

34-46 BROOKHOLLOW AVENUE, NORWEST

Social Impact Assessment



Prepared for Visy Dior Pty Ltd

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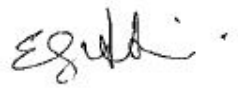
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Executive Summary

HillPDA has been engaged by Visy Dior Pty Ltd to prepare a Social Impact Assessment to accompany a planning proposal for consideration by The Hills Shire Council in regard to the planning proposal for an employment precinct with a limited residential component. The subject site is located at 34-46 Brookhollow Avenue, Norwest and is within The Hills LGA. The site is immediately adjacent to a proposed new Sydney Metro station.

The concept proposal would allow for approximately of 60,690 square metres of new development, of which almost 50,000 square metres will provide commercial uses including offices, hotel/pub, retail, community co-working space and child care centre. The proposal also encompasses a maximum of approximately 12,000 square metres of residential apartments and a civic space that connects to Norwest Metro station.

HillPDA has undertaken an assessment of the Norwest community's demographic characteristic in order to understand how the planning proposal may impact on the community. The area in which the planning proposal relates is primarily an employment area and the existing resident population comprise mainly working families. Overall, the population has a larger proportion of middle-aged people and school-aged people compared to Greater Sydney. Apartment dwellers in The Hills Shire are generally younger families. Median incomes in the area are above average and the LGA has high rates of home ownership. The LGA has a shortage of smaller more affordable dwellings suited to young couple and young families.

Norwest has been identified by the NSW Government as a Strategic Centre. Strategic centres are intended to attract significant investment and business activity to provide jobs growth. Diversifying the range of activities in strategic centres is supported to create vibrant, safe places and a quality public realm focusing on a human-scale public realm and locally accessible open space. Consistent with these objectives, the planning proposal seeks to balance the efficient movement of people, support the liveability of places and improve the walkability. The planning proposal provides for a diverse and vibrant night-time economy and creates the conditions for residential development within strategic centres and within walking distance (up to 10 minutes), but not at the expense of the attraction and growth of jobs, retailing and services. On this basis, the planning proposal is generally consistent with the strategic directions of the NSW Government.

An audit of the existing social infrastructure has indicated that there that many of the child care centres in the area have been found to be operating at or near capacity. A child care centre has been included into the concept proposal to address these needs. In addition, a community co-working space is proposed to provide a collaborative space suited to work-at-home professionals, providing an opportunity for social interaction and flexible work practices. Civic space is also proposed which would make a valuable contribution to the public domain of Norwest.

The potential social impacts have been assessed. Over the potential for negative impacts to the community are considered very low and low in scale and intensity.

There are numerous positive social impacts from the planning proposal including:

- Employment focused redevelopment with the potential to catalyse the revitalisation of Norwest as a high-profile employment area
- The delivery of jobs and homes in a highly accessible location with good access to services
- Increased housing diversity including an increase in the supply of more affordable dwellings for couples and young families
- The provision of community facilities on site, including a child care centre and civic space, and the ability to contribute to the traffic management, pedestrian and cycle improvements in the surrounds

- The potential to reposition Norwest as a modern workplace with a stimulating day and night time economy.

Overall, the negative impacts of the planning proposal can be successfully managed with the implementation of mitigation measures. The planning proposal would have an overall benefit to the social environment of Norwest and The Hills Shire.

INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

HillPDA has been engaged by Visy Dior Pty Ltd to prepare a Social Impact Assessment (SIA) to accompany a planning proposal for consideration by The Hills Shire Council in regard to the planning proposal for an employment precinct with a residential component. The subject site is located at 34-46 Brookhollow Avenue, Norwest (the site) within The Hills LGA. The site is located immediately adjacent to a proposed new Sydney Metro station in the heart of Norwest.

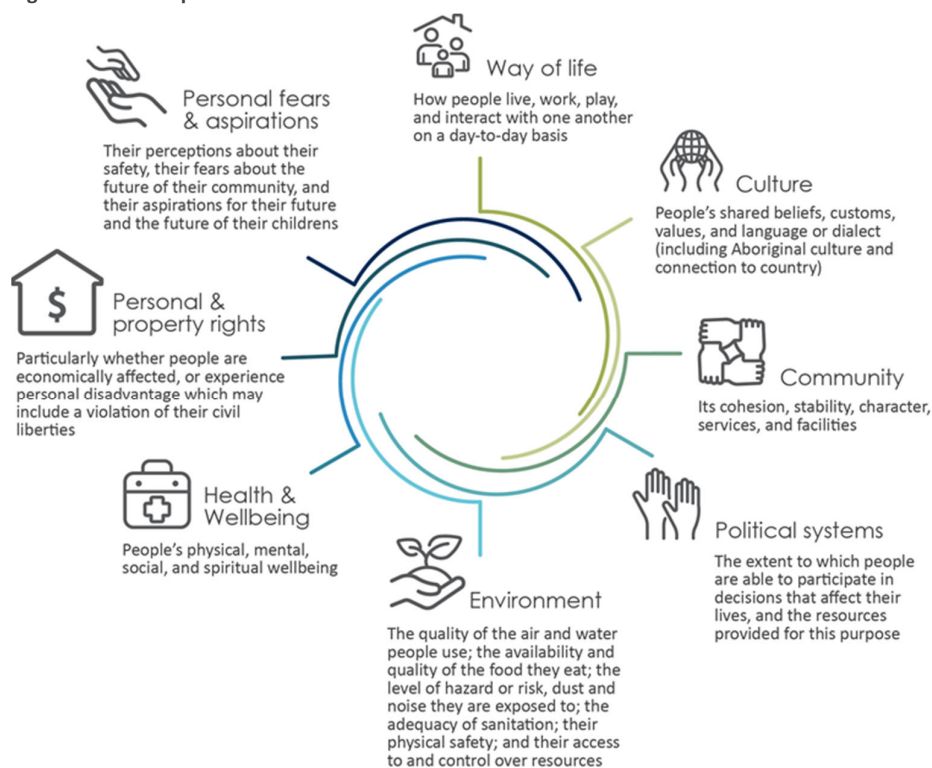
The planning proposal seeks to amend *The Hill Local Environmental Plan 2012* to include the additional permitted uses of 'residential flat building' part of the site, adjust the maximum building height and floorspace ratio to allow a concept proposal comprising an employment precinct of 60,690 square metres providing offices, hotel/pub, retail, co-working space, child care centre and civic space, as well as residential apartments and civic space.

The SIA aims to identify both potential positive and negative social impacts associated with the proposal. This report also suggests mitigation measures which will help to maximise social benefits and minimise negative impacts to the community.

1.1 Defining social impacts

A social impact can be defined as the net effect of an activity on a community and the well-being of individuals and families. For the purpose of this assessment, social impacts are changes to one or more of the matters identified in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Social impacts



Source: Adapted from Vanclay, F. (2003). International Principles for Social Impact Assessment. Impact Assessment & Project Appraisal 21(1), 5-11

1.2 Assessment methodology

Table 1 presents the key steps and tasks which have been undertaken as part of this SIA.

Table 1: Assessment methodology

Phase 01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site and locality assessment. This included a site visit and inspection of the surrounding area, to assess the local context, identify potential impact receptors and understand the scale of the proposed change to the locality • Review of Council's Social Impact Assessment Guidelines • Review of the planning proposal
Phase 02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation review – review of documents relating to the planning proposal including technical reports • Infrastructure audit – review of other relevant nearby facilities and land uses • Demographic analysis – identification of the current and future population community profiles • Crime data – review of crime statistics to identify any potential issues.
Phase 03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of the key changes (physical and demographic) likely to occur from the planning proposal/activity • Description and analysis of how key stakeholders are likely to be affected • A review of the community consultation that was undertaken to determine the community values and concerns • In depth review of the technical studies associated with the planning proposal.
Phase 04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of the impacts during construction and operation • Identification of the significance and likelihood of impacts
Phase 05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of appropriate management and mitigation measures to inform the future development

1.3 Impact assessment framework

The impact assessment presented in this report identifies and evaluates changes to existing social conditions likely to arise from the proposal. This includes the assessment of direct and indirect benefits and effects/impacts, as well as consideration of any cumulative impacts.

Figure 2 reflects the assessment process that was undertaken to determine the overall significance of impacts. The following sections outline the criteria that underpin each of the assessment components that contribute to

the assessment framework. Professional judgement and experience are applied on a case-by-case basis to identify the significance of impact on the social environment.

Figure 2: Impact assessment framework

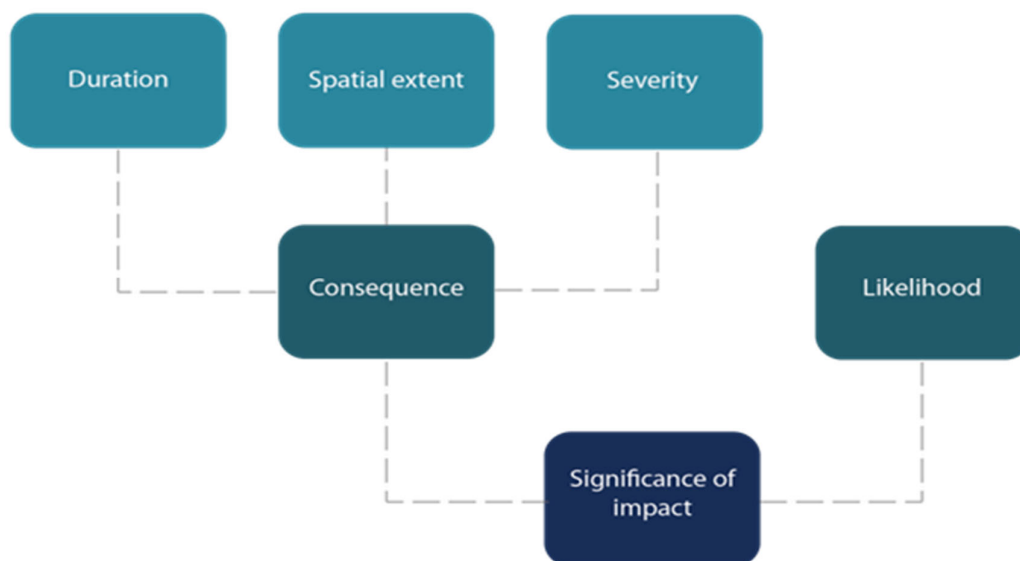


Table 2 below outlines the criteria for defining duration, spatial and severity outcomes and Table 3 identifies the overall the level of impact rating which is comprised of multiple combinations of duration, spatial and severity outcomes.

Table 2: Criteria for determining the significance of impact

Impact	Duration	Impact	Spatial extent	Impact	Severity of impact
Short term	Less than one year Low frequency	Direct Property	Individual/household	Negligible	No discernible positive or negative changes to baseline conditions
Medium term	One to six years Medium intermittent frequency	Locality	Small number of households	Small	Minimal positive or negative changes to baseline conditions
Long term	More than six years Consistent frequency	Suburb	Large part of/ whole community Suburb as defined by ABS	Medium	Moderate positive or negative changes to baseline conditions
		Municipality	Local Government area or greater	Large	Major positive or negative change to baseline conditions Government

Table 3: Level of impact

Category	Significance
Negligible	No discernible positive or negative changes to baseline condition.
Slight	Small change to baseline condition, generally short or short-medium term, confined to a locality or suburb and are able to be mitigated or enhanced.
Moderate	Medium change to baseline condition that may be short, medium, or long term. The spatial extent may vary, however impacts would usually respond to mitigation or enhancement.
Major	Large change to baseline condition usually resulting in medium to long-term effects. Spatial extent is generally at an LGA or regional level with the potential for substantial effects on the social or economic environment. Negative impacts would require extensive mitigation.

Likelihood of impact

The significance of which potential social impacts and benefits would occur as a result of the proposal is assessed by comparing the level of impact (low, moderate and high) against the likelihood of impact occurring. The likelihood criteria used for the assessment is identified in Table 4.

Table 4: Likelihood of impact

Likelihood	Description	Probability
Near certain	Expected to occur, almost frequently	90 percent
High	Could occur in many instances	70 percent
Possible	Just as likely to happen as not	50 percent
Low	Very limited occurrence	30 percent

Significance of impact

Table 5 identifies the risk assessment matrix used to determine levels of risk from the likelihood (identified in) and consequence ratings.

Table 5: Significance of impact

Consequence ratings					
Likelihood rating		Neutral	Slight	Moderate	Major
	Rare	Negligible	Negligible	Minor	Moderate
	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Minor	Moderate
	Possible	Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Moderate
	High likelihood	Minor	Minor	Moderate	Major
	Near certain	Minor	Moderate	Major	Major

CONTEXT

2.0 CONTEXT

2.1 The subject site and surrounds

2.1.1 Description

The subject site is known as 34-46 Brookhollow Avenue, Norwest within The Hills Shire Local Government Area (LGA). The subject site is around 15,960 square metres across one block with frontage to Norwest Boulevard to the north-west and Brookhollow Avenue to the east.

