Amendments C207 & C208

Landscape Issues Evidence

Barry Murphy – MDG Landscape Architects

15th August, 2017

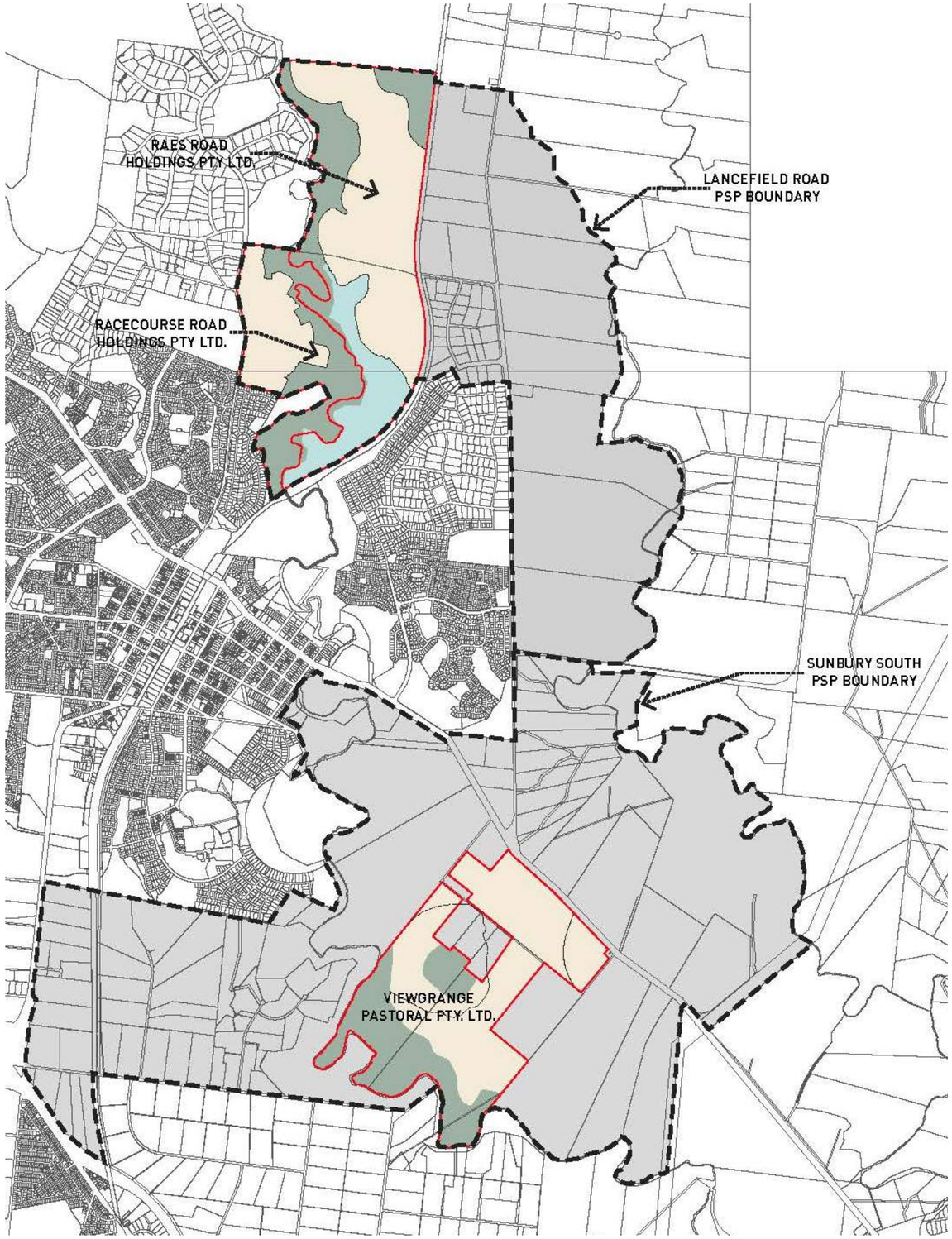


Figure 1.1 – Villawood land holdings within the Sunbury South and Lancefield Road PSP areas.

1 INTRODUCTION

I have been engaged by Norton Rose Fulbright, to prepare landscape evidence in relation to some specific issues to do with land controlled by Villawood Properties and embodied in Amendments C207 and C208 to the Hume Planning Scheme.

I have been specifically requested to address the following issues in relation to Redstone Hill and Amendment C207:

- the size, shape and location of the Redstone Hill hilltop park as well as its perimeter interfaces and desirability of providing "activation" to the park and that perimeter;
- the size, shape and location of the proposed green wedge link park between the creek corridor and the park on top of Redstone Hill;
- the distribution of Public Open Space within the Villawood land holdings; and
- the integration of the required wetlands into the natural topography of the site.

Additionally, in relation to Sherwood Heights and Amendment C208, I have been requested to address:

- the extent of developable area versus Public Open Space along the Jacksons Creek corridor; and
- the visual aspects to do with the location of a non-Government school in relation to the escarpment edge on the eastern side of the valley, just north of Cannon Gully.

In preparing the evidence and this report I have:

- inspected the subject sites and surrounds;
- reviewed the proposed Amendment documentation and the proposed PSPs; and
- reviewed a range of submissions to the proposed Amendments, including that from Council.

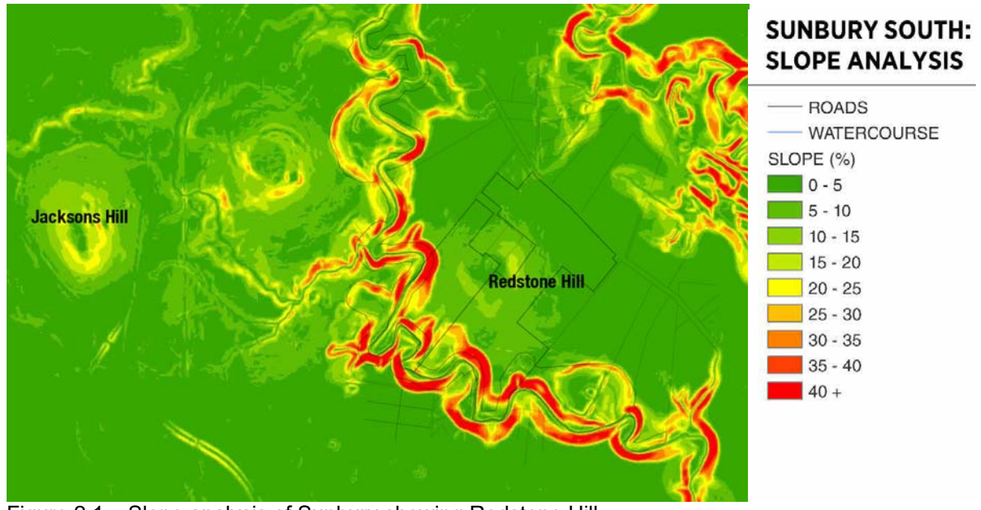


Figure 2.1 – Slope analysis of Sunbury showing Redstone Hill

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

Redstone Hill (C207):
The land within Villawood's control is shown in Figure 1.1. It sits on a broad hilltop that rises to around 256m AHD. The "top" is quite broad and runs more or less north-east to south-west over approximately 250 metres but only around 80-100 metres in the opposite perpendicular direction. The land falls radially from this high ground, with the majority of Villawood's holding falling west and south, but with a significant portion falling to the north and north-east. Apart from the escarpment, the grades on the hillside range from quite gentle and below 5% on the broad top, but then are predominantly between 5 and 10% for the remainder. However, some areas range up to 15%. These slopes meet an abrupt escarpment on the west and south sides. To the north-east, there are some steep sections (up to the 15 - 20% range) before the land becomes gentler and is between 0-5% as it falls toward Sunbury Road. Figure 2.1 shows a slope analysis of the site, while Figures 2.2 and 2.3 show images of Redstone Hill and its escarpment.

The land is currently cropped and has only limited tree cover, confined to a "home paddock" area just south-west of the hilltop and some windrows along some of the roadways around and within the site. Figure 2.4 shows an aerial photo of the subject land.


