Major Project Application MP 08_0195

78-90 Old Canterbury Road, Lewisham

Supplementary visual impact assessment of Preferred Project Report

Report prepared for Lewisham Estate Pty Ltd

by Dr. Richard Lamb

November, 2011

1/134 Military Road, Neutral Bay, NSW 2089 PO Box 1727 Neutral Bay NSW 2089
T 02 99530922 F 02 99538911 E info@richardlamb.com.au W www.richardlamb.com.au

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

Introduction

1. This report amends aspects of the assessment of the potential visual and related amenity impacts of the Major Projects Application MP 08_0195, 78-90 Old Canterbury Road, Lewisham.
2. Richard Lamb and Associates prepared a report for the Environmental Assessment of the application in October, 2010. Subsequently the scheme was amended and the application is now a Concept Plan for the Preferred Project.
3. The main content of the October 2010 report remains valid, however the amended scheme is differently massed in part and there are changes to building heights in some cases that would change the detail of how the plan would be perceived from outside.
4. This report is provided to amend the specific parts of the EA report that are affected by the amendments to the Preferred Project Concept Plan. In addition, this report seeks to clarify and explain corrections that have necessarily been made to the montages prepared to accompany the application.
5. The applicant received comments from the Department of Planning and Infrastructure with regard to the montages, which also referred to questions posed by Marrickville Council and some community representatives. This report responds to those queries.

Methodology

6. The important visual resources of the Study Area and its surrounding context were identified as part of the EA assessment and remain;
    i. Important vistas and visual linkages
        - overpasses on Old Canterbury Road and Longport Street over the freight rail line
        - vista down McGill Street from Old Canterbury Road
        - vista down Toothill Street
        - vista down Henry Street
        - vista down Hudson Street from Old Canterbury Road
        - vista down William Street from Old Canterbury Road and also from the park at the western terminus of Jubilee Street
        - vista down Brown Street from Longport Street

    ii. Important interfaces
        - southern and eastern edges along Old Canterbury Road facing residential developments
        - western edge along the freight rail line and the proposed greenway
        - northern edge visible from the main railway line

- internal northern and southern edges to the proposed central public open space

iii. External visual resources relevant to development site and proposed development

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

7. A summary amended analysis of the features and merits of the Council's McGill Street Precinct Master Plan and the PPR is presented. The criteria analysed include;
   i. the treatment of the central part of the Study Area;
   ii. the spatial arrangement of buildings and open spaces in individual sectors;
   iii. building height distribution, gradation and address to the important edges of the Study Area with respect to immediate surrounding context, and:
   iv. response to the existing and proposed potential visual linkages.

Visual and urban design considerations

8. The Applicant proposes similar urban design strategies to be incorporated within the PPR to ensure compatibility with the built form and high quality visual and residential amenity.
9. In addition and in response to comments from the Department of Planning and Infrastructure, amendments to the Concept Plan include;
   i. Ground levels restored to approximately natural ground levels: additional residential units on ground located to the base of all buildings.
   ii. Public and communal spaces generally lowered to natural ground level to link with central park and continuous, seamless open space.
   iii. Level links to adjoining properties via existing natural ground levels in William and Brown Streets.
   iv. Building A cut back from southern green space, corner articulated and building stepped to add quality and higher amenity to the green space.
   v. Ground level amended footprint to Building C to maximize public open space, with reduced retail.
   vi. Dual use housing in Building E directly addressing central green space.
   vii. Reduced splay and cutback of Building G, lowered to level B1 to maintain communal outdoor space at ground level.
   viii. Improved setbacks of buildings from the internal central public open space as well as along the public parks individual sectors.
   ix. Additional 2 levels to Building D, with northern alignment set back above the 6th storey to create lesser bulk in expression.

Corrected montages

10. The montages attached to the EA are no longer relevant and are not discussed in this amended report.
11. The Visual Analysis that accompanied the amdended PPR was not prepared by or supervised by Richard Lamb and Associates (RLA).. The reasons for inconsistencies among and within the montages were investigated by RLA and a corrected set prepared by Tony Owen Partners are included with this report.
12. The corrected montage show a realistic built form for the development proposed in the PPR. There are no major differences between the observations and analyses in the visual impacts assessment of the EA and the conclusions of the same assessment when it is applied to the PPR.
13. The Preferred Project does not cause any unacceptable or significantly different visual or streetscape impacts compared to those that would be caused by the construction of the Council's McGill Street Precinct Master Plan Option.
14. The application continues to have better greater merits compared to the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan with better overall permeability, visual linkages and relationships to public open spaces.
15. The overall visual impacts are rated moderate for the Preferred Project and are similar to those that would be the result of the construction of the Council's McGill Street Precinct Master Plan.
16. The proposed PPR is considered to be satisfactory.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this report

Richard Lamb and Associates have been appointed by Lewisham Estates Pty Ltd to undertake an amended assessment of the potential visual impacts of Major Projects Application MP 08_0195 for the subject site, 78-90 Old Canterbury Road, Lewisham. The application is now a Preferred Project Report (PPR).

RLA prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) report on the Concept Plan and preferred options in October, 2010. Most of the baseline observations and the Director General's requirements of March, 2009 remain current and are not repeated in this amendment. This report retains the numbering of chapters and sections from that report so the two can be compared directly. Where there is new material this is presented in full. Where the content is of this report would be the same, only a note to that effect is presented. Where the findings are similar other than for minor changes, it presents a summary of the issue and focuses on the differences only.

This report is provided to address whether any new issues arise from the amendments made between the EA and PPR in as far as they are relevant to our area of expertise.

It is also to address concerns raised by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure, which also mention similar concerns raised by Marrickville Council and some community groups about perceived inconsistencies within and between montages that show views of the site from some specific viewing points.

Three sets of montage have now been prepared in relation to the application by the project architects Tony Owen and Partners (TOP);

1. A set appended to RLA's EA report of October, 2010 at Appendix 3;
2. A Visual Analysis set representing the PPR, which also included amendments to the Concept Plan of the preferred option that had been assessed in the EA;
3. A set of corrected montages of the PPR, which is appended to this report at Appendix A.

Set 1 represented the Concept Plan Option in the EA. The option was amended in the Preferred Project and as such the montages in the RLA 2010 report not relevant to the PPR. Some of the comments referred to by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure about inconsistencies between sets 1 and 2 are not relevant, because they are based on comparisons being made between sets 1 and 2 (ie. a comparison between the Concept Plan in the EA and the Preferred Project Concept Plan).

There were also concerns expressed about the set of montage prepared for the PPR. They were not supervised by RLA. An analysis of those montages has been made and it was found that there were some flaws in the methodology of their preparation. TOP have now prepared a corrected set of montages. This report uses those corrected montages as an aid in analysing the visual impacts of the PPR.

1.2 Background and the proposed development

Approval is now sought for a PPR. It remains a mixed use development but with a reduced retail component. The PPR is for buildings ranging in height from 5 to 10 storeys with a 4-storey address to Old Canterbury Road as before, but the layout, massing and address to the internal landscape spaces is slightly different.

The PPR occupies part of the McGill Street Precinct Area. Hassell prepared a Master Plan for the McGill Street Precinct for a mixed use development to include residential and commercial uses, based on the Marrickville Urban Strategy, with which the PPR generally complies.

Hassell also prepared a Master Plan for the Allied Mills Site. As in the EA, the overall built form for the PPR will be substantially less than what would exist on the Allied Mills site as per the Hassell Master Plan.

The Council's McGill Street Precinct Master Plan proposes a public open space flanked by internal roads in the central part of the Study Area, to which the PPR responds more positively than Option 3 of the original Concept Plan in the EA.

The connection of this layout to the existing street grid outside the Study Area is similar to the Council's McGill Street Precinct Master Plan and retains the Green Way along the freight rail line and an access off Old Canterbury Road at the location of Hudson Street.

The PPR compared to the Preferred Option proposes less commercial floor space, greater setbacks from the central parkland areas, greater stepping of buildings with height relative to that interface (Building C) and reduced footprint of Building A north of the central parkland. The number of dwelling with direct access to ground level and the parkland is increased. Changes of level across the site north to south are minimised so the public domain generally follows existing natural ground levels and the parkland flows into the road and path system seamlessly.

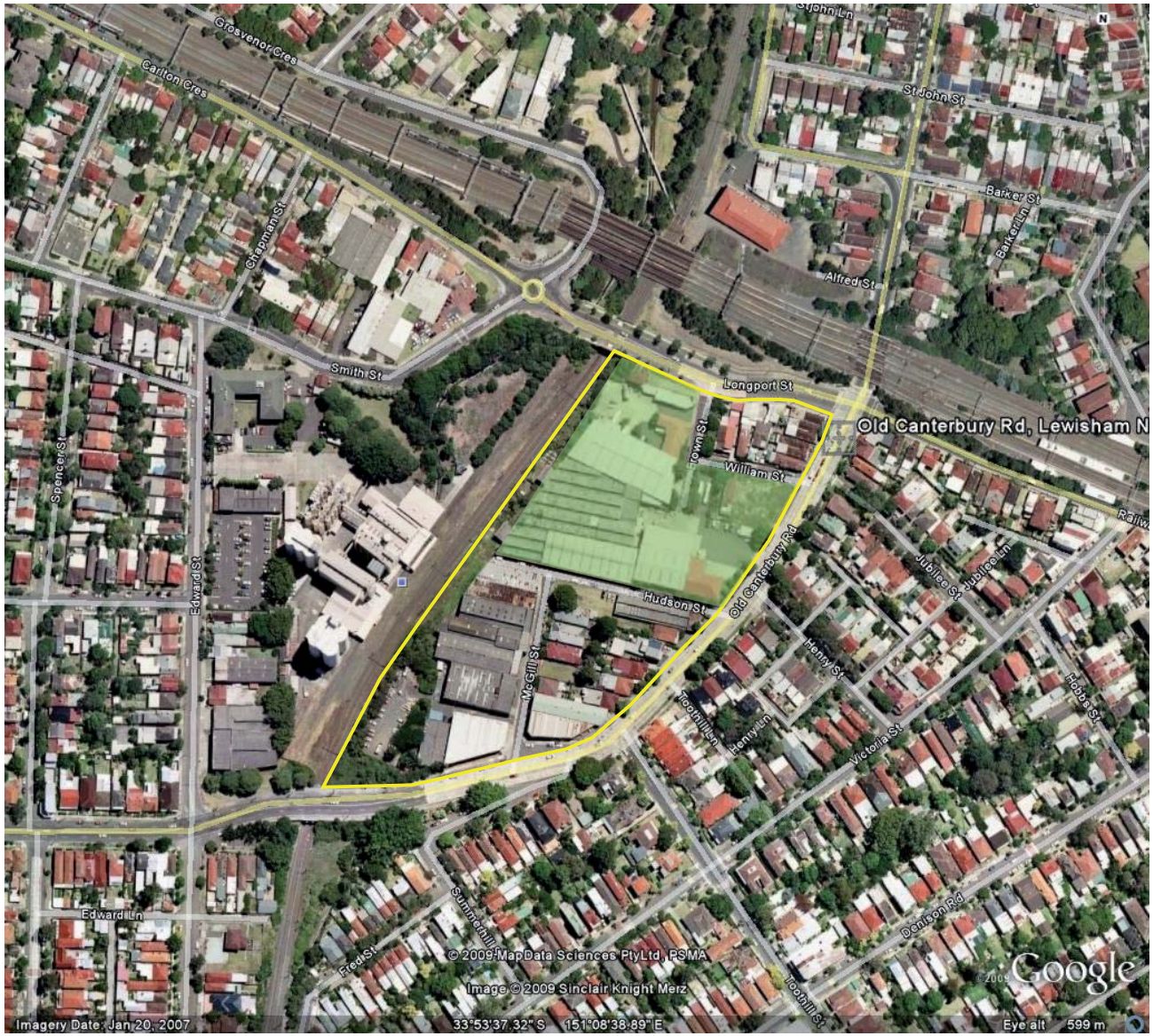
The main underlying principle for the PPR is to have taller buildings closer to the western edge (10, 10 and and 9 storeys), lower buildings in the interior (7 storeys) and further lower buildings (5 storeys maximum height) along the eastern edge.

