

SOUTH EAST PRECINCT *BAKEHOUSE QUARTER*

VISUAL ANALYSIS

May 2010



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Urbis has been engaged by Pelorus Property Group to undertake a visual analysis of the site located in the South East Precinct of the Bakehouse Quarter, North Strathfield in response to the Director-General's Requirements for an Environmental Assessment as part of a Major Projects application.

This visual analysis assessed the likely impacts of the proposed site from the following eleven viewpoints selected through desktop research, site visits, and identification of landscape character units and visual quality:

- Vantage Point 1: Parramatta Road West
- Vantage Point 2: M4 Motorway Eastbound
- Vantage Point 3: George Street, South Bakehouse Quarter
- Vantage Point 4: Level 3, Bakehouse Quarter
- Vantage Point 5: George Street, North Bakehouse Quarter
- Vantage Point 6: Open Space Link
- Vantage Point 7: Bridge over Rail Line, Pomeroy Street
- Vantage Point 8: Queen Street North
- Vantage Point 9: Princess Lane
- Vantage Point 10: Queen Street
- Vantage Point 11: Parramatta Road East

Photomontages of selected views have also been prepared to illustrate the likely impacts of the proposed development.

The analysis identifies that though the proposed development is visible from a number of locations, the impacts are either minimal or acceptable. The proposed scheme provides a landmark in the skyline denoting the locations of the Bakehouse Quarter. Potential views from open spaces to the northwest are blocked by vegetation, changes in topography, powerlines, and existing development.

Due to the dislocation of most of the precinct from the rest of the Bakehouse Quarter by the M4 Motorway and the precinct's adjacency to Parramatta Road, the site reads as being more connected to the area across Parramatta Road to the south where taller residential development is beginning to occur. The proposed height will be contributory to this change in character that is occurring and will provide a visual balance on Parramatta Road.

It is recommended that the following is considered during the detailed design for the site, to reduce the visual impact of the development:

- Careful selection of colours, material and finishes particularly on upper storeys to avoid reflectivity, visual prominence and disturbance to views. Colours, material and finishes that assist with softening the interface should be adopted.
- The facade articulation is particularly important on wide elevations of the proposed development. Vertical breaks through both articulation and a change in materials aid in reducing the perceived bulk and scale.
- The top of the building could also be articulated through a change in form and materials to reduce the perceived height.
- The interface with Parramatta Road is vital to creating a good visual statement. The treatment of the facade and orientation of the buildings should contribute to the interface.

PART 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Urbis has been engaged by Pelorus Property Group to undertake a visual analysis of the site located in the South East Precinct of the Bakehouse Quarter, North Strathfield in response to the Director-General's Requirements for an Environmental Assessment as part of a Major Projects application for the site.

This work has been carried out to assess the potential visual impacts of the proposed development on the site and surrounding area.

The objectives of this report are:

- To identify, assess and document the visual and landscape qualities and characteristics of the land within the study area.
- To identify, assess and document views from the public domain that could potentially be impacted by the proposed development.
- To ensure the potential redevelopment adequately addresses bulk and scale impact issues by providing design recommendations.

1.2 Method

The process that Urbis used in conducting this visual analysis included, but was not limited to:

1. Research and site survey

- Desktop review and mapping to identify high points, ridge lines, potential view corridors and key vantage points.
- Photo documentation of key vantage points.

2. Identification of visual quality

- Assessing the quality of the existing characteristics of landscape based on the existing visual conditions and sensitivity to change.
- Identification of common elements of the landscape to understand the visual character and how it is experienced by people in the public domain. Potential private domain view impacts are acknowledged but not accessed in this report. Private domain assessment is to be undertaken at development application stage.

3. Analysis

- Assessment of the impact of the proposal on the identified character.
- Assessment of the impact of the proposed development on views experienced from the study area

4. Presentation of findings

1.3 Definition of Concepts

The following are definitions of concepts used for the purpose of the analysis undertaken as part of this report.

Scenic Quality

The scenic quality of the subject site and its surrounds is based on the extent to which the visual aesthetics and amenity of the landscape is valued from a human point of view. This value is based on professional opinion and an understanding of general community values.

Visual and Landscape Sensitivity

The visual and landscape sensitivity is the level that which views and/or landscape that are experienced by people can vary from the existing character or proposed future character without changing the fundamental elements or distinctive qualities that make the landscape recognisable.

Determining the existing landscape's sensitivity to change also depends on the degree to which the landscape has already been altered by urban development. If the landscape has had recent change, the introduction of additional development, and therefore more change, may potentially have less perceived impacts than in an area that has remained substantially unchanged for an extended period time. However it is noted that cumulative change may alter the key elements of the landscape and hence alter the perceived key characteristics of the area.

Visual Impact

The visual impact of a proposed development is determined by how much the proposed development imposes on the scenic quality, views and/or landscapes.

The acceptability of the visual impact of the proposed development is influenced by the weight/importance that is given to each of the vantage points. Identification of the importance of particular views of the landscape identified in this report are determined by the method described in the planning principle for views from Tenacity Consulting v Warringah [2004] NSWLEC 140.