Figure 2.2 – Redstone Hill from Vineyard Road


Figure 2.3 – Redstone Hill from Jacksons Hill

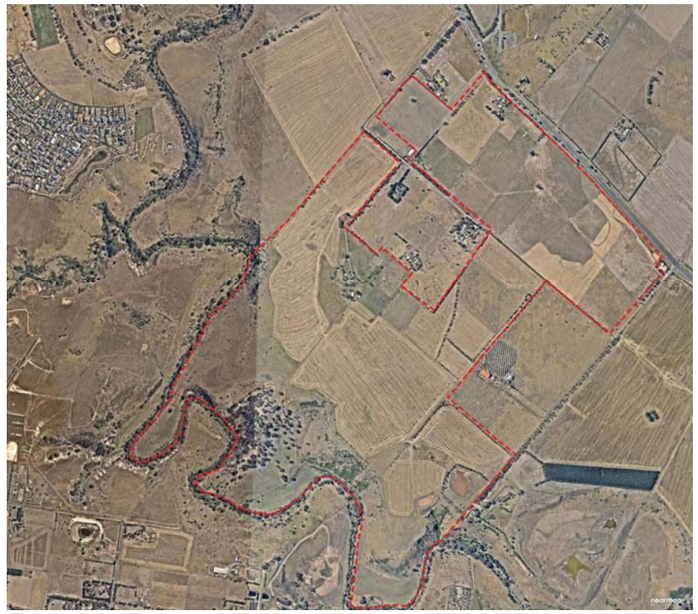


Figure 2.4 – Redstone Hill showing Villawood land holdings.

Sherwood Heights (Racecourse Road Holdings P/L) - (C208):
"Sherwood Heights" is the proposed estate name for the part of the land that is proposed for development within the land designated as "Racecourse Road Holdings Pty Ltd" shown in Figure 1.1. The extent of the land is also shown on an aerial photograph in Figure 2.5, which also includes the Raes Road Holdings P/L land to the north of this, east of the creek.

The land sits east of Racecourse Road and encompasses Jacksons Creek valley to the railway line in the east. It is comprised of a broadly convex hill slope with the high point just south of the Elizabeth Drive roundabout. The slopes over much of the hillside portion of the site vary from 10 - 15% but it flattens out quickly at the bottom to much gentler grades around 1.5 - 3% within the valley. The break in grade to the valley floor is quite noticeable for much of the site.

A natural drainage gully is located in the southern portion of the site and falls from west to east. Toward the lower reaches of the gully is a farm dam created across the terrain. Additionally on this western part of the site are three relatively small stock watering holes.

On the western side of the creek, the land is currently used for cropping and grazing. The tree vegetation is confined predominantly to around the farm dam and a vegetated ridgeline in the south, which is outside the proposed development area. There is also substantial vegetation in the form of treed windrows along the western boundary to Racecourse Road. For the southern portion of the boundary, the trees are on either side of fence line (ie. some are within the road reserve,) while north of Elizabeth Drive, all of the trees are within the road reserve. There is also a windrow along the northern boundary of the site. At the northern end of the site is a eucalypt windrow along the boundary with the Emu Bottom Wetlands to the north. A portion of this wetland crosses the boundary and extends into the subject site.

Jacksons Creek is fairly deeply incised into the valley floor, sitting 2 – 4 metres below the broader valley base.

The eastern side of the land is characterised by steeply sloping escarpments that rise to a plateau-like landscape at the top. The plateau falls very gently (at around 1 – 2%) toward the south, before slightly steepening then meeting the very steep escarpment (1:3 and steeper) that forms into a gully, known as Cannon Gully.

The land is currently cropped and has two small farm dams toward the eastern end where the gully (Cannon Gully) rises to meet the plateau. The break in grade is marked by a row of Cypress running more or less east-west along the southern edge of the plateau, with a few more Cypress in a discontinuous row along the western edge of the plateau.

Figure 2.5 – Sherwood Heights (Racecourse Road) and eastern plateau.
(Note that the Raes Road Holdings P/L land can be seen to the north.)

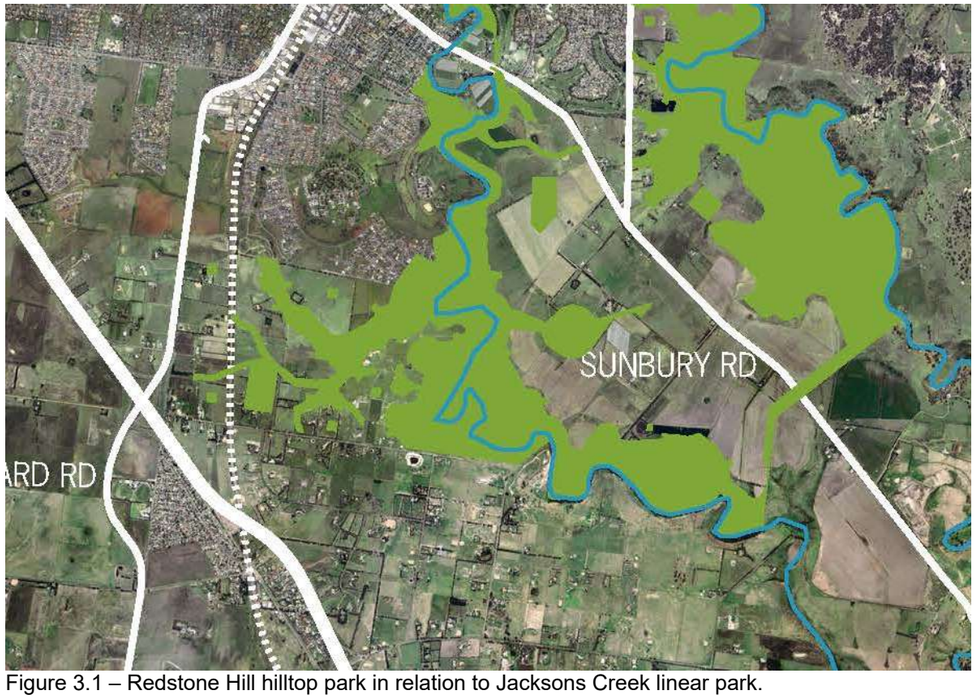


Figure 3.1 – Redstone Hill hilltop park in relation to Jacksons Creek linear park.

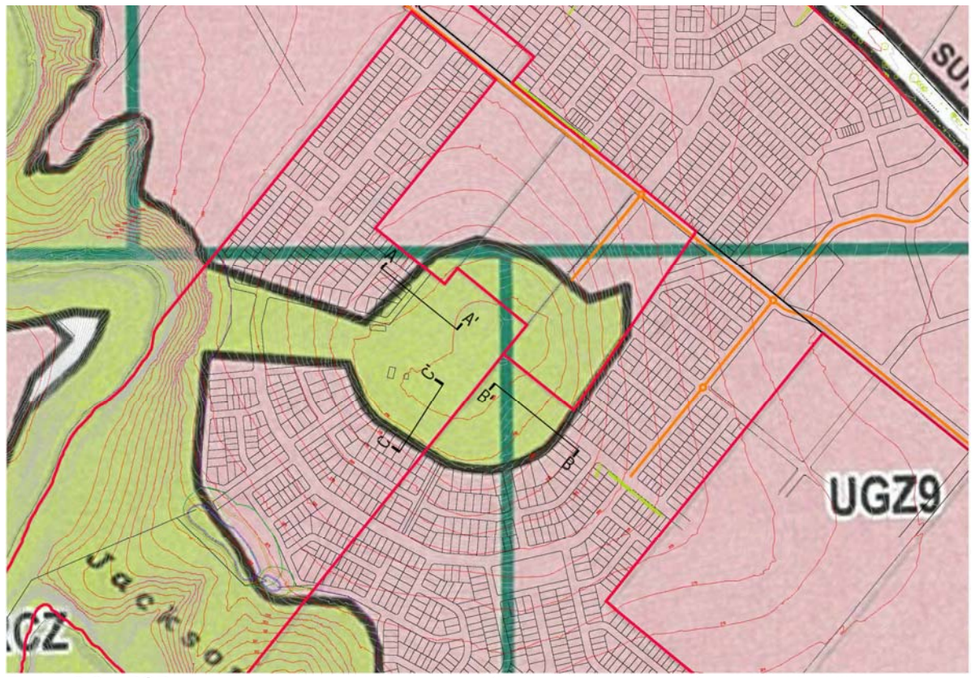


Figure 3.2 – PSP zoning plan overlaid on an indicative subdivision layout provided by Villawood. (Note minor areas of discordance in the north west of the Redstone Hill park.)

3 ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED – C207 – REDSTONE HILL

3.1 Redstone Hill Park – size, shape and location

The park atop Redstone Hill is proposed to be a regional recreation amenity. The PSP sites it broadly across the top of the hill and extending down the slopes to around RL 248 on the north-west, approximately RL 249 on the south-west and RL 245 on much of the south-east but dropping below RL 230 as the boundary continues north-east.

