

To: Edward Sundstrum – Vermont Street Partners Limited.
From: Alicia Lawrie, Associate Urban Designer – Barker & Associates Limited
Date: 28 August 2025
Re: Brookvale Green – Urban Design Memorandum for Fast Track Consenting Referral Application

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Project Background and Description

Vermont Street Partners has engaged Barker & Associates Ltd (B&A) to provide urban design services for the master planning, consenting and design of *Brookvale Green*. The site is located at 174 & 176 Brookvale Road approximately 3.5km to the east of Havelock North’s village centre in the Hawkes Bay. It comprises of a total area of 23.99 hectares on the eastern edge of Havelock North’s urban residential boundary. *Brookvale Green* provides a unique opportunity to deliver a comprehensive residential community comprising of 189 – 215 new homes within a well-connected, high-quality and distinctive living environment.



Figure 1: Brookvale Green proposed development.

By integrating the existing streams as a natural edge, the proposal establishes a defined rural–urban boundary and enhances the site’s ecological values. A defining characteristic of the site is the two stream corridors, one meandering through the centre and the other forming the northern boundary. These features are central to the design approach, providing a strong landscape framework that has shaped the layout of streets, lots, and open spaces. The streams contribute to the site’s visual amenity, support ecological values, and provide opportunities for walking, cycling, and passive recreation. Their integration into the development ensures a strong connection to the site’s natural character, while the northern stream establishes a soft green edge that reinforces the relationship with the wider rural landscape.

The residential community of *Brookvale Green* is guided by a series of design principles focused on delivering a liveable, connected and green environment, with enhanced public spaces and diverse housing options. The development is structured around a central loop road that extends from Brookvale Road and runs through the heart of the site. This loop is supported by local streets and pedestrian and cycle connections to enable a legible grid structure. A variety of housing typologies and densities are proposed to meet the evolving and growing needs of the housing market, ensuring choice and flexibility for future residents. Together, these elements will support the creation of a diverse, visually interesting neighbourhood with a strong sense of place.

This memo should be read in conjunction with [Appendix 2 – Brookvale Green Masterplan](#) prepared by Barker & Associates August 2025, and provided as a separate appendix to the application.

1.2 Statement of Qualifications and Experience

Alicia Lawrie

I am an Associate Urban Designer at Barker & Associates (B&A). B&A is a planning, urban design and landscape consultancy with offices located around New Zealand. I have been employed by B&A since January 2022, and am based in the Wellington office.

I hold a Masters of Architecture (Professional) and a Bachelor of Architectural Studies from Victoria University of Wellington. I am an associate member of the New Zealand Planning Institute. I have approximately 9 years’ experience working in the field of urban design in the public and private sectors.

I have a broad range of experience working on behalf of clients including land developers, commercial entities and Councils in Northland and around New Zealand. This has involved urban design assessments to support resource consent applications, urban design peer reviews, the development of urban design guidelines, strategic planning and master planning.

2.0 Site & Context Analysis

2.1 Site Context

The *Brookvale Green* site has a total combined area of approximately 23.99ha and is made up of five titles, Lot 2 DP 7771 & Lot 2 DP 529421 (174 Brookvale Road), Lot 1-2 DP 16311 (176 Brookvale Road), Lot 1 DP 529421, Lot 16 DP 3449 and Lot 3-4 DP 481968. It is situated to the south of Brookvale Road at the eastern fringe of Havelock North’s existing urban area.

The site has an irregular shape primarily due to the stream located along the sites northern most boundary, as well as the existing landownership patterns to the east and south. The site is wider to the east, tapering to the north-west to form a narrower frontage where it adjoins Brookvale Road. Existing access is provided to the site from Brookvale Road, where it contains a recently upgraded, sealed legal accessway, approximately 10m wide. A secondary legal accessway is located along the sites western most boundary. Lot 1 DP 529421 is located within the site boundary while, Lot 2 DP 28543 is located outside the site. Both parcels are owned by Hastings District Council (HDC), and provides additional informal access to the site from Brookvale Road. Lot 3-4 DP 481968 are also owned by HDC and currently contain an open space reserve.