PART 2

STUDY CONTEXT

2.1 Local Context

The site, as shown in **Figure 1**, is the South East Precinct of the Bakehouse Quarter, a mixed use retail and commercial development on the site of the old Arnott's Biscuit Factory in North Strathfield. Parramatta Road defines the southern boundary of the site, the Northern rail line defines the eastern boundary and George Street defines the western boundary. The M4 Motorway crosses over the southern portion of the site. Sydney Olympic Park is located approximately 1 km to the northwest of the site.

2.2 Site Area

The subject site is approximately 8,200 sqm and is located within the Canada Bay LGA. The site area consists of the following lots:

- Lots 30 and 31 in DP 1835
- Lot 15 in DP 262881
- Lots 1-9 and Lots 12-13 in DP 262882
- Lot 1 in DP 320106
- Lots 100-106 and Lot 109 in DP 717983
- Lots 1-2 in DP 1023863

2.3 Proposed Development

The proposed development is a 14 storey office building on the north east corner of the site, retention of an existing 2 storey building on George Street, and a theatre and 12 storey hotel on the southern boundary of the site along Parramatta Road. Based on plans prepared by WAH Architects dated April 2010.

2.4 Existing Landscape Character

Topography

The site is generally located in a low point of the local area, with a local high point 500m to the east and a minor ridgeline 2km to the south.

The topography across the site inclines towards the western boundary.

Built Form

The existing built form surrounding the site is comprised of a range of different building types and heights. Detached single family residential houses are directly to the east and commercial and warehousing buildings are directly to the north east and south. Higher density residential buildings are nearby to the south, southwest and southeast.

The area is undergoing a change in character, particularly to the south, where several 11 and 12 story residential buildings have already been built, and several more are proposed to be built.

Landscape

There are a significant number of established trees to the east of the site along the rail reserve and residential streets, as well as to the west in the open space corridor.