The subject site is within the existing Norwest Business Park. The site of the proposed new Norwest Sydney Metro Station is adjacent and immediately to the north east of the site. A local retail centre and place of public worship are to the north and west of the site. Low density detached houses adjoin the site at its southern border. An aerial photo of the subject site is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Site boundary



LEGEND

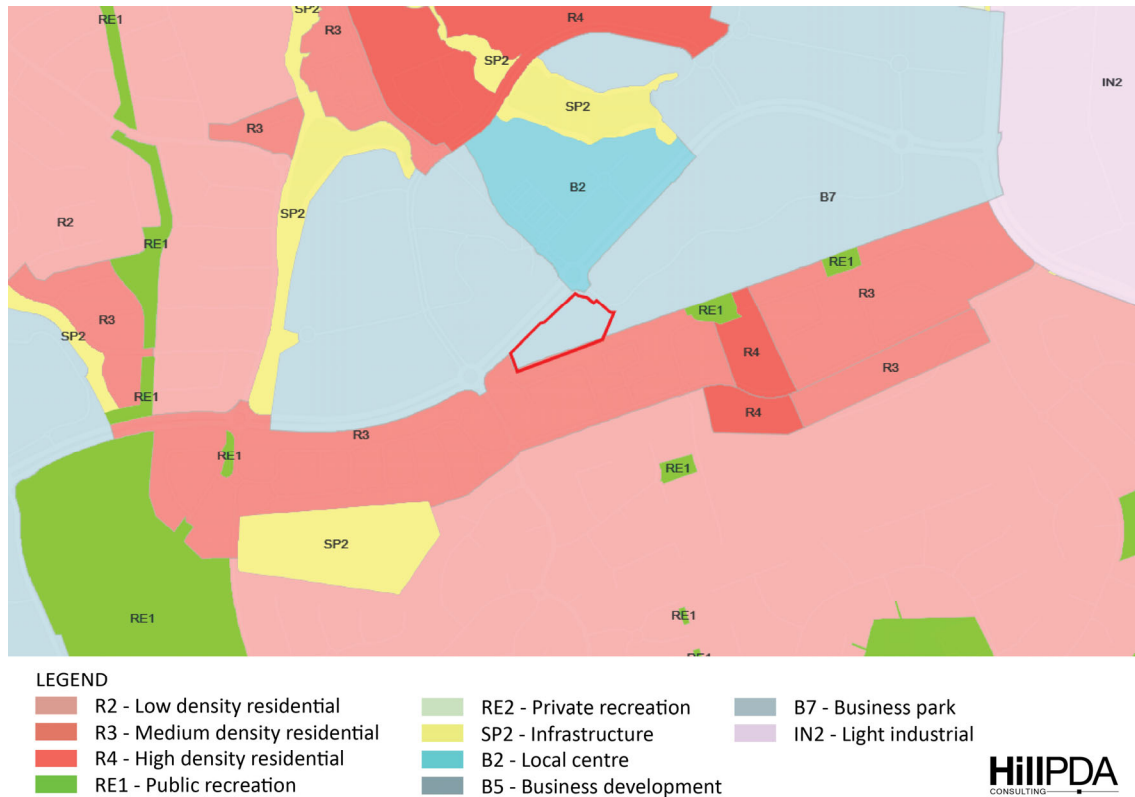
Site Boundary - 34-46 Brookhollow Avenue

The subject site currently accommodates three separate buildings and rear parking. Within the current complex is the Capital Business Centre, hosting the offices of Creation Homes, the Hillsong Health Centre, Hills Nursing, Northwest Commercial and Industrial Real Estate, Broadway Infotech, Pharmaprint, and others. The buildings are setback over twenty metres from the site boundary which is bordered with hedging and gumtrees.

2.1.2 Zoning

The subject site is currently zoned as B7 Business Park in accordance with The Hills Local Environmental Plan 2012. This is seen in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4: Zoning map



2.1.3 Accessibility

Cars

Private vehicles are currently the dominant mode of transport in the area. Most institutional buildings and facilities have dedicated off-street parking for clients and customers. Norwest Boulevard is the main four-lane road that runs through the Business Park, connecting the Westlink (M7) and Old Windsor Road (A2) to the Castle Hill industrial area to the west. Norwest Boulevard is, at times, subject to heavy traffic congestion, particularly at peak weekday hours.

Pedestrian/cycling

A network of pedestrian footpaths extends throughout Norwest. The new Sydney Metro Northwest and associated works will improve pedestrian amenity in Norwest. This includes the following transport and design facilities:

- Norwest Boulevard/ Brookhollow Avenue intersection upgrades from roundabout to traffic signals with formal pedestrian crossings
- Kiss and ride facilities and taxi rank on Brookhollow Avenue
 - bus stops on Norwest Boulevard, adjacent to the metro station
 - pedestrian link under Norwest Boulevard to improve access and safety between the metro station and bus stops and Norwest Marketown
 - open forecourts and plaza areas.

There are some dedicated cycle paths in the area, inking some aimed at recreational cycling along nature corridors.

Bus

There are two bus stops (one on each side of Norwest Boulevard) directly affront the subject site. These stops are named Norwest Boulevard before Reston Grove (ID: 215383) and Norwest Boulevard after Solent Court (ID: 2153142). These bus routes link the Business Park to Castle Hill and Rouse Hill Town Centres, and the Parramatta and Sydney CBDs. These stops host the route 618X, 628, 715, 745, T62, T64 and T70 buses. One hundred metres west of the subject site are the two bus stops which host 613X, 614X, 714 and T62 routes. The 614X and 618X buses are express services to the Sydney CBD at 20 minute intervals, with a journey time of 50 minutes. The T60-70 buses connect to Parramatta Station, a journey that takes 38 minutes, with buses every ten minutes in peak time. The 715, 714 and 745 buses connect Seven Hills Station with Castle Hill at 50 minute frequencies.

Train

The Sydney Metro became operational in mid-2019. Currently the nearest station, Seven Hills, is 7km south-west. The Sydney Metro is a major rail project connecting Sydney's North-west to the CBD through Epping, Macquarie Park and Chatswood. The new train service will operate every four minutes during peak time, and every ten minutes during regular service.

2.2 Local and regional context

The Norwest Business Park is a large commercial complex which is home to around 400 companies employing over 25,000 people. The subject site is located at the southern boundary of the Business Park. Within the Business Park there are several sub-precincts, including zoned areas such as B5 Business Development, IN2 Light Industrial, B2 Local Centre, and B7 Business Park. Australia's largest ice-skating rink, a shopping centre, two service stations, Hillsong Church, gyms, alternative health services, medical centre, commercial law firms, banks, child care centres, drive-through post office, waterways and landscaped public open spaces are all located within the Business Park. The suburbs surrounding the Norwest Business Park are primarily established low-density residential areas. However, 200 metres northwest of the subject site has been rezoned to permit higher density residential.

Prior to the development of Norwest Business Park, most non-residential developers in the area had concentrated on purely industrial projects. Norwest Business Park signified a major shift in development thinking: instead of developing properties for mainly industrial purposes, a significant proportion of office and retail space became part of the picture.

Norwest Business Park has been identified as a strategic centre by the Greater Sydney Commission in the Greater Sydney Region Plan. The evolution of Norwest from a business park to a strategic centre will be catalysed by the new Sydney Metro rail line and a new station in Norwest. The greater Sydney Commission has set significant targets for jobs growth in Norwest indicating the location's significance to Sydney's economy.

The transformation of Norwest to a strategic centre is already evident. The Sydney Metro Northwest project is nearing completion with the new Norwest Station scheduled to open in May 2019. The underground train line will boost productivity in the area through reduced transit times to other business centres in Sydney's north and the Sydney CBD.

2.3 The proposal

Visy Dior Pty Ltd proposes the demolition of the three existing buildings on site and the construction of an employment focused precinct incorporating commercial, residential, supporting retail and community-focused floor space. The residential component would be provided at the westernmost portion of the site, adjacent to existing residential uses. The proposal includes podium development with three slender towers of 15 to 23 floors.

Delivery of the residential component of the site would be contingent on:

- Delivery of commercial and public plaza space
- Incorporating work/study areas into 40 per cent of units
- Provision of five per cent of units (five units) as affordable housing for key workers for ten years.

The proposed mix of uses is indicated in Table 6.

The proposal includes social infrastructure provision as follows:

- A child care centre in Building B comprising and indoor area of 650 square metres with an additional private and dedicated outdoor area of 600 square metres
- A community space in the form of a 3,880 square metre civic plaza.

The proposal also includes dedicated commercial spaces which would provide a community benefit including:

- A 750+ square metre community co-working space for micro and small business to access facilities and network
- A hotel/pub, which was previously approved for the site, of approximately 1,500 square metres to provide a place for workers residents and families from the surrounding area to meet and enjoy a meal.

In addition, the proposal includes pedestrian connections to the Norwest Metro Station and public transport interchange. The proponent has indicated a commitment to contribute to traffic, pedestrian and cycling improvements in the surrounds noting that The Hills Corridor Strategy (2015) identifies a need for the following:

- Norwest Boulevard and Reston Grange - Replace roundabout with traffic signals
- Norwest Boulevard and Reston Grange - Cycleway and pedestrian path enhancement.

Table 6: Proposed floor area yield

Category	Gross Floor Area (sqm)	GFA (as percentage)
Residential	12,407	20%
Commercial/office	48,289	80%
TOTAL	60,696	100%

Figure 5 Photomontage of the proposal



PBD Architects

The proposed unit mix is seen in Table 7. The unit mix has been designed to conform to The Hills LEP requirements for development within Sydney Metro Northwest Urban Renewal Corridor. As recommended by a traffic study, 780 car parking spaces will be provided in basement levels.

Table 7: Unit mix of future dwellings

	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	Total
Total	13 (14%)	55 (60%)	23 (25%)	91

The proposal includes a staged demolition and construction process across the three podium tower divisions. The proposal includes design elements to ensure sunlight access to the neighbouring residential properties.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

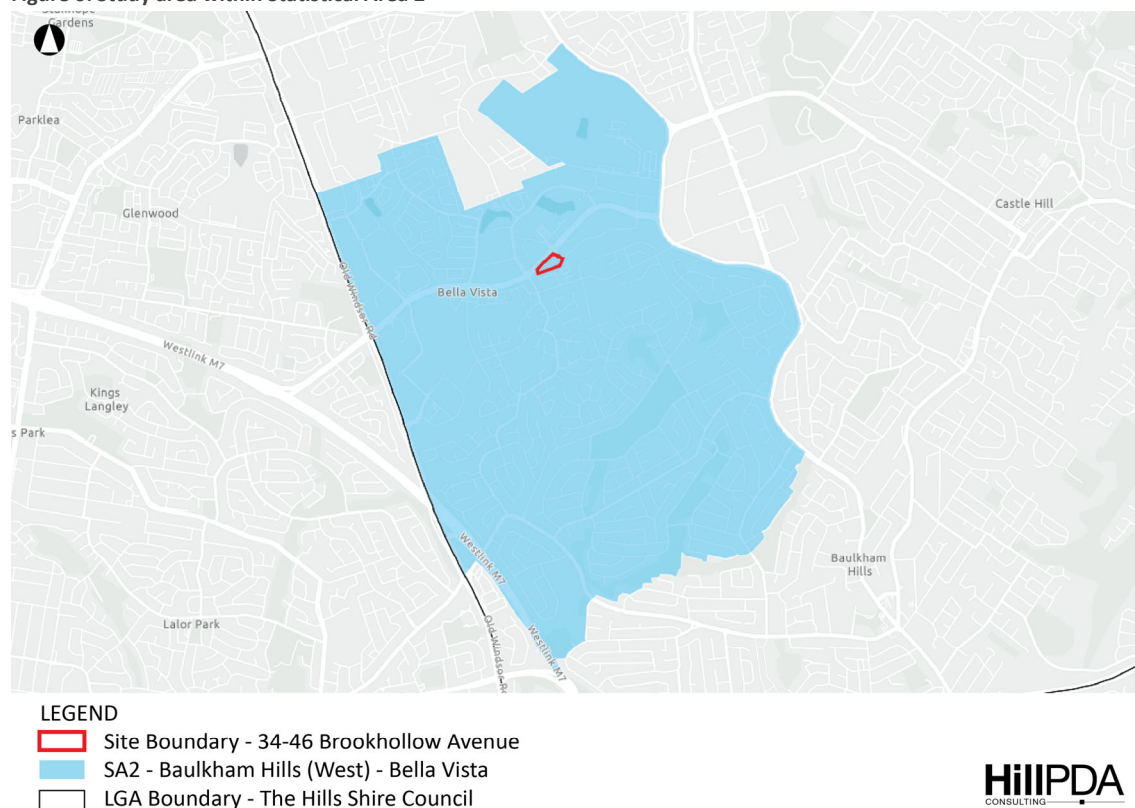
3.0 COMMUNITY PROFILE

The section provides a snapshot of the socio-economic characteristics of the study area to better understand the underlying and emerging social needs of the community and potential social impacts of the planning proposal.

