

Tallawarra Lands Concept Plan  
Approval Modification

APPENDIX

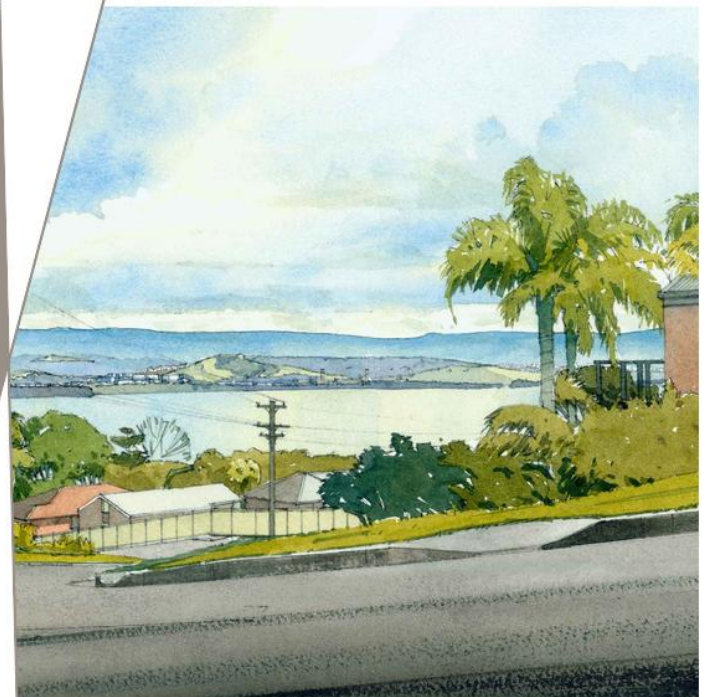
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VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

# Tallawarra Lands

## Tallawarra Lands Modification Application – Visual Impact Assessment

82017142-02



Prepared for  
Bridgehill (Tallawarra) Pty Ltd

10 November 2017

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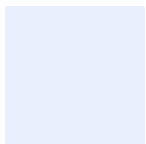
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# 1 Introduction

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## 1.1 Overview of Proposal

On 23 May 2013, the Minister granted consent for the Tallawarra Lands Concept Plan (Concept Plan) (MP09\_0131). The Plan provided for a mixed use development including residential, commercial, industrial and retail development, public open space areas, new recreational facilities, environmental management, conservation areas and riparian corridors. Since this approval was granted, the need for housing within the Illawarra has increased and the type of housing stock required has shifted as the demographics of the area changed.

A proposed modification to the approved Concept Plan seeks to increase the density of development within the northern half of the site by amending zone boundaries and minimum lot sizes to meet this increase in demand and the changing demographic requirements. The modification also seeks to amend a number of conditions of the original Concept Plan approval to acknowledge changes that have occurred over the 4 years since the approval was granted. These changes primarily comprise the separation of the North Shore and Central precincts from the Southern precinct, which is being held by the existing landowner Energy Australia and the associated requirements of the first development application.

## 1.2 Purpose of this report

The Modification Application that is the subject of this report seeks to increase the footprint of residential development in the Central and North Shore Precincts of the Tallawarra Lands and to increase the overall approved residential yield from 1,010 to 1,480 lots, along with decoupling the North Shore and Central precincts from the Lakeside Precinct, as it is not available to Bridgehill.

Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) were issued for this Modification Application on 23 January 2017. Various specialist assessments are required to address the SEARs. The visual impact of the proposed modification is specifically called up as a matter for assessment. This visual impact report has been prepared to address requirement No.4 which details visual impact reporting expectations in the Environmental Assessment and which reads:

*“4. Visual Impact*

*The Modification Request shall provide a detailed visual impact assessment of the proposal from key viewpoints including views towards the site from the Shellharbour LGA. The assessment shall provide a comparative analysis of the visual impacts of the proposal compared with the concept approval.”*

## 1.3 Method

In essence, any visual impact of this Modification proposal will result from the development for low density residential purposes of land that would be undeveloped under the Concept Plan as currently approved. To assess these potential impacts, the following process has been adopted:

- Review of the Visual Impact Assessment carried out for the original Part 3A Concept Plan Application (Richard Lamb & Associates, February 2011). This assessment has been used as the basis to gain an understanding of:
  - The existing visual character of the site and its locality, along with “Scenic Quality Zones” within the site and their respective values;
  - The effective visual catchment of the site and critical viewing locations within the catchment.
- Review of the Modification Proposal in order to ascertain the extent of land additional land to be developed in comparison to the current approval;
- A site and area inspection to ascertain viewing locations identified in the Lamb report (and any additional locations) that are likely to be impacted by the Modification proposal;
- Preparation of amended artist's impressions of views of the modified proposal from the identified critical viewing locations (using impressions prepared for the original visual assessment). The

amended artist's impressions have been prepared by John Haycraft of Haycraft Duloy, the same artist who prepared the original impressions;

- Assessment of the changes to the identified views and the resulting impacts on local visual quality and a comparative analysis of the changes to these views against the concept approval;
- Conclusions with respect to the additional visual impacts of the proposed modification and recommendations for any mitigation measures that might be required to address these.

## 2 Approved Concept and Proposed Modification

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### 2.1 Approved concept plan

The Concept Plan approval (MP09\_0131) was granted for the Tallawarra Lands on 23 May 2013. This approval was granted on the land owned by Energy Australia Tallawarra Pty Ltd for a mixed use development comprised of the following;

- > Three residential precincts being North Shore, Central and Lakeside; comprising a total of 1,010 lots
- > A retirement village containing 200 dwellings and a primary school
- > A neighbourhood centre
- > 12 ha of land zoned B6 Enterprise corridor
- > 54 ha of industrial and light industrial land
- > 2.5 ha site for use as a tourist facility
- > Road network, foreshore open space, walkways, cycle paths and share paths
- > 360 ha of open space

### 2.2 Proposed Modification

The proposed modifications to the Concept Plan result from the desire to provide a residential housing mix that meets the increased demand for a broader range of housing types in an inviting community setting, while offsetting the reduced yield associated with current delays in the development of the Lakeside Precinct. In addition to the modification identified below, changes are also proposed to the conditions of approval; however, these would not result in substantial change in the visual presentation of the site and have not been considered further.

#### 2.2.1 Overview

The proposed changes seek to increase the residential capacity within the Tallawarra Lands site. The proponent aims to achieve these through a number of small changes to the approved Concept Plan. This involves some adjustments to the zone extents to the R2 and IN2 zones within the North Shore and Central precincts subject to further environmental assessments. Further to this, the mix of housing types provided for will move towards smaller lot sizes to encourage townhouse and villa style dwellings over standard detached housing stock. These changes will combine to enable an increase in dwelling yield from the approved 1,010 lots to a proposed 1,480 lots.

To enable these changes a number of modifications to the Concept Plan conditions of approval will be required. These modifications are discussed in more detail below.

#### 2.2.2 Modification Proposal Components

##### 2.2.2.1 *Boundary Increases*

The proposal seeks to increase the boundaries for both the North Shore and Central precincts.

##### 2.2.2.1.1 **North Shore Precinct**

The adjustments to the zone boundaries within the North Shore Precinct are as follows:

- > Reduce the existing transmission easement width to accommodate a 15 metre wide corridor for underground transmission lines beneath a proposed road.
- > Expand the R2 zone (for low density residential land) south east into the RE1 Public Recreation Zone
- > Expand the R2 zone (for low density residential land) south into the E3 Zone up to the ridge line.
- > Expand the RE1 zone south of the expanded R2 zone in compensation for the reduction in RE1 zoned land described above.