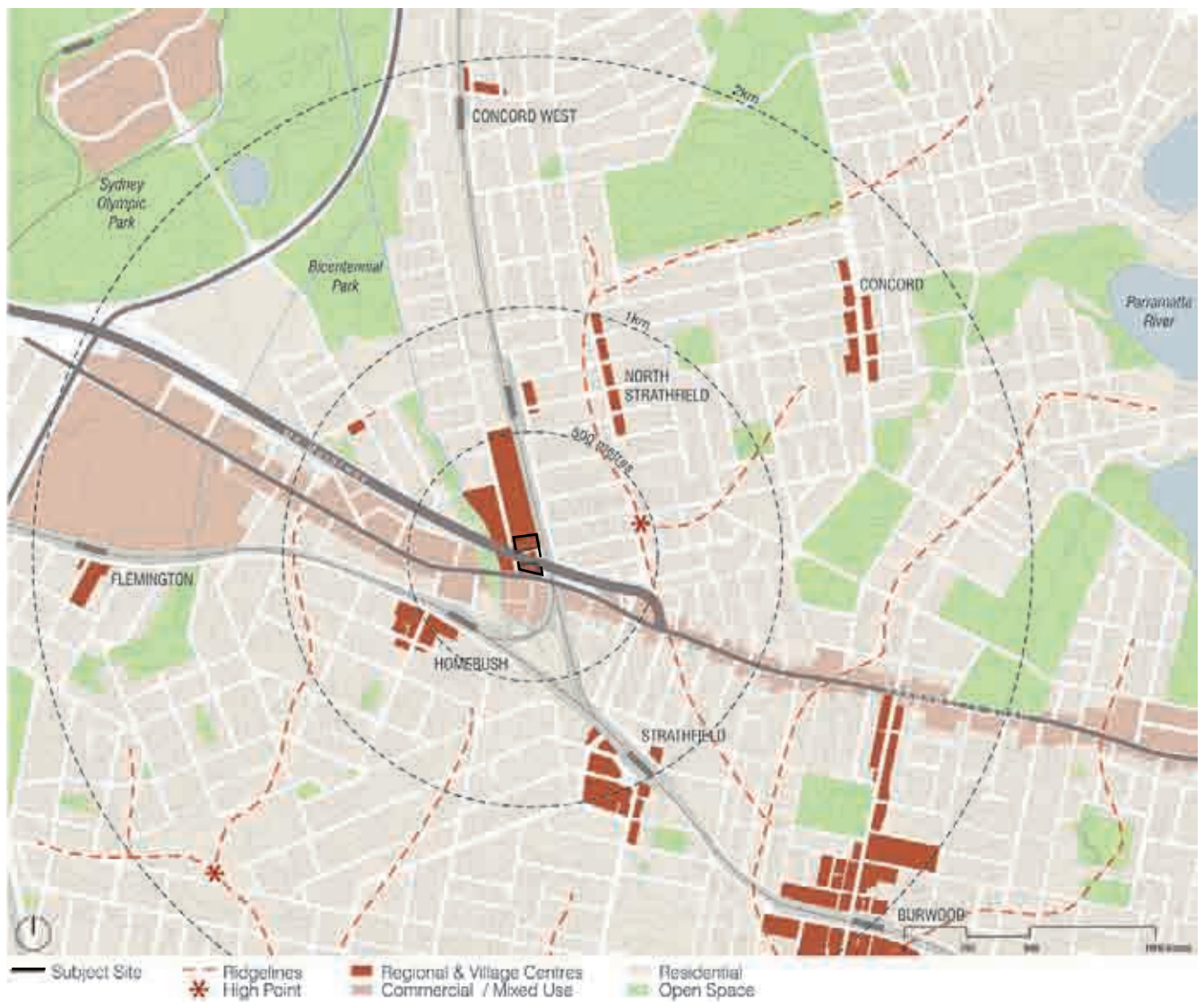


Figure 1: Study Area - Local Context Analysis

2.5 Local Visual Catchment

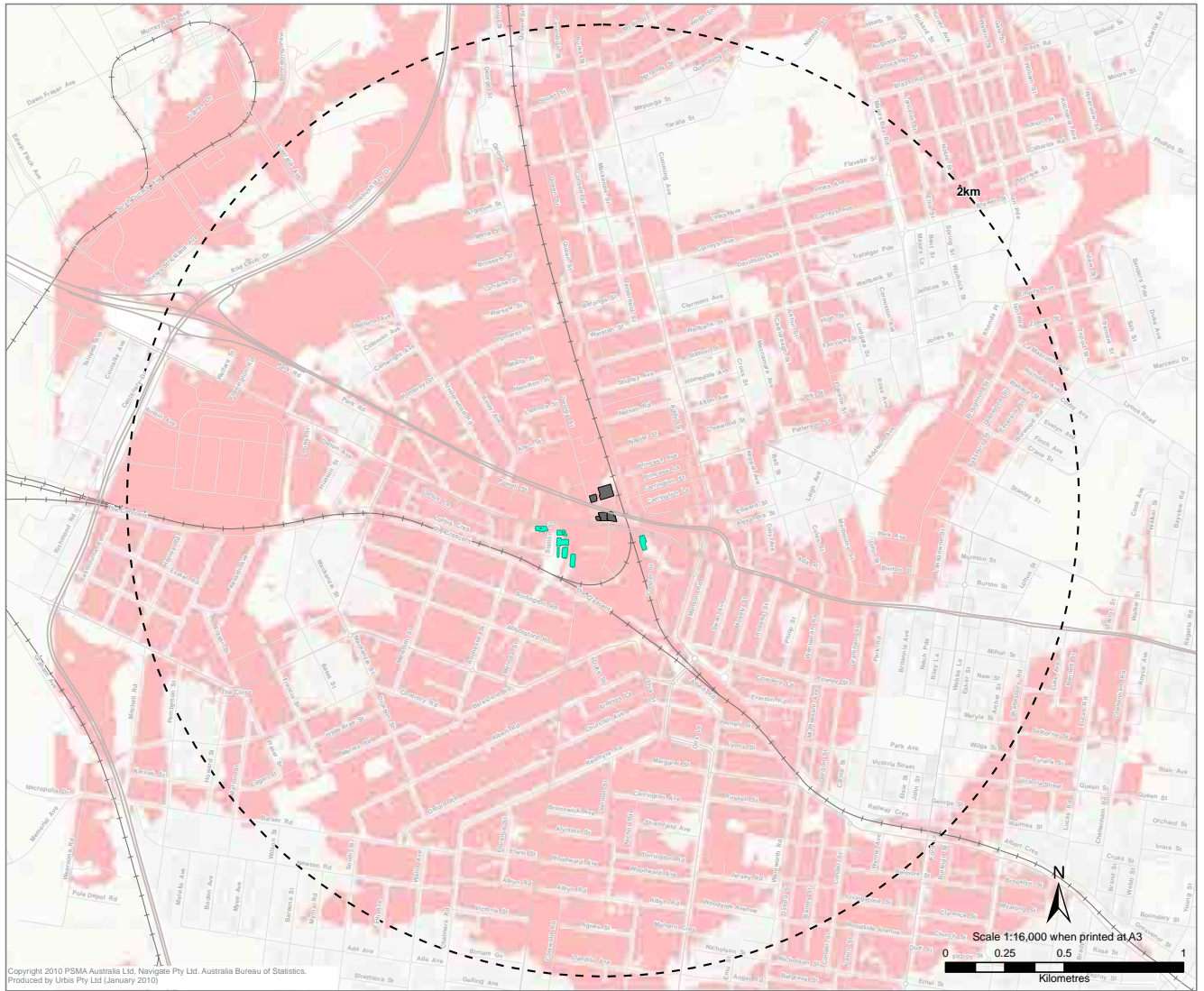
A desktop analysis of the local visual catchment has been undertaken using GIS and is illustrated in **Figure 2**.

This analysis takes into account the topography of the area, and assumes standard heights for each building type (i.e. single storey houses, warehouses, etc.) as well as plots the heights of specific structures, such as the M4 Motorway and taller residential development to the south, that could potentially impact views. This analysis is very rudimentary and does not take into account vegetation, powerlines and any other buildings that may be taller than the standard height by uses.

The analysis indicates that the proposed development is potentially viewable from much of the local area. Any potential visual impacts of the proposed development are considered to have maximum impact on view points within the immediate local catchment.

