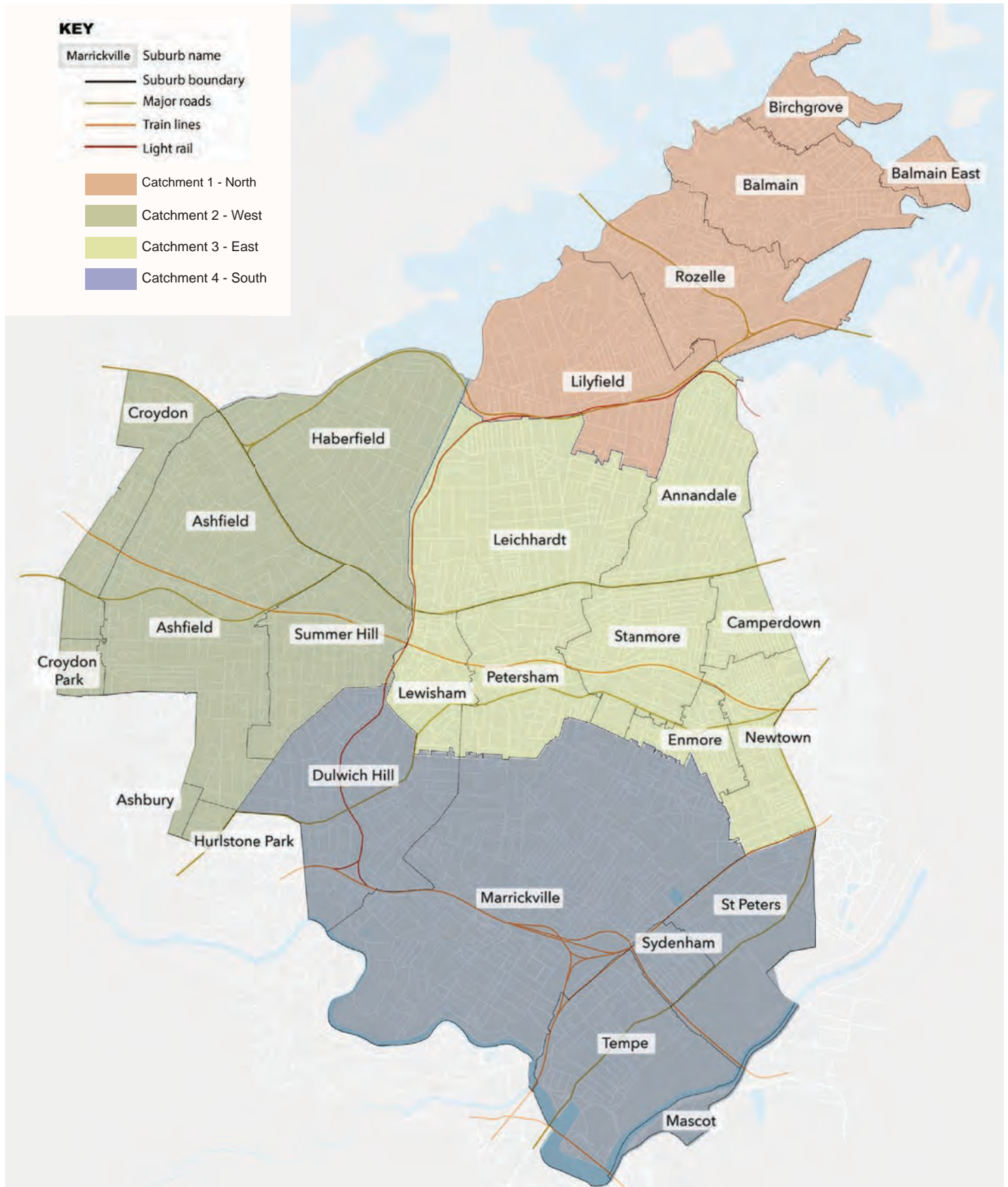


Blackmore Oval walking path. Photography by Welsh + Major.



Inner West Council area and suburbs. Recreation Needs study - A Healthier Inner West.

