

# 361-365 NORTH ROCKS ROAD

## VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT ADDENDUM

PREPARED FOR  
**EG FUNDS MANAGEMENT**  
MAY 2024  
FINAL

**URBIS**

URBIS STAFF RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS REPORT:

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| Director:      | Jane Maze-Riley                        |
| Project Team:  | Nicholas Sisam, Piyangi Mallawarachchi |
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We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as the traditional custodians of all the lands throughout Australia. We recognise and respect the connection to their land, cultural heritage and community, and we pay respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

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# 01 INTRODUCTION



# 1.0 PURPOSE OF THE ADDENDUM

This Visual Impact Assessment Addendum has been prepared by Urbis on behalf of the proponent being EG Funds Management Pty Ltd (EG) to support a Planning Proposal PP-2021-3409 for rezoning at No's 361-365 North Rocks Road, North Rocks.

The site was previously occupied by Next Sense (formerly the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children), however has now been secured by EG given the site is now surplus to Next Sense's operational needs and their relocation to a new campus in Macquarie Park.

The Planning Proposal seeks to create North Rocks Village (see Figure 1), a Housing Diversity Precinct as expressed in Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS). It will deliver a genuine mix of housing opportunities within a garden village setting that is respectful of existing neighbourhood character, in addition to new open space including an oval and village square. It also includes a community 'hub' comprising a library and multi-purpose community facility.

The Planning Proposal was initially submitted to the City of Parramatta Council in June 2021, however, has since been subject to a rezoning review process (ref RR2022/31). On 21 March 2024, a Record of Decision to Submit Planning Proposal to Gateway Determination was issued by the Sydney Central Planning Panel. This decision recommends the proposal proceeds to Gateway Determination, subject to conditions, which included some recommended design modifications.

The Planning Proposal has now been amended to adopt the panel recommendations. Key design amendments can be summarised as follows:

- Minor adjustments to building heights, including a range of 2-6 storeys across the site,
- 3 storey building heights along North Rocks Road,
- Minor amendments to building layouts, and
- A Masterplan which may facilitate an approximate 1.1:1 Floor Space Ratio.

The proposed Masterplan is depicted in Figure 1 opposite.

The Planning Proposal will facilitate:

- Approximately 795 new residential dwellings (including apartments, townhouses, and detached dwellings)
- Approximately 130 independent living units and aged care (seniors housing)
- Approximately 4,400m<sup>2</sup> new community facilities
- Approximately 2,800m<sup>2</sup> retail/commercial floor space
- Associated landscaping, road network, public open space improvements, and increased tree canopy cover.

We have reviewed the documentation made available to us following the Rezoning Review Process. This Visual Impact Assessment Addendum has been updated to reflect the amended project scope for submission as part of an amended Planning Proposal package.



**Figure 1** North Rocks Masterplan.

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

This report follows a previous Visual Impact Assessment report prepared by Urbis in October 2022 (the VIA) and can be read in conjunction with it. The VIA includes detail and observations about the predominant visual character of area's which adjoin the subject site and features that contribute to the areas visual context. Observations in the VIA speak to the visual compatibility of the Planning Proposal with the existing and desired future character of North Rocks and other parts of the visual catchment. The VIA was informed by a desktop analysis of the underlying landform, slopes analysis and view shed maps, the parameters of which the proposed height (7 Storeys) and the height of surrounding mature vegetation to the west, north and east.

## 1.2 VISUAL CATCHMENT

The potential visual catchment is a theoretical geographical area within which parts of the site and in this case proposed development, may be visible. Urbis have based assumptions about existing visibility on fieldwork observations from surrounding roads public open spaces, highpoints and reviewed view shed maps prepared using GIS data.

The height of vegetation was established via Point Cloud Data and Digital Elevation Models from NSW Government Spatial Services datasets - Sydney 2019-06 and aerial mapping from Nearmap - 2022-09-12. The height of vegetation will have grown in the intervening years (2019-2023) such that the screening effects of the surrounding vegetation are likely to be greater and more effective, reducing the potential visual catchment even further than what is considered in the VIA and in this addendum. Therefore, the potential visual catchment will be smaller and more constrained than included in the view shed map.

