

# Social Impact Assessment (SIA) – 3-5 Help Street, Chatswood

Prepared for  
Loftex Chatswood Pty Ltd

March 2025



# Authorship and Declaration

This report has been prepared by a suitably qualified and experienced author who holds appropriate qualifications and has relevant experience in social science or related areas. The author's qualifications, experience and demonstrated understanding of social impacts are outlined below:

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The author declares that this SIA report:

- Was completed on date 7 March 2025
- Has been prepared in accordance with the Department of Planning, Housing and Industry's Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State Significant Development (2023)
- Contains all reasonably available and relevant information
- Was completed with an understanding of the authors' legal and ethical obligations
- Does not contain information that is false or misleading.

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# Executive Summary

This Social Impact Assessment (SIA) report accompanies a State Significant Development Application that seeks approval for a mixed-use development with in-fill affordable housing in Chatswood, NSW. The SIA has been prepared in response to the SEARs issued for the project (SSD-76555711).

This SIA evaluates the potential impacts of the proposal on the surrounding community, encompassing both the construction and operation phases of the project. The SIA draws on the analysis of the current and forecast social conditions of the defined social locality, along with details of the proposed development, to assess its likely social impacts. It also draws on the outcomes of community consultation that has been undertaken to date, and additional engagement specifically to inform this SIA.

The SIA has been prepared in accordance with the following documents:

- NSW's Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State Significant Projects as updated in February 2023 (the 'NSW SIA Guideline')
- *Technical Supplement – SIA Guideline February 2023.*

This SIA has identified that the project is likely to result in both temporary and permanent social impacts, particularly during the construction phase and following the development's completion.

The project brings significant long-term benefits, including increased housing supply, improved affordable housing options, and enhanced streetscapes that will improve the overall liveability and accessibility of Chatswood. The addition of affordable units directly supports vulnerable groups and addresses local housing stress, contributing to greater social equality and resilience in the community.

During construction, there may be temporary negative impacts associated with accessibility changes, construction fatigue, and disruptions to the daily lives of residents and businesses in the immediate area. These include impacts such as temporary footpath closures, increased truck movements, and general disruptions to amenity and local access. While there may be concerns about changes to the skyline and potential displacement of residents, the project is aligned with broader strategic planning goals for the area.

It is understood that the majority of identified negative impacts are capable of substantial mitigation, and the project team has committed to the additional social mitigation recommended by this Assessment (see Section 7.0 of this SIA). While the proposed development may introduce temporary disruptions and change, it brings substantial long-term social benefits. As such, the proposal is considered to present an overall positive social impact.



# 1 Introduction

This Report documents the process and outcomes of the Social Impact Assessment (**SIA**) undertaken by Mecone Group Pty Limited (**Mecone**) on behalf of Loftex Chatswood Pty Ltd (**'The Proponent'**), for the proposed mixed-use development with in-fill affordable housing at 3-5 Help Street, Chatswood. This SIA forms part of the Project's Environmental Impact Statement (**EIS**) required under Part 4 of the NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (**EP&A Act**).

The Project is a State Significant Development (**SSD**) under *State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021* (**Planning Systems SEPP**). A development application (**DA**) for the Project is required to be submitted under Part 4 of the EP&A Act.

## 1.1 Project Overview

The proposal seeks development consent for the demolition of the existing site structures and construction of a 35-storey shop top housing development comprising:

- A 3-storey podium comprising non-residential uses between ground level and Level 1
- A 32-storey residential tower comprising 160 units
- Five-level basement providing a total of 165 parking spaces
- Ground floor landscaped, and public domain improvements, and
- Services and infrastructure improvements as required.

The primary objectives of the project are as follows:

- Provide a range of apartment types, varying in size and layout that delivers critical housing, that incorporates high quality design, enhanced liveability and universal design elements that address the needs of families, young people, older people and those with a disability alike
- Redevelop an existing ageing low-medium density development that is in a highly accessible location, with significant development potential
- Achieve design excellence through thoughtful design that is of a high quality and complementary to the surrounding locality and metropolitan character of Help Street and the Chatswood CBD.
- Deliver an ecologically sustainable development which integrates ESD principles

## 1.2 Requirement for SIA

**Table 1** below specifies the Social Impact requirements provided in the SEARs for this SSDA with application number SSD-76555711.

**Table 1: SEARs requirements for Social Impact**

Issues and Assessment Requirements	Response
<b>20. Social Impact</b>	



Provide a Social Impact Assessment that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is prepared in accordance with the <i>Social Impact Assessment Guidelines for State Significant Projects</i></li> </ul>	Response provided throughout this report.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is targeted and proportionate to the project's context and likely impacts</li> </ul>	See section 3.0.

## 1.3 Review questions and responses

The review questions outlined by the Social Impact Assessment Guidelines for State Significant Projects (DPHI, 2023) (**'NSW SIA Guideline'**) are designed to confirm that the requirements of the Guideline have been fulfilled when considering the scale of social impacts associated with the proposed development. **Table 2** below outlines these review questions and indicates how they have been addressed in this SIA.

**Table 2: Review questions and responses**

Review Questions	Addressed by report (yes/no), relevant section
Does the lead author meet the qualification and experience requirements?	Yes – refer Authorship and Declaration.
Has the lead author provided a signed declaration?	Yes – refer Authorship and Declaration.
Would a reasonable person judge the SIA report to be impartial, transparent and suitably rigorous given the nature of the proposal?	Yes.
<b>Proposal's social locality and social baseline</b>	
Does the SIA report identify and describe all the different social groups that may be affected by the proposal?	Yes – refer Section 4, particularly Section 4.2.5.
Does the SIA report identify and describe all the built or natural features that have value or importance for people, and explain why people value those features?	Yes – refer Section 4.3.
Does the SIA report identify and describe historical, current, and expected social trends or social changes for people in the locality, including their experiences with this proposal and other major development proposals?	Yes – refer Section 4.
Does the social baseline study including appropriate justification for each element, and provide evidence that the elements reflect both relevant literature and the diversity of view and likely experiences?	Yes – refer Section 4.
Does the social baseline study demonstrate social-science research methods and explain any significant methodological data or limitations?	Yes – refer Section 4, with methodology provided Section 3.3.
<b>Identification and description of social impacts</b>	
Does the SIA report adequately describe likely social impacts from the perspectives of how people may experience them, and explain the research used to identify them? When undertaken as a part of SIA scoping and initial assessment, has the plan for the SIA report been detailed?	Yes – refer Section 6.



Does the SIA report apply the precautionary principle to identifying social impacts, and consider how they may be experienced differently by different people and groups?	Yes – refer Section 6.
Does the SIA report describe how the preliminary analysis influenced proposal design and EIS engagement strategy?	Yes – refer to project refinements outlined in Section 7.

### Community engagement

Were the extent and nature of engagement activities appropriate and sufficient or canvass all relevant views, including those of vulnerable or marginalised groups?	Yes – refer Section 5.
How have the views, concerns and insights of affected and interested people influenced both the proposal design and each element of the SIA report?	Refer methodology (Section 3), data gathering (Section 4 – 5), assessment an understanding of level of importance/concern (Section 6).

### Predicting and analysing social impacts

Does the SIA report impartially focus on the most important social impacts to people at all stages of the proposal, without any omissions or misrepresentations?	Yes – refer to approach taken to assessment (Section 6).
Does the SIA report analyse the distribution of both positive and negative social impacts, and identify who will benefit and who will lose from the proposal?	Yes – refer Section 6.
Does the SIA report identify its assumptions, and include sensitivity analysis and alternative scenarios? (including 'worst-case 'and 'no proposal 'scenarios where relevant.	'Worst case' and 'no proposal' scenarios are discussed in the EIS. For this SIA, comparison against a baseline scenario that does not include the proposal is a common methodology to address the alternative scenario requirement (see Section 4).
Do the evaluations of significance of social impacts impartially represent how people in each identified social group can expect to experience the proposal, including any cumulative effects?	Yes – refer Section 6.
Are the evaluations of significance disaggregated to consider the likely different experiences for different people or groups, especially vulnerable groups?	Yes – refer Section 6.

### Responses, monitoring and management

Does the SIA report propose responses that are tangible, deliverable, likely to be durably effective, directly related to the respective impact(s) and adequately delegated and resourced?	Yes – refer Section 7.1.
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Does the SIA report demonstrate how people can be confident that social impacts will be monitored and reported in ways that are reliable, effective and trustworthy?	Yes – refer Section 7.2.
Does the SIA report demonstrate how the proponent will adaptively manage social impacts and respond to unanticipated events, breaches, grievances and non-compliance?	Yes – refer Section 7.2.

## 1.4 Report Overview

Following the NSW SIA Guideline this Report is structured as follows:

- **Section 1.0** and **Section 2.0**: Introduction, including a Project Overview, Assessment Requirements and Methodology
- **Section 3.0**: Scoping and proportionality
- **Section 4.0**: Social Baseline, consisting of the community profile
- **Section 5.0**: Field study
- **Section 6.0**: Social Impact Assessment
- **Section 7.0**: Mitigation and enhancement
- **Section 8.0**: Conclusion.



## 2 Methodology

SIA comprises a number of key phases that relate to:

- Developing an understanding of the social context and area of influence of a project
- the scoping of issues of importance and interest to key stakeholders and local communities
- an assessment and evaluation of social impacts that may occur as a result of a proposed project
- the identification of strategies to address negative impacts and enhance positive impacts.

Further, SIA, when informed by local communities and stakeholders, affords opportunities to effectively identify, integrate and address social impacts of projects within planning, design, and development processes. This section outlines the key activities undertaken within each of these phases.

### 2.1 Assessment Requirements

This SIA has been prepared in alignment with the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's **(DPHI)** Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State Significant Projects (2023) ('the SIA Guideline'), alongside the Project's EIS process.

Furthermore, this SIA has been prepared to address the Industry Specific Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements **(SEARs)** issued on 25 October 2024, that included an assessment of social impacts in accordance with the NSW SIA Guideline.

According to the SIA Guideline, social impacts are the consequences that people experience when a new project brings change. These can include changes across:

- Way of life
- Accessibility
- Community
- Culture
- Livelihoods
- Decision-making systems
- Surroundings
- Health and wellbeing.

Two main types of social impacts may arise as a result of the proposed development:

- Direct impacts can be caused by the project which may cause changes to the existing community, as measured using social indicators, such as population, health and employment
- Indirect impacts that are generally less tangible and more commonly related to matters such as community values, identity and sense of place. Both physically observable as well as psychological impacts need to be considered.

### 2.2 Social Locality

For this SIA, a social locality has been chosen taking into consideration both localised social impacts and those likely to occur on a broader scale. This locality has been determined based on:

- The construction activities and operational uses of the proposal
- The likely scale and extent of potential direct and indirect impacts and benefits of the proposal on the social factors identified in the SIA Guideline. This includes indirect impacts that are generally less tangible and more commonly relate to matters such as community values, identity and sense of connection to place

- Cumulative impacts that may impact affected communities as a result of other transport, construction and major development processes underway within or proximate to the site
- The potentially affected built or natural features that have social value or importance located on or near the construction sites, and the social characteristics of the areas likely to be affected by the proposal, as informed by the social baseline study and other technical assessments that inform the EIS
- The community and stakeholder groups that would be most likely affected by the direct and indirect impacts, based on stakeholder and community engagement activities, and other available information sources.

The primary social locality for the purpose of this assessment is the Chatswood Statistical Area Locality (**SAL**), representing the primary community likely to be impacted by this project. In gathering the baseline analysis, comparison is made to the Willoughby LGA (**Figure 1**) and Greater Sydney to understand variation and unique characteristics of the immediate social locality.

