



Major Project Application MP 08\_0195 for mixed use  
development comprising of commercial and residential use

## **78-90 Old Canterbury Road, Lewisham**

### **Visual impact assessment**

Report prepared for Lewisham Estate Pty Ltd

by Dr. Richard Lamb

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## **Executive Summary**

### **Introduction**

1. This report is an independent assessment of the potential visual and related amenity impacts of the Major Projects Application MP 08\_0195 for a proposed Master Plan for a mixed use development comprising residential and commercial uses for the development site, 78-90 Old Canterbury Road, Lewisham, legally described as Lot 11 DP 774322 and Lots 6-8 DP 977044, Lewisham.
2. The subject site is bounded by Longport Street to the north, Old Canterbury Road to the east, Hudson Street to the south and a green corridor (redundant freight railway corridor) to the west. The north eastern corner of the site is bounded by William Street and Brown Street. The subject site has a total area of 13,115sqm.
3. For the purpose of undertaking a detailed potential visual impact and urban design analysis and to correspond to the Master Plan prepared by Tony Owen and Partners, the Study Area for this Report has been taken as the whole triangular McGill Street Precinct Area and further emphasis is given to the merits assessment of the proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site only.
4. This report is provided as part of the Environmental Assessment submitted for the proposed Major Project and specifically to address Director General's Requirements Key Issue 2 Built Form and Land Uses, Key Issue 4 Urban Design, Key Issue 5 Public Domain and part of Key Issue 7 as outlined in the DG's requirements dated 16 March 2009 (MP 08\_0195) in as far as they are relevant to my area of expertise.
5. The Applicant proposes Detailed Master Plan Options (2A, 2B, 3A and 3B and a Master Plan) which are in line with the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan of Marrickville Council which includes the subject site but extends beyond it to the south and includes the area between the disused freight line and Old Canterbury Road to the south of Hudson Street. The proposed Detailed Master Plan Options are in line with and are a refinement of the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan. It considers the Marrickville Urban Strategy which stipulates the potential for the development site for a mixed use development with high density residential and low impact employment uses. The Master Plan for the whole Study Area combines features of Options 2B and 3B and focuses on Preferred Option 3 for the subject site only, which combines features of Detailed Master Plan Options 2B and 3B for the subject site.

### **Methodology**

6. The important visual resources of the Study Area and its surrounding context are identified as part of the assessment. They are;
  - i. Important vistas and visual linkages
    - overpasses on Old Canterbury Road and Longport Street over the freight rail line
    - vista down McGill Street from Old Canterbury Road
    - vista down Toothill Street
    - vista down Henry Street



- vista down Hudson Street from Old Canterbury Road
  - vista down William Street from Old Canterbury Road and also from the park at the western terminus of Jubilee Street
  - vista down Brown Street from Longport Street
  - ii. Important interfaces
    - southern and eastern edges along Old Canterbury Road facing residential developments
    - western edge along the freight rail line and the proposed greenway
    - northern edge visible from the main railway line
    - internal northern and southern edges to the proposed central public open space
  - iii. External visual resources relevant to development site and proposed development
    - the existing taller buildings in the Allied Mills Site
    - the future development on the Allied Mills Site, subject to the Hassell Master Plan for that site, which will be a maximum height of 12 to 14 storeys ?
7. A detailed comparative analysis of the features and merits of the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan and of the proposed Master Plan Options including the proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site only is presented. The criteria analysed include;
- i. the treatment of the central part of the Study Area;
  - ii. the spatial arrangement of buildings and open spaces in individual sector;
  - iii. building height distribution, gradation and address to the important edges of the Study Area with respect to immediate surrounding context, and;
  - iv. response to the existing visual linkages and axial views from the immediate surrounding context and proposed potential visual linkages.

### **Visual and urban design considerations**

8. The Applicant proposes a number of urban design strategies to be incorporated within the detailed design stage for improved compatibility with the built form and high quality visual and residential amenity. These include;
- i. Appropriate setbacks of the buildings along the various edges.
  - ii. Lower street facing height and set back taller components for buildings facing the residential edge along Old Canterbury Road.
  - iii. Appropriate setbacks of buildings from the internal central public open space as well as along the public parks individual sectors i.e., the northeast, northwest, southeast and southwest sectors.
  - iv. Appropriate lower height of parts of the buildings on the north side of the central public open space for better sunlight access to the park.
  - v. High quality aesthetics and architectural standards, façade treatments, articulation and modulation.



- vi. Appropriate forms, materials and colours.
  - vii. Appropriate orientation of buildings, windows, doors and other openings.
  - viii. A 20m green space buffer along the freight light rail allowing for a shared cycle/walking link, public open space and buffer planting. A light rail station is also proposed approximately in the alignment of the central park which does not cause any significant visual impacts.
9. The landscape masterplan proposes appropriate landscape species and landscape treatment for various edges, the central park, public and private open spaces, internal street networks and the greenway corridor.

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

- 10. It is determined that there are no increased negative effects on views of the development site from the external public and private domains of any of the proposed Options compared to the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan.
- 11. The proposed Options do not cause any increased visual or streetscape impacts compared to those that will be caused by the construction of the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan Option.
- 12. The Applicant's proposed Options have better permeability and visual linkages with external streets and axial views available through them compared to the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan.
- 13. The proposed Options have improved grading of building heights with respect to the sensitivity of the various edges of the Study Area, compared to the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan.
- 14. The proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site and the Master Plan (combining features of the proposed Options 2B and 3B) have greater merits compared to the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan and the other Options in regard to the central open space, layout of buildings and the related open spaces in the individual sectors.. They also have better overall permeability and visual linkages.
- 15. The overall visual effects are rated moderate for all the proposed Options and are similar to those that would be the result of the construction of the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan.
- 16. The overall visual impacts are rated moderate for all the proposed Options and are similar to those that would be the result of the construction of the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan.
- 17. The McGill Street Precinct Master Plan has some merits in regard to building height distribution adjacent to the Central public open space and it is recommended to have a lower height of the street wall in all the proposed Options adjacent to the north side of the central open space and stepping up of the buildings behind.
- 18. Each of the proposed Options has merits on some criteria and all of them are superior to the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan in regard to their address to the surrounding environment, street grid, streetscapes, linkages and permeability options.
- 19. The proposed Master Plan and the Preferred Option 3 for the subject site, subject to further refinement at the detailed approval stage, are considered on overall balance to be the most preferred options in terms of visual and urban issues.



## **1.0 Introduction**

### **1.1 Purpose of this report**

We have been appointed by Lewisham Estates Pty Ltd to undertake an independent assessment of the potential visual impacts of a Major Projects Application MP 08\_0195 for a proposed Master Plan for a mixed use development comprising residential and commercial uses for the subject site, 78-90 Old Canterbury Road, Lewisham, which is legally described as Lot 11 DP 774322 and Lots 6-8 DP 977044, Lewisham.

This Report is based on research carried out on the existing documentation relevant to the Application and a detailed field assessment undertaken on 13 October 2009. This report is provided as part of the Environmental Assessment submitted for the proposed Major Project and specifically to address Director General of Planning Requirements Key Issue 2 Built Form and Land Uses, Key Issue 4 Urban Design, Key Issue 5 Public Domain and part of Key Issue 7 as outlined in the DG requirements dated 16 March 2009 (MP 08\_0195) in as far as they are relevant to our area of expertise.

### **1.2 Background and the proposed development**

Approval is sought for a Concept Plan for a Major Project comprising a mixed use development for residential, commercial and retail land uses with associated car parking facilities and public domain improvements. The Concept Plan is for buildings ranging in height from 4 to 9 storeys with a maximum overall FSR of 3.5:1. Public domain improvements include the creation of new streets, open space areas and pedestrian access points.

The subject site is an irregular shaped allotment that is currently occupied by an assortment of industrial buildings. It is bounded by Longport Street to the north, Old Canterbury Road to the east, Hudson Street to the south and a green corridor (redundant freight railway corridor) to the west. A few outbuildings are located within the green corridor to the west and attached to the western boundary alignment of the subject site. The north eastern corner of the site is bounded by William Street and Brown Street. The site has a total area of 13,115sqm.

For the purpose of undertaking a detailed potential visual impact and urban design analysis and to correspond with the Master Plan prepared by Tony Owen and Partners, the overall Study Area for this Report has been taken as the whole triangular McGill Street Precinct Area. Detailed emphasis is given to the merits assessment of the Preferred Option 3 for the subject site.