The view shed map show that:


- The majority of views towards the site are heavily screened or filtered by foreground, mid ground and distant vegetation in views from the west, north and east.
- Direct views from dwellings located in Duncan Place will be limited due to their primary orientation and retained and proposed planting on the site.
- Medium distance views from the south in the vicinity of Lawndale Avenue will be constrained and partly blocked by the North Rocks Shopping Centre and further constrained by lower relative viewing heights.
- Close and direct views from North Rocks Road will be limited to a short section approximately from the intersection of Barclay Road and North Rocks Road to the west and New North Rocks Road and North Rocks Road intersection to the east.
- The proposal would have negligible visibility from the M2 Motorway.





**Figure 2** View Shed Map (up to 6 storeys).



An aerial photograph of a dense forest, showing a vast expanse of green tree canopies. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent teal color, creating a monochromatic effect. The text '02 VISUAL EFFECTS ANALYSIS' is prominently displayed in the upper left quadrant.

# 02 VISUAL EFFECTS ANALYSIS

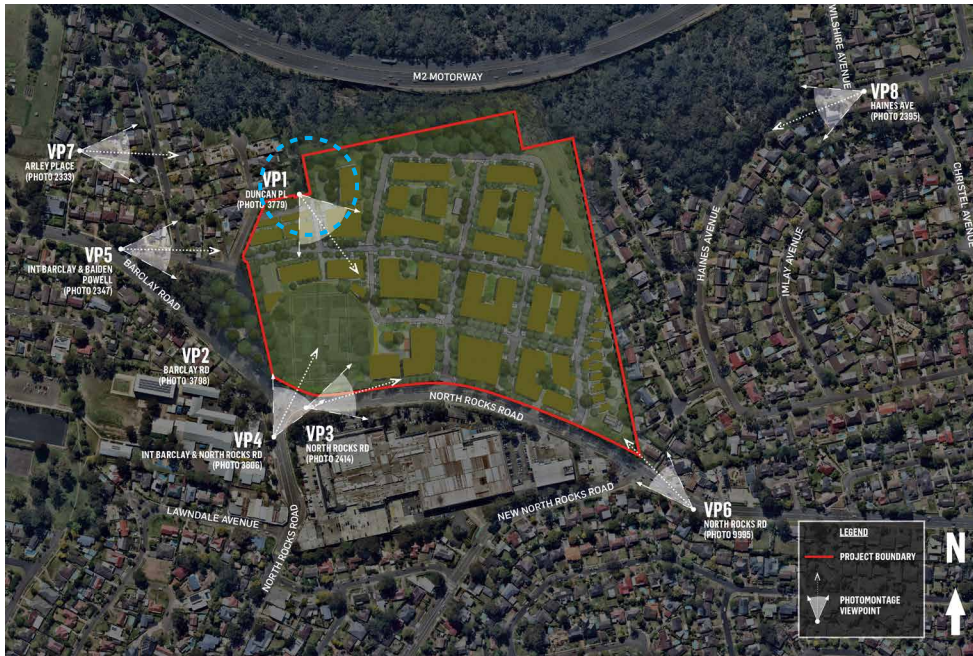






# VIEW PLACE 1

## ADJACENT TO REAR OF 1 DUNCAN PLACE



**Figure 3** View place location.

### EXISTING VIEW

This view is available from Crown Land (forming the western boundary extent) located between the rear of residential dwellings in Duncan Place and the subject site.

The existing view is predominantly characterised by existing mature and juvenile vegetation on the subject which will be retained. The photomontage does not include additional planting proposed as part of the Planning Proposal so the composition shown is a 'worst case' scenario in terms of visibility.



**Photo 1.** Existing view.

### PROPOSED VIEW

The mid-ground composition includes filtered views to the upper parts of the proposal.

The upper part of the massing obscures a minor extent of open sky and forms a new built form horizon. Retained foreground vegetation will soften the effects of the massing and help to retain the intrinsic visual quality of the site, view and visual context.

Whilst the built form proposed will change a minor extent of the view, its effects are limited, minor and when relevant impact ratings criteria are applied, would result in a low visual impact rating.

The proposal does not block scenic or important features or compositions, such as unique topography, vegetation, heritage items or icons.



