8-12 Victoria Road & 2A Villiers Street Parramatta

BUILDING ENVELOPE, URBAN DESIGN AND PLACE IMPACTS ANALYSIS - ADDENDUM (REVISED)

2014 SEPTEMBER

TOWN PLANNING
AND URBAN DESIGN

Contents

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Introduction

BACKGROUND

Background

In October 2013, TPG Town Planning and Urban Design (TPG) submitted a Planning Proposal (PP) on behalf of the Catholic Diocese of Parramatta (the Applicant) to seek an amendment to the Parramatta City Centre Local Environmental Plan 2007 ('City Centre LEP') maximum floor space ratio (FSR) and maximum height of building development standards which apply to the site at 8-12 Victoria Road and 2A Villiers Street, Parramatta (the 'subject site').

Appended to the PP was an Urban Design Study, prepared by AE Design Group (Appendix D of the submitted October 2013 version of the PP), which sought to identify potential future opportunities for redevelopment with a set of design principles that optimise the potential of the subject site. A key element of the study was to identify appropriate development standards to permit the development proposed in the design principles.

Following its consideration of the PP and the appended Urban Design Study the Parramatta City Council issued correspondence on 20 December 2013 outlining particular concerns, of which the most relevant to this document are summarised as follows:

- Whilst Council staff acknowledged that there may be justification for increase in height and FSR limits, the proposed form was considered excessive requiring refinement of built form massing and additional justification to be provided.
- Overshadowing of Prince Albert Park was considered excessive during winter months and that further consideration to the setbacks was required in accordance with the DCP.
- Further consideration of heritage view lines was required to ensure that the proposed development would result in no detriment to identified views.
- Consideration of the (then) Planning Proposal submitted for the adjacent McDonald's site was required to achieve a unified approach. (Note that this PP was withdrawn).
- Modifications to the western setback for greater pedestrian safety.

Following receipt of the aforementioned correspondence, TPG and the Applicant worked closely with the Parramatta City Council to refine the proposed building envelope. This involved regular communication and engagement with Council officers with the aim of achieving a mutually acceptable outcome.

Engagement with Council Officers

On 17 January 2014, TPG, the Catholic Diocese and heritage consultants NBRS met with Council officers to gain further clarification of the issues raised within its correspondence. Any Heritage matters raised by Council are addressed within NBRS's supplementary heritage report, separate to this document.

Regarding concerns of building bulk, Council officers acknowledged that zero overshadowing of Prince Alfred Park would be onerous and difficult to achieve. It was therefore acknowledged that further analysis would be required to demonstrate that any proposed overshadowing would not significantly impact the amenity within the park.

Whilst the proposed 45m height was considered excessive, Council officers acknowledged that in order to enable feasible development of the site, some height uplift may be considered, however redistribution of bulk would need to occur to minimise height impacts.

As previously mentioned, a PP had been received for the adjacent McDonald's site, with the height focused to the northern end of the lot. Council officers had yet to review the PP had yet to occur at that time, however Council indicated its preference was likely to review the application in unison with refinements to the proposal for the subject site. The PP for the neighbouring site has since been withdrawn.

To address Council officers' feedback, further analysis of massing impacts and modification of built form was undertaken as a progression of the original proposed concepts for further discussion with Council officers.

A further meeting was held with Council officers on 18 February 2014, during which TPG and the Applicant presented the revised concepts. After additional feedback at this meeting, plans were modified, and formed the basis of the revised Planning Proposal submitted to the Council in April 2014, which was subject to further consideration by Council officers and negotiation with the applicant prior to reaching a position where Council officers were in a position for a recommendation to go up to Council.

TPG and the Applicant engaged with Council officers on numerous occasions following the lodgement of the original PP in an effort to ensure that any concerns of Council officers were addressed.

Concept Evolution

In consideration of matters raised by Council, TPG and the Applicant undertook revisions to the proposed building envelope originally prepared by AE Design Group.

The original proposal was characterised with podium development of up to 5 levels addressing Victoria Road and Villiers Street, and a cardinally oriented 14 tower to a height of 45 metres and located towards the east of the site.

Based on correspondence and feedback from Council officers at aforementioned meetings, the concept was redesigned to include the following features, which are detailed within this report. In summary, Key modifications to the built form are as follows:

- Reduction in overall height from 45m, to 34m height, which reduced the number of levels from 14 levels originally proposed to 11 levels.
- Redistribution of tower massing towards the northern and western boundaries, to minimise shadow impacts on Prince Alfred Park and reduce potential for overwhelming scale as viewed from Victoria Road and the park.
- Refinement of podium setbacks to accord with DCP principles and minimise shadow impact on Prince Alfred Park.
- Focusing commercial space at the plaza space to offer greater potential for place activation and commercial viability for future business.
- Provision of 'live/work' units along the ground level frontage to Victoria Road and Villiers Street, where main street style commercial activation is unlikely to occur in the short to medium term, but enables transition to commercial uses as future needs arise.

Notwithstanding the above, on 3 June 2014, Council officers advised, based on the recommendations of its design excellence panel, that a height of 49 metres could be supported. After further discussions the applicant was advised that Council officers were willing to support an FSR of 3.65:1, which formed the basis of Council officers' recommendation to Council at its Ordinary Meeting of Council on 28 July 2013.

Throughout the process of communication with Council, the Applicant maintained its position that an FSR of 3.65:1 would be inadequate and will not provide the certainty sought by the Diocese to enable the Old Kings School integrated precinct project to be adequately financed by the redevelopment of 8-12 Victoria Road and therefore sought an FSR of 4.8:1.

On 28 July 2014, Council resolved to:

> *"... amend the Parramatta City Centre LEP 2007 to increase the maximum floor space ratio from 2:1 to 4.8:1 and to increase the maximum building height from 24m to 49m (16 storeys) be endorsed and forwarded for Gateway determination by the Department of Planning and Environment in accordance with Section 56 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979."*

The following resolution is also relevant to this revision of the Urban Design Study:

> *"... the applicant be requested to update the urban design and heritage analysis for public exhibition purposes to reflect the planning proposal."*

Based on the above, the design concept outlined in this urban design study has been amended to reflect key massing elements outlined within the preferred building envelope prepared by Parramatta City Council officers in its draft DCP, and modified in light of the above resolution of Council.

Purpose of this report

The purpose of this report is to outline:

- modifications and design evolution of previous design proposals in response to feedback provided by Council officers;
- demonstrate design principles that relate to the proposed urban design approach and building envelope;
- relevant principles to demonstrate the benefits improvements of the revised approach to massing, land use and place activation; and
- provide the necessary justification for design elements to assist Council in its consideration of the revised PP.

Relationship to previous works

This report forms a supplementary section to the original urban design report prepared by AE Design, which forms Appendix D of both the original and revised Planning Proposal.

The report outlines all key modifications to the original principles and built form proposed and provides relevant justification in terms of urban design impacts, particularly with regard to solar access and place. This report effectively replaces sections 5 to 7 of the original urban design study prepared by AE Design Group.

It should be noted that the planning and strategic context outlined within Sections 1 to 4 of that report are considered relevant as the strategic background to this study.

