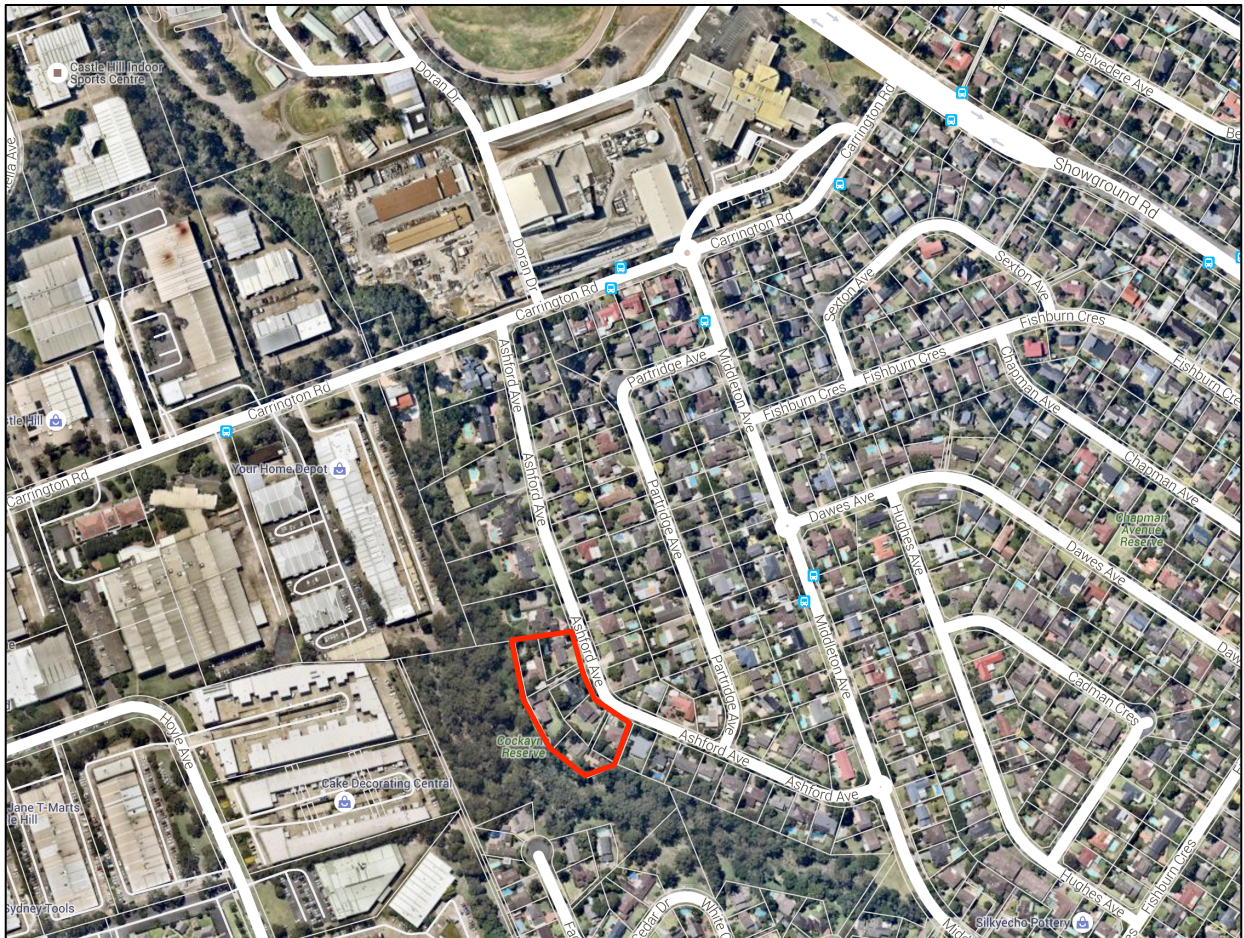


Submission:

Showground Station Precinct Proposal

Prepared on behalf of land owners of 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 32 and 34 Ashford Avenue, CASTLE HILL.



