

Crown Street



ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Concept Plan and Stage 1 Project Application
Crown Street, Wollongong

PREPARED FOR BELMORGAN PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT

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Executive Summary

The proposal relates to the redevelopment of the 'Dwyers' site and the 'Oxford Tavern' site located at Crown Street Wollongong and is submitted to the Minister for Planning (the Minister) pursuant to Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979 (EP&A Act) and the State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005 (Major Projects SEPP). The proposal is for a Concept Plan for the overall development of both sites and a Project Application for the Stage 1 component (the 'Dwyers' site).

This project is being undertaken by Belmorgan Property Development Pty. Ltd. on land owned by Wollongong City Plaza Pty Ltd and has been designed by DBI Design (Architects). The proposed development has a capital investment value of approximately \$160 million.

The development of the Dwyers site includes Stage 1 development of an entertainment and leisure shopping centre (including a mix of retail, restaurants, cinema complex and offices) and associated basement car parking. The Stage 2 component involves the construction of an international 4 star hotel, conference facility and restaurant (on top of the podium formed by the Stage 1 shopping centre).

The Oxford Tavern site proposal constitutes Stage 3 of the project and will include the development of a mixed use development featuring the relocated tavern and retail at ground level, two (2) office levels above with a 8 level office tower facing Burelli Street and an 11 level residential tower facing Crown Street above podium level and associated basement car parking. The timing, proximity and magnitude of both the Dwyers and Oxford Tavern site development all factor in the decision to consider both sites as a combined Major Project and also deal with the sites concurrently.

The site straddles across the boundary of two different zones under the recently introduced Wollongong City Centre Local Environmental Plan 2007: the Oxford Tavern site being located within the B3 Commercial Core zone and the Dwyers site being located within the B4 Mixed Use (or City Edge as indicated on the LEP map) zone. The proposal is largely permissible in the zones. We note that this component is subject of an existing approval pursuant to Part 4 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. The proposal under Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 includes a reapplication of the Stage1 component. As agreed in a meeting with the Minister, the overall Concept Plan was to include the existing approved Stage 1 component to ensure this component is appropriately integrated with the remainder of the development.

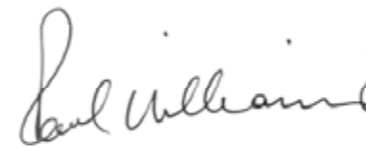
The proposal otherwise complies with the provisions of both the Wollongong City Centre LEP 2007 (WCCLEP 2007) and the Wollongong City Centre DCP 2007, save for a number of minor variations which have been assessed as being appropriate in the circumstances. It is noted that the proposal is subject of the design excellence provisions of the WCCLEP 2007 and in this regard, a design competition is required to be entered into. It is proposed that a design competition be held in association with the subsequent Project Applications for Stages 2 and 3.

The proposal is located on a key site within the City Centre and will provide for the revitalisation of the eastern precinct and improved connection of the City Centre with the Beach. The overall concept is well integrated and includes well needed facilities and services that the City of Wollongong is currently lacking including: a DDS, contemporary cinema complex, a 4 star hotel, a conference centre and high grade commercial office space.

Improvement to the public domain will be substantial and capitalising upon the north facing 'café character of this end of Crown Street, will include alfresco dining along the Crown Street property frontage.

The project is a significant investment in the future of Wollongong City Centre including a substantial number of additional jobs for the region and will go a long way toward securing the future of the City as a vibrant, fully serviced and enjoyable place to visit and live.

This report has been written by Urbis, with input from a number of other expert consultants, on behalf of Belmorgan Property Development. The accuracy of the information contained herein is to the best of my knowledge not false or misleading. The comments have been based upon information and facts that were correct at the time of writing the report.



Paul Atree-Williams

Associate Director

1 Introduction

The project involves the development of the Dwyers and Oxford Tavern sites. The proposal includes a Concept Plan for the development of the overall site and a Project Application for the Stage 1 component. The Stage 1 component includes construction of an entertainment and leisure shopping centre (including a mix of retail, restaurants, cinema complex and offices) with associated four level basement car parking. The Stage 2 component will be constructed above the podium formed by the Stage 1 Shopping Centre and involves the construction of an international 4 star hotel, conference facility and restaurant.