Building Envelope Concepts

MASSING, HEIGHT AND SETBACKS

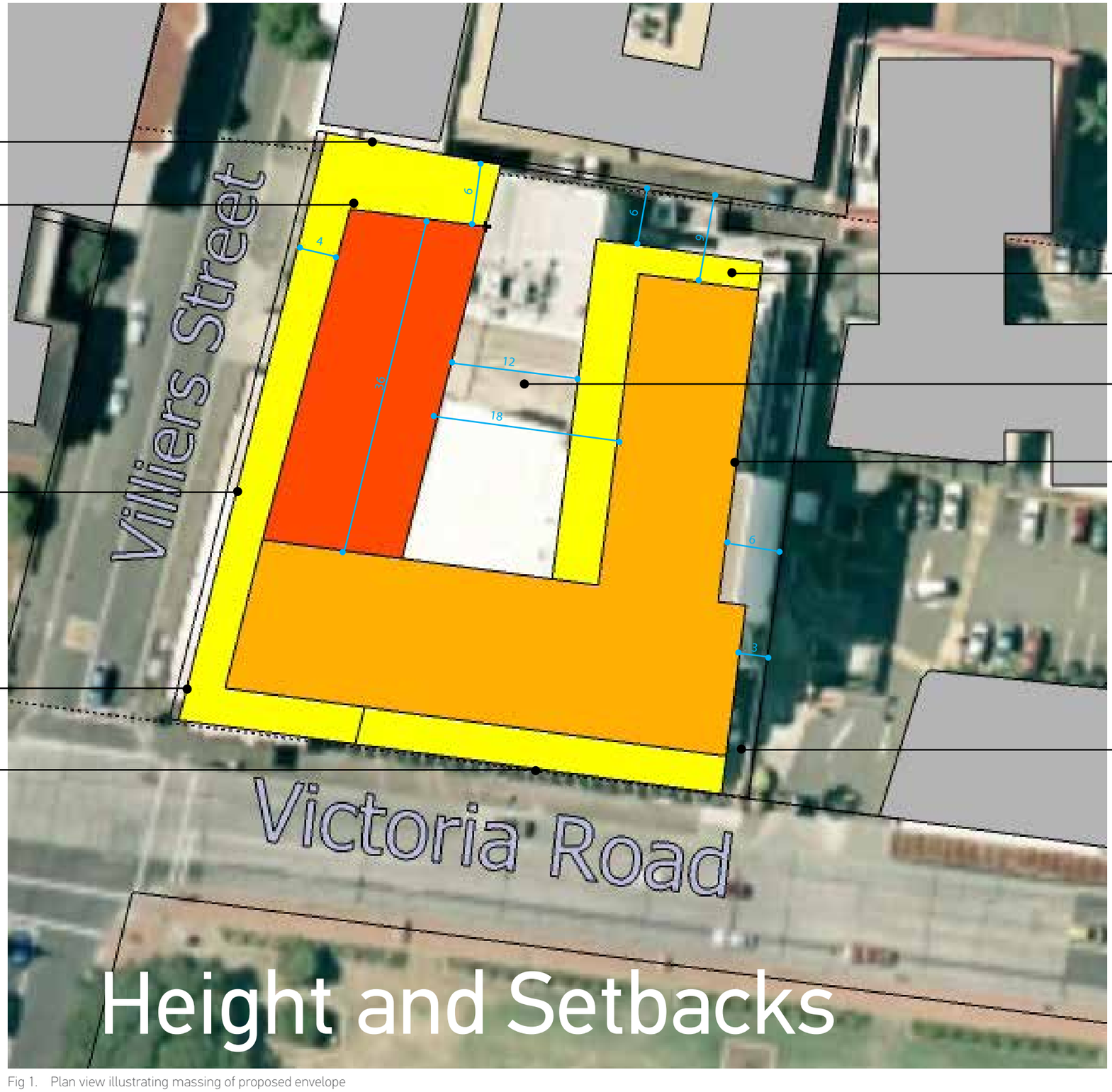
North Setback - Nil to 4 levels for continuous street edge

Tower element 36m maximum dimension with a 6m northern setback as per Draft DCP

West Setback - Nil for first 4 levels and 4m above 14 metres

West Setback - 1.0m for first 4 levels to accommodate footpath widening

South Setback - Nil for first 4 levels and 4m above 14 metres



Setbacks to accord with SEPP 65 principles

Building separation to accord with SEPP 65 principles

6m setback in accordance with Council's Draft DCP

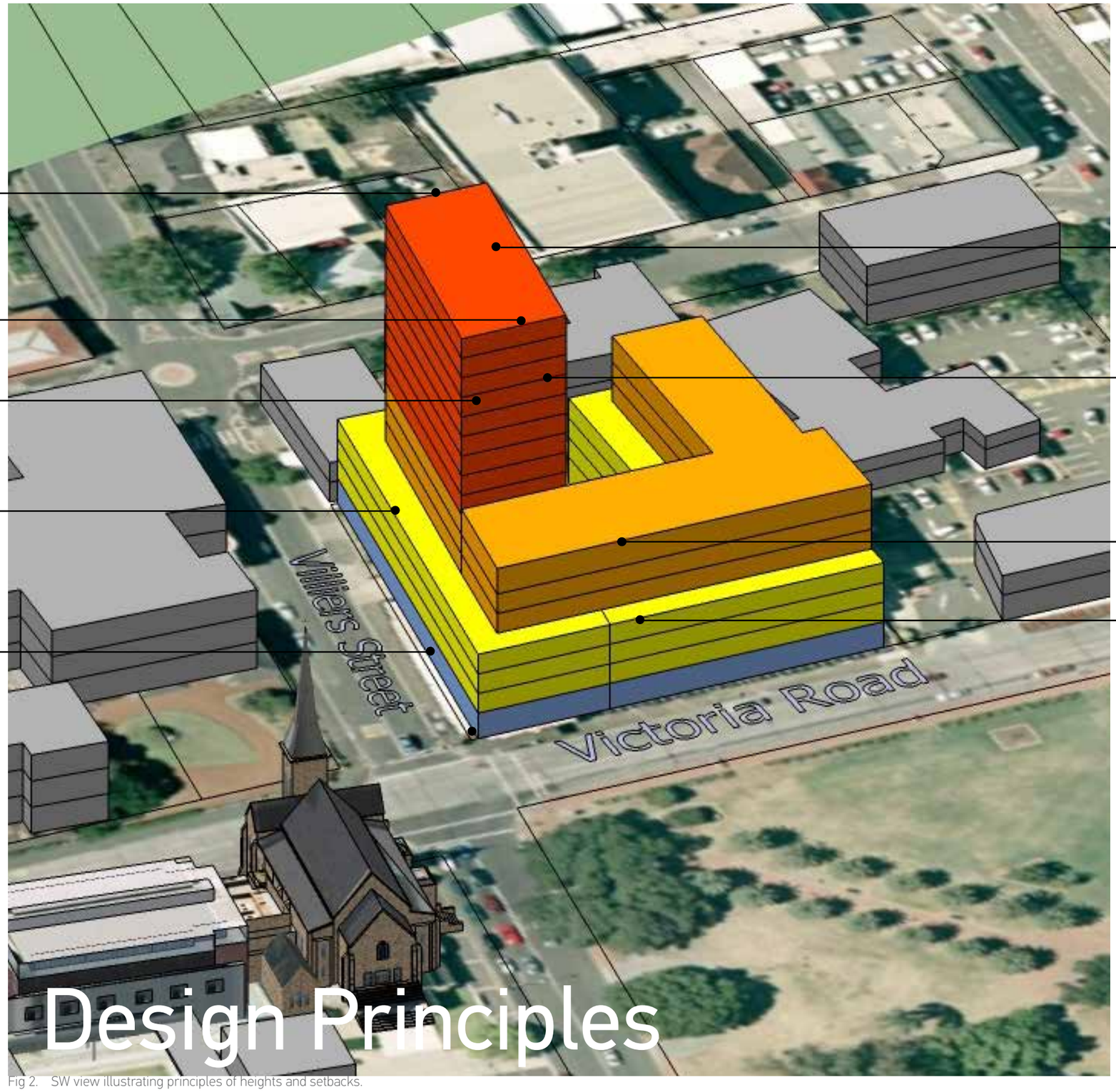
3m allowance for half of through site link

Legend

- 4 levels
- 7 levels
- 16 levels

Fig 1. Plan view illustrating massing of proposed envelope

Design Principles



Reduced northern upper level setbacks as per Council's draft DCP. Neighbouring lot is of insufficient depth for tower-style development.

Design of tower element provides the narrow dimension towards the Park as per Council's draft DCP to minimise impact of bulk

Tower set back in accordance with Council's draft DCP to reduce overshadowing of Prince Alfred Park

Lower podium level setbacks reflect the bulk and scale of heritage buildings along Villiers Street

Commercial/ Retail/ Live-work units to the ground level to enable transition to commercial units as future needs evolve. Subject to DA approval

Focus tower element to the north west of the site away from Prince Alfred Park to minimise impacts of bulk and overshadowing

The tower element consists of simple forms to accord with the desired character for Parramatta.

DCP compliant setbacks to podium to minimise overshadowing on Prince Alfred Park

Podium heights reflect heights and setbacks outlined within the current DCP to promote a consistent street edge between neighbouring sites.

Legend

- Level 1 (Commercial/ Retail/ Live work units)
- Levels 2-4
- Levels 5-7
- Levels 8-16

Fig 2. SW view illustrating principles of heights and setbacks.

