

Open Space and Community Facilities Assessment



Bella Vista Priority Precinct

Prepared for NSW Department of Planning and Environment

For Public Exhibition ■ August 2015 ■ 14429

Reproduction of this document or any part thereof is not permitted without prior written permission of JBA Urban Planning Consultants Pty Ltd.

JBA operates under a Quality Management System that has been certified as complying with ISO 9001:2008. This report has been prepared and reviewed in accordance with that system. If the report is not signed below, it is a preliminary draft.

This report has been prepared by:



14/08/2015

This report has been reviewed by:



14/08/2015

Contents

1.0	Introduction	1
1.1	Scope and content of this study	1
1.2	Report structure	2
1.3	Priority Precinct overview	2
2.0	Strategic planning framework	4
2.1	State Level	4
2.2	Local Level	6
3.0	Existing situation	9
3.1	The Bella Vista Station Precinct	9
3.2	Community profile	9
3.3	Existing open space and community facilities	11
3.4	Existing educational facilities	17
4.0	Projected population growth	18
4.1	The draft Bella Vista Station precinct	18
5.0	Open space and recreation	19
5.1	Open space provision	19
6.0	Needs assessment	24
6.1	Assessment of adequacy	24
6.2	Implications for open space planning in the Precinct	28
6.3	Conclusion	31
6.4	Recommendations	31
7.0	Community facility requirements	34
7.1	Overview	34
7.2	Libraries	35
8.0	Educational facilities	37
9.0	References	38

Contents

Figures

1	Proposed Bella Vista Station precinct plan	3
2	A Plan for Growing Sydney	4
3	Bella Vista Structure Plan	5
4	Indicative location of open space and public domain	5
5	Population pyramid by 2031	11
6	Existing open space and community facilities	13
7	Examples of existing open space	15
8	Balmoral Reserve	15
9	Kellyville Park Master Plan	16
10	Proposed open space provision	20

Tables

11	Participation rates under the Draft Hills Shire Integrated Open Space Strategy	6
12	Key demographic features	9
13	Key household characteristics	10
14	Existing open space, recreation and community facilities	11
15	Existing education facilities	17
16	Distribution criteria	25
17	Open space benchmarking	27
18	Assessment against traditional quantum standards	28
19	Assessment against participation rates	29
20	Existing library facilities	35
21	Floor area requirements for new library facilities	36

Executive Summary

Due to its alignment with the North West Rail Link, Bella Vista has been selected by the NSW Government as a Priority Precinct. Under this designation, the government is planning to provide more homes and jobs close to the rail station. To guide this outcome, a new planning framework has been established that will deliver 4,200 new homes and 2,170 new jobs in a high density residential, employment and mixed use, transit oriented form.

To support this growth, a public open space network is proposed. The network, which includes both new open space and augmentation and embellishment of existing open space, comprises 18.14 ha of open space, including 11.48 ha of new passive open space and 1.46 ha of new active open space. Key features include a plaza and mall in the town centre, varied riparian corridors spaces, local neighbourhood parks and small scale sports facilities.

The proposed open space network does not align with traditional numerical standards for quantum. However, it is widely accepted that reliance on such standards is a poor indicator of the suitability of open space for an incoming population. Rather, a balanced consideration of a range of factors such as distribution, type and role, quality, forecast future demographics and recreation participation trends is required. Assessment of the network against these factors shows that it performs well in a number of key areas. In particular, the open space network will ensure that new homes are within a 5 minute walk (400m) of open space, and the extent of linear and linkage open space will cater for walking and cycling, which are two of Australia's most popular recreation activities. Furthermore, the allocation of large areas of well-located land for land intensive sporting fields does not represent the highest and best use of land, particularly where there are suitable alternative locations closeby.

On this basis, the proposed open space network is considered to be adequate to cater for the likely recreation needs of the incoming community

Factoring in proposed additional population, best practice and considering benchmark standards, it is recommended that one neighbourhood scale community facility having a minimum area of around 400 – 500m² should be provided to service both the Bella Vista and Kellyville precincts. Due to its role as a larger centre having a greater amount of employment and residential development, it is recommended that this facility be provided in the adjoining Bella Vista precinct in a central location, ideally adjoining or near the civic plaza, and incorporate flexible, multi-purpose space/s that can be configured to suit a broad range of indoor recreation activities. It is also recommended that additional library space of approximately 200-300 square metres and potentially incorporating internet and computer services and reading spaces be co-located or integrated with this community facility.

Glossary of terms and acronyms

Full name	Abbreviated name and acronyms
Bella Vista Station Precinct	the Precinct
Bella Vista Station Precinct Structure Plan	the Structure Plan
The Department of Planning and Environment	the Department
The Hills Shire Council	the Council (only where there will be no confusion about which council referred to)
Blacktown City Council	the Council (only where there will be no confusion about which council referred to)
The Hills Local Government Area	The Hills LGA
North West Rail Link	NWRL
North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy	NWRL Corridor Strategy
The Hills Local Environmental Plan 2012	The Hills LEP 2012
The Hills Development Control Plan 2012	The Hills DCP 2012

1.0 Introduction

This report has been prepared by JBA and provides an assessment of open space and community facilities relating to the proposed rezoning of the Bella Vista Station Precinct.

The Bella Vista Station Precinct was announced by the NSW Government in August 2014. The precinct is one of a number of Priority Precincts which aim to provide for more homes, jobs and improved public spaces close to transport and services. One of the key goals for Priority Precincts is to increase housing choice and affordability by delivering increased housing supply in an environmentally, socially and economically sustainable manner.

The Bella Vista Station Precinct covers approximately 472 hectares, and includes the area within an 800 metre radius, or roughly a 10 minute walk, of the new Bella Vista Station. The boundary has also taken into account the surrounding road network, natural features, and the development pattern of the area.

The precinct covers two local government areas. Land on the eastern side of Old Windsor Road is located within the Hills Local Government Area, and land on the western side of Old Windsor Road is within the Blacktown Local Government Area.

The vision for the Bella Vista Station Precinct is for a business and commercial destination, as well as providing for a mix of housing types within walking distance of the new station, and ensuring the heritage, open space network and natural environment is protected.

The Bella Vista Station Precinct is a long term project that will be delivered over the next 25 years.

1.1 Scope and content of this study

JBA has been engaged by the Department to identify the existing provision of and future requirements and opportunities for open space and community infrastructure to meet the needs of the forecast new populations within the Bella Vista and Kellyville Station Precinct PP catchments.

This report relates to the Bella Vista Station Precinct. A separate report covers the Kellyville Station Precinct.

The scope of this assessment includes:

- open space (passive and active);
- recreation facilities;
- multi-purpose community centres;
- libraries; and
- education facilities.

Childcare facilities are not included in this assessment as these facilities are provided for by the private sector within the Hills district. The planning framework established for the Precinct will provide adequate opportunities for these facilities to be provided both within the areas proposed to be up-zoned as well as in surrounding areas.

Likewise, the need for and provision of healthcare services (public or private) and emergency services is addressed via other processes and is not the responsibility of local government.

The scale and extent of the Bella Vista Station precinct requires planning for open space and social infrastructure needs to take a holistic view. Accordingly, this report has also considered and taken into account the findings of the open space and social infrastructure review being undertaken for the Showgrounds Station and Kellyville Station Precincts.

The recommendations within this report have informed the urban design and proposed planning controls for the precincts to ensure that appropriate open space and community infrastructure will be provided to meet the needs of the future population.

Approach

This report provides a broad, high level assessment of the existing and proposed future open space and social infrastructure requirements and entails:

- a review of the existing state and local planning policy context;
- a peer review of existing studies of community and recreation facility needs;
- preparation of existing and future demographic profiles using ABS Census data, Department Population and Household Projections and local data sources;
- a desktop audit of existing and planned social infrastructure within the Precinct;
- high level assessment of the future demand for local and regional open space and social infrastructure, including the types of facilities, potential for enhancement of existing facilities and likely land take for new facilities;
- identification of potential future requirements for regional open space and social infrastructure (e.g. location, quantum) having regard to the planned and projected incoming population; and
- identification of leading practice in the provision of community facilities and open space planning and developing social planning principles to guide precinct design.

1.2 Report structure

This report is structured as follows:

- **Section 1:** introduction, report scope and overview of the proposed precinct;
- **Section 2:** outline of the strategic planning framework applicable to the precinct;
- **Section 3:** overview of existing demographics, open space and community infrastructure provisions within the precinct ;
- **Section 4:** summary of the projected population and its characteristics under the precinct;
- **Section 5:** assessment of open space requirements for the incoming population;
- **Section 6:** assessment of community facility requirements for the incoming population; and
- **Section 7:** assessment of the education requirements for the incoming population.