The Oxford Tavern site proposal constitutes Stage 3 of the project and will include the development of a mixed use development featuring the relocated tavern and retail at ground level, two office levels above with an eight level office tower facing Burelli Street and an eleven level residential tower facing Crown Street above podium level and associated four level basement car parking. The timing, proximity and magnitude of both the Dwyers and Oxford Tavern site development are all factors in the decision to consider both sites as a combined Major Project and also deal with the sites concurrently.

1.1 Background

On 1 August 2005, Council approved the original proposal (DA 2004/1565) for a proposed entertainment and leisure centre on the Dwyers site (a.k.a. Gravity).

On 8 November 2005, the Minister declared the Dwyers site (31 Crown Street) a Major Project.

On 9 June 2006, the Land and Environment Court held DA 2004/1565 to be invalid due to a delegation process technicality.

On 2 August 2006, a meeting was held with the Minister and Council representatives at which it was recommended that Council determine the Stage 1 proposal subject to deferred commencement requiring an amendment in an urban design sense to the scheme to ensure compliance with the then draft City Centre Plan.

On 21 August 2006, the Stage 1 proposal was determined by Wollongong City Council as a 'deferred commencement' consent to allow amendment as outlined above, refer to **Appendix A**.

In November 2006, a second Court procedure was commenced by a third party challenging 21 August 2006 determination. This matter is yet to be heard by the Court.

In December 2006, an appeal was lodged by the applicant challenging the conditions of the 21 August 2006 determination. This matter was dismissed by the Court.

Neither of the above appeals should affect the assessment and determination of the current proposal.

On 9 August 2007 amended plans were lodged with the Department and Wollongong Council in response to the deferred commencement consent conditions.

At the time of writing this report the Department had issues concurrence to the DA 2004/1565 amended scheme in a letter dated 27th September 2007 and Council were dealing with the amended plans with a view to making the consent operational.

1.2 Application format

Belmorgan Property Development, in accordance with the Major Projects SEPP and 75B of the EP&A Act on 12 September 2006 sought the Minister's opinion as to whether the development is of a kind to which Part 3A of the EP&A Act applies. It is noted that a concept plan for the development was invited by the Minister and Council in a meeting on 2 August 2006. Council confirmed the invitation in a resolution of Council on 21 August 2006 which read:

'...the applicant lodge an application to the Minister for Planning, under Part 3A, (Major Projects) for a concept plan for all stages of the total project, including aspects on any other land/sites (eg. Oxford Tavern site) and that the applicant be advised that this application must comply with the provisions of the relevant draft LEP and DCP'

In a letter dated 4 December 2006, the Department advised that the Minister on 2 November 2006 formed the opinion that the proposal is a Project and that Part 3A of the Act applies, and the submission of a concept plan pursuant to Section 75M of the Act is authorised refer to **Appendix B**. It was noted in the letter that *'the Concept Plan submission must include both the towers and the podium of the Dwyer's site and the Oxford Tavern site.'*

As requested by the Minister, the proposal includes a concept plan for the overall development of both sites and includes additional documentation for the Stage 1 component sufficient to constitute project approval and, subject to obtaining a construction Certificate, proceed with construction of the first stage immediately. It is noted that demolition and remediation action plan approval have already been granted and these works are underway.

1.3 The vision for the site

To complement the vision for the overall City Centre through:

- Introducing a vibrant activity centre to revitalise the eastern end of the City.
- Ensuring buildings and spaces are functional and of high quality design.
- Showcasing the beach side character of the location with alfresco dining.
- Providing for much needed high quality accommodation and conferencing facilities in a central location by way of a 4 star hotel.
- Providing for much needed commercial facilities including a multi cinema complex and DDS.
- Injecting much needed capital investment into the City Centre and the creation of jobs.
- Including residential development to capitalise on the amenity provided by the beach-side location and good access to facilities.
- Including high quality office space in an accessible location with high amenity for future workers.

