

VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT - INTEGRATED HEALTH FACILITY, 60, 62 & 64 SHOWGROUND RD, GOSFORD

prepared for:

CHP



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VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT - INTEGRATED HEALTH FACILITY, GOSFORD

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VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT - INTEGRATED HEALTH FACILITY, GOSFORD

summary

1. ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

Terras Landscape Architects has undertaken a visual assessment of the proposed integrated health facility at 60, 62 and 64 Showground Road, Gosford, NSW, 2250. The assessment has been undertaken to address the project Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) as they relate to visual impact, in particular, 'an impact assessment at private receptors and public vantage points.'

The criteria for the visual assessment has been detailed and viewpoint data sheets have been prepared using site photographs to allow the reader to gain a visual appreciation of the views from the identified significant viewing locations.

Additional descriptive text and information has been provided to support this investigation. This summary has been provided as a brief commentary on the findings of the visual assessment.

- The proposal involves the removal of existing residential lots and the construction and operation of an integrated health facility within an existing mixed-use zoned area. The subject site is surrounded by existing mixed-use development, with a large majority related to the health sector and neighbouring site, Gosford Hospital. To the east, the site adjoins a major road corridor of Gosford, Showground Road, and is ideally located near Gosford Hospital to form an extension of the existing health precinct.
- The site is located north of the central business district of the suburb of Gosford. The site is registered as Lots 1-4 CP/SP20058 and Lots 1-6 CP/SP20095 within the Central Coast Council Local Government Area. The site is zoned B4 - Mixed Use.
- The site is located in the suburb of Gosford, on 60, 62 and 64 Showground Road. The closest major road corridor is Showground Road, located on the eastern boundary of site. The access point of site is from this road corridor.
- The local area character units associated within a 500m radius of site include mixed-use, special purpose infrastructure, commercial core, general residential and public and private recreational zones. The proposed use of site can be classified as featuring a mix of special purpose businesses relating to the health sector and specialist disability accommodation units on Level 5, with a consideration of existing landscape and incorporation of vertical vegetation to soften built form from front and rear elevations whilst also match the existing urban fabric of the immediate surrounds of the site.
- The site topography falls to the east towards Showground Road, and includes on-site retaining as per the architectural documentation.

- Viewing locations are restricted to within 250m of the site. Direct views from Showground Road and Holden Street are available but restricted due to existing built form in the urban context and softened by proposed front and rear landscaping. Fragmented views from the east are available, however these are only afforded to stationary drivers and pedestrians at the Mann/Faunce Street Bus Station, as well as from high points along minor and low-traffic roads of Faunce and Beane Street.
- It is acknowledged that the viewing time of motorists and pedestrians on Holden Street is minimal and restricted to the end 50m of the cul-de-sac. Pedestrian and traffic flow was observed to largely relate directly to the health precinct and is limited to a four hour parking time restriction. The greatest visual impact is currently from locations east of the site, with direct contact with the boundary on Showground Road. It is noted that these areas are within the mixed-use zone and contain existing/emerging development. Landscaping proposed to the east and west elevations of the proposed structure aim to soften views of the built form from the street and emerge it into the existing urban fabric.
- The proposed design can be considered an extension of the existing health precinct and urban district. The proposed works are functional and minimalist in form and designed with a consideration of landscaping into the vertical form, creating diversity in the streetscape whilst also maintaining consistent with B4 Mixed-Use land zoning requirements.
- The proposed building works are separated from the nearest residentially zoned land by approximately 135m south-west of the site but are significantly restricted due to existing vegetation and built form and when afforded, viewed in the context of the established mixed-use and special purpose zoned land.
- The visual impact rating has been assessed to be low and low/moderate. This is a result of views afforded responding to the established character of the area and consistent with the urban, mixed-use context and thus the loss of visual quality is minor.

In summary, it is considered that the overall visual impact arising from the proposed development is LOW with the exception of immediate-proximity views to be LOW/MODERATE, with the incorporation of the landscaping as a key design consideration making a positive contribution to the amenity of the site.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1. Objectives

The objectives of this report are as follows:

- To identify and describe the existing visual/landscape environment and to evaluate its current qualities including an assessment of visual quality.
- To identify viewsheds and to locate and/or identify typical viewpoints from which the impacted areas may be seen.
- To determine what the likely impacts the proposal may cause to the prevailing visual/landscape quality of the area and to make recommendations, where appropriate, to reduce the visual impact of the proposed development if required.

2.2. Methodology

The methodology applied to this study involves systematically evaluating the visual environment pertaining to the site and using value judgements based on community responses to scenery. This identifies aspects that are more objective (such as the physical setting, character and visibility of a proposal), from more subjective aspects, such as the compatibility of the proposal within the setting.

Visual data collection involves systematically evaluating the visual environment from relevant viewpoints through fieldwork to determine the actual potential for views to the site. Once a viewpoint has been identified, data is recorded both photographically and as detailed notes.

The selection of viewpoints has generally been based on locations where potential for views of the proposed development would occur. Viewpoint selection criteria include: consideration of where views can be obtained from publicly frequented locations, such as major traffic corridors; prominent look-outs or locations of high scenic value; or, where members of the local community may be affected.

This assessment has been undertaken in accordance of the requirements of Guidelines for Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment (RMS, 2013) and as such, the work has been carried out following the below steps:

- Assess the visibility of the proposal. This includes a review of the existing visual environment/landscape setting of the locality.
- Identify key existing viewpoints and their sensitivity. This requires the preparation of a viewpoint analysis using a representative number of viewpoints located within a reasonable distance of the site located within its visual catchment.
- Assess visual impacts. A brief description of the proposal is included within this section followed by an assessment of the likely impacts based on a composite of the sensitivity of the view and the magnitude of the proposal being a combination of scale, size and character having regard to the proximity of the viewer.

The assessment has also been undertaken to address the project SEARs, which require:
'Visual - including an impact assessment at private receptors and public vantage points.'

2.3. Terminology

The below meaning for the following terms shall apply to this report:

- The proposal/development site is that activity which has the potential to produce a visual impact either during the works or as a result of it.
- The subject site (referred to also as the site) is defined as the land area directly affected by the proposal within defined boundaries. (re: Lots 1-4 CP/SP20058 and Lots 1-6 CP/SP20095).
- The study area consists of the subject site plus the immediate surrounding land potentially affected by the proposal during its construction and operation phase.
- The study locality is the area of land within the regional visual catchment whereby the proposal can be readily recognised. Generally this is confined to a six-kilometre radius beyond which individual buildings are difficult to discern especially amongst other development where contrasts are low. Further, visual sensitivity generally declines significantly beyond this range due to the broad viewing range that can be had from vantage points. For this study the locality has been limited to the visual catchments that have distances less than one kilometer as views beyond this are restricted.

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VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT - INTEGRATED HEALTH FACILITY, GOSFORD

the site

3. THE SITE

3.1. Site Context

The site address is 60, 62 and 64 Showground Road, Gosford, NSW, 2250. It is located north of the central business district of the suburb of Gosford, within an established B4 - Mixed-Use zone off Showground Road. It is formally identified as Lots 1-4 CP/SP20058 and Lots 1-6 CP/SP20095. It is subject to the Central Coast Council Development Control Plan 2022 and to Central Coast Local Environmental Plan 2022.

The suburb of Gosford lies approximately 70km south of Newcastle, and approximately 50km north of Sydney on the Central Coast. The area is largely residential in character, and features a mix of modern, urban development amongst the city centre. It is well-known as it is placed in the centre of the central coast region, with large-scale business operations due to its prime accessibility between Sydney and Newcastle. The nearest residential area is located approximately 135m south-west of the site but views from these areas of site are significantly restricted due to existing vegetation and built form and when afforded, viewed in the context of the established mixed-use and special purpose zoned land.

