# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. **INTRODUCTION** 4
   1.1 Background & Purpose 4
     1.1.1 Overview 4
     1.1.2 Purpose of the Report 4
     1.1.3 The Challenge 6
     1.1.4 Urban Village 6
   1.2 The Study Area 8
   1.3 Project Objectives 8
   1.4 Design Team 12
   1.5 Consultation 14
     1.5.1 Community Advisory Group 14
     1.5.2 Authorities 14

2. **PLANNING CONTEXT AND PREVIOUS STUDIES** 16
   2.1 The Role of Corridors in Metropolitan Sydney 16
   2.2 Hume Highway Corridor Strategy 20
   2.3 Hume Highway Masterplan Study: Environmental Analysis Report 22
   2.4 Hume Highway Masterplan Study: Economic Analysis Report 22
   2.5 Yagoona Land Economics + Development Feasibility Analysis 23
   2.6 Yagoona Community Facilities Study 24
   2.7 Yagoona Urban Renewal Strategy: Site analysis Opportunities and Constraints 24
1.1 BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

1.1.1 Overview

The Hume Highway has been identified as a key corridor within the emerging Sydney Metropolitan Strategy (City of Cities 2005). In response to this as well as local planning consideration, Bankstown City Council has adopted the Hume Highway Corridor Strategy and exhibited a draft LEP and S94 contributions Plan for Stage 1 of that Strategy.

The strategy establishes a vision and identifies a number of initiatives and precinct based options for revitalization of the Hume Highway Corridor. Council is now seeking to progress with stage 2 of the Hume Highway Corridor Strategy, which will focus initially on the Yagoona Town Centre and its neighborhood as it represents one of three centres located on that corridor and also has its own significance as a district scaled Centre.

Council’s Housing Strategy also identifies urban village environments such as Yagoona as locations to make significant contributions to meeting new and local housing demand in the long term.

Both the local and metropolitan planning directions being identified for Yagoona will result in significant growth and development of the Town Centre and its environs. Council has prepared Yagoona Urban Renewal Strategy as the framework for planning and managing that growth and development.

1.1.2 Purpose of this report

This report identifies a strategy for the renewal for Yagoona and includes a masterplan and urban design framework for the study area. The report indicates possible future development scenarios, provides a graphic vision of that place together with outline controls and housing typologies that will also inform a future Development Control Plan (DCP) for the Town Centre.

This report is design based and makes tangible the broader strategic objectives set out in Bankstown City Council’s draft Hume Highway strategy. It is also informed by the several other studies which are identified later in the report.

While being design based, there is a strong commercial basis for the development sites identified and implementation strategies proposed.
5

View of the Existing Town Centre on the Hume Highway Looking West

The Town Centre Study Area

400 metres

Hume Highway

Bankstown Rail Line

Typical Highway Frontage Retail on the Hume Highway - Most Facades are of Poor Quality
1.1.3 The Challenge

Yagoona is a currently a centre in decline. The dual challenge for Yagoona is therefore not only to redress this decline, but to accommodate significant future development as part of a vibrant urban village community.

The renewal of Yagoona will therefore only be achieved through both the provision of new and improved infrastructure and attraction of significant private investment and development in the centre.

The name Yagoona is Aboriginal for “now” or “today”. As it happens this Aboriginal meaning is most apt as the challenge facing Yagoona is perhaps the greatest challenge currently facing similar communities throughout the broader metropolitan centre.

If successful, the Yagoona Urban Renewal Strategy may be used as a model for the revitalization and growth of other similar centres within Bankstown and across the metropolitan area.

