



PRELIMINARY  
DA IMPACT REPORT

UTS Blackfriars Precinct  
Blackfriars Precinct Research Building

**To the Department of Environment and Planning**

On behalf of

The University Notre Dame Australia Sydney

February 2016

## Contents

Contents	1
Introduction	1
Executive Summary	2
The Site	2
General description of the proposal	3
Impacts of the Proposal	4
Conclusions	6

### Appendix A - Shadow Diagrams

Issue	Date	Status	Author	Approved
A	01/02/16	Issued to Department of Planning and Environment	RD/PD	RD

## Introduction

### Purpose of this Report

This report is provided on behalf of the University of Notre Dame Australia as a preliminary assessment of the DA lodged by the University Technology Sydney (UTS) for the Blackfriars Precinct Site in Buckland Street Chippendale.

It reviews the potential impacts of the proposed development on the adjacent sites owned (and leased) by The University of Notre Dame Australia (UNDA). It raises some concerns with the proposal and makes recommendations to the Department of Planning and Environment, in relation to modifying the proposal in order to reduce these impacts.

### DA process

The Development Application has been issued by UTS to the Department of Planning and Environment as a Stage 1 development which seeks approval for a building envelope. We understand that a further Development Application will need to be submitted by the Applicant to seek approval for the detailed design of a building to be constructed within the envelope.

### DA Documents Reviewed

The documents reviewed are those on public exhibition as made available for comment by Department of Planning and Environment as part of the DA assessment process. The documents reviewed include the Environmental Impact Statement prepared by UrbanAC (Issue 3 dated 12/11/2015) and its appendices:

Appendix 1 SEARs  
Appendix 2 S94a template - Capital Investment Value  
Appendix 3 Clause 46 Height 04 - Appendix 3 Clause 46 Height 04  
Appendix 4 Clause 46 Floorspace 04 - Appendix 4 Clause 46 Floorspace 04  
Appendix 5 Architectural Drawings A3 H2o 1 Cover and main plans copy  
Appendix 5 Architectural Drawings A3 H2o 2 Photomontages and 3D modeling  
Appendix 5 Architectural Drawings A3 H2o 3 Shadow Diagrams  
Appendix 5 Architectural Drawings A3 H2o 3a Winter Shadows Supplement  
Appendix 5 Architectural Drawings A3 H2o 4 Study within envelope  
Appendix 6 Architectural Report H2o - Appendix 6 Architectural Report  
Appendix 7 Heritage and Visual Considerations Report  
Appendix 8 Conservation Management Plan Part 1  
Appendix 8 Conservation Management Plan Part 2  
Appendix 9 Archaeological Assessment Part 1  
Appendix 9 Archaeological Assessment Part 2  
Appendix 10 Aboriginal Archaeological Assessment  
Appendix 11 Public Domain and Landscape Report  
Appendix 12 Arboricultural Assessment - Appendix 12 Arboricultural Assessment  
Appendix 13 Transport and Accessibility Report - Appendix 13 Transport and Accessibility Report  
Appendix 14\_ 1 Contamination Site Audit Report  
Appendix 14\_ 2 Contamination Revised RAP  
Appendix 15 Approved Masterplan  
Appendix 16 Site Survey 01\_ CC\_GDLP-11867\_00  
Appendix 16 Site Survey 02\_ CC\_GDLP-11868\_00

### Closing date for submissions

The Application went on Public Exhibition on 10/12/2015. According to the website the closing dates for submissions in relation to the DA is 01/02/16.

### Diagrams appended to the Report

This report includes diagrams which have been prepared on behalf of UNDA to indicate the potential impacts of the proposed development. These diagrams have been produced using basic sketch-up modelling and are indicative only.

## Executive Summary

The proposal is a Stage 1 DA for the demolition of existing buildings and a building envelope for a new 6 storey, 6,225m<sup>2</sup> teaching and research building at the northern end of the UTS owned Blackfriars site.

The proposal exceeds a number of the planning constraints stipulated by local planning codes.

The proposed building envelope (as well as other aspects of the proposal) impacts the adjacent UNDA campus.

The impacts include:

- Overshadowing of the UNDA St Benedict's campus.
- Solar access
- Visual impact/bulk and scale
- aesthetics
- Privacy
- Heritage
- Infrastructure
- Impacts during construction
- A suggested potential connection of the Blackfriars and the UNDA campuses.

