

Visual Impact Assessment

Addendum Report – Hastings Secondary College Upgrade – s4.55(2) modification #2 to SSD-11920082

6 Owen Street, Port Macquarie
Schools Infrastructure NSW



'Gura Bulga'

Liz Belanjee Cameron

'Gura Bulga' – translates to Warm Green Country. Representing New South Wales.

By using the green and blue colours to represent NSW, this painting unites the contrasting landscapes. The use of green symbolises tranquillity and health. The colour cyan, a greenish-blue, sparks feelings of calmness and reminds us of the importance of nature, while various shades of blue hues denote emotions of new beginnings and growth. The use of emerald green in this image speaks of place as a fluid moving topography of rhythmical connection, echoed by densely layered patterning and symbolic shapes which project the hypnotic vibrations of the earth, waterways and skies.

Ethos Urban acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and recognises their continuing connection to land, waters and culture.

We acknowledge the Gadigal people, of the Eora Nation, the Traditional Custodians of the land where this document was prepared, and all peoples and nations from lands affected.

We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

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Chris Bain 04/11/2022

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Executive summary

Schools Infrastructure NSW is proposing to modify development consent for the new Police Citizens Youth Club (PCYC) (the proposal) that forms part of the Hastings Secondary College located at 6 Owen Street, Port Macquarie. This results in a height increase and other changes such as removing fencing and adding landscaping.

This visual impact assessment reconsidered the proposal's visual impact on public and private domain viewpoints included in previous VIAs undertaken for the site.

The key findings from this VIA are that:

- the proposal will have negligible visual impact on the private domain when assessed against Tenacity
- impact is largely contained to the addition of ventilation structures on the roof
- the proposal will have low impact on the public domain
- impact on the public domain is mainly limited to the site's interface with Oxley Oval, and arises due to a new surface level carpark
- however, the scale of this carpark is small, and the visual catchment already contains a similar carpark bordering the northern edge of the oval
- the carpark is therefore considered to be compatible with the existing visual character of the local area
- the proposal will not give rise to any new visual impact issues not already addressed in previous assessments
- the proposal will not affect significant views or view corridors protected in the PMHDCP 2013
- the proposal will continue to appropriately address Owen Street and Oxley Oval, providing interesting and quality architectural additions to the streetscape and appearing as an addition the existing residential and mixed-use built form, removing fencing and adding landscaping and appearing as an addition the existing residential and mixed-use built form.

Fundamental or otherwise large-scale changes to the proposal are not recommended to achieve acceptable visual impact outcomes.

On this basis, the proposal has an acceptable visual impact and as such is capable of approval on visual impact grounds.

1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this report is to assess the visual impact of a proposal to modify the new Police Citizens Youth Club (PCYC) granted development consent by the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) on 21 December 2021

This report is to be read as an addendum to the visual impact assessments prepared by Ethos Urban and dated 24 May 2021 and 10 September 2021.

2.0 The site

The site is located at 6 Owen Street Port Macquarie (refer **Figure 1**).

It is currently occupied by the Hastings Secondary College Port Macquarie Campus (the school).

The part of the site upon which the PCYC will be located is currently occupied by a school playing field.



Figure 1: The site

Source: Nearmap and Ethos Urban

3.0 Background

SSDA 11920082 (the SSDA) was lodged by Schools Infrastructure NSW (SINSW) in May 2020. The SSDA sought development consent from DPE for upgrades to the school, including construction of the PCYC.

During the assessment process, DPE requested preparation of a visual impact assessment (VIA). This VIA was prepared by Ethos Urban and dated 24 May 2021.

During public exhibition of the proposal a number of submissions were received on visual impact to the private domain. DPE summarised these submissions as follows:

- ‘Submissions raised concerns about potential significant view loss for residential properties adjacent to the site caused by the proposal. Concerns were particularly raised regarding impacts to views from 11 Owen Street (La Mer Apartments) directly opposite the proposed PCYC and 17-19 Owen Street (Mainsail Apartments) to the south-west of the PCYC. Both properties currently enjoy views to the east / north-east over the current open school playing fields and Oxley Oval towards Oxley Beach and the ocean horizon beyond’.

To address these issues, Ethos Urban prepared an updated VIA dated 10 September 2021.

DPE granted development consent to the SSDA on 21 December 2021.

In its conclusion, the Department stated that the proposal is in the public interest, and recommended it be approved subject to conditions.

