

CROWS NEST OSD – SITE B

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

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REPORT

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GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS

Term/ Abbreviation	Definition
Cumulative impact	Consideration of the result of the incremental impact of the proposal when added to other past, current and known likely future activity (Transport for NSW, 2023)
DCP	Development Control Plan
DEM	Digital elevation model
DTM	Digital Terrain Model
Desired future character	A term used to capture the desirable future outcome or vision for an area as set down in planning documents or as professionally assessed and envisaged by urban designers or other built environment professionals (Transport for NSW, 2023)
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EP&A Act	NSW <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>
GIS	Geographic information system
Impact	The effect of a proposal, which can be adverse or beneficial, when measured against an existing condition (Transport for NSW, 2023)
Landscape	All aspects of a tract of land, including landform, vegetation, buildings, villages, towns, cities and infrastructure (Transport for NSW, 2023)
Landscape character	The combined quality of built, natural and cultural aspects which make up an area and provide its unique sense of place (Transport for NSW, 2023)
Landscape character type	Multiple similar landscape character zones repeated within a larger study area, grouped to avoid repetition in their description (Transport for NSW, 2023)
Landscape character zone	An area of landscape with similar properties or strongly defined spatial qualities, distinct from areas immediately nearby (Transport for NSW, 2023)
LCT	Landscape Character Type
LCZ	Landscape Character Zone
LEP	Local Environmental Plan
LGA	Local Government Area
Magnitude	The measurement of the scale, form and character of a development proposal when compared to the existing condition. Examples of assessing magnitude provided in Guideline for landscape character and visual impact assessment Environmental impact assessment practice note EIA-N04 (Transport for NSW, 2023) include: • a large interchange would have a very different impact on landscape character than a localised road widening in the same area. • a more distant bridge would have a lesser magnitude than one nearer to residents. • a vegetated embankment facing a parkland would have less contrast than a retaining wall in the same location.
NSC	North Sydney Council
OSD	Over Station Development
SEPP	State Environmental Planning Policy 2021
Project site	Refers to the area that would be directly disturbed by construction of the project (for example, as a result of ground disturbance and the construction of foundations for structures). It includes the location of construction activities, compounds and work sites, and the location of permanent infrastructure
SDPP	Station Design and Precinct Plan
SEARs	Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements
Sensitivity	The sensitivity of a landscape character zone or view and its capacity to absorb change of the nature of the proposal. In the case of visual impact this also relates to the type of viewer and number of viewers. Combined with magnitude, sensitivity provides a measurement of impact. (Transport for NSW, 2023)

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Term/ Abbreviation	Definition
SSDG	State Significant Development Guidelines
The Project	Refer to Proposal Outline
Transport for NSW	Transport for NSW is the lead agency of the NSW Transport cluster.
View	The sight or prospect of a landscape or scene (Transport for NSW, 2023)
Visibility	The state or fact of being visible or seen (Transport for NSW, 2023)
Visual impact	The impact on the views from residences, workplaces, and public places (Transport for NSW, 2023)
ZTI	Zone of theoretical (visual) influence

0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Proposal

The Crows Nest Metro station forms part of the development of the Sydney Metro City and Southwest line connecting Chatswood to Sydenham.

This report is being prepared to assess specifically the Site B Over Station Development (OSD) based on a developed concept prepared by Woods Bagot Architects.

The project comprises three main elements:

- The lower ground plane, comprising of a mixture of OSD scoped areas and metro-related services.
- A podium carpark extending two levels.
- Residential apartment on levels 4 -16.

Development Summary

Crows Nest OSD - Site B is a 14 storey tower above the Crows Nest Metro Station.

The site area is 1872sqm. The concept approval includes a maximum height to the top of the service zone of RL 158m and includes a maximum residential FSR of 13,000m².

The Metro Station is comprised of 3 levels:

Ground Level - Hume Street includes the OSD tower lobby, retail, and back of house spaces.

Level 01 includes a retail mezzanine, back of house, and a loading dock which is used for OSD garbage collection and is a future easement for rail authority access.

Level 02 contains plant rooms for the metro station.

The OSD car parking levels are located on level 5 and 6. These are naturally ventilated with 27 car spaces on level 5 and 28 car spaces on level 6. There is a total of 55 spaces.

Apartments are located from level 7 to 18. Level 19 and 20 contain penthouses.

A roof terrace on level 21 includes communal gardens and pools, as well as private penthouse terraces.

Level 7-8 : **10 apartments per floor**

Level 9-18: **11 apartments per floor**

Level 19: **8 apartments (5 x two storey)**

Level 20: **3 apartments**

Total number of apartments: **130**

Approach and methodology

This landscape character and visual amenity assessment has been undertaken using the framework from the *Guideline for Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment Environmental Impact Assessment Practice Note EIA-N04* (Transport for NSW, 2023) and with reference to *Landscape and Visual Assessment AILA Guidance Note for Queensland* (Australian Institute of Landscape Architects, 2018).

A desktop study of the study area was undertaken to:

- determine potential landscape character zones (LCZs) and landscape character types (LCTs) around the project site,
- map potential viewing envelopes of the project; and

- determine critical or significant views and vistas for visual amenity assessment.

Landscape character assessment

A landscape character assessment was undertaken to assist in determining the “the overall impact of a project on an area’s character and sense of place (what people think and feel about a place and how society values it, whether or not they are physically present at it).” (Transport for NSW, 2023).

For each LCT/LCZ an assessment was undertaken to understand the values of the landscape which in turn informs the sensitivity of both landscapes and views (visual amenity) around the identified LCT/LCZ to potential change.

For each LCT/LCZ, the level of magnitude of change to landscape character as a result of this project was assessed.

The combination of landscape character sensitivity of each of the LCTs/LCZs, and the magnitude of change, provides a rating of potential landscape character impact for each of the units.

Visual impact assessment

Subsequent to the Landscape character assessment, a visual impact assessment was undertaken to assist in defining ‘the day to day visual effects of a project on people’s views (what people see at a place, when they are there). (Transport for NSW, 2023)

For each of the viewpoints, using the sensitivity outputs from the LCTs associated with the viewpoints, an assessment was undertaken to understand the values of the landscape within the views, and the sensitivity of those views to change.

As well, for each of the viewpoints a level of magnitude of change was assessed using the scale, form, and character of project. Photomontages were produced to assist in the assessment of the magnitude of change from 3 viewpoints. Additionally, these photomontages assisted in describing general poetical impacts of the proposal.

The combination of sensitivity of a viewpoint to change, and the magnitude of change within that view, provides a rating of visual impact for each of the identified views during construction and operation.

Findings

Landscape character assessment

The desktop and site assessment identified 8 LCTs and 2 LCZs associated with the project site. The assessment found 1 LCZ with moderate level of potential landscape character impacts. The balance of the LCTs and LCZs with below a moderate level of potential landscape character impacts

Table 0-1 provides a summary of the assessment for potential landscape character impacts across all **8 LCTs** and **2 LCZs**.

Table 0-1: Summary of potential landscape character impacts

LCT/ LCZ	Landscape character Sensitivity	Magnitude of landscape character change	Landscape character impacts
LCT1 - Northern Low/ Medium Density residential	Medium landscape character sensitivity	Medium magnitude of change	Moderate landscape character impact
LCT2 - Southern Low/ Medium Density Residential	Low landscape character sensitivity	Low magnitude of change	Low landscape character impact
LCT3 - High Density Residential	Low landscape character sensitivity	Negligible magnitude of change	Negligible landscape character impact

LCT/ LCZ	Landscape character Sensitivity	Magnitude of landscape character change	Landscape character impacts
LCT4 - Mixed Use Residential/ Commercial	Low landscape character sensitivity	Negligible magnitude of change	Negligible landscape character impact
LCT5 - Low/ Medium Density Civic/ Special Activity	Moderate landscape character sensitivity	Low magnitude of change	Moderate-Low landscape character impact
LCT6 - High Density Civic Infrastructure	Low landscape character sensitivity	Negligible magnitude of change	Negligible landscape character impact
LCT7 - Parks/ Open Space	Moderate landscape character sensitivity	Low magnitude of change	Moderate-Low landscape character impact
LCT8 - Reserves/ Endemic Vegetation	High landscape character sensitivity	Negligible magnitude of change	Negligible landscape character impact
LCZ1 - Willoughby Road Town Centre Precinct	Low landscape character sensitivity	High magnitude of change	Moderate landscape character impact
LCZ2 - Artarmon Industrial Estate	Low landscape character sensitivity	Negligible magnitude	Negligible landscape character impact

Visual impact assessment

The desktop study and site inspection identified 14 viewpoints with potential for visual amenity impacts associated with the project.

The visual impact assessment found:

- Viewpoint 5 from the Pacific Highway would have moderate visual amenity impacts because of the proposal.
- Viewpoint 9, Willoughby Road at Clarke Street would have high-moderate visual amenity impacts because of the proposal.
- Viewpoint 10, Oxley Street at Pacific Highway, would have moderate visual amenity impacts because of the proposal.
- All other viewpoints would have lower than moderate visual amenity impacts because of the proposal.

Table 0-2 provides a summary of the assessment for potential visual impacts across all 14 viewpoints.

Table 0-2: Summary of assessment of potential visual impacts

Viewpoint	Name	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change – Const.	Visual Impact – Const.
VP01	Gore Hill Cemetery	High sensitivity	Negligible magnitude of change	Negligible visual impact
VP02	Gore Hill Oval	Moderate sensitivity	Negligible magnitude of change	Negligible visual impact
VP03	Matthew Street	Low sensitivity	Low magnitude of change	Low visual impact
VP04	St Thomas Cemetery	Moderate sensitivity	Low magnitude of change	Moderate-Low visual impact
VP05	Pacific Highway	Low sensitivity	High magnitude of change	Moderate visual impact
VP06	Holtermann Street at Sophia Street	Low sensitivity	Moderate magnitude of change	Moderate-Low visual impact
VP07	Shirley Road at Pacific Highway	Low sensitivity	Moderate magnitude of change	Moderate-Low visual impact
VP08	Crows Nest Community Centre	High sensitivity	Negligible magnitude of change	Negligible visual impact
VP09	Willoughby Road at Clarke Street	Moderate sensitivity	High magnitude of change	High-Moderate visual impact
VP10	Oxley Street at Pacific Highway	Low sensitivity	High magnitude of change	Moderate visual impact
VP11	Friedlander Place	Low sensitivity	Low magnitude of change	Low visual impact
VP12	Crest of Gillies Street	Moderate sensitivity	Nil magnitude of change	Nil visual impact
VP13	Observatory Hill Lookout	High sensitivity	Nil magnitude of change	Nil visual impact
VP14	Sydney Opera House	High sensitivity	Nil magnitude of change	Nil visual impact

Mitigation Strategies

The proposed mitigation strategies outlined in Section 6 are aimed at managing and minimising the potential visual impacts that have been identified based on the findings in this report. These mitigation strategies reflect the iterative design process undertaken by the broader design team in response to the NSW SEARs design guidelines required by state significant developments, as well as the Crows Nest Station Design and Precinct plan developed by Sydney Metro, in conjunction with the North Sydney Council's intended future outcomes for the region.

4 State design review panel meetings were held to ensure that the panel, representative of the interests of the NSW state government and their various guidelines, were happy with the outcome. Throughout this rigorous iterative process, several changes were made to the form and shape of project to aid in mitigating visual impact.

At a local council level, the project design responds to the North Sydney Council Planning scheme and the St Leonards and Crows Nest 2036 Plan built form principles, which serve as a reflection of the area's intended and desired character and values.

The mitigation strategies are broken into:

- Design Safeguards, and;
- Operational Safeguards

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

The Crows Nest Metro station forms part of the Sydney Metro City and Southwest line connecting Chatswood to Sydenham. Crows Nest is the second to last station heading north before Chatswood and is one of 6 new metro stations on the 16.5 kilometre stretch.

This report is being prepared to assess specifically the Site B Over Station Development (OSD) based on a developed concept prepared by Woods Bagot Architects. A previous Visual Impact Assessment was undertaken for the greater Metro precinct, and where relevant, information in this report will replicate previously presented information.

The project comprises three main elements:

- The lower ground plane, comprising of a mixture of OSD scoped areas and metro-related services.
- A podium carpark extending two levels, with an architecturally designed screen utilising natural ventilation. The space on the podium would be utilised for some medium sized trees and low shrubbery to aid in screening the carpark and creating a belt of greenery extending around the majority of the built form.
- The typical apartment levels (level 4 -16), the rooftop areas are a large communal space with shade trees.

Further information on the location of the project, and a description of the project site for the purposes of this document, is provided in the environmental impact statement (EIS).

Figure 1-1 provides an overview of the site context in which Crow's Nest Metro project sits

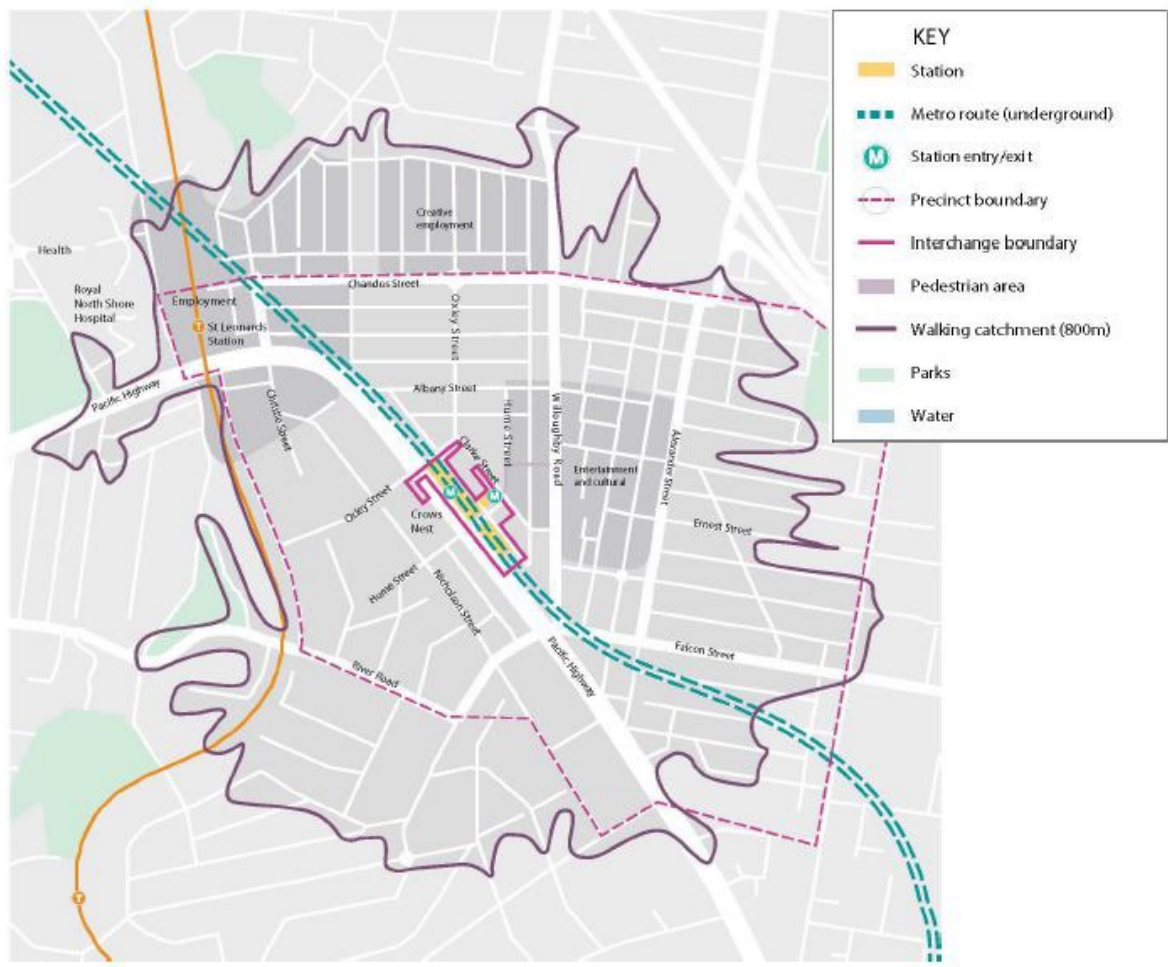


Figure 1-1 Project Site Context (Sydney Metro, 2022)

This report has been prepared in response to section 6 of the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) issued as condition of approval of this project.

Table 1-1: Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements – Design, Place and Movement

Development Specific SEARs	Where addressed in this report
Section 6 Visual Impact Provide a visual analysis of the development from key viewpoints, including photomontages or perspectives showing the proposed and likely future development. Where the visual analysis has identified potential for significant visual impact, provide a visual impact assessment that addresses the impacts of the development of the existing catchment.	Refer to <i>Section 3 - Landscape character assessment</i> for a baseline analysis of the landscape character in the areas surrounding the proposal. Refer to <i>Section 5 - Visual amenity impact ASSESSMENT</i> for a comprehensive analysis and assessment of critical viewpoints identified within the surrounding areas. Photomontage are included in <i>Section 5 - Visual amenity impact ASSESSMENT</i> for a visual representation of the project from key receiver locations. <i>Section 6 - Mitigation Strategies</i> and provides proposed mitigation measures and safeguards addressing potential landscape character and visual amenity changes as a result of the Project.

1.2 Study limitations and assumptions

This assessment is intended to be an objective report, based on professional analysis of the provided design. This report seeks to establish the anticipated landscape character and visual impacts of the project.

Landscape character and visual impact assessment requires qualitative (subjective) judgements to be made based on our professional background and expertise as Landscape Architects. The assessment process aims to be objective and describe any changes factually. Potential changes because of the project have been defined, however the significance of these changes requires qualitative (subjective) judgements to be made. The conclusions of this assessment therefore combine objective measurement and subjective professional interpretation.

The opinions, conclusions and any recommendations in this report are based on assumptions made by RPS as described in this report.

Due to limited access to along Clarke Lane at the time of the site visit, some potential viewpoints nearer to the building have been excluded from this report.

The digital terrain model utilised for the visual field analysis is based on the locations and sizes of buildings and vegetation on the 10th April, 2013; The viewpoints therefore are verified by site visits undertaken during the course of this assessment.

Due to the nature of the Metro and OSD developments, separating the analysis of the OSD and the Metro below would be limiting. To ensure a thorough analysis, the Site B OSD and Metro related infrastructure that sits above ground will be understood as one wholistic development (i.e. potential cumulative impacts) and considered as much when analysing and assessing possible visual impact.

1.3 Methodological overview

This report has been prepared in accordance with the required deliverables outlined under section 6 – Visual Impact of the Secretary of the Department of Planning and Environment (SEARs) document (application number SSD-61400212).

This report has been prepared to assess the potential landscape character and visual amenity impacts from constructing and operating the project. The report:

- a. addresses the relevant SEARs listed in Table 1-1
- b. uses a desktop evaluation to understand the relevant landscape character elements, potential visual field of the project and potential viewsheds in and around the project.
- c. uses a landscape character assessment to:
 - i. understand the existing landscape character,
 - ii. understand and extrapolate intended landscape character; and
 - iii. describe the existing environment.
- d. uses the outcomes of i. to iii. to set a baseline to assess changes in both landscape character and visual impacts arising from the Project; and
- e. recommends measures to mitigate and manage the impacts identified.

Detailed methodologies are provided in this report for:

- Landscape character assessment – see section 3.
- Visual envelope mapping – see section 4.
- Visual impact assessment – see section 5.

2 PROPOSAL OUTLINE

2.1 Site Context

The Crow's Nest OSD Site B is located between the Pacific Highway to the west, Hume Street to the north and Clarke Lane to the east in Crow's Nest; within the North Sydney Council LGA.

Site B is approximately five (5) kilometres north of Sydney's Central Business District (refer Figure 2-1). The site sits on the south-east corner of the wider Crows Nest Metro station precinct;

To the north of Hume Street is Site A, which currently has concept approval for a 21-storey commercial building. Further north is St Leonards and existing medium to high density commercial buildings. Site B backs onto Clarke Lane which runs parallel to the highway and connects to the Crows Nest village centre and heritage commercial district along Willoughby Road to the south. South of Site B along the highway for several hundred meters are an array of 2-storey mixed use buildings, generally comprising a retail ground floor offering and commercial or residential above.

The western side of Pacific Highway is a similar 2-storey mixed-use array of buildings, which transitions immediately into the low-density residential neighbourhoods of Wollstonecraft.

Topographically, the development sits within a depression on an elevated ridgeline that falls gradually to the north-east to Long Gully and more sharply to the south-west towards Berry Creek and the bay beyond.

Table 2-1: Proposal area particulars

Aspect	Details
Development Name	Crow's Nest Metro Site B OSD
Address	477, 449 and 491-495 Pacific Highway, Crow's Nest, NSW 2065
LGA	North Sydney Council
Coordinates (approx.)	Lat: -33.826172 Long: 151.199672
Site total area (approx.)	1,872m ²
Lot and Plan	Lot 100, DP747672, Lot 101, DP747672, Lot A, DP442804
Land zoning (site)	MU1 – Mixed Use (North Sydney Local Environmental Plan, 2015)

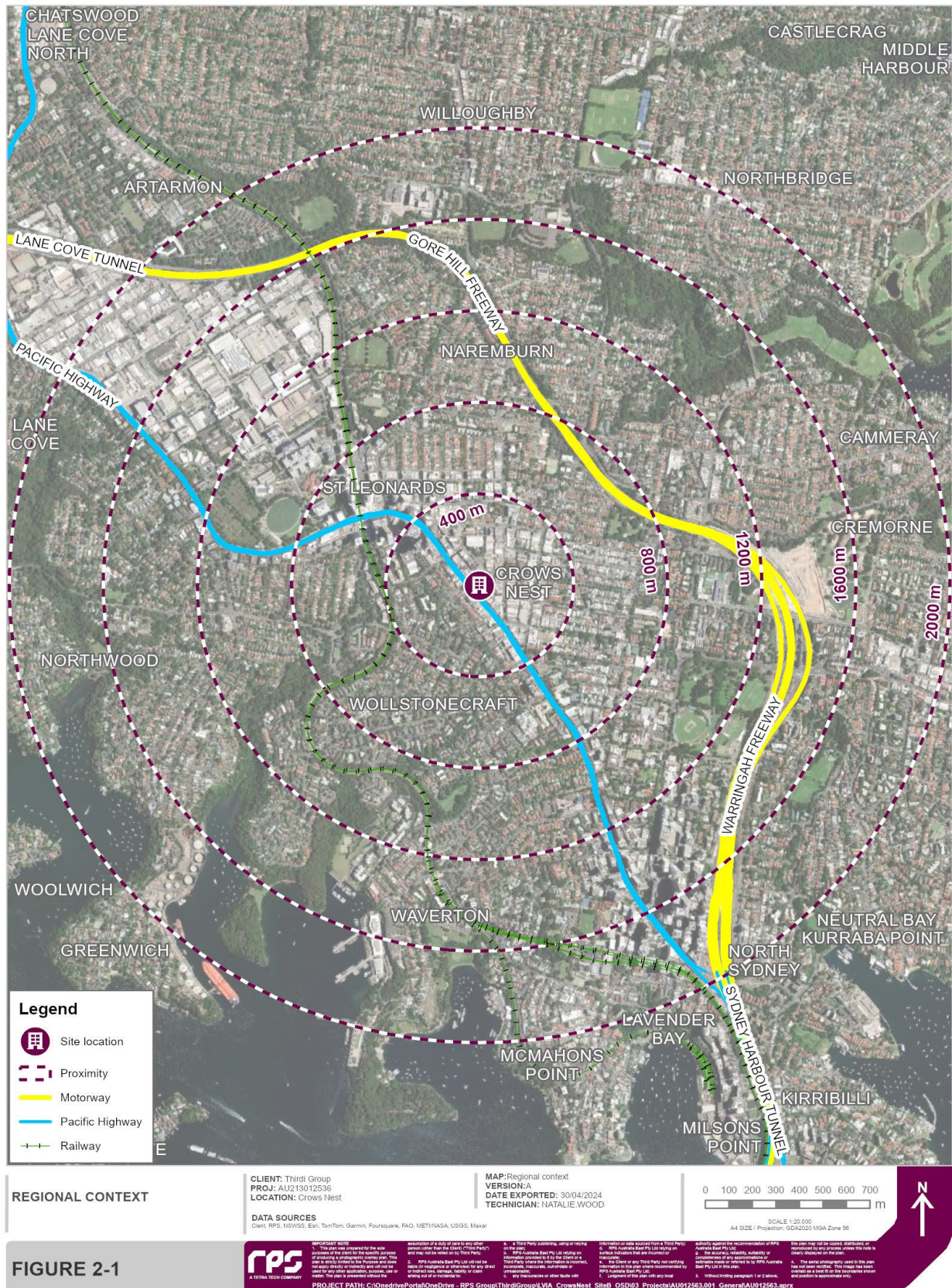


Figure 2-1: Project Regional Context

Source: Nearmaps

2.2 Project Description

The project area is inclusive of all the Crows Nest Metro Station precinct Site B over station built form. The architect's, Woods Bagot designed in close consultation with the Crows Nest Over-Station Guidelines (V13), the international Indigenous Design Charter and the NSW Government's Connecting with Country Framework to create an appropriately contextualised mixed-used building that closely considers its contemporary and historical surroundings.

Levels 2 and 3 are designated for carparking and incorporate a screening system that maintains natural ventilation. Landscape Architects, RPS, worked closely with Woods Bagot here to balance ventilation with planting to ensure a level of greenery to these lower levels. The residential levels focus heavily on ensuring the highest level of sustainable innovation through naturally ventilating corridors, articulated form to provide solar exposure and internal corridor planters with highly considered species selection to ensure a successful and thriving ecosystem.

The rooftop amenity is divided between private penthouse terraces to west and a communal space to the east. The architect's and Landscape Architect's (also by RPS) were focussed on incorporating mature native planting to provide shade and amenity as well as effectively subdividing the space into useable and appropriately functional pockets for maximum resident use. This includes a lap pool, smaller spa pool, a BBQ area and an outdoor undercover seating/WFH space.

The design process including 4 rounds of State Design Review Panel meetings to ensure that the architecture and landscape architecture satisfied the rigorous State Significant Development requirements as well as the Crows Nest Over Station Guidelines.



Figure 2-2 Site B OSD Artist's Impression

Source: Woods Bagot

2.4 Legislative Context

Planning legislation and policies play an important role in providing guidance on the valued qualities of landscape and those landscape qualities which are expected or are to be protected. The *project* and the *study area* are subject to legislation and policies across State and local levels of government in Australia. The following is an outline of those planning legislation and policies as they are relevant to the study area and landscape character and visual amenity noting no specific legislation at an international level was found to be directly applicable to the project and study area.

2.4.1 State Planning Context

This Proposal falls under the requirements of Clause 19 of Schedule 1 of the State Environment Planning Policy (Planning Systems), 2021 and as such is classified as a State Significant Development (SSD). Clause 19 states:

19. rail and related transport facilities:

- Development that has a capital investment value of more than \$30 million for any of the following purposes:
- Heavy railway lines associated with mining extractive industries or other industry.
- Railway freight terminals, sidings, and inter-modal facilities
- Development within a rail corridor or associated with railway infrastructure that has a capital investment value of more than \$30 million for any of the following purposes:
- Commercial premises or residential accommodation,
- Container packing, storage, or examination facilities,
- Public transport interchanges.

The Proposal is subject to the provisions of...

- *Better Placed: An integrated design policy for the built environment of New South Wales* (Government Architect - New South Wales, 2017).
- *Greener Places Framework* (Government Architect - New South Wales, 2020) and *Draft Greener Places Design Guide* (Government Architect - New South Wales, 2020).
- *Connecting with Country* (Issue No. 3, 2023) (Government Architect - New South Wales, 2023) and *Designing with Country Discussion Paper* (Government Architect - New South Wales, 2020).
- *Aligning Movement and Place* (NSW Government, 2021).
- *St Leonards and Crow's Nest 2036* (NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, 2020)

2.4.2 Local Planning Context

The *North Sydney Council Development Control Plan* is the document pertaining to and surrounding the project site. In particular, the following sections:

- Part C Section 3 – St Leonards / Crows Nest Planning Area
- Part C Section 10 – Waverton / Wollstonecraft Planning Area

Table 2-2 Local Planning Objectives

Reference	Principals/Objectives
North Sydney Development Control Plan – Locality Statement – St Leonards and Crows nest	Section 3.1 St Leonards Town Centre “The St Leonards Town Centre is identified as a Strategic Centre within the heart of the Eastern Economic Corridor and forms part of an identified Health and Education Precinct under the Greater Sydney Region Plan. In particular, it is a dense, significant, sustainable and busy urban centre where: • it will accommodate sustained growth in the health and technology sectors, whilst supporting creative industries, small to medium sized businesses, startups, galleries, entertainment and speciality retail to ensure it enhances the economic function of North Sydney, • Residents, workers and visitors enjoy a high level of amenity and quality of the natural and built environment • Residents, workers and visitors can easily access the Planning Area through excellent public transport links to the Sydney CBD, other suburban centres and many parts of the Sydney Region by rail and bus.” Relevant Principles • Predominately high to medium-high rise, commercial and mixed commercial and residential development. • High Density residential accommodation within mixed use buildings is concentrated close to the railway and metro stations and along the Pacific Highway. • To ensure that density and scale is concentrated close to the rail and metro stations and along the Pacific highway. • To ensure a positive transition in height and scale down from tall towers to neighbouring and adjoining lower density areas. • Buildings should generally transition in height from St Leonards Railway Station, Crows Nest metro Station and Pacific Highway down to the surrounding areas and the lower scale development on Chandos Street, Willoughby Road, Crows Nest Town Centre, the Upper Slopes Neighbourhood and Crows Nest neighbourhood. • To provide adequate privacy, access to light, air and outlook for the occupants of buildings, neighbouring properties and future buildings. Section 3.2 Crow’s Nest Town Centre “The Crow’s Nest Town Centre is smaller in scale in comparison to St Leonards, with 19th Century, two storey shopfront parapets along Willoughby Road and parts of the Pacific Highway. The Town Centre services the daily needs of residents and visitors, as well as having a lively dining district. Traffic is actively managed so pedestrians can move freely across Willoughby Road.”

Reference	Principals/Objectives
	Relevant Principles Intensify commercial and mixed use development in close proximity to the Metro station and along Pacific Highway with active uses at the ground floor levels commercial within the podium levels and residential above. • Predominately medium rise mixed use development, built boundary to boundary, with setbacks to laneways, and above the podium, with shops at ground level, non-residential/ residential on first floor and residential above • Expansion of Hume Street Park to provide a large connected piece of open space connecting Willoughby Road to Oxley Street...to provide the principle public open space area within the St Leonards / Crows Nest locality, generally located on land bound by Pole Lane, Oxley Street, Clarke Street and Hume Streets, with • Provision of a new public open space of Holtermann Street and backing onto the Crow's Nest community Centre...will provide additional public open space with excellent year-round sunlight Significant Views The following views and vistas are to be preserved and where possible enhanced: • Vista north along Willoughby Road and Pacific Highway Identity / Icons • Formalised outdoor dining on Willoughby Road, Burlington, Ernest and Holtermann Streets • Pacific Highway and Falcon Street, Major sub-arterial thoroughfares • Crow's Nest Metro Station • Hume Street Park • Ernest Place, Crow's nest Community Centre and the proposed Holtermann Street Park • To enhance the distinctive character of street within the Centre • To ensure the context of heritage items are not adversely eroded. All above points are extracts from the North Sydney Development Control Plan (DCP), 2013 (North Sydney Council, 2013)
<i>St Leonards and Crow's Nest 2036 Plan</i>	Vision <i>"The St Leonards and Crows Nest 2036 Plan will facilitate the urban renewal of St Leonards and Crows Nest for an expanding employment centre and growing residential community in the suburbs of St Leonards, Greenwich, Naremburn, Wollstonecraft, Crow's Nest, and Artarmon".</i> Relevant Precinct Objectives • Ensure new development retains and enhances important heritage elements...and preserving key views and vistas. • Retain and enhance the village atmosphere in and around Crow's nest, particularly along Willoughby Road • Consider cumulative impacts of new developments on existing areas, including...view loss. • Contain taller buildings between St Leonards Station and Crow's Nest Metro Station. • Concentrate higher density housing along the Pacific Highway between the St Leonards Station and Crows Nest Metro Station All above points are extracts from the St Leonards and Crow's nest 2036, 2020 (NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, 2020)

3 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

This section provides an understanding of the existing visual environment, identifying broader, recurring landscape character types (LCTs) within the project assessment radius, as well as specific landscape character zones (LCZs).

An appreciation of the visual character of the present landscape assists in the development of a baseline and provides means for the evaluation in visual impact assessment, and subsequently how the Proposal would influence:

- The present visual environment.
- The aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the landscape.
- The unique character of the landscape.

This section classifies the sensitivity and magnitude of change that the project has on these LCT/LCZs during operation and potential impacts to landscape character as a result of the proposal.

3.1 Methodology for Landscape Character Assessment

3.1.1 Identifying landscape character zones and types

The methodology for this assessment of landscape character impacts is adapted from the following:

- Guideline for Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment Environmental Impact Assessment Practice Note EIA-N04 (Transport for NSW, 2023)
- Landscape and Visual Assessment AILA Guidance Note for Queensland (Australian Institute of Landscape Architects, 2018).

An LCZ can be defined when there are apparent patterns of elements occurring consistently in a specific type of landscape. The LCZs, and prominent landscape features identified and described below collectively define the overall character for the part of the local area. Multiple, similar landscape character zones repeated within a study area are considered Landscape Character Types (Transport for NSW, 2023).

The LCZs and LCTs were initially identified through a desktop review the characteristics outlined in Table 3-1 (adapted from *Guideline for landscape character and visual impact assessment Environmental impact assessment practice note EIA-N04* (Transport for NSW, 2023)):

Table 3-1: Potential values that might define landscape character zones (LCZs)

Characteristic	Potential values that might define landscape character zones (LCZs)
Geology	The geological quality of an area whether it is rocky, alluvial, has deep or thin soils etc ↑
Topographic	The topographical qualities of an area whether it is hilly, rolling, flat, mountainous etc
Natural drainage	The natural drainage of an area the rivers, creeks, lakes and how these affect character
Ecological characteristics and land cover	The ecological characteristics and land cover of an area whether it is forested, wetland, scrub, grass etc and the quality and type of cover and dominant flora species
Agricultural qualities	The agricultural qualities of an area and how these contribute to character for example dairy/cane farming, forestry, wheat, and the types of field boundaries and farm structures
Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage and cultural	The Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage and cultural qualities of the area whether they are formally designated in planning documents, including the presence of individual items and broader conservation areas or instead aren't listed but reflect local traditions around community, cultural practice, stories, prior occupancy and significant events
Planning designations	The planning designations of an area relating to landscape character including desired future character including listing on registers of significant places, whether international, federal, state or local
'Movement and Place' assessment (If available)	the conclusions of the 'Movement and Place' assessment of the road corridor carried out prior to the commencement of the project.
Settlement patterns	How the settlements (farms, villages towns cities) fit into their natural setting and topography

Characteristic	Potential values that might define landscape character zones (LCZs)
Built form	The built form of the towns and cities, the composition of buildings, open space, civic and business areas and transport networks
Open space	The character and quality of parks and other open space throughout the area
Green infrastructure	The contribution of green infrastructure and vegetation including the prevalence and nature of trees, shrubs and groundcover, and the significance of individual trees or groups of trees including their contribution to canopy cover
Cultural and recreational elements	The main cultural and recreational elements of an area—the parks, popular walks, meeting places, community features and cultural icons
Demographics	The demographics of an area and how that extends to influence aspects of character
Architectural styles	The style of architecture, the materials, forms, historical mixes and design qualities
cultural and recreational elements	The main cultural and recreational elements of an area—the parks, popular walks, meeting places, community features and cultural icons
The infrastructure environment	The scale and pattern of rail, footpaths, roads, active transport, bridges, electricity pylons, dams etc. and the style and form of boundaries, fences, walls, lighting and other associated infrastructure elements
Economic and industrial features	Major economic or industrial features such as factories, quarries, business parks etc. ¹ The spatial qualities of an area—how enclosed or open it is, as defined by ridge lines, vegetation and built form Characteristics which may be harder to objectively define but still would be important in understanding how a place is valued such as sensory aspects of a place (for example its scenic quality, the prevalence of particular sounds or smells); the spiritual aspects of a place
Spatial qualities	How enclosed or open the area is, as defined by ridge lines, vegetation and built form
Other special qualities	Other characteristics which may be harder to objectively define but still would be important in understanding how a place is valued such as sensory aspects of a place (for example its scenic quality, the prevalence of particular sounds or smells); the spiritual aspects of a place
Seasonality	If relevant, how the area changes daily and seasonally—whether there is substantial night time activity, whether there are peaks which coincide with holiday periods or the dominant climatic conditions

The LCZs and LCTs are verified by undertaking site inspection of the areas to confirm those qualities identified in the desktop analysis.

Site inspection verifying the LCZs and LCTs were undertaken on the following dates:

- 1 November 2023
- 15 March 2024

3.1.2 Assessing landscape character impacts

To understand potential landscape character impacts, The LCZs and LCTs identified within 2km from the proposal are evaluated for:

1. The inherent capability of each LCZs or LCTs to absorb the landscape character impacts associated with the proposal.
2. The potential magnitude of the changes to the landscape character considering the size, scale, geographical area, duration and reversibility of the effects on the landscape.

Sensitivity is assessed based on the ability for each character area 'to absorb change of the order of the proposal' (Transport for NSW, 2023). Certain elements within the landscape would have a higher sensitivity than others. For example, an area listed on the UNESCO world heritage register would likely correlate with a higher level of sensitivity, or a pristine natural environment is likely to be more sensitive to a change of the nature of a four lane motorway than a built up industrial area. (Transport for NSW, 2023).

Landscape sensitivity is ranking based on the definitions below in Table 3-2 (adapted from Large-Scale Solar energy guidelines - Technical Supplement -Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Department of Planning and Environment - NSW, 2022).

Table 3-2: Landscape Character Sensitivity Level Ranking

Level of Landscape Character Sensitivity	Example of factors in defining landscape character sensitivity
Low- Landscape Character Sensitivity	- The landscape is highly modified from its natural state. - The landscape does not have any specific recognisable features. - No specific planning controls attribute special value to this landscape. - The landscape characteristics of the unit exhibited are substantially robust, degraded or the value of the unit is low enough to accommodate change without a notable alteration to its distinctive features or adverse effects to the unit's qualities. This unit has a high threshold for significant or detrimental change
Moderate- Landscape Character Sensitivity	- The landscape is somewhat modified from its natural state. - The landscape is recognisable at a local level. - Planning controls recognise the landscape character type/zone but does not attribute specific special values to the landscape. - The landscape characteristics of the unit exhibited are moderately susceptible to change. - This unit can potentially accommodate change <i>in select situations</i> given careful consideration without a notable change or alteration to its distinctive features or adverse effects to the unit's qualities. This unit has an Intermediate threshold for significant or detrimental change
High- Landscape Character Sensitivity	- The landscape is not impacted by human intervention. - The landscape is highly recognizable at a national level. - Planning controls attribute specific special value to the landscape - The landscape characteristics of the unit exhibited are highly susceptible to change and/or the value of the unit is high/moderate to high. - This unit is unable to accommodate this type of development without a notable change or alteration to its distinctive features or adverse effects to the unit's qualities. This unit has a very low threshold for significant or detrimental change

For each of the LCTs and LCZs, the magnitude of change (inclusive of cumulative impact) is assessed a rating based on the physical scale of the project, how distant it is and the contrast it presents to the existing condition. Magnitude of the Changes to the Landscape Character are ranked with one of the following ratings:

- High Magnitude of Landscape Character Change
- Moderate Magnitude of Landscape Character Change
- Low Magnitude of Landscape Character Change
- No Magnitude of Landscape Character Change

Overall Landscape character impacts has been assessed based on Table 3-3:

Table 3-3: Impact Ranking Matrix – Landscape Character Impact

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Magnitude of the Changes to the Landscape Character			
	High Magnitude of Landscape Character Change	Moderate Magnitude of Landscape Character Change	Low Magnitude of Landscape Character Change	No Magnitude of Landscape Character Change
High Sensitivity	High landscape character impact	High-moderate landscape character impact	Moderate landscape character impact	Negligible landscape character impact
Moderate Sensitivity	High-moderate landscape character impact	Moderate landscape character impact	Moderate-low landscape character impact	Negligible landscape character impact
Low Sensitivity	Moderate landscape character impact	Moderate-low landscape character impact	Low landscape character impact	Negligible landscape character impact

3.2 Landscape Character Type and Zones

The desktop evaluation and site verification identified the following LCTs, which are shown in Figure 3-1:

- **Northern Low/ Medium Density Residential**
- **Southern Low/ Medium Density Residential**
- **Medium - High Density Residential**
- **Mixed Use Residential/ Commercial**
- **Low/ Medium Density Civic/ Special Activity**
- **High Density Civic Infrastructure**
- **Parks/ Open Space**
- **Reserves/ Endemic Vegetation**

The following LCZ's were identified through desktop evaluation, site verification, and planning policy, to be of unique significance, and therefore require individual assessment:

- **Willoughby Road Precinct**
- **Artarmon Industrial Estate**

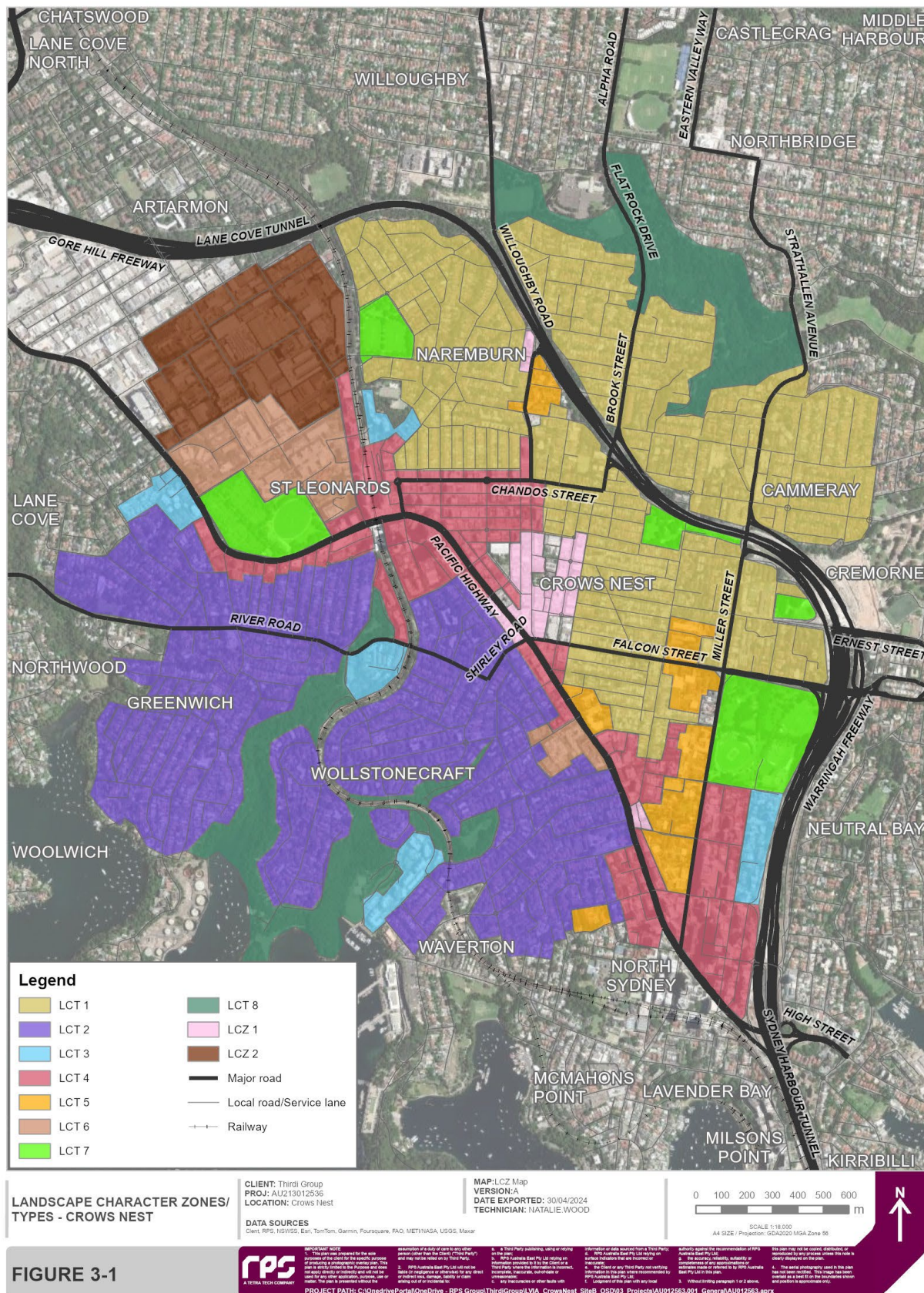


Figure 3-1: Landscape Character Types and Zones

3.3 Assessment of Landscape Character Impacts

3.3.1 LCT 1 – Northern Low/ Medium Density Residential

LCT 1 includes the broader residential neighbourhoods north and east of the Pacific Highway. This character type sits between Flat Rock Creek and Gore Hill Freeway to the north; Cremorne to the east; Civic and special activities centres to the south, and Artarmon employment precinct and Crows Nest Town Centre to the west. This character type consists predominately of medium and low density residential dwellings, with occasional small commercial businesses integrated into the pre-existing built form. A portion of this character type sit within the bounds of heritage neighbourhoods outlined in the NSC DCP including:

- Holtermann Estate A Conservation area
- Holtermann Estate B Conservation area
- Holtermann Estate C Conservation area
- Holtermann Estate D Conservation area

While historically significant, these conservation areas are perceived as a portion of the broader character type, and therefore not assessed individually.

The defining characteristics of this LCT are:

- Predominately low rise (1-2 storey) detached and semi-detached dwellings ranging in style from Victorian to Federation/Edwardian styles, Californian Bungalow through to Post-war and modern.
- Strong terracotta colour palette throughout (tile rooves and bricks)
- Varying building setback from the street depending on the building style.
- infill development to four stories of varying ages. Natural red and painted brick construction. Various detailing with details and materials similar to the workers cottages. Brick walk-ups are common throughout, among other styles.
- Inconsistently vegetated streetscapes throughout the character type, with a prevalence of mature street trees along Ernest Street, Falcon Street, Hayberry Street.
- Lot and building sizes increase further north into Naremburn, between the rail corridor and Gore Hill Freeway



Figure 3-2: Landscape Character Type 1 - Northern L/ MDR (Photo RPS)

Landscape Character Zone / Type	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Magnitude of Landscape Character Change	Assessed Landscape Character Impact
LCT1 – Northern Low/Medium Density Residential	Moderate Landscape Character Sensitivity	Moderate Magnitude of Landscape Character Change	Moderate Landscape Character Impact
	- The areas comprising this landscape character type are highly urbanised/modified with minimal vegetative elements. - Due to the overarching heritage neighbourhood character occurring throughout the character type; this area has little capacity to absorb change.	The project will be a moderate divergence from the current character of the LCT	

3.3.2 LCT 2 – Southern Low/ Medium Density Residential

LCT 2 includes the broader residential neighbourhoods south of the Pacific Highway. This character type is bordered by the Pacific Highway to the north and east; and stretches south towards the bay to the farthest assessed extent from the project site. The NSC DCP defines the following neighbourhoods within this LCT:

- The upper slopes
- Waverton Villager Neighbourhood
- Wollstonecraft Peninsula Neighbourhood

There are also several small conservation areas scattered throughout the character type that represent various intact collections of historically significant residential built form; these include:

- Wollstonecraft Conservation Area
- Crows Nest Road Conservation Area
- Priory Road Conservation Area
- Bay road Conservation Area

The broader character type consists predominately of medium and low-density residential dwellings. The defining characteristics of this LCT are:

- A steep topography running northwest to southeast away from the Pacific Highway to the bay.
- A riparian vegetation corridor/ parkland coinciding with Berry's Creek divides the LCT into the separate yet similar zones; as well as dividing the suburbs of Wollstonecraft and Greenwich.
- Medium density mid-century brick walk-ups are common throughout, among other styles. These vary in height from The density and prevalence of medium density flats varies throughout, with a stronger density south and west of the Pacific Highway in Wollstonecraft and Waverton.
- Generally, highly vegetated streetscapes throughout the character type, with particular prevalence of mature street trees throughout Wollstonecraft, Waverton and the residential areas of Greenwich where greater setbacks allow for a greater degree of borrowed landscape. Species are a mix of medium to large native and exotic species, including a prevalence of Eucalyptus.



Figure 3-3: Landscape Character Type 2 - Southern L/ MDR (Photo: RPS)

Landscape Character Zone / Type	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Magnitude of Landscape Character Change	Assessed Landscape Character Impact
LCT 2 – Southern Low/Medium Density Residential	Low Landscape Character Sensitivity - The areas comprising this landscape character type are all heavily urbanised/modified with varying low to moderate vegetative elements; the majority of which is street trees and verge vegetation and private front and backyard vegetation or varying quantities. - This character type has a fair capacity to absorb change while retaining its distinct character traits. This is predominately due to the intermittent presence of pre-existing multi-storey flat and apartment buildings.	Low Magnitude of Landscape Character Change The project sits predominately beyond view and therefore does not noticeably impact the character of the LCT	Low Landscape Character Impact

3.3.3 LCT 3 - High Density Residential

LCT 3 consists of separated patches of wholly high density residential dwellings, both privately owned and commercial enterprise. These buildings range in size from 5 – 12 storeys tall; and are generally grouped in arrays of similar styles and heights, assumedly corresponding to individual, large-scale developments.

The defining characteristics of this character type are:

- Tall multi-storey residential flats and apartments sited within large blocks with generous setbacks.
- Moderate to heavily vegetated surrounding landscape, in particular the Gasworks Neighbourhood in Wollstonecraft.
- An array of materials and colours, ranging from a modern white palette to an archetypal Sydney brick and terracotta.



Figure 3-4: Landscape Character Type 3 - High Density Residential (Photo: Google Maps)

Landscape Character Zone / Type	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Magnitude of Landscape Character Change	Assessed Landscape Character Impact
LCT 3 – High Density Residential	Low Landscape Character Sensitivity	Negligible Magnitude of Landscape Character Change	Negligible Landscape Character Impact
	• The areas within this character zone are highly urbanised and consist of high-density built form with varying height and size. • This character type high density is generally associated with a moderate quantity of introduced vegetation, which softens the bulk of the buildings. • This character type has substantial capacity to absorb change without losing its attributes.	• The project infrastructure closely resembles the character of this LCT and therefore there is a negligible magnitude of change.	

3.3.4 LCT 4 - Mixed Use Residential/ Commercial

LCT 4 consists of high density mixed use residential and commercial offerings. This character type is generally centred around the Pacific highway within the St Leonards town centre, Crows Nest Town Centre and North Sydney commercial precinct.

The defining characteristics of this character type are:

- Commercial or retail ground floor offerings and its associated infrastructure and amenity with either commercial or residential offerings above the podium level.
- A mix of contemporary glass clad high rise and concrete brutalist or modernist era buildings.
- The ground floor character is an eclectic mix of protected heritage F and B and newer retail and commercial offerings.
- The noise of the Pacific Highway bisecting or running nearby to the majority of this character type as well as the higher daily population density creates a bustling atmosphere synonymous with commercial centres.
- The concentrated presence of hard surfaces and sporadic street trees creates a notable urban heat island effect throughout.
- Urban plazas and pockets are dotted throughout and are at there busiest during the lunch rush.
Notable examples are:
 - Hume Street Park
 - Friedlander Place
 - Christie Street Reserve



Figure 3-5: Landscape Character Type 4 - Mixed use Residential/ Commercial (Photo: RPS)

Landscape Character Zone / Type	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Magnitude of Landscape Character Change	Assessed Landscape Character Impact
LCT 4 – Mixed use Residential/ Commercial	Low Landscape Character Sensitivity	Negligible Magnitude of Landscape Character Change	Negligible Landscape Character Impact
	The highly built up and dense nature of this allow for a significant ability to absorb change throughout all areas of this character type.	The project infrastructure closely resembles the character of this LCT and therefore there is a negligible magnitude of change.	

3.3.5 LCT 5 - Low/ Medium Density Civic/ Special Activity

LCT 5 consists of low to medium density civic spaces, including public buildings like libraries and community centres, as well as churches, sprawling, low rise school grounds and accompanying open space. These spaces generally comprise a mix of pre-modern and/or heritage buildings and contemporary additions, creating a blend of built form and open space unique to this LCT.

The defining characteristics of this LCT are:

- Generally low density, sprawling buildings
- Extensive vegetation throughout
- Large areas of sealed concrete associated with school grounds and civic infrastructure (parking, sports courts, play and gathering spaces)
- Large areas of turf associated with sports, as well as civic parks
- A mixture of religious and secular buildings, particularly Catholic and other similar Christian places of worship. These are associated with religious schools, as well as stand alone churches sited near to community centres.
- While predominately privately owned, the general layout of key localities within this LCT are similar in character to public precincts, with some spaces being co-opted by the neighbourhood similar to a public park.



Figure 3-6: Landscape Character Type 5 - Low/ Medium Density Civic/ Special Activity (Photo: Google Maps)

REPORT

Landscape Character Zone / Type	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Magnitude of Landscape Character Change	Assessed Landscape Character Impact
LCT 5 – Low/ Medium Density Civic/ Special Activity	Moderate Landscape Character Sensitivity A mixture of both unique heritage and homogenous modern built form throughout allows for a moderate ability for this LCT to absorb change.	Low Magnitude of Landscape Character Change - Minimal interaction between the project and this LCT. - Generally cohesive type of infrastructure that only moderately diverges from the character of the LCT.	Moderate Low Landscape Character Impact

3.3.6 LCT 6 - High Density Civic Infrastructure

LCT 6 consists of high-density civic infrastructure, this generally refers to metropolitan hospitals and health precincts, and inner-city universities.

The key localities within this character type are:

- The Mater Hospital
- The Royal North Shore Hospital Precinct
- TAFE NSW and Bradfield Senior College

The defining characteristics of this LCT are:

- High density, modern infrastructure with a heavy ground floor presence, ranging in height from 5 to 12 storeys. Generally, these collections of buildings are homogenous in style, and dominate complexes with pre-modern and heritage built form secondary.
- Multistorey carparking and overpass infrastructure.
- Networks of narrow, highly pedestrianised streets throughout the various complexes.
- Extensive ground floor activation through cafes, metro scale convenience and grocery stores, large paved or concrete forecourts and courtyards. These spaces are predominately focused within the internal areas of the broader precinct.
- Extensive highly maintained vegetation throughout, including street and canopy trees, wide vegetated and WSUD friendly verges and 'pocket parks'



Figure 3-7: Landscape Character Type 6 - High Density Civic Infrastructure (Photo: Google Maps)

Landscape Character Zone / Type	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Magnitude of Landscape Character Change	Assessed Landscape Character Impact
LCT 6 – High Density Civic Infrastructure	Low Landscape Character Sensitivity	Negligible Magnitude of Landscape Character Change	Negligible Landscape Character Impact
	All areas within this LCT are highly modified, with a homogenous urban character, allowing for a significant ability to absorb change throughout.	The Project infrastructure is of a similar scale and form as those typical of this LCT and therefore a negligible divergence of character	

3.3.7 LCT 7 – Parks/ Open Space

LCT 7 consists of (predominately) public open space, ranging in size from neighbourhood pocket parks to larger colonial-era parklands. The character of this LCT intersects closely with LCT 5, with the defining difference being a reduced amount of privately owned built form (school grandstands, sports clubhouses etc.) creating the perceived character of a publicly accessible parks.

Areas with a predominance of open space and a presence of activity beyond the initial intentional use of the space (use of sports ovals outside game day etc.) defines a space under LCT 7, where as those spaces uses predominately for their privately appointed purpose (students using a school courtyard) would be assumed into the dominant character of the overall space.

The key spaces within this LCT are:

- Gore Hill Park
- Naremburn Park
- Sir Thomas Rest Park
- Anzac Park
- St Leonards Park

The defining characteristics of this LCT are:

- Large, open swathes of turf (generally sports fields), surrounded by trees
- Most parks have play spaces and sealed sports courts
- Predominately bounded by roads on most sides
- Extensive presence of mature, contrived native and introduced vegetation.
- Well maintained and ordered, excepting Gore Hill Cemetery which has a run-down, overgrown and undermaintained appearance.
- Some infrastructure including public toilets, sports clubhouses, public auditoriums, memorials, and heritage buildings.



Figure 3-8: Landscape Character Type 7 - Parks/ Open Space (Photo: RPS)

Landscape Character Zone / Type	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Magnitude of Landscape Character Change	Assessed Landscape Character Impact
LCT 7 – Parks/ Open Space	Moderate Landscape Character Sensitivity	Low Magnitude of Landscape Character Change	Moderate-Low Landscape Character Impact
	- This LCT is heavily modified with contrived vegetation throughout. - This LCT has some capacity to accommodate change while maintaining its valued attributes.	- The project is generally obscured from this LCT - The parklands within this LCT are generally rimmed by trees and inward facing or embracing of their urban outlook. - The parks and open space have a noticeable urban parkland character that comfortably accommodates urban infrastructure.	

3.3.8 LCT 8 – Reserves/ Regrowth Vegetation

LCT 8 consists of regrowth or otherwise undeveloped, vegetated land. Generally, these spaces are associated with creek corridors and form heavily vegetated, linear corridors.

The defining characteristics of this LCT are:

- Heavily vegetated with native and introduced species
- Some minimal infrastructure. Predominantly footpaths and parkland elements
- Highly undulating and generally corresponding to creek lines running from ridgelines to the bay



Figure 3-9: Landscape Character Type 8 - Reserves/ Endemic Vegetation (Photo: google Maps)

Landscape Character Zone / Type	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Magnitude of Landscape Character Change	Assessed Landscape Character Impact
LCT 8 – Reserves/ Endemic Vegetation	High Landscape Character Sensitivity	Negligible Magnitude of Landscape Character Change	Negligible Landscape Character Impact
	• The landscape is somewhat modified from its natural state (being regrowth areas of vegetation). • The landscape is likely valued by the community due to its juxtaposition to the urban environment. • Planning controls recognise the landscape character type and protect development in these areas.	• The proposal does not impact this landscape character type.	

Landscape Character Zone / Type	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Magnitude of Landscape Character Change	Assessed Landscape Character Impact
	The landscape characteristics are moderately susceptible to change. This unit can potentially accommodate change in select situations given careful consideration without a notable change or alteration to its distinctive features or adverse effects to the unit's qualities.		

3.3.9 LCZ 1 – Willoughby Road Town Centre Precinct

Willoughby Street precinct is 'smaller in scale in comparison to St Leonards along Willoughby Road and parts of the Pacific Highway. The Town Centre services the daily needs of residents and visitors, as well as having a lively dining district. Traffic is actively managed so pedestrians can move freely across Willoughby Road.' (North Sydney Council, 2013)

The defining characteristics of this LCZ are:

- Heritage and character retail and mixed-used residential developments
- A mix of passive and active recreational spaces
- Extensive outdoor street dining, generally surrounded by built up planters to the back of the curb.
- Wide, covered walkways of pavement and concrete
- Mature street trees occur in stretches, particularly around the Crows Nest Community Centre.
- A strong palette of contrasting colours.
- Predominately 2-lane streets with on-street parallel parking



Figure 3-10: Landscape Character Zone 1 Typical - Willoughby Road Town Centre Precinct (Photo: RPS)

Landscape Character Zone / Type	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Magnitude of Landscape Character Change	Assessed Landscape Character Impact
LCZ1 - Willoughby Road Town Centre Precinct	Moderate Landscape Character Sensitivity	Moderate Magnitude of Landscape Character Change	Moderate Landscape Character Impact
	- The landscape is heavily modified from its natural state. - The landscape is recognisable at a local level. - This precinct is noted in the North Sydney Planning scheme as being an area of significant character - The landscape character changes proposed by the development are recognized in the planning scheme as desired future character and as a result the landscape sensitivity is determined to be low.	The proposed development, along with adjacent approved proposals, significantly alter the scale of the built environment adjacent to this LCZ.	

3.3.10 LCZ 2 – Artarmon Industrial Estate

Artarmon Industrial estate sits to the north of the project site between the Pacific Highway and Gore Hill Freeway, and adjacent to the North Shore private hospital.

The defining characteristics of this LCZ are:

- Large lots consisting of predominantly:
 - Low rise warehouses
 - Multi-storey carparks
 - Business parks of varying scale
 - Shopping centres and other branded free standing retail offerings
- The built form is predominantly devoid of notable character 'big box' style



Figure 3-11: Landscape Character Zone 2 - Artarmon Industrial Estate (Photo: Google Maps)

Landscape Character Zone / Type	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Magnitude of Landscape Character Change	Assessed Landscape Character Impact
LCZ2 - Artarmon Industrial Estate	Low Landscape Character Sensitivity	Negligible Magnitude of Landscape Character Change	Negligible Landscape Character Impact
	• The landscape is heavily modified from its natural state. • The landscape is recognisable at a local level. • Planning controls recognise the landscape character type/zone but does not attribute specific special values to the landscape.	• The project has little visibility at this distance from the LCZ	

3.4 . Summary of Landscape Character Impacts

The assessment of landscape character undertaken by RPS found that the project would potentially result in moderate landscape character impacts for two LCTs/LCZs. The project would result in less than moderate landscape character impacts for the remaining eight LCTs/LCZs.

Table 3-4 provides a summary of the assessment for potential landscape character impacts across all **8 LCTs** and **2 LCZs**.

Table 3-4: Summary of potential landscape character impacts

LCT/ LCZ	Landscape character Sensitivity	Magnitude of landscape character change	Landscape character impacts
LCT1 - Northern Low/ Medium Density residential	Medium landscape character sensitivity	Medium magnitude of change	Moderate landscape character impact
LCT2 - Southern Low/ Medium Density Residential	Low landscape character sensitivity	Low magnitude of change	Low landscape character impact
LCT3 - High Density Residential	Low landscape character sensitivity	Negligible magnitude of change	Negligible landscape character impact
LCT4 - Mixed Use Residential/ Commercial	Low landscape character sensitivity	Negligible magnitude of change	Negligible landscape character impact
LCT5 - Low/ Medium Density Civic/ Special Activity	Moderate landscape character sensitivity	Low magnitude of change	Moderate Low landscape character impact
LCT6 - High Density Civic Infrastructure	Low landscape character sensitivity	Negligible magnitude of change	Negligible landscape character impact
LCT7 - Parks/ Open Space	Moderate landscape character sensitivity	Low magnitude of change	Moderate-Low landscape character impact
LCT8 - Reserves/ Endemic Vegetation	High landscape character sensitivity	Negligible magnitude of change	Negligible landscape character impact
LCZ1 - Willoughby Road Town Centre Precinct	Moderate landscape character sensitivity	Moderate magnitude of change	Moderate landscape character impact
LCZ2 - Artarmon Industrial Estate	Low landscape character sensitivity	Negligible magnitude	Negligible landscape character impact

The RPS assessment found that the project would result in a number of positive landscape character outcomes, at a the local scale, including:

- Greater extent of cohesive built form along the Pacific Highway
- Increased street vegetation in alignment with development requirements
- Improved pedestrian experience along Pacific Highway, Oxley and Clarke Street
- Extensive podium and rooftop vegetation visible from all aspects, creating a net positive increase in canopy cover
- Cohesive façade materiality influenced by surrounding character and heritage buildings

4 VISUAL ENVELOPE MAPPING

To determine potential viewing locations, and therefore those areas which might be visually impacted by the project, the zones of theoretical visual influence (ZTI) were generated using the GIS software ArcGIS Pro. Table 4-1 lists the configurations that were used to generate the ZTI.

Table 4-1: Configuration for generation of ZTI

Item	Configuration
Base Topographical Data	NSW LiDAR point cloud data service – DSM at 10cm Resolution
ZTI base point frequency	Perimeter sightlines (sightlines are only run to the cells on the perimeter of the visible areas in order to establish visibility areas. This method has a better performance than the 'All Sightlines' method since less sightlines are run in the calculation.)
Eye Height	1.8m from ground level as determined by the DSM
Receptor Height	66.5m from ground level as determined by the DSM
Maximum radius of assessment from each base point	1000m

Vegetation, buildings, and other barriers are represented nominally by the digital surface models (DSM). Potentially obscured viewpoints were ground-truthed onsite to confirm the information output by the desktop study.

Figure 4-1 shows the generated ZTVI and potential viewing locations of the project.

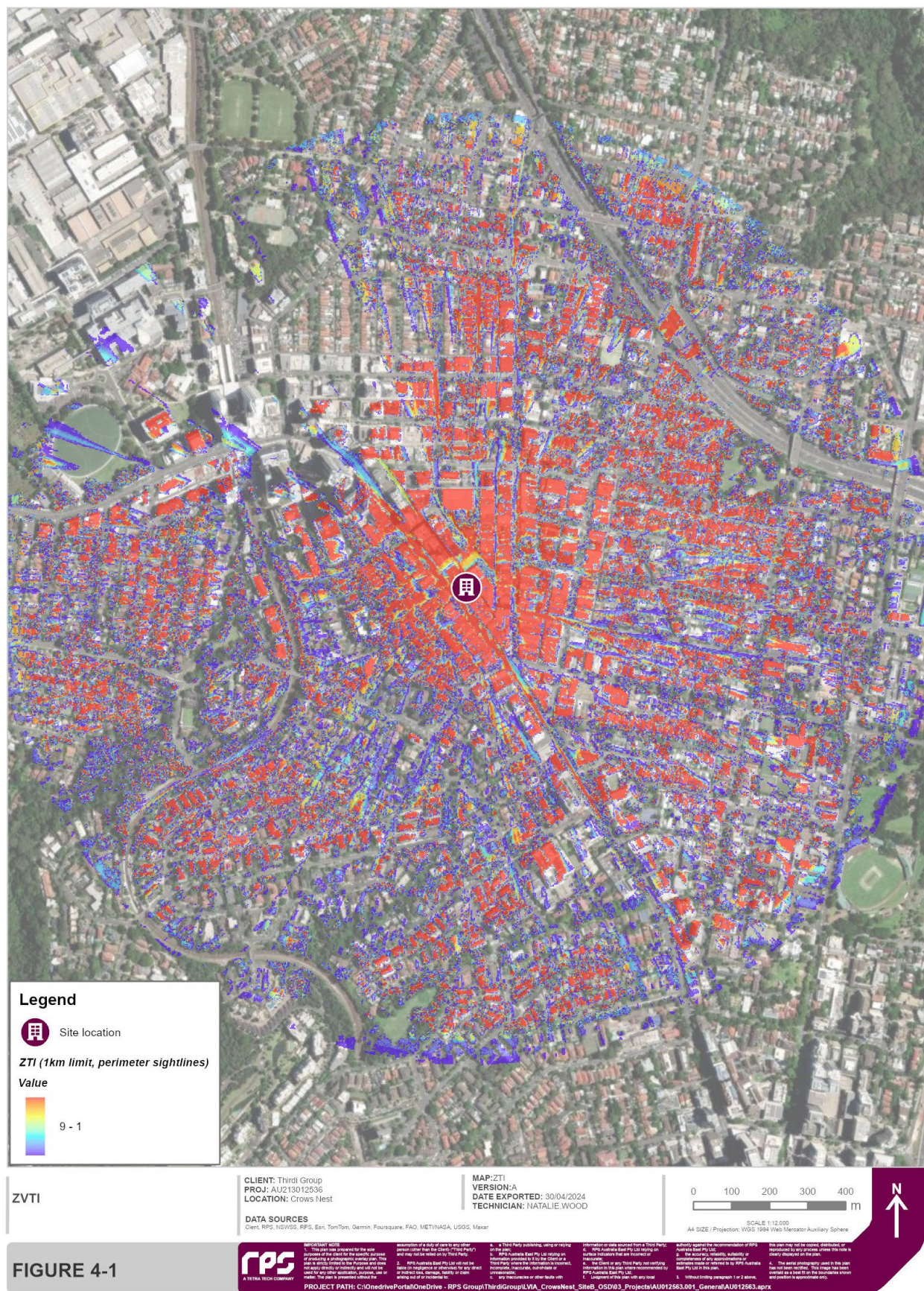


Figure 4-1: Zone of theoretical visual influence (ZTI)

5 VISUAL AMENITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A visual amenity impact assessment was undertaken to determine the potential impact on the views from residences, workplaces and public places associated with the project inclusive of construction activities the project during its operation phase.

5.1 Methodology for visual amenity impact assessment

The methodology for this assessment of visual amenity impacts is adapted from the following:

- Guideline for Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment Environmental Impact Assessment Practice Note EIA-N04 (Transport for NSW, 2023)
- Landscape and Visual Assessment AILA Guidance Note for Queensland (Australian Institute of Landscape Architects, 2018).

The visual amenity impact assessment methodology used in this report included:

- A desktop assessment to identify viewpoints for onsite assessment.
- A site assessment to record photography for the potentially impacted viewpoints.
- An assessment of viewpoint sensitivity and the magnitude of changes of those viewpoints.
- An assessment of rating of the potential visual impacts for each of the potentially impacted viewpoints.
- Propose safeguards and mitigation measures for potentially impacted viewpoints – refer section 6

5.1.1 Identifying viewpoints

To describe the potential visual amenity impacts associated with the project a desktop analysis was conducted to identify potential viewpoints in and around the development that might experience potential changes.

The following tools were used in the initial desktop assessment to identify viewpoints:

- Web based aerial photography - Near Map.
- Web based aerial photography - Google Earth.
- Web based street photography - Google Street View.

Viewpoints that might be considered for visual amenity assessment include:

- Views from adjacent residencies and workplaces.
- Views from public spaces including open space, lookouts, vantage points and important thoroughfares.

To rationalise the number of viewpoints for site verification potential sites were:

- Assessed against the visual envelope prepared in *section 4*
- Grouping and clustering visual receptors that are
 - geographically located
 - would have the same sensitivity
 - would likely experience the same level of magnitude of change

Site inspections to verify the viewpoints and record site data (including photography) were undertaken on the following dates:

- 1 November 2023
- 15 March 2024

5.1.2 Assessment of visual amenity sensitivity

Visual sensitivity refers to “the quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change” (Transport for NSW, 2023). Combined with magnitude, sensitivity provides a measure of impact. Visual sensitivity relates to the direction of view and the composition of the view.

The higher the visual quality of the landscape surrounding the viewpoint, the greater the significance of introducing new development and therefore the impact on the existing. For example, road widening would be ranked lower than changes to national parkland. A place with a more consistent character would be more visually sensitive to new development than a place with less consistency.

This report considers views from pedestrians, motorists, habitable room windows, and outdoor areas of the home yard. Views from locally culturally significant, community orientated, spaces are considered the most sensitive receptors. This report also adopts the standard methodology of sensitivity relating to proximity, in that the greater the distance between the visual receptor and the Proposal, the lesser the visual sensitivity.

The LCT/LCZs examined in section 3.3 are used to inform the visual baseline sensitivity for viewpoints in Section 5.

The visual amenity sensitivity level rankings used in this assessment are defined in Table 5-1

Table 5-1: Visual amenity sensitivity level ranking

Level of visual amenity sensitivity	Example of factors in defining landscape character sensitivity
Low visual amenity sensitivity	- The landscape in view is highly modified from its natural state. - The landscape in view does not have any specific recognisable features. - No specific planning controls attribute special value to this landscape in view. - The view is substantially robust, degraded or the value of the view is low enough to accommodate change without a notable alteration to its distinctive features or adverse effects to the views qualities. This view has a high threshold for significant or detrimental change
Moderate visual amenity sensitivity	- The landscape in view is somewhat modified from its natural state. - The landscape in view is recognisable at a local level. - Planning controls recognise the landscapes in view but does not attribute specific special values to those landscapes. - This view can potentially accommodate change without a notable change or alteration to its distinctive features or adverse effects to the views qualities. This view has an Intermediate threshold for significant or detrimental change
High visual amenity sensitivity	- The landscape in view is not impacted by human intervention. - The landscape in view is highly recognizable at a national level. - Planning controls attribute specific special value to the landscape in view - The landscape characteristics of the in the view are highly susceptible to change and/or the value of the view is high/moderate to high. - This view is unable to accommodate this type of development without a notable change or alteration to its distinctiveness. This view has a very low threshold for significant or detrimental change

5.1.3 Assessment for magnitude of change

When assessing visual impact, the magnitude refers to “the measurement of the scale, form and character of a development proposal when compared to the existing condition” (Transport for NSW, 2023)

Magnitude also takes into consideration the distance between the viewer(s) and the proposed development. Judging the magnitude of visual effects takes account of:

- the scale of the change within the view with respect to the addition (or loss) of elements taken up by the proposed development
- the degree of change and/or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape in terms of form, scale and mass, line height, colour, and texture

- the nature of the view of the proposed development and whether the views are permanent, full, partial or glimpses
- the location of the proposed development in relation to the region in question also influences magnitude.

This assessment for magnitude of change considers the impacts of other approved development including:

- Crows Nest Metro Station OSD – Site A
- Crows Nest Metro Station OSD – Site C

For each of the view, the magnitude of change (inclusive of cumulative impact) is assessed and ranked with one of the following ratings:

- High Magnitude of Change
- Moderate Magnitude of Change
- Low Magnitude of Change
- Nil Magnitude of Change

5.2 Photomontages

5.2.1 Methodology

Photomontages provide an indication of what a Proposal may look like from key representative viewpoints once complete and help to demonstrate the bulk and scale. Photomontages for the Proposal have been prepared from three viewpoints:

- Viewpoint 5 – Pacific Highway
- Viewpoint 6 – Holtermann Street at Sophia Street
- Viewpoint 9 - Willoughby Road at Clarke Street

These viewpoints were chosen to highlight different aspects of the Proposal and demonstrate potential future views from the most impacted viewpoints. The photomontages are shown against the existing environment noting that materials and finishes are indicative and would be further investigated during detailed design.

5.2.1.1 Processing Steps

The steps taken to complete the photomontages including the respective programs utilised as well as inputs required are below:

- Viewpoints were decided on by RPS to represent viewpoints of notable sensitivity
- A tour of the chosen viewpoints was conducted on 1st November, 2023 for viewpoints 5 and a subsequent trip was conducted to capture the base imagery for viewpoint 9 on 15 March 2024
- RPS conducted some minor post-production work in photoshop to ensure light levels were accurately representative of the conditions on site
- 3D assets were developed by Woods Bagot in Revit and provided to RPS on 11th September, 2024
- Compositing of the blank montage and 3D assets was done in Adobe Photoshop

5.2.1.2 Limitations and assumptions

- The form and massing of the building is based on the architectural model provided to RPS on 11th September 2024, Changes beyond this date are not reflected. All elements shown are a true representation of the building information provided on the above date, this pertains to the podium (Metro Station) and residential tower

- Lack of 3D perspective – Digital photography flattens images and removes the 3D perspective that the human eye uses.
- Limited image resolution – whilst some photographic equipment can mimic the resolution of the eye, the gear used for this report does not.
- A lack of changing lighting and atmosphere – the images gathered for the photomontages were taken at various times and under various conditions. Whilst best practice emphasises a need to capture a view at multiple times of the year and day, this was not logistically possible at this stage of the overall project delivery.
- A lack of other sensory interruption compounding the possible effects of the project form I.e.. noise, movement of vehicles and pedestrians, the heat or cold of the weather etc.

5.2.2 Viewpoint 5 Photomontage – Pacific Highway

5.2.2.1 Notes/Considerations

- Cloudy skies, intermittent sun
- A lot of vehicular and pedestrian movement in the fore and midground

5.2.2.2 Register

Camera: Nikon Z5

Tripod type: Manfrotto tripod with a 3-way pan/tilt head

Lens height: 1.57m

Image Capture Resolution: 6016x4016 pixels

Bit Depth: 24

F-Stop: F/7.1

Exposure: 1/5000 (auto)

Focal Length: 50mm



Figure 5-1 Viewpoint 5 Montage base image



Figure 5-2 Viewpoint 5 - Photomontage

5.2.3 Viewpoint 6 Photomontage – Holtermann Street at Sophia Street

5.2.3.1 Notes/Considerations

- Cloudy skies, intermittent sun
- Some vehicular and pedestrian movement in the fore and midground

5.2.3.2 Register

Camera: Nikon Z5

Tripod type: Manfrotto tripod with a 3-way pan/tilt head

Lens height: 1.57m

Image Capture Resolution: 6016x4016 pixels

Bit Depth: 24

F-Stop: F/7.1

Exposure: 1/5000 (auto)

Focal Length: 50mm



Figure 5-3 Viewpoint 6 - Montage Base Image



Figure 5-4 Viewpoint 6 - Photomontage

5.2.5 Viewpoint 9 Photomontage – Willoughby Road at Clarke Street

5.2.5.1 Notes/Considerations

- Cloudy, overcast skies
- Some vehicular and pedestrian movement in the fore and midground

5.2.5.2 Register

Camera: Nikon Z5

Tripod type: Manfrotto tripod with a 3-way pan/tilt head

Lens height: 1.57m

Image Capture Resolution: 6016x4016 pixels

Bit Depth: 24

F-Stop: F/7.1

Exposure: 1/5000 (auto)

Focal Length: 50mm



Figure 5-5 Viewpoint 9 – Montage Base Image



Figure 5-6 Viewpoint 9 -Photomontage

5.2.6 Assessment for Visual Amenity Impact

The combination of sensitivity and magnitude of change are to rank potential visual impacts at each of the viewpoints as per Table 5-2Table 3-3:

Table 5-2: Impact Ranking Matrix – Visual Amenity Impact

Viewpoint Sensitivity	Magnitude of the Changes to the View				
	High magnitude of change	Moderate magnitude of change	Low magnitude of change	Negligible magnitude of change	Nil magnitude of change
High viewpoint sensitivity	High visual amenity impact	High-moderate landscape character impact	Moderate visual amenity impact	Negligible visual amenity impact	Nil visual amenity impact
Moderate viewpoint sensitivity	High-moderate visual amenity impact	Moderate visual amenity impact	Moderate-low visual amenity impact	Negligible visual amenity impact	Nil visual amenity impact
Low viewpoint sensitivity	Moderate visual amenity impact	Moderate-low visual amenity impact	Low visual amenity impact	Negligible visual amenity impact	Nil visual amenity impact

5.3 Viewpoint Assessment

A total of **14** viewpoints were identified in the desktop evaluation as having the potential for visual impacts and are shown in Figure 5-7. The extent to which the project would be visible from the identified viewpoints would vary depending on existing topography, vegetation, buildings, and land uses, as well as the form of the project when viewed from each viewpoint.



Figure 5-7 Viewpoint Locations

5.3.1 Viewpoint 1: Gore Hill Cemetery

5.3.1.1 Viewpoint 1 – Description

Gore Hill Cemetery is a generally under-maintained parcel of public land. At the top of the site, where VP1 is taken, the eye is drawn south towards the project site by the pathway and is framed by mature vegetation in the Midground; which heavily obscures the majority of the view through to the background. The foreground is dominated by overgrown grasses and wildflowers, as well as headstones of various sizes.



Figure 5-8 Viewpoint 1 - View from Gore Hill Cemetery (Photo: RPS)

Table 5-3 Viewpoint 1 - Visual Impact Assessment

Viewpoint sensitivity	Magnitude of change from this viewpoint	Viewpoint visual amenity impact
"The quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change"	Magnitude refers to the form—scale, size, character—of the project and its proximity to the viewer.	Rankings for sensitivity and magnitude are combined to generate the visual amenity impact from this viewpoint table.
High sensitivity	Negligible magnitude of change	Negligible visual amenity impact
- The view is almost entirely dominated by vegetation of varying scales. Most of this view is contrived, and undermaintained. - The prevalence of historic graves and headstones within the view greatly increases the sensitive of the space	Due to the height and density of vegetation in the midground of the view, none of the project would be visible. If vegetation were to be managed, the taller buildings in the St Leonards Business district would completely obscure the project.	

5.3.2 Viewpoint 2: Gore Hill Oval

5.3.2.1 Viewpoint 2 – Description

The foreground of this view is entirely occupied by the Gore Hill Oval and associated elements (Fence, benches, goal post, stadium lights). The topography of the midground falls away to the south and blends from large trees (predominately eucalypts) to mid-rise buildings within the Royal North Shore Hospital precinct.



Figure 5-9 Viewpoint 2 - View from Gore Hill Oval (photo: RPS)

Table 5-4 Viewpoint 2 - Visual Impact Assessment

Viewpoint sensitivity	Magnitude of change from this viewpoint	Viewpoint visual amenity impact
"The quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change"	Magnitude refers to the form—scale, size, character—of the project and its proximity to the viewer.	Rankings for sensitivity and magnitude are combined to generate the visual amenity impact from this viewpoint table.
Moderate sensitivity - This view is a highly modified parkland with a perimeter of vegetation that create a somewhat naturalised midground. - The buildings in the centre midground greatly lower the scenic amenity of the view due to their contrasting, inaesthetic appearance	Negligible magnitude of change - Due to the height and density of vegetation in the midground of the view, as well as the existing buildings, very little of the project would be visible. - Given the presence of mid-rise buildings in the centre of the view, the project would blend with the existing midground and cause minimal visual disturbances.	Negligible visual amenity impact

5.3.3 Viewpoint 3: Matthew Street

5.3.3.1 Viewpoint 3 – Description

This view is heavily urbanised and sits adjacent to a suburban street. The dominant element is a brick and tile home in the midground, as well as a strong ephemeral presence of vehicles. There's very little vegetation within the view beyond the street tree present in the left foreground. The location of viewpoint 3 on the upslope of a small rise naturally draws the eye of walkers, and drivers up the hill and towards the project site as they walk south-west (the direction of the viewpoint).

The background of the view contains a high-rise to the right and 2 cranes in the centre of the view (the left most is associated with the Metro station works below the project)



Figure 5-10 Viewpoint 3 - View from Matthew Street (Photo: RPS)

Table 5-5 Viewpoint 3 - Visual Impact Assessment

Viewpoint sensitivity	Magnitude of change from this viewpoint	Viewpoint visual amenity impact
"The quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change"	Magnitude refers to the form—scale, size, character—of the project and its proximity to the viewer.	Rankings for sensitivity and magnitude are combined to generate the visual amenity impact from this viewpoint table.
Low sensitivity	Low magnitude of change	Low visual amenity impact
- This view is highly suburbanised and dominated by a character brick and tile dwelling. - There is very little vegetation or natural elements to contribute to scenic amenity. - Some mid-rise – high-rise buildings visible in the background as well as the signs of construction along the distant Pacific Highway	- The proposed building is similar in size and scale to other the other built form visible within the view, minimising the magnitude of change. - The project would only be visible to those facing or moving south-west and would predominately be obscured by the immediate foreground or topography.	

5.3.4 Viewpoint 4: St Thomas Cemetery

5.3.4.1 Viewpoint 4 – Description

This view is dominated by grass in the immediate foreground with dense vegetation in the midground. There is a narrow window where a crane is visible in the background.



Figure 5-11 Viewpoint 4 - St Thomas Cemetery (Photo: RPS)

Table 5-6 Viewpoint 4 - Visual Impact Assessment

Viewpoint sensitivity	Magnitude of change from this viewpoint	Viewpoint visual amenity impact
"The quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change"	Magnitude refers to the form—scale, size, character—of the project and its proximity to the viewer.	Rankings for sensitivity and magnitude are combined to generate the visual amenity impact from this viewpoint table.
Moderate sensitivity	Low magnitude of change	Moderate-Low visual amenity impact
- This view has extensive vegetation screening views to residences, increasing the overall scenic amenity. - The space is well maintained, appealing	- Some upper portions of the project would be framed by a gap in the vegetation. - The project would only be visible in a narrow section of the viewer's visual range.	

5.3.6 Viewpoint 5: Pacific Highway

5.3.6.1 Viewpoint 5 – Description

This view is facing south and is dominated by the Pacific Highway. The project site sits in the centre of the view in the midground with a similar construction site visible to the left of the view and beyond. The only vegetation visible is 2 street trees visible along the western (nearer) edge of Pacific Highway. Vehicles move through the view constantly and form a dominant component. The furthest visible point along the highway provides some narrow views of the southern edge of the Willoughby street precinct, however these are heavily screened by stationary and passing vehicles, as well as low hanging branches from street trees.

RPS has prepared a photomontage to describe the potential visual impacts from this viewing; refer Figure 5-13.



Figure 5-12 Viewpoint 5 - Pacific Highway (Photo: RPS)



Figure 5-13 Viewpoint 5 - Pacific Highway - Photomontage

Table 5-7 Viewpoint 5 - Visual Impact Assessment

Viewpoint sensitivity	Magnitude of change from this viewpoint	Viewpoint visual amenity impact
"The quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change"	Magnitude refers to the form—scale, size, character—of the project and its proximity to the viewer.	Rankings for sensitivity and magnitude are combined to generate the visual amenity impact from this viewpoint table.
Low sensitivity	High magnitude of change	Moderate visual amenity impact
• This view is highly urbanised and dominated by the Pacific Highway and related civil infrastructure • There is very little vegetation or natural elements to contribute to scenic amenity, excepting a row of street trees to the western side of the highway • The desired future outcome in the NSC is for the proposed type of development.	• When considering the adjacent approved proposals, the eventual view would include several buildings of a similar size and general design style to the project. • The entirety of the centre of the view would be occupied by the project built-form, blocking views to some low-rise heritage buildings that sit on the Willoughby street business precinct side of the block. • The sky beyond would be obscured, creating a heavier sense of enclosure, similar to the St Leonards Business District to the north of the view. • The project would result in a cohesive urban scenery	

5.3.7 Viewpoint 6: Holtermann Street at Sophia Street

5.3.7.1 Viewpoint 6 – Description

Viewpoint 6 west-south-west along Holtermann street, It's dominated by the street in the foreground and multiple 2-3 storey commercial and civic buildings, including the Greek Orthodox Church. There's a moderate level of vegetation throughout the view; predominately street trees, with some larger trees in the far mid-ground. Vehicles form a transient part of this view as they pass through. On street and private undercover parking is also present.

RPS has prepared a photomontage to describe the potential visual impacts from this viewing; refer Figure 5-15



Figure 5-14 Viewpoint 6 – Holtermann Street at Sophia Street (Photo: RPS)



Figure 5-15 Viewpoint 6 – Holtermann Street at Sophia Street - Photomontage

Table 5-5 Viewpoint 6 - Visual Impact Assessment

Viewpoint sensitivity	Magnitude of change from this viewpoint	Viewpoint visual amenity impact
"The quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change"	Magnitude refers to the form—scale, size, character—of the project and its proximity to the viewer.	Rankings for sensitivity and magnitude are combined to generate the visual amenity impact from this viewpoint table.
Moderate sensitivity	Low magnitude of change	Moderate-low visual amenity impact
- This view is urbanised and dominated by Holtermann Street and adjacent street trees and related civil infrastructure. - A non-contributory Heritage building sits within the view (Greek Orthodox Church) (North Sydney Council, 2013)	The Project would sit behind the heritage building. The extent of visibility would be limited to the upper portion of the building.	

5.3.8 Viewpoint 7: Shirley Road at Pacific Highway

5.3.8.1 Viewpoint 7 – Description

Viewpoint 7 is dominated by the Pacific Highway and related civil infrastructure; vehicles move through the view constantly. 2 storey mixed use heritage store fronts run along the far eastern side of the highway, partially obscuring the project site: consisting of blue construction netting and cranes. The built-form increases in height towards the background in St Leonards. Some vegetation is visible along the near side of the Pacific Highway.



Figure 5-16 Viewpoint 7 – Shirley Road at Pacific Highway (Photo: RPS)

Table 5-8 Viewpoint 7 - Visual Impact Assessment

Viewpoint sensitivity	Magnitude of change from this viewpoint	Viewpoint visual amenity impact
“The quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change”	Magnitude refers to the form—scale, size, character—of the project and its proximity to the viewer.	Rankings for sensitivity and magnitude are combined to generate the visual amenity impact from this viewpoint table.
Low sensitivity	Moderate magnitude of change	Moderate-Low visual amenity impact
- The extensive civil infrastructure related to the Pacific Highway and minimal vegetation reduces the scenic amenity - There are heritage buildings present within the view - Built form dominates the background behind the project site. - The proposal is a desired future outcome of the NSC planning scheme.	The intended form and scale of the project would be consistent with buildings adjacent, and approved adjacent development.	

5.3.9 Viewpoint 8: Crows Nest Community Centre

5.3.9.1 Viewpoint 8 – Description

Viewpoint 8 is a view from the forecourt/performance stand adjacent to the entrance of the Crows Nest Community centre. The foreground of the view is dominated by a small urban parkland, consisting of turf, pathways and park infrastructure. Large exotic tree species (London Plane Tree) obscure the background and frame the view. The distant midground consists of Willoughby Street character shop fronts. People and vehicles transverse the view constantly.



Figure 5-17 Viewpoint 8 – Crows Nest Community Centre (Photo: RPS)

Table 5-9 Viewpoint 8 – Visual Impact Assessment

Viewpoint sensitivity	Magnitude of change from this viewpoint	Viewpoint visual amenity impact
"The quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change"	Magnitude refers to the form—scale, size, character—of the project and its proximity to the viewer.	Rankings for sensitivity and magnitude are combined to generate the visual amenity impact from this viewpoint table.
High sensitivity	Negligible magnitude of change	Negligible visual amenity impact
- The parkland quality and Dominant, mature vegetation increase scenic amenity - Character shop fronts throughout. Some heritage listed - Based on the high presence of mature vegetation and the well maintained urban parkland character of the space, this view has high scenic amenity and a high sensitivity to change.	Very little if any of the project would be visible from this view due to the vegetation and building between this view and the project	N

5.3.10 Viewpoint 9: Willoughby Road at Clarke Street

5.3.10.1 Viewpoint 9 – Description

Viewpoint 9 looks over Willoughby Road, up Clarke street. The view is dominated by character mixed use retail with black and white branding along the wide awning. The immediate foreground is dominated by the Willoughby and Clarke street intersection and related civil infrastructure, as well as some low streetside vegetation. Mature exotic trees sit in the midground and obscure a dated commercial warehouse. The construction netting of the adjacent OSD development is visible in the right of the view.

RPS has prepared a photomontage to describe the potential visual impacts from this viewing; refer Figure 5-13.



Figure 5-18 Viewpoint 9 – Willoughby Road at Clarke Street (Photo: RPS)



Figure 5-19 Viewpoint 9 – Willoughby Road at Clarke Street - Photomontage

Table 5-10 Viewpoint 9 – Visual Impact Assessment

Viewpoint sensitivity	Magnitude of change from this viewpoint	Viewpoint visual amenity impact
"The quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change"	Magnitude refers to the form—scale, size, character—of the project and its proximity to the viewer.	Rankings for sensitivity and magnitude are combined to generate the visual amenity impact from this viewpoint table.
Moderate sensitivity	High magnitude of change	High-Moderate visual amenity impact
- Character street with heritage elements throughout - Referenced in the planning scheme as a notable character street. - Some contrived vegetation, larger trees screening buildings in the midground increase scenic amenity. - The proposal is a desired future outcome of the NSC planning scheme.	- Close proximity of the project to lower character mixed use and residential buildings would also be a noticeable departure of scale and form. - A constant filtered view of the project from extends up the eastern side of Willoughby street from Albany Street to Falcon Street, with the greater view around intersections.	

5.3.11 Viewpoint 10: Oxley Street at Pacific Highway

5.3.11.1 Viewpoint 10 – Description

The Pacific Highway and associated infrastructure dominates the foreground, vehicles transverse the view constantly. Construction netting and cranes related to the project site and adjacent sites dominate the entirety of the midground.



Figure 5-20 Viewpoint 10 – Oxley Street at Pacific Highway (Photo: RPS)

Table 5-11 Viewpoint 10 - Visual Impact Assessment

Viewpoint sensitivity	Magnitude of change from this viewpoint	Viewpoint visual amenity impact
“The quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change”	Magnitude refers to the form—scale, size, character—of the project and its proximity to the viewer.	Rankings for sensitivity and magnitude are combined to generate the visual amenity impact from this viewpoint table.
Low sensitivity	High magnitude of change	Moderate visual amenity impact
- This view is highly urbanised and dominated by the Pacific Highway and related civil infrastructure - There is very little vegetation or natural elements to contribute to scenic amenity, excepting a row of street trees to the western side of the highway - The proposal is a desired future outcome of the NSC planning scheme.	- When considering the adjacent approved proposals, the eventual view would include several buildings of a similar size and general design style to the project. - The entirety of the centre of the view would be occupied by the project built-form, blocking views beyond, - The sky beyond would be obscured, creating a heavier sense of enclosure, similar to the St Leonards Business District to the north of the view.	

Viewpoint sensitivity	Magnitude of change from this viewpoint	Viewpoint visual amenity impact
	The eventual view would include several buildings of a similar size and general design style to the project	

5.3.12 Viewpoint 11: Friedlander Place

5.3.12.1 Viewpoint 11 – Description

The forecourt of Friedlander Place sits within the foreground, with a portion of the associated high-rise blocking the right hand third of the view. The Pacific highway runs through the view from left to right with associated signage and signals. A row of extensive, large street trees run along both sides of the Highway in front of multi-res/commercial buildings of varying heights; particularly the 16-storey 545-553 Pacific Highway building. The background shows the project site behind an adjacent related site.