1.1.4 Urban Villages

Bankstown Council provides the following definition of an Urban Village which can be read as an objective for the renewal of Yagoona:

“An urban village is a compact, vibrant, town centre made up of a mix of land uses, including commercial, retail and others, located around a central public transport node. It should have safe and attractive public spaces (public domain) and be a place where people live or visit so as to use public transport, work, and shop and congregate socially. The boundaries of the village should generally be no greater than a walkable distance from the central transport node or the central town square.”
Attractive Retail Street

Pleasant Town Centre Street and Improved Public Transport

Low Speed Traffic Environment
1.2 THE STUDY AREA

The suburb of Yagoona is located in the Local Government Area of Bankstown and is located approximately 16 km south west of the Sydney CBD, 10 km south east of the Parramatta CBD and 1km north west of the Bankstown CBD.

The Yagoona Township is focused on the intersection of the Hume Highway (also known as Liverpool Rd) and the Bankstown Rail Line.

The study area for the purposes of the Yagoona Urban Renewal Strategy is generally defined as an area generally within a 400m radius of the town centre. Figure 1 provides an aerial image of that study area.

1.3 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The following represent the objectives for the development of the Urban Renewal Strategy:

- Build a higher quality urban environment
- Take advantage of the location regional accessibility to attract business and investment
- Rejuvenate retail activity in the town centre
- Attract passing trade to stop and use the centre
- Promote accessibility, improve pedestrian connections especially to public transport nodes and across the Highway
- Create a new community facilities combined with new housing to reinvigorate the town centre
- Reduce retail vacancy rates (currently 27%)
- Improve the Highway streetscape
- Use the existing town centre assets to improve the urban environment
Vehicle Access and Parking

View of Cooper Street Looking Towards the Hume Highway
1.4 DESIGN TEAM

The Yagoona Town Centre Masterplan has been prepared by the following team in consultation with both Bankstown City Council, the project manager, as well as with input from a number of authorities.
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1.5 CONSULTATION

The team has consulted extensively in the development of this strategy. This is in addition to consultation undertaken in earlier studies.

1.5.1 Community Advisory Group

An advisory Group was established and met regularly during the development of the strategy. This group included representatives of local community and business interests and provided local insights and important feedback to the team during the development of the strategy.

1.5.2 Authorities

Department of Planning
Several meeting were held with the Department of Planning (DOP) throughout the development of the Strategy. The meetings were used to gain insights into the emerging Metropolitan Strategy and the directions that strategy were taking with corridors.

Rail Corporation
Several meeting were held with this organisation to gain an understanding of their strategic planning and capital works programs for the Yagoona Rail line and station. These meeting were also used to explore design issues and opportunities associated with station redevelopment and future use of adjoining lands owned by Rail Corporation.

RTA
Several meetings were held with RTA. These meeting were held to explore opportunities for future Highway reconfiguration and operation as well as options for future pedestrian bridges etc.

Opportunities associated with the RTA plans for strategic bus corridors were also examined and discussed as part of these meetings.

Existing Corner of the Hume Highway near the Rail Line

View of the “dip” into the Yagoona Town Centre
2.1 THE ROLE OF CORRIDORS IN METROPOLITAN SYDNEY

The Hume Highway Corridor is the front door to the City of Bankstown. The Yagoona Town Centre and immediate surrounds form part of the proposed Hume Highway Corridor.

The sections of the Hume Highway Corridor within the municipality also function as a regional economic zone. It is home to leading organisations in retail, business services, manufacturing transport, and research, with an estimated retail turnover of $85 million and employing over 22,400 people.

Although some sections of the Hume Highway Corridor have recently experienced renewal, there are many sections in a state of decline. This has lead to the Corridor becoming an under utilised yet still valuable piece of infrastructure.

In recognition of this trend, the NSW Government is considering contributing to the revitalization of the Hume Highway Corridor as part of the “Sydney Metropolitan Strategy”. The Strategy will serve as a blueprint for government investment in Sydney for the next 30 years.

The NSW Government is aiming to implement the Strategy in collaboration with local councils, and will take into consideration road and rail improvements, regional bus corridors, power and water supply, land acquisitions, new housing and creating jobs.

Should Bankstown City Council wish to participate in this existing new opportunity, it must take action now.

