



**19-25 MACQUARIE PLACE &  
46-52 PITT ST, MORTDALE**

**CONTEXT ANALYSIS  
PREPARED FOR  
THINK PLANNERS**

REVISION 05.08.2022

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## 1.0 Introduction

**2.0: Strategic Context** - Examines the wider Context of Mortdale Town Centre

**3.0: Urban Context** - Analyses the surrounding Urban Context

**4.0: FSR and Height** - Analyses the prescribed densities and heights to the site and surrounding context

**5.0: Urban Character** - Examines the urban context of the surrounding precinct, focusing on built form, streetscape characters

**6.0: Public Realm Interface** - Analyses the streets and public spaces around the site and in the surrounding context

**7.0: Urban Design Analysis -Town Centre** - Studies the urban form of the wider context of the site - analysing the appropriate density and character of the town centre precinct

**8.0: Neighbouring Interfaces** - Analyses the immediate context of the site and it's relationship with direct neighbouring buildings

**9.0: Design Option Analysis - site** - Examines three alternative urban design responses and their responsiveness to urban design principles

**10.0: Preferred Scheme: Option 3** - Highlights the details and rationale of the preferred Urban Design Response.

**11.0: Conclusion** - Summarises the context and site responsiveness of the chosen scheme

## 2.0 Strategic Context

Located on Sydney's southside, Mortdale is an established suburb that borders the suburbs of Penshurst to the east, Oatley to the south, and Peakhurst to the west. Mortdale is located 20 kilometres south of the Sydney Central Business District and is part of the St George area. Mortdale extends south to Lime Kiln Bay on The Georges River. The locality has excellent connectivity with access to several key arterial road networks including Boundary Road and King Georges Road.

Mortdale Town Centre lies within the heart of the suburb with direct connectivity to Mortdale Train station which services the Illawarra line. The site is also well connected to a number of key bus routes - 944 and 945, which connects Mortdale, Bankstown and Hurstville.

In response to the site's strategic position and its inclusion within a town centre that is marked for upgrade with excellent public transport connectivity.

### URBAN DESIGN CONCLUSION:



Respond to the site's positioning along the rail corridor by providing high density mixed use development