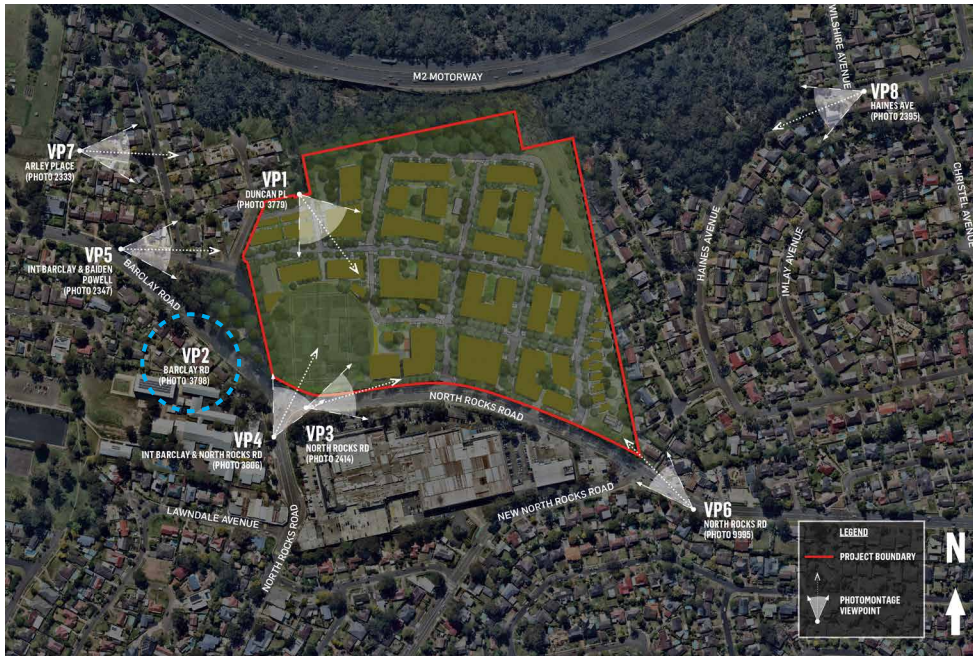


**Photo 2.** Proposed view.



# VIEW PLACE 2

## BARCLAY ROAD APPROACH VIEW



**Figure 4** View place location.

### EXISTING VIEW

Views from Barclay Road towards the site are extremely limited, where only isolated, filtered glimpses for east-bound road users, are possible. This view from the south side of the road, provides some access to the south-west corner of the subject site via the existing open space and planned oval.

The existing view is predominantly characterised by ornamental gardens, gently sloping topography and existing mature along the site's boundary. The photomontage does not include additional planting proposed as part of the planning proposal which would further reduce potential views to any buildings proposed.



**Photo 3.** Existing view.

### PROPOSED VIEW

A small section of the proposal is visible in the mid-ground composition between intervening vegetation and retained vegetation along the site's western boundary.

The available view of the proposal is limited to an isolated glimpse from Barclay Road, predominantly for east-bound users.

The proposal does not block views of any scenic or highly valued features.