It is important that Urban Corridor Principles are clearly articulated to avoid the common misconception that an urban corridor is “a development along a busy road”. In this strategy the following corridor principles have been used:
Metro Strategy Centres and Corridors
i. The primary reason for a corridor zone to be developed is that they have the potential to provide an integrated public transport system, that will be highly desirable to those living, working, shopping, or using local community facilities in that area.

ii. By concentrating activity into ‘nodes’ along the transport corridor, existing centres can be revitalized and refocused to either improve or create new passing trade associated with transport. Nodes can therefore ‘link places’.

iii. Strategic partnerships are fundamental to success. Without this the status quo will remain. This report recommends an active partnership be created between Bankstown City Council, Government Agencies, the local shop owners, businesses and the local community.

iv. Infrastructure is vital. This report recommends key upgrades to the Hume Highway, the rail station and creating a better relationship between bus drop offs, town centre activities, and the rail station. There are also recommendations to government on the further provision and upgrade of transport services and infrastructure.

v. Multi modal transport is vital. There must be a strong connection between rail and bus transport. Walking, cycling, heavy rail, metro rail and buses all provide a suite of transport options.

vi. Respect the market – any development plan must be able to be delivered by the market, in partnership with government where appropriate. The background economic studies provides a strong underpinning to this report as identified at section in Section 2.4 and 2.5.

vii. Assign responsibility – there must be a single authority to execute an agreed plan. It is proposed that Bankstown Council take on this responsibility in leading the process. This is detailed in Section 6 implementation and includes liaison with other government agencies.
Previous Study

Existing Highway Frontage Use
2.2 HUME HIGHWAY CORRIDOR STRATEGY

At its meeting held on 7 December 2004, Council adopted the Hume Highway Corridor Strategy in accordance with Council’s Management Plan “CITYPLAN”. The Strategy discusses Council’s vision to promote investment and redevelopment of the Hume Highway Corridor by:

- creating a new enterprise zone that will attract business and employment investment;
- developing three town centres (Bass Hill, Yagoona and Chullora) with focus on retail activities;
- investigating opportunities for new housing that will support the three town centres;
- attracting government infrastructure investment to support the revitalization;
- improving public transport with a creation of regional bus corridors; and
- setting up a framework for Council to actively promote investment and business relocation to the Hume Highway Corridor.

It is recognised further investigative work and public discussion must take place. However, Council must first decide on a vision if it is to provide leadership and collaborate with the NSW Government to achieve infrastructure improvements as part of the “Sydney Metropolitan Strategy”. Following this process, the Hume Highway Corridor Strategy will provide a framework to determine land use re-zonings to create the new enterprise zone, consolidation of retail and residential uses, and landscape improvements to the physical domain.

Yagoona was identified as one of three distinctive town centres. In particular the following initiatives were proposed:

- Initiatives identified in the strategy include:
  - A new railway station
  - Improved bus services
  - Pedestrian overpass
  - Town square
  - New retail opportunities
  - New housing opportunities (up to 1500 dwellings)
YAGOONA TOWN CENTRE

STAGE ONE - RETAIL CORE
Reinforce Yagoona as the primary shopping centre for the Hume Highway that:
* provides an accessible railway station;
* provides a rail/bus interchange, commuter parking and a pedestrian overpass with lift access;
* focusses retail activities and mixed-uses mainly along the highway frontage;
* provides new open spaces and community facilities to cater for residents; and
* improves the median strip treatments

STAGE TWO - SUPPORTING HOUSING
Consult with residents and property owners, and investigate options to promote higher-density housing within a 400-800 metre walking distance of the Yagoona railway station. This will help to support the viability of the rail and bus improvements, infrastructure works, and retail activities.

RAILWAY STATION/Bus INTERCHANGE
Upgrade to create an accessible railway station (with lift access), with links to the proposed regional bus corridor and bus interchange on both sides of the highway.