Generally this report finds that there will be an impact on the amenity of the St Benedict's campus due to the potential bulk and scale of the development and this report recommends that consideration be given to reducing the height of the building envelope and that the building envelope be setback from the western boundary of the St Benedict's campus.

The UTS proposal suggests a physical connection between the UTS Blackfriars site and the UNDA St Benedict's site.

We understand that there has been no consultation between UTS or UNDA during the process of this application. This report recommends that UNDA meet with UTS to discuss the development of the Blackfriars site including the boundary configuration and the potential for links and access which may benefit both campuses.

## The Site

The Blackfriars site is located at the corner of Buckland Street and Blackfriars Street Chippendale NSW. The site is in close proximity to the UNDA St Benedict's Campus including surrounding properties owned and leased by UNDA.

The Blackfriars site includes 7 buildings and is bounded on two sides by a stone and metal palisade fence and gates. The Blackfriars site is currently used for child care facilities, student accommodation and teaching facilities. The site is listed in the SLEP2012 as a heritage item.

The Backpackers' site and (eastern end) the Car Wash (112-126 Broadway Chippendale) sites are owned by UNDA and abut the northern boundary of the site. The UNDA St Benedict's Campus abuts the western boundary. Blackfriars Street forms the southern boundary and Buckland Street forms the east boundary to the site.

Grafton Street intersects with Buckland Street adjacent to the northern part of the Blackfriars site. 19-21 Buckland Street, which is leased by UNDA, is directly opposite the site and No 1 Grafton Street and 7 Moorgate Street, which are owned by UNDA, are nearby. The UNDA's Pioneer House is diagonally opposite the northwest corner of the site.

Refer to the diagram below showing the subject site.

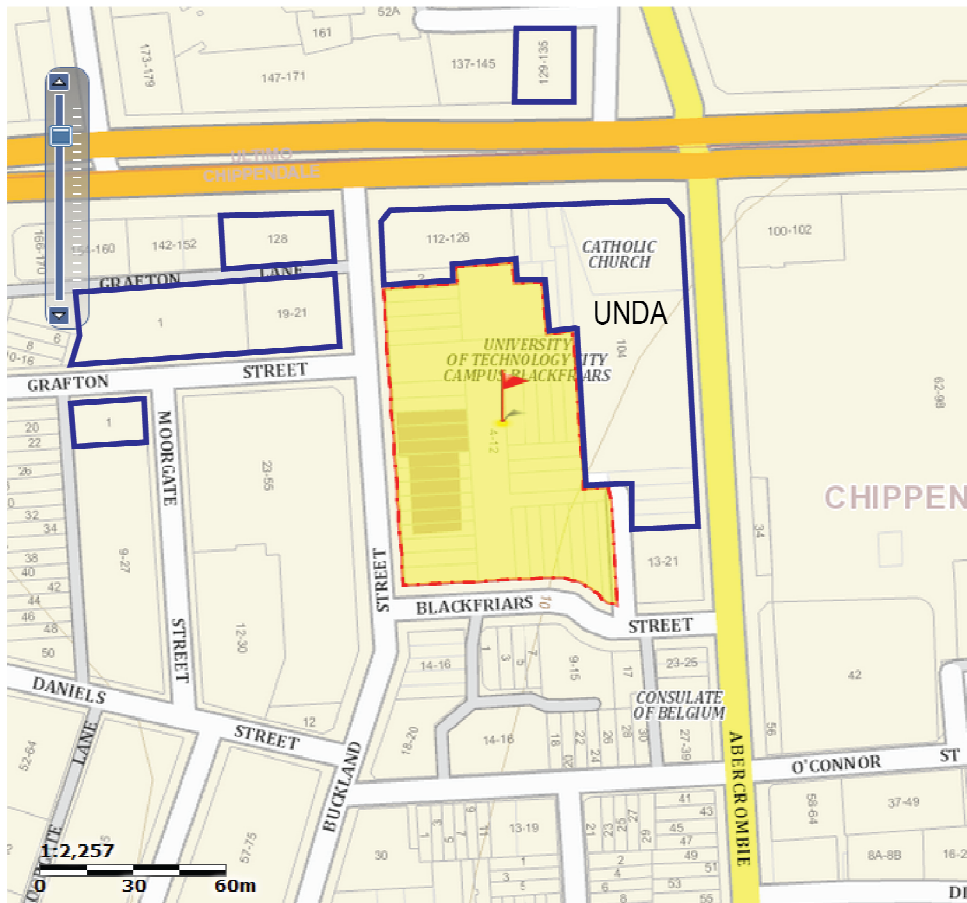


Figure 1. Location Map (source: <http://maps.six.nsw.gov.au/>)