This Report presents a summarised comparative analysis of the layouts and the merits of the PPR against the Council's McGill Street Precinct Master Plan in terms of urban design, address to the streetscapes and various important edges, visual linkages and protection of important vistas. The proposed PPR Concept Plan is shown at Page 16 in this Report.

1.3 Documents consulted

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

1. McGill Street Precinct Master Plan, prepared by Hassell.
2. Draft Heritage Report, prepared by Weir Phillips, dated July 2009.
3. Lewisham Concept Plan Study for Environmental Assessment, prepared by Tony Owen and Partners.
4. Proposed Preferred Option 3 for the subject site only, prepared by Tony Owen and Partners.



north
Not to scale

The study area

The subject site currently under the Applicant's ownership

Figure 1
Development site and its surrounding context

5. Landscape Concept Plan for the EA prepared by Site Landscapes, dated May 2010.
6. Visual Analysis for the PPR prepared by Tony Owen and Partners.
7. PPR plans and view analysis study including corrected montages, prepared by Town Owen and Partners (Appendix A to this report).
8. Marrickville Council Local Environmental Plan 2001.
9. Marrickville Council Draft Local Environmental Plan 2010.
10. Ashfield Council Local Environmental Plan 1985.
11. Marrickville Council Expressions of Interest for Urban Design Study for McGill Street, Lewisham & St Peters triangle, St Peters, dated December 2008.

1.4 Visual impact assessment methodology

The methodology for this assessment is the same as in Chapter 1.4 of the RLA Visual impact assessment for the EA.

1.5 The relevant Director General's Requirements

The following table indicates the original DGR's and locates the parts of the report which address the individual requirements. They remain relevant to the PPR.

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

1.6 Corrected montages of the PPR

In response to questions raised by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure that incorporated questions from Marrickville Council and comments from concerned resident action groups, RLA was requested by the applicant to undertake a review of the montages that had accompanied the initial PPR.

This review, which was assisted by staff of TOP who had prepared the original montages (Set 2, in Section 1.1 above) revealed that there were flaws in the assumptions made during the preparation of the montages and as a result that they did not all accurately represent the likely visual impression of the PPR that would be gained from some of the view points that had been used.

The following were identified as reasons for inconsistencies and in some cases inaccuracies among the montages:

1. The locations of the viewing places had not been accurately surveyed. The reason for this was that in the early stages of the proposal and before the preparation of the EA, it was not considered necessary to go to this level of detail in preparing what had at that stage were to be simple block model montages of the proposed development. In retrospect it would have been better if this situation had been rectified later, for example by surveying the viewing places accurately for their location and RL, however this was not done.
2. In the early stages of preparation of montages, the montage artists used topographic information from a map of the immediate locality on the Marrickville Council website to establish the locations and RLs of the viewing places. However, it subsequently became clear that there were significant inaccuracies in the interpretation of this material, some of it resulting from inconsistencies in the material itself, leading to errors in assumptions about the RLs of the viewing places of up to at least one contour interval (ie. 10m). There were also some assumptions made about the locations of viewing places based on aerial imagery which was out of date (eg. Google Earth images), leading to some minor but further inaccuracies.
3. There were two features of the electronic images of views that had been used to create montages at various stages that had not been controlled at the time the photographs were taken. These were the focal length of the camera lens used to take the photographs and the horizontal and vertical angle of the view (ie. Camera tilt). It would have been preferable if all the views were at the same focal length and taken with the same camera, with the body of the camera held level both horizontally and vertically. However, the images were not all taken with the same camera and the cameras were hand-held, meaning that horizontal and vertical tilts were not controlled and were not consistent across the base images.
4. A further practical and unavoidable issue with the images into which a computer image of the development proposed in the PPR was placed was that in some views a very wide angle of view was necessary if the whole of the PPR was to be represented in the view (for example the views from Longport Street). This cannot be achieved with a single image because the focal length of the lens that is necessary to encompass a realistically wide field of view has to be so short that there is very significant spherical distortion of the image. As a result, a computer model of the development will not fit into the image in a satisfactory or accurate way. In some of the views, three images were electronically “stitched together” in the computer to produce a composite image to satisfactorily represent the width of field apparent to the eye. However, in Set 2 of the montages, this was not sufficiently taken into

account when the computer model was superimposed on the stitched-together images. What occurs in this case is that the items in the centre of the view appear to be too far away from the viewer, too small, too low and horizontally out of place compared to their "real" location on the subject land. This effect is unavoidable when using stitched together images if the stitched together image is conceived of as being equivalent to a single photograph. Great care has to be taken to only merge the centre part of the image with the computer model (that is the only area of the image that has a centre that matches the centre of the computer image of the 3-D model of the development being simulated). The computer image cannot be made to fit the other parts of the image and has to be deliberately distorted to give the impression of a better fit at the sides. There is also another distortion effect which occurs. In this case, because the stitched together image contains material that is close to viewer in the centre, but very much further away at the sides, the computer image in the centre of the merged image (the montage), because it is based on 2 point perspective which does not match the curved picture plane of the stitched together image, can appear to be be too high and too close, particularly in the vertical dimension. This is a feature of the view from the overpass over the disused freight line on Longport Street, which features Building D in the foreground.

Having made the discovery above of the features that could have caused inaccuracies in the Set 2 montages, TOP set about rectifying these in the following ways:

1. The locations of each of the viewing places were re-visited and established as accurately as possible. Features that are evident in the photographic images and that are also visible on aerial imagery (eg, road alignments, kerbs, intersections, even parked cars) were plotted onto the images and related to 3-D imagery of the PPR, to which 3-D information on the Allied Mills site buildings had been added.
2. Wire diagrams of the extra features were created in the computer and added to the overall 3-D model of the PPR, so that there were now external reference points, such as the silos and lift overruns on buildings in the Allied Mills site, street alignments, kerbs and buildings on the edges of the subject site.
3. The levels of each of the viewing places were established and the horizontal and vertical level of each image estimated using a builder's level, so tilt could be eliminated as a factor or compensated for in the montage images.
4. Preliminary montages were prepared by overlaying the 3-D imagery on the original images, with corrections for the RL of the viewing place and compensation for the camera tilt.
5. Visible features on the images for which there was independent 3-D image information on the wire diagrams was matched to the images, or if there was not a good match, the reason investigated and recitified.
6. A set of corrected montages was prepared, which is appended to this report at Appendix A.

RLA are satisfied that the best possible effort has been put into rectifying the montages and that they are a reasonable representation of the likely future height, location and form of the building masses proposed in the PPR.

A brief analysis of the montage views follows.

1.7 Analysis of corrected montages

Study Plan

The study plan shows the location from which photographs were taken for the montages. They are the same as in the Set 2 montages, however the horizontal angles of view are more accurately represented. The wide angles of views (et. View points 5, 6, 7 and 8) indicate that composite or stitched-together images have been used).

View 1

The original (Previous) montage has the correct overall profile for the development, but the computer model is too low (ground line is incorrect) and horizontal size of the development is too small. The distance from which the view had been taken had been incorrectly determined, as had the RL. The corrected montage has the ground lines corrected and the scale of the PPR buildings shown realistically.

View 2

The original (Previous) montage has the correct overall profile for the development, but the computer model is too low (ground line is incorrect). The RL of the place from which the view had been taken had been incorrectly determined. The corrected montage has the ground lines corrected. The development is not visible.

View 3

The original (Previous) montage has the correct overall profile for the development, but the computer model is too low (ground line is incorrect). The RL from which the view had been taken had been incorrectly determined. The corrected montage has the ground line corrected and therefore the PPR buildings are shown realistically.

View 4

The original (Previous) montage has the correct overall profile for the development, but the computer model is slightly out of place. The corrected montage has the location corrected, which can be determined by the match of the wire frame diagram to the Allied Mills building visible on the left of the view. The development is not visible.

View 5

The original (Previous) montage has the correct overall profile for the development, but the computer model is too low (ground line is incorrect). Also, because the underlying image is stitched together, the model of the PPR is shown to be too far to the left in the view, which should show Building B and D, whereas it is showing only part of Building A.. The corrected montage has the centre of view of the computer model in the left hand image that has been stitched together as it should be and in the corrected montage the visibility and scale of the PPR buildings is shown realistically.

View 6

The original viewing location for this montage was accurately known and therefore the original (Previous) montage presents a similar location of the built form of the PPF compared to the corrected montage. The built form appears slightly higher in the corrected montage following review and reorientation of the centre of the camera relative to the 3-D model of the PPR.

View 7

The original (Previous) montage has the correct overall profile for the development, however because the underlying image is stitched together, for reasons explained above, the model of the buildings appears too far away from the viewer. In addition, in the left side of the stitched together image, the horizontal location of the buildings does not match their location in relation to known features on the subject site (eg. It should relate to the red roofed building on the left and extend toward the location of the Brown Street intersection, which approximates with the location of a power pole on the left of the image). The corrected montage has the same building mass, with slightly different detailing, shown at a realistic distance from the viewer. The left side of the built form, including the corner of Building D is only approximately accurate, because as explained above, it cannot be made to fit into the composite image accurately. In reality it would appear less bulky and lower.

View 8

The original (Previous) montage has the correct overall profile for the development, other than for minor amendments that have subsequently been made, but the computer model is out of place in the view. The view place location that had been assumed was incorrect and when the 3-D model, including the Allied Mills site buildings were used to cross check this, it was found to be a considerable distance further west. The corrected montage has the location of the PPR buildings accurate and has the correct relationship to the Allied Millls buildings which are visible above and behind Buildings E and F.

2.0 Visual effects analysis

2.1 The visual character of the site and the surroundings

The visual character of the site and surrounding remains the same.

2.2 Visual exposure of the site and the proposed development

The analysis of the visual exposure and important visual linkages, including the view directions identified in the Council's McGill Street Precinct Master Plan remains largely unchanged. Figure 2 represents the viewing locations that were documented to analyse the potential visual exposure of the Concept Plan to the entire Study Area. The Photographic Plates at Appendix A of our EA report, which remain the same, are not reproduced in this report for the sake of economy.

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

The existing views are unchanged.

Views of the PPR for the subject site from the section of Old Canterbury Road between Longport Street and Toothill Street will remain similar.

There are no significant views of the PPR from further south and southwest of the overpass such as from in the vicinity of Edward Street/Weston Street and Windsor Street.

There is a small window of viewing opportunity of the interior of the Study Area across the overpass over the freight rail line for road users travelling in the eastward direction. There would be visibility of a number of buildings of the PPR in this view. Development of the southern part of the Precinct in the future may take this view away again.

2.2.2 View from residences and residential streets

Edward Street and Weston Street

There will be no significant views of the proposed PPR.

