



Planning &  
Environment

# Showground Station Precinct

PLANNING REPORT

VOLUME 1

December 2015



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## Glossary

Act	Environmental Planning and Assessment Act
AHD	Australian Height Datum
CBD	Central Business District
DCP	Development Control Plan
Department	Department of Planning and Environment
FSR	floor space ratio
GFA	gross floor area
ha	hectare
LEP	Local Environmental Plan
LGA	local government area
Minister	Minister for Planning
RMS	Roads and Maritime Services
SEPP	State Environmental Planning Policy
TfNSW	Transport for New South Wales

# Executive summary

This planning report has been prepared by the Department of Planning and Environment to support the precinct proposal for the Showground Station Precinct.

## Sydney Metro Northwest

The \$8.3 billion Sydney Metro Northwest (formerly known as the North West Rail Link) is Australia's largest public transport infrastructure project currently under construction and a priority rail project for the NSW Government. The project will deliver eight new railway stations to Sydney's growing North West, including one at Showground, and is due to open in the first half of 2019. The *North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy* was prepared to guide future planning and development along the rail corridor, with a Structure Plan prepared for each of the new eight stations. The Strategy was finalised in September 2013.

Sydney Metro Northwest is the first stage of the Sydney Metro. Sydney Metro City and Southwest is the second stage, which will extend from Chatswood and then under Sydney Harbour, underground in the Sydney CBD and west to Bankstown. The second stage is planned to open in 2024.

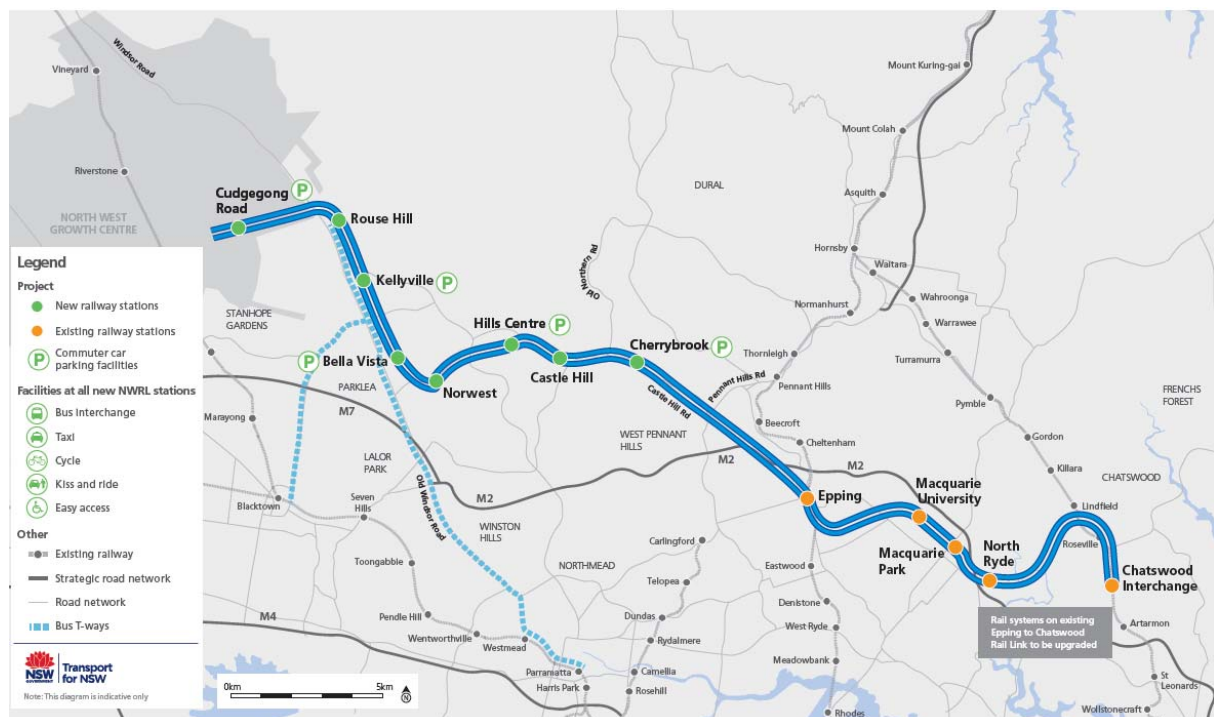


Figure 1 Sydney Metro Northwest

## **North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy**

The *North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy* was released in 2013. The Corridor Strategy was prepared by the Department of Planning and Environment and Transport for NSW in collaboration with relevant Councils and State agencies. It established a strategic planning framework to guide development around the eight new stations along the Sydney Metro Northwest and to inform the community of the future vision and direction for the area. It will also assist infrastructure agencies and service providers to identify, prioritise and coordinate the delivery of infrastructure upgrades in accordance with each precinct's long term projected growth.

## **Priority Precincts**

*A Plan for Growing Sydney*, released in December 2014, established the NSW Government's vision for Sydney's future, which is a 'strong global city, a great place to live'. One of the biggest challenges to achieving this aim is how to provide for the 664,000 new homes and 689,000 new jobs needed for the predicted 1.6 million residents by 2031. The Priority Precincts program is an important government program integral to meeting the goals in *A Plan for Growing Sydney*.

The Priority Precincts program aims to provide for new housing and jobs in centres with good transport connections, making it easier for people to get to and from home and work. Coordinating infrastructure provision is also important to ensure that housing growth will be supported by community facilities, schools, green open space, and other public spaces to make these centres attractive and pleasant places to live and work. Collaboration with councils and government agencies, and community consultation is fundamental to this process.

## **Why Showground?**

Following the finalisation of the North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy, The Hills Shire Council unanimously voted to nominate the Showground Station Precinct, along with the Bella Vista Station and Kellyville Station Precincts as Priority Precincts. These were endorsed by the NSW Government in August 2014. The decision to endorse these precincts as Priority Precincts was based on a number of factors, including that the precincts:

- would maximise the use of the Sydney Metro Northwest and other public transport infrastructure;
- will provide more jobs closer to home and promote public transport to employment areas, reducing the need for private vehicle trips;
- respond to strong current demand, and project future demand for additional employment and housing.

## **Precinct Proposal**

### **Vision**

The vision for the Showground Station Precinct by 2036 is 'The Hills Cultural and Innovation Precinct', which is guided by the following principles:

- provision for a range of housing, employment and retail services close to public transport, the regional road network and high quality open spaces including the revitalised Castle Hill Showground;
- creation of an attractive and convenient local centre around the station, providing shops, cafes, restaurants, a central village plaza and jobs;
- provision of high quality, pleasant network of public open space areas;

- delivery of more homes close to the station to meet growing demand and increase housing choice to reflect changing household sizes and lifestyles. It is predicted that 5,000 additional homes can be provided in the precinct over the next 20 years;
- enhancement of existing employment areas and opportunities, providing for greater range of business types including niche and start-up businesses to complement the Norwest Business Park. It is predicted that 2,300 additional jobs can be provided in the precinct over the next 20 years;
- improving access and connections to the new station and throughout the precinct through improved bus services, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and crossings over Cattai Creek; and
- managing impacts on the natural environment including protection of remnant ecological communities in the Cattai Creek corridor.

It is estimated that by 2036, around 5,000 additional homes and 2,300 new jobs will be created in the precinct, along with at least 6,000m<sup>2</sup> of retail space and 2.7 hectares (ha) of public open space.

### **Proposed Planning Controls**

The proposed land use controls focus on opportunities around the station to meet the goals of transit oriented development, while also recognising the character of existing low density areas further from the station, and the need for high quality public spaces and community facilities to cater for the population growth.

The rezoning proposal comprises:

- zoning for a mixed use local centre around the station to facilitate a compact, walkable centre providing a variety of shops, services and apartments;
- retention of the existing zoning of the Castle Hill Showground for this important regional recreational and event site;
- areas designated as parks and open space;
- building heights to transition down from the station area to stand-alone housing areas beyond, providing for a range of housing types to meet demand for greater housing choice;
- business zones to be largely retained in the western part of the precinct, with planning controls to provide for more diversity in employment such as small plate offices for start-ups and emerging businesses; and
- recommended precinct specific controls for The Hills Shire Council to adopt into their Development Control Plan, including environmental management controls and building design controls to provide high levels of amenity for residents of these buildings, as well as for people using the surrounding streets and open space areas.

Although this draft plan includes controls such as maximum heights and floor space ratios, all future development proposals will still need to address other relevant controls such as those in State Environmental Planning Policy No. 65 – Design Quality of Residential Apartment Development, and the applicable Development Control Plan. This will determine the overall built form of development in the precinct.

Like any major renewal area, the Showground Station Precinct is a long term project that will be delivered over the next 20 years.

### **Community Consultation**

Extensive community consultation is a key component of the Showground Station Precinct planning process. The consultation that has been undertaken prior to the public exhibition has included:

- community information stalls staffed by the Department of Planning and Environment at community events between August and November 2014, and the Castle Hill Show 13-15 March 2015;
- telephone survey conducted in April 2014 with a report provided on the precinct website;
- online survey that was available over a 10 week period from 1 August to 19 October 2014;
- precinct newsletters delivered in October 2014 to residents in the three precincts;
- Stakeholder Briefing Sessions in October 2014 and March 2015 (for the Showground Precinct) and in November 2014 and April 2015 (for the Kellyville/Bella Vista Precincts) for representatives of local community and business groups; and
- project update register for members of the community to sign up to, to receive emailed newsletters about the precincts.

The comments and ideas raised by the community as part of this consultation process have been taken into consideration as part of the planning for the precinct.

The exhibition of the rezoning proposal will give the community further opportunity to participate and view the studies and the proposal, and provide comments and views about the proposal. Community information sessions are to be held during the exhibition period.

### Precinct Support Scheme

Through the Precinct Support Scheme, the NSW Government has allocated approximately \$15 million across the Showground, Bella Vista and Kellyville Station Precincts to fund local infrastructure upgrades. The precinct planning process, along with community consultation has identified a number of projects which could be funded through this scheme within the Showground Precinct, including:

- the upgrade of facilities at the Castle Hill Showground including a contribution towards a multipurpose facility, playground facilities, sporting facilities, walking and cycling paths, a market pavilion, lighting and park furniture such as tables, seating and barbeques;
- enlarging and/or improving Chapman Avenue Reserve; and
- walking and cycling paths within the precinct including along existing streets and Cattai Creek riparian corridor.

Community feedback is being sort on the types of projects the community would like to see funded through the Precinct Support Scheme.

### Next Steps

Following the exhibition of this rezoning proposal, the matters raised in the submissions received will be assessed and where required, the rezoning proposal will be amended. A recommendation will then be prepared for the Minister for Planning, to determine the rezoning.





# 1 Introduction

This planning report supports the proposed rezoning of the Showground Station Precinct. It has been prepared by the Department of Planning and Environment to provide an overview of the proposed rezoning. The accompanying precinct proposal document provides additional supporting material to further explain the precinct proposal.

## 1.1 Sydney Metro Northwest

The \$8.3 billion Sydney Metro Northwest (formerly known as the North West Rail Link) is Australia's largest public transport infrastructure project currently under construction and a priority rail project for the NSW Government. The project will deliver eight new railway stations to Sydney's growing North West, and is due to open in the second half of 2019. The *North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy* was prepared to guide future planning and development along the rail corridor, with a Structure Plan prepared for each of the new eight stations. The Strategy was finalised in September 2013.

Sydney Metro Northwest is the first stage of the Sydney Metro. Sydney Metro City and Southwest is the second stage, which will extend from Chatswood and then under Sydney Harbour, underground in the Sydney CBD and west to Bankstown. The second stage is planned to open in 2024.

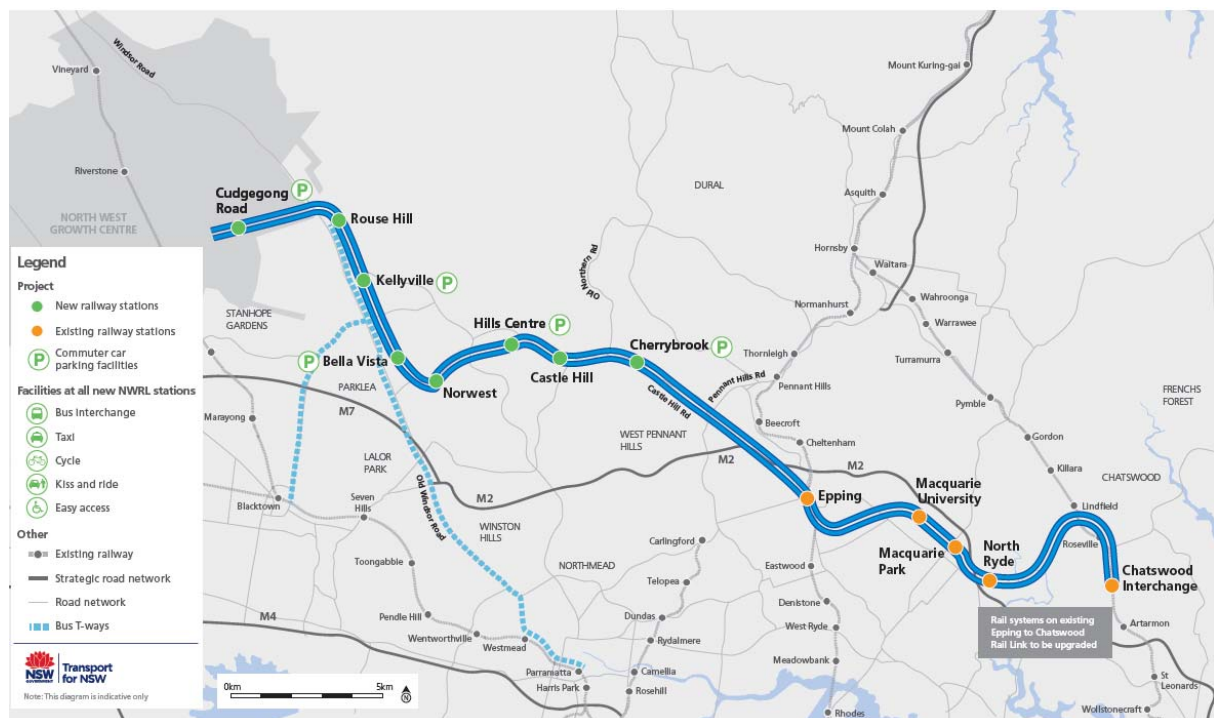


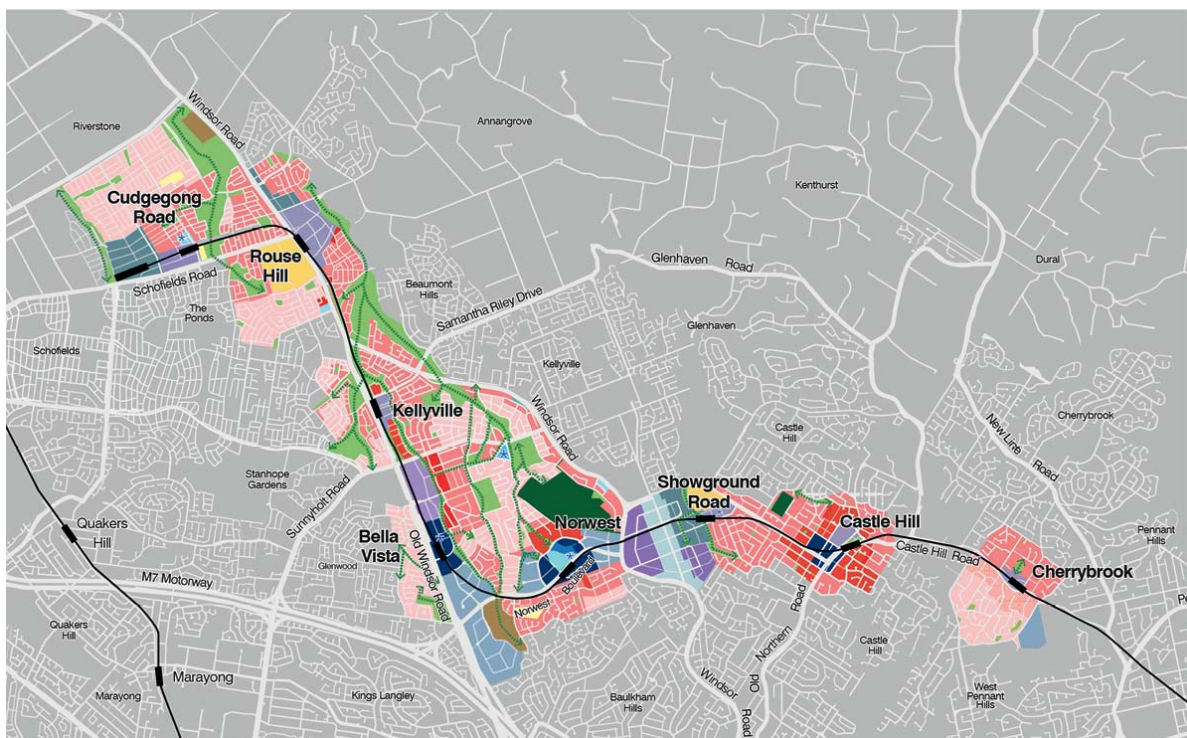
Figure 2 Sydney Metro Northwest

Demand for new homes and jobs in north western Sydney is expected to increase as a result of the improved access and this creates a significant opportunity to comprehensively plan for the future, by providing for new homes, jobs, open space, recreational opportunities and services in attractive communities close to public transport.

## 1.2 North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy

The Department of Planning and Environment and Transport for NSW, in consultation with relevant local councils and State government agencies, finalised the North Rail Link Corridor Strategy in September 2013. The Corridor Strategy, which included Structure Plans for each station precinct, was prepared to integrate land use and transport planning to meet current and emerging challenges associated with future expected growth in the North West region, and:

- identified future visions for the precincts surrounding the new stations;
- projected housing and job growth for each precinct and the corridor as a whole; and
- established a framework for managing future land use change.



**Figure 3 Sydney Metro Northwest and Stations Structure Plans**

The Corridor Strategy was prepared to provide the community with an understanding of how the corridor is likely to change and grow into the future. It will also assist infrastructure agencies and service providers to identify, prioritise and co-ordinate the delivery of infrastructure upgrades in accordance with each precinct's long term projected growth.

When the Corridor Strategy was made, a local planning direction was issued by the Minister for Planning under Section 117 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 to require future planning in the precincts to be consistent with the Corridor Strategy, including the growth projections and future character of each station precinct.

## 1.3 Showground Structure Plan

A Structure Plan was prepared for the Showground Station Precinct as part of the North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy. The Showground Station Structure Plan considered the potential for the Sydney Metro to transform the Showground Station Precinct by providing a new focal point for the community centred upon the station. Opportunities were identified for more homes close to the station, a greater mix of housing choice, and mix of neighbourhood shops and services to provide for the daily needs of the community.

The Structure Plan is a high level strategic plan that provides the framework for future planning of the precinct (see Figure 4). It relies on further detailed planning in order to determine the most appropriate planning controls, in this case, it has been used to guide the current rezoning proposal for the Showground Station Precinct.

