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1.0 Introduction

This Background Report provides an evidence base for community facilities directions included in City of Canterbury Bankstown Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS). It represents a critical component of the suite of studies and strategies now underway in the Canterbury-Bankstown LGA (CBCity), to inform strategic planning frameworks that will significantly impact the area's development as part of the implementation of the South District Plan.

This Community Facilities Background Report supports the LSPS by clearly articulating the existing supply of community facilities across CBCity, and points to current and future demand, with regard to current patterns of use, accepted benchmarks for provision and best practice trends.

This Report provides a strategic, high level assessment of community facility needs across the LGA and will be further refined through targeted stakeholder engagement and further detailed analysis.

1.1 Background

City of Canterbury Bankstown (CBCity) Council plays a key role in providing social infrastructure to support and sustain the liveability and wellbeing of the local community.

Community facilities are an important part of the wider social infrastructure network and support a range of services and facilities that strengthen and enhance social sustainability. Community facilities are one way that Council connects with the community through amenities and services - they are also places that bring individuals together, and offer space for the community to connect, create and learn.

Delivering adequate and appropriate social infrastructure, including community facilities, is fundamental to achieving City of Canterbury-Bankstown's vision of a city that is "thriving, dynamic, real". CBCity aspires to a place where:

"Our communities are safe, strong, caring for each other and inclusive of all. We have good access to the services we need and use them well. Our people are healthy in mind and body... we are a place of incredible activity and opportunity... We remember, we celebrate and we dream. Our people are proud of themselves, proud of their roots and proud of our City..." (CSP, p.17)

Council's existing portfolio of social infrastructure includes libraries, community centres, parks and recreation facilities that support local residents to thrive by improving access to employment and education opportunities and services, facilitating social connections between people of diverse cultures and backgrounds and providing spaces for creative expression and community events that strengthen the social fabric of CBCity.

1.2 Scope of this Background Report

Council provides a range of community facilities that support the community. This Background Report focuses on the 93 Council-owned facilities that provide key community facilities or are available for hire. This broadly includes:

- Integrated multipurpose community facilities,
- Local community facilities, including:
 - Community halls, centres and meeting rooms,
 - Early childhood health centres,
 - Dedicated youth space,
 - Senior citizens' centres,
 - Men's sheds,
- Libraries,

- Childcare centres / preschools, and
- Cultural and creative facilities.

To assess these community facilities, we have applied an established typology that defines the role and function of the facilities included in this Report (see Table 1).

Table 1 Typology of community facilities

Facility category	Description
Integrated multipurpose community facility	<p>A large multipurpose community facility that is a focal point for the local community. It is delivered through a single building/site or a cluster of proximate buildings/sites and is typically integrated or co-located with other facility types within the network (e.g. library, indoor recreation facility).</p> <p>This type of facility provides a series of adaptable programming spaces for use by diverse sectors of the community, and may include a range of other spaces and uses as appropriate to meet community needs, e.g. access to support services, information and referral, and spaces for lifelong learning, active living, arts and creative programs. Integrated multipurpose facilities should be accessible on a walk-in basis and provide opportunities for spontaneous interaction among diverse members or sectors of the community. These facilities generally include an "anchor" such as a library or recreation centre.</p>
Local community facilities	<p>This category includes a range of facilities that do not meet best practice standards in terms of multipurpose facilities that are large (+2000sqm) and adaptable. It includes facilities that are small, localised and/or predominantly single use or specialised but provide no space for casual social interaction.</p> <p>In CBCity, these localised community facilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community centres, halls and meeting rooms, • Youth centres • Senior citizens centres, • Early childhood health centres, and • Men's sheds.
Libraries	Libraries may be standalone facilities, although they may be integrated as part of larger integrated multipurpose facilities, where they typically form the anchor facility.
Childcare centre / preschool	These facilities are purpose-built or fitted out for the provision of early childhood education and care. The majority of provision is via private and not-for-profit sector.
Cultural and creative facilities	This category includes a range of creative and cultural facilities including maker spaces accessible to the public, space for professional artistic development (e.g. rehearsal rooms, artist studios) and spaces for performance/audiences (e.g. theatres, cinemas, exhibition space).

Council has recently undertaken detailed planning for other social infrastructure types across the LGA, including open space, leisure and aquatic facilities and creative and cultural facilities. Directions for these facility types are included in the following plans:

- *Creative CBCity* (2019, draft)
- *Canterbury Open Space Strategy* (2017)
- *Bankstown Open Space Strategic Plan* (2014)
- *Leisure and Aquatic Strategic Plan* (2018)

It is also acknowledged that there are complementary, non-Council facilities that provide key community benefits to local residents – both within and outside the CBCity LGA. Some of these facilities are privately owned and operated, such as cafes, sports clubs, RSLs and religious organisations. While this report focuses on Council-owned land and facilities, it is acknowledged that these facilities contribute to the diversity of offer for community infrastructure in the City.

1.3 Purpose of this Background Report

This Community Facilities Background Report provides an overview of the strategic and local context and preliminary analysis that has informed the development of social infrastructure directions for City of Canterbury Bankstown's Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS). It has been developed through:

- Desktop research and review of relevant strategic plans and policies,
- Site visits to key Council-owned community facilities, and
- Preliminary stakeholder engagement with Council staff and LSPS consultants.

This Background Report will:

- Describe and contextualise CBCity's existing inventory of community facilities,
- Provide an overview of the existing and future community profile and demographic context,
- Present preliminary findings of background research and supply and demand analysis to date,
- Identify current and future issues, challenges and opportunities for community facilities across CBCity, and
- Present a suite of guiding principles to inform the development of the final Community Needs Analysis to support the LSPS.

This Background Report will provide the basis for the preparation of CBCity's LSPS, and will underpin further detailed assessment to be undertaken as part of the development of the Community Needs Analysis.

2.0 CBCity context

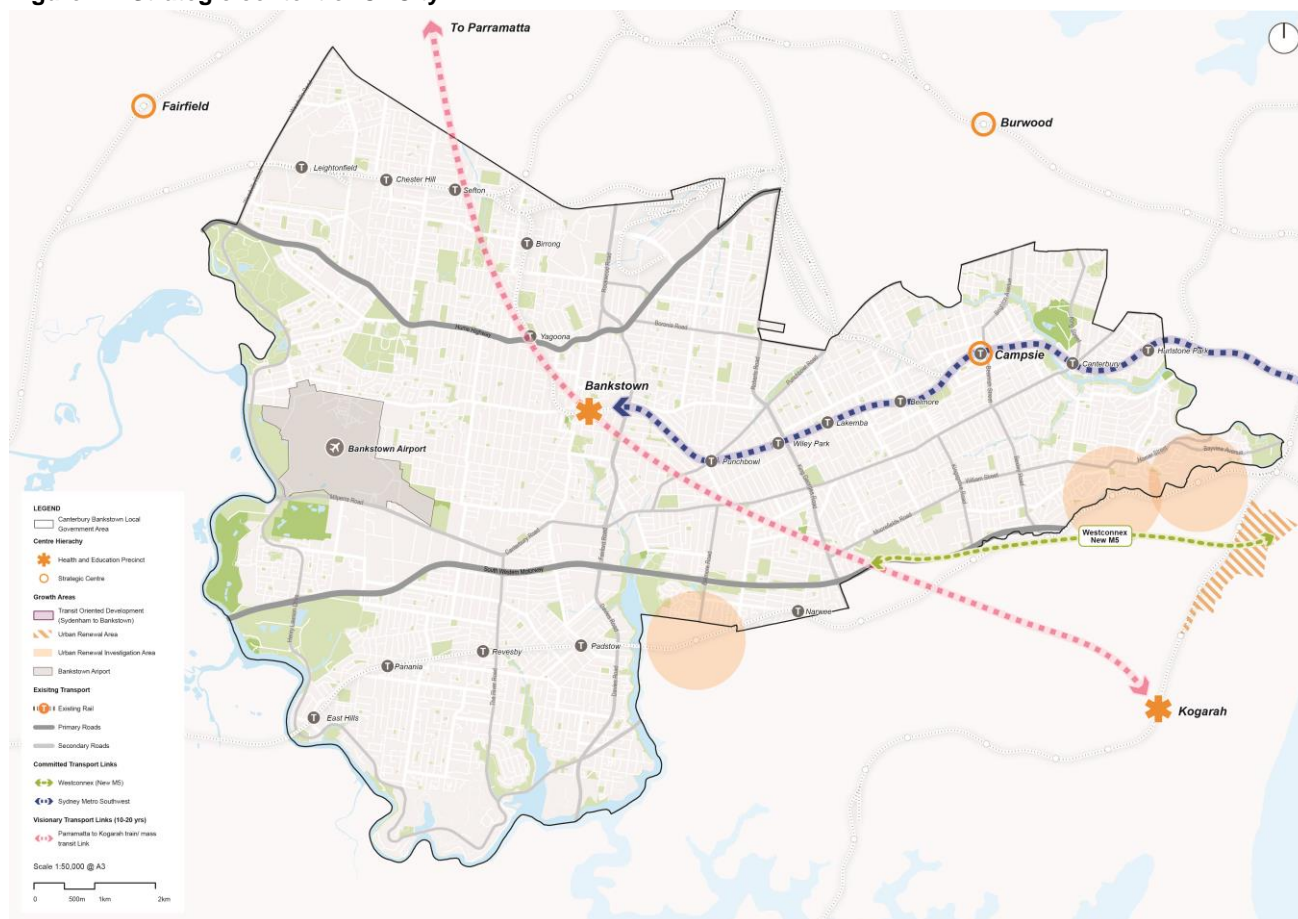
This section provides an overview of the CBCity context that has informed the development of this Background Report.