3.1 Study area

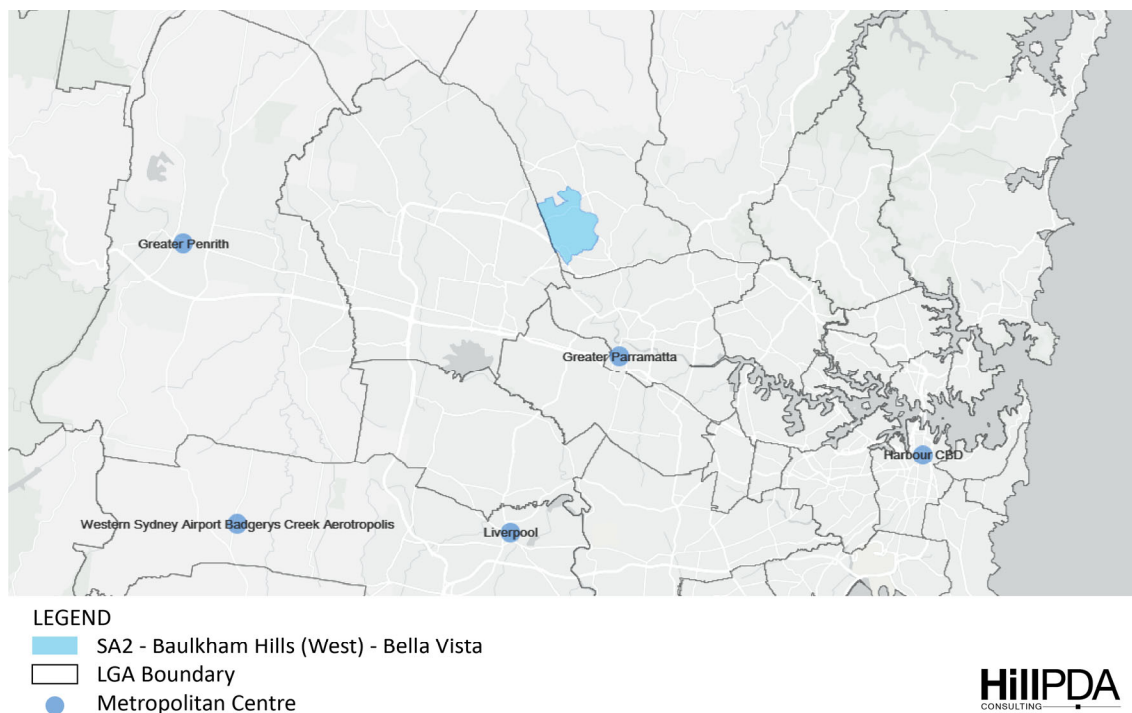
For the purpose of this analysis, the study area has been defined using Baulkham Hills (West) – Bella Vista Statistical Areas Level 2 (SA2), as defined by the 2016 Australian Census of Housing and Population (ABS). The SA2 is outlined in Figure 6 below.

Figure 6: Study area within Statistical Area 2



To provide context and highlight the uniqueness of the location; comparisons are made against Baulkham Hills (West) – Bella Vista’s location in the wider Sydney region, outlined in Figure 7 below.

Figure 7: Statistical Area 2 within Greater Sydney



3.2 Demographic characteristics

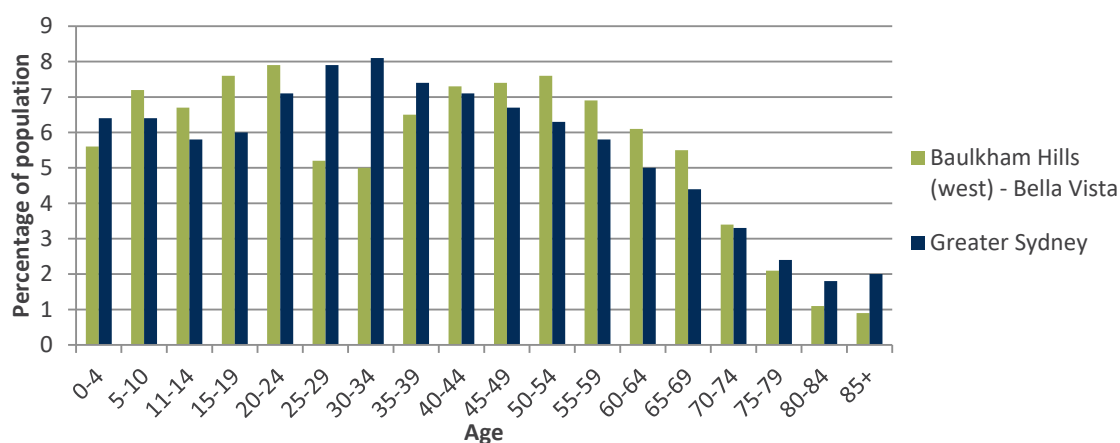
A snapshot of the study area's demographics is seen in Table 8.

Table 8: Baulkham Hills (West) - Bella Vista demographic snapshot

	Baulkham Hills (West) - Bella Vista	Greater Sydney
People	20,066	4,823,991
Male	49%	49%
Female	51%	51%
Median age	38	36
Families	5,551	1,247,047
Average children per family (all households)	1.1	0.8
All private dwellings	6,344	1,855,734
Average people per household	3.3	2.8
Median weekly household income	\$2,444	\$1,750
Median monthly mortgage repayments	\$2,500	\$2,167
Median weekly rent	\$590	\$440
Average motor vehicles per dwelling	2.2	1.7

Source: ABS Census, 2016

Figure 8: Population age distribution



Source: ABS Census, 2016

The distribution of population age indicates a larger proportion of middle-aged people and young people. The study area has a noticeably lower proportion of the young workforce.

Table 9: Top six countries of birth

Country of birth	Baulkham Hills (West) - Bella Vista (%)	Country of birth	Greater Sydney (%)
Australia	57.8	Australia	57.1
China	5.7	China	4.7
India	5.6	England	3.1
England	2.9	India	2.7
Sri Lanka	2.7	New Zealand	1.8
Hong Kong	1.5	Vietnam	1.7

Source: ABS Census, 2016

In Baulkham Hills (West) - Bella Vista, 31.6 per cent of people had both parents born in Australia and 55.8 per cent of people had both parents born overseas, whereas in Greater Sydney, 33.1 per cent of people had both parents born in Australia and 49.4 per cent of people had both parents born overseas.

3.3 Employment

A snapshot of the study area's employment characteristics is seen in Table 10.

Table 10: Employment snapshot

	Baulkham Hills (West) - Bella Vista	Greater Sydney
Median weekly incomes (\$)		
Personal	795	719
Family	2,526	1,988
Household	2,444	1,750
Employment (% of labour force)		
Worked full-time	61.0	61.2
Worked part-time	30.1	28.2
Away from work	3.8	4.5
Unemployed	5.1	6.0
Travel to work (%)		
Car, as driver	61.5	52.7
Train	2.0	10.9
Bus	9.8	5.5
Worked at home	5.2	4.4

Source: ABS Census, 2016

The top industries of employment in Baulkham Hills (West) - Bella Vista were hospitals, computer system design and related services, banking, supermarket and grocery stores, and cafes and restaurants. The most common occupations in the study area included Professionals (30.2 per cent), Clerical and Administrative Workers (17.2 per cent), Managers (16.4 per cent), Technicians and Trades Workers (9.6 per cent), and Sales Workers (9.4 per cent).

It is noted that 68 per cent of employed females in The Hills Shire had children (compared to 43 per cent in Greater Sydney), with a mode of two children.

3.4 Housing

A snapshot of the study area's employment characteristics is seen in Table 11.

Table 11: Housing snapshot

	Baulkham Hills (West) - Bella Vista	Greater Sydney
Number of Bedrooms (% of occupied private dwellings)		
1	1.7	7.3
2	3.1	24.8
3	20.7	33.8
4+	73.3	30.9
Tenure (% of occupied private dwellings)		
Owned outright	38.9	29.1
Owned with a mortgage	44.9	33.2
Rented	14.7	34.1
Other/not stated	1.6	3.7
Number of motor vehicles		
None	1.4	11.1
1 motor vehicle	20.4	37.1
2 motor vehicles	46.7	32.8
3 or more motor vehicle	30.0	15.7

Source: ABS Census, 2016

This data indicates that the study area has a disproportionate amount of 4+ bedroom homes compared to Greater Sydney. This is consistent with the dominant housing typology in the study area (85 per cent are separated houses). Compared to Greater Sydney, more people in the study area own their houses either outright or with a mortgage. Only 14.7 per cent of people in the study area rent their dwellings.

3.5 Social advantage and disadvantage

The Socio-Economic Indices for Areas (SEIFA) has been developed by the ABS to provide an overview of social and economic wellbeing and welfare of communities across a range of spatial scales. The SEIFA measures the relative level of socio-economic advantage and disadvantage based on various census characteristics, such as income, education, unemployment and occupations. In the context of this Index, a lower score indicates an area that is relatively disadvantaged compared to an area with a higher score. Table 12 below identifies the index rankings and quantiles.

Table 12: SEIFA rankings and quantiles

Measure	
Rank	To determine the rank of an area, all the areas are ordered from lowest score to highest score. The area with the lowest score is given a rank of 1; the area with the second-lowest score is given a rank of 2 and so on, up to the area with the highest score which is given the highest rank.
Decile	Deciles divide a distribution into ten equal groups. In the case of SEIFA, the distribution of scores is divided into ten equal groups. The lowest scoring 10% of areas are given a decile number of 1, the second-lowest 10% of areas are given a decile number of 2 and so on, up to the highest 10% of areas which are given a decile number of 10.
Percentile	Percentiles divide a distribution into 100 equal groups. In the case of SEIFA, the distribution of scores is divided into 100 equal groups. The lowest scoring 1% of areas are given a percentile number of 1, the second-lowest 1% of areas are given a percentile number of 2 and so on, up to the highest 1% of areas which are given a percentile number of 100.

The SEIFA index for Baulkham Hills (West) - Bella Vista can be seen in Table 13.

Table 13: Baulkham Hills (West) - Bella Vista SEIFA score and decile

Baulkham Hills (West) - Bella Vista						
	Australia			NSW		
	Rank	Decile	Percentile	Rank	Decile	Percentile
Advantage and disadvantage	2109	10	97	522	10	94
Disadvantage	2130	10	98	541	10	97
Economic resources	2155	10	99	543	10	98
Education and occupation	1903	9	87	483	9	87

The study area's SEIFA score ranks it in the top decile for three of the four categories. This means that Baulkham Hills (West) – Bella Vista is among the more advantaged SA2 areas in Australia.

3.6 Crime 'Hot Spots'

Figure 9 illustrates the 'hot spot' maps for Norwest and surrounding suburbs. These maps are based on Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOSCAR) data for six of the most prevalent crime types and show locations where these crimes are particularly prevalent in relation to the subject site.

The 'hot spot' maps indicate that the Subject Site and its immediate surroundings are located within an area with little or no crime.

Figure 9: Crime 'hot spot' maps



Source: Microburbs, Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research

3.7 Summary of key findings

- The distribution of population age indicates a larger proportion of middle-aged people and school-aged people compared to Greater Sydney.
- The study area ranked relatively high on the SEIFA index which indicates the area is relatively socio-economically advantaged.
- The median weekly incomes in Baulkham Hills (West) - Bella Vista (\$795 personal and \$2,444 per household) were higher when compared to Greater Sydney (\$719 personal and \$1,750 household).
- Personal cars are the dominant mode of transport in the area, where only 1.4 per cent of dwellings had no car (11.1 per cent in Greater Sydney).
- More people own their houses in the study area (83.8 per cent) when compared to Greater Sydney (62.3 per cent), with a particularly high proportion owning their houses outright (38.9 per cent).
- The dominant housing typology is detached houses, where 73.3 per cent of houses have four or more bedrooms.
- Overall, the area has a low level of crime. It has been observed that the study area has a higher level of break and enter crimes than other crimes, clustered in isolated incidents.

STRATEGIC POLICY CONTEXT

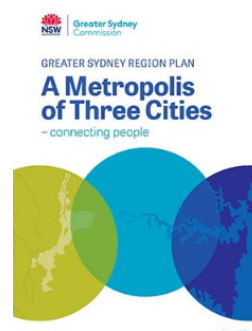
4.0 STRATEGIC POLICY CONTEXT

4.1 State Government

4.1.1 Greater Sydney Regional Plan – ‘A Metropolis of Three Cities’

The Greater Sydney Regional Plan, ‘A Metropolis of Three Cities’ aims to manage the growth of Sydney by integrating land use, transport and infrastructure planning. A primary aspiration is to increase quality of life through reducing the amount of time people spend travelling to jobs and services to around 30 minutes or less.

‘The 30-minute city aspiration will guide decision-making on locations for new jobs and housing and the prioritisation of transport, health, schools and social infrastructure investments. This will facilitate the co-location of infrastructure in metropolitan and strategic centres with direct public transport, so that people can access services and jobs.’



The Greater Sydney Region Plan outlines forty high-level planning objectives. The most relevant to the planning proposal are summarised below:

Objective 6 – Services and infrastructure meet communities’ changing needs

- Improved health, public transport and accessibility outcomes can be achieved through the provision of schools, recreation, transport, arts and cultural, community and health facilities in walkable, mixed-use places co-located with social infrastructure and local services
- Deliver social infrastructure that reflects the needs of the community now and in the future.
- Optimise the use of available public land for social infrastructure.

The planning proposal is consistent with Objective 6 by providing an employment-based precinct, which includes social infrastructure, in close proximity to public transport. The limited residential uses would be located within a walkable catchment of public transport and supported by the services of Norwest. The proposed child care centre and community co-working space have been included in the proposal to respond to the needs of the existing community as well as growth generated by the planning proposal.