Encourage relocation of kindergarten/citizen centre

Improve gateway sites
2.3 HUME HIGHWAY MASTERPLAN STUDY: ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

The environmental analysis, prepared by BBC consulting planners was released in April 2004 and covered the 7 precincts along the Hume highway within the Bankstown city council LGA. It investigated air and acoustic environment impact as well as suggesting strategies for implementing each in masterplans for each precinct. Key strategies relevant to the Yagoona town centre (precinct4) included:

**Reducing Traffic**
- Improve local links to reduce the need to utilise the highway for local trips
- Improve local public transport and links to routes to lessen car use
- Investigate improved traffic management including speed zones and accommodating pedestrian desire lines.

**Air Quality**
- Monitor air quality on the Hume highway
- Investigate means of traffic smoothing to minimise stop start driving

**Noise**
- Investigate the use of low noise asphalt in future road works
- Encourage land uses along the corridor that are less sensitive to noise
- Residential sites with direct access to the Hume highway to incorporate noise attenuation
- Measures and set backs for air quality Introduce traffic light phasing to reduce traffic noise

**Land Use**
- Investigate intensification of residential development within the commercial centre and within 600 metres of the centre.
- Frame specific controls for setbacks, landscape requirements, noise barrier design and acoustic treatments.
- Residential, hotel and open space development within 20m of the highway will not meet statutory criteria without mitigation. Such mitigation is technically feasible and practical.

2.4 HUME HIGHWAY MASTERPLAN STUDY: ECONOMIC ANALYSIS REPORT

The report prepared by SGS Economic Planning was released in January 2004 and addressed supply and demand as well as framing strategic directions for the 7 precincts including Yagoona.

Recommendations included:

**Physical Development Principles:**
- Promote accessibility – pedestrian, public transport, vehicular access including parking and passing trade.
- Incorporate residential development at a scale and density appropriate to transport opportunities.
- Seek ‘compactness’ – magnets to maximise passing trade
- Undertake streetscape and infrastructure works
  - Improve safety
  - Improve pedestrian scale
  - Upgrade building facades
  - Provide weather protection
  - Provide opportunities for rest, meetings and interaction
- Maximise active street frontages to pedestrian and public areas
- Link shopping, social, community, transport, services, food outlets
2.5 YAGOONA LAND ECONOMICS + DEVELOPMENT
FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS

The study was conducted by Urbis JHD and completed in February 2005. It examined the underlying reasons behind Yagoona’s economic decline and lack of investment activity and also explored the financial feasibility of future residential and retail development and opportunities for opportunities for attracting such development within the Yagoona Town Centre.

A summary of key issues arising from this study is provided below:

Retail
• Currently approximately 8,500m2 of commercial space in the Yagoona Town Centre (excluding 3,100m2 of church land) Of this over 3,000m2 is vacant (over35%)
• Yagoona is suffering decline as a consequence of it inability to capture an appropriate proportion of local expenditure.
• This expenditure is escaping to nearby retail areas such as Bass Hill
• The lack of a large scaled supermarket is the key reason behind Yagoona’s underperformance
• Existing retail area is currently spread out along the highway, which is not conducive to the operation of a successful retail environment.
• The shops located adjacent to the rail station are currently the most successful traders
• Consolidation and rationalisation of retail areas to a more focused area closer to the rail network would provide a more successful retail environment
• Cooper Rd, Highland St and Church Rd also provide opportunity to create traditional shopping streets strips
• One of the major retailers are looking to develop a 2500m2 supermarket in Yagoona area
• Councils car park site (located behind IGA) represents a good opportunity to develop a large supermarket site
• There is some feasibility for this to occur as part of a mixed use development
• There is limited demand for commercial office space within the broader area

Residential
• Low residential values are reflective of the poor perception and appearance of Yagoona and subsequently limit residential redevelopment opportunities of apartment buildings above 3 storeys
• Simply increasing FSR’s alone will not ignite redevelopment opportunities.
• However if an increase in $20-50,000 per 2 bedroom unit, over current market expectations were to be realised, then the viability of such development would be achieved.
• Improvements in the amenity and appearance of Yagoona through landscaping, street furniture and provision of community focal point etc would assist in achieving that necessary increase in value.
• The development of a larger supermarket and additional retail facilities would also assist in achieving increase in value and therefore introduce development feasibilities for apartment type development.
2.6 **YAGOONA COMMUNITY FACILITIES STUDY**

This study reviewed the demand and supply of community facilities in the study area and also explored opportunities for improving the quality of community services and developing a civic focus precinct through the consolidation of community facilities in the local area.

