

ACCESS REPORT

WORCESTER ROAD

ROUSE HILL

REZONING APPLICATION



Worcester Road looking south east (opposite Lot [REDACTED] at the entry to Rouse Hill Park)

Prepared By [REDACTED]
15th October 2015



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Introduction

This report has been prepared to provide an accessibility review of two sites on [REDACTED] which are proposed to be zoned for;

- Educational use for a School (lots [REDACTED] to [REDACTED]); and
- Sports Fields (lots [REDACTED] to [REDACTED])

With respect to “accessibility” this assessment considers;

- Topography and impact on design and construction of school buildings and facilities and mobility around the site, in particular, for people with disabilities.
- Topography and impact on design and construction of sports fields and facilities and mobility around the site, in particular, for people with disabilities.
- How the likely construction would impact on the inclusive participation of people with disabilities in terms of universal access and movement around the sites.

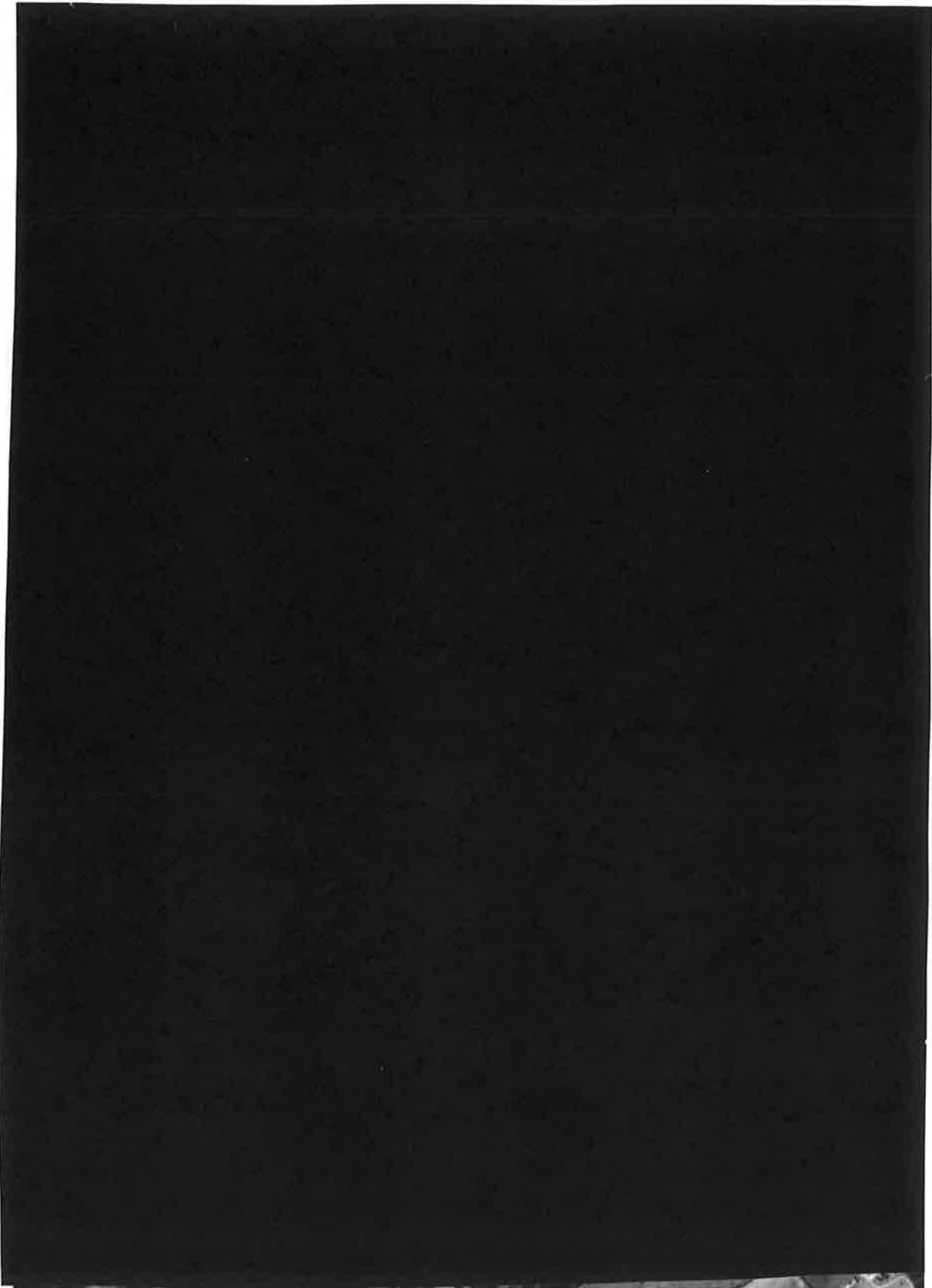
Assessment Criteria

This assessment considers the following legislation and standards pertaining to access for people with disabilities:

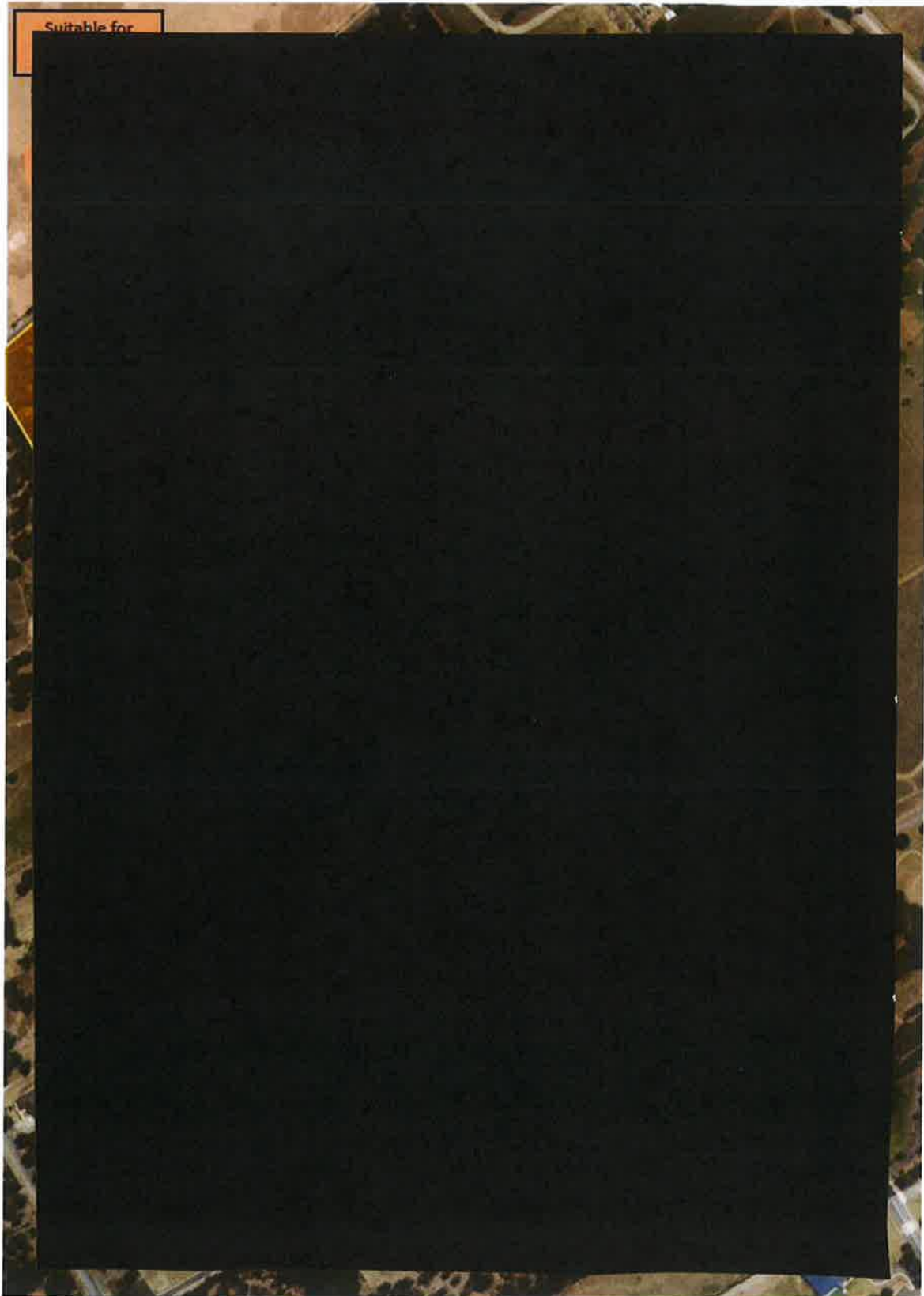
- (1) Disability Discrimination Act
- (2) DDA Premises Standards (2010).
- (3) NSW Disability Inclusion Act (2014)
- (4) Australian Standard AS1428.1 (2009) – Design for Access and Mobility and referenced standards.
- (5) Australian Standard AS1735.12 (1999) – Lifts.

