

COX on behalf of Pazit Pty Ltd.

19/09/2014

ARCHITECTURE
PLANNING
URBAN DESIGN
INTERIOR DESIGN

Department of Planning and Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001

RE: Proposal to expand the Western Sydney Employment Area



Cox Richardson is making this submission on behalf of Pazit Pty Ltd, owners of Capitol Hill, an area within the boundary of the Broader Western Sydney Employment Area (BWSEA). Capitol Hill was at the last exhibition, excluded from the "employment area" as it was recognised that a portion of the BWSEA is not suitable for employment. These areas included those east of Aldington Road, including Capitol Hill, due to the topography of these lands.

We suggested in August 2013, that these lands should not be excluded from the BWSEA Structure Plan as they perform important and vital roles within the Study Area and are inextricably linked to the successful development of the employment lands. We are pleased to see that these lands have again been included in the overall BWSEA.

The Draft Structure Plan recognised the need for a transition between employment lands and adjacent residential lands so as to avoid ongoing conflicts between two incompatible land uses and the need to ameliorate noise and visual impact. To satisfy this requirement it is again requested that the natural north-south ridgeline adjacent to Aldington Road is reinforced by suitable landscaping, and is free of built form associated with the employment lands.

Secondly, it is well recognised by the BWSEA, and a number of the Government's strategies including the Draft Metropolitan Strategy for Sydney 2031 and the Metropolitan Plan 2036, that executive housing within easy access of employment lands is a key catalyst for the early development of these employment land release precincts, particularly business parks. This aspect of the development of Sydney's most successful Business Parks is outlined in the study by University of Western Sydney Professor Philip O'Neill, in the appended report.

It is recommended that those areas within the BWSEA which have been identified as unsuitable for employment remain as part of the Structure Plan but proposed as locations for executive housing. These areas utilise natural elements such as ridgelines and drainage corridors as transitional zones between employment lands and the executive housing.

The BWSEA recognised these elements as important considerations in the future delivery and orderly development of the Structure Plan:

“the ridge lines associated with the Northern Road and Aldington Road create pockets of undulating land and steep slopes above 15% and would be difficult to develop for certain land uses”

(Draft Broader Western Sydney Employment Area Structure Plan, pg. 29)

“The Draft Structure Plan identifies 1,250 hectares of non-employment uses, generally located in areas along the ridges to protect the landform and adjacent to rural residential areas to provide a suitable interface to buffer employment uses... Non employment areas include... Land east of Aldington Road adjoining Mount Vernon”

(Draft Broader Western Sydney Employment Area Structure Plan, pg. 40)

“Land for employment areas should be accommodated as a priority with other urban uses located on unsuitable land for employment”

(Draft Broader Western Sydney Employment Area Structure Plan, pg. 36)

“Disadvantages: Some topographical constraints in certain parts of the study area limit the feasibility of development for industrial purposes”

(Broader Western Sydney Employment Area: Economic Issues and Drivers Study, April 2013 pg. 14)

The WSEA represents a great initiative by government to reduce the significant shortfall of jobs in Western Sydney by proposing the largest employment land area ever released in the Sydney region. However, the biggest challenge is to develop the land expeditiously with more labour intensive jobs than currently being provided by the successful development of the Eastern Creek employment lands, which are principally for warehousing and logistics.

It is now generally accepted that labour intensive businesses are established by those decision makers who find it convenient to access their businesses from where they live. The need for housing easily accessible to decision makers as a key component to the successful development of an employment estate is becoming increasingly recognised and is well documented in the Draft BWSEA Structure Plan and the Economic Issues and Drivers Study, to quote:

“The rural residential suburbs of Horsley Park and Mount Vernon comprise two hectare* lots that provide a mix of executive housing and small-scale agriculture including market gardens and livestock training”

(Draft Broader Western Sydney Employment Area Structure Plan, pg. 22)

**please note that Hosley Park and Mount Vernon generally comprise of 1 hectare lots.*

“Disadvantages: Current lack of proximate residential housing, including executive housing opportunities, to support a range of employment generating development”

(Broader Western Sydney Employment Area: Economic Issues and Drivers Study, April 2013 pg. 14)

“Disadvantages: Current lack of proximate residential housing, including executive housing opportunities, to support office demand and business park development”