**Figure 2-1** below shows the extents of zone boundary adjustments within the North Shore Precinct.





## North Shore Precinct Concept Plan

TALLAWARRA LANDS

### Legend

- Concept Plan Boundary
- Lot Layout
- Watercourses (LPI)
- Cadastre (DFSI-SS, 2017)
- Concept Approval Boundary
- Modification Boundary

FIGURE 2-1

1:4,000 Scale at A3





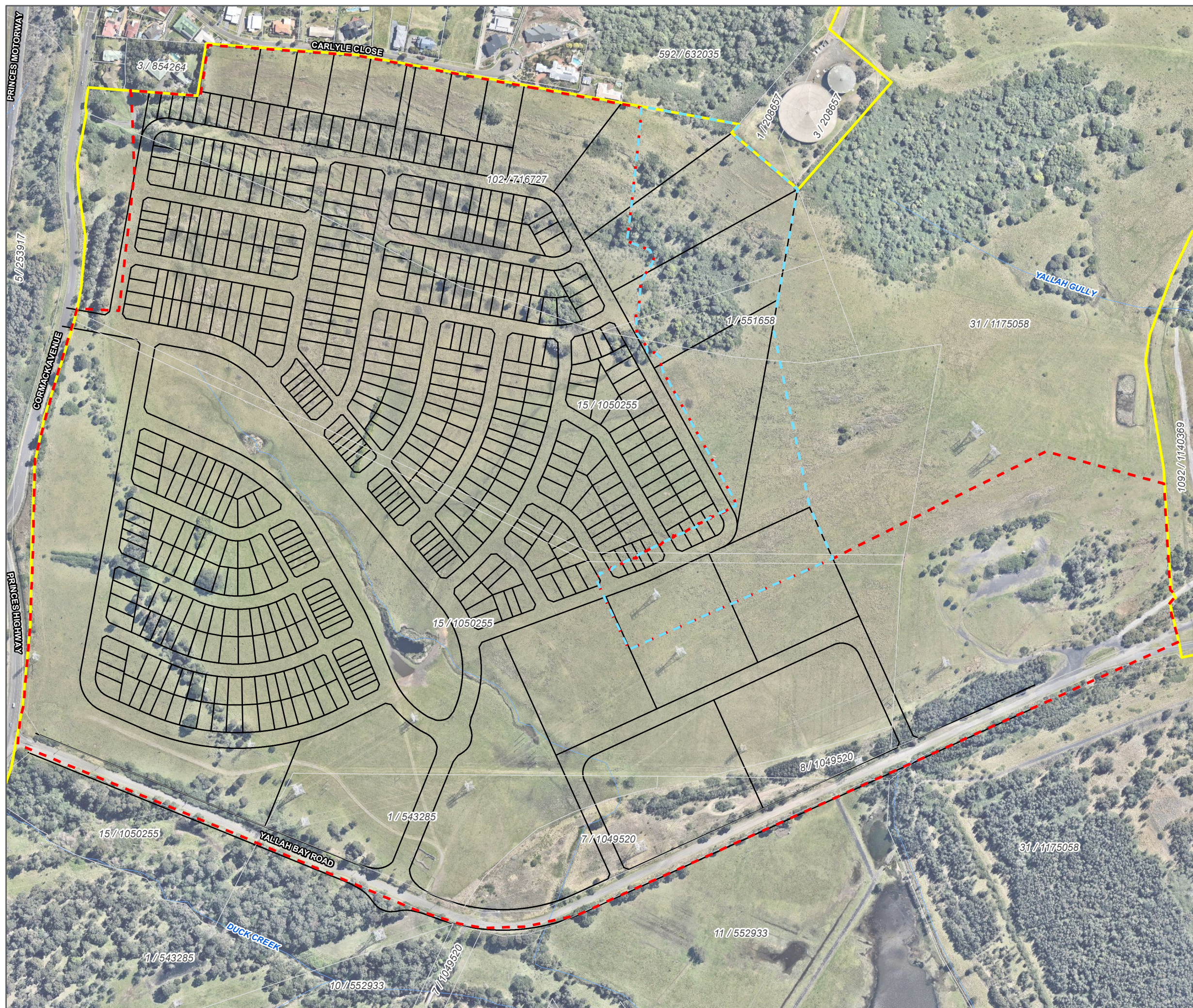
#### **2.2.2.1.2 Central Precinct**

The adjustments to the zone boundaries within the Central precinct are as follows;

- > Expand the R2 zone (for low density residential development) east, into the E3 Zone.
- > Expand the R2 zone (for low density residential development) north into the R5 Large Lot residential zone.
- > Minor alterations to R2 Zone (for low density residential development) into the E3 Zone around the riparian corridors
- > Expand the R5 zone (for large lot residential development) east, into the E3 Zone.
- > Extend the IN2 zone north into the E3 Zone.