Hassell have prepared a Master Plan on behalf of Marrickville Council for the McGill Street Precinct (the Study Area for this Report) which includes the subject site but extends beyond it to the south and includes the area between the disused freight line and Old Canterbury Road to the south of Hudson Street. The McGill Street Precinct Master Plan is for a mixed use development to include residential and commercial uses. The Master Plan is based on the Marrickville Urban Strategy which stipulates the potential of the Study Area for a mixed use development with high density residential and low impact employment uses. The Master Planning for the Study Area will lead to potential rezoning of the Study Area and its inclusion in the comprehensive LEP.



The McGill Street Precinct Master Plan proposes a maximum building height of nine storeys and the predominant height range is 3 storeys to 8 storeys. Hassell have also prepared a Master Plan for the Allied Mills Site which proposes up to 12 to 14 storey buildings on that site. Both the Allied Mills site and the McGill Street Precinct (including the subject site) are located adjacent to a disused freight rail line with the former to its west and the latter to its east respectively. As such, the overall built form for the Study Area will be substantially less than what would exist on the Mill site as per the Master Plans for the two sites. The Allied Mills Site is within Ashfield LGA and the Study Area is within Marrickville LGA.

The Applicant now proposes a new Master Plan (four proposed Detailed Master Plan Options 2A, 2B, 3A and 3B) for the entire Study Area (McGill Street Precinct) which is largely in line with the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan in terms of spatial arrangement of buildings and road layouts. The four Detailed Master Plan Options for the Study Area propose buildings up to a maximum of nine storeys. The Applicant then further details a Master Plan which combines features of 2B and 3B for the whole Study Area. Only a part of the Study Area is under the Applicant's ownership (the subject site) which is essentially the northern part of the Study Area. The preferred Option 3 that is considered in more detail is proposed in the Applicant's Master Plan which combines features of 2B and 3B for the subject site.

The McGill Street Precinct Master Plan proposes a public open space flanked by internal roads in the central part of the Study Area on land which is totally owned by the Applicant, thereby placing a significant portion of the Applicant's land under public open space. While there may have been other reasons for this in the minds of those that prepared the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan, the outcome is not equitable and for other reasons that can be seen below, we are of the opinion that the location of the boundaries of the public open space in the centre of the site in that Plan are also not optimal.

The Applicant proposes a central public open space flanked by internal roads or a central boulevard road flanked by two strips of public open space in various Options which is partly on the Applicant's land and the remainder of which is further south of the Applicant's land within the Study Area. The connection of this layout to the existing street grid outside the Study Area is better than exists in the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan. We consider this to be a better visual and urban design outcome, one that is more equitable with regard to land ownership and one which we fully support. The Applicant also proposes a Green Way along the freight rail line in accordance with the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan. A 20m green space buffer is proposed along the freight light rail allowing for a shared cycle/walking link, public open space and buffer planting. A light rail station is also proposed approximately in the alignment of the central park.

The Applicant proposes retail and commercial areas which will be partly below natural ground level and partly on ground floor. Entrances and exit to and from the Study Area will be on grade. There is no podium structure now proposed in any Options which was one of the Council's concerns for the Applicant's previous scheme.

The Applicant proposes similar internal road networks and entrance and exit to and from the Study Area as in the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan. The main entrances to the Study Area are through Brown Street off Longport Street at the north end and through McGill Street off Old Canterbury Road at the south end. There is also access proposed off Old Canterbury Road through William Street. The proposed central public open space/boulevard road off Old Canterbury Road divides the Study Area into a northern and a southern sector and the proposed internal road networks/entrances further divide these two sectors into northeast and northwest and southeast and southwest sectors respectively. This is in line with the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan.





The study area

The subject site currently under the Applicant's ownership

**Figure 1**  
 Development site and its surrounding context





The northeast, northwest, southeast and southwest sectors of the Study Area are proposed to contain a number of buildings, small public parks and internal roads in line with the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan.

The Applicant's proposed Options have more 9 storeys buildings compared to the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan which has only one of these. The main underlying principle for the Applicant's proposed Options is to have taller buildings closer to the western edge (9, 8 and 6 storeys), lower buildings in the interior (6 storeys) and further lower buildings (4 storeys maximum height) along the eastern edge.

This Report presents a comparative analysis of the layouts and the merits and demerits of the proposed Master Plan Options against the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan in terms of urban design, address to the streetscapes and various important edges, visual linkages and protection of important vistas. The proposed Detailed Master Plan Options and the Preferred Option 3 which considers the subject site only are shown at Appendix B in this Report.

### **1.3 Documents consulted**

We had the opportunity to peruse the following documents and drawings for the preparation of this report.

1. McGill Street Precinct Master Plan, prepared by Hassell.
2. Draft Heritage Report, prepared by Weir Phillips, dated July 2009.
3. Lewisham Master Plan Study for Environmental Assessment, prepared by Tony Owen and Partners.
4. Proposed Detailed Master Plan Options 2A, 2B, 3A and 3B prepared by Tony Owen and Partners.
5. Proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site only, prepared by Tony Owen and Partners.
6. Preliminary Block Massing Options, Options 1, 2 and 3, prepared by Tony Owen Partners.
7. Landscape Masterplan prepared by Site Landscapes, dated May 2010.
8. Marrickville Council Local Environmental Plan 2001.
9. Marrickville Council Draft Local Environmental Plan 2010.
10. Ashfield Council Local Environmental Plan 1985.
11. Marrickville Council Expressions of Interest for Urban Design Study for McGill Street, Lewisham & St Peters triangle, St Peters, dated December 2008.

### **1.4 Visual impact assessment methodology**

The methodology for this assessment consists of five main steps as briefly described below.

The first part of the method consists of an objective analysis of the visual effects of the proposal. The analytical section of the report is intended to identify and document the objective visual effects which will occur as a result of construction of the proposed development and also the relative size



or magnitude of those effects (what effects and how much) relative to those that would occur as a result of the construction of the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan.

The analytical part of the report begins with a documentation of the existing visual context of the subject site and the characteristics of the proposed development. This is followed by an analysis of the area in which the proposal would be visible (its visual catchment) and the factors which condition its visibility. An analysis is then made of the extent of visual change that would occur in the catchment as a result of the construction of the development relative to the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan. Change is considered in relation first to the site itself and secondly to the surrounding context. The analysis component also compares the merits and potential effects of the proposal against those that would be the result of the construction of the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan. Finally, an analysis of the factors which either increase or decrease a viewer's sensitivity to the potential change to the site and locality is made. A relevant consideration in regard to sensitivity is the proximity of the Study Area to a number of heritage items of local significance and a draft Heritage Conservation Area in its vicinity.

The second main component of the method comprises the visual impact assessment. It considers the appropriateness and impacts on scenic quality and landscape character and on specific views and items of significance by assessing the factors such as the physical absorption capacity and compatibility of the proposal with the character of the site and the surroundings.

The assessment proceeds to identifying principles for the management of the visual resources of the site and its wider setting in the context of the opportunities and constraints presented by both the existing and future character of the site.

A six point qualitative scale is used throughout the report with regard to explaining the relative visual effects or potential impacts of the proposal. The scale values range from negligible, through low, low-moderate, moderate, moderate-high to high, ie. moderate is the mid-range value where there is a measurable effect.

The report has the following components:

1. Explanation of the proposed development, its components and the background. (Section 1.2 of this report)
2. Visual effects analysis (Chapter 2 of this report). This comprises:
  - a) Identification and description of the visual context of the site and the surroundings, and the visual resources (Section 2.1 of this report). This section also identifies the presence of heritage items in the visual context of the site in terms of their visibility and contribution to the relevant views and settings.
  - b) Analysis of specific visual exposure of the site and the proposal, including the identification and indication of the viewing places and direction of existing views into and out of the site. This section also considers the potential view loss effects of the proposal and the effect on views to and from the heritage items in the visual context of the site. (Sections 2.2 of this Report).
  - c) Analysis of the visual resources of the site and its immediate surroundings is undertaken which further assists in analysing the response and address of the proposal to protection of these resources. (Section 2.3 of this Report).



