

Supplementary Visual Impact Assessment

Greenwich Health Campus – Detailed Design (SSD 13619238)

95-115 River Road,
Greenwich
HammondCare





'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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1.0 Introduction

This Supplementary Visual Impact Assessment (Supplementary VIA) assesses the visual impact of the detailed design and construction of the redevelopment of Greenwich Hospital into an integrated health campus comprising hospital, residential aged care, seniors housing, and overnight respite uses under SSD 13619238.

This Supplementary VIA has been prepared by Ethos Urban on behalf of HammondCare. It supplements, and should be read in conjunction with, the Visual Impact Assessment prepared by Clouston Associates dated 22 April 2022. It responds to the following requirements (**Table 1**):

Table 1 The planning framework

Item	Excerpt
Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) – SSD 13619238	
2. Built Form and Urban Design	<i>"Provide: a visual impact assessment that identifies any potential impacts on the surrounding built environment and landscape including views to and from the site and any adjoining heritage items."</i>
Future Environmental Assessment Requirements (FEARs) – SSD 8699	
B7	<i>"All future development applications for new built form must include an assessment of amenity impacts and demonstrate that consideration has been given to the protection and minimisation of potential amenity impacts, including: [...] • (c) view impacts (including to Northwood private properties to the west and Lane Cove River)"</i>
SSD 13619238 Request for Additional Information (RFI) – 1 June 2022	
1	<i>"We require the following additional information: • view impact analysis from Lane Cove River and Northwood private properties to the west as required by the future assessment requirements of SSD-8699."</i>

This Supplementary VIA assesses the visual impact of the proposal from the following additional viewpoints, as requested by the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) in the request for additional information (RFI) for SSD 13619238 dated 1 June 2022:

- Northwood private residential properties to the west (viewed from 17 Upper Cliff Rd); and
- The Lane Cove River (viewed from Onions Point).

2.0 The Site and its Context

2.1 Site Context

The site is located in the suburb of Greenwich, within the Local Government Area (LGA) of Lane Cove Council. Surrounding land uses are predominantly of low density residential uses and open space with substantial vegetation cover. The site's location in the context of its surroundings is shown in **Figure 1** below.

