

Client

Lend Lease

Project

Community Facilities and Open Space
Report
Bingara Gorge Staged Development
Application

Date

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1 Introduction

This report has been prepared for Lend Lease, to provide an assessment of community facility and open space requirements associated with increasing the dwelling yield at Bingara Gorge to 1,800 lots and to support and inform a development application for the increased dwelling yield.

Development of a residential community at Bingara Gorge, Wilton, has been underway since 2006. Development approval already exists for 1,165 residential allotments, expected to result in a population of about 3,500 people.

Lend Lease has an existing Voluntary Planning Agreement (August 2007) with Wollondilly Shire Council for Bingara Gorge, based upon the approved yield of 1,165 dwellings. This VPA sets out Council's requirements for community facilities and open space to be provided within the development and contributions towards off-site facilities.

Lend Lease is now seeking to increase the yield at Bingara Gorge by an additional 635 lots and has sought advice on the specific requirements for additional community facilities and open space to meet the needs of the increased population.

This assessment has occurred within the context of the broader planning for "Wilton Junction", and the requirements for community facilities and open space that have been identified for Wilton Junction as a whole, and particularly for district level community facilities and open space.

2 Population forecasts for Bingara Gorge

Currently, approval exists for a maximum of 1,165 dwellings to be developed within Bingara Gorge. This is expected to generate a population of around 3,500 people, based upon an assumed average household size of around 3 persons per dwelling.

As at 1 April 2015, about 800 residential lots have been sold, and about 300 dwellings have been occupied, resulting in a population of about 960 people. This equates to an average of 3.2 persons per dwelling.

The predominant household type has been young families with children in the 0-10 years range, followed by young couples yet to start a family. Empty nester couples without children make up the third most popular type of household. It is anticipated that this group as a proportion will continue to grow, especially once the proposed golf course at Bingara Gorge is completed, and this will reduce the average size of households slightly. However, families with children are expected to remain the predominant household type.

Detailed population forecasts have been prepared for the Wilton Junction Master Plan by MacroPlan Dimasi. These have examined the types of households likely to move into the different types of dwellings, based upon population trends in south-west Sydney. Based upon the types and mix of households likely to move to Wilton Junction, MacroPlan Dimasi has forecast an average household size of 2.93 persons.

Given that a redesigned Bingara Gorge project with a reduced average lot size is likely to attract generally the same sorts of households as the balance of Wilton Junction, and for the sake of consistency with planning for Wilton Junction, it is proposed to base population forecasts for Bingara Gorge on an assumed average household size of 2.93 people across the development.

On this basis, a yield of 1,800 dwellings is likely to result in a population of around 5,274 people. This is an increase of 1,774 over the 3,500 originally forecast for the approved 1,165 dwellings.

3 Community facility requirements

3.1 Current VPA

The existing VPA for Bingara Gorge between Lend Lease and Wollondilly Shire Council makes provision for contributions for community facilities as follows:

- **Within Bingara Gorge**
 - **Community function and meeting space**, to include land on which the facilities are provided and building with a minimum gross floor area of 577 sqm, to include multi-purpose floorspace for functions, gatherings and entertainment uses, meeting rooms, office space, storage and amenities – to a total value of **\$1,510,000** (at 2007 prices);
 - **Temporary community floorspace** to be provided in the Sales and Information Centre until such time as the permanent facility is required – no value assumed or stated;
 - Employment of a **Community Development and Cultural Programs Officer** (Community Liaison Officer) for a period of 4 years – to a total value of **\$200,000** (2007 prices);
- Monetary contributions to **facilities off-site** – to a total value of **\$1,900,000** (2007 prices) being for:
 - Contributions towards construction of Central Library; and / or
 - new library resource material; and / or
 - public internet access kiosk and/or
 - mobile library vehicle; and
 - civic administration and customer service centre and/ or works depot.

The VPA sets out the payment schedule for each item, linked to the issuing of Subdivision Certificates for a specified number of residential allotments. For example, the permanent community function and meeting space is required to be provided by issue of the Sub-division Certificate for the 800th residential allotment.

