TOPOGRAPHY

Telopea lies amidst hilly topography, bordered by north-eastern and north-western ridge lines that slope downwards to the Waratah Shops. Although this creates beautiful views, it is often difficult for people with mobility issues to access local shops, community facilities and the train stop.

- North-south aligned roads, following the dominant ridge, provide relatively easy walks to the facilities in the core. However, once in the core, the journey between Waratah Shops and the future light rail stop requires walking up roads with moderate grades.
- Key streets with steep slopes for walking include:
  - Sturt Street, between Manson Street and Wade Street.
  - Eyles Street.
  - Shortland Street.
- The ridge line provides views from the upper parts of Sophie Street, Marshall Road, Manson Street and Sturt Street.
- The topography can be used as a tool to maximise views.
- Vistas occurring from outside of the master plan area looking into Telopea are generally restricted due to the height and density of surrounding vegetation.

VEGETATION AND ECOLOGY

Telopea is framed by a vegetation corridor mainly following the creek lines at the bottom of the catchment. Mature trees are located along streets and in clumps on private land. This vegetation is valued by the community and is to be retained.

- Parts of Telopea contain Critically Endangered Ecological Communities (CEEC), Endangered Ecological Communities (EEC) and hollow-bearing trees that provide potential habitats for threatened species. These are mostly within creek corridors or open spaces and/or outside the study area. These will not be developed as part of the master plan. However, there are small stands of Blue Gum High Forest and hollow-bearing trees generally in the rear of private properties to the north east of the study area. These areas are to be retained, protected and improved wherever possible.
- Given the current treed urban landscape within large parts of Telopea, the City of Parramatta Council (CoP) has identified the northern half of the precinct as an “Urban Landscape Corridor”. This comprises urban vegetation including mature trees that can provide links between core habitat areas. These are often located at the rear or front of lots within the building setback or comprise the street trees themselves. These areas may also contain hollow-bearing trees that have not been mapped.
- Street trees will be retained and future development will seek to increase the tree canopy by preserving, replacing or planting new trees to maintain the urban landscape corridor concept and minimise the urban heat island effect.

FLOODING

Telopea is located in the Ponds Subiaco Creek catchment, which is part of the larger Parramatta River Catchment. There is flood risk at the southern portion of Sturt Park near Kissing Point Road. Most of the proposed development area is outside of the 100 year ARI flood extent. A small number of properties likely to be affected in a 100 year ARI flood are located on Kissing Point Road at the Sturt Road intersection. This combined with limited access options, means the properties are not considered suitable for higher densities.

Mature trees, undulating landscapes and ecological corridors are essential elements valued by the community. They give a sense of place to Telopea and differentiate it from other surrounding neighbourhoods.
Telopea is well connected to open space areas. There is approximately 197 ha of open space within a 2 km radius of the neighbourhood and 330 ha within 20 minute cycle, which exceeds the benchmark standards for existing urban areas. More specifically, the neighbourhood has 30 ha of existing open space in total.

The master plan provides an excellent opportunity to facilitate the linking of existing open spaces in and around Telopea with the ‘green links’ being considered as part of the broader CoP initiatives in the ‘Parramatta Ways’ plan.

PARKS

Existing parks in Telopea are mainly located within the lower parts of the neighbourhood. These are sufficient in area to serve the current and growing population. Improved facilities and activation within each park will help to improve usability and safety. New centrally located recreation space at the top of the catchment will improve access and opportunities for passive recreation.

The existing parks in and directly adjoining the study area include:

**Sturt Park:** There is a need to address perceptions of safety at Sturt Park. The park is perceived to be unsafe by the community due to:
- The lack of street and night lighting;
- Poor surveillance, in part caused by having only one main road frontage on Sturt Street;
- High security fencing along the school; and
- Densely vegetated areas.

Currently, the park comprises a small skate park, playground, basketball court and open playing field, picnic shelters, cricket cages and a toilet block. It is heavily vegetated on the southern portion and has a direct link to the creek and adjoining environmental conservation areas.

The park has no clear arrival point and has limited activation. This discourages a variety of potential recreational users and raises concerns around antisocial behaviour.

**Acacia Park:** Located on a high point, it offers panoramic views to the wider Telopea area. It has a good quality playground, kick-about space, open lawn, and mature perimeter trees around the park to offer shade. Despite this, many residents are unaware of Acacia Park as a recreation resource. Generally, improved awareness of the park system can be addressed by providing a cohesive way finding strategy.

**Rapanea Community Forest:** This provides access to Ponds Creek for bush walking and the potential for improved connections to Dundas Park, Vineyard Creek corridor and Cox Reserve.

**Telopea-Carlingford Greenway:** A wide corridor between the railway and private properties known as the Telopea Carlingford Greenway has poor security and passive surveillance. This land can potentially be used as an off-road cycleway adjacent to the light rail. Future development backing into the corridor should promote pedestrian connections from Marshall Street to the corridor and increased surveillance.