The site is located in a minor valley between East and West Gosford, with a steep battering on the eastern boundary of site. Views from the immediate western boundary, from neighbouring properties along Holden Street, are superior and views from the immediate eastern boundary, along Showground Road, are inferior due to the topography of site. The main views available to drivers and pedestrians are when travelling along Showground Road but are viewed in the existing built, urban context and softened by proposed front landscaping. Fragmented views from Beane and Faunce Street whilst fragmented, are also superior due to the nature of the site in a minor valley but are reduced due to foreground built structures and distance. Beyond this, existing views of the site from high points on Henry Parry Drive and south of Faunce Street West are not possible due to existing vegetation and built form.



Image 1 Looking south along Showground Road, from the Etna St/Racecourse Rd round-a-bout showing the typical landscape of the area, with the site in the mid ground.



Image 2 The site is located approximately 70km south of Newcastle, and approximately 50km north of Sydney on the Central Coast



Image 3 The site and immediate surrounds

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the site

3.2. Site Description

The subject site is currently comprised of residential townhouses and buildings. The site's southern boundary borders an existing residential lot, and western and northern boundaries meeting existing special purpose infrastructure, relating to Gosford Hospital.

The site has an area of approximately 2437m², and is proposed to include an integrated health hub facility and specialist disability accommodation.

The site has frontage and access to Showground Road. The site is adjoined by existing health facilities and a residential lot to the south. Located further south is Gosford City Centre.

The site topography falls to the east towards Showground Road, and includes on-site retaining as per the architectural documentation.



Image 4 Existing neighbouring sites



Image 5 Site lot boundary



Image 6 Aerial view of the site and access point

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VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT - INTEGRATED HEALTH FACILITY, GOSFORD

visual environment

4. VISUAL ENVIRONMENT

4.1. Site Character

The subject site is overall of low scenic quality. The existing buildings are easily recognised, with a strong urban character and unique, surrounding architectural form. To the north, south and eastern elevations of site, there is visible freestanding infrastructure associated with the SP2 - Special Purpose zone. It is also noted that the land to the west, whilst operating from previously-used residential premises, operate as extensions of health networks for the Gosford Hospital district, such as Covid-19 Testing Clinics.

Land directly to the east opposite Showground Rd, is Gosford Railway Line. Noting that Gosford Train Station is located approximately 200m further south. The footpath on this side of the road links Etna Street to Gosford Train Station and does not include seats or areas encouraging stationary movement, further reducing opportunity for pause and views of site.

The site is only partially visible from Faunce Street, Faunce Street West, Mann Street and Beane Street. Views afforded from these points area available for very brief periods, and forms part of the existing, visible, urban fabric. The subject site will be most visible from the adjoining, Showground Road, as well as briefly, for minimal and selected audiences along Holden Street. Views will be limited to within 250m of the site.



Image 13 Land zoning around site within 250m.



Image 7 The site from Gosford Train Station footpath on Showground Rd



Image 8 The site as viewed travelling south along Showground Rd



Image 9 Existing neighbouring site - Gosford Precinct for the UON



Image 10 Gosford Railway Line with existing, surrounding, large-scale, urban development in the background



Image 11 Rear neighbouring site use - Covid-19 Testing Clinic

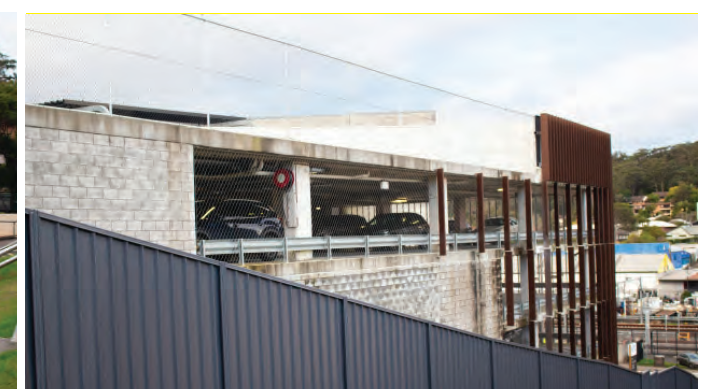


Image 12 Existing neighbouring site - Gosford Hospital Parking Facility

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VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT - INTEGRATED HEALTH FACILITY, GOSFORD visual environment

4.2. Landscape Character Units

The site lies in Gosford, approximately 70km south of Newcastle, and approximately 50km north of Sydney on the Central Coast. The 2021 Census recorded a population of 71 168, which reside scattered amongst the region but predominantly north and east of Gosford City Centre. The closest residentially zoned land lies approximately 135m south-west of the subject site but are significantly restricted due to existing vegetation and built form and when afforded, viewed in the context of the established mixed-use and special purpose zoned land.

The City of Gosford is located on generally flat land with terrain increasing around Rumbalara Reserve located to the east, and Gosford High Waterview Park located to the west. The city is characterised by its urban character and ideal location along the Central Coast. Beyond the City Centre the area is defined by fragmented residential and urban land.

The landscape characters associated with the site are special purpose infrastructure related to the health sector, large residential developments, and public and private recreational commerce. The overall site character is therefore typical of mixed development and infrastructure, set amongst large-scale urbanity, and distant views of vegetated and built landscape.



Image 14 Aerial of proposed site with surrounding site mixed-use



Image 15 View in direction of site from Showground Road



Image 16 Showground Road, heading north, outside of Gosford Train Station



Image 17 Rear of site from Holden Street



Image 18 Site from residential area, on Faunce Street West



Image 19 Looking north-west toward site from Faunce Street



Image 20 Looking west from Beane Street

5. THE PROPOSAL

5.1. Proposed Project

CHP is proposing to construct and operate a mixed use development consisting of an integrated health hub facility and disability accommodation on the subject site. The development will include retail and medical land uses such as GP clinic, pharmacy, radiology, pathology on the ground level; with 4 levels of medical suites above; and Level 5 to provide seven specialist disability accommodation units. The proposal will also include the establishment of associated infrastructure, earthworks, servicing, hardstand areas and landscaping. Colours of the development will be recessive and consistent with the surrounding landscape.

The subject site is well located in an established mixed-use and special infrastructure zone to accommodate the proposed integrated health facility. The proposal will allow CHP to improve public access to health and health-related accommodation and services. The subject site is located adjacent to the Gosford Hospital and will be ideally located to act as an extension of the existing health precinct within Gosford.



Image 21 Architectural render of the East Elevation from Showground Road showing proposed works



Image 22 Satellite image with proposed site plan



Image 23 Architectural render of proposed works within the existing context.

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the proposal

5.2. Proposed Landscaping

Coordinating with the building works, new landscaping is proposed to be established on the site. The landscaping works include an incorporation of vegetation to soften built form from front elevation whilst also match the existing urban fabric of the immediate surrounds of the site. Species chosen, feature a native and exotic palette suitable for the coastal climate.

Front boundary buffer planting sees an increase in visual privacy through the implementation of a diverse array of grassy and leafy species with a variety of colourful flowers. This planting is expected to provide a positive contribution to the Showground Road streetscape and is commensurate with the scale of the development proposed, noting that it sits within an established mixed-use zone.

Additional landscaped areas have been included on Level 5 to provide residents and users of the building with a private and unique outdoor area for retreat and rest.

Proposed landscaping is expected to soften immediate views of site from Showground Road.