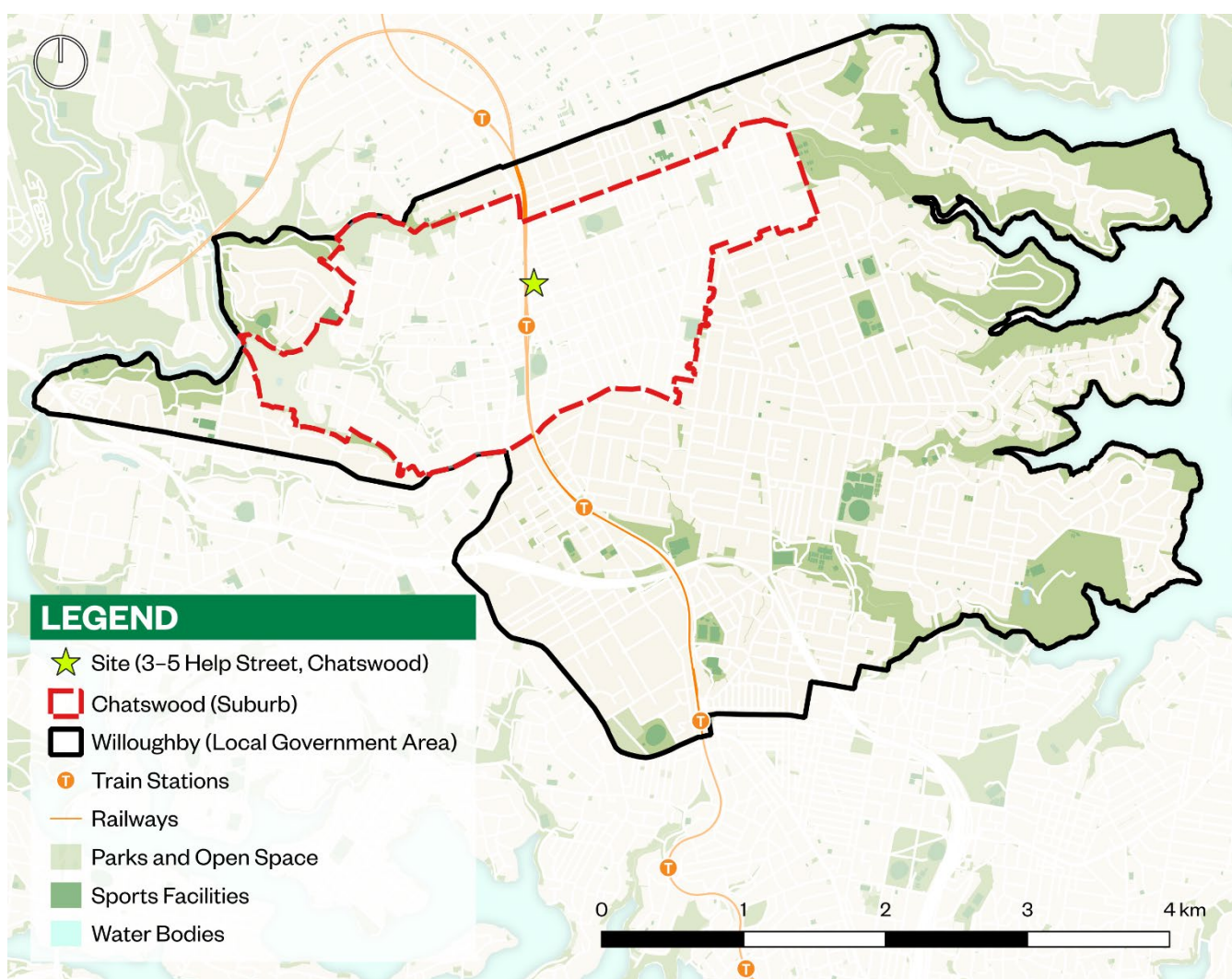


Figure 1: Immediate Social Locality



## 2.3 Social Baseline Profile

A social baseline profile gathers knowledge from both primary and secondary data sources to inform an understanding of the existing social environment in which a project is proposed and of potentially affected communities. The social baseline profile is a foundational component of SIA as it provides the basis for which social impacts associated with the Project may be predicted, assessed, monitored, and managed over time.

The NSW SIA Guideline outlines the key components of a social baseline profile, including:

- The scale and nature of the project.
- Who may be affected, including identification of any vulnerable or marginalised groups.
- Any built or natural features on or near the project.
- Relevant social, cultural, and demographic trends and other change processes.
- The history of the proposed project and/or development in the area, including community response to previous change.

### 2.3.1 Data Sources

To gain an understanding of the demographic characteristics and composition of communities within the social locality and to ascertain how the Project may change or affect people, socio-economic and demographic data has been gathered and summarised from key publicly available datasets, including the ABS Census (2021) and the Social Health Atlas of Australia (PHIDU, 2020), as well as through a literature review of local and State government strategic plans and local media.

## 2.4 SIA Field Study

Social impact assessment involves the participation and collaboration of people who have an interest in or those that are affected by a project. Engagement to inform this SIA has been undertaken in line with the NSW SIA Guideline.

A stakeholder identification process was undertaken for the Project to support the planning and delivery of community and stakeholder consultation to inform the SIA, as well as wider engagement activities. This process involved identifying stakeholders with an interest in the Project, or those directly and indirectly affected. This process has been outlined in **Section 5**.

Both quantitative and qualitative information collected through engagement activities has been analysed to inform the identification and analysis of social impacts associated with the Project, as outlined in **Section 5.1**. Similarly, outcomes of engagement have been utilised to inform the Engagement Outcomes Report as per **Appendix D** of the EIS.

## 2.5 Social Impact Evaluation

Social impacts associated with the Project have been evaluated by providing a rating of impacts according to impact characteristics, as defined in the NSW SIA Guideline. Dimensions of social magnitude used to conduct the impact evaluation are outlined in **Section 6**.

Both technical ratings and stakeholder perceptions of impacts are assessed. The integration of the outcomes of technical ranking (severity/scale) with stakeholder perceived ranking of impacts (intensity



or importance), thus affords a true integration of expert and local knowledge in SIA and enables both types of risk to be addressed in the development of impact mitigation, amelioration, and enhancement strategies. Such an approach is acknowledged in the SIA Guideline (DPE, 2023) in relation to estimating material effects.

Prioritising impacts in this integrated manner ensures that appropriate assessment and mitigation strategies can be developed that not only address impacts that may require more technical management, but also those impacts that are perceived by stakeholders as of high importance/concern. These perceived concerns are just as important to manage as they have the potential to result in elevated levels of community concerns, complaints and grievances if not addressed appropriately.

**Section 5** provides an evaluation of the significance of each potential negative and positive social impact. The assessment includes the consideration of the **social significance** of each impact across the suite of factors, including the **likelihood** of each identified impact, along with the envisaged **duration, extent, and potential to mitigate/ enhance**.

Magnitude of impact generally considers the following dimensions:

- Extent – Who specifically is expected to be affected (directly, indirectly, and/or cumulatively), including any vulnerable people? Which location(s) and people are affected? (e.g., near neighbours, local, regional, future generations)?
- Duration – When is the social impact expected to occur? Will it be time-limited (e.g., over particular proposal phases) or permanent?
- Severity or scale – What is the likely scale or degree of change? (e.g., mild, moderate, severe)?
- Intensity or importance – How sensitive/vulnerable (or how adaptable/resilient) are affected people to the impact, or (for positive impacts) how important is it to them? This might depend on the value they attach to the matter; whether it is rare/unique or replaceable; the extent to which it is tied to their identity; and their capacity to cope with or adapt to change?
- Level of concern/interest – How concerned/interested are people? Sometimes, concerns may be disproportionate to findings from technical assessments of likelihood, duration and/or intensity.

Each impact is assigned an overall **significance rating**, which considers both the **likelihood** of the impact occurring and the **consequences** should the impact occur. The assessment also sets out recommended **mitigation, management and monitoring measures** for the identified impacts.

The social impact significance matrices specified in the SIA Guideline have been adapted for the purposes of undertaking this SIA in **Figures 2, 3 and 4**.

		Magnitude level				
		1	2	3	4	5
Likelihood level		Minimal	Minor	Moderate	Major	Transformational
A	Almost certain	Low	Medium	High	Very High	Very High
B	Likely	Low	Medium	High	High	Very High
C	Possible	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
D	Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
E	Very unlikely	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium

**Figure 2: Social Impact Significance Matrix**



Source: SIA Guideline (DPHI 2023).

Magnitude level	Meaning
<b>Transformational</b>	Substantial change experienced in community wellbeing, livelihood, infrastructure, services, health, and/or heritage values; permanent displacement or addition of at least 20% of a community.
<b>Major</b>	Substantial deterioration/improvement to something that people value highly, either lasting for an indefinite time, or affecting many people in a widespread area.
<b>Moderate</b>	Noticeable deterioration/improvement to something that people value highly, either lasting for an extensive time, or affecting a group of people.
<b>Minor</b>	Mild deterioration/improvement, for a reasonably short time, for a small number of people who are generally adaptable and not vulnerable.
<b>Minimal</b>	Little noticeable change experienced by people in the locality.

**Figure 3: Defining Magnitude Levels for Social Impacts**

Source: SIA Guideline (DPHI 2023).

Likelihood level	Meaning
<b>Almost certain</b>	Definite or almost definitely expected (e.g. has happened on similar projects)
<b>Likely</b>	High probability
<b>Possible</b>	Medium probability
<b>Unlikely</b>	Low probability
<b>Very unlikely</b>	Improbable or remote probability

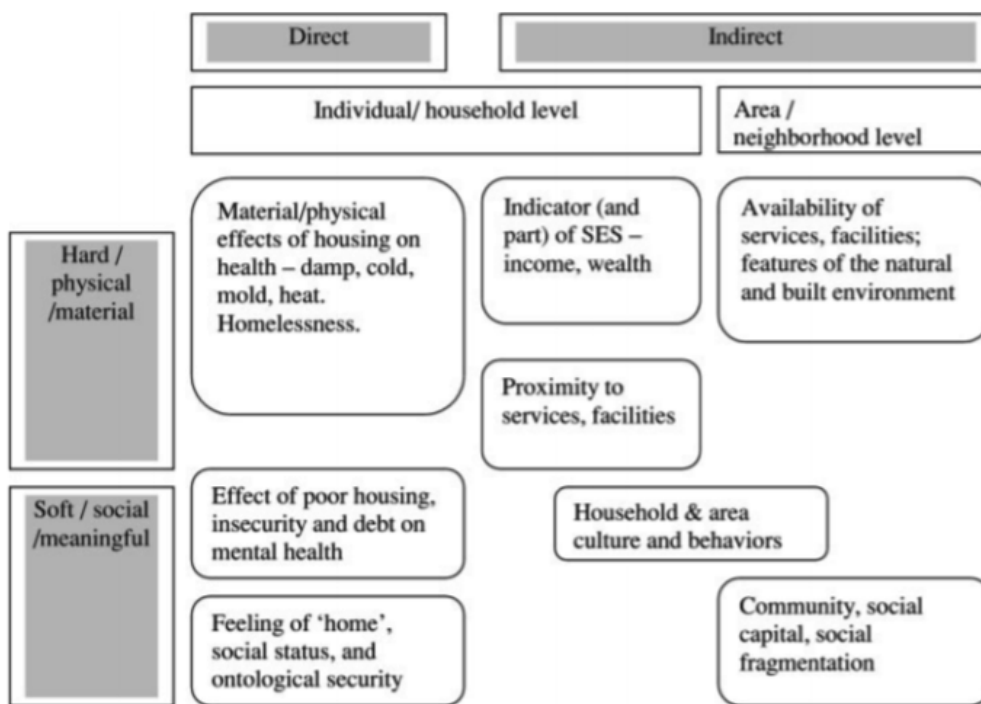
**Figure 4: Defining Likelihood Levels for Social Impacts**

Source: SIA Guideline (DPHI 2023).