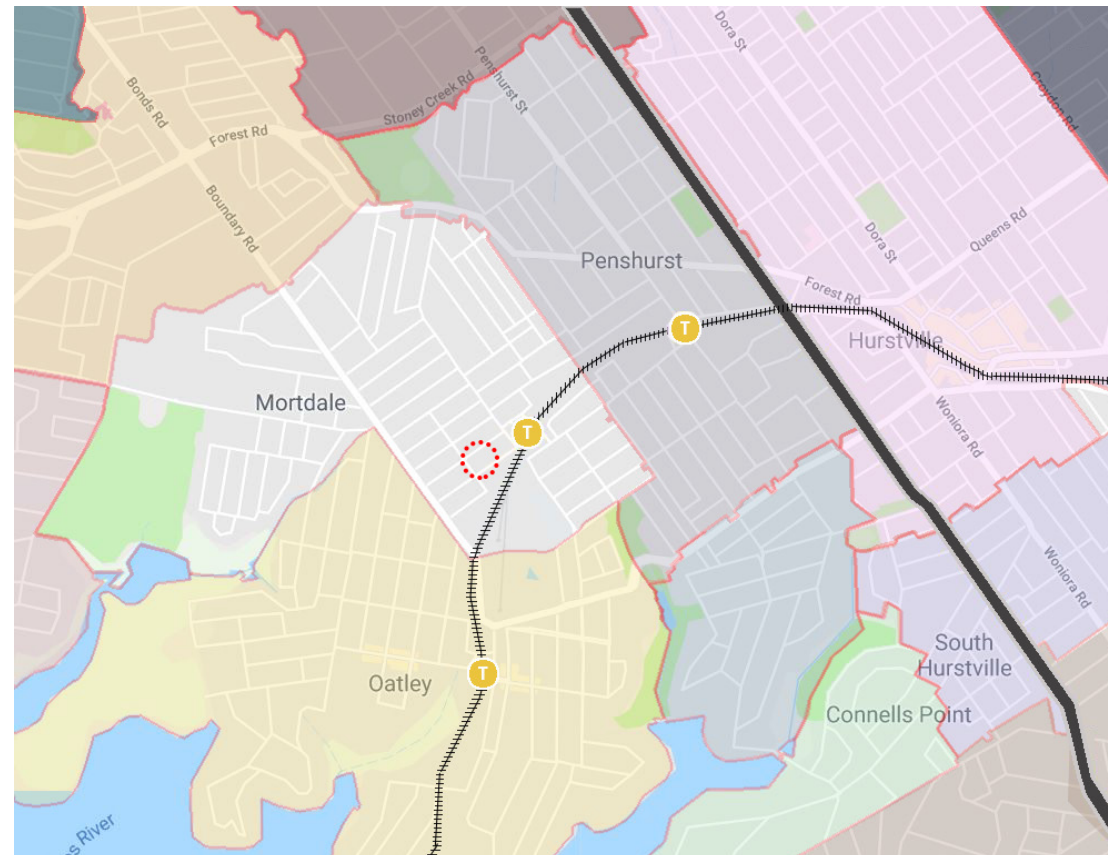


figure 1: map of Mortdale Town Centre within the broader Suburban Sydney Context



### 3.0 Urban Context

The site is located on the south-eastern end of the Mortdale Town Centre at the intersection of Pitt St and The Strand, approximately a 3-5 minute walk from Mortdale Train Station. The Town centre comprises two streets that branch out from the station which is located at the centre. The commercial town centre is nestled in a broader urban residential context and is located close to key community and education facilities such as Mortdale Public School, Marist Catholic College and Mortdale Community Centre.

The site itself is an amalgamation of different blocks with different uses. The majority of the site is taken up by the existing Mortdale RSL and existing ground floor uncovered carpark. The south eastern corner contains a 1 storey commercial building on no. 46 Pitt St. The north eastern corner is currently a single dwelling at 19 Macquarie Place.

#### URBAN DESIGN CONCLUSION:

Provides an opportunity for a larger amalgamated block with a significant development which marks the end of the town centre and such becomes an anchor development