2.1 Strategic context

CBCity is a large and vibrant LGA with a complex urban fabric – with major metropolitan centres, including Bankstown CBD and Campsie; major transport infrastructure – both new, e.g. City & Southwest Metro, and existing, e.g. Bankstown and Airport & South train lines; urban renewal corridors including the as designated Sydenham to Bankstown corridor, and significant metropolitan infrastructure, such as Bankstown Airport, Western Sydney University's Bankstown campus and Bankstown Hospital.

The map at Figure 1 summarises the strategic context for CBCity that will inform the delivery of social infrastructure in this area.

Figure 1 – Strategic context of CBCity



Source: Ethos Urban.

2.2 Strategic policy context

The strategic policy for this Report provides clear guidance on Council's and the community's goals – in particular the goals outlined in *2028 CBCity – Council's Community Strategic Plan* (2018).

Ultimately, these policy documents recognise the role of social infrastructure as contributing to a connected, liveable and cohesive community – one that becomes stronger and more resilient as it grows and diversifies. The priorities identified in these documents have informed the assessment of community facilities within this Background Report.

2.2.1 South District Plan (Greater Sydney Commission, 2018)

The South District Plan sets the strategic framework for planning for CBCity's future. The Plan identifies future city-shaping infrastructure planned for delivery in this area, as well as future growth precincts. The Plan sets out a number of high level directions which will impact the delivery of social infrastructure within CBCity, specifically:

- Planning Priority S1: Providing services and social infrastructure to meet people's changing needs
 - Action 8: Deliver social infrastructure that reflects the needs of the community now and in the future.
 - Action 9: Optimise the use of available public land for social infrastructure.
- Planning Priority S2: Fostering healthy, creative, culturally rich and socially connected communities
 - Action 10: Deliver healthy, safe and inclusive places for people of all ages and abilities that support active, resilient and socially connected communities by:
 - providing walkable places at a human scale with active street life;
 - prioritising opportunities for people to walk, cycle and use public transport;
 - co-locating schools, health, aged care, sporting and cultural facilities; and
 - promoting local access to healthy fresh food and supporting local fresh food production.
 - Action 11: Incorporate cultural and linguistic diversity in strategic planning and engagement.
 - Action 12: Consider the local infrastructure implications of areas that accommodate large migrant and refugee populations.
 - Action 15: Strengthen social connections within and between communities through better understanding of the nature of social networks and supporting infrastructure in local places.

2.2.2 CBCity 2028 – Community Strategic Plan (City of Canterbury Bankstown, 2018)

CBCity Council's CSP sets out a range of high-level goals, strategies and outcomes around community wellbeing and quality places and spaces that respond to the evolving needs of the community, which will be foundational to the overarching recommendations included in the project. In particular, the CSP identifies the following key strategies to enhance community wellbeing:

- Safe and strong – A proud inclusive community that unites, celebrates and cares.
- Clean and green – A clean and sustainable City with healthy waterways and natural areas
- Prosperous and innovative – A smart and evolving City with exciting opportunities for investment and creativity.
- Moving and integrated – An accessible City with great local destinations and many options to get there.
- Health and active – A motivated City that nurtures healthy minds and bodies.
- Liveable and distinctive – A well designed, attractive City which preserves the identity and character of local villages.
- Leading and engaged – A well-governed City with brave and future focused leaders who listen.

The development of the CSP was underpinned by extensive community engagement that identified the following community perspectives relevant to the delivery of social infrastructure in the LGA:

- Residents value the importance of having services, community facilities and open space which are accessible from their doorstep. This is especially important for the ageing population.
- Residents value local economic activity and the opportunity to work near where they live. They acknowledge nightlife and the value of the city as a hub for arts and culture.
- Residents value the accessibility of amenities and services and enjoy visiting open space utilising cycling and pedestrian infrastructure.

- Residents value the importance of schools which are located within the neighbourhood and which provide spaces that can be jointly used by the community outside of school hours.

Council has also undertaken detailed social infrastructure planning for open space, cultural and creative facilities and aquatic and leisure facilities. These strategic plans have been reviewed and summarised in Section 3.7.

2.3 Community profile

Demographic trends and patterns provide an indication of the existing demographic profile of CBCity and will inform future trends and needs for social infrastructure delivery. For the purposes of this Report, key LGA demographics are summarised below.

Data within this section has been sourced from Draft Demographic Study completed by SGS Economics and Planning (March 2019), City of Canterbury Bankstown's Profile ID and ABS 2016 Census QuickStats.

2.3.1 Current community profile – key statistics

In 2016, the CBCity community had the following demographic profile:¹

- Age structure: The median age in CBCity is 35², the largest age group is was ages 25-29 which accounted for 8.1% of the population. The highest growth rate can be found in the young adult age group at 11.04% (2006-2016).
- Households: Couples with children dominate the share of household compositions (42,590 households). Group households between 2011 and 2016 had the largest growth rate of 10.12%.
- Household income and housing costs: Most households earn \$800-\$999 and less (per week) compared to Greater Sydney and the District area. The highest proportion of households are rented (36%) and most households have monthly repayment rates between \$2,600 and \$3,499 and \$2,000 to \$2,199.
- Education: 47.9% of residents had no post-school qualifications. 19.7% held a bachelor or higher degree.³
- Diversity: The majority of the resident population of CBCity have declared they are of Arab (18.8%) and British (14.5%) ancestry. The largest religious group in 2016 was Islam (20.8%) with Western (Roman) Catholic closely behind (20.4%).⁴
- Languages: More than half of residents in CBCity (60.1%) speak a language other than English at home. The top languages spoken at home are Arabic (17.2%), Vietnamese (7.2%) and Greek (5.4%).⁵
- Housing type: The largest proportion of houses are Separate Houses (55.3%) with an increase of Semi-Detached (+4%).

2.3.2 Canterbury Bankstown's future community

Between 2021 and 2036, the CBCity resident population is forecast to change as follows:⁶

- An increase of 112,869 people, representing a growth rate of 8.90% each five years.
- Expected continued growth across all age categories particularly retirees, mature adults and youth.
- Expected growth in housing supply of 52,375 dwellings. This represents a total growth of 11.24%.
- Employment forecasted to grow with 22,133 jobs additional jobs by 2026, providing a 5.77% growth rate each five years.
- An increase in people aged 20-24 – by 36% between 2016 and 2036.⁷
- An increase in residents aged 65 and over of 35,900.⁷

¹ The data in this section has been sourced from the SGS Demographic Study (draft, 2019) undertaken to inform the Canterbury-Bankstown LSPS.

² ABS 2016, 2016 Census QuickStats, https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/LGA11570?opendocument

³ Profile ID 2016, City of Canterbury Bankstown, Qualifications, <https://profile.id.com.au/canterbury-bankstown/qualifications>

⁴ SGS Economics and Planning, Canterbury Bankstown – Demographic Study (Draft), March 2019.

⁵ Profile ID 2016, City of Canterbury Bankstown, Languages spoken at home, <https://profile.id.com.au/canterbury-bankstown/language>

⁶ SGS Economics and Planning, Canterbury Bankstown – Demographic Study (Draft), March 2019.

⁷ Greater Sydney Commission, South District Plan cited by SGS.

2.3.3 Key themes

When comparing the existing and future community profile of CBCity, there are a number of emerging themes which directly influence the considerations for future provision of community facilities. The themes are summarised below.

Rapid growth

Between 2006 and 2016, the LGA has grown by 46,000 people and population density has risen by 7%. Demographic trends indicate that over the next 20 years there will be a 21.54% increase in population.

Social infrastructure plays an integral role in the ongoing social sustainability of the LGA and can strengthen communities as they grow. It is critical to ensure there is a sufficient supply of well connected and accessible community facilities to support forecast population growth.

Existing Council-owned community facilities that are currently underutilised but well located and maintained may be necessary for future social infrastructure delivery, and a long term view will need to be taken.

Increasing diversity

CBCity is a thriving multicultural community that is culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse. Community facilities will play a vital role in supporting cultural practices and cross-cultural connection – and Council will continue to have a role in providing spaces are culturally sensitive, flexible and inclusive of all community members, including at a range of price points.

A high proportion of children and young people

As the CBCity area is predominately made up of couples with children (40% of households), there is a high proportion of children and young people living in the LGA. A younger population profile is found in the suburbs of Bankstown CBD, Lakemba, Wiley Park, Greenacre – Mount Lewis and Condell Park. It is important these areas which are affordable are also supplied with infrastructure which caters to a younger demographic, where children and young people can socialise, feel included and access a range of activities.

Some community members are experiencing disadvantage

Some members of the CBCity are experiencing disadvantage, and social infrastructure will play a role in supporting these residents to access services, engage in lifelong learning and participate in the community – regardless of income. For example:

- 55.7% of the population had completed Year 12 schooling (or equivalent) as of 2016.³ The area's relatively low levels of education attainment must be factored into future recommendations for community facilities as there could be greater need for spaces with educational uses.
- 13.1% do not speak English well or at all. It is therefore important facilities are inclusive and provide services in community languages.⁸
- 8.5% of Canterbury-Bankstown residents live in (rent) social housing and majority of households have a lower than average median income compared to South District and Greater Sydney. It is important facilities are inclusive of low incomes, providing community support services and venues which are affordable or free.

