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HUNT ARCHITECTS

ALLIED PINNACLE FLOUR AND MAIZE MILL

PROPOSED MODIFICATION (DA-318-12-2004)

NOVEMBER 2021

PUBLIC

APPENDIX E

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT MEMORANDUM

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MEMO

To: Dr Mark Maund, Principal Environmental Consultant, WSP

From: Suzie Rawlinson, Director, IRIS Visual Planning + Design

Date: 6 October, 2021

Re: **Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Memorandum**
Proposed Extension to Picton Flour Mill

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1. Introduction

This memo provides an assessment of the potential visual impacts of the proposed extension to Allied Pinnacle's Picton Flour Mill (the proposal). The flour mill is located between Picton Road and the Southern Highlands rail line, to the south-east of the town of Picton, and north-west of Wilton.

This assessment includes a description of the proposal, outlines the relevant planning context, describe the potential visual catchment of the project, including the screening provided by existing landform and vegetation. It identifies the location of potential visual receivers, including local roads and private properties. It also considers the appropriateness of the height, bulk, massing and scale of the proposal to determine the compatibility of the proposal with the character of the existing mill.

2. Proposal

The proposal includes the following elements:

- Building extension – external expansion of the northwest corner of the building, including:
  - a warehouse extension (north) (between about 8-9 metres high)
  - an engineering area extension to the west
  - an office, sheltered concrete slab and a toilet is to be installed externally on the northeast corner of the new warehouse extension.
  - Associated external production areas.
- Two production areas – two rooms and a third staging area.

3. Planning context

The following planning legislation and documents have been reviewed and provide context to this assessment:

- *Sydney Regional Environmental Plan No. 20—Hawkesbury-Nepean River*
- *Wollondilly 2040: A vision for the future of Wollondilly* (Wollondilly Local Strategic Planning Statement, Wollondilly Shire Council, 2020)
- *Wilton 2040 – A Plan for the Wilton Growth Area* (NSW Department of Planning and Environment, 2018)
- *Wollondilly Local Environmental Plan 2011* (Wollondilly Shire Council, 2011).

3.1. Sydney Regional Environmental Plan No 20—Hawkesbury-Nepean River

Sydney Regional Environmental Plan (REP) No. 20 aims to protect the scenic environment of the Hawkesbury-Nepean River by considering the visual impact of development on the surrounding area (PART 2, cl.6, 11f). Although the lot at 330 Picton Road has frontage along the Nepean River to the south of the great Southern Railway, the proposal site is located about 900 metres from the Nepean River and does not contain any land identified for scenic protection.

3.2. Wollondilly 2040: A vision for the future of Wollondilly

Wollondilly Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) outlines the land use planning vision for Wollondilly over the next 20 years. The LSPS identifies key planning priorities and actions that focus on protecting and retaining the characteristics that make Wollondilly unique, whilst manage changing and growth.

The proposal is located in the northern part of the Wilton Growth Area. There are seven precincts within the Wilton Growth Area. The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) has prepared *Wilton 2040 A Plan for the Wilton Growth Area* (2020), a guiding document for the transformation of this area. This document has been summarised in the following section.

3.3. Wilton 2040: A Plan for the Wilton Growth Area

The proposal site is located in the northern part of the Wilton Growth area. The structure plan (refer to Figure 3-1) identifies the area between Picton Road and the Nepean River valley (including the proposal site) as employment land. The flat rural land to the northeast of the proposal site, on the other side of Picton Road is identified as employment land for further investigation.

Much of the developable land within the Wilton Growth Area is described as gently undulating and open pastoral land with scattered tree cover, of low to moderate scenic value. The adjacent undulating rural landscape of ridgelines, densely vegetated river gorges and open pastoral land are considered to be of high scenic value and provide a green buffer to the urban area and nearby rural villages. The Razorback Range defines the northern boundary of the growth area and is described as a dominant landform, providing high impact vistas. The slightly elevated and heavily forested ranges of the Dharawal State Recreation Area create vistas to the east. Ridgelines and slopes with scenic values are considered unsuitable for urban development.

The Carriage Creek tributary to the north west of the proposal site is identified as a high value waterway and riparian area, and this plan advocates the protection and restoration of this area in the Landscape section.