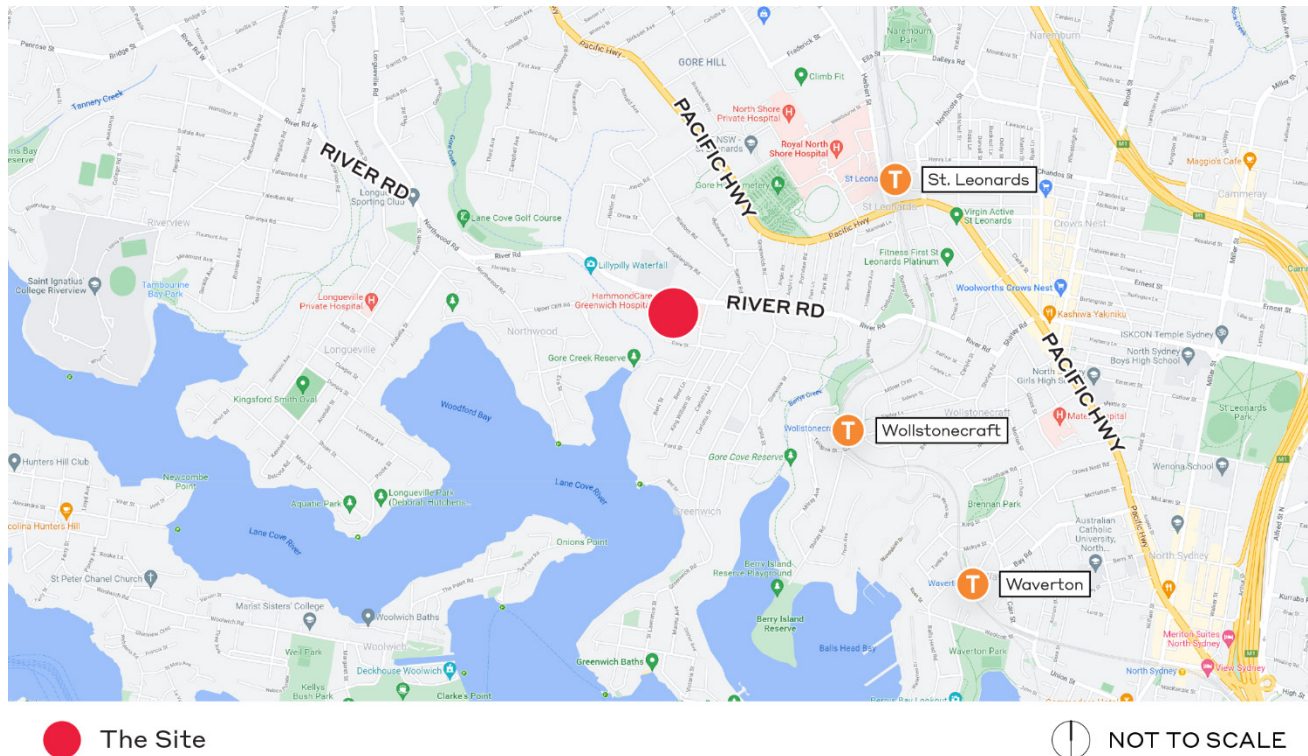


Figure 1 Location of the site in its surrounding context

Source: Google Maps, edits by Ethos Urban

2.2 The Site

The site is known as 95-115 River Road, Greenwich. It comprises a total of two allotments, which are legally described as Lots 3 and 4 in DP584287. Lot 3 accommodates the existing Hospital building, and Lot 4 accommodates Pallister House. In total, the site is 33,763m² in size and irregular in shape.

The site is bounded by River Road to the north, St Vincents Road to the east, and existing residential housing to the south and west. The site is characterised by a sloped and varied topography. Site levels rise towards the centre from its southwestern and south-eastern boundaries, with a steep fall at the southwestern end, towards Gore Creek Reserve.

Existing development on the site comprises the current Greenwich Hospital complex. Existing buildings at the site range between 1-5 storeys in height and are interconnected through a series of internal corridors and external pathways. This includes the Main Hospital Building, which provides patient hospital beds, general healthcare, and palliative care services (**Figure 2**), the Riverglen building which provides sub-acute mental health services for older persons (**Figure 3**), and the Blue Gum Lodge (**Figure 4**), which is currently used for pain clinic and community care healthcare services.

Near the southern end of the site, within Lot 4 in DP584287, is the State Heritage-listed 'Pallister House' building (SHR 00574). This two-storey Victorian house currently houses the hospital's dementia and research facilities, and education facilities (**Figure 5**).

Significant existing vegetation is currently located on the site, especially concentrated at its eastern, western, and southern boundaries. A number of hardstand parking areas are also integrated into the existing Greenwich Hospital campus.



Figure 2 Main Hospital Building, viewed from the main River Road entrance

Source: Ethos Urban



Figure 3 Riverglen Building, viewed from western vehicle entrance

Source: Ethos Urban



Figure 4 Blue Gum Lodge, viewed from River Road

Source: Ethos Urban



Figure 5 Pallister House

Source: Ethos Urban

2.3 Surrounding Development

Development immediately surrounding the site comprises a predominantly low rise residential typology, which is generally separated from the Hospital campus by on-site vegetation. The site's surrounding context includes:

- To the north of the site is River Road, across which is a series of low density, detached dwellings (**Figure 6**), as well as the Greenwich Public School to the northwest (**Figure 7**);
- To the south of the site are low density detached dwellings along Gore Street (**Figure 8**). The Bob Campbell Oval public open space, which is part of Gore Creek Reserve (**Figure 9**), is located to the southwest.
- To the east of the site is a row of low density detached dwellings across St Vincents Road (**Figure 10**).
- To the west are additional detached residential dwellings (**Figure 11**).



Figure 6 Detached residential dwellings to the north

Source: Ethos Urban



Figure 7 Greenwich Public School to the northwest

Source: Ethos Urban



Figure 8 Residential dwellings to the south

Source: Ethos Urban



Figure 9 Bob Campbell Oval to the southwest

Source: Ethos Urban



Figure 10 Detached dwellings to the east

Source: Ethos Urban



Figure 11 Detached to the west, along River Road

Source: Ethos Urban

3.0 The Proposal

The proposed development (SSD 13619238) seeks approval for the detailed design and construction of the redevelopment of Greenwich Hospital into an integrated health campus, following concept approval for the project under SSD 8699. Specifically, consent is sought for the following:

- Site preparation works, including demolition of the existing hospital building and associated facilities, site remediation, and tree removal;
- Construction of a new hospital facility and integrated healthcare campus comprising of hospital, residential aged care, seniors housing, and overnight respite, across:
 - A new main hospital building up to RL 80.0;
 - Two new seniors housing buildings, northern building up to RL 56.35, and southern building up to RL 60.63;
 - A new respite care building up to RL 56.9;
- Construction of associated site facilities and services, including pedestrian and vehicular access, and basement parking;
- Site landscaping, signage and infrastructure works; and
- Preservation of Pallister House which will continue to host research and administrative functions.

