

Major Project Application (MP10\_0110)  
Proposed medium density residential development

## **74-78 Belmore Street, Ryde**



### Visual impacts assessment

Report prepared for Achieve Australia Pty Ltd  
by Dr. Richard Lamb

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## **Executive Summary**

### **Major Project Application MP10\_0110 for a residential apartment development 74-78 Belmore Street, Ryde**

#### **Introduction**

1. Richard Lamb and Associates undertook an independent assessment of the potential visual impacts of the proposed development. The Report addresses the relevant DGR's for the Application to include Key Issue 2 Built Form and Urban Design (dot point 1), Key Issue 3 Environmental and Residential Amenity (dot point 1 and dot point 2), Key Issue 8 Heritage and Plans and Documents 5 (View Analysis).

#### **Methodology**

2. The assessment began by investigating the existing visual character and resources of the site and the surrounding context to identify the visual opportunities and constraints. The visual resources identified were;
  - i. The boundary interfaces of the subject site on Belmore Street, Junction Street and Porter Street and low density residential developments located on these streets.
  - ii. The heritage item (Crowle Home) on the subject site, its setting and curtilage, including gardens, and entrance gate. The palisade fence along Belmore Street also contributes to the visual resources of the subject site.
  - iii. The tall vegetation along the boundaries of the subject site and a small number of trees within the interior.
  - iv. The interface at the southern boundary of the subject site with the adjacent church building (approved residential/retail development).
  - v. Recently constructed, approved but yet to be constructed and future potential medium density developments on parts of the Meadowbank Employment Area (MEA).
  - vi. The presence of large industrial buildings on parts of the MEA in the existing context.
  - vii. Significantly screened visibility of the subject site from the wider context, including those from the heritage items.
3. The response of the proposal to the identified visual opportunities and constraints was then analysed (Section 2.4 of the report).
4. The general principle of the layout and building height distribution is such that the proposal will present a lower height closer to the streets along Belmore Street, Junction Street and Porter Street and the taller components of the buildings are set further back. Significant setbacks along the streets are also proposed in accordance with the MEA Master Plan in Ryde DCP 2010.

5. The buildings have significant separations between themselves as well as from the heritage curtilage. The memorial garden associated with Crowle Home will be retained as a heritage landscape-passive recreation area. Other gardens along the carriageway will also be retained. A large central courtyard will be used as open landscape/village green to cater to all future residents. The single storey Block F adjoining the original Crowle Home will be for community use and will contain a swimming pool and a gymnasium. There are a number of internal pedestrian streets proposed on the ground level.
6. McGregor Coxall has prepared a Landscape Concept Plan. The proposal incorporates substantial size and quality of open spaces and appropriate solar light and orientations and high quality internal residential amenity.
7. The buildings layout is such that the axial view to the carriage way and to the heritage home will be maintained from Belmore Street and the outward view axes from the heritage home in the north, east and west directions will be kept open.
8. The visual exposure of the site and the proposed development was documented by visiting a number of viewing locations and making observations. This also included an assessment from the waterway and from the southern side of Parramatta River. The visual exposure from the private domain was determined by making observations from the streets, Parramatta River and the foreshore.
9. The assessment also included identifying the heritage items within the visual catchment of the subject site, visiting them and documenting the potential effect of the proposal on the views to and from the heritage items and views between the heritage items (section 3.1 of the report).
10. The vegetation along the boundaries of the subject site provides a significant screening effect to the views of the interior. Views of the subject site are also restricted from the south, southeast and southwest directions due to the screening effect of recently constructed residential developments, industrial developments, foreshore vegetation and vegetation in the neighbouring sites. Views of the subject site from the north, northeast and northwest within the wider context are also predominantly of the canopies of trees due to the intervening effect of development, vegetation and topography.
11. Only parts of the proposed development will be visible in individual views from both the public and private domain viewing locations. The vegetation along the edges of the subject site will screen the lower parts of the proposed buildings in individual views.
12. Representative viewing locations were nominated for the preparation of block model photomontages of the development seen from strategic locations. The locations were selected to represent the range of views available from the whole visual catchment and the most significance locations from which they are available. NBRS+P Architects have prepared the montages under our supervision. They represent the visual exposure and the potential effect of the proposal on the present composition and character of the views. It was determined that the proposal will be well within the desired and emerging character of the locality and not prominent in any views. The proposed heights are compatible with the adjacent developments
13. The potential visual effects of the proposed development were analysed and the impacts assessed.



### **Findings and assessment**

14. The potential visual effects of the proposal were analysed and it was found that the proposal will have a moderate and a positive effect on the character of the site and the surroundings. It does not have any significant negative effect on the views to and from the heritage items or views between the heritage items.
15. The proposed development will have moderate to high compatibility with the existing, emerging and desired future character of the site and the surroundings as envisaged by the MEA Master Plan in Ryde DCP 2010. It is of similar nature to recently constructed and approved developments in the locality such as Faraday Park, Shepherds Bay and Bay One residential developments. It is responsive to the adjacent developments on the bounding streets with regard to building heights.
16. The proposed development is in line with the urban design principles, general development controls and precinct specific development controls with regard to views and vistas, foreshore access, visual and pedestrian linkages, street setbacks and street heights, vegetation retention and enhancement, provision of open spaces and adaptive reuse of buildings that are given in the MEA Master Plan in Ryde DCP 2010.
17. Subject to appropriate strategies and commitments with regard to urban design and residential amenity at the detailed design stage, the proposed development will not result in any significant potential visual and related amenity impacts, including visual privacy and view blocking.



## **1.0 Introduction**

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

I have been appointed by NBRS + Partners on behalf of the Applicant, Achieve Australia, to undertake an independent assessment of the potential visual impacts of the proposed Major Project Application (MP10\_0110) for a residential apartment development at 74-78 Belmore Street, Ryde. The subject site is within the Meadowbank Employment Area (the MEA).

The report is based on our field documentation and assessment undertaken on 27 October, 18 June and 15 July 2010. The Report also addresses the relevant Director General's Requirements (DGRs) for the Application, specifically:

1. Key Issue 2 Built Form and Urban Design (dot point 1- Height, bulk and scale of the proposed development within the context of the locality and adjoining residential development);
2. Key Issue 3 Environmental and Residential Amenity (dot point 1 – Impacts of the proposal on visual privacy and view loss and dot point 2- Details of the measures to be implemented to achieve a high level of environmental and residential amenity);
3. Key Issue 8 Heritage (Potential effect on views to and from heritage items), and;
4. Plans and Documents 5 (View Analysis).

The Report also addresses the City of Ryde's input to the relevant Key Issues of the DGRs, as stated in their letter to the Department of Planning, dated 15 October 2010. The report forms part of the Environmental Assessment submitted with the Application.

The Report gives specific consideration to the potential effects of the proposed development on the existing views to and from the heritage items located within the immediate and wider visual context of the subject site. This analysis is to be read in conjunction with the Statement of Heritage Impact prepared by NBRS + Partners.

I have previously provided specialist advice to NBRS + Partners based on my own independent initial assessments of the visual character, the visual opportunities and constraints and heritage aspects to inform the layout and building height distribution of the proposed development for the subject site. I support the design which is the subject of the Major Project Application and the Environmental Assessment on visual, heritage views and related amenity impacts grounds.

### **1.2 Documents consulted**

I have perused the following documents in the preparation of this report;

1. Concept Plan Drawings 09002-EA01-A to 09002-EA13-A, prepared by NBRS + Partners, dated 25 February 2011.
2. 32708A01. DWG, Revision A, Sheet 1 of 1, Plan showing detail and levels over Lots 13 & 14 DP 4481, Lot 1 DP 921633, Lot 11 & 12 DP 51349 and Lot 1 DP 1109537, prepared by Degotardi, Smith & Partners, dated 21 October 2010.



3. 31887A01. DWG, Revision A, Sheet 1 of 2, Plan showing detail and levels over part of “The Crowle Home”, prepared by Degotardi, Smith & Partners, dated 5 May 2009.
4. Landscape Architecture Concept Plan Report, prepared by McGregor Coxall, dated 17 January 2011.
5. Director General's Requirements for the Major Project Application, issued 16 September 2010.
6. City of Ryde's input on the DGRs, letter from the Council to the Department of Planning, dated 15 October 2010.
7. Heritage Curtilage Study, 'Crowle Home', prepared by NBRS + Partners, dated 16 September 2009.
8. Ryde Local Environmental Plan 2010.
9. Ryde Development Control Plan 2010.

### **1.3 Visual impact assessment methodology**

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

The first part is the visual character and resources analysis which describes the present and desired future character of the site and the surrounding context and identifies the existing and potential visual resources of the development site. It then describes the proposed development and how it responds to the identified visual resources of the development site.

The second 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 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).

It starts with 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. Change is considered in relation first to the existing, emerging and desired future character of the site itself and secondly to the existing, emerging and desired future character of the surrounding context. 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 development site to the Parramatta River, which is considered a heritage item of national significance and a number of heritage items of local and State significance within the surrounding context of the site. Specific visual effects are also considered to include potential view loss effects, interruption of predominant view lines including those to and from the heritage items and in general terms the likely effects on visual privacy and visual amenity of the existing and future residents.

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





The assessment proceeds to address the relevant planning instruments with regard to visual issues and then presents a summary of strategies and commitments with regard to the present application and future measures for the fine grain design stage of the proposal.

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 ratings in the visual impact factors (ie., the Physical Absorption Capacity and Compatibility) work in the reverse order compared to visual effects rating. For example High level of Physical Absorption Capacity means Low level of visual impact.

The report has the following components:

1. Visual character and resource analysis (Chapter 2 of the Report). This comprises:
  - a) Description of the existing character of the development site. (Section 2.1 of the report)
  - b) Description of the existing character of the surrounding context. 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. (Section 2.2 of the report)
  - c) Identification of the existing and potential visual resources of the development site. (Section 2.3 of the Report)
  - d) Description of the proposal and its response to the above identified visual resources. (Section 2.4 of the Report)
2. Visual effects analysis. (Chapter 3 of the report) This comprises:
  - a) 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 the site. The viewing locations include roads, recreation areas, waterways and residences and commercial and industrial developments. Specific consideration is given to the visual exposure to the heritage items. (Sections 3.1 of the Report)
  - b) Analysis of the change in the intrinsic character of the site and relevant locality due to the proposed development. (Sections 3.2 and 3.3 of the Report)
  - c) 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 development site from those viewing locations. (Section 3.4 of the Report)
  - d) Analysis of specific visual effects such as visual privacy, view loss and interruption of existing important views, including views to and from the heritage items. (Section 3.5 of the Report)
  - e) Evaluation of the overall visual effects of the proposal based on the above analysis (Section 3.6 of the Report)
3. Visual impacts assessment (Chapter 4 of the Report), which considers:
  - a) Physical absorption capacity. (Section 4.1 of the Report)
  - b) Compatibility with the character of the site. (Section 4.2.1 of the Report)





- c) Compatibility with the character of the surroundings including heritage items. (Section 4.2.2 of the Report)
  - d) Address to relevant Planning Instruments (Section 4.3 of the Report).
  - e) Summary of strategies and commitments for improved address to surrounding context and residential amenity. (Section 4.4 of the Report)
  - f) Evaluation of the overall visual impacts of the proposal based on the above assessment. (Section 4.5 of the Report)
4. Conclusions. (Chapter 5 of the Report)



## **2.0 Visual character and visual resources analysis**

### **2.1 Visual character of the site**

The subject site is rectangular and is bounded by Junction Street to the north, Porter Street to the east and Belmore Street to the west. It is adjacent to a small church site to its south, which is presently occupied by a single storey precast concrete and brick building 'Sydney House of Worship'. A residential/retail development has been approved for this site. The subject site has a gradual downward slope from north to south and a cross fall from east to west.