(Broader Western Sydney Employment Area: Economic Issues and Drivers Study, April 2013 pg. 89)

“Successful business parks require a reasonable surrounding residential population to drive demand for office space”

(Broader Western Sydney Employment Area: Economic Issues and Drivers Study, April 2013 pg. 87)

“Demand for particular types of employment lands follows an appropriately skilled workforce. This is particularly evident when considering the distribution of business parks through the Sydney Region against the proportion of tertiary educated residents”

(Broader Western Sydney Employment Area: Economic Issues and Drivers Study, April 2013 pg. 80)

It has also been recommended by a study by Professor Phillip O'Neill of the UWS (appended) that the location of "executive" housing within easy access of employment areas is essential for its timely development. Similarly, it has been shown that fastest growing employment lands in the Sydney Region have been Macquarie Park and Norwest, both within easy reach of the executive housing of the North Shore and the Hills respectively.

"Experience has shown that major business parks (such as Norwest) can develop in areas with good access to a skilled and professional workforce. Securing higher-order jobs for the South West Subregion, for example, will require investment in skills and training, as well as a range of executive housing."

(Metropolitan Plan for Sydney 2036, pg. 149)

It is in this light that we propose the establishment of an executive housing Precinct as follows:

An Executive Housing Estate within the Broader WSEA:

The area bounded by Mamre Road to the west, the pipeline to the north, the M7 to the east and Elizabeth Drive to the south, forms an area of 36km², and is predominantly established residential with Mount Vernon in Penrith LGA, and Horsley Park in Fairfield LGA. Within this predominantly residential area is the Aldington Road and Capitol Hill area, both included within the boundary of the Broader WSEA. This latter area measures approximately 9km², and occupies the steepest land of the BWSEA. As proposed in the Broader Western Sydney Employment Area Structure Plan, that the steep land which is unsuitable for employment lands be used for another purpose. It is this land that is proposed for an executive housing precinct. The importance of executive housing to stimulate early development of more labour intensive businesses has been outlined earlier in this submission.

This precinct is made up of the Aldington Road and Capitol Hill areas, together with the schools precinct north of Bakers Lane. The advantage this precinct has is the considerable north-south ridge which blocks off much of the employment lands west of Mamre Road, from any noise that may be generated by its operations.

This Executive Housing Precinct requires an overall indicative layout plan as has been produced in the past decade for new housing precincts in the North West and South West Growth Centres by Department of Planning and Environment. A benchmark for this precinct in terms of size, now nearing completion, is Harrington Park in Camden LGA. It is part of the Macarthur Region and adjacent to the South West Growth Centre. This estate of 2,298 dwellings and 7,416 people, is adjacent to Smeaton Grange Industrial Area and 8km from the Hume Motorway which leads directly into the M7. Aldington Road/Capitol Hill Precinct is only 4km to the M7. Additionally, Harrington Park is 10km from Macarthur Railway Station, which is the same distance as Aldington Road/Capitol Hill is from St Marys Station. Harrington Park's community profile, when compared with Camden as whole, has a higher level of schooling and tertiary education, and an equal number of professionals and managers.

A survey of those living in the vicinity of Capitol Hill shows that many are business owners who have located nearby in employment areas such as Wetherill Park. This pattern is likely to be repeated as decision makers move into what could become one of the region's most prestigious residential estates and could benefit the employment area to the same degree that the North Shore suburbs have stimulated Macquarie Park and the Hills Shire housing estates, and are benefitting the Northwest Business Park.

Capitol Hill is 170 ha of land under one ownership, which is bisected by Ropes Creek. The site is generally cleared of vegetation, and is currently used for cattle grazing, has no environment impediments, and can be developed immediately. It will serve as a major catalyst towards stimulating the much needed growth in the Broader Western Sydney Area. It is for this reason recommended that the Aldington Road/Capitol Hill area as described above be considered for executive housing.