1.4 The objectives of the project

The objectives of the project include:

- Meet the objectives set in the Wollongong City Centre Plan by the Cities Taskforce, addressing the potential increase of employment in the area and to cater for the foreseen influx of new residents.
- Integrate with and build upon the Stage 1 entertainment, leisure and shopping centre already approved pursuant to Part 4 of the Act.
- Promote tourist activities in the Wollongong City Centre and region by providing a minimum four (4) star high quality hotel and conference centre.
- Promote retail uses at street level that complement the activities associated with the other components of the mixed use proposal and those adjacent to the site.
- Promote the continuation of activities along Crown Street, including complementary retail and commercial uses. It must be noted that the residential activities and retail activities are separate and discrete uses.
- Give impetus to the revitalisation of the Wollongong City Centre.
- Enhance street activities and vibrancy of the surrounding street through presentation of retail tavern and commercial activities with fine grained architectural detailing.
- Ensure that the development sits comfortably within the surrounding area.
- Provide a high quality urban environment through careful design of buildings and a well designed public domain.
- Enhance the public domain through improvement of pedestrian and vehicular connections within the site and with the surrounding area.
- Introduce high quality residential development to take advantage of the convenience and sustainability of living in this prime location within the City Centre and the amenity offered by the coast.
- Enhance the mix of land uses to promote vibrancy of the surrounding streets throughout the day and evening.

2 Proponent and consultant team

The Proponent of the Concept Plan and Project Application is Belmorgan Property Development (Belmorgan).

The various specialist consultants engaged in the preparation of this report, and the input for which they were responsible are:

- Urbis (Urban Planning and Community Consultation)
- DBI Design (Architects)
- Leyshon Consulting (Economic)
- Parsons Brinkerhoff (Traffic)
- Taylor Brammer (Landscaping)
- Taylor Thomson and Whitting (Stormwater/Flooding)
- CSD (Preliminary BCA)
- Morris Goding (Accessibility)
- Heggies (ESD/Acoustics/Wind/Reflectivity)
- Coffey Consulting (Geotech and Contamination)
- Waste (JD McDonald)
- Jim Hatz and Associates (Electrical)
- Hughes Trueman (Fire/Hydraulics)
- Erbas (Mechanical)
- NBR SAP (Heritage)
- BMT and Associates (Quantity Surveying)
- JJ Marino (Structural)



3 The Receiving Environment

3.1 Regional context

The site is located in Wollongong within the Wollongong Local Government Area (LGA). The nearest city centres include:

- Warrawong which is located approximately 5 kilometres south of the Wollongong City Centre; and
 - Shellharbour City Centre which is also approximately 15 kilometres south of the Wollongong City Centre,
- Wollongong has been identified as a “Regional City” in the Draft Illawarra Regional Strategy, primarily due to employment and the services it provides as well as its strategic location along rail and bus networks.



Figure 1 - Aerial

The Regional Strategy is discussed in more detail in **Section 3.2** of this report. The Regional Strategy states that:

“Wollongong provides a higher order administration, education and health services, cultural and recreational facilities and higher density commercial and residential development for the Region. The revitalisation of Wollongong City Centre, under the Cities Taskforce project, will refocus it as the regional city and strengthen its economic and employment significance.”

The site is located within 5 kilometres of key employment lands within the Illawarra Region including the Port Kembla precinct, the University of Wollongong and Innovation Campus. Other key strategic lands within the Wollongong area include the Kembla Grange industrial lands, Port Kembla Harbour and Illawarra Regional Airport, refer to **Regional Context Plans - Aerial Figure 1** and **Illawarra Regional Strategy Figure 2**.



Figure 2 - Illawarra Regional Strategy Map

The site straddles across the boundary of two different zones under the recently introduced Wollongong City Centre Local Environmental Plan 2007: the Oxford Tavern site being located within the B3 Commercial Core zone and the Dwyers site being located within the B4 Mixed Use (or City Edge as indicated on the LEP map) zone. It is noted that the sites to the east are zoned for tourism purposes and that tourism uses are encouraged in both zones, **refer to Figure 4: Zoning Map.**

The site is in a key location on the main shopping strip of Crown Street and represents a transition between the proposed City Core zone and the City Edge zone. The southern boundary of the site fronts Burelli Street which runs parallel to Crown Street. Burelli Street provides "cross-town" transport access and servicing to the commercial precinct of the town centre. A bus stop is located adjacent to the site on Burelli Street.

