



Rhodes East - Social Infrastructure and Open Space Assessment

Final Report

Client:

Roberts Day, on behalf of NSW Department of Planning & Environment

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Executive summary

This Social Infrastructure and Open Space Assessment, prepared by Elton Consulting, considers the facilities and services that will be required to support population growth arising from future development within the Rhodes East Priority Precinct Investigation Area. Rhodes East is one of a number of precincts within the Sydney metropolitan area designated for housing densification around transport hubs.

Relevant policies and objectives of the NSW Government and the City of Canada Bay Council have been reviewed to provide the guiding framework for the planning and provision of community facilities and open space.

The study presents an analysis of the social context of the Rhodes East Precinct and surrounding areas. It examines characteristics of the existing population and also considers those of Rhodes West, which has seen rapid growth and change over the past 10 years and provides useful insights into the characteristics of people likely to move to the Rhodes East Precinct in the future.

The report then examines existing human services, community and recreational facilities and open space in and around the Rhodes East Precinct and their capacity to absorb demand likely to be generated by future residents. Social infrastructure within Rhodes East is relatively limited. The Rhodes Community Centre on Blaxland Road is a heavily used, but dated facility with a range of heritage constraints. A large new cultural and community precinct, known as The Connection, will shortly open in Rhodes West. Rhodes West also contains a large commercial and retail centre and several childcare centres. A wide range of other services and facilities are available in nearby centres such as Concord, Burwood, Strathfield, Bicentennial Park and Sydney Olympic Park, which are easily accessible by rail, bicycle and on foot. Concord's facilities include schools, a library, community centre, hospital, medical facilities and commercial areas. A proposed library, school and regional open spaces are, or will soon be, located to the west in Wentworth Point and the Sydney Olympic Park precincts. Key needs for the existing community include access to flexible meeting and activity spaces for a range of purposes, indoor and outdoor places and spaces for large community or private gatherings, local medical services such as doctors and allied health services and improved public transport. A number of recently established childcare centres will address some pre-existing gaps in service provision, and The Connection will provide much needed space for community activities for existing residents and the new community in Rhodes East. However, additional services will be required by the area's growing population in future.

The study found that the Precinct has a good supply of open space and recent upgrades and embellishments recommended in the *Open Space Masterplan* and *Plan of Management (Corkery 2015a and 2015b)* have now been completed. At the same time, sporting fields in the surrounding area are already at capacity. Other open space and recreation needs include good quality walkways and plazas where residents can walk, meet, access the waterfront, shops, food and activities, open lawn areas and parks, barbeque and picnic facilities with good amenities, public toilets and signage. On the basis of this assessment, new local services, facilities and quality open space will be required to cater for the future population.

The Structure Plan for Rhodes, as detailed in the Urban Design Report prepared by RobertsDay, envisages an additional 4,000 human scale, high density dwellings and around 9,100 new residents across five distinct 'character areas'. Characteristics of a population attracted to high density living have been analysed and would be expected to include high proportions of well-educated young adults working in professional occupations, households of generally only one or two people and low

proportions of families with school aged children and older people aged 65+. High density areas also typically show high proportions of rental properties and high levels of cultural diversity.

The analysis suggests a range of social infrastructure should be provided to meet the needs generated by the projected population growth in the Rhodes East Priority Investigation Area. The following community facilities are recommended for inclusion within Rhodes East precinct:

- » An expanded multi-purpose community centre (with an additional 546-1,065m² floorspace) to be provided as part of a heritage-sensitive redevelopment of the Rhodes Community Centre on Blaxland Road, adjoining an active 'green corner' of mixed use and open space at the south western corner of Denham Street and Cavell Avenue. This expanded facility would complement and expand the range of community uses and spaces, and would operate in synergy with The Connection in Rhodes West
- » A primary school
- » Convenience retail and specialty commercial venues where people can meet, eat, drink and relax
- » 4 privately operated childcare centres (depending on size)
- » Local medical centres.

Arrangements for the location, timing and delivery arrangements for the new local primary school remain subject to ongoing discussions between DP&E and the Department of Education.

In terms of local open space and recreation facilities, this study has recognised that there are several important challenges to providing additional areas of open space in this area, including fragmented land ownership within the precinct, large areas of good quality open space within close proximity and high costs of acquiring new open space. The Structure Plan instead adopts a model for open space provision that focuses on creating new walkways and connections, linking local areas with the harbour and parks, embellishing existing areas of open space and creating a high quality public domain. This approach is supported by Council's Open Space Masterplan and other policies and has been successfully applied in other high density residential areas.

The Structure Plan allows for:

- » 1.92 ha of new public open space, made up of redevelopment of Leeds Street foreshore to provide a foreshore transit plaza (future Ferry Wharf) and destination retail and commercial activities, expansion of King George V Park, enhancements to McIlwaine Park (including potentially breaking down the barrier of Concord Road through construction of a station bridge), investment in foreshore works and new facilities at Uhrs Point Reserve, foreshore resting areas and a continuous foreshore access
- » Secondary and internal green links and a high quality public domain via enhanced 'Complete Streets', new streets, pedestrian connections, 'Corners Strategy', public art and placemaking
- » Exploration of opportunities for development of a 'river pool'
- » Passive local open space embellished to a standard consistent with the range of passive recreational activity needs of a high density population and the recommendations of Council's Open Space Masterplan.

The future community will also rely to some extent on existing open space and recreation facilities in Rhodes West, Sydney Olympic Park, Concord, Burwood, Strathfield and the wider area for access to regional open space, sporting fields, indoor sports courts, outdoor court complexes and aquatic facilities. However, with population growth in surrounding areas, these facilities are reaching their capacity the facilities proposed within this Structure Plan are needed to provide high quality public spaces, places and connections to support this new population of Rhodes East.

1 Introduction

This report has been prepared by Elton Consulting for Roberts Day, on behalf of NSW Department of Planning & Environment (DP&E) as one of a number of technical studies to support investigations into the future planning for Rhodes East. DP&E is working with the City of Canada Bay Council to prepare a rezoning proposal for the 36ha site, following Council's request for the site to be declared a Priority Precinct.

Elton Consulting was engaged to prepare an assessment of the social infrastructure and open space that would be required to support an increase in population associated with a potential rezoning of the precinct. This report builds on an earlier Preliminary Report to:

- » Review relevant social infrastructure and open space studies for Rhodes East and the City of Canada Bay
- » Document existing community facilities in and around the Rhodes East Precinct, their usage and capacity, plans for new facilities and key issues in providing for future community needs
- » Use broad population estimates implied by the Structure Plan to forecast the types of social infrastructure and open space needs that would be generated
- » Detail a plan for provision of social infrastructure and open space to meet identified needs, based on existing facilities and capacity, accepted benchmarks and standards and advice from Council and the Department of Education as to the preferred rates and methods of provision.

1.1 Precinct location and context

The Rhodes East Priority Investigation Area is bounded by the Parramatta River in the north, Brays Bay in the East, Mary Street, Rhodes in the south and the Northern Rail Line / Blaxland Road, Rhodes in the west, as shown in Figure 1 overleaf. Bisected by Concord Road, Rhodes East contains mainly low density housing to the east of Concord Road and south of Leeds Street, and the Leeds Street Industrial Area along the Parramatta River in the north. The train station, topography and waterfront setting contribute to an area that is easily accessible by public transport, bicycle and on foot to many established and emerging centres such as Concord, Burwood, Strathfield, Sydney Olympic Park, Wentworth Point and Carter Street.

Until the 1970s, the Rhodes Peninsula was characterised by an industrial precinct to the west of the railway line and in the southern section of the peninsula, an industrial area to the Peninsula's north east (Leeds Street Industrial Precinct) and a predominately residential area to the east.

Remediation and redevelopment of Rhodes West industrial areas over the past 20 years through Sydney REP 29 (1999), the Draft Rhodes West Masterplan (2009) and the Rhodes West Development Control Plan (DCP) (2015), has transformed the Peninsula physically and socially. Industrial sites have been replaced with retail, commercial and high density transport oriented residential mixed-use developments. In the past five years alone, more than 40 planning, community engagement, open space and development projects have been delivered, involving Council, private sector developers and other levels of government. Businesses include the Rhodes Waterside Shopping Centre, Rhodes Corporate Park and smaller businesses, which together provide an estimated 8,000 jobs. A major new cultural and community precinct in Rhodes West, known as The Connection, will open shortly to meet the needs of residents from the area, and a large new indoor recreation and leisure facility is planned to the west of Rhodes train station. The residential population in Rhodes West, including Liberty

Grove, is currently around 14,000 people (City of Canada Bay website – *The Rhodes Community*; City of Canada Bay, November 2012).

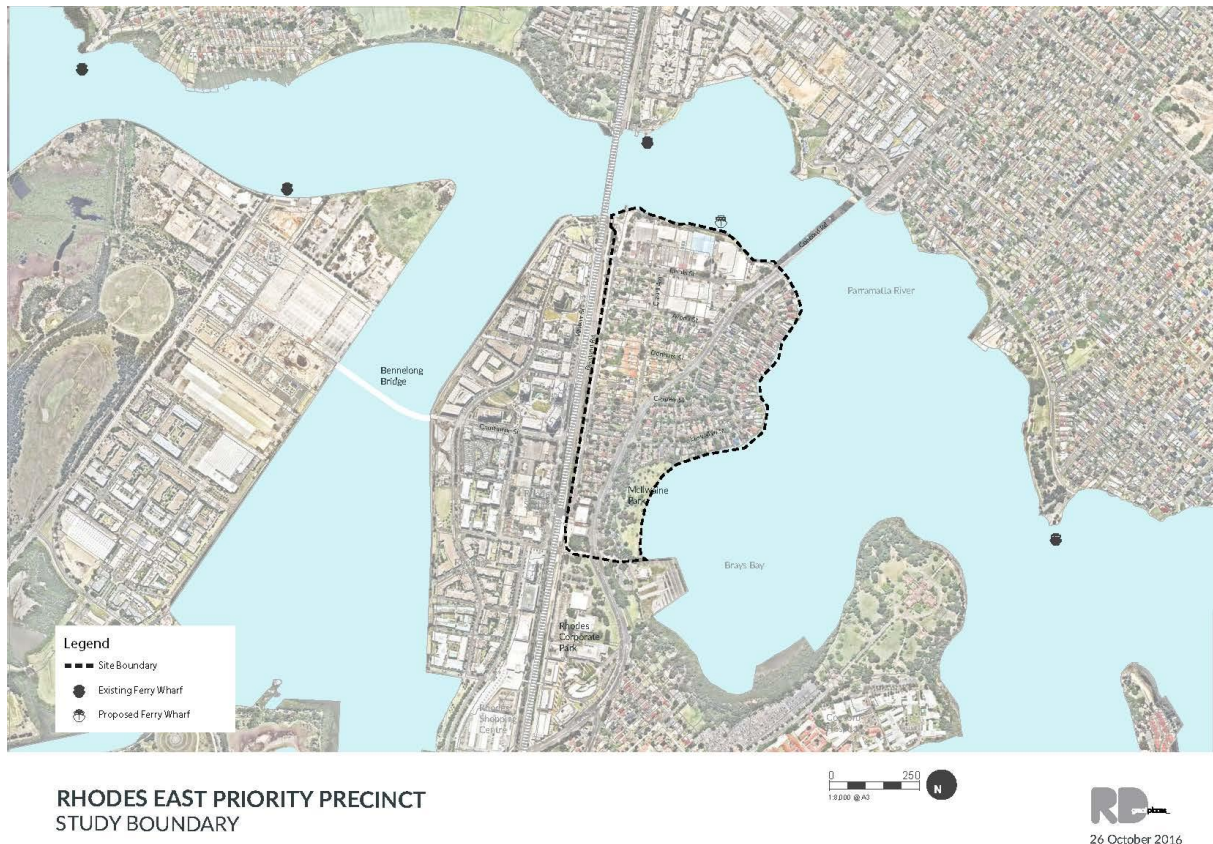


Figure 1 Context Map – Rhodes East Priority Precinct Investigation Area

Beyond the Peninsula's boundaries, significant development is planned for Sydney Olympic Park, Wentworth Point, Carter Street and Homebush, in Auburn LGA to the west, including large new residential communities. Development has also been occurring along the northern foreshore of the Parramatta River in Meadowbank and Ryde.

1.2 Precinct vision and objectives

The Vision and Objectives adopted to guide urban renewal of Rhodes East as proposed by Council are:

Vision:

Rhodes East will be an exciting and vibrant place to live and work through the creation of a connected and diverse community.

Objectives:

- » Sustainability – A high-level of sustainability is to be achieved
- » Transport - Prioritise walking, cycling and the use of public transport ahead of private vehicles
- » Affordable Housing - Deliver a minimum 5% affordable housing for key workers in the area (note: percentage to be tested through economic modelling)

- » Human scale high-density development of 4-15 Storeys – achieve a significant increase in residential density without the extensive need for high-towers (note: 4-15 storeys is based on initial work of the Future Cities Collaborative and Council)
- » Waterfront Access – Provide continuous public access to the Parramatta River foreshore.

Social infrastructure includes services and facilities such as schools, preschools and childcare, sports and recreation, community centres and aged care facilities, as well as areas of open space and walking / cycling connections.

2 Precinct planning context

This chapter examines the social policy and planning context of Rhodes East and the findings of previous studies to assist in understanding the background against which the Precinct would be planned and redeveloped. This includes a review of a demographic profile report of the existing population of the Precinct, to understand the relevant social characteristics that may indicate existing needs and social infrastructure demands.

2.1 Policy and planning context

Documents relating to Rhodes East have been prepared for a range of purposes in recent years, including the development of Rhodes West (west of the railway line), planning for Rhodes Central Urban Activation Precinct (UAP -the area between the railway line and Concord Road) and more recently Rhodes East (east of the railway line).

Key policies, plans and studies relevant to an understanding of social infrastructure and open space within and near the precinct are summarised below.

A Plan for Growing Sydney

Sydney's Metropolitan Strategy, *A Plan for Growing Sydney* (NSW Government 2014), sets the overall context for development within Sydney and contains a number of directions and actions aimed at accelerating housing supply and improving housing choice in both urban renewal and greenfield precincts. The Plan aims to reinvigorate key Sydney suburbs with a greater choice of homes linked to improved public transport, and access to shops, restaurants, parks and education and health services.

The next stage in planning will be the preparation of individual subregional plans, in partnerships between the State Government, Councils and the community. Subregional plans will link the strategic directions of the *Plan for Growing Sydney* with more detailed planning controls for local areas.

The City of Canada Bay is located within the Central Subregion of Sydney, which is forecast to increase from 819,400 to 1,086,250 residents between 2011 and 2031 – an increase of more than 266,000 people. It is estimated that this rate of population growth will require construction of 130,700 new homes in this 20 year timeframe.

Priorities for the Central Subregion relevant to Rhodes East include:

- » A competitive economy
- » Accelerate housing supply, choice and affordability and build great places to live
 - > Work with Councils to identify suitable locations for revitalised suburbs, new services, homes and jobs close to transport
- » Protect the natural environment and promote its sustainability and resilience
 - > Work with councils to:
 - implement the Greater Sydney Local Land Service's State Strategic Plan to guide natural resource management
 - protect the natural attributes and visual amenity of the coastline and enhance opportunities for public access
 - protect the health of waterways and aquatic habitats.

Rhodes is identified as a Strategic Centre with the following priorities:

- » Work with council to protect capacity for long-term employment growth in Rhodes
- » Work with council to provide capacity for additional mixed-use development in Rhodes including offices, retail, services and housing
- » Support health-related land uses and infrastructure around Concord Hospital
- » Work with council to improve walking and cycling connections between Rhodes train station and Concord Hospital
- » Facilitate construction of a public transport, walking and cycling bridge over Homebush Bay to connect Rhodes to Wentworth Point.

Futures Plan 20 Community Strategic Plan

FuturesPlan20 (FP20 – City of Canada Bay 2010) is the City of Canada Bay's *Community Strategic Plan*. The Plan sets out a community vision prepared as an input to Council's *Local Planning Strategy*. Engagement identified community values and priorities for the City around four key themes:

- » Active and Vibrant – focusing on support for community health and wellbeing, places for participation in sport and recreation, availability of community service needs, opportunities for community connection, celebration of established and emerging community, cultural awareness and support for the arts, culture and lifelong learning
- » Sustainable Spaces and Places – focuses on protecting the environmental, cultural and social values of open spaces and foreshore areas, protection and enhancement of biodiversity, support for environmental sustainability, a safer community, enhancing community spaces and infrastructure and sustainable design that conserves local heritage
- » Innovative and Engaged – focuses on open communication and collaboration on local issues, promoting local services and events, and innovation and good governance to meet community and legislative expectations
- » Thriving and Connected – focusing on support for a range of housing options, develop facilities to promote walking and cycling, safe and accessible local footpaths and roads, public transport options, support for local shopping centres, local employment, education and skills development, maintenance of sustainable tourism destinations and support for large high quality, global standard business parks and enterprises.

The values and aspirations reflected in the Plan are important in planning for a new community in Rhodes East. They are consistent with the community feedback from a range of other consultations held within the LGA.

Canada Bay Local Planning Strategy (LPS) 2010-2031

Canada Bay's *Local Planning Strategy (LPS) 2010* provides long term direction for the planning of Canada Bay, to assist future decision-making in response to population growth and change. The Strategy also ensures that Sydney-wide strategic plans and projects (such as infrastructure, employment, housing) are incorporated into the Council's planning decisions.

Sections relating to housing, employment and recreation and open space are directly relevant to the Social Infrastructure and Open Space Assessment.

Housing

The LPS sets out ways in which the State Government housing objectives and targets can be achieved within the City of Canada Bay to ensure there is housing choice so that there is an adequate supply for families, for people with disabilities, and that priorities for affordability and the needs of the ageing population are met. Forecasts for future housing demand and supply have been superseded by the

current plans for the rezoning of Rhodes East. However, the LPS sets out a range of objectives and actions for housing in the LGA that are relevant to social planning for this area.

Objectives are to:

- » Provide a broad mix of new housing
- » Facilitate the provision of a greater share of low cost or affordable housing
- » Support and revitalise traditional local centres.

Strategies to achieve these objectives include:

- » Provide a mix of housing types over the short and medium term
- » Provide a greater share of low cost and affordable housing
- » Ensure an adequate supply of low cost housing in the private market
- » Monitor and evaluate housing strategies
- » Improve urban design.

Employment

The LPS addresses future employment needs and provision, as population growth creates demand for a range of industries and commercial floorspace. In 2006, Rhodes had the highest employment density in the LGA, with Rhodes Waterside Shopping Centre and commercial floorspace, Rhodes Corporate Park and Leeds Street industrial zone. Future employment growth in the LGA is expected to be concentrated in Rhodes, consistent with the Draft Inner West Sub-regional Strategy.

Broad employment objectives and those specific to Rhodes support the protection of some employment lands and further development of employment opportunities in this area:

- » Improve transport services and infrastructure and capitalise on opportunities for future transport and road infrastructure upgrades
- » Protect employment generating capacity and provide diverse opportunities for employment
- » Retain industrial sites
- » Support strategically positioned new and developing centres - including the development of Rhodes as a specialist centre and economic driver for the LGA
- » Encourage a diverse employment base
- » Support home based businesses and support for start-ups.

Recreation and open space

Recreation and open space objectives across a range of government policies and plans aim to increase participation in community activities, use of parks, sporting and recreational facilities and participation in the arts and cultural activities.

Council's provision of open space and recreational facilities are outlined according to a classification by hierarchy and functions. Overall, the LGA contains more than 218ha of open space, or 3.32ha per 1,000 residents. Excluding the 40ha privately owned Concord Golf Course, the remaining 170ha is distributed across local, district and regional parks, with the high proportion of regionally significant open space due to several large foreshore and sports parts such as Majors Bay Reserve, Timbrell Park, St Luke's Park, Cintra Park and Queen Elizabeth Park. Almost two thirds of the open space is within Concord Statistical Local Area (SLA), with the remainder in Drummoyne SLA.

The LPS lists Council's recreational facilities and average population serviced by each facility (see Appendix B). The LPS notes that while the overall rate of open space provision is close to the generally accepted benchmark of 2.83ha/1,000 residents, it is important to take a range of other

factors into consideration when considering community needs. Open space adequacy issues were examined in the City's 2007 *Recreation Plan* which concluded that the quantity of open space was adequate but only just so, "with little spare capacity to accommodate the additional open space needs generated by new development" (p. 124). A range of issues were also raised in relation to the quality and distribution of open space across the LGA. These included:

- » Relatively high rates per capita of open space provided in Rhodes
- » A perception of a lack of sporting and recreation facilities across the LGA
- » A high proportion of small local parks
- » Limited supply of natural areas
- » Many sportsgrounds rated by user organisations as having poor quality turf, insufficient floodlighting, poor to adequate amenities, floodlighting, kiosks etc.

Demand for active open space was seen as being particularly under pressure. Many sporting fields and courts are being used at or above capacity in winter months (p. 125).