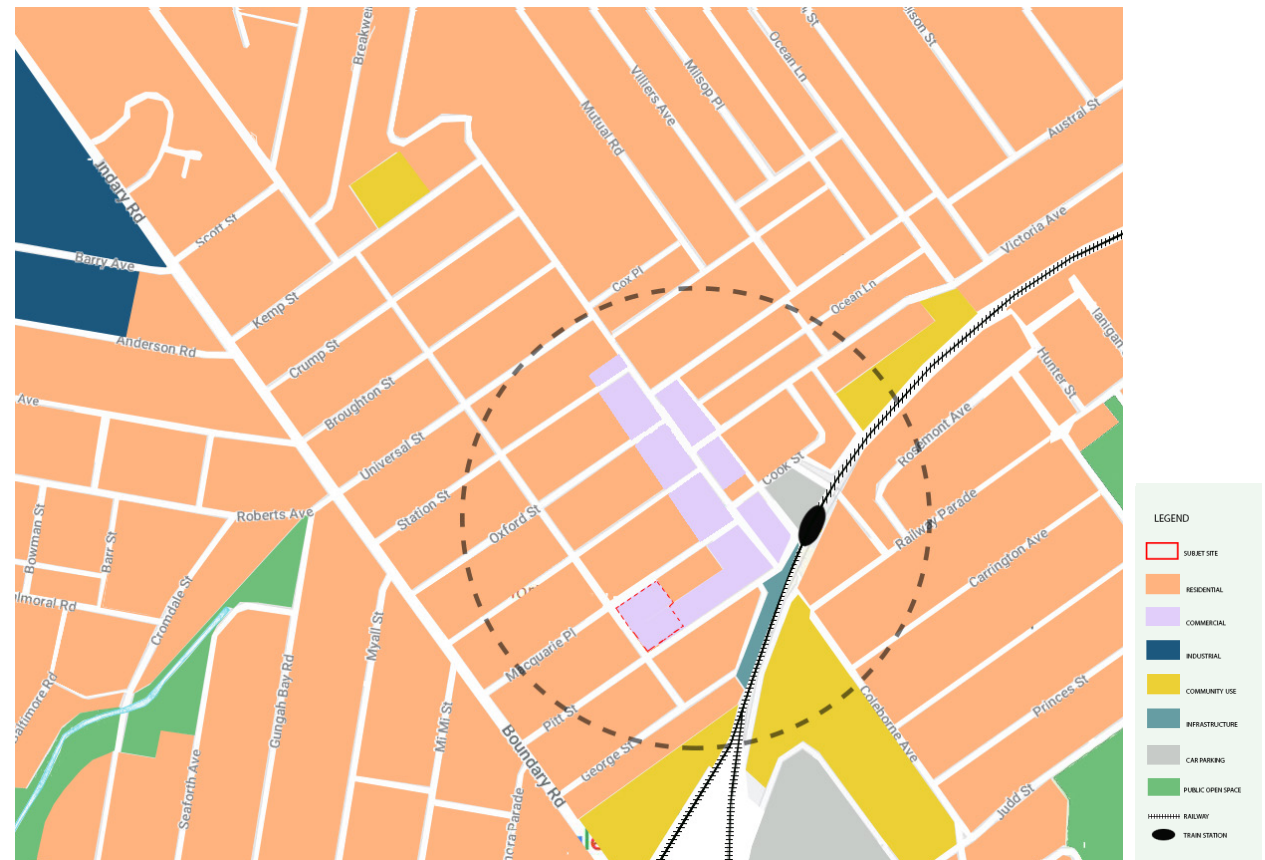


figure 2: Diagram of usage within the Town Centre within the suburb of Mortdale

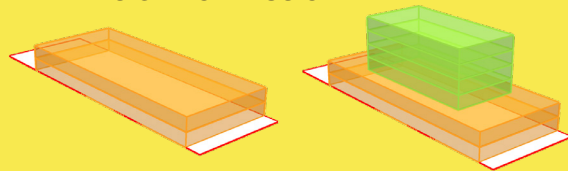
## 4.0 FSR and Height

The Hurstville Local Environmental Plan 2012 applies an FSR of 1.5:1 to the envelope of the Mortdale Town Centre. To the North West of the Town Centre, there are a number of residential blocks with an applied FSR of 1:1. These lots adjoin the rear boundaries of the town centre. To the east of the centre are smaller 1-2 storey residential single dwellings with applied FSR's of 0.6:1.

The FSR of the town centre at 1.5:1 currently allows for 2 storey commercial developments with 0m front and side setbacks. This does not substantially cater for a desired mixed use development with 2 storey podium commercial and residential above. Many of the existing developments already fulfill the existing FSR limit on these sites, and would not be acceptable for development under the existing controls.

The subject site consolidates 2 different FSR controls - subject to a 1:1 FSR limit on the lots facing Macquarie Place, and a 1.5:1 FSR on the lots facing Pitt st.

### URBAN DESIGN CONCLUSION:



A 1.5:1 FSR along Mortdale Town Centre is not a sufficient floor space ratio to enable an optimal density of mixed use development along what is a key pedestrian corridor. Many of the existing 2 storey commercial buildings already fill out this FSR before the addition of any residential component.



figure 3: FSR diagram

The Hurstville Local Environmental Plan 2012 applies an undefined height limit to the subject sites of the Mortdale Town Centre. The applied LEP height limit to the north West of the Town Centre is 12m. To the East of the Town Centre, a height limit of 9m applies.

The Town Centre LEP height is not prescribed under the LEP maps. The DCP similarly does not apply a DCP storey control, but does recommend that the rear building envelopes of the shop top housing developments maintain a sufficient rear setback and that the majority of height be along the front boundary, with sufficient stepping down toward the rear as the sites transitions into different zones.

In keeping with the FSR recommendation, the building height for Mortdale Town Centre precinct would be suitable for development under a height limit between 19-21 m, allowing for a 1-2 storey commercial podium 2-4 storey residential storeys above.

#### URBAN DESIGN CONCLUSION:

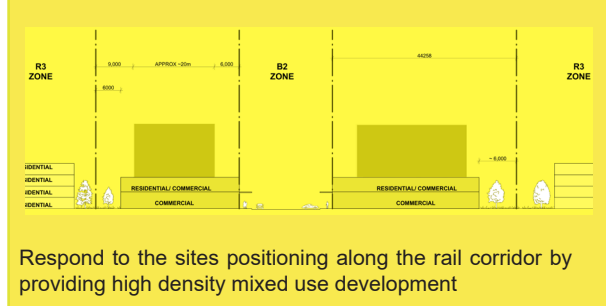


figure 4: Future height diagram Hurstville LEP



Detailed height mapping of the Mortdale Town Centre Precinct and wider context shows a recession of height and density towards the Centre. Predominantly, the Town Centre is composed of 1-2 storey building forms. Towards the edges of the Town Centre, the blocks are predominantly 3-4 storey apartment buildings.