From this view shed analysis, potential areas of impact were refined through the identification of landscape character units and confirmed through ground truthing of the site and surrounds.

Vantage points were not considered from areas beyond the 1km radius, as distance, topography and existing built form limit the visual impact. The maximum visual impact is experienced from vantage points in close proximity to the site.



Legend

- Zones of Visual Influence
- Proposed Buildings
- Surrounding Tall Development
- Property Boundaries
- Railway Line
- Highway / Freeway
- Main Road
- Local Road

Figure 2: Potential Zones of Visual Influence

PART 3

ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL VISUAL IMPACTS

Based on the GIS local visual catchment analysis and on- location observational analysis, the following vantage points have been identified within the immediate visual catchment (1km of the site).

The selection of key view points has been based on potential views towards the site from each direction and the proximity of views to the subject site, where viewers will experience maximum visual impact from the proposed development. Places where the subject site is most likely to be viewed from by the public has also been a key consideration of vantage point selection. The key vantage points selected are illustrated in **Figure 4**.

The key view points as illustrated in **Figure 4** are identified as:

- Vantage Point 1: Parramatta Road West
- Vantage Point 2: M4 Motorway Eastbound
- Vantage Point 3: George Street, South Bakehouse Quarter
- Vantage Point 4: Level 3, Bakehouse Quarter
- Vantage Point 5: George Street, North Bakehouse Quarter
- Vantage Point 6: Open Space Link
- Vantage Point 7: Bridge over Rail Line, Pomeroy Street
- Vantage Point 8: Queen Street North
- Vantage Point 9: Princess Lane
- Vantage Point 10: Queen Street
- Vantage Point 11: Parramatta Road East

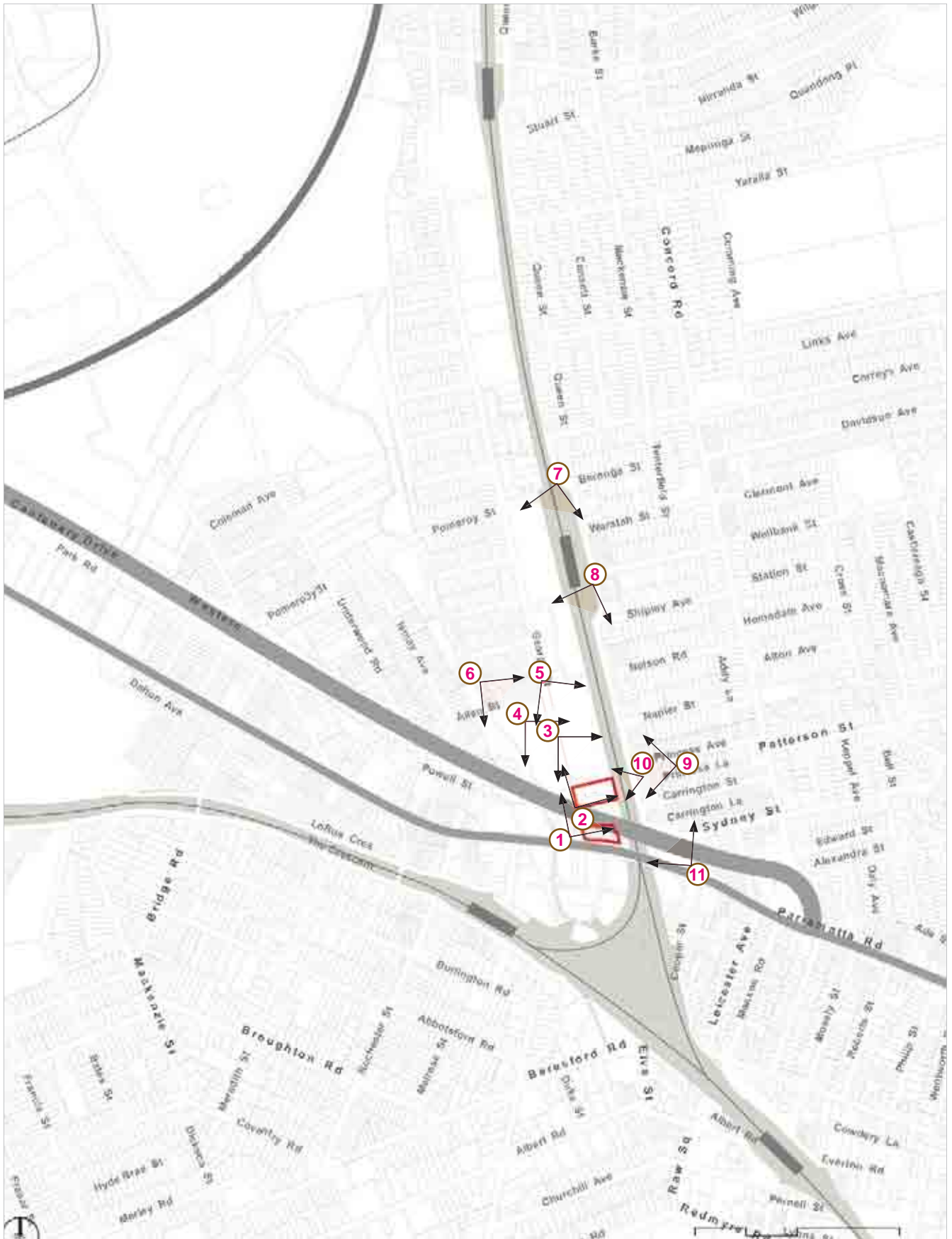


Figure 4: Location of Identified Vantage Points

Vantage Point 1 - Parramatta Road West

Description

This vantage point is located at the intersection of Parramatta Road and George Street and is looking northeast. The view is dominated by vehicular traffic and the elevated M4 Motorway.