The public interest grounds comprised the following public benefits:

- provision of updated educational facilities to meet the needs of the existing school population
- a new community facility providing social and recreational facilities for young people
- investment of \$29.867 million and delivery of 42 construction jobs and six full-time equivalent operational jobs associated with the PCYC.

In its assessment of visual impact on the public domain, DPE found as follows:

- ‘Having regard to views from the public domain in consideration of the relevant established planning principles, the Department considers that the proposal would have acceptable impacts. The proposal would not affect any significant views or view corridors protected in the PMHDCP 2013. The proposed CAPA and PCYC buildings appropriately address Owen Street and provide interesting and quality architectural additions to the streetscape. In addition, the eastern elevation of the PCYC building that would face Oxley Oval would be of similar interest and quality as the Owen Street elevation. From both viewpoints, the proposal would appear as an addition the existing residential and mixed-use built form’.

In its assessment of visual impact on the private domain, DPE found as follows:

- ‘Overall, the Department acknowledges that the proposal is a significant change to existing views, particularly to apartments in 11 Owen Street. However, following a careful assessment of the proposal against the established planning principles, the Department considers that the impacts would be acceptable subject to further landscaping treatments’.

Of note, the Department found:

- ‘the three-tone brickwork further breaks up and adds interest to the elevation (Owen Street)
- the siting and design initiatives for the PCYC represent skilful design, in accordance with established planning principles

- the proposal includes landscaping along part of the front of the PCYC building to soften and screen the appearance of the building to Owen Street and residential properties’.

The Department conditioned that additional planting be provided along the remainder of the front of the PCYC and along the northern side to screen views from the Port City Bowling Club to further soften the appearance of the building and mitigate the visual impact to adjoining residential properties, particularly 11 Owen Street.

Following further design development, amendment to the development consent is required. Modification application 1, which is separate to this application, has been prepared and submitted for the adjoining Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) building. Modification application 2 relating to the PCYC is the subject of this application.

4.0 The proposal

The modification application seeks amendment to the PCYC as outlined in the accompanying report prepared by DFP and shown in **Figure 2**. Comparison with the approval is shown in **Figure 3**. Note that this proposal only relates to the PCYC located in the upper left of the images.

Of note are proposed height changes. While the façade elevation remains consistent with the approved height, the overall height of the building has increased by 480mm for the roof top ventilators. The southern elevation has reduced by 900mm from the approved height.