To date, an initial payment of **\$475,000** (plus CPI) has been made for off-site facilities, and the temporary community floorspace and the community development officer have been provided (**\$200,000**).

3.2 Meeting additional needs

3.2.1 Community function and meeting space

In relation to community facilities, increasing the dwelling yield at Bingara Gorge has potential to impact primarily on requirements for community centre floorspace.

In considering how the needs of the additional population will be met, it is important to understand how the existing provision was originally calculated, and whether or not it remains valid, in whole or in part.

It is understood that the requirement for Lend Lease to provide 577 sqm of community centre floorspace was based upon a negotiated agreement. The original proposal was for Lend Lease to provide 400 sqm of floorspace for centre based childcare in the village centre and a further 177 sqm of space for community meetings and functions attached to the proposed country club. The childcare component was based upon Department of Community Centre standards for childcare centres, and the community centre component equated to a standard (origins unknown) of 52 sqm per 1,000 residents.

As the negotiations on the VPA proceeded, it is understood that Council decided it would not operate a childcare centre at Bingara Gorge and so would not require space for a childcare centre. However, it still required space to be provided for activities for families and children (eg playgroups, out of school hours care), and so retained the requirement for the 400 sqm. This was eventually combined with the community centre component to create a requirement for 577 sqm of floorspace for general community activity purposes.

It should be noted that in addition to the proposed Bingara Gorge facility, the existing Wilton village already has its own community centre of around 227 sqm.

A pre-school childcare centre is now open and operating within the Bingara Gorge village centre. The facility caters for c90 places in a childcare centre of around 500 sqm. Although a private sector operation, this centre satisfies the demand for centre based childcare upon which the original assessment of floorspace need in the VPA was based. This means that the required floorspace would be made available purely as function, meeting and activity space, as a typical local community centre.

Given that childcare demand will be met by the private sector, it would seem that the requirement to provide 577 sqm community centre floorspace is, in effect, a considerable overprovision, when compared

with numerical standards and the levels of provision pertaining throughout the rest of the Shire.

Wollondilly Shire Council has recently prepared an Open Space, Recreation and Community Facility Strategy, which proposes a planning hierarchy and benchmarks for community facilities for adoption across the Shire and particularly for application in areas of new development. While not yet adopted formally by Council, the draft Strategy nevertheless gives guidance as to what Council's requirements are likely to be.

The draft Strategy proposes that community centres be planned to meet the needs of growing populations across the Shire on the basis of providing floorspace equivalent to around 80 sqm per 1,000 residents for both local and district level facilities. Typically, this will require about 60sqm/1000 people for local level facilities, and a further 20sqm/1000 people towards district level facilities (although the balance between local and district floorspace may be adjusted according to local circumstances). The provision of both local and district level facilities will provide a network of complementary facilities which together will meet the social and cultural needs of the district. This is consistent with the size and capacity of community centres being provided in other growth areas within south west Sydney.

These standards have been adopted in the planning of community facilities for Wilton Junction, where three local multi-purpose community centres and one district community resource centre is proposed to meet the needs of a forecast population of around 35,000 people. One of the proposed local multi-purpose community centres is the Bingara Gorge facility.

Application of the proposed Council benchmark (60 sqm/1000 for a **local level facility**) to the forecast population of Bingara Gorge indicates the following:

- The population of the already approved 1,165 dwellings would generate a need for only around 210 sqm of community floorspace;
- The forecast population of 5,274 for the proposed 1,800 dwellings would generate a need for 316sqm;
- The 577 sqm floorspace already required under the current VPA would satisfy needs for a population of over 9,600 people (equal to an "over provision" of c44%).

The planning framework contained within the draft Open Space, Recreation and Community Facility Strategy, and applied in the planning of community facilities for Wilton Junction, provides for a further 20

sqm/1000 floorspace to be contributed for district level community facilities.

