

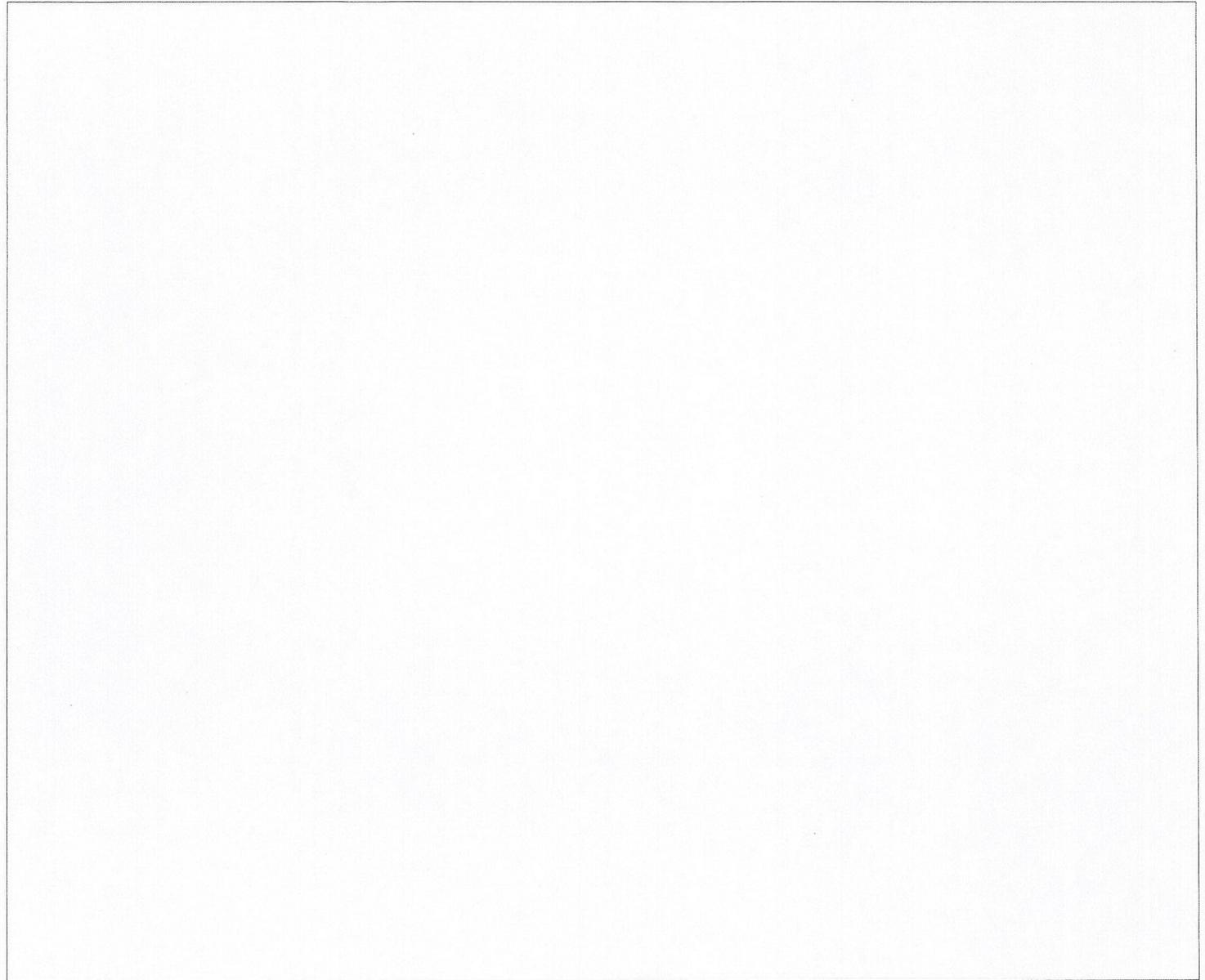
STUDIO ZANARDO

PLANNING PROPOSAL

URBAN DESIGN REPORT

15-23 HOMER STREET, EARLWOOD

APRIL 2014



PREPARED BY

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INTRODUCTION

Studio Zanardo has been engaged by Croycon Investments Pty Ltd to prepare an Urban Design Report to accompany and support the Planning Proposal prepared by Burrell Threlfo Pagan for 15-23 Homer Street, Earlwood.

The purpose of the Planning Proposal is to explain the objectives and intended effect of the proposed LEP amendment and set out sufficient justification for the making of that plan. It must demonstrate that the proposal has strategic planning merit, site-specific merit and is consistent with the relevant policies. The Planning Proposal is to be supported by technical information and investigations where necessary.

The text and diagrams contained in this report are intended to support and provide sufficient justification for those aspects of the Planning Proposal which have an urban design dimension. The material presented is considered to be current, accurate, technically competent, and delivered in a way that is concise, clear and easy to understand. The level of detail is intended to be proportionate to the complexity of the proposed amendment and demonstrate that the relevant environmental, social, economic and site specific impacts have been identified and addressed adequately.

QUALIFICATIONS

Michael Zanardo is a registered architect, an urban designer, and the principal of Studio Zanardo established in 2007. Studio Zanardo specialises in the design of housing, with a particular focus on social and affordable housing. Project experience spans all levels of detail, from small-scale residential buildings, through to medium-density mixed-use projects and large scale urban design proposals.