Objective 7 – Communities are healthy, resilient and socially connected

Deliver healthy, safe and inclusive places for people of all ages and abilities that support active, resilient and socially connected communities by:

- providing walkable places at a human scale with active street life
- prioritising opportunities for people to walk, cycle and use public transport
- co-locating schools, health, aged care, sporting and cultural facilities.

The planning proposal is consistent with Objective 7 because it prioritises opportunities for people to walk and use public transport. The design by PBD Architecture promotes active street life and a human scale by reducing the setbacks to Norwest Boulevard and creating a civic space within the precinct. Retail and hotel/pub functions are located at street level to assist in activating the area.

Objective 10 – Greater housing supply

- Accommodating homes needs to be linked to local infrastructure – both to optimise existing infrastructure and to maximise investment in new infrastructure. Opportunities for capacity that aligns with infrastructure can be realised by urban renewal, local infill developments and land release areas.
- Developers also play an important role in supporting housing outcomes. The development industry needs to continually provide new housing and translate the development capacity created by the planning system into approvals and supply.

Consistent with objective 10, the planning proposal is for the delivery of jobs and homes linked to the delivery of new rail infrastructure.

Objective 12 – Great places that bring people together

Using a place-based and collaborative approach throughout planning, design, development and management, deliver great places by:

- prioritising a people-friendly public realm and open spaces as a central organising design principle
- recognising and balancing the dual function of streets as places for people and movement
- providing fine grain urban form, diverse land use mix, high amenity and walkability in and within a 10-minute walk of centres
- integrating social infrastructure to support social connections and provide a community hub

The planning proposal aims to provide a community focus by providing social infrastructure, civic space and a community co-working hub and hotel/pub at a focal point immediately adjacent to the new Metro station.

Objective 14 – A Metropolis of Three Cities – integrated land use and transport creates walkable and 30-minute cities

- Integrate land use and transport plans to deliver the 30-minute city.
- Investigate, plan and protect future transport and infrastructure corridors.
- Support innovative approaches to the operation of business, educational and institutional establishments to improve the performance of the transport network.

The planning proposal integrates land uses with transport and would make a substantial contribution to a walkable and 30-minute city.

Objective 22 – Investment and business activity in centres

Attracting investment, business activity and jobs in strategic centres across Greater Sydney increases access to a wide range of jobs, goods and services close to people's homes and supports the 30-minute city. Norwest is identified as a strategic centre. All strategic centres are expected to provide access to jobs, goods and services in centres by:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ attracting significant investment and business activity in strategic centres to provide jobs growth ■ diversifying the range of activities in all centres ■ creating vibrant, safe places and a quality public realm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ focusing on a human-scale public realm and locally accessible open space ■ balancing the efficient movement of people and goods with supporting the liveability of places on the road network ■ improving the walkability within and to centres |
|--|---|

- completing and improving a safe and connected cycling network to and within centres
- providing for a diverse and vibrant night-time economy in a way that responds to potential negative impacts
- creating the conditions for residential development within strategic centres and within walking distance (up to 10 minutes), but not at the expense of the attraction and growth of jobs, retailing and services; where appropriate, strategic centres should define commercial cores informed by an assessment of their need.

The planning proposal is consistent with the above intent for strategic centres.

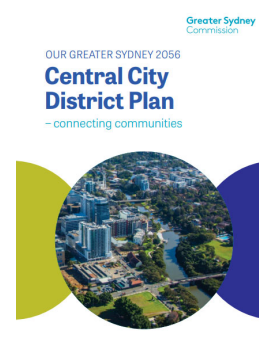
Overall, the review of the Greater Sydney Region Plan indicates that the planning proposal is consistent with the overarching goals of fostering growth while enhancing local amenity. The proposed mix of uses will allow for the co-location of services, maximising utility of the Norwest train station and leveraging the existing business park to produce a liveable, sustainable and economically productive development.

4.1.2 Central City District Plan

The Greater Sydney Region Plan, finalised in March 2018, replaced ‘A Plan for Growing Sydney 2014.’ This Plan is built on a vision where the people of Greater Sydney live within 30 minutes of their jobs, education and health facilities, services and great places.

Norwest is identified as being located in the Central City District. The District Plan states that:

‘The Central City District will capitalise on its location in the centre of Greater Sydney and with enhanced radial transport links will continue developing its world-class health, education and research institutions as well as its finance, business services and administration sectors to drive the economy. High quality urban renewal and new neighbourhoods will be matched with quality public places, green spaces and infrastructure to attract skilled workers and top 100 businesses.’



Norwest is identified as one of the ‘strategic centres’ of the Central City District:

‘Norwest Business Park is an established commercial centre. Sydney Metro Northwest and the new station at Norwest will provide the opportunity to transform the traditional 1990s-style business park model into a transit-oriented, more vibrant and diversified centre with higher employment densities and a mix of residential uses and supporting services. Sydney Metro Northwest will also enable faster and more reliable business-to-business connections to other centres such as Macquarie Park.’

The District Plan includes an action regarding the future planning of Norwest:

Action 45 – Strengthen Norwest through approaches that:

- a. retain and grow commercial capacity to achieve the centre’s job targets
- b. encourage complementary retail services around Norwest Lake and the station precinct

The District Plan includes job targets for the Norwest Business Park, including the Norwest Private Hospital Precinct and Bella Vista. These are seen in Table 14.

Table 14: Central City District employment targets

Norwest	Jobs
2016 estimate	32,400
2036 baseline target	49,000
2036 higher target	53,000

Source: Central City District Plan

The planning proposal would make a significant contribution to meeting the above employment targets by providing 48,289 square metres of commercial floorspace.

Through its objectives, strategies and corresponding analysis, the Region Plan discusses a range of considerations that are particularly important to consider in a social impact assessment.

By emphasising local activation, inclusion, connection to services and leveraging local opportunities, the proposal reflects place-based service approach. With its position so closed to Norwest Metro Station, the planning proposal reflects an effective linkage between a primarily employment based development, the residential component and local infrastructure.

Urban renewal is an identified priority for new transit corridors under the GSC's plans. Where there is significant investment in mass transit corridors, both existing and proposed, urban renewal may best be investigated in key nodes along the corridor, such as Norwest, where the area surrounding the metro station delineated for transit-oriented development. As such, the planning proposal represents a good balance in providing a primarily employment use focused development with significant commercial contributions and will to ensure the limited residential development can benefit from access and services in centres.

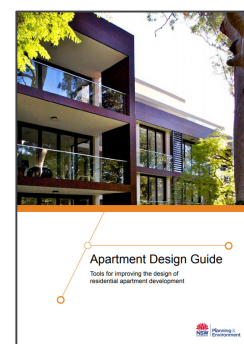
The planning proposal is consistent with the strategic directions in the District Plan.

4.1.3 Apartment Design Guide/SEPP 65

The Apartment Design Guide and SEPP 65 recognize that there can be negative social outcomes associated with poorly-designed apartments, buildings and complexes. The NSW Department of Planning and Environment released the Apartment Design Guide, which is a resource for pre-development application discussions describing expectations for new development. The Apartment Design Guide outlines best practice of apartment design in NSW. The State Environment Planning Policy (SEPP) 65 Design Quality of Residential Apartment Development mandates that nine design quality principles should be considered by design professionals when designing residential apartment development. These include:

- Principle 1: Context and Neighbourhood Character
- Principle 2: Built Form and Scale
- Principle 3: Density
- Principle 4: Sustainability
- Principle 5: Landscape
- Principle 6: Amenity
- Principle 7: Safety

- Principle 8: Housing Diversity and Social Interaction



■ Principle 9: Aesthetics

An assessment of the planning proposal against the above principles is provided in the Planning Proposal report and an assessment against the Apartment Design Guide is provided in urban design report.

4.1.4 NSW Ageing Strategy

Priority 1: Health and wellbeing

Encourage older people to have fit and healthy lifestyles through activity and diet. Maintaining health can support independence through community engagement. Health services should aim at being more accessible.

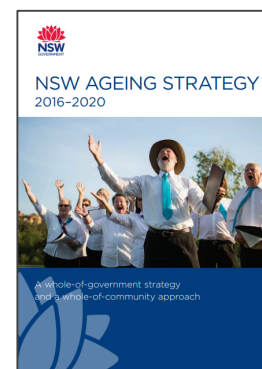
Priority 3: Housing choices

One of the most important ways to ensure their quality of life in older age is access to housing that is affordable and appropriate to peoples' physical needs, and allows residents to stay connected to their community. A government and private sector response is required to address issues around housing supply and design. The NSW Government will investigate potential changes to regulatory responses to provide more housing choices for older people as they age.

Priority 4: Getting around

Enabling older people in NSW to travel safely and appropriately to participate in social and economic life and access services is key to positive ageing.

The planning proposal would increase housing choice, offering the opportunity for downsizing of housing, thus allowing greater housing options for people in The Hills Shire to age in place. Similarly, the planning proposal includes dwellings that are designed to Liveable Housing Guidelines, which allows for universal accessibility, offering housing that is appropriate to older peoples' physical needs.



4.2 Local Government

4.2.1 Norwest Station Structure Plan

Norwest Structure Plan Section 4.1 identifies the subject site as being a short term ‘opportunity site’ maintained as a Business Park zone. The Business Park’s objective is ‘to provide for the employment needs of a growing community and to encourage the emergence of a prominent employment area with direct access to the new rail link and station.’ The masterplan also supports high density apartment living in close proximity to the business park and railway station to capitalise on the high transport amenity in the area.

The planning proposal aligns with the Norwest Structure Plan by retaining the Business Park zone and fostering employment needs above and beyond current uses of the site and allowing an employment focused development that will encourage the employment area, boosted by limited residential uses.

4.2.2 North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy – Norwest

Section 9 pertains to the vision for Norwest:

‘The North West Rail Link will also provide opportunities to increase residential densities within walking distance of the station by introducing a variety of housing types to ensure there is affordability and appropriate housing for all members of the community.

The Study Area will provide opportunities for increased employment and housing capacities within walking/ cycling distance of the station and the Business Park, while ensuring the local amenity, heritage, open spaces and natural environment are protected. This vision will be achieved by: building on the Centre’s assets to enhance the competitiveness of commercial office employment, as well as retailing; identifying and assembling strategic sites within the Centre to attract public and private investment around a compact commercial core; and improving liveability and amenities within the Centre by providing a diverse range of dwellings and an enhanced public domain.’

The planning proposal conforms to the vision of the North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy by enhancing the strategic centre’s commercial assets, and focusing on employment uses to attract investment, boosting the economic identity of the region and providing housing in a high-amenity location at the new Norwest Metro Station.

4.2.3 Hills Shire Plan

The Hills Shire Plan sets outcomes and strategy for the as follows

- **Outcome 1:** A connected and inclusive community with access to a range of services and facilities that contribute to health and wellbeing.
 - **Strategy 1.3** Facilitate the provision of services across the community.
- **Outcome 2:** Well informed local and potential companies about the range of employment opportunities, locations and business intelligence about the region.
 - **Strategy 2.2** Support existing businesses and business networks to increase business capacity and capabilities to grow jobs.
 - **Strategy 2.3** Supporting visitor economy in The Sydney Hills for planned growth.
- **Outcome 5:** Well planned and liveable neighbourhoods that meets growth targets and maintains amenity.

- **Strategy 5.1** The Shire's natural and built environment is well managed through strategic land use and urban planning that reflects our values and aspirations.
- **Outcome 7:** Our Community infrastructure is attractive, safe and well maintained.
 - **Strategy 7.1** Provide and maintain sustainable infrastructure and assets that enhance the public domain, improve the amenity and achieve better outcomes for the community.
 - **Strategy 7.2** Manage and maintain a diverse range of safe, accessible and sustainable open spaces and provide recreation, sporting and leisure activities and facilities.
- **Outcome 9:** Our natural surroundings are valued, maintained and enhanced and impacts are managed responsibly through education and regulatory action.
 - **Strategy 9.3** Manage new and existing development with a robust framework of policies, plans and processes that is in accordance with community needs and expectations.

In relation to the objectives of The Hills Shire Plan, the proposal provides a range of services such as a child care centre and community co-working space in a location just beside the Norwest train station. This will create a high-amenity environment and support existing businesses and business networks to facilitate job growth, in alignment with The Hills Shire Plan. Similarly, the proposal supports Council's goals of development that responds to community needs and meets growth targets while maintaining high amenity.

4.2.4 Hills Shire Council Disability Inclusion Action Plan

This Action Plan aims to:

- Increase participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of community life.
- Enable dignified and equitable use by all abilities as part of building design considerations.

By adhering to the Apartment Design Guide and Liveable Housing Guidelines, the proposal demonstrates an ability to respond to the need for universal access to buildings and spaces outlined in the Hills Shire Council Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

4.2.5 The Hills – Centres Direction

This strategic planning document identifies land use goals for each of the municipality's town centres. Norwest is identified as a specialised centre with the following directions:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ■ Landscaped Business Park | ■ Technology based business and industry |
| ■ Access to major transport infrastructure, road, future rail | ■ Higher density and variety of housing |
| ■ Large office floorplates, commercial built form | ■ High amenity restaurants, recreation facilities, child care centres, parkland. |

The planning proposal includes large floorplate commercial development collocated with major rail infrastructure, retail and higher density housing. The planning proposal would strengthen opportunities for technology based industries to locate in Norwest. The proposal also includes a high amenity hotel/pub, child care centre, community co-working hub and civic space.