The pattern of building heights represent an inverted form of a typical Town Centre Precinct, where building heights gradually increase towards the centre.. The highest density of building storeys should, contrary to the current pattern, front the main commercial streets of Morts Rd and Pitt St. An appropriate scale of these developments would be a 2 storey commercial podium with an additional 4 storey residential form above. This would provide an appropriate transition of scale from 3-4 storey residential apartments along the less busy residential streets to a 6 storey development along Town Centre roads.

#### URBAN DESIGN CONCLUSION:



Densification in height and bulk should increase towards the town centre. An appropriate scale would be six stories

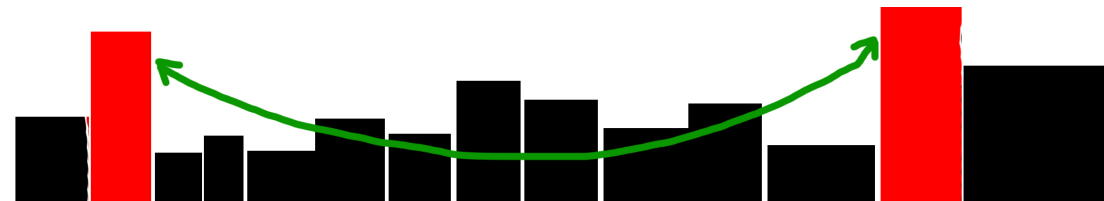


figure 5: Existing diagram of building storeys

It is important to note that although a six storey density pattern in the Town Centre is recommended, the density pattern should not rely on a homogenised six storey scale, but should include key sites as markers/identifiers for visual reference. These key sites would help to distinguish the centre as a significant urban precinct and distinguish it from the surrounding neighbourhood. Such landmarks create diversity and incident in the visual townscape, contributing to the 'legibility' of the town centre from local streets. Key markers help to orient people in urban space by establishing key reference points for urban navigation.

The recommendation of this report is that appropriate key sites be selected as marker points for visual reference within the centre. Typically, key sites are selected on the basis of visual recognizability and proximity to key transport or cultural hubs. To successfully support an uplift of height and FSR, these key sites must also take into account their potential impact on the surrounding built environment through solar and wind studies.

This analysis of the potential density pattern in the centre is further examined in Section 5, where key sites are assessed through the analysis of existing urban character.



**figure 6:** Street elevation diagram displaying key sites in density+ height as visual markers



**figure 7 :** The importance of corner sites as references in pedestrian navigation



## 5.0 Urban Character

The existing urban character of the Mortdale Town Centre precinct is comprised of 2 streets - Morts Rd and Pitt St. Predominantly these streets have active commercial frontages dispersed with key heritage/cultural sites as well as residential apartments with street setbacks which disrupt the activated streetscape pattern.

The active commercial frontages are typically contained in the built form of two storey shop top housing, however the first floor housing component is generally taken up with non active commercial/office space.

There exist a number of distinguishable sites along Morts Rd which are the fire station and Mortdale Uniting Church, both of which have historically significant facades which are to be preserved. There are a number of additional clusters of shop top housing buildings along both streets that have significant facades meant for preservation. These are identified in the following pages. There are also a number of critically under-developed sites in the form of car parks along both streets which interrupts the urban density pattern. Beyond the town centre are predominantly 3-4 storey residential apartment blocks, fanning out to 1-2 storey residences along the fringes.

Overall, the centre contains a highly fragmented usage and character pattern with dispersed sites that disrupt potential consolidation for urban densification.



figure 8: Urban Character Analysis map

**Figure 9:** Depicts the Mortdale Fire Station at 19 Morts Rd. The fire station was built in 1914 and has a facade of significant historical value. The fire station sits within a block between Victoria Avenue and Newman St. It has an un-developed carpark as its southern neighbour and a one storey commercial bank and supermarket to it's north. The positioning of the building interrupts potential consolidation of this block for future development. It must be noted that the retention of this key cultural building is critical in maintaining the existing character of the centre in a broader context.