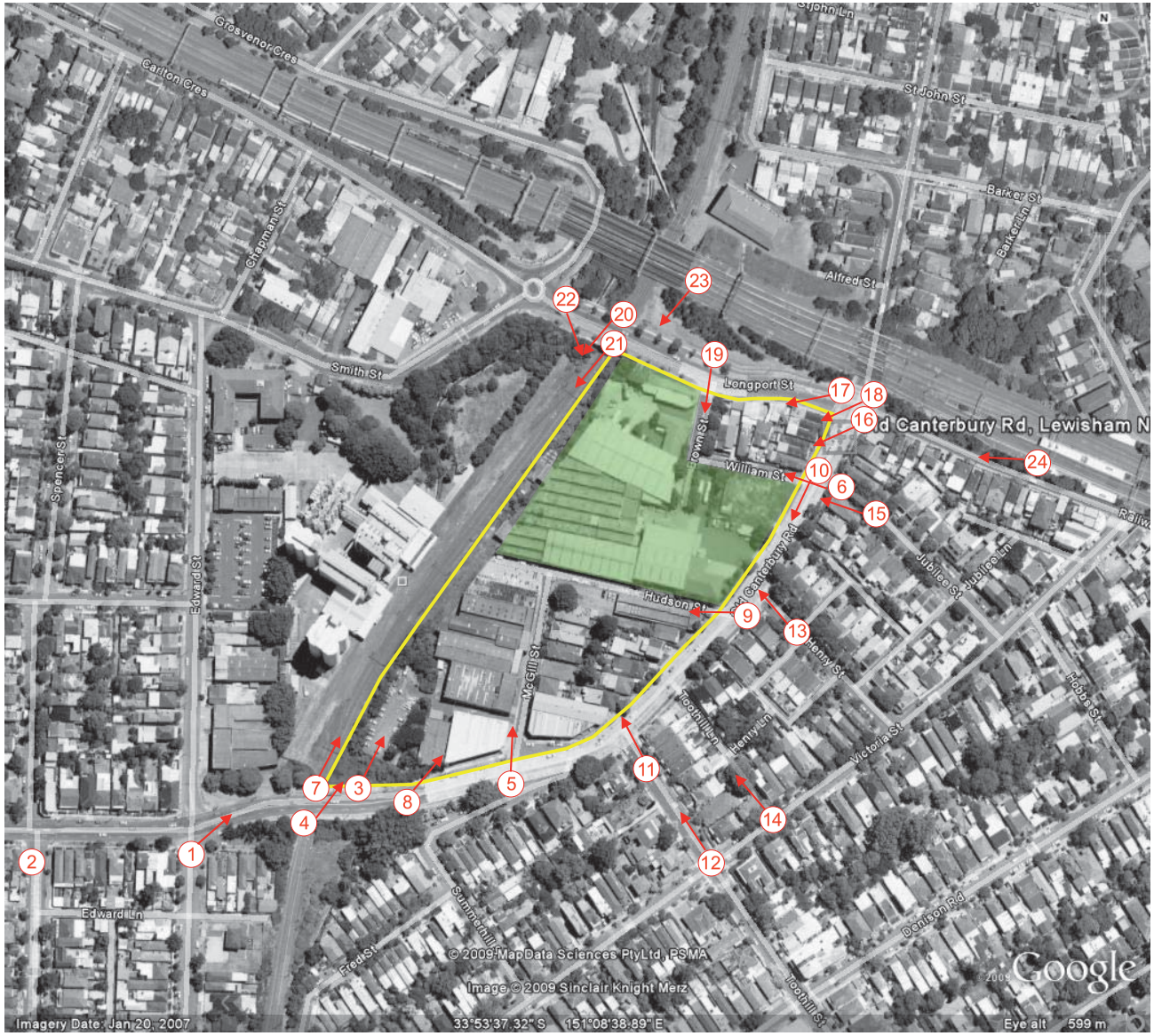
Windsor Road

There are no views of the site of the PPR from Windsor Road. There would not be any significant visibility of the buildings.

Summer Hill Street

The view exposure to this street remains the same.

Parts of the buildings in the PPR will be seen from a section of Summerhill Street and the residences



north
Not to scale

1 External viewing location (refer to Photographic Plates)

The Study Area

The subject site currently under the Applicant's ownership

Figure 2
View point anlaysis (refer to Photographic Plates)

12.2_CONCEPT PLAN

Proposed Street allows access to basement Parking.

Additional turning bay / drop off point

Greatest height and diversity adjoining the railway line at the furthest point from existing residential

10m set back to minimise impact to the greenways to provide vehicle access and address points to apartments.

large central green space addressed by majority of units

shared zone creates a plaza space as a focal point for the precinct and addresses the proposed light rail station

New light rail station

New turning drop down round about

Private open space to surrounding residential development

Brown St retained as access and address points for Units

Paved pedestrian shared lane wtih end turning bay

Shoptop housing addresses main street Old Canterbury Road.

5 storeys to Old Canterbury Rd modulate the scale to the surrounding residential areas. Mixed use zone contain ground floor shop top housing and home office

Retail/ shoptop housing faces/feeds onto central green boulevard, activating the treeline park.

Central green boulevard creates a linkage from Henry St to the greenway and provides single intersection for parking and loading access
- Delivery of park in stage 1

Hudson Street Retained as main site entry

Additional visitor car parking

SCALE 1:1000 @ A3
0 10 20 30 40 50

study area boundary
higher density mixed use development
medium density mixed use development
lower density mixed use development

Public / private open space area to surrounding residential development.

located on it. Views will not be possible from Summerhill Street once the remaining part of the Study Area is also developed as proposed in the Council's McGill Street Precinct Master Plan.

Toothill Street

The observations on existing views from Toothill Street, the intersection of Toothill Street and Victoria Street and the axial view down Toothill Lane from Victoria Street remain unchanged.

Views of parts of the PPR, both close to Old Canterbury Road and in the western part of the subject site will be visible from a section of Toothill Street and through the axial view down Toothill Lane from Victoria Street. There would generally not be any significant views of the built form rom the residences with the exception of those located adjacent to the intersection of Old Canterbury Road.

The visibility of the PPR will be greater than had been shown in earlier montages, however the overall nature of the built form visible would be similar.

Henry Street

The observations on existing views remain the same.

Views of parts of the buildings in the PPR north of Henry Street will be visible and they will appear taller by one to two storeys, however the overall nature of the built form visible would be similar.

There would not be any significant views from the residences with the exception of those located adjacent to the intersection of Old Canterbury Road.

Jubilee Street

The observations on existing views remain the same.

Views of parts of the PPR will be visible from a section of Jubilee Street and a Park located at the western terminus of the Street. There would not be any significant views of the PPR from the residences with the exception of those located adjacent to the intersection of Old Canterbury Road. Future development of the north west sector of the Precinct in the future may take this view away again.

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

The observations on existing views remain the same.

There would be views of the PPR from the section of Longport Street between Old Canterbury Road and Smith Streetand of the majority of it from between the overpass over the freight rail line on Longport Street and the intersection with Old Canterbury Road. Future development of the north west sector of the Precinct may take a significant part of this view away again.

The impressions of the heights of the buildings and their location relative to Brown Street have been corrected in the montages appended to this report. The character of the built form in the PPR would be the same, but more detail has been applied to the buildings to show how articulation and variations in materials could contribute, for example, to reducing the perception of height and bulk of a future Building D.

2.2.4 Views from the main railway line

The observations on existing views remain the same.

The buildings which will be located adjacent to the northern edge of the subject site will be visible from the western end of Lewisham Station and from the trains. The visibility of the PPR for the subject site will not have any significant effect on the existing visibility of the Allied Mills buildings from the trains.

2.2.5 Allied Mills Site and the freight rail line

The observations on existing views remain the same.

Buildings A, B and D, adjacent to the western edge of the Study Area, the central public open space and some internal roads proposed in the PPR will be visible.

2.2.6 Visual exposure from wider visual catchment

There would not be any significant visibility of built form of the PPR from further north, east, west or south in the visual catchment as documented previously. Potential visibility, if any, from any distant elevated locations within the district is not considered to be a significant negative effect.

3.3 Visual resources of the Study Area and its context

The visual resources of the existing site and context as previously documented remain unchanged. Refer Figure 3.

2.3.1 Important vistas and visual linkages

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

a) Overpasses on Old Canterbury Road and Longport Street over the freight rail line.

b) Vista down McGill Street from Old Canterbury Road.

c) Vista down Toothill Street.

d) Vista down Henry Street.

e) Vista down Hudson Street from Old Canterbury Road.

f) Vista down William Street from Old Canterbury Road and also from the park at the western terminus of Jubilee Street.

g) Vista down Brown Street from Longport Street

2.3.2 Important interfaces

The following remain the important interfaces.

a) Southern and eastern edges along Old Canterbury Road facing residential developments

b) Western edge along the freight rail line and the proposed greenway

c) Northern edge visible from the main railway line and Longport Street

d) Internal edges to the proposed central public open space.

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

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

a) The existing taller buildings in the Allied Mills Site

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

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

2.4.1 Salient features of the Council's McGill Street Precinct Master Plan

The Council's McGill Street Precinct Master Plan is intended to consider external views, have high permeability, provide linkages across the Study Area from east to west, a greenway and central parkland and a gradation of building heights across the Study Area, higher in the west and decreasing east and toward the parkland in the south.

For permeability and connections, the Council's McGill Street Precinct Master Plan features open spaces at various scales, building separation, connections across the Study Area, some deliberately contrived view corridors and buildings stepping down to the streets. The PPR achieves at least equivalent and in many respects better permeability.

The PPR proposes a larger proportion of taller buildings than the Council's McGill Street Precinct Master Plan and a stricter graduation in heights increasing from east to west, but otherwise differs largely in the internal road layout and public open spaces.

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

The PPR proposes significantly increased residential amenity in regard to green space, the access to it from residential properties and ability of resident to move about on grade. As such it is also improved with respect to facilitating future development of the land to the north east and south of the subject site.

Building C is stepped significantly back from the parkland and Hudson Street, reducing the perception of height and bulk of the building to the parkland and street.

Should future development south of Hudson Street be constrained to the same setback from the street, the green space contribution made would be very significant in the locality, which has minimal public open space provision. We question whether, in the event of such development, the retention of the part of Hudson Street east of McGill Street as shown in the PPR is warranted.

The PPR maintains excellent visual linkage and permeability options.

3.3.3 Spatial arrangement in the four sectors

The discussion in this section related to the four sectors of the whole study area considered for Concept Plan Options in the EA and is not relevant to assessment of the PPR.

2.4.4 Internal road layout

The main entrances and exits retain connections to existing streets, partly resulting from the exclusion of the land north of William, east of Brown and south of Longport Streets.

Access to McGill Street off Hudson is retained. As in 2.4.2 above, we question whether, in the event of future development of a similar form following rezoning of the land, whether the retention of the part of Hudson Street east of McGill Street that is shown in the PPR is warranted.

2.4.5 Building height distributions and address to important interfaces

Building height distribution along the western edge

The PPR proposes two 10 storey buildings and on 9 storey building along the western edge. The Council's McGill Street Precinct Master Plan proposes variation in heights and the buildings range from two to nine storeys along the western edge but with no logic to explain the variation in height of buildings along that edge.

