

Name:

Address:

SAVE ALFRED STREET NORTH



Submission to the NSW Department of Planning,
Industry and Environment
Planned changes to Alfred Street North Neutral Bay
within the Western Harbour Tunnel & Warringah
Freeway Upgrade.
RMS Code: SSI-8863

1. Executive Summary

The “Upgrades and changes to the surrounding road network” section of the Western Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) makes the following statement:

Capacity and configuration works along Alfred Street North, including the realignment of Alfred Street North between Wyagdon Street and the Ridge Street shared user bridge, as well as reconfiguration of Alfred Street North to provide new off ramp lanes from the Warringah Freeway to the High Street interchange.



The EIS and other supplementary documentation in relation to the project state that the realignment will create a significant reduction in the width of Alfred Street North resulting in a plan to remove vital parking spaces, reposition the pedestrian overpass a short distance to the south of the existing position and include the removal of the pedestrian on-ramp and the building of a new on-ramp for the overpass.

As the owners of apartments within 433 Alfred Street North, we vehemently object to the imposition of changes to our street which will detrimentally impact all of the residents' ability to move safely to and from our property and to receive basic services where access to our building is required. The changes will remove the basic tenet of being able to live normally and move within the surrounds of our apartment block. Without any exaggeration, it is an intrusion on our street that risks the lives of residents and visitors.

When the removal of all parking was raised at an information meeting, the response from the engineer was simply, Quote: “Park in an adjoining street”. The engineer must not have set foot on Alfred Street North as there is no adjoining street where parking is allowed. This obvious lack of awareness for the needs and basic living requirements of residents significantly reduces our faith in the planning abilities of those appointed to prepare the EIS.

In addition to the parking and change to the width of the street, the proposed 6 metre high noise reduction wall will significantly impact the light to both our street and our building. As shown in later photos the shadow at 3pm on a winter's day will almost fully engulf all apartments in our blocks.

This submission provides evidence of how the proposed plan is flawed.

While we object to the major impacts these changes will make, we felt it appropriate, however, to provide a recommendation on how the impact of these planning failures may be reduced, if only in a limited way. This includes the building of a cantilever bridge where the bus lane is planned to intrude onto Alfred Street North freeing up parking options.

Our clear preference, however, is for the planners to not proceed with the extra bus lane and find an alternative to the existing totally unacceptable plan that goes beyond the realm of fairness or safety for the rate paying owners of properties on Alfred Street North.

While this may not be of interest to state planners and members of parliament, this work will significantly reduce the value of our properties due to both the construction process and completed work making all residents in the area extremely dissatisfied with the government allowing this to proceed.

We are writing this submission as the Covid 19 pandemic starts to impact our country and our lives significantly with many of our residents facing unemployment, reduced income, a major reduction in our superannuation and lifestyle changes.

While we don't blame the Government for the arrival of the virus, we can blame the government for the imposition this planning will further have on our lives and livelihoods.

With our lives changing significantly because of the pandemic, including a significant risk to our property values, we now face this additional hurdle to further worsen our financial positions.

Our government leaders are meant to lead, but this is not leadership, it is a proposal without regard to its effect on the residents. We understand progress but we won't accept blatant poor planning and arrogance.



2. Purpose

This submission responds specifically to the proposed changes which will impact the width, parking availability and access to our property by residents, trades people, removalists, and essential services such as ambulances etc.

This submission will also identify the extensive consequences of the proposed changes and how these, under any consideration, should be considered as draconian.

3. EIS proposals, impact and recommendations

The elements of the EIS that relate to Alfred Street North are as follows:

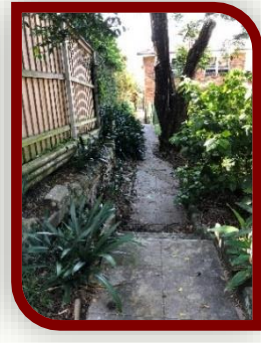
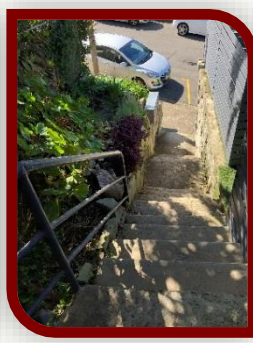
Element 1

The building of an extra lane on the freeway to be used as a bus lane going south along the existing Alfred Street off ramp from the freeway. The freeway and retaining wall works may extend a further 1m over the area currently occupied by the pedestrian ramp. This will reduce the width of Alfred Street North and includes a plan to remove 50 parking spaces, including the ½ hour parking and loading zone outside No. 433.

This proposal will create the following issues for Alfred Street North residents and visitors:

- This is a major disruption to the accessibility and usage of 433 Alfred Street North from the lower section opposite Eaton Rd to the higher area at Wyagdon St. This section of Alfred St North contains at least five medium to large apartment buildings containing over 750 residents and contains approximately 50 parking spaces on either side of Alfred Street North. There is only limited parking within the five apartment blocks with two of the blocks not having any parking at all. It is planned that all 50 parking spaces be removed. This is totally untenable and is not acceptable planning on any level.

- There is no nearby on street parking as the only adjoining street is Winter Ave which is one way from Bent street into Alfred Street North. It is very narrow and no parking is permitted. It is also a shared street with pedestrians and bicycles. Parking is obviously impossible. This photo shows the entry to Winter St.
- The planned removal of the ½ hour and loading zone parking outside No. 433 will detrimentally impact all of the residents' ability to move safely to and from their property and to receive basic services where access to our building is required. The changes will remove the basic tenet of being able to live normally and move within the surrounds of our apartment block. There will be no room to put out our at least 40 garbage bins as there will be no space to place them near the street.
- Any proposal to reduce the already narrow street creates a major physical risk to any person walking along the footpath or coming out of the apartment block. A child coming out of the entrance gate to No. 433 would be immediately subjected to traffic a metre away. This plan is not just an inconvenience it is a risk to the lives of the residents and visitors.
- The only other entry to Alfred Street North which provides any access to the apartments at No. 433 is a narrow walkway which starts in between the 100 and 500 blocks. This walkway which goes through to Bent street is only ½ metre wide in places, is 150 metres long and contains 120 steps. This is totally unacceptable for any commercial delivery, removalist, emergency or private entry to No. 433. Photos of this pathway are shown below.



Our recommendation is as follows:

Recommendation 1

An alternative plan should be prepared by the planners to not proceed with the extra bus lane or to find a way to not impede upon Alfred Street North.

Element 2

The removal of the option to turn left at the end of the off-ramp from the freeway to proceed into Alfred Street North and a new off-ramp to come off the freeway near to the Mount Street overpass to funnel traffic to the North Sydney area.

This proposal will create the following issues for Alfred Street North residents and visitors:

- The residents of No. 433 Alfred Street North are already inconvenienced by the inability to enter the street from any eastern access point. This is due to the inability to turn left from Winter Street into Alfred Street North. Therefore, all entry must be either from the existing Alfred Street off-ramp from the freeway, or from North Sydney via the High Street overpass.
- The removal of the sharp left-hand turn from the freeway off-ramp means a significant increase in traffic through the already heavily used North Sydney roads

Our alternate recommendation for this proposal is as follows:

Recommendation 2

As in Recommendation 1 an alternative plan should be prepared by the planners to not proceed with the extra bus lane.



Element 3

With the adding of the extra bus lane, the existing pedestrian ramp leading to the pedestrian overpass in front of 433 Alfred Street North will be demolished. A new pedestrian overpass going across to Ridge Street to be built approximately 20 metres south of the existing overpass and include a new pedestrian on-ramp from Alfred Street North.

This proposal will create the following issues for Alfred Street North residents and visitors:

- The existing pedestrian ramp is an acceptable entry to the overpass in addition to the steps on the eastern side of Alfred Street North as shown with these two photos.
- The plan to move the pedestrian ramp further to the south of the existing position places the entry to the overpass somewhere nearer to the lower section of Alfred Street North. This lower section of the street is below a twenty metre rock wall that separates the two levels of the street. This is shown by a photo of the proposed new overpass and entry.
- Based on the photos below, the construction of the new on-ramp and stairs would be a major disruption to the use of the lower section of the road which also has three apartment blocks in its near vicinity. We cannot see how this work could be completed at all and even if a plan was created for it to somehow function, the construction

program would block off all access to both the lower and upper sections of Alfred Street North.



- When the engineer responsible for answering questions about the new overpass at the information meeting was asked how this would be achieved, the answer was “Don’t worry about that. We don’t think the drawing shows how it will be done. We will just find another way”.

We don’t call this planning. This is guesswork for an impossible task.

Our alternate recommendation for this proposal is as follows:

Recommendation 3

As in Recommendation 1 an alternative plan should be prepared by the planners to not proceed with the extra bus lane and avoid the moving of the existing overpass.

Element 4

A new retaining wall to hold the new lane to be built where the pedestrian and bicycle ramp is now and include a noise reduction wall above the traffic line.

This proposal will create the following issues for Alfred Street North residents and visitors:

- As already stated, the widening of the freeway to include a bus lane will significantly impinge on Alfred Street North in many significant ways. To have a retaining wall with a further noise reduction wall above it, placed where the existing ramp to the pedestrian overpass is situated would create a jail like view from the apartments. During winter the shadow of the noise reduction wall will encompass our apartments. The traffic which is already close would simply overpower our street and destroy our access and limited functionality.

Our alternate recommendation for this proposal is as follows:

Recommendation 4

As in Recommendation 1 an alternative plan should be prepared by the planners to not proceed with the extra bus lane and avoid the retaining wall and noise reduction wall.

4. Alternative proposal

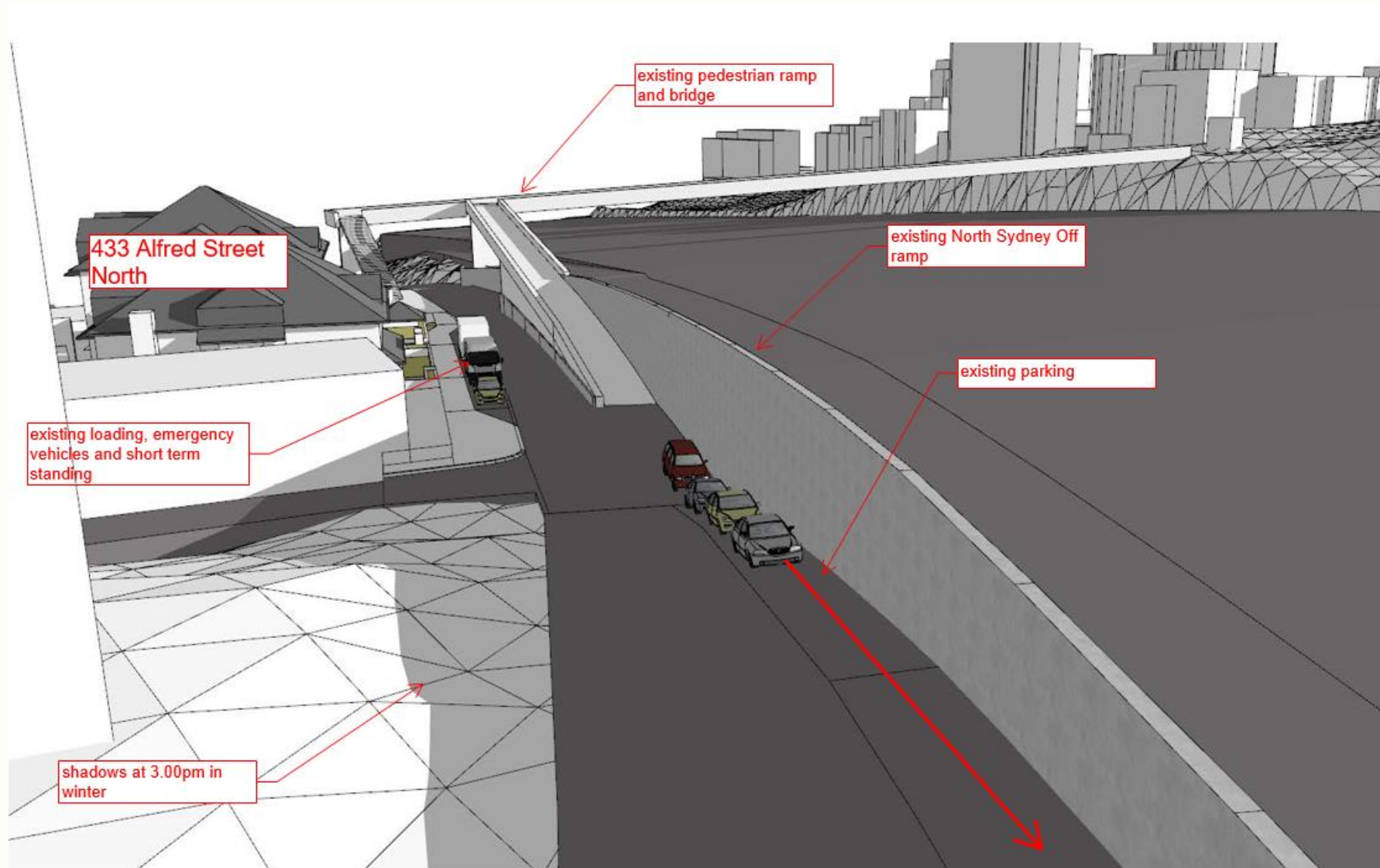
The owners of apartments at No. 433 Alfred Street North clearly prefer for the planners to not proceed with the extra bus lane and find an alternative to the existing totally unacceptable plan.

While it is easy for us to simply object, we thought that if our protests and that of other stakeholders in our street were not sufficient to stop this part of the plan from proceeding, we should provide an alternative. Our very reluctant plan would be to include a cantilever bridge where the bus lane is planned to intrude onto Alfred Street North freeing up parking options.

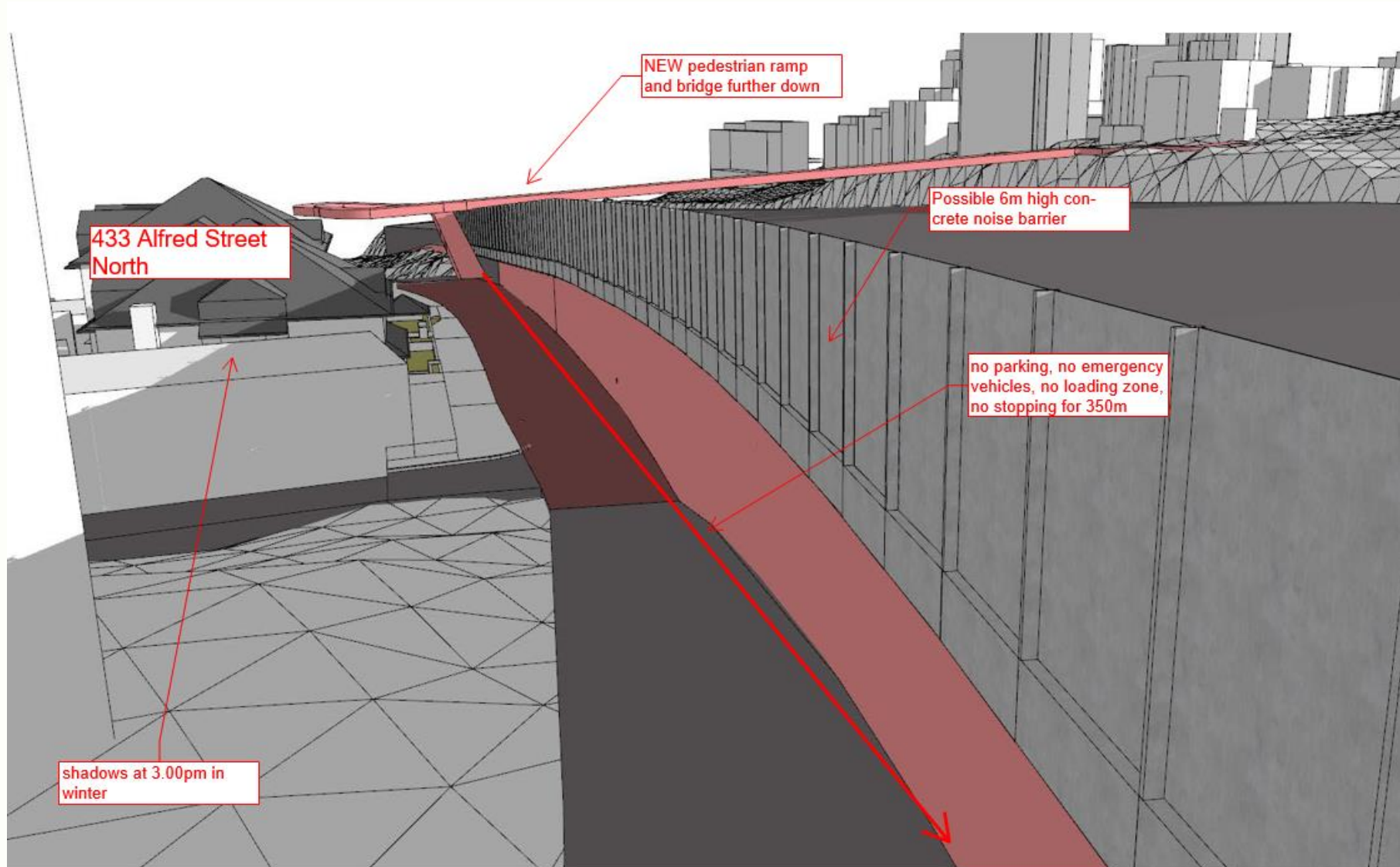
While this would need to be re-drawn by the relevant engineers, we have created an alternative that would at least allow the loading zone, ½ hour parking and some additional spaces to remain underneath the cantilever.

Photographic evidence of impact of proposal

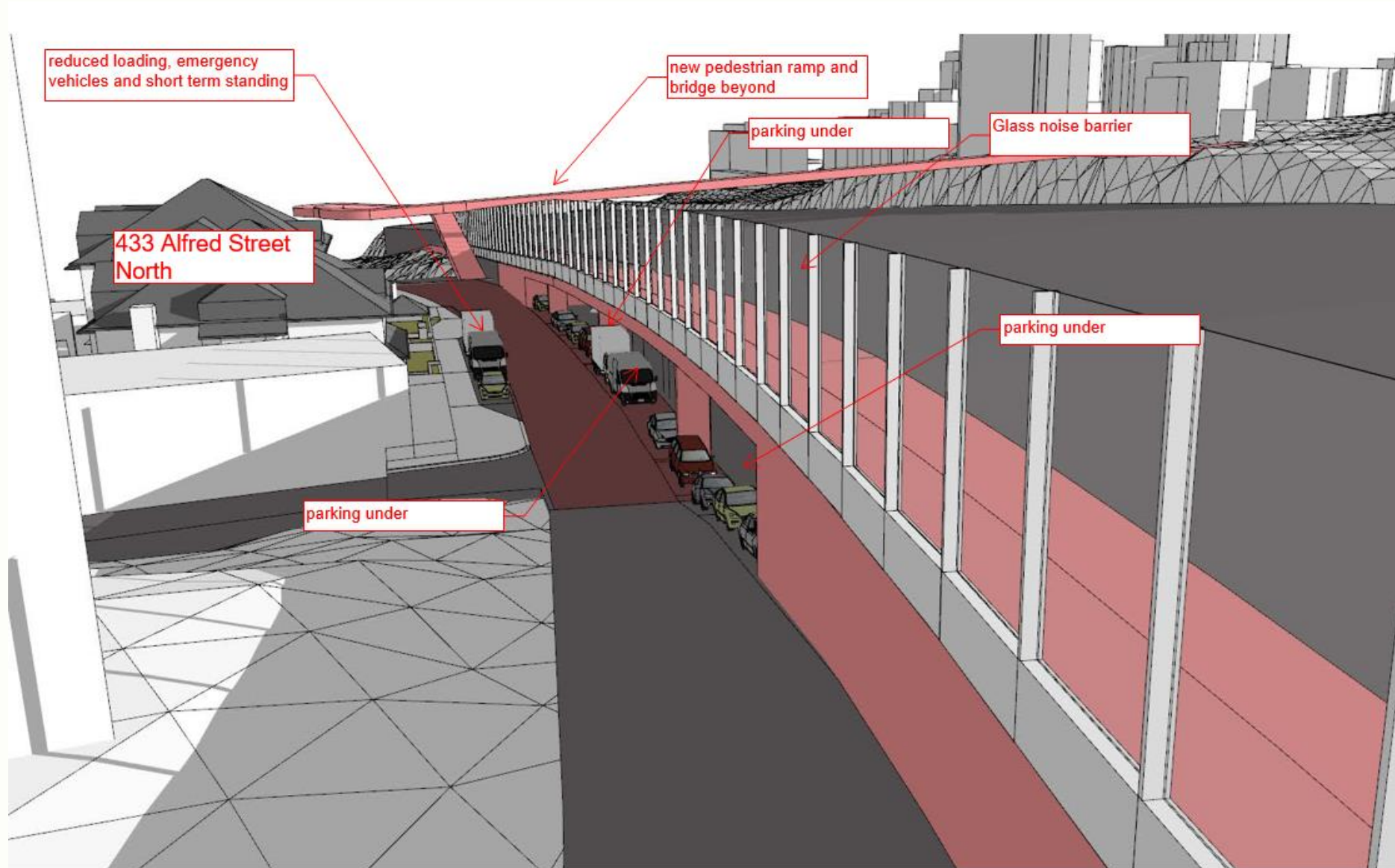
The photos below are a 3D depiction of the existing street and various angles of the proposed EIS changes. The photos show the major impact this proposal will make to our street as well as alternative suggestions that are lodged as a possibly acceptable position, but definitely not our preferred position which is the for the new lane not to proceed.



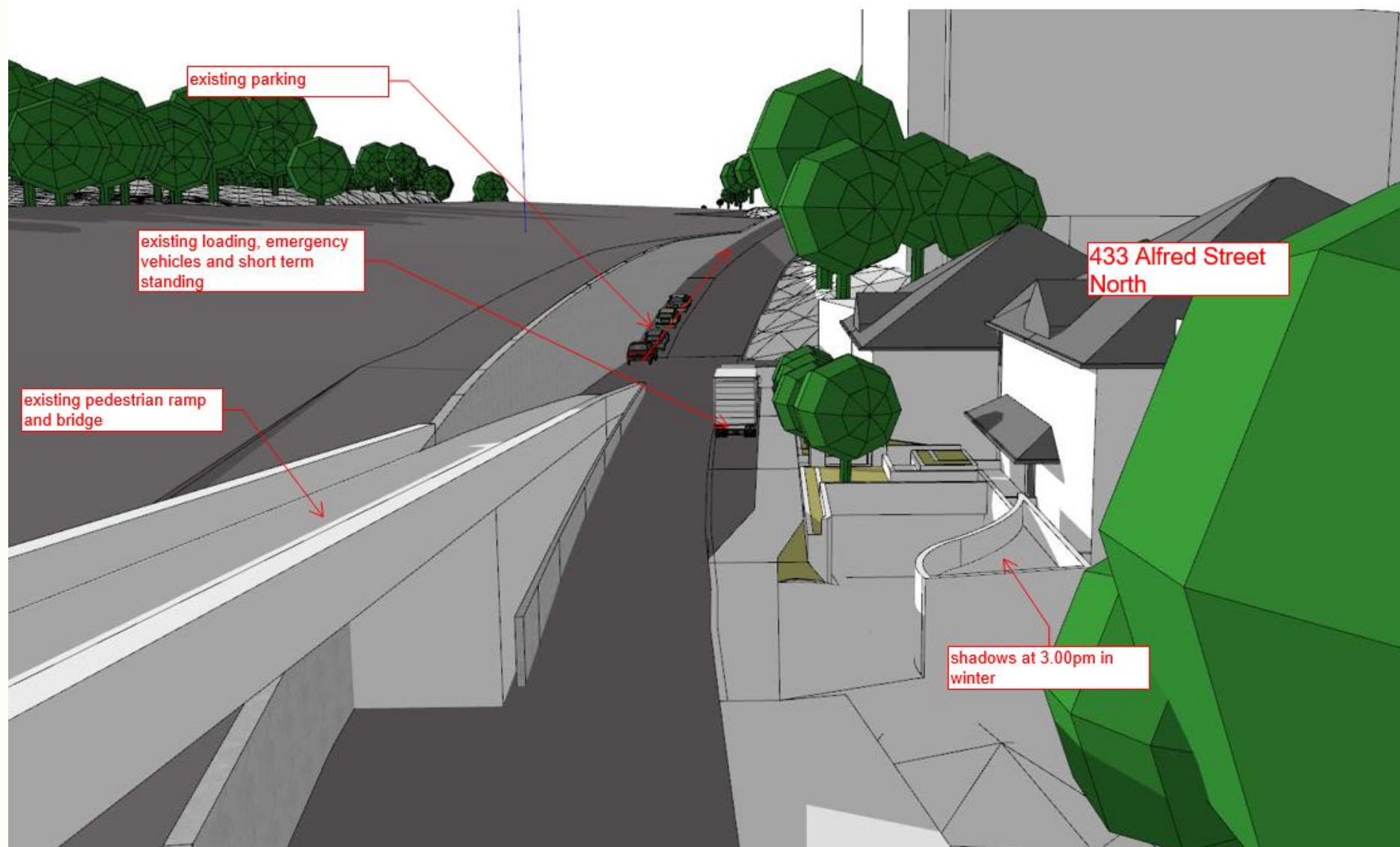
EXISTING ALFRED STREET NORTH



RMS PROPOSED ALFRED STREET NORTH



PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE ALFRED STREET NORTH



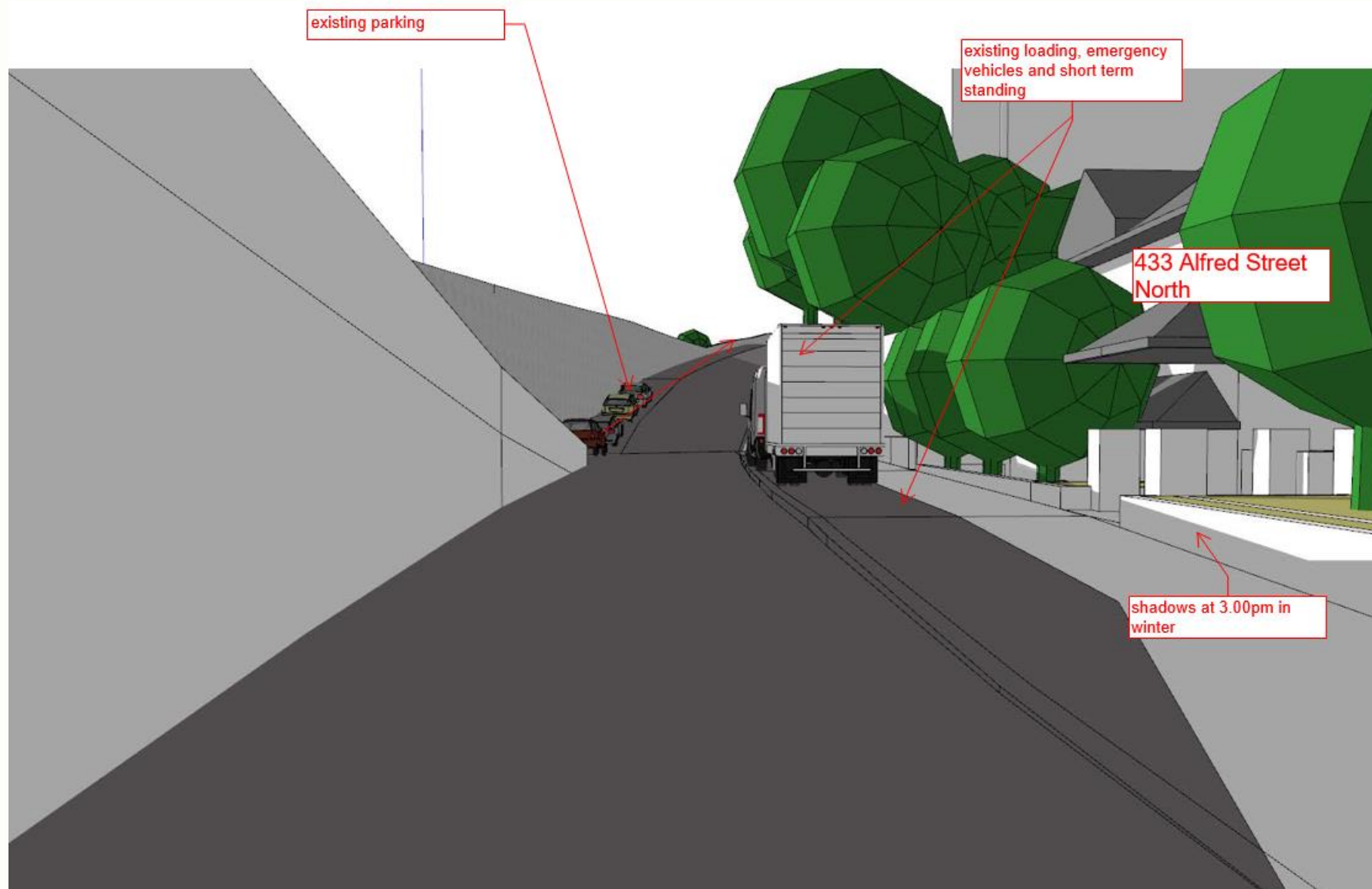
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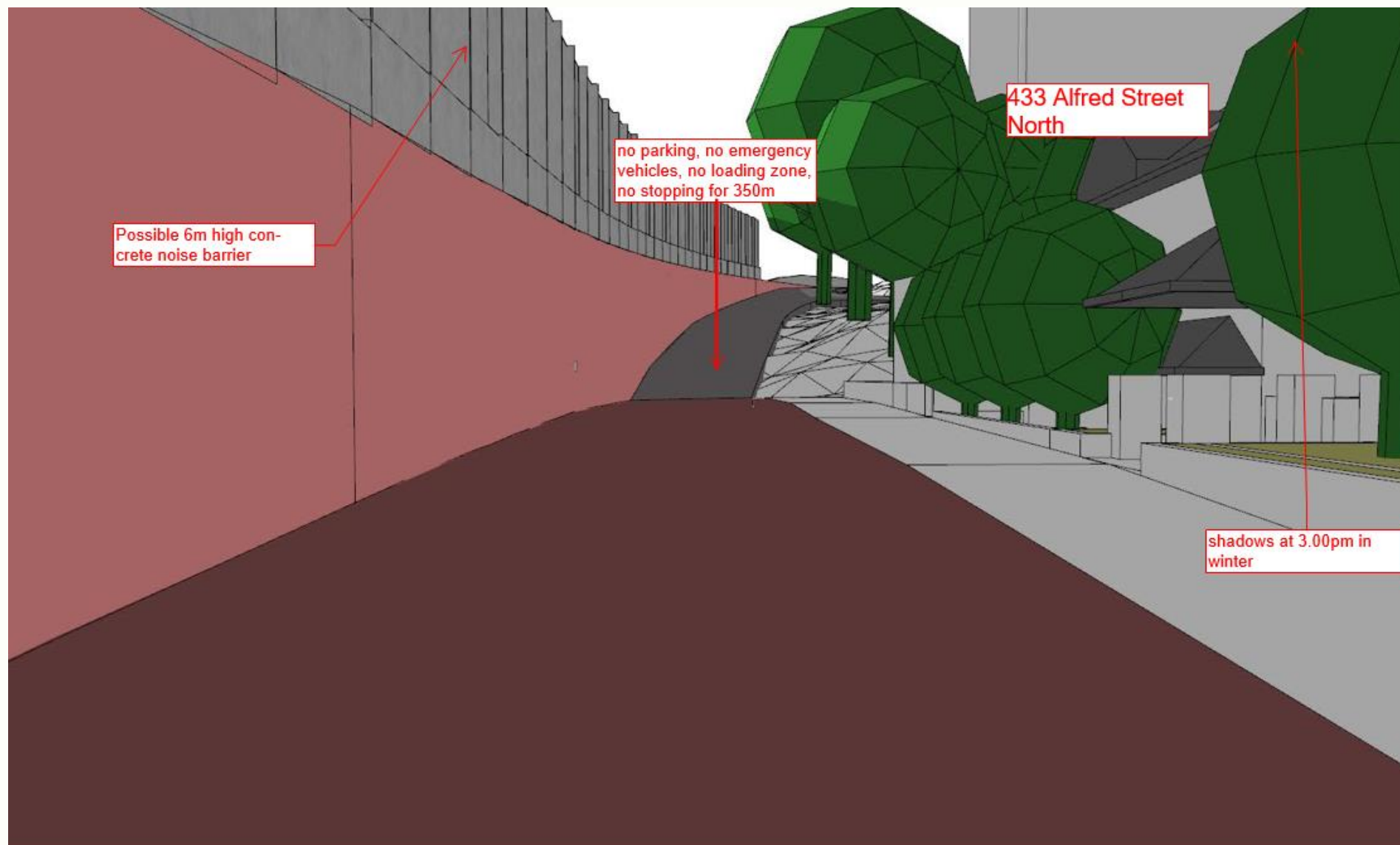
RMS PROPOSED ALFRED STREET NORTH

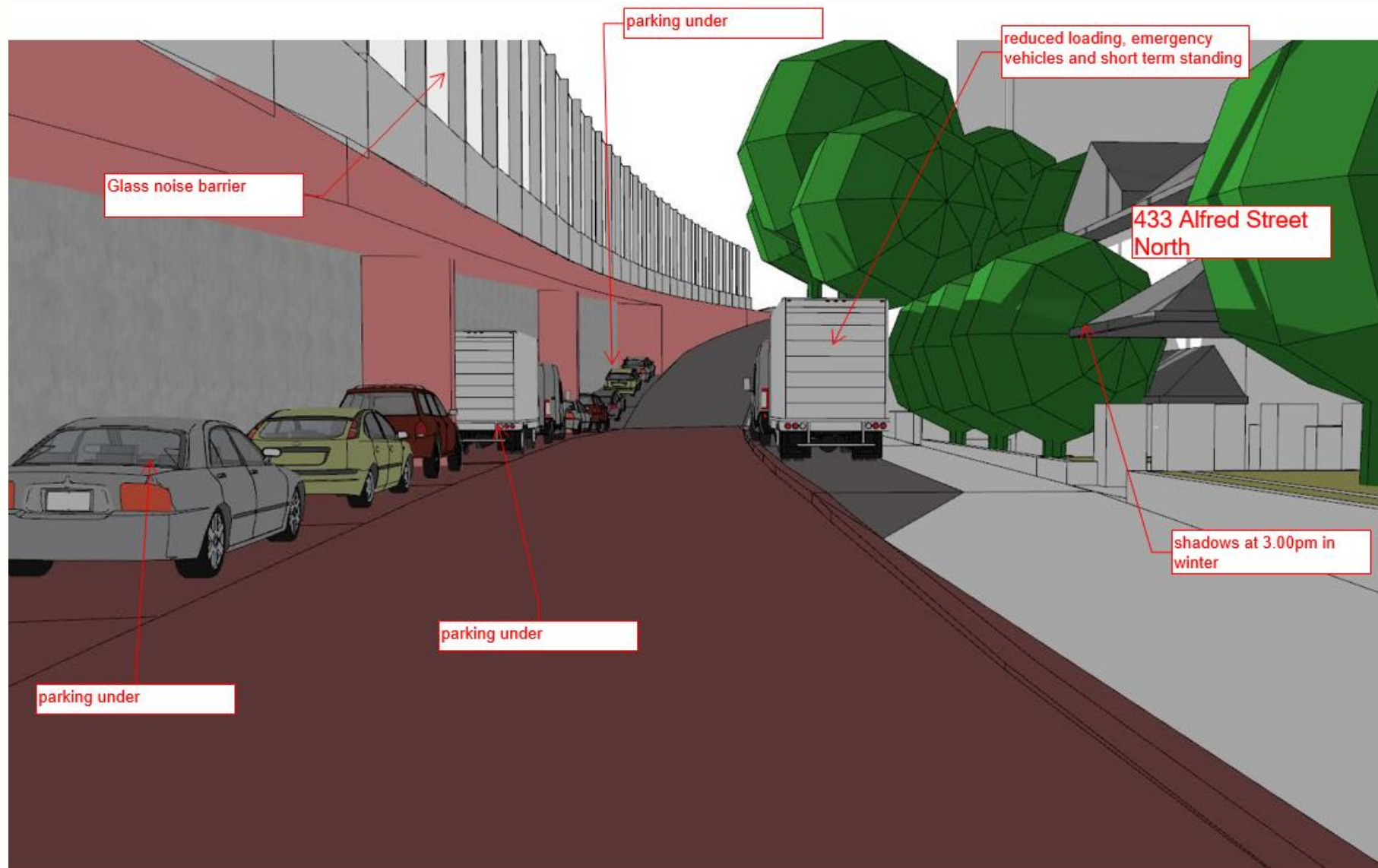


PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE ALFRED STREET NORTH

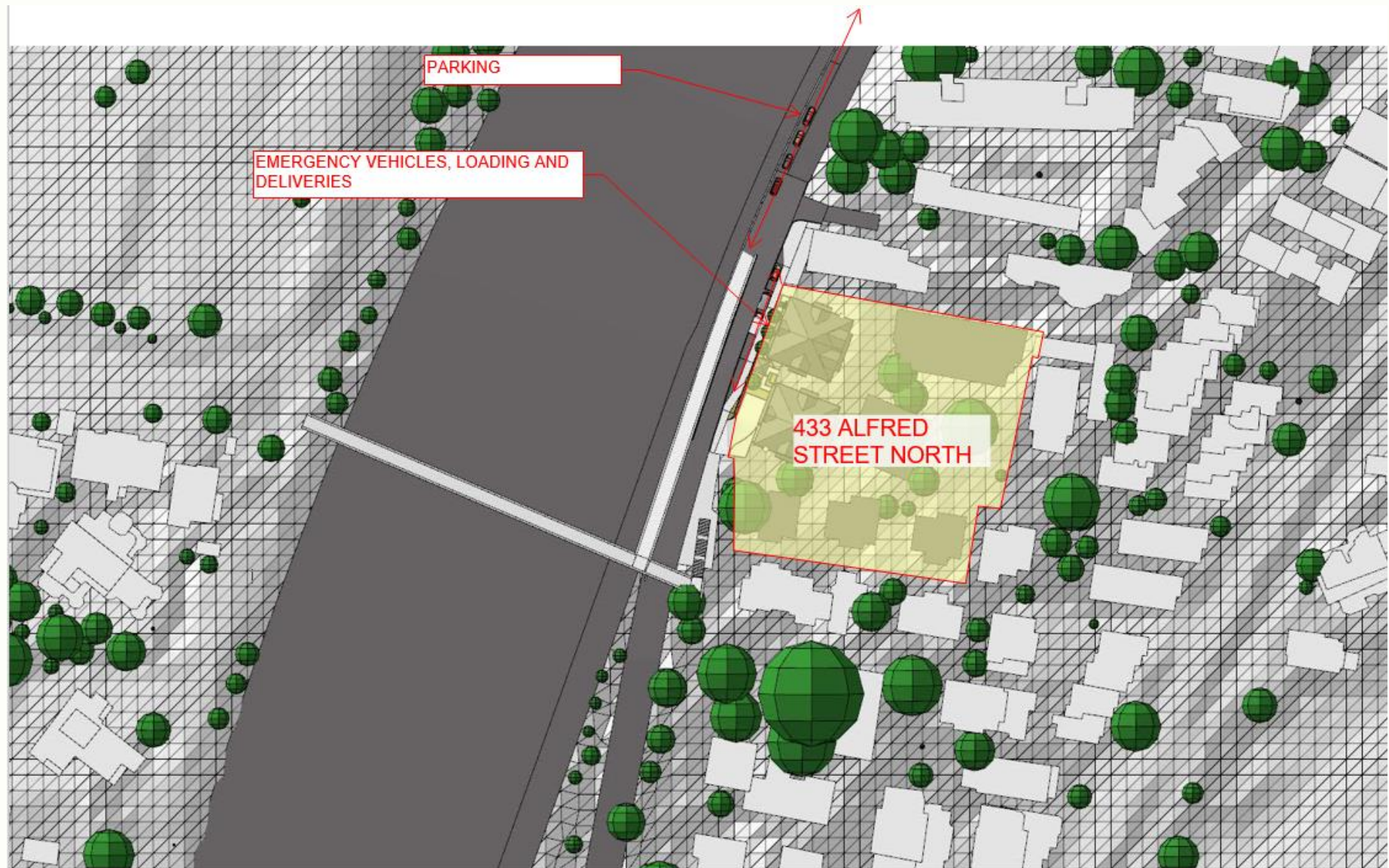


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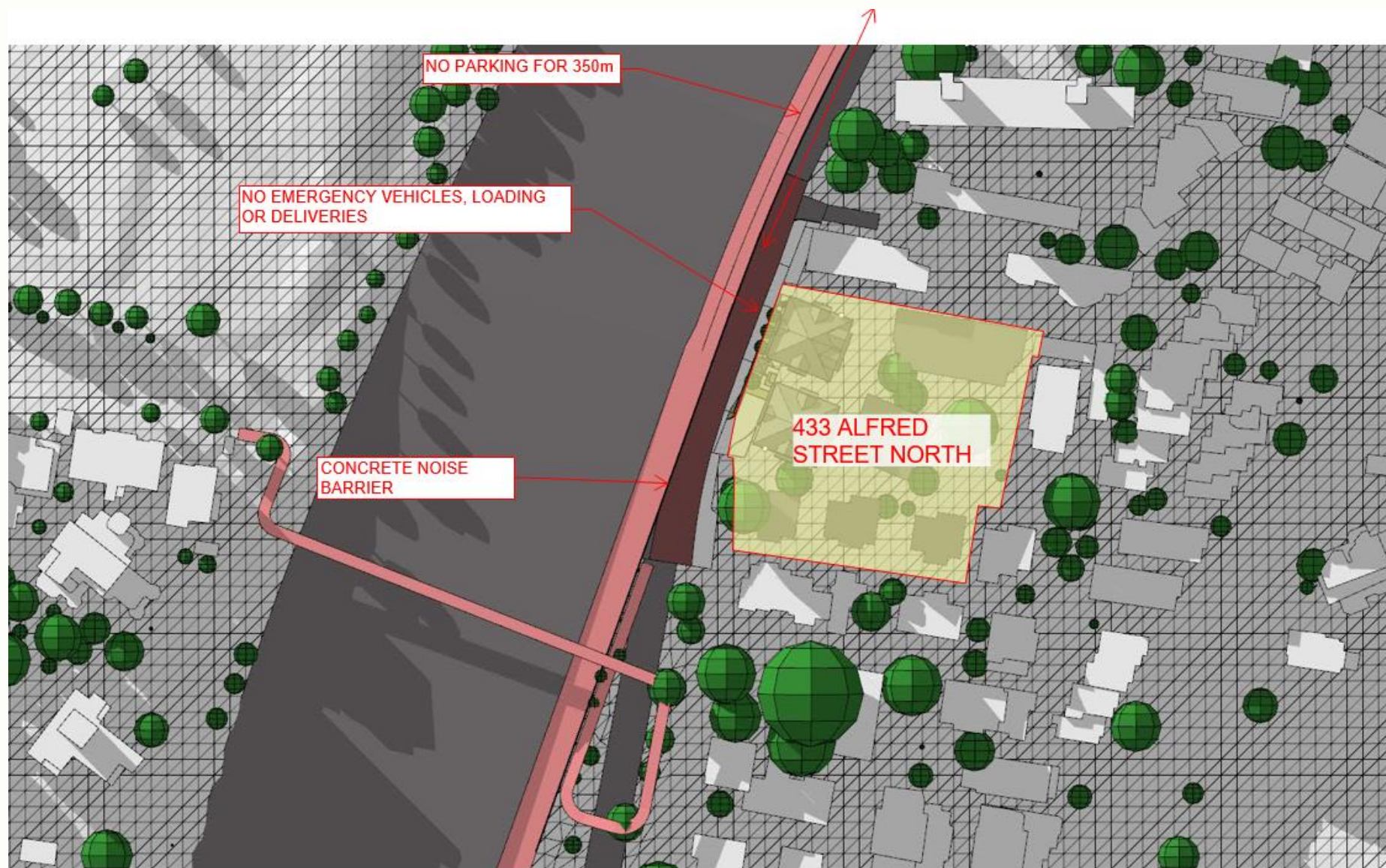




PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE ALFRED STREET NORTH



EXISTING ALFRED STREET NORTH



RMS PROPOSED ALFRED STREET NORTH



PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE ALFRED STREET NORTH

As stated earlier, our clear preference is for the bus lane to not proceed and we request further planning to be carried out to avoid this intrusion on Alfred Street North.

Name:

Address:

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Printed name:

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