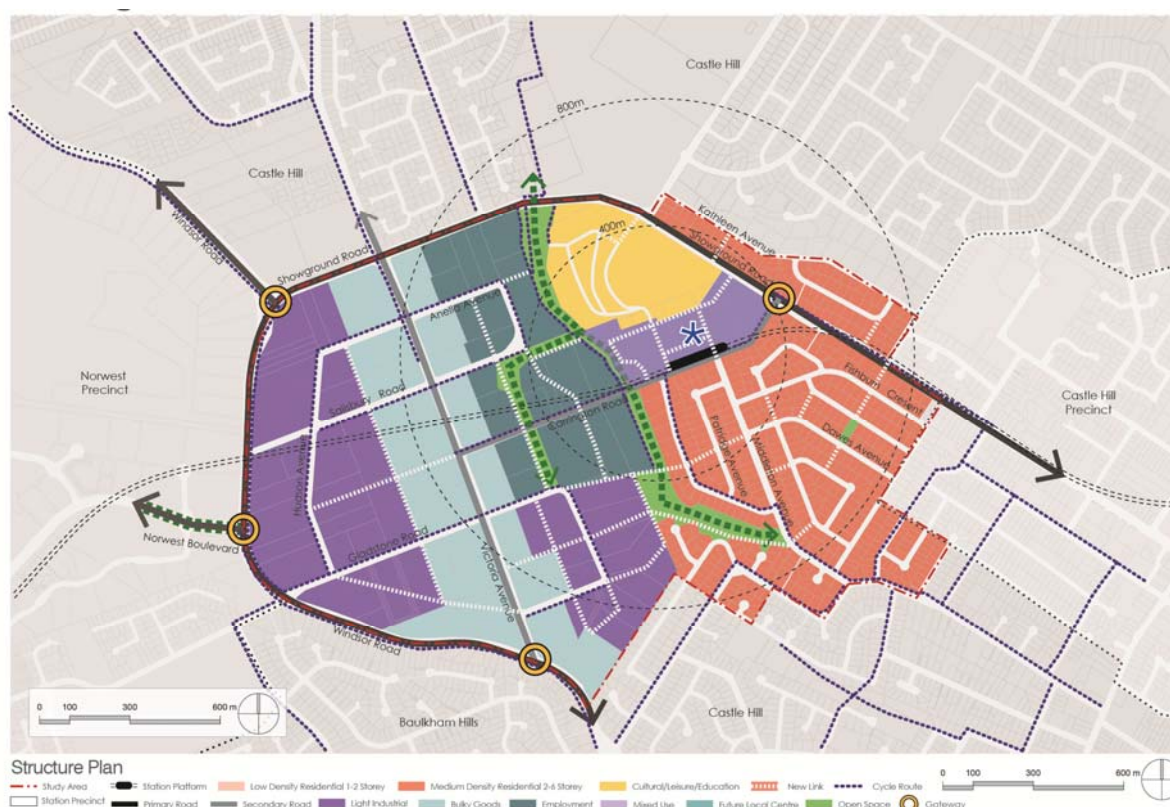


Figure 4 Showground Station Structure Plan

## 1.4 A Plan for Growing Sydney

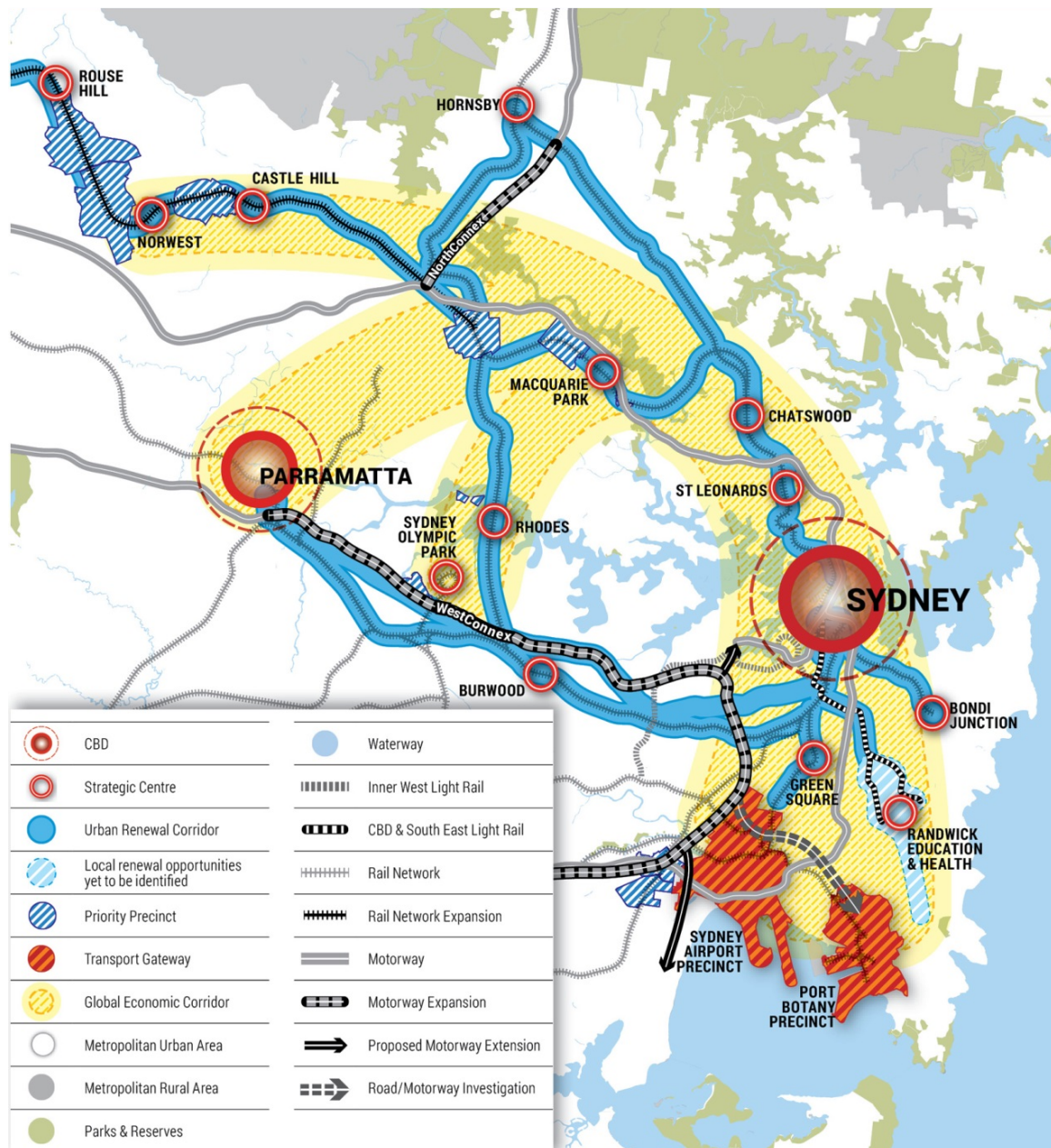
*A Plan for Growing Sydney*, released in December 2014, details the NSW Government's vision for Sydney's future, which is 'a strong global city, a great place to live'. One of the biggest challenges to achieving this aim is how best to provide the 689,000 new jobs and 664,000 new homes for an extra 1.6 million residents predicted by 2036, while also creating strong, healthy and connected communities.

The Plan focuses new housing to be located close to public transport that runs frequently and can carry large numbers of passengers. This will make it easier for more people to get to jobs, education facilities, hospitals, and sporting, cultural and entertainment facilities by public transport, taking pressure off congested roads.



Putting more housing and services in these centres can also makes it easier to do everyday activities like shopping, dropping children at school or child care, or visiting the local park on foot or by bicycle, rather than driving several kilometres.

By increasing housing choice, we can respond to changing housing needs and lifestyle preferences, such the increasing number of single and couple only households in Sydney.



**Figure 5 Urban Renewal Corridors**

The plan also aims to increase Sydney's economic competitiveness and attract and retain highly skilled workers. The Global Economic Corridor is a significant generator of the State's economic activity, featuring a high concentration of Sydney's high skilled jobs. The plan seeks to expand employment opportunities and improve transport infrastructure to remove bottlenecks in this corridor. A large part of the Sydney Metro Northwest corridor, as far west as Norwest, is included in

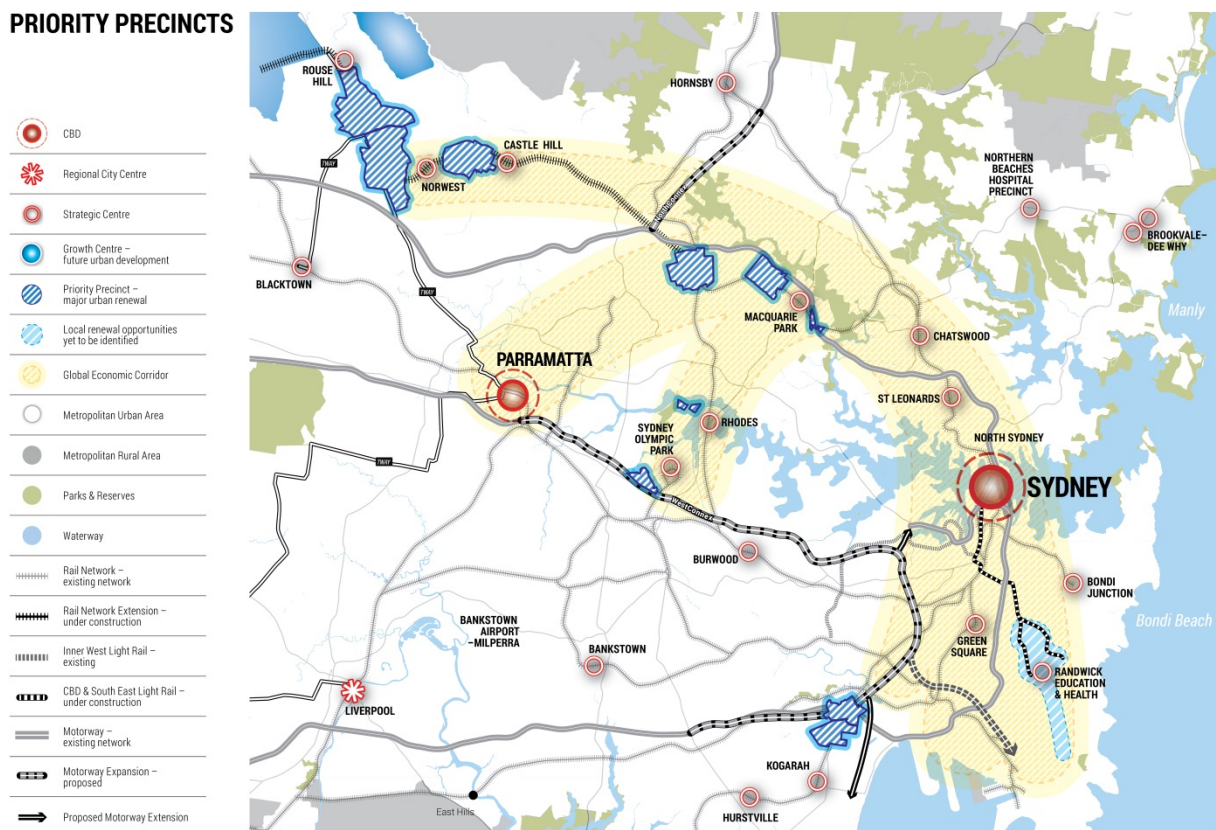
the Global Economic Corridor. Due to the importance of this rail link in Sydney's future, it is also identified as one of several Urban Renewal Corridors in the plan. The urban renewal corridors are planned to provide more homes and jobs with excellent transport access.

## 1.5 Priority Precincts

The Priority Precincts program is a NSW Government program integral to meeting the goals of *A Plan for Growing Sydney*. The Priority Precincts program aims to provide for new housing and jobs in centres with good existing or planned transport services, and coordinates the delivery of infrastructure to ensure that the growth will be supported by improved public open space and community facilities to make these places attractive places to live, and enhance people's lifestyles and living standards.

The foundation for this program is evidence based planning, in which detailed studies are undertaken to understand the existing constraints and opportunities, then developed into a proposal for the rezoning of areas within a precinct. Priority Precincts have to consider economic feasibility and demonstrate that outcomes are achievable. Funding assistance is also provided to councils under the Precinct Support Scheme for additional local infrastructure to directly benefit the community through improved public spaces.

### PRIORITY PRECINCTS



**Figure 6** Priority Precincts

Community consultation is an important component and may include community forums, stakeholder information sessions and information sessions.

As illustrated in Figure 6 above, there are 10 areas in Sydney have been identified as Priority Precincts. Of these, the North Ryde Station, Epping Town Centre, Wentworth Point, Herring Road and Carter Street Precincts have been rezoned.

The key features of the Priority Precinct program are discussed in more detail below:

### **Changing preferences and lifestyles**

Sydney is changing all the time. As well as needing to house and provide jobs for an extra 1.6 million people by 2036, there is also a need to consider the changing preferences and lifestyles of Sydney's residents. Priority Precincts plan for development over the medium to long term and therefore need to take into consideration these changes.

### **Desire to live near centres**

People want to live near centres to make their lives simpler and more enjoyable. A centre is a focus area for shops, services and transport. It may be a large centre such as Sydney or Parramatta CBD, or a smaller centre such as local suburban shops.

By living close to a centre, people can walk or cycle to shops and services for everyday needs. They can also easily access public transport spending less time travelling to work and more time with friends and family.

### **Preference for apartments**

Many Sydneysiders are choosing to live in apartments rather than houses. These include older people who are downsizing, younger people who want convenience, and families who enjoy more time together by being close to workplaces and public transport. Some people like the advantages of communal facilities (open space or a pool or gym) that can come with apartment buildings.

The preference for apartments is shown in housing statistics with more apartments being built than freestanding houses and the weekly rent for an apartment the same as for an equivalent house.

Priority Precincts plan for apartments in appropriate locations close to public transport, shops and services. An increased supply of apartments should also assist with affordability.

### **Convenient transport options**

People want to live close to their workplace, shops and services. By locating more homes close to public transport, it is easily accessible to more people. Increased use of public transport benefits the community through reduced traffic congestion and lower greenhouse emissions.

Rising costs of car ownership and fuel, traffic congestion and an awareness of the impacts of climate change, have lead some people to reconsider their need for a car. A car share scheme is an option chosen by an increasing number of people. According to one Sydney car share scheme, one car share vehicle can replace the need for 9-13 private cars.

Fewer young people are getting their driver's licence and fewer young people own a car. Instead many utilise social media and shop online, so owning a car is not a priority.

Priority Precincts encourage active transport, such as walking and cycling, by planning for more homes close to public transport, shops and services.

### **Ageing in place**

Our population is ageing. As people get older, many want to downsize from a large family home to one that is easier to maintain. But they want to remain in the same area to be close to friends and



family. To enable people to grow older in their existing communities, new housing varieties need to be built. Priority Precincts plan for varied housing options such as high-rise apartments, low-rise apartments, and townhouses in addition to retaining existing low-density residential (traditional houses).

### **How close is close?**

Most Priority Precincts are based around a centre or multiple centres. A major consideration for the location of a precinct is walking distance to public transport, shops and services. A rule of thumb is that most people are comfortable with a ten-minute walk to public transport and shops and services. A ten-minute walk is approximately 800m.

### **Evidence based planning**

All Priority Precincts follow a similar process to determine the most appropriate development for the medium to long term.

First, a series of studies are undertaken to understand the existing constraints and opportunities within the precinct. The studies may look at existing planning controls, heritage, environment, land ownership (few owners of large landholdings or many owners of small sites), strata and recent developments (areas unlikely to be redeveloped in the short or medium term), transport, public spaces, economic feasibility, flooding, connectivity and accessibility (how easy is it to get around), footpaths and cycleways.

The results of these studies are combined to provide the basis for where future development could be located within the precinct. The Department of Planning and Environment works with experienced consultants, local councils and the community to develop a proposal for the rezoning of areas within the precinct. Not all areas within every precinct will be rezoned.

### **Community consultation**

Community consultation is important in developing plans for all Priority Precincts. Most precincts include a community forum or community stakeholder group which meets to:

- allow the Department to present and update the planning being undertaken for the precincts
- receive feedback from the community.

Draft plans, such as this one, are exhibited for community consultation before being finalised. Community information sessions are held during the exhibition period so that the community can hear about the proposal, ask questions and articulate concerns.

The Department's website is regularly updated so the community can follow the progress of each Priority Precinct.

### **Precinct Support Scheme**

There is also a State Government funded Precinct Support Scheme of \$100 million to be shared between the Priority Precincts to improve public spaces, streetscapes, local access and walkability.

## 2 Showground Station Precinct Overview

This section of the report gives an overview of the precinct, and provides an analysis of the existing environmental and social features of the precinct. This information has been used to inform the precinct proposal on exhibition.

### 2.1 Precinct description

The Showground Station Precinct covers approximately 271 hectares, and includes the area within an 800 metre radius, or roughly a 10 minute walk, of the new Showground station. The boundary has also taken into account the surrounding road network, natural features, and the development pattern of the area.

The precinct is bounded by Showground Road and Kathleen Avenue to the north, and Windsor Road to the west and south. The eastern boundary runs along a number of local residential streets including Fishburn Crescent, Anthony Road and Parsonage Road.



Figure 7 Aerial photo of the Showground Precinct and its surrounds

The precinct boundary has been expanded in the south-east compared to the 2013 Showground Structure Plan. This is so that the precinct boundary largely runs along roads rather than cutting through blocks, and does not leave a narrow portion of R2 Low Density zoned land surrounded by R3 Medium Density zoned land.



**Figure 8 Precinct Boundary Changes**

## 2.2 Existing development and character

There are a range of land uses in the precinct, although in distinct areas.

The western part of the precinct, generally west of Cattai Creek, is an established employment area, featuring a range of uses including light industrial, car sale yards, bulky goods retailing and small strata offices. Lots are generally large, around one hectare or larger, and a number are strata titled.

The eastern part of the precinct, generally east of Cattai Creek and south of Carrington Road, is an established residential area, with the most common housing types being detached single and two storey houses. Lots are mostly between 800m<sup>2</sup> and 1,000m<sup>2</sup>. There are a few courtyard style attached housing developments (with shared driveways) off Warwick Parade and Cecil Ave, one to two storeys in height.

Land in the precinct on the north-eastern side of Showground Road, is also a residential area with largely stand-alone dwellings.

The area north of Carrington Road and east of Cattai Creek is currently being used for the construction of the North West Rail Link.

The Castle Hill Showground site is approximately 18 hectares and contains the arena, small spectator stands and amenities. There are a number of sheds on the site used for the Castle Hill Show held annually. Other buildings used for markets, smaller events, and a small theatre.

## 2.3 Population profile

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A demographic profile for the precinct was prepared by the Department using data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011 Census. A copy of this report is located at Appendix D. The demographic profile reveals the characteristics of the existing population of the Showground Precinct, which features the following:

- the majority of households are families with older children;
- is highly educated;
- has much higher private vehicle use than the Sydney average;
- almost all live in detached dwellings which is much greater than the Sydney average; and
- has high level of socio-economic advantage (comprising factors such as occupation, income, employment status and education level) compared to other parts of Sydney.

## 2.4 Existing access and movement

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### **Road Network**

The precinct contains four State managed arterial roads. The primary arterial road is Windsor Road, which runs along the western edge of the precinct. Showground Road generally runs along the northern boundary of the precinct, Victoria Avenue runs north-south through the site, and Carrington Road, connects Showground Road with Victoria Avenue.

Windsor Road provides a connection to the M2 Motorway, and to suburbs to the north including Beaumont Hills and Kellyville. Norwest Boulevard connects to an intersection with Windsor Road in the west. Showground Road connects the precinct to Castle Hill, a major centre and bus transport interchange area in the region. Victoria Avenue is the site's major north-south link and runs through the existing light industrial area. Carrington Road is a local road providing an east-west connection between Showground Road and Victoria Road, and runs alongside the Showground station site.





Figure 9 Established Road Network and Sydney Metro Northwest

### Public Transport - Buses

A number of bus services run through the precinct, providing connections to major centres in the region, including Norwest Business Park, Castle Hill, Parramatta and Macquarie Park. Services run along Showground Road, Victoria Avenue, Windsor Road and Middleton Ave and Parsonage Road. Castle Hill is a major interchange.

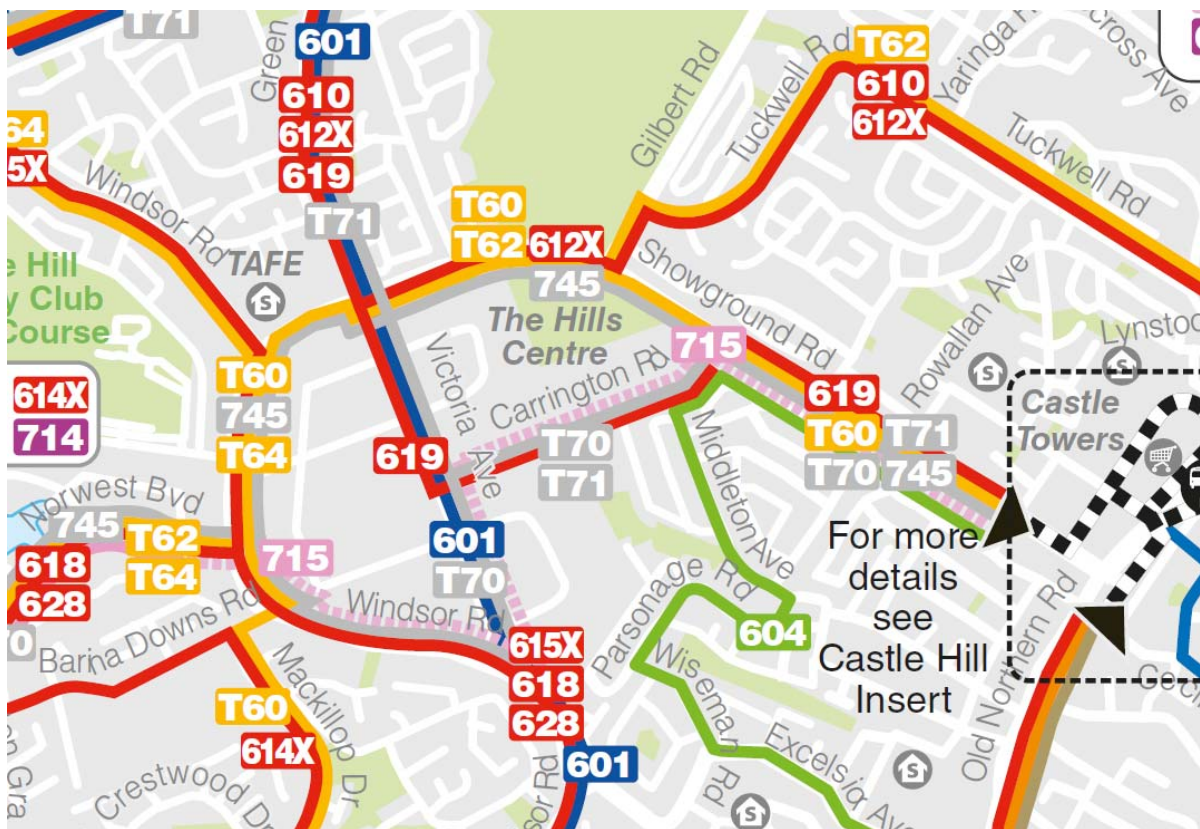


Figure 10 Bus routes in the Showground Road area (Source: Hillsbus)

### **Pedestrian and cycle networks**

Pedestrian paths are largely along street footpaths, although there are some paths through the Castle Hill Showground.

Bicycle paths in the precinct are largely on-road, along Old Windsor Road, Victoria Avenue and Carrington Road. There is a bicycle path from Fred Caterson Reserve to Showground.

## **2.5 Existing open space**

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The largest area of open space in the Showground Precinct is the Castle Hill Showground. This is classified as a regional open space facility serving the wider Hills Shire community, and is just over 17 hectares in size. The facilities on the showground site include the showground arena, stables, community meeting space and Pavilion Theatre. The Castle Hill Showground is used for a range of community activities and events including the annual Castle Hill Show, local theatre productions and regular growers markets.