Height, Yield and FSR

Height

Tower (roof line)	49m
Podium	24m
F-F height (commercial)	3.9m
F-F height (residential)	3.0m

Indicative GFA

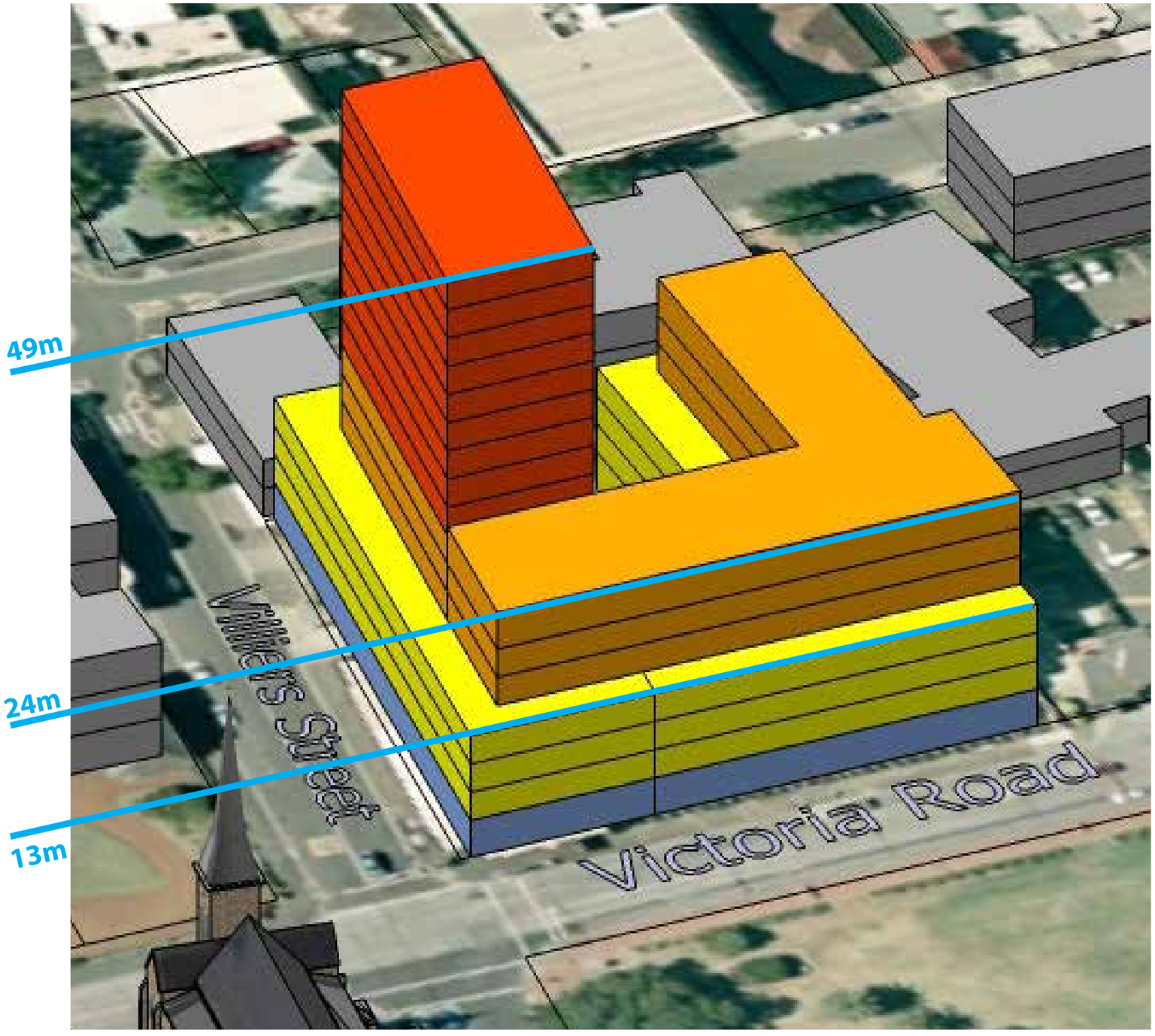
Level 15	451m^2
Level 14	451m^2
Level 13	451m^2
Level 12	451m^2
Level 11	451m^2
Level 10	451m^2
Level 9	451m^2
Level 8	451m^2
Level 7	451m^2
Level 6	1,541m^2
Level 5	1,541m^2
Level 4	1,541m^2
Level 3	2,227m^2
Level 2	2,227m^2
Level 1	2,227m^2
Level G	2,227m^2
Total	
17,590m^2	

Floor Space Ratio (FSR)

