

ST JOSEPH'S COLLEGE

Physical Education and Sports Precinct Project

VISUAL ASSESSMENT REPORT
MAY 2019



**ST JOSEPH'S
COLLEGE**
HUNTERS HILL

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Title: St Joseph's College Visual Assessment

Prepared for: St Joseph's College- Physical Education and Sports Precinct Project

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SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In response to the SEARs, St Joseph's College Physical Education and Sports Precinct Project (PESPP) has aimed to respond to visual impacts by addressing the compatibility and harmony of built form within the concept of its existing surroundings.

This Visual Assessment Report has reviewed and assessed the sensitivity and magnitude of the proposed changes from key locations to assist people with interpreting any impacts they believe may exist.

Our findings revealed that the proposal incorporates a number of key measures designed to mitigate the potential visual impacts:

- A compatible built form with the surroundings in terms of height, materials and colours
- Use of facade treatment, articulation and colour selection to reduce the height impact
- Retaining or reinstating trees and other landscaping surrounding the site for screening
- Reducing the height impact by locating the proposal in the lower point of the site
- Responding to the context through appropriate building height and setbacks

Of the multiple viewpoints assessed, all result in impacts considered to be in the LOW and NEGLIGIBLE ranges as a result of the proposal.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of this report

RSt Joseph's College (SJC) submitted a State Significant Development Application (SSD 17_897) to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) in 2018 proposing the Physical Education and Sports Precinct Project (PESPP) building.

Following exhibition and notification of SSD 17_897, the DPE issued a Response to Submissions (RTS) letter on 23 November 2018. In response to the Key Issues identified by DPE, the PESPP building has been amended as follows:

- Luke Street Setback:
 - A 4.3m building setback to Luke Street is proposed (compared with 1.3m in the original SSD), providing for a new landscaped buffer including the planting of significant trees between the PESPP and stone wall. The increased setback also simplifies the required construction solution to protect the stone wall.
- Building height:
 - A 2.7m reduction in height (-19%) is proposed. This is achieved by increasing the excavation depth to lower the entire building and relocating the roof plant away from Luke Street. The amended building height is predominantly 11.4m compared with 14.1m in the original SSD (the amended height is 14m to 15m to the relocated plant room which is located well away from Luke Street).

This report investigates on the possible impacts that the amended Physical Education and Sports Precinct (PESP) and Healy Gymnasium may have on the surrounding and adjacent publicly accessible areas.

The key vantage points have been determined through a site visit and focus on what are considered the most prevalent views of the area.

The photos labelled 'existing' were captured during a site visit performed on Tuesday 10th April 2018.

1.2 Proposal overview

The Project includes:

1. Demolition of the following existing buildings (which are not heritage significant) near the intersection of Luke Street and Gladesville Road:

- (a) College Shop
- (b) Healy Gym and Maintenance Workshop
- (c) Outdoor Sports Courts
- (d) Workshop/Storage and Shed.

2. Construction of the Physical Education and Sports Precinct Project (PESPP) comprising the following facilities:

- (a) Lower Ground Floor: New car parking, maintenance workshops, storage, offices, amenities etc. A net increase of 54 car parking spaces is proposed (84 new spaces to be provided in the SCP basement less 30 at grade spaces to be removed)
- (b) Ground floor: Three indoor sports courts, amenities, kitchen and entry lobbies
- (c) First Floor: Void over sports courts, bench seating (180 seats), staff facilities, two general learning areas and foyer
- (d) Driveway entry to the PESPP (no new vehicular cross overs)
- (e) Landscaping and tree removal/replacement.

