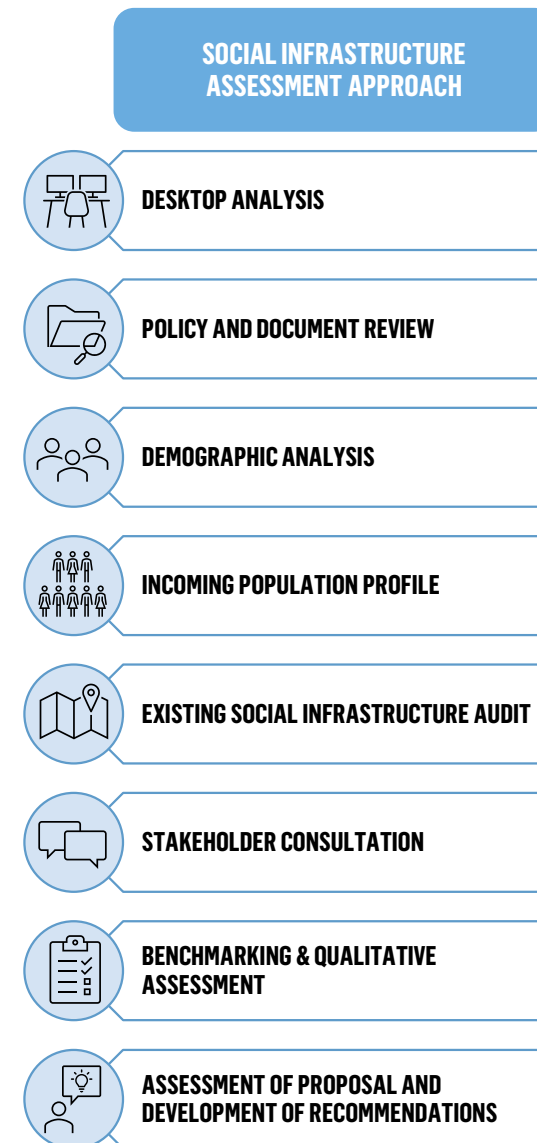
The findings will inform the master plan for the West Gables Rezoning and decisions around developer contributions.

## Approach to assessment

There are a number of key inputs that are needed to determine the social infrastructure and open space needs of a community. As shown in Figure 1, this assessment involved:

- Desktop analysis
- Review of master plan documentation
- Strategic policy and document review
- Demographic analysis of the current and future population
- Development of a profile of the anticipated incoming population profile of the site
- Audit of existing social infrastructure and open space near the site
- Consultation with key stakeholders including representatives from The Hill Shire Council's strategic, social infrastructure and open space teams and representatives from School Infrastructure NSW
- Benchmarking and qualitative assessment to identify the future demand of the proposal site's incoming population for social infrastructure and open space
- Recommendations for preferred social infrastructure and open space provision on site or off site.

Figure 1: Approach to assessment

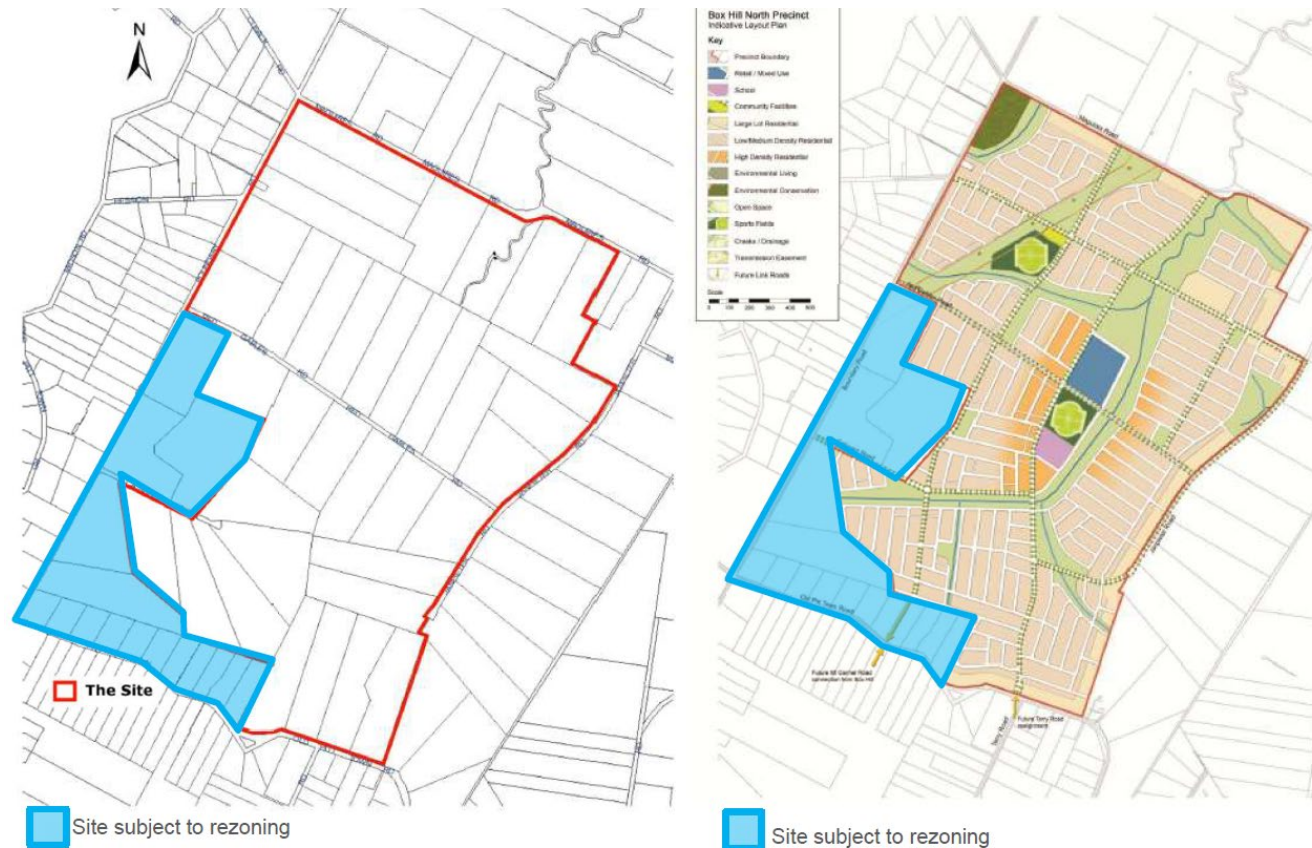


# 1.2 ABOUT THE WEST GABLES REZONING PROPOSAL

## Project background

Stockland and Allam are proposing the development of a new residential community in the suburb of Gables in Sydney's North West. The 78.01ha site is zoned RU6 Transition, and located immediately west of the Box Hill North Precinct, which was rezoned as a stand-alone precinct in 2016. The site's location relative to the Box Hill North Precinct is shown in Figure 2. Stockland and Allam are seeking to lodge a planning proposal to the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) to rezone the site to residential use.

Figure 2: Subject site relative to the Box Hill North Precinct



Source: Stockland and Allam, 2022

# 1.3 PROPOSAL MASTER PLAN

The proposal master plan, shown in Figure 3, includes 64.18ha of net developable area (NDA), and incorporates provision of 1,200-1,300 residential lots. The master plan proposes allocation of the site area as follows:

- 47% standard lots of 300-700sqm
- 6% smaller lots of under 300sqm
- 4% larger lots of 700sqm.

The larger lots will front Old Pitt Town Road and the smaller lots will be focused around proposed open space areas.

The master plan also incorporates approximately 6.15ha of open space provided as local parks that will accommodate passive or unstructured recreation. There are four main parks proposed: Northern Park (2.34ha); Southern Park (2.23ha); Eastern Park (0.58ha) and Western Park (0.66ha). The proposed locations of these parks is shown in Figure 4 on the following page.

Concept plans for the Northern, Southern and Eastern parks are included in Figure 5 on the following page. The plans provide an indication of potential arrangement of key inclusions that respond to site opportunities and constraints, including existing vegetation and topography. The concept plans propose inclusion of areas for play, picnicking, gathering, and recreation.

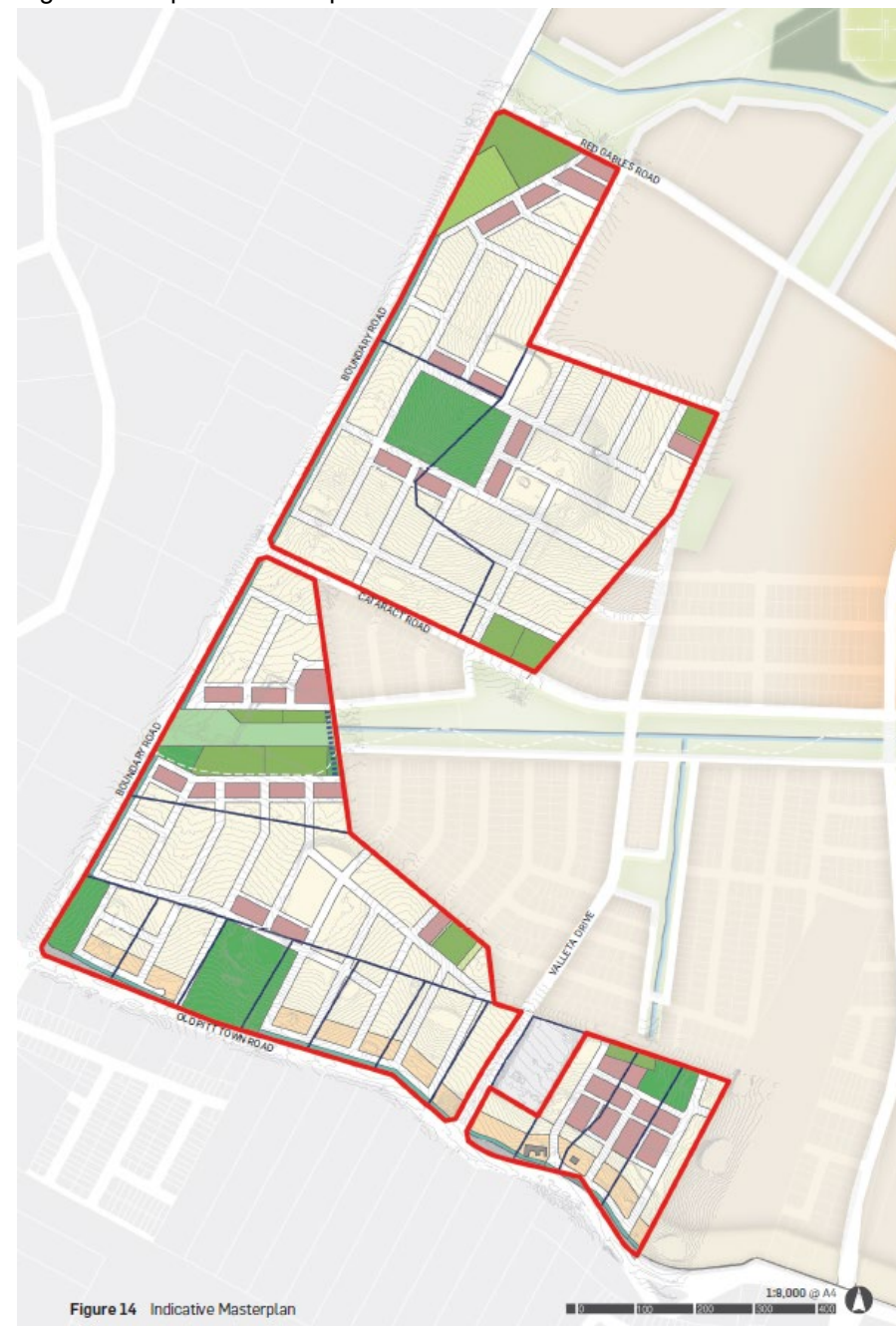
The proposal also includes an additional 3.63ha of open space consisting of easements, riparian corridors, landscape buffers (to Boundary and Pitt Town Roads), drainage and water management areas. A breakdown of open space provision is included in Table 1.