Cockayne Reserve is a large reserve within part of the Cattai Creek corridor, however access and use of this space is limited as due to existing vegetation and topography.

Chapman Avenue Reserve, between Chapman and Dawes Avenue is a neighbourhood park, predominantly grass with some aging play equipment.

Fred Caterson Recreation Reserve is a 12 hectare regional reserve which adjoins the northern side of the precinct. It provides a mix of active sporting uses and passive recreational uses including sports fields, tennis and basketball courts, and BMX tracks.

Other areas outside precinct, but still within 1.6km of the station, include:

- Coolong Reserve – neighbourhood park providing netball courts, small playing field with cricket pitch, barbeques and picnic shelters, and children's play equipment
- Brett Parkinson Reserve – a small, local park
- Maurice Hughes Reserve – a small, local park
- Anson Place Reserve – a small, local park which includes a children's playground

## **2.6 Existing landform, creek lines and drainage**

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The land within the Showground Precinct is largely undulating, essentially forming a "bowl" shape, with Cattai Creek being the lowest part of the precinct, and the northern part of Cattai Creek being the lowest point of this creek line.

The Cattai Creek corridor is heavily vegetated with limited public access. The creek has two separate drainage lines, the main line running from the south through Cockayne Reserve to Middleton Avenue, and a second line further west through several commercial and industrial properties, and under Victoria Avenue. The main north-south creek line almost cuts the precinct in two, with few crossings.

The site is at fairly low risk of flooding, with the area most susceptible to flooding at the northern boundary of the precinct in the Cattai Creek corridor.



## 2.7 Existing community facilities

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There are no schools located within the precinct, however there are a number of schools nearby including Excelsior Public School, Castle Hill High School, and Gilroy Catholic College. The Castle Hill Campus of TAFE NSW Western Sydney Institute is located on the northern side of Showground Road.

Other community facilities include facilities on the Castle Hill Showground, such as the theatre used by the Castle Hill Players, a child care centre, and the Powerhouse Museum Discovery Centre.

## 2.8 Heritage

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Indigenous heritage sites have been identified in the Castle Hill Showground and Fred Caterson Reserve.

There are two existing local heritage items identified in The Hills Shire Council LEP. These are properties at 107 Showground Road and a former farm cottage house at 128-132 Showground Road.

Management of Indigenous and European heritage sites is covered in *The Hills Development Control Plan 2012*.

## 2.9 Land ownership

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The area around the Showground Station area, between Carrington Road and the Castle Hill Showground, and is currently largely owned by the NSW government and being used for the construction of Sydney Metro Northwest.

Castle Hill Showground is Crown Land under the control and management of The Hills Shire Council. The Hills Shire Council is also responsible for Chapman Avenue Reserve and Cockayne Reserve.

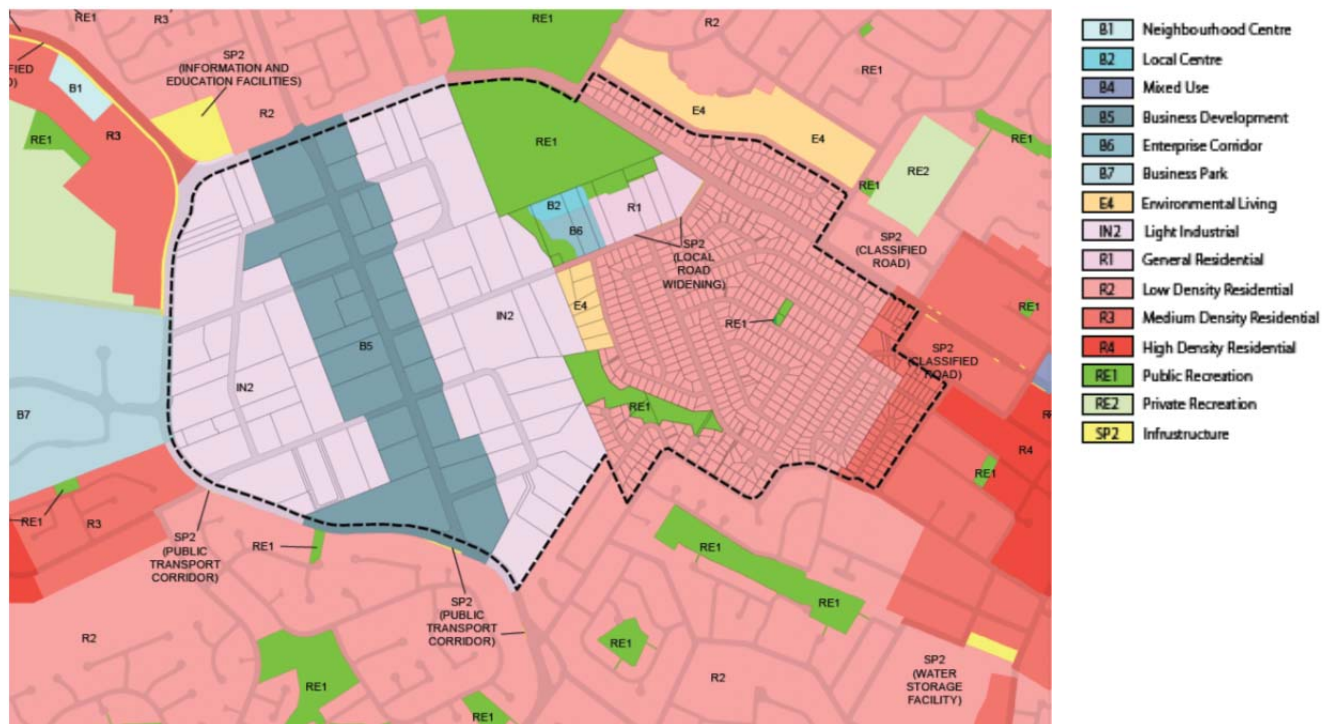
The employment and residential lands are generally in private ownership.

## 2.10 Existing local planning controls

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*The Hills Local Environmental Plan 2012* applies to precinct. The precinct is currently zoned for a range of employment, housing and recreational uses. This includes:

- a small local centre (zone B2 Local Centre) adjacent to the Castle Hill Showground;
- light industrial, warehouse and distribution and bulky good retailing within the IN2 Light Industrial and B5 Business Development zones (bulky good retailing limited to the B5 zone)
- business and offices premises within the B6 Business Enterprise zone;
- a range of dwelling types with:
  - single homes and dual occupancies limited to E4 Environmental Living and R2 Low Density Residential zones;
  - multi dwelling housing is also being permitted in the R3 Medium Density Residential zone; and
  - all types of residential dwellings are permitted in the R1 General Residential zone, along with office and business uses, neighbourhood shops and restaurant and cafes; and
- The Castle Hill Showground, Cockayne Reserve and parks are zoned RE1 Public Recreation and recreational facilities, community facilities, markets and restaurants/cafes are permitted in this zone.



**Figure 11 Existing Zoning**

Building heights are limited to 20m (approximately 4-5 storeys) within the business and industrial areas west of Cattai Creek, 16m (5 storeys) adjacent to the Castle Hill Showground and 9m (2 storeys) within the residential area east of Cattai Creek.

A minimum lot size of 8,000m<sup>2</sup> applies to the business and industrial areas west of Cattai Creek, with a minimum lot size of 700m<sup>2</sup> and 2,000m<sup>2</sup> for areas zoned R2 Low Density Residential and R4 Environmental Living, respectively.

## 2.11 Surrounding area

The Showground Station Precinct is close to other important centres in the region including:

- Castle Hill, which is a major retail and services centre in the region, and is the next station precinct along the Sydney Metro Northwest heading towards Epping.
- Norwest Business Park adjoins the western side of the Showground Precinct, a major commercial/office centre. It is the next station precinct along the Sydney Metro Northwest heading towards Cudgegong Road.
- Rouse Hill Town Centre is located 4 stations from Showground Station, and is a major shopping centre in the region.

All these centres will be accessible along the North West Rail Link.

## 2.12 Specialist studies

Several specialist studies were prepared as part of the planning for the station precinct to inform the rezoning proposal. The areas investigated include:

- traffic and transport;
- economics and market conditions;

- Aboriginal heritage;
- European heritage;
- ecology;
- open space and community facilities;
- drainage and flooding; and
- contamination.

The findings of these reports are discussed in more detail in Section 5 of this report, and copies of the reports are located in the Appendices to this report.

## 3 Precinct proposal

This section details the proposed rezoning of the Showground Station Precinct. It summarises the vision for the precinct, proposed access and transport measures, public spaces, built form, as well as the proposed planning controls.

### 3.1 Vision and principles

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The vision for the Showground Station Precinct by 2036 is “The Hills Cultural and Innovation Precinct”. The Sydney Metro Northwest and new station at Showground will be the catalyst for providing a local centre with homes, jobs, shops, cafes and restaurants, and local services close to transport connections, in an attractive and convenient place where people enjoy living, working and visiting. The principles of transit-oriented development have underpinned the planning for the precinct, to encourage access to, and use of this significant piece of transport infrastructure.

One of the key features of attractive, vibrant centres is high quality and well-located public spaces, and this is an important component of the precinct proposal. Public spaces proposed include a new village plaza linking the station and the Castle Hill Showground, improved neighbourhood parks, and more accessible natural open space areas adjoining the Cattai Creek corridor. Street design, including tree planting and paths, is also part of this strategy. The Hills Shire Council is also planning to upgrade the Castle Hill Showground site to reinforce its role as a regional recreational, cultural and leisure asset for the community.



**Figure 12** Aerial View of the Precinct Proposal

The precinct is also being planned so that getting around on foot, bike and public transport will be realistic and viable modes of travel, such as getting to the station, going to work, shops and cafes, or even just for exercise and health. The improved paths and connections will not just benefit those living closest to the station, but also residents and workers elsewhere in the precinct.

Focusing the supply of new homes closest to station means that more residents will be able to benefit from the convenience of being so close to the railway station as well as local shops, cafes and other services. A range of housing types are proposed in the residential areas of the precinct, to provide increased housing choice in the precinct, and provide a transition in heights down to the detached, single and two storey housing beyond the precinct boundary. It is estimated that the precinct could provide for around 5,000 new dwellings over the next 20 years.

Providing for a range of apartment and town house style living options provides more housing choice for those residents who still want to stay in the same area but would prefer a smaller, more convenient housing type. This also recognises the increase in single and couple only households in Sydney who don't want a large house to maintain. This enables the more established areas with large stand-alone homes to retain their character, and this important housing choice.

Having more people in the new local centre also increases the viability of local business and services, and can also increase the feeling of safety and liveliness by having more activity and "eyes on the street", especially after dark.

The existing employment areas are to be largely retained, although more flexibility in the type of uses are being proposed to reflect changes in technology and industries, such the demand for small offices (compared to large offices offered in Norwest Business Park), and emerging and innovative industries. The proposal is targeting around 2,300 new jobs over the next 20 years.

To achieve this vision, controls are proposed for *The Hills Local Environmental Plan 2012*, and recommended controls have been prepared for the Council to consider adopting into The Hills Development Control Plan 2012.

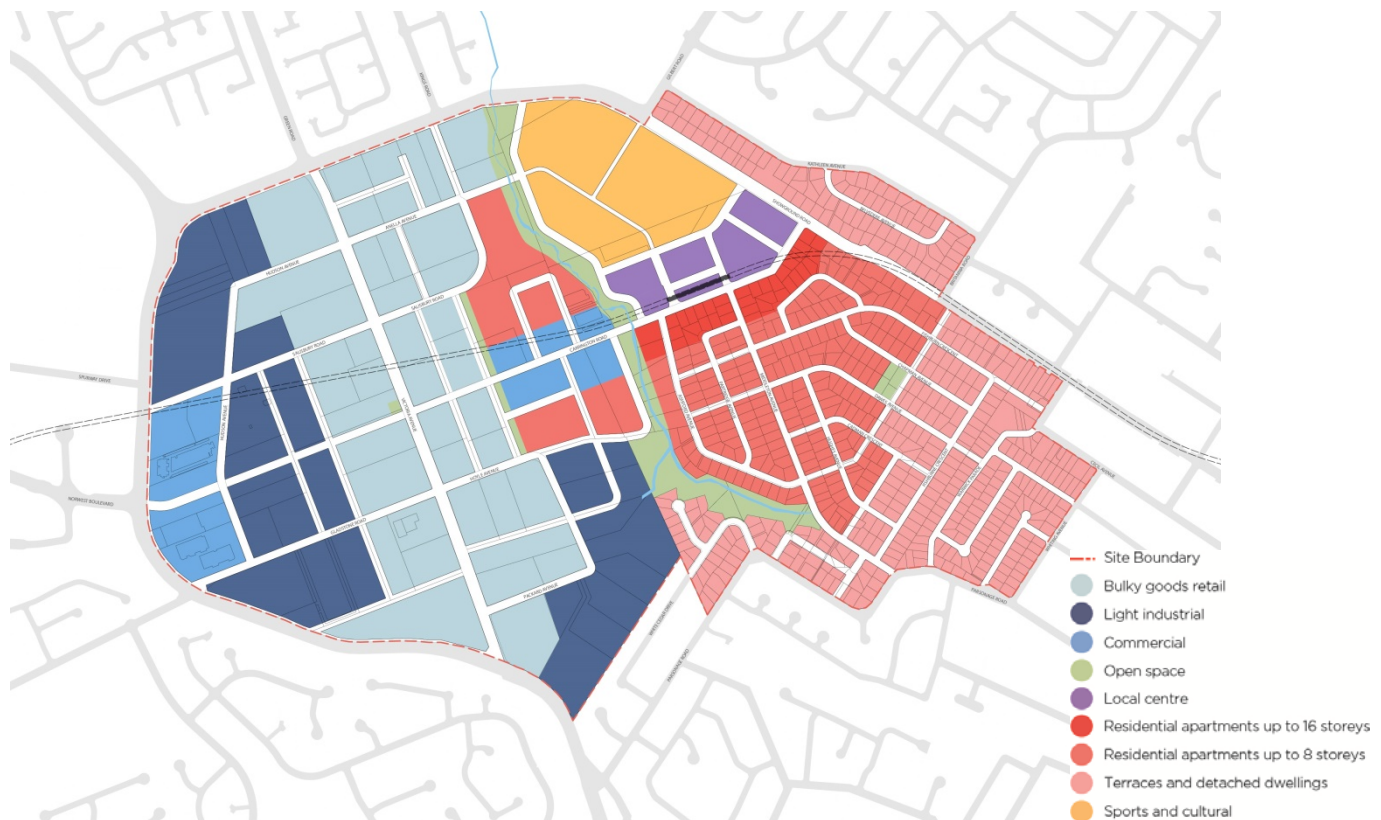
The key components of the Showground Station Precinct proposal, and which will be discussed in more detail in this report are:

- Land uses and sub-precincts;
- Public open spaces;
- Access and movement;
- Community facilities;
- Built form; and
- Planning controls.



## 3.2 Land Uses and character areas

The proposed land uses have been identified to achieve the vision for the precinct as a cultural and innovation precinct. It has been informed by Showground Structure Plan prepared for the North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy, and the specialist studies prepared for this proposal.



**Figure 13** Precinct Plan

There are five main character areas within the Showground Station Precinct:

- **Local centre:** adjoining the new station and Castle Hill Showground, the local centre is planned to provide a mix of uses in the area including shops, cafes, restaurants, and apartments at upper levels. It is intended to provide a vibrant and lively focal point for the community.
- **Carrington Road:** this area will provide a transition between employment areas in the west, and residential areas in the east. Businesses are proposed to front Carrington Road, to improve the quality of this street and create a better connection through the precinct. Residential apartments are proposed behind and adjoining the creek corridors.
- **Employment:** this is the western part of the precinct. It will be for a range of business premises, including bulky goods retailing along Victoria Road. It is also planned to create greater connections with Norwest Business Park
- **Residential – apartments:** south of Carrington Road, but still very close to the station, this area is considered best suitable for the highest apartment buildings outside the local centre, with heights reducing as distances from the station increase.



- **Residential - terraces and detached homes:** located further south-east of the station, and north-east of Showground Road, this will provide additional housing choice in the precinct and blend in with low scale, detached housing outside the precinct.

There are some differences in the proposed land uses compared to the Structure Plan finalised in 2013, for a number of reasons:

- the economic analysis found that there is less demand for large floor plate commercial buildings than that proposed in the Structure Plan, especially due to competition from Norwest Business Park. However it is expected that there will be increased demand for smaller floor plate offices and flexible business premises especially for emerging and innovative industries and businesses;
- the urban design analysis found that there is greater capacity for more homes close to the station, subject to appropriate design controls, as recommended to be adopted into The Hill Development Control Plan 2012; and
- the precinct has been expanded in the south east so that the boundary largely runs along roads rather than cutting through blocks, and does not result in a narrow strip of R2 Low Density Residential zoned land surrounded by land zoned R3 Medium Density Residential.

### 3.3 Public open spaces

#### Proposal

A range of public open spaces are proposed to meet the needs of the existing and new residents and workers, and provide an attractive and pleasant environment. The open space proposed has been supported by the NRWL Corridor Strategy, and the Open Space and Community Facilities Assessment report prepared by Arup (located at Appendix J).

Figure 14 shows the location of proposed open space which includes:

- new village plaza (1,150m<sup>2</sup> with an additional 1,950m<sup>2</sup> of plazas to be delivered as part of the Sydney Metro Northwest construction);
- potential for new regional recreation and sporting fields to be located at Castle Hill Showground (existing area of approximately 14.5ha);
- expanding and/or embellishing Chapman Avenue Reserve (currently 2,240m<sup>2</sup> and expanding to approximately 4,000m<sup>2</sup>). Alternatively a new local park could be provided as the residential area redevelops;
- zoning of certain areas of riparian corridors as public open space, that are currently in private ownership (an additional 4.3ha); and
- expanding the walking and cycling network.

The open space areas proposed for the precinct have been based on a range of factors including the projected population profile of future residents, the quantity, quality and role of existing and planned open space, the proximity of open space to homes, and the challenge of providing open space in transit oriented, urban renewal locations where the primary aim is to deliver more homes and jobs close to transport.

Trends in recreational activity and comparisons with other urban renewal centres were also an important consideration. Data collected by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and Australian Sports Commission found that recreation participation patterns have changed in recent years, with a growth

in individual fitness activities such as walking (the most popular activity), aerobics/fitness programs, weight training and cycling, and a reduction in club and team sports activities.

The precinct proposal features an interconnected network of a variety of high quality public open spaces (see Figure 14) to provide for a diverse range of recreational activities to meet the needs of the new population, reflect changing participation patterns, and to complement the existing and planned open space outside the precinct.

The planned open space areas will also support the retention of large areas of vegetation and remnant ecological communities in the precinct. Further detail on the proposed open space network in the precinct is provided below, with details regarding requirements for private open space discussed in Section 3.8 of this report.



**Figure 14** Open Space Network

### ***Station concourse and village plaza***

To ensure the station surrounds and town centre will be attractive and pleasant spaces to live and visit, a number of public spaces are proposed around the station in the local centre. In addition to the station forecourt being built as part of the station construction, a village square is proposed between the station and the Castle Hill Showground, linking the two. The design is intended to include shops along one side with outdoor seating, grassed area and planting, seating, water feature and other elements for people to have lunch, stroll, gather, and meet friends.



#### LEGEND

1. Doran Drive with parking bays and bus stops
2. Mixed Use Buildings
3. Open lawn for passive and active recreation
4. Retail spillout edge
5. Feature planting bed
6. Grove of ornamental trees with public seating located under
7. High quality, durable paved finish
8. Native street trees within planted pits

**Figure 15 Village Plaza**



**Figure 16 Artist Impression of the Village Plaza**

### ***Castle Hill Showground***

The Castle Hill Showground is within the precinct, however there is no proposal to change the zoning, which is currently RE1 Public Recreation. Planning for the future of this site, including the preparation of a masterplan, will be the responsibility of Council to take forward. However some ideas for the



potential future of this site have been presented to help with considering options for this site to meet the future recreational, social and cultural needs of the community. These include provision of a multi-purposes indoor facility and updated facilities to make the site more user-friendly, increase the types of activities that can undertaken, and maximise the benefits of this site for the wider community.

For example, and as illustrated in Figure 17, the Castle Hill Showground has sufficient space to accommodate:

- a new stadium and sports field that could also be used for activities associated with the Castle Hill Show;
- multi-purpose community facilities that could be used for cultural events, exhibitions, as well as youth and sporting events;
- a village green;
- a market pavilion; and
- a children's playground as well as picnic and barbeque facilities.