Prepared by: Think Planners
Document Date: 25 February 2016
LGA: Hills Shire Council

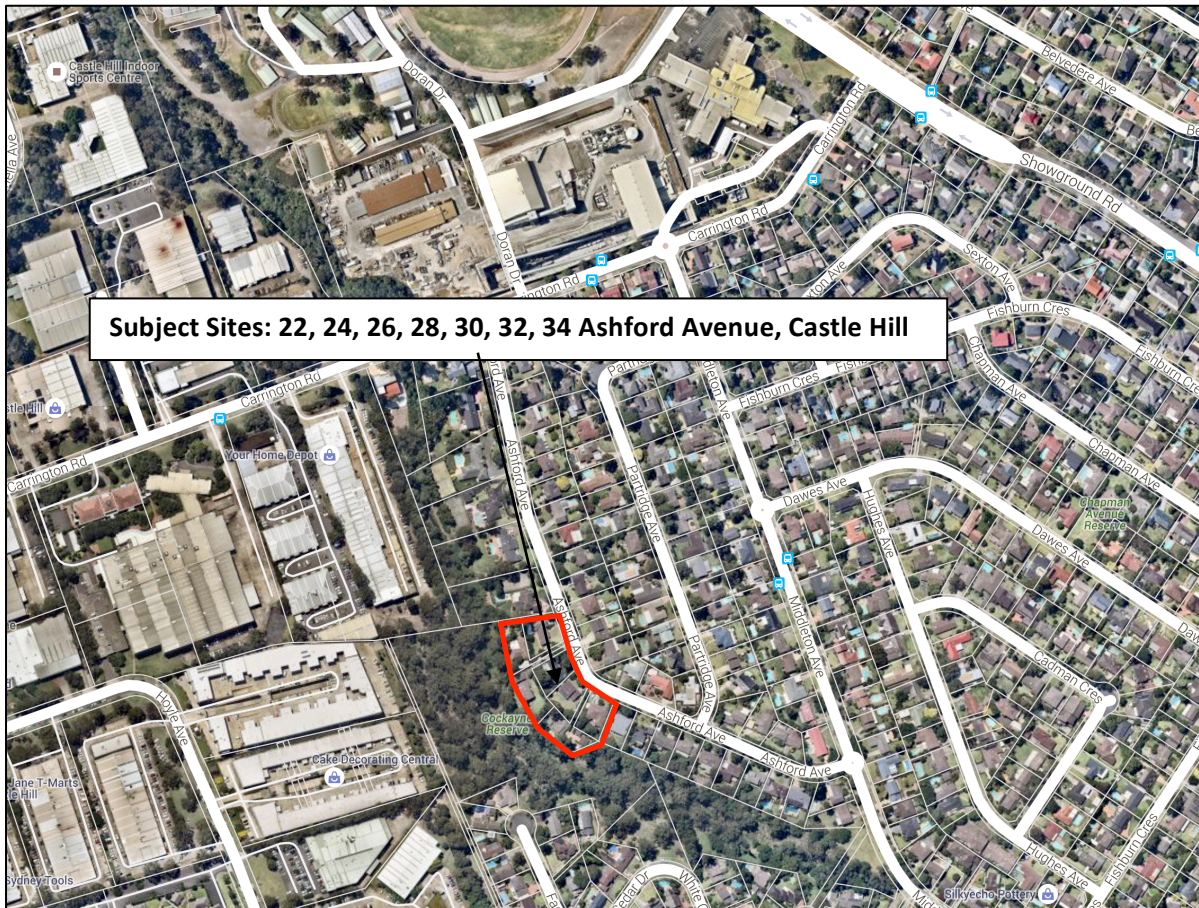
QUALITY ASSURANCE

PROJECT: Submission: Showground Station Precinct Proposal
ADDRESS: 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 32 and 34 Ashford Avenue, CASTLE HILL
COUNCIL: Hills Shire Council
AUTHOR: Think Planners Pty Ltd

Date	Purpose of Issue	Rev	Reviewed	Authorised
25 February 16	Draft Submission Issue	Draft	SJ	AB
27 February	Submission Issue	Final	AB	AB

Subject Sites

Think Planners Pty Ltd are engaged by the owners of 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 32 and 34 Ashford Avenue, Castle Hill. These sites are identified in the aerial photograph below.