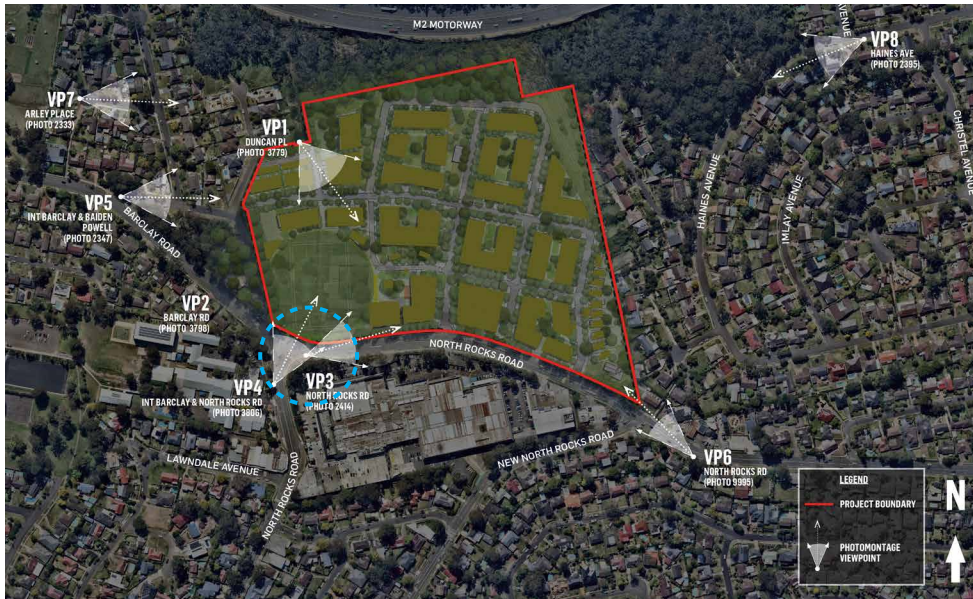


Photo 4. Proposed view.



# VIEW PLACE 3

## NORTH ROCKS ROAD VIEW NORTH-EAST



**Figure 5** View place location.

### EXISTING VIEW

This view east towards the site is characterised by North Rocks Road and intermittent vegetation along the southern site boundary. The view is typical of a pedestrian experience from the south side of North Rocks Road adjacent to the shopping centre.

### PROPOSED VIEW

The mid-ground composition will include filtered views of the proposal where the taller components of the massing set back from North Rocks Road are partially visible between retained vegetation.

Visibility of the proposal is limited to a short section of North Rocks Road for viewers who are immediately adjacent to the site and whom will experience views from moving viewing situations rather than for sustained periods.

The built forms proposed will block small sections of open sky and do not block views to heritage items, scenic or sensitive public domain reserves, and open spaces.



**Photo 5.** Existing view.



**Photo 6.** Proposed view.



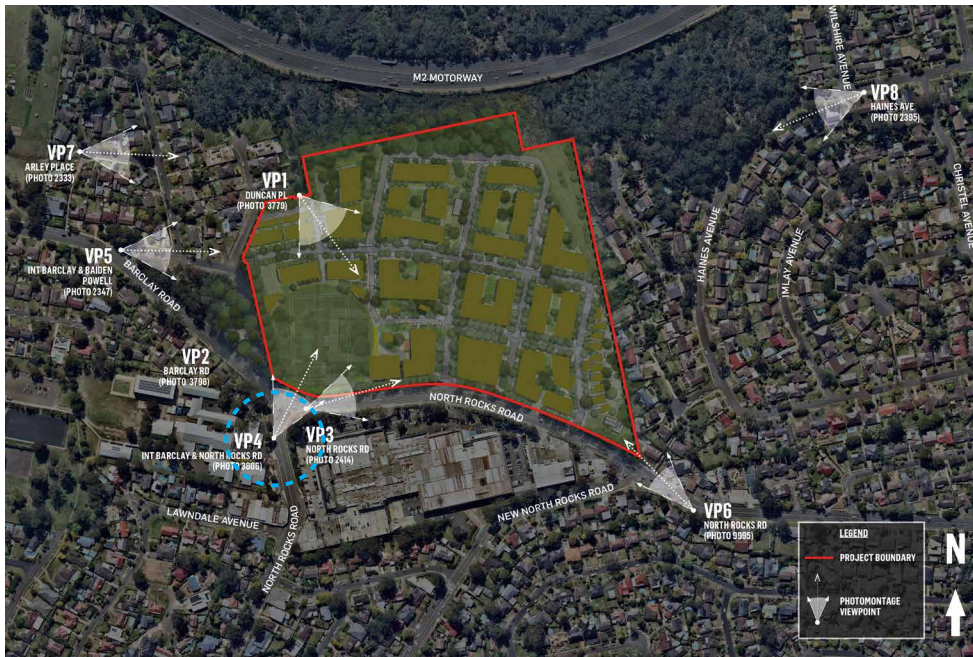


**Photo 7.** Proposed view with indicative planting at approximately 7 years post construction.



# VIEW PLACE 4

## NORTH ROCKS ROAD APPROACH FROM THE SOUTH



**Figure 6** View place location.

### EXISTING VIEW

The view is characterised by the North Rocks Road carriageway, mature trees along the site's southern boundary and the south-west part of the subject site.



**Photo 8.** Existing view.

### PROPOSED VIEW

The mid-ground composition includes a partial view of a small upper storey section of the proposal visible between retained vegetation.

Visibility to the proposal is limited to a short section of North Rocks Road for viewers who are immediately adjacent to the site and whom will experience views from moving viewing situations rather than for sustained periods.