There is a heritage listed house of local heritage significance 'Crowle Home' on the subject site. It is associated with a circular bitumen driveway/carriageway off Belmore Street and formal gardens. The house is a large single storey Federation House. There are later additions to the northern, southern and eastern elevations of the original house which were built at various times during the conversion of the cottage to institutional use. The entrance to the house and the premises is through Belmore Street. This entrance has an iron gate supported by two concrete posts. There is palisade fencing along the Belmore Street frontage of the site.

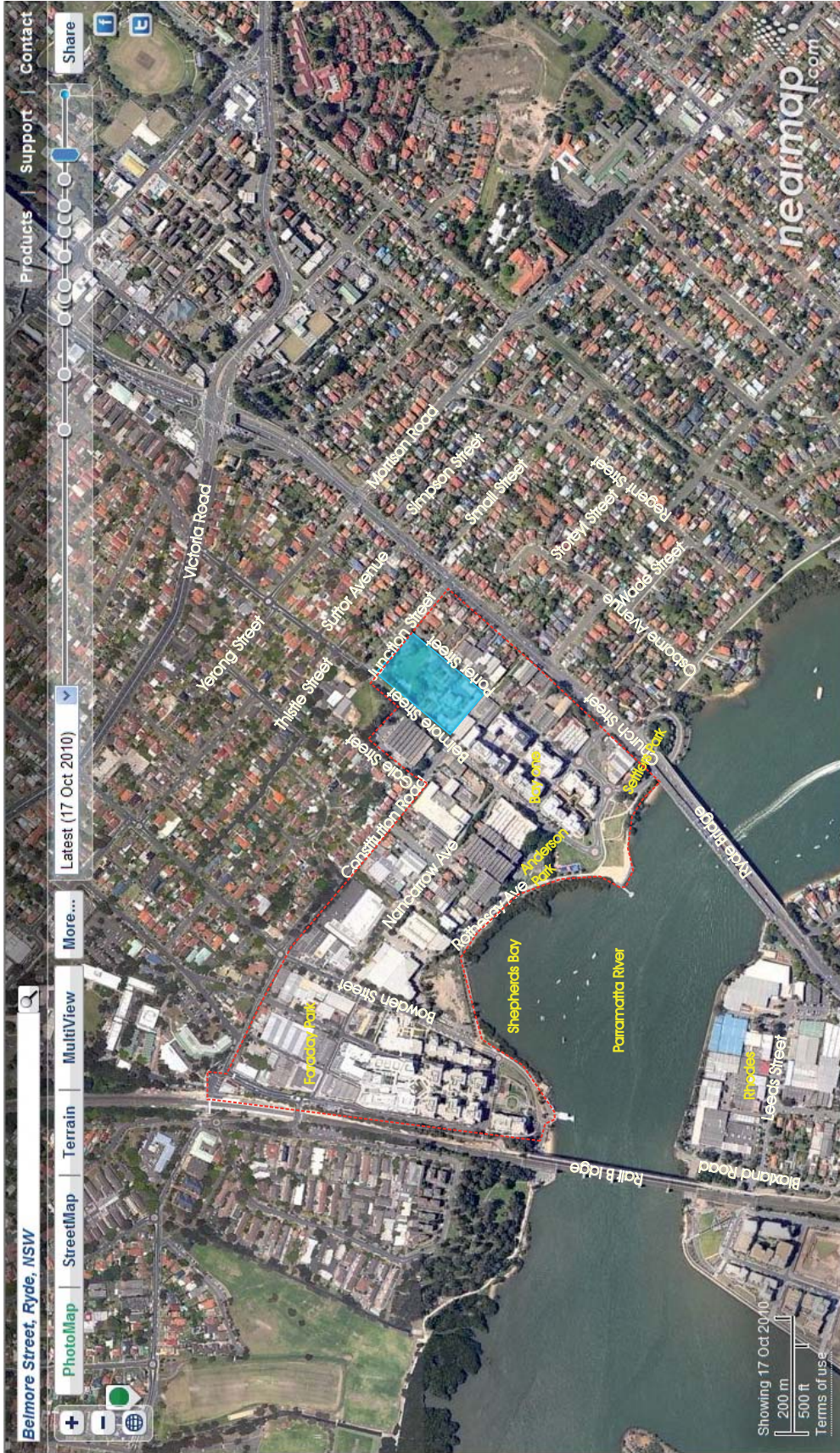
NBRS + Partners have undertaken a Heritage Curtilage Study and identified a curtilage for the heritage item. This curtilage boundary has been shown on the Concept Plan drawings and includes the original house, the carriageway, the entrance, the gardens and the palisade fencing.

There are large Camphor Laurel trees about 10 to 20m high along the Belmore Street and Junction Street frontage of the subject site. There are also some trees of other species along the Porter Street frontage of the subject site as well. There are some Brush Box, Cypresses, Liquidambars and native plants, shrubs and ornamental trees mainly in the northwest corner of the subject site and some further north of the central loop of the carriageway associated with Crowle Home. There is one Pin Oak tree to the east of the curtilage in the vicinity of E F Edwards Building and another Pin Oak along the northern boundary (Junction Street boundary) of the site. There are two Jacarandas flanking the Belmore Street entrance to the subject site.

The subject site is presently used for institutional purposes and provides for the care of people with disabilities. There are a number of one to three storey brick buildings which cater to the accommodation and care of the patients. There is a vehicular entrance to the subject site on Porter Street. There are on-ground car parks/carports associated with individual institutional buildings to the east and south of Crowle Home.

The vegetation along Belmore Street and Junction Street provides significant screening to the views of the interior of the site. Crowle Home and the carriageway are mostly only visible from a section of Belmore Street in the vicinity of the entrance to the subject site on that street. Views of Crowle Home and its curtilage are otherwise not possible from the external domain. The institutional buildings also do not have a prominent visibility due to the screening effects of the vegetation along the boundaries of the subject site, with the exception of the views from Porter Street. They are of no architectural merit.





↑ north  
Not to scale

## The extent of Meadowbank Employment Area

The subject site

## Map 1 Site identification and its context



## **2.2 Visual character of the surrounding context and streetscapes**

The surrounding context of the subject site is of a varied character. The subject site is within the MEA which is subject to a site specific Master Plan (Part 4.2 of DCP 2010). The MEA extends between the railway line to the west and Church Street to the east, the foreshore to the south and Constitution Road and Junction Street to the north. This area is a former industrial area and many industrial and commercial buildings (some functional and some non-functional) still exist on parts of this area. There are recent residential and mixed use developments constructed on parts of this area. Similar developments are also approved and presently under construction and further Applications for similar developments have been lodged with the Department of Planning/Council for other parts within this area.

The immediate context consists of;

- Meadowbank Public School opposite the subject site on Belmore Street,
- Low density detached predominantly single storey residential character of Belmore Street and Junction Street,
- Part industrial and part low density predominantly single storey detached residential character of the east side of Porter Street (this land is also under the MEA and can be subject of future medium density residential or mixed use development).
- A church, located immediately south on Belmore Street, for which a residential/retail development has been approved;
- A factory/Council depot, located on the northwest corner of the intersection of Belmore Street and Constitution Road. This land is also within the MEA and has the potential to be developed for residential or mixed use purposes in future.

There is recent medium density development (Bay One residential development) which is now completed further south of the subject site. It is located on the former industrial site (now part of the MEA) and is bounded by Belmore Street to the west, Porter Street to the east, Well Street to the south and the Church site to the north. This development has a five storey street wall height on Belmore Street and a sixth storey further set back from the street as a discontinuous level.

Constitution Road is characterized by low density detached predominantly single storey residential development on the north side and industrial developments on the south side. The south side of Constitution Road is under the MEA and a Concept Plan and Project Application has been lodged for mixed and residential apartment development for a site generally bounded by Belmore Street to the east, Bowden Street to the west, Constitution Road to the north and Rothesay Avenue to the south. This development proposes four to six storey street wall heights and one to two storey pop ups set back from the streets along all the bounding streets. Some taller buildings of up to twelve storeys are also proposed within the interior of the subject site. There is also an approved but yet to be constructed residential apartment development at 146 Bowden Street, closer to the foreshores of Shepherds Bay.

The wider context of the subject site further north, northeast and northwest is that of low density residential character. Faraday Park medium density residential development (within the MEA) is located further west and southwest of the subject site.

The subject site does not have any significant visual connection with the Parramatta River and the foreshores of Shepherds Bay. The vegetation within the foreshore reserves and in neighbouring





sites and the heights of the industrial buildings and recently constructed medium density residential developments significantly screen views of the subject site from the south, southeast and southwest directions. The screening effect due to developments will further increase with time as new developments are under construction and owing to the emerging and desired future character of the MEA.

The wider visual context of the subject site also consists of Anderson Park along the Shepherds Bay foreshore, a foreshore walkway and the eastern and western ferry wharves. The John Whitton Bridge (railway bridge) and the Ryde Bridge (road bridge) on the Parramatta River also form part of the wider visual context of the subject site. The Ryde Bridge is listed as an item of local heritage significance. The John Whitton Railway Bridge is listed as an item of State Heritage Significance under Ryde LEP 2010. It is also listed on the NSW State Heritage Register. The significance of the John Whitton Bridge is associated with it being one of the twelve double lattice girder bridges that have survived substantially intact in the NSW railway system. It has been adaptively reused as pedestrian bridge beside the new functional railway bridge to its west.

The subject site does not have any significant visibility from these bridges. Only parts of tree canopies on the subject site can be seen in the background of industrial and residential developments and foreshore vegetation from vehicles and pedestrians moving south to north on the road bridge. Similar views are possible from trains on the rail bridge. Views are highly limited from the John Whitton Bridge (the pedestrian bridge) adjacent to it because of the blocking effect of the steel lattice work.

The visual context adjacent to the foreshore on the south side of the Parramatta River is predominantly characterised by industrial development in Rhodes. Part of this land, immediately to the west of the John Whitton Bridge (railway bridge) has been redeveloped as large scale residential consisting of apartment buildings of up to nine storeys in height. There has also been a Joint Master Plan Application with the Department of Planning for 30+ storey towers in the Rhodes locality, on the southern side of Parramatta River.