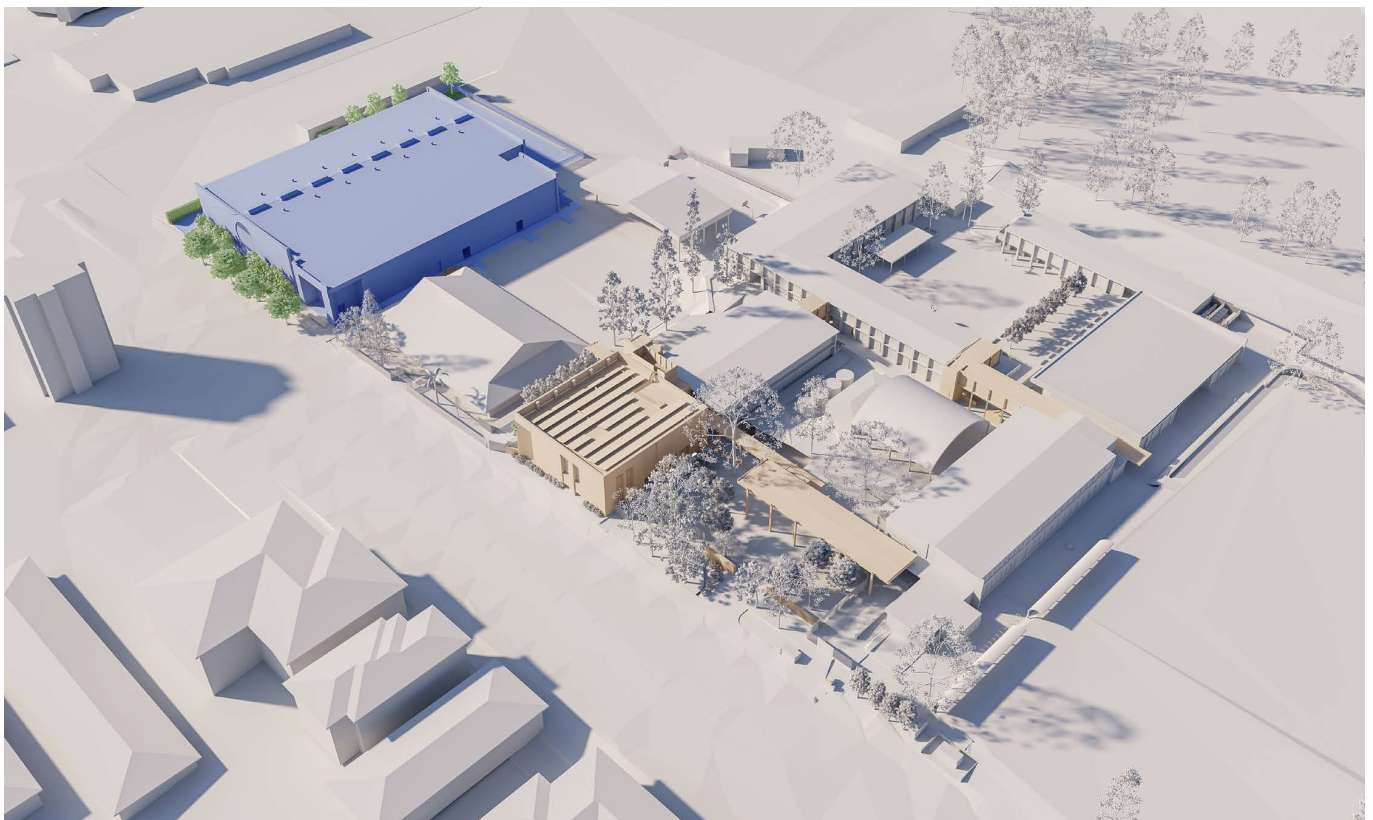


Figure 2: The proposal

Note: the proposal subject of this modification application is shown in blue

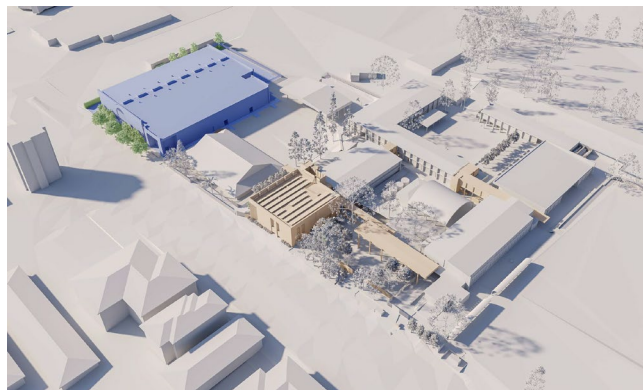


Figure 3: Comparison of approved and proposal

Note: the proposal subject of this modification application is shown in blue

5.0 Method

The VIA reconsiders visual impact on the following public and private domain viewpoints included in previous VIAs:

Public domain

1. Owen Street adjacent to Port City Bowling Club looking south / south-east
2. Owen Street adjacent to Oxley Cove Apartments looking east / north-east
3. Burrawan Street looking north
4. Pacific Drive looking south-east across Oxley Oval
5. Owen Street adjacent to La Mer Apartments looking east

Private domain

6. La Mer, apartment 4
7. La Mer, apartment 6
8. La Mer, apartment 14
9. Mainsail, apartment 9
10. Mainsail, apartment 10
11. Mainsail, apartment 11
12. 21 Owen Street.

The location of these viewpoints is shown in **Figure 4** and **Figure 5**.

Updated photomontages have been prepared in accordance with the Land and Environment Court (LEC) Photomontage Policy.

Assessment of impact has been undertaken against *Tenacity Consulting v Waringah* [2004] NSWLEC 140 (Tenacity) for private views and Ethos Urban methodology derived from the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition (GLVIA3) (Landscape Institute and IEMA), *Rose Bay Marina Pty Limited v Woollahra Municipal Council and anor* [2013] NSWLEC 1046 (Rose Bay) and other relevant guidance.



Figure 4: Viewpoints – public domain



Figure 5: Viewpoints – private domain

6.0 Key issues

Having regard to submissions and the Department's assessment, the key issue for consideration is whether the proposal materially changes the nature of impact upon which the Department drew its conclusions. Specifically, this includes whether it will:

- give rise to any new visual impact issues not already addressed in previous assessments
- affect significant views or view corridors protected in the PMHDCP 2013
- continues to appropriately address Owen Street and Oxley Oval, providing interesting and quality architectural additions to the streetscape and appearing as an addition the existing residential and mixed-use built form.