An artist's impression of the proposal is provided in **Figure 12** below.



Figure 12 Artist's impression of the proposed Greenwich health campus

Source: Bickerton Masters

For more information on the proposed development, refer to the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) prepared by Ethos Urban to which this Supplementary VIA is attached.

4.0 Viewpoints

This Supplementary Visual Impact Assessment analyses the visual impact of the proposal from the following viewpoints, as required by the SSD 8699 FEARs, and the RFI by DPE dated 1 June 2022:

- Viewpoint 1: Northwood private residential properties to the west (17 Upper Cliff Rd¹); and
- Viewpoint 2: The Lane Cove River (taken from Onions Point²).

The location of the above viewpoints is shown in **Figure 13** below.



Figure 13 Location of the identified viewpoints

Source: Nearmap, edits by Ethos Urban

¹ 17 Upper Cliff Road was used to assess anticipated visual impacts from residential properties to the west in Northwood under the SSD 8699 Concept Approval. Therefore, the same identical viewpoint has been chosen again to ensure consistency and enable comparison of impacts.

² Onions Point was selected as it was not feasible to provide imagery with the necessary level of accuracy required through survey while directly above the Lane Cove River.

5.0 Methodology

Decisions on visual impact are inherently subjective and involve professional value judgements. A summary outline of the methodology undertaken for this VIA is provided below.

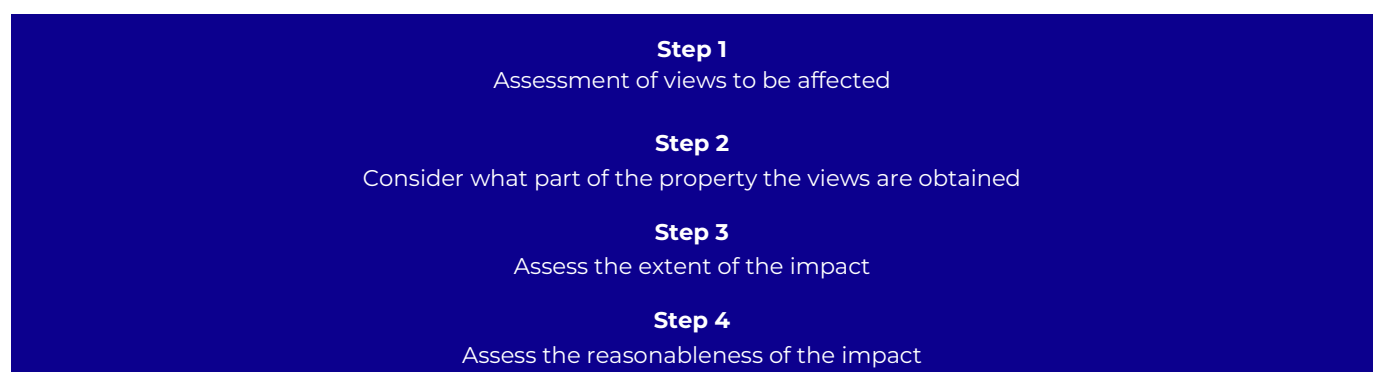
5.1 Private Domain (17 Upper Cliff Rd)

With regards to views from Northwood private properties to the west of the site (17 Upper Cliff Road), it is a long established legal principle in Australia that no one has the right to a view. However, the legal system has acknowledged that views from a person's home can have considerable value (Lindsay Taylor Lawyers, 2015).

To encourage a consistent approach to the address of the impact on private views through development, in 2004 the NSW Land and Environment Court established a planning principle in *Tenacity Consulting v Warringah* [2004] NSWLEC 140 (Tenacity). While this principle was formulated in particular response to a clause in the relevant LEP (the Warringah Local Environmental Plan 2000) requiring reasonable sharing of views, this principle has been widely adopted by consent authorities even in the absence of such statements due to the public interest test of the EP&A Act. On this basis, Tenacity has been adopted as the relevant test in this case.

In *Tenacity*, Roseth SC noted that the LEP did not “state what is view sharing or when view sharing is reasonable”.