EXISTING SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

5.0 EXISTING SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The following section provides an overview of the social infrastructure and open space located within the study area. This audit has been informed by a desktop analysis of geographical data and resources, including:

- The Hills Shire Council Website
- Core List Australia (2016)
- NSW Department of Education and Communities My School website.
- ArcGIS Online.

The audit is indicative and based on the data available at the time of preparing this report. Consultation was undertaken to ensure accuracy of data and to highlight key issues and aspects relating to service provision, including specified future needs. The purpose of the social infrastructure audit is to understand strengths and weaknesses of existing social infrastructure and to determine what has potential to accommodate future population growth.

5.1 What is social infrastructure?

Social infrastructure is an asset that accommodates social services or facilities. Social infrastructure is an important aspect of society as it provides the community with tangible or perceived benefits linked to the safety, health and wellbeing of that community. It also links to the economic growth and the sustainability of the community, therefore playing a critical role in society. For the purposes of the planning proposal, social infrastructure is important for meeting the needs of the future employees on the site, as well as future residents.

Specifically, this report has been produced to address the needs of particular infrastructure types, which include the following:

- Education – child care, schools, tertiary facilities
- Active and passive recreation – such as parks, sporting ovals and social clubs, halls etc.
- Community and culture – libraries and community centres.

For clarity, this report excludes businesses such as retail or commercial services. While these facilities provide a valuable social function, the future provision of these businesses in any area is typically market-led and does not have formal government funding. Further, future employees would be most likely to use social infrastructure (e.g. exercising in parks) during times when facilities have lower demand from residential uses.

Social infrastructure facilities generally operate at three levels of provision. These are local, regional and district. The different scales of infrastructure service different sized catchments. Catchments refer to both geographical areas and the size of the population serviced. For example, a primary school is intended to serve the local population, usually within walking distance. However, a university will cater for a much wider population.

HillPDA uses a distance-based catchment approach – a two kilometre catchment. Assessing such a locality's social infrastructure base is a way of shifting serviceability towards a more walkable, 20-minute neighbourhood future that is projected for Norwest.

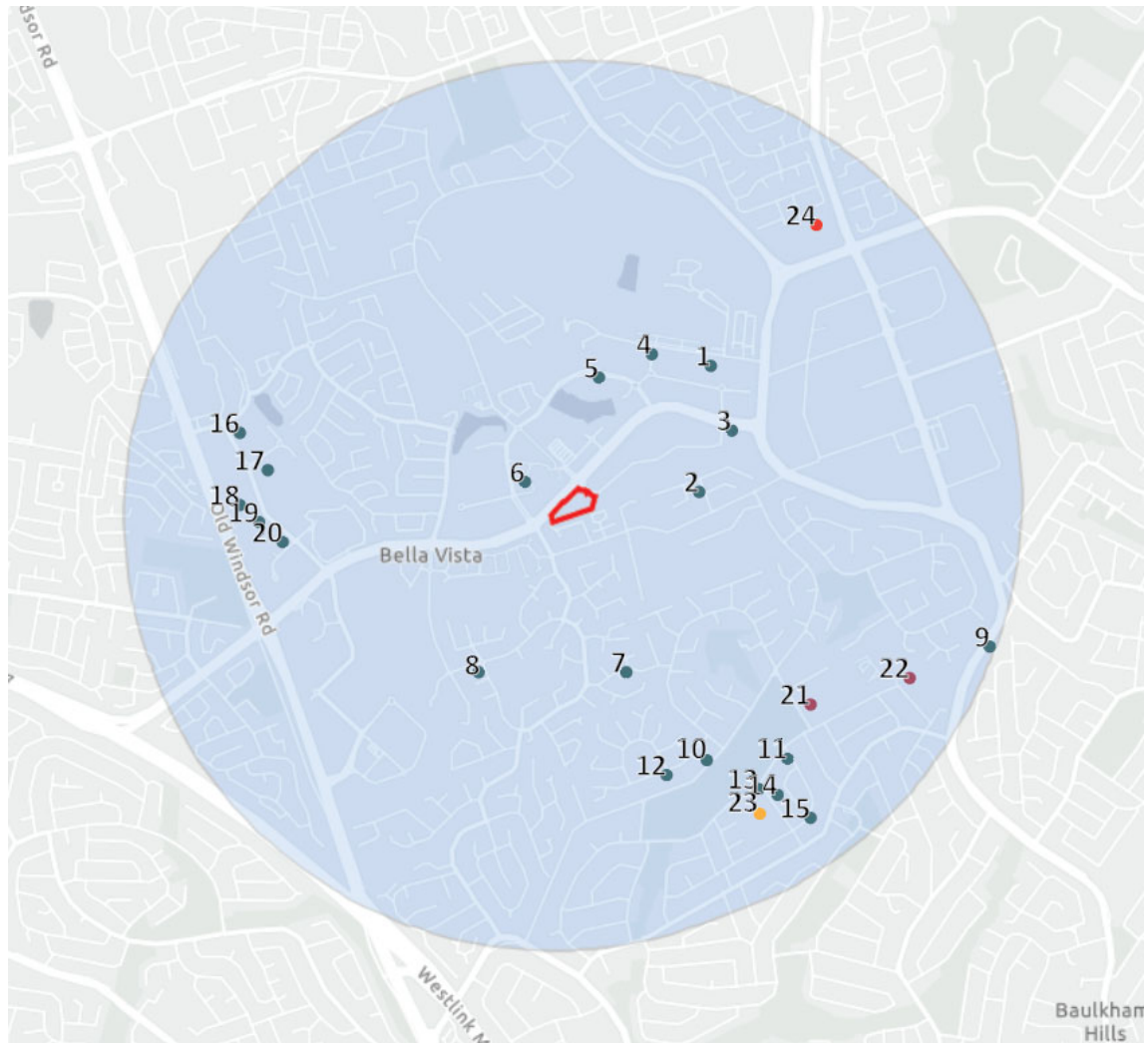
In conducting the audit of social infrastructure, local and district facilities have been identified. Table 15 identifies the facilities included in the audit and the catchments that they serve.

Table 15: Social infrastructure parameters of provision

	Local (generally up to 20,000 people)	District (generally up to 50,000 people)
Child care and educational facilities	Primary school Long day care Preschool Out of school hours care	Specialist school Secondary school Combined school
Community and cultural facilities	Branch library Meeting space Community centre	District library Multipurpose community centre/community hub
Active open space	Playground Outdoor sport court i.e. tennis and basketball Oval/sport field	Multi-purpose community/ neighbourhood sports centre Indoor sport facilities
Passive open space	Neighbourhood open space and parks	

5.2 Child care and education facilities

Figure 10: Child care and education facilities



LEGEND

- Site Boundary - 34-46 Brookhollow
- 2km buffer
- Early learning/child care
- High school
- Pre-primary/primary school
- Tertiary institute

A large cluster of education facilities are clustered around Crestwood Public high school and primary school. Within the Norwest Business Park there are 11 child care centres.

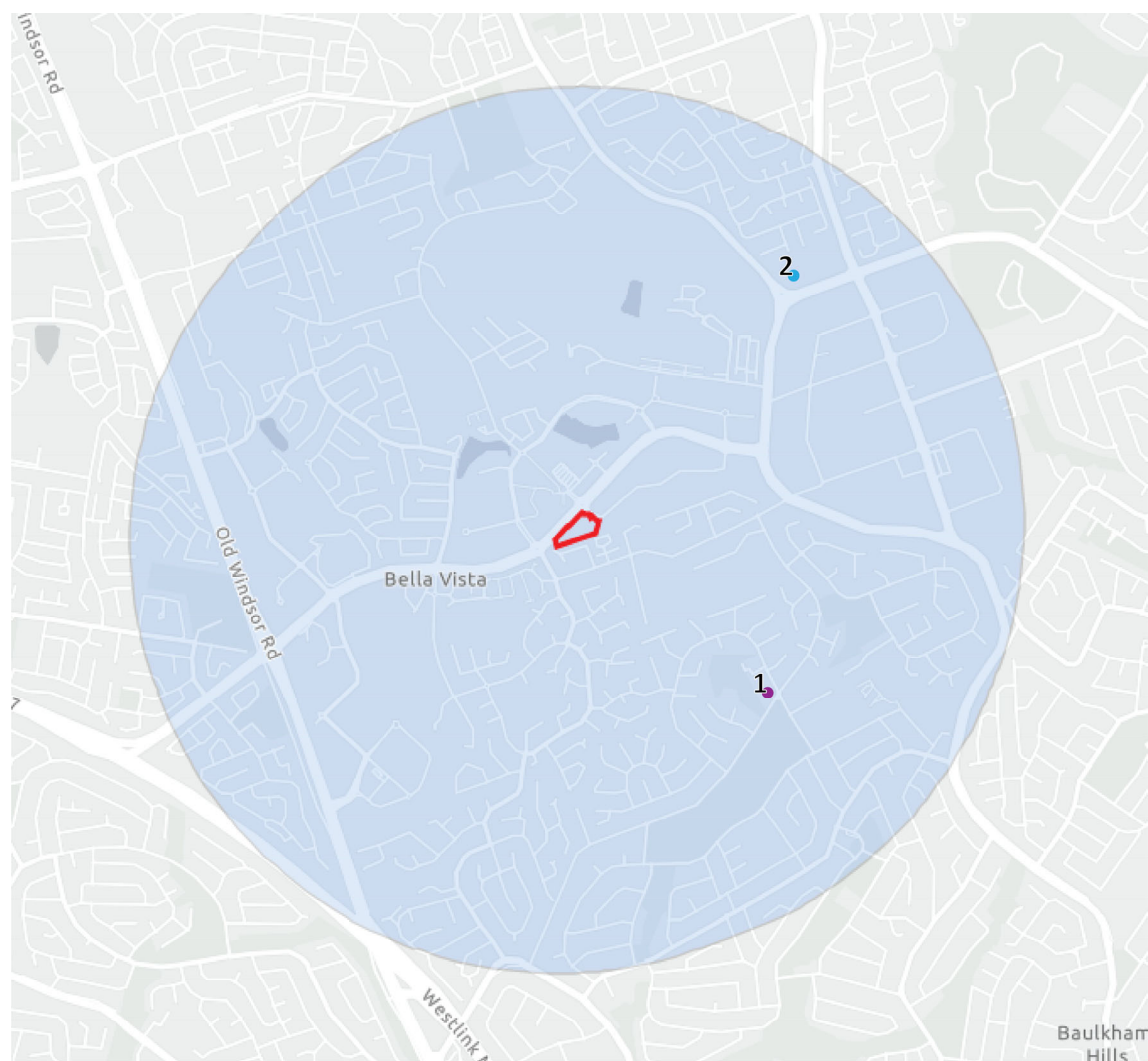
The catchment is well facilitated with child care and early learning centres. However, many child care centres in the catchment are operating at capacity. This is relevant for future employees on the site, who may prefer an option for child care close to work.

Table 16: Child care and education facilities

Map ID	Service Type	Name of facility	Vacancies
1	Early learning/child care centre	Our Early Learning Facility	Yes
2		Homera's Family Day Care	Yes
3		Atlas Childcare and Early Learning Centre	No
4		Young Scholars at Norwest	No
5		Parkview Childcare Centre	Yes
6		Hillsong Child Care Centre - Baulkham Hills	No
7		Masooma's Family Day Care	Yes
8		Ku Village Green Children's Centre	Yes
9		Baulkham Hills Family Day Care	
10		St Michael's OOSH	No
11		Tina's Family Day Care	Yes
12		Little Cubs Family Daycare	Yes
13		Cubbyhouse at Crestwood	No
14		Baulkham Hills North OOSHC Centre	No
15		Crestwood Early Learning & Long Day Care Centre	Yes
16		Kidspace Family Day Care Services	Yes
17		Headstart Early Learning Centre Norwest	No
18		Giggles Childcare & Early Learning Centre – Giggles 2	No
19		Explore & Develop - Norwest	No
20		Giggles Child Care Centre - Giggles 1	Yes
21	Primary school	Crestwood Public School	Yes
22		St Michael's School	Yes
23	High school	Crestwood Public School	Yes
24	Tertiary institution	TAFE NSW – Castle Hill	Yes

5.3 Community and cultural facilities

Figure 11: Community and cultural facilities



- LEGEND**
- Site Boundary - 34-46 Brookhollow
 - 2km buffer
 - Community centre
 - Cultural facility

Table 17: Community and cultural facilities

	Name of facility	Uses
1	Crestwood Community Centre	Children Parties, Meetings and Group Dance or Fitness
2	Museums Discovery Centre	Applied arts and sciences museum that hosts school excursions and other visits

