DESIGN GROUP

VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

93-107 Cecil Avenue & 9-10 Roger Avenue, Castle Hill

NOMINATED ARCHITECT: KAICHI LEUNG
NSW 7133|QLD 4478|VIC 800401

xx/xx/2026

a24033

ISSUE	REPORT	DATE
ISSUE B	FINAL REPORT	27 MARCH 2026

I, Kaichi Leung, confirm that this Visual Impact Assessment addresses the requirements of SEARs Requirement No.6 for SSD-78156221. The assessment has been prepared in accordance with relevant State and local legislation, policies, and guidelines, including the Guideline for Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment – Environmental Impact Assessment Practice Note EIA-N04 (December 2018) and the NSW Land and Environment Court Guidelines for the Use of Photomontages.
I further confirm that all information contained in this Visual Impact Assessment is accurate and not false or misleading.

DESIGN GROUP

NOMINATED ARCHITECT: KAICHI LEUNG
NSW Architects Registration No. 7133

A: Level 3, 9 Barrack Street, Sydney, NSW 2000
Ph: 1300 377 789 I W: www.aplusdg.com.au

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

Figure 1 – Overall site location map


Figure 2 – Aerial map showing site location.

1.1 Scope and Purpose of Report

This Visual Impact Assessment has been prepared as supporting documentation for a development application for the demolition of existing buildings and the construction of a mixed-use development at 93–107 Cecil Avenue and 9–10 Roger Avenue, Castle Hill. The proposed development comprises several stages, including basement car parking, ground-floor commercial spaces, and 615 residential apartments across buildings ranging from 3 to 25 storeys.

The purpose of this report is to objectively evaluate the visual impact of the proposed development on the surrounding locality, including private and public viewpoints, streetscapes, and key open spaces. The assessment has been prepared with reference to relevant statutory planning instruments, including The Hills Development Control Plan (DCP) 2012 and The Hills Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2019, as well as industry-recognised methodologies.

1.2 The Proposed Development

1.2.1. Project Overview

The application seeks consent for a mixed-use residential and commercial development. This design approach ensures a sensitive response to the site's strategic location within the Castle Hill Strategic Centre and the transitioning character of the surrounding area.

The proposal, detailed in the architectural plans prepared by A+ Design Group, is supported by comprehensive landscape and engineering documentation. Key components of the development include:

- Demolition of the existing structures on site.
- Excavation for two basement levels providing 793 car spaces, including dedicated spaces for residents, visitors, and commercial uses.
- Removal of selected existing trees, with provisions for replacement planting and extensive landscaping to enhance the site's environmental outcomes.
- Construction of four towers ranging from 23 to 35 storeys, carefully responding to the site's natural topography and surrounding built form.
- Delivery of 610 residential units, offering a diverse mix of:
  - 1-bedroom, 2-bedroom, and 3-bedroom apartments.
  - 15% affordable housing, in compliance with the Housing SEPP 2021.
- Integration of 3,789m² of commercial and retail spaces to activate the ground plane, provide employment opportunities, and support local economic growth.
- Extensive landscaping and communal spaces, including:
  - Deep soil zones to promote urban greening.
  - Rooftop gardens and communal open spaces designed to enhance residential amenity and environmental performance.

The proposal aligns with the objectives of the Housing SEPP 2021, the Hills Local Environmental Plan 2019, and the Castle Hill Precinct Plan. By delivering increased density and urban renewal in proximity to Castle Hill Metro Station, the development supports the area's evolution into a key residential and commercial hub while ensuring high-quality design outcomes.

1.2.2.The Site

The site is located within the Castle Hill Strategic Centre, governed by The Hills LEP 2019 and the Hills DCP 2012. The DCP specifically identifies this area as part of the Castle Hill Mixed-Use Precinct, supporting higher-density residential and commercial developments to complement its proximity to the Castle Hill Metro Station (650 metres away).

The site comprises 17,623.6 square metres, with a frontage of 160.925 metres to Cecil Avenue and 35.92 metres to Roger Avenue, and falls approximately 15 metres from north to south.

The surrounding area features a mix of low-to medium-density residential developments, transitioning to newer apartment buildings and commercial spaces closer to the Castle Hill commercial core. The proposed development aligns with the site-specific controls in the Hills DCP, which guide height transitions, façade articulation, and urban integration.

See Figure 3 for the ground floor plan and Figure 4 for the aerial view of proposal.

Figure 3: Ground Plane Landscape Plan from Site Image.

Figure 4: Aerial view from A+ Design Group

1.2.3.Proposed Land Use and Built Form

The proposed design delivers a contemporary, integrated aesthetic utilising high-quality materials, including textured brickwork, metal finishes, and glass balustrades. The design incorporates extensive landscaping across ground planes, communal rooftop spaces, and balconies, aligning with The Hills DCP 2012 requirements for enhancing visual amenity.

Building heights range from 23 to 35 storeys, ensuring a sensitive relationship with future contemplated built form in the surrounding area achieving:

- A balanced urban-to-residential interface.
- Preservation of visual corridors and tree canopies.
- Mitigation of perceived visual bulk through articulation and façade modulation.

Response to Topographic Constraints

The site's natural fall of 15 metres has been carefully considered to:

- Optimise views across the precinct while minimising overshadowing and adverse visual impacts.
- Integrate the built form with the natural environment by retaining existing tree canopies and introducing additional landscaping measures.

The proposal reflects the built form vision outlined in the Castle Hill Precinct Plan, which identifies the site as part of a key gateway precinct supporting landmark developments and increased densities near public transport nodes.

Figure 70. Built Form (Storeys)

Metro Station	M				
Metro Line (Underground)		H 4-15 Storeys		Q 8-20 Storeys	
Castle Hill Strategic Centre		I 4-18 Storeys		R 10 Storeys	
A 2-3 Storeys		J 4-20 Storeys		S 12 Storeys	
B 3 Storeys		K 4-22 Storeys		T 13-18 Storeys	
C 3-5 Storeys		L 4-25 Storeys		U 16 Storeys	
D 4-5 Storeys		M 5-6 Storeys		V 18-23 Storeys	
E 4-6 Storeys		N 8 Storeys		W 20-21 Storeys	
F 4-8 Storeys		O 8-10 Storeys		X 8-30 Storeys	
G 4-12 Storeys		P 8-12 Storeys			

The Hills Shire Council **Precinct Plan Castle Hill Strategic Centre** 103

Figure 7: Built Form (Storeys) - Figure 70 taken from Castle Hill Precinct Plan

Site Map and Contextual Analysis

The site map (see Figure 8) indicates planning zoning around the neighbouring properties, which has influenced the selection of viewing positions for the visual impact assessment.

Contextual Analysis

An analysis was undertaken of the visual and statutory planning contexts relevant to the assessment of visual impacts as part of the Development Application.

Site Inspection

A site inspection was undertaken to photograph the site and surrounding area and to investigate:

- The topography and existing urban structure of the local area;
- The streetscapes and sites most likely to be affected by the Proposal;
- Important vistas and viewsheds; and
- Other major influences on local character and amenity.

Visual Impact Analysis

The visual impacts of the proposed development were analysed in relation to its visual context and assessed for their likely effects on the surrounding area.
Statutory Planning Assessment:
The results of the local view impact assessment are presented in Section 3 of this report.

1.4 References

The following documentation and references were used to inform the preparation of this report:
Design Documentation

- The design drawings and information relied upon for the preparation of this report were prepared by A+ Design Group, dated December 2025.

Relevant Legislation and Policies

- State Environmental Planning Policy No. 55 – Remediation of Land;
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Building Sustainability Index: BASIX) 2004;
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Vegetation in Non-Rural Areas) 2017;
- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, as amended (“the Act”).

Best Practice Guidance

- Australia and New Zealand Urban Design Protocol: www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/urban/design-protocol-mar05/urban-design-protocol-colour.pdf;
- The Value of Urban Design: www.designcouncil.org.uk/Documents/Documents/Publications/CABE/the-value-of-urban-design.pdf;
- Fifteen Qualities of Good Urban Places: www.goldcoast.qld.gov.au/planning-and-building/fifteen-qualities-of-good-urban-places-3774.html;
- The Image of the City (1960), Kevin Lynch

Local Planning Instruments

- The Hills Local Environmental Plan 2019;
- The Hills Development Control Plan 2012.

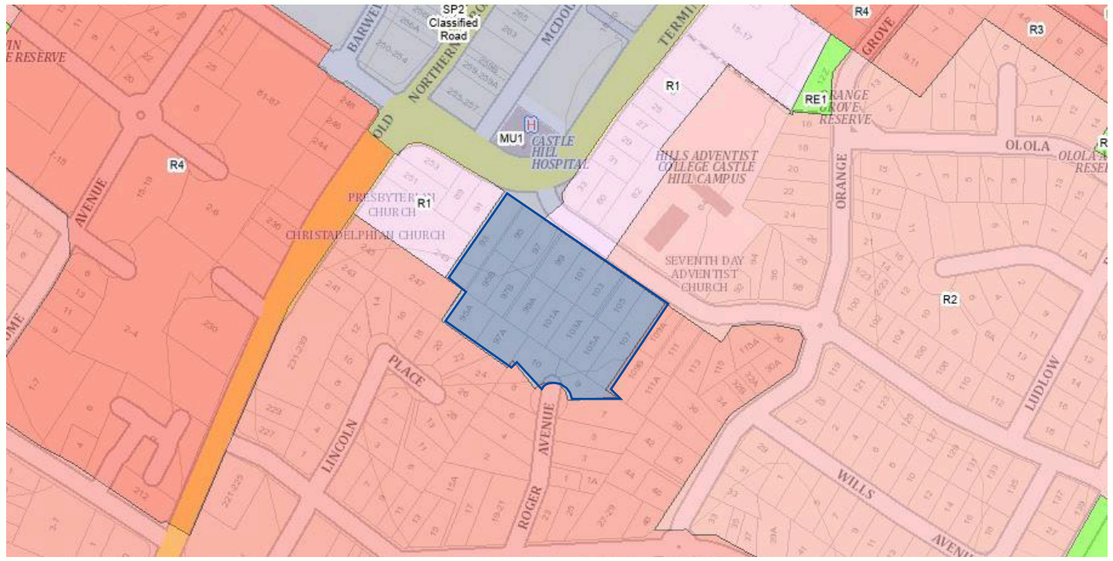


Figure 8: Land zoning map, indicating site with target.

1.3 Visual Impact Assessment Methodology

The visual impact assessment utilises photomontage images to illustrate the proposed development's integration within the existing environment, employing industry-standard methods to ensure accuracy and transparency.

1.3.1 Process

A detailed 3D model of the site and its surrounds was developed, reflecting the proposed building envelope. Virtual cameras were positioned to replicate key viewpoints at 1600mm and 1100mm heights, corresponding to standing and sitting positions.

Baseline photographs were overlaid with photomontage views, aligning with survey data, existing trees, and built structures to ensure accuracy. The rendered views represent the visual impact of the proposal and inform potential mitigation measures to minimise adverse impacts.

1.3.2 Assessment Methodology

The assessment applies:

The Hills DCP 2012: Relevant provisions guiding height transitions, façade articulation, and landscaping to integrate the built form into its context.

EIA-N04 Guidelines (NSW RMS 2018): A structured framework for evaluating landscape character, visual sensitivity, and magnitude of change.

Tenacity Consulting v Warringah Council [2004] NSWLEC 140: The Land and Environment Court's planning principle for view sharing.

These methodologies ensure a robust and objective evaluation of the proposal's visual impact, aligning with statutory requirements and industry best practices.

1.3.3 Visual Impact Evaluation

Key locations with prominent and unobstructed views were identified to assess sensitivity to visual changes, such as view loss or obstruction. High-quality views include natural environments and landmark features, while low-quality views feature heavily developed environments with minimal visual appeal.

Using baseline photography, accurate 3D visualisations of the proposal were overlaid to interpret potential changes and identify opportunities for mitigation. The Guideline for Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment (EIA-N04) was particularly instrumental in evaluating the sensitivity of the views and the magnitude of change, ensuring a methodologically robust and defensible assessment.

Planning principles for public domain views, such as Rose Bay Marina Pty Ltd v Woollahra Municipal Council (2013), were also considered to ensure impacts are assessed transparently and objectively.
See Figures 5 and 6 for the selected viewpoint locations.

To assess the visual impact of the proposed development, two primary aspects are considered

1. View loss of actual substance, such as landscape elements, middle and distant views.

2. Direct sky view loss, which considers the obstruction of open sky visible from impacted viewpoints.

While the value associated with a view is inherently subjective, a numerical scale ranging from 0 to 15 (see Figure 11) is employed to assign relative values to views. This allows for an objective framework to compare the visual impacts on different viewpoints.

The evaluation incorporates two key measures

Quantitative Assessment
Numeric values, ranging from 0 (no visual impact) to 15 (significant visual impact), are assigned to reflect the level of visual disruption caused by the development. These values are used to compare impacts across various affected locations and assess the relative significance of the view loss.

Qualitative Assessment
A qualitative value is assigned to the existing view based on visual quality criteria outlined in Figure 11. These criteria include:

- The scenic quality of landscape elements.
- The presence of significant middle or distant view elements.
- The existing urban or natural context.

The percentage of visual content affected by the proposed development is calculated, evaluating how the new built form interacts with the existing surroundings. This analysis considers the degree to which the development blends into its urban and natural context.

Factors assessed include:

- Compatibility with surrounding building forms.
- Continuity with existing architectural styles and materials.
- Landscaping and design features that mitigate visual disruption.

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

Figure 9: Environmental impact assessment practice note EIA-N04 Landscape and visual impact assessment matrix

2. THE SITE AND THE VISUAL CONTEXT

The subject sites are zoned MU1 Mixed Use Zone under The Hills Local Environmental Plan 2019, which governs the permissible land uses for the site (see Figure 7). Mixed-use developments, including residential flat buildings and commercial premises, are permissible with development consent.

The Neighbourhood Context provides a broader frame of reference that relates the appearance of the proposed development to the character of other developments within the local area. This context evolves from an understanding of the site's surroundings, including its proximity to Castle Hill Metro Station and the transitioning urban density within the precinct. Within this context, the relative appearance, size, and scale of different buildings are compared for their visual compatibility and contribution to the local character. The neighbourhood context is vital to the visual "legibility" of the development and its integration with surrounding developments. This legibility informs the cognitive mapping of the area, contributing to a unique sense of place while ensuring the arrangement and functionality of the local area are maintained.

2.1 The Visual Context

The site is located within the Castle Hill Strategic Centre, identified as a key area for urban transformation under The Hills Local Strategic Planning Statement and The Greater Sydney Region Plan. The surrounding precinct combines a mix of residential, commercial, and public uses. The area's existing developments include low- to medium-density residential housing, newer apartment buildings, and significant retail and commercial hubs, such as Castle Towers and Castle Mall.
The proposed development is well-positioned within this context to enhance the precinct's evolving character while contributing to housing supply and economic growth. Its integration with the surrounding built form, including transitions in building height and massing, ensures a balanced visual relationship with neighbouring developments.

Roger Ave - Aerial North West Facing

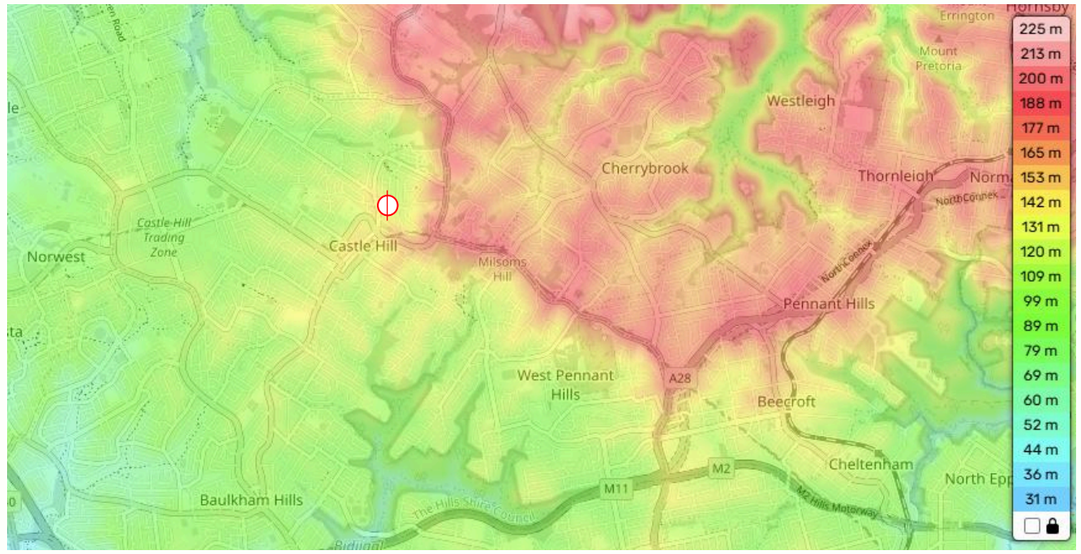


Figure 10: Subject Site topographical map.

2.2 Streetscapes

The surrounding streetscapes are characterised by diverse architectural styles and scales. On Cecil Avenue, the built environment features newer multi-storey apartment complexes alongside older detached residential dwellings, creating a blend of established and transitioning urban form. Along Roger Avenue, the streetscape predominantly consists of low-density residential housing, which contributes to a quieter, more suburban character.

The proposed development incorporates stepped building heights and extensive landscaping to harmonise with the existing streetscape. Taller structures front Cecil Avenue, aligning with its mixed-use zoning and urban character, while the southern boundary transitions to lower-rise buildings to complement the residential character of Roger Avenue.

2.3 The selected view locations for the local view analysis

Due to the site's topography, the visual impact is most relevant to neighbouring residential properties, particularly those to the south and east. The site features a natural fall of approximately 15 metres from Cecil Avenue to Roger Avenue, influencing the vantage points from which the development is visible.
The greatest potential for visual impact arises from neighbouring properties on Roger Avenue and Cecil Avenue, where views may currently extend across the site to other areas of Castle Hill. The analysis considers these viewpoints, particularly lower levels of neighbouring buildings, to assess potential impacts on privacy, visual amenity, and streetscape integration.

Cecil Ave - South West Facing

01

Roger Ave - Aerial North Facing

02

Old Northern Road - Aerial East Facing

03

Roger Ave - Aerial North West Facing

04

The eastern boundary of the site fronts Old Northern Road, a significant historic arterial route that serves as a major thoroughfare within Castle Hill. The road features four lanes of traffic and plays a vital role in connecting the Castle Hill Strategic Centre to surrounding suburbs and the broader Sydney road network. Its historic character and strategic importance add to the site's prominence within the local urban context.

The site benefits from close, walkable proximity to a range of parkland and green spaces, including Greenup Park Reserve and other nearby open spaces. These green spaces provide opportunities for recreation, relaxation, and visual amenity, contributing to the broader appeal of the area.

With its elevated position and district-wide outlook, the site offers significant potential for expansive views across multiple orientations. These views can be capitalised upon through the thoughtful placement of residential units, balconies, and communal spaces, enhancing both the residential amenity and overall design quality of the development. The orientation and built form have been carefully designed to optimise these key view corridors, creating opportunities for visual connections to the surrounding green landscape and broader Castle Hill precinct.

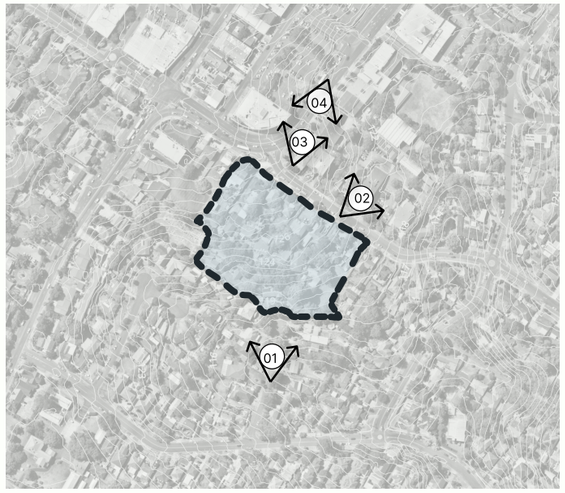
Roger Ave - North Facing

Cecil Ave - North Facing

Terminus St - South Facing

Terminus St - North Facing

The local character surrounding the site is diverse and reflective of the area's evolving urban landscape.
Along the Castle Hill Station interface on Old Castle Road, the underground Castle Hill Metro Station serves as a major public transport hub, promoting transit-oriented development. Adjacent to this, the high-rise Castle Towers complex stands as a prominent landmark, anchoring the commercial and retail core of the Castle Hill Strategic Centre.
Surrounding the site, the existing built form primarily consists of low-scale commercial buildings, which contribute to a transitional character between the mixed-use precinct to the north and the established residential neighbourhoods to the south.
To the west, Roger Avenue features an established tree canopy that provides natural shade, visual softness, and a sense of tranquillity, contrasting with the emerging higher-density urban forms nearby. This mature vegetation enhances the area's visual character and creates an opportunity for the proposed development to integrate with the existing landscape, maintaining a balance between urban renewal and natural elements.
The combination of established greenery, low-scale commercial buildings, and the precinct's proximity to key infrastructure highlights the site's role as a gateway location within the Castle Hill Strategic Centre, offering a blend of connectivity, amenity, and future growth potential.



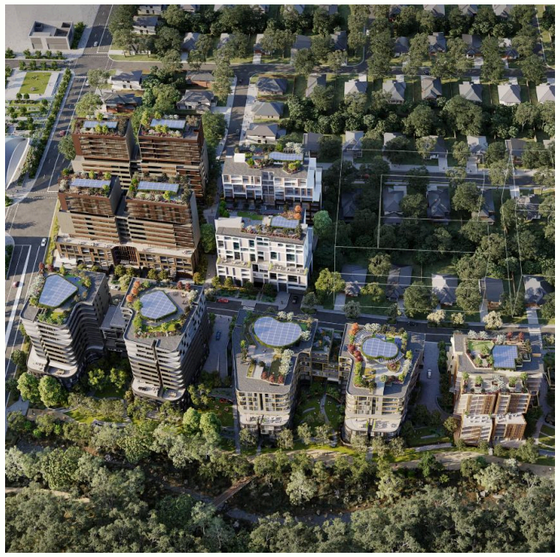
1 Atmosphere - 2018

2 Grand Reve - 2024

3 Skyview - 2026

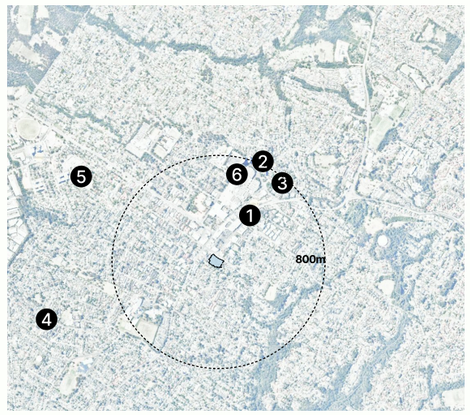
Castle Hill's strategic location near the Metro station and the North West Rail Link corridor, coupled with projected population growth, positions it as a key area for higher-density development. Designated as a 'Major Centre' in A Plan for Growing Sydney, Castle Hill supports the social needs of the surrounding community with access to facilities, services, and leisure options. Future development will focus on apartment living around the retail/ commercial core, offering high-density housing, increased job opportunities, and improved transport links, making it a high-growth area with a diverse range of services.

4 The Ashford - 2023



5 The Ashford - 2032

6 Castle Towers Masterplan



3. VISUAL IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3. VISUAL IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Visual Impact Assessments, with reference to the requirements of the Land and Environment Court

The visual impact assessment adheres to the guidelines set forth by the Land and Environment Court of NSW, which provide a baseline framework for evaluating view loss and visual impact. These guidelines ensure consistency, fairness, and compliance with legal principles when considering the impact of new developments on surrounding properties and the broader community.

The visual impact assessment evaluates the proposed development in relation to its surrounding context, focusing on seven selected viewpoints. Each viewpoint has been analysed to assess the visual sensitivity, magnitude of change, and overall impact of the development. The assessment methodology aligns with the Hills Development Control Plan (DCP) 2012, ensuring compliance with provisions for height transitions, façade articulation, and landscaping to mitigate visual impacts.

3.2 Project set up and accuracy

The visual impact of the proposed development has been assessed from seven key viewpoints within a 400-metre radius of the site. These viewpoints were selected to represent public and private spaces where the proposal is most visible and where its integration with the surrounding environment is most critical.

Each viewpoint was evaluated using the following criteria:

- Visual sensitivity of the location (e.g., residential areas, open spaces).
- Magnitude of change introduced by the proposed development.
- The capacity of the existing landscape and streetscape to absorb the development.

To ensure accuracy, the Applicant provided a comprehensive site survey, which was used to verify all assessment inputs. The proposed development model, prepared by A+ Design Group, was integrated into the site context and precisely aligned with the survey DWG, survey points, point cloud data, and RLs (Reduced Levels).

A district-scale Lidar-based model, accurate to within 0.25 metres and supplied by Aerometrics, was developed to provide a contextual representation of the site and its surroundings within a 150-metre to 1-kilometre radius. This model formed the foundation for assessing visual impacts across varying distances. The alignment of the proposed development with baseline photographs further ensured the accuracy and reliability of the virtual imagery used in the assessment.
This methodical approach enables a detailed and objective evaluation of the proposal's visual impacts while maintaining a high degree of precision.

3.3 Method of Assessment

The assessment of the visual impact followed a structured, three-stage process:

Stage 1- Light Map Creation and Initial Assessment
A light map of the local area was generated using the Lidar-based model to identify areas where the proposed development would be visible. This map incorporated detailed representations of buildings, trees, and roads, providing an initial assessment of view impact and guiding the selection of key locations for virtual and site-based evaluations.

Stage 2- Virtual Review and Confirmation
The light map was reviewed to confirm visibility zones where view loss might occur. Virtual cameras were placed into a detailed 3D scene, perpendicular to window glazing or balustrades of affected properties. Rendered views of the proposal's block form were generated, highlighting key visual elements for clarity. These preliminary visuals are provided in Appendix D (see Figure 10).

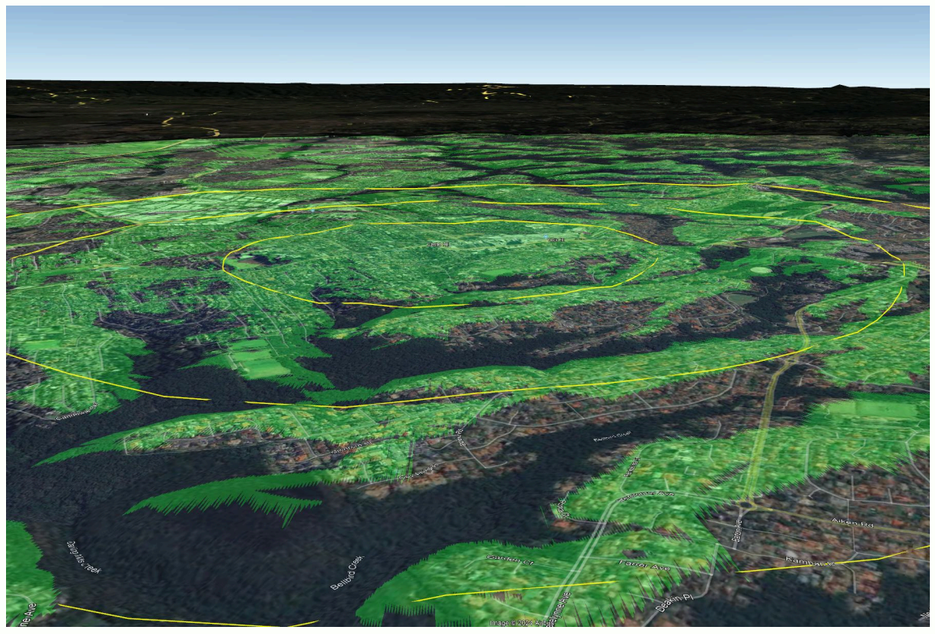
Stage 3- Site Visit and Detailed Photography
A site visit was conducted to capture additional survey information and verify the accuracy of virtual assessments. Photos were taken from relevant viewing locations, focusing on main living areas within neighbouring properties, both at sitting and standing eye levels. A Canon EOS Full Frame Digital Camera with a fixed 24mm lens was used for all viewpoint photos, taken at an eye height of 1600mm.
Accurate RLs derived from the point cloud enabled precise alignment of floor levels, window frames, and balustrades. The detailed point cloud data allowed for the triangulation of camera pitch, roll, and yaw, ensuring a high degree of accuracy in the rendered visuals. This methodology surpasses traditional wireframe modelling in terms of detail and verification reliability.

Photographs captured during the site visit are accompanied by descriptions and location details, which can be cross-referenced with the site map provided in Appendix A.

This comprehensive approach ensures a thorough and accurate visual impact assessment, aligning with both legal requirements and best practices in visual analysis.

Viewsheds

Viewsheds: 1km, 2km & 3km Buffer



Viewsheds: 1km, 2km & 3km Buffer

The viewshed analysis for the proposed development at 93–107 Cecil Avenue and 9–10 Roger Avenue, Castle Hill illustrates the extent to which the development will be visible across varying distances. The analysis incorporates buffer zones extending 1km, 2km, and 3km from the site to assess the visual catchment and broader impact on the surrounding area.

1km Buffer
Represents the immediate visual catchment, where the proposed development will be most prominent. This zone includes key local streetscapes, nearby residential areas along Roger Avenue, and the interface with Cecil Avenue. Within this range, views are characterised by a mix of low- to medium-rise buildings, mature tree canopies, and clear sightlines to the upper sections of the proposed development.

2km Buffer
Encompasses the intermediate catchment, including parts of the Castle Hill Strategic Centre and surrounding suburban residential areas. In this zone, the development becomes less dominant, with existing vegetation, topography, and surrounding built form providing natural and built buffers that reduce visual prominence.

3km Buffer
Represents the extended visual catchment, where the development's visibility is most reduced due to increased distance, intervening tree canopies, and the surrounding urban fabric. At this range, the visual impact is largely limited to distant skyline alterations, with the stepped building design mitigating its overall bulk and maintaining compatibility with the evolving urban landscape.

The viewshed analysis demonstrates that while the proposed development introduces a significant visual element within the 1km buffer, the design responds to the existing character through height transitions, façade articulation, and landscaping. Beyond this zone, natural buffers and existing built form help integrate the proposal into the broader Castle Hill context.

4. SELECTED VIEWS

The selected views have been carefully chosen to represent a range of public and private viewpoints that provide clear and unobstructed perspectives of the proposed development site.

These viewpoints are strategically located within 400 metres of the subject site and include key streetscapes, intersections, and open spaces where the visual impact of the proposal can be assessed effectively. Each view highlights specific elements of the existing environment, such as low-rise residential areas, mature vegetation, and open sky, which form the visual baseline for the assessment.

The analysis of these views allows for an objective evaluation of the visual sensitivity, magnitude of change, and overall impact of the development, ensuring alignment with planning principles and the evolving character of the Castle Hill precinct.

VIEWPOINT 1

Viewpoint Assessment

Viewpoint	Visual sensitivity	Change magnitude	Composite impacts assessment
Close views			
Viewpoint 1	Moderate	High	Moderate-High

Visual impact – Amount of new building visible in view – 70%
Visual impact ratio of view loss to sky view loss: 45% : 55%
Existing Visual Quality Scale no: 7/15
Visual Impact Assessment Scale no: 9/15

View Direction: Facing South-West towards the proposed redevelopment site.
This public viewpoint is from the east-side footpath of Cecil Avenue, directly opposite the development site. The existing view consists of:

- Low-rise single-storey residential dwellings.
- Mature street trees that partially soften the view.
- Utility infrastructure, including power poles and lines, contributing to the suburban character.

Visually, the proposal introduces a noticeable change in scale and mass within the existing low-rise suburban context. However, it is of an appropriate scale and form for the site when assessed within the context of the desired future character of the area, as outlined in the existing and emerging planning controls.

Rose Bay Marina Pty Limited v Woollahra Municipal Council Assessment Summary:

- Value of view: Moderate
- View location: Public viewpoint – Residential street footpath
- Extent of impact: Moderate to High
- Reasonableness of proposal: Acceptable within the context of the relevant planning instruments – see Statement of Environmental Effects.

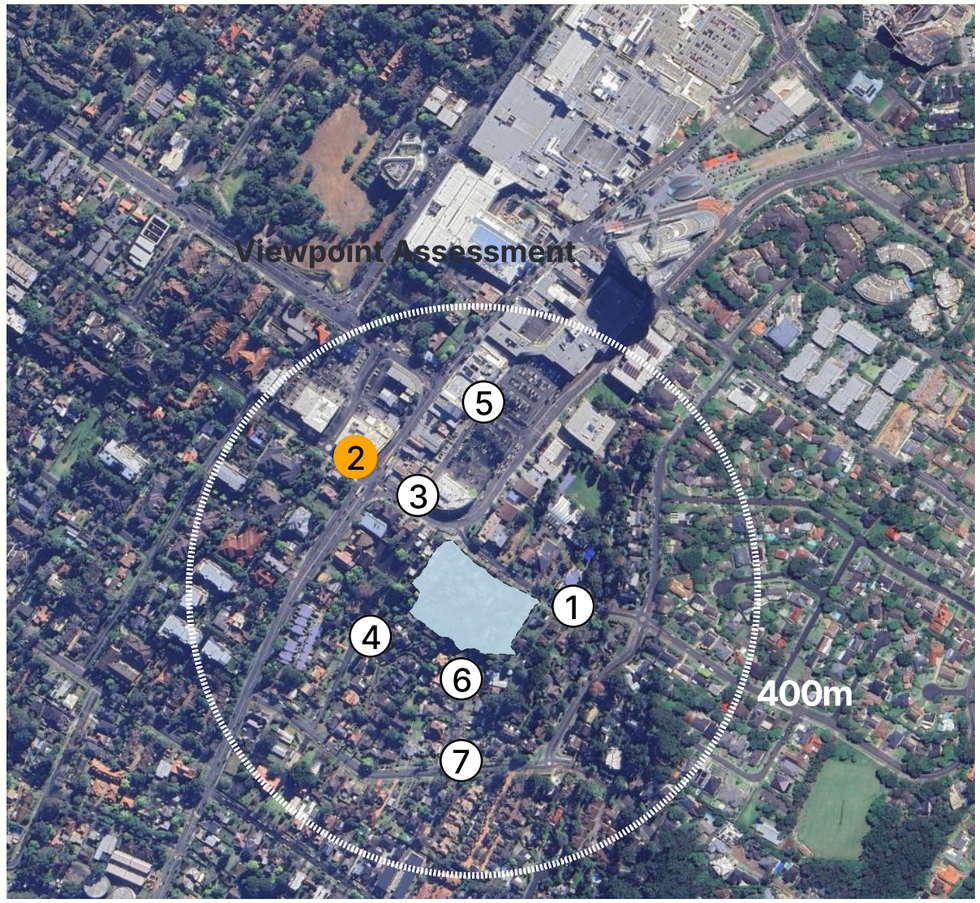
VIEWPOINT 1

Existing site photo

Photomontage of new proposal model onto existing site photo

Photomontage of new proposal with ‘future character’ proposal in reference to The Castle Hil Precinct Plan with Housing SEPP 2021 30% uplift

VIEWPOINT 2



Viewpoint Assessment

Viewpoint	Visual sensitivity	Change magnitude	Composite impacts assessment
Close views			
Viewpoint 2	Moderate	Low	Low

Visual impact – Amount of new building visible in view – 60%
Visual impact ratio of view loss to sky view loss: 50% : 50%
Existing Visual Quality Scale no: 6/15
Visual Impact Assessment Scale no: 9/15

This is a static, public viewpoint from the north-west corner of Cecil Avenue and Great Northern Road, facing southeast towards the subject site.

The view includes a mix of low-rise commercial buildings and infrastructure, such as streetlights, road signs, and traffic signals in the foreground. Mature trees provide some mid-ground screening, but the upper sections of the proposed development are visible, altering the skyline.

Visually, the proposal introduces a noticeable change in scale and mass within the existing low-rise suburban context. However, it is of an appropriate scale and form for the site when assessed within the context of the desired future character of the area, as outlined in the existing and emerging planning controls.

Rose Bay Marina Pty Limited v Woollahra Municipal Council Assessment Summary:

- Value of view: Moderate
- View location: Public viewpoint – Intersection/road reserve
- Extent of impact: Moderate to High
- Reasonableness of proposal: Acceptable within the context of the relevant planning instruments – see Environmental Impact Statement

VIEWPOINT 2

Existing site photo

Photomontage of new proposal model onto existing site photo

Photomontage of new proposal with ‘future character’ proposal in reference to The Castle Hil Precinct Plan with Housing SEPP 2021 30% uplift

VIEWPOINT 3

Viewpoint Assessment

Viewpoint	Visual sensitivity	Change magnitude	Composite impacts assessment
Close views			
Viewpoint 1	Moderate	High	Moderate-High

Visual impact – Amount of new building visible in view – 30%
Visual impact ratio of view loss to sky view loss: 20% : 80%
Existing Visual Quality Scale no: 8/15
Visual Impact Assessment Scale no: 5/15

This is a static, public viewpoint from the north-east corner of Cecil Avenue and McDougall Lane, facing east towards the subject site.

- A low-rise commercial building in the immediate foreground.
- Utility infrastructure, including street signs and streetlights.
- Mature trees and vegetation partially screening the view mid-ground.
- A clear open sky forming the dominant upper frame

Visually, the proposal introduces a moderate visual change with 30% of the building visible. The development primarily impacts the sky view while maintaining a significant portion of the existing mid-ground visual elements, such as vegetation and infrastructure. The proposal is appropriate in scale and form when assessed against the desired future character of the area, as defined in the Castle Hill Strategic Centre Framework and emerging planning controls.

Rose Bay Marina Pty Limited v Woollahra Municipal Council Assessment Summary:

- Value of view: Moderate
- View location: Public viewpoint – Road intersection
- Extent of impact: Moderate
- Reasonableness of proposal: Acceptable within the context of the relevant planning instruments – see Environmental Impact Statement

VIEWPOINT 3

Existing site photo

Photomontage of new proposal model onto existing site photo

Photomontage of new proposal with ‘future character’ proposal in reference to The Castle Hil Precinct Plan with Housing SEPP 2021 30% uplift

VIEWPOINT 4

Viewpoint Assessment

Viewpoint	Visual sensitivity	Change magnitude	Composite impacts assessment
Close views			
Viewpoint 3	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Moderate

Visual impact – Amount of new building visible in view – 25%
Visual impact ratio of view loss to sky view loss: 20% : 80%
Existing Visual Quality Scale no: 7/15
Visual Impact Assessment Scale no: 4/15

This is a static, public viewpoint from Lincoln Place, facing north-east towards the subject site.
The existing view comprises:

- A low-density residential setting featuring single-storey brick dwellings with pitched roofs.
- Mature tree canopies in the mid-ground and background, which visually dominate the scene.
- Open sky forming the upper visual frame, with power lines introducing minor clutter to the scene.

Visually, the proposal introduces a low to moderate visual change, with 25% of the building visible above the existing treeline. While the sky view is partially impacted, the existing mature trees and residential context significantly buffer the development's visual prominence. The stepped design of the proposal ensures that the building bulk is reduced and visually softened, aligning with the desired future character of Castle Hill as outlined in the Castle Hill Precinct Plan.

Rose Bay Marina Pty Limited v Woollahra Municipal Council Assessment Summary:

- Value of view: Moderate
- View location: Public viewpoint – Intersection/road reserve
- Extent of impact: Moderate to High
- Reasonableness of proposal: Acceptable within the context of the relevant planning instruments – see Environmental Impact Statement

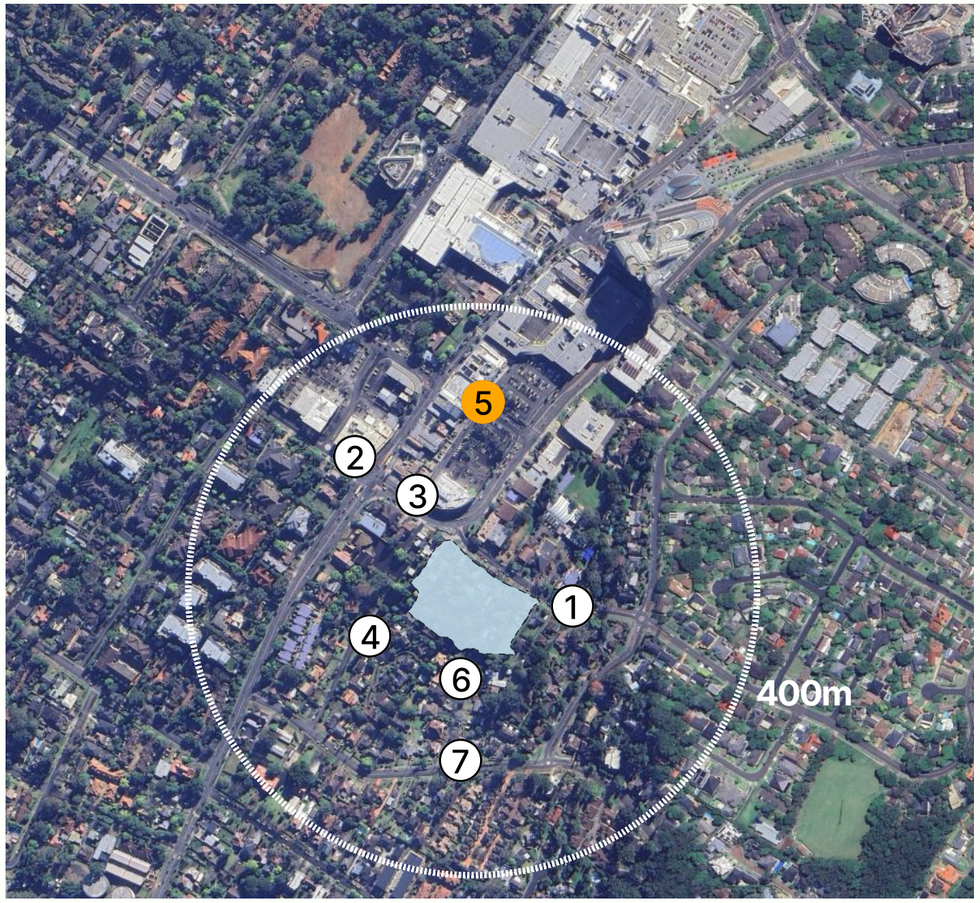
VIEWPOINT 4

Existing site photo

Photomontage of new proposal model onto existing site photo

Photomontage of new proposal with ‘future character’ proposal in reference to The Castle Hil Precinct Plan with Housing SEPP 2021 30% uplift

VIEWPOINT 5



Viewpoint Assessment

Viewpoint	Visual sensitivity	Change magnitude	Composite impacts assessment
Close views			
Viewpoint 5	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate

Visual impact – Amount of new building visible in view – 40%
Visual impact ratio of view loss to sky view loss: 30% : 70%
Existing Visual Quality Scale no: 7/15
Visual Impact Assessment Scale no: 6/15

This is a static, public viewpoint from McDougall Lane, near the car park, facing south towards the subject site.
The existing view includes:

- A commercial car park and pedestrian infrastructure in the immediate foreground.
- Mature trees in the mid-ground that provide partial screening.
- Low-rise commercial buildings and open sky dominating the upper frame.

Visually, the proposal introduces a moderate visual change, with 40% of the building visible in the frame. The skyline is partially altered, though the mid-ground trees provide effective buffering, reducing the perceived scale and bulk of the proposal. The proposal remains appropriate within the context of the desired future character of the Castle Hill Strategic Centre, as outlined in the Hills LEP 2019 and Housing SEPP 2023.

Rose Bay Marina Pty Limited v Woollahra Municipal Council Assessment Summary:

- Value of view: Moderate
- View location: Public viewpoint – Car park and road edge
- Extent of impact: Moderate
- Reasonableness of proposal: Acceptable within the context of the relevant planning instruments – see Environmental Impact Assessment

VIEWPOINT 5

Existing site photo

Photomontage of new proposal model onto existing site photo

Photomontage of new proposal with ‘future character’ proposal in reference to The Castle Hil Precinct Plan with Housing SEPP 2021 30% uplift

VIEWPOINT 6

Viewpoint Assessment

Viewpoint	Visual sensitivity	Change magnitude	Composite impacts assessment
Close views			
Viewpoint 6	Moderate	Low	Low

Visual impact – Amount of new building visible in view – 15%
Visual impact ratio of view loss to sky view loss: 10% : 90%
Existing Visual Quality Scale no: 8/15
Visual Impact Assessment Scale no: 3/15

This is a static, public viewpoint from Roger Avenue, facing north towards the subject site.
The existing view comprises:

- A quiet residential street with single-storey homes and manicured lawns.
- A dense tree canopy along both sides of the street, providing substantial mid-ground screening.
- Limited utility infrastructure (powerlines and poles).
- Open sky visible above the treeline, forming the dominant upper frame.

Visually, the proposal introduces a minimal visual change, with only 15% of the building visible through gaps in the existing tree canopy. The impact primarily affects the sky view, with the development having negligible impact on the residential streetscape.
The proposal aligns with the desired future character of the Castle Hill Strategic Centre, maintaining appropriate scale and form in this transitioning area.

Rose Bay Marina Pty Limited v Woollahra Municipal Council Assessment Summary:

- Value of view: Moderate
- View location: Public viewpoint – Residential street footpath
- Extent of impact: Minor
- Reasonableness of proposal: Acceptable within the context of the relevant planning instruments – see Statement of Environmental Effects.

VIEWPOINT 6

Existing site photo

Photomontage of new proposal model onto existing site photo

Photomontage of new proposal with ‘future character’ proposal in reference to The Castle Hil Precinct Plan with Housing SEPP 2021 30% uplift

VIEWPOINT 7

Viewpoint Assessment

Viewpoint	Visual sensitivity	Change magnitude	Composite impacts assessment
Close views			
Viewpoint 7	Moderate	Low	Low-Moderate

Visual impact – Amount of new building visible in view – 20%
Visual impact ratio of view loss to sky view loss: 15% : 85%
Existing Visual Quality Scale no: 8/15
Visual Impact Assessment Scale no: 4/15

This is a static, public viewpoint from Roger Avenue, facing north towards the subject site.
The existing view consists of:

- A residential streetscape with two-storey brick dwellings and pitched roofs in the immediate foreground.
- Mature street trees on the right side of the view that provide a strong green canopy.
- Open sky views dominating the upper portion of the visual frame.
- Utility infrastructure, including powerlines and light poles, adding minor visual clutter.

Visually, the proposal introduces a minor change to the existing view, with 20% of the building visible above the treeline and rooftops. The sky view is partially impacted, but the mature tree canopy and residential forms largely buffer the visibility of the new development.
The proposal aligns with the desired future character of the area as defined by the Castle Hill Strategic Centre Framework and emerging planning controls, facilitating higher-density living while retaining residential amenity.

Rose Bay Marina Pty Limited v Woollahra Municipal Council Assessment Summary:

- Value of view: Moderate
- View location: Public viewpoint – Residential street footpath
- Extent of impact: Minor
- Reasonableness of proposal: Acceptable within the context of the relevant planning instruments – see Statement of Environmental Effects.

VIEWPOINT 7

Existing site photo

Photomontage of new proposal model onto existing site photo

Photomontage of new proposal with ‘future character’ proposal in reference to The Castle Hil Precinct Plan with Housing SEPP 2021 30% uplift

5. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

Summary

Viewpoints 2 and 5 demonstrate the highest visual impact, primarily due to the building's greater visibility and noticeable skyline alteration.
Viewpoints 1, 3, and 7 show a moderate level of impact, mitigated by tree canopies and partial view obstruction.
Viewpoints 2 and 6 have the lowest visual impact, with minimal building visibility and strong mid-ground screening.

Viewpoint	Visual sensitivity	Change magnitude	Composite impacts assessment
Close views			
Viewpoint 1	Moderate	High	Moderate-High
Viewpoint 2	Moderate	Low	Low
Viewpoint 3	Moderate	High	Moderate-High
Viewpoint 4	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Moderate
Viewpoint 5	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Viewpoint 6	Moderate	Low	Low
Viewpoint 7	Moderate	Low	Low-Moderate

CONCLUSIONS & PLANNING SCHEME PROVISIONS RELATING TO VISUAL IMPACTS

This Visual Impact Assessment has reviewed the proposed development within its future planning context and concludes that the design delivers a built form that is visually consistent and compatible with the desired future character of Castle Hill. The proposal responds effectively to its strategic location within the Castle Hill Strategic Centre, aligning with the vision outlined in the Castle Hill Precinct Plan.

The proposal achieves the objectives of the Hills LEP 2019, The Hills Shire DCP, the Housing SEPP 2021, and The Hills Shire Council's urban design guidelines by delivering:

- A balance between urban density and visual sensitivity;
- An appropriate scale and massing that mitigates visual impacts on surrounding properties;
- High architectural and environmental design quality that supports the precinct's urban renewal goals.

As outlined in the accompanying Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) prepared by Sutherland Planning, the assessment has carefully considered:

- Integration with the planned future context of the Castle Hill Strategic Centre;
- Visual compatibility with existing and emerging developments in the area;
- A balanced approach to mitigating view loss while delivering increased housing diversity and commercial space.

In light of this analysis, it is concluded that the proposed development provides a visually appropriate and contextually responsive outcome. The application is satisfactory in terms of visual impact and should be supported for approval, as it aligns with the relevant planning controls and contributes positively to the evolving urban design quality of Castle Hill.

The scheme contained within this document has been prepared by a+ Design Group solely for the purpose of providing information about potential development.

The materials should not be considered to be error free or to include all relevant information.
Nothing in this document in any way constitutes advice or a representation by a+ Design Group nor does the transmission or sending of these materials create any contractual relationship.

Neither a+ Design Group nor any of its officers, employees, agents or contractors, will be liable for any direct or indirect loss or damage you may suffer or incur arising directly or indirectly from the use of any materials from this document.

DESIGN GROUP

NOMINATED ARCHITECT: KAICHI LEUNG
NSW Architects Registration No. 7133

APLUS DESIGN GROUP

A: Level 3, 9 Barrack Street, Sydney, NSW 2000
Ph: 1300 377 789 I W: www.aplusdg.com.au