The following assessment commentary has been prepared subsequent to;

- Site inspection
- Slope analysis of contour mapping
- Consideration of the guidelines prepared by the NSW Department of Education regarding “site factors” and “landscape design”.



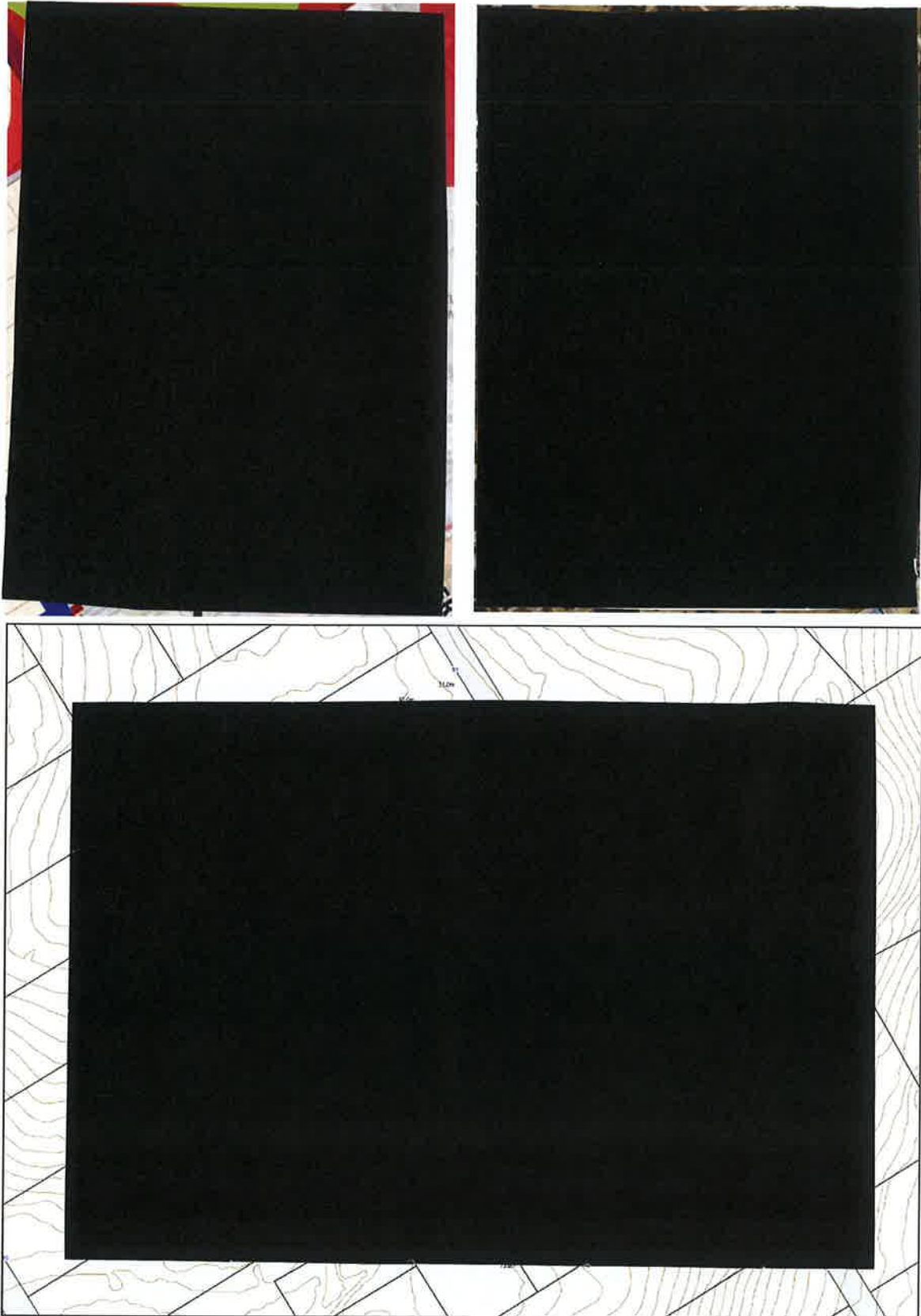
MAP I - WORCESTER ROAD EXISTING ZONING
(SOURCE GOOGLE)



