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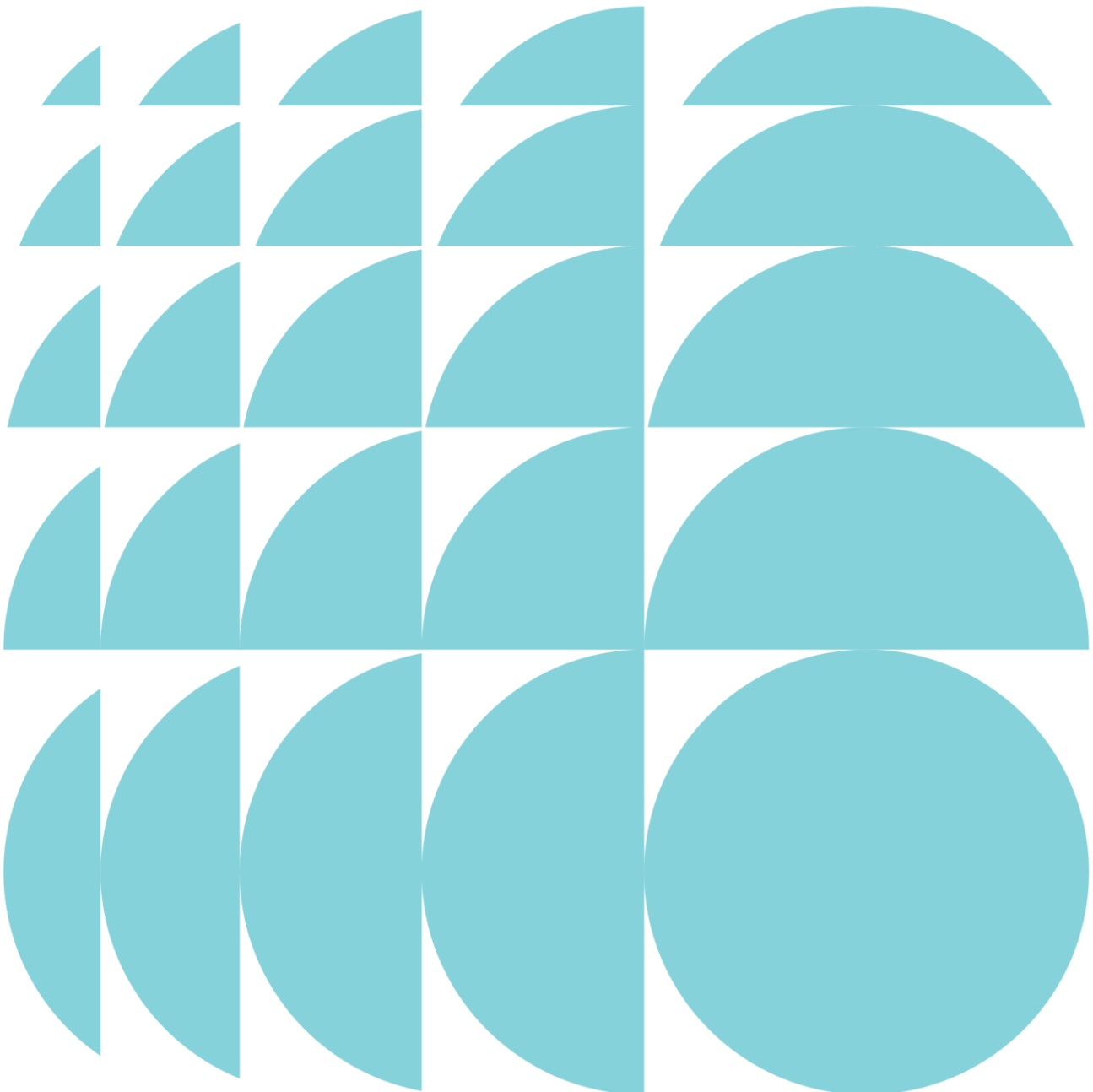
## Social Infrastructure Needs Peer Review

### FINAL REPORT

Chester Square  
1 Leicester Street, Chester Hill

Prepared for City of Canterbury Bankstown  
Council

20 July 2020 | 2190990



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## Executive Summary

### Background

City of Canterbury Bankstown Council engaged Ethos Urban to undertake a Social Infrastructure Needs Peer Review of Chester Hill Village Centre and the Chester Square (1 Leicester Street, Chester Hill) Planning Proposal.

The Planning Proposal is to redevelop the existing Chester Square shopping centre to deliver a mixed-use development including 648 residential units, nearly 17,000sqm of commercial and retail floorspace, and a 2,800sqm publicly accessible plaza.

To accompany the Planning Proposal, a range of community benefits are proposed, including:

- 160sqm community centre (cold shell) within the development
- Financial contribution towards upgrade of Nugent Park North and Nugent Park South

The proposal will also deliver privately-owned publicly accessible space in the form of communal rooms within the development and the publicly accessible plaza.

### Purpose of this report

The purpose of this project is to independently peer review the *Social Impact and Community Benefits Assessment* (Cred Consulting, August 2019), lodged by the proponent of the Chester Square Planning Proposal. Specifically, it reviewed key social infrastructure provision recommendations relating to the Chester Square Shopping Centre and the broader town centre, then make recommendations on any additional social infrastructure requirements for the town centre.

The outcomes of the peer review informed the planning proposal and site specific DCP controls, and the negotiation of a Planning Agreement with the proponent. Peer review is a process whereby industry experts (“peers”) evaluate the quality of other experts’ work to ensure the work is rigorous, coherent and evidence-based. This peer review forms part of Council’s ongoing review of local planning controls aimed at facilitating redevelopment at Chester Hill village centre.

This peer review involved a critical review of key planning and social planning documents relating to the Planning Proposal for Chester Square (1 Leicester Street, Chester Hill), to deliver recommendations on any additional social infrastructure that may be required, and any other relevant considerations.

The outcomes of this peer review were contextualised in Council’s broader approach to social infrastructure provision within Chester Hill and the LGA as a whole.

### Development context

The review of the local social context and policy context of the proposed development highlighted the following considerations relevant to the peer review:

- Canterbury Bankstown is one of the largest, most populous and most diverse LGAs in Sydney. It is Council’s vision to prioritise growth and renewal in major and local centres in Canterbury-Bankstown with strong access to infrastructure, public transport, employment and education opportunities. As the major centre for the north west of the LGA, Chester Hill plays an important role in supporting access to housing, employment opportunities and social infrastructure.
- The community of Chester Hill grew at a similar rate to the Canterbury Bankstown LGA, at 9% over five years (between 2011 and 2016). The existing community is a diverse mix of age groups, household types and residents from a broad range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The existing dwelling profile is dominated by separate houses. The area is forecast to grow from 12,460 residents in 2016 to 13,622 in 2036.

- Many members of the Chester Hill community are experiencing significant disadvantage, with relatively low levels of educational attainment, low household incomes and high numbers of households living in social housing. Many residents who were born overseas also do not speak English well or at all.
- Chester Hill is a major local centre for the north west of the Canterbury Bankstown LGA, and is characterised by retail, community and residential uses. The retail areas are located to the north of the railway line, at the Chester Square shopping centre and along Waldron Road. These areas comprise a supermarket and range of shops and services. There is a concentration of social infrastructure to the south of the railway line.
- There are a relatively large number of local community facilities within Chester Hill that are owned and operated by Council, including Chester Hill Library and Knowledge Centre, Chester Hill Neighbourhood Centre, Bill Lovelee Youth Centre, a childcare centre and guides hall; as well as open space assets.
- It is a Council priority to enhance and expand social infrastructure provision across the LGA. Council's approach emphasises enhancing the effectiveness of existing facilities, prioritising investment in growth centres to support communities in need, supporting cultural diversity through community facilities and developing flexible, adaptable spaces to meet community needs as they change over time.
- Council has undertaken significant social infrastructure needs analysis for the Chester Hill area. Recommendations from previous social infrastructure planning emphasise increasing the utilisation, size and quality of existing facilities, and enhancing the connections between existing facilities to deliver a vibrant "hub" of community facilities in a single location close to the train station. The recommendations do not support delivery of a new standalone facility of below benchmark size, disconnected from other community facilities in the Chester Hill local centre.

### Peer review of social infrastructure needs arising from the Planning Proposal

The peer review of the *Social Impact and Community Benefits Assessment* (Cred, 2019), commented on the adequacy of the following aspects of the report, with regard to best practice approaches to social infrastructure assessment and planning:

- Assumptions underlying the social infrastructure analysis,
- Social infrastructure assessment methodology,
- Benchmarks used in the report,
- Social needs gaps identified in the report,
- Community benefits proposed in the report,
- Social impact analysis in the report,
- Strategic alignment of the proposal.

The key findings of the peer review process included:

- There are some issues with the underlying assumptions of the report as they relate to forecast population growth and change generated by the development. The methodology used to forecast population change associated with the development may have projected higher levels of population growth than are likely.
- While there are no NSW guidelines for social infrastructure assessment, the methodology applied by Cred to analyse the demand for social infrastructure generated by the development is logical, and generally aligns with good practice and industry standards.
- Cred has applied numeric benchmarks to identify social infrastructure "gaps" arising from the proposed development. The outcome of Cred's application of numeric benchmarks, while arising from a rigorous process, lacks the consideration of the broader strategic context and directions set out in Council's new strategic plans for community facilities delivery. Alternative benchmarks, aligning with the social infrastructure study recently completed by Council, have been proposed in this peer review.
- Some of the community benefits proposed in the report (i.e. the 160sqm cold shell community centre within the development) do not align with Council's approach to social infrastructure provision, nor to best practice principles for social infrastructure provision. Other community benefits (i.e. financial contribution towards

embellishment of Nugent Park) are appropriate and will contribute towards meeting community needs in the area.

- Some of the community benefits listed in the report are privately owned and publicly accessible, and therefore cannot ultimately be classed as public benefits.
- The social impact analysis component of Cred's report is considered robust and is aligned with industry best practice.

### Recommendations arising

The peer review process has highlighted the following opportunities to improve the *Social Impact and Community Benefits Assessment* (Cred Consulting, August 2019), lodged by the proponent of the Chester Square Planning Proposal.

The following recommendations will enhance the quality of the *Social Impact and Community Benefits Assessment* (Cred Consulting, August 2019):

- Revise the forecast population associated with the proposed development, based on a more detailed analysis of the household occupancy rates of higher density areas within Canterbury Bankstown LGA.
- Apply the more holistic and flexible benchmarks used in Council's social infrastructure study (*Community Needs Analysis*, Ethos Urban) to the proposed development, to re-assess demand for social infrastructure generated by the development.
- Revise the proposed community benefits offer based on:
  - Contextualising the social infrastructure analysis within Council's strategic framework for community facilities planning, to come up with recommendations that are aligned with Council's broader strategy for the locality, and the LGA more broadly.
  - Aligning the community benefits offer with best practice social infrastructure provision principles, such as integrated, accessible community facilities, co-location and multipurpose facilities.

### Alternative and additional social infrastructure needs

To meet social infrastructure needs arising from the proposed development and the broader Chester Hill local centre, this peer review proposes the following alternative community benefits:

- Financial contribution towards upgrade of Nugent Park North and Nugent Park South, including the following potential embellishments:
  - A playground for older children / intergenerational play;
  - Meeting places, shaded tables and seating for games, picnics and conversation;
  - Creative lighting design for night time use by future residents / increased safety;
  - Outdoor gym/fitness equipment;
  - Flat kick around grassed space / village lawn (useable for events); and
  - Improved and well-lit pedestrian links

The detailed upgrades for the park will be subject to stakeholder and community engagement to determine community priorities.

- Financial contribution towards upgrade and/or expansion of existing community facilities within 400m walking distance of the site, including:
  - Bill Lovelee Youth Centre
  - Chester Hill Library and Knowledge Centre
  - Chester Hill Community Centre

The detailed upgrades for the park will be subject to stakeholder and community engagement to determine community priorities.

### **Revised community benefits proposal**

In response to the outcomes of this peer review, Council has recommended that an alternative Planning Proposal be referred to the gateway in March 2020. Council's feedback includes:

- Amend the 'Height of Buildings Map' to increase the building height from 20 metres to 44 metres, rather than 65 metres, as originally proposed
- Amend the 'Floor Space Ratio Map' to increase the floor space ratio from 2.5:1 to 3.5:1, rather than 4.53:1 as originally proposed
- A clause requiring 5% of residential yield being dedicated to Council (or a nominated affordable housing provider) being adopted
- A revised Planning Agreement offer being made providing:
  - Acquisition and dedication to Council of Lots 36, 37, & 38 in Deposited Plan 14908 (Post Office Site) for expansion of Charles Place;
  - Road widening works and dedication of 1.6 metres of the subject site along Frost Lane to Council;
  - Construction of raised and paved pedestrian link across Frost Lane to Charles Place and public domain improvements for same;
  - A financial contribution towards the embellishment and upgrade of Nugent Park North and Nugent Park South;
  - Construction of a 2,800 square metre public square within the subject site publicly accessible 24/7 and retained on title;
  - Financial contribution toward public domain improvements and carriageway works along Waldron Road between Bent and Priam Street including street tree planting, paving and scramble pedestrian crossing;
- Payment of all applicable Section 7.11/12 local infrastructure contributions; and,
- Preparation of a site specific DCP to ensure that a suitable built form outcome is achieved and to apply appropriate controls on land use mix to maintain the primacy of specialty retail along Waldron Road.

The revised social infrastructure proposed to be delivered on this site (i.e. financial contribution towards embellishment of Nugent Park) and other community benefits (i.e. public domain improvements, provision of affordable housing) are in line with the recommendations of the draft report prepared by Ethos Urban for Council.

The community benefits associated with the revised Planning Proposal represent an improved social infrastructure outcome for the site, and for the community of Chester Hill. The revised community benefits are aligned with Council's identified social infrastructure needs for this area, best practice approaches to social infrastructure provision and policies and strategies relevant to this area.



## 1.0 Introduction

City of Canterbury Bankstown Council has engaged Ethos Urban to undertake a Social Infrastructure Needs Peer Review of Chester Hill Village Centre and the Chester Square (1 Leicester Street, Chester Hill) Planning Proposal.

The purpose of this project is to independently peer review the *Social Impact and Community Benefits Assessment* (Cred Consulting, August 2019), lodged by the proponent of the Chester Square Planning Proposal. In addition, the report is to take a broader review of the Chester Hill town centre and make recommendations on any additional and/or alternative social infrastructure that may be required.

The Planning Proposal is to redevelop the existing Chester Square shopping centre to deliver a mixed-use development including 648 residential units, nearly 17,000sqm of commercial and retail floorspace, and a 2,800sqm publicly accessible plaza.

To accompany the Planning Proposal, a range of community benefits are proposed, including a 160sqm cold-shell community centre within the development, to be dedicated to Council; financial contribution towards the upgrade of nearby Nugent Park and the widening of Frost Lane. The proposal will also deliver privately-owned publicly accessible space in the form of communal rooms within the development and the publicly accessible plaza.

Peer review is a process whereby industry experts (“peers”) evaluate the quality of other experts’ work to ensure the work is rigorous, coherent and evidence-based.

As per Council’s brief, the key objectives of the peer review are to:

- Assess anticipated demand for social infrastructure generated by the proposed retail and commercial floorspace and residential unit yields of the planning proposal;
- Assess whether the proposed social infrastructure is adequate;
- Recommend additional and/or alternative social infrastructure needs to accommodate the proposed development and local centre development more broadly.

This report provides preliminary comments on the peer review underway of the Social Impact and Community Benefits Assessment (Cred Consulting, August 2019), lodged by the proponent of the Chester Square Planning Proposal, in the context of the broader development proposal.

### 1.1 Site context

The proposed development is located at 1 Leicester Street, Chester Hill with the Canterbury-Bankstown LGA (see **Figure 1**). It is located approximately 25 kilometres west of the Sydney CBD. The site is approximately 16,714 square meters in size and is currently zoned B2 Local Centre under the Bankstown Local Environment Plan 2015.