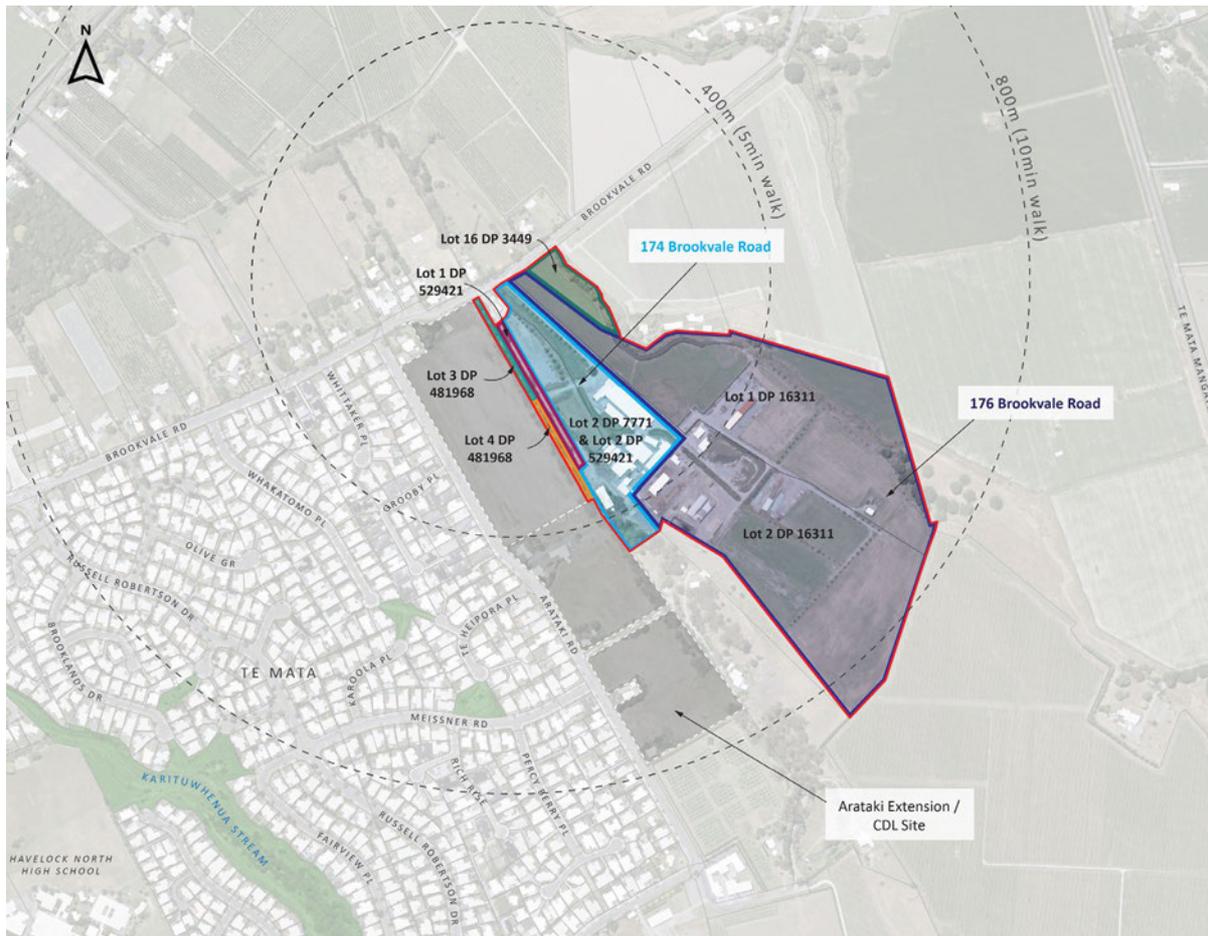


Figure 2: The proposal site at 174 & 176 Brookvale Road and the associated titles.

As noted, two streams traverse through the site, one to the north (referred to as Stream B) and one through the sites centre (referred to as Stream A) before they converge and drain into Karamu Stream located beyond the site, to the north west of Brookvale Road. The site has significant contours along its western boundary, which rises approximately 14m. The remainder of the site is generally flat with a gentle fall towards the sites northern most stream.

The site is known as Te Mata Mushroom site due to its former use for mushroom growing, production and composting operations, which were ceased in 2022. Te Mata Mushroom Factory was located in the southwestern portion of the subject site and was initially established in 1967 when the site was previously surrounded by pastoral land uses. The facilities on the subject site were progressively developed over the following five decades as production levels grew.

The site contains approximately 8,800m² of existing buildings in the form of disuse spawning and picking sheds, warehousing, packhouses, compost bunkers, implement shedding, office space and staff amenities. Approximately 13,300m² of yard space including storage, vehicle manoeuvring, loading, parking and compost making areas are also located throughout the site in support of the previous activities.

