



Fernhill Estate Development Application – Eastern Precinct

Assessment of Social Issues

Client:
AE Design

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Final draft report

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Fernhill Estate

Fernhill Estate is located adjacent to the village of Mulgoa, in the City of Penrith. The property consists of a total landholding of approximately 643 ha, in 15 contiguous titles. The land lies generally south of Mayfair Road and north of Mulgoa Village, extending west of Mulgoa Road almost 5 kilometres.



The Central Precinct of the property contains the State Heritage listed "Fernhill", with its homestead and gardens, stables, paddocks, landscape features and extensive vegetation with a range of biodiversity values. In heritage terms, the property is one of the most significant private estates in NSW. It contains significant European heritage values arising from the colonial-era homestead and surrounding gardens which are listed on the National and NSW State Heritage Registers.

Three additional, contiguous land parcels adjoin this State heritage area:

- » The Mayfair Road Precinct; to the north is a rural/environmental area
- » The Eastern Precinct; to south east, adjoins the rural village of Mulgoa
- » The Western Precinct along Fairlight Road to the west, adjoins rural residential and environmental areas.

The property has been the subject of several previous rezoning, subdivision and development proposals in recent years that have not progressed for a variety of reasons. Separate Planning Proposals are now being prepared for the Eastern and Western Precincts. This report provides a review of the social issues and potential impacts that may arise as a result of the rezoning and future development for residential uses in the Eastern Precinct.

1.1.2 Development concept

The proposed development for the Eastern Precinct is shown on the following Figure and comprises:

- » 50 Torrens Title residential allotments, accessed from Mulgoa Road, as per the Development Application (DA) drawings prepared by ae design partnership that form part of this application
- » Demolition of the existing house, ancillary structures and pool at Lot 1 DP 570484
- » Construction of roads, bushfire tracks, stormwater infrastructure and other infrastructure etc. to service the allotments, as per the plans provided by Mott MacDonald that forms part of this application
- » Residential lots range in size and are between 750 and 1,770 sqm in size
- » The grouping and siting of the residential allotments to:
 - > Maintain the rural landscape that adjoins the Village of Mulgoa, through the provision a setback from Mulgoa Road
 - > Provide a pattern of subdivision that reflects the rural character of the area and maintains vistas towards Fernhill.
- » The new road is set back 65m from Mulgoa Road. Buildings are setback between 65 to 90m from Mulgoa Road to provide a scenic landscape buffer to Mulgoa Road. This also maintains the existing rural setting entering the Village from the north towards Mulgoa Public School, which is a local Heritage Item
- » A setback that will be landscaped with clusters of vegetation and shrubs that are adjacent to the road
- » The maintenance of a vista to the heritage listed school when entering Mulgoa Village from the north
- » The retention of the existing dam west of the development footprint
- » The maintenance and enhancement of ecologically significant communities to the west of the lake, which are part of a Bio-Banking agreement that will preserve the vegetation in perpetuity
- » The location of the subdivision with the existing cleared land and areas with exotic grassland
- » The removal of some vegetation in moderate condition:

"The potential impacts of the proposal would affect a very small proportion of local habitats and their population" (GHD Ecological Eastern Precinct 2014).

"The proposal will require the removal of vegetation, which is considered to be in moderate condition, however the removal of vegetation will not result in the isolation or fragmentation of any significant areas of vegetation" (GHD, Ecological Report, 2014).
- » A vista towards Fernhill is incorporated within the design as illustrated on the development footprint diagram which will be publicly accessible open space with no built form
- » The entrance to the development area aligns with St Thomas Road intersection with Mulgoa Road in accordance with desirable network management practices (Mott MacDonald 2014)
- » The detailed design of future dwelling houses will be subject to further assessment from Penrith Council, however, key considerations as part of the subdivision are landscape and the siting of dwellings and these are addressed as follows:



- > The 50 residential lots have been designed to accommodate a typical building pad 12m x 25m, which includes a garage or a carport
- > Draft design guidelines will be prepared to inform Council when assessing the building design of the Eastern Precinct, which has been informed by the rural character and siting of the site
- > Housing will be consistent with the existing controls for residential development in the Mulgoa Village, contained in Penrith Development Control Plan 2010.

The concept for the Eastern Precinct involves a modest and sensitive expansion of Mulgoa Village, through subdivision and creation of 50 residential lots providing an interface between the village and Fernhill Estate.

1.2 Purpose of this report

This assessment of social issues and potential impacts has been prepared to assist Penrith City Council in its consideration of the proposals and to inform the assessment processes.

This report provides an overview of the social issues and potential social impacts that may arise as a result of the proposed rezoning and subdivision of the Eastern Precinct. From our previous work on earlier proposals for this site, we understand that Penrith City Council is likely to be interested in the following potential social impacts / issues:

- » An assessment of social impacts on the existing Mulgoa village
- » Whether the proposed development near Mulgoa presents a logical extension to the rural village or a significant expansion
- » Potential social infrastructure needs arising from the proposed residential uses.

The nature and scope of this assessment is limited by the concept stage of the development. As such, the report provides a high level overview of social issues, potential impacts and benefits, which will benefit from further assessment as the planning process proceeds. It relies on a desktop review of available information and published sources, but has not been directly informed by consultation with the local community or stakeholders, other than that provided to us by our client or publicly available through desktop research.

2 Demographic Trends and Planning Policies

Proposals for housing development in western Sydney need to be considered within the context of broad population growth pressures which underpin NSW state and local level planning policies. This context is useful in identifying local and regional social issues, planning criteria and social objectives used to evaluate the merits of potential developments.

These factors are described in the following sections.

2.1 Social and demographic trends

2.1.1 Population growth and drivers in Western Sydney

Development of Fernhill Estate will occur in a context of high demands for new housing within the Sydney Metropolitan Area to accommodate forecasted population growth.

Sydney's population is growing and changing more rapidly than was evident even eight years ago. The Draft Metropolitan Strategy for Sydney 2031 (NSW Government, March 2013) states that by 2031, Sydney's population will grow by another 1.3 million people, to 5.6 million. The numbers of people aged over 65 years are expected to double, and more than one million residents will be aged under 15 years. Almost half of Sydney's population will live in Western Sydney.

The key drivers for population growth in Western Sydney are natural increase (almost 70%), high rates of new household formation and overseas immigration (more than 30%).

To meet the need for new housing, the revised Metropolitan Strategy now plans for 350,000 new dwellings in western Sydney by 2031. The North-West subregion is expected to experience relatively high rates of growth, with an increase of more than 50% in its projected population by 2036.

Actions are also underway to more closely involve key stakeholders across Western Sydney in influencing future planning directions for the region (WSROC, 2012). The Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC) has developed a Future Directions Strategy for a Regional Integrated Planning Strategy (RIPS) and aims to take a stronger leadership role and multi-layered approach to the area's future renewal and growth. A priority need is to focus "on building the West as a vibrant community and economy in itself, in order to secure educational priorities, the cultural activities and the employment investment that will transform the economy and achieve integration with the wider city." (p. 14) The Next Steps Strategy proposes a range of ideas to build a stronger identity for the region, including:

- » Improving the Brand – a more positive identity to attract investment ... and the bias toward lower paid and lower skilled jobs ... perceptions and promoting the region's many assets
- » Distinct identities – build in a distinct identity for each town and community
- » Community pride – build and enhance a sense of community pride to promote connection to the region
- » Iconic projects and signature events

- » Economic resilience – through diversifying businesses
- » Increase employment opportunities – greater job diversity including professional jobs and jobs in the creative sectors so residents of Western Sydney can work locally
- » Promote creative arts and cultural expression
- » Housing choice and affordability – greater choice for the diverse households in the region.

Outcomes will be achieved in partnership with businesses, the community and other stakeholders.

An example of the partnership approach supporting investment and development across the Penrith Valley Region is seen in the initiatives of the Penrith Business Alliance (PBA) <http://penrithbusinessalliance.com.au/>. The PBA aims to achieve the City's economic objectives, particularly that of creating 40,000 additional jobs in the local economy by 2031. It leads and facilitates projects that will ensure the local economy continues to grow, employ more residents and become increasingly competitive. Their Strategic Plan sets out goals including the promoting the Regional City for its lifestyle, employment, business and investment opportunities.

2.1.2 Changing size and composition of households

The size and composition of average households has changed significantly over the past two decades and these trends are expected to continue. Key issues are:

- » Occupancy rates have declined and households have become smaller, as a result of more people living alone and reductions in fertility. Average household size in Greater Sydney has declined from around 3.5 people per dwelling in the 1950s to 2.7 in 2011 and is expected to decline further to around 2.51 persons per dwelling in 2031.
- » Increasing diversity in household composition. Whereas fifty years ago family households with children made up around 2/3 of households, this is currently around 36% and expected to decline to 32% of the population by 2031. At the same time, the proportion of couple households without children, single parent families and lone person households has increased. Households with 1 or 2 people are now the majority of all households and this trend is expected to continue.

Further diversity arises from overseas immigration, a trend towards multi-generation households, ageing of the population and rates of relationship breakdown and formation of blended families.

These changes in household size and formation have a profound impact on planning for future housing demand, as:

- » Total housing demand will exceed population growth. While the population of Sydney is expected to increase by 30% to 2031, the increase in total demand for housing is expected to be 46%
- » There will be demand for greater diversity and choice in housing size and type to reflect the needs of different types of households. This is reflected in the changing mix of housing in Sydney. In addition to increasing densities and gentrification in many parts of Sydney, another trend in new urban fringe developments in western Sydney is towards larger lot sizes and housing styles serving higher income, lower density preference markets with a bias towards families and children. This type of housing is also appealing to the growing numbers of higher paid managers, professionals and entrepreneurs who choose to live near their families or places of work or those who may be attracted to western Sydney.

2.1.3 Ageing of the population

The ageing of the population and increasing life expectancy are resulting in growing numbers of people aged over 65 years, and particularly in the older aged cohorts. In Sydney by 2031:

- » The number of people over 65 will double and those 75 and over will increase by 137%
- » The proportion of older people as a percentage of the total population will double
- » There will be a shift in the location of older population from the inner/middle suburbs of Sydney to the outer suburbs as the baby boomer population of the outer suburbs enters the older age cohorts
- » In Penrith, the population of people aged 65+ is expected to grow from 14,100 in 2006 (8.2% of the population) to nearly 33,000 people in 2026, representing 16.6% of the total Penrith population
- » 'Ageing in place' is still likely to be the predominant choice, either through remaining in the family home or seeking opportunities to downsize to a more compact dwelling in the same locality.

Many of these trends are outlined in and supported by policy directions included in the Draft Metropolitan Strategy for Sydney 2031, discussed below.

2.1.4 Housing supply

At the time of the 2011 census, 82% of all dwellings in the Penrith LGA were detached dwellings, 10% were medium density dwellings (semi-detached, row, terrace or town houses) and 7% were apartments.