Michael was engaged as a lead architectural consultant to the NSW Department of Planning & Infrastructure for the comprehensive review of the SEPP 65 Residential Flat Design Code. This project involved extensive research and testing, resulting in the refinement and revision of all text and diagrams including Better Design Practice advice and Rules of Thumb. He has also recently been a consultant urban designer to the NSW Department of Planning & Infrastructure for the Anzac Parade South Urban Activation Precinct project looking at proposing the rezoning of large areas of the Randwick Local Government Area.

Michael sits on the Ku-ring-gai Urban Design Consultant Panel providing SEPP 65 design assessments and best practice urban design advice to Council. He is also a consultant Design Manager to Bridge Community Housing, and has acted as an urban design expert witness in the NSW Land & Environment Court. He is currently undertaking a PhD at USYD investigating architectural typologies and design strategies for affordable housing in Sydney.

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REGIONAL CONTEXT

The site is located in the inner southwest suburb of Earlwood, within Canterbury Local Government Area, on the border of Marrickville Local Government Area. The site is on the south bank of the Cooks River and is in close proximity to many large public parks. The site is 9km from Sydney CBD, 4km from Sydney Airport and 7km from Port Botany.

The site is within 6km of the major centres of Kogarah, Hurstville and Burwood which provide significant employment, major shopping, business and service centres, and centralised community facilities. The site is within 4km of the town centres of Marrickville Road, Campsie and Rockdale which provide supermarket shopping, local services and community facilities. Villages and small villages within 2km include Earlwood, Illawarra Road, Wolli Creek, Hurlstone Park and Arncliffe that provide strip shopping and local services.

The site is within an 800m walking distance to Turrella train station and 1600m cycling distance to Dulwich Hill, Marrickville, Tempe and Wolli Creek train stations. This provides access to three separate lines of the Sydney Trains Network which connect to Sydney CBD. The light rail station at Dulwich Hill is also within 1600m. The M5 can be accessed nearby to the south.



Regional context 1:82,000 [2012 Aerial_maps.six.nsw.gov.au]

▲ North 1km

LOCAL CONTEXT

This part of Earlwood is known locally as Undercliffe, having been a separate suburb until 1993. Undercliffe is a peninsula defined by the Cooks River to the north and Wolli Creek to the south. Topographically, the area is formed by a strong east-west spur with very steep northern and southern slopes. Bayview Avenue follows the ridge line of the spur towards the point, whilst Undercliffe Road traces the base of the northern slope. Homer Street gradually climbs the flank of the spur and the Parry Steps provide pedestrian access from Homer Street up to Bayview Lane. Riverview Road runs parallel to the river on lower flatter ground. At the intersection of Homer Street and Undercliffe Road, the northern face of the spur protrudes to the street edge to reveal a dramatic vegetated sandstone cliff-face. The name 'Undercliffe' comes from this distinctive natural feature.

The area is predominantly comprised of detached residential dwellings with the exception of a small pocket of apartment buildings and commercial uses within which the site is located. The suburb of Marrickville to the north has a residential character, whilst Turrella to the south has an industrial character.

The site is a gently sloping piece of land situated between the cliff and the Cooks River. It is located on the western side of Homer Street at the roundabout intersection with Undercliffe Road and the Illawarra Road bridge. The site overlooks Stafford Walk with the Cooks River Cycleway to the north. Across the bridge to the north are the Marrickville Golf Club, HJ Mahoney Reserve and Steel Park. To the east along Undercliffe Road are Wanstead Reserve, Gough Whittam Park and Waterworth Park. On the far side of the spur, on the southern slope, is Wolli Creek Regional Park. Nearby public buildings include Undercliffe Public School and the Greek Orthodox Church on Bayview Street, and the Community Recreation Centre on Illawarra Road.



Local context 1:5000 (2012 Aerial_maps.six.nsw.gov.au)