## General description of the proposal

### The proposal generally

The UTS Development Application for the Blackfriars site is a Stage 1 DA for the demolition of the Blackfriars Children's Centre and a proposed building envelope for the construction of a new 6 storey, 6,225m<sup>2</sup> building occupying the northern end of the site. The proposed building envelope will be separated from the remaining buildings, at the southern end of the site, by a central courtyard space.

The main entry to the site remains from the Buckland Street entry/s into the new central courtyard and entry to the new building is off the central courtyard space through the south façade of the new building.

The building is proposed to be used for research and teaching purposes including involvement with commercial partners although the exact use of the building is not described in detail.

As the proposal is for the Stage 1 envelope it does not provide details of the architectural treatment of the proposed building although it refers to the building as 'contemporary'. Plans of the proposed building indicate a service core within a crank in the boundary adjacent to the Carwash site.

The proposal suggests a potential connection between the UTS Blackfriars Site and the UNDA St Benedict's site. The location of the connection is not shown on the drawings included with the proposal; however a potential location is through the proposed central courtyard aligning, generally, with the site entry.

## Non-compliances with Local Planning Codes

The proposal exceeds the limits of 2 key constraints specified under the Sydney Local Environment Plan 2012 (SLEP2012);

- > Floor Space Ratio
- > Height

These non-compliances allow for the building envelope to have an additional bulk and scale above what would otherwise be the case for a complying development. The proposed FSR is 16 % greater than that permitted; the proposed height is 3 times the height permitted.

### Floor Space Ratio (FSR)

It is noted that the proposed envelope exceeds the FSR permitted under SLEP2012:

*“The Proposal has a gross floor area of 6,225m<sup>2</sup>, giving the total development on the site including the Proposal a floor space ratio of 1.5:1. This is above the floor space ratio development standard for the site of 1.25:1. A written request to vary this development standard is provided at Appendix 4 and sets out in full the planning justification for the departure from the standard.”*

This appears to be an additional 1514 m<sup>2</sup> above the area permitted by Council. It is acknowledged that this is for a proposed envelope and not a proposed building. However the Environmental Impact Statement stresses that the additional area is required to ensure the viability of the project.

The increased FSR results in a building of larger bulk and scale that would otherwise be approved on the site. The proposed FSR is 16 % greater than that permitted.

### Height

It is noted that the proposed envelope exceeds the permitted height limit under SLEP2012:

*“The Proposal has a height of 27.95m, which is above the height of buildings development standard for the site of 9m. A written request to vary this development standard is provided at Appendix 3 and sets out in full the planning justification for the departure from the standard.”*

This is an additional 18.95 m above the height limit permitted by Council. (Or 3 times the permitted 9 m height limit)

The increased FSR results in a building of larger bulk and scale that would otherwise be approved on the site.

## Impacts of the Proposal

### Over shadowing

#### The Proposal

The proposed envelope would result in some overshadowing of the UNDA St Benedict's Campus particularly the St Benedict's courtyard. The Courtyard is a key outdoor space and a focus of the campus which provides an entry forecourt to the historic St Benedict's Church as well as being the only landscaped outdoor space within the campus.

*“The Proposal casts an additional shadow on the outdoor spaces of the adjacent UNDA campus. At its worst case, during the winter solstice, the open spaces of the UNDA courtyard retain their existing solar access for the entire morning and until approximately 1pm, with the shadow gradually increasing until the space is in full shade by about 3.15pm. It should be noted that existing tall boundary fence between the two sites also partially shades this area (see Figure 24). It is considered that the overshadowing impact on the UNDA courtyard spaces is acceptable, with the spaces continuing to have excellent solar access all morning and in the middle of the day throughout the year”*

The increased FSR and height of the building results the potential increased overshadowing. This impact is likely to be reduced when the proposed envelope is setback from the western boundary of the St Benedict's Campus and / or when the proposal is reduced in height.