1.3 Priority Precinct overview

Priority Precincts are areas with good access to existing or planned transport infrastructure and that have potential to provide for significant growth in housing and jobs. The program is based on the following key principles:

- a strategic precinct-based approach (rather than a single site or development);
- close involvement with local government at an early stage and throughout the investigation process;

- precincts located in close proximity to existing and planned transport and service infrastructure;
- comprehensive engagement with the community throughout the precinct investigation process; and
- development controls that are economically feasible and consistent with market demand.

The Bella Vista Station precinct offers the opportunity to provide an increased housing diversity in the local area as well as a revitalised town centre providing local jobs and services. The proposed Bella Vista Station precinct plan is presented at **Figure 1**.

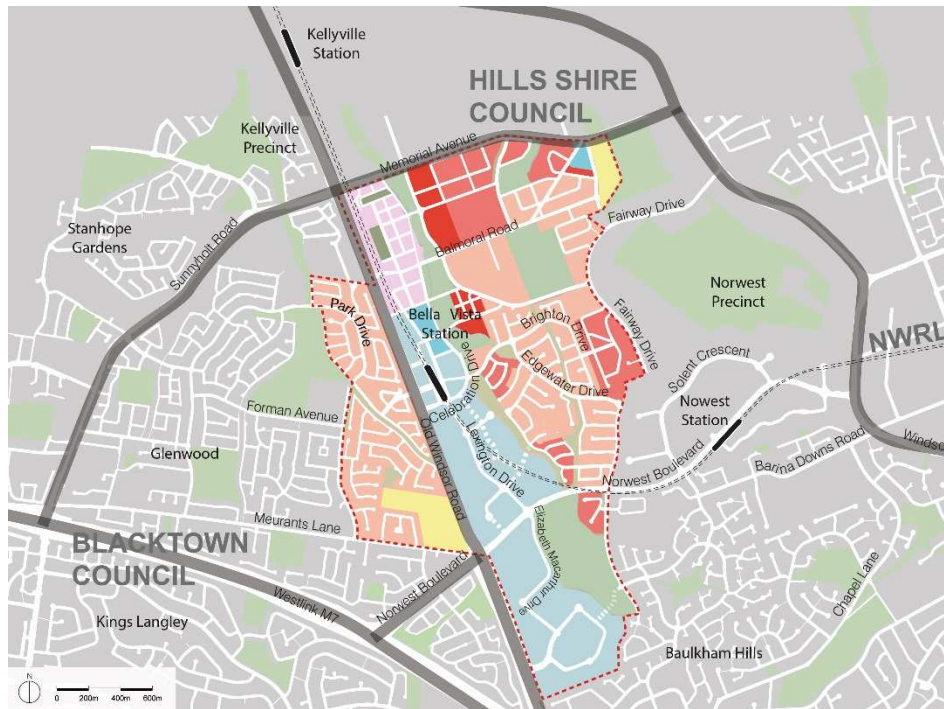


Figure 1 – Proposed Bella Vista Station precinct plan
Source: AJ+C

2.0 Strategic planning framework

2.1 State Level

A Plan for Growing Sydney (2014)

In December 2014 the Department released A Plan for Growing Sydney – the metropolitan plan to guide development over the next 20 years. The plan envisages the metropolitan population of Sydney will grow by 1.6 million people, 900,000 of these living in Western Sydney and the need to provide an additional 664,000 new homes by 2031.

Goal Three of the metropolitan plan aims to create a great place to live with communities that are strong, healthy and well connected. In order to deliver on this goal, the plan directs the implementation of the Sydney Green Grid project, which provides a metropolitan scale network of cycleways and connections between regional parks.

A Plan for Growing Sydney identifies the Bella Vista Station precinct as a “Priority Precinct – major urban renewal” as shown in **Figure 2**.

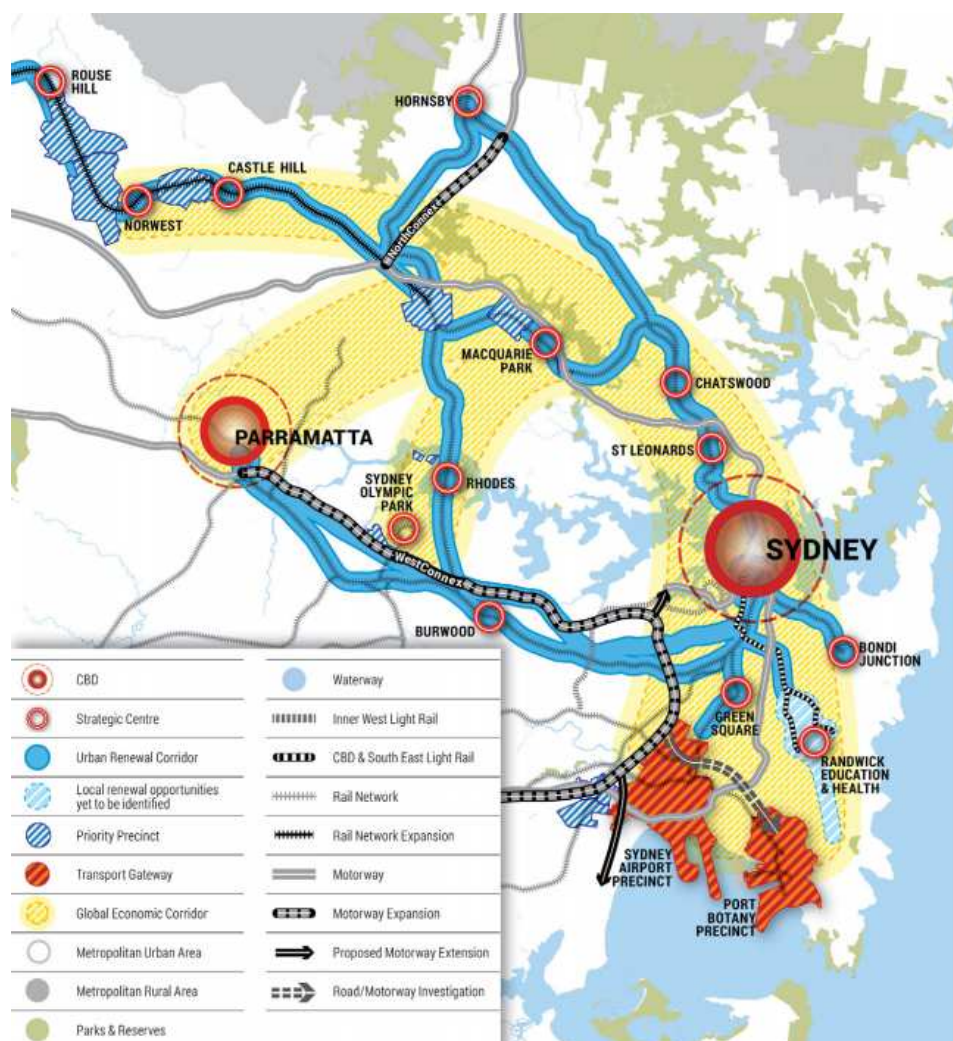


Figure 2 – A Plan for Growing Sydney
Source: Department of Planning and Environment

North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy

The North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy, including Structure Plans for each station and its surrounds, has been prepared to guide development over the next 20-25 years.

The Bella Vista Station Structure Plan sets the vision for future development of the precinct. It sets out that the precinct will have an important function in the NWRL corridor as a business and commercial 'destination' station, while also providing increased residential development opportunities (see **Figure 3**).

The Structure Plan sets an objective to provide attractive open spaces of high amenity for the public, as well as a robust street pattern to support future growth opportunities within the locality. These spaces are characterised as green open spaces for residents that are accessible and safe, and landscaped appropriately to integrate with the existing character of the area.

The Structure Plan also identifies areas of existing and proposed open space (see **Figure 4**).

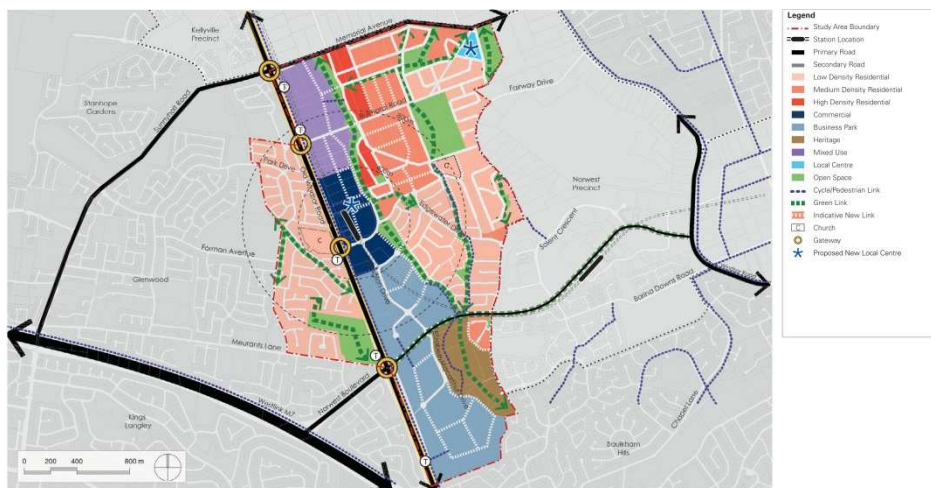


Figure 3 – Bella Vista Structure Plan

Source: Transport for NSW / Department of Planning and Infrastructure



Figure 4 – Indicative location of open space and public domain

Source: Transport for NSW / Department of Planning and Infrastructure

2.2 Local Level

The Hills Shire Recreation Strategy 2007

The Hills Shire Recreation Strategy 2007 strategy includes an assessment of the community's recreation needs, including both active (organised) sports participation and passive (informal/not organised) participation. Baulkham Hills Shire in 2007 had approximately 416 open space reserves with a total combined area of around 1500 hectares. The strategy identified that there may be a lack of variety in open space provision in specific suburbs.