As can be seen in Figure 3.1, the proposed Redstone Hill regional park sits just off, but very well connected to the proposed Jacksons Creek regional park. The visual connections between the hilltop and the creek valley are extensive. These two parks will work together in a complementary way from a recreation activity standpoint. Jacksons Creek regional park will play a strong role in conservation and will offer extensive walking and cycling trails, together with picnic facilities, environmental interpretation and other amenities. Redstone Hill offers the potential for a more intensive and wider range of recreation opportunities, including more structured amenities that would be inappropriate in a more conservation oriented open space. Consequently, the two parks can work well together to provide a broad range of recreation opportunities at a regional scale of attraction. Additionally, the location of the proposed Redstone Hill Town Centre in such close proximity to the Redstone Hill park offers further potential for synergistic uses between the two and underpins the hilltop park's importance as a link from the Town Centre to the Jacksons Creek corridor.

Council's policy in relation to hilltops is defined in the Hume Planning Scheme in Cl 22.02 Rural Land Character and Urban Design Local Policy, where it states:
"The City also contains highly visible and largely undeveloped hills and ridges as well as very steep, sloping and densely vegetated creek valleys. These features strongly influence the character of the City's rural areas and provide important backdrops to its urban areas and towns."

One of the Objectives outlined under that policy is *"To minimise the visual impact of development on and near prominent hilltops, steep slopes and ridgelines."*

Council's *Sunbury HIGAP Spatial Strategy, (July 2012)* reflects this policy and notes the following in relation to Redstone Hill in particular:
"Two regional hill top parks at Mount Holden and at Redstone Hill will also be planned providing elevated spaces to enjoy the expansive views across and around Sunbury." (P20, Sunbury HIGAP Spatial Strategy, July 2012)

On page 38 of the report, it notes:
"The Redstone Hilltop Park will be connected to the Jacksons Hill Regional Park and will provide a large high quality passive open space area that allows the local community and wider Sunbury to enjoy wide ranging views across Sunbury and the wider area." (Sunbury HIGAP Spatial Strategy, July 2012)

Additionally, the report goes on to say:
"Land between Jacksons Creek and Redstone Hill on the west will remain undeveloped to retain views from Jacksons Creek and Jacksons Hill and retain the landscape connection between Redstone Hill and Jacksons Creek. Building heights, landscaping and the extent of development on the slopes of Redstone Hill will be controlled to protect the dominance and visual qualities of Redstone Hill. Development interfacing the escarpment of both Jacksons Creek and Emu Creek will be set back and be restricted in height to minimise the visual impact, particularly when viewed from these creeks."

Clearly from this policy standpoint, Sunbury's hilltops are an important aspect of the landscape character of the area and are to be protected from development that would overly intrude on that character.

Council's submission to the VPA notes its support of height controls that would *"restrict development to that which doesn't protrude above 253m AHD. These controls will assist in maintaining the visual prominence and natural landscape qualities of Redstone Hill, whilst maintaining views from the hilltop." (P18)*

Figure 3.2 shows the VPA's proposed zoning plan that defines the extent of the Redstone Hill hilltop park against an indicative subdivision layout. It shows a high degree of concordance apart from one area in the north-west in which the indicative layout extends further up the hillside. This would need to be modified to accord with the PSP boundary. (The plan also shows the locations of the cross-sections that are discussed and represented below.)

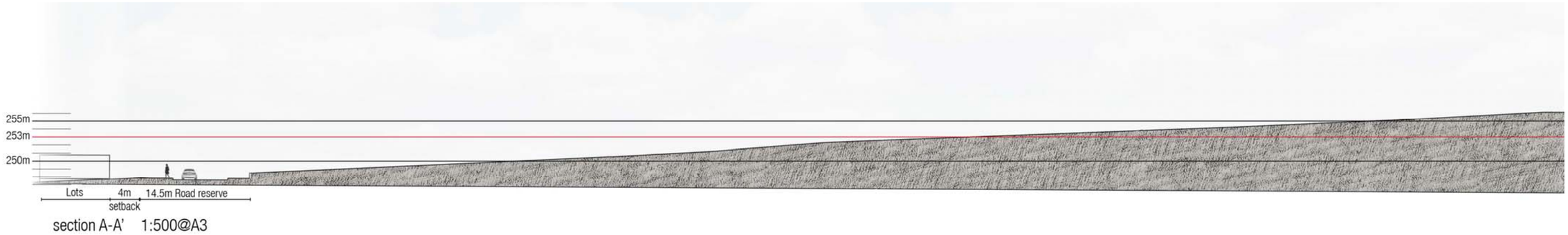


Figure 3.3 – Section AA through north-western edge of hilltop park (showing the road on the outside of the PSP boundary line.)

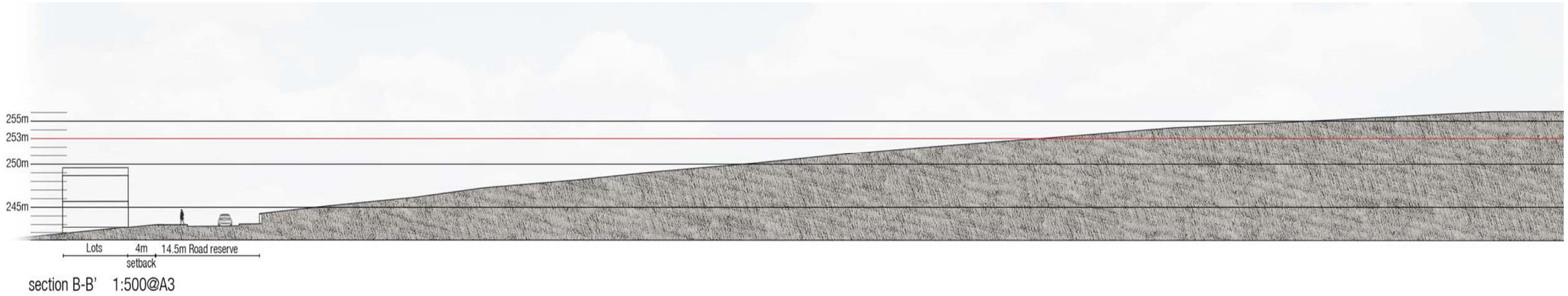


Figure 3.4 – Section BB through south-eastern edge of hilltop park (showing the road on the outside of the PSP boundary line.)

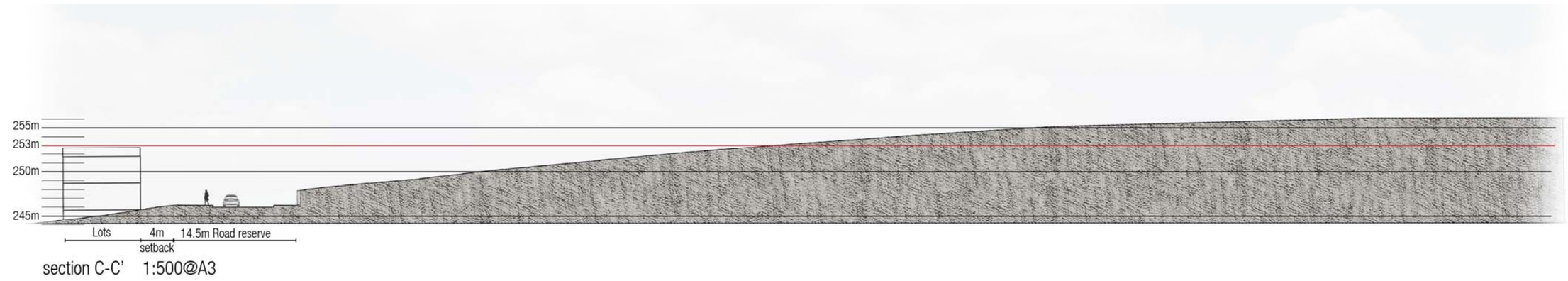


Figure 3.5 – Section CC through south-western edge of hilltop park (showing the road on the outside of the PSP boundary line.)

While there has been no detailed road design done as yet and the contours are photogrammetric, the sections provide a good indication of the likely range of interface issues to the hilltop park, particularly in relation to levels.

Figure 3.3 shows a cross section through the north-western edge of the park where the PSP boundary line sits at around RL 248. The 253 AHD height cut-off would therefore accommodate a structure less than 5 m high, effectively a single storey dwelling. With the PSP line and level of 248 AHD, the dwellings along the front line of the street adjacent to the park would all need to be no more than single storey at the front. Some of these lots have around 2m of fall away from the street, which may therefore theoretically accommodate a structure that was a split level, flat roofed 2 storey dwelling.

Figure 3.4 depicts a section through the south-eastern edge of the park. The roadway in this location appears to be at around RL 243, approximately 10m below the proposed RL253 height control. Consequently, two storey homes could be easily accommodated in this area.

Figure 3.5 shows a section across the south-western edge of the park where the allotments would start at around RL 247. The effect of the RL 253 built form control would limit the heights of these buildings to around 6m at the front property line. As in the other cross sections, the land continues to fall away from the roadway, so with careful design and the fall of the land, two storey homes could be accommodated in this zone without impacting the 253 AHD control level.