Refer to the diagrams included in appendix A. The diagrams indicate that the impact of overshadowing on the St Benedict's Courtyard is significantly reduced by lowering the building to within the permissible 9 metre height limit.

#### Impact on other UNDA sites

There will be some overshadowing of 19-21 Buckland Street during morning periods

### **Solar access**

As indicated by the shadow diagrams submitted with the proposal the UTS proposal will reduce solar access to the St Benedict's Courtyard by the mid-afternoon this is likely to result in a reduction of natural light.

The location of the proposed development is near to one of the main entrances to the Campus and the entry to the Vice Chancellery. The massing of the proposed development will restrict natural light to this entry area.

There are some small (glass brickwork providing natural light) openings on the south side of the existing Backpackers building which will be obscured by a building within the proposed envelope.

### **Visual impact/bulk and scale**

The UTS proposal is for a building envelope providing the opportunity to construct a 6 storey building of considerable bulk and scale immediately on the southern boundaries of both the Backpacker's and Carwash sites (eastern portion) and on the western boundary (northern part) of the St Benedict's site.

The UTS proposal exceeds Pioneer House by approximately 3 metres. It is significantly taller than the buildings forming the St Benedict's Courtyard including the Vice Chancellery, St Benedict's Church and the St Benedict's Main Building to the south. The new building is within 15 metres of the southwest corner of the historic St Benedict's Church.

A new building constructed against the western (northern part) boundary of the St Benedict's Campus will be visible from the courtyard. There will be visual impact from this bulk and scale from within the courtyard. Due to building code fire protection constraints, a wall within close proximity to the St Benedict's boundary, at the limit of the building envelope, is likely to be a solid wall without any openings. This may add to the impact of bulk if the facade is not activated or articulated.

As noted above the location of the proposed development is near to one of the main entrances to the Campus and the entry to the Vice Chancellery. The bulk and scale of the proposed development in this location will provide a negative sense of enclosure and overbearing scale to this space which is an important entry and connects with the St Benedict's Courtyard.

### **Aesthetics**

The UTS proposal is for a building envelope. Details of any proposed building within the envelope will need to be provided with a future application. As noted above, building code constraints could result in a blank wall within close proximity to the boundary. This information will need to be assessed at the time with consideration of the context with the St Benedict's Campus.

### **Privacy**

A new building within the UTS site could overlook the St Benedict's Courtyard from openings setback from the boundary. This will need to be assessed once details of a proposed building are submitted.

### **Heritage**

Both the St Benedict's site and the Blackfriars sites are listed (Item I170 and Item I165 respectively) and both are within a Heritage Conservation Area C9.

The bulk and scale of the UTS proposal will have an impact on these buildings. The proposed building envelope is within 15 metres of the St Benedict's Church. Consideration could be given to requiring that the building envelope be setback from the western boundary of the St Benedict's Campus.

The heritage status of the stone boundary wall would need to be assessed in relation to any development within proximity to the wall and if there was to be consideration of a penetration through the wall to provide a link between the two campuses.

### **Infrastructure**

The UTS proposal may require infrastructure such as a new electrical substation. It is suggested that this be raised at the proposed discussion between UTS and UNDA, so as to optimise any such infrastructure that might serve both UTS and UNDA.

### Impact during construction

There may be a number of impacts on the St Benedict's Campus during construction. These would include;

- > Construction noise
- > dust
- > Contamination run-off
- > Excavation within close proximity to the boundary (and buildings within UNDA sites)

The mitigation of these issues should be conditioned with any approval for the site. Consideration could be given to setting the building further back from the western boundary of the St Benedict's Campus to reduce construction impacts.

### Potential Connection between Adjacent Sites (UNDA and UTS)

The UTS proposal refers suggests a possible future connection between the UTS Blackfriars site and UNDA St Benedict's campus (Environmental Impact Statement Clause 2.5, page 13):

*"This arrangement also facilitates a possible future connection to the 'quadrangle' space within the UNDA campus to the east if such a connection becomes desirable at a future time".*

This report recommends that UNDA hold a meeting with UTS to discuss such connections.

## Conclusions

### Key issues

There will be an impact on the amenity of the St Benedict's Campus in relation to the visual impact of bulk and scale and solar access to the Courtyard and one of the main campus entries.