Further north of the subject site, the topography generally dips and then gradually rises up to Victoria Road which runs along a ridgeline. The Council's Planning Instruments require the existing visual connection between Parramatta River and Victoria Road and the visibility of a treed context and ridgeline along Victoria Road seen from Parramatta River to be maintained by future developments. The potential effect of the proposed development on this aspect is discussed in detail in Section 3.1.

There are many items of heritage significance within the surrounding and wider context of the subject site. With the exception of the Parramatta River, the rail and road bridges and a foreshore reserve, all heritage items in the wider context are predominantly located to the north and northeast of the subject site. These are discussed in detail in Section 3.1 of the Report.

## **2.3 Visual resources of the site and its context**

Based on the analysis of the visual character of the site and the surroundings, the following visual resources are identified, which pose opportunities and constraints to any potential future development;

1. The boundary interfaces of the subject site on Belmore Street, Junction Street and Porter Street and low density residential developments located on these streets.



2. The heritage item (Crowle Home) on the subject site, its setting and curtilage, including gardens, and entrance gate. The palisade fence along Belmore Street also contributes to the visual resources of the subject site.
3. The tall vegetation along the boundaries of the subject site and a small number of trees within the interior.
4. The interface at the southern boundary of the subject site with the adjacent church building (approved residential/retail development).
5. Recently constructed, approved but yet to be constructed and future potential medium density developments on parts of the MEA.
6. The presence of large industrial buildings on parts of the MEA in the existing context.
7. Significantly screened visibility of the subject site from the wider context, including those from the heritage items (this aspect is discussed in detail in Section 3.1).

## **2.4 The proposal and its response to the visual resources**

The proposal is for a residential apartment development consisting of a number of buildings, Blocks A, B, C, D, E, F and G. A two to three storey basement car park is proposed on the subject site. The proposal will be constructed in stages.

Block A is proposed to be located in the southwest sector of the site and will have a frontage to Belmore Street. It will be an L-shaped footprint, varied building height and is two, four, six and seven storeys high. The part of the building parallel to Belmore Street is stepped up from two storeys at the northern end to four storeys and then six storeys. It also has an overall seven storey high component which is set back above all the edges of the six storey component. The part of Block A which is to the east of the component parallel to Belmore Street is part four and part five storeys high. This height variation is to respond appropriately to the heritage curtilage.

Block B is proposed to be located in the northwest sector of the site and has a frontage to both Belmore Street and Junction Street. It is of an irregular shape and has small, lower height components of two and four storeys at the southwest end and four storeys at northern end respectively, a six storey large central part and an overall seven storeys high component which is set back above the six storeys component from all the edges. The building height distribution of this building is to appropriately respond to the heritage curtilage, the low density residential character of Junction Street and to take opportunity of the treed character of the Belmore Street edge of the subject site.

Block C is proposed to be located in the northeast sector of the subject site and will have a rectangular footprint. It will have a frontage on both Junction Street and Porter Street. It will have four storeys height closer to Junction Street and a six storey component further set back from Junction Street. This six storey high component is also set back from Porter Street by a four storey component. The building height distribution is to appropriately respond to the low density residential character of Junction Street and the narrow width of Porter Street.

Block D is located along the eastern boundary of the site and has a frontage to Porter Street. It is predominantly a rectangular footprint. It has a narrow four storey high component close to Porter Street which also wraps around part of the southern edge of the Block. A six storey component is set back from Porter Street and a seven storey component is further set back.



Block E is also located along the eastern boundary of the site and has a frontage to Porter Street. It is predominantly a rectangular footprint. It has a narrow four storey high component close to Porter Street which also wraps around part of the northern edge of the Block. A six storey component is set back from Porter Street and an overall seven storey component is set back above the six storey component from all the edges.

Block F is proposed to wrap around part of the southern and eastern elevation of the original Crowle House. It will be single storey high and will be located within the heritage curtilage area. It will be at the location of the existing later additions to the heritage house.

Block G is proposed to be located between Blocks C and D with a small rectangular footprint. It will be a single storey high.

All buildings are proposed to be located at significant setbacks from the site boundaries, which also allow retention of the majority of the existing trees along the edges of the subject site. A soft landscape buffer/screen zone will be established along the edges. The buildings have significant separations between themselves as well as from the heritage curtilage. The memorial garden associated with Crowle Home will be retained as a heritage landscape-passive recreation area. Other gardens along the carriageway will also be retained. A large central courtyard will be used as open landscape/village green to cater to all future residents. The single storey Block F adjoining the original Crowle Home will be for community use and will contain a swimming pool and a gymnasium. There are a number of internal pedestrian streets on ground level. McGregor Coxall has prepared a Landscape Concept Plan.

The buildings layout is such that the axial view to the carriage way and to the heritage home will be maintained from Belmore Street and the outward view axes from the heritage home in the north, east and west directions will be kept open.

The proposed Blocks respond appropriately to the various interfaces of the subject site on Belmore Street, Junction Street, Porter Street and to the southern boundary. The Buildings generally have lower heights closer to the Streets and the taller components are significantly set back from the street heights. The exception to this principle is in Blocks A and B where parts of the building are six and seven storeys high at the same setback from the street as the remainder of the building. This is because Blocks A and B are not in the immediate vicinity of low density residential developments, but closer to land which has the potential for medium density development, a Council depot and a public school. The subject site along the Belmore Street edge is a transition from low density residential to the north to medium density developments to the south.

Two vehicular entry and exit are proposed to be via Porter Street. Only those trees on the subject site along Porter Street are proposed to be removed which are essential for the vehicular entry and exit. Two Pin Oak trees in the interior of the subject site are also retained. The Landscape Concept Plan also provides the detail of the tree removal, which is minimal. It also provides details of the proposed additional trees, shrubs and ground covers.

Pedestrian access to the site is proposed to be provided at a number of locations on all Streets. Pedestrian access is also proposed to be provided to and from the public pedestrian site walkway adjacent to the southern boundary of the subject site.





**Plate A**

From the northwest corner of the intersection of Constitution Road and Belmore Street, looking northeast at the subject site.



**Plate B**

Looking at the Belmore Street entrance to the subject site from standing straight opposite on Belmore Street.



**Plate C**

Looking northeast towards the northwest part of the subject site from standing straight opposite the Belmore Street entrance to the subject site.



**Plate D**

From the northeast corner of the intersection of Junction Street and Belmore Street looking east along the Junction Street streetscape.



**Plate E**

The Heritage Item on the subject site 'Crowle Home' and its setting.



**Plate F**

Looking north-northeast in the general direction of Willandra House in the district from the northern part of the subject site.





**Plate G**

Looking towards Belmore Street from the northern part of the subject site.



**Plate H**

The carriage drive & formal garden associated with the Heritage Item on the subject site.



**Plate I**

The Memorial Garden 1945 associated with the Heritage Item on the subject site.



**Plate J**

A pin oak tree within the interior of the subject site which is proposed to be retained in the proposed development.



**Plate K**

Looking east towards Porter Street from the carpark in the southeast part of the subject site



**Plate L**

Looking west towards Belmore Street from the carpark in the southern part of the subject site.





**Plate M**

Rear of the heritage building. The additions to the southeast elevation can be seen. A single storey building containing a gymnasium and swimming pool is proposed here.



**Plate N**

The residential context of the south side of Junction Street between Porter Street & Church Street as seen from in front of 7 Junction Street 'Waratah'.



**Plate O**

From in front of 6 Junction Street looking at the residential context of the north side of the Street.



**Plate P**

Residential context of part of the west side Porter Street



**Plate Q**

Industrial context of Porter Street



### **3.0 Visual effects analysis**

#### **3.1 Visual exposure of the site and the proposal**

As part of the field assessment, the visual exposure of the site and the proposed development was documented by visiting a number of viewing locations and making observations. This included an assessment from the waterway and from the southern side of Parramatta River. The visual exposure from the private domain was determined by making observations from the streets, Parramatta River and the foreshore. Appendix A contains photographic plates representing the visual exposure and the viewing locations assessed are shown on Maps 2 and 3.

The assessment also included identifying the heritage items within the visual catchment of the subject site, visiting them and documenting the potential effect of the proposal on the views to and from the heritage items and views between the heritage items.

As mentioned above, the vegetation along the boundaries of the subject site provide a significant screening effect to the views of the interior. Views of the subject site are also restricted from the south, southeast and southwest directions due to the screening effect of recently constructed residential developments, industrial developments, foreshore vegetation and vegetation in the neighbouring sites. Views of the subject site from the north, northeast and northwest within the wider context are also only of the canopies of trees to a small extent due to the intervening effect of development, vegetation and topography.

Only parts of the proposed development will be visible in individual views from both the public and private domain viewing locations. The vegetation along the edges of the subject site will screen the lower parts of the proposed buildings in individual views.

#### **Roads**

##### **Visual exposure of the subject site**

The subject site is visible from the immediate streetscapes of Belmore Street, Junction Street and Porter Street. It is visible from a section of Gale Street across parts of the Council Depot site (across the driveway) and the Meadowbank Public School.

Only parts of tree canopies on the subject site are visible from a section of Constitution Road between its intersection with Belmore Street and Hamilton Crescent West, in an oblique view over the Council depot site.

There is visibility of only tree canopies along the eastern boundary of the subject site from Well Street in the vicinity of its intersection with Porter Street. There is no significant visibility of the subject site from Rothesay Avenue, Bowden Street, Nancarrow Avenue and Hamilton Crescent West. There is no visibility of the subject site from further west of Bowden Street.

Visibility of the canopies of trees on the subject site is possible from Sutton Avenue, Thistle Street, Yerong Street and Simpson Street from only near their intersections with Belmore Street.

There is no significant visibility of the subject site from Victoria Road with the exception of the visibility of the tree canopies from near its intersection with Belmore Street. Views of parts of





the tree canopies on the subject site are also possible from a section of Victoria Road near its intersection with Church Street/Devlin Street. There is no visibility of the subject site from further north of Victoria Road or from Blaxland Road. Nor is there any significant visibility from Morrison Road.

Views of only a very small part of the tree canopies on the subject site are possible from the Ryde Bridge. There is visibility of some trees along Porter Street, Junction Street and Belmore Street from Church Street near its intersection with Junction Street.

Further east of Church Street, views of parts of the tree canopies on the subject site are possible from a section of Simpson Street near its intersection with Regent Street, from a section of Storey Street, a section of Small Street and from near the intersection of Riverside Avenue and Osborne Avenue. No significant views of the subject site are possible from locations further east of Regent Street.

There is no significant visibility of the subject site, with the exception of some tree canopies, from the pedestrian bridge adjacent to the rail bridge on the Parramatta River. Similar views may be possible from the rail bridge.