Think Planners Pty Ltd have reviewed the Showground Station Precinct Proposal December 2015 as published by the NSW Government and provide commentary as it applies to this land and surrounds identified above.

Ashford Avenue is located within the well-established low density residential area of Castle Hill. The land currently contains a mix of single and double storey low density residential dwellings of various ages and architectural styles. The properties on the south western side of Ashford Avenue are afforded an exceptionally high level of amenity as they adjoin the open space corridor within Cockayne Reserve.

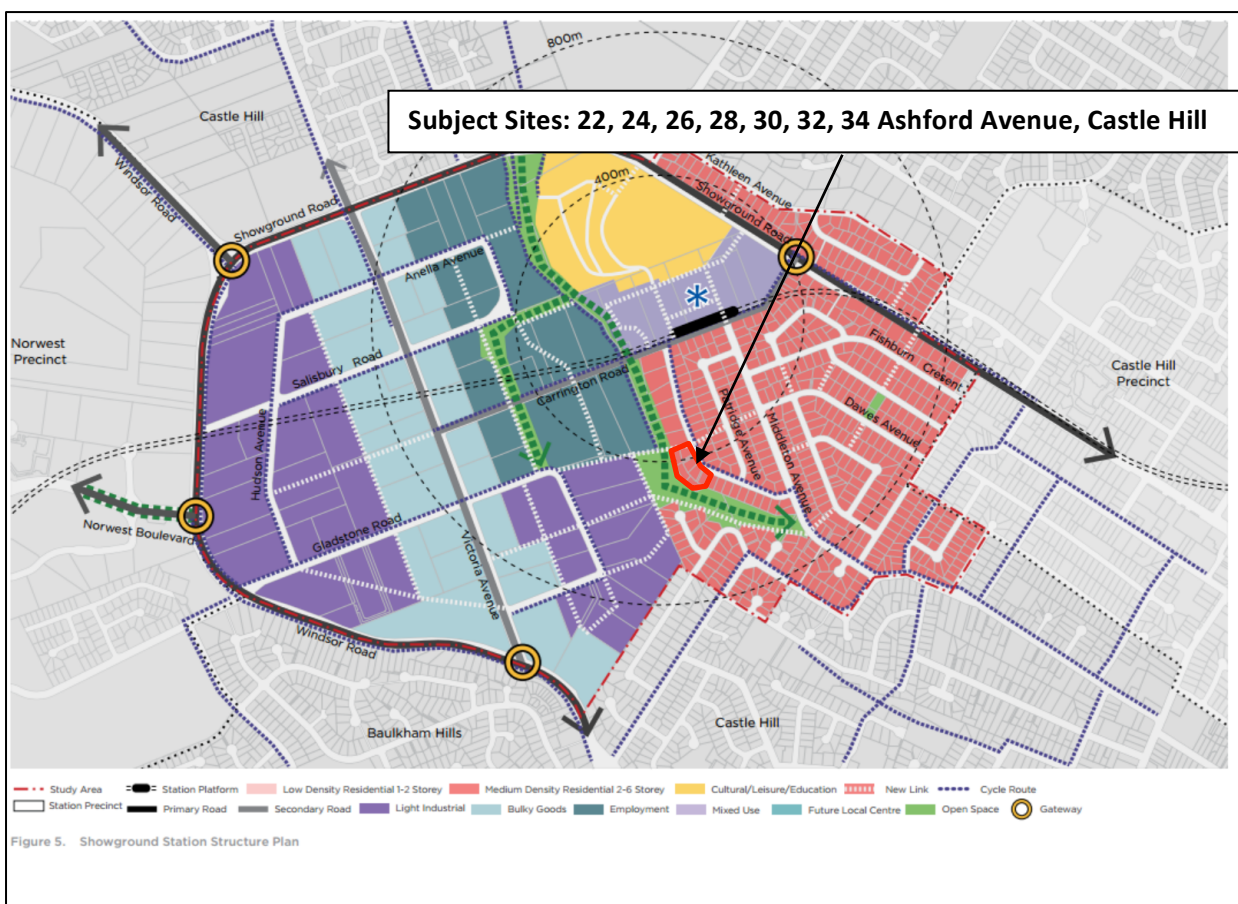
The establishment of the North West Rail Link acts as the key catalyst for transforming Castle Hill into a well-connected sustainable community for the future. The land subject to this submission is generally located within 400m of Showground Station and associated future local centre. The land provides an example of an ideal location for higher density housing development.

The owners of this land have formed together and will work together for the development of this land. This has benefits in allowing a comprehensively master-planned development which will deliver a superior urban design outcome.

Discussion

The land at Ashford Avenue Castle Hill is located within the Showground Station Precinct Proposal as per the NSW Government's publication from December 2015. This Proposal has been informed by the 2013 North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy. The Proposal includes the Showground Station Precinct which is centred on the new Showground Station aiming to provide excellent transport access to employment centres, retail and educational facilities. This Precinct will provide for a greater supply of homes, more housing choice, more jobs closer to home, and great public places.

A Structure Plan was prepared for the Showground Station Precinct as part of the North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy. An extract from the Structure Plan is shown below with the sites at Ashford Avenue identified.

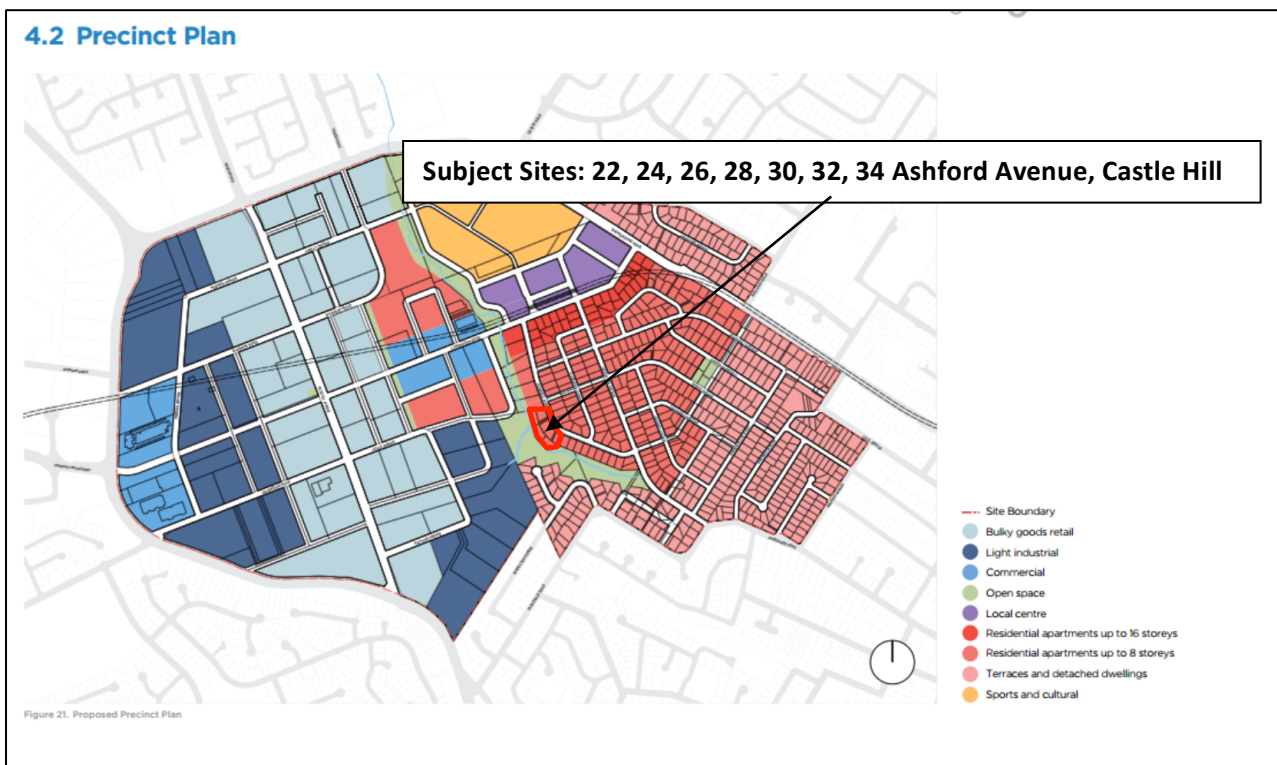


Ashford Avenue is identified in this initial Structure Plan to provide medium density housing up to 6 storeys. As can be seen the subject land is generally within 400m walking distance of Showground Station.

The NSW Government's Plan for Growing Sydney 2014 provides a vision for Sydney over the next 20 years which is built on the foundations of world class transport, housing choice, creation of liveable communities and sustainable communities. The Government's Plan recognises that one of the largest challenges is how to best provide the needed 664,000 new homes needed for a predicted 1.6 million more residents by 2031 and in response to this recognition the Government pursues the Priority Precincts program.

Priority Precincts, including the Showground Station Precinct, are all within 800m of planned transport services. The Showground Station Precinct benefits from public transport connection which aims to create a convenient and enjoyable lifestyle with the added benefit of reduction in traffic congestion. Moving away from the traditional low density development of this area to introduce a variety of housing forms affords a range of community wide benefits including allowing local residents to age in place.

The Showground Station Precinct is envisioned to deliver 5,000 new homes within this Precinct in the next 20 years. In order to deliver these homes a detailed Precinct Plan has been developed showing the delivery of residential apartments up to 8 storeys in height along Ashford Avenue Castle Hill, see extract from the Precinct Plan below.

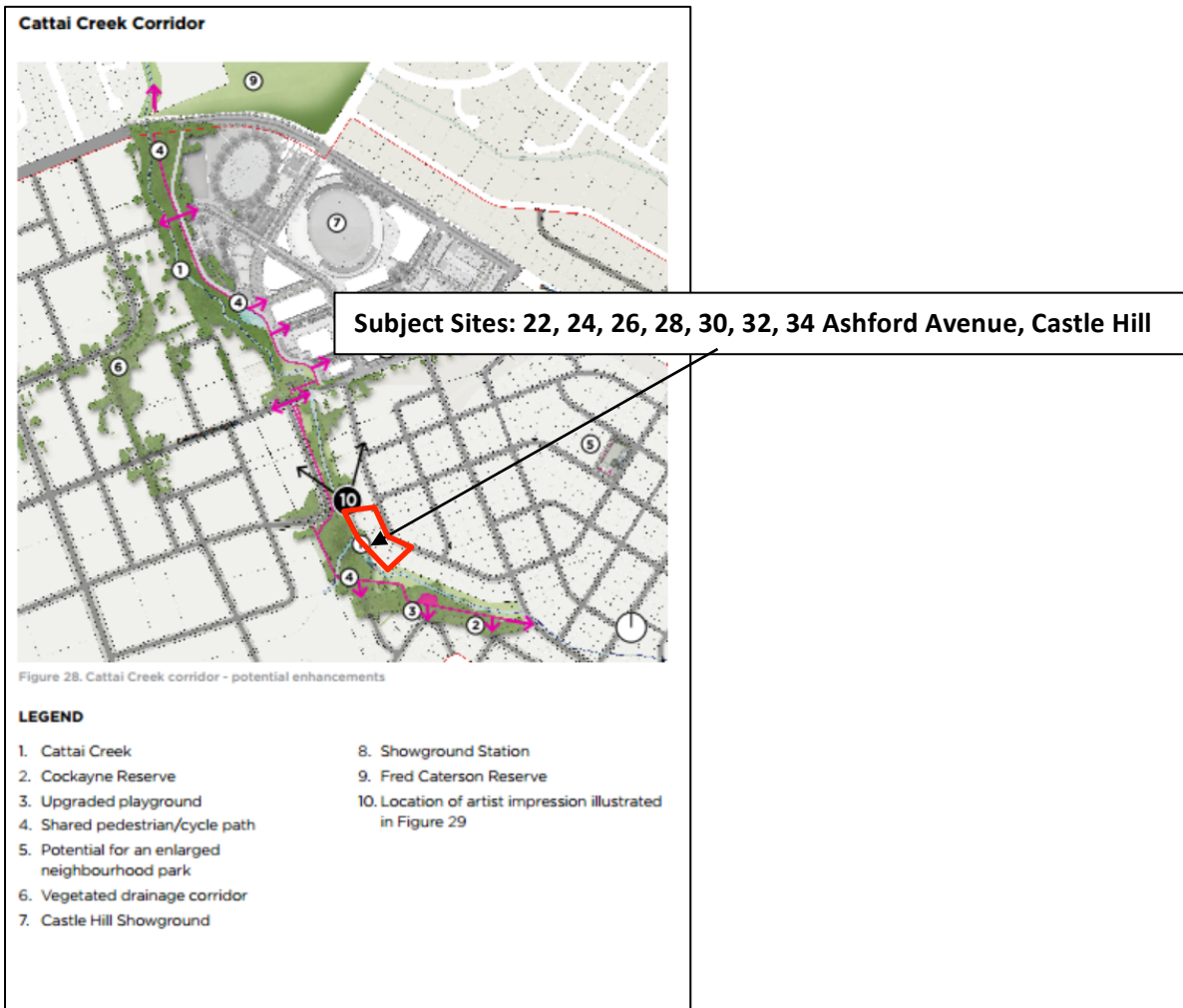


The subject sites are located within the proposed Residential Apartments Sub-precinct which is on the southern side of Carrington Road. The key characteristics of this area include a high level of accessibility to the station, shops, open space and other related town centre facilities. The proposed height limits for residential flat buildings in this location makes the transition from the higher density residential development in the north of this Precinct (at 12 to 16 storeys) down to residential flat buildings with height limits from 8 to 6 storeys.