The site is legally described as Lot 452 in DP 800063. The site is bound by Leicester St to the north, Priam St to the east, Frost Lane to the south and Bent Street to the west. Currently, the main entry access is off Leicester Street. The site is located approximately 150 metres from the Chester Hill train station.



**Figure 1**      **Site location**

*Source: Cred Consulting, 2019.*

Currently on the site is the Chester Square Shopping Centre which is a single storey shopping centre comprising 8,300sqm of retail floorspace and 250 car spaces (see **Figure 4** to **Figure 15** over page).



**Figure 2** Chester Square from Frost Lane and Frost Lane

Source: Ethos Urban.



**Figure 3** Chester Square from Leicester Street, Plaza link to Chester Square from Waldron Street

Source: Ethos Urban.



**Figure 4** Shops in Chester Square

Source: Ethos Urban.



## 1.2 Description of proposed development

The following section describes the proposed development for the site, including the Planning Proposal, and the revised proposal, in response to Council's feedback.

### Planning Proposal submitted by Holdmark – August 2019

The proposal for the site submitted by Holdmark in August 2019 incorporates the redevelopment of the site into a mixed-use precinct. The redevelopment will increase the current FSR of 2.5:1 to 4.53:1. The proposed development includes the following elements:

- Increasing front setback on the northern edge of the site and providing a development with a two storey podium with a townhouses along Leicester St.
- Four buildings along the a north-south axis, each with an eight storey scale on their northern end and rising to either 10, 14, 15 or 19 storeys on their southern end. The two central towers will be the highest with a reduction in height to the eastern and western edges.
- Capacity for 75,779sqm of GFA comprising:
  - Approximately 648 apartments (1, 2 and 3 bedroom units)
  - 16,763 sqm of non-residential uses with approximately 1,000 sqm of office space and 15,763 sqm of retail space
- Basement car parking for approximately 690 car spaces for commercial uses and 875 car spaces for residential use.
- Provision of high-quality public domain areas surrounding the site and the transformation of the rear laneway. This includes the creation of a central public plaza area approximately 2800 sqm.

The proposed development delivers the following community benefits that will contribute to the existing Chester Hill community and the forecast new population of the proposed development:

- 160sqm community centre within the development (cold shell), to be dedicated to Council,
- Financial contribution towards upgrade of Nugent Park North and Nugent Park South,
- Widening of Frost Lane,
- Privately-owned/publicly accessible space:
  - Communal rooms within residential part of development,
  - 2800sqm privately owned public plaza.

### Revised Planning Proposal – March 2020

Council commissioned a peer review of the urban design, economic analysis and social infrastructure needs associated with the Planning Proposal. In response, Council has recommended that an alternative Planning Proposal be referred to the gateway in March 2020. Council's feedback includes:

- Amend the 'Height of Buildings Map' to increase the building height from 20 metres to 44 metres, rather than 65 metres, as originally proposed
- Amend the 'Floor Space Ratio Map' to increase the floor space ratio from 2.5:1 to 3.5:1, rather than 4.53:1 as originally proposed
- A Clause requiring 5% of residential yield being dedicated to Council (or a nominated affordable housing provider) being adopted
- A revised Planning Agreement offer being made providing:
  - Acquisition and dedication to Council of Lots 36, 37, & 38 in Deposited Plan 14908 (Post Office Site) for expansion of Charles Place;
  - Road widening works and dedication of 1.6 metres of the subject site along Frost Lane to Council;

- Construction of raised and paved pedestrian link across Frost Lane to Charles Place and public domain improvements for same;
- A financial contribution towards the embellishment and upgrade of Nugent Park North and Nugent Park South;
- Construction of a 2,800 square metre public square within the subject site publicly accessible 24/7 and retained on title;
- Financial contribution toward public domain improvements and carriageway works along Waldron Road between Bent and Priam Street including street tree planting, paving and scramble pedestrian crossing;
- Payment of all applicable Section 7.11/12 local infrastructure contributions; and,
- Preparation of a site specific DCP to ensure that a suitable built form outcome is achieved and to apply appropriate controls on land use mix to maintain the primacy of specialty retail along Waldron Road.

Council has also requested that the Traffic Impact Assessment, Economic Analysis and Social Need Needs Analysis prepared to support the Planning Proposal in August 2019 be amended to reflect the supported concept and address the issues raised in Council's independent peer review studies.

Council will prepare a site-specific DCP Amendment based on the revised Planning Proposal.

### 1.3 Purpose of this peer review

The purpose of this study is to undertake a peer review of the social infrastructure needs analysis undertaken to support the planning proposal for Chester Hill Village Centre (B2 zoned land) and Chester Square.

Specifically, it will review key social infrastructure provision recommendations relating to the Chester Square Shopping Centre and the broader town centre, then make recommendations on any additional social infrastructure requirements for the town centre.

The outcomes of the peer review informed the planning proposal and site specific DCP controls, and the negotiation of a Planning Agreement with the proponent.

This peer review forms part of Council's ongoing review of local planning controls aimed at facilitating redevelopment at Chester Hill village centre.

Through this peer review of the Chester Square Shopping Centre planning proposal social infrastructure study, this project will deliver a robust assessment of the adequacy of social infrastructure proposed.

Key findings will ultimately highlight whether additional social infrastructure is required to support the wellbeing and resilience of Chester Hill's community, now and into the future. The outcome of this peer review will ultimately be to support Council's smart planning for social infrastructure delivery across the broader Canterbury-Bankstown LGA, through a tailored, localised approach that is entirely appropriate to the area's social diversity and characteristics, forecast level of population growth and changing urban form.

## 1.4 Methodology

To develop this peer review, the following steps were undertaken:

1. Review of Planning Proposal and associated documentation;
2. Site visit to Chester Square and surrounding neighbourhood;
3. Review of context of the proposed development, including the population profile and demographic characteristics of Chester Hill, character of Chester Hill local centre, identification of social infrastructure within 400m and 800m walking distance of the site and review of local social issues and trends relevant to the proposed development;
4. Review of state and local policies and strategies relevant to the site to identify strategic drivers for delivery of social infrastructure on the site;
5. Peer review of *Social Impact and Community Benefits Assessment* (Cred Consulting, August 2019), lodged by the proponent of the Chester Square Planning Proposal. The peer review included analysis of underlying assumptions, methodology, benchmarks, identified social infrastructure needs gaps and proposed community benefits, as well as the strategic alignment between the proposal and Council's identified social infrastructure priorities;
6. Development of draft report, including preliminary findings of peer review, and recommendations regarding the adequacy of proposed social infrastructure and alternative or additional social infrastructure to be delivered on the site. This draft report was reviewed by Council;
7. Revision of draft report to incorporate Council feedback, and provide commentary on final proposed suite of social infrastructure to be delivered on the site.

## 2.0 Development context

The following section provides an overview of the context of the proposed development at Chester Square, and the broader Chester Hill suburb.

### 2.1 Key findings

The review of the local social context and policy context of the proposed development highlighted the following considerations relevant to the peer review:

- Canterbury Bankstown is one of the largest, most populous and most diverse LGAs in Sydney. It is Council's vision to prioritise growth and renewal in major and local centres in Canterbury-Bankstown with strong access to infrastructure, public transport, employment and education opportunities. As the major centre for the north west of the LGA, Chester Hill plays an important role in supporting access to housing, employment opportunities and social infrastructure.
- The community of Chester Hill grew at a similar rate to the Canterbury Bankstown LGA, at 9% over five years (between 2011 and 2016). The existing community is a diverse mix of age groups, household types and residents from a broad range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The existing dwelling profile is dominated by separate houses. The area is forecast to grow from 12,460 residents in 2016 to 13,622 in 2036.
- Many members of the Chester Hill community are experiencing significant disadvantage, with relatively low levels of educational attainment, low household incomes and high numbers of households living in social housing. Many residents who were born overseas also do not speak English well or at all.
- Chester Hill is a major local centre for the north west of the Canterbury Bankstown LGA, and is characterised by retail, community and residential uses. The retail areas are located to the north of the railway line, at the Chester Square shopping centre and along Waldron Road. These areas comprise a supermarket and range of shops and services. There is a concentration of social infrastructure to the south of the railway line.
- There are a relatively large number of local community facilities within Chester Hill that are owned and operated by Council, including Chester Hill Library and Knowledge Centre, Chester Hill Neighbourhood Centre, Bill Lovelee Youth Centre, a childcare centre and guides hall; as well as open space assets.
- It is a Council priority to enhance and expand social infrastructure provision across the LGA. Council's approach emphasises enhancing the effectiveness of existing facilities, prioritising investment in growth centres to support communities in need, supporting cultural diversity through community facilities and developing flexible, adaptable spaces to meet community needs as they change over time.
- Council has undertaken significant social infrastructure needs analysis for the Chester Hill area. Recommendations from previous social infrastructure planning emphasise increasing the utilisation, size and quality of existing facilities, and enhancing the connections between existing facilities to deliver a vibrant "hub" of community facilities in a single location close to the train station. The recommendations do not support delivery of a new standalone facility of below benchmark size, disconnected from other community facilities in the Chester Hill local centre.

### 2.2 Social context

This section provides an overview of the context of the proposed development based on demographic characteristics, locational characteristics, the surrounding social infrastructure context and local social issues and trends impacting the development.

#### 2.2.1 Population profile

The following community profile of the Chester Hill area uses population and employment data from multiple sources. The results of the 2016 ABS Census of Population and Housing, sourced from the City of Canterbury Bankstown Council's Community Profile (<https://profile.id.com.au/canterbury-bankstown>).

For the purpose of this section, demographic analysis with focus on Chester Hill and its relation to the wider Canterbury Bankstown LGA and the Greater Sydney region.

## Population and age structure

Between 2011 and 2016 the population in Chester Hill changed. In 2016, the usual resident population of Chester Hill was 12,060 residents, an increase from 11,024 residents in 2011. This represents an increase of 1,035 residents, or 9% over five years. Across the City of Canterbury Bankstown LGA the population has grown by 26,149 residents or 8.5% over five years.

In 2016, Chester Hill had a higher proportion of children under 18 years old and a higher proportion of residents aged 60 or older than the Canterbury Bankstown LGA average:

- In 2016, the median age in Chester Hill was 35 years, this is the same as the median age across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA.
- 25.9% of residents in Chester Hill were under the age of 18, compared with 24.2% across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA.
- 19.4% of residents in Chester Hill were over the age of 60, compared with 18.8% across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA.
- The largest growth group was the young workforce (18-24 years), which grew by 272 people between 2011 and 2016.

## Household and dwelling characteristics:

In 2016, Chester Hill had a similar household profile to the Canterbury Bankstown LGA, with a higher proportion of lone adults compared with the LGA average:

- The largest household group is couples with children households (40% of households in Chester Hill, compared with 39.8% across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA)
- The second largest household group is lone persons (22% of households in Chester Hill, compared with 18.6% across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA)
- The third largest household group is couples without children (14.8% of households in Chester Hill, compared with 18.5% across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA)
- 14.7% of households are one parents families, compared with 13.1% across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA.
- 2.3% of households are group households, compared with 3.2% across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA.

In 2016, the average household size in Chester Hill was 3.12 people per dwelling, a slight increase from 2.96 people per dwelling in 2011. This is slightly higher than the 2016 average across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA of 3.00 people per dwelling.

Compared with the Canterbury Bankstown LGA average, there is a significantly lower proportion of high-density dwellings in Chester Hill and a higher proportion of separate houses:

- 73.3% of dwellings in Chester Hill are separate houses, compared with 56.1% across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA.
- 23.2% of dwellings in Chester Hill are medium density, compared with 28.4% across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA.
- 2.8% of dwellings in Chester Hill are high density, compared with 14.4% across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA.



## Tenure and housing costs

In 2016, there was a mix of tenure types in Chester Hill:

- 35.9% of households in Chester Hill were renting compared with 34.8% across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA. Of these households, 15.8% of households living in Chester Hill were living in social housing, compared with 8.1% of households across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA.
- 27.5% of households in Chester Hill fully owned their home, compared with 28.7% across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA.
- 28.7% of households in Chester Hill were purchasing their home with a mortgage, compared with 28.2% across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA.

In 2016, the median rental payment in Chester Hill was \$330 per week, compared with \$380 across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA.

In Chester Hill, 20.8% of households are living in housing stress, compared to 18.6% of households in the Canterbury Bankstown LGA. Of those households in Chester Hill with a mortgage, 21% are living in mortgage stress, compared to 17.8% in the Canterbury Bankstown LGA.

34.5% of households who are renting in Chester Hill are living in rental stress, compared with 39.1% in Canterbury Bankstown.

## Weekly household income

Chester Hill had a slightly lower median weekly household income compared with the Canterbury Bankstown LGA median. In 2016, the median weekly household income in Chester Hill was \$1,125, compared with \$1,298 per week across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA. The median weekly household income in Chester Hill is significantly lower than the Greater Sydney average of \$1,750.

In 2016, 13.9% of households in Chester Hill were classified as high income (earning more than \$2,500 per week), compared with 18.2% across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA. 26.1% of households in Chester Hill were low income (earning less than \$650 per week), compared with 20.6% across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA.

## Cultural and linguistic diversity

Chester Hill is a culturally and linguistically diverse community, with a more than half of residents speaking a language other than English at home:

- 60.9% of Chester Hill residents speak a language other than English at home, which is similar across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA (60.1% across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA). In the Greater Sydney Region 35.8% of residents speak a language other than English at home.
- The top languages other than English spoken in Chester Hill are:
  - Arabic (22.8% of Chester Hill residents),
  - Vietnamese (11.9%),
  - Cantonese (4.4%),
  - Mandarin (4.2%),
  - Persian/Dari (1.2%).
- Chester Hill also has a high proportion of people born overseas, with 43% of residents born overseas compared with 44.0% of residents in the Canterbury Bankstown LGA. The top overseas places of birth in Chester Hill are:
  - Vietnam (9.9% of Chester Hill residents),
  - Lebanon (7%),
  - China (4.4%),
  - New Zealand (1.9%),
  - Iraq (1.3%).

Of the residents who were born overseas, 14% arrived in Australia within the 5 years prior to 2016.

The religious profile in Chester Hill may also provide an indication of cultural identity and ethnicity. The religious make up in Chester Hill in 2016 was:

- 26.4% of all residents in Chester Hill are Muslim, compared with 20.8% in the Canterbury Bankstown LGA and 5.3% across the Greater Sydney region.
- 18.3% of all residents are Western (Roman) Catholic, compared with 20.4% in the Canterbury Bankstown LGA and 24.2% across the Greater Sydney Region.
- 10.8% of all residents are Buddhist, compared with 6.1% across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA and 3.9% across the Greater Sydney region.

### **Educational attainment**

Chester Hill has lower levels of educational attainment than both the City of Canterbury Bankstown LGA and the Greater Sydney region.

- 48.2% of people aged over the age of 15 years in Chester Hill completed year 12 or equivalent, compared with 55.7% across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA and 60% across the Greater Sydney region.
- Overall 35.6% of the population held a tertiary qualification, compared with 42.5% across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA and 52.7% across the Greater Sydney region.

### **SEIFA Index of Disadvantage**

In 2016, Chester Hill had a SEIFA score of 871.3. This places them in the 7<sup>th</sup> percentile for disadvantage. In comparison, the City of Canterbury Bankstown LGA has a SEIFA score of 935 and is in the 17<sup>th</sup> percentile. The Greater Sydney region has a SEIFA score of 1,018 and is placed in the 56<sup>th</sup> percentile.

### **Crime rates**

Statistics from the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOSCAR) show that across all offence types the offence rate per 100,000 is low (less than 1054.3 per 100,000). The 2-year trend across offence types shows a stable rate of offence.

### **Forecast population growth and change**

Over the next 20 years the Chester Hill population is predicted to grow by 9.3% from 12,460 residents in 2016 to 13,622 in 2036 (Source: Forecast.id).

During this time, the demographic profile of this area is expected to continue to evolve. These broader growth patterns will affect social infrastructure planning by all active providers in Chester Hill Village Centre, and are an important baseline context within this research will be undertaken.