Under the Strategy, the methodology for open space planning in the Shire, particularly in new release areas such as Kellyville, Rouse Hill and the Balmoral Road Release Area was changed to be based on a needs analysis as opposed to the historical standard of 2.83 hectares per 1,000 people. The strategy includes an implementation plan includes high priority (1-3 years), medium priority (4-6 years) and low priority (7-10 years) recommendations.

Draft Hills Shire Integrated Open Space Strategy 2014

In 2013, the Hills Shire Council undertook a detailed review of existing open space and the open space needs of the Shire's future population. The draft Hills Shire Integrated Open Space Strategy 2014 was prepared for the consideration of Council. The Open Space Strategy sets out that participation rates in recreation and leisure activities are unlikely to change over the next 15 years but that due to population, the number of people participating in recreation will increase. The Strategy estimates that more than 80% of the Hills Shire residents are likely to use open space for sporting, physical activity and social activities at least once per year. The participation rate for each activity and the expected number of residents using that open space facility are reproduced in **Table 1**.

Table 1 – Participation rates under the Draft Hills Shire Integrated Open Space Strategy

Open Space Facility	Participation rate	Expected level of use 2031
Off-road trails	54%	135,600
Grass sportsgrounds	19%	47,200
Swimming pools	14%	35,400
Tennis / netball / courts	10%	24,700
Skate parks	7%	18,500
Golf courses	6%	15,400
Bushland recreation area	6%	14,400
Waterway / lake	3%	7,400
Lawn bowls greens	2%	4,600
Outdoor basketball courts	2%	3,900
Motorsport	1%	2,900
BMX track	1%	2,800
Hockey facility	1%	2,700
Target sports facilities	1%	2,000
Equestrian facilities	1%	2,000

The Open Space Strategy sets out that school-aged children are the largest users of public open space, especially active outdoor space. The Strategy projects that this age

group will continue to account for 22% of the population of the Shire. Conversely, the strategy sets out that young adults (20-34 years) make up only 18% of the Shire's population and require a different range of recreation facilities, located between home and work. Older people (aged 65 years and over) make up approximately 12% and an increasing proportion of the population. There is an increasing need for parks and trails to encourage older people to remain active and social later in life.

Social Infrastructure Discussion Paper

Council's Social Infrastructure Discussion Paper outlines potential opportunities for the Precinct as a result of its forecasted population growth. The paper suggests the opportunity for the establishment of a bicycle lane through the Precinct in order to meet recreational demand, and the possibility of a multipurpose facility to be used for conferences, concerts and elite sporting events. Council suggests that a number of 'cultural actions' are to be undertaken in the following years, including the integration of the principles outlined in the Cultural Strategy with any plans for the Castle Hill Showground.

Cultural Plan for Baulkham Hills Shire

The Cultural Plan for the Baulkham Hills Shire contains a number of strategies to further the cultural, social, economic and environmental development of the LGA. A main focus of the document is to interact with the community, and work towards building a strong identity by bringing together people and place. The plan's goals involve the creation of a place that is liveable and inspiring, perfecting a balance between private learning opportunities and public creative expression, and planning for healthy cities. The underlying principles and goals set out by Council through the Plan should remain central in current and future strategies for the Precinct.

Recreation Strategy

Introduced in 2007, Council's Recreational Strategy assesses the recreation needs of its community. The study involves an analysis of the area's demographic characteristics, trends found in the level of sport participation, current levels of open space provision, and the supply of recreational facilities. The strategy identifies and categorises the needs of the community in regards to recreation facilities. These involve issues such as the need for building upgrades and increased community awareness of sport opportunities.

Taking into consideration the findings of the strategy, plans for the Precinct must address these issues in order to ensure that the needs of The Hills LGA community are met.

Tracks and Trails Strategy

The Tracks and Trails Strategy outlines a number of principles to improve existing pedestrian and cycle networks throughout The Hills LGA. The Strategy provides a brief analysis of the networks already in existence, stating that older suburbs are less likely to have an integrated footpath and cycleway network, and that the opportunity to develop walking trails in order to add to recreational experiences is evident. The current cycleway throughout the Precinct is made up of both on and off-road paths, although continuous interruptions to the cycle network is evident. Similarly, areas within the Precinct are lacking footpath infrastructure.

Through an improved pedestrian and cycle network, Council aims to provide opportunities for the wider community to participate in a healthy and active lifestyle. In order to achieve a successful pedestrian and cycleway network, it will be essential to incorporate a number of principles, including the provision of safe and attractive tracks and trails, the creation of walkable neighbourhoods, the fostering of community spirit, the establishment of accessible walking and cycling networks, and promotional strategies to encourage all members of the community to get active. The Strategy ensures that incorporating these principles into a policy will be essential in achieving the vision of enabling healthy lifestyles.

Bike Plan Review

Council's Bike Plan Review provides an analysis of current and future demands of bicycle riders in The Hills LGA, with the aim of creating an environment in which cycling is made easier and more attractive.

At present, cycle ways run along Carrington Road, Victoria Avenue and Windsor Road. Additionally, many bicycle pathways can be found inside Fred Caterson Reserve, consisting of both unsealed and concrete paved routes.

When looking specifically to the Precinct, there appears to be a lack of cycle ways connecting the surrounding open space areas. The review identifies areas such as Castle Hill as a prime location for urban renewal strategies to promote cycle ways and greater bicycle accessibility in order to reduce reliance on cars.

Two roads within the Precinct are identified in the review of dangerous cycling locations and environments; Windsor Road and Showground Road. Both are currently considered dangerous due to: speeding cars and trucks; a lack of safe crossing points; poor road surfaces; and dangerous intersections.

Balmoral Road Release Area Section 94 Plan No. 12

The Balmoral Road release area is located partly within the Precinct. The Hills Shire Contributions Plan No. 12 – Balmoral Road Release Area came into effect on 26 September 2006. This plan levied residential development within the area to which the plan applies to provide local infrastructure to service the incoming population. The Balmoral Road Section 94 Plan planned for a projected population growth of approximately 13,012 residents by 2021.

The Hills Shire Contributions Plan No. 12 – Balmoral Road Release Area identified open space and community facilities that would be funded through the collection of levies under the plan.

The plan identified the need for 35.8 hectares of additional open space which was broken down as follows:

- 27.66 hectares of district open space;
- 4.42 hectares of local open space; and
- 3.43 hectares of greenway links and pedestrian connections.

The Plan also set out the following community facilities:

- Kellyville Park Community Centre;
- Indoor Recreational Centre - Kellyville Park;
- Indoor Recreational Centre - Burnie Mullane Sports Complex; and
- Expansion of Rouse Hill Regional Centre library.

3.0 Existing situation

3.1 The Bella Vista Station Precinct

The Bella Vista Station Precinct covers an area of approximately 415ha and is focussed around the Bella Vista Station, currently under construction. The precinct is predominantly within the Hills Shire Council LGA, with parts of the precinct extending into the Blacktown Council LGA.

The precinct is bound to the north by Memorial Drive, running east-west between Windsor Road and Old Windsor Road. Old Windsor Road, dissecting the western portion of the precinct, provides connection to Seven Hills Road and the M7 Motorway.

The precinct contains a portion of the Norwest Business Park and covers approximately half the area of the Balmoral Road Release Area – a low density residential land release area. Development within the Norwest Business Park is largely complete, with only a number of sites remaining undeveloped. The Balmoral Road Release Area is in the early stages of development with small pockets of residential development currently under construction.

3.2 Community profile

Population characteristics

In 2011, the Bella Vista Station precinct area had a population 5,541. The area has a large percentage of school aged children (24%) and a median age of 33.5 years. 41.3% of residents were born overseas and a further 69.1% of residents had one or both parents born overseas. As a result, a smaller proportion of residents in the Bella Vista Station area spoke English at home (60%) compared with the Sydney average (63%).