To provide guidance, Roseth SC stated that “The notion of view sharing is invoked when a property enjoys existing views and a proposed development would share that view by taking some of it away for its own enjoyment. (Taking it all away cannot be called view sharing, although it may, in some circumstances, be quite reasonable)”. To determine whether view sharing is reasonable in the circumstances, Tenacity specifies a four step process:



- “26 The first step is the assessment of views to be affected. Water views are valued more highly than land views. Iconic views (eg of the Opera House, the Harbour Bridge or North Head) are valued more highly than views without icons. Whole views are valued more highly than partial views, eg a water view in which the interface between land and water is visible is more valuable than one in which it is obscured.
- 27 The second step is to consider from what part of the property the views are obtained. For example the protection of views across side boundaries is more difficult than the protection of views from front and rear boundaries. In addition, whether the view is enjoyed from a standing or sitting position may also be relevant. Sitting views are more difficult to protect than standing views. The expectation to retain side views and sitting views is often unrealistic.
- 28 The third step is to assess the extent of the impact. This should be done for the whole of the property, not just for the view that is affected. The impact on views from living areas is more significant than from bedrooms or service areas (though views from kitchens are highly valued because people spend so much time in them). The impact may be assessed quantitatively, but in many cases this can be meaningless. For example, it is unhelpful to say that the view loss is 20% if it includes one of the sails of the Opera House. It is usually more useful to assess the view loss qualitatively as negligible, minor, moderate, severe or devastating.
- 29 The fourth step is to assess the reasonableness of the proposal that is causing the impact. A development that complies with all planning controls would be considered more reasonable than one that breaches them. Where an impact on views arises as a result of non-compliance with one or more planning controls, even a moderate impact may be considered unreasonable. With a complying proposal, the question should be asked whether a more skilful design could provide the applicant with the same development potential and amenity and reduce the impact on

the views of neighbours. If the answer to that question is no, then the view impact of a complying development would probably be considered acceptable and the view sharing reasonable”.

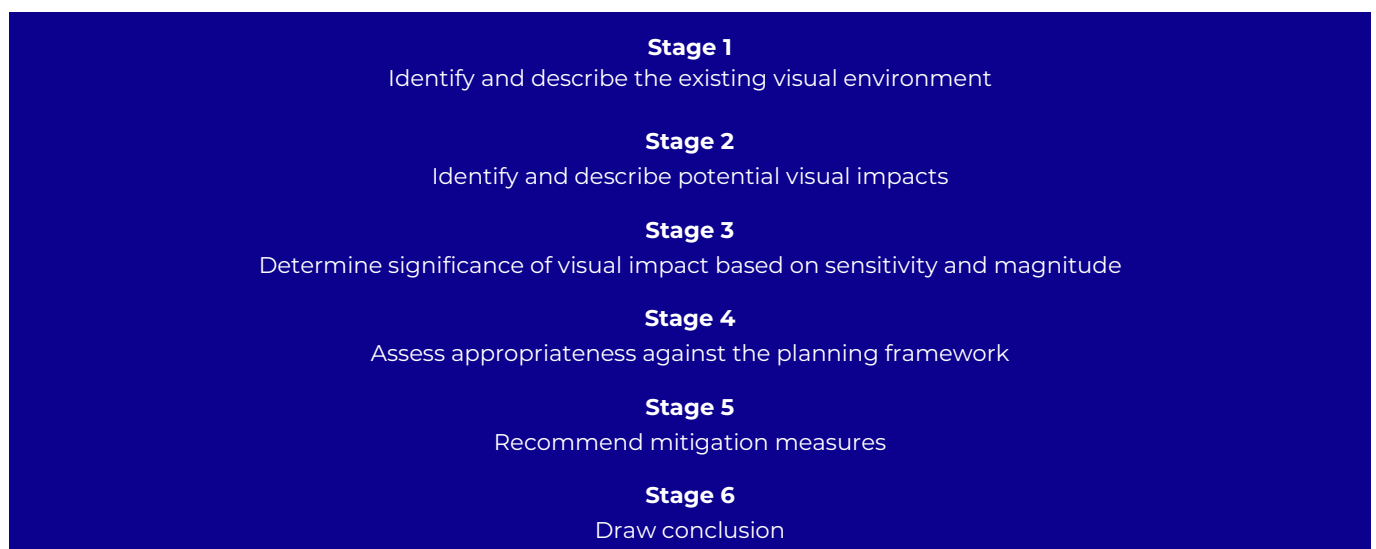
It is noted that while guidance on relevant considerations is provided, judgement on the extent of impact is inherently subjective. In our experience, to be considered devastating under the Tenacity scale, the nature of impact would need to involve:

- blocking of views to a valuable and prominent feature, and / or
- blocking of part of views to a valuable and prominent feature with the effect of significantly reducing the ability to understand and appreciate the feature, and / or
- complete blocking of views from the property, and in particular truncating views to the foreground to leave only outlook remaining.