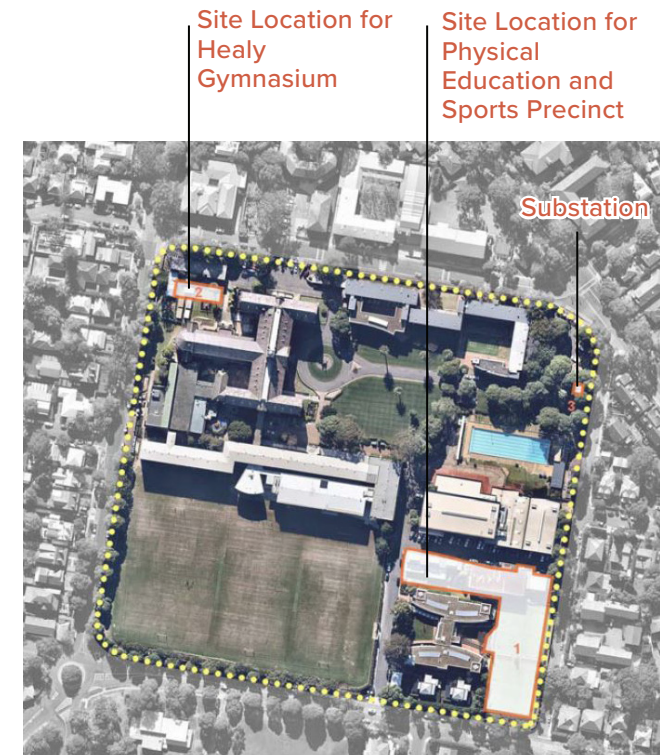


Figure 1-1 : Site Location Plan

3. Construction of a new single storey building to accommodate the relocated Healy Gym in the north-western corner of the site near the intersection of Mary Street and Mark Street.
4. New kiosk substation and landscaping in the north-eastern corner of the site
5. Use of the completed works as an educational establishment.
6. Staging which would facilitate completion of the SCP in up to two stages (noting that the entire project may be completed in one stage).

2. ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

2.1 General

A qualitative assessment of the visual impacts and changes to landscape has been undertaken with reference on the RMS Environmental Impact Assessment Guidance Note: Guidelines for landscape character and visual impact assessment (2013).

Under the guideline, the main type of visual effect (or impacts) is assessed:

- effect on key viewpoints (visual impact)

The guidelines describe the assessment as a way to define the day to day visual effects of a project on people's views.

2.2 Photomontage

3D model of the proposal and supporting technical documentation enabled the vantage points to be realistically documented as 'existing' and 'proposed' photomontages. The accuracy of the photomontages is based on the following process and information:

- Plotting the vantage points using accurate survey details of the site and proposal;
- Digitally linking the coordinate data into Google Earth (GE);
- Creating a 3D Sketchup model of the terrain;
- Digitally linking the massing model of the proposed built form to GE for broader context understanding and to match the model view to the photo position and view angle;

- Photo- editing the hybrid photo/ model views to reflect landscaping, intended built form, and lighting.

2.3 Assumption

The following assumption has been made:

- Photomontages are generated from photos taken at camera level of approximately 1.7m above natural ground level.

2.4 Detailed methodology

The determination of the impacts is based on the following criteria:

Sensitivity is defined as *"The sensitivity of a landscape character zone or view and its capacity to absorb change."*

In the case of visual impact this also relates to the type and number of viewers, availability of alternative views and distance of the development from viewers. The more sensitive vistas are likely to be seen by people engaged in outdoor recreation, travellers along scenic routes and occupiers of residences. Less sensitive views are likely to be seen by people engaged in activities that do not involve appreciation of views, travellers and workers who are less likely to notice views.

Magnitude is defined as *"The measurement of the scale, form and character of a development proposal*

when compared to the existing condition".

In the case of visual assessment the level of magnitude generally decreases as the distance from the development to various viewpoint locations increases.

EIA No4 Guidelines, 2013, RMS

2.5 Effects on key viewpoints

The combined assessment of the sensitivity and magnitude provides the rating for the visual impact as per the matrix on the following page.

For the purposes of this assessment the criteria listed in Table 2-2 and Table 2-3 have been specifically defined for sensitivity and magnitude of change for the visual impact to viewpoints (note these are a general guide only for this project).

		MAGNITUDE					
		High	High to Moderate	Moderate	Moderate to Low	Low	Negligible
SENSITIVITY	High	High impact	High Impact	Moderate High	Moderate High	Moderate	Negligible impact
	High to Moderate	High Impact	Moderate High	Moderate High	Moderate	Moderate	Negligible impact
	Moderate	Moderate High	Moderate High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-low	Negligible impact
	Moderate to Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-low	Moderate-low	Negligible impact
	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-low	Low	Low	Negligible impact
	Negligible	Negligible impact	Negligible impact	Negligible impact	Negligible impact	Negligible impact	Negligible impact

Table 2-1 : Impact Level (Matrix of Sensitivity & Magnitude)

Sensitivity	Criteria
High	Scenic or public views with a high visual value High number of users in close proximity Users involved in recreational activities The site has a high visual prominence
Moderate	Public views with a moderate visual value Moderate number of users in close or moderate proximity The site is visually prominent
Low	Public views with a little visual value A low number of users Users are mostly passers-by The site is not visually prominent
Negligible	Public views with none or limited visual value A limited number of users not in close proximity Receptors are mostly in motor vehicles The site is not visually prominent

Table 2-2 : Sensitivity Ranking Criteria

Magnitude	Criteria
High	The proposal forms a dominant and immediately apparent part of the scene It contrasts in scale and character It is detrimental to the quality of the scene
Moderate	The proposal forms a visible new element within the overall scene, yet one that is relatively compatible with the surrounding character and view's composition It is possibly reducing the quality of the scene
Low	The proposal constitutes only a minor component of the wider view, that is compatible with the surrounding character and view's composition
Negligible	The proposal constitutes only a minor component of the wider view, which might be missed by the casual observer or receptor. Awareness of the proposal would not have an effect on the overall quality of the scene.