There are opportunities immediately south of the Telopea-Carlingford Greenway for the creation of new public space within the core, and particularly as part of any development adjacent to the new light rail stop. These will be important to help activate the area and provide more convenient access at this ridge location.

CYCLE PATHS

The master plan leverages off the existing cycle path network of Telopea that adequately connects green open spaces and urban infrastructure around the neighbourhood. The cycle paths proposed by CoP will improve the permeability to the Telopea light rail stop. There is an opportunity to extend this cycle network into the Telopea-Carlingford Greenway Corridor with an off-road cycleway and to other parks.

The community want parks to stay and improvements made including more activities that attract families, more lighting, rest areas and active recreation options.
SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Telopea benefits from a range of social infrastructure services, mostly centrally located in and adjacent to the core. However, many of these services are at capacity. The urban renewal of Telopea will bring increased population which will also increase demand for social infrastructure. Social infrastructure should be expanded and redesigned to accommodate a larger and more diverse population.

EDUCATION

Within 10 minutes drive, residents of Telopea have access to a range of public and private schools, as well as several established colleges, universities and TAFEs.

- Primary Schools: Carlingford Public School, Carlingford West Public School, Dundas Public School, Ermington West Public School, Yates Avenue Public School and Telopea Public School.
- High Schools: James Ruse Agricultural School, Cumberland High School, St Patrick’s Marist College, Marsden High School, Tara Anglican School for Girls and The Kings School.
- College & Universities: Western Sydney University (WSU), Macquarie University, Macquarie Community College and United Theological College.
- TAFEs: English Language Centre Meadowbank and the Northern Sydney Institute Ryde Campus.

Telopea Primary School is centrally located on a 2 hectare site adjacent to the core. It incorporates a Montessori Preschool and the Waratah Centre (which provides a parallel academic program for Years 7 to 12 before entering back into main stream education).

The school provides primary education catering for a diverse student community and offers a range of cultural, sporting and social programs including a community garden. At a current enrolment of some 60 students there is capacity to increase enrolments within the existing school. Increased enrolments are likely to increase demand for new classrooms and associated educational infrastructure.

New school buildings in other higher density areas are increasingly being geared to providing classrooms in multi storey developments. This provides economies in terms of construction and maintenance and retains open play space. The redevelopment of Arthur Phillip High School and Parramatta Public School in Parramatta CBD are recent examples of the delivery of multi-storey education facilities in response to metropolitan Sydney’s increasing residential density.

Planning for education has also evolved to recognise the importance and potential benefits from the co-location of facilities within the broader community. Libraries, meeting rooms, performing spaces, auditoriums and open spaces are facilities that can be potentially shared. The school is well placed in the core to enable co-location and sharing of other community facilities.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS

Presently, community facilities located across Telopea have limited physical integration. Community facilities, programs and services in Telopea currently comprise:

- The Dundas Community Centre - A community facility which includes a two hundred people main hall, meeting rooms and craft room. It contains the Dundas Area Neighbourhood Centre (DANC), Dundas Branch Library and community health centre.
- The Dundas Area Neighbourhood Centre (DANC) - A neighbourhood centre which provides daily activities and support for residents across a diverse spectrum of interests and needs.
- The Dundas Branch Library - A branch library which provides books, e-material and reference services, as well as the delivery of books to housebound people, and other lifelong learning programs, services, and events.
- Waratah Montessori Preschool and Sophie’s Cottage Kindergarten.
- Two community gardens - one on Shortland Street and the other at the school.
- Dundas Valley Medical Centre.
- Hope Connect, family support services and the HuB.
- Community rooms within Hume Housing developments.
- Schools as Community Centres project within Telopea Public School.

The community supports new spaces such as an improved and expanded library, child care centre, additional meeting rooms, landscaping and public Wi-Fi.
The Dundas Community Centre at Sturt Street incorporates the Dundas Branch Library, DANC and Community Health Centre. These facilities could be upgraded with expanded programs and spaces to cater for a diverse population.

Telopea Public School could provide community rooms, hall or open space that are shared with the broader community out of school hours or could utilise these same facilities provided on adjacent sites.

TRED Community Leaders Group in association with the DANC oversee the community gardens on Shortland Street. Community gardens could be provided within new development sites to be accessible to a range of people.

The HuB on Wade Street could be relocated to a suitable location in consultation with the service provider.