Land Area	3,648.2m^2
Total GFA (incl non-res)	17,590m^2
FSR	4.8:1

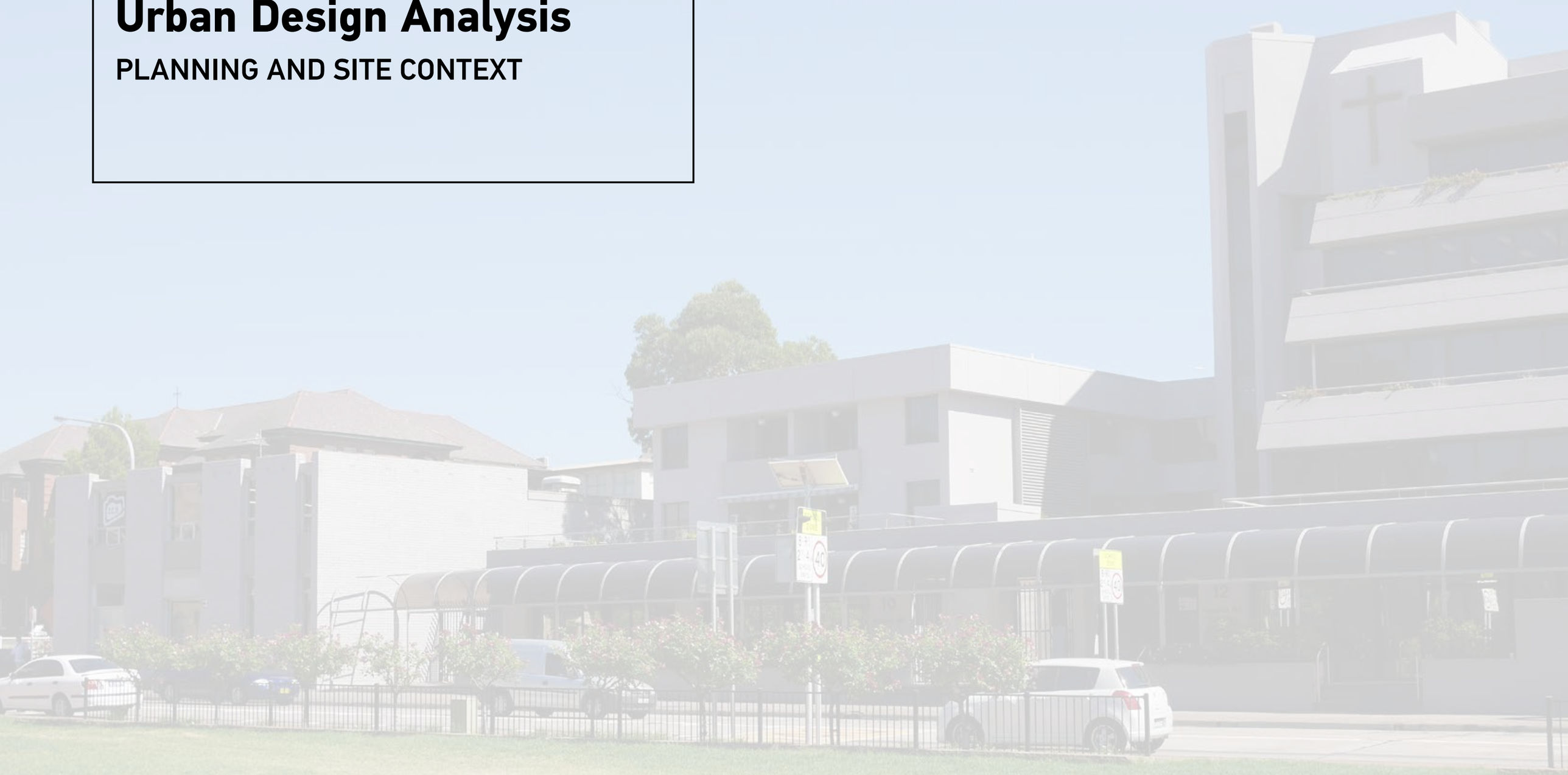
Apartment Yield

Estimated yield of 180 apartments



Urban Design Analysis

PLANNING AND SITE CONTEXT



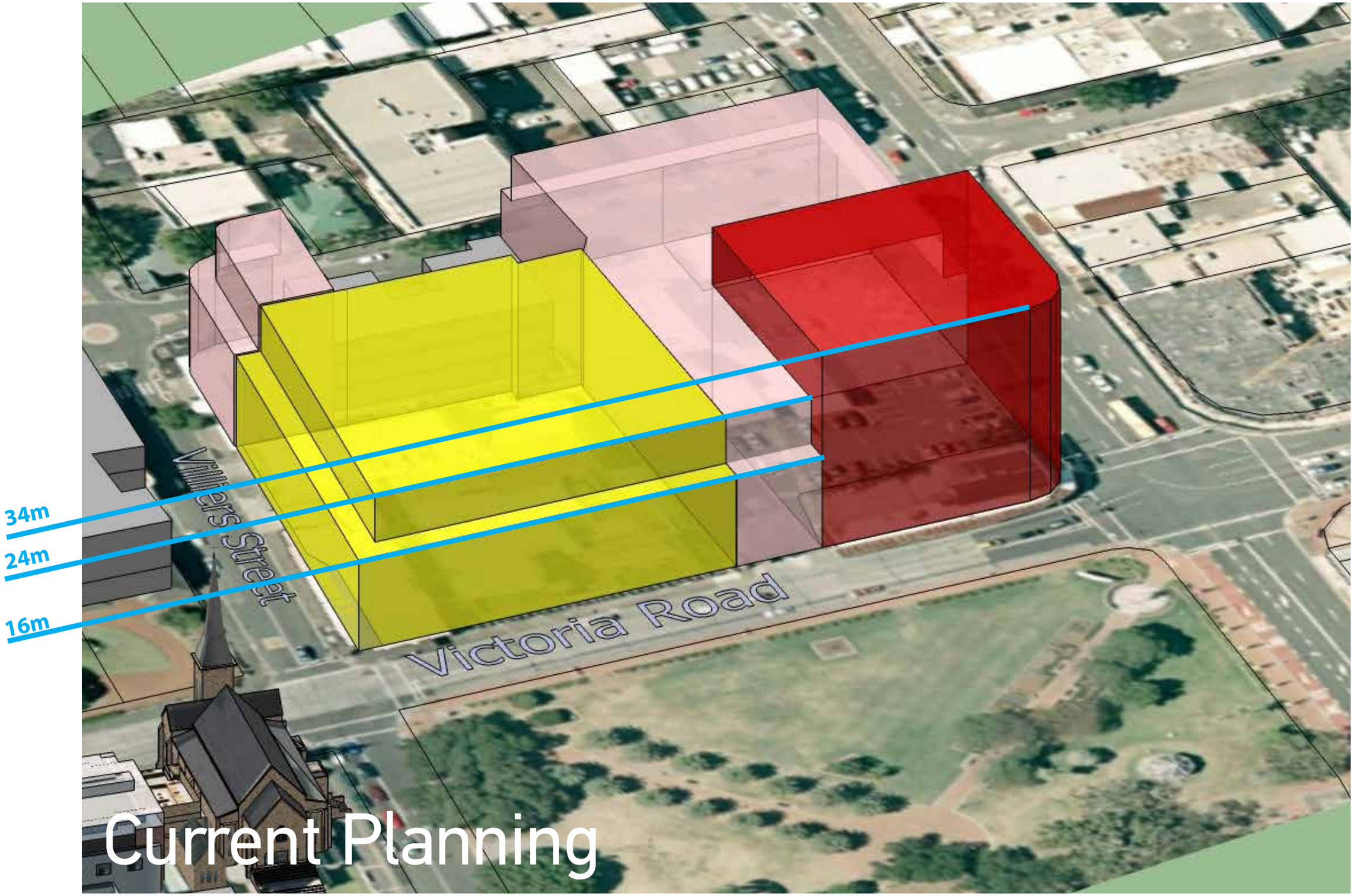
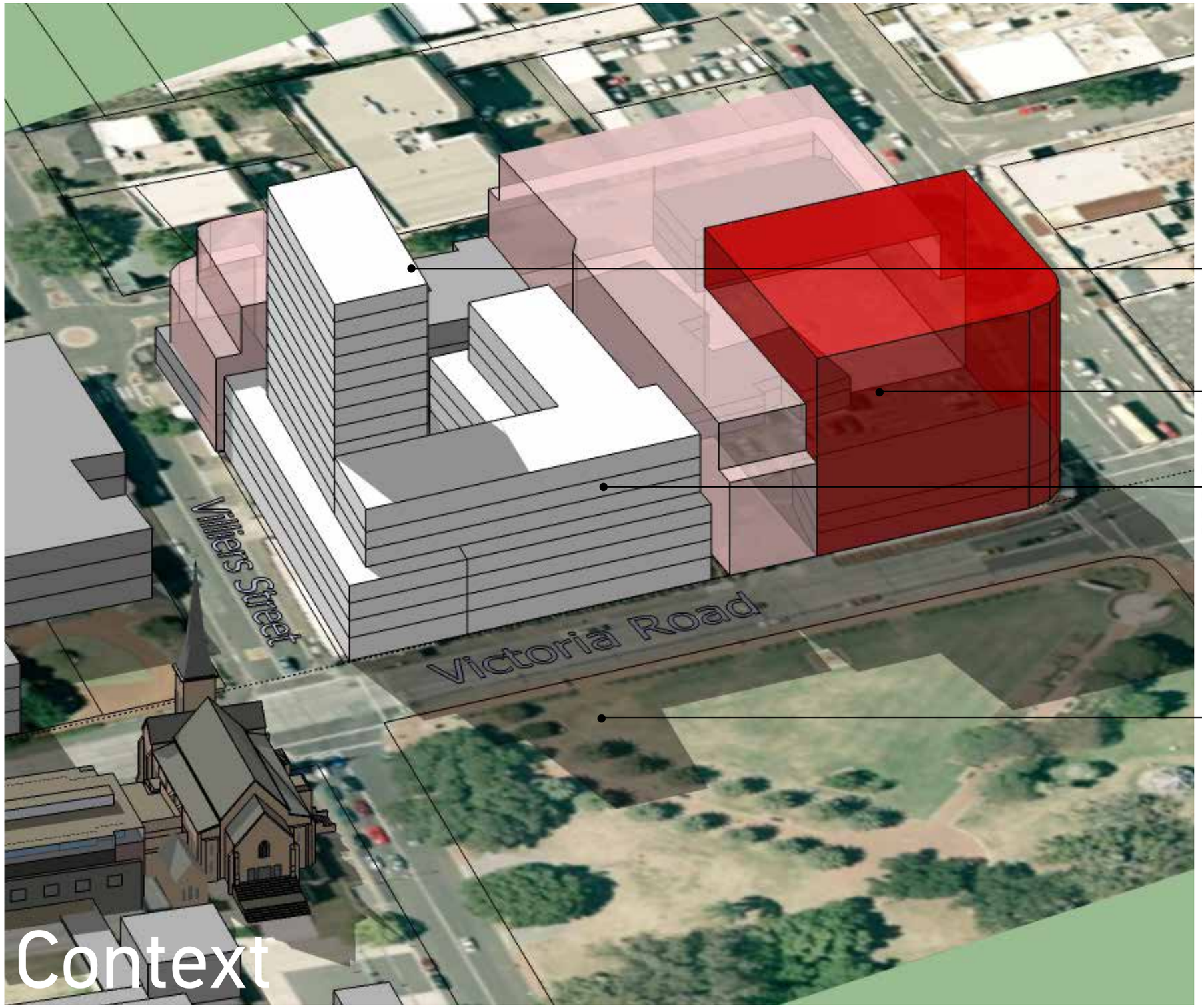


Fig 3. SW view including permitted envelope on McDonald's site under current LEP and DCP