Demographics

Overview

This section outlines the current community profile of Leichhardt, Haberfield and Lilyfield, using data from the 2021 ABS Census from Profile i.d., as well as future projections outlined in Recreation Needs Study - A Healthier Inner West, Updated 2021 (Cred Consulting). To further analyse this data, the LGA was broken down into 4 catchment areas. Leichhardt falls into catchment 3.

Catchment 3's population is the most densely populated catchment in the LGA and has the highest forecast growth of all catchments. This catchment has a high proportion of students attending university or TAFE, a high proportion of group households, and fewer families and children. It also has a very high proportion of same-sex couples.

Population growth

In 2021, the estimated resident population of the Inner West was 183 772 people. The population decreased by 7422 people or 3.8% between 2016 and 2021. The growth rate of Greater Sydney during this period was 7.8%.

Leichhardt experienced a below average amount of growth, with its population increasing by 536 people (3.7%).

Haberfield + Lilyfield experienced a marginal population growth at a rate of less than 2%.

Despite this short term dip, Inner West Council estimates significant population growth by 2036.

Open space provision

The Inner West has an estimated 321.6 hectares a of open space which equates to 9.1% of the total land area.

In 2016 the provision of open space per person was 16.4m². In 2016, catchment 3 had a provision of open space per person of 7.6m² and an estimated 6.4m² by 2036.

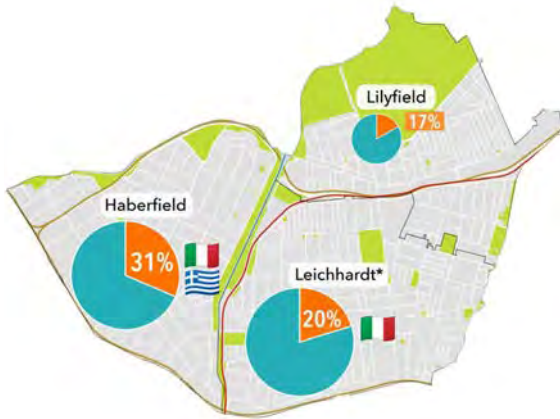


KEY

Icons show suburbs with a proportion above the LGA average or high number of:

- Babies and children (0 - 12yrs) (over 12.9% or over 1,000 people)
- Young people (12 - 24yrs) (over 13.1% or over 1,000 people)
- Older people (65yrs +) (over 12.2% or over 1,000 people)
- People with disability (over 4.5% or over 500 people)

01 Leichhardt - Age + disability profile.
Recreation Needs Study - A Healthier Inner West.



KEY

- % speaking English at home
- >1.5 % Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population
- % speaking a language other than English at home

Languages spoken by more than 2% of the population:

- Arabic
- Cantonese
- Greek
- Italian
- Macedonian
- Mandarin
- Nepali
- Portuguese
- Spanish
- Tagalog
- Vietnamese

*In Leichhardt, while the proportion of people speaking a language other than English at home is relatively low, the number of speakers is very high: >2,000

02 Leichhardt - Cultural profile.
Recreation Needs Study - A Healthier Inner West.



KEY

- Median weekly household income:
 - \$1,500 - \$1,749
 - \$1,750 - \$1,999
 - \$2,000 - \$2,499
 - \$2,500 - \$2,999
 - > \$3,000
- % of households with cars:
 - Under 75%
 - 75% - 80%
 - 80% - 85%
 - 85% - 90%
 - Over 90%
- Dominant dwelling type:
 - Low density
 - Medium density
 - High density

03 Leichhardt - Density, income + housing profile.
Recreation Needs Study - A Healthier Inner West.

Demographics

Age + Disability Profile

Spaces that are inclusive of all age groups, accessible and flexible should be prioritised to cater for current and future population needs.

Leichhardt has an above average proportion of babies and children (0-12yrs), young people (12-24yrs) older people (65+yrs), and people reporting a need for assistance.

Haberfield shares similar demographic statistics and has one of the highest median ages (43).

Cultural Profile

Italian language has a high representation in Leichhardt, correlating with it's history as an area with a high number of Italian immigrants. Although the proportion of people speaking a language other than English at home is low, the actual number of speakers is very high.