**Figure 2-2** below shows the extents of zone boundary adjustments within the Central precinct.





## Central Precinct Concept Plan

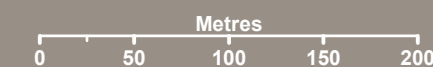
TALLAWARRA LANDS

### Legend

- Concept Plan Boundary
- Lot Layout
- Watercourses (LPI)
- Cadastre (DFSI-SS, 2017)
- Concept Approval Boundary
- Modification Boundary

FIGURE 2-2

1:4,000 Scale at A3



Map Produced by Cardno NSW/ACT Pty Ltd (WOL)  
Date: 2017-10-25 | Project: 8201714201  
Coordinate System: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 56  
Map: 82017142-01-GS-029-Central\_Concept\_Plan.mxd 03  
Aerial imagery supplied by nearmap (October, 2016)



**2.2.2.2      Increase Densities**

In conjunction with the minor changes to the boundaries of the two precincts discussed above, the modification to the approved Concept Plan also seeks to amend the provisions of Wollongong LEP 2009 to facilitate a greater mix of housing types and densities to meet the changing housing needs of the community. The proposed changes include:

- > a reduction in the minimum lot size within the R2 zoned land
- > an increase in the maximum height of building in certain areas
- > an increase in the floor space ratio (FSR) in certain areas

## 3 Visual Impact Assessment

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### 3.1 Approach

The SEARs specifically require a comparative analysis of the visual impacts of the proposed modification with the approved Concept Plan. In response to this requirement, the visual impact assessment of the Modification Application has been based on a review of the findings of the original visual impact report prepared by Richard Lamb & Associates (February 2011) – the Lamb Report. The review has informed an appreciation of the existing visual quality of the site and its locality. Additionally, critical viewing points that are likely to be impacted by the proposed Modification have been selected from the viewpoints identified in the Lamb report.

### 3.2 Visual impacts – comparative analysis

Following is a summary review of the components of the Lamb study that are relevant to this assessment, along with a comparative analysis of the proposed Modification against each component.

#### 3.2.1 Visual context and character of the environs (Lamb S.2.1)

The Lamb report identifies the parts of the site that are predominantly visible from outside the site as having a predominantly rural character comprising grazing and pastoral land with a varied topography. The development of the land as proposed in the concept plan will change this character to a mix of residential, commercial and employment uses while retaining the existing rural character on the undulating and elevated land in the central northern portion of the site.

With respect to visual character, the proposed Modification to the concept plan will involve a small extension of the residential character that has been introduced in the North Shore and Central Precincts as described in the current approved plan. Specifically, residential development in the north shore precinct will extend southwards to include new blocks of low density residential development along an existing east-west trending ridgeline (**Figure 2-1**).

All of the proposed Modifications to the concept plan are contained in the land to the north of Yallah Bay Road. For the purposes of this assessment, we are referring to this land as the modification site.

Changes to the central precinct will involve minor amendments to the residential development footprint including extension of conventional lots to the north and some additional rural residential lots extending to the north east in the general direction of the Mount Brown water tower (**Figure 2-2**).

#### 3.2.2 Proposed land use distribution under the Concept Plan (Lamb S.2.2)

Within the modification site, the approved concept plan includes:

- Hillside residential / large lots with predominantly south west orientation on southern side slopes in the vicinity of Mount Brown;
- Conventional residential development below these side slopes within the central precinct;
- Further conventional residential development in the North Shore Precinct to the north of a ridgeline that runs through that part of the site.