Tower element setback provides separation between neighbouring lots

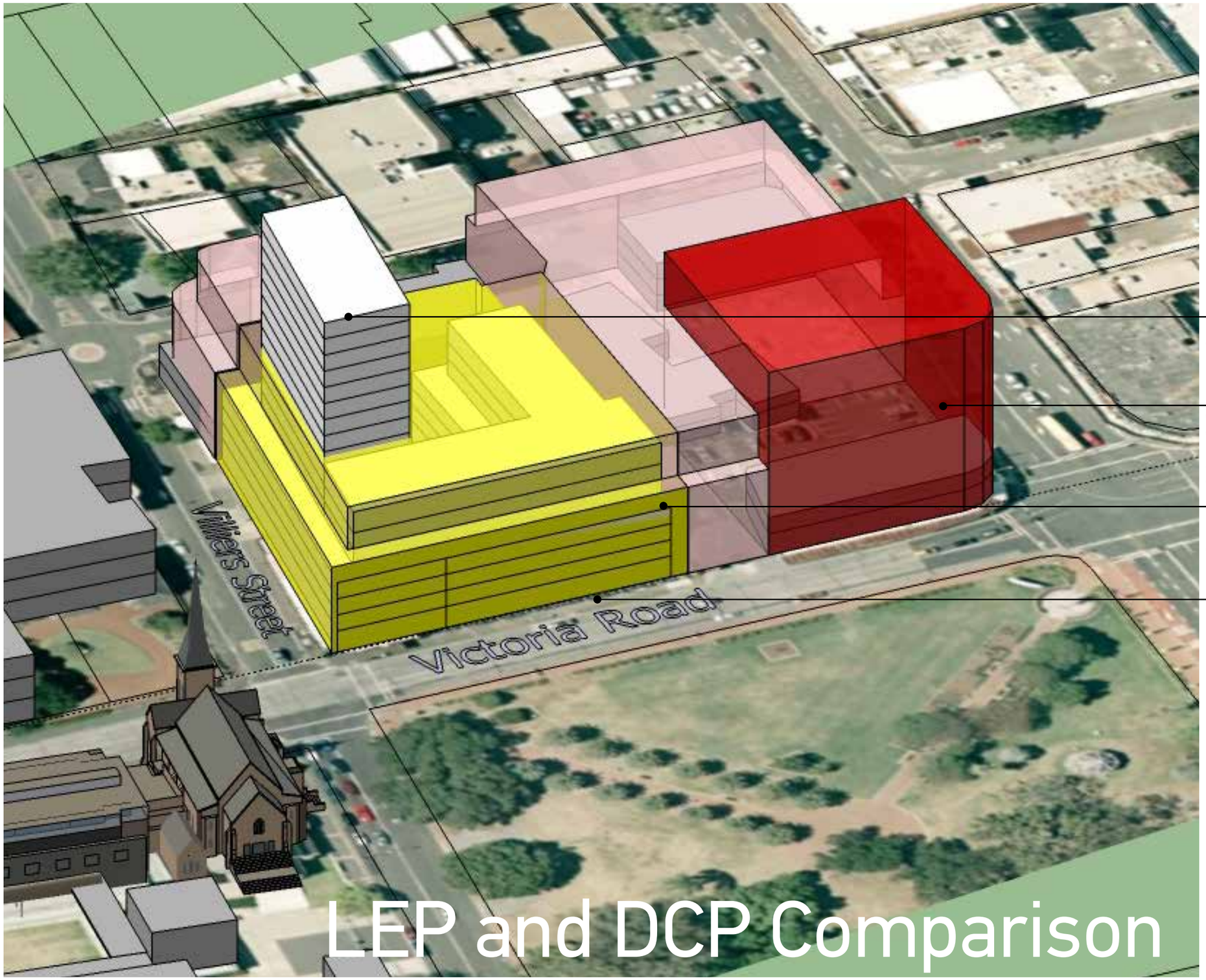
Gateway element set forward on Victoria Road significantly more imposing on Prince Albert Park than proposed envelope

Podium envelope provides for streetscape consistency in accordance with DCP

Shadow impact significantly lower than permitted envelope on McDonald's site due to slender tower design

Context

Fig 4. SW view including permitted envelope on McDonald's site under current LEP and DCP



Proposed additional levels on subject site.

Gateway element set forward on Victoria Road significantly more imposing on Prince Albert Park than proposed envelope on subject site.

Podium envelope provides for streetscape consistency in accordance with DCP.

Building envelope addresses the street edge for greater activation.

Legend

- Building envelope permitted by LEP and DCP for subject site
- Building envelope permitted by LEP and DCP for McDonald's site
- Permitted 'gateway' envelope
- Portion of envelope outside of current permitted controls

Fig 5. SW view including proposed development in relation to existing LEP height and FSR requirements.

Solar Analysis and Concept Evolution

SHADOW IMPACTS

June 21

09:00

10:00

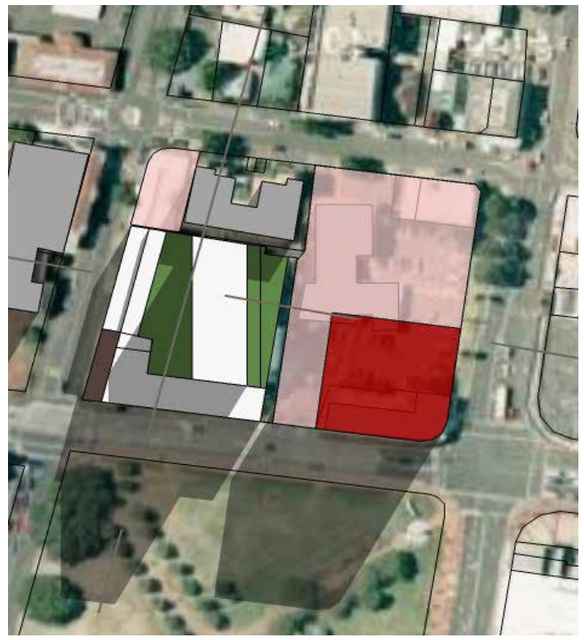
11:00

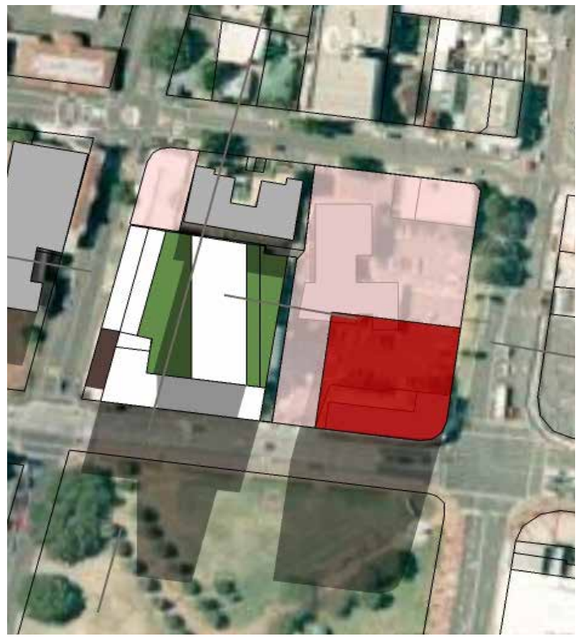
Existing LEP and DCP Controls

- Major shadow cast from permitted envelope from this site and the adjacent site.
- Morning shadow impacts result primarily from the McDonald's envelope

Original Concept

- Long shadow cast from subject site and major shadow cast from McDonald's site.
- Morning shadow impacts result both from the proposed envelope on the McDonald's envelope.
- Shading to the clock would occur from 11am until sunset under current controls should the Gateway element be constructed on the McDonald's site.





Revised (Current) Concept

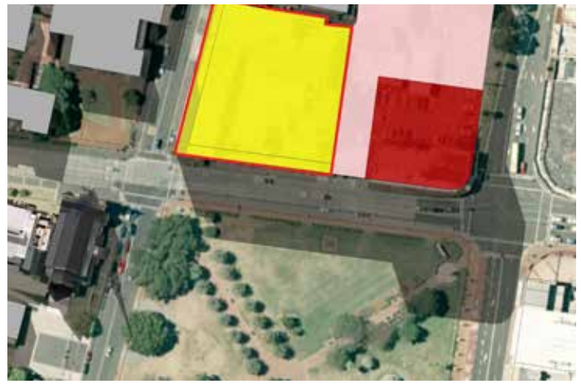
- In comparison to the original concept, shadow impacts of proposed envelope on both sites result in greater access to morning sun, to encourage morning use for exercise and other sun seeking activities.
- Shadow cast does not reach unshaded areas of the park until after midday due to relocation of tower element.
- For 76.5% of daylight hours on 21 June, the Gollan clock is outside of the shadow line of the proposed envelope on the subject site.
- Narrow tower reduces shadow impact and ensures solar access ins maintained in a greater area of the affected quadrant, meaning that people can choose sun or shade.