## **2.2.2 Locational character**

The following section provides a brief overview of the local character of the area surrounding the proposed development.

The Bankstown DCP 2015 identifies that the Chester Hill Village Centre is characterised by retail, community and residential uses (see **Figure 5** to **Figure 6**). The retail areas are located to the north of the railway line, at the Chester Square shopping centre and along Waldron Road. These areas comprise a supermarket and range of shops and services.

Most shops in the centre are traditional shop top housing with servicing from the rear. There are a range of community facilities located to the south of the railway line, and include Chester Hill Public School, an RSL, a community centre, library and Nugent Park. Residential uses surrounding the community facilities provide a transitional area to the retail core. Much of the housing stock is reaching the end of its lifecycle and consists of a mix of residential flat buildings, dual occupancies and dwelling houses (see **Figure 7**).



**Figure 5** Local shops on Chester Hill Road and Waldron Street, Chester Hill

Source: Ethos Urban.



**Figure 6** Local shops on Waldron Street, Chester Hill

Source: Ethos Urban.



**Figure 7** Suburban homes, Chester Hill

Source: Ethos Urban.



### 2.2.3 Social infrastructure context

The following section analyses the supply of social infrastructure available within walking distance to the site. This section also includes an analysis across social infrastructure types and local and district-level catchments as relevant.

A desktop review of the existing local and district social infrastructure has been undertaken to inform this peer review, taking account of both current and planned facilities.

This local social infrastructure analysis has identified and mapped social infrastructure within a local catchment of 400m and 800m from the site, a distance equivalent to a 10-15 minute walk.

Social infrastructure has been grouped into eight categories as follows:

- Public open space
- Recreation facilities
- Community facilities
- Libraries
- Schools
- Childcare and preschools
- Public transport
- Health services
- Civic services (including police, fire service and post office)

A summary of the key infrastructure within each category is provided below and local social infrastructure is mapped at **Figure 14**.

#### Public open space

The site is located within walking distance to several open spaces, including Nugent Park (see **Figure 8** and **Figure 9**) and Abbott Park (see **Figure 10**). There are also a number of pocket parks and playgrounds within walking distance of the site.



**Figure 8** Nugent Park South, Chester Hill

Source: Ethos Urban.



**Figure 9** Nugent Park North, Chester Hill

Source: Ethos Urban.



**Figure 10** Abbott Park and Russ Wheeler Reserve, Chester Hill

Source: Ethos Urban.

## Recreation facilities

There are a number of recreation facilities within walking distance of the site, including the Terry Lamb Complex (see **Figure 10**) and a bowling green to the north of the site.

## Community facilities

The site is located within walking distance to several community facilities, including:

- Chester Hill Library and Knowledge Centre (see **Figure 11** and **Figure 12**)
- Chester Hill Community Centre, including a shared use community hall within Chester Hill Public School (see **Figure 13**)
- Bill Lovelee Youth Centre.

Some of these facilities are concentrated to the south of the site, across the railway line.





**Figure 11** Chester Hill Library and Knowledge Centre  
*Source: Ethos Urban.*



**Figure 12** Chester Hill Library and Knowledge Centre  
*Source: Ethos Urban.*



**Figure 13** Chester Hill Community Centre  
*Source: Ethos Urban.*

## Education facilities

There are three schools within walking distance of the site: Chester Hill Public School, Sefton High School and Salamah College (an independent Islamic school for K-12).

## Aged care

There is one aged care facility within walking distance of the site – Abel Tasman Village. This facility provides residential living, home care and specialist care, including respite, dementia care, palliative care.

## Childcare centres and preschools

There is one childcare centre within walking distance of the site at KU Chester Hill.



**Figure 14 Social infrastructure context**

Source: Ethos Urban.

## 2.2.4 Local social issues and trends

The following section includes a brief overview of local issues and trends relevant to the provision of social infrastructure in Chester Hill, and likely to impact on the proposed development.

### Chester Hill as a vibrant local centre for the north-west of the LGA

Chester Hill is a local centre to the north west of Bankstown CBD. It is an established local retail and service centre for the surrounding community, focused around Chester Hill Station. The Bankstown DCP (2015) outlines that Chester Hill Village Square will continue functioning as the largest shopping precinct servicing the North West Local Area. The DCP also outlines the desirability of medium and high-density living options to be developed within close walking distance of the railway station and civic spaces.

Alongside retail, commercial and residential options, the centre contains a range of social infrastructure owned and operated by Council within walking distance of the site, including:

- Chester Hill Library and Knowledge Centre, which includes a mix of study spaces, children's area, small meeting rooms, seating and an internal garden. The Library is open and staffed six days a week (recently renovated);
- Chester Hill Neighbourhood Centre, a local community facility with hireable spaces delivered in partnership with Chester Hill Public School;
- Bill Lovelee Youth Centre, a local community facility with hireable spaces located adjacent to a sportsground;
- Chester Hill Guides Hall, and
- Chester Hill KU Children's Centre, a Council-own facility leased to KU to operate.

This suite of community facilities, as well as surrounding open spaces, provides a strong foundation to support community wellbeing within Chester Hill, subject to effective ongoing renewal as community needs grow and change.

### Concentration of disadvantage in Chester Hill

There is a significant concentration of disadvantage in Chester Hill. The SEIFA Index of Disadvantage prescribes Chester Hill a score of 871.3. This places the suburb in the 7<sup>th</sup> percentile for disadvantage. In comparison, the City of Canterbury Bankstown LGA has a SEIFAS score of 935 and is in the 17<sup>th</sup> percentile.

Provision of high quality social infrastructure will play a role in supporting these residents to access services, engage in lifelong learning and participate in the community. For example:

- Less than half of residents over 15 years (48.2%) in Chester Hill had completed Year 12 schooling (or equivalent) as of 2016. The area's relatively low levels of education attainment must be factored into future recommendations for community facilities as there could be greater need for spaces with educational uses.
- 14.5% of the population in Chester Hill do not speak English well or at all, it is important facilities are inclusive and provide services in community languages.
- 15.8% of Chester Hill households live in (rent) social housing and majority of households have a lower than average median income compared to Canterbury Bankstown LGA and Greater Sydney. It is important facilities are inclusive of low incomes, providing community support services and venues which are affordable or free.
- Over a third (34.5%) of Chester Hill households that are renting are in rental stress. Households that spend too high a proportion of their income on meeting housing costs have limited resources to meet the cost of accessing other daily living needs, including groceries, transport and medical services.

### Population growth across Canterbury Bankstown LGA

Between 2006 and 2016, the Canterbury Bankstown LGA grew by 46,000 people, from 300,460 in 2006 to 346,300 in 2016 (15% increase over ten years) and population density has risen by 7% over the same period. Demographic trends indicate that over the next 20 years there will be a 44% increase in population, to 499,980 in 2036.



Social infrastructure plays an integral role in the ongoing social sustainability of the LGA and can strengthen communities as they grow. It is critical to ensure there is a sufficient supply of well-connected and accessible community facilities to support forecast population growth.

Social infrastructure plays an integral role in the ongoing social sustainability of the LGA and can strengthen communities as they grow. It is critical to ensure there is a sufficient supply of well-connected and accessible community facilities to support forecast population growth. The future planning and development of Chester Hill will be an important consideration in ensuring that the needs of the broader Canterbury Bankstown area are met.

### **Cultural and linguistic diversity in Chester Hill**

Chester Hill, and more widely the City of Canterbury Bankstown, is home to a community rich with cultural diversity. The Canterbury Bankstown LGA has a significantly higher proportion of people who speak a language other than English at home than the Greater Sydney Region:

- 60.1% of residents in the City of Canterbury Bankstown speak a language other than English at home.
- 35.8% of residents in the Greater Sydney region speak a language other than English at home.

The proportion of residents who speak a language other than English at home has changed considerably in the five year period to 2016. For example, in Chester Hill there was a 4% increase in people who spoke only Arabic at home to 22.8%.

There is also a distinct religious profile in the Chester Hill area;

- 26.4% of all residents are Muslim, compared with 20.8% in the Canterbury Bankstown LGA and 5.3% across the Greater Sydney region.
- 18.3% of all residents are Western (Roman) Catholic, compared with 20.4% in the Canterbury Bankstown LGA and 24.2% across the Greater Sydney Region.
- 10.8% of all residents are Buddhist, compared with 6.1% across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA and 3.9% across the Greater Sydney region.

The unique cultural diversity of this group is an integral aspect in understanding the social infrastructure needs of the community. The changes in community profile may also influence the role and function or cultural identity of Canterbury-Bankstown's local centres through the type of retail and community services in demand. Any modification to existing, or new, social infrastructure must meet the needs of the diverse and changing community in Chester Hill, and across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA.

## 2.3 Policy context

The following section identifies the key social drivers for this site, based on a review of the key state and local policies and strategies. A summary of the key themes of this review is provided in Table 3.1 below. The comprehensive analysis is provided at **Appendix A**. The following documents have been reviewed:

- *South District Plan* (Greater Sydney Commission, 2018)
- *CB City 2028 – Community Strategic Plan* (City of Canterbury Bankstown Council, 2018)
- *Connective City 2036 – Draft Strategic Planning Statement* (City of Canterbury Bankstown, 2019)
- *Bankstown DCP 2015* (City of Canterbury Bankstown Council, 2015)

A comprehensive review of the strategic policy context for the development is available at **Appendix A**.

Policy theme	Key implications for community needs	Relevant documents
Population growth and change, concentrated in centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canterbury Bankstown is one of the largest, most populous and most diverse LGAs in Sydney. It is Council's vision to prioritise growth and renewal in major and local centres in Canterbury-Bankstown with strong access to infrastructure, public transport, employment and education opportunities.</li> <li>• Canterbury Bankstown LGA is rapidly changing, having to provide services and infrastructure for a diverse and growing community. To support these changes there is a policy focus on supporting growth through increased housing, infrastructure improvements, increased employment and business opportunities. This growth will be further supported by improved built form outcomes, public and active transport options, social infrastructure and services.</li> <li>• Population growth is placing pressure on existing social infrastructure, which will need to be more flexible and adaptable to support community needs.</li> <li>• To support population growth, it is a Council priority to deliver diverse, affordable and accessible housing in established centres, close to public transport, employment opportunities and essential services.</li> </ul>	<p>South District Plan (GSC, 2018)</p> <p>Draft LSPS (City of Canterbury Bankstown, 2019)</p>
Supporting the wellbeing of a diverse and growing population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canterbury Bankstown LGA is a diverse community, with residents from a broad range of communities. It is a Council priority to develop thriving communities where people are safe, have strong connections, care for each other and are inclusive.</li> <li>• Providing high quality, diverse and affordable housing, public spaces, services, open space and community facilities that reflect community values and enhance sense of place is a key community priority as the LGA grows.</li> </ul>	<p>Community Strategic Plan (City of Canterbury Bankstown, 2018)</p> <p>Draft LSPS (City of Canterbury Bankstown, 2019)</p>
Chester Hill as a vibrant local centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chester Hill is a designated local centre and is well located on the Bankstown train line in Council's LSPS. As a local centre, its role is to provide urban services, employment and retail options to a wide catchment and provide additional housing to the community.</li> <li>• It is a state and local on the need to ensure local centres provide significant jobs, commercial, civic, social and retail uses. To support this there is a drive to use place-based planning to ensure the role of centres as a focus for connected neighbourhoods.</li> <li>• New and diverse housing development with local centres may help to ensure that the needs of the community are met. Co-locating housing with schools, health, aged care, sporting and cultural facilities.</li> </ul>	<p>Draft LSPS (City of Canterbury Bankstown, 2019)</p> <p>South District Plan (GSC, 2018)</p> <p>Bankstown DCP (City of Canterbury Bankstown, 2015)</p>
Enhancing social infrastructure provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population growth and high density development are placing significant pressure on existing social infrastructure across Canterbury Bankstown LGA.</li> <li>• Providing a mix of city-shaping and community-supporting social infrastructure is important to support the wellbeing and resilience of the community as it grows. Council have developed an approach to social infrastructure planning across the LGA that emphasises enhancing the effectiveness of existing facilities, prioritising investment in growth centres to support communities in need,</li> </ul>	<p>Draft LSPS (City of Canterbury Bankstown, 2019)</p>

Policy theme	Key implications for community needs	Relevant documents
	supporting cultural diversity through community facilities and developing flexible, adaptable spaces to meet community needs as they change over time.	

## 2.4 Social infrastructure policy context

City of Canterbury Bankstown Council has undertaken community needs analysis to develop policy directions for the provision of social infrastructure across the LGA, including in Chester Hill. This section provides an overview of the social infrastructure policy context for the development, based on two previous studies:

- *Local North West Community Needs Study* (Elton Consulting, 2012)
- *Community Needs Analysis* (Ethos Urban, 2019)

### 2.4.1 Local North West Community Needs Study (Elton Consulting, 2012)

The *Local North West Community Needs Study* was commissioned by the former Bankstown City Council in 2012 to provide a framework for the delivery of social infrastructure in the North West Local Area, which consists of the suburbs of Chester Hill, Bass Hill, Sefton, Villawood, Lansdowne and Georges Hall. The report was prepared by Elton Consulting.

In this study, Chester Hill was identified as a “village centre”, and therefore a focus of housing and employment growth. It was designated as the major centre within the North West Local Area, and was expected to serve communities from across this catchment.

At the time of the study, there were a relatively large number of stand alone community facilities within Chester Hill:

- Chester Hill Multipurpose Community Centre,
- Chester Hill Neighbourhood Centre,
- Chester Hill Library,
- Chester Hill KU Children’s Centre,
- Bill Lovelee Youth Centre,
- Chester Hill Girl Guides, and
- Chester Hill First Scouts (Baden Avenue).

The analysis and recommendations of the study are on a dwelling target in Chester Hill of 730 new dwellings in the local area by 2031.

Based on the application of benchmarks, and consideration of the network of social infrastructure across the broader North West Local Area, the study concludes that the projected population increase does not indicate a strong demand for additional community facilities in the North West Local Area.

The study states that the existing provision, condition and location of the existing facilities suggests that the primary focus in the area should be on consolidation and how these facilities could be reconfigured or enhanced to better meet community needs.

The key actions outlined in the Local North West Community Needs Study relevant to this peer review include:

- Creation of Chester Hill Community Hub through redevelopment of the library site, creation of enhanced library and community space. Since this study was written, this recommendation has been implemented to some extent, and the Chester Hill Library has been expanded.
- Creation of Bill Lovelee / Abbott Park Health/Wellness/Fitness Hub – enhancement/expansions of existing building, creation of outdoor fitness track/equipment. This could include:
  - Expansion of the existing facility
  - Implementation of a permanent management system

- Introduction of outdoor fitness equipment and circuit type outdoor facilities
- Improvement to playground
- Enhancement of the existing Chester Hill Multipurpose Community Centre through the enhancement of open space at the corner of Wellington and Chester Hill Road.
- Maintain the KU Chester Hill Children’s Centre. No change recommended however an opportunity to expand if required onto the Girl Guides site.
- Chester Hill Girl Guides – current uses could be accommodated in enhanced Chester Hill Community Hub and enhanced Bill Lovelee facility.
- Chester Hill First Scouts – Low rate of usage and poor location, Scout activities could be accommodated elsewhere.

#### 2.4.2 Community Needs Analysis (Ethos Urban, 2019)

To support the development of the LSPS, Council commissioned Ethos Urban to develop a community needs analysis to inform social infrastructure planning and delivery across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA.

