

Visual Impact
Assessment



WARRAWONG COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

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CHAPTER

1



INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Introduction

This report supports a Review of Environmental Factors (REF), prepared in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act), the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 (EP&A Regulation) and State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021 (TI SEPP).

The proposal relates to the development of the Warrawong Community Health Centre (WCHC).

A Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) has been required by Health Infrastructure Planning as part of the Review of Environmental Factors (REF) process.

Project description and summary

The project scope for the Warrawong Community Health Centre includes:

- demolition of existing Building D, Building E, and Building H, along with nearby retaining walls, gazebos and pathways
- construction of a new building (part single storey and part two storey) with a gross floor areas of around 2,000m², to accommodate a number of community health related services
- alterations and additions to carparking and access, including expand the south carpark
- ancillary infrastructure and works, including service connections, landscaping, and signage

Site location

Warrawong Community Health Centre (WCHC) is proposed to be located at 89-91 Cowper Street, Warrawong NSW 2052 in Wollongong.

The site area for the project includes the wider Port Kembla Hospital. However, the focus of this Visual Impact Assessment is on the new Community Health Centre building on the northeast of the site. Other works proposed generally include road widening and minor demolition that do not have a broader visual impact.

Methodology

The methodology for this assessment has been developed by Architectus, based on key considerations listed in this document, including:

- the project's planning framework;
- relevant planning principles for view assessment established by the New South Wales Land and Environment Court; and
- Architectus' experience in preparing Visual Impact Assessments for a variety of projects.



Figure 1: Demolition Plan
Source: Warrawong Community Health Centre, COX Architecture and Silver Thomas Hanley (2023)

The site and context

The proposed Warrawong Community Health Centre will be located on the existing site of the Hillside Childcare Centre and other facilities, within the grounds of the Port Kembla Hospital and along Cowper Street. It will feature a new clinic area, support areas and staff workspace amenities.

Site Context

The study site occupies the existing Hillside Childcare Centre and other facilities. Key immediate areas of the site are:

- Directly adjoining to the west of the site is the main hospital buildings, apart of the Port Kembla Hospital.
- The immediate surrounding areas to the north across Cowper Street and east across Fairfax Road are private; consisting of low residential buildings (typically homes).

Local Context

The local context varies over the topography that makes up the area, with the north-west to the site sitting above the north-east to south areas. Key local context includes:

- The Warrawong town centre is located roughly 500m to the south-east of the site along Cowper Street. In 2022 the Wollongong City Council announced a Proposed Street Scape upgrade to the town centre. Improving the pedestrian aspects of the centre; changes include widening the footpaths, creating vegetation verges and allowing for outdoor dining.
- Approximately 700m to the south of the site is Lake Illawarra with a various number of open spaces along the foreshore. These include Kully Bay Sports Complex, Kully Bay Oval, Kully Bay Playground and Kully Bay Park.
- The site is located on the eastern side of a ridge line facing largely southeast across the topography and with limited visibility from the northwest.



The proposal

From a visual impact perspective key features of the proposal include:

- The existing building on the site; being the Hillside Childcare Centre apart of the Port Kembla Hospital, is set to be demolished and then rebuilt to the current proposal that has been put forward. This new building will include clinic areas, support areas and staff workshop amenities. The current proposal is approximately the same height as the existing however we have not quantified this as detailed survey heights of the existing building have not been available
- The existing ground level car park is set to remain with minor changes to the landscape

This is further described through Figures 2-11.



Figure 2: Exterior Perspective
Source: Warrawong Community Health Centre, COX Architecture and Silver Thomas Hanley (2023)

The proposal

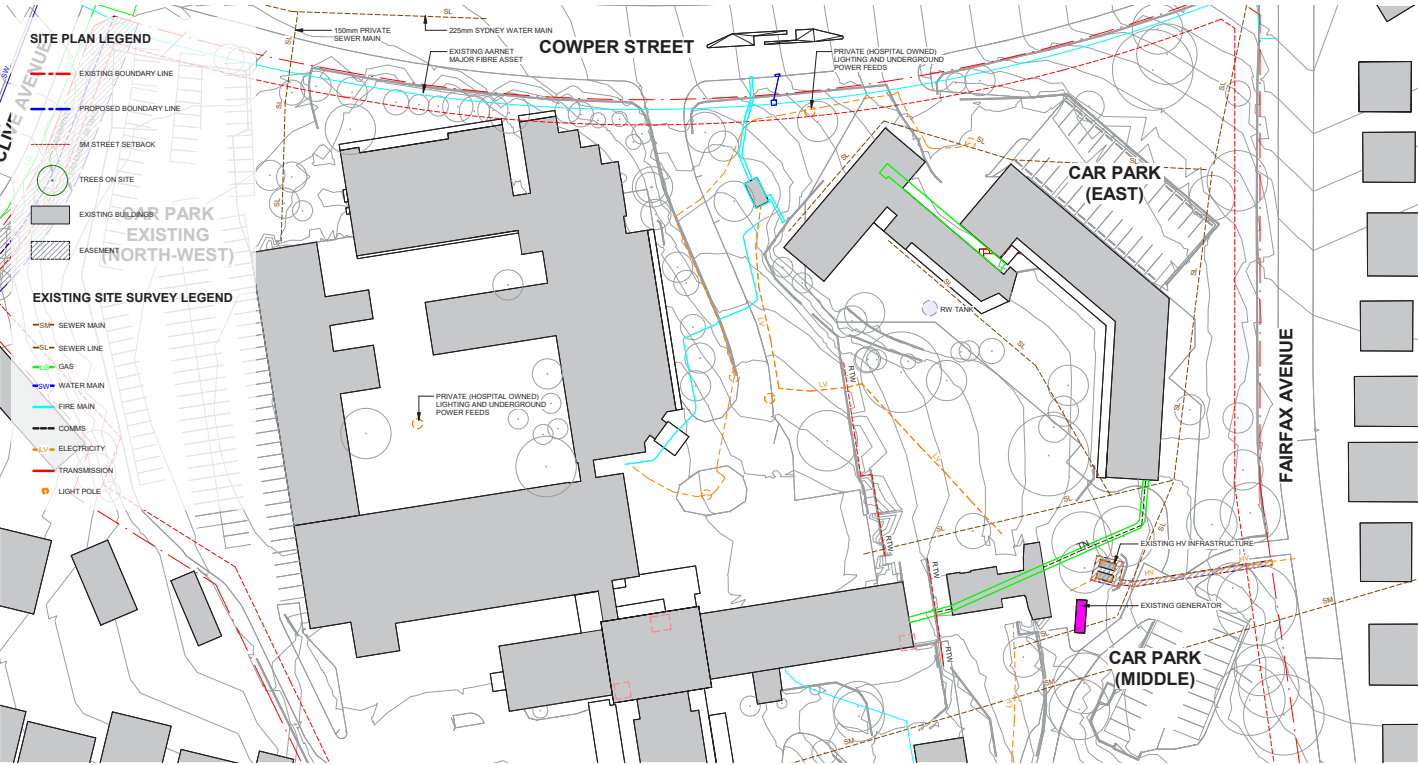


Figure 3: Existing Site Plan
Source: Warrawong Community Health Centre, COX Architecture and Silver Thomas Hanley (2023)



Figure 5: Proposed Ground Floor Plan
Source: Warrawong Community Health Centre, COX Architecture and Silver Thomas Hanley (2023)