⁸ Profile ID 2016, City of Canterbury Bankstown, English Proficiency, <https://profile.id.com.au/canterbury-bankstown/speaks-english>

3.0 Current community facilities supply

3.1 Overview of community facility provision

There is a mixed level of provision of community facilities across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA. The current supply of community facilities in CBCity includes:

- 1 integrated multipurpose community facility,
- 56 local community facilities currently utilised for a range of purposes, including:
- 31 community meeting rooms and halls
- 22 childcare centres and preschools, and
- 4 creative and cultural facilities.

The location of these facilities are shown in Figure 2 below. The following section provides an overview of community facilities by asset type.

3.2 Integrated multipurpose facilities

A large multipurpose community facility is a focal point for the local community. It can be delivered through a single building/site or a cluster of proximate buildings/sites and is typically integrated or co-located with other facility types within the network (e.g. library, indoor recreation facility).

This type of facility provides a series of adaptable programming spaces for use by diverse sectors of the community, and may include a range of other spaces and uses as appropriate to meet community needs, e.g. access to support services, information and referral, and spaces for lifelong learning, active living, arts and creative programs. Integrated multipurpose facilities should be accessible on a walk-in basis and provide opportunities for spontaneous interaction among diverse members or sectors of the community. These facilities generally include an "anchor" such as a library or recreation centre.

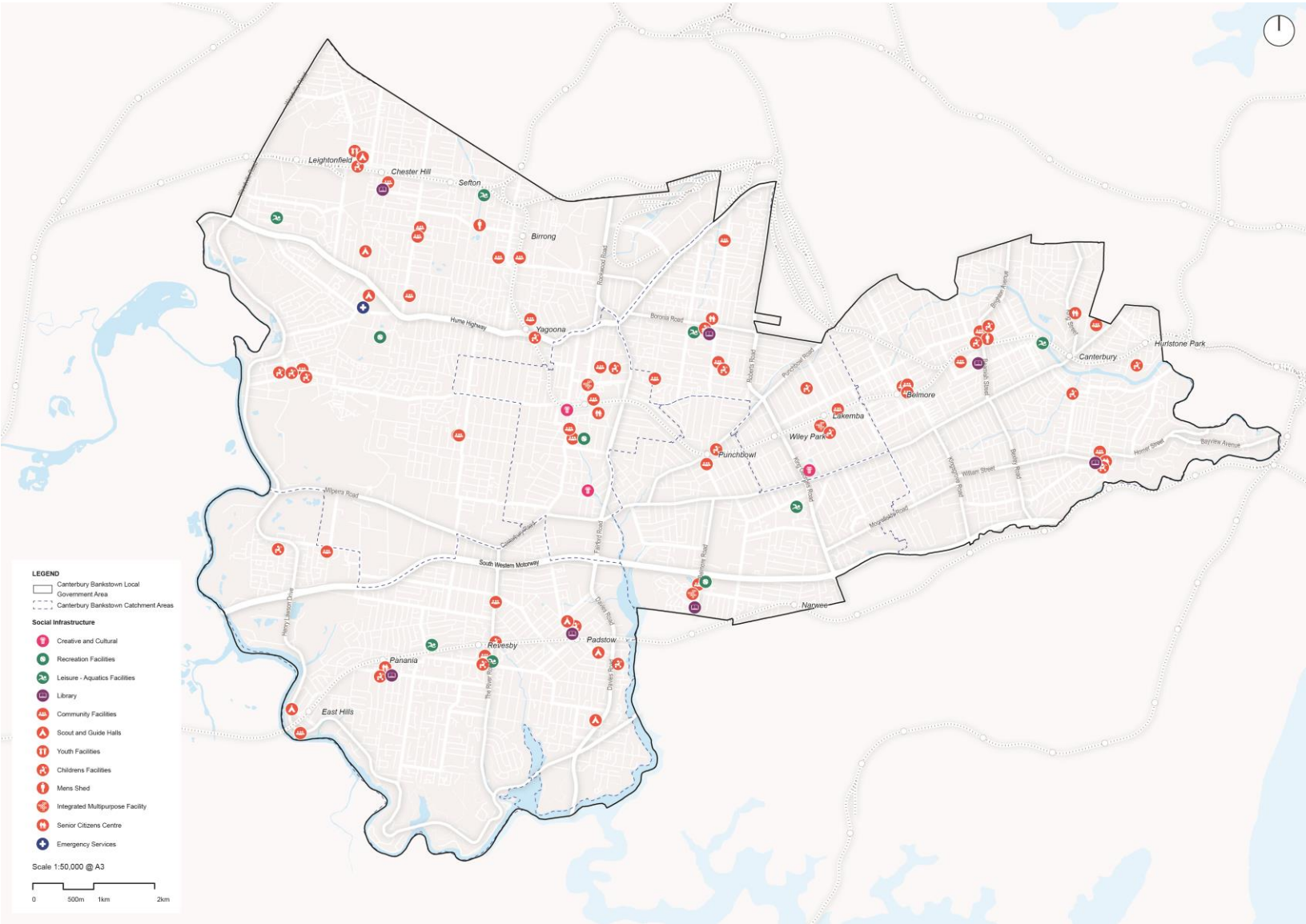
CBCity includes one integrated multipurpose hub – the Bankstown Library and Knowledge Centre, a recently built facility that is co-located with the Bryan Brown Theatre and a local open space and plaza, within walking distance of Bankstown Station.

Figure 2 – Integrated multipurpose community facility, Bankstown Library and Knowledge Centre



Source: Ethos Urban.

Figure 3 – Community facilities, CBCity



Source: Ethos Urban.

3.3 Local community facilities

CBCity provides a range of small, localised community facilities to deliver specific services within neighbourhoods. These local community facilities include:

- Community centres, meeting rooms and halls,
- Scout and Guide halls,
- Early childhood health centres,
- Senior citizens' centres,
- Youth centres, and
- Men's sheds.

An assessment of each facility type is provided below.

3.3.1 Community centres, halls and meeting rooms

CBCity Council plays an important role in the provision of community halls, centres and meeting rooms to meet the needs of current and future populations.

There are a relatively large number (31) of community centres, halls and meeting rooms across CBCity, which form a network that spans various sizes and purposes. Community centres, halls and meeting rooms provide a mix of meeting spaces for community groups and larger spaces for community events. These facilities provide space for a range of local events, activities and programs to meet the social, educational, cultural and recreational needs of the community. They often include classrooms, meeting spaces, kitchens and administrative areas.

There is a mixed level of provision of community centres, halls and meeting rooms across CBCity – while some facilities are working well, there are opportunities to improve these facilities to better meet the needs of the growing CBCity community. For example:

- Many of Council's facilities are located adjacent to or within public parks or reserves. While this presents some challenges around utilisation and activation, it offers opportunities to increase the integration and interaction of indoor and outdoor spaces – potentially increasing the space and capacity of some facilities.
- Few Council facilities are located as part of a local "high street" where residents are accessing daily living needs (e.g. shopping, medical centres, schools). Developing community facilities in "high street" locations may increase the visibility, awareness and utilisation of local facilities.
- While some facilities (e.g. Yagoona Community Centre), have been recently refurbished, many facilities are smaller, older and under-utilised. Some facilities are also in relatively poor condition and require significant upgrades to facilitate increased functionality enhanced utilisation.
- Very few of CBCity's community facilities are activated during the day. Most community facilities include bookable rooms available to the community but these facilities are not proactively managed by venue staff, and hirers will need to collect keys from Council Customer Service. Neighbourhood Centres (e.g. Lakemba, Punchbowl) are generally leased to community groups who staff and activate these spaces, however, other facilities are generally not used unless by a hirer.
- There is a high proportion of small community meeting rooms and other facilities (e.g. Condell Park Community Community Hall, Georges Hall Community Centre), rather than larger, more flexible community spaces. Leading practice in community facility planning and provision has seen many local governments move away from small and dispersed facilities towards a small number of larger, centrally located, flexible and multipurpose spaces.
- There are a small number of shared use facilities that have been delivered in partnership with other local stakeholders (e.g. Chester Hill Community Centre, which has been delivered in partnership with NSW Department of Education). Council is actively pursuing other shared use opportunities with other stakeholders, including NSW Department of Education, with whom Council has recently signed an MOU to explore joint use and shared use opportunities.

- Other organisations within CBCity provide a range of complementary spaces that are used by the community for small events, e.g. sports clubs, RSLs and schools. However, these spaces are not administered by Council, and Council will need to continue to play a role in developing inclusive, affordable spaces for use by the whole community.
- Some facilities within CBCity serve a regional population, including Belmore Stadium, Memorial Oval and Bankstown Velodrome, attracting users from across Greater Sydney – and state government may have a role in providing funds for their operation and maintenance.

Previous studies of community facilities in the former Canterbury LGA (see *Canterbury Area Community and Cultural Facilities Strategy*, Elton Consulting, 2017) found centres were accessible via public transport and well integrated and utilised. However, facilities had constrained hiring policies of venues and the inability to cater for short term hirers. Current spaces are considered dated and lack storage for users. Aside from Lakemba, community centres are not available for private functions. It was found there was a duplication of facilities given their single purpose and close location.

Figure 4 – Georges Hall Community Centre (L) and Yagoona Community Centre (R)



Source: Ethos Urban.

