

Architectural Design Statement
Abercrombie Precinct Redevelopment
University of Sydney



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Architectural Design Statement

Abercrombie Precinct Redevelopment

University of Sydney

00

Vision



The Value Proposition was developed around five key themes:

1. Research and workplace
2. Industry
3. Community and Campus
4. Teaching and Learning
5. Environment and Sustainability.

01

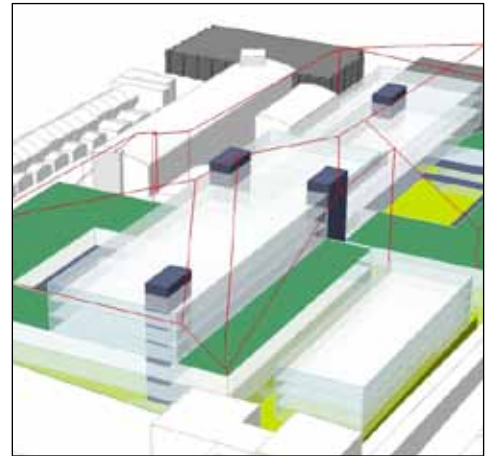
Campus and Community Network



The Abercrombie Precinct site is significant as a gateway, sitting as the Southern entry of the University and as an extension of the pedestrian link, Eastern Avenue.

02

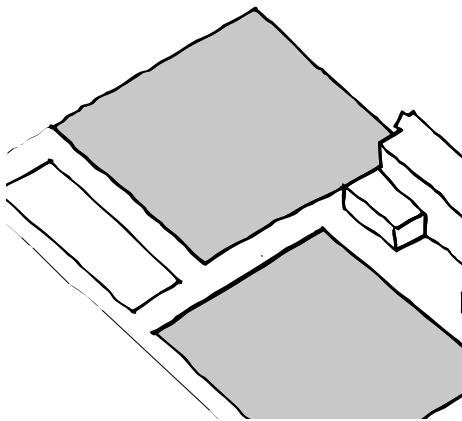
Zoning and Scale



The building form is responsive in scale and character according to where it meets the site edges.

03

Site Zoning: Public, Invited and Private



The building typology follows the brief's functional needs, flexibility and clarity in zoning of the site.

04

Address and Activation



The main entry is an extension of the internal street and runs off Coderington Street.

05

**Landscape Form and Scale
Sustainability and Environment**



The site is just as much about the external response to the internal response.

The aspiration for the Abercrombie Precinct Redevelopment is underpinned by the University of Sydney Faculty of Economics and Business' mission statement: Consonant with the University's strategic purpose, the mission of the faculty of Economics and Business is 'to build and sustain the leading learning community in business and management education in Australia and its region.' (Faculty of Economics Business Plan 2010).

The design of the precinct is also aligned with the University of Sydney's strategic White Paper. The White Paper was published in August 2010 and provides context and commentary about the Strategic Plan 2011–2015 and details how the University proposes to meet future challenges.



“A sustainable environment that fosters creative business thinkers, encouraging collaboration and agility around teaching, learning, research, community, campus and industry”

Georgia Singleton
Woods Bagot

The Abercrombie site is ‘off campus’ on the corner of Coderington to and Abercrombie streets. This is an important site for University development and has a significant dual role to play in establishing the new southern front door to the campus while also acting as an integrated link to the community. The proximity of residential and heritage dwellings to the site has meant that clear urban design principles were required to deal with this unique location. These principles are based around the South Sydney LEP (1998) and is required to address the following:

- local topography and setting
- streetscape and character of locality
- scale and design of neighbouring development
- privacy and access to sunlight for occupants surrounding
- energy efficiency- lighting, ventilation, heating and cooling
- public domain enhancement
- predominant views/vistas – parks, reserves, roadways, footpath, public domain
- adjacent land uses and activities

A Value Proposition was developed around the above parameters and can be filtered around 5 key themes:

1. Research and workplace
2. Industry
3. Community and Campus
4. Teaching and Learning
5. Environment and Sustainability

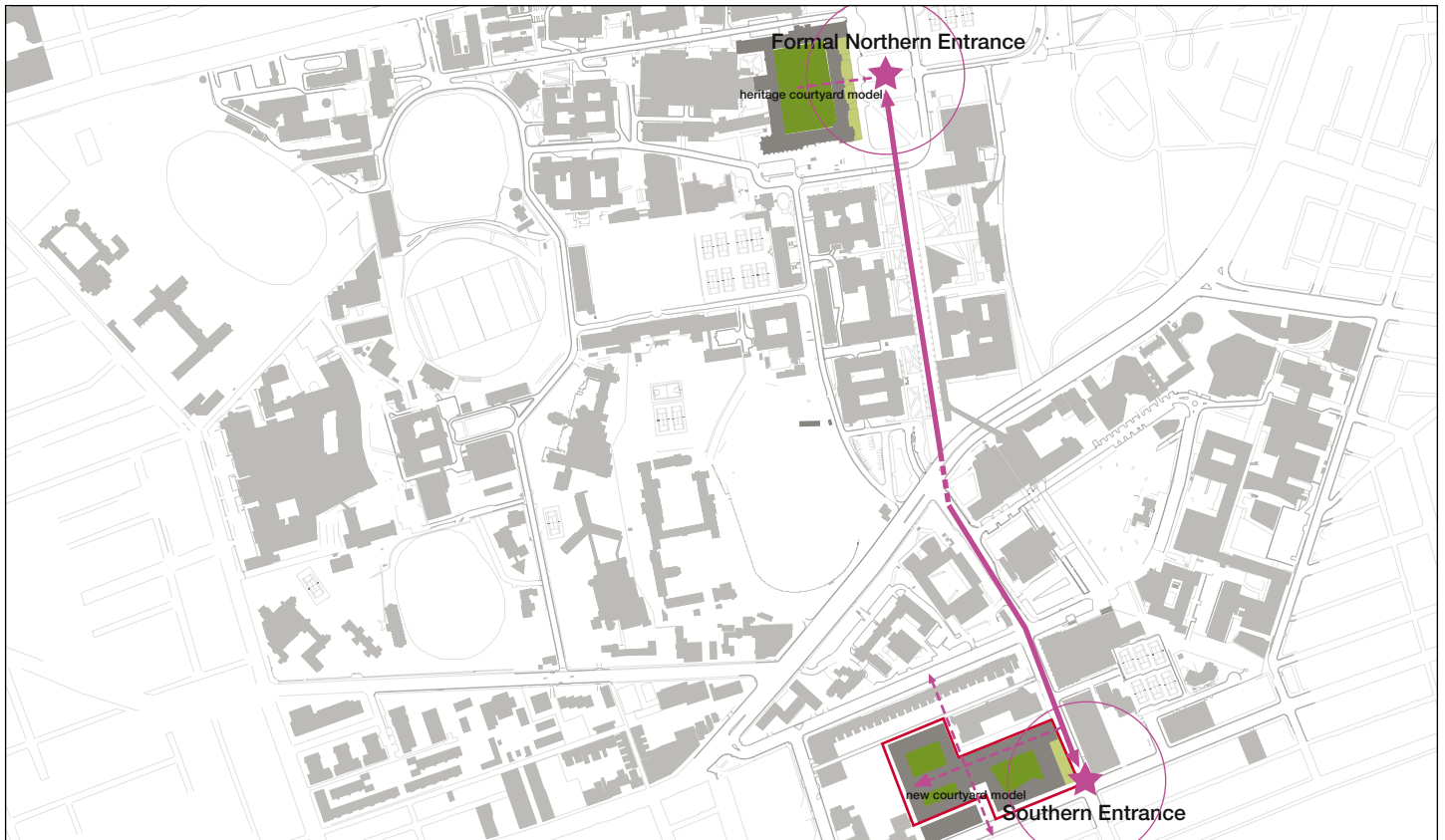
Under each of these themes we have established a set of critical success factors which led to a series of urban, architectural and interior spatial implications. These spatial implications are the design principles for the project and described further in this text. Our design seeks a balance and resolution between the brief, the design principles along with the iconic aspirations of the university at this gateway site.

Abercrombie Precinct Redevelopment Campus and Community Network

The site is significant as the southern gateway site and as an extension of the pedestrian link. The significance is not only the connectivity back to the campus but also the relationship to the surrounding streets and neighbourhoods. The new building has a responsibility to address all of these conditions. This principle has set up series of responses which are revealed the:

- main entry
- street address to Coderington St
- the respect for the scale
- geometry and relationship to campus
- community of the existing road network
- campus courtyard typology.