For Bingara Gorge, the **district level facilities** will be provided off-site, in Wilton Junction town centre (assuming Wilton Junction goes ahead), or in Picton and/or elsewhere (if it does not proceed) as is currently the case (via the \$1.9M cash contribution).

The additional requirement for district facilities equates to 70 sqm for the existing approved population, and 105 sqm for the population forecast for 1,800 dwellings.

Ideally, this allowance should be contributed towards the provision of district level facilities off-site, in order to locate the facility close to other town centre facilities. However, even if it were to be combined with the local level provision, this would require a facility of only 280 sqm for the already approved dwellings, and 421 sqm for the proposed 1,800 dwellings.

Accordingly it is concluded that the community meeting and function space of 577 sqm already agreed to in the current VPA will be more than sufficient to meet demand generated by increased population arising from proposed increase in dwelling yield, and no additional floorspace should be required.

It is understood that the Bingara Gorge Country Club is the preferred location for the provision of accessible floorspace for community activities and meetings.

The existing VPA requirement to provide in excess of the standard applied to planning community facilities for the balance of Wilton Junction raises a number of issues. Most importantly, it will create inequities in relation to the other Wilton Junction landowners, who are planning their facilities on the basis of the benchmarks outlined above. It will also threaten the provision of the district level community resource hub, as it is clearly unreasonable to ask Lend Lease to contribute towards this when it has already more than met its floorspace obligations within Bingara Gorge. At the same time however, contributions from the additional lots proposed for Bingara Gorge have been factored into the apportionment of costs for the proposed district community resource hub in the planning for Wilton Junction.

There would seem to be two options:

Option 1. Proceed with the concept of the country club facilities providing all 577 sqm of the community facilities, and seek a "credit" for the notional over-provision against requirements for off-site provision of facilities in negotiating a VPA covering the proposed additional dwellings. A large community centre at Bingara Gorge may be able to absorb some of the demand from adjoining development,

should the Wilton Junction development proceed, and this should be recognised in future arrangements with Council and adjoining developers (and subject to commercial agreements between the relevant parties).

Option 2. Negotiate with Council to reduce the legal requirement for community centre floorspace to 316 sqm, in line with draft Council benchmarks for local facilities and likely level of provision required of the other Wilton Junction landowners. The public community centre floorspace forms part of the country club facilities, and it would be straightforward to review which parts of the clubhouse facilities should be designated as the public elements, leaving the balance as part of the private clubhouse.

As part of these negotiations, the contribution already made by Lend Lease in respect of off-site facilities (\$275,000 of the \$475,000 [plus CPI]) should be assessed against the likely requirement to contribute towards the provision of 105 sqm of land for district level facilities for the proposed 1,800 dwellings.

3.2.2 Temporary community centre

The temporary community centre is currently being provided in the project office, adjacent to the café, and is well used by residents.

This community centre will continue to be required until the permanent community function and meeting space is formally provided at the Bingara Gorge Country Club. As mentioned previously, the current VPA identifies that the permanent community function and meeting space should be provided by issue of the Sub-division Certificate for the 800th residential allotment. By this stage, Bingara Gorge will have a population of about 2,200 – 2,400 people. This is considered to be a large enough population to have outgrown a temporary facility, and to warrant a permanent facility.

Lend Lease is proposing to provide the permanent community facility in advance of the VPA requirements. As mentioned above, the permanent community facility will be provided within the Country Club. It is anticipated that the facility will be formally announced as available for community use during 2015.

Accordingly no change to the current VPA in terms of the temporary community facility or timing of the permanent facility is required.

3.2.3 Community development worker

The VPA required that the community development worker (Community Liaison Officer) be employed from the issue of the Sub-division Certificate for the first residential allotment, for a period of four years.

The community development worker has been employed on an on-going part-time basis since mid-2006 (ie seven years), and accordingly the VPA requirement has already been satisfied in full.

The requirement to fund a community development worker was not linked to the approved number of dwellings. Rather it recognised that there would be a need to provide information to new residents, particularly in relation to the Community Association, and to provide activities and initiatives to stimulate the development of social networks and community identity. This has occurred and the foundations for the development of community activities and networks have now been established.