There is no significant visibility of the subject site from the northern terminus of the streets in the Rhodes locality such as from the end of Blaxland Road and Cavell Avenue.

### **Visual exposure of the proposed development**

The upper parts of Blocks A and B will be visible from a section of Belmore Street. Parts of Block C may be visible from a section of Belmore Street in the vicinity of its intersection with Junction Street. Parts of Block E will be visible from a section of Belmore Street, south of the entrance to the subject site. Parts of Block D may also be visible from a section of Belmore Street.

Blocks B and C will be visible from Junction Street. Parts of Block D and E will also be visible from a section of Junction Street between Porter Street and Church Street.

Blocks C, G, D and E will be visible from Porter Street.

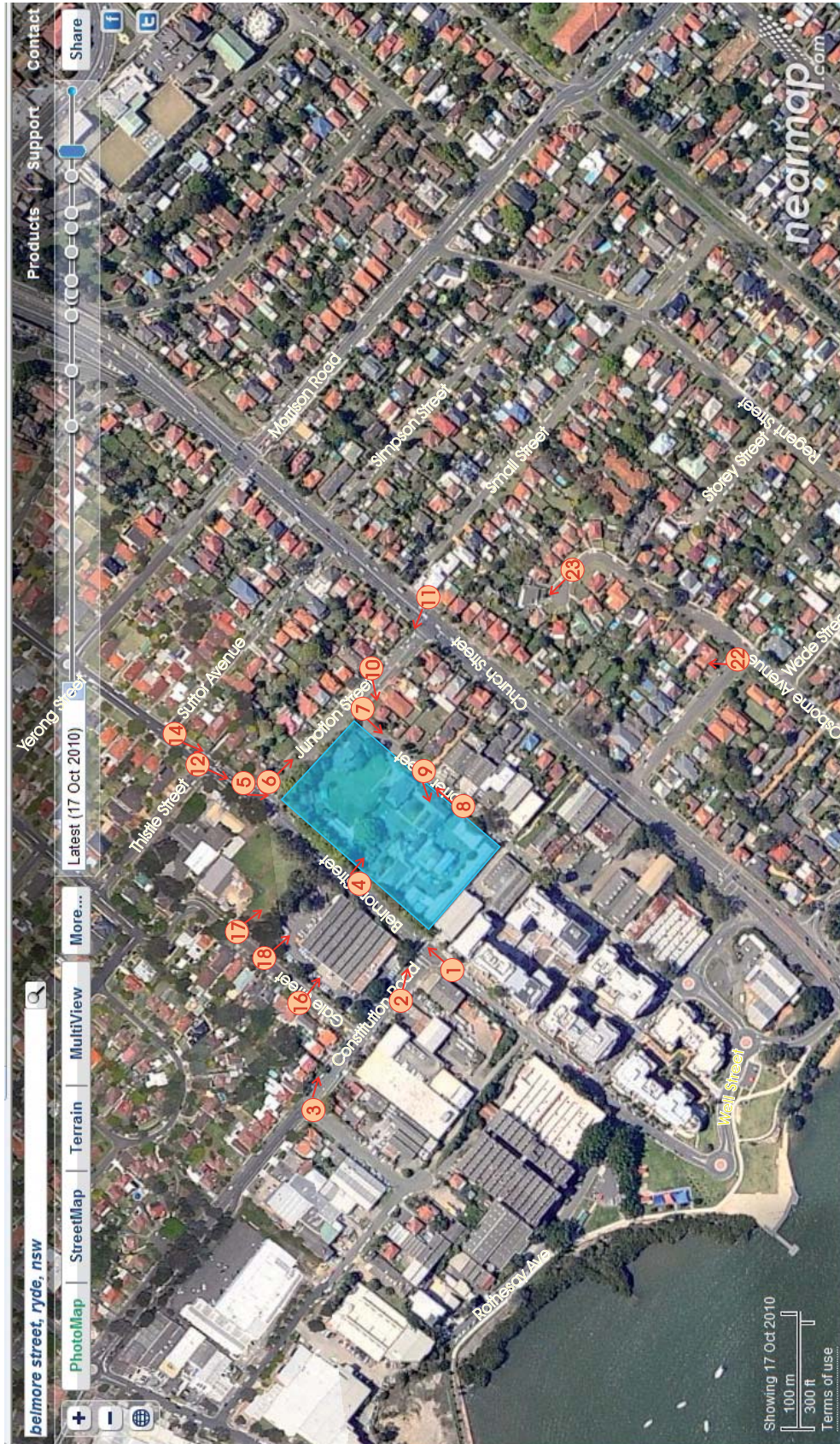
Parts of Block A may be visible from a section of Constitution Road between Belmore Street and Hamilton Crescent West. Parts of Blocks A, B, E and D may be visible from sections of Gale Street.

Parts of Block B will be visible from Sutton Avenue, Thistle Street, Yerong Street and Simpson Street only from near their intersections with Belmore Street. There may be visibility of small upper parts of Blocks A and C as well.

Only a small part of the proposed development, possibly Blocks C and D may be visible from Victoria Road in the vicinity of its intersection with Belmore Street and from its intersection with Church Street/Devlin Street.

There will not be a significant visibility of the proposed development from the Ryde Bridge. Parts of Blocks B and C will be visible from Church Street in the vicinity of its intersection with Junction Street.

Parts of Blocks D and E will be visible from a section of Simpson Street near its intersection with Regent Street, from a section of Storey Street, a section of Small Street and from near the intersection of Riverside Avenue and Osborne Avenue.



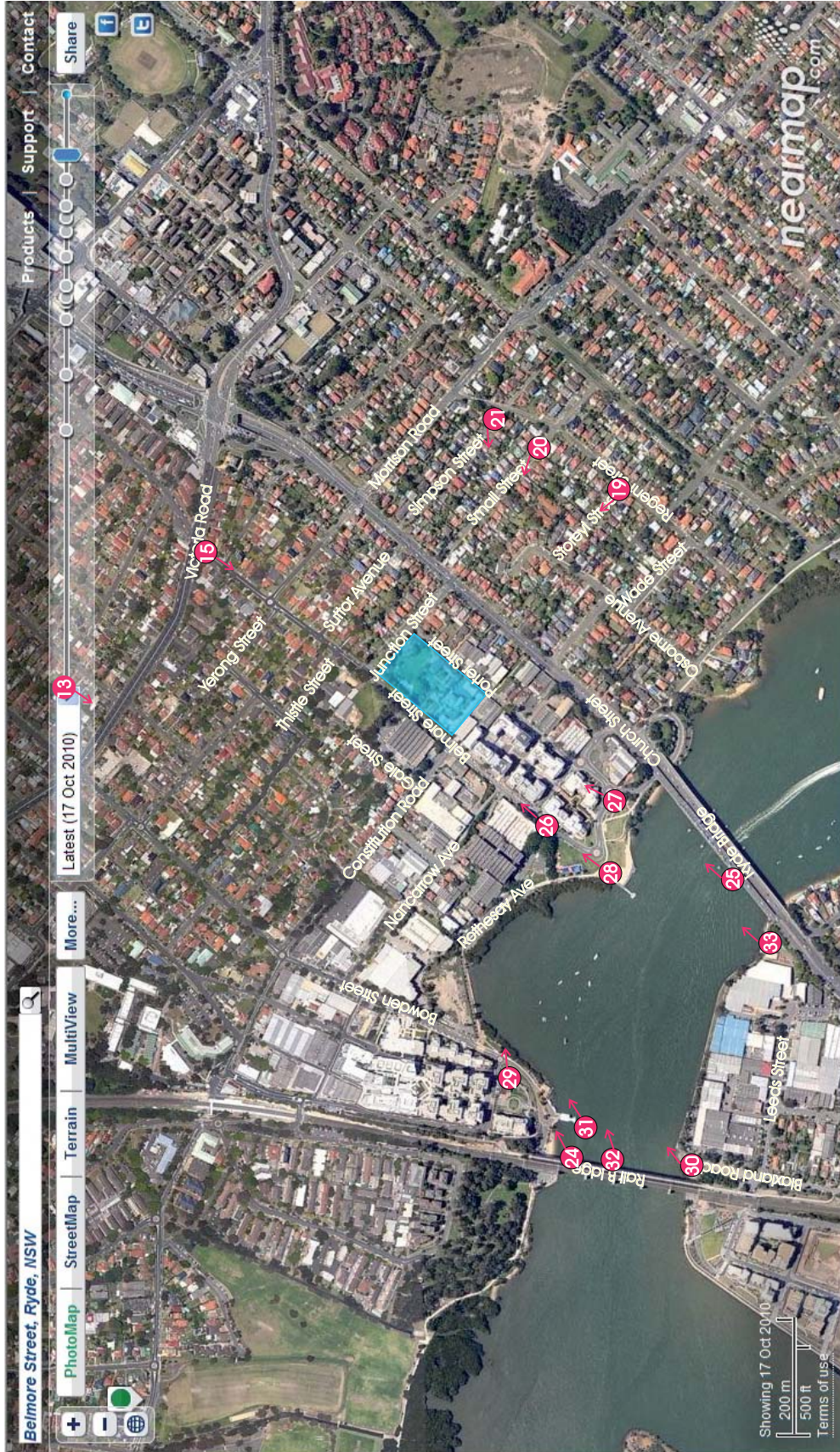
1 Viewing location and viewing direction

The subject site

**Map 2 View Point Analysis (Viewing locations in the immediate and closer context)**

↑ north  
Not to scale





30 Viewing location and viewing direction

The subject site

↑ north  
Not to scale

**Map 3 View Point Analysis (Viewing locations in the wider context)**



Parts of Block A may be visible from the John Whitton Bridge (pedestrian bridge) adjacent to the functional rail bridge and there may be also similar visibility from trains on the rail bridge.

There will not be any significant visibility of the proposed development from the northern terminus of roads in the Rhodes locality.

## **Reserves and recreation areas**

### **Visual exposure of the subject site**

There is no significant visibility of the subject site from the Shepherds Bay foreshore and Anderson Park, the pedestrian paved areas or the two ferry wharves. Only parts of the tree canopies along the eastern edge of the subject site are visible from a section of Settlers Park in the form of a focal view up Porter Street. There are no views of the subject site from Settlers Park further east of Church Street. There are no significant views of the subject site from the foreshore walkway between Rothesay Avenue and Bowden Street and from the Shepherds Bay Plaza at the intersection of Bowden Street and Bay Drive.

The foreshore of Rhodes is predominantly privatized. The subject site has no significant visibility from the foreshores of the residential waterfront development in the Rhodes locality or near the northern terminus of Blaxland Road.

There is no significant visibility of the subject site from the reserve land adjacent to the Yarralla Sea Scouts building at the eastern terminus of Leeds Street in Rhodes locality. It also does not have any significant visibility from the pedestrian pathway under the Ryde Bridge.

### **Visual exposure of the proposed development**

There will not be any significant visibility of the proposed development from the recreation areas and the foreshores discussed above.