MAP 2 - WORCESTER ROAD & GUNTAWONG ROAD RECOMMENDED ZONING
(SOURCE GOOGLE)

Accessibility Assessment

Slope Analysis



- 1. School Site [REDACTED]** - The site provides the following topographical characteristics
- (a) Lots [REDACTED] are located on top of a hill with a high point of RL72.5 in the south corner of the site and a low point of RL60.5 at the north corner on western boundary.
 - (b) The 12 metre fall over approximately 220 metres represents an average slope of 1:18. However, the slope is not even and some areas provide a much steeper 1:10 to 1:12 slope.
 - (c) The existing gateway to Lot [REDACTED] is sited on RL66.0 as illustrated below.



[REDACTED]

- 2. Impact on Design & Construction** – The impact of the topography on the design of a school would require multiple building platform interconnected by lifts and numerous ramps.
- 3. DDA Premises Standards** - The DDA Premises Standards prohibits ramps that have a vertical rise exceeding 3.6 metres and while it is possible to group ramping in blocks of less than 3.6 metres it is evident that even with cut and fill that there would be at least 3 predominant building levels approximating RL66.0, RL62.0 and RL70.0.
- 4. Design & Construction** - While lifts, ramps and retaining walls can readily form part of the design of a school and associated facilities, it is obviously more expensive to build and maintain compared to a school build with on-grade access paths at 1:20 or less.
- 5.** One example of a school situated on a steeply sloping site in north-west Sydney is Hills Grammar at Kenthurst, which was the subject of a successful DDA complaint in the 1990's which has been a landmark decision that implores the right of people with disabilities to equal access to education.
- 6.** Almost 20 years later the various school buildings located on sloping areas still have convoluted outdoor pathways and bridges that attempt to facilitate access around the campus. However, the outcome is still problematic for children attending the campus.
- 7.** Other schools that I have been involved in that are attempting to remove physical barriers for children with disabilities include; Pymble Ladies College, Scots College, Riverview, Trinity Grammar Summer Hill, St Gregorys Campbelltown and Barker College Hornsby to name a few. In each case the cost and interruption to school activities is significant and easily avoid if site selection and planning is judiciously undertaken.