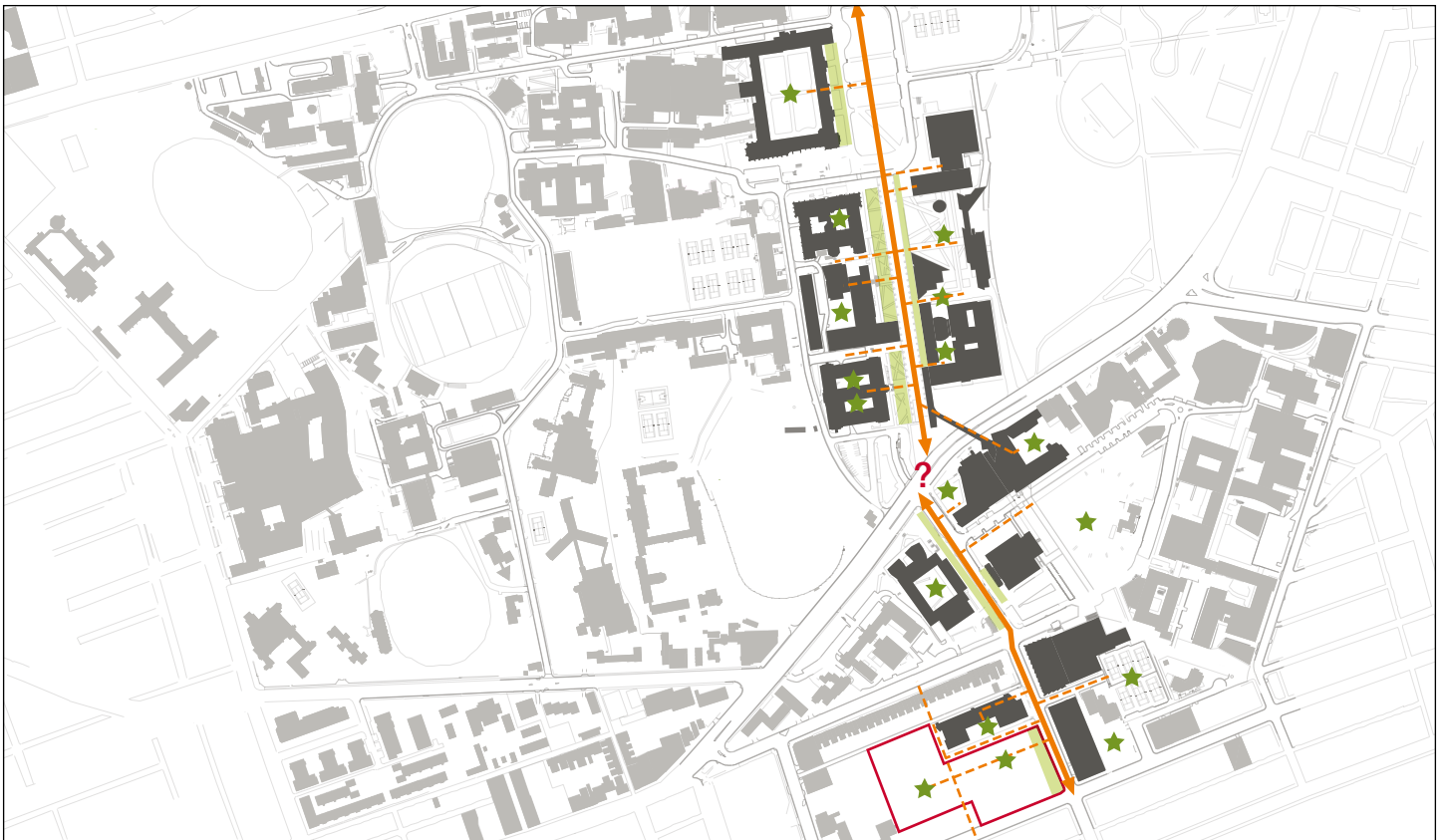
Connection to Campus



Strong Grid



Built Typology

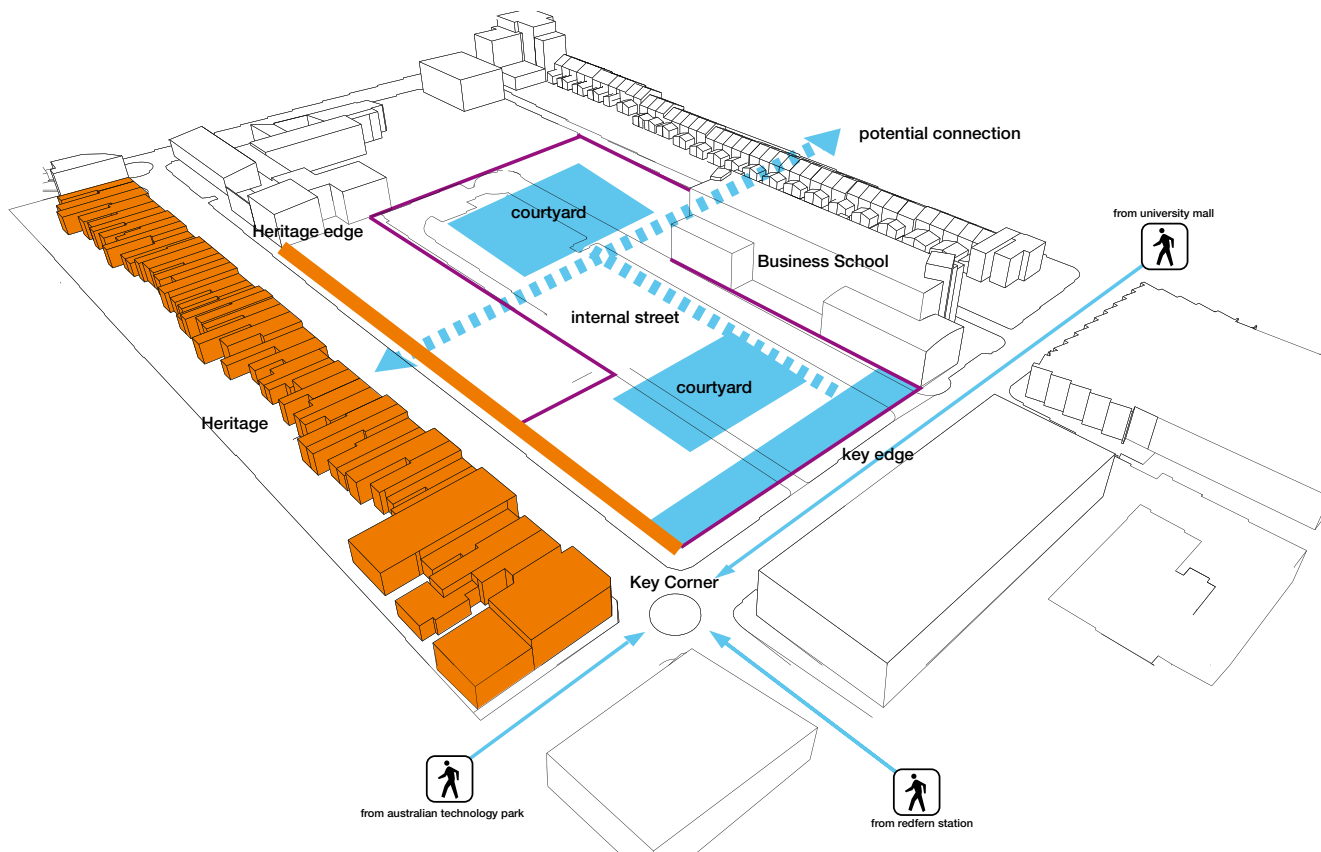


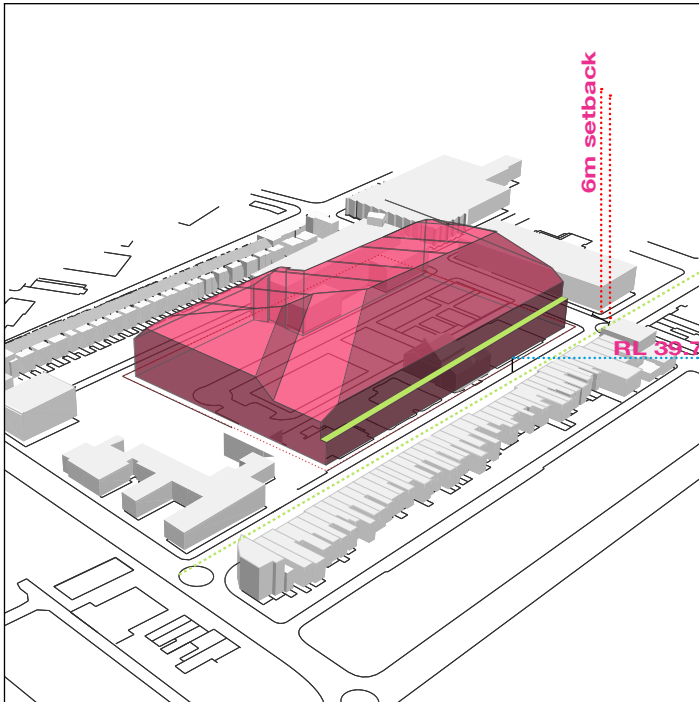
The building form is responsive in scale and character according to where it meets the site edges. The building envelope was not only established by heritage site lines, and solar access but with respect to the scale, character and amenity of surrounding streetscape.

