



Mr Tony McCabe  
Director  
Create Infrastructure NSW  
52 Martin Place,  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

<b>Your Reference</b>	Your Reference
<b>Our Reference</b>	Our Reference
<b>Contact</b>	Kelly van der Zanden
<b>Telephone</b>	02 9806 5521
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:kvanderzanden@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au">kvanderzanden@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au</a>

## Date

Dear Mr McCabe,

### Re: Willow Grove Relocation

In response to Create Infrastructure NSW's (**Create**) process to identify potential future site for a relocated Willow Grove, the City of Parramatta Council (**Council**) wishes to provide the following feedback for consideration. Council acknowledges Create's recent informal engagement survey conducted 16 August-13 September 2022, seeking community feedback on the shortlisted sites:

- Site 1 – North Parramatta (within the Cumberland Hospital site)
- Site 2 – Lake Parramatta Reserve
- Site 3 – Robin Thomas Reserve

Council supports investment in the cultural and social infrastructure of the City for the needs of residents and workers. Council is encouraged by Create's consideration of the City of Parramatta's Social Outcomes Framework Plan and the EOI process to identify a future community use for Willow Grove informed by community needs research and stakeholder and community consultation. However, Council emphasises the importance of contemplating the site location with its future use, and in this regard, encourages further iterative work noting that the interdependencies should inform the final location of the site.

Council has identified more detailed considerations for each site for further consideration by Create. These are collated under relevant headings and provided as an attachment to this letter.

This feedback is provided on the basis that there is an expectation that once a preferred site is identified, further and more detailed due diligence and site investigations will be undertaken. This is particularly relevant for the Council owned Robin Thomas Reserve, recognising that there are a number of significant constraints on the site as well as operational and legal considerations. Should this site be preferred, detailed assessment and discussions with Council will be required to determine, amongst other things, feasibility, property ownership, use, and ongoing maintenance, repairs and capital investment of the property.

We look forward to further engagement with Create on the Willow Grove Relocation project.

Should you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me on 02 9806 5767 or email [jconcato@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au](mailto:jconcato@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au).

#### Contact us:

[council@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au) | 02 9806 5050  
[cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au](http://cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au) | PO Box 32, Parramatta, NSW 2124  
ABN 49 907 174 773 | [cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au](http://cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au)

Regards,

**Jennifer Concato**  
Executive Director  
City Planning & Design

**Attachment 1** – Summary of *Key Considerations* relating to Short Listed Sites for Willow Grove

DRAFT

**ATTACHMENT**

**Summary of Key Considerations relating to Short Listed Sites for Willow Grove**

**North Parramatta**

<b>Key Consideration</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<i>Site Suitability</i>	Located within the State Significant Cumberland Hospital precinct, it is suitable for short and long-term cultural and community uses to be located in state significant built heritage in Parramatta.
<i>Proximity to River</i>	The site is physically and visually distanced from the original location and River Foreshore, and is distinct from the original setting and curliage of Willow Grove.
<i>Access to Public Transport</i>	The site is proximate to public transport (including bus and the future light rail) making it highly accessible.
<i>Relationship to recreational and open space</i>	The site is in close proximity to the nearby proposed recreational oval within North Parramatta, as well as the Parramatta CBD and Parramatta Park.
<i>Flooding</i>	Based on current modelling the site will be affected by flooding during the Probable Maximum Flood.
<i>Heritage</i>	<p>The Cumberland Hospital East Campus area is an intact heritage precinct reinforced by the collection of buildings in their landscapes and original locations, which contribute to its meaningful historical character, registered for its State significance.</p> <p>The introduction of Willow Grove would need to be assessed against the provisions of the <i>Heritage Act 1977</i> to ensure a positive contribution to the historical character of the precinct.</p> <p>Any relocation should be recognised by a new locally significant listing, imposed as an additional layer over the State Heritage Register listing.</p>
<i>Westmead Place Strategy 2036</i>	<p>The Westmead Place Strategy 2036 identifies North Parramatta as a mixed use precinct within a highly valued heritage and parkland setting. The challenge will be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ensure Willow Grove positively contributes to this setting and visa versa without being lost amongst other items</li> <li>- not preclude the opportunity to provide a through site link from Dunlop Street</li> </ul> <p>Adequate curtilage and setbacks should be provided and the siting of Willow Grove should not impact upon any logical extension of existing streets identified to improve access and permeability through the site, aligned with the strategic vision identified in the strategy.</p>
<i>Other</i>	Does not raise any concerns for Council as a landowner.

