

# Visual Impact Assessment

Digital Advertising Signage  
City West Link Road, Lilyfield



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

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# 1 Introduction

This Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) has been prepared by *Keylan Consulting Pty Ltd* (Keylan) on behalf of JCDecaux to accompany a development application (DA) for the installation of a digital advertising sign on the northern side of City West Link Road, Lilyfield.

The proposed development comprises the installation of a new, doubled sided monopole digital advertising sign located at the City West Link Road, Lilyfield. The new digital advertising sign provides:

- advertising display area of 14.93m<sup>2</sup>
- visual screen size of 14.16m<sup>2</sup>
- the continued display of illuminated advertisements
- a minimum 10 second dwell time for message changes
- a maximum night time luminance of 200 cd/m<sup>2</sup>

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>Executive Summary</b>	An overarching summary of the findings and conclusions of the assessment contained within this VIA.
<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 considering the assessment of the proposal.

Table 1: Report Structure



## 2 The site and locality

### 2.1 Site description

City West Link Road is state classified road (MR650). City West Link Road is a long-established transport corridor, catering for motorists travelling in a general east-west alignment.

The subject site is located adjacent to the City West Link Road, within the curtilage of the Sydney Light Rail corridor. There is a pedestrian pathway on the southern elevation of City West Link Road. There is no pedestrian access on or to the northern elevation of the road.

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



Figure 1: Site Context (Source: Near Maps)

The road overpass as viewed from both directions of the City West Link Road is shown in Figure 2 and 3. There are no existing advertising signs located in the proposed location.



Figure 2: Existing Street view - westbound (Source: JCDecaux)

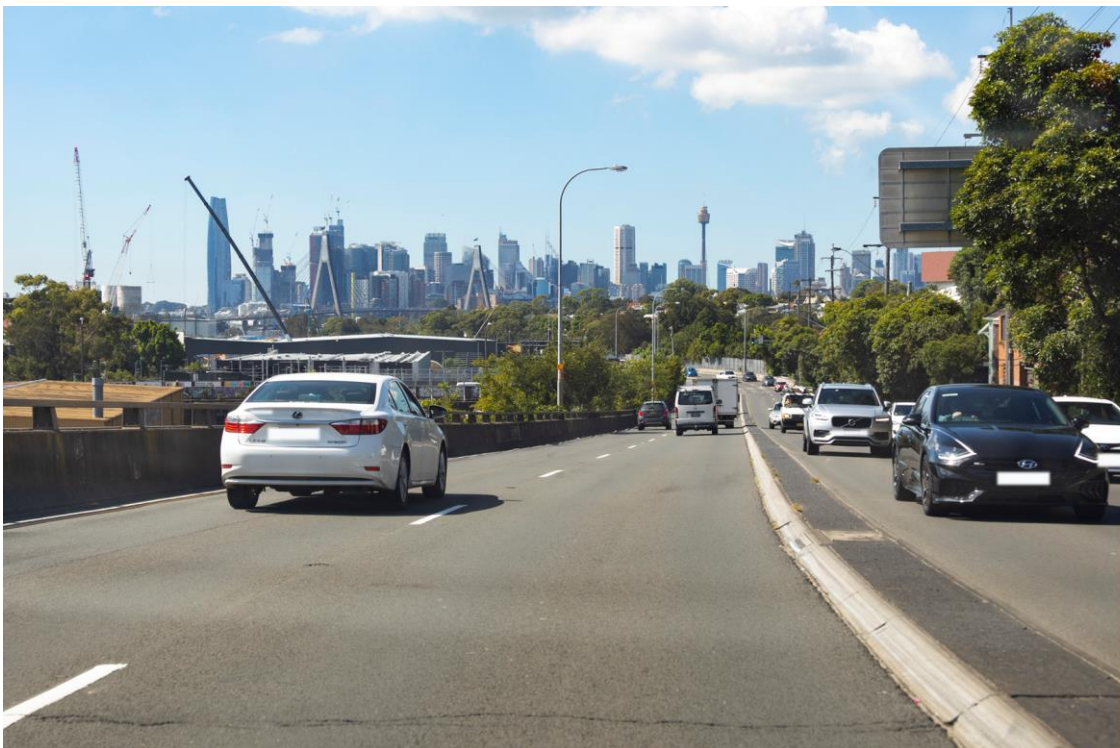


Figure 3: Existing Street view - eastbound (Source: JCDecaux)

## **2.2 Surrounding locality**

The proposed digital advertising sign will be located within an established Sydney Trains Light Rail corridor and visible from an established TfNSW Road Corridor to east and westbound traffic.