Sales prices reflect the availability and quality of the housing stock. Data for December 2012 (Figure 1) compares dwelling prices for Penrith with other outer ring suburbs and Greater Sydney as a whole. Median sales prices in Penrith are generally well below those of the Outer Ring suburbs and Sydney as a whole, and this is also shown in the price profile, where overall, Penrith's dwelling prices are considerably lower than elsewhere. While this is a positive in terms of housing affordability, this shows there is little available at the higher end of the market for those on higher incomes seeking a premium housing product.

The distribution of household income within the LGA also reflects a lower median income compared with Greater Sydney. Figure 2 shows a larger proportion of households in Penrith earns \$800-\$2,499 per week, compared with Greater Sydney, where a higher proportion of households earn \$2,500-\$4,000+ per week. Nevertheless, while Greater Sydney has a higher proportion of residents in managerial and professional occupations, the higher proportion of young managers and professionals (aged under 35 years) in Penrith LGA (Table 2) points to an aspirational cohort and potentially an underlying demand for high end housing.

A review of recently sold properties in the Penrith region demonstrates that there is some demand for higher end properties (above \$800,000). This is met in a few discrete locations such as Cranebrook, Glenmore Park and Mulgoa, often on large landholdings of more than 4,000 m². Some newly constructed properties are marketed at aspirational buyers as a 'reflection of success'.

Table 1 Sales Prices by Region

All Dwellings, December Quarter 2012			
LGA	First quartile (\$'000s)	Median (\$'000s)	Third quartile (\$'000s)
Penrith	312	370	443
Outer ring suburbs	351	452	621
Greater Sydney	410	555	770
Non-Strata Dwellings, December Quarter 2012			
LGA	First quartile (\$'000s)	Median (\$'000s)	Third quartile (\$'000s)
Penrith	350	400	470
Outer ring suburbs	375	480	670
Greater Sydney	430	620	878

Source: Housing NSW Rent and Sales Report No. 103, Rent: March quarter 2013, available at Housing Analysis and Research www.housing.nsw.gov.au (under Quick Links)

Figure 1 Sales Prices by Region

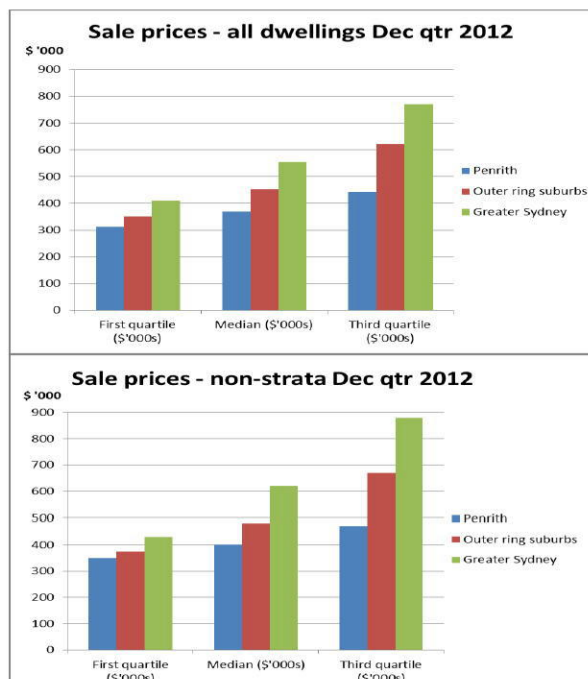


Figure 2 Distribution of household income – Penrith LGA and Greater Sydney Region

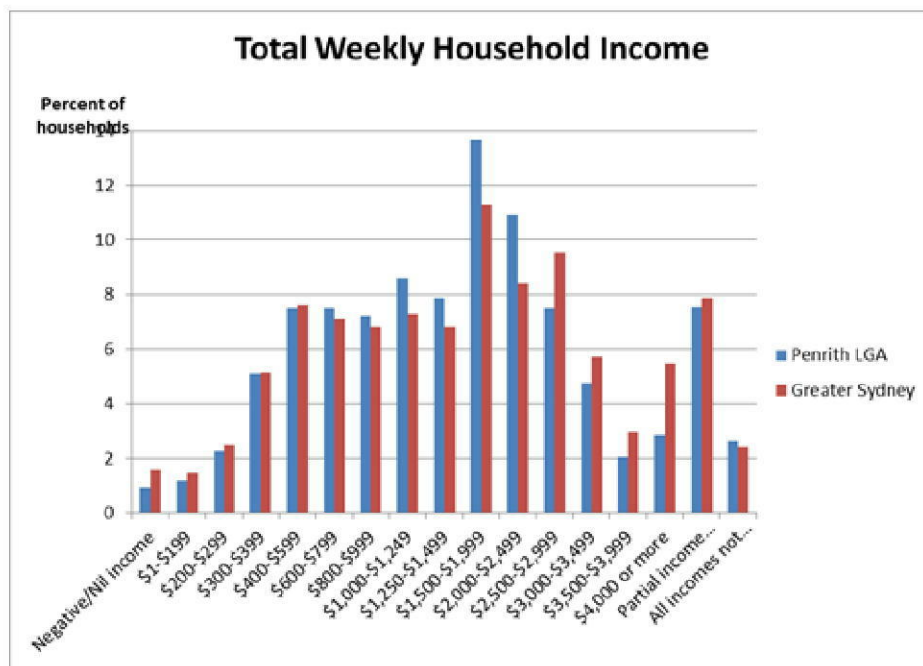


Table 2 Residents in managerial and professional occupations, Penrith and Greater Sydney 2011

	Penrith LGA (%)	Greater Sydney (%)
Managers and professionals	24.0	38.8
Managers and professionals aged under 35 years	40.2	38.2

2.1.5 Lifestyle, health and generational issues

A number of lifestyle trends have implications for the design of housing and neighbourhoods:

- » While average household size is falling, this has not been accompanied by a corresponding reduction in the size of dwellings. Rather the average size of new homes has increased considerably.
- » Proportionally few families live in units and detached housing with backyards is still the preferred arrangement for families with children. Higher density housing is primarily occupied by young people, couples without children, older people and recent immigrant families.
- » There is a trend for increasing numbers of younger adults to live at home with their parents well into the 20s, associated with trends such as delayed marriages, housing affordability, an increase in casual employment, longer participation in education and levels of student debt. This gives rise to demand for housing designed to give a measure of privacy and independence to different generations living together.
- » Achieving a balance between work and family life is a challenge for increasing numbers of households. Time spent commuting to work can restrict time available for family life, pointing to a need for services, facilities and activities that are local and easily accessed.
- » Increasing numbers of people choosing to work from home, which gives rise to demand for homes which can accommodate work spaces and equipped with advanced telecommunications technology. It also creates a need for local business support services.

2.2 Emerging issues and trends within Penrith

Many of the above issues and trends are currently influencing the lives and lifestyles of residents within Penrith. An analysis of community perceptions (Penrith City Council, January 2010) noted the following emerging issues and trends:

- » Access and equity – there are indications of wide differences in social advantage within and between communities, as evidenced by social isolation, low income and other social barriers to access
- » Social change – including new suburbs being built on the City fringe and changes to established communities due to infill multi-unit housing
- » Demographic change – the ageing population will have an important influence on service provision at the same time as continuing demands for youth and children's services, particularly in newer areas
- » Local government responsibilities – these are growing and changing and require flexibility and enthusiasm in rising to the challenges presented
- » Community participation – communities expect to be involved in decision making and Council aims to encourage participation
- » Biodiversity conservation – there is greater community awareness of the significance and importance of this issue.
- » Community safety and well-being – Council has adopted a Development Control Plan (DCP) which encourages appropriate design to discourage crime and contribute towards public safety. The DCP is based on the principles of surveillance, access control, territorial reinforcement and space management and applies to all developments.

2.3 State and Local Policies and Plans

A wide range of State and local policies and plans set out the social objectives for new developments within the Penrith LGA and western Sydney more generally. The major issues relevant to an assessment of social planning issues associated with development of Fernhill Estate are summarised in the Table 3, with more detail provided in Appendix A. The policies and plans acknowledge a range of similarities and differences in expectations and approaches to development between urban and rural parts of the LGA.

Key issues which arise consistently across plans and policies which are relevant to future planning for Fernhill Estate include:

- » Demand for more and more affordable housing supply and greater housing diversity
- » Adaptability of housing types to meet future changes in the population, particularly aging over time
- » Creation of communities rather than housing estates, ensuring community needs can be met through social infrastructure and design which encourages interaction, connections, safety and community well-being
- » The importance of access, including public transport, so that all groups in a community are able to access services and facilities necessary to meet social, recreational, employment and health needs
- » Preservation of natural, cultural and historic heritage of an area
- » Incorporation of employment opportunities into new developments to minimise travel needs.

An assessment of the current proposal against these broad criteria and the opportunities to maximise potential benefits of the proposal are outlined in Sections 5 and 6.

Table 3 Policies and plans relevant to Fernhill proposal

Policies reviewed Relevance and implications for Fern Hill Estate

State level policies

Draft Metropolitan Strategy for Sydney 2031	<p>The Draft Metropolitan Strategy 2031 provides the overall context for the rezoning and development of Fern Hill Estate. Mulgoa is located within the 'Metropolitan Rural Area' to the south and west of Glenmore Park. The Strategy supports the growth of established rural towns and villages within this Metropolitan Rural Area, directs the management and monitoring of lands for possible expansion of the Metropolitan Urban Area, supports identification and protection of priority green corridors and the increase in productivity of agricultural and resource lands and associated employment opportunities.</p> <p>The Fernhill proposal is consistent with the Strategy's objectives, as it will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Encourage liveability (housing diversity and quality design, social inclusiveness, accessibility and connectivity) » Support growth of the existing village of Mulgoa » Provide employment opportunities » Protect the existing green corridor and Nepean River environmental values.
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Council level policies

Penrith Local Environment Plan 2010	<p>This LEP includes clauses from the now repealed SREP no. 13 – Mulgoa Valley. Controls aim to protect the area's unique historical heritage and ecological landscape character, and recognise the significance of its picturesque rural landscape, including important heritage buildings and natural bush landscapes.</p>
Penrith Regional City Community Strategic Plan 2031	<p>The Penrith Regional City Community Strategic Plan 2031 provides a 'big picture' long term direction for the City – identifying key community aspirations as well as Council and community priorities and objectives.</p> <p>With its focus on liveability, affordability, accessibility and environmental quality, the Penrith Regional City Community Strategic Plan 2031 is consistent with many objectives of the Metropolitan Strategy for Sydney. It also emphasises the need for equitable access to essential services and facilities and adequate infrastructure (eg public transport, roads, education, hospitals and social services) to support growth within the region.</p> <p>Fernhill Estate will support these objectives and contribute towards the infrastructure needs of its future residents.</p>