The master plan does not include any open space provision for active or structured sport and recreation or any other forms of social infrastructure.

Table 1: Open space breakdown and areas

Open space type	Area (ha)	% of NDA
Local parks	6.15	9.6%
Infrastructure easements	0.90	1.4%
Riparian corridors	1.40	2.2%
Landscape buffers	1.33	2.1%
Water management infrastructure	4.05	6.3%

Figure 3: Proposal master plan



Source: Urbis 2022



# 1.4 OPEN SPACE CONCEPT PLANS

Figure 4: Concept plan



Source: Urbis 2022

Figure 5: Concept plans for Northern Park (top), Southern Park (centre), Eastern Park (bottom)









Source: Urbis 2022



# 1.5 DEFINING SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Social infrastructure is a combination of 'hard' and 'soft' infrastructure. Hard infrastructure is the buildings, spaces and facilities which serve a social need, while soft infrastructure is the programs, classes, services and networks that run from a building, space or facility. This assessment focuses on determining needs of the incoming population for hard infrastructure, that will support the provision of soft infrastructure in the future.

						
	Community	Arts and culture	Open space	Recreation	Education	Health
HARD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community centre</li> <li>Library</li> <li>Men's shed</li> <li>Seniors centre</li> <li>Youth facility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultural centre</li> <li>Gallery</li> <li>Exhibition space</li> <li>Performance centre</li> <li>Theatre</li> <li>Museum</li> <li>Creative spaces</li> <li>Artist studios</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parks</li> <li>Informal sports play</li> <li>Natural space</li> <li>Green and blue links</li> <li>Passive recreation opportunities (i.e cyclin, walking, running pathways)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sports fields</li> <li>Outdoor courts</li> <li>Aquatic facilities</li> <li>Recreation centres</li> <li>Outdoor gyms</li> <li>Community gardens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early education</li> <li>Primary school</li> <li>High school</li> <li>Technical college</li> <li>University</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community health centre</li> <li>General practitioner</li> <li>Hospitals</li> </ul>
SOFT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community classes</li> <li>Community events</li> <li>Outreach services</li> <li>Playgroups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performances</li> <li>Art exhibitions</li> <li>Community programs, classes and workshops (music, art, performance)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exercise classes</li> <li>Playgroups</li> <li>Public art</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community classes and programs (i.e aqua aerobics, seniors gym classes)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intergenerational programs/services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Primary health services (health promotion, counselling, allied health, medical and nursing services)</li> <li>Other health support services (alcohol support, aged care, maternal and child health, disability services, mental health and disability support)</li> </ul>

# 1.6 SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY TRENDS

Over time the planning and delivery of social infrastructure needs to adapt to changes in the social, economic and environmental context. To meet the challenges of greenfield development, including significant incoming populations, governments around the world are reviewing the way they plan and design social infrastructure. Current trends in the planning and design of social infrastructure are outlined below.

These trends have been considered in the approach to this social infrastructure assessment and in developing recommendations.

**“Community infrastructure is “the interdependent mix of facilities, places, spaces, programs, projects, services and networks that maintain and improve the standard of living and quality of life in a community.”**

Department of Planning Western Australia, 2012

## Planning trends

**Co-design** of facilities with the end users to encourage community ownership and a fit for purpose design

**Partnerships** which provide alternative approaches to funding and delivery of infrastructure, including share-use arrangement and public-private partnerships

**Integrated delivery** of community services in a single facility to improve service delivery for and create efficiencies through common areas and amenities

**Accessibility** of facilities by public, private and active transport is maximised to support a reduction in car use and convenience for different users

**Co-location** of social infrastructure to provide user convenience and encourage cross utilisation of clustered facilities

**Extension** of the home as backyards' are shrinking and people need open space and social infrastructure as places to connect and gather with others

## Design trends

**Flexible** spaces and fittings that can respond to changing preferences over time and avoid redundancy of facilities and equipment

**Multi-purpose** facilities and open space that are designed to support a range of user groups, including different ages, abilities and activities in one location to support increased utilisation by creating spaces that serve multiple functions

**Compact** designs that enable the delivery of critical social infrastructure in areas that are constrained by spaces or land values

**Technology** enabled facilities, including free wi-fi for users, online booking systems and high-tech maker spaces that may provide 3D printing, computer programming and music and movie production

**Smart buildings** and spaces to help social infrastructure providers minimise the long term maintenance and environmental costs of infrastructure



# **2.0**

## **CURRENT LANDSCAPE**

## 2.1 SITE CONTEXT

### Site location and regional context

The site, shown in Figure 6, is located in the suburb of Gables, in The Hills Shire Local Government Area (LGA). The site currently consists of large rural residential lots. Several farm dams are located throughout the site.

The site is located in just outside of Sydney's North West Growth Area (NWGA), which is a 10,200ha area in the Central and Western City Districts, designated for transition from rural to residential uses. The development of the NWGA responds to population growth across Sydney and increased government investment in transport infrastructure in the area, including major road upgrades and the Sydney Metro North West Line.

### Local context

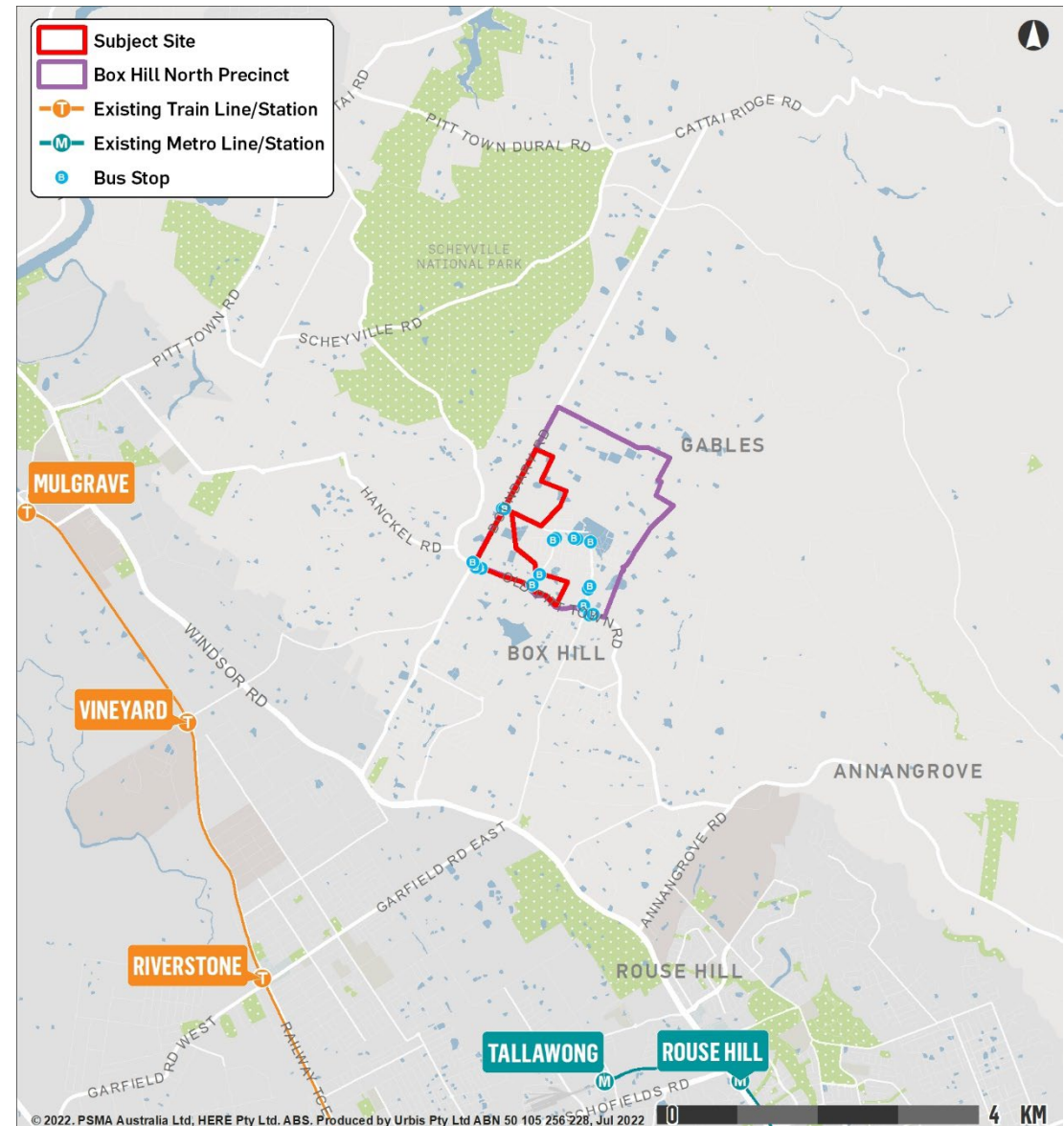
The site is bounded by Red Gables Road to the north, several new roads to the east, Old Pitt Town Road to the south, and Boundary Road to the west. The site is located adjacent to the Box Hill North Precinct, which was rezoned as a stand-alone precinct for low density residential development in 2016. Construction of some parts of the Box Hill North Precinct is complete and residents have moved in. When fully complete, the Box Hill North Precinct is expected to have a permanent residential population of 13,498 people.

Rural residential lots in the Hawkesbury City LGA are located to the west of the site, to the west of Boundary Road. There is no publicly available evidence of plans to rezone this area at the time of writing.

As the site and surrounding area has a small population density, public transport access to the site is currently limited. However, there are several bus stops located within the Box Hill North Precinct that provide services to Riverstone Station (4km from the site) and Rouse Hill Station (2.5km from the site).