From this review of an indicative development around the perimeter of the Redstone Hill hilltop park, it would appear that the adoption of the 253m AHD contour as the height control for development around the hill will preserve the top of the hill as a discernible element in the broader landscape of Sunbury. Additionally, the fact that the proposed park boundary dips significantly lower than RL 247 on the south-eastern and eastern sides, means that the excellent views to the Melbourne CBD would be fully retained from all of the hilltop.

The three sections shown around the perimeter of the park also highlight the topographic impact on casual surveillance of the future hilltop regional park. Safety in public open space benefits from casual surveillance, whether from adjacent dwellings or passing traffic. The sections show that the topography limits the degree to which passing traffic and the perimeter dwellings can provide casual surveillance. In an 18 Ha park, this needs to be addressed in the design. This issue brings up the potentially competing demands of protecting the views to and from the hilltop, while acknowledging the proposed usage as a regional recreation facility and consequently the significant recreation opportunities that could be included to draw people to the park. I believe both can be achieved through careful design of the site.

Figure 3.6 shows a set of “design principles” for the hilltop park prepared for an earlier subdivision application for the Villawood land. It was prepared without Council or community input, purely as a discussion-starter about what might be able to be achieved in this large park and therefore represents just one of many potential solutions for the hilltop. It has been included in this evidence because it demonstrates how one arrangement of uses within the park can provide a regional level of recreation resources and help improve the safety on the hilltop by bringing people through defined routes to higher activity areas. This movement of people through parts of the park would create the informal surveillance needed to increase safety. The diagram focuses an activity centre in the middle of the park, in form of a café and function centre that is visible from the town centre. This would fit well with Objective O18 of the PSP which aims to *“support the creation of a regional destination based parkland at Redstone Hill that is developed sympathetically to its landscape significance and provides for strong physical and visual connections to both the Major Town Centre, the Jacksons Creek regional park, and surrounding hill tops.”*

Figure 3.6 – Design principles / spatial relationships for hilltop park

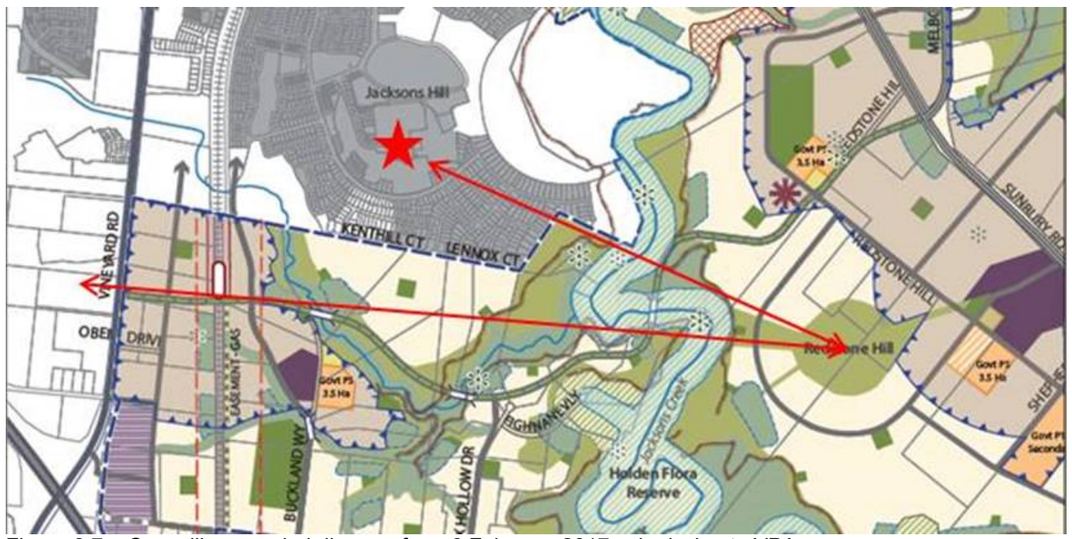


Figure 3.7 – Council's amended diagram from 6 February 2017 submission to VPA.

3.2 Redstone Hill Park Green Wedge alignment

A green wedge has been incorporated between the creek valley and the park on top of Redstone Hill in the PSP and in the Villawood subdivision proposal. Figure 3.7 opposite shows Council's response to this wedge location, suggesting some amendment to its alignment. Council's submission to the VPA states that *"the intent of this wedge shaped area is to enable uninterrupted views from Jacksons Hill to the Jacksons Creek Valley, rocky outcrop and up to the top of Redstone Hill. It would also facilitate views from Redstone Hill to Bald Hill."*

Figure 3.8 shows a view from Jacksons Hill to Redstone Hill, while Figure 3.9 shows a view from Vineyard Road, directly in the line of the view from Bald Hill to Redstone Hill. Both images show the Redstone Hill top as a broad convex curve. They also show that the rock escarpment of the valley's eastern edge is quite evident in the vistas. In the context of Council's desire to form a visual connection not only between the hilltops but also to include the rocky escarpment as part of that visual experience, it is appropriate that the "green wedge" should facilitate those connections.

Figure 3.10 maps these two vista lines over a contour plan of the overall area and over the Villawood provided indicative subdivision layout. The facilitation of the visual connections described above would therefore suggest that the green wedge be defined by the area between the two vista lines, with roads occupying the edge outside this.

Figure 3.12 diagrammatically indicates the effect of the green wedge for the view corridor, presented as an overlay on the photograph shown in Figure 3.9. (Note that the figure is **not** an accurate 3D model and therefore does not attempt to be a visual simulation of the future. Rather, it is a broad diagrammatic indication of the impact of a green wedge view corridor from Jacksons Hill, together with the building height control and urban layout being proposed, broadly amended to fit the lines shown in Figure 3.10.) It can be seen from the diagram that the view corridor, height controls and break of slope setbacks combine to leave Redstone Hill standing prominently above the urban development. Additionally, the rocky escarpment is clear and visible, with the green wedge forming a link that allows the eye to more clearly connect the two.

From this analysis and depiction of view potential, is seems clear that the indicative subdivision layout would need to be amended to accommodate the view connections mapped and depicted above. Indeed, I believe the PSP wedge definition on the northern boundary should also be slightly modified to better reflect the view line from the high point on Jacksons Hill (though the southern boundary is acceptable.) The close-up view in Figure 3.11 shows in more detail the view corridor noted above, overlaid on the indicative subdivision layout and the PSP wedge lines.


Figure 3.8 – Redstone Hill from Vineyard Road


Figure 3.9 – Redstone Hill from Jacksons Hill

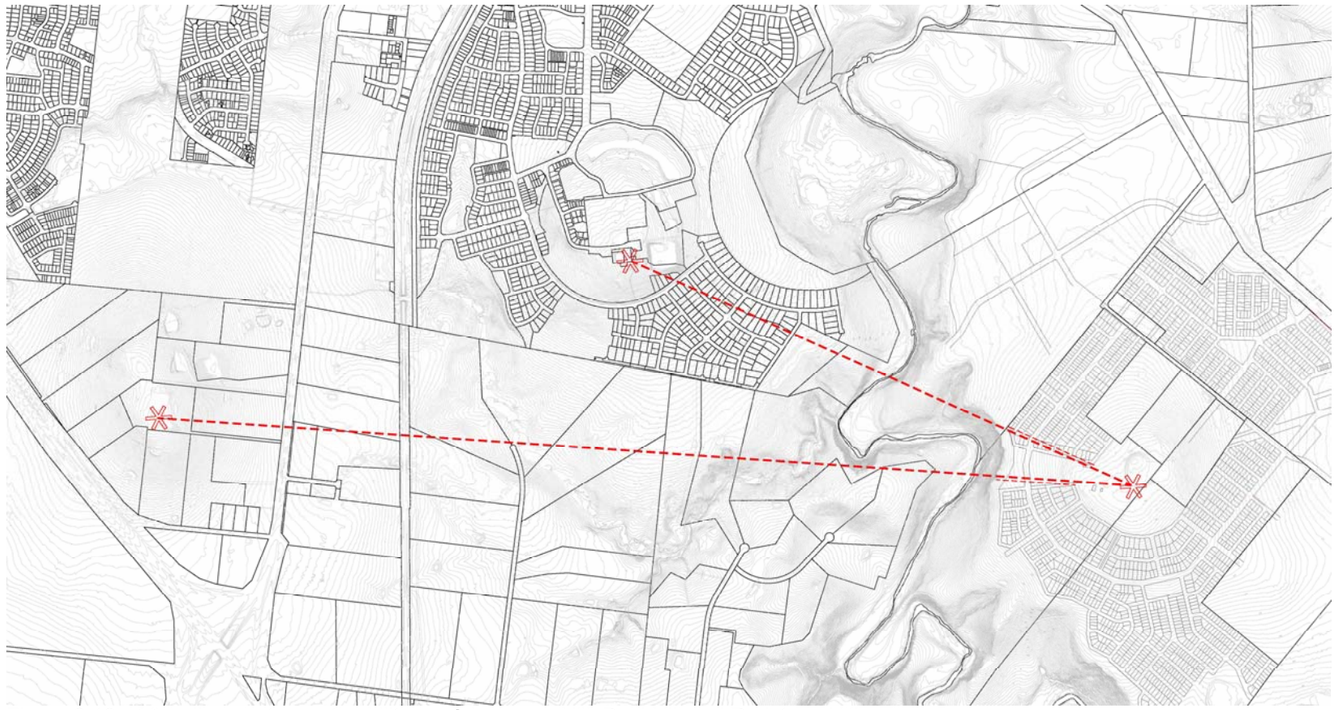


Figure 3.10 – View lines between the hilltops of Jacksons Hill, Bald Hill and Redstone Hill