Likewise, a third of Haberfield residents identify their primary languages as Italian and Greek.


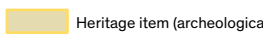
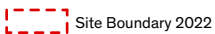

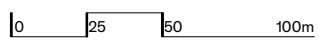

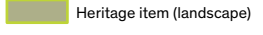
Lilyfield has 17% of people speaking a non-English language, which is below average for the LGA at 28.4%. No specific language group is identifies more than 2% of the population.

Density, Income + Housing Profile

Leichhardt is characterised by medium density housing which is typical for the LGA. The area is forecast to have some of the largest population growth in the LGA, with 90.3 persons per hectare by 2036. This represents an increase by one third of the population, and places significant demand on already limited open space.

Income levels are average and above, and car ownership is high. The majority of households have cars. Improved connectivity would encourage Leichhardt residents to use active or public transport.



- | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|
|  Conservation Area |  Heritage item (archeological) |  Site Boundary 2022 |  1943 Aerial Imagery (Six Maps) |  0 25 50 100m |
|  Heritage item |  Heritage item (landscape) | | | |
| 01 Semi detached house, 102 William Street (Item no 11166) | 02 Semi detached house, 100 William Street (Item no 11165) | 03 Former General Store, incl. interiors, 2 Hubert Street (Item no 11121) | 04 Leichhardt Park incl. Leichhardt Ovals, Aquatic Centre + Interiors (Item no 11197) | |

A Brief Historic Overview

Our First Nations

Prior to European colonisation, the Leichhardt area was inhabited by the Wangal clan of the Eora nation. The territory of the Wangal people extends along the southern shore of the Parramatta River to Parramatta. Suburbs close to the city such as Glebe are also the home of the Gadigal and Wangal ancestors. Hawthorne Canal (previously Long Cove Creek) formed a natural boundary dividing the country of the Wangal and Gadigal clans. The surrounding bushland was rich in plant, bird and animal life with fish and rock oysters available from Blackwattle Bay. Fish and shellfish were staples in the diet of the local Aboriginal people. Sixteen midden sites have been identified within Leichhardt with four accessible to the public. The middens are dated at approximately 500 years old, and are recognised as significant by the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council and archaeologists.

The Formation of Blackmore Oval

In 1890 the removal of mangroves along the former Long Cove Creek began the construction of Hawthorne Canal. This prompted residential estates to develop along the waterway, shaping the suburbs surrounding the site today. The residential estate in Haberfield, to the west of the site, is within a heritage conservation area.

Briefly between 1903-1904 the Canal had a ferry service operated by the Drummoyne - Leichhardt Ferry Company. The name Hawthorne Canal was officially gazetted in 1974, in honour of John Stuart Hawthorne MP, who first advocated for the construction of the canal in parliament in 1890.

The contemporary light rail route follows the tracks of the original tram line built in 1890. The original tramline was converted into a goods line around 1920, which followed the line into Darling Harbour.

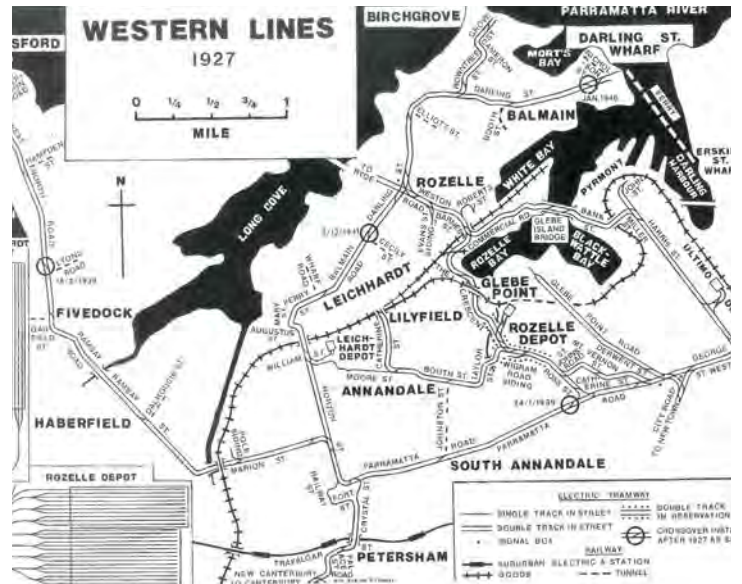
In 1912, the Lieutenant-Governor proclaimed the land as Public Parklands and gave to it the name 'Blackmore Park'.

