



Educational Needs Analysis

Melrose Park

Client: PAYCE

Date: 31 March 2021

Contact:

Will Roden
will.rodan@elton.com.au
02 9387 2600

**SYDNEY
02 9387 2600**

Level 27, 680 George Street
Sydney NSW 2000

www.elton.com.au
consulting@elton.com.au
Sydney | Brisbane | Canberra | Darwin | Melbourne | Perth
ABN 56 003 853 101

Elton Consulting is now part of the WSP Group.

Prepared by	Alexander Iping
Reviewed by	Will Roden
Date	31 March 2021
Version	2021 Update Report

Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	3
1.1	Study outline and purpose	3
1.2	Site context	3
1.3	Proposed development	3
1.4	Report outline	4
2	EXISTING EDUCATION FACILITY NEEDS	6
2.1	Existing schools	6
2.2	Existing school capacity	6
2.3	Planned school upgrades	7
2.4	Existing tertiary education facilities	7
3	FUTURE EDUCATION FACILITY NEEDS	9
3.1	Growth and change in the broader area	9
3.2	Projected education needs	10
3.3	Addressing school needs	12
4	SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS	14

FIGURES

Figure 1	Masterplan for the Proposed Development	5
----------	---	---

TABLES

Table 1	Enrolment of schools in the local area	6
Table 2	Capacity of schools in the local area	7
Table 3	Impact of the Meadowbank Education and Employment Precinct	7
Table 4	Population forecasts for Ermington-Melrose Park	9
Table 5	Primary school attendance rates for select suburbs	10
Table 6	Secondary school attendance rates for select suburbs	11

1 Introduction

1.1 Study outline and purpose

This report documents findings from the first phase of an educational needs analysis for a proposed development at Wharf Road, Melrose Park (the proposed development). This report is to accompany a Planning Submission for the development being lodged with the City of Parramatta Council.

The first phase of the analysis has involved:

- » Identifying existing primary and secondary schools and tertiary education facilities near the Site
- » Examining the potential characteristics of the future community (to gain insight into the potential extent of education facility needs)
- » Estimating future educational needs.

This report was written in 2016 and updated in 2021 to incorporate changes to the master plan, new Census data, and new school enrolment data. Engagement with the NSW Department of Education and Melrose Park Public School was a key component of the original report, but has not been possible for this update.

The care and education needs for the future community's pre-school aged children is considered in Elton Consulting's study Community, Sport and Recreation Facilities and Open Space Study for the Northern Precinct, Melrose Park (the CSRFOS Study).

1.2 Site context

The 25 hectare Site is located in the suburb of Melrose Park, on the border of the Parramatta and Ryde Local Government Areas. The Site lies immediately to the south and east of the suburb of Ermington (in the City of Parramatta), north of the Parramatta River and west of the suburb of West Ryde. It is also west of an established residential area in Melrose Park.

The Site is located approximately 2km away (walking distance) from the nearest train stations in Meadowbank and West Ryde. The northern border is close to Victoria Road, a main arterial road with a number of bus routes. The Parramatta CBD is approximately 6km from the Site, to which bus routes along Victoria Road provide frequent access.

Sydney Olympic Park and its associated open space, sport, recreation and entertainment facilities are easily accessed by car from the Site (15 minute drive), but it is less accessible by public transport. Importantly, stage 2 of the Parramatta Light Rail is proposed to run along the southern end of the Site. This will connect Melrose Park directly by public transport to both Parramatta and Sydney Olympic Park.

The City of Parramatta is one of the fastest growing areas in the Sydney Metropolitan Region and will continue to experience significant growth. The population of City of Parramatta is projected to grow from an estimated 251,311 in 2018 to about 389,017 in 2036, an increase of some 137,706 people.

1.3 Proposed development

The development's planning process is currently in the rezoning stage. The current Masterplan for the Site (**Figure 1**) proposes the following:

- » Approximately 5,000 medium to high density residential dwellings (including 20 dwellings that will be dedicated to Council for affordable housing in perpetuity)
- » 50,514sqm of public open space including two large parks (Central Park and a playing field), a common (Western Parklands South), linear parks on the eastern edge of the Site (Wharf Road Gardens North and

South) and landscaped zone along the western edge of the Site (Western Parklands). Also proposed are a number of communal open spaces between residential buildings

- » A Town Centre that includes retail and commercial uses
- » **Dedication of 10,000sqm of land to the City of Parramatta for a new school**
- » Inclusion of around 2 kilometres of cycle paths throughout the development.