3.4. Wollondilly Local Environmental Plan 2011

An objective of Wollondilly Local Environmental Plan (LEP) is to promote the use and development of land whilst protecting the natural landscape character. The lot at 330 Picton Road, including the proposal site, is zoned IN3 Heavy Industrial. The objectives for this zone support the provision and protection of industrial land for industrial uses, whilst minimising any adverse effects of heavy industry on other land uses. The proposal site is not restricted by the height of buildings clause.

3.5. Wilton Growth Area Development Control Plan 2021

Wilton Growth Area Development Control Plan 2021 gives more detailed planning and design guidelines and controls for residential development in South East Wilton and North Wilton precincts. The proposal site is outside of these precincts.

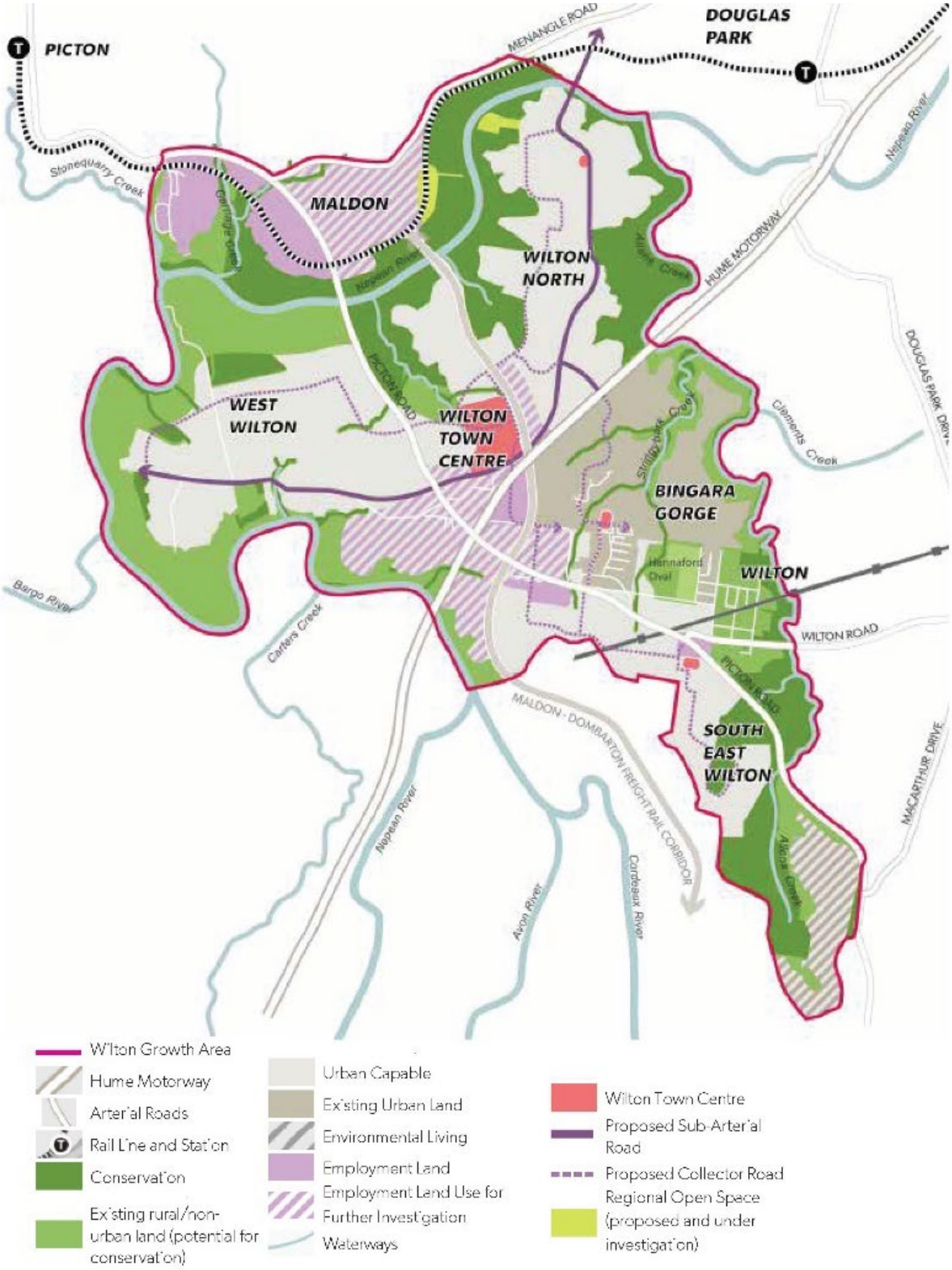


FIGURE 3-1 WILTON GROWTH AREA STRUCTURE PLAN

4. Assessment method

This visual impact assessment has been undertaken generally in accordance with the guidance from the *Guideline for Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment EIA-N04* (Transport for NSW, 2020).

