

## **Visual Impact Assessment (Amended)**



Digital Advertising Signage  
Enmore Road, Newtown



Prepared for JCDecaux on behalf of Sydney Trains  
Submitted to the Department of Planning and Environment

**Amended January 2024**



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# 1 Introduction

This Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) has been prepared by *Keylan Consulting Pty Ltd* (Keylan) for JCDecaux on behalf of *Sydney Trains* (the Applicant) to accompany an amended Development Application (DA) for the installation of digital advertising signage on Enmore Road, Newtown within the Inner West Local Government Area (LGA).

The amended proposal comprises the construction of a digital advertising sign and removal of six existing static signs amounting to an area of 30m<sup>2</sup>. The new digital advertising sign provides:

- an advertising display area of 14.93m<sup>2</sup> and visual screen size of 14.16m<sup>2</sup>
- the continued display of illuminated advertisements
- a 60 second dwell time for message changes
- a maximum night-time luminance of 200 cd/m<sup>2</sup>
- structural supports and access platforms

The VIA describes, analyses and assesses the potential visual impacts associated with the proposal. The relevant legislation and planning instruments are addressed in detail within the *Statement of Environmental Effects* (SEE) prepared to accompany the development application and have been informed by the findings of this VIA.

## 1.1 Report Structure

The VIA has been prepared in accordance with the following document structure:

Section	Overview
<b>1 Introduction</b>	Introduction to the VIA and the proposed development.
<b>2 Site and Locality</b>	A description of the site, the context and an assessment of the opportunities and constraints presented by the site.
<b>3 The Proposal</b>	A detailed description of the proposed development application
<b>4 Methodology</b>	A description of the methodology undertaken including any limitations encountered during the assessment.
<b>5 Assessment</b>	An in-depth visual impact assessment of the existing environment, proposal and potential impacts on the surrounding area.
<b>6 Conclusion</b>	A concluding statement taking into account the assessment of the proposal.

Table 1: Report Structure



## 2 The site and locality

### 2.1 Site description

The proposed digital advertising sign is located to the north-west of the Enmore Road and King Street intersection in Newtown, within the Inner West LGA.

The subject site is approximately 5 kilometres (km) south-west of the Sydney Central Business District (CBD) and is 75 metres (m) west of the City of Sydney LGA. The rail lines located adjacent the site include the T1 North Shore and Western Line, the T2 Inner West & Leppington Line and the T3 Bankstown Line.

The site and surrounding area are subject to high volumes of foot traffic being within the Newtown centre and in proximity to the entrance of Newtown Station.

Signage is not uncommon in the area and includes a variety of business identification and advertising signage. Notably, there is a business identification sign located approximately 5m west of the site and advertising signage located approximately 30m east of the site on bus shelters.

The site in context to the surrounding area is shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Site context (Base source: Six Maps)

## 2.2 Surrounding locality

The advertising sign will be located within an established Sydney Trains corridor and visible from Enmore Road and King Street. Built form surrounding the site and in proximity to the road corridor is generally 2 to 3 storeys and consists of includes:

- commercial uses to the south, east and west
- a small number of shop top housing on Enmore Road and King Street
- a residential area 50m north on Bedford Street
- a number of heritage items and heritage conservations areas (HCAs)
- Newtown Train Station approximately 80m to the south-east

Images of the site and surrounding locality are provided in the Figures below.



Figure 2: View looking north-west towards the site from Enmore Rd/King St intersection (Source: Keylan)





Figure 3: View looking north-east towards the site from Enmore Road (Source: Keylan)



Figure 4: View looking east towards commercial/mixed use buildings along Enmore Road, opposite proposed signage (Source: Keylan)