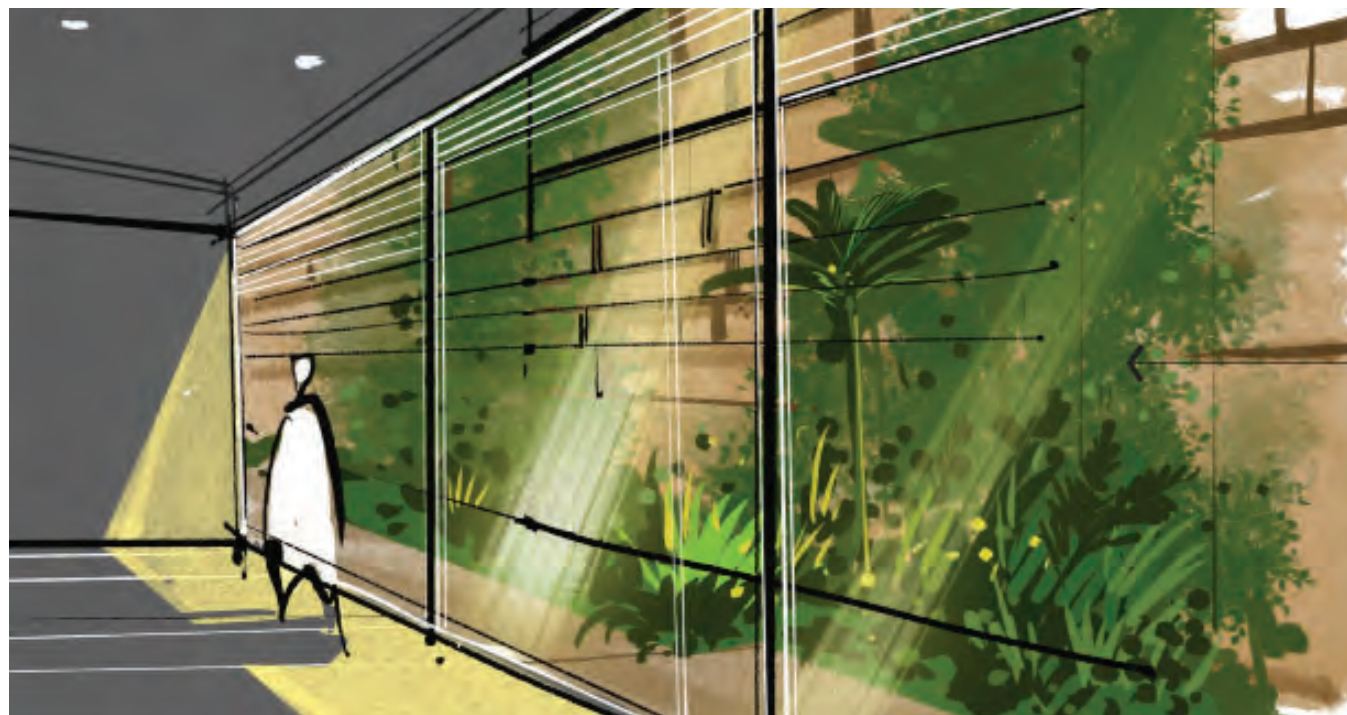


Image 24 Indicative, perspective sketch of rear/western boundary retaining required along ground floor and landscaping to soften

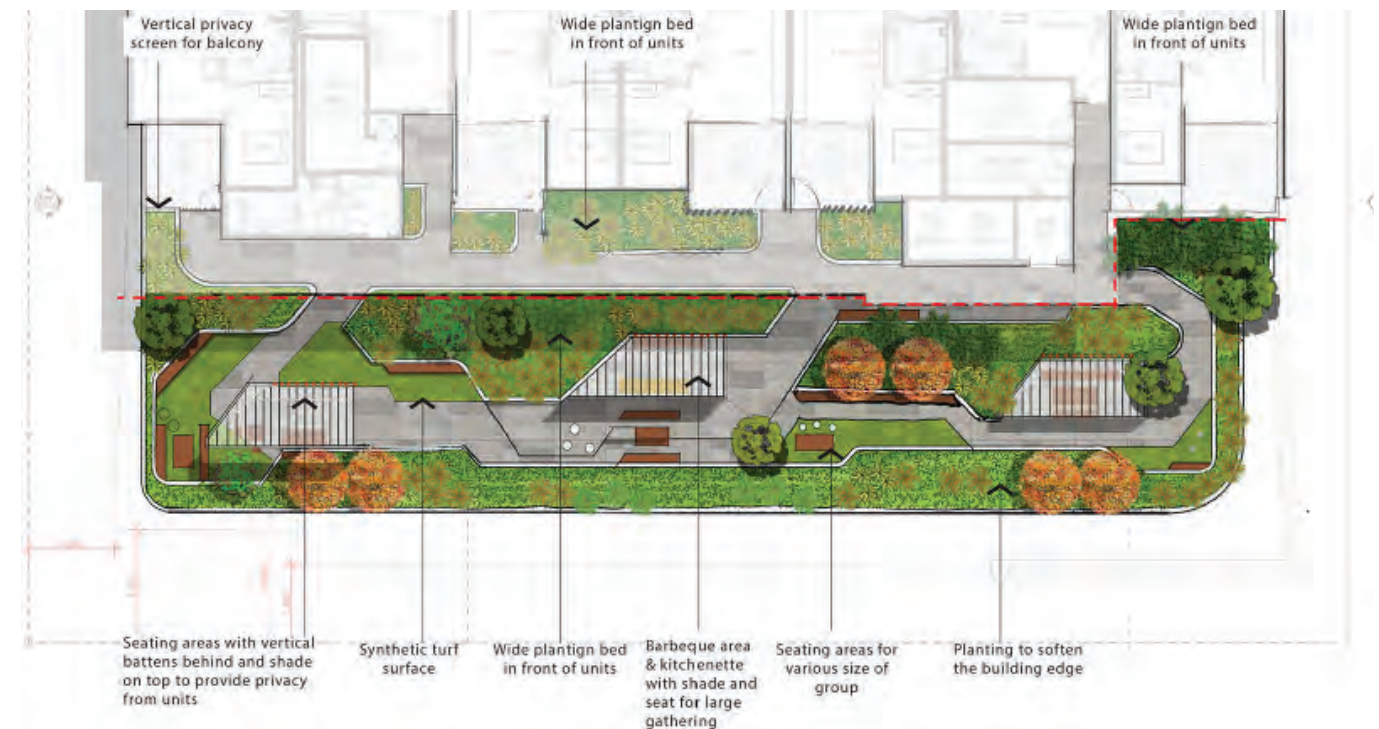


Image 25 Landscape plan showing Level 5 retreat and rest area



Image 26 Indicative, section sketch looking south, of rear/western boundary retaining required along ground floor and landscaping to soften

viewpoint data sheets

6. VIEWPOINT DATA SHEETS

6.1. Viewpoint Analysis

This section of the VIA considers the likely impact that the proposed development may have on the local visual environment. This is achieved by selecting particular sites, referred to as Viewpoints, conducting inspections and determining how the development will appear from these locations.

Where accessible, areas within the study locality were visited to gain an appreciation of views and sight lines back to the subject site. This VIA assesses the existing visual amenity of the site and resultant visual impact of the proposed development.

Landscape assessment is concerned with changes to the physical landscape in terms of features/elements that may give rise to changes in character. Visual appraisal is concerned with the changes that arise in the composition of available views as a result of changes to the landscape, people's responses to the changes and to the overall effects on visual amenity. Changes may result in adverse (negative) or beneficial (positive) effects.

The nature of landscape and visual assessment requires both objective analysis and subjective professional judgement. Accordingly, the following assessment is based on the best practice guidance listed above, information and data analysis techniques, uses subjective professional judgement.

Many potential viewpoints were assessed for inclusion in this report. Due to local topography, existing vegetation and development, viewpoints into the site are restricted to motorists and pedestrians travelling within a 250m radius. The greatest visual access afforded into the site will be to vehicles travelling along Showground Road and Holden Street in the immediate vicinity of site. All other views afforded are fragmented and viewed within the existing SP2 and B4 context. Direct views from Showground Road and Holden Street are available but restricted due to existing built form in the urban context and softened by proposed front and rear landscaping. It is acknowledged that the viewing time of motorists and pedestrians on Holden Street is minimal and restricted to the end 50m of the cul-de-sac. Pedestrian and traffic flow was observed to largely relate directly to the health precinct and is limited to a four hour parking restriction.

Fragmented views from the eastern side of the Gosford Railway Line are available, however these are only afforded to stationary drivers and pedestrians at the Mann/Faunce Street Bus Station, as well as from high points along minor and low-traffic roads of Faunce and Beane Street.