Delivering adequate and appropriate social infrastructure is fundamental to achieving City of Canterbury-Bankstown’s vision of a city that is “thriving, dynamic, real.” Council aspires to a city where:

*“Our communities are safe, strong, caring for each other and inclusive of all. We have good access to the services we need and use them well. Our people are healthy in mind and body... we are a place of incredible activity and opportunity... Our people are proud of themselves, proud of their roots and proud of our City...”*

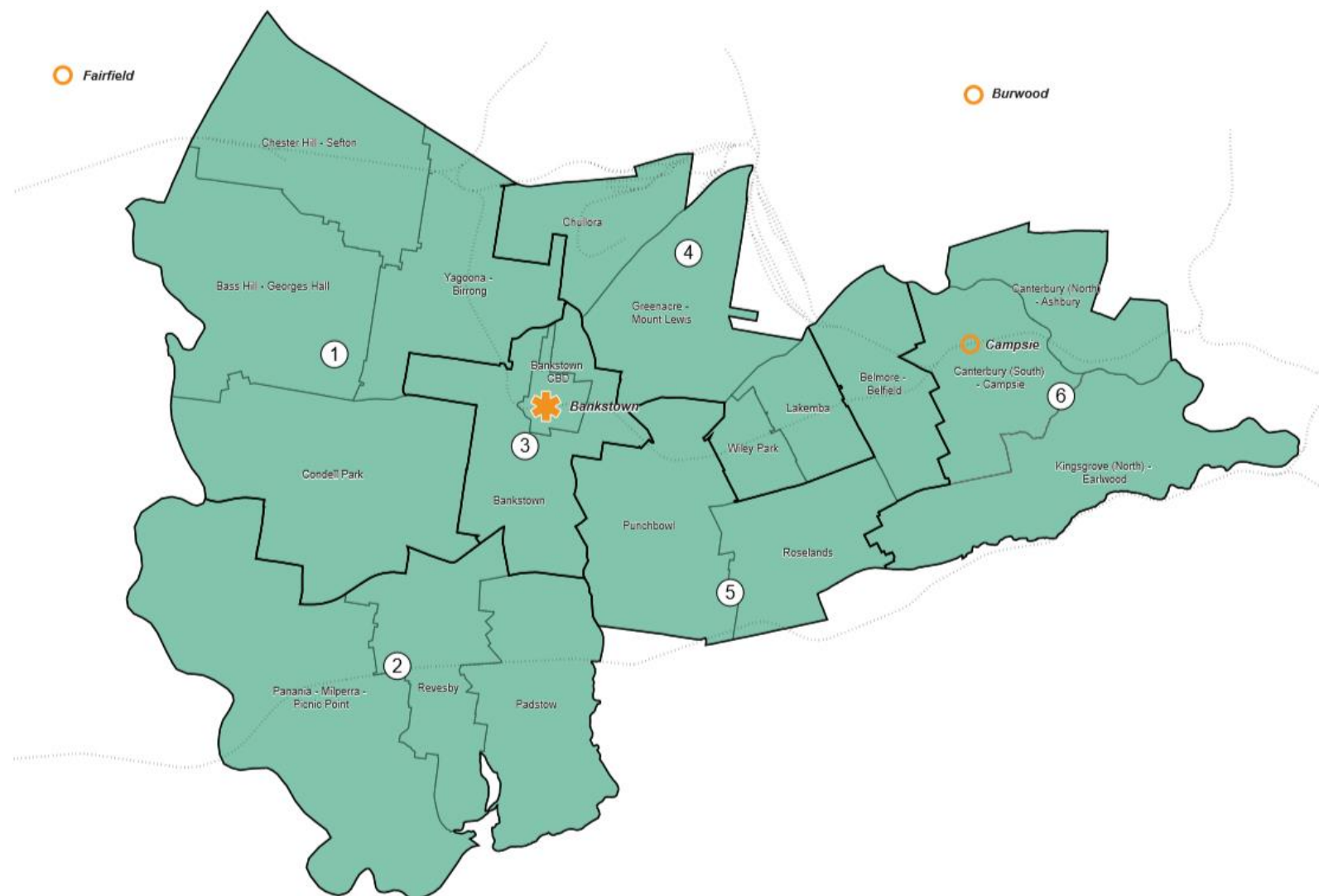
Provision of high quality social infrastructure is key to delivering City of Canterbury-Bankstown’s vision. Council’s existing portfolio of social infrastructure includes libraries, community centres, parks and recreation facilities which support local residents to thrive.

Council is currently focused on social infrastructure planning for the future as part of the development of its LSPS and its Community Strategic Plan – CB City 2028.

To undertake this analysis, the LGA was divided into six catchments, and Chester Hill was located in Catchment 1. This catchment included the small areas of Chester Hill, Sefton, Yagoona, Birrong, Chullora, Condell Park, Bass Hill and Georges Hall, as shown in **Figure 15**.

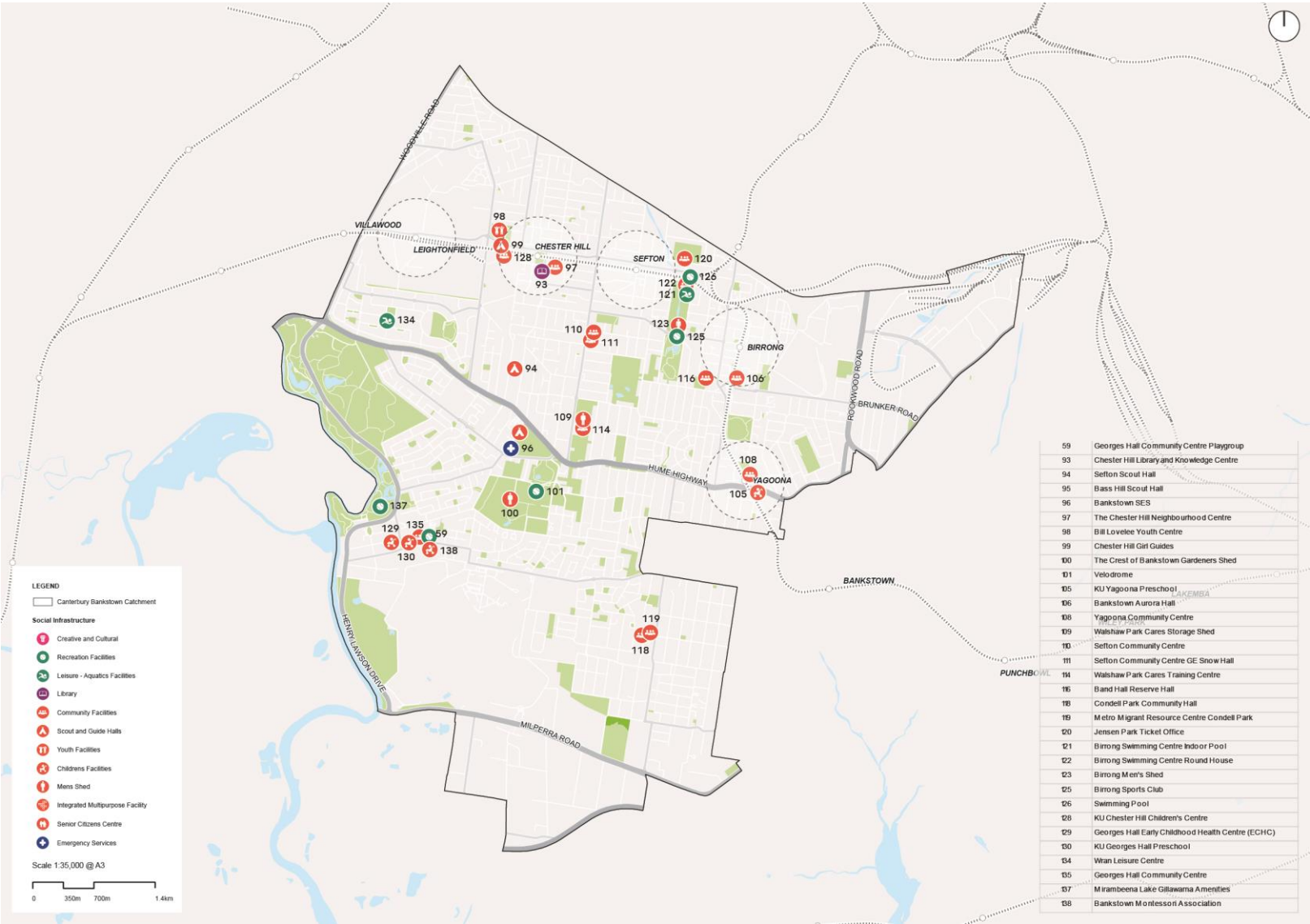
Catchment 1 is a large geographic area with a number of urban centres and industrial areas. The catchment includes Bankstown Airport, two centres at Chester Hill and Yagoona, and three significant industrial areas at Chullora, Leightonfield and Condell Park (adjacent to the Bankstown Airport). In 2016, the population of Catchment 1 was 73,930 in 2016, increasing to 85,677 in 2026 and 95,828 in 2036.

The audit identified a total of 25 community facilities in Catchment 1, as shown in **Figure 16**.



**Figure 15** Catchments applied through the Community Needs Analysis, 2019

Source: Ethos Urban, 2019.



**Figure 16** Community facilities within Catchment 1

Source: Ethos Urban, 2019.



**In terms of quantum and distribution, this catchment is well provisioned.** However, the catchment is characterised by small, older facilities concentrated in local centres and accessible by train. There are a number of smaller facilities located out of centre, including some scout halls and a velodrome. A number of these smaller facilities have recently been consolidated into larger community facilities, including Chester Hill Library and Knowledge Centre and Chester Hill Community Centre.

**Many facilities across this catchment are underutilised,** and there are opportunities to better activate and enhance the attractiveness of these facilities to hirers. The quality and condition of facilities within Catchment 1 is mixed. While some facilities (e.g. Chester Hill Library and Knowledge Centre, Chester Hill Community Centre) have recently undergone renovation and refurbishment to meet contemporary provision models, other facilities require significant upgrades to improve their utilisation (e.g. Bill Lovelee Youth Centre).

**This catchment is undergoing significant population growth to 2036** and will require significant investment to ensure that future community needs are met, including:

- At least two large integrated multipurpose community facilities,
- Two libraries,
- Enhancements to clusters of local community facilities to improve their functionality and suitability, and
- New cultural and creative spaces.

These recommendations, as relevant to Chester Hill, are discussed in detail below. The recommendations emphasise increasing the utilisation, size and quality of existing facilities, and enhancing the connections between existing facilities to deliver a vibrant “hub” of community facilities in a single location close to the train station.

The recommendations do not support delivery of a new standalone facility of below benchmark size, disconnected from other community facilities in the Chester Hill local centre.

### **Delivering new integrated multipurpose facilities in Catchment 1**

Noting Council’s constrained resources, the geographic size of the LGA and the rate and scale of population growth in the catchment, a pragmatic lens is required to meet demand for integrated community facilities in this catchment. Council has recently invested in the redevelopment and enhancement of community facilities within the village centres of Chester Hill and Yagoona (including development of the Chester Hill Library and Knowledge Centre, Chester Hill Neighbourhood Centre and Yagoona Community Centre).

These facilities are high quality, and reflect contemporary provision models, and it is therefore unlikely that these key facilities will be further expanded or renovated in the next ten years. Both of these facilities are a reasonable size, but do not meet the 2000-2,500sqm benchmark for floorspace for integrated multipurpose community facilities.

To deliver at least two integrated multipurpose facilities in this catchment there are opportunities to enhance the synergies between existing facilities to improve their functioning as multipurpose, integrated community facilities. In Chester Hill, the recently renovated Library and Neighbourhood Centre provides a total of 1,941sqm in a location close to a train station and town centre. A new or expanded community facility in this location (of at least 400sqm) will create an integrated multipurpose facility in this centre.

### **Enhancing utilisation of local community facilities to meet community needs**

There is also an opportunity to meet community needs through enhancing utilisation of the Bill Lovelee Youth Centre. This facility is a reasonable size and is within walking distance of Chester Hill Station. There are opportunities to enhance the utilisation of this facility by increasing synergies between the facility and the park / sportsgrounds where it is located, and by formalising its use as a broader community facility, rather than a youth centre.

### **Improving utilisation of the Chester Hill Library and Knowledge Centre, potentially through improving integration with surrounding facilities**

It is also noted that the floorspace within the Chester Hill Library and Knowledge Centre is approximately half of the recommended floorspace (877sqm) for a branch library. Although small in size, Chester Hill Library and Knowledge Centre was renovated in 2013 and is well located adjacent to the recently renovated Chester Hill Community

Centre, Chester Hill Public School and a short walk from the Chester Hill train station. The space includes a mix of study spaces, children's area, small meeting rooms, seating and an internal garden. The Library is open and staffed six days a week. The qualitative assessment noted that the facility is currently somewhat underutilised, considering its multifunctional, location and size.

There may be opportunities to increase utilisation of the existing facility, and to increase synergies and connections between the library and the Chester Hill Neighbourhood Centre across the road. In the long term, there may be opportunities to enhance the size and programming of these facilities so that they operate as an integrated multipurpose facility. Integrated multipurpose community facilities typically have a "core" or "anchor" use, which is frequently a library.



### 3.0 Social infrastructure analysis methodology and best practice

This section aims to outline industry leading practice approaches to social infrastructure analysis, to provide a basis for assessing whether the *Social Impact and Community Benefits Assessment* (Cred, 2019) aligns with best practice in this field.

#### 3.1 Best practice guidelines and principles for social infrastructure analysis

In general, social infrastructure is defined as “the interdependent mix of facilities, places, spaces, programs, projects, services and networks that maintain and improve the standard of living and quality of life in a community” (WA Dept of Planning, 2012).

The NSW Government does not have specific guidelines for preparation of social infrastructure analyses. Several social infrastructure analysis guidelines have been prepared over the past two decades for authorities across Australia, including:

- *South East Queensland Regional Plan 2005-2015: Implementation Guideline No. 5 Social Infrastructure Planning* (Queensland Government, Office of Urban Management, 2005)
- *Best Practice Guide for Social Infrastructure* (Queensland Government, July 2019)
- *People Places: A Guide for Public Library Buildings in New South Wales* (State Library of NSW, Third edition, June 2012)
- *Draft Greener Places Policy* (Government Architect NSW, 2017)

Although these documents provide recommendations for approaches to social infrastructure planning and benchmarks for the provision of social infrastructure for a range of facility types in a range of settings, there is no one set of specific guidelines generally accepted as providing international best practice standards.

##### 3.1.1 Social infrastructure benchmarks

As noted above, there are a wide range of social infrastructure benchmarks applicable to a local government setting. There is no single set of best practice social infrastructure benchmarks, although there are some general trends that have formed an industry standard.

Benchmarks are a tool that provides guidance on the quantum, size and location of facilities in relation to a specific population size and geographic catchment. They provide guidance on best practice facilities provision, to be used as part of a broader analysis that takes account of a rich range of qualitative and quantitative information. It is important to recognise that benchmarks are not a one-size-fits all tool; they will ultimately represent only one aspect of City of Canterbury Bankstown’s broader decision-making process.

In understanding the following community needs analysis, relevant considerations for this study are as follows:

- The Canterbury Bankstown LGA is geographically large, with uneven population distribution across catchments and rapid population growth in some precincts.
- Benchmarks do not take into account population density and the distribution of residents across a geographical area, nor do they consider geographical barriers to access (e.g. major roads, distances between facilities).
- Benchmarks do not take into account the quality or utilisation of a facility – these qualitative considerations have been subject to a separate assessment, which have also informed study recommendations.

There are no universally accepted benchmarks for the provision of social infrastructure at a local government level. The existing rate of provision of community and cultural centre space for other councils in Sydney varies greatly, between about 40 to 130 sqm per 1,000 people. Councils comparable to City of Canterbury Bankstown (e.g. City of Parramatta, Hornsby Shire Council) aim for between 80m<sup>2</sup> and 100m<sup>2</sup> per 1,000 people.

**Section 4.2.3** provides a comprehensive analysis of the benchmarks used by Cred in preparing the report that forms the basis of this analysis.