The fact that Lend Lease chose to continue to employ a community development worker (Community Liaison Officer) at Bingara Gorge until 2013 appears to have been a commercial decision on their part, but might appropriately be recognised in any VPA negotiations with the Council.

The need for a community development worker will diminish as Lend Lease has now employed "Club Links" to manage and administer the Bingara Gorge Community Association and its facilities, including the Country Club.

Notwithstanding, Lend Lease has made a commitment to assess with Council the impact of the community development worker in helping to achieve the original objectives identified in the VPA. That assessment has been approved by Lend Lease pending a positive response by Council to the proposal to expand the Bingara Gorge project to 1800 dwellings.

3.2.4 Childcare

In terms of additional requirements for childcare in response to the additional dwellings proposed, there is likely to be some additional demand. However this does not need to be quantified now, as childcare will continue to be provided by commercial / not-for-profit organisations according to their own commercial feasibility assessments. It is likely that additional demand could be met by expanding the number of places at the proposed centre, rather than building additional centres. The need for additional childcare provision will also depend upon the type of childcare required as families move in to the development ie pre-school for 3-5 year olds or long daycare for 0-5 year olds. For these reasons, childcare is generally provided once precise demand can be established.

3.2.5 Library

As noted previously, the original VPA has required contributions to be made towards off-site facilities, primarily towards library facilities and resources in

Picton. To date an initial payment of \$475,000 (plus CPI) has been made, comprising the following relevant items:

- Public internet access - **\$1,152**
- New library resource material - \$ not stated
- Provision of Central Library - **\$198,848**

The proposed development of Wilton Junction will generate a population of sufficient size to warrant a new district library in Wilton Junction. As a result, Council is likely to require Lend Lease to make financial contributions towards this facility for the additional 635 lots, apportioning costs in proportion to the total catchment population and having taken account of the above contribution of \$200,000 (plus CPI) already made by Lend Lease in respect of library facilities.

3.3 The primary school

In addition to the provisions of the local VPA, Bingara Gorge contains a primary school provided by the NSW Department of Education and Communities (DEC). The land, valued in 2005 at about \$6million, was provided to the State Government **at no cost**.

The new Wilton (Bingara Gorge) Primary School has been built to serve Bingara Gorge and the existing Wilton township and surrounding area. The school opened in Term 2, 2011. With a current enrolment of about 285 students, and accommodation comprising six permanent classrooms and eight demountables, it is now at capacity.

However, the school has potential to expand its capacity as the population of the area grows. There are already plans for it to grow: In 2014, the DEC announced that the Wilton (Bingara Gorge) Primary School would be subject to a significant expansion, comprising 10 new classrooms. The tender documentation for the expansion was released on 31 March 2015 with development expected to start later in 2015.

The site is relatively large (3ha), and would provide capacity for the school to expand even further to a Core 21 school (21 classrooms) if warranted.

The Department of Education and Communities has a standard of one public primary school per 2,000 to 2,500 dwellings in areas of new residential development. However, this standard is used as a guideline only, and does not reflect a school's finite capacity.

In the 2011 census, the Wilton locality contained about 650 dwellings and these need to be factored into the catchment area for Wilton Public School. When combined with the proposed 1,800 dwellings for Bingara Gorge, the total catchment, at 2,450 dwellings, is still within the DEC guidelines as only needing one primary school.

In addition, the 654 existing dwellings include those from rural residential areas in a wide catchment around Wilton. If the development of Wilton Junction proceeds, another 3 primary schools may be required for Wilton Junction. These schools will have capacity to absorb some of the students from the broader Wilton area, and any overflow from the Bingara Gorge school.

The key issue with regard to the primary school is the timing of its expansion from six to fourteen classrooms, and then to 21 classrooms. This is dependent upon the DEC receiving the necessary budget allocations through State Treasury processes. Enrolments at the school are currently running well ahead of forecasts, culminating in the decision in 2014 by DEC to bring forward its planned expansion of the school.