### 3 Scoping and proportionality

Scoping, the first phase of an SIA, determines the size and scale of likely social impacts of the project and, in turn, the scope of the Assessment. The SIA scoping and initial assessment process begins by gaining an understanding of the project's social locality and the characteristics of the communities within it, referred to as the social baseline. This involves an initial evaluation of the likely social impacts on different groups within the locality and determining the necessary level of assessment. It also includes considering potential refinements or approaches in response to these impacts, while addressing the remaining SIA tasks, such as community engagement.

The scoping assessment was guided by the Shaw (2004) framework of housing elements affecting health and mental health in **Figure 5**. Where relevant, the assessment has considered the potential impact of this housing project in line with this widely accepted framework for assessing the direct/indirect, and hard/soft impacts on population health, wellbeing, and way of life.



**Figure 5: Direct/indirect and soft/hard housing elements affecting health and mental health. Adapted from Shaw, 2004**

Source: Larrisa Lai and Paty Rios, 'Housing design for socialisation and wellbeing', 3 *Journal of Urban Design and Mental Health* 12 (2017).

Generally, the scoping has identified a relatively minor scale of impact when compared against comparable SSD projects. In line with the principle of proportionality, this SIA has been developed in line with the requirements for a 'basic' social impact assessment.



# 4 Social Baseline

## 4.1 Legislative and policy context

The SIA has drawn on State legislation and State, regional and local strategy and policy to identify the relevant legislative and policy context to inform the SIA. Particular policies of relevance to this SIA are summarised in the table below. A more detailed summary of the legislative and policy position in relation to the proposal is provided in the EIS.

**Table 3: Legislative and Policy Context Summary**

Document Name	Description	Relevance to SIA
Greater Sydney Region Plan – A Metropolis of Three Cities	<p>The Greater Sydney Region Plan – A Metropolis of Three Cities<sup>1</sup> sets a 40-year vision (to 2056) for the Greater Sydney Region and establishes a 20-year plan to manage the Growth of Greater Sydney in the context of social economic and environmental matters.</p> <p>The Plan states that Greater Sydney is growing and that by 2036, the NSW Government will need to deliver over 725,000 new homes for an additional 1.36 million people and places for 817,000 additional jobs.</p>	<p>The themes relevant to the SIA for the proposal are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A city for people</li> <li>• A city of great places</li> <li>• Jobs and skills for the city</li> <li>• A city in its landscape</li> <li>• A city supported by infrastructure</li> </ul> <p>These themes enable a key understanding of the ambitions and aspirations for the Greater Sydney Region, covering aspects such as sustainable development, improved infrastructure and community well-being.</p> <p>They serve as a framework to identify relevant factors, ensuring that the SIA aligns with regional goals and addresses the needs and expectations of the local community. This alignment helps to ensure that the proposal supports the broader strategic vision for the area.</p>
North District Plan	<p>The North District Plan<sup>2</sup> is a plan implementing A Metropolis of Three Cities at a district level. The Plan guides the local strategic planning in Hornsby, Hunter’s Hill, Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, Mosman, North Sydney, Northern Beaches, Ryde and Willoughby LGAs (which make up the North City District).</p>	<p>The plan outlines the strategic planning aspirations for the broader district encompassing the proposal. It helps identify factors important to the local community and socio-economic aspirations.</p> <p>The site is situated within the Willoughby LGA and the Northern District of the Greater Metropolitan Sydney. Chatswood is identified as a Strategic Centre and major asset along the well-connected Eastern Economic Corridor from Macquarie Park to Sydney Airport.</p>

<sup>1</sup> Greater Sydney Commission 2018, *Greater Sydney Regional Plan: A Metropolis of Three Cities*

<sup>2</sup> Greater Sydney Commission 2018, *North District Plan*



		<p>Additionally, the plan sets Willoughby's 5-year housing target to 2021 at 1,250 dwellings.</p>
<p>Willoughby Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)</p>	<p>The Willoughby City Council Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)<sup>3</sup> sets out the 20-year vision for land use in the LGA, the special character and values that are to be preserved and how change will be managed into the future.</p>	<p>The LSPS contains a number of planning priorities relevant to the proposal and SIA, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing housing diversity to cater to families, the aging population, diverse household types and key workers.</li> <li>• Increasing the supply of affordable housing.</li> <li>• Developing Chatswood CBD as a key commercial centre and integral part of the Eastern Economic Corridor.</li> <li>• Augmenting local infrastructure and using existing infrastructure more intensively and efficiently to accommodate planned growth.</li> </ul> <p>The LSPS envisions high-density apartments concentrated in the Chatswood CBD which will add to its vibrant and mixed urban environment. As well as having a strong office and retail market, Chatswood is framed as the premier cultural and multi-cultural centre on the North Shore.</p> <p>By aligning with the LSPS, the SIA can ensure that the proposal supports the strategic land use direction for the local study area and broader LGA.</p>
<p>Chatswood CBD Planning and Urban Design Strategy to 2036</p>	<p>The Chatswood CBD Planning and Urban Design Strategy to 2036<sup>4</sup> guides future private and public development as the Chatswood CBD grows over the next 20 years. It aims to provide capacity for future growth and employment, achieve exceptional design and a distinctive, resilient and vibrant CBD.</p>	<p>The strategy informs changes to Willoughby Local Environment Plan 2012 and Willoughby Development Control Plan that directly affect the subject site. This involves provisions related to minimum commercial floor spaces, affordable housing, design excellence and rezoning of residential land to mixed use.</p> <p>It provides the following objectives relevant to the proposal and SIA, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A reinvigorated commercial core area and economically buoyant CBD.</li> <li>• A sustainable balance between commercial, retail, residential,</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> Willoughby City Council 2020, *Willoughby Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)*

<sup>4</sup> Willoughby City Council 2018, *Chatswood CBD Planning and Urban Design Strategy to 2036*



		<p>educational, cultural and other uses to ensure ongoing vibrancy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A CBD of exceptional urban design, easy pedestrian linkages and good public domain, where character and heritage are embraced, and the greening of the centre is achieved.</li> </ul> <p>In order to protect and increase employment opportunities, the strategy also considers areas around the “edge” of the CBD that could be ideal for mixed use type development, where residential could be accommodated as part of an extended CBD boundary.</p> <p>As such, the strategy directly influences the SIA by shaping the parameters for development within the Chatswood CBD.</p>
Our Willoughby 2032 Community Strategic Plan (CSP)	Our Willoughby 2038 Community Strategic Plan ( <b>CSP</b> ) <sup>5</sup> outlines the community’s long-term vision and priorities for Willoughby LGA over the next decade. It identifies 5 outcomes that the LGA seek to achieve and targets against which it will measure its progress.	<p>The CSP provides an overview of the community’s aspirations and needs. It is therefore important in developing the baseline for understanding the specific values and priorities of the local study area.</p> <p>It helps inform and shape future development proposals in alignment with local expectations and goals.</p>
Willoughby Housing Strategy 2036	The Willoughby Housing Strategy 2036 <sup>6</sup> is a 20-year plan designed to guide the location, quantity and type of future residential development in the Willoughby LGA. It aims to accommodate the projected need for 6,000 to 6,700 additional dwellings by 2036.	<p>The strategy focuses on maximising the potential of existing medium and high-density residential zones, increasing housing in a new mixed-use zone in the Chatswood CBD, and exploring opportunities for housing and employment in local centres.</p> <p>The strategy informs the SIA by ensuring that proposed developments align with long-term housing goals, meet projected demand, and contribute to vibrant and sustainable communities within the Willoughby LGA.</p>

<sup>5</sup> Willoughby City Council 2022, *Our Willoughby 2032 Community Strategic Plan (CSP)*

<sup>6</sup> Willoughby City Council 2020, *Willoughby Housing Strategy 2036*



## 4.2 Socio-demographic profile

### 4.2.1 Population and demographic composition

#### Population Size and Growth

The population of the Chatswood SAL was 25,553 people at the 2021 Census.<sup>7</sup> This is a slight increase from 24,913 people in 2016. Similarly, the Willoughby LGA grew from 74,303 people in 2016 to 75,613 people in the 2021 Census.<sup>8</sup> This indicates that both Chatswood SAL and the broader Willoughby LGA have experienced population growth during this period. This positive demographic trend highlights the area's potential for further development and investment.

Population projections are not available at the SAL level. However, at the LGA level, it is projected that the population will grow to 89,235 by 2041.<sup>9</sup> This represents an 18% increase compared to that projected across NSW (21%) between 2021 to 2041.<sup>10</sup> This suggests that while Willoughby LGA is experiencing population growth, it is at a slightly lower rate compared to the overall growth projected for the State. However, this growth still signifies a notable demographic shift within the LGA.

#### Age Profile

Data regarding age distribution within a population can provide insights into potential needs, values and vulnerabilities within communities. For instance, individuals under the age of four and those aged 65 and above are generally considered more susceptible to health impacts, while older populations may exhibit less adaptability to change.

In 2021, the median age of the population in the Chatswood SAL was 37 years old.<sup>11</sup> This is younger than the median age of 39 across the Willoughby LGA and NSW.<sup>12</sup> The age profile of the SAL indicates a high proportion of the population within the 30-34 year old and 35-39 year old age brackets and a low proportion within the 80 years and above age brackets.<sup>13</sup> This reflects a high proportion of middle-aged people, suggesting that the area has less families with elderly members.

### 4.2.2 Housing and households

#### Household Composition

The average household size in the Chatswood SAL was 2.5 persons in 2021.<sup>14</sup> This is slightly smaller than the average household size of 2.6 across Willoughby LGA and NSW. Almost 58% of households

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<sup>7</sup> ABS 2021 Census, *Chatswood SAL – QuickStats*

<sup>8</sup> ABS 2016 Census, *Willoughby LGA – Time Series Profile*

<sup>9</sup> NSW Population Projections 2022, *LGA (ASGS, 2020) Projections 2001-2041*

<sup>10</sup> NSW Population Projections 2022, *State Projections*

<sup>11</sup> ABS 2021 Census, *Chatswood SAL – Community Profile*

<sup>12</sup> ABS 2021 Census, *NSW State/Territory – Community Profile*

<sup>13</sup> ABS 2021 Census, *Chatswood SAL – Community Profile*

<sup>14</sup> ABS 2021 Census, *Chatswood SAL – Community Profile*



in the SAL were made up of one-family households; 27% were couples with children. This is lower than the one-family household composition across Willoughby LGA (63%) and NSW (59%).<sup>15</sup>

Lone person households comprised almost 21% of households in the SAL, slightly above Willoughby LGA (20%) and marginally below NSW (22%). This indicates a significant presence of families coexisting alongside lone individuals within the community. The household composition of the SAL, compared to Willoughby and NSW is provided in **Table 4** below.