Policies reviewed Relevance and implications for Fern Hill Estate

Sustainability Blueprint	<p>Penrith Council's Sustainability Blueprint for urban release areas is a guide for council, developers and other stakeholders to ensure urban release areas are planned using the principles of sustainability.</p> <p>The Fernhill proposal would address the objectives of Council's Sustainability Blueprint, through its contribution to housing diversity and liveability through its range of lot sizes and would create some local employment through construction.</p>
Penrith Inclusion Plan: People with Disability 2009-2013	<p>The Plan aims to improve Penrith City for people with disability and in doing so, deliver outcomes that benefit the greater community by making it easier for people to move around, access services and employment and obtain information about the City. The Plan envisages a "sustainable, inclusive and accessible community" and provides objectives, practical actions and strategies for Council to directly and indirectly achieve the vision.</p> <p>Fernhill Estate will address the objectives of this policy through its neighbourhood design and a built environment that encourages interaction and inclusion.</p>
Planning for an Ageing Community Strategy 2010+	<p>This Strategy highlights that the population is rapidly aging and aims to ensure that by planning now, the needs of the future older community will be effectively met. The Strategy incorporates strategies to guide Council's urban, infrastructure and services planning to support older people to lead healthy, active and independent lives as they age and meet their diverse needs.</p> <p>Fernhill Estate will be attractive to residents across a range of age groups and life stages. Its built form will promote access and interaction for residents and the wider community.</p>
Penrith City Council Youth Action Plan 2010-2013	<p>This is a brief document outlining strategies and actions for Council and its partners to improve Penrith City Council for young people, focusing on key, current priorities. These include providing opportunities for cultural experiences and improvements to accessibility to services for young people.</p> <p>Rezoning of land in this Eastern Precinct of Fernhill Estate will support the existing village and school in Mulgoa and will provide housing for families in an area where younger people can experience the area's natural settings.</p>
Cultural Framework 2007-2011	<p>The document is an aspirational plan addressing local issues and examining international best practice relating to cultural places.</p> <p>This proposal directly supports Penrith's local identity and heritage values.</p>
Recreation and Cultural Strategy (2003)	<p>This Strategy was developed to guide Council in their role as providers of recreation and cultural facilities. The Strategy provides a vision for appropriate, sustainable, well-located, accessible recreational, cultural and community facilities for the Penrith community with consideration of population growth.</p> <p>The Strategy identifies the following principles for the planning and provision of these facilities and programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Recreation and cultural opportunities should be accessible and available to all residents

Policies reviewed Relevance and implications for Fern Hill Estate

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Recreation and cultural resources should be distributed equitably throughout the City » Facilities should be culturally relevant.
Penrith Regional City Infrastructure Strategy	<p>This Strategy identifies the critical infrastructure required to support the projected substantial increase in Penrith's population in the future. It recognises the critical role that infrastructure planning plays in creating sustainable, cohesive, liveable and vibrant communities and notes that Western Sydney and Penrith have fallen behind in educational attainment and income compared to inner Sydney. Well planned and designed infrastructure is required to close this gap. In addition to physical infrastructure, the Strategy addresses the provision of 'social public infrastructure' – cultural, recreational, social support and environmental facilities and identifies the facilities needed at the regional, district and local levels.</p>
Penrith Residential Strategy	<p>This Strategy provides the framework under which future population and housing growth for Penrith is to be managed. It acknowledges that population growth does not merely increase demand for housing stock, but also increases demands for social, economic and environmental services to support residential development. It recognises that population growth will be accommodated by infill development within established areas, as well as by future development of several confirmed release areas.</p>
Penrith Rural Lands Study	<p>This study was undertaken to support the sustainability of Penrith's rural lands. It responds to pressures for greater certainty for rural residents about the future of their area and considers appropriate land uses to minimise conflicts between rural and residential activities and preserve the distinctive character and values of Penrith's rural areas.</p> <p>Issues and values raised during community consultations in fringe rural areas including Mulgoa were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Desires to maintain village character and heritage and natural resources » Pressures from some property owners for subdivision of large rural lots and from others to maintain the area's rural character » Economic importance of tourism » Infrastructure and community services needs » Rural land use conflicts. <p>These issues are likely to continue to be important and may impact on community acceptance of the proposal. An emerging social issue for Mulgoa is its changing culture and lifestyle, as it increasingly becomes a 'dormitory suburb' for Penrith.</p>
Penrith Rural Lands Strategy, 2003	<p>Under this Strategy, Mulgoa's status as a rural village is preserved, but with a designated village expansion area and rural living (one hectare) areas. The Strategy recognises the pressures for subdivision in the vicinity of Mulgoa village by incorporating a village expansion area and rural living areas. These areas are to the east of the existing village and south of the proposed Eastern Precinct covered by this proposal.</p>

Policies reviewed Relevance and implications for Fern Hill Estate

The Eastern Precinct development is not located within these areas and would not impact on the area's scenic landscape. The small increase in the population within the Eastern Precinct would support existing businesses within Mulgoa village.

3 Social Context of the Development

This Section summarises the population and socio-economic characteristics of the current population of Mulgoa village and compares this with the wider Penrith area. Community views in relation to the village and its setting, as expressed in consultations for the Rural Lands Study (Penrith City Council, 2001) are also outlined.

3.1 Demographic characteristics

Fernhill is located adjacent to the village locality of Mulgoa and within the State suburb of Mulgoa.

Mulgoa is described on Penrith City Council's website in terms of its rural setting and historical connections and heritage:

"Mulgoa today has gone full circle, from the early farming, vineyards and orchards, to the guest houses of the first part of the twentieth century, it is now an area of extensive hobby and general farming, with some tourist through traffic. The twin villages of Mulgoa and Wallacia add value to the City of Penrith because they retain strong connections with the early pioneers who initially settled the area."

(<http://www.penrithcity.nsw.gov.au/index.asp?id=437>, accessed 26/04/2013)

A comparison of maps from the two most recent censuses (ABS, 2011 and 2006), shows that the boundaries for the village of Mulgoa (urban centre/locality) and for the suburb of Mulgoa have changed substantially. As a result, it is not possible to directly compare the population of these areas over time.

Table 4 overleaf gives a brief overview of the community profile for the village of Mulgoa, the Mulgoa State Suburb, Penrith Local Government Area (LGA) and Sydney Statistical District (SD).

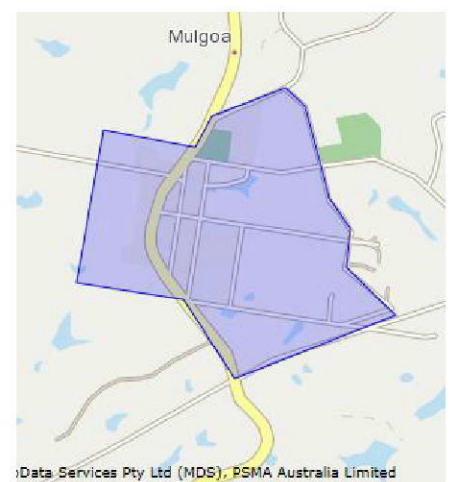
Mulgoa village / urban locality

At the 2011 Census, Mulgoa urban centre/locality had a population of 712 residents. The village is one of Penrith's smallest centres. The population of the suburb of Mulgoa was 1,792 in 2011.

At the time of Penrith's Rural Lands Study (2001), approximately 17% of the residents of Penrith municipality were found to live in rural villages, while most lived in dispersed rural areas, on properties ranging from 1-40 hectares.

Other key features of the Mulgoa village population shown in Table 4 include:

- » A very high proportion (17.3%) of children (aged 5-14 years) compared with Penrith (14.1) and NSW (12.4)
- » Relatively small population (7.7%) aged over 65 years



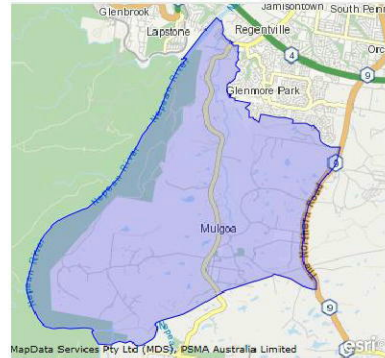
Mulgoa urban centre 2011

- » More than half of households are families (52.8%) with children and there are relatively few single parent families (12.6%)
- » Very low unemployment rate (2.5%) and a relatively high weekly household incomes (\$1,680)
- » A relatively small proportion of dwellings are fully owned (25.9%), but a very large proportion of dwellings are being purchased (58.8%). Only 15% of dwellings are rented in Mulgoa village.

Mulgoa suburb

Mulgoa suburb has some similar characteristics to the village. However, key features of the area which differ from the village include:

- » A low proportion of babies and pre-schoolers and relatively older population overall - 27% of the suburb population is aged over 55 years. This contributes to the relatively high median age of 37
- » Very high weekly household incomes (\$1,783) compared with other areas
- » Relatively high proportions of family households (84%), with couple families without children (38.4%) being the dominant type
- » Almost 40% of households fully own their own homes in this suburb – substantially more than in other comparison areas.



Mulgoa suburb 2011

Penrith

Penrith grew slowly between 2006 and 2011. It has:

- » A relatively young population (median age 34 years), with relatively high numbers of babies and pre-schoolers (7.6%), primary and high school aged children
- » Relatively small households (2.9 persons), on average, partly explained by the relatively large proportion of one parent families (19.2%)
- » The lowest weekly household income of the comparison areas (\$1,398), and a relatively high unemployment rate (5.5%).

Sydney

By comparison with these areas, Sydney has grown relatively more quickly, by almost 6% in the five years to 2011. Sydney's age profile and family structure are not too dissimilar to the suburb of Mulgoa, although average household size is smaller, at 2.7 people.

Two other notable features of Sydney SD's population which distinguish it from the Mulgoa locality and suburb, are the relatively high proportion of single person households and the high proportion of renters. Median weekly household incomes are also lower across Sydney than in Mulgoa, and unemployment rates are higher.