There is no existing social infrastructure and open space on the site. Some social infrastructure within the Box Hill North Precinct, as outlined in the Box Hill North Indicative Layout Plan, has been delivered. Additional planned social infrastructure will be delivered as this precinct develops. The existing and planned social infrastructure in the area surrounding the site is discussed further in Sections 2.4 and 2.5 of this report.

Figure 6: Site context map



Source: Urbis 2022



## 2.2 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

This section provides a summary of the strategic context for the planning and provision of social infrastructure and open space based on a review of relevant state and local government strategies and plans. This included:

- Central City District Plan, Greater Sydney Commission (2018)
- Hills Future 2036 – Local Strategic Planning Statement, The Hills Shire Council (2019)
- Recreation Strategy, The Hills Shire Council (2019)
- Box Hill North Precinct Contributions Plan, The Hills Shire Council (2016).

### Key implications for this assessment

- District level strategic plans highlight the importance of the planning and provision of adequate social infrastructure to service the diverse needs of the existing and future population.
- The planning of social infrastructure should consider innovative approaches that facilitate the provision of flexible, multiuse facilities that are highly utilised and meet a diverse range of needs.
- Council's Recreation Strategy highlights the importance of the provision of adequate, high quality, well-distributed and accessible open spaces that meet the needs of the current and future population of the LGA. The Recreation Strategy also proposes the provision of a diversity of open space types that align with Council's proposed hierarchy and embellishment levels.

### Central City District Plan, Greater Sydney Commission (2018)

The Central City District Plan (the District Plan) is a 20-year plan to manage growth and provides a guide to implementing the Greater Sydney Region Plan, A Metropolis of Three of Three Cities. It informs councils' local strategic planning statements and assessment of planning proposals. The Central City District covers the LGAs of The Hills, Blacktown, Cumberland and Parramatta.

The District Plan contains 22 planning priorities under four key themes: infrastructure and collaboration, liveability, productivity and sustainability. The following planning priorities are relevant to this assessment.

#### Planning Priority C3: Providing services and social infrastructure to meet people's changing needs

- Creating opportunities for increased shared use and more flexible use of under-utilised facilities such as schools, sports facilities, halls and creative spaces can support growth and respond to the different needs of local demographic groups.
- Planning for early education and care facilities requires innovative approaches to the use of land and floor space, including co-location with compatible uses such as primary schools and office buildings, close to transport facilities.
- Planning for new schools, and the use of existing schools must respond to growth and changing demands, and consider innovative approaches such as more efficient use of land, contemporary design, greater sharing of spaces and facilities and flexible learning spaces.
- Joint and shared use of facilities is encouraged to make school assets available to the community outside school hours and to give schools access to community facilities.

#### Planning Priority C17: Delivering high quality open space

- The key considerations for planning open space are quality, quantity and distribution.
- Within the land release areas of the District, provision will need to be made to accommodate new open space areas to fulfil the wide needs of the community – from local playgrounds to sportsgrounds.

## 2.2 STRATEGIC CONTEXT [CONTINUED]

### Hills Future 2036 – Local Strategic Planning Statement, The Hills Shire Council (2019)

The Hills Future 2036 – Local Strategic Planning Statement (the LSPS) outlines the 20 year vision for land use in the Hills Shire and provides planning priorities and actions to be achieved over the next five years.

The suburb of Gables (referred to throughout the LSPS as its former name 'Box Hill North') is identified as a town centre within Council's centres hierarchy. Town centres play an important role in providing a mix of residential, retail and employment and recreation uses. The LSPS anticipates the Gables will accommodate an additional 3,200 dwellings from 2019 to 2036, most of which will be at low to medium densities.

Planning Priority 10 in the LSPS, 'Provide social infrastructure and retail services to meet residents' needs', demonstrates Council's commitment to ensuring residents, particularly those in high growth and greenfield areas, have access to social infrastructure including galleries, theatres, libraries, community centres, community gardens, walking trails, playgrounds and open spaces.

Planning Priority 15, 'Provide new and upgraded passive and active open spaces', outlines Council's commitment to providing high quality and accessible playing fields, parks and playgrounds. Council recently undertook detailed open space planning as part its Recreation Strategy which was published in 2019. This strategy is discussed on the following page.

Figure 7: Structure plan of the Hills Shire Council urban area



Source: The Hills Shire Council 2019, page 25



## 2.2 STRATEGIC CONTEXT [CONTINUED]

### Recreation Strategy, The Hills Shire Council (2019)

The Hills Shire Council Recreation Strategy (2019) (the Recreation Strategy) focuses on establishing a framework for the provision of open space and recreation facilities in the Shire to 2036 and informs the planning priorities and five-year action plan contained in the LSPS.

The Recreation Strategy contains a detailed evidence base of open space provision based on benchmarking undertaken by Council, key trends and planning priorities.

The Recreation Strategy focuses on the two key categories of open space:

- Passive open spaces – areas of play or quiet relaxation where people interact with each other and the environment
- Active open spaces – areas for physical activity and organised sport.

To determine the quantity of open space, the Recreation Strategy provides a population-based benchmark, as outlined in Table 2. Noting there are several limitations to using benchmarks, the Strategy also outlines hierarchies for passive and active open space. These include service/embellishment levels, catchment distances, and area sizes for open spaces in each hierarchy level. These are summarised in Figure 8, with more detail provided in Appendix A, B and C of this report.

The Strategy notes that any open space transferred between a developer to Council will be assessed against this hierarchy.

The Strategy also provides several planning priorities and associated principles. The following are relevant to the proposal and should be considered in the assessment of open space:

#### 1. Provide social infrastructure to meet residents' needs

- Categorise all existing and future open space on the open space hierarchy.
- Embellish open space in accordance with the standard levels of service table.

#### 2. Provide new and upgraded passive and active open spaces

- Parks will have an area of at least 5,000sqm and park design and embellishment will reflect their level on Council's open space hierarchy.
- All residents will live within 400 metres of a local park.
- Where possible and appropriate, creek corridors are to be utilised as greenway links.
- Open spaces will be embellished in accordance with the open space hierarchy and level of service benchmarks.
- Parks should be located where they can be seen from nearby residential properties or areas with a high level of pedestrian activity.
- Development that adjoins open space should have an attractive outlook to that open space.
- The use of drainage land will be considered where practical for playing fields, small courts or other recreational opportunities.

Table 2: The Hills Shire Council open space benchmarks

	Ratio (ha/1,000 people)
Passive open space	1.62
Active open space	1.21
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2.83</b>

Figure 8: The Hills Shire Council passive open space hierarchy (top) and active open space hierarchy (bottom)



Source: The Hills Shire Council 2019, page 16-18

## 2.2 STRATEGIC CONTEXT [CONTINUED]

### Box Hill North Precinct Contributions Plan (2016)

The Box Hill North Precinct Contributions Plan (the Contributions Plan) specifies the local infrastructure to be delivered for the new development area identified as the Box Hill North Precinct, immediately east of the proposal site. The Contributions Plan does not apply to the West Gables proposal site, however as the site is located adjacent to the Box Hill North Precinct consideration has been given to social infrastructure planning within this area.

Under a Voluntary Planning Agreement between The Hills Shire Council and the developer of the Box Hill North Precinct, the developer is responsible for the delivery of local infrastructure within this Precinct.

The Indicative Layout Plan (ILP) for the Box Hill North Precinct is shown in Figure 9. Key planned social infrastructure to be delivered includes a 1,020sqm multipurpose community centre and a public primary school. A range of open spaces will also be provided throughout the Precinct, as outlined in Table 3, and several have already been delivered.

A full list of the existing and planned social infrastructure within the Box Hill North Precinct is incorporated in Sections 2.4-2.9 of this report which includes an audit of existing and planned social infrastructure in the surrounding area.

Table 3: Box Hill North open space provision

Open space type	Total area (ha)
Active open space (playing fields)	9.22
Pocket parks	2.47
Passive open space (linear open space)	29.19
<b>Total open space area</b>	<b>40.88</b>
<b>Rate of provision (ha per 1,000 persons)</b>	<b>3.0</b>

Source: Box Hill North Precinct Contributions Plan (2016), page 20

Figure 9: Box Hill North Indicative Layout Plan



Source: The Hills Development Control Plan (DCP) 2012, Part D Section 17 (page 4)

## 2.3 CURRENT POPULATION OF GABLES





### Demographic approach

This section provides an overview of the current and future demographic profile of the population of the site and surrounding area, using data from the 2021 Australia Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census and population projections from Forecast id. Demographic data for The Hills Shire LGA and Greater Sydney have been used, where relevant, for comparison.

### Current community profile

In 2021, the suburb of Gables was home to **3,339 people**. This accounts for approximately 2% of The Hills Shire LGA population. Table 4 provides an overview of the key demographic characteristics of Gables.

Table 4: Key demographic characteristics of Gables in 2021

Young family population	
	The Gables population had a lower median age (32 years) compared to The Hills Shire LGA (38 years). The suburb also had a considerably higher proportion of adults aged 30-39 years (22%) and children aged 0-9 years (22%) compared to The Hills Shire LGA (13% and 14% respectively).
Culturally diverse community	
	Gables had a similar proportion of residents who were born overseas (41%) to The Hills Shire LGA (43%) and Greater Sydney (41%). The top three countries of birth outside of Australia in Gables included India (11%), Philippines (5%) and South Africa (2%).
Low density living and high home ownership	
	Separate houses accounted for almost all dwellings in Gables (97%) and most dwellings were owned with a mortgage (71%). The suburb had a higher average household size (3.3 persons) compared to The Hills Shire LGA (3.1 persons) and Greater Sydney (2.7 persons).
High levels of socio-economic advantage	
	Households in Gables had a higher median weekly income (\$3,219) compared to The Hills Shire LGA (\$2,831) and Greater Sydney (\$2,077).