4 Open space requirements

4.1 Current VPA and DCP requirements

The existing Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) for the public open space at Bingara Gorge for the already approved 1,165 lots proposes nine reserves totalling 10.92 ha in area – to a total value of **\$10,610,000**. This includes both the value of the land and its embellishment and comprises:

- eight Level 2 parks (local and neighbourhood)
- one Level 1 park (district level), comprising 2.8 ha off the Bingara Gorge site within the Wilton Recreation Reserve, which was to undergo further embellishment to create additional winter sports fields and sports courts. The overall area of Wilton Recreation Reserve is 8.8 ha.

The development also includes the following:

- A golf course (at about 87 hectares) and
- Extensive areas of bushland (at about 113 hectares).

In addition, payments - to a total value of **\$240,000** were required towards the completion of the Shire-wide Wollondilly Community Leisure Centre. To date, an initial payment of **\$60,000** (plus CPI) has been made for these off-site facilities.

Section 3.12.12 of the Wollondilly DCP 2011 (Volume 7 - Site Specific Controls, Bingara Gorge) requires a minimum of 2.83 ha of publicly accessible parkland per 1000 persons. The DCP provides no definition of the preferred split between passive and active open space, although the existing masterplan shows a split of 25% Active, and 75% Passive.

Section 3.12.4 of the DCP requires “parkland to be distributed within precincts such that the area of parkland is proportional to the density of residential development”, placing the requirement on the developer to ensure that larger areas of open space are located in more densely populated precincts.

These numerical requirements are relatively simplistic, to ensure a minimum threshold is met. They do not take into account the facilities and level of embellishment of open spaces.

Based solely on these simple numerical standards, the baseline provision requirements of open space

on a 2.83 ha/1000 persons standard under the VPA and DCP resulted in the need for approximately 9.905 ha of open space for a population of 3,500 persons.

Lend Lease’s approved masterplan for 1,165 dwellings identifies 10.92 Ha of open space and so this more than meets the requirements in total from a numerical standards basis.

4.2 The quantum of open space

As open space planning for the existing approved dwellings has been based upon population based standards, increasing the population at Bingara Gorge could be expected to increase requirements for open space proportionately.

Based upon the standard of 2.83 ha/1000 persons, a forecast population of 5,274 people (1,800 lots) would generate a need for 14.925 ha. This is 4 ha more than provided for the 1,165 dwellings under the VPA.

However, consistent with contemporary practice, it is understood that Council is moving away from a fixed benchmark approach to open space planning based on the traditional standard of 2.83ha/1000. This reflects a recognition that the particular opportunities and constraints of each site will influence open space requirements, and that the quality of open space is as important as the quantity in ensuring that the sporting and recreation needs of the population may be met. It also recognises the high capital and operational costs in providing excessive levels of open space, and implications of resultant high contribution rates for housing affordability.

For Bingara Gorge, Lend Lease supports this more flexible approach, on the grounds that:

- Bingara Gorge contains very considerable areas of open space in the form of bushland and the golf course. While it is recognised that these cannot be formally counted towards the provision of public open space, in practice they nevertheless present significant opportunities for informal recreation, particularly for bush walking and enjoyment of the natural environment (using the shared bushfire trail pathways) and walking on parts of the golf course when it is not in use for golfing. These recreational opportunities should be factored into the overall open space plan for Bingara Gorge.
- Lend Lease has a solid commitment to the provision of quality embellishments in its provision of open space, as evidenced by the parks and playgrounds provided to date at Bingara Gorge and in its other development projects. Embellishments have generally been provided at a level in excess of the base levels required in the existing VPA. This commitment to quality will

continue throughout the remainder of the development.

Bingara Gorge has the land available to meet a baseline requirement of 2.83 ha/1000 for open space provision, should Council require this. However, in recognition of the issues outlined above, a lower baseline rate of 2.5 ha/1000 is proposed. This is in line with the broader context of open space planning currently under investigation for Wilton Junction. Based on this lower standard, a population of 5,274 people would require a minimum of 13.18 ha.