Table 4 Population Characteristics

Census Characteristic	Mulgoa urban centre/locality**	Mulgoa State Suburb	Penrith LGA	Greater Sydney SD
Population				
1986	558	917	135,447	
1991	539	1,032	149,622	3,538,314
1996	539	1,530	163,122	3,741,290
2001	567	n/a	171,870	3,997,321
2006*	587	2,217	172,140	4,148,571
2011	712	1,792	178,467	4,391,674
Change 2001-2006** (%)	n/a	n/a	0.1	3.8
Change 2006-2011** (%)	n/a	n/a	3.7	5.9
Age Profile (%)				
0-4 years	5.6	5.4	7.6	6.8
5-14 years	17.3	14.0	14.1	12.4
15-24 years	13.5	15.4	14.7	13.3
25-54 years	41.4	37.9	42.4	43.9
55-64 years	14.3	15.0	11.4	10.8
65+ years	7.7	12.4	9.9	12.7
Median age 2006	33	36	32	35
Median age 2011	35	37	34	36
Born overseas (%)	10.9	16.2	20.5	31.7
Main languages other than English spoken at home (% of population)	Dutch (0.6%) Italian (0.6%) Maltese (0.6)	Maltese (1.6%) Italian (1.5%) Arabic (1.5%)	Arabic (1.5%) Tagalog (1.0) Italian (0.9%)	Arabic (4.1%) Mandarin (2.0%) Cantonese (2.0%)
Total private dwellings 2006	193	728	62,165	1,643,675
Total private dwellings 2011	245	592	62,632	1,640,199
Average household size (persons)	3.0	3.1	2.9	2.7
Same address 1 year ago (%)	85	85	83	79
Same address 5 years ago (%)	60	67	62	55
Median household income (\$/week)	1,680	1,783	1,398	1,447
Unemployment rate (%)	2.5	4.6	5.5	5.7
Family types				
Total families	199	498	48,360	1,152,551
Couple families with children (%)	52.8	48.8	49.7	48.9
Couple families without children (%)	32.7	38.4	29.6	33.5
One parent families (%)	12.6	11.0	19.2	15.7
Other families (%)	2.0	1.8	1.5	1.9
Household types				
Family household (%)	82.7	84.0	78.3	73.1
Lone person household (%)	16.0	15.3	19.2	22.6
Group household (%)	1.3	0.7	2.5	4.3
Tenure type				
Fully owned (%)	25.9	38.5	26.8	30.4
Being purchased (%)	58.8	39.7	43.8	33.4
Rented (%)	15.4	19.3	26.7	30.1

Source: 2011 Census of Population and Housing, ABS; Penrith Rural Lands Strategy, Penrith City Council, 2001

note * 2006 and 2011 population counts represents usual residents. All others represent location at census night

** Mulgoa urban centre/locality area used in the Census roughly approximates the area of Mulgoa village. Note, the boundaries of this area were expanded between 2006 and 2011 to include a larger area to the north of the village. The boundaries of the suburb of Mulgoa were also changed following the 2006 Census, resulting in a smaller area in 2011. As a result, it is not possible to calculate rates of population change over time.

3.2 Community services and facilities

Community services and facilities were identified through the Rural Lands Study, the Eco Logical Australia Sustainability Assessment for this project and brief discussions with Council's Social Planner, the local school and pre-school.

Consistent with the current small size of the Mulgoa population, facilities and services at the local level are limited. Local level facilities in or near Mulgoa village include:

- » Schools:
 - > Mulgoa Pre-school, St Thomas Road, Mulgoa
 - > Mulgoa Public School, Mulgoa Road, Mulgoa
 - > Nepean Christian School, Mulgoa Road, Mulgoa
 - > Christian Brothers Novitiate, Mulgoa
- » Medical services:
 - > Mulgoa Medical Centre
 - > Mulgoa Medical Practice
- » Churches:
 - > St Thomas Anglican Church, St Thomas Road, Mulgoa
 - > Schoenstatt Fathers
 - > Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary
 - > Edmund Rice Retreat and Conference Centre, Mulgoa Road, Mulgoa
- » Community Hall:
 - > Mulgoa Hall, Littlefields Road, Mulgoa, capacity for 110 people
- » Mulgoa Park, corner Littlefields Road and Mulgoa Road, Mulgoa
- » A local shopping centre on Mulgoa Road, Mulgoa catering for a wide range of daily needs, including a supermarket, bakery, butcher, chemist, fruit and vegetable shop, newsagent, real estate, medical practice, café and a restaurant, hair salon and bottle shop
- » Glenmore Heritage Valley Golf Club, Mulgoa Road, Mulgoa

The Mulgoa Public School had 76 students in 2012. Enrolments have been increasing slightly (from 60 and 70) over recent years. There has been a need for demountables in the past and if necessary, there is room to accommodate more classrooms.

The local Christian school caters for children up to year 10. The nearest government high school is located at Glenmore Park to the north.

The Mulgoa pre-school has a license for 29 places but is currently operating below capacity. This is perhaps due to increased numbers of alternative services in Glenmore Park, Penrith and other nearby areas, as well as fewer young children locally.

A range of district and regional level facilities are provided in the wider area, with facilities and services available in Glenmore Park, Regentville (10 minutes to the north by road) or in Penrith itself. This includes Nepean Hospital, dentists and specialist medical services, high schools and further education facilities, aged care, family support, youth and welfare services. The closest district and regional shopping, entertainment and recreation facilities are also provided in Penrith city centre.

Westbus currently operates services north to Penrith and south to Wallacia / Warragamba Dam. There are around three services in the peak in each direction and then trips at 2-hour intervals during the day. An infrequent service is offered on weekends.

3.3 Economic resources

Although dated, the Rural Lands Study (Penrith City Council, June 2001) continues to frame Council's policy for lands beyond the City centre. This Study noted the importance of tourism as a growing activity linked to rural uses and the area's natural and heritage resources and consistent with Council's economic development strategies. It suggests opportunities for substantial heritage buildings to be used for tourist related uses such as guest houses, restaurants or resorts, subject to conservation of heritage qualities and buildings and settings (p. 117). These uses will "support the City as a significant tourism destination". Many of these observations are also incorporated into the Draft Metropolitan Strategy for Sydney 2031.

The economic values of preserving and managing rural settlements are also stressed, including their role in providing shopping, educational, health and other basic services and as a focal point for the community activities which support rural communities. The growth of villages "needs to be managed so that it does not have a detrimental impact on the sustainability of the agricultural uses or the landscape, heritage and biodiversity conservation values" (p. 121).

3.4 Stakeholder consultation

Targeted consultation with key stakeholders has been undertaken over several years and concepts for the future of the Fernhill estate have been developed and adapted to take this feedback on board.

Consultation has involved presentation of relevant plans for the site (including aspects of heritage conservation proposals, biodiversity conservation issues, plans for event and activities and subdivision plans) to groups and individuals with specific interests in the future of the historic site and its environment, or legislative responsibility for approving aspects of its future use. In addition, there have been many meetings and discussions with officers from Penrith City Council.

The current Planning Proposal recognises the issues raised during these consultations and discussions and will ensure impacts on the community are minimised as far as possible, while also preserving the important heritage, conservation and landscape values of the Estate.

3.4.1 Rural areas within Penrith

While quite dated now, an indication of community values around development in rural parts of Penrith was initially gleaned from consultations and workshops held by Penrith City Council in preparation of the Rural Lands Study (June 2001). As outlined in the previous chapter, key concerns relating to rural areas within Penrith LGA that were raised in these discussions covered:

- » Pressures for subdivision
- » Improved access to services, especially road quality and maintenance, but also Council provided services and other infrastructure
- » Land use conflicts.

3.4.2 Mulgoa area

Community workshops held in Mulgoa specifically for the Rural Lands Study mirrored many of the issues raised in the wider area consultations but highlighted the importance of the village character for local residents:

- » There was a strong desire to control development while preserving the natural beauty of the area and its village character, including provision of a green belt around the town and limitations on subdivisions.
- » It was felt that growth could be contained with graduated development from the village core outwards, with clearly defined planning and long term growth strategies. However, it was recognised that some growth was desirable to maintain the viability of the school and sustain the village
- » Subdivision proposals were a major area of discussion. Residents are divided about whether subdivision should be allowed in the area and if so, where, how much and what size is desirable. Many support further subdivision and reduced lot sizes, particularly as a way of realising increases in their land values. Others are opposed on the basis that it would adversely change the character of the area and create demand for the few available services. There was little agreement on the appropriate lot sizes if subdivision were to be permissible. Some favour tighter controls and minimums of 10 hectare properties. Others support 4 hectare minimum lot sizes or smaller. Smaller lot sizes were seen as a way of encouraging younger families into the area. Generally, SREP 13 was supported and there were calls for it to be strengthened.
- » Even amongst those supporting some subdivision, there was support for maintaining the rural character of the area. There was also an expectation that subdivision policies should be consistent and apply consistently across the area, to provide some certainty for the future.
- » Traffic management, road maintenance and improvements in public transport were important transport issues. Other issues around service provision included calls for reticulated water and sewerage, more recreational facilities such as parks and gardens and neighbourhood shopping and commercial facilities.

More recently, community values have been expressed at community meetings and through the community feedback in relation to this project. The feedback reflects perceptions of some residents about the potential for adverse effects on local traffic, amenity and the character of this local area, as a result of this proposal.

These consultations indicate that the current proposal is of considerable interest to residents. A small increase in the local population could be expected to support the viability of existing facilities and may attract additional services to the area, benefiting both existing and newer residents. However, the proposal could also impact on the rural village character and set a possible precedent for future subdivision.

Community values and concerns expressed through these consultations have helped to shape the current proposal. Recommendations to minimise potential social impacts are discussed further in Sections 5 and 6.

4 Development proposal

4.1 Description of proposal

As outlined in Section 1, the proposal envisages subdivision and future residential development in the Eastern and Western Precincts of the Fernhill Estate.

The concept for the Eastern Precinct involves subdivision of the land for residential purposes:

- » Subdivision of a parcel on land adjoining the northern boundary of Mulgoa village into 50 Torrens title residential lots. Lots will range in size from 750m² to 1,770m² and are shaped so as to be suitable for detached dwellings.
- » The precinct will be accessed from Mulgoa Road and development will incorporate construction of road and infrastructure services associated in accordance with relevant standards associated to service the allotments. This will constitute a modest and sensitive expansion of Mulgoa Village.
- » The design and character of dwellings proposed will be to a high standard and will offer an alternative to estate housing characteristic of many new developments across Penrith and western Sydney. Setbacks, landscaping and lot sizes are designed to maintain the rural character and scenic landscape of the area. A vista towards Fernhill will be protected as publicly accessible open space.

4.2 Population forecasts

4.2.1 Penrith LGA and Mulgoa area

Between 2013 and 2031, the population of Penrith City LGA is forecast to increase from around 190,000 to more than 223,000 people. This is equivalent to an 18.3% increase overall, or around 0.94% pa.

Penrith City Council (through *.id profile*) has also released population projections for the Regentville - Mulgoa – Wallacia area which is larger than the Mulgoa village area discussed in previous sections. Regentville-Mulgoa-Wallacia is bounded by the Western Motorway and the suburb boundary of Glenmore Park in the north, The Northern Road, Littlefields Road and the suburb boundary of Luddenham in the east, the boundary of Liverpool City in the south and the Nepean River in the west. Forecasts for this area may be indicative of expected trends in this rural part of the LGA.

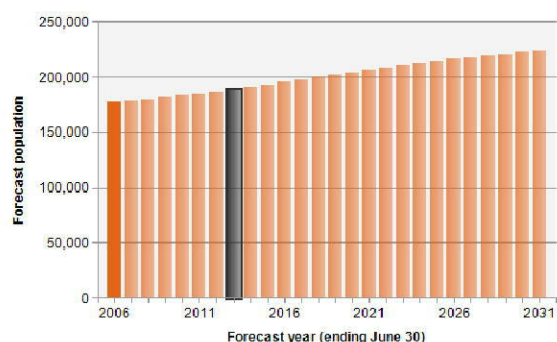
The graph below shows Forecast Residential Development to increase slowly from around 1,400 dwellings to around 1,800 over this period. This forecast is based on a number of assumptions, including that 119 dwellings would be constructed at Fernhill Estate between 2015 and 2031. Another development of similar size at Allan Road, Mulgoa, is expected to be completed between 2015 and 2019. No development within the Mulgoa village centre is anticipated. The total population is estimated to increase marginally from around 4,000 to 4,760. This contrasts with earlier forecasts which showed the area's population to decline, at least to 2021.