## **Waterway**

### **Visual exposure of the subject site**

The subject site does not have any significant visibility from Shepherds Bay or from Parramatta River due to the screening effect provided by the foreshore vegetation, vegetation within foreshore sites and the presence of industrial and recently constructed medium density residential development in the view line. Future development of residential buildings on other sites is likely to increase this effect.

### **Visual exposure of the proposed development**

Similarly to the visibility of the subject site, there will not be any significant visibility of the proposed development from parts of Shepherds Bay or the Parramatta River.





## **Residences, industrial and commercial areas, public school**

### **Visual exposure of the subject site**

The subject site is visible from residences, institutional developments (Meadowbank Public School), industrial and commercial developments located on parts of the Streets discussed under the section on visual exposure from Roads above. The road names are not discussed here again to avoid repetitions.

### **Visual exposure of the proposed development**

Similarly, parts of the proposed development will be visible from residences, institutional developments (Meadowbank Public School), industrial and commercial developments located on parts of the Streets discussed under the section on visual exposure from Roads above.

Parts of the proposed development will be visible from the residences and industrial/commercial developments located on the immediate streetscapes of Belmore Street, Junction Street and Porter Street. Parts of the proposed development will also be visible from the Meadowbank Public School.

It will be visible from some residences located on Gale Street across parts of the Council Depot site (across the driveway) and the Meadowbank Public School. Parts of the proposed development will be visible from the Council Depot site at the northwest corner of the intersection of Constitution Road and Belmore Street. It will also be visible from the church site immediately south of the subject site which is approved for residential/retail development.

There will be no significant visibility of the proposed development from developments located on a section of Constitution Road between its intersection with Belmore Street and Hamilton Crescent West.

There will not be any significant visibility of the proposed development from the industrial/commercial developments on Rothesay Avenue, Bowden Street, Nancarrow Avenue and Hamilton Crescent West. There will not be any significant visibility of the proposed development from residences located on Bowden Street and those located further west of it.

Only small parts of the proposed developed (mainly parts of Block B) may be visible from residences in Sutton Avenue, Thistle Street, Yerong Street and Simpson Street only that are located closer to the intersections of these streets with Belmore Street.

There will not be any significant visibility of the proposed development from the residences/developments located on Victoria Road including from those located near its intersection with Belmore Street. There will not be any significant visibility of the proposed development from residences/developments located on Morrison Road as well.

Parts of the proposed development (mainly parts of Blocks C and D) will be visible from developments that are located on Church Street near its intersection with Junction Street.

Further east of Church Street, parts of the proposed development (mainly parts of Blocks C, D and E) will be visible from those residences located on a section of Simpson Street near its intersection with Regent Street, on a section of Storey Street, on a section of Small Street and near the intersection of Riverside Avenue and Osborne Avenue. No significant views of the proposed development will be possible from residences further east of Regent Street.



There will not be any significant visibility of the proposed development from residences and industrial developments in the Rhodes locality.

### **Heritage items**

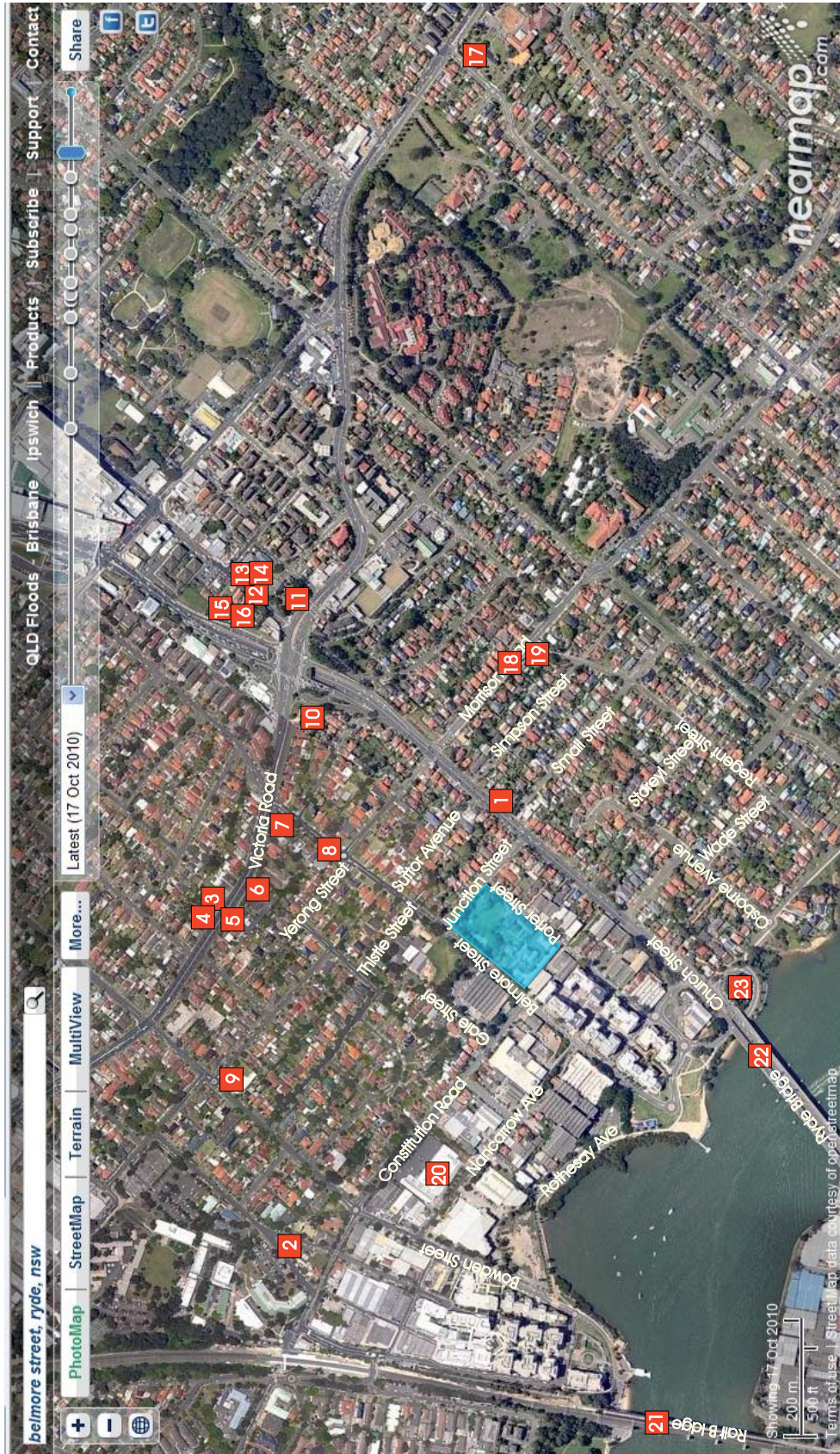
This section discusses the heritage items that are present in the visual catchment of the subject site and the potential effects of the proposed development including its visual exposure and effects on the views to and from the heritage items and between the heritage items. The heritage items are listed and their level of significance stated. The significance of the heritage items is not discussed as it forms part of the expertise of NBRs + Partners and has been dealt with in their Statement of Heritage Impact Report.

The assessment presented below addresses the relevant questions to be answered under the NSW guidelines outlined in the Heritage Office of NSW publication for Statements of Heritage Impact as part of the Heritage Manual. The question to be answered is;

*New development adjacent to a heritage item - How does the new development affect views to, and from, the heritage item? What has been done to minimise negative effects?*

The following table summarises the assessment for individual heritage items. Appendix C represents the photographs of each heritage item and the view access from them.





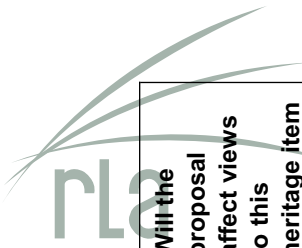
1 Heritage items

The subject site

**Map 4 Locations of the heritage items**

↑ north  
Not to scale





<b>Heritage item</b> <i>(as per the schedule in Ryde LEP 2010)</i> <b>Refer Map 5</b>	<b>Level of significance</b>	<b>Is the site visible from this heritage item?</b>	<b>Is the site in the view line from this heritage item to other heritage items?</b>	<b>Will the proposal be visible from this heritage item?</b>	<b>Will the proposal affect views from this heritage item to other heritage items?</b>	<b>Will the proposal affect views to this heritage item from the visual catchment?</b>
<b>76, 78 and 80 Church Street Terraces</b> (Item No 32) (1 on Map 5)	Local	Yes (mostly only canopies of some trees are visible)	No	Yes (upper parts of some buildings will be visible through screening vegetation in the foreground and middle ground and over the residential developments in the foreground.)	No	No
<b>The Laurels Nursing Home (34-38 See Street) (Item No 116) and Fountain (Corner See and Angas Street (Item No 115)</b> (2 on Map 5)	Local	No	No	No	No	No
<b>Addington (House) (813-815 Victoria Road)</b> (Item No 152) (3 on Map 5)	State	No	No	No	No	No
<b>The Retreat (House) (817 Victoria Road)</b> (Item No 153) (4 on Map 5)	State	No	No	No	No	No
<b>Wallametta Club (House) (826 Victoria Road)</b> (Item No 154) (5 on Map 5)	Local	Yes (tree canopies visible)	No	Yes (upper parts of some buildings may be distantly visible)	No	No

<b>Heritage item</b> <i>(as per the schedule in Ryde LEP 2010)</i> <b>Refer Map 5</b>	<b>Level of significance</b>	<b>Is the site visible from this heritage item?</b>	<b>Is the site in the view line from this heritage item to other heritage items?</b>	<b>Will the proposal be visible from this heritage item?</b>	<b>Will the proposal affect views from this heritage item to other heritage items?</b>	<b>Will the proposal affect views to this heritage item from the visual catchment?</b>
<b>Ryde Court House (812 Victoria Road)</b> (Item No 151) (6 on Map 5)	Local	Yes (heavily screened visibility in the direction of the site is possible from the rear open space-not from the building)	No	Yes (heavily screened visibility of upper parts of some building may be possible from the rear open space of the property)	No	No
<b>Ryde Police Station (808 Victoria Road) (Item No 150)</b> (7 on Map 5)	State	Yes (trees visible)	No	Yes (upper parts of very small number of buildings may be visible)	No	No
<b>21 Belmore Street (House)</b> (8 on Map 5)		No	No	No	No	No
<b>Church (74A Bowden Street) (Item No 20)</b> (9 on Map 5)	Local	No	No	No	No	No
<b>Willandra House (770-772 Victoria Road)</b> (Item No 149) (10 on Map 5)	State	Yes (heavily screened view due to the intervening effect of vegetation and developments)	No	Yes (heavily screened visibility of upper parts of some buildings may be possible)	No	No
<b>St Anne's Church (46 Church Street) (Item No 30) and St Anne's Cemetery (46 Church Street) (Item No 31)</b> (11 on Map 5)	State	Yes (heavily screened view of mostly some tree canopies of the site is possible from the church grounds)	No	Yes (heavily screened views of upper parts of some buildings may be possible)	No	No