The 1943 aerial image shows an unknown building located in the centre of the site.

In 1942 the site was taken over by the Allied Works Council.

By 1955, the site was occupied by a number of new structures, in response to the war. The current clubhouse and amenities buildings were constructed during this time and can be clearly identified on the site. Three large tent structures were erected and remained on the site for some time, visible in the 1965 historical map.

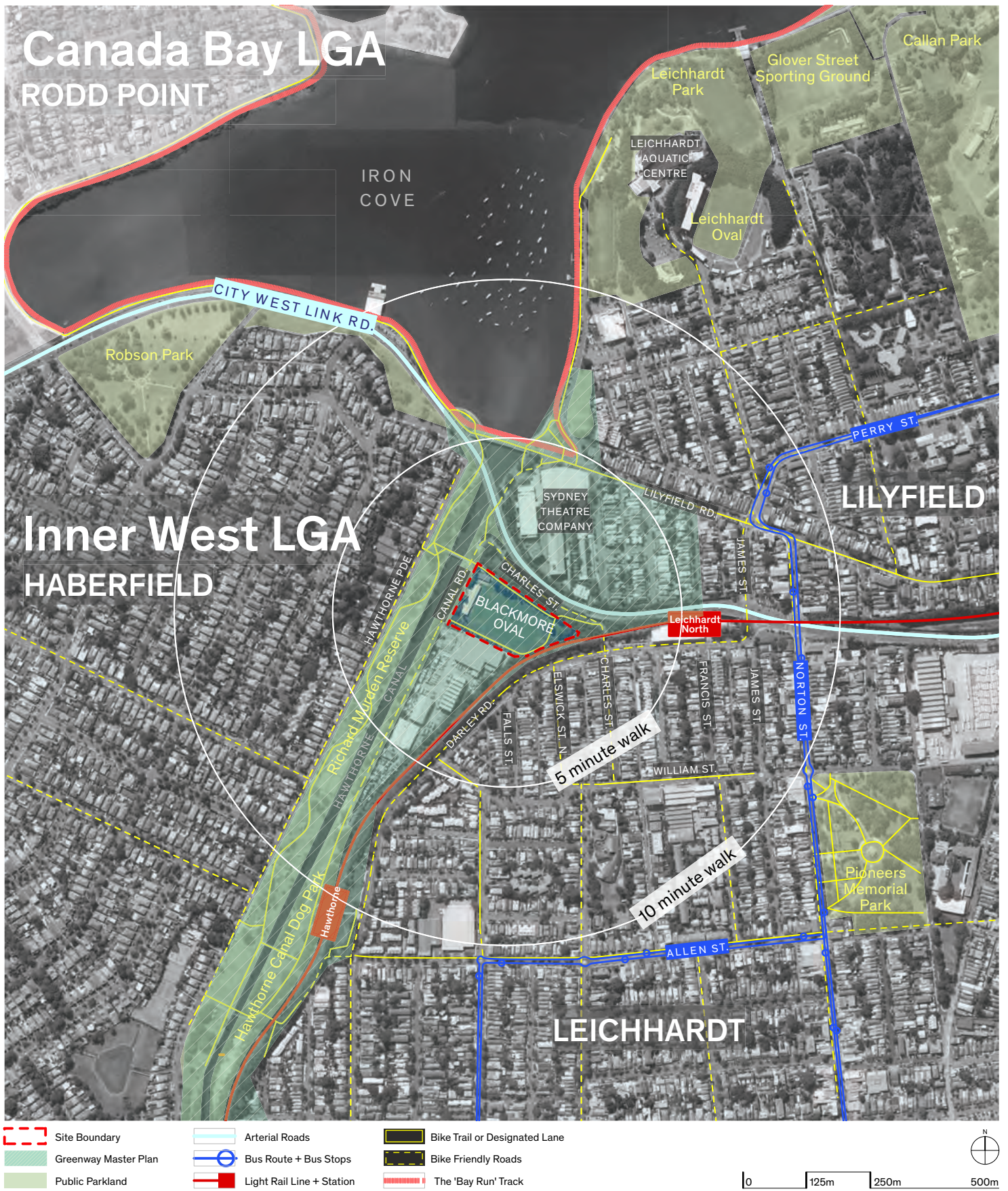
A later (1970) aerial map shows the site cleared of war infrastructure and restored as public recreational land.