8. Clearly site selection can have an enormous impact on accessible design, construction and maintenance which inherently dictates the access and inclusive experiences of people with disabilities.
9. **Mobility & Inclusion** – Clearly a site that incorporates lifts, stairs and ramps to negotiate numerous changes in levels will inevitably results in separate “routes’ for people using stairways compared to the population group that rely on lifts and ramps for everyday mobility. As a consequence of separate routes for accessible paths of travel people with mobility restrictions will experience a lesser degree of inclusive participation, which is contrary to the NSW Disability Inclusion Act (2014).
10. **Summary** – In summary the slope analysis indicates;
 - a) That the design and construction of a school on this site is possible, albeit at a higher construction and maintenance cost.
 - b) That the design of the school would inherently require lifts, ramps and retaining walls and create more circuitous accessways around the site that would be more restrictive for people with mobility impairments and be less inclusive.
11. **Alternatives** – In review of neighbouring properties to the west of the subject site along Worcester Road and Guntawong Road it is evident that more gradual topography exists that is far better suited for a school and associated facilities.



12. In particular Lots 38, 50, 58, in Guntawong Road which could be complimented by Sports Fields and facilities on Lots 91, 97 and 107 in Worcester Road and Lots 61 and 65 in Guntawong Road as illustrated below.
13. Equally the abovementioned option could easily be swapped to provide a School on Lots 61, 65, with sporting fields on lots 91, 97 38, 50, 58.
14. It is also apparent that the sites, lots 91, 97, 107 38, 50, 58, have some limitations in terms of commercial use due to the riparian conditions, Conversely, sporting fields and outdoor landscaped public space or school playgrounds are ideal for low level areas.
15. In addition to relocating the school to the north west, the subject site at lots 49 and 55 would provide a good elevated site for residential development whereby the abovementioned issues regarding mobility of people around the site could be significantly mitigated by thoughtful design of aggregated buildings that is inherent with medium density residential development.

16. **Sports Fields Site (Lots [REDACTED])** – The site provides the following topographical characteristics;

- a) Lots 61, 69, 77 and 85 are located on the slope of a hill with a high point of RL71.5 in the south corner and a low point of RL51.0 at the north corner.
- b) The 20 metre fall over approximately 450 metres represents an average slope of 1:22. However, the slope is not even and some areas provide a much steeper 1:10 to 1:12 slope.
- c) There are several dams on properties 61, 69 and 91.
- d) Lot 77 incorporates numerous woodland trees and to a lesser extent 85 and 91.
- e) Lot 85 is directly opposite the entrance to Rouse Hill Park and provides an ideally opportunity for vehicular access for a future 4 point intersection with a roundabout.



17. **Impact on Design & Construction** – The impact of the topography on the design of sports fields would require significant earthworks and disturbance of the natural landscape to establish platforms large enough for football fields and similar sports ovals. The provision of on-site parking would inevitably require numerous ramps to interface with amenities and viewing areas.

18. **DDA Premises Standards** – While the DDA Premises Standards do not strictly apply to outdoor sports fields the associated buildings would need to comply and inevitably there would be design challenges for a site with a 20 metre change in levels.

19. Therefore the prohibition of ramps that have a vertical rise exceeding 3.6 metres is relevant and while it is possible to group ramping in blocks of less than 3.6 metres it is evident that even with cut and fill that there would need to be multiple platforms to accommodate level playing fields.

20. Design & Construction - While lifts, ramps, embankments and retaining walls can readily form part of the design of sporting facilities, it is obviously more expensive to build and maintain compared to a precinct with on-grade access paths at 1:20 or less.

21. Mobility & Inclusion – Clearly a site that incorporates lifts, stairs and ramps to negotiate numerous changes in level will inevitably result in separate “routes” for people using stairways compared to the population group that rely on lifts and ramps for everyday mobility. As a consequence of separate routes for accessible paths of travel people with mobility restrictions will experience a lesser degree of inclusive participation, which is contrary to the NSW Disability Inclusion Act (2014).

22. Summary – In summary the slope analysis indicates;

- a) That the design and construction of sporting fields on this site is possible, albeit at a higher construction and maintenance cost.
- b) That the design of sporting fields would inherently require ramps, embankments and retaining walls and create more circuitous accessways around the site that would be more restrictive for people with mobility impairments and be less inclusive.