### 3.1.2 Best practice principles for social infrastructure provision

There are a range of trends and approaches which form best practice principles for social infrastructure provision. The recent *Best Practice Guide for Social Infrastructure* (Queensland Government, July 2019) provides a concise summary of key principles for social infrastructure provision in a range of contexts, including:

- *Planning for the future – Identifying and protecting effective locations and ways to deliver social infrastructure to meet future community needs.*
- *Exploring the best mix of approaches – Using combined government, community and private sector management and implementation to deliver the best mix to physical infrastructure and non-physical systems and services.*
- *Encouraging partnerships through co-location – Planning, designing and locating social infrastructure to facilitate effective partnerships with complementary infrastructure and service providers.*
- *Locating for access and convenience – Ensuring access to social infrastructure is convenient, easy and affordable for users.*
- *Repurposing for the community – Maximising the use of existing well-located physical infrastructure, including re-use, to meet evolving community needs.*
- *Sharing and integrating facilities – Encouraging shared use and management of facilities across government, market and community providers, covering a range of social functions and uses.*
- *Designing for adaptability – Ensuring social infrastructure is, by design and management, appropriately flexible to grow and adapt to evolving needs.*

Council's draft *Community Needs Analysis* (Ethos Urban, 2019), prepared to inform the development of Council's *Local Strategic Planning Statement* (City of Canterbury Bankstown, 2019), also contains a suite of draft principles to inform the analysis and planning of community facilities in the LGA.

These principles provide high level objectives to inform the provision and enhancement of future community infrastructure and services in CBCity. They are intended to connect with and deliver on the principles for the future of the City described in Council's 2018 Community Strategic Plan.

Council's draft vision for the provision of community facilities in Canterbury Bankstown LGA is:

***Community facilities will support the wellbeing and resilience of CBCity's diverse community as it grows and changes.***

This vision connects with Council's 2028 vision to develop a dynamic, thriving and real community as the city increases in density and diversity. It also recognises the critical role of high quality, flexible and well-located community facilities in achieving this goal.

Council's draft principles for provision of community facilities within Canterbury Bankstown LGA are:

#### **An accessible and integrated network**

Community facilities are a network of interconnected facilities, each of which plays a role in the whole. All people in the community have equitable access to local community facilities, services, programs, spaces and amenities as part of convenient, integrated and walkable neighbourhoods.

Community facilities are located close to existing and planned public transport, existing and emerging centres, retail shops and businesses. They are focal points for local communities – enhancing community identity and improving community cohesion and connection.

Community facilities play an important role in delivering “an accessible City with great local destinations:” they are integrated with the communities in which they are located, with a strong interrelationship between informal community spaces on the street and more formal spaces within community facilities.

## **Inspiring places and spaces that sustain community wellbeing and resilience**

Community facilities are designed and delivered in a way that creates high quality spaces for communities to connect, create, learn and socialise. Spaces and places designed with community in mind supports them to flourish.

Community facilities are open to all, support diversity and enhance social cohesion and connection. Providing the spaces, places, programs and services that enable residents to be active, learn, connect with each other and participate in civic and community life is an important investment for Council. This infrastructure forms the foundation for improving the wellbeing and resilience of CBCity's communities over time.

## **Welcoming, culturally appropriate and grounded in community character and identity**

The CBCity community is diverse, with a wide range of age groups, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, income levels and experiences. CBCity is a "proud, inclusive community that unites, celebrates and cares," and community facilities provide spaces for diverse community members to come together, share and learn from each other.

Community facilities in Canterbury-Bankstown reflect and enhance local character and community identities and values, providing welcoming spaces where people can connect. They play an important role in placemaking, delivering "a well-designed, attractive City which preserves the identity and character of local villages". They reflect and enhance the local community character and identity.

## **Adaptable and multipurpose places and spaces**

Community facilities and other social infrastructure types are flexible in their form, function, programming and management, so they can respond to changing community needs and social trends. Facilities and spaces that are multipurpose (where appropriate) and co-located with other social infrastructure and services, are responsive and adaptable to community needs.

To support the CBCity community as it grows, expansion of the capacity of the community facilities network is effective and efficient. Enhancing the quality of spaces and ensuring they are appropriate to local communities' changing needs maximises their utilisation. Delivery of community spaces through partnerships with other government and non-government organisations provides opportunities to efficiently increase provision to meet growing community needs.

## **Socially, environmentally and economically sustainable**

The role of social infrastructure in CBCity in sustaining social wellbeing, economic growth and diversity and environmental health is recognised and prioritised. Innovative models of infrastructure delivery support financial sustainability over the long term. New facilities make use of environmentally sustainable designs, materials and technologies and are delivered in well-connected locations that promote walking, cycling and public transport use.

## **Support prosperity and improved equity across the community**

Community facilities play a role in supporting CBCity's future as a "smart and evolving City with exciting opportunities for investment and creativity."

They support social inclusion and equity through the provision of accessible, affordable facilities and services. They play an important role in addressing socio-economic inequality across the LGA, by providing spaces that enable all people to thrive. They provide spaces, programs and services that enhance the wellbeing and prosperity of community members experiencing disadvantage.

Community facilities catalyse local economic development, creativity and enterprise by providing spaces, programs and amenities that support emerging businesses.

## **Shaped by community participation**

Community engagement is recognised as key to planning and developing community facilities that reflect community needs and aspirations, including new ways of living, working and recreating. Council actively engages with communities over time to understand their changing needs and aspirations and delivering appropriate infrastructure.

## 4.0 Peer review of social infrastructure needs

The following section provides a peer review of the *Social Impact and Community Benefits Assessment* (Cred, 2019) submitted to Council with the Planning Proposal for Chester Square (1 Leicester Street, Chester Hill).

### 4.1 Approach

Peer review is a process whereby industry experts (“peers”) evaluate the quality of other experts’ work to ensure the work is rigorous, coherent and evidence-based.

This peer review involved a critical review of key planning and social planning documents relating to the Planning Proposal for Chester Square (1 Leicester Street, Chester Hill), to deliver recommendations on any additional social infrastructure that may be required, and any other relevant considerations.

This peer review provides an expert assessment of key community infrastructure considerations impacting the site, coupled with a robust vision for delivering social outcomes through appropriate social infrastructure planning to sustain community wellbeing and resilience.

The outcomes of this peer review will be contextualised in Council’s broader approach to social infrastructure provision within Chester Hill and the LGA as a whole. It will ultimately support Council’s smart, efficient and realistic planning for social infrastructure delivery across Canterbury-Bankstown LGA into the future, through an approach that is entirely appropriate to the site’s current adequacy of social infrastructure provision; surrounding social context; community profile, and degree of forecast population growth and change impacting community needs.

### 4.2 Peer review – Assessment of Cred report

This section provides a peer review of the *Social Impact and Community Benefits Assessment* (Cred, 2019), including comments on the adequacy of the following aspects of the report, with regard to best practice approaches to social infrastructure assessment and planning:

- Assumptions underlying the social infrastructure analysis,
- Social infrastructure assessment methodology,
- Benchmarks used in the report,
- Social needs gaps identified in the report,
- Community benefits proposed in the report,
- Social impact analysis in the report,
- Strategic alignment of the proposal.

#### 4.2.1 Assumptions

Overall, the assumptions used in the report appear to be reasonable, appropriate and suitably justified. For example:

- Assumptions about future population growth and change are based on existing information about based on a household size of 3.2 persons per household, based on equivalent to other high density small areas within the Chester Hill/Canterbury Bankstown area.
- Assumptions about expected future demands for facilities and services are based on industry benchmarks and reasonable population forecasts.

#### Commentary on forecast population growth and change

The following section provides commentary on the assumptions underlying the forecast population growth and change associated with the Planning Proposal. Cred’s report states:

*“The development proposal is for 648 units resulting in approximately 2,070 residents living within a 1.7ha site (based on a household size of 3.2 persons per household, equivalent to other high-density small areas within the*

*Chester Hill/Canterbury Bankstown area). The forecast population will likely be culturally diverse including Vietnamese, Arabic, Mandarin and Cantonese speaking, couple households, and families with children households.”*

To test the assumption that 3.2 persons per household is a reasonable household occupancy rate for residents of the proposed development, a comparison of high density areas within Canterbury Bankstown LGA, and the average household size in these small areas is identified in **Table 1** below.

Based on a review of household sizes in areas in Canterbury Bankstown LGA with concentrations of high density, it is likely that the assumption that 3.2 persons per household is too high an occupancy rate for the proposed development. It is likely to be between 2.4 and 2.9 persons per household. This will impact the forecast population growth associated with the proposed development.

**Table 1 Comparison of household size in high density areas within Canterbury Bankstown LGA**

Small area	% of households living in high density	Average household occupancy rate
Bankstown CBD	78.1	2.79 persons per household
Riverwood	51.1	2.39
Canterbury	37.7	2.61
Campsie-Clemtown Park	33.5	2.86
Chester Hill	2.8	3.12
Canterbury Bankstown LGA	14.4%	3.00

Source: ABS Census 2016, via atlas.id

Cred have also noted that the future population of the proposed development is likely to be culturally diverse. Although population forecasts are not available for this area by cultural background, the existing character of the Canterbury Bankstown community is highly diverse, and it is likely that the LGA, and Chester Hill will continue to be home to communities from a wide range of cultural backgrounds.

Finally, Cred have noted that the future population of the proposed development is likely to include couple households and families with children households. It is likely that high density residential at this development will attract a broad range of households, including lone person and couple only households.

### Commentary on expected future demands for facilities and services

The other key assumption underlying this report is that additional population will generate demand for additional facilities and services. For example, Cred’s report states that forecast population growth will lead to:

*“a need for social and recreational public and communal spaces that respond to the cultural needs and interests of residents and spaces for children and young people, and working aged people to keep fit, healthy and happy. Given the high density of the site, and the high working population likely to live there, there will be a need for an activated public domain both day and night including well-lit parks and plazas (walking the dog, exercising, playing with children at night), cafes and restaurants, places for free (not connected to retail) and informal social gathering (eg shaded tables and seating), and communal rooftop and podium level open space and community spaces.”*

These assumptions reflect industry trends and are reasonable and appropriate for a development of this scale.

#### 4.2.2 Methodology

The methodology, social impact analysis and social infrastructure assessment undertaken by Cred to develop the *Social Impact and Community Benefits Assessment* appear to align with good practice and industry standards. As identified in Section 3.1, the NSW Government does not have specific guidelines for preparation of social infrastructure analyses.

In their report, Cred undertook the following methodology:

- Review of local planning and policy context and implications,
- Community profile (ABS 2016) current and forecast of the site (post development), the precinct and the Chester Hill suburb including total population, age profile, income, cultural diversity and implications relating to social needs and impacts,
- Audit and mapping of social infrastructure and open space within 400m and 2km of the site and within suburb of Chester Hill,
- Benchmarking social infrastructure and open space demand against planning standards,
- Identification of benefits that could be delivered on the site, or contributions that could be made toward embellishments offsite to improve social sustainability for the existing and new residents,
- Analysis of social impacts in accordance with the requirements of the EP&A Act and the PIA Policy statement,
- Recommendation of mitigation measures, stated in accordance with site redevelopment, to address identified impacts.

The peer review has highlighted that most aspects of this methodology are logical and rigorous, and have resulted in the identification of community needs likely generated by the development.

In particular, the strategic context, community profile, assessment of community facility and open space supply and demand, as well as the discussion of social sustainability trends in high density development, are clearly written, succinct and well-researched.

A brief comment on the methodology undertaken by Cred is summarised in **Table 2** below.

**Table 2 Review of Cred's methodology**

Cred methodology	Response
Review of local planning and policy context and implications	<p>This review included analysis of a number of regional and local plans and policies that are likely to influence planning for the Chester Square site, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Metropolis of Three Cities: The Greater Sydney Region Plan (GSC 2017)</li> <li>• South District Plan (GSC 2018)</li> <li>• Better Places (GANSW 2017)</li> <li>• CBCity 2028 Community Strategic Plan (City of Canterbury Bankstown, 2018)</li> <li>• Playgrounds and Playspaces Strategic Plan (City of Canterbury Bankstown, 2019)</li> <li>• Draft Leisure and Aquatics Strategic Plan (City of Canterbury Bankstown, 2019)</li> <li>• Draft Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reconciliation Action Plan (City of Canterbury Bankstown, 2018)</li> <li>• Draft Belmore Sports and Recreation Precinct Masterplan (City of Canterbury Bankstown, 2018)</li> <li>• Draft Ewen Park Improvement Plan (City of Canterbury Bankstown, 2018)</li> <li>• Bankstown Local Environmental Plan (City of Canterbury Bankstown, 2015)</li> <li>• Bankstown Development Control Plan (City of Canterbury Bankstown, 2015)</li> </ul> <p>Cred did not undertake a review of previous social infrastructure planning in the Chester Hill area, including:</p>



Cred methodology	Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Needs Analysis (Ethos Urban, 2019, prepared for Canterbury Bankstown Council)</li> <li>Local North West Community Needs Study (Elton Consulting, 2013, prepared for Bankstown Council).</li> </ul> <p>These two documents provide important background regarding the current and forecast social infrastructure needs in Chester Hill, and contextualise social infrastructure planning for the site in the broader context of the LGA's social infrastructure network. These studies have been reviewed in <b>Section 2.2.4</b> of this report.</p>
Community profile (ABS 2016) current and forecast of the site (post development), the precinct and the Chester Hill suburb including total population, age profile, income, cultural diversity and implications relating to social needs and impacts	Cred completed a comprehensive review of the demographic characteristics of the suburb of Chester Hill which is adequate for the purposes of this report.
Audit and mapping of social infrastructure and open space within 400m and 2km of the site and within suburb of Chester Hill	Cred completed a comprehensive analysis of the current supply of social infrastructure within 400m (conventional walking catchment) and 2km (conventional catchment for regional social infrastructure) of the site, which is adequate for the purposes of this report.
Benchmarking social infrastructure and open space demand against planning standards	<p>Cred has used numeric benchmarks to identify existing and future social infrastructure needs gaps generated by the development. These benchmarks do not align with the benchmarks used in Council's broader draft social infrastructure study (Ethos Urban, 2019).</p> <p>These benchmarks are reviewed further in <b>Section 4.2.3</b> below.</p>
Identification of benefits that could be delivered on the site, or contributions that could be made toward embellishments offsite to improve social sustainability for the existing and new residents	Cred has identified a range of benefits that could be delivered on the site to enhance the social sustainability of the community. While this analysis is logical and rigorous, it could be further expanded (see <b>Section 7.0</b> ).
Analysis of social impacts in accordance with the requirements of the EP&A Act and the PIA Policy statement	<p>Cred has identified a range of social impacts that may arise as a result of the proposed development. While this analysis is logical, it could be significantly expanded (see <b>Section Error! Reference source not found.</b>).</p> <p>In particular, further analysis is required regarding the impact of the proposed development on communities in Chester Hill experiencing disadvantage.</p>
Recommendation of mitigation measures, stated in accordance with site redevelopment, to address identified impacts	<p>Cred has identified a range of mitigation measures to address the potential social impacts associated with the proposed development. While this analysis is logical, it could be significantly expanded (see <b>Section Error! Reference source not found.</b>).</p> <p>In particular, there is an opportunity to develop social strategy directions to enhance the potential positive impacts of the proposed development.</p>

### 4.2.3 Benchmarks

The following section provides a review of the social infrastructure benchmarks used by Cred to develop the *Social Impact and Community Benefits Assessment*.

Benchmarks are a tool to provide guidance on the quantum, size and location of community facilities in a given area, in relation to population size and geographic catchment. They provide guidance on best practice facilities provision, which are used to inform the broader context and understanding of facilities provision.

As noted in **Section 3.1.1**, there are a wide range of social infrastructure benchmarks applicable to a local government setting. There is no single set of best practice social infrastructure benchmarks, although there are some general trends that have form an industry standard.

To identify community needs generated by the proposed development, Cred has applied the following benchmarks (see **Table 3**) based on an estimated 2,070 additional residents resulting from the Chester Square site redevelopment.