Development surrounding the site and in proximity to the road corridor includes a mix of light industrial and business development to the north-east and low-density residential housing to the south.

## **2.3 Existing Signage Environment**

There are two existing landscape, digital monopole advertising signs located approximately 300 metres and 450 metres east of the proposal. One sign faces west and is visible to eastbound traffic and one faces east and is visible to westbound traffic.

The proposed sign that is the subject of this report is of a similar nature, however, is of different proportion and size to these nearby existing signs. Both nearby signs are owned and operated by JCDecaux.



### 3 The Proposal

The proposal involves the installation of a digital advertising monopole sign, located on the northern side of City West Link Road, also known as Brenan Street in Lilyfield.

The development is summarised in Table 2 below.

Development Aspect	Description
Development summary	Installation of a new, double sided digital advertising sign
Signage location	The sign is proposed on the northern elevation of the City West Link Road in Lilyfield. The sign is proposed to be oriented to face both east and westbound traffic.
Advertising display area	14.93m <sup>2</sup> (4.708m x 3.172m)
Visual Screen Size	14.16m <sup>2</sup> (4.608m x 3.072m)
Road clearance from ground level to the sign	6.88 m clearance to City West Link Road
Dwell time	Minimum dwell time of 10 seconds
Signage exposure	The viewing area of the proposed digital sign is from approximately 160 metres away for vehicles travelling eastbound and 230 metres for vehicles travelling westbound.
Illumination	The digital signage is illuminated using LEDs installed within the front face
Consent time period	15 years
Existing signage	None

Table 2: Development summary

An indicative image of the sign, as viewed from City West Link Road is provided below.