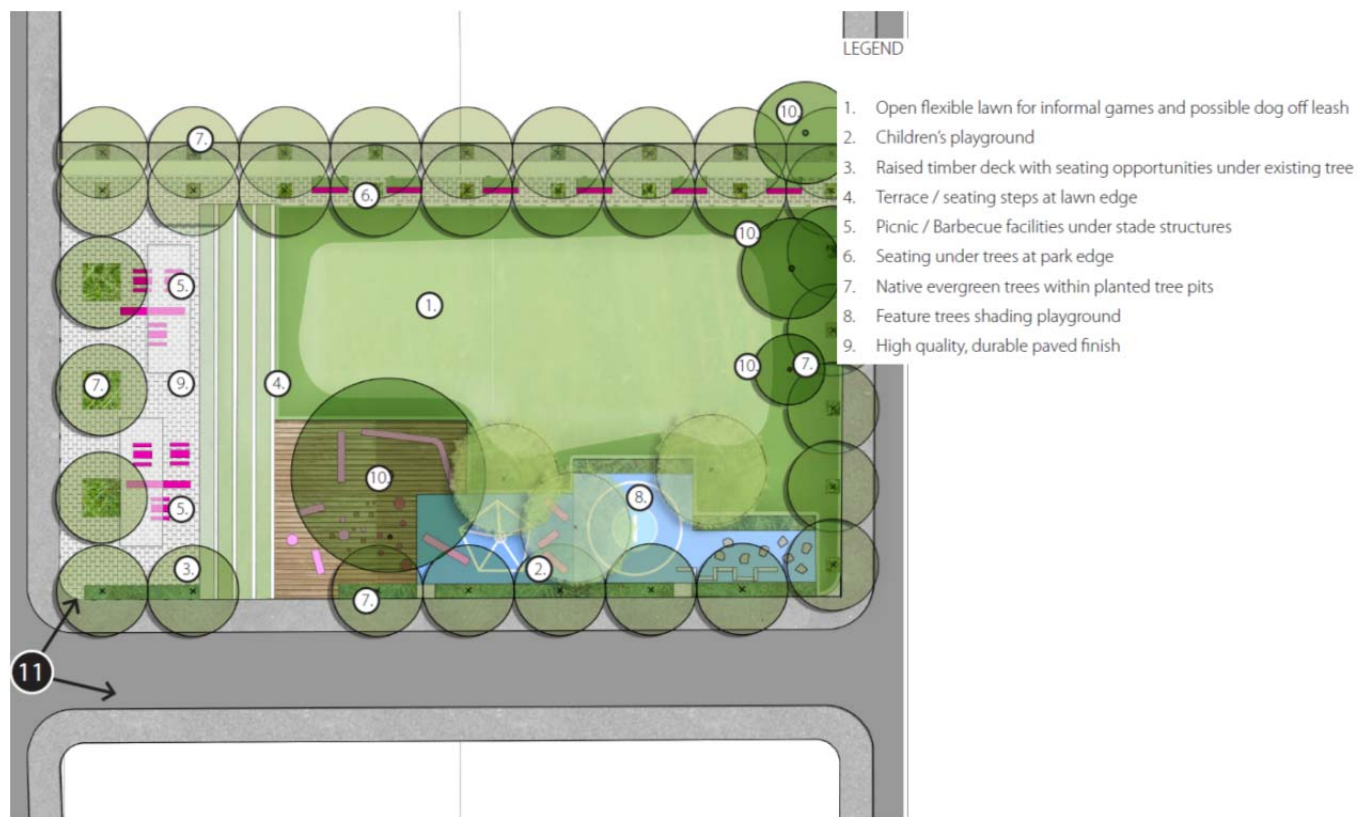


**Figure 17 Potential Improvements to Castle Hill Showground**

### **Local Park – Chapman Avenue Reserve**

It is proposed that Chapman Avenue Reserve could be improved and/or enlarged by approximately 2,250m<sup>2</sup>, so the community can make better use of this park. Alternatively a new local park could be provided as the residential area redevelopments. The indicative concept design for the local park(s), as illustrated in Figure 18 provides for more green open space for new residents to enjoy, as well as new tree planting, children's play equipment, level grassed areas, seating and shelter.

There are other opportunities for providing new and expanded local parks in the precinct, including within existing employment areas along Victoria Road.

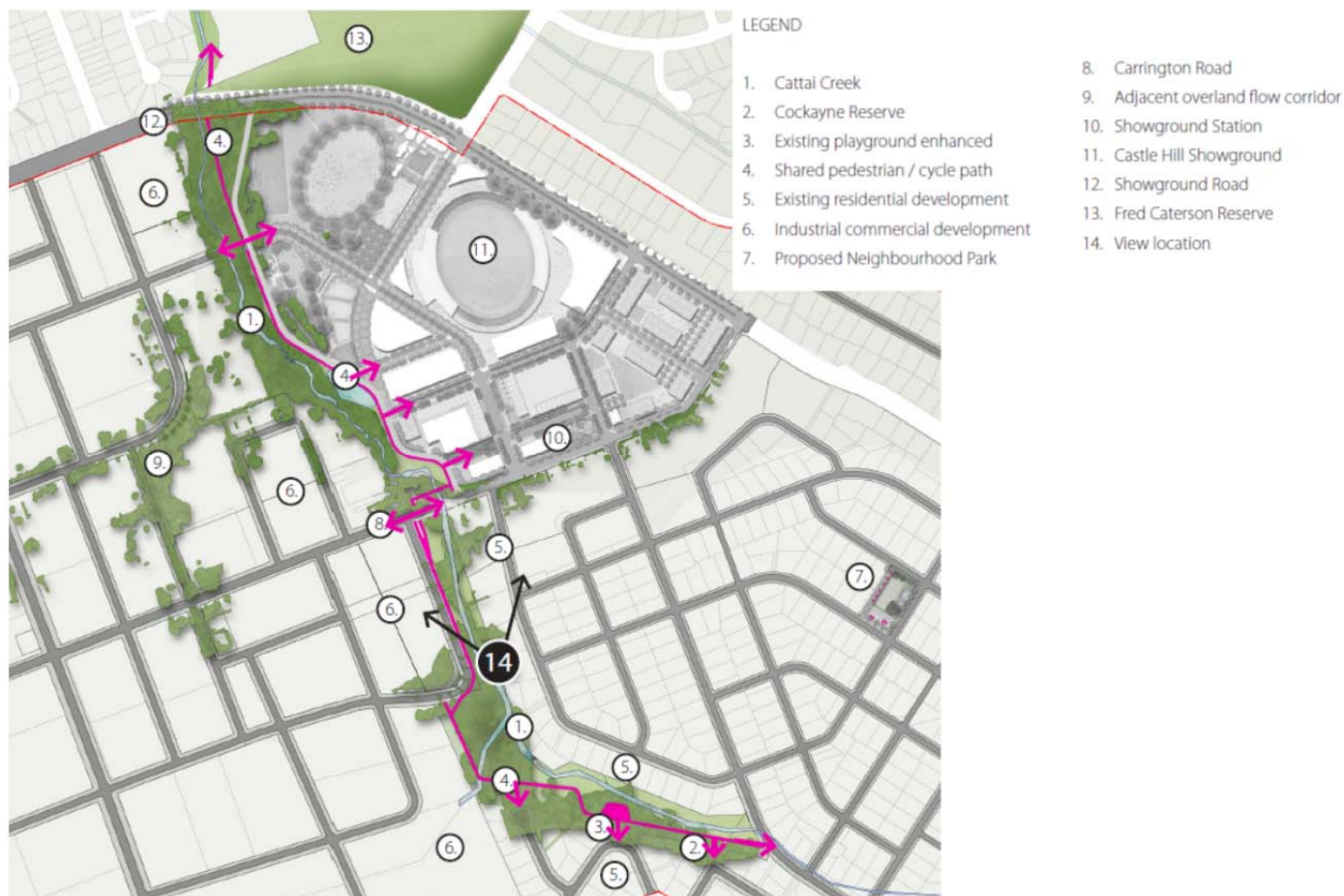


**Figure 18 Local Park(s) - Indicative Concept Design**

### **Cattai Creek Corridor/Cockayne Reserve**

It is proposed that the Cattai Creek corridor be improved and made more accessible for the public, while also maintaining the important drainage and ecological function of the corridor. Opportunities to improve the creek corridor could include improving the quality of the natural vegetation within the corridor, such as weed removal, and installing facilities such as paved bicycle and walking paths along the corridor, more opportunities to locate play equipment, and seating.

Providing better linkages through the creek corridor will make the precinct more connected and accessible, promoting more pleasant and healthy forms of travel through the precinct, as well as more opportunities for exercise.



**Figure 19 Potential Improvements to Cattai Creek**

### ***Other areas of the public domain***

In addition to designated open space areas, treatments to the wider public domain are also contribute to the appearance and liveability of an area. These treatments could include features such as tree planting, improved and expanded footpaths, seating, bus shelters, and lighting.

Passive surveillance, known as “eyes on the street” can be improved by providing clear lines of sight between public and private places, effective use of lighting of public areas, and landscaping that makes places attractive, but also makes people feel safe when they use them.

### **Analysis**

As part of the consultation undertaken with The Hills Shire Council for the planning for the precinct, Council requested that open space provision should be based on a rate of 2.83 hectares per 1,000 people, which is a rate that Council has used to determine adequate open space provision for greenfield land release areas.

A historical benchmark of 2.83ha per 1,000 people has often been the basis for planning for the recreational needs of future residents, especially in ‘greenfield’, new release, low density suburbs. This rate is derived from a British standard from the early 1900s. The Department’s *Recreation and Open Space Planning Guidelines for Local Government*, published in December 2010, states that this rate is not relevant to contemporary planning and ignores the fact that open space of different types needs to be provided to accommodate different needs.



The Hills Shire Council's Recreation Strategy (2007) also states that "pure application of ratios can be deficient in that standards do not necessarily reflect the different needs of different communities, or the diversity of quality and accessibility of open space".

The 2.83 ha per 1,000 people rate is rarely met in existing transit-oriented centres in Sydney, and is becoming increasingly difficult to achieve in infill areas, in particular for playing fields, due to land fragmentation and land values. It also does not reflect technological advances since the early 1900s, such as synthetic turf and lighting. Comparisons with other infill areas (refer to Table 1) indicate that the provision of open space should focus on the quality and useability of the open space, rather than a simple quantified rate.

**Table 1 Open Space within Urban Renewal Areas**

Precinct	Additional Population	Open space (ha per 1,000 people)	Features
Rhodes Peninsula	9,000	0.87	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cycleways and pedestrian routes through foreshore reserve and public streets</li> <li>• Bicycle parking station for 200-300 bicycles</li> <li>• Network of open space along foreshore</li> <li>• Multi-purpose community centre</li> <li>• Town Square</li> </ul>
Epping Priority Precinct	9,875	0.12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hornsby Shire Council is considering works including an extension and upgrade to West Epping Park</li> <li>• Parramatta City Council is considering a range of upgrades to the public domain</li> </ul>
Harold Park	2,500	1.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public open space</li> <li>• Common open space</li> <li>• Landscaped streetscapes</li> <li>• Green roofs</li> </ul>

To respond to Council's concerns, an analysis of the rate of open space within the precinct and in the surrounding area has been undertaken.

The 2007 Hill Shire Recreation Study reported that the council area is provided with significant quantities of open space per person:

- 8.82ha per 1,000 people for all open space; and
- 3.39ha per 1,000 people, excluding bushland.

The Showground Station Precinct is in the suburb of Castle Hill, and currently features an open space rate of 5.54ha per 1,000 people (based on 2011 census data). As a result of this proposal and forecast population of 10,500 people by 2036, and the forecast population growth in the Castle Hill Station Precinct in the North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy, the rate of open space is forecast to be around 3.10ha per 1,000 people. It should be noted that while the current rate of open space would decrease, the quality and functionality of the open space proposed for in the precinct is expected to be improved, and is still well over the traditional rate of 2.83 ha per 1,000 people.

Should additional demand for open space, and in particular sporting fields, arise from the growing population, there are a number of options available to Council including increasing the efficiency of existing sporting fields, and purchase of new fields, through Section 94 developer contributions. This also reflects Council's approach to planning in the Castle Hill North precinct, where Council recognises that this precinct is located within an existing urban area where there is limited opportunity for the provision of new open space areas, and further analysis will be required to identify how to better utilise or add to existing spaces to meet additional demand.

Section 94 developer contributions collected through the redevelopment of the area would provide funding for Council to embellish existing open space or purchase new open space for sports field should demand grow further. For example, a rate of \$20,000 per dwelling in the precinct will raise \$100 million in contributions, part of which could be spent on purchasing, embellishing and upgrading open space.

Another strategy that is being used by a growing number of councils in Sydney, including Sutherland and Warringah Councils, to address demand for sport fields is to increase the use of synthetic turf. The latest technology synthetic turf has many benefits including increased usage, allowing play in all weather conditions, consistency of surface and decreased maintenance costs. For example, Kareela Oval in Sutherland Shire has been provided with two new all-weather synthetic fields allowing 60 hours of play a week compared with 25 hours a week on natural turf. The cost of providing the two synthetic fields at Kareela Oval in Sutherland Shire was \$2.9 million.

Upgrades to existing facilities, including synthetic fields, could be provided at existing sporting fields in close proximity to the precinct, including the following:

- Fred Caterson Reserve, adjoining the northern side of the precinct, with an area of 58 hectares. Facilities include 6 sporting fields/pitches, indoor basketball court and tennis courts.
- Coolong Reserve, to the southwest, which features a junior sports field for cricket (in summer) and soccer (in winter), and netball courts
- Mackillop Drive Reserve, which includes a field currently being used for junior soccer.

Lighting could also be provided where impacts on residents are minimal, to extend the use of these fields even further.

Controls are also recommended for The Hills Development Control Plan to ensure new developments provide suitable areas of private open space so that residents are able to enjoy the benefits of open space including areas for relaxing and socialising. It will also add to the green character of the area, helping to soften the built form and improve environmental sustainability.

### 3.4 Transport, access and movement

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Transport for NSW has prepared a Transport Plan to support the Showground Station Precinct proposal. The plan describes the transport network improvements recommended to support the growth in the Showground Station Precinct, so that the proposed new homes, jobs and services will be supported by a broad range of transport infrastructure and services, and achieve the goals of transit oriented development.

Sydney Metro Northwest, including the new station at Showground, is a significant piece of transport infrastructure that will shape the future of the region, significantly improving accessibility to jobs and services across the growing north-west of Sydney, and to and from Sydney's Global Economic Corridor.

The Transport Plan reflects the NSW Government's transport planning objectives, including those within A Plan for Growing Sydney and the NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan. These include:

- improving the integration of transport and land use planning;
- optimising existing infrastructure and planned investment to maximise social and economic benefits;
- providing greater transport options;
- coordinating travel distance and mode, encouraging customers to choose the most appropriate travel options to correspond to their length of trip;
- supporting multi-modal trips by providing effective and efficient interchanges; and
- managing travel demand to shape sustainable travel behaviour.

Metro Northwest, including the new station at Showground, is a significant piece of transport infrastructure for Sydney which will result in much greater choice and opportunity for getting around the region and the wider Sydney area. Transport for NSW has prepared a transport study to support the Showground Precinct and its opportunity to provide more sustainable and efficient travel patterns in the region.

### **New rail and transport interchange facilities**

Sydney Metro Northwest, including all eight stations, is expected to open in 2019. The service will provide services every four minutes in peak times. The indicative travel time from Showground Station to Wynyard Station is 46 minutes.

The second stage of the Sydney Metro, the Sydney Metro City and Southwest, will extend from Chatswood, run under Sydney Harbour, the Sydney CBD and west to Bankstown. This section is planned to open in 2024 with the capacity to run a Metro train every two minutes each way under the Sydney CBD.

Along with a new station, a transport interchange will be provided with facilities including a bus interchange in Doran Drive, 4 taxi spaces, parking and storage for 40 bicycles, 2 spaces for buses, 15 kiss-and-ride spaces and 4 taxi spaces. A customer car park for 600 spaces will also be provided.

Showground Station will be an underground station with the entrance via a forecourt at the corner of Carrington Road and Doran Drive (which has been demolished for the construction of the rail line).

### **Bus services**

Transport for NSW is planning to revise the existing bus network once the Sydney Metro Northwest is opened. It is expected that the number of bus services to the Sydney CBD via the M2 will be replaced with more services to rail stations from surrounding residential areas, and to major destinations not served by rail. Bus priority lanes will be investigated to be located on major roads.

Encouraging better bus connections to centres will mean this transport option can be more competitive with car travel, especially where there are more services outside peak time, evenings and on weekends.

Routes to Parramatta and Norwest are not expected to change, although frequencies are likely to be increased.

Within the Showground Precinct itself, all bus services are recommended for higher frequency to improve connections and encourage more public transport use. Bus lanes could be provided on Showground Road and parts of Carrington Road to by-pass vehicle congestion if necessary. The need for bus only lanes will be reviewed as the precinct developments.

New public transport connections from Windsor Road to Carrington Road will also be investigated to create better connections to Norwest Business Park and improve access to the employment areas.

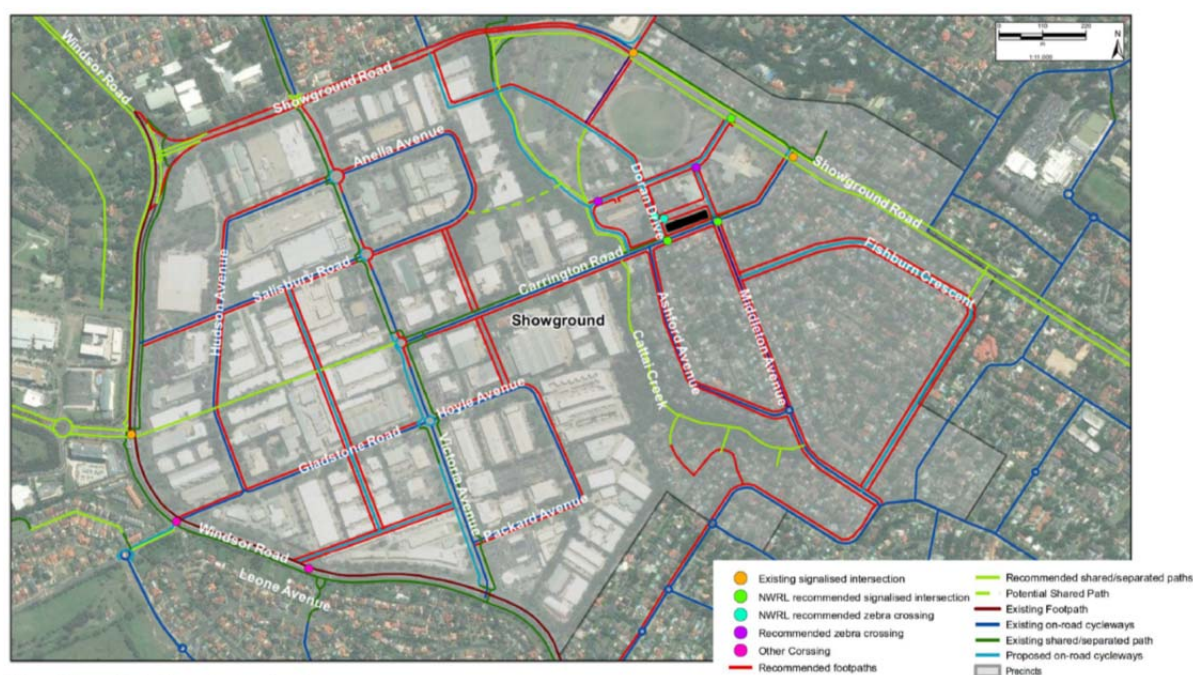
### Pedestrian and cycle networks

Planning for the precinct will include the upgrading of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure such as footpaths, shared paths, lighting, and providing connections to 'missing links' for improved access in the precinct. This will encourage more walking and cycling to and from the station for residents and workers.

As part of the new station and transport interchange construction, improvements to pedestrian and cycle networks are scheduled, including signalised crossings at new intersections on Carrington Road, pedestrian crossings on roads within the local centre, footpaths on both sides of the road, and on-road cycling lanes. The station design includes secure bicycle parking with space for 40 bicycles close to the station entry

*The Hills Shire Council Bike Plan* undertaken in 2009 includes a number of proposed upgrades or new bike routes to connect major centres and fill in missing links. These include the Cattai Creek Trail to provide recreational access along Cattai Creek, from Glenhaven Bridge in the Kellyville/Rouse Hill release area to the Castle Hill light industrial area through the Fred Caterson Reserve.

The proposed improvements to the pedestrian and cycle networks, as illustrated in Figure 20, would complement and build upon *The Hills Shire Council Bike Plan*.



**Figure 20 Proposed Pedestrian and Cycle Network**

### Regional and local road network

The construction of the station and transport interchange includes a new local street network around the station to be implemented in stages (see Figure 21). The street network will provide:

- new street between Showground Road and Cattai Creek;
- extension of Middleton Ave to Castle Hill Showground;

- new street between Doran Drive and the extended Middleton Avenue;
- upgrade of Doran Drive; and
- new and upgraded intersections at:
  - Carrington Road and Middleton Avenue;
  - Carrington Road and Doran Drive;
  - Showground Road and new precinct access street.

In addition, works to be investigated to the road network to accommodate growth in the precinct include:

- extension of Fishburn Avenue to Showground Road;
- widening of Showground Road between Old Northern Road and Carrington Road to four lanes;
- two new signalised intersections on Showground Road between Carrington Road and Green Road;
- extension of Carrington Road between Victoria Avenue and Windsor Road to provide for buses, pedestrians and cyclists only; and
- upgrade of the signalised intersection of Showground Road, Green Road and Victoria Avenue.

New roads within residential and employment areas will also be required as the precinct redevelops to provide greater access and permeability within the precinct. Proposed road upgrades and indicative road network within the precinct is provided in Figure 22.

The transport report noted that key sections of the arterial road network experience congestion, and this will affect access to and within the precincts, even with improved public transport and pedestrian and cycling networks.

Protecting local streets from rat-running traffic avoiding congestion on the main arterial roads will also be important to achieve a high level of amenity within the planned development areas.





**Figure 21 Proposed Road Upgrades for Sydney Metro Northwest**



**Figure 22 Proposed Upgrades and Indicative Road Network**

### Car Parking

Centres and suburbs in Sydney that already have high numbers of dwellings and services around railway stations tend to experience much lower rates of car ownership and tend to use alternative means to travel to work (such as public transport, walking and cycling) compared to the suburb of Castle Hill. Table 2 and Table 3 below provide a comparison of car ownership rates and journey to work information, respectively, for other suburbs close to railway stations.