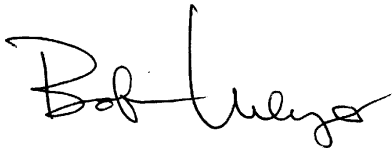
Recommendations

1. We recommend therefore that the areas within the BWSEA, with topographies not suitable for employment lands, be identified for Executive Housing, given the outstanding views towards the Blue Mountains and to the surrounding vegetated ridges (see appended maps).
2. The major ridge line which traverses the site from north to south, is preserved as it forms a visual and noise barrier between the proposed employment lands to the west and any future residential development to the east of the ridge.
3. It is suggested that the lands making up Aldington Road and Capitol Hill, as shown in the accompanying plans, be zoned for residential lots to provide for executive housing.
4. That the zoning of the proposed "executive" housing areas as shown in Figure 1, remain an integral component of the whole WSEA given the inextricable link between the rapid development of the employment lands and the adjacent "executive" housing.

We are of the opinion that the sooner this housing estate is developed, the sooner there will be demand for developing the employment lands and the sooner Western Sydney's jobs deficit will be reduced.

Thank you for the opportunity of making this submission.

Yours sincerely,



Bob Meyer
Director of Planning
Cox Richardson
On behalf of Pazit Pty Ltd.

Figure 1: Lands east of Aldington Road within the BWSEA boundary suitable for executive housing.