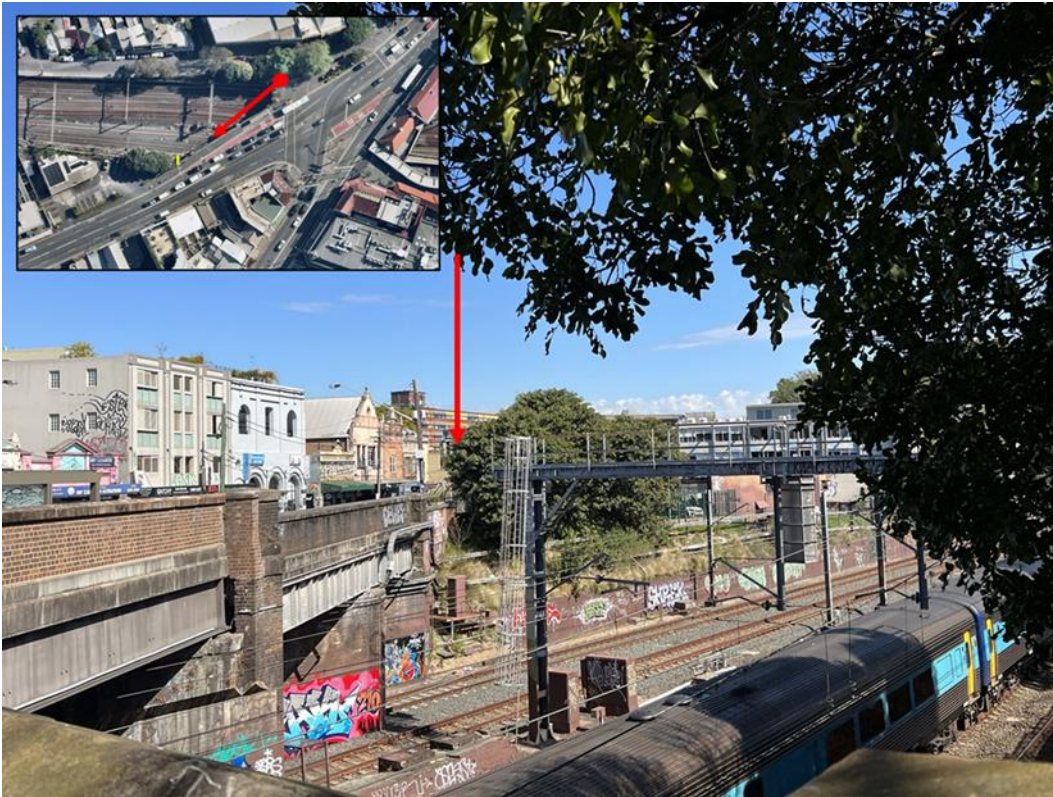


Figure 5: View looking south-west towards the site from Enmore Road Railway Overbridge (Source: Keylan)



Figure 6: View looking north-east of commercial premises along King Street (Source: Keylan)





Figure 7: View looking south-west of commercial/mixed use premises along Enmore Road, opposite proposed sign (Source: Keylan)

### 3 The Amended Proposal

The amended proposal involves the installation of a digital advertising sign with an east facing panel on Enmore Road, Newtown (Table 3).

Development Aspect	Description
<b>Development summary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>installation of a new freestanding digital advertising sign with east facing panel</li> <li>removal of 6 existing static advertising signs</li> </ul>
<b>Signage location</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lot 3 DP 239081</li> <li>the sign is proposed on the northern side of the intersection of Enmore Road and King Street</li> <li>the site is adjacent to the railway corridor in a small, fenced area, approximately 30m west of the existing bus stop on Enmore Road</li> <li>the sign is proposed to be orientated to face westbound traffic travelling along Enmore Road and King Street</li> </ul>
<b>Advertising display area</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14.93m<sup>2</sup> (4.708m x 3.172m)</li> </ul>
<b>Visual screen size</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14.16m<sup>2</sup> (4.608m x 3.072m)</li> </ul>
<b>Dwell time</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>60 seconds</li> </ul>
<b>Signage exposure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visibility of the proposed sign from 130m from the west</li> </ul>
<b>Illumination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the digital signage is illuminated using LEDs installed within the front face</li> </ul>
<b>Consent time period</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15 years</li> </ul>
<b>Existing signage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>signage is not uncommon in the area and includes a variety of business identification signage and advertising, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a business identification sign approx. 5m to the west</li> <li>advertising signage on a bus shelter approximately 30m south-east of the site</li> <li>an existing freestanding 'Welcome to County' sign 50m east of the site</li> <li>various awning signage on surrounding premises</li> <li>wayfinding signage at the intersection of Enmore Road and King Street</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Table 2: Development summary

The proposed changes to address issues raised by DPE, agency and council include:

- relocation of the sign 30m west outside the state heritage curtilage and no longer physically attached to the bridge structure (being an item of SHI significance)
- reorientation of the sign to face east towards westbound traffic
- removal of 6 existing static signs on the inside of the Enmore Road railway bridge
- increased dwell time from 15 to 60 seconds (exceeding the 10 seconds required under the Signage Guidelines)

The proposed signage will also be available for display of emergency messaging by Sydney Trains and other NSW Government agencies such as NSW Police, NSW Health and Transport for NSW. Architectural drawings for the sign and signage removal are provided within the Architectural package at Appendix 3.



## 4 Methodology

This VIA has been informed by site visits undertaken on 27 October 2021, 13 April 2023 and 29 August 2023. This VIA has been informed by the relevant *NSW Land & Environment Court* Planning Principles relating to visual impacts.

The VIA identifies the visual catchment of the proposed signs and identifies the existing, emerging, and desired future character of the area to understand any sensitive receivers and likely visual impacts.