Figure 5-21 Viewpoint 11 – Friedlander Place (Photo: RPS)

Table 5-12 Viewpoint 11 - Visual Impact Assessment

Viewpoint sensitivity	Magnitude of change from this viewpoint	Viewpoint visual amenity impact
"The quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change"	Magnitude refers to the form—scale, size, character—of the project and its proximity to the viewer.	Rankings for sensitivity and magnitude are combined to generate the visual amenity impact from this viewpoint table.
Low sensitivity	Low magnitude of change	Low visual amenity impact
- Highly urbanised view with the Pacific Highway running through the centre - Some mature street trees adding scenic amenity while blocking unappealing building frontages - The proposal is a desired future outcome of the NSC planning scheme.	Views are predominately blocked by another development	

5.3.13 Viewpoint 12: Crest of Gillies Street

5.3.13.1 Viewpoint 12 – Description

Viewpoint 12 is taken from the footpath at the crest of Gillies Street, looking towards the project site in the distance. The view is dominated by Gillies street in the centre and parked vehicles along both sides; light poles and typical suburban civil signage are also visible. The midground is dominated by mature and semi-mature street trees as well as vegetation from the private property frontages. Filtered views of mid-rise and high-rise residential buildings are run along the horizon in the background.



Figure 5-22 Viewpoint 12 - Crest of Gillies Street (Photo: RPS)

Table 5-13 Viewpoint 12 - Visual Impact Assessment

Viewpoint sensitivity	Magnitude of change from this viewpoint	Viewpoint visual amenity impact
"The quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change"	Magnitude refers to the form—scale, size, character—of the project and its proximity to the viewer.	Rankings for sensitivity and magnitude are combined to generate the visual amenity impact from this viewpoint table.
Moderate sensitivity - A high level of vegetation increases scenic amenity - The view is dominated by the street - Moderate scenic amenity and moderate sensitivity to change	Nil magnitude of change Views are blocked by vegetation and buildings	Nil visual amenity impact

5.3.14 Viewpoint 13: Observatory Hill Lookout

5.3.14.1 Viewpoint 13 – Description

Mature vegetation dominates the foreground, predominately green with some purple foliage; these screen the roofs of warehouse and dock buildings that skirt the Sydney harbour. The harbour stretches horizontally across the view in the midground from the Sydney Harbour Bridge in the right third; boats and ferries transverse the view here.

The far northern shoreline extends back into the background from grass and vegetation to low-mid-rise buildings up to 2 separated areas of high density commercial and residential high-rise which obscure the horizon. 2 telephone towers are the furthest notable landmark within the left third of the view.



Figure 5-23 Viewpoint 13 - Observatory Hill Lookout (Photo: RPS)

Table 5-14 Viewpoint 13 - Visual Impact Assessment

Viewpoint sensitivity	Magnitude of change from this viewpoint	Viewpoint visual amenity impact
"The quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change"	Magnitude refers to the form—scale, size, character—of the project and its proximity to the viewer.	Rankings for sensitivity and magnitude are combined to generate the visual amenity impact from this viewpoint table.
High sensitivity	Nil magnitude of change	Nil visual amenity impact
- Long, uninterrupted views over the harbour greatly increase scenic amenity - Extensive vegetation in the foreground and mid-ground increase the scenic amenity - Highly urbanised skyline - The viewline is protected by planning instruments including the NSC planning Scheme. - Internationally significant landmark, Sydney Harbour Bridge, increases the scenic amenity and scenic value of the view.	Nil, views are obscured by buildings between this viewpoint and the proposal	

5.3.15 Viewpoint 14: Sydney Opera House

5.3.15.1 Viewpoint 14 – Description

Viewpoint 14 is dominated by the water of Sydney Harbour in the foreground and a portion of the Sydney Harbour Bridge in the left most third of the midground of the view. The far northern shore slope away from the viewer and is a mixture of mid-rse residential towers and moderate patches of mature vegetation associated with harbour side parks. Taller mixed residential/commercial buildings are visible behind the columns of the bridge.



Figure 5-24 Viewpoint 14 - Sydney Opera House (Photo: RPS)

Table 5-15 Viewpoint 14 - Visual Impact Assessment

Viewpoint sensitivity	Magnitude of change from this viewpoint	Viewpoint visual amenity impact
"The quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change"	Magnitude refers to the form—scale, size, character—of the project and its proximity to the viewer.	Rankings for sensitivity and magnitude are combined to generate the visual amenity impact from this viewpoint table.
High sensitivity	Nil magnitude of change	Nil visual amenity impact
- Moderately urbanised skyline along the midground and horizon. - Internationally significant landmark, Sydney Harbour Bridge, increases the scenic amenity and scenic value of the view. - The viewline is protected by planning instruments including the NSC planning Scheme.	Nil, views are obscured by buildings between this viewpoint and the proposal	

5.4 Summary of Visual Impacts Assessment

The project would result in temporary visual impacts during construction due to visible elements such as work areas, machinery and equipment, hoarding and fencing, waste materials and partially constructed structures.

During operation, visual impacts would occur as a result of the presence of project infrastructure and removal of vegetation. Table 5-16 provides a summary of the assessment for potential visual impacts across all 14 viewpoints.

Table 5-16: Summary of assessment of potential visual impacts

Viewpoint	Name	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change – Const.	Visual Impact – Const.
VP01	Gore Hill Cemetery	High sensitivity	Negligible magnitude of change	Negligible visual impact
VP02	Gore Hill Oval	Moderate sensitivity	Negligible magnitude of change	Negligible visual impact
VP03	Matthew Street	Low sensitivity	Low magnitude of change	Low visual impact
VP04	St Thomas Cemetery	Moderate sensitivity	Low magnitude of change	Moderate-Low visual impact
VP05	Pacific Highway	Low sensitivity	High magnitude of change	Moderate visual impact
VP06	Holtermann Street at Sophia Street	Low sensitivity	Moderate magnitude of change	Moderate-Low visual impact
VP07	Shirley Road at Pacific Highway	Low sensitivity	Moderate magnitude of change	Moderate-Low visual impact
VP08	Crows Nest Community Centre	High sensitivity	Negligible magnitude of change	Negligible visual impact
VP09	Willoughby Road at Clarke Street	Moderate sensitivity	High magnitude of change	High-Moderate visual impact
VP10	Oxley Street at Pacific Highway	Low sensitivity	High magnitude of change	Moderate visual impact
VP11	Friedlander Place	Low sensitivity	Low magnitude of change	Low visual impact
VP12	Crest of Gillies Street	Moderate sensitivity	Nil magnitude of change	Nil visual impact
VP13	Observatory Hill Lookout	High sensitivity	Nil magnitude of change	Nil visual impact
VP14	Sydney Opera House	High sensitivity	Nil magnitude of change	Nil visual impact

6 MITIGATION STRATEGIES AND SAFEGUARDS

In response to the SEARs RPS has prepared this report to describe and assess potential landscape character and visual amenity impacts that result from the Proposal.

In summary this assessment found that:

- The Willoughby Road Town Centre Precinct LCZ would have moderate landscape character impacts because of the proposal.
- Viewpoint 5 from the Pacific Highway would have moderate visual amenity impacts because of the proposal.
- Viewpoint 9, Willoughby Road at Clarke Street would have high-moderate visual amenity impacts because of the proposal.
- Viewpoint 10, Oxley Street at Pacific Highway, would have moderate visual amenity impacts because of the proposal.
- All other LCTs/LCZs would have lower than moderate landscape character impact visual amenity impacts because of the proposal.
- All other viewpoints would have lower than moderate visual amenity impacts because of the proposal.

Section 6.1 proposes mitigation measures to assist with maintaining the current visual quality of the landscape as well as complementing the heritage character of the precinct.

Section 6.1 provides generalised safeguards to maintain the integrity of the current Proposal.

6.1 Mitigation Strategies

Mitigation strategies to manage and minimise the potential visual impacts have been identified based on the findings in this report. The mitigation strategies below reflect the iterative design process undertaken by the broader design team in response to the NSW SEARs design guidelines required by state significant developments, as well as the Crows Nest station design and Precinct plan developed by Sydney Metro.

4 State design review panel meetings were held to ensure that the panel, representative of the interests of the NSW state government and their various guidelines, were happy with the outcome. Throughout this rigorous iterative process, several changes were made to the form and shape of project to aid in mitigating visual impact.

At a local council level, the project design responds to the North Sydney Council Planning scheme and the St Leonards and Crows Nest 2036 Plan built form principles, which serve as a reflection of the area's intended and desired character and values.

6.2 Safeguards

Further to the above proposed mitigation measures the following safeguards are proposed to maintain the integrity of the current proposal in relation to landscape character and visual amenity.

6.2.1 Design Safeguards

The proposed architectural response responds to the above design guidelines by:

- Minimising bulk and scale through horizontal and vertical articulation and choice of materials:
 - Terracotta and metal are used heavily throughout to complement surrounding existing character areas such as Willoughby Road. Brick is also specifically emphasised on the podium form, however that falls outside the scope of assessment for this report.
 - Material colours are soft, pastel greens and blues to simultaneously mimic the remnant blue gum forest of the area and to compliment adjacent built form styles (refer to Figure 6-1)

- A simple vertical articulation in the form to break up the height of the building that is sympathetic to its context.
- Extensive use of landscaping and green elements at street level and top-of-podium levels including:
 - Planting around the entirety of the podium to screen the carpark façade. Creeping and trailing plants are incorporated to encourage additional screening over time.
 - Planters are incorporated into the awnings above some retail and commercial entrances to reduce the scale of the built form at a human level and to help integrate the building into its surroundings.
- The overall bulk and scale of the Proposal allows for an appropriate 'transition in height, bulk and scale from the highway to the surrounding neighbourhood areas' (NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, 2020) as well as the emphasis on transitioning the scale of built-form from the taller forms of St Leonards business district down to the single-storey residential dwellings.
- Maintaining solar access to Willoughby Road between 11:30am and 2:30pm (mid-winter, 21 June) and Earnest Place between 10am and 3pm (mid-winter, 21 June) to reduce overshadowing.
- Above ground carparking has a highly considered architectural screening system to reduce visual effects. (refer Figure 6-3)

Tower Materiality

Cultural & Environmental Story Telling



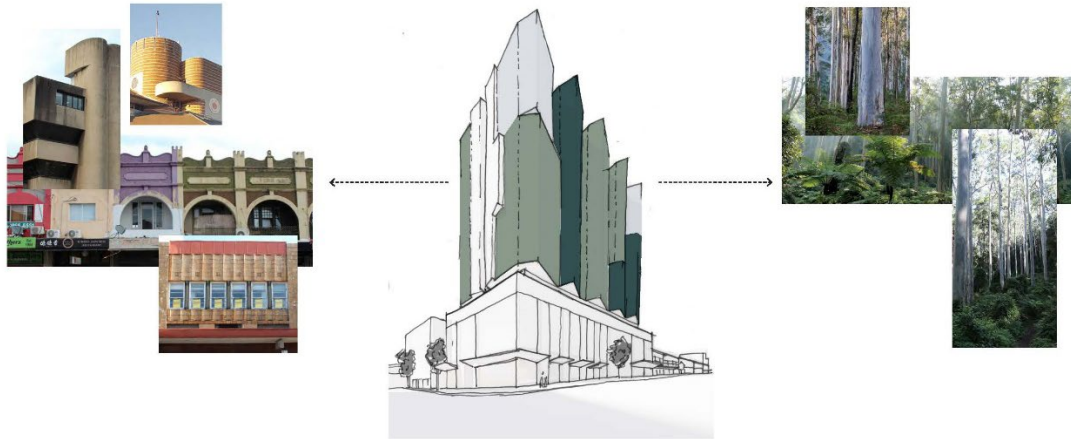
WOODS BAGOT

State Design Review Panel / 55

Figure 6-1 Tower Materiality (Extract from SDRP)

Source: Woods Bagot

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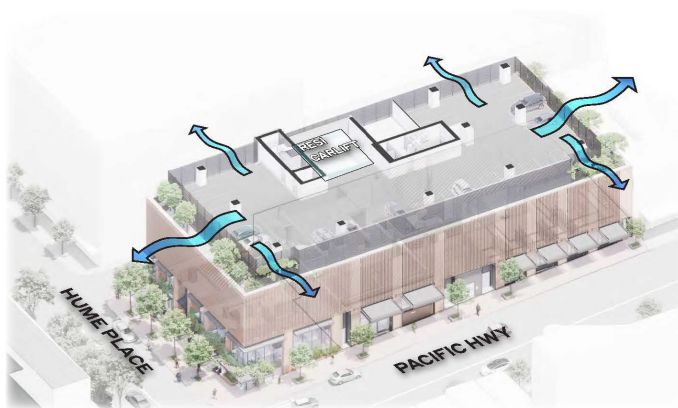
State Design Review Panel / 4

Figure 6-2 Design Inspiration (Extract from SDRP)

Source: Woods Bagot

Parking

Garden Levels 02 and 03



Residential car parking is setback and concealed by landscaped terraces ensuring a recessed expression between the tower and the podium. The facade is perforated allowing the space to be naturally ventilated removing the need for loud mechanical systems.

WOODS BAGOT

Figure 6-3 Parking Design (Extract from SDRP)

Source: Woods Bagot

6.2.2 Operational safeguards

- Undertake regular landscape maintenance work to vegetation and planting on the podium and upper levels to ensure an enhanced level of scenic amenity.
- Ensure all selected materials are chosen for their longevity as well as aesthetic appearance and complimentary character to the surrounding urban environment.

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