2.2 Local context and surrounding land uses

The *Brookvale Green* site is located on the north-eastern periphery of the Havelock North's urban edge. As noted above, it is positioned approximately 3.5km from the centre of Havelock North's village which contains a range of commercial, retail and community amenities including supermarkets, medical centres and churches.

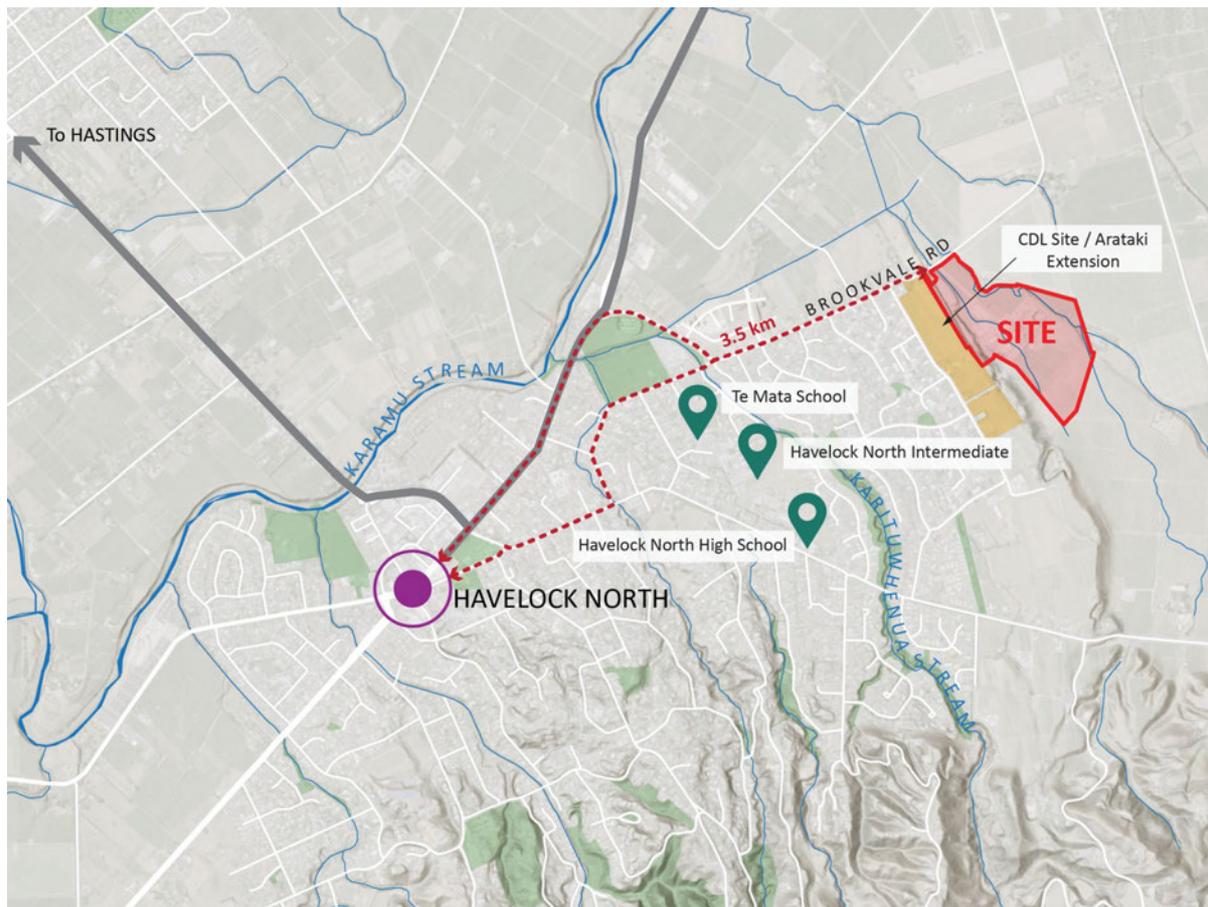


Figure 3: The proposal site is located approximately 3.5km from Havelock North Village Centre.

Nearby community amenities in the surrounding suburb of Te Mata include schools such as Te Mata School, Havelock North Intermediate and Havelock North High School and a network of green spaces and walkways adjoining Karitūwhenua Stream, to support future residential growth on the Site.

The site is predominantly surrounded by rural and rural residential land to the north, south and east. The adjoining rural land ranges in size from 7.6ha – 60ha and are primarily made up of open, flat paddocks, vineyards and agricultural land, accessible from Brookvale Road and Te Mata Mangatere Road. While the land directly adjoining the Site is zoned Plains Production, laned zoned Te Mata Special Character Area is located further to the south of the site along Te Mata Road.