7.0 Visual impact assessment

7.1 Public domain

7.1.1 Owen Street adjacent to Port City Bowling Club looking south / south-east

Approved view



Figure 6: Owen Street adjacent to Port City Bowling Club looking south / south-east – existing view

Source: Virtual Ideas

Proposed view



Figure 7: Owen Street adjacent to Port City Bowling Club looking south / south-east – proposed view

Source: Virtual Ideas

7.1.2 Owen Street adjacent to Oxley Cove Apartments looking east / north-east

Approved view



Figure 8: Owen Street adjacent to Oxley Cove Apartments looking east / north-east – existing view

Source: Virtual Ideas

Proposed view



Figure 9: Owen Street adjacent to Oxley Cove Apartments looking east / north-east – proposed view

Source: Virtual Ideas

7.1.3 Burrawan Street looking north

Approved view

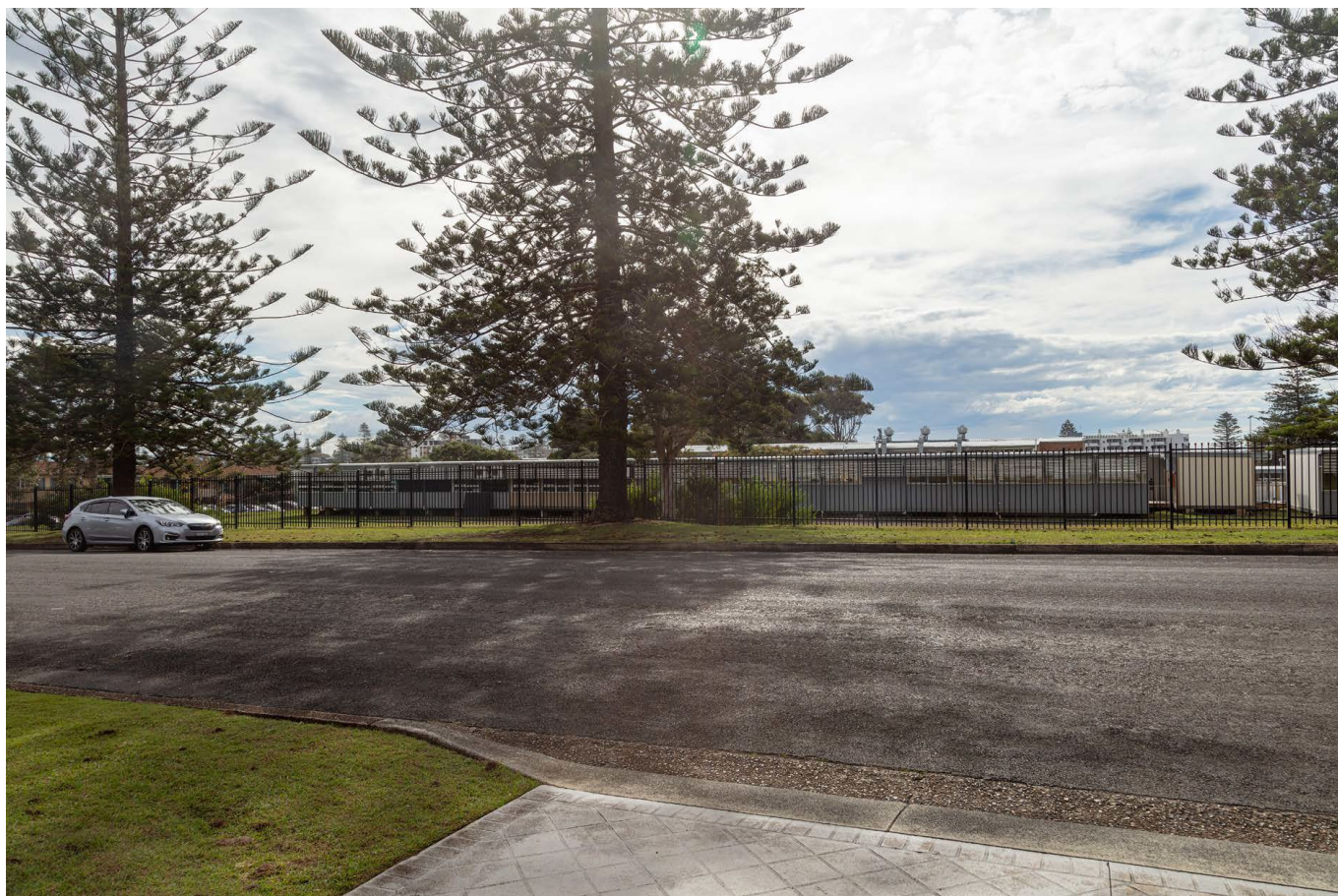


Figure 10: Burrawan Street looking north – existing view

Source: Virtual Ideas

Proposed view

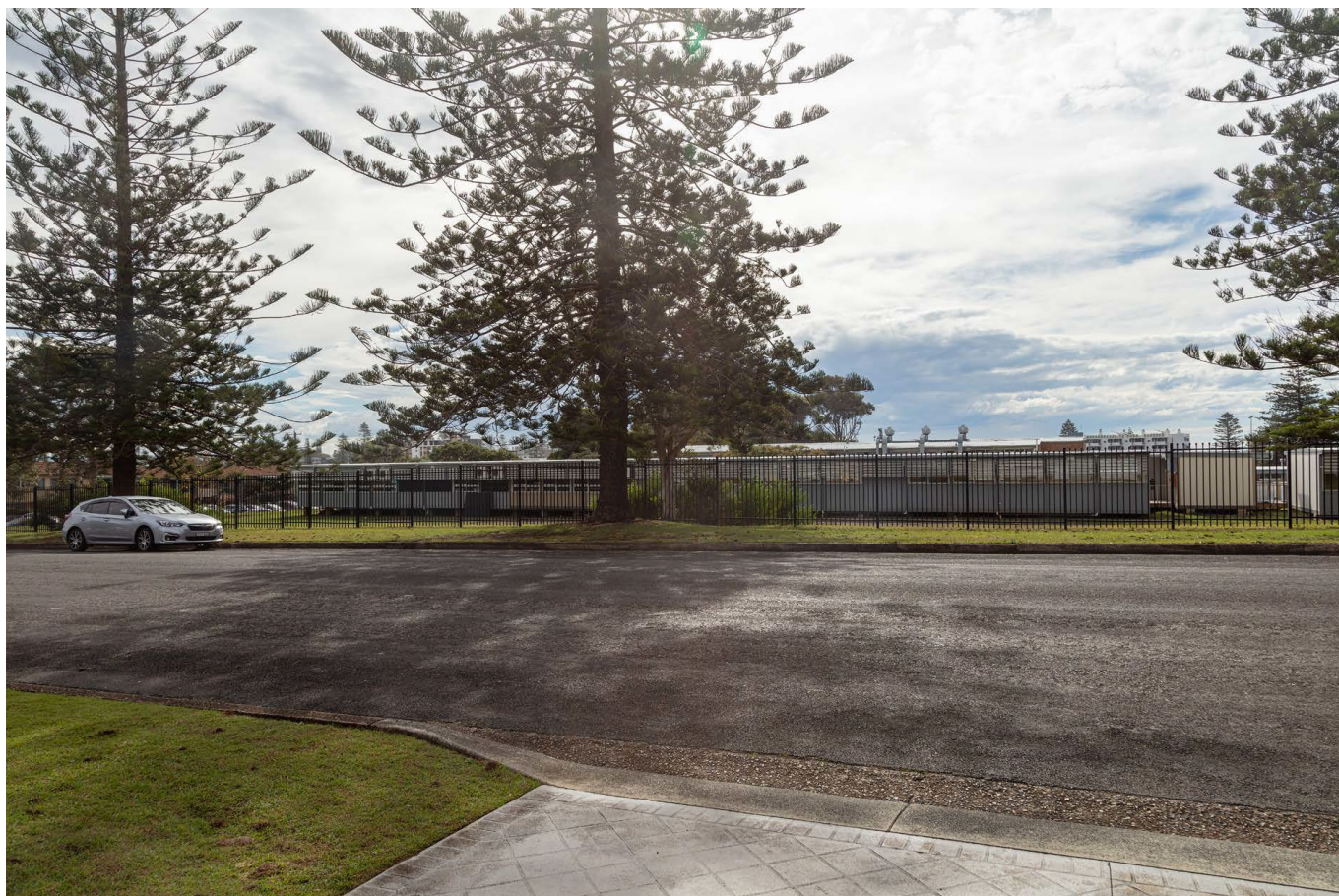


Figure 11: Burrawan Street looking north – proposed view