Railway lines in the area, 1927. Source: to be verified



Parish Map, Year and source TBC



Neighbourhood Context

Local Character

Blackmore Oval is located on the northern most point of Leichhardt, neighbouring Lilyfield to the north and Haberfield to the west. Accessed by Canal Road, the park is not visible from anywhere in Leichhardt due to the intervening railway line embankment. This causes a significant disconnection between the park and Leichhardt CBD. Despite its visual disconnection from the greater area, the park services many locals, with a large number of dwellings in Leichhardt, Haberfield and Lilyfield within a 10 minute walk.

Traveling North along Hawthorne Canal, pedestrian and cyclist pathways connect to the Sydney Theatre Company and the Bay Run track, both within five minutes walk. Following the Bay Run track north, Leichhardt Park + Sporting Grounds is a 10 minute walk from Blackmore Oval. Directly north of Blackmore Oval is an area of wetlands which separates the park from Charles St. This wetland includes a natural pathway linking to the park and a lookout area.

To the south along Hawthorne Canal, an off-leash dog park is accessible to pedestrians and cyclists from Blackmore Oval. Adjacent to this trail, large warehouses form an established arts precinct, including manufactures, trades and a film studio, which follow the southern boarder of the site.

The Richard Murden Reserve runs along the Canal opposite Blackmore Oval. A Cyclist and pedestrian bridge near the main entrance to Blackmore Oval connects both parks.

Major Roads

The City West Link Road runs along the north of Blackmore oval, but is not directly linked to its entry point. Vehicles entering the site travel below the lightrail overpass, from Darley St.

Public Transport

Three buses with routes along Norton Street have stops within 10 minutes walk of Blackmore Oval. These routes are:

- Bus Route 437, with stops from QVB City to Five Dock
- Bus Route 445, with stops from Balmain to Campsie
- Bus Route 440, with stops from Rozelle to Bondi Junction

Approximately five minutes walk from the park is Leichhardt North light rail station. Leichhardt North falls on the L1 Route traveling between Central and Dulwich Hill.

Cycle Routes

The area around Blackmore Oval is well connected by cycle trails and bike friendly roads. Bike friendly roads link the park to the greater Leichhardt area. Specific bike paths + wide shared paths link Blackmore Oval to the canal and connecting parklands. These connections lead to the Harbour and extend along the foreshore.

Local Parklands

Blackmore Oval is well positioned to connect to neighbouring parks along Hawthorne Canal, the GreenWay, and the Iron Cove Bay Run area.

The park is towards the northern end of the Greenway Masterplan, which aims to create and maintain a web of connected green spaces following the canal from Cooks River in the south to the Harbour in the north. As such, the connection of Blackmore Oval to neighbouring parklands is important.



Existing Conditions

Character

The character of Blackmore Oval is sport + fitness oriented. The scale of existing facilities + number of parking spaces available limit opportunity for growth in capacity. As such, the park retains a local character, clear throughout the sports clubroom + facilities.

To the north of the site, a leafy walking trail and well maintained wetlands connect users to nature. Self directed fitness is intertwined with nature along these travel paths, which link to the greater green spaces beyond.

Dispite the beauty of the parks surroundings, dilapidated buildings + infrastructure have a negative impact on the character of the park upon arrival. The existing facilities within the park are unhygienic + uncomfortable for users.

