Concept Plan Report

HASSELL

SUMMER HILL FLOUR MILL



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Introduction

This Concept Plan for the Summer Hill Flour Mill site supports the *Part 3A application and Environmental Assessment* prepared by SJB Planning (May 2011) for the Summer Hill Flour Mill site and has been prepared by HASSELL on behalf of EG Funds Management.

This report responds to the Director Generals Requirements (DGRs) issued 16th December 2010 and the Test of Adequacy advice issued by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure on 15th April 2011. It provides an overview of the strategic context for the project, a series of design strategies that have been applied to the wider precinct, and it presents the Concept Plan in detail.

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Analysis

Regional Context

The 2.47 hectare Summer Hill Flour Mill site is located approximately 7km from Sydney's central business district, in the inner western suburb of Summer Hill. The site is highly urbanised and is strongly influenced by its proximity to central Sydney. It falls within the local municipalities of Ashfield and Marrickville, with the LGA boundaries traversing the site at the north-eastern corner.

The Summer Hill Flour Mill site sits between the east-west tributaries of the Parramatta River and the Cooks River, which run north and south of the site respectively. A small water tributary, known as Hawthorne Canal, extends from an inlet of the Parramatta River (Iron Cove) in the north, southwards, alongside the Summer Hill Flour Mill site to the east and beyond.

Sydney's International Airport at Port Botany lies to the south-east of the site, and the site is physically connected along the water tributaries of Hawthorne Canal and the Cooks River. The close proximity of major roads including Parramatta Road, Old and New Canterbury Roads and Liverpool Road, further ensure good access and connectivity to the region.

The site forms part of a larger industrial precinct located to the east of the freight line, which covers an area of approximately 10ha and combined, forms an island of industries within a mostly medium density residential community.

There are some small formal pockets of open space scattered within the region with larger corridors of green open space sited along the waterways and rivers north and south of the suburb.

Figure 1.1

Not to scale

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Site Location and Local Context

The site is commonly known and referred to as the 'Summer Hill Flour Mills' and is located along Smith Street, Summer Hill. The site includes all land bounded by Longport Street and Smith Street to the north, a residential street, Edward Street, to the west, and the Hawthorne Canal and the largely disused Rozelle Goods Line to the west.

The Summer Hill Flour Mill site is a large parcel of land with its proximity to the Great Western railway line, its alignment with Hawthorne Canal and the north-south freight corridor being the strongest elements affecting the site. The various building typologies on the Summer Hill Flour Mill site contrast to those in the surrounding area, and when viewed with its neighbouring industrial precinct to the east, form an isolated land use within a predominantly residential landscape.

The site falls across both the local government areas Ashfield Council and Marrickville Council. The Hawthorne Canal is a water body which forms (a physical) border between the LGAs of Marrickville and Ashfield.

The site has an advantageous location, being in close proximity to the intersection of Old Canterbury Road, Railway Terrace and Longport Street, and is also within a short walking distance of both Summer Hill and Lewisham train stations.

The site is of significance, in the local context, with its landmark silo buildings visible from across the district.



Figure 1.2

The Greenway Public open space Site boundary





LGA boundary
 Site boundary

Analysis

Ownership and Boundaries

The Summer Hill Flour Mill site falls across the local government areas of Ashfield Council and Marrickville Council. The Hawthorne Canal is an important drainage corridor which forms a physical boundary between the LGAs.

The Hawthorne Canal owner by Sydney Water, crosses a portion of the site. No change to the ownership or alignment of the canal is proposed.

A portion of the site (situated in Marrickville Council LGA) is access constrained and will require emergency evacuation in an extreme flooding event. It is proposed that this emergency access be provided across RailCorp land, and this has in principle support from RailCorp.

The adjacent properties on Edward Street (to the south west of the site) have the potential in the future to be redeveloped. The concept plan proposal supports this by providing additional access and servicing streets.

A small portion of land at the intersection of Smith Street and Longport Street is outside the subject site and its ownership cannot be determined.

Not to scale

01

Landscape and Open Space

The pattern of landscape and open space within the site can be distinguished by groupings of formal street plantings, stands of trees mixed with privet along the Hawthorne Canal corridor, and clusters of stands of exotics and native trees predominantly to the north of the site.