Several viewpoints have then been selected for a detailed analysis based on their visibility to the proposal, the identification of key existing viewpoints and the sensitivity of each viewpoint. Each viewpoint has been assessed in accordance with the following points:

1. existing visual character and likely extent of change to locality and surrounds
2. visual sensitivity, based on existing visual character, key views and other significant visual features
3. visual exposure of site under current situation and following development of the site
4. likely visibility of proposed development, including location, type and number of viewers and duration of impact
5. level of visual impact (low, moderate or high)

The following limitations have been encountered while preparing this VIA:

- photographs taken cannot replicate the experience of viewing the proposal with the human eye
- photographs have only been able to be taken from public areas and therefore viewpoints cannot provide an exact analysis of impacts to private property
- photomontages are indicative only and may not accurately replicate the proposal

The amended DA is also accompanied by a specialist Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) and specialist Lighting Impact Assessment (LIA), visual impacts which should be referred to in addition to this assessment.

## 5 Assessment

The assessment within this Section has been undertaken in accordance with the methodology outlined at Section 4.

### 5.1 State Environmental Planning Policy (Industry and Employment) 2021

Chapter 3 of the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Industry and Employment) 2021* (Industry and Employment SEPP) aims to ensure that advertising and signage is well located, compatible with the desired amenity of an area and of high quality. Schedule 5 of Industry and Employment SEPP provides assessment criteria which guides the assessment of visual impacts arising from signage.

Schedule 5 of Industry and Employment SEPP is addressed in detail within the SEE. Key points from the Schedule 5 assessment relevant to the VIA include:

- the proposal is compatible with the character of the area, as it is located within a highly urbanised, active and engaging road and pedestrian environment which is enhanced through a variety of signage typologies
- the proposal is compatible with the existing and desired future character of the area as it provides a contemporary form of digital advertising signage, designed by Tzannes Architects, that is considered and creative ensuring a high-quality design outcome while also removing low quality signage within the area
- the proposal is compatible with the scale, proportion and characteristics of the site.
- the proposal is consistent with outdoor advertising in the area being a mixed use area with various types of commercial signage
- the proposal does not unreasonably impact the amenity of the area
- the proposal will not obscure or compromise any important views
- the proposal does not dominate the skyline
- the proposal does not unreasonably impact viewing rights of other advertisers

### 5.2 Visual Catchment

The sign is proposed to face Enmore Road to allow the advertising panel to be orientated towards motorists travelling westbound along the road corridor. On this basis, the proposed sign has a limited visual catchment and is largely limited to the road corridor as shown in Figure 4. The visual character of this catchment consists of:

- an urbanised transport corridor which supports active frontages and night-time trade
- a commercial corridor precinct that supports retail and commercial uses
- a small number of shop top housing tenancies
- a public plaza to the east
- an area with a rich heritage and cultural importance, including heritage items and the 'King Street and Enmore Road' HCA

In this VIA, the visual catchment includes areas with views of the sign's advertising panel. Although views of other parts of the structure such as the rear, side or pole components will be possible from other areas, these are not considered to be within the visual catchment.



Notwithstanding, viewpoint 7 has been included to provide an assessment of views towards the rear of the sign. Additionally, viewpoint 8 has been included to provide an assessment of view from the closest residential receiver, though only views of the side and rear of the sign are expected from this location.



### 5.3 Assessment of Viewpoints

#### ***View 1: View from Newtown Station entry on King Street***

View 1 was selected as it reflects the view towards the proposed sign from the pedestrian entrance/exit at Newtown Station. The Newtown Station is a State heritage item (no. 5012123).

It is expected that pedestrians at Newtown Station will only have views towards the sign for a point in time as they enter or exit the station. On this basis, pedestrians will only experience limited and short-term exposure to the sign advertising material. Figure 7 provides an indicative view of the sign from this viewpoint.

Whilst the proposed sign will be visible from this heritage item, it will not detract from the heritage significance of Newtown Station. The HIS at Appendix 7 states:

*“...the proposed signage is now in an unobtrusive spot and will read, where visible in conjunction with the item, as a background element that is neither detracting from the streetscape, or prominent in any way...”*

Further to the above, the proposed sign (as amended) will result in an improved outcome and will reduce visual impacts on the State heritage item for the following reasons:

- the sign will be relocated 30m west from the previously proposed location, increasing the distance between the sign and the heritage item and removing the sign from the heritage curtilage
- the sign will no longer be attached to the railway bridge (which forms part of the heritage item), instead it will be secured to the ground via a concrete pile in a small, grassed area to the immediate north of the bridge
- the proposal will rationalise signage in the area through the removal of 30m<sup>2</sup> of existing static advertising signage currently visible from Newtown Station

In addition to the above, the sign will provide an active and engaging element that visually interests pedestrians as they enter and exit Newtown Station. The sign is also consistent with the King Street and Enmore Road locality (per MDCP 2011) as it will encourage an active street frontage and support Newtown's night-time economy.