This visual impact assessment has been undertaken in the following steps:

- Identification of existing conditions, including topography, land use, land cover, settlement pattern, key sites and buildings (including heritage items)
- Identification of the visual catchment (potential visibility of the proposal) using a GIS generated visual catchment diagram
- Assess potential visual impact on representative viewing locations:
  - identify view sensitivity
  - describe the magnitude of change to the view
  - assign a visual impact level
- identifies opportunities for mitigation.

The impact levels have been assigned in accordance with the visual impact rating matrix contained within the guidance from the *Guideline for Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment EIA-N04* (Transport for NSW, 2020).

Sensitivity	Magnitude: High	Magnitude: Moderate	Magnitude: Low	Magnitude: Negligible
High	High	High-Moderate	Moderate	Negligible
Moderate	High-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-low	Negligible
Low	Moderate	Moderate-low	Low	Negligible
Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

FIGURE 4-1 VISUAL IMPACT RATING MATRIX (SOURCE: FIGURE 7, TFNSW, 2020)

5. Existing conditions

5.1. Landscape character

The proposal site is located on a flat cleared land, between Picton Road and the Southern Highlands rail line, to the south-east of the town of Picton, and north-west of Wilton. The area to the north and east of Picton Road is zoned rural landscape and comprises large rural blocks with scattered houses and agricultural structures. The landform is this rural area includes flat rural valleys beside Picton Road, transitioning to elevated ridges to the north and east, forming part of the Razerback Ridge (refer to Figure 5-1). This area has partially cleared and traditionally used for grazing pastures. There are several residences located in both flat and elevated areas, in close proximity (up to 1 kilometre) to the proposal site.

The landform at the proposal site is generally flat and low-lying. The site has been largely cleared for industrial use. There are artificial embankments and trees alongside Picton Road, which provide screening from the road and enclosure of the proposal site from the surrounding area. Further to the south of the site, beyond the railway line, the landscape includes open pastures, transitioning to woodland near the Nepean River. This woodland area is zoned for environmental conservation (Wollondilly LEP) and provides a vegetated backdrop to the mill. A large cement plant is located about 500 metres to the west of the proposal site, also on flat land zoned for heavy industry. Apart from the cement plant, surrounding land uses are generally rural.

5.2. Visual catchment of the proposal

A visual catchment of the proposal has been identified using a digital surface model (landform, trees and built form derived from LiDAR data) combined with points on the location and at the maximum height of the proposed building extension. The visual catchment analysis (refer to Figure 5-2) shows that the visual influence of the proposal would be very limited, due to the undulating terrain and concentration of vegetation surrounding the site.

Based on this analysis, there are views to the site from elevated rural areas to the north and northwest of the proposal site, including the elevated south facing hill sides and ridges. There would also be level views to the proposal from the flat cleared land to the north and east of the site, near Picton and Menangle roads. These areas are generally accessible from private properties and views to the site would be limited by intervening vegetation and local variations in topography.

Picton and Menangle roads provide the main opportunity for viewing the site from the public domain. However, the embankments and vegetated mounds along the northern boundary of the site, alongside Picton Road, minimises opportunities to view the proposal site. The proposal site would also be seen in views from trains travelling along the Southern Highlands rail line, for about 800 metres of the track.

FIGURE 5-1 VIEW NORTH ALONG PICTON ROAD AT THE SITE ENTRY (LEFT OF VIEW

6. Visual impact assessment

The following summarises the potential visual impact from the public domain and private residential dwellings.