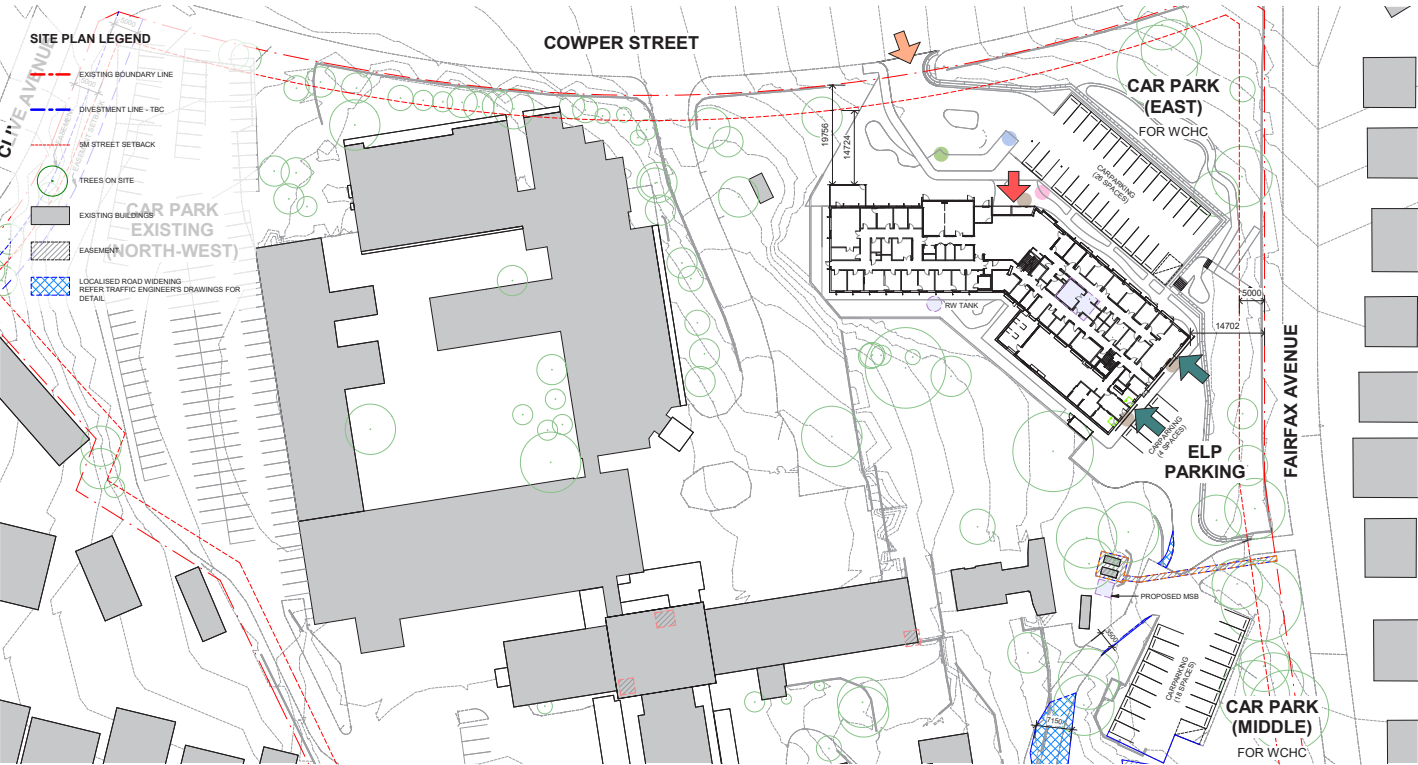


Figure 4: Proposed Site Plan
Source: Warrawong Community Health Centre, COX Architecture and Silver Thomas Hanley (2023)

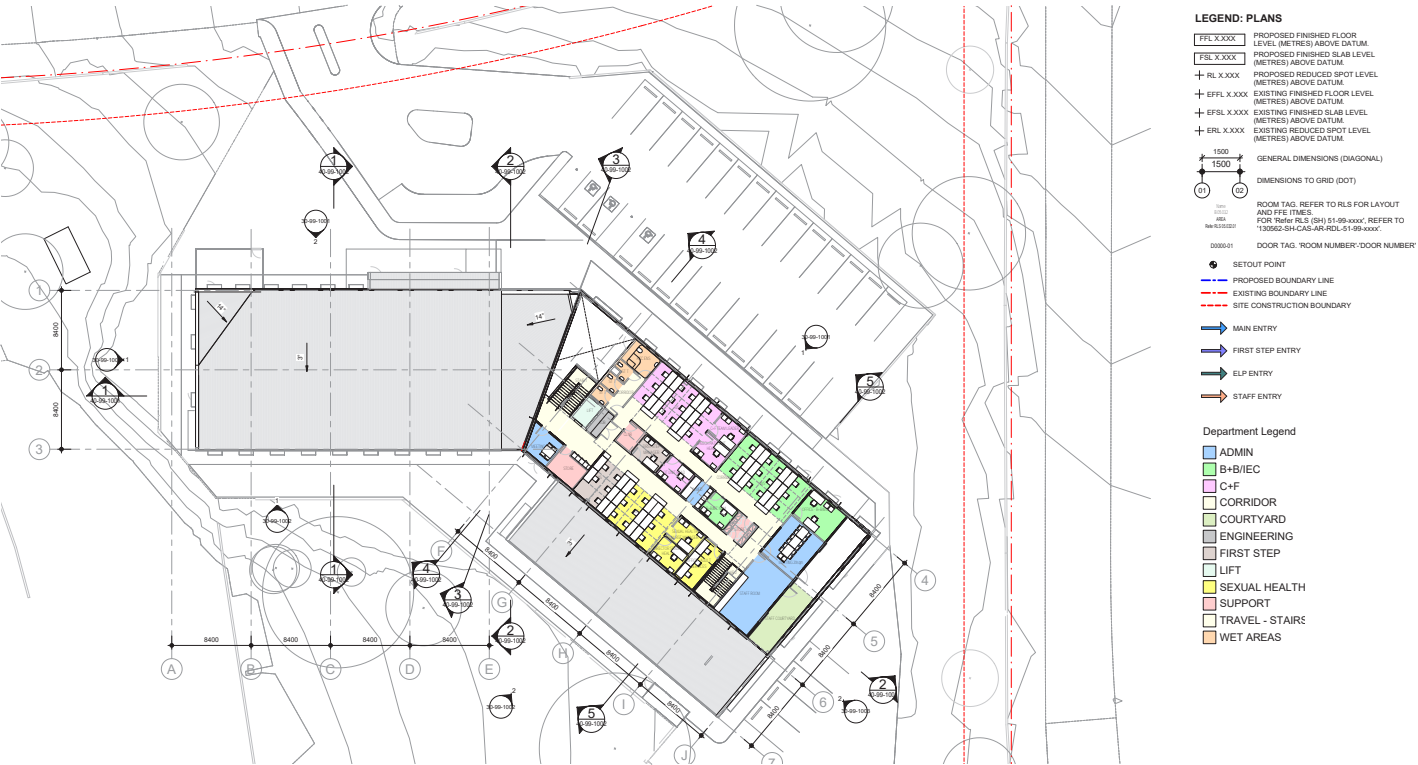


Figure 6: Proposed First Floor Plan
Source: Warrawong Community Health Centre, COX Architecture and Silver Thomas Hanley (2023)

The proposal

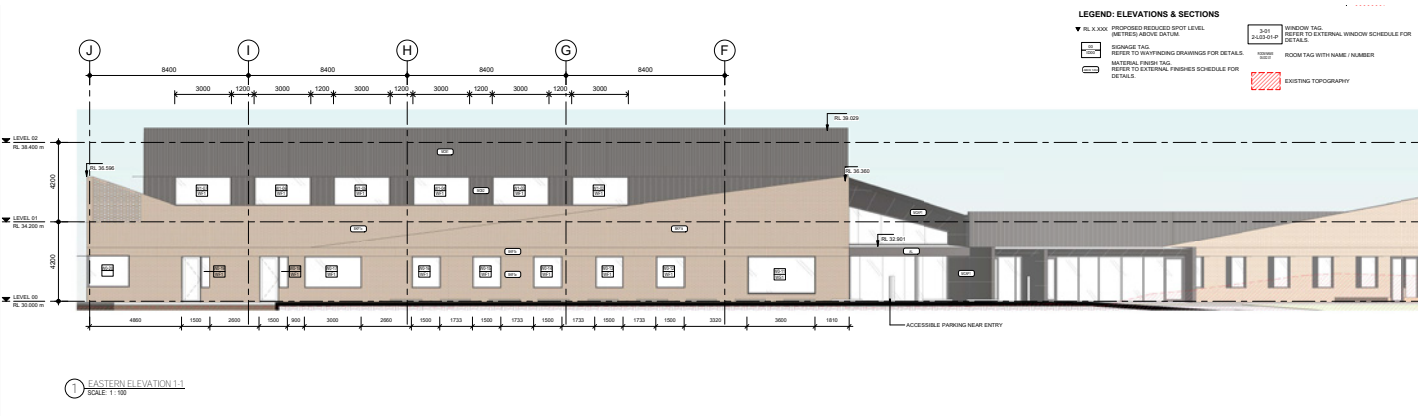


Figure 7: Proposed Eastern Elevation 1-1
Source: Warrawong Community Health Centre, COX Architecture and Silver Thomas Hanley (2023)