- d) Analysis of the response of the proposed Options with regard to visual context and resources. (Chapter 2.4 of this Report).
  - e) Analysis of the change in the intrinsic character of the site and relevant locality due to the proposed development. (Section 2.5 and 2.6 of this Report).
  - f) Analysis of visual sensitivity in terms of nature and significance of viewing locations, including heritage items and the likely expectation of the existing and future character of the views of the Study Area from those viewing locations. (Section 2.7 of this Report).
  - g) Evaluation of the overall visual effects of the proposal based on the above analysis. (Section 2.8 of this Report)
3. Visual impacts assessment (Chapter 3 of this Report), which considers:
- a) Physical absorption capacity. (Section 3.1 of this Report).
  - b) Compatibility with the character of the site. (Section 3.2 of this Report).
  - c) Compatibility with the character of the surroundings including heritage items. (Section 3.3 of this Report).
  - d) Evaluation of the overall visual impacts of the proposal based on the above assessment. (Section 3.4 of this Report).
4. Recommendations and Urban Design strategies for improved address to surrounding context and residential amenity. (Chapter 4 of this Report).
5. Conclusions. (Chapter 5 of this Report).



## 1.5 Address to the relevant Director General's Requirements

The following table indicates the relevant DGR's and locates the parts of the report which address the individual requirements.

DGR No.	Detail	Part of the report which addresses the DGR
Key Issue 2 Built Form and Land uses	<i>The proposal shall address the height, bulk, scale and intensity of the proposed development within the context of the locality</i>	Sections 2.1, 2.3 and 2.4
Key Issue 2 Built Form and Land Uses	<i>Demonstrate that the proposal does not have unacceptable levels of impact on views.</i>	Sections 2.2, 2.3, 2.4.6 and 3.0. Figures 1, 2 and 3.
Key Issue 2 Built Form and Land Uses	<i>The EA shall give consideration to the relevant objectives of the Urban Design Study for McGill Street, Lewisham and St Peters triangle that has been commissioned by Marrickville Council.</i>	Sections 1.2 and 2.4.
Key Issue 4 Urban Design	<i>View analysis to and from the site from key vantage points.</i>	Section 2.2, Figure 2 and Photographic Plates.
Key Issue 5 Public Domain	<i>The EA shall provide details on the interface between the proposed uses and public domain, and the relationship to and impact upon existing public domain and address the provision of linkages with and between other public domain spaces.</i>	Sections 2.3 and 2.4, Figures 1 and 3.
Key Issue 7 Environmental and Residential Amenity	<i>The EA must address view loss and achieve a high level of environmental and residential amenity.</i>	Sections 2.2, 3.2, 3.3 and 4.0



## **2.0 Visual effects analysis**

### **2.1 The visual character of the site and the surroundings**

The Study Area is bounded by an unused freight rail line to the west, Longport Street and main railway line to the north and Old Canterbury Road to the east and south. The Study Area at present is characterised by light industrial use and is occupied by a number of industrial buildings accessed through McGill Street, Hudson Street and William Street off Old Canterbury Road and Brown Street off Longport Street. There are some residences located within the Study Area along Old Canterbury Road in the vicinity of its intersection with William Street.

The subject site is essentially the northern part of the Study Area, between Longport Street and Hudson Street. The north east corner of the Study Area bounded by Brown Street, William Street, Old Canterbury Road and Longport Street does not form part of the subject site.

The immediate visual context of the Study Area to its south and east is residential, which is separated from the Study Area by Old Canterbury Road. The residential context to the south and east is constituted by single and two storey attached and detached late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century Victorian and Federation Queen Anne style cottages on Summerhill Street, Toothill Street, Victoria Street, Henry Street and Jubilee Streets. Single to two storey residential development of various architectural styles is also present further south and southwest of the Study Area including those on Old Canterbury Road, Edward Street, Weston Street and Windsor Road.

The Allied Mills Site is located to the west of the freight rail line and forms a major component of the existing industrial context to the Study Area. It is occupied by a number of beige coloured tall buildings backing onto the freight rail line. These buildings are also visible from the main railway line and trains and are a local landmark. By way of a scale comparison these buildings on the Mills site are significantly taller than the tallest envelopes in the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan or the Applicant's proposed Options. There are also small scale buildings and a car park fronting Edward Street on the Mills site. There is vegetation including some brush box and Camphor Laurels in the southern corner of the Mills site. There is dense vegetation on the northeast corner of the Mills Site as well which provides high screening effect to the views of the Mills Site and the Study Area from viewing locations in the northwest direction relative to the Study Area.

The freight rail line forming the western edge of the Study Area is proposed to be transformed into a Green Way in all of the proposed Master Plan Options including the Preferred Option 3 for subject site. This is in line with the Council's future intention of making the rail line corridor a green space and providing visual linkages as represented in the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan.

There are no heritage items within the study area. The Heritage Report prepared by Weir Phillips states that no components of the Study Area warrant listing on the Marrickville LEP. There are a number of heritage items of local significance in the vicinity of the Study Area. These include; 4 Summerhill Street, St Thomas Catholic Church, School and Presbytery, Lewisham Railway viaducts over Long Cove Creek, Lewisham Railway Bridges over Long Cove Creek and stone terracing and steps at No 101-109 Old Canterbury Road. The Study Area is also in proximity to a Draft Heritage Conservation Area Res A2 Lewisham Area comprising residences on the south and east side of Old Canterbury Road and further to its south, southeast and east.





Tony Owen and Partners have prepared photomontages for a number of representative viewing locations. They represent the visibility and appearance of the proposal in the existing context from the visual catchment. The viewing locations selected are representative of those we have assessed as part of this Report. The photomontages are appended at Appendix C.

## **2.2 Visual exposure of the site and the proposed development**

The following is an analysis of the visual exposure and important visual linkages, which also includes consideration of all of the view directions identified in the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan. We have also identified many other view directions some of which are as important, or more important, than those identified in the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan and which we consider qualify for consideration as additional key vantage points. This is also based on the Director General's Requirements to include assessment of the visibility from all key vantage points.



In general, only parts of the proposed Master Plan Options, proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site or that of the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan would be visible from any individual viewing direction. This is because there is little significant topographic variation within parts of the Study Area and its effective external visual catchment. The exception to this is that the majority of the Study Area is located at lower level relative to a section of Longport Street and the main railway line and also below a section of Old Canterbury Road in the vicinity of the overpass over the unused freight rail line on the south boundary of the site. The Study Area also has a gradual fall from southeast to northwest. The other factors decreasing the visibility of a number of proposed buildings situated further away from the viewer is the effect of the proposed buildings in the foreground of the view which will screen the buildings located in the interior of the Study Area.

We have assessed that the views of parts of the proposed development for all of the Applicant's proposed Master Plan Options and the proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site will not be significantly different or greater compared to those that will be available for the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan when considered in relation to the whole visual catchment.

The visual exposure analysis was not restricted to the subject site and to the proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site. Figure 2 represents the viewing locations that were visited and documented to analyse the potential visual exposure of the Master Plan Options for the entire Study Area. Photographic Plates are appended at Appendix A corresponding to the viewing locations on Figure 2.

### **2.2.1 Views from Old Canterbury Road and overpass over the freight rail line**

There are views of the southern and eastern parts of the Study Area from Old Canterbury Road predominantly between the overpass on the freight rail line and the intersection of Longport Street and Old Canterbury Road. The predominant existing views of the Study Area are of the buildings fronting the Road and parts of the Allied Mills buildings in the background. There are some axial views to the interior of the Study Area through McGill Street, Hudson Street and William Street. These axial views are mostly terminated by the presence of buildings within the Study Area over and behind which parts of the tall Allied Mills buildings can be seen. There would be views of the southern and eastern parts of the detailed Master Plan Options from this section of the Road.

-  External viewing location (refer to Photographic Plates)
-  The Study Area
-  The subject site currently under the Applicant's ownership

**Figure 2**  
 View point analysis (refer to Photographic Plates)







Views of the Preferred Option 3 for the subject site will be mostly from a section of Old Canterbury Road between Longport Street and Toothill Street once the remaining part of the Study Area is also development as proposed in the detailed Master Plan Options or on the basis of the Council's McGill Street Precinct Master Plan.

There are no significant views of the Study Area or of the proposed Master Plan Options from further south and southwest of the overpass such as from in the vicinity of Edward Street/Weston Street and Windsor Street. The vegetation in the Allied Mills Site and that which is present near the southwest corner of the Study Area provides high screening effect to views from here.