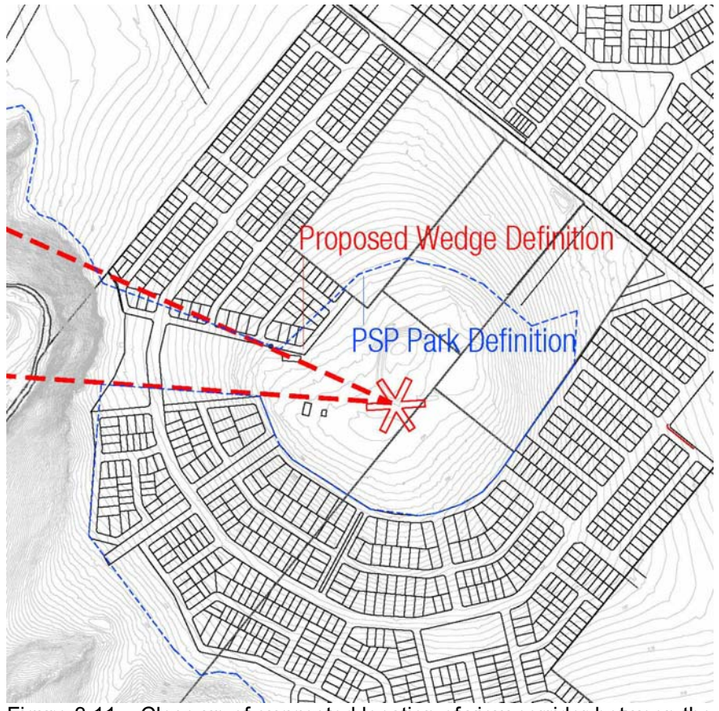


Figure 3.11 – Close up of suggested location of view corridor between the hilltops, showing the current PSP park and 'wedge' alignment.

Figure 3.12 – Diagrammatic illustration of view cone 'wedge' to Redstone Hill

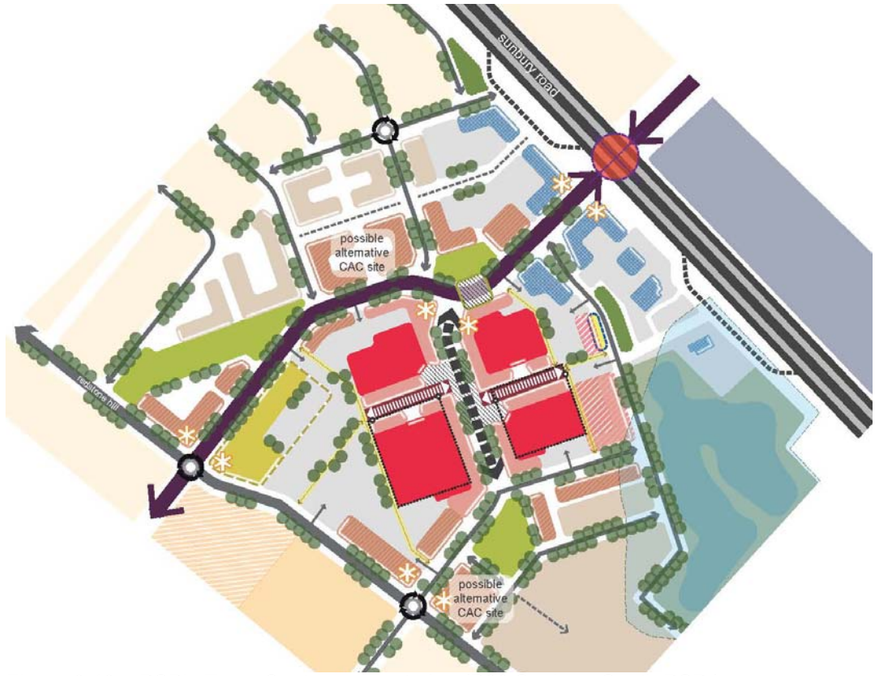


Figure 3.13 – PSP's Town Centre concept plan (P26 Sunbury South PSP.)

Figure 3.14 – 500m 'walkable' catchments for proposed open space distribution.

3.3 Public Open Space Distribution

In the Mesh submission to the PSP of 8th February 2017, the issue of the distribution of public open space is raised, with the view to amending both the size and location of the two parks in Parcel 61.

The PSP is graphically inconsistent in relation to the southern of these two open spaces. The PSP's Land Use Budget plan shows the southern park being adjacent to the visual axis / green link to Redstone Hill Park. The Redstone Major Town Centre Concept Plan however shows development on that site and instead depicts smaller parks at either end of the town centre's 'main street'. (Refer Figure 3.13.)

The Mesh submission requests redistribution of open space to a 1Ha park in the north-west of Parcel 61 and a 0.5Ha park in the Town Centre, at the southern end of the main street.

Figure 3.14 shows 500m diameter "walkable" catchments to the proposed local park distribution, as well as the smaller recreation "nodes", on a portion of the PSP's Future Urban Structure plan. (The plan uses 500m rather than the usual 400m walkable catchment because the City of Hume uses this as its standard for parks distribution.) It can be seen from the diagram that the relocation of the southern park from being adjacent to the visual axis to a more easterly location creates a high level of accessibility throughout the development. Particularly, it caters better to the proposed medium/high density residential to the south-east of the town centre, providing this population with better access to public open space.

Importantly also, this proposed location for the park accommodates the potential for the creation of a 'town square' style park that can form a community focus and civic 'heart' for the community. The proposed location is highly visible from the main street and could be the focus for civic events, farmers' markets, art shows, school performances and a range of other community building and community reinforcing events.

The nature of this park as a more urban style space means that it could be smaller than a traditional local park because more of it would be hard paved (and consequently tolerate more wear.) Additionally, it would accommodate a slightly different range of uses that do not require large grassed "kick about" spaces, creating a slightly different style of park for the development and providing residents with some diversity of choice. Figures 3.15 – 3.20 show some examples of such urban or town square style park elements.

The reallocation of 0.25 Ha to be added to the north-western park allows that park to set itself apart from the other open space recreational "offers" that will be available to residents when the full PSP area is developed. The modest increase in size of this park would allow it to accommodate a slightly wider variety of recreational amenities than could be accommodated in a 0.75Ha park, particularly in relation to informal active pursuits involving ball games. For example, a 1Ha park has the potential to accommodate two "kick about" spaces, whereas a 0.75Ha park generally would only accommodate one. Alternatively, the additional space would accommodate the creation of a number of smaller "quieter" grassed areas as picnic lawns. These would be too small to encourage active ball games and help channel such activity into the larger purpose designed space. Either of these options would allow a spread of the park uses and potentially make the quieter areas of the park less 'intruded on' by the boisterous activities that can occur in these informal active spaces.

The other ancillary benefit of the increased size of the north-western park comes from the fact that it is likely to be the only park in existence for the first few years of the development of the area. As the only local open space, it would be beneficial if the size of the park allowed it to offer a broader range of recreational opportunities to the fledgling community as the surrounding areas and their parks were being developed over the longer time frame. At full development of the PSP area, there would be no increased parkland from that denoted in the PSP to burden Council's limited maintenance budgets.