3.3.2 Scout and Guides halls

Like many other Councils in NSW, CBCity has historically taken a role in the provision of halls to support Scouts and Guides to deliver their programs. CBCity currently provides eight scout and guide halls across the LGA.

Some key themes regarding the provision of Scouts and Guides halls in CBCity include:

- Provision of community spaces dedicated to a single user group is no longer a contemporary model of community facility provision. Increasingly, community centres are programmed as spaces where many members of the community can come together to meet each other and interact.
- Scout and guide halls are generally not accessible to the general public, and do not provide opportunities for broader access – even when the hall is under-utilised. The network of scout and guide halls within CBCity is not well integrated with the broader community centre and halls network.
- They are located within green and open spaces, which can reduce the visual prominence of the facility and may impact negatively on perceptions of safety.
- There are a large number of scout and guide halls in CBCity. Some of these halls have regular but infrequent bookings from Scouts and Girl Guides groups, but are not well-used outside of these times. CBCity is currently growing rapidly, and there may be opportunities to renew some of these facilities to meet broader community needs.

3.3.3 Early childhood health clinics

Like many other Councils in NSW, CBCity has historically taken a role in the provision of early childhood health clinics to support NSW Health to deliver their early childhood health programs. CBCity currently provides seven early childhood health centres across the LGA.

Key considerations in planning for early childhood health clinic provision in CBCity include:

- Stakeholder consultation undertaken by Council with NSW Health indicated that NSW Health is moving towards integrated models of health provision, based in “one-stop-shop” style facilities. Early childhood health centres can be isolated suburban facilities that are inflexible.
- Varied levels of utilisation across the LGA (e.g. Georges Hall early childhood health clinic has been vacant for some time). Some facilities have been repurposed (e.g. Condell Park clinic is now used as a migrant resource centre). There may be opportunities to increase the utilisation of these facilities through renewal or consolidation.
- There may be value in retaining some smaller walkable childhood health facilities to support young families within growth areas, particularly in future high density precincts.

Previous studies of community facilities in the former Canterbury LGA (see *Canterbury Area Community and Cultural Facilities Strategy*, Elton Consulting, 2017) found that there are clusters of Early Childhood Health Centres (EHC) which present opportunity for amalgamation. The services possess high community benefit, are well utilised and located in accessible areas. The Early Childhood Health Centres function well, however some of the facilities are in poor condition. The Lakemba facility was identified to be in the poorest condition. The Sydney Local Health District EHC coordinator found that Punchbowl’s newest facility was found to be the most successful and would be a good precedent for other areas.

Figure 5 – Georges Hall Early Childhood Health Centre



Source: Ethos Urban.

3.3.4 Senior citizens' centres

There are six senior citizens' centres located within CBCity. These centres offer a broad range of activities to people aged 50 and over, including cultural, social and recreation services, as well as lifelong learning activities. Key considerations in planning for senior citizens centres in CBCity include:

- Seniors activities can be accommodated in a range of community, cultural and recreation facilities. Contemporary models of provision generally recommend that hall/meeting space is considered as part of an integrated multipurpose facility to maximise utilisation and activation.
- Senior citizens' centres in CBCity are relatively small (<400 sqm) and are frequently co-located with other standalone community facilities, including early childhood health centres. In some instances, these facilities have been redeveloped as a larger, flexible, multipurpose community hub (e.g. Yagoona Community Centre).

Previous studies of community facilities in the former Canterbury LGA (see *Canterbury Area Community and Cultural Facilities Strategy*, Elton Consulting, 2017) found that community service facilities provide fundamental and valuable services benefitting the community. They are highly utilised but limited in their operations due to the lack of space. Although facilities are accessible by public transport there is a lack of car parking. There is opportunity in consolidating facilities which are located close to each other into larger, more functional spaces.

3.3.5 Youth centres

Youth centres are intended to offer dedicated space for young people to undertake cultural, social, educational and recreational activities, and to access youth-specific services. However, increasingly youth-focused programs are offered through facilities with a broader user base, such as libraries, community centres or recreational facilities. Additionally, youth services also provide services in open spaces, such as local plazas.

There are two youth centres located within CBCity – Bill Lovelee Youth Centre in Chester Hill and Belmore Youth Resource Centre in Belmore.

Key considerations in planning for youth centres in CBCity include:

- Activities and services for young people can be accommodated in a range of community, cultural and recreation facilities. Contemporary models of provision generally recommend that hall/meeting space is considered as part of an integrated multipurpose facility to maximise utilisation and activation.
- There are varied levels of utilisation of youth centres within CBCity. Belmore Youth Resource Centre is well utilised by young people, service providers and youth workers. A drop in service is offered at the centre three afternoons a week during term time, and the facility is staffed Monday – Friday, 9AM – 5PM. In contrast, the Bill Lovelee Youth Centre in Chester Hill is not well utilised, nor is it used exclusively by young people. Instead, it hosts a range of activities including religious groups.

Figure 6 – Bill Lovelee Youth Centre, Chester Hill



Source: Ethos Urban.

3.3.6 Men's sheds

CBCity Council operates two Men's Sheds across the LGA. These spaces aim to provide a more social and less isolating environment for men of all ages and backgrounds to get together and work on projects and connect with others. These facilities are located in Birrong and Campsie.

3.4 Libraries

There are ten libraries in CBCity which offer a range of online and hardcopy resources, computers, WiFi, study spaces and meeting rooms. These libraries are distributed across the LGA, in a range of local centres, including:

Greenacre, Chester Hill, Padstow, Lakemba, Riverwood, Campsie, Bankstown CBD, Earlwood and Panania. A small library in Riverwood is due to be demolished shortly, as it has been replaced by the new Riverwood Library, which was delivered as part of the Washington Park redevelopment.

There is a mixed level of provision of libraries across CBCity – the library network includes both high quality, recently built, contemporary flagship facilities (i.e. Bankstown Library and Knowledge Centre) and older, more basic facilities (e.g. Lakemba, Earlwood and Padstow Libraries). Some key themes regarding library provision in CBCity include:

- There are a diverse range of library facilities throughout CBCity. Some facilities are small, standalone libraries in suburban centres, with limited floorspace (less than 500sqm) that limit the flexibility and useability of the library for a range of programs and services. Other libraries (e.g. Bankstown, Chester Hill, Riverwood and Campsie) are relatively recently built facilities, and include flexible meeting spaces, are located in town centres, and facilitate a broad range of activities.
- A strength of existing libraries is their close proximity to public transport. Some facilities are located within town centres or as part of shopping centres (e.g. Campsie Library) and are well-connected to the surrounding community and daily living needs for residents. Some libraries are also co-located with other social infrastructure, enhancing utilisation of these facilities.
- The utilisation of some library facilities could be improved (e.g. Panania and Earlwood). Some of these facilities require significant investment and upgrades to provide spaces that meet contemporary expectations for high quality design, information technology and collaborative learning opportunities.

Previous studies of libraries in the former Canterbury LGA (see *Canterbury Area Community and Cultural Facilities Strategy*, Elton Consulting, 2017) found that a great strength of existing libraries is their utilisation and proximate location to public transport. Libraries have evolved into cultural hubs, providing space and facilities for other services. Contrarily, it has been outlined that facilities are restricted in their size limiting their utilisation and flexibility. Lakemba and Campsie have been identified as libraries which need to expand in size.

Figure 7 – Chester Hill Library (L) and Campsie Library (R)



Source: Ethos Urban.

3.5 Childcare centres / preschools

CBCity Council plays a role in the provision of childcare centres and preschools to meet the needs of current and future populations. It is beyond the scope of this Report to address provision of childcare services in detail, but it is noted that Council currently provides 22 childcare centres and preschools, some of which are leased to not-for-profit childcare providers.

Key considerations in planning for childcare provision in CBCity include:

- The former Canterbury and Bankstown Councils had different approaches to childcare provision. Canterbury City Council owned and operated a not-for-profit childcare service, while Bankstown Council owned facilities that were leased to other providers. CBCity is a provider of childcare services in the LGA.
- The majority of children's services in CBCity are provided by government organisations, not for profits and provide organisations, but Council may have a role in providing choice and demonstrating best practice within the market.
- Some childcare centres within CBCity are leased by providers at significantly below market rates, and there may be opportunities to strategically enhance the financial sustainability of some of these centres.

3.6 Creative and cultural facilities

CBCity operates four cultural facilities across the LGA, including Bankstown Arts Centre – a staffed facility open to the public. Detailed planning of cultural and creative facilities is outside the scope of this report (and has been covered in Council's Creative City plan). However, it is noted that there is currently an uneven provision of cultural and creative facilities across the LGA. There are no facilities in Campsie, the City's major growth centre other than Bankstown, and in the future Council may wish to consider provision of cultural and creative facilities in this centre to support forecast population growth and enhance Campsie as a civic precinct.

Previous studies of libraries in the former Canterbury LGA (see *Canterbury Area Community and Cultural Facilities Strategy*, Elton Consulting, 2017) found that some cultural facilities are isolated from public transport and services, creating an issue of safety. Spaces are limited in size and do not have suitable amenity, restricting the use of the building as a venue.

CBCity Council has already undertaken some work to analyse the supply of cultural facilities across CBCity (see *Creative CBCity*, 2019). Council's draft Strategy for cultural and creative resources identifies a range of actions to support artistic and cultural opportunities for professional practitioners and the broader community, including via arts facilities, and through open spaces, urban and environmental planning and community development. The draft Strategy recognises the importance of creativity in shaping CBCity's social fabric and celebrating the community's unique identity.