Source: Virtual Ideas

7.1.4 Pacific Drive looking south-east across Oxley Oval

Approved view



Figure 12: Pacific Drive looking south-east across Oxley Oval – existing view

Source: Virtual Ideas

Proposed view



Figure 13: Pacific Drive looking south-east across Oxley Oval – proposed view

Source: Virtual Ideas

7.1.5 Owen Street adjacent to La Mer Apartments looking east

Approved view

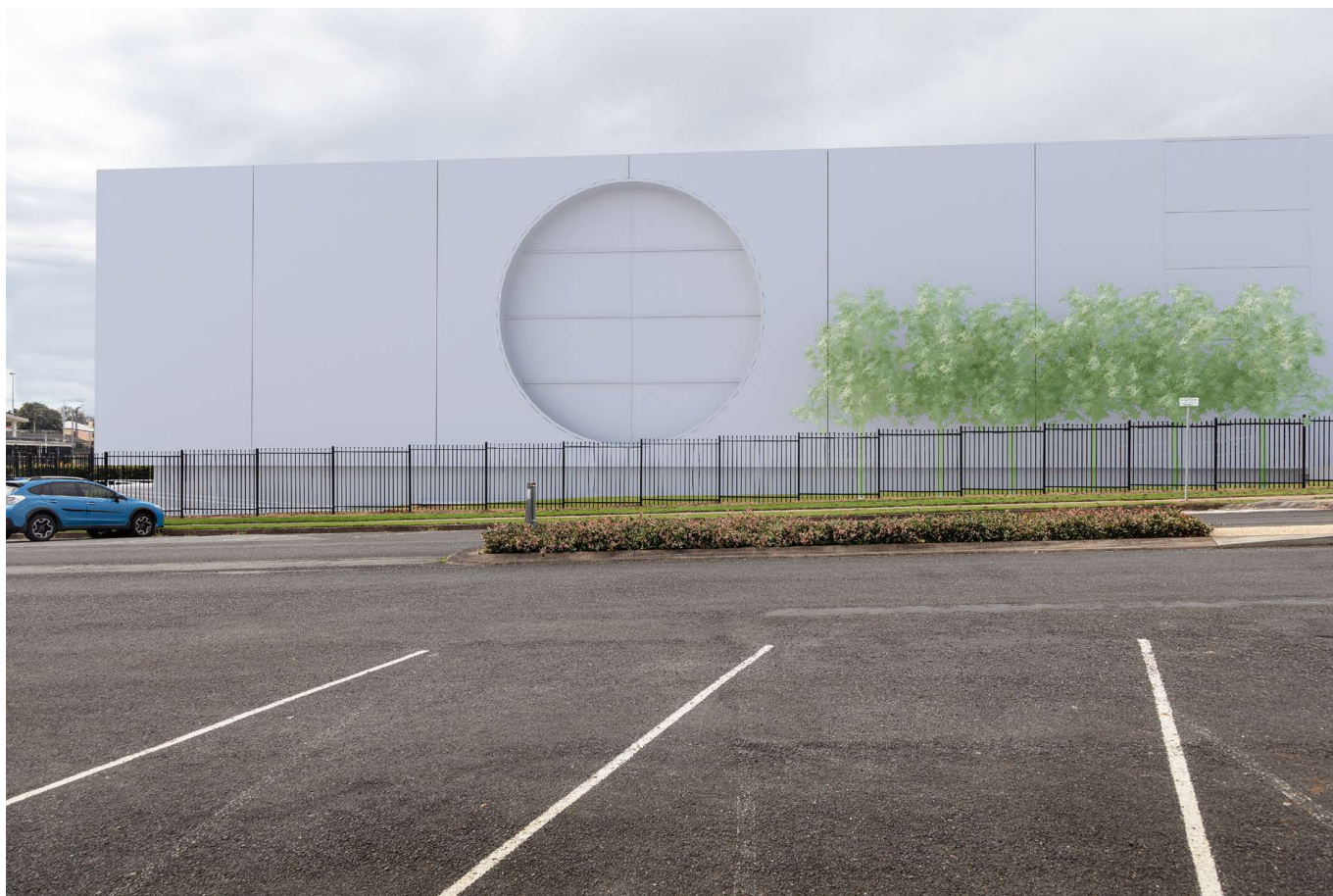


Figure 14: Owen Street adjacent to La Mer Apartments looking east – existing view