The development application for the 1,800 lots makes provision for 13.58ha of land for open space. This includes:

- 10ha for the nine parks identified in the original VPA
- A further 3.58ha spread among ten new parks distributed throughout the development. These range in size from 0.26 ha to 0.5 ha.

In addition, a further area of 5.38 ha has been identified as supplementary open space, comprising five parks of predominantly linear open space. When these are included in the calculations, the total quantum of open space to be provided at Bingara Gorge totals 18.96 ha.

It is clear that Bingara Gorge will easily meet the minimum requirements of open space for the proposed 1,800 lots that is required to satisfy the proposed standard of 2.5ha/1000.

4.3 Active and passive open space

None of the new parks will provide specific formalised and structured sports facilities, and the only / main sportsground provided by Bingara Gorge remains:

- the private 18 hole Golf Course and associated Driving Range across over 85Ha of land; plus
- the contribution towards the Wilton Recreation Reserve (aka Wilton Oval) identified in the original VPA.

The current active open space provision on Wilton Recreation Reserve is considered to be a satisfactory outcome for the following reasons:

- The current Wilton Recreation Reserve is significantly underutilised with the playing field be used anecdotally on average 2-3 times per summer, and 8-9 times per winter.
- The existing Wilton Recreation Reserve is highly accessible to Bingara Gorge residents with the existing and draft masterplan demonstrating connectivity through an integrated cycleway and

pedestrian path network, and new proposed link road. This will ensure that all future residents of Bingara Gorge will be within a 5 minute drive or 20 minute walk of the reserve.

- It is in keeping with current best practice in sports provision, which suggests that formal sports fields should be provided only at a district level (Level 1) or higher (eg regional), in order to cluster facilities for competition purposes, promote accessibility and create efficiencies in infrastructure and management, rather than spreading single facilities in local open space throughout residential areas.
- It recognises that a cluster of district sporting facilities is proposed to be located adjacent to the Wilton Junction town centre. This is likely to comprise a district sports park of around 10 ha, to include a number of sporting fields for different sporting codes and both outdoor and indoor sports courts.
- Local open space can be activated to complement formalised sporting facilities, with informal recreational facilities such as half basketball courts, tennis courts and kickabout areas.
- In particular it recognises that several of the larger parks included in both the current VPA and the new master plan are large enough (greater than 0.5 ha) to cater for informal sport / training without any significant additional infrastructure, such that the space can be used for both active and passive recreation. These can make use of mobile goal posts and boundary markers being brought onto site only when needed, and also provide for informal sports areas by way of kickabout areas.

4.4 Implications of Wilton Junction

The requirements outlined in Section 4.2 above have been based upon Bingara Gorge being regarded as a self-contained development, where all the required open space is provided within the development (or in the case of the Wilton Recreation Reserve, on land that is immediately adjoining Bingara Gorge).

However, it is understood that planning for Wilton Junction has considered open space requirements across the Wilton Junction sites and the draft Section 94 Plan for Wilton Junction will apportion costs for its acquisition and embellishment across all the proposed development areas. The open space plan for Wilton Junction and arrangements for cost sharing are still being finalised. However, the preliminary open space plan makes provision for a district sports park of around 10 ha near the town centre, as noted above.

It is likely that Lend Lease would be required to contribute towards the cost of the district sports park. For the sake of equity with the other landowners, this should be viewed as a part of the provision of open space to be made by Lend Lease, and not in addition to this.

Accordingly, if Lend Lease is required to contribute towards the provision of the district sports park, requirements for the local open space (quantum and embellishment) to be provided within Bingara Gorge should be reduced proportionately. The extent of this potential reduction has not been calculated for this report. This will require careful examination of the draft open space plan and Section 94 costings for Wilton Junction to determine the appropriate level of provision.