**Figure 10:** Shows the car parking lot adjacent to the Mortdale Fire Station. The parking lot services the customers to the commercial premises along Morts Rd, particularly the supermarket to the north.

**Figure 11:** The Mortdale Hotel is situated on the corner of Pitt St and George St. It's narrow triangular lot size maximises its street frontage. Built in the 1920's, it has a historical double brick facade that has significant value in the context of the Town Centre.

**Figure 12:** The Mortdale Uniting Church at 18 Morts Rd is situated in the block immediately adjacent to Mortdale Train Station. To it's south exists a row of 2 storey shop top housing buildings which carry through to the top of the street. To the north exists a one storey commercial premises with activated commercial facades including a cafe and a deli. The positioning of the church is in a key position in the view to consolidating this block under a larger mixed use development. It must be noted that the retention of this key cultural building is critical in maintaining the existing character of the centre in a broader context.



figure 9



figure 10



figure 11



figure 12



**Figure 13:** Depicts the significant shop top housing facades marked for retention along Morts Rd and Pitt St. Development on these sites would require retention of the 1-2 storey facades with 4-6 storey residential development setback above.



figure 13

The Urban Character analysis reveals a highly fragmented land use pattern through the two predominant streets of the centre with a number of significant historical and cultural buildings. These buildings identified previously, are significant in contributing to the existing character of the Town Centre. They are vital in forming the overall urban character of the existing neighbourhood and are comprised of historically significant facades that should be preserved.

This report recommends that the existing urban character of the town centre is preserved, with the existing 1-2 storey buildings identified retained as commercial podium levels and bolstered with recessed residential above of up to six storeys.

Importantly, this report recommends new 'marker' developments that consolidate the fragmented urban character pattern where possible. These marker sites will strategically exceed the six storey development pattern by proposing anchoring developments yielding increased density. These developments will facilitate the retention of key historical and cultural one storey (low density) sites by offsetting these with higher density development. This mix of density is vital in achieving the optimal density pattern for a thriving Town Centre.

These sites are identified at the nucleus of the centre adjacent to the train station, and at either end of the Town Centre which provide threshold development to either entry to the centre.

#### URBAN DESIGN CONCLUSION:

A number of key sites form part of the urban character. There are significantly under-developed car parking sites which require infill development to link the street activation, including the subject site. There are opportunities for key anchor developments at either end of the centre, with a concentrated tower developments in centre adjacent to the rail station.