**Table 4: Household composition\***

Household Composition	Chatswood	Willoughby	NSW
Couple family with no children	2,401 (22%)	6,735 (22%)	751,141 (22%)
Couple family with children	3,026 (27%)	10,207 (33%)	906,395 (27%)
One parent family	934 (8%)	2,446 (8%)	306,454 (9%)
Two or three family households (with or without children)	204 (2%)	481 (2%)	67,791 (2%)
Lone person household	2,291 (21%)	6,320 (20%)	723,716 (22%)
Group household	508 (5%)	1,067 (3%)	111,646 (3%)

\*Note: figures are rounded to the nearest whole number

### Household tenure and cost

The median weekly rent in the Chatswood SAL was \$577 in 2021.<sup>16</sup> This was moderately above the median across the Willoughby LGA (\$571) and notably higher than NSW (\$420).<sup>17</sup> About 38.3% residents were experiencing rental stress in Chatswood which was higher than the State average of 35.5%. Rental stress, often characterised by households spending 30% or more of their income on housing costs, is a potential concern within the social locality.

### 4.2.3 Socio-economic Factors

#### Household income

In 2021, the median weekly household income in the Chatswood SAL was \$2,158.<sup>18</sup> This was lower than the median weekly household income for Willoughby LGA (\$2,556) but higher than the median for NSW (\$1,829). While this indicates a generally higher than average income, this does not necessarily reflect overall socio-economic status and there is considerable variation within the study area.

<sup>15</sup>

<sup>16</sup> ABS 2021, *Family Composition*, Table Builder, Findings based on use of ABS TableBuilder data ABS 2021 Census, *Chatswood SAL – Community Profile*

<sup>17</sup> ABS 2021 Census, *NSW State/Territory – Community Profile*

<sup>18</sup> ABS 2021 Census, *Chatswood SAL – Community Profile*



## Resident Workforce

Of the residents over age 15 in the Chatswood SAL, there were 12,177 people employed – either part-time, full-time or away from work – at time of the 2021 Census.<sup>19</sup> This accounts for 94% of the labour force in the SAL. Approximately 6% of the labour force was unemployed, which is higher than the rate for Willoughby LGA (4%) and NSW (5%).

Of the residents living within Chatswood, most were employed in Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (17%); Health Care and Social Assistance (12%); Financial and Insurance Services (12%), Retail Trade (8%); and Accommodation and Food Services (7%) industries.

## Top industries of employment

The Chatswood SAL provided 33,998 jobs in 2021. **Table 4** shows the top industries of employment in the Chatswood SAL, illustrating a concentration of high-skilled service sectors.<sup>20</sup>

**Table 5: Top industries of employment in the Chatswood SAL**

Industry of Employment	Number of Jobs	% of Jobs in Chatswood
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	5,939	17.5%
Retail Trade	5,277	15.5%
Health Care and Social Assistance	3,661	10.8%
Construction	2,540	7.5%
Accommodation and Food Services	2,280	6.7%

With Willoughby providing 77,609 jobs, it is noted that Chatswood alone accounted for about 44% of the total jobs in the LGA. It is therefore a significant employment area for the region and wider State.

## Businesses

Business counts are not available at the SAL level. In June 2023, there were 13,012 businesses in the Willoughby LGA.<sup>21</sup> Most of these businesses were in Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (22%); Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services (16%); Financial and Insurance Services (9%); Health Care and Social Assistance (9%); and Construction (9%) industries.

### 4.2.4 Access and movement

In 2021, approximately 55% of residents commuting from Chatswood to work travelled via a vehicle, either as a driver or passenger, while only 25% and 19% opted for public or active transport.<sup>22</sup> Of these private modes, 97% were by car, 2% by motorbike and 1% by truck. This reflects the local study area's

<sup>19</sup> ABS 2021 Census, *Chatswood SAL – Community Profile*

<sup>20</sup> TfNSW 2022, Travel Zone Projections <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/data-and-research/reference-information/travel-zone-projections-2022>

<sup>21</sup> ABS 2023, *Counts of Australian Businesses by LGA, June 2019 to June 2023*

<sup>22</sup> ABS 2021, *Method of Travel to Work*, Table Builder, Findings based on use of ABS TableBuilder data



high level of dependence on private vehicle travel, most commonly cars. Willoughby reflected similar trends of high vehicle usage, with 66% of residents commuting from the LGA to work, while 19% preferred public transport and 14% for active transport.

## 4.2.5 Vulnerable communities

### Socio-Economic Index for Area (SEIFA)

Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (**SEIFA**) is a tool designed to evaluate the welfare of Australian communities. These indexes are developed by the ABS, derived from the five-yearly Census of Population and Housing and are calculated through principal component analysis. The index of relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage, presented in **Table 6**, represents a spectrum from advantage (high values) to disadvantage (low values), based on Census variables.

**Table 6: SEIFA Index**

Advantages and Disadvantages			
Location	Score	Decile	Percentile
Chatswood SAL	1,113	10	97
Willoughby LGA	1,142	10	98

SEIFA results reveal that the Chatswood SAL is within the top 3% most advantaged suburbs in Australia, with the Willoughby LGA being within the top 2% of most advantaged LGAs. This indicates that both areas exhibit favourable socio-economic conditions relative to other suburbs and LGAs nationwide, likely characterised by higher average incomes, better access to education and employment opportunities, and enhanced infrastructure.

### Need for assistance (Disability)

Disability can restrict mobility, employment opportunities and access to financial resources. The need for assistance dataset provides insights into the disability status of individuals in the local study area by identifying the proportion of people who require help with core activities (self-care, mobility, and communication) due to a disability, long-term illness or advanced age.

About 4% of the Chatswood SAL reporting having a need for assistance with core activities in 2021.<sup>23</sup> This was similar to that reported of Willoughby LGA (4%) and slightly lower than NSW (6%).<sup>24</sup> This indicates that the local study area does not have a substantial proportion of people in need of assistance.

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<sup>23</sup> ABS 2021 Census, *Chatswood SAL – Community Profile*

<sup>24</sup> ABS 2021 Census, *NSW State/Territory – Community Profile*



## 4.3 Community values

This section explores the values of importance to the community, both associated with the proposal, and more broadly.

Our Future Willoughby 2032 Community Strategic Plan (**CSP**) reflects the key aspirations of the local community for the social locality. It highlights values centred around diversity, liveability, prosperity and sustainability.

The CSP envisions Willoughby as a city with a diverse population and landscape, fostering a vibrant and prosperous environment. Cultural vibrancy is highlighted through a mix of languages, beliefs and social connections, with food and music as central elements. Heritage is preserved alongside modern development, ensuring resilient communities. Environmental stewardship is a priority, with a focus on sustainability. Enhanced connectivity through public transport and digital infrastructure supports a smart city. The economy thrives on a blend of global corporations and local businesses, attracting new talent.

To achieve the community's vision, the following 5 outcomes and key priorities have been identified:

- **Outcome 1:** a city that is green.
  - **Priorities:** creating and improving green spaces and urban tree canopy cover, promoting sustainable lifestyles, and safeguarding waterways, bushland and wildlife.
- **Outcome 2:** a city that is connected, inclusive and resilient:
  - **Priorities:** enhance transport choices, encourage diversity, celebrate indigenous and non-indigenous history and heritage, and create neighbourhoods that connect all types of households and families.
- **Outcome 3:** a city that is liveable.
  - **Priorities:** foster feelings of safety and cleanliness, create inclusive recreational spaces, promote active lifestyles, and balance population growth and development with quality of life.
- **Outcome 4:** a city that is prosperous and vibrant.
  - **Priorities:** facilitates the development of all businesses, build and support a night-time economy, create memorable food destinations, and diversify our economy including innovative industries.
- **Outcome 5:** a city that is effective and accountable.
  - **Priorities:** demonstrate leadership and advocacy for local priorities, balance the creation of new public assets with the upgrade of existing assets, and anticipate and respond to changing community needs.

Noting that these matters are important to the community, it is therefore crucial to understand if and how the proposal supports, or detracts, from these broader community aspirations.



## 4.4 Social infrastructure

### 4.4.1 Existing Community and cultural facilities

There are a number of social infrastructure and community facilities within the Chatswood SAL. Social infrastructure potentially impacted by the proposal may include those in close proximity to the proposal site. However, it is also important to consider the facilities located in the broader study area.

**Table 7**, supported by **Figure 6**, outlines the social infrastructure, services and facilities within the SAL. The majority of these facilities are considered to have a local reach, as their users will predominantly come from the local study area (e.g. schools, places of worship, hospitals and nursing homes).

**Table 7: Itemised social infrastructure and community facilities**

Map Ref.	Type	Name
1	Art Gallery	ART SPACE ON THE CONCOURSE
2	Art Gallery	FOYER EXHIBITION SPACE
3	Combined Primary-Secondary School	ST PIUS X COLLEGE
4	Community Facility	WYLLIE LODGE
5	Community Facility	CHATSWOOD CROQUET CLUB
6	Community Facility	CHATSWOOD TENNIS CLUB
7	Community Facility	THE HUB COMMUNITY GARDEN
8	Community Facility	DOUGHERTY COMMUNITY CENTRE
9	Community Facility	CHATSWOOD GIRL GUIDES HALL
10	Community Facility	CHATSWOOD HALL BLUE GUM PARK
11	Community Medical Centre	CHATSWOOD COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE
12	General Hospital	HIRONDELLE PRIVATE HOSPITAL
13	General Hospital	CHATSWOOD PRIVATE HOSPITAL
14	General Hospital	VISION EYE INSTITUTE CHATSWOOD
15	High School	MERCY CATHOLIC COLLEGE
16	High School	CHATSWOOD HIGH SCHOOL
17	High School	SATURDAY SCHOOL OF COMMUNITY LANGUAGES CHATSWOOD
18	Library	CHATSWOOD LIBRARY
19	Nursing Home	COLUMBIA AGED CARE SERVICES-WILLOWOOD CENTRE
20	Nursing Home	DOUGHERTY APARTMENTS
21	Nursing Home	JAPARA FOREST VIEW
22	Nursing Home	WILLOUGHBY RETIREMENT COMMUNITY HOSTEL
23	Place Of Worship	SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
24	Place Of Worship	BAPTIST CHURCH
25	Place Of Worship	CHRISTIAN SCIENTIST CHURCH
26	Place Of Worship	ANGLICAN CHURCH
27	Place Of Worship	ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH
28	Place Of Worship	SALVATION ARMY CHURCH
29	Place Of Worship	SYNAGOGUE



30	Place Of Worship	CHRISTIAN BROTHERS
31	Place Of Worship	PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
32	Place Of Worship	CATHOLIC CHURCH
33	Place Of Worship	CHURCH OF CHRIST
34	Place Of Worship	ANGLICAN CHURCH
35	Police Station	CHATSWOOD POLICE STATION
36	Primary School	OUR LADY OF DOLOURS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
37	Primary School	CHATSWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL

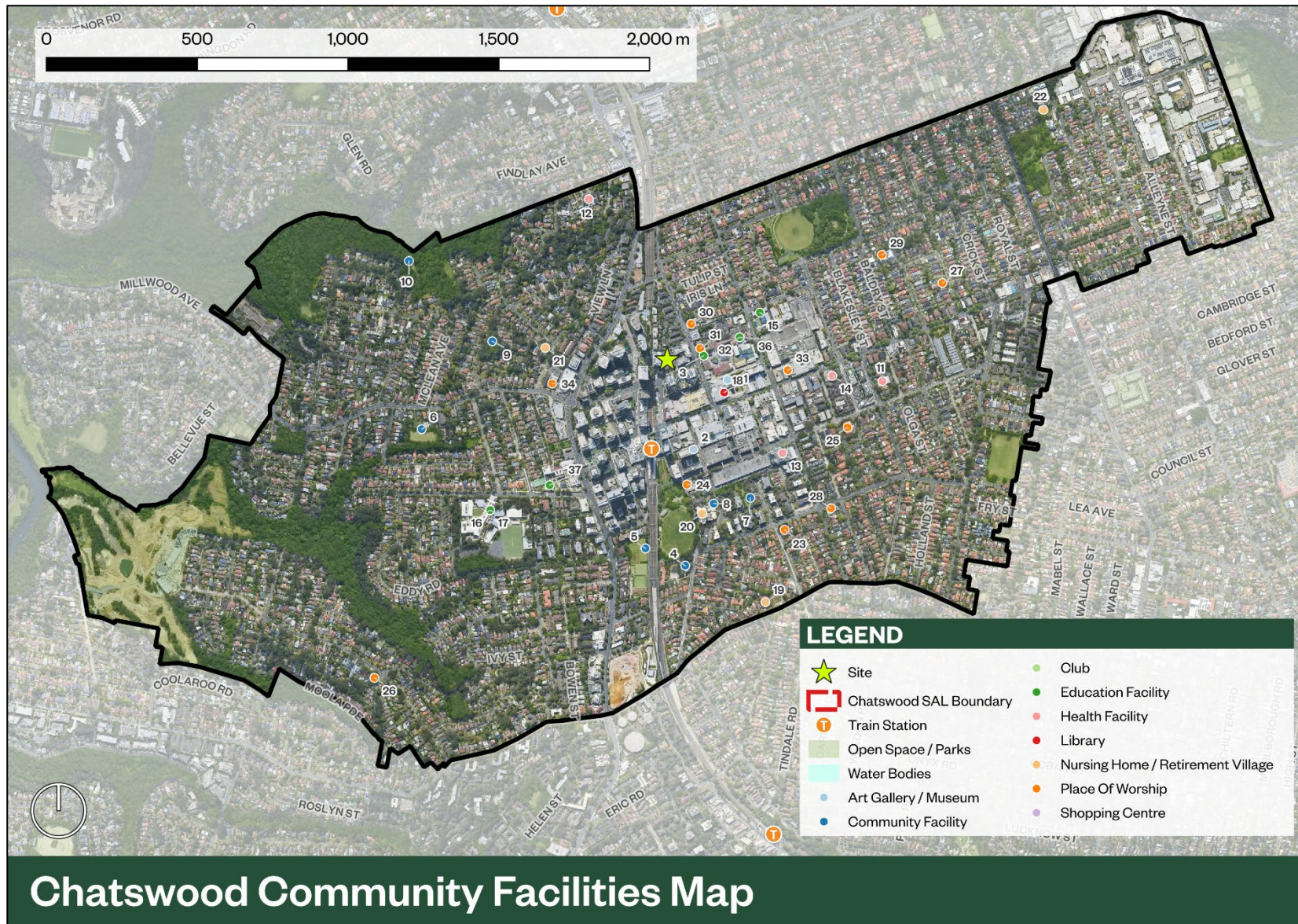


Figure 6: Social infrastructure and community facilities near the proposal site

Source: (Author, 2024)



## 4.4.2 Existing Open space and recreation

The Chatswood SAL and Willoughby LGA feature a variety of open spaces and recreational areas. Open spaces potentially impacted by the proposal include those near the project site as well as those in the broader catchment area.

**Table 8** details the specific sports facilities close to the site within Chatswood. **Figures 7 and 8** present an overview of open spaces and sports facilities across Chatswood and Willoughby, respectively. These areas primarily cater to the local community (e.g., local parks, sports courts and sports fields).

**Table 8: Itemised sports facilities in the Chatswood SAL**

Map Ref.	Type	Name
38	Sports Court	BASKETBALL COURT
39	Sports Court	TENNIS COURTS
40	Sports Court	BASKETBALL
41	Sports Court	CHATSWOOD SKATE PARK
42	Sports Court	Sports Court
43	Sports Court	TENNIS
44	Sports Court	BASKETBALL HALF COURT
45	Sports Court	TENNIS COURTS
46	Sports Field	BALES PARK
47	Sports Field	CHATSWOOD OVAL
48	Sports Field	BOWLING GREENS
49	Sports Field	CROQUET GREENS
50	Sports Field	GREVILLE STREET RESERVE
51	Sports Field	CRICKET
52	Sports Field	CROQUET GREENS

## 4.4.3 Future developments

From 2021 to end of December 2024, there were 211 determined DAs<sup>25</sup> within the Chatswood SAL, with a current average determination time of 96 days.<sup>26</sup> Notably, this included 46 commercial DAs, 3 industrial DAs, 8 mixed-use DAs and 104 residential DAs.

It is noted that dwelling approval data is not available at the SAL level. In the last year to June 2024, there were only 143 building completions across the broader Willoughby LGA, with 612 building approvals within the same period.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Mecone 2024, *Chatswood DA Approvals Data Scrape from DPHI*

<sup>26</sup> Mecone 2024, *MOSAIC Report - Local Development Applications Snapshot Willoughby LGA*

<sup>27</sup> DPHI 2024, *Greater Sydney Urban Development Program Dashboard*

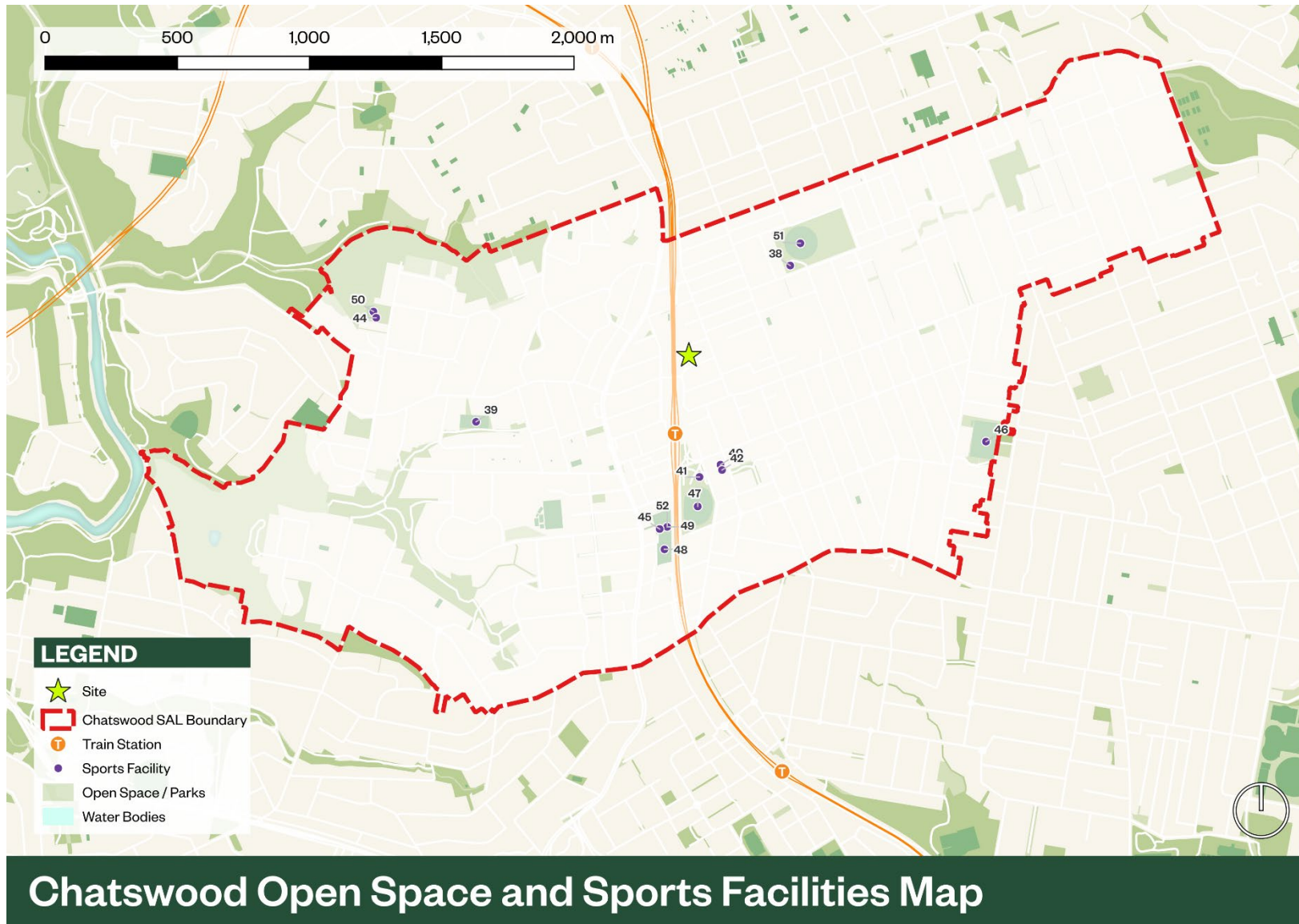


Figure 7: Open spaces and sports facilities in the Chatswood SAL

Source: (Author, 2024)

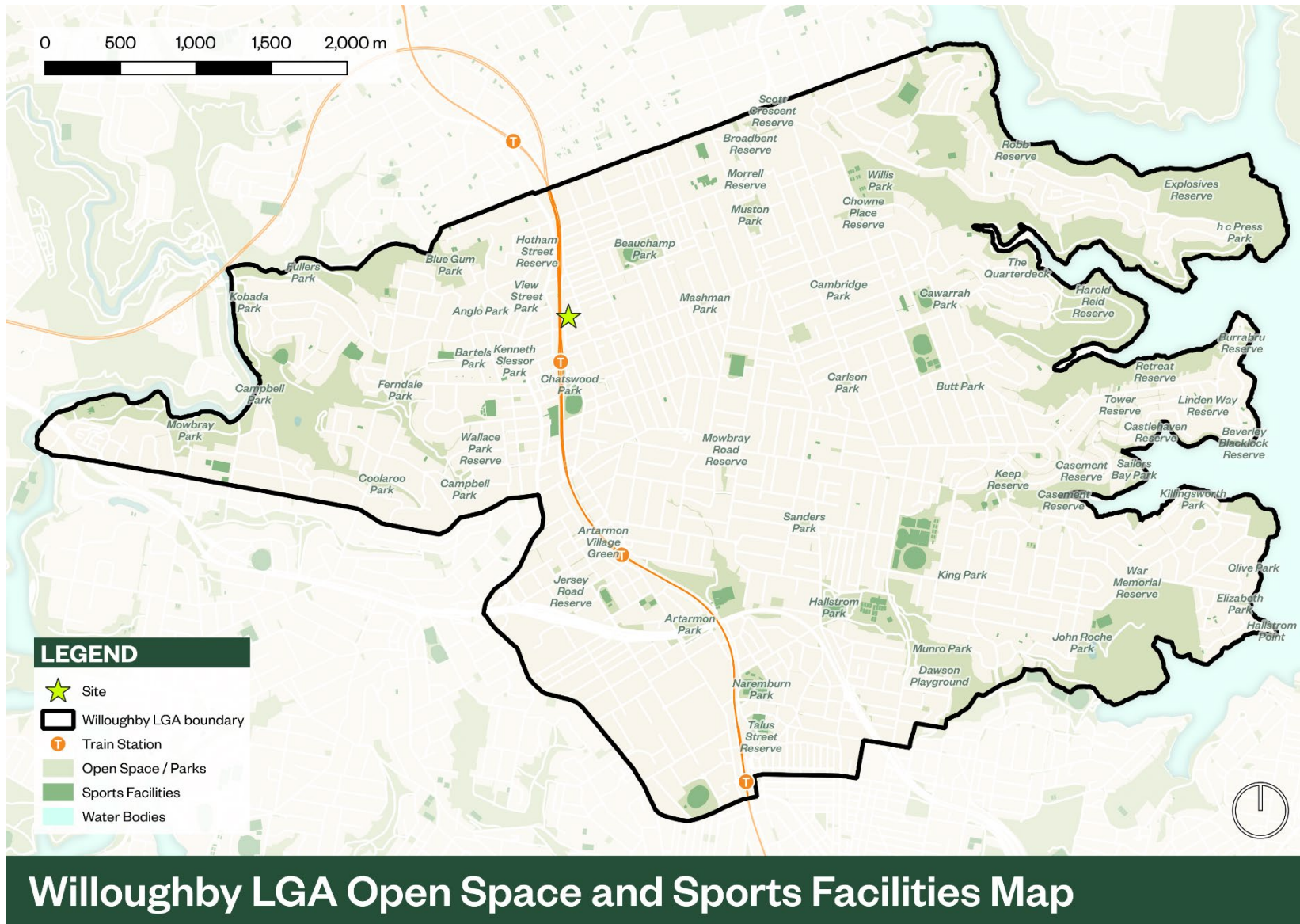


Figure 8: Open spaces and sports facilities in the Willoughby LGA

Source: (Author, 2024)