The adjoining properties to the south west range from 0.9ha – 5.2ha and contain rural residential activities and commercial businesses (Shaggy Range). Directly to the west, the site adjoins the Arataki Extension site (or CDL site) which is situated between the subject site and existing urban edge of Havelock North at Arataki Road (approximately 150m from the site). The Arataki Extension site is a fast-track listed project which proposed to develop approximately 150 to 200 residential allotments on an 11-hectare site. The CDL site has also been included in the Napier Hastings Future Development Strategy (August 2025) as a greenfield development site/new residential area.

A portion of the site's western edge contains a council reserve which runs parallel to the site boundary along the embankment and contains a stand of mature gum trees.

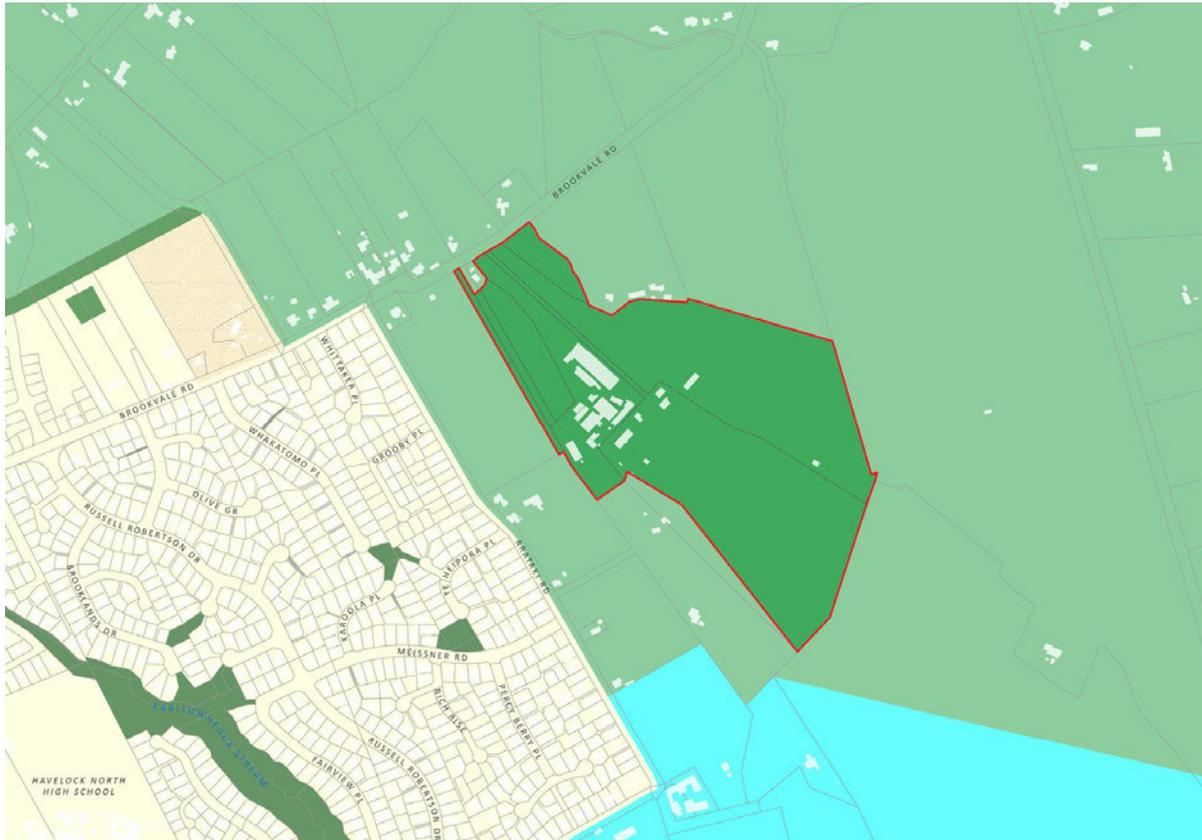


Figure 4: Figure showing the site and the surrounding land uses within the Operative Hastings District Plan. The site and the direct surrounds are zoned Plains Production (green). The residential area to the west is zoned General Residential (yellow), and Te Mata Special Character Area (blue) is located to the south of the site.