Table 2-3 : Magnitude Ranking Criteria

3. VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

3.1 Viewpoint 1- Intersection of Rocher Ave & Gladesville Rd

View 1 is from intersection of Rocher Ave & Gladesville Rd to St Joseph's College site.

The proposed changes in the view are:

- Demolition of existing sports courts in the south-east corner of the college site and introduction of a new built form.



Google Earth Coordinate:
33°49'59.0"S 151°08'22.3"E



Existing View 1



Proposed View 1

Sensitivity

The view from Gladesville Street is considered to have a LOW sensitivity due to:

- Receptors are road users in motor vehicles and/or pedestrians that are passing through therefore have short term views;
- Public view has a little visual value;
- Passers-by are less likely to notice or be concentrating on views since this is a residential/pedestrian thoroughfare.

		MAGNITUDE					
SENSITIVITY		High	High to Moderate	Moderate	Moderate to Low	Low	Negligible
	High	High impact	High Impact	Moderate High	Moderate High	Moderate	Negligible impact
	High to Moderate	High Impact	Moderate High	Moderate High	Moderate	Moderate	Negligible impact
	Moderate	Moderate High	Moderate High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-low	Negligible impact
	Moderate to Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-low	Moderate-low	Negligible impact
	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-low	Low	Low	Negligible Impact
	Negligible	Negligible impact	Negligible impact	Negligible impact	Negligible impact	Negligible impact	Negligible impact

Table 3-1 : Visual Impact Level

Magnitude

The magnitude of the proposal in this view is considered NEGLIGIBLE, due to:

- Proposal is largely screened by existing street vegetation;
- Proposal constitutes only a minor component of the view;
- Proposal might be missed by the casual observer;
- The upper band wall cladding in dark colour reduces the height impact;
- No effect on the overall quality of the scene.

Assessment of impact

The visual impact for this view is assessed as NEGLIGIBLE, as it will have minimum expression in comparison to the existing landscape.



Existing View 1



Proposed View 1

3.2 Viewpoint 2- Intersection of Gladesville Rd & Luke Street

View 2 is from intersection of Gladesville Rd & Luke Street.

The proposed changes in the view are:

- Demolition of existing sports courts in the south-east corner of the college site and introduction of a new built form.



Google Earth Coordinate:
33°49'59.6"S 151°08'26.7"E



Existing View 2



Proposed View 2

Sensitivity

The view from intersection of Gladesville Rd & Luke Street is considered to have a LOW sensitivity due to:

- Receptors are road users in motor vehicles and/or pedestrians that are passing through therefore have short term views;
- Public view has a little visual value;
- Proposed built form is located at the intersection therefore passers-by are unlikely to notice or be concentrating on views.

		MAGNITUDE					
		High	High to Moderate	Moderate	Moderate to Low	Low	Negligible
SENSITIVITY	High	High impact	High Impact	Moderate High	Moderate High	Moderate	Negligible impact
	High to Moderate	High Impact	Moderate High	Moderate High	Moderate	Moderate	Negligible impact
	Moderate	Moderate High	Moderate High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-low	Negligible impact
	Moderate to Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-low	Moderate-low	Negligible impact
	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-low	Low	Low	Negligible impact
	Negligible	Negligible impact	Negligible impact	Negligible impact	Negligible impact	Negligible impact	Negligible impact

Table 3-2 : Visual Impact Level

Magnitude

The magnitude of the proposal in this view is considered MODERATE to LOW, due to:

- Low visual expression of the proposal and compatibility with the surrounding character;
- Proposal is largely screened by existing street vegetation and housing;
- Proposed facade and material design is compatible with the college building visible in the existing view.

Assessment of impact

The low sensitivity combined with a moderate to low magnitude will result in a LOW visual impact.



Existing View 2



Proposed View 2

3.3 Viewpoint 3- Intersection of Luke Street & Short Street

View 3 is from intersection of Luke Street and Short Street.

There will be no change in the view:

- The new built form is covered by existing and proposed street vegetation.