#### 4.4.4 Transport and Accessibility

**Table 9** provides a summary of public transport services accessible from the subject site.

**Table 9: Public Transport Services**

Public Transport Services		
<b>Bus</b>	Within 100 metres:	Within 600 metres
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 160X to Dee Why,</li><li>• 275 to Castlecrag,</li><li>• 277 to Castle Cove,</li><li>• 279 to Frenchs Forest,</li><li>• 280 to Warringah Mall,</li><li>• 284 to Duffys Forest,</li><li>• 530 to Burwood,</li><li>• 533 to Sydney Olympic Park,</li><li>• 536 to Gladesville,</li><li>• 558 to Lindfield,</li><li>• 565 to Macquarie University</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 113 to Royal North Shore Hospital,</li><li>• 115 to North Sydney</li><li>• 120 to City (QBB)</li><li>• 144 to Manly</li><li>• 255 to Colwell Cres &amp; Beaconsfield Road</li><li>• 265 to Chatswood West</li><li>• 267 to Greenwich</li><li>• 281 and 283 to Belrose</li><li>• 516 to Top Ryde City</li></ul>
<b>Train</b>	Within 100 metres	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• T1 North Shore Line Services</li><li>• T9 Northern Line Services</li></ul>	
<b>Metro</b>	Within 100 metres	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• M1 Northwest and Bankstown Line services to Tallawong and Sydenham</li></ul>	



## 5 Field study

Respectful, inclusive and meaningful engagement is a fundamental part of SIA, alongside other research activities. It provides first-hand insights into what people value and how they expect a project to affect them. It also helps to focus the scope of the SIA on the things that really matter.

It is important to recognise that engagement and public participation is only one component of an SIA. It is aimed at both providing the community the opportunity to meaningfully inform this assessment, as well as increasing the rigour of the assessment through direct insights from affected communities.

The following methodology for the SIA engagement has been developed in line with the community engagement objectives outlined in **Appendix A** of the NSW SIA Guideline (see table overleaf).

**Table 10: Stakeholder engagement for SIA – activities**

Level of participation	Engagement technique	Purpose in SIA	Key stakeholders	Completion
Sharing information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Surveys and fact sheets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying affected and interested people, groups, organisations and communities</li> <li>Helping people to understand the proposal and the SIA</li> <li>Addressing questions, concerns and complaints</li> </ul>	Government agencies; local community and businesses	<p>Engagement with a variety of government agencies has occurred. The Engagement Outcomes Report provides additional detail.</p> <p>Community and stakeholder notification has included an extensive letter drop, through both a mail out and doorknocking, conducted by Mecone Social Planning. Detailed information on this process is provided in the Engagement report.</p> <p>A project information sheet has been provided to all residents and businesses within the distribution catchment.</p>
Consulting to collect information and insights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Surveys and interviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying and predicting social impacts</li> <li>Collecting data, evidence and insights</li> <li>Demonstrating early engagement</li> <li>Confirming data, assumptions and findings</li> </ul>	Local community and businesses	Through the notification process, a survey containing questions developed to inform this Social Impact Assessment was provided for residents and businesses to complete. A copy of this survey is provided in the Engagement Report.
Collaborating in decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Face to face meetings and telephone/video calls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encouraging co-design, or collaboration in project design</li> <li>Identifying and predicting social impacts</li> <li>Collaborating during monitoring,</li> </ul>	Registered Aboriginal Parties ( <b>RAPs</b> )	Close engagement has occurred with the local RAPs as part of the development of the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Report. Further detail is provided in that report.



		mitigation and management measures and actions	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Involving marginalised groups</li></ul>	

## 5.1 Community survey

There were three responses to the community survey distributed to the local community, which encompassed approximately 465 dwellings. The distribution area for the survey is illustrated in the following figure.

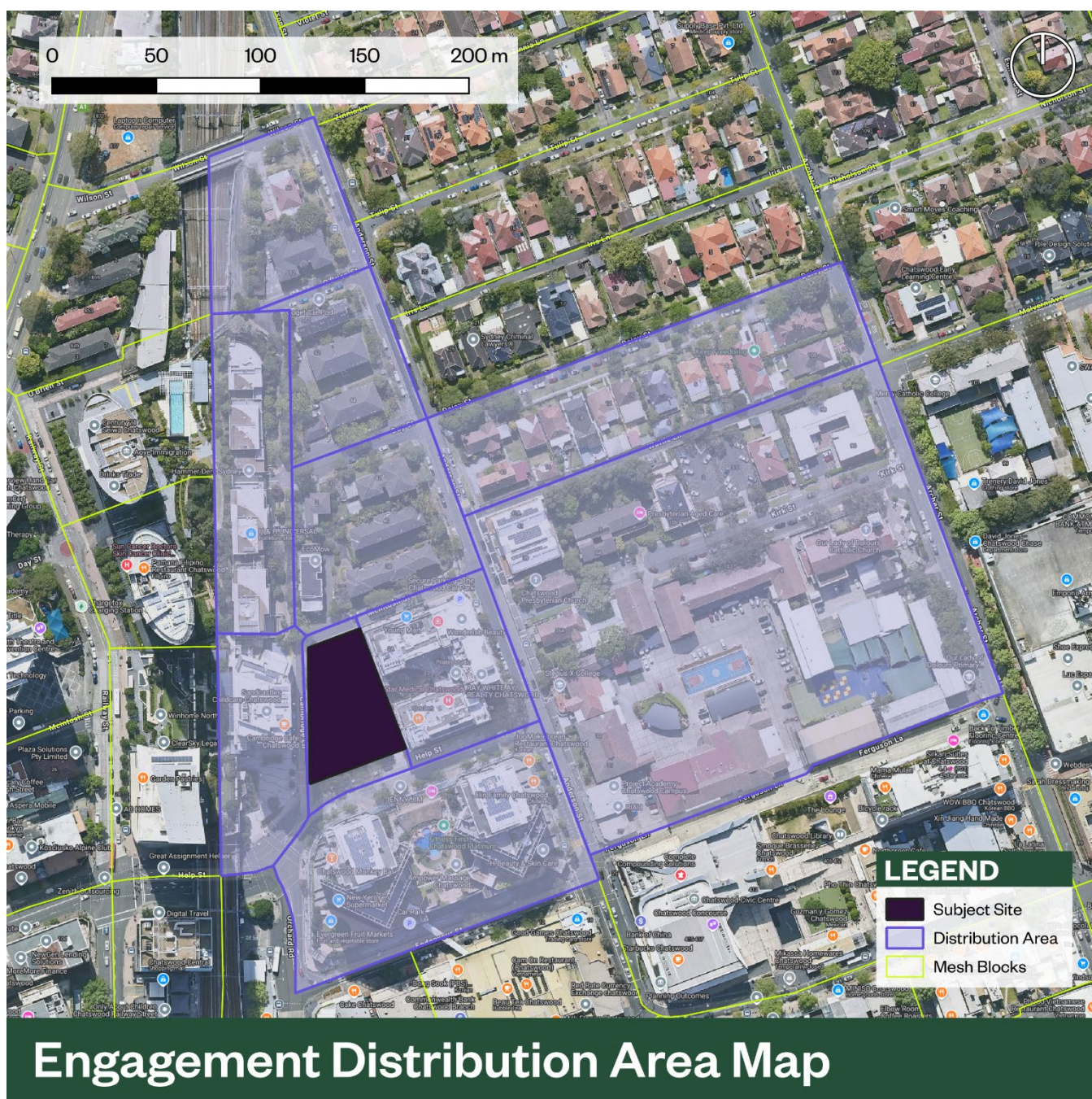


Figure 9 Engagement distribution area

(Source: Mecone)



This section summarises the survey response received; however, given the small sample size, the response should be considered as representing individual feedback (as opposed to general community sentiment). It is noted that the survey was available for over four weeks, with no submissions being received after formal closing time included in this SIA (the survey form was open longer than advertised in case of late submissions).

### 5.1.1 Overview of Respondents

Of the three responses received, two were from females and one was from a male. Two respondents were in the 35-54 age group while one was in the 65+ age group. None of the respondents identified as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background. The three respondents have lived in Chatswood for varying durations – one for three years, one for six years and one for eleven years.

### 5.1.2 Key Themes

#### **Positive attributes of Chatswood**

Two of the three respondents expressed positive attitudes regarding the Chatswood community – with key themes including benefits of being multi-cultural, safety and not having high levels of traffic. However, one respondent felt that the Chatswood community was busy. When asked about what they liked about their local community the key themes that emerged included proximity to transport and shops. Some respondents also noted the area's friendly and safe suburban feeling as well as general convenience.

#### **Disadvantaged or vulnerable groups in the Chatswood community**

When asked to identify disadvantaged or vulnerable groups in their community, one respondent did not note any such groups. One respondent identified new migrants and non-English speaking residents, whilst the other identified the existing general population as being potentially vulnerable.

#### **Perceived project impacts**

All three respondents could not identify any positive impacts relating to the project. When asked about potential negative impacts of the project, a few key themes emerged including privacy concerns, sunlight access, view loss, and traffic concerns.

In response to minimising these negative impacts to the community, the respondents had a number of suggestions. These included increased open space provision along the ground floor and a smaller proposed maximum building height to minimise sunlight access loss.

## 5.2 Feedback on social impacts from local government

Engagement with Willoughby City Council through the DA process identified the following two potential social impacts requiring further validation:

1. Impacts to local accessibility due to traffic and parking concerns
2. Impacts to human health from basement flood impacts.

Both of these impact areas were addressed by Mecone planning (on behalf of the applicant) and is documented in the EIS and Engagement Report. Specific concern with social impact of the proposed development was not identified in engagement with local government stakeholders.



## 5.3 Assessment of adequacy

The SIA Guideline outlines the following two criterion to assess the sufficiency of engagement conducted to inform the SIA:

- Were the extent and nature of engagement activities appropriate and sufficient to canvass all relevant views, including those of vulnerable or marginalised groups?
- How have the views, concerns and insights of affected and interested people influenced both the project design and each element of the SIA report?

The community engagement undertaken as part of the SSDA process is considered to deliver on the DPHI SIA Guideline requirements for this SIA. This assessment is on the basis that limitations with the engagement process have been identified and mitigated proactively. For this project, this is the limited sample size for the SIA Survey. The small sample size for the SIA survey, because of limited completions, reduces its ability to be representative of a general community experience of impacts. As such, the survey has not been relied upon in the impact assessment and individual responses have been incorporated as representing individual views of interested parties. The assessment has involved a higher-than-average level of desktop research and validation to mitigate against the small sample size.