The proposed modification will change this landuse distribution to include:

- A mix of large and conventional lots on the southern side slope of Mount Brown and some very large lots extending further to the east. Each of these lots would support a single dwelling.
- Extensions of the conventional residential lots in the north shore precinct up to the southern ridgeline.

#### 3.2.3 Scenic resources of the site (Lamb S.2.3)

Scenic resources are described in the Lamb report as existing visual features that can provide opportunities for scenic experiences in future development scenarios. Scenic resources that are of significance to the modification site include:

- The Mount Brown hills and associated prominent slopes and vegetation (which contributes to horizon views in views from the west and south-west). These parts of the site are described as being suitable for low intensity development, subject to management of scenic values.

The proposed modification increases the development footprint across part of this land. Management measures will be required to ensure that the existing vegetation resources are retained and protected in the development of the land.

#### **3.2.4      Scenic quality zones (Lamb S.2.4)**

The Lamb Report identifies a series of scenic quality zones based on the intrinsic visual quality and constraints of the land. The modification site lies entirely within an area identified as Zone C (see **Figure 3-1** below). With respect to the modification site, the critical visual characteristics and constraints of this Zone include:

- Expansive views to / from the south, south-east, east, north-east and north.
- Pockets of remnant vegetation on the side slopes of Mount Brown which contribute to the quality of views towards the site.
- Capacity for large lot and low density residential development in the western portion, strategically located to be below the horizon of the critical views from the external domain.
- The upper and middle slopes of the southern, south-eastern and eastern part of the zone are constrained for future development due to their visibility from the south, south-east and eastern directions from the external domain.



**Figure 3-1 Scenic Quality Zones – extract from Concept Plan Visual Impact Assessment (Richard Lamb & Associates)**

Source: Part 3A Concept Plan Application (Richard Lamb & Associates, February 2011)

### 3.2.5 Existing visual exposure of the site (Lamb S.2.5)

The Lamb Report identifies a series of viewing locations within the effective visual catchment of the site (**Figure 3-2**). The analysis of views from these locations includes listings of Visual Exposure Zones that are likely to be visible from each the viewing location.



Viewing locations for the assessment of potential impacts of the proposed modification have been selected from those in the Lamb report that have been judged to be most likely to be impacted by the proposed changes to the concept plan. Given that the proposed modification essentially involves extension of the residential development footprint onto the south facing slopes of the northern sector of the site (Visual Exposure Zones A & B in the Lamb report), viewing locations that are likely to be impacted would be to the south, south-east and east of the site, with some minor changes to views from the north as a result of proposed new ridgeline residential development in the extension of the north shore precinct.



**Figure 3-2 Visual exposure zones – extract from Concept Plan Visual Impact Assessment (Richard Lamb & Associates)**

Source: Part 3A Concept Plan Application (Richard Lamb & Associates, February 2011)





**Figure 3-3 Views from across Lake Illawarra – extract from Concept Plan Visual Impact Assessment (Richard Lamb & Associates)**

Source: Part 3A Concept Plan Application (Richard Lamb & Associates, February 2011)

On this basis the following viewing locations are considered relevant to assessment of the visual impacts of the modification application:



- Views from Yallah Bay Road at close range – Views north from Yallah Bay Road would include the new ridgetop houses on Carlisle Close. Views to the north east would include the extended residential development in the north shore precinct along the north – east ridgeline and on the south facing slopes. Viewing locations 13 & 14 would be the most likely to change as a result of the modification.



**Figure 3-4** View Location 13 – from Yallah Bay Road towards the Carlisle Close ridgeline.  
Source: Cardno



- Views from the north-east and north of the site – views to the site from lakeside recreation areas and from high points further to the north would change marginally to include new residential development along the east-west ridgeline from Mount Brown. These are relatively long views over distances in the order of 1.5 – 2.0kms. The Illawarra Escarpment forms much of the backdrop to these views. Viewing locations 33 and 34 have been selected to assess the impacts of the modification.



**Figure 3-5 View Location 33**  
*Source: Cardno*

View location 33 – from the north-western foreshore of Muddy Bay, near Lakeside Drive. The site of the north shore precinct appears in the foreground with the Illawarra Escarpment as a continuous horizon line.