**Table 2 Households with one or no vehicle**

Centre/Suburb	1 vehicle	No vehicle	Total
<b>Castle Hill</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>31%</b>
Hornsby	51%	16%	67%
Artarmon	55%	15%	70%
Rhodes	58%	15%	73%
Waitara	60%	19%	79%
St Leonards	54%	30%	84%



**Table 3 Journey to Work Modes**

Centre	Public Transport, Walking and Cycling	Car	Other/Not stated
Castle Hill	18%	80%	2%
Hornsby	47%	52%	4%
Waverton	56%	40%	4%
Artarmon	54%	43%	3%
Rhodes	48%	50%	1%
Waitara	50%	49%	2%
St Leonards	69%	29%	1%
Wolli Creek	60%	38%	2%

Source: Bureau of Transport Statistics

Centres well serviced by car share schemes are also more viable in centres with higher number of homes, so it is easier to get by without having to own a car, and can even be a better financial option. There are currently 8 car-share vehicles in Artarmon, 6 in Rhodes, and 10 in St Leonards.

The Sydney Metro Norwest will provide rail access to major employment centres in Sydney including Norwest Business Park, Macquarie Park, North Sydney and the Sydney CBD.

It is therefore expected that car ownership rates are expected to drop within the precinct due to the benefits of improved public transport and pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. In light of this, it is considered appropriate for car parking rates to be reviewed. Comparisons of The Hills Shire Council car parking rates compared to other areas with a rail station are provided in Tables 4 and 5 below.

**Table 4 Comparison of Car Parking Rates - Residential**

Precinct	Hornsby (<800m of station)	North Ryde	Wolli Creek	Willoughby (railway precincts)	The Hills (Major Centre)
<b>Studio</b>	0.75	0	1	0.5	-
<b>1 bed</b>	0.75	1	1	1	<b>1</b>
<b>2 bed</b>	1	1	1-2	1	<b>1.5</b>
<b>3+ bed</b>	1.5	1	2	1.2	<b>2</b>
<b>Visitors</b>	1 per 7 units	1 per 10 units	1 per 5 units or less, 0.5 per 6 dwellings or more	1 per 4 dwellings	<b>2 per 5 units</b>

**Table 5 Comparison of Car Parking Rates - Employment**

Business Type	Hornsby (<800m of station)	North Ryde	Willoughby (railway precincts)	Hills (Commercial Centre)
Commercial	1/48 m <sup>2</sup>	1/90 m <sup>2</sup> GFA	1/110 m <sup>2</sup> GFA	1/40 m <sup>2</sup> GFA
General Retail	1/29 m <sup>2</sup>	1/100 m <sup>2</sup> GFA	1/25m <sup>2</sup>	1/18.5 m <sup>2</sup> GFA
Supermarket	N/A	NA		NA
Industrial	N/A	NA	commercial rates + 1/77m <sup>2</sup> of factory +1/300m <sup>2</sup> of storage +6/100 m <sup>2</sup> of showroom space (bulky goods only)	1/50 m <sup>2</sup> of GFA or 1/ 2 employees whichever is greater
Bulky Goods Retail	1/75m <sup>2</sup>	NA		1/40 m <sup>2</sup> GFA

Based on the above analysis, the following car parking rates are recommended for the precinct (Table 6) and these rates have been adopted in the recommended development controls for the precinct. However, it is noted that it will be a matter for Council to determine whether these recommended controls are adopted in its Development Control Plan.

Parking rates for commercial developments should be considered in light of the construction of the Sydney Metro Northwest. In the *Retail and Commercial Markets Strategy* prepared by AEC Group for the Bella Vista Station Precinct, it was noted that the opening of stations in the employment centre of Macquarie Park (Macquarie University and Macquarie Park) spurred private investment in the business park, with significant development activity ongoing. Parking ratios in Macquarie Park are maximums, ranging from 1:80m<sup>2</sup> GFA within 400m of the stations, to 1:46m<sup>2</sup> GFA further from the train stations.

**Table 6 Recommended Parking Rates**

Land Use	Within 400m of Station	Outside 400m of Station
Dwelling – detached, attached and semi-detached	1 space per dwelling (minimum)	
Multi dwelling housing	1 space per 1 or 2 bedroom 1.5 spaces per 3 or more bedrooms 1 visitor space per 5 dwellings	
Residential flat buildings, and dwellings in shop top housing	Average of 1 space per studio, 1 bedroom and 2 bedroom dwelling 1.5 spaces per 3 bedroom dwelling 2 spaces per 4 bedroom dwelling 1 visitor space per 10 dwellings	
Industrial	1 space per 100m <sup>2</sup> GFA	
General Retail	1 space per 50m <sup>2</sup> GFA	1 per 30m <sup>2</sup> GFA
Commercial	1 space per 80m <sup>2</sup> GFA	1 space per 40m <sup>2</sup> GFA
Supermarket	1 space per 30m <sup>2</sup> GFA	1 space per 20m <sup>2</sup> GFA
Bulky good retail	1 space per 60m <sup>2</sup> GFA	1 space per 50m <sup>2</sup> GFA

\*Rates are maximums unless otherwise specified.

The recommended development controls for the precinct also include a requirement for car schemes to be encouraged to be included in new apartment buildings and in designated spaces within the Showground Station Precinct close to the station.

Within the local centre, limited on-street parking is recommended to support local business, and should be prioritised for disabled parking, car share spaces, loading zones and short stay parking (up to 2 hours).

It is also recommended that councils consider implementing a four hour limit for parking in streets within 800m of the station to act as a deterrent for rail customers, and employee parking.

Bicycle parking rates have also been recommended to encourage cycling in the precinct, as detailed in Table 7 below.

**Table 7 Recommended Bicycle Parking Rates**

Land Use	Bicycle parks rate (minimum)
Residential flat buildings	1 space per 3 apartments 1 space for 12 apartments for visitors
Industrial	1 space per 1500m <sup>2</sup> GFA for staff
Commercial	1 space for 600m <sup>2</sup> GFA for staff
Shops/cafes/restaurants	1 space per 450m <sup>2</sup> for staff

### 3.5 Community facilities

A number of community facilities will need to be provided in the precinct as it grows over time.

The Department of Education is responsible for the provision of public primary and high schools. Schools capacity is continually being reviewed to ensure future student enrolments can be accommodated. It has been estimated that a new high school would be required for the Castle Hill area and this could either be provided at the Showground Station Precinct or Bella Vista Station Precinct. Timing and location of the high school would be continually assessed as the precinct develops.

The upgrade of the Castle Hill Showground also has potential to improve the quantity and quality of community facilities. A multi-purpose facility is recommended, that could provide a range of services including youth and community services. The details will be confirmed by council as part of the master planning for the Castle Hill Showground.

Child care and out of school care is generally provided by the private sector or not-for-profit in The Hills Shire. It is expected that the number of services will increase to meet the growing demand. The open space and community needs analysis predicted that a new child care centre, 2-3 pre-schools, an occasional care centre, and an after-hours school care centre would be required, to address the needs of the new population.

### 3.6 Built Form

The built form strategy for the precinct has considered the 2013 Structure Plan and the technical studies prepared for the Priority Precincts. The five character areas in the Showground Station precinct will each have different built form characters and are discussed below.

## **Local Centre**

The area directly adjoining the new station, between Carrington Road and the Castle Hill Showground, will see the focus of the activity and development in the precinct, with a new centre featuring a village plaza linking the station to the Castle Hill Showground. Shops, cafes and restaurants and other business premises are planned along the streets and the plaza that will be used throughout the day and evening. Residential apartments will be located above these premises.

The recommended controls for built form include:

- identifying locations for ‘active street frontages’, where shops and services are to face the street, have glazing and awnings, to promote a lively and safe environment, as well as encouraging outdoor seating at cafes and restaurants;
- street front podium up to 4 storeys. These podiums will have minimal setbacks to promote a feeling of activity in the street. Limiting the podium to this height will give the street a more human scale and make the streets seem more open;
- levels above the podium are to be setback at greater distances, at least 3 metres.
- the maximum building heights will be 20 storeys. These will only be in limited locations as taller buildings are recommended to require greater separation distances between each other, and need to minimise overshadowing. It is expected there will be a range of heights in the local centre.
- the customer car park is to be sleeved with other buildings fronting the streets, featuring retail and residential uses, to avoid blank walls and unpleasant looking buildings.

## **Carrington Road**

This area is located on the western side of Cattai Creek, and planned to feature offices and business premises fronting Carrington Road, with residential apartment buildings located behind these, and adjoining the creek corridor. It will provide a transition, but an important link, from the local centre and residential area to the east, and the employment area to the west.

Recommended controls include:

- a 5m landscaped setback along Carrington Road, to allow for the retention of existing vegetation and new landscaping between buildings and the street;
- building heights up to 6 storeys for sites fronting Carrington Road, which will be permitted for commercial/business uses;
- building heights up to 8 storeys for residential apartments;
- apartments fronting Cattai Creek reserve...(setbacks, design) to protect from flooding impacts and reduce the impact on users of the reserve; and
- minimum 5m setbacks for residential along other streets.

## **Employment**

The western part of the precinct provides for a range of business and local jobs, and will continue to have this role. The economic and market analysis did not predict large scale change to this part of the precinct, however identified the potential for growth in the industrial sector, along with “support” type office uses and retail (see Section 5.1 for further details).

Recommended controls include:

- heights up to 6 storeys within the area adjacent to Norwest;

- heights of up to 4 storeys within areas zoned for light industrial and bulky goods retail purposes; and
- setbacks along main streets (Victoria Avenue and Carrington Road) to be a minimum of 15m.

### **Residential - Apartments**

This area is located to the south of Carrington Road, generally within 600m of the station. This is to provide for a range of residential apartments to be built close to the station, with the highest buildings closest to the station. This is important because as identified in the transport study, public transport use is higher within 400 metres of a station with good frequency.

Heights will reduce as the distance from the station increase. This is also to ensure that heights transition down from the highest buildings around the station to two-storey detached buildings more commonly found outside the precinct.

Recommended controls include:

- limit the highest residential buildings, along Carrington Road, to 12 storeys;
- maximum heights reduce down to 8 storeys, and 6 storeys further away from the station;
- 5m landscaped setback along Carrington Road and residential streets; and
- 5m setback along Showground Road.

### **Residential – Townhouses and Detached homes**

This area is located in the south-eastern part of the precinct, as well as the north-eastern side of Showground Road. It seeks to retain the lower scale heights that are currently found in this part of the precinct, and areas adjoining the precinct boundary, but allow for a broader range of dwelling types including town houses, attached dwellings and stand-alone homes on smaller lots. The on-line survey conducted in 2014 found that these types of homes were also a popular choice for current residents in the area who would consider living in the different type of home in the future.

Recommended controls include:

- Maximum building heights of 2 to 3 storeys;
- Minimum lot sizes of 240m<sup>2</sup>;
- 5m setback on key residential streets; and
- Minimum lot widths ranging from 6m for attached dwellings, and 8m for detached dwellings.

Although the draft plan includes controls such as maximum heights and floor space ratios, all future development proposals will still need to address other relevant controls such as those in State Environmental Planning Policy No. 65 – Design Quality of Residential Apartment Development, and the applicable Development Control Plan. This will determine the overall built form of development in the precinct.

## **3.7 Proposed Planning Controls**

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The rezoning of the precinct will occur through an amendment to *The Hills Shire Council Local Environmental Plan 2013* (the Hills LEP). The amendment will be facilitated through a State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) under section 37 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, as the proposal is considered to be of State significance. The Explanation of Intended Effect, which provides a more detailed explanation of the proposed amendment to the Hills LEP is at Appendix A.



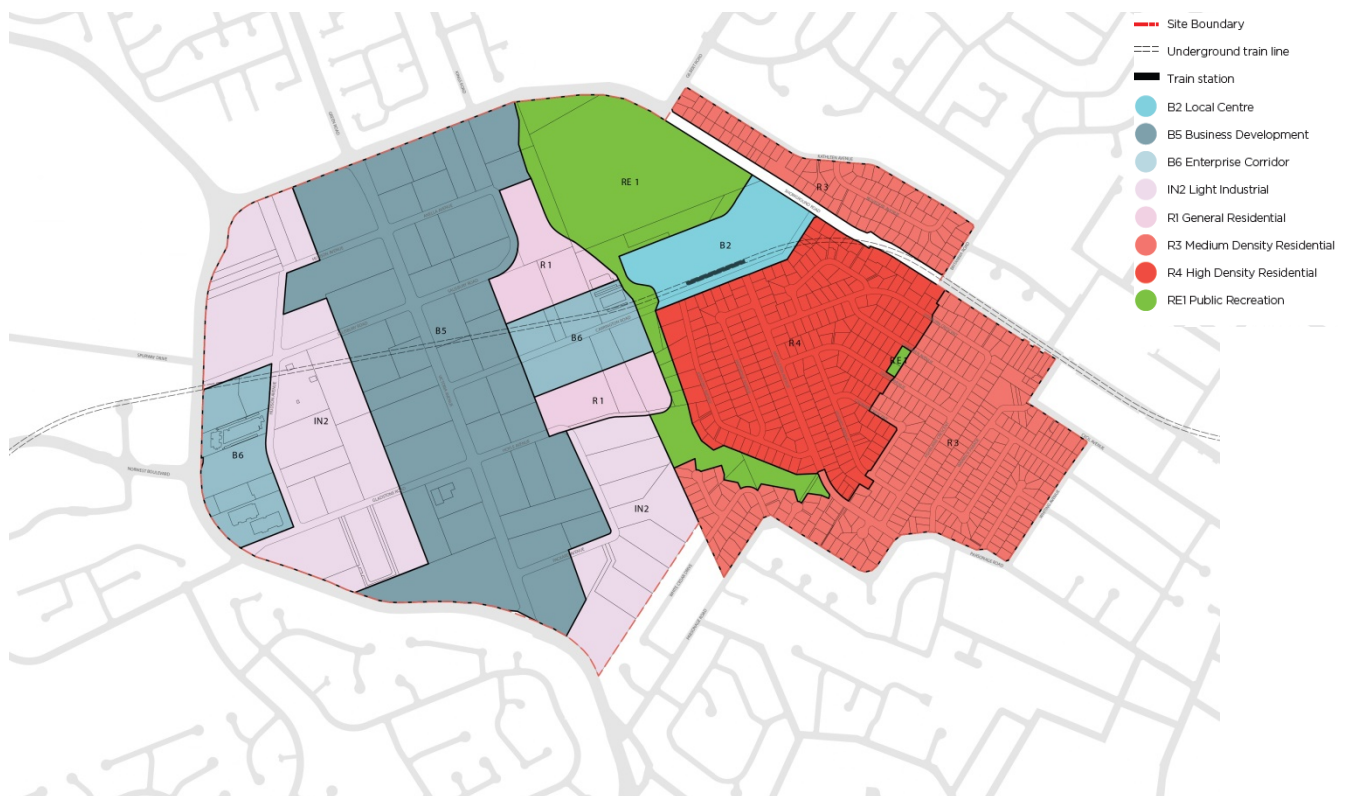
The proposed amendments to The Hills LEP cover land use zones, maximum building heights, floor space ratio controls and minimum lot size controls.

Site specific development controls proposed to form part of The Hills Development Control Plan 2013 are also recommended.

It is also proposed to amend Schedule 2 of the *State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011* (State and Regional Development SEPP) to list a portion of the precinct as an identified site.

### Proposed zonings

The proposed zoning illustrated in Figure 23 reflects the land use by providing appropriate zones to deliver a diverse range of housing and employment areas supported by the new Showground Station, and local centre.



**Figure 23 Proposed Land Use Zoning**

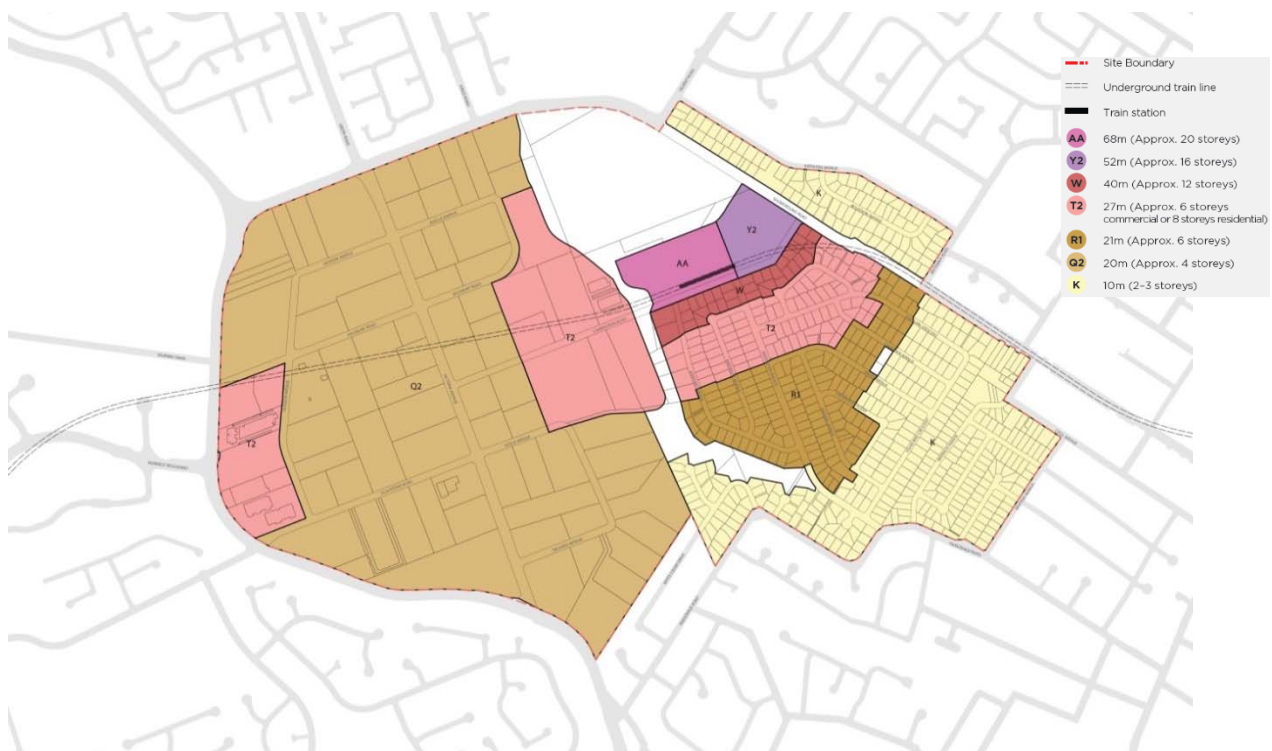
Land use zones proposed include:

- **B2 Local Centre:** The new local centre at the station will be zoned B2 to permit a broad range of commercial and community uses, as well as residential apartments above.
- **B5 Business Development:** The existing B5 zone will be retained along Victoria Avenue and expanded to include land fronting Showground Road to expand opportunities for bulky goods retailing or other employments uses.
- **B6 Business Enterprise:** The B6 zone will apply to land fronting Carrington Road west of Cattai Creek and land in the west adjoining Windsor Road, opposite Norwest Business Park. The B6 zone will encourage additional employment and business opportunities by allowing a broader range of commercial uses including offices and business premises, but exclude shop top housing.

- **IN2 Light Industrial:** The IN2 zone will be maintained within the majority of western part of the precinct as well as within the southern portion of the precinct west of Cockayne Reserve.
- **RE1 Public Recreation:** The Showground, Cockayne Reserve, the proposed parkland along Cattai Creek will be zoned RE1. Residential lots adjoining Chapman Avenue Reserve are to be zoned RE1 to facilitate the expansion of the park.
- **R1 General Residential:** The R1 zone will apply to the land located to the north and south of the B6 land fronting Carrington Road. All types of residential development are permitted within the R1 zone, including residential apartments. Office and business premises are also permitted to allow employment uses.
- **R3 Medium Density Residential.** The R3 zone will apply to the residential area located within the precinct furthest from the station. Dwelling houses, attached housing and multi-dwelling housing are permitted within the R3 zone, but residential apartments are prohibited.
- **R4 High Density Residential.** The R4 zone will apply to the residential area to the south of Carrington Road up to the R3 zoned land. All types of residential development are permitted within the R4 zone, including residential flat buildings.

### Proposed maximum building heights

As discussed in Section 3.6 a range of building heights is proposed across the precinct, transitioning from the highest buildings around the station to two-storey detached buildings further from the station (see Figure 24).