Analysis

Type of viewer	Motorists, some pedestrians
Duration of view	Moderate for motorists: 60km/h speed limit, but at traffic signal. Potentially unlimited for pedestrians.
Scenic quality	The scenic quality of this view is low with no practically distinctive built form or landscape views. The view is dominated by traffic-related activity, including signals and at times heavy traffic. In the mid-ground there is a billboard, and the elevated M4 Motorway is in the background. The scattered trees provide some relief from the extensive amount of hard surfaces.
Visual and landscape sensitivity	This view has a moderate to low sensitivity to change. Though it is highly visible, the duration of the view is generally low and the scenic quality is low.

Assessment

Though the proposed scheme will change this landscape, the change is acceptable due to:

- The low existing scenic quality of the view.
- Likely change to the character of the area due to taller residential developments taking place to the south that the proposed scheme will be contributory to in scale.
- No particular important views of built form or landscape afforded from this location.



Figure 5: Location of Vantage Point 1



Figure 6: Vantage Point 1

Vantage Point 2 - M4 Motorway Eastbound

Description

This vantage point is located on eastbound approach of the M4 Motorway. The particular vantage point was chosen due to the proximity to the site. Due to the elevated nature of the M4 in this location, this vantage point is afforded distant views across the site to the surrounding residential area.

Analysis

Type of viewer	Motorists along M4 Motorway
Duration of view	Short: 90km/h speed limit and site lines tangent to direction of travel.
Scenic quality	The scenic quality of this view is medium, with views of the original Arnott's sign and the Bakehouse Quarter, as well as car parks and surrounding residential development. A broken tree line exists to the east of the vantage point in the residential area which terminates at the existing buildings on the Bakehouse Quarter site.
Visual and landscape sensitivity	Though this view has high visibility and close proximity to the vantage point, the duration of the view is short due to the high speeds of vehicles and the tangential sight lines. Therefore, this view has a medium sensitivity to change.

Assessment

The proposed scheme will change the landscape. However this change is acceptable due to:

- Viewing duration is short due to high speeds and tangential lines of sight.
- The proposed scheme would not block views from the east bound lanes of the M4 to the Arnott's sign or existing Bakehouse Quarter from this vantage point.
- The proposed scheme will offer a landmark in the area denoting the location of the Bakehouse Quarter.



Figure 7: Location of Vantage Point 2

It is also noted that while further away and subject to passing vehicles the west bound traffic passing this vantage point will experience acceptable visual change due to the proposed development.



Figure 8: Vantage Point 2

Vantage Point 3 - George Street, South Bakehouse Quarter

Description

This vantage point is located within the Bakehouse Quarter on George Street, and is oriented south. It is characterised by the existing built form of the former Arnott's Biscuit Factory.

Analysis

Type of viewer	Motorists on George Street, pedestrians in Bakehouse Quarter
Duration of view	Medium for motorists: 50 km/h speed limit. Potentially unlimited for pedestrians.
Scenic quality	The scenic quality is medium to high, as the Bakehouse Quarter has a generally unique and cohesive visual statement including built form and vegetated nodes along the streets. However this is truncated by the M4 Motorway that separates part of the South East Precinct from the rest of the Quarter.
Visual and landscape sensitivity	This view has a medium to high sensitivity to change due to the existing quality of the Quarter and high pedestrian use.

Assessment

The proposed scheme will change the landscape. However this change is acceptable due to:

- The proposed scheme being contributory to the commercial character of the Quarter.
- The proposed scheme shields and distracts from the M4 Motorway.
- Taller aspects are set away from the main street with little the proposed buildings maintaining the bulk and scale of the existing buildings along George Street.
- No particular important views of built form or landscape afforded from this location.



Figure 9: Location of Vantage Point 3



Figure 10: Vantage Point 3

Vantage Point 4 - Level 3, Bakehouse Quarter

Description

This vantage point is located on level 3 of a building on the east side of George Street in the Bakehouse Quarter. It has views of the South East Precinct, the M4 Motorway and high density residential development in the background.

Analysis

Type of viewer	Users of the building
Duration of view	Currently short to medium, due to use as exercise facility
Scenic quality	The scenic quality of the foreground is high due to the built form of the Bakehouse Quarter. However, the middle to background of the view has low scenic quality due to the M4 Motorway, incongruous tall residential development and a clutter of signage.
Visual and landscape sensitivity	The view has a medium low sensitivity to change due to the proximity of the site, but the view is already cluttered with a mixture of different buildings, signs and structures.