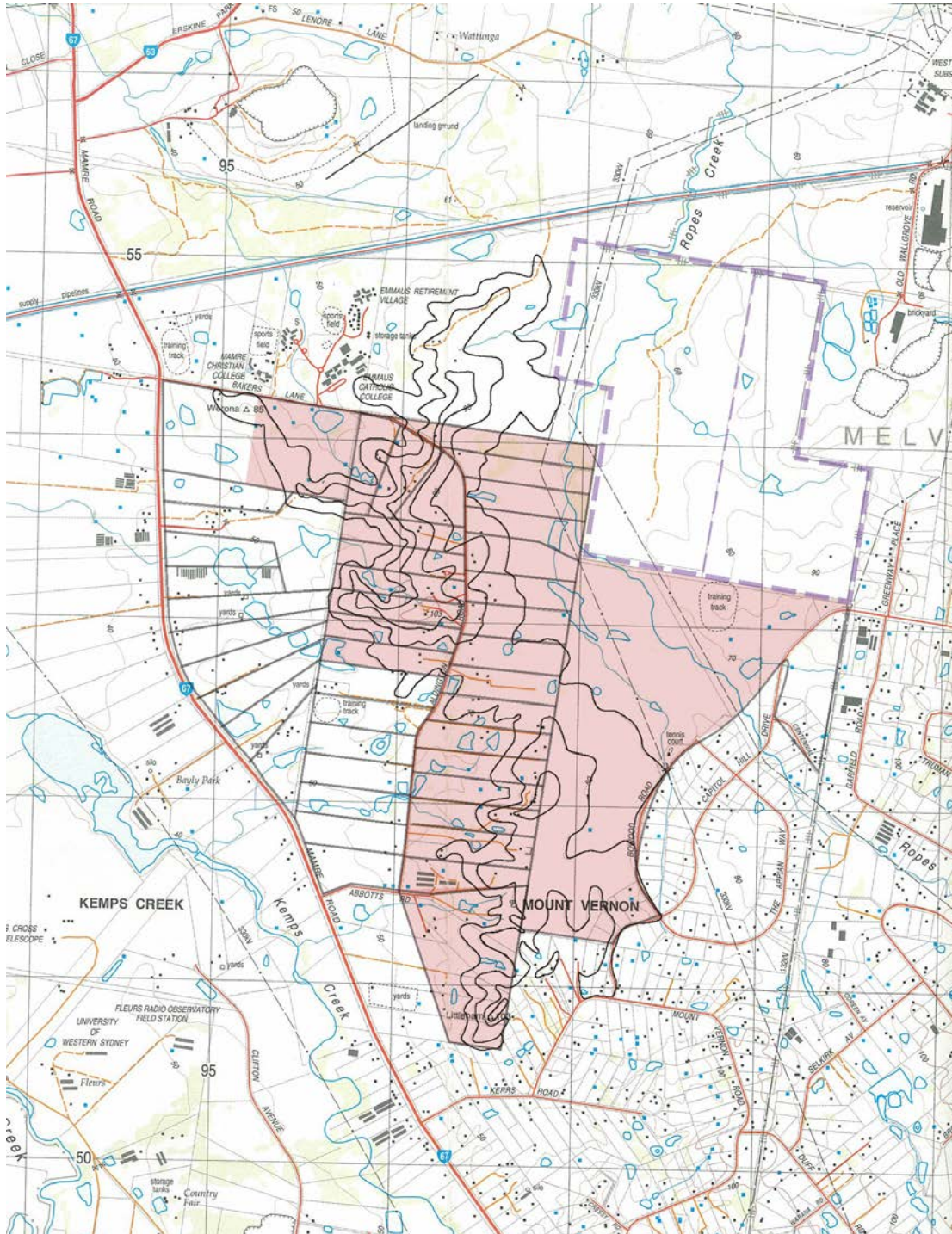


Figure 2: Lands east of Aldington Road within the BWSEA boundary with undulating topography (Capitol Hill highlighted)

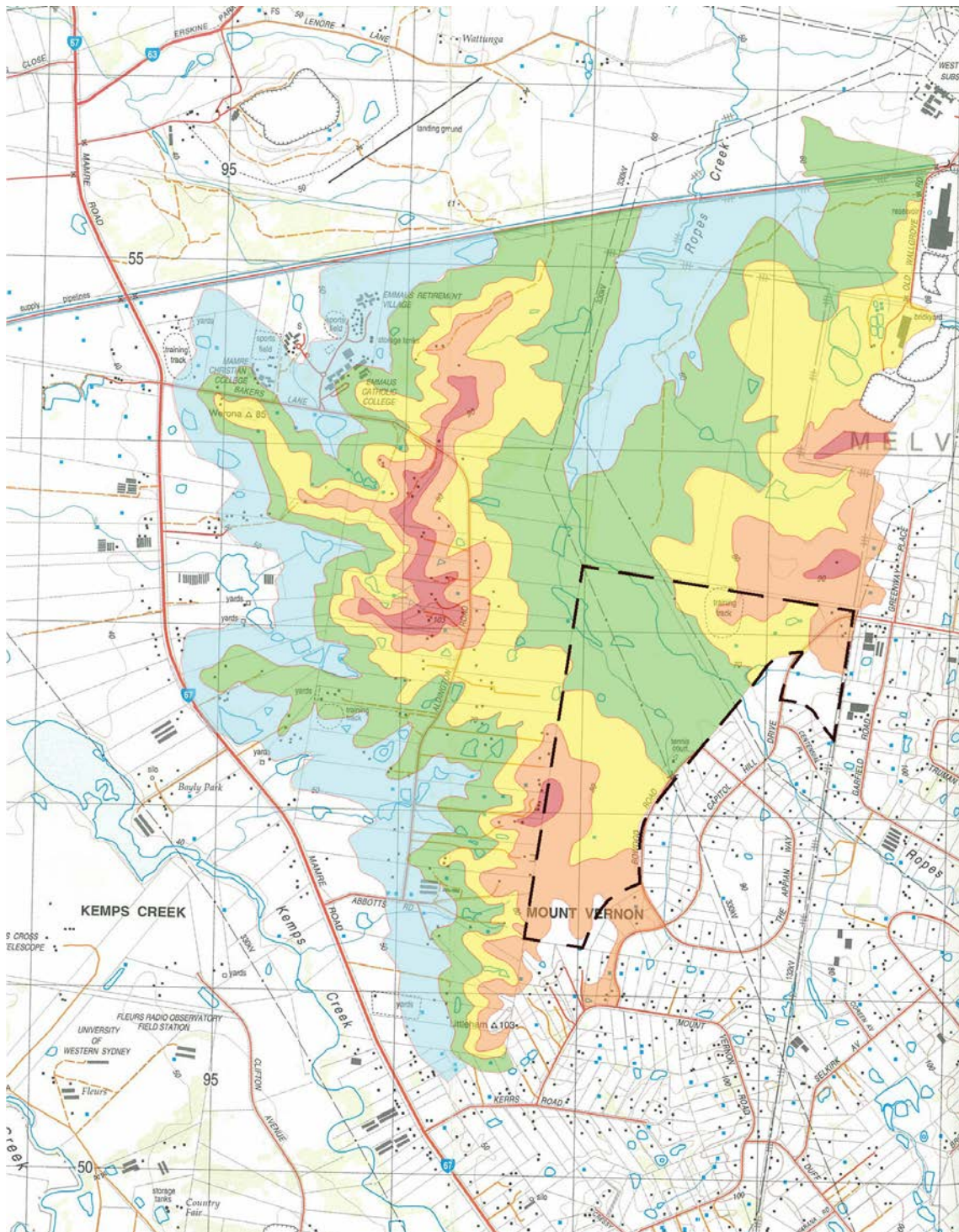


Figure 3: The overall residential area is shown in relationship to the roads (Potential estate precinct highlighted)