Photographic images were taken using a digital camera with a focal length approximating a standard 50mm lens for a conventional 35mm camera and equivalent to the human eye, so that all images represent an accurate representation that is neither zoomed in or out. A number of indicative photo panoramas have been included to put views to the site in context with the surrounding area.

Viewer sensitivity and quality is further discussed in the following section.

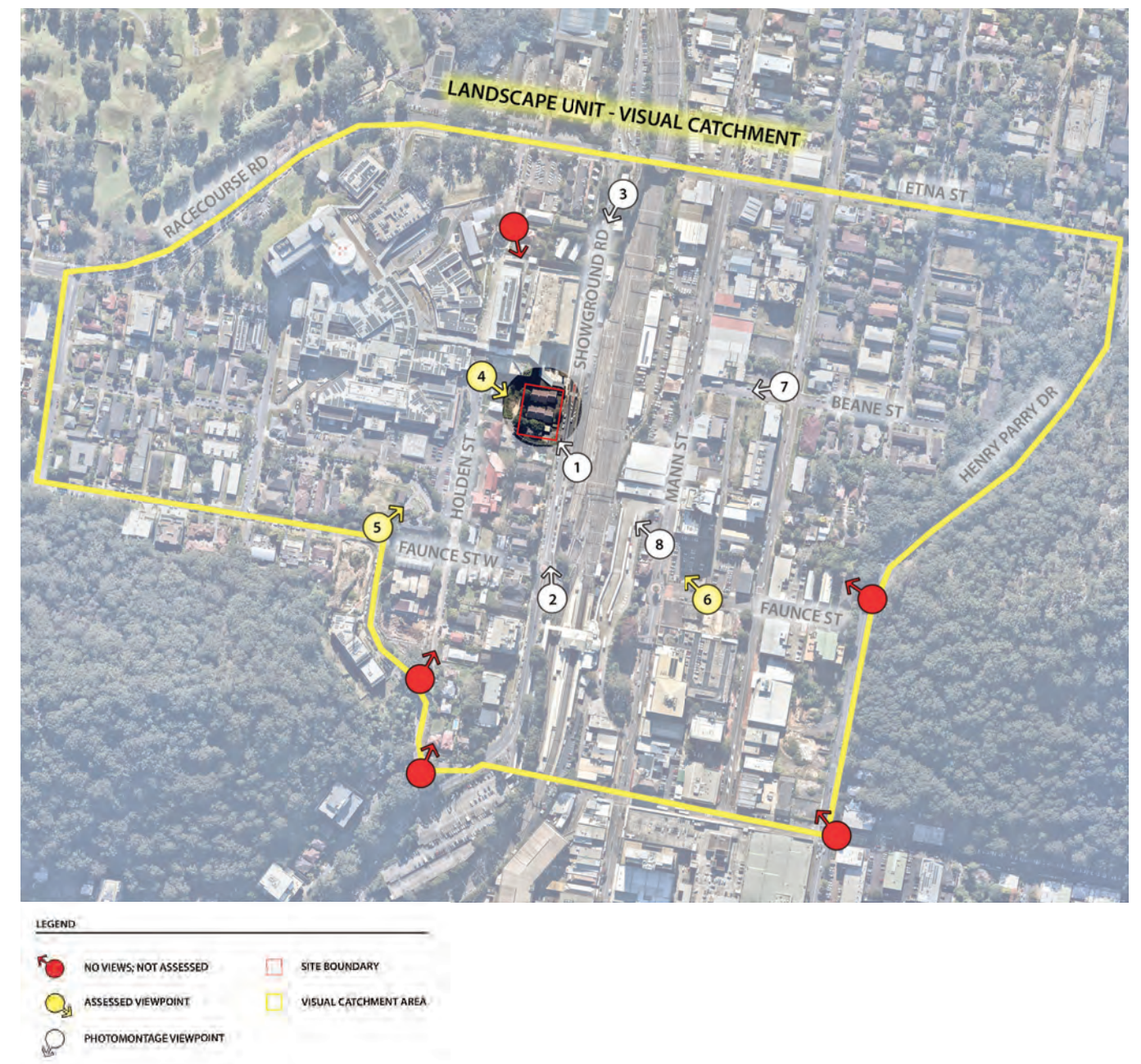


Image 27 Viewpoint locations

viewpoint data sheets

6.2. Viewsheds

The viewshed diagram explores and demonstrates the views into the site. As discussed in the viewpoint analysis, due to local topography, existing vegetation and development, the viewshed area is restricted to within the immediate surrounds, and to a maximum distance of generally 250m.

The diagram shows that the most exposed views are within the immediate proximity of the site, afforded to vehicles travelling along Showground Road and Holden Street. The gradient effect demonstrates that the viewsheds reduce over distance towards Faunce Street, Faunce Street West, Beane Street and Etna Street are minimal and reduced as they fade to a light colour.

Vehicles travelling along Mann Street will have a limited and brief view when looking west towards site at the Mann/Faunce Street Bus Station, due to break in built form and height of proposed infrastructure. High viewpoints from Faunce Street, Faunce Street West, Gosford Train Station entry on Showground Road and Beane Street are possible due to increased elevation from underlying topography but are fragmented and reduced due to existing built form and existing vegetation. Beyond this, existing views of the site from high points on Henry Parry Drive and south of Faunce Street West are not possible due to existing vegetation and built form.

Showground Road experiences frequent traffic loads as it operates as a traffic connection point between North Gosford and Gosford City Centre with frequent users. Holden Street experiences significantly less traffic and limited audience (largely relevant to the local immediate health precinct and limited to a four hour parking restriction).

View access and effect is further explained in the following section.