Associated with this projected development pattern is a forecast population profile (shown below), which will see small levels of growth across this Regentville - Mulgoa – Wallacia area. While there is expected to be a small increase in the numbers of younger people, most of the population growth will occur in the 35-44 and over 60s age groups.

These projections for Mulgoa indicate that population growth would assist in supporting existing services which otherwise might experience a decrease in demand over time.

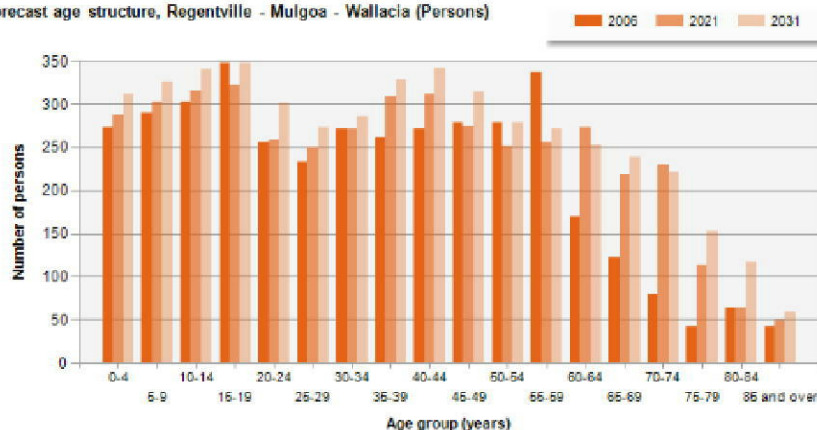
These opportunities and potential impacts are discussed further in Sections 5 and 6.

Forecast population, Penrith City



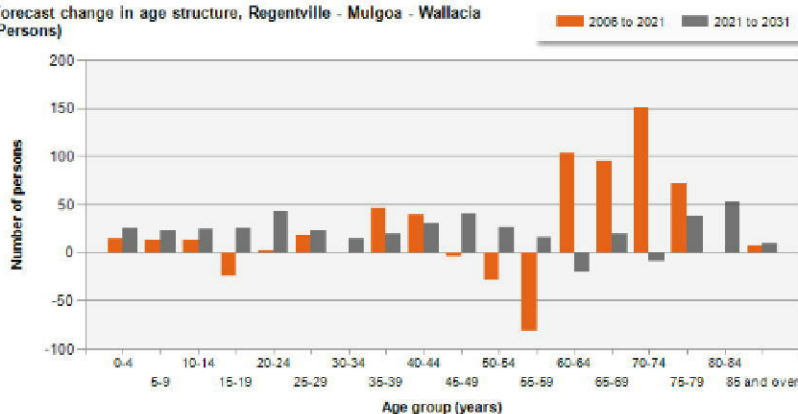
Source: (<http://forecast2.id.com.au/Default.aspx?id=247&pg=5000>)

Forecast age structure, Regentville - Mulgoa - Wallacia (Persons)



Source: <http://forecast2.id.com.au/Default.aspx?id=247&pg=5210>

Forecast change in age structure, Regentville - Mulgoa - Wallacia (Persons)



Source: <http://forecast2.id.com.au/Default.aspx?id=247&pg=5210>

4.2.2 Projected population for Eastern Precinct

The concept for the Eastern Precinct envisages large lots suitable for detached dwellings. We have therefore estimated future populations using similar occupancy ratios as for those of detached dwellings for the overall Penrith LGA. At the 2011 census, Penrith's 48,409 detached dwellings had an average household size of 3.02 persons. The 223 detached dwellings within Mulgoa locality had an average household size of 3.0 persons.

Following construction, the 50 properties at Eastern Precinct would be expected to yield a resident population of approximately 150 people.

Age and household characteristics of residents of this precinct would depend on future marketing strategies, housing styles and demand. The opportunities and risks associated with aspects of this development for the incoming population and existing communities are considered in the following sections.

It will be important to recognise that different population groups will have different social needs and will impact on the existing community in different ways. It is recommended that the nature and needs of particular target groups be monitored as planning for the development continues.

5 Identification of social issues and benefits

From our review of the local and regional planning policy documents, our understanding of the proposed development and previous studies, we would expect a range of social issues and benefits to arise as a result of this proposal. Where there are potential risks, these are identified, together with suggested strategies to help manage or reduce these risks.

5.1 Impacts on social character and identity

Mulgoa is an established rural village, about ten kilometres south of Penrith. Although its population has been relatively stable over time, there are indications that it is slowly changing and developing a greater reliance on employment and other services from Penrith, 15 minutes by road to the north. Community values indicate a strong identity with the rural landscape and historic heritage characteristics of the village, while also displaying greater integration with the wider area and pressures for further subdivision and change.

In considering how the proposed subdivision might impact on the character and identity of the existing village, key issues include:

- » The scale of new development proposed
- » The appearance of new development
- » The rate of new development.

In terms of the scale, the proposed subdivision in the Eastern Precinct would add to the population of the local area. The 50 lots proposed for the Eastern Precinct represents a 20% increase in dwellings within the Mulgoa village area and would generate a similar proportional increase in new residents (150 new residents compared with the 2011 resident population of Mulgoa village of 712 people).

While the additional population represents a significant increase over its current size, the proposed increase is nevertheless occurring from a very small base. The number of lots proposed is modest and will not detract from Mulgoa's status as a "village" in a rural landscape setting. The village will be capable of retaining its distinct identity and separation from urban development areas to the north.

Impacts on the character of the existing settlement will also be influenced by the "look" of the new development and extent to which it integrates physically with the existing village fabric. At this concept stage it is too early to determine the design character for proposed housing. However, the low density housing lots are likely to be suited to larger dwellings and targeted at the higher end of the housing market.

Setbacks, landscaping and site layout would enable the precinct to be outside the view lines of Fernhill House from Mulgoa Road.

Impacts on character and identity of the Mulgoa area will also be influenced by the rate of development. While some development may initially occur soon after approval, it is expected that the rate of development overall would occur at a relatively slow pace over 10 years. This would avoid immediate changes to the existing housing availability and prices, while allowing new

residents to integrate into the existing community in an incremental way. This slow rate of development would also enable local services and facilities such as local shops to adapt at a slower pace to accommodate this growth over time.

Plans for the rezoning and subdivision have been progressively modified to take comments into consideration from Penrith City Council and community members. In order to further minimise potential impacts on the village and rural character and identity, it is recommended that:

- » Housing be designed and sited to minimise impacts on the rural landscape character of the Mulgoa village
- » Housing in the Eastern Precinct be designed to be sympathetic to the character of the existing village
- » The development integrate physically with the existing village and avoid entry or boundary treatments or street layouts that would segregate it or impact adversely on village identity.
- » The rate of development be managed to minimise rapid change to the village, its facilities and social character
- » Consultation continues with the community to recognise concerns relating to future impacts on character and identity of the area and to develop mutually acceptable solutions for incorporation into the detailed planning of the development.

Ongoing consultation and engagement with the existing community in relation to the proposal would assist in identifying opportunities and perceived risks with regard to the character and identity of the village throughout the planning process and enable planning and design to minimise adverse social impacts. Community engagement could also help foster acceptance of the new development by:

- » Allowing opposing views and community concerns to be aired early in the planning process
- » Enabling proposals to be tailored to address these issues and
- » Providing opportunities to strategically manage community concerns.

5.2 Impacts on housing mix and availability

The proposal will increase housing availability in the Mulgoa area, will add to diversity in housing types and will assist Penrith City Council in meeting its targets for new housing.

By providing lot sizes of between 750 and 1,770m², the proposal will add diversity to the styles of housing being provided in most new estates within western Sydney.

There is demand for higher end properties within western Sydney and a large cohort of young managers and professionals in the area. Larger lot sizes will help attract residents seeking housing at the upper end of the market. In particular, these lots are likely to appeal to people from managerial, professional and 'entrepreneurial' occupational groups who live in western Sydney or wish to move to the area to be near their place of work. In addition, the premium nature of the setting will appeal to higher income earners and second and subsequent home buyers already living in the district who wish to trade up to a 'higher' level of housing with greater status and amenity.

5.3 Impacts on social integration and cohesion

A key social issue for the area will be the expected impacts of the new population on the composition of the existing community, as this will have implications for social cohesion and the

integration of the new and existing populations. Impacts on community cohesion will be dependent on the characteristics, lifestyles and values of the incoming population and the rate of development.

As noted above, the relatively large housing lots proposed within the Eastern Precinct are likely to be suited to “entrepreneurs”, and targeted at the higher end of the housing market. While not meeting traditional criteria for affordability, this style of housing will meet an identified niche for this form of housing within Penrith’s housing market.

Potential impacts of population growth would be mitigated to the extent that the population attracted to the development would have similar characteristics to the existing population of Mulgoa village and surrounding areas. Similarities in age, household, socio-economic and cultural profile would facilitate acceptance of the new population and its integration and absorption with the existing population and so promote social cohesion and harmony. Similarities would also mean population growth would be less likely to impact on the culture and lifestyle of the area, as the new population would be likely to share the values, priorities and aspirations which attracted the existing population to the area.

- » The age and household characteristics of the incoming population will be dependent on:
- » The size, type and style of housing to be provided and its cost
- » The appeal of the development to different segments of the market
- » The appeal of the area to different sections of the existing local population and others moving to the region.

Because of the relatively large lot sizes in the Eastern Precinct and quality of the development expected, it is likely that the population will have higher than average levels of household income consistent with the profile of surrounding areas. This is likely to include managers, professionals and entrepreneurs currently working in western Sydney or those wishing to re-locate to the semi-rural area. Other residents may aspire to trade up from their current home or improve their amenity while staying in the area. The future population may therefore have many characteristics consistent with those of the existing Mulgoa village and surrounding areas. As outlined above in Section 3, the populations within Mulgoa village and the wider suburb of Mulgoa are characterised by relatively high median household incomes, with a relatively high proportion of younger managers and professionals. The area also contains high proportions of family households with children, and these are the types of households expected to be attracted to the development. It is expected that the large majority of residents would be home purchasers rather than renters.

Overall, the population characteristics of future residents are not expected to differ greatly from those already living in the local area. This will assist in maintaining the existing character of the Mulgoa village and rural area.

As outlined above, the rate of sales and development is not expected to be rapid and this will assist the existing community to respond to change and absorb the newcomers gradually.