In summary, the visual impact associated with the sign from Newtown Station will be low for the following key reasons:

- the sign will only be visible for a point in time as pedestrians enter and exit Newtown Station
- the proposal will contribute to the wider locality as a commercial precinct that supports active frontages, commercial spaces, entertaining businesses and a busy road environment
- the sign will not detract from the heritage significance of Newtown Station as confirmed in the HIS at Appendix 7 and given the improvements as part of this amended application
- Enmore Road is a busy transport corridor whereby signage, traffic lights, vehicle lights and noise already form part of the pedestrian experience in this area





Figure 10: VIEW 1: Existing view (Source: Keylan)



Figure 11: VIEW 1: Indicative view (Source: Keylan)

***View 2: View towards sign from 333 King Street, Newtown***

View 2 was selected as it reflects the view towards the proposed sign from the closest commercial, retail and residential tenancies on the southern side of Enmore Road as well as the view of pedestrians walking along the public footpath on this side of the road.

***Commercial, retail and residential tenancies***

Visual impacts on commercial, retail and a small number of shop top housing tenants on the southern side of Enmore Road will be low as the sign will be oriented to the west and will follow the curving nature of the road. On this basis, the sign will not face directly towards these premises.

Whilst this VIA does not assess lighting impacts as these are outlined in the LIA at Appendix 5, it is important to note that luminance measures will be followed to ensure any lighting impacts resulting from the sign are appropriate for these tenancies. It is noted that the LIA found only one residential receiver subject to illumination from the sign. An assessment of impacts on this property are provided at viewpoint 8.

The amended DA is an improvement from previous iterations of the application where more residences were expected to experience illumination, albeit below the maximum allowed. The one residence subject to illumination as part of this proposal will experience luminance levels substantially below the maximum allowed under the guidelines.

***Pedestrians on southern side of Enmore Road***

The visual impact of the proposed sign on pedestrians on the southern side of Enmore Road will be low given the sign will only be visible for a point in time as pedestrians walk west along the footpath. In addition, Enmore Road is a busy transport corridor where signage, traffic lights, vehicle lights and noise already form part of the pedestrian experience at this location.

On this basis, it is anticipated there will be limited change to the existing visual catchment for pedestrians at this location.





Figure 12: VIEW 2: Existing view (Source: Keylan)



Figure 13: VIEW 2: Indicative view (Source: JCDecaux)



***View 3 View towards the sign from the Enmore Road / King Street intersection***

View 3 was selected as it represents the viewpoint from the closest intersection to the subject site, that being the Enmore Road King Street intersection.

Visual impacts from the proposed sign on pedestrians and motorists using this intersection will be low as pedestrians and motorists crossing the intersection and will experience limited and short-term exposure to the sign. The Signage Safety Assessment (SSA) at Appendix 4 confirms the sign will not impose adverse safety impacts to pedestrians or motorists at this intersection.

Visual impacts are also considered low as the sign is suitable for the locality. The sign contributes to the locality as a commercial precinct through activating the street frontage and generating visual interest along the streetscape.

Given the commercial nature of the locality and number of existing signs in the area, it is also anticipated there will be limited change to the existing visual catchment as a result of a digital sign.



Figure 14: VIEW 3: Existing view (Source: Keylan)



Figure 15: VIEW 3: Indicative view (Source: JCDecaux)

***View 4 View facing west towards the site from edge of Pride Square***

View 4 was selected as it represents the viewpoint from Pride Square.

The visual impact on the public domain of Pride Square will be low for the following reasons:

- the proposed sign (as amended) is a substantial distance from Pride Square (approx. 60m), noting it has been relocated 30m west than previously proposed
- the sign will not be clearly visible from Pride Square given the distance as well as its orientated towards the road corridor, existing vegetation and a bus stop
- there will be limited change to the existing visual catchment from Pride Square as a result of the sign given the commercial nature of the locality and the number of existing signs in the area

On the basis of the above, views of the sign from Pride Square are expected to be minimal.

It is also important to note there is an existing 'Welcome to country' sign located on the western edge of Pride Square. The proposed sign will not block, obscure or detract from this sign as it will be located more than 50m away. In addition, the signs will be viewed in different view corridors, and they also differ by type and function of signage.

In summary, visual impacts on Pride Square will be low and the proposed sign will have no impact on the ability of the public to attend Pride Square or interpret its importance to various community groups.





Figure 16: VIEW 4: Existing view (Source: Keylan)



Figure 17: VIEW 4: Indicative view (Source: JCDecaux)

### ***View 5 View from bus stop on Enmore Road***

View 5 was selected as it represents the viewpoint from the existing bus stop on Enmore Road approximately 30m east of the site. This section also provides an assessment of the view impacts on the Oporto sign which is located 5m west of the proposed sign.