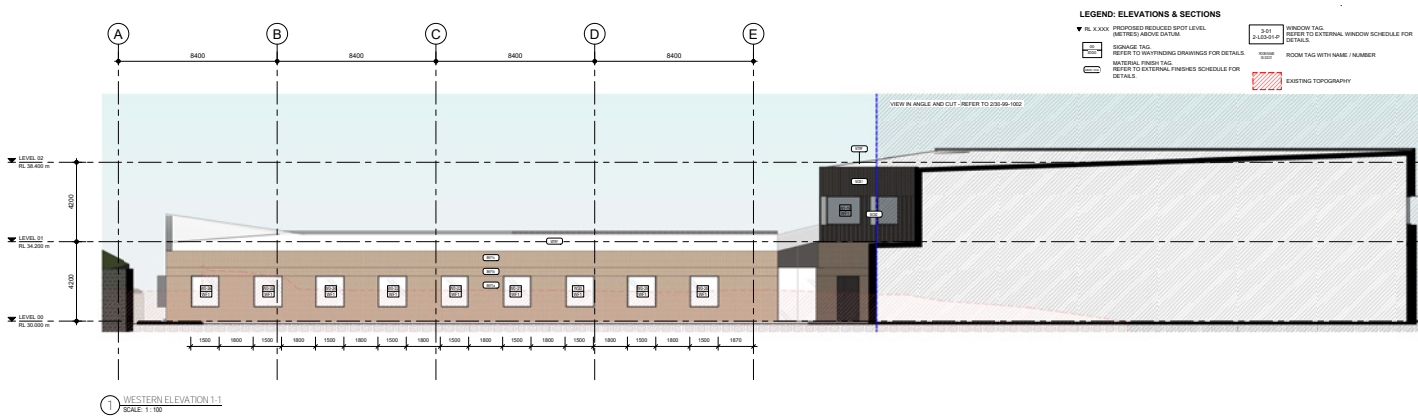


Figure 10: Proposed Western Elevation 1-1
Source: Warrawong Community Health Centre, COX Architecture and Silver Thomas Hanley (2023)

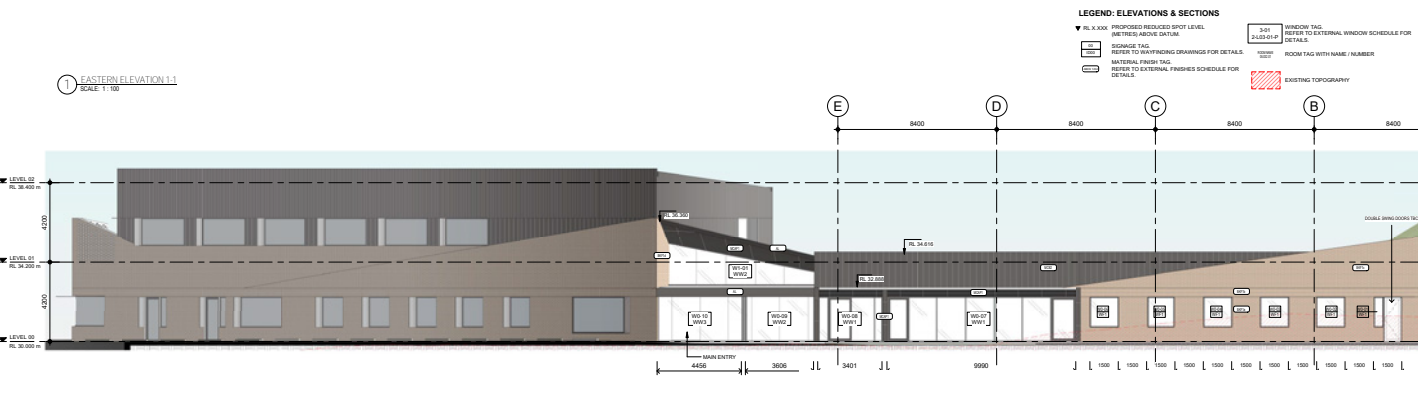


Figure 8: Proposed Eastern Elevation 1-2
Source: Warrawong Community Health Centre, COX Architecture and Silver Thomas Hanley (2023)

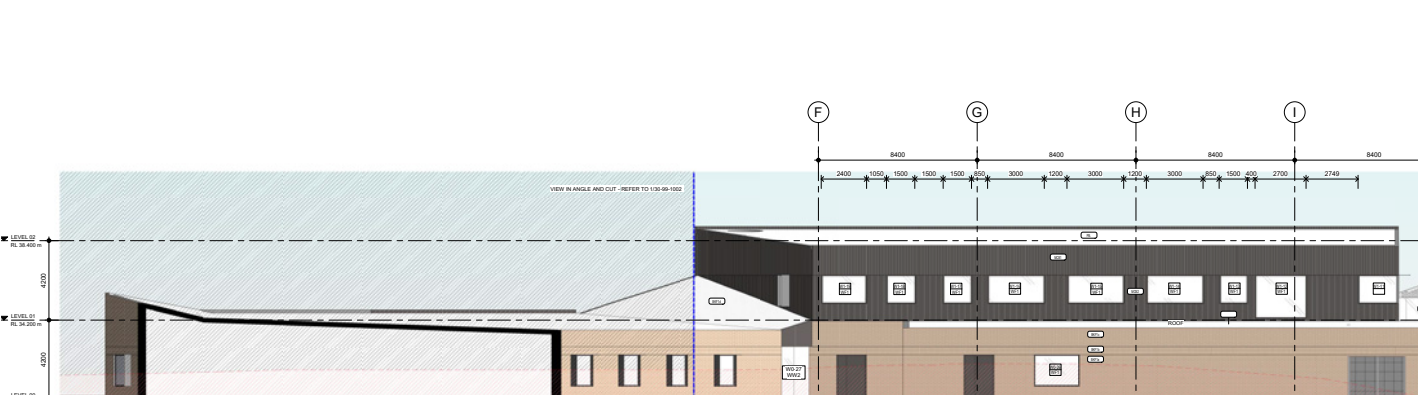


Figure 11: Proposed Western Elevation 1-2
Source: Warrawong Community Health Centre, COX Architecture and Silver Thomas Hanley (2023)

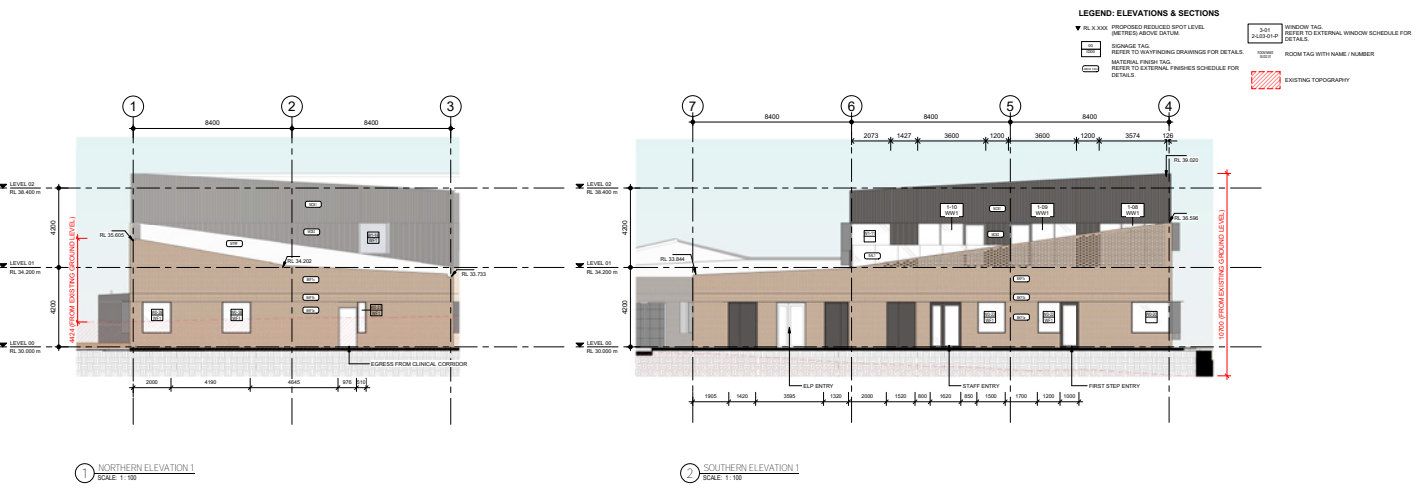


Figure 9: Proposed Northern and Southern Elevation
Source: Warrawong Community Health Centre, COX Architecture and Silver Thomas Hanley (2023)