<b>Heritage item</b> <i>(as per the schedule in Ryde LEP 2010)</i> <b>Refer Map 5</b>	<b>Level of significance</b>	<b>Is the site visible from this heritage item?</b>	<b>Is the site in the view line from this heritage item to other heritage items?</b>	<b>Will the proposal be visible from this heritage item?</b>	<b>Will the proposal affect views from this heritage item to other heritage items?</b>	<b>Will the proposal affect views to this heritage item from the visual catchment?</b>
Church and Hall (25-27 Church Street) (Item No 27), Hall (27 Church Street) (Item No 28) and Former Court House (42 Church Street) (Item No 29) (12 to 14 on Map 5)	Local	No	No	No	No	No
Parsonage (House) (12 Turner Street) (Item No 132) (15 on Map 5)	Local	No	No	No	No	No
Westward Cottage (House) (8 Turner Street) (Item No 131) (16 on Map 5)	Local	No	No	No	No	No
St Charles Church (562-582 Victoria Road) (Item No 147) (17 on Map 5)	State	No	No	No	No	No
Mayfield House (281 Morrison Road) (Item No 77) (18 on Map 5)	Local	No	No	No	No	No
312 Morrison Road (Shop) (Item No 78) (19 on Map 5)	Local	No	No	No	No	No

Heritage item (as per the schedule in Ryde LEP 2010) Refer Map 5	Level of significance	Is the site visible from this heritage item?	Is the site in the view line from this heritage item to other heritage items?	Will the proposal be visible from this heritage item?	Will the proposal affect views from this heritage item to other heritage items?	Will the proposal affect views to this heritage item from the visual catchment?
<b>Factory (37 Nancarrow Avenue) (Item No 80) (20 on Map 5)</b>	Local	No	No	No	No	No
<b>Meadowbank Railway Bridge (Item No 37) (21 on Map 5)</b>	State	Yes (mostly canopies of trees are visible)	No (the view of the site from here may generally be in the direction of Willandra House and St Anne's Church, but there are hardly any views available of these)	Yes (upper parts of some buildings will be visible. The development on Holdmark site, if approved and constructed, would significantly screen the proposal in this view)	No	No
<b>Bridge (Church Street) (Item No 33) (22 on Map 5)</b>	Local	Yes (mostly canopies of small number of trees are visible)	No	Yes (only upper parts of small number of buildings will be visible behind the Bay One residential development)	No	No
<b>Settlers Park (No. 10 Loop Road) (23 on Map 5)</b>	Not sure	Yes (mostly in the form of a focal view down Porter Street from near the intersection of Porter Street and Well Street. Only some tree canopy visible)	No	Yes (only upper parts of a small number of buildings will be visible behind the Bay One residential development)	No	No



## **Photomontages**

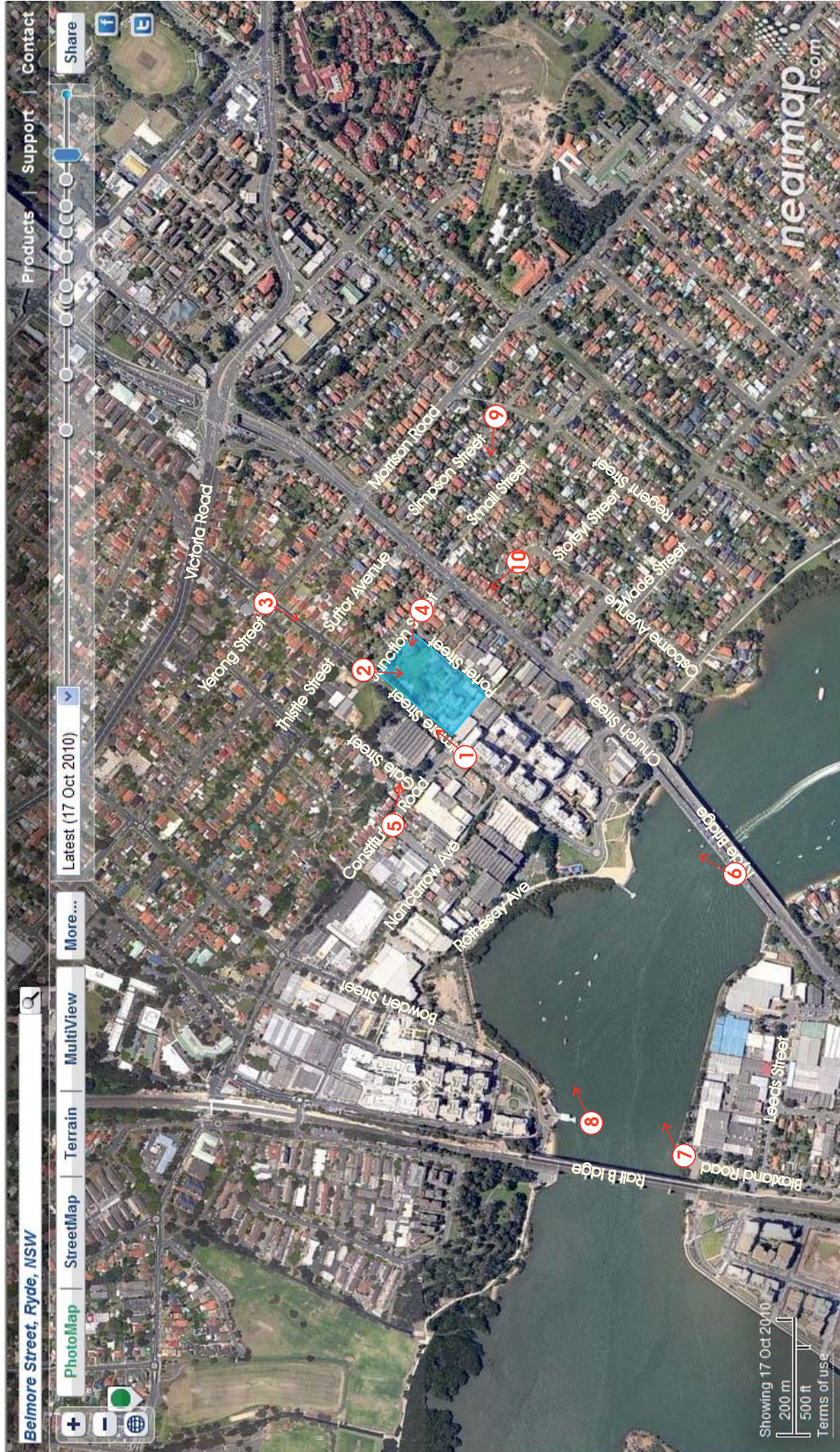
NBRS+ Partners have prepared block model montages of the proposed Concept Plan for eleven representative viewing locations. I nominated the viewing locations based on the findings of my field assessment. The viewing locations were selected to represent the kind of views available from the whole visual catchment and the range of locations from which they are available. The representative viewing locations are the following;


1. From about 30m south of the southwest corner of the intersection of Belmore Street and Constitution Road looking north.
2. View southeast from the northwest corner of the intersection of Junction Street and Belmore Street.
3. From the southwest corner of the intersection of Yerong Street and Belmore Street looking south.
4. From in front of 5 Junction Street, looking southwest.
5. From the intersection of Hamilton Crescent West and Constitution Road looking east-northeast.
6. From the southwest corner of the former liftable part of the Ryde Bridge looking north-northwest.
7. From the boat ramp at the northern terminus of Blaxland Road in Rhodes looking northeast.
8. From the Parramatta River, near the western ferry wharf in Meadowbank looking northeast.
9. From Simpson Street near its intersection with Regent Street looking southwest.
10. From in front of 21 Osborne Avenue looking west.

The viewing locations are shown on Map 5 and the montages are at Appendix B. From many of the above viewing locations, the proposed development will largely be not visible and the montage artist has indicated the general location of the development with the help of an arrow.


Viewing places that included the view of heritage items and the proposed development in the same view composition were visited for the purpose of preparing photomontages. With the exception of the Ryde Bridge (the road bridge) and rail bridges as heritage item locations, we were unable to find such places. For example while there is a view generally toward the subject site from Willandra and St Anne's Church, the view is so screened by foreground vegetation as to make preparation of the montages highly problematic. In any event, the development of the subject site to the heights proposed does not cause any significant effect on views of other specific heritage items.








1 Viewing location and viewing direction



The subject site

**Map 5 Viewing locations for photomontages**



North  
Not to scale



### **3.2 Potential change in the intrinsic character of the site**

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.

It is considered that the proposed development will have a moderate effect on the existing character of the site on the six point evaluation scale described above in the methodology. The character of the site will change from that of an institutional character with predominantly single to up to three storeys high brick 1960-70s buildings to a high quality residential apartment development with a high quantum of and quality of the public domain, and increased accessibility to views and pedestrian permeability, legibility and security. The effect will be a positive one in regard to amenity. The proposed development will result in defined open spaces, vegetated boundaries zones and increased physical and visual linkages and view corridors.

The existing visual and physical setting and curtilage of the heritage item will be maintained and the unsympathetic additions to it on the southeast elevation will be replaced by a small scale aesthetically and architecturally sympathetic building.

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, the desired future character and with the underlying zone objectives and permissibility. This has been considered at Sections 4.2 and 4.3 of the Report respectively.

### **3.3 Potential change in intrinsic character of surrounding context**

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 existing, emerging and desired future character of the MEA is that of high quality residential apartment development. In my opinion, the character change of the subject site will positively respond to part of this surrounding context and will be an improvement over the existing situation. The existing, under construction and approved residential context of the development site is predominantly located on former industrial/commercial/institutional sites, similar to the subject site.

The subject site is also located in the vicinity of low density residential development on Belmore Street, Junction Street and parts of Porter Street and a public school on Belmore Street. In this regard, the layout and building heights are proposed to appropriately respond to this low density character and at the same time adequately utilise the development potential of the site and the screening effect that the trees could provide to any future development.

The development proposes a four storey height closer to street on Junction Street and Porter Street and parts of Blocks A and B on Belmore Street are only up to two to four storeys high.

In my opinion, the building profiles, forms and heights are appropriate for the subject site which is located at a transition position at the edge of the MEA and having some low density residential interfaces with the immediate contexts.





The proposed development is responsive to the presence of heritage items in its visual catchment and does not have the effect of detracting from the existing and desired character of the context and of the view compositions available from the general public and private domains.

Overall, I consider that the proposed development will have a low-moderate effect on the intrinsic character of the surrounding context. The effect is considered to be a positive one. It will provide a familiar character of high compatibility with the existing context. It will be in line with the existing planning controls and policies and produce a more interesting and attractive outcome.

### **3.4 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 considered more important than one of similar quality on a less sensitive site or seen from a private viewing place.