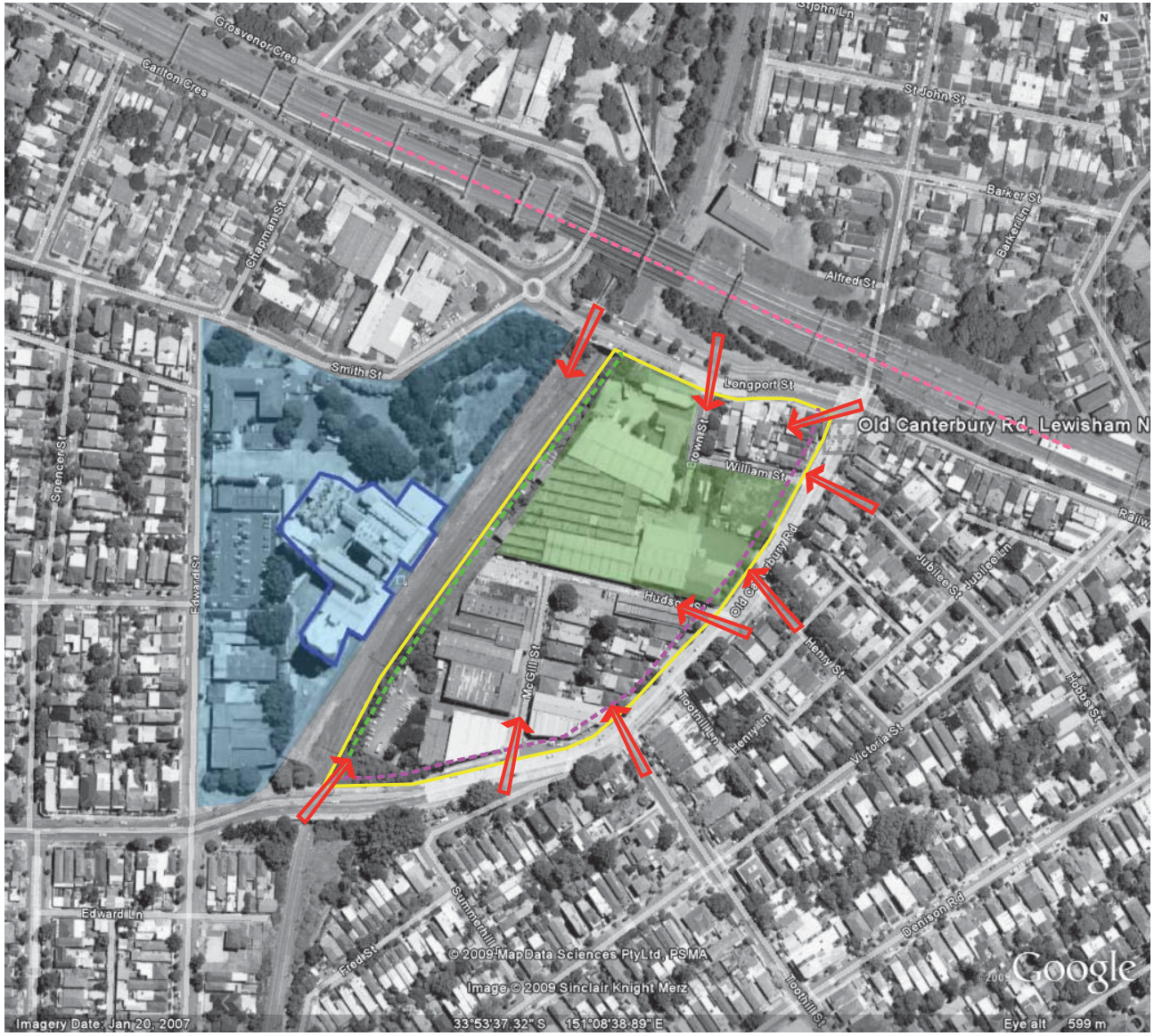
We do not see any obvious merits in having such building height variation along this edge but do prefer a lower building height for the building in the extreme northwest corner as it addresses Brown Street (Building D), which has a prominent location adjacent to Longport Street, visibility from the main railway line and is adjacent to a proposed main entrance. The building will appear approximately 7 storeys out of the ground relative to Longport Street and 9 storeys high in Brown Street. The architectural treatment suggested to provide a six storey appearance for the component of the building facing Longport Street, stepping up to 9 storeys behind, is supported.

Building height distribution adjacent to the central open space

The width and depth of the central open space, which will effectively also be part of a shared zone west of the intersection with McGill Street associated with the plaza space, links to the greenway and extends parkland as far as Building D on both sides of the spine of Buildings A and B.

Merits of the PPR over the Preferred Concept Plan Option C with regard to central open space include;

1. "Toe" element of Building C removed, resulting in increased public outdoor space at ground level.



north
Not to scale

Vistas and visual linkages

Proximity to Main Railway Line

Freight rail line / potential green way link

Residential edge on the opposite side of Old Canterbury Road

Tall buildings in Allied Mills Site

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

The Study Area

The subject site currently under the Applicant's ownership

Figure 3
Visual context and visual resources of the development site

2. An increased setback of Building C from Hudson Street and the stepping of the building with a 5 storey façade to the parkland, to 7 storeys maximum behind.
3. The northern part of Building C stepping down to five storeys to Brown Street and the parkland.
4. Building A stepping at seven storeys, to nine and then ten successively, moving north from the plaza space/parkland.
5. Buildings E and F with dual use housing directly addressing the green spaces.

Building height distribution along the existing residential edge

The building height distribution of the PPR along the eastern edge is similar to the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan Option and is four storeys at the street wall, stepping to five storey buildings behind. This is an acceptable outcome taking into consideration the neighbouring residential edge, its inclusion in the Lewisham Draft Heritage Conservation Area and the narrow width of Old Canterbury Road.

Building height distribution in the northern and northeast sector

The reference in the EA report the north east sector is not relevant, because this area is not part of the PPR.

The Council's McGill Street Precinct Master Plan proposes predominantly a four storey height in the northern sector of the subject site, however we consider this not to be realistic, given the status of the main entrance on Brown Street, off Longport Street, the scale of the adjacent Allied Mills site buildings present and future and the major differences in level between Longport and the subject site. A four storey building would be only two storeys above the natural ground levels at the boundary and not make sustainable or viable use of the resources of views, access to sunlight and ventilation and the absence of constraints of adjacent residential land. We consider the PPR to be satisfactory in overall height on this boundary with an architectural treatment above six visible levels that appropriately reduces the perception of the bulk of the building as viewed in the public domain.

2.4.6 Various Linkages and Vistas

Vista across the overpass on Old Canterbury Road

The PPR is confined to the northern sector of the land subject to the Council's McGill Street Precinct Master Plan. Future development of the south west sector of the Precinct may take a significant part of this view away.

Visual linkage across McGill Street

The PPR provides excellent visual linkage and better visual and physical permeability than the Council's McGill Street Precinct Master Plan. This is due to the proposed strategic locations and grading of building and location of the spine of parkland opposite McGill Street and leading into the subject site as far as Building D.

Axial view down Toothill Street

For the axial view down Toothill Street, the PPR terminates in the stepped form of Building A (stepping from 7 to 9 and then 10 storeys). However the view is a long view and is confined on each site, oblique to the subject site and is over the existing industrial development south of Hudson Street, or up to 4 storeys.

The view is shown in the corrected montages appended to this report. It is evident that the Visual Analysis montages initially provided were in error,but the corrected montages give a realistic impression of the height and character of Building A seen from the distance involved.

Visual linkage across Henry Street

The PPR for the subject site results in better visual linkage with Henry Street compared to the Council's McGill Street Precinct Master Plan in terms of view of and through the proposed central public open space, although predominantly from near the intersection. Compared to the low amenity and scenic quality of the existing view, the PPR is a significant positive contribution to the location.

Visual linkage across Jubilee Street

The view will predominantly contain Building D seen as the background above the existing residential and low scale industrial development between the viewer and the building. The composition of the view is similar to the view down Toothill Street that is discussed above. The existing foreground will remain until future development of the land which if subject to similar urban design controls to either the PPR of the Council's McGill Street Precinct Master Plan will take most of this view away again.

Axial view down Brown Street

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

Vista across the overpass on Longport Street

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

2.4.7 Proposed landscape concept plan

The Landscape Concept Plan prepared by Site Landscapes for the Concept Plan Options has not been updated. However the principles it is based on could be adapted to the PPR landscape design with no difficulty.

2.5 Potential change in intrinsic character of the Study Area

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

The PPR will result in a moderate to high change in the existing intrinsic character of the subject site. The extent of that change to the existing character will not be significantly different in the PPR and is anticipated in Council's McGill Street Precinct Master Plan and Marrickville Urban Strategy. The level of change is a desired feature of the future environment and therefore not a significant visual impact.

2.6 Potential change in intrinsic character of the surroundings

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

The potential effect of the PPR for the subject site on the existing intrinsic character of the surrounding context generally is considered to be low considering both the existing and desired future for the surrounding context. This level of effect is similar to that which will be the result of the construction of the Council's McGill Street Precinct Master Plan.

The individual buildings within the PPR will be required to be of high architectural and aesthetic standards with appropriate articulation, façade treatments, setbacks, appropriate street front heights and set backs of taller components where necessary.

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, with the underlying existing and future zone objectives, permissibility and the desired future character. These have been considered at Section 3.2 and 3.3 of the Report respectively.

2.7 Visual sensitivity

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

The overall visual sensitivity of the Study Area including the subject site was judged in summary to be low-moderate on a scale from negligible to high in our earlier assessment. That rating does not change in the PPR and the reasons given for that rating are below, with minor amendements:

- The Study Area is located in proximity to the Allied Mills Site which has a number of taller buildings that are seen in the context of the Study Area from its visual catchment and are a local landmark.
- Council's Master Plan for the Allied Mills Site proposes buildings of up to 12 storeys in height. The buildings in the PPR would be seen in future in the context of these proposed taller buildings on the Allied Mills Site.
- The subject site for the PPR is visible to train passengers over a very small window of viewing opportunity. Parts of the proposed buildings will also be visible from the western end of Lewisham Railway Station.
- The subject site for the PPR has been used for industrial purposes for a considerable period and is of low scenic quality. The site is intended to change in intensity, use, form and scale of development, as demonstrated in the Council's McGill Street Precinct Master Plan.
- The PPR is not visible from high sensitivity public domain locations, such as recreation areas such as reserves or waterways (with the exception of an informal small public open space at the western terminus of Jubilee Street).
- The proposed development will not have any significant visibility or negatively affect the ability to view or interpret the significance of heritage items in the vicinity.
- Potential visibility of the PPR from the heritage listed Girder Bridges will not negatively affect their significance. The development proposed does not affect views to and from this heritage item and is not within the cartilage of the bridge.
- The Study Area is located adjacent to Old Canterbury Road and Longport Street which are two important local roads. Parts of the subject site are visible from sections of these roads.
- The nature of existing use of the subject site is different to the residential context to its immediate south and east.
- The nature of the proposed future use of the subject site is mixed use comprising some retail and commercial and medium to high density residential. The scale, density and built form of the proposed development that is anticipated are significantly different to the immediate residential context.
- The site backs on the disused freight rail line which is intended to be transformed into a public green way. Subject to appropriate landscaping and urban design measures the proposed development will have only positive effects along this edge.

2.8 Overall extent of visual effects

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

3.0 Visual impact assessment

3.1 Physical absorption capacity

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

The Study Area is at a prominent location, as far as the visual catchment to the immediate south, southeast and east is concerned and there are no landscape or topographic features in the visual context that would screen or hide the proposed development when seen from these directions. However, the proposed individual buildings would provide moderate to high screening effect to each other in the views from the adjacent streets (eg. Old Canterbury Road and Longport Streets) and with few exceptions only some and/or parts of individual buildings would be visible from any single viewing location within the visual catchment.

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

The potential impacts of the PPR overall will be similar to and no greater than the Council's McGill Street Precinct Master Plan in regard to this impact factor.

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

3.2 Compatibility with the character of the site

Our former assessment, that the proposed development would have high compatibility with the existing and future character of the subject site is unchanged.

3.3 Compatibility with the character of the surrounding context

Our former assessment, that the proposed development will have moderate compatibility with the existing and moderate-high compatibility with the future character of the local and the sub-regional context is unchanged.

3.4 Overall extent of visual impacts

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

4.0 Summary of Urban design strategies

The following are some of the appropriate urban design strategies that have been adopted for the proposed development. These will be also incorporated into the design detailed stage of the development.

1. Appropriate setbacks of the buildings along the various edges.
2. Lower street-facing height and set back of taller components for buildings facing the residential edge along Old Canterbury Road.
3. Appropriate setbacks of buildings from the internal central public open space as well as along the public parkland.
4. Appropriate setback and height of buildings on the north side of the central public open space for better amenity in the parkland.
5. Potential for high quality aesthetics and architectural standards, façade treatments, articulation and modulation to increase the aesthetic appeal of individual buildings. These will govern applications at the detailed design stages.
6. Appropriate forms, materials and colours.
7. Appropriate orientation of buildings, windows, doors and other openings to counteract potential amenity impacts.