Street trees, where established, play a major role in creating visual cohesion of the streetscape and adjacent suburbs.

The Rozelle Goods Line (which has now ceased operation), has been designated in the Marrickville Urban Strategy as the 'GreenWay Corridor' (which will extend from the Cooks River to Iron Cove along the Hawthorne Canal) for biodiversity and recreational connections. This corridor has limited aesthetic appeal at present, however is viewed as being both a valuable ecological and recreational opportunity. It is envisaged that the GreenWay will incorporate light rail with walk/cycle paths and bush regeneration. The creation of this GreenWay will mean the Summer Hill Flour Mill site and McGill Street Precinct (as well as the wider area) will have excellent access to regional open space connections.

There is a scattering of local urban parks within close proximity to the site however there is no strong, clear connection between these open space areas.



01_ A bird's eye view of the suburb of Summer Hill with its strong tree canopy 02_The Hawthorn Canal corridor 03_A typical residential street lined with trees







The Greenway Public open space

- Existing vegetation
- Street tree planting
- Site boundary



Built form

Site boundary

Analysis

Figure Ground

The figure ground reveals how the alignments of the Great Western railway line and the Rozelle Goods Line (dominant elements of the urban landscape) have strongly influenced the built form in the area.

The site is isolated from surrounding neighbourhoods by the heavily trafficked Old Canterbury Road and Longport Street, the Rozelle Goods Line and the Western railway line.

The density and pattern of development on the Summer Hill Flour Mill site contrasts to that of the regular pattern of development in the local neighbourhood. The scattering of larger footprint buildings on the site is in contrast to the pattern of regularly spaced and aligned building typologies outside of the site and is attributed to the confluence of topography and major structuring elements on the block shape and size.

Of interest is the density and pattern of development of the Summer Hill Flour Mill site and the adjacent McGill Street precinct, which are in significant contrast to that of the otherwise regular pattern of development in the local neighbourhood. The scattering of larger footprint buildings appear to be in response to the alignment of the railway line, and the concentration of these buildings along the railway line relates back to their industrial function.

In general however, the pattern of development in the local area surrounding the site is fine grained, and predominately residential in both scale and character.





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- **01_** A local residential street with regular lot pattern and size
- 02_Larger lots reflect industrial usage 03_Larger footprint development which contrasts with the surrounding residential area

Analysis

Traffic Access and Transport

Train

The Summer Hill Flour Mill site is located between two train stations on the Inner West Line of the City rail network, which operate services to the city and west.

Summer Hill railway station is within a approximately 5 minute walk west of the precinct. The walk to the station follows Smith Street and takes pedestrians though the local Summer Hill centre along Lackey Street.

Lewisham Station is located to the east of the precinct. Pedestrian access from the west to the station is currently characterised by exposure to heavy traffic along Longport Street with limited opportunities to improve conditions. The walk along Railway Terrace towards Lewisham Station is hazardous as pedestrians are limited to a narrow, cluttered footpath on the south side of the street.

Bus

The site benefits from being serviced by five bus routes. Buses include the 480 and 483 which follow routes along Parramatta Road and then on to Liverpool Road (travelling between the city and Strathfield Station), the 461 which travels along Parramatta Road from the city to Burwood. The 413 bus route which travels from Campsie to the city via Ashbury, passing the site along Old Canterbury Road. This service stops at the bus stop located on Old Canterbury Road north of the Toothill Street intersection and provides five buses during the morning peak period (8am-9am) on weekdays. New Canterbury Road (which is a short walk from the site), also has several bus routes travelling along this road.

Bicycle

A network of existing and proposed bicycle routes is making cycling in the suburb an increasingly attractive mode of transport. The planned integrated bicycle route along the new light rail alignment in the Greenway will further enhance north south connections and access to the precinct.

Light Rail (approved)

The NSW Government is extending the light rail network from Lilyfield through to Summer Hill and on to Dulwich Hill Station along the disused freight corridor. The extension will provide improved inner-city transport options with generally a larger catchment than the existing heavy rail. The Lewisham stop between Longport Street bridge and Old Canterbury Road bridge will cater to the Lewisham and Summer Hill community.

Vehicles

The site has limited road frontage and vehicular access is generally via narrow, low volume residential streets. Main access to the Summer Hill Flour Mill site is from Edward Street and secondary access via Smith Street.



