

12 May 2022

218786

Mr Brodie McHutchison
Director
Carmichael Tompkins Property Group
Suite 14.04, Aurora Place, 88 Phillip Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Via email: brodie.mchutchison@ctpg.com.au

Dear Brodie,

RE: Marist Catholic College North Shore, assessment of visual impact

Thank you for asking us to assess the likely visual impact of changes to proposed alterations and additions to Marist Catholic College North Shore.

In particular, I note we are to respond to relevant parts of the Department of Planning and Environment's (DPE) Response to Submissions (RtS) letter dated 20 December 2021.

This assessment forms an addendum to the VIA prepared by Ethos Urban and dated 17 December 2020 (the original VIA). Where it conflicts with this VIA, this assessment prevails to the extent of the inconsistency.

In undertaking this assessment we have had regard to:

- RtS, DPE, 20 December 2021
- Presentation to the SDRP, WMK, 13 April 2022
- Letter of advice and recommendations, GANSW, 20 April 2022
- Heritage Impact Statement, Weir Phillips, April 2022.

This letter is to be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Submissions Report (Ethos Urban, May 2022)
- Architectural Design Statement: Response to Submissions 2 (WMK, 22 April 2022)
- Heritage Impact Statement (Weir Phillips, April 2022).

This assessment is based on images prepared by WMK.

The proposed changes

It is our understanding that the following key changes are proposed:

- replacement of the proposed at-grade carpark with a publicly accessible plaza
- reduction in the height of the Miller Street building
- further articulation of the Miller Street and Carlow Street buildings.

These changes are reflected in **Figure 1**.

It is understood from review of the letter of advice and recommendations that these proposed changes are supported by the SDRP.

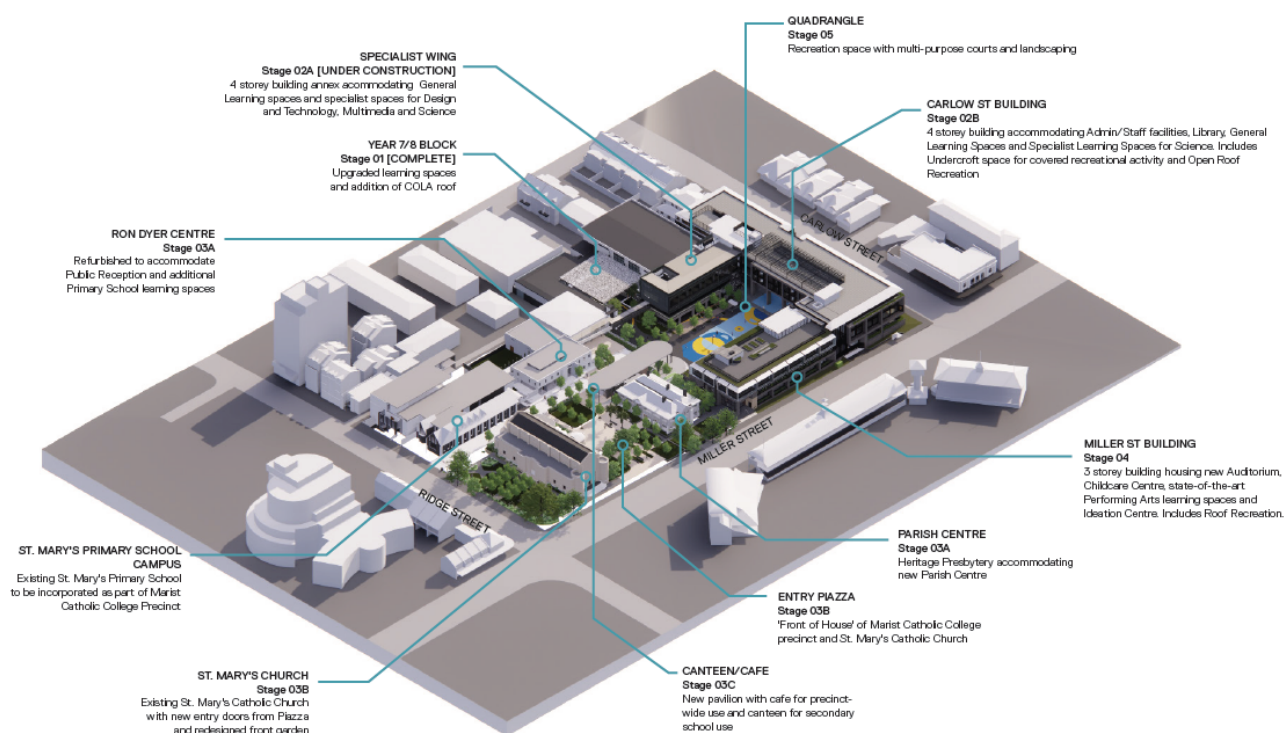


Figure 1: The amended proposal

Source: WMK

Matter 1: bulk and scale of the corner building

DPE request: 'The bulk and scale of the building at the corner of Miller and Carlow Street has not been assessed. The Department has raised this concern earlier and considers that the scale of the proposal at this corner should be reduced. The design should be revisited with the goal of being able to provide a proposed corner building of a form, that more sympathetically responds to the heritage aspects of the surrounding context'