Source: ABS 2021 Census



# 2.4 OVERVIEW OF EXISTING SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

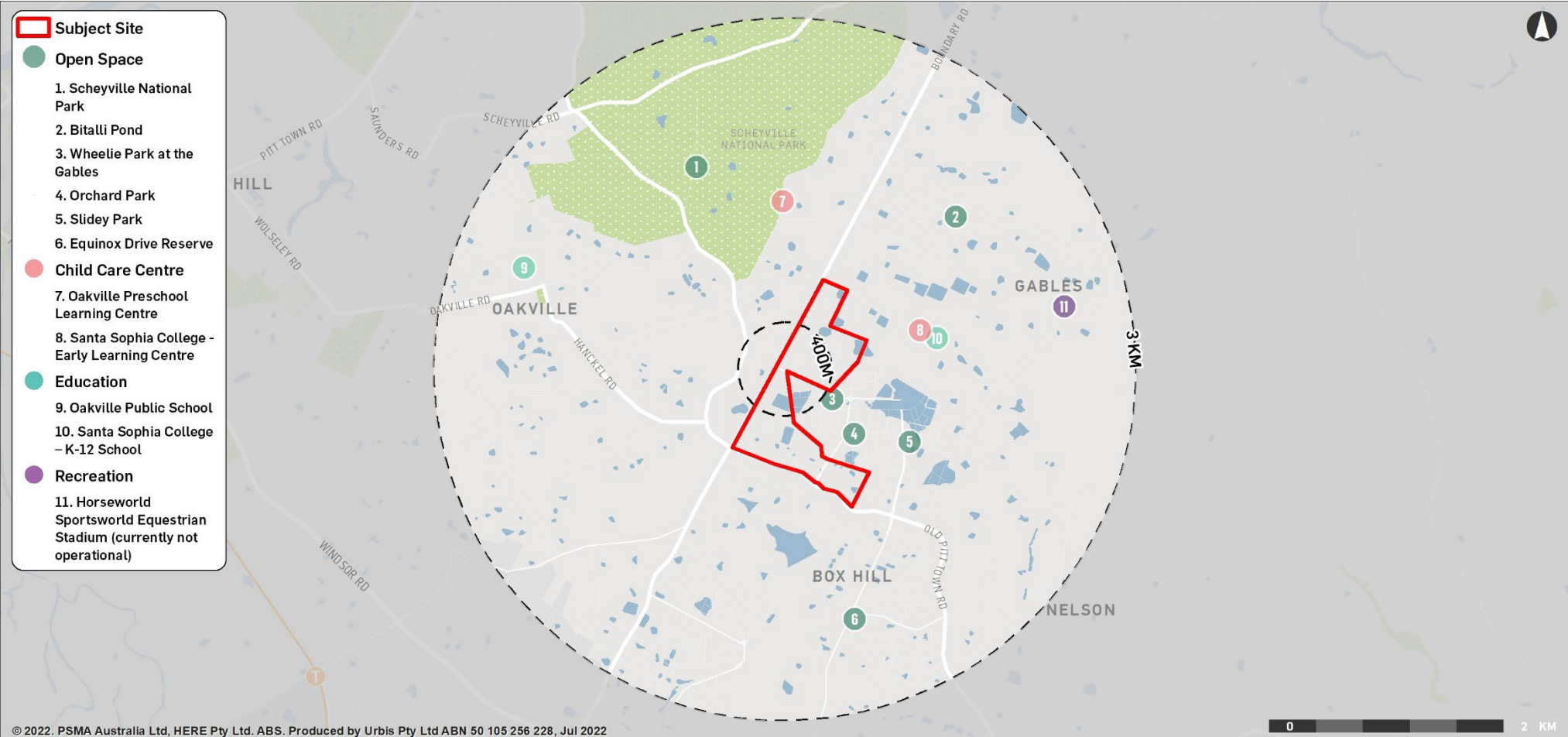
## Overview of existing social infrastructure

As the area surrounding the site was formerly rural residential uses and has only been recently developed, there is currently limited surrounding social infrastructure within the immediate vicinity (see Figure 10). The following pages provide a more detailed outline of open space and social infrastructure surrounding the site, as well as planned social infrastructure for future delivery.

**“Social infrastructure connects people and communities to services and opportunities that enhance their quality of life, enable them to live together and help each other, keep them safe, and healthy”**

Figure 10: Existing social infrastructure and open space within 3km of the site

Infrastructure Australia, 2019



## 2.5 AUDIT OF EXISTING AND PLANNED PASSIVE OPEN SPACE

### Existing passive open space

Map reference	Name	Suburb	Distance from site	Description
1	Scheyville National Park	Scheyville	2km	Located in the Hawkesbury LGA and managed by NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. The park is 950ha and contains vegetated areas (lagoons and wetlands), walking tracks, horse riding trails, camping and picnic facilities and heritage structures and buildings.
2	Bitalli Pond	Maraylya	1km	0.26ha local park containing a playground and sheltered seating.
4	Orchard Park	Gables	500m	0.45ha local park with a children's playground, ping pong table, drinking fountain, walking paths and sheltered seating.
3	Wheelie Park	Gables	100m	0.58ha local park with a children's playground, children's bicycle track and sheltered seating.
5	Slidey Park	Gables	1km	1.72ha local park with a children's playground,, ping pong table and sheltered seating.
-	Transmission Line Park	Gables	100m	10ha east-west linear open space located below a transmission line corridor containing large vegetated areas with landscaped pathways and seating.

Figure 11: Existing passive open space in Gables, including Slidey Park (top), Wheelie Park (middle), Orchard Park (bottom)



Source: The Hills Shire Council 2022

## 2.5 AUDIT OF EXISTING AND PLANNED PASSIVE OPEN SPACE [CONTINUED]

The following planned passive open spaces are being delivered in Gables as part of the staged development of the Box Hill North Precinct. The open space size and description were sourced from the Box Hill North Precinct Contributions Plan (2016) and may be subject to change.

### Planned passive open space

Map reference	Name	Size	Suburb	Description
-	Western Drainage Park	0.58ha	Gables	Informal park with planting, seating and pathways
-	Shale Sandstone Transitional Forest (SSTF) Park	Not available	Gables	Informal park with planting, seating and pathways
-	Eastern Drainage Park	3.65ha	Gables	Informal park with planting, seating and pathways
-	Cumberland Plain Woodland (CPW) Park	2.79ha	Gables	Informal linear park with plating, seating and pathways
-	Pocket Park 2	0.58ha	Gables	Contains playground equipment, seating, pathways and lighting
-	Pocket Park 3	0.59ha	Gables	Contains playground, seating, pathways and lighting
-	Central Square and Southern Portion	2.22ha	Gables	Contains playground, seating, pathways and lighting



## 2.6 AUDIT OF EXISTING AND PLANNED ACTIVE OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION FACILITIES

### Existing active open space and recreation facilities

There is no existing active open space and recreation facilities close to the site. The following tables provide an overview of the closest higher-order (regional and district) facilities to the site.

Map reference	Name	Suburb	Distance from site	Description
-	Bernie Mullane Sports Complex	Kellyville	10.8km	The Bernie Mullane Sports Complex is a multi-purpose open space and recreation hub. It is identified as a district-level sporting facility and. It features an indoor sports stadium, five outdoor fields, five netball courts, six tennis courts, gym, change rooms, public amenities and an inclusive playground. Upgrades were undertaken in 2017 to convert two of the grass fields to synthetic turf surfaces and in 2021 to refurbish the indoor courts and other internal areas.
-	Riverstone Swimming Centre	Riverstone	6.8km	The Riverstone Swimming Centre in the Blacktown LGA is the closest aquatic centre to the site. It contains an outdoor Olympic-sized pool, learn to swim pool, baby's pool and picnic and playground facilities.
-	Waves Fitness and Aquatic Centre	Baulkham Hills	15km	The Hills Shire Council recently redeveloped and opened the Waves Fitness and Aquatic Centre. The new facility is the major aquatic and leisure centre in LGA and includes a new 50m pool, spectator seating, 25m learn to swim and leisure pool, gym and group fitness areas and a recreation courtyard.

Figure 12: Existing active open space and recreation facilities, including recently redeveloped Waves Fitness and Aquatic Centre (top) and Bernie Mullane Sports Complex (bottom)



Source: The Hills Shire Council

## 2.6 AUDIT OF EXISTING AND PLANNED ACTIVE OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION FACILITIES [CONTINUED]

### Planned active open space and recreation facilities

Map reference	Name	Suburb	Distance from site	Description
-	Central Sports Fields	Gables	600m	Mixed active and passive open space with sports fields, amenities block, seating, pathways, lighting, BBQ facilities and fencing. One sportsground of 4.4ha located in the centre of the precinct adjoining the neighbourhood retail centre and primary school. This will include one double playing field, parking and surrounding passive open space.
-	Northern Sports Fields	Gables	500m	Mixed active and passive open space with sports fields, amenities block, seating, pathways, lighting, BBQ facilities and fencing. One sportsground of 4.9ha, located in the north western part of the Precinct. This will include one double playing field or large oval suitable for cricket / AFL.
11	Horseworld Sportsworld Equestrian Stadium	Maraylya	2.3km	The 10ha Horseworld site was purchased by The Hills Shire Council in 2017. Interviews with Council representatives indicated consideration is being given to the potential inclusion of indoor courts and facilities and outdoor playing fields and the future facility would likely service a district population. There is currently no funding source for this facility.
-	Brindle Parkway Reserve	Box Hill	1.8km	A draft master plan has been prepared for a new park in Box Hill, located approximately 1.8km from the site. The master plan proposes two full sized sports fields, a nature walk, shared pathway, local playground and amenities building.

## 2.7 AUDIT OF EXISTING AND PLANNED COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL FACILITIES

### Existing community and cultural facilities

Map reference	Name	Suburb	Distance from site	Description
-	Box Hill Nelson Community Centre	Box Hill	3.5km	The Box Hill Nelson Community Centre is the closest community facility to the site. It contains a single 132sqm space with capacity for 100 people, kitchen and outdoor seating area. The venue is managed by Council and can be hired by the community.
-	Rouse Hill Community Centre	Rouse Hill	5.5km	The Rouse Hill Community Centre is a large community centre managed by Council. The centre includes a function room of 234sqm and five smaller meeting rooms ranging between 35sqm to 60sqm. The function room and three of the five meeting rooms are available for community hire.
-	Castle Hill Community Hub	Castle Hill	15.3km	The Castle Hill Community Hub contains several co-located facilities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Pioneer Theatre – multi-purpose performance and event space managed by Council. The theatre space is configurable and can accommodate up to 350 people.</li> <li>▪ Castle Hill Cultural Centre – comprises several meeting rooms available for community hire.</li> <li>▪ Castle Hill Library – contains study tables, printing, scanning and photocopying and free Wi-Fi.</li> </ul>
-	Riverstone Library	Riverstone	6.5km	Riverstone Library is the closet library to the site and is in the Blacktown LGA. The library contains photocopying and scanning facilities, free Wi-Fi, Justice of the Peace services and study tables.
-	Vinegar Hill Memorial Library	Rouse Hill	7.6km	The Vinegar Hill Memorial Library is the closest The Hills Shire Council library to the site. The library is co-located with a community centre on level one of the Rouse Hill Town Centre and has printing, scanning and photocopying facilities, free Wi-Fi and study tables.