While population growth forecasts are now out of date, the LPS contains useful principles for future provision of open space and recreational facilities, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 City of Canada Bay Principles for Provision of Parks

Attribute	Local Parks	District Parks	Town Parks
Function	Accessible and close-to-home ('walk to') recreation opportunities in residential areas. They are important for most residents – but particularly for children, the parents of children and older people	Larger, less accessible ('drive to') parks providing for larger scale or specialist recreation opportunities that cannot be readily accommodated in small local parks.	Provide rest / relaxation and entertainment opportunities for workers, shoppers and visitors to commercial/retail centres
Catchment	1. Small local reserves that provide for people within immediately adjacent areas - probably within 200-300 metres walking distance 2. Larger neighbourhood parks that may attract users from surrounding suburbs/areas (but still usually within walking or cycling distance).	Desirably within 2-3 kilometres of all households	
Key uses	The small reserves provide short-term play and rest opportunities and landscape features, primarily for local residents.	As for larger local parks plus longer-term activities – family/group social gatherings, picnicking, walking/cycling Greater range of facilities –	Range from small landscaped squares to large pedestrian malls

Attribute	Local Parks	District Parks	Town Parks
	The larger parks may comprise more comprehensive play equipment, more significant landscape features (views, significant vegetation etc) and linkages with other open space.	playgrounds, nature walks, cycle tracks, dog exercise areas, walking circuits Cultural & natural heritage resources may be important elements of district scale parks	
Minimum size	Parks should be at least 3,000m ² in size	Desirably three hectares or more	Depends on size of town centre Generally aim to meet minimum area requirement for local parks (3,000m ²), although smaller area can provide for basic recreation such as seating and breakout spaces
Design and location requirements	User friendly in terms of attractiveness, diversity of opportunity, perceived safety, proximity to user populations and presence/ absence of access barriers Ideally, parks that combine a variety of features and uses – contact with nature, pleasant social settings, children's play, cultural interest and varied topography.	As for local parks – but also large enough to accommodate a much greater variety of uses while protecting and enhancing natural features, cultural heritage, views and/or visually significant areas.	Generally hard landscaped rather than natural grass Can incorporate seating, toilets, paving and public art

Source: City of Canada Bay 2010, Table 6.10, p. 132 and 133

Open space linkages are a high priority, providing connectivity and adding value to the usability and recreation potential for open spaces, as they offer opportunities for community participation in walking, dog walking, cycling, jogging and skating. When vegetated, these areas can also provide biodiversity benefits and areas for picnics and outdoor gatherings (City of Canada Bay 2010, p. 133).

While the total quantity of open space is an important consideration, this needs to be balanced by other factors such as suitability and accessibility criteria.

Demands for future sports fields were estimated using participation rates for a range of sports by age group. Again, while population estimates are dated, planning for future needs would adopt similar planning principles.

Options considered to meet future demand across the LGA were found to include:

- » More intensive use of existing space and facilities (where 'spare capacity' exists)
- » The embellishment or expansion of existing spaces (to increase their carrying capacity)

- » Synthetic conversions of sports field open space, and/or
- » The acquisition of new open space and recreation facilities.

Council's key principles and performance requirements for new open space to maintain existing service levels to 2031, are summarised in the following Table from the LPS:

Table 6.14: Principles and Performance Requirements for Open Space

Performance requirement	Principle
Adequate, well distributed open space	Adds to the diversity of open space types in the area (eg: heritage, conservation and balanced/diverse range of recreation opportunities) Creates/adds to open space in a residential block which has little or no open space
Space suitable for intended purposes	Sufficient size: Local – minimum 0.3 ha and preferably minimum 0.5ha with at least some parks 1.0ha+ District – 3.0ha+ Sports areas require at least 4ha of usable area
Cost-effective use of land/space	Contribute to the viability of an existing site Site would be difficult to use productively for alternate purposes
Accessibility	Has high accessibility/centrality to users: Local – at least one park within 300-500m of all residents District – one park within 2-3kms of all residents
Connectivity	Has a capacity to support linear linkage
Heritage	Has historic, cultural, environmental significance
Scenic value	Has high landscape/visual/scenic values (and contributes to the identity/legibility of the area)
Safety	Visitor safety – facilitated by casual surveillance from residences and/or streets
Sustainability	Has suitable topography/drainage etc to enable ease of long term maintenance

Calculations of notional open space requirements from forecast population growth and additional open space needed to meet that demand are superseded by changes in population and dwelling forecasts, including those for the Rhodes peninsula. These have been reviewed as part of the Structure Planning for Rhodes East in discussions with Council officers and DP&E.

S94 Development Contributions Plan 2015

Social infrastructure

Council commissioned several studies to identify current and future (to 2031) community facility needs, costs and strategies and directions to meet the future needs of the community. These include:

- » A Community Facilities Resourcing Strategy (CRED 2011)
- » A Cultural Plan and Public Art Strategy (adopted in 2007)
- » Draft City of Canada Bay Cultural Facilities Report (2013).

Community facilities are currently provided at a floorspace rate of 162m² per 1,000 residents.

"The CRED *Community Facilities Resourcing Strategy 2011* concluded that there were many deficiencies in the current provision of community facilities. There was no multi-purpose district

community centre or a youth centre, most of Council's community venues were unstaffed community halls, were single purpose facilities which are expensive to maintain, are not co-located with other services and did not provide space for delivery of programs for young people" (p. 20).

Priorities for the provision of future Council operated facilities include:

- » More strategically located facilities within activity hubs near commercial, retail and other community activity
- » Need to rationalise Council's single purpose facilities and co-locate within activity hubs
- » Provision of a range of spaces for older people
- » More education and care places and family support programs and services
- » Programs and services for young people close to public transport
- » Increasing demand for indoor recreation facilities
- » Community centres to build connections between new and existing community members.

In addition the *Cultural Plan 2008-2013* and the *draft Cultural Facilities Report 2013* identified the need for:

- » Purpose built infrastructure in key sites e.g. Cabarita Park Conservatory
- » Community activity hubs to centralise cultural interaction in Concord/Strathfield, Five Dock and Drummoyne
- » Cultural programs in existing facilities
- » Strategic partnerships for cultural facilities
- » Art revitalisation and adaptive reuse of vacant properties.

The Plan specifically excludes the needs of the new population in Rhodes West which are dealt with in a separate S94 Contributions Framework.

No community and cultural facilities identified in the S94 Contributions Plan are proposed for Rhodes East.

Open space

Council's *S94 Contributions Plan* notes that current rates of public open space provision are 2.6ha per 1,000 population (p. 6).

"Due to the unlikelihood of Council being able to purchase additional land for open space and recreation facilities, development contributions are better spent on upgrading, rationalising and increasing the capacity of existing infrastructure to better cater for the additional population" (p. 6)

Amongst the nominated High Priority Open Space & Recreation Works to 2031, \$500,000 is allocated for a small skate park facility in Rhodes East in the long term. The location of this facility is shown as being on the eastern side of Concord Road between Cropley and Llewellyn Streets.

Funds are also allocated to selectively redevelop some key spaces for social/family recreation for people of all abilities and including teenagers and older adults. Funds are also allocated for re-establishing bushland for passive open space, community gardens and foreshore environmental works.

Off-leash dog areas (short-term) and off road trails (staged) are also included in the S94 Contributions Plan and could potentially be incorporated into Rhodes East.

Rhodes Peninsula Place Plan 2012

Council's *Place Plan* for the Rhodes Peninsula contains a community profile, outcomes of a detailed community and stakeholder engagement process and an Action Plan for the provision of community facilities, functions, activities and programs to meet community needs to 2022. The Plan draws heavily on the community aspirations expressed by more than 800 stakeholder participants through survey, focus group, Neighbour Day engagement and a stakeholder workshop. Participants were asked to provide feedback on the social and physical infrastructure that could meet community development, recreational, cultural, economic and community service needs, as the Peninsula continues to develop and change. The Action Plan includes Council, key stakeholders and other delivery partners.

The placemaking model adopted for the Plan incorporates five attributes of place:

- » Social and cultural life
- » Uses and activities
- » Comfort and image
- » Connectivity
- » Voice and influence.

Overarching themes from the engagement undertaken in developing the Place Plan were:

- » Infrastructure that keeps up with demand
- » The public domain needs to be kept clean and well maintained
- » Rhodes Peninsula as a more active and vibrant place.

Some of the placemaking Actions identified are within Rhodes East, including landscaping, parking and boat ramp works under John Whitton Bridge and road and footpath improvements. Others, while referring to new facilities in Rhodes West, will be directly accessible to a new community in Rhodes East, such as The Connection within the Community Precinct, Bennelong Bridge and works around Rhodes Station.

Planning for future placemaking sets out a large number of specific actions for:

- » The entire peninsula
- » The Community Precinct
- » The public domain, open space and foreshore areas
- » Private and commercial space in strata buildings, the Business Park and the shopping centre.

The values expressed in the Place Plan are consistent with, and well integrated into Council's plans and policies, including recreation and open space planning, cultural planning and development, place activation strategies and community development initiatives. Council aims to adopt this place planning model in considering needs and planning for social infrastructure and open space facilities in Rhodes East.

Recreation Facilities Strategy

The City of Canada Bay's *Recreation Facilities Strategy* further examined demand and supply of recreational facilities in 2013 to better understand the needs of its growing population and to provide a framework for Council's planning of recreational facilities. The Strategy is based on an assumption of an additional 20,000 residents by 2031. Many of these new residents will live in medium and high density housing, with implications for the availability of "private open space for physical and social activity, as well as children's play and pet exercise".

The Strategy provides a full list of available recreational facilities and activities across the LGA and specifies additional facilities likely to be required, together with an Action Plan and Principles to prioritise the Actions.

Those specific to Rhodes include:

- » "Liberty Grove – Rhodes will have the largest increase in demand within the City of Canada Bay by 2031 for off-road trails, and gym / fitness / dance / martial arts / gymnastics facilities" (p. 13)
- » "Rhodes / Concord / Strathfield and Russell Lea areas were consistently less well served than other areas of the City – largely because these areas lack large open spaces (which contain most of the City's recreation facilities).. " (p. 23)
- » "Cabarita and Rhodes are outside 1km distance threshold of a public playing field" (p. 29)
- » "Rhodes has very limited opportunities for residents to play soccer" ... "Consider acquiring a 2--pitch site in Rhodes east... Consider using a rooftop for futsal in Rhodes Business Park, or a floating pontoon in Rhodes" (p. 31-32) "Consider partnering with the private sector to provide futsal. Consideration should be given to providing indoor courts sports access to Rhodes residents. This should be a minimum of two courts (netball sized courts)" (p. 56).
- » "Consider providing a small skate facility in Rhodes East" (p. 40)
- » "Provide a greater diversity of opportunities and landscape setting types in [social / family recreation parks] open space in Rhodes" (p. 43)
- » "Consider Rhodes ... as priorities for provision of [children's playground facilities in] social / family recreation parks, as these are least well served" (p. 44)
- » "Open space in Rhodes generally provides relatively low quality experiences because of the limited size of parks, and where linear reserves are provided the diversity of opportunities and landscape setting types is low" (p. 46)
- » "Develop a community garden at Rhodes ... if there is community support" (p. 47)
- » "The Rhodes Peninsula Place Plan suggests 'Identify a suitable location for a dog park/s or off leash area/s within the next 5 years' " (p. 47)
- » "Establish a Rhodes (Homebush Bay) to Olympic Park [cycling] circuit" (p. 49)
- » "There will be demand for indoor sports facilities to be provided in the Rhodes community to support an increased population of around 12,000 people. These facilities should reflect the cultural diversity of the area" (p. 57)
- » "The Community Survey identified that there were "not enough basketball courts in the area, particularly Rhodes" (p. 58).

As the current Planning Proposal for the LGA envisages an increase in population of around 31,350 residents, additional facilities to those set out in the Strategy will need to be provided in accordance with the Strategy's principles.

Rhodes Peninsula Front Door 2 Foreshore Open Space Masterplan

This 2015 Plan "provides a vision for the design and management of public open space in response to the needs of a changing community at Rhodes Peninsula" (p. 1). The Plan incorporated findings of a broad community engagement program aimed at capturing "a good understanding of the aspirations, concerns, needs and values of the local community and other relevant stakeholders" (p. 12).

Key design principles identified through the Masterplan are:

- » A Peninsula of Places
- » Visual Coherence in the Public Domain

- » A Connected and Legible Open Space Network
- » Community Engagement and Partnerships
- » Sustainable Open Spaces.

The Principles recognise that there are significant limitations to acquiring additional areas for public open space on the peninsula, so they instead aim to increase “the capacity of existing open spaces to comfortably accommodate more users” (p. 18), create a distinct visual identity, connectivity between open spaces and to be socially, environmentally and economically sustainable.

The Masterplan identifies areas of open space within Rhodes East and Rhodes West precincts and provides a Concept Plan for each space, its amenities, uses, activities and relationships to adjoining open spaces and urban uses¹. Within Rhodes East the Masterplan provides a Concept Plan for:

- » Mill Park and John Whitton Bridge Reserve
- » Uhrs Point Reserve and King George V Reserve
- » McIlwaine Park and Churchill Tucker Reserve
- » Brays Bay Reserve
- » Rhodes Park and Lovedale Place Reserve
- » Cropley Street Reserve and Cavell Avenue Landscape Area.

None of these parks have outstanding playground equipment upgrades as part of Council’s *Let’s Play: providing outdoor playgrounds for families in the City of Canada Bay 2008*.

Much of McIlwaine Park, and Brays Bay Reserve, Rhodes Park and Lovedale Place Reserve are outside the Investigation Area for this project.

Rhodes Peninsula Open Space Plan of Management

This Plan guides the management and use of open space across the peninsula in a flexible and balanced way to meet the values, needs and opportunities of the local community, people working in the area and visitors into the future.

The vision of the Plan of Management is to create “an engaging, legible and sustainable network of public spaces extending from front door to foreshore, offering a diverse range of experiences and uses with strong physical and ecological connections” (p. ii).

Key issues for open space management relevant to the Social Infrastructure and Open Space assessment include:

Table 2 Open space issues in Rhodes Peninsula

Community value	Value statement for community land in Canada Bay	Issue
Access	The community places a high value on the ease of access to community land, regardless of age or physical ability, and expects parks to avoid areas that permanently alienate members of the public. There is a desire for a network of local paths to	Pedestrian connectivity within Rhodes Peninsula, including along its foreshore, is commonly desired by the community. Several areas within and between open space do not currently permit easy pedestrian movement. Many people are encouraged by the current bicycle facilities although most consider that

¹ Note that some place names for parks and foreshore areas have been recently updated or renamed since the Open Space Plan of Management and the Front Door to Foreshore Plans were released.

Community value	Value statement for community land in Canada Bay	Issue
	link with the foreshore walks. The community also values equity of access to recreational opportunities.	an increase in connectivity is required between open spaces throughout the Peninsula, as well as to surrounding areas. Cycle lane improvements, in particular along Walker Street, were noted as being of particular importance. Major barriers to existing connectivity that were identified include the railway corridor and Concord Road.
Aesthetics	The community values community land as attractive places to visit and view, providing a sense of place and character, for nearby neighbourhoods.	Concern was expressed by the community that the image for Rhodes as a place is not clearly communicated within open space and the public domain. There is a desire to encourage and provide opportunities for public art, cultural events, and other organised public events within open space areas. Increasing the vibrancy of streets, particularly at night, with bars and restaurants is also desired, as are alternate commercial opportunities to Rhodes Waterside Shopping Centre (retail, cafés, etc).
Culture and well-being	The community values community land as places to promote good health, and as venues for cultural activities, events and festivals.	Community members want to see public art incorporated into foreshore areas, including contemporary art / small pieces that reflect local context. Markets for fresh food, arts and crafts are seen as very important.
Ecology	The community values the natural environment and there is a strong desire to rehabilitate natural areas. Trees are highly valued and there is a general view that more trees should be planted, but not at the expense of local views.	There is a general opinion amongst the community that many open space areas lack adequate tree cover, and that additional tree plantings would contribute to local ecological values as well as increase the availability of shade to allow more use during summer.
Education	Some parks are valued as places for learning about the ecology and history of the area.	The Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway within Rhodes Park and the Ship Building Memorial within Brays Bay Reserve provide important educational links to the history of Brays Bay and its role during World War II. Community education about littering, illegal dumping, responsible use of trolleys, and dog ownership is also seen as an important aspect of effective management of the public domain.
Foreshores	The community places a particularly high value on foreshore parks and walking trails. There is a strong view that the foreshore should continue to be improved and the foreshore walk be completed, from	Great importance is placed on the Rhodes Peninsula foreshore areas by the local community. There is strong support for foreshore connectivity within the Peninsula, with existing foreshore parks and connections well-used by the existing community. There is also a desire to incorporate public art into

Community value	Value statement for community land in Canada Bay	Issue
	Drummoyne to Olympic Park.	foreshore areas, such as contemporary art / small pieces that consider local context.
Heritage	Some parks are valued as places containing visual and social links to earlier times. There is a community desire to identify and conserve areas of heritage significance.	The community values heritage interpretation in parks and open spaces, and considers the Armory Wharf Café at Newington in Sydney Olympic Park as a good example. Other suggestions include public art that reflects local context and historical values
Maintenance	The community values community land that is well maintained.	The community would like to see an increase in the regularity and better coordination of Council's waste management, street maintenance, grass cutting and weed removal services. The provision of more rubbish bins in public streets and parks was identified by the community as being required. Other maintenance related concerns included more prompt removal of graffiti and abandoned cars, and the provision of dog tidy facilities in public streets and parks.
Partnerships	The community values an ability to have a say and be involved in the future of community land.	Opportunities for intergenerational and cross cultural engagement / participation in public art projects should be investigated.
Recreation	The community values the wide range of quality recreation and leisure experiences offered on community land. However, there is a desire for more park facilities, new and/or upgraded facilities (such as picnic facilities in district parks), more walking tracks and bike paths, and year-round swimming.	Community needs for sporting and recreation facilities, BBQ areas and public toilets are not considered to be very well met at present. There is a strong desire within the community to improve recreation facilities and amenity values within existing open spaces by increasing BBQ and picnic facilities, public toilet facilities, shade and seating opportunities, and bicycle parking for open space users, as well as providing dog off-leash areas and community gardens. Suggested locations for off-leash dog areas include Rhodes Foreshore Park and King George V Reserve. Other facilities identified as needed by the community include water features for children's play as well as mobile food services in Rhodes Foreshore Park and Rhodes Waterside Park.
Social	The parks are valued as places for people to meet. Well maintained, non-threatening parks are appreciated as venues for family gatherings.	Many community members want to see a mix of programs within open space areas, including recreational, educational and cultural opportunities, to create a more engaging Rhodes Peninsula. A number of open space areas within the Peninsula are currently underused and require a program of additional facilities and recreation opportunities. Provision of amenities such as BBQ/picnic facilities, seating with shade and

Community value	Value statement for community land in Canada Bay	Issue
		public toilets within open spaces were commonly identified in the surveys as being required by the community. The development of markets that sell fresh food, as well as arts and crafts was identified as very desirable to facilitate social interaction within the community.

Corkery Consulting 2015b

Peninsula-wide strategies include:

- » An emphasis on circulation and wayfinding – developing a legible and visually cohesive public domain with safe and enjoyable access to open space facilities and activities, to contribute to community health and well-being. Objectives are:
 - > To improve pedestrian and cycle access and circulation to and between existing open spaces
 - > To provide an integrated network of shared use paths, pedestrian-only paths and cycle lanes to maximise access and circulation throughout the Peninsula
 - > To provide improved waterfront access where appropriate
 - > To establish regional connections to surrounding areas, particularly with Bicentennial Park, Wentworth Point and Meadowbank via Meadowbank Railway Bridge.
- » A Peninsula urban mesh is proposed to improve access and circulation through the peninsula including in east-west direction across the railway line and across Concord Road.
- » Continuous pedestrian / cycle connection along the northern foreshore, including:
 - > Extension of the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway from Brays Bay Reserve through Churchill Tucker Reserve to create the Pacific Campaign Walk (Corkery 2015b, p. 31).

Plans of Management (PoM) for each area of open space are proposed for implementation over a 15 year timeframe. A coherent public domain image, visual connections and 'urban forest' principles also underpin the PoM for each area of open space within the study area.

Plans for Uhrs Point Reserve / King George V and for McIlwaine Park and Churchill Tucker Reserve are of greatest significance for the Rhodes East Priority Investigation Area:

- » McIlwaine Park + Churchill Tucker Reserve

McIlwaine Park is a large waterfront park to the east of Concord Road and a short distance from Rhodes railway station. Churchill Tucker Reserve lies between McIlwaine Park and the station.

The southern portion of McIlwaine Park contains the northern section part of the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway, which extends southwards through Brays Bay Reserve. The Plan of Management for McIlwaine Park includes creating a westward extension to the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway, to be known as the Pacific Campaign Walk. The Pacific Campaign Walk will complement the existing Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway by commemorating ex-servicemen and women with a focus on Australia's involvement in the Pacific War.

The Pacific Campaign Walk would connect through Churchill Tucker Reserve to the railway station via a new pedestrian plaza / bridge. The proposed Pacific Campaign Walk will encourage movement from the station towards the foreshore and Brays Bay Reserve. A new plaza at the southern end of McIlwaine Park, adjoining Brays Bay Reserve, would incorporate a boardwalk,

planting, shelters, paving and seating. In this area, the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway would also be realigned.