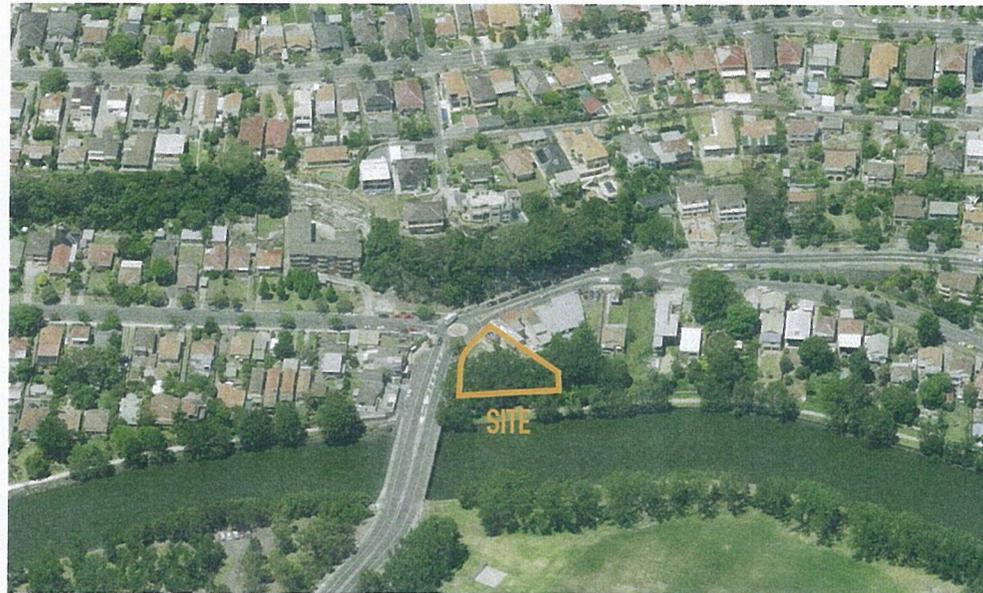
North 50m

STUDIO ZANARDO

LOCAL CONTEXT (continued)

The site is well serviced by the 423 and L23 bus route, having bus stops in both directions immediately to the south on Homer Street. The 423 bus runs from Kingsgrove, via Earlwood, Marrickville, Enmore, Newtown, Sydney University and Ultimo to Circular Quay. This route provides good access to employment, shopping, services and community facilities. Historically, this route was serviced by the Earlwood tram between 1912 and 1957.

The area offers many recreational opportunities within extensive nearby parklands. The Cooks River Cycleway is a regional connection permitting bicycling along the river foreshore from Homebush Bay in the north to Botany Bay in the south. Canterbury Velodrome is located in Waterworth Park.



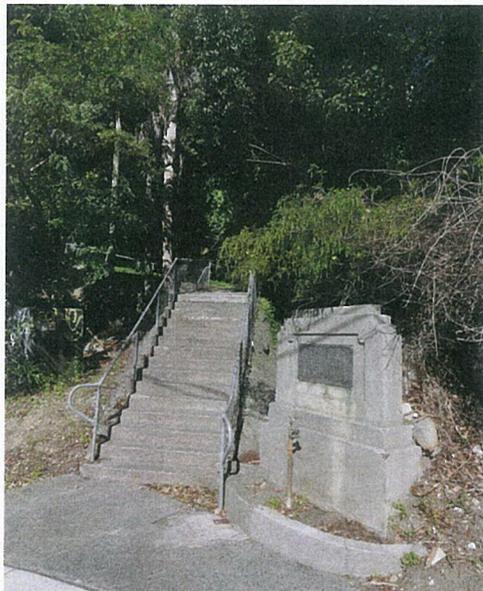
High view from north (Birds eye_bing.com/maps)



423 bus route map (Map_sydneybuses.info)



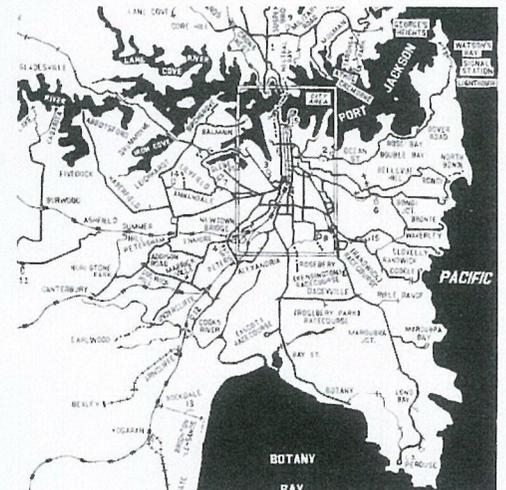
R1 class tram on Undercliffe Bridge, Earlwood, 1957 (Image_photosau.com.au/Canterbury)



The Parry Steps from Homer Street



High view from east (Birds eye_bing.com/maps)



New South Wales Government Tramways at maximum extent (Map_Keenan 'Tramways of Sydney')