Assessment

The proposed scheme will change the landscape in close proximity from the viewing location. However this change is acceptable due to:

- The contributory effect, with appropriate facade treatment, of the proposed buildings to the commercial character of the Quarter.
- Shielding and context provided to the M4 Motorway and blocking of the visual clutter beyond.
- Distant views are of existing tall residential buildings.



Figure 11: Location of Vantage Point 4



Figure 12: Vantage Point 4

Vantage Point 5 - George Street, North Bakehouse Quarter

Description

This vantage point is at the northern end of the Bakehouse Quarter on George Street, looking south. The view is dominated by the existing built form of the Quarter.

Analysis

Type of viewer	Motorists, pedestrians in Bakehouse Quarter
Duration of view	Medium for motorists: 50 km/h speed limit. Potentially unlimited for pedestrians.
Scenic quality	The scenic quality of the foreground is high due to the unique and cohesive character of the Bakehouse Quarter including building height, street wall, planting along street and street width.
Visual and landscape sensitivity	The sensitivity to change is high in the foreground due to the cohesiveness of the built form and high pedestrian use. However, the view is dominated by the buildings in the foreground, with the background visual receding. Therefore, the background has a medium to low sensitivity to change.

Assessment

Though the scenic quality is high, the background, where the proposed scheme would be located, has a low sensitivity to change due to the dominance of the foreground. The proposed scheme will not significantly change the landscape due to:

- The proposed taller elements of the scheme are set back from George Street and will be shielded by the existing development.
- Any views in the background of the scheme would be contributory to the commercial character of the Quarter.



Figure 13: Location of Vantage Point 5



Figure 14: Vantage Point 5

Vantage Point 6 - Open Space Link

Description

This vantage point is located in the open space link that runs along a drainage channel. It includes pedestrian and cycleway paths.

Analysis

Type of viewer	Cyclists and pedestrians using the regional connection.
Duration of view	Short to medium as cyclists and pedestrians move through the link.
Scenic quality	The scenic quality of this view point is medium due to the open space nature of the area.
Visual and landscape sensitivity	Moderate sensitivity to change due to use of the space but is mitigated by the high level of visual encroachment already occurring in the background.

Assessment

The proposed scheme will not significantly change the landscape due to:

- The distance between the proposed scheme and the open space link.
- Existing vegetation and built form in between the proposed scheme and the open space that provides a visual barrier.
- Existing buildings already present in the view and no particular important views of landscape afforded from this location.



Figure 15: Location of Vantage Point 6



Figure 16: Vantage Point 6

Vantage Point 7 - Bridge over Rail Line, Pomeroy Street

Description

This vantage point is located on a vehicular and pedestrian bridge over the rail line at Pomeroy Street, north of the subject site.

Analysis

Type of viewer	Motorists, some local suburb pedestrians and cyclists
Duration of view	Short for motorists: 50 km/h speed limit and sight lines tangent to direction of travel. Potentially unlimited for pedestrians.
Scenic quality	The scenic quality is medium due to the substantial existing vegetation, but is mitigated by the existing rail line.
Visual and landscape sensitivity	The sensitivity to change is medium due to the existing vegetation, the existing development in the mid- to background and the distance of the view and tangential sight lines.

Assessment

The proposed scheme will not significantly change the landscape due to:

- Tall existing buildings already present in the centre of the view.
- Existing vegetation, rail line and built form in between the proposed scheme and the space that provides a visual barrier.
- Short duration of the view and tangential sight lines for most viewers.
- The Arnotts sign will remain visible from the vantage point.



Figure 17: Location of Vantage Point 7



Figure 18: Vantage Point 7

Vantage Point 8 - Queen Street North

Description

This vantage point is located on the corner of a neighbourhood shopping strip on Queen Street to the east of the rail line.

Analysis

Type of viewer	Motorists and local neighbourhood pedestrians
Duration of view	Medium for motorists: 50 km/h speed limit, but at stop sign. Potentially unlimited for pedestrians.
Scenic quality	The scenic quality is medium due to the substantial existing vegetation.
Visual and landscape sensitivity	The sensitivity to change is low due to visual barrier created by existing trees.

Assessment

The proposed scheme will have little to no impact on the landscape due to:

- The distance between the proposed scheme and the landscape.
- Existing vegetation that provides a visual barrier.
- No particular important distant views afforded from this location.



Figure 19: Location of Vantage Point 8



Figure 20: Vantage Point 8

Vantage Point 9 - Princess Lane

Description

This vantage point is located on Princess Lane in the residential area to the east of the subject site.

Analysis

Type of viewer	Local residents motorists and some pedestrians
Duration of view	Medium as motorists or pedestrians travel west along the lane. Potentially unlimited for any two storey adjacent residential.
Scenic quality	The scenic quality is low due to views of the existing elevated M4 Motorway.
Visual and landscape sensitivity	The lane itself has a low to medium sensitivity to change due to low usage. However, this view also represents the likely impacts from neighbouring houses. Though the houses are in close proximity to the site, views would be from second levels and from side boundaries, therefore the sensitivity to change is medium.