Google Earth Coordinate:
33°49'54.3"S 151°08'26.9"E



Existing View 3



Proposed View 3

Sensitivity

The view from intersection of Luke Street & Short Street is considered to have a LOW sensitivity due to:

- Receptors are road users in motor vehicles and/or pedestrians that are passing through therefore have short term views;
- Public view has a little visual value;
- Local road with a low number of users
- Passers-by are less likely to notice or be concentrating on views since this is a residential/pedestrian thoroughfare.

		MAGNITUDE					
SENSITIVITY		High	High to Moderate	Moderate	Moderate to Low	Low	Negligible
	High	High impact	High Impact	Moderate High	Moderate High	Moderate	Negligible impact
	High to Moderate	High Impact	Moderate High	Moderate High	Moderate	Moderate	Negligible impact
	Moderate	Moderate High	Moderate High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-low	Negligible impact
	Moderate to Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-low	Moderate-low	Negligible impact
	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-low	Low	Low	Negligible Impact
	Negligible	Negligible impact	Negligible impact	Negligible impact	Negligible impact	Negligible impact	Negligible impact

Table 3-3 : Visual Impact Level

Magnitude

The magnitude of the proposal in this view is considered NEGLIGIBLE due to:

- Proposal is completely screened by existing structure and street vegetation;
- No change in the view.

Assessment of impact

The visual impact for this view is assessed as NEGLIGIBLE, as it will not be visible from this viewpoint.



Existing View 3



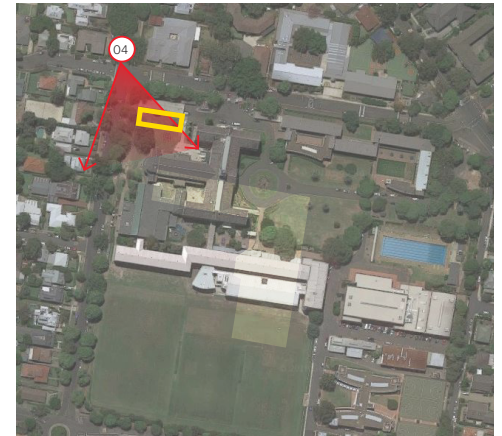
Proposed View 3

3.4 Viewpoint 4- Intersection of Mary Street & Mark Street

View 4 is from intersection of Mary Street & Mark Street.

The proposed changes in the view are:

- Introduction of a new single storey built form with a similar envelope treatment.



Google Earth Coordinate:
33°49'48.3"S 151°08'16.2"E



Existing View 4



Proposed View 4

Sensitivity

The view from intersection of Mary Street & Mark Street is considered to have a LOW sensitivity due to:

- Receptors are road users in motor vehicles and/or pedestrians that are passing through therefore have short term views;
- Public view has a little visual value;
- Local road with a low number of users;
- Proposed built form is located at the intersection therefore passers-by are unlikely to notice or be concentrating on views.

		MAGNITUDE					
		High	High to Moderate	Moderate	Moderate to Low	Low	Negligible
SENSITIVITY	High	High impact	High Impact	Moderate High	Moderate High	Moderate	Negligible impact
	High to Moderate	High Impact	Moderate High	Moderate High	Moderate	Moderate	Negligible impact
	Moderate	Moderate High	Moderate High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-low	Negligible impact
	Moderate to Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-low	Moderate-low	Negligible impact
	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-low	Low	Low	Negligible impact
	Negligible	Negligible impact	Negligible impact	Negligible impact	Negligible impact	Negligible impact	Negligible impact

Table 3-4 : Visual Impact Level

Magnitude

The magnitude of the proposal in this view is considered LOW due to:

- Proposal is largely screened by existing street vegetation;
- Proposal constitutes only a minor component of the view;
- Proposal is only one storey and compatible with the view's composition;
- Minor affect on the overall quality of the scene.

Assessment of impact

The visual impact for this view is assessed as LOW, as it will have limited to LOW impact on the existing landscape.



Existing View 4



Proposed View 4

5. CONCLUSION

Table 4.1 summarises the likely visual impact level of the proposal to surrounding viewpoints.

Overall, the visual impacts assessed from multiple viewpoints surrounding the site result in impacts considered to be in the LOW and NEGLIGIBLE ranges.

Viewpoints	Visual Sensitivity	Magnitude of Visual Change	Impact Level
Viewpoint 1 Intersection of Rocher Ave & Gladesville Rd	Low	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint 2 Intersection of Gladesville Rd & Luke Street	Low	Moderate to Low	Low
Viewpoint 3 Intersection of Luke Street & Short Street	Low	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint 4 Intersection of Mary Street & Mark Street	Low	Low	Low

Table 4-1 : Summary of Visual Impact to Key Viewpoints

