

Peddle Thorp & Walker Pty Ltd**Copyright**

This publication is subject to copyright. Except as permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, no part of it may in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise) be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted without prior written permission. Enquiries should be addressed to the publishers.

Sydney

A Level 11, 88 Phillip Street
Sydney NSW 2000
Australia

T +61 2 9232 5877

W www.ptw.com.au

Peddle Thorp & Walker Pty Ltd

ABN 23 000 454 624

Trading as PTW Architects

NSW Nominated Architects

S Parsons Architect No.6098

D Jones Architect No 4778



URBAN DESIGN REPORT IN SUPPORT OF A PLANNING PROPOSAL
FOR NOS. 253-267 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, NORTH SYDNEY



Prepared by GM URBAN DESIGN & ARCHITECTURE PTY LTD
10 Vincent Street
Balmain East NSW 2041

Tel (02) 8920 8388
Fax (02) 8920 9333

Prepared for Legacy
Job number 17139
Date created 01 / 03 / 2021

GMU implements and maintains an internal quality assurance system.

Issue	Date	Status	Prepared by	Reviewed by
A	24/03/2021	Draft for review	LZ	GM
B	31/03/2021	Final Draft	LZ	GM
C	01/04/2021	Final	LZ	

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. STRATEGIC CONTEXT ANALYSIS	4
2.1 NORTH SYDNEY AND THE URBAN STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK	5
2.2 FUTURE GROWTH OF NORTH SYDNEY	6
2.3 CIVIC PRECINCT STUDY	7
2.4 THE CURRENT PLANNING CONTROLS	8
2.5 THE CURRENT DCP CONTROLS	9
3. THE SITE AND ITS LOCAL CONTEXT	10
3.1 THE SITE'S CHARACTERISTICS	11
3.2 CONNECTIVITY	13
3.3 BUILDING HEIGHT STUDY	14
3.4 HERITAGE CONTEXT AND CONSERVATION AREAS	15
3.5 STUDY OF THE BUILT FORM RESPONSE TO HERITAGE ITEMS AND/OR CONSERVATION AREAS	16
3.6 BUILT FORM CHARACTER OF RECENT MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT (B4 ZONE)	17
3.7 SITE CONSTRAINTS	18
3.8 SITE OPPORTUNITIES	19
3.9 PRELIMINARY CONCEPT OPTIONS	20
4. THE MASTER PLAN	22
4.1 THE MASTER PLAN	23
4.2 OVERSHADOWING ANALYSIS	29
4.3 URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES	32
5. FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS	34
5.1 PROPOSED STATUTORY CONTROLS	35
5.2 CONCLUSIONS	36



1. INTRODUCTION

GM Urban Design and Architecture (GMU) have been appointed by Legacy Pty Ltd to undertake an urban design study for a mixed-use development for the site located at Nos. 253-267 Pacific Highway, North Sydney.

The main purpose of this study is to consider the site opportunities given the location of the site in proximity to the new Victoria Cross metro station as well as the current planning strategies and controls developed for the future desired growth of North Sydney.

The study has also considered built form principles and density to achieve an appropriate urban design outcome that is mindful of the site's context but also contributes to need for Transit Oriented Development around the new Metro Station in recognition of the significant State Government's infrastructure investment.

In formulating the preferred master plan and design principles for the subject development, GMU has conducted a detailed analysis of the existing character of the area and the established built form character in response to the existing rich heritage context and fabric of the North Sydney area.

This study has considered the broader Council planning framework for the surrounding city centre area and the intent of the applicable and draft controls for the general and immediate context. This urban design report forms part of the supporting documentation included as part of a Planning Proposal for the site.

METHODOLOGY

In undertaking this study and arriving at the views and conclusions expressed in this report, GMU has undertaken the following methodology:

- Site and broader context visit.
- Reviewed the North District Plan and North Sydney Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)
- Reviewed the current controls for the subject site, subject block and North Sydney CBD in general.
- Researched previous/current studies for North Sydney City Centre and St Leonards and Crows Nest Precinct including:
 - North Sydney CBD Capacity and Land Use Strategy (May 2017)
 - North Sydney Commercial Centre Study 2013
 - Ward Street Precinct Master Plan (endorsed by Council in June 2019).
 - St Leonards and Crows Nest 2036 Plan (Aug. 2020)
 - Civic Precinct Planning Study (adopted by Council in Nov. 2020)
- Reviewed Planning Proposals and recent DA approvals or DA's under assessment in the vicinity of the subject site.
- Considered the site and block from various vantage points including approaching by car and public transport and its visibility from Pacific Highway.

THE SUBJECT SITE

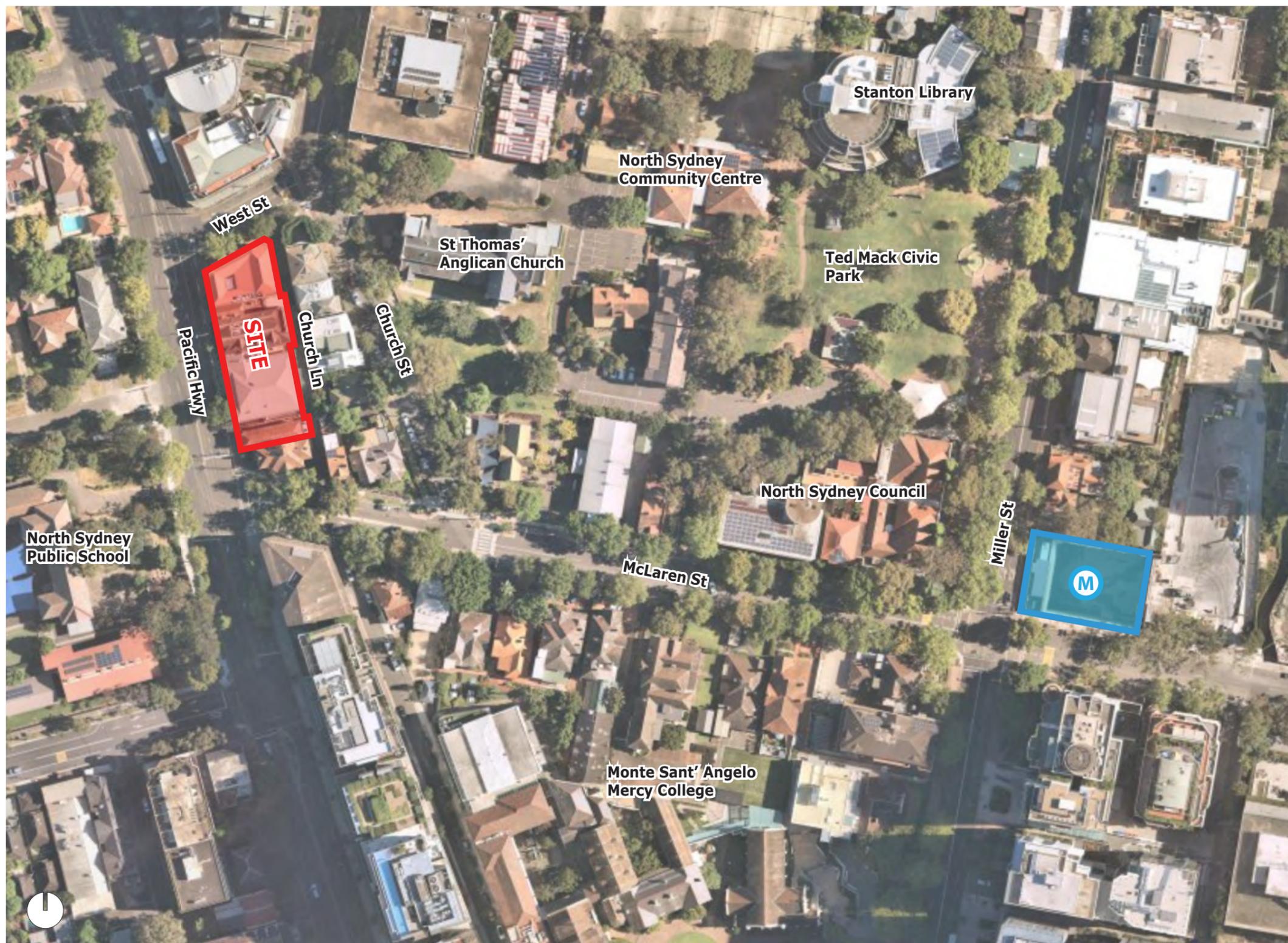


Figure 1. Aerial photo of subject site (source: Near Map).

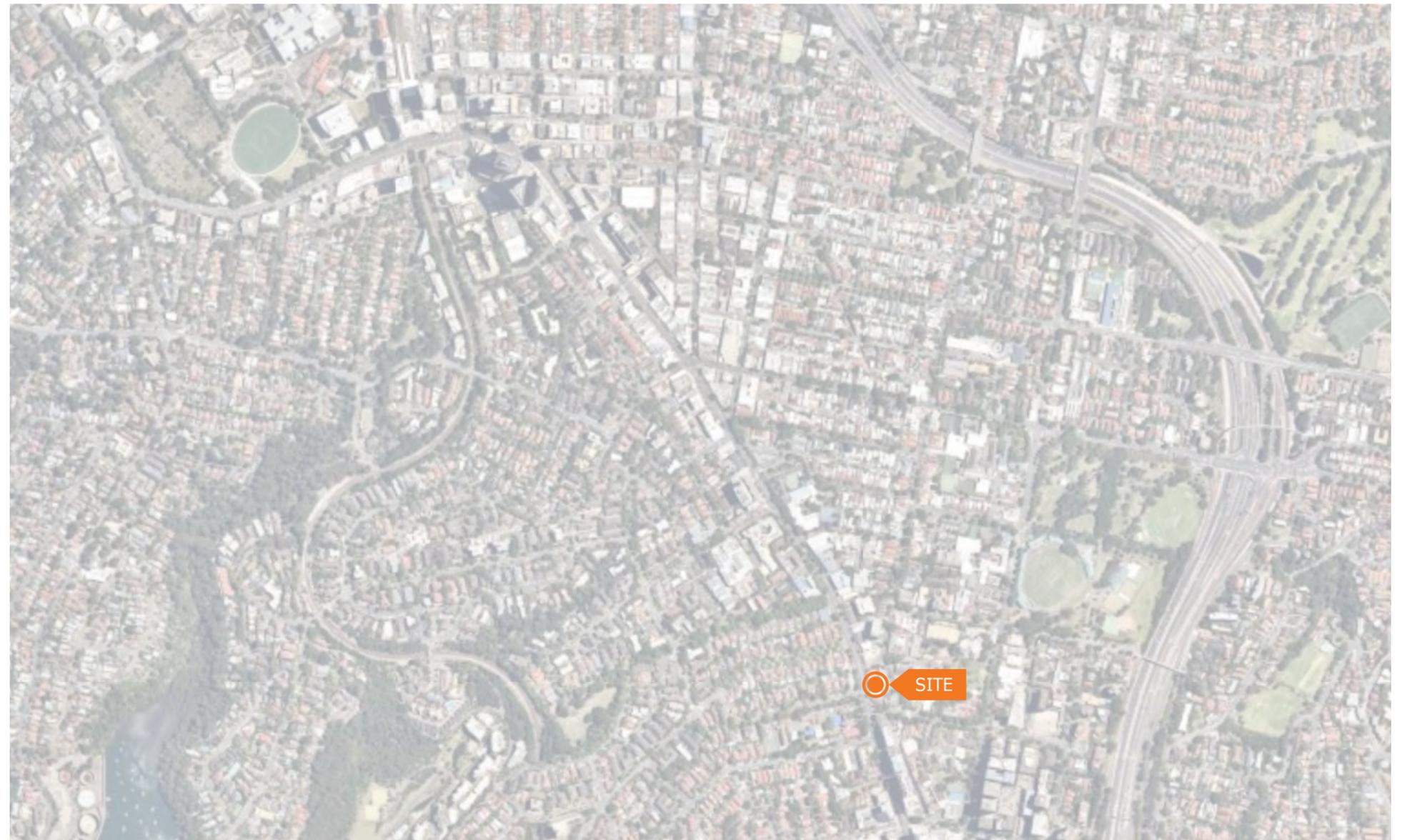
The subject site consists of Nos. 253, 255-259, 261-263, 265 & 267 Pacific Highway, North Sydney. The site has an area of approximately 1,469sqm and is irregular in shape. It has a primary street frontage of approximately 59.7m to Pacific Highway and a secondary frontage to Church Lane.

The site is bounded by Pacific Highway and Crows Nest Road Conservation Area to the west, West Street to the north, Church Lane and lower scale McLaren Street Conservation Area to the east.

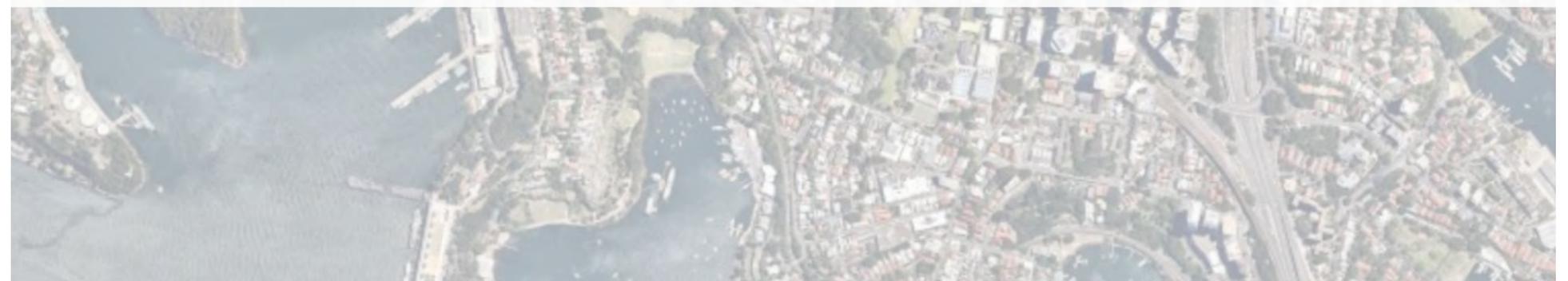
The site's location along Pacific Highway and in proximity to the CBD core area, new Victoria Cross metro station (approx. 260m) and a wide range of facilities and amenities makes it an ideal place to provide increased residential density and job opportunities to support the TOD development and the state infrastructure investment.

The site is currently occupied by five 2-storey brick buildings with commercial use including a heritage item at Nos. 256 Pacific Highway. This proposal intends to retain the existing heritage item and integrate it with the main building envelope design.

PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK



2. STRATEGIC CONTEXT ANALYSIS



2.1 NORTH SYDNEY AND THE URBAN STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

North District Plan

The North District Plan, released in March 2018, provides the overarching district-level planning direction to implement 'A Metropolis of Three Cities-the Greater Sydney Region Plan', guiding development towards the 40-year vision. The Plan seeks to locate housing and jobs in the right places to support new and improved infrastructure. It also targets enhancing North Sydney's commercial core, seeking to strengthen the District's economic link to the Harbour CBD and its role as part of the Eastern Economic Corridor via a number of priorities and actions.

As shown in Figure 2, the North Sydney CBD is identified as part of the 'Harbour CBD', which is envisioned as Australia's global gateway. The intent is to grow the CBD as a whole to boost productivity and global connections. It will be further supported and shaped by the Sydney Metro, which is Australia's largest public transport project.

The planned new Victoria Cross Metro Station, located in the northern section of North Sydney CBD, will "relieve demand in peak hours and support continued growth of the North Sydney CBD and enhance Sydney's status as a global city" (courtesy of Sydney Metro City & Southwest Project overview - February 2016).

Proposed entries to the station are via Miller Street at the corners of McLaren Street and Berry Street. This catalyst infrastructure will strengthen the connectivity and accessibility of North Sydney as well as bring new opportunities to revisit and optimise land use for sites still available for redevelopment. The goal is to establish a compact, transit oriented core around both the existing heavy rail and new metro stations.

North Sydney Local Strategic Planning Statement

The North Sydney Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) sets out a 20-year vision for land use planning within the LGA, which provides guidance on the desired future growth and change of the area. It identifies a series of Planning Priorities and actions to achieve the overarching vision.

The LSPS outlines that the main concentration of additional housing supply over the next 20 years will be in around existing centres and transport nodes such as the North Sydney CBD, St Leonards/Crows Nest and Neutral Bay and Cremorne Military Road Corridor. By implementing this approach, it will assist in easing the development pressure in sensitive areas such as the conservation areas and along foreshore lands, whilst maintaining the local character of the precincts.

The Statement recognises that future residential development will be more likely in the form of medium to high density development given the existing fine-grain lot patterns and reduced availability of land.

The LSPS aims to maintain the North Sydney CBD and St Leonards/Crows Nest as the key job hubs. It envisions that the North Sydney CBD will have a 18-hour economy supported by a wide range of after-hours activities.

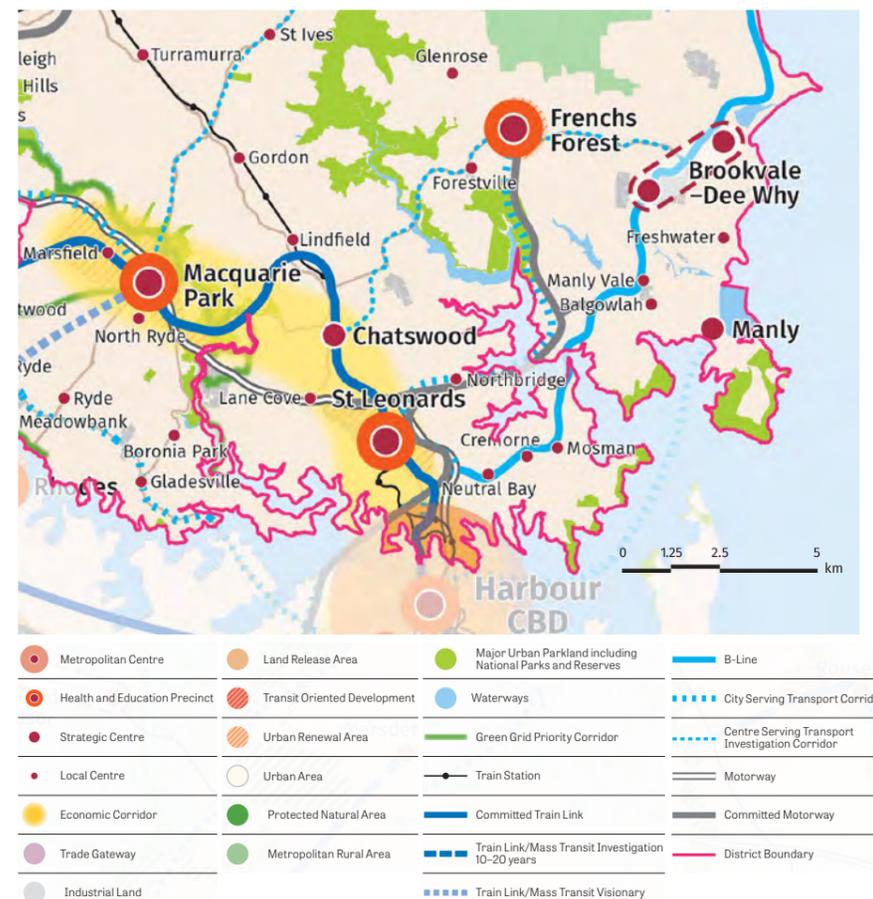


Figure 2. North District Structure Plan (source: North District Plan).

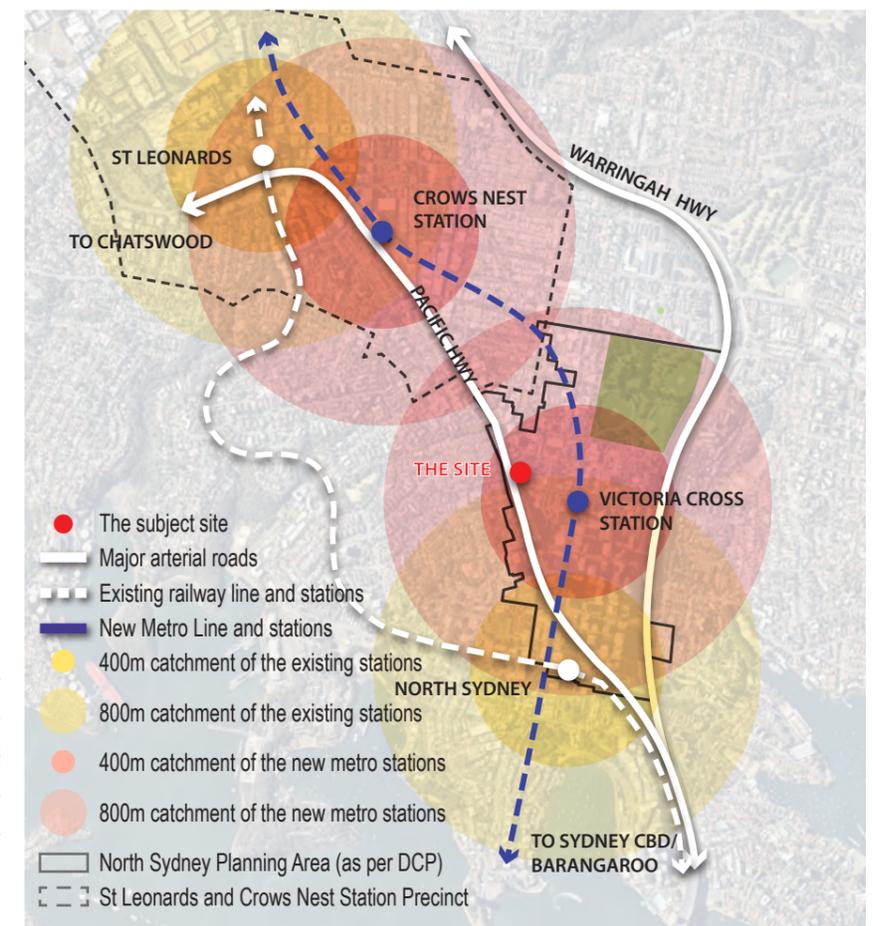


Figure 3. Connectivity of North Sydney (source: GMU)

Broad opportunities for the site

The subject site is strategically located along Pacific Highway and approximately 260m to the west of the new north entry to the Victoria Cross Metro Station. Benefiting from excellent access to public transport - both major CBD bus routes and the new metro station, this site presents an opportunity to:

- Support the significant State Government's infrastructure investment.
- Provide a medium/high density mixed-use development to support the housing and job targets and contribute to intensification in close proximity to the new station.

- Enhance the vitality and after hour activities within the centre area and particularly along the northern portion of the Pacific Highway spine.
- Reinforce the Highway concentration of development that is intended to occur along Pacific Highway, both for North Sydney and Crows Nest over time.

2.2 FUTURE GROWTH OF NORTH SYDNEY

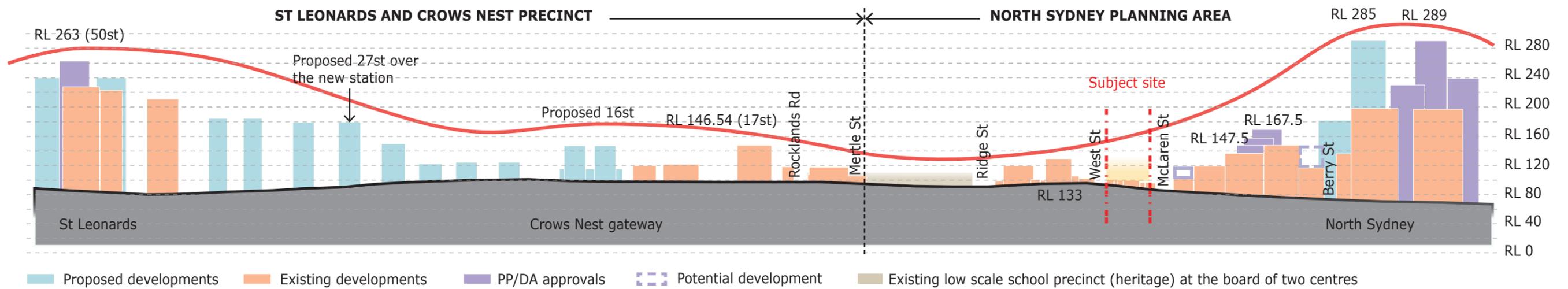


Figure 4. Indicative elevation along Pacific Highway

North Sydney CBD Capacity and Land Use Strategy

The North Sydney CBD Capacity and Land Use Strategy (the Strategy) sought to facilitate intensification of land use opportunities with increased heights moving northward in recognition of the new metro station. The Strategy also attempted to unlock the commercial capacity within North Sydney CBD area whilst identifying future residential opportunities in the mixed use zone of the centre. However, no changes to LEP height controls were proposed for lands within B4 Mixed Use zone as it would be subject to consideration of proponent-initiated planning proposal processes.

It was clear that the future main height spine in North Sydney is located between Miller and Walker Street with a secondary height spine along Pacific Highway extending towards Crows Nest (see Figure 6).

North Sydney Council adopted the Strategy in early 2017 and subsequently lodged a Planning Proposal to implement the Strategy. The proposed amendments to LEP controls were gazetted in May 2020.

Ward Street Precinct Masterplan

The Masterplan intends to seek additional density and height as a world-class transit-oriented development in recognition of the Victoria Cross Station as well as delivering much needed public domain and amenity improvements to the CBD area. The final endorsed masterplan will deliver 5,000 new jobs and a new knowledge and cultural hub that well connects to the wider public domain network, contributing to the desired 18-hour economy in the heart of the CBD. The proposed heights are up to RL 285 (57st) closer to the metro station. The Masterplan will further extend the edge of the CBD area towards St Leonards Park and assist in establishing a new apex of the centre around the Victoria Street metro station.



Figure 5. Overall North Sydney CBD Vision (source: Stage 2 Ward Street Masterplan)

St Leonards and Crows Nest 2036

The St Leonards and Crows Nest 2036 Plan sets up the overarching vision and land use strategic for an expanding employment centre and growing residential community in recognition of the new Crows Nest Metro Station.

The proposed over-station development aims to achieve a building height of up to RL 180m (27st). The plan also recommends increased building heights at the major intersection and entry into the precinct area to form a sense of arrival with a general wall height of 8st along Pacific Highway towards the southern end of the planned precinct area.

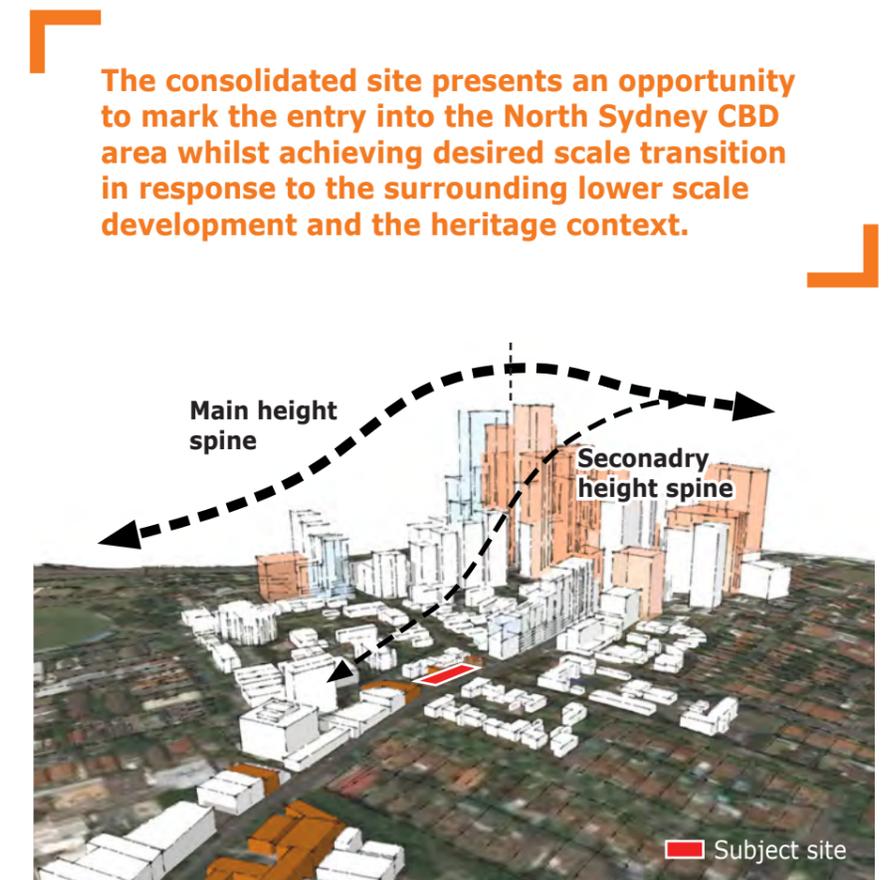


Figure 6. Anticipate future growth of North Sydney CBD

The consolidated site presents an opportunity to mark the entry into the North Sydney CBD area whilst achieving desired scale transition in response to the surrounding lower scale development and the heritage context.

2.3 CIVIC PRECINCT STUDY

The purpose of this study is to provide a holistic vision and long-term framework to guide the orderly growth of the future development and improvements within the identified precinct area, which was excluded from the strategic planning for St Leonards/Crows Nest and the North Sydney CBD areas. The Planning Study was adopted by Council on 30 November 2020.

The study intends to develop the Pacific Highway frontage into a medium-scale environment with increased amenity in response to the existing lower scale character of the area and its rich heritage context. It encourages generally a 4st street wall with an increase in height to 10st to the southernmost block (where the subject site is located) to provide a better transition from the North Sydney CBD area.

The subject site is identified as part of the Education and Civic Core Precinct, which is envisioned to create a well-defined civic and educational campus that supports schools and addresses future growth. The study recognises the site's potential to provide additional dwellings contributing towards the Council dwelling target. It recommends a non-residential FSR of 1.0:1 with increased opportunity to support small to medium sized business growth.

The design parameters for the site are:

- One single mixed use building with commercial uses on the podium levels and residential above
- A part 10 and 8st tower from to the south of the heritage item
- A 3st podium with nil setback to Pacific Highway, aligning with the streetscape to the north and mid-block heritage item
- A min 3m setback to the built form above the podium from Pacific Highway
- Min 4m upper level setback to the mid-block heritage item. No overhanging elements are to be supported.
- Preservation and integration of the heritage item into the podium design.
- Significant above podium setback to the conservation area
- Future development is to not reduce or affect the amenity of education facilities located on the western side of Pacific Highway (overshadowing and visual privacy).



Figure 7. North-South Land Use Banding (source: Civic Precinct Planning Study)

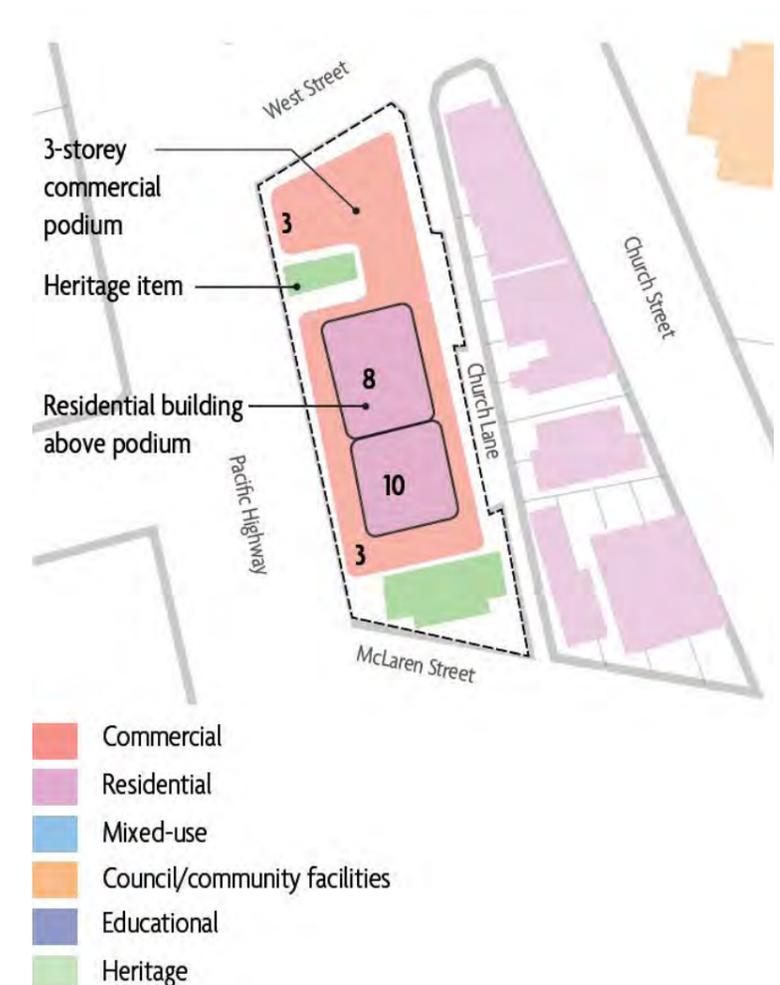


Figure 8. Proposed built form (source: Civic Precinct Planning Study)



Figure 9. Proposed building storeys (source: Civic Precinct Planning Study)

*Building storeys are indicative and not to scale

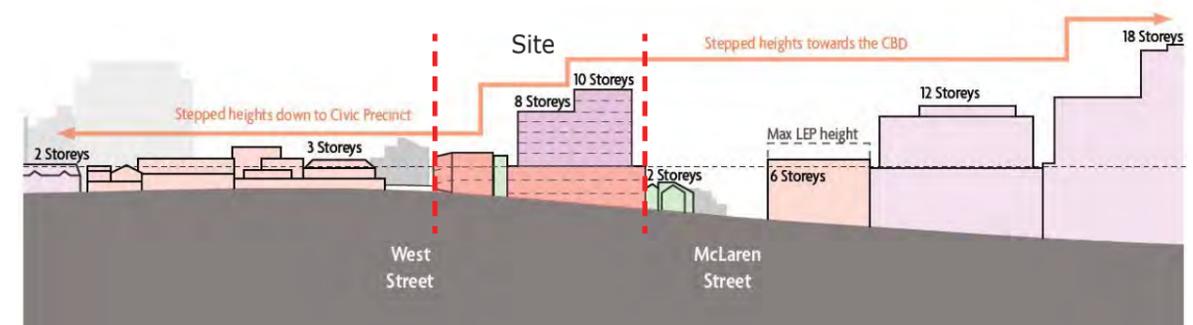


Figure 10. Proposed built form for the subject site (source: Civic Precinct Planning Study)

2.4 THE CURRENT PLANNING CONTROLS

GMU has reviewed the current planning controls that apply to the site and its surrounding context in order to understand the current development potential for the site. The permissible controls including zoning, height of buildings, FSR and heritage significance and conservation area status are discussed below:

Zoning

- All the eastern linear blocks along Pacific Highway, including the subject site, are zoned B4 Mixed Use.
- The land adjacent to the east of the site is zoned R3 Medium Density Residential.
- Areas to the west on the other side of Pacific Highway are zoned R2 Low Density Residential and SP2 - a large school precinct.

Height of building

- The subject site has a permissible height of 10m (equivalent to 3st) which applies across the entire block.
- The adjoining lands to the west and east have an allowable height of 8.5m (equivalent to 2st).
- The block area to the immediate north has a maximum building height control of 13m (equivalent to 4st).
- The blocks along the highway to the south towards the CBD area rise from RL 106m (approx. 21m/6st) to RL 200.

FSR

- No specific FSR control applies to the site or the surrounding areas.
- A minimum commercial FSR of 0.5:1 applies to the site.

Heritage

- The subject site contains a listed heritage item located at No. 265 Pacific Highway.
- The site is flanked by two conservation areas to the east and west including various heritage items.

GMU's overview of the current planning instruments shows that the site and the block in which it is contained was seen as the low scale end of the North Sydney centre and part of the low scale area between Crows Nest and North Sydney CBD. However, the advent of the new rail station and the need for greater concentration of jobs and housing for North Sydney, Crows Nest and St Leonards means that any low scale transitional areas should ideally occur outside of the 400m or even the 800m radii around the stations. Therefore, the subject block and available sites outside of the conservation areas need to contribute that intensification to support the infrastructure investment and creation of walkable centres.

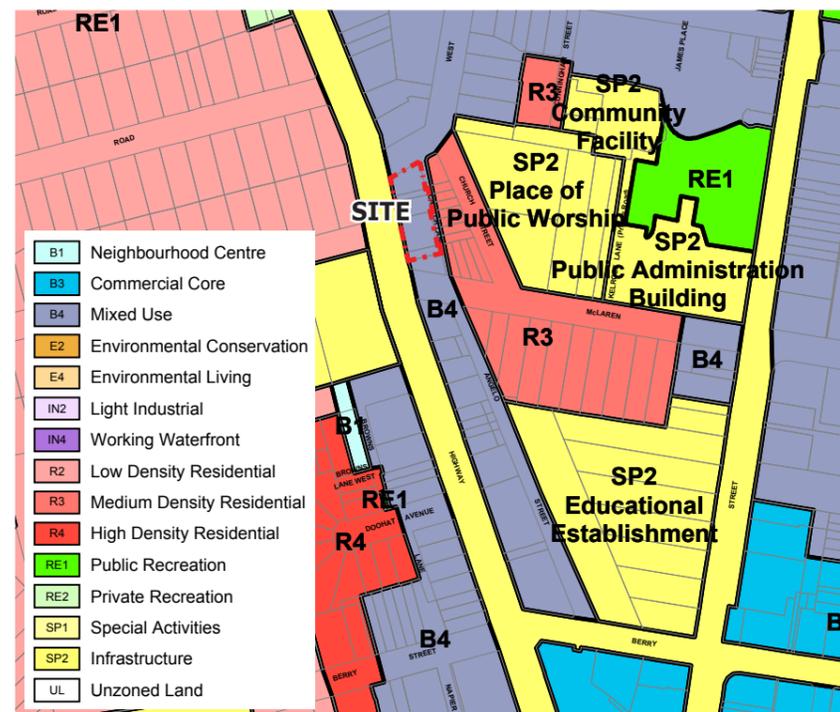


Figure 11. Zoning map (source: North Sydney Council).



Figure 12. Height of building map (source: North Sydney Council).



Figure 13. Non-Residential FSR map (source: North Sydney Council).

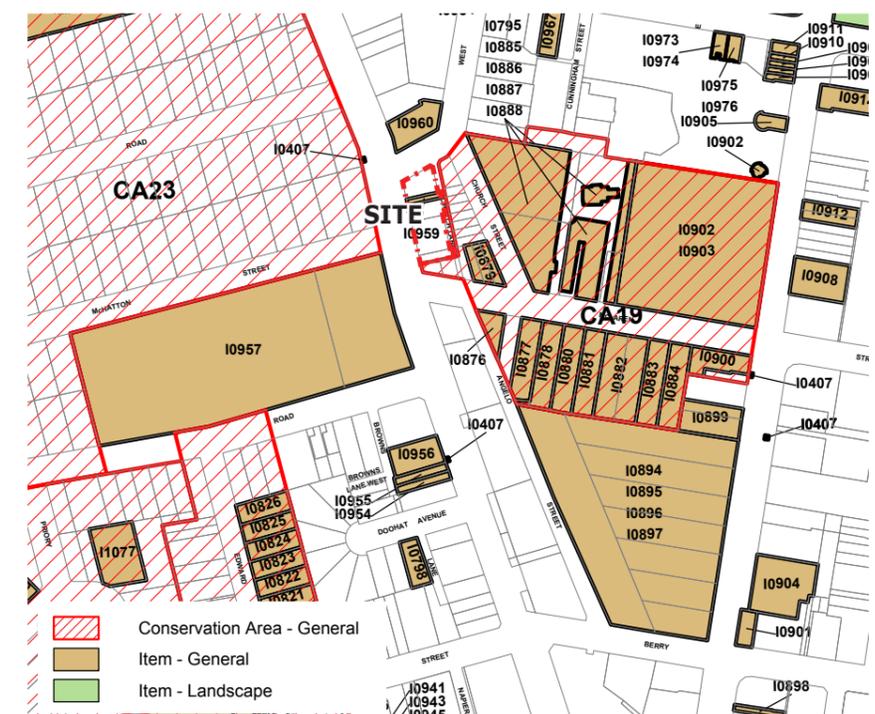


Figure 14. Heritage map (source: North Sydney Council).

2.5 THE CURRENT DCP CONTROLS

The site is located to the southern end of Eden Neighbourhood Precinct, adjoining the Central Business District to the north.

The existing streetscape is characterised by zero lot boundary setbacks to greater separation to image along the Pacific Highway, irregular planting of street trees and shrubs as well as wide fully paved footpaths. The area currently has a high level of accessibility to high frequency bus services along the Pacific Highway.

The North Sydney DCP 2013 envisaged the following future character for this area:

- Diverse range of activities including residential, public services, commercial and retail.
- A variety of different sized nonresidential spaces.

The DCP also outlines a number of desired built form characteristics for any development along Pacific Highway and with an interface with Church Lane. They are:

- A variety of building heights in the mixed use area with the average height being 4 storeys.
- Buildings adjacent to conservation areas transition in height to match building height in conservation areas.
- A podium of 4 storeys to Pacific Highway and West Street with a weighted setback of 3m above the podium.
- A podium of 3 storeys to Church Lane with a setback of 1.5m above the podium.
- Building form emphasises on quality mixed use design to complement heritage items.
- Form, scale and massing reflects surrounding development to provide visual interest through a range of detailing.
- Ground floor commercial/retail uses to provide activity and interest along Pacific Highway.
- Mixed use development complements lower scale residential development in adjoining conservation areas.

In principle even with intensification of this area, the streetscape and podium of any built form can achieve the majority of the desired built form character elements, with a sympathetic response to the conservation area and heritage items. However, we consider that the nominated building height (average 4 storeys) in the current DCP is no longer appropriate given the changing character and redevelopment along the Pacific Highway and the significant transport investment in North Sydney. Council has also recognised this issue and therefore recommends an increase in height wherever appropriate to complement the desired T.O.D and support the future growth of the North Sydney CBD.

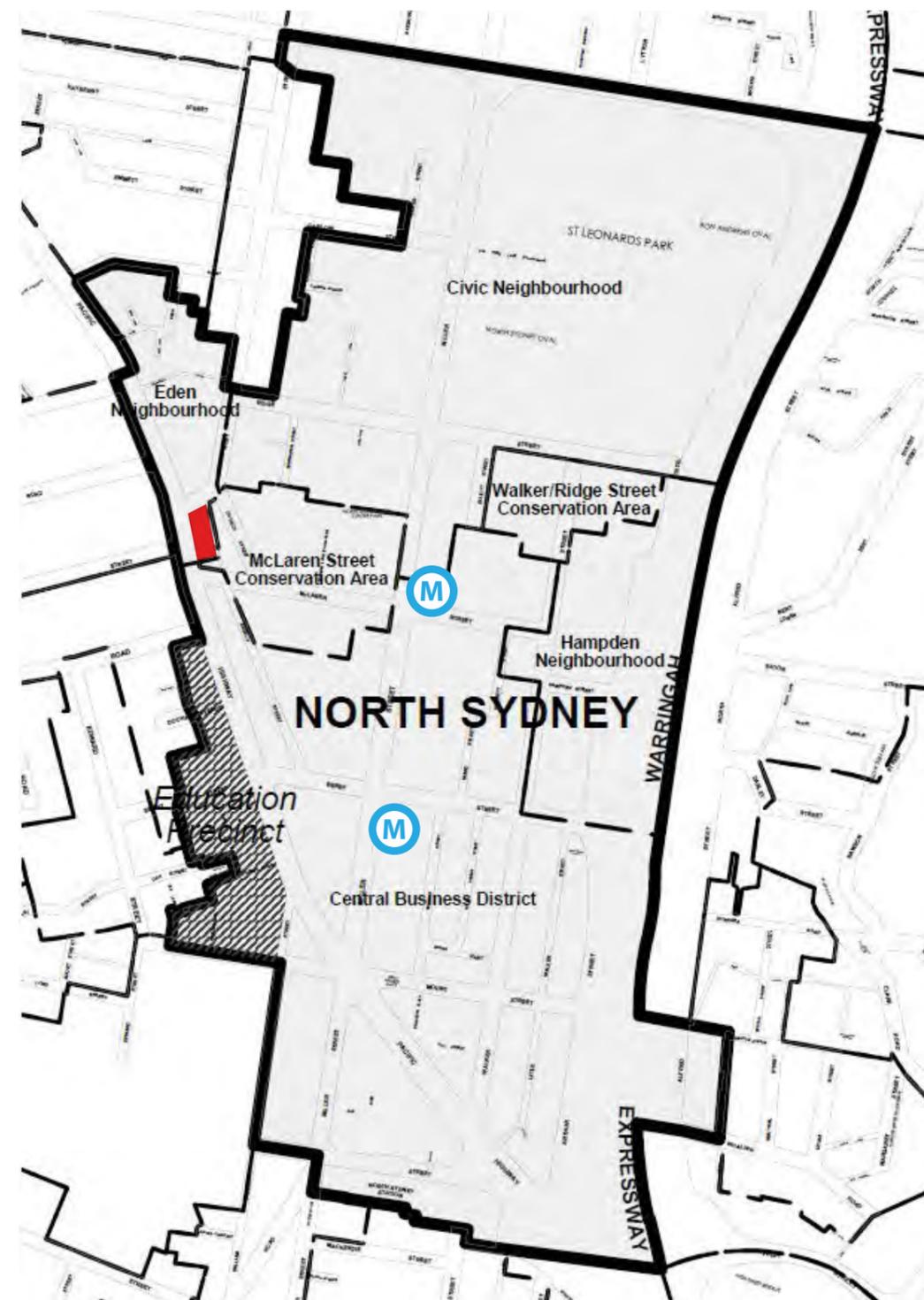


Figure 15. North Sydney Planning Area and associated Locality Areas (source: North Sydney DCP 2013).

The site's location in proximity to the new metro station and CBD core area makes it an ideal place for higher scale development to support the TOD and future vision of the area.



3. THE SITE AND ITS LOCAL CONTEXT



As identified in the Civic Precinct Study, the subject site presents an opportunity to provide a holistic approach to deliver a medium scale mixed use development whilst providing a sympathetic response to the heritage item and the conservation areas in the vicinity.

The Study also provides general guidelines describing the desired built form outcome, however, it is evident that the yield within Council's draft and final study will not provide sufficient incentive for redevelopment (Details please refer to the *Economic and Feasibility Advice* prepared by Atlas Urban Economics).

In arriving at a well-considered built form that will generally respond to built form outcomes anticipated by Council whilst providing sufficient incentives, GMU has studied the existing established built form character of recent mixed-use developments within the B4 zone and existing developments with an interface to a conservation area and/or heritage items. Council's study seeks to establish a relationship for this site to the CBD as part of the 'transitional' edge of the CBD so a clear relationship to new development in the block to the south is both a reasonable and desirable urban design response for this site.

The detailed site and context analysis informs the preferred master plan and the general design principles that will guide the future development of the subject site.

3.1 THE SITE'S CHARACTERISTICS

The subject site consists of the following allotments with a total area of approximately 1,468.79sqm:

- No. 253 Pacific Highway (SP 16134)
- No. 255-259 Pacific Highway (SP 22870)
- No. 261-263 Pacific Highway (Lot 51 DP 714323)
- No. 265 Pacific Highway (Lot B DP 321904)
- No. 267 Pacific Highway (Lot 10 DP 749576)

The site is occupied by five 2-storey brick buildings with commercial/retail uses. No. 265 Pacific Highway, also known as 'The Cloisters Antique Dealer', is a listed heritage item with local significance located towards the northern part of the site. The business is currently closed for operation.

The existing vehicle entries to those properties are limited to Church Lane, which is a narrow laneway with a general width of 4.5m and 3m to a number of pinch points.

The site has a street frontage of approximately 59.7m to Pacific Highway. It falls in a north-to-south direction by approximately 5m along Pacific Highway and Church Lane.

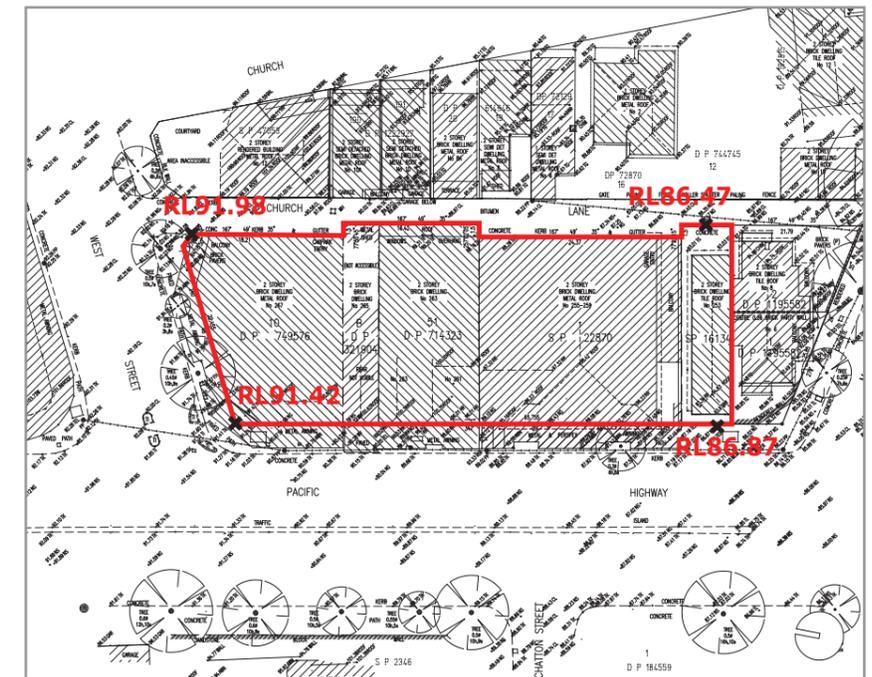


Figure 17. The survey of the site (Source: Linker Surveying)



Figure 16. The subject site (courtesy of PTW)



Heritage hotel and tower development to the north of the site.



Existing heritage development on site.



Existing 2-storey dwelling within the conservation area to the south.



Recent developments with higher density and scale to the south of the site.



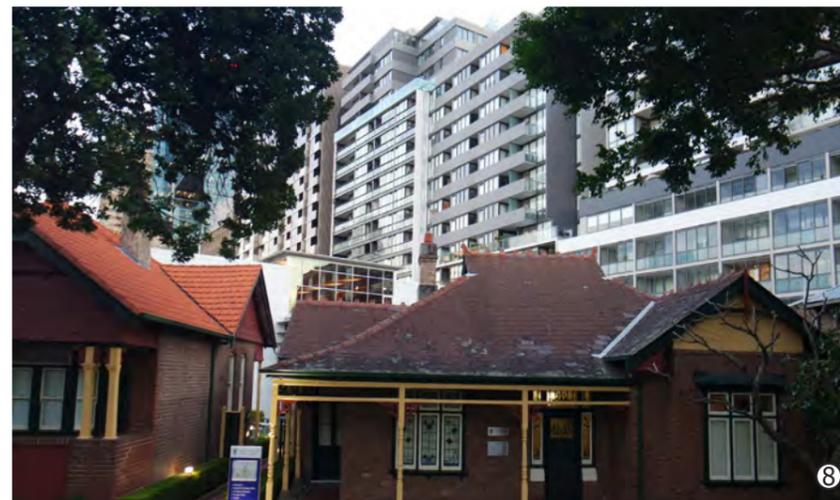
Narrow laneway and low scale dwellings with windows facing the site to the east.



Existing school with front playground across Pacific Highway to the west.



Tower development adjacent to low-scale buildings along Angelo Lane.



Recent development showing an abrupt edge to towers relative to low scale developments.

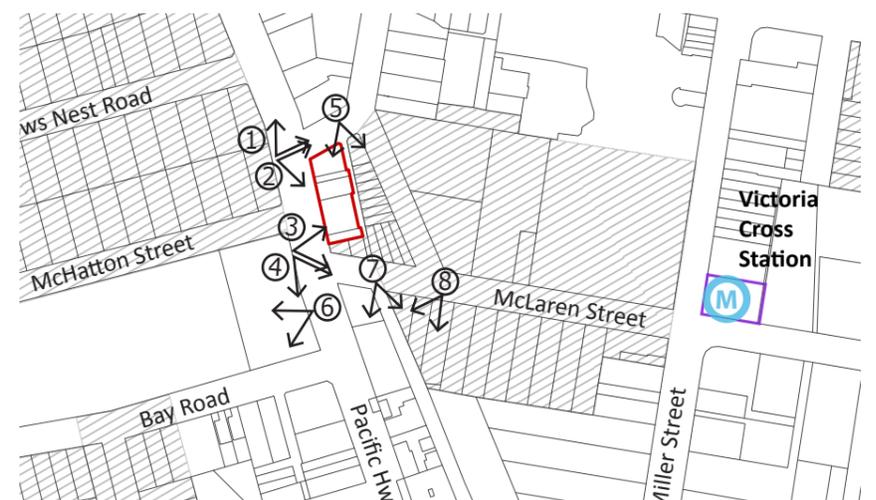
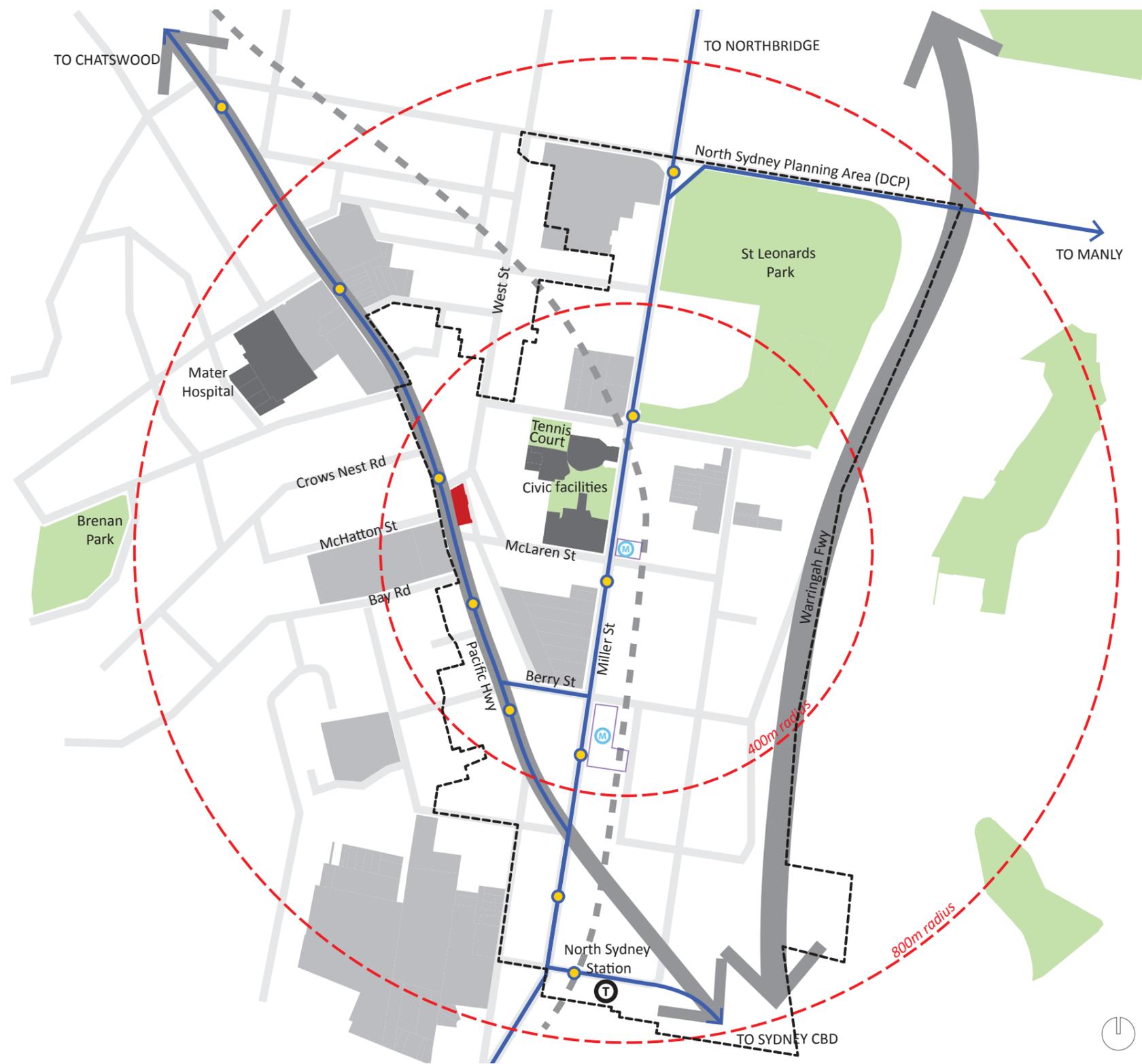


Figure 18. View key location map.

3.2 CONNECTIVITY



The site, located on Pacific Highway, is well connected to local public transport and road infrastructure. There are regular bus services which connect to Chatswood and the Sydney CBD. The site is within an 800m walkable catchment of the existing station at North Sydney and is 800m from Crows Nest centre, 400m from Mater Hospital, 300m from North Sydney Council and 80m from North Sydney Demonstration School. Around the site the street pattern is an interconnected grid system which offers a range of pedestrian and vehicular routes to North Sydney and St Leonards as well as the highway itself to supplement public transport.

The new Metro Rail (currently under construction) will further strengthen the site's accessibility and connectivity from/to surrounding key destinations such as Sydney CBD, Barangaroo, Macquarie Park and Macquarie University. The norther entry/exit of Victoria Cross Station is proposed at corner of Miller Street and McLaren Street, approximately 260m (2min walk) east of the site.

The site is located within short distance to a number of other facilities such as North Sydney Council, Stanton Library, local schools and a number of parks including St Leonards Park and Ted Mack Civic Park.

The location of the subject site enables it to play an integral part in the strategic planning and future growth of North Sydney and the existing height spin along Pacific Highway.

As a consolidated site comprising most of a block in close proximity to the new metro station and the CBD area, the site can contribute to the intended transit-oriented centre by providing a variety of housing choices, start-up business opportunities and jobs.

The site enables a holistic approach to provide intensification around the new station with a sympathetic response to the existing heritage context and an improved pedestrian environment.

Figure 19. Connectivity (source: GMU).

3.3 BUILDING HEIGHT STUDY



Figure 20. Existing building heights (source: GMU).

To understand the existing and evolving character of the North Sydney area, GMU has studied the existing and recently approved building heights within the area.

Figure 20 shows that there is an established height spine along the Pacific Highway Corridor. The Northpoint Tower is currently the apex of the centre with a height of 37 storeys (RL 196.78). The height spine then transitions down towards the north to Ridge Street, achieving 10 storeys in height.

The current LEP controls and the endorsed Ward Street Masterplan encourage further intensification around the new Victoria Cross Metro Station and along Miller Street. The permissible height of RL 289 at No. 77-81 Berry Street will shift the new apex of the centre towards the metro Station. The approved heights at No. 168 Walker Street (up to 28st) suggests an expansion of the CBD edge towards St Leonards Park.

The street block to the south of the site is occupied by a number of recent large tower developments of 11 to 20 storeys, forming a 'wall' of development immediately adjacent to the McLaren Street Conservation Area and Monte Sant Angelo Mercy College - a large heritage precinct (see Figure 20). The existing total FSR's of these buildings range between 7.23-10.48:1 and a non-residential FSR of 0.55-1.7:1.

These block form developments, with greater heights, create a sudden scale transition between the current development and the lower-scale (2-3 storeys) heritage developments to the east. This pattern can also be seen within the context area, e.g. tower developments around Berry Street with a significant scale change to the existing traditional fine-grain dwellings.

The building height study clearly shows that North Sydney is undergoing a significant uplift in recognition of the new Metro Station. Its skyline profile will be changed given the shift of the height emphasis towards the north of the CBD expanding to McLaren Street. It is also noted that one of the strong characteristics of the North Sydney CBD edge is that there is an abrupt scale change from the recent high-rise mixed-use and commercial towers to the lower scale conservation areas.

3.4 HERITAGE CONTEXT AND CONSERVATION AREAS

The site is located between 2 separate conservation areas - McLaren Street (to the south and south-east) and Crows Nest (to the north-west) and amongst a number of heritage items in the vicinity.

According to the Statement of Heritage Impact report prepared by NBR Architecture Heritage, the Crows Nest Conservation Area, segregated by Pacific Highway to the north-west, is mainly characterised by 1-2 storey residential dwellings with gardens and street trees contributing to the quality of the area. The McLaren Street Conservation Area has more diversified building character (1-3 storeys) including Church and Council buildings and some residential dwellings to the eastern side of Church Lane and southern side of McLaren Street. No. 6-8 McLaren Street (2-storey), located at the western end of conservation area where McLaren Street meets Pacific Highway, is categorised as a contributory item adjacent to the south of the site.

There are a number of heritage items in the vicinity, such as Union Hotel to the north (2-storey), North Sydney Demonstration School to the west, and the McLaren Street Group (a group of 1-2 storey Federation style dwellings) to the south-east. Given the site's location within the significant heritage context, it is important to provide a sympathetic design response to reinforce the predominant character of the heritage streetscape and the low-scale built form.

The Cloisters Antiques (No. 265 Pacific Highway) on site is a heritage listed item in the Victoria Free Gothic style. It is considered as a prominent element on the present streetscape. The subject development attempts to retain the original building with demolition of the late extension with low heritage value as well as incorporate it into the future podium development.

Views along McLaren Street are characterised by mature trees and the lower scale heritage items. There is an opportunity for the site to reinforce this low-scale visual corridor by setting back the potential tower development away from the conservation area.

It is also noted that views from McLaren Street to the south, south west and south east are characterised by recent tower development as a backdrop to the lower-scale heritage context. These tower developments to the south of the site along Pacific Highway with rear access from Angelo Street (approx. 9m wide) establish an abrupt edge relative to low scale conservation area and heritage items. They have their podium built to the boundary with residential units on lower podium level facing the residential/institutional development on the other side of the lane.

A brief study of the interface of recent high-rise developments to conservation/heritage areas in North Sydney shows the following main characteristics:

- Adaptive reuse of heritage items with a modern interpretation.
- Sudden scale transition between the new high-rise mixed use development and conservation areas adjacent.
- Recent development doesn't provide required ADG separation distances to existing residential/heritage areas.

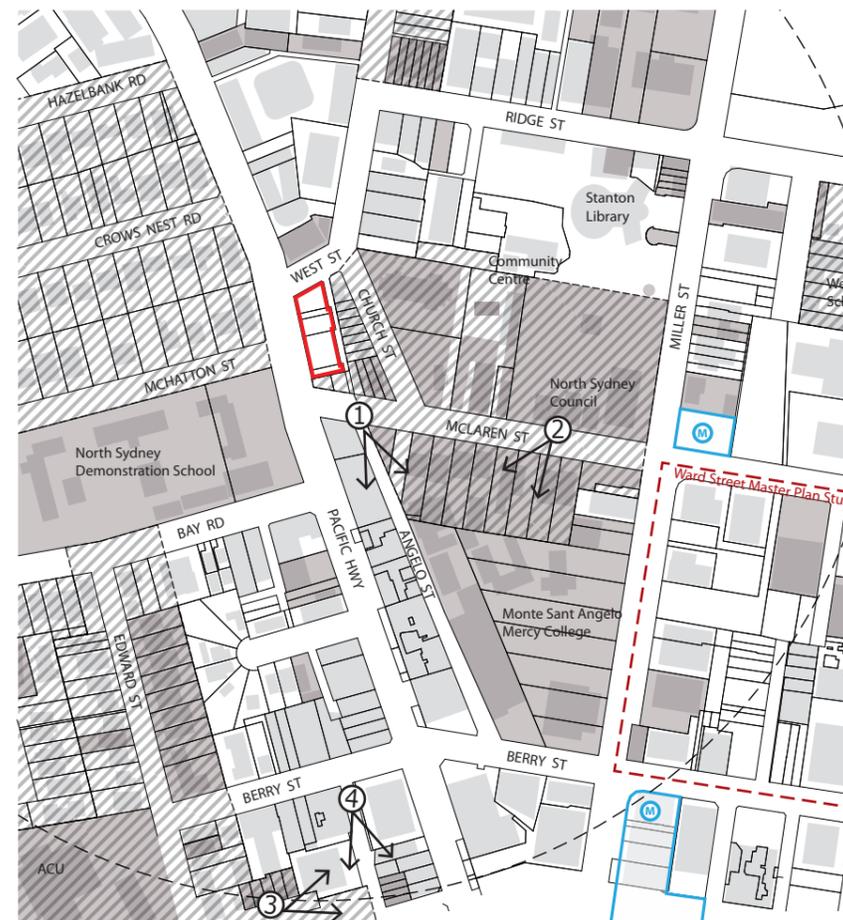


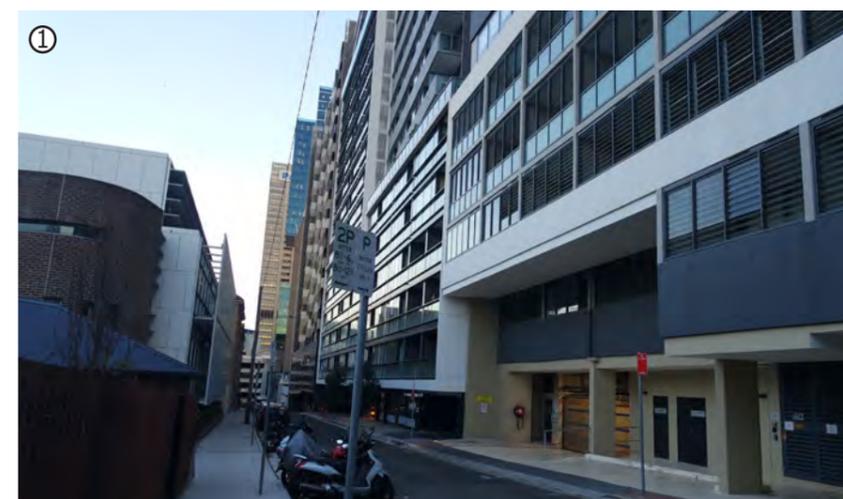
Figure 21. Existing heritage context (source: GMU).



Recent tower development viewed from McLaren Street Conservation Area.



Existing tower developments along Oak Street with an interface to a conservation area.



Recent tower developments along Angelo St.



Adaptive reuse of heritage buildings with tower developments as a back

3.6 BUILT FORM CHARACTER OF RECENT MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT (B4 ZONE)

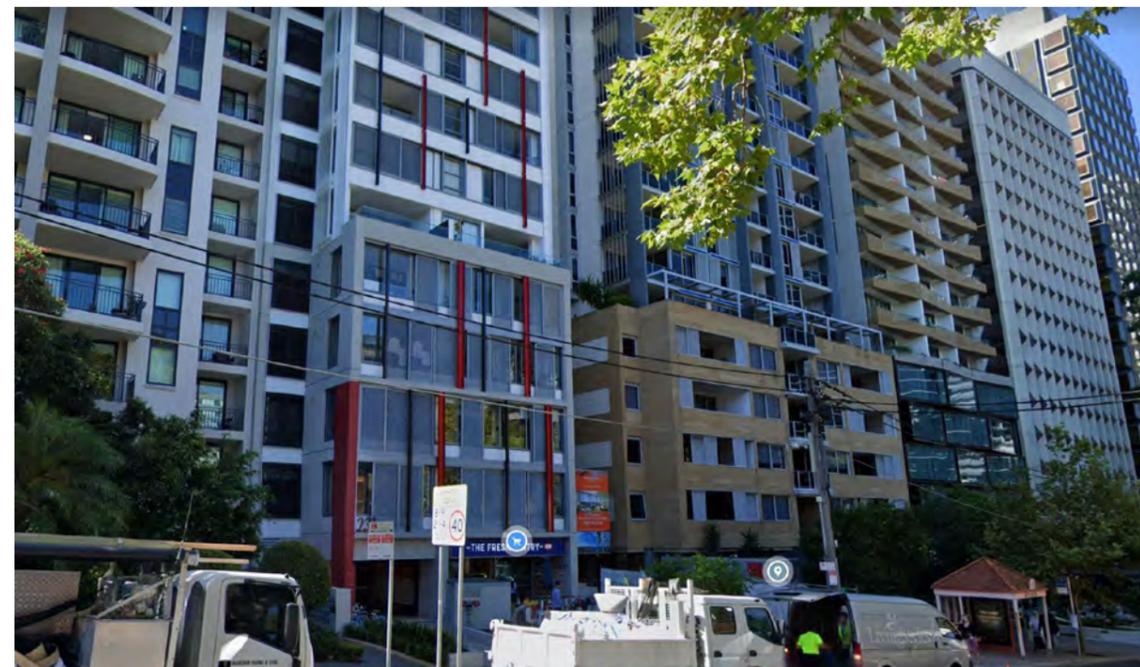
Study of recent developments within B4 Mixed use zones along Pacific Highway and Miller Street shows the following characteristics:

- A distinct podium and tower form but not necessarily through use of a large setback. Solution include:
 - Narrower upper-level setbacks to the towers above the podium (generally approx. 1-3m)
 - Different facade and material treatments
- Vertical indentations/articulation to reduce the perceived bulk and scale of a larger scale development and break up the continuity of the street wall in response to the existing lot patterns and/or finer-grain context.

The Civic Precinct Planning Study requires a 3m upper-level setback to Pacific Highway which is consistent with the current DCP controls. However, the current context and prevailing streetscape character does not universally comply with this approach. Therefore, we consider that a reduced upper level setback is acceptable.



Recent mixed use tower development along Pacific Highway.



Recent mixed-use high-rise development along Miller Street.

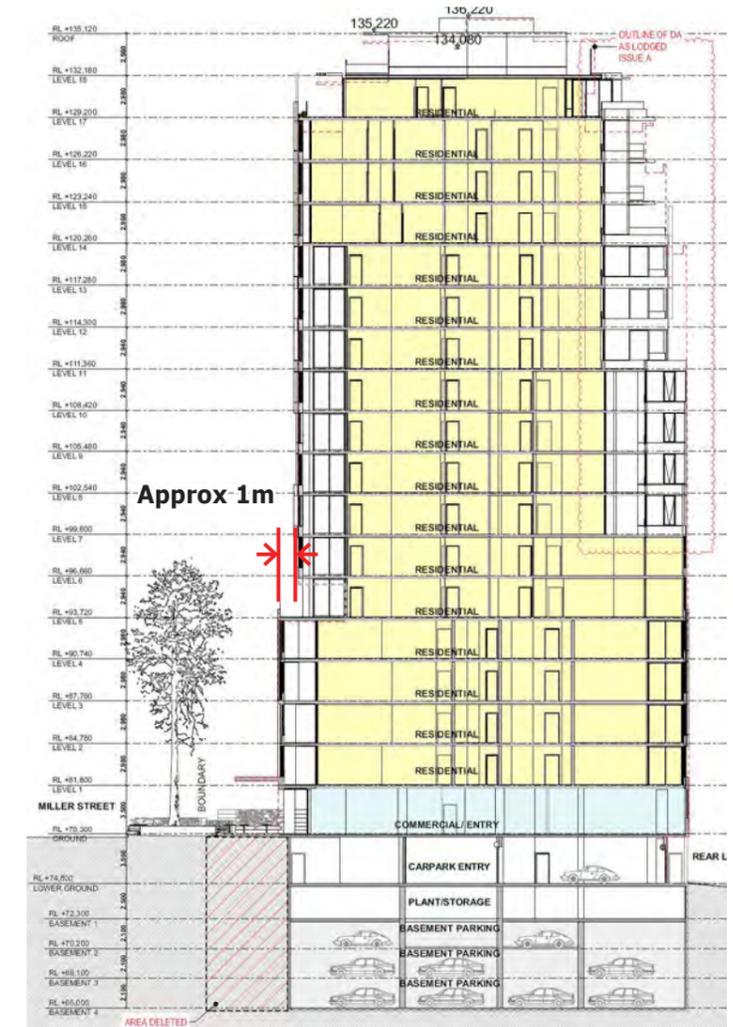


Figure 24. Sectional study of 231 Miller Street

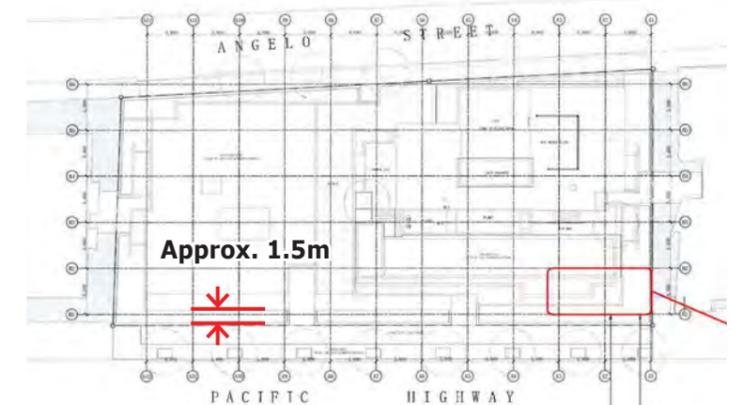


Figure 25. Roof plan of 225 Pacific Highway

3.7 SITE CONSTRAINTS

GMU has conducted a detailed analysis of the site's constraints and opportunities to understand the potential future built form and any potential impacts.

The site constraints are:

- The site depth limits the built form outcomes and constraints options for a basement car park.
- Proximity to Crows Nest Road Conservation Area (west) and McLaren Street Conservation Area (east and south).
- Proximity to a number heritage items including North Sydney Demonstration School with a front playground to the southwest (2-3st).
- The listed heritage item (No. 265 Pacific Highway) on site requires integration that supports its significance within the design response.
- The existing low-scale fine-grain residential dwellings with windows, balconies and backyards facing the laneway to the east. The future interface with these dwellings requires a careful design response.
- Potential overshadowing impacts to the south and south-west, particularly school play grounds.
- Existing dwellings/buildings with solar panels installed on the rooftop in the vicinity. Any future development on site should ensure sufficient solar access is maintained to these properties.
- Vehicle access from Pacific Highway is restricted.
- Church Lane is a narrow lane (3-4.5m) to the east. It creates access issues for neighbouring dwellings already, widening the laneway will assist manoeuvring as well as enabling access to the site from the laneway.
- Noise generated by existing traffic along Pacific Highway.

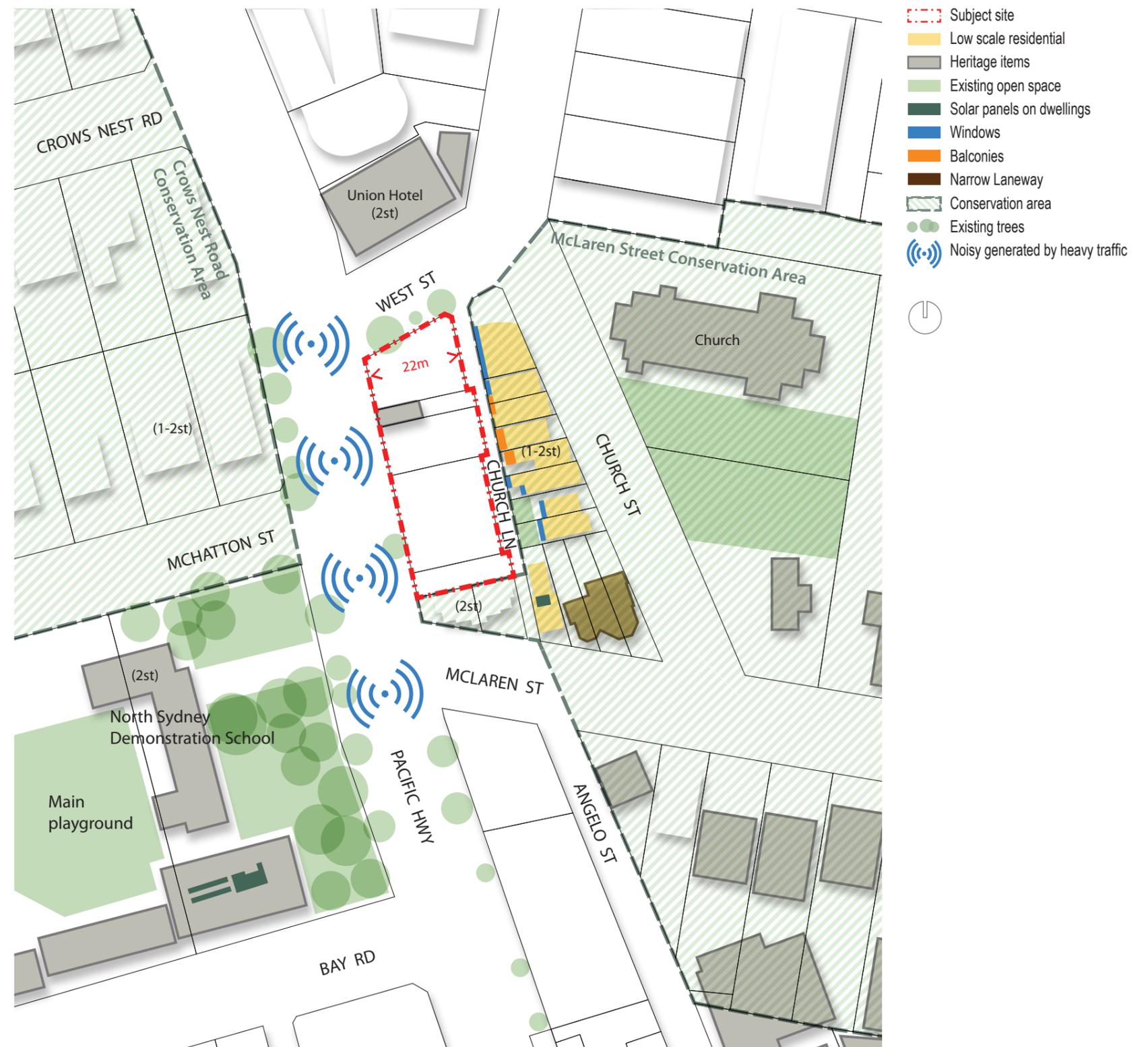


Figure 26. Site Constraints (source: GMU).

3.8 SITE OPPORTUNITIES

As recognised by the Civic Precinct Planning Study, the site has an opportunity to accommodate medium scale development to provide the desired scale transition between the CBD area and surrounding lower scale context.

The site's characteristics and location offers the following opportunities for re-development of the site to:

- Provide a mixed-use development including commercial, retail and a mix of contemporary housing choices in close proximity to amenities and job hubs.
- Provide improved active frontages and extended night time activity to Pacific Highway.
- Provide larger units with capacity for working from home and family units eg. larger bedrooms, separately dedicated study areas.
- Provide a smaller and slender tower form achieving improved residential amenity and reduced visual bulk.
- Accommodate increased height along the highway spine to support the principle of T.O.D development and the desired city skyline and reduce pressure on other low scale areas close to the new station.
- Provide a lower-scale street wall in response to the heritage context.
- Adaptive reuse and integration of the listed heritage item into the new development.
- Provide improved amenity for residents and neighbours through a laneway widening of up to 6m with an additional 3m setback to the upper tower levels.
- Provide public domain improvements to Church Lane with increased activation and passive surveillance and limited vehicle entries.
- Provide a sympathetic built form response to enhance the visual corridor between McLaren Street and Crows Nest Street Conservations Areas.
- Enhance the streetscape character of Pacific Highway with new street planting.

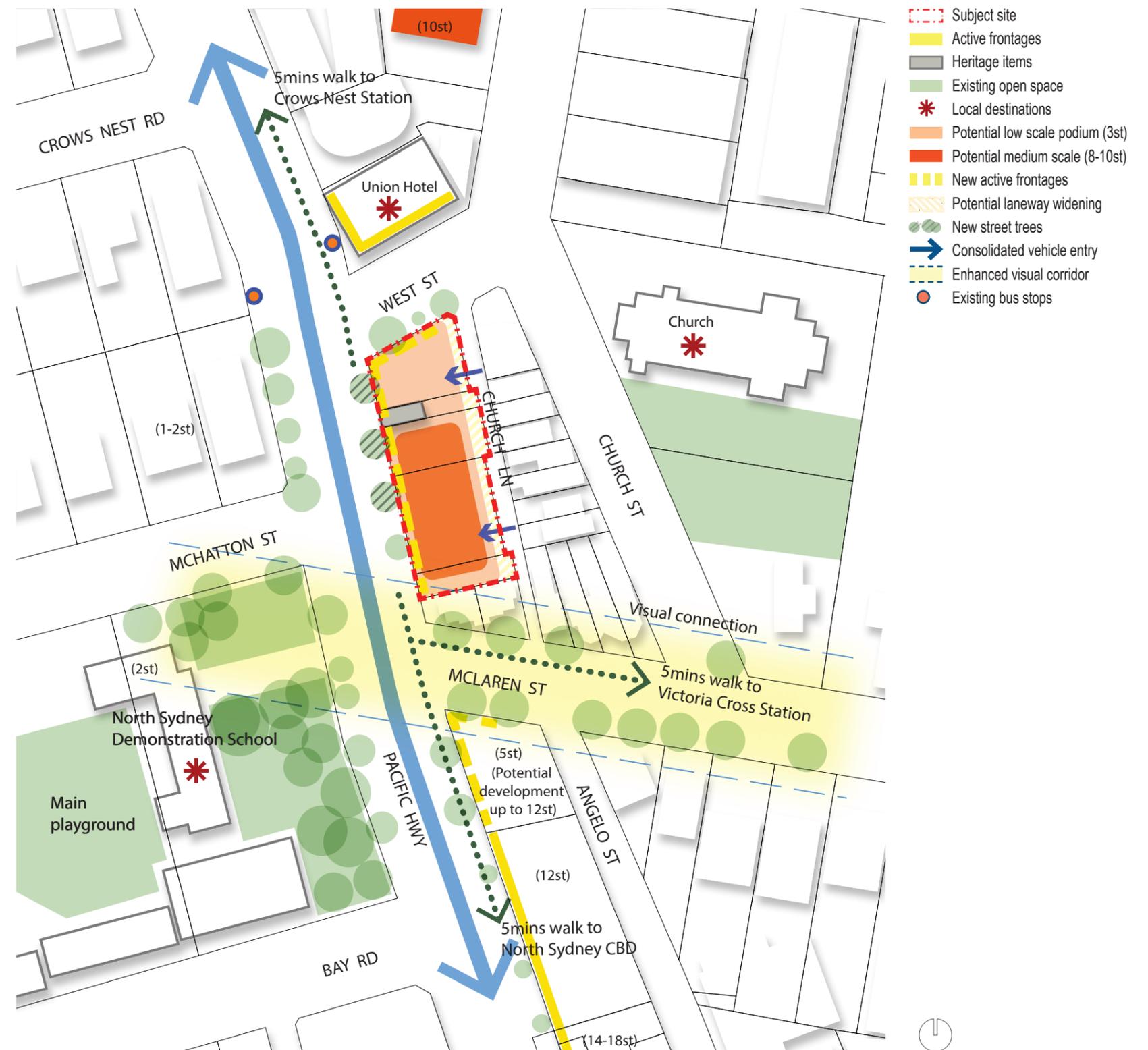


Figure 27. Site Opportunities (source: GMU).

3.9 PRELIMINARY CONCEPT OPTIONS

In early January 2021, the project team presented 2 preliminary concept options to Council with a focus on the tower form development. Both of the options adhered to most of the built form guidelines set by the Civic Precinct Planning Study (CPPS) but with a number of variations proposed.

As per Figures 28 & 29, Option 1 presents a 3st podium and stepped tower form with heights varying between 8, 9 and 10 storeys. Option 2 shows a 10st tower and 3st podium. Both of the options sought to reduce the recommended setbacks to Pacific Highway and heritage items and alternative tower forms.

Council considered that Option 1 presented a better outcome in response to the CPPS, however, further justifications were required for the proposed form and clarifications on the overshadowing impact. Additional setbacks

above 8 storeys would be required. Option 2 was not consistent with the CPPS. A holistic master plan approach would be required for the expanded site area including the lots to the north.

To be consistent with the mixed use developments south of McLaren St, Council required a 3m weighted setback to Pacific Highway. A 3m above podium setback to the south for non-habitable rooms was supported by Council. Furthermore, Council required 12-15m tower setbacks from the centre line of Church Lane as per the ADG for better transition.

Based on Council's feedback and further detailed urban design study of the context and built form character, GMU and the project team developed the preferred master plan which shows a clear stepped built form with improved built form response to the surrounding context and heritage items.



Figure 28. Tower envelope - Option 1 (source: PTW).

Pros -

- Stepped built form providing scale transition from the CBD area.
- Improved residential amenity for upper level units where they will have larger private open space and open views to the surrounding areas.
- Less shadow impact on the surrounding areas.

Cons -

- No setback to Pacific Highway is proposed. The proposal utilise a 'waist' level design to differentiate tower and podium form.
- Narrow upper-level setbacks to the heritage item and conservation area which may increase the tower's perceived bulk and scale
- Limited communal open space on the roof top

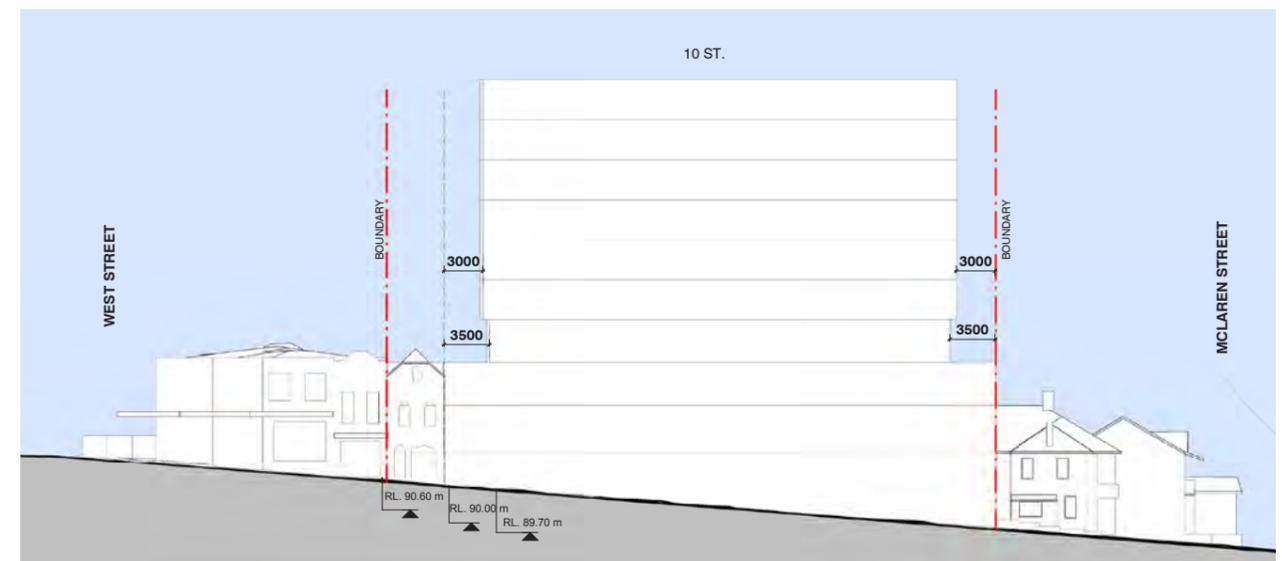


Figure 29. Tower envelope - Option 2 (source: PTW).

Pros -

- More efficient layout plan for the tower development.
- Larger upper-level setbacks to the heritage item and conservation area which assist in achieving a better response to the context.
- Greater communal open space on the roof top.

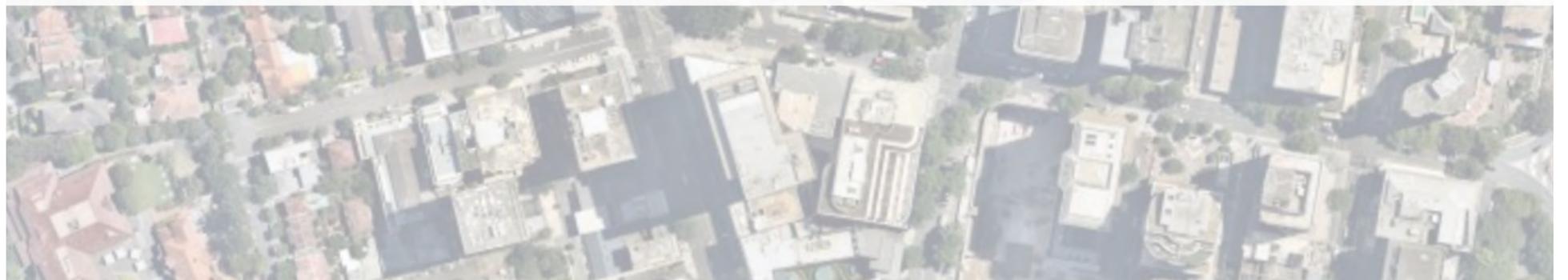
Cons -

- No setback to Pacific Highway is proposed. The proposal utilises a 'waist' level design to differentiate tower and podium form.
- No scale transition from the CBD area to surrounding heritage context.
- Increased perceived bulk and scale
- Increased overshadowing impact on surrounding areas.

PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK



4. THE MASTER PLAN



4.1 THE MASTER PLAN

The final preferred master plan is developed based on the general built form outcomes anticipated by the Civic Precinct Planning Study, Council's feedback on the 2 preliminary concept options and a detailed site and context analysis as well as shadow and amenity impacts to neighbouring sites.

The key design elements of the master plan are:

- A lower-scale street wall height of max. 3 storeys to Pacific Highway and Church Lane in response to the surrounding heritage and lower scale context.
- A part 8 and part 10 storey tower located at the southern end of the site with a 3m setback to the southern common boundary above the podium.
- A 1m street setback to the tower from Pacific Highway to create a defined podium and tower form as well as responding to the existing streetscape character.
- Integration of the heritage item into the new podium development. A 9m separation distance is to be provided between levels above podium.

- A new covered courtyard between the conserved heritage item and the new structure to the eastern boundary accommodating highly intrusive uses i.e. Kitchen, bathrooms etc.
- Laneway widening to Church Lane from 3-4.5m to 6m.
- An additional 3m setback to the tower levels to the east, ensuring the separation distance and amenity to neighbouring residential properties.
- Residential uses on the podium levels only where a 9m setback to the neighbouring boundary is provided.
- 2 vehicular access points from Church Lane.
- Communal open space on the rooftop of the lower component of the tower.
- Provision of landscape screening on the edges of podium to mitigate the potential overlooking issues and wind effect.
- Separated commercial and residential entries are provided along Pacific Highway. A secondary residential entry is provided along Church Lane.
- Activation to streets with a mix of commercial/retail and communal uses.

- Provision of vertical articulations to both Pacific Highway and Church Lane facades in response to the heritage context and 'fine-grain' character of the area.
- Provision of awnings to Pacific Highway and West Street with improved pedestrian amenity.
- Potential new street trees along Pacific Highway to enhance the existing leafy streetscape character.

The proposal aims to provide increased commercial floor space of approx. 1,792 sqm and 4,351 sqm for residential uses.

According to the preliminary typical layout testing by PTW, 82% of total units can receive min. 2 hours solar in the mid-winter and a greater portion of units (72% of total units) can achieve cross-ventilation due to the slender tower form design (gross floor area of 542 sqm).

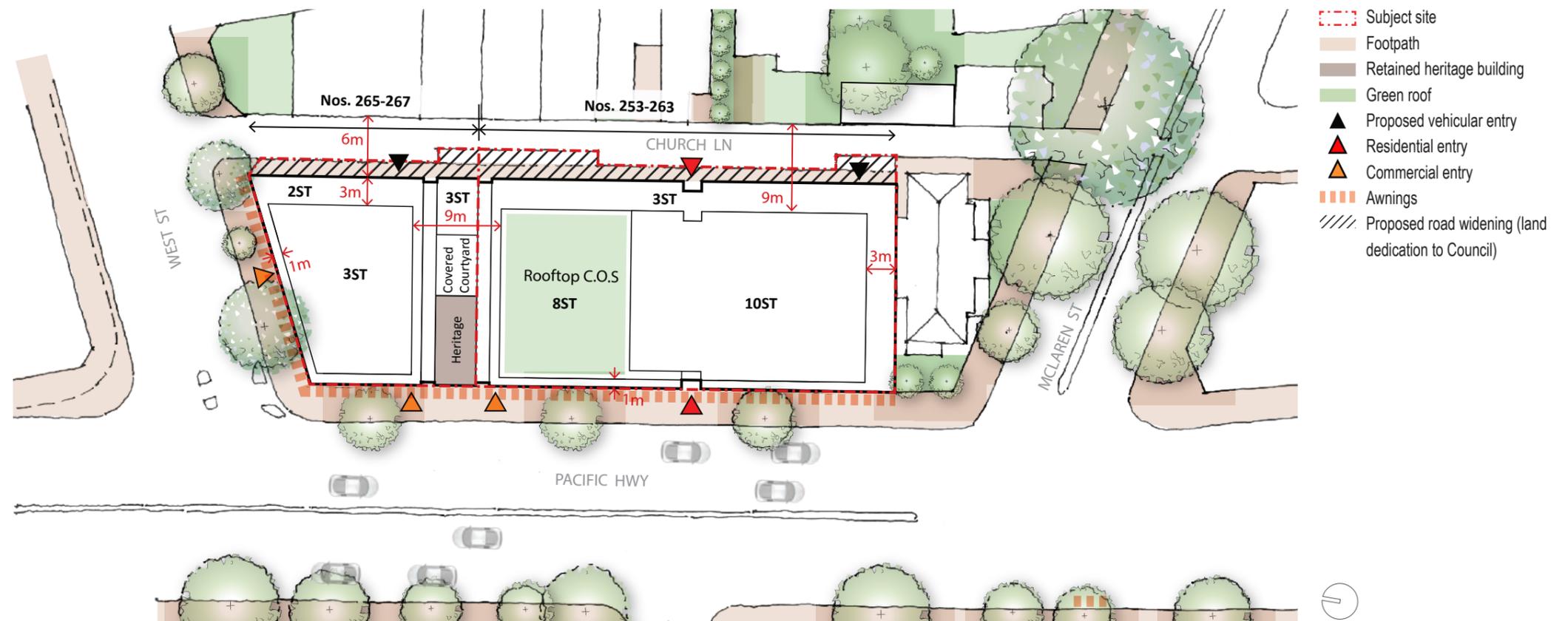


Figure 30. Preferred master plan.

Built form response to the surrounding context

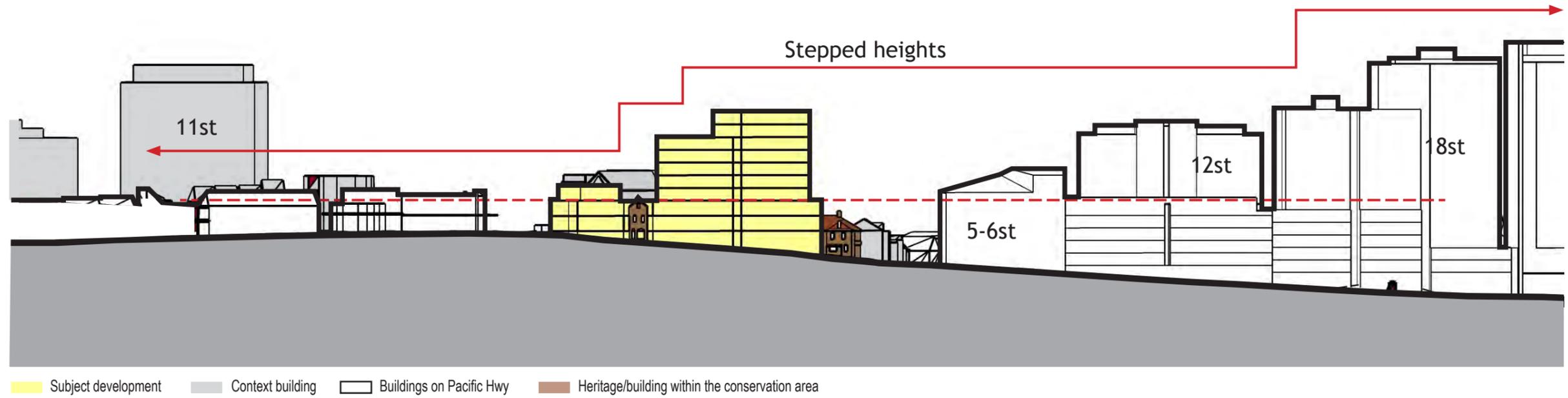


Figure 31. Pacific Highway elevation



Figure 32. Bird's eye view showing the subject development in changing context.

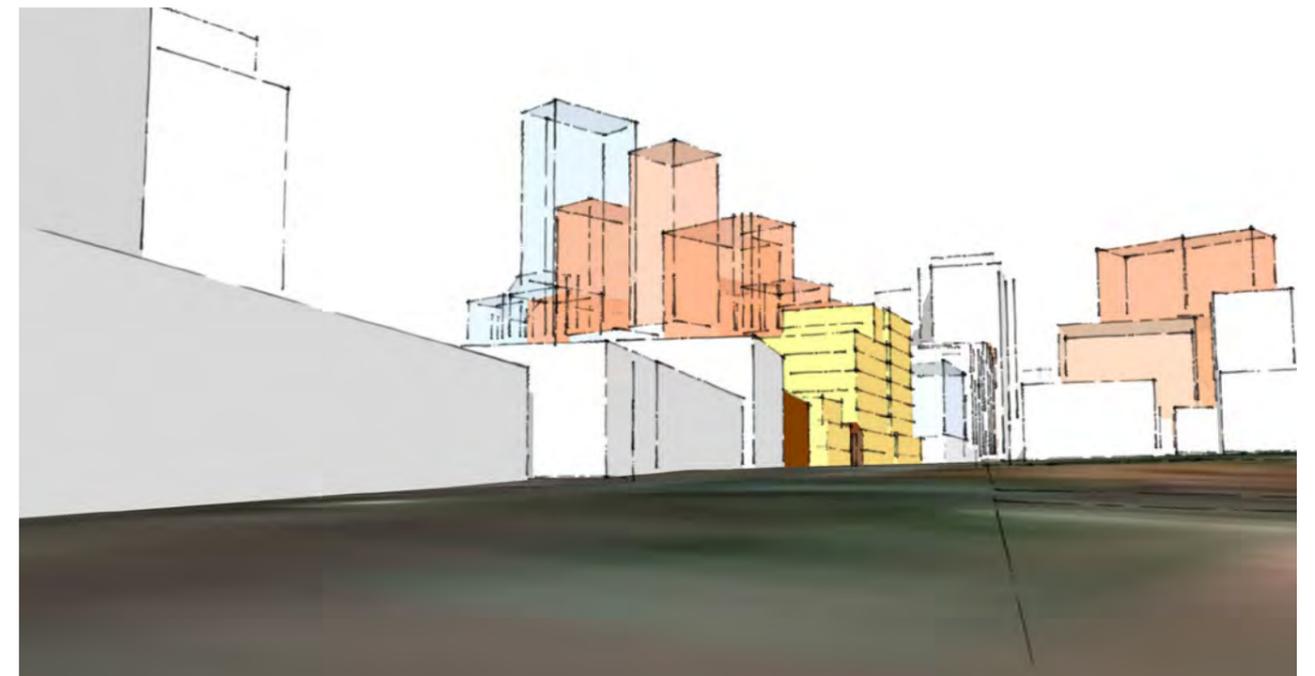


Figure 33. View south from Pacific Highway, showing the proposal in the changing context.

- Subject development
- Approved Planning Proposals / DAs
- Proposed lift overrun zone
- Ward Street Precinct Masterplan

Indicative podium floor plans



1 LOWER GROUND PLAN
1 : 200



1 LEVEL 01 PLAN
1 : 200



2 UPPER GROUND PLAN
1 : 200

Figure 34. Indicative ground level (lower and upper floors) plans showing proposed street level activation (source: PTW).

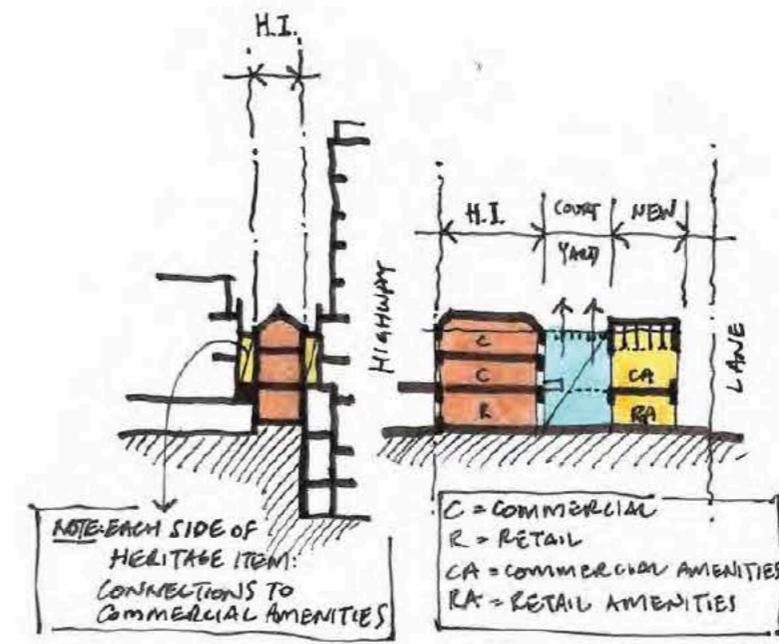
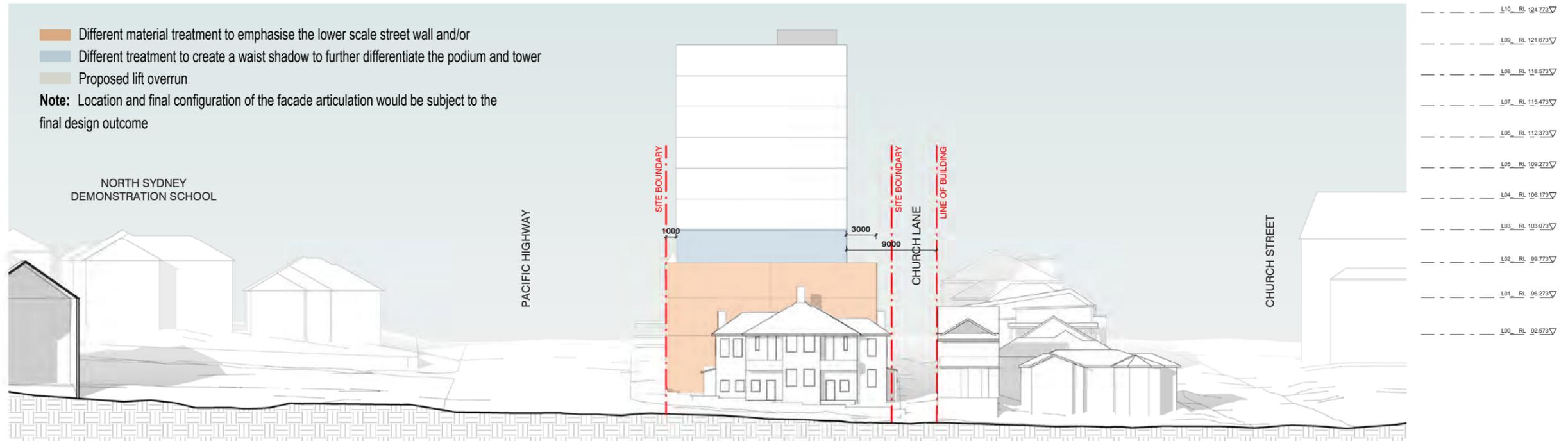


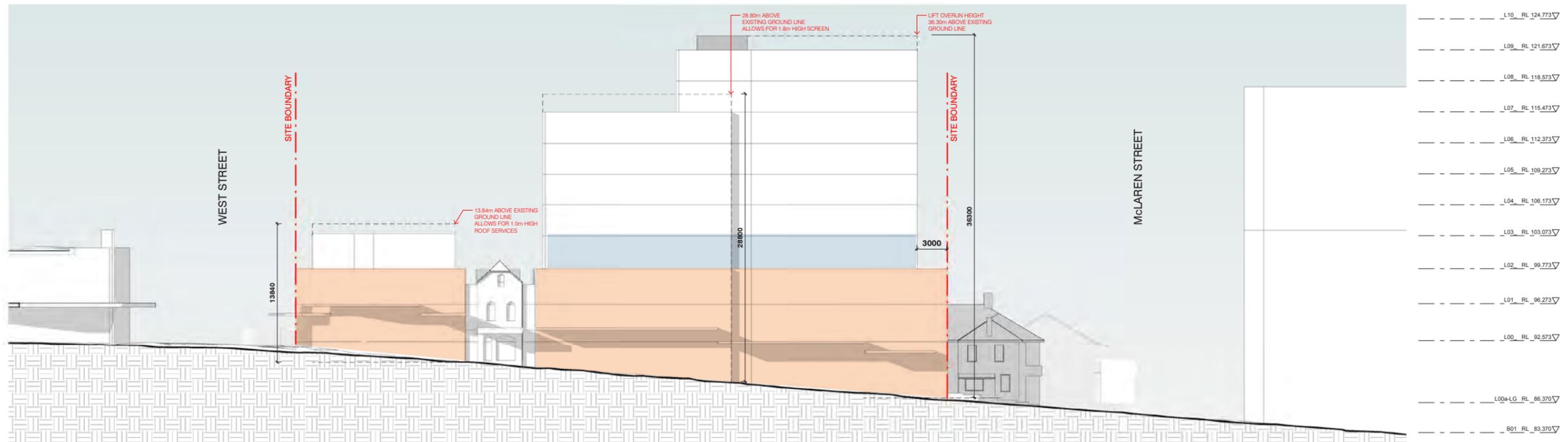
Figure 35. Indicative layout plans and sketch concept showing the proposed integration of retained heritage item into the overall podium design (source: PTW).

Artist's impression of the proposed development

Figure 36. Artist's impression of the proposed development - viewing towards south from Pacific Highway (source: PTW).

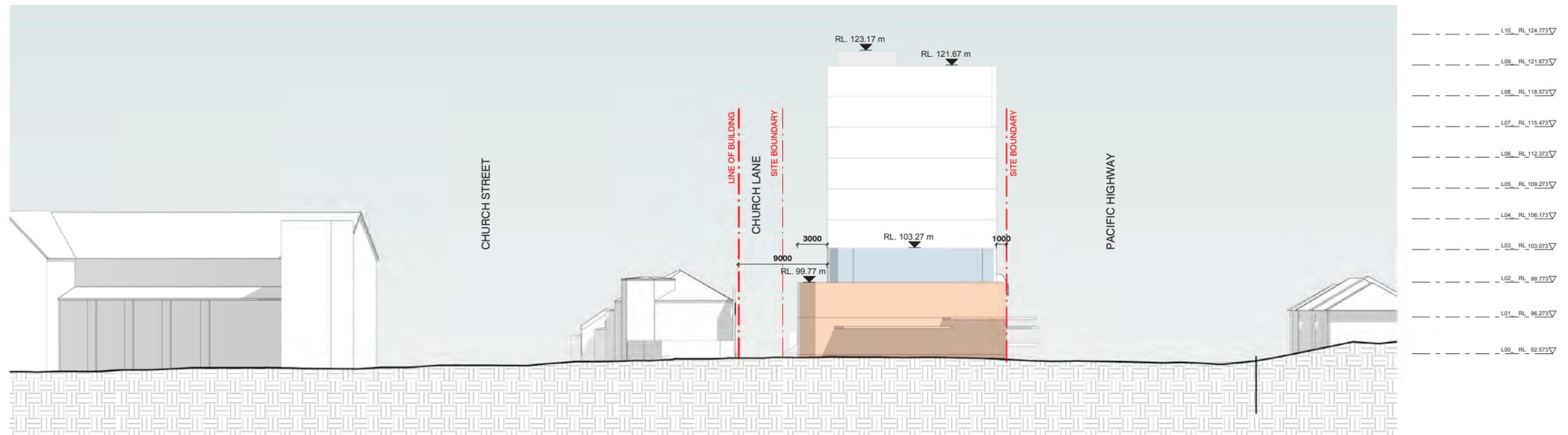


1 SOUTH ELEVATION (McLAREN STREET) - ENVELOPE
1 : 200

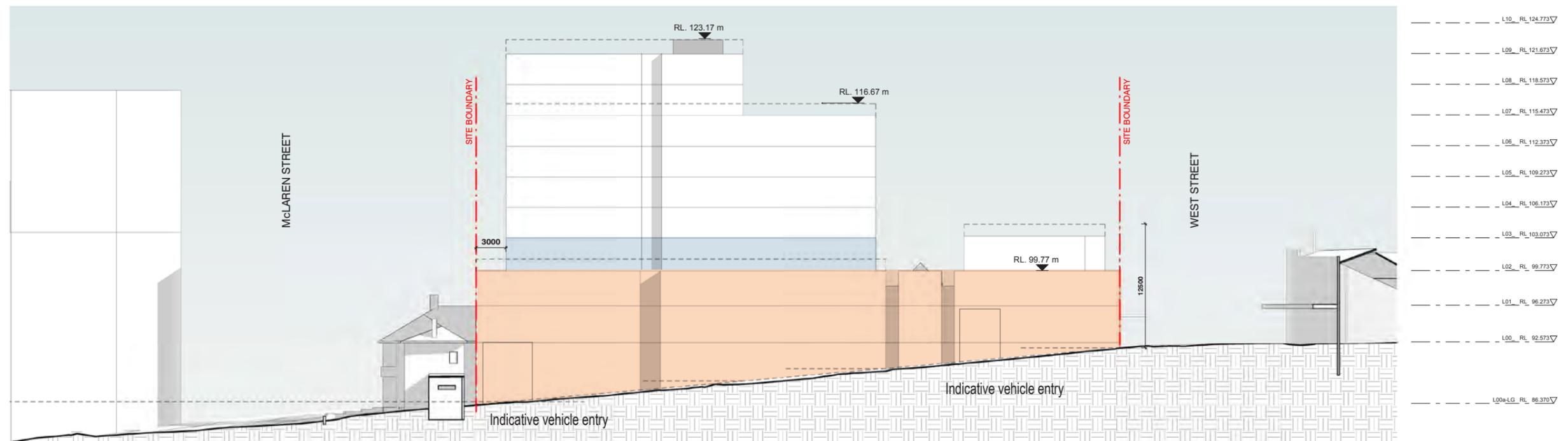


2 WEST ELEVATION (PACIFIC HIGHWAY) - ENVELOPE
1 : 200

Figure 37. Indicative elevations (adopted from PTW Building Envelope Study and Reference Design).



1 NORTH ELEVATION (WEST STREET) - ENVELOPE
1 : 200



2 EAST ELEVATION (CHURCH LANE) - ENVELOPE
1 : 200

Figure 38. Indicative elevations (adopted from PTW Building Envelope Study and Reference Design).

4.2 OVERSHADOWING ANALYSIS

The proposed building envelope has been tested in terms of shadow impacts on the surrounding areas and properties. The analysis shows the extent of shadows cast by the proposed maximum development envelope between 9am and 3pm in mid-winter. The diagrams also show a comparison of the shadow impacts of the proposed building envelope relative to the recommended built form presented in the Civic Precinct Study.

As Figure 39 shows, the proposed building envelope creates a fast-moving shadow to the surrounding context. It creates no additional overshadowing on the North Sydney Demonstration School's playground during the day and therefore is acceptable.

The KU Dem School Kids Care (before and after school care) playground to the west of Pacific Highway is usually used between 7:30-9am and 3-6pm during its operation time. According to the Childcare Planning Guideline 2017, a minimum 30% of the outdoor play areas need to have year-round solar access. As shown in Figure 40, approximately 30% of the outdoor space can receive sunlight between 7:45-9am. The proposed building envelope will only create minor additional overshadowing to the area when compared to Council's envelope. We consider that the proposal will still remain reasonable solar access to this play area. If there are any potential changes to the future use of this space i.e. activity time, the proposal will not create adverse shadow impact during the day time.

Based on desktop research of internal layouts of those residential properties to the east, the available information suggests that their main living/private open spaces are located to the north and east where they can receive most of the sunlight during the day. The subject development to the west of this residential block will have no impact on their main living and private open spaces. No. 2 Church Street has a rear courtyard facing Church Lane, approx. 50% of this space can receive almost 3 hours sunlight during the day. Nos. 8A-10A have upper-level terraces facing the laneway. It is noted that Council's proposed building envelope will have shadow impacts on the terraces after 1pm. The proposal creates less impact when compared to Council's envelope which allows more daylight into these spaces. No. 3 McLaren St located to the south-east of the site can receive min. 4 hours sunlight. The proposal only impact its front garden after 2pm.

It is noted that there are a number of buildings in the vicinity have solar panels installed on the rooftop. The detailed study shows that all these properties can receive a minimum of 4 hours solar during the day. Therefore, the shadow impacts created by the subject development in the late afternoon to the south-east is acceptable. We consider that the site located at No. 1 McLaren Street is one of the potential sites for redevelopment. The shadow analysis shows that the subject development will not limit the development potential of that property as at least 70% of the facades can receive min. 2-hours solar in mid-winter.

Compared with Council's envelope, the subject development will generate minor increased overshadowing in early morning in mid-winter and less impact in the afternoon. The above-detailed analysis shows that the proposed development can ensure reasonable solar access to the adjoining properties with no adverse impacts.

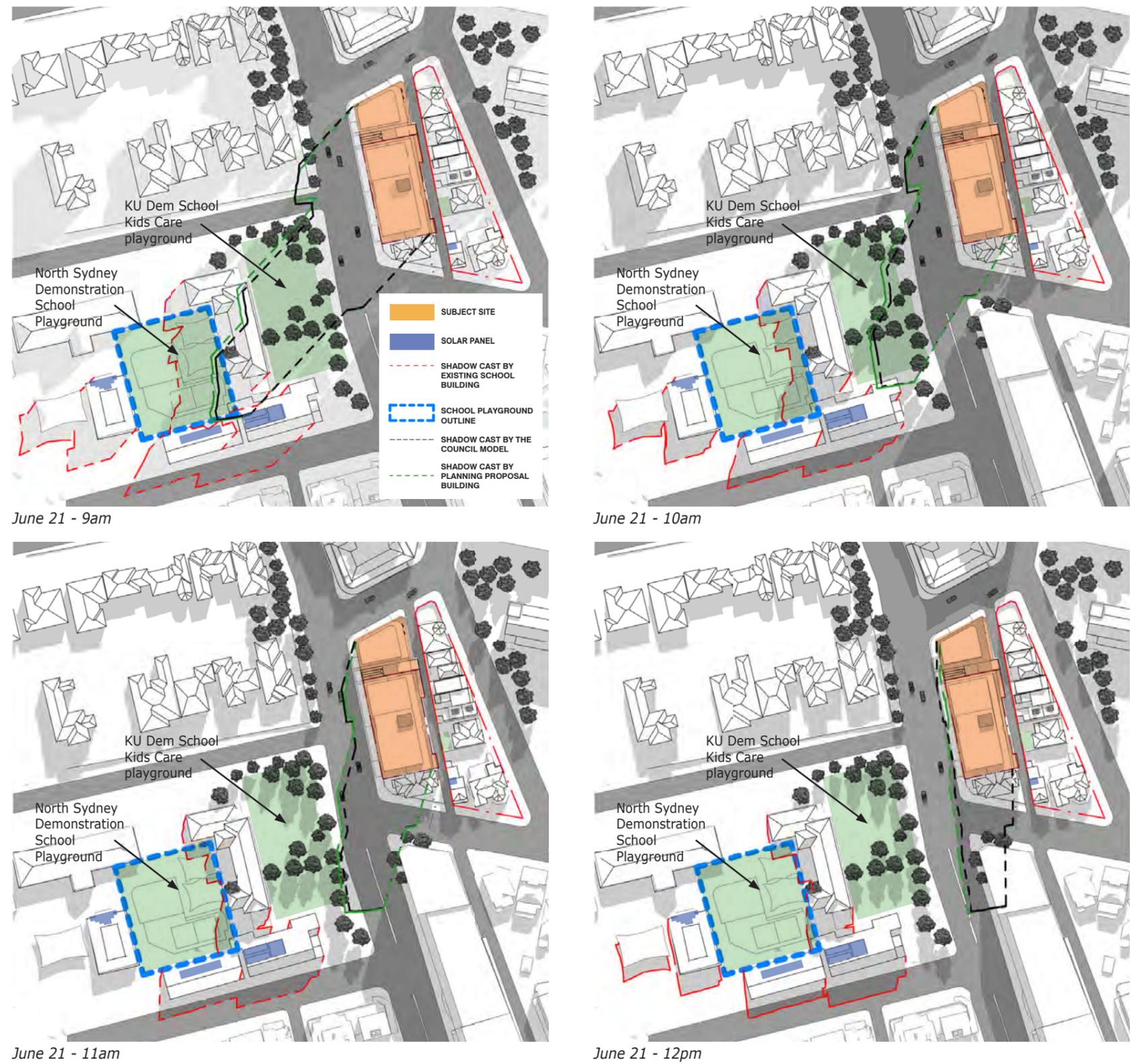


Figure 39. Shadow impact analysis diagrams (adapted from Shadow Diagrams - Winter Solstice prepared by PTW)



June 21 - 1pm



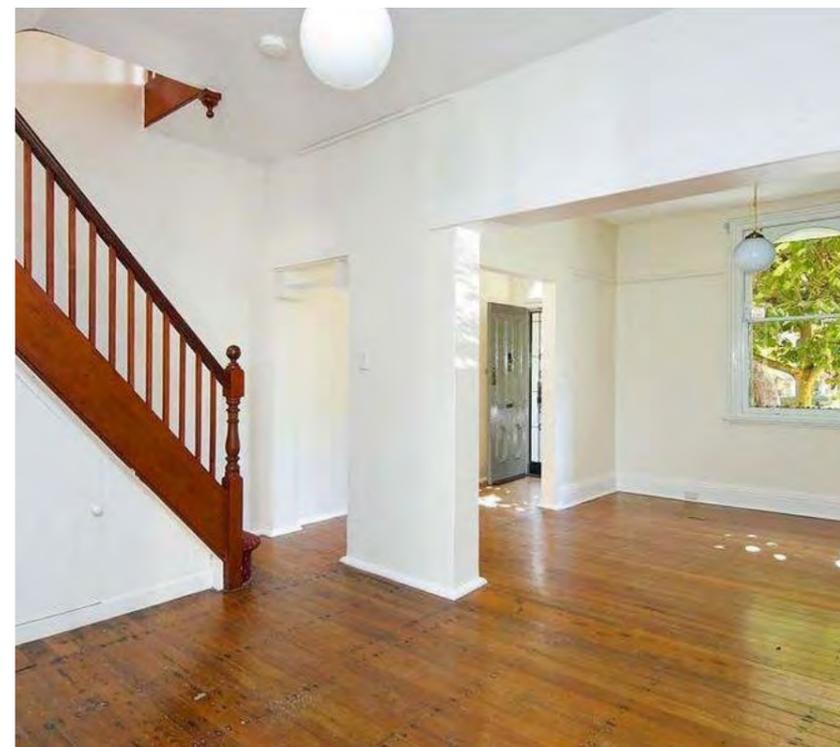
June 21 - 2pm



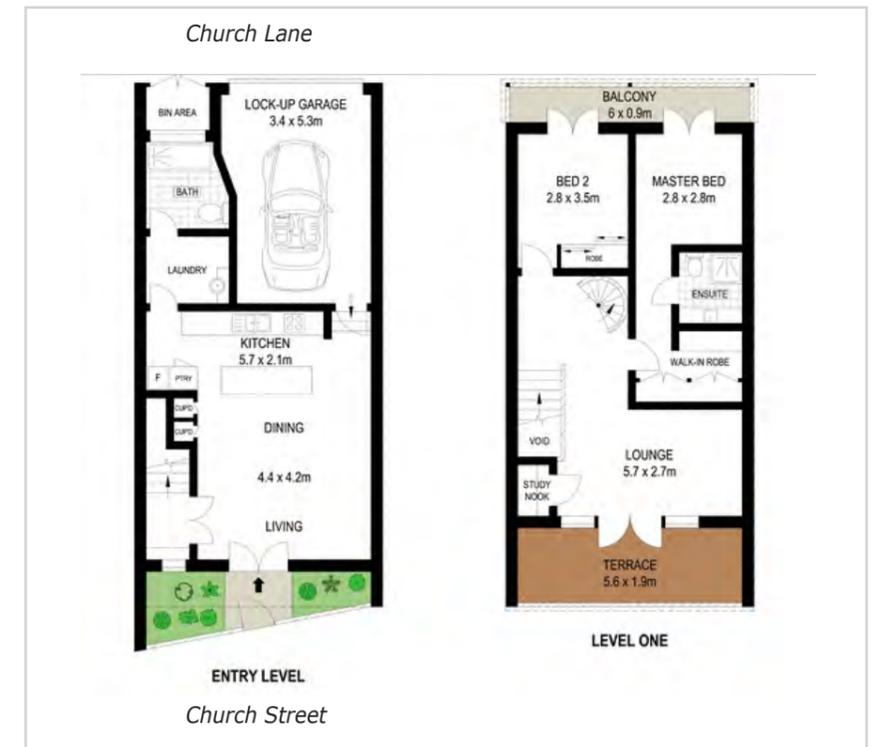
June 21 - 3pm



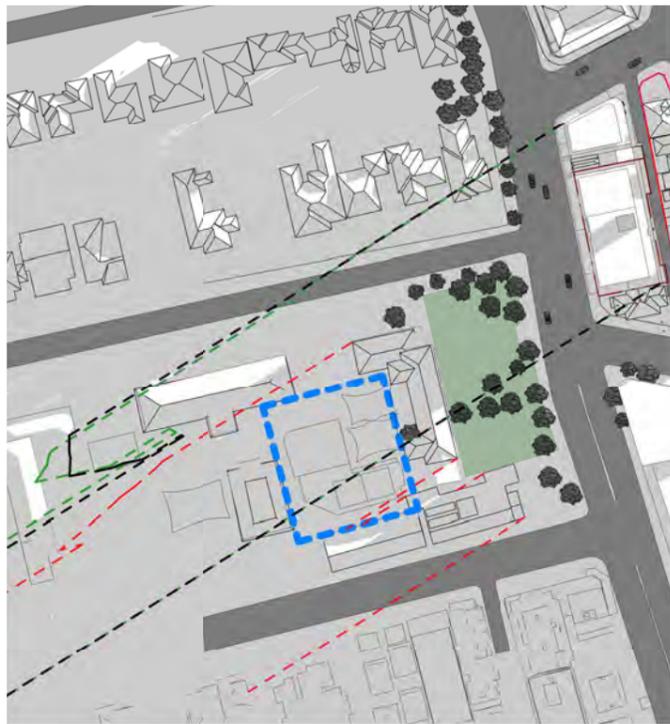
12 Church Street - units with living room facing Church and West Streets (source: Google).



10 Church Street with living room facing Church Street (source: Google).



10A Church Street - Layout plans (source: Google).



7.30am 21st of June



7.45am 21st of June



8.00am 21st of June



8.15am 21st of June



8.30am 21st of June



8.45am 21st of June

Figure 40. Early morning (7:30-8:45am) shadow impacts on the KU Dem School Kids Care site (source: PTW)

4.3 URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

To guide the future development of the site, GMU has prepared the following site-specific development objectives to ensure an appropriate built form and design excellence are achieved.

Maximum building heights

Objectives

- To provide increased opportunities for height and density within 300m of the station to contribute to the TOD development around the new Metro Station.
- To respond to the role of Pacific Highway within North Sydney CBD whilst also transitioning from the increased height of the CBD to the city edge.
- To achieve an appropriate built form relationship to the existing heritage items and conservation areas consistent with the character of North Sydney.
- To minimise any adverse shadow impacts to the adjoining houses and school.

Building setback and separation

Objectives

- To achieve reasonable separation, amenity and outlook for neighbouring dwellings.
- To provide an appropriate curtilage around the heritage item.
- To continue the visual connection between McLaren Street and Crows Nest Conservation areas.
- Concentrate height and scale along the Pacific Highway frontage to maximise separation to the conservation area.

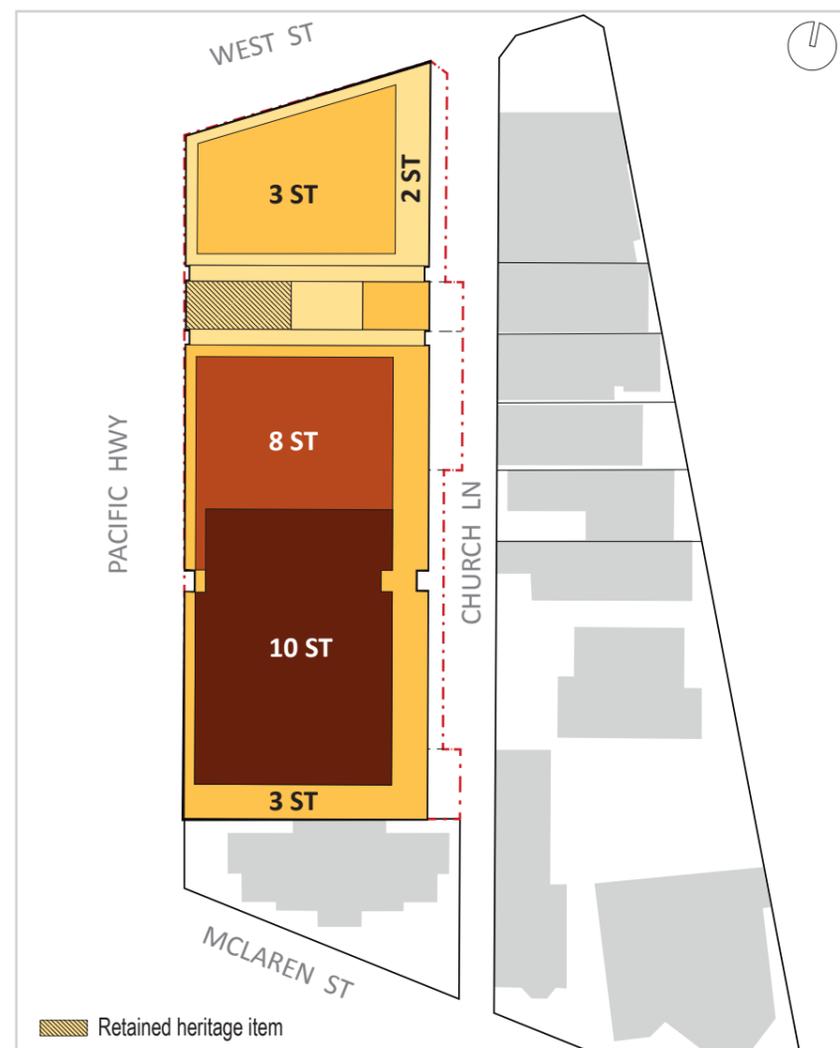


Figure 41. Maximum building heights

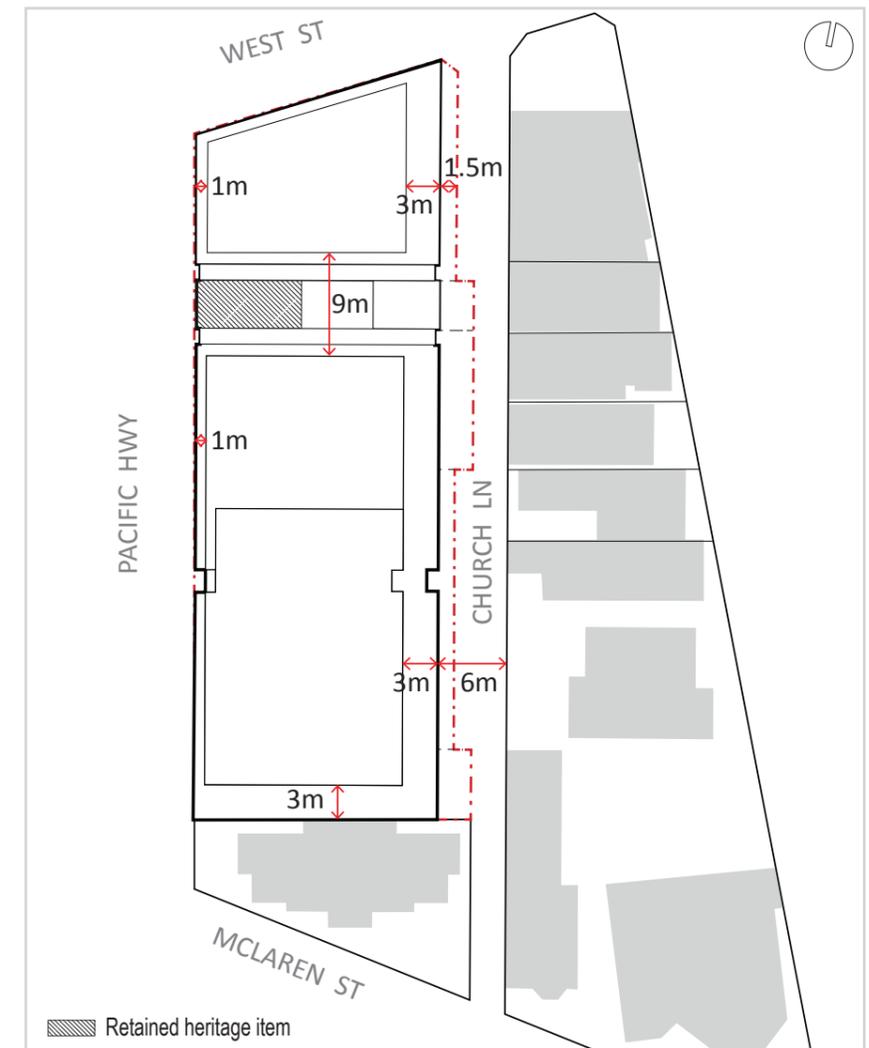


Figure 42. Setbacks and separation distances

Open space and landscape areas

Objectives

- To achieve quality external recreational areas for residents.
- To achieve landscape buffers between neighbouring residential dwellings and new residential development within the podium.
- To provide reasonable privacy to the neighbouring residential dwellings from residential uses at lower levels.

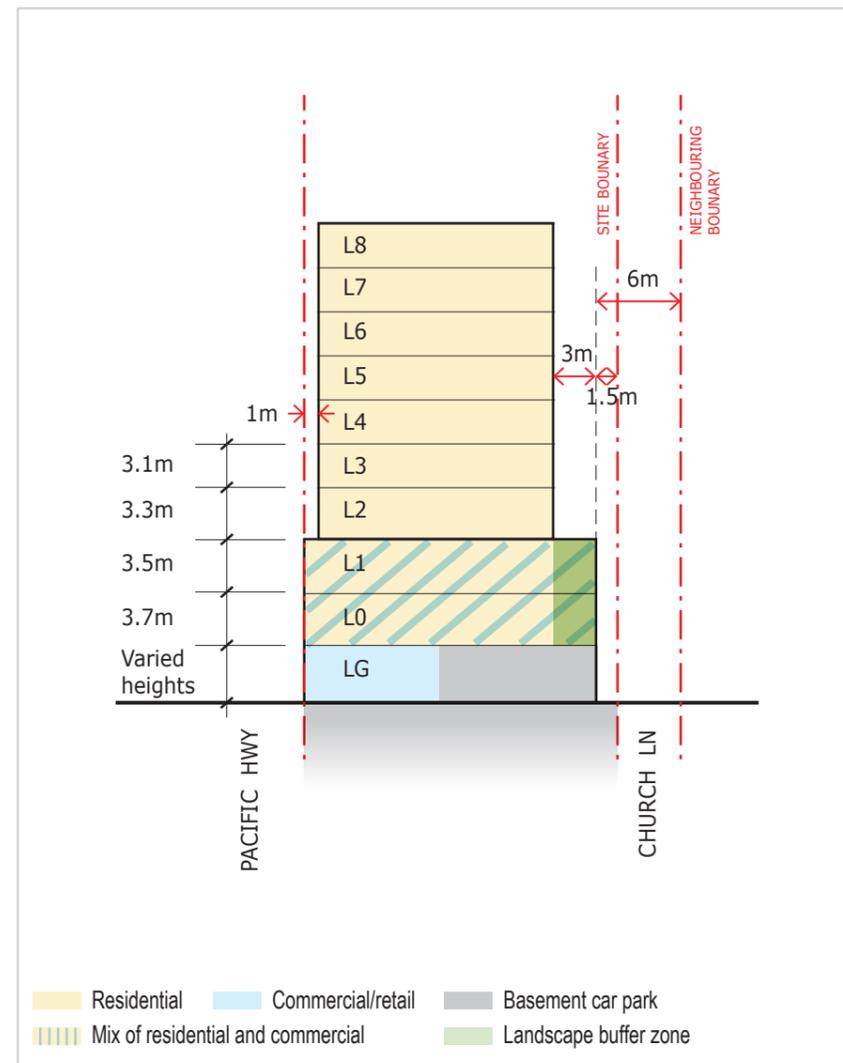


Figure 43. Upper level setbacks to Pacific Highway and floor to floor heights

Activate frontages and awnings

Objectives

- To enhance the Pacific Highway and West Street streetscapes and the public domain for all weather conditions.
- To provide an active ground plane with an increased opportunity for passive surveillance to the public domain.

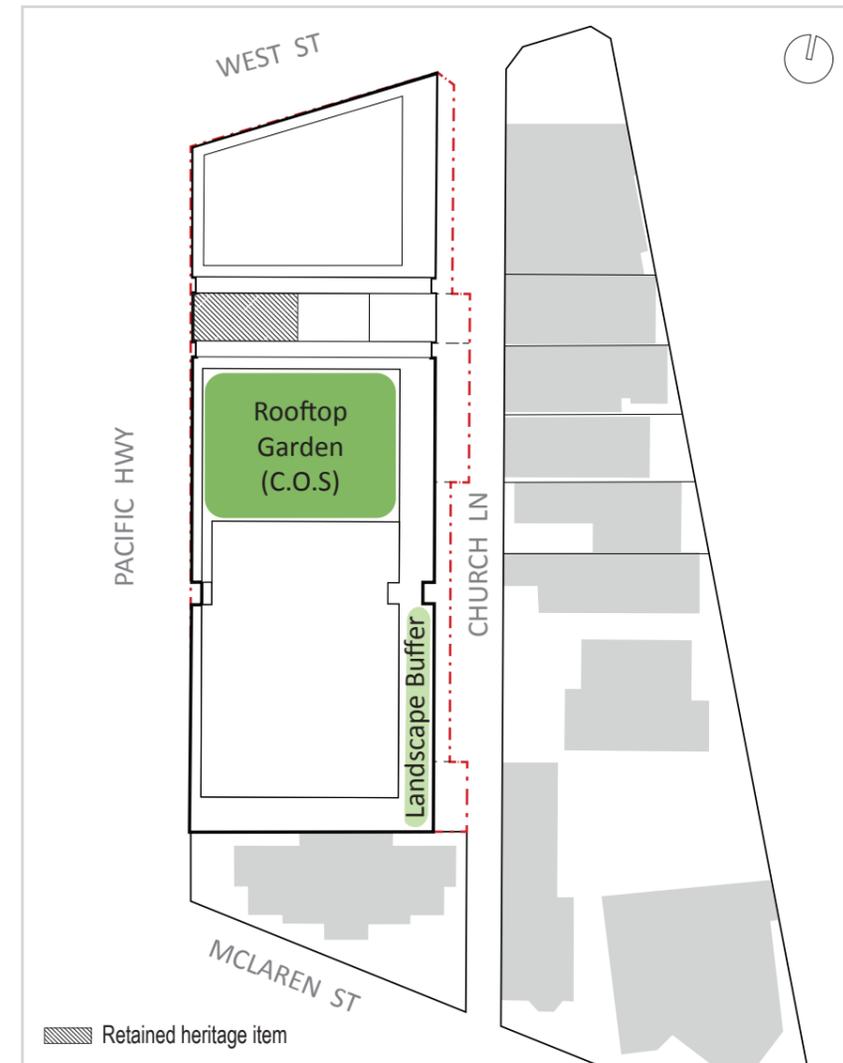


Figure 44. Open space and landscape area

Vehicular and pedestrian access

Objectives

- To merge traffic movements as access is denied from Pacific Highway.
- To improve the public domain of Pacific Highway for pedestrians.
- To widen Church Lane to benefit all uses.
- To improve the site's accessibility.



Figure 45. Access, active frontages and awnings



5. FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS



5.1 PROPOSED STATUTORY CONTROLS

GMU recommends that the following statutory controls in North Sydney LEP 2013 be amended.

LEP Height of Building

Given the changing context and desired concentration of height and density around the new Victoria Cross Metro Station and along the Pacific Highway Corridor, the proposal seeks an opportunity to amend the current maximum building height from 10m to a maximum 14m to Nos. 265-267 and part 29m and 37m to the remainder of the site, ensuring a desired stepped form achieved.

LEP FSR

Currently, there is no specific FSR control applies to the site. The proposal seeks to introduce a maximum FSR of 5.35:1 to Nos. 253-263 and 1.85:1 to Nos. 265-267, ensuring a viable and quality design outcome in the later development stage.

LEP Non-residential FSR

The existing non-residential FSR applicable to the site is 0.5:1. To support the economic growth of the centre area, the proposal seeks an amendment to an increased non-residential FSR of 1.0:1 for the site.

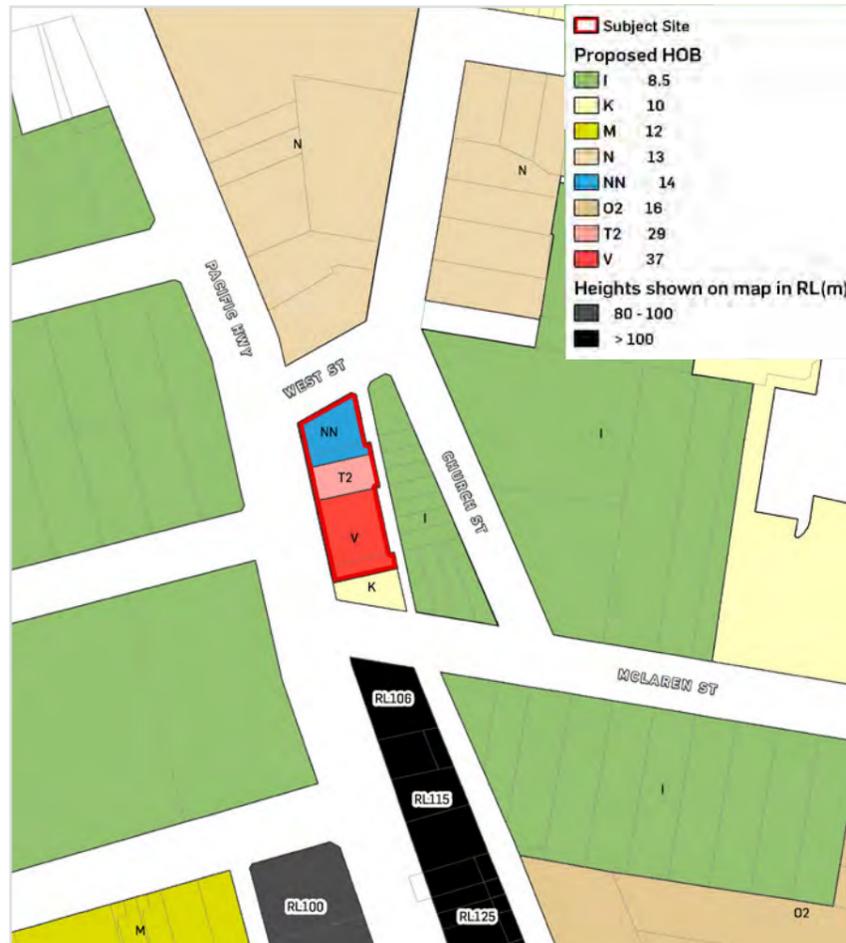


Figure 46. Proposed amendments to the Height of Building Map (source: Urbis).



Figure 47. Amended FSR Map (source: Urbis).



Figure 48. Amended Non-Residential FSR Map (source: Urbis).

5.2 CONCLUSIONS

GMU and the project team have undertaken a detailed analysis of the existing and desired future character and growth pattern of North Sydney and the role that the subject site could play in the anticipated growth of the North Sydney Centre.

This report has concluded that the proposed redevelopment of the site provides the opportunity to complement the Sydney Metro project of a new station at North Sydney. Its increased density and taller form for this block will contribute positively to the need for transit-orientated development around the new Victoria Cross Station supporting this largest State Government's investment.

The site, as an amalgamated land parcel in close proximity to the North Sydney CBD and reinforcing both the height spine along Pacific Highway in North Sydney whilst also creating transition to the city edge, will provide a greater concentration of jobs and housing for North Sydney reinforcing the approach of a walkable city whilst the existing characteristics of the area also acknowledging.

The proposed development will provide a defined lower-scale podium in response to the surrounding lower-scale context and heritage items. The heritage shop on site will be retained and integrated as part of the

podium development. The single tower form with appropriate setbacks to heritage items, conservation areas and the laneway will support the desired intensification around the station whilst responding to the heritage and conservation area context. The stepped form will provide desired scale transition from the North Sydney CBD.

The proposed widened Church Lane (from 4.5m to 6m) will improve the access for movements in the laneway, especially those residential dwellings with rear access to the east. The proposal intends to embellish the footpaths and public domain around the site and dedicate land to Council to facilitate the widening of Church Lane as an offer of public benefit.

The proposed development will provide an increased opportunity for start-up business, new jobs and housing diversity including potential larger units allowing people working or study from home to support the future growth of the centre with a new metro station. The slender tower form will assist in achieving good residential amenity and reduced perceived bulk in response to the heritage context.

Based on the above, GMU encourages Council to support this Planning Proposal and recommend it for 'gateway' approval.



Figure 49. Artist's impression of the proposed development (source: PTW).

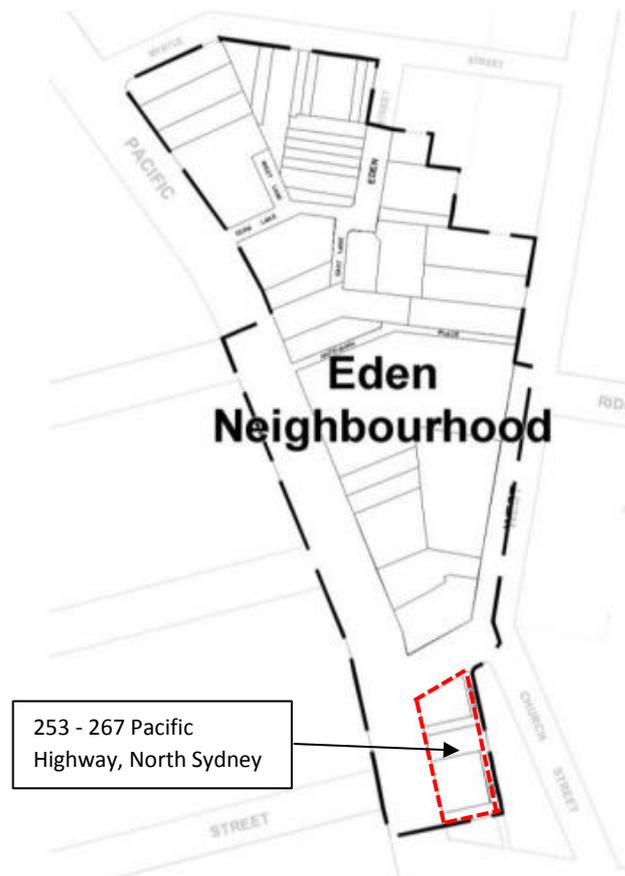


Project NOS. 253-267 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, NORTH SYDNEY
Prepared for LEGACY
Job number 17139
Date issued 01 / 04 / 2021

North Sydney Development Control Plan 2013

Area Character Statements - North Sydney Planning Area

2.3 Eden Neighbourhood



2.3.4 253 - 267 Pacific Highway, North Sydney Precinct Controls

Solar access

P1 Any proposal must not reduce the level of solar access currently available to the primary play area of the educational use opposite the site during school hours (9:00 – 3:00pm). Any additional overshadowing outside school hours should not exceed the shadow cast by the building envelope contemplated in Council's Civic Precinct Planning Study.

Heritage interfaces

P2 The podium element of any new development shall be modulated and present an appropriate scale at its interface with No 6-8 McLaren Street.

P3 A highly considered architectural treatment shall be provided at this interface in order to create a sympathetic relationship between these building elements.

P4 Blank walls or an abrupt imposing form and presentation are to be avoided.

Podium – street wall height

P5 The proposed podium element shall be stepped to respond to the topography of the site.

P6 A maximum 2-storey scale at the site interface with 6-8 McLaren Street.

P7 A maximum 2-3 storey street wall height to Pacific Highway is required.

Tower

P8 The tower facade, articulation and massing treatment should present as two expressed forms to break up the scale and massing of the tower.

P9 A minimum tower setback of 2.3m shall be provided to the retained heritage item at 265 Pacific Highway.

P10 A minimum above podium tower setback of 3m shall be provided to the site's southern boundary.

P11 The tower, including the podium component is to be a maximum of 10 storeys in height.

P12 A minimum setback of 1m shall be provided above level 2 to the site's northern boundary.

Pacific Highway setback

P13 A minimum above podium tower setback of 1m is to be provided, with at least 40% of the envelope set back to 2m.

Church Lane setback

P14 A minimum above podium tower setback of 3m is to be provided, with a predominant setback of 4m being provided for at least 60% of the building length.

Church Lane widening

P15 A 6m widening of Church Lane inclusive of public footpaths is required to improve neighbourhood amenity and passive surveillance to the public domain.

URBAN DESIGN REPORT TO ACCOMPANY THE INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT OF A PLANNING PROPOSAL – PP2/21 AT 253-267 PACIFIC HIGHWAY NORTH SYDNEY

27th January 2022

INTRODUCTION

Atlas Urban Design & Strategy was commissioned in May 2021 as part of the team led by AK Planning to complete the independent review of this Planning Proposal. This commission included a design review of the reference design by PTW Architects and provided advice to North Sydney Council regarding the proposed controls.

Following initial review and feedback, modifications were made to the design. This Urban Design Report summarises the primary considerations relevant for the site and should be read in conjunction with the assessment by AK Planning.

BACKGROUND

The continuing growth and diversification of the North Sydney CBD, together with the advent of the new Metro Station, led to the area being considered for greater density through Regional, District and Local Plans. The Civic Precinct and Surrounds Planning Study (CPSPS) and The Civic Precinct Planning Study 2020 (CPPS) identifies 8 design guidelines for the site which includes a max height of 10 storeys stepping down to 8 storeys further to the north; podium heights and above podium setbacks as well as heritage separations.

This Atlas Urban review and report takes the CPPS as given while recognising it is a high-level study completed without granular testing. The massing options of the CPPS adopt a generic design response, whereas the site is highly unusual, and the challenges of integration and amenity are significant. Therefore, design development for the site naturally requires analysis, refinement and testing.

The preliminary Planning Proposal of April 2020 drew on work by the proponent's team (GMU and PTW) and was illustrated by reference design. The reference design revealed challenges and opportunities for the site and proved that the diagram from the CPPS cannot simply be filled without unreasonable impacts on the context.

From Better Placed Design Guide for Heritage
P. 24

<https://www.governmentarchitect.nsw.gov.au/resources/ga/media/files/ga/design-guides/better-placed-design-guide-for-heritage-2019-01-30.pdf>

Working with scale and grain

Scale refers to the size, height, and proportions of a building or element in relation to the surrounding built fabric or landscape. Grain is the pattern of arrangement and size of buildings and lots in a precinct. Both contribute to an area's character, while subdivision patterns and street layouts often provide the predominant rhythm of building frontages.

New design in heritage areas should relate to the predominant scale and grain of the setting. It should respect the height, bulk, density, and grain of the heritage fabric. Re-subdivision of lots within conservation areas should reinforce the established townscape pattern.

SITE AND CONTEXT CONSIDERATIONS

The triple-fronted site is narrow and steeply sloping. Its principal frontage is the busy Pacific Highway; however, it has pleasant frontages to West Street and Church Lane. It is surrounded by a low-scale heritage setting with various building types, including street-wall and setback semi-detached buildings.

The Pacific Highway block to the south of McLaren Street has a tall street wall contiguous with CBD. The low-scale heritage character McLaren Street creates a distinct break, which carries the low-scale heritage character to the Pacific Highway. The heritage character extends north along the Highway to number 265 and the Union Hotel.

Critical challenges for the site:

- Heritage buildings effectively surround the site, many free-standing with hipped and gabled roofs (rather than street-wall heritage buildings as seen in the CBD)
- Low-scale heritage setting makes the building highly exposed 'in-the-round.'
- The house at 6 McLaren Street (corner of McLaren and Pacific Highway) is not a street-wall building. Therefore, a typical zero-lot blind podium wall would represent a poor interface
- The site is not part of the contiguous CBD, so the rhythm and scale should be different from the developments to the south of McLaren Street
- The poor amenity of the Pacific Highway frontage owing to its exposed heavily trafficked, limited setback and relative isolation from other activated frontages
- The enlarged servicing requirements of the large mixed-use site are challenging with the sloping and narrow site, is in tension with the opportunity to create potentially high amenity of the side streets and laneway. Reference design shows rear lane dominated by giant undercroft over 6 metres high.

Key design opportunities:

- Respond to fine grain established by heritage, especially in modulation and rhythm along frontages.
- Massing and morphology to solve relationships to diverse contexts without overwhelming heritage
- Positive interface with McLaren Street heritage character, which extends to Pacific Highway
- The sloping site requires a design with frequent stepping floor levels with the ground level
- Optimise amenity on lane especially given the noisy unpleasant environment of Pacific Highway
- Step height street wall to respond to context and grain
- Setback from the southern boundary to create curtilage and amenity (may entail shifting Car Park entry)
- Detailed Street wall design in dialogue with heritage (e.g. polychromatic brickwork, fenestration etc.)
- Distinct waist or setback above the street wall (set back 2+ metres) to distinguish tower

- Tower expression may be very distinctive and contemporary (distinguish from the base - also distinguish from CBD)
- Consolidate servicing such as car park entries and storerooms to optimise lane frontage so glazed & active frontage may decant to the laneway and or mid-block walk-through
- Highway frontage may be more solid in response to a busy/noisy environment
- The Eastern elevation will be visible and must have an equivalently high degree of design quality and resolution as the west

The unique circumstance of the site means the specific design response is crucial. A successful design will resolve the dramatic scale transitions and changes in building typology. This is beyond massing. Instead, it will require an exceptionally skilful architectural response.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Having completed an assessment of the amended indicative reference design against the Civic Precinct Planning Study (CPPS) and relevant Regional, District and Local Plans, the following is noted:

- The proposal provides for higher density development near the new Victoria Cross Metro Station, which is an appropriate outcome for this precinct
- The proposed height is generally consistent with that anticipated under the CPPS
- The built form location and massing is generally consistent with that expected under the CPPS
- The stepped podium along Pacific Highway allows the modulation of the elevation to differentiate the block in its heritage setting
- The proposed controls create the potential for a building having an acceptable impact concerning heritage curtilage and relationship to the existing heritage item on the site at No. 265 Pacific Highway an appropriate interface with the contributory building at No 6-8 McLaren Street; and its height relationship with the adjoining conservation area.

Having completed an urban design review of the Planning Proposal against the Civic Plan and relevant Regional and District Plans, it is recommended that the Planning Proposal be supported to proceed to Gateway Determination.

Given the sensitivity concerning built form and amenity surrounding the site, it is recommended that the draft site-specific DCP be further developed to help manage the transitional relationship and interface with neighbouring low-density areas and contributory buildings, including overshadowing impacts. In addition, it is recommended that the site should be the subject of a design excellence process for the reasons of its distinct position and prominence.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Walter'.

Paul Walter
Director