The built forms proposed will predominantly block views to vegetation and open sky and do not block views to heritage items, scenic or sensitive public domain reserves, and open spaces.





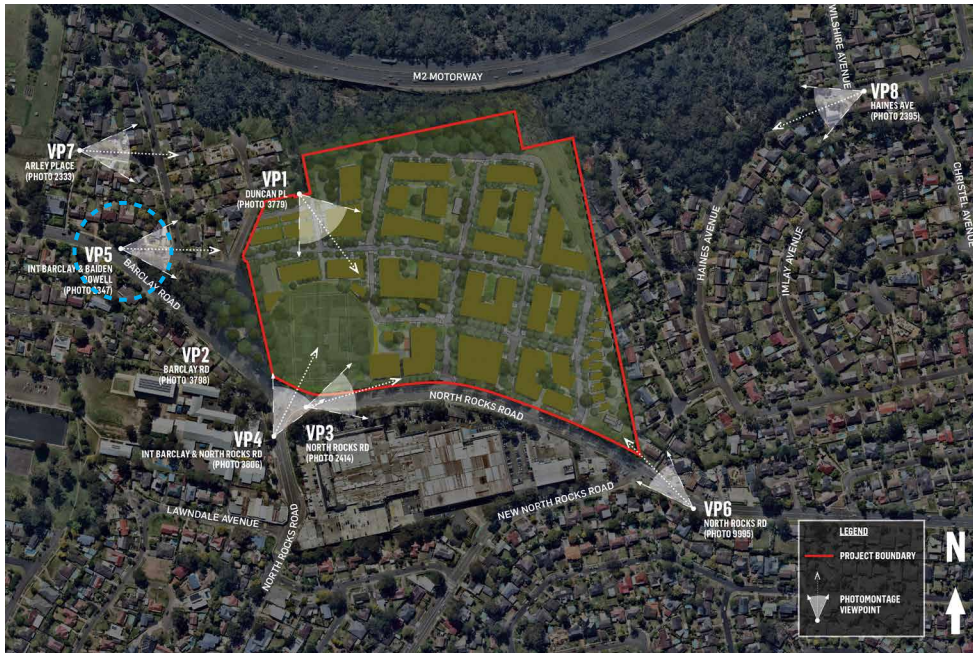
— PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT  
- - - PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OBSCURED BY VEGETATION  
ORIGINAL PHOTO EXTENT - 35MM STANDARD VIEW

Photo 9. Proposed view.



# VIEW PLACE 5

## VIEW EAST AT INTERSECTION OF BARCLAY ROAD & BAIDEN POWELL PLACE



**Figure 7** View place location.

### EXISTING VIEW

The composition is characterised by large, mature trees of varied species to the north and south of Baden Powell Place which results in a dense tree canopy cover that blocks or highly filters views beyond. Baden Powell Place recedes eastward to the site's western boundary where further large trees block views into the site and any long distance views beyond.



**Photo 10.** Existing view.

### PROPOSED VIEW

Vegetation outside of the site and retained vegetation along the site's western boundary block views of the proposal and as such the existing view composition from this vicinity will not change.