It is noted that the bulk and scale is addressed in the context of compatibility in the existing VIA (section 10.4). It was concluded that on the balance of relevant considerations the proposal is acceptable in relation to bulk and scale. In particular, it was noted that the surrounding area has varied bulk and scale, including the larger North Sydney Oval opposite the site that is a feature of the visual catchment, and that the proposal provides an opportunity to create a threshold between the typically smaller scale development to the north and the typically larger scale development to the south.

The originally planned siting, which is built to the Miller Street and Carlow Street corners to provide a corner treatment that pairs with the North Sydney hotel, has been retained. The complementary landscaped setback is also retained to mitigate visual impact at the ground level. The proposal's overall prevailing horizontally emphasised rectangular form, which works to reduce the perception of building bulk and scale, is also retained. These measures are considered key to achieving a sympathetic response to the adjoining visual context.

As a consequence of the proposed changes, the arrangement of built form now more clearly reads as a distinct base, middle and top. In particular, the robust horizontal delineation of the base, middle and top emphasises this three part composition. If note, the delineation between the base and middle continues the strong horizontal line established by the hotel's cantilevered awning.

Within this composition, the setback of the top from the middle part and the dominance of transparent glazing significantly reduces its visual prominence in the streetscape. While noting the actual scale, this has the effect of enabling the proposal to be largely read as a two storey building to the casual, passing observer who is expected to make up the majority of people using Miller Street on a regular base.

The façade has been further broken down in a series of smaller, square and rectangular shaped elements. This breaking down of scale is similar to that achieved by the hotel's upper level archways. Recessing of floorspace behind the main structural framing of the building and the generous use of transparent glazing further works to reduce the appearance of building bulk and scale.

Colour is proposed to primarily include natural greys and browns, which are visually neutral and will enable the proposal to blend well with its surrounds. Similarly, simple concrete, glass and timber materiality is proposed which will also facilitate integration with surrounds.

The resulting proposal sits comfortably in the Miller Street streetscape as shown in **Figure 2** and **Figure 3**.

These images support the conclusion of the original VIA that the proposal is acceptable in relation to bulk and scale.



Figure 2 The proposal seen from Miller Street north of the North Sydney Hotel

Source: WMK



Figure 3 The proposal seen from Miller Street in the vicinity of St Leonards Park

Source: WMK

Matter 2: visual impact on internal heritage items

The Visual Impact Analysis (VIA) addresses views of the proposal from the public domain only. Views within the site that demonstrate the relationship between the heritage items and the area of new development and any potential visual impacts on the heritage buildings are not included in either the VIA or the HIS, particularly in relation to the Presbytery. The VIA should be amended to address this matter.

The proposed Miller Street and Carlow Street buildings are deliberately sited to the north-east of the site away from the most sensitive heritage items within the site. As can be seen from **Figure 4** and **Figure 5**, this creates a considerable separation distance to the northern edge of St Mary's Church.

This area is to be occupied by a publicly accessible plaza, and be landscaped in a manner that is responsive to the heritage values of the church (eg, Principle 12 of the Landscape Strategy is Respect Heritage: Enhance the setting of existing heritage buildings) (refer **Figure 6**).

As a consequence, the proposal has acceptable visual impact on St Mary's Church.



Figure 4 Relationship of the proposal with St Marys Church

Source: WMK



Figure 5 The proposal seen from Miller Street south of St Marys Church

Source: WMK



Figure 6 Potential landscaping treatment of the publicly accessible plaza

Source: WMK

The proposal is sited closer to the St Marys Presbytery (the Presbytery).

In response to the RtS, WMK has prepared views showing this relationship. They are provided at **Figure 7** and **Figure 8**.

Of note, the pavilion is sited in line with the southern edge of the Presbytery. This maintains the integrity of the existing open space relationship between St Marys Church and the Presbytery.

As can be seen, the Miller Street building achieves a considerable separation to the northern edge of the Presbytery. This enables the Presbytery to be seen and appreciated as a separate, individual element from Miller Street.

The proposed height of the Miller Street building is considered to be compatible with the Presbytery, and will not result in an inappropriate, overbearing form. This is further supported by the street sections provided in the urban design documentation.

Being located adjacent to and behind the Presbytery maintains the ability to see the Presbytery as a distinct building from Miller Street.