Further north within McIlwaine Park new BBQ and picnic facilities are proposed, as well as paths, an exercise station, a foreshore promenade, central and northern pedestrian nodes, an over water deck and a large dog off-leash area.

» Uhrls Point Reserve + King George Reserve

The Plan of Management aims to integrate these two adjacent reserves and improve the quality of open spaces in the northern part of Rhodes East Precinct. A new waterfront pedestrian plaza is proposed to pass through Uhrls Point Reserve and under Uhrls Point bridge. This would form part of the Parramatta River Loop. New water access is proposed for the for Sea Scouts and Dragon Boats areas via a new boardwalk with boat launching and recovery facilities.

The western part of Uhrls Point Reserve includes plans for a waterfront pedestrian plaza and tiered slope, providing seating and recreational opportunities. New carparking facilities are also envisaged.

Llewellyn Street would also support additional waterfront pedestrian and cycle connections.

Plans for King George V Reserve would include a fenced dog off-leash area and additional picnic facilities, seating and shelter. This improved open space is adjacent to St Mary's Multi-cultural Day Care centre.

Riverside Scoping Study Report (City of Canada Bay 2012)

This study provides information to assist in re-interpreting the history, cultural, economic and environmental heritage importance of the Parramatta River foreshore – identifying sites and stories contributing to life and development of the southern foreshore of this regional waterway. Key aspects and sites identified will contribute to future projects to support interpretation, understanding and cultural research for the community. Themes include circulation and connections, water access and experience, delivering public art that integrates with the foreshore environment and context, and understanding and interpretation of the many layers of cultural heritage and development.

Within Rhodes Peninsula East, Rhodes Park and Kokoda Lovedale Reserve are identified as having particular significance and a range of cultural layers and opportunities. Neither of these parks is situated within the Rhodes East Precinct. Further opportunities are identified within existing and planned parks in Rhodes West.

Community Safety and Crime Prevention Plan 2014-2018

This plan aims to continue work to improve the safety of the LGA, which, despite its size, traffic and population growth, has seen a reduction in key crimes to low levels. Priority areas for crime reduction include identity fraud, theft from retail stores, stealing from motor vehicle and graffiti.

Strategies to achieve these aims include Council and the Community Safety Precinct Committee working collaboratively with Burwood Council, NSW Police (Burwood Local Area Command), Commonwealth agencies, local businesses, residents and community groups across a range of issues, continuing to support the Licensing Accord, rapid graffiti removal, and CPTED and planning initiatives to prevent and reduce crime.

City of Canada Bay Cultural Plan

Council's Cultural Plan takes a place management approach to fostering cultural development within its growing and changing community in and around the LGA. Cultural development through place management allows a focus on "history and heritage, stories, people, landscape, streetscape and culture. It is about discovering what makes a place distinctive, authentic, and memorable" for individuals and the community (p. 4).

Through this approach, Council aims to:

- » Establish productive partnerships and links to the many cultural facilities and attractions
- » 'Turn its spaces into places' so people will stop and become involved
- » Encourage residents to experience and appreciate the area's cultural and environmental diversity and through this, develop a greater sense of belonging.

The Plan sets out the infrastructure, support and linkages necessary to achieve these aims.

In addition to growing numbers of residents, the City is attracting a new generation of workers in creative and knowledge-based industries who also contribute to new demands for cultural and place-based services and attractions.

Rhodes is identified as an emerging centre and one of the LGA's activity hubs, where opportunities for cultural activities and place making are being realised through a range of strategies and directions. In Rhodes, these include development of 'The Connection', informal cultural activities and galleries, markets, cafés, wireless services, wet-dry workshop spaces, digital displays, performance spaces and improved street-life and public art. These provide a template for future development of activity hubs that support community interaction. Rhodes Community Precinct will have a variety of facilities to attract visitors and encourage community interaction.

Rhodes Peninsula Arts Plan

This Plan, adopted in 2012, provides a framework to encourage high quality public art to 2020 that will "energise the public domain, recall local heritage, connect with the river and its moods and be an integral part of the design..." (p. 3). The public art plan will aim to resonate with locals and visitors, encourage an engaged interest in place and become, over time, a marker of community life. It will also respond to the cultural diversity of Rhodes and reflects Council's belief that "the urban environment should be a place of lively, representative cultural identity" (p. 3).

The Plan sets out principles of public art and reflects many of the themes, values and aspirations that have been consistently raised in community feedback about the future of the peninsula.

Opportunities for projects within Rhodes East include:

- » *Riverlights* and other art works under the John Whitton Bridge
- » A *Living Memory* project that incorporates several new artworks near the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway in Brays Bay Reserve and across Mary Street East, towards Rhodes Railway Station.
- » There are also other opportunities such as water trails along cycleways through Rhodes East and street art in new public areas. Some would be provided by Council with others funded through developer contributions.

Rhodes Central Urban Activation Precinct Submission

The *Rhodes Central Urban Activation Precinct (UAP) Submission* was prepared by the City of Canada Bay to seek formal nomination of this area as a (UAP) by DP&E. Rhodes Central is the portion of the peninsula which lies between the railway line and Concord Road. The Submission includes background information about the precinct and proposes a vision and principles for a sustainable community that could apply, or be adapted, to Rhodes East (see Appendix A).

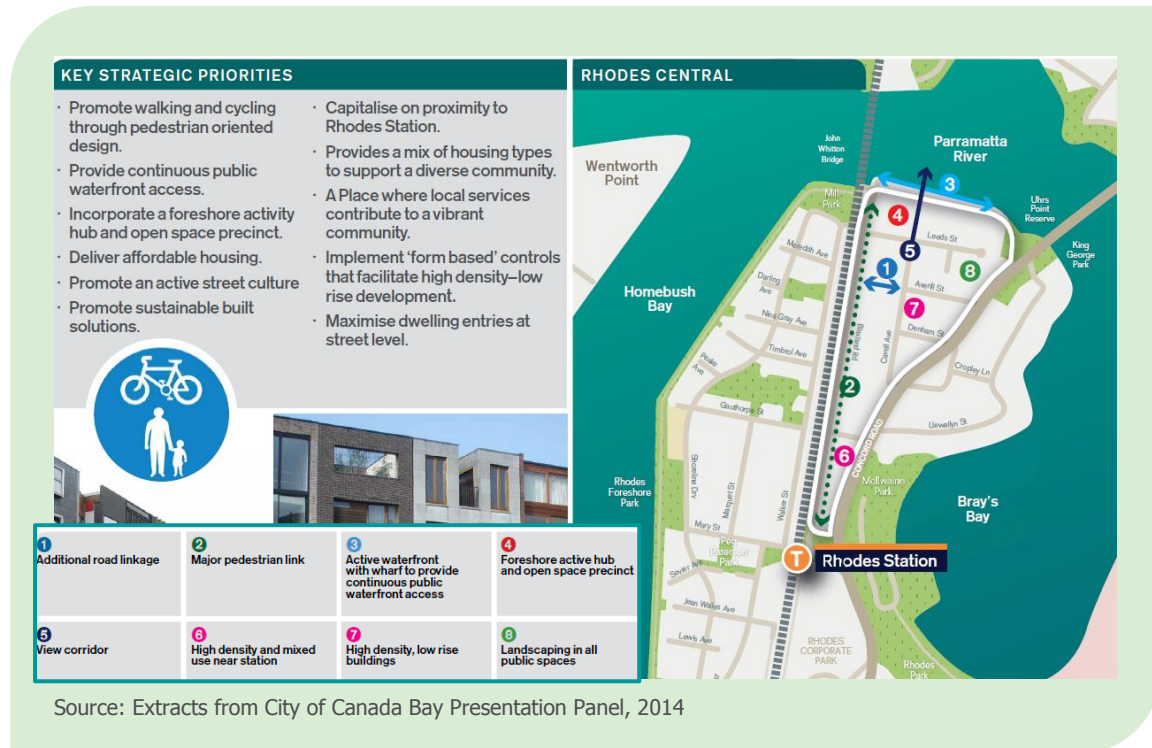
Future City Report

The City of Canada Bay has been working with the Future Cities Program on developing opportunities for Rhodes Central, the area between the railway line and Concord Road.

Future City Report (Future Cities Program 2014) proposes and tests opportunities for an 'Innovation Scenario' for the Rhodes Central Precinct which includes 2,891 residential dwellings and a mix of

commercial, retail, community uses and open space, including the possibility of a school on the northern foreshore.

Following a planning workshop, the Key Strategic Priorities adopted by the City of Canada Bay Council for the Rhodes Central precinct (excluding land east of Concord Road) are shown below:



2.2 Demographic context

2.2.1 Existing population

Rhodes Peninsula

In 2011, Rhodes Peninsula had an estimated resident population of approximately 7,727 people, just over double its 3,844 residents in 2006, and around 10% of Council's 80,065 residents. The Peninsula's western precinct was characterised by a predominance of high density apartment living, and these residents made up 90% of the Rhodes peninsula population. At the time of the census, the Rhodes peninsula as a whole was characterised by:

- » A large working age population with a relatively high income profile
- » A very high proportion of tertiary students
- » A predominance of couple families – including a mix of couples without children (including empty nesters) and couples with children
- » Similar proportions of very young children (0-4 years) as the LGA and surrounding areas (except when compared with Liberty Grove which has a higher proportion of children in this age group)
- » A low proportion of people aged 55+
- » A very high proportion of group households

- » A very high proportion of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds – with very high proportions of people who were born overseas, and who speak a language other than English at home. The most commonly spoken languages other than English were Korean, Mandarin, Cantonese and Hindi.
- » A relatively low proportion of people who own their home outright, and a very high proportion who are renting their home.
- » A comparable rate of home purchase to the City of Canada Bay and wider areas, however a considerably higher rate of households whose mortgage repayments are more than 30% of their household income.
- » A very high rate of internet connectivity (City of Canada Bay, 2012).

Rhodes East

A DP&E analysis of 2011 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census of Population and Housing data (November 2015) shows the Rhodes East precinct contained only around 10% (or 733) of the Peninsula's 7,727 residents in 2011. Of the 274 private dwellings in Rhodes East, 76% were separate houses and 24% were semi-detached, terraces or townhouses. This area currently contains no flats or apartments.

On average, residents of Rhodes East are older (42.5 years) than those of Rhodes as a whole (28 years), the LGA (37.1 years) and Sydney overall (35.7 years). The local population has a relatively large proportion of residents aged over 40 years, in part attributable to an aged care facility (Concord Community Hostel on Cavell Avenue, Rhodes, has 62 low care beds).

Other key characteristics of the Rhodes East population and housing in 2011 include:

- » A similar proportion of the population born in Australia (62%) and born overseas (38%) as in Canada Bay LGA and Sydney as a whole. The most common countries of origin for overseas born residents were China (6.3%), South Korea (3.9%) and England (3.6%)
- » A slightly lower proportion of residents completed year 10 or higher (86%), than in the LGA (89%) and Sydney (88%). Rates of post-school qualifications (57.5%) are slightly above those for Sydney (54.9%) but slightly lower than the Canada Bay average (61.6%)
- » Labour force participation rates were slightly lower in Rhodes East (63%) than in the LGA (69%) and Sydney (66%), partly attributable to the older median age of residents. For those in the labour force, the unemployment rate in Rhodes East was low (3%) compared with the LGA (4.3%) and Sydney (5.7%). The top industries of employment of residents were Retail Trade (12.2%), Health Care and Social Assistance (11.4%) and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (11.1%)
- » While the majority of residents of Rhodes East drive to work (59%), this rate is well below the LGA and Sydney averages of 68%. In Rhodes East, a high proportion of residents (27%) travel to work by train (compared with 14% in the LGA and 17% in Sydney) and by walking (9% compared with 3% in the LGA and 5% in Sydney). By contrast, only 2% of Rhodes East residents travelled to work by bus (10% in the LGA and 7% in Sydney). Rhodes East has a relatively high proportion of residents with two or more motor vehicles (46% in the LGA and 48% in Sydney).
- » Household types in Rhodes East were similar to those of Sydney as a whole, with 37% being couples with children, 22% being couples without children, 20% lone person households and 9% single parent households. Compared with the LGA, there was a higher proportion of couples with children and 'multiple and other' households and a lower proportion of couple only and lone person households in Rhodes East.
- » The average household size in Rhodes East was 2.67 persons, compared with 2.55 for the LGA and 2.69 for Sydney.

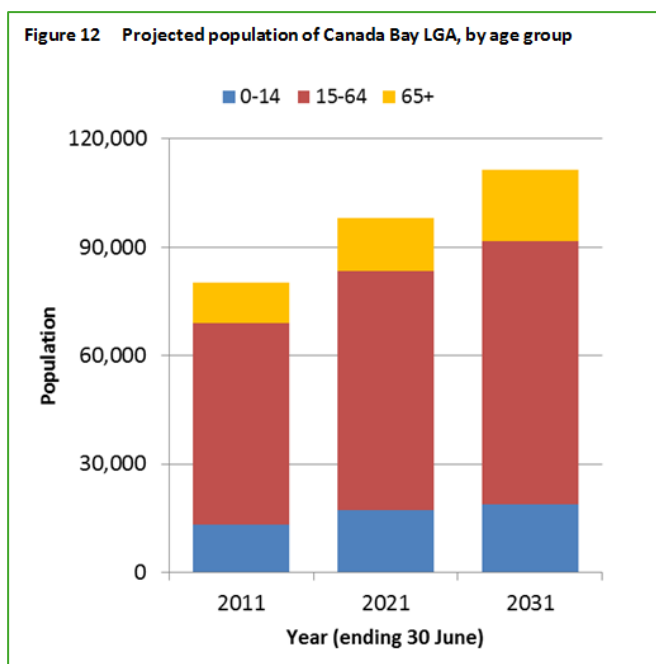
- » The area had a relatively high proportion of dwellings owned outright (70%) and relatively fewer rented (30%) than the LGA and Sydney.
- » Median weekly household incomes were similar to the LGA average and above those for Sydney. Nevertheless, more than 37% of families were classed as experiencing housing stress, which was slightly above the rate for Sydney as a whole and well above the Canada Bay rate of 27.2%.

The demographic data is, however, dated, due to it being from the 2011 census and the rapid population growth that has occurred in Rhodes West since that time.

A better understanding of the demographic context will be available in early 2017, when results from the 2016 census are available.

2.2.2 Future population

Population projections are provided for the Canada Bay LGA as a whole. These indicate an expected increase of 31,300 residents between 2011 and 2031, to 111,350 people. These projections are considered by Council to be conservative. More than half of the increase is expected to be attributable to natural increase and much of this increase will be in older aged groups. For example, the population aged over 65 is expected to increase by 77% while the 0-14 age group is expected to increase by 43% and the 15-64 year age group is expected to increase by 31% by 2031.



Source: DP&E 2015

Forecasts prepared by forecast.id for the City of Canada Bay and Rhodes include development plans for Rhodes West, but do not yet factor in the potential for large-scale redevelopment of Rhodes East. Under current forecasts, Rhodes as a whole is expected to reach a population of 20,040, and the City of Canada Bay would reach a population of 115,523 in 2031. This population forecast is based on assumptions of future residential development in Rhodes reaching 8,868 dwellings in total, primarily within Rhodes West, with only minimal infill redevelopment expected in Rhodes East.

Plans for the rezoning of Rhodes East will further increase the total population and dwelling stock for the peninsula as whole.

3 Existing social infrastructure and open space provision

This chapter considers the provision of existing and planned key social infrastructure, in and around the Rhodes East Priority Precinct Investigation Area, which currently meets, or in future could address, some of the needs of the future new population.

Community facilities within Rhodes and across the LGA are provided by the City of Canada Bay Council and other (private and non-government) agencies. Council's website and other sources have been examined to identify locations and functions of existing facilities (see Figure 2 overleaf). The following sections provide a summary of those nearest Rhodes East.

Existing social infrastructure has been considered in terms of its place within a hierarchy which includes regional infrastructure (major facilities and services serving an LGA or broader metropolitan region), district facilities (serving a number of suburbs) and local facilities (serving their immediate surrounding, local community).

3.1.1 Regional level infrastructure

Health facilities

The Rhodes East precinct is located within the Sydney Local Health District (LHD). The nearest tertiary level hospital is the Concord Repatriation General Hospital, just beyond the precinct boundary to the south-east. Concord Repatriation General Hospital is a 750 bed facility for the inner west community, and has teaching affiliations with the University of Sydney. Once primarily a hospital focusing on caring for war veterans, the hospital now services the local communities of Concord and beyond. A masterplan is being prepared for the Hospital, as described in Section 5.3.3.

The Concord Centre for Mental Health is a modern purpose-built facility attached to Concord Hospital for patients needing specialist psychiatric inpatient care. Rivendell Child, Adolescent and Family Unit is a mental health facility within the grounds of Concord Hospital's heritage listed Thomas Walker Convalescent Hospital building that specialises in the problems of young people and operates as part of Concord Hospital's Concord Centre for Mental Health.

Private hospitals are located nearby in Concord, Strathfield and Putney.

The nearest community health centres are located outside the LGA, in Ryde.

Cultural facilities

There are no large, regional level cultural facilities (galleries, performance or entertainment venues) in the Rhodes East precinct. The nearest large scale entertainment venues are located at Sydney Olympic Park (ANZ Stadium, Allphones Arena, Sydney Showground), as well as in Parramatta and Sydney's inner west and CBD. Also missing from Rhodes are studio spaces for artists or exhibition areas to display works.

The new cultural and community precinct in Rhodes West, 'The Connection', will offer some spaces for performances and cultural expression in its multi-purpose auditorium hall and creative studios. Public art is being incorporated into particular areas of open space in accordance with Council placemaking plans and policies. For example, internal and external spaces within The Connection are joined by a large public artwork.

Figure 2 Social infrastructure and open space near Rhodes East



RETAIL / BUSINESS PARK

- A1 Rhodes shopping centre
- A2 Rhodes Business Park
- A3 Newington Business Park

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

- B1 Meadowbank TAFE and Library
- B2 Newington Public School
- B3 Italian bi-lingual School
- B4 Meadowbank Primary School
- B5 Ryde Public School
- B6 Concord West Public School
- B7 Rivendell

EMERGENCY SERVICES / MEDICAL

- C1 Rhodes Fire Station
- C2 My Health Medical Centre
- C3 Rhodes Family Practice
- C4 Concord Repatriation General Hospital
- C5 Thomas Walker Hospital

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- D1 Newington Library
- D2 Ryde Library
- D3 Rhodes Community Centre
- D4 The Connection, Rhodes Community Precinct
- D5 1st Yaralla Sea Scout Hall

CHILDCARE

- E1 Concord West Long Day Care
- E2 Concord West Playgroup
- E3 Concord West / Rhodes Preschool
- E4 Dreamtree Family Day Care
- E5 Kids @ Weldon Concord West Middle Childhood Services
- E6 Learn and Play Children's Centre
- E7 Only About Children – Rhodes Corporate Park Child Care Centre
- E8 Rhodes Central Pre School Kindergarten
- E9 Rhodes Children's Centre
- E10 Rhodes Family Day Care
- E11 St Mary Multicultural Child Care Centre
- E12 Rhodes Threebees Family Day Care

OPEN SPACE

- F1 Sydney Olympic Park
- F2 George Kendall Riverside Park
- F3 Mill Park and John Whitton Bridge Park
- F4 Meadowbank Park
- F5 Memorial Park
- F6 Uhrs Point Reserve
- F7 King George Park
- F8 McIlwaine Park
- F9 Brays Bay Reserve
- F10 Rhodes Park
- F11 Churchill Tucker Reserve
- F12 Lovedale Place Reserve
- F13 Peg Paterson Park



A selection of entertainment and leisure facilities such as clubs, pubs, bars, restaurants and cinemas are located in Rhodes West. A few cafes in Rhodes East serve existing employment and residential populations, although more variety is available in Concord, North Strathfield, Ryde and Sydney Olympic Park. These facilities will all be available to new residents at Rhodes East.

Tertiary education facilities

Two TAFE facilities are located within a few kilometres to the north-east of the precinct:

- » Northern Suburbs Institute (NSI) of TAFE, Meadowbank campus
- » Northern Suburbs Institute (NSI) of TAFE, Ryde campus

Macquarie University is around 7.5 kilometres to the north-east and Western Sydney University's new Parramatta CBD campus is around 12 kilometres to the west.

Council has reported that there is a heavy, and increasing, demand for adult education services within the existing population. In addition, demands are being placed on existing learning facilities from older residents seeking to remain active. There are no community or adult education centres near Rhodes. Residents would need to travel to Newtown, Carlingford, Parramatta or elsewhere to attend classes. However, some on-line or face to face courses may be offered locally within existing community facilities during the day or evenings.

Emergency and justice services

Rhodes Fire Station is a volunteer (retained) facility located within the Rhodes East precinct.

Rhodes lies within the Burwood Local Area Command (LAC) for Police services. The City of Canada Bay works closely with Burwood Council and Burwood LAC in relation to community safety issues. However, Burwood Police Station is around 7 kilometres to the south. The nearest police station and local courthouse are on Victoria Road, Ryde – 3 kilometres to the north across Parramatta River.

The nearest ambulance station is on Denistone Road, Ryde.

3.1.2 District and local level infrastructure

Community centres and libraries

Rhodes East contains the Rhodes Community Centre on Blaxland Road. This former primary school has two large rooms, a kitchen, toilets, parking and air conditioning and is available for uses such as meetings, training, information sessions and private functions. It is a very well used, but older style, facility, with limitations such as outdated kitchen, toilets and air conditioning, and very limited storage space. It is understood to have a local heritage listing.

The Kokoda Education Centre is a Council owned community facility in Rhodes Park (beyond the study area boundary) that offers spaces for hire. The facility is managed by the Kokoda Memorial Walkway Board. This is also heavily used at peak times and lacks storage space. In addition, Kokoda Education Centre and Walkway is a nationally significant space that is heavily used by students and for commemorative events. Shared use would need to be negotiated with the RSL and is considered impractical.

There is also a community centre at Gipps Street, Concord, with seating for around 250 people.

Demands for community meeting spaces are also met by a range of church halls and other spaces. Rhodes East currently contains two formal places of worship: the prominent St. Mary & St. Merkorious Coptic Orthodox Church is located on Cavell Avenue, while the Cornerstone Presbyterian Community Church operates from the Rhodes Community Centre on Blaxland Road. However, it is understood that there are a number of groups, including churches and other faith based groups, seeking rooms for services and programs for a wide range of purposes which currently cannot be met. In particular,

spaces with storage for equipment, (such as kindy gym, yoga, tables, places for weekly worship) are in high demand.

There are two libraries in the City of Canada Bay – one in Concord and another in Five Dock. Concord Library (4kms south of Rhodes East), is a large, modern, multi-purpose facility offering a wide range of adult, junior and young adult books, magazines, newspapers and audio-visual formats in English and community languages including Chinese, Greek, Italian and Korean and English as a Second Language. The facility also includes meeting rooms, a café and other facilities.

Libraries at Homebush, Ryde, West Ryde and at Burwood are all relatively close to Rhodes East, although they are designed to serve the populations of neighbouring LGAs.

It is understood that a new library is proposed for Wentworth Point as part plans for a future community centre there.

The new multi-purpose community facility, 'The Connection' on the waterfront in Rhodes West will open to the public in mid-2016. At around 3,000m², the facility will comprise four buildings:

- » A café / restaurant, (Bare Witness) to be leased to a private operator
- » A digital collection / cultural hub (The Learning Space - 'a library without books'), with suites for service delivery and some staff accommodation
- » 4 multi-purpose rooms for a variety of uses including children's activities, movement classes (The Meeting Space)
- » An auditorium / hall with two spaces for performances and seating for around 300 (The Event Space).

While relatively small for the 14,000 residential population in Rhodes West, this new community centre will be one of Canada Bay's largest. It is understood that that demand for the Event Space is already over-subscribed, which indicates the high demand for community space for such uses.

The Connection was planned to operate as part of a network with Concord and Five Dock Libraries. The network was also expected to incorporate the Auburn Library and Community Facility (scheduled to open in 2017), located only 500-700m from The Connection when the new Bennelong Bridge is opened. However, this network is unlikely to continue in its current form should councils amalgamate and new arrangements be agreed.

It is understood a new community centre is also planned as part of the redevelopment of Sydney Olympic Park, although this will be sized to meet the needs of the future Olympic Park population.

Local health services

Early childhood health services are available in Concord, although there are plans to relocate this facility to a new Concord community hub.

There are a number of local medical centres and allied health services located in Rhodes West and around Concord Hospital. However, it is understood that these existing facilities are operating at capacity serving the existing population. Some new allied health services will need to be provided to meet the needs of the new population.

Schools

There are no schools within the Rhodes peninsula, but many schools in nearby suburbs. The Rhodes East area falls entirely within the Concord West Public School catchment for primary school students and the Concord High School catchment for secondary school students.

Schools nearest Rhodes East are listed in Table 3, together with historic enrolment information from the myschool website.

Table 3 Schools near Rhodes East

School name	Enrolments					
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Primary Schools						
Concord West Public School	363	400	434	448	486	458
Concord Public School	229	234	251	255	261	265
North Strathfield	633	651	646	681	682	657
Mortlake Public School, Concord	313	324	353	365	383	381
Victoria Avenue Public School, Concord					Opened 2015	88
Putney Public School, Ryde	405	445	445	467	472	481
Meadowbank Public School	159	168	175	180	217	228
Ryde Public School	389	422	421	461	504	498
Newington Public School, Newington	420	473	539	638	738	814
Rivendell School Special Government, Concord West (part of Concord Hospital)	49	47	59	55	63	54
Italian Bilingual School, Meadowbank	92	109	104	94	92	99
St Ambrose Catholic Primary School, Concord West	356	364	416	431	478	468
Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School, North Strathfield					Opened 2015	69
Combined						
The Macdonald College, Concord West	387	353	299	290	268	254
High schools						
Concord High School	850	847	855	875	929	1,003
Ryde Secondary College, Ryde	938	979	1,034	1,081	1,103	1,080
Holy Cross College, Ryde	546	528	527	515	561	600

Source: www.myschool.edu.au accessed 1 February 2016 and 21 March 2016

Most schools have seen increasing enrolments in recent years, with Concord West, Ryde and Newington Public Schools and Concord High School showing significant increases in their sizes since 2010.

It is understood a new primary school is planned for the Wentworth Point site to the west of Rhodes. The school, which the Department of Education has advised will open in 2017, is expected to have capacity for between 415 and 480 students as part of stage 1 and will relieve enrolment pressures in the surrounding schools. Future expansion of this school may be possible in the future if required.


Advice from the Department of Education has highlighted the need for another new primary school if there is any additional growth in the Rhodes East precinct. This is considered further in Section 5.3.

Early learning and childcare facilities

The Figure in Table 3 shows two privately run early childhood education and care centres are provided within Rhodes East and a further two are located within Rhodes West. West Rhodes Pre-school, an early childhood education and care centre in Rhodes Park is provided by Council, but this is south of the Rhodes East Precinct boundary.

Details of early education and care centres in the area were obtained from the NSW Government Mychild website (www.mychild.gov.au).

Table 4 Childcare facilities in Rhodes, 2016

Name and location	Details	
A) Learn and Play Management The Rhodes Shopping Centre 7/1 Rider Boulevard, Rhodes	Long Day Care and Pre-school	
B) Only about Children Rhodes Corporate Park 1E Homebush Bay Drive, Rhodes	Long Day Care	
C) Rhodes Central Preschool Kindergarten 103/52-54 Walker Street, Rhodes	Long Day Care	
D) Rhodes Children's Centre 2 Mary Street, Rhodes	Long Day Care	
E) St Mary Multicultural Child Care Centre – Rhodes 66 Llewellyn St, Rhodes	Long Day Care	
Concord West Rhodes Preschool Killoola Street (Rhodes Park), Concord West	Community based, non-profit preschool	
Rhodes Threebees Family Day Care	Family Day Care	

Source: www.mychild.gov.au – accessed 27 January 2016

Other childcare centres are located in Ryde, Concord West, Homebush Bay and Abbotsford, as shown in Figure 2.

It is understood that recent establishment of several private childcare centres has addressed a shortfall observed in recent years.

Human services

People with disabilities and seniors, who live independently at home or have a carer, are supported by the Inner West Home and Community Care (HACC) program, serving Ashfield, Burwood, Canada Bay, Leichhardt and Strathfield LGAs. At the 2011 Census, profile.id reports that nearly 3,000 people

(comprising almost 4% of the population) reported needing help in their day-to-day lives due to disability (<http://profile.id.com.au/canada-bay/assistance> accessed 15 June 2016).

Community organisations providing aged and disability services in the area are listed on Council's community services database. Living Care is one such service, currently located in Rhodes East. There are also a number of support and social groups for seniors and carers from specific cultural groups operating in the LGA.

Community services within the LGA are well utilised, particularly family support services and the Metro Assist migrant resource centre.

There is one residential aged care facility in the area. Concord Community Hostel accommodates 62 residents, with a 40-bed residential care hostel unit and 22-bed residential care secure dementia unit.

Youth facilities

In 2011, there were almost 11,000 young people aged between 12 and 24, making up almost 14% of the LGA's population. There are no specific facilities catering to the needs and interests of these young people in Rhodes. The absence of community spaces for young people within the LGA was identified as a need in the Community Facilities Resourcing study (Cred 2011).

The City of Canada Bay offers a range of projects, programs and other youth-related initiatives for young people living, working or studying locally, helping them to gain valuable skills, contribute to their community, meet and work with other young people. Some services are offered on-line.

The nearest spaces specifically catering for young people are located within Concord and Five Dock libraries.

3.2 Open space and recreational facilities

Regional sporting and recreational facilities

Rhodes East lies within 2 kms (or a 5km drive) of Sydney's Olympic Park and its wide range of metropolitan and regional sporting and recreational facilities, which are easily accessible by rail, bicycle and on foot from Rhodes East. The site includes international competition quality sporting fields, an aquatic centre, gymnasium, sports centre, cycling facilities and courts for hire or program use, for school groups, holiday activities, clubs and national and international events. The site also provides facilities for meetings and conferences and is home to the Australian Institute of Sport.

District and local open space

Council's many open space and recreational facilities are detailed in the *Open Space Master Plan* (Corkery Consulting 2015a) and Rhodes Peninsula Open Space *Plan of Management* (Corkery Consulting 2015b).

The following areas of open space are located within the Rhodes East precinct (see Figure 2):

- » Mill Park and John Whitton Bridge Reserve
- » Uhrs Point Reserve and King George V Reserve
- » McIlwaine Park and Churchill Tucker Reserve
- » Cropley Street Reserve and Cavell Avenue Landscape Area.

As noted earlier, Council's *Open Space Masterplan* provides a hierarchy and Concept Plans for each area of open space, its amenities, uses, activities and relationships to adjoining open spaces and urban uses. The plans highlight opportunities to connect areas of open space by pedestrian and cycle paths.

Peninsula wide strategies and Plans of Management (PoM) for each area of open space within Rhodes Peninsula are proposed for implementation over a 15 year timeframe (see pp. 17-18 above). A coherent public domain image, visual connections and 'urban forest' principles also underpin the PoM for each area of open space within the study area.

Overall, the City of Canada Bay LGA has a good level of provision of recreational open space, especially in areas near Concord. However, Council reports that it is unable to keep up with an increasing demand for access to active recreation sports fields at present, and current sporting fields are already used to capacity. A new population at Rhodes East will contribute to these growing demands for active open space and recreational facilities.

In terms of other types of recreation facilities, it is noted that facilities at the 1st Yaralla Sea Scout hall in Uhrs Point Reserve, to the west of Concord Road at Ryde Bridge, are outdated and in need of maintenance and upgrading. Use of the site is currently shared with the Dragon Boats club - an increasingly popular activity in the area. However, it is understood that access arrangements and Dragon Boat storage and launch facilities are not well suited to this site and would benefit from purpose built facilities.

The key indoor recreation facilities closest to the precinct are the Five Dock Leisure Centre and the Cabarita and Drummoyne Swim Centres. These are not easily accessible from Rhodes, especially by public transport.

However, a new Leisure Centre, with a café, childcare centre, gym, sports courts and program pool, is planned for Rhodes West as part of a major development in the station precinct. Plans were exhibited in May 2015.

Public paths and foreshore walkways in Rhodes West are heavily used by residents for daily recreation, to access facilities such as entertainment, cafes and parks and to commute to work within and beyond the Precinct.

3.3 Identified needs

The *Community Facilities Resourcing Strategy* (Cred 2011), Council's *S94 Contributions Plan* (2015), the *Cultural Plan* (2014) and the *Arts Plan* (2012) each identify a range of community values and needs, together with facilities or strategies that could be provided to meet those needs for the future residential population of Rhodes, or the wider LGA. Each study was based on census data and assumptions about future population growth on the peninsula. These assumptions have varied over time and from study to study. However, in all reports and plans, future population growth has been expected to occur only on Rhodes' western side.

Growth and development in Rhodes West has seen new facilities being provided by Council, developers and the private sector to fill known gaps. At the same time, the population profile has been changing, so that current residents may have different needs to those of even 5 years ago.

Feedback from Council and the community to the most recent plans suggests the key social infrastructure needs for existing residents of the Peninsula currently include:

- » Flexible and appropriately sized meeting and activity spaces that can be hired out, especially with storage and other facilities for a wide range of community uses
- » Spaces for adult education and further learning
- » Indoor and outdoor places and spaces for large community or private gatherings and events, including large format spaces for events of more than 300 people
- » Local medical services – doctors, allied health services
- » Public transport and access to and around the peninsula.

Open space and recreational needs of the existing population relate to facilities identified in the *Recreation Facilities Strategy* (@ Leisure Planners 2013), *Open Space Master Plan* and the *Rhodes Open Space Plan of Management* (Corkery 2015a and 2015b). The new Rhodes Leisure Centre, when opened, will provide a gym, indoor courts, a program pool and other facilities for residents. The proposed pool is for lessons and formal programs and is not expected to be used for recreational or fitness swimming. In addition, this facility may not open until 2023-2025.

The greatest open space and recreation needs for existing residents, as identified by Council and residents in community surveys are:

- » Access to active recreation spaces such as sports fields
- » Walkways, footpaths and plazas in a high quality public domain, where residents can walk, meet, access the waterfront, shops, food and activities. Walking together on the area's shared pedestrian and cycle links is a very popular recreational and social activity for residents and legible, permeable, attractive public spaces will further encourage active travel and connections within the community
- » Additional open lawn areas and parks suitable for kicking a ball
- » Indoor and outdoor places and spaces for large community or private gatherings and events
- » BBQ and picnic facilities
- » Restaurants and community spaces
- » Co-location of cafes and restaurants within parks, to activate spaces across the day and week
- » Dog walking and exercising areas – both on and off leash
- » Toilet facilities
- » Power and potable water connections for events and activities
- » Active water recreation opportunities such as improvements to existing Sea Scout Hall and amenities, and development of an appropriate site for storing Dragon Boats and launching these and other water craft.
- » Upgrades and new elements (public art, interpretive signage and memorial, pathway) in Churchill Tucker Reserve (east of Rhodes station) and connecting to McIlwaine Park
- » Wayfinding
- » Potential for community garden/s although these raise issues with responsibility and maintenance, so location and management are key considerations.
- » Clever use of the available streetscapes, view corridors, buildings, podiums and public and semi-public open spaces to ensure every opportunity to activate and maximise the availability of open space for the public is realised.

4 Future population and profile

This chapter considers the future population of the Rhodes East Priority Precinct Investigation Area in terms of its size and broad demographic characteristics. Assumptions about the future population will underpin the assessment of social infrastructure needs of existing and future residents.

4.1 The development scenario

The Structure Plan for the Rhodes East Priority Precinct (RobertsDay, November 2016) is presented in Figure 3.

Key features include:

- » A high density but low rise development typology
- » Five distinct 'character areas' comprising:
 - > Rhodes East Gateway (adjacent to Rhodes train station)
 - > Leeds Street Foreshore Precinct
 - > The High Point
 - > Concord Road Corridor
 - > Eastern Foreshore

The Structure Plan contains a residential, community, commercial, and mixed uses, a 'green necklace' of open spaces and a 'Complete Streets' strategy to emphasise local pedestrian / cycling and public transport connections and linkages through the Precinct.

4.2 Forecast dwelling yields and population

The Structure Plan for the precinct will result in a forecast yield of 3,977 dwellings. Assuming an average household size of 2.3 people per dwelling (consistent with the suburb average at the 2011 census), the 2036 population within Rhodes East represents a projected increase to around 9,100 residents, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5 Projected dwelling uplift – Rhodes East Urban Investigation Area

2011 dwellings	2011 population	Future 2036 dwellings	2036 population
274	733	3,977	~ 9,145

Source: Roberts Day, DP&E and City of Canada Bay

The Structure Plan envisages most of the future development potential for the precinct will be in the area between the railway line and Concord Road, as shown in Table 6.

Legend

- Residential
- Potential School/ Community Site
- Destination Retail (with residential above)
- Adaptive Ground Floor Priority (with residential above)
- Mixed Use
- Public Open Space
- Foreshore Access
- Corner Plazas
- Resting Area
- Land Bridge Site
- Pedestrian Link
- Pedestrian Bridge
- Potential Pedestrian Railway Overpass Location
- Floating River Pool
- Mixed Use Corner
- FerryWharf
- Site Boundary



RHODES EAST PRIORITY PRECINCT STRUCTURE PLAN BASE PLAN



Table 6 Projected locational split of new precinct population, 2036

	West of Concord Road	East of Concord Road	Total
Approximate yield at full development	3,085	892	3,977
Estimated population (at 2.3 persons per household)	7095	2,050	9,145

Source: Roberts Day, DP&E and City of Canada Bay

These forecasts are further divided into indicative yields for each of the five character areas within the Structure Plan, as shown in Table 7.

Table 7 Projected dwelling yield and population by Character Area, 2036

Character Area	Indicative yield	Indicative population
Leeds Street Foreshore Precinct	1,365	3,139
Rhodes East Gateway	347	798
Concord Road Corridor	753	1,731
The High Point	972	2,235
Eastern Foreshore	540	1,242
Total	3,977	9,145

Source: Roberts Day, DP&E and City of Canada Bay

More than one third of the future population and dwellings growth is expected to occur within the Leeds Street Foreshore Precinct.

4.3 Demographic characteristics of future population

4.3.1 Characteristics of high density areas

Forecasting age or household characteristics of a future population requires consideration of factors such as dwelling size and mix, market price and segment, experience in similar nearby areas and the influence of other factors particular to the site. The characteristics of the future population will be influenced most heavily by the type and size of the dwellings constructed.

It is understood that residential development within the precinct will take the form of high density but low rise apartments of varying sizes, ranging from studios to 3+ bedrooms. In this respect, the dwelling types will be similar in some ways to those in Rhodes West, but quite different to those in other parts of Concord.

Past studies conducted by Elton Consulting and other organisations have attempted to identify typical characteristics of populations living in medium and higher density areas in Sydney. The following section draws on analysis from two key sources using data from the 2011 ABS Census of Population and Housing:

- » The characteristics of people living in multi-unit residential development across Greater Sydney undertaken by the City Futures Research Centre

- » The characteristics of apartment dwellers living in urban transformation areas or new higher density developments adjacent to the harbour, (as opposed to apartments across the metropolitan area as a whole), using the examples of Pyrmont, Zetland, Rhodes and Meadowbank.

These studies suggest that in comparison with lower density areas, high density dwellings across Sydney are likely to be characterised by:

- » A high proportion of young adults (25-34), along with an under-representation of both school aged children and older adults 65+. Specifically, while proportions of pre-school children (0-4 years) are broadly consistent with, or only slightly below, the metropolitan average, the proportions of school aged children and adolescents aged 5-19 years are generally significantly below the average for Greater Sydney. This suggests that people tend to stay in apartments while their children are young, or until the second child is born, and then move to larger dwelling types
- » A significantly higher proportion of households comprising couples without children and single persons compared with lower density areas, and a correspondingly much smaller proportion of households comprising families with children. The household profile appears to vary spatially across Sydney though – with eastern suburbs, north shore and ocean or harbour locations having a higher proportion of older people and lone person households and western suburbs such as Liverpool, Fairfield, Canterbury and Auburn having higher concentrations of families with children living in apartments
- » Different tenure patterns, with a much higher proportion of dwellings in private rental and a lower proportion that is owner occupied. In addition, there is a higher proportion of private dwellings that are unoccupied. Urban Taskforce Australia found that occupancy is roughly equally split between owner occupiers and renters. Renters are predominantly younger adults (under 45 years), while the majority of owner occupiers are over 45 years
- » A higher proportion of residents born overseas, with a particularly high proportion born on the Asian continent
- » High rates of labour force participation and high proportions of the workforce engaged in professional or managerial roles
- » Higher median weekly household income, reflecting high levels of workforce participation, high levels of full-time employment and relatively high proportions with tertiary qualifications and in professional / managerial positions.

These characteristics are generally consistent with the demographic profile of Rhodes in 2011.

4.3.2 Implications for the Rhodes East Precinct

Based upon the trends outlined above, the Rhodes East Precinct is likely to be characterised by:

- » A high proportion of investor owned housing with around half being rental accommodation
- » A high proportion of young adults (aged 25-40) who are well educated, working in professional occupations and who are drawn to the area to be close to work
- » A high proportion of households comprising one or two people
- » A lower proportion of households comprising families with children. However, numbers of children will still be significant due to the size of the incoming population, and social infrastructure will still be required that addresses their needs
- » Lower proportions of older residents aged 65+
- » High levels of cultural diversity.

This means that social infrastructure will need to accommodate a wide diversity of needs, including those of young single people and working adults, young children, older children, families, retirees and older people. The likely heterogeneity of the population points to a need for flexible and multi-use facilities capable of responding to changing needs, rather than focusing on the particular requirements of specific age or life cycle cohorts.

The population of Rhodes East is likely to be similar to that of Rhodes West in its age and household profile. This points to the importance of providing infrastructure and attractors that can help to enhance social cohesion. Social infrastructure and community development initiatives can play an important role in encouraging links and connections between new and existing communities reducing the risk of polarisation and fragmentation.

It is not possible to forecast the precise age and household profile of the Precinct at this early stage of planning. However, although the estimated percentages of total population for some of the key age groups are relatively small (eg. school aged, and older adults), the actual numbers are likely to still be relatively significant and will create demand for social infrastructure.

Given the projected demographics, a key challenge for the Rhodes East Precinct will be achieving a socially diverse and sustainable community, in terms of a balance of age, household type and income. The extent to which a reasonably diverse population may be achieved will depend largely upon the mix of housing available, and in particular the proportion of larger dwellings capable of accommodating families with children as well as affordable housing options. A development with a high proportion of studio and one bedroom apartments may assist somewhat with affordability but will also limit its appeal to families with children, and also possibly to older people. This may create the potential for a community that lacks diversity.

5 Community facility requirements

This chapter considers the community facilities and human services that will be required to meet the needs of the Rhodes East Urban Investigation Area population in future, estimated to reach approximately 9,100 people over the next 20 years.

5.1 Approach to planning social infrastructure

In social infrastructure planning, community facilities and services are commonly considered at three levels:

- » Local neighbourhood level services and facilities - generally provided for a population of about 5,000–15,000 people to meet everyday needs, and including community centres, childcare centres, primary school, local park and doctor's surgery
- » District level services and facilities - more specialised services which operate on a broader district catchment of around 20,000 – 30,000 people, and up to 50,000 people, depending on the needs of the population. These include libraries, sporting facilities, high school, community health centre, family support services, emergency services. They are most often located in activity centres, ideally linked to public transport and in locations where people have reason to gather and visit.
- » Sub-regional and regional level services - major facilities for a population of over about 100,000 people, and including hospitals, tertiary education, major cultural facilities.

Traditional approaches to planning for social infrastructure and open space have commonly relied on numerical benchmark or standards calculations, such as 'number of facilities per 1,000 people', 'percentage of land area' or 'hectares per 1,000 people'. Such standards should only ever be used as an initial starting point or rough guide in identifying needs, as such a mathematical approach does not take account of the characteristics of the future population or site opportunities and constraints. More importantly, they have been developed primarily for use in greenfield areas, and should be applied judiciously in urban infill and higher density areas, in recognition of existing facilities, dwelling and demographic characteristics and expressed community needs. The following table provides examples of commonly used standards that could provide an initial starting point when considering community needs for Rhodes East. These standards are drawn from those being applied in Sydney's Priority Growth Areas on the metropolitan fringe.

Table 8 Typical standards for community facilities and open space

Facility type	Commonly applied standard	Notional requirement for population of 9,100
District multipurpose community centre	1 :20,000-30,000 people Approximately 1,200-2,500 square metres GFA Floorspace based on 60-80 sqm/1000 people for local and district facilities	Does not meet threshold
Local community centre	1 for every 10,000-20,000 people Approximately 600-1,000 square metres GFA.	Does not meet threshold

Facility type	Commonly applied standard	Notional requirement for population of 9,100
	Floorspace based on 60-80 sqm/1000 people for local and district facilities	
Community hall or meeting room	1 for 5,000 – 10,000 people Floorspace based on 60-80 sqm/1000 people for local and district facilities	Community hall / small community centre
District library	39 sqm per 1,000 people (plus 20% circulation space) for populations of 20,000-35,000 people Or 35 sqm per 1,000 people (plus 20% circulation space) for populations of 35,001-65,000 people Based on State Library of NSW Guidelines	Does not meet threshold
Cultural facility	Will depend on size and scale of facility. Generally 1:50,000+	Does not meet threshold
Community health centre	1:50,000 people (Central Sydney Local Health District Strategic Plan)	Does not meet threshold
Childcare / early education centre	1 place per 2 children aged 0-5 years	305 places
Out-of-school-hours care	1:4,000-6,000 people co-located with school or childcare centre	1 OOSH care centre
Primary school	1:2,000-2,500 dwellings	1 primary school
High school	1:6,000-7,500 dwellings	Does not meet threshold
Open space	2.83ha:1,000 people (City of Canada Bay currently 2.6ha/1,000 people) Or 5% land area in higher density areas	1.8 Ha
Sporting fields	1 double playing field: 5,000 people (4-5 ha)	1 double playing field
Swimming pool / Aquatic centre	1:40,000-50,000 people	Does not meet threshold
Recreation centre	1 indoor court: 25,000 people	Does not meet threshold

Social infrastructure is provided by a wide variety of agencies, including all levels of government, non-government organisations and the private sector. At this Structure Plan stage, the strategy for social infrastructure provision needs to focus on the facilities which may have significant land requirements, to ensure that sufficient land is identified in appropriate locations to meet future need. This focuses particularly on facilities and services provided by local government and State Government agencies (such as schools). Services provided by the Commonwealth Government (eg employment services, some family services, veterans' services,) have land requirements that are likely to be relatively

modest, and most likely will use available commercial office space within designated centres. Such sites can be identified in subsequent detailed levels of planning.

Sites for facilities provided by the non-government and private sectors are usually acquired through the private market and will need to be considered at a later stage of development as demand is established. At the same time, it is recognised that some types of private / non-government facilities may have significant land requirements. These include private schools, private hospitals and medical services, churches, private childcare services, commercial gym and fitness facilities, residential aged care facilities and entertainment facilities such as cinemas, hotels and restaurants. The Structure Plan will need to allow sufficient scope and flexibility to accommodate such uses as demand emerges.

A forecast of around 9,100 additional people in Rhodes East will provide a catchment of sufficient size to support a number of local level facilities and services within the precinct. In general, a population of this size would not be considered large enough to warrant the provision of higher order district or regional level facilities and would rely instead on those currently provided within the wider region such as Rhodes town centre, Concord and Canada Bay LGA.

While social infrastructure planning for Rhodes East aims to understand the additional demand likely to be generated by, or attributable to, a new population in this precinct, planning also needs to recognise that recent and planned future population growth in nearby precincts over recent years (Rhodes West, Wentworth Point in particular) has contributed to cumulative demands for district and regional level social infrastructure and open space that may not be able to be met within these new precincts – thus placing additional demands on existing facilities in surrounding areas. The future development of Rhodes East is being planned within the context of this growing and changing population and will add to these cumulative pressures, but would not be required to provide for unmet or emerging demands from these adjacent precincts.

Facilities have been considered in terms of those which are provided by local government, those provided by State Government agencies, and those provided by the private and non-government sectors.

5.2 Local government community facilities

5.2.1 Community centres

Consideration of the needs of the future Rhodes East residents for community centre space has incorporated information about the existing provision in Rhodes West and Concord.

The assessment of existing social infrastructure outlined in Chapter 3 indicated that there is already a shortage of places where residents can meet for social, activity based, leisure or further education purposes.

Some of these identified needs will be met through the new community centre at Rhodes West (The Connection), located only a short distance from Rhodes East. The Connection will comprise a large, modern community and cultural precinct with a range of activity spaces and a mix of community and income generating uses. The Connection will be open every day, and its spaces are flexible and multi-purpose, with a range of spaces and facilities in each of its four 'spaces' to cater for a diverse range of uses.

As noted in 3.1.2, the Rhodes East Precinct already contains the Rhodes Community Centre. However, due to this facility's local heritage listing, limitations on refurbishment and already heavy usage, this facility will not be able to meet the variety of social, leisure, learning and support needs generated by a population of 9,100 people for local meeting and activity spaces.

A population of 9,100 additional residents would typically justify provision of a new local community centre. In recognition that community spaces are already in high demand in the Rhodes area and shortages exist for community meeting spaces, additional community space would provide venues for:

- » Community activities, programs and classes, such as playgroups, fitness groups, art and craft classes and after school activities
- » Meetings of local organisations and community groups
- » Accommodation for community services and the delivery of sessional and outreach services
- » A base for community development activities and events
- » Leisure and support activities for young people and for older people
- » Adult education classes and training courses
- » Hire for corporate or private functions, such as birthday parties.

A community centre can be a critical facility in areas of new development, providing activities and services that promote social interaction and the development of community networks and which support the health and well-being of residents. Community centres also provide a source of community information and a base for community development initiatives that foster community identity and sense of belonging.

New community centre space should therefore be provided within the Rhodes East Precinct to cater for the needs of all ages, socio-economic groups and diverse cultural groups. Community centres should ideally be multi-purpose facilities with a range of flexible spaces capable of meeting multiple needs and delivering a range of activities and services to the incoming population. Canada Bay Council's *Section 94 Development Contributions Plan* (2015) adopts a rate of 162m² per 1,000 residents for the provision of future community facilities in accordance with research by Cred 2011. Application of this benchmark suggests the proposed additional 9,100 residents would generate a need for an additional 1,474m² of community facility floorspace. However, the benchmark includes a broader range of facilities than just community centres, and also incorporates an allowance for district and regional facilities within the wider LGA. Allowing for around 45m² of this rate for these purposes would imply a need to allocate around 1,065m² floorspace (ie. 72% of the total 162m² rate) to a new community facility for the Rhodes East population.

By comparison, Elton Consulting typically recommends (as a starting point) a rate of provision of about 60-80m² for every 1,000 people for neighbourhood, local and district level facilities. This is based on analysis of comparative rates of provision across a number of Sydney local government areas and derived through the testing of provision rates on a number of successful projects. This rate does not include specialist facilities (such as arts/cultural facilities) and is used as a guide only to provide a broad estimate of community facility needs. A rate of 60m² for local facilities would imply a need for a considerably smaller facility, of around 546m².

Consideration has been given to how this quantum of floorspace might be provided within the Precinct, especially in light of Council's preference for locating community facilities within an activity hub. While there are many competing demands for future use of the Council-owned Rhodes Community Centre on Blaxland Road, its location and current use as a community facility supports the opportunity for a heritage-sensitive redevelopment into a larger 'community hub'. On its own, an additional 546m² in community space is considered to be quite small, and would have limited potential for flexible uses to complement capacity already in the area. However, application of Council's higher rate would imply a total of 1,065m² additional space for incorporation into a redevelopment of this site. Management of the facility and its activities in a way that complements and supports activities at The Connection, is consistent with a community hubs model and makes best use of available resources.

The Blaxland Road site adjacent to the Cavell Avenue and Denham Street 'green corner' mixed use site would also provide opportunities for a flexible design of indoor-outdoor areas and assist in site activation and place-making. A community hub at this site could also incorporate a space to meet the identified shortfall in resident demand for large format events, which could be managed jointly with The Connection's Event Space.

Several alternative locations have also been considered for a potential new community facility. The required space could be instead provided as part of the redeveloped Leeds Street Industrial Area. This location also could create a focus for a community hub with indoor-outdoor space located within the proposed waterfront plaza. The option of including the community facility within the proposed Rhodes Leisure Centre has also been considered, but this site is within Rhodes West, it is very close to The Connection and it would likely also require renegotiation of the VPA, which has only recently been completed.

Guiding principles for the planning and provision of community facilities, developed by Elton Consulting, are included in Appendix A. These principles are provided to assist identification of suitable sites and future planning of community facilities in the Precinct. In summary, the location of the community centre should be guided by the following criteria:

- » Central to its catchment population and easily accessible by the majority of their users
- » Visually prominent, with a main street location and presentation to the street
- » Accessible by public transport, and located to maximize access for pedestrians and cyclists
- » Fully accessible to enable use by people with limited mobility
- » Located to enhance a sense of community, vibrancy and local civic identity, and to help create a focal point or hub for the community. This includes places where people already have cause to congregate, rather than on standalone sites, for reasons of safety, accessibility and convenience. Shopping centres and schools are recognised as the key destinations where people tend to congregate within a neighbourhood. Locations within or adjacent to commercial centres also add to the activity level and critical mass needed to create a vibrant mix of activities and lively centre
- » Located to provide a high level of safety and security, particularly at nights and weekends. This is most usually associated with high levels of activity and casual surveillance, as well as lighting and proximity to public transport
- » Where possible, located adjacent to open space to allow for larger outdoor community events, spill-over activities and children's play. Locations adjacent to outdoor recreation facilities such as tennis or netball courts can also provide a leisure focus as well as space for community activities
- » Located to ensure access to safe and convenient parking, including shared parking with surrounding land uses where appropriate.

A key trend in community facility provision involves a move towards multipurpose facilities that function as 'third places' – informal public gathering spaces that enable people to sit, relax, meet, gather and interact. They are places that encourage social connections and are essential to the creation of a sense of community. Community centres are addressing the communal yearning for 'places to spend time, where you don't have to spend money'. They are busy, safe, and interesting places where you can feel like you are part of a community, but not have to pay for the privilege.

Responding to the importance of the 'third place', the 'community living room' component to a community centre is becoming increasingly prevalent. This model involves a focus on levels of comfort, space and amenity that encourage people to linger and spend time in informal ways. Such third places are also particularly important in higher density communities where space within the home to entertain friends, study or just relax is limited. Community facilities can also play an important role in higher density environments by providing space for hire for private functions and

meetings that may not easily be accommodated in smaller dwellings (such as for children's parties, birthdays as well as strata and body corporate meetings).

The actual layout and functions within a new community facility will depend on its overall size, to be determined in conjunction with Canada Bay Council. However, it should complement the existing spaces available within the Rhodes Community Centre (and those at The Connection), and should incorporate:

- » A variety of flexible spaces suitable for a range of social, leisure and cultural activities and changing needs over time. Spaces could include:
 - > a hall suitable for large gatherings and events and physical activities
 - > some additional meeting and activity rooms of different sizes
 - > A room for children's activities which opens onto an enclosed garden. This might be used for child-minding for parents attending centre activities, for playgroups, and for before and after school or vacation care
- » Plenty of storage to meet the needs of a variety of user groups
- » Kitchen suitable to support private functions such as birthday parties
- » Adjacent outdoor space with children's play equipment and barbecue, to provide for spill over social events and activities for children and young people.

Depending on the design and opportunities to combine with spaces in the existing Community Centre, there may also be an opportunity to provide for:

- » Offices for a community development worker and for other human service providers
- » Sessional or outreach health and welfare services such as baby health clinic, counselling or family support services.

Given all these considerations, it is recommended that:

- » The Rhodes Community Centre on Blaxland Road be expanded by 546-1,065m² to provide a larger, modern and complementary multi-purpose community facility for Rhodes East. Expansion at this site presents some challenges with retention or incorporation of its heritage features, but would reinforce the role of the centre as a community hub.
- » Location adjacent to a small park or plaza as part of the 'Corners Strategy' could incorporate a new large format space for public or private events and should allow for a playground / play area, café or other local placemaking embellishments
- » Operation of the expanded Rhodes Community Centre in tandem with The Connection will support its role as a new community hub.

The Blaxland Road site is being considered for potential redevelopment - retaining the existing Rhodes Community Centre building as part of a new, larger facility. Positioning the proposed 'green corner' area of new open space at the south western corner of the Denham Street and Cavell Avenue intersection offers the opportunity to integrate this community use with adjoining open space. The site is only a short distance from the station and Leeds Street foreshore, but is still sufficiently centrally located to be accessible and visible.

Should the preferred site on Blaxland Road not be available for a community centre (due to competing demands for its use), then alternative site options will need to be considered, consistent with the locational principles above and in conjunction with Council. At this stage, options include:

- » Leeds Street Foreshore Precinct

- » As part of redevelopment and activation of the Rhodes East Gateway commercial development, land-bridge and / or combined with a new primary school.

5.2.2 Facilities and services for older people

The proportion of older people expected to be attracted to Rhodes East Precinct is not likely to be high, particularly in the early stages of development. However, there will still be older people wishing to live near their families or remaining in the precinct, and it will be important that their needs are met in order to ensure that they do not become isolated in a community otherwise oriented towards young adults and young families.

The social, leisure and recreational needs of older people may be met through mainstream services and facilities for the whole community, and through programs and activities for older people delivered within the multi-purpose community centre. Leading practice now steers away from providing age-specific buildings, such as senior citizens centres, which can only be used by specific sections of the population and which thereby run the risk of being under-utilised for much of the week or as the population changes. Instead, the usual practice now is to provide multi-purpose facilities which have flexibility to incorporate activities for different target groups as required.

Older people will have access to the waterfront plaza at Leeds Street Foreshore Precinct, the foreshore access and other pedestrian and cycle paths through the precinct, connecting to local parks and amenities. These will support goals of active living, a connected community and an age friendly environment.

5.2.3 Facilities for young people

As for older people, leading practice now steers away from providing separate facilities just for young people, on the grounds of their under-utilisation for much of the time while young people are at school or work.

At the local neighbourhood level, the needs of young people for space for social and leisure activities may be met through activities available within the proposed expanded community centre, as well as through a well-designed public domain, and the pedestrian paths, cycleways and areas of open space along the waterfront. Some embellishments proposed for inclusion at McIlwaine Park and King George V Reserve (eg. areas for informal sports, half courts) would also appeal directly to younger people. A skate park proposed by Council's *Open Space Master Plan* and *Plan of Management* (Corkery June 2015a and 2015b) for the eastern side of Concord Road between Cropley and Llewellyn Streets has instead been incorporated into the Structure Plan as an extension of the 'skateable moments' / small skatepark integrated into the foreshore edge in a new location under John Whitton (railway) Bridge within the Leeds Street Foreshore Precinct. This proposed inclusion would support plans to create a highly active hub in this area.

Young people will also be able to use the gym, courts and other facilities at the proposed Leisure Centre near Rhodes Station (when built), although the swimming pool will offer lessons and programs rather than recreational or lap swimming.

Provision of wifi hotspots and well-designed, well lit, modern spaces that are safe and comfortable would support the social and recreational needs of younger people.

5.2.4 Libraries and cultural facilities

No new library facilities are included in the Rhodes East Structure Plan, as the projected population on its own would not meet benchmarks where new facilities would be required. Instead the library needs of new residents will be met by district level facilities at the nearby Concord or Five Dock libraries

(4kms and 8kms distant, respectively), or through the new digital collection Learning Space at The Connection in Rhodes West.

Applying standards for library facilities as outlined in Table 8 (*People Places- A Guide for Public Library Buildings in NSW, State Library of NSW 2012*) to the combined populations of Rhodes West and Rhodes East (at approximately 23,500 people) would generate a need for around 928m² of library space. Much of this demand will be met through The Connection's 'Learning Space', as part of Council's overall library network. This dedicated learning facility will include state of the art digital equipment, a creative studio, digital classroom and flexible open community space, featuring hosted programs and events. Its five areas comprise:

- » Studio 1 – a classroom style room suitable for programs and learning
- » Studio 2 – suitable for photography, video and music creation
- » Digital Classroom – for private study in a shared environment
- » Open Space – open air space for informal meetings
- » Digital Gallery – high-tech gallery featuring changing artists.

The Digital Gallery will meet some of the needs identified in this study for creative and gallery space in the local area.

The projected population would not be sufficient to support a cultural facility, which typically include stages and theatres as part of a district or regional level facility in a major centre, serving a larger population. Spaces for cultural and artistic expression could be incorporated into the proposed expansion to the Rhodes Community Centre on Blaxland Road (eg rooms for classes and workshops, exhibition space), consistent with Council's *Cultural Plan*. However, it is recognised that there are many competing demands for this site, and even for future uses within the proposed community hub. The adjacent mixed use corner would, nevertheless, be an ideal location for display of public art.

Public art would also provide a focal point for the Leeds Street Foreshore, and embellishments to parks and streetscapes throughout the Precinct. A foreshore location would be accessible to new residents of Rhodes East as well as those in Rhodes West.

Some community and cultural events are currently held in Rhodes West and with further embellishment through this Structure Plan there will be opportunities for additional events and entertainment within McIlwaine Park and Brays Bay Reserve.

However, these facilities cannot cater for very large gatherings. For large entertainment and cultural events, residents will need to access facilities at the Sydney Olympic Park precinct or elsewhere in the wider Sydney or Parramatta areas.

5.3 State Government social infrastructure

5.3.1 Government schools

In areas of urban renewal, the Department of Education's policy is to optimise use of its existing assets, as its first preference, through solutions such as:

- » Increasing the size, amenity and functionality of existing schools to manage growth
- » Renewing existing assets to provide contemporary teaching spaces for students
- » Realigning school catchment boundaries to appropriately manage growth where possible
- » Managing enrolments to provide priority to 'in catchment area' students
- » Using temporary classrooms to manage short term fluctuations in enrolment levels.

New schools will only be established where there are no other options available to use existing sites.

Planning for schools within this precinct has been handled through a negotiation process between DP&E and NSW Department of Education. The Department of Education has advised that while high school needs will be able to be accommodated at Concord High School in future, the projected population growth from Rhodes East together with demand from Rhodes West will generate need for a new primary school with 19-20 classrooms in the area. Discussions have therefore focussed on opportunities for a 'vertical school' to meet the needs of primary school students likely to be generated by rezoning and growth in this precinct. A school of this size would require approximately 5,700m² gross floor space (excluding play areas) and a 2,000m² floorplate over four levels, including one floor of internal play and roof top play areas. Access to public open space is also required.

The Department applies the following guiding principles in planning for schools in high density areas:

Urban Design

- » co-located with active open space
- » minimum 2-3 street frontages
- » no major overshadowing
- » co-located with community services where possible (i.e. community centres, libraries)
- » centrally located in residential catchment area.

Roads

- » avoid locating on major and sub-arterial roads (RMS preference)
- » located on collector road network
- » located on existing bus (or public transport) routes to avoid duplication of bus traffic
- » allowance for lay-by areas for pick up and drop off.

Environmental

- » not located on contaminated land (otherwise remediated to a standard that is suitable for schools)
- » not located adjacent to developments that area likely to result in significant health issues (i.e. noise, vibration, air quality impacts)
- » not located adjacent to heavy industrial development
- » not located within the 1 in 100 year flood level
- » emergency evacuation routes accessible for sites within proximity of flood prone land.

The guiding principles indicate there is the potential to co-locate a vertical school within a community hub, such as the expanded multi-purpose community centre proposed for the Rhodes Community Centre on Blaxland Road. It is recognised that this model could present practical design and management issues that would need to be resolved with the Department of Education.

DP&E is continuing to work with the Department of Education in relation to the education requirements of a future Rhodes East Precinct population.

5.3.2 Higher education

The higher education needs of Rhodes East residents would be met through existing TAFE and university facilities.

The Northern Sydney Institute of TAFE's Meadowbank and Ryde campuses are a short distance to the north. Major changes to the TAFE funding model from 2015 will instead see greater competition for

course delivery, increasing specialisation amongst TAFE campuses, greater flexibility in where courses are delivered (eg at workplaces) and changes to use of TAFE buildings and sites. The need to deliver courses within workplaces and demand for outreach classes, may increase the need for rooms to be available within community facilities. However, these classes would also require specialty equipment, and are not likely to be suitable for multi-purpose shared use facilities, such as the proposed community centre.

Students from this area would attend universities across Sydney, with Macquarie University, CBD university campuses and Western Sydney University's Parramatta CBD campus being closest.

Accommodation for other lifelong learning activities (eg community colleges, evening classes, U3A) can be provided through other types of facilities such as community centres and schools, without the need for purpose-built facilities. These needs should be considered in the design of the expanded community facility proposed for Blaxland Road.

5.3.3 Public health services

The future population of the Rhodes East precinct will not be large enough to justify provision of any community health or hospital facilities within the precinct, but will instead rely on those in the wider region.

Public health services for residents of Rhodes East will continue to be provided by the Sydney Local Health District (HD) through Concord Repatriation General Hospital, an Early Childhood Health Centre at Concord and community health centres in the wider area.

Major projects are planned for Concord Repatriation General Hospital to 2018 (NSW Health Sydney LHD), including development of a masterplan for the site to incorporate a new aged care precinct, a new palliative care service, a Cancer Centre, an Ambulatory Care facility, imaging facilities and upgrades to Emergency and operating theatres. In addition, there is provision for ongoing service quality improvements.

Within Council's Section 94 Contributions Plan, the Early Childhood Health Centre at Concord is planned to be relocated into a new multi-purpose Concord Community Hub.

The capacity of health services is influenced as much by staffing as by the capacity of buildings, and it is not a straightforward exercise to simply apply standards to derive future health service requirements for a new population.

Development within Rhodes East has not been considered in the population forecasts which underpin the *Sydney Local Health District Strategic Plan 2014-2018*. However, as part of the development of the Structure Plan for Rhodes East, DP&E is continuing to consult with NSW Health. Population forecasts for Rhodes East will need to be factored in to the Health District's new Strategic Plan when it is updated in 2018.

5.3.4 Emergency services

Fire and Rescue NSW

Rhodes East contains a volunteer (retained) Fire Station.

Fire & Rescue NSW (FRNSW) monitor and assess resource needs across Sydney as population and demands change. It is expected that the precinct will be serviced from the existing Fire and Rescue station on Concord Road, Rhodes East.

NSW Police

The Rhodes East Precinct falls within the Burwood Local Area Command, although the nearest police station is located in Ryde.

Planning for police services relates more to emergency response times, and hence travel distance and road networks, than it does to population thresholds. As the Precinct growth will occur within an established area, there is unlikely to be any need for additional police stations.

Ambulance

As noted in Section 3, the Precinct is served by ambulances based in Denistone Road, Ryde.

As with planning for Police services, ambulance planning is made on the basis of rapid response times rather than population thresholds. Development in this precinct is unlikely to create unsustainable pressure on the response times from this station. No additional ambulance facilities are expected to be required.

5.4 Private / non-government sector facilities

5.4.1 Neighbourhood shopping

Residents of Rhodes East Precinct will have access to a range of commercial and retail offerings with the precinct.

The Structure Plan incorporates:

- » Around 6,000-6,500m² of convenience retail within the Rhodes East Gateway character area comprising:
 - > 1,500-2,000m² supermarket
 - > 600m² specialty food grocery / liquor
 - > 1,000-1,500m² restaurants or fast food
 - > 1,500m² specialty and personal services
 - > 500-1,000m² non-retail services.
- » Around 7,000m² destination retail within the Leeds Street Foreshore Precinct character area comprising :
 - > Wine bars and cafes
 - > Small gourmet supermarket (max size of 1,600m²) and delicatessens
 - > Micro-brewery or other specialist retail uses.

As well as these retail and commercial services, these character areas would also be likely to include places for informal meeting and gathering in their outdoor civic spaces.

The convenience retail centre proposed adjacent to Rhodes Station will integrate with existing retail and commercial services at and near the western side of Rhodes Station.

Higher order shopping is available at the Rhodes Shopping Centre, also in Rhodes West.

5.4.2 Childcare facilities

A number of different forms of childcare and activities for young children are generally provided in a community, including long daycare, family daycare, pre-school, occasional care and playgroups. Additionally, services to support families with young children may be provided. It is not appropriate at this stage of the planning process to try to anticipate need for the various specific types of services. Instead, leading practice encourages planning of flexible multi-purpose childcare centres, which can provide a mix of services or adapt as precise needs are identified.

The provision of childcare has changed substantially in recent years, associated with shifts in government regulation and funding policy, such that the private sector is now the provider of the majority of childcare centres in Australia. As such, the provision of childcare in most new developments is now left largely to market forces. In common with the provision of childcare in most new developments, childcare in Rhodes East will be provided by private sector providers, as demand develops.

Benchmarks for the provision of childcare places tend to vary, from around 1 place: 5 children aged 0-5 years in older suburban areas, to 1 place: 2 children in some higher density infill areas (eg City of Sydney). Assuming similar rates of preschool aged children to those at the time of the 2011 census and adopting the higher benchmark would suggest childcare demands in the order of 280 places for residents of Rhodes East Precinct at full development.

The number of childcare centres required will depend upon the size of each centre in terms of number of childcare places. There is no standard size of centre. However, for reasons of cost efficiencies, there is a trend to provide larger centres (60-80+ places), where local demand justifies this. This would suggest 4 new childcare centres will be required. These are expected to predominantly offer Long Day Care services which suit most working parents.

It is not necessary that precise requirements for childcare are identified at this structure planning stage. Childcare centres are a permitted use within residential areas and do not require land to be designated at the master planning stage.

Planning for childcare will also need to address the need for out of hours school care for primary school aged children. Out of School Hours (OOSH) care (also known as Out of School Hours Care – OSHC) is now typically provided at most schools and some offer Vacation Care as well.

There are many successful examples where childcare centres have been co-located with community facilities. Consideration should be given to the inclusion of a childcare centre, as well as out-of-school-hours care, vacation care and, potentially, occasional care services, as part of the proposed community facility and / or new school.

5.4.3 Private schools

Providers of independent schools undertake detailed demographic and feasibility assessments before committing to new release areas. They also tend to acquire their sites through market processes, rather than necessarily acquiring sites designated in master plans.

Demand for private schools reflects the socio-economic and religious profile of an area as well as the availability of private schools in the surrounding area. The limited site area and size of development sites in Rhodes East means there is unlikely to be demand for new private school sites within Rhodes East.

5.4.4 Medical services

The needs of an additional 9,100 people will not be able to be absorbed by existing medical services and a range of new medical and allied health services will be required.

Based upon the national benchmark of 1 GP per 1,100 people, the additional population will give rise to a need for around 8 additional GPs. The additional GPs may be distributed through an expansion of existing practices or establishment of new services. There is no standard number of GPs to make up a general practice, but a minimum of about 4-5 GPs is now commonly regarded as needed to create a viable practice. This suggests that 2 medical centres might be required.

Medical practices and other allied health services such as dentists and physiotherapists are provided according to the commercial feasibility assessments of practitioners, and services may be located in

commercially leased premises, without the need for purpose built capital facilities. A range of other services exist in the Concord Repatriation Hospital precinct.

5.4.5 Welfare and support services

The Rhodes East population is expected to be reasonably affluent and active and demand for welfare and support services will be modest.

The expansion of existing services and development of new services will rely primarily on funding increases to non-government services through government grant programs, in turn dependent upon government budgetary processes. It will primarily require increases in recurrent funding for additional staffing and program resources, rather than capital funding for new facilities. However, facilities with land use requirements include residential care facilities for older people and accommodation services for people with a disability, such as group homes. Sites for such facilities are usually acquired through market processes as demand arises. At this early stage of the planning process, it is not possible to identify particular requirements for such facilities.

A key need of welfare and support services in the area is for affordable office accommodation. Such services are best located in centres where they are accessible by public transport. The proposed community centre in Rhodes East could provide some office accommodation for sessional services. However, given the large number of community health and support services that will be available at the Concord Repatriation Hospital precinct, it is unlikely that additional space for such services would be required in Rhodes East.

5.4.6 Places of worship

In addition to meeting spiritual needs, places of worship can also provide an important base for community development, youth, volunteer and welfare support activities in new communities, and as such can fulfil an important role in building community spirit and identity. Places of worship may also provide halls and other spaces which can be utilised for community activities by the general community. Others may contribute to demands for larger or flexible spaces within facilities such as the proposed community hub.

Should demands exceed space available within the proposed community hub, the acquisition of sites for places of worship is generally left to market forces, according to their ability to purchase sites, and it is difficult to specifically identify sites at the master planning stage. However, the relatively high cost of sites may preclude places of worship from establishing in urban infill communities.

5.5 Delivery of community facilities

The key facilities to be delivered for the Rhodes East Precinct are an expanded multi-purpose community centre and a new primary school.

For the community centre, it should be noted that under current legislation, there is no source of funds available with which to build community facilities. Under regulations set out in the *Revised Local Development Contributions Practice Note* (DPI February 2014), councils wishing to exceed the designated cap (\$20,000 per dwelling in Canada Bay) may only use S94 contributions for "essential works". This includes land only for community facilities and land plus 'base level embellishment' for open space and sporting facilities. The building of community centres is not considered to be "essential works". Accordingly, the funding of the construction of the community centres will rely upon Council making the funds available, future reforms to the developer contribution system that allow for contributions to be levied for building community facilities, or the introduction of other grant programs for local government social infrastructure.

In relation to the need for a new primary school, it is important to note that new schools are generally not developed until the Department of Education's modelling indicates that there will be sufficient demand to justify it. Any spare capacity within existing primary and high schools in the surrounding area will be utilised first, and then opportunities exhausted to augment capacity on existing sites, for example by use of demountable classrooms.

5.6 Summary

Rhodes East Precinct, at full development with a population of around 9,100 people, will be large enough to support local neighbourhood facilities such as a primary school, neighbourhood and specialty shopping, 4 childcare centres, 2 medical centres and new community centre facilities.

The precinct will not be large enough to warrant any district or regional level facilities, and will not provide a suitable location for district or regional facilities serving the broader area by virtue of its location on the peninsula, lack of a major centre and its proximity to Rhodes West. Rhodes East will rely on existing district and regional facilities and services to meet the needs of its future population.

Growth forecasts for the area will need to be factored into the capital works and service development plans of State Government agencies with regard to health, welfare, disability and aged care services and facilities.

6 Open space and recreational requirements

Access to open space for both active and passive leisure and recreation pursuits is regarded as critical to physical and mental wellbeing and is seen as a key component of a healthy and sustainable community. Open space is important for many reasons and is used by different population groups for a wide range of leisure and recreation activities.

This chapter outlines the open space, sporting and recreation facilities that will be required to meet the needs of the future Rhodes East Precinct population of around 9,100 people. It considers:

- » The importance of open space
- » Key sport and recreation participation trends that help to inform the approach to open space infrastructure provision for the Rhode East Precinct
- » Approaches to planning for how much open space to provide
- » Planning principles to guide future provision.

6.1 Demand analysis

6.1.1 Trends in recreation and sport participation

NSW Data

Sport and physical recreation have long been important features of the Australian lifestyle and identity and health and fitness has become a major lifestyle movement in recent years. However, a range of data suggests there have been important changes in the ways in which people participate in physical activity for both leisure and sport. Key trends in physical recreation participation and facility use summarised in the Australian Sports Commission's report *The Future of Australian Sport* (2013) include:

- » A movement from organised, team sports to a focus on individual fitness
- » Substantial growth in indoor sport and recreation
- » Flexibility in the times that people enjoy their recreation, as demands on time increase and work practices change
- » Greater demand for indoor facilities that are available all day, every day of the year.

The report notes that:

"People are fitting sport into their increasingly busy and time-fragmented lifestyles to achieve personal health objectives. Participation rates in aerobics – running and walking as well as gym memberships – have all risen sharply over the past decade while participation rates for many organised and team sports, with the exception of soccer, have held constant or declined" (Standing Committee on Recreation and Sport, 2010, quoted by Australian Sports Commission).

“While participation rates in organised physical activities have remained level over the past decade, participation rates for non-organised physical activities have grown ... Non-organised physical activity has a much higher participation rate.”

These trends are also reflected in sports and physical activity participation data. The most recent sports participation data is contained in the results of the Australian Bureau of Statistics *2013–14 Multipurpose Household Survey* (ABS 2015). This report finds that, for people aged 15 years and over in NSW, individual, non-organised physical activities are significantly more popular than organised, team sporting activities. Increased participation in non-organised activities has been responsible for the overall increases in regular physical activity between 2001 and 2010. The most participated in activities are the more informal and unstructured activities (walking, fitness/gym, swimming, cycling). These activities not only have higher participation rates in the most recent data, but the general trend from 2005-2006 shows them all increasing in participation levels. Conversely some of the more organised activities such as soccer and football sports, as well as tennis, experience much lower levels of participation and are generally experiencing decreasing participation trends over time.

Parks Base (2014) also reports results of a comprehensive survey of park use across Australia conducted between 2008 and 2014 and including 11,818 park user respondents. Survey results confirm the dominance of non-organised activities within park space, with non-sport activities making up the majority of park use. Playing or training for sport makes up 5% of hours spent in parks, compared with dog activities, walking and enjoying the environment (each making up around 12-14% of time spent in parks), use of children’s playground (8%) and relaxing (5%).

It is also important to understand the composition of the future population in planning for sport and recreation infrastructure. As previously discussed, urban renewal areas such as Rhodes East are likely to include a relatively low proportion of families with school aged children. (For example, in urban transformation areas such as Rhodes West, Meadowbank, Pyrmont, Zetland and apartment precincts of Newington, school aged children and adolescents (5-19 year olds) made up 7-12% of the population in 2011, compared to 19% for Greater Sydney.)

This likely age profile of Rhodes East reinforces the importance of non-organised physical activity and the need to ensure that adequate space is provided for informal, unstructured activities.

The need for informal, unstructured activity spaces is of even greater significance in higher density areas where dwellings have no backyards and small living spaces. These informal spaces can provide for activities ranging from children’s birthday parties, to family gatherings to quiet places to read and relax.

The Rhodes context

The *Open Space Masterplan for the Rhodes Peninsula* (Corkery Consulting, June 2015a) presents detailed information from an extensive review and engagement process in Rhodes. Key trends identified through this work include:

- » “The spectrum of public open space opportunities being provided is increasingly aligned with community profiles and seeks to respond to community input, rather than be derived from the application of an out-dated and inappropriate open space provision formula
- » Public open space is not just limited to parks, but is increasingly recognised as incorporating streetscapes, plazas, promenades and park areas; all comprising the shared public domain. In the case of Rhodes Peninsula it extends from the ‘Front Door to the Foreshore’
- » Public open space is recognised as making a major contribution to community health and well-being
- » Optimising physical connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists together with good public transport that links the places people want to go to, is increasingly adopted as a central organising principle

- » Planning and design of the public domain needs to respond to the growing awareness of the role of placemaking, supported by public art and wayfinding strategies
- » The expanded use of personal electronic devices with social media and other communication technology is increasingly being used to raise awareness of public facilities, transport options and events, and to facilitate social interaction
- » Flexibility is recognised as essential to public open space planning and management to ensure they can adapt over time to changing social needs and new opportunities” (p. 11).

In planning for Rhodes East, this data suggests that emphasis should be placed on the provision of spaces and places for unorganised, unstructured recreation and leisure including both active forms such as walking, running and gym activities. Also important are places for relaxation, contemplation, pet exercise and general social interaction. Health and wellbeing in a broad sense, including both physical and social/mental health, is an important theme that can help to guide the nature and type of spaces to support the future population.

While the proportion of the population that participates in organised sport is quite small, there is nevertheless a need to provide sporting facilities to accommodate a diversity of sporting codes. The *Open Space Plan of Management* notes the shortage of sporting facilities in the Rhodes Peninsula, but does not propose new facilities for this area. Council’s key strategies and plans summarised in Section 2.1, together with community feedback and advice received during preparation of this study, formally recognise that the existing supply of active open space across the LGA is already at capacity. As for other higher density urban renewal areas across Sydney, meeting the needs of the future population of East Rhodes for access to sporting open space will be a key challenge.

6.1.2 Approaches to determining quantum of open space

As discussed above, traditional approaches to planning for open space in greenfield sites have commonly relied on benchmark calculations. A commonly applied standard for calculating the provision of open space in New South Wales is 2.83 hectares per 1,000 people. Within Canada Bay LGA at present, the rate of provision is 2.6 hectares per 1,000 people. However, while such standards can provide a useful starting point, a purely mathematical application is not desirable and unlikely to provide outcomes which take into account the context of the site and balance community benefit with efficiency and cost. Moreover, Council’s S94 Contributions Plan acknowledges that large new areas of open space are not likely to be available in future (see Section 2.1 above).

Another mechanism utilised for determining the amount of open space is the percentage of land area approach. The following table shows the range of percentages used in different urban renewal projects.

Table 9 Percentage of land area as open space in selected high density areas

Place/project	% of land area
Barangaroo Central	46
Harold Park	36
Green Square	14
Barangaroo South	10.5
Docklands, Melbourne	3.9
DP&E guidelines	5*

* The DP&E Guidelines are an acknowledgement, rather than a recommendation, that based on land analysis, inner urban areas contain an average of approximately 5% of land area devoted to open space

In addition to the large variations in land devoted to open space across these urban renewal areas, there does not seem to be a clear relationship between percentage of open space provided and size of the population using it, effectiveness of open space or resident satisfaction. Open space with an emphasis on quality of both design and materials can produce good community outcomes with relatively low rates of provision, if appropriately and strategically planned.

Because of the limitations of numerical benchmark approaches in open space planning, their use is progressively being superseded by policies, guidelines and performance criteria that focus on accessibility, diversity and quality, rather than merely the quantum of open space to be provided.

6.1.3 Open space planning principles

Open space planning principles for Rhodes East are set out in Council's *Local Planning Strategy*, the Rhodes Peninsula *Open Space Masterplan* and *Plan of Management* (Corkery 2015a and 2015b) and summarised in Section 2. In summary, the Rhodes Peninsula Masterplan adopts the following five design principles:

- » A Peninsula of Places
- » Visual coherence in the public domain
- » A connected and legible network
- » Community engagement and partnerships
- » Sustainable open space.

These objectives were confirmed in recent community engagement outcomes for the Precinct undertaken as part of the structure planning process. Outcomes of the community workshops held in April 2016 highlighted the following themes for the provision of open space within Rhodes East:

- » New areas of open space should be considered in conjunction with access to the foreshore and connections to existing open spaces. Existing open spaces can be improved and should be linked to new areas of open space within the Precinct
- » New open space should be of a high quality and offer a range of uses (including other community uses) to different groups within the population to encourage activation and reasons to stay
- » A variety of walking experiences and environments was supported.

An on-line community survey (darzin 2016) also found that parks and BBQ / picnic facilities were considered to be the highest priority recreational and sporting facilities for the precinct.

6.2 Opportunities and constraints

The precinct presents a number of opportunities and constraints to be recognised in the planning of open space. These are outlined below:

- » The provision of an adequate quantity of high quality open space for a range of uses should be a key focus of the planning for this Precinct. Access to open space is of particular importance in higher density environments in which residents have more limited access to private outdoor space.
- » Existing sporting fields in the LGA are already over-subscribed, yet the existing urban pattern and fragmented land ownership place constraints on the development of new fields within the precinct. Council's S94 Development Contributions Plan notes the significant constraints on purchasing additional land and focuses instead on works to increase the capacity of existing facilities such as embellishments, lighting, synthetic surfaces and other upgrades.
- » The pattern of existing development places constraints on the availability of areas for new open space in the precinct. Planning should consider open space provision both within and near the Precinct and explore opportunities to enhance and embellish existing spaces within the Precinct through provision of quality space that is well designed and utilises quality finishes and features.
- » Key opportunities include the proximity of the Precinct to the harbour, an extensive network of large and established parks and foreshore pedestrian and cycle paths which are popular and well-used. Open space should maximise the Precinct's waterfront location and views as an amenity and utilise its qualities to create vistas, recreational opportunities as well as calming, contemplative spaces.
- » Planning for a new ferry terminal within the northern part of the Precinct presents an opportunity to attract residents to integrate active travel and public transport for commuting as well as a destination and focus for place-making and community and commercial activities. However, this opportunity also presents challenges, such as incorporating a future 'river pool' near this area.
- » Participation data suggests that open space planning should recognise the importance of areas of passive open space as well as the need for a network of connections and paths to support a range of unstructured recreational and leisure activities such as walking, jogging and cycling.
- » Streets can make important contributions to the quality and availability of publically accessible open space if they are designed as more than just roads but as multifunctional public spaces. 'Complete Streets' are places not only for movement but for socialising, entertaining, commerce and civic activity. Most streets will continue to provide connections for vehicles but will also be designed to cater specifically for cyclists and pedestrians. The street will include the carriageway, footpath, landscaping including trees and seating, small urban spaces, building forecourts and street-based retail that will contribute to significantly enhance urban life in the Precinct.
- » Active open spaces elsewhere in the LGA will continue to be used for sporting activities. In addition, the new Leisure Centre to be developed adjacent to Rhodes Station will provide a range of facilities for active sporting needs of a wide range of age and population groups within an accessible location for future residents of Rhode East.
- » Opportunities to potentially use building rooftops as areas of open space have not been explored as part of this study for several reasons, including expected building sizes / footprints and types and the expectation that solar panels will be incorporated as a sustainability initiative.
- » Planning for this precinct should also focus on the creation of a healthy built environment – a key direction identified in *A Plan for Growing Sydney* (NSW Government, 2014).
- » Good quality urban design and architecture are also essential in creating welcoming, activated and safe streets and neighbourhoods for an active population.

6.3 Structure Plan

The Rhodes East Structure Plan (November 2016) proposes the following open space inclusions.

Table 10 Open space planned for Rhodes East

	Approximate size (m ²)
Foreshore access including resting areas	10,800 (900m long x 12m wide)
Leeds Street Foreshore plaza	4,500 (100m x 45m)
Corner Strategy open space / widened verge:	
- Cavell Avenue and Denham Street	100
- Cavell Avenue and Averill Street	100
- Copley Street and Concord Road -	100
New pedestrian links including a land bridge	3,000
Floating river pool	600 (25m lap pool – 8 lanes x 2.5m and 10m x 5m kids pool)
Total	19,200

Source: Roberts Day, DP&E and City of Canada Bay Structure Plan

The Structure Plan provides for creation of a significant public area at the Precinct's northern waterfront and an opportunity to provide foreshore access between Ryde Bridge and McIlwaine Park.

The Structure Plan also provides for several other, smaller areas of open space that link in with, or extend, existing areas of open space (a Green Necklace concept).

Key features of open space included in the Structure Plan include:

- » Redevelopment of Leeds Street (currently light industrial area) foreshore to provide "an urban interface that engages with the water, supports the destination retail and creates a transit plaza to the future Ferry Wharf" (Roberts Day, DP&E and City of Canada Bay, 2016, p. 14)
- » A continuous foreshore access linking parks, resting areas, destinations and people
- » Potential nodes in an integrated open space, heritage and public art trail
- » Enhancement of McIlwaine Park by breaking down the barrier of Concord Road through construction of a land bridge.
- » Open space is supplemented by provision of secondary and internal green links via enhanced streets and new streets and pedestrian connections
- » A 'Corner Strategy' will further supplement open space by providing intimate open spaces or widened verges on identified mixed use corner sites
- » Potential for a 'river pool' in Brays Bay.

6.4 The quantum of open space

The Structure Plan has made provision for a total of 1.9 ha to be zoned as open space. Approximately half of this is made up of the foreshore walk, which in the Rhodes East context is potentially an important space for active recreation such as walking, jogging and cycling.

On the face of it, this level of provision would appear to be low for a population of this size. In particular, the rate of provision is considerably less than the greenfields standard of 2.83 ha/1,000 people cited in Section 6.1.2 above and the current rate of provision across the LGA of 2.6ha per 1,000 residents. Application of these rates would imply a demand for around 25 ha.

However, Canada Bay Council and community members who have participated in discussions around the future of Rhodes East Precinct recognise that there are limitations on opportunities to provide large new areas of open space, especially given the Precinct's location close to significant and well-used waterfront parks and paths. The focus of planning has been on ensuring residents have access to open space which is of high quality, easily accessible and provides for a diversity of recreation experiences, rather than on the quantum of open space.

In addition to local parks and the foreshore walk, recreation needs will be met by creating good quality streetscapes, recognising that walking, running and cycling are likely to be the priority recreation activities of future residents. The Structure Plan has a focus on open space provision within a framework of 'Complete Streets', where streetscapes are reconfigured to prioritise pedestrians and cyclists over cars and to create new links around the foreshore and to the railway station. This approach emphasises the creation and enhancement of small-scale, place-based open spaces such as walkways, outdoor dining, foreshore plazas, landscaping, seating, shade, bicycle parking, car sharing and dog-friendly environments.

The waterfront location also presents opportunities to meet some of the future recreation needs through water-based activities, rather than all needs being met through traditional parks and playing fields. Opportunities to create a 'river pool' to address demand for swimming and water play are discussed in the following section and will be further explored in subsequent stages of the planning process.

The limited opportunities to provide new open space within the precinct mean that residents of Rhodes East will also contribute to the use of open space, particularly active sporting facilities, within nearby areas. This will require enhancements to the available facilities to support their more intensive utilisation. The detailed ways in which existing spaces can be enhanced through further embellishments, and associated contribution arrangements, will need to be negotiated with Council.

Given the potential for the range of open space facilities and embellishments outlined above, the Precinct's proximity to nearby parks and waterways, and other district and regional recreational areas and the financial contributions to be made, the quantum of recreational open space proposed within the Structure Plan is considered to be adequate.

6.5 Requirements for active open space

Provision for active open space within Rhodes East will be through further connections and linkages for pedestrians and cyclists described in Section 6.3, which provides the opportunity to deliver 1.08ha of foreshore access, joining into the existing walkway from Rhodes West to John Whitton Bridge in the Precinct's north. Council and the community have expressed a strong view that the popularity of walking and cycling should be reinforced and new opportunities provided through this Structure Plan.

Council recognises that new opportunities for areas of active open space within the precinct are limited. In particular, opportunities to acquire new land within the precinct for sports fields are limited, due to its fragmented pattern of ownership and land costs. In addition, Council has expressed the view that existing areas of open space both within and adjacent to the precinct should not be cluttered with new sporting fields or facilities and instead should be retained as open space.

Council's current approach, as reflected in its *Recreation Strategy* and the *Section 94 Development Contributions Plan*, is to use a range of strategies to upgrade (or investigate upgrades at) existing

sporting facilities and areas of open space elsewhere in the LGA (including within Concord and on the Yaralla Estate), to enable their more intensive utilisation.

As such, additional needs for active recreation within Rhodes East will be met through a combination of the following:

- » Minor embellishments to existing parks, including King George V Reserve, Uhr's Reserve and McIlwaine Park will support informal activities such as running, cycling, kicking balls, throwing frisbees and informal team sports. There will also be space for children's play equipment near paths and seating
- » An emphasis on attracting regular use of streetscapes, linkages and walkways within and beyond the precinct for a wide range of daily activities including social activities, exercise and commuting
- » Upgrades to existing sporting fields in the wider area through embellishments (including new synthetic surfaces, lighting, some additional land acquisition) consistent with Council's S94 Development Contributions Plan for sporting fields. Residents of Rhodes East will contribute financially to these upgrades through contributions through Council's S94 Plan or negotiated Voluntary Planning Agreements (VPAs)
- » Subject to future plans by Sea Scouts and the Commonwealth, there is potential for future investment in foreshore works and new facilities at Uhrs Point Reserve to support boat launching for the Dragon Boats, as well as facilitating access for the Sea Scouts
- » Use of the planned Rhodes Leisure Centre facilities, just beyond the Precinct boundary at Rhodes Station, for activities such as gym, court sports, table tennis
- » Use of The Connection in Rhodes West to access indoor activities such as yoga and dance classes
- » Use of indoor and outdoor sporting facilities, courts and pools elsewhere in the LGA, including Majors Bay Reserve, the Five Dock Leisure Centre, Cabarita and Drummoyne Swim Centres and the Concord Sports Precinct
- » Accessing regional level facilities within the Sydney Olympic Park precinct, which will be more readily accessible with construction of the Bennelong Bridge connecting Homebush and Rhodes West.

River pool opportunity

As outlined in the previous section, the location of the Precinct also presents opportunities to meet some of the demand for active recreation facilities through a unique public 'river pool' in the Parramatta River.

Demand for a new aquatic facility

Current aquatic facilities within the City of Canada Bay include the Cabarita Swimming Centre in Concord and the Drummoyne Swimming Centre. These are located 7kms and 10kms respectively from Rhodes East.

Participation rates in sport and recreation can provide information on likely demand for a range of activities, including swimming. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) *Multipurpose Household Survey* published in 2015 shows swimming is the third most popular physical recreation activity in New South Wales, with 9% of the population engaging in this activity as a regular sport or recreation.

The *Recreation Facilities Report* (@Leisure 2013) noted that demand for outdoor aquatic facilities is likely to be one of the greatest recreation needs within the LGA by 2031, even in the absence of plans for additional population in Rhodes East:

"It is unlikely that the existing outdoor pools will cater for the total number of people who will want to swim (12,000 estimated.) –especially older persons, and young children by 2031, and

hence if swimming participation is to increase additional indoor opportunities, especially for training and lessons and programs will be required” (@Leisure 2013, p. 54).

Contemporary planning standards in urban areas suggest that aquatic facilities should be provided at a rate of approximately one for every approximately 100,000 people. The City of Canada Bay’s *Recreation Facilities Report* suggests a rate of 1:60,000 people for local outdoor swimming pool and 1:75,000-100,000 people for district facilities. In addition, the report suggests that pools should be provided within a 2.5-3km distance of households.

While Council’s *Section 94 Development Contributions Plan* provides for a new indoor aquatic facility and upgrades to Drummoyne Swimming Centre, there are no plans for new outdoor pools.

Initiatives to improve water quality for swimming

The Parramatta River Catchment Group (PRCG) is a regional organisation of local councils (including the City of Canada Bay), state agencies and community representatives whose aim is to work together to improve the health of the Parramatta River catchment (<http://www.parramattariver.org.au/>). The group meets several times each year “to discuss issues and opportunities relevant to improving the natural environment within the Parramatta River catchment and to undertake regional, collaborative projects that assist in addressing one or more issues affecting the local environment”.

The PRCG is promoting an *Our Living River* initiative (<http://www.ourlivingriver.com.au/our-mission/>) to make the Parramatta River Swimmable Again by 2025. The initiative argues that every Australian should have access to a natural place to swim and relax. It argues that ‘Sydney Deserves a World Class River’ for a range of reasons, including:

- » Greater liveability – supporting and enhancing life through greater biodiversity, better air quality and access to activities such as swimming, picnicking, cycling and relaxing
- » Social connection – creating an attraction and place for social and recreational activities, fostering connections and being a fun, safe place to meet
- » Biodiversity – for healthy vegetation and fish and where people can be near nature
- » Better Public Amenities – for residents and tourists to enjoy the Parramatta river
- » Healthy Living – where people are attracted to swim, walk, cycle, hold events or bring children to play
- » Business opportunities – attracting restaurants and venues to invest in waterfront locations
- » Increased Property Value – highly desirable locations will attract buyers, investors and promote development.

Scientific modelling shows it is possible to improve river water quality to an acceptable level for these uses and the project appears to have wide community and agency support.

The *Our Living River* website shows 22 potential future locations for swim sites within the Parramatta River. Four suggested sites are located within 500 metres of the Rhodes East northern foreshore:

- » Meadowbank
- » Shepherds Point
- » Putney Park
- » Prince Regent Swimming Club Baths.

Each of these sites is located on the northern side of the Parramatta River and none are currently swimmable due to poor water quality.

Plans to improve water quality within the Parramatta River to a swimmable standard are also consistent with a growing ‘Urban Plunge’ (or ‘wild swimming’) movement internationally to reclaim

urban waterways and successful projects in Copenhagen, Berlin, London and New York. A number of projects and proposals for urban swimming are being devised and considered by architects, engineers, artists and planners as a way of better engaging with rivers as critical elements of our cities, incorporating them into the urban experience in new and imaginative ways and maximising new leisure opportunities (see for example H Partridge September 5, 2014, "From lidos to plunge pools: urban swim projects around the world", Financial Times <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/876a63e8-32a4-11e4-a5a2-00144feabdc0.html#axzz3CX0GBzem>; O Wainwright August 13, 2014, "Wild swimming in the city: come on in, the river's cleaner!", The Guardian <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2014/aug/13/wild-swimming-urban-waterways-floating-lidos>; J Withers, September 13, 2014, "Urban Plunge - open swimming in the heart of the city", The Ecologist" http://www.theecologist.org/green_green_living/2543077/urban_plunge_open_swimming_in_the_heart_of_the_city.html – accessed 24 June 2016).

Rhodes East context

With a proposed new population of around 9,100 residents, ABS participation rates would suggest there will be demand from around 850 new users within the Rhodes East population. While the projected population on its own does not approach the level of demand to support even a local pool, the precinct is distant from other pools in the LGA and the wider catchment could contribute towards demand for its use.

The proposed Leisure Centre near Rhodes station will go some way to meeting swimming needs for the existing population and is close to suggested river pool locations. However, it will be privately operated and will not provide opportunities for recreational swimming and relaxation in a public setting.

While the proposal raises a range of important technical and operational issues (water quality, feasibility, governance), a river pool would contribute towards a shortfall in active open space in the precinct by meeting other active recreational needs for aquatic facilities. It could also contribute to social integration and community connections in Rhodes by creating a destination and focal point for relaxation, social and recreational activities and safe places for people of all ages, including young people, to meet and have fun.

In combination with other attractors at the waterfront precinct such as destination retail and harbour views, a river pool has the potential to act as a popular local destination and unique local experience.

6.6 Requirements for passive open space

6.6.1 Parks, plazas and linkages

The planning of open space should ensure equitable access to recreation opportunities. A commonly recognised standard for passive open space involves ensuring all residents are within 400-500 metres walk from a park.

Due to the small size of the Rhodes East Precinct, the majority of new dwellings will be easily within 400 metres of new or existing areas of open space and new plazas and connections. The proposed distribution therefore meets this objective and provides reasonably equitable access.

A centrepiece of Council's open space strategy includes provision for an upgrade and inclusion of new elements (public art, interpretive signage and memorial, pathway) in Churchill Tucker Reserve adjacent to Rhodes Station. The proposed Pacific Campaign Walk will link Churchill Tucker Reserve with the adjacent McIlwaine Park and the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway.

Proposed new areas of open space range in size from 100m² for the Corner Plazas, to 1.08ha for the foreshore access and resting areas. In addition, the Complete Streets approach will focus on streets as areas of open space with pedestrians and cyclist prioritised over cars. All areas will include a wide range of inclusions and embellishments, such as:

- » Walkways and plazas
- » Landscaping and tree plantings
- » Seating, shade and covered areas
- » Bicycle parking
- » Dog-friendly facilities (drinking bowls, bags and bins)
- » Barbeque and picnic facilities
- » Lighting
- » Spaces for markets, gatherings and performances
- » Drinking fountains, toilets and amenities
- » Access to water and electricity
- » Signage and spaces for public art.

Passive open spaces throughout the precinct should be unique, each providing a variety of different offerings. They should together form a comprehensive network of open spaces that collectively meet a diverse range of community interests and needs.

6.6.2 Playgrounds

There are opportunities for the area's open spaces to include a range of playground experiences for young children. Playgrounds encourage children to engage in non-organised physical activity and provide important community meeting places that encourage social interaction and assist social cohesion. These playgrounds should collectively provide a range of play environments for children of various ages and a range of play experiences, including challenging play opportunities for older children.

6.6.3 Activities for young people

Other amenities that cater to older children and young people should also be included in open space in the Rhodes East Precinct. An allocation for a skateboard facility in Rhodes East in Council's S94 Plan has been incorporated into the Structure Plan as a 'skateable moments' / small skatepark integrated within the Leeds Street Foreshore Precinct ; under John Whitton Bridge. Other possible facilities such as for rollerblading, bike/BMX, scooter riding, half courts for informal ball games or climbing walls should also be considered. Such facilities and spaces are important for young people who are not interested in structured sporting activities.

Precise facilities for young people to include within the parks will require further discussion between Council and the incoming population of Rhodes East.

6.7 Regional facilities

Regional and wider district level open space, sport and recreation facility needs of the new Precinct community will be met through the existing regional level facilities provided in the wider LGA and Sydney Olympic Park. These facilities can be readily accessed by rail, bicycle and on foot. It is

however, acknowledged that many of these facilities are already under pressure from high demand generated by existing residents, or from other residential development proposed for the area, such as at Sydney Olympic Park. This is a matter for further consideration by the City of Canada Bay Council.

6.8 Conclusion

In terms of local open space and recreation facilities, this study has identified:

- » Limited opportunities for large new areas of open space within the Precinct
- » Provision of 1.92 ha of land to be zoned as public open space, as identified in the Structure Plan
- » Passive local open space distributed to ensure equitable access for future residents and of a quality and level of embellishment to support a range of passive and informal active recreational activities
- » Linear open space in new linkages and design of 'Complete Streets'
- » Potential for a river pool.

Needs for access to sporting open space will be met by enhancements to existing playing fields in the surrounding area to enable their more intensive utilisation. Arrangements for contributions to support these further embellishments for off-site facility upgrades will need to be negotiated with Council.

The future community of Rhodes East will also rely on indoor sports courts and spaces within the proposed Rhodes Leisure Centre and The Connection in Rhodes West, as well as on existing open space and recreation facilities elsewhere in the LGA, in Sydney Olympic Park and across the sub-region.

7 Conclusion

This report has considered the community facilities, human services and open space that will be required to support population growth arising from future development within the Rhodes East Priority Precinct Investigation Area. The precinct is one of a number within the Sydney metropolitan area designated for housing densification in areas around transport hubs.

Relevant policies and objectives of the NSW Government and the City of Canada Bay Council have been reviewed to provide the guiding framework for the planning and provision of community facilities and open space.

The study has considered the social context of the precinct and characteristics of the existing Rhodes East population, which numbered 733 people living in 274 private dwellings at the 2011 Census. Residents of these households are on average older than the LGA median and the area currently contains a relatively high proportion of family households. In most other ways, the Rhodes East population shows strong similarities with the LGA population as a whole. Population characteristics of higher density communities, such as nearby Rhodes West, have also been examined, to provide useful insights into the characteristics of people likely to move into the Rhodes East Precinct in future.

Existing human services, community and recreational facilities and open space in and around the Rhodes East Precinct and their capacity to absorb demand likely to be generated by future residents have been assessed. Rapid growth and development in Rhodes West has seen new facilities being provided by Council, developers and the private sector to fill known shortfalls. Social infrastructure in Rhodes East is more limited, reflecting its low density character. The existing Rhodes Community Centre on Blaxland Road is heavily used, but is an older, dated facility. A new cultural and community precinct, known as The Connection, will shortly open in Rhodes West. Rhodes West also contains a large commercial and retail centre and several childcare centres. A wide range of other services and facilities are available in nearby centres such as Concord, Burwood, Strathfield, Bicentennial Park and Sydney Olympic Park, which are easily accessible by rail, bicycle and on foot. Concord's facilities include schools, a library, community centre, hospital, medical facilities and commercial areas. A library, school and regional open spaces are, or will soon be, located to the west in Wentworth Point and the Sydney Olympic Park precincts. Key needs for the existing community include access to flexible meeting and activity spaces for a range of purposes, indoor and outdoor places and spaces for large community or private gatherings, local medical services such as doctors and allied health services, and improved public transport. Some of these needs will be met at The Connection community hub. However, additional services will be required by the area's growing population in future.

Rhodes East Precinct contains several areas of good quality open space and harbourside public areas, including plazas near the station (Churchill Tucker Reserve) and northern waterfront (John Whitton Bridge Park) and the large McIlwaine Park. Upgrades and embellishments of parks and open spaces across the peninsula have recently been completed. Open space and recreation needs include additional access to sports fields, good quality walkways and plazas where residents can walk, meet, access the waterfront, shops, food and activities, open lawn areas and parks, barbeque and picnic facilities with good amenities, public toilets and signage. On the basis of this assessment, new local services, facilities and quality open space will be required to cater for the future population.

The Structure Plan for Rhodes East shows that the precinct could accommodate around 4,000 new dwellings and an additional population of around 9,100 new residents in a human scale high density development style across five distinct 'character areas'. One third of the future development potential for the Precinct is located within the Leeds Street Foreshore Precinct, between the railway line and

Concord Road. Evidence from other high density urban infill areas, including Rhodes West, suggests that the population will comprise a high proportion of young adults (aged 25-40) who are well educated, working in professional occupations. Most households will comprise only one or two people, with relatively low proportions of families with school aged children and older people aged 65+. The area is also expected to contain a high proportion of rental properties and high levels of cultural diversity.

On the basis of these population projections, assessment of existing facilities and discussions with government agencies, the facilities recommended for inclusion in Rhodes East and included in the Structure Plan are shown in Table 11.

Table 11 Recommended community facilities and open space for Rhodes East

Identified need	Proposed strategy	Estimated cost	Time-frame	Responsibility
Community facilities				
Flexible, appropriately sized meeting and activity spaces Spaces for further learning Indoor / outdoor places for large community or private gatherings and events	Heritage-sensitive expansion of Rhodes Community Centre, Blaxland Road by 546-1,065m ² to create a larger multi-purpose community facility or community hub Situating adjacent to small park or plaza / active green corner of mixed use and open space at the south western corner of Denham Street and Cavell Avenue Operate the expanded Rhodes Community Centre in tandem with The Connection to support its role as a new community hub	\$2.9 million - \$5.6 million, based on cost estimate of \$5,300 / sqm	Short term	Council
Schools	4 storey primary school of 5,700m ² total gfa located near accessible public open space	Dependent upon school design. Cost of typical primary school is around \$15 million	As demand arises	Department of Education
Local medical services	1-2 new medical centres		Market demand	Private sector
Convenience retail and specialty commercial venues where people can meet, eat, drink and relax	Private sector		Market demand	Private sector
Childcare	Potential for 4 new		Market	Council / Private

Identified need	Proposed strategy	Estimated cost	Time-frame	Responsibility
	centres including opportunity for inclusion in expanded multi-purpose community facility		demand	sector
Affordable accommodation for services delivery	Potential to include sessional space within the expanded multi-purpose community centre	Included in costs of multi-purpose community facility or community hub above	Medium term	Council
Recreation and open space				
Walkways, footpaths, cycle links and plazas in high quality public domain	'Complete streets', new streets, pedestrian connections, corner strategies, public art and placemaking	1.9ha in total ranging in size from 100m ² corner plazas to 1.08ha Foreshore Walk \$90/sqm embellishment costs	Short term	Council and developers
Additional open lawn area and park improvements for running, kicking balls, informal team sports, children's play equipment Facilities such as BBQs, picnic facilities, toilets, power, wayfinding, cafes in parks, interpretive signage	Embellishments to existing open space within King George V Park, Uhr's Reserve and McIlwaine Park	Included in above	Short term	Council and developers
Aquatic and foreshore works at Uhr's Point Reserve for 1 st Yaralla Sea Scouts and Dragon Boat launching	Upgrade area in accordance with S94 Development Contributions Plan	Land area included in above	Short to medium term	Scouts and Crown Land funding
Active water recreation	Relocate Dragon Boats or upgrade launching facilities Explore opportunities to create river pool		Short term Long term	Council

Identified need	Proposed strategy	Estimated cost	Time-frame	Responsibility
Access to sporting fields	Developer contributions towards sporting field upgrades and embellishments		Short term	Council and developers
Indoor recreation and activity space	Use The Connection, Leisure Centre and other facilities in the wider LGA		Short to medium term	Council and private sector

Key community facilities recommended for inclusion in Rhodes East Precinct are:

- » An expanded multi-purpose community centre (with an additional 546-1,065m² floorspace) to be provided as part of a heritage-sensitive redevelopment of the Rhodes Community Centre on Blaxland Road, adjoining an active 'green corner' of mixed use and open space at the south western corner of Denham Street and Cavell Avenue. This expanded facility would complement and expand the range of community uses and spaces, and would operate in synergy with The Connection in Rhodes West
- » Convenience retail and specialty commercial venues where people can meet, eat, drink and relax
- » 4 privately operated childcare centres (depending on size)
- » Local medical centres
- » Primary school.

In relation to the proposed expansion of the Rhodes Community Centre on Blaxland Road, it is recognised that there are many competing uses for the site, including a new primary school. But given its current role, potential for expansion, its central location within the community, proximity to public transport and opportunities to integrate development with an active Green Corner within the Structure Plan, an expanded community centre would be an ideal use of the site. A dedicated funding source will be key to provision of such an expanded facility, and while no such source currently exists, there are proposals to reform funding for the planning and development of community facilities in the longer term and opportunities for one-off grants from State or Commonwealth Government to fund local government social infrastructure which could be pursued.

The need for a new local primary school has been identified, but its final location, timing and delivery arrangements remain subject to ongoing discussions between DP&E and the Department of Education.

In terms of local open space and recreation facilities, this study recognises that there are important challenges to providing additional areas of open space in this area, including fragmented land ownership within the precinct, large areas of good quality open space within close proximity and high costs of acquiring new open space. The Structure Plan instead adopts a model for open space provision that focuses on creating new walkways and connections, linking local areas with the harbour and parks, embellishing existing areas of open space and creating a high quality public domain. This approach is supported by Council's *Open Space Masterplan* and other policies and has been successfully applied in other high density residential areas. In summary, the Structure Plan provides for:

- » 1.9 ha of new public open space, made up of a continuous foreshore access, redevelopment of Leeds Street foreshore to provide a foreshore transit plaza (future Ferry Wharf) and destination retail and commercial activities, enhancements to McIlwaine Park (including potentially breaking

down the barrier of Concord Road through construction of a station bridge) and investment in foreshore works and new facilities at Uhrs Point Reserve

- » Secondary and internal green links and a high quality public domain via enhanced 'Complete Streets', new streets, pedestrian connections, 'Corners Strategy', public art and placemaking
- » Exploration of opportunities for development of a 'river pool'
- » Passive local open space embellished to a standard consistent with the range of passive recreational activities needs of a high density population and the recommendations of Council's Open Space Masterplan.

Needs for access to sporting open space will be met by enhancements to existing playing fields in the surrounding area to enable their more intensive utilisation. Arrangements for contributions to support these further embellishments for off-site facility upgrades will need to be negotiated with Council.

The Structure Plan also includes potential sites for a future river pool to contribute towards active open space, subject to further investigations of feasibility.

The future community will also rely to some extent on existing open space and recreation facilities in Rhodes West, Sydney Olympic Park, Concord, Burwood, Strathfield and the wider area for access to regional open space, sporting fields, indoor sports courts, outdoor court complexes and aquatic facilities. However, with population growth in surrounding areas, these facilities are reaching their capacity the facilities proposed within this Structure Plan are needed to provide high quality public spaces, places and connections to support this new population of Rhodes East.

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Appendices

- A Vision and principles for Rhodes Central
- B Open space and recreational facility rates of provision
- C Guiding principles for community facility provision

A Vision and principles for Rhodes Central²

A-1 Our Vision

Rhodes Central will be an exciting and vibrant place to live and work through the creation of a connected and diverse community.

The Vision for Rhodes Central is based on the following principles:

A-1-1 A healthy place

The Rhodes Central precinct will:

- » Be walkable.
- » Increase active and natural social interaction through increased foot traffic and reduction in car use.
- » Be landscaped to provide opportunities for rest and recreation.

A-1-2 Sustainable

The Rhodes Central precinct will lead the way as one of the most sustainable precincts in Sydney and likely Australia.

The Rhodes Central precinct will seek innovative solutions to implement:

- » A strong mix of residential, commercial and retail opportunities to ensure the precinct is self-sufficient and provides daily conveniences to reduce unnecessary out of precinct car travel.
- » The provision of less than 1 car space per dwelling.
- » Smarter mix of vehicle use and support services, including integrated car share and electric recharge facilities.
- » Sustainable building design and orientation to reduce ongoing energy consumption.
- » Energy rated buildings (eg. Green Star system).
- » Efficient building standards tied to planning incentives to leverage mini CHP (combined heat and power) and solar solutions.
- » Innovative precinct wide management of waste.
- » Integrate best practice stormwater design and the efficient use of water resources.

² Source: City of Canada Bay, November 2014.

A-1-3 Designed to inspire and implement a walkable pedestrian precinct

Rhodes Central is a transport oriented development, located directly adjacent to Rhodes Rail Station. The precinct will be developed with emphasis on internal access and connections to and from major transport and infrastructure. The precinct will:

- » Promote pedestrian and cycle activity.
- » Provide safe, convenient & attractive footpaths for pedestrians.
- » Provide excellent bike share ways and connections, including supporting systems (i.e. bike sheds, bike hire and storage facilities).
- » Provide direct route connections to major facilities and frequently utilised resources.
- » Provide a vibrant, safe and inviting amenity.
- » Reduce car use and provide less on street parking to encourage higher use of streets for pedestrians and bikes.
- » Create walkable, well connected, safe, weather protected (where appropriate) and attractive pedestrian routes.

A-1-4 Creates a vibrant community

A vibrant community will be developed through a multi layered approach of reducing car use to minimise streets dominated by cars and encouraging an active precinct through the increased public space and pedestrian movement on the streets.

- » Provide a mix of housing types and commercial opportunities that encourages residents of all ages and abilities to work and live within the precinct.
- » Provide a continuous public waterfront access.
- » Create a foreshore activity hub, mixing opportunities for retail, cafes and restaurants.
- » Create opportunities for recreation and urban public spaces.
- » Provide opportunities to create self-contained communities to maintain an active street culture through everyday use of local shops and services.
- » Opportunity to create an artist's hub, to provide studio space and associated residential accommodation. This would provide complementary opportunities for outdoor art exhibitions. eg. 'Sculptures by the River'.
- » Investigate options for an additional public commuter ferry and/or public wharf to enhance functionality and activate a riverside culture and meeting place.

A-1-5 Integrates social diversity and economic sustainability

- » Deliver 5% affordable housing and housing for aged persons.
- » Integrate community, recreation and cultural facilities.
- » Create and maintain affordability through appropriate dwelling types, mix, density and location.
- » Create an appropriate balance of residential and commercial development, to ensure all general daily needs can be met within the precinct.
- » Accommodate specialist support services such as facilities for continuing education.

- » Create alternate ways to structure the retail precinct, including exploring options for distinctive retailing.

A-1-6 Creates jobs of the future

A focus of the precinct plan will be to ensure sufficient jobs are retained and created to support the new population. It is intended that where a population of 6,000 people can be housed, approximately 2,800 jobs will be required to support the network. The Rhodes Central project will seek to:

- » Retain some existing industries.
- » Pedestrian oriented design to ensure all daily services are conveniently located within walking distance. Detailed planning will occur to ensure that each precinct within the Rhodes Central has a distinctive character and urban form.
- » Creation of an artist's hub. Provision of studio space with residences above enhancing a diverse employment sector.
- » Education facilities close to Rhodes train station to enhance opportunities and convenience for people to engage in continuing education (such as Open University in the UK)
- » Encourage opportunities for distinctive retailing.

A-1-7 Focus on connections and relationships to major infrastructure

- » The precinct will be a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) being located adjacent to, and within 800m of the Rhodes Rail Station.
- » The plan for the precinct will enhance connections to the Rhodes rail station.
- » Maximise patronage and connections to local bus services.
- » Investigate the opportunity for a ferry wharf within the precinct to provide direct water access to the City.
- » Utilise facilities proposed for Rhodes West including the Recreation Centre and Multipurpose Community Centre whilst providing additional attractors and facilities within the precinct that provide diversity and opportunities to residents in Rhodes West.
- » The foot/cycle access across the new pedestrian bridge to Olympic Park will be able to access these facilities and provide added viability through higher use.

A-1-8 Provides appropriate building height, scale and form

Activation of Rhodes Central will be led by diverse building forms and architecture. Vibrancy on the streets through retail opportunities and high pedestrian traffic will be coupled with diverse building facades to create interest and clear building identification within the precinct.

- » Establishes urban scaled streets and public spaces.
- » Provides a range of residential densities and heights, with particular emphasis on achieving high density in low rise buildings.
- » 'Form based' controls will be used to ensure that there is a focus on building form.
- » Achieves appropriate orientation and solar access.
- » Provides a mix of housing types to encourage a diverse population.

- » Encourages a relationship between residences and street interface. Wherever possible, ground floor apartments should have front doors that are directly accessible from the street.
- » Ensure a minimum of 6 architects are involved in designing the built form within the precinct, avoiding a mono- design culture. This could include opportunity for architectural design changes every 100m.
- » Achieve high quality built form and urban design.
- » Improve sight lines, north/south to the river and open space.

B Open space and recreational facility rates of provision³

Table 6.1: Provision of Open Space Per Capita by Type

Open Space Type/function	No. of parks	Total Hectares	Ha/1,000
Parks	86	93.66	1.42
Ancillary space (road closures; road & rail reserves)	52	4.28	0.07
Sports/active (fields/courts)	20	80.40	1.22
Golf course	2	40.01	0.61
Total	*160	218.35	3.32
* Greater than 150 because 10 parks have both 'sports' and 'park' components			

Table 6.2: Open Space Function and Hierarchy

Open space function	Hierarchy			
	Local	District	Regional	Total
Park*	42.42	15.97	36.06	94.45
Sports ground	-	48.34	32.05	80.39
Natural area**	-	-	-	-
Ancillary (road closures etc)	4.28	-	-	4.28
Total	46.7	64.31	68.11	179.12
* Includes 'community title' parks				
** Not separately identified in the current data base (21 of Council's 150 parks are categorised as having at least some 'natural area' values – but this has not yet been quantified)				

NB excludes golf course

Table 6.3: Sub-Area Distribution of Local and District Parks

District	Pop*	No. parks/1000 people	Ha/1000 people	No.	Ha
Concord SLA	31,163	1.8	3.60	57	111.73
Drummoyne SLA	34,582	1.9	1.95	65	67.39
TOTAL	65,745	1.9	2.72	122	179.12
* 2006 Census population					

³ City of Canada Bay *LPS*, 2010a

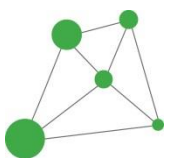

Specific facilities as identified in the City of Canada Bay *Open Space and Recreation Needs Analysis* (June 2008) include the following:





- » 150 parks (13 'regional', 13 'district level sports grounds or multi-purpose parks', and 124 'local' parks and ancillary spaces)
- » 17 sportsground complexes (with 68 summer and winter season sports fields as summarised in Table 6.4 , below)
- » 3 golf courses (one private and two public)
- » 17 barbecue/picnic areas
- » 11 unrestricted dog 'off-leash' areas
- » 1 bicycle training track and several walk/cycle routes
- » 48 playgrounds and one skateboard facility
- » 24 tennis courts (at five centres) and 34 netball courts (at one centre)
- » 2 swimming/aquatic centres
- » 1 indoor leisure centre (Five Dock Leisure Centre).






Table 6.4: Existing Sports Facilities in Canada Bay City

Facility type	Current Provision	
	No. of Facilities	Population/facility
Soccer fields (Senior)	17	3,900
Soccer fields (Mini/junior)	14	4,700
Rugby League	2	33,000
Rugby Union	7.5	8,800
Hockey	1	66,000
Australian Football	1.5	44,000
Baseball diamonds	7	9,500
Softball diamonds	0	-
Cricket fields	17	3,900
Athletics	1	66,000

C Guiding principles for community facility provision

 <p>A co-ordinated network of facilities</p>	<p>Community facilities should not be planned in isolation but be considered as a broader network of facilities that work together to meet a broad range of community needs, across a district or sub-region. Planning and delivering facilities as a network represents an integrated, strategic approach to community facility provision. It allows facilities to provide a different range of offerings, with the option for each facility to include unique, specialist services or amenities.</p> <p>The key to a successful network of facilities is the organisation of facilities within a hierarchy. A facility hierarchy includes larger and specialist, higher order facilities (e.g. central libraries, performing arts facilities, exhibition or conference facilities and galleries) serving a wider sub-regional or LGA-wide populations down to small, local facilities to meet the day to day needs of their immediate, surrounding communities.</p> <p>By considering facilities as part of a network, duplication of services, programs, spaces and amenities can be avoided, therefore, representing a more economically sustainable approach to community facility planning.</p>
 <p>Central to catchment and equitable access</p>	<p>Community facilities should be central and accessible to the population they are intending to serve. Leading practice favours the location of community buildings in urban centres to enhance accessibility and connectivity with related uses. Well used community facilities tend to be located in places that are readily accessible by public transport and where people already congregate, such as shopping centres and schools. These locations increase convenience and decrease car trips by reducing the need for multiple trips when dropping children off at school and/or childcare, linking with transport for journeys to work, accessing services and undertaking everyday tasks such as shopping. These locations also enhance visibility, safety and convenient access. Adequate parking nearby also promotes good access to facilities.</p> <p>The facility building should comply with the principles of universal design by facilitating access to and use of the facility and its spaces by all individuals and groups (regardless of age, ability, cultural background or level of social or economic advantage/disadvantage). This relates to providing a high level of physical access, connection and way-finding as well as ensuring services, programs and activities are broadly advertised and promoted and are affordable.</p>

 <p>Location to promote visibility and accessibility</p>	<p>To be well used and serve identified social needs, community facilities should be highly visible. Ideally, they should be on a main street with ground floor street frontage for optimum visibility and accessibility. Enabling an awareness of what happens inside also promotes usage.</p> <p>Community facilities are an important part of the civic fabric of our centres and suburbs. Accessibility and visibility through main street locations with a ground floor presence can be important to maximising utilisation and enhancing accessibility. Recent examples like Vinegar Hill Library and Community Centre at Rouse Hill Town Centre in Western Sydney demonstrate how community facility space can be well integrated with town square type development without compromising the availability of valuable retail space.</p>
 <p>Clustered/co-located</p>	<p>Co-locating or clustering community facilities, including libraries, community centres and community service centres, is presented as a key principle for the provision of community facilities.</p> <p>The community hub model, which involves co-locating facilities on neighbouring sites or in a single building, is also proposed as a key approach for consideration. Community hubs provide a range of offerings and can, therefore, become key focal gathering points within a community; attracting a range of users and promoting social connection and cohesion. The community hub model can extend beyond co-locating community facilities, to clustering community facilities with other activity generating uses such as transport nodes, shops, schools, childcare, parks and playgrounds.</p> <p>Clustering can also contribute to overall sustainability by reducing the need for multiple trips and allowing residents to carry out a number of tasks in a single location through a single trip. Case study research demonstrates the preference of users of community facilities to combine trips with shopping and other activities.</p>
 <p>Flexibility and multiple use</p>	<p>Community facilities should be designed and built to maximise flexibility in use, so they can respond and adapt as needs change. Where possible, buildings should be capable of delivering a range of programs and services, rather than designated for single uses or specific target groups that may quickly become out-dated. Flexibility is enhanced by providing multi-purpose spaces capable of accommodating a diversity of uses, thereby enabling a range of activities and target groups to use the facility and in doing so, ensure maximum use and optimisation of space. Multi-use facilities are also more dynamic and capable of responding and adapting to the changing needs and preferences of the community. Facilities that are responsive and flexible will be used more intensively over their lifetime.</p>
 <p>Serving identified social needs</p>	<p>Community facilities should address the social needs of the particular community in which it is located in order to contribute to residents' and workers' health, wellbeing and quality of life. Programs, activities and services offered should respond to the needs and interests of the people that live and work around it and foster long term social benefits for the community. The planning and design of a community centre should reflect the potential programs, activities and services envisaged.</p>

 <p>Inclusive and welcoming</p>	<p>Facilities should be welcoming and accessible to people of all ages, cultural backgrounds, abilities, income levels and interests. This can be achieved not only through the provision of spaces catering to different groups and a design that provides universal access, but also through effective programming – ensuring activities and services are provided for a broad range of people. In doing so, facilities can also play a role in helping to bring together different groups in the community.</p>
 <p>Contribute to public domain and sense of place</p>	<p>Community facilities should contribute to urban vitality, local identity and sense of place, and become important focal points and gathering places for the community. A strong connection between the facility and the broader community can be fostered through development of facilities on landmark sites and with distinctive architecture and quality design. Community facilities should be distinctive civic buildings and welcoming places, and should present as a reflection of local culture. This helps ensure they develop a strong local profile and are well known in the community, thereby promoting high levels of usage. Incorporating public art into the building design is also important in creating distinctive and welcoming community centres. Public art is an important avenue to tell local stories and to create places that are recognised and valued in the community.</p>
 <p>Near open space for activities and events</p>	<p>Locations adjacent to open space including town squares, village centres and parks increase the range of activities that can occur on community facilities land. As an example, community centres adjacent to parks and playgrounds are ideal locations for playgroups. Facilities located next to civic squares provide opportunities for markets, festivals and similar events. Locating community facilities near open space areas is another approach to enhancing utilisation, flexibility of use and providing opportunities for a wider range of community building activities. It is also another way to ensure that community facilities are integrated into their surrounding physical environment and seen as 'part of the community'.</p>
 <p>Connected to public transport, pedestrian and cycling networks</p>	<p>Planning for community facilities requires a focus on enhancing efficiency and utilisation. Public transport enhances accessibility for all population groups. As a principle, community facilities should ideally be located within 400 metres walking distance of a regular public transport stop. Linking to pedestrian and cycling networks provides another avenue to promote the accessibility of facilities to all groups in the population and is a further means to encourage sustainable behaviour and a healthy and active lifestyle.</p>
 <p>Of sufficient size and design to enable expansion and adaptation</p>	<p>It is difficult to precisely predict the absolute requirements for community facilities for a future population. Assumptions about demand are based on current projections regarding future populations. These projections may change and therefore affect requirements for community facilities land. Past experience has shown that it is important to provide some flexibility in the provision of community facility space.</p>



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