

# Cherrybrook

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This document answers frequently asked questions about planning for Cherrybrook Precinct, and includes responses to questions asked during an online information session on 4 August 2022.

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## What is on exhibition?

Three separate but related plans in the Cherrybrook Precinct are on exhibition:

- The department is exhibiting the Cherrybrook Precinct Place Strategy, which will help guide the development of the wider Cherrybrook precinct and inform future rezoning. The draft place strategy builds on the 2013 Structure Plan and community feedback from our consultation in 2017 and 2018. The strategy proposes a ‘green village’ – a compact and walkable medium-rise precinct surrounding the station and the mixed-use centre.
- Landcom, on behalf of Sydney Metro, is exhibiting a rezoning proposal for the Cherrybrook Station State Significant Precinct (SSP) to create a new town centre on government-owned land next to the metro station. The rezoning aims to facilitate a mixed-use centre to support the metro station and the needs of the community. The Department of Planning and Environment will manage the assessment of this process.
- The department is also exhibiting an amendment to State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) Planning Systems to enable the Cherrybrook Station government land to be listed as a State Significant Development (SSD) site. This will allow future development application/s for the government land to be assessed by the Department through the SSD process.

## How was the community consulted before the draft place strategy was prepared?

Extensive consultation was undertaken during the preparation of the North West Rail Link Corridor, which included the 2013 Cherrybrook Station Structure Plan.

Between July 2017 and January 2018, the department conducted workshops and online consultation with the communities of Cherrybrook, West Pennant Hills and nearby neighbourhoods to discuss residents’ priorities and ideas for their neighbourhood.

The consultation included a PlaceScore survey in July/August 2017 which allowed people to rank what was important to them in their neighbourhood. The PlaceScore survey findings showed that local residents were united in wanting to preserve the area’s natural setting, with pockets of strongly held views including that:

- People aged under 45 overwhelmingly responded that they need to be able to access employment centres and other neighbourhoods
- Nearly three-quarters of female respondents valued being able to access neighbourhood amenities – cafes, shops, health and wellness services – and locally owned businesses, and

- Half of all male respondents want to see spaces for group or community activities and gatherings.

Workshops and further surveys in November 2017 to January 2018 were designed to give residents an opportunity to share how their values and ideas could be expressed in the design of the Cherrybrook Precinct. Two community workshops were held on 22 November 2017, with a combined attendance of more than 130 people, including school students, local retailers and residents from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds as well as the broader community.

The online survey, which invited participants to voice their individual views, ran from November 2017 to January 2018 and attracted 393 responses. Invitations for the workshops and online survey were distributed via the department's database of Cherrybrook Precinct stakeholders, and through a social media campaign that reached more than 3,600 people.

### **My property was identified in the 2013 Cherrybrook Structure Plan for potential increased density. When will my property be rezoned?**

The place strategy reviews and refines the recommendations of the 2013 Cherrybrook Structure Plan. It will refine the boundaries of the proposed growth area (the green village) and identify the properties within this area proposed for potentially rezoning but does not rezone the private land in the precinct. The place strategy will recommend potential planning controls for the private land within the green village such as a maximum 5-storey height and density of 1.4:1 floor space ratio to enable residential apartments and inform any subsequent rezoning proposals by councils or privately led.

### **Why has the Cherrybrook Precinct been identified as an area for growth when there is another major urban hub – Castle Hill – close by?**

Cherrybrook Precinct has been identified as an opportunity for new housing and jobs that can benefit from improved transport and access due to the Sydney Metro Northwest line. This is detailed in the [2013 Cherrybrook Station Structure Plan](#) and also in the 2018 Greater Sydney Commission North District Plan.

The Cherrybrook Precinct is not intended to have the same level of growth as Castle Hill, which is classified as a 'Strategic Centre' by the Greater Sydney Commission. The current SSP rezoning investigations propose Cherrybrook to be a 'Local Centre', with lower density than Castle Hill.

Long-term plans will be put in place to support Cherrybrook's growth alongside Castle Hill, Norwest and other vital hubs in the Sydney Metro Northwest Planned Urban Renewal Corridor over the next 20 years. NSW is projected to have 9.9 million residents by 2036. Sydney's present population of 4.7 million is projected to reach 6.4 million and the city's working-age population is projected to increase by almost a million people over the same period. Providing the jobs, housing and infrastructure for current and future residents requires a strong strategic focus.

### **What planning controls currently apply to Cherrybrook?**

The current planning controls for Cherrybrook are contained in The Hills and Hornsby Shire councils' Local Environmental Plans. These planning controls will apply until land is rezoned.

### How was the growth area within the precinct determined?

The proposed growth area or 'green village' has been based on the area generally within 400 metres (or 4-5 minutes' walk) of the metro station and the mixed-use local centre. The northern side of Castle Hill Road has a wider extent of proposed growth as this land is less steep and is a shorter walk to the station than the equivalent wider area south of Castle Hill Road. This ensures a compact and walkable urban village that has the accessibility and liveability benefits of being close to a metro station and a new mixed-use centre.