While of a similar height to the Presbytery, when seen from the publicly accessible plaza to the south the pavilion incorporates a number of measures that make it appear as a compatible and ancillary element. This includes:

- its physical proximity to the Presbytery

- its long, linear siting perpendicular to the Presbytery presenting its narrow face to the viewer
- its single storey design
- its contemporary design
- its lightweight design, with extensive use of transparent glazing to its southern elevation.

When seen from the north, the pavilion will be more visually prominent. This is mainly due to the distinct and visually prominent overhang, gathering space and stairs. While blocking existing views to the Presbytery, these are not considered to be significant views. Furthermore, glimpses of the Presbytery will be visible in the background, acknowledging its presence.

Again, the design measures mentioned above mean that it will not detract from the overall composition of the school, and will not introduce a large, discordant element.



Figure 7 The proposal's relationship with the Presbytery

Source: WMK

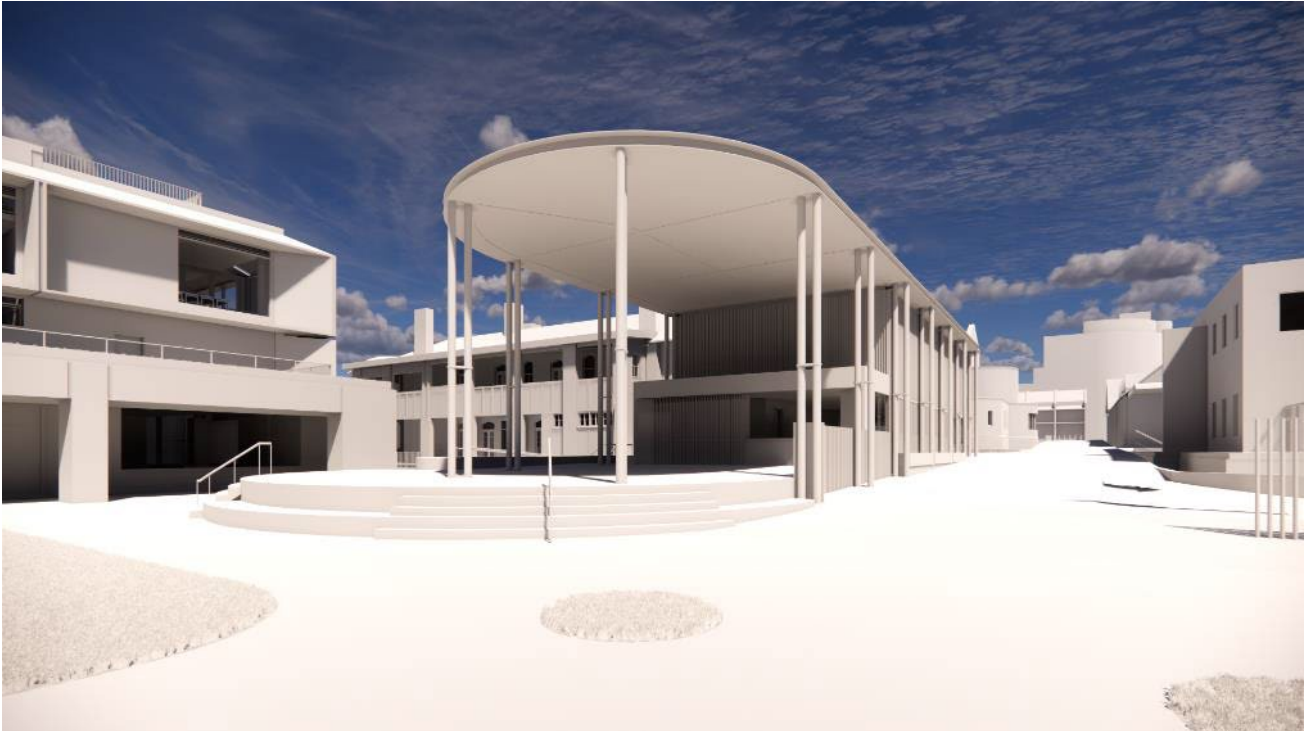


Figure 8 The proposed canteen and canopy structure

Source: WMK

For the reasons outlined in this assessment, the revised proposal is considered to:

- satisfactorily respond to the key visual impact matters raised in the RtS
- not change the substantive content, findings or conclusion of the original VIA
- be capable of approval based on visual impact grounds.

Should you have any questions in relation to this assessment, please do not hesitate to contact me on any of the below mentioned means.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris Bain'.

Chris Bain

Director – Strategic Planning

E: cbain@ethosurban.com

T: 02 9956 6962

CC: Kate Tudehope – Ethos Urban, Kirsty Vogel – Ethos Urban