5.0 Summary conclusion

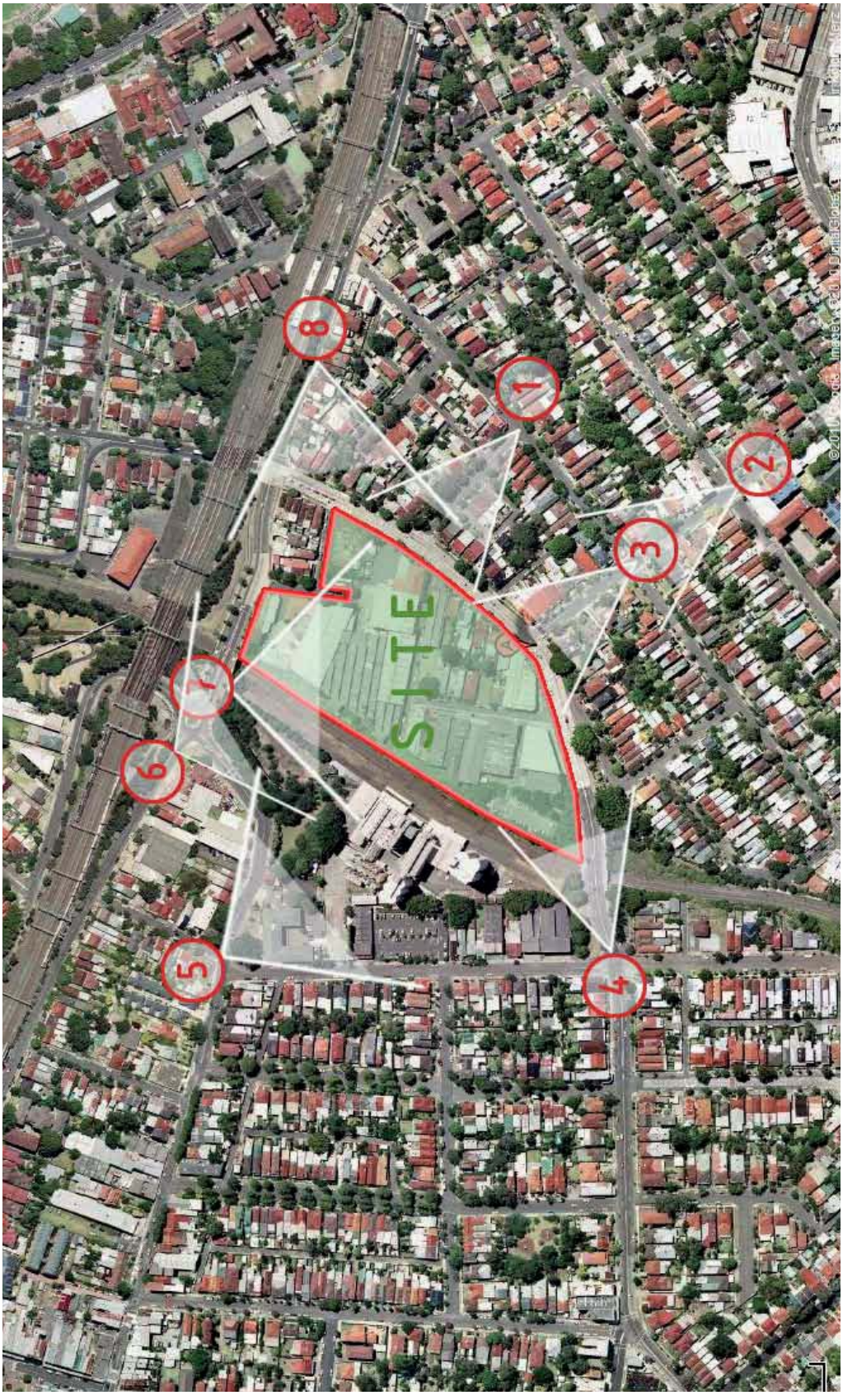
We have determined that there are no increased negative effects on views of the PPR from the external public and private domains. The PPR does not have any increased visual or streetscape impacts compared to those that will be caused by the construction of the former Concept Plan Preferred Option. They also do not have any increased impact on any important vistas across parts of the subject site.

The PPR for the subject site has better permeability and visual linkages with the external streets and axial views available through them compared to the Council's McGill Street Precinct Master Plan. In regard to the central open space, the PPR is a significant improvement on the Council's McGill Street Precinct Master Plan in that regard.

It is considered that the PPR site is acceptable in regard to views to and from heritage items in the vicinity of the Study Area and does not have any negative effect on the significance of those heritage items.

The corrections made to the montages show a realistic built form for the development as seen from the same view places assessed in our earlier reports. The buildings are shown with enough detail to give a useful impression of their future height, bulk and character and this is indicated in the elevations by TOP. The details of their form, articulation, materials, colours etc. and the finer aspects of setback distances and so on will be subject to future applications.

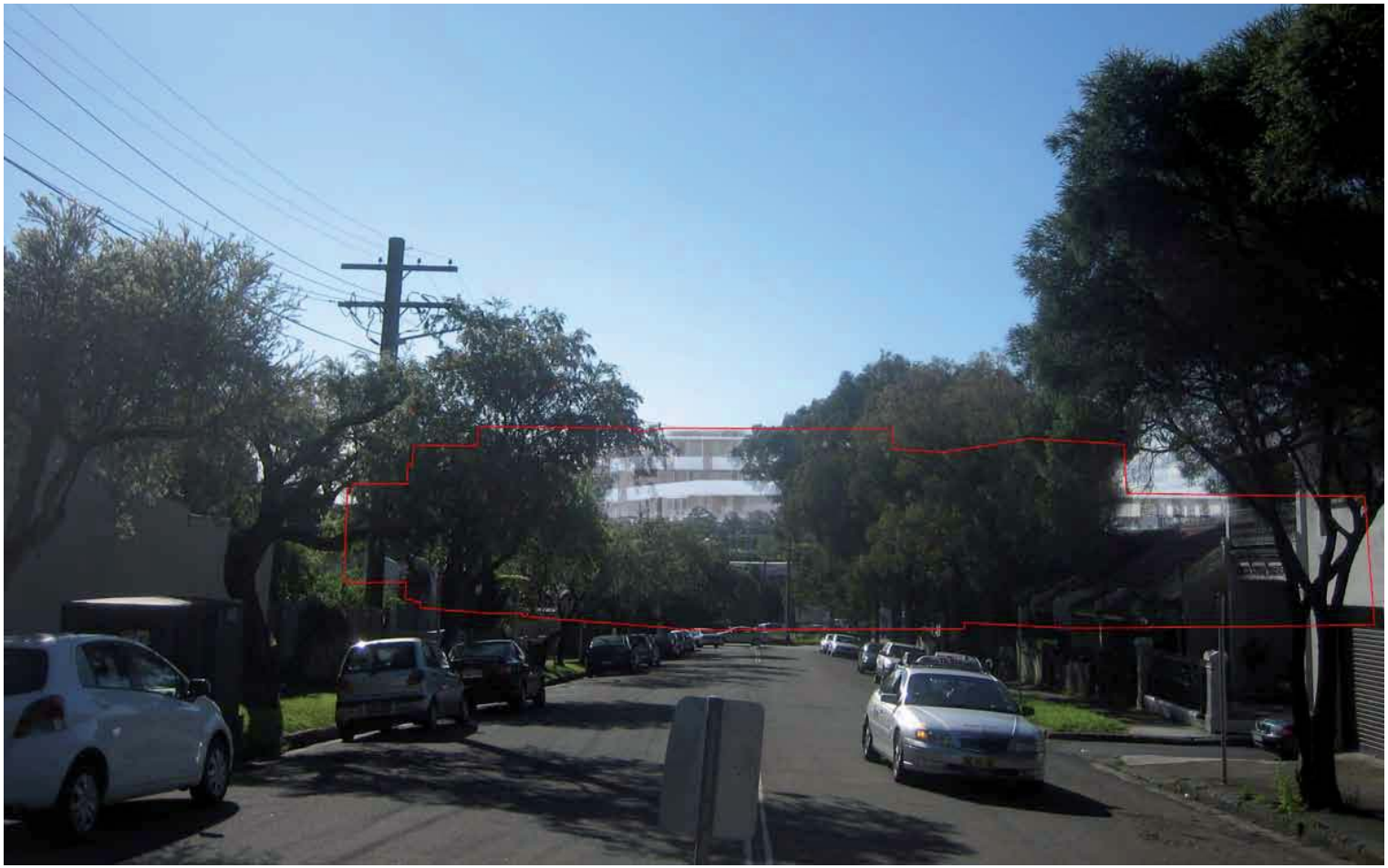
Appendix A Corrected View Study Montages