The visual sensitivity of the subject site for the proposed development is assessed to be low-moderate on the scale of negligible, low, low-moderate, moderate, moderate-high and high. This is for the following reasons;

1. The proposed development will be predominantly only visible from the immediate public and private domains visual catchment.
2. The proposed development will not have any significant visibility from the foreshores of Shepherds Bay, Parramatta River, the Ryde Bridge and the road bridge and from any recreation areas and reserves which are considered to be high view sensitivity viewing locations.
3. There are many heritage items in the surrounding context of the subject site, however, the proposed development will not have any prominent visibility from them and will not affect views to and from them, or their settings.
4. The proposed development does not affect views to any important scenic features or affect any important view corridors or established view lines from its visual catchment.
5. The existing vegetation along the boundaries of the subject site and the potential for further landscaping provides potential for a development, as proposed.
6. The presence of a heritage item on the site poses some constraints on the spatial arrangement and scale of the development with regard to the heritage setting and visual and physical curtilage of the item. The physical curtilage protected by the existing conservation policies recommended by NBRBS + Partners seems appropriate as does the extended setting that would be potentially protected by the proposed development.
7. The immediate low density residential context on Belmore Street, Junction Street and a section of Porter Street are considered to be of medium viewer sensitivity and pose some constraints on heights proposed adjacent to streets on the subject site. The proposed development is considered to be appropriate in this regard.
8. The Meadowbank Public School is also considered to be a high view sensitivity location which provides views to the site for a high number of viewers and for sustained periods of times. However, it is considered that it does not restrict the site for the overall nature of development, as proposed.



9. The existing and emerging medium density residential context of part of the surrounding context of the subject site is considered to be of low viewer sensitivity and the proposed development is responsive to this character.
10. The proposed development is responsive to the transitory location of the subject site at the northern edge of the MEA area and partly surrounded by low density residential character.

### **3.5 Specific Visual effects**

As part of the formulation of the urban design principles at the fine grain design stage, specific measures will be taken to create a high quality residential environment. This will include appropriate building orientations and placement of doors, windows and balconies, appropriate setbacks and spatial arrangement, provision of open spaces, parks, opportunities for views outward, view corridors and access to scenic resources.

#### **Visual privacy**

Visual privacy between neighbours within the proposed development as well as with adjacent existing and approved residential development will be maintained by commitments to appropriate setbacks, building orientations, locations of doors, windows and balconies, and landscaping.

These measures can be incorporated at the fine grain design stage. This level of design is not part of the current Concept Plan Application.

#### **Interruption of views and view loss effects**

The proposed development is responsive to the existing view access from the public and private domains. There is no view access to the foreshore and the river from the section of Belmore Street adjacent to the subject site due to change in the alignment of the road, however the proposed development will not have any effect on this street view corridor.

The proposal will not cause any significant effect on existing access to views to the heritage items on Victoria Road and its general vicinity from locations to the south, southwest and southeast including the views from the Ryde Bridge, the rail bridge, Parramatta River, its foreshores and developments on its north and south sides. The proposal will not cause any significant effect on the existing views/visual connection between the Parramatta River and Victoria Road and to the sense of the view of the treed ridgeline along Victoria Road. This is affected by the already constructed residential apartment developments to the south and south west of the subject site and by approved and yet to be constructed developments in the same vicinities.

There are no significant views of or between heritage items east and west of the subject site and the proposed development does not affect the existing level of east-west view access across the subject site.

The proposal will not have any significant effect on views from heritage items or views to heritage items from the visual catchment, including views between heritage items. The subject site is not in the view lines between the most significant items that are local landmarks and retains views



with the potential for linkages or claimed linkages, such as Willandra House, Dame Eadith Walker Hospital (Yaralla Estate), the Road and Rail Bridges, St Anne's Church and the group of heritage items in Church Street and Turner Streets, Ryde, Addington and the Police Station/Court House.

The potential effects of the proposed development on the views to and from individual heritage items are discussed in detail in Table 3.1.

### **3.6 Overall visual effects**

Based on the analysis presented above on each factor, it is assessed that the overall visual effects of the proposed development will be low to moderate on the six point evaluation scale.



## **4.0 Visual impacts assessment**

### **4.1 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. High physical absorption capacity means low visual impact.

The subject site has a high intrinsic physical absorption capacity for the proposed development. The individual buildings will provide high screening to the buildings behind them in most individual views and the vegetation along the boundaries of the subject site will provide significant screening effects to the lower parts of buildings on the boundaries of the site.

The surrounding context also provides a high level of physical absorption capacity to the proposed development. This is due to the presence of foreshore vegetation, vegetation within industrial sites and road reserves and the intervening effects of the medium density residential developments and industrial developments which obscure views of the subject site and the proposed development in views from the south, southeast and southwest directions.

Viewed from the north and northeast, the intervening effects of topography, vegetation within reserves, road reserves and individual properties and the presence of residential developments in the foreground and middleground, the proposed development does not have any visually prominent presence in the view compositions.

Even when seen from the immediate public and private domains, the proposed development will blend well with the existing, emerging and desired character of the locality by being of high architectural standards, adequate articulation and modulation, appropriate colours, materials, scale and form and building heights.

### **4.2 Compatibility of the proposed development**

Compatibility is different from change. While change is objective, the measure of visual compatibility is intended to evaluate the extent to which the change conforms with or acceptably fits into the future visual context of the site and its surroundings. Compatibility also means that the development responds appropriately to the desired future character if this has been determined by strategic planning instruments or policies and guidelines. High compatibility means low visual impact

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

Compatibility with the existing character of the site is a measure of how the proposed development responds to the natural and built features such as vegetation, topography, scenic features and



existing developments within the site as well as its potential impact on the visibility of those features from external viewing locations. It is also an assessment of how the proposed development takes into consideration the future retention, management and conservation of such natural features. In assessing this, it is also taken into consideration whether the proposed development is a permissible use of the site.

The proposed development has moderate to high compatibility with the character of the site. It is responsive to and proposes retention of the heritage item, its setting and the curtilage, majority of vegetation and existing view corridors. It does not require any significant land form alteration in terms of its existing topography. It proposes increased and improved visual and pedestrian linkages to and from the subject site, additional view corridors and internal significant open spaces.

The proposed development will result in a positive change to the existing built form character of the site.

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

Visual compatibility of the proposed development with the surrounding built and natural character is an assessment considered over its total visual catchment. It is not a measure of whether the proposal can be seen or distinguished from its surroundings. The relevant parameters are whether the proposal can be constructed and utilised without the intrinsic scenic character of the locality being unacceptably changed. It assumes that there is a moderate to high visibility of the proposal to some viewing places. It further assumes that new elements which presently do not exist in the immediate context can be perceived as visually compatible with that context provided that they do not result in the loss of, or excessive modification of, the visual character of the locality.

The visual compatibility of the proposed development with regard to the existing, emerging and desired future character of the site was judged to be moderate-high. The reasons for this judgment are;

1. The proposed development is of similar nature to the recently constructed and approved developments in the locality such as Faraday Park, Shepherds Bay and Bay One residential developments.
2. The proposed development is responsive to the existing and potential future adjacent developments on Belmore Street, Junction Street and Porter Street, with regard to street wall heights, overall building heights, setbacks and footprints.
3. The proposed development is in line with the desired future character of the locality as stipulated by Council's Planning Instruments and the evidence of emerging character for similarly located land both in the immediate vicinity and also in Rhodes and Homebush Bay.
4. Subject to appropriate commitments the proposed development will not result in any significant potential visual or related amenity impacts, including visual privacy.
5. The proposed development maintains the existing and provides for increased view access for existing adjacent development and the public domain.
6. The proposed development has positive or at the most neutral effect on the overall visual character and scenic quality of the locality.
7. Overall, the proposed development maintains a treed character of the subject site when seen from the external visual catchment.





### **4.3 Address to the relevant Planning Instruments**

Below I have addressed the Planning Instruments in as far as they are relevant to the potential visual impacts of the proposed development.

#### **4.3.1 Ryde Local Environmental Plan 2010**

The development site is zoned B4 Mixed Use under the LEP 2010. The objectives of the zone relevant to potential visual impacts are;

*To provide a mixture of compatible land uses*

*To create safe and attractive environments for pedestrians*

*To recognise topography, landscape setting and unique location in design and land-use*

Comment: Based on the above assessment presented at Sections 2.0, 3.0 and 4.0, I consider that the proposed development is responsive to these objectives.

#### *4.3 Height of buildings*

*(1) The objectives of this clause are as follows:*

*(a) to maintain desired character and proportions of a street within areas,*

*(b) to minimise overshadowing and ensure a desired level of solar access to all properties,*

*(c) to enable the built form in denser areas to create spatial systems that relate to human scale and topography,*

*(d) to enable focal points to be created that relate to infrastructure such as train stations or large vehicular intersections,*

*(e) to reinforce important road frontages in specific centres.*

*(2) The height of a building on any land is not to exceed the maximum height shown for the land on the Height of Buildings Map.*

Comment: The proposed development positively responds to these objectives. Parts of the proposed development exceed the maximum building height shown on the Height of Buildings Map, however; it is in line with the recently constructed, under construction and approved residential developments within the MEA and to the other recently developed waterfront developments such as in Rhodes, Homebush Bay and Breakfast Point.

#### **4.3.2 Ryde Development Control Plan 2010**

Part 4.2 MEA (MEA) is relevant to the development site. The proposed development is responsive to the Master Plan objectives given at Section 1.5 and the SEPP 56 Guiding Principles given at Section 1.6 of Part 4.2 of the DCP 2010.



Some of the salient features of the future character of the MEA is described as

***Built-form will be sympathetic towards and respond to Meadowbank's location on the Parramatta River and to the topography in general. Therefore, buildings will not dominate either the northern ridgeline or the foreshore.***

***Built height at the foreshore will be limited to four storeys, regardless of usage. Uses and development will be compatible with, and complement, public uses of the Parramatta River and its foreshores. Existing built structures, particularly those of the industrial past of Meadowbank should be considered, where possible, for adaptive reuse. To encourage adaptive reuse, Council will consider, where appropriate, varying the development mix by up to 10%, or the addition of another storey.***

***Meadowbank will be an urban place that recognises and reinforces its relationship to the Parramatta River. A significant characteristic will be the extent of public open space, stretching across the eastern and western extremes of Shepherds Bay. Access from the north to the foreshore will be encouraged. Views to and from the river and foreshore will be protected. The public domain – both the street network and other open spaces – will be clearly defined, link to existing networks and be extensively landscaped. Private development will be encouraged to provide public open space and add to the existing landscape setting.***

Comment: The proposed development has taken these guidelines into consideration and appropriately responds to the future character envisaged by the MEA Master Plan.