Activity

The park is well utilised by the community for a number of activities. The sporting ground itself is used for both sporting events and informal sports, as well as joggers running around its perimeter. The grassy + shaded areas to the north boundary are also popular for unstructured recreation, with people relaxing, meeting for picnics and gatherings or dog walking.

The park also serves as a thoroughfare. With it's close proximity to the Bay Run trail, users travel through the park from Leichhardt to the Canal. The path is used as an extension of the fitness trails along the Hawthorne Canal.

Furniture

The placement of seating within the park is fairly utilitarian. Three park benches face the sporting field along the southern boundary. These benches are in good physical condition, but offer limited seating capacity for spectators + general park goers. No variation in seating configuration is offered, rather all benches are identical and face the sporting field. To the east (rear) of the park is one unshaded picnic table, also in good condition.

Within the park there are three workout stations. All three are in good condition and offer a wide range of fitness types for different levels of mobility.

Bin locations were all towards the entrance of the park along Canal Rd. Presumably, bins are distributed throughout the park during sporting events. However, when the site is not in use for sport, bins are haphazardly clustered alongside the parks

entrance. The creates an unwelcoming and unhygienic arrival to the park.

Lighting

Five large flood lights provide adequate night lighting to the sports ground when in use after dark. These lights are in good condition to serve the needs of the future. To the north boundary, 8 new post lights follow the walking trail, while allowing areas beyond to remain dark to the benefit of local wildlife. These lights are in good condition and create an overall sense of comfort + safety for users at night.

The park is lacking night lighting along Canal Road and along the southern boundary. As such, the fitness circuit to the rear of the park is not utilised at night.

Signage & Wayfinding

Signage throughout the zone is haphazard, at times unclear, and generally in poor condition. The main entry sign is outdated and bares the Leichhardt Council branding. In its current position, view of the sign is often impaired by tree foilage and parked vehicles.

Dog on/off leash signage is clear and up-to-date with Inner West Council branding. It is consistant with other inner west parks. This sign is located at each entry to the park off Canal Rd, alongside a doggy bag dispenser.

To the east (rear) of the park is a large metal sign promoting the local sports club who use the park. This sign is wired to included a megaphone and is in good condition. A number of other club related banners are fixed to the chainlink fence of the cricket nets.

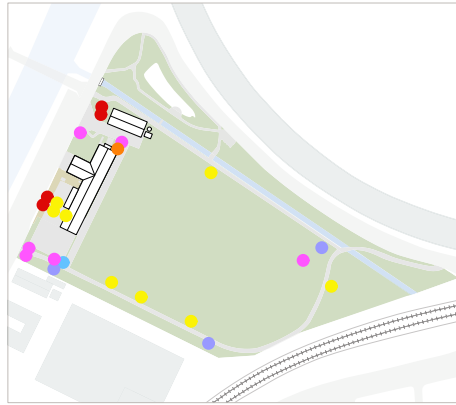
A pedestrian/bike share sign is located alongside the footpath at the rear of the site. It is in good condition but bares no likeness to other signs in the park, nor does it include council branding.

Tree Cover + Understorey Planting

Surrounding the sports field, the park is flanked with established trees on all four sides. Native trees, including Brush Box, Paper Bark and other Eucalyptus species, follow the boundary to the north along the existing storm water channel. These trees form a shaded ecosystem rich with flora and fauna. These trees link to many beyond the park along Charles Street, which follow through to connect to tree cover along the Hawthorne Canal.