14.0_View Analysis Study Plan

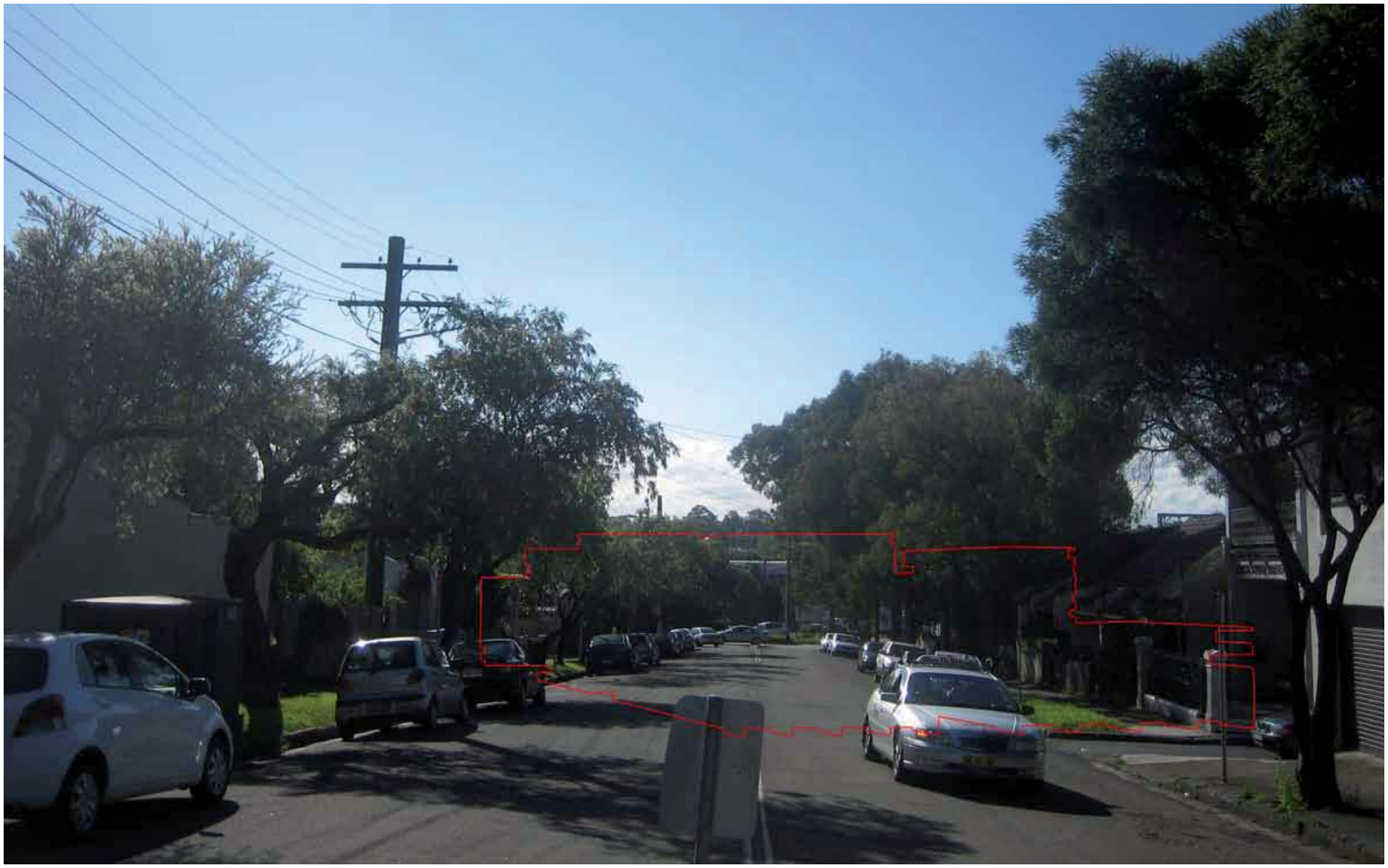
14.1_View Analysis Study Plan

VIEW 1 - CORRECTED



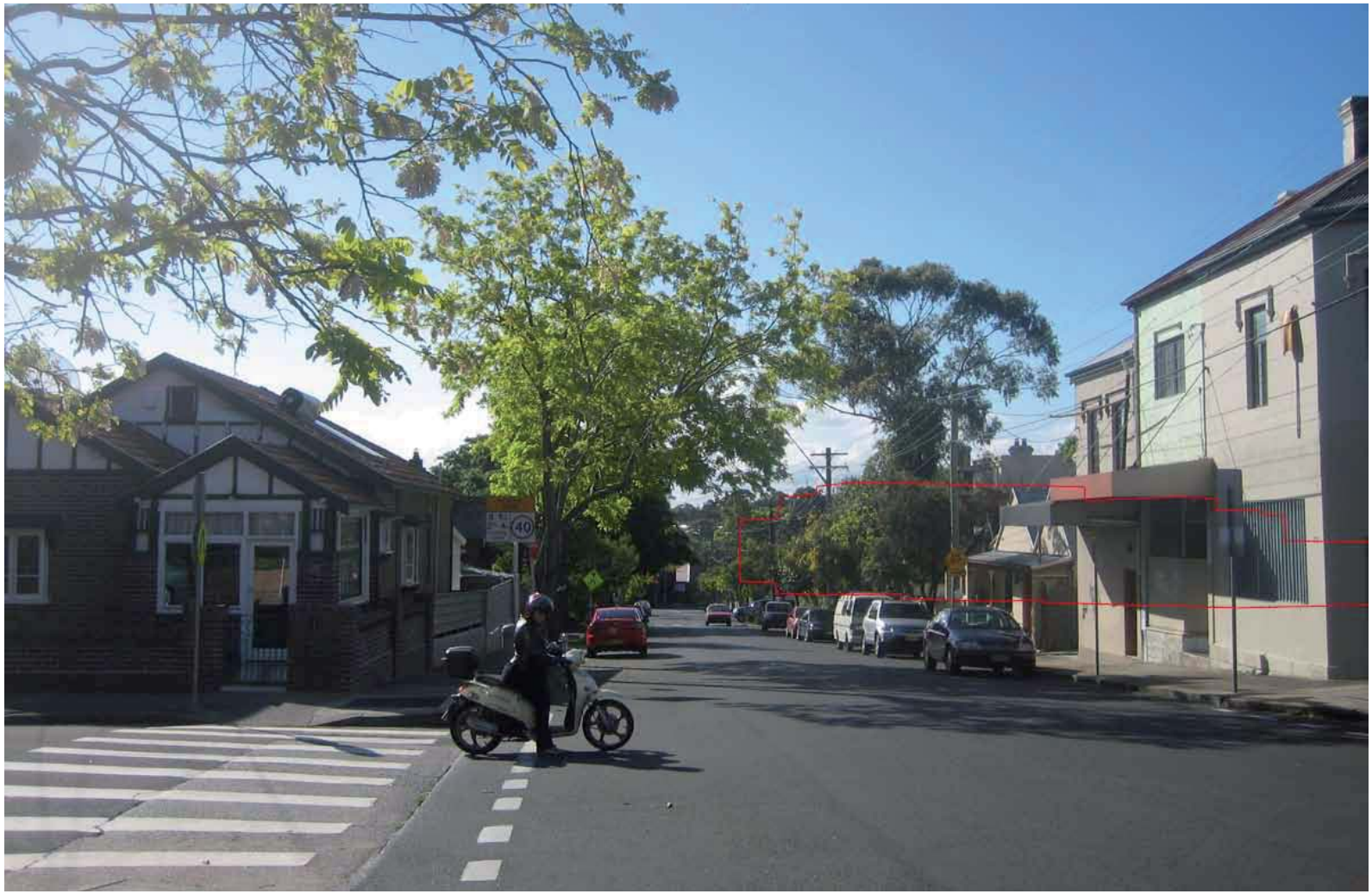
14.1_View Analysis Study Plan

VIEW 1 - PREVIOUS



14.2_View Analysis Study Plan

VIEW 2 - CORRECTED

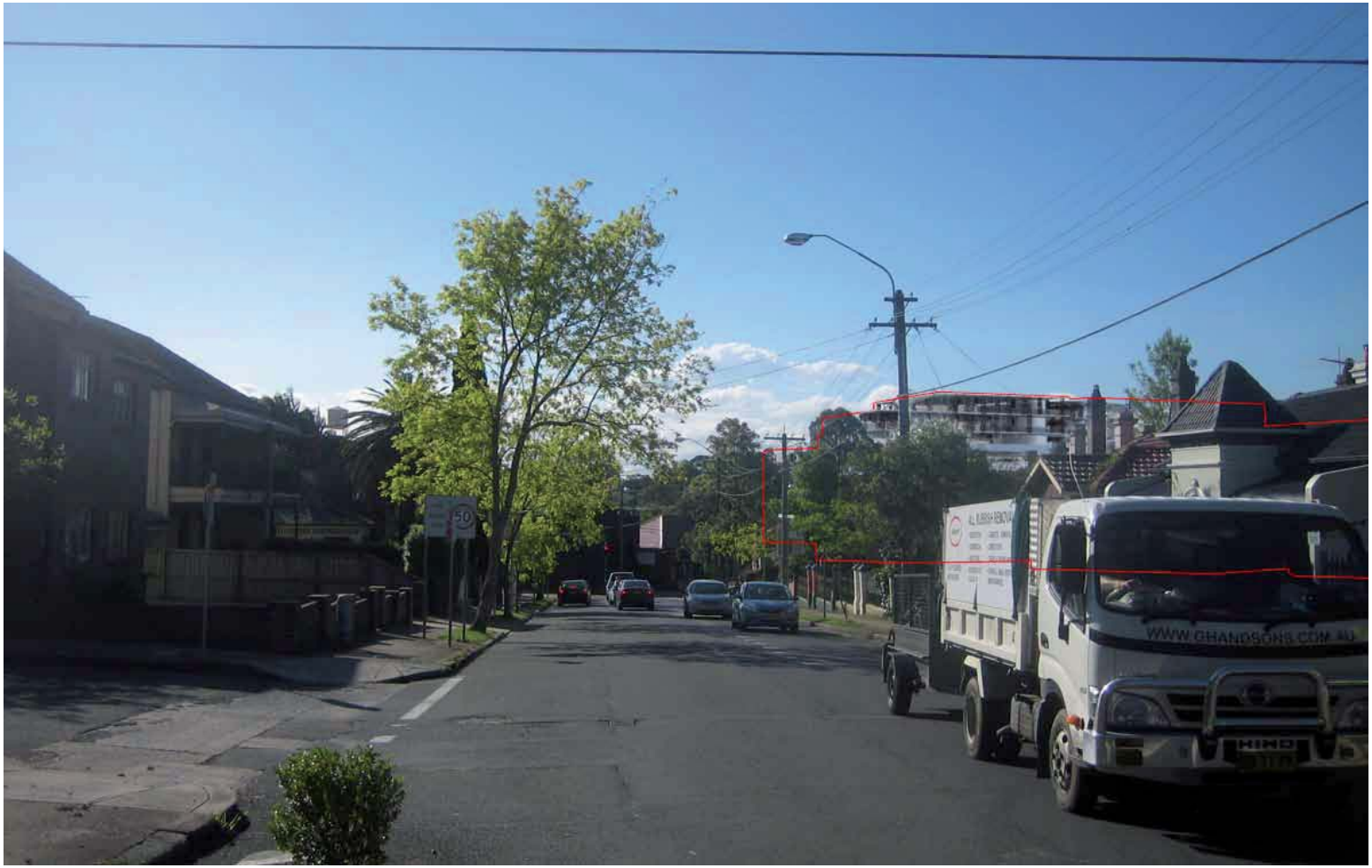


14.2_View Analysis Study Plan

VIEW 2 - PREVIOUS

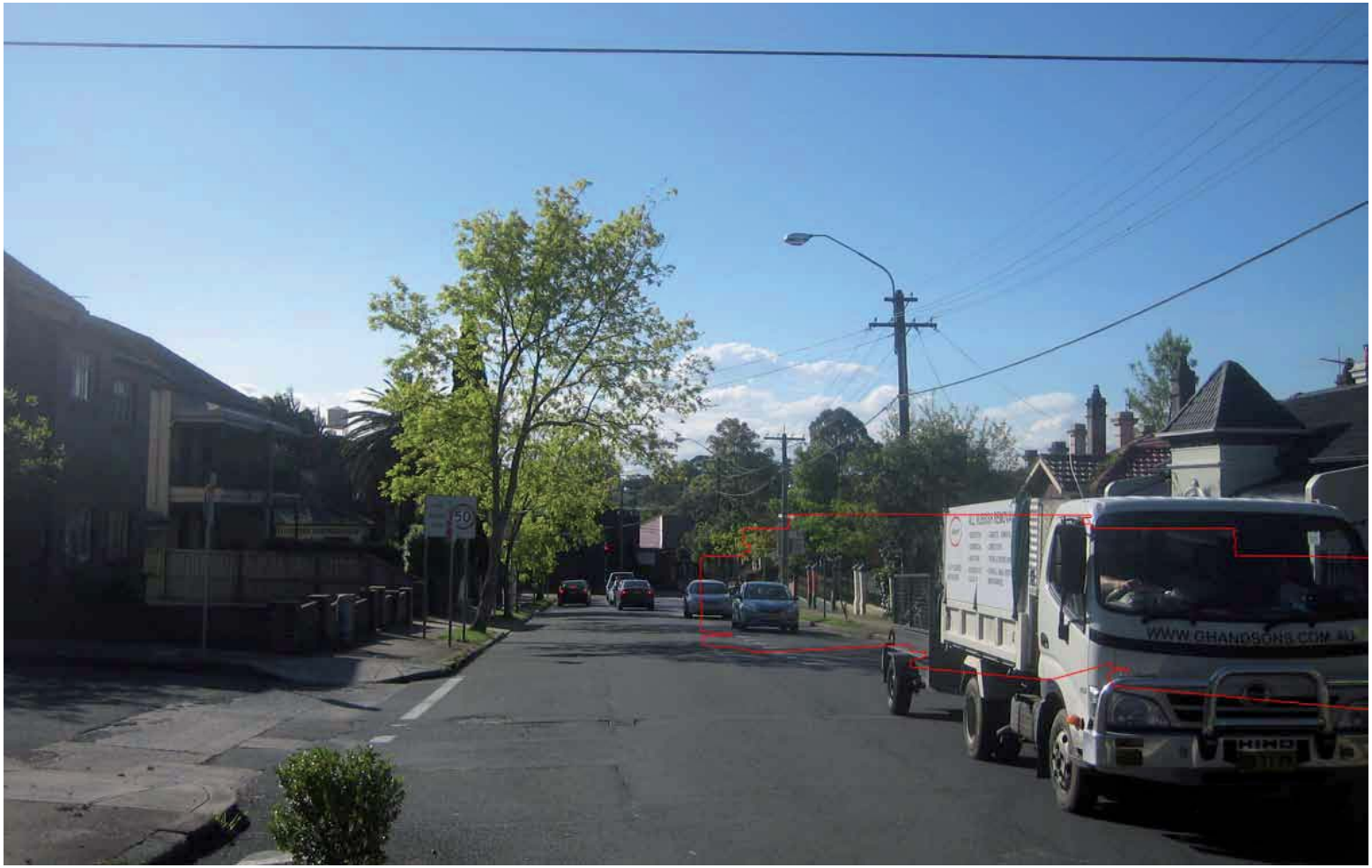
14.3_View Analysis Study Plan

VIEW 3 - CORRECTED



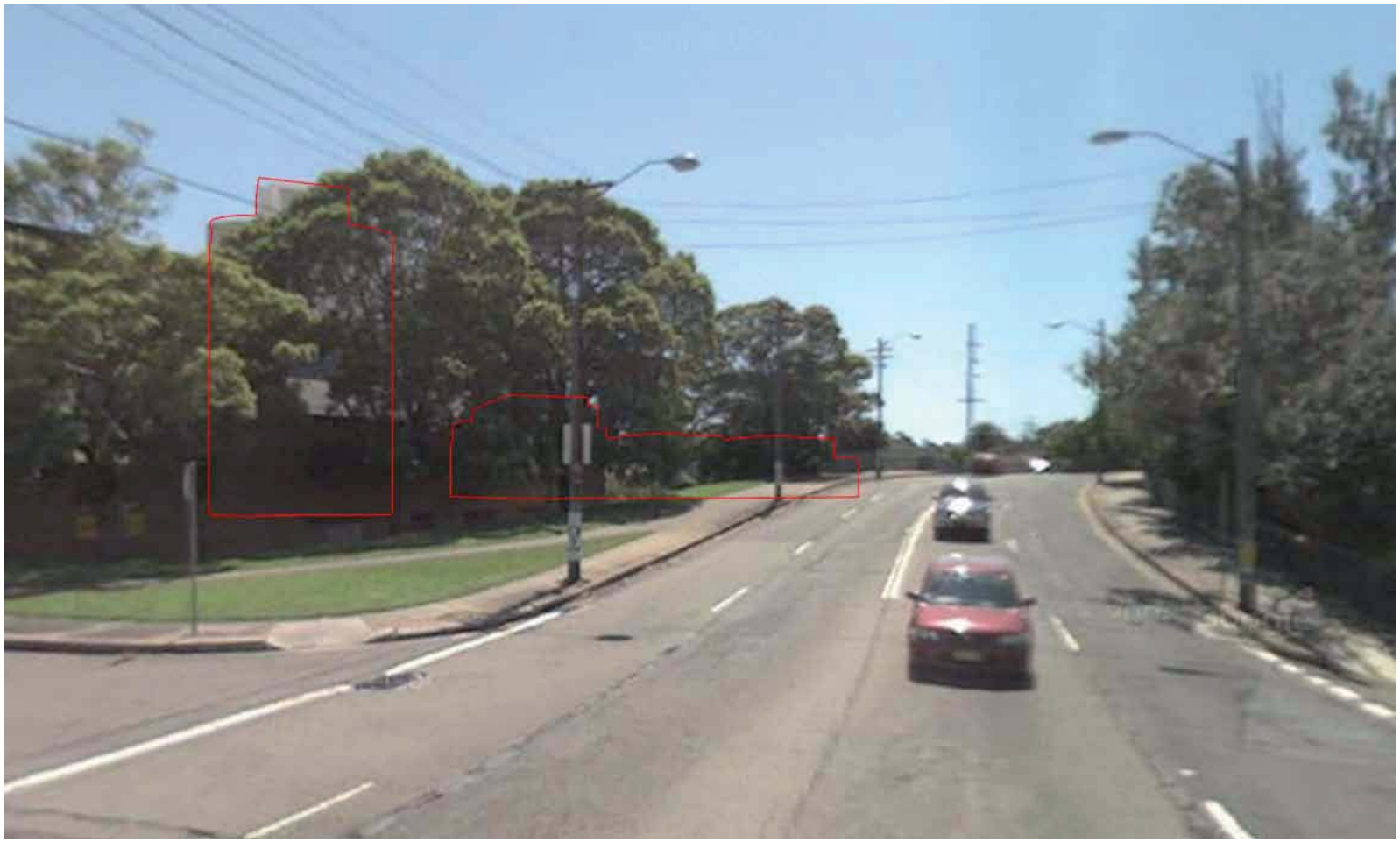
14.3_View Analysis Study Plan

VIEW 3 - PREVIOUS



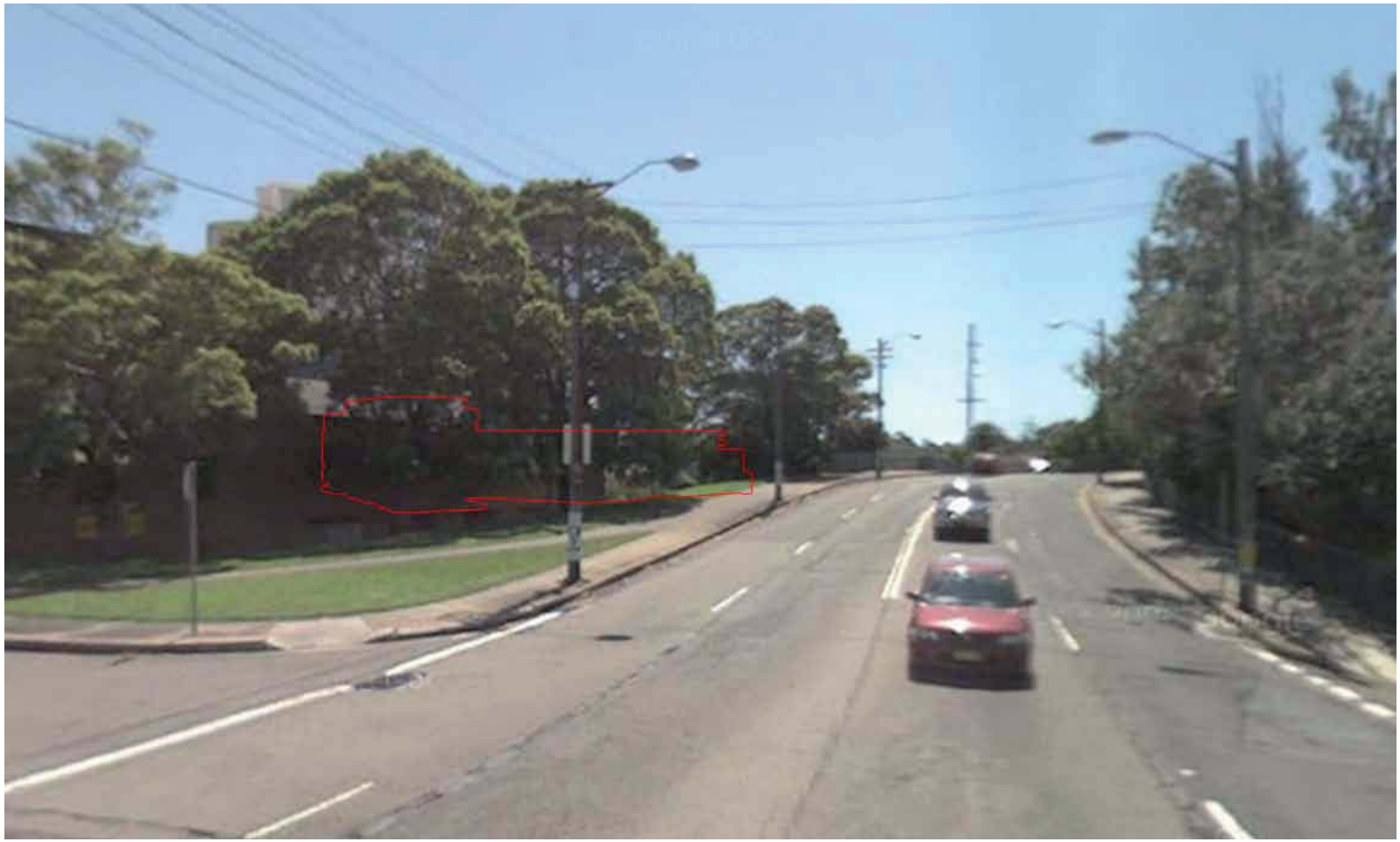
14.4_View Analysis Study Plan

VIEW 4 - CORRECTED



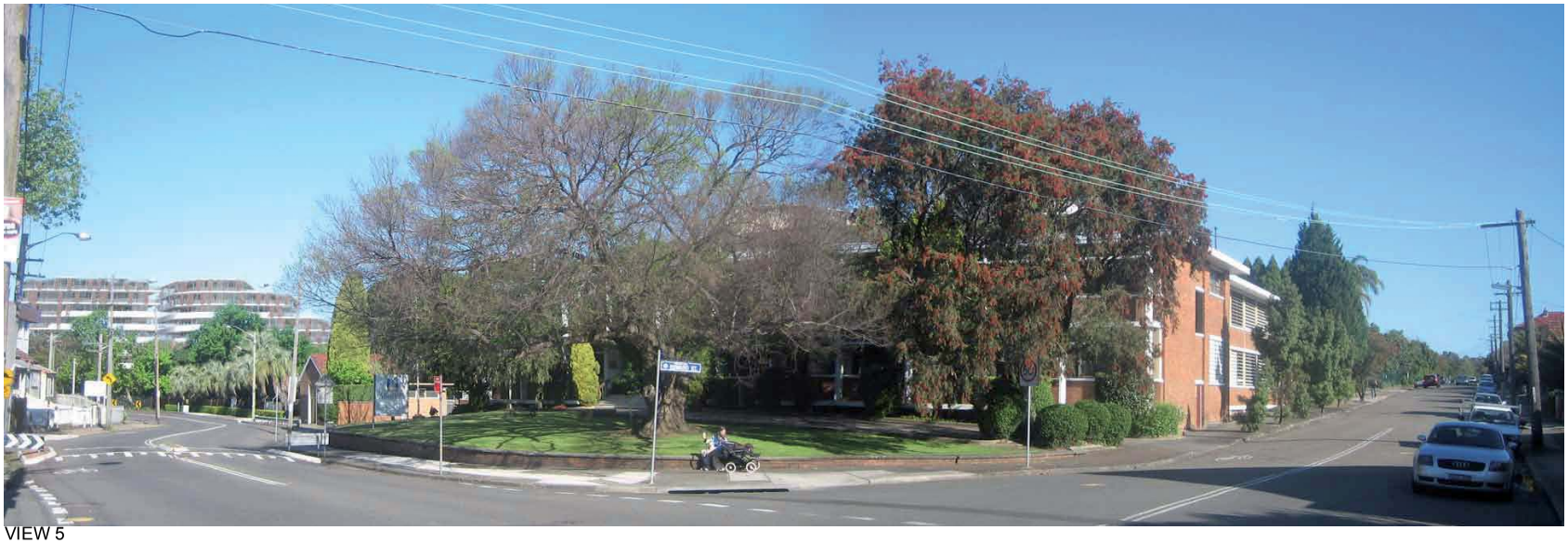
14.4_View Analysis Study Plan

VIEW 4 - PREVIOUS

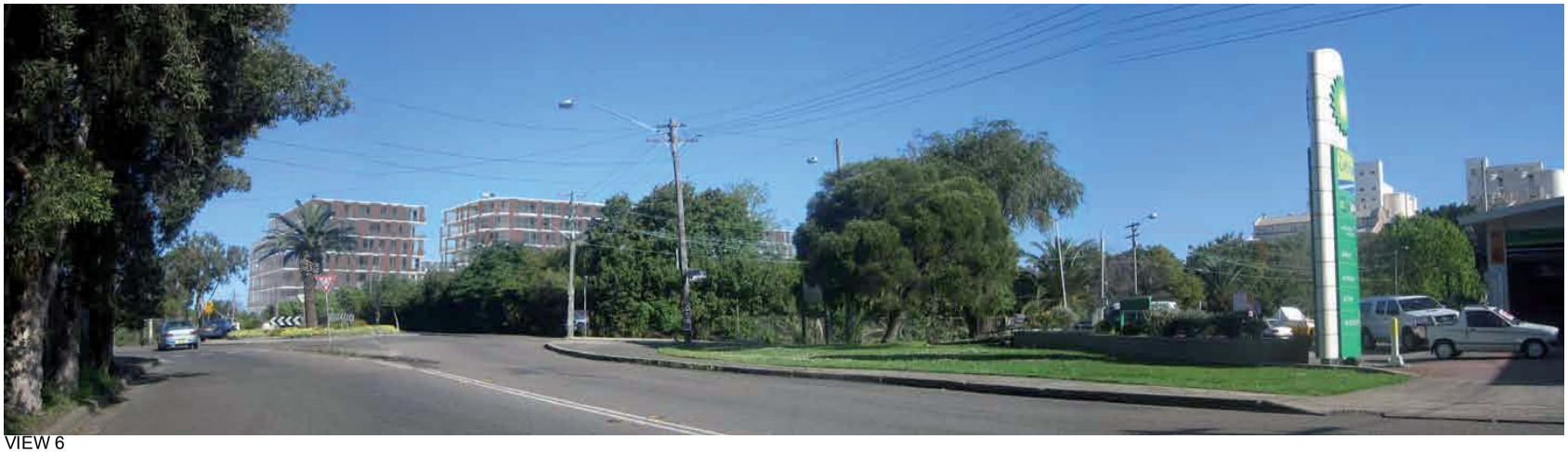


14.5_View Analysis Study Plan

VIEW 5 + 6 - CORRECTED



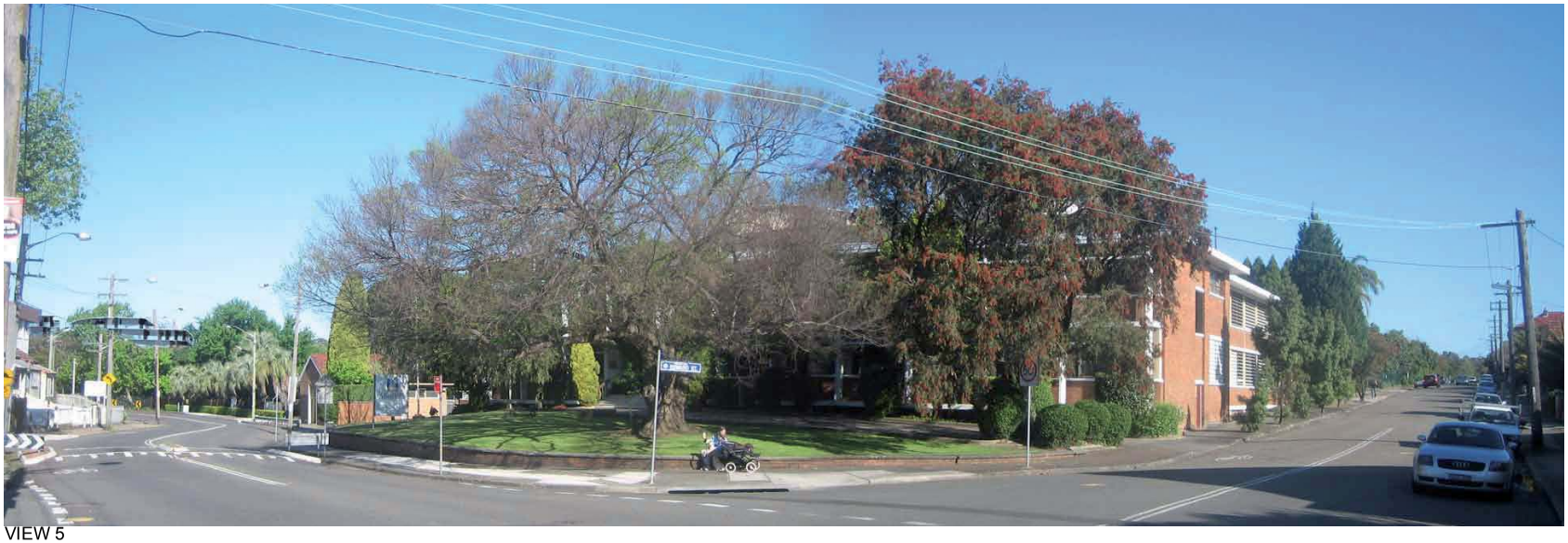
VIEW 5



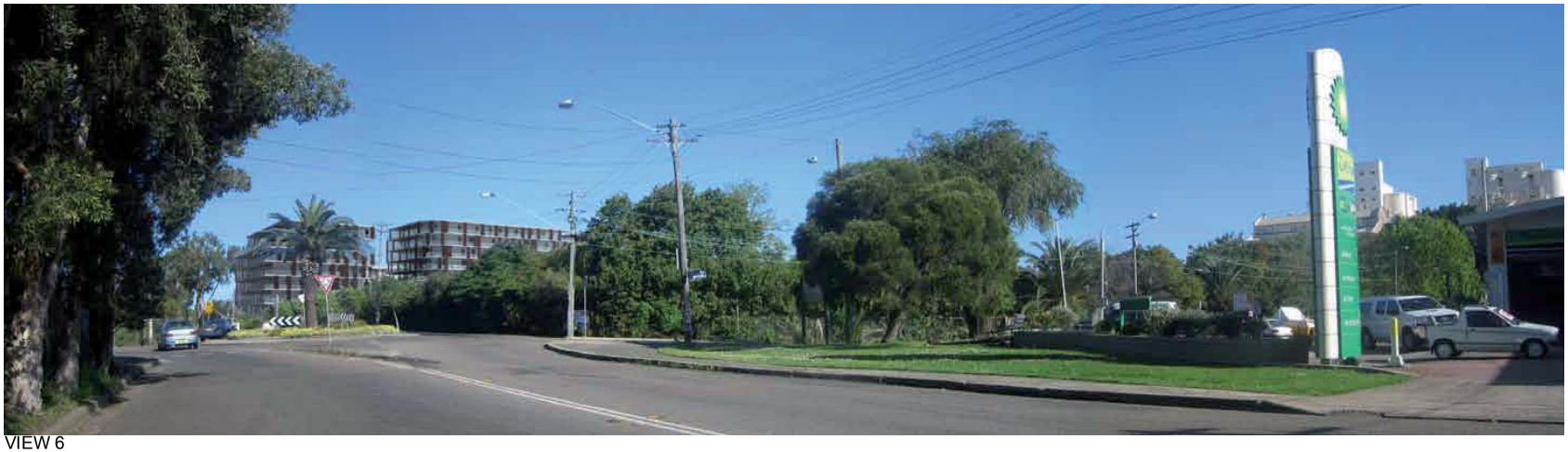
VIEW 6

14.5_View Analysis Study Plan

VIEW 5 + 6 -PREVIOUS



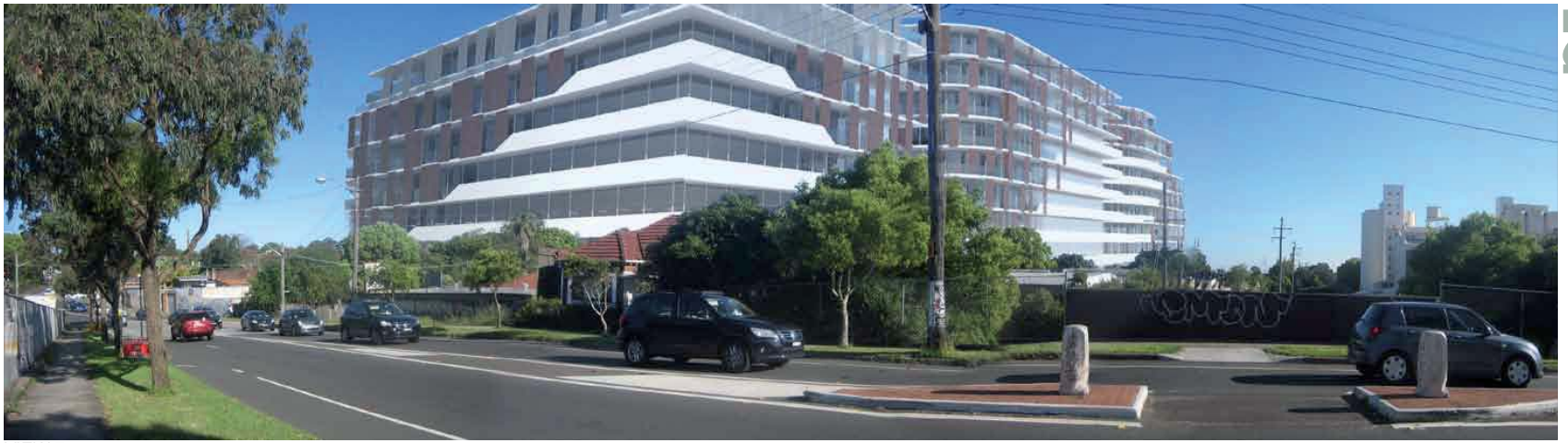
VIEW 5



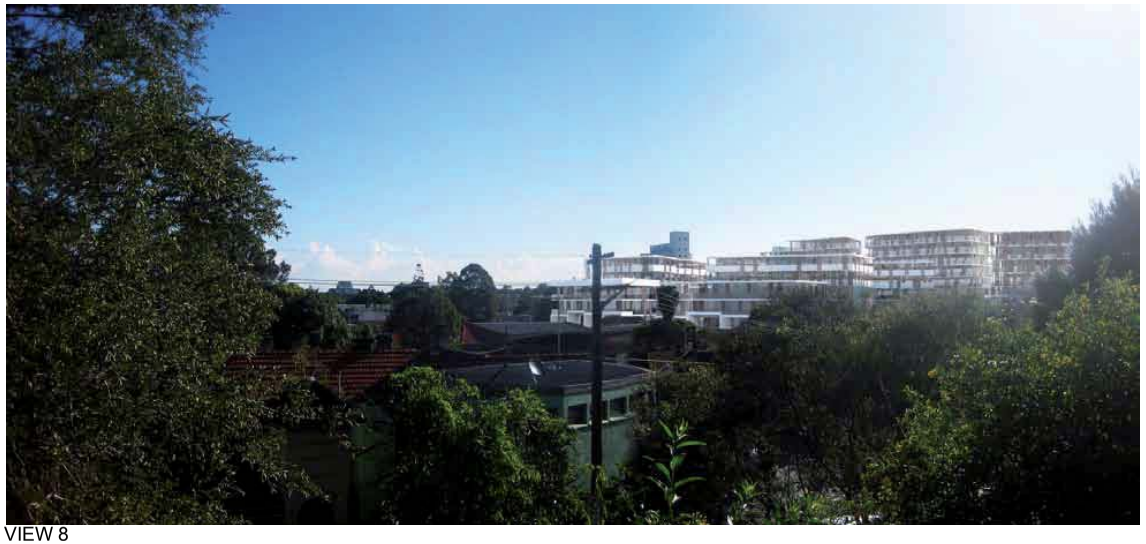
VIEW 6

14.6_View Analysis Study Plan

VIEW 7 + 8 - CORRECTED



VIEW 7



VIEW 8

14.6_View Analysis Study Plan

VIEW 7 + 8 - PREVIOUS

VIEW 7

VIEW 8

Appendix B Summary CV Dr Richard Lamb

Summary

