

# view analysis

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8 parsonage street, ryde

# bridge

8 Parsonage Street, Ryde

## Height:

The conceptual basis for the Cox + Kennedy design derives directly from the project's location, context, site and brief.

The design takes as its starting point the fact that this site, the last remaining site in the Shepherds Bay residential precinct, is unusual and special because of its very specific location.

The site is located at the interface and entry point to two major municipal areas of Sydney, is in the heart of one of the city's most important urban renewal areas and is a place that will be highly visible from both afar and to the many thousands of people passing it daily as they travel up and down the river, along Concord Road and as they cross Ryde Bridge.

Its identification as a site worthy of something more than its surrounds reflects this significance.

The site offers the opportunity to provide a development that steps away from its surrounds and offers ideas that challenge the norm through urban and architectural excellence.

## Context:

The scheme derives from several observations:

- That the site was at the entry point to both Ryde and Rhodes
- That the site is located at a significant bend in the river, affording views in and from both directions
- That the site is an 'island' separated from and different to its immediate neighbours in Shepherds Bay
- That the site adjoins several significant recent high density residential precincts including Shepherds Bay, Rhodes, Breakfast Point, Wentworth Point and East Rhodes
- That these developments have already established precedents regarding the scale of development for the area
- That this change from industrial to high density and high rise residential development along the river will continue

Considering the above the team considered what might be an acceptable and appropriate height for a development on this site from a contemporary urban planning perspective.

In doing this we looked at:

- the scale and dimensions of Ryde Bridge
- the scale and height of Ryde Town Centre
- the height of buildings on adjoining sites within Shepherds Bay
- the height of buildings in the adjoining Rhodes Urban Renewal Precinct opposite Shepherds Bay
- current trends in building heights being proposed and approved throughout Sydney
- current trends in development scale and size being proposed and approved throughout Sydney
- the value of the range of urban strategies being proposed for the site and the appropriate residential yield required to support them
- the public benefit and value capture achieved by permitting a taller building on the site

We were also conscious that:

- the scale and size of apartment and commercial development being accepted and supported throughout Sydney has changed radically in recent years and that in terms of context and fit a building exceeding the 10 or 15 storeys previously contemplated for the site was neither radical nor out of step with contemporary urban practice and thinking
- that the upper reaches of the Parramatta River from Breakfast Point to Rhodes (including East Rhodes) and beyond to Parramatta is one of the major urban renewal corridors of Sydney
- that buildings of 25 storeys are now accepted, understood and being built within these sectors along the river
- by the scale of projects currently being proposed and approved across metropolitan Sydney 25 storeys is relatively modest. Proposals for buildings of up to 50 storeys and higher are now common and are rapidly changing the city skyline. (Parramatta City Council alone has 45 Planning Proposals seeking an uplift in building heights)

Key to the above was our analysis of the impacts of existing and proposed development immediately opposite the site at Rhodes and East Rhodes:

Rhodes:

The relationship of the project to the development directly opposite Shepherds Bay at Rhodes is significant.

Rhodes is one of the key urban renewal precincts in Sydney and along the Parramatta River. The area, which has an urban character and density similar to Shepherds Bay, includes a series of tower buildings of similar scale and height to the proposed development located at landmark points in the precinct.

These buildings are generally located at high points in the land mass of the

development, are highly visible, including from the river, and in many ways have set the precedent and character for other development along the river.

East Rhodes:

East Rhodes, which is yet to be built, is also scheduled to contain a mix of development including 25 storey buildings.

Being on the eastern side of the Concord Road this development will not only confirm the centrality of the urban precinct being developed at that point in the river but also that 25 storeys is now the new default height plane for the area.

That is, it will establish that it is both normal and reasonable to expect to see buildings of up to 25 storeys in this part of Sydney and along the upper reaches of the river.

In considering these issues the team were highly conscious of the building's visibility from the river, its impact on the skyline when viewed from afar and its visibility when travelling across Ryde Bridge or down Church Street.

We recognised that the site was at an important intersection and bend in the river and that whilst it would be desirable from an urban design perspective if the building were 'matched' by a similar building on either the western side of Shepherds Bay adjacent the railway bridge or the opposite side of Church Street adjacent Ryde Bridge, this was unlikely to occur and that the Building was likely to be a stand alone structure for some time to come.

The team came to the position that:

- the site is unusual and special because of its very specific location and characteristics
- the site is worthy of something more than its surrounds and offers the opportunity to provide a development that steps away from its built context through urban and architectural excellence.
- the scale, use and density being proposed is appropriate and reasonable and works well in relation to the scale and proportions of the site
- the value of placing the majority of the building mass in one structure on the eastern side of the side is compelling
- once the height of Building on the site exceeds 10 storeys the scale of the existing context is already departed from a 24 storey building is no longer materially significant or unusual in Sydney or the locality
- the city skyline of Sydney is now 'peppered' with tall buildings which are no longer seen as out of place or disruptive in the urban landscape
- when viewed from afar the building will 'fit' within the skyline being established by the Rhodes Development
- the current process of evolution of the character and height of development

- across Sydney will continue
- building heights are likely to continue to increase rather than stabilise
- these changes are impacting on the broader community's expectations for the Desired Future Character of Sydney as a whole
- placing taller buildings at the lower portions of an area rather than on the high points, as has traditionally been the case (for example in Rhodes), offers a quite different reading of scale