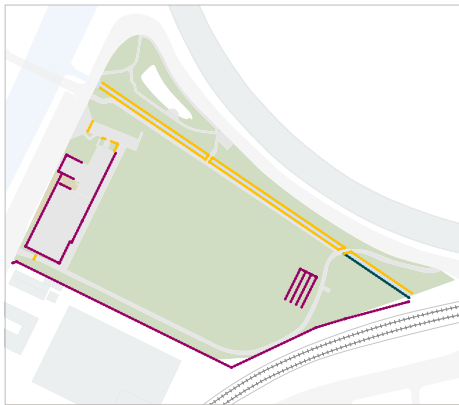
Tree cover & Understorey Planting



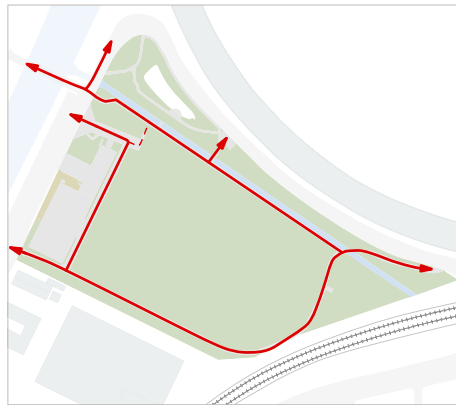
Existing Structures + Facilities



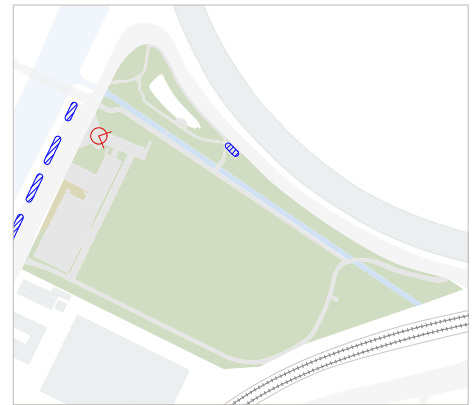
Lighting



Fence + Enclosure



Pedestrian Access Points & Existing Pathways



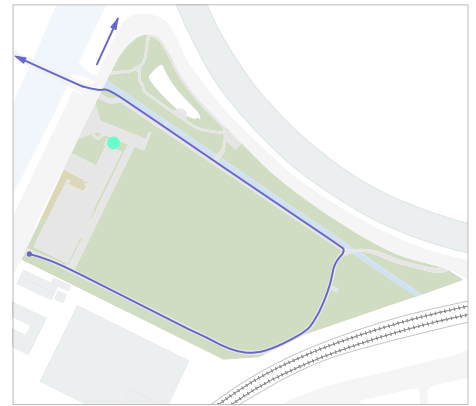
Vehicular Access Points, Roads and Carparking



Sports + Recreation Grounds



Contours



Bicycle paths and parking

Formal path connections	Existing trees	High fence	Lighting	Water Bubbler
Informal path connections	Understorey planting	Medium fence	Signage	Furniture: Benches & Tables
Existing bicycle path	Wetland	Low fence / Bollard	Bins	Gym Equipment
Service vehicle access	Ground surface - Soft fall	Light rail	Fire Booster Valve	Bicycle Rack
Public parking	Grassed areas			
	Pedestrian pathway - dirt			
	Pedestrian pathway			
	Asphalt driveway			

This dense tree coverage extends to the rear (east) of the site where dense vegetation covers the light rail embankment.

Along the southern boundary is a row of tall spaced pine trees, with a small number of self sown trees in between them. The sparseness of these trees offer little separation between the park and the large commercial warehouse beyond.

Where tree cover is dense to the north of the site, thick and rich understory planting is observed. Following the walking trail are native grass species + shrubs. The wetlands beyond offer even more diverse species of ground cover planting.

Where tree cover is broken to the southern boundary, no understory planting exists. Small pockets of understory planting are found near the southern entrance from Canal Rd and alongside the path along the northern boundary of the park.

Fauna Linkages

The trees flanking the northern boundary link to many trees beyond the park boundary along Charles Street, which follow through to the tree cover along the Hawthorne Canal. The density of this planting creates a link between the canal, the wetlands and the park. This is an important link which should be protected.

The lack of shade to the southern boundary creates a break in the network of planting which shelters animals. The sparseness of planting results in a breakdown of biodiversity along this boundary.

Ground Cover & Surfaces

The surface of the park is flat and no implications from drainage issues were observed. Pathways in the park are a combination of concrete and bitumen and are generally in good condition. Ground cover is typically grass, however under the canopies of the larger trees, shaded areas are mulched and/or planted. Grass appears to be in good condition and well maintained. Artificial turf is used within the cricket nets and around the three fitness stations throughout the park. This groundcover is in average condition.