The planning submission also proposes contributions to community infrastructure in the surrounding area, including towards:

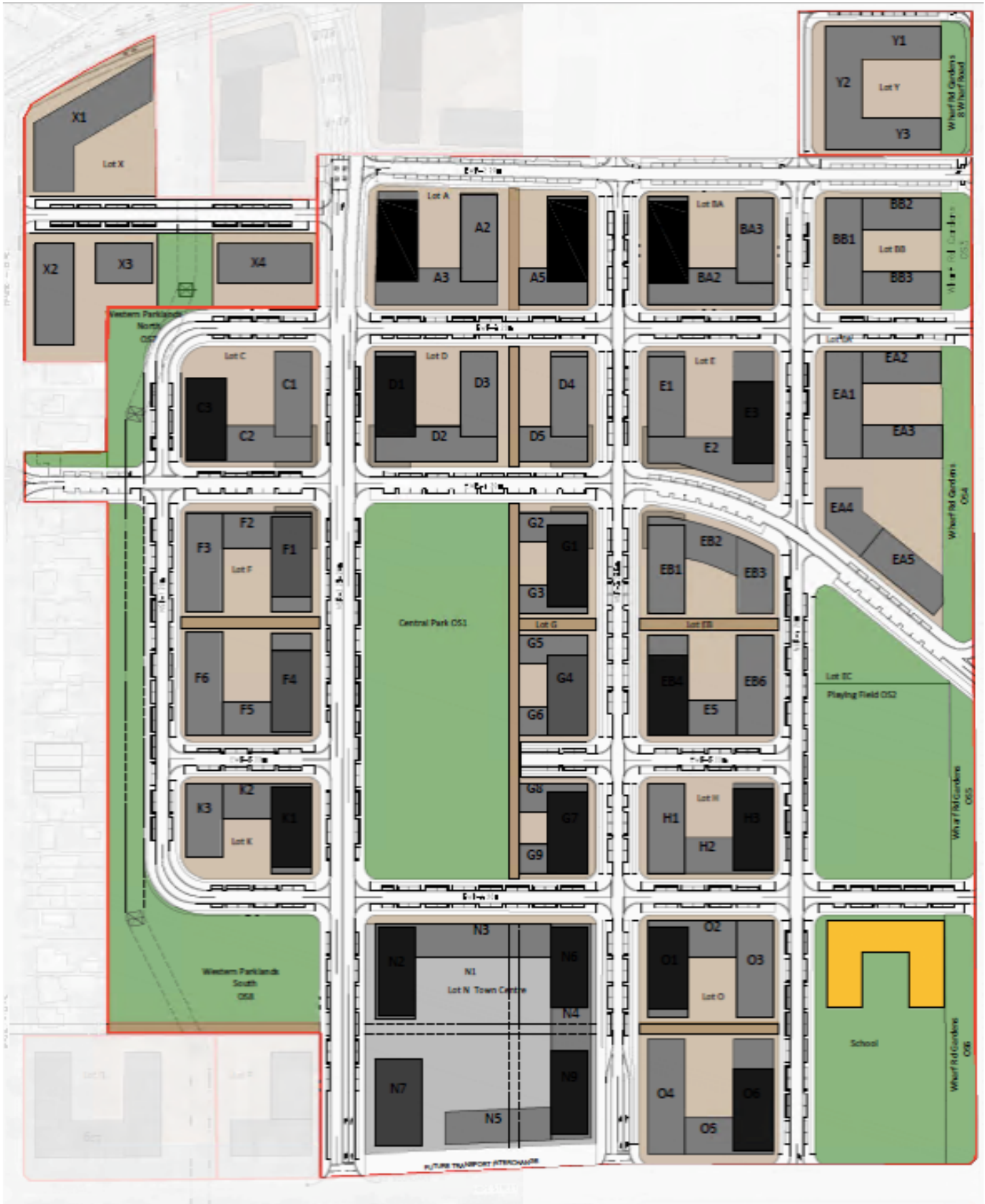
- » The upgrade of nearby Ermington Community Hub and Library – \$3.5 million
- » The provision of community shuttle buses to connect the development to surrounding areas (including Meadowbank railway station and wharf).