Regarding formal cultural and creative facilities, Council has noted that it is important creative and cultural hubs are accessible and diverse. Artists want to live and work locally, where appropriate spaces are accessible. There are areas in the Canterbury-Bankstown neighbourhood which are underutilised and unused, spaces which present possible opportunity for activities such as concerts, exhibitions, street art and workshops.

3.7 Other facility types

CBCity Council has recently undertaken detailed social infrastructure assessments for other facility types. These plans and strategies are summarised below and have informed the development of this Report.

3.7.1 Open space

Open Space Strategy - City of Canterbury (2017)

The former City of Canterbury Council developed an *Open Space Strategy* in 2017 to guide the future provision, development and management of open space across the LGA. The Strategy identified that the former City of Canterbury had 341.3 hectares of space, of which 220.6 (64.6%) is Council owned and 120.7 hectares (35.4%) is Crown or non-Council land. The Strategy identified that much of this open space provision is concentrated in the eastern and south-west edges of the LGA, and that suburbs undergoing significant growth are likely to experience gaps in provision. It recommended that Council looks to provide open space in areas with current shortfalls in provision.

A summary of the supply of open space in Canterbury LGA is included in Table 2 over page.

Table 2 Supply of open space, Canterbury LGA

Open space category	Ha
Natural area	44.0
Sportsground	106.5
Park	146.2
General community use	31.0
Other	13.6
Total	341.3

Source: Canterbury City Council.

Community consultation to develop the Strategy found there is a desire to protect, maintain and enhance existing areas as open spaces are an important part of the neighbourhood. Additional green infrastructure is needed to cater for group sport activities such as Soccer, Rugby and Touch Football. It was also found that walking and cycling paths were highly valued by the community.

Open Space Strategic Plan - Bankstown City Council (2014)

The former Bankstown City Council undertook detailed open space planning to inform the development of the *Open Space Strategic Plan 2022*. The Plan identified that the Bankstown LGA has an extensive supply and variety of open space settings that meet a diverse range of community demands. Former Bankstown City Council had approximately 800 hectares of open space, including 330 public spaces – a third of these sites were less than 0.2 hectares in size. A summary of the supply of open space in Bankstown LGA is included in Table 3.

Table 3 Supply of open space, Bankstown LGA

Open space category	Ha
Natural area	352.28
Sportsground	342.60
Park	97.48
General community use	3.81
Uncategorised	3.71
Total	799.88

Source: Bankstown City Council.

Significant state/regional sporting and recreation facilities controlled by Council are also complemented by major open spaces controlled by other government agencies or private owners, including open spaces such as Georges River National Park and private golf courses. Some areas of open space are currently controlled by exclusive leases, meaning that it is not necessarily available for broader community use.

The Plan identifies that the former LGA is changing with greater demands being placed on this open space from a growing and diverse population. The effective and long term management of this open space is critical to support population growth.

3.7.2 Aquatic and leisure facilities

Leisure and Aquatics Supporting Plan, City of Canterbury Bankstown (2019)

City of Canterbury Bankstown Council undertook a detailed assessment of leisure and aquatic facilities to inform the development of the *Leisure and Aquatics Supporting Plan* (adopted August 2019). The Plan identifies that there are six leisure and aquatic facilities in Canterbury-Bankstown, located in Birrong, Canterbury, Greenacre, Revesby, Roselands and Villawood.

Supply analysis of these facilities identified the following considerations:

- *Oversupply – All aquatic facilities cater for small population catchments, and there is an excess of similar leisure and aquatic facilities within Greater Sydney and Council's boundaries. All residents have access to other facilities outside Council's boundaries.*
- *Inappropriate facilities – They have passed their useful life and lack points of difference between them. They are not compliant with current standards and their layout increases resource management costs and risk. Moreover, they perform only local functions, not acting as regional or district facilities.*
- *Access – Many of the facilities are not easily accessible or well-connected, especially for active transport.*
- *Location – They are not strategically placed near commercial operations or where our community needs them to be. Many of the facilities are not highly visible to the community, which limits awareness and attendance.*
- *Network – While facilities are located in each of Council's wards, they are not planned as a network of complementary facilities. Planning by wards does not account for the proximity to similar facilities in other council areas, population density or barriers to access.*
- *Co-location – Many of the facilities are co-located with existing open space, but there is little connectivity between them. (p.9)*

The Strategy draws on a detailed analysis of the economic, social, recreation, community development and environmental opportunities presented by each site within the LGA to develop recommendations.

4.0 Preliminary supply demand analysis

To progress this community facility analysis, Ethos Urban is undertaking a supply and demand analysis to understand gaps in provision that will need to be addressed as part of future planning for community facilities. This analysis will inform recommendations for future provision of community facilities.

This detailed analysis is currently underway and is guided by a set of benchmarks which set out provision for particular facility types across certain population numbers and geographic areas. These benchmarks, and the preliminary analysis of the quality, quantity and distribution of facilities across CBCity are discussed below.

An important range of qualitative information informed this work, including engagement with Council staff and other key stakeholders about critical issues relating to community facilities in the LGA.

4.1 Benchmarking provision

A detailed supply and demand analysis of community facilities in CBCity is underway and is guided by a suite of benchmarks which set out guidelines for provision of particular facility types across certain population numbers and geographic areas. The benchmarks that will be applied are at Appendix A.

It is noted that social infrastructure planning in a diverse and fast-changing urban environment like CBCity presents significant challenges. The combination of a growing population and limited land supply highlights the need for solutions beyond those traditionally proposed for social infrastructure planning.

Simplistic methods purely involving population to facility ratios and numeric benchmarks do not reflect the contemporary challenges of increasing densities, declining land supply, increasing provision costs and changing community expectations. Combined with the emerging shifts in how programs and services are delivered, there is a need to look at planning for social infrastructure in creative ways, seeking to realise opportunities, take account of feasibility and financial constraints, and deliver plans that are aspirational, but also flexible, realistic and pragmatic.

Numeric benchmarks are only one piece in the puzzle of social infrastructure planning, and rarely reflect the complexity of planning for population growth in established areas. Future demands on social infrastructure will require Council to make the most effective use of available land and property opportunities - and to develop collaborative solutions with stakeholders, service providers and communities.

Preliminary analysis of the quality, quantity and distribution of facilities across the LGA has led to some key findings, which are discussed below.

4.2 Quantity and distribution

CBCity is a large local government area, covering 110 km² and a wide variety of local and regional centres. Council owns or manages 97 community facilities, which form a network that spans various sizes and purposes.

Understanding the quantum of community facilities is important but must be overlaid with other qualitative considerations such as usage, type and proximity to other services and facilities.

Although there are a relatively large number of community facilities in CBCity, some of these facilities are older, poorly located or require significant upgrades to meet contemporary models of community facility provision. Some preliminary considerations regarding the quantity of community facilities within CBCity include:

- Many of Council's facilities are located adjacent to or within public parks or reserves which presents challenges around utilisation and activation.
- Some facilities are smaller, older and under-utilised. Some facilities are also in relatively poor condition and require significant upgrades to facilitate increased functionality enhanced utilisation. In contrast, other facilities are recently refurbished.

- There is a high proportion of small community meeting rooms and other facilities (e.g. Condell Park Community Community Hall, Georges Hall Community Centre), rather than larger, more flexible community spaces.

Regarding distribution, the majority of community facilities in CBCity are clustered in local centres, including Bankstown CBD and Campsie, and along major transport routes.

The heat map at Figure 8 over page shows the density of facilities across the LGA, noting gaps at the southern edge of the LGA. There are also gaps in Chullora industrial area and Bankstown Airport, however it is noted that these are currently industrial areas and therefore have limited demand for social infrastructure. This map does not take into account the provision of schools or regional social infrastructure, which play an important role in meeting demand across the LGA.

Consideration of spatial distribution is important, however, this finding must be overlaid with other qualitative considerations. CBCity includes strong east-west public transport connections along heavy rail lines and future metro lines. These transport connections are primary access routes to a wide range of community facilities within CBCity and in surrounding LGAs.