Figure 1.6

- The Greenway
- Public open space
- ← Traffic flow - Bus route/stop
- "O" Proposed light rail route/stop

---- Existing bicycle route --- Proposed bicycle route (local) --- Proposed bicycle route (regional) Site boundary

Not to scale





- Local business/shops
- School
- The Greenway
- Public open space Predominately residential
- Site boundary

Analysis

Local Amenities

Summer Hill is a local mixed use centre in Sydney's inner west, with great diversity is part of its character.

The site is situated between a series of local centres offering a mix of retail, community and commercial activities. Most of the Summer Hill local shops are clustered close to the train station. Summer Hill's shopping precinct is centred around a small town square with good pedestrian access, and is surrounded by cafés and restaurants typically found along Lackey and Smith Streets.

The smaller neighbourhood centre of Lewisham is also within close proximity to the site and is located to the east.

In regards to open space, there is a scattering of local urban parks within proximity to the Summer Hill Flour Mill site but a poor spatial relationship and connection to them.

Summer Hill has two schools. Trinity Grammar School in Prospect Road is a private school catering for students from Year 3 to Year 12. Summer Hill Public School, located in Moonbie Street, is a primary school catering for students from Kindergarten to Year 6.





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Not to scale

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02_

01_ Summer Hill's main street (Lackey Street) 02_ Summer Hill local shops 03_ A local school (Trinity Grammar)

Topography

The topography of the local area has resulted in a loose grid system of streets. Major roads such as Liverpool Road, New Canterbury Road and Crystal Street, all run along ridge lines.

The Summer Hill Flour Mill site is located along a valley and drainage corridor. The site is situated at the lowest point of a north-south aligned valley which slowly begins to rise just south of the site. The existing goods freight line runs north-south along the valley floor.

The irregular shaped allotment of the site is a direct result of the combination of the convergence of major linear elements such as the railway lines, the alignment of the Hawthorne Canal corridor as well as the underlying topography of the area.



Figure 1.8

10m above sea level 20m above sea level 30m above sea level 40m above sea level 50m above sea level Site boundary



Figure 1.9



- Site boundary

Analysis

Heritage

Both the Ashfield and Marrickville LGAs boast a significant number of built heritage items, places of significance, landscapes and vistas which combine to make it a diverse and distinctive area.

The Summer Hill Flour Mill site represents a very important industrial complex not only within Ashfield but is a historically significant typology within Sydney. The site was established as an industrial site because of the advantages that the freight rail line offered the flour milling industry. However with this function having now been relocated to Picton, the significance of the site's history (that is, it comprises part of Australia's long history of flour milling), is worth recognising both from a physical and social perspective. Its original functions, its landmark scale and presence, as well as its impressive engineering and architectural qualities contribute to its historic footprint. The large silo and bin structures are aesthetically significant and a dominant and iconic feature of the Summer Hill landscape. They represent significant elements of the suburb and inner west region's built form and have been identified as being of heritage value. None of the structures however have been listed as heritage items.

The suburb of Summer Hill is rich in heritage with more than one hundred properties listed as items of significance (the majority of which are houses). In addition, collective groups of buildings also combine to create local conservation areas, including a low density residential area adjacent the site which boasts a collection of late nineteenth and early twentieth century homes to form a Heritage Conservation Area.

In general, residential dwellings in the local area vary from being modest to large in scale, and are stylistically mixed, displaying a great variety of original Victorian and Edwardian villas, terraces and cottages.





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01_An item of high heritage significance, the Mungo Scott building

02_The silos which stand as a local landmark

03_An example of the housing located in the 'ResA2 Lewisham Area'



design strategies



Proposal for Summer Hill Flour Mill site shown with the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan

The Summer Hill Flour Mill site has been master planned as a part of the wider precinct including the McGill Street area. Together, these two sites are a contiguous industrial precinct, suitable for renewal as mixed use and transport oriented developments.

Although the two sites have different clients and different development and design briefs, a single, holistic design response has been resolved around critical issues of accessible public open space, permeability, building uses, building address and built form. The design strategies or principles for the expanded precinct are presented here.



Figure 2a This diagram illustrates the principle of linking existing centres through a new precinct, access to the green corridor and increased permeability

Linking the local centres

movement.