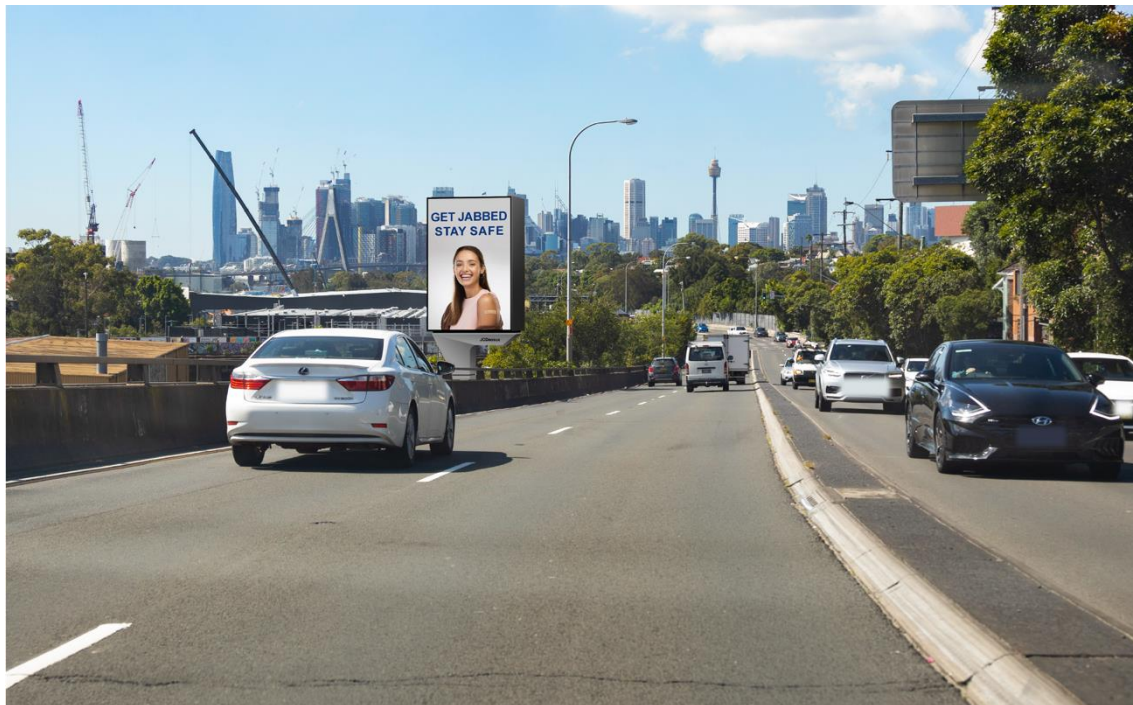


Figure 4: Indicative view from City West Link - eastbound (Source: JCDecaux)



## 4 Methodology

This VIA has been informed by a site visit undertaken on the 5 April 2022 and utilises photographs taken on this date. 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 sign 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 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 which are summarised in Section 5.4 of this report.

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:

- the 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

Additionally, as the DA is accompanied by a specialist Lighting Impact Assessment, visual impacts associated with the illumination of the proposed sign has not been considered as part of this VIA.

## 5 Assessment

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

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

*Chapter 3 – Advertising and Signage of 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 provides assessment criteria which guides the assessment of visual impacts arising from signage.

Schedule 5 of the 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 railway corridor and is orientated to present to City West Link which is a road corridor
- the proposal will not obscure or compromise any important views
- the proposal does not dominate the skyline as it is a consistent height with other signage and infrastructure along the City West Link and railway corridor
- the area of the proposal is appropriate as it will contribute to the visual interest of the surrounding streetscape as the sign represents an innovative form of advertising
- the proposal is compatible with the scale, proportion and characteristics of the site

### 5.2 Visual Catchment

The proposed sign faces the City West Link Road and will be visible from traffic and pedestrians travelling east and westbound. The proposed sign will be visible from properties containing low-density residential dwellings located to the south of the site.



Figure 5 Visual Catchment (Source: Near map)

The character of the visual catchment can be described as:

- a transport corridor, being located on the northern of a classified road (City West Link) and above the light railway line
- railway yard and industrial storage area
- low density residential for areas within the visual catchment to the south

The proposal is considered to be consistent with the visual character of the area as it is primarily a transport corridor. There are limited sensitive receivers within the visual catchment as the topography of the area and existing vegetation acts as a screening mechanism.

As addressed in Section 2.3, there is limited signage within the vicinity of the site, excluding road safety signs. These signs are suitably separated which ensures the proposal will not result in any visual clutter within the locality.

The viewpoints identified below within the visual catchment have been identified to assess visual impacts.