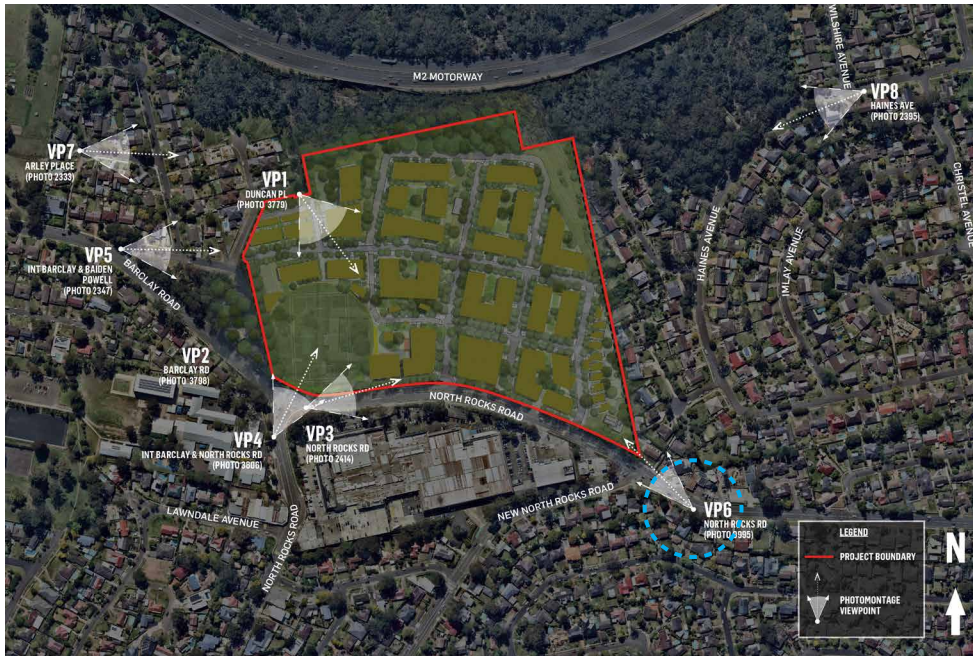


Photo 11. Proposed view.



# VIEW PLACE 6

## NORTH-WEST VIEW ALONG NORTH ROCKS ROAD



**Figure 8** View place location.

### EXISTING VIEW

The view is characterised by the North Rocks Road carriageway. The northern side of the road includes an open expanse of foreground and low height residential development. The mid-ground includes part of the subject site which is heavily screened by existing vegetation. The southern side of the road includes vegetation, infrastructure and partial views of commercial development.



**Photo 12.** Existing view.

### PROPOSED VIEW

The proposal introduces a small amount of additional built form to the composition, with the proposed higher built forms set back from North Rocks Road within the site visible above existing and retained vegetation.

Proposed 3 storey height development along North Rocks Road is blocked from view by retained vegetation.

The proposal does not block views of any scenic or highly valued features.



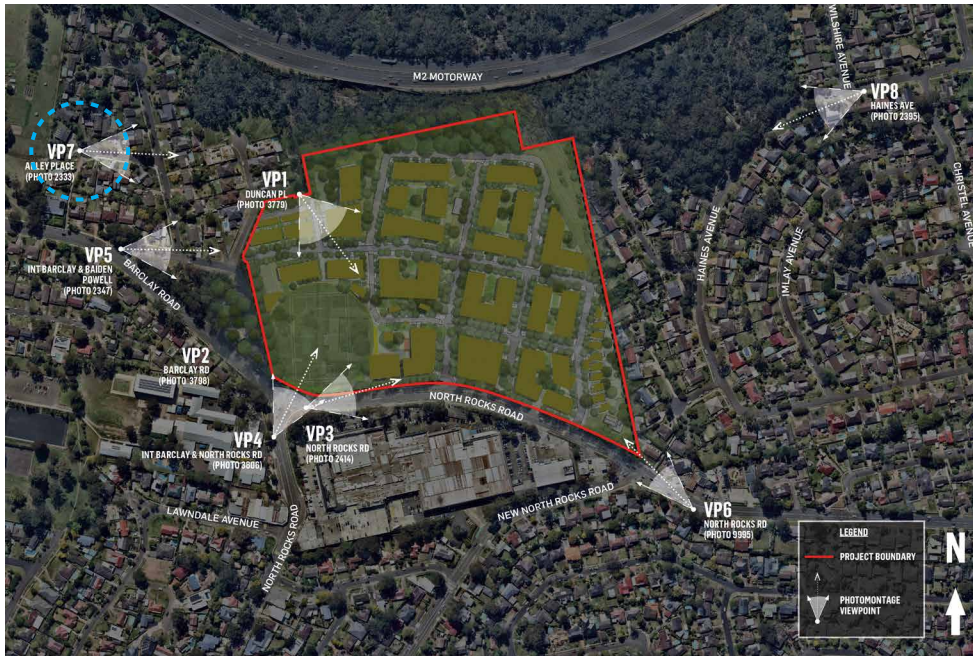


Photo 13. Proposed view.



# VIEW PLACE 7

## VIEW EAST FROM ARLEY PLACE



**Figure 9** View place location.

### EXISTING VIEW

The elevated position at the western end of Arley Place is one of a few elevated, isolated locations from which a partial view towards the site is available. The view is characterised by vernacular residential suburban development including mature vegetation. Single and double storey detached dwellings are visible to varied degrees amongst large trees located within properties which block views into the site.



