



ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HERITAGE MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS

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29 June 2009
 Mr Andrew Grainger
 Assessment Coordinator
 Bridge to Bay Alliance - Victoria Road Upgrade Project
 PO Box 743,
 Drummoyne
 NSW, 1470

Our Ref: 090330-2

**Re: Victoria Road Upgrade, Cyclist and Pedestrian Improvements & Bus Stop improvements,
 White Bay Bus Stop, Rozelle City bound - Heritage Impact Statement**

Dear Andrew,

This letter report presents the results of a heritage impact statement (HIS) for the proposed installation of a cantilevered pedestrian/cyclist pathway adjacent to the White Bay Power Station and Former White Bay Hotel.

It is understood that the proposed improvement works comprise the installation of a cantilevered walkway, relocation of the existing pedestrian fencing and bus shelters and installation of a new pedestrian barrier.

Site Location and Extent

The site of the proposed pedestrian and cyclist pathway will be located on the city-bound side of Victoria Road. The footprint of the proposed development will be located between the original main entrance to the power station on Victoria Road, and the site of the former White Bay Hotel (figure 1). It will cantilever out from the existing pedestrian footpath towards the structures of the Power Station, including the Administration Block and the former Staff Canteen.

General Description of Proposed Works

The cycle way is to form a mixed cycle/pedestrian bypass behind (to the east) of the designated bus stop at this point in Victoria Road (see figures 1-3). The cycle way will be approximately 32m long and 4m wide. It will be formed as a cantilevered platform supported by 16 precast concrete slabs on 19 cast concrete piles set on 1500mm centres into bedrock (sandstone) below. The existing pedestrian fence, PVC coated cyclone wire fence, is to be reinstated on the eastern boundary of the cycle way with a new pedestrian barrier to separate the existing footpath from the cycle way on its western side.

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Figure 1: Location of the proposed development. The cantilevered walkway is visible at the centre of the image, as the curved blue section between the yellow line and the White Bay Power Station Administration Block extending into the image from the top (Bridge to Bay Alliance - Victoria Road Upgrade)

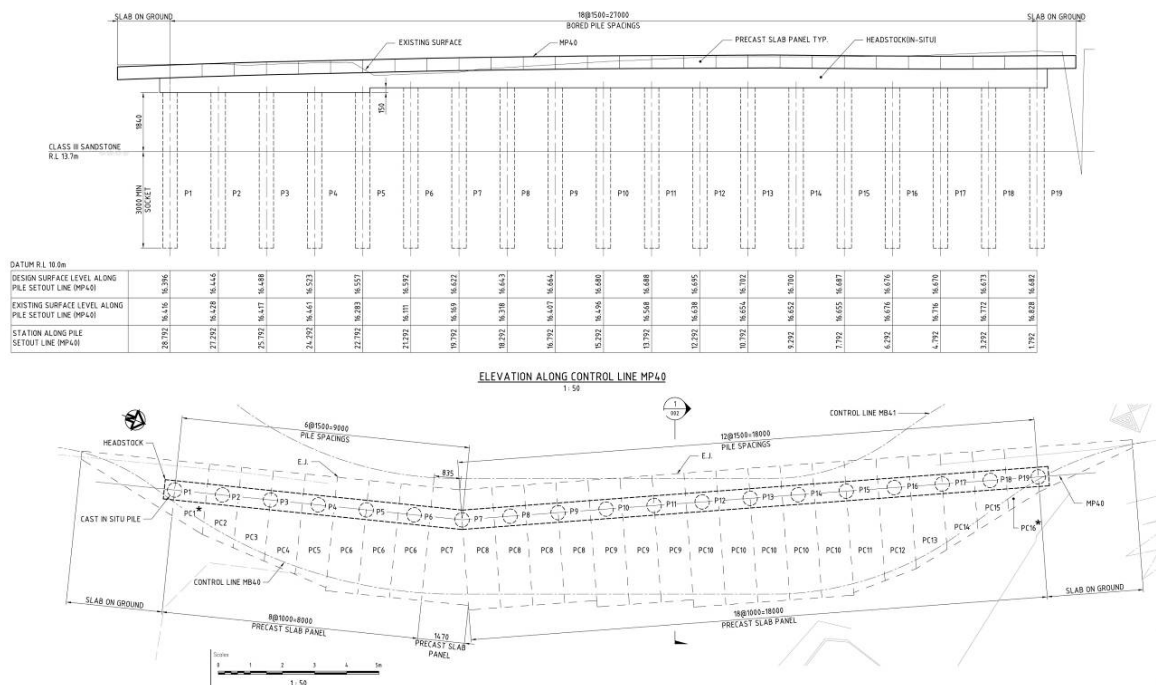


Figure 2: Plan and section of the proposed development. (Bridge to Bay Alliance - Victoria Road Upgrade, file name: HYD-DRG-BS-whitebay_1.dwg)

HISTORIC & ABORIGINAL HERITAGE

- SURVEY & ASSESSMENT
- CONSERVATION PLANNING
- STRUCTURAL RECORDING
- EXCAVATION & ANALYSIS

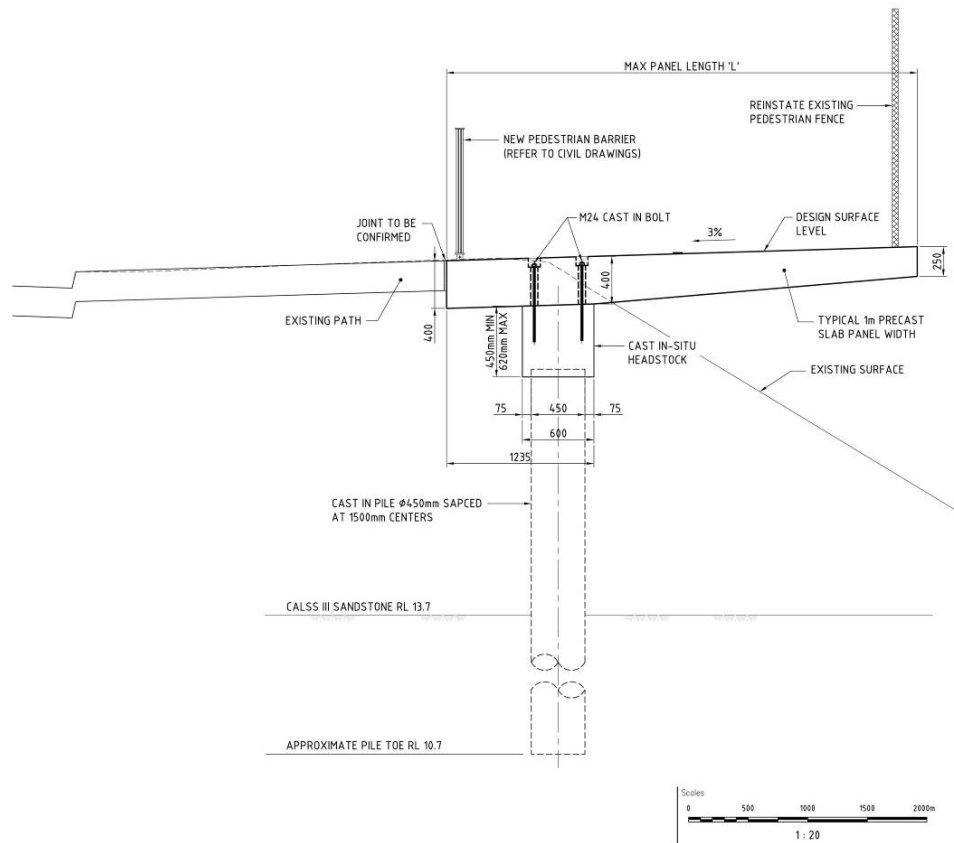


Figure 3: Section of the cantilevered walkway showing construction details. (Bridge to Bay Alliance - Victoria Road Upgrade, file name: HYD-DRG-BS-whitebay_2.dwg)

Heritage Values of the Site

While the proposed development area is not itself of heritage value, it is located immediately adjacent to the White Bay Power Station complex which has been identified as being of State Heritage Significance. The Conservation Management Plan (CMP) prepared for the Power Station Complex¹ identifies the main Victoria Road entrance to the Power Station as being of exceptional (Grade 1) significance, the Administration Block as being of High (Grade 2) significance and the Staff Canteen, adjacent to the Administration Block and the proposed development area, as being of Minor (Grade 4) significance (figure 4).

The CMP noted that:

'Aesthetically White Bay Power Station contains internal and external spaces of exceptional significance. These spaces include raw industrial spaces of a scale, quality and configuration which is becoming increasingly rare and which inspire visitors and users alike. Externally it is a widely recognised and highly visible landmark, marking the head of White Bay and the southern entry to the Balmain Peninsula and its industrial waterfront. It retains a powerful physical presence and industrial aesthetic and is the most important surviving industrial building in the area.'

¹ Design 5 Architects 2004. White Bay Power Station, Robert Street Rozelle: Conservation Management Plan

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White Bay Power Station has strong and special associations and meanings for the local community, for former power station workers and for others who have used the site, and is of high social significance. It is a potent symbol of the area's industrial origins and working traditions, aspects of community identity that are strongly valued today by both older and new residents. It is one of the few surviving features in the area that provide this symbolic connection.'

The Victoria Road Façade of the White Bay Power Station was identified as being of aesthetic significance in the CMP, as shown in 5. The CMP stresses that:

'In order to retain the visibility and prominence of the White Bay Power Station as a harbourside landmark, it should not be substantially obscured by any development on nearby sites. All too often those landmarks which define an area or have for a long time formed the focus of views and axis along major roads and from major public spaces are diminished by inappropriately placed or scaled development in their vicinity. Thus any development being proposed in the vicinity of the White Bay Power Station must carefully consider its bulk, scale and placement in order to respect its landmark values.'

It is noted that the proposed development will not involve any direct impacts to the fabric of the White Bay Power Station. However the views to and from this area of the power station are of heritage value and should be maintained, and any potential impacts to these views, minimized in accordance with the CMP policies set out below:

- 1.2.1 - Any development being proposed in the vicinity of the White Bay Power Station must carefully consider its bulk, scale and placement in order to respect the visibility and prominence of the power station as a harbourside landmark. (Volume II, p.92)
- 1.2.2 - The views from major axial approaches such as Anzac Bridge, Glebe Point Road, Johnston Street Annandale, City West Link, Victoria Road (from North West), Mullens Street and Robert Street must be maintained as substantially unobstructed views. (Volume II, p.93)
- 1.2.3 - General and changing views toward White Bay Power Station from the harbour, major parks and public areas of... Victoria Road, should be retained substantially unobstructed by other large elements, existing or future. (Volume II, p.93)
- 1.2.11 - The west and south elevations are seen as less dramatic [than the north and east elevations] but equally as important in the identity of the place. Their overall massing, configuration and visibility should be retained and respected. (Volume II, p.95)

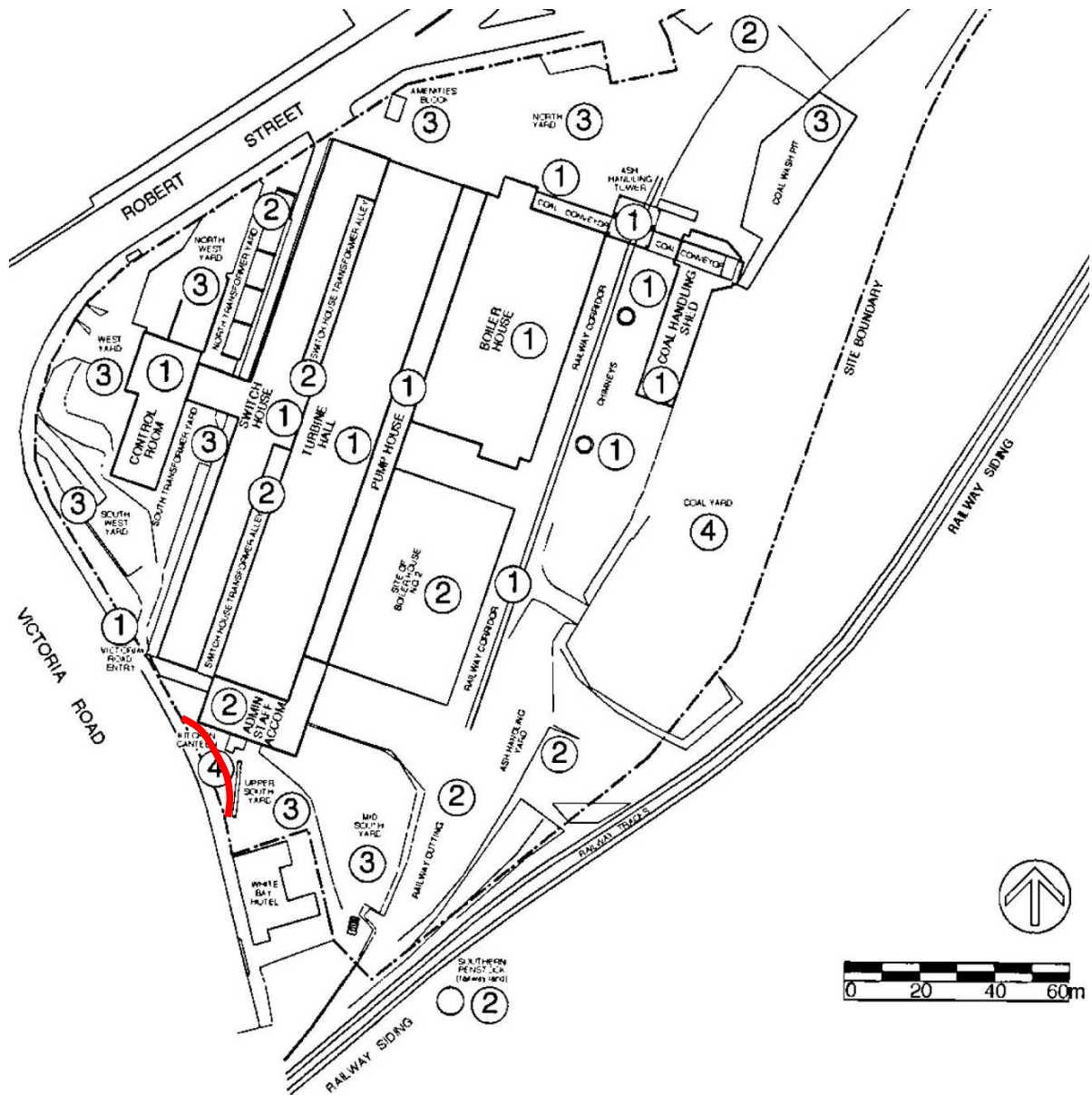


Figure 4: Grading of Significance across the White Bay Power Station Complex. The area of the proposed development is indicated by the red line (White Bay Power Station CMP, Volume II, Page 72; Figure 3.8.2/1)

HISTORIC & ABORIGINAL HERITAGE

- SURVEY & ASSESSMENT
- CONSERVATION PLANNING
- STRUCTURAL RECORDING
- EXCAVATION & ANALYSIS

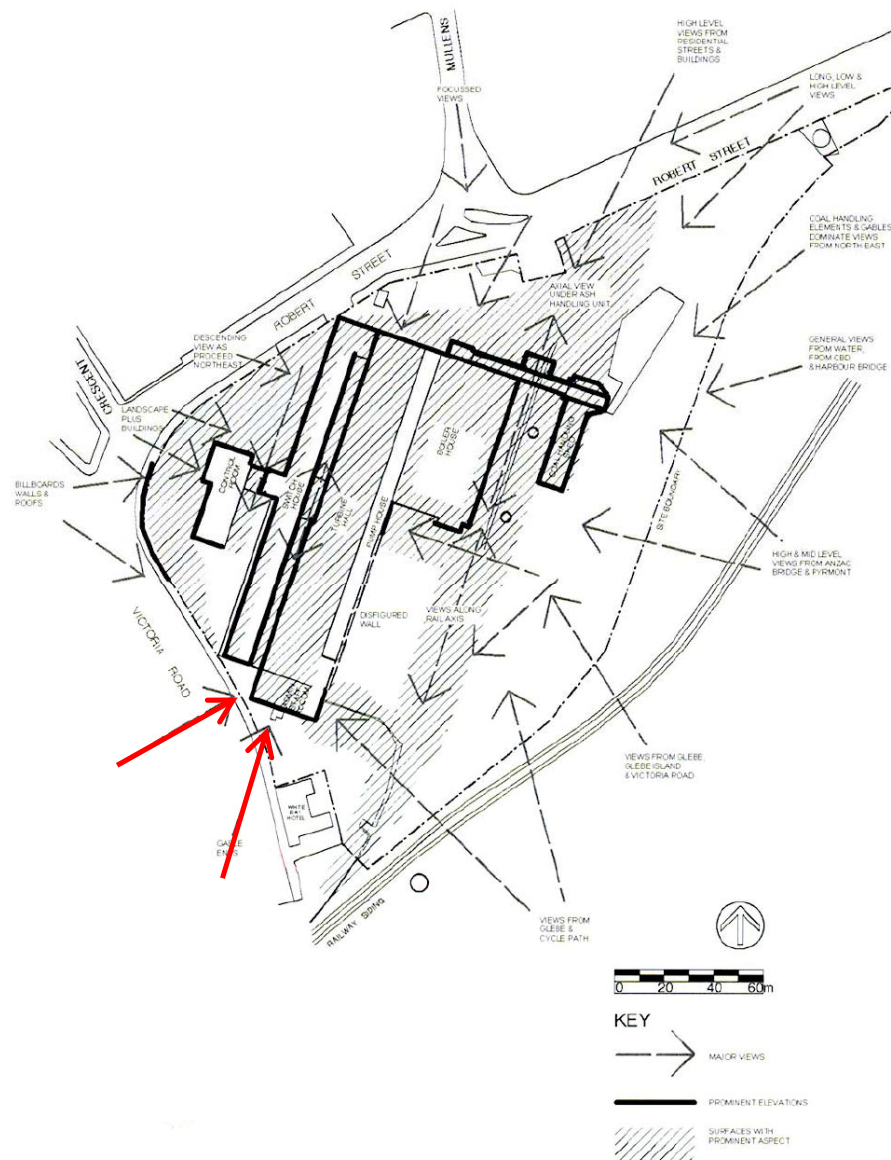


Figure 5: Analysis of views around the White Bay Power Station, as identified by the 2004 CMP. The views which have the potential to be impacted by the proposed development are indicated by the red arrows (White Bay Power Station CMP, Volume II, Page 48; Figure 3.2.1.2.1)

Results of Site Inspection and Historical Research

AHMS undertook a site inspection on Tuesday March 31st 2009, to assess the potential heritage impacts posed by the proposed development. This site inspection confirmed that the potential for archaeological remains within the footprint of the proposed development is very low. The site has been cut down to form yards associated with the power station, essentially removing any archaeological remains which may have been present prior to the development of the current structures. Comparison and overlays of historic maps with current aerial photographs and maps also indicated that there was limited European development of this area prior to the construction of the power station (Figure 6).

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- SURVEY & ASSESSMENT
- CONSERVATION PLANNING
- STRUCTURAL RECORDING
- EXCAVATION & ANALYSIS

The site inspection confirmed that the major heritage constraint or impact posed by the proposed development is aesthetic, and requires consideration of views to and from the Staff Canteen and Administration Block of the White Bay Power Station (See Figures 7 - 13).

In addition to this, care must be taken to avoid damage to the Staff Canteen or Administration Block during construction works.

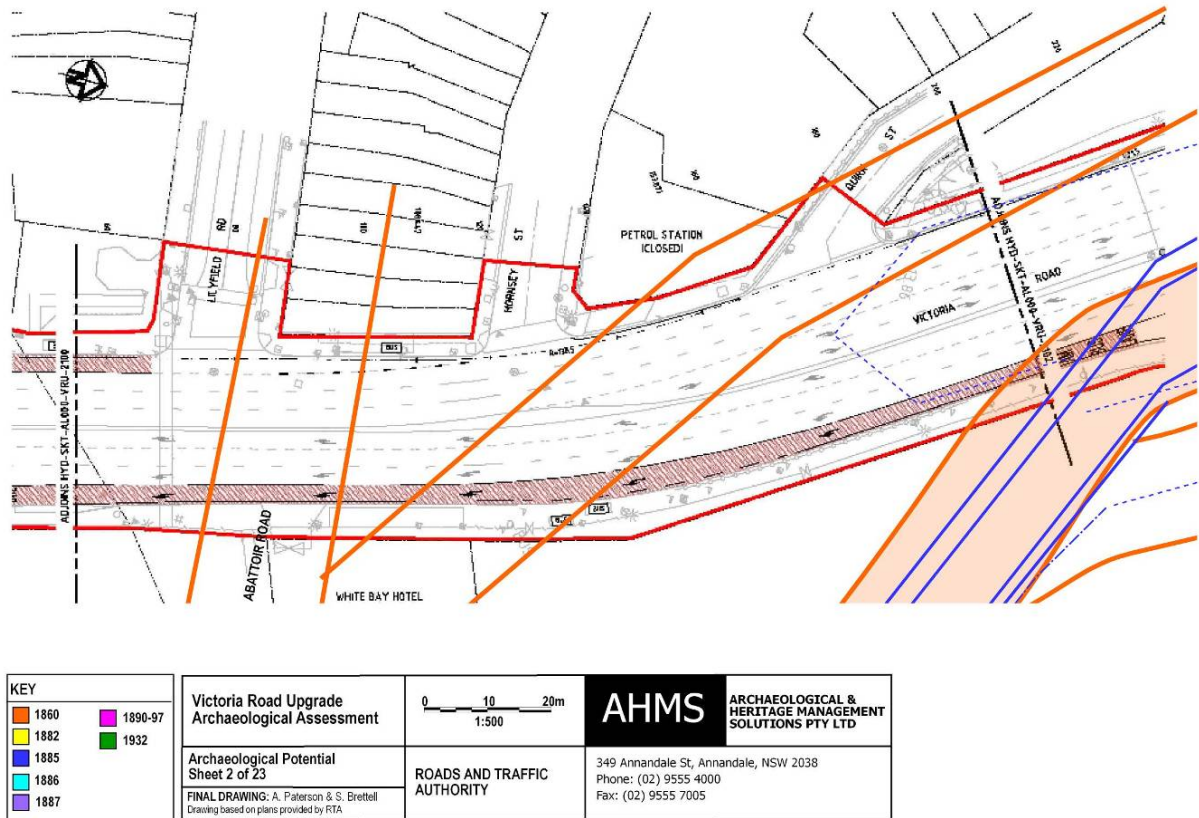


Figure 6: Overlay of Historical maps on RTA base plans. The only historic uses of the proposed development appear to have been roadways, any traces of which are likely to have been removed by the cutting down of the site during the construction of the White Bay Power Station (AHMS Victoria Road Archaeological Assessment 2008).

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Figure 7: View of the Staff Canteen (the small wooden structure), adjacent to the Administration Block which dominates the right hand side of this image. The red dotted line indicates the approximate location of the proposed cantilevered cycle way.

HISTORIC & ABORIGINAL HERITAGE

- SURVEY & ASSESSMENT
- CONSERVATION PLANNING
- STRUCTURAL RECORDING
- EXCAVATION & ANALYSIS



Figure 8: View along the Victoria Road property boundary of White Bay Power Station from the pedestrian bridge to the main entrance of the power station. The approximate location of the proposed cantilevered cycle way is indicated by the red dotted line.

HISTORIC & ABORIGINAL HERITAGE

• SURVEY & ASSESSMENT • CONSERVATION PLANNING • STRUCTURAL RECORDING • EXCAVATION & ANALYSIS



Figure 9: View of the existing bus stop, footpath, Staff Canteen and Administration Block, facing north. The approximate location of the proposed cantilevered cycle way is indicated by the red dotted line.



Figure 10: View to the south east, showing the location of the existing bus stops and the proximity of the Staff Canteen to the approximate location of the proposed cantilevered cycle way (indicated by the red dotted line).

HISTORIC & ABORIGINAL HERITAGE

- SURVEY & ASSESSMENT
- CONSERVATION PLANNING
- STRUCTURAL RECORDING
- EXCAVATION & ANALYSIS



Figure 11: View facing west, showing the location of the existing bust stop (indicated by the red arrow) in relation to the Administration block (visible that the right hand side of this image).

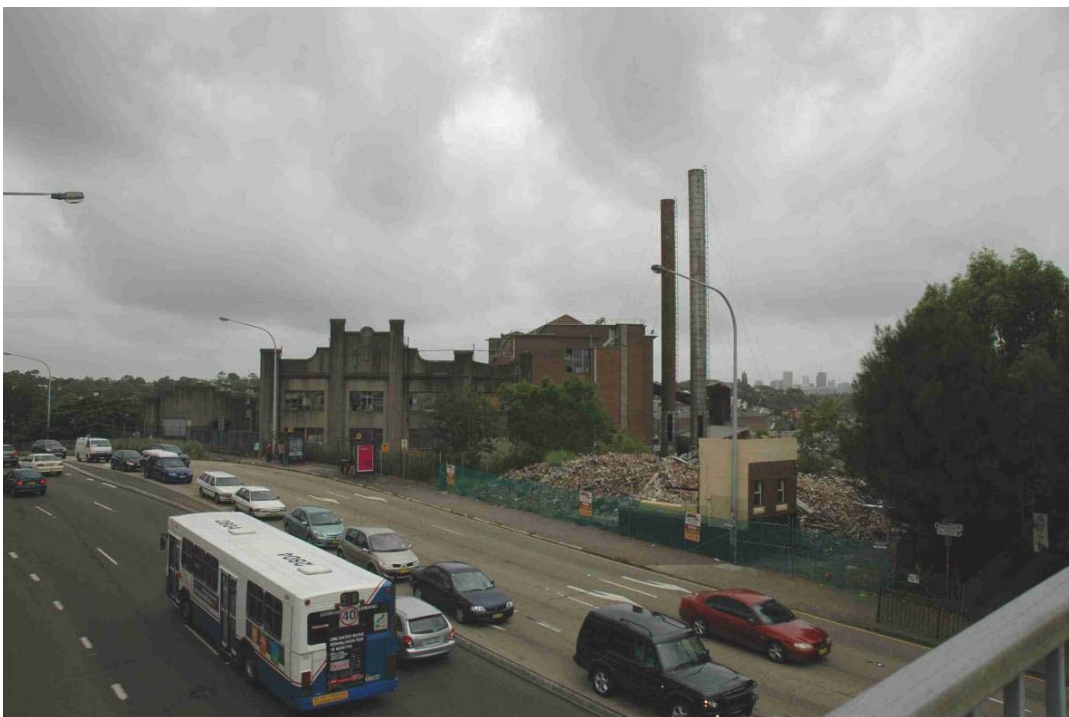


Figure 12: View facing north east, showing the visual proximity of the existing bus stops to the Administration Block.

HISTORIC & ABORIGINAL HERITAGE

- SURVEY & ASSESSMENT
- CONSERVATION PLANNING
- STRUCTURAL RECORDING
- EXCAVATION & ANALYSIS

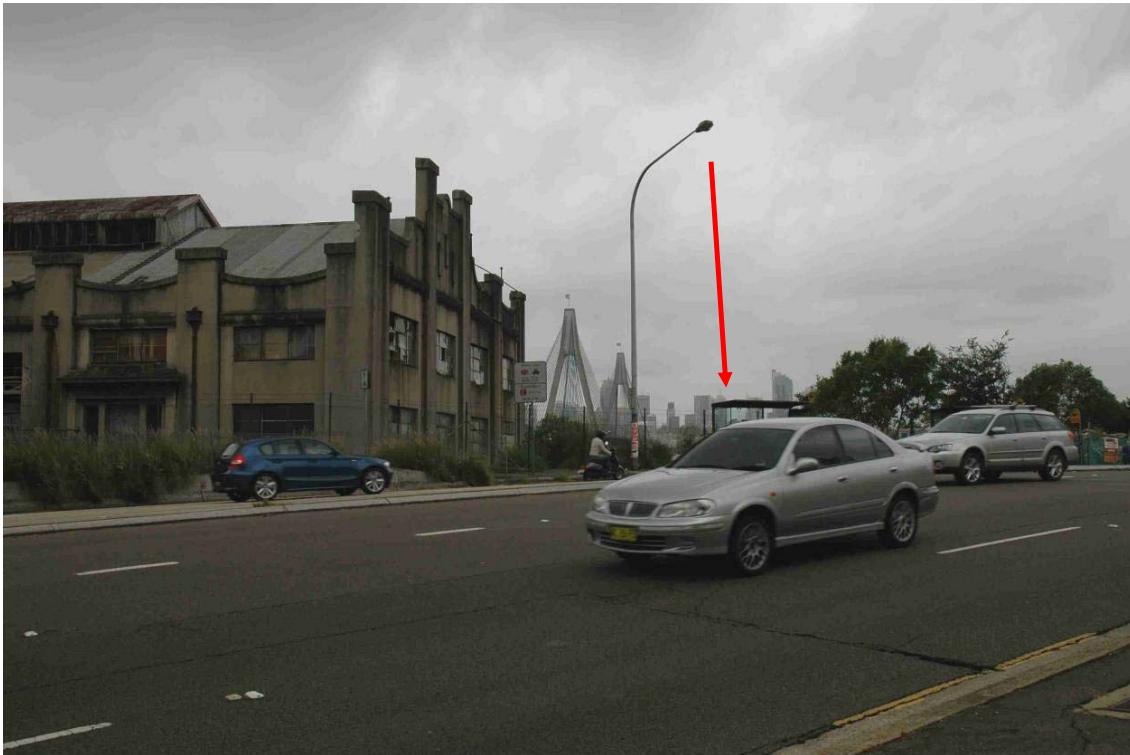


Figure 2: View facing north east, showing the visual proximity of the existing bus stops (indicated by the red arrow) to the Administration Block. This view also illustrates the views past the power station to the Anzac Bridge, another landmark structure of this area.

Impact Assessment

While this report respects that the proposed development does not involve the demolition of heritage items associated with the White Bay Power Station, its proximity to the Victoria Road façade of the complex has the potential to impact on the visual coherence of the heritage item. The northern end of the proposed cantilevered walkway will be located very close to the corner of the 1928 Administration Block, and extends to the south, where it has the potential to visually impact on the Staff Canteen, particularly on its north-eastern corner.

The existing bus stop and footpath are separated from the White Bay Power Station Site by a chain link and barbed wire fence which serves the dual function of security for the heritage item and safety for pedestrians. While this fence is not attractive or ideal, the chain link construction does not dramatically impact on the views to, from and past the site of the power station. The proposed development intends to reinstate this fencing along the edge of the future cantilevered pedestrian walkway. Despite the chain link fence being of medium to low impact on the views around the power station, it is recommended that given the adverse impact caused by the proximity of the proposed walkway the installation of a new pedestrian fencing be considered, such as safety glass panels, or a similar material, to allow clearer views to and from the power station.

Construction works as shown in figure 14 are planned to be undertaken within the fence indicated by the broken blue line. The Bridge to Bay Alliance has indicated that the exact location of this fencing will be determined immediately prior to commencement of works, once on site. It is strongly recommended that the fencing be offset from the former Staff

HISTORIC & ABORIGINAL HERITAGE

• SURVEY & ASSESSMENT • CONSERVATION PLANNING • STRUCTURAL RECORDING • EXCAVATION & ANALYSIS

Canteen building by at least one metre to ensure no impacts to this structure or the adjacent Administration block.

Statement of Heritage Impact

The proposed development of a cantilevered pedestrian walkway on the city bound side of Victoria Road, adjacent to the White Bay Power Station and former White Bay Hotel is considered unlikely to pose any significant impact to the heritage significance of the White Bay Power Station provided the following recommendations are implemented:

1. The construction boundary fence is offset from the Staff Canteen and Administration Building to avoid damage to the heritage fabric and impacting on the visual appearance of these buildings.
2. The fencing along the eastern edge of the cantilevered walkway must not reduce visibility and sight lines to, from and past the White Bay Power Station below its current level. However, the installation of some form of glass safety panel barrier along this section would be preferable, opening up vistas past the power station to the Glebe Island Silos and Anzac Bridge.

As discussed above, the development area has no archaeological potential, and as such requires no further archaeological investigation or mitigation works.

Yours sincerely,



Sophie Brettell
Heritage Consultant
AHMS

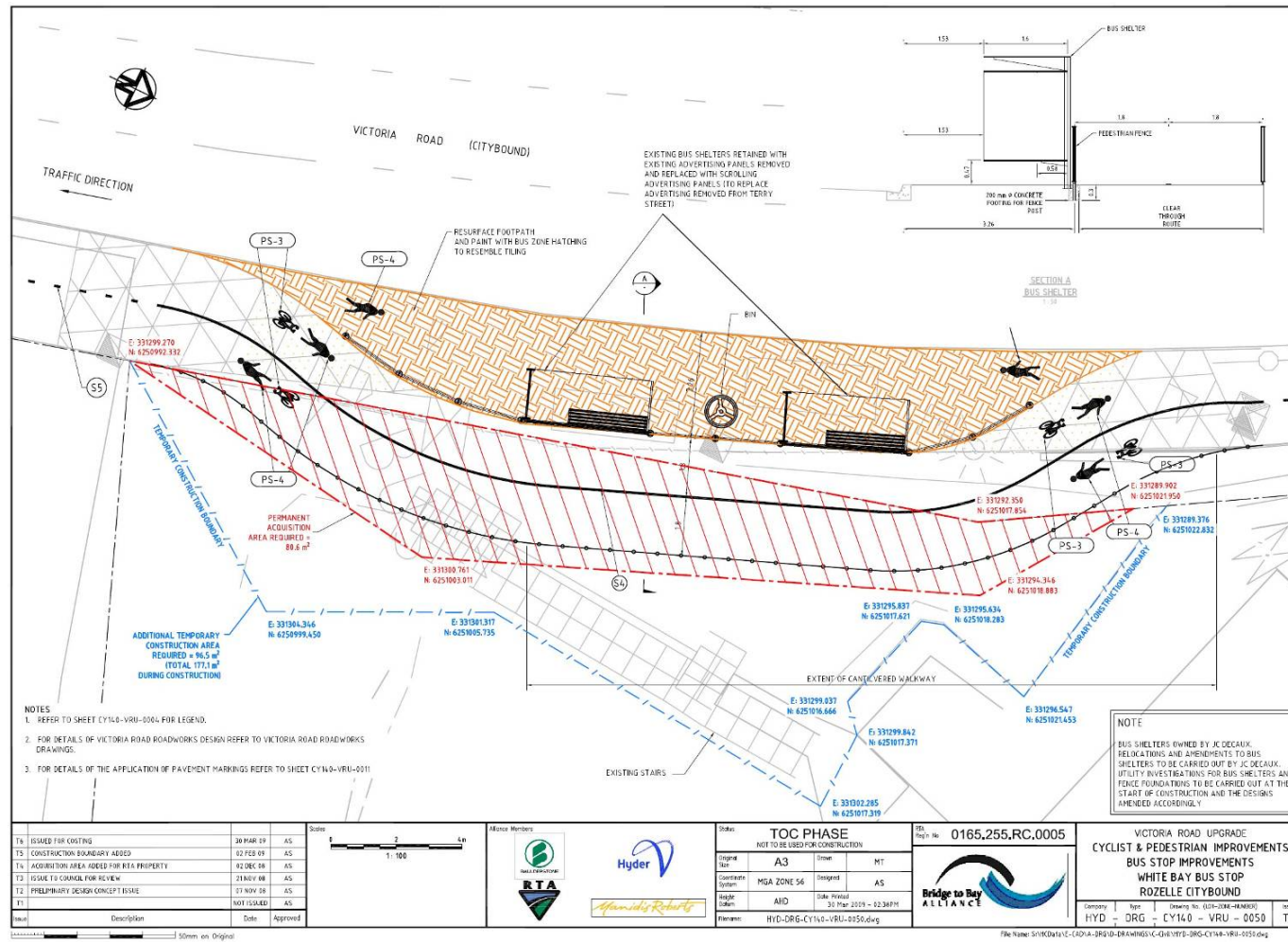


Figure 14: Proposed development plan showing the intended positions of the two existing bus shelters and the relocated pedestrian fence. The construction area fence line is indicated by the broken blue line (Bridge to Bay Alliance – Victoria Road Upgrade Project).

HISTORIC & ABORIGINAL HERITAGE

- SURVEY & ASSESSMENT
- CONSERVATION PLANNING
- STRUCTURAL RECORDING
- EXCAVATION & ANALYSIS