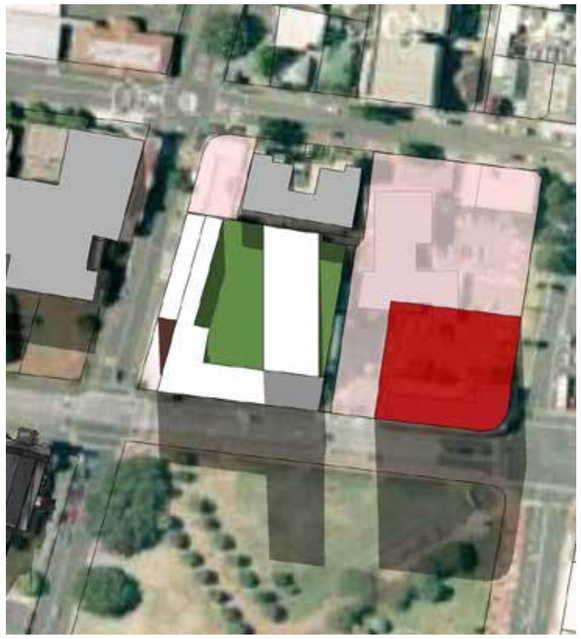
12:00

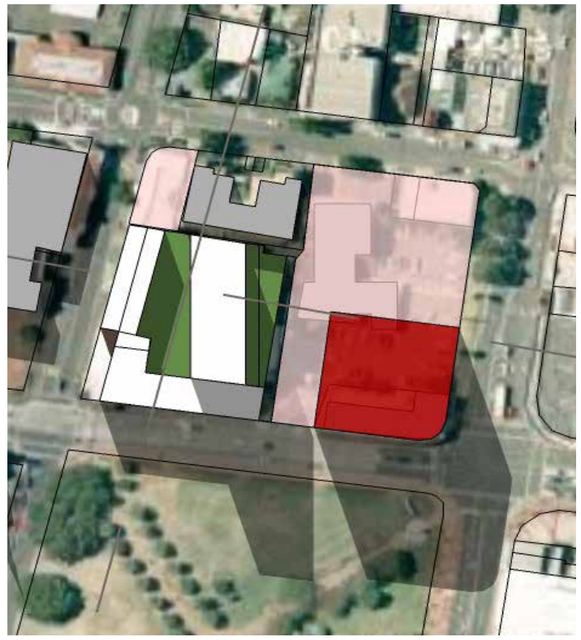
13:00

14:00

15:00







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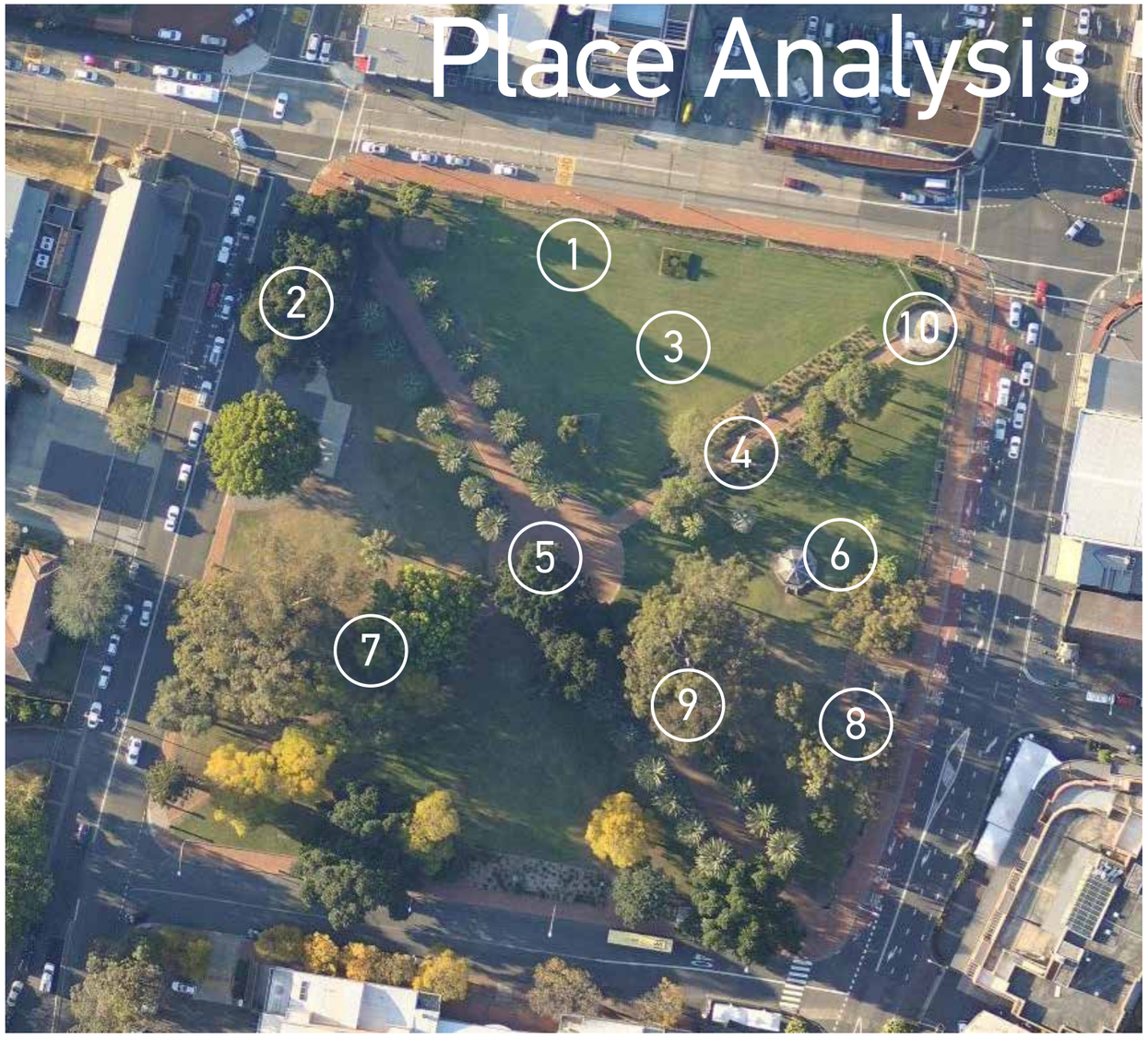
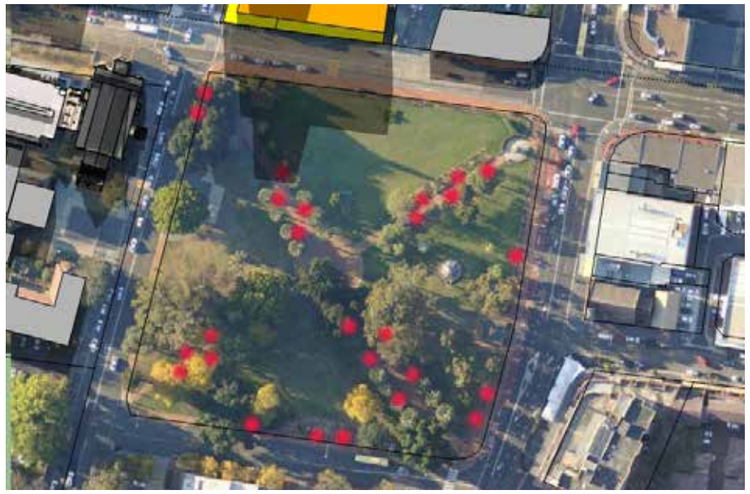
Place Analysis

PLACE CONTEXT AND IMPACTS

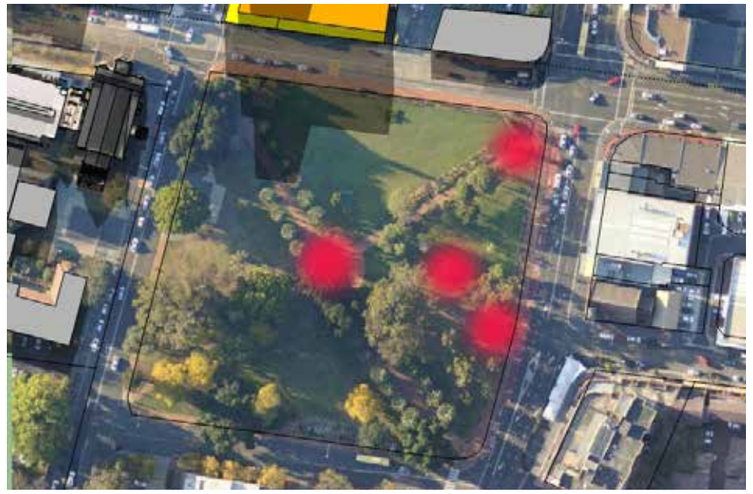
Place Analysis





Public Seating

Public seating is not provided adjacent to Victoria Road and is predominantly located on internal and peripheral footpaths. Note that the majority of public seating is provided in shaded areas. The proposed envelope does not result in shadow impact on public seating areas.