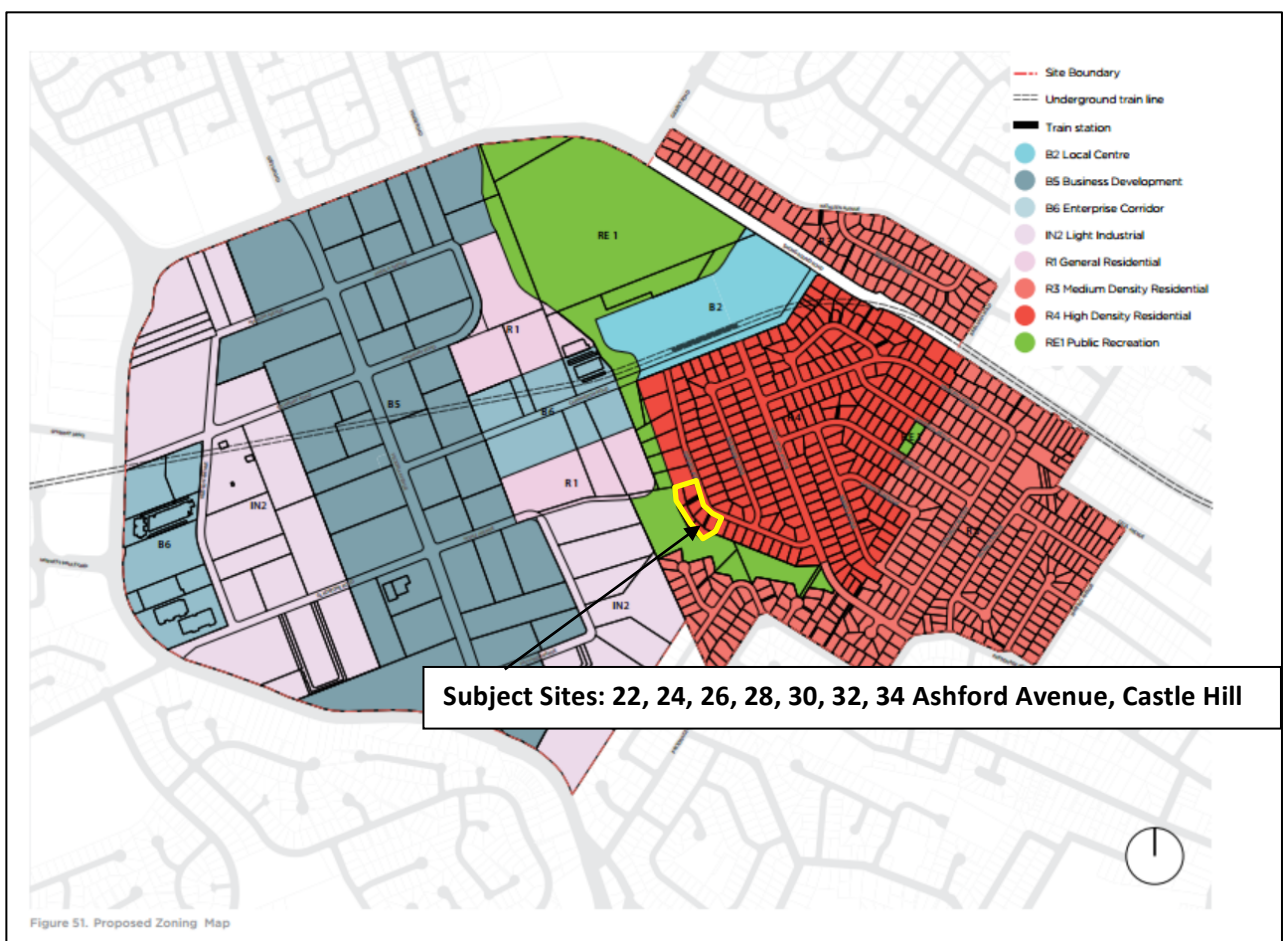
The open space corridor located at the rear of properties along Ashford Avenue provides a good buffer for the transition from high density development through to the medium density development to the south. The open space corridor acts as a green barrier appropriately framing the future local centre and high density residential development.

As highlighted above the subject land is well connected to good quality public open space and public open space corridors as shown in below in the Cattai Creek Corridor.