The result is the best points of the building are located towards the centre of the site and Coderington Street. The height is dropped to three levels at Abercrombie Street where there is most potential impact on community and dwellings.

The student accommodation is located to Abercrombie Street to create a link to the community and form a residential hub to the site. The residential typology also acts as a break in the scale of the streetscape.

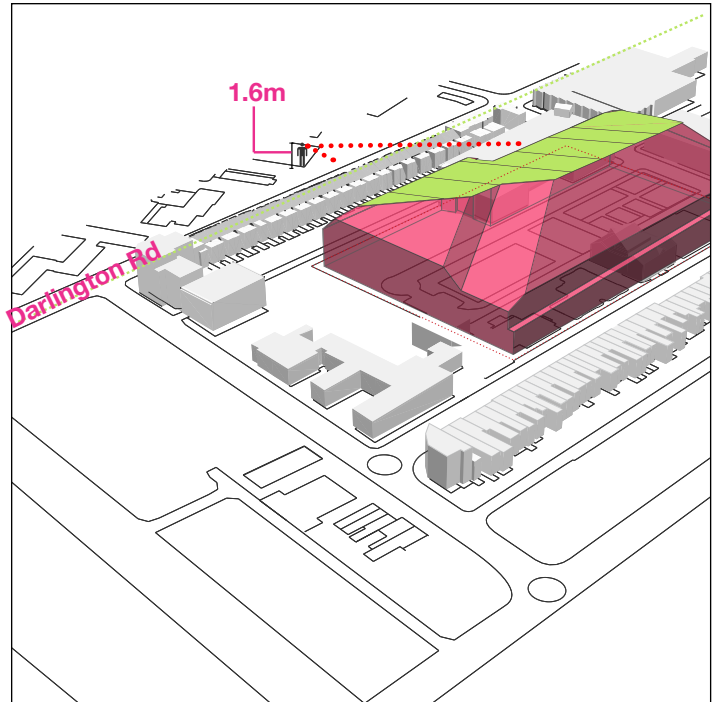
Pedestrian Linkages





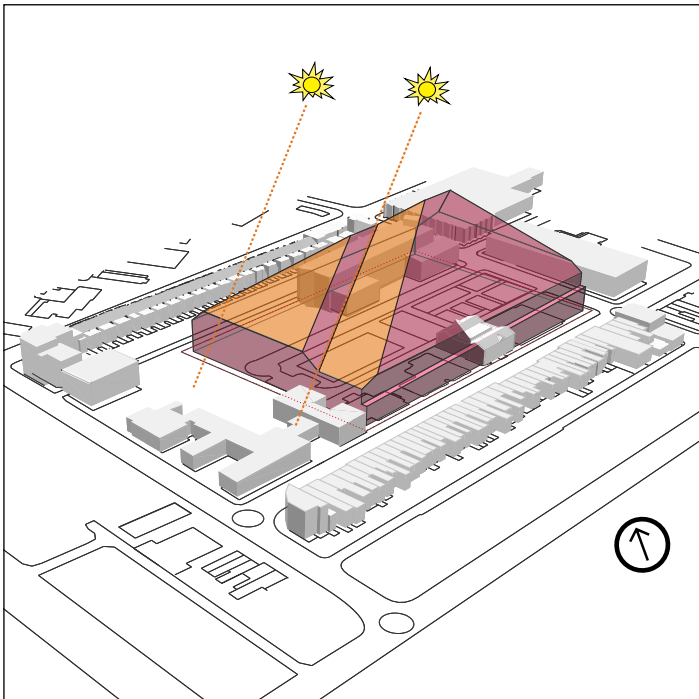
Context and Heritage

Street scale and response to Abercrombie Street terraces



Context and Heritage

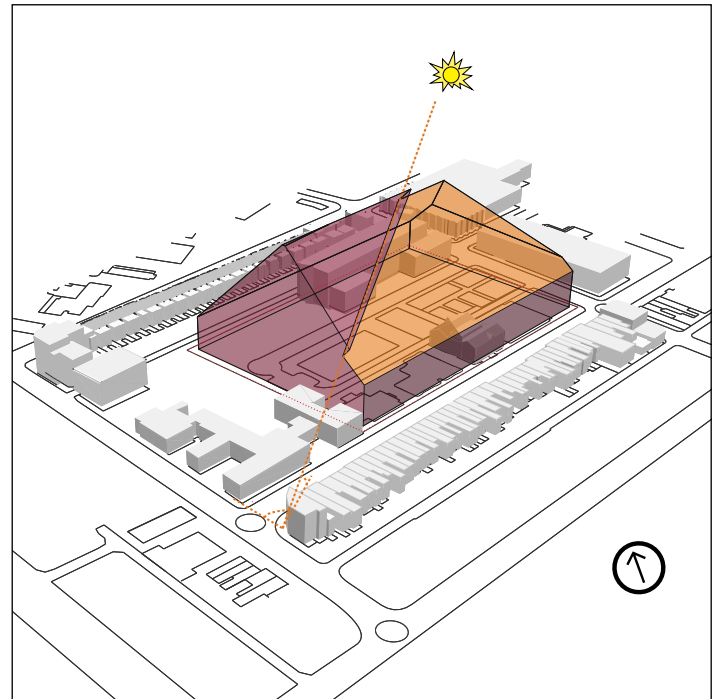
Proposed envelope concealed by ridge line of heritage terraces on Darlington Rd.