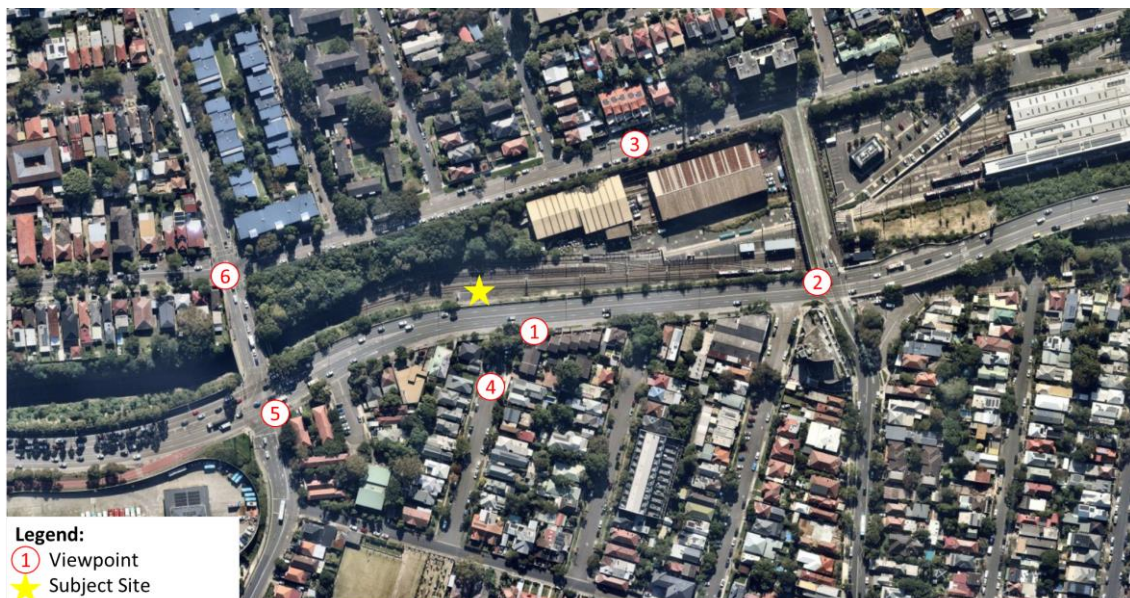


Figure 6: Viewpoints (Base source: Near Map)

### **5.3 Assessment of Viewpoints**

#### ***View 1: Southern side of City West Link Road***

View 1 was selected as it represents the view from closest residential property receivers located to the south of the proposed sign, and also identifies the viewpoint from road users, within the visual catchment. It is anticipated that the only residential receivers on the southern side of the City West Link Road, will be the dwellings located with a frontage to the City West Link Road.

The view from the residential properties fronting the City West Link will be largely obscured due to the dense vegetation along the road frontage, as identified in Figures 9 and 10. Some of these dwellings are also screened by retaining walls and security fencing which further minimises visual impacts.

Additionally, these dwellings are oriented north-south, and therefore will provide limited view lines towards the advertising sign, which faces east-west. Potential impacts as a result of the illumination are limited to light spill which can be mitigated through baffles and adjustable illumination as detailed within the Lighting Impact Assessment (Appendix 4).

Based on our site inspection and analysis, it is considered that residential dwellings located further south of the City West Link will have no direct sightlines towards the sign due to the fall of land, the curving nature of the road and the residential properties located to the north, effectively screening the view lines towards the sign.

On the basis of the above, the potential visual impacts as a result of the proposed signage are considered minor.





Figure 7: Existing view (Source: Keylan)



Figure 8: Proposed view (Source: JCDecaux)





Figure 9 Existing view from street frontage (eastbound) (Source: Keylan)



Figure 10: Existing screening on the southern side of City West Link Road (eastbound) (Source: Keylan)

### ***View 2: Catherine Street Intersection***

View 2 was selected as it provides context of the sign from the Catherine Street Railway Bridge, which is identified as a heritage item (no. 12) under Part 3 of the Precinct SEPP. This assessment indicates the nature of the sign as it will be viewed from the bridge and intersection and its impact on the surrounding area.

As noted in Figure 11, a tall, brick wall and additional fencing is located on either side of the Catherine Street bridge. Due to the nature of this wall, vehicles or pedestrians travelling over the bridge cannot see further east or west until they have reached the intersection and turned onto City West Link Road. As such, the proposed sign is not visible from the bridge.

The area located at the Catherine Street and City West Link Road intersection is a mixture of commercial and residential. A mixed-use building is located at the intersection, comprising of a grocery shop and residential apartments above. The residential apartments are oriented away from the proposed sign, and face towards the East. The site inspection revealed that there are limited windows or viewpoints towards the proposed sign from this building.

As such, it is unlikely that the proposed sign will have any visual impacts on the residential property and development at the intersection, due to the orientation of the buildings and curving/sloping nature of the land.



Figure 11: Existing view from Catherine Street Railway Bridge (Source: Keylan)



### ***View 3: Northern Side of Lilyfield Road***

View 3 was selected as it is the furthest point of sight for residential properties within the visual catchment. Due to the curving nature and slope of the road, and existing dense vegetation the sign will not be visible from any point further to the north.

It is unlikely there will be any adverse visual impacts from this viewpoint. Figure 12 demonstrates the existing nature of the area, including vegetation and infrastructure which partially screens sightlines for residents looking southwest. Figure 13 demonstrates that the proposed sign will not have any tangible impacts.