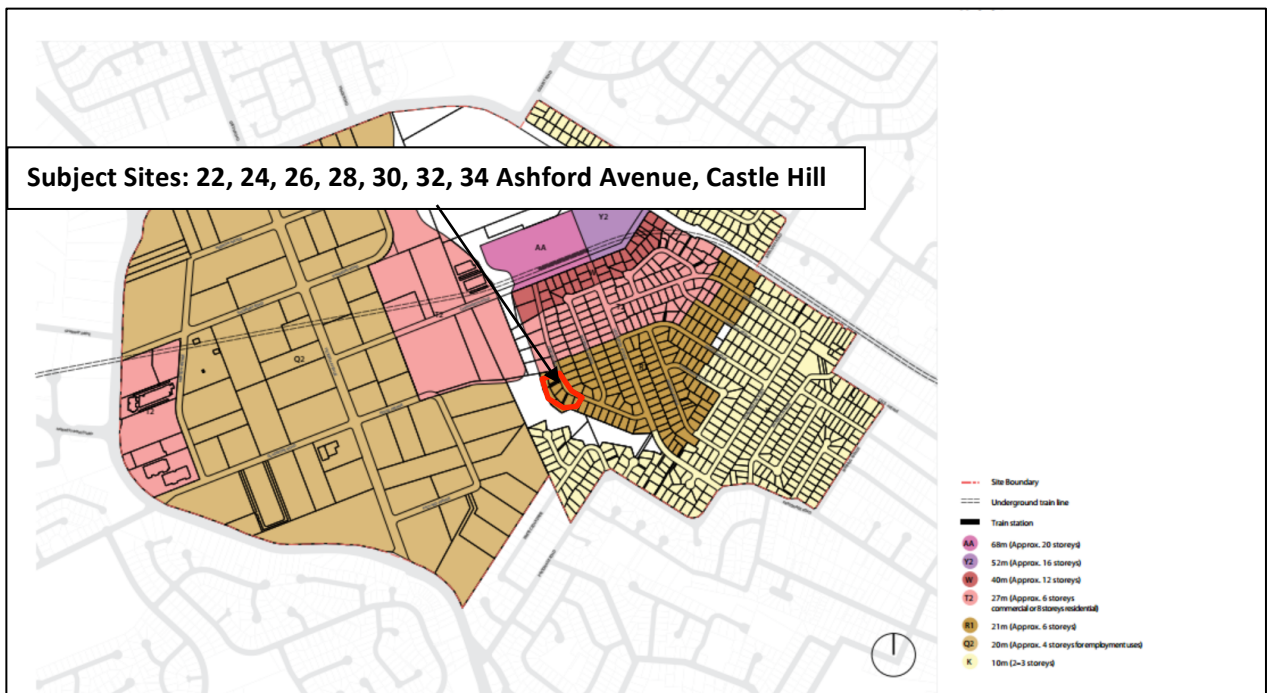
Along with the amenity benefits of an open space corridor comes the planned shared pedestrian and cycle path infrastructure which will enhance direct links from the subject land through to the station precinct.



The Showground Station Precinct Proposal identifies the subject land at Ashford Avenue to be zoned R4 High Density Residential (see below) which again is a reflection of the characteristics of the land having a high level of accessibility to the station, shops, open space and other facilities.



The Showground Station Precinct Proposal identifies the subject land to be developed to approximately 6 storeys which again is commensurate with the key characteristics of this land.



This submission supports the proposed Precinct Plan as it relates to the development of land at Ashford Avenue Castle Hill and in particular the proposed R4 High Density Residential zone along with the maximum building height controls to permit up to 8 storeys. It is our view that having regard to the height and the large land holding that an FSR of approximately 2.3:1 is appropriate and will ensure delivery of development.

The Precinct Proposal reinforces the planning principles being advocated by all levels of Government in providing increased density around public transport which is more commonly known as transit oriented development. The key principle of transit oriented development is maximising access to public transport and encouraging its use. The proposed high density residential zoning of land at Ashford Avenue is consistent with both the State and Local policy platforms along with the guiding principle of transit orientated development.

Conclusion