Solar impact on Darlington Public School

9am June 22 (worst case)

As per COX masterplan

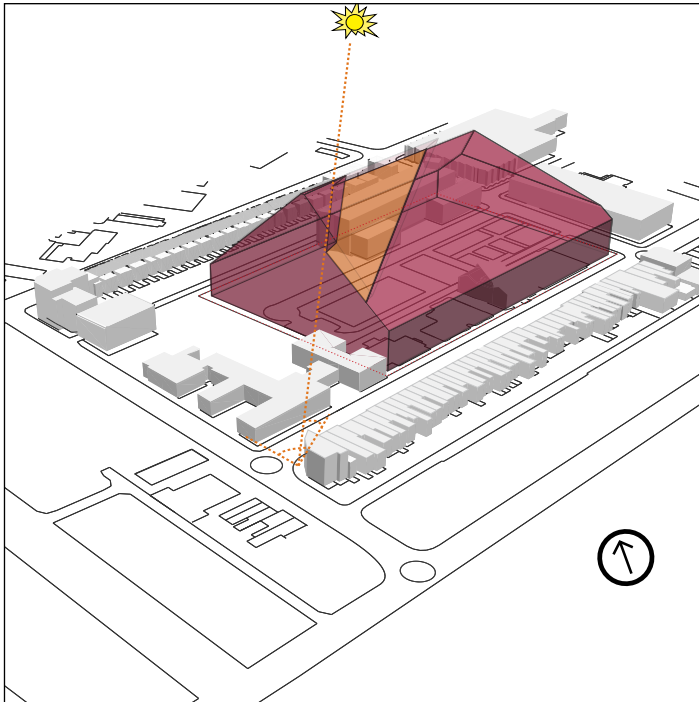


Abercrombie St: Solar Access

To achieve minimum 3 hours of sunlight between 9am and 12noon

9am June 22

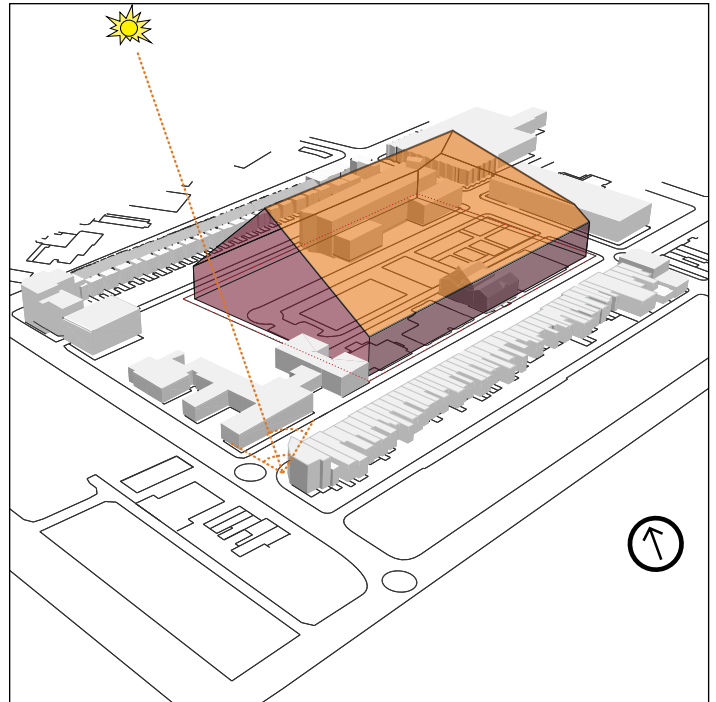
No shadow cast over terraces on eastern side of Abercrombie St



Abercrombie St: Solar Access

10am June 22

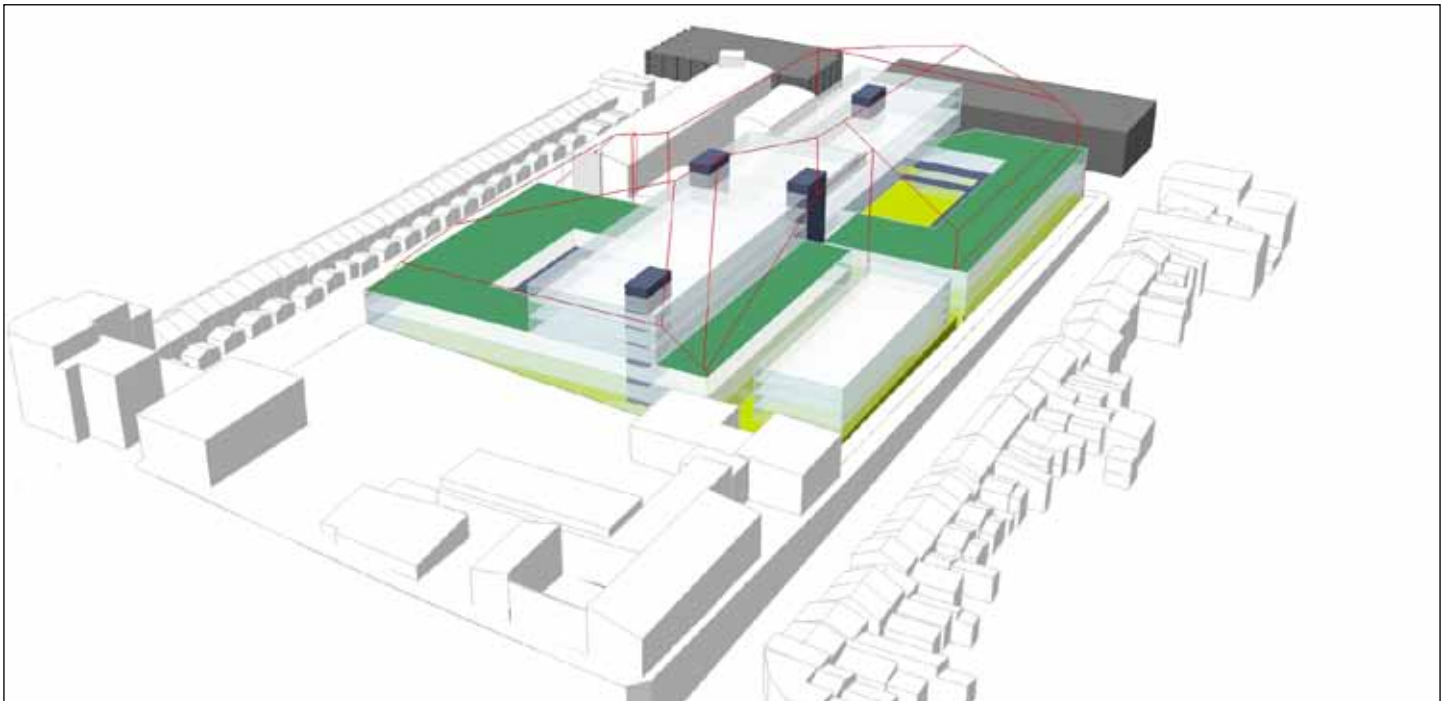
No shadow cast over terraces on eastern side of Abercrombie St