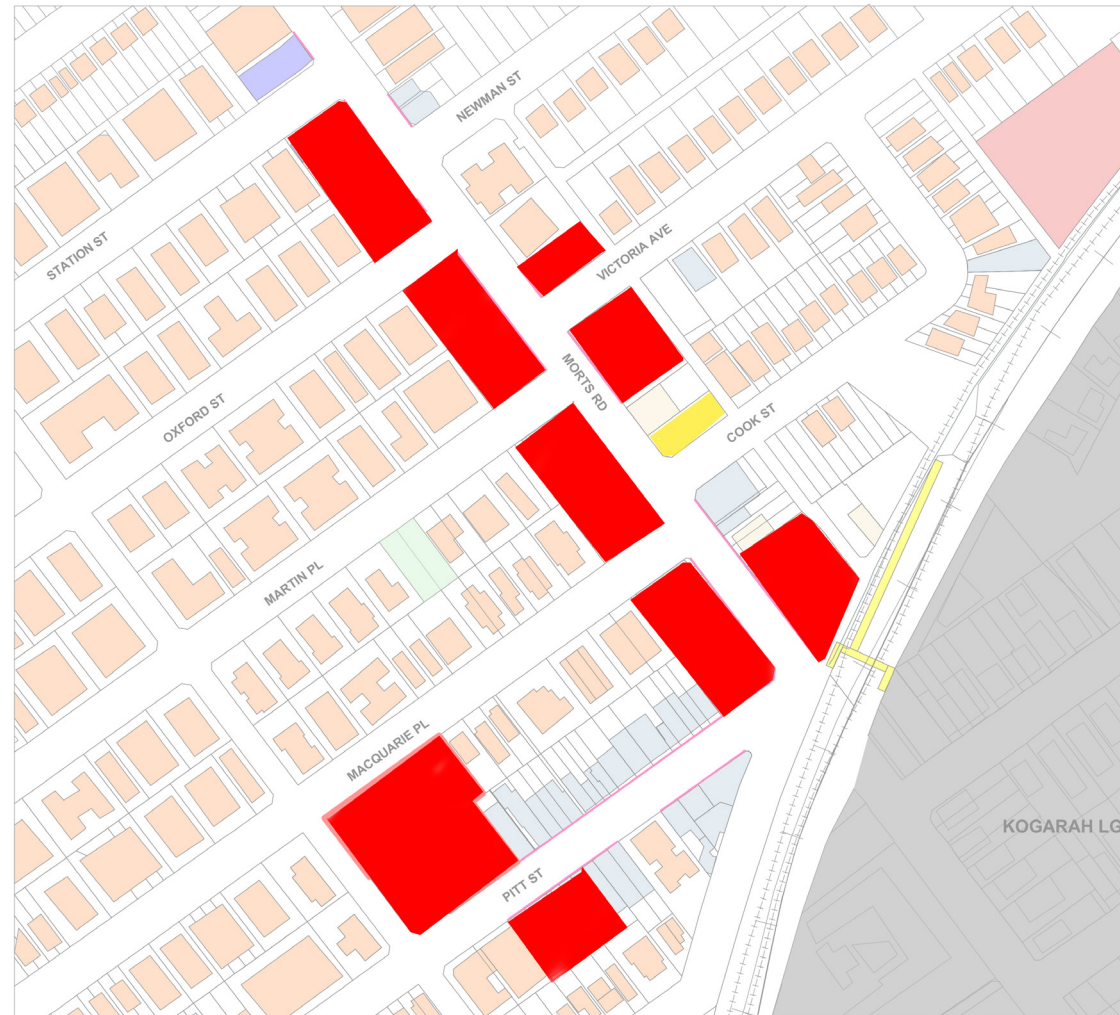
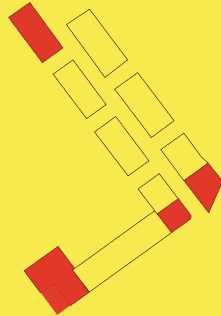


figure 14: Potential future amalgamations diagram



## 6.0 Public Realm Interface

Morts Rd and Pitt St create the pedestrianised spine that forms the Mortdale Town Centre. The lack of trees and planting within the streetscape make these roads a less attractive place for pedestrians. For that reason, a more attractive streetscape/public domain plan that encourages pedestrian movement and pedestrian oriented retail/commercial growth is required.

There are adequate street crossings along both roads to support a vibrant pedestrianised precinct with active commercial frontages. The site provides an opportunity to create an extension of the existing fine grain commercial frontage along Pitt St. Currently, the frontage along Pitt St is taken up by a blank brick wall which creates a dead interface to pedestrians. A new commercial interface is encouraged. The Macquarie Place frontage creates an opportunity to respond to the residential scale streetscape with an increased setback to the street and ample planting zones.

### URBAN DESIGN CONCLUSION:

An activated commercial podium along Pitt St is encouraged. The Macquarie Place interface is an opportunity to re-invigorate the existing RSL building with an increased green setback zone which responds to the residential scale of Macquarie Place.