Source: Virtual Ideas

Proposed view



Figure 15: Owen Street adjacent to La Mer Apartments looking east – proposed view

Source: Virtual Ideas

7.1.6 Assessment

As can be seen from the photomontages, the proposal will have low impact on the public domain. The increase in height is not readily visible. Impact is mainly limited to the site's interface with Oxley Oval, and arises due to a new surface level carpark. However, the scale of this carpark is small, and the visual catchment already contains a similar carpark bordering the northern edge of the oval. The carpark is therefore considered to be compatible with the existing visual character of the local area

In addition, the proposal:

- will not give rise to any new visual impact issues not already addressed in previous assessments
- will not affect significant views or view corridors protected in the PMHDCP 2013
- will continue to appropriately address Owen Street and Oxley Oval, providing interesting and quality architectural additions to the streetscape and appearing as an addition the existing residential and mixed-use built form.

7.2 Private domain

7.2.1 La Mer, apartment 4

Approved view

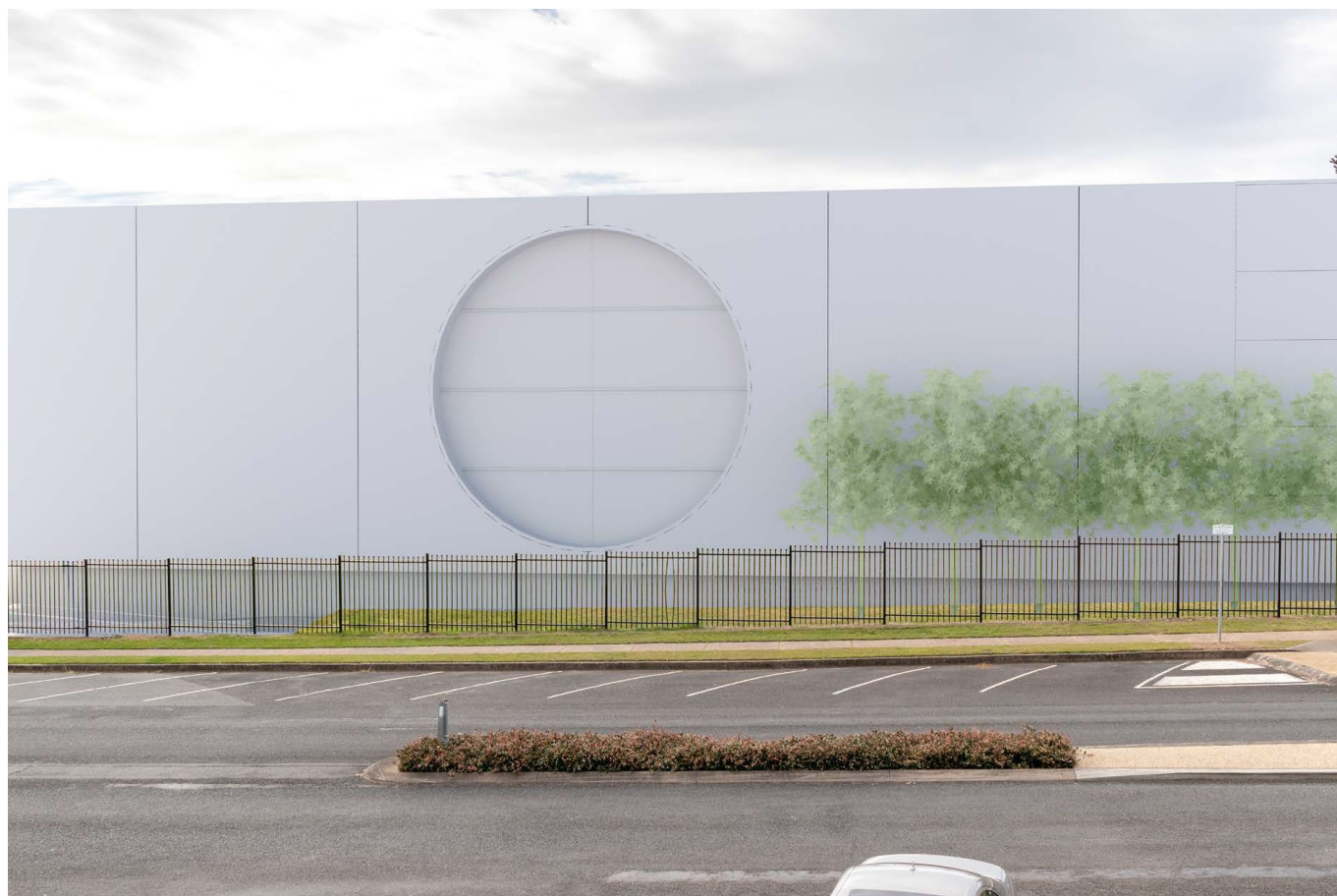


Figure 16: La Mer, apartment 4 – existing view

Source: Virtual Ideas

Proposed view



Figure 17: La Mer, apartment 4 – proposed view

Source: Virtual Ideas

7.2.2 La Mer, apartment 6

Approved view



Figure 18: La Mer, apartment 6 – existing view

Source: Virtual Ideas

Proposed view



Figure 19: La Mer, apartment 6 – proposed view

Source: Virtual Ideas

7.2.3 La Mer, apartment 14

Approved view



Figure 20: La Mer, apartment 14 – existing view

Source: Virtual Ideas

Proposed view



Figure 21: La Mer, apartment 14 – proposed view

Source: Virtual Ideas

7.2.4 Mainsail, apartment 9

Approved view



Figure 22: Mainsail, apartment 9 – existing view

Source: Virtual Ideas

Proposed view



Figure 23: Mainsail, apartment 9 – proposed view

Source: Virtual Ideas

7.2.5 Mainsail, apartment 10

Approved view



Figure 24: Mainsail, apartment 10 – existing view

Source: Virtual Ideas

Proposed view



Figure 25: Mainsail, apartment 10 – proposed view

Source: Virtual Ideas

7.2.6 Mainsail, apartment 11

Approved view



Figure 26: Mainsail, apartment 11 – existing view

Source: Virtual Ideas

Proposed view



Figure 27: Mainsail, apartment 11 – proposed view

Source: Virtual Ideas

7.2.7 21 Owen Street

Approved view



Figure 28: 21 Owen Street, apartment 4 – existing view

Source: Virtual Ideas

Proposed view