6.1. Impact on views from the public domain

Views from Picton Road

Existing conditions: Picton Road is located along the north eastern boundary of the mill site, passing through industrial and rural areas. Travelling northwest towards the site, between the Nepean River and Southern Highlands rail overbridge, there are clear views across flat pasture fields to the existing mill. After the railway crossing, the road passes through a cutting, which blocks views to the proposal site. After this cutting, there are clear elevated views towards the site, where the existing mill is viewed in proximity to the cement works. After this short section of road, embankments and vegetation alongside the road partially block and filter views to the site. Travelling southeast towards the site along Picton Road, there are less opportunities to clearly view the proposal site, due to the vegetation alongside the road, within adjacent fields and alongside a tributary of Carriage Creek, north of the proposal site. Generally, the existing silos are visually prominent where the mill can be seen, due to their mass and form.

Sensitivity: Picton Road is a local road, used generally by residents, workers at nearby industrial sites and visitors to the areas. It is of **low visual sensitivity**.

Visual Impact: At its closest point, the proposal site would be seen at a distance of about 350 metres from Picton Road. The proposed extension to the building would be fully or partly screened by the existing mill building in some views from the south, as it would be located to the north of the existing mill building. In views from the north it would be seen intermittently from a short section of this road at moderate speed. From this angle, it would be viewed alongside the existing mill, with a roofline that is lower than the main building. The proposed shed extension would be visually compatible with the character of the existing mill sheds and would not appreciably alter the scale of the mill and character of this view. Overall, there would be a low magnitude of change, to a view of low sensitivity, and a **low visual impact**.

FIGURE 6-1 VIEW WEST FROM PICTON ROAD

Views from Menangle Road

Existing conditions: Travelling southwest towards the proposal site along Menangle Road, the existing flour mill is visible for about one kilometre as this road approaches the junction with Picton Road. The mill is viewed with a foreground of pasture fields, against a backdrop of woodland alongside the Nepean River valley. The lower section of the mill is partially blocked by intervening landform and vegetation located along the road. The existing silos are prominent in the view. To the north, other existing industrial buildings can be seen.

Sensitivity: Menangle Road is a local road, used generally by nearby residents and their visitors. It is of **low visual sensitivity**.

Visual Impact: At its closest point, the proposal site would be seen at about 450 metres from Menangle Road, near the Picton Road intersection. The proposal would be seen intermittently, from a short section of this road from vehicles travelling at a moderate speed. The proposed extension would be lower than the main building, and not prominent in this view. The proposal would be seen against a backdrop of vegetation along the Nepean River valley. The proposed shed extension would be visually compatible with the character of the existing mill sheds and would not appreciably alter the scale of the mill and character of this view. Overall, there would be a low magnitude of change, to views of low sensitivity, resulting in a **low visual impact**.

FIGURE 6-2 VIEW SOUTH FROM MENANGLE ROAD, NEAR PICTON ROAD JUNCTION

Impact on views from the Southern Highlands rail line

Existing conditions: The Southern Highlands rail line is located to the west of the proposal site. This rail corridor has multiple tracks, carrying both freight and passenger trains. The passenger rail lines are located about 60 metres from the proposal site, west of the freight railway. Several passenger trains would pass the proposal site each day along the Southern Highlands rail line travelling between Goulbourn and Sydney. Beside the existing mill, there is limited vegetation alongside the rail corridor and there would be clear views to the proposal site from passing trains for about 800 metres.

Sensitivity: Views from the Southern Highlands rail line would generally be experienced by residents and visitors to the area and are of **low visual sensitivity**.

Visual Impact: As the trains would be travelling at moderate speed, the proposal would be seen for a short period of time. The proposal would be viewed in the context of an existing mill. While the proposed extension would be seen in close proximity, it would be lower in height than the main buildings and seen as a small

addition relative to the scale of the existing larger buildings. Overall, there would be a low magnitude of change, to views of low sensitivity, and a **low visual impact**.

6.2. Impact on views from residential dwellings

Views from dwellings on lower lying land to the north and northwest

Existing conditions:

Several residential properties on the surrounding river plain are likely to have views to the proposal site (refer to Figure 5-4). These include dwellings at:

- 300 Picton Road - North of the proposal site. Located within an industrial zoned property and is generally level with the site.
- 1365 Menangle Road (former Ingham's Chickens site) – North east of the proposal site.
- 1404 Menangle Road - North of the proposal site.
- Would have views across industrial zoned land towards Carriage Creek tributary.