**Figure 24 Proposed Height of Buildings**

In summary, the proposed building heights are:

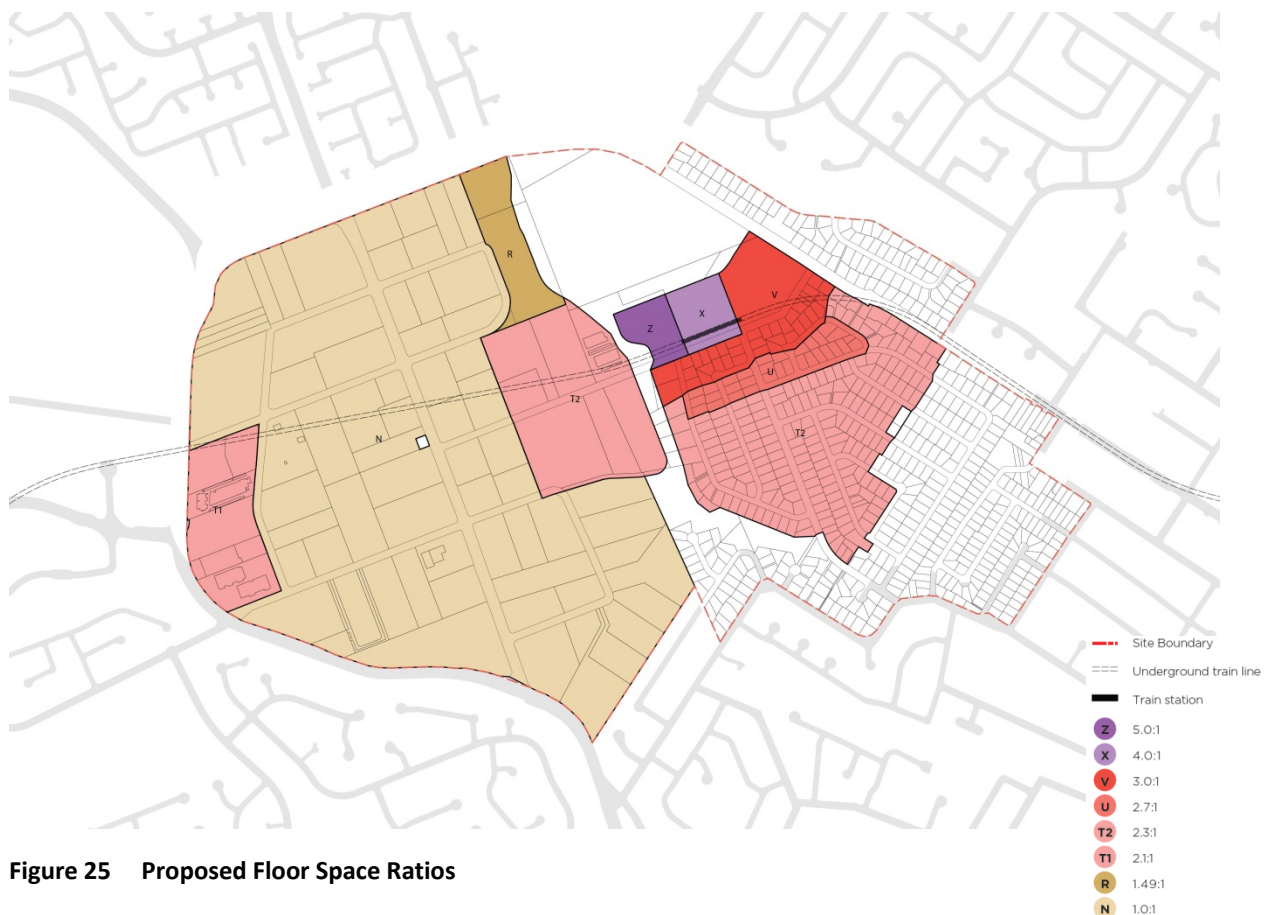
- maximum of 16 to 20 storeys (52-68m) adjacent to the station;

- transitioning from a maximum of 12 storeys (40m) to 2 to 3 storeys (10m) in the residential area south of Carrington Road;
- maximum of 6 storeys (21m) within the new business area fronting Carrington Road, with a maximum of 8 storeys (27m) in the adjoining general residential zone; and
- maximum of 4 storeys (20m) in the industrial and bulky goods area, with a maximum of 6 storeys (27m) within the employment area opposite Norwest.

The proposed height controls are maximums, and all future development proposals will still need to address other relevant controls such as overshadowing and privacy in State Environmental Planning Policy No. 65 – Design Quality of Residential Apartment Development, and the applicable Development Control Plan. This will determine the actual height of future developments.

### Proposed maximum floor space ratios

The proposed range of floor space ratios shown in Figure 25 has been identified to encourage regeneration and investment in the precinct, but also provide the desired built form across the precinct as detailed in report.



**Figure 25 Proposed Floor Space Ratios**

The proposed floor space ratio represents a balance between a high quality built form, the capacity of infrastructure, particularly roads, and financially viable development.

The proposed FSR controls are maximums, and all future development proposals will still need to address other relevant controls such as setbacks and open space provision in State Environmental Planning Policy No. 65 – Design Quality of Residential Apartment Development, and the applicable Development Control Plan. This will determine the actual built form of future developments.

## **Proposed amendments to the State and Regional Development SEPP**

The State and Regional Development SEPP identifies State significant development where the Minister for Planning is the consent authority under Part 4 of the EP&A Act. State significant development is either categorised in Schedule 1 or listed in “identified sites” in Schedule 2.

It is proposed that areas adjacent to the new Showground Metro Station and within Government ownership would be listed in Schedule 2 of the State and Regional Development SEPP as an identified site. To facilitate the delivery of infrastructure to support new homes and jobs, it is proposed that the following development be identified as State significant development under this listing:

- a principal subdivision establishing major lots or public domain areas, or
- the creation of new roadways and associated works.

## **Other proposed amendments**

The proposed minimum lot sizes seek to ensure new residential development in the precinct is viable, is able to achieve good design, and provide sufficient amenity for residents and neighbours.

Provisions for minimum lot sizes for different housing types are proposed to be added to Sections 4.1A and 4.1B of The Hills LEP.

For residential flat apartments, a minimum lot size of 1,500m<sup>2</sup> is proposed. This is considered to be sufficient to provide for the smaller apartment buildings in the precinct. Larger developments would by default need larger sites to also meet relevant controls for setback, landscaping and building separation requirements as recommended in The Hills Development Control Plan 2012 (refer to Appendix D).

For dual occupancy, a minimum lot size of 600m<sup>2</sup> is proposed, and for multi unit housing, a minimum lot size of 1,500m<sup>2</sup> is proposed.

The minimum lot size for subdivision in the R3 Medium Density zone in the precinct is proposed to be 240m<sup>2</sup>, where detached, semi-detached and attached dwellings are permitted. This is the same minimum lot size for a single development application made for subdivision, and the erection of an attached dwelling or a dwelling house on each lot resulting from the subdivision, under Clause 4.1B (3) of The Hills LEP.

A map will be referenced in the control to show the areas that these provisions will apply to.

In summary, the minimum lot size requirements are to ensure that future redevelopment:

- can facilitate good design with appropriate building footprints and built form;
- has lot sizes and dimensions that are appropriate for scale and character of precinct renewal proposals;
- responds to the proposed vision and future character of the area, its subdivision pattern and street structure; and
- respects and minimises impact on the privacy and amenity of neighbouring properties.

## 3.8 Recommended Development Controls

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In addition to the recommended changes to *The Hills Local Environmental Plan 2013*, recommended controls to be incorporated into The Hills Development Control Plan (DCP) have also been proposed.

Development Control Plans provide detailed planning and design guidelines to support the planning controls in Local Environmental Plans. These can cover matters such as building setbacks, design measures, landscaping area and parking rates.

It is proposed that the recommended controls would form a site specific section of the DCP, however, it will be a matter for council as to which controls are ultimately adopted for the precinct. Proposed controls (see Appendix B) have been identified for residential and business development, along with guidelines for public domain and environmental management.

### **Residential Development**

Recommended guidelines have been prepared for a variety of housing types including residential apartment buildings, shop top housing (residential apartments located above ground floor retail and commercial), multi-dwelling housing and small lot housing; and include:

- Building height and form;
- Setbacks and relationship with the street;
- Building design and facades;
- Private open space and landscaping;
- Car parking rates;
- Bicycle parking;
- Acoustic criteria;
- Safety and security; and
- Access and adaptable housing.

### **Business Development**

Proposed business development controls primarily relate to:

- Setbacks, building layout and design; and
- Access and parking.

### **Public Domain**

- Street network and design;
- Pedestrian and cycle network;
- Open space network; and
- Public art.

### **Environmental Management**

A number of environmental management controls are also recommended to reflect contemporary best practice in relation to:

- Indigenous and European heritage;
- Sustainability;
- Stormwater and drainage; and
- Ecology



## 3.9 Affordable Housing

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The NSW Government is committed to delivering more opportunities for affordable housing across Sydney. Action 2.3.3 of *A Plan for Growing Sydney* outlines that the NSW Government will provide more affordable housing in Government-led urban renewal projects and on Government-owned sites to meet the shortfall in affordable housing.

The Government will develop a comprehensive approach for affordable housing on the Government-owned land across the Showground Station, Bella Vista Station and Kellyville Station precincts in consultation with all stakeholders. This approach includes a local housing strategy that recognises and plans for a diverse range of housing, including affordable housing.

## 3.10 Accommodating Growth

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The Precinct Proposal estimates an extra 5,000 additional homes and 2,300 additional jobs for the precinct.

Table 8 below illustrates the comparison between the 2013 Structure Plan and the current Precinct Proposal.

**Table 8 Comparison of growth projections for the Showground Station Precinct**

Additional homes		Additional jobs	
Strategy – 2036	Priority Precinct	Strategy – 2036	Priority Precinct
3,600	5,000	7,700	2,300

The yield figures for the precinct proposal are based on the projected take-up rates and employment growth estimated in the economic analysis undertaken to inform the precinct plan. The actual yields achieved by 2036 will be dependent on several factors including economic conditions, employment patterns, technological changes, social trends, housing preferences, and immigration levels.

Notwithstanding the above, infrastructure and services to accommodate growth are constantly reviewed over time by service providers to identify the need for additional services or works that may be required. This includes road and public transport services, schools, hospitals, and utilities including water, gas and electricity. For utilities in particular, this issue is addressed at the development application stage, as it is a requirement that developers obtain approval from utility providers that these services are available.

In addition, if more residential development occurs than predicted, more Section 94 or 94A local contributions will be collected by the council to provide local services to respond to the increased population, such as open space, recreation facilities and local road upgrades.

The infrastructure that has been identified to be delivered to support the projected growth in the precinct, and how infrastructure needs will be monitored and funded over time, is detailed in the Infrastructure Schedule in Section 6 of this report.

The growth projected for the precinct will go some way to providing the estimated 664,000 new homes and 689,000 new jobs in Sydney by 2036.

### ***The Hills Corridor Strategy***

The Hills Shire Council has prepared The Hills Corridor Strategy (Council Strategy), which sets out Council's framework for the delivery of growth identified in the North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy.

The Council Strategy states it has been prepared to guide and form the basis of Council's response to the Showground, Bella Vista and Kellyville Priority Precincts. The Hills Shire Council resolved to exhibit the draft The Hills Corridor Strategy for community feedback at a Council meeting of 8 September 2015.

When the North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy was released, a local planning direction was issued under Section 117 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* to require future planning proposals to be consistent with the Corridor Strategy, including the growth projections and future character of each station precinct.

The primary difference between the Council Strategy, the North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy and the Showground Priority Precinct are employment growth forecasts. The Council Strategy forecasts a much higher increase in jobs, in particular commercial jobs, than the Department.

The Department's employment growth projections for Showground were informed by market demand and economic feasibility analysis, including the preparation of a comprehensive retail, commercial, industrial and residential study.

This analysis indicated that there would be strong demand for industrial, bulky goods and local retail uses within the precinct, while commercial demand is likely to be limited due to the proximity of Norwest Business Park, which has significant capacity for additional employment growth, and is likely to be more attractive to commercial tenants.

It is noted that the capacity for employment growth under the Showground Precinct's proposed rezoning controls are greater than the project take up rates to 2036, and employment growth is not restricted by the growth projections in the rezoning proposal.

## **3.11 Precinct Support Scheme**

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Through the Precinct Support Scheme, the NSW Government has allocated approximately \$15 million across Showground Station, Kellyville Station and Bella Vista Station Precincts to fund local infrastructure upgrades. The intention of the funding is to enable Council to provide local infrastructure that will directly benefit the community. The funding is additional to development contributions (that is Section 94 contributions), and could be used by Council to develop a new local park, upgrade existing open space, improve the local streetscape or provide additional community facilities, amongst other things.

Precinct support scheme projects need to satisfy a number of criteria including the project:

- can be delivered in a short timeframe;
- will provide direct benefits to the community; and
- has not already been funded by other means.

The precinct planning process, along with community consultation has identified a number of projects which could be funded through this scheme for the Showground Station Precinct. This funding could be allocated towards:

- the upgrade of facilities at the Castle Hill Showground including a contribution towards a multipurpose facility, playground facilities, sporting facilities, walking and cycling paths, a market pavilion, lighting and park furniture such as tables, seating and barbeques;
- enlarging and improving Chapman Avenue Reserve;
- upgrading playground facilities at Cockayne Reserve;
- improving existing playing fields at Fred Caterson Reserve; or
- walking and cycling paths within the precinct including along existing streets and Cattai Creek riparian corridor.

Projects have also been identified for the Bella Vista Station and Kellyville Station Precincts and include:

- walking and cycling paths including along existing streets and Elizabeth Macarthur Creek and Caddies Creek corridors;
- pedestrian and cycle paths through Bella Vista Farm, connecting residents to the Circa Shopping Centre;
- improvements to existing sports fields and/or new sports fields at Caddies Creek, Kellyville; and
- a new community centre at either Bella Vista or Kellyville town centres.

Through the exhibition process, the Department is seeking Community feedback on the types of projects the community would like to see funded through the Precinct Support Scheme.

Following public exhibition, council and the Department would work together to review the shortlisted projects and reach agreement on the recommended project(s) to receive Precinct Support Scheme funding for each precinct. The Department and council would then enter into a funding agreement to detail the works to be delivered, the projects costs, project completion milestones and payment arrangements.

## 4 Consultation

Extensive consultation with the community, key stakeholders, and relevant government agencies has been undertaken during the preparation of this proposal.

### 4.1 Community Events

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Following the announcement of the three Sydney Metro Northwest Station Precincts, four community information stalls were held in 2014, and one during the first quarter of 2015. Staff from the Department of Planning and Environment were available to provide information about the *North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy*, the planning work being undertaken for the three Priority precincts, and to answer questions. An 'ideas board' was provided for people to add comments and suggestions about the station precincts, to be considered as part of the planning process.

The community events the Department attended were:

- Paws in the Park at Castle Hill Showground – Sunday 31 August;
- Orange Blossom Festival, Castle Hill – Saturday 13 September;
- Hawkesbury Harvest and Food Fair – Saturday 11 October;
- Bella Vista Farm Open Day – Sunday 2 November; and
- Castle Hill Show – Friday 13 to Sunday 15 March 2015.

Some of the key comments made by the community included:

- the importance of good connections to the rail stations, and through the precincts, for pedestrians and those using buses and bicycles;
- need to address traffic and car parking, particular near the stations;
- the importance of parks and green spaces;
- provision of sports facilities;
- provision of schools and community facilities;
- provision of dog parks/facilities;
- protection of heritage; and
- safety and security, especially at night and around the stations.

This feedback was considered in the planning for the precinct, and these issues are discussed throughout the planning report.

## 4.2 Telephone survey

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The Department of Planning and Environment commissioned a telephone survey that was conducted in April 2014. The survey involved randomly generated numbers of residents living in the North West Rail Link corridor, with a total of 503 residents completing the survey.

The survey was conducted to gain an understanding of the types of activities and facilities the community would like to see within the precincts, and how the community would like to be consulted throughout the process.

The survey found that:

- awareness of the *North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy* was high, with 84% of respondents aware of it;
- visions for the future included a vibrant and well-connected community with good transport links, job opportunities and educational facilities;
- car parking, parks and other open space, cafes, restaurants and shops, community facilities and cycling links are some of the facilities that residents would like to see around the stations; and
- newsletters and local papers are the favoured form of communication regarding local planning and development activities, although younger people favoured online and email formats.

## 4.3 Online survey

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An online survey was made available on the Showground, Bella Vista and Showground Station Precinct websites following the announcement of the three station precincts. The survey was available to be completed over a 10 week period between 2 August and 19 October 2014.

The survey comprised 12 questions about the respondent's current circumstances including age, sex and living location, future housing considerations, favoured local facilities and amenities.

A total of 280 respondents completed the survey, with 63% living in one of the three station precincts.

Some of the notable findings of the survey included:

- most respondents (83%) lived in detached homes, which is consistent with the percentage of these types of homes in the area according to 2011 Census data;
- the majority of respondents (78%) would prefer to live in the same area if they moved to a different type of home in the future;
- the most important features influencing where people would live were public transport; proximity to cafes, restaurants and shops; and proximity to parks and open space;
- most respondents (80%) were concerned that young people would have difficulty affording a home in the area in the future;
- the most popular local facilities to support growth in the area were parks and reserves; community facilities such as libraries and community centres; and bicycle and pedestrian paths; and
- the most popular facilities that could be provided at Castle Hill Showground were a multipurpose venue; car parking facilities; and markets.

The online survey report has been made publicly available on the precinct websites. The findings of the survey were considered for the planning of the precinct, including planning for housing choice,



provision for local shops and services in the new precincts, as well as providing for improved connections, open space and community facilities.

## 4.4 Newsletters

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A newsletter for each of the three station precincts was delivered to residences within each precinct in October 2014. The newsletters have been designed to keep the local community informed about the planning for the precincts around the new Showground, Bella Vista and Showground stations, and how they can get involved.

The number of residences that were delivered a copy of the October 2014 newsletters and that will receive future newsletters are as follows:

- Showground – 2,150;
- Bella Vista – 2,400; and
- Showground – 1,150.

A copy of each newsletter was also placed on the relevant station precinct website.

## 4.5 Stakeholder Briefing Sessions

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Stakeholder Briefing Sessions were held for the Showground Station Precinct on 30 October 2014, and 30 March 2015 for the Showground Station Precinct, and 6 November 2014 and 1 April 2015 for the Kellyville Station and Bella Vista Station Precincts.

The purpose of the Stakeholder Briefing Sessions is to provide information to representatives of community, business and other relevant local groups about the planning being undertaken for the precincts, and for these representatives to pass this information to their members. These sessions also provide these representatives the opportunity to raise issues and concerns they may have, which have been used in the planning for the precincts.

Matters raised during these sessions were generally consistent with the comments received at community events. However, other matters raised related to:

- the ongoing use of the Castle Hill Showground by community groups;
- need to involve younger generations in planning for the precincts; and
- the importance of Bella Vista Farm as recreational space for existing and future residents.

## 4.6 Registration for project updates

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Members of the community were invited to request to receive updates for the precincts by emailing their details to [urbanactivation@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:urbanactivation@planning.nsw.gov.au). Copies of the newsletters were sent to those who registered. They were also notified of the public exhibition and how to comment.

## 4.7 Agency consultation

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The Department has been meeting with The Hills Shire Council, Transport for NSW, and other government agencies regarding the proposed precinct as required.

## 4.8 Exhibition consultation

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During the exhibition period, the Department will be conducting a number of activities to inform the community about the exhibition of the proposal, and to provide opportunities to get involved. These will include:

- letters to landowners in the precinct, and letterbox drops to residents within the precinct to inform them of the exhibition of the proposal;
- on-line survey to received community feedback on the proposed projects to be funded through the Precinct Support Scheme;
- community drop-in information sessions at a number of locations;
- update the precinct website with the exhibition documentation and information on how to make a submission;
- youth specific forum;
- social media campaign; and
- making copies of the documents available at locations including the Department's offices at Bridge Street, Sydney, and at The Hills Shire Council and Blacktown City Council offices.

## 5 Supporting Studies and Considerations

This section outlines how key considerations have been investigated and addressed for the Showground Station precinct.

### 5.1 Economic Feasibility

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A comprehensive retail, commercial, industrial and residential economic feasibility assessment was undertaken to inform the Precinct employment and residential development controls to facilitate sustainable growth (see Appendix F).

From an employment perspective, the analysis identified the potential for the Precinct to provide more than 2,300 jobs by 2036, with strong demand for residential development. A summary of economic analysis is provided below.

#### **Industrial and Bulky goods**

The analysis undertaken identified the potential for growth in the Precinct's industrial sector. Accordingly, light industrial and bulky goods uses will be maintained and enhanced and will provide an important employment and service function for existing and new residents in the Precinct and the broader region. Victoria Avenue will be reinforced as a major bulky goods retailing area, and will be expanded to include additional areas fronting Showground Road which benefit from a high level of exposure to passing trade.

#### **Commercial**

There is also identified the opportunity for the Precinct to provide "support" type office uses due to its close proximity to transport and neighbouring commercial centres. The analysis identified that there is unlikely to be a significant demand for large floor plate office uses within the Precinct, as business needing larger floor plates would be more attracted to Norwest which is an established business park. Nonetheless, it is considered that there will be demand for smaller strata office product. Accordingly, a broader range of commercial uses, including office and business premises will be permitted within the western area of the Precinct to enhance the relationship and linkages with Norwest Business Park.

The employment functions of Carrington Road will also be reinforced with the establishment of a broader range of employment uses, including office and business premises up to six storeys in height. This will create a continuous employment spine that links with Victoria Avenue.

#### **Retail**

The economic feasibility analysis identified the potential for the Precinct to provide approximately 6,000m<sup>2</sup> of neighbourhood retail uses, including a 3,000m<sup>2</sup> full-line supermarket and an additional 3,000m<sup>2</sup> of supporting retail. The Precinct's rezoning would enable these activities to be focused around the Showground station to form a vibrant and active local centre. The centre would accommodate shops, cafes and restaurants, and various other services and facilities for residents, workers and visitors. Residential apartments would be located above retail and commercial levels of

mixed use buildings to maximise pedestrian activity and surveillance around the station and trade for shops and businesses within the centre.

### **Residential**

The residential analysis found that the Precinct has a number of attributes that make it very attractive for residential development. This includes its excellent access to transport options (Sydney metro Northwest and the M2 Motorway), its proximity to major employment centres, its high social economic local community and strong underlying demand for, and current undersupply of, residential developments.

The Precinct's development controls have the potential to deliver around 5,000 new homes by 2036. Importantly, this will include a mix of dwelling types and sizes to cater for the housing needs of the whole community.

## **5.2 Indigenous Heritage**

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An Indigenous Heritage assessment was conducted to identify existing indigenous sites throughout the Precinct and inform the rezoning for the project (see Appendix G).