CHAPTER

2

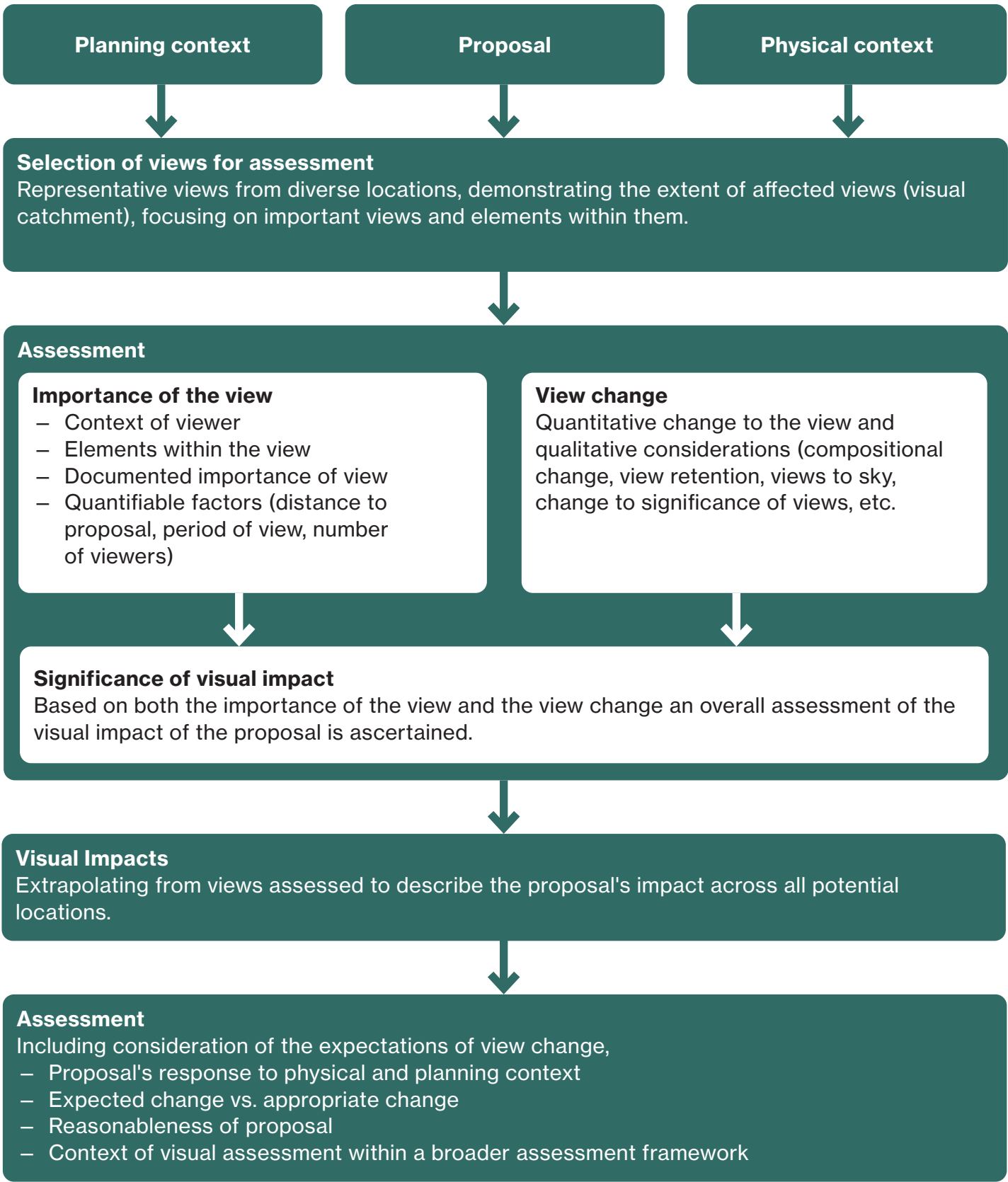
KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR ASSESSMENT

Approach to assessment

The methodology for this assessment has been developed by Architectus based on Architectus' experience in preparing Visual Impact Assessments for a variety of projects and the following key considerations for the project which are further described through this chapter:

- Planning framework for visual and view assessment.
- Land and Environment Court Planning Principles regarding view sharing and visual impact assessment.
- Heritage sensitivity.
- Standards for photography and photomontage.
- Criteria for assessment (architectus).

A general overview of Architectus' process for the assessment of visual impact is described in the diagram adjacent.



Planning framework

Planning framework for visual and view assessment

This section discusses the planning framework pertaining to visual and view assessment matters for the project.

Following is a summary of Health Infrastructure's Review of Environmental Factors (REF requirements, Environmental Planning Instruments (EPIs), policies or guidelines which apply to the site and have specific reference to views and visual impact.

Health Infrastructure’s Review of Environmental Factors (REF) requirements

Health Infrastructure's template REF requests a visual impact assessment when the answer is yes to any of the questions below:

- Are the works visible from residential properties or other land uses that may be sensitive to visual impacts?
- Will the works be visible from the public domain?
- Are the works located in areas of high scenic value?
- Will the works involve night work requiring lighting?

This visual impact assessment considers the visual impacts created in relation to the above questions.

Planning framework

State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021

The State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021 (SEPP 2021) includes provisions specifically relating to development in coastal environment areas (figure 11).

Section 2.10 Coastal environment area [Division 3 Development land within the coastal environment area] identifies the following development principles:
(2) (a) the development is designed, sited and will be managed to avoid an adverse impact referred to in subsection (1), or

(b) if that impact cannot be reasonably avoided - the development is designed, sited and will be managed to minimise that impact, or

(c) if that impact cannot be minimised-the development will be managed to mitigate that impact.

Whilst the site is located within the Coastal environment area there are no provisions relating specifically to views or visual impacts.

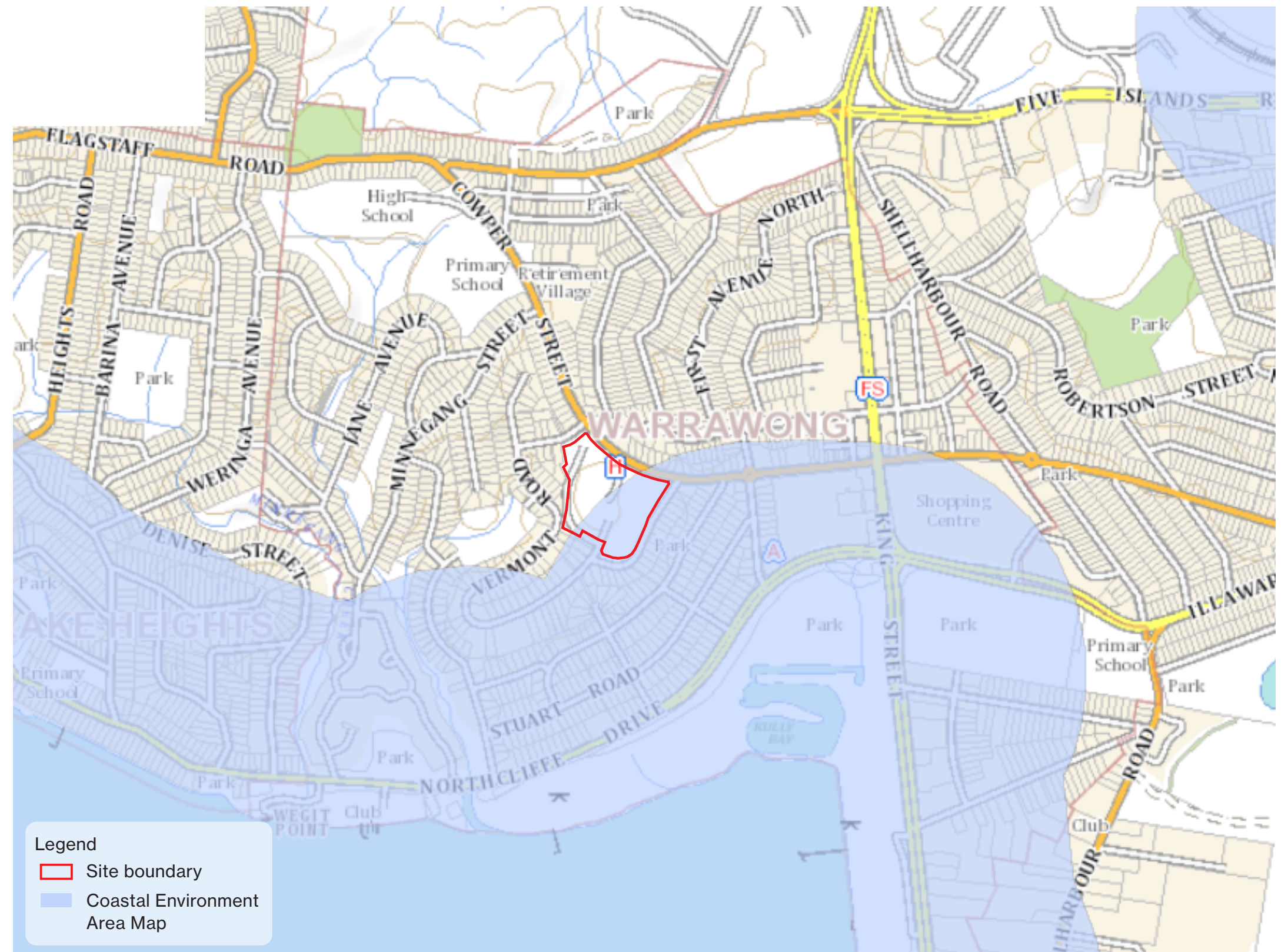


Figure 12: SEPP (Resilience and Hazards) 2021 Coastal Environment Area Map with Architectus edits
Source: State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021

Planning framework

Wollongong Local Environmental Plan 2009

The Wollongong Local Environmental Plan 2009 (Wollongong LEP 2009) does not include any specific controls or objectives specific to visual impact that relate to this site. Key controls are shown in Figures 12-14 below.