Social integration will be further enhanced by the new and existing populations sharing common facilities and services. New residents would send children to local schools and make use of local shops and other facilities, thus being drawn into existing social networks in the district.

To promote social integration and cohesion between new and existing population groups, it is recommended that:

- » Efforts be made to blend the Eastern Precinct site into Mulgoa’s village setting rather than creating a ‘gated community’, so as to avoid conferring the appearance of status on new residents or stigmatising residents already living in Mulgoa

- » Consultation with the existing community be undertaken to identify issues and concerns relating to social integration, and measures be initiated to address any such concerns
- » The rate of development be managed to minimise rapid change to the village, and enable newcomers to be absorbed gradually.

5.4 Social infrastructure needs

A new population of about around 150 people in total will create very modest demands for social infrastructure, and will not be large enough to warrant any new facilities and services. The future population of Mulgoa village at completion of the development will still not be large enough to meet the thresholds for most types of facilities and services at the local level, and both new and existing residents will rely on facilities and services in the wider area to meet most of their needs.

Impacts on facilities and services will depend on the age and life cycle profile of the incoming population. At the local level, there is likely to be increased support for local shops, and some limited demand for additional childcare and primary school places. However, we understand that there is some surplus capacity within the local school and pre-school to absorb the new residents.

New residents will also expect to participate in community activities, access medical services and play in local parks and playgrounds. The small population increase associated with this proposal would create a very minor increase in demand, which can be absorbed by existing facilities. As such, there will be no need for new social infrastructure.

The reliance on district and regional services and facilities in the surrounding area points to a need to consider the adequacy of:

- » Transport services
- » Health and medical services
- » Social activities particularly for older residents and young people.

A rural residential lifestyle overcomes many of the community infrastructure needs associated with other types of housing developments, as the larger lots and semi-rural landscape provide recreational opportunities which are not available in more developed areas. There is therefore a trade-off to be made by residents between their limited access to services and facilities, and the lifestyle advantages of low density living in a scenic open space setting.

Social isolation is a risk factor for those without cars or unable to drive. Bus services which offer transport only in peak periods will not meet the needs of older residents or youth who wish to access services in the daytime or recreational and social facilities in the evening and at weekends. Social isolation can be addressed through provision of more local services or through public or community transport services to meet the specific (accessibility, timing, destination etc) needs of these groups or individuals. However, costs of service provision can be prohibitive, even in urban areas, and will present a challenge for an area such as Mulgoa.

To ensure new residents have access to appropriate local, district and regional level facilities and services, it is recommended that:

- » Consultation be undertaken with local residents and service providers to examine opportunities to upgrade or augment existing local facilities and services in line with projected increases in demand
- » Initiatives be considered to improve connectivity by public or community transport between Mulgoa village and services and facilities in Glenmore Park, Regentville and Penrith City. Such initiatives should give particular focus to the needs of groups at risk of social isolation.

5.5 Traffic impacts

The proposed subdivision and new residential population could be expected to generate some traffic and access issues. Potential traffic impacts were examined in a Traffic Impact Report (Mott MacDonald, July 2014).

The design for this Precinct includes a single access road from Mulgoa Road at its intersection with St Thomas Road. Traffic entering the precinct from the north via Mulgoa Road would be controlled through a channelized right turn bay. Further studies are proposed to investigate the need for a second channelized right turn bay at this intersection for traffic turning into St Thomas Road from the south. In addition, a footpath will be provided to enable residents to walk into the area from Mulgoa Road.

Analysis found that the traffic expected to be generated by the additional population in this precinct would be approximately 43 trips during each weekday peak period. This is not considered to be a significant increase given conditions in the local area.

Intersection analysis indicated that under a 2026 future scenario developed for the modelling, existing intersections would operate safely and efficiently, and would be well within their operational capacities. In summary, "the proposed development is not anticipated to have any significant impact on capacity or safe operation of the surrounding road network" (p. 38).

5.6 Social sustainability

Social sustainability refers to issues such as the provision of social infrastructure, connectivity and access to shops, facilities and employment through transport and land use planning strategies and diversity of housing types, dwelling mix and affordability. Connectivity and integration with the surrounding area need to be considered in both physical and social terms. Most of these aspects of social sustainability have been discussed in previous sections.

The proposed Eastern Precinct addresses these social sustainability objectives through its close proximity to the existing village, within walking and cycling distances of the village centre, bus stops and community hall.

Another fundamental principle of social sustainability is that residents have an opportunity to participate in decision-making, and to influence the planning and development of their community. Applying this principle means promoting mechanisms for new residents of a community to become involved, as well as providing opportunities for the broader community to participate in the planning process.

It is recommended that there be a public community consultation program to accompany further planning for this area. This will enable existing residents to identify how the proposed development might impact upon the Mulgoa community and to contribute their ideas, comments and feedback as plans are formulated. This process is particularly important for the acceptance of the development within the Mulgoa community and to support its integration with the surrounding area.

There may also be a need to consider mechanisms to involve new residents in community activities and networks. Access to information about local services and facilities will assist new residents in participating in local community events, developing networks and getting involved in the local community.

5.7 Benefits to the local community

The project could be expected to bring a number of community benefits for some residents of Mulgoa and the wider area. These may include:

- » Expanding the availability and diversity of housing options within the local area
- » Supporting the viability of existing facilities that might otherwise be undermined as the population ages or decreases
- » Enhancing the vitality of the village through a manageable level of population growth which would support new shops, cafes and services
- » Opportunities to encourage active travel between the new precinct and the village centre, school, areas of open space and other destinations.

The proposed rezoning will also provide valuable benefits to the wider community by enabling a separate plan for the majority of Fernhill Estate's Central Precinct to proceed. This separate plan will consolidate Estate lands in order to protect its heritage values, its integrity as a large and unique rural estate and significant landscape and environmental values for the community.

5.8 Summary of Issues

A summary of the main social issues arising from the current proposal for the Eastern Precinct is given in Table 7 below, together with recommendations on appropriate measures to address these issues.

Social Issue	Recommended Response
Potential impacts on village character and identity from Eastern Precinct subdivision	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Subdivision masterplan has been progressively modified to take into consideration comments from Council and community members. In finalising designs, dwellings should be sited to minimise impacts on the rural landscape character of the Mulgoa village• Housing be designed to be sympathetic to the character of the existing village• The development integrate physically with the existing village and avoid entry or boundary treatments or street layouts that would segregate it or impact adversely on village identity• The rate of development be managed to minimise rapid change to the village, its facilities and social character• A process of consultation with the existing community be initiated to consider community concerns relating to impacts on character and identity of the area and how these might be addressed in the detailed planning of the development.
Potential negative response to population growth and change and challenges to social integration and cohesion between new and existing population groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The new subdivision be publicly accessible to ensure it is accessible to both new and existing residents• Consultation with the existing community be undertaken to identify issues and concerns relating to social integration, and measures be initiated to address any such concerns• The rate of development be managed to minimise rapid change to the village, and enable newcomers to be absorbed gradually.
Limited access to social infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demographic characteristics of the incoming population be monitored as development proceeds in order to identify particular social

infrastructure needs of the incoming population

- Initiatives be investigated to improve connectivity by public or community transport between Mulgoa village and services and facilities in Glenmore Park, Regentville and Penrith City.

Traffic generation impacts

- Minor roadworks will be undertaken to ensure safety for road users and pedestrians
- No adverse impacts expected from the rezoning and proposed level of future development.

Challenges to the social sustainability of the development

- There be a public community consultation program to accompany further planning for this area. This will enable existing residents to identify how the proposed development might impact upon the Mulgoa community and to contribute their ideas, comments and feedback as plans are formulated.

Possible social isolation for residents without access to private transport

- Encourage provision of information about local services and networks, and social and recreational activities
- Engage with local community about existing needs and possible solutions
- Encourage the provision of public transport services to better link the site with Penrith and other key centres.

Broader community heritage and landscape benefits

- Proceed with consolidation of Fernhill Estate's Central Precinct as a means of protecting the heritage, landscape and environmental values for the community.

6 Conclusions

This study has examined a range of demographic data, strategic planning documents and background material associated with the proposed subdivision of the Eastern Precinct of the Fernhill Estate. Based on this information, the report has considered the potential for social benefits, social issues and adverse social impacts to arise.

Key benefits of the proposal include:

- » Benefits of additional housing – There is a strong demand for additional housing across Sydney, including western Sydney. This proposal will support a small increase in the stock of housing and will add to housing diversity within the Penrith LGA through provision of a style of housing that is not currently being provided within many of the estate developments at present.
- » Small scale and manageable increase in local population – The proposed scale of the Precinct (50 lots), represents an increase of around 150 residents in the Mulgoa area when fully developed. While this is a relatively large proportional increase, the size of the incoming population will not contribute to any significant demands for new social infrastructure. In addition, the characteristics of new residents are likely to be broadly similar to those already living in the area. As such, no adverse impacts to community cohesion or integration are expected.
- » Protection of valued lifestyle, natural environment and heritage values – The proposal attempts to ensure the area's unique heritage and landscape features are preserved and made available for the benefit of the local community.
- » Support for local economic activity – The proposal would generate local economic activity and employment during construction and provide support for existing services and facilities within Mulgoa village. The additional population moving to the new subdivisions would provide additional support to existing facilities, such as the local school and pre-school and the viability of the existing shopping area
- » Protection of heritage and conservation values – The proposal will also provide valuable benefits to the wider community by enabling a separate plan for the majority of Fernhill Estate's Central Precinct to proceed. This separate plan will consolidate Estate lands in order to protect its heritage values, its integrity as a large and unique rural estate and significant landscape and environmental values for the community.

Likely impacts on the composition of the population, lifestyle character and community cohesion are expected to be minimal, given the relatively small size of the incoming population.

Recommendations to encourage successful development include a relatively slow rate of development, housing styles and landscaping that are sympathetic to the character of this rural area, design that will encourage interaction between new and incoming residents and community engagement.

Traffic impacts associated with residential development were found in the Traffic Impact study to be insignificant, once roadworks are complete. A single access road and a new turning bay are included in the proposal to mitigate potential traffic impacts.

Consultation and engagement with residents, the local school, clubs and other stakeholders within Mulgoa through the planning and implementation phases will contribute to an understanding of the proposal and its rationale, and will, in time, build community acceptance of the new Precinct within Mulgoa.

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Appendices

A Strategic policies and plans

A Strategic policies and plans

A-1 State level policies

A-1-1 Draft Metropolitan Strategy for Sydney 2031

The Draft Metropolitan Strategy for Sydney (March 2013) sets out the NSW Government's vision for Sydney providing 'a blueprint for balanced and sustainable growth both in established suburbs and in greenfield development'.

The Strategy's vision for Sydney in 2031 is:

- » 'A strong global city' – the nation's economic and financial powerhouse, attracting domestic and international business investment, drawn to our strong housing market, diverse economy and efficient and well-functioning freight network
- » 'A liveable local city' – great places to live and work, providing opportunity and choice for all Sydneysiders.