The report identified one known Aboriginal site lying within the Castle Hill Showground site and another lying directly outside the Precinct's northern boundary near Showground Road. The locations of these two sites are zoned as public recreation and this rezoning is to be maintained within the Precinct.

The assessment determined that the rezoning of the Precinct would not cause harm to the identified Aboriginal heritage objects or sites, however, the potential for the development to impact on items of Aboriginal significance will need to be considered as the precinct redevelops.

It is an offence under the NSW *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* to harm or impact any Aboriginal cultural heritage sites or objects without a relevant permit. Any future development activity within the Precinct that may potentially impact the known Aboriginal sites will need to:

- comply with the statutory requirements of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act*;
- be accompanied by an Aboriginal due diligence report prepared in accordance with the *Due Diligence Code of Practice for the Protection of Aboriginal Objects*;
- require an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit from the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage following development approval; and
- comply with the controls in Council's development control plan.

The Department has provided Council with a number of recommended Aboriginal heritage provisions for potential incorporation in Council's DCP to provide more detailed guidance for avoiding harm and impacts to Aboriginal heritage sites, values, objects and/or places where possible.

The recommended DCP controls are provided at Appendix B.

## **5.3 Non-Indigenous Heritage**

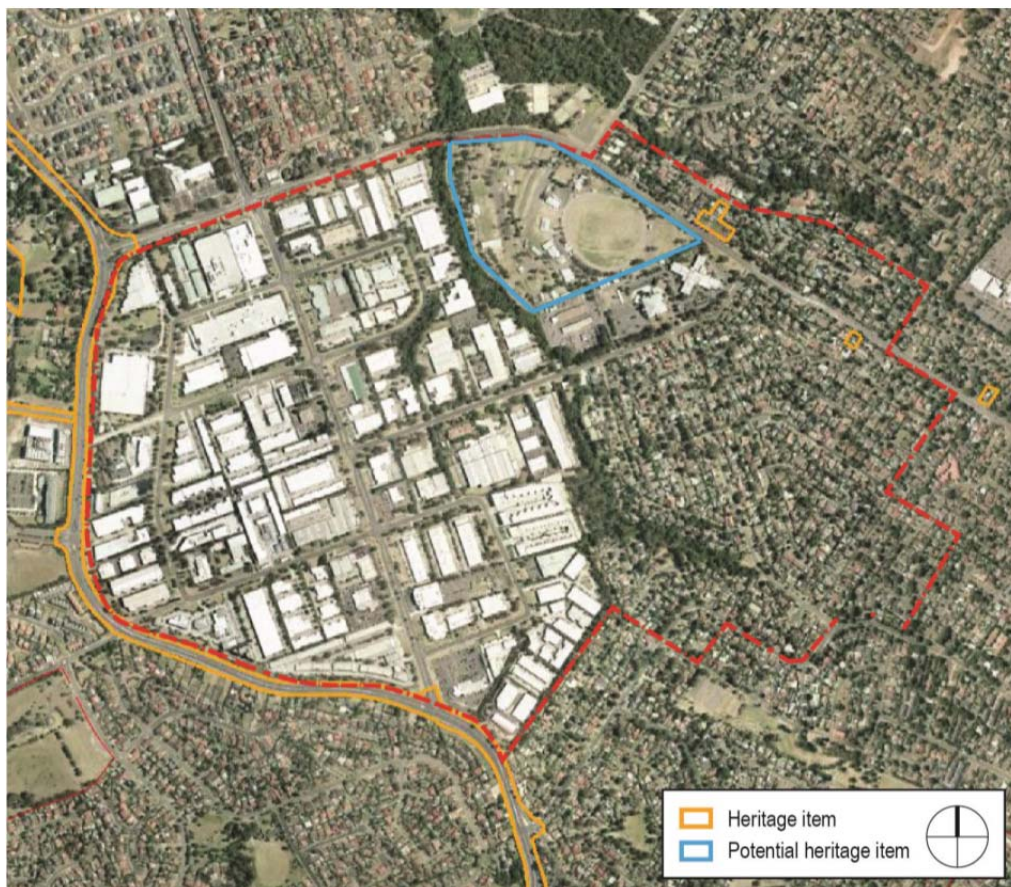
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Until the 1960s, the surrounding area and the Precinct was predominately used for agriculture. Three local heritage items in the Precinct, a house at 107 Showground Road, Castle Hill and a former farm cottage house at 128-132 Showground Road, and also the road alignment of Windsor Road, part of

which forms the western boundary of the Precinct, are the last remaining physical links to the rural history of the area (see Figure 26).

While the Castle Hill Showground is not listed as a heritage item on any heritage registers, it provides a physical link to the area's rural history and is an important and well used cultural and recreational facility in The Hills Shire that is held in high esteem by the local community. In 1996 a draft heritage and cultural landscape study of the Castle Hill Showground assessed the Castle Hill Showground as having heritage value for its historical, social, rarity and representative values at a local level.

The heritage assessment (see Appendix H) determined that the Precinct has low potential to contain intact archaeological remains from the early nineteenth century. If any archaeological items are located in the future, they will be required to be managed in accordance with the requirements of the *Heritage Act* and relevant Heritage Council guidelines.



**Figure 26 Heritage Items & Potential Heritage Items within and adjacent to the Precinct.**

The assessment reviewed the heritage provisions in Council's DCP and determined they provide appropriate provisions and controls for managing development within and adjacent to heritage items within The Hills LGA. Proposed development in the vicinity of these heritage items will need to comply with the requirements of Council's DCP and may require further heritage assessment to be carried out

The Department has provided Council with a number of recommended additional European heritage and European Archaeology provisions for incorporation in Council's DCP. This includes a recommendation that heritage interpretation and public art be implemented in the public domain.



The Department also recommends specific cultural heritage controls for Castle Hill Showground be incorporated in Council's DCP. This would include the requirement that:

- Development in the vicinity of Castle Hill Showground be compatible and respond positively to the historic character of the Showground; and
- An interpretation strategy be prepared and implemented with any new development of the Castle Hill Showground.

## 5.4 Ecology

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A desktop ecological study was undertaken to identify the biodiversity and riparian characteristics of the Precinct and to provide recommendations on how they should be appropriately considered as part of the rezoning process (see Appendix I). Field surveys for part of the Precinct were also previously undertaken as part of the environmental impact assessments for the Sydney Metro Northwest project.

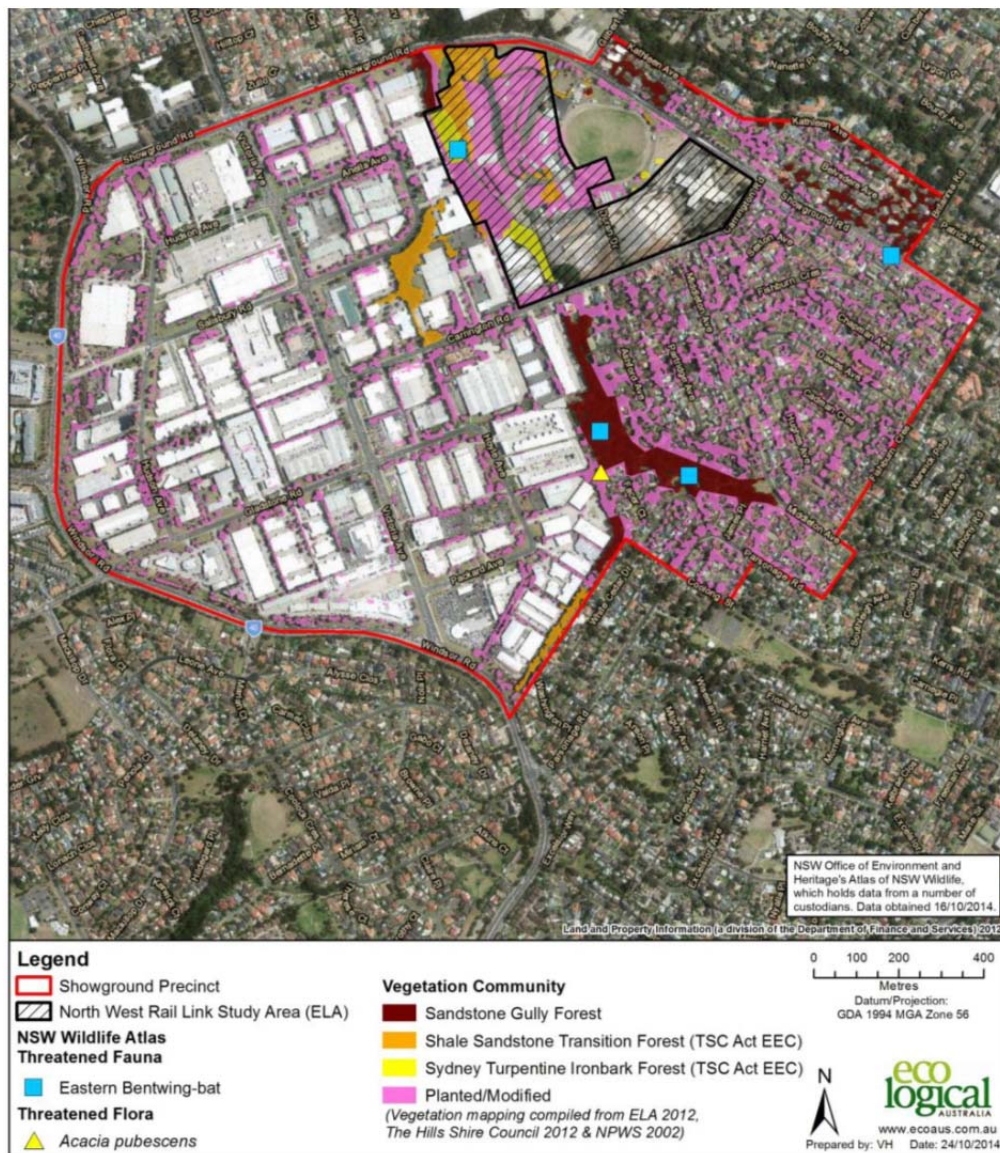
### Existing Biodiversity Values

Figure 27 identifies the vegetation communities and threatened species that have been identified or previously recorded in the Precinct, including:

- Shale Sandstone Transition Forest (approximately 4.05ha of the Precinct) – an endangered ecological community listed under the Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995 ('TSC Act') and the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth) ('EPBC Act');
- Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest (approximately 1.09 ha of the Precinct) – an endangered ecological community under the TSC Act and critically endangered species under the EPBC Act;
- Downy Wattle (*Acacia pubescens*) – a threatened flora species listed under the TSC and EPBC Acts was recorded as having a previous record within the Precinct ; and
- the Eastern Bent-wing Bat (*Miniopterus schreibersii*) – a threatened fauna species listed under the TSC and EPBC Acts as was recorded as having a previous record within the Precinct.

The Precinct also contains around 7.22ha of Sydney Sandstone Gully Forest. This vegetation community is not listed under either the TSC or EPBC Act, but it may provide potential habitat for threatened flora and fauna. A further 5 threatened flora and 17 threatened fauna species were also identified as being likely to occur or potentially occurring within the Precinct, although no previous records of their sightings.

Part of the upper reaches of Cattai Creek traverses the Precinct, which is mapped as a second order stream and would likely contain aquatic fauna habitat for a number of species, although no aquatic threatened species are likely to occur.



**Figure 27 Vegetation Communities & Threatened Species**

### Potential Impacts

The ecological assessment estimated the Precinct could indicatively impact around 60% of the Precinct's Shale Sandstone Transition Forest (2.45ha), 19% of the Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest (0.21ha), 44% of the Sydney Sandstone Gully Forest (3.14ha) and 71% of the riparian corridor (4.8ha).

These figures are based on the assumption the rezoned land would be developed to its capacity under the proposed development controls. Potential ecological impacts from the redevelopment of the Precinct would not be fully known until the area has been rezoned and individual development applications lodged, at which time the ecological footprint of proposed activities can be quantified and more detailed environmental assessments undertaken.

The ecological assessment found that the ecological communities throughout the Precinct are likely to be degraded due to historical disturbances and that the removal of this amount of vegetation would not lead to significant impact.

## Assessment

Most of the mapped ecological communities and where previous sightings of threatened species have occurred are located within the riparian corridor within the Castle Hill Showground and within Cockayne Reserve. These areas are zoned for public recreation and this zoning is to be maintained.

Part of the Precinct's riparian corridor is proposed to be rezoned from E4 Environment Living to RE1 Public Recreation. This would require ownership of the lands transferring to Council which would facilitate significantly enhanced ecological outcomes than current arrangements, including the establishment of a more holistic environmental management regime, improved integration and vegetation links within the riparian corridor, greater community access and the prohibition of new dwellings in the new RE1 zone.

Proposed activities within the riparian corridor, such as a new cycleway, pedestrian path and a potential crossing within the Castle Hills Showground to the employment lands would need to comply with the requirements of the NSW Office of Water *Controlled Activity Guidelines* and would be subject to more detailed environmental assessment at the development application stage.

The Department has prepared recommended ecological controls for incorporation in Council's DCP to protect and enhance areas of significant native vegetation and riparian corridors.

The recommended DCP controls are provided at Appendix B, and would require a comprehensive vegetation management plan to be prepared and implemented for Cattai Creek and Cockayne Reserve, and approved before the start of any construction works in this land. The vegetation management plan would incorporate monitoring and maintenance to ensure the rehabilitation and regeneration of Cattai Creek and Cockayne Reserve.

All future development applications within the Precinct will also need to comply with the preservation of trees and vegetation requirements in *The Hills Local Environmental Plan 2012*, and the water sensitive urban design and landscaping controls within Council's development control plan, described further below.

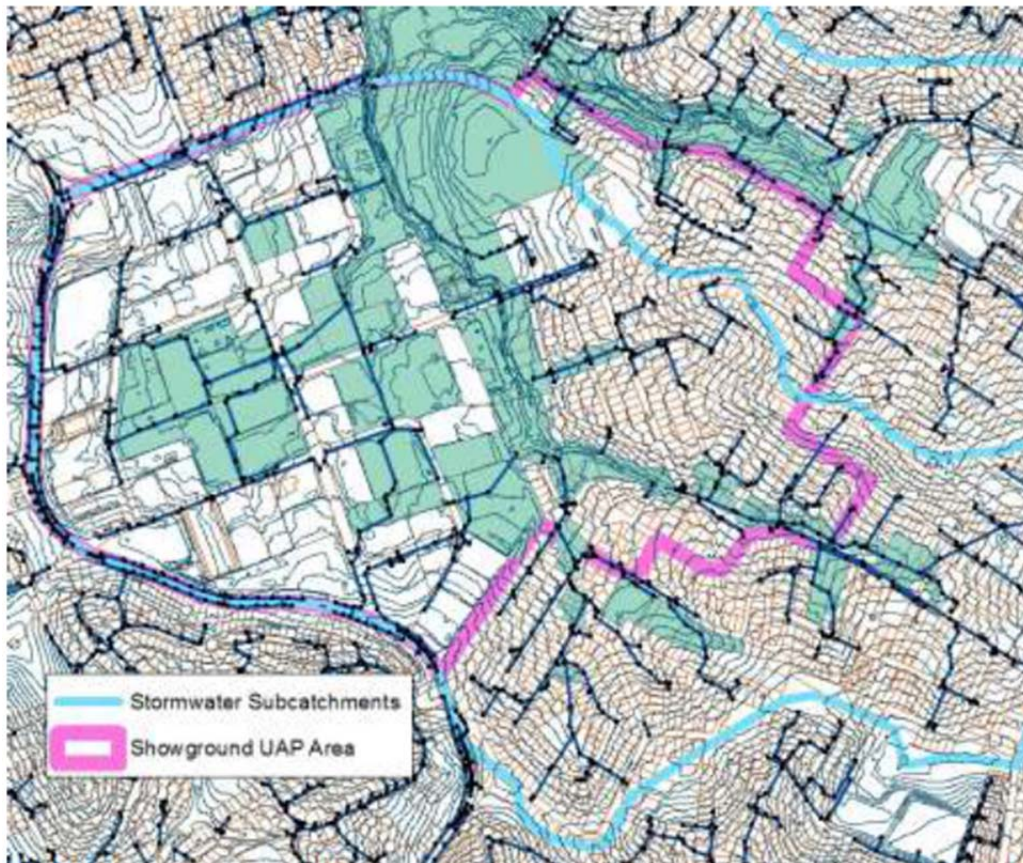
## 5.5 Hydrology and drainage

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The precinct extends over two sub catchments of Cattai Creek, with the majority of the Precinct draining north along Cattai Creek towards Showground Road. A portion of the Precinct to the north-east drains to a tributary of Cattai Creek and becomes an open watercourse at Britannia Road.

A desktop assessment of drainage and hydrology flows relevant to the Precinct was undertaken to provide an assessment of flood affected land associated with the Precinct's rezoning (see Appendix K).





**Figure 28 Showground Precinct stormwater drainage network and upstream catchment**

### Potential Impacts

Properties shaded green in Figure 28 above have been mapped by council as flood control lots, which means that the land may be partially or wholly constrained by flood risks, although development is not prohibited. Land identified as a flood control lot is required to comply with the development controls in Part C6 of council's development control plan to guide the management of flood risks associated with development.

A range of different flood planning levels under council's development control plan may apply to a flood control lot, depending on the type of development proposed and the part of the development in consideration. This includes an overarching control that relates to ensuring proposed developments do not increase flood effects to other properties.

### Assessment

The hydrology and drainage study has been informed by council's existing flood control lot mapping and relevant flood planning levels.

Council is preparing an Urban Overland Flow Study to update council's understanding of land that may be affected by an overland flow path within the Precinct. The study will assist council in reviewing land identified as flood control lots that are subject to flood related development controls.

Future development applications at the Precinct will need to comply with the existing water sensitive urban design controls in council's development control plan. The drainage and hydrology study also recommended additional 'target based' water sensitive controls be incorporated by council in its development control plan, consistent with best practice principles.

The Department has provided recommended controls to:

- adopt best practice techniques for stormwater quality management ;
- minimise flooding and reduce the effects of stormwater pollution on Cattai Creek and Cockayne Reserve; and
- ensure an integrated approach to water management through the use of water sensitive urban design principles.

The recommended controls are provided at Appendix B.

## 5.6 Open Space and Community Facilities

An assessment of open space and community facilities was undertaken to identify the existing provision, and opportunities for additional open space and community facilities to meet the needs of future residents of the Precinct.

### ***Existing Open Space and Community Facilities***

Five areas of public open space are located within 800m of the Showground station, and a further 12 are located within 1,600m of the future station. There is 92.66 ha of total open space within 1,600m of Showground Station, with 11.08ha of this as active open space (sports fields and courts).

A description of these open spaces, their size and function is set out in the Open Space and Community Facilities Assessment is at Appendix J. A map identifying existing public open space within 1,600m of Showground Station is set out below (Figure 29).



**Figure 29 Existing Community Facilities within 1,600m of the future Showground Station**



There are three areas of public open space within the Showground Precinct: Castle Hill Showground, Chapman Reserve and Cockayne Reserve, with a total area of 21.51 ha, including 3.43 ha of active open space.

There is one secondary school, one TAFE, one public library and six child care centres within a 1,600m radius of Showground Station.

### ***Open Space and Social Infrastructure Assessment***

The assessment noted that the open space needs for new communities are evolving in light of changing demographics and community lifestyles. There is increasing demand for informal recreational activities such as walking and also non-traditional recreational activities, which often tend to suit smaller spaces rather than traditional large outdoor spaces like sporting fields.

The assessment recommended an open space rate of 1ha per 1,000 people, with 0.5ha of active open space (ie. sports fields) per 1,000 people suitable, although the assessment also states that using this rate is limited as other factors such as the type and role, distribution, quality and responsiveness of open space to forecast future demographics and emerging trends need to be taken into consideration. Based on these considerations, the assessment concludes that the proposed open space for the precinct is considered to adequately cater for the likely recreational needs of the future population, subject to recommendations. These recommendations include facilities that should be included as part of the master planning for the Castle Hill Showground site. The Department is generally supportive of these recommendations, and encourages Council to consider these when preparing the master planning for the upgrade of the Castle Hill Showground.

It is noted in the assessment that the proposed open space network for the Showground Precinct, as described in Section 3.3 of this Planning Report, performs well when assessed against other comparable renewal precincts and is responsive to the changing needs, demographics and lifestyle choices of the broader community. Better linkages to the surrounding area, such as to the adjoining Fred Caterson Recreation Reserve, which provides a range of sporting fields and courts, would also be of benefit.

The Open Space and Social Infrastructure Assessment included a review of plans prepared by The Hills Shire Council, including the Recreational Strategy released in 2007. This Strategy considered trends in level of sports participation, current levels of open space provision, and supply of recreational facilities. The Recreational Strategy noted a number of recreation participation trends including:

- demand for a greater diversity of recreational activities;
- greater emphasis on non-competitive, unstructured recreation opportunities at the expense of participation and involvement in organised sport;
- more flexible opening hours, including weekday, evening and weekend time slots; and
- increasing demand for indoor facilities.

The Integrated Open Space Plan for the Hills Shire (2014) reported on a survey of residents undertaken in December 2012 to understand participation rates. It was found that changing demand that will influence the way people use facilities include:

- walking and cycling are anticipated to have the largest increase in participation rates over the next 10 years;

- there are more social and small sided game formats of the traditional sports being played; and
- gym and fitness activities will continue to be one of the fastest growing uses of open space.

The Department is also mindful of the Council's approach for the planning of the Castle Hill North precinct, which, as stated in the exhibited material, "given the Castle Hill North Precinct is located within an existing urban area there is limited opportunity for the provision of new open space areas" and further analysis will be required to identify how to better utilise or add to existing spaces to meet additional demand.