Abercrombie St: Solar Access

12noon June 22

No shadow cast over terraces on eastern side of Abercrombie St



Optimal building envelope (500,635m3):

- respect heritage integration
- view parameters
- shadow impact

The building should fit within the optimal envelope to ensure an appropriate response to its context.

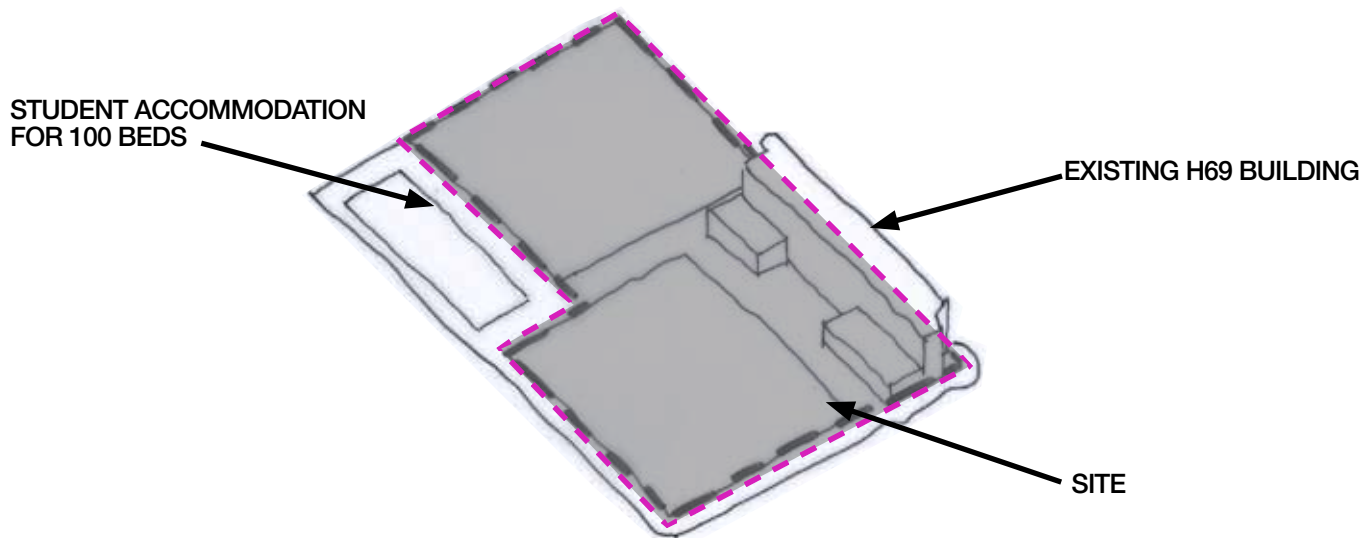
Abercrombie Precinct Redevelopment

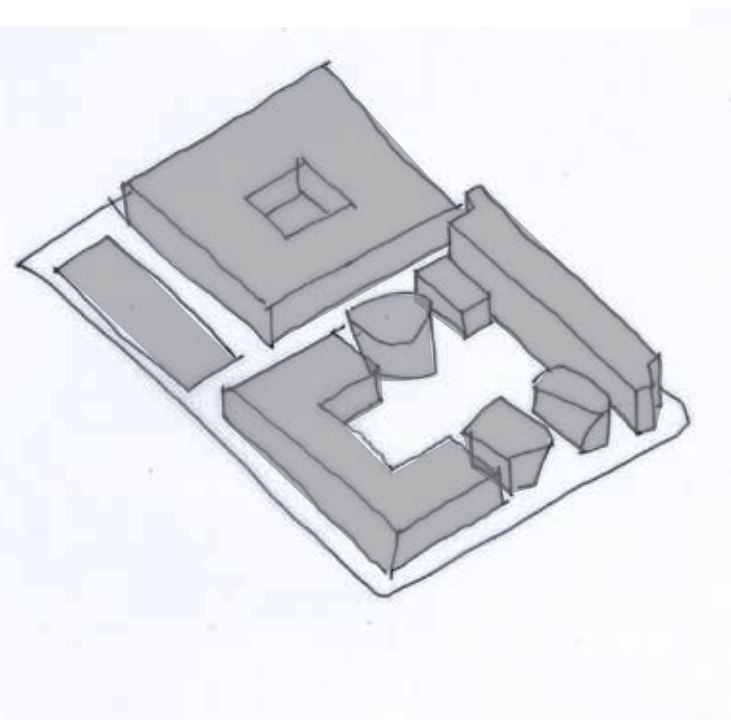
Site zoning: Public, Invited and Private

The building typology follows the briefs functional needs, flexibility and clarity in zoning of the site. The first three levels of the building are the public and invited spaces, the environment is a large “terrain-like” floor plate consisting teaching and learning functions which are in the form of flexible teaching spaces and three external courtyards. The building encourages interaction with the existing structures on the site, wide streets and social spaces to meet and work.