The proposal exceeds the limits of the SLEP2012 for FSR and height and therefore there is basis for objections to reduce these impacts. Some of the impacts of the proposal would be alleviated by reducing the building to a complying height and some consideration of setting the building envelope back from the western boundary could be given to also lessen the impacts.

### Connection between the UTS Blackfriars Campus and the UNDA St Benedict's Campus

We recommend that UNDA consider the mutual benefits, if any, of a connection between the campuses and hold discussions with UTS.

### Potential acquisition of the crank in the south boundary of the Carwash site

There is a crank in the southern boundary of the Carwash site which indents into the Carwash site. If this crank was to be acquired by UNDA it would allow a direct connection between the Carwash site and the St Benedict's site which would greatly benefit the functionality, security and access of the UNDA campus. As noted above the UTS proposal suggests a connection between both campuses. Through further investigation there may be an opportunity to benefit both campuses by allowing connections between these sites. We recommend that this should also be discussed with UTS.

The current proposal indicates that the service core for the new building on the Blackfriars site may be located within the crank.

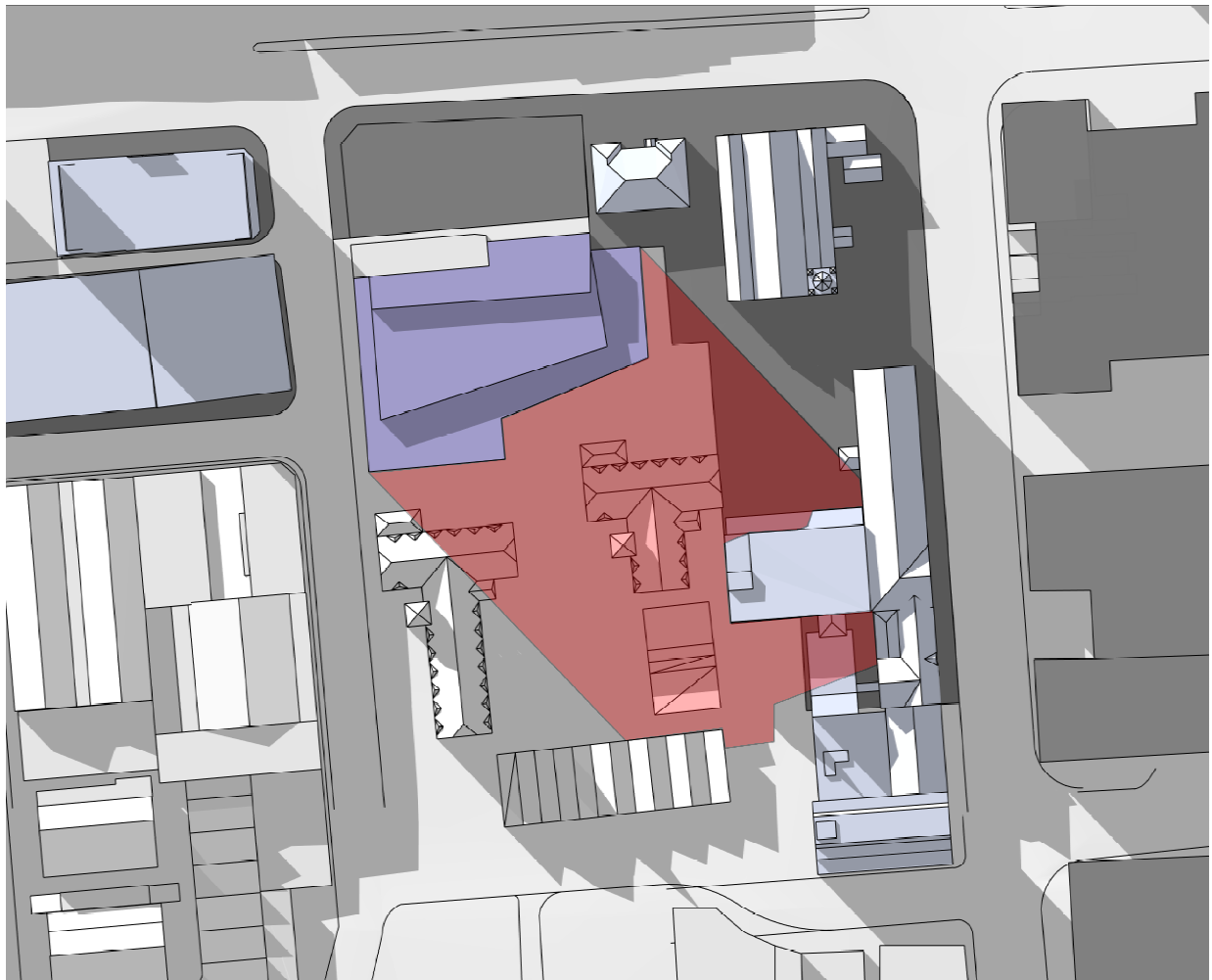


# **Appendix A**

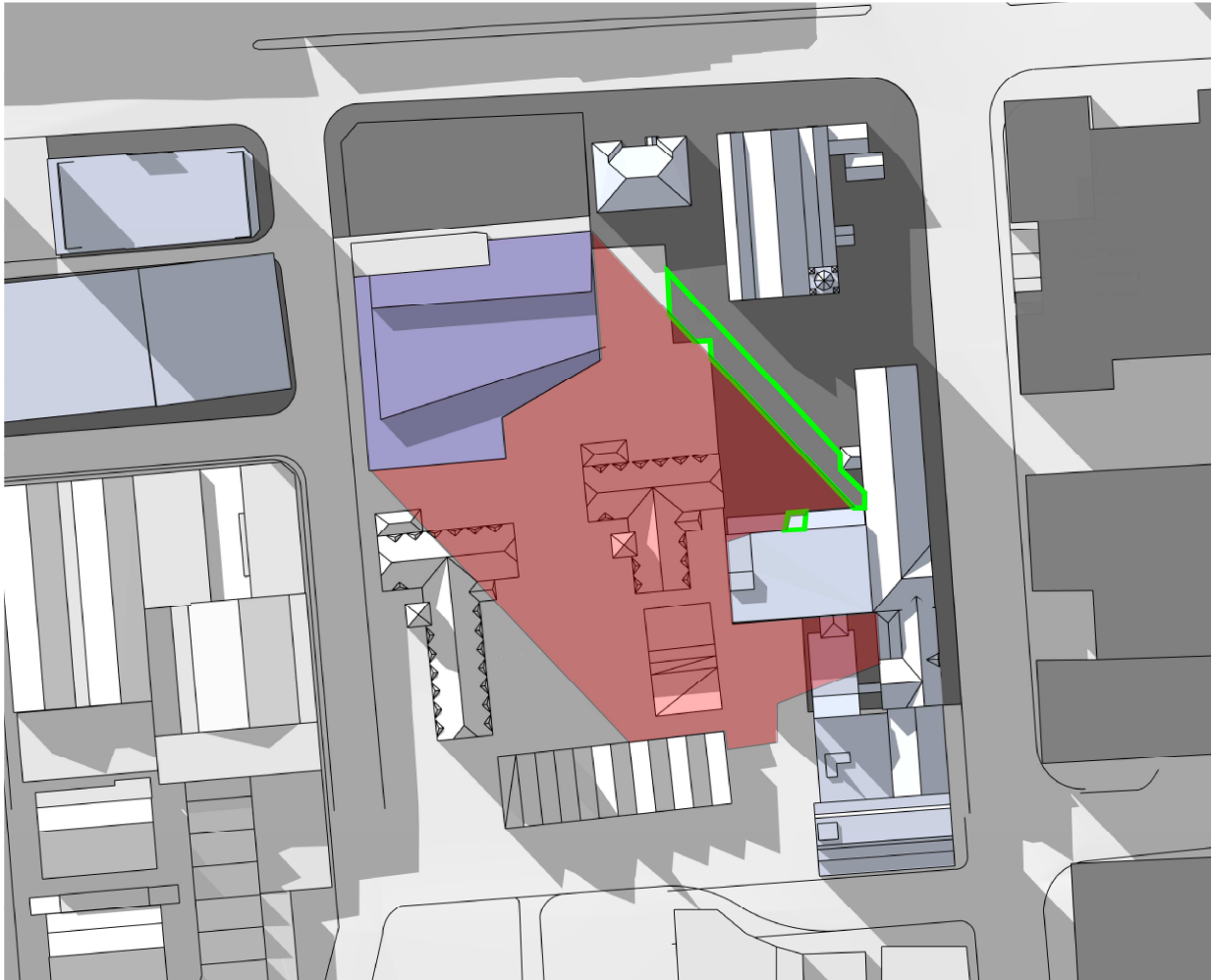
## Shadow Diagrams

## Shadow Diagrams

The following diagrams are based on broad outlines representing buildings and are diagrammatic only.