Figure 13: Existing community and cultural facilities, including Rouse Hill Community Centre function room (top) and The Pioneer Theatre (bottom)



Source: The Hills Shire Council



## 2.7 AUDIT OF EXISTING AND PLANNED COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL FACILITIES [CONTINUED]

### Planned community and cultural facilities

Map reference	Name	Suburb	Distance from site	Description
-	Box Hill community centre	Box Hill	3.5km	A new community facility is being planned by the Hills Shire Council in Box Hill. The proposed location of this facility is within a new town centre on the corner of The Water Lane and Nelson Road, which is also the current site of the Box Hill and Nelson Community Hall. Consultation undertaken with Council representatives (refer Section 3.3) indicates the facility will include a satellite library service and designated study spaces. A DA for the facility is currently being prepared.
-	Gables multi-purpose community centre	Gables	750m	The Box Hill North Precinct Contributions Plan (2016) identifies a multi-purpose community centre in Gables on land dedicated to Council through a voluntary planning agreement (VPA). As the facility is in the early planning phase, there is little information currently available. During the consultation conducted for this assessment, Council representatives noted that supporting documentation for the Box Hill North Precinct Contributions Plan identified a facility with a floorspace of around 1,000sqm will be required. Council representatives also suggested the potential for consideration of a larger facility to accommodate additional need generated by the future population of the proposal site (refer Section 3.3).

## 2.8 AUDIT OF EXISTING AND PLANNED EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE FACILITIES

### Existing education and childcare facilities

Map reference	Name	Suburb	Distance to site	Description
1	Oakville Preschool Learning Centre	Oakville	1.5km	Caters to children aged 2 to 6 years and offers long day care and early learning services. Desktop research indicates the centre can accommodate 64 children and does not have any vacancies.
2	Santa Sophia College – Early Learning Centre	Gables	1.2km	Located on the Santa Sophia College campus. Desktop research indicates the centre can accommodate up to 60 children.
3	Oakville Public School	Oakville	2.5km	Public primary school accommodating around 500 students.
4	Santa Sophia College – K-12 School	Gables	1.5km	Co-educational K-12 school established in 2018. The School can accommodate up to 1,920 students and comprises a five storey vertical campus with play spaces and an oval.
-	Riverstone High School	Riverstone	6.1km	The closest public high school to the site. The school has approximately 500 students enrolled from Year 7 to Year 12.

### Planned education and childcare facilities

Map reference	Name	Suburb	Distance to site	Description
-	New public primary school	Gables	500m	A proposed K-6 public primary school located on a 2.2ha site dedicated to the Department of Education as part of the development of the Box Hill North Precinct. Consultation with School Infrastructure NSW (SINSW) representatives (refer Section 3.3) indicated the school is anticipated to be operational from Term 1 2025.
-	New public primary school and high school	Box Hill	2.3km	Consultation with SINSW representatives (refer Section 3.3) indicated a new primary and high school is being planned on land at 48-52 Terry Road, Box Hill. The primary school is anticipated to open in 2025-2026, with the high school component opening in the late 2020s or early 2030s.

## 2.9 AUDIT OF EXISTING AND PLANNED HEALTH FACILITIES

### Existing health facilities

Map reference	Name	Suburb	Approximate distance to site	Description
-	The Hills Community Health Centre	Castle Hill	16.2km	The Hills Community Health Centre is the closet community health centre to the site. It is operated by the Western Sydney Local Health District and serves The Hills LGA population. The centre provides a range of services for families and children and for people with chronic and complex health conditions.
-	Grantham Street Family Practice	Riverstone	3.9km	Grantham Street Family Practice is the closet General Practitioner (GP) practice to the site. It contains two GPs and one physiotherapist.
-	Blacktown Hospital	Blacktown	16.6km	Blacktown Hospital is the closet public hospital to the site and provides 24 hour emergency services, intensive and high dependency care, acute and surgical care, obstetrics, paediatrics, newborn care, rehabilitation and mental and community health services.
-	Lakeview Private Hospital and	Norwest	13.1km	Lakeview Private Hospital is the closet private hospital to the site. It provides a range of specialist services and includes a day surgery and rehabilitation, pathology, radiology and pharmacy services.

### Planned health facilities

Map reference	Name	Suburb	Approximate distance to site	Description
-	Rouse Hill Hospital	Rouse Hill	7.2km	Health Infrastructure NSW is planning a new public hospital in Rouse Hill to service the growing community in the NWGA. The hospital will be located on the corner of Commercial Road and Windsor Road. Clinical service planning is currently underway which will determine the services to be provided in the new hospital. Construction is expected to commence in March 2023. Once operational, Rouse Hill Hospital will be the closet public hospital to the site.



# **3.0**

## **GAPS AND NEEDS OF THE INCOMING POPULATION**

# 3.1 FUTURE POPULATION OF THE SURROUNDING AREA

## Forecasting approach

This assessment is primarily concerned with the future population of the proposal site. However, it is important to recognise the profile of the future population in the wider area to understand the context and the contribution the development will make to population growth, change and the increasing need for, and demand on, social infrastructure.

Forecast id provides population projections for ‘small areas’ (SAs) within The Hills Shire LGA. These areas generally comprise two or more suburbs within a similar geographical area. The site is located within the Box Hill SA which comprises the suburbs of Box Hill and Gables.

## What is the likely future population of Gables?

Between 2021 and 2036, the Box Hill SA population is expected to increase significantly (+1,340%) as more greenfield and rural residential areas are redeveloped for suburban residential uses. This represents the largest increase of all SAs in The Hills Shire LGA. As shown in Table 5, the largest population increase is expected to occur between 2021 and 2026 (+222%).

The area is projected to continue to be characterised by a high proportion of family households in 2036, with over half of all households (53%) comprising couple families with dependents. The most prevalent age cohorts in 2036 are expected to be parents and homebuilders (35 to 49 years), young workforce (25 to 34 years) and primary schoolers (5 to 11 years).

A detailed breakdown of the incoming population of the proposal site specifically is provided in the following section (Section 3.2).

Table 5: Population projections for Box Hill SA

Area	2016	2021*	2026	2031	2036
Box Hill SA population	939	1,637	5,278	12,558	23,567
Box Hill SA five-year % change	-	+74%	+222%	+138%	+88%
The Hills Shire LGA five-year % change	-	+12%	+11%	+11%	+11%

Source: Forecast.id 2017

\* The 2021 population is sourced from the ABS Estimated Resident population

## 3.2 INCOMING POPULATION OF THE PROPOSAL SITE

### Approach to degerming the incoming population

To assess community needs for social infrastructure, it is important to understand the number of people a proposal will introduce into an area and the likely demographic characteristics of the incoming population.

To determine the size and characteristics, Forecast id population and demographic data projections for the greater Box Hill area, including the new suburb of Gables, was considered. While the site will include a slightly more diverse mix of lot sizes and housing typology, the incoming population will likely closely resemble that of the population the surrounding Box Hill and Gables areas.

### Dwelling mix and density of the proposal

The proposal includes approximately 1,200-1,300 dwellings. According to Forecast id, the projected average household size for the Box Hill SA (which includes the suburbs of Box Hill and Gables) in 2036 is 3.41 persons. Based on these figures, the likely incoming residential population for the proposal will be up to around **4,400 residents**.

### Indicative age profile










For the purposes of benchmarking, a likely age profile for the projected incoming population was determined and is shown in Table 6. The population for each service age group was determined by applying the projected age group percentages for the Box Hill SA from Forecast id.

The age profile suggests in 2036 the incoming population will have high proportions of adults aged 35-49 years, babies and pre-schoolers, and primary school aged children, and comprise a high proportion of families with children.

### Implications for social infrastructure provision

While there will be some level of need generated by the incoming population for all forms of social infrastructure, the projected age profile indicates there will be specific demand generated for childcare, schools, parks and playgrounds. The planning for social infrastructure however must also consider that needs of the community will change over time as residents move through different life stages.

Table 6: Projected service age groups for the proposal site in 2036 (based on forecast data for the Box Hill SA)

Age bracket	Indicative %	Likely incoming population*
 <b>Babies and pre-schoolers</b> 0-4	11.0	484
 <b>Primary schoolers</b> 5-11	13.5	594
 <b>Secondary schoolers</b> 12-17	8.9	392
 <b>Young adults</b> 18-24	5.9	260
 <b>Young workforce</b> 25-34	13.9	612
 <b>Parents and homebuilders</b> 35-49	25.5	1,122
 <b>Older workers and pre-retires</b> 50-59	9.7	427
 <b>Empty nesters and retirees</b> 60-69	5.7	251
 <b>Older adults</b> 70+	6.0	264

Source: Forecast id, 2017



## 3.3 STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFIED GAPS AND NEEDS

### Consultation with The Hills Shire Council

To inform this assessment, Urbis undertook a videoconference interview with representatives from The Hills Shire Council's open space and strategic planning teams on 25 May 2022. A summary of the key points from the discussion is provided below:

#### Open space and recreation facilities

- Overall, there is a deficiency in active open space in Gables/Box Hill North.
- Council representatives will want to see alignment with Council's Recreation Strategy in the report and proposal, however benchmarks are not the only consideration and there can be flexibility around benchmarks proposed in the strategy. Council representatives noted a preference for quality over quantity of open space.
- Residents should be within 400-500m walking distance to passive open space.
- The minimum park size outlined in Council's Recreation Strategy (0.5ha) is not definite or fixed, so as long as the park is functional and meets the needs of the community.
- Open space can incorporate riparian and drainage spaces as long as the open space is functional, usable and of good quality.
- Contribution to the provision of active open space off site is an acceptable option for consideration.
- Council proposes a benchmark of 1 sportsfield per 2,500 people, which is outlined in Council's Recreation Strategy.
- A key gap in the area and focus for Council is an indoor sports facility that includes indoor sports courts. Council purchased the Horsecworld site in Maraylya and has earmarked the site for an indoor recreation facility with outdoor playing fields. However there are currently no funding sources identified for this facility.

#### Community facilities

- There is a preference for the provision of larger, consolidated facilities over smaller dispersed facilities.
- Council has previously utilised the former Growth Centre Development Code community facility benchmark of one facility per 6,000 people for planning facilities, however representatives noted that this benchmark is outdated.
- Council is preparing a DA for a community facility in the suburb of Box Hill. This facility will include a satellite library service and designated study space.

#### Child care

- No gaps in child care provision in the area have been identified to date.
- Council operates some children's services, however it tends to rely on privately operated services to meet community needs.

#### Schools

- There is currently an under-provision of schools in new release areas in the LGA and Council representatives are supportive of consulting School Infrastructure NSW as part of the assessment.

#### Health

- A new hospital is being planned in Rouse Hill. Construction is expected to start in March 2023 and clinical services planning is currently underway.

## 3.3 STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFIED GAPS AND NEEDS [CONTINUED]

### Consultation with School Infrastructure NSW (SINSW)

Urbis undertook a videoconference interview with representatives from SINSW on 16 June 2022. A summary of the key points from the discussion is provided below:

#### General discussion points

- SINSW has factored population projections from the Hills Shire Housing Strategy into its population forecast modelling and has included the anticipated population growth from the rezoning of the proposal site in its forecasts.
- There is currently a shortfall in schools in the North West Growth area, however new public primary and high schools are being planned.
- A significant priority for SINSW is ensuring that parents and children can walk to school, rather than drive. Wide footpaths for walking/cycling and good street layouts were identified as key considerations. It will be important to demonstrate this in the master plan, particularly for the proposal site area north of Cataract Road, as SINSW indicated this area would fall within the catchment of the proposed public primary school in the adjacent precinct.