5.2 Public Domain (Lane Cove River)

The Land and Environment Court of New South Wales (the LEC) in *Rose Bay Marina Pty Limited v Woollahra Municipal Council & Anor* [2013] NSWLEC 1046 (Rose Bay) established a planning principle for the assessment of views from the public domain.

Consideration of public domain views (Lane Cove River) in this Supplementary VIA has been informed by the planning principle outlined in Rose Bay and is generally in accordance with methodology established in international standard Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment version 3 (GLVIA3) published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment in 2013. A summary outline of this methodology is provided below.



5.3 Assumptions, Limitations and Exclusions

The following limitations and exclusions apply to this VIA:

- while photomontages provide an indication of likely future visual environment, they can only provide an approximation of the rich visual experience enabled by the human eye. As they are based on photographs, the same limitations that apply to photography, including optical distortion, apply.
- consideration of night-time impact, including lighting, is excluded.
- consideration of impact on Aboriginal cultural heritage values associations is excluded. This is only appropriately undertaken by a member or qualified representative of the Aboriginal community.

6.0 The Planning Framework

In considering visual impact, the following planning framework is applicable to the site:

- *Lane Cove Local Environmental Plan 2009* (LLEP 2009);
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021* – Chapter 10: Sydney Harbour Catchment; and
- *Sydney Harbour Foreshore & Waterways Area Development Control Plan 2005*;

Detailed discussion of the relevant strategic and statutory planning framework, including assessment against the relevant planning legislation, is provided within the Visual Impact Assessment prepared by Clouston Associates dated 22 April 2022, to which this Supplementary VIA should be read in conjunction with.

7.0 Visual Impact

This section of the report provides photomontages that illustrate the likely visual impacts of the proposal by comparing existing views with proposed views from the selected viewpoints. It is important to note that as the emphasis of assessment should be on scale and form, detail such as materiality and landscaping have been excluded from these visuals. On this basis, and consistent with accepted practice, they can be considered to represent a 'worst case' scenario in terms of visual impact.

7.1 17 Upper Cliff Road

The anticipated visual impacts from 17 Upper Cliff Road are shown in **Figures 14 – 16** below. Comparison is provided between the existing view, the view under the Concept Plan approval (SSD 8699), and the proposed view under this detailed design SSDA.



Figure 14 Viewpoint 1 – 17 Upper Cliff Rd – Existing View

Source: V-Mark Design



Figure 15 Viewpoint 1 – 17 Upper Cliff Rd – View under SSD 8699 approval

Source: V-Mark Design



Figure 16 **Viewpoint 1 – 17 Upper Cliff Rd – Proposed View**

Source: V-Mark Design, Bickerton Masters

7.2 Lane Cove River

Anticipated view impacts from the Lane Cove River (taken from Onions Point) is shown in **Figures 17 – 19** below.



Figure 17 Viewpoint 2 – Lane Cove River – Existing View

Source: V-Mark Design



Figure 18 Viewpoint 2 – Lane Cove River – Proposed View

Source: V-Mark Design, Bickerton Masters



Figure 19 Viewpoint 2 – Lane Cove River – Proposed View – highlighted and scale enlarged for clarity

Source: V-Mark Design, Bickerton Masters

8.0 Visual Impact Assessment

8.1 Private Domain (17 Upper Cliff Road)

The following provides an assessment of private domain views from Northwood residential properties to the west (17 Upper Cliff Road) against Tenacity steps 1 – 4 as identified in **Section 5.1**.

8.1.1 Tenacity Steps 1 – 3

Step 1 – Views to be affected: The view is primarily of a suburban residential setting comprising low rise residential detached dwellings. Parts of the Sydney and North Sydney CBDs can be seen in the background above and behind this setting.. The view does not contain water, a land – water interface or any other elements considered to be of high value or iconic status under Tenacity. The value of the view is objectively assessed as moderate.

Step 2 – What part of the property the views are obtained: The view has been taken from the property at 17 Upper Cliff Road for consistency with the Greenwich Concept Approval (SSD 8699).

Step 3 – Extent of the impact:

The proposal does not block any significant view lines, and does not block views to the Sydney CBD or North Sydney CBD. The proposed buildings, including the tallest part of the proposal (the hospital building) do not generally protrude above the skyline when viewed from 17 Upper Cliff Road, and therefore does not detract from views of the sky.

Compared to the Greenwich Concept Approval, additional view loss is negligible.