**Table 3**      **Benchmarks used by Cred**

Social infrastructure type	Benchmark	Demand generated by incoming population	Cred analysis
Community centre/venue	80sqm per 1,000 people	160sqm	Given the proximity to existing libraries and community centres, the development does not trigger the need to deliver any new public facilities. As forecast population of the proposed development will be living in high density apartments, a local level community space of around 160sqm (based on 80sqm per 1000 persons benchmark) for community programs, meetings and services.
Library	People Places: NSW State Library	160sqm	Given the proximity to existing libraries and community centres, the development does not trigger the need to deliver any new public facilities.... The proposal could include consideration of an improved pedestrian/cycle link to the Chester Hill Library and Knowledge and Community Centre.
Early education and care (0-5 years)	1 place per 3.8 children	43 places	
Early education and care (5 to 12 years)	1 place per 14 children	18 places	
Open space	Quantum benchmark: 15% of site area	3,322sqm or 0.3ha of open space	Based on the site size, proximity benchmarking and forecast population, a public park of around 0.3ha is required within 200m of the site.
	Proximity benchmark: At least one local park of between 0.1ha and 0.3ha within 200m of public open space	Proximity benchmark is met (Nugent Park is within 200m of the development)	

While the peer review has confirmed that the benchmarks used in Cred's analysis are in line with industry standards, they highlight the challenges of numeric benchmarks.

While the numeric benchmarks used by Cred in this report generate the recommendation that a 160sqm community centre be provided within the development, this recommendation is inappropriate for the following reasons, in the context of Council's new Community Needs Analysis that was undertaken to inform Council's LSPS process:

- This facility will likely be too small and inflexible to accommodate a wide range of community programs and activities. Council's *Community Needs Analysis* recommends that local community facilities be at least 400sqm in size.
- Council already owns and operates several local community facilities in Chester Hill, and a new 160sqm community centre at this site will be costly for Council to activate, administer and maintain over time. It will also replicate services being provided 400m away in community facility precinct across the railway line.

Council's most recent social infrastructure study (prepared by Ethos Urban in 2019 to support the development of the LSPS) identifies an alternative set of benchmarks, as identified in **Table 4** below.



The *Community Needs Analysis* (Ethos Urban, 2019) classifies Canterbury-Bankstown Council's community facilities into five categories:

- Integrated multipurpose facilities
- Local community facilities
- Libraries
- Child care centres/ pre-schools
- Cultural and creative facilities.

**Table 4** provides a description of each typology, the relevant target provision and floorspace guide.

The benchmarks used in this analysis have been developed by social planning professionals at Ethos Urban, based on a range of sources, including established benchmarks applied in contemporary social planning practice.

**Table 4 Facility definitions, target provision and floor space guide**

Facility category	Definition	Target provision	Guide for floorspace	Source
<b>Integrated multipurpose facilities</b>	A large multipurpose community facility that is a focal point for the local community. It is delivered through a single building/site or a cluster of proximate buildings/sites and is typically integrated or co-located with other facility types within the network (e.g. library, indoor recreation facility). This type of facility provides a series of adaptable programming spaces for use by diverse sectors of the community, and may include a range of other spaces and uses as appropriate to meet community needs, e.g. access to support services, information and referral, and spaces for lifelong learning, active living, arts and creative programs. Integrated multipurpose facilities should be accessible on a walk-in basis and provide opportunities for spontaneous interaction among diverse members or sectors of the community. These facilities generally include an "anchor" such as a library or recreation centre.	Minimum 1 Integrated Multipurpose Facility per approx. 20,000 to 30,000 residents	Minimum floorspace of 2000m <sup>2</sup> , aiming for at least 2500m <sup>2</sup> where possible, increasing with the size of population	Ethos Urban
<b>Local community facilities</b>	This category includes a range of facilities that do not meet best practice standards in terms of multipurpose facilities that are large (+2000m <sup>2</sup> ) and adaptable. It includes facilities that are small, localised and/or predominantly single use or specialised but provide no space for casual social interaction. For example: seniors centres, town halls, scout halls	Between 3 to 4 local community facilities per approx. 20,000 to 30,000 residents	Minimum floorspace per facility of 400m <sup>2</sup> , increasing with the size of the catchment's population.	Ethos Urban
<b>Libraries</b>	Libraries may be standalone facilities, although they may be integrated as part of larger integrated multipurpose facilities, where they typically form the anchor facility.	Minimum 1 branch library per approx. 20,000 to 30,000 residents, based on NSW State Library standards applied to this population size	Minimum floorspace for branch library of 1500m <sup>2</sup>	State Library of NSW
<b>Child care centres/ preschools (Council owned/operated)</b>	These facilities are purpose-built or fitted out for the provision of early childhood education and care. The majority of provision is via private and not-for-profit sector. Any further quantitative analysis of childcare provision across CBCity LGA will depend on Council's position on facility provision. Benchmarks have therefore not been provided in this section of the report as they will require further study.		As per State Environmental Planning Policy (Educational Establishments and Child Care Facilities) 2017.	

Facility category	Definition	Target provision	Guide for floorspace	Source
<b>Cultural and creative facilities</b>	This category includes a range of creative and cultural facilities including maker spaces accessible to the public, space for professional artistic development (e.g. rehearsal rooms, artist studios) and spaces for performance/audiences (e.g. theatres, cinemas, exhibition space).	There is no best practice benchmark for assessing cultural and creative facilities. This Study recommends some provision of these facilities in accordance with community need and demand. These facilities would be typically located within an integrated multi-purpose hub.		N/A

Based on the benchmarks used in Council's existing draft social infrastructure study, population growth and change associated with the proposed development would place pressure on existing social infrastructure within Chester Hill, but is unlikely to trigger demand for a new local community facility.

#### 4.2.4 Social needs gaps

As part of the report, Cred have identified a range of community needs or “gaps” in social infrastructure provision that are likely to arise as a result of the proposed development.

Cred have argued that to support the forecast increased population and density at the site, the following social infrastructure will be required.

- *Access to a local park for local uses of at least 0.1 to 0.3ha within 200m walking distance. Greater Sydney Commission and Government Architect's Office set a benchmark of at least one local park of between 0.1ha and 0.3ha within 200m of new high density developments. There is currently one existing park within 200m of the site (Nugent Park, north of the rail line). However, in its current state it is not embellished or functional to sustain a new population of more than 2,000 people. Other parks are more than 400m from the site and not easily walkable, particularly at night.*
- *Locally accessible community space for community programs, community gathering, community celebrations, co-working, or arts and cultural uses. The forecast population would trigger demand for an additional 160m<sup>2</sup> of community floor space. There is sufficient library floor space in the Chester Hill Library to accommodate the new population.*

Overall the social needs “gaps” identified by Cred are logical, although they have been generated through the application of numeric benchmarks, which have a number of weaknesses – as discussed in **Section 4.2.3**. More detailed commentary on the social needs “gaps” identified by Cred is identified below.

#### Commentary on social needs gaps arising from the proposed development

While the social needs gaps that Cred has identified are logical, they are not contextualised within a broader understanding of social infrastructure gaps in Chester Hill and the surrounding area.

#### Social infrastructure needs in the broader catchment

City of Canterbury Bankstown's *Community Needs Analysis* (Ethos Urban, 2019), positions Chester Hill within Catchment 1, for the purposes of the social infrastructure analysis. While this report does not identify specific recommendations for the future of Chester Hill, it provides a general assessment of social infrastructure needs within Catchment 1. This report highlighted the following findings for Catchment 1:

- Catchment 1 is a large geographic area with a number of urban centres and industrial areas. Catchment 1 comprises the SA2s of Chester Hill – Sefton, Yagoona – Birrong, Chullora, Condell Park and Bass Hill – Georges Hall. The catchment includes Bankstown Airport, two village centres at Chester Hill and Yagoona, and three significant industrial areas at Chullora, Leightonfield and Condell Park (adjacent to the Bankstown Airport). In 2016, the population of Catchment 1 was 73,930 in 2016, increasing to 85,677 in 2026 and 95,828 in 2036. There is a total of 25 community facilities in Catchment 1.
- In terms of quantum and distribution, Catchment 1 is well provisioned. However, the catchment is characterised by small, older facilities concentrated in local centres and accessible by train. A number of these smaller facilities have recently been consolidated into larger community facilities (e.g. Chester Hill Community Centre,

Yagoona Community Centre). Many facilities across this catchment are underutilised, and there are opportunities to better activate and enhance the attractiveness of these facilities to hirers.

- This catchment is undergoing significant population growth to 2036 and will require significant additional investment to ensure that future community needs are met, including at least one large integrated multipurpose community facility, two libraries and enhancements to clusters of local community facilities to improve their functionality and suitability, and new cultural and creative spaces.

The analysis of social infrastructure needs within Catchment 1 are included in **Appendix B**.

### ***Social infrastructure needs in Chester Hill***

As identified in **Section 2.1**, there are a range of Council-owned community facilities and open space within walking distance of the proposed development, including:

- Nugent Park,
- Bill Lovelee Youth Centre,
- Chester Hill Library and Knowledge Centre, and
- Chester Hill Community Centre.

The Community Needs Analysis (Ethos Urban, 2019) highlights that the quality of these facilities is varied, and some facilities are underutilised during some parts of the week. Some facilities may require upgrades and renewal to enhance utilisation. However, Chester Hill Library and Knowledge Centre and Chester Hill Community Centre were recently upgraded.

### ***Social infrastructure needs arising from the Planning Proposal***

Cred has proposed delivery of the following community benefits to meet needs arising from the development:

- 160sqm community centre within the development (cold shell), to be dedicated to Council,
- Financial contribution towards upgrade of Nugent Park North and Nugent Park South.

The provision of a 160sqm community centre is based on the

However, this peer review has highlighted that additional population generated by the Planning Proposal will not trigger need for an additional community facility to support the forecast population.

As some facilities in Chester Hill were recently developed, and others are currently underutilised, it is likely that these facilities could absorb additional demand generated by the proposed development, if they are appropriately upgraded and expanded.

#### 4.2.5 Proposed community benefits

As part of the report, Cred have identified a range of community benefits that will be delivered by the proposed development and will contribute to the existing Chester Hill community the forecast new population of the proposed development.

A review of the community benefits proposed is identified in **Table 5**.

**Table 5 Review of community benefits of the proposal**

Proposed community benefits	EU response
160sqm community centre within the development, cold shell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This facility will likely be too small and inflexible to accommodate a wide range of community programs and activities. Council's <i>Community Needs Analysis</i> recommends that local community facilities be at least 400sqm in size.</li> <li>Council already owns and operates several local community facilities in Chester Hill, and a new 160sqm community centre at this site will be costly for Council to activate, administer and maintain over time.</li> <li>Delivery of a community centre at this site will replicate services being provided 400m away in community facility precinct across the railway line.</li> </ul>
Financial contribution towards upgrade of Nugent Park North and Nugent Park South	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This proposed community benefit is logical, and will meet community needs arising from the development.</li> <li>Nugent Park, while well-located, requires significant upgrades to enhance the appearance and usability of the space.</li> <li>Cred has also proposed improvements to Nugent Park, which appear logical: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A playground for older children / intergenerational play</li> <li>Meeting places, shaded tables and seating for games, picnics and conversation</li> <li>Creative lighting design for night time use by future residents / increased safety</li> <li>Outdoor gym/fitness equipment</li> <li>Flat kick around grassed space / village lawn (useable for events), and</li> <li>Improved and well-lit pedestrian and cycle linkage from the site to the Nugent Park, north of the rail-line.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

The report also identifies the following general benefits arising from the development:

- 2,800sqm privately owned, publicly accessible town square, providing a central meeting place for the existing and future community
- Access to high quality new housing including a range of 1, 2- and 3-bedroom dwellings, and
- 6,082sqm of communal open space within the development (accessible to the residents only).

However, these facilities, as they are not conventionally classified as "social infrastructure" and will remain privately owned, and therefore not truly publicly accessible, have not been counted as social infrastructure.

#### 4.2.6 Strategic alignment

The following section provides commentary on the proposed community benefits to assess their alignment with the recommendations in Council's broader social infrastructure study. It is noted that Cred Consulting would not have had access to this broader study at the time of drafting their report for Holdmark.

The peer review has highlighted the following:

- The proposed community benefits align with Council's general aim to enhance and expand the provision of social infrastructure within Canterbury Bankstown LGA as the community grows. In particular, the proposed community benefits are located adjacent to public transport and co-located with daily living needs, which will enhance the accessibility of the facilities.

- The delivery of a community facility within a major shopping centre may enhance the visibility of the facility, ensuring it is welcoming to the Chester Hill community.
- The proposed community benefits do not align with the following draft principles for social infrastructure provision within Canterbury Bankstown LGA:
  - An accessible and integrated network – The proposed community facility is located on the other side of the railway line from the cluster of community facilities within Chester Hill, and is not well-integrated with surrounding facilities.
  - Adaptable and multipurpose places and spaces – The proposed community centre is of a very limited size, less than half of the recommended floorspace benchmark (400sqm) for local community facilities used in Council's social infrastructure study. The small size of the facility will significantly limit the potential of the facility to host multiple activities. As the facility will be located within a privately-owned shopping centre, it may be challenging to expand the community facility over time as this will require negotiations with the owner of the shopping centre.
  - Socially, environmentally and economically sustainable – Standalone local community facilities, such as the one proposed, can be costly for Council to activate, administer and maintain over time, meaning it is unlikely to be financially sustainable over the longer term.

#### 4.2.7 Social impact analysis

This section provides a peer review of the social impact analysis section contained in Cred's report. As the brief for this peer review specified a focus on reviewing the social infrastructure analysis component of the report, this section is concise.

The social impact analysis section of the report (Chapter 8) contains a brief comment on the potential social impact of the proposal against the following social factors:

- Population change;
- Community identity and sense of belonging;
- Community and recreation facilities/services;
- Accessibility and connectivity;
- Housing diversity and affordability; and
- Crime and safety.

The social impact analysis generally concludes that the overall impact of the proposal on the surrounding community and future residents and users of the site will be positive during operation. The most significant positive benefits relate to the delivery of new social infrastructure and publicly accessible spaces on the site, new housing in a well-connected location and improved connectivity to active and public transport within Chester Hill. Potential negative impacts primarily relate to disruption to the local community during the construction phase, and can be mitigated through community consultation and implementation of a Construction Management Plan.

The peer review of the social impact analysis section of the report has highlighted:

- The social impact analysis contained in the Cred report, while brief, is generally of a high standard and aligns with industry best practice (i.e. IAIA Guidelines).
- The research methodology informing the social impact analysis is robust, and analysis has been informed by a mix of quantitative data (i.e. demographic analysis) and qualitative data (i.e. review of community aspirations as included in strategic documents prepared by Council), as well as by a site visit and analysis of the social infrastructure context surrounding the site. This methodology is aligned with industry standards.
- The social impact analysis shows a strong understanding of the key benefits and impacts of this development. These include the role of social infrastructure in supporting community wellbeing, the potential impact of an increased population density on this site and the likely pressure on surrounding amenities and services, as well as the potential impact of delivery of new housing on this site on housing supply, affordability and diversity.

- The mitigation measures included in the report respond effectively to the social impacts identified through the analysis, and have informed the development of recommendations for social infrastructure provision.

The social impact analysis included in this report is robust, and no revisions are recommended.

### 4.3 Key findings of peer review process

The key findings of the peer review process include:

- There are some issues with the underlying assumptions of the report as they relate to forecast population growth and change generated by the development. The methodology used to forecast population change associated with the development may have projected higher levels of population growth than are likely.
- While there are no NSW guidelines for social infrastructure assessment, the methodology applied by Cred to analyse the demand for social infrastructure generated by the development is logical, and generally aligns with good practice and industry standards.
- Cred has applied numeric benchmarks to identify social infrastructure “gaps” arising from the proposed development. The outcome of Cred’s application of numeric benchmarks, while arising from a rigorous process, lacks the consideration of the broader strategic context and directions set out in Council’s new strategic plans for community facilities delivery. Alternative benchmarks, aligning with the social infrastructure study recently completed by Council, have been proposed in this peer review.
- Some of the community benefits proposed in the report (i.e. the 160sqm cold shell community centre within the development) do not align with Council’s approach to social infrastructure provision, nor to best practice principles for social infrastructure provision. Other community benefits (i.e. financial contribution towards embellishment of Nugent Park) are appropriate and will contribute towards meeting community needs in the area.
- Some of the community benefits listed in the report are privately owned and publicly accessible, and therefore cannot ultimately be classed as public benefits.
- The social impact analysis component of Cred’s report is considered robust and is aligned with industry best practice.