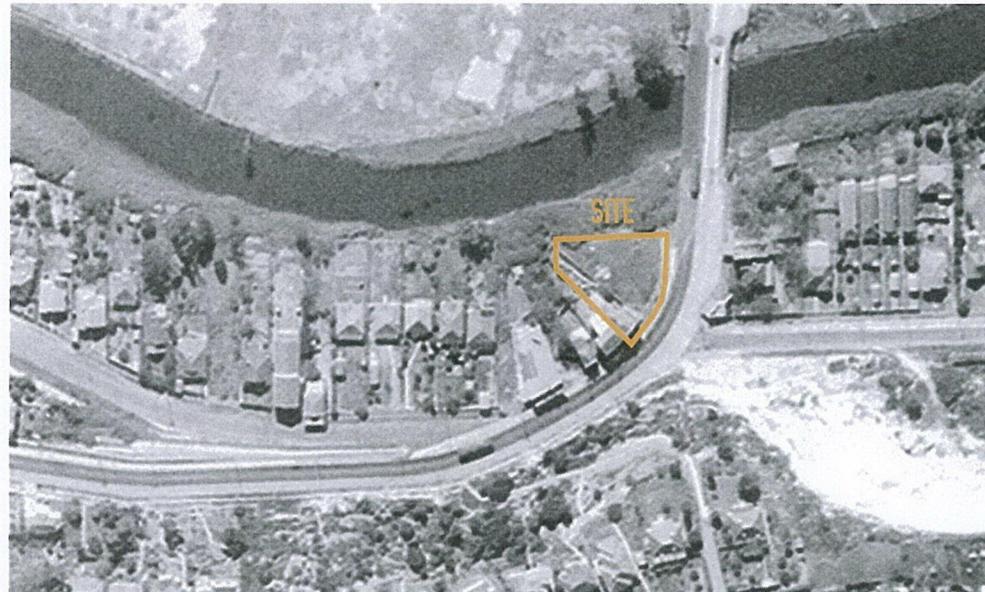
LOCAL HISTORY

Early local industry in Undercliffe included the quarrying of sandstone on the south side of Undercliffe Road, the impact of which can be clearly seen in the manmade cliff which rises above the southern side. The original natural landform can be seen at the intersection of Homer Street and Undercliffe Road where the rock remained in its natural state. Many of the nearby original houses were constructed of sandstone masonry, or had foundations of sandstone.

The southern side of the Cooks River in this area was first settled in 1828 by Joshua Thorp, architect and Assistant Colonial Engineer. He erected a nine-room stone country house in the gothic style on the subject site, called 'Juhan Munna' (also known as Undercliffe House), using a punt to ferry across the river to Marrickville. The house was purchased by Fredrick Wright Unwin who owned the neighbouring farm in the 1840s, then by P.A. Tompson, a solicitor c1850. The house was demolished in the 1880s for the widening of Homer Street.

The first wooden bridge to cross the Cooks River was built in 1836. Tompson also built a bridge in 1854. In 1912 the first electric tram operated along Illawarra Road to Undercliffe, later extending through to Earlowood in 1924. The tram line was closed in 1957, with the service replaced by buses. The current bridge was constructed by the Department of Main Roads in 1964.

The site appears to have remained unchanged for almost a century. Today, 21-23 Homer Street is still occupied by a two-storey terrace, albeit highly modified and modernised, currently in use as a carpet shop. 15-19 Homer Street is vacant, used only as an informal unsealed car park. There are no known heritage issues associated with the site.



1943 Aerial photo 1:2000 [Aerial_maps.six.nsw.gov.au]

North 20m



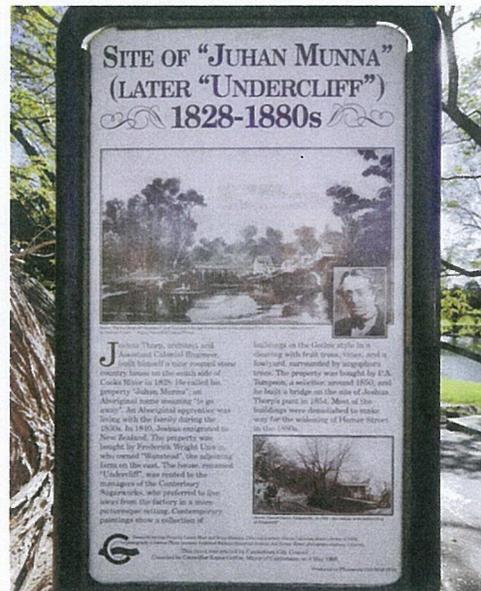
Cooks River from Illawarra Road, Earlowood, 1901 [Image_photosau.com.au/Canterbury]



Tram crossing Undercliffe Bridge, Earlowood, c1950s [Image_photosau.com.au/Canterbury]



Undercliffe Road, Earlowood, 1960 [Image_photosau.com.au/Canterbury]



Interpretive panel on site



Tompson's Crossing, Undercliffe Estate, Earlowood, 1862 [Painting_photosau.com.au/Canterbury]

BUILT CONTEXT

The site is opposite the well-known Adora Cafe at 10 Homer Street. The Adora Cafe is two storeys plus parapet, built to the street edge with an active street frontage and awning. The neighbouring site to the north at 8 Homer Street appears to have been recently approved for mixed use residential redevelopment. To the southwest, the site adjoins a recently completed 4-5 storey apartment building at 25-33 Homer Street. This building presents as four and a half storeys to the street with its basement partially out of the ground and a large expressive skillion roof. It has a height of approximately 18m from street level to its upper roof line. The south facing street elevation is defensive with small punched openings. It has a small setback and presents solid courtyard walls to the street. There are no commercial or retail uses at ground level. Diagonally opposite the site at 78 Undercliffe Road is a four storey 1950s apartment building. It is set on a high sandstone base such that it is effectively five storeys in height plus a pitched roof and is also approximately 18m in height. The Undercliffe 'cliff' faces the site across the roundabout intersection. It is the tallest element in the immediate context, standing at over 20m in height, and dominates the streetscape. The cliff has buildings and mature vegetation on top of it which rise to an even greater height.

Together, these properties comprise a small grouping of B1 'Neighbourhood Centre' and R4 'High Density Residential' zoned sites set within what is predominantly a R2 'Low Density Residential' zoned context.



Adora Cafe opposite the site (A)



Recently completed four to five-storey apartments (B)



Four storey 1950s apartments on high sandstone base (C)



The Undercliffe 'cliff' (D)



Land Zoning (Map_Canterbury LEP 2012)



Site context 1:2000 (Aerial_Apple Maps application)

North 20m



Building footprints, open space, trees and contours 1:2000

North 20m

STREETScape

The streetscape within close proximity to the site has an definite urban character, with the obvious exception of the prominent natural feature of the cliff.