#### ***Bus stop and footpath***

The visual impact on pedestrians sitting at this bus stop or walking westbound in the vicinity of the bus stop will be low for the following reasons:

- pedestrians using the bus stop will only have views of the sign for a point in time as they wait for a bus – experiencing limited and short-term exposure
- pedestrians walking westbound along this section of Enmore Road will also only have views of the sign for a point in time – experiencing limited and short-term exposure
- the proposal will contribute to the area as the locality is a commercial precinct that supports active frontages, commercial spaces, entertaining businesses, and a busy road environment
- the proposal is consistent with the character of the area given Enmore Road is a busy transport corridor where signage, traffic lights, vehicle lights and noise already form part of the pedestrian experience

#### ***Oporto sign***

The proposed sign will not unreasonably impact the viewing rights of other advertisers in proximity to the site, in particular, the business identification sign associated with the Oporto fast food premise, located approximately 5m west of the site.

The figures below show the Oporto sign is almost entirely concealed by existing vegetation. In addition, the proposed sign is positioned further north than the 'Oporto' sign.

The visual impact on the Oporto sign will be low for the following reasons:

- the proposed sign will be single-sided and the Oporto sign is double sided, thereby the two signs will only be visible together from one direction (westbound traffic)
- the proposed sign is an advertising sign and the Oporto sign is a business identification sign, therefore they represent two different sign typologies
- the Oporto sign is not the sole business identification sign for the Oporto premises, and therefore the installation of the proposed sign will not detract from Oporto's identification or customer capacity
- motorists travelling west along Enmore Road are unable to turn into the Oporto car park until the second (most western) driveway (50m past the proposed digital advertising sign) and at this location the Oporto premise and other business identification signs relating to the premise are completely visible to motorists



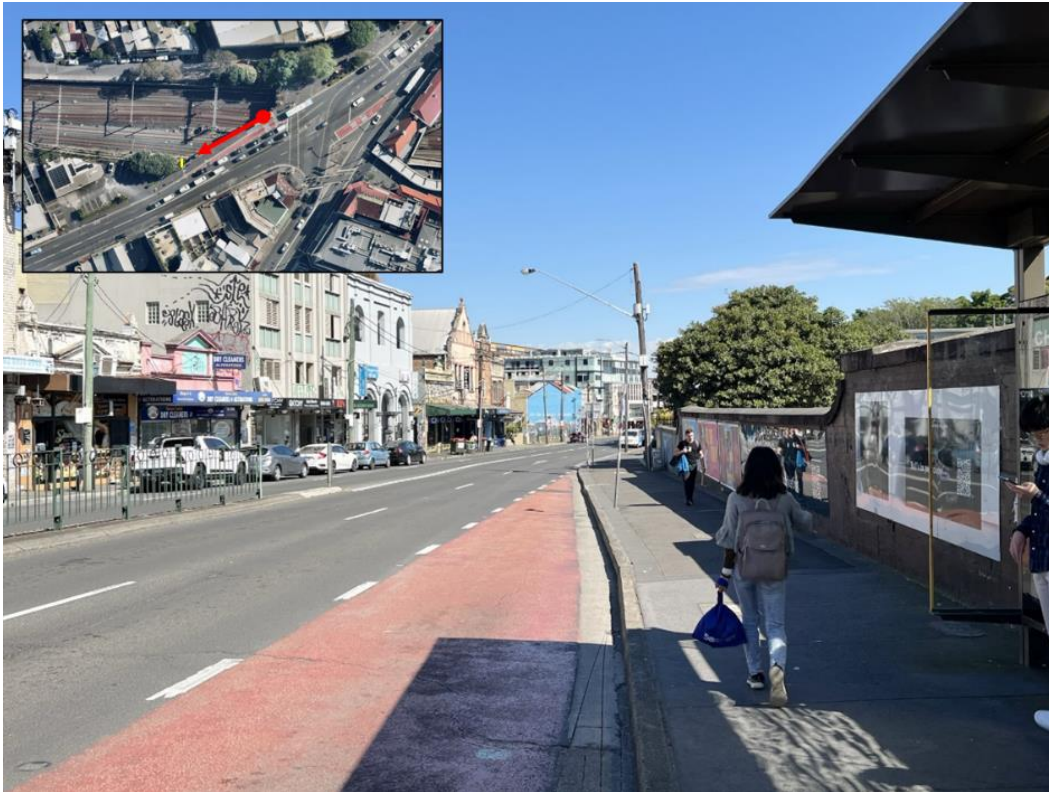


Figure 18: VIEW 5: Existing view (Source: Keylan)