Demographic information prepared by the Department provides that the precinct's age profile mirrored that of The Hills as a whole. A copy of this analysis is attached at **Appendix 1**. Even though a proportion of the Bella Vista Station precinct population lives in the Blacktown LGA, there is no similarity to Blacktown's age profile. Therefore, comparison in **Table 2** has been made between the Bella Vista precinct area, The Hills Shire and the Sydney Statistical Division.

Table 2 – Key demographic features

Characteristic	Bella Vista Station precinct area		The Hills Shire		Sydney Statistical Division	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Under 15	1,330	24%	36,877	21%	801,837	19%
15-39	1,996	36%	57,887	33%	1,622,604	38%
40-64	1,883	34%	61,745	34%	1,336,048	31%
65+	332	6%	20,505	11%	525,728	12%
Median Age	33.5		32.7		35.7	
Born Overseas		41.3%		33.6%		38%
Language other than		40%		29%		37%

Characteristic	Bella Vista Station precinct area		The Hills Shire		Sydney Statistical Division	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
English spoken at home						
Tertiary Educated		43.1%		60.3%		54.9%
Unemployment		4.6%		4.1%		5.7%
Housing Stress		36.3%		40.9%		44.7%
Median annual household income	\$104,000 - \$129,999 per year		Not provided		\$65,000 - \$77,999 per year	

Household characteristics

The key household characteristics for the Bella Vista Station precinct are presented in Table 3. In 2011, the Bella Vista precinct had an average household size of 3.5 people. This is substantially higher than the Sydney average of 2.69 persons per household. This is further explained by the dwelling characteristics of the area with 86% of the population living in detached dwellings, 14% in semi-detached or townhouse style dwellings, and no apartment buildings within the area.

In the Bella Vista precinct, 81% of households own two or more vehicles. A further 18% of households own one car. This accounts for a large private vehicle dependency within the area, with 80% of households driving to work.

Table 3 – Key household characteristics

Characteristic	Bella Vista precinct		The Hills Shire		Sydney Statistical Division	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Lone person		7.5%		8%		22%
Multiple and other		5%		3%		3%
Couple no children		20%		24%		22%
Single parent		6%		8%		10%
Couple with children		57%		50%		35%
Average Household size	3.5		3.09		2.69	
Apartments		0		5%		30%
Semidetached/Townhouse		14%		11%		13%
Detached dwelling		86%		84%		57%
Rented		17%		16%		33%
Owner occupier		83%		84%		67%

Forecast population changes

The ABS and the Hills Shire Council have prepared population and dwelling forecasts for the suburb of Bella Vista to 2031. Although the number of dwellings within the suburb of Bella Vista is expected to increase by 258 by 2031, the average household size is expected to decrease from 3.47 to 2.97 persons. This will result in an expected

decrease of 564 people to a total population of 7,091. By 2031, it is expected that the number of school aged children will decrease from 1,862 to 1,230 and the number of people over the age of 65 will make up 19% of the population. The projected age structure is shown in **Figure 5**.

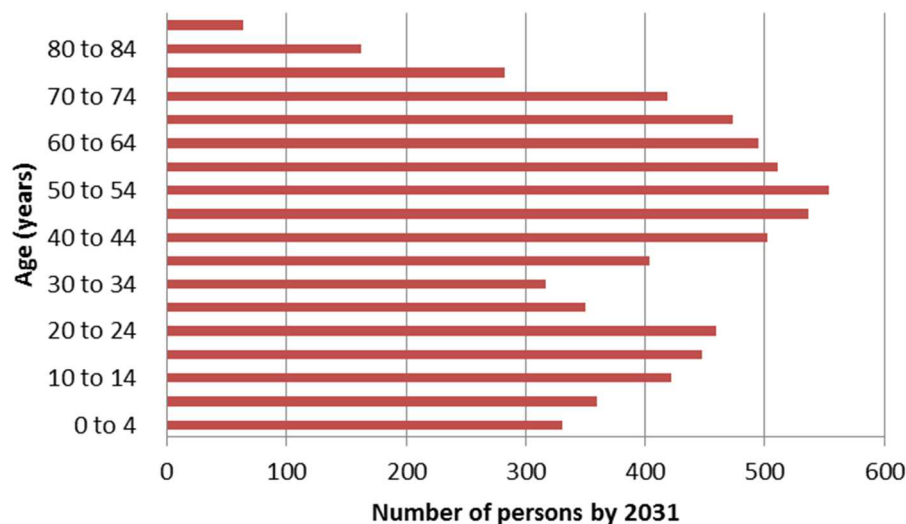


Figure 5 – Population pyramid by 2031
Source: JBA and JBA

3.3 Existing open space and community facilities

A significant number of existing facilities are located within and immediately surrounding the Bella Vista Station and Kellyville Station precincts. There is approximately 266 hectares of existing land zoned RE1 Public Recreation within the combined area of the two precincts. A summary of the existing open space and community facilities are presented in **Table 4** and their location is shown in **Figure 8**.

Existing facilities range from sporting ovals and complexes, to informal recreation areas with playgrounds and barbeque facilities, to large corridors primarily servicing as drainage networks but providing off-road trails and links through the area. Examples of existing open space within and surrounding the precinct are presented in **Figure 7**.

Table 4 – Existing open space, recreation and community facilities

Type of Facility	Number
Active Open Space	
Playing Fields and Ovals	40
Courts	30.5
Skate Parks	1
Total Area	143 hectares
Passive Recreation Areas	
Number of parks	15
Playgrounds	12
Total Area	108 hectares
Off-Road Networks and Trails	

Type of Facility	Number
Number of trails	10
Total Distance	16 kilometres
Riparian Corridor	
Total area (SP2 zoned land)	157 hectares
Indoor Recreation Facilities	
Number of facilities	2
Community Facilities/Spaces	
Number of facilities	6

Under its contributions plans, The Hills Shire Council is also planning on the delivery of a number of additional, or the embellishment of existing, open spaces and community facilities. This includes the acquisition of land for the new Arnold Avenue district park, the extension of Kellyville Park and the upgrade of Burns Road Park.



(ing) ● Passive Open Space (existing) ↔ Trails and Networks (existing) ● Indoor Recreation Space (existing) ● Childcare ● Religious Facilities
 (ed) ● Passive Open Space (planned) ↔ Trails and Networks (planned) ● Community Centres and Halls (existing) ● Healthcare

Open space and community facilities
JBA

A1 Balmoral Reserve

Once complete, Balmoral Reserve will provide additional sporting facilities within the Balmoral Road Release Area (see master plan at **Figure 8**). The site is described as a local park under the Contributions Plan No. 12 with an area of approximately 4,500 square metres. The facility will provide two cricket ovals in the summer season and four hockey/soccer fields for the winter season. The facility will also include a tennis centre, at grade car park and amenities. Land acquisition was scheduled to occur when the catchment population reached 4,600 to 9,400 residents, which was originally forecast to occur by 2013), and capital expenditure when the catchment population reached more than 9,400 residents, which was originally forecast to occur by 2020).

A2 – Kellyville Park

The Contributions Plan No. 12 will collect funds to extend and upgrade the existing facilities at Kellyville Park. Currently, the facility provides two playing fields, club house facilities, playground and netball courts. Under the proposed master plan (see **Figure 9**) the park will be expanded and reconfigured to provide two cricket ovals, three soccer/hockey ovals, four smaller rectangle fields, baseball diamond, two junior baseball diamonds, at grade car park and clubhouse. The planned upgrade was scheduled to occur when the catchment population reached 4,600 to 9,400 residents, which was originally forecast to occur by 2013).

P1 – Bella Vista Farm

Bella Vista Farm is a historical precinct dating back to the late 1700s. The site contains a number of farm buildings including the original two storey homestead. Bella Vista Farm provides substantial passive open space for the existing community and allows for historical interpretation of previous land uses within the area.

Delivery timeframes

Contributions Plan No. 12 prioritises the timing of infrastructure delivery based on development reaching 3 population thresholds:

- up to 4,600 residents (expected to be by 2010)
- 4,600 to 9,400 residents (expected to be by 2013)
- more than 9,400 residents (expected to be by 2020).

However, section 10.1 of the Plan notes that 'the ability to deliver a particular facility is largely dependent upon the rate of development within the Balmoral Road Release area, and the corresponding receipt of contributions by Council.



Crestwood Reserve



Kate Bird Park



Kellyville Memorial Park



Typical off-road trail and riparian corridor

Figure 7 – Examples of existing open space
Source: JBA



Figure 8 – Balmoral Reserve
Source: The Hills Shire



Figure 9 – Kellyville Park Master Plan
Source: The Hills Shire

3.4 Existing educational facilities

Within the precinct and the area immediately surrounding, are a number of primary and secondary schools operated by both the private sector and the NSW Department of Education and Communities. These existing facilities are summarised in **Table 5**.