Both Crown and Burelli Streets provide a strong link to the eastern precinct of the City Core which includes such magnets as the Wollongong Entertainment Centre, WIN stadium and the Beach. The site is positioned on the busy north-west through access of Corrimal Street which dissects the City Core. The site is strategically located to encourage pedestrian traffic across Corrimal Street and along the Crown Street central spine: providing a real link between the City Core and the Beach.

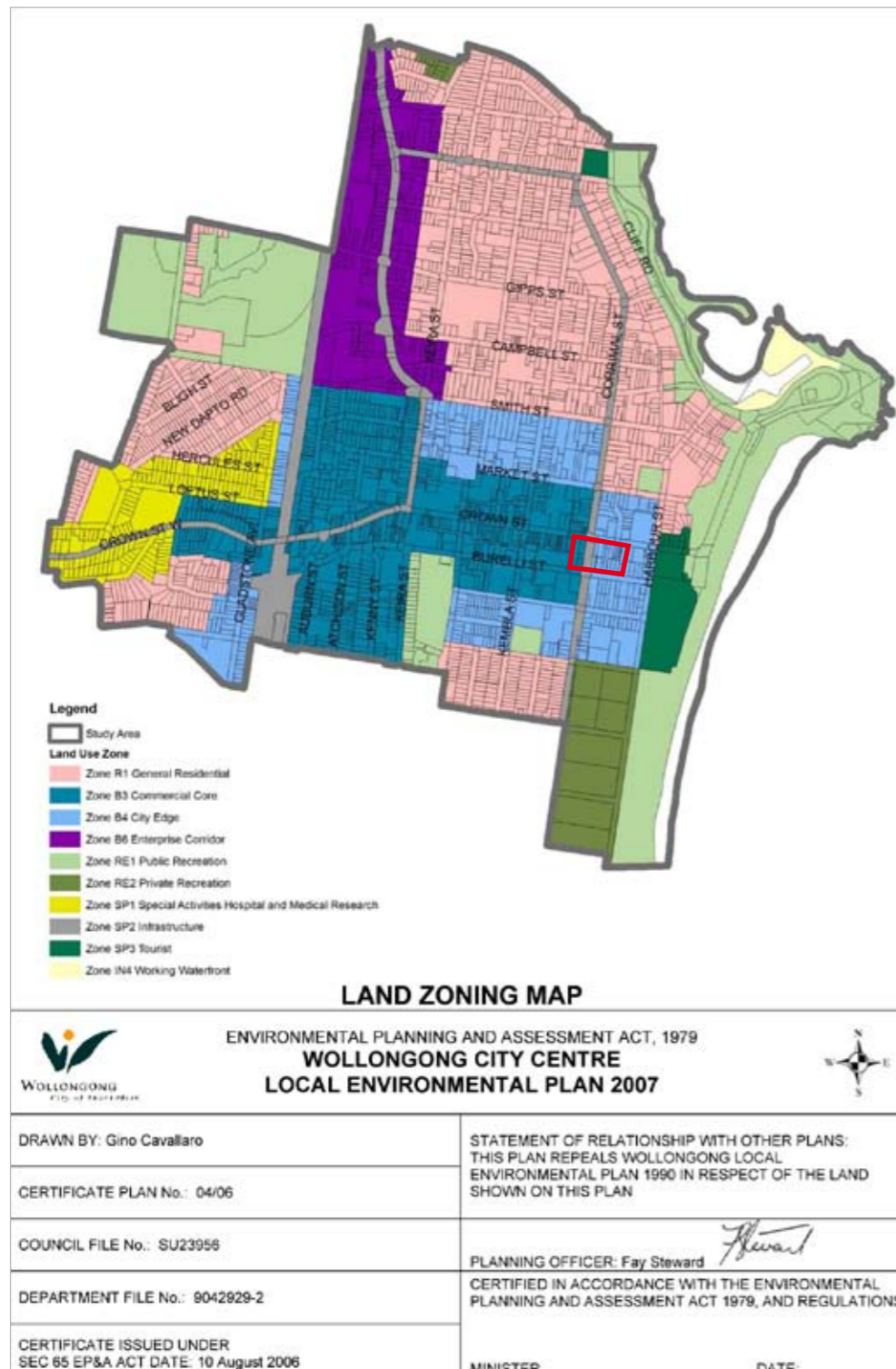
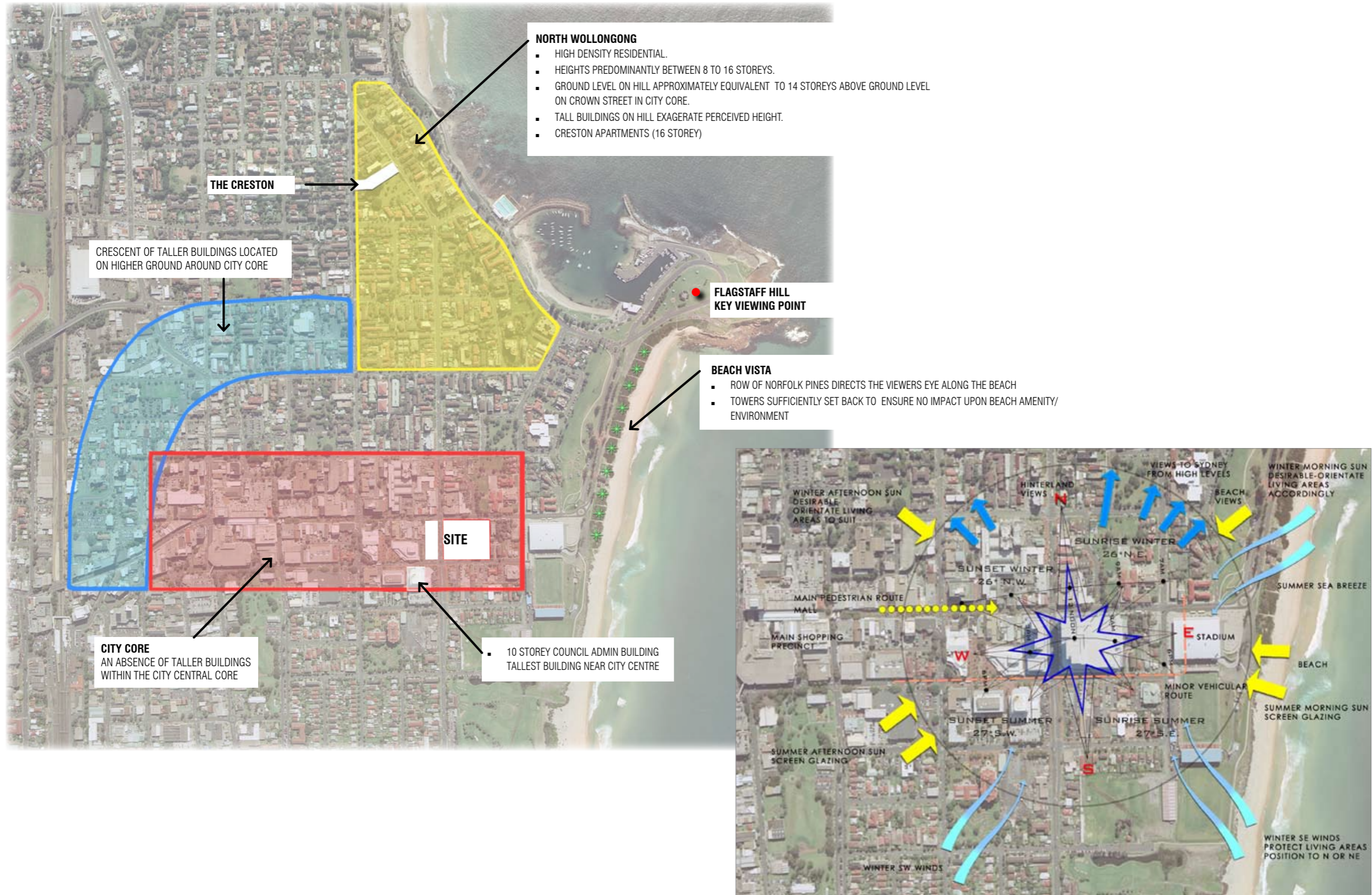


Figure 4: Zoning Map

3.4 Site Analysis



Crown Street

Environmental Assessment | Concept Plan and Stage 1 Project Application

Photographs of the Surrounding Area