The extent of impact is qualitatively assessed as minor on the Tenacity scale..

8.1.2 Tenancy Step 4 – Reasonableness

The visual impacts of the proposal are consistent with the anticipated impacts of development at the site, as established by the approved building envelopes under the Greenwich Concept Approval (SSD 8699). In this regard, it is noted that the reduction in building heights and incorporation of landscaped terraces, when compared to SSD 8699 as submitted, has resulted in a reduction in assessed visual impacts compared to the Concept Approval Visual Impact Assessment, which was provided at Appendix H of the Response to Submissions Report prepared by Ethos Urban dated 18 September 2019.

Therefore, the visual impact of the proposal from 17 Upper Cliff Road is considered to be consistent with the key directions of the planning framework, and is considered to be reasonable.

8.2 Public Domain (Lane Cove River)

Under the *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment version 3* (GLVIA3) methodology, VIA is undertaken against three key criteria:

1. Sensitivity;
2. Magnitude; and
3. Significance.

Assessment of expected visual impact against the above criteria is provided below. **Attachment A** provides further discussion around each of the above criteria.

8.2.1 Sensitivity

Table 2 below provides the sensitivity assessment of views from the Lane Cove River.

Table 2 Assessment of sensitivity of nominated viewpoints

Viewpoint	Main visual receptors	Value	Sensitivity
Lane Cove River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travellers on the Lane Cover River People engaged in outdoor recreation 	Scenic water viewpoint of interface between land and water	High

8.2.2 Magnitude

Table 3 below provides the magnitude assessment.

Table 3 Magnitude assessment

Viewpoint	Size and scale	Duration and reversibility	Magnitude
Lane Cove River	Imperceptible	Ongoing and capable of being reversed	Imperceptible

8.2.3 Significance

Table 4 below provides the significance assessment.

Table 4 Significance assessment

Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Significance
Lane Cove River	High	Imperceptible	Negligible

8.3 Discussion

As demonstrated above in **Figures 17 – 19**, the proposal is largely screened by vegetation when viewed from the Lane Cove River. Although the sensitivity of this viewpoint is high, due to being an important maritime thoroughfare as well as the river being frequently used for recreation, the proposal is largely imperceptible when viewed from this location. No proposed building protrudes above the skyline, and when viewed from the river the proposal exhibits a similar bulk and scale to existing dwellings (which are less tall but also less screened by vegetation).

The proposal is not considered to hinder the visual enjoyment of the Lane Cove River and surrounding area. Therefore, the overall significance of impacts from the Lane Cove River is considered negligible.

9.0 Assessment against the Planning Framework

This Supplementary Visual Impact Assessment responds to the planning framework as identified in **Section 6** above.

Assessment against the strategic and statutory planning context for the site, including the following legislation:

- *Lane Cove Local Environmental Plan 2009* (LLEP 2009);
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021* – Chapter 10: Sydney Harbour Catchment; and
- *Sydney Harbour Foreshore & Waterways Area Development Control Plan 2005*;

is provided within the Visual Impact Assessment prepared by Clouston Associates dated 22 April 2022.

The assessment of view impacts from 17 Upper Cliff Road is not considered to result in additional matters for assessment with regards to the above legislation.

With regards to view impacts from the Lane Cove River, it is noted that the zoning objectives in the LLEP 2009 for R2 Low Density Residential land requires consideration of views from the Lane Cove River:

Zone R2 - Low Density Residential

1 Objectives of zone

- *To provide for the housing needs of the community within a low density residential environment.*
- *To enable other land uses that provide facilities or services to meet the day to day needs of residents.*
- *To retain, and where appropriate improve, the existing residential amenity of a detached single family dwelling area.*
- *To encourage new dwelling houses or extensions of existing dwelling houses that are not highly visible when viewed from the Lane Cove River or Parramatta River.*
- *To ensure that landscaping is maintained and enhanced as a major element in the residential environment.*

Although the proposed development is not for a dwelling house, and neither is it located on R2 zoned land, consideration of the R2 zoning objectives has been requested as the proposed seniors housing buildings are permissible with consent under the former *State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing for Seniors or People with a Disability) 2004* (SEPP Seniors) due to the site being adjacent to R2 zoned land. For more information, refer to Section 5.2.2 of the EIS to which this Supplementary VIA is attached.

The analysis of view impacts in **Section 8** above have demonstrated that the proposal is not 'highly visible' from the Lane Cove River and will not result in adverse view impacts on the Lane Cove River.