Table 5 – Existing education facilities

Name	Address	Public/Private
Primary		
Crestwood Public School	38 Peel Rd, Baulkham Hills	Public
Parklea Public School	205 Glenwood Park Dr, Glenwood	Public
Kellyville Ridge Public School	Greenwich St, Kellyville Ridge	Public
Beaumont Hills Public School	The Parkway, Beaumont Hills	Public
Kellyville Public School	35A Windsor Rd, Kellyville	Public
Ironbark Ridge Public School	Ironbark Ridge Road, Rouse Hill	Public
John XXIII Catholic Primary School	160 Perfection Ave, Stanhope	Private (Catholic)
Our Lady of the Rosary Primary School	8 Diana Ave, Kellyville	Private (Catholic)
St Angela's Primary School	40 Harrington Avenue, Castle Hill	Private (Catholic)
Secondary		
Crestwood High School	17 Chapel Ln, Baulkham Hills	Public
Glenwood High School	Forman Ave, Glenwood	Public
Tallowood School	44 Redden Dr, Kellyville	Public
Kellyville High School	York & Queensbury Avenue, Kellyville	Public
Rouse Hill High School	105 Withers Road, Rouse Hill	Public
K-12		
William Clarke College	1 Morris Grove, Kellyville	Private (Anglican)
St Michael's School	5 Chapel Ln, Baulkham Hills	Private (Catholic)

Proposed new school

To cater for increased demand from the incoming population, it is proposed to rezone land to the SP2 Infrastructure zone to facilitate the establishment of a new primary school on Fairway Drive in the east of the Precinct. This site is suitable for a school due to its proximity to the opportunity sites, its accessibility to the broader area due to its location on Fairway Drive and its location adjoining the Balmoral Road Sports Complex, which has the potential to provide for additional sporting and recreation facilities for students.

4.0 Projected population growth

4.1 The draft Bella Vista Station precinct

The draft Bella Vista Station precinct envisages 4,200 new dwellings within the Precinct over the next 20 years. Growth is planned to occur in a series of large opportunity sites located close to the rail station and areas of highest amenity such as parkland and open space.

An average occupancy rate of 2.1 people per dwelling is utilised to determine future population. Whilst the final dwelling mix and sizes will vary over time, this assumed occupancy rate provides a reasonable estimate considering the location and form of the proposed housing under the precinct. This occupancy rate is generally consistent with that used in other comparable precincts around Sydney.

In other parts of the precinct a number of additional dwellings have either been recently constructed or are planned for development. The open space and community infrastructure needs of these residents will be met through council's provision of facilities identified in its development contributions plan.

Non-residential population growth

9,400 jobs will be accommodated in the precinct by 2036. This is broadly in line with the expectations of the Structure Plan.

Projected demographic characteristics

The demographic characteristics of the incoming population is expected to differ from that of a traditional suburban demographic profile. Based on the analysis of similar precincts around Sydney, research undertaken by Hill PDA¹, anticipated the following characteristics within the incoming population:

- increased working aged residents (ie 15-44 years);
- increased multiculturalism –with new migrants being attached to living within close proximity to a railway station and apartment style living;
- increasing professional working couples without children; and
- increased skilled labour force.

These characteristics have an influence on the type of open space and community facilities to be provided.

¹ Hill PDA (2014), North West Rail Link Market Research

5.0 Open space and recreation

5.1 Open space provision

The Bella Vista precinct plan proposes to provide 18.14 ha of open space within the Precinct (see **Figure 10**). This includes 11.48 ha of new passive open space and 1.46 ha of new active open space. Key public spaces are described in greater detail below. Note that a new public park and plaza are also proposed as part of the Circa Precinct. However, due to the preliminary nature of planning for these spaces, they have not been counted towards the amounts identified below.

Existing & Committed	
Passive	5.2
Sub-Total	5.2
Proposed New Passive	
Retail Plaza	0.3
Pedestrian Mall	0.3
Kiss and Rise / Linear Green Space	0.25
Pocket Parks	2.13
Riparian Corridor – passive	3.07
Riparian Corridor - other	0.88
Fairway Drive	2.55
Circa Precinct	2.00
Sub-Total	11.48
Proposed New Active	
Small Scale Sports	1.46
Sub-Total	1.46
Total	18.14

The distribution of existing and proposed new public open spaces will mean that dwellings within the precinct will be located within a 800m distance of a publicly accessible open space.

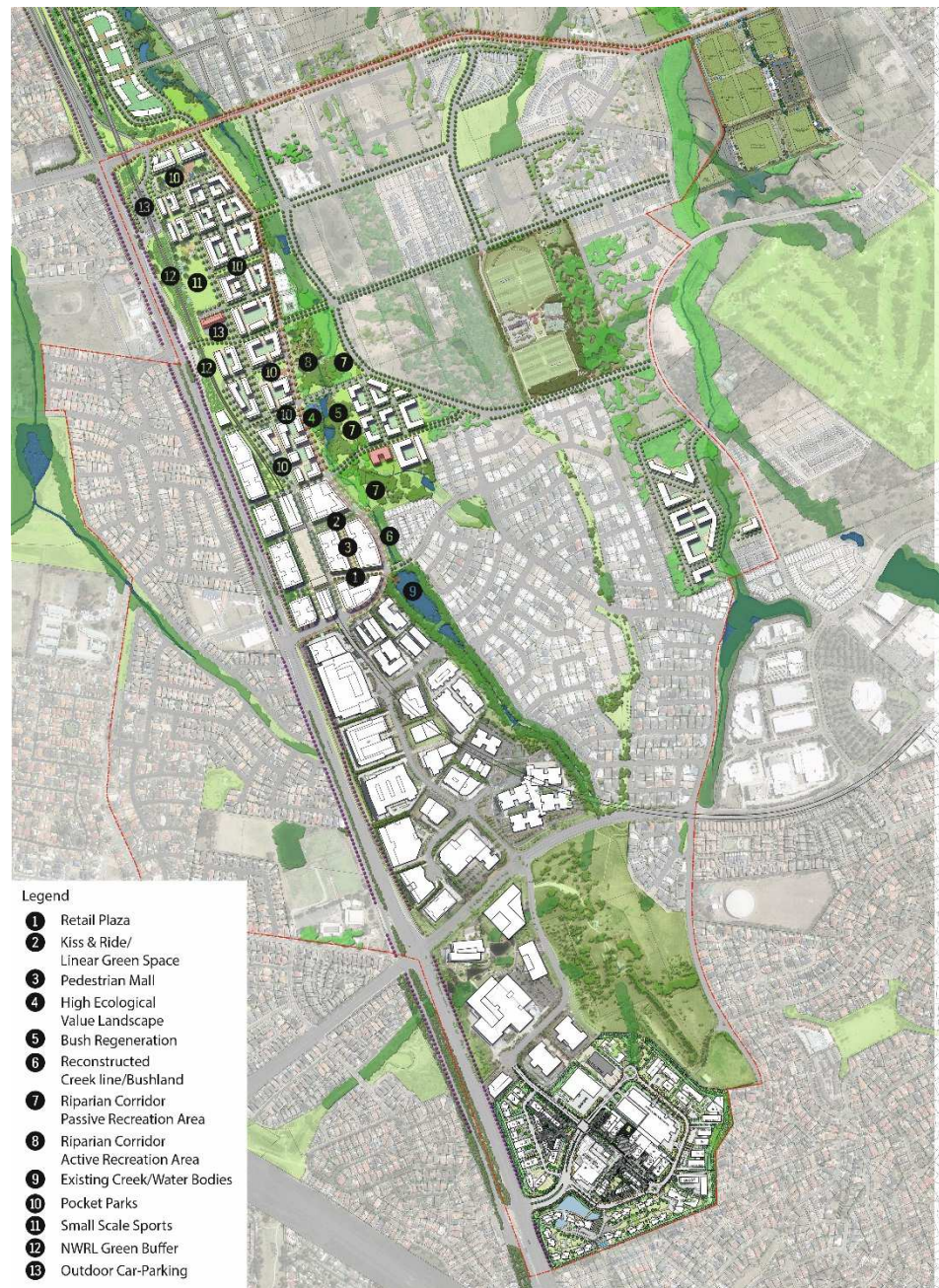


Figure 10 – Proposed open space provision
Source: AJ+C

Small Scale Sports

Located to the north of the rail station, this area has the potential to provide range of small scale sports facilities catering for active recreation uses. This includes:

- futsal;
- netball and basketball hoops;
- children's playground; and
- fitness stations

In addition to providing recreation space, the proximity of this precinct to new apartments will also provide valuable amenity and environmental benefits for residents. The area can also be used for infrequent, organised outdoor community events.