4.3 Quality

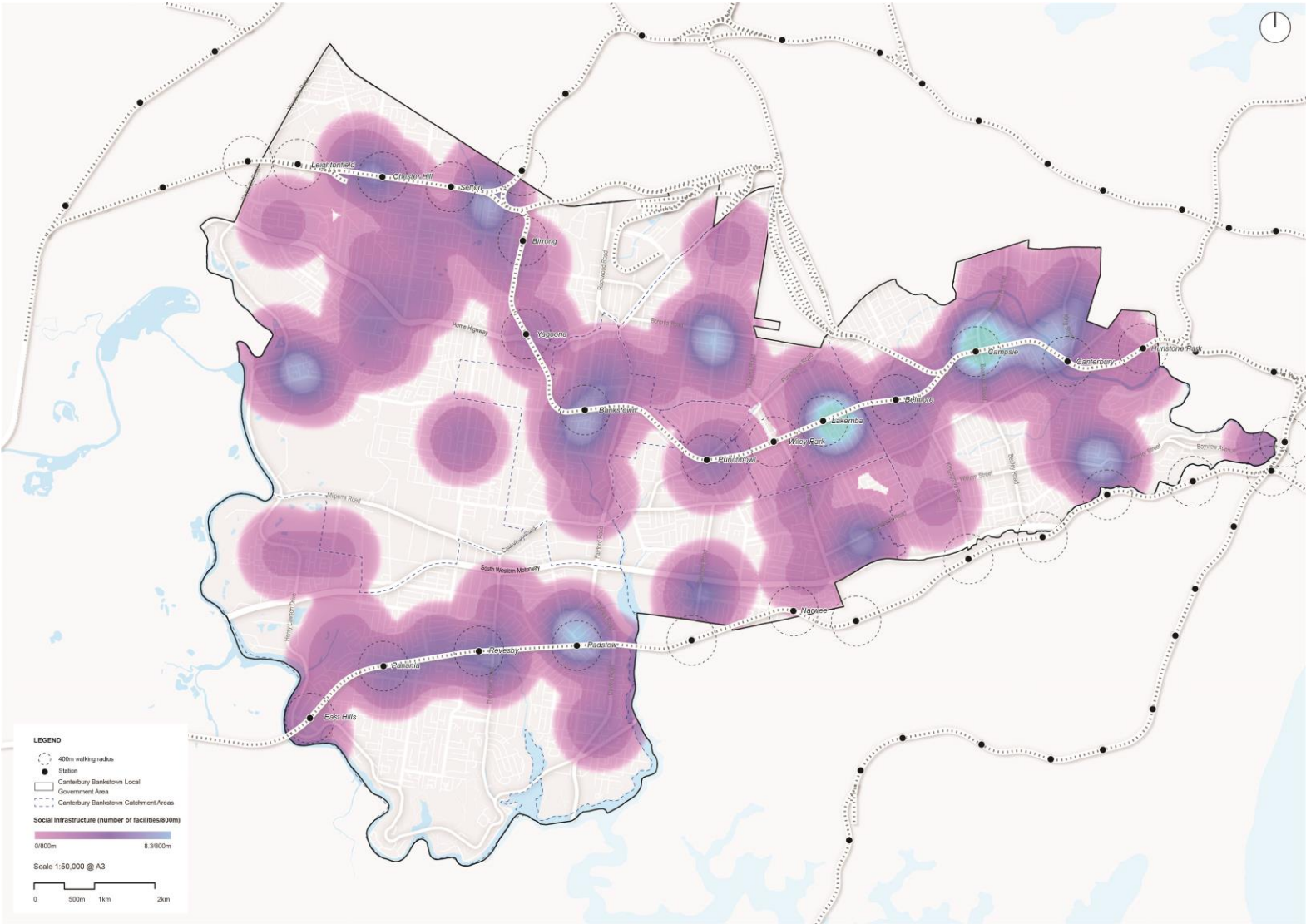
CBCity actively maintains its network of community facilities, and many facilities have recently undergone expansions, renovations and upgrades.

The condition and appearance of facilities plays a role in shaping positive perceptions and experiences of past and future users.

Key considerations regarding quality include:

- Many Council facilities were established in the 1970s and 1980s and reflect models of service provision no longer current,
- Some facilities are poorly integrated into their surrounding context, e.g. isolated within a green setting,
- Some facilities require significant upgrades or refurbishment to improve their operation, function and activation,
- There are also opportunities for small scale upgrades and enhancements to improve the visibility and consistency of services across the facilities, including provision of improved signage.

Figure 8 – Distribution of community facilities within CBCity



Source: Ethos Urban.

5.0 Current issues, challenges and opportunities

The following section provides a brief overview of current challenges and opportunities influencing the provision of community facilities within CBCity.

5.1 Population growth and changing demographics

CBCity's population is forecast to grow by around 154,000 residents over twenty years - from 346,300 in 2016 to 499,890 in 2036. Over the next twenty years, the demographic profile of this area is expected to continue to evolve. Due to the diversity of the LGA, there are few consistent patterns across the entire LGA. However, the City will consolidate its role as one of Sydney's most ethnically diverse communities, and average age will continue to rise.

Population growth within CBCity has involved social and cultural change, which community facilities design and delivery will need to respond to. Particular hotspots of growth include Canterbury, Campsie, Punchbowl and Yagoona, and the new City and Southwest Metro will also drive growth and urban renewal along this corridor. Some demographic highlights over the planning horizon for the LSPS include:

- An increase in all main age groups, including a 16.1% increase in population under working age, a 32.7% increase in population of retirement age and a 14.1% increase in population of working age,
- Over the longer term, decline in families and first-time homebuyers attracted to housing opportunities in neighbouring growth areas,
- A large gain of young adults as a result of higher density development,
- Slight loss of empty-nesters and retirees,
- The largest increase being in the 35 to 39 age group, which is expected to increase by 5,135 and account for 7.1% of total persons,
- The largest 5 year age group in 2026 being the 25 to 29 age group, with a total of 32,328 persons,
- A slight decrease in average household size from 2.98 to 2.91.

CBCity Council's long term vision is to deliver a thriving and dynamic city, and sustain community wellbeing and liveability as the community grows. High quality, flexible and well-located community facilities are critical to supporting population growth and meeting the changing needs of the community. Some key considerations include:

- Some facilities within CBCity are dedicated to single user groups, ageing and inflexible – these facilities may lack the flexibility to respond to the changing needs of diverse communities and may remain underutilised without renewal and refurbishments.
- Existing community facilities across CBCity are likely to come under significant pressure due to population growth, and there are likely to be increasing financial demands on Council associated with rising infrastructure costs and increasing expectations from the community.
- Forecast growth and urban transformation within CBCity can offer opportunities to deliver new and improved social infrastructure as large sites and precincts are redeveloped and planned holistically. For example, Council have identified opportunities to holistically plan for the provision of social infrastructure across Campsie.

5.2 Limited land supply and increasing pressure on available infrastructure

CBCity will need to accommodate another 154,000 residents by 2036, and will mostly achieve this through redevelopment of existing areas. Opportunities for additional land for open space recreation and community facilities are limited and need to be explored wherever possible.

Although CBCity is a major population centre in Greater Sydney, with the same population as the ACT, it lacks some of the infrastructure of major cities – such as large exhibition spaces and cultural facilities.

Some of the existing social infrastructure across the LGA is under utilised, and there may be opportunities to renew and enhance these facilities to increase utilisation across this network – taking into account the difficulty of acquiring

land for new built facilities, such as libraries, aquatic centres, indoor sports centres and community centres. Population growth and increasingly cultural diversity will also increase the range of activities desired in public and community spaces – creating more potential for user conflict.

Increasing density also means that size will matter in terms of public open space, sporting facilities and community facilities. There are threshold limits to how many residents can be accommodated within a given facility or area. Planning for residential growth without a plan to meet the additional population's need for social infrastructure will directly erode local liveability and community wellbeing. Although it may seem that CBCity has an oversupply of some facility types, these facilities are vital public assets that are likely to be needed to support population growth in the longer term future.

A range of strategies will be needed to meet the challenge of providing social infrastructure in CBCity. Council has already begun to explore some of these options – for example, undertaking partnerships with NSW Department of Education to share the use of community infrastructure and delivering new and renewed community facilities that are flexible and adaptable to meet changing community needs over time.

Other strategies to deliver social infrastructure to support population growth in CBCity may include:

- Delivering transformative city shaping infrastructure in key locations that have the potential to shape growth and ensure that civic and community facilities are at the heart of urban transformation in CBCity;
- Focusing on delivery of social infrastructure in growth centres, corridors and spines to support sustainable growth, including in collaboration with developers and other stakeholders;
- Enhancing the effectiveness of existing facilities;
- Meeting growing community needs through partnerships with other providers; and
- Delivering flexible, adaptable spaces accessible across the LGA that can meet a variety of community needs.

5.3 A community of diverse languages, cultures, experiences and needs

People of all ages, abilities, incomes, cultures, languages, religions, lifestyles and experiences live in CBCity, and the diversity of the community is an asset that enriches and strengthens the vibrancy of the City.

More than 140 languages are spoken in the LGA, and residents come from more than 100 countries. Many residents of CBCity were born overseas (44.0%), and 60.1% of residents speak a language other than English at home, almost twice the Greater Sydney average (35.8%). 13.1% of residents do not speak English well or at all. There are large Arabic, Vietnamese, Greek and Chinese languages speaking communities in the LGA – as well as a large Muslim community (20.8% of residents). Like other parts of Western Sydney, CBCity is a centre of migration for Australia, and almost one in five (17.5%) CBCity residents born overseas arrived in Australia in the last five years.

Community facilities and other social infrastructure plays an important role in strengthening social connections between people of diverse cultures, and to foster a thriving, dynamic and welcoming community. Community facilities provide spaces for local programs and services, English language classes, cultural and community groups – as well as informal meeting spaces and events that enable residents to build community and place-based connections. Cultural and creative facilities also offer an opportunity to showcase and celebrate the diversity of the CBCity community. Facilities have a role in building cross-cultural and intergenerational understanding and trust, as well as individual and community wellbeing.

Community facilities in CBCity will need to be inclusive of all people, as well as culturally sensitive to encourage the social and civic participation of all residents. For example, a lack of women only recreation facilities, such as gyms or swimming pools, may act as a barrier for Muslim women's participation in healthy active living programs.

5.4 Large and dispersed network of facilities – challenges of maintenance

CBCity is a relatively large local government area, extending over 110km² – from Earlwood in the east to Milperra in the west, Picnic Point in the south and Chester Hill in the north.