Further, these dwellings are oriented north-south, and therefore it is expected it will provide limited view lines towards the advertising sign - which faces east-west.

As such, the visual impacts of the proposed sign are restricted due to the dense vegetation situated on the northern side of the railway corridor together with a substantial separation distance from these properties to the proposed sign.

Based on the above, it is anticipated the visual impacts will not adversely impact the residents of the Lilyfield Road properties.



Figure 12 Existing view from Lilyfield Road (Source: Keylan)





Figure 13 Proposed view from Lilyfield Road (Source: JCDecaux)

#### ***View 4: Pretoria Street***

View 5 was selected to determine the visual catchment extent of the proposed sign.

As demonstrated in Figure 15, the proposed sign is marginally visible from this location. Further, these dwellings are oriented north-south, and therefore it is expected that it will provide limited view lines towards the advertising sign - which faces east-west. It is considered the proposal will have little adverse impacts on the low-density residential area located further south of the City West Link Road.

Therefore, based on the above analysis, this viewpoint is not considered visually sensitive in this context.



Figure 14: Existing view (Source: Keylan)



Figure 15: Proposed view (Source: JCDecaux)

### ***View 5: Balmain Road Intersection***

View 5 was selected as it is the furthest point on the western side of the City West Link Road that may be able to view the proposed sign.

Despite being a prominent corner location, the view and sightlines of the proposed sign from this point are considered minimal. As discussed, the slope and curving nature of the road results in limited long distance sightlines towards the signage.

In addition, the existing nature of the area is not considered visually sensitive, as it is predominantly classified as the railway corridor and a bus depot, located on the south-eastern side of the intersection.

It is noted there is some residential properties on the southern side of the intersection, however, these properties have been previously addressed within this assessment (View 1).

The visual impacts of the proposed sign from this viewpoint are limited and will not have any tangible impacts.



Figure 16: Existing approximate view - eastbound, from Balmain Rd intersection (Source: Keylan)



***View 6: Balmain Road and Lilyfield Road intersection***

View 6 was selected to determine the visual catchment extent of the proposed sign.

As demonstrated in Figure 17 the proposed sign is not visible from this location due to the existing dense, natural vegetation.

Accordingly, the proposal will have no adverse impacts on the low-density residential area located further north-west of Balmain Road.

Based on the above analysis, this viewpoint is not considered visually sensitive in this context.



Figure 17: Existing view (south-east facing) (Source: Keylan)



## 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.

The number of residential dwellings within the area indicate a typically greater visual sensitivity. However, the proposal seeks to minimise the proposed impacts of the sign and careful consideration has been given to the locality.

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

Viewpoint / Location	Distance of View	Visual Sensitivity	Level of Impact
Southern side of City West Link Road	0 m – 50 m	Residential area – highly sensitive	Low to Medium
Catherine Street Bridge intersection	225 m	Low sensitivity	Low
Northern side of Lilyfield Road	130 m	Residential area – moderately sensitive	Low
Pretoria Street	40 m	Residential area – moderately sensitive	Low
Balmain Road intersection	160 m	Low sensitivity	Low
Balmain Road and Lilyfield Road intersection	150 m	Low sensitivity	Nil

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

The proposed advertising sign on the northern side of the City West Link Road, Lilyfield will result in limited visual impacts to the surrounding locality, including sensitive receivers within the neighbouring Lilyfield residential areas.

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

- the existing surrounding area is considered to have medium to high visual sensitivity due to residential dwellings within the visual catchment
- notwithstanding the above, the views to the proposed sign from many sensitive receivers will be obstructed by existing structures, street trees, sloping nature of the land and setbacks of residential dwellings
- the signage is consistent with the character of the surrounding area
- the surrounding area does not exhibit visual clutter
- the proposed sign will be visible to high numbers of pedestrians and motorists reflective of its location along a transport corridor
- the proposal does not impact upon any heritage values, scenic views or protrude above the dominant skyline

Following consideration of the above, the proposal is considered to result in acceptable visual impacts to the City West Link Road, Lilyfield and the surrounding locality.