The Strategy calls for:

- » 'Balanced growth' delivered through a number of means including a new land release policy (that includes the promotion of opportunities for further greenfield land release in response to market demand)
- » The creation of a liveable City through:
 - > A mix of new, well-designed housing to meet the needs of the growing population
 - > Socially inclusive places that promote social, cultural and recreational opportunities
 - > Accessible and adaptable recreation and open space.
- » Accessibility and connectivity – the planning and delivery of transport and land uses that are integrated and promote sustainable transport choices and improved accessibility and connectivity for centres and new urban areas.

With regard to the Penrith LGA, the Strategy identifies:

- » The Penrith LGA as part of the Western Subregion
- » Penrith as a 'Regional City' – a capital of its subregion, containing a full range of services and activities
- » The potential establishment of a 'Specialised Precinct' – the Penrith Education and Health Precinct – by enhancement of the area around Nepean Hospital, University of Western Sydney and TAFE campuses a Kingswood-Werrington
- » Plans for the expansion and growth of the Western Sydney Employment Area (part of which will be located in the southern section of Penrith LGA)
- » Management of the health of the Nepean River and protection of its role as a recreation and commercial fishery resource.

Mulgoa is located within the 'Metropolitan Rural Area', which contains 5% of Sydney's dwellings and population. These areas will also see population growth but their economic, social and sustainability values will also be protected. The Metropolitan Rural Areas (which includes Penrith's rural areas) are defined as a 'city shaper', which will present opportunities for change and shape how Sydney grows and functions. These areas will be "managed to provide for local growth and to maximise the productivity of the Area's businesses, enterprises and resources that benefit the longer-term future of the city" (p. 11). In addition, Figure 14 of the Metropolitan Strategy shows a notional route of the future M9 Outer Sydney Orbital passing to the east of Mulgoa.

In summary, the Strategy:

- » Supports the growth of established rural towns and villages and directs the management and monitoring of lands for possible expansion of the Metropolitan Urban Area
- » Directs the identification and protection of priority green corridors and the increase in productivity of agricultural and resource lands and associated employment opportunities.

The Draft Metropolitan Strategy 2031 therefore provides the overall context for the rezoning and development of Fern Hill Estate. The development is consistent with the Strategy's objectives, as it will:

- » Encourage liveability (housing diversity and quality design, social inclusiveness, accessibility and connectivity)
- » Support growth of the existing village of Mulgoa
- » Provide employment opportunities
- » Protect the existing green corridor and Nepean River environmental values.

A-2 Penrith City Council policies

A-2-1 Penrith LEP 2010

This LEP incorporates provisions previously included in the now repealed Sydney Regional Environmental Plan No 13 relating to Mulgoa Valley (gazetted 1987). The provisions were developed to counter development pressures for rural sub-divisions and housing. The Penrith LEP now provides controls to protect the unique historical heritage and ecological landscape character of the Mulgoa Valley and recognises its significant 'picturesque rural landscape', including important heritage buildings and natural bush landscapes. The LEP excludes the village of Mulgoa, but covers land within Fernhill Estate.

The LEP's provisions aim to ensure that the development of the Mulgoa Valley is guided to maximise the benefits and conservation of its resources in its metropolitan context, especially rural landscape and heritage resources.

Specific aims relevant to assessing social issues and impacts are:

- (a) "to identify buildings, works, relics and places of historic, architectural, cultural, archaeological, aesthetic and natural significance which comprise the environmental heritage of the Mulgoa Valley
- (b) to ensure conservation of Items of Environmental Heritage
- (c) to ensure protection of natural ecological elements within the Valley, especially areas of ecological significance
- (d) ...
- (e) To conserve the rural landscape of the Valley
- (f) To protect the setting of the Mulgoa Village within the rural landscape

- (g) To allow orderly and economic development which is compatible with the rural and natural landscape and heritage of the Valley
- (h) To protect and utilise the tourism and recreation potential of the Valley where it is consistent with the conservation of its rural and natural landscape, heritage and agricultural qualities
- (i) ...
- (j) To enable rural residential development where it is consistent with the conservation of the rural and natural landscape, heritage and agricultural qualities."

Subdivisions are generally limited to 20 hectares (with the exception of some land on Kings Hills Road) and there are controls on construction of houses, developments affecting Mulgoa Road and tree preservation. Development consent requirements apply to environmental heritage items and the landscape and scenic qualities of the area.

The Fernhill proposal successfully addresses most of the aims of the LEP (ie (a) to (j) above, particularly those relating to buildings and places of historic and natural significance, conservation of Items of Environmental Heritage, protection of the natural ecological elements, conservation of the rural landscape and protection and utilisation of tourism potential in the Mulgoa Valley).

A-2-2 Penrith Regional City Community Strategic Plan 2031

The Penrith Regional City Community Strategic Plan 2031 provides a 'big picture' long term direction for the City – identifying key community aspirations as well as Council and community priorities and objectives.

The Plan summaries key community visions for the City. These are addressed under five key themes. Those themes and outcomes most relevant to addressing social issues in new development areas are outlined below:

A City of opportunities

- » Ensure that residents have equitable access to basic needs of life including incomes, affordable housing, services, facilities, education and information
- » Ensure adequate infrastructure is provided to support the substantial growth in the Penrith region including public transport, roads, education, hospitals and social services.

A green City

- » The City's waterways and 'green' corridors provide important natural landscapes and recreational places for the community

A liveable City

- » The region needs an improved transport network with more transport options including better footpath and cycleway networks (in addition to public transport)
- » The quality of streets, parks and public spaces influence everyone's daily life and directly contribute to their wellbeing and the City's liveability
- » High quality recreation and leisure facilities and programs encourage communities to be active and healthy
- » Quality neighbourhood centres can contribute to a community's sense of belonging by supporting local social interactions, networks and community activities
- » Public spaces in Penrith should encourage safe and healthy communities

A vibrant City

- » Resilient communities are those with access to cultural opportunities. These opportunities contribute to community harmony and understanding. While growing in the future, the City should retain its unique identity while attracting a wider audience and becoming more cosmopolitan

- » More people should play a role in their communities. Opportunities for social interaction, strong vibrant networks and partnerships should be encouraged. Communities should also play a role in decision making processes.

With its focus on liveability, affordability, accessibility and environmental quality, the Penrith Regional City Community Strategic Plan 2031 is consistent with many objectives of the Metropolitan Strategy for Sydney. It also emphasises equitable access to essential services and facilities and adequate infrastructure (eg public transport, roads, education, hospitals and social services) to support growth within the region. Fernhill Estate will support these objectives and contribute towards the infrastructure needs of its future residents.

A-2-3 Sustainability Blueprint

Penrith Council's Sustainability Blueprint for urban release areas is a guide for council, developers and other stakeholders to ensure urban release areas are planned using the principles of sustainability. Key aims are to:

- » Provide the framework for delivering quality urban environments and sustainable outcomes in release area planning
- » Reflect the 'triple bottom line approach' demonstrating best practice in economic, social and environmental sustainability, not only for current communities, but also for future generations.
- » Apply to all new urban release areas, including employment or residential land uses, or a mix of both.

The Blueprint contains ten design principles to ensure "social, economic and environmental systems can function effectively and in an integrated way" for present and future generations and to facilitate the development of "equitable functioning communities" which capture opportunities for the city of Penrith (p. 3).

The Sustainable Design Principles are:

Principle 1:	Value Site Attributes – preserve ecosystems, protect biodiversity, air, water and conserve heritage
Principle 2:	Create localised landscapes and quality of public domains - based on the indigenous landscape attributes
Principle 3:	Create communities – not just housing estates
Principle 4:	Create employment – promote economic growth of the City and minimise the need for commuting
Principle 5:	Save Water – water sensitive urban design
Principle 6:	Save energy and greenhouse gases – 'smart-lot' design
Principle 7:	Maximise liveability & longevity – design for durability and adaptability
Principle 8:	Reduce resource consumption – energy, land, water and materials
Principle 9:	Minimise waste – return, reuse, recycle
Principle 10:	Build-in community safety and crime prevention measures – thoughtful design of the public domain

Valuing site attributes includes conservation of environmental heritage on a site, heritage items or conservation areas in the vicinity of the site as well as conserving the heritage significance of settings and views.

Public domain objectives include recognition of the natural setting, creation of attractive streetscapes which retain and enhance views and vistas and landmark features and a high quality public domain which achieves a high level of amenity and sense of place. This also includes provision of facilities for public recreation and community use which meet the needs of the incoming population.

Creating communities requires identification of the public infrastructure, community, educational, cultural and recreational facility needs of a new community and plans to foster social and cultural interaction. Infrastructure needs to be costed and delivery timeframes provided. Informal and formal community meeting spaces encourage social interaction. These need to be accessible and contribute to people's enjoyment of the environment their health and sense of well-being.

Creating diverse communities requires a range of lot sizes and housing types, which can be adapted over time to meet changing requirements, such as an ageing population. A minimum of 3% of all residential allotments should be allocated to affordable housing.

Employment objectives seek to ensure new jobs are created to match the incoming workforce participants.

Liveability and longevity objectives target a high quality and standard of housing and development, as well as encouraging accessible and adaptable dwellings.

The physical environment should encourage a feeling of safety.

The Fernhill proposal would address the objectives of Council's Sustainability Blueprint, through its contribution to housing diversity and liveability through its range of lot sizes, housing types and community facilities and would create some local employment during construction.

A-2-4 Penrith City Council's Social Planning Framework

Penrith City Council has demonstrated a strong commitment to best practice social planning, with the vision of recognising the complexity of the City, the many challenges facing it, and the requirements for priorities to be identified and delivered.

A strategic approach to social planning has been adopted by Council, based on the development and use of a Social Planning Framework.

The Social Planning Framework acknowledges that there are wide differences in social advantage between and within communities. It identifies that to achieve social justice in Penrith, commitment from other levels of government is required.

Council's Social Planning Framework comprises the following five key elements:

- » Consultation and participation;
- » Demographic information;
- » Council's Strategic and Management Plan;
- » Council's Equity and Access Policy;
- » Partnerships with other levels of government.

The following plans and policies have been developed in recent years and form part of Council's Social Planning Framework. The ways in which they specifically address issues around new development are summarised below.

A-2-5 Penrith Inclusion Plan: People with Disability 2009-2013

The Plan aims to improve Penrith City for people with disability and in doing so, deliver outcomes that benefit the greater community by making it easier for people to move around, access services and employment and obtain information about the City.

The Plan envisages a "sustainable, inclusive and accessible community" and provides objectives, practical actions and strategies for Council to directly and indirectly achieve the vision.

Inclusion Plan objectives of interest to this study are:

- » *City Leadership, Promotion and Strategic Partnerships* – leading and working with City partners to enhance access and inclusion in the City
- » *Environmental, Local and Transport* – planning accessible/inclusive neighbourhoods and improved transport and recreation options
- » *Development, Design and the Built Environment* – improving the way the built environment facilitates access and interaction.