The study recommended that a community centre be provided within the Precinct to meet the needs of future residents. A new multi-purpose facility could be provided within the Castle Hill Showground to benefit from the site's proximity to the future Showground station. An indicative location for a new community/education/cultural facility has been identified in the preliminary concept plan for the Castle Hill Showground to assist in Council's preparation of a future master plan for the site.

The preliminary concept plan for Castle Hill Showground provides an indicative layout for a range of active and passive recreation and community activities that could be of significant benefit to the existing and new population, including a children's playground, skate park, dog training and off lease areas, community garden, picnic facilities, pedestrian and cycle paths, a flexible market area, indoor sports facilities, a cultural and community facility, as well as an equestrian area and the Castle Hill Showground stadium.

The assessment noted that the open space needs for new communities are evolving in light of changing demographics and community lifestyles. There is increasing demand for informal recreational activities such as walking and also non-traditional recreational activities, which often tend to suit smaller spaces rather than traditional large outdoor spaces like sporting fields. The expanded Cattai Creek corridor and improved open space network will be of particular benefit for people engaging in these activities.

### ***Open Space rates analysis***

To help inform the open space planning for the precinct, an analysis of the Showground Precinct was undertaken by the Department to understand the existing and proposed rates of open space. This comparison was undertaken in response to concerns raised by The Hills Shire Council who preferred that a rate of 2.83 hectares per 1,000 people be met for the Showground Precinct. Tables 8 and 9 below summarise these findings.

**Table 9 Open space rates in the Showground Station Precinct**

Showground Precinct	Population	Open Space	Open Space Rate per 1,000 people
Existing (2011)	2,437	21.52ha	8.83ha
Forecast (2036)	10,500	26.31ha	2.51

Notes:

- Existing population is obtained from 2011 Census data for dwelling numbers, multiplied by an average occupancy rate of 3.1 persons per household. Open space is the area of all land zoned RE1 Public Recreation.
- Showground Precinct forecast is the forecast population in the precinct for the year 2036, with an occupancy rate of 2.1 persons per household (a rate reflective of apartment occupancy rates in similar urban renewal areas). The additional open space is all land identified as public open space in the precinct

proposal, including open space delivered as part of the Sydney Metro Northwest construction, but not including the potential park in Victoria Ave.

**Table 10 Open Space rates in the suburb of Castle Hill**

Castle Hill Suburb	Population	Open Space	Open Space Rate per 1,000 people
Existing (2011)	37,881	209.8ha	5.54ha
Forecast (2036 – Showground Precinct)	45,944	214.59	4.67ha
Forecast (2036 – Showground and Castle Hill Precincts)	69,004	214.59	3.10ha

Notes:

- Existing population is obtained from 2011 Census data for dwelling numbers, multiplied by an average occupancy rate of 3.1 persons per household. Open space is the area of all land zoned RE1 Public Recreation.
- The Castle Hill suburb forecast (2036 – Showground Precinct) is the net forecast population growth in the suburb of Castle Hill to the year 2036, only including the growth in the Showground Precinct, which has been allocated an occupancy rate of 2.1 persons per household. The additional open space is all land identified as public open space in the precinct proposal, including open space delivered as part of the Sydney Metro Northwest construction, but not including the potential park in Victoria Ave.
- The Castle Hill suburb forecast (2036 – Showground and Castle Hill Precincts) is the net forecast population growth in the suburb of Castle Hill to the year 2036, including the growth in the Showground Precinct, and the growth identified in the Castle Hill Precinct Structure Plan, which has been allocated an occupancy rate of 2.1 persons per household. The additional open space is all land identified as public open space in the precinct proposal, including open space delivered as part of the Sydney Metro Northwest construction, but not including the potential park in Victoria Ave. No additional open space has been included for the Castle Hill Precinct as this is still unknown.

As shown in Table 8 above, the rate of open space in the Showground Precinct by 2036 is forecast to be less than the traditional rate of 2.83ha per 1,000 people. However, the quality of this open space is considered to be high, and provides for an interconnected network of a range of recreational uses.

More significantly, the overall rate of open space for the suburb of Castle Hill (Table 9), which includes the Showground Precinct and currently has a very high rate of open space provision, is forecast to continue to have an open space rate above 2.83 ha per 1,000 people, whether or not the forecast growth in the Castle Hill Precinct is included. The open space in the suburb includes the 66 hectare Fred Caterson Reserve which immediately adjoins the Showground Precinct boundary, and is therefore highly likely to be used by the new population in the Showground Precinct. It is noted that the open space rate which includes the forecast growth in the Castle Hill Precinct has not included any additional open space for this precinct as it is still unknown, and therefore suggests the future open space rate in the suburb is likely to be even higher.

Not only do these rates for the suburb of Castle Hill suggest an adequate rate of open space provision for the local community, it is also considered that the future population would have access to a wide range of quality open spaces to cater for a wide range of open space needs. Options for the provision of even more open space are available, and these are discussed in Section 3.3 of this Planning Report.

## 5.7 Contamination

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*State Environmental Planning Policy 55 – Remediation of Land* (SEPP 55) promotes the remediation of contaminated land for the purpose of reducing risk of harm to human health or any other part of the environment. SEPP 55 requires the planning authority to be satisfied that the land will be remediated before the land is used for sensitive uses and the associated Managing Land Contamination guidelines outline the required investigations.

A desktop contamination review of the Precinct's history and site inspections (see Appendix L) was undertaken to identify both existing and potential contamination sources throughout the Precinct.

The review identified three areas of interest for potential contamination (refer to Figure 30). This included the site of the former Council Depot, a small portion of the Castle Hill Showground and various land allotments to the west of Cockayne Reserve containing car servicing, goods industries, pharmaceutical and veterinary products production, industries generating metal waste, electrical substation and a hotel.

The sites with potential contamination are predominately located in the Precinct's existing light industrial, business and warehouse areas, which are to be retained under the Precinct rezoning. The areas containing potential contamination immediately to the north of Carrington Road and at the former Council Depot are proposed to be rezoned for residential and mixed employment uses respectively, which means that further contamination investigations will be required to be undertaken in conjunction with specific development proposals.

Further contamination assessment may also be required at the development application stage for development proposed near the identified potentially contaminated site at Castle Hill Showground.

The Department's Managing Land Contamination guidelines recognise that as proposed land uses can vary both in type and location across land to be rezoned, it can be difficult for a planning authority to be satisfied that every part of the land is suitable for the proposed use(s), in terms of contamination, at the rezoning stage. The guidelines therefore provide for rezonings to proceed provided there are measures in place to ensure that the potential for contamination and the suitability of the land for proposed uses are assessed once detailed proposals are made.

Before any development can be carried out, development approval would need to be given. In accordance with SEPP 55, which would continue to apply to any redevelopment with the precinct, the consent authority must consider whether the subject land is contaminated, and if so, must ensure the land is appropriately remediated prior to development occurring.

The Department is therefore satisfied the contamination assessment undertaken for the Precinct satisfies the requirements of SEPP 55 for the purposes of rezoning, and that the suitability of the proposed land uses will be further assessed at the development application stage.



**Figure 30 Sites Indicating Potential Contamination**

## 5.8 Landowner Proposals

A number of landowners proposals have been received by the Department. These included:

- Hartland site (corner of Windsor Road and Victoria Avenue);
- 46 Carrington Road and Showground Business Park (14 Anella Avenue and 16-20 Salisbury Road); and
- Residential consortiums.

### ***Hartland Site***

The site is bounded by Victoria Road, Windsor Road, Packard Avenue and a service road. Two zonings currently apply to the site, with part zoned B5 Business Development, and part zoned IN2 Light Industrial.

The landowner proposal comprises a mixed use development including business uses, residential apartments and public open space.

The 2013 Structure Plan retained this part of the precinct for employment uses, and stated that Victoria Avenue is to be reinforced as a bulky goods corridor to provide a vital service function for the growing population of the North West. The site is also further than an 800m walking distance from the station location.

Due to the role of this part of the precinct identified in the Structure Plan, its distance from the station and proximity to arterial roads, the Department does not support the landowner proposal for this site.



#### ***46 Carrington Road and Showground Business Park***

Two separate proposals were made to the Department from different owners of sites in a similar location in the Showground Precinct, one at 46 Carrington Road and the other at a site known as the Showground Business Park. Both sites are currently zoned IN2 Light Industrial, with a maximum building height of 20 and a maximum floor space ratio of 1:1.

##### 46 Carrington Road

The site at 46 Carrington Road is located on the southern side of Carrington Road and has an area of approximately 4 hectares.

The landowner proposal for this site includes a mix of commercial and residential uses. The commercial component includes of 12,000m<sup>2</sup> of gross commercial floor space, providing for 640 jobs. Commercial buildings with retail uses at the ground floor were proposed along Carrington Avenue.

The residential component, located at the rear of the commercial uses, includes 70,000m<sup>2</sup> of gross residential floor space, that could deliver 1,005 apartments, with a floor space ratio of 2.07:1. These apartment buildings are proposed to range in height from 12m (3 storeys) to 46.5m (15 storeys).

##### Showground Business Park

The second site is known as the Showground Business Park, with property addresses of 14 Anella Avenue and 16-20 Salisbury Road. This site runs alongside Cattai Creek, south of Showground Road, and has an area of approximately 5.6 hectares.

Two options were put forward for this site. The first scheme features commercial buildings fronting Showground Road, with a gross floor area of 35,700m<sup>2</sup>, and up to 16 storeys in height. Residential apartment buildings would be located south of these buildings, over the remainder of the site. A total of 133,850m<sup>2</sup> gross floor area is proposed, which could deliver 1,102 apartments in buildings ranging in height from 8 to 20 storeys in height. Retail floor space of 7,670m<sup>2</sup> is also proposed.

The second scheme does not include commercial uses. Apartment buildings would be located across the site, with a total of 176,760m<sup>2</sup> gross floor area, which could deliver 1,369 apartments in buildings ranging in height from 8 to 20 storeys. This scheme also features retail floor space of 7,670m<sup>2</sup>.

##### Analysis

The 2013 Structure Plan identifies the subject sites for employment uses, to provide for the employment needs of a growing community and encourage the emergence of a new prominent employment area with direct access to the new station. The Structure Plan anticipated that this part of the precinct could accommodate large floorplate commercial offices on sites are carefully designed to integrate into the cultural/leisure/education area closer to the station.

The Department has considered a number of issues relating to these two land owner proposals, including:

- the need to retain sufficient employment lands to reflect the forecast employment growth in the precinct;
- the market demand analysis undertaken for employment uses in the precinct;
- the role of Carrington Avenue, in particular as the key link between the station and residential areas with the major employment/bulky goods retail area in the west;
- forecast housing demand in the region and provision of sufficient infrastructure to meet the demands of the new population; and

- achieving the public domain vision in the 2013 Structure Plan including upgraded streetscapes and improved green links.

It is considered that the Carrington Road frontage should be retained for commercial uses, including retail, to emphasise the role of this road and need to connect the employment areas with the station.

The area to the rear of the commercial area could potentially provide for residential uses. This would assist in providing a transition between the residential areas in the eastern part of the precinct and the employment area. It could also provide an important opportunity to open up the green links identified in the Structure Plan. Apartments in these areas would also achieve some activity in this part of the precinct outside of weekday working hours and on weekends, and provide passive surveillance to the creek corridor areas to improve safety for those using the green links. It is proposed to zone these areas R1 General Residential, which allows all types of housing, as well as business premises and offices to allow for flexibility of uses on these sites. This will be the only part of the precinct allowing this flexible zone.

The proposed building heights put forward in these schemes are not supported by the Department, as the precinct proposal seeks to locate the highest buildings, and greatest density, closest to the station. The precinct proposal recommends building heights of 27m, which is approximately 6 storeys of commercial office space, or 8 storeys of residential apartments, which is considered to be a suitable transition of height between the station and the industrial/bulky goods areas further west. An FSR of 2.3:1 has been recommended for lots fronting and/or within 200m of Carrington Road to encourage activity along this important street for the precinct, with an FSR of 1.49:1 for land within the Showground Business Park.

#### ***Residential consortiums***

The Department was approached by a number of residential property owners in the existing R2 Low Density Residential zoned land, advising that they had formed consortiums to sell their properties as single lots for development. No proposals have been put forward for these properties.

The issue of appropriate land uses, height and floor space ratios for this part of the precinct has been considered in detail in preparing the precinct plan, as outlined in Section 3 of this report.

## 6 Infrastructure Summary

A summary of the infrastructure items required to support the proposed Showground Station Precinct is provided in Table 11 and includes local and regional traffic improvements, public transport improvements, and education and local infrastructure.

These infrastructure items would be funded by a range of sources as identified below. The Precinct Support Scheme is also available to support infrastructure delivery and would prioritise items which improve public spaces and local access.

**Table 11 Infrastructure summary for Showground Station Precinct**

Item	Measure	Who	Process
<b>Regional &amp; strategic transport planning measures</b>			
1.	Construction of the Sydney Metro Northwest including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Metro Station, station plaza and public domain</li> <li>Bus, taxi, cycle and kiss and ride interchange facilities</li> <li>Customer Car Park with 600 spaces</li> <li>Public plaza and potential retail space</li> <li>Access for emergency, delivery and maintenance vehicles.</li> <li>New and upgraded Station Precinct access streets, including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New street between Showground Road and Cattai Creek/station car park (along southern edge of Castle Hill Showground), with bus-only right turn priority into Showground Road.</li> <li>Extension of Middleton Ave to Castle Hill Showground</li> <li>New street between Doran Drive and extended Middleton Ave</li> <li>Upgrade of Doran Drive</li> </ul> </li> <li>Shared paths along northern side of Carrington Road between Doran Drive and Showground Road</li> </ul>	TfNSW	Sydney Metro Northwest to be completed in 2019
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Showground Road Upgrade:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Widening of Showground Road to a minimum of four lanes between Carrington Road and Old Northern Road;</li> <li>Modifying the intersection of Showground Road and Pennant St to accommodate additional turning lanes and bus priority measures;</li> <li>Building a 2.5 metre wide shared footpath and cycleway along the northern side of Showground Road between Carrington Road and Pennant St;</li> <li>Bus priority measures including bus priority lanes.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	RMS	Voluntary Planning Agreement between Roads and Maritime Services, The Hills Shire Council and QIC and to be completed mid 2017
3.	Windsor Road widening, between Showground Road and Memorial Ave	TfNSW	To be determined as

Item	Measure	Who	Process
			precinct develops
4.	Bus network: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improvements to the rapid bus and suburban network to create a more connected system that complements the Sydney Metro Northwest</li> <li>Continued review and Improvements to local bus services, including bus routes to service new development areas</li> <li>Bus lanes on Norwest Boulevard as part of future upgrade.</li> </ul>	TfNSW	To be determined as precinct develops
	Intersection upgrades at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Showground Road / Carrington Road;</li> <li>Showground Road / Victoria Road;</li> <li>Windsor Road / Showground Road;</li> <li>Norwest Boulevard / Windsor Road;</li> </ul>	TfNSW	To be determined as precinct develops
<b>Local transport measures – potential road upgrades</b>			
5.	New and upgraded intersections, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Signalised Intersection - Carrington Road and Middleton Ave (replacing existing roundabout)</li> <li>New Signalised Intersection - Showground Road and new precinct access street (completed as part of NWRL early works)</li> <li>Signalisation of intersection of Doran Drive and Carrington Road.</li> <li>New traffic lights at the intersections of Showground Road with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rowallan Ave; and</li> <li>Kentwell Ave/Cheriton Ave;</li> </ul> </li> <li>Changing the intersection of Showground Road and Britannia Road to left-in/left-out access.</li> </ul> <p>Intersection upgrades at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Castle Street / Pennant Street;</li> <li>Carrington Road / Victoria Road; and</li> <li>Fishburn Crescent / Showground Road.</li> </ul>	TfNSW  RMS  Relevant road authority/ developer	Sydney Metro Northwest to be completed in 2019  Voluntary Planning Agreement between Roads and Maritime Services, The Hills Shire Council and QIC and to be completed mid 2017  Delivery as part of a Section 94 Plan and potential other funding sources
6.	New roads: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extension of Fishburn Crescent to Showground Road to provide vehicle access to the precinct south of Showground Road, and associated intersection upgrade.</li> <li>New local streets as development occurs</li> </ul>	Relevant road authority / developer	To be confirmed as precinct develops
7.	Potential extension of Carrington Road from Victoria Road to Windsor Road as a bus, walk and cycle only connection	Relevant road authority / developer	Delivery as part of a Section 94 Plan
<b>Local transport measures - Pedestrian and Bicycle Network</b>			

Item	Measure	Who	Process
8.	Dedicated pedestrian facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Footpaths on both sides of all streets in precinct.</li> <li>• Installation of new pedestrian crossings on new and existing streets where required to accommodate increased pedestrian activity</li> <li>• Pedestrian crossings on all legs at new signalled intersections.</li> </ul>	Relevant road authority / developer	Delivery as part of a Section 94 Plan and potential other funding sources
9.	Separated/shared paths: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Along Showground Road, between the Precinct and Castle Hill</li> </ul> Separated/shared paths: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Along Victoria Ave, between Carrington Road and Showground Road;</li> <li>• Along Windsor Road, between Showground Road and Memorial Ave;</li> <li>• Along Norwest Boulevard, between Windsor Road and Old Windsor Road;</li> <li>• Along Barina Downs Road, between Victoria Road and MacKillop Drive;</li> <li>• Along Salisbury Road, between Victoria Ave and Windsor Road; and</li> <li>• Along Cattai Creek, between Showground and Middleton Ave.</li> </ul>	RMS  Relevant road authority / developer	To be determined as precinct develops  Delivery as part of a Section 94 Plan and potential other funding sources
<b>Education</b>			
10.	Investigation for a potential new high school to be provided in either Castle Hill, Showground Station Precinct or Bella Vista Station Precinct	Department of Education and Communities	School Cluster Asset Plan
11.	Investigation for the expansion of existing primary schools (and out of school hours facilities where possible)	Department of Education and Communities	School Cluster Asset Plan
<b>Local open space and community facilities</b>			
12.	Expansion and embellishment of Chapman Avenue Reserve from 1,900m <sup>2</sup> to approximately 4,150m <sup>2</sup> .	The Hills Shire Council/ developer	Delivery as part of a Section 94 Plan and potential funding of improvements under the government funded Precinct Support Scheme
13.	Revitalisation of Cattai Creek Corridor including public ownership of land in the corridor.	The Hills Shire Council/ developer	Delivery as part of a Section 94 Plan and potential funding of improvements under the government funded Precinct Support Scheme
14.	Contribution to embellishment of sports fields in the surrounding area	The Hills Shire Council	Delivery as part of a Section 94 Plan and potential funding of improvements under the government funded Precinct Support Scheme



Item	Measure	Who	Process
15.	Village Plaza, minimum of 1,150m <sup>2</sup> located to the east of Doran Drive connecting Showground Station to Castle Hill Showground.	The Hills Shire Council/ developer	Delivery as part of a Section 94 Plan
16.	Multipurpose community centre at Castle Hill Showground, with a minimum floor area of 1,500m <sup>2</sup> to include youth and community needs	The Hills Shire Council	Delivery as part of a Section 94 Plan and potential funding of improvements under the government funded Precinct Support Scheme
17.	Embellishment of Castle Hill Showground	The Hills Shire Council	Delivery as part of a Section 94 Plan and potential funding of improvements under the government funded Precinct Support Scheme
18.	Embellishment of Cockayne Reserve	The Hills Shire Council	Delivery as part of a Section 94 Plan and potential funding of improvements under the government funded Precinct Support Scheme
19.	Streetscape works to improve pedestrian environments on key streets including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Victoria Ave; and</li> <li>• Carrington Street</li> </ul>	The Hills Shire Council/ developers	Delivery as part of a Section 94 Plan and potential funding of improvements under the government funded Precinct Support Scheme
20.	Children's services (these services could be combined): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 long day care centre</li> <li>• 2-3 pre-schools</li> <li>• 1 occasional care centre</li> <li>• 1 hours school care centre</li> </ul>	Not for profit or private sector	Private sector

## 6.1 Monitoring and Reporting

To provide a valuable evidence base to inform service and infrastructure delivery as the precinct redevelops the next 20 years, the Department will monitor and report annually on the:

- number of housing approvals, construction commencements and completions for all housing types within the Precinct;
- pipeline for additional housing throughout north west Sydney; and
- performance of The Hills and Blacktown Councils' development processing times.

The Department will also monitor population, household and dwelling projections for north-western Sydney, The Hills and Blacktown LGAs.

### *Employment Lands*

The Department's Employment Lands Development Program will continue to monitor and audit the supply of employment lands throughout the precinct and surrounding area to inform policy development, infrastructure co-ordination and future planning for employment lands.

### *Infrastructure Funding*

The Department will also work with infrastructure agencies and stakeholders to co-ordinate the infrastructure required to support integrated land use planning throughout the precinct and broader corridor.

This will include the identification of available finance and contributions schemes to deliver key infrastructure items and open space projects.

## 7 Next Steps

Following the public exhibition of the Showground Station Precinct rezoning proposal, the Department of Planning and Environment will assess the matters raised in the submissions and where required, the rezoning proposal will be amended.

Once finalised, the rezoning proposal will be forwarded to the Minister for Planning for approval.

Approval and publication of the rezoning will enable the lodgement of development applications for individual development proposals with The Hills Shire Council for processing and assessment.

The Minister for Planning will be the consent authority for subdivision works and enabling infrastructure on NSW Government land.

It will also be a matter for The Hills Shire Council to consider adopting the Department's recommended development controls for incorporation in council's comprehensive development control plan.