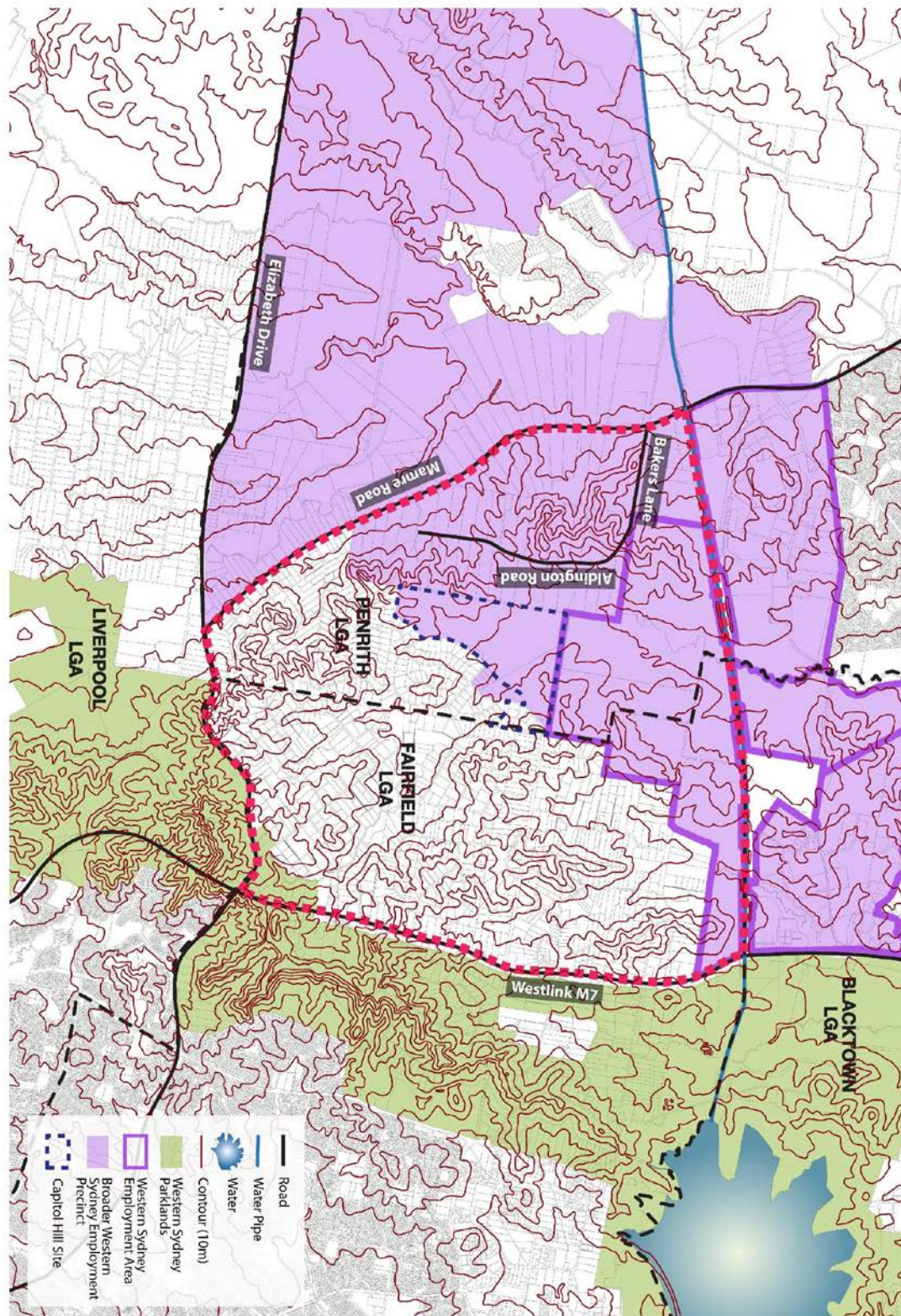


Figure 4: The Aldington Road and Capitol Hill areas are shown in relationship to the north-south ridge (Potential estate precinct highlighted)