The report was prepared with extensive consultation with key community groups, including service providers and educational establishments.

The study revealed that Yagoona was reasonably well provided with community facilities, but future community service provision in Yagoona is constrained by the age, design and limited use of existing community buildings.

The study also examined open space demands in the area and recommended that Gazzard Park should be redeveloped as a high quality passive open space area.

All of the key stakeholders consulted as part of the study considered the development of a single multi-purpose community facility in Yagoona to be a positive benefit to their own service provision as well as the broader community. It was also generally considered by all stakeholders that Gazzard Park was an ideal location for that multi use facility. The two schools in the study areas were both particularly keen to utilise such a facility and indicated that they would be major users of it.

It was also suggested that such a centre could be delivered as part of a mixed use facility that might include, retail, commercial or residential activities. This has recently been undertaken by other Local Councils in Sydney.

2.7 **YAGOONA URBAN RENEWAL STRATEGY: SITE ANALYSIS OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS**

This report was carried out by Space a Cityscape Planning + Projects in February 2005. The report identifies key context issues as well as a detailed site analysis including transport and circulation, open space, land use and built form, character and existing housing typologies.

Key findings from this and other report are summarized in section 3 of this report.
The Highway “dips” down at the Town Centre. This Quality can be reinforced are improved to create a stronger Town Centre.
3.1 CONSTRAINTS + WEAKNESSES

- Highway and rail split centre into 4 quadrants
- High volume and speed traffic environment
- Adverse air and noise impacts associated with highway environment
- Lack of connections, links and accessibility
- Decline in rail use
- Significant retail expenditure within catchment is lost to nearby centres because the existing supermarket is not large enough
- Aged infrastructure and building stock in centre
- No coherent trader group to market promote the centre
- Poor built form
- Highly Fragmented property ownership on the Highway will make redevelopment very difficult
- Retail is dispersed and fragmented
- Lack of diversity of uses
- Lack of safety
- Lack of identity
- Lack of comfort and amenity
- Lack of sustainability
- Land immediately adjacent to the highway not suitable for school or residential uses
- Existing ‘day to day’ retail not attracting locals or passing trade
- School acoustic wall to highway
- Highway retail environment very poor. Shops are generally in poor condition.
- There is no central ‘place’ or gathering space for community
- Sensitive uses such as schools and childcare should be 50-100m from the busy roads
3.2 OPPORTUNITIES + STRENGTHS

- Rail and Highway provide excellent regional accessibility to key CBD’s (e.g., Sydney, Parramatta, Liverpool, Bankstown)
- High traffic exposure
- Adequate parking
- Convert the ‘inactive’ edges to non-retail uses and consolidate the core
- Potential for integrated community facility to be developed and create civic precinct
- Areas provided away from the Highway afford higher amenity urban environment
- Potential for development of more traditional shopping strips in streets perpendicular to Highway (e.g., Cooper Rd)
- Create new connections between places to increase pedestrian flows – connect to the station, to the green spaces.
- Potential to consolidate retail activity in areas focused around the rail
- Optimize the station site by creating a multi-modal transport node
- Traders located near the rail station are the most successful operators
- Council-owned land provides early redevelopment opportunities
- Gazzard Park
- Create active frontages along the rail approaches
- Large underdeveloped sites provide good housing opportunities
- Surrounding tree-lined, grid street system provide quality residential environment
District Context
4.1 URBAN DESIGN OBJECTIVES AND OPTIONS