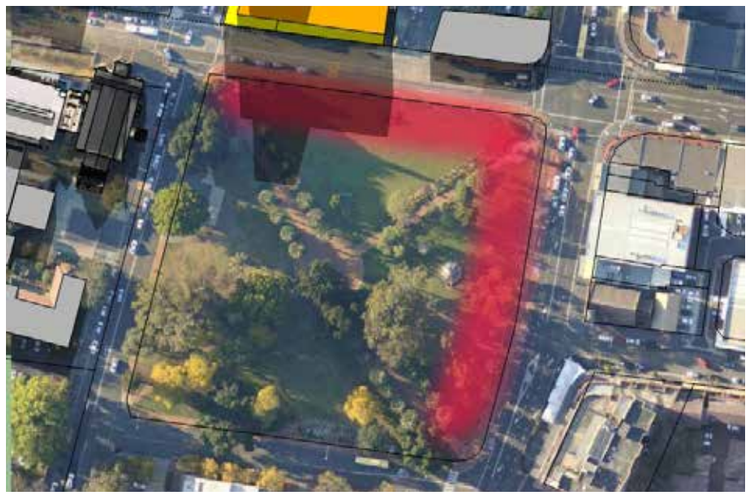


Destinations

Key destinations are concentrated towards the centre of the park with northern areas lacking in focal points and place making infrastructure. Shadow cast from the podium of the proposed envelope does not impact key place making features of the park and does not reach the Gollan Clock until 2:33pm leaving it free of shadow from the proposed envelope for over 75% of daylight hours on June 21.

Movement Lines

Formal pathways direct movement towards the centre of the park. Peripheral footpaths are separated from the park by fencing. Internal footpaths are not significantly impacted by the shadow cast by the proposed envelope.

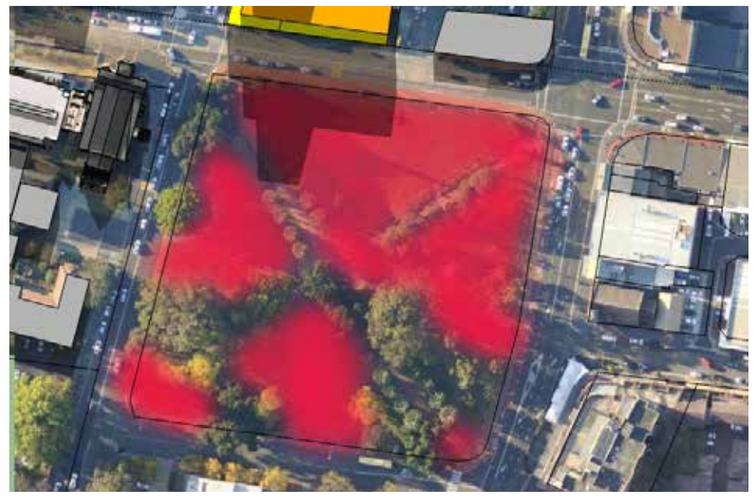


Road Noise

Areas of the park closest to Victoria Road and Church Street are adversely impacted by road noise. Sparse landscape along Victoria Road contributes to a sense of exposure to traffic and noise. Shadow impacts fall primarily within the area most affected by road noise and traffic - an area that provides a lower level of comfort for visitors to the park.

Shady Areas

The park is characterised as a combination of sunny and shady areas. Areas of the park have a thick tree canopy providing areas of shade during summer months. Shadow impacts of the proposed building envelope make a minimal contribution to the provision of additional shade in mid winter.



Sunny Spots

Large areas of the park have good amounts of sunshine and dappled light at various times of the day, particularly the northern quarter between the central hub and Victoria Road. The shadow of the proposed building envelope does not significantly detract from solar access throughout the park.

Shadow Impacts 12:00pm June 21

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View Lines

VISTAS AND VIEW POINTS

Victoria Road View Analysis

Fig 6. East view along Victoria Road including permitted envelope on McDonald's site

A local approach to everyday views

The Victoria Road vista provides one of the most significant 'everyday' views to St Patrick's Cathedral. Setting taller buildings forward has potential to close in this view and visually compete with the spire.

Hard street setbacks proposed within current building controls within the LEP and DCP would have the effect of closing in the vista. This results in obvious conflicts in form relating to envelopes on the north side of Victoria Road and their response to St Patrick's Cathedral and adjacent heritage buildings. The urban design intent to establish a 'gateway' is a common urban design practice, the recognition that a gateway elements provides at a district scale, can often conflict with addressing vistas with a more locally appropriate scale.

Fig 7. East view including proposed envelope on McDonald's site

Opening the Victoria Road vista

Proposed setbacks to upper levels for the proposed envelope, as would be experienced upon approach to the subject site, reflect the height of adjacent buildings, whilst opening up the vista to upper levels.

This approach allows the St Patrick's Cathedral and spire to be more easily read from Victoria Road. It respects the human scale at the street edge with upper levels set back is a more locally relevant approach to protecting everyday view lines as these are the places that people engage with the view simply by being there.

This approach allows the massing of the proposed envelope to reflect the masonry elements of the St Patrick's Cathedral, whilst enabling the lower podium of the proposed envelope to the define the street edge. Upper level setbacks provide greater separation providing space and emphasis on the spire as seen from an everyday viewpoint. This approach frames the street edge, whilst allowing the spite to be clearly read without a sense of crowding.

OGH View Line

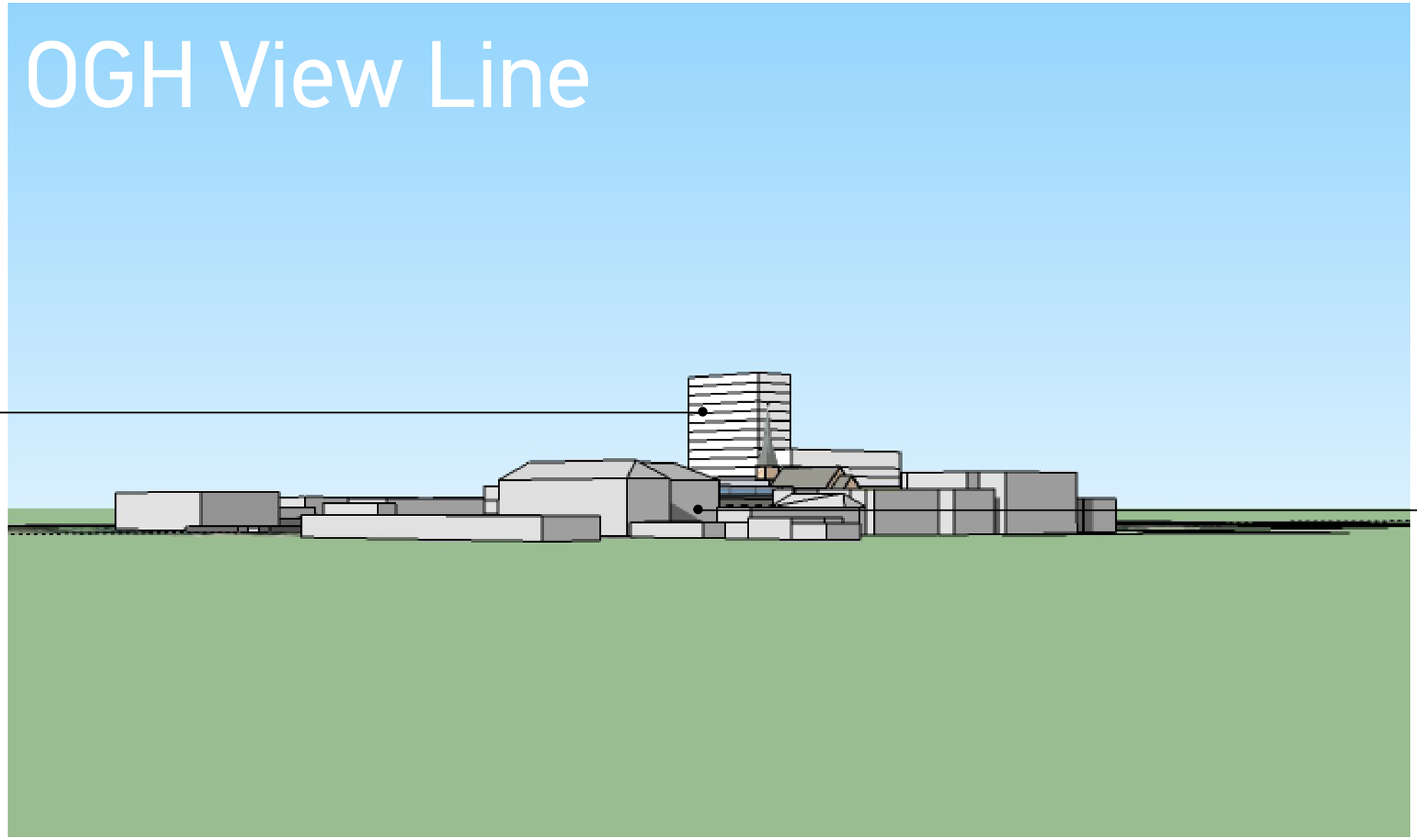

Fig 8. View from Old Government House, which illustrates that the proposed development maintains visual access to the spire and the Old Kings School site.