#### Primary schools

- SINSW is planning three new schools to meet the demand generated by population growth in Gables, Box Hill and the surrounding area.
- A new public primary school is being developed in suburb of Gables, adjacent to the proposal site. The 2ha school site will be transferred to the Department of Education through a VPA in coming months. While it still requires Treasury approval, the anticipated opening of this school is Term 1 2025.
- The proposal site area north of Cataract Road would likely be included in the catchment for the planned school in Gables.
- The proposal site area south of Cataract Road would likely be accommodated by a new primary school planned on Terry Road, Box Hill. This school is anticipated to open in 2025-2026.

#### High schools

- A new public high school is also planned to be located adjacent to the proposed primary school on Terry Road, Box Hill in late 2020s or early 2030s.

# 3.4 APPROACH TO ASSESSING SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPEN SPACE NEEDS

## General approach

Planning for future social infrastructure, whether in new or established communities, is a complex task. This assessment takes a good practice approach to identifying social infrastructure and open space requirements of the site.



This has included:

- Understanding the **site and strategic context** of the area that are guiding planning decisions, with consideration of stakeholder perspectives
- Identifying the **demographic characteristics** of the current community and the likely demographic characteristics of the future population to understand future needs and demands for social infrastructure and open space
- Understanding the **existing provision of social infrastructure** and identifying key gaps in provision
- Considering **Council and leading practice principles and benchmarks**, and applying these appropriately to the site.

## Open space standards and benchmarks

As for other types of social infrastructure, there are currently no universal standards for the planning of open space in Australia. At a state level, the Government Architect of NSW (GANSW) has released draft guidelines around open space planning, with key performance indicators shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Key performance indicators for open space

		Local: high density	Local: low & medium density	District	Regional
	<b>Walking distance</b>	2-3 minutes or 200m	5 minutes or 400m	25 minute walk or 2km	30 minutes travel time in vehicle
	<b>Minimum size</b>	3,000sqm	5,000 – 7,000sqm	2-5ha	5ha +

Source: Draft Green Places Design Guide, 2020, p.16

As noted previously, Council's Recreation Strategy also provides guidelines for open space provision. This includes open space hierarchies with minimum accessibility and size requirements, contained in Appendices A-C of this report. In consultation, Council representatives also noted a growing focus on open space quality and performance, rather than quantity. This includes ensuring open space is located within walking distance (400m) of homes and providing quality open space with embellishment that aligns with the relevant open space category and type. This aligns with the Greener Places approach.

Council's Recreation Strategy also uses a population-based benchmark of 2.83ha open space per 1,000 people with 1.62ha for passive and 1.21ha for active recreation. The Strategy does not explain the rationale for this split.

The approach to open space has evolved nationally and more evidenced based approaches to benchmarking open space are now more typically used. This is discussed on the following pages.

## Assessing open space and recreation needs

Access to open space is critical to the health and wellbeing of a community. It is also particularly important for residents living in high density areas and areas with smaller lot sizes, as access to backyards is limited. As introduced in Chapter 1 of this report, there are two open space categories to consider:

- **Open space for passive or unstructured recreation:** spaces that allow for unstructured activities such as walking, running, cycling playing, meeting friends, walking the dog or relaxing.
- **Open space for active or structured recreation spaces and organised sport:** spaces that enable more structured or organised sporting activities such as courts, fields and aquatic facilities.

This assessment considers the demand generated by the incoming population from the proposal for both types of open spaces.



## 3.4 APPROACH TO ASSESSING SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPEN SPACE NEEDS [CONTINUED]

### Background to open space benchmarks in NSW

There are two main ways of considering the quantity of open space provided in a location: by proportion and by area.

Historically, NSW has taken an area-based approach. For example, the superseded Growth Centres Development Code (2006) contained a benchmark of 2.83ha per 1,000 people for 'open space and recreation'. While the benchmark is framed in the Code as a 'guiding threshold', and is caveated with a note stating 'May be refined through specific studies', the 2.83ha per 1,000 people benchmark has been widely used in open space planning in NSW, including by The Hills Shire Council.

The 2.83ha per 1,000 people provision rate is based on patterns of recreation from the UK over 100 years ago. There is no evidence base for the use of this rate as a default standard in 21st century Australia, despite its frequent use in NSW.

The draft Greener Places Design Guide (2020) argues for a performance-based approach which moves away from the quantification of space. It states:

Planning that relies on a spatial standard such as 2.8ha/1,000 people is only effective with high levels of quality control and often works against opportunities for multiple use and innovative solutions. Equally, past approaches such as specifying a percentage of land did not have any direct link to the demand arising from a development, as densities can vary greatly yet the percentage stayed fixed (2020, pg.11).

In submissions to the draft Greener Places Design Guide, 'inner metropolitan councils, regional councils, industry and peak bodies support the guide's performance-based approach....Outer metropolitan councils suggest using a balance of performance based and quantitative spatial standards for open space' (Greener Places Design Guide Consultation Report 2021, pg.8).

The development of the draft DPE Urban Design Guideline (2021) aimed to find this balance and proposed a proportion based approach, whereby 15% of net developable area was set aside for open space. This was complemented by a range of performance-based criteria. This approach is also consistent with the previous Recreation and Open Space Planning Guidelines for Local Government (2010) cited by some NSW councils today, whereby 15% of the total area is set aside for open space, of which 9% is for local and district open space. The Guidelines were removed from exhibition in March 2022 alongside the draft SEPP for Design and Place. At the time of this report, the draft Greener Places Design Guide remains the principle guiding document for open space planning in NSW.

### Approaches to open space benchmarks across Australia

Several other states in Australia take a proportion-based approach to considering open space provision. For example:

- SA's offset scheme under the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act (2016) requires large subdivisions to set aside 12.5% of land for open space
- Victoria's Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines for New Communities in Victoria (2021) recommends 10% of net developable area (NDA) be set aside for local parks and sports fields, with 3-5% for local parks and 5-7% for sports fields. The rationale for the 10% proportion is explained in the box below.
- WA's Development Control Policy 2.3 requires 10% gross subdividable area for open space, which may include regional open space.

### Case study: provision approach in Victoria

In 2017, the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) released the Metropolitan Open Space Network: Provision and Distribution Report. This report emphasises a performance based approach to open space provision. It also includes extensive mapping and calculations of open space distribution across Melbourne, covering 32 municipalities.

The report identifies there is approximately 57.7sqm of public open space per person across Melbourne, including in growth areas. While this rate varies considerably across municipalities, it equates to approximately 9.3% of total land area as open space.

Using this information, SGS's Open Space Contribution Rate Planning Research (2018) for the City of Monash recommends 10% of all developable land be open space. This is based on an average provision rate of 30sqm per person and the associated open space required from the expected population growth. SGS notes several Victorian councils apply an average per capita provision rate of 24 – 30.3sqm, based on existing conditions. This average is therefore seen as an acceptable basis for informing the 10% rate of developable land area and enabling all residents to have acceptable access to open space.

## 3.4 APPROACH TO ASSESSING SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPEN SPACE NEEDS [CONTINUED]

### Summary of findings:

- Open space planning, particularly in other parts of Australia, is moving away from the population-based benchmark used by Council.
- The focus on open space quality and functionality described by Council representatives and outlined in Council's Recreation Strategy aligns with NSW guidelines.
- The draft Green Places Design Guide takes a performance-based approach which moves away from the quantification of total open space. While there is some support for this model (notably from inner metropolitan and regional councils), some outer metropolitan councils suggest a combination of performance based and quantitative standards for open space is needed. Several states in Australia have already adopted a quantitative, proportion-based approach.
- Council and State guidelines use a hierarchy of provision for open space planning. Alongside quantitative measures for each level in the hierarchy, guidance around open space function, size and accessibility is provided to enable a well balanced network of open space and recreation opportunities.
- Expanding the assessment of open space beyond quantitative standards is aligned to the multi-criteria approach recommended by the GANSW, which considers a range of factors to provision such as local context, accessibility, quality and usability.

### Assessment approach

This assessment considers open space demand generated by the proposal for structured and unstructured recreation uses.

To determine an appropriate amount and configuration of open space that will provide good community outcomes for the future population, this assessment has considered both performance based and quantitative spatial standards for open space.

Performance based principles, considering criteria around accessibility, quality and configuration of spaces, are drawn from the Draft Greener Places Guide and Council's Recreation Strategy.

With regard to quantitative benchmarking, this assessment primarily references the:

- 10% of NDA indicator used in Victoria, as this is the most contemporary and evidenced based approach currently available
- Minimum park sizes contained in Council's Recreation Strategy
- 400m accessibility catchment recommended in the Draft Greener Places Guide and in Council's Recreation Strategy.

This assessment however recognises the incoming population will also need access to open space for active or structured recreation and acknowledges Council's benchmarks for playing fields. These open space needs are considered and benchmarked separately to the proportion based approach applied to the site.

## 3.5 BENCHMARKING ASSESSMENT

Table 8 below and overleaf provides a benchmarking assessment to identify likely requirements for social infrastructure and open space. Benchmarks have generally been sourced from relevant Council documents. Where Council does not provide benchmarks for social infrastructure, best practice industry benchmarks have been used.