Fernhill Estate will address the objectives of this policy through its accessible neighbourhood design and a built environment that encourages interaction and inclusion.

A-2-6 Planning for an Ageing Community Strategy 2010+

While it acknowledges the proportion of older people is lower than state and national averages, the Ageing Community Strategy highlights that the population is rapidly aging. The Strategy aims to ensure that by planning now, the needs of the future older community will be effectively met.

The Strategy aims to guide Council's urban, infrastructure and services planning to support older people to lead healthy, active and independent lives as they age and meet their diverse needs.

To achieve these objectives, the Strategy identifies the following five priority themes (and their associated actions for Council of interest to this study):

- » Encouraging participation in social, leisure and cultural activities by:
 - > Ensuring that as well as meeting the needs of families and younger age groups, facilities (social and cultural) are also appropriate and accessible for growing numbers of older people
 - > Ensuring social and leisure activities and programs reflect the changing interests of older people
 - > Removing barriers to participation (addressing issues around affordability, information, access, comfort, belonging and safety).
- » Encouraging healthy lifestyles and access to health care and support services
- » Supporting older people to 'age in place' by:
 - > Increasing the supply of housing suited to the needs of older people in appropriate locations
- » Creating local communities that support active aging by:
 - > Developing and implementing strategies and policies that support age-friendly built environments
 - > Enhancing community and personal safety and sense of security for older people
 - > Improving access to transport services to meet the needs of older people
 - > Promoting social interaction and sense of community for older people through neighbourhood design and facilities
 - > Providing public open space and recreation facilities that support active living for older people and respond to their changing needs and interests
 - > Promoting access to all public facilities and services for older people
 - > Ensuring Council's parks and walking trails support the health and wellbeing of older people
- » Encouraging participation in, and contribution to, community life

Fernhill Estate will be attractive to residents across a range of age groups and life stages. Its built form will promote access and interaction for residents and the wider community.

A-2-7 Penrith City Council Youth Action Plan 2010-2013

The Youth Action Plan is a brief document outlining strategies and actions for Council and its partners to improve Penrith City Council for young people, focusing on key, current priorities.

Key strategies and actions of possible interest to this study are outlined below:

- » Cultural experiences and opportunities – facilitate opportunities for young people to participate in cultural development. Penrith Youth Interagency outreach events committee to look at organisation events in rural areas
- » Improve accessibility to services for young people – development of outreach services and improved resourcing.

The proposal will provide housing for families who will be able to take advantage of the area's natural setting.

A-2-8 Cultural Framework 2007-2011

The Cultural Framework was developed in response to a longer term goal in the superseded Strategic Plan 2005-2009 to 'develop Penrith as a cultural hub within Western Sydney'.

The document is an aspirational plan addressing local issues and examining international best practice relating to cultural places.

The Framework outlines:

- » Culture is more than the arts, it is about the unique identity of a place including its history, people, landscape, natural assets, public spaces and facilities, events and festivals and local skills and products
- » The role of culture in the creation of harmonious, socially sustainable communities through cultural facilities, celebrations, programs and other initiatives
- » Council's intention to advocate for the highest standards of design and sustainability in architecture, urban design and open space. These spaces should reflect the character and quality of the Penrith landscape.
- » Council's commitment to ensuring established and developing areas are diverse and distinct, involve local communities in the planning process to ensure a sense of ownership and inclusion and involve local artists in community cultural development
- » Council's investment in the protection, conservation and promotion of Penrith's distinct cultural heritage and improving access to it. Council will also facilitate additional interpretation of Penrith's heritage (through interpretive signage and public art).

This proposal directly supports Penrith's local identity, heritage, cultural values.

A-2-9 Recreation and Cultural Strategy (2003)

The Recreation and Cultural Strategy (Stratcorp Consulting 2003) was developed to guide Council in their role as providers of recreation and cultural facilities. The Strategy provides a vision for appropriate, sustainable, well-located, accessible recreational, cultural and community facilities for the Penrith community with consideration of population growth.

The Strategy identifies the following principles for the planning and provision of these facilities and programs:

- » Recreation and cultural opportunities should be accessible and available to all residents

- » Recreation and cultural resources should be distributed equitably throughout the City
- » Facilities should be culturally relevant.

The Strategy also identifies objectives as well as strategies and actions for Council in the planning and provision of facilities. The following are of relevance to this study:

- » Ensure high quality recreational open space for all members of the Penrith community
- » Enhance the foreshore of the Nepean River with additional passive recreational facilities, including opportunities for improved linkages (shared paths) to adjoining urban areas
- » Enhance the existing network of local and regional cycling and walking paths (as well as equestrian paths)
- » Provide appropriate recreation and cultural facilities for children and families. Priority should be given to the installation of playgrounds in established areas including rural areas such as Mulgoa
- » Provide appropriate recreation and cultural facilities for young people.

A-2-10 Penrith Regional City Infrastructure Strategy

The Penrith Regional City Infrastructure Strategy (SGS Economics and Planning 2008) aimed to identify the critical infrastructure that would be required to support the projected substantial increase in population in the future.

The Strategy:

- » Recognises that infrastructure planning plays a critical role in creating sustainable, cohesive, liveable and vibrant communities
- » Reports that Western Sydney and Penrith have fallen behind in educational attainment and income compared to inner Sydney and well planned and designed infrastructure is required to close this gap.

In addition to physical infrastructure, the Strategy addresses the provision of 'social public infrastructure' – cultural, recreational, social support and environmental facilities.

The Strategy includes an appraisal of existing infrastructure and recommendations for future infrastructure requirements. These are outlined below.

Regional level infrastructure

Existing situation	Future additional infrastructure requirements
Is currently well provided (including cultural, educational, health and recreational facilities and emergency services)	Expansion of hospital services 2 community health centres 17 primary schools 6 high schools 2 community centres 1 police station 1 ambulance station

District level infrastructure (LGA wide)

Shortage of facilities, in particular youth services and senior citizens services. Gaps also include an additional aquatic centre as well as the two multipurpose facilities (identified in the Penrith City Improvement Plan)	2 youth centres 2 multipurpose centres (incl. seniors centre) 1 aquatic centre
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Local level infrastructure

Has sufficient local level infrastructure (including three branch libraries, a number of	2 additional libraries 14 childcare centres
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neighbourhood centres, Council and private operated childcare)

1 community/ neighbourhood centre
70ha of sporting facilities

Improvement of public transport networks and cycleways are also identified as key requirements.

The Strategy concludes with the following set of key strategic objectives for the provision of infrastructure. Those of interest to this study are outlined below:

- » Supporting communities – communities to be supported by provision of a full-suite of well-planned and designed social and physical infrastructure delivered in a timely fashion
- » Maximising liveability – high quality public domain including open spaces, streetscapes and urban spaces. Open spaces will provide for a full range of recreation, cultural and leisure activities and will promote a healthy lifestyle.

Social infrastructure needs of the incoming population are discussed in Sections 5.4 and 6.4 of this report.

A-2-11 Penrith Residential Strategy

This Strategy provides the framework under which future population and housing growth for Penrith is to be managed. The Strategy acknowledges that population growth does not merely increase demand for housing stock, but also increases demands for social, economic and environmental services to support residential development (Penrith City Council, June 2001). The 'key objective for strategic management of Penrith's urban land is that population growth in Penrith will be accommodated by infill development within established areas, as well as by future development of several confirmed release areas.

A-2-12 Penrith Rural Lands Study

This study (Penrith City Council, June 2001) was undertaken to support the sustainability of Penrith's rural lands. It responds to pressures for greater certainty for rural residents about the future of their area and considers appropriate land uses to minimise conflicts between rural and residential activities and preserve the distinctive character and values of Penrith's rural areas. Aims of the Rural Lands Study are to:

1. Reinforce Penrith's urban growth limits and promote a compact City by identifying and promoting their intrinsic values and functions
2. Sustain healthy and diverse rural lands by conserving their biodiversity, maintaining the integrity and natural capital of ecosystems and promoting social well-being of rural communities
3. Promote agriculture and other rural land-uses that are sustainable into the longer term
4. Promote a sustainable economic environment that fosters economically viable rural development, employment, transport and future investment opportunities
5. Increase the awareness of economically sustainable rural land use practices and promote responsible stewardship of Penrith's rural lands
6. Achieve outcomes which support and enhance Council's vision of a region with a harmony of urban and rural qualities with a strong commitment to environmental protection and enhancement, and which offers both the cosmopolitan and cultural lifestyles of a mature city and the casual character of a rural community.

The Study provides background information about the demographic, social and economic features of Mulgoa village and the surrounding area. It summarises findings, key issues and values arising

from community consultations undertaken with residents and discusses the range of social and economic issues confronting fringe rural areas including Mulgoa. These include:

- » Desires to maintain village character and heritage and natural resources
- » Pressures from some property owners for subdivision of large rural lots and from others to maintain the area's rural character
- » Economic importance of tourism
- » Infrastructure and community services needs
- » Rural land use conflicts.

These issues are likely to continue to be important for the local community and may impact on community acceptance of the proposal. Consultation with community stakeholders has occurred throughout development of proposals for Fernhill and it is recommended as a component of the ongoing stages of the planning and development.

An emerging social issue for Mulgoa is its changing culture and lifestyle, as it increasingly becomes a 'dormitory suburb' for Penrith (p. 130).

A-2-13 Penrith Rural Lands Strategy

Under this Strategy (Penrith City Council, September 2003), Mulgoa's status as a rural village is preserved, but with a designated village expansion area and rural living (one hectare) areas. The village expansion area and rural living (one hectare) areas are to the east of the existing village and south of the proposed eastern development area covered by this proposal. New land use designations for Fernhill Estate are (1) Rural Conservation and (7) Environmental Protection. These specify minimum lot sizes for future subdivisions.

The Strategy's objectives cover social, economic and environmental factors, as shown in the following table.

Factor	Objective
Growth management	Provide for coordinated and effective growth in Penrith's rural lands
Land use planning	Develop a land use framework that will give a level of certainty to the people who live in the rural areas of Penrith
Quality of life	Ensure that residents have adequate access to appropriate services and facilities
Economic development and employment opportunities	Provide for economic development opportunities that are in keeping with the rural character of Penrith
Infrastructure requirements	Provide an adequate level of infrastructure for the people who live and work in rural Penrith
Scenic and landscape	Ensure that development has a minimal impact on the scenic and cultural landscape of Penrith; and
	Ensure that growth is managed to retain the rural character of Penrith
Heritage and culture	Preserve the rural heritage and culture of Penrith

The Rural Lands Strategy recognises the pressures for subdivision in the vicinity of Mulgoa village by incorporating a village expansion area and rural living areas. The Eastern Precinct is immediately north of Mulgoa village and would utilise and support community services and facilities

and provide new community benefits as described in Section 4. Rezoning and development would also minimise any impacts on the area's scenic landscape.



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