23. Alternatives – In review of neighbouring properties to the north west of the subject site along Worcester Road and Guntawong Road it is evident that more gradual topography exists that is far better suited for sporting fields and associated facilities.

24. In particular Lots 91, 97 and 107 in Worcester Road and potentially Lots 61 and 65 in Guntawong Road as illustrated below.



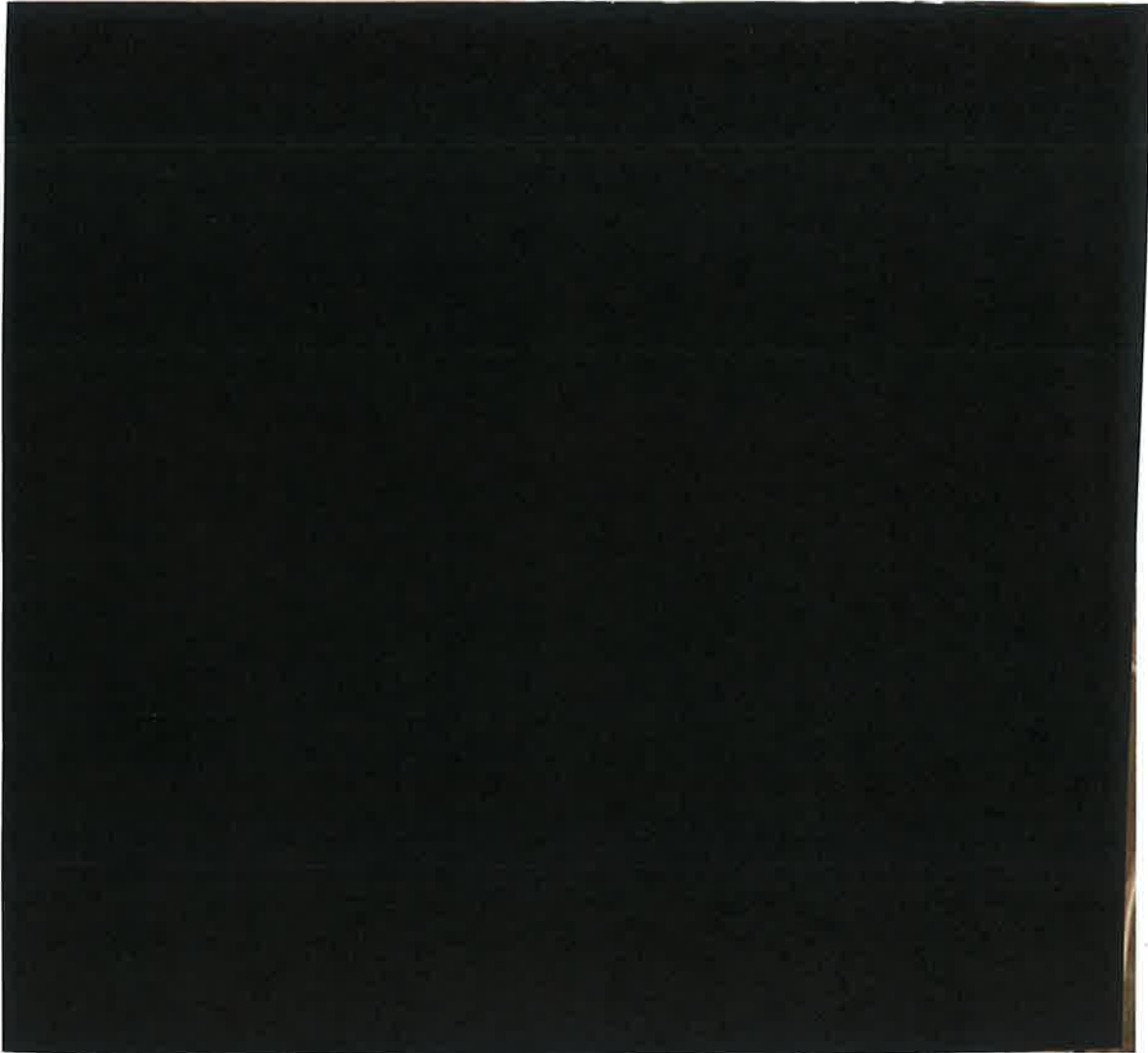
Lot 107 Worcester Road

25. Equally the abovementioned option could easily be swapped to provide a School on Lots 61, 65, with sporting fields on lots 38, 50, 58.