Assessment

The proposed scheme will significantly change the landscape in close proximity from the viewing location. However this change is acceptable, provided appropriate facade treatment and articulation is used, due to:

- Shielding of the M4 Motorway that the proposed scheme offers.
- Low scenic quality of the view and low frequency of viewers experiencing this view.
- Any views from residential development would be from second storeys and over a side boundary.



Figure 21: Location of Vantage Point 9



Figure 22: Vantage Point 9

Vantage Point 10 - Queen Street

Description

This vantage point is located on Queen Street to the east of the site looking west.

Analysis

Type of viewer	Motorists, few pedestrians, residents
Duration of view	Moderate for motorists: 50km/h speed limit, but tangential sight lines. Potentially unlimited for pedestrians and residents.
Scenic quality	The view is dominated by the rail line and vegetation in the foreground, with views of the M4 Motorway and existing Bakehouse Quarter development in the midground. The scenic quality is low due to the dominance of the rail line and the motorway.
Visual and landscape sensitivity	This view has a moderate sensitivity to change. Though the site is visible and the duration of the view is high for residents, the scenic quality is low and the site is visual separated with vegetation and rail powerlines.

Assessment

Though visible, the scenic quality of this view is low. Existing vegetation along the railway line limits views to the site. Therefore, though the proposed scheme will change this landscape, the change is acceptable due to:

- The low existing scenic quality of the view.
- Shielding of the M4 Motorway that the proposed scheme offers.
- The limited number of dwellings facing west, most are oriented north-south. Additionally the land surrounding the vantage point is zoned R3 Medium Density Residential under Canada Bay Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2008 and is subject to change in the future.

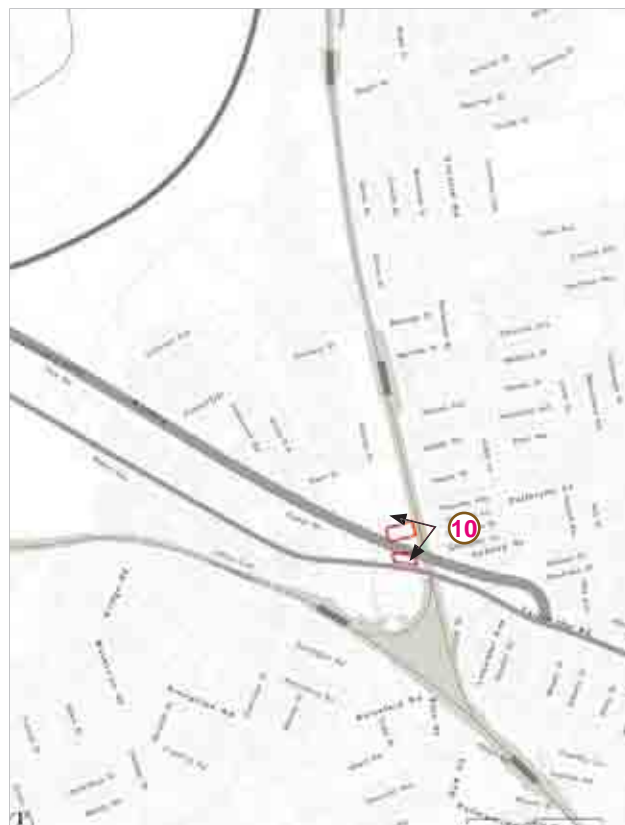


Figure 23: Location of Vantage Point 10



Figure 24: Vantage Point 10

Vantage Point 11 - Parramatta Road East

Description

This vantage point is located on Parramatta Road to the east of the site looking west.

Analysis

Type of viewer	Motorists, few pedestrians
Duration of view	Moderate for motorists: 60km/h speed limit, but at traffic signal. Potentially unlimited for pedestrians.
Scenic quality	The view is dominated by traffic-related activity, and at times heavy traffic. In the mid-ground there is the Arnott's Biscuit sign on the rail bridge. The scattered trees provide some relief from the extensive amount of hard surfaces.
Visual and landscape sensitivity	This view has a moderate to low sensitivity to change. Though the site is potentially visible, the duration of the view is generally low, the scenic quality is low and the site is in the background.

Assessment

Though visible, the scenic quality of this view is low. Therefore, though the proposed scheme will change this landscape, the change is acceptable due to:

- The low existing scenic quality of the view.
- Likely change to the character of the area due to taller residential developments taking place to the south of the site that the proposed scheme will be contributory to in scale.
- The proposed scheme will provide a landmark for motorists approaching from the east identifying their arrival to the Bakehouse Quarter.



Figure 25: Location of Viewing Point 11

The proposed development may impact the mid-ground views of some upper level apartments in the buildings currently located and under construction on the southern side of Parramatta Road east of the railway line (as shown on the left side of Figure 26). However the number of units affected are limited to those facing north. The topography indicates that the existing view is already of the existing buildings on the Bakehouse Quarter site. It is noted that private domain views have not been assessed as part of this report and it is unclear the extent of the views afforded from the upper level apartments of these buildings.



Figure 26: Viewing Point 11

PART 4

PHOTOMONTAGES

Visual impacts of proposed built form

Based on the analysis of views towards the South East Precinct, the following photomontages depict the proposed development within the precinct and potential future adjacent development to provide a further understanding of the likely impacts.