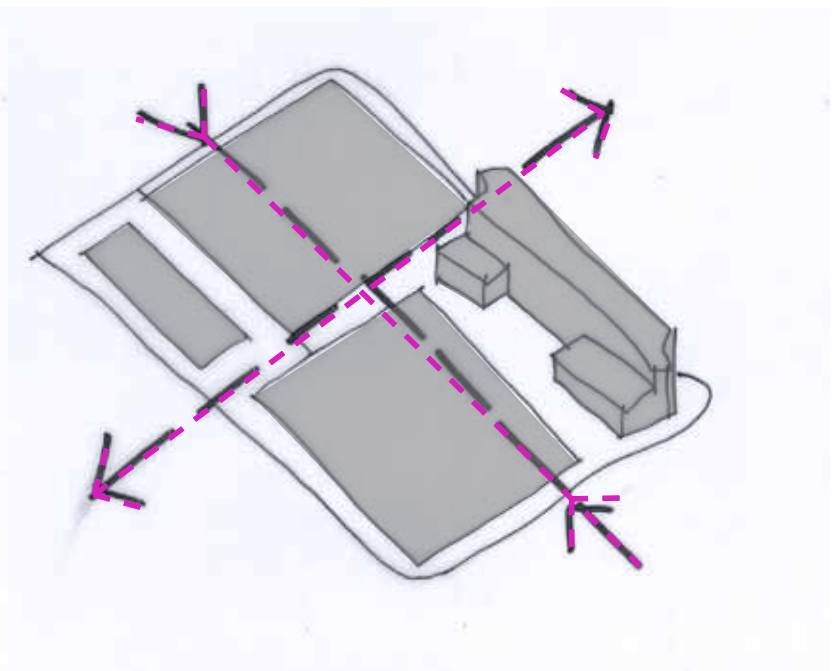
The courtyards and teaching spaces are linked with a main internal street and other secondary circulation routes which run both horizontally and vertically.

The upper levels consist of invite and private spaces, the function of these are research and workplace environments. Three cores and internal stairs connect the upper and lower functions and are located along the primary street. The upper floors are also designed around social hubs , wide stairs for meeting places and visual connectivity between floors. This will provide opportunity for collaboration and collegiality between staff members, industry and students.

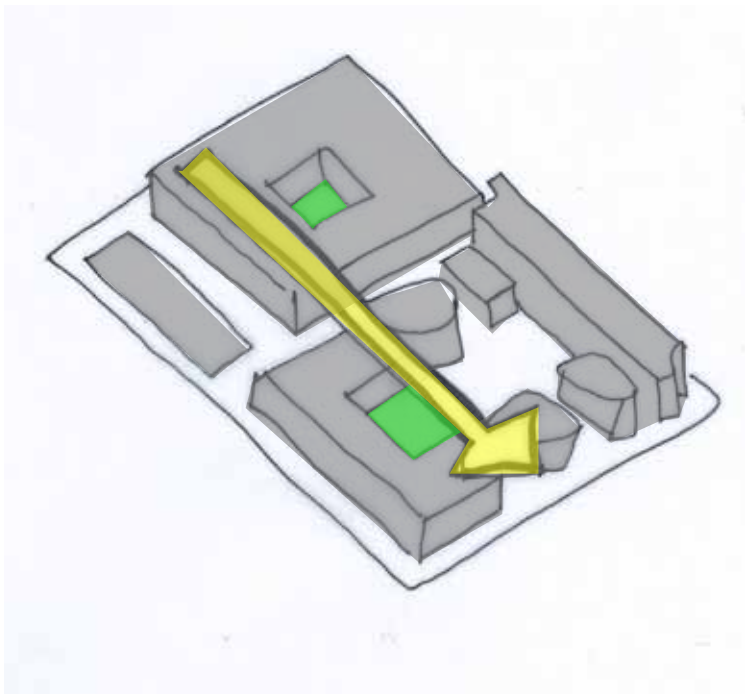




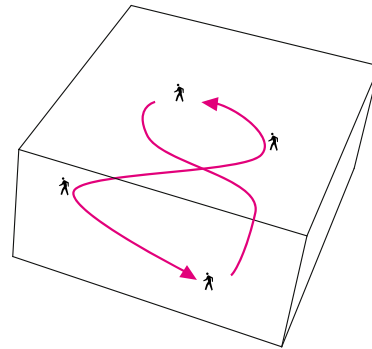
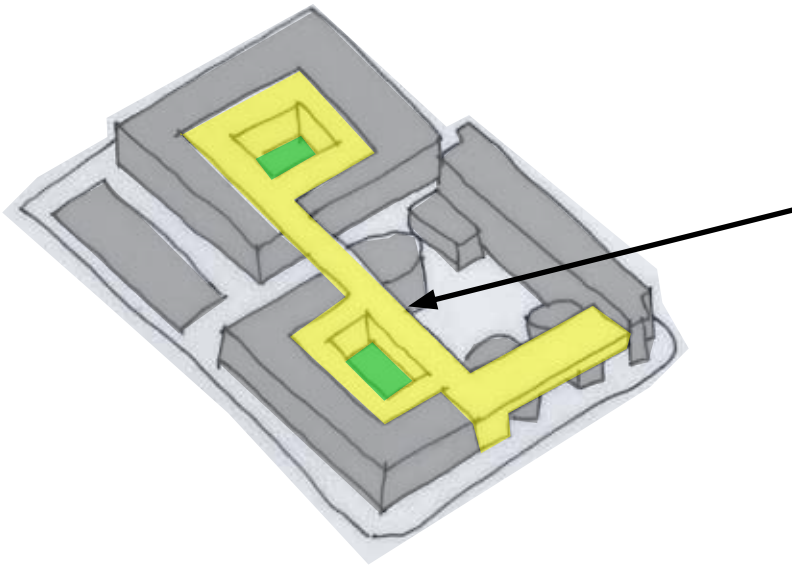
Extruding the volumes
The learning environment