1.4 Report outline

This report contains:

- » A preliminary examination of existing education facility provision and capacity (Chapter 2)
- » An initial assessment of future education facility demands and needs of the future development community (with consideration of broader population growth and associated needs) (Chapter 3)
- » Identification of potential approaches to addressing education facility needs (Chapter 3)
- » Summary of findings and an outline of next steps (Chapter 4).

Figure 1 Masterplan for the Proposed Development



2 Existing education facility needs

2.1 Existing schools

There is a total of seven schools near the Site, including five government primary schools, one government secondary school, and one non-government primary school (**Table 1**). Melrose Park Public School is located directly adjacent to the south of the Site.

Table 1 Enrolment of schools in the local area

School	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Trend
Government Primary Schools						
Melrose Park Public School	194	197	210	208	212	+9.3%
Ermington Public School	447	447	416	402	415	-7.2%
Rydalmere East Public School	172	177	195	200	181	+5.2%
Ermington West Public School	151	157	171	179	189	+25.2%
West Ryde Public School	538	604	669	691	634	+17.8%
Government Secondary Schools						
Marsden High School	753	800	860	877	877	+16.5%
Non-Government Primary Schools						
St Michaels Catholic Primary school	334	336	333	354	365	+9.3%

Source: Australian Curriculum Assessment and Report Authority, *MySchools*, 2020, <https://www.myschool.edu.au/>

The enrolment data shows:

- » West Ryde Public School is the largest primary school in the local area, with over 600 enrolments
- » Ermington West Public School and West Ryde Public School are the two primary schools experiencing the greatest increase in enrolments (25.2% and 17.8% respectively)
- » Melrose Park Public School is a relatively small primary school but it is growing (9.3%)
- » Marsden High School is the closest secondary school and has nearly 900 enrolments with notable growth over the period (16.5%).

2.2 Existing school capacity

Data from the NSW Department of Education has been used to assess the existing capacity of government schools near the Site. **Table 2** overleaf compares the enrolment capacity and 2020 enrolments of each school. This measures their capacity based on permanent school buildings only – it does not consider non-permanent buildings such as demountable learning spaces.

This analysis does not include non-government schools as enrolment capacity data is not publicly available.

The data demonstrates that:

- » There is capacity within the public education system in the area – Rydalmere East Public School and Ermington West Public School have capacity to accommodate an additional 309 students collectively, while Marsden High School can accommodate an additional 209 students

- » Two schools have been expanded to meet demand – Melrose Park Public School and Ermington Public School currently accommodate 153 students more than their enrolment capacity.

Additionally, consultation with the Department of Education in 2016 indicated Melrose Park Public School could grow to 250 students without the need for major modifications.

Table 2 Capacity of schools in the local area

School	Enrolment cap*	2020 enrollment	Difference
Government Primary Schools			
Melrose Park Public School	<150	212	+62
Ermington Public School	324	415	+91
Rydalmere East Public School	301	181	-120
Ermington West Public School	278	189	-89
West Ryde Public School	N/A	N/A	N/A
Government Secondary Schools			
Marsden High School	1080	877	-203

Source: The Sydney Morning Herald, *The Sydney schools exceeding new enrolment caps by almost 1000 students*, 2020, <https://www.smh.com.au/education/the-sydney-schools-exceeding-new-enrolment-caps-by-almost-1000-students-20200420-p54lff.html>

2.3 Planned school upgrades

Of the selected schools, two have either been upgraded recently or have planned upgrades with funding committed from the NSW Government. These are:

- » West Ryde Public School – The West Ryde Public School Upgrade was recently completed in mid 2020. It included development of a new three-storey building with 14 new permanent teaching spaces and a new library, as well as improved play areas.
- » Marsden High School – As part of the development of the Meadowbank Education and Employment Precinct (the Precinct), Marsden High School and Meadowbank Public School will be relocated to the Precinct. Once relocated, the Precinct will cater for 1,000 primary school students and 1,500 secondary students significantly increasing their capacity (**Table 3**).