The recently completed four-five storey apartment building is set back 3m from the street edge with solid courtyard walls and does not provide a landscape treatment. The Adora cafe, and the existing carpet shop on site, are built to the street edge. The Adora cafe includes an awning, beneath which chairs and tables occupy the footpath during the day. Footpaths are relatively wide without grass verges. There are some small planted areas, and several street trees, however most of the 'green' appearance is borrowed from the vegetated sandstone cliff. Lighting, telegraph poles, signage and bus shelters are clearly present alluding to the more intensive use of land in this area.

The road carriageway is busy, carrying buses, trucks and cars primarily along the Homer Street and Illawarra Road alignment. Traffic calming measures including the roundabout and median strips. A pedestrian crossing is provided on Homer Street at the roundabout intersection, connecting the bus stops. A well-used bicycle crossing is provided on Illawarra Road allowing continuity of the Cooks River Cycleway on either side of the bridge. The site has a driveway crossing to the existing carpet shop within the roundabout intersection.



Panoramic view from in front of site looking southeast showing the Adora cafe (left), four storey 1950s apartments and cliff (central), and recent four-five storey apartments (far right)



Panoramic view from in front of site looking east showing the vacant site (left), Adora cafe (central), and four storey 1950s apartments and cliff (far right)



Panoramic view from opposite site looking northwest showing cliff (left), recent four-five storey apartments (centre left), the site (centre) and Adora cafe (right)

VISUAL CATCHMENT

Apart from views within the streetscape, the site is visible primarily from a northern approach.

The site can be viewed at a distance from HJ Mahoney Reserve looking south across the Cooks River. It is noted however that there is no formal path along this edge of HJ Mahoney Reserve and views from the park itself are generally screened by the trees that line its southern edge. The recently completed four-five storey apartment building adjacent to the site is clearly visible from across the river. Its white, stepping form can be seen between a gap in the mature trees along Stafford Walk. It is noted that even at this lowest vantage point this building still sits below and 'within' the vegetation on the ridge line.

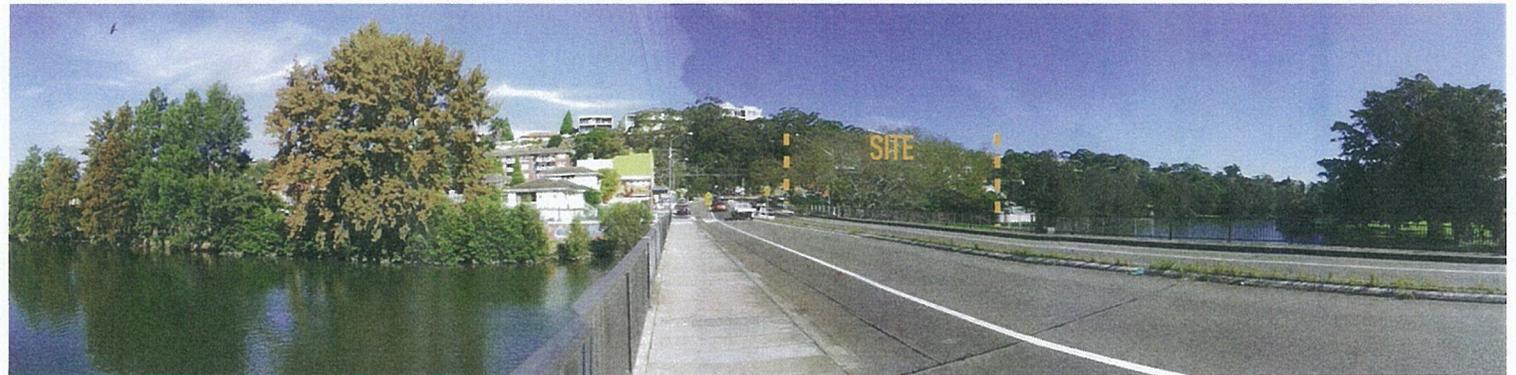
The site is most visible from a northern approach along Illawarra Road as the bridge crosses the river. The northeastern corner of the site is somewhat screened by a stand of trees at the corner of Stafford Walk. The recently completed four-five storey apartment building adjacent to the site is almost completely screened. The party wall and awning of the Adora cafe can be seen defining the eastern edge of the street. The four storey 1950s apartments can be seen above and behind the Adora cafe. Again, from this angle, the cliff forms a green visual backdrop.

From an eastern approach along Undercliffe Road, the site is mostly obscured until the roundabout intersection is reached. Trees line the foreground view along the low density residential street, however the recently completed four-five storey apartments on axis with Undercliffe Road and visible at the end of the street is more urban in presentation.

From a southwestern approach along Homer Street, the bend in the road conceals the site from view until the roundabout is reached. The streetscape of the recently completed four-five storey apartments, without trees, plantings, or a footpath verge present a strongly urban character from this aspect.