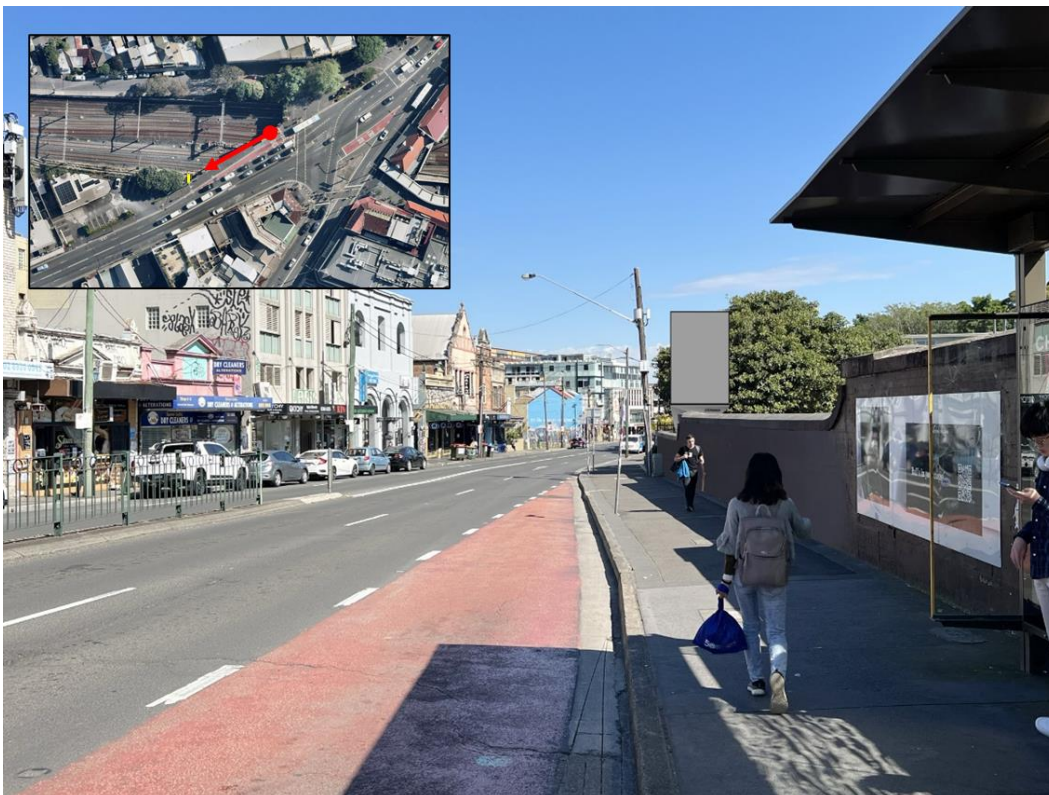


Figure 19: VIEW 5: Indicative view (Source: JCDecaux)



***View 6 View from Bank Hotel local heritage item***

View 6 was selected as it reflects the view towards the proposed sign from the Bank Hotel local heritage item. The 'Bank Hotel including interior' is a local heritage item located at 324 King Street, Newtown (no. I1010).

This location is also considered the furthest point that advertising material on the sign would be visible. This is confirmed in the SSA at Appendix 4.

The visual impacts on the Bank Hotel local heritage item as a result of the sign will be low for the following reasons:

- the Bank Hotel building is generally orientated to the north and as the sign is proposed to face west, the sign will only be visible from a small number of areas within the Bank Hotel building
- the HIS at Appendix 7 confirms there will be minimal and acceptable impact on the heritage significance of this item
- the proposal will contribute to the area as the locality is a commercial precinct that supports active frontages, commercial spaces, entertaining businesses, and a busy road environment
- the proposal is consistent with the character of the area given Enmore Road is a busy transport corridor where signage, traffic lights, vehicle lights and noise already affect the Bank Hotel building



Figure 20: VIEW 6: Existing view (Source: Keylan)



Figure 21: VIEW 6: Indicative view (Source: JCDecaux)

***View 7 View of the sign from the west***

View 7 was selected as it represents a viewpoint to the west of the sign.

Visual impacts on commercial, retail and shop top tenants as well as pedestrians and motorists travelling eastbound in this location will be nil as views will be limited to the rear of the sign. Importantly, the rear of the sign exhibits a simple design consisting of black and aluminium framing, specifically designed by Tzannes Architects.

Further to the above, it is anticipated that the sign when viewed from the west will result in limited change to the current environment as it will blend into existing built form.

The sign will not protrude above nearby vegetation and buildings along Enmore Road which are generally 2 to 3 storeys in height.