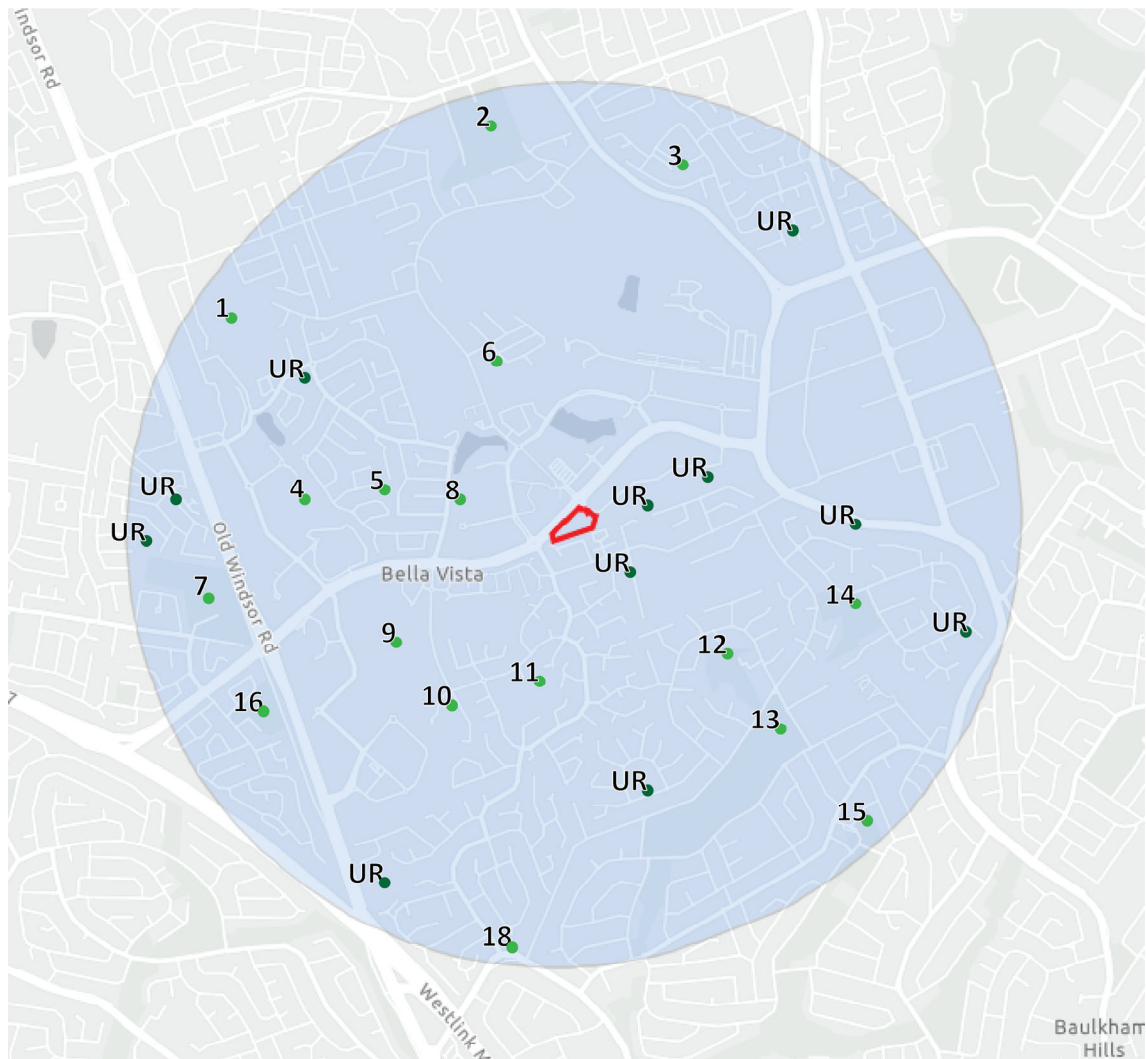
The catchment of the subject site has a deficiency of purpose-built community centres and public infrastructure. There are larger, district-scale community facilities and cultural centres in Rouse Hill, Castle Hill and Baulkham

Hills. Some private or commercial uses nearby including churches may act as a community hub. Nonetheless, community-scale social infrastructure is lacking in a walkable catchment of the subject site.

5.4 Open space

The distribution of open space is indicated below, noting that it generally excludes linear open space within the Norwest area.

Figure 12: Active and passive open space



LEGEND

- Site Boundary - 34-46 Brookhollow
- 2km buffer
- Dedicated park
- Unnamed reserve

There is fairly even distribution of open space around the catchment of the subject site. When considering linear open space, the network of public areas around the lake to the north of the site would likely be used by future

employees and residents. Otherwise, the standalone pockets of landscaped areas between surrounding developments do not necessary serve the same social purpose for passive or active recreation opportunities.

Otherwise, there is a distinct lack of traditional public open space in the Norwest Business Park and the industrial lands to the east.

The residential areas south of the subject site are home to a majority of the active open space facilities such as sports grounds.

Table 18: Active and passive open space

Map ID	Name of facility	Note
1	Elizabeth Macarthur Creek Reserve	
2	Kellyville Park	Sport as a primary use
3	Hemsley Grove Park	
4	Waterfall Crescent Reserve	
5	Hilltop Park	Playground included
6	Fairway Drive Reserve	
7	Valentine Sports Park	Sport as a primary use
8	Creek Reserve	Landscaped promenade
9	Bella Vista Farm	Historic farm that hosts music and other events
10	Bella Vista Oval	Sport as a primary use
11	Village Green Park	
12	Charles McLaughlin Reserve	Sport as a primary use
13	Crestwood Reserve	Sport as a primary use
14	Mackillop Drive Reserve	Sport as a primary use
15	Baulkham Hills Park	
16	Refalo Reserve	

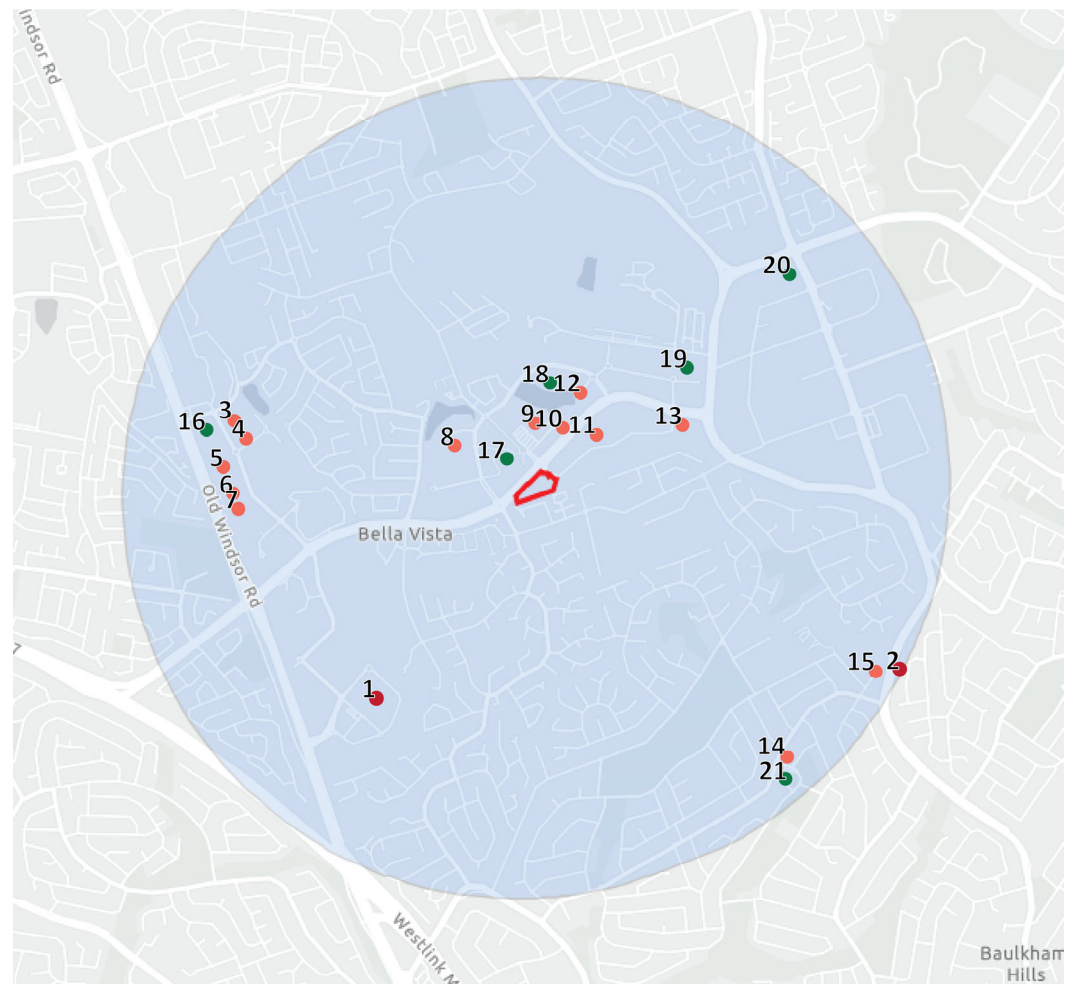
The catchment of the subject site is well facilitated by a hierarchy of active and passive open space.

Many of the unnamed reserves are through-block links in neighbourhood residential areas. These are most common in the older residential areas, while the new residential areas in Kellyville include dedicated active open space.

5.5 Health facilities

Local health facilities are indicated below.

Figure 13: Health facilities



LEGEND

- Site Boundary - 34-46 Brookhollow
- 2km buffer
- Hospital
- Medical clinic
- Pharmacy

Table 19: Health facilities

Map ID	Type of facility	Name	
1	Hospital	Norwest Hospital (private)	Large private hospital offering a broad range of surgical and nonsurgical services
2		The Hills Private Hospital	92 patient-bed rehabilitation unit and 19 bed mental health unit
3	Medical Clinic	Health Dimensions	Osteopath
4		Bites Health Clinic	Dietary
5		Acusum Health	Acupuncture
6		Elevate Health	Occupational Rehabilitation
7		Body Care Health and Chiropractic	Chiropractor
8		Dentistry on Solent	Dentist
9		Smile@Norwest Dental Surgery	Dentist
10		Complete Smiles Bella Vista	Dentist
11		Aurum Health Care	Chiropractor
12		Balance Health and Performance	Occupational Rehabilitation
13		Bella Dental Care	Dentist
14		My Hills Dentist	Dentist
15		Smilessence	Dentist
16	Pharmacy	Pharmasave Norwest Care Chemist	
17		Optimal Pharmacy Plus	
18		Lakeview Private Hospital Pharmacy	
19		The Hills Chemist	
20		HealthShed Discount Pharmacy	
21		Crestwood Centre Pharmacy	

The area is well serviced by private health facilities. The nearest Public hospital is at Westmead which is around 12 km to the south. Medical clinics and pharmacies are available within Norwest.

FUTURE GROWTH

6.0 FUTURE GROWTH

6.1 Employment

Future employment growth related to the planning proposal is discussed in detail in the planning proposal's *Economic Impact Assessment*. As per the EIA, Transport for NSW's employment forecast in the Norwest Business Park anticipates growth from 22,305 jobs in 2016 to 35,915 jobs in 2036, or 13,610 jobs.

Table 20: Employment Forecasts Norwest Business Park

Industry	2016	2036	Change
Education and Training	283	706	59.9%
Public Administration and Safety	330	802	58.8%
Arts and Recreation Services	277	621	55.4%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	2,723	5,247	48.1%
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	343	648	47.1%
Administrative and Support Services	601	1,117	46.2%
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	171	290	41.1%
Information Media and Telecommunications	329	541	39.2%
Health Care and Social Assistance	2,399	3,942	39.2%
Accommodation and Food Services	788	1,275	38.2%
Financial and Insurance Services	1,784	2,845	37.3%
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	155	245	37.0%
Retail Trade	4,980	7,696	35.3%
Manufacturing	2,496	3,810	34.5%
Other Services	666	1,013	34.2%
Construction	2,479	3,446	28.1%
Mining	14	16	10.9%
Wholesale Trade	1,402	1,564	10.4%
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	3	4	5.0%
Printing (including the Reproduction of Recorded Media)	84	87	4.2%
Grand Total	22,305	35,915	37.9%

Source: TfNSW Employment Forecast TZ Codes 4514; 4515; 4516; 4517; 4521

The District Plan anticipates job growth between 16,600 and 20,600 jobs across the entire Norwest centre.

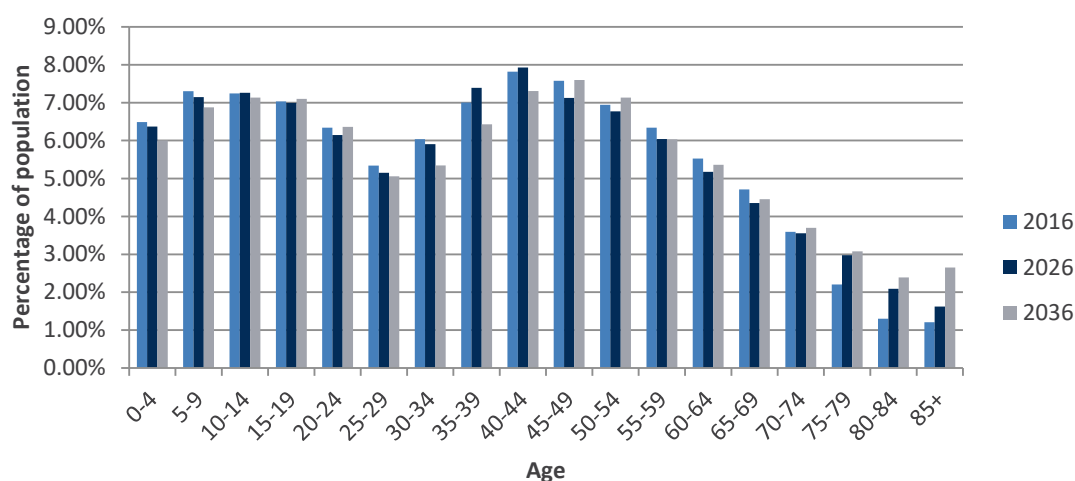
However, as per Council's *Productivity and Centres Strategy* (2019), the Norwest Central (i.e. the Norwest Business Park), only has a future potential capacity of 13,420 jobs, resulting in a shortfall.