### How high will the buildings be?

The green village will be a medium-density scale with a maximum building height of 5 storeys to ensure the new housing blends in with the surrounding leafy residential suburb and the Blue Gum High Forest. Building frontages along all the streets of the green village will have a 3-storey terrace form, with the upper 2 storeys further setback. The overall scale and height of the green village responds to community feedback and views that the new development needs to be sympathetic to the area's existing leafy green character.

### What will be done to ensure high-quality design and prevent shoddy development?

The design quality of the proposed future medium-density development will be guided by the NSW Apartment Design Guide and development control plans while construction quality will be guided by the Building Code of Australia.

Further design excellence requirements can be included in both councils' local environmental plans when the green village area is rezoned.

### Why are townhouses not included as a housing option?

Economic testing shows low-rise medium-density such as townhouse development is not feasible from a development perspective. This is mainly because of high land value of the existing residential properties compared with the sale price of new town houses.

The feasibility testing along with urban design testing recommends that medium-density housing of up to 5 storeys is required for development to be feasible in the green village. However, the proposed built form of the precinct seeks to provide terrace style apartments on the ground floor facing streets to active the public domain and create connected neighbourhoods rather than individual apartment buildings.

### How big would blocks need to be for individual landowners to bring forward a development application?

Within the Hills Shire Council area of the green village, a minimum consolidated area of 4,000 sqm will be required to enable development applications for proposed medium-density development to be approved. A minimum consolidated area of 2,000 sqm will apply in the Hornsby Shire Council area.

### How will people access the precinct from outside – will there be dedicated cycle/pedestrian paths to Castle Towers, Cherrybrook Village and Pennant Hills station?

Planning for the green village includes many new cycle and pedestrian links and footpaths. These provide and improve the linkages from the Cherrybrook Station Precinct to the existing regional dedicated pedestrian and cycle links which provide access across the region and to destinations such as Cherrybrook Village, Castle Hill town centre and Pennant Hills Station.

### Will there be community shared gardens?

A total of 23,700sqm of new local open space is proposed across the Green Village/potential growth area, in addition to the open space being provided in the mixed use town centre. The future detailed planning and design stages for these open space areas will provide the opportunity for a variety of public open space uses to be considered based on the needs of the proposed community, which could include community shared gardens.

### Why is the government land at Cherrybrook station being rezoned before the private land in the wider precinct?

Rezoning the government land will help deliver the proposed town centre and the associated public open space and community facilities at the precinct's heart. The town centre and this community infrastructure will then support the needs of the proposed population from the subsequent rezoning and development of the wider precinct private land.

In addition, the government land, which is the surplus land from construction of the Cherrybrook metro station, is currently unused and dormant. Rezoning will allow this land to be developed, particularly to maximise the transport advantages of its location.

### Will a rezoning mean higher rates for landowners?

The calculation and levying of rates is a function of local government. The NSW Valuer General annual land valuation process does take into account current zoning, and councils use these land values as a way to calculate and distribute rates across their local government areas.

Under the Local Government Act 1993 a ratepayer may apply for a postponement of rates if they cannot afford the increase. A council may determine to postpone the payment of the increase in rates attributable to a rezoning. Should the property be sold in future the deferred rates would be payable.

### What infrastructure will be provided?

Planning studies have identified the infrastructure required to support the growth in Cherrybrook Precinct. The 3,200 new homes will be supported by improved road and transport infrastructure, new open space, community facilities and local shops and cafes that will make the area a better place to live.

### What is being planned to deal with increased traffic?

Most of the green village is within 400 metres of the metro station and the mixed-use centre. This proximity combined with new pedestrian and cycle links and local roads will encourage greater

walkability, active transport and public transport use. Detailed traffic modelling has been undertaken into the additional car use expected from the new homes. The outcomes from this analysis include recommended upgrades to major (state) road intersections to support the proposed growth in the precinct.

### Will any roads such as Dalkeith Road or Robert Road be widened?

The Traffic and Transport Study does not recommend the need to widen existing local roads such as Dalkeith and Robert Road. The draft place strategy proposes to instead add new local road linkages to improve local road access and increase permeability through the green village.

### Do traffic studies include actual visits to sites at representative times and dates?

The Traffic and Transport Study for the wider Cherrybrook Station Precinct included traffic counts and site visits, particularly at key days and time periods. The microsimulation modelling study, testing and analysis was undertaken by specialist traffic consultants who were project managed by Transport for NSW in partnership with the Department of Planning and Environment with stakeholder input including from the Hills Shire and Hornsby Shire councils.

### What new local road and pedestrian/cycle links will be provided?

A number of new local road links are recommended to improve connectivity for cars, pedestrians and cyclists. In addition, 1.4 km of new pedestrian cycle links will improve accessibility and the active transport network across the green village/growth area. Regional cycle links will also be enhanced and connections improved.

### How will this be provided?

The new local road and pedestrian/cycle links are located on portions of land within the development sites. The land required for these links will be dedicated to the councils as development occurs in exchange for the floor space ratio yielded from the specific land.