It is noted that previous consultation activities conducted with residents for other State Significant Development Applications also received limited feedback. For example, SSD-59805958 represents a proximate, recent and comparable project. A total of three (3) responses were received on the social impact survey before lodgement as of June 2024, as reported in the *Stakeholder Engagement Report* (HillPDA, 2024) accompanying the SSDA. It is noted that the distribution catchment for that project overlaps significantly with this project's catchment.

Further, Council's Engagement Outcomes Report for its Night-Time Economy Strategy, published in August 2023, identifies a low level of response. This was despite a significant distribution size and variety of consultation methods being employed.

Comparison with previous engagement can be useful in understanding whether lack of feedback is project-specific or characteristic of a social locality, due to either lack of interest, consultation fatigue, or another factor.

Overall, there is considered to be sufficient opportunity provided for community engagement to meaningfully inform the preparation of this SIA in line with the NSW SIA Guideline.

## 6 Social Impact Assessment

This section discusses and analyses the issues and impacts (both positive and negative) in relation to the Project with analysis framed in accordance with the social impact categories outlined in **Section 2.0** and the NSW SIA Guideline.

### 6.1 Key affected communities

Considering the outcomes of the social baseline, the proposal's area of social influence is mostly confined to the immediate context and suburb. **Figure 18** identifies potential affected communities in the immediate social locality.

Within the areas of social influence, the following individuals and communities are likely to be impacted by the proposal:

- Residents living in neighbouring areas who may experience the direct impacts of this proposal (e.g. construction activities, noise and vibration). These residents may also be subject to other changes, including redevelopment proposals and cumulative construction impacts.
- Older residents living in Chatswood. Community engagement verified a baseline finding that Chatswood has a relatively significant number of senior residents, many of whom live in higher-density residential areas. Any potential impact on their gathering places or access routes, for example through construction activities, would be significant.
- People living in the Presbyterian Aged Care facility.
- Students attending St Pius X College.

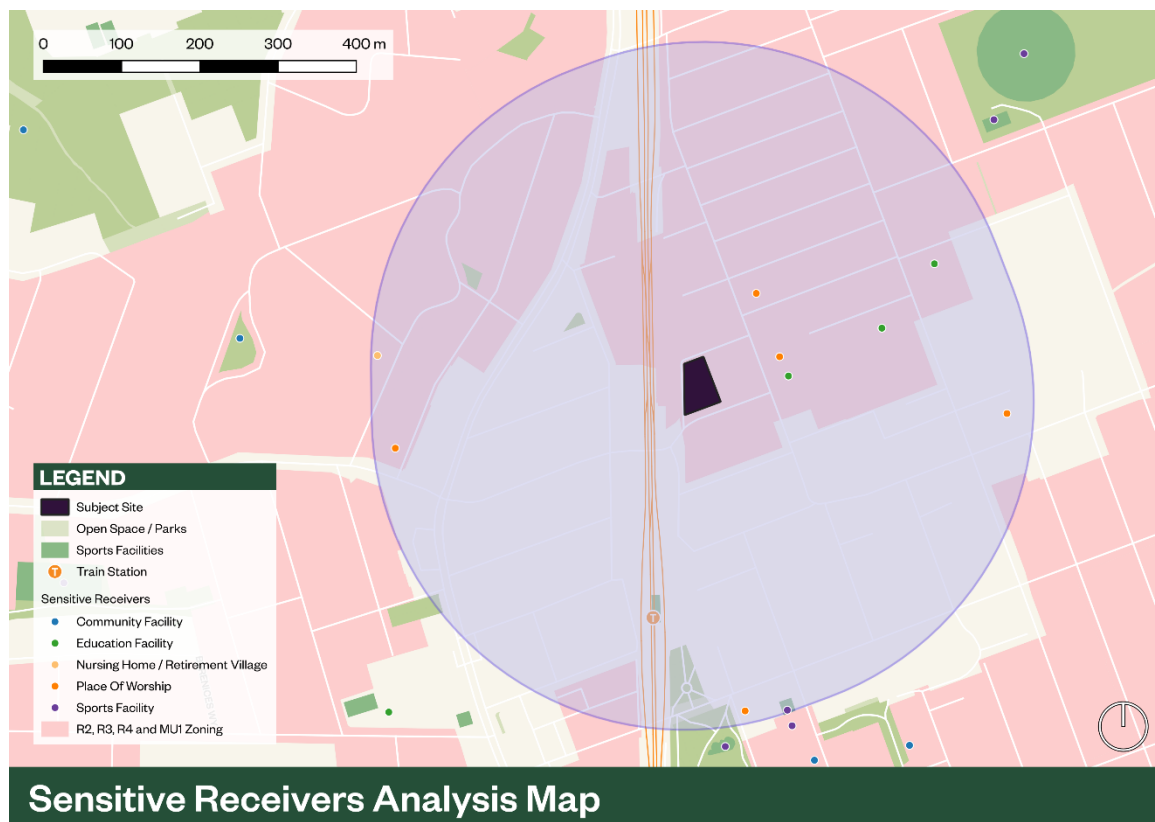


Figure 10: Sensitive receivers analysis mapping



## 6.2 Impact assessment

The following section sets out the assessment of social impacts arising from the proposed development and recommended responses, including measures to enhance social benefits and mitigate potentially negative impacts, across the suite of factors set out in the SIA Guideline. The assessment has been based on the information available to date, and is primarily a desktop study, informed by a review and analysis of available documents relevant to the proposal (**Table 11**).

**Table 11: Impact Assessment**

Impact	Supporting evidence – social baseline and other technical reporting	Importance and levels of concern to community and stakeholders	Impact dimensions			Significance and experience without mitigation		Alternatives explored and mitigation/enhancement measures identified in relevant technical reporting
			Period, duration and extent	Likelihood	Magnitude	Social significance rating	Experience	
<b>Existing community in the immediate area of social influence – residents, workers and business-owners</b>								
<p><b>Temporary accessibility changes</b> Temporary changes to the way that people access local streets and move around their neighbourhood can have impacts to residents' way of life. These may be generated by increased truck movements during construction, and/or temporary hoardings and scaffolding.</p>	There are some community sensitivities to changes to accessibility, particularly for older residents living in Chatswood (refer Social Baseline provided above).	One survey respondent raised concern regarding traffic impacts associated with the construction of the project.	Temporary - immediate surrounds of the site.	Likely	Moderate	<b>High</b>	Negative	<p>The Preliminary Construction Traffic Management Plan identifies that whilst light vehicle (worker) trips would be tidal, arriving in the morning and departing in the afternoon, heavy vehicle (truck) trips would be more dispersed and spread throughout the day.</p> <p>The CTMP restricts Heavy vehicles larger than 12.5m HRV to arrive and depart the site outside of school zone hours and the builder is responsible for the staging of truck deliveries to ensure that no queuing or marshalling of trucks on the public road is necessary.</p> <p>These measures would result in a much lower likelihood of impact, resulting in a post-mitigation assessment of a Medium significance negative impact.</p>
<p><b>Temporary impacts to amenity for neighbouring residents and sensitive receivers</b> While construction impacts are themselves subject to environmental impact management, they can comprise social impacts when they are experienced negatively by the community. A negative experience of construction impacts may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical impacts to health and wellbeing</li> <li>Direct psychological impacts attributed to physical elements</li> <li>Indirect psycho-social impacts attributed to the perception of change to an environment that construction activities can create and the lessening of items of value. For example, noise impacts that reduce the perceptibility of ambient bird sounds that a resident has come to associate with their area, and the wider community associate as a component of their sense of place, will have psycho-social impacts and should be considered in this SIA.</li> </ul>	<p>There are some community sensitivities to changes to surrounding amenity, particularly for older residents living in Chatswood (refer Social Baseline provided above).</p> <p>The Noise and Vibration Assessment Report (PWNA, 2025) has identified that works have the potential to exceed noise management levels when working within proximity of surrounding residential and other receivers, as well as the Highly Noisy Affected Level (75 db(A)).</p> <p>The Estimated Development Cost Report prepared for this SSDA estimates that there will be an average of 110 workers/day during construction, with a peak of 160 workers/day (Newton Fisher, September 2024).</p>	<i>Not identified in engagement</i>	Temporary - immediate surrounds of the site.	Likely	Moderate	<b>High</b>	Negative	<p>The Noise and Vibration Assessment Report identifies that suitable management controls and community notifications are required due to the level of possible exceedances in noise and vibration.</p> <p>The Report further identifies site specific noise mitigation measures, which would substantially mitigate identified noise concerns (refer Section 6.8 – 6.14 of that Report). The mitigations, monitoring, and management identified is considered comprehensive and, if delivered, suitable to substantially mitigate identified impacts.</p> <p>These measures would result in a much lower likelihood of impact, resulting in a post-mitigation assessment of a Medium significance negative impact.</p>
<p><b>Relocation of existing residents</b> Increased property values often make it difficult for previous residents living on a site acquired for redevelopment to buy back in to a suburb, leading to potential displacement from the area where they may have social ties and other</p>	2021 census data indicates that within Chatswood SAL, 38.3% of people experience rental stress (see Section 4.2.1).	<i>Not identified in engagement</i>	Permanent – existing residents	Possible	Major	<b>High</b>	Negative	<p>Alternatives, including a do-nothing scenario, have been explored in the EIS for this SSDA. It is understood that there are benefits relating to the provision of new market and affordable housing that</p>



Impact	Supporting evidence – social baseline and other technical reporting	Importance and levels of concern to community and stakeholders	Impact dimensions			Significance and experience without mitigation		Alternatives explored and mitigation/enhancement measures identified in relevant technical reporting
			Period, duration and extent	Likelihood	Magnitude	Social significance rating	Experience	
connections. There may also be a lag between the demolition of existing dwellings and the provision of new dwellings through a redevelopment proposal.								should be weighed against this possible negative impact.
<p><b>Changes to skyline generating impacts to existing views and overshadowing<sup>28</sup></b> Changes to existing sense of place and skyline has been identified as a potential social impact. There may be some value attached to these views, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aesthetic value, such as impacts to sense of place and wider visual values of streetscape or landscape</li> <li>Property value, and associated emotional anxiety regarding any actual or perceived impacts</li> <li>Wellbeing value, including the effect of any changes to landscapes on peoples' ability to gain mental health and wellbeing benefits from vistas.</li> </ul>	<p>Mecone has reviewed the Visual Impact Assessment prepared for this project (Urbaine Design Group, January 2025). Overall, the report has identified a moderate variation to the existing visual impact and view loss for neighbouring residential properties. In forming this conclusion, the report has noted that views looking from the East and West are already impacted significantly by large residential towers on the northern boundary of Chatswood CBD. The new proposal is appropriate in the context of the current visual envelope.</p> <p>Mecone has also reviewed the Heritage Impact Statement prepared for this SSDA (OzArk, December 2024). This Statement undertook an analysis of European built heritage values on the site and surrounds. The Statement identified that no impacts to local heritage were expected as a result of this SSDA.</p>	This issue was raised amongst survey respondents, suggesting a level of importance to some community members.	Permanent – immediate social locality	Unlikely	Minor	Low	Negative	The provision of a design excellence strategy.
<p><b>Improved streetscape</b> It is understood that this project proposes to deliver an improved streetscape, including enhanced pedestrian amenity on its frontage with Help Street, McIntosh Street and Cambridge Lane</p> <p>The Design Report and Landscape Report accompanying this SSDA identifies a number of public domain improvements that seek to activate the street frontage.</p>	<p>The Design report (EM BE CE, February 2025) identifies that the core of the proposed scheme is the new public space along Cambridge Walk. There is an opportunity on this site to provide a sunlit activated commercial precinct, enhance the adjacent public plaza, improve pedestrian links and be a catalyst for the implementation of the greater Chatswood CBD Strategy.</p> <p>It is further understood that the CPTED Report (HillPDA, 2025) has identified that the proposal is expected to improve passive and natural surveillance in the area, reducing the risk of crime, due to the presence of increased residential and worker population at the site.</p>	<i>Not identified in engagement</i>	Permanent – immediate social locality	Likely	Moderate	High	Positive	This social benefit has been enhanced through the project's design process, including extending the public domain on Cambridge Lane, Help and McIntosh Streets to create an improved pedestrian environment, street furniture, and unified planting and paving.
<b>Future residents of the development</b>								
<p><b>Increased market housing supply positively influencing access to housing for some demographics</b> The increase in market housing supply is expected to improve access for certain demographics by reducing competition for existing properties, thereby broadening housing availability. The additional stock is likely to alleviate demand pressures, indirectly benefiting groups such as first-home buyers and single-person households who may have been previously excluded due to limited availability. This increase in supply aligns with market</p>	<p>2021 census data indicates that within Chatswood SAL, 38.3% of people experience rental stress (see Section 4.2.1).</p> <p>The Willoughby Housing Strategy aims to accommodate up to 6,700 additional dwellings by 2036, meaning that this development will contribute to meet council's housing target (Section 4.1).</p>	Relatively high levels of importance to a relatively large proportion of the local community due to high existing rental stress.	Permanent, with an acute positive impact immediately after delivered.  Willoughby LGA and Greater Sydney.	Likely	Major	High	Positive	Not identified.