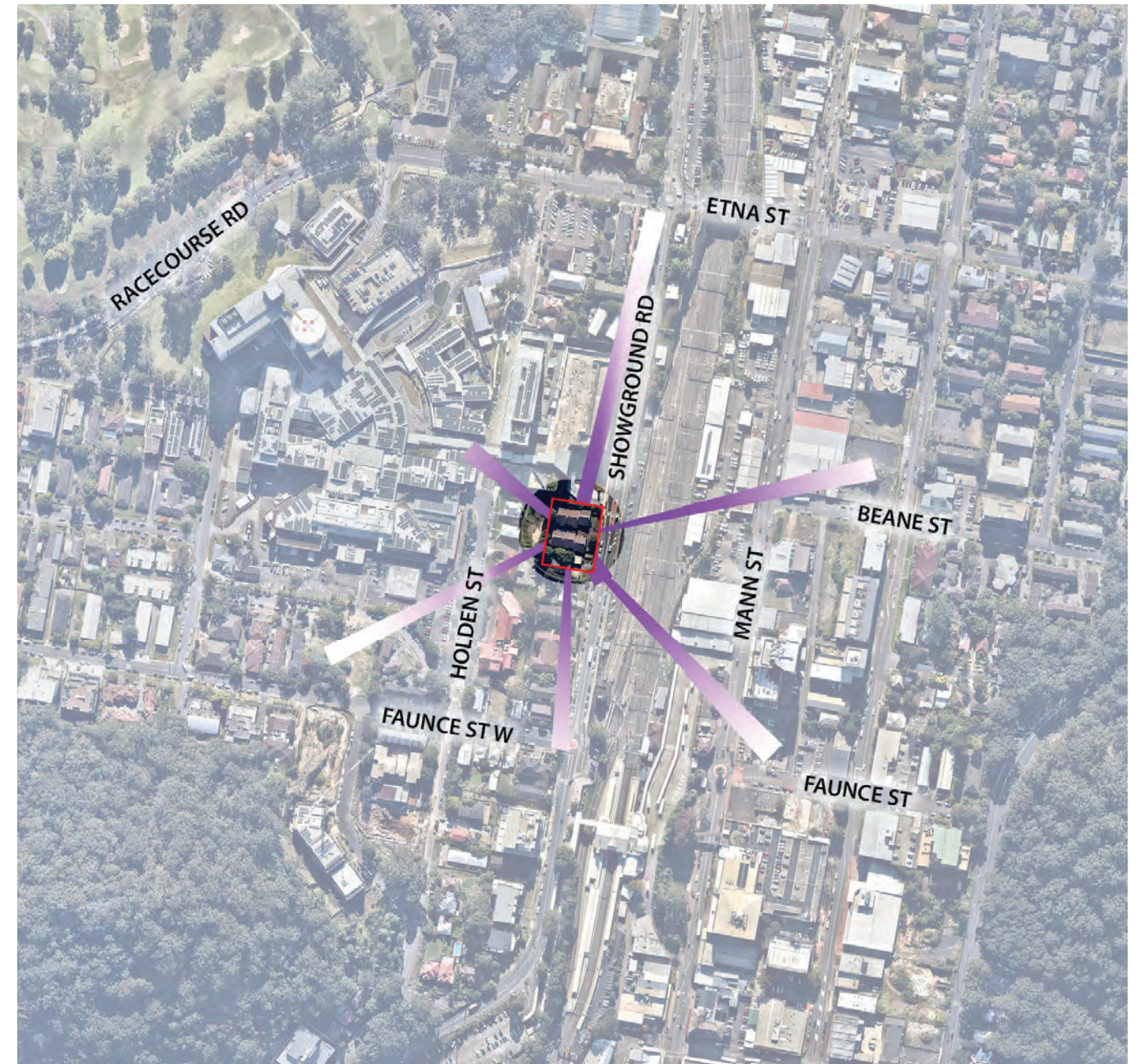


Image 28 Viewshed diagram. Close views are represented in purple, with further views shown in blue.

VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT - INTEGRATED HEALTH FACILITY, GOSFORD

assessment criteria

7. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

7.1. Visual Quality

The visual quality of an area is essentially an assessment of how viewers may respond to designated scenery. Scenes of high visual quality are those that are valued by a community for the enjoyment and improved amenity that they can create. Conversely, scenes of low visual quality are of little scenic value to the community with a preference that they be changed and improved, often through the introduction of landscape treatments (e.g. screen planting).

As visual quality relates to aesthetics, its assessment tries to anticipate subjective responses. There is evidence to suggest that certain landscapes are continually preferred over others with preferences related to the presence or absence of certain elements.

The rating of visual quality of this study has been based on the following generally accepted conclusions arising from scientific research (DOP, 1988).

- Visual quality increases as relative relief and topographic ruggedness increases.
- Visual quality increases as vegetation pattern variations increase.
- Visual quality increases due to the presence of natural and/or agricultural landscapes.
- Visual quality increases owing to the presence of water forms (without becoming common) and related to water quality and associated activity.
- Visual quality increases with increases in land use compatibility.

VISUAL QUALITY REFERENCE TABLE				
		RATING		
		LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
ELEMENT	LANDFORM / RELIEF			
	CONTRAST	FLAT TERRAIN DOMINANT. RIDGELINES NOT OFTEN SEEN.	UNDULATING TERRAIN DOMINANT. LITTLE CONTRAST OR RUGGEDNESS. RIDGELINES PROMINENT IN ONLY HALF OF LESS OF LANDSCAPE UNITS.	HIGH HILLS IN FOREGROUND AND MIDDLE GROUND. PRESENCE OF CLIFFS, ROCKS AND OTHER GEOLOGICAL FEATURES. HIGH RELIEF (E.G. STEEP SLOPES RISING FROM WATER OR PLAIN). RIDGELINES PROMINENT IN MOST OF LANDSCAPE UNIT.
	VEGETATION			
	DIVERSITY AND CHANGING PATTERNS	ONE OR TWO VEGETATION TYPES PRESENT IN FOREGROUND. UNIFORMITY ALONG SKYLINE	PATTERNING IN ONLY ONE OR TWO AREAS. 3 OR 4 VEGETATION TYPES IN FOREGROUND FEW EMERGENT OR FEATURE TREES	HIGH DEGREE OF PATTERNING IN VEGETATION. 4 OR MORE DISTINCT VEGETATION TYPES. EMERGENT TREES PROMINENT AND DISTINCTIVE TO REGION.
	NATURALNESS			
	CORRECT BALANCE	DOMINANCE OF DEVELOPMENT WITHIN MANY PARTS OF A LANDSCAPE	SOME EVIDENCE OF DEVELOPMENT BUT NOT DOMINANT	ABSENCE OF DEVELOPMENT OR MINIMAL DISTURBANCE WITHIN LANDSCAPE UNIT. PRESENCE OF PARKLAND OR OTHER OPEN SPACE INCLUDING BEACH, LAKESIDE, ETC.
	WATER			
	PRESENCE, EXTENT AND CHARACTER	LITTLE OR NO VIEW OF WATER. WATER IN THE BACKGROUND WITHOUT PROMINENCE. PRESENCE OF POLLUTED WATER OR STAGNANT WATER.	MODERATE EXTENT OF WATER. PRESENCE OF CALM WATER. NO ISLANDS, CHANNELS, MEANDERING WATER. INTERMITTENT STREAMS, LAKES, RIVERS, ETC.	DOMINANCE OF WATER IN FOREGROUND AND MIDDLE GROUND. PRESENCE OF FLOWING WATER, TURBULENCE AND PERMANENT WATER.
	DEVELOPMENT			
	FORM & IDENTITY	PRESENCE OF COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL STRUCTURES. PRESENCE OF LARGE SCALE DEVELOPMENT (E.G. MINING INFRASTRUCTURE, ETC) RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT	PRESENCE OF ESTABLISHED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT. SMALL SCALE, INDUSTRIAL ETC IN MIDDLEGROUND. PRESENCE OF SPORTS AND RECREATION FACILITIES.	PRESENCE OF RURAL STRUCTURES (E.G. FARM BUILDINGS, FENCES ETC.). HERITAGE BUILDINGS AND OTHER STRUCTURES APPARENT. ISOLATED DOMESTIC SCALE STRUCTURES.

Source: After Clouston & Brouwer, 1995

VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT - INTEGRATED HEALTH FACILITY, GOSFORD

assessment criteria

7.2. Viewer Access

This considers the relative number and type of viewers, the viewer distance, the viewing duration and view context. The rationale is that if the number of people who would potentially see portions of the proposal is low, then the visual impact would be low, compared to when a large number of people would have the same view.

VIEWER ACCESS MATRIX													
		VIEWER DISTANCE											
		VERY SHORT (<1km)			SHORT (1-2km)			MEDIUM (2-3km)			LONG/DISTANT (>3km)		
		VIEWING DURATION											
		>10mins	10-30mins	>30mins	>10mins	10-30min	>30mins	>10mins	10-30min	>30mins	>10mins	10-30min	>30mins
VIEWER NUMBERS	VERY LOW (>49 PEOPLE PER DAY)	L	M	H	L	M	M	L	L	M/L	L	L	L
	LOW (50-149 PEOPLE PER DAY)	L	M	H	L	M	M	L	L	M	L	L	L
	MODERATE (150-199 PEOPLE PER DAY)	M	H	H	M	M	H	L	M	M	L	L	L
	HIGH (>200 PEOPLE PER DAY)	H	H	H	M	H	H	H	M	H	L	L	M

Source: Adapted from

7.3. Visual Effect

Visual effect is the interaction between a proposal and the existing visual environment. It is often expressed as the level of visual contrast of the proposal against its setting or background in which it is viewed.

This is particularly important should any proposed development extend above the skyline unless, once again, there are particular circumstances that may influence viewer perception and/or visual impact.

It should be noted that a high visual effect does not necessarily equate with a reduction in scenic quality. It is the combination of both visual sensitivity and visual effect that results in visual impact.