4.1.1 Masterplan Objectives and Principles

- Link the 4 quadrants, creating connections from all surrounding areas to the Centre
- Create good connections from the 4 quadrants to the rail station
- Create an active town square and/or an active street. Must be a compact place to be successful
- Integrate
  - Social functions
  - Community functions
  - Nearby residential
  - Train station
  - Services
  - Fast food outlets
- Provide community facilities to meet the community's needs – community centre, early childhood centre, childcare, better access to library facilities, park facilities (BBQ, playground etc).
- Recognize the existing value of the existing ‘green places’ (Gazzard Park, existing residential streets, some significant trees) and connect them
- Green the Hume Highway to improve amenity and create a new gateway image
- Increase density within 600m of the station
- Upgrade buildings and shop facades
- Prepare a landscape Masterplan for the centre and immediate surrounds
Local Context - Figure Ground Plan

- Hume Highway
- Town Centre Retail
- Gazzard Park
- Rail Platform

Typical Bungalows

The existing Community Building
4.1.2 Options Explored

- Railway location options
  - Major redevelopment option – concourse, development, new station, new connections
  - ‘Medium’ upgrade, new connections
  - ‘Minimal’ upgrade, new connections

- Open space/ active street options
  - Current open space location
  - Nearer the highway
  - Active street rather than a space
  - Major and minor space

Option 3 was selected as the preferred option. The new rail platform creates a strong linkage between the new retail core and community core.

This option also creates more linkages than the other options better connecting the 4 quadrants.
OPTION 1 - SHORT TERM

- New Links
- Minimal Rail Upgrade
- Minor Open Space
OPTION 2 - SHORT TERM

- New Links
- Medium Rail Upgrade
- Minor Open Space

OPTION 2 - LONG TERM
OPTION 3 - SHORT TERM

- New Links
- Medium Rail Upgrade
- New Retail Street

OPTION 3 - LONG TERM

- New Links
- Medium Rail Upgrade
- New Retail Street

OPEN SPACE VISTA

New Retail Street

New North South Link

New East West Link
4.2 RESULTING URBAN DESIGN STRUCTURE AND STRATEGY

The new town centre proposes the following key strategies:

- Create connections from the surrounding community back to the Yagoona Town Centre
- Reinforce connections across the Hume Highway recognizing both the traffic function of the Highway and the fact that it passes through a centre
- Provide visual and pedestrian links across the Highway to Gazzard Park
- Create a new east/west connection behind the Hume Highway that connects both sides of Yagoona to the rail station
- Create a new place associated with the rail station. The place will contain a new larger supermarket within a ‘main street’ of retail
- Improve the physical environment for the retail on the Hume Highway. This should include:
  - street trees on the pavements to improve the amenity and signal that a revitalization is on the way
  - Improve the ability of pedestrians to cross the highway at the centre
  - Improve the safety for the children attending the school on the highway. This will remove a signalized pedestrian crossing that is at the edge of the centre
  - Slowing through traffic to 60km/pher hour as signposted. This will encourage parking outside peak hours, a major problem for shop owners
- Create a stronger identity for the Yagoona Town Centre identifying it as a ‘place’ along the Hume Highway
  - Provide median trees at the ‘thresholds’ into Yagoona at the east and west ‘gateways’ at the edges of Yagoona.
  - These widened islands already exist
  - These islands are located at the two high points and will clearly define the town centre zone which sits within a dish between the two higher entry points into Yagoona
- Consolidate council’s community facilities into one place close to the rail station and easily accessible from the new ‘main street’
- Locate 2 new bus stops at the east and west ends of the ‘main street’ with short pedestrian connections to the rail station and back to the community. The stops will be located on the transit route but off the highway
Structure Plan and Key Precincts, Access and Linkages
Masterplan Short Term - Concentrates on Sites under Council Control
Masterplan Long Term - The Town Centre will embrace all Areas within the consolidated Precinct Stimulating Public and Private Sector Activity