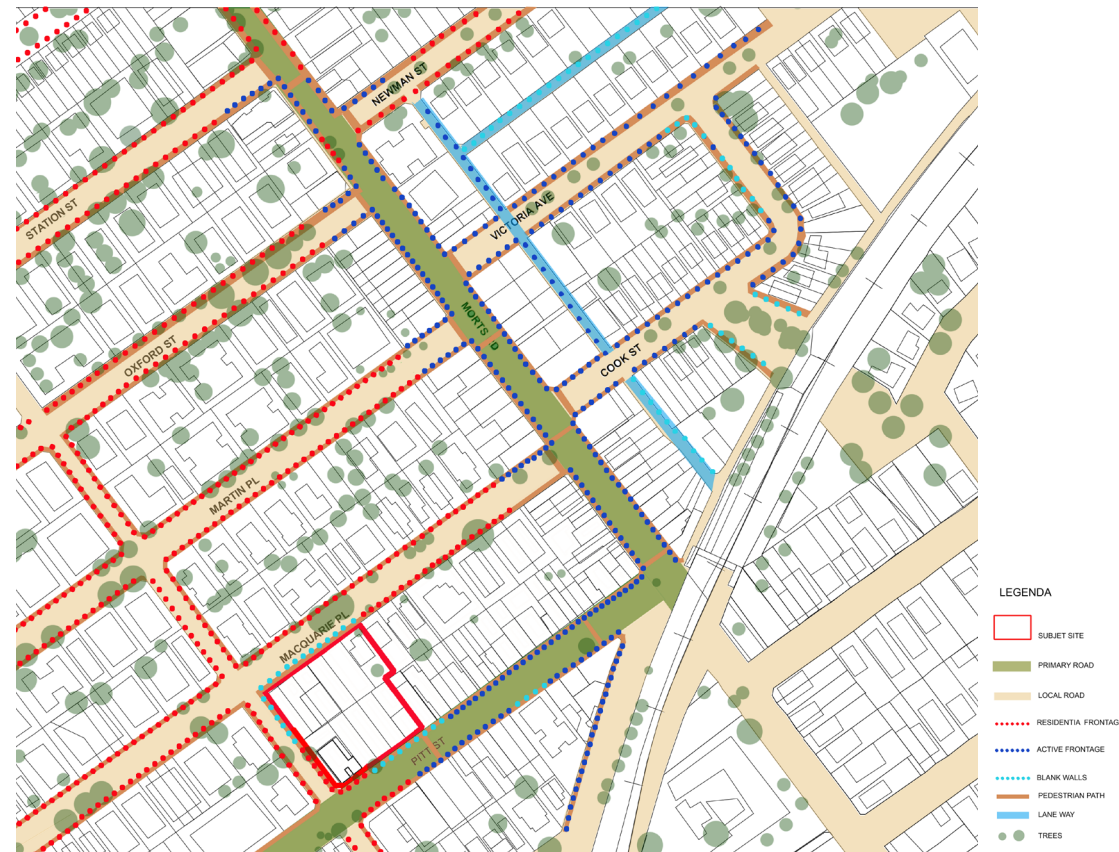
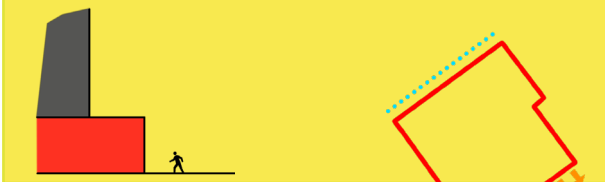


figure 15: Public realm interface diagram



## 7.0 Urban Design Options Analysis Mortdale Town Centre

The site is situated along the western end of the Mortdale Town Centre. The Town Centre is critically under-developed, with a density pattern that is contrasting to the potential commercial and residential growth of the Centre. The two town centre streets of Morts Rd and Pitt St contain primarily 1-2 storey commercial premises with minimal shop top housing on the northern end of the centre, and 3-4 storey residential flat buildings dispersed towards it's edges. The current 1.5:1 FSR of the Centre does not effectively support the required density for an activated Urban hub. It is the recommendation of this report that an FSR of 3:1 would provide an effective scale and density to support a thriving Town Centre.

The subject site represents a unique opportunity to consolidate a number of different uses and amalgamate these uses under a strengthened mixed use premises. The sites north-eastern corner presents an opportunity to demolish the existing 1 storey single dwelling which does not fit the existing street character and density pattern. It is recommended that the remaining single dwelling uses along Macquarie Place be consolidated under larger 4 storey apartment buildings which would fit into the existing bulk and scale of the street. The Site represents an opportunity to activate the southern boundary with an extension of a commercial shopfront.



figure 16: Diagram of subject site within the existing built form context

The activation and densification of the Mortdale Town Centre is key to an appropriately populated commercial and residential precinct that is well supported by public transport links. The existing prescribed FSR of the site is un-supportive of development as many of these sites already fulfill this ratio under their existing use. It is recommended that an uplift in FSR be considered to bolster the existing commercial podium along the street, and allow for a number of amalgamated residential apartment blocks along Morts Rd and Pitt St