Hope Connect, which is located within the Telopea Christian Centre on Shortland Street and provides family support services (and The HuB), could be integrated within a multi-purpose community centre, remain in its current location or relocated to a suitable alternative identified by the service provider.
Telopea residents currently carry out most shopping trips in nearby centres outside of the neighbourhood. Telopea has access to a range of retail outlets and major retail centres within a 6 km radius (approximately 10 minutes drive), including:

- Regional Centres: Westfield Parramatta (south-west).
- Sub-regional Centres: Westfield North Rocks, Carlingford Court

Within the neighbourhood, existing retail services are located at the Waratah Shops on Benaud Place. These comprise a 900 sq.m supermarket and additional 1,400 sq.m of specialty retail shops and an automotive service centre.

Retail demand analysis identifies that in order to support the future population, over 7,000 sq.m of retail is needed, anchored by a large-scale supermarket (3,000-4,000 sq.m).

Expansion at the current location presents the following challenges:

- Land ownership is fragmented, with the exception of the existing 900 sq.m supermarket and adjoining car park.
- Development of a new full line supermarket on Benaud Place would require demolition of the existing buildings and car park as well as additional tenancies. This will disrupt the commercial offering while works are being undertaken.

Many of the existing shops are older, and community feedback has supported the upgrade, renewal and possible long term relocation of the shops near the train where there will be greater pedestrian activity and movements.

In the short term, there will be a continued need for shops in this part of the neighbourhood. However, even with significant expansion or renewal, the existing shopping strip cannot support the growing population (as shown over the page).

Telopea is well located close to employment at Parramatta CBD, Macquarie Park, Norwest and Rydalmere. Local employment opportunities in Telopea are limited to the shops, schools and community facilities within and nearby the master plan area.

Many residents support having access to a great variety of shops and services, a bigger supermarket, more restaurants and cafes, more parking and improved public spaces around the shopping centre.
DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR WARATAH SHOPS

Existing Waratah Shops Condition

- Existing Waratah Shops will not be able to serve the capacity of Telopea in the future, having a limited area and parking.
- In any future expansion, the development will face challenges in terms of access due to the significant slope.

Option 1: Develop New Supermarket in Existing Area

- This option would need underground parking to enable a new supermarket.
- Most of the existing shops would need to be demolished for redevelopment to occur.
- The elongated shape will not work well for supermarket layout and function.
- Limited connectivity due to the significant slope is likely to be a barrier to patronage.

Option 2: Develop Supermarket on East Side of Evans Road

- Limited space for a large format supermarket.
- Elongated shape will not work well for supermarket layout and function.
- Limited connectivity to existing shops.
- Distance between east side of Evans Road and existing slope is not ideal for pedestrian movement, particularly due to significant level changes between Benaud Place and Evans Road.

Option 3: Develop Supermarket on West Side of Existing Retail

- The supermarket can be developed at this area but there will be vehicular conflicts between servicing and pedestrian movement.
- Development will result in conflict between the proposed supermarket, and future residential areas (south and west of the supermarket).
- Poor pedestrian connectivity, amenity and different level changes would create two separate shopping areas (east and west of the lane).
- Additional parking for the supermarket would need to be under the building.
The community want to see the aged social housing upgraded with better quality buildings, good landscaping and improved passive surveillance.
The master plan will foster the long-term growth of a vibrant, cohesive and safe neighbourhood.

Telopea will be an inclusive community with shared civic spaces, relevant community services and facilities, and housing choices for a diversity of residents.

The new light rail stop marks the main point of arrival to Telopea, strengthening its identity within the greater Parramatta area.

Telopea’s key areas of change include:

1. Creating a welcoming arrival point in Telopea
   The proposed light rail stop will become a key arrival point in Telopea, welcoming residents and visitors and signaling entry to the neighbourhood. A new pedestrian civic plaza adjacent to the light rail stop will lead pedestrians to ground level shops and cafes that open onto footpath and pedestrian spaces. This activated pedestrian area will be the point of access to lifts and/or escalators serving different levels of the new community facilities space, lower level supermarket and relocated Wade Street entry (adjacent to the existing school and Council’s current community facilities). This will ease pedestrian movement across the steepest part of the hill to access the light rail stop. There is potential to follow a similar approach on other parts within the core that have steep slopes.

2. Emphasising a sense of place in Telopea
   Better parks, public spaces and outdoor café seating will be shaded by Telopea’s existing mature trees. Within parks, new furniture and facilities, and better design will improve outdoor activity and neighbourhood safety. Many of Telopea’s trees are preserved throughout parks, undulating landscapes and footpaths so that the sense of place remains alongside residential development.

3. Building a diverse residential population in Telopea
   The addition of 3,500 - 4,500 mixed residential dwellings will stimulate change in the make up of local households in Telopea. The provision of new and upgraded community facilities and retail options will cater to a diversity of age groups, cultural backgrounds, needs and interests.

   Each of these key changes deliver a vital component of the overall master plan. Together, they build on existing community strengths to create an enjoyable, vibrant and supportive neighbourhood, bringing to life Telopea’s vision for the future.