Table 3 Impact of the Meadowbank Education and Employment Precinct

School	Enrolment (2020)	Enrolment capacity	Additional capacity
Meadowbank Public School	486	1,000	+514
Marsden High School	877	1,500	+623

Source: School Infrastructure NSW, *Schools at the Meadowbank Education and Employment Precinct*, 2019, <https://www.schoolinfrastructure.nsw.gov.au/content/infrastructure/www/projects/m/meadowbank-education-and-employment-precinct>

2.4 Existing tertiary education facilities

The nearest tertiary education facilities to the Site include:

- » The Northern Sydney Institute (NSI), part of TAFE NSW, Meadowbank Campus, See Street, Meadowbank (approximately 3.5kms to the east)

- » The Northern Sydney Institute (NSI) Ryde Campus, Blaxland Rd, Ryde (approximately 5kms to the north east)
- » University of Western Sydney, Parramatta Campus, James Ruse Drive, Parramatta (approximately 4km to the west)
- » Macquarie University, at Macquarie Park is approximately 7.5kms to the north east.

The delivery of the Meadowbank Education and Employment Precinct is expected to revitalise the Meadowbank TAFE NSW campus. The new Meadowbank TAFE NSW campus will feature:

- » New Multi-Trades and Digital Technology Hub
- » Improved campus access to the railway station.

This \$154 million investment is expected to deliver a technology focused TAFE campus with an emphasis on life long learning, collaboration with industries to provide practical training experience to students, and learning spaces that are modern, flexible and future proof¹.

¹ NSW Government, *Meadowbank Education and Employment Precinct*, <https://www.nsw.gov.au/projects/meadowbank-education-and-employment-precinct>

3 Future education facility needs

3.1 Growth and change in the broader area

The City of Parramatta is a rapidly growing area and is projected to experience continuing population growth into the future. The population of City of Parramatta Council is projected to grow from an estimated 251,311 in 2018 to about 389,017 in 2036, an increase of some 137,706 people.

The Ermington-Melrose Park area is projected to increase from an estimated 11,022 people in 2016 to 39,991 people in 2036. The forecast age breakdowns for Ermington and Melrose Park combined are outlined in **Table 4**.

Table 4 Population forecasts for Ermington-Melrose Park

Service age groups	2016 (people)	2016 (%)	2036 (people)	2036 (%)	Change (people)
Babies and pre-schoolers (0 to 4)	919	8.3	3,364	8.4	2,445
Primary schoolers (5 to 11)	974	8.8	4,117	10.3	3,143
Secondary schoolers (12 to 17)	751	6.8	2,757	6.9	2,006
Tertiary education (18 to 24)	927	8.4	3,524	8.8	2,597
Young workforce (25 to 34)	1,666	15.1	7,110	17.8	5,444
Parents and homebuilders (35 to 49)	2,361	21.4	9,148	22.9	6,787
Older workers and pre-retirees (50 to 59)	1,347	12.2	3,948	9.9	2,601
Empty nesters and retirees (60 to 69)	1,081	9.8	3,072	7.7	1,991
Seniors (70 to 84)	759	6.9	2,449	6.1	1,690
Elderly aged (85 and over)	237	2.1	502	1.3	265
Total persons	11,022	100.0	39,991	100.0	28,969

Source: Ermington - Melrose Park Population Forecasts (.id)

The population forecasts suggest significant population growth in the area leading to greater demand for educational facilities across all age groups. The estimates are that there will be 3,000 more primary schoolers, 2,000 more secondary schoolers and 2,500 more tertiary education aged people in the area to 2036.

Projected development population

The CSRFOS Study estimates the size and composition of the future population for the development. It assumes an occupancy rate of 2.1 persons/household based on analysis of similar locations with high density development. When this is applied to the proposed 5,000 dwellings, a population of approximately 10,500 people is projected for the proposed development.

The age and household type profile of the population within the development is likely to be quite different from the population forecasts above and those of its immediate surrounding suburbs (except Meadowbank). The CSRFOS Study notes the future development community is likely to be characterised by:

- » A high proportion of young adults (aged 25-40) who are well educated, working in professional occupations and who are drawn to the area to be close to work
- » A higher proportion of households comprising families with young children, but a lower proportion of households with school aged children compared with Greater Sydney, although anecdotal evidence suggests

numbers of school aged children may be higher than experienced in similar high density developments in the past. Numbers of children will still be significant and community infrastructure will still be required that addresses their needs

- » A high proportion of households comprising one or two people
- » With the proposed development in close proximity to Meadowbank TAFE, and also relatively close to the University of Western Sydney at Rydalmere, it may also attract and include a high proportion of tertiary students.