The Warrawong Community Health Centre is located within R2 Low Density Residential where hospital facilities are permitted with consent.

It may be noted that houses opposite the site to the north and east along Cowper Street leading to the Warrawong Centre are in a MU1 Mixed Use zone."

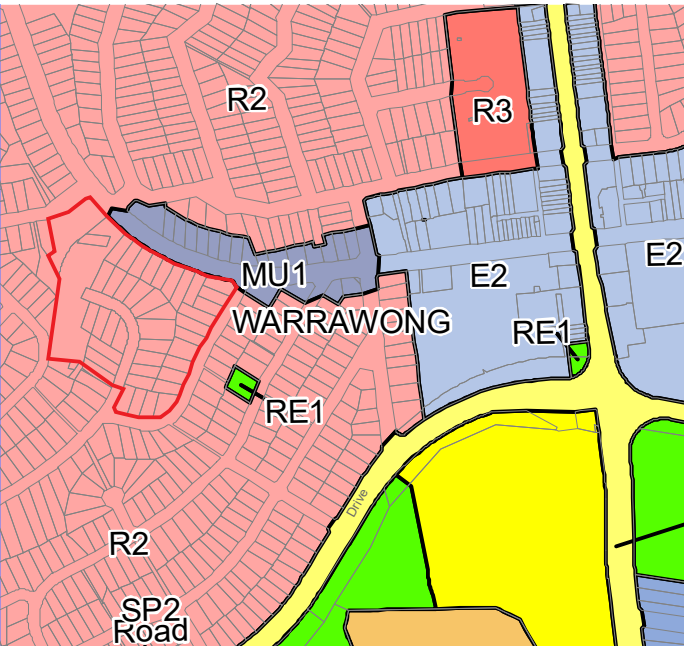


Figure 13: Land Zoning Map Sheet LZN_027
Source: Wollongong Local Environmental Plan 2009 (sheet FSR_027)

- E2 Commercial Centre
- MU1 Mixed Use
- R2 Low Density Residential
- RE1 Public Recreation
- R3 Medium Density Residential
- Site boundary

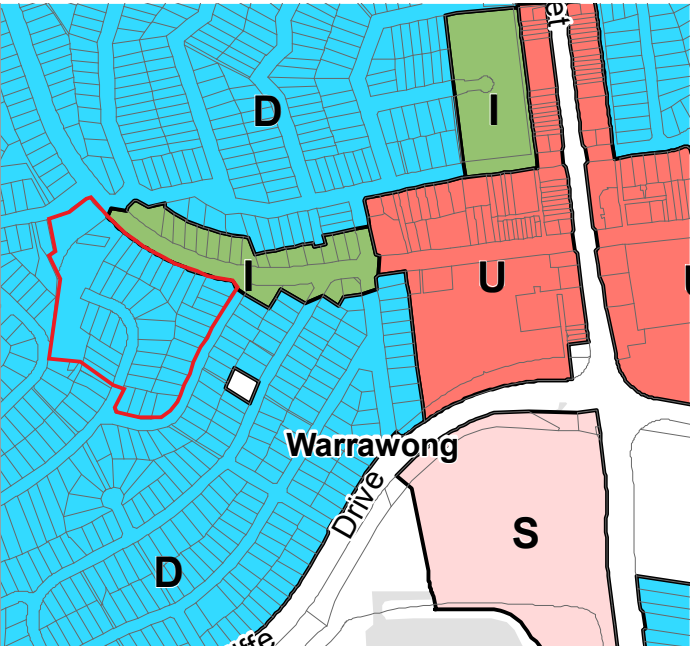


Figure 14: Floor Space Ratio Map Sheet FSR_027
Source: Wollongong Local Environmental Plan 2009 (sheet FSR_027)

- D 0.5
- I 0.75
- U 2.5
- Site boundary



Figure 15: Height of Building Map Sheet HOB_027
Source: Wollongong Local Environmental Plan 2009 (sheet FSR_027)

- J 9
- N 13
- S 24
- Site boundary

Wollongong Development Control Plan 2009

The Wollongong Development Control Plan 2009 (Wollongong DCP 2009) includes no significant provisions relating specifically to views relevant to a proposal of this nature.

Chapter D01 'Character Statements'

The site is located in the 'Warrawong' character area. There is no description of views within the existing character or desired future character statements in these sections.

Planning principles

The Land and Environment Court has established Planning Principles for the assessment of development on views, both from public and private realms.

The Planning Principles assist when making a planning decision, including particularly:

- where there is a void in policy;
- where policies expressed in qualitative terms allow for more than one interpretation; and
- where policies lack clarity.

The assessment of the impact of view loss on public views is established by *Rose Bay Marina Pty Limited v Woollahra Municipal Council and anor [2013] NSWLEC 1046* at 39 - 49.

The principles for view sharing in respect of private views are established in *Tenacity Consulting v Warringah Council [2004] NSWLEC 140* at 25-29.

Public Views - *Rose Bay Marina Pty Limited v Woollahra Municipal Council and anor [2013] NSWLEC 1046*

A consideration of the likely impacts on these public views in relation to the New South Wales Land and Environment Court Planning Principles set out in *Rose Bay Marina Pty Limited v Woollahra Municipal Council and anor [2013] NSW LEC 1046*. In this case, Senior Commissioner Moore set out a number of steps for the consideration of public domain view impacts, which are identified below:

The established planning principle process is as follows:

Identify the scope of the existing views from the public domain (44). This should consider:

- The nature and extent of any existing obstruction of the view;
- Compositional elements of the view;
- What might not be in the view - such as the absence of human structures in the outlook across a natural area;
- Is the change permanent or temporary; or
- What might be the curtilages of important elements within the view.
- Identify the locations in the public domain from which the potentially interrupted view is enjoyed (45);
 - Identify the extent of the obstruction at each relevant location (46);
 - Identify the intensity of public use of those locations and where the enjoyment of the view will be obscured (47);
 - Review any document that identifies the importance of the view to be assessed (48).

The methodology utilised in this VIA is in accordance with the five-step process established by *Rose Bay Marina Pty Limited v Woollahra Municipal Council [2013] NSW LEC 1046*.

Private Views - *Tenacity Consulting v Warringah Council [2004] NSWLEC 140*

A consideration of the likely impacts on these private views in relation to the New South Wales Land and Environment Court Planning Principles set out in *Tenacity Consulting v Warringah Council [2004] NSWLEC*. In this case, Senior Commissioner Roseth set out a number of principles for the consideration of private view impacts, which are discussed individually below, based on the following steps:

- Assessment of views to be affected. At 26: “water views are valued more highly than land views. Iconic (e.g. of the Opera House, the Harbour Bridge or North Head) are valued more highly than views without icons. Whole views are valued more highly than partial views, e.g. a water view in which the interface between land and water is visible is more valuable than one in which it is obscured”.
- Consideration of from what part of the property views are obtained. At 27: “For example the protection of views across side boundaries is more difficult than the protection of views from front and rear boundaries. In addition, whether the view is enjoyed from a standing or sitting position may also be relevant. Sitting views are more difficult to protect than standing views. The expectation to retain side views and sitting views is often unrealistic”.

- Assessment of the extent of the impact. At 28: “this should be done for the whole of the property, not just for the view that is affected. The impact on views from living areas is more significant than from bedrooms or service areas (though views from kitchens are highly valued because people spend so much time in them). The impact may be assessed quantitatively, but in many cases this can be meaningless. For example, it is unhelpful to say that the view loss is 20% if it includes one of the sails of the Opera House. It is usually more useful to assess the view loss qualitatively as negligible, minor, moderate, severe or devastating”.
- Assessment of the reasonableness of the proposal. At 29: “A development that complies with all planning controls would be considered more reasonable than one that breaches them. Where an impact on views arises as a result of non-compliance with one or more planning controls, even a moderate impact may be considered unreasonable. With a complying proposal, the question should be asked whether a more skilful design could provide the applicant with the same development potential and amenity and reduce the impact on the views of neighbours”.

The four step process described above has been incorporated into the methodology in this report.

Strategic context

Warrawong Town Centre Master Plan 2013

The Warrawong Town Centre Master Plan which is located primarily along Cowper Street and is approximately 250m east of the site. The Town Centre Master Plan was submitted in June of 2013. The master plans other key moves include:

- Cowper Street Renewal
- A new Community centre and Library
- Community Outdoor space
- Laneway activation

Stage 1 of the initial implementation of this plan included upgrading the public domain and pedestrian experience in the site. This stage has since been resubmitted, titled Warrawong Streetscape Upgrade or Cowper Street Renewal (figure 15) which was submitted in October 2022.

Stage 2 of the original master plan for the Southern Suburbs Community Centre and Library underwent community engagement and the development of a concept design (figure 16). The Development Application for this was approved in October 2022.



Figure 16: Cowper Street Artist Impressions (Stage 1)
Source: Warrawong Street scape upgrade 2022



Figure 17: Southern Suburbs Community Centre and Library
Source: Our Wollongong 2022



Figure 18: Warrawong Town Centre Master Plan

Source: Warrawong Town Centre Master Plan 2013 (p 6)

Standards for photography

The key used in the photographic industry for approximating the human eye's field of view is a 50mm focal length on a 'full frame' 35mm camera.

For many views this format alone would not provide a clear understanding of the breadth of the view and/or the size of the proposal. In this case a wider-angle view has been used and is noted within the view description. In these cases a comparison to a 50mm focal length lens is also provide through an overlaid 'box' on the view.

See adjacent for an example of how these fields of view compare.



Criteria for assessment

Architectus’ criteria for assessment of visual impact are included adjacent. These are based on the Planning Principles described in the previous chapter and Architectus’ experience in the Assessment of Visual Impact.

- These are divided into two broad categories:
- 1. Importance of the view
 - 2. View change

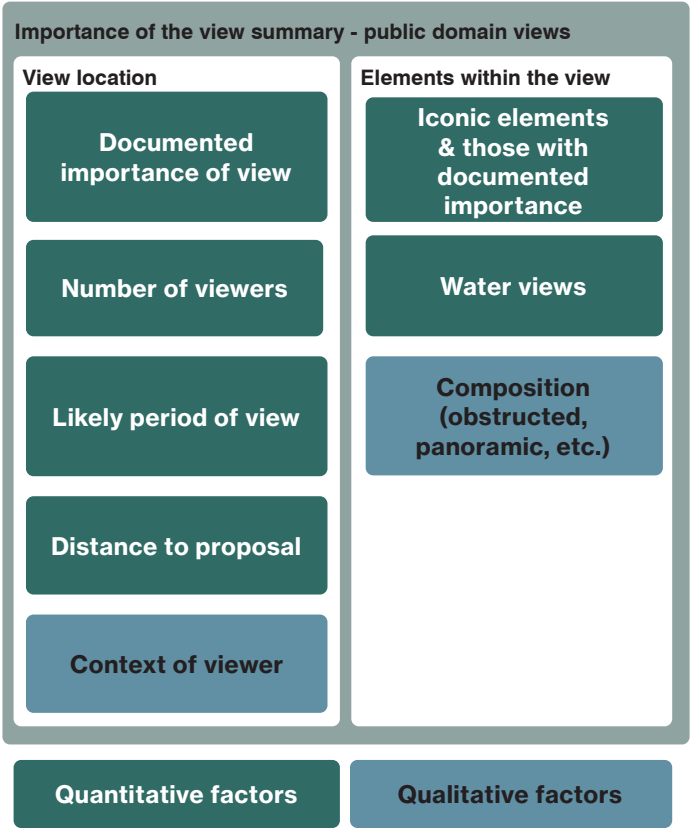
The importance of the view is defined differently for public domain and private views with weighting applied which is consistent with the New South Wales Land and Environment Court Planning Principles.

These criteria have been applied in the assessment of views in the following chapters of this document.

Importance of the view - Public Domain Views

The importance of the view includes consideration of the following factors:

- The importance of the view location, including;
 - Any document that identifies the importance of the view to be assessed;
 - The number of viewers;
 - The likely period of view;
 - The distance to the proposal; and
 - The context of the viewer (whether the view is static or dynamic, obtained from sitting or standing positions, etc.)
- Elements within the view, including:
 - whether iconic elements or water views are present;
 - the existing composition of the view, and any existing obstructions to the view;



Criteria for importance of view - and breakdown into qualitative and quantitative factors

These features are described for each view and a final categorisation of view importance has been produced as a summary. The following table presents examples of how these categorisations are used.

Importance of the view - public domain views

Criteria	
High	Unobstructed views of highly valuable or iconic elements from highly important or highly used locations.
Moderate-High	Generally unobstructed views including important visual elements from well-used locations. The view is regularly used / a high use location with some view importance.
Moderate	Views including elements of moderate importance with little obstruction which are obtained from moderately-well used locations. The view may assist in attracting the public to this location.
Low-Moderate	Views with some important elements which may be partially obstructed or from a less well-used location. The view may be a feature of the location however is unlikely to attract the public to it.
Low	Views from public spaces or streets with little pedestrian use or obstructed views or views with few important elements. Obtaining views is not a focus of using the space.

Some elements which form part of the consideration of view importance are quantitative measures that can be estimated for the purpose of comparison. The table below shows the criteria used in evaluating the relative number of viewers and period of view.

Relative number of viewers

Criteria	
High	High use public spaces and primary walking routes
Moderate	Connector streets and well used public spaces
Low	Low use locations such as urban lanes and local streets

Period of view

Criteria	
High (long-term)	Viewers may sit or stand for extended periods such as park seating or plaza space
Moderate	Viewers may pause for a moment, such as an intersection; see the same view for an extended period whilst moving; or there may be a mix of passing and extended views.
Low (short-term)	Passing views such as those from streets

Criteria for assessment

Importance of the view - Private views

The importance of the view includes the same elements as the importance of public domain views. The location within a residence from which a view is obtained (whether from a sitting or standing position; a living room, bedroom or balcony) provides some further guidance as to how the view is perceived and whether an expectation to retain the view is realistic. For instance, as set out in the Planning Principles from ‘Tenacity Consulting v Warringah (2004/140)’, a sitting view or a view across side boundaries is considered more difficult to protect than a standing view or view across front boundaries.

Importance of the view - private views

Criteria	
High	Uninterrupted views of highly important or iconic elements from standing positions across from front or rear boundaries.
Moderate-High	Primary views of important elements from locations which may have an expectation of retention such as across front boundaries.
Moderate	Views of some important elements which may have some lower expectation of retention, such as those across side boundaries, seated views or partial views, views from bedrooms and service areas.
Low-Moderate	Views with selected important elements, partially obstructed views or views with some important elements where there is low expectation of retention.
Low	Views with few important elements, highly obstructed views or views where there can be little expectation of retention.

View change rating

The view change is a qualitative assessment which includes consideration of:

- the quantitative extent to which the view will be obstructed or have new elements inserted into it by the proposed development;
- whether any existing view remains to be appreciated (and whether this is possible) or whether the proposal will make the existing view more or less desirable, or locations more or less attractive to the public;
- any significance attached to the existing view by a specific organisation;
- any change to whether the view is static or dynamic;

Some elements which form part of the consideration of view change are quantitative measures that can be estimated for the purpose of comparison. The tables below show the criteria used in evaluating these.

Prominence

Criteria	
High	The proposal is dominant in the composition of the view
Moderate	The proposal is visible and clearly noticeable in the view
Low	The proposal will not be noticeable within the view without scrutiny.

Significance of elements obstructed

Criteria	
High	Obstructs elements of significance in the view such as views of iconic elements, water views or other elements of identified importance
Moderate	Obstructs large areas of sky or small areas of important elements in the view
Low	Minor/no impact to the sky with no obstruction of important elements

A description of the visual impact rating for each view has been provided, with a final categorised assessment of the extent of visual impact provided under the following categories:

Overall extent of view change

Criteria	
High	The proposal obscures iconic elements or elements identified as highly significant within the existing view.
Moderate-High	The proposal is prominent within the view, changing the quality of the existing view or obscuring elements of significance within the view.
Moderate	The proposal obscures some elements of importance within the existing view or is highly prominent within the view.
Low-Moderate	The proposal is prominent in the view and/or obscures minor elements within the view.
Low	The proposal is visible within the view however does not impact on any elements of significance within the view.
None/Negligible	The proposal will not be noticeable within the view without scrutiny.

The approach taken is generally conservative in its consideration of these views for the purpose of highlighting maximum potential impacts for consideration in terms of acceptability.

Overall significance of visual impact

Overall significance of visual impact assesses the nature of the proposed change factoring in Importance of view and view change.

The matrix below shows the methodology used in evaluating visual impact significance.

Visual impact matrix

Importance of view	High					
		None/Negligible	Low	Low-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate - High
		View change				

Significance of visual impact

High	
Moderate/High	
Moderate	
Low/Moderate	
Low	
Negligible	

A high extent of visual impact is not necessarily unacceptable. This may be the case when a proposal contributes to the desired future character of an area that may be different to the existing character. The overall acceptability of the proposal and its visual change is discussed in the final chapter of this document.

CHAPTER

3



VISUAL ANALYSIS

Methodology

This chapter describes the initial consideration of a broad range of views of the proposal. These views consider important locations and principles identified in relevant planning policy required to be addressed, based on the criteria set out in this document.

This chapter is structured as follows:

- Visual catchment, setting out a broad consideration of potential visibility based on topography and landscape features.
- Points of interest, describing key public domain locations of importance including existing places and those planned, as well as private views that overlook the site
- Public domain views - eleven (11) views have been shown in this section from a variety of locations, grouped as follows:
 - General Public Views
 - 1. Cowper Street
 - Open Space Public Views
 - 2. Kully Bay Sports and Oval
- Private views - seventeen (17) views have been shown in this section from a variety of locations, grouped as follows:
 - 3. Cowper and Greene Street
 - 4. Fairfax and Vermont Road

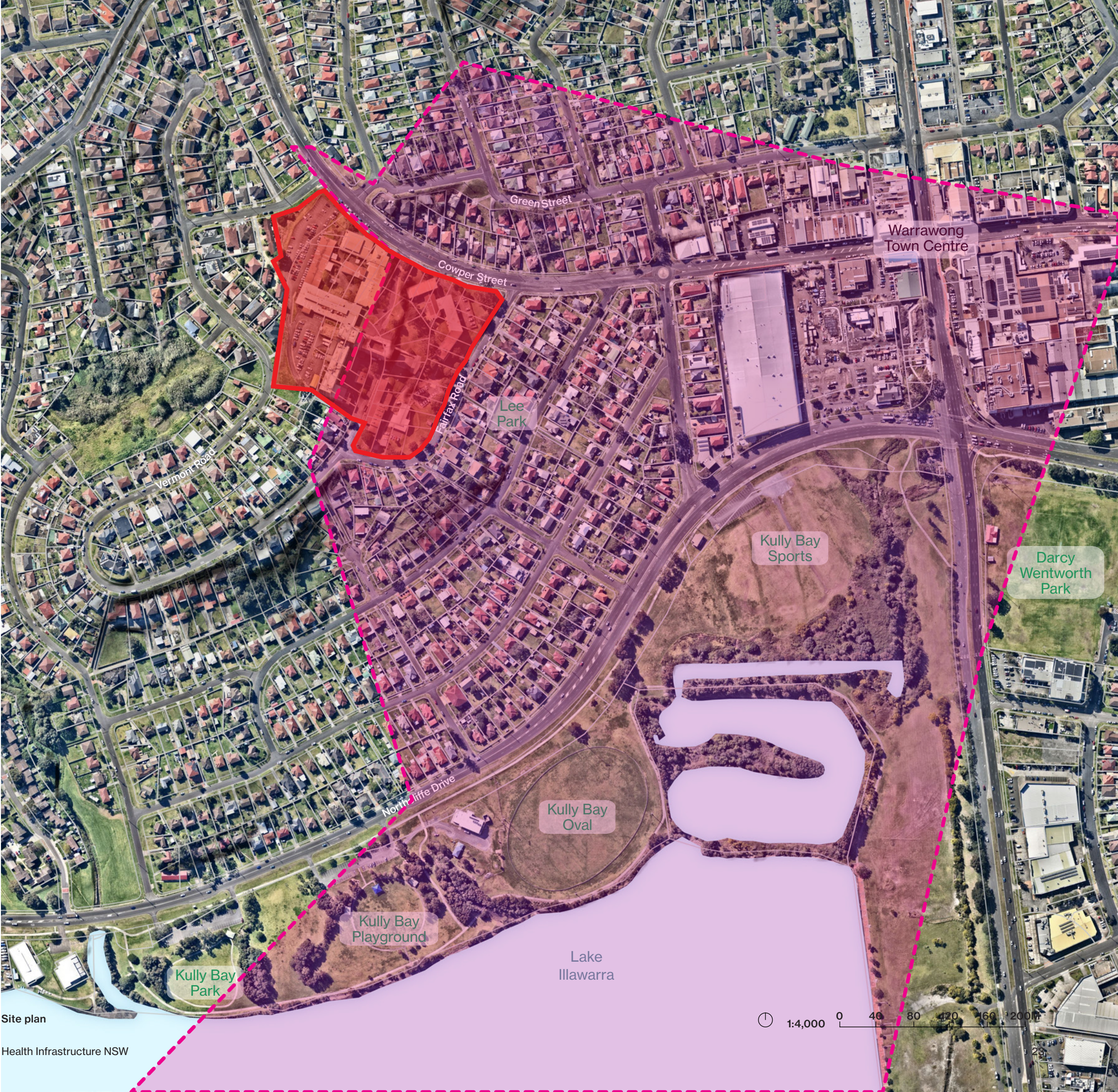
Following this consideration, no views have been identified with potential for significant visual impact, as per guidelines in the Review of Environmental Factors (REF) that would result in a more detailed photomontage assessment being required.

Visual catchment

The proposal's potential visual catchment includes a range of areas around the Warrawong area including along Lake Illawarra.

This work focusses on the local visual catchment which is most likely to be affected by any view change.

- Legend
- Site boundary
 - Approx. maximum extent of visibility / visual catchment (ground level views)



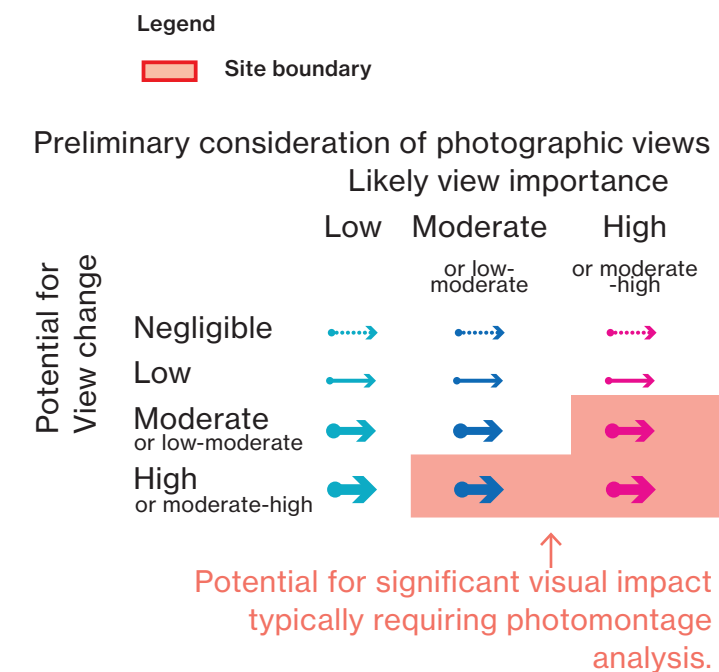
Public domain views

Views have been divided into the following categories, discussed over the following pages:

- 1. Warrawong Town Centre
- 2. Kully Bay Sports and Oval

The view locations photographed are shown adjacent together with a preliminary categorisation of their importance and potential for view change. This is based on the criteria for assessment described in the previous chapter of this document.

Categorisation adjacent is based on the photograph and consideration of design only, typically with a conservative estimate that may be refined through detailed analysis if required.