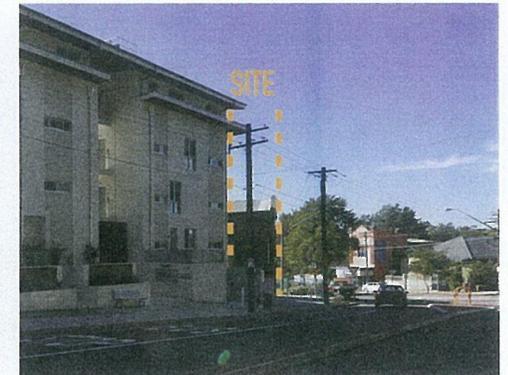
Panoramic view from HJ Mahoney Reserve looking south across the Cooks River showing the bridge (left), the site (centre left), and recent four-five storey apartments (centre)



Panoramic view from bridge looking south showing the landscaped river foreshore, the Adora cafe (centre left), cliff (centre) and the site (right)



View looking west along Undercliffe Road showing the four storey 1950s apartments (far left), the Undercliffe 'cliff' (left), recent four-five storey apartments (centre), the site (centre right), and low density residential streetscape (right).



View looking northeast along Homer St showing recent four-five storey apartments (left), site (centre), Adora cafe (right)

SITE ANALYSIS

The site is located at 15-23 Homer Street, Earlwood. It is comprised of four lots being Lots 1, 2 and 3 in DP 209918 and Lot 1 in DP 119762. The combined site area is 1,144.3m². The site is wedge-shaped with a curving frontage to Homer Street of 44.79m and a straight frontage to Stafford Walk of 42.81m. The site falls 2m gently from the southernmost corner to the north for the majority of the site and then drops off steeply (2-4m) down to Stafford Walk along the northern edge. The Canterbury LEP indicates that the site is within the Flood Planning Area. Canterbury Council has advised that the 1 in 100 year ARI flood level is estimated at 3.2m AHD and all habitable floor areas are required to be built at 3.7m AHD or above.

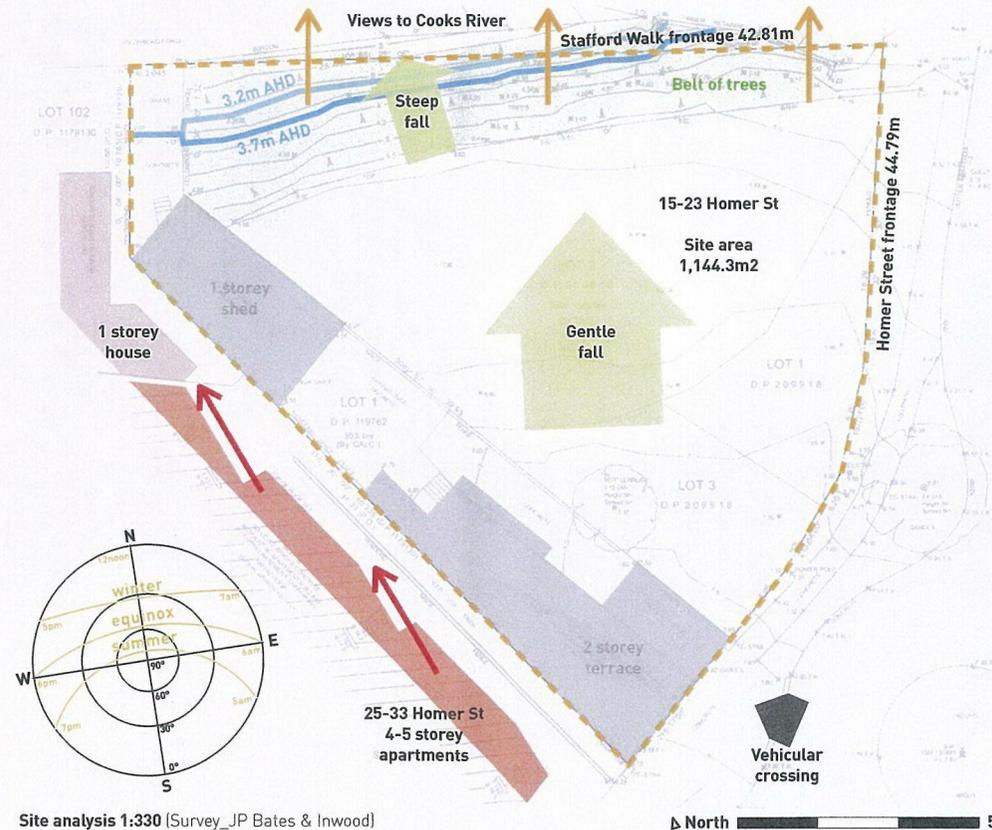
The site is currently occupied by a two storey terrace currently used as a carpet shop, with single storey shed to the rear. The remainder of the site is vacant, used only as an informal unsealed car park and overgrown with weeds. The northern edge of the site has a belt of trees occupying the incline. The vehicular crossing access occurs within the roundabout intersection.

The site enjoys a favourable orientation with a wide unobstructed northern frontage to Stafford Walk granting unimpeded solar access throughout the day, as well as pleasant views to the Cooks River and beyond. The Homer Street elevation is oriented to the east and southeast and will receive some solar access in the mornings.