### 4.4 Recommendations arising

The peer review process has highlighted the following opportunities to improve the *Social Impact and Community Benefits Assessment* (Cred Consulting, August 2019), lodged by the proponent of the Chester Square Planning Proposal.

The following recommendations will enhance the quality of the *Social Impact and Community Benefits Assessment* (Cred Consulting, August 2019):

- Revise the forecast population associated with the proposed development, based on a more detailed analysis of the household occupancy rates of higher density areas within Canterbury Bankstown LGA.
- Apply the more holistic and flexible benchmarks used in Council’s social infrastructure study (*Community Needs Analysis*, Ethos Urban) to the proposed development, to re-assess demand for social infrastructure generated by the development.
- Revise the proposed community benefits offer based on:
  - Contextualising the social infrastructure analysis within Council’s strategic framework for community facilities planning, to come up with recommendations that are aligned with Council’s broader strategy for the locality, and the LGA more broadly.
  - Aligning the community benefits offer with best practice social infrastructure provision principles, such as integrated, accessible community facilities, co-location and multipurpose facilities.



## 5.0 Recommendations

The following section draws on the outcomes of the peer review (**Section 4.0**) to:

- Identify whether the proposed social infrastructure is adequate;
- Recommend additional and/or alternative social infrastructure needs to accommodate the proposed development and local centre development more broadly.

The outcomes of this section will inform the negotiation of a Planning Agreement with the proponent.

### 5.1 Adequacy of proposed social infrastructure

The following social infrastructure is proposed to accommodate the needs generated by the proposed development, and the development of the Chester Hill local centre more broadly:

- 160sqm community centre (cold shell) within the development
- Financial contribution towards upgrade of Nugent Park North and Nugent Park South

The delivery of a relatively small, standalone, cold shell community centre within the development does not align with Council's broader approach to social infrastructure provision in the LGA, or with best practice principles for social infrastructure provision (as discussed in **Section 3.0**).

The provision of financial contribution towards the upgrade of Nugent Park North and Nugent Park South is a logical community benefit that aligns with Council's broader approach to social infrastructure provision in the LGA.

### 5.2 Alternative and additional social infrastructure needs

To meet social infrastructure needs arising from the proposed development and the broader Chester Hill local centre, the following alternative community benefits are proposed:

- Financial contribution towards upgrade of Nugent Park North and Nugent Park South, including the following potential embellishments:
  - A playground for older children / intergenerational play
  - Meeting places, shaded tables and seating for games, picnics and conversation
  - Creative lighting design for night time use by future residents / increased safety
  - Outdoor gym/fitness equipment
  - Flat kick around grassed space / village lawn (useable for events), and
  - Improved and well-lit pedestrian links

The detailed upgrades for the park will be subject to stakeholder and community engagement to determine community priorities.

- Financial contribution towards upgrade and/or expansion of existing community facilities within 400m walking distance of the site, including:
  - Bill Lovelee Youth Centre
  - Chester Hill Library and Knowledge Centre
  - Chester Hill Community Centre

The detailed upgrades for the park will be subject to stakeholder and community engagement to determine community priorities.

## 6.0 Review of revised community benefits proposal

The following chapter provides commentary on the revised Planning Proposal that has been referred to Planning Gateway, to assess whether the revised concept results in an improved social infrastructure outcome and addresses the issues raised in the report.

### 6.1 Revised community benefits proposal

Council commissioned a peer review of the urban design, economic analysis and social infrastructure needs associated with the Planning Proposal. In response, Council has recommended that an alternative Planning Proposal be referred to Planning Gateway in March 2020. Council's feedback includes:

#### Revised Planning Proposal – March 2020

Council commissioned a peer review of the urban design, economic analysis and social infrastructure needs associated with the Planning Proposal. In response, Council has recommended that an alternative Planning Proposal be referred to the gateway in March 2020. Council's feedback includes:

- Amend the 'Height of Buildings Map' to increase the building height from 20 metres to 44 metres, rather than 65 metres, as originally proposed
- Amend the 'Floor Space Ratio Map' to increase the floor space ratio from 2.5:1 to 3.5:1, rather than 4.53:1 as originally proposed
- A clause requiring 5% of residential yield being dedicated to Council (or a nominated affordable housing provider) being adopted
- A revised Planning Agreement offer being made providing:
  - Acquisition and dedication to Council of Lots 36, 37, & 38 in Deposited Plan 14908 (Post Office Site) for expansion of Charles Place;
  - Road widening works and dedication of 1.6 metres of the subject site along Frost Lane to Council;
  - Construction of raised and paved pedestrian link across Frost Lane to Charles Place and public domain improvements for same;
  - A financial contribution towards the embellishment and upgrade of Nugent Park North and Nugent Park South;
  - Construction of a 2,800 square metre public square within the subject site publicly accessible 24/7 and retained on title;
  - Financial contribution toward public domain improvements and carriageway works along Waldron Road between Bent and Priam Street including street tree planting, paving and scramble pedestrian crossing;
- Payment of all applicable Section 7.11/12 local infrastructure contributions; and,
- Preparation of a site specific DCP to ensure that a suitable built form outcome is achieved and to apply appropriate controls on land use mix to maintain the primacy of specialty retail along Waldron Road.

### 6.2 Review of revised community benefits proposal

The revised social infrastructure proposed to be delivered on this site (i.e. financial contribution towards embellishment of Nugent Park) and other community benefits (i.e. public domain improvements, provision of affordable housing) are in line with the recommendations of the draft report prepared by Ethos Urban for Council. These are reviewed in further detail in **Table 6** below.

It is also noted that the revised social infrastructure proposal does not include the 160sqm community space (cold shell), as originally proposed. The delivery of a relatively small, standalone, cold shell community centre within the development does not align with Council's broader approach to social infrastructure provision in the LGA, or with best practice principles for social infrastructure provision (as discussed in **Section 3.0**).

The community benefits associated with the revised Planning Proposal represent an improved social infrastructure outcome for the site, and for the community of Chester Hill. The revised community benefits are aligned with Council's identified social infrastructure needs for this area, best practice approaches to social infrastructure provision and policies and strategies relevant to this area.

**Table 6      Review of revised community benefits**

Proposed community benefit	EU response
Financial contribution towards upgrade of Nugent Park North and Nugent Park South	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This proposed community benefit is logical, and will meet community needs arising from the development.</li> <li>Nugent Park requires upgrades to enhance its appearance and usability as a public space.</li> </ul>
Improvements to the public domain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a need to improve the public domain along Frost Lane, Waldron Street and Charles Place, in particular, as this space has limited activation or passive surveillance. Improving the permeability of this area through public domain improvements and increased pedestrian links would enhance the walkability and accessibility of this local centre for workers, visitors and residents.</li> <li>Improvements to the public domain of the local Chester Hill centre will enhance the liveability and walkability of this area for residents, workers and visitors, and has the potential to help activate the area as a "hub" for community activity.</li> </ul>
Provision of affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More than a third of renting households in Chester Hill are experiencing rental stress, meaning that they are paying a high proportion of their income towards housing costs, reducing their ability to meet the costs of other daily living needs, including groceries, transport and medical care.</li> <li>Council's strategies and policies identify the need for affordable housing to be delivered in locations close to public transport, shops and services, and employment opportunities. This site is therefore an ideal location for the provision of affordable housing.</li> </ul>

The following general benefits will also be delivered through the revised Planning Proposal:

- 2,800sqm privately owned, publicly accessible town square, providing a central meeting place for the existing and future community
- Access to high quality new housing including a range of 1, 2- and 3-bedroom dwellings, and
- 6,082sqm of communal open space within the development (accessible to the residents only).

However, these facilities, as they are not conventionally classified as "social infrastructure" and will remain privately owned, and therefore not truly publicly accessible, have not been counted as social infrastructure.

## 7.0 Conclusions

This section provides a brief conclusion, drawing on the outcomes of independent peer review the *Social Impact and Community Benefits Assessment* (Cred Consulting, August 2019), lodged by the proponent of the Chester Square Planning Proposal. In addition, the report takes a broader review of the Chester Hill town centre and make recommendations on any additional and/or alternative social infrastructure that may be required.

The proposal is for the redevelopment of the site for a mixed-use development of:

- 648 residential units (1, 2 and 3-bedroom units),
- 16,763sqm of commercial/retail floorspace,
- 2800sqm of privately owned, publicly accessible space within a town square, plaza.

While the proposed development is located in an area appropriate for higher density development – close to a train station and within a local centre – the scale of the proposed development is out of step with surrounding developments.

This development will generate significant demand for access to social infrastructure within the Chester Hill local centre, associated with approximately 2,070 new residents on the site, as well as workers and visitors to the shopping centre that will be delivered on the site. To support the needs of these communities, upgraded and enhanced social infrastructure will be required in Chester Hill.

The proponent has proposed following community benefits that will contribute to meeting the needs of the existing Chester Hill community and the forecast new population of the proposed development:

- 160sqm community centre within the development (cold shell), to be dedicated to Council,
- Financial contribution towards upgrade of Nugent Park North and Nugent Park South,
- Widening of Frost Lane,
- Privately-owned/publicly accessible space:
  - Communal rooms within residential part of development,
  - 2800sqm privately owned public plaza.

This peer review has reviewed the following aspects of the *Social Impact and Community Benefits Assessment* (Cred Consulting, August 2019):

- Assumptions underlying the social infrastructure analysis,
- Social infrastructure assessment methodology,
- Benchmarks used in the report,
- Social needs gaps identified in the report,
- Community benefits proposed in the report,
- Strategic alignment of the proposal.

This peer review has concluded that:

- There are some issues with the underlying assumptions of the report as they relate to forecast population growth and change generated by the development. The methodology used to forecast population change associated with the development may have projected higher levels of population growth than are likely.
- While there are no NSW guidelines for social infrastructure assessment, the methodology applied by Cred to analyse the demand for social infrastructure generated by the development is logical, and generally aligns with good practice and industry standards.
- Cred has applied numeric benchmarks to identify social infrastructure “gaps” arising from the proposed development. The outcome of Cred’s application of numeric benchmarks, while arising from a rigorous process, lacks the consideration of the broader strategic context and directions set out in Council’s new strategic plans

for community facilities delivery. Alternative benchmarks, aligning with the social infrastructure study recently completed by Council, have been proposed in this peer review.

- Some of the community benefits proposed in the report (i.e. the 160sqm cold shell community centre within the development) do not align with Council's approach to social infrastructure provision, nor to best practice principles for social infrastructure provision. Other community benefits (i.e. financial contribution towards embellishment of Nugent Park) are appropriate and will contribute towards meeting community needs in the area.
- Some of the community benefits listed in the report are privately owned and publicly accessible, and therefore cannot ultimately be classed as public benefits.

Based on the above peer review, the existing proposed community benefits are considered inadequate, and the following alternative community benefits are proposed:

- Financial contribution towards upgrade of Nugent Park North and Nugent Park South.
- Financial contribution towards upgrade and/or expansion of existing community facilities within 400m walking distance of the site, including:
  - Bill Lovelee Youth Centre
  - Chester Hill Library and Knowledge Centre
  - Chester Hill Community Centre

The detailed upgrades for these facilities will be subject to stakeholder and community engagement to determine community priorities.

Based on the advice provided by Ethos Urban, Council proposed alternative community benefits to be delivered on the site. The revised social infrastructure proposed to be delivered on this site (i.e. financial contribution towards embellishment of Nugent Park) and other community benefits (i.e. public domain improvements, provision of affordable housing) are in line with the recommendations of the draft report prepared by Ethos Urban for Council.

The community benefits associated with the revised Planning Proposal represent an improved social infrastructure outcome for the site, and for the community of Chester Hill. The revised community benefits are aligned with Council's identified social infrastructure needs for this area, best practice approaches to social infrastructure provision and policies and strategies relevant to this area.

## Appendix A. Broader recommendations of *Community Needs Analysis*

The following excerpt from the *Community Needs Analysis* (Ethos Urban, 2019) prepared for City of Canterbury Bankstown includes a social infrastructure needs analysis for Catchment 1 - Chester Hill – Sefton, Yagoona – Birrong, Chullora, Condell Park and Bass Hill – Georges Hall, and recommendations arising from the study.

### Catchment 1 - Assessment by facility type

#### *Integrated multipurpose facilities*

There is no integrated multipurpose facility in the Catchment 1. In accordance with the benchmarking provision, there should be at least one integrated multipurpose facility per 20,000 -30,000 residents – meaning there should be up to three integrated multipurpose community facilities within this catchment by 2036. The nearest existing integrated multipurpose community is the Bankstown Library and Knowledge Centre, located in Catchment 3.

By 2036, there will therefore be a need to enhance existing clusters of facilities and/or deliver a new integrated multipurpose community facilities in this catchment. To ensure appropriate distribution of facilities, there should be at least two facilities, one located in the north (in Chester Hill) and another in the south (in Georges Hall).

Noting Council's constrained resources, the geographic size of the LGA and the rate and scale of population growth in the catchment, a pragmatic lens is required to meet demand for integrated community facilities in this catchment. Council has recently invested in the redevelopment and enhancement of community facilities within the village centres of Chester Hill and Yagoona (including development of the Chester Hill Library and Knowledge Centre, Chester Hill Neighbourhood Centre and Yagoona Community Centre). These facilities are high quality, and reflect contemporary provision models, and it is therefore unlikely that these key facilities will be further expanded or renovated in the next ten years. Both of these facilities are a reasonable size, but do not meet the 2000-2,500sqm benchmark for floorspace for integrated multipurpose community facilities.

To deliver at least two integrated multipurpose facilities in this catchment there are opportunities to enhance the synergies between existing facilities to improve their functioning as multipurpose, integrated community facilities. In Chester Hill, the recently renovated Library and Neighbourhood Centre provide a total of 1,941sqm in a location close to a train station and town centre. A new or expanded community facility in this location (of at least 400sqm) will create an integrated multipurpose facility in this centre.

To meet demand for an integrated multipurpose facility in the south of the catchment, an integrated multipurpose community facility could be provided in Georges Hall. There is also a cluster of facilities in Georges Hall local centre that could be better integrated and enhanced to operate as an integrated multipurpose community facility, serving the communities of Bass Hill, Georges Hall and Condell Park, in the south of the catchment. Provision of a flexible, multipurpose community facility in this area is important as there are limited east-west and north-south public transport connections in this part of the catchment – as the Hume Highway and Bankstown Airport act as barrier.

There is also potential to deliver new integrated multipurpose community facilities in CBCity as part of Council's plans to upgrade existing aquatic and leisure centres. Council have proposed to upgrade Birrong Swimming Centre – to address the need for integrated multipurpose community facilities in this area, there may be opportunities to deliver a new integrated multipurpose community facility with a swimming and recreation centre at its core on this site. New spaces within the future Birrong Swimming Centre would move towards adequate provision of integrated multipurpose community facility space in this catchment by 2036.

Council is also proposing to close and repurpose the Wran Leisure Centre in Villawood. Although this site is located out of centre, there may be an opportunity to repurpose the leisure centre as an integrated multipurpose community facility.

Council's future decision making for social provision in this catchment will depend on prioritisation of investment.



**Table 7 Catchment 1 Integrated Multipurpose Facilities Benchmarking Assessment Findings**

Existing Provision	Floorspace	Target Provision and Provisional Floorspace	Benchmark Assessment
No existing provision	N/A	<p>Minimum 1 Integrated Multipurpose Facility per approx. 20,000 to 30,000 residents</p> <p>Minimum floorspace of 2000m<sup>2</sup>, aiming for at least 2500m<sup>2</sup> where possible, increasing with the size of population</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are currently no integrated multipurpose facilities within Catchment 1.</li> </ul>

Source: Ethos Urban

### Libraries

There is one library within Catchment 1, located in Chester Hill. It primarily services the residents of Chester Hill and Sefton, and it is likely that residents of Yagoona and Birrong access the large, high quality library at Bankstown Library and Knowledge Centre.