The proposed Showground Station Precinct Proposal is supported by the owners of land at 22, 24, 26, 28, 30,32 and 34 Ashford Avenue Castle Hill. This land is ideally located in walking distance of Showground Station where a group of land owners are working together to deliver a consolidated site to the market that will allow for the comprehensive masterplanning of a large residential development. A larger development site like this provides the opportunity to bring forward a good quality urban design outcome which can provide housing diversity and choice.

The proposed 8 storey height, along with a corresponding FSR of approximately 2.3:1, is considered appropriate to achieve the outcomes sought and a high quality urban outcome.

Any reduction in zoning, height or density controls under future plans would present concerns for the viability of delivering the housing targets set forward for this Precinct. In the absence of appropriate planning controls redevelopment of these sites will be stifled which will be a significant missed opportunity.

The planning controls included in the Showground Station Precinct Proposal will enable the timely redevelopment of the subject site consistent with the desired future character envisaged within the locality.

The Showground Station Precinct Proposal provides for a holistic approach to the planning for this Precinct enabling a logical rollout of high density residential development in locations that are walkable to the future railway station and associated community/commercial infrastructure.

The owners of the subject land would like to be kept informed of further progress with the precinct planning for this area. I would appreciate you keeping Think Planners Pty Ltd up to date with future documents and planning controls for the site.

Adam Byrnes
Director
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