It is important to note that these assumptions are based on existing trends and data relating to higher density communities as well as the proposed dwelling type and mix. The demographic profile of people living in higher density dwellings has changed in recent years with more families choosing apartment living (although proportions are still relatively low). The growth in apartment development and changing housing preferences may see further changes in the demographic make-up of higher density areas.

3.2 Projected education needs

We have estimated needs for primary and secondary schools generated from the development based on several assumptions. It is important to note that:

- » The Department of Education applies its own set of assumptions and its own model to project the number of students within the in the future. The Department also undertakes its own modelling to determine the capacity of existing schools to accommodate projected population growth, requirements for school upgrades and/or the provision of new schools in an area.
- » The Department's modelling will incorporate cumulative demand in the area. **Table 4** shows this area is experiencing significant growth and will continue to into the future. This will increase demand for primary, secondary and tertiary education facilities.

Primary schools

We estimate demand for primary school enrolments generated by the development using age profiles from urban transformation areas such as Pyrmont, Zetland and Rhodes. These suburbs were identified in the CSRFOS Study as comparable areas to the proposed development.

The average proportion of primary school aged children in these areas is 3.0% (Pyrmont – 3.5%, Zetland – 2.6%, Rhodes – 2.7%) (ABS TableBuilder Pro, Age, 2016). If we apply this rate to an expected population of 10,500 people, we estimate there will be 315 primary school aged children in the future community.

Using average school attendance rates in suburbs in the Melrose Park Public School catchment area (**Table 5**), we estimate demand for approximately:

- » 214 government primary school places
- » 82 Catholic primary school places
- » 20 other non-government primary school places.

Table 5 Primary school attendance rates for select suburbs

Suburb	Government	Catholic	Other Non-Government
Melrose Park	49.7%	43.9%	6.4%
Ermington	66.5%	27.5%	6.2%
Meadowbank	77.4%	19.7%	6.6%
West Ryde	71.2%	22.2%	6.7%

Suburb	Government	Catholic	Other Non-Government
Average	67.8%	26.0%	6.4%

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, TableBuilder Pro, *Type of Educational Institution Attending (TYPP)*, 2016

Secondary schools

Again, we estimate demand for secondary school enrolments generated by the development using age profiles from urban transformation areas such as Pymont, Zetland and Rhodes.

The average proportion of secondary school aged children in these areas is 1.7% (Pymont – 2.1%, Zetland – 1.4%, Rhodes – 1.8%) (ABS TableBuilder Pro, Age, 2016). If we apply this rate to an expected population of 10,500 people, we estimate there will be 179 secondary school aged children in the future community.

Using average school attendance rates in suburbs in the Marsden High School catchment area (**Table 6**), we estimate demand for approximately:

- » 112 government secondary school places
- » 45 Catholic secondary school places
- » 22 other non-government secondary school places.

To better understand projected secondary school needs, school attendance data has been applied to the expected number of secondary school children which will be generated by the proposed development.

Table 6 Secondary school attendance rates for select suburbs

Suburb	Government	Catholic	Other Non-Government
Melrose Park	36.6%	51.1%	11.5%
Ermington	55.0%	38.6%	6.8%
West Ryde	64.2%	26.5%	9.2%
Carlingford	73.1%	14.7%	11.8%
Denistone	50.0%	35.0%	13.8%
Denistone East	58.4%	22.9%	16.3%
Denistone West	67.2%	29.7%	12.5%
Eastwood	70.7%	17.6%	11.4%
Epping	73.9%	10.9%	15.4%
Dundas	54.1%	35.0%	8.0%
Dundas Valley	55.8%	35.3%	9.1%
Putney	26.8%	53.0%	21.0%
Rydalmere	63.8%	28.1%	6.4%
Ryde	50.8%	35.7%	13.7%
Average	62.7%	25.1%	12.3%

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, TableBuilder Pro, *Type of Educational Institution Attending (TYPP)*, 2016

Tertiary education facilities

Tertiary education facilities serve wide Metropolitan or Regional catchments and are not planned on a local level. The population of the new development will not be large enough to warrant the provision of tertiary facilities and will instead rely on those in the wider region. The future development community will have good access to a number of existing tertiary education facilities, including Northern Sydney Institute (NSI) Meadowbank and Ryde campuses, the Meadowbank Education and Employment Precinct, University of Western Sydney Parramatta Campus and Macquarie University.