VISUAL EFFECT TABLE		
LEVELS	HIGH	RESULTS WHEN A PROPOSAL PRESENTS ITSELF WITH HIGH VISUAL CONTRAST TO ITS VIEWED LANDSCAPE WITH LITTLE OR NO INTEGRATION AND/OR SCREENING.
	MODERATE	RESULTS WHERE A PROPOSAL NOTICEABLY CONTRASTS WITH ITS VIEWED LANDSCAPE, HOWEVER, THERE HAS BEEN SOME DEGREE OF INTEGRATION (E.G. GOOD SITING PRINCIPLES EMPLOYED, RETENTION OF SIGNIFICANT EXISTING VEGETATION, PROVISION OF SCREEN LANDSCAPING, CAREFUL COLOUR SELECTION AND/OR APPROPRIATELY SCALED DEVELOPMENT).
	LOW	OCCURS WHEN A PROPOSAL BLENDS IN WITH ITS EXISTING VIEWED LANDSCAPE DUE TO A HIGH LEVEL OF INTEGRATION OF ONE OR SEVERAL OF THE FOLLOWING: FORM, SHAPE, PATTERN, LINE, TEXTURE OR COLOUR. IT CAN ALSO RESULT FROM THE USE OF EFFECTIVE SCREENING OFTEN USING A COMBINATION OF LANDFORM AND LANDSCAPING.
	NEGLIGIBLE	THERE ARE NO VIEWS OF THE PROPOSAL COMPONENTS AND AS SUCH THERE IS NOT IMPACT

Source: Adapted from

VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT - INTEGRATED HEALTH FACILITY, GOSFORD

assessment criteria

7.4. Visual Sensitivity

Another aspect affecting visual assessments is visual sensitivity. This is the estimate of the significance that a change will have on a landscape and to those viewing it. For example, a significant change that is not frequently seen may result in a low visual sensitivity although its impact on a landscape may be high.

The assessment of visual sensitivity is based on a number of variables such as: the number of people affected; viewer location including distance from the source; the surrounding land use and degree of change. Variables may also include viewer position, i.e. inferior, where the viewer's station is below the horizontal axis as characterise by looking up (least preferred), neutral, where the viewer sight line is generally along the horizontal axis, and, superior, where the viewer sight line is above the horizontal axis as characterise by looking down to an object (most preferred).

Generally the following principles apply:

- Visual sensitivity decreases as the viewer distance increases. This occurs as changes to the scenic environment must be assessed over a broader viewshed which is comprised of a greater number of competing elements.
- Visual sensitivity decreases as the viewing time decreases.
- Visual sensitivity can also be related to viewer activity (e.g. a person viewing an affected site while engaged in recreational activities will be more strongly affected by change than someone passing a scene in a car travelling to a desired destination).
- Visual sensitivity decreases as the number of potential viewers decreases.

Visually sensitive landscapes include:

- Main ridgelines
- Significant natural landscape features such as coastal headlands, prominent hills, lake channel entrances, lake islands and lake promontories
- National Parks, State Recreation Areas and other protected natural conservation areas
- Other areas zoned for natural values (areas zoned e2 - Environmental Conservation)
- Within 100m of the lake edge
- Within 300m of the coastal edge
- Heritage conservation areas and precincts

The adjoining table outlines the visual sensitivity based on the above criteria.

VISUAL SENSITIVITY TABLE						
		DISTANCE ZONES				
		FOREGROUND		MIDGROUND		BACKGROUND (>2km)
		0-0.5km	0.5-1km	1-1.5km	1.5 - 2km	
LAND USE	RESIDENTIAL: RURAL OR URBAN	MODERATE SENSITIVITY	MODERATE SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY
	NATURAL AREAS	HIGH SENSITIVITY	HIGH SENSITIVITY	HIGH SENSITIVITY	MODERATE SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY
	TOURIST OR PASSIVE RECREATION	HIGH SENSITIVITY	HIGH SENSITIVITY	MODERATE SENSITIVITY	MODERATE SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY
	MAJOR TRAVEL CORRIDORS	HIGH SENSITIVITY	MODERATE SENSITIVITY	MODERATE SENSITIVITY	MODERATE SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY
	TOURIST ROADS	HIGH SENSITIVITY	MODERATE SENSITIVITY	MODERATE SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY
	MINOR ROADS	MODERATE SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY
	AGRICULTURAL AREAS	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY
	INDUSTRIAL AREAS	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY

Source: Adapted from EDAW, 2000

VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT - INTEGRATED HEALTH FACILITY, GOSFORD

assessment criteria

7.5. Visual Impact

Visual impact is the assessment of changes in the appearance of the landscape as the result of some intervention typically man-induced, to the visual quality of an area having regard to visual sensitivity and visual effect and the other attributes that these elements embody as discussed above.

Visual impact may be positive (i.e. beneficial or an improvement) or negative (i.e. adverse or a detraction). When visual impacts are negative, the loss of visual quality needs to be determined and when they are found to be undesirable or unacceptable, then mitigation measures need to be formulated with the aim of reducing the impact to within, at least acceptable limits.

The adjoining table illustrates how Visual Effect and Visual Sensitivity levels combine to produce varying degrees of Visual Impact. The overall project assessment summary is marked in red and is assessed as LOW/MODERATE. Further assessment is provided in the Visual Evaluation for selected viewpoints.

VISUAL IMPACT TABLE					
		VISUAL EFFECTS LEVELS			
		HIGH	MODERATE	LOW	NEGLIGIBLE
VISUAL SENSITIVITY LEVELS	HIGH	HIGH IMPACT	HIGH IMPACT	MODERATE IMPACT	NEGLIGIBLE IMPACT
	MODERATE	HIGH IMPACT	MODERATE IMPACT	LOW IMPACT	NEGLIGIBLE IMPACT
	LOW	MODERATE IMPACT	LOW IMPACT	LOW IMPACT	NEGLIGIBLE IMPACT
	NEGLIGIBLE	NEGLIGIBLE IMPACT	NEGLIGIBLE IMPACT	NEGLIGIBLE IMPACT	NEGLIGIBLE IMPACT

Source: EDAW, 2000



Image 29 Viewpoint 1, existing view. Looking north from Showground Road.

Viewpoint 1	
Location	<p>Showground Road, looking north.</p> <p>This view is typical of vehicles traveling north along Showground Road. Due to the topography, the viewer position is neutral. The visual sensitivity is considered high as Showground Road is a major road with high levels of vehicle and foot traffic and is located within an established mixed-use development area. The proposed works will be located between existing residential and special infrastructure developments, and will be visible from this location, causing viewer access to be high. The visual effect is low, as it is considered that the proposed works will largely blend with the existing streetscape of established large-scale, urban development.</p> <p>Based on the above assessment, the overall visual impact is rated moderate.</p>
Distance to the site	25m south of the site
Visual Quality	Low

Visual Evaluation Criteria			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Viewer Position	INFERIOR	NEUTRAL	SUPERIOR
Viewer Access			
Visual Sensitivity			
Visual Effect			
Visual Impact - Significance Rating	Based on above criteria is: Moderate		

VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT - INTEGRATED HEALTH FACILITY, GOSFORD indicative photomontage - viewpoint 1



Image 30 Viewpoint 1, existing view. Looking north from Showground Road.



Image 31 Viewpoint 1, proposed view. Looking north from Showground Road. Indicative photo montage showing proposed works with established vegetation.



Image 32 Viewpoint 2, existing view. Looking north from Showground Road outside Gosford Train Station pedestrian entry.

Viewpoint 2	
Location	Showground Road, looking north. This view is typical of users traveling north along Showground Road. Due to the topography, the viewer position is superior. The visual sensitivity is considered high as Gosford Train Station and Showground Road experience frequent and high levels of traffic and are located within an established mixed-use development area. The proposed works will be located between existing residential and special infrastructure developments, and will be visible from this location, causing viewer access to be high. The visual effect is low, as it is considered that the proposed works will largely blend with the existing streetscape of established urban development. Based on the above assessment, the overall visual impact is rated moderate.
Distance to the site	150m south of the site
Visual Quality	Low

Visual Evaluation Criteria			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Viewer Position	INFERIOR	NEUTRAL	SUPERIOR
Viewer Access			
Visual Sensitivity			
Visual Effect			
Visual Impact - Significance Rating	Based on above criteria is: Moderate		

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VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT - INTEGRATED HEALTH FACILITY, GOSFORD indicative location - viewpoint 2



Image 33 Viewpoint 2, existing view. Looking north from Showground Road outside Gosford Train Station pedestrian entry.