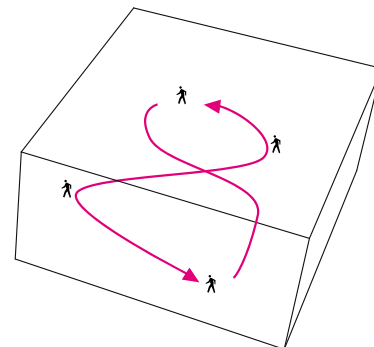
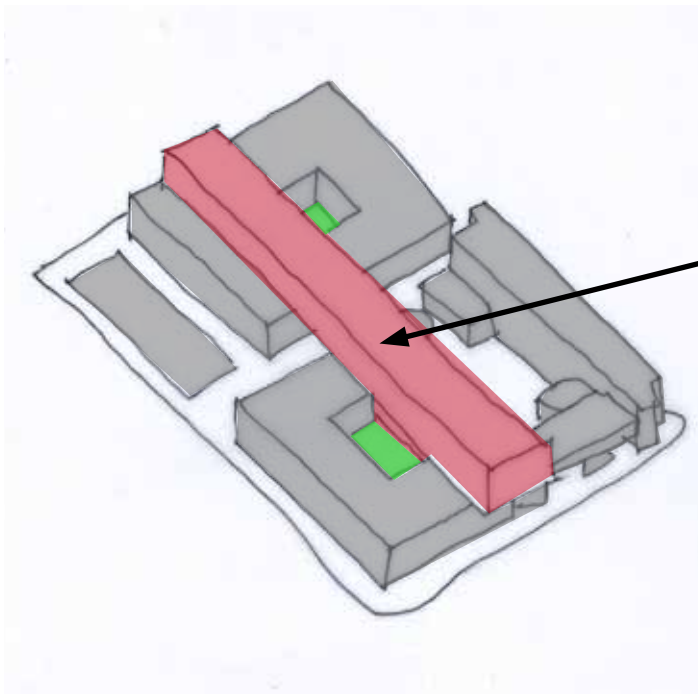
Connecting the site



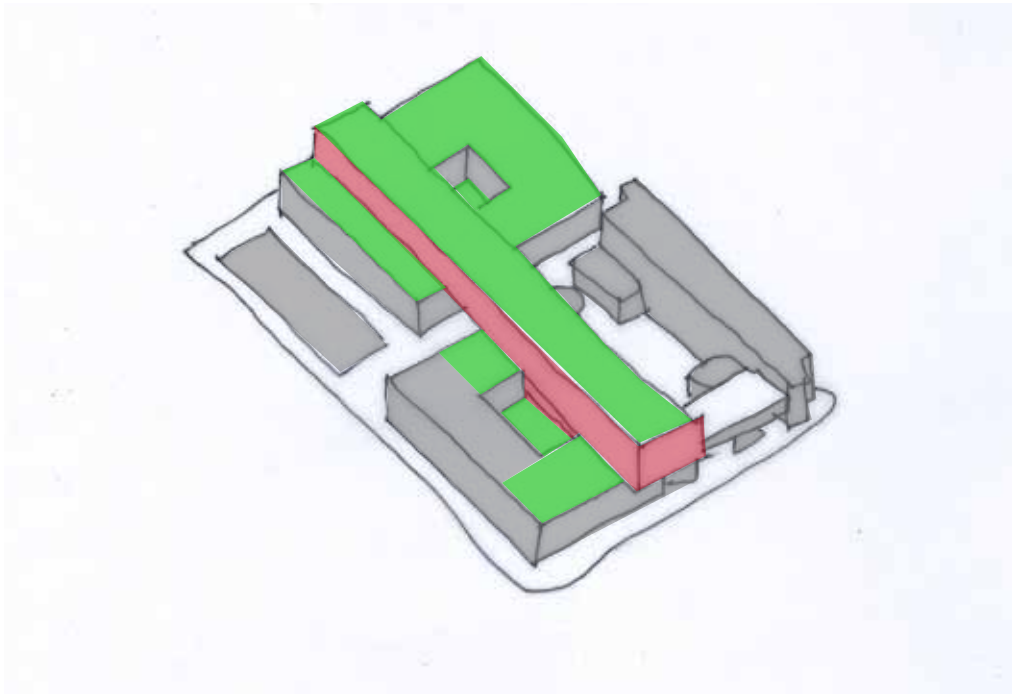
Creating a street
and courtyards



Circulate around the courtyards
Collaborative spaces



workplace environment



Integrate upper levels with roof gardens.

Abercrombie Precinct Redevelopment

Address and Activation

The main entry addresses is Coderington St, the entry is into a courtyard connecting the old and new structures on the site. This strong entry statement also acts as a visual and strong physical link back to the main campus. There are secondary entries throughout the site and through a middle site access laneway. This allows for porosity and openness to the campus and amenity.

The building is activated at the ground and upper floors with the use of exposed stairs linking floors of teaching space, transparency from the street through to the courtyards and internal informal learning environments.

The functional floor plates are provided with a 'spectrum' of learning environments resulting in variation to the facade and reading of internal depth of rooms. The laneways are activated by "knowledge vessels" a series of colourful protrusions into the landscape to create not only a playfulness in the form but variety and spectacle in the spaces between the forms.

A variety of transparency and screening to the facade will allow visual access and integration where required and privacy in areas close to the school and community dwellings.



Abercrombie Precinct Redevelopment

Landscape Form and scale

Sustainability and Environment

Landscape Form and scale

Landscape is an important part of the design for the purpose of informal learning environments, visual and physical amenity to the community. The courtyard and roofscape will be themed and seasonal and will address some of the sustainability agenda for the precinct.

Sustainability and Environment

The sustainability aspect to the site is a response to the internal and external environment. The shape of the floorplate and regularity of grid allows for future flexibility in both the learning and workplace environments. The building width, height and aspect have been driven by the desire to create a building that responds to the external climate and potential for fresh air and naturally lit spaces.

The building is open and welcoming to the community through movement and views into and back to the city at upper levels. The building displays a strong commitment to sustainability. The measures are integrated with the architectural response with built in flexibility for the future.

“What if every act of
design made the world
a better place?”

Ross Donaldson
Woods Bagot