**Figure 3-6 View Location 34**

*Source: Cardno*

View location 34 – north shore precinct in foreground with Illawarra Escarpment occupying the full horizon. Existing high tension power stanchions are a significant negative element in this view.



- Views from the east and south-east – these are distant views, generally from the eastern foreshores of Lake Illawarra and high points to the east. The views are the broadest available of the site, particularly of Visual Exposure Zones A & B, but they are over long distances (4-5 kms from the site) and are set against the backdrop of the Illawarra Escarpment, which forms the horizon of these views. The impacts of the modification on these views have been assessed with reference to viewing locations 36, 37 & 38.



**Figure 3-7 View Location 36**

Source: Cardno

Viewing point 36 – long view towards the site from Mount Warrigal. Mount Brown and its south facing side slopes form a mid-distance view with the Illawarra Escarpment as a backdrop and continuous horizon.





**Figure 3-8 View Location 37**

*Source: Cardno*

Viewing point 37 – long view from Lake Illawarra foreshore. The site is a prominent mid distance element in the view but it is dominated by the backdrop of the Illawarra Escarpment which forms a continuous horizon element.





**Figure 3-9 View Location 38**

*ssSource: Cardno*

Viewing point 38 – view from north east off Windang Road, Windang. Similar to views from the south, the site is a small component of a very broad view which is dominated by the backdrop of the Illawarra Escarpment.



### 3.3 Visual representations

The Lamb Report included a series of artist's impressions prepared over images of key views as a means of representing the likely changes to these views that would result from implementation of the Concept Plan. In order to further the comparative analysis of the proposed modification against the approved Concept Plan, these impressions have been amended to illustrate the additional residential development proposed by the modification application. The original and modified impressions have all been prepared by John Haycraft of Haycraft Duloy, Architectural Illustrators.

The artists impressions illustrate that while the proposed modifications will amend the views, the overall visual character of the area will remain. The dominant features of the regional views, such as the backdrop of the Escarpment will be retained, with the undergrounding of power lines improving local views.



**Figure 3-10 View 2 showing new housing**

*Source: Haycraft Duloy*





**Figure 3-11 View 4 Showing New Housing**  
*Source: Haycraft Duloy*



**Figure 3-12 View 5 Showing new housing**  
*Source: Haycraft Duloy*





**Figure 3-13 View 6 Showing new housing**  
Source: Haycraft Duloy



**Figure 3-14 View 7 Showing new Housing**  
Source: Haycraft Duloy





**Figure 3-15 View 8 Showing new Housing**

Source: Haycraft Duloy

### 3.4 Recommended urban design strategies (Lamb S.5.2)

The culmination of the Lamb report is a series of strategies aimed at protecting and enhancing the identified scenic resources of the site. Strategies of relevance to the modification application are quoted below:

*“Strategies for proposed large lot and central residential precinct in Visual Exposure Zone A and north shore residential precinct in Visual Exposure Zone B*

1. *Location of the building envelopes to be below the horizon of the views.*
2. *Roads orientations and public domain landscape to assist in minimising visibility of buildings on ridgelines. There should be minimal visibility of internal roads from the external domain.*
3. *Appropriate landscape setting and visual and physical separation between built forms for the residential uses.*
4. *Appropriate use of materials and colours to reduce prominence.”*

Commentary on the visual impacts of the proposed modification with respect to these strategies follows.

#### 3.4.1 Central Precinct

The photographic survey and artist’s impressions indicate that the views into and from the central precinct generally include the Illawarra Escarpment as a backdrop and continuous horizon. The exception to this is close views towards the precinct from locations such as Yarrah Bay Road (for example from viewing location 13). In these close views only, the modification would result in a limited number of houses (in the order of 8) that would be accessed from Carlyle Close and would be visible as horizon elements towards the ridgeline to the west of Mount Brown. Our opinion is that these views from Yarrah Bay Road would not be critical to the visual experience of the site as they would be incidental only and the view would quickly open up with movement to the east to include Mount Brown and its surrounding vegetation. Notwithstanding this, any visual impacts of the Carlyle Close houses could be managed by controls to set the houses back from the street along with requirements to cap building heights and to carry out ridgeline tree planting.