This last point is relevant when considering the proposed development in relation to Ryde City Centre (Top Ryde). Top Ryde is located at the top of Church Street approximately 1.5km north of the subject site and is approximately 50m above the ground level of the subject site. Top Ryde contains a series of 10 storey buildings, including the iconic Ryde Civic Centre, the ridges of which are approximately 80m - 100m above the ground level of the subject site. The relationship with Top Ryde is relevant to the extent that:

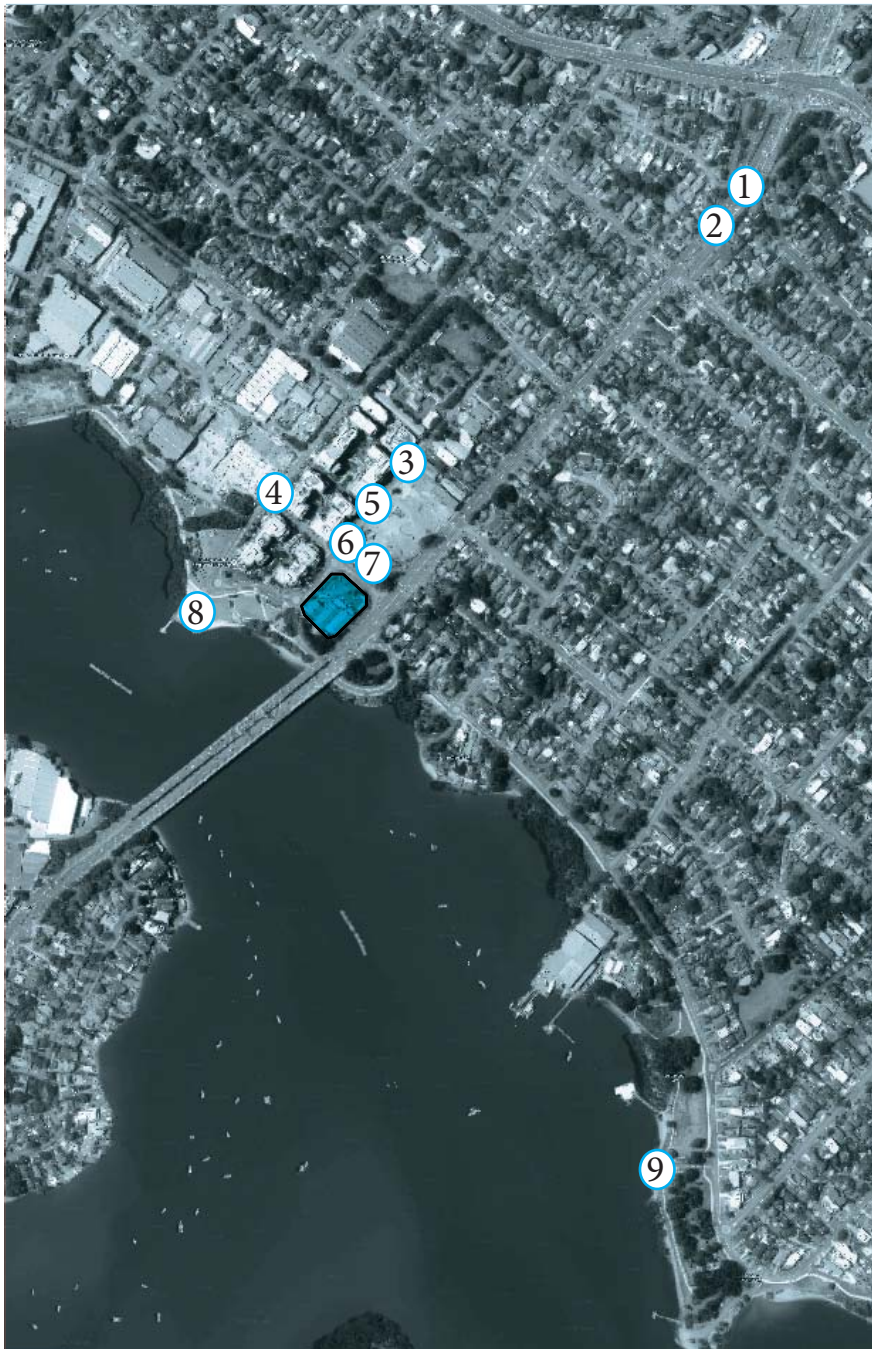
- Top Ryde will retain its visual and physical dominance of the urban landscape
- The proposed building will not be visually intrusive to the town centre
- The urban landscape, including the residential development of Shepherds Bay itself, located to the north behind the subject site will provide an appropriate visual backdrop to the building

Based on these considerations the team considered that:

- a building of the type being proposed could be justified for the site and in fact seen to be providing a valuable, attractive and important addition to the urban landscape.
- the public benefit from such an uplift was clearly demonstrable in terms of its planning and urban outcomes.



## Key Plan:



1. Church Street C
2. Church Street D
3. Position 3 Level 1
4. Wells Street
5. Meriton Building A
6. Meriton Building B
7. Meriton Building D
8. Ryde Wharf
9. Yarala Road, Bennelong Park





1 Church Street C



2. Church Street D





### 3. Position 3 Level 1



### 4. Wells St





5. Meriton Building A - Level 5



6. Meriton Building B - Level 3





7. Meriton- Building D



8. Ryde Wharf



## 9. Benelong Park, Yarala Rd