Should Council determine that open space planning for Wilton Junction be determined according to a different baseline than that proposed in this report (ie 2.5ha/1000), then Lend Lease will consider the implications of amending the Bingara Gorge project accordingly.

Further, to avoid issues of inequity between Bingara Gorge and Wilton Junction, Council will need to take account of the contribution of \$60,000 (plus CPI) already made by Lend Lease in respect of the off-site Leisure Centre.

4.5 Embellishment of open space

Proposed levels of embellishment and associated costings have been documented in the current VPA for the areas of open space already proposed – to a total value of \$10.61M. This information would be revised and extended to cover the new parks in a new VPA for the additional lots.

Proposed embellishments across the parks are likely to include the following:

- Playgrounds,
- Barbecue and picnic facilities,
- Shelters, shade and seating,
- Walking and cycling paths and circuits,
- Lighting, irrigation and landscaping.

In keeping with Lend Lease's usual practice and the nature of Bingara Gorge as a Community Title estate, levels of embellishment will, in practice, generally exceed Council's minimum requirements. This will ensure that Council objectives for both quantity and quality of open space are met.

Notwithstanding, the VPA Amendment should be updated to reflect an agreed position between

Council's current standard costs and Lend Lease's actual expenditure to date, in respect of the relevant Value of Works.

4.6 Timing and delivery

The existing VPA outlines timing for the delivery of the various open spaces at Bingara Gorge. This relates to the issuing of subdivision certificates for various thresholds of the development. It is best practice and recommended instead that local open space development be linked to the registration of adjoining lots – usually within 12 months of registration. This will ensure that the park is established when the first residents are moving into the estate.

Local parks should be developed in order that the first occupants in any given precinct have immediate access to reserves. Timing of embellishments of major recreational facilities should be triggered as the population increases to avoid vandalism which is often common when limited populations exist in new communities. Typically this involves establishing and agreeing occupancy levels, triggers and thresholds.

For the proposed embellishment of Wilton Recreational Reserve, this may involve a staged approach, in line with the proposed increase in population, and be appropriately reflected in the delivery model, be it either a cash contribution (earlier), or works-in-kind by the developer requiring development consent, and eventual construction (later).

4.7 Meeting best practice principles

In addition to satisfying Council requirements with regard to the quantum of open space to be provided, the open space plan for the additional lots will meet best practice principles for open space planning in the following ways.

4.7.1 Equitable Distribution of Open Space

International best practice suggests that a maximum walking distance of 400-500 metres (or a 10 minute walk) from any residential property to a park as optimum in urban or semi urban areas.

The distribution of open space proposed in the masterplan will place nearly all residents within 400 metres from local open space, and all residents will be within around 500 metres. In addition to areas of designated open space, all residents will enjoy ready access to other areas of open space for walking and visual enjoyment, including the 87ha of golf course and c112ha of designated environmental bushland.

4.7.2 A Network of Local Open Space

The masterplan proposes an extensive network of off-road paths, shared paths, cycle ways, bush paths

and fire trails. All of these paths are recreation facilities in their own right and they also make access to public open space convenient, easy and safe.

Typically, barriers to open space include major road crossings, streets with heavy traffic and steep terrain. These factors in effect extend the theoretical 400metre/10 minute walking catchment and act as barriers in the open space network. Bingara Gorge is not a highly urbanised development and as the steepest terrain of the gorges does not form part of the open space requirements, the issue of terrain is not a major barrier factor in this regard.

4.7.3 Open Space Corridors

Wherever possible connections and corridors linking the discrete open space areas should be achieved. Corridors have been accommodated where possible in some of the following ways:

- Co-located with flood and WSUD infrastructure (overland flow, detention basins swales etc)
- Along bushland corridors
- Co-located with infrastructure easements where feasible
- Integrated into residential streets with specific design controls providing street tree planting, dwelling address and garden design, WSUD features etc.

4.7.4 Providing a variety of recreation opportunities

The local and neighbourhood open spaces detailed in the existing and proposed masterplans provide a range and variety of recreation opportunity for future residents. Features such as shade and shelter, BBQs, seating, lighting and pathways accommodate most of the basic needs a community might have, while an amphitheatre, viewing towers, outdoor stage and lakes extend recreation opportunities well beyond meeting basic needs.