3.3 Addressing school needs

Government primary schools

The development is likely to stimulate demand for an additional 315 primary school places, of which 214 will be for government schools.

Based on consultation with the Department of Education in 2016, Melrose Park Primary School could absorb a small part of this demand (approximately 40 places) without the need for major modifications. However, this leaves unmet need for around 170 places.

Consultation with the Department of Education is required to further explore potential primary school facility needs and develop a potential approach to address these. During initial discussions with the Department of Education for this project in 2016, the Department provided the following guidance on planning for population growth and future school provision:

- » In a climate of high and growing demand from population growth and limited funds, it is the Department's preference to expand existing schools to increase capacity (where possible) as opposed to building new schools.
- » The Department, therefore, would be interested in any opportunities that may arise to expand the capacity of existing schools in the area (including through development contributions and partnerships).

In response to the above directions, PAYCE organised discussions with the Melrose Park Public School Principal to explore potential opportunities for a partnership approach (between PAYCE, the Department and the school) which would involve upgrading and increasing the capacity of the school to meet future, projected needs. Discussions with the Department and Melrose Park Public School Principal indicated that both parties would consider this as a potential option in the future.

We are not aware of the status of discussions between PAYCE, the Department and the Melrose Park Primary School.

The planning proposal

The current planning proposal incorporates the contribution of 10,000sqm in land for a new school on the Site. This is directly adjacent to a playing field (8,032sqm), wetland park (2,264sqm) and gardens (2,337sqm + 1,388sqm).

This level of provision is consistent with School Infrastructure NSW's School Site Selection and Development Guideline (2020), which recommends a site size of 15,000sqm including open space for primary schools accommodating up to 1,000 students in high density/town centres.

The Guideline supports innovative solutions for school design in dense urban areas, noting school buildings above four storeys may explore options for open space within levels of the building, on rooftops, under the building and/or shared with the community. This may reduce the site area if the provision rate of 10sqm of open space per students is provided.

Government secondary schools

The development is likely to stimulate demand for an additional 179 secondary school places, of which 112 will be for government schools. Given Marsden High School currently has capacity of around 200 places and its capacity

will be boosted when it relocates to the Meadowbank Education and Employment Precinct, this demand could be met within existing schools.

Non-government schools

Population growth in the area may prompt interest from non-government school providers in the establishment of new schools or increasing the capacity of existing schools in the area. Non-government school providers undertake independent detailed demographic analysis and feasibility assessment to determine plans. This report does not, therefore provide an analysis of independent private school needs.

Tertiary education

Tertiary education facilities serve wide Metropolitan or Regional catchments and are not planned on a local level. The population of the new development will not be large enough to warrant the provision of tertiary facilities, and will instead rely on those in the wider region. The future development community will have good access to a number of existing tertiary education facilities.

4 Summary and next steps

This report documents initial findings about the impact of the proposed development at Wharf Road, Melrose Park (by PAYCE) on needs for educational facilities.

There is existing capacity within the public education system in and around Melrose Park, but some schools are experiencing growing demand:

- » Melrose Park Primary School is a small school adjacent to the Site which has expanded to meet growing demand. It currently has 212 students, but could accommodate up to 250 without major modifications.
- » Marsden High School is the local secondary school and has existing capacity for an additional 200 students. Its maximum capacity will be increased to 1,500 places (from 1,080 places) as part of the Meadowbank Education and Employment Precinct project.

We estimate the future community at the proposed development will include approximately 315 primary school aged children and 179 secondary school aged children. We estimate this will create demand for 214 government primary school places and 112 government secondary school places. We note the Department of Education utilises its own models for calculating education needs in areas and determining the capacity of existing schools to accommodate population growth.

The development will also create demand for tertiary education places. However, tertiary institutions serve metropolitan or regional catchments and are not planned on a local level. As a result, further investigations of plans for these facilities have not been conducted as part of this report.

It is likely that Marsden High School will have capacity to meet additional demand from the new community, but Melrose Park Primary School will not.

The planning proposal includes a contribution of 10,000sqm of land within the Site for a new school. This would be suitable for a primary school development given it is adjacent to a proposed public oval.

Next steps in this study process will involve further discussions with the Department of Education to further explore potential primary school facility needs and confirm the approach for address these.

elton
consulting
a wsp company

www.elton.com.au