<sup>28</sup> The NSW SIA Guideline, 'Scoping Worksheet' (DPHI, 2021) notes the following in relation to impacts to aesthetic value and amenity: *When considering perceptions of adverse impacts on amenity, an evaluation must be made of the reasonableness of those perceptions. This evaluation involves 'the identification of evidence that can be objectively assessed to ascertain whether it supports a factual finding of an adverse effect on amenity...': Telstra Corporation Ltd v Hornsby Shire Council [2006] NSWLEC 133.*



Impact	Supporting evidence – social baseline and other technical reporting	Importance and levels of concern to community and stakeholders	Impact dimensions			Significance and experience without mitigation		Alternatives explored and mitigation/enhancement measures identified in relevant technical reporting
			Period, duration and extent	Likelihood	Magnitude	Social significance rating	Experience	
principles and contributes to the overall housing diversity and social sustainability of the area.								
<p><b>Increased affordable housing</b></p> <p>The inclusion of affordable housing units within the development is expected to directly improve access to housing for lower-income households and other vulnerable demographics. By offering below-market-rate housing, the proposal addresses housing affordability challenges in the area, providing opportunities for residents who may have been unable to secure housing otherwise. This targeted provision of affordable units supports broader social equity goals and enhances the diversity and resilience of the community.</p>	2021 census data indicates that within Chatswood SAL, 38.3% of people experience rental stress (see Section 4.2.1).	Relatively high levels of importance to a relative proportion of the local community due to high existing rental stress.	Permanent, with an acute positive impact immediately after delivered.  Willoughby LGA and Greater Sydney	Almost certain	Major	<b>Very high</b>	Positive	Not identified.
<p><b>Access to social infrastructure</b></p> <p>A key factor of social sustainability is access to social infrastructure and services. For a healthy, liveable and sustainable community, housing needs to be within walking, cycling, or close public transport distance to employment, education, health, open space, and community services. Quality social facilities and services play an important role in supporting and facilitating community harmony and connectedness.</p>	There is a strong network of social infrastructure in the immediate surrounds of the site. This includes both local facilities, services and facilities within 600 metres of the subject site. This includes open space, clubs, community facilities, nursing homes, places of worship and mass transport infrastructure (Section 3.4).	Given the socio-economic disadvantages experienced by a proportion of occupants of affordable housing, this impact takes on a higher level of importance.	Ongoing  Future residents of the project.	Likely	Moderate	<b>High</b>	Positive	The Design Report identifies a number of on-site communal amenities for future residents, including communal open space, communal lounge, and other recreation opportunities. This has the potential to further enhance access to social infrastructure, for residents of the project and by reducing demand on surrounding existing infrastructure.
<p><b>Access to employment and daily needs</b></p> <p>The provision of increased housing close to employment and daily needs is likely to have a positive impact on future residents of the scheme. Additionally, the provision of retail and employment generating uses in this scheme has the potential to increase access to employment and daily needs for residents in the wider social locality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2021 Census data indicates that within Chatswood SAL, approximately 6% of people are unemployed (Section 4.2.3).</li> <li>Census data also indicates that within Chatswood SAL, approximately 25% and 19% opt for public or active transport (Section 4.2.4).</li> </ul>	Given the socio-economic disadvantages experienced by a proportion of occupants of affordable housing, this impact takes on a higher level of importance.	Ongoing  Future residents of the project	Likely	Moderate	<b>High</b>	Positive	Not identified.
<p><b>Active travel and health and wellbeing</b></p> <p>The provision of increased housing in an area with a provision for active travel has the potential to enhance the health and wellbeing of future residents of the scheme. This is further enhanced by the provision of off-street bicycle parking facilities within the proposal, and its close location to cycling routes that connect to public transport options.</p>	The provision of end-of-trip facilities for both residents and workers in a way that is highly integrated with the building's floorplate and design has the potential to further encourage active lifestyles for future residents and workers.	Given the socio-economic disadvantages experienced by a proportion of occupants of affordable housing, this impact takes on a higher level of importance.	Ongoing  Future residents of the project	Likely	Moderate	<b>High</b>	Positive	Not identified.
<b>Cumulative impacts affecting wider Chatswood SAL and Willoughby</b>								
<p><b>Increased urban densification</b></p> <p>The <i>Technical Supplement to the NSW SIA Guideline</i> (p. 41) identifies increased urban densification as having potential secondary consequences for both psychological and physical wellbeing. This cumulative impact reflects broader ongoing urban change, with potential stressors such as reduced green space, increased noise levels, and higher population densities contributing to shifts in the community's</p>	Empirical studies have shown that denser and more diverse neighbourhoods can have lower social cohesion. For example, evidence from the highly urbanised and densified city of Oslo has found that "residents of dense, mixed-use, inner-city neighbourhoods form more impersonal neighbour ties." <sup>29</sup> High transiency within an area – when a large number of new people moving in and many moving out each year - manifests in low scores of some community cohesion measures due to a lack of	This issue was raised amongst survey respondents, suggesting a level of importance to some community members.	Ongoing	Unlikely	Minor	<b>Low</b>	Mixed  As an impact based on a variable experience of change in the Chatswood SAL, it may be experienced positively or	Not identified.

<sup>29</sup> (Mouratidisa & Poortingabc, 2020).



Impact	Supporting evidence – social baseline and other technical reporting	Importance and levels of concern to community and stakeholders	Impact dimensions			Significance and experience without mitigation		Alternatives explored and mitigation/enhancement measures identified in relevant technical reporting
			Period, duration and extent	Likelihood	Magnitude	Social significance rating	Experience	
living environment. While not unique to this project, these effects are critical to monitor in assessing the long-term wellbeing of the area's population.	<p>strong social ties and established trust which are necessary elements of a cohesive community.<sup>30</sup></p> <p>Increased density can, on the other hand, help to diversify an area and increase vibrancy and cultural richness.<sup>31</sup></p>						negatively depending on the receiver.	
<p><b>Cumulative changes to community size and composition</b></p> <p>Cumulative changes to community size and composition are anticipated as ongoing developments in the area lead to shifts in demographic makeup. This impact, not specific to this project, is reflective of broader patterns of urban change, including increased population density and potential displacement. Such shifts may alter social cohesion, resource demands, and the availability of community services, all of which contribute to the overall sustainability of the neighbourhood.</p>	<p>The baseline study has identified that there is likely to be a notable demographic shift within the area due to high levels of population growth in Willoughby LGA. This population growth is likely to be focused on higher density housing, which generally attracts smaller household types including more lone-person households. This project is likely to accentuate existing trends.</p> <p>The social locality is already highly multicultural based on demographic data available (See Sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 of this report).</p>	This issue was raised amongst survey respondents, suggesting a level of importance to some community members.	Ongoing	Likely	Minimal <i>It is noted that the change is expected to accentuate existing demographic trends.</i>	<b>Low</b>	Mixed  As an impact based on a variable experience of change in the Chatswood SAL, it may be experienced positively or negatively depending on the receiver.	Not identified.
<p><b>Construction fatigue</b></p> <p>Construction fatigue, as a cumulative impact, presents ongoing challenges for local residents during prolonged or multiple construction projects. This fatigue manifests through heightened sensitivity to noise, dust, and general disruption, leading to possible declines in quality of life. Although this effect is not exclusive to this development, its intensity can increase over time, necessitating careful management to minimize long-term adverse effects on resident wellbeing.</p>	The baseline study has identified a high number of future developments in the immediate social locality through a review of current development applications (see Section 4.4.3).	<i>Not identified in engagement</i>	Ongoing	Possible	Moderate	<b>Medium</b>	Negative	Not identified.

<sup>30</sup> (Mouratidisa & Poortingabc, 2020).

<sup>31</sup> (Demireva, 2019).



# 7 Mitigation and enhancement

## 7.1 SIA recommendations

The following recommendations aim to avoid and mitigate any identified significant negative impacts and enhance the social benefits. It also outlines the significance of any residual impacts.

Table 12: SIA recommendations

Impact	Initial rating	Project refinements	SIA recommendations to avoid, minimise and enhance	Significance of residual impact
Temporary accessibility changes; temporary impacts to amenity for neighbouring residents and sensitive receivers; construction fatigue	High	Not identified.	Preparation and implementation of a robust Communications and Engagement Strategy for the construction and initial operation of the site.  This Strategy should include detail regarding complaints management, communication with the community stakeholders and consultation with direct neighbours as required.	Medium
Increased affordable housing	Very high	N/A	Delivery of affordable housing component tenure-blind, and in alignment with the NSW Minister's Guidelines for Affordable Housing.	Transformational
Access to social infrastructure; Increased urban densification; cumulative changes to community size and composition	High	N/A	Include design features that incorporate areas for residents of the scheme to gather and interact. This would contribute to enhanced social cohesion in the SAL.	Very High

## 7.2 Management and monitoring

The post-approval of a project should ideally include continuous mitigating, enhancing, monitoring and managing of social impacts, as per the SIA Guidelines. This management can help to ensure negative impacts are better mitigated, positive impacts are further amplified and that you maintain and enhance your positive working relationships with communities and stakeholders. The monitoring and adaptive management of social impacts aim to protect and enhance the social environment throughout the life of the project, starting during construction.

The mitigation and management of other potential impacts that interrelate with social impacts will contribute to the mitigation and management of social impacts of the proposed project. The preparation of the Construction Management Plan and the Operational Plan of Management should include reference to this Social Impact Assessment to ensure that impacts that cannot be fully mitigated can be managed, and unexpected consequences addressed proactively.



## 8 Conclusion

This SIA has concluded that the proposed development will have a net positive social benefit to the communities identified in this assessment.

Temporary impacts during construction can be managed through implementation of relevant technical reports, communications strategies, legislative requirements, and conditions of consent. Engagement with the local community and stakeholders during construction is strongly recommended to minimise impacts.

The assessment concludes that the identified negative social impacts of the Project can be reasonably mitigated or managed to reduce their significance, while positive impacts will increase in significance if appropriate enhancement measures are put in place.