As discussed in Council's strategy, employment across the Hills LGA is required to grow from 63,865 to 114,500 jobs during this period to maintain the current 0.8:1 ratio of local workers to jobs.

6.2 Residential

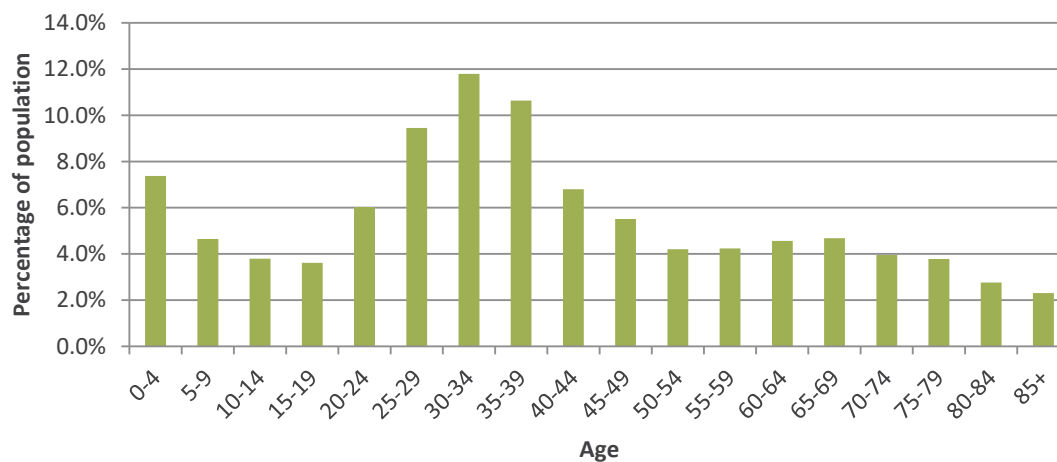
To estimate the future residential population of the planning proposal, HillPDA has considered the population projections released by DPE (Figure 14) and the current demographic characteristics of apartment dwellings in The Hills LGA (Figure 15).

Figure 14: Population projections in The Hills LGA, 2016



Source: Department of Planning and Environment Population Projections (2016)

Figure 15: Age of population of flats/apartment dwellings in The Hills LGA, 2016



Source: ABS Tablebuilder, Census 2016

By benchmarking the current apartment dweller age characteristics against population forecast, a projected demographic profile can be estimated (Table 22). This demographic profile is applied to a nominal population gathered from dwelling occupancy rates (Table 21).

Table 21: Project population from planning proposal

Dwelling type	Dwelling number	Occupancy rate	Projected population
One Bedroom	13	1.5	20
Two Bedroom	55	2.1	115
Three Bedroom	23	2.6	60
Total	91		195

Source: adapted from Tablebuilder, 2016 Census, Australian Bureau of Statistics

The future population of the planning proposal is estimated in Table 22.

Table 22: Projected proposal population

Age	2036 projected population in apartments The Hills LGA	Projected population from planning proposal
0-4	6.89%	13
5-9	4.22%	8
10-14	3.69%	7
15-19	3.68%	7
20-24	6.06%	12
25-29	9.17%	18
30-34	11.10%	22
35-39	10.06%	20
40-44	6.29%	12
45-49	5.54%	11
50-54	4.40%	9
55-59	3.93%	8
60-64	4.40%	9
65-69	4.42%	9
70-74	4.06%	8
75-79	4.65%	9
80-84	3.86%	8
85+	3.75%	7
Total	100.0%	195

Source: Adapted from DPE NSW Population Projections Data and ABS Census 2016

This population projection will be used in the following section to benchmark social infrastructure provision.

SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.0 SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 Access and connectivity

The planning proposal will deliver jobs and homes on a site adjacent to the new Norwest Metro station. The site will be well-connected to major employment centres and services.

The proposed mix of uses on the site will offer immediate access to convenience retail, employment, entertainment and social infrastructure – meeting many of the day to day needs of residents and employees on site and reducing the need for car travel. As the subject site is located directly adjacent to the future Norwest train station, and a major jobs centre (Norwest Business Park), living without a car or using fewer cars per household is likely to become a viable option for future residents.

The planning proposal will offer some improvements to the pedestrian environment by providing weather protection along Norwest Boulevard with this pedestrian route connecting to the station and proposed civic space.

An assessment of the potential traffic impacts and parking requirements has been conducted by GTA consultants. In relation to traffic, the GTA Consulting report states that:

The proposed car parking provisions are considered appropriate for the anticipated transport requirements of future residents, employees and visitors. It strikes a balance between more aggressive limited parking provisions across Sydney and the higher rates specified in DCP 2012. The approach also recognises that the historical reliance on travel by private vehicle will likely significantly change over coming years with the continued expansion of Sydney Metro and assists in realising reduced traffic generation in and around the area.

The planning proposal could potentially generate an additional 300 vehicle trips over the existing land use; or an additional 200 inbound vehicle trips and 160 outbound vehicle trips in the peak directions, which represents less ‘tidal’ traffic flow compared to the traditional wholly commercial nature of the site and broader Norwest and Bella Vista commercial areas.

The proposal includes 780 car spaces, as recommended by GTA Consulting. The social impacts resulting from car parking requirements are considered minimal given that the proposal would contribute to a transit-oriented development allowing higher public transport patronage.

This would assist the integration of the subject site into the surrounding land uses and minimise the potential for negative impacts.

7.2 Amenity

Amenity has its meaning of pleasantness, but also has a physical (or tangible) component. This includes the character and appearance of buildings, proximity to commercial or recreational facilities, quality of infrastructure and absence of noise, unsightliness or offensive odours. It also has a psychological or social component.

Amenity is what makes one location feel different from another, but it also contributes to a place’s identity and can be what makes our physical surroundings worth caring about. Amenity can affect the ability of a resident, a visitor or the community to enjoy or undertake activities within the local area.

Design quality

The planning proposal is the outcome of a competitive design process and consequently, the proposal exhibits design excellence.

The residential area adjacent to the subject site presents a challenge in built form transition, and in overshadowing issues. The design by PBD Architecture has been developed through a detailed analysis of overshadowing in order to minimise the risks to the adjoining residences. The details of this analysis are provided in the urban design report. The design of the proposal is centred on maintaining crucial sunlight access to the residential properties to the south, meeting the requirements of The Hills DCP Part B, Section 5. Under the proposal, each of the neighbouring properties would achieve four hours of sunlight during the winter solstice, thereby minimising the risk of reduced amenity to neighbouring residences.

The proposal is a three-tower podium design with transparent frontages on each side and balconies to reduce massing impact. The colours and materiality of the design are aimed at reducing visual bulk of the buildings. These design aspects are aimed at creating great places where people enjoy spending time.

The concept design's residential flat building component is consistent with the Apartment Design Guideline's requirements for setbacks from surrounding lower density uses and internal amenity. The concept design aims to reduce potential negative impacts associated with higher density development by:

- Positioning towers on Norwest Boulevard frontage away from residences
- Incorporating slender towers to reduce overshadowing, maintaining high amenity solar access within the site's and surrounding residents' open spaces
- Positioning lower scale buildings near residents
- Maintaining appropriate setbacks between the residential flat building and surrounding residences.

Whilst maintaining amenity to neighbouring properties is important, it is noted that the adjoining land to the south has been rezoned to permit higher density development. Further assessment of amenity considerations will occur as that area redevelops in the future

Public space activation

The provision of civic space and through-site connections to the new Norwest Metro station present significant benefits to future residents and workers. The proposed social infrastructure on site, including a child care centre and community co-working hub, will support the incoming population as well as the existing resident and working population. In addition, the ground floor retail spaces and hotel/pub will offer private informal spaces for social activities.

Overall, the proposal will contribute to a vibrant public domain with a high level of amenity.

Impact of construction

No construction will arise directly from this planning proposal. However, the potential for future construction has the potential to affect the amenity of sensitive receivers within the surrounding area. During construction, the following may affect local amenity:

- The introduction of construction facilities to the environment
- Noise and dust arising from construction activities
- Unpleasant odours
- Increased traffic volumes and/or congestion.

The area is currently in a state of construction due to the Norwest Sydney Metro station development.

There will be an opportunity to assess construction impacts more fully at the development application stage. At this stage it is noted that there may be a short term reduction in amenity may impact the surrounding residential and commercial land use and increase traffic congestion along an already congested route (Norwest Boulevard). Particularly, the residential areas to the south are considered sensitive receivers to construction-related amenity impacts such as noise, dust, odours or vibration.

7.3 Social infrastructure

As discussed in Section 5, social infrastructure includes a variety of public and private assets that service the social needs of the community. Demand for, and quantification of benchmarks for demand of, social infrastructure is typically measured by the surrounding residential population. As such, this section focuses on the demand generated by the residential component of the planning proposal.

However, future employees would likely generate some level of demand for social infrastructure as well. It is anticipated that this demand would generally fall within the benchmarks for residential demand, given that the demand would largely be felt at different hours (e.g. employee demand for sports fields would typically be during daytime hours on weekdays, when residents would have a lesser demand).

Demand for community infrastructure

The proposal would generate demand for additional community infrastructure based on the demographic composition of the projected population. HillPDA uses the following benchmarking figures dictated by the Growth Centre Commission's Development Code (2006).

Table 23: Community facilities benchmark analysis

Type of facility		Benchmark (number per population)	Demand from proposal
Health and Social Welfare			
	Community Health Centre	1 : 20,000 people	0.0
	Hospital Beds	2 beds : 1000 people	Less than 1 bed
	Aged care		
	Aged Care Housing	1:10,000 people	0.0
	High Care (Nursing home)	40 beds : 1,000 people 70yrs+	1 bed
	Low Care (Hostel) places	48 places : 1,000 people 70yrs+	1 place
	Youth Centres	1 : 20,000 people	0.0
	Community Service Centre	1 : 60,000 people	0.0
Culture			
	Branch Library	1 : 33,000 people	0.0
	District Library	1 : 40,000 people	0.0
	Performing Arts/Cultural Centre	1 : 30,000 people	0.0
Community Centre			
	Local	1 : 6,000 people (2,000-2,500sqm)	0.0
	District	1 : 20,000 people	0.0

The standard broad-scope benchmark for library floor space provision for branch libraries is 35 square metres per 1,000 people.¹ By this benchmark, the proposal would generate demand for 4.5 square metres of additional library floor space. There is limited provision of libraries, neighbourhood centres and youth facilities in the study area. However, such facilities in other nearby centres such as Castle Hill, Rouse Hill or Baulkham Hill have capacity for additional patronage.

Within the study area, private facilities such as places of worship, music and dance centres, or artist schools may act as community hubs. Smaller facilities that serve the locality are an effective way of nurturing communities and should be promoted in the development of a district strategic centre such as Norwest.

The study area is very well facilitated with both active and passive public open space. Future employees would have access to mapped public open space, as well as the linear open space around the nearby lake.

With regard to health infrastructure, the subject site is well placed. The Norwest Hospital precinct (one kilometre west of the subject site) has been subject to development and expansion in recent years. This area will include a large retirement village.

Demand for child care and education facilities

Employees of the commercial component of the proposal could also generate demand for child care centres. An additional 48,289 square metres of commercial floor space has potential for a total of 2,579 workers as identified in HillPDA's Economic Impact Assessment. When considered in the context of 68 per cent of female employees in The Hills Shire having children, it becomes apparent that commercial land use would benefit from additional child care places. However, the number of places in demand is not clear as the employee catchment is not known at this stage.

The co-location of child care centres and commercial centres has flow-on social benefits for families and economic benefits for businesses. The provision of 650 square metres internal GFA for a child care centre will bring such amenity to the local worker and residential population. A child care centre has been included in the concept proposal to address the projected demand for these services and the current shortfall in provision.

The population projections for the subject site indicate that there will be a nominal increase of 220 new residents, a proportion of which will be children that require education and child care facilities. The table below shows the benchmarks for child care and education provision. The planning proposal triggers demand for local education infrastructure.

Table 24: Child care benchmark analysis

Social Infrastructure Type	Threshold	Demand from proposal
Long day care	1 place: 5 children 0-4 years	3
Out of school hours	1 place: 25 children 5-12 years	1

Source: GCC: Growth Centre Commission – Development Code (2006)

The planning proposal includes 91 dwellings. Anticipated population growth arising from the planning proposal would not trigger the demand for an additional primary school. Future development of neighbouring land, combined with the planning proposal, may generate a need for additional primary school facilities in the longer term depending on the scale and mix of uses proposed.