Public domain views

General Public Views

1. Cowper Street

The views adjacent are provided from the locations along Cowper Street, focusing on those within the Warrawong Town Centre for all views except for TC1 which is approaching the site from the west. The Warrawong Town Centre services majority of the southern Wollongong region as it is home to the Warrawong Plaza (retail hub). The town centre includes multiple retail, commercial and restaurant/cafes along Cowper Street. This area is subject to a 2013 Master Plan for the Town Centre. The Cowper Streetscape Renewal proposed by Council was consulted on in late 2022 and proposes footpath widening, opportunities for outdoor dining, landscape and improved pedestrian access which will increase the pedestrian movement and time spent along the street.

Importance of the views

Views TC2-TC6 are considered to have a low-moderate importance as there are pedestrians walking along this space which face the site directly however the view itself is not highly significant, focussing on a hillside with some trees already partially interrupted by buildings. TC1 has a moderate importance as a view seen by many drivers approaching Warrawong from the West.

View change

The proposal will be replacing the existing building and will be approximately the same height (however we have not quantified this as detailed survey heights of the existing building have not been available). Therefore the view change is anticipated to be low or negligible.

Legend

- -> Approximate location of proposal



TC1



TC2



TC3



TC4



TC5



TC6

Public domain views

Open Space Public Views

2. Kully Bay Sports and Oval

The views adjacent are provided from the Kully Bay Sports fields and the Kully Bay Oval. The public open space sits along Lake Illawarra and services the local community. These areas are well maintained and used for both sports and leisure.

Importance of the views

Generally the views from Kully Bay Sports fields and Kully Bay Oval towards the site have a low-moderate importance. While the parks are public and have a range of users, generally those seeking to obtain a view will be facing in the opposite direction, south towards Lake Illawarra rather than towards the site.

View change

The proposal is considered to be a negligible view change in all views as it will be replacing the existing building and will be approximately the same height (however we have not quantified this as detailed survey heights of the existing building have not been available).



KB1



KB2



KB3



KB4



KB5

Legend

- -> Approximate location of proposal

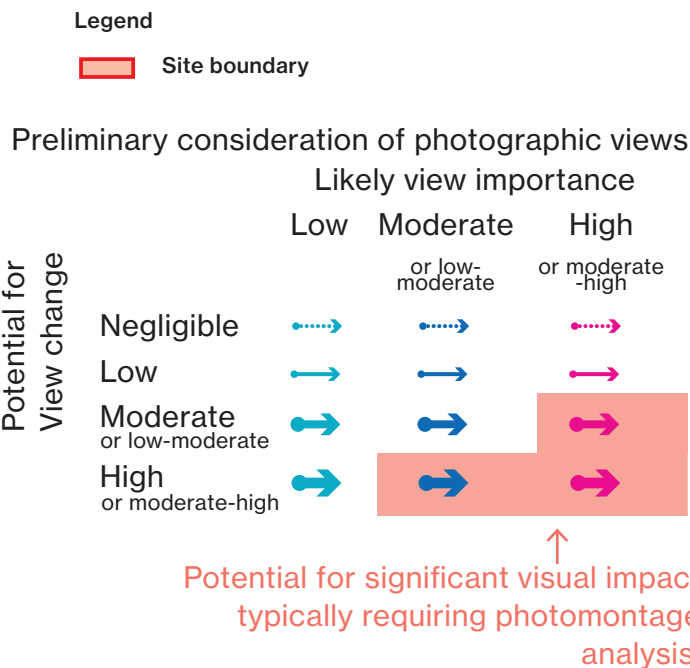
Private views

Views have been divided into the following categories, discussed over the following pages:

- 3. Cowper and Greene Street
- 4. Fairfax and Vermont Road

The view locations photographed are shown adjacent together with a preliminary categorisation of their importance and potential for view change. This is based on the criteria for assessment described in the previous chapter of this document.

Photographs from the public domain have been used to understand private views as access has not been obtained into private properties. The discussion and categorisation of views seeks to consider the impacts on the relevant properties, not just as shown in the photograph.



Private views - locations considered

Private views

3. Cowper and Greene Street

The views adjacent are provided from Cowper and Greene Street which are made up of detached houses. Greene Street has low use by vehicles and pedestrians, whereas Cowper Street is a major road as it leads the surrounding north-western areas to the Warrawong Town Centre.

Importance of the views

Views S1, S2 from Greene Street see the site within a horizon setting which has greater importance than other views which are across the street only. Views from inside these properties may be slightly elevated from those photographed from the street. These are considered of moderate importance. Views S3, S7, and S8 are oblique views which are not seen from the front of properties and thus are of a low importance.

Views S4, S5, and S6 are generally of low-moderate importance as they are direct from the front of properties and enjoy some view to significant trees at the front of the site

View change

As the proposal will replace the existing building and will be approximately the same height (however we have not quantified this as detailed survey heights of the existing building have not been available). The extent of view change is considered to be low-moderate in all views.

Legend

- -> Approximate location of proposal



S1



S2



S3



S4



S5



S6



S7



S8

Private views

4. Fairfax and Vermont Road

The views adjacent are provided from Fairfax and Vermont Road which are made up of detached houses. Fairfax and Vermont Road are both considered to be minor roads.

Importance of the views

The primary view from these properties is generally to the south or southeast where they enjoy elevated views towards Lake Illawarra and neighbouring ridgelines. For the majority of properties, views towards the site are also oblique (generally obtainable only from the front yard of properties) except for R6, R7 and R8 which face the site directly. The view is generally a short range prospect with quality given to the existing broad, green, and treed setbacks. The view importance is generally low from all views except for R6, R7 and R8 where it is low-moderate.

View change

Whilst these views will be impacted it is important to take into consideration that the views will alter but no significant visual elements will be removed. As the proposal will be replacing the existing building and will be approximately the same height (however we have not quantified this as detailed survey heights of the existing building have not been available). The green setbacks and existing trees will generally be maintained. The view change is generally considered to be low-moderate.

Legend
- -> Approximate location of proposal



R1



R2



R3



R4



R5



R6



R7



R8

CHAPTER

4

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Conclusion

Purpose of report

This View Analysis and Visual Impact Assessment has been prepared by Architectus to support the Review of Environmental Factors (REF) for Health Infrastructure relating to the development of the Warrawong Community Health Centre (WCHC).

The methodology for this assessment has been developed by Architectus based on the planning framework, relevant planning principles for view assessment established by the New South Wales Land and Environment Court and experience in preparing Visual Impact Assessments for a variety of projects.

Summary of impacts - public domain views

The proposal's greatest impacts will be a low change to moderately important views along Cowper Street, both from the town centre to the east and approaching the site from the west. The proposal's impact is largely limited due to it being approximately the same height in comparison to the existing Childcare building (however we have not quantified this as detailed survey heights of the existing building have not been available), its distance and the retention of significant trees on site.

The proposal is found to have a negligible change on a range of other moderately important views in the vicinity including other locations in Warrawong Town Centre, and those to the south within Kully Bay Sports and Oval where the change is similarly limited and the predominant orientation of views is in the opposite direction towards Lake Illawarra.

Summary of impacts - private views

The proposal's greatest impact is found to be low-moderate or moderate view change on moderately important views from a range of buildings that face the site directly including approximately:

- Seven houses on Cowper Street (300-312 Cowper Street). These sites face the proposal across Cowper Street. The green front setback of the existing site which will be retained is an element of some value from these locations. These houses are within the mixed use MU1 zone where some change may be anticipated in the future.
- Five houses on Greene Street (40-46 Greene Street and 1 Second Avenue N). These sites will view the proposal from an elevated edge and have distant views past and adjacent to the site.
- Seven houses on Fairfax Road (1-13 Fairfax Road). The primary view for many of these properties is to the opposite side of the property (rear boundaries) where the topography drops and allows for distant views.

The proposal will be clearly visible from all of these locations however as its impact will be limited due to it being approximately the same height in comparison to the existing Childcare building (however we have not quantified this as detailed survey heights of the existing building have not been available), and retains current significant green setbacks and key trees.

A range of additional houses on the same streets will experience a low impact as their views across the subject site are oblique (generally only obtainable from front porches or close to windows) rather than directly through front, rear or side windows.

Conclusions and reasonableness of proposal's visual impact

As described above, the impacts of the proposal on both public and private views have been found to be limited. With public views having at most a low change to moderately important views and private views having at most a moderate change to moderately important views. While the proposal will be visible from residential properties and areas of the public domain with some sensitivity, the impact of the proposal is limited. This is largely because the proposal will be approximately the same height in comparison to the existing Childcare building (however we have not quantified this as detailed survey heights of the existing building have not been available) and retaining setbacks and key trees.

Given the above it is considered that the visual impact created by the proposal is appropriate and acceptable.

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