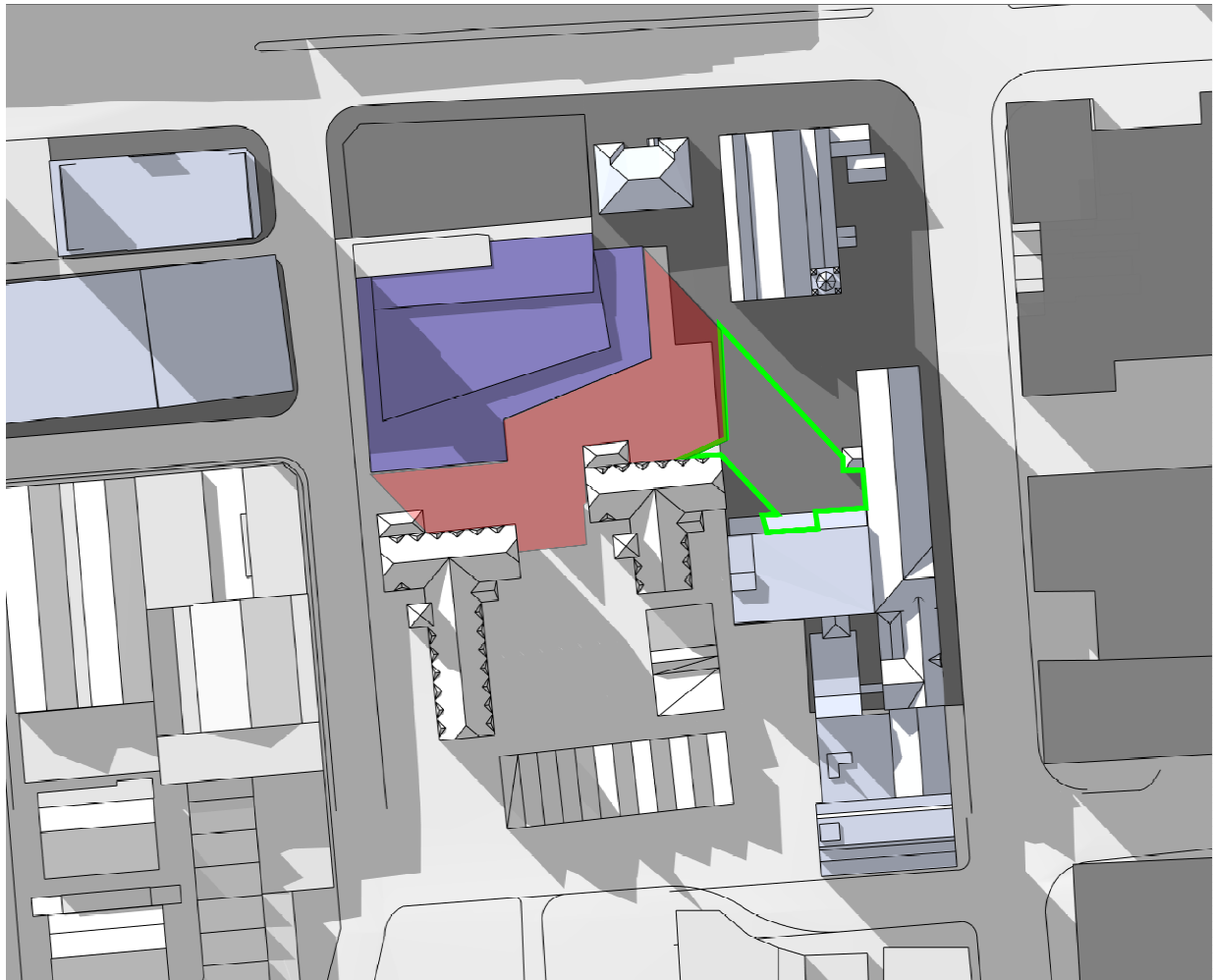


The proposed envelope 3 pm June 21<sup>st</sup>



The proposed envelope with setback 3 pm June 21<sup>st</sup>

The reduction in shadow outlined in green.



The proposed envelope with reduced height 3 pm June 21<sup>st</sup>

The reduction in shadow outlined in green.