Figure 3.15 – Urban park with significant paved areas

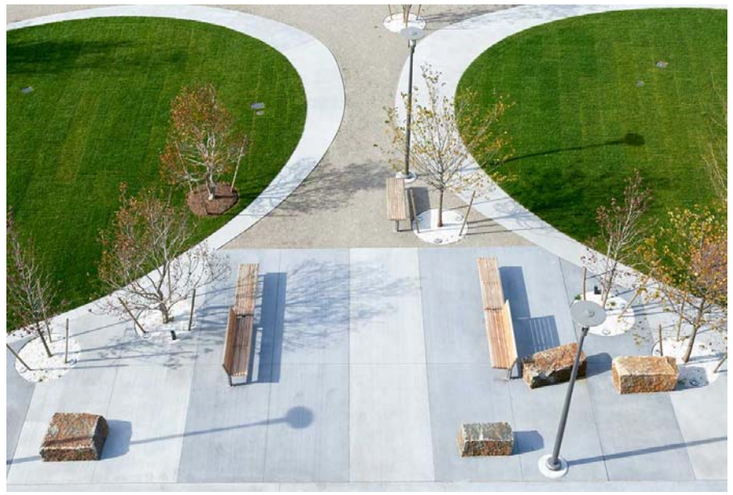


Figure 3.16 – Urban park with seating area

Figure 3.17 – Urban park with barbecue and picnic area

Figure 3.18 – Urban park paving and seating

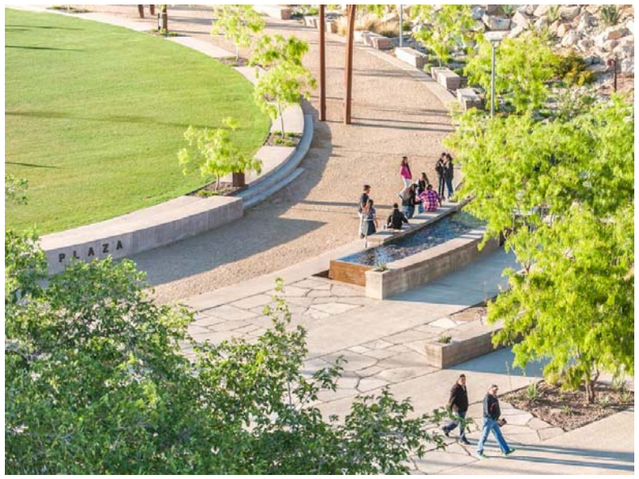


Figure 3.19 – Urban plaza style space

Figure 3.20 – Urban park paved seating area with water feature

Figure 3.21 – Planted rock stabilized batters offer flexibility with slopes and a more diverse landscape.

3.4 Wetland Integration

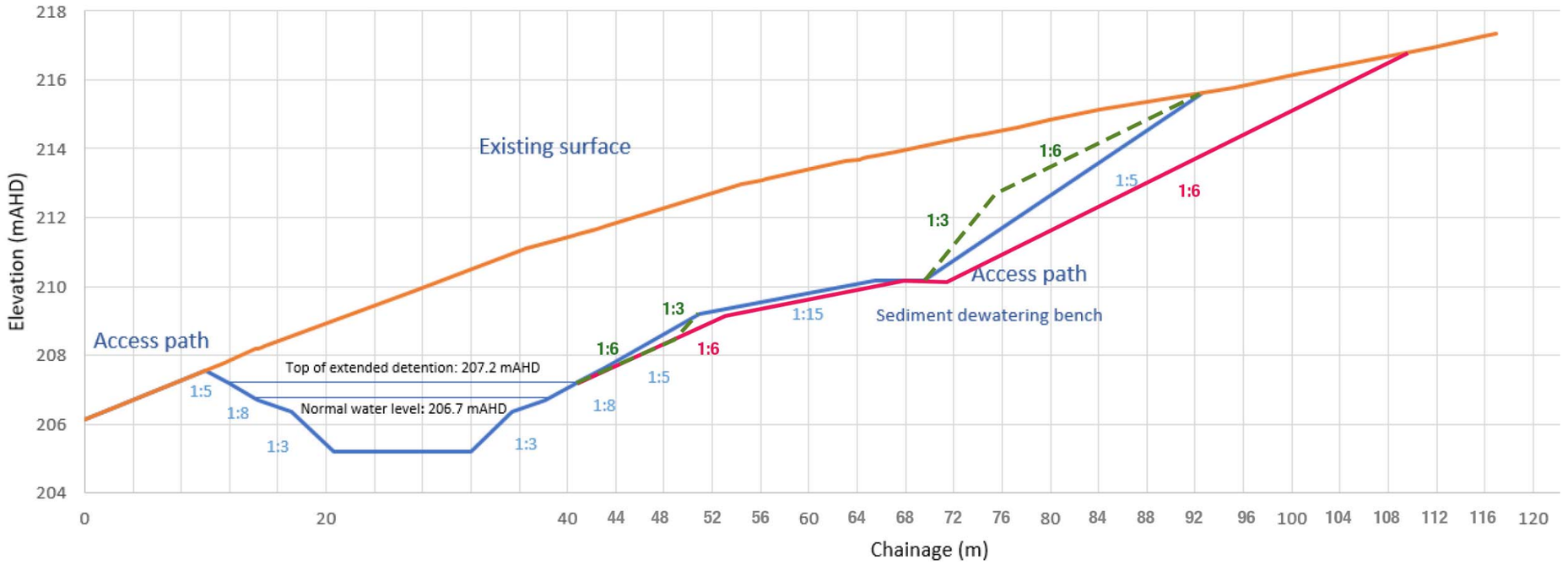
The issue of integrating the required water quality control wetlands into the relatively steep site of Redstone Hill brings landscape issues to the fore.

Both wetlands WL 4 and WL 7 are shown in Alluvium's reports and depict the location and cross sections of each of the wetlands. Both wetland designs adopt Melbourne Water's standard grade of 1:5 for grassed batters. However, both wetlands will become Council assets and consequently Council's grass batter standards of 1:6 will come into play. This standard is based on valid OH&S concerns that determine the maximum grade upon which it is safe to operate a mower.

In any urban development however, the efficient use of land is paramount. Land is not an infinite resource to be used without careful consideration of its allocation to various uses and the design that is applied to it. On the slopes of a site like Redstone Hill, the application of "one size fits all" standards is neither a site responsive nor sensitive way to use a scarce resource. The application of 1:6 grades on the designs prepared by Alluvium would result in the earthworks footprint of the wetlands widening (ie. perpendicular to the contours) by approximately 10m in the case of WL7 and around 20m for WL4.

A more creative approach to the wetland designs however would allow the footprints to avoid taking an unnecessary amount of developable land, impacting on the overall density of the development. Figure 3.21 shows how rock stabilised planted batters can be used to take up steeper grades and reduce the footprint area. This approach not only deals with accommodating slope over a shorter distance, but also offers much more diversity and complexity to the landscape. Used in combination with 1:6 grassed batters, the landscape can become more visually interesting as the setting for the wetlands.

Figure 3.22 shows the current Alluvium design cross section for WL4 (shown in the blue line), as well as indicating the impact of 1:6 grassed batters (shown in red) as well as some judicious use of 1:3 planted rock stabilised batters (shown in green).



Redstone Hill cross section BB

Figure 3.22 – Mark-up of Alluvium cross-section BB for WL4, showing impact of 1:6 batters (red) and a mix of 1:6 grassed slopes and 1:3 planted rock stabilised batters (green).


Figure 4.1 – the deeply incised Jacksons Creek


Figure 4.2 – Sherwood Heights from north on Racecourse Road, showing the sloping land transitioning to the valley floor.


Figure 4.3 – Northward view showing slopes on the left, the gentler 'flood plain' in the centre and incised creek on the right.


Figure 4.4 – Sherwood Heights site from east side of valley


Figure 4.5 – Sherwood Heights hillside from the north

4 ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED C208 – SHERWOOD HEIGHTS

4.1 Extent of Development and Public Open Space

In the vicinity of Sherwood Heights, the Jacksons Creek valley has a well-defined set of landform elements. The hillslopes adjacent to Racecourse Road fall generally at around 1:8 to 1:11, though some small areas are up to 1:6. These slopes abruptly flatten out to grades of between 1:30 and 1:60 across a 70 – 250m wide area before they reach the edge of the highly defined and deeply incised creek itself. These banks down to the creek are in the order of 4-6m and vary in slope from 1:2 to nearly vertical, though a major portion of the banks are around 1:1 grade.

The consequence of this landform is that there is a clear distinction from the creek itself, to the gentle slopes of a flood plain (or edge thereof) and then the steeper slopes of the surrounding land. Figures 4.1 – 4.5 show this landform distinction.

The PSP proposes a substantial area of public open space within the Jacksons Creek valley, as shown in Figure 4.6 over. In a more simplified graphic, the extent of public open space within the overall corridor can be seen in Figure 4.7. Both these images reinforce that a significant linear park is proposed, encompassing the core of the creek valley, stretching almost 4 km from the rail bridge crossing of Jacksons Creek in the south to the northern end of the PSP area.