In more distant views, from the eastern foreshore of Lake Illawarra, the Carlyle Close ridgeline is set against the continuous backdrop of the Illawarra Escarpment. The proposed houses would appear against this backdrop and would not create skyline elements.

The artist's impressions indicate that the other extensions to the development footprint proposed for the central precinct, being a new row of conventional lots at the base of the western ridgeline and the introduction of 4 very large lots towards the east, with access from a proposed road at their low end, would have minimal impacts on the visual quality of the locality when compared to the approved concept plan.

### **3.4.2      North Shore Precinct**

As is the case with the majority of views towards the central precinct, our analysis has indicated that all views towards the north shore precinct from the north, east and west include the Illawarra Escarpment as a continuous backdrop and horizon. In comparison to the approved concept plan, the proposed modification will result in additional single dwelling housing along the ridgeline extending east from Mount Brown with a minor extension onto the north facing slope of the precinct. Positive visual impacts will result from the proposal to remove a number of visually prominent high tensile stanchions on the ridgeline and relocate the electricity cables underground.

The Lamb report recommends that to preserve the visual quality of the locality, building envelopes should not extend beyond the horizon line. The view analysis that has been carried out as part of this visual impact assessment has found that in all available views towards the north shore precinct, the Illawarra Escarpment is a continuous horizon element. In this context, although there will be single dwelling houses on the ridgeline resulting from the modification, and these will be new elements in views from the north, south and to a lesser extent the east, the houses will be viewed against the backdrop of the Escarpment and will not form horizon views. Given also that the proposal includes removal of electricity stanchions which are a significant negative element in the local visual environment, our opinion is that the proposed modifications to the north shore precinct are acceptable with respect to their visual impact.



## 4 Conclusion & Recommendations

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The proposed modification to the approved concept plan for the Tallawarra Lands will involve extensions of residential development onto land to the north of the central precinct and to the south of the north shore precinct. It also involves removal of a number of visually intrusive electricity stanchions within the north shore precinct. The assessment of visual impacts of this proposal has found that:

- Views that would be impacted by the proposed modification include close views from Yallah Bay Road and more distant views to the south east, east, north east and north, all of which would be from land on the foreshores of Lake Illawarra and higher land above the lake.
- Only views from Yallah Bay Road would involve changes to the horizon, in the form of approximately 8 new dwellings on large lots. In all other views of this amended precinct footprint, new development would not form skyline elements. The extensions to the central precinct are considered to be acceptable with respect to visual impacts.
- Although some new ridgeline development is proposed in the north shore precinct, it would not impose on the skyline in any of the views assessed. Taking into account that the proposal also includes removal of the stanchions which are negative visual elements in the local landscape, our opinion is that the impacts of the proposed extension of the north shore precinct development footprint are acceptable.
- Our comparative analysis of the modified proposal against the approved concept plan has found that the relatively minor extensions to the development footprint would not be inconsistent with the conclusions and recommendations of the visual impact reporting for the approved concept plan.

Our recommendations with respect to the protection and enhancement of the landscape and scenic resource of the site are consistent with the Lamb report and include:

- Envelope and height controls should be put in place to minimise the visibility of new development along ridgelines. Specifically, new development accessed from Carlyle Close should be subject to setback and height controls to ensure that its visibility above the ridgeline is minimised.
- Existing vegetation on the site should be retained and enhanced where possible.
- Landscape treatment should include large forest scale trees, preferably of species endemic to the locality. These should be planted within lots and as street trees and should be concentrated on the higher lands and ridgelines where new development is likely to be most visible.
- A materials and colours palette should be included as part of a suite of development controls for the site. This should be aimed at minimising visual impacts of new built form.

## 5 References

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This section identifies reference material used in this report

Part 3A Concept Plan Application (Richard Lamb & Associates, February 2011)