## Lake Parramatta

Key Consideration	Comment
<i>Site Suitability</i>	<p>The site is a large reserve with strong natural heritage values including Sydney Turpentine-Ironbark Forest Critically Endangered Ecological Community, Aboriginal heritage campsite, archaeology associated with former water supply filtering beds and is bushfire prone land.</p> <p>The relocation of Willow Grove conflicts with the nature and strategic directions that Council has set for Lake Parramatta Reserve as a significant visitor destination with a valuable natural swimming area.</p> <p>Considerable environmental impacts and inconsistent with bushland setting.</p> <p>Its isolated location would present difficulties in successfully supporting its future use.</p>
<i>Proximity to River</i>	<p>Furthest distance from the original site, the river setting and its curtilage with no visual or physical connection to the City or river foreshore.</p>
<i>Access to Public Transport</i>	<p>The location is not well connected by public transport with limited provision of car parking during peak time.</p>
<i>Relationship to open space and recreation</i>	<p>Lake Parramatta Reserve is identified as an important recreational and natural open space in Parramatta. City of Parramatta Council's Community Infrastructure Strategy 2020 (CIS) uses a catchment-based approach to understand the network provision of local and district social infrastructure facilities across a large area. Findings from the CIS identify a significant shortfall in the provision of open space across the local government area, particularly in Catchment 4, where Lake Parramatta is located.</p> <p>Lake Parramatta Reserve has been identified for future embellishment and upgrades to the existing park and outdoor recreation facilities to support healthy higher density living.</p> <p>The relocation of Willow Grove to this location will impact upon the quantum of open space available at Lake Parramatta Reserve and the catchment.</p>
<i>Flooding</i>	<p>No impacts from flooding identified.</p>
<i>Heritage</i>	<p>This area is heritage listed as Lake Parramatta Reserve and is of local significance in the Parramatta LEP 2011. The reserve is the first wildlife refuge in the Sydney Region and has the ability to demonstrate heritage values of a public amenity of the past, being site of former water supply for Parramatta. The area contains a large population of quite intact remnant bushland, unusual in the region, and is an important and popular recreational area close to a large population.</p> <p>A relocated Willow Grove would be inconsistent with bushland setting and associated sustainability requirements</p>



<i>Environmental</i>	Bushfire Asset Protection Zone requirements (Rural Fires Act) Critically Endangered Ecological Community (Biodiversity Conservation Act) Inconsistent with 'environmental protection' and 'public recreation' purposes (Crown Land Management Act 2016) 'Future Act' likely not valid (Native Title Act 1993) Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit (National Parks & Wildlife Act 1974) <sup>2</sup>
<i>Other</i>	As it is Crown land, there is a potential procedural challenge to the management and operation of the site.

DRAFT

**Robin Thomas Reserve**

Key Consideration	Comment
<i>Site Suitability</i>	<p>Proximate to other significant heritage items in the vicinity of the river foreshore including Harrisford House (182 George Street, built circa 1823 – 1829) and Ellengowen (153 George Street, circa 1872).</p> <p>Potential impact upon mature fig trees close to the site identified for Willow Grove and upon State significant archaeology and heritage.</p>
<i>Proximity to River</i>	<p>The site is physically and visually proximate to the Parramatta River foreshore with similar orientation and relationship to the River as the original siting of Willow Grove.</p>
<i>Access to Public Transport</i>	<p>The site is proximate to public transport (including bus and the future light rail) making it highly accessible.</p> <p>There is no direct vehicle access to Robin Thomas Reserve from George or Harris Streets due to PLR making it difficult to access the mid-site location for servicing or parking – likely to require easement.</p> <p>Limited car parking and site access limited to Hassall Street to the south. Access separated by playing fields.</p>
<i>Relationship to recreational and open space</i>	<p>City of Parramatta Council's Community Infrastructure Strategy 2020 (CIS) confirms that Robin Thomas Reserve is a significant open space within the CBD. Relocation of Willow Grove to this location would further impact upon the shortfall of open space in the LGA and this location specifically.</p> <p>Robin Thomas Reserve has been identified for future upgrades to provide new and improved sporting and recreation facilities to increase capacity for active and passive recreation, as well as enhance overall amenity. Passive green space is also limited in the CBD and important for the growing density of the City.</p> <p>A Master Plan was prepared in 2018 for the upgrade of Robin Thomas Reserve to provide a new amenities block at the location identified for Willow Grove. The amenities block is in the process of being belivered. Any changes to this would require an amendment to the Development Agreement between TfNSW and Council.</p>
<i>Flooding</i>	<p>Based on current modelling the site will be affected by flooding during the Probable Maximum Flood. Unlikely to represent a severe risk however further investigation and a detailed flood study should be undertaken.</p>
<i>Heritage</i>	<p>The land is heritage listed for its Aboriginal and Early Colonial Landscape and is on the State Heritage Register (SHR 01863 Ancient Aboriginal and Early Colonial Landscape).</p> <p>The site is significant because of the presence of the Parramatta Sand Body which is an important cultural landscape and archaeological feature that has contributed to our understanding of pre-colonial Aboriginal occupation and also as the site of the Military Barracks and</p>



	<p>Soldiers associated with the NSW Corps. The site of the Military Barracks and Soldiers Garden is a rare archaeological site. It was one of two military barracks built during the period of Captain Arthur Phillip's term as Governor of NSW. The site, which was occupied by the NSW Corps in May 1791, has the potential to provide the earliest surviving physical evidence of a convict period military barracks in Australia.</p> <p>The relocation of Willow Grove at Robin Thomas Reserve requires consent under the <i>Heritage Act 1977</i>, particularly to understand the potential impacts upon archaeology.</p> <p>The fig trees on Robin Thomas Reserve are also local items which should not be impacted upon by any structure or excavation.</p>
<i>Legal</i>	<p>Lack of detail regarding the responsibility and cost for ongoing maintenance to, or long standing obligations for, Willow Grove, its ownership and the potential liability to Council.</p>
<i>Other considerations</i>	<p>Loss of amenities building and Civic Park as part of RTR Master Plan 2018, which are unlikely to be provided in their intended form or elsewhere due to space constraints should they be displaced by Willow Grove. The amenities building and Civic Park are part of TfNSW Project Delivery Agreement.</p>

DRAFT