

Appendix N

Visual impact assessment

Settlement City Shopping Centre – Port Macquarie
Environmental Assessment proposed Stage 1



CLOUSTON associates



SETTLEMENT CITY SHOPPING CENTRE REDEVELOPMENT, PORT MACQUARIE

VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

NS 1063 R -01E 11/08/2009

Cover Image:
View to site and junction of Bay Street and Park Street from Park Street

SETTLEMENT CITY, PORT MACQUARIE VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT



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1. INTRODUCTION

This Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) report evaluates the proposed future partial redevelopment of The Settlement City Shopping Centre being developed by ING Real Estate and located in Port Macquarie NSW.

1.1 PURPOSES OF THE REPORT AND PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The purpose of this report is to provide an objective assessment of:

- The scenic impacts of the Settlement City project development.
- The means by which such impacts might be mitigated through the appropriate siting and design of the development.

The report has been prepared in such a manner that it informs the design of the development proposal as well as assessing the impacts that the proposal generates.

1.2 SCOPE AND LIMITS OF THIS REPORT

The report has been based on a professional assessment of the visual qualities of the locality and site as well as the impacts of the proposed development.

At this juncture the opinions of adjoining landowners or other persons who may view this development from the public or private domain have not been sought.

1.3 REPORT METHODOLOGY AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

The principal methodology adopted and adapted for this visual impact assessment is modelled on the approach outlined in 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (GLVIA) prepared by the Landscape Institute (UK) and The Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment.

Key components of the project methodology include:

- Review of all background documentation and reports already prepared for this project.
- A detailed briefing from the full report team.
- A detailed site visit of the site and locality to evaluate existing landscape character, visual catchment, key visual landmarks in the immediate landscape and potential visual impacts of the development scenic sensitivity and determine visual landmarks and visual detractors.
- Preparation of this report based on the GLVIA methodology and reviewed in association with Manidis Roberts.

Key background documents that have informed this VIA include:

- Settlement City Precinct Structure Plan 2009. This detailed plan evaluates the qualities of the site and locality, providing direction on appropriate strategies for future development. It also contains a brief Visual Assessment of the Precinct.
- Development Concept prepared by The Buchan Group.
- Adequacy Review prepared by Manidis Roberts.

1.4 TERMS USED IN THIS REPORT

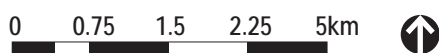
The following provides a brief explanation of the terms and abbreviations commonly used in Visual Impacts Assessments reports and which appear in this report:

- **Visual catchment:** an area or areas from which a subject site is visible, the boundaries of which are normally determined by what may be seen from the site itself up to and including the visual horizon.
- **Viewsheds:** these apply to the quantum of the subject site that may be seen from any given viewpoint.
- **Visual Receptors:** the public or community at large who would have views of the subject site either by virtue of where they live and/or work or from transport routes, paths, lookouts and the like.
- **Visual Accessibility:** the number of people that would regularly view the site. High visual accessibility would include locations from which large numbers of people would view a subject site, such as from a major highway or dense urban area.
- **Visual Sensitivity** (sometimes referred to as Scenic Absorption Capacity): the degree to which a given landscape can absorb change (ie from development) without significant detrimental effects (ie open level grass plains have high sensitivity/low absorption capacity). High sensitivity implies that even small changes in the landscape would be highly visible and would visibly alter the key characteristics of a landscape.

Note that all of these definitions relate to quantitative and measurable non-subjective aspects of visibility and impact. A secondary qualitative assessment is also included in the methodology.



Source: Google Earth 2005



 Settlement City Precinct Boundary



Fig 1.1

Settlement City, Port Macquarie • Visual Impact Assessment
LOCALITY PLAN

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Source: Google Earth 2005



Fig 1.2

Settlement City, Port Macquarie • Visual Impact Assessment
SITE PLAN AND REDEVELOPMENT AREA

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2. LOCAL CONTEXT

2.1 PLANNING CONTEXT

Local government compliance plans which the Settlement City Precinct site is directed by includes:

- Hastings Local Environment Plan 2001
- Hastings Retail Policy Plan 2004
- Settlement City Precinct Structure Plan 2009
- Port Macquarie Foreshore Masterplan
- Port Macquarie-Hastings Development Control Plan 2006

Macroplan Australia, in association with GM Urban design and Urbanhorizon Pty Ltd, were commissioned by Port Macquarie-Hastings Council to develop a concept structure plan and development controls for the Settlement City Precinct Structure Plan (2009).

The Settlement City Structure Plan (SCSP) will provide the planning framework for the assessment of any rezonings, Part 3A Applications or development applications. The SCSP was adopted by the Council on 21 January 2009 and may be incorporated into both the Councils LEP and DCP.

As part of the *Settlement City Precinct 1 Structure Plan* developed by MacroPlan Australia the key points of views and vistas which overlook the area were located and are reproduced in this report (refer Figure 2.4). This study indicates under DCP 20 and DCP 49 that the major receptors identified that overview this proposed development are from:

- **St. Agnes Church (A)** to the south east of the site - one of the last remaining water views from this ridgeline with views of the dominant hills beyond the site.
- **The Foreshore Walk (B)** to the east across the Hastings River - with views across the river from a popular and well used public seawall walkway.
- **Residential Ridgeline (D)** to the direct south of Warlters Street - with oblique views predominately from the private domain into the site.
- **Hastings Avenue and Warlters Street (E)** to the south of the site - with views across to Park Street North and beyond.

Other views and vistas shown in Figure 2.4 indicate sightlines identified in DCPs that are directed to other parts of the precinct but away from the site of this proposal.. These include:

- **Park Street South and Gore Street (C)** to the south east of the site - with views over the Hastings River out to Pelican Island.
- **Buller Street** to the south east of the site - with views across Westport Park and beyond.

For the purposes of this VIA the views that will have direct relevance to the proposed development on this part of the precinct and which are mostly likely to require detailed assessment are A, B and D. Additionally from site analysis a fourth view (refer P1 Figure 2.1) of potential significance is to be had from the seawall walk.

2.2 LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND VISUAL ACCESSIBILITY

This locality of Port Macquarie is characterised by the presence of water, be it in canals, marinas or natural estuary environments. The site possesses a prime outlook over two river frontages and mangrove trees. Built form is mostly low key and the general character of a tourist destination is evident everywhere.

2.3 SITE CHARACTER

The site of the proposed redevelopment of Settlement City is known as the biggest sub regional shopping centre north west of the regions largest town of Port Macquarie and is located on the waters edge of the Hastings River and The Governors Way. The site is extensively covered with built form and contains some of the states major retailers. The retail complex is serviced in the immediate surrounds by expansive areas of customer car parking with the majority facing the Bay Street boundary.

2.4 BUILT FORM AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The most visible built form within the immediate vicinity is the large rising roof of the Panthers Club. As a simple form in a white finish it does not unduly impact on the locality and can be considered an appropriate landmark.

2.5 VISUAL LANDMARKS AND DETRACTORS

In the general locality the principal significant visual landmarks that make positive contributions to the landscape include:

- The Panthers Club roof line.
- Existing Pine trees on the eastern side of Park Street, outside the Sails Resort.
- The large flagpole within the development site.
- Illuminated advertising of a quality that connects the viewer with a visual landmark without detracting from the overall appeal of the site.

Visual detractors in the landscape may include the following:

- Overhead powerlines.
- Car parking areas.
- The weir structure.
- Illuminated advertising that detracts from the appeal of the site.

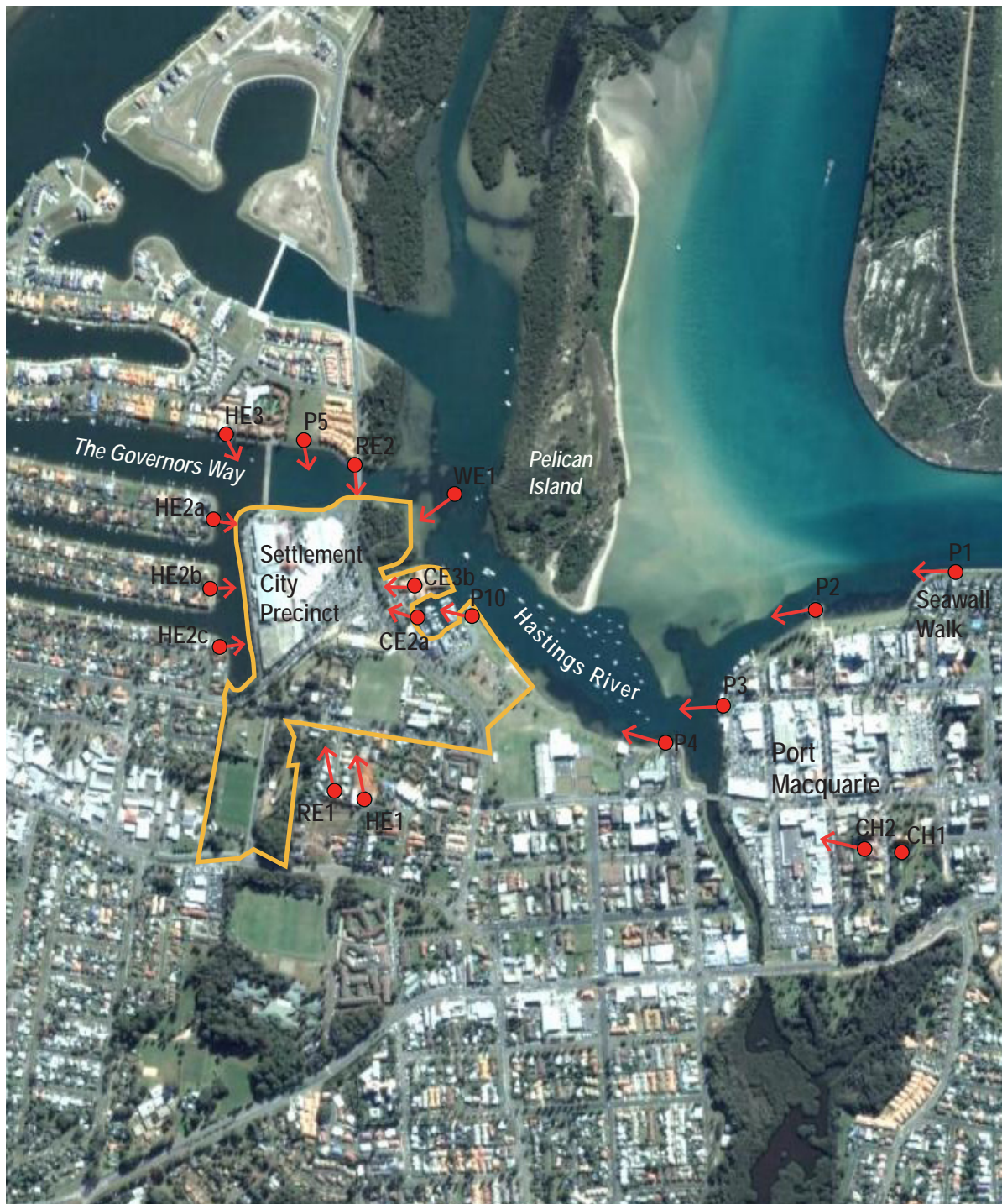
Other key views, vistas and landmarks are shown in the Precinct Structure Plan and are summarised in Figure 9 of that document (see Figure 2.4).

2.6 PUBLIC ACCESS

For the most part public access to the site and locality is permeable with the public able to access foreshore and the site development. Public access is not denied but is nonetheless not generally safe on the sites western boundary where no footpath is provided along the service access road.

2.7 LANDSCAPE CONDITION

Much of the original natural vegetation of the valley has been removed through development.



Source: Google Earth 2005



Fig 2.1

Settlement City, Port Macquarie • Visual Impact Assessment
VISUAL RECEPTOR LOCATIONS - DISTRICT

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Source: Google Earth 2005



Fig 2.2

Settlement City, Port Macquarie • Visual Impact Assessment
VISUAL RECEPTOR LOCATIONS - LOCAL

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Source: Google Earth 2005

0 250 500m



Photo Location sites
(refer to site photos)

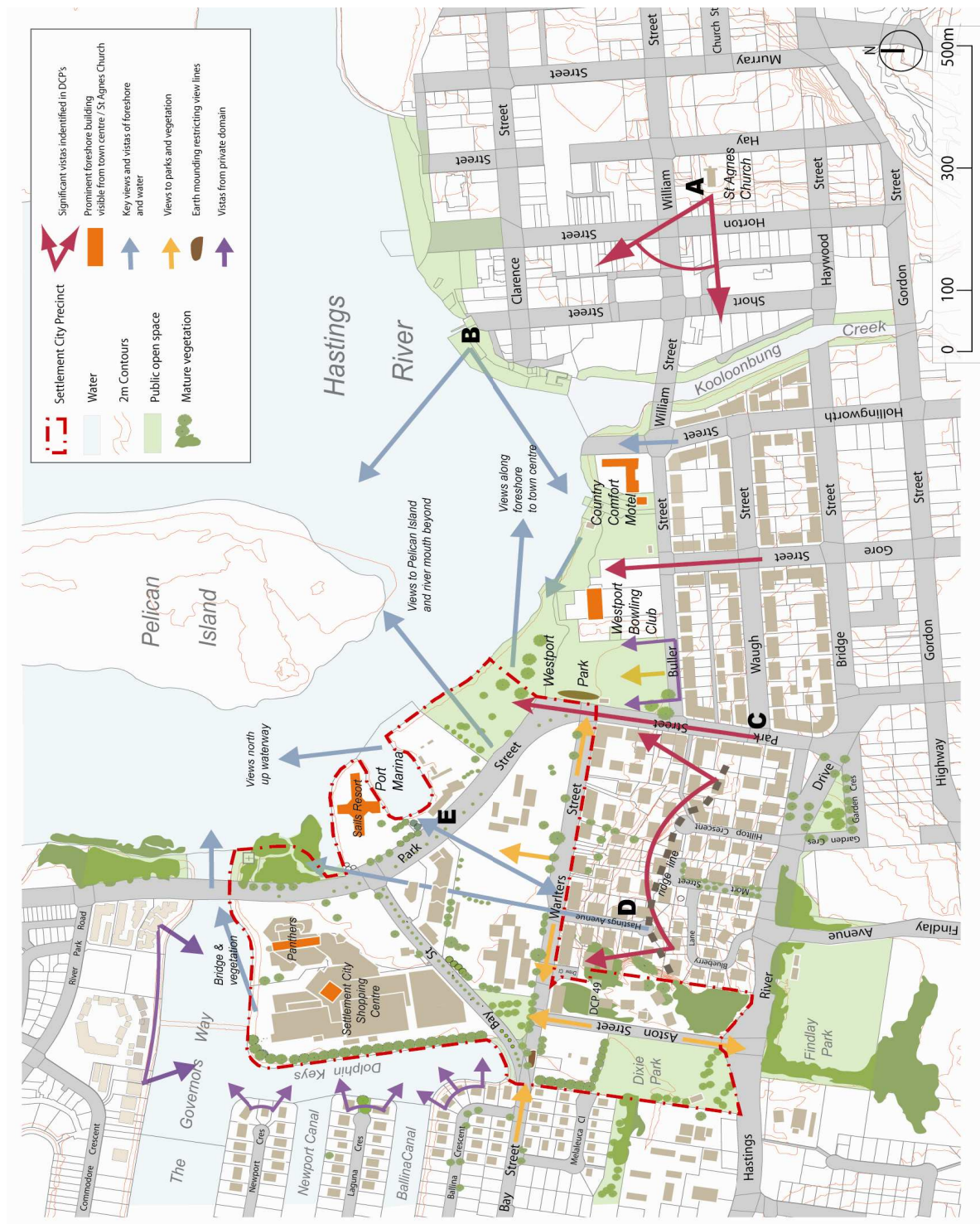


Fig 2.3

Settlement City, Port Macquarie • Visual Impact Assessment
PHOTO LOCATIONS

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Source: Port Macquarie Hastings Council: Settlement City Precinct Structure Plan January 2009



Photo 1 - View across rooftops from forecourt of St. Agnes Church. Panthers Club roof visible middle distance on the right



Photo 2 - View from tour boat wharf looking west towards the site



Photo 3 - Telephoto view from foreshore walk with Panthers Club roof visible in centre



Photo 4 - View to site from top of Hastings Avenue



Photo 5 - View south from Park Street north of bridge

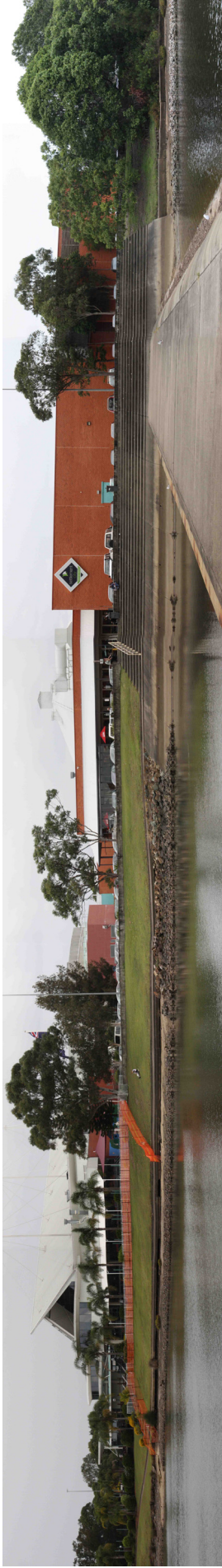


Photo 6 - View looking south towards site. Panthers Club with palm trees in front of building on left of image



Photo 7 - View from footpath to roundabout at Park and Bay Street junctions. Note street tree planting dominates mid ground

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	SITE PHOTOGRAPHS		15.05.09