The cost to construct the new roads and pedestrian/cycle links will be funded through the councils' section 7.11 development contribution plans, with funds collected after development applications are approved and before construction begins across the green village/growth area.

### What new open space and parks will be provided?

A total of 23,700sqm of new local open space will be provided in the green village, which includes 3 new local parks, expansion of Robert Road Park and preservation of the Blue Gum High Forest next to the mixed-use local centre with associated community open space and town square. The additional open space combined with the new pedestrian and cycling links and local roads will ensure that 93% of residents are within 250 metres of open space.

### Will any properties need to be acquired?

The draft place strategy identifies 14 locations required to expand or create new local parks. In some cases, only part of a lot will be required. In total 9 houses are potentially affected, being for the Mariam Place Park and the Robert Road Park extension.

As this is a draft strategy, no decisions have been made yet. We encourage the community to provide feedback during the exhibition period.

If the area is rezoned in future, the relevant council for the land in question (Hornsby Shire or The Hills Shire) would be the acquisition authority and would need to follow the requirements of the Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991.

The process for property acquisition aims to support landowners with valuations based on market values, with a focus on the process being fair, consistent and transparent.

### **What will be done to improve parking? Will there be restricted street parking?**

Sydney Metro Northwest's plans for Cherrybrook Station include about 400 commuter spaces, parking and storage for 40 bicycles as well as kiss-and-ride spaces for 14 cars to help ensure the new Cherrybrook Station and train link reduce pressure on current car parking spaces. Additionally, any new developments will be required to include onsite parking. The two local councils will also continue to manage the on-street parking to achieve the best outcomes.

The local area already has restricted parking near the metro station. Both councils will continue to monitor any need to adjust these restrictions in order to manage commuter parking and preserve parking opportunities for local residents.

### **What can be done to protect children and disabled people?**

The new local parks, pedestrian cycle links and local roads will increase safe recreational opportunities. This will also improve mobility, general access and active transport opportunities and build on the work already provided by Sydney Metro, such as improved pedestrian and cycleways and road upgrades.

### **How will existing residents' privacy be protected from apartments overlooking their properties?**

Privacy and overlooking is addressed at development assessment stage, particularly through the consideration of the NSW Apartment Design Guide and compliance with development control plans.

Generally, transitions from the proposed growth areas to existing areas, that are not proposed for change, are across streets giving acoustic and visual separation.

### **Will new infrastructure be in place before new residential developments are built?**

The draft plans for the station area will identify the infrastructure required to support the growing community. It will also specify how this new infrastructure will be funded, with the aim of new or upgraded facilities to be provided to match the pace of development.

### **Are any new schools proposed in the precinct?**

Schools Infrastructure NSW (SINSW) advises that the growth stemming from the SSP (State Significant Precinct rezoning proposal) can likely be absorbed by surrounding schools.

Notwithstanding this, the proposed growth of 3,200 additional dwellings over 20 years, together with current projections, indicates that there will be a requirement for at least an additional primary

school, secondary school and support services infrastructure in the area surrounding both precincts. SINSW will begin optioneering to identify appropriate solutions to accommodate the projected enrolment demand. This will ensure that existing schools are fully utilised before new schools are considered. The possible need for new school sites will also be subject to future population and housing forecasts issued by DPE within the NSW Common Planning Assumptions and the actual growth rates of development.

### Will there be a new hospital?

The Cherrybrook Station Precinct is serviced by a number of public and private hospitals such as Hornsby Ku-ring-gai public hospital, Westmead public hospital (adult and children's), Sydney Adventist Hospital, Norwest Private Hospital and the planned new Rouse Hill Hospital.

NSW Health has advised it does not have a specific concern with the planned precinct growth of 3,200 dwellings over a 20-year timeframe. NSW Health planning is generally based on NSW government growth forecasts, which take into account proposed precinct growth and planned major rezonings across Sydney.

### What is planned for the government land next to the metro station?

Landcom has prepared a rezoning application, on behalf of the landowner Sydney Metro, through the State Significant Precinct (SSP) planning process. The rezoning would support the development of a new mixed-use local centre with a supermarket, cafes, a community facility and open spaces and about 390 new homes, with a minimum of 5% affordable housing. The department is responsible for gathering submissions and evaluating the rezoning proposal.

Find out more about the rezoning proposal at [Landcom's webpage](#).

### What happens next?

We will review submissions received during the exhibition and respond to any issues raised when the place strategy is finalised. If adopted, the place strategy will come into effect through a Ministerial Direction requiring planning proposals to follow its intent and guidance.

The department will also review submissions on the State Significant Precinct and provide a recommendation to the Minister on whether to proceed with a rezoning of that site. Landcom will prepare a response to submissions report for the Department's consideration as part of this process for a decision is made.

Planning controls for the Cherrybrook Precinct will be introduced through amendments to the Local Environment Plans (LEPs) of Hills Shire Council and Hornsby Shire Council.