Figure 11 – Example of the type of open space that may be established in the Small Courts Precinct
Source: AJ+C

Pocket parks

This will include new passive open space totalling 2.13 ha adjoining the riparian corridor and with substantial road edge providing enhanced opportunity for visual and physical permeability. These parks will include lawn, paved areas, shade trees and other facilities such as paths, drinking fountains and seating.

These parks also have the potential to cater for community gardens and allotments and stormwater detention.



Figure 12 – Example of a pocket park

Circa Precinct

This precinct has the potential to deliver over 2ha of new publicly accessible open space integrated with its future development for commercial, residential and other uses. Complementing its employment focus, the main new open space would be a centrally located plaza space that is configured and designed to facilitate informal interaction and gathering. It will likely include substantial areas of hardstand complemented by street furniture such as seating, public art and extensive tree plantings for shade and amenity outcomes. This main open space would be supported by two other new parks, which would be turfed and largely cater for passive recreation activities and feature facilities such as informal 'kick about' spaces. The northern park would visually and physically integrate with the adjoining Bella Vista Farm.



Figure 13 – Example of the type of open space that may be established in the Circa Precinct

Retail plaza and pedestrian mall

The precinct proposal includes the provision of retail plaza and pedestrian mall in the town centre. With a combined area of 0.60 ha, these area will provide a formal and informal meeting space for the community and an opportunity for local community events. Bordered by active uses including cafes, eateries, local shops and a community/civic space, the civic plazas will aim to provide:

- public art/water feature;
- shade planting or shade structures;
- hard and soft landscaped areas;
- furniture; and
- lighting.



Figure 14 – Precedent examples of a civic plaza

6.0 Needs assessment

6.1 Assessment of adequacy

Assessment of the adequacy of proposed open space for an incoming population is a complex process that requires balanced consideration of a range of quantitative and qualitative criteria.

To guide this process, the former NSW Department of Planning published the *Recreation and Open Space Planning Guidelines for Local Government* (the Guidelines). These guidelines have become the NSW standard for open space planning within communities.

The key directions of these guidelines have been adapted to inform assessment of the proposed open space within the Kellyville station and Bella Vista station precincts. Key criteria used in this assessment have included:

- amount;
- type and role;
- distribution;
- quality;
- demographics, in particular trends; and
- benchmarking with other similar renewal locations.

Amount

Since the mid-20th century, the provision of open space in most new NSW communities has largely been based on quantifiable numerical benchmarks. These benchmarks often took the form of a rate of open space per head of population or in some cases a percentage of land to be allocated for such purposes as part of subdivision. The current default in many parts of NSW is a rate of 2.8ha per 1,000 new residents. This rate features in a number of planning frameworks, including the NSW Government's Growth Centres Code and local government open space strategies and development contributions plans. As an alternative, the Guidelines suggest a default rate of 15% of non-industrial land be allocated for open space purposes.

Type and role

The Guidelines suggest that a variety of open space types and roles is required within an area.

Typical types of open space are:

- Parks;
- Linear and linkage; and
- Outdoor sport.

This refers to the main function of the open space. Within this main function, a range of other functions can be accommodated. This includes whether the space is catering for active uses, eg ball kick about space, walking and cycling, passive uses, eg seating, and whether it is aligned with a natural feature such as a creek or other waterbody.

Typical roles are:

- Local;
- District; and

- Regional.

This refers to the catchment size for which the open space caters.

Distribution

Distribution is a good measure of accessibility. Locating public open space within a walking distance of homes is likely to increase the patronage of these open spaces, and increase the likelihood of patrons walking or cycling to the open space which has attendant health benefits and extends the length of the recreational activity. It is particularly important where rates of car ownership are low or for older or mobility challenged persons.

The Guidelines identify the following distribution criteria.

Table 6 – Distribution criteria

Type	Role	Distance from most dwellings (m / km)
Parks	Local	400m
	District	2km
	Regional	5 – 10km
Linear and linkage	Local	N/a
	District	N/a
	Regional	5 – 10km
Outdoor sport	Regional	1km
	Regional	2km
	Regional	5 – 10km

Another good measure of accessibility is ensuring that residents are located within a comfortable walking distance, usually up to 10 minutes (800m) of an open space.

Quality

Providing for quality open space is important in areas that are undergoing substantial growth and change such as the precinct. Quality is affected by a number of factors, including:

- Useability;
- Layout and design;
- Facilities; and
- Maintenance.

In particular, open space should not be located on constrained land that is subject to issues such as steep topography, frequent flooding, bushfire risk or contamination.

Demographics

Review of ABS data has identified that there is a number of broad societal trends that are currently occurring throughout Australia that have an impact on open space planning. These changes include:

- a growing population;
- changing population composition;

- emergence and increased use of technology, including at home;
- longer working hours and consequent reduction in leisure time; and
- families with both adults working.

Based on recent Department research, the Sydney metropolitan region is also experiencing a number of key demographic changes. These include:

- greater proportion of older person (aged 65 +);
- smaller household size, with an increase in couple only and lone person households; and
- more people born overseas.

Hill PDA was commissioned by UrbanGrowth NSW to undertake research into the demographic characteristics of recent, comparable precincts in the Sydney metropolitan region. Their findings indicated that in such areas, there are:

- more working aged residents;
- more professional working couples (15-44) without children;
- more people born overseas;
- less traditional nuclear families;
- more skilled workers, in particular managers and professionals;
- less vehicle ownership; and
- more renters.

Recreation participation and trends

These demographic changes are having an impact on the use of public open space, in particular recreation participation characteristics.

The ABS and the Australian Sports Commission administered Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey (ERASS) which ran from 2001 to 2010 provide an insight into these changes.

Recreation participation patterns have changed significantly in the past 10 years.

In 2010, 82.3% of Australians aged 15 years and over participated in at least one physical activity for exercise, recreation or sport in the previous 12 months. This was a significant increase from the 77.8 per cent recorded in 2001. Walking was the most popular activity for both males and females, with 35.9 per cent of the population participating at least once in walking for exercise, recreation or sport in 2010. Walking was also the most frequently participated in activity (averaging 3 times per week) with aerobics/fitness, weight training and running averaging twice per week. Other activities popular with both males and females included aerobics/fitness, swimming, cycling, running, golf tennis and bushwalking.

The recreation survey demonstrated that regular participation was much higher for non-organised activities (38.5 per cent) than it was for organised activities (12 per cent).

One of the most prominent trends has been a high growth in individual fitness activities including walking (for pleasure and fitness), swimming, aerobics/fitness programs, weight training and cycling. There has also been substantial growth in other non-team/non-club activities, such as aerobics/fitness, cycling and running (and parallel declines in more traditional activities such as swimming, tennis and golf).

Overall, the increase in participation in organised physical activity participation in NSW since 2001 (8 per cent) has been slightly lower than the relevant population (15 years+) growth in the same period (10 per cent).

Benchmarking

Comparison with other areas within Sydney currently undergoing renewal for additional homes and jobs in higher density settings is also useful. The following table provides an overview of open space provision in selected brownfield and infill renewal locations.

Table 7 – Open space benchmarking

Precinct	Open Space 1,000 population	Features
Rhodes Peninsula	0.87ha/1,000 population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cycleways and pedestrian routes through foreshore reserve and public streets ▪ Bicycle parking station for 200-300 bicycles ▪ Network of open space along foreshore ▪ Multi-purpose community centre ▪ Town Square
Epping Priority Precinct	0.12ha/1,000 population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hornsby Shire Council is considering works including an extension and upgrade to West Epping Park ▪ Parramatta City Council is considering a range of upgrades to the public domain
Harold Park	1.9ha/1,000 population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public open space ▪ Common open space ▪ Landscaped streetscapes ▪ Green roofs
Wolli Creek (Discovery Point Precinct)	0.87ha/1,000 population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ District Park totalling 2.3ha with frontage to Cooks River ▪ Local and neighbourhood parks including open space above the railway line and within a civic village square ▪ Cooks River revitalisation
Central Park Broadway	0.17ha/1,000 population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ District and neighbourhood pocket parks ▪ Street landscaping including a shared path network with local area connections
St Leonards (Forum)	0.194ha/1,000 population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Terraced public open space with water feature and seating ▪ Direct access to local retail and café uses
Sydneygate, Waterloo	0.07ha/1,000 population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Informal passive open space ▪ Walking paths ▪ Landscaping and street furniture, including seating ▪ Linear connection with broader open space network

As can be seen from these examples, the rate of open space provision per head of new population is substantially less than that specified in traditional quantitative

standards. This is particularly the case in infill locations such as Epping. This reflects the difficulty in providing new open space, in particular large, land intensive playing fields, in renewal locations due to land fragmentation. Furthermore, the provision of such open spaces would need to occur at the expense of homes and jobs, which is arguably against the primary purpose of creating growth precincts. This demonstrates that the application of traditional, quantitative standards to more urban, transit oriented development contexts is inappropriate, and a more multi-faceted, qualitative approach is needed. In particular, this involves consideration of social infrastructure as well as open space.