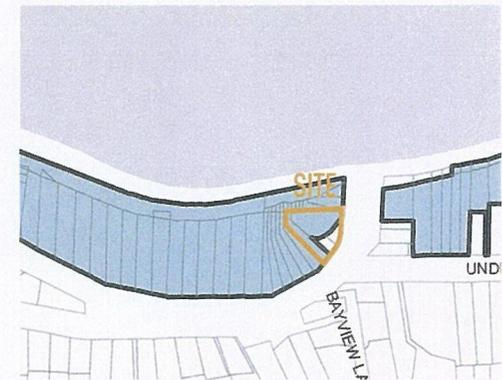
The site directly adjoins only one site, being 25-33 Homer Street. The recently completed four-five storey apartments on this site is setback from the southwestern boundary by 3m. The wall of this building is sculpted to provide views from apartments along the side setback towards the river rather than look out at 90 degrees towards the site. These apartments look over a single storey house at the rear of 25-33 Homer Street.



Panoramic view from on site looking southeast showing the Adora cafe (left), cliff (centre), two storey terrace on site (right), and recent four-five storey apartments (far right)



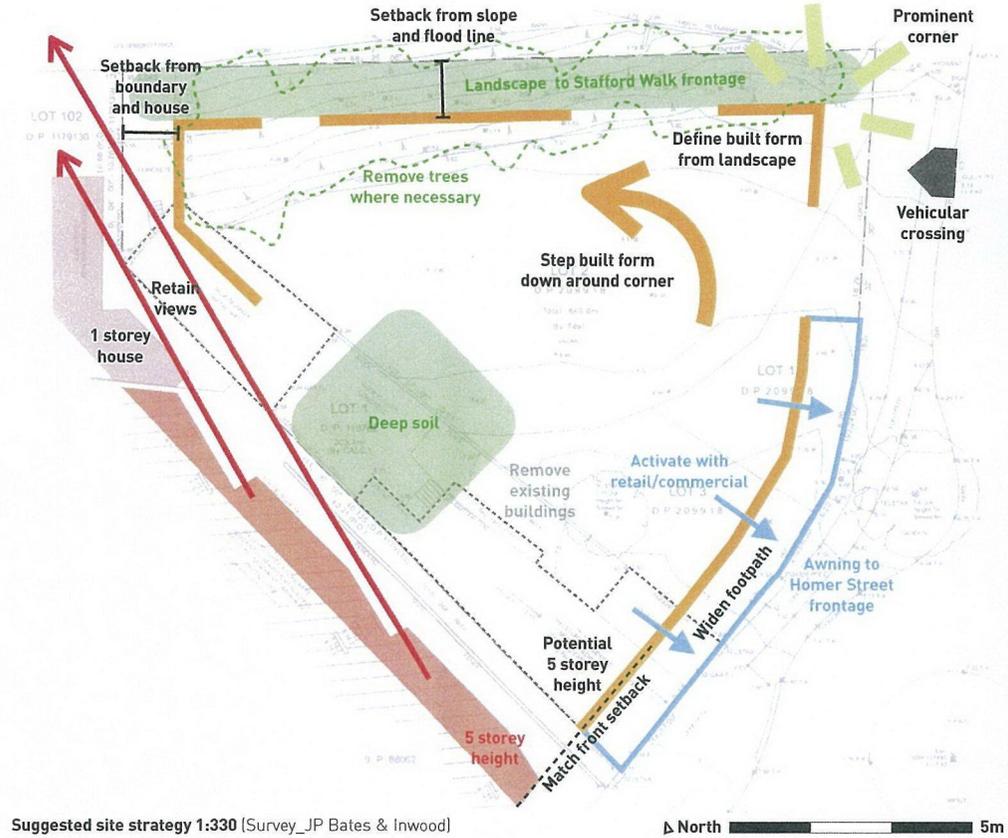
View looking east along Stafford Walk showing steep fall from site towards Cooks River and belt of trees on incline



Flood Planning (Map_Canterbury LEP 2012)

SUGGESTED SITE STRATEGY

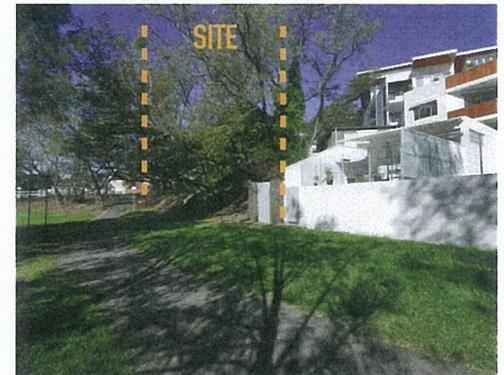
Existing buildings should be removed. The Homer Street frontage at ground level should be activated with retail or commercial uses as intended by the B1 'Neighbourhood Centre' zoning under Canterbury LEP 2012. The frontage to Homer Street should be set back to match the setback of the recent 4-5 storey apartment building to the southwest with the treatment at ground level being a widening of the footpath. This setback should be provided with an awning to echo the treatment of the Adora cafe opposite to encourage street activity. The vehicular crossing should be moved north to the lowest point of the site on Homer Street to provide easier access to a basement level for car parking. This will also improve traffic safety by removing the vehicular crossing from the roundabout intersection. The northeasternmost corner will be prominent in the streetscape and the most visible part of the building from a northern approach. This corner should strongly define the transition from the landscape character of Stafford Walk to solid built form. It should also be given ample design attention so that it becomes an attractive local landmark as an 'entrance' to Undercliffe. Any built form should be setback from the northern boundary to have the habitable floor level set above the flood line. This also provides the opportunity to landscape the setback and contribute to the landscape character of Stafford Walk. Existing trees on the incline could be retained where feasible. The westernmost portion of the built form, which would be highly visible from a western approach along Stafford Walk, should be setback and articulated above and behind the neighbouring single storey house. This setback will also permit the retention of angled views for apartments in the neighbouring building. An area of deep soil should be integrated centrally on the southwestern boundary to allow a medium-large tree to grow. This will also provide a leafy outlook for apartments and alleviate overshadowing of the neighbour in this sensitive location. The overall building height should be five storeys to match the height of the neighbouring building as well as the height of the 1950s apartments and the cliff. The built form should then 'step' down with the topography of the site towards the river as it turns the corner. A recessive colour should be used that does not stand out against the backdrop of the cliff when viewed from the river.