A number of diagrams within the PSP depicting the Conservation Areas (Figures 5 and 6) confirm that an extensive network of shared paths is planned throughout the valley, connecting it with the surrounding areas while protecting valuable growling grass frog habitat and encouraging habitat creation for other species. A limited number of passive recreation nodes are depicted, as well as a pedestrian / cycle creek crossing point.

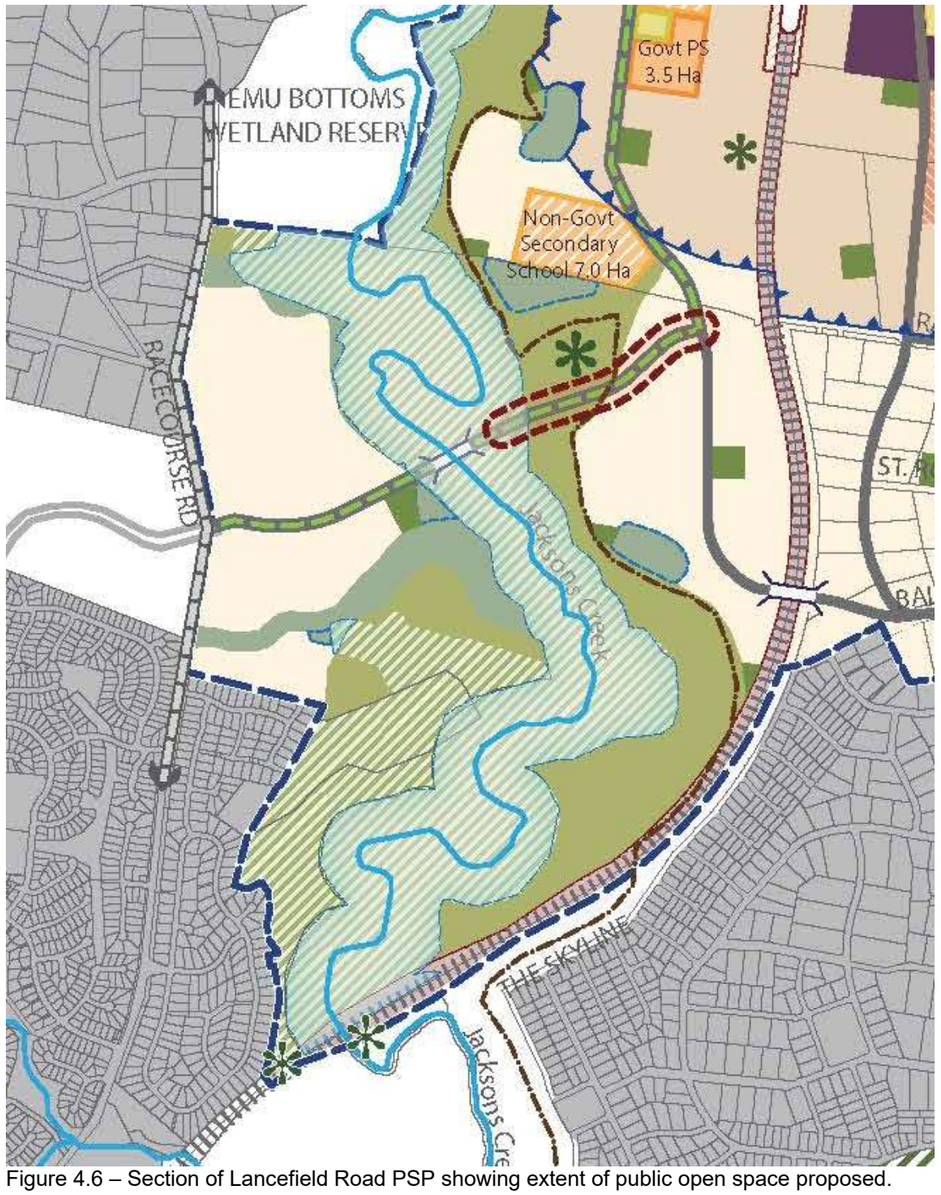


Figure 4.6 – Section of Lancefield Road PSP showing extent of public open space proposed.

Figure 4.7 – Extent of overall public open space within the Jacksons Creek valley north and south of the Sherwood Heights development area.

Figure 4.8 – View northward up the valley from north of the Conservation Area.

Figure 4.9 – Sherwood Heights site showing proposed extent of development area being located outside the valley floor and street alignments generally paralleling the contours.

Figure 4.10 – Sherwood Heights site showing proposed extent of development area being located outside the valley floor and street alignments generally paralleling the contours.

The key issue in relation to the extent of development on the Sherwood Heights slopes is then how well it will "fit" with the proposed regional park and its conservation, recreation and landscape values. This will be influenced by the ability to retain views up and down the valley for users within it, as well as the extent to which the proposed development can be absorbed in the landscape.

Figure 4.8 shows a panoramic photo of the valley looking northward. The lower portion of the Sherwood Heights slopes can be seen in the left of the photo, while clear views northward up the valley are evident in the central portion of the vista. Development on the slopes will not detrimentally impact the perception of the distant views up the valley to the treed landscapes in the distance.

In relation to the ability of the land to visually accommodate the proposed development, the layout of the subdivision is important. The arrangement of roads more or less paralleling the contours is critical in the allowing the creation of treed streetscapes which as they move up the hillside, create an overall sense of green filtering of the residential development. Figure 4.10 shows the proposed layout for the area, clearly showing the way most of the roads generally parallel the contours. For the sake of comparison, Figure 4.9 shows the VPA's proposed plan amendment to the development area, following response to the draft PSP. It can be seen that the revised Villawood proposal in Figure 4.10 generally accords with this revised VPA drawing.

The subdivision proposed skirts the 'bottom' of the hill and proposes a roadway interface to the regional park. From a visual point of view, this interface needs to be treated carefully to ensure the future urban development sits comfortably adjacent to the open space of the valley. Issues to be addressed would include:

- establishing a strong vegetative edge to valley through appropriate indigenous tree plantings along the roadway interface;
- ensuring there are significant tree plantings in the streets further up the slopes to soften the overall built form and prevent silhouetting of the buildings against the skyline. (As noted above, the streets paralleling the contours accommodate this well); and
- finding a balance between the vegetative softening described above and the inevitable need for bushfire protection for this front line of urban development.

On this basis, the PSP's definition of the extent of developable land adjacent to Racecourse Road appears logical. The developable land sits outside the gentler slopes referred to above and would continue to allow the nature of the valley's landform to be easily perceived by users within it. The proposal to designate the area as a regional park will clearly cement the landscape values of the creek and its floodplain, together with the dramatic escarpments on the eastern side. The proposed subdivision layout accommodates street tree planting in a manner that will help the residential development nestle into the hillslopes as the vegetation matures. Aiding in this also is the fact that the allotment depths are significantly larger than traditional lots. The depths of 40m to 50+m will allow the planting of significant canopy trees throughout the development, further adding to the softening vegetation of the road reserves.

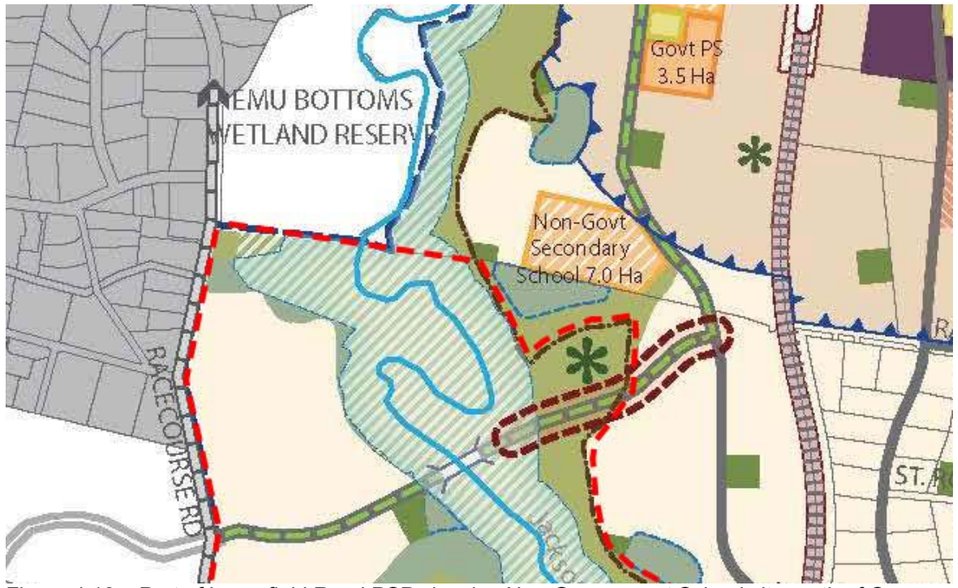


Figure 4.10 – Part of Lancefield Road PSP showing Non-Government School site north of Cannon Gully.