Figure 22: VIEW 7: Existing view (Source: Keylan)

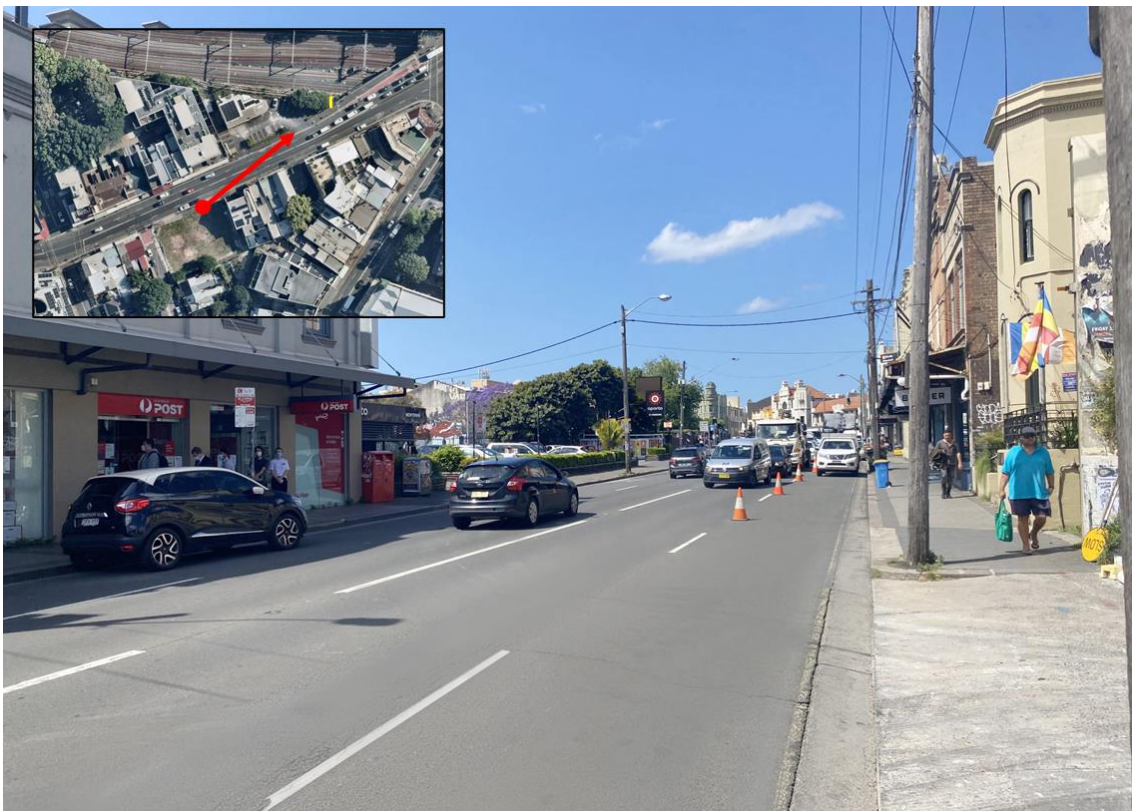


Figure 23: VIEW 7: Indicative view (Source: JCDecaux)

### ***View 8: View of the sign from 8 Enmore Road, Newtown***

View 8 was selected as it represents a viewpoint from the closest residential receiver, 8 Enmore Road, Newtown.

The property at 8 Enmore Road is a medium density (4 storey) shop top housing development which includes six residential units and two commercial premises at ground level.

The property is located in a busy urban environment along a major transport route from Enmore into Newtown. This area is characterised by an eclectic building mix to reflect its location in this inner-city environment.

Our assessment concludes that the visual impact from the proposal on the upper level residential receivers is low, for the following reasons:

- the outdoor private open space provided for the six units is located at the rear of the property, away from Enmore Road (and the proposed sign)
- the Enmore Road frontage provides semi-enclosed balconies (Figure 24 and Figure 25) with limited visual impacts
- the design of each balcony reduces the visibility due to its semi-enclosed design with fixed movable shutters to provide privacy and noise attenuation from Enmore Road (Figure 25)

We note that the photomontage below (Figure 27) is only indicative and was taken from the commercial premise at ground level. Notwithstanding, as outlined above, views of the sign may be possible from the residential balconies of 8 Enmore Road. However, these views will be :

- restricted to oblique views of the structure (partial side and rear) not the advertisements as shown in the photomontage at Figure 27.
- framed by existing landscaping
- are unlikely to impact on broader district views given the distance and height of the residential apartments above street level and signage level.

Based on the above analysis informed by site inspection, our assessment concludes that visual impact is low and does not result in any unacceptable impacts on this property in this locality.