Across this large geographic area, CBCity maintains a large number of facilities of varying sizes, quality and functions. There are a large number of “legacy” community facilities that reflect service provision models that are no longer current – such as early childhood health clinics, senior citizens’ centres and scout and guide halls. Other facilities are based on historic patterns of development and suburban delivery models which are no longer fit for purpose – for example, some facilities are isolated from public transport but have large parking areas. Some of these facilities are underutilised, and of varying quality – and there are challenges for Council associated with maintaining, renewing and planning for this extensive network.

Due to the scale of population growth forecast across CBCity to 2036, it will be important to retain many of these facilities to support the increased population over this longer planning horizon – although some of these facilities may be underutilised in the short and medium term. There may be potential to explore transitional and pop-up uses that activate these facilities for local communities, and to review. Social infrastructure, including community facilities, can play an important role in placemaking and enhancing community character of local centres as they grow.

5.5 Delivering social inclusion and equity

Compared with the Greater Sydney average, some members of the CBCity community are experiencing disadvantage:

- 13.1% of residents do not speak English well or at all (compared with 6.5% across Greater Sydney),
- 8.1% of residents live in social housing (compared with 4.6% across Greater Sydney),
- 6.7% of residents need assistance with daily living needs (compared with 4.9% across Greater Sydney),
- 47.9% of residents have no qualification (compared with 37.7% across Greater Sydney),
- 18.6% of households are experiencing housing stress (compared with 11.8% across Greater Sydney).

Community facilities support social inclusion and equity through the provision of accessible, affordable facilities and services. CBCity’s network of community facilities includes affordable early childhood education and care services, facilities and programs for young people and older people, opportunities for education and lifelong learning (including in Council’s libraries), access to technology, and social and cultural infrastructure that enhances quality of life for all people – regardless of income.

Community facilities can also act as catalysts for local economic development, creativity and enterprise – by providing spaces that support emerging businesses through working spaces. For example, local entrepreneurs may use libraries as workspaces, or for meetings.

Community facilities also support residents experiencing disadvantage by providing a physical location for local services to provide programs and work in partnership with the community to build its strengths. For example, CBCity includes a number of migrant resource centres and youth centres.

There are some other organisations in the area that provide spaces for hire to the community, such as sports clubs and RSLs, but CBCity Council will continue to have a role in providing affordable and accessible spaces that are inclusive of all community members, regardless of income.

6.0 Future challenges and opportunities – the view to 2036

The following section includes a summary of future challenges and opportunities for community facility provision in CBCity to 2036.

6.1 Developing a contemporary network of facilities to support a growing, diverse population

To support and strengthen the CBCity community as it grows will require a contemporary network of social infrastructure that meets changing and diverse community needs.

Flexible, adaptable and multipurpose spaces and places will be required to meet emerging and future community needs. Community space needs to be designed to be flexible to changes in ways of living and working within the community. The need for multipurpose spaces also needs to be balanced with the need for purpose-built spaces for specific uses, e.g. galleries and exhibition spaces.

Planning community facilities as a network will also involve recognising the relative strengths of particular facilities to avoid duplication of services and ensure that a range of spaces are available across the LGA.

Community facilities play an important role in facilitating and enabling a vibrant, cohesive and socially sustainable community – and are strongly valued by residents. Recent community engagement undertaken to inform the CSP indicates that CBCity residents value access to parks and open spaces, the village feel of centres and the diverse cultures within the community. Residents would like to see more community and cultural programs and celebrations including markets, creative spaces and public art.

6.2 Maximising Council-owned assets to deliver vibrant, walkable and integrated centres

CBCity includes approximately 43 centres of various scales, from small neighbourhood centres at Condell Park and Panania, town centres in Lakemba, Belmore, Revesby and Canterbury, to large strategic centres at Campsie and Bankstown CBD. These diverse centres provide foci for retail, employment, business, cafes, restaurants and social infrastructure within the broader urban fabric of CBCity.

Many of these centres include existing community facilities, which could be better integrated into the urban fabric of these local centres – to enhance the character and activation of local centres, while diversifying the range of activities within the neighbourhood. For example, the “high street” model of community facility provision, as exemplified by Campsie Library, provides a multi-functional, flexible space in a major centre, co-located with other services and commercial facilities that meet daily living needs. This delivery model encourages utilisation of readily accessible facilities, as well as social interaction across diverse sectors of the community, bringing people together and enhancing community cohesion. Other service providers within CBCity are also seeking to locate their services within centres (e.g. NSW Health).

Current strategic planning frameworks also influence the provision of social infrastructure by emphasising placemaking, walkable neighbourhoods and the “30 minute city” concept. These drivers seek to co-locate services, employment and community facilities. Well-designed community facilities are also a key factor in vibrant and engaging places and contributes to the distinctive character and identity of local neighbourhoods. CBCity has the potential to renew facilities to ensure that they contribute towards the liveability and social sustainability of the community as it grows.

6.3 Community facilities at the heart of urban transformation

Revitalisation of community facilities as part of a holistic approach to urban renewal will maximise the value of the urban transformation focused along the two north-south spines of Chapel Road and the Eastern Lifestyle precinct:

- The Chapel Road spine, which extends from Chullora industrial area in the north to Salt Pan Creek industrial area in the south creates a connection through the Bankstown CBD that provides a focus for commercial, industrial and community activity in the western side of CBCity.
- The Eastern Lifestyle precinct, which is a spine that extends from the north to the south of the LGA, via Campsie, and focuses cultural, creative, commercial and community uses in the eastern side of the LGA.

There are opportunities to deliver new or revitalised community facilities along this spine to ensure that social inclusion and socio-economic diversity remain priorities as this area transforms. For example, there is an opportunity to build on the success of the Bankstown Library and Knowledge Centre to revitalise the Bankstown CBD. Additionally, renewal of Campsie Library will provide a civic anchor for the revitalisation of that precinct.

High quality, iconic community facilities can enhance sense of place and community identity as an area transforms – foregrounding community facilities within the context of urban transformation will help to ensure that CBCity residents continue to thrive as the city grows.

Facilities also enhance local character and identity and can contribute to sense of belonging and community development. Community facilities are a key form of infrastructure in high density communities and are necessary for liveability and encouraging healthy and active lifestyles.

6.4 Enabling new ways of living and working

Successful social infrastructure planning requires effective forecasting and responding to social and economic trends, including the needs of growing and emerging communities, and new patterns of living and working. In CBCity, some of these trends are likely to include:

- Changing patterns of use for community facilities, including the use of community facilities as informal gathering spaces or “community lounges”, and the use of facilities as informal work spaces. This can place pressure on older facilities that are not well designed to accommodate new uses.
- Residents in emerging high density neighbourhoods will need spaces where they can socialise and recreate outside their homes, which is likely to place pressure on existing infrastructure. High density living can create an increased risk of social isolation, loneliness and disconnection – provision of “third spaces” for people to spend time and connect with others is a critical way to mitigate this risk to community wellbeing.
- Flexible working patterns and the rise of independent entrepreneurs – freelancers, emerging businesses and independent entrepreneurs are likely to work outside conventional 9 – 5 working hours and will benefit from great spaces to work, close to home. Libraries and community centres are increasingly used as working spaces, and there may be opportunities to repurpose underutilised facilities as co-working and start-up hubs or maker spaces for use by a broad range of community members, to enhance the economic and social vibrancy of local neighbourhoods.

6.5 Recognising the value of public assets – taking a long term view of community facility provision

CBCity has an extensive network of community facilities to maintain – which can be costly and challenging due to the scale of the LGA. Some of these facilities are older, under-utilised and do not reflect contemporary models of community facility provision. However, these facilities are important public assets that are likely to have value in supporting forecast growth within CBCity.

It will be important for CBCity Council to take a long term view of community facilities provision, to plan facilities to support growth over a ten or twenty year planning horizon. If existing facilities are well-located to support future forecast growth, there may be opportunities to explore transitional or pop-up uses to activate these facilities as they “lie fallow” for more intensive uses in the future.

6.6 Innovative delivery models – planning for social infrastructure within a dynamic, growing area

Social infrastructure planning in a diverse and fast-changing urban environment like Canterbury-Bankstown presents significant challenges. CBCity Council will need to draw on innovative approaches to delivering social infrastructure to meet community needs in the context of limited land supply and increasing high density growth. The combination of a growing population and limited land supply highlights the need for solutions beyond those traditionally proposed for social infrastructure planning.

Simplistic methods purely involving population to facility ratios and numeric benchmarks do not reflect the contemporary challenges of increasing densities, declining land supply, increasing provision costs and changing community expectations. Combined with the emerging shifts in how programs and services are delivered, there is a

need to look at planning for social infrastructure in creative ways, seeking to realise opportunities, take account of feasibility and financial constraints, and deliver plans that are aspirational, but also flexible, realistic and pragmatic.

Numeric benchmarks are only one piece in the puzzle of social infrastructure planning, and rarely reflect the complexity of planning for population growth in established areas. Future demands on social infrastructure will require Council to make the most effective use of available land and property opportunities - and to develop collaborative solutions with stakeholders, service providers and communities.

Practically, CBCity will need to consider supply, demand, type, quality, trends and recommended actions to develop strategies for the provision of community facilities over the short, medium and longer term – and to inform Council's budgeting process, and operating and delivery plans.