Generally, from these properties there would be views across a flat partially cleared rural landscape with groups of trees along Carriage Creek tributary, alongside roads and within fields, filtering views to the existing mill. There would be other large scale industrial uses in background of these views.

Visual impact: The proposal site would be seen at distances varying between 470 and 680 metres from these dwellings. The proposal would be seen in the middle ground of view and seen against a backdrop of woodland along the Nepean River valley. The lower and ground level of the proposal is likely to be screened or filtered by existing vegetation, including the trees and shrubs along Picton Road and Carriage Creek tributary. The shed extension would not be prominent, being lower than the height of the main building and a relatively small addition to the existing shed. Overall, the proposal would be absorbed into the existing character of the mill and not alter the prevailing character of these views. Overall, there would be a low magnitude of change, and a **low visual impact**.

FIGURE 6-3 VIEW NEAR 1404 MENAGLE ROAD

Views from elevated properties to the north and north east

Existing conditions: Properties at 1400, 1360 and 1315 Menangle Road (refer to Figure 5-4) are likely to have views to the proposal site. There would be elevated views from these properties, across a partially cleared and undulating landscape including both rural and industrial uses. These dwellings are located about one kilometre from the proposal site.

Visual impact: The proposal would be seen in the middle ground of these views and viewed against a backdrop of woodland along the Nepean River. The proposed shed extension would be comprise a small change to the overall building, being a relatively small addition being lower than the height of the main buildings and smaller in scale than the existing sheds. It would not rise above the vegetated ridgeline which provides a backdrop to these views or obstruct a notable portion of the surrounding rural landscape.

The proposed shed extension would be visually compatible with the character of the existing mill sheds and would not appreciably alter the scale of the mill and character of this view. Overall, there would be a low magnitude of change, and a low visual impact.

FIGURE 6-4 PRIVATE DWELLINGS IN THE VICINITY OF THE PROPOSAL SITE

7. Visual impact summary

TABLE 7-1 VISUAL IMPACT SUMMARY

	Location	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Visual impact
1	Views from Picton Road	Low	Low	**Low**
2	Views from Menangle Road	Low	Low	**Low**
3	Impact on views from the Southern Highlands rail line	Low	Low	**Low**
	Impact on views from residential dwellings	Low	Low	**Low**
4	Views from properties on lower lying land to the north and northwest	Low	Low	**Low**
5	Views from properties to the north and north east	Low	Low	**Low**

8. Mitigation measures

As a part of the previous approval, there were two landscape treatments (L1 and L2) established at the existing mill site, to ensure that the mill is suitably screened from the existing residences and roads near the site.

The landscape treatment L1 extends along the boundary of the site with Picton Road, comprising a mound approximately two to four metres in height and approximately 30 metres wide at its widest point. Behind the mounded area, there are belts of native trees and shrubs, which are nearing maturity, and assisting in screening the mill from traffic on Picton Road, and from nearby residences along Picton and Menangle roads.

Treatment L2 is extends along a tributary of Carriage Creek, towards Picton Road, including native trees and shrubs. This area provides general screening of the mill from areas to the north and northwest of the site, include residences and views from Picton Road.

As the potential visual impacts are low, there is no need for any further visual mitigation.

It is preferred that the colours selected for the proposed shed is a colour that would complement the existing shed colour, or a colour that recedes so that the proposal is not visually obtrusive.