Image 34 Viewpoint 2, existing view. Looking north from Showground Road outside Gosford Train Station pedestrian entry. Indicative placement and shape from this viewpoint of proposed works without vegetation.



Image 35 Viewpoint 3, existing view. Looking south from Etna Street/Showground Road round-a-bout

Viewpoint 3	
Location	<p>Etna Street/Showground Road round-a-bout, looking south.</p> <p>This view is typical of vehicles traveling south along Showground Road at the Etna Street/Showground Road round-a-bout. Due to the topography, the viewer position is superior. The visual sensitivity is considered high as Showground Road is a major road with high levels of traffic and is located within an established mixed-use development area. The proposed works will be located between existing residential and special infrastructure developments, and will be visible from this location, causing viewer access to be high. The visual effect is low, as it is considered that the proposed works will largely blend with the existing streetscape of established urban development.</p> <p>Based on the above assessment, the overall visual impact is rated moderate.</p>
Distance to the site	200m north of the site
Visual Quality	Low

Visual Evaluation Criteria			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Viewer Position	INFERIOR	NEUTRAL	SUPERIOR
Viewer Access			
Visual Sensitivity			
Visual Effect			
Visual Impact - Significance Rating	Based on above criteria is: Moderate		

VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT - INTEGRATED HEALTH FACILITY, GOSFORD

indicative location - viewpoint 3



Image 36 Viewpoint 3, existing view. Looking south from Etna Street/Showground Road round-a-bout



Image 37 Viewpoint 3, existing view. Looking south from Etna Street/Showground Road round-a-bout Indicative placement and shape from this viewpoint of proposed works without vegetation.



Image 38 Viewpoint 4, existing view. Looking east from Holden Street.

Viewpoint 4	
Location	Holden Street, looking east. This view is typical of vehicles circling the end of the cul-de-sac on Holden Street. The viewer position is superior. There is light traffic flow as Holden Street experiences significantly less traffic and limited audience (largely relevant to the local immediate health precinct and limited to a four hour parking restriction). Visual sensitivity is high due to proximity and visual access is considered moderate, as current views--whilst afforded to drivers and pedestrians at close range--is available in brief periods and a superior position on a low-traffic road. The visual effect is low, as it is considered that the proposed works will blend with the existing form, shape, line and colour of the existing streetscape along this elevation. Based on the above assessment, the overall visual impact for this viewpoint is rated low/moderate.
Distance to the site	50m west of the site
Visual Quality	Low

Visual Evaluation Criteria			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Viewer Position	INFERIOR	NEUTRAL	SUPERIOR
Viewer Access			
Visual Sensitivity			
Visual Effect			
Visual Impact - Significance Rating	Based on above criteria is: Low/Moderate		



Image 39 Viewpoint 5, existing view. Looking north-east from Faunce Street West.

Viewpoint 5	
Location	<p>Faunce Street West, looking north-east.</p> <p>This view is typical of vehicles traveling south, downhill along Faunce Street West. The viewer position is superior. There is light traffic flow as this is a minor road, used predominantly by residents, therefore, visual access is considered low. Visual sensitivity is considered moderate, as current views are only afforded to drivers due to breaks in vegetation, and are not overly visible from this location. Furthermore, it is noted that this viewpoint is currently available as it is a vacant site. If/when future development occurs on this site, any views of the proposed site from Faunce Street West will be negligible. The visual effect is low, as it is considered that the proposed works will blend with the existing form from the superior viewpoint and be mostly screened from existing vegetation.</p> <p>Based on the above assessment, the overall visual impact for this viewpoint is rated low.</p>
Distance to the site	190m south-west of the site
Visual Quality	Low

Visual Evaluation Criteria			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Viewer Position	INFERIOR	NEUTRAL	SUPERIOR
Viewer Access			
Visual Sensitivity			
Visual Effect			
Visual Impact - Significance Rating	Based on above criteria is: Low		



Image 40 Viewpoint 6, existing view. Looking north-west from Faunce Street.

Viewpoint 6	
Location	<p>Faunce Street, looking north-west.</p> <p>This view is typical of vehicles traveling west, downhill along Faunce Street. The viewer position is superior. There is medium traffic flow as this is a linking street between mixed and commercial use zones. Visual sensitivity and visual access is considered moderate due to viewer numbers and predominant, established built form from this viewpoint. The current view is afforded to drivers in brief periods, and the proposed site is assumed to largely blend with existing form, thus, not dominant the streetscape from this location. Therefore, the visual effect is low.</p> <p>Based on the above assessment, the overall visual impact for this viewpoint is rated low/moderate.</p>
Distance to the site	230m south-east of the site
Visual Quality	Low

Visual Evaluation Criteria			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Viewer Position	INFERIOR	NEUTRAL	SUPERIOR
Viewer Access			
Visual Sensitivity			
Visual Effect			
Visual Impact - Significance Rating	Based on above criteria is: Low/Moderate		



Image 41 Viewpoint 7, existing view. Looking west from Beane Street.

Viewpoint 7	
Location	Beane Street, looking west. This view is typical of vehicles traveling south, downhill along Beane Street. The viewer position is superior. There is low-medium traffic flow as this is a linking street between mixed-use and residential zones. Visual sensitivity and visual access is considered moderate due to viewer numbers and predominant, established built form from this viewpoint. The current view is afforded to drivers in brief periods from a superior viewpoint, and the proposed site is assumed to largely blend with existing form, thus, not dominant the streetscape from this location. Therefore, the visual effect is low. Based on the above assessment, the overall visual impact for this viewpoint is rated low/moderate.
Distance to the site	230m east of the site
Visual Quality	Low

Visual Evaluation Criteria			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Viewer Position	INFERIOR	NEUTRAL	SUPERIOR
Viewer Access			
Visual Sensitivity			
Visual Effect			
Visual Impact - Significance Rating	Based on above criteria is: Low/Moderate		

VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT - INTEGRATED HEALTH FACILITY, GOSFORD
indicative location - viewpoint 7



Image 42 Viewpoint 7, existing view. Looking west from Beane Street

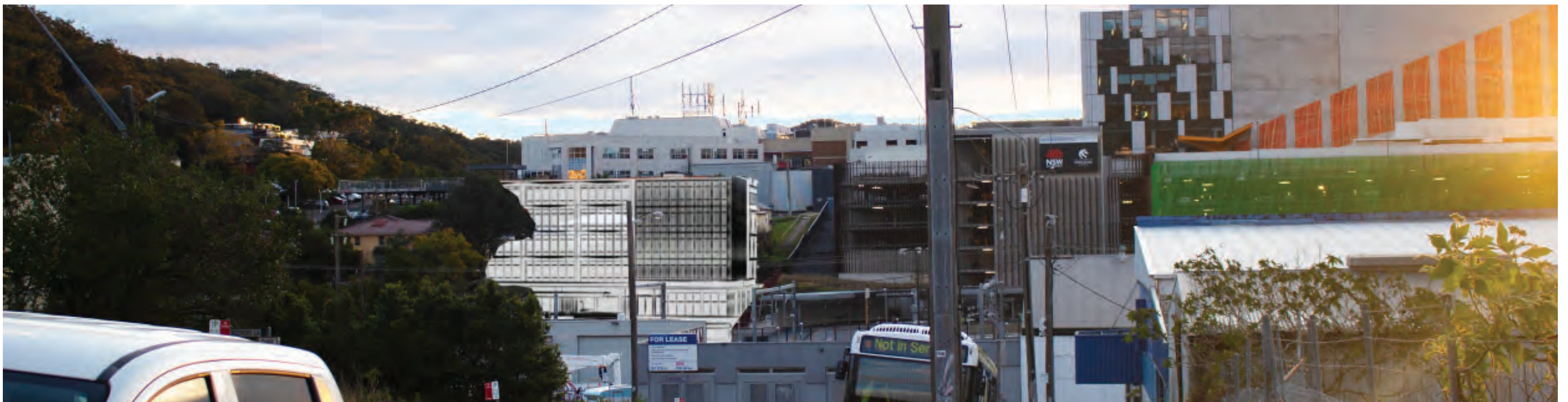


Image 43 Viewpoint 7, existing view. Viewpoint 4, existing view. Looking west from Beane Street. Indicative placement and shape from this viewpoint of proposed works without vegetation.