Permeability and connectivity are reflected in the concept plan as guiding principles for both the Summer Hill Flour Mill site and the McGill Street precinct. Improved permeability is about connecting existing local centres rather than creating an enclave. The existing light industrial zone between the local centres acts as a barrier to pedestrian access directing all movements across the Longport Street overpass, which presents a less than ideal connection. The new configuration allows pedestrians to connect from Lewisham to Summer Hill via a pleasant arrangement of public open spaces and new streets.

Extending existing streets and pedestrian links into and through the site will provide a comprehensive and legible network of local streets. It will better connect the surrounding neighbourhood to the green corridor and give access to what will become an extended recreational open space corridor between Old Canterbury Road and Smith Street, catering for pedestrian, bicycle and light rail



Figure 2b

This diagram shows how the green corridor is connected to the adjacent public spaces, creating a network of linked open spaces and a permeable pattern of streets

Permeability

The concept plan addresses the provision of public open space, the connection to the green corridor and provision of access to public transport by providing a permeable environment through a series of streets and pedestrian routes. Additional open green spaces extend east and west from the green corridor into the renewal areas. On the Summer Hill Flour Mill site an existing avenue of Brushbox trees with a generous, 'park like' space connects to Smith Street. New public streets edging the green corridor give new buildings an address overlooking the open space rather than turning their back to them as is often the case along the rail corridor.

The heart of the development focuses on the heritage buildings which will provide a community and cultural focus to public active uses adding to the variety of public spaces.



Figure 2c

This diagram represents the envisaged scale of built form for both the Summer Hill Flour Mill site and the McGill Street precinct. Also highlighted are active edges addressing the green corridor

Built form

The concept plan adopts a sensitive approach to built form and embraces the existing heritage structures on the Summer Hill Flour Mill site. The design ensures greater visibility of the green corridor. New streets orientate the buildings toward the light rail line, formalising the green corridor into a pedestrian/cyclist/light rail friendly boulevard.

Active uses such as cafes, studios and small retail opportunities line the streets facing open spaces, increasing activity levels and pedestrian traffic as well as safety and security in the area.

Legend

Village centre Greenway/open space Significant structures/ adaptive re-use Existing residential dwellings Mixed residential (low scale) Mixed residential (medium scale) Mixed residential (higher scale) Proposed Lewisham west light rail station



Summer Hill Flour Mill site

Active edges eg. retail, commercial obbies, residential entrances



--- Future light rail extension route

Strategic Views

Proposal for Summer Hill Flour Mill site shown with the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan

In the context of views and vistas, the most notable feature in the area is the iconic nature of the architectural elements associated with the Summer Hill Flour Mill site which assume an important visual presence within the locality. The silo structures, with their unique physical qualities and significant contrasting height and scale (relative to surrounding development), when viewed within the local context ensures their visual dominance within the area.

Several important views of and to the site, particularly of the iconic silo structures are experienced as a result. These are as follows:

- View A When walking from Summer Hill Station, and turning the corner onto Smith Street, the subject site's 'green' corner and significant tree (outside of the administration building) are evident. The landscape setback draws attention to the striking height and physical dominance of the structures comparative to surrounding residential development
- View B When walking along Smith Street, on approach to the bend, first glimpses of the site and the historic flour mill building begin to emerge
- View C From the inner west train line, both on approach to Summer Hill Station, and as the train passes the site, its physical dominance within the local landscape is evident
- $\label{eq:ViewD} {\sf ViewD} \qquad {\sf Hudson\,Street\,off\,Old\,Canterbury\,Road\,offers\,a\,direct\,visual\,connection\,to\,the\,site} \\ {\sf and\,the\,silos}$
- View E The scale and vertical expression of the silo buildings contrasts to that of the lower scale residential building typologies in the surrounding local streets
- View F The silos structure serves as a focal point down local residential streets and in some circumstances, is the terminating view
- View G The new road proposed in the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan improves the view from not only Old Canterbury Road to the Greenway, but also to the light rail stop











Figure 2.1

The GreenWay

- Public open space
- Development footprint
 View corridor (predominant)
- ←---o View corridor
- Site boundary

01_ViewG 02_ViewC 03_ViewF



- Site boundary

Design Strategies

Building Configuration and Density

Proposal for Summer Hill Flour Mill site shown with the McGill Street Precinct Master Plan

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