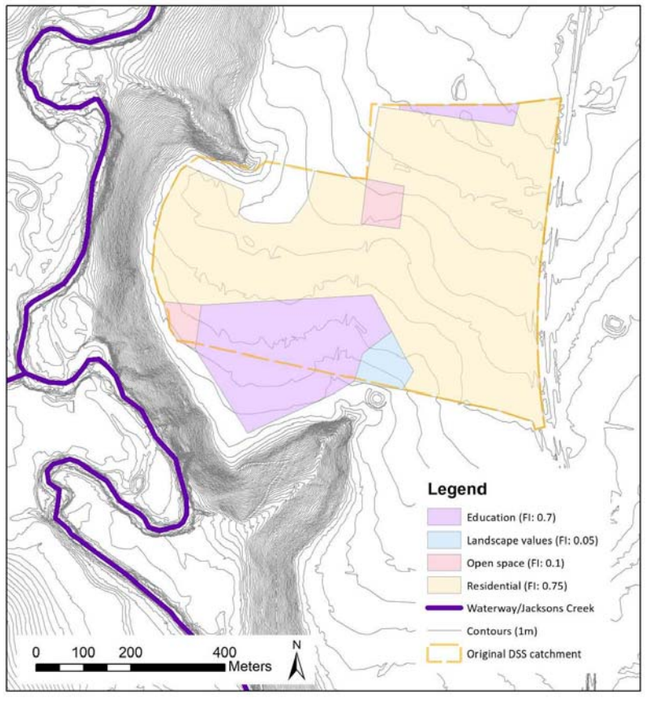


Figure 6. *Catchments contributing to the proposed wetland*

Figure 4.11 – Proposed alternative arrangement of Non-Government Secondary School site and wetland.

4.2 Land use allocation around Non-Government Secondary north of Cannon Gully

The PSP has allocated a Non-Government Secondary School site on the plateau north of Cannon Gully, as can be seen in Figure 4.10.

It is my understanding that Salesian College intend to create a campus on that site that will focus on agricultural education. Their current syllabus uses the valley as part of their educational activities. In that context, the Salesians have a strong desire to be directly connected to the valley escarpment and floor from their future campus location. Additionally, there is a strong visual link from the plateau site to the existing campus at Rupertswood.

Figures 4.11 and 4.12 show a proposed alternative layout for the area shown by Alluvium in their Preliminary Functional Design Report. That alternative arrangement relocates the wetland further south from the PSP site and enables the location of the educational campus along the top of the plateau.

From within the proposed regional park, the relocation of the campus to being closer to the escarpment area will have no detrimental impact on the visual qualities of the valley. As can be seen in Figure 4.11, the actual school site is set well back from the edge of the escarpment. Together with the relatively low intensity use and the strong likelihood of any built form being concentrated toward the eastern end of the site, near the higher order street, the campus and its activities will not impact on the use and enjoyment of the regional park adjacent.

The broad layout for the regional park shown in Figure 6 of the PSP confirms that there will be shared trails at both the top and bottom of the escarpment. In the context of an adjacent Secondary School, these links will form an important connection for the campus to its surrounding community. Additionally, the escarpment of Cannon Gully already has an access track cut into the side of the slope. This track could be a useful link between the shared trails and facilitate movement between the campus and the valley floor. (I note that the track is however on a grade of around 1:7, which will make it suitable only for able bodied pedestrians.)

From a visual point of view then, the proposal to rearrange the school and wetland relationship presents no visual problems for the regional park and indeed would form an attractive visual connection between the two arms of the school.

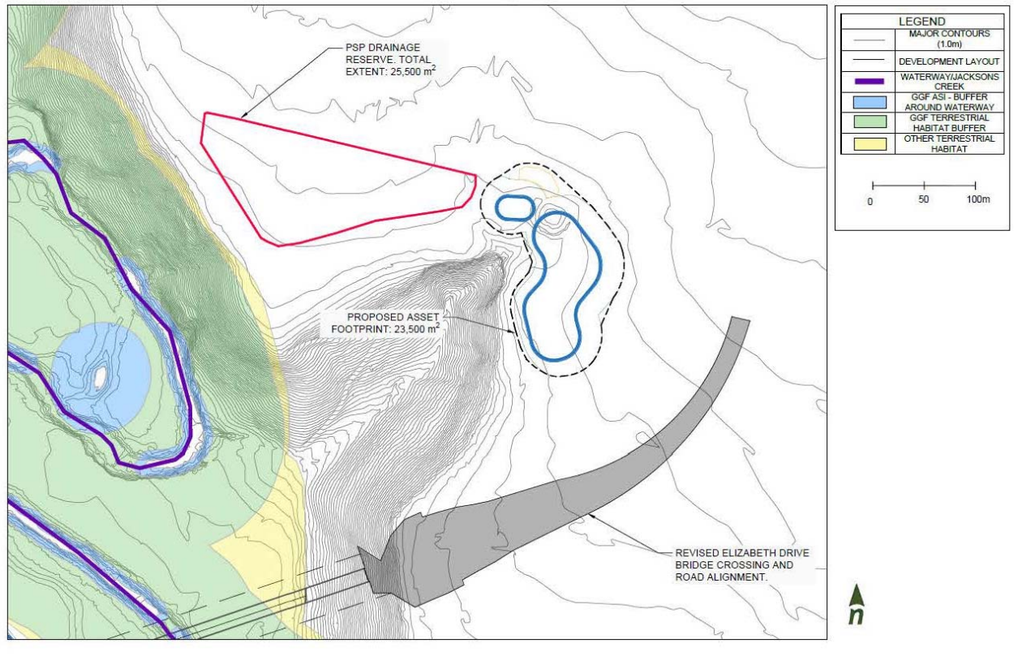


Figure 5. *Wetland asset WL11 – PSP location and Villawood alternative, with key site constrains*

Figure 4.12 – Proposed alternative arrangement for wetland, showing original PSP location.

5 SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

Having reviewed the areas of concern outlined in the introduction to this evidence, I believe:

- The size and shape of the Redstone Hill regional park as shown in the PSP plans is broadly correct and I concur with Council's desire to protect views to the top of the hill through a height restriction of 253m AHD;
- While the location of the visual access "wedge" west of Redstone Hill shown in the PSP is broadly correct, it could be improved with a small amendment to the northern edge of the wedge land;
- The distribution and spatial allocation of the open space areas within Villawood's land holdings identified in the Sunbury South PSP and reinforced in Villawood's Section 96 application create a highly accessible distribution of open space and create increased potential for diversity of recreation offer between parks in the area;
- The integration of wetlands into topography such as exists on Redstone Hill demands a more flexible approach than "one size fits all" standards can accommodate. A range of useful batter treatment measures would improve the usage of land within the future development;
- The extent of developable land adjacent to Racecourse Road is appropriate from a topographic and visual point of view and its relationship with the adjacent extensive proposed regional park can be a soft and well vegetation interface;
- The proposal to rearrange the Secondary School and wetland north of Cannon Gully offers advantages to the future school campus and creates no detrimental impact on the visual or usage components within the adjacent regional park; and
- The creation of the proposed Jacksons Creek Regional Park will provide the existing and emerging community of Sunbury with and extraordinary recreation and conservation asset that will serve them well into the future.

Barry Murphy
MDG Landscape Architects Pty Ltd.

August, 2017

Attachment 1 – Statement of Evidence

Name: Barry Murphy

Address: MDG Landscape Architects
Level 3, 141 Flinders Lane
Melbourne Vic 3000

Qualifications:
1975 Dip. Hort. Sci. Burnley Horticultural College
1979 Grad. Dip. L.D. Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
1985 Master of Landscape Architecture (Site Planning & Urban Design Stream), University of California, Berkeley, including the following awards:
1985 A.S.L.A. Honour Award, U.C. Berkeley
1984 Eisner Prize for Creative Arts, U.C. Berkeley
1985 Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award, U.C. Berkeley

Professional memberships:
Fellow, Australian Institute of Landscape Architects

Area of Expertise:
My areas of expertise are in landscape architecture, site planning and urban design, with that expertise built through a range of tertiary level courses and qualifications, together with over 40 years' experience in the field.

Expertise to prepare report:
Barry Murphy has a diverse range of experience in landscape architecture from a variety of positions in both government and private practices. His experience ranges from site design and detailing of urban projects to site analysis and land planning for broadscale areas. From 1986 until 1989, he was Director in charge of Tract Consultants Australia P/L's Perth office. In 1992 he commenced his own practice, now known as MDG Landscape Architects, which provides landscape architectural and urban design services to range of private and local government clients.

Facts and assumptions:
As detailed in the evidence.

Reference Documents:
As detailed in the evidence.

Summary of Opinion:
Refer Section 5 of report.

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