5 Conclusion

This report has considered the community facilities and open space required to meet demand generated by an additional 635 dwellings at Bingara Gorge (making a total yield of 1,800 dwellings). The key findings with regard to community facilities are:

- Approval of a total of 1,800 dwellings is likely to result in a population of around 5,274 people living in Bingara Gorge. This is 1,774 more people than forecast under current approvals (based upon a maximum of 1,165 dwellings).
- The community meeting and function space of 577 sqm already agreed to in the current VPA will be more than sufficient to meet demand generated by the additional dwellings and no additional floorspace is required to service the proposed increase in population.
- Indeed, the agreed 577 sqm represents a significant over-provision when considered against the numerical standard of 60 sqm / 1000 persons contained within the draft Wollondilly Open Space, Recreation and Community Facilities Plan. This suggests a need for only 316 sqm of local community floorspace for a population of 5,274 people.
- In addition, contributions equivalent to 105 qm may be required towards the district community resource centre proposed for Wilton Junction town centre. However, any calculation should take account of the cash contributions towards off-site district community facilities already made by Lend Lease.
- Contributions may also be required towards a district library proposed for the Wilton Junction town centre. However, any calculation should take account of the cash contributions towards library facilities already made by Lend Lease.
- Existing VPA requirements to provide a temporary community centre and a community development worker have been satisfied and are not affected by the increased dwelling yield.
- Childcare provision can be expanded by commercial providers as demand warrants and no additional provision should be required from Lend Lease.
- The Wilton Primary School will need to be expanded to meet forecast demand. The current site is large enough to accommodate this

expansion. The announcement of the additional 10 classrooms at Bingara Gorge will meet the demand created by an expanded Bingara Gorge development at 1800 dwellings.

In terms of open space provision, key findings include:

- Recognising the limitations of a purely standards-based approach to open space planning, the approach proposed for Bingara Gorge recognises the particular recreational opportunities provided by the extensive areas of bushland, trail network and golf course, and the need to focus on quality of embellishments as well as quantum of land in open space planning.
- The proposed new Masterplan and associated DA for a revised total of 1,800 dwellings proposes a network of 19 parks totalling 13.58 ha. This is slightly in excess of a proposed target of 2.5 ha/1000.
- The provision of active open space will continue to focus on the Bingara Gorge Golf Course and the Wilton Recreation Reserve (aka Wilton Oval) and this is considered to be a satisfactory outcome for the proposed development.
- While open space planning for Wilton Junction has not been finalised, it is likely that Lend Lease may also be required to contribute towards the provision of a district sports park at Wilton Junction town centre. Any calculation should take account of the cash contributions already made by Lend Lease towards off-site recreational facilities and district open space.
- The proposed open space will, in all likelihood, be embellished to a standard that exceeds Council's minimum requirements, as historically has been the case. In this way, Council objectives for both quantity and quality of open space will not only be met but will also be exceeded.
- The proposed open space will also meet best practice principles in terms of providing equitable access, a network of local open space, open space corridors and a variety of recreation outcomes.

The assessment has occurred within the context of planning for Wilton Junction and the requirements for community facilities and open space that have been identified for Wilton Junction as a whole. This has raised some critical issues of equity with regard to levels of provision likely to be sought from the other Wilton Junction landowners. Key issues include:

- The notional over-provision of community facility floorspace contained within the current VPA for

Bingara Gorge, relative to levels of provision proposed for the other areas.

- The need to reduce the level of provision of local open space proposed within Bingara Gorge in recognition that contributions will also be sought towards district level sporting facilities in Wilton Junction town centre.

An approach to dealing with these issues will need to be resolved as the new masterplan is finalised and the related development application is assessed and determined. The proposed VPA Amendment is considered to be a suitable mechanism to document a formal agreement on the level and timing of agreed provision.