10.0 Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Measures for the proposal are discussed in Section 9 of the Visual Impact Assessment prepared by Clouston Associates dated 22 April 2022.

This Supplementary VIA, through the analysis of two additional viewpoints from 17 Upper Cliff Rd and the Lane Cove River, has not identified any additional mitigation measures required for the proposal. The view impacts of the proposal are considered to be appropriate.

11.0 Conclusion

This Supplementary Visual Impact Assessment has considered the view impacts of the SSD 13619238 proposal from the following additional viewpoints:

- Viewpoint 1: Northwood private residential properties to the west (17 Upper Cliff Rd); and
- Viewpoint 2: The Lane Cove River.

This Supplementary VIA has found the anticipated visual impacts to be consistent with those assessed and found to be appropriate under the Greenwich Concept Approval (SSD 8699), and not result in unacceptable visual impacts and/or view loss. Buildings were found to generally be screened by vegetation, generally not project above the skyline, or block any significant sight lines.

Therefore, when viewed from the above viewpoints, the proposal is considered to have an acceptable visual impact.

Attachment A – GLVIA3 Criteria

Sensitivity

Sensitivity involves consideration of:

- the type of visual receptor (i.e., people) ordinarily exposed to the view; and
- the value of the view.

Type of Visual Receptor

While ultimately a personal matter and subject to variation, for the purposes of VIA each type of visual receptor can be considered to have a different level of overall sensitivity to change in their visual environment on a spectrum ranging from higher to lower (refer **Table A**).

Table A Level of likely sensitivity to change

Level of likely sensitivity to change	Type of visual receptor
Higher	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Residents at home• People, whether residents or visitors, who are engaged in outdoor recreation, including use of public footpaths, whose attention or interest is likely to be focused on the landscape and on particular views• Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes where travel involves recognised scenic routes• Visitors to heritage assets, or to other attractions, where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience• Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area
Lower	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes• Visitors to facilities or services (eg, shops, offices, cafes) that meet their day to day needs• People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation which does not involve or depend upon appreciation of views of the landscape• People at their place of work whose attention may be focused on their work or activity, not on their surroundings, and where the setting is not important to the quality of working life

Value

The value of a view is a complex concept. A variety of theories such as “prospect-refuge” inform a number of different approaches. These approaches range on a spectrum from those that say value is to be determined by the trained experts (the objectivist school) to those that suggest value can only be determined by an individual's perceptions. It is suggested that a balance between these two ends of the spectrum is most appropriate. In particular, due to the mechanics and limitations of planning policy, a bias is to be made to more objective, measurable and approaches that involve informed generalisations.

Under this approach, value is often influenced by components and composition when considered against aesthetic principles (e.g., features, edges or contrasts and composition) (Planisphere, 2016) and other aspects such as rarity, representativeness, and condition (LI and IEMA, 2013) and iconic status (Planisphere, 2016) (NSW Land and Environment Court).

In terms of general human preferences, the following principles have been consistently found in scenic preference studies and community consultation (AILA, 2018):

- water and natural elements are preferred over urban scenes;
- mountains and hills are preferred over flat land;

- views are preferred which include both mid-ground elements (with some detail discernible) and a background; and
- views with skyline features and views which include focal points are preferred.

The GLVIA3 states that value should be informed by consideration of:

- recognition of the value attached to particular views, for example in relation to heritage assets, or through planning designations.
- indicators of the value attached to views by visitors, for example through appearances in guidebooks or on tourist maps, provision of facilities for their enjoyment (such as parking places, sign boards and interpretive material) and references to them in literature or art.

In Tenacity, Roseth SC made specific reference to relative value, stating that in general:

- water views are valued more highly than land views;
- iconic views (eg of the Opera House, the Harbour Bridge or North Head) are valued more highly than views without icons; and
- whole views are valued more highly than partial views, eg a water view in which the interface between land and water is visible is more valuable than one in which it is obscured.

Visual amenity is also a relevant consideration. Under the GLVIA3, visual amenity is defined as “the overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of the people living, working, recreating, visiting or travelling through an area”. This is supported by the NSW Government, which states that “amenity is the pleasantness, attractiveness, desirability or utility of a place, facility, building or feature”.

Based on this, it is considered that views that have the following parameters are capable of being considered to have a higher value:

- designated landscapes or the backdrop to a heritage item;
- recognised and important viewpoints or from recognised scenic routes;
- full views to iconic landscape elements such as the Sydney Opera House; and
- other specific designation in an environmental planning instrument.