The public domain views selected for montages to be prepared were the vantage points with the most significant direct views to the site.



Figure 27: Photomontage from Vantage Point 3 - George Street Bakehouse Quarter

Proposed South East Precinct Development
Potential Future Adjacent Development

The montage (Figure 27) shows Building Q in the context of potential future adjacent development creating a new skyline as viewed from Vantage Point 3.



Figure 28: Photomontage from Vantage Point 7 - Bridge over Railway line Pomeroy Street

■ Proposed South East Precinct Development
■ Potential Future Adjacent Development

The montage show in Figure 28 illustrates Building F in the context of potential future adjacent development and existing development as viewed from Vantage Point 7 along the railway corridor. The Arnott's Sign remains visible from this vantage point.



Figure 29: Photomontage from Vantage Point 9 - Princess Lane

 Proposed South East Precinct Development



Figure 30: Building F - Eastern facade concept (WAH Architects)

The montage of the proposed development from Vantage Point 9 shown in Figure 29 illustrates the substantial change to view. The impact of the eastern facade of Building F is reduced by the vertical and horizontal articulation shown in the facade concept (Figure 30).

It is noted that dwellings that face west towards the site west of the vantage point will be significantly affected by the proposed development (Figure 31).

It is also noted that Powell's Estate Conservation Area and a heritage item at 15 Queen Street listed under Canada Bay LEP 2008 are in the vicinity of the vantage point however the existing vegetation, separation by the railway line and orientation of dwellings limit the impact of the proposed development.

However, as the number of dwellings affected is limited and the land use zoning of the western facing dwellings allows change from detached dwellings to medium density residential the impact is considered acceptable.



Figure 31: Location of Building F in relation to Queen Street dwellings

PART 5

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

The analysis identifies that though the proposed development is visible from a number of locations, the impacts are either minimal or acceptable. The proposed scheme provides a landmark in the skyline denoting the locations of the Bakehouse Quarter. Potential views from open spaces to the northwest are blocked by vegetation, changes in topography, powerlines, and existing development.

The visual landscape that is affected by the proposal are those which area in close proximity to the site, where tall building are proposed and already exist. Much of the surrounding residential areas are not affected or have minimal ability to view the proposed development. The taller buildings in the area are anticipated as urban renewal along Parramatta Road takes place.

Due to the dislocation of most of the precinct from the rest of the Bakehouse Quarter by the M5 Motorway and the precinct's adjacency to Parramatta Road, the site reads as being more connected to the area across Parramatta Road to the south where taller residential development is beginning to occur. The proposed height will be contributory to this change in character that is occurring and will provide a visual balance on Parramatta Road.

The proposed scheme steps down to George Street, contributing to the existing character in the Bakehouse Quarter and providing transition between George Street and the development further to the south.

The bulk and scale of the proposed development will add to the prominence of the built form. In *Michael Hesse v Parramatta City Council* [2003] NSWLEC 313 the visual impact is based on whether the proposed built form relates better to the precinct than the existing development. When applying this principle to the proposed development, there is opportunity to:

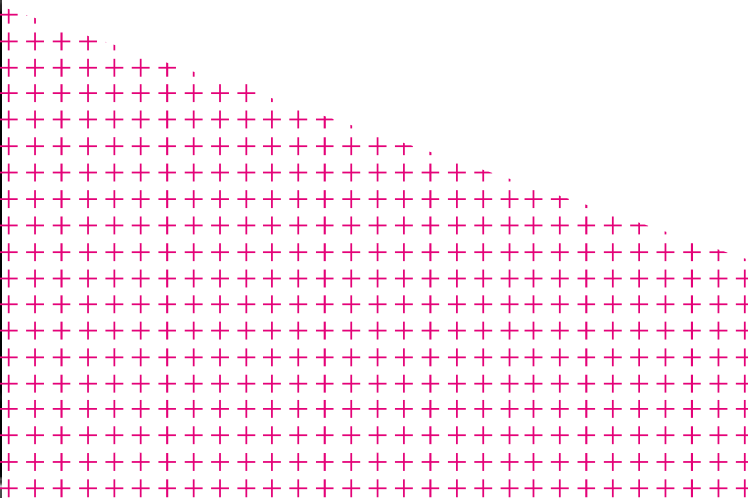
- Relate the proposed development to its context utilising sympathetic colours, material and finishes to provide a more subtle transition between built form and landscape, than the existing development.
- Reduce building bulk towards the top of the development, thereby reducing the visual bulk adding to the merit to the proposed development.

5.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations are to be considered during the design development for the site, to reduce the visual impact of the development:

- Careful selection of colours, material and finishes particularly on upper storeys to avoid reflectivity, visual prominence and disturbance to views. Colours, material and finishes that assist with softening the interface should be adopted.
- The facade articulation is particularly important on wide elevations of the proposed development. Vertical breaks through both articulation and a change in materials aid in reducing the perceived bulk and scale.
- The top of the building could also be articulated through a change in form and materials to reduce the perceived height.
- The interface with Parramatta Road is vital to creating a good visual statement. The treatment of the facade and orientation of the buildings should contribute to the interface.





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