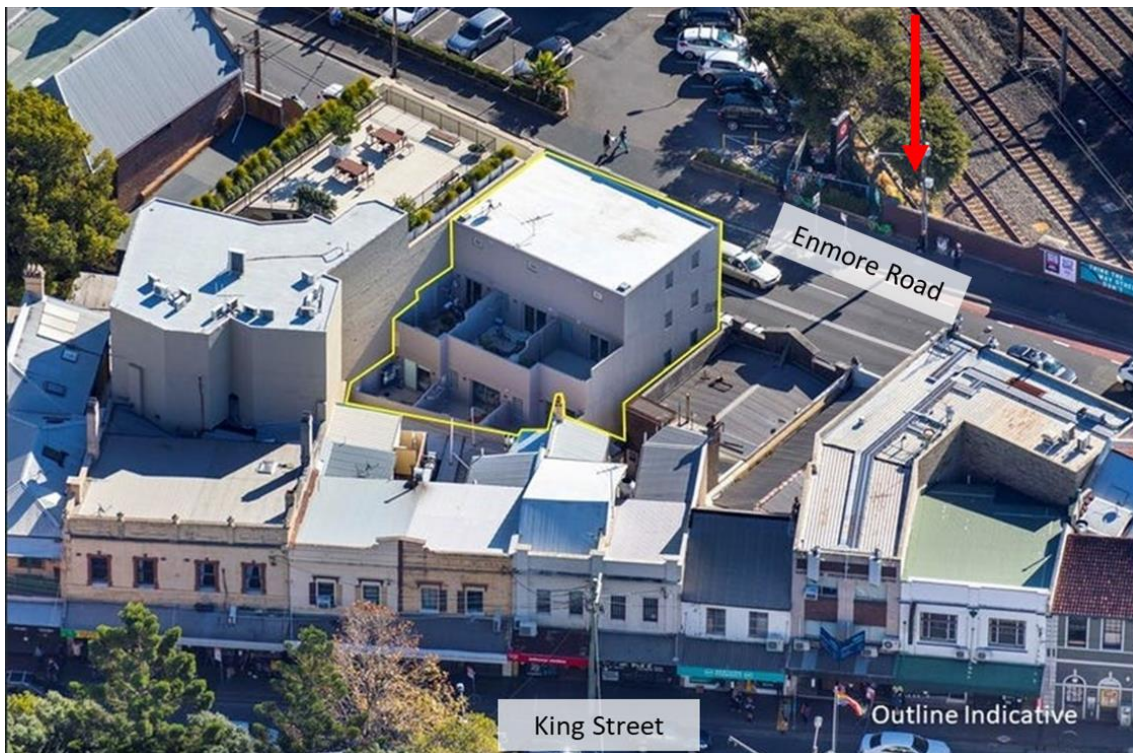


Figure 24: View of private open space at 8 Enmore Rd as viewed from the south. Proposed signage location shown by red arrow. (Base source: Realestate.com)



Figure 25: View towards 8 Enmore Road as seen from the proposed sign location (Source: Keylan)





Figure 26: VIEW 8: Existing view from street level (Source: Keylan)



Figure 27: VIEW 8: Indicative view from street level (Source: JCDecaux)

## 5.4 Assessment Matrix

The below matrix provides an overall assessment of each viewpoint based on the number of viewers, duration of view, distance and visual sensitivity.

Given the orientation and size of the proposed sign, visual impacts of the proposal are considered to be low or nil.

Viewpoint / Location	Distance of View	Visual Sensitivity	Level of Impact
1	70m	Medium	Low
2	20m	Low	Low
3	60-90m	Low	Low
4	50m	Medium	Low
5	30m	Low	Low
6	130m	Medium	Low
7	70m	Low	Nil
8	20m	Medium	Low

Table 3: Assessment Matrix

Rating	Visual Sensitivity	Level of Impact
Low	Not a sensitive receiver	Little change to existing views
Medium	Moderately sensitive receiver (e.g. a park)	Somewhat impacted
High	Highly sensitive receivers (e.g. residential uses, childcare, or heritage item)	Highly impacted

Table 4: Rating definitions

## 6 Conclusion

This VIA supports a DA for the installation of a new digital advertising on Enmore Road, Newtown within the Inner West LGA.

The proposed sign will comprise an advertising display area of approximately 14.93m<sup>2</sup>. The advertising panel on the sign will be visible to motorists travelling westbound on Enmore Road and King Street.

The application also proposes to remove six existing static signs on the inside of the Enmore Road railway bridge. These signs have an overall area of 30m<sup>2</sup>.

Following a detailed analysis of the proposal and the surrounding locality, this VIA found the following:

- the sign meets the requirements of the Industry and Employment SEPP and Signage Guidelines
- the sign will only be viewed at a point in time by pedestrians and patrons of public transport
- a sign will not detract from the heritage significance of surrounding heritage items
- the presence of vegetation along the road corridor will restrict views of the sign from surrounding areas
- an advertising sign will enhance the visual interest of Enmore Road through the presentation of high resolution static digital advertisements
- the sign is compatible with the area given it is a highly commercial precinct which supports an active street frontages
- the proposal will have a low visual impact on the residential receivers
- the sign will not impact the public domain or viewing rights of the 'Welcome to country' sign in Pride Square or the Oporto sign to the west
- the proposal will not result in visual clutter
- the proposal will rationalise signage within the locality which will positively impact the area
- views of the sign from the west will have no impact as only the rear of the sign will be visible, allowing it to integrate with surrounding built form

Following consideration of the above, the proposal will result in acceptable visual impacts and will provide for a signage structure that is compatible with the surrounding streetscape.