Table 8: Social infrastructure benchmarking assessment

Social infrastructure	Proposed benchmark	Source	Demand generated by incoming population
<b>Community and cultural facilities</b>	<p>1 district community centre per 15,000-25,000 people (900sqm minimum). Incorporating multipurpose spaces for broad range of community activities and programs</p> <p>80sqm of community centre space per 1,000 people*</p> <p>1 arts and cultural centre per 50,000 to 150,000</p>	<p>Guidelines for Community Infrastructure, Parks and Leisure Western Australia (2020)</p> <p>*Floor area benchmark for community centres is regarded as a good practice provision rate for metropolitan councils. It has been adopted by several NSW Councils including Hornsby Shire Council, City of Parramatta, Ku-ring-gai Council, Blacktown City Council and the City of Ryde</p>	<p>The incoming population will not alone generate demand for a district community centre or arts and cultural centre. It will, however, be likely to generate demand for approximately 350sqm of community centre space and contribute to demand for arts and cultural facilities.</p>
<b>Libraries</b>	<p>1 branch library per 20,000-50,000 people</p> <p>42sqm per 1,000 people (for populations less than 15,000)</p>	<p>Guidelines for Community Infrastructure, Parks and Leisure Western Australia (2020)</p> <p>Floor area based on State Library of NSW (People Places population calculator)</p>	<p>The incoming population will not alone generate demand for a library. However it will generate demand for approximately 185sqm of library floor area.</p>
<b>Education</b>	<p>As determined by internal SINSW modelling</p> <p>Approximate school enrolment numbers of up to 1,000 primary students and up to 2,000 secondary students for new schools</p>	SINSW	<p>In 2036, population projections indicate 13.5% of the incoming population will be primary school aged (5-11 years) and 8.9% will be secondary school aged (12-17 years). Applying these proportions to the total incoming population in 2036 means there will be approximately:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 594 primary school aged children</li> <li>• 392 secondary school aged children.</li> </ul> <p>Modelling is used by SINSW to determine needs for public schools and factored into advice from SINSW representatives on the provision of school places.</p>



## 3.5 BENCHMARKING ASSESSMENT [CONTINUED]

Table 8: Social infrastructure and open space benchmarking assessment [continued]

Social infrastructure	Proposed benchmark	Source	Demand generated by incoming population
<b>Childcare</b>	1 long day care place per every 3 children aged 0-4 years (80-100 places per centre)	Industry standard	In 2036, population projections indicate 11.0% of the incoming population will be aged 0-4 years. The incoming population will therefore generate demand for approximately 160 childcare places, which equates to up to two childcare centres.
<b>Health facilities and services</b>	1 GP practice for every 4,000 to 5,000 people, with up to five GPs  1 integrated community health centre for every 75,000-100,000 people	Integrated Primary and Community Care Development Plans for the South West Growth Centre, NSW Health (2012)	The incoming population will generate demand for one small practice with up to five GPs.  The incoming population alone will not generate need for an integrated community health centre, however together with broader population growth in the area, it will contribute to increasing demand for these facilities and services.
<b>Sport and recreation facilities</b>	1 outdoor playing field per 2,000-4,000 people (lower figure is for established areas and higher figure is for high density areas)  1 indoor recreation centre per 50,000 -100,000 people (minimum 3 courts)  Aquatic centres: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local/neighbourhood: 1 per 30,000 people</li> <li>District: 1 per 75,000 people</li> <li>Regional: 1 per 150,000 people</li> </ul>	Council's Recreation Strategy	The incoming population will generate demand for up to two outdoor playing fields.  The incoming population will not alone generate demand for an indoor recreation or aquatic facility, however together with broader population growth in the area, it will contribute to increasing demand for these facilities.
<b>Open space</b>	10% of NDA as open space  All dwellings are within 400m of local open space. Local open space to be minimum 0.5ha, embellished to standards outlined in Council's Recreation Strategy	As proposed in Section 3.4  Council's Recreation Strategy	Based on a NDA of 64.18ha, 6.42ha of open space should be provided on site.  Open space will need to be distributed so that all dwellings are within 400m (5 minute walk) of open space. Open space should be developed with consideration of Council's hierarchy and proposed service levels, as outlined in Appendices A-C.




# **4.0**

## **DEMAND ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

## 4.1 SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEMAND ANALYSIS




This section outlines the likely social infrastructure needs generated by the incoming population. It is informed by qualitative and quantitative information provided in Sections 1 to 3 of this report, including the policy review, current and future demographic profile, existing and proposed social infrastructure, and benchmarking assessment. Table 9 provides a summary of the likely needs for each social infrastructure type.

Table 9: Social infrastructure and open space demand analysis

Social infrastructure	Demand analysis
<b>Community and cultural facilities</b> 	<p>Community and cultural facilities provide spaces for community activities, programs and services. They provide opportunities for people to meet, gather, learn, exercise, perform, celebrate, and to access important information and services. They also contribute to the forming and strengthening of social connections and facilitate community cohesion. Community facilities are best located in town centres so they are easily and conveniently accessed by the community.</p> <p>The incoming population will not alone generate demand for a new community centre. It will however generate demand for approximately 350sqm of community centre floorspace. The multipurpose community facility proposed for the neighbouring Gables area, identified as part of the Box Hill North Precinct Contributions Plan, is well located to meet the needs of the incoming population. Council representatives confirmed that the planning process for this facility has not yet commenced. The opportunity to contribute to this facility in order to incorporate the needs of the incoming population could be explored with Council.</p> <p>The incoming population's needs for higher order regional and cultural facilities such as performing arts centres and galleries are likely to be met through district and regional level facilities such as The Castle Hill Community Hub located in the Castle Hill town centre.</p>
<b>Libraries</b> 	<p>The incoming population will not alone generate demand for a library, however it will generate demand for approximately 185sqm of library floor area. Currently, the closest libraries to the site are Riverstone Library in the Blacktown LGA (6.5km away) and Vinegar Hill Memorial Library in The Hills Shire LGA (7.6km away). Consultation with Council indicated the proposed community centre in Box Hill will include a satellite library service with a dedicated study space. A similar satellite library service could be considered for the proposed community facility in Gables. Opportunities to contribute to the proposed Gables community facility so that it can meet the needs of the incoming population for library services should be explored through consultation with Council.</p>
<b>Education</b> 	<p>The incoming population is expected to include approximately 594 primary and 392 secondary school aged children. Currently, there are two schools within 3km of the site. These are Santa Sophia College (a K-12 Catholic school) and Oakville Public School (a public primary school). Consultation with SINSW representatives indicated several new public schools are proposed in the area surrounding the site and that it is likely the need generated by the incoming population could be met through these new schools. These schools are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A public primary school in Gables (estimated opening 2025). SINSW representatives suggested that students from the northern section of the site (i.e. north of Cataract Road) could be accommodated in the catchment for this school</li> <li>▪ A co-located public primary school and public high school at 48-52 Terry Road, Box Hill. SINSW representatives indicated the primary school would be delivered first (estimated opening 2025-2026) potentially followed by the high school (late 2020s or early 2030s). Representatives suggested that students from the southern section of the site (i.e. south of Cataract Road) could fall within the catchment for the primary school, and high school needs of the all future residents could be met through the planned high school.</li> </ul>

## 4.1 SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEMAND ANALYSIS [CONTINUED]

Table 9: Social infrastructure and open space demand analysis [continued]

Social infrastructure	Demand analysis
<b>Childcare</b> 	<p>The incoming population will generate need for around 160 childcare places. This equates to around two childcare centres. Currently there are two childcare facilities within 3km of the site: Santa Sophia Early Learning Centre in Gables and Oakville Preschool Learning Centre. A desktop review indicates the latter facility is currently at capacity. No vacancy data is available for the Santa Sophia Early Learning Centre.</p> <p>It is expected the demand for the two additional childcare centres will be met through future private operator provision within the surrounding area, including future centres that may be developed in the neighbouring Box Hill North Precinct. Childcare centres are also permissible in residential areas, and there is potential for private and not for profit providers to establish new centres within the site in response to future market demand.</p>
<b>Health</b> 	<p>The incoming population will likely generate need for approximately five GPs, who traditionally may have been located in one practice. Contemporary GP practices are tending to be larger, with a number of GPs with different areas of speciality, often supported by allied health services, operating from one practice. It is expected the local health service needs of incoming residents will be met through existing and new services in the surrounding area, potentially including the Gables retail/mixed use centre identified in the Box Hill North Precinct Contributions Plan. Some of the incoming population's health service needs will also be met through the existing Rouse Hill Community Health Centre.</p> <p>The future Rouse Hill Hospital will serve the needs of the incoming population and the broader population of the North West Growth Area for specialist and high-order health services. This facility is likely to be completed in the mid to late 2020s.</p>
<b>Indoor recreation facilities</b> 	<p>The incoming population will not alone generate demand for an indoor recreation facility or aquatic facility. However, together with broader population growth in the North West Growth Area, it will contribute to increasing demand for these facilities.</p> <p>It is expected the needs of the incoming population will be met through existing aquatic facilities. These include the recently redeveloped Waves Aquatic and Fitness Centre in Baulkham Hills, a regional level facility, and the Riverstone Swimming Centre which is managed by Blacktown City Council.</p> <p>The closest existing indoor sports courts are located within the Bernie Mullane Sports Complex in Kellyville (approximately 10.8km from the site), which is identified as a district level facility in Council's Recreation Strategy. Council representatives identified indoor sports courts in the LGA's growth area as a key gap. Council representatives identified the potential opportunity to address this gap through the former Horsecworld site in Maraylya (approximately 2.3km from the site). Council purchased this site with the intention of redeveloping it into a district-level multipurpose indoor and outdoor recreation facility. Council's Recreation Strategy notes this facility could accommodate up to four indoor courts. At present there is no funding source for this facility.</p> <p>Opportunities to contribute to the future redevelopment of the Horsecworld site to accommodate the needs of the incoming population for indoor recreation facilities could be explored with Council.</p>



## 4.1 SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEMAND ANALYSIS [CONTINUED]

Table 9: Social infrastructure and open space demand analysis [continued]

Social infrastructure	Demand analysis
<b>Open space for structured recreation and sports</b> 	<p>The proposal master plan does not include open space for active or structured recreation. In accordance with Council's benchmarks the incoming population will generate demand for approximately two playing fields. The Box Hill North Precinct Contributions Plan identifies two future active open space areas within Gables: the Central Sports Fields and the Northern Sports Fields. Each area is expected to accommodate two playing fields and amenities. While these facilities are within close proximity to the site, Council's benchmarks indicate this open space will cater to the needs of the projected Gables population and can not be relied upon alone to meet the needs of the incoming population.</p> <p>Consultation with Council representatives indicated additional outdoor playing fields may be included as part of the redevelopment of the former Horseworld site. Opportunities to contribute to the development of the Horseworld site to meet the needs of the incoming population for active open space could be explored with Council. The incoming population would be within 2km of this facility (which aligns with Council's standards).</p>
<b>Open space for unstructured recreation</b> 	<p>Based on a proportion based approach, and a site NDA of 64.18, 6.4ha (10% of NDA) of the site should be allocated as public open space. The proposal master plan incorporates 6.15ha of open space in the form of local parks, which equates to 9.6% of the NDA. The master plan also includes incorporates an additional 3.63ha (5.7% of NDA) of easements, landscape buffers and riparian corridors. These areas will not have the same level of recreation functionality as the local parks, but will provide opportunities for additional recreational opportunities for uses such as linear recreation, seating areas and dog parks (within easements).</p> <p>The Urban Design Report (Urbis, 2022) examines the accessibility of proposed open space. All dwellings will be within 400m of a local park. A small number of dwellings in the northern section of the site will be just beyond 400m walking distance to local parks on site, however they will be within this distance of open space in the neighbouring Gables area.</p> <p>As described previously, there are four main local parks proposed. The local parks are reasonably well distributed across the site. All four parks align with Council's minimum size standards. The Northern and Southern Parks are large, district-sized parks greater than 2ha in area. These parks will provide large, central gathering and recreation spaces for the future community. The Eastern and Western Parks are also of reasonable size (greater than 0.5ha).</p> <p>The concept plans developed for the Northern, Southern and Eastern Parks indicate that the parks will be well embellished and will include existing and future large trees, providing important shade and greenery, play spaces, picnic and barbeque amenities and flexible open spaces. Future detailed designs for these parks should ensure the level of embellishment of parks aligns with the hierarchy and standards proposed in Council's Recreation Strategy. Detailed designs should also consider the demographic profile of the area and potential changing needs. The incoming population is projected to consist predominately of families with children. While providing play opportunities for younger children will be important, providing play and recreation opportunities for older children and young people will also be critical to cater to changing needs over time.</p> <p>As identified, the proposal does not include any open space for active or structured sport and recreation and contribution to development of facilities off site is proposed. There will, however, be opportunities for non-structured sport and recreation on site through provision of, for example, walking/jogging/cycle paths and single multipurpose courts or half courts and open grassed areas for informal ball games within the local parks.</p>