For the purposes of this VIA and to be meaningful in a DA setting, the value of a view can be considered to involve consideration of its characteristics as determined by an interplay of:

- components (ie, elements and features);
- composition; and
- other aspects.

This is shown in **Table B**.

Table B **Value**

Value	Components	Composition	Other aspects
Higher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural • Water • Mountains and hills • Skyline features • Icons • Heritage and heritage conservation areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly discernible mid ground and background • Focal points • Whole views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rare • Representative of a valued condition, intact and cohesive • Good condition • Recognition of the value attached to particular views

Lower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban • Land • Level landform • No skyline features • No icons • No heritage or heritage conservation areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesser distinction between midground and background • No focal points • Partial views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common • Not representative of a valued condition, intact or cohesive • Poor condition • No recognition of the value attached to particular views
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Magnitude

Magnitude is a key measure of visual impact in the GLVIA3 and the “Guideline for landscape character and visual impact assessment” (TfNSW, 2020).

Magnitude is measured based on consideration of:

- size or scale;
- geographical extent of the area influenced; and
- duration and reversibility.

It is important that magnitude is judged is a factor of deviation from the existing visual environment.

Size or Scale

Size or scale involves consideration of:

- the scale of the change in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view and changes in its composition, including the proportion of the view occupied by the proposed development.
- the degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics in terms of form, scale and mass, line, height, colour, and texture.
- the nature of the view of the proposed development, in terms of the relative amount of time over which it will be experienced and whether views will be full, partial or glimpses.

In general, large-scale changes which introduce new, non-characteristic or discordant or intrusive elements into the view are more likely to be placed in the major category.

Geographic Extent of the Area Influenced

Geographical extent of the area influenced involves consideration of:

- the angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor;
- the distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development; and
- the extent of the area over which the changes would be visible.

Duration and Reversibility

Duration and reversibility involve consideration of whether the proposal is:

1. ongoing and irreversible;
2. ongoing and capable of being reversed;
3. limited life (5 – 10 years); or
4. limited life (< 5 years).

It is important to note that whether a proposal can be considered to be ongoing and irreversible or ongoing capable of being reversed is relative. While there is generally not development proposal that is fully reversible, development of an apartment building that is intended to be strata titled (for example) can be considered ongoing and irreversible due to the challenges associated with its consequent removal, and certainly the return of the land to its previous state.

These considerations are then combined as shown in **Table C** below to provide a rating of magnitude based on a five point verbal scale:

1. major;
2. moderate;
3. minor;
4. insignificant; or
5. imperceptible.

Table C Factors of magnitude

Scale of change and geographical extent of the area influenced	Duration and / or reversibility				
		Ongoing and irreversible	Ongoing and capable of being reversed	Limited life (5 – 10 years)	Limited life (< 5 years)
	Major change over wide area	Dominant	Considerable	Considerable	Noticeable
	Major change over restricted area or Moderate change over wide area	Considerable	Considerable	Noticeable	Noticeable
	Moderate change over restricted area or Minor change over a wide area	Considerable	Noticeable	Noticeable	Perceptible
	Minor change over a restricted area or Insignificant change	Perceptible	Perceptible	Perceptible	Imperceptible
	Imperceptible change	Imperceptible	Imperceptible	Imperceptible	Imperceptible

Significance

Significance of visual impact is determined by combining judgements about sensitivity and magnitude (refer to **Table D** below).

The categories of significance are as follows:

1. Major;
2. High;
3. Moderate;
4. Low; or
5. Negligible.

The GLVIA3 provides the following guidance for judgements about significance:

"There are no hard and fast rules about what makes a significant effect, and there cannot be a standard approach since circumstances vary with the location and context and with the type of proposal. In making a judgement about the significance of visual effects the following points should be noted:

- effects on people who are particularly sensitive to changes in views and visual amenity are more likely to be significant*
- effects on people at recognised and important viewpoints or from recognised scenic routes are more likely to be significant*
- large-scale changes which introduce new, non-characteristic or discordant or intrusive elements into the view are more likely to be significant than small changes or changes involving features already present within the view".*

It should be noted that determination of significance does not automatically mean that the impact is unacceptable. Rather, subsequent consideration is required to be made of the reasonableness of the visual impact. Regard in this matter is to be given to the planning framework.

Table D Factors of significance

Sensitivity	Magnitude					
		Dominant	Considerable	Noticeable	Perceptible	Imperceptible
	High	Major	High	Moderate	Low	Negligible
	Medium	High	Moderate	Low	Low	Negligible
	Low	Moderate	Low	Low	Negligible	Negligible
	Negligible	Low	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible