

64 & 66 Lavender Street & 3, 5 & 7 Middlemiss Street Lavender Bay

Visual Impact Assessment

Prepared For

Central Element

March 2026

Final

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands we operate on. We acknowledge their continuing connection to Country through culture and community and we pay our respects to Elders past and present.

Urbis staff responsible for this report

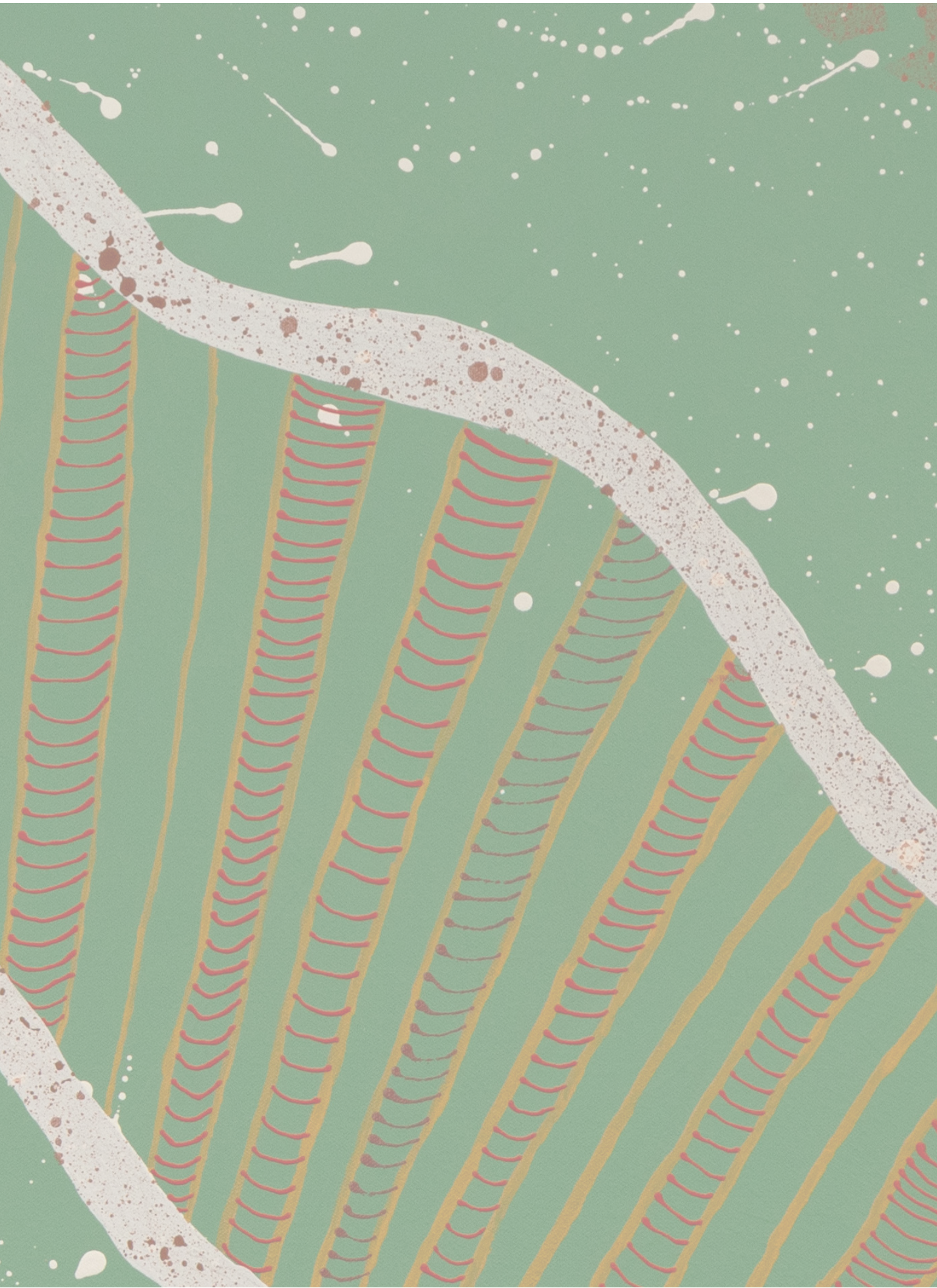
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Executive summary



This Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) has been prepared to accompany a State Significant Development Application (SSDA) and concurrent Rezoning Proposal for a residential development at 64 and 66 Lavender Street and 3, 5 and 7 Middlemiss Street (the site).

The SSDA involves demolition of the existing buildings on site and construction of a 3 storey podium form and two towers at 32 and 23 storeys consisting of 163 apartments including 3% affordable housing in perpetuity.

This report has been prepared to address the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) issued for the project (SSD-86797708).

- This VIA follows an objective, logical process to determine the importance of the extent of visual change associated with the proposal, in relation to the local and wider visual catchment.
- A 3D architectural model of the proposal has been used by Urbis to prepare 6 analytical photomontages which show the proposal in a range of representative views from across the visual catchment.
- Along with fieldwork observations, photomontages have informed an analysis of visual effects (extent of change) and have helped to determine and overall visual impact rating. The Impact rating per view informs the ultimate visual impact conclusion in relation to the project across the potential visual catchment.

Method & results

- The methodology employed to assess visual impacts establishes the visual baseline against which to measure the extent and significance of visual change.
- The visual impacts of the proposal have been determined by applying various relevant, logical weighting factors to each representative view, including Sensitivity, Compatibility and Visual Absorption Capacity.
- The final visual impact ratings per view are included in Section 5.0 of this report.

Key findings

- Topography and Intervening tower development to the north-west and north-east limit public domain potential distant views to the proposed development.
- The proposal is highly visible in a limited number of close views (VP6). From medium distant low lying waterfront locations (VP22) and from elevated locations on the southern side of Sydney Harbour (VP2), the visibility is constrained to upper tower forms only.
- The proposal is highly compatible with the immediate and wider visual context in terms of its height, form and character which will be visible in the context of the North Sydney and Milsons Point tower clusters. This context ensures a high level of visual absorption capacity and visual fit for the proposal.
- The proposal is likely to be consistent with viewer expectations for this part of Lavender Bay and does not appear as a novel or uncharacteristic element within the immediate or wider visual context.
- The majority of close views will be brief from moving, viewing situations from immediate streetscapes, rail corridor Sydney Harbour Bridge.
- Potential sustained views are possible from isolated parts of Clark Park and distant locations including from Sydney Harbour and Dawes Point.

- The proposal is located adjacent to and at the northern end of the an existing tower cluster in Milsons Point.
- The spatial separation and orientation of slender tower forms at differentiated heights create visual interest and permeability to an existing varied built form typology and broader North Sydney skyline.

Private Domain Views

- Based on fieldwork observations and analysis of 2 representative CGI views from immediate neighbouring dwellings (residential flat building buildings) potential private domain view impacts are limited and minor.
- Close, direct, northerly views from immediate neighbours at 61 and 55 Lavender Street, and 118 Alfred Street to the south will change to include foreground development.
- Such potentially affected residential views are vernacular, district compositions, predominantly characterised by vegetation, residential and tower development. The scenic quality of northerly views from Lavender Street dwellings are not highly valued in Tenacity terms.
- Potential impacts are limited to mid and high-level dwellings (those that sit above existing height controls), 3 neighbouring residential buildings, in one direction only where all other available views in alternate directions are unaffected.
- Immediate neighbours will experience some level of visual change where no views of scenic merit in Tenacity terms will be lost.
- Indicative Tenacity ratings for both representative views analysed were minor, which is low on the Tenacity qualitative impact rating scale.
- Upper level south-easterly 'commercial views' from View Sydney Hotel will change to include new tower forms where blocking effects are limited and view loss of significant scenic merit is unlikely.
- Overall considering the height and scale of the proposed development, private domain view impacts are likely to be low, reasonable and acceptable.

The proposal is supported on visual impact and view sharing grounds.

SEARs Declaration		
Qualified Professional Name	Jane Maze-Riley	
Qualified Professional Qualifications	Qualifications Master Urban and Rural Planning University of New England. Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (Honours) Lincoln University, NZ Memberships Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) Australian Institute of Landscape Architects – Associate member	
The undersigned declares that this Visual Impact Assessment has been prepared in response to the following SEARs requirements issued for the Project on 30 June 2025 (EIS) and 2 July 2025 (Rezoning Report) for SSD-86797708:		
SEARs item no	SEARs Issue and Assessment Requirement	
7.0	Assess amenity impacts on the surrounding locality, including solar access, visual privacy, view loss and view sharing, as well as wind, lighting and reflectivity impacts. A high level of environmental amenity for any surrounding residential or other sensitive land uses must be demonstrated.	Section 6.0
8.0	Provide a visual analysis of the development from key viewpoints, including photomontages or perspectives showing the proposed and likely future development.	Section 4.0 and 5.0
Signed		
Date	16.03.26	

01 Introduction



1.1 Introduction

This report has been prepared in support of a State Significant Development Application (SSDA) and concurrent Rezoning Proposal at 64 and 66 Lavender Street and 3, 5 and 7 Middlemiss Street (the site).

The proposed development seeks approval for the rezoning of the site and development consent for the construction of a residential development.

The SSDA specifically involves the following works:

- Demolition of the existing buildings on site
- Site excavation, and other preparatory site works
- Construction of a 32 and 23 storey residential flat building consisting of 163 apartments including 3% affordable housing in perpetuity.
- Five levels of basement parking
- Vehicular access from Lavender Street and loading access from Middlemiss Street
- A new public accessible open space, including through-site link and site landscaping
- Site amalgamation
- Utility and services augmentation as required.

To accommodate the proposed SSDA, a concurrent rezoning is sought to increase the site's maximum building height.

Table 1 SEARs Compliance.

Description of Requirement	Section Reference
7. Environmental Amenity	
• Assess amenity impacts on the surrounding locality, including solar access, visual privacy, view loss and view sharing, as well as wind, lighting and reflectivity impacts. A high level of environmental amenity for any surrounding residential or other sensitive land uses must be demonstrated.	Section 6.0
8. Visual Impact	
• Provide a visual analysis of the development from key viewpoints, including photomontages or perspectives showing the proposed and likely future development.	Section 4.0 and 5.0

This VIA follows an objective, logical process to determine the importance of the extent of visual change in relation to the local and wider visual context.



Figure 1 Site location | Urbis.

1.3 Proposed development in visual terms

The proposed development includes two tower forms connected by a central core and shared three-storey podium. The towers broadly present as two slender forms at differentiated heights where the lower tower, at 23 storeys (RL 110.80), is positioned to the north, and the taller tower, at 32 storeys (RL 137.00) to the south.

Both forms present longer elevations to the south and north-east and are taller relative to immediate residential development particularly to the west and north-west.



Figure 2 Site plan | SJB

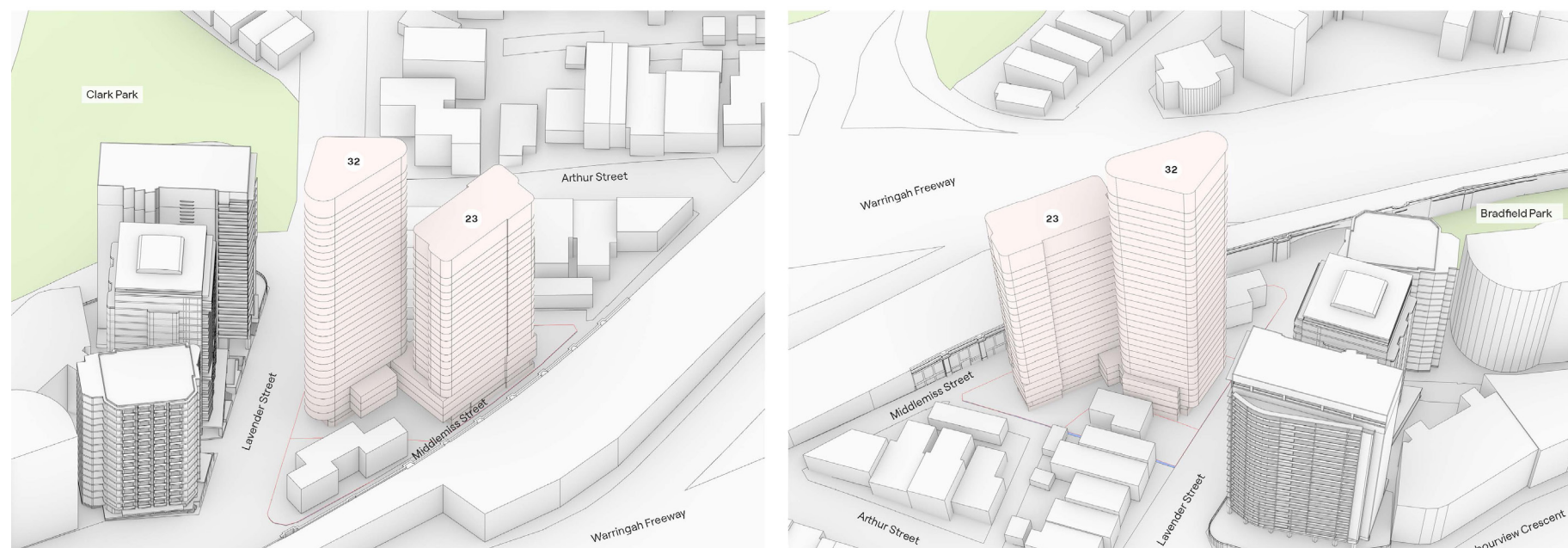
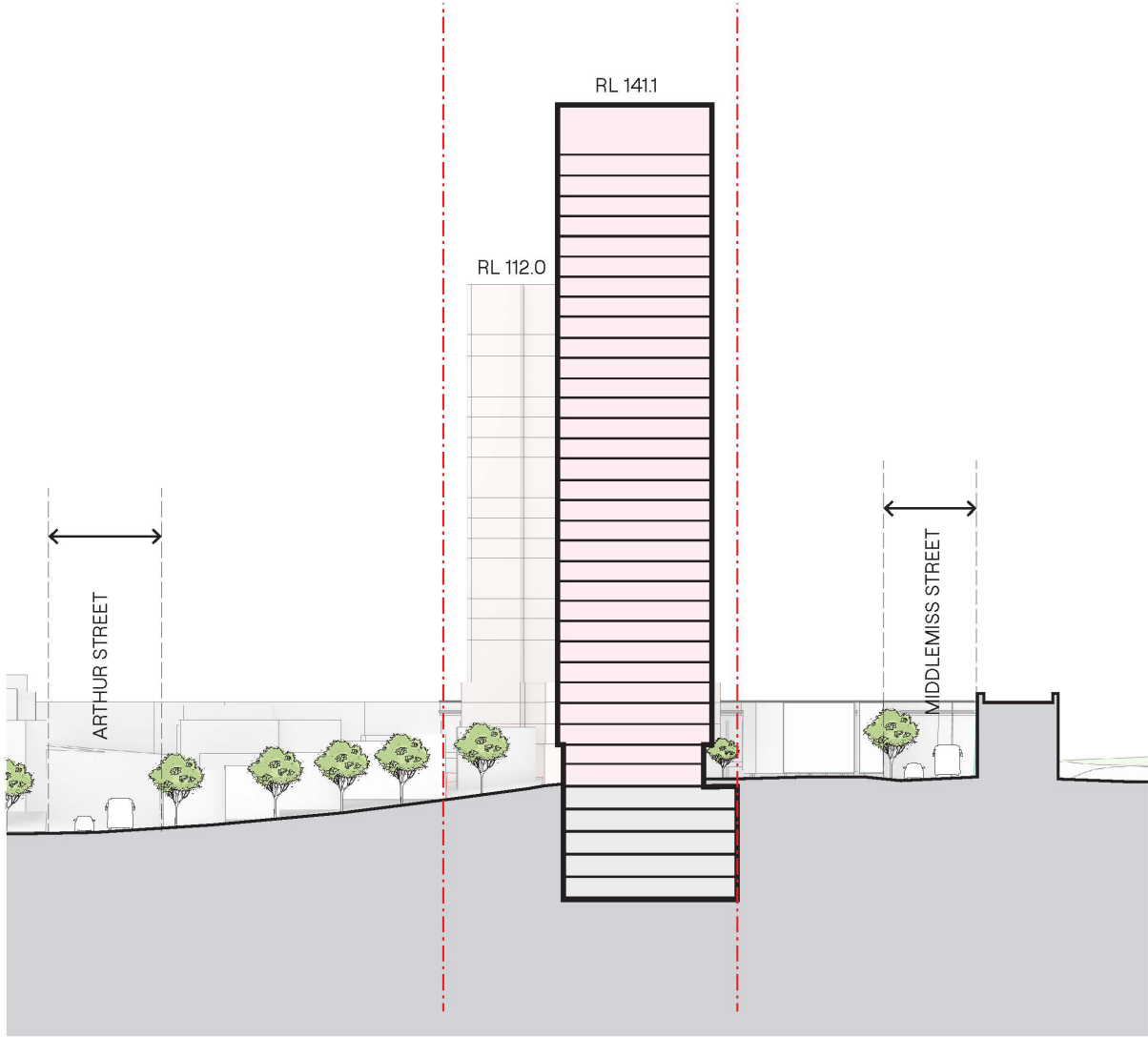


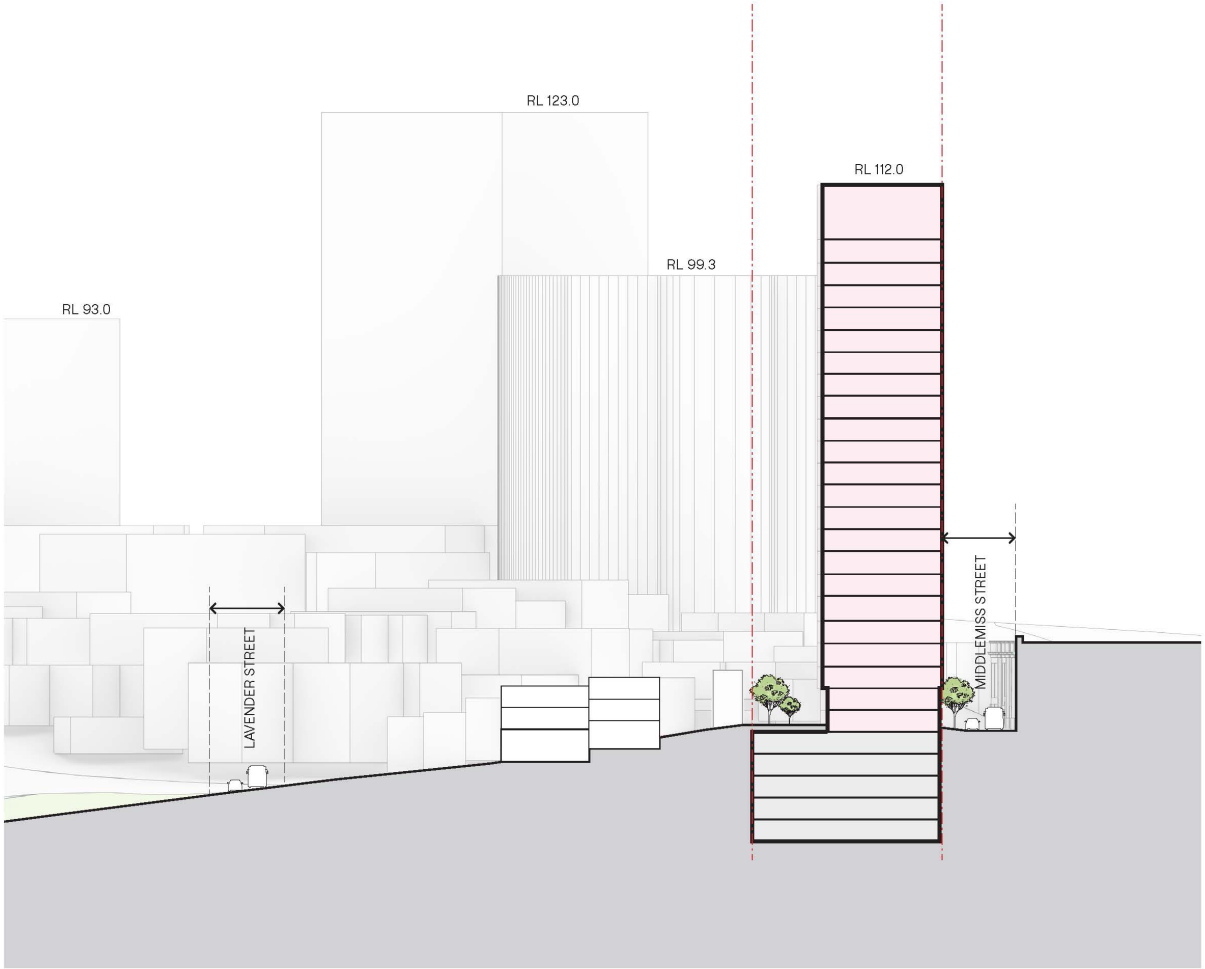
Figure 3 Proposed massing | SJB

Cross sections

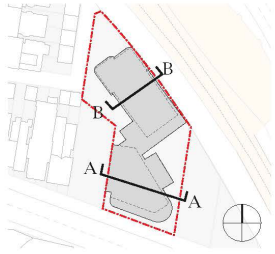


Section AA'

KEY
--- Site boundary



Section BB'



02 Methodology

2.1 Urbis methodology

The methodology employed by Urbis to assess visual impacts is based on a combination of established methods used in NSW. It is based on widely adopted concepts and terminology included in multiple Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) methods, guidelines and objectives.

In addition the Urbis VIA method draws on 30 years of academic research and publications by industry leaders who have considered a more tailored response to assess the visual impacts of built forms in urban settings rather than Landscape Character Visual Impacts Assessments (LCVIA).

An LCVIA takes a more holistic approach to changes proposed to the physical and visual landscape, which in our opinion is more appropriate to assess the impacts of development in greenfield locations or sites that are predominantly characterised by rural or open, less developed landscapes.

The Urbis methodology identifies objective ‘visual baseline’ information about the site and surrounds, analyses the extent of visual effects or quantum of change using visual aids from key locations, and considers the importance of that change. The significance of the extent of visual effects is explained and determined in the visual impact assessment section of the method and this report.

The Urbis method takes into consideration other relevant factors such as the underlying strategic planning intent of the site, its immediate or wider setting. For example other methods do not consider visual compatibility with the existing or desired future character for the site or area which may allow for transformational visual change.

The Urbis method also distinguishes and places ‘weight’ on key factors such as view place and viewer sensitivity, physical absorption capacity etc. and considers impacts on unique settings near the site that could be potentially affected, including for example heritage items, conservation areas, views to icons and areas of high scenic quality.

Separating objective facts from subjective opinion provides a robust and comprehensive matrix for analysis and final assessment of visual impacts.

The sequence of steps and logic flow is shown graphically in the method flow chart.

Our method also has regard to:

‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment’ (Third Edition) (GLVIA3) Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (2013)

The Landscape Institute Technical Guideline Note- Visual Representation of Development Proposals (AILA 2019)

Guidance note for Landscape and Visual Assessment (AILA 2018)

Guidelines for Landscape Character and Visual Impact assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment practice note EIA -NO4 prepared by the Roads and Maritime Services 2018 (RMS LCIA)

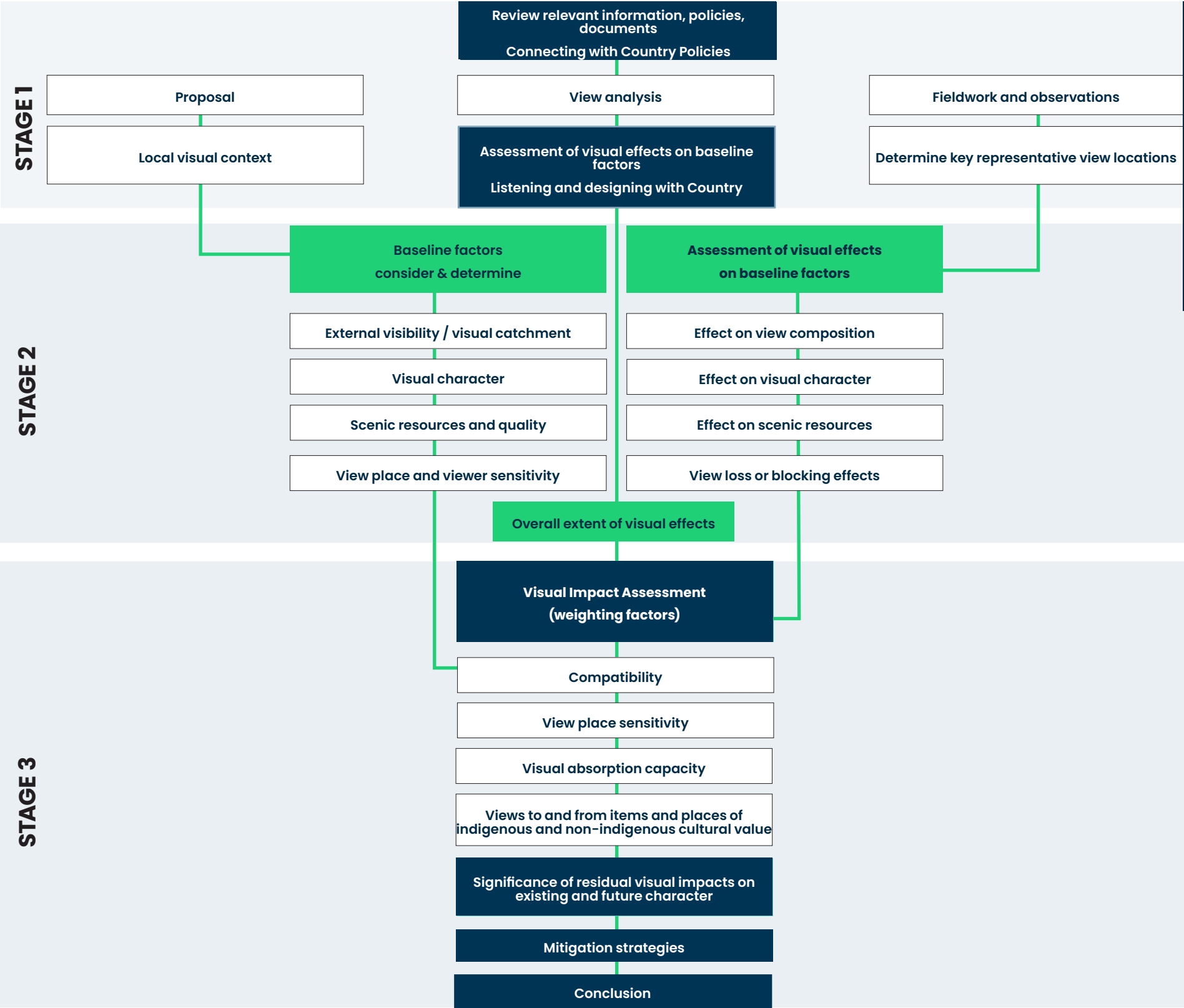


Figure 4 Urbis methodology flowchart.

03 Baseline visual analysis



3.1 Visual context

The visual character of this part of Lavender Bay is influenced by the landform of the Bay which falls in elevation towards the shoreline, development patterns along the eastern and western headlands, and the North Sydney CBD. The site sits broadly north-east of the head of the deep bay between two peninsulas, Milsons Point to the east and McMahon's Point to the west. The central ridgeline of each promontory including developing along it, forms the site's approximate local visual catchment.

The eastern headland (Milsons Point) aligns with the Cahill Expressway and is characterised by a central spine of high density mixed-use residential tower forms extending south from the subject site to Bradfield Park near the northern pylons of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Tower development within Milsons Point is elevated above Luna Park and rail yards along the lower foreshore of the headland. To the west of tower development, Alfred Street separates tower development from civic spaces along the train line near Milsons Point Station.

Blues Point Road extends along the western headland where topography falls in elevation to the east, south and west. Development is predominantly medium and high density residential, including isolated towers, mid-height apartment blocks and terraced flat buildings elevated over the bay.

The centre of the bay slopes steeply towards the waterfront where Wendy Whiteley's Secret Garden, Clark Park, Quibaree Park and Watt Park form an interconnected network of public open green space along the harbour foreshore, known as Lavender Bay Parklands. The parklands sit below Lavender Street and are characterised by dense tree canopy and a limited number of residential dwellings. Access to the foreshore and Lavender Bay Ferry Wharf is via a network of steps through the parklands and under the dis-used rail line which follows the curve of the bay.

This part of Lavender Bay includes visually unique features, scenic harbour views including icons and areas of high public amenity and scenic quality. The Parklands are physically and visually distinct from neighbouring parts of Lavender Bay to the north, east and west. They sit below and separate from surrounding residential areas that are characterised by greater height density, scale and major infrastructure. The parklands are characterised by unique vegetation, dense tree canopy and small interconnected areas accessible to pedestrians only.

North of Lavender Street, above Lavender Bay Parklands is a predominantly low density residential area (though of mixed R2, R3 and R4 zoning) where the visual character varies from North Sydney and Milsons Point. The subject site is located at the south-western corner of this area between the northern edge of Milsons point and the southern fringes of the North Sydney CBD, immediately adjacent to the Cahill Expressway. This area is of lower height and density compared to adjacent tower clusters where the proposal will present as an extension of existing tower development within Milsons Point. In this regard, the proposal is highly compatible within its context.

Lavendar Bay is highly developed where the visual character is predominantly characterised by the co-existence of tower forms and constrained areas of lower height residential development.

Immediate neighbouring development

Three luxury residential towers directly align with the site, located on the southern side of Lavender Street. These include *Latitude Apartments* at 55 Lavender Street (also referred to as the Platinum building), on the corner of Harbourview Crescent, *Blue at Lavender Bay* at 61 Lavender Street and 118 Alfred Street Lavender Bay. These towers form the northern edge of the Milsons Point tower cluster along the eastern headland of Lavender Bay.

3.2 Heritage items

The site is located east of the Lavender Bay Conservation Area which includes the areas north and south of Lavender Street. Several local heritage items within the Conservation Area are located along Arthur Lane, Walker Street, Mackenzie Street and Miller Street. South of Lavender Street are various heritage items including but not limited to Luna Park, the Railway, Brett Whiteley House, Clark Park and Lavender Bay Ferry Wharf.

We note the complex surrounding heritage context, however, potential visual impacts on documented 'heritage views' to and from or between items, if confirmed as being significant by other, can be further investigated.

Urbis have not reviewed Conservation Management Plans to identify potential documented heritage views, however, should such views be identified by the heritage consultant, we can undertake additional, specific analysis, photography and assessment.

3.3 Documented views

The site is included within the mapped Milsons Point Town Centre under Section 9 Lavender Bay Planning Area in the North Sydney Development Control Plan 2013. Documented views are listed at 9.1.1 and re-produced below. Based on fieldwork observations and analysis, we provide the following high-level insights in relation to relevant documented views.

P7 The following views and vistas are to be preserved and where possible enhanced:

(a) District views from streets and reserves to Sydney Harbour and beyond.

Access to district views of Sydney Harbour from street locations surrounding the site is limited. The site does not align with existing view corridors to Sydney Harbour, and is therefore unlikely to block such.

(b) Views to Lavender Bay from Luna Park Lookout (71), Harbour View Crescent.

The site is physically distanced from Luna Park Lookout and Harbour View Crescent and will not block visual access between the above locations and Lavender Bay.

(c) Views to Sydney Harbour from Bradfield Park No. 1 Lookout (69), Olympic Park Lookout (70); Alfred Street, Paul Street.

The location of the site is such that the proposal would not block Bradfield Park, Olympic Park Lookout and Alfred Street, Paul Street which are located at the southern (and opposite) end of Milsons Point Town Centre.

3.4 Visual catchment

Our understanding of the potential visual catchment of the proposed development has been informed by fieldwork, desktop review of all relevant statutory and non-statutory documents, an analysis of aerial imagery and topography. We have also undertaken rudimentary 3D modelling to further inform the extent of potential visibility.

Public Domain Visual Catchment

- Visibility is limited from the north due to intervening built form within the North Sydney CBD.
- Visibility from the south-eastern headland, for example along Alfred Street, is constrained by tower development within Milsons Point.
- Visibility from the western headland is constrained due to intervening built form and settlement patterns along Blues Point Road. The proposal is visible from isolated locations such as McMahon's Point Ferry Terminal.
- The proposal will be highly visible in close views from neighbouring low density residential areas to the west including, for example, Lavender Street, Middlemiss Street and Mackenzie Street.
- Mid and upper sections of the proposal will likely be visible from Saint Peters Park between the western end of Mackenzie Street and Blues Point Road.
- Visibility to the proposal from Lavender Bay Parklands is constrained by vegetation and dense tree canopy.
- Visibility from distant, isolated locations including Neutral Bay Ferry Terminal, Forsyth Park and Ridge Road is limited to middle and upper sections of the proposal, amongst other tower forms within the North Sydney CBD.
- Northerly views of the proposal from the Sydney CBD are restricted to north-facing foreshore areas, near the southern pylons of the Sydney Harbour Bridge and Pier One.
- Due the presence of close neighbouring tower forms, surrounding major infrastructure and underlying topography, in the majority of views across the visual catchment, visibility is constrained to middle and upper sections of the proposal only.

3.5 Visual catchment



Figure 5 Locations inspected during fieldwork.



Figure 6 Residential tower development opposite (south) of the site, from Arthur Lane.



Figure 7 North Sydney tower development, north-west of the site.



Figure 8 Limited visibility to proposal from Clark Park due to dense tree canopy.



Figure 9 High density development within Milsons Point along Alfred Street.



Figure 10 Low density development along Union Street.



Figure 11 Terrace development along Lavender Street from Clark Park steps.



Figure 12 Foreshore park lands and tower development from Lavender Bay ferry wharf.



Figure 13 Low density residential dwellings and tower development.

3.6 Visual character of the site

The subject site includes five lots occupied by five, south-facing three to four storey flat buildings. Two lots front south to Lavender Street and three are positioned at the rear of the site along Middlemiss Street and the rail corridor. The site is slightly elevated above road level and occupies a local high point along Lavender Street which undulates along its course. The site at the corner of Lavender and Middlemiss Streets does not form part of the site area however is subject to future development.

3.7 Scenic quality

Scenic quality relates to the likely expectations of viewers regarding scenic beauty, attractiveness, or preference. Scenic preferences typically relates to the variety of features that are present, and the uniqueness or combination of those features. Scenic quality of the visual setting of the subject site is a baseline factor against which to measure visual effects. Criteria and ratings for preferences of scenic quality and cultural values of aesthetic landscapes are based on empirical research undertaken in Australia and internationally.

Therefore, analysis of the existing scenic quality of a site or its visual context and understanding the likely expectations and perception of viewers is an important consideration when assessing visual effects and impacts.

Urbis Comment:

The scenic quality of the site is considered low. The site includes low height residential flat buildings characterised by traditional pitched roof forms, mature vegetation and generous setbacks which contribute to an attractive, established streetscape character present along the northern side of Lavender Street. The site does not include visually unique, rare or distinguishing features of scenic quality, and elements of the site do not combine to form scenic or highly valued compositions.