Suggested site strategy 1:330 (Survey_JP Bates & Inwood)



View looking north along Homer Street showing the suggested area of street activation and awning treatment



View looking east along Stafford Walk showing the suggested area to set back from the western boundary for articulation



Panoramic view from on site looking south showing where an active street frontage along Homer Street would turn the corner to Stafford Walk and make a prominent corner

SUGGESTED BUILDING ENVELOPE

The suggested envelope comprises a perimeter block form that runs along the northern and eastern frontages of the site.

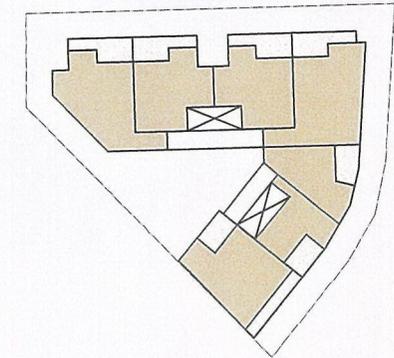
The built form should be set back 3m from Homer Street to align with the setback of the southwestern neighbour. The Homer Street frontage should be activated with retail/commercial uses at the ground floor level towards the southern end of the site. The active frontage should have a 3m awning over the setback. The built form should be set back 3m from Stafford Walk to set the habitable floor level above the flood line and to provide a landscaped setback. The built form should be setback 3m from the northwestern boundary to retain the angled views from neighbouring apartments, provide articulation to a wall that will be highly visible from a western approach along Stafford Walk, and to allow the deep soil in the courtyard to be contiguous with the perimeter. The built form should have a party wall to the south western boundary to provide visual and acoustic privacy to the neighbouring apartments and make the ground floor use as long a frontage to the south as possible.

The suggested building depth is 14.1m which will provide a narrow building section with high amenity. This dimension will permit a unit layout comprising a majority of cross ventilated apartments as well as single orientation apartments that are not too great in depth. The permissible building height should be 18m to allow for 5 storeys of development. This is in line with the metres/height provisions of Canterbury DCP2012. The built form should step with the topography to maintain compliance with the height plane. The deep soil area in the centre of the site should be a minimum of 6m in dimension from the southwestern boundary to support the growth of a medium to large tree.

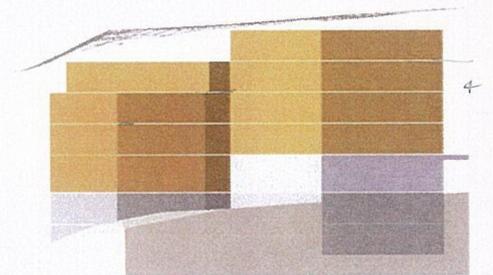
The envelope and indicative plan have been tested against the SEPP65 Residential Flat Code and is able to achieve compliance with the Rules of Thumb including solar access and cross ventilation.



Suggested site strategy 1:330

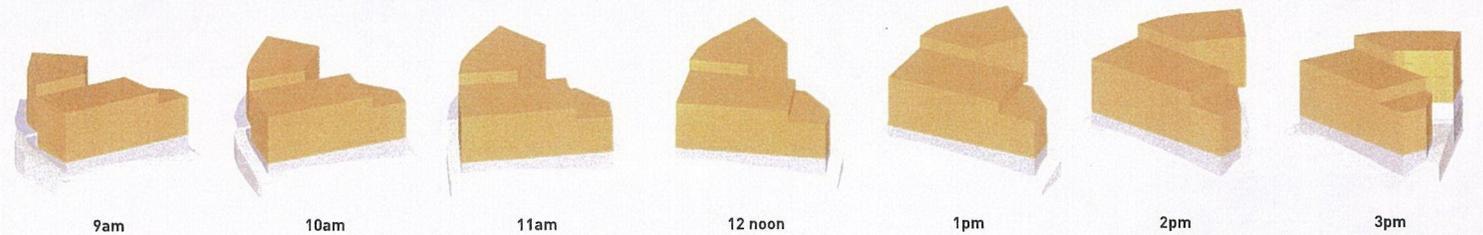


Indicative unit layout showing apartments, balconies, vertical circulation cores and horizontal circulation



Height plane study view from south west showing 18m height plane accommodating five storey built form

North 5m



View from the sun solar access study at June 21 winter solstice