## 4.2 SUMMARY OF GAPS AND NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Summary of key social infrastructure needs

- Community, library and cultural facilities and service needs are likely to be met through contributions to planned new facilities, including a multipurpose community centre in Gables.
- Primary and high school needs are likely to be met by existing and planned schools in surrounding areas.
- The likely incoming population of children aged 0-4 years will generate the need for up to two childcare centres. This may be met by existing and future centres in the surrounding area, or on site provision of centres, which are permissible in residential zones.
- The incoming population will generate the need for around five GPs. These needs will likely be met through new medical centres, including potential new services in the new Gables retail/mixed use centre.
- Needs for hospital and specialist health services will be met through the future Rouse Hill Hospital and specialist services associated with this facility.
- Aquatic facility needs are likely to be met through existing and upgraded facilities.
- Council has identified a specific gap in indoor recreation/sports facilities in the North West Growth Area and has identified the development of the former Horsecworld site as a potential opportunity to address this gap. Contributions to the development of this facility presents a potential option to address the incoming population's needs for indoor recreation space.
- The incoming population will generate demand for approximately two playing fields. This need could be met through contributions to new active open space off site, including on the former Horsecworld site.
- The incoming population's needs will also need access to local passive open space within walking distance. The proposal includes 6.15ha of open space in the form of local parks, which equates to 9.6% of the NDA. It also includes a further 3.63ha (5.7% of NDA) of easements, landscape buffers and riparian corridors which provide additional recreational opportunities. Between the local parks and recreational use of these areas, the open space needs of incoming residents are likely to be met.

### Recommendations

- Continue to consult with Council to develop a suitable approach to providing contributions to the provision of social infrastructure off site to meet the needs of the incoming population, in particular for active open space, indoor recreation facilities, community centres and libraries.
- Continue to consult with SINSW regarding timing of proposed schools.
- Future planning phases should support the provision of childcare facilities on site where possible.
- Future detailed planning and design should focus on strengthening active transport connections between the site and surrounding social infrastructure, including parks, schools, childcare and other services to encourage walking and cycling. This should include creating adequate, shaded, accessible pathways.
- The parks across the site should be considered and designed as a network, each providing unique offerings and collectively meeting the recreational needs of the incoming population.
- The embellishment of open space should align with Council's hierarchy and standards so that parks provide high quality spaces that meet the needs of the incoming population and play a role in the broader LGA open space network. Council's hierarchy and standards suggest the larger Northern and Southern Parks should perform a district function. Embellishment of these parks should therefore also consider the recreation needs of the surrounding community.
- The design of parks should also consider Council's requirements in relation to ongoing maintenance, so that open space can be effectively and efficiently maintained in the future.
- Parks should include a diverse range of play opportunities to cater to the needs of the high proportion of young children who are likely to be moving into the area. Parks should also include recreational opportunities for older children and young people so that offerings remain relevant as the community grows and changes over time.
- Explore opportunities to provide additional recreational opportunities within easements and drainage corridors to expand the offering of functional open space on site.

# APPENDICES

# APPENDIX A: THE HILLS SHIRE COUNCIL PASSIVE OPEN SPACE HIERARCHY

Table 10: The Hills Shire Council passive open space hierarchy

Classification	Definition	Examples	Catchment	Area
Local (Basic park)	Undeveloped park consisting of primarily turf, generally used as a kick-about area. May include a bench or seat, some landscaping and a pathway link forming part of an extended route. They are generally small but can also be a large undeveloped bushland setting.	Gilbert Road Reserve, Castle Hill	400m	0.5-1ha
Local (Local park)	Open space serving an immediate local catchment including adjoining and nearby surrounding streets. They service the daily and weekly needs of surrounding residents, and are generally accessed by walking or cycling from surrounding areas. They contain basic infrastructure including a playground, attracting visitors for short visits of up to an hour.	Turkeys Nest Dam Reserve, Beaumont Hills	400m	0.5-1ha
Local (Suburban park)	These parks are slightly larger than local parks catering for a local catchment up to a suburb. They contain slightly larger playgrounds than a local park with shade, sheltered seating/picnic facilities, drinking water, pathways and landscaping. They attract visitors for short to medium visits of an hour or two.	Balcombe Heights Estate Reserve, Baulkham Hills	400m-1km	0.5-2ha
Local (Urban park in high density areas)	Open space servicing a larger local catchment of up to a suburb in higher density area. These parks have the character of an urban park and contain recreational infrastructure such as playgrounds, formal paved areas, designated seating and shelter, and may include technological features such as wifi availability to cater for the increased surrounding population. They attract visitors for short to medium visits of an hour or two.	Arthur Whitting Park, Castle Hill	400m-1km	0.5-1ha
District	Open space serving a group of suburbs or ward area. These spaces contain multiple and diverse recreational opportunities including an extensive playground. They attract visitors from within and outside the Shire for medium to long visits of one to three hours.	Crestwood Reserve, Baulkham Hills	2km	2-5ha
Subregional	Open space serving a major portion of the Shire or from outside the Shire. They are generally accessed by car and/or major public transport routes, but can be influenced specifically by their location, intent, purpose and historical value. These spaces generally contain multiple and diverse recreational opportunities or significant items of interest. They are destination facilities, attracting visitors for long stays of more than three hours.	Castle Hill Showground, Castle Hill	One facility for the Shire	5+ha

Source: The Hills Shire Council Recreation Strategy (2019), page 17-18



## APPENDIX B: THE HILLS SHIRE COUNCIL ACTIVE OPEN SPACE HIERARCHY

Table 11: The Hills Shire Council active open space hierarchy

Classification	Definition	Examples	Catchment	Area
Ancillary	Ancillary playing fields consist of a single playing field, sometimes below full-size. They are generally located in established areas and are limited in their use due to their restricted space. They can include related facilities, but generally lack the required infrastructure. School sites where only a single playing field is possible due to limitations of available space can be considered. To ensure maximum usability at school sites, they will need to be full size fields and require as a minimum, synthetic playing surfaces, floodlighting, amenities and car parking. Ancillary sites are not a preferred approach for existing public open space.	Ellerman Park, Dural	1-2km	Subject to availability of land
Local	Predominantly include two full-sized playing fields (occasionally three to four fields with basic level infrastructure for a single code), amenities, floodlighting and car parking. They include core infrastructure sufficient for grassroots local sport and recreation. This level is the most common sized playing field facility across the Shire.	George Thornton Reserve, West Pennant Hills	1-2km	5ha
District	District facilities are generally larger and cater for a wide catchment including a minimum four full-sized playing fields. They include a larger amenities building, floodlighting, car parking and multi-purpose/hard courts (tennis, netball, basketball, etc.). They are generally suitable for grassroots local and representative sport, as well as recreation.	Bernie Mullane Sports Complex, Kellyville	2km	5-10 ha
Regional	Regional facilities cater for multiple sports and recreation opportunities. They serve the entire Shire and visitors. They can be used for various levels from local sport, representative, state and national sport. These facilities are preferably located close to public transport links and also include ancillary passive recreational opportunities.	Fred Caterson Reserve, Castle Hill	5-10km	10+ ha

Source: The Hills Shire Council Recreation Strategy (2019), page 16

# APPENDIX C: THE HILLS SHIRE COUNCIL OPEN SPACE SERVICE LEVELS

Table 12: The Hills Shire Council open space service levels

Level of service	Passive recreation						Active recreation			
Hierarchy	Local basic	Local	Local suburban	Local urban	District	Subregional	Ancillary	Local	District	Subregional
Shared pathway forming commuter link	✓	If identified as a route in Council's adopted Bike Plan and relevant Contribution Plans								
Internal pathways/connections	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
On-site car parking			O		✓	✓	O	✓	✓	✓
Public amenities			O	O	✓	✓	O	✓	✓	✓
Playground	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	O		✓	✓
Playground – water play			O	O	O	✓			O	
Playground shade structure	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Playground fencing	F	F	F	F	F	F		F	F	F
Playground synthetic/rubber soft fall	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		O	✓	✓
Outdoor fitness equipment			O	O	✓	✓		O	✓	✓
Skate parks			O		O	✓		O	O	O
Dog off-leash area	O	O	O		O	O	O	O	O	O
Shelter and seating		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		O	✓	✓
Seating	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bbq facilities (electric)			O	✓	✓	✓		O	O	✓
Rubbish bins and collection		O	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Drinking water		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tap/water connection	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Park lighting		O	O	✓	✓	✓		O	✓	✓
Park signage	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Landscaping/tree planting	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Amenities building changerooms								✓	✓	✓
Indoor recreation centre								✓	✓	✓
Storage							O	✓	✓	✓
Training and clubroom								O	P	✓

Level of service	Passive recreation						Active recreation			
Hierarchy	Local basic	Local	Local suburban	Local urban	District	Subregional	Ancillary	Local	District	Subregional
Grandstand									P	✓
Spectator viewing area (seating)								O	✓	✓
Fencing – reserve perimeter				O				✓	✓	✓
Fencing – main field perimeter								O	P/O	✓
Playing field							✓	✓	✓	✓
Playing surface drainage and Irrigation							O	✓	✓	✓
Playing field – synthetic surface									O	O
Playing field floodlighting standard (lux)							50*	100*	100*	500*
Tennis court (incl. floodlighting)							O	O	O	O
Netball court (incl. floodlighting)							O	O	O	O
Multi-purpose court (incl. floodlighting)							O	O	O	O
Cricket pitch (synthetic grass)							O	O	O	O
Cricket practice nets (Synthetic Grass with Fencing)							O	O	O	O
Recycled water tank/s						O	O	✓	✓	✓
Public art				O	O	✓				
Open space kick-about area	O	✓	✓	O	✓	✓		O	✓	✓
Irrigation – gardens, kick-about areas		O	O	✓		✓			O	O

**Legend:** ✓ = Included (Core) ; O = Optional ; P = (Premier Facility only) ;  
F = Fencing – Safety only (to prevent access onto roads, car parks, water, bushland etc.)

\* = Average lux level across the playing field surface

Source: The Hills Shire Council Recreation Strategy (2019), page 64-65