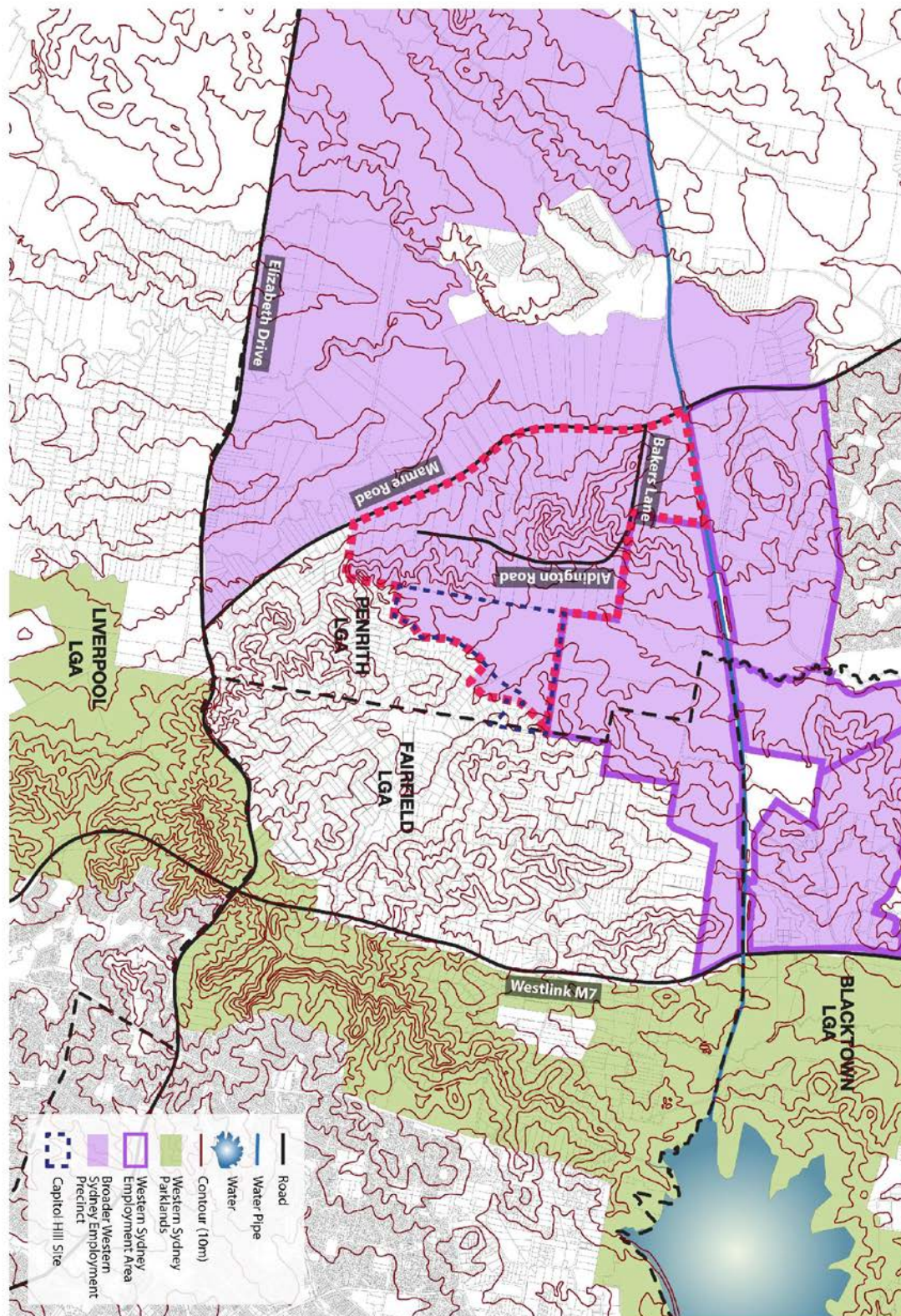


Figure 5: The Aldington Road, Capitol Hill and existing schools precinct areas are shown in the larger employment land context