Services & Drainage

A large above-ground rainwater tank is located to the north of the site, adjacent the existing amenities building. It should be assessed whether additional capacity is desirable or whether any modifications or upgrades to the system are required. Should new amenities be proposed, consideration of rainwater catchment should be a factor.

Telstra ducting runs around the perimeter of the site. A sewer pipeline runs across the sports field, connecting to a line at the north of the stormwater channel.

Boundary Conditions

Built topographical features define the site boundaries. To the north, a low chainlink fence serves as a balustrade to a deep stormwater channel which defines the edge of the park. A tall chainlink fence extends along the south east boundary, protecting the park from the train rail embankment, and continuing along the southern boundary. Sections of this fence are in poor condition, while generally the condition is ok.

To the west, the existing sports club building, which is surrounded by a tall painted metal fence, defines the park boundary and separates the oval from the carpark and canal beyond. The industrial estate to the south is separated by a tall chainlink fence, with little visual separation.

Pedestrian Access & Existing Pathways

There are five entry points into the park. Three lead from Canal Rd to the west and connect to the greater stretch of parklands along the canal. Two additional entry points lead north through the existing wetlands to Leichhardt via Charles St.

A wide concrete path follows the northern boundary, connecting to a concrete bridge over the stormwater channel. The additional entry point along the northern boundary leads to a series of natural permeable paths traversing through the wetlands.

The bitumen path following the perimeter to the east and south is in average condition and not as wide as other shared cycle paths in the area.

Vehicular Access Points, Roads and Car Parking

There is no vehicle access into the park, however service vehicles can access the park via the north-west entry on Canal Road, which has a layback and removable bollards. Carparking associated with the park is located outside the park boundary along the canal. There is not a sufficient number of parking spaces to cater to the needs of the park during organised sports.

Existing Structures and Heritage Significance

There is no evidence of historical conservation or celebration of history within the park.

Overall, existing structures within the park are in very poor condition, in terms of both physical condition and function.

There are two existing buildings on site. Both are single storey painted weatherboard with metal rooves, of the same style. The smaller building to the north of the site houses two changing facilities, the mens shower and toilet facilities, an accessible WC, as well as the local Men's Shed group. Shower and WC facilities are in terrible condition and the arrangement of spaces is convoluted and impractical for users.

The larger of the two buildings houses the local SES, alongside the female toilets, sports clubhouse and canteen. The location and condition of the womens facilities is terrible. These facilities are unsafe and unhygienic. The remainder of this building serves its users well.

A metal shed is located alongside the rainwater tanks. This is in good condition.

Three cricket nets are located at the rear of the park. These are in average condition.



01



02



03



04



05



06



07



08



09



10



11



12

Constraints + Opportunities

Based on the analysis set out over the previous pages, the following opportunities present themselves within Blackmore Oval.

There are opportunities to:

- Upgrade + maintain the existing building used by the SES and sports club.
- Investigate options to demolish and relocate the men's shed to a larger purpose built facility to allow membership expansion and redevelopment of the Blackmore Park facilities.
- Provide safe + sanitary facilities which support the needs of the local sporting community + casual park user.
- Improve signage consistency throughout the park.
- Establish a design for new signage that communicates the civic and historic character of the park.
- Install a park map at well selected locations. The park map should include a tactile section + section written in language of First Nations group. Clearly identify park assets and public toilet locations.
- Investigate additional park furniture to suit the needs of various park activities.
- Improve circulation by upgrading pathways.
- Establish new understorey planting to selected areas along the southern boundary to increase biodiversity.

01. Stormwater channel / 02. Wetlands / 03. Main entry, bin storage area + car parking / 04. SES + clubhouse / 05. Cricket nets / 06. Sports field / 07. Fitness station / 08. Typical bench style / 09. Sports club sign / 10. Main building + entrance to female WC / 11. Main sign / 12. Shaded walkway to the north

2.4 Other Input

SES

Men's Shed

Leichhardt Wanderers (football + cricket clubs)

Subject to Draft Plan of Management exhibition and future community engagement outcomes