Figure 292: 1 Owen Street, apartment 4 – proposed view

Source: Virtual Ideas

7.2.8 Assessment

Under Tenacity, despite the increase in height, additional view loss is qualitatively as negligible. Impact is largely contained to the addition of ventilation structures on the roof. These are necessary for the adequate ventilation of the building, and are not considered to give rise to unacceptable visual clutter.

The removal of the partly underground entrance to the building at the north-west of the site will result in a marginally reduced visual impact

8.0 Findings

The key findings from this VIA are that:

- the proposal will have negligible visual impact on the private domain when assessed against Tenacity
- impact is largely contained to the addition of ventilation structures on the roof
- the proposal will have low impact on the public domain
- impact on the public domain is mainly limited to the site's interface with Oxley Oval, and arises due to a new surface level carpark

- however, the scale of this carpark is small, and the visual catchment already contains a similar carpark bordering the northern edge of the oval
- the carpark is therefore considered to be compatible with the existing visual character of the local area
- the proposal will not give rise to any new visual impact issues not already addressed in previous assessments
- the proposal will not affect significant views or view corridors protected in the PMHDCP 2013
- the proposal will continue to appropriately address Owen Street and Oxley Oval, providing interesting and quality architectural additions to the streetscape and appearing as an addition the existing residential and mixed-use built form, removing fencing and adding landscaping and appearing as an addition the existing residential and mixed-use built form.

9.0 Mitigation measures

Fundamental or otherwise large-scale changes to the proposal are not recommended to achieve acceptable visual impact outcomes.

Where appropriate, the Department may wish to consider landscaping along the site's northern boundary with the Port Macquarie Bowling Club and within the carpark. It is noted that as large, spreading trees are not recommended on visual impact grounds due to the visual character of Oxley Oval and its immediate surrounds to the north and west being characterised by an open setting where well maintained turf dominates.

10.0 Conclusion

For the reasons outlined in this VIA, the proposal has an acceptable visual impact and as such is capable of approval on visual impact grounds.

Appendices

Visual impact evidence