The table also shows that in these areas the focus on new open space has been on centrally located urban open spaces such as plazas, linear open space corridors, often including walking and cycling facilities and aligned with waterways, and upgrades to the public domain.

6.2 Implications for open space planning in the Precinct

The application of traditional quantifiable standards to Transport Orientated Development (TOD) contexts is inappropriate for a range of reasons, including:

- the origins of such controls in the earlier part of the 20th century and their application to greenfield, lower density settings;
- different demographics and lifestyle preferences;
- limited evidence supporting the specified rates;
- application of a simplistic, one size fits all method that does not account for individual local context and character differences;
- the frequent lack of correlation between amount and quality of open space; and
- failure to account for the challenge of delivering new open space in established communities such as the precincts that are undergoing renewal.

Rather, these quantum standards are a useful starting point. It is only in combination with other factors such as type and role, distribution, quality, responsiveness to forecast future demographics and emerging trends and comparison with other similar renewal locations that a fair assessment of adequacy can be made.

Table 9 provides an overview of the open space outcomes for the Kellyville and Bella Vista precincts. Note that this is a net figure which adjusts the total population to account for existing and planned dwellings.

Table 8 – Assessment against traditional quantum standards

Precinct	Nett additional population	Nett additional dwellings	Proposed new open space (ha)	Ha/1,000 nett additional people
Kellyville	7,447	3,546	11.18	1.5
Bella Vista	5,792	2,758	18.14	3.13
Combined	13,239	6,304	29.32	2.32

Despite not achieving traditional quantitative standards, the proposed open space network performs well when assessed against other comparable renewal precincts. The quantum of open space in the precinct significantly exceeds that of the nearest benchmarked precinct, which is Harold Park at 1.9ha/1,000 population.

Based on a benchmark of 0.5ha for active open space by way of sporting fields and courts, **Table 10** indicates the quantum of active open space required in the Bella Vista

Station Precinct whilst considering the trends and participation rates discussed in Council's 'Integrated Open Space Plan' 2014.

Table 9 – Assessment against participation rates

Outdoor facility type	% of the population wanting to use type of open space	Number of residents wanting to use type of open space	Quantum of Open Space required per nett additional people in Bella Vista (0.5ha/1000person)
Off-road trails	(48.2%)	3,180	1.59ha
Grass sportsgrounds	(16.8%)	1,108	0.55ha
Swimming pools	(12.6%)	831	0.42ha
Tennis / netball / courts	(8.8%)	580	0.29ha
Skate parks	(6.6%)	435	0.22ha
Golf courses	(5.5%)	362	0.18ha
Bushland recreation area	(4.9%)	323	0.16ha
Waterway / lake	(2.6%)	171	0.086ha
Lawn bowls greens	(1.6%)	105	0.053ha
Outdoor basketball courts	(1.4%)	92	0.046ha
Motorsport	(1%)	65	0.033ha
BMX track	(0.9%)	59	0.030ha
Hockey facility	(0.96%)	63	0.032ha
Target sports facilities	(0.72%)	47	0.024ha
Equestrian facilities	(0.72%)	47	0.024ha

On the basis of a more qualitative based approach and using a representative quantitative figure, the active recreational standards and estimated needs indicated in the 'Integrated Open Space Plan' and the indicative standards for the provision of recreational facilities in the Department's 'Draft Development Contributions Guidelines', are not appropriate for the context of the study areas.

The open space proposed for the precinct is appropriate on a number of grounds, including:

- distribution;
- useability;
- quality;
- responsiveness to demographics and recreation trends; and
- highest and best use of land.

Distribution

In terms of distribution, all proposed new dwellings will be located within a comfortable 5 minute walk (400m) of an open space. The accessibility of the proposed open space will be increasingly important to the forecast future population due to an increase in the number of older persons, lesser ownership of private motor vehicles and less leisure time.

Useability

The proposed network incorporates a broad range of open spaces. In particular, the precincts will be served by an extensive and connected network of linear and linkage parks largely aligned with riparian corridors.

The proposed open space network is not located on areas of significant physical constraint. While parts of the network are affected by flooding, this is for the one in one hundred year event.

Quality

The increase in population will provide contributions from developers that can be used to upgrade the quality of existing open spaces, and the provision of new high quality open spaces. This potentially includes a range of new facilities and infrastructure, such as amenities blocks and furniture such as seating and lighting. The alignment of most of the linear and linkage open spaces with riparian corridors will also provide them with enhanced amenity. Much of the perimeter of most open spaces will be adjoined by public roads, providing a high level of physical and visual permeability, providing more accessible and safer recreation spaces. Particular attention will be afforded to the layout, design and embellishment of the civic plazas as important community and social gathering places.

Responsiveness to demographics and recreation trends

Demographic changes and recreation participation and trends will have an impact on the use and planning of open space. In particular, the increase in working age residents and older persons, corresponding decline in the proportion amount of school age children and broad societal trends such as longer working hours resulting in a more time poor population will result in greater demand for open space that cater for informal recreational activities such as walking. Informal activities such as walking can be well accommodated in the proposed extensive and connected linear and linkage corridors. Further, the increase in time poor, working age people will place greater demand on facilities that have more flexible opening hours such as indoor recreation facilities, including fitness centres and gymnasiums. Time poor working age people may also choose to access open space and recreational facilities closer to their workplaces as well, many of which will be located outside of the precincts.

The increase in people born overseas, and the consequent increase in multi-cultural, will increase demand for spaces that can accommodate non-traditional recreational activities. These activities often tend to be suited to smaller, indoor spaces rather than large outdoor spaces such as playing fields. This can be potentially provided for in the two indoor activity / community spaces proposed for the Bella Vista precincts.

Conversely, while still popular, these changes and trends will likely result in less demand for open spaces such as large playing fields that cater for traditional organised sporting activities. Despite this, the Caddies Creek sporting complex will be augmented with the provision of a new outdoor multi-purpose sports fields that could cater for AFL, cricket and / or football. The scale of the Caddies Creek sporting complex will cater for a district wide catchment, and as such service both the Kellyville and Bella Vista precincts.

The increase in older persons and lone person households will create demand for open spaces that can facilitate informal community interaction and socialising. The provision of a centrally located civic plaza in each precincts, which has the potential to be co-located with a community centre, can foster this outcome.

Highest and best use of land

The main purpose of the Priority Precinct program, which has been reflected in planning for Kellyville and Bella Vista, is the creation of more homes and jobs in accessible locations close to public transport, in this case rail. Delivery of this outcome requires careful consideration of the highest and best use of land, with the most

accessible land closest to public transport being allocated for homes and jobs, supplemented by open space and community facilities. The allocation of large areas of land for land intensive sporting fields in these locations does not represent the highest and best use of land, particularly where there are suitable alternative locations closely. The proposed open space network provides a range of smaller, accessible open spaces within and close to the growth precincts, makes innovative use of otherwise land under the rail viaducts for recreation uses and makes existing open space work harder through augmentation and embellishment, in particular through the provision of an additional multi-purpose outdoor sporting field at Caddies Creek. On this basis, the proposed planning framework, including the open space network, is considered to represent a fair balance of land use, and highest and best use of land given density, height and other key parameters.

6.3 Conclusion

The precinct, both in terms of its setting and design, is consistent with the principles of transit oriented development (TOD). The application of traditional, quantum based standards for the provision of open space largely relate to greenfield, lower density contexts, and as such are not appropriate to TOD settings.

This is evidenced in benchmarking with comparable precincts in the metropolitan area, which has demonstrated that substantially lesser amounts of land is provided for the purposes of public open space.

However, this benchmarking has also shown that this is offset by the high quality and useability of open space that is provided, with extensive facilities for increasingly popular activities such as walking and cycling being provided and embellishments such as public art, seating, lighting being common.