3.0 Urban Design Opportunities and Constraints

As part of the Urban Design Assessment accompanying this Fast-Track Consent Referral Application, the high-level urban design opportunities and constraints that the site presents to development have been identified to assist in the preliminary urban design assessment. These include:

- Steep topography along the western boundary due to the Te Mata Peak ridgeline. This creates separation from the adjoining sites to the west, connectivity/access, and building platform and site design constraints for proposed lots;

- Irregular geometry created by the landholdings which can impact the subsequent street and block network. Opportunities for future connections through adjoining sites to be considered to support an integrated and connected environment;
- The two streams which traverse through the site are recommended to have buffers of 10-20m. These buffers significantly reduce developable areas and create a constraint for continuous vehicular and pedestrian access and potentially influences to the overall connectivity of the site. However, they also present opportunities for open space provision, ecological restoration, stormwater management, passive recreation and visual amenity. This can support public amenity and enhanced ecological values, connectivity, and recreational outcomes.
- Current access from Brookvale Road and the wider roading network is limited, restricting vehicular entry and creating potential congestion points. Additional access points to Arataki Road via the neighbouring CDL site is being considered as a potential future opportunity. This connection is dependent on discussions with private landowners.
- New stormwater management features/ponds and wetland are proposed but will require detailed hydrological and engineering assessments to confirm their location, size and efficiency.
- The proposed housing typologies and densities are based on preliminary yield assumptions, recognising that exact numbers may vary following detailed site investigations and design stages.
- The provision of residential development to provide a range of housing choices through varying, sizes, arrangements and densities. The proposed residential precinct will create approximately 215 - 189 lots, which range from 250 – 800m² across the Site. A variety of housing typologies will help to support a diverse neighbourhood by catering to a range of people, while also contributing to the visual interest across the development.

4.0 Urban Design Assessment

4.1 Potential Urban Design Effects

The following section outlines the potential urban design effects associated with the proposal, recognising that these may vary in scale and significance depending on more detail design investigations and expert input. These potential effects have been identified to inform consideration of appropriate mitigation measures and urban design recommendation in the subsequent sections:

- The proposal introduces a low- to medium-density residential development (including future typologies such as terrace houses) within a rural context. This is expected to create visual changes to the existing environment and could potentially result in adverse visual and amenity effects to the adjacent rural areas to the north, east and south of the site.
- The sites irregular shape and the existing natural features onsite could result in a less legible and well-connected street and block arrangement, and may prevent the orientation of some lots from maximising sunlight access. Stream A also bisects the site, limiting continuous vehicular and pedestrian access and potentially effecting connectivity within the site.
- The narrow frontage to Brookvale Road along the site's northwestern boundary limits opportunities for more than one vehicle access point from this location, and restricts the potential for future dwellings to visually connect with and enhance the street environment. This, along with the site's irregular shape

and topographical constraints, creates a potential barrier to the effective integration of the development into the existing movement network, limiting site accessibility.

- The steeper contours along the western boundary of the site present challenges for residential development in this area, potentially affecting building platforms, residential amenity, street layouts, and both vehicular and active transport access. As the contours slope down to the northeast, potential shading effects on future dwellings at the base of the slope are likely to be limited.
- The introduction of residential development near existing rural land could give rise to reverse sensitivity effects, where noise, odour, privacy, and other typical rural production activities could adversely affect the amenity of new residents.
- The relationship between residential dwellings, proposed open spaces, and the street network may present potential safety risks and amenity effects which, if not addressed through careful design, could result in isolated areas or poor CPTED outcomes.

4.2 Potential Mitigation

The conceptual masterplan developed as part of the referral application aims to incorporate some measures and design approaches to mitigate the above potential urban design effects. These will also be further explored as part of the masterplan refinement and the development of an urban design assessment. Mitigation measures include:

- Distribution of density strategically across the site, with smaller, with more intensive lots (250m²) located centrally within the site to internalise effects. Position larger lots (800m²) on the outer edges of the site and at rural boundaries.
- Provision of appropriate buffers areas, vegetated screens and setbacks to rural edges to reduce potential visual and amenity effects between rural and residential land. The northern stream will form a natural edge to the site's northernmost boundary, creating a buffer between residential development and adjoining rural land. Proposed ecological enhancements will also provide opportunities for visual amenity, outlook from adjoining dwellings and passive recreation.
- Development of a set of design controls and urban design guidelines to help manage the bulk, scale, form and quality of the future dwellings. These guidelines should ensure good on-site amenity, support sensitive integration into the surrounding environment, and minimise potential visual dominance and privacy effects.
- Provision of appropriately designed bridge structures, culverts and pathways across Stream A in key locations, to enhance pedestrian, cycling and vehicular connectivity, and provide for greater permeability and accessibility between the two sections of the proposal.
- Development of the street network as a semi-regular grid at the centre of a proposed loop road to provide access to the site from Brookvale Road. This will provide a more legible street network and increase the number of regular shaped blocks and lots proposed on site, limiting rear lots and right of ways within the proposal.
- Provision of larger lots on the western edge of the site to allow appropriate integration of the site contours and limit the need for extensive earthworks and retaining. Bespoke housing layouts and engineered design solutions will be explored with respect to these site constraints and limit potential privacy and on-site amenity effects.