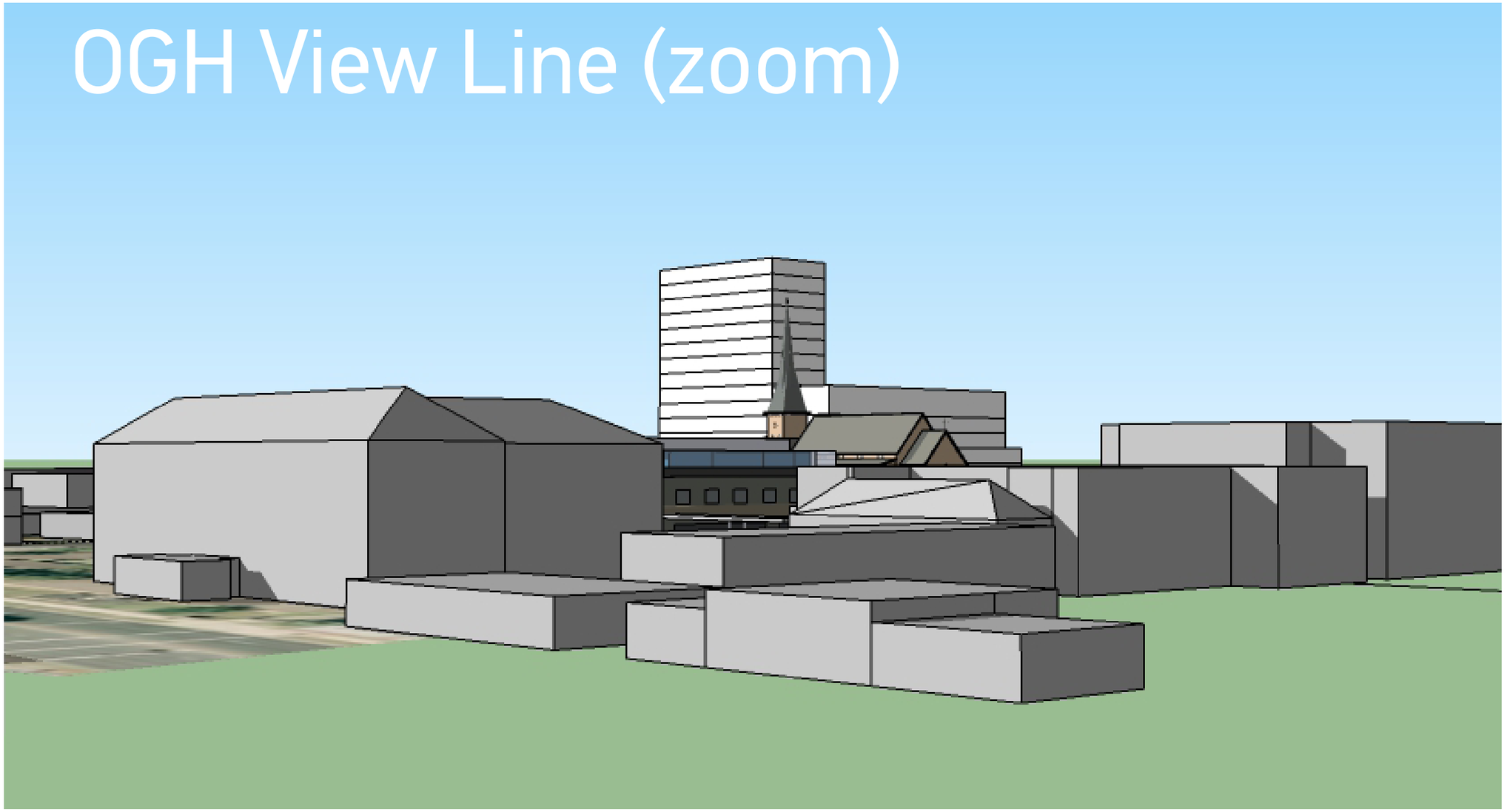

Fig 9. Zoomed in view from View from Old Government House, which more closely illustrates visual access to the spire and the Old Kings School site.

Views from Old Government House - Observations

- Heritage analysis (refer to NBRS Heritage Report Supplementary View Analysis March 2014) indicates that the:
  - nature of the significance of this view is due to the historical connection between Old Government House and the former King's School and Government Farm.
  - significant view does not extend to St Patrick's Cathedral or to the subject site.
  - Cathedral is a peripheral background element with marginal visibility and no dominance in the view even with the obscuring vegetation removed. Whilst the envelope forms a backdrop to heritage elements, it would not obscure views to the spire.
- Any building envelope above 6 levels would form a backdrop to the spire.
- The proposed building does not remove the ability for the spire to be read from this view.

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Conclusions

PLACE CONTEXT AND SUMMARY OF IMPACTS

Setbacks

- Activation of the street edge and interaction between the public and private realm is assisted by nil setbacks to both Victoria Road and Villiers Street in accordance with DCP principles.
- The widening of the footpath along Villiers Street will improve accessibility and pedestrian safety.
- A 3m eastern setback will accommodate the required share of the through-site link.
- Sufficient separation between the tower element and Prince Alfred Park has been established to minimise potential for overshadowing and to soften the visual impact of building bulk.
- Setbacks the street edge conform to DCP requirements to establish a comfortable human visual scale and allow appropriate solar access in the public realm.
- Appropriate site planing and setbacks promote passive surveillance of the public realm for pedestrian safety.

Solar Access

- The proposed envelope does not result in excess shadowing and allows access to sunny areas in Prince Alfred Park within the shadow path at various times throughout the day.
- The greatest impact of overshadowing would result from the permitted envelope of the gateway element on the neighbouring McDonald's site should this site be developed in accordance with the current DCP.
- In comparison to the previous concept, shadow impacts of proposed envelope on both sites results in greater access to morning sun, to encourage morning use for exercise and other sun-seeking activities.
- The proposed envelope does not result in significant overshadowing of Prince Alfred park at midday on June 21, leaving the area of the park with the greatest solar access relatively unaffected.

Height

- The tower element is positioned to the north west of the site and set back sufficiently to provide greater solar access to the neighbouring McDonald's site and reduce overshadowing of Prince Alfred Park.
- Lower podium level heights reflect the bulk and scale of heritage buildings along Villiers Street and Victoria Road for an appropriate response to local context.
- Upper and lower level podium heights reflect heights and setbacks outlined within the DCP to promote a consistent street edge between neighbouring sites.
- Design of the tower element provides the narrow dimension towards Victoria Street to minimise impact of bulk on Prince Alfred Park.
- The tower element consists of simple forms to accord with the desired character for Parramatta.

Place Making

- Commercial/ retail/ live-work units on Victoria Road and Villiers Street will facilitate place activation and provide greater amenity in the precinct.
- Shadowing occurs mainly to the footpath and areas impacted by road noise with minimal place making qualities. The proposed envelope does not overshadow public seating areas of Prince Alfred Park, which are focused along walkways and towards the park's centre.
- Shadowing of Prince Albert Park falls primarily within the area most affected by road noise and traffic - an area that provides limited attraction and comfort for visitors to the park.
- Shadow cast from the podium of the proposed envelope does not impact key place making features of the park and does not reach the Gollan Clock until 2:57pm, which would also occur under the current DCP.
- The proposed envelope does not significantly overshadow identified areas of the park with the greatest solar access and does not significantly contribute to the shading of the park in mid winter.
- Internal footpaths are not significantly impacted by the shadow cast by the proposed envelope.

Activity/ land use

- Commercial/retail/ live-work activities are focused towards Victoria Road and Villiers Street, which is the most viable place for businesses with better solar access and separation from traffic movement and noise along Victoria Road.
- Live/work units with larger floor to ceiling heights may be required in the short to medium term, which could accommodate commercial or retail activities or enable transition to commercial units as future needs evolve and the demand for commercial floor space in that location increases.
- Non-residential activities at ground level could potentially include cafe, restaurant, office or 'front of house' church related community and support service activities, which have potential to offer place making opportunities.

View-lines and Vistas

- The significance of DCP View 1 is due to the historical connection between Old Government House and the former King's School and Government Farm and does not extend to St Patrick's Cathedral or to the subject site. (refer to NBRS Heritage Report Supplementary View Analysis).
- When viewed from Old Government House (OGH), any building envelope above 6 levels on the subject site would form a backdrop to the spire and would be permitted under the DCP/ LEP.
- Whilst the envelope forms a backdrop to heritage elements, it would not obscure views to the spire from OGH.
- The proposed envelope promotes a local approach that, in comparison to current development controls, opens up the everyday Victoria Road view line towards St Patrick's Cathedral allowing built form to define the street, whilst improving the ability of the spire to be read as a significant landmark within the streetscape.

TOWN PLANNING
AND URBAN DESIGN

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