There are opportunities for Council to deliver new and improved community facilities within CBCity that meet the needs of communities while making the best use of existing assets. For example:

- Establishing social infrastructure within integrated multipurpose community facilities (e.g. Bankstown Library and Knowledge Centre). These facilities accommodate a range of facilities in a “one stop shop” and provide improved access to a range of services, encourage compatible uses and supporting partnerships between service providers. They are also a cost-effective way of delivering community services – however, in a LGA as large and populous as CBCity, they need to be complemented by walkable local facilities.
- Emphasising placemaking and integrating community facilities within town centres and “high streets” to ensure activation throughout the day.
- Shared use of social infrastructure, including school facilities, to maximise the use and efficiency of spaces and buildings for community use by enabling use of facilities by a broader range of user groups.
- Exploring opportunities to enhance the cost-effectiveness and financial sustainability of facilities by exploring additional revenue streams, such as social enterprises, venue hire and cafes.
- Exploring innovative partnerships for delivery, such as public private partnerships that allow Council and the private sector to work together to deliver major projects. For example, sports clubs are prominent within the CBCity community and there may be opportunities to acknowledge and broker community access to these spaces.

7.0 Vision and principles for future community facilities provision

The following vision and principles will guide the provision and planning of social infrastructure in CBCity and provide the basis for engagement with Council, stakeholders and the community in the development of the LSPS.

7.1 Vision statement

Community facilities will support the wellbeing and resilience of CBCity's diverse community as it grows and changes.

This vision connects with Council's 2028 vision to develop a dynamic, thriving and real community as the city increases in density and diversity. It also recognises the critical role of high quality, flexible and well-located community facilities in achieving this goal.

7.2 Principles for delivery

A suite of draft principles have been prepared to inform the analysis of community facilities underpinning the development of the LSPS. These principles provide high level objectives to inform the provision and enhancement of future community infrastructure and services in CBCity.

7.2.1 Accessible and connected network

Community facilities should be a network of interconnected facilities, each of which plays a role in the whole network. All people in the community should have equitable access to local community facilities, services, programs, spaces and amenities as part of convenient, integrated and walkable neighbourhoods.

Community facilities located close to existing and planned public transport, existing and emerging centres, retail shops and businesses, can become focal points for local communities – enhancing community identity and improving community cohesion and connection.

7.2.2 Inspiring places and spaces that sustain community wellbeing

Community facilities should be designed and delivered in a way that creates high quality spaces for communities to connect, create, learn and socialise. Spaces and places designed with community in mind supports them to flourish.

Providing the spaces, places and connections that enable residents to be active, connect with nature, connect with each other and participate in sport, recreation and community life is an important investment for Council. This infrastructure forms the foundation for urban health and contributes to the social, physical and economic wellbeing of CBCity's communities.

7.2.3 Welcoming and grounded in community character and identity – culturally appropriate

The CBCity community is diverse, with a wide range of age groups, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, income levels and experiences. CBCity's community facilities and open spaces should reflect and enhance local character and community identities and values, providing welcoming spaces where people can come together.

A range of facilities appropriate to the needs of the culturally diverse community are required.

7.2.4 Adaptable and multipurpose places and spaces

Community facilities and other social infrastructure types are flexible in their form, function, programming and management, so they can respond to changing community needs and social trends. Facilities and spaces that are multipurpose (where appropriate) and co-located with other social infrastructure and services, are responsive and adaptable to community needs.

7.2.5 Socially, environmentally and economically sustainable

The role of social infrastructure in CBCity in sustaining social wellbeing, economic growth, diversity and environmental health is recognised and prioritised. Innovative models of infrastructure delivery support financial sustainability over the long term. New facilities should make use of environmentally sustainable designs, materials and technologies, and be delivered in locations that promote walking, cycling and public transport use.

7.2.6 Supports improvement of equity in the community

Some residents of CBCity are experiencing disadvantage – for example, they may live in social housing, lack educational qualifications, be a recently arrived migrant or have limited English proficiency. Community facilities have a role in addressing social inequality across CBCity by providing spaces that are accessible to all people, regardless of income – and educational, cultural, social and economic programs that enable all people to thrive.

7.2.7 Shaped by community participation

Community engagement is key to planning and developing community facilities that reflects community needs and aspirations, including new ways of living, working and recreating. This includes actively engaging with communities to understand changing patterns of use and delivering appropriate infrastructure for the future.

Appendix A. Benchmarks

Facility category	Definition	Target provision	Guide for floorspace	Comment
Integrated multipurpose facility	A large multipurpose community facility that is a focal point for the local community. It is delivered through a single building/site or a cluster of proximate buildings/sites and is typically integrated or co-located with other facility types within the network (e.g. library, indoor recreation facility). This type of facility provides a series of adaptable programming spaces for use by diverse sectors of the community, and may include a range of other spaces and uses as appropriate to meet community needs, e.g. access to support services, information and referral, and spaces for lifelong learning, active living, arts and creative programs. Integrated multipurpose facilities should be accessible on a walk-in basis and provide opportunities for spontaneous interaction among diverse members or sectors of the community. These facilities generally include an "anchor" such as a library or recreation centre.	Minimum 1 Integrated Multipurpose Facility per approx. 20,000 to 30,000 residents	Minimum floorspace of 2000sqm, aiming for at least 2500sqm where possible, increasing with the size of population	
Local community facilities	This category includes a range of facilities that do not meet best practice standards in terms of multipurpose facilities that are large (+2000sqm) and adaptable. It includes facilities that are small, localised and/or predominantly single use or specialised but provide no space for casual social interaction. For example: seniors centres, town halls, scout halls	Between 3 to 4 local community facilities per approx. 20,000 to 30,000 residents	Minimum floorspace per facility of 400sqm, increasing with the size of the catchment's population.	There may be community centres in Canerbury Bankstown that would not meet this benchmarks, although they currently meet the needs of the local community. This may indicate opportunities for expanding some facilities and rationalising others.
Community halls	Community halls provide a mix of meeting spaces from small group rooms to larger halls for bigger events.	1 per approx. 20,000 residents	Approximately 250 - 300sqm per facility	Contemporary models of community facility provision generally recommend that hall/meeting space is considered as part of an integrated multipurpose facility to maximise utilisation and activation.
Community meeting rooms	These facilities provide a space for a range of small, local level events and programz that meet the social, educational, cultural and recreational needs of the community. Community meeting rooms can include classrooms, meeting spaces, kitchen and admin areas.	1 per approx. 10,000 residents	Approximately 50 - 250 sqm per facility	Contemporary models of community facility provision generally recommend that hall/meeting space is considered as part of an integrated multipurpose facility to maximise utilisation and activation.
Dedicated youth space	Space for leisure, recreation, training and support services for your people. Space for a youth workers, employment training programs, drop in areas, formal areas and as a base for outreach services.	1 per approximately 30,000 - 60,000 residents	Approximately 400 - 500 sqm	Contemporary models of community facility provision generally recommend that youth space is considered as part of an integrated multipurpose facility to maximise utilisation and activation.

Facility category	Definition	Target provision	Guide for floorspace	Comment
Senior citizens centres	Dedicated space for seniors' groups and activities including a wide range of healthy ageing programs.	1 per approx. 40,000 - 60,000 residents	Approximately 250 - 400 sqm per facility	Seniors activities can be accommodated in a range of community, cultural and recreation facilities. Contemporary models of provision generally recommend that hall/meeting space is considered as part of an integrated multipurpose facility to maximise utilisation and activation. However, it is noted that there are a number of senior citizens' centres in Canterbury Bankstown, and therefore it may be pragmatic to identify a quantum of community facilities floorspace for this target age group.
Libraries	Libraries may be standalone facilities, although they may be integrated as part of larger integrated multipurpose facilities, where they typically form the anchor facility.	Minimum 1 branch library per approx. 20,000 to 30,000 residents, based on NSW State Library standards applied to this population size	Minimum floorspace for branch library of 1500sqm	The library can be co-located within an integrated community facility, following good practice. Branch libraries may be complemented by neighbourhood-level library link facilities.
Regional libraries	A regional or central library provides the main library service for an LGA or a region and requires additional floorspace for its large collection, range of services and back workroom activities and storage.	1 per LGA or region	28 sqm per 1,000 people for populations of 100,000 residents or more (i.e. a 2,800 sqm library for a population of 100,000 residents does not include additional space for central library functions).	
District libraries	Library located in a district centre that includes a significant resource collection both in books and media, as well as IT facilities, programming space and/or a variety of open areas for social interaction and relaxed reading.	1 per approx. 50,000 residents	39 sqm per 1,000 people for populations of 20,000 - 35,000 residents; 35 sqm per 1,000 people for populations of 35,001 - 65,000 residents	
Child care centre / preschool	These facilities are purpose-built or fitted out for the provision of early childhood education and care. The majority of provision is via private and not-for-profit sector.	CBCity would need to undertake a separate childcare needs analysis to establish appropriate benchmarks for provision of childcare across the LGA.		

Facility category	Definition	Target provision	Guide for floorspace	Comment
Cultural and creative facilities	This category includes a range of creative and cultural facilities including maker spaces accessible to the public, space for professional artistic development (e.g. rehearsal rooms, artist studios) and spaces for performance/audiences (e.g. theatres, cinemas, exhibition space).	To be determined in collaboration with Council - cultural and creative facilities are an important piece of infrastructure and we would recommend some level of provision in association with multi-use facilities.	Target to be determined in collaboration with Council - cultural and creative facilities are an important piece of infrastructure and we would recommend some level of provision in association with multi-use facilities.	Opportunities for provision across the LGA can be explored – with a view to realising opportunities in a range of ways – for example through working with the private sector to facilitate delivery of makers' spaces and spaces for cultural production – in the absence of specific targets.