9. Conclusion

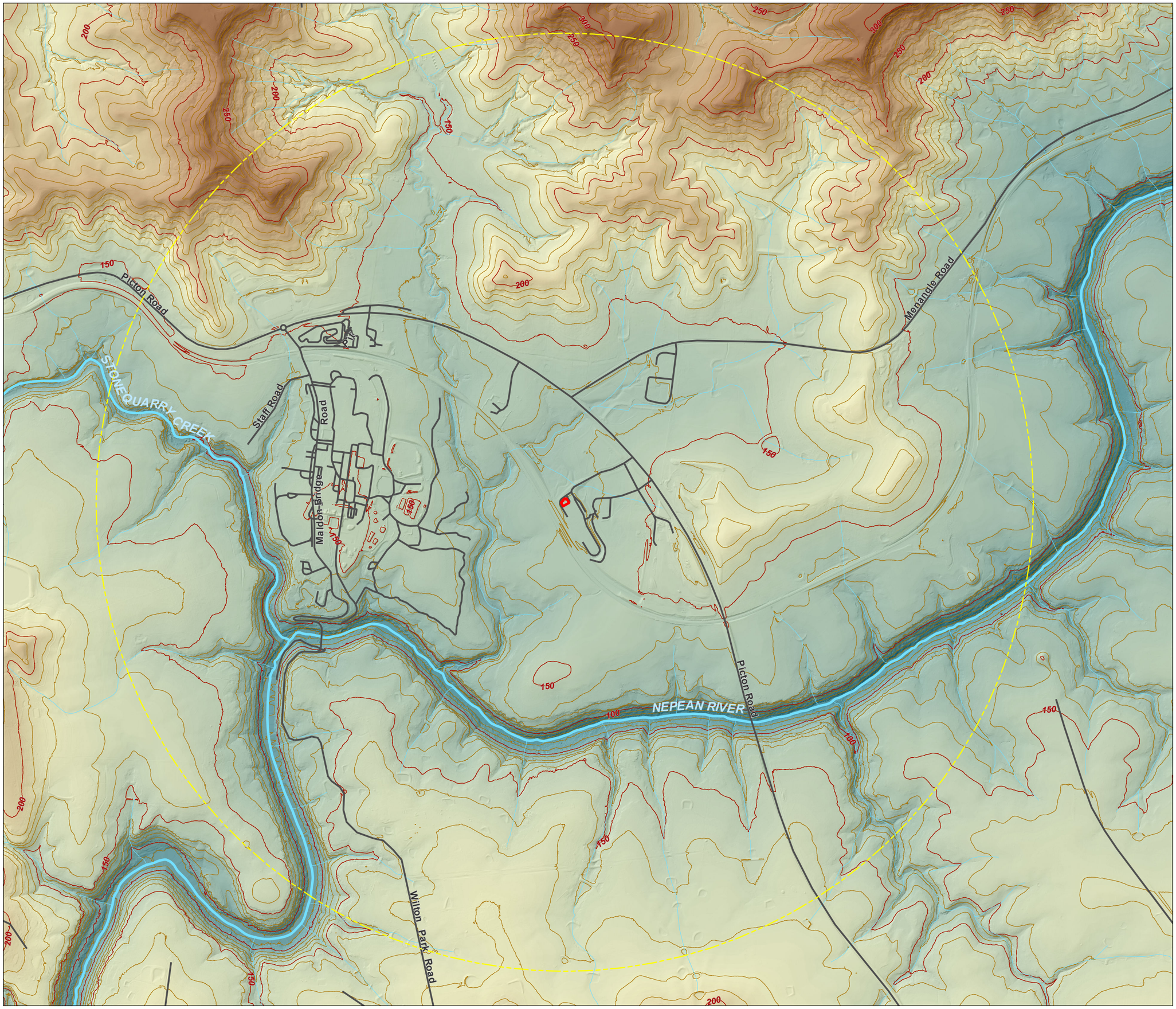
The proposal has a limited visual catchment due to the intervening landform and existing vegetation. Where the proposed shed would be seen it would have a low visual impact as the proposed shed extension would be visually compatible with the character of the existing mill sheds and would not appreciably alter the prevailing character of these views.

Allied Pinnacle
Picton Warehouse

Figure 5-1

Topography

iris



Proposal site

2km Buffer Contour

(50m) Contour (10m)

Watercourse

SOURCE:
Surface analysys: Derived from LiDAR, WOLLONGONG 1 metre Resolution Digital Elevation Model © Department Finance, Services and Innovation 2019
Watercourse: GeoScience Australia 2015

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0 250 500 750
Metres

A3 Scale: 1:15,000

File:PictonWarehouse-Fig2-Topography-210830 Date: 30/08/2021

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Allied Pinnacle
Picton Warehouse

Figure 5-2

Visual Catchment Analysis

iris

Proposal site

2km Buffer

Visual catchment

SOURCE:
Surface analysys: Derived from LiDAR, WOLLONGONG LAS Point Cloud © Department Finance, Services and Innovation 2019

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0 250 500 750
Metres

A3 Scale: 1:15,000

File:PictonWarehouse-Fig5-VisualCatchment-210830 Date: 30/08/2021

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