¹ State Library NSW, *People Places: A Guide for Public Library Buildings in New South Wales Third Edition*, State Library of New South Wales, June 2012

7.4 Housing choice

It is noted that the proposal includes a significant proportion of two and three bedroom apartments. Given that the study area is disproportionately characterised by four or more bedroom apartment, the proposal would diversify the housing market, allowing more options for downsizing and in fact better respond to market demand for two and three bedroom dwellings.

The construction of a new development will provide an opportunity to develop residential apartments in line with the relevant legislation and Australian Standards for adaptable housing and disability access. This is a key motivation outlined in the NSW Ageing Strategy – to allow people to grow old in a consistent area and maintain social connections into older age. Doing so requires the design to conform to age-friendly design parameters outlined in the Liveable Housing Design Guidelines.

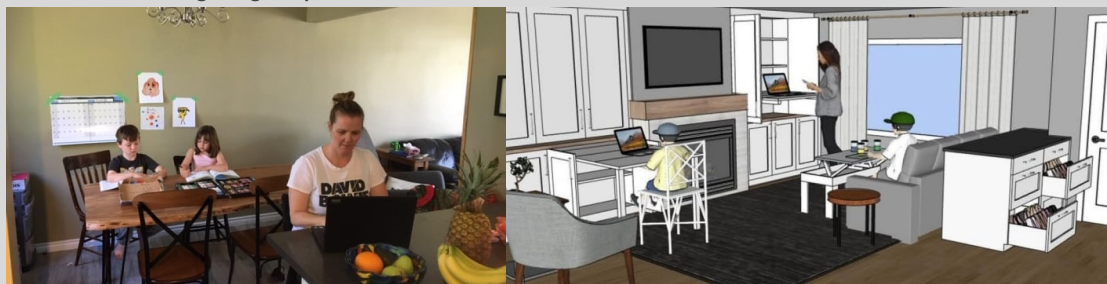
The provision of universally designed housing, adaptable housing and other housing innovations would potentially result in a positive contribution to the community through increased housing choices and accessible dwellings.

The planning proposal would deliver work/study areas in 40 per cent of delivered apartments. Coupled with the delivery of larger units, this would help address recent demand associated with COVID-19 for high-quality areas to support work-from-home arrangements. These areas are otherwise difficult to accommodate in standard apartment buildings, requiring compromises in households for common space. Formal design responses to the need for work-from-home spaces are currently being developed by the industry, and the planning proposal's requirement would encourage development of a housing product that would deliver appropriate spaces for future residents.

The planning proposal would provide 5 per cent of delivered units as affordable housing for key workers. As discussed in Council's draft Housing Strategy (2019) delivery of affordable housing is a key issue. Provision of five apartments would help address the significant shortage of similar units in the LGA.

The planning proposal will make a positive contribution to housing diversity in The Hills Shire.

COVID-19 and housing design requirements



Source: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/hamilton/here-s-how-covid-19-is-changing-what-people-want-from-the-design-of-their-homes-1.5551338>

The impact of COVID-19 has impacted several aspects of the Australian business environment, with design responses being made across commercial and residential environments. While businesses may be supportive of work from home arrangements expanding,² those arrangements have identified issues with dwellings, particularly apartments, being suitable working environments.³ Home offices and multipurpose spaces have become increasingly important for people working from home and it is anticipated that apartments, which traditionally have focused on an economy of space, will incorporate new design elements.⁴

² <https://www.cnn.com/2020/08/07/atlassian-tells-employees-they-can-work-from-home-indefinitely.html>

³ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/hamilton/here-s-how-covid-19-is-changing-what-people-want-from-the-design-of-their-homes-1.5551338>

⁴ <https://architizer.com/blog/inspiration/industry/covid-19-home-design/>

7.5 Community cohesion

There are a number of design and planning aspects of the proposal that provide the opportunity for interaction between the existing and future communities of workers, residents and visitors.

The inclusion of community co-working spaces would attract different types of businesses conducive to a progressive business park model. A child care centre included within the development would provide a service for residents and employees, with opportunities for social interaction. The inclusion of limited residential and restaurant uses would contribute to the night time economy in the area, creating a sociable environment for existing and new residents. Retail land use integrated on the ground floor, surrounding a public plaza, would provide a platform for community cohesion in the public realm. This is supported by convenience retailing near the train station's entrance, plus a restaurant and pub within the development.

The area proposed for an apartment building (the western portion of the subject site) interfaces with residential uses to the west and south. The concept plan demonstrates that setbacks with lower density uses, as outlined in the Apartment Design Guideline can be met or exceeded. Further, the apartment building steps down significantly from the Norwest Metro station. This residential interface would serve as a buffer between the low density residential uses surrounding the Subject Site and the taller commercial built form elements.

Overall, the planning proposal encourages cohesion of existing and future residents and workers.

7.6 Community health and safety

Crime

The risk of the proposal directly or indirectly contributing towards crime in the area has been considered. It is noted that the houses immediately bordering south of the subject site (along Ridgehaven Place) are attracting some break and enter crime, as seen in Section 3.6. The planning proposal will increase surveillance and activity on the site which may deter break and enter crime. The proposed mix of uses fosters activity during longer hours of the day, contributing to natural surveillance in the area within and immediately surrounding the subject site.

A Crime Risk Assessment may be undertaken prior to a development application being prepared to incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles.

Lifestyle

The subject site's proximity to a high-frequency train station would provide social and health benefits to employees and residents. Impacts such as stress and fatigue arise as a result of long daily commutes - when jobs are located further away from housing, and housing from jobs. The proposal will reduce the need for long commute times.

Health benefits of public transport accessibility have been appreciated and included as part of NSW State Government planning policy that promotes transport-oriented development. As such, the proposal realises the benefits of transport accessibility and would leverage this for a complementary worker-resident population.

Precincts with a mix of employment and residential uses

Co-location of employment and residential land uses in is creating self-sustaining destinations that are changing the way we work and live, a trend that is likely to accelerate. These precincts offer households accommodation, work, shops, services, recreation and entertainment all in the same location, minimising the need for transport and maximising the benefits of existing infrastructure. While the planning proposal would primarily result in an employment focused precinct, some of the benefits of mixed use precincts identifies in the literature that are relevant to the planning proposal include:

- Including residential uses allows greater investment in a public domain, community facilities, open space, recreation facilities, site connections and local traffic improvements which provides quality living and working environments
- Leveraging the reputation of Norwest Business Park can attract higher-order tenants including major corporations and international headquarters
- An on-site population provides an immediate catchment to underpin the viability of retail and services offer
- Residents activate a precincts in the evening, when workers have gone home, providing a basis for a night time economy
- Living and working on site reduces travel time and maximises time to spend with family, friends and in leisure activities
- Opportunities to make flexible working arrangements easier and the negative consequences of overtime hours are minimised enticing workers stay with the business for longer
- Existing infrastructure that is in place for the business park provides a firm foundation for an expanded community, with existing open space, health facilities and community facilities all being available to incoming residents and workers

- Infrastructure that goes unused outside standard business hours can be used by residents in the evening, including major infrastructure investments, such as the metro station, which will maximise patronage and benefits from the Government's investment.

Hence, there are significant benefits likely to arise from the missed use nature of the planning proposal.

7.7 Local regional economy

Housing costs

The Australian Bureau of Statistics forecasts that the Sydney Metropolitan Area will gain an additional 1.5 to 1.9 million residents by 2036. In light of this change, the NSW State Government forecasts that Sydney will require an additional 664,000 dwellings over the next twenty years. Increased housing supply was also identified as a key priority in the draft Central City District Plan. As such the proposal would contribute to meeting demand for new dwellings and align housing supply with demand. Further the resulting net increase in dwelling supply can help to alleviate pressure on housing costs in the local area. This would be expected to have some positive influence on housing affordability in The Hills Shire, allowing more flexibility with life choices and long-term wellbeing.

Construction-related expenditure

The construction of the development is expected to have short and long-term benefits with respect to construction employment and the purchase of materials. During construction, the planning proposal would generate additional construction jobs. Local businesses are also likely to benefit from increased construction related trade. This has been addressed in an Economic Impact Assessment by HillPDA.

The construction industry is a significant component of the economy, accounting for 6.7 per cent of Gross Domestic Product and employing almost one million workers across Australia.⁵ The industry has strong linkages with other sectors, so its impacts on the economy go further than the direct contribution of construction.

7.8 Social impact risk assessment

The above considerations have been used to assess the social risks associated with the proposal using the method outlined in section 1.2 and 1.3. The findings are presented in Table 25. Mitigation measures are suggested to address potential negative impacts.

⁵ Source: IBIS World Construction Industry Report 2015

Table 25: Social risk assessment

	STAKEHOLDER	DURATION	EXTENT	SEVERITY	CONSEQUENCE	LIKELIHOOD	MITIGATION/ ENHANCEMENT	SIGNIFICANCE
Potential negative Impacts								
Congestion from intensified land use	Employees, visitors and residents of the Subject Site; Residents of surrounding area.	Long term	Suburb	Medium	Moderate	Possible	Adopt recommendations from traffic report	Minor negative
More pedestrians in the area	Employees, visitors and residents of the Subject Site; Residents of surrounding area.	Long term	Locality	Medium	Slight	High	Identify potential to contribute to upgrades to pedestrian realm	Minor negative
Impact of construction	Residents of surrounding area	Short term	Locality	Medium	Slight	High	Produce a CEMP at the DA stage	Minor negative
Imposition of high density development	Residents of surrounding area	Medium term	Locality	Small	Slight	High	Confirm adherence to Apartment Design Guide at the DA stage	Minor negative
Demand for community infrastructure	Employees and residents of the subject site	Medium term	Suburb	Small	Slight	Possible	Proposed provisions of community co-working hub and child care centres	Minor negative
Demand for child care and education facilities	Employees and residents of the subject site	Medium term	Suburb	Medium	Slight	Possible	Provide child care centre in as part of the planning proposal	Minor negative
Potential positive Impacts								
Provision of employment floorspace	The Hills LGA; Greater Sydney	Long Term	Suburb	Medium	Moderate	High	None required	Moderate positive
Affordable housing provision	Residents of the Subject site	Long Term	Locality	Medium	Moderate	High	None required	Moderate positive
Work/study area equipped units	Residents of the Subject site	Long Term	Locality	Medium	Moderate	High	None required	Moderate positive
Crime	Residents of surrounding area	Medium term	Locality	Small	Moderate	Low	None required	Low positive
Diversified housing options in the area	Residents of surrounding area; The Hills LGA	Long term	Municipality	Medium	Major	High	Final dwelling mix reflects community needs	Major positive
Housing close to jobs and services	Employees, visitors and residents the Subject Site	Long term	Municipality	Medium	Moderate	High	None required	Moderate positive
Construction-related expenditure	Surrounding businesses; The Hills LGA; Greater Sydney	Short term	Municipality	Small	Slight	Possible	Construction managers to support local spending.	Minor positive
Reduced pressure on housing costs	The Hills LGA; Greater Sydney	Medium term	Municipality	Medium	Moderate	High	None required	Moderate positive
Commercial growth in Norwest	Surrounding businesses; Employees; The Hills LGA	Medium Term	Locality	Medium	Moderate	High	None required	Moderate positive

8.0 CONCLUSION

HillPDA has been engaged by Visy Dior Pty Ltd to prepare an SIA to accompany a planning proposal for consideration by The Hills Shire Council in regard to the planning proposal for an employment precinct with a residential use. The subject site is located at 34-46 Brookhollow Avenue, Norwest within The Hills LGA.

The SIA aims to identify both potential positive and negative social impacts associated with the planning proposal. This report also suggests mitigation measures which will help to maximise social benefits and minimise negative impacts, to the community.

Increased demand for community infrastructure and child care can be addressed on the site and a child care centre has been included in the proposal. While the potential for short term impacts through congestion was an initial concern, a traffic study by GTA consulting has confirmed that the traffic impacts of the planning proposal can be appropriately managed. The proponent has indicated a commitment to contribute to intersection improvements and the pedestrian and cycle network to manage these impacts.

Most of these potential social impacts have been assessed as very low and low in scale and intensity. The mixed-use typology and the inclusion of a child care centre and co-working spaces are measures in the planning proposal that have responded to the findings of this report and respond to potential social impacts.

On a larger scale the planning proposal could benefit the wider community and economy by:

- Significant contributions to employment in the Norwest Business Park
- Providing a public plaza that would contribute to the amenity of the subject site for the benefit employees in the surrounding area
- Locating residential uses on the western end of the site, allowing for a transition in height and a use that is compatible with the residential uses to the west and south
- Increasing pedestrian connectivity between the Norwest Metro site and the surrounding employment and residential uses
- Fostering commercial growth for a mix of commercial uses via co-working spaces
- Assisting in the wider COVID-19 response and increased demand for work from home areas in apartments by incorporating work/study areas into 40% of residential units
- Providing housing close to jobs and services
- Providing affordable housing, with 5% of units to be provided as affordable housing for key workers
- Reducing pressure on housing costs by increasing supply.

Overall, the negative impacts of the planning proposal can be successfully managed with the implementation of the above mitigation measures. The planning proposal would have an overall benefit to the social and economic environment of Norwest and The Hills Shire.

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