- Professional consultant specialising in visual and heritage impacts assessment and the principal of Richard Lamb and Associates (RLA)
- Honorary senior lecturer in Architecture and Heritage Conservation in the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning at the University of Sydney
- Director of Master of Heritage Conservation Program, University of Sydney, 1998-2006.
- 30 years experinence in teaching and research in environmental impact, heritage and visual impact assessment.
- Teaching and research expertise in interpretation of heritage items and places, cultural transformations of environments, conservation methods and practices.
- Teaching and research experience in visual perception and cognition, aesthetic assessment and landscape assessment,.
- Supervision of Master and PhD students postgraduate students in heritage conservation and environment/ behaviour studies..
- Member of the EBS disciplinary group. The field is based around empirical research into human aspects of the built environment, in particular aspects of aesthetic assessment, visual perception, landscape preference and environmental psychology.
- Richard Lamb provides:
    - professional services, expert advice and landscape and aesthetic assessments in many different contexts
    - Strategic planning studies to protect and enhance scenic quality and landscape heritage values
    - Scenic and aesthetic assessments in all contexts, from rural to urban, provide advice on view loss, view sharing and landscape heritage studies.
    - Expert advice, testimony and evidence to the Land and Environment Court of NSW and Planning and Environment Court of Queensland in various classes of litigation.
    - Specialisation in mattes of heritage landscapes, visual impacts, and urban design
    - Appearances in over 150 cases and submissions to several Commissions of Inquiry and the principal consultant for over 400 consultancies.
- Qualifications
    - Bachelor of Science - First Class Honours, University of New England
    - Doctor of Philosophy, University of New England in 1975
    - Accredited Administrator and Assessor, Myers Briggs Psychological Type Indicator
- International Journals for which Publications are Refereed
    - Landscape & Urban Planning,Journal of Architectural & Planning Research, Architectural Science Review,People and Physical Environment Research (Journal of the Australian and New Zealand Association for Person Environment Studies), Journal of Environmental Psychology, Australasian Journal of Environmental Management, Ecological Management & Restoration, Urban Design Review International