#### **Relevant Urban design Principles given at Section 2.3 are**

- *Protect the existing treed ridgeline from being obscured by development;*
- *Protect the existing scale of the built environment;*
- *Respect the existing street pattern;*
- *Respect the bulk, height, rhythm and scale of the existing neighbourhood and topography;*
- *Maintain and create views to significant points of interest, especially water vistas;*
- *Provide open space and pedestrian links to the foreshore;*

Comment: The proposed development satisfies these Urban Design Principles, in as far as it is possible, with a Concept Plan Application which does not include fine grain design of the individual buildings. The description of the proposed development at Section 2.4 details the response of it to the existing character and existing and potential visual resources of the development site and its context.

#### **The development site is within Precinct 9 Special Uses**

***Precinct 9 - Special Uses: New development may be up to 2 storeys high, with a five meter landscape setback. Usage to be determined by Council based on merit of development.***

Comment: Council resolved on 3 August 2010 to limit the height within MEA to six storeys. The heights within the proposed development range from two to six storeys with some components



of seven storeys. I have determined that the proposed heights do not result in any unreasonable visual impacts. The Department of Planning does not require strict compliance with the planning controls and will undertake a merits-based assessment.

## **Section 4 General Development Controls**

### **Views and vistas**

#### *Objectives*

- *Reinforce and protect views to the Parramatta River and beyond and enhance permeability through the area - north-south and east-west.*
- *Maintain and enhance view corridors, view sheds and panoramas both into and out of the MEA.*
- *Maintain views through sites from pedestrian and cycle links to the Parramatta River*
- *Protect views from the water of the northern treed ridgeline of Meadowbank.*
- *Facilitate views by reflecting topographical changes in building heights.*

#### *Controls*

- a) *Provide a five (5) to ten (10) metre setback along Bowden Street and Belmore Street from the north at Constitution Road towards the south at the junction of the Parramatta River. Refer to Figure 9.*
- b) *Ensure new buildings take into account in their design and orientation the existing views on the subject site and adjoining sites. New developments should be orientated to take advantage of water views and vistas.*
- c) *Ensure that new development does not compromise views of the northern ridgeline of Meadowbank.*
- d) *Development applications will be required to include a views study in accordance with the above strategy.*

Comment: The proposed development is in line with the above objectives and controls. The setbacks proposed are in line with those required by the MEA Master Plan along all the streets. The existing views are retained and provision for additional views is made with the help of visual linkages, pedestrian accesses and view corridors. Views from the water of the northern treed ridgeline of Meadowbank/Ryde will not be affected by the proposed development. This Report addresses Control d).

## **Section 5 Precinct Specific Development Controls**

### **5.3 Precinct 9: Special Uses**

#### *Principles*

- *The precinct is to consist of special uses, eg educational facilities, compatible with the rest of the MEA development. Facilities should generally support the local or wider community.*





- *Architecture will be of the highest standard and be in keeping with the MEA style (ie a more “industrial” look) while also addressing adjacent residential architecture.*

#### *Controls*

##### *Height*

- a) To comply with Ryde LEP 2008 and a maximum of 2 storeys.*
- b) Roof forms should respond to adjoining residential scale, be pitched and be of similar material.*

##### *Landscaping*

- d) Retain all existing mature trees that add to the high quality of the area.*
- e) Landscaped setbacks should be provided to enhance the setting. The set back on Junction Street should match that of the adjacent residential development.*
- f) Permeable landscape must comprise at least 25% of the site.*

Comment: With the exception of the non-compliance with the height control, the proposed development is specifically organised in line with these Principles and Controls.

The Council has further adopted the Centres and Corridors Study which recommends that the planning controls in the MEA need to be reviewed to promote urban renewal. The Study recommends that the future LEP and DCP permit development between 4 to 6 storeys generally and 8 storeys on specific sites close to the railway station and Ryde Bridge. It states that the FSR will vary between 1.8:1 and 2.7: 1. The Concept Plan generally responds to the Study recommendations. Council has also prepared a draft Ryde LEP 2011 which reflects the recommendations of the Study.

### **MEA Master Plan Maps**

The proposed development is in line with the setback controls, retention of existing trees and the proposed street plantings and the retention of existing and proposed views shown on various Maps of the Master Plan document.

## **4.4 Strategies and commitments**

Below, is a summary of measures already undertaken and which will be undertaken at the finer grain design stage in terms of improved urban design and visual and residential amenity.

The proposed development incorporates;

1. Adequate setbacks and lower building heights along primary roads to include Belmore Street, Junction Street and Porter Street.
2. Significant internal open spaces, retention and increase in street plantings, pockets of vegetation and retention of existing significant trees.
3. It retains existing visual linkages and proposes new visual and pedestrian linkages.
4. It retains existing view corridors identified in DCP 2010.



5. The layout and building heights are responsive to views both looking north and looking south.

The fine grain design stage of the development will include the following general urban design measures;

1. Appropriate building orientations for sunlight, visual privacy and increased residential amenity
2. Appropriate locations of doors, windows and balconies and landscaping for visual privacy
3. High quality architectural design with horizontal and vertical building articulation and modulation, façade treatments and roof forms.
4. Appropriate use of materials and colours.

#### **4.5 Overall visual impacts of the proposal**

The potential overall visual impacts of the proposal are rated as low-moderate in the scale of negligible, low, low-moderate, moderate, moderate-high and high.



## **5.0 Conclusion**

Based on the above assessment, I conclude that with regard to the potential visual impacts, the proposed development is acceptable and it does not result in any significant negative visual effects and impacts on its visual catchment. The proposed development will cause a positive change to the existing character of the site and the surroundings and will be compatible with the existing, emerging and desired future character of the site and the surroundings as envisaged by the MEA Master Plan in DCP 2010. It appropriately responds to the character adjacent to the bounding streets by providing adequate setbacks and lower building heights closer to the street.

The proposed development is responsive to the heritage item, its setting and curtilage on the subject site. The layout of the development is such that individual buildings will provide screening effects to other buildings in individual views. The subject site and the context have significant physical absorption capacity for the proposed development. The proposed development does not affect views to any important scenic features from the visual catchment and it does not affect views to and from heritage items and between heritage items.

Overall, I support the proposed development on visual impacts grounds.



## Appendix A

### Photographic Plates - View Point Analysis (Refer to Map 2 and 3 for Viewing Locations)



**Plate 1**

From Belmore Street, about 30m south of the southwest corner of its intersection with Constitution Road, looking north.



**Plate 2**

From Constitution Road, about 30m west of the southwest corner of its intersection with Belmore Street, looking east.



**Plate 3**

From the intersection of Hamilton Crescent West and Constitution Road looking east-northeast.



**Plate 4**

Looking east, at the Belmore Street entrance to the subject site from standing straight opposite.



**Plate 5**

View southeast, towards the subject site, from near the northwest corner of the intersection of Junction Street and Belmore Street.



**Plate 6**

From the northeast corner of the intersection of Junction Street and Belmore Street looking east, along the Junction Street streetscape.





**Plate 7**

From the southeast corner of the intersection of Junction Street and Porter Street looking south along the Porter Street streetscape.



**Plate 8**

From Hayes Reserve on Porter Street, looking north-northwest towards the subject site and the streetscape.



**Plate 9**

Detail of the Porter Street frontage of the subject site as seen from in front of No. 3 Porter Street.





**Plate 10**

From in front of 5 Junction Street, looking southwest towards the subject site.



**Plate 11**

From the northeast corner of the intersection of Church Street and Junction Street looking west, towards the subject site.



**Plate 12**

From the northwest corner of the intersection of Belmore Street and Thistle Street looking south, towards the subject site.



**Plate 13**

From the southwest corner of the intersection of Yerong Street and Belmore Street looking south.



**Plate 14**

From the southeast corner of the intersection of Suttor Avenue and Belmore Street looking south.



**Plate 15**

Vista down Belmore Street from Victoria Road.





**Plate 16**

From in front of 17 Gale Street, looking east.



**Plate 17**

From in front of 5 Gale Street looking east, towards the subject site across the Meadowbank Public School grounds.



**Plate 18**

From opposite 9 Gale Street looking east, towards the subject site, through driveway of the Council Depot site.





**Plate 19**

From in front of 4 Storey Street looking west towards the subject site.



**Plate 20**

From in front of 25 Small Street looking west-southwest towards the subject site.



**Plate 21**

From Simpson Street near its intersection with Regent Street looking southwest, towards the subject site.



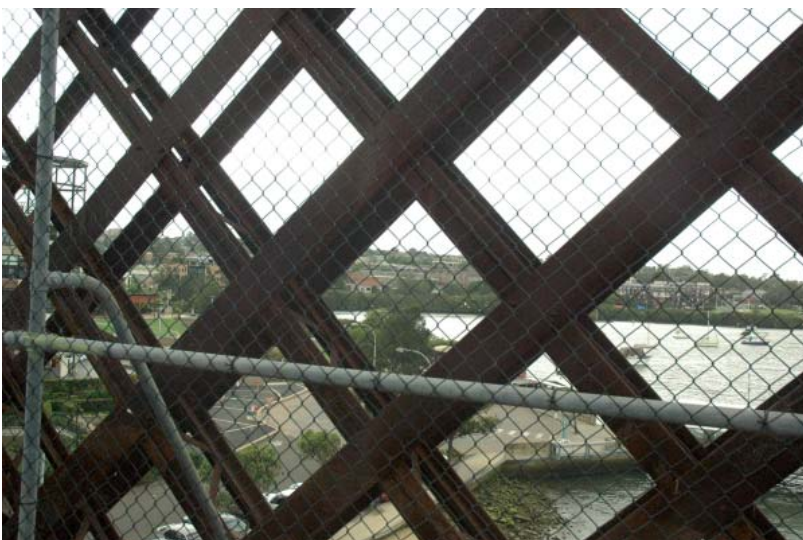
**Plate 22**

From near intersection of Riverside Avenue and Osborne Avenue, looking west towards the subject site.



**Plate 23**

From in front of 21 Osborne Avenue, looking west, towards the subject site



**Plate 24**

From the pedestrian bridge adjacent to the rail bridge, looking east-northeast in the general direction of the subject site.





**Plate 25**

From the southwest corner of the liftable part of the Ryde Bridge looking north-northwest in the general direction of the subject site.



**Plate 26**

Looking north along Belmore Street from near its intersection with Rothesay Avenue.



**Plate 27**

From Settlers Park near the intersection of Porter Street and Well Street looking north in the general direction of the subject site.



**Plate 28**

From the paved area for pedestrian access near the eastern ferry wharf along Shepherds Bay, looking north.



**Plate 29**

From the park area in Shepherds Bay Village Plaza adjacent to Bay Drive and Belmore Street looking east-northeast.



**Plate 30**

From the boat ramp at the northern terminus of Blaxland Road in Rhodes looking northeast.





**Plate 31**

From Parramatta River, near the western ferry wharf in Meadowbank looking northeast.



**Plate 32**

From Parramatta River under John Whitton Bridge, between the second and third piers looking northeast.



**Plate 33**

From the reserve adjacent to Yarralla Sea Scouts Building near the eastern terminus of Leeds Street, looking north.