26. It is also apparent that the sites, lots 91, 97, 107 38, 50, 58, have some limitations in terms of commercial use due to the riparian conditions, Conversely, sporting fields and outdoor landscaped public space or school playgrounds are ideal for low level areas.

27. In addition to relocating the sporting fields to the north west the subject site at lots 61 to 91 would provide good elevated sites for residential development whereby the abovementioned

issues regarding mobility of people around the site could be significantly mitigated by thoughtful design of aggregated buildings that is inherent with medium density residential development.



T-Junction of Worcester Road & Guntawong Road, which provides an ideal opportunity for site access into Lots 50 / 38



Lot 91 Worcester Road



Lots 91 & 85 Worcester Road & Entry to Rouse Hill Park (left of image)

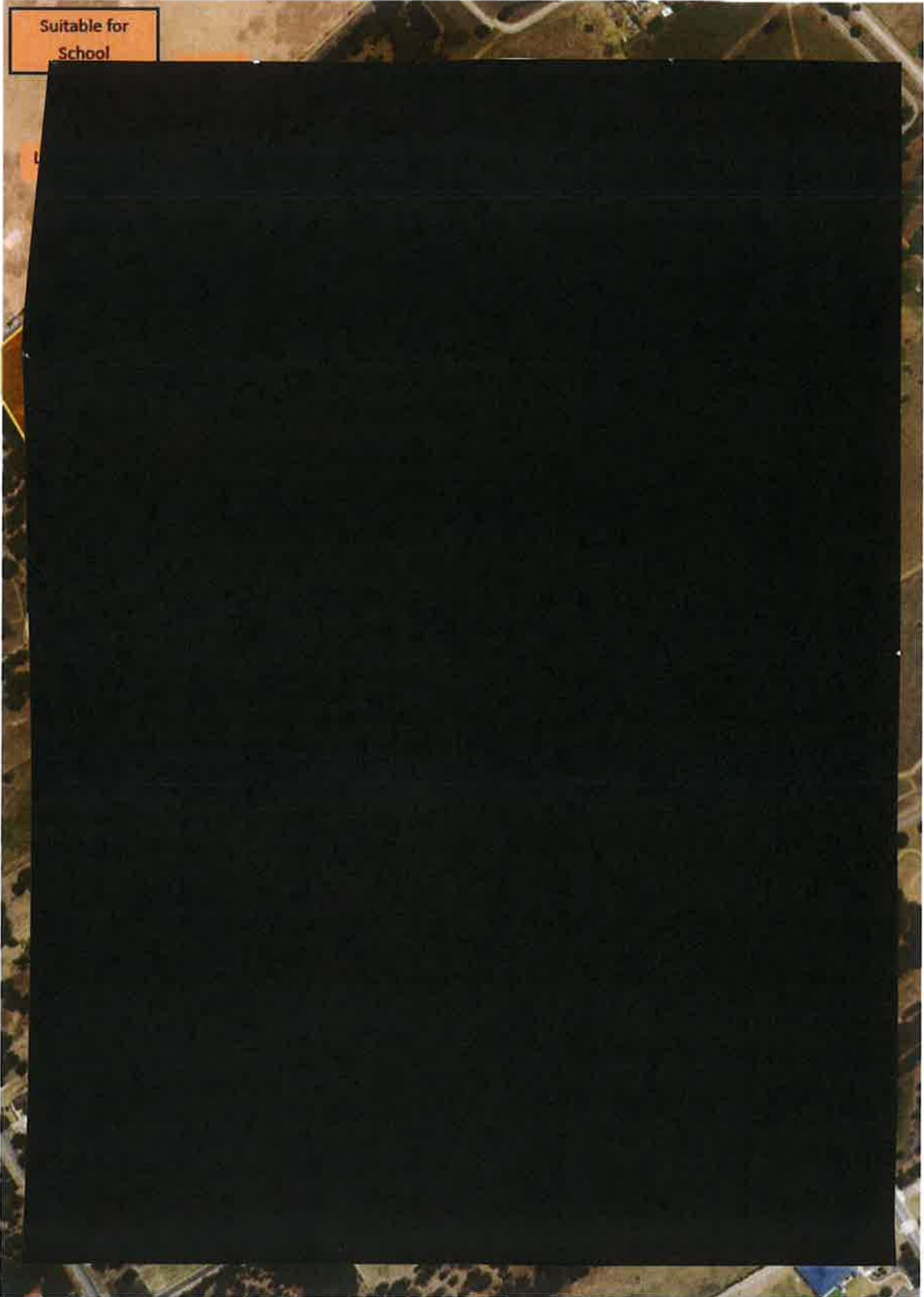
Conclusion

In summary this accessibility review identifies;

- The slope of the subject sites from Lots 49 to 91 occupy the steeper sections of Worcester Road and while it is possible to design and build a school and sporting facilities that the area directly to the northwest provides a far more suitable environment for such public facilities in terms of design, construction and maintenance costs, ease of mobility around a site which inherently enables more inclusive participation of people with mobility restrictions.
- Equally the land at Lots 91, 97, 107, 61 and further west would inherently have less commercial value due to potential water management issues.

Therefore, I conclude that Lots 49 to 85 are better suited to residential development while Lots 91, 97, 107 on Worcester Road and 61, 65, 38, 50 and 58 on Guntawong Road are far better suited for a school and sporting facilities that would easily satisfy accessibility and inclusive participation of people with disabilities consistent with the objectives of the DDA and NSW Disability Inclusion Act.





MAP 2 - WORCESTER ROAD & GUNTAWONG ROAD RECOMMENDED ZONING
(SOURCE GOOGLE)

Appendix A – Statement of Expertise



CONSULTANCY PROFILE & STATEMENT OF EXPERTISE

