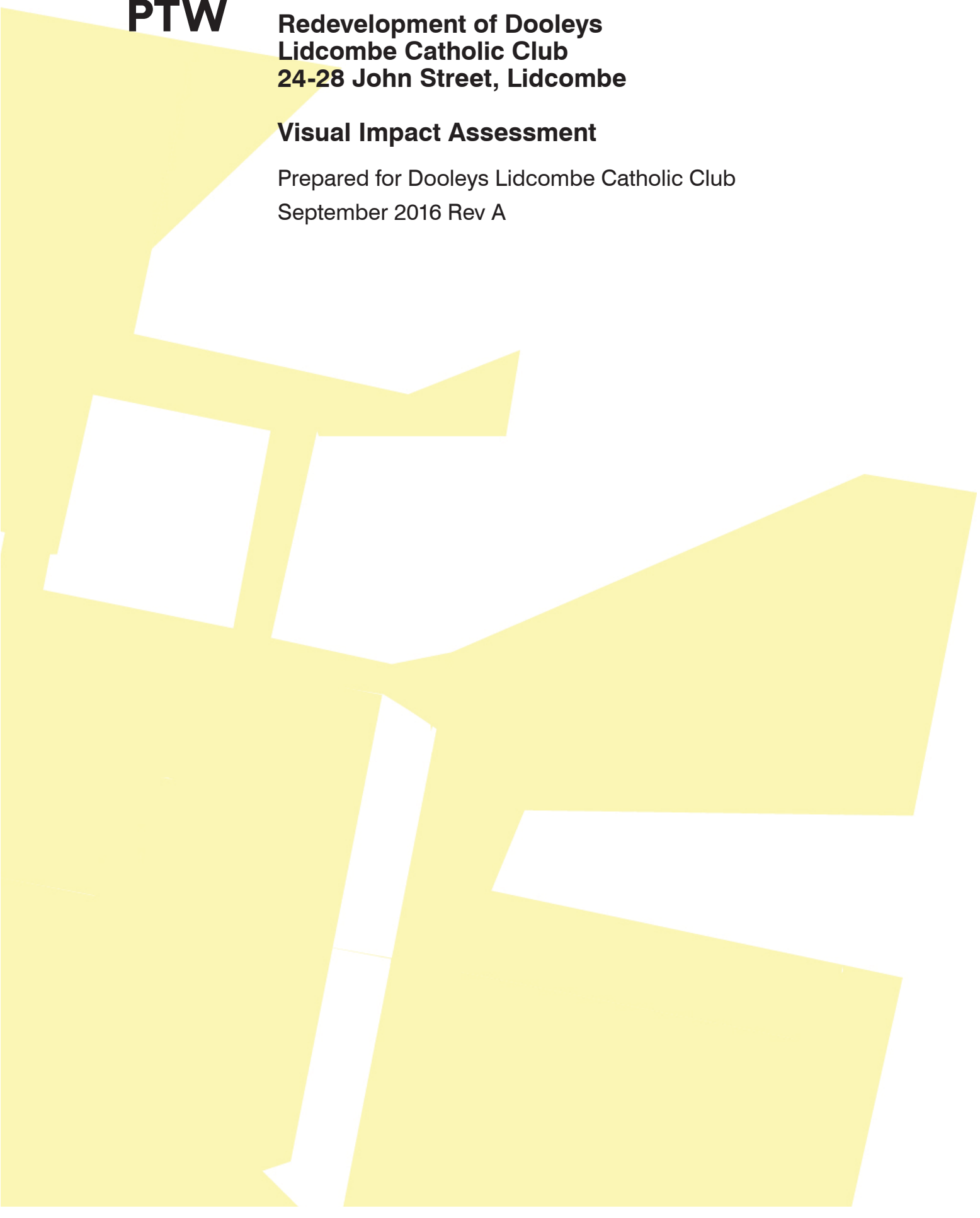




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**Redevelopment of Dooleys
Lidcombe Catholic Club
24-28 John Street, Lidcombe**

Visual Impact Assessment

Prepared for Dooleys Lidcombe Catholic Club

September 2016 Rev A

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Introduction

This report assesses the likely visual impact of the proposed redevelopment of Dooleys Lidcombe Catholic Club. This impact is taken to mean an assessment of the street view within the immediate area with key views assessed in terms of the proposal's visibility.

This analysis is set out as follows:
Under Chapter 1, is the analysis of the visual context of the proposal and its visual setting is provided as a series of precincts.
Under Chapter 2 the potential visibility of the proposal is established. This will then allow the key viewpoints to be identified.
Under Chapter 3, each view and its visual impact is assessed against both the current and future conditions with the envelope of the Proposed Development.
Under Chapter 5, a summary of impacts and mitigation measures are identified.

The determination of a visual impact, as identified in this report, is based on the criteria - sensitivity and magnitude.

Sensitivity is defined as *“The sensitivity of a landscape view and its capacity to absorb change. [It also refers] to the qualities of an area, the number and type of receivers. [...] Visual sensitivity is related to the direction of view, the composition of the view...”* (1)

Magnitude is defined as *“The measurement of the scale, form and character of a development proposal when compared with the existing condition. In the case of visual assessment, this also relates to how far the proposal is from the viewer.”* (1)

The combined assessment of the sensitivity and magnitude provides the rating for the visual impact as per the table below.

		Magnitude			
		High	Moderate	Low	Negligible
Sensitivity	High	High Impact	High-Moderate	Moderate	Negligible
	Moderate	High-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-low	Negligible
	Low	Moderate	Moderate-Low	Low	Negligible
	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Table 1 - Visual impact grading matrix (1)

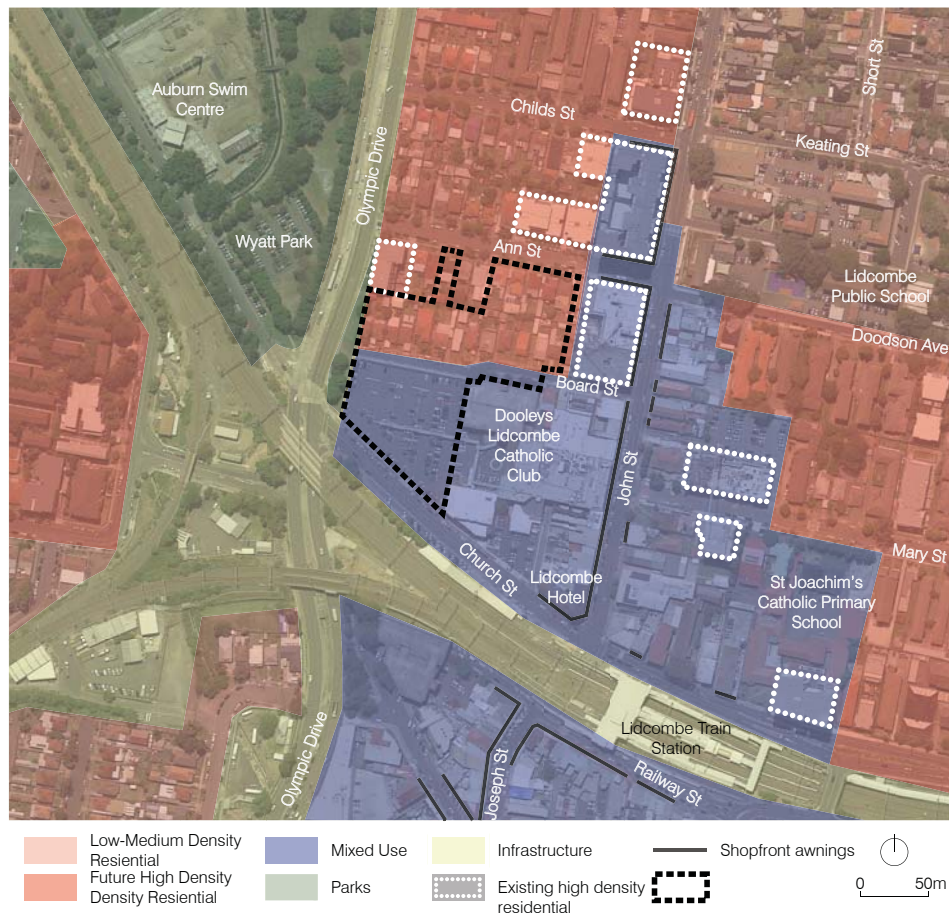
(1) EIA N04 Guidelines, 2013, RMS

1. Visual Context

In the context of the Dooleys Club several zones of coherent visual attributes are identified. It is important to consider the urban character of these precincts as they:

- 1) provide a setting for the proposal; and
- 2) provide a context within which the viewpoints are established and are influenced by (Refer to analysis Chapter 3: Visual Impact)

Note: These precincts consider Council's DCP Zoning Plans



Map 1 - Visual Zones



Short St looking north.

Low-Medium Density Residential Precinct

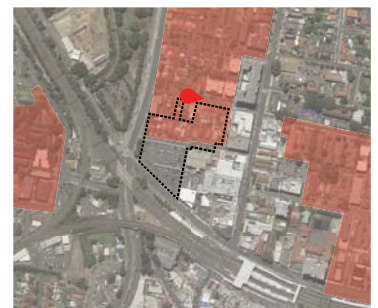
This precinct is defined by 1-2 storey detached residences with a front set back for gardens. There are minimal street trees in this precinct and it is suburban character. In terms of future development an increase in scale to a maximum height of 9m (c. 3 storeys) can be accommodated.



Ann st looking east.

Future High Density Residential Precinct

This precinct is being redeveloped. With 1-2 storey dwellings this precinct is interspersed with newer 3-4 storey residential apartment blocks. Wider streets present the opportunity for street trees. In terms of future development an increase in scale to a maximum height of 18m (c. 6 storeys) can be accommodated.

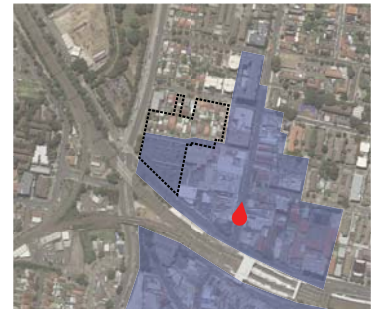




John St looking north

Mixed Use Precinct

This precinct is defined by 1-3 storey small scale development, in some locations being developed as 7-9 storey mixed use residential. There is a mix of commercial, residential and community uses. No street trees are found in this precinct. In terms of future development, an increase in scale to a maximum height of 32-36m (c. 10-12 storeys), going up to 60m (c. 20 storeys) can be accommodated.



Church St looking south

Parks Precinct

This precinct is defined by the southern entry to Wyatt Park. The main entry leads to a carpark and the Auburn Swim Centre. It also provides extensive amenity along Olympic Drive towards north. A striking feature is the tree boulevard along the main road. This precinct is to remain as a park.



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Olympic Drive looking south

Infrastructure Precinct

This precinct is defined by the rail corridor with its triangular node, running Southeast-Northwest, and the 6 lane Olympic Drive, running north-south. These infrastructure corridors create the immediate edge to the west and south of the proposal.



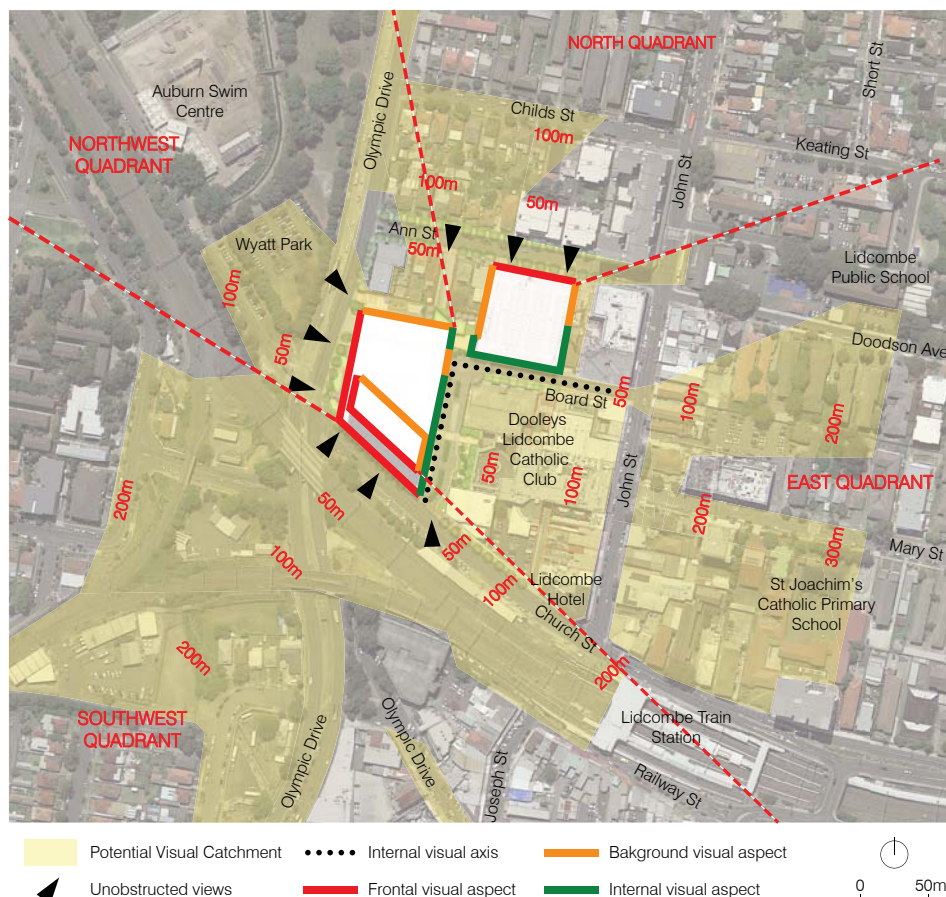
2. Existing Visibility

The diagram below identifies the Potential Visual Catchment of the Proposed Development by verifying the zones from which there is visibility under the existing conditions.

Whithin this Visual Catchment, four visual quadrants are identified, each with a particular visible attribute.

North Quadrant

This quadrant is currently defined by low density residential uses with some visual amenity achieved through the regular order of dwellings, lower scale buildings and some vegetation.



Map 2 - Visibility of the Proposed Development

Within this quadrant the Proposed Development presents the car park building in the foreground with the club podium and hotel tower in the background. There are closer and unobstructed views towards the car park along Ann St. The nearby residential apartment buildings block the views from the east. The potential observers in this quadrant are residents along Ann St and Childs St.

East Quadrant

This Quadrant is located on the highest ground of all the study area. Being currently defined by retail and mixed use developments, there is visual amenity due to the urban character of John St. which includes two local school with large trees. All parts of the Proposed Development are presented in the background. Views of the development can occur from nearby residential uses but this is constrained by the limitations of window size. Along John St. there is no visibility due to the elevated sightlines determined by the height of existing buildings.

The realignment of Board Street under the Proposed Development will present internal views framed by adjoining mix uses fronting John St.

The potential observers in this quadrant are the residents between Doodson Ave, Mary St and Church St and students / parents where applicable, as well as future patrons of the Club and Hotel.

Southwest Quadrant

In this quadrant and with a sloping terrain, the ground falls towards the north to

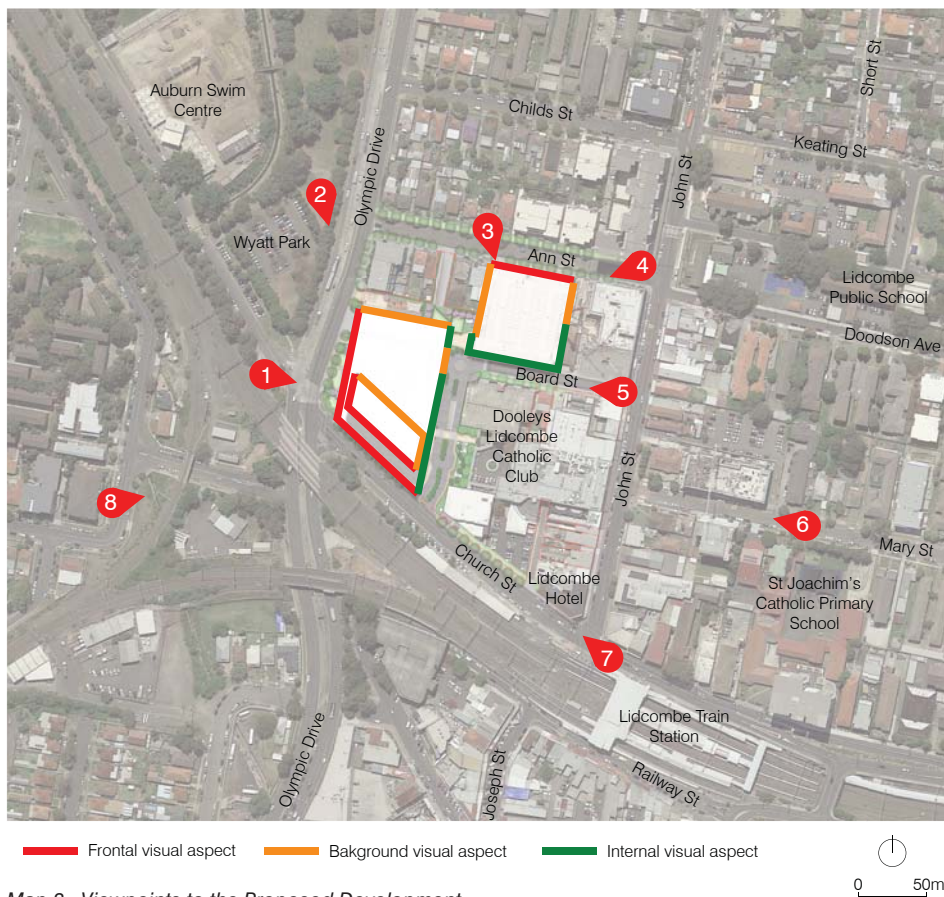
meet the recreational uses of the Auburn Swim Centre. This quadrant is defined by infrastructure uses (both rail and roads), with residential and mixed uses located to the periphery of this quadrant. It has low visual value due to the expanse of pavement and gravel associated with the infrastructure uses. The hotel tower of the Proposed Development presents itself with a frontal aspect, having the greatest visibility in the Lidcombe skyline. Immediate south of the site along Church St, has unobstructed views to both the podium and tower. The distance from the west reveals the Proposed Development behind a sweep of roadway pavement. The observers in this quadrant are train passengers (short term observation), drivers along Olympic Drive (short term observation) and local residents to Southwest (long term observation).

Northwest Quadrant

The landform of this Quadrant is the lowest of the study area, being dissected by a drainage line near the Auburn Swim Centre. Defined by Olympic Drive this quadrant is edged by residential uses to the east and the extensive greenery of the Wyatt Park to the west defined by mature trees and open grounds. This park has high visual value. The development presents itself frontally towards Wyatt Park, and there are unobstructed views along Olympic Drive. The car park is not visible from this quadrant. The potential observers in this quadrant are the vehicle drivers along Olympic Drive and the users of the Swim Centre (both short term observation).

3. Visual Impact

For the purpose of this report, 8 viewpoints have been listed as key in the assessment of the Visual Impact of the Proposed Development. These views correlate to the visual catchment and quadrants identified earlier, and are established at different distances surrounding the Proposal.



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Viewpoint 1 (55m distance)

This viewpoint is located on the intersection of Olympic Drive with Curch St, looking east at the Proposed Development.

Sensitivity:

The view from this angle is dominated by multiple lane roadways and a rail embankment. As there is significant vegetation in front of the development, this 'buffering' has the potential to give the view some capacity to absorb change. The view is unobstructed and there is likely to be a significant number of viewers, but the view is short-term since the viewers are likely to be within a car or on the train. The podium is quite balanced by existing and proposed vegetation. The tower is prominent in the skyline. This will be more in context as future developments in the surrounding area are realized.

The Sensitivity is considered:

With current conditions - Moderate

Potential with DCP development - Moderate

Magnitude:

In the dramatic vertical scale of the tower this mass will reinforce the canyon effect with the rail embankment. The podium development is quite grounded and this is due in part to the horizontal presence and 'buffering' by vegetation. This is a close view when driving along Olympic Drive, increasing the visual impact of the Proposed Development.

The Magnitude of the impact is considered:

With current conditions - High

Potential with DCP development - Moderate

Assessment of impact:

The combined assessment of the above factors provides an impact of:

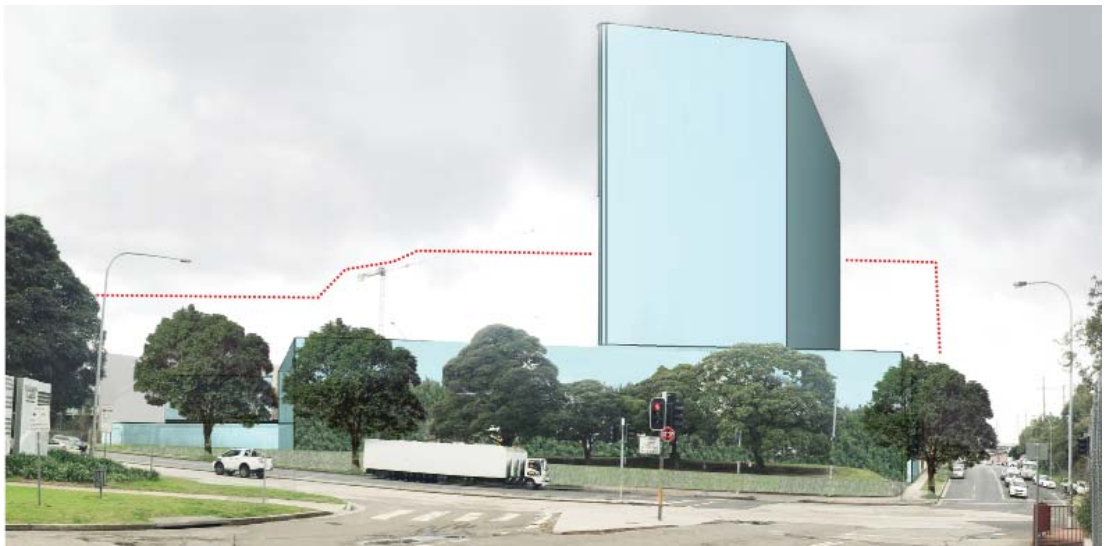
With current conditions: High-Moderate

Potential with DCP conditions: Moderate

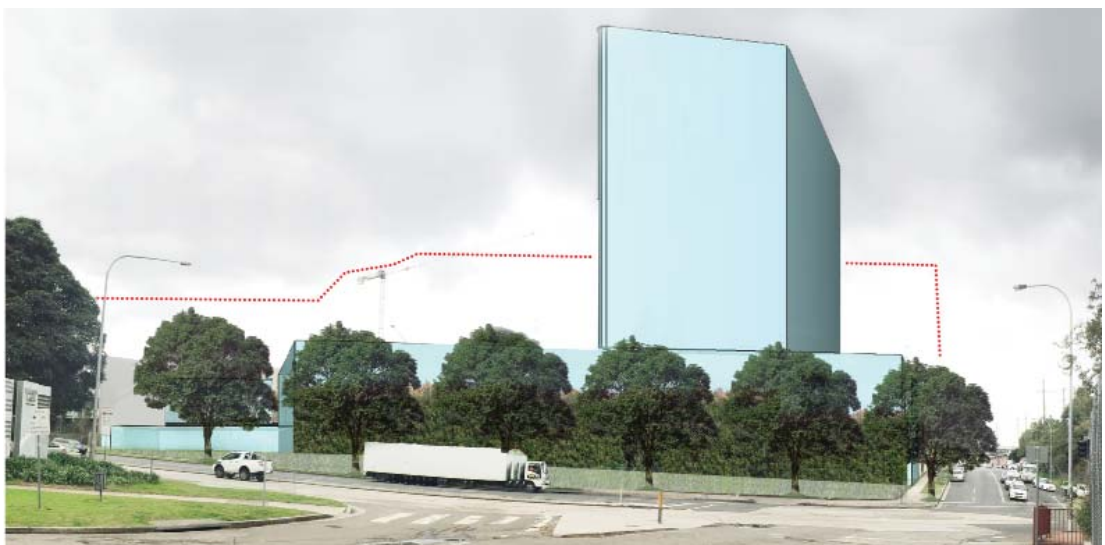
PTW



View 1.1 - Current conditions



View 1.2 - Proposed Development keeping existing trees (maximum allowed built envelope for surrounding area shown in dotted line)



View 1.3 - Proposed Development with proposed landscaping (maximum allowed built envelope for surrounding area shown in dotted line)

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Viewpoint 2 (100m distance)

This view is located in Wyatt Park, looking south at the Proposed Development within a zone of public recreation,.

Sensitivity:

As the quality of the area is semi-natural, this view is dominated by greenery and in this particular location, the skate park. The presence of the canopy trees is quite robust, and this foreground has some capacity to absorb change in the view. The viewers are likely to be the users of the skate park and of the open informal recreation areas. As the majority of uses will likely be weekend use the views would occur infrequently. The composition of the view is a strong foreground tree canopy with the development in the background within an expanse of sky.

The Sensitivity is considered:

With current conditions - Moderate

Potential with DCP development - Moderate

Magnitude:

With the development there is a change in scale in the background to the park, yet it is a form with elegant proportions. Given the predominant natural quality of the area, the proposed building brings a change in character. However it is a single volume, thus reads as an urban marker on the edge of the town centre. Given the distance of the view, the magnitude is somehow reduced.

The Magnitude of the impact is considered:

With current conditions - Low

Potential with DCP development - Low

Assessment of impact:

The combined assessment of the above factors provides an impact of:

With current conditions: Moderate-Low

Potential with DCP conditions: Moderate-Low

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View 2.1 - Current conditions



View 2.2 - Proposed Development

Viewpoint 3 (20m distance)

This viewpoint is located off Ann St, and looks at the proposed car park from the northwest.

Sensitivity:

This is predominantly a low density residential area in transition to high density, and with some existing street trees has sensitivity with limited capacity to absorb change. This is due to the qualities of the area: as a suburban residential streetscape. The observers of this view are likely to be local residents of this short street - and therefore to be low in numbers. The direction of the view is towards the high density residential building beyond and this acts as a backdrop for the view. In terms of composition, the car park is highly visible and presents itself frontally to the street and to the residential uses opposite; but the majority of the observers would be looking laterally with existing street trees when passing by. These street trees will assist in absorbing the views of the proposal.

The Sensitivity is considered:

With current conditions - High

Potential with DCP development - Low

Magnitude:

The car park building brings an increase in scale, but consistent with the nearby and adjoining high density developments. This horizontal mass provides a transition in scale between the current low scale residential uses along Ann St to the taller residential uses along John St. A very significant change is the unbroken extent of the carpark facade, which is in contrast to the smaller existing grain. In the same way, the flanking boundary walls when facing the adjoining residences, have a great impact due to the extent of the wall. There is also a significant change of character from residential to a carpark building. The existing trees soften the presence of the building and the proposed trees (in Council's land) introduces a consistent treatment with an appropriate scale.

The Magnitude of the impact is considered:

With current conditions - High

Potential with DCP development - Moderate

Assessment of impact:

The combined assessment of the above factors provides an impact of:

With current conditions: High

Potential with DCP conditions: Moderate-Low

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View 3.1 - Current conditions



View 3.2 - Proposed Development with existing trees



View 3.3 - Proposed Development with proposed trees

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Viewpoint 4 (55m distance)

This view is located at the intersection of John St and Ann St, looking west at the Proposed Development.

Sensitivity:

The view is taken from an area of high density mixed use and looks west into a low density residential area. As such there is sensitivity due to its visual qualities due to the background having a low capacity to absorb change. The foreground is broad and robust and as such has great capacity to absorb change. There is a significant number of receivers in the adjacent residential buildings and the passers by along John St.

The Sensitivity is considered:

With current conditions - Moderate

Potential with DCP development - Low

Magnitude:

The Proposed Development brings an increase in vertical scale to the adjoining residential areas, but it serves as a transition to the higher residential blocks towards John Street. The extent of the facade is quite long which contrasts greatly with the fine grain in the residential dwellings in the background. There is a strong contrast in character from the proposed car park, which feels out of context within this local residential area. The current street trees and proposed use of vegetation can assist in a transition of scale and character to the adjoining surroundings.

The Magnitude of the impact is considered:

With current conditions - Moderate

Potential with DCP development - Low

Assessment of impact:

The combined assessment of the above factors provides an impact of:

With current conditions: Moderate

Potential with DCP conditions: Low

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View 4.1 - Current conditions



View 4.2 - Proposed Development (maximum allowed built envelope for surrounding area shown in dotted line)



View 4.3 - Proposed Development with proposed trees (maximum allowed built envelope for surrounding area shown in dotted line)

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Viewpoint 5 (54m distance to car park, 135m to club)

Sensitivity:

This is an urban core view with no significant visual quality and with low sensitivity. It has high capacity to absorb change due to adjoining built form and moderate amounts of sky visible. The viewers are likely to be pedestrians passing along John St and local residents down Board St (note these are to be relocated with the proposal). This is a strongly framed view with buildings with different heights

The Sensitivity is considered:

With current conditions - Low

Potential with DCP development - Low

Magnitude:

Due to the proposed development there is an increase in the local vertical scale, but visually this is kept in balance by the adjacent buildings as they frame and give scale to the view.

The Magnitude of the impact is considered:

With current conditions - Low

Potential with DCP development - Low

Assessment of impact:

The combined assessment of the above factors provides an impact of:

With current conditions: Low

Potential with DCP conditions: Low

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View 5.1 - Current conditions



View 5.2 - Proposed Development (maximum allowed built envelope for surrounding area shown in dotted line)



View 5.3 - Proposed Development with proposed trees (maximum allowed built envelope for surrounding area shown in dotted line)

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Viewpoint 6 (295m distance)

This view is located off Mary St and looks west at the Proposed Development.

Sensitivity:

This view is quite balanced in scale with the proportion built form to sky. Due to this it has low capacity to absorb change, albeit being a heavily built area. The foreground is low to high density residential with signs of change with development. The likely observers are to be local residents, pupils and parents attending the St. Joachim's Catholic Primary School. The composition of the view is linear and framed.

The Sensitivity is considered:

With current conditions - Moderate

Potential with DCP development - Negligible

Magnitude:

With the proposed development, there is an increase in vertical scale. The vertical linear forms of the view are kept but the extent of visible sky is truncated by the Hotel Tower. With the potential development under the DCP conditions the Tower will be concealed.

The Magnitude of the impact is considered:

With current conditions - Moderate

Potential with DCP development - Negligible

Assessment of impact:

The combined assessment of the above factors provides an impact of:

With current conditions: Moderate

Potential with DCP conditions: Negligible

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View 6.1 - Current conditions



View 6.2 - Proposed Development (maximum allowed built envelope for surrounding area shown in dotted line)

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Viewpoint 7 (185m distance)

This view is located at the intersection of Church St and John St, looking northwest at the Proposed Development.

Sensitivity:

The view is defined by the railway embankment and rail corridor, railway station, and the Lidcombe Hotel on the corner and transition with John Street. As it is on an edge situation, it has reduced sensitivity and it has some capacity to absorb change. The visual quality of the Hotel will establish the basis for visual contrast to the new development; as with any new development within existing built-up town centres.

The Sensitivity is considered:
With current conditions - Low
Potential with DCP development - Negligible

Magnitude:

Having an increase in scale due to the Proposed Development, and given the view distance the skyline of the Hotel tower is aligned with the Hotel roof line. This increase in vertical scale will be further established with the potential adjoining development under the DCP conditions. As an urban marker, there is an interesting contrast in form, given the town centre is predominantly horizontal and the Hotel Tower is vertical, and overall this marker creates a synergy with existing buildings.

The Magnitude of the impact is considered:
With current conditions - Moderate
Potential with DCP development - Negligible

Assessment of impact:

The combined assessment of the above factors provides an impact of:

**With current conditions: Moderate-Low
Potential with DCP conditions: Negligible**

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View 7.1 - Current conditions



View 7.2 - Proposed Development (maximum allowed built envelope for surrounding area shown in dotted line)

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Viewpoint 8 (180m distance)

This view is located at Samuel St and looks east towards the Proposed Development.

Sensitivity:

As an open view its quality is determined by the scale of adjacent residential buildings and railway embankment.

As a transition zone with diverse and robust elements, the view has capacity to absorb change. The likely viewers are to be moderate in number, being local residents.

The view is towards the local skyline and the composition is open and expansive.

The Sensitivity is considered:

With current conditions - Low

Potential with DCP development - Low

Magnitude:

The Hotel Tower is highly visible above the railway embankment, punctuating the skyline through a base line of infrastructure and trees.

There is and an increase in scale but given the distance this element is not overempowering and is relative in visual proportion to the adjoining existing buildings. There is a change in character but this tower is seen as an urban marker in synergy with this residential area.

The Magnitude of the impact is considered:

With current conditions - Moderate

Potential with DCP development - Moderate

Assessment of impact:

The combined assessment of the above factors provides an impact of:

With current conditions: Moderate-Low

Potential with DCP conditions: Moderate-Low

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View 8.1 - Current conditions



View 8.2 - Proposed Development (maximum allowed built envelope for surrounding area shown in dotted line)

5. Summary

The impact of the proposal based on the selected viewpoints is summarised below.

Generally, a closer unobstructed view (such as views 1 and 3) and a view where there is a greater change in scale and character (such as view 3) offer greater impact. Views with significant framing, expansive views or where the Proposed Development is less visible offer a lesser impact (such as views 2, 5, 8).

On the other hand, the quality and refinement of the architectural design and use of vegetation, some of which are in the public domain (ie within Council's domain) assist in mitigating visual impacts.

The concept for the hotel tower has a double facade of full height glazing with a diagonal mesh grid that gives it a light, reflective and airy presence. On the other hand, the podium features a series of closely spaced vertical mullions, that gives depth and pattern. This visually grounds the building. The car park is a concrete patterned volume, with the street facades consisting of open sections. and relating to vertical mullions, are vertical strips of green wall.

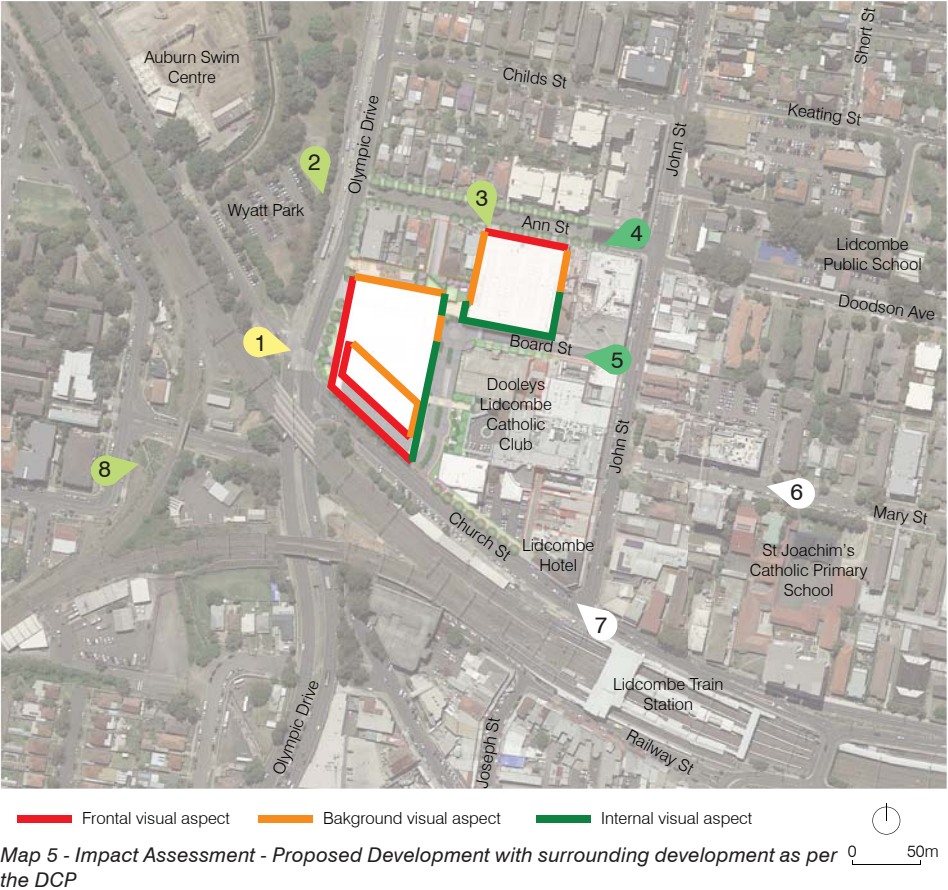
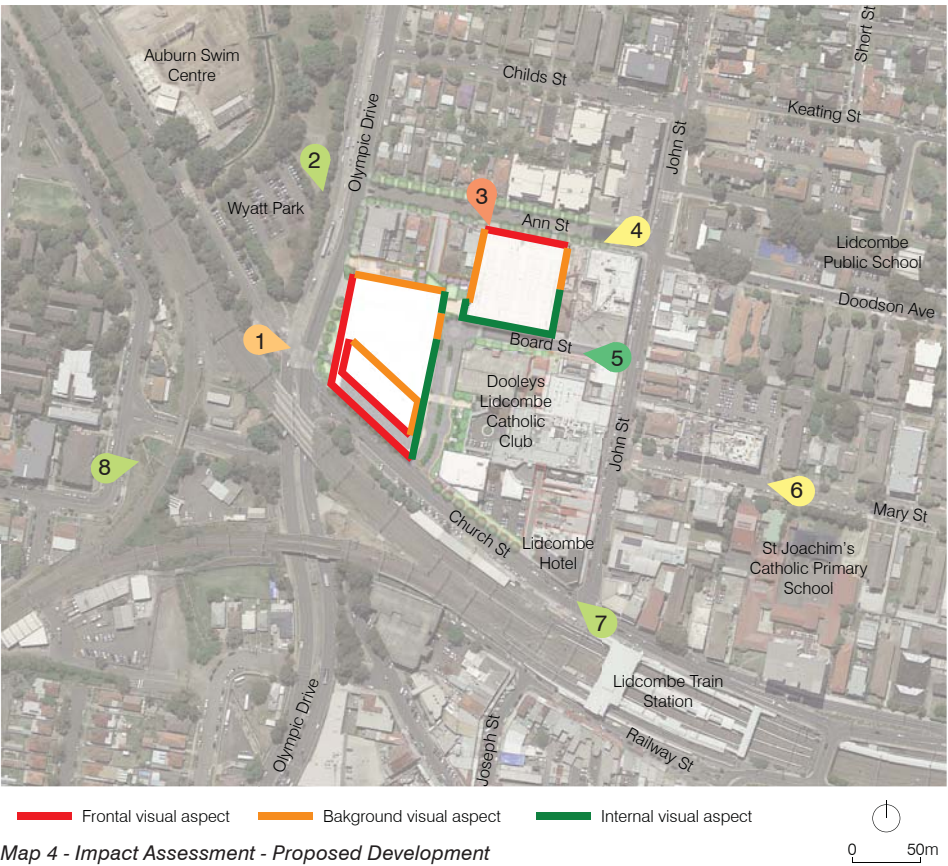
Over time, the development of the area will reduce the impact of the Proposed Development as the scale and character of the built form becomes more balanced and integrated.

View	Location	Distance to proposal	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Visual Impact
1	Church St	55m	Moderate	High	High-Moderate
2	Wyatt Park	100m	Moderate	Low	Moderate-Low
3	Ann St	20m	High	High	High
4	Ann St	55m	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
5	Board St	54m	Low	Low	Low
6	Mary St	295m	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
7	Church St	185m	Low	Moderate	Moderate-Low
8	Samuel St	180m	Low	Moderate	Moderate-Low

Table 2 - Impact assessment - Proposed Development

View	Location	Distance to proposal	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Visual Impact
1	Church St	55m	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
2	Wyatt Park	100m	Moderate	Low	Moderate-Low
3	Ann St	20m	Low	Moderate	Moderate-Low
4	Ann St	55m	Low	Low	Low
5	Board St	54m	Low	Low	Low
6	Mary St	295m	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
7	Church St	185m	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
8	Samuel St	180m	Low	Moderate	Moderate-Low

Table 3 - Impact Assessment - Proposed Development with surrounding development as per the DCP



PTW Locations

Sydney

Level 13
9 Castlereagh Street
Sydney NSW 2000
Australia
T +61 2 9232 5877
F +61 2 9221 4139

E info@ptw.com.au
W www.ptw.com.au

Beijing

Unit 1706, Zhong Yu Plaza
6 Gongti Bei Road
Chaoyang District
Beijing 100027
People's Republic of China
T +86 10 8571 2635
F +86 10 8571 2637

Shanghai

Suite 4302
Bund Centre
222 Yan An East Road
Huangpu District
Shanghai 200002
People's Republic of China
T +86 21 6335 1100
F +86 21 6335 0300

Shenzhen

Level 14
Jinjia Technology Building
#19 Keji Zhonger Road
Nanshan, Shenzhen 518057
People's Republic of China
T +86 150 2663 9691

Taipei

2F, No.116, Sec 1
Zhongshan North Road
Taipei City 104, Taiwan
T +886 2 2522 1882
F +886 2 2522 1883

Hanoi

Level 5
Han-Viet Tower
203 Minh Khai Street
Hai Ba Trung District
Hanoi, Vietnam
T +84 4 3974 4252
F +84 4 3974 4255

Ho Chi Minh City

Room 6.02
Level 6, An Phu Plaza
117-119 Ly Chinh Thang
Ward 7, District 3
Ho Chi Minh City
Vietnam
T +84 8 3931 8779
F +84 8 3931 8778