Image 44 Viewpoint 8, existing view. Looking north-west from Mann Street.

Viewpoint 8	
Location	Mann Street, looking north-west. This view is typical of vehicles traveling north/south along Mann Street. The viewer position is inferior. There is high traffic flow as this is a main road within the commercial/mixed-use zone between North Gosford and the Gosford City Centre. Visual access is considered high due to large volumes of traffic that use this road, however, visual sensitivity is considered moderate, as views are only afforded to stationary vehicles and pedestrians at the Mann/Faunce Street Bus Station for a short viewing time. The visual effect is low, as the proposed works will (to a large extent) blend with existing form and be mostly screened from the infrastructure of the Gosford Railway line in the immediate foreground. Based on the above assessment, the overall visual impact for this viewpoint is rated low.
Distance to the site	160m south-east of the site
Visual Quality	Low

Visual Evaluation Criteria			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Viewer Position	INFERIOR	NEUTRAL	SUPERIOR
Viewer Access			
Visual Sensitivity			
Visual Effect			
Visual Impact - Significance Rating	Based on above criteria is: Low		

VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT - INTEGRATED HEALTH FACILITY, GOSFORD
indicative location - viewpoint 8



Image 45 Viewpoint 8, existing view. Looking north-west from Mann Street.



Image 46 Viewpoint 8, existing view. Looking north-west from Mann Street. Indicative placement and shape from this viewpoint of proposed works without vegetation.

8. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1. Discussion

This section considers the general impact the proposal may have on the local visual environment and identifies those areas where the visual impact may potentially be the most significant. This was done by undertaking a surrounding site inspection and broadly scoping the study area to identify where the proposed development would likely to be visible and appear to be most prominent. Visual effect may be either based on the degree of exposure or the number of people likely to be affected.

Viewpoint 1 and 2 are typical of people travelling north along Showground Road. The site is immediately visible from Gosford Train Station entry along Showground Road and the immediate viewpoint as seen in Viewpoint 1. Viewpoint 3 is typical of users travelling south along Showground Road from the Etna Street/Showground Road round-a-bout. The proposed works will largely blend with the existing streetscape of established large-scale, urban development. The visual sensitivity and visual access from viewpoint assessments 1-3 is high.

Viewpoint 4 is typical of vehicles circling the end of the cul-de-sac on Holden Street. The viewer position is superior. Despite limited traffic, viewer access is considered moderate due to visibility of site from this view. As the proposed works will be visible from this location but traffic is only limited to users of the Holden Street cul-de-sac, as well as noting that the proposal will remain consistent in nature with surrounding mixed-use development, the overall visual impact will be low/moderate.

Viewpoint 5 is typical of vehicles traveling south, downhill along Faunce Street West. The viewer position is superior. There is light traffic flow as this is a minor road, used predominantly by residents, therefore, visual access is considered low. Visual sensitivity is considered moderate, as current views are only afforded to drivers due to breaks in vegetation, and are not overly visible from this location. Furthermore, it is noted that this viewpoint is currently available as it is a vacant site. If/when future development occurs on this site, any views of the proposed site from Faunce Street West will be negligible. The visual effect is low, as it is considered that the proposed works will blend with the existing form from the superior viewpoint and be mostly screened from existing vegetation. Therefore, the overall impact is to be considered low.

Viewpoint 6 and 7 are considered from viewers traveling west, downhill along Faunce Street and Beane Street, respectively. The viewer position is superior. There is medium traffic flow as these operate as linking streets between mixed, commercial and residential use zones. Visual sensitivity and visual access are considered moderate due to viewer numbers and predominant, established built form from this viewpoint. The current views are afforded to drivers in brief periods, and the proposed site is assumed to largely blend with existing form, thus, not dominant the streetscape from these location. Therefore, the overall impact of these viewpoints are to be considered low.

Viewpoint 8 is typical of users traveling north/south along Mann Street. The viewer position is inferior. There is high traffic flow as this is a main road within the commercial/mixed-use zone between North Gosford and the Gosford City Centre. Visual access is considered high due to large volumes of traffic that use this road, however, visual

sensitivity is considered moderate, as views are only afforded to stationary vehicles and pedestrians at the Mann/Faunce Street Bus Station. The visual effect is low, as the proposed works will (to a large extent) blend with existing form and be mostly screened from the infrastructure of the Gosford Railway line in the immediate foreground. Therefore, the overall impact of this viewpoint is to also be considered low.

Viewpoint Summary				
	ACCESS	SENSITIVITY	EFFECT	IMPACT
Viewpoint / Indicative Photomontage 1 - Looking west from Showground Road (25m)	HIGH	HIGH	LOW	MODERATE
Viewpoint / Indicative Location 2 - Looking north-west from Showground Road/Gosford Train Station Entry (150m)	HIGH	HIGH	LOW	MODERATE
Viewpoint / Indicative Location 3 - Looking south-east from Showground Road round-a-bout (200m)	HIGH	HIGH	LOW	MODERATE
Viewpoint 4 - Looking east from Holden Street cul-de-sac (50m)	MODERATE	HIGH	LOW	LOW/MODERATE
Viewpoint 5 - Looking north-east from Faunce Street West (190m)	LOW	MODERATE	LOW	LOW
Viewpoint 6 - Looking north-west from Faunce Street (230m)	MODERATE	MODERATE	LOW	LOW
Viewpoint / Indicative Location 7 - Looking west from Beane Street (230m)	MODERATE	MODERATE	LOW	LOW
Viewpoint / Indicative Location 8 - Looking north-west from Mann Street (160m)	HIGH	MODERATE	LOW	LOW

8.2. Conclusion and Recommendations

A review of the visual catchment of the proposed development site showed that views of the site were limited. Visibility of the site is reduced to within 250m due to topography, existing stands of established built environment.

Generally the viewpoints assessed to the immediate north/south and east/west of Showground Road and Holden Street occurred within relatively close proximity to the site. From these locations the site is viewed within the context of the surrounding landscape, and the proposed development will form a small component of an established mixed-use zone.

From the south-west, the proposal has minimal exposure to vehicles travelling east along Faunce Street West, and it is concluded that the proposal will be low visual impact due to the intermittent viewpoints. Furthermore, as future development occurs on the vacant, residential-zoned site, views to the proposal will be further minimised.

The proposed development is considered to be consistent with the character of the area. The proposal will have a low accumulative visual impact on the surrounding area, with the exception of immediate-proximity views to be low/moderate, with the proposed works (to a significant extent) blending with the established mixed-use, urban character of the area.

This will result in a LOW visual impact overall, with LOW/MODERATE visual impact for immediate-proximity viewpoints.

The following recommendations are provided:

- Implementation of the landscaping plan prepared and submitted with the DA.
- Planting to be undertaken as soon as practicable
- Ensure regular maintenance to landscaped areas
- Recessive colours to be used in the proposed built form

9. REFERENCES

Central Coast Council Development Control Plan 2022 (DCP)

Central Coast Local Environmental Plan 2022 (LEP).

Williamson, D, 1978, "Scenic Perceptions of Australian Landscapes", Landscape Australia, Vol. 2, pp 94-100.

EDAW (Australia) Pty Ltd (2000) 'Section 12 – Visual Assessment', The Mount Arthur North Coal Project: Environmental Impact Statement, URS Australia Pty Ltd, Prepared for Coal Operations Limited.

Urbis(2008), Berrybank Visual Impact Assessment Final Report, Victoria

Nearmap, 2022

Elevation Architecture DA Submission

Terras Landscape Architects Landscape DA Submission



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