Accessibility Solutions consultancy offers a range of services to provide advice for clients to develop new and modify existing buildings, facilities and services to be accessible to people with disabilities to comply with legislation and regulations relevant to people with disabilities.

Relevant legislation and regulations that underpins advice includes the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Building Code of Australia, Australian Standards 1428, DDA Premises Standards, DDA Transport Standard, State Environment Planning Policy Housing for Seniors or People With a Disability (SEPP HS) / Seniors Living Policy, SEPP 65 – Residential Flat Buildings Design Code and various local government DCP's.

The scope of services provided by Accessibility Solutions includes:

- Plan Appraisals and design advice
- Access Reports for development applications and construction certificates
- Expert Reports for Court evidence
- Access Auditing of existing buildings, facilities, transport conveyances and infrastructure
- Policy and document reviews and development of Disability Action Plans
- Staff training in access auditing

The services consider issues concerning people with all types of disability including; physical; vision; hearing, intellectual and other cognitive impairments that may affect access for people with a disability consistent with the Disability Discrimination Act.

As principal consultant Mark Relf has considerable experience and expertise in a wide range of access related projects and is an accredited member of the Association of Consultants in Access Australia for the purposes of providing advice concerning access to the built environment and services for people with disabilities.

His expertise has been gained over 20 years working in management and advocacy roles within the disability sector and since 1994 providing advice to clients on access issues. Mark also participates on various key committees concerning access for people with disabilities. His qualifications and affiliations are:

- Accredited Member of the Association of Consultants in Access Australia.
- Member, Standards Australia ME/64 Committee responsible for the AS1428 suite and AS4299 – Adaptable Housing.
- Member, NSW Heritage Office's – Fire, Access and Services Advisory Panel.