- Potential vehicular, and or pedestrian and cycle connection to adjoining private land (CDL / Arataki Extension site) to be explored as a potential opportunity through discussions with adjacent landowners. This will increase connectivity between future residents and provide for access to amenities and services within the wider Havelock North.
- Encourage lots to be orientated to directly face the proposed street network. Ecological features and open spaces of site will be adjoined for the majority of their length by public street edges, maximising visual amenity, connectivity and access and resulting in a heightened sense of activation and passive surveillance.
- The landscape, lighting and architectural responses will provide a design quality that will mitigate visual and amenity effects and provide good connectivity outcomes across the proposed development. The design of public spaces, pedestrian accessways and their interfaces with residential lot boundaries will follow CPTED principles, ensuring clear sightlines, appropriate lighting, active frontages, and surveillance from adjacent buildings and public areas.

5.0 Response to Council Feedback

The following section provides an interim response to HDC feedback. This will be further discussed and refined before lodgement of the future substantive application.

5.1 Lot sizes and variation

- Within the concept masterplan, the smaller 250m² lots are located at the northern edge of the central blocks. They are positioned and oriented to overlook the stream and open spaces, creating a positive interface and enhancing amenity. Their placement approximately 60m from the northern boundary provides an appropriate separation from the adjoining productive rural land, achieving a balanced outcome that supports variety, amenity, and adequate buffering and separation.
- Lots have been arranged to locate smaller lots centrally within the site, internalising their effects, while larger lots are positioned along the outer edges and rural boundaries. This provides a clear rationale for variation and distribution, balancing site constraints, integration with the surrounding environment, and the creation of a coherent neighbourhood structure. While lot sizes have been deliberately arranged to achieve these outcomes, there may be opportunities to further diversify the mix of lot sizes across the development.

5.2 Play node provision

- The open space corridors alongside the streams to the north and at the centre of the site provide suitable locations for future informal recreational opportunities (such as play nodes), further supporting community use and activation of these spaces.

6.0 Preliminary Recommendations and Conclusion

Having undertaken a high-level urban design assessment, it is considered that the *Brookvale Green* development can be supported from an urban design perspective, subject to the recommendations outlined below:

- Undertake further technical assessments to ensure infrastructure, ecological, transport, geotechnical and topographical considerations are coordinated with urban design outcomes.
- Proposed development controls should allow for residential dwellings with a massing that can appropriately respond to the surrounding private and public realm, and achieve an appropriate degree of residential amenity. Matters to be considered include overshadowing, outlook, passive surveillance, space functionality, solar orientation, privacy and indoor-outdoor connections.
- Develop a comprehensive design guide to ensure high-quality architectural and landscape design outcomes. The design guide should at the minimum include the consideration of visual massing, scale, façade, fencing and landscaping, and design responses to the frontages and streetscape interfaces. The design guide is to ensure that quality urban design and landscape outcomes are maintained during the development and lifetime of the subdivision.
- Further explore opportunities to diversify lot sizes and housing typology variation across the development as the design progresses, while recognising the clear rationale behind the current distribution which responds to site constraints, integration with the surrounding environment, and the creation of a coherent neighbourhood structure.
- Explore opportunities to integrate additional open space, informal recreation and play node provision along the stream corridor, recognising that the recommended 10–20m stream buffers can support a range of outcomes including ecological restoration, stormwater management, passive recreation, visual amenity, and enhanced connectivity.

In conclusion, it is considered that the *Brookvale Green* proposal represents an appropriate urban design response to the opportunities and constraints of the Site. The proposal demonstrates the potential to achieve a high degree of on-site and neighbourhood amenity. With the design considerations and above recommendations in place, the development can achieve a built form that positively contributes to the attractiveness and safety of the public realm and suitably manage potential adverse effects on the wider environment and adjoining neighbours.

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