**Photo 14.** Existing view.

### PROPOSED VIEW

Intervening vegetation and built form blocks virtually all of the proposal.

A negligible section of the proposal is visible above an existing residential roof form and forms a minor to imperceptible change in the visual composition.

The proposal does not block views of any scenic or highly valued features.



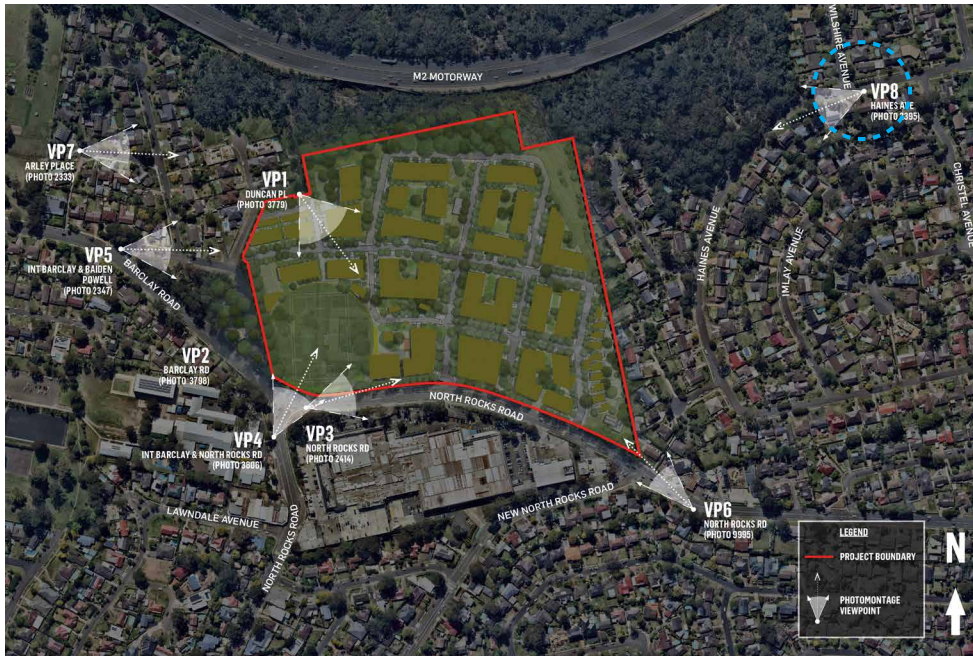


Photo 15. Proposed view.



# VIEW PLACE 8

## SOUTH-WEST VIEW ALONG HAINES AVENUE



**Figure 10** View place location.

### EXISTING VIEW

The composition is characterised by vegetation of varied species including large trees within residential properties to either side of Haines Avenue and the 1st Murray Farm Scouts site. The vegetation largely blocks views of existing built form, with only partial views of roof forms visible between the viewpoint and site.



**Photo 16.** Existing view.

### PROPOSED VIEW

The foreground and mid-ground composition are unaffected by the proposal.

Intervening vegetation blocks nearly all of the proposal, with a small section of the proposal visible to the centre left of the composition.

The proposal add a minor extent of additional built form to the composition and does not block views of any scenic or highly valued features.





Photo 17. Proposed view.





# 03 CONCLUSION



## 2.1 CONCLUSION

- The visual catchment of the site and the tallest RL proposed is very limited and constrained to close views from a short section of North Rocks Road.
- GIS viewshed analysis and fieldwork observations confirm that the tallest forms proposed will not be visible from the M2 motorway.
- Close views from North Rocks Road to the site will be of short duration, from moving, viewing situations and will include 4 replacement buildings.
- Proposed boundary planting or any potential visual mitigation techniques along North Rocks Road when employed will further reduce visibility of the proposal.
- Retained and potential boundary vegetation along North Rocks Road will in time, significantly reduce the perception of scale from North Rocks Road.
- The proposal does not block access to any documented views, heritage items, icons or areas of unique scenic quality.
- The proposal allows for the retention of significant vegetation on the site and as such maintain its underlying intrinsic scenic quality.
- The proposal can be supported on visual impact grounds.