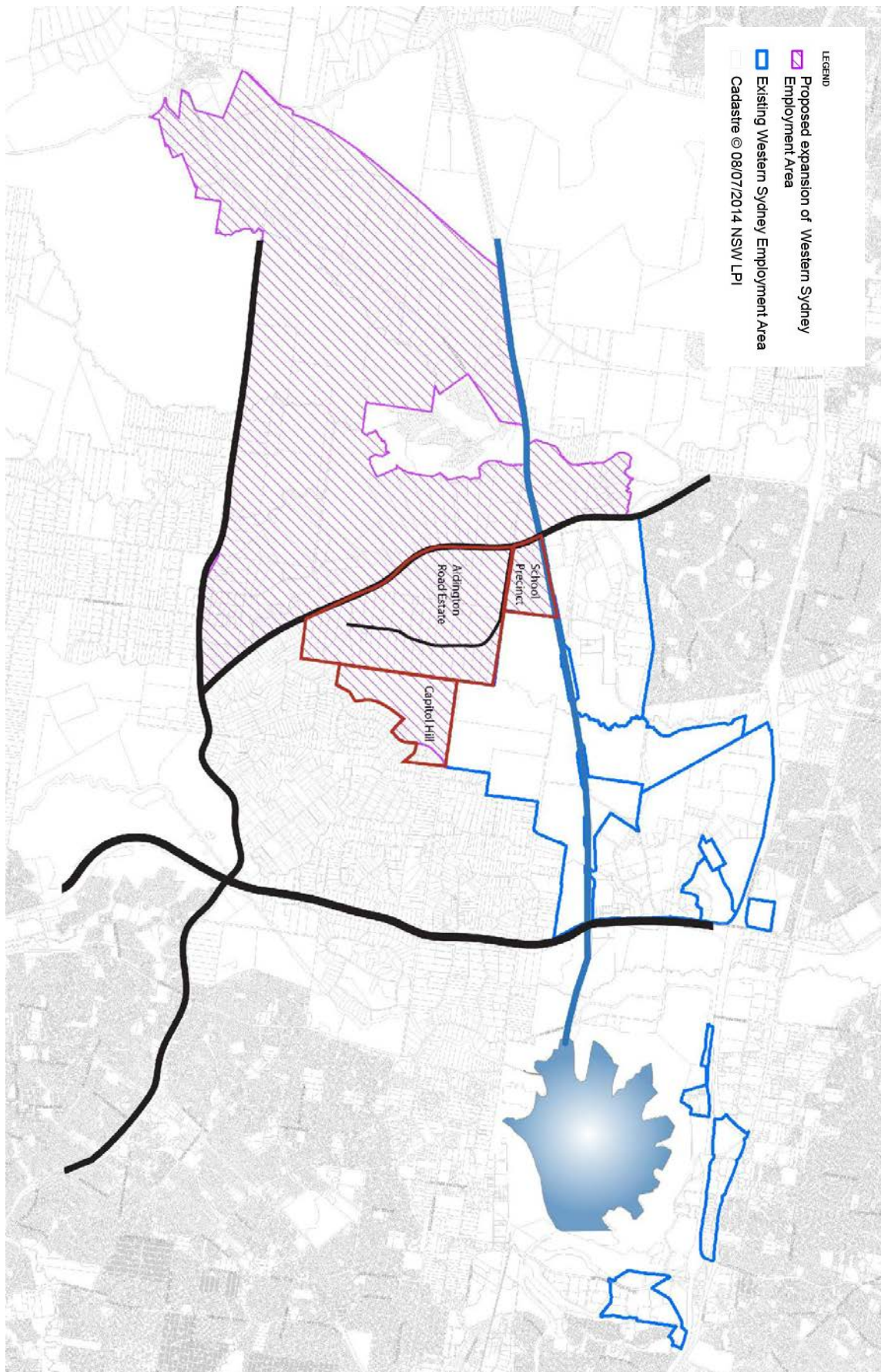


Figure 6: Harrington Park Master Plan
Source: www.harringtonpark.com.au