Based on a balanced consideration of performance against more traditional evaluation criteria such as amount, other factors such as distribution, the likely needs of the future community based on observed societal and demographic changes, difficulties in delivering open space in renewal locations and the primary aim of the Priority Precinct program to deliver more homes and jobs close to rail, the proposed open space network is considered to be adequate to cater for the likely recreation needs of the incoming community such to consideration of the recommendations in **Section 6.4** of this report

6.4 Recommendations

Principles

Based on the needs assessment, it is recommended that the following principles be considered in any future open space planning and design for the precinct:

- **connected** – provide an integrated network of open spaces
- **accessible** – ensure most people are able to comfortably walk to an open space
- **diverse** – provide for a variety of open space and recreation experiences
- **safe** – provide high levels of surveillance from public roads and adjoining buildings
- **attractive** – ensure open space is well designed and maintained
- flexible – ensure open space is configured to cater for a range of activities and is sufficiently robust to accommodate usage pressures
- **innovative** – ensure open space makes use of different , including the use of otherwise underutilised land

Initiatives

These principles can be translated into a number of initiatives:

- ensure the open space network caters for a range of passive and active recreation activities
- prioritise the accommodation of activities with the greatest participation rates and / or those that show a sustained increased in participation rates such as walking in the linear and linkage open spaces
- extend the existing Caddies Creek sporting complex through the provision of an additional sporting fields that cater for a district catchment
- provide a centrally located civic plaza within each of the precincts relative to the rail station and town centres, ideally co-located with an indoor community or recreation facility
- consider upgrades to existing sporting fields to more robust synthetic surfaces
- designate otherwise underused land under the rail line for recreation purposes
- provide flexible and adaptable open spaces.



Linear open space corridors



Children's play equipment



High quality public domain

High quality public domain

Figure 15 – Examples of open space
Source: JBA

7.0 Community facility requirements

7.1 Overview

Community facilities includes facilities such as multi-purpose community centres, meeting rooms, performance spaces, community hubs and libraries etc. The planning for new community facilities is typically based on the following hierarchy of population catchments:

- neighbourhood level facilities: such as local community centres that cater for a local population of around 5,000 to 10,000-15,000 people;
- district level facilities: such as libraries that cater for a larger population catchment of between 15,000 and 50,000 people; and
- regional level facilities: such as major cultural centres that cater populations of 50,000 / 100,000+

Given these population parameters it is necessary to consider the combined Kellyville and Bella Vista precincts together when planning for community facilities as well as their surrounding neighbourhoods.

Benchmarks

There are no universally adopted benchmarks or guidelines for the provision of community facilities at a local government level. In the absence of specific benchmarks, the following best practice principles should be used to inform the location and design of future community facilities within the precinct. These requirements have been derived from similar studies in other LGAs² and should be utilised as guide for all new and upgraded facilities.

Issue	Principle
Visually prominent	Locate in a highly visible location, such as a main street, that is central to the population catchment
Well integrated	Co-locate near/in retail centres and/or with other community facilities such as schools and other community services
High accessibility	Locate within walking distance of public transport and be well connected to the pedestrian/bicycle network to ensure highest levels of accessibility
Place making	Locate facilities adjacent to open space areas, town squares or plazas to enhance the civic presence of the facility and place making opportunities
Multipurpose design	Design to accommodate a range of different activities at the same time and allow for future expansion
High public safety	Location, facility and management meet best practice requirements for public safety as per Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)
Sustainable design	Design for high levels of sustainability to assist with long term operational efficiency

There are no existing multi-purpose community centres located within either of the precincts. Existing local community centres nearby include:

- Wrights Road Community Centre;

² Community Facility Needs Assessment and Development Study Final Report (2007), Heather Nesbitt Planning for Auburn Council and Wentworth Point Urban Activation Precinct Community Facilities Study (2013), Elton Consulting for Department of Planning and Infrastructure

- Beaumont Hills Community Centre;
- Village Green Community Centre; and
- Stanhope Gardens Leisure Centre.

The Hills Shire Council is currently planning a new local community centre to be located at Kellyville Park Community Centre.

For community and social outcomes it is best practice to provide a multi-purpose community centre as part of large scale renewal projects. On this basis, factoring in proposed additional population and considering benchmark standards, one neighbourhood scale community facility having a minimum area of around 400 – 500m² should be provided to service both the Bella Vista and Kellyville precincts.

Due to its role as a larger centre having a greater amount of employment and residential development than either Kellyville or Showground precincts, it is recommended that the Bella Vista precinct is the most appropriate location for the community facility. The centre should centrally located, ideally adjoining or near the civic plaza, and incorporate flexible, multi-purpose space/s that can be configured to suit a broad range of indoor recreation activities. An emerging and appropriate trend is to co-locate such space as part of a larger multi-functional centre, possibly including a new generation business hub or library. This should be considered to maximise community and social benefit. Most existing community facilities are located outside of centres and all are removed from high quality public transport facilities. The proposed new facility will provide an alternative offering by being highly accessible to not just the immediate business and residential catchment but also to a larger area.

The proposed scale of population increase resulting from the precinct is not considered sufficient to warrant the establishment of a new multi-purpose community centre within the Blacktown LGA. Development in the Blacktown LGA will generate contributions towards the upgrade of facilities in the LGA.

7.2 Libraries

Existing provision

The Hills Shire Council currently operates two primary libraries at Castle Hill and Rouse Hill with branch libraries at Carlingford, Dural and Baulkham Hills. Blacktown Council operate five libraries, with the Denis Johnson Branch Library and the Lalor Park Branch Library within the vicinity of the Bella Vista precinct. The existing library facilities are presented in **Table 10**.

Table 10 – Existing library facilities

Name	Location
The Hills Shire	
Vinegar Hill Memorial Library	29 Main Street, Rouse Hill Town Centre, Rouse Hill
Baulkham Hills Branch Library	Railway Street, Baulkham Hills
Castle Hill Library	Cnr Castle & Pennant Sts, Castle Hill
Carlingford Branch Library	Lloyds Avenue, Carlingford
Dural Branch Library	Pellitt Lane, Dural
Blacktown City	
Lalor Park Branch Library	Cnr Freeman Street and Northcott Road, Lalor Park
Dennis Johnson Branch Library	Cnr Stanhope Parkway & Sentry Drive, Stanhope Gardens

Name	Location
Riverstone Library & Digital Hub	1st Floor, Marketown, cnr Market Street & Riverstone Parade, Riverstone
Our Library @ The Mount Druitt Hub	Ayres Grove, Mt Druitt
Max Webber Library	Cnr Flushcombe Road & Alpha Street, Blacktown

Planning for Libraries

Neither The Hills Shire Council nor Blacktown City Council have strategies in place to inform the need or location of future library facilities. The *Growth Centres Development Code 2006* provides a benchmark for the provision of libraries being:

- Branch Library: 1:33,000 with 2,400sqm area; and
- District Library: 1:40,000 with 2,400sqm area.

People Places, published by the State Library of NSW, provides the following rates for the delivery of library services. The floor space areas, shown in **Table 11** below, relate to the level of participants rather than the expected population. Projected participants of fewer than 2,750 persons will generate the minimum gross floor area of 190 square metres. This demonstrates the out-of-date type of facility prescribed by the *Growth Centres Development Code 2006*.

Table 11 – Floor area requirements for new library facilities

Projected population served	Floor area (sqm per 1,000)
fewer than 20,000	57.5
20,001 to 35,000	39
35,001 to 65,000	35
65,001 to 100,000	31
more than 100,000	28

Expected demand

The Bella Vista precinct is projected to result in an increase of approximately 8,800 residents within the precinct over the next 20 years. The combined population increase between the Bella Vista and Kellyville precincts are expected to be 17,000 people. The raw population increase is not large enough to justify a new branch library between the precincts but in order to mitigate the increase in demand on existing services, it is recommended that a smaller community centre, including limited Council library services, be provided within the Bella Vista precinct. Potential facilities may include:

- Library collection service;
- Internet and computer services;
- Reading spaces; and
- Activity rooms.

A facility to cater for the incoming population, based on the formula prescribed above, would require a floor area of approximately 200-300 square metres.

To maximise accessibility and patronage and to promote synergies, it is recommended that this facility be co-located, or integrated with the recommended new community facility in a central location such as the civic plaza.

8.0 Educational facilities

The Department has undertaken discussions with the Department of Education and Communities with regards to the likely provision of primary and secondary schools within the Precinct and more broadly within the NWRL corridor. The additional school students likely to be generated by the infill development in the Precinct and its surrounds are identified in the Department's report.

9.0 References

- A.J. Veal, University of Technology Sydney 2009, Open Space Planning Standards in Australia: in Search of Origins: U-Plan Project Paper 1
- Australian Bureau of Statistics 2014, Population by Age and Sex, Australia, States and Territories
- Australian Sports Commission 2010, Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey
- Bankstown City Council 2012, Open Space Strategic Plan 2022
- City of Canterbury 2010, Strategic Recreation Plan
- Elton Consulting 2013, Wentworth Point Urban Activation Precinct Community Facilities Study
- Heather Nesbitt Planning 2007, Community Facility Needs Assessment and Development Study Final Report
- Hill PDA 2014, North West Rail Link Market Research Advice
- Marrickville Council 2011, Recreation Needs for Marrickville
- NSW Department of Planning 2009, Local Development Contributions Guidelines
- NSW Department of Planning and Environment 2014, NSW Population, Household and Dwelling Projections
- Stratcorp 2006, Woolhara Recreational Needs Assessment and Strategy