3.8 Public view place sensitivity

This factor relates to the likely level of public interest in a view of the proposed development. The level of public interest includes assumptions made about its exposure in terms of distance and number of potential viewers. For example, close and middle-distance views from public places such as surrounding roads and intersections that are subject to large numbers of viewers, would be considered as being sensitive view places. However, the level of sensitivity depends on the nature of the view and whether it is gained from either a moving viewing situation and the duration of exposure to the view for example for short periods of time or for sustained periods.

Urbis Comment:

Clark Park occupies low lying topography and waterfront area south-west of the site, below Lavender Street. Visibility from more distant locations, deep within the park is constrained either by relative viewing locations, intervening topography or the presence of mature tree canopy.

Potential views from northern areas of the park to mid and upper sections of the proposed towers may be available.

Potential visibility was inspected from Saint Peters Park, north-west of the site along Blues Point Road. From this viewing location, the majority of the proposal is blocked from by intervening built form and vegetation where only middle and upper sections of the proposal will be visible. Views from Saint Peters Park include the existing 'Platinum' tower development, immediately south-west of the site.

Foreshore Areas

The proposal is visible from sensitive low lying or exposed foreshore locations, though constrained by intervening topography, vegetation and surrounding tower development.

Visibility to middle and upper section of the proposal is likely from isolated, lower relative viewing levels along the Lavender Bay foreshore, such as Lavender Bay ferry wharf. Upward views from this and similar waterfront locations are characterised by dense foreground vegetation and tower development beyond.

The deep form of the bay, isolated areas of low density foreshore development and flat expanse of open harbour increase viewing opportunities from more distant waterfront locations including from the western headland at McMahon's Point ferry wharf. From this viewing location the proposal is contextualised by other equivalent tower forms within Milsons Point to the east and North Sydney CBD.

In more distant views, for example from Hayes Street Neutral Bay (Neutral Bay ferry wharf), and Observatory Hill visibility is limited to upper tower forms only.

Notwithstanding the broad visual catchment, which includes multiple sensitive public domain locations, visibility is intermittent and isolated, where the proposal is contextualised by neighbouring tower development.

3.9 Private view place sensitivity

Viewer sensitivity is a judgement as to the likely level of private interest in the views that include the proposed development and the potential for private domain viewers to perceive the visual effects of the proposal. The spatial relationship (distance), the length of exposure and the viewing place within a dwelling are factors which affect the overall rating of the sensitivity to visual effects.

Urbis Comment:

Visibility from close, elevated dwellings

- The subject site is located immediately north of three luxury residential towers at 55 Lavender Street (Latitude Apartments) at the corner of Harbourview Crescent, 61 Lavender Street (Blue Apartments) directly opposite the site, and 118 Alfred Street at the corner of Alfred Street and Lavender Street (**refer Figure 12**).
- The proposal will be highly visible in direct views to the north from the above towers, noting that the majority of scenic and highly valued

compositions are available to the south-west, south and south-east. Notwithstanding the above, northerly views towards the North Sydney CBD will change.

- Whilst the proposal will change the spatial composition of existing views, view impacts from these towers are unlikely to be significant in Tenacity terms.

Visibility from surrounding low-density areas

- Direct views to the proposal from surrounding low-density private domain locations are constrained due to the predominant east-west alignment of dwellings.
- Private domain views to the proposal are available from neighbouring dwellings west and north-west of the site, including from Arthur Lane and Arthur Street.
- Beyond this, private domain viewing opportunities are predominantly constrained to low density residential areas west of the site, north of Lavender Street at the southern fringes of the North Sydney CBD. This includes, for example, private domain locations along Walker Street Mackenzie Street and Miller Street.
- Views from east-facing dwellings along the foreshore on the western side of Lavender Bay may potentially include part of the proposal.

Visibility from distant residential towers

- Private domain views from mid and upper level dwellings from a limited number of residential towers to the south-west and north-west will likely include part of the proposal.
- Upper sections of the proposal may be visible in northerly views from dwellings where it will form part of a composition characterised by existing high density development.

View Sydney Hotel

- We note the proximity of the View Sydney Hotel, also referred to as the Harbourview building, approximately 200m north-west of the site at 17 Blue Street, North Sydney.
- The Harbourview building is a semi-circular high rise building oriented south-east towards the Cahill Expressway and Sydney Harbour Bridge where it aligns diagonally with the site, 55 and 61 Lavender Street, and 118 Alfred Street.
- Review of photo imagery from View Sydney Hotels indicates the proposal will be visible in predominantly south-easterly views from centrally located suites.
- The proposal will be seen in the context of tower development at 55 and 61 Lavender Street and 118 Alfred Street, where these existing developments block part of the Cahill Expressway and the northern pylon of the Sydney Harbour Bridge.
- Mid and upper level south-easterly views will change to include new, closer and taller built form (**refer Figure 13**).

- Additional, potential cumulative blocking effects generated by the proposal are likely to be minor, including limited areas of open sky and distant development.
- Existing views to the south-south-east, south, south-west and east will remain unaffected.



Figure 14 Residential tower development directly south of the site, 61 and 55 Lavender Street and 118 Alfred Street. Approximate location of proposal indicated by yellow arrow.



Figure 15 Upper level view from View Sydney hotel, approximate location of proposal indicated by yellow arrow.