

Client

Department of Planning

Project

Community Facilities and Open Space
Assessment - Marsden Park Industrial
Precinct

Date

27 July 2009

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Date **27 July 2009**

Job number **09/1146**

Document name **Community facilities and open space
report revised final.doc**

Version **1**

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Contents

Executive Summary	1
1 Introduction	2
1.1 Background	2
1.2 Development context	2
1.3 Scope of this study	2
1.4 The study process	3
2 Policy Framework	4
2.1 Sydney Metropolitan Strategy	4
2.2 The Growth Centres SEPP	4
2.3 The Growth Centres Commission Development Code	5
2.4 Blacktown City Council policies	6
2.5 Principles for sustainable social infrastructure	9
3 Existing social context	11
3.1 The regional social context	11
3.2 Social profile of the area	12
3.3 Issues for the existing population	13
4 Existing community facilities and open space	14
4.1 Existing community facilities	14
4.2 Existing open space and recreational facilities	15
5 Population and employment forecasts	17
5.1 Projected development yields	17
5.2 Estimated population	17
5.3 Demographic characteristics of new release areas	17
5.4 Projected workforce	19
5.5 Workforce characteristics	19
6 Community facility requirements	20
6.1 General approach to planning of social infrastructure	20
6.2 Defining the catchment population	20
6.3 Standards for provision of community infrastructure	21
6.4 Location, spatial and design criteria	22
6.5 Community infrastructure needs	22
6.6 Blacktown City Council community facilities policies	24
6.7 Generic Workforce Requirements	26
6.8 Conclusion	27

7 Open Space and Recreational Requirements	29
7.1 Demand considerations	29
7.2 Open space standards	30
7.3 Provision of open space	32
7.4 Section 94 implications	33
7.5 Workforce demands for open space and recreation	33
7.6 Other open space considerations	34
7.7 Summary	34
8 Conclusion	35
9 References	37

Executive Summary

This report has considered the community facilities, human services and open space that will be required to support the population of the future Marsden Park Industrial Precinct (MPIP), within the North West Growth Centre. The report has been prepared for the Department of Planning (DoP), (formerly the Growth Centres Commission), as one of the studies needed to support preparation of the precinct plan for MPIP.

The report contains 8 sections:

Section 1 provides an introduction and background to the study and outlines its scope and purpose.

Section 2 outlines the policy background to the study, identifying objectives for the provision of social infrastructure and open space for the precinct within the Sydney Metropolitan Strategy, the Growth Centres SEPP and Development Code, and policies of Blacktown City Council. These objectives provide the guiding framework for the community facilities and open space strategy recommended in the report. Based on these objectives, a set of best practice principles for the provision of social infrastructure in MPIP is outlined.

Section 3 examines the social context of the precinct. It discusses the pattern of development in the area and describes characteristics of the existing population. A caravan park in the centre of the site makes up a major component of the existing population. Key issues relate to the effects of proposed changes on these and other residents and the need to plan to minimise potential social impacts.

Section 4 examines the availability of existing services, facilities and open space in the area and their capacity to absorb demand likely to be generated by residents of the Marsden Park Industrial Precinct. The assessment showed there are no existing facilities within the precinct and only very basic facilities in adjacent areas that will be able to meet the local needs of the new population. While there is a reasonable supply of open space in nearby areas, overall there is a shortage of useable high quality parklands and open space and few recreational facilities to meet future residents' needs.

Section 5 considers the characteristics of the future population of Marsden Park Industrial Precinct, based on a development scenario of predominantly industrial and business park development, with a small component of residential development. A preliminary estimate of 1,121 dwellings and 3,205 residents is given for the precinct at full development, and these figures are used to assess

likely demand for social infrastructure and open space. The population is expected to have reasonably similar characteristics to households in other nearby recent release areas. Section 5 also outlines characteristics of the future workforce of the employment lands, projected to be around 10,000 people.

Section 6 provides an assessment of the community facilities and services likely to be required for residents of the future Marsden Park Industrial Precinct, based on Growth Centre Commission standards and recent policies of Blacktown City Council. The analysis shows that the residential population will be too small, on its own, to warrant facilities other than a local shop and possibly some child care services. However, its social infrastructure needs should be considered together with those of the future Marsden Park Precinct, which adjoins the MPIP to the north. Principles to guide the location of these facilities are proposed. When combined, these two precincts will require substantial services and facilities, as outlined in Section 6.8.

In addition, the local workforce will require access to a range of services such as convenience shopping, areas of open space and places for leisure activities, childcare, business support and training facilities. Most of these will need to be provided by the private sector within the Business Park or Industrial Zone.

Section 7 examines the likely open space and recreation requirements of the precinct. After outlining some general trends in the demand for open space and recreation, it presents GCC standards for provision of open space and recreational facilities. Blacktown City Council has however developed its own standards based on recent planning for nearby Growth Centre precincts. These have been applied to derive estimates of open space requirement for MPIP and the adjacent Marsden Park Precinct. MPIP on its own will create demand for more than 9 ha of open space overall, which includes a need for 6 ha of parks and a local sports field, provided in a hierarchical framework. The north eastern residential area has the potential to accommodate some of this open space. However, it may be necessary to then provide additional open space and playing fields off-site, in adjoining areas. The population will also contribute to demand for tennis courts, netball courts and other facilities which will need to be provided off-site, when Marsden Park Precinct is developed in future. Provision will need to be made for residents of MPIP to contribute to these future facilities from the outset. Demands for open space areas for use by the MPIP workforce can be met through private provision of areas within large developments, in line with proposed conditions in the Development Control Plan.

Section 8 draws together the findings and recommendations for facilities and open space outlined above.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

In 2006 the NSW Government announced plans outlining the future of land releases in the North West and South West Growth Centres of Sydney. The Growth Centres will together provide for 180,000 homes over the next 30 years, characterised by staged delivery of infrastructure co-ordinated with land releases and a focus on sustainability to achieve world's best practice standards.

Marsden Park Industrial Precinct was released by the Growth Centres Commission (GCC, now Department of Planning) in June 2008. The Precinct is the first to be released under the Government's Precinct Acceleration Protocol, which allows planning and development to proceed ahead of the planned land release program being undertaken in the Growth Centres.

The Precinct Acceleration Protocol allows landholders to have the release of a Precinct within the Growth Centres accelerated, on the condition that there will be no cost to Government. A Precinct Acceleration Control Group, chaired by the Director-General of the Department of Planning, oversees the process of considering precinct acceleration proposals.

1.2 Development context

Marsden Park is located in the south western part of Sydney's North West Growth Centre, to the north of established areas of Blacktown. The Marsden Park Industrial Precinct (MPIP) is situated south of the future Marsden Park Precinct and west of the Schofields West and Colebee Precincts.

Although there are other employment areas proposed for the North West Growth Centre, this 445 hectare development site has the potential to create the largest employment area in the North West Growth Centre in terms of both its area and industrial concentration.

The precinct is roughly rectangular in shape. To the north, the precinct is bounded by large rural residential blocks along South Street. The eastern boundary of the precinct is Bells Creek which flows in a roughly north-south direction. Richmond Road runs approximately parallel to Bells Creek, 200-300 metres west of this eastern border. To the west of MPIP lies the large Airservices Australia International Radio Transmitter Station, an area of bushland. The southern boundary of MPIP is formed by the reserve

for the future Castlereagh Freeway, and the established suburbs of Bidwill and Hassall Grove.

Much of the site has semi-rural uses, including large rural residential properties and livestock production. In the centre of the MPIP, off Hollinsworth Road, is the Town and Country Estate, an established caravan park containing approximately 245 mobile/ manufactured' homes. Approximately 400 metres to the north is the Waste Services Depot, accessed off Richmond Road.

The Department of Planning has adopted a target of 11,000 dwellings and a population of 30,800 for the Marsden Park Precinct, which will be developed within the next 20 years as a large residential area immediately to the north of MPIP. The Marsden Park town centre is planned for the south eastern corner of the Marsden Park Precinct, which adjoins the northern corner of MPIP. At this stage, there are few details of the planned town centre or the population for Marsden Park Precinct. Assumptions about the future of the overall Marsden Park precinct will be directly relevant to future community needs of MPIP residents and businesses.

The MPIP is expected to comprise industrial lands and some housing. An Economic and Employment Study undertaken for this area (Jones Lang LaSalle, May 2009) suggests that the MPIP will attract a workforce of approximately 10,000 people, primarily in office, industrial, retail and bulky goods uses. There are also expected to be jobs in local service industries and urban services. In addition to industrial employment, the MPIP includes residential land in four small discrete areas on its northern and eastern boundaries.

The relatively small residential community proposed within MPIP will need to access many of its community services and facilities, recreational and open space needs from the adjoining future Marsden Park town centre and the wider Marsden Park Precinct. Likewise, the workforce within the MPIP will need access to services and facilities which will be provided in this larger precinct to the north. As a result, the analysis and findings of this report need to bear in mind the close inter-relationship between these two precincts and the relative timing of their development, to ensure adequate provision is made for community and open space facilities.

1.3 Scope of this study

This Community Facilities and Open Space report provides specialist advice to support the preparation of the Marsden Park Industrial Precinct (MPIP) Plan with regard to:

- Demographic profiles for the precinct

- The human services, community facilities and open space requirements of the precinct, having regard to the regional context, the GCC Development Code, existing facilities and services and likely needs of the incoming residential and workforce populations
- Opportunities for more innovative and site responsive strategies, including co-located and shared facilities
- Identification of design, spatial and locational criteria for recommended social infrastructure and their application in the draft Indicative Layout Plan (ILP) for the precinct
- Identification of costings and delivery strategies suitable to inform a Section 94 plan / Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA)
- Strategies to maximise the connectivity of the precinct with adjoining areas
- Recommendations for strategies with regard to management and land titling to facilitate social infrastructure outcomes, and for integration with conservation and other infrastructure outcomes.

1.4 The study process

Preparation of this report has involved:

- Discussions and meetings with representatives of the Department of Planning (DoP) and Blacktown City Council (BCC)
- Review of existing plans, policies and background studies from Blacktown City Council, the former Growth Centres Commission and the NSW Department of Planning
- Analysis of the social context of the MPIP, including demographic analysis of the surrounding district population (using 2006 ABS census data for the local area)
- Discussions with government agencies and service providers about existing services and future requirements of the forecast population
- Analysis and incorporation of projected economic and employment data for the area prepared by Jones Lang LaSalle
- Identification of other social planning matters that have emerged during the research and are considered to contribute to positive social outcomes.

2 Policy Framework

A number of policies have been examined as part of this study to provide context and guidance for the planning and delivery of community facilities, human services and open space for Marsden Park Industrial Precinct.

The policy review has considered:

- Sydney Metropolitan Strategy
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Region Growth Centres) 2006
- Growth Centres Commission Development Code
- Strategic and social planning policies of Blacktown City Council.

A brief outline of relevant issues contained in these policies is presented below.

2.1 Sydney Metropolitan Strategy

Economic, social and environmental sustainability are the guiding principles for the Sydney Metropolitan Strategy. Aims which are most relevant to achieving the sustainability objectives for residents and employment areas such as MPIP are:

- Enhancing Liveability
- Strengthening Economic Competitiveness

2.1.1 Enhance Liveability

Key objectives with regard to Enhancing Liveability include to:

- Focus residential development around town centres, villages and neighbourhood centres
- Concentrate economic activity, services and facilities in centres, which are well designed, viable, vibrant, safe and close to public transport
- Plan for a housing mix near jobs, transport and services
- Provide for a range of dwellings suited to the changing population
- Improve housing affordability
- Promote good access to services and timely infrastructure

- Improve access to shopping, friends and family, parks and recreation and other daily activities
- Encourage use of active transport – public transport, walking and cycling - to improve community health and connectivity to services and facilities
- Promote active healthy lifestyles and community interaction through provision of parks, sporting facilities and public places
- Provide a diverse mix of parks and public places and improve the quality of local open space
- Apply sustainability criteria for new urban development. The sustainability criteria include the provision of mechanisms to ensure infrastructure (including social infrastructure) is provided in a timely and efficient way, and that adequate and accessible services and facilities are available to meet quality and equity objectives.

2.1.2 Strengthen Economic Competitiveness

Key objectives with regard to Strengthening Economic Competitiveness include to:

- Increase the number of jobs in Western Sydney by 237,000 (close to half the new jobs in Sydney) with an emphasis on more skilled jobs and stronger links to the global economy
- Plan for sufficient zoned land and infrastructure to achieve employment capacity targets in employment lands
- Utilise local assets to encourage learning and innovation
- Embed skills development in major redevelopment projects
- Increase integration of employment and housing markets
- Encourage emerging businesses.

2.2 The Growth Centres SEPP

State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Region Growth Centres) 2006 provides the statutory planning framework for the Growth Centres and establishes the broad planning controls for their development. In particular, it identifies areas of open space and environment conservation to be protected, areas that are flood prone or major creek lands and transitional lands that need to be further assessed in the precinct planning process.

The objectives of the SEPP include to:

- Enable the establishment of vibrant, sustainable and liveable neighbourhoods that provide for community well-being and high quality local amenity
- Provide controls for the sustainability of land in those growth centres that has conservation value
- Provide for the orderly and economic provision of infrastructure in and to those growth centres.

The SEPP also provides objectives for Public Recreation: Regional and Local Zones, which include:

- To enable the land to be used for regional open space or recreation purposes that are consistent with the protection of its natural and cultural heritage values.

2.3 The Growth Centres Commission Development Code

The GCC Development Code provides the basis for the planning and design of precincts and neighbourhoods within the Growth Centres, and a guide to the incorporation of best practice standards. The Development Code contains a large number of objectives to guide the planning and provision of community facilities and open space. They include:

- Achievement of quality design outcomes
- Infrastructure investment to keep pace with development
- A range of housing types to suit the needs of all members of the community
- Planning to enable residents to walk to shops for daily needs
- Easy access to town centres with a full range of shops, recreational facilities and services, along with smaller village centres and neighbourhood shops
- A range of land uses to provide the right mix of houses, jobs, open and recreational spaces.

Specific objectives of the Development Code address particular elements and include to:

- Increase housing choices
- Provide facilities and services at a local level, including parks, libraries, shops, schools, and health facilities
- Improve walking and cycling pathways, especially between residential areas and shops and schools
- Integrate existing infrastructure
- Provide, protect and maintain a range of open space opportunities throughout the entire precinct

- Provide a range of commercial and retail opportunities
- Enhance safety, maximise surveillance and minimise opportunities for crime
- Utilise public places and public buildings to promote community identity.

Specific Development Code objectives with regard to community facilities include to:

- Provide community facilities within walking distance of residential neighbourhoods and transport nodes
- Provide access to a wide range of social and community facilities catering for different social groups and age groups
- Create good access to new areas of open space and community facilities
- Improve access to existing parks and recreational facilities
- Minimise the impact of access ways on the environmental qualities of public open space
- Provide good, but unobtrusive, access.

The Code also provides objectives in relation to the location, co-location and multiple use of community services and facilities in order to:

- Facilitate efficient use of resources and services through maximising opportunities for joint, shared or multiple-use of open space and community facilities
- That adequate social, cultural and community facilities are appropriately located in relation to public open spaces
- Facilitate the viability of social facilities by means of appropriate location and distribution
- Maximise accessibility and convenience of social facilities and services through co-location
- Facilitate social and community facilities that meet the future requirements of the population
- Provide for the social needs of future communities
- Enable adequate land to be made available for the provision of social infrastructure
- Facilitate the timely provision of community facilities and services
- Locate community facilities within the centres and neighbourhoods
- Create opportunities for the optimal use of land and resources, educational and community facilities.

The Development Code's objectives relating to public open space aim to balance the dual function of the undeveloped land for both recreational purposes and stormwater management systems. In addition the land needs to be accessible and useable by the public for a wide range of activities. Specific open space objectives include to:

- Integrate stormwater management and water sensitive urban design with networked open space
- Provide a balance of useable and accessible open space with neighbourhood and district stormwater management
- Protect recreational uses
- Provide an interconnected network of open spaces
- Integrate public open space into the urban structure to maximise land use efficiency
- Facilitate the provision of public open space of an appropriate quality and quantity
- Facilitate the provision of public open space and its development as part of the subdivision process
- Provide a diverse mix of open spaces and community facilities designed to cater for a range of uses and activities
- Facilitate the provision of sporting and recreation facilities that can meet the needs of future communities
- Provide amenity to residential areas
- Avoid pressure to existing open space systems in surrounding areas.

Additional open space objectives with regard to urban spaces and connections include to:

- Provide public open space that is pleasant, safe and usable both during daytime and at night
- Integrate open space with the mix of uses in the town centre to form a focal point
- Provide residents with accessible passive and active recreational opportunities
- Provide open space that promotes local character and identity
- Provide play spaces which are designed and located to be safe and convenient and to assist in childhood development
- Retain existing stands of remnant vegetation and to associate them with passive recreational facilities
- Provide open space for a diversity of interests catering for a wide range of users.

The Development Code also contains a set of Precinct Development Parameters which provide some guidance in establishing benchmarks and thresholds for the planning of open space and social infrastructure in precincts.

The North West Growth Centre is approximately 10,000 hectares in size and comprises 16 Precincts, in which about 70,000 new homes are planned.

2.4 Blacktown City Council policies

2.4.1 Blacktown City 2025 - Delivering the Vision

This document provides a strategic framework for creating a healthy and vibrant city as it changes over the next 15 years and beyond, based on ideals, values and aspirations of residents.

Eight key strategies have been developed around the following directions:

- A creative, friendly and inclusive City
- Environmental sustainability
- Vibrant commercial centres
- A smart economy
- Urban living and infrastructure
- Clean green spaces and places
- Getting around
- A sporting City.

Focus areas within several themes which are relevant to the future community infrastructure, services, open space and recreational needs of MPIP are summarised below.

A creative, friendly and inclusive city –

- Develop Council's land use planning and economic development strategies that focus on creating local jobs for local people
- Expand the role of community centres so that they become community resource hubs, providing spaces for learning, human service delivery and recreational and cultural activities
- Council to continue to play a role in providing high quality child care services which meet the needs of all children and their families

Vibrant commercial centres –

- Implement planning strategies to describe the desired future development and foster

partnerships with government, land owners and the private sector

A Smart Economy -

- Facilitate development of sectors of advanced manufacturing, business services, logistics, building and construction
- Attract major commercial and office development to ... business parks and new urban areas
- Promote the availability and benefits of life long learning opportunities
- Ensure the development of industry clusters that create and retain local wealth
- Lobby the State government to recognise the need for infrastructure ... to accompany increasing demands in housing, population and employment growth targets
- Build a strong partnership with the State Government to ensure new infrastructure is provided in a timely manner

A Sporting City -

- Provide and promote indoor and outdoor sporting opportunities for a wide range of users
- Establish relationships with peak governing bodies and identify innovative approaches in the creation of new venues and facilities
- Support and promote local sporting champions as role models
- Maximise community interest in sport and increase participation by actively promoting Council's facilities and the benefits of sport to the wider community
- Promote community development through sport.

2.4.2 Blacktown City Council Social Plan 2006-2010

The Blacktown City Social Plan 2006-2010 (Blacktown Social Plan) has been prepared following extensive research and analysis of ABS 2001 Census data, and consultations with key stakeholders, service providers and targeted groups of the community. The Plan looks at the overall characteristics, social needs and aspirations of the Blacktown LGA population, and further analysed sub-places in order to identify local strategies.

The Blacktown Social Plan aims to:

- Utilise community strengths

- Establish collaborative partnerships between the community sectors and stakeholders
- Integrate initiatives with existing networks to maximise efficiency and benefits to the community.

Eleven indicator based priority areas examine the health and social wellbeing of the community. Data analysis and stakeholder consultations have resulted in key concerns being identified. Key concerns in the North-West sector included:

- Stress
 - Undesirable people and behaviours
- Early Life
 - A lack of services: youth, family, and transport
 - Travel distances to work from home and the impacts this had on families
 - Limited Aboriginal services.
- Social Exclusion
 - Limited supply of support services for Aboriginal people and need for more low cost/affordable childcare services for Aboriginal people.
- Work
 - Large travel distances to work from home and the impact this had on family and personal time.
- Unemployment
 - Large distances between employment locations and residential areas.
- Social Support
 - A lack of services: youth and family
 - Poor public transport
 - A Limited supply is a need to locate shaded and seated rest areas in parks so they can be better used
 - Poor street lighting and footpaths.
- Addiction
 - Undesirable people and behaviours.
- Food
 - Limited choice in local shopping areas
 - Poor access by public transport to food and retail choice.
- Transport
 - Limited public transport options.
- Service Development

- The fragmentation, lack of integration, under resourcing and poor funding of human services.

2.4.3 Blacktown City Council Cultural Plan

The Cultural Plan aims to increase community participation through cultural development and provide citywide access to cultural development opportunities for all residents.

The strategy aims to incorporate arts and cultural services in new and existing community facilities, involving the community in any developments to create ownership and involvement.

2.4.4 Wellness through Physical Activity Policy

Blacktown Council's Wellness Vision aims "to promote physical activity in the community as a contribution to achieving physical, mental, cultural, social and environmental health and wellbeing" (p.3).

Through this policy BCC is committed to:

- "Interpreting, supporting and strengthening Council's overall vision through enhancing wellness by means of promoting physical activity and its associated health benefits
- Enriching residents and visitors to Blacktown City through the provision of and access to programs, services and facilities that enhance wellness through physical activity
- Identifying priority populations and/or locations for increasing physical activity related initiatives throughout the City
- Creating safe and sustainable physical environments that foster wellness through increased physical activity and assist in promoting a vibrant city image" (p. 5)

Council has adopted the following guiding principles to promote and develop wellness in the City:

- "Provision and access – Council recognises the need for an accessible network of recreation infrastructure and an opportunity for all members of the community to engage in physical activity, regardless of ability, age, class, gender, sexuality, culture or race
- Special needs and population groups – Council will encourage a focus on activities that have a positive impact on groups who have lower levels of physical activity
- Community interaction and engagement – Council appreciates the rich and powerful resources that

the community can provide through identifying needs, obtaining support for programs and initiatives, providing resources and shaping strategies

- Whole of council approach – Council recognises the need to adopt an organisational philosophy where wellness and physical activity is incorporated within the strategic directions of Council and its operations
- Safe, supportive and sustainable environments – Council acknowledges the importance that the physical environment plays in supporting the local community to participate in a range of activities that will lead to community wellness through physical activity
- Partnerships – Council creates and maintains relationships with key stakeholders including other spheres of government, neighbouring Councils, local businesses and community groups to produce mutually beneficial outcomes related to physical activity and community wellness
- Civic responsibility / governance – Council will assume a leadership and advocacy role in developing a setting for wellness in Blacktown City and ensure that physical activity is recognised as a priority in relevant activities and actions
- On-going monitoring and evaluation – Council recognises the importance of reviewing participation in physical activity in order to adequately meet the demands of the changing demographics and lifestyles of our residents" (p.4).

2.4.5 Blacktown Recreation and Open Space Strategy

BCC's Recreation and Open Space Strategy (ROSS) outlines directions for the provision, development, management and maintenance of open space and recreation facilities within the City for the next eight years.

The Strategy recognises that recreation and open space facilities contribute to, and are important for, the quality of life of residents. It provides an understanding of:

- The needs and issues for the existing population, including community and sporting groups
- The issues and gaps for provision of existing recreation and open space and sporting facilities
- Opportunities for improving existing recreation and open space and sporting facilities
- Priorities based on the level of need.

This information will assist in the planning and management of enhancements to open space and service provision and in implementation of the City Vision strategies for 'Clean, Green Spaces and Places' and 'A Sporting City'. Priority strategies include:

- Directions for sport such as:
 - The provision and development of sportsgrounds within a hierarchy
 - The provision of key facilities for some sports and organised activities
 - Promoting community and sport development
 - Development of Blacktown as the sporting capital of Western Sydney
- Catering for informal recreation, particularly:
 - The provision and development of parks
 - Provision of linear parks and trails
 - Local parks and playgrounds
 - Youth facilities
- The future provision and development of aquatic and indoor facilities
- Directions for the protection, enhancement and maintenance of natural areas including bushland and watercourses
- Opportunities for using facilities and supporting community participation
- Directions for future planning.

Key issues which need to be considered in planning for and maintaining the open space areas within the BCC area include:

- Equity – there is a high demand for sportsgrounds and other areas of open space due to the large proportion of families and young people and the anticipated growth in physical activity participation rates. Equity in provision across the municipality is an important consideration
- Quality – there will be a high priority for further development of reserves to enhance their quality and encourage their use
- Access – Council needs to continue to provide for the needs of people with disabilities, people with prams, older people in using paths, accessing open spaces and recreational facilities
- Safety – the community values safety highly and will use recreation and open space facilities more when they feel safe and secure
- Sustainability – Council will need to balance values of biological diversity, ecological integrity and

intergenerational equity with community demands and needs.

2.5 Principles for sustainable social infrastructure

Based on the objectives contained within the State and local government planning policies outlined above and best practice principles, objectives to guide the provision of sustainable social infrastructure in MPIP include:

1. Provide facilities and services in an efficient, timely and co-ordinated way to support the pattern of development. This means ensuring that facilities and services are available to residents as early as possible and they are not disadvantaged through delays in delivery;
2. Make most efficient use of limited resources, for instance through designing community facilities to be multipurpose, co-located with other facilities and able to accommodate shared and multiple use arrangements;
3. Cluster related facilities and services, preferably within designated centres or hubs, to promote civic identity, safety, accessibility and focal points for the community;
4. Ensure facilities and services are accessible by public transport and located to maximise access for pedestrians and cyclists;
5. Ensure flexibility in the design and use of facilities, so they can respond and adapt as needs change. Where possible, buildings should be capable of delivering a range of services, rather than designated for single uses or specific target groups that may quickly become outdated;
6. Promote an equitable spread of facilities and open space and equitable access for all sections of the population, through the distribution, design and management of facilities. In particular facilities should be affordable for their target population;
7. Provide environmentally and economically sustainable buildings;
8. Ensure viable levels of resourcing, particularly recurrent funding for staff and programs, not just initial capital development;
9. Promote innovation and creativity in the way agencies come together to deliver and integrate services that aim to enhance community capacity and resilience;

10. Develop sustainable ownership, governance, management and maintenance arrangements for facilities;
11. Enhance potential connections between social infrastructure and open space, including the potential to establish activity and service hubs and links to unique open space features.

3 Existing social context

It is important to understand the social context of any new development, to ensure that its planning takes account of and is responsive to the surrounding social conditions and that it will integrate, both physically and socially, with the surrounding area. This chapter presents an overview of the social context for development of the MPIP. It considers issues of growth and change in Blacktown LGA, and the characteristics of surrounding areas. An assessment of existing community facilities, human services and open space in the surrounding area which could address some of the needs of the future new population is provided in the following chapter.

3.1 The regional social context

North western Sydney has experienced high levels of growth over the past decade. New housing development and ongoing planning for the North West Growth Centre have created demands for shops, infrastructure, community services, open space and recreational areas. In addition, improved road networks i.e. M2 and M7, have attracted greater concentrations of business and industrial employment opportunities to this region.

Across the southern boundary of MPIP runs a corridor reserved for a future M7 extension to the Castlereagh Freeway. Beyond this corridor lie suburbs developed between the 1950s and 1990s which are now established residential areas. Rapid residential development to the west and east has occurred more recently over the past decade, as part of Sydney's North West Sector. This includes the suburbs of Shanes Park, Rouse Hill, Parklea, Stanhope Gardens, Newbury and Kellyville Ridge.

To service some of this new population, the new Rouse Hill Regional Centre to the east of the MPIP has been completed. This development is proposed to contain a town centre with about 100,000 metres² of commercial and retail space, approximately 1,800 dwellings, parks and some community facilities. It is expected that the Rouse Hill Regional Centre will also accommodate about 4,500 people upon completion. Housing will comprise a mix of apartments and family homes. A transit interchange was proposed to connect to the future Rouse Hill train station as part of the North West Rail Link. However the State Government has placed this project on hold indefinitely and this area will be serviced by the recently completed North Western Bus Transitway.

Residential development is currently occurring to the west at Ropes Crossing, and to the east at Colebee

(Stonecutters Ridge) and The Ponds. Some sections within these areas have been recently completed and are occupied by new residents.

The Stonecutters Ridge master planned community at Colebee will deliver 840 dwellings with an estimated population of approximately 2,700 people. The Ponds development will generate 3,200 dwellings across three stages with a projected total population to reach 9,500 people. It is anticipated that the Ropes Crossing and Ropes Creek developments will provide approximately 1,800 dwellings with an estimated 4,900 residents living in the area once completed (Elton Consulting July 2008).

Elsewhere in the North West Growth Centre, Precinct Plans are being developed for Riverstone and Alex Avenue, located approximately 5 kms to the east and north east. These areas are expected to accommodate another 15,000 new housing lots. Draft plans for employment lands in Riverstone West Precinct, currently on exhibition, show the 285 ha site will provide around 12,000 jobs for residents of western Sydney, including 8,300 jobs in a business park setting adjacent to Riverstone rail station and around 3,700 jobs in light industrial and general industrial areas (www.qcc.nsw.gov.au).

Immediately north of the MPIP, the future Marsden Park precinct is expected to accommodate a population of 30,800 in 11,000 new dwellings by 2031. The area is expected to include a Town Centre, 10-11 neighbourhood centres and employment facilities.

This recent and proposed growth has important implications for the planning and delivery of social infrastructure and open space in both Marsden Park Precinct and the MPIP. Rapid population growth in surrounding areas has placed strains on existing services and facilities within Blacktown. At the same time, planning for new precincts has focused mainly on local community services and open space needs, with less focus on planning for higher level regional social infrastructure.

Social issues associated with the rapid rate of urban development occurring in this area include:

- A shortage of local employment opportunities, coupled with relatively poor public transport services. Many residents spend considerable time commuting to work outside the region. Time spent commuting can restrict time available for family life, recreation and for involvement in community life. This demonstrates a need for facilities and activities that are locally based.
- Newcomers can be separated from established support networks and may experience isolation and dislocation. This indicates a need to foster social support networks and services.

- The relatively high cost of new housing creates financial stress for many households. This may be exacerbated by uncertainties associated with the threat of unemployment or negative equity. There is a need for social and recreational opportunities that are affordable.
- There is a need for strategies to promote integration of new and existing communities, to foster community cohesion and identity and help ensure that the change process does not strain social harmony.

3.2 Social profile of the area

Understanding the profile of the existing population of an area can help in predicting the characteristics of new residents. It is also useful when developing strategies to promote integration of new and existing communities. In addition, some existing residents are likely to be displaced by development of the MPIP and Marsden Park Precinct over the next 20 years. It is important to understand the similarities and differences between existing and future populations, and the types of social impacts which could arise through this process of change.

Blacktown City Council has previously prepared a social profile of the area, based on an analysis of the 2006 ABS Census of Population and Housing. A brief profile of the key characteristics of the populations within and adjoining MPIP is provided below.

3.2.1 Characteristics of existing MPIP population

The MPIP site itself is typical of a semi-rural landscape with dispersed housing and large acreages. However, there is a caravan park with approximately 250 permanent manufactured homes located towards the centre of the site.

Census collector district (CCD) data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2006 Census covers the MPIP area but extends further north and east. However, it provides some context for the characteristics of the population in this area at the time of the 2006 Census.

Marsden Park area demographic characteristics

The CCD 1270307 in Blacktown LGA contained 249 private dwellings and a total population of 485 in 2006. This represents a 3% increase since the 2001 Census.

Other key features of the area in 2006 as compared to Blacktown LGA include:

- A higher Australian born population. Only 20% of the population in this area was born overseas compared with more than 34% for the LGA

- A lower percentage of children aged up to 11 years (13% as compared to 20% in the LGA)
- Fewer younger adults aged between 25 to 34 years (9% as compared to 15% in the LGA)
- A higher percentage of mature adults aged between 50 to 59 (17% to 11% respectively)
- Almost twice the proportion of people above 60 years than the LGA average (23% compared with 12%)
- A higher median age of 42 years compared with a median of 32 years for the LGA
- A higher proportion of people unemployed (10.5% to 6.8% respectively)
- The CCD contained equal proportions of Couple families with children and Couple families without children (35% in each category). Another 26% of families were single parent families. In the LGA as a whole, there were more Couple families with children (53%) and fewer single parent families (20%)
- There is a very high proportion of lone person households (44%) compared with the LGA (16%)
- The rate of home ownership in this area is almost double that of the LGA, at 48%, compared with 23.5% which indicates that the area is more settled with mature families and empty-nester households. More households are also renting in this area than the LGA overall (35% compared with 30%)
- Most housing in this CCD is within the caravan park, as 78% of dwellings are classified as 'other' and only 22% are separate houses. This compares with 83% being separate dwellings in the LGA
- The key industries people worked in were Poultry farming (7.8%) and road freight transport (6.7%), whereas the LGA recorded Schools education (3.4%), Hospitals (3.3%) and cafes, restaurants and takeaways food services (3.0%) as the main industries
- Residents of this CCD were twice as likely to be working as Labourers (23.5%) than Blacktown residents (11.9%). Other common occupational groups were Machinery operators and drivers (19%) and Managers (14.5%). Across the LGA, the most common occupational groups were Clerical and administration (19%), Professionals (15%) and Technical and Trades (14.5%).
- Overall, only 6.0% of the households earned a high income (\$1,700 per week or more), compared with 24.0% for the LGA. Almost 32% were low income households (\$500 per week or less), compared with 17% for the LGA.
- The median household income, at \$620/week, is roughly half that of \$1,105/week for Blacktown LGA.

Status of existing caravan park

The Town and Country caravan park has been operating from this site for around 20 years and it is understood there are several long term residents of up to 20 years. Discussions with the owner indicated that he is hoping to sell the site within the next five years, depending on market conditions. The owner stated that existing residents have been advised that long term planning for rezoning of the area is underway and incoming residents are asked to sign documentation acknowledging that they will need to find alternative accommodation in the medium term. All residents are on short-term week to week leases.

3.2.2 Characteristics of surrounding areas

Immediately south of MPIP lie the established Mt Druitt suburbs of Bidwill and Hassall Grove. Bidwill was developed in the post-war years, between the 1950s to the 1970s as a residential area and contains several parklands and reserves. Hassall Grove is a newer residential area which developed rapidly in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Bidwill's population declined slightly during the 1990s as a result of relative stability in dwelling stock and a decline in average household size. The population of Hassall Grove has been relatively stable since 2001.

Schofields and Rouse Hill areas to the east are currently predominantly rural-residential areas, with some industrial areas in the south-west. Most development occurred during the post-war years. The population has been relatively stable since the early 1990s, as new dwelling construction has been balanced by a decline in average household size.

To the north east, the existing townships of Riverstone and Vineyard have older, established populations and a variety of shops, community facilities and some industrial land uses. The population declined slightly between 2001 and 2006, as a result of a decline in average household size, but suburban development has been occurring in recent years.

3.3 Issues for the existing population

The draft Indicative Layout Plan for the MPIP proposes development of employment uses and residential dwellings which will require sub-division, consolidation and redevelopment of existing properties. This will result in substantial change to the character of the area and residents' lifestyles if they continue to live in the rural residential areas and caravan park as development occurs.

Potential issues and impacts arising from this arrangement and future plans for the site's caravan park residents are the subject of a separate social impact being carried out by Elton Consulting for DoP. Relevant issues will be identified in discussions with the owner, Departments of Housing and Fair

Trading, tenancy and community housing advocacy groups. At this stage it is anticipated that they may include:

- Impacts on established social networks, schooling, employment patterns
- Impacts on support systems for elderly residents and those on lower incomes or pensions
- Availability of alternative affordable housing
- Timeframes and logistics of closure and/or re-location.

There are few other residential properties within the MPIP and it is understood from DoP that other property owners have agreed to proceed with rezoning proposals. In this context, there are few other issues likely to arise from a social impact perspective.

4 Existing community facilities and open space

Existing human services, community facilities and open space in the surrounding areas which could be accessed by the future population of MPIP have been identified and examined to determine their availability and capacity to absorb demand generated by this future residential and workforce population.

4.1 Existing community facilities

4.1.1 Primary and secondary schools

In terms of educational facilities, the Marsden Park Primary School is located at Garfield Road West near Richmond Road, in the far east of Marsden Park Precinct. The school is a small rural school with only two permanent classrooms, two demountable classrooms, a demountable library and staff room giving a permanent capacity for only 50-60 children. The Department of Education and Training (DET) has advised that the school currently has 81 students. Although this number has fluctuated between 80 and 105 students over the last five years, DET anticipates that the enrolment numbers will stabilise in the short to medium term.

DET has advised that the timing of residential development within MPIP relative to other precincts will determine whether demands generated by future residential development within MPIP are met through a significant upgrading of Marsden Park Primary School or directing students to neighbouring precincts. No school is planned for MPIP.

In terms of secondary schooling, Marsden Park is within the catchment zone of Riverstone High School, located five kilometres north east of Marsden Park Primary School. This high school has significant spare capacity, and operates as a junior high school only (Years 7 to 10). Senior students progress to Nirimba College in Schofields, which is on a shared site with TAFE, University of Western Sydney and Terra Sancta College. Nirimba College opened in 1999 and has recorded strong enrolment growth. DET has advised that Nirimba College is currently at full capacity with eight demountables. The site has capacity for further accommodation. However, Nirimba is currently difficult to access by bus from MPIP.

DET also stated that previous advice given to the GCC indicates the need for two new high schools in

the Marsden Park Precinct (based on estimated 10-11,000 dwellings). DET advised that high school demand from the Marsden Park Industrial Precinct would be met by one of these high schools when constructed.

4.1.2 Religious and cultural facilities

Facilities used by religious and cultural organisations within MPIP include:

- The Australian Hindu Multicultural Association's Cultural Centre, located north west of the public school at 1050 Richmond Road. This small centre promotes social, cultural, religious and educational activities for the Hindu community in Sydney
- The Hamrun Association Club, run by the Maltese Cultural Committee, providing social functions and cultural activities for the local Maltese community
- The Ahmadiyya Mosque is located on Hollinsworth Road, towards the southern end of Marsden Park. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Association is also housed with the mosque.

4.1.3 Emergency services

There are no emergency services within MPIP.

Marsden Rural Fire Station is located within Marsden Park Precinct to the north east on Garfield Road West and there are other Rural Fire Services at Schofields to the east and Berkshire Park to the west.

4.1.4 Surrounding areas

Riverstone and Alex Avenue

To the north east of the MPIP, Schofields, Riverstone and Alex Avenue Precincts currently have a limited range of human services and facilities, including several schools and child care centres, a community centre, youth centre, indoor sports centre and a small branch library situated on the first floor of a shopping centre at Riverstone. These facilities have been provided to meet existing local needs. They will not be adequate to meet needs of Riverstone and Schofields as these precincts are developed and will certainly not be able to absorb demand from MPIP.

In terms of emergency services, Riverstone has a police station and a new ambulance station. These facilities serve the surrounding areas of Alex Avenue, Schofields and Marsden Park.

Planning is underway for the Riverstone and Alex Avenue precincts to house approximately 15,000 new dwellings and over 40,000 new residents. The following community facilities are proposed to service the new population (Macroplan and GCC, 2008):

- A new town centre in Alex Avenue with retail and commercial facilities
- A community services hub in Riverstone that will include a library, arts centre, multi-purpose space meeting rooms and cultural centre
- A staged duplication of the Richmond Rail Line and improvements to the existing Riverstone Station
- Three new primary schools and a new combined Kindergarten to Year 12 school (with special needs services) at Riverstone and one new primary school and a new combined Kindergarten to Year 12 school (with special needs services) at Alex Avenue
- Two youth centres at Riverstone and Alex Avenue (Macroplan).

Blacktown City Council is currently investigating the identified needs for community facilities, including a community services hub, before finalising plans for the areas. However, services in these precincts are designed to service their future resident populations and will not have the capacity to cater for those living further afield in the MPIP or Marsden Park Precinct.

Schofields

Schofields has little in the way of available social infrastructure besides a small, council-owned multi-purpose community centre, a small youth centre, one primary school and a small post office. Construction of a new fire station is almost complete (Macroplan, p. 58).

The Structure Plan for Schofields identifies planning scenarios for this area, incorporating a hierarchy of centres to accommodate social infrastructure.

As with the Riverstone and Alex Avenue Precincts, proposed services and facilities have been planned to meet needs of future residents. There is not likely to be spare capacity for additional residents living in the MPIP or Marsden Park Precinct.

Colebee

Directly to the east of the MPIP is Colebee (also known as Stonecutters Ridge) master planned development. Construction has commenced on 840 dwellings centred on a Greg Norman designed golf course. The development will generate approximately 2,000 people. However, the limited community facilities to be provided on site will serve local residents only (Colebee report page 3 and 16 and website).

Hassall Grove and Bidwill

To the south, Hassall Grove contains a neighbourhood centre, small shopping centre, a primary school and the Christian Catholic College. Bidwill contains the Bidwill Primary School and

Chifley College as well as the redeveloped Bidwill Shopping Centre, which is planned to open by Easter 2009.

The established populations in this area generally already use existing services to capacity. In addition, these areas are not readily accessible from the proposed residential parts of MPIP and the Castlereagh Freeway corridor reserve forms a barrier to closer integration of these areas in future.

4.1.5 Summary of existing community facilities

In summary, there is no existing social infrastructure within MPIP itself, and limited facilities in the adjacent Marsden Park precinct, to meet the needs generated by a new residential and workforce population.

Services in established areas are stretched to capacity and are not easily accessible. Services planned for each of the new Growth Centre Precincts are designed to service their future individual populations. There is no regional level social infrastructure with capacity to cater for those living in the MPIP or Marsden Park Precinct.

4.2 Existing open space and recreational facilities

MPIP itself contains no designated local open space areas, although there are a number of private recreational uses in the vicinity including Paintball and the Golf Academy Driving Range.

Under the Growth Centres SEPP, the Air Services Australia site will be retained as open space to protect its conservation values associated with the Cumberland Plain Woodland. A regional public recreation area is also designated for land adjoining the western boundary of MPIP.

4.2.1 Surrounding areas

Riverstone and Alex Avenue

There is limited stock of existing open space provision within Schofields, Riverstone and Alex Avenue Precincts. There are a number of sporting and recreational facilities within Riverstone and Alex Avenue areas including a bowling club, swimming centre, netball and tennis courts and a pony centre.

In terms of future sporting and recreational facilities, three local sporting facilities (consisting of five double playing fields) and a district sporting facility/recreation facility (consisting of a 20 court netball facility) are planned for Riverstone Precinct. Alex Avenue Precinct is expected to receive three local sporting facilities consisting of four double playing fields and six netball courts. There is also a need for provision of additional playing fields outside

of the current precinct boundaries in order to meet the prescribed needs-based levels.

For open space provision, an additional 10 neighbourhood parks are planned for Riverstone and 12 in Alex Avenue. These parks are expected to be distributed across the precincts to serve local catchment populations and be within a 400 metre walk for all residents. In addition to the above, it is recommended that nine local parks be provided in Riverstone and seven within Alex Avenue. These larger parks will provide a greater range of passive and active recreational opportunities including walking/cycling paths, playgrounds, seating and potential picnic and public art provision.

These areas of open space have been planned to meet the local and neighbourhood needs of these precincts and will not have district or regional capacity to also serve MPIP.

Schofields

Schofields currently contains a small local park, Schofields Park, which has play and picnic facilities.

The Nirimba educational precinct contains high quality sports and recreational facilities including tennis courts, football and soccer fields, swimming pool and gym. These are open to general public use but the hours of operation are restricted.

Colebee and Stonecutters Ridge

Colebee contains the Colebee Nature Reserve which runs along the western boundary of the Stonecutters Ridge development.

The Stonecutters Ridge development will provide new sporting and recreational facilities, including a golf course which will be open to the general public. However other facilities including tennis courts, the swimming pool and local open spaces will be designated for private use as community title facilities.

Hassall Grove and Bidwill

Hassall Grove contains the Mittaggar Reserve which adjoins the educational precinct. The Reserve comprises of an oval with pavilion, netball courts and picnic area along Bells Creek corridor which stretches south into Oakhurst and Plumpton.

Bidwill contains Bidwill Reserve, with recreational walks and some netball courts, as well as Walshe Grove Park.

These areas have been designed to meet local needs and are neither easily accessible nor appropriate to meet the additional future needs of MPIP residents.

Other open space

In areas beyond the immediate catchment, a number of larger areas of district or regional open space currently exist. The following areas are within around 10 kms of MPIP:

- Windsor Downs Nature Reserve (approx 340ha)
- Castlereagh Nature Reserve (492 ha)
- Rouse Hill Regional Park (approx 49ha)
- The Scheyville National Park (approx 933ha) is another area of regional open space further to the north east
- The northern parts of Western Sydney Regional Parklands (5,280 ha in total) are readily accessible from MPIP.

A new Wianamatta Regional Park (63 ha) is proposed for part of the former ADI site at St Marys.

4.2.2 Summary of open space and recreational facilities

While the large areas of open space listed above may attract use by future residents of the MPIP, neighbourhood and local open space in surrounding areas are designed to service local populations and as such will be too distant to be used by MPIP residents or employees of the industrial area. Likewise, recreational facilities in Riverstone, Schofields or Alex Avenue Precincts are unlikely to be used regularly by new residents of MPIP because of the distance from this area.

BCC is currently working with the State government and other stakeholders in planning for future location and upgrades of major regional sporting facilities. However, these facilities are not readily accessible to the MPIP and will not meet local needs for recreation and open space.

5 Population and employment forecasts

5.1 Projected development yields

Preliminary estimates of residential dwelling yields for the MPIP have been provided by GCC for the purposes of this study. Residential development is proposed for four separate areas along the northern and eastern boundaries of the MPIP site.

Projected yields are shown below:

Table 1: Projected dwelling yields

Area	Land area (ha)	Dwellings per ha	Approx. number of dwellings
R2	15.1	15	227
R3	29.8	30	894
Total			1,121

This breakdown provides for 20% of dwellings to be detached houses and the remaining 80% to be townhouse style attached dwellings.

5.2 Estimated population

At the 2006 census, occupancy rates in Blacktown LGA for detached dwellings were 3.1 persons per household, while occupancy rates for attached dwellings were 2.8 persons per household. These occupancy rates have been used to estimate population for the MPIP from dwellings yields.

Applying the average occupancy rates above to forecast dwellings numbers has resulted in the following population estimates:

Table 2: Estimated population

Area	Estimated dwellings	Occupancy rate	Estimated Population
R2	227	3.1 ¹	702
R3	894	2.8 ²	2,503
Total	1,121		3,205

Notes:

1. Average occupancy rate for detached dwellings in Blacktown LGA, 2006 Census

2. Average occupancy rate for attached dwellings in Blacktown LGA, 2006 Census

This table shows that the residential component of the MPIP is likely to result in a population of about 3,205 people.

This estimated population would be spread across four separate parcels of residential land within the

precinct. Housing areas planned for the north western and north eastern corners and the south eastern corner of MPIP are designated for low density (15 dwellings per hectare) detached housing. In the centre of the northern boundary, two parcels are identified for medium density (30 dwellings per hectare) townhouse style dwellings.

This distribution across the site needs to be considered in planning for the location of future community facilities and areas of open space.

5.3 Demographic characteristics of new release 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 areas and the influence of other factors particular to the site.

The proposed dwelling mix has the potential to attract a range of household types at different stages of the life cycle and with different needs. The high proportion of medium density dwellings is likely to attract smaller household types, including singles, couples and first home buyers, investors and retirees with older children or empty nesters. These dwellings will typically be available in lower price ranges than larger detached dwellings. Established families, second and third home buyers and those trading up to larger properties are likely to be attracted to detached housing.

At this stage, with few details of housing characteristics, it is too early to predict the specific age structure or other demographic characteristics of the area's future population.

However, residents in this area and the Marsden Park precinct to the north are expected to share characteristics of populations of recent land releases in other nearby parts of western Sydney.

Some common features of residents of these new release areas include:

- Households will usually move into the area from within a 5-10 km radius
- There is likely to be a general predominance of young families with young children and couples who have not yet started a family
- Most adults are in the 25-49 years age cohorts
- A small but significant number of single person households
- More home owners
- Increasing family sizes over time, as couples have children.

As land release areas develop over time, the peaks in the age distribution associated with a predominance of young families tend to reduce and the population will become more diverse in terms of age and household type. The proportion of the population who are young children and young adults will decline as the population ages and the proportion of older children with older parents grows. The proportion of the population aged 55+ will also increase considerably as the area matures and older people are attracted to the area to be near family and grandchildren, or to downsize to a smaller home.

In this way, the population profile is likely to come to more closely approximate that of an established area with a variety of age and household characteristics, rather than a traditional new release area with particular age concentrations.

A number of other demographic trends in the wider population will have an impact on future demographics of the area. These include trends such as:

- Smaller households and declining occupancy rates
- Increasing numbers of people choosing not to have children
- The increasing age at which people do have children
- Increasing numbers of people choosing to live alone

- Rates of relationship breakdown
- The ageing of the population, increasing life expectancy and growing numbers of people in the oldest age cohorts
- Changing lifestyle trends, including increasing numbers of people working from home and the extent to which housing forms will attract particular lifestyle groups.

The age profile of the future population will reflect the affordability of housing. First home buyer estates tend to have slightly younger parents (25-34 years) and a higher proportion of children aged 0-4 years. Release areas settled by families who are second and subsequent home buyers show a slightly older age distribution, with a higher proportion of adults in their 30s and early 40s and primary school or teen aged children. Smaller properties will be attractive to single person households, younger people, 'empty nesters' and retired couples. Attached medium density housing is attractive to investors and tenants.

Housing affordability will also be affected by changes in housing interest rates or subsidies for first home buyers, which will also impact on purchasing patterns, particularly for first home buyers.

In order to provide a broad indication of the approximate age breakdown of the future population in this area, the age profile of a number of housing estates in surrounding areas at the 2006 census was examined. Details are presented below:

Table 3: Percentage of population by age cohort for nearby suburbs, 2006

Suburb	Proportion of the population in each age group (%)								
	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-39	40-49	50-64	65+
Stanhope Gardens	11	8	5	5	6	32	13	13	7
Glenmore Park	10	10	9	8	7	26	15	12	4
Quakers Hill	8	9	8	7	8	26	15	14	5
Rouse Hill	14	11	8	5	4	31	13	11	4
Blacktown LGA	8	8	8	7	7	23	14	18	8

Source: ABS 2006 Census of Population and 11.5Housing

1. Estimated in Elton Consulting, July 2008

The above table provides an indication of the approximate age breakdown which might be expected for residents moving into new development areas. On the basis of these figures, some preliminary estimates of the population breakdown for MPIP are estimated. This breakdown is a useful starting point in estimating needs for child care services, schools and aged care in the following sections. They will however need to be further refined as more detailed planning for the area takes place.

Table 4: Estimated population breakdown by age cohort for MPIP

Age group	Estimated %	Estimated no.
0-4	9	288
5-9	9	288
10-14	8	256
15-19	7	224
20-24	7	224
25-39	28	897
40-49	14	449
50-64	12	385
65+	6	192
	100	3,205

5.4 Projected workforce

The projected workforce size for MPIP has been estimated by Jones Lang LaSalle (May 2009) to be 10,000 people by 2026, as shown in the following table:

Table 5: Employment forecasts

Year	Total jobs
2011	2,000
2016	4,000
2021	6,000
2026	10,000

Appropriate uses within MPIP were considered to include a mix of industrial, office and retail (primarily bulky goods) and business park uses. In general, manufacturers and transport and storage companies as well as companies in the communications, finance, insurance, property and business services dominate business parks, with industry clusters of warehousing and distribution common.

5.5 Workforce characteristics

At this stage there are no details of the likely gender or age characteristics of the future workforce.

An analysis of gender breakdown for a range of broad industry types has enabled an indicative gender breakdown for the industrial component of the site to be estimated. Light industry in similar industrial areas in western Sydney show a breakdown of around 75% males and 25% females (Fagan 2004). By contrast, the gender breakdown for business parks is significantly different, due to a higher proportion of professional, clerical, research and service jobs. A business park is likely to attract a relatively high proportion of female workers (Fagan et al).

It has been assumed that the age profile is likely to span the full spectrum of ages from 17 through to 65 years. It will also be important that the workforce includes jobs across a range of different skills and educational levels.

6 Community facility requirements

6.1 General approach to planning of social infrastructure

In social infrastructure planning, facilities and open space resources are commonly considered at three levels:

- Neighbourhood level services and facilities, available within about five - ten minute walking distance for most residents, and generally provided for a population of about 4,000 – 12,000 people.
- District level services are more specialist services which operate on a broader district catchment (about 15,000 – 50,000 people). These will vary according to the particular characteristics and needs of the population. They are usually staged to respond to the achievement of population thresholds, with numbers sufficient to support their provision
- Sub-regional and regional level services, comprising major facilities for a population of over about 50,000 people.

Social infrastructure is provided by a wide variety of agencies, including all levels of government, non-government organisations and the private sector. At the precinct planning phase, the strategy 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 Precinct Plan will need to allow sufficient scope and flexibility to accommodate such uses as demand emerges.

The following sections summarise the types of services and facilities which the MPIP population will need to access.

6.2 Defining the catchment population

As outlined in Sections 5.1 and 5.2 above, the MPIP is anticipated to yield about 1,121 dwellings, resulting in a population of around 3,205 at completion. It will also have employment for a workforce of around 10,000 workers. Facilities and services will be required within this precinct to meet local needs of both the residential and employment populations.

Residents of this area will need to have access to neighbourhood facilities to meet a range of daily needs. However, a population of 3,205 will not be large enough to meet the thresholds for most types of community services and facilities. It will, however, be large enough to sustain some local neighbourhood facilities such as local shops and local parks.

Residents of MPIP will also contribute to demand for local and district level facilities in the wider area. A wide range of services and facilities are likely to be provided in the Marsden Park Precinct Town Centre, which will be situated adjacent to the north eastern border of the MPIP and west of Richmond Road. The future Marsden Park precinct is expected to accommodate a population of 30,800 in 11,000 new dwellings by 2031, including a Town Centre, 10-11 neighbourhood centres and employment facilities. The Town Centre will be a key location for social infrastructure to service the MPIP population living close to the Town Centre and the wider population of the Marsden Park Precinct. Local, neighbourhood and district/regional services and facilities which are likely to be developed here will also be available to the MPIP workforce. The populations of MPIP and the wider Marsden Park Precinct will therefore need to be considered together for planning purposes.

Given its location relative to other Precinct Town Centres in the North West Growth Centre (particularly at Riverstone and at Schofields), some district level facilities in Marsden Park Town Centre could be expected to attract use from suburbs to the north (Marsden Park North), east (eg West Schofields) and west (ie Shanes Park). However, Richmond Road is expected to act as a barrier to

accessing services in Marsden Park from the east. Shanes Park is distant from the location of the future Town Centre, is separated to some extent by the large Air Services Australia site and may not be readily accessible by road. These areas are therefore considered to be too distant for inclusion in the catchment population to be serviced by the Marsden Park Precinct Town Centre.

Planning for Marsden Park Precinct is yet to commence. However, planning for MPIP needs to take account of future development projections and policies for the Marsden Park Precinct, particularly due to its proximity and scale in comparison with MPIP's relatively small residential population.

When precinct planning for the Marsden Park Precinct population of 30,800 is undertaken, it will therefore need to include the 3,205 residents of the MPIP in its service planning, as they will need to utilise services and facilities in this Town Centre. The Marsden Park Precinct community services and infrastructure planning should therefore be undertaken for a total residential population of 34,005.

In the interim, it will be important for BCC to make provision for the future needs by ensuring infrastructure contributions are levied from the MPIP population to count towards future infrastructure in the larger Marsden Park Precinct.

The projected workforce of 10,000 within MPIP will also generate demand for certain community services, open space and recreational facilities. A small range of local services and facilities will need to be provided within the MPIP, but most will not be available in this area until the Town Centre is constructed. The timing and location of development will impact on the adequacy of provision.

6.3 Standards for provision of community infrastructure

The GCC Development Code (October 2006) specifies standards for the provision of community infrastructure across each growth centre community. These standards (see Table below) provide a starting point for community facilities planning, which must then be adapted to the specific characteristics of each community and subjected to more detailed analysis.

Table 7: GCC Community Infrastructure Standards

Type of facility	Benchmark (Number per population)	Size (Site area)
Education		
Public Primary schools	1:2,000 new dwellings (approx)	3ha / 2.3ha (if joint use)
Public High Schools	1:6,000 new dwellings (approx)	6-10ha
Tertiary		
Health and Social Welfare		
Community Health Centre	1:20,000 people	2,000m ² (for 80,000 people)
Hospital	2 beds:1,000 people	
Aged Care	1:10,000 (centre)	
Aged Care Housing	40 beds:1,000 people 70+ years	
High Care (Nursing home)	48 beds:1,000 people 70+ years	
Low Care (Hostel) places		
Youth Centres	1:20,000 people	1,000-1,500m ²
Community Service Centre	1:60,000	3,000-3,500m ²
Childcare facility	1 place:5 children 0-4 years	
After school care facility	1 place:25 children 5-12 years	
Culture		
Branch library	1:33,000 people	2,400m ²
District Library	1:40,000 people	2,400m ²
Performing Arts/Cultural Centre	1:30,000 people	0.24ha-8ha
Emergency Services		
Ambulance		To accommodate 2 ambulances
Fire Station		2,000m ² min
Police Station		4,000m ² (for first ten years)
Community Services		
Local	1:6,000 people	1,500-2,400m ²
District	1:20,000 people	2,000-2,500m ²

Source: Growth Centres Commission (2006) Structure Plan

In general, the GCC standards distinguish between the neighbourhood, district, sub-regional and regional level facilities discussed in Section 6.1. Neighbourhood level facilities include primary schools, local doctors, child care facilities and local community facilities. District level services and facilities include high schools, community health centres, youth centres, libraries, performing arts centres or a multi-purpose Community Resources Hub. Sub-regional or regional facilities serve larger populations and include major health services and hospital facilities, tertiary education and major sporting or entertainment venues.

6.4 Location, spatial and design criteria

In addition to standards shown in Table 7, and general principles for the design and location of sustainable social infrastructure outlined in Chapter 2 (section 2.6), a number of spatial and design criteria should also be taken into account when planning infrastructure needs for new areas. These include:

- The need for an equitable spread of social infrastructure, open space and recreation and sport facilities, giving consideration to hierarchy levels and desired catchments
- The capacity of any existing social infrastructure and open space to cater for parts of the new population
- The potential connections between social infrastructure, open space and facilities, including the potential to establish activity and service hubs and link to unique open space features
- The topography of the development, proposed main road systems and potential barriers that could impact on access and connections
- The arrangement of neighbourhoods and centres, including links to schools, commercial centres and other facilities
- Opportunities for co-location and shared use to make efficient use of land resources.

6.5 Community infrastructure needs

6.5.1 District, sub-regional and regional level services

As outlined previously, although detailed planning is yet to take place, Marsden Park Precinct to the north is expected to eventually house a new population of 30,800 people in addition to the 3,205 residents estimated for the MPIP. This population will generate demand for a wide range of regional, district and neighbourhood level services.

A population of this size is likely to require:

- A large cluster and variety of shops and commercial services
- 2 high schools and other learning facilities, based on a DET standard of 1 high school for 6,000 dwellings
- A Community Resources Hub, providing multipurpose community facilities and spaces to accommodate community organisations
- Civic and cultural facilities, including a branch library and community arts spaces
- Entertainment, leisure facilities and services
- Sporting and recreation facilities
- Larger areas of open space for passive recreation
- A range of medical and community health services
- Individual and family support services, and services addressing particular issues such as welfare, legal aid, employment, housing
- Facilities and services for particular sections of the population, such as young people, older people, people with a disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities
- Larger places of worship
- Emergency and safety services.

Some of these facilities and services, such as the library, Community Resource Hub and community health centre, are likely to be located in the Town Centre, just north of MPIP. Residents of MPIP would look to the Town Centre and the wider Marsden Park precinct for the necessary range of services.

In addition, the new population will require access to a variety of sub-regional and regional level services, usually provided for larger populations, including:

- Health and hospital services
- Tertiary education facilities – TAFE colleges and university
- Major welfare and support agencies eg Home and Community Care
- Major cultural and civic facilities – eg large performing arts venue, exhibition space, local government branch office, major library
- Specialist higher order entertainment and leisure facilities

- Major recreation and sporting facilities – eg stadium, regional park, botanic gardens.

Planning for regional level social infrastructure for the North West Growth Centre has not yet occurred and it is unclear whether or where such facilities will be provided, or the extent to which there will be reliance of existing facilities in Blacktown LGA or the wider area. However, it is clear that regional level services will not be located in MPIP to serve the wider area, although some could be located in the Marsden Park Town Centre.

6.5.2 Neighbourhood level services

The projected population for MPIP alone does not meet the threshold levels to justify provision of most types of neighbourhood facilities. Instead, its population will contribute to the need for facilities which will be shared with the adjacent Marsden Park Precinct. The extent of neighbourhood level facilities to be located within MPIP or Marsden Park Precinct will depend on more detailed planning which will be undertaken beyond the precinct planning stage.

It is important for residents to have access to neighbourhood level services to satisfy day to day convenience retail needs (eg for milk, bread and newspapers) without having to drive long distances. This suggests a need for local convenience retail shopping, although the specific nature has not yet been determined and will be influenced by the dispersed layout of residential development across

the site and other convenience retail along Richmond Road or in the business park itself.

Other neighbourhood level services will need to include local parks, spaces for informal meeting and gathering, primary schools, child care centres and access to GPs. These core services are required by most new residents from the outset of settlement to meet their local everyday neighbourhood needs. Without access to such basic services, residents are likely to be significantly inconvenienced or disadvantaged and for this reason it is considered that these services should ideally be available from the time the first residents move into an area, or as soon as possible afterwards.

With its small population, neighbourhood level facilities within MPIP are likely to be limited to a local shop for convenience retail, or informal meeting places such as a café. The population breakdown shown in Section 5.3 above would also indicate a need for a child care centre. Open space needs are discussed in Section 7.

6.5.3 Community facilities requirements

Because of the need for planning MPIP community facilities in parallel with those of Marsden Park Precinct, GCC standards have been used to estimate future demand for community services and facilities for MPIP, the larger Marsden Park Precinct and the combined populations. The table below shows the indicative need for a large number of facilities in this wider area.

Table 8: Community Infrastructure Estimates, MPIP and Marsden Park

Type of facility	Benchmark (Number per population)	Estimated requirements		
		MPIP (Population 3,205 Dwellings 1,121)	Marsden Park Precinct (Population 30,800 Dwellings 11,000)	Total
Education				
Public Primary schools	1:2,000 new dwellings (approx)	0.6	5.5	6
Public High Schools	1:6,000 new dwellings (approx)	0.2	1.7	2
Tertiary				
Health and Social Welfare				
Community Health Centre	1:20,000 people	0.2	1.5	1.7
Hospital	2 beds:1,000 people	3.2 beds	30.8 beds	34.0 beds
Aged Care Aged Care Housing High Care (Nursing home) Low Care (Hostel) places	1:10,000 (centre) 40 beds:1,000 people 70+ years 48 beds:1,000 people 70+ years	0.3 centres	3.1 centres	3.4 centres
Youth Centres	1:20,000 people	0.2	1.5	1.7
Community Service Centre	1:60,000	0.1	0.5	0.6

Type of facility	Benchmark (Number per population)	Estimated requirements		
		MPIP (Population 3,205 Dwellings 1,121)	Marsden Park Precinct (Population 30,800 Dwellings 11,000)	Total
Childcare facility	1 place:5 children 0-4 years	58	554 ¹	612 places
After school care facility	1 place:25 children 5-12 years	17	148	165
Culture				
Branch library	1:33,000 people	0.1	0.9	1.0
District Library	1:40,000 people	0.1	0.8	0.9
Performing Arts/Cultural Centre	1:30,000 people	0.1	1.0	1.1
Emergency Services				
Ambulance				
Fire Station				
Police Station				
Community Services				
Local	1:6,000 people	0.5	5.1	5.6
District	1:20,000 people	0.2	1.5	1.7

Note: 1. Assumes 9% of residents aged 0-4 years as outlined in Section 5.3

Of the facilities listed in this table, there are no community facilities which are generally provided to a population of 3,205, or 1,121 dwellings.

Depending on the number of pre-school aged children, the development could generate demand for a child care centre and some after school care places. However, as there is not expected to be demand for a primary school for this area alone, after school care would need to be accessed in association with the local primary school, possibly at Marsden Park Primary School in the short term.

When the more general principles for provision of community services and facilities (Sections 2.6 and 6.4) are taken into consideration, however, there are opportunities for distributing future facilities to meet locational and spatial objectives.

Given that there is a total demand for around 6 primary schools across the two precincts, and depending on the timing of development in Marsden Park itself, it may be possible to provide a primary school close to the northern edge of MPIP to service this residential population and the southern part of Marsden Park Precinct. This could be associated with a new child care centre and also take up the demand for future after school and vacation care places. It should be noted that, historically, child care in Blacktown has been provided in a timely way by the private sector to fill identified needs, particularly in association with new primary schools.

Fragmentation of residential areas across the northern and eastern boundaries of the MPIP site will create challenges for the provision of the local level

services. It may be difficult to service small populations spread across a wide geographical area, compared with providing for the needs within a single neighbourhood.

The timing of MPIP and the eventual development of the Town Centre will have an important influence on the location and availability of these services to MPIP residents.

6.6 Blacktown City Council community facilities policies

The recent *Riverstone and Alex Avenue Demographic Profile and Community Infrastructure Report* (Macroplan, 2008) examined community infrastructure needs, initially using the traditional GCC approach as outlined above. However, Blacktown City Council has since adopted an alternative model of service provision, based around the concept of Community Resource Hubs (BCC, 2008).

The new model was prompted by:

- An increased supply of child care centres due to private sector investment and public-private partnerships in schools
- Changes in the funding of neighbourhood centres which removed funding for community development officers
- Small size of existing Council neighbourhood centre facilities which limited the range of programs

- Opportunities for an alternative 'consortium' model of service provision, as piloted in the Ropes Crossing precinct.

Although still in the development phase, details of the model are summarised below.

6.6.1 Community Resource Hub (CRH) Model

CRHs will be larger than single-purpose buildings and will be planned around service delivery rather than size needed for particular uses. The aim is to provide local, multipurpose community facilities which are fitted out so that services can be functional immediately. CRHs will provide a focus for local communities to come together for social, life long learning and human service activities and services. A CRH would have a larger building form than existing neighbourhood centres, funded by merging budgets for different centres (eg local community, youth and childcare). This will result in larger facilities, whose increased critical size will provide opportunities for increased co-location of agencies, and thus improved delivery of services and programs.

A CRH would have three broad functions:

- Life long learning – providing opportunities for individual community members (from birth through to active ageing) to gain knowledge, skills and qualifications in order to reach their full potential within their communities. Potential life long learning activities within CRHs may include playgroups, library outreach story times, homework support, small business courses and TAFE outreach courses (eg languages, first aid, job preparation).
- Health and wellbeing - providing spaces for a range of community (and private) health and welfare practitioners to offer support and counselling services to individuals and families. Potential health and wellbeing services might include, early childhood clinics, family support services, therapeutic clinics such as speech pathology, psychology, counselling services and group programs such as stress management, quit smoking, weight loss.
- Recreation and culture - providing spaces and opportunities for community members and groups to express their cultural identity and engage in leisure and recreational activities. Potential recreational and cultural activities might include music lessons, spaces to hire for family events such as birthdays, weddings and anniversaries, school holiday programs, craft programs for people with disabilities, seniors community choirs, community film nights, dance classes and playgroups. In addition, the provision of

recreation and open space facilities, including that of leisure and aquatic centres, has many co-locational synergies with Community Resource Hub principles and this can enhance community outcomes and economies of scale.

Based on BCC policy, it is expected the Marsden Park Town Centre would have a CRH, which would service the needs of MPIP residents. In particular, given the expected attraction of the area to young families, the CRH for the Marsden Park Town Centre would need to provide a range of social infrastructure for children and families, including family support services, early childhood health and family relationship services. These services would operate in parallel with privately provided child care services, required in the Town Centre and in residential and industrial parts of MPIP.

6.6.2 Section 94 implications

Based on recent investigations into the community infrastructure needs and costs for the Riverstone and Alex Avenue Precincts, Blacktown City Council has developed some benchmark site areas and costs for new community facilities.

The estimates shown below provide an indication of broad areas and costs of various facilities which are likely to be required within the Marsden Park Town Centre to meet demand based on estimated populations for both MPIP and the Marsden Park Precincts.

Table 9: Facilities for which Section 94 contributions may be sought

Facility	Floor - space m ²	Land m ²
Community Resource Hub/ Youth Centre/ Arts Centre	1,020	4,000
Shared CRH/Library/ Arts Centre	180	
Library	1,920	4,000
Children and Family Services	490	2,200
Informal Indoor Recreational Facility	785	3,200
Total	4,395	13,400

As detailed plans and costing of the future community infrastructure needs for Marsden Park Precinct has not been developed, further analysis and planning will be required when more is known about the Marsden Park Precinct population and housing characteristics.

In the interim, provisions will need to be made for the costs for likely infrastructure to be apportioned to the population of MPIP. It is important not to forgo the opportunity to levy development contributions from MPIP on a population basis if it is developed in advance.

It is suggested that these cost estimates be incorporated into an interim Section 94 Plan which can then be revised at a later date once detailed planning of social infrastructure for Marsden Park is assessed.

6.7 Generic Workforce Requirements

In addition to the needs of the resident population, the workforce within MPIP will require access to a range of services and facilities.

A workforce generally requires access to the following:

- Shops and general stores for daily convenience needs, including snacks and meals, cigarettes, chemist supplies
- Other everyday services, such as a post office, bank or ATM
- Pleasant spaces away from the workplace to eat lunch or have a break
- Places to socialise and gather after work, or to network with those from other firms, such as cafes and pubs
- Open space areas for recreation, exercise and fitness before or after work or during lunch breaks
- Childcare for parents with pre-school aged children and babies
- Access to training and lifelong learning opportunities
- Access to library services
- Business support services, including places for meetings and access to resources such as photocopying or IT support.

Although it is not yet clear what is proposed for the business park areas, BCC's 2006 DCP permits limited office and retail space ancillary to industrial development or to service the daily convenience needs of the workforce within industrial zones.

As with residents of MPIP, the needs of the future workforce of MPIP will be met largely through the variety of commercial services and community facilities to be located in the future Marsden Park Town Centre. However, some services will need to be provided within the employment area for use by the workforce, particularly if employers are seeking to attract employees to a high quality working environment.

The extent to which the Marsden Park Industrial Precinct workforce may require access to services and facilities and ways in which these needs might be met are discussed below.

6.7.1 Convenience shopping needs

The MPIP will need to make provision for local convenience shops, food outlets, petrol stations and ATMs, suitable to meet the daily convenience needs of the workforce, particularly if MPIP is developed prior to the Marsden Park Town Centre. When the Town Centre is constructed, a wider range of services and facilities will be available within 1-2 kms from the centre of this area. From the industrial area, the Town Centre will be most accessible by car.

The MPIP will not, in itself, be large enough to warrant provision of many other services such as bank branches, a post office or other large-scale commercial and personal services. Other services such as medical and dental services or hairdressers are expected to be available within the Town Centre of Marsden Park Precinct in the longer term.

Until then, the extensive range of services available in the Riverstone and Schofields Town Centres will need to be utilised by the workforce.

6.7.2 Leisure and entertainment

The workforce will require access to spaces where they can enjoy a break from the workplace, including places to eat lunch, to socialise and gather away from work, or to network with those from other firms.

The Precinct Plan will need to make provision for:

- Open space areas with embellishments appropriate for gathering and eating, within walking distance of most businesses. Open space areas should be pleasant and inviting, with seating and shade, protected from wind and away from traffic or other noise and air pollutants
- Potential for snack bars, cafes or coffee shops
- Additional facilities within the Marsden Park Town Centre when constructed

Provision for open space and recreational needs is discussed in Section 7.5. In relation to leisure and recreational activities, the precinct is not expected to contain pubs and restaurants, even in the business park area, as such facilities may not be viable in this location with only the workforce for clientele. These types of facilities are more appropriately located in the future Marsden Park Town Centre, or nearby precincts such as Riverstone, Alex Avenue or Schofields.

6.7.3 Childcare

It is too early to determine the gender characteristics of the future workforce, although it is anticipated that there will be a sizeable female workforce associated with the business park uses, in particular

(Fagan et al, 2004). Anecdotal experience from other areas suggests that demand for work-based childcare is usually associated with the mother's, rather than father's place of work. Given the size of the future workforce and inclusion of business park uses, demand for work-based childcare can be expected.

At present, there are no nearby child care facilities. While a resident population of 3,205 may create sufficient demand for a child care centre on its own, the combined needs of the resident population and the workforce will generate a need for one or more centres.

It may be many years until the Marsden Park Precinct Town Centre is sufficiently developed to provide additional child care services.

Demands for childcare within the MPIP will need to be monitored as development occurs. Should demand be greater than anticipated, a private sector provider should be sought to establish a childcare facility within the precinct, subject to the market for such a facility being established.

6.7.4 Business support services

Business support services have been provided in some other industrial areas, providing spaces for meetings and access to resources such as photocopying or IT support. Such a facility would provide business advice, services and facilities to local firms, including enterprise development skills.

The extent to which such services are required will depend on the nature of businesses within MPIP, although they would be expected to be provided as part of the business park.

6.7.5 Access to training and lifelong learning opportunities

When the Marsden Park Precinct Town Centre is complete, the MPIP workforce will have access to the adult education opportunities to be provided as part of the lifelong learning programs which are likely to be provided through the Community Resource Hub expected within the Town Centre. However, these services will not initially be available for the MPIP workforce.

Some industrial areas are known to include a Skilling and Employment Centre, to offer a range of training and employment services for the firms, residents and workers in the precinct.

6.7.6 Access to library services

A proportion of the workforce is likely to use library resources close to work. This need will be satisfied by the likely inclusion of a branch library within the Marsden Park Town Centre.

6.7.7 Other design requirements

The social needs of the MPIP workforce will be met not only through providing access to appropriate services and facilities, but also by creating an attractive and safe environment which enhances the health and well-being of workers. From a social planning perspective, there are several issues which will need to be addressed in the urban design and master plan for the precinct. These include:

- The need to make the business park and industrial area a safe and secure place, both for the workforce and for the surrounding community. Given the potential for working extended hours, consideration will need to be given to appropriate lighting, security, and opportunities to promote activity in order to facilitate casual surveillance over key public areas. The design and location of buildings, entrances and car parking will also need to have regard to safety and security considerations. In addition, strategies are required to ensure that the Precinct is not used for anti-social activities at nights and weekends, which could impact on nearby residential areas. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles will be incorporated into the detailed design of the Precinct.
- Given the likely reliance of the workforce on the facilities and services in the future Marsden Park Precinct Town Centre, there is a need for appropriate pedestrian, cycle and road linkages within MPIP to facilitate such access.
- Routes leading to and within the MPIP should be pleasant and appealing for pedestrians, with appropriate lighting, shade, signage and bus shelters, and attractive streetscapes.
- There is a need to create a quality public domain which provides a pleasant and attractive setting for work. In addition to landscaping, open space and urban design controls of the Precinct Plan, consideration should be given to implementing cultural development, public art and place-making strategies to enhance the identity of the Precinct and create a distinctive sense of place.

6.8 Conclusion

This section has outlined requirements for neighbourhood level community facilities and human services in MPIP and principles for their design and location.

The future resident population of MPIP will be too small to meet thresholds for most local and district facilities and the fragmentation of residential areas across the site will further reduce the size of neighbourhood populations. Ideally, local

convenience shops and informal meeting and gathering places should be provided so as to be within walking distance, so residents can meet everyday needs. This is particularly important in MPIP, as the future Marsden Park Town Centre may not be constructed for many years. However, the need for convenience shops may also depend on development which occurs along Richmond Road, for instance petrol stations with convenience shopping facilities.

Planning for MPIP needs to take account of future development projections and policies for the Marsden Park Precinct. Together these areas are expected to house more than 34,000 residents in more than 12,100 dwellings.

Facilities and services to meet the needs of this total population are likely to include:

- 6 primary schools
- 2 public high schools
- A community health centre
- Community resource hub
- Aged care facilities
- Child care facilities including after school and holiday care
- A branch and district library
- Performing arts / cultural centre.

A Community Resource Hub would enable a range of services to be co-located, an option which is currently being adopted in the Riverstone and Alex Avenue Precincts.

Residents of MPIP and its workforce will need to access these facilities and services to meet their needs, when they are eventually built. District and regional level needs will be met through existing facilities for the wider community of Blacktown, or through new facilities which have yet to be planned.

Within the Industrial Precinct, the workforce will need access to a range of ancillary facilities to meet their daily needs. These are likely to include:

- Convenience shops and services
- Pleasant places to meet, socialise and relax
- Child care
- Business support services
- Training and life long learning facilities

- A well-designed and safe environment.

The development of MPIP and the wider Marsden Park Precinct will also give rise to a need to expand existing human services in the area in line with population growth. This will require increases in recurrent funding through State and Federal government health, welfare and community programs for staffing and activities.

7 Open Space and Recreational Requirements

This chapter examines the open space and recreation facilities that will be required to satisfy the needs of the MPIP resident and workforce populations.

7.1 Demand considerations

7.1.1 Trends in demand

Based on the available research on sport and recreation participation in Western Sydney, it is predicted that the following factors will characterise the long term demand for recreation and open space opportunities across the North West Growth Centre. Factors most relevant to the incoming workforce include:

- National health issues will continue to stress improving opportunities within the built environment for everyday incidental exercise within employment and residential areas and requiring designated walking and cycling tracks within nature corridors and natural areas.
- There will be a sustained demand for health and fitness opportunities, requiring both indoor and outdoor facilities.
- The quality of facilities and open space is becoming as important as quantity. Open space should be more carefully designed to take into account a wider range of needs. For example, well formed and well maintained paths that are suitable for older people, those with a disability, strollers, prams and young children using hard surface toys.
- The high demand for recreation programs for all age groups will continue, resulting in increased demand for indoor multipurpose sport and leisure centres.
- It is likely that as the population grows there will be increased levels of cultural diversity in the community, giving rise to a greater variety of sport and recreation needs.
- There are limited recreation, entertainment and commercial leisure opportunities for young people. There is a need to view them as having a legitimate claim on public space and this will need to be addressed in the planning of the public domain in all precincts.
- There will be an increased demand for natural areas as places to experience the natural environment, away from the urban setting and for appealing areas to walk and relax in a natural setting. In particular, more natural river settings, creek corridors and larger bushland parks are valued. There is high demand for walking and cycle networks, including track systems linked to corridors and natural areas.
- There will be an increasing need for more innovative strategies to manage competing recreation activities within key natural resource areas. In particular more adventurous activities such as higher impact activities like horse riding, mountain bike riding, trail bike riding and 4X4 drive use.
- Sporting codes are increasing the duration of playing seasons and increasing demand for training as well as competition grounds. Coupled with climate change, consideration needs to be given to all-weather/synthetic surfaces as an alternative to grass so that facilities can be used all year round and minimise demand for irrigation.
- Sporting clubs are demanding higher standards of provision, with changing facilities, storage and floodlighting essential inclusions so they can play in the evening and in winter.
- Changing demand patterns suggests growth in adventure based activities such as artificial climbing wall, bmx, skateboarding, in-line skating, mountain biking, trail running, beach volleyball within urban areas also need to be considered to meet the needs of young people.
- Amenities within parks are also essential. Shade, water seats, interactive equipment and skating and bike areas are core inclusions for parks to be used regularly.
- The increase in community events within parks requires additional facilities and utilities such as power, water, parking infrastructure.
- There is potential to explore dual use opportunities to share resources and facilities, particularly in the early stages of development when population numbers will be lower. This will assist to make some facilities financially viable.
- With an increasing trend to indoor multipurpose facilities, consideration should be given to the design of community centres to ensure that they can accommodate a range of leisure and recreation programs, for example dance, yoga, exercise, martial arts.

- There is increasing demand for passive recreation opportunities for families, and for affordable facilities and activities.
- Transport to sport is difficult for young people due to lack of public transport.
- Demand is strong for a hierarchy of playgrounds with more diverse opportunities for older children.
- The costs of operation of sporting facilities, including insurance costs
- Declining numbers of volunteers
- Funding and the ability to attract sponsorship
- The desire to improve facilities to accommodate growth.

7.1.2 Demand for district level open space

BCC has noted increasing participation in physical activity in many areas, particularly in both informal recreation and in demand for organised sport.

In future growth areas, the high representation of young families creates needs for junior sporting activities and facilities which meet the needs of both men and women. However, growth and change place an emphasis on the need for a flexible approach to the provision and management of sports grounds.

With respect to open space, there is a need for accessible, useable and high quality parks with well maintained facilities such as paths, play equipment, fencing and landscaping. Demand analysis has indicated that community usage would increase if a hierarchy of city-wide parks was established, focusing on family and group activities such as picnic areas, trails and play areas. There is also an identified desire for some unique 'regional' playgrounds.

At the same time, Council has identified a number of other factors influencing demand here and elsewhere in NSW including:

7.1.3 Demand for local open space

Demand for local open space relates to resident's expectations and aspirations. Future developments will contain a mix of families with children, adolescents and young people, and middle aged and older people. Local open space is important for encouraging informal interaction and creating opportunities for new and existing residents to come together and build networks, both at a local neighbourhood and whole of community level. In addition local open space encourages extended family activity, for walking and cycling as well as family gatherings.

The provision of open space is also an important urban design consideration. The level of local open space will in part be informed by GCC and BCC's standards of local open space provision, outlined below.

7.2 Open space standards

The GCC Structure Plan provides indicative thresholds for the provision of open space and recreational facilities, as shown in the table below.

Table 10: GCC Community Open Space Standards

Type of facility	Benchmark (Number per population)	Size (Site area)
Open Space and Recreation		
Overall Open Space	2.83ha:1,000 people	
Neighbourhood Open Space	1:2,000 people	1ha
Local Open Space	1:10,000 people	2ha
District Open Space	1:100,000 people	5ha
Local Sports Ground	1:10,000 people	1ha
District Sports Ground	1:30,000 people	2ha
Regional Sports Ground	1:200,000 people	5ha
Local Tennis Centre	1:10,000 people	1ha
District Tennis Centre	1:30,000 people	1ha
Equestrian	1:30,000 people	2ha
Lawn Bowls	1:30,000 people	1ha
Netball/Basketball Local	1:10,000 people	1ha
Netball/Basketball District	1:30,000 people	2ha
District Aquatic Centre	1:100,000 people	1ha
Regional Aquatic/Indoor Sports Centre	1:300,000 people	2ha

Source: Growth Centres Commission (2006) Structure Plan

It is understood, from discussions with BCC, that the open space standard of 2.83 ha per 1,000 people (excluding regional open space) shown in Table 10 would be seen as a minimum acceptable level for this new development area, provided that it is of high quality. High quality open space is defined as being useable open space which is not compromised by land constraints such as slope, detention basins, unsuitable vegetation, salinity, poor location, power easements, flood proneness and so on.

Other standards included in this table are either inconsistent with Blacktown Council's hierarchy of open space provision, or considered to be below the desirable levels for BCC. For example, the site area of local and district sportsgrounds appears to be well below the desired size for such facilities. In Blacktown LGA, the minimum area preferred for a local sports ground is considered to be a double playing field facility with an approximate minimum area of 4ha, including playing fields, amenities, parking, buffer zones and other interrelated facilities such as playgrounds.

BCC envisages that existing equestrian facilities, such as Shanes Park Reserve, will adequately cater for current and anticipated equestrian demand. It is therefore recommended that additional equestrian facilities not be provided. Instead, emphasis should be placed on providing adequate levels of other recreation and open space facilities such as high quality parks, sportsgrounds and leisure facilities which are forecasted to be in high demand. It may, however, be beneficial for the current equestrian facility to be considered for future embellishment to enable it to maintain an acceptable standard that meets community needs.

Benchmark indicators for aquatic facilities provided in the GCC Structure Plan are also not consistent with Council's current planning or existing facilities. Council considers a district facility in the vicinity of 50,000 to 100,000 people and regional facilities for over 100,000 people.

Guidelines and benchmarks previously used in planning for Riverstone and Alex Avenue Precincts are relevant standards to apply when planning for MPIP and other new release areas. This includes:

- A provision level of 1.9ha per 1,000 persons of high quality, useable parks provided in a hierarchical manner, with almost all residents within 400-500 metres walking distance of a park
- Minimum park size of 0.3ha to ensure greater useability and viability
- 1 sportsfield per 1,850 people (minimum double playing field layout)

- 1 netball court per 3,500 people
- 1 tennis court per 4,000 people
- Playground provision providing a diverse mix (including older children and children with a disability) and within 400-500 metres walking distance of almost all residents
- Youth recreation spaces such as BMX tracks and skate areas with consideration to access and social spaces
- Provision of aquatic facilities within Council's existing aquatic hierarchy
- 1 competitive indoor sport court per 25,500 people (Minimum 4 court facility preferred)
- Enhancement of the 'Connectivity' principle allowing for the strategic provision of cycle paths and fitness trails especially along green corridors

Other issues which need to be considered in planning for facilities include:

- Diversity in needs and expectations in relation to the provision of amenities, storage, parking and other facilities
- Sportsgrounds should cater for a variety of sports, to improve their viability. There may however be some cases where exclusivity of use will benefit the community.
- Sportsgrounds located in residential streets can impact on residents
- Where possible, sportsgrounds and recreational spaces should be integrated, and incorporate trees and shade
- Sportsgrounds should be accessible to the general community and a variety of sporting groups.

As discussed in Section 5, the proposed development is expected to yield about 1,121 dwellings and a projected population of around 3,205 people. If the standards used in planning for Riverstone and Alex Avenue Precincts are applied to MPIP and Marsden Park generally, this would indicate potential demand for around 9 ha of high quality open space within MPIP, excluding regional open space. This amount would need to be notionally split between active and passive uses in equal proportions and be of sufficient quality to provide a useable, high quality environment.

Table 11: Indicative Open Space Requirements for MPIP and Marsden Park Precinct

Type of facility	Benchmark (Number per population)	Estimated requirements		
		MPIP (Population 3,205 Dwellings 1,121)	Marsden Park Precinct (Population 30,800 Dwellings 11,000)	Total
Open space and recreation				
Overall Open Space	2.83ha:1,000 people	9.1	87.2	96.3 (to be provided in a hierarchical framework for active and passive uses)
High quality useable parks within walking distance	1.9ha:1,000 people	6.1 ha	58.5 ha	64.6 ha with minimum park size of 0.3ha each
Local Sports field	1:1,850 people	1.73	16.6	9.3 double playing fields of 4 ha each minimum
Netball courts	1:3,500 people	0.9	8.8	9.7 courts
Tennis courts	1:4,000 people	0.8	7.7	8.5 courts
Indoor sports court (minimum 4 courts needed)	1:25,500 people	0.12 court	1.21 courts	1.3 towards a minimum 4 court facility

Source: based on BCC benchmarks

7.3 Provision of open space

The table above indicates that approximately 6.1 ha should be allocated for parks and playgrounds within MPIP. These should be provided according to a hierarchical framework and cater for the needs of a range of age groups and activities including play equipment, open spaces for ball play, seating and other embellishments such as shelter, toilets and barbeques. There will also be demand for at least one sports field, incorporating a double playing field configuration which allows for both summer and winter sports. Based on Council's standards, this will require a further 4 ha minimum, with appropriate allowances made for buffer zones, parking, practice / warm up areas, amenities, lighting and other inter-related facilities such as playgrounds. This would bring the requirement for local open space to meet the needs of the MPIP residential population to 10.1 ha. This is slightly above the 9.2 ha required through application of the GCC benchmark of 2.83 ha /1000 persons, which, as outlined previously, is considered by Council to be a minimum, rather than desirable, level of provision.

Open space requirements within MPIP are therefore limited to local open space located within walking distance (400-500 metres) to new residents. Given population estimates, it is likely that there would be demand for 1-2 neighbourhood parks. However, as outlined above, BCC has identified a range of issues associated with small parks, including maintenance,

management, park development capabilities, user satisfaction and overall site viability. As a result, Council generally prefers to plan for a minimum park size of 0.3 hectares. As the residential areas will be distributed across the northern and eastern edges of the site in a number of distinct parcels, there will be a challenge to provide facilities which are both readily accessible and meet neighbourhood needs. Some of this open space needs to be provided within the precinct, and it has been suggested that there is potential for an appropriately sized park in the north eastern residential area. There is then the potential to provide some open space off-site, in adjoining areas. For example, residents living in the central northern residential area could access parks or playing fields which will be provided within the future Marsden Park Town Centre.

The ways in which the 10 ha of open space required to meet demand generated by the MPIP residential population will be provided will therefore require further detailed consideration in association with Council and the masterplanners for the precinct beyond the timeframe of this study. Development of MPIP will also contribute to demand for district level open space, but as the population is too small to warrant these facilities within MPIP there will need to be some contribution towards open space in areas beyond MPIP.

Future planning for the wider Marsden Park Precinct will therefore need to ensure the MPIP residential population is included in open space provisions.

Based on the BCC policies, indicative open space requirements for the combined areas will include:

- 96 hectares of high quality useable open space overall
- 65 hectares of high quality useable parks of minimum 0.3 hectares each
- 9 double playing fields of a minimum of 4 hectares each
- 10 netball courts
- 9 tennis courts.

However, active and passive recreation and open space requirements for the wider Marsden Park Precinct will need to be provided on a hierarchical basis with varying levels of facilities at each location. Indicative hierarchical provision levels for the Marsden Park Precinct may include:

- One city-wide sportsground consisting of three double playing fields
- Two district sportsgrounds consisting of two double playing fields
- Two district sportsgrounds consisting of one double playing field
- One city-wide park of approximately 3-6 ha size
- Eight district parks of approximately 1-3 ha size
- 34 neighbourhood parks of approximately 1ha.

There will also need to be contributions to other facilities such as indoor sports facilities, youth facilities and a district aquatic centre.

Further analysis will need to be undertaken when planning for Marsden Park Precinct occurs. This will enable the impact of development in other release precincts on this area to be assessed.

7.4 Section 94 implications

When Marsden Park Precinct is being developed, it should be possible to fund the sports grounds, outdoor courts and other recreational open space through Section 94, as they will be provided to cater for the local needs of the Marsden Park population. Provision should be made for residents of MPIP to contribute to these facilities from the outset.

7.5 Workforce demands for open space and recreation

As discussed in Section 6.8 above, the MPIP workforce will also create demands for open space and recreational areas through needs such as:

- Local places for having lunch or a break from the work environment
- Fitness opportunities
- Pedestrian and cyclist links to other parts of the precinct, including open space areas such as creek corridors and walking areas.

Consideration should also be given to the desirability of locating some open space or recreational facilities within the industrial zoned lands as a means of activating the area at weekends and at night to minimise vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

Blacktown Council has previously incorporated requirements for communal open space and leisure areas in employment lands into its Development Control Plan (DCP), as has been used in similar areas such as Riverstone West Industrial Zones. This helps ensure adequate open space areas are provided for the use and enjoyment of employees and visitors. For example, the Riverstone West DCP requires that:

- 5% of land within the Business Park and 1% of land within the Industrial Precinct is dedicated to communal areas
- Solar access to communal open spaces is to be maximised, with communal areas receiving a minimum of 2 hours direct sunlight between 11am and 3pm on the 21st of June
- Appropriate shading is to be provided so that communal spaces are useable during summer
- Communal open spaces are to incorporate the primary deep soil area where possible. The landscaping of courtyard spaces is to provide for the growth of mid to large size trees
- Landscaped areas are to incorporate trees, shrubs and ground covers endemic to the area where appropriate.

The DCP also applies controls to private open space to help ensure that the size, location, configuration and embellishment of these areas encourages employee and visitor usage. These controls include:

- Each development shall be provided with at least 1 private open space area for the use and enjoyment of employees and visitors to that development. The area shall be suitably

landscaped and accessible from the main office component of the development

- Small pockets of open space designed to enhance the appearance of the development will not be counted in the private open space allocation, neither will car parking areas, manoeuvring areas, or landscaped setback areas
- In locating private open space areas, consideration should be given to the outlook, natural features of the site, and neighbouring buildings
- Private open space areas shall be embellished with appropriate landscaping, shade, paving, tables, chairs and the like.
- Private open space areas shall be relatively flat and not contain impediments which divide the area or create physical barriers which may impede use
- The area should be screened so it is not directly visible from the public domain but is provided with adequate sunlight access.

Similar controls could be applied within the MPIP.

7.6 Other open space considerations

Consistent with Council directions, MPIP offers opportunities for linear connections and walking tracks to support participation in walking, including dog walking. Bike tracks that provide safe and appealing opportunities for recreation and transport, particularly for children and young people, will also be important.

Council is committed to investigating city-wide parks along open space corridors and in locations with diverse settings which link to linear paths. Linear open space and some parks could be connected to the creekline along Bells Creek. However, as with other open space planning, quality and accessibility are key considerations for Council. Recreation open space should not be drainage land unless it has good aesthetic and recreation value.

Council's policies and the open space needs of the MPIP population and workforce will need to be considered in more detail when future planning for Marsden Park Precinct's district and regional open space needs is undertaken. In the meantime, BCC should seek contributions for open space and recreational facilities from MPIP residents for off-site sporting facilities.

7.7 Summary

Demand for open space and recreation in new development areas shows relatively high participation and need for areas for formal and informal play and leisure activities.

BCC has developed standards for provision of facilities through planning for nearby areas of Riverstone and Alex Avenue Precincts within the North West Growth Centre. These indicate there will be a demand for around 9-10 hectares of open space in total, of which around 6 ha will be required for parks and playgrounds. There will also be a requirement for one sports field in this area as part of a hierarchical framework. Facilities will need to be provided across the area to meet Council's access and equity guidelines. The ways in which the open space will be provided will require detailed consideration in association with Council and the masterplanners for the precinct. Some of this local open space will be able to be provided within the precinct, such as in the north eastern residential area. There is then the potential to provide some open space and playing fields off-site, in adjoining areas.

Provision for other facilities such as netball courts, tennis courts, an indoor sports centre and aquatic facilities will need to be made through off-site facilities as part of the development of the wider Marsden Park Precinct, possibly in its Town Centre. Where this is necessary, pro-rata contributions will need to be made from MPIP residents to Council's Section 94 plan.

The open space needs of the workforce have been met in similar areas through provisions within the DCP for a proportion of the development site to be dedicated for communal open space. A similar approach could be adopted in MPIP.

Estimates of open space and recreation needs for the wider Marsden Park Precinct will need to be revised when more detailed planning is undertaken.

8 Conclusion

This report has considered the community facilities, human services and open space that will be required to support the residential and employment populations in the future Marsden Park Industrial Precinct. This has necessitated some assessment of likely future requirements of the adjacent Marsden Park Precinct, given the reliance of future residents on facilities and services located within the future Marsden Park Town Centre. The MPIP, when fully developed, is expected to contain about 1,121 dwellings, a residential population of about 3,205 and a workforce of about 10,000 people. A variety of new facilities, services and open space opportunities will need to be provided, recognising that existing facilities in the established parts of north western Sydney will not be able to extend to cover the new release areas. These new facilities will need to meet the needs of the incoming population and workforce, as services in other established areas, and those to be provided elsewhere within the North West Growth Centre, are generally provided for local populations.

The report has identified the types of facilities and services that will require further consideration as the planning of the MPIP and Marsden Park Precinct move forward. Key issues include:

- The need for the residential components of MPIP to be taken into account in future development projections and policies for the Marsden Park Precinct. The analysis in this report indicates that the future residential population for MPIP will be too small to generate demand for many community facilities on its own. However, when combined with the future Marsden Park Precinct population, these areas are expected to house around 34,005 residents in more than 12,000 dwellings and will hence generate demands for a wide range of district level as well as local level services and facilities. The great majority of social infrastructure to service MPIP will therefore need to be located within the Marsden Park Precinct, including the Town Centre, when constructed.
- There is a small resident population in the rural residentially zoned area at present. A majority of these residents live in a caravan park which is likely to be closed within a few years. The closure will require careful planning. A separate Social Impact Assessment is being prepared. Other residents will face the progressive changes over time as this predominantly rural area is rezoned and developed for housing, business and industrial uses.

- There are few existing community services and facilities in the Marsden Park area, with the exception of a local primary school. There are a small number of cultural and religious facilities, including a large mosque, and some basic emergency fire services. Services in nearby areas are stretched to capacity and will not be able to provide for this new population. There are some large areas of existing open space, but no areas of local open space for future residents.
- Based on GCC standards and BCC policies, MPIP on its own will be too small to require much more than local convenience shopping and possibly some child care services. However, the combined community facilities needs for both MPIP and Marsden Park would include:
 - 6 primary schools
 - 2 public high schools
 - A community health centre
 - Community resource hub
 - Aged care facilities
 - Child care facilities including after school and holiday care
 - A branch and district library
 - Performing arts / cultural centre.

A Community Resource Hub within the Marsden Park Town Centre would enable a range of services to be co-located, particularly those for families and youth.

Costs for this infrastructure will need to be apportioned to the population of MPIP and it will be important not to forgo the opportunity to levy development contributions, even though no detailed planning for Marsden Park has yet been undertaken.

Ancillary facilities likely to be needed by the workforce include:

- Convenience shops and services
- Pleasant places to meet, socialise and relax
- Child care
- Business support services
- Training and life long learning facilities.

These will need to be provided within a well-designed and safe environment and are likely to be provided by the private sector.

- GCC standards are not directly applicable to the provision of open space and recreational areas, although a broad average of 2.83 ha of useable high quality open space per 1,000 people is considered a minimum standard of provision. Using BCC benchmarks from nearby development areas shows there will be demands from MPIP residents for:

- 9.2 ha of open space overall
- 6.1 ha of parks and playgrounds (with a minimum area of 0.3 ha each) to be located within 400-500 metres walking distance of residents
- A local sports field comprising double playing fields and amenities with an area of around 4 ha.

The ways in which these facilities will be provided will require detailed consideration at the masterplanning stage. The north eastern residential area has the potential to accommodate some of this open space. It may be necessary to then provide additional open space and playing fields off-site, in adjoining areas.

Contributions from residents will need to be made for the provision of other off-site facilities such as netball courts, tennis courts, indoor sports centre, youth facilities and aquatic facilities

- Estimates of open space and recreational needs are also presented for the combined populations of Marsden Park and MPIP
- Provisions for the quality and size of communal and private open space within the Business Park and Industrial zones can be made through the DCP, as has been applied in nearby employment precincts within Blacktown.
- Estimates to cover the costs of these facilities and contributions towards the future facilities in Marsden Park Precinct which would be used by these residents should be incorporated into an interim Section 94 Plan, which can be revised at a later date as more comprehensive planning of facilities and open space within the Marsden Park Precinct is undertaken.

9 References

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