The benchmark for library provision requires a minimum of 1 branch library per 20,000 – 30,000 residents. In accordance with this benchmark, the provision of Library services within Catchment 1 does not currently meet the benchmark for library provision and by 2036 there will be a significant undersupply of library floorspace in this catchment.

According to the benchmarks, three branch libraries will be required in this catchment by 2036. However, it is noted that the catchment is in close proximity to Bankstown Library and Knowledge Centre, which aims to serve a broader community and is currently underutilised. Bankstown Library and Knowledge Centre would therefore absorb some demand from Catchment 1, and it is likely that only two branch libraries will need to be delivered in this catchment.

It is also noted that the floorspace within the Chester Hill Library and Knowledge Centre is approximately half of the recommended floorspace (877sqm) for a branch library. Although small in size, Chester Hill Library and Knowledge Centre was renovated in 2013 and is well located adjacent to the recently renovated Chester Hill Community Centre, Chester Hill Public School and a short walk from the Chester Hill train station. The space includes a mix of study spaces, children's area, small meeting rooms, seating and an internal garden. The Library is open and staffed six days a week. The qualitative assessment noted that the facility is currently somewhat underutilised, considering its multifunctional, location and size.

There may be opportunities to increase utilisation of the existing facility, and to increase synergies and connections between the library and the Chester Hill Neighbourhood Centre across the road. In the long term, there may be opportunities to enhance the size and programming of these facilities so that they operate as an integrated multipurpose facility. Integrated multipurpose community facilities typically have a “core” or “anchor” use, which is frequently a library.

Population growth and change over the next 20 years is expected to be significant, with a projected increase of some 21,898 residents between 2016 and 2036, and demand for additional library services in Catchment 1 is likely to increase significantly. As new ways of living and working evolve over the coming years, it will also be important that libraries can also be adaptive and responsive to community need.

Although there is currently an oversupply of library floorspace at the Bankstown Library and Knowledge Centre (Catchment 3), a short train ride from Catchment 1, there may be opportunities to embed “library” uses in future integrated multipurpose community facilities in Catchment 1, or include “community lounge” or kiosk-style libraries as part of local community facilities in the area.

In particular, there may be opportunities to redevelop the cluster of local community facilities in Georges Hall as an integrated multipurpose community facility for the southern part of the catchment, serving the communities of Bass Hill, Georges Hall and Condell Park. A library could form the “anchor” for this multipurpose community facility.

The benchmarking assessment findings are provided in **Table 8**.

**Table 8 Catchment 1 Libraries Benchmarking Assessment Findings**

Existing Provision	Floorspace	Target Provision and Provisional Floorspace	Benchmark Assessment
Chester Hill Library and Knowledge Centre	877 sqm	At least 1 branch library per 20,000 – 30,000 residents  Minimum floorspace for branch library of 1500m <sup>2</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This facility falls well short of the minimum floorspace required for a branch library.</li> <li>By 2036, three libraries of at least 1500sqm should be provided within this catchment.</li> </ul>

Source: Ethos Urban

**Local community facilities**

There are 17 local community facilities located in Catchment 1. The local community facilities in this catchment currently perform a range of functions, including: community halls and meeting rooms, early childhood health centres, men's sheds and scout and guide halls.

The majority of local community facilities in this catchment are clustered in local centres, to the north of the catchment and long the train line. There are a small number of facilities distributed within the centre of the catchment, generally within green spaces.

In accordance with the overall benchmark of 3 - 4 local community facilities per 20,000 to 30,000 residents, the existing supply within Catchment 1 is considered adequate. Although the existing population within Catchment 1 is significantly higher than typical benchmarking standards, it is considered that the mix and availability of existing local community facilities is adequate. When assessing the provisional floorspace requirements however there is a shortfall in facilities of at least 400sqm – only Bill Lovelee Youth Centre, Chester Hill Neighbourhood Centre and Yagoona Community Centre meet these floorspace requirements.

Although the provision of local community facilities within Catchment 1 is satisfactory from a quantum and distribution perspective, there are significant opportunities to enhance the existing facilities to meet contemporary needs and changing preferences. There is a relatively high number of local community facilities, however, there are limitations to the quality of these facilities. The majority of facilities in this catchment are small and inflexible, are occupied by specialised uses (e.g. early childhood health facilities) and are not staffed or activated. There is therefore a 'gap' in Catchment 1 of facilities that meet contemporary community needs. However, there is significant potential to improve existing facilities to meet these needs.

Considering the geographic size and scale of the catchment, there is a good distribution of local community facilities. The majority of facilities are concentrated around train stations and local centres (including Chester Hill, Sefton, Birrong, Yagoona, Georges Hall and Condell Park).

Despite 'gaps' in provision in these locations, the broader context of the community facilities network in Canterbury-Bankstown suggests there is limited need for new local community facilities within Catchment 1. This is due to:

- Underutilisation of existing community facilities within the catchment, particularly facilities located in parks and green spaces,
- Connectivity of the eastern side of the catchment to integrated multipurpose community facilities at Bankstown CBD via the train.
- Relationship of Catchment 1 with key 'destinations' including Granville, Auburn and Bankstown;

The benchmarking assessment findings are provided in **Table 9**.

**Table 9 Catchment 1 - Local Community Facilities Benchmarking Assessment Findings**

Existing Provision	Floorspace	Target Provision and Provisional Floorspace	Benchmark Assessment
<b>Local community facilities</b>			
17 local community facilities		3-4 per 20,000 – 30,000 people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adequate provision of local community facilities in terms of quantum and distribution.</li> </ul>

Existing Provision	Floorspace	Target Provision and Provisional Floorspace	Benchmark Assessment
		Minimum floorspace per facility of 400m <sup>2</sup> , increasing with the size of the catchment's population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only three local community facilities meet or exceed the minimum floorspace requirements (Bill Lovelee Youth Centre, Yagoona Community Centre, Chester Hill Neighbourhood Centre), others fall short significantly.</li> <li>Two facilities are vacant and require significant upgrades to improve their fitness for purpose.</li> </ul>

### ***Child care centres/ preschools***

There are seven Council-owned child care centres and preschools in Catchment 1. These centres are leased to not-for-profit childcare providers including KU.

There are no formal benchmarks for childcare provision in Canterbury-Bankstown, and Council has not formally adopted a position on its role in childcare provision.

Any further quantitative analysis will depend on Council's position on facility provision. Therefore this section of the report notes the supply of Council owned childcare facilities but does not assess existing or future gaps in provision.

### ***Cultural and creative facilities***

There is currently no provision of creative and cultural facilities in this catchment. Although there are no established benchmarks for cultural and creative facility provision, in an area of this size and population, provision of makerspaces, space for community arts activities and other creative activities is appropriate.

Significant upgrades to the Bankstown Arts Centre would provide opportunities for residents of Catchment 1 to participate in arts, creative and cultural facilities.

## **Catchment 1 – Priorities and strategies for delivery**

### ***Provide integrated community facilities to support population growth***

Assessment against the established benchmarks indicates a need for at least one new integrated multipurpose facility in Catchment 1. There are a number of opportunities to deliver this facility, including:

- Redevelopment, consolidation of facilities in Georges Hall - there is a cluster of older-style community facilities (including a small community centre, early childhood health centre and three childcare centres / preschools) in Georges Hall that could be redeveloped and reconfigured to work as an integrated multipurpose community facility to meet demand from the southern part of the catchment.
- Redevelopment of the Birrong Swimming Centre – Council has identified in its Aquatics and Leisure Centres Strategy that Birrong Swimming Centre will undergo a major upgrade. There is potential to create community spaces as part of the redevelopment of this facility, which would enable the facility to act as an integrated multipurpose facility.

### ***Enhance utilisation and flexibility of the existing network of local community facilities***

To better meet demand for local community facilities, the following actions could be explored:

- Increasing utilisation of Bill Lovelee Youth Centre – This facility is a reasonable size and is within walking distance of Chester Hill Station. There are opportunities to enhance the utilisation of this facility by increasing synergies between the facility and the park / sportsgrounds where it is located, and by formalising its use as a broader community facility, rather than a youth centre.
- Increasing utilisation of Yagoona Community Centre – This community centre is well-located a short walk from Yagoona Station and close to Yagoona Public School. It was recently renovated, with a variety of reasonably sized community spaces, however, it is currently underutilised. Council could explore opportunities to enhance the utilisation of this space through activation, staffing and effective promotion.

There are also a range of opportunities to enhance the integration of facilities with the local neighbourhood to improve utilisation of these facilities. These opportunities include:

- Accommodating new community uses and spaces such as community gardens, community kitchens and new hire spaces (e.g. there are two vacant scout and guide halls in Sefton which could be repurposed as community gardens);
- Increasing the provision of multi-use, adaptable and flexible spaces; and
- Strengthening the network of local community facilities.

## Appendix B. Strategic policy context

South District Plan	
Greater Sydney Commission (2018)	
Purpose and vision	<p>The South District Plan includes the City of Canterbury Bankstown and outlines the directions for growth in the South District over the next 20 years. The South District is part of the Eastern Harbour City.</p> <p>Chester Hill is designated a local centre. The train station also forms a key location in the transport plan for the district.</p> <p>The plan outlines how the future vision for the South District will be achieved through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustaining vibrant public places, walking and cycling, and cultural, artistic and tourism assets.</li> <li>• Providing innovation in providing recreational and open spaces and increased urban tree canopy.</li> <li>• Matching growth and infrastructure, including social infrastructure.</li> </ul> <p>Planning priorities relevant to this proposal include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– S1: Providing services and social infrastructure to meet people's changing needs.</li> <li>– S2: Fostering healthy, creative, culturally rich and socially connected communities.</li> <li>– S3: Providing housing supply, choice and affordability, with access to jobs and services.</li> <li>– S4: Creating and renewing great places and local centres and respecting the District's heritage.</li> </ul>
Key actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver healthy, safe and inclusive places for people of all ages and abilities that support active, resilient and socially connected communities by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Providing walkable places at a human scale with active street life</li> <li>– Prioritising opportunities for people to walk, cycle and use public transport.</li> <li>– Co-locating schools, health, aged care, sporting and cultural facilities</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Prepare local or district housing strategies that address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Delivery of 5-year housing supply targets</li> <li>– Delivery of 6 – 10-year housing supply targets</li> <li>– Capacity to contribute to the longer term 20-year strategic housing targets for the district</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Use place based and collaborative approach throughout the planning, design, development and management of delivering great places</li> <li>• Use place based planning to support the role of centres as a focus for connected neighbourhoods.</li> <li>• Use flexible and innovative approaches to revitalise high streets in decline</li> </ul>

Community Strategic Plan	
City of Canterbury Bankstown (2018)	
Purpose and vision	<p>This is a 10-year community strategic plan to develop Canterbury Bankstown LGA as “thriving, dynamic and real”:</p> <p><i>“We are THRIVING – Our communities are safe, strong, caring for each other and inclusive of all. We have good access to the services we need and use them well. Our people are healthy in mind and body. We value the beauty and diversity of our natural environment and keep it safe for future generations.</i></p> <p><i>We are DYNAMIC – We are a place of incredible activity and opportunity. Easy to move around in. We create, prosper and grow, confidently embracing technology and innovation; always transforming and evolving.</i></p> <p><i>We are REAL – Our attractive and distinctive neighbourhoods reflect our history, yet look to the future and lead the way. We remember, we celebrate and we dream. Our people are proud of themselves, proud of their roots and proud of our City...”</i></p>



Community Strategic Plan	
Key actions	<p>The policy outlines 7 'destinations' to achieve this vision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe and strong: A proud inclusive community that unites, celebrates and cares</li> <li>• Clean and green: A clean and sustainable City with healthy waterways and natural areas</li> <li>• Prosperous and innovative: A smart and evolving City with exciting opportunities for investment and creativity.</li> <li>• Moving and integrated: An accessible City with great local destinations and many options to get there</li> <li>• Healthy and active: A motivated City that nurtures healthy minds and bodies</li> <li>• Liveable and distinctive: A well designed, attractive City which preserves the identity and character of local villages</li> </ul> <p>Leading and engaged: A well-governed City with brave and future focused leaders who listen.</p>
Connective City 2036: Draft Local Strategic Planning Statement	
City of Canterbury Bankstown (2019)	
Purpose and vision	<p>The LSPS aims to provide a blueprint for development in Canterbury Bankstown into 2036. 500,000 people are expected to live in Canterbury Bankstown by 2036 and the policy outlines the plan for the future. Council states:</p> <p><i>"We will prioritise growth and renewal in specific places in Canterbury-Bankstown – places where we can build on current strengths and proactively respond to opportunities. Growth and change will be coordinated, well-designed and above all well executed. The 5 City Directions focus on:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Chapel Road Precinct, Connective City's heart – from Chullora to Bankstown;</li> <li>2. Eastern Lifestyle and Medical Precinct - Campsie to Kingsgrove;</li> <li>3. Bankstown Aviation and Technology Precinct;</li> <li>4. 34 centres and their surrounding suburbs; and</li> <li>5. Canterbury-Bankstown's river systems and tributaries....</li> </ol> <p><i>Larger centres, where the character, community or services favour more housing and activity, will continue to evolve into vibrant urban places. These will continue to see increases in housing, along with infrastructure improvements, jobs and business opportunities.</i></p> <p><i>We aim to match this growth with improved building and public domain design, pedestrian safety and public transport. As populations change and grow, we need a variety of community, civic and retail services within the centres, as these are the City's hubs of activity. The focus for all centres is commercial and street-fronting retail space. The larger centres are more likely to be home to shop-top housing, and experience an increase in the number, diversity and quality of commercial space, local jobs, services, community and civic places and public transport."</i></p> <p>Chester Hill is allocated as a local centre that aims to provide urban and community centres. These urban features include the provision of additional housing. Local centres are also highlighted as being useful for significant jobs, commercial, civic, social and retail uses.</p> <p>Council has established a relationship with the NSW Department of Education to deliver joint and shared use projects across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA e.g. the Chester Hill Neighbourhood Centre</p>
Key actions	<p>The draft LSPS contains ten "evolutions" to achieve the vision of the draft LSPS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination, community, collaboration and context</li> <li>• Movement for commerce and place</li> <li>• Places for commerce and jobs</li> <li>• Blue web</li> <li>• Green web</li> <li>• Urban and suburban places, housing for the city</li> </ul>

Connective City 2036: Draft Local Strategic Planning Statement	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural places and spaces</li> <li>• Design quality</li> <li>• Sustainability and resilience</li> <li>• Governance and funding</li> </ul> <p>The draft LSPS also provides a range of directions for “cultural places and spaces” in Canterbury Bankstown to 2036:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City-shaping infrastructure</li> <li>• Focus on delivery in growth centres and precincts to support sustainable growth</li> <li>• Community-supporting infrastructure</li> <li>• Retain community facilities but make them work harder</li> <li>• Enhance the effectiveness of existing facilities</li> <li>• Improve prosperity and equity through investment priorities</li> <li>• Leisure and aquatic infrastructure</li> <li>• Partnerships with other providers</li> <li>• Facilities for a culturally diverse community</li> <li>• Affordable spaces for community service providers</li> <li>• Flexible, adaptable spaces</li> <li>• Greater understanding and recognition of our indigenous cultural places and spaces across the City.</li> </ul>
Bankstown DCP	
City of Canterbury Bankstown (2015)	
Purpose and vision	<p>The Bankstown Development Control Plan 2015 outlines the Chester Hill Village Square as a village centre for development. These centres have been nominated to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development occurs that is compatible with the desired character and role of the particular centre.</li> <li>• Development occurs that achieves good urban design in terms of building form, bulk, architectural treatment and visual amenity.</li> <li>• Development that provides adequate amenity to people who live in, work in, and visit the local area.</li> <li>• There are transitional areas that are compatible with the prevailing suburban character and amenity of neighbouring residential environments.</li> <li>• There are specific guidelines for key development sites within the centres.</li> </ul> <p>The DCP outlines that Chester Hill Village Square needs to continue functioning as the largest shopping precinct servicing the North West Local Area. The DCP also outlines the desirability of medium and high-density living options to be developed within close walking distance of the railway station and civic spaces.</p>