There is a small window of viewing opportunity of the interior of the Study Area across the overpass over the freight rail line for road users travelling in the eastward direction. This view includes views of the buildings and some vegetation in the Allied Mills Site, some buildings in the south western part of the Study Area, screening vegetation near the southwest corner of the Study Area and district views consisting of a small part of the city skyline, vegetation and some church spires in the distance. There would be visibility of a number of buildings of the proposed Master Plan Options including the Preferred Option 3 for the subject site or parts of it in this view.

## **2.2.2 View from residences and residential streets**

### **Edward Street and Weston Street**

There are no significant views of the Study Area from Edward Street and Weston Streets and their intersections with Old Canterbury Road due to the screening effect of residential developments, road reserve vegetation and vegetation near the southwest corner of the Study Area. There are no significant views of the Study Area from residences on Edward Street and Weston Street. There will be no significant views of the proposed Master Plan Options including the proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site.

### **Windsor Road**

There are no views of the Study Area from Windsor Road. The view in the east-northeast direction, towards the Study Area from near the intersection of Windsor Road with Old Canterbury Road is highly screened by the vegetation present near the southwest corner of the Study Area and the intervening effects of residential developments and road reserve vegetation on Old Canterbury Road. There would not be any significant visibility of the proposed Master Plan Options including the proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site.

### **Summerhill Street**

There are views of parts of the Study Area, mainly of the buildings located adjacent to Old Canterbury Road, from the section of Summerhill Street which runs parallel to Old Canterbury Road. The residences located on Summerhill Street also have similar views of parts of the Study Area.

The axial view down a section of Summer Hill Street which is perpendicular to Old Canterbury Road is not of parts of the Study Area, but of the vegetation near its southwest corner.

There is an axial view to the interior of the Study Area through McGill Street for a section of Summerhill Street and for some residences.



Parts of the proposed detailed Master Plan Options for the Study Area, closer to the southern and eastern edges of the Study Area will be seen from a section of Summerhill Street and the residences located on it.

Views of the Preferred Option 3 for the subject site will not be possible from Summerhill Street once the remaining part of the Study Area is also developed as proposed in the detailed Master Plan Options or on the basis of the Council's McGill Street Precinct Master Plan.

### **Toothill Street**

There are views of parts of the Study Area, mainly of the buildings located adjacent to Old Canterbury Road from Toothill Street, along its road alignment. The residences on the street are oriented towards the street and there are highly oblique views (perpendicular to their predominant orientation) towards the Study Area from them.

There are similar views from the intersection of Toothill Street and Victoria Street and also an axial view down Toothill Lane from Victoria Street.

Views of parts of the proposed Master Plan Options including the Preferred Option 3 for the subject site, which will be located adjacent to a section of the eastern edge of the Study Area, will be visible from a section of Toothill Street and through the axial view down Toothill Lane from Victoria Street. There would not be any significant views of the proposed Master Plan Options including the Preferred Option 3 for the subject site from the residences with the exception of those located adjacent to the intersection of Old Canterbury Road.

### **Henry Street**

There are axial views of a car park and some industrial buildings within the Study Area from Henry Street. The residences on the street are oriented towards the street and there are highly oblique views (perpendicular to the orientation) towards the Study Area site from them.

Views of parts of the proposed Master Plan Options including the Preferred Option 3 for the subject site, which will be located adjacent to a section of the eastern edge of the Study Area, will be visible from Henry Street. This will include views of an internal road, parts of the central open space and parts of some buildings flanking the central open space on the north side. There would not be any significant views of the proposed Master Plan Options including the Preferred Option 3 for the subject site from the residences with the exception of those located adjacent to the intersection of Old Canterbury Road.

### **Jubilee Street**

There are axial views of some residences within the Study Area which are located adjacent to Old Canterbury Road from Jubilee Street and a Park located at the western terminus of the Street. The residences on the street are oriented towards the street and there are oblique views (perpendicular to their natural orientation) towards the Study Area from them.

Views of parts of the proposed Master Plan Options including the Preferred Option 3 for the subject site, which will be located adjacent to a section of the eastern edge of the Study Area will be visible from a section of Jubilee Street and a Park located at the western terminus of the Street. There would not be any significant views of the proposed Master Plan Options including the Preferred



Option 3 for the subject site from the residences with the exception of those located adjacent to the intersection of Old Canterbury Road.

### **2.2.3 Views from Longport Street and overpass on the freight rail line**

There are views of the northern parts of the Study Area from a section of Longport Street between its intersections with Old Canterbury Road and Smith Street. There are also views of the upper parts of the tall buildings within the Allied Mills Site from this section of the Street. Part of the Study Area in the northern sector is located at lower position relative to the remainder of the Study Area and Longport Street. Hence, the only views from Longport Street of the Study Area are that of the buildings located adjacent to the street and tree canopies of some vegetation in the interior of the Study Area or along the western edge. The buildings fronting Longport Street block views of the interior of the Study Area.

There are views of the interior of the Study Area from the overpass on the freight rail line on Longport Street. This view is more evident to pedestrians walking on the south side of the Street. There are not any significant views for the moving traffic generally. However the upper parts of the proposed tall buildings in the proposed Master Plan Options including the Preferred Option 3 for the subject site and McGill Street Precinct Master Plan Option will be visible to them across the overpass and also from along Longport Street.

There are views of the parts of the interior of the Study Area across Brown Street from Longport Street.

Views of the Study Area from Longport Street further west of the overpass are highly screened due to the road reserve vegetation and vegetation within the Allied Mills Site.

There would be views of parts of the proposed Master Plan Options including the Preferred Option 3 for the subject site, which will be located adjacent to the northern edge of the Study Area from the section of Longport Street between Old Canterbury Road and Smith Street. There would be views of the majority of the proposed Master Plan Options including the Preferred Option 3 for the subject site from standing at the southern edge of the overpass over the freight rail line on Longport Street.

### **2.2.4 Views from the main railway line**

There are filtered views of the northern part of the Study Area from the western edge of Lewisham Station. The intervening effect of residential development and vegetation and lower topography of the northern part of the Study Area restricts the view. The larger Allied Mills buildings are also visible in the view.

There are filtered views and only a small window of viewing opportunity from the passenger trains travelling both east and west. Only parts of the buildings adjacent to Longport Street within the Study Area are visible in the context of the Allied Mills buildings in this view.

Parts of the proposed Master Plan Options including the Preferred Option 3 for the subject site, which will be located adjacent to the northern edge of the Study Area will be visible from the western edge of Lewisham Station and through the window of viewing opportunity from the trains. The visibility of the proposed Master Plan Options including the Preferred Option 3 for the subject site will not have any significant effect on the existing visibility of the Allied Mills buildings from either the Station or from the trains.





### **2.2.5 Views from the Allied Mills Site and the freight rail line**

The western edge of the Study Area including vegetation and some industrial buildings is visible from the Allied Mills site and the freight rail line. The buildings located adjacent to the western edge of the Study Area, the central public open space and some internal roads proposed in the Master Plan Options including the Preferred Option 3 for the subject site will be visible from here.

### **2.2.6 Visual exposure from wider visual catchment**

There would not be any significant visibility of the Study Area and the proposed Master Plan Options including the Preferred Option 3 for the subject site from further north, east, west or south of the visual catchment as documented above. Potential visibility, if any, from any distant elevated locations within the district is not considered to be of any significant negative effect.

## **2.3 Visual resources of the Study Area and its context**

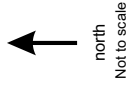
The visual resources of the Study Area and its context are identified to be the important visual linkages between it and the external public domain and the various edges/interfaces of the Study Area with the surrounding land uses. The physical and visual relation of the Study Area with the immediate surrounding existing and future contexts are also considered to be important visual resources. Refer Figure 3.

The heritage items in the vicinity of the Study Area generally add to the visual resources of the visual context; however they do not constrain the potential of the Study Area in regard to the proposal as they do not have any significant visual linkages with it. The underlying historic connection with the continuing industrial function of the Study Area to some of the infrastructure based heritage items such as Lewisham railway viaducts and Lewisham railway bridges over Long Cove Creek will be maintained.

### **2.3.1 Important vistas and visual linkages**

The following are the important vistas and visual linkages identified as part of the visual assessment.

- a) Overpasses on Old Canterbury Road and Longport Street over the freight rail line.
- b) Vista down McGill Street from Old Canterbury Road.
- c) Vista down Toothill Street.
- d) Vista down Henry Street.
- e) Vista down Hudson Street from Old Canterbury Road.
- f) Vista down William Street from Old Canterbury Road and also from the park at the western terminus of Jubilee Street.
- g) Vista down Brown Street from Longport Street



Vistas and visual linkages



Proximity to Main Railway Line



Freight rail line / potential green way link



Residential edge on the opposite side of Old Canterbury Road



Tall buildings in Allied Mills Site



Area subject to Hassel Master Plan (Allied Mills Site) with future buildings up to 12 storeys high



The Study Area



The subject site currently under the Applicant's ownership



**Figure 3**  
Visual context and visual resources of the development site





### **2.3.2 Important interfaces**

The following are the important interfaces identified as part of the visual assessment.

- a) Southern and eastern edges along Old Canterbury Road facing residential developments
- b) Western edge along the freight rail line and the proposed greenway
- c) Northern edge visible from the main railway line
- d) Internal northern and southern edges to the proposed central public open space.

### **2.3.3 External visual resources relevant to Study Area and the proposed development**

The visual resources within the external visual catchment to which the Study Area visually and physically relate and to which the proposed development need to positively respond to are

- a) The existing taller buildings in the Allied Mills Site
- b) The future development on Allied Mills Site, subject to the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan for that site, which will be a maximum height of 12 to 14 storeys.

## **2.4 Response of the proposed development with regard to visual context and resources of the Study Area**

### **2.4.1 Salient features of the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan**

With regard to visual impacts and urban design principles, the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan is intended to have considered the external views, have high permeability, have linkages across the Study Area from east to west, a greenway and central parkland. It is also intended to have a gradation of building heights across the Study Area, with lower buildings on the Old Canterbury Road frontage and taller buildings adjacent to the Greenway.

For permeability and connections, the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan features open spaces at various scales, building separation, connections across the Study Area, some deliberately contrived view corridors and buildings stepping down to the streets. The McGill Street Precinct Master Plan in general is poorly related to the existing street grid pattern whereas the Applicant's proposed Detailed Master Plan Options and the Preferred Option 3 for the subject site are superior. In general, the proposed Detailed Master Plan Options and the Preferred Option 3 for the subject site achieve at least equivalent and in many respects better permeability.

There is little evidence of a formal gradation of building heights across the Study Area in the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan, with one 9, one 8 and four 6 storey envelopes identified, with the taller buildings not defining the western boundary or a backdrop to the taller Mills buildings behind. The remainder are dominated by five, four and down to two storey building forms, the lower buildings being in the interior of the Study Area. There is a two storey building envelope adjacent to the western boundary which does not seem to be in line with the principle of gradation of building heights.

The Applicant's proposed Detailed Master Plan Options and the Preferred Option 3 for the subject site propose similar building heights to each other, a larger proportion of taller buildings than the





McGill Street Precinct Master Plan and a stricter graduation in heights increasing from east to west, but differ largely in the internal road layout and public open spaces. The main entrances to the Study Area are similar in all the of the Applicant's proposed Options.

#### **2.4.2 The Central Part of the Study Area and distribution of public open spaces**

The proposed Options 3A and 3B differ from Options 2A and 2B in terms of the proposed treatment of the central part of the Study Area. Options 3A and 3B propose vegetated strips on either side of a formal boulevard style road proposed in the central part of the Study Area which will be accessed from Old Canterbury Road and terminate with a roundabout beyond which there is again a vegetated area adjacent to the western edge of the Study Area, leading to the Greenway. There is an access to McGill Street off the roundabout from the central road in these Options.

Options 2A and 2B propose a central open landscaped park like space that is less formally joined to the Greenway which, while it physically divides the Study Area into northern and southern sectors also unifies them around the parkland. The central park is proposed to be bound by a road accessed off Old Canterbury Road to its north, west and part of its southern edge and join with McGill Street in these Options. In this regard, the proposed Options 2A and 2B are superior as far as the treatment of the central open space is concerned in regard to the scale of the space and some of the visual and urban design outcomes. However, there are other merits of the proposed Option 3B in regard to the arrangement and linkages between other public open spaces including those across the central open space area which makes it equally meritorious.

The proposed Option 3A is the least desirable option in regard to the treatment of the central part as well as the arrangement and areas of public open spaces in the northwest, northeast, southwest and southeast sectors.

The proposed Option 3B is similar to the proposed Option 3A in regard to the treatment of the central part of the Study Area, but it has well defined and large areas of public open spaces in the northeast, northwest, southeast and southwest sectors that are better linked and related to specific buildings. In this regard, the proposed Option 3B has improved internal permeability and improved internal open spaces.

The proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site and the Master Plan which combine the features of the proposed Options 2B and 3B are considered most appropriate in terms of the treatment of the central part of the Study Area. They propose a central green boulevard which creates a linkage from Henry Street to the greenway. A road off Old Canterbury Road is proposed to the north of this open space which terminates in a round about near the western edge. There is a provision for future access to McGill Street off the roundabout from the central road in these Options. They also propose a road parallel to the western edge.

The McGill Street Precinct Master Plan proposes the green space totally to the north of Hudson Street, whereas the Applicant's Options 2A and 2B propose the green open space by removing Hudson Street and at a location further south relative to the northern edge of the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan open space. We do not consider there are any significant benefits as far as visual impacts are concerned of the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan or of the Applicant's proposed Options 2A and 2B in regard to the central parkland. However, proposed Options 2A and 2B result in a better visual linkage and permeability options with Henry Street compared to the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan.



### **2.4.3 Spatial arrangement in the four sectors**

#### **Northwest sector**

The spatial arrangement of buildings and open spaces in the northwest sector is the same in the proposed Options 2A, 2B and 3A. It is different in the proposed Option 3B which has four buildings (as opposed to five buildings in the proposed Options 2A, 2B and 3A) and larger public open spaces. In this regard the proposed Option 3B is the most meritorious for the northwest sector of the Study Area. The Preferred proposed Option 3 for the subject site and the proposed Master Plan has four buildings and larger public open spaces in this sector, similar to the proposed Option 3B.

All Options have a nine storey building in the southwest part of the northwest sector of the Study Area (the third building along the western edge from the Longport Street end). We consider that there is scope for a lower building height for part of the envelope of this building that is adjacent to the Central park space to eliminate overshadowing impact and provide better address to the park. A lower height close to the northern edge of the central park space and a taller building component further set back from the central park space is considered to be an acceptable outcome for the location of this building envelope. The proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site and the Master Plan propose eight storeys height closer to the park edge for this building envelope.

#### **Northeast sector**

All proposed Options including the proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site propose similar spatial arrangement of buildings and public open space for the northeast sector of the Study Area and these are of similar merits to the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan.

#### **Southeast sector**

The proposed Options 2A and 2B have similar spatial arrangement of buildings and open space for the southeast sector. The proposed Option 3A is slightly different in terms of building footprints and shape of the public open space to the proposed Options 2A and 2B for this sector. The proposed Options 2A, 2B and 3A have five buildings in this sector. The proposed Option 3B has four buildings (with one building in the interior of a larger footprint) and a larger public open space with improved internal permeability and relationship with the central part of the Study Area.

In this regard, the proposed Option 3B is considered to be the most appropriate option for the southeast sector and of greater merit compared to the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan. We consider the proposed Options 2A, 2B and 3A to be of similar merits to the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan for the spatial arrangement in the southeast sector of the Study Area.

The proposed Master Plan has four buildings and a larger public open space with improved internal permeability and relationship with the central part of the development site, similar to 3B.

The proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site does not include this part of the Study Area as the Applicant does not own it at present.

#### **Southwest sector**

The proposed Options 2A and 2B have similar spatial arrangement of buildings and open space for the southwest sector. These proposed Options have three buildings and an open space in this





sector. The proposed Options 3A and 3B differ from the proposed Options 2A and 2B and have four buildings and an open space.

We consider there to be no benefit of one less building in the proposed Options 2A and 2B and one more building in the proposed Options 3A and 3B as the area under buildings in this sector is approximately the same in all the proposed Options. The proposed Master Plan has similar spatial arrangement as the proposed Options 3A and 3B. However, the proposed Options 2A and 2B have some merits in terms of spatial arrangement in that they provide a better visual linkage for the external public domain through McGill Street. This is explained in more detail in Section 2.4.6. Having said this however, this connection is possibly of lesser significance than several others.

The proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site does not include this part of the Study Area as the Applicant does not own it at present.

We consider all proposed Options to be of greater merit compared to the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan for the spatial arrangement in the southwest sector of the site.

#### **2.4.4 Internal road layout**

The main entrances and exits to the Study Area are similar in all proposed Options. The proposed Options 3A and 3B have similar internal road layout and there is no cross connection between the north and south sectors at the ground or upper levels. The proposed Option 2A also has no cross connection between the northern and southern sectors at the ground and upper levels. The connectivity in the northern sector is the same for the proposed Options 2A, 3A and 3B.

There is an access to McGill Street off the roundabout from the central road in the proposed Options 3A and 3B. The proposed Option 2A also has a connection between McGill Street and the central road accessed off Old Canterbury Road.

The proposed Option 2B has all the features of the proposed Option 2A in regard to internal roads and it also has a road running along the western boundary off the central loop road, providing further access to the north western and south western sectors and a cross connection between them.

In regard to the road layout, the proposed Option 2B is considered to be the most desirable option and of similar merits compared to the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan. We consider the proposed Options 2A, 3A and 3B to be of slightly lesser merits compared to the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan for the internal road layout.

The proposed Master Plan proposes connection between McGill Street and the road to the north of the central park. It also proposes a road parallel to the western edge of the site and is similar to Option 2B in this regard.

The proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site proposes a provision for connection between McGill Street and the road to the north of the central park. It also proposes a road parallel to the western edge of the subject site and is similar to the proposed Option 2B in this regard.

#### **2.4.5 Building height distributions and address to important interfaces**

##### **Building height distribution along the western edge**

There are more 8 and 9 storey buildings in all of the Applicant's proposed Options compared to the building height distribution in the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan. For example, the proposed



Options 3A and 3B propose two 8 storey buildings, four 9 storey buildings and one 6 storey building (in the southwest corner) along the western edge. The proposed Options 2A and 2B propose two 8 storey buildings, three 9 storey buildings and one 6 storey building (in the southwest corner). On the contrary, the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan proposes variation in heights and the buildings range from two to nine storeys along the western edge.

The McGill Street Precinct Master Plan document does not present any logic to explain the variation in height of buildings along the western edge. We do not find any obvious merits in having such building height variation along this edge, however; there are some merits in having lower building height for the building in the extreme northwest corner as it addresses Brown Street, from where access to the Study Area is proposed in the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan as well as all of the proposed detailed Master Plan Options. This is because of the prominent location adjacent to Longport Street, visibility from the main railway line and its location adjacent to the proposed main entrance to the Study Area. On the other hand, since the building may be only approximately 6 storeys out of the ground relative to Longport Street, provided that the massing was resolved relative to Brown Street, this would be acceptable.

Generally, we consider all the proposed Options to be appropriate in terms of building height distribution along the western edge subject to appropriate urban design principles including setbacks, articulation and appropriate façade treatments. I do have some concern as mentioned in 2.4.3 above about the height of the building envelope proposed adjacent to the north west end of the central parkland (the first building on the north side of the park looking west) in all the proposed Options. This is because of its potential overshadowing impact on the park. The McGill Street Precinct Master Plan has a three storey building along a considerable part of the northwest boundary to the park, probably for this reason, among others. I do not consider it necessary to limit the height of buildings to that extent.

The proposed Master Plan proposes three 8 storey buildings, two nine storey buildings, one part 8 and part 9 storey building and one six storey building.

The proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site proposes one eight storey building, one nine storey building and one part eight and part nine storey building along the western edge. It proposes eight storeys height closer to the central park edge.

### **Building height distribution adjacent to the central open space**

There are merits in having lower wall heights directly adjacent to the proposed central public open space particularly on the north side. Buildings predominantly of two to three storeys at the street wall, stepping up and back behind are appropriate. One signature building with a taller corner tower treatment adjacent to Old Canterbury Road such as is proposed in the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan (6 storeys rather than the 4 storey proposed in Applicant's Options) could also be considered.

### **Building height distribution along the residential edge**

The building height distribution along the eastern edge is similar in all of the proposed Options including the proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site and the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan Option and is mostly four storeys with the exception of the building in the southern corner which is five storeys high in the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan and six storeys high in all of



the Applicant's proposed Options. The proposed Master Plan proposes one up to eight storeys building to the south of the central green boulevard along Old Canterbury Road.

The Applicant proposes a lower building height at the street front and stepping up of buildings behind at approximately 6m setback from the street as a general urban design principle. This also seems to be the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan principle, although it is not clear how it works. A building height of three storeys at the street's edge and greater heights of up to four and five storeys behind will result in an improved urban design option and street address. This is taking into consideration the neighbouring residential edge, its inclusion in the Lewisham Draft Heritage Conservation Area and the narrow width of Old Canterbury Road. We consider all the proposed Options to be appropriate in this regard.

### **Building height distribution in the northern and northeast sector**

The McGill Street Precinct Master Plan proposes predominantly a four storey height in the northern and north east sector. All of the proposed Options including the proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site propose a mix of four and six storey buildings. In terms of potential visual impacts, views and visual linkages, we consider all the proposed Options to be acceptable for the north and northeast sector of the Study Area subject to appropriate articulation and street façade treatment and they do not result in any increased impacts compared to the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan.

## **2.4.6 Various Linkages and Vistas**

### **Vista across the overpass on Old Canterbury Road**

The visual linkage across the overpass on Old Canterbury Road would be similar in all of the proposed Options and the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan. The McGill Street Precinct Master Plan proposes a five storey building in the southwest sector whereas all of the proposed Options propose a six storey building. Any building of three storeys or higher would take away views across this visual linkage through the Study Area. In this regard, I find the proposed six storey building in the southwest sector in all the Options to be acceptable and to have no impacts that are different from the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan.

The proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site will also respond appropriately to this vista.

### **Visual linkage across McGill Street**

The proposed Options 2A and 2B propose better permeability and visual linkage down McGill Street compared to the proposed Options 3A, 3B, the proposed Master Plan and the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan. This is due to the proposed strategic locations and grading of building and location of a central park adjacent to McGill Street. In this regard, we are of the opinion that the layout, building heights, circulation space and open space distribution are better in the proposed Options 2A and 2B for the southwest sector of the site (to the west of McGill Street).

The proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site is not assessed in regard to this aspect as it does not include this part of the Study Area.



### **Axial view down Toothill Street**

For the axial view down Toothill Street, all the proposed Options including the proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site present better permeability into the site compared to the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan due to smaller footprints of individual buildings and discontinuity in built form in the alignment of Toothill Street.

### **Visual linkage across Henry Street**

The proposed Options 2A, 2B and the Preferred Option 3 for the subject site result in better visual linkage with Henry Street compared to the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan in terms of view of and through the proposed central public open space. The proposed Options 3A and 3B are also considered to be appropriate.

### **Visual linkage across Jubilee Street**

For Jubilee Street, all of the proposed Options including the proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site and the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan result in a similar effect on views and are considered to be acceptable subject to appropriate articulation, lower height at the street's edge and façade treatments.

### **Axial view down Brown Street**

For views across Brown Street, all of the proposed Options including the proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site have similar effect as that of McGill Street Precinct Master Plan and are considered to be acceptable. The treatment of a building of more than 6 storeys high in the extreme northwest sector would need to consider the changes in level relative to Longport Street and how to access and treat the front of the building relative to Brown Street.

### **Vista across the overpass on Longport Street**

For the visual linkage across the overpass over Longport Street I am of the opinion that all the proposed Options including the proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site are appropriate and would not have any significant increased effect compared to the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan.

## **2.4.7 Proposed landscape master plan**

A landscape master plan is proposed as part of the Application. It proposes appropriate landscape species and landscape treatment for various edges, the central park, public and private open spaces, internal street networks and the greenway corridor.

A 20m green space buffer along the freight light rail allowing for a shared cycle/walking link, public open space and buffer planting. A light rail station is also proposed approximately in the alignment of the central park which does not cause any significant visual impacts.

Refer to the Landscape Master Plan prepared by Site Landscapes for further details. The landscape masterplan is considered to be in line with the Council's McGill Street Precinct Master Plan.



## **2.5 Potential change in intrinsic character of the Study Area**

Change in the intrinsic character of the site is a description of the extent and nature of visual changes when considered in relation to the site's present character before the intended development is constructed.

The proposed Options including the proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site and the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan will result in a moderate to high change in the existing intrinsic character of the Study Area. The existing character which is that of one, two or three storey light industrial warehouses, sheds, workshops and some single or two storey residential developments will potentially change to a more intense urban development in the form of a number of relatively taller mixed commercial and residential buildings.

The proposed development is permissible and its potential for the intended use has been recognised by the Council by way of the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan and Marrickville Urban Strategy. The potential effect of the proposed Options in this regard is not considered to be any different or greater than the result of the construction of the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan.

## **2.6 Potential change in intrinsic character of the surroundings**

Change in the intrinsic character of the surroundings is a description of the extent and nature of visual effects when considered in relation to the surroundings of the site which would be caused by the intended development being constructed.

The potential effect of the proposed Options including the proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site on the existing intrinsic character of the surrounding context is considered to be low. This potential effect is similar to that which will be the result of the construction of the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan. The rating is given considering both the existing and future surrounding context. Given the nature of the surrounding context to be a mix of industrial (Allied Mills Site existing and future context), infrastructure (main railway line and disused freight rail line) and low density residential, I have analysed that the individual components of the proposed development appropriately respond to and maintain the existing and future character.

The individual buildings within the proposed Options including the proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site will be of high architectural and aesthetic standards with appropriate articulation, façade treatments, setbacks, lower street front height and set back taller components.

A change to the visual character of a site or the immediate surroundings can be positive, neutral or negative and does not directly lead to visual impacts. The more important question to be investigated is the compatibility of the proposed development with the visual character of the site and the surroundings and with the underlying zone objectives and permissibility. This has been considered at Section 3.2 and 3.3 of the Report respectively.

## **2.7 Visual sensitivity**

Sensitivity relates to the number of viewers who would be likely to see the proposed development and their likely expectations for visual quality. It is usually considered that a visual impact on a sensitive location in the public domain is more important than one of similar quality on a less sensitive site or seen from a private viewing place.





The overall visual sensitivity of the Study Area including the subject site was judged in summary to be low-moderate on a scale from negligible to high for the following reasons:

- The Study Area is located in proximity to the Allied Mills Site which has a number of taller buildings that are seen in the context of the Study Area from its visual catchment and are a local landmark.
- There is a Master Plan for the Allied Mills Site which proposes buildings of up to 12 storey height. The proposed buildings on the Study Area would be seen in future in the context of these proposed buildings on the Allied Mills Site.
- The Study Area is located in proximity of the main railway line and parts of it are visible to the passengers on the train through a very small window of viewing opportunity. Parts of the proposed buildings will also be visible from the western end of Lewisham Railway Station.
- The Study Area has been used for industrial purposes for a long time and is of low scenic quality. The Study Area has the potential for development, as proposed and as in the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan.
- The Study Area is not visible from any recreation areas such as reserves or waterway (with the exception of an informal small public open space at the western terminus of Jubilee Street).
- The proposed development will not have any significant visibility or effect views to or from any other heritage items in the vicinity of the Study Area.
- Any potential visibility from the heritage listed Girder Bridges is not capable of affecting their significance. The proposed development does not affect views to and from this heritage item.
- The Study Area is located adjacent to Old Canterbury Road and Longport Street which are two important local roads. Parts of the Study Area are visible from sections of these roads.
- The nature of existing use of the Study Area is different to the residential context to its immediate south and east.
- The nature of the proposed use of the Study Area is mixed use comprising commercial and residential. The scale and density of the proposed development is different to the immediate residential context.
- The Study Area backs on the disused freight rail line which is intended to be transformed into a public green way. Subject to appropriate landscaping and urban design measures the proposed development will have no significant negative effect along this edge.

## **2.8 Overall extent of visual effects**

The visual exposure of the proposed Options including the proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site is localized and the potential visual effects are rated to be Moderate overall. This analysis is based on the nature of the proposed development, the localised change to the character of the Study Area, the low change to the character of the immediate surroundings, no significant amenity effects and moderate sensitivity of the surrounding context.



### **3.0 Visual impact assessment**

#### **3.1 Physical absorption capacity**

Physical Absorption Capacity (PAC) means the extent to which the existing visual environment can reduce or eliminate the perception of the visibility of the proposed development. PAC includes the ability of existing and future elements of the landscape to physically hide, screen or disguise the proposal. It also includes the extent to which the colours, material and finishes of buildings allows them to blend with or reduce contrast with others of the same or closely similar kinds to the extent that they cannot be easily distinguished as new features of the environment.

The Study Area is at a prominent location, as far as the visual catchment to the immediate south, southeast and east is concerned and there are no landscape or topographic features in the visual context that would screen or hide the proposed development when seen from these directions. However, the proposed individual buildings in all the Options would provide moderate to high screening effect to each other and only some and/or parts of individual buildings would be visible from a single viewing location within the visual catchment.

There is limited visibility of the Study Area and the existing PAC is High from viewing locations in the northeast, northwest, north and west directions due to intervening effects of topography, built developments and vegetation.

The potential impacts of the proposed Options including the proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site will be similar and no greater than the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan in regard to this impact factor.

The more important impact factors for the proposed development are compatibility with the character of the Study Area and the surrounding context which are discussed as below.

#### **3.2 Compatibility with the character of the site**

The proposal has high compatibility with the existing and future character of the Study Area. The existing character of the Study Area is industrial and the proposal would result in a compatible use of the Study Area as is intended by the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan and envisaged by the Council in their policies and strategies. The change in the character of the Study Area is also anticipated by the Council documents and Draft Plans. The building heights proposed would also be compatible with the intended future character of the Study Area and that of the adjacent Allied Mills Site.

Appropriate measures and urban design principles will be adopted at the design stage such as high aesthetic standards, articulation, setbacks, façade treatments, lower street-facing height and appropriately set back taller components and adequate landscaping which will result in further compatibility of the proposed development with the character of the Study Area.



### **3.3 Compatibility with the character of the surrounding context**

The proposal will have moderate compatibility with the existing and moderate-high compatibility with the future character of the local and the sub-regional context. It will be seen in the existing context of the tall buildings on the Allied Mills site in many views and in future it will be seen in the context of up to 12 storey buildings on that site that are prescribed by the Master Plan.

The proposed development will have a compatible streetscape scale and character to the streets in which the important interfaces and connections will be perceived. Old Canterbury Road and Longport Street will have a compatible scale and character as a result of the proposed wall heights, setbacks above this and screening of the interior of the Study Area. The same general principles for street wall and setbacks apply to streets inside the Study Area that are perceived as connections with the surrounding street grid. As such, the compatibility of scale invites permeable connections into the interior of the Study Area and will result in an appropriate outcome. Each of the proposed Options including the proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site is considered to be of similar character and compatibility in this regard with the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan.

### **3.4 Overall extent of visual impacts**

The potential visual impacts of the proposal are rated to be Moderate overall and they are similar to those that would be the result of the construction of the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan.

## **4.0 Summary of Urban design strategies**

The following are some of the recommendations for improved urban design outcome for the proposed development. These recommendations will be taken into account at the design stage of the development.

1. Appropriate setbacks of the buildings along the various edges.
2. Lower street facing height and set back taller components for buildings facing the residential edge along Old Canterbury Road.
3. Appropriate setbacks of buildings from the internal central public open space as well as along the public parks individual sectors i.e., the northeast, northwest, southeast and southwest sectors.
4. Appropriate lower height of parts of the buildings on the north side of the central public open space for better sunlight access to the park.
5. High quality aesthetics and architectural standards, façade treatments, articulation and modulation.
6. Appropriate forms, materials and colours.
7. Appropriate orientation of buildings, windows, doors and other openings.



## **5.0 Summary conclusion**

We have assessed that there are no increased negative effects on views of the Study Area from the external public and private domains of any of the proposed Options including the proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site compared to the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan. The proposed Options do not have any increased visual or streetscape impacts compared to those that will be caused by the construction of the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan Option. They also do not have any increased impact on any important vistas across parts of the Study Area.

The Applicant's proposed Options including the proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site have better permeability and visual linkages with external streets and axial views available through them compared to the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan. The proposed Option 3B has greater merits compared to other Options in regard to the central open space, layout of buildings and open spaces in the individual sectors (northeast, northwest, southeast and southwest) and permeability and visual linkages in general. In this regard, the proposed Options 2A and 2B have greater merits than the proposed Option 3A on these criteria.

A lower building height at the street front along Old Canterbury Road is recommended to appropriately address the residential edge. The buildings will be stepped up behind the lower street front component as is proposed and shown in the block model montages.

Subject to incorporation of appropriate urban design strategies as recommended above, the proposed Detailed Master Plan Options and the Preferred Option 3 for the subject site are acceptable in regard to views to and from heritage items in the vicinity of the Study Area and they do not have any negative effect on the significance of those heritage items.

The McGill Street Precinct Master Plan has some merits in regard to building height distribution adjacent to the Central public open space and it is recommended to have a lower height of the street wall in all the proposed Options adjacent to the north side of the central open space and stepping up of the buildings behind. A taller building adjacent to Old Canterbury Road facing the park on the north side as proposed in the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan is also acceptable, but is not a feature of the Options proposed.

Overall, our opinion is that each of the proposed Options has merits on some criteria and all of them are superior to the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan in regard to their address to the surrounding environment, street grid, streetscapes, linkages and permeability options.

The proposed Master Plan and the proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site which combine the features of the proposed Option 2B in regard to the treatment of the central part of the site and the proposed Option 3B in regard to building layout and internal open spaces are considered on overall balance to be the most preferred options in terms of visual and urban issues subject to further refinement at the detailed approval stage.

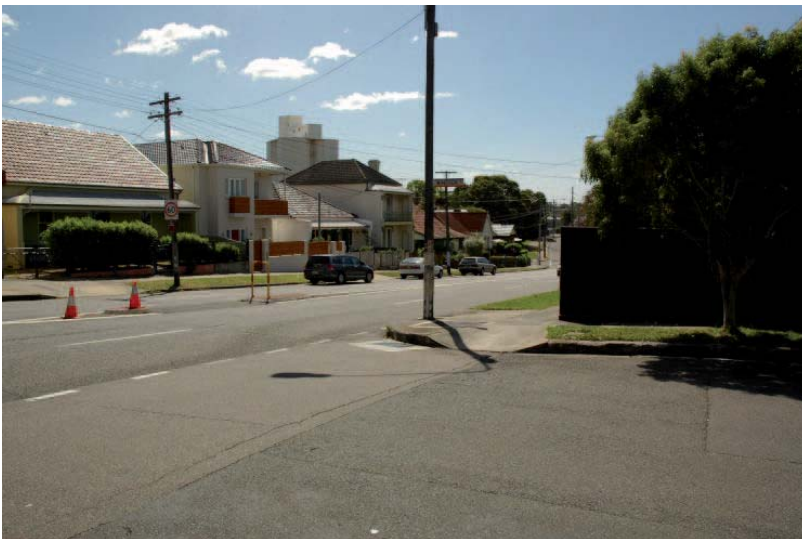


## Appendix A: Photographic Plates

(Refer to Map 2)



**Plate 1:** From near the intersection of Weston Street and Old Canterbury Road, looking northeast.



**Plate 2:** From near the intersection of Windsor Road and Old Canterbury Road, looking east.



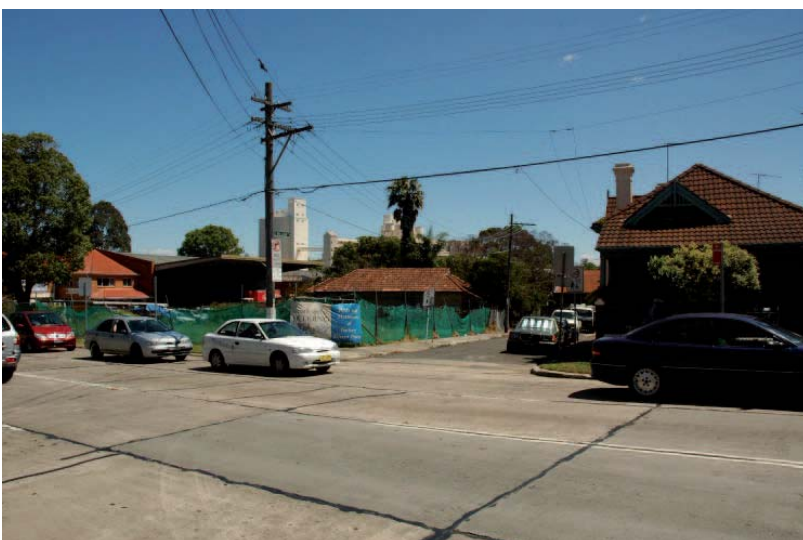
**Plate 3:** From the north side of Old Canterbury Road, about 1m east of the overpass over freight rail line, looking north.



**Plate 4:** From the south side of Old Canterbury Road, looking north through the alignment of the overpass over the freight rail line.



**Plate 5:** From in front of 95 Summerhill Street, looking north in the alignment of McGill Street.



**Plate 6:** From the east side of Old Canterbury Road, looking west in the alignment of William Street.





**Plate 7:** From the northern edge of the overpass on Old Canterbury Road across the freight rail line, looking north to north-northeast.



**Plate 8:** From the south side of Old Canterbury Road, about 30m east of the overpass on the freight rail line, looking north to east.



**Plate 9:** From in front of 75 Old Canterbury Road, looking southwest to northwest.



**Plate 10:** From standing on the west side of Old Canterbury Road, opposite its intersection with Jubilee Street, looking south along Old Canterbury Road.



**Plate 11:** From Toothill Street, about 20m southeast of its intersection with Old Canterbury Road, looking northwest.



**Plate 12:** From Toothill Street, near its intersection with Victoria Street, looking northwest.





**Plate 13:** From Henry Street, near its intersection with Henry Lane, looking west.



**Plate 14:** From Victoria Street, looking west, in the alignment of Toothill Lane.



**Plate 15:** From the western terminus of Jubilee Street, looking west.



**Plate 16:** From the southeast corner of the intersection of Old Canterbury Road and Longport Street, looking southwest.



**Plate 17:** From the northwest corner of the intersection of Old Canterbury Road and Longport Street, looking southwest.



**Plate 18:** From the northeast corner of the intersection of Old Canterbury Road and Longport Street, looking southwest.





**Plate 19:** From the north side of Longport Street, looking south in the alignment of Brown Street.



**Plate 20:** From the northern edge of the overpass on Longport Street over the freight rail line, looking south.



**Plate 21:** From the southern edge of the overpass on Longport Street over the freight rail line, looking south.



**Plate 22:** From near the northeast corner of the intersection of Longport Street, Smith Street and Carlton Crescent, looking southeast.



**Plate 23:** From passenger train on the main railway line, travelling west to east, looking south towards the development site.



**Plate 24:** From the western edge of southern platform at Lewisham Station, looking west-southwest, towards the development site.



## Appendix B: Proposed Master Plan Options (Courtesy: Tony Owen and Partners)

### 7.1\_DETAILED MASTER PLAN OPTIONS

OPTION 2A



tony owen partners



## 7.2\_Detailed Master Plan Options

OPTION 2B





### 7.3\_Detailed Master Plan Options

OPTION 3A



tony oswen pbrs



## 7.4\_Detailed Master Plan Options

OPTION 3B





## 8.2\_MASTER PLAN



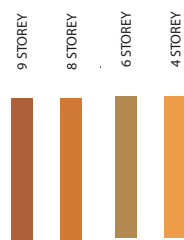
## 8.5\_MASTER PLAN

### BUILDING HEIGHT

The heights of the buildings on site will be stepped from the railway corridor to the west, to the existing housing to the east. The areas to the east of Old Canterbury Road are characterized by lower rise existing housing. Several council planning studies for Railway Terrace and environs have proposed a 4 storey model for this area. Therefore, it is proposed to provide a 4 storey streetscape to Old Canterbury Rd.

In discussions with council, council planners have suggested that the proposed building heights be stepped from 9 storey to 4 storey. This is reflected in council's own master plan for a similar site in Dulwich Hill as well as council's own master plan for the site which establishes a building height of 9 storey to the railway line.

The central zone is a transition zone and will have a typical building height of 6 storey.





## 12.2\_MASTER PLAN



12.5 SUBJECT SITE MASTER PLAN

BUILDING HEIGHT

The heights of the buildings on site will be stepped from the railway corridor to the west, to the existing housing to the east.

The areas to the east of Old Canterbury Road are characterized by lower rise existing housing. Several council planning studies for Railway Terrace and environs have proposed a 4 storey model for this area. The proposed development is proposed to provide a 4 storey streetscape to Old Canterbury Rd.

In discussions with council, council planners have suggested that the appropriate scale for the buildings on the railway is around 8 – 9 storey. This is reflected in council's master plan for a similar site in Dulwich Hill as well as council's own master plan for the site which establishes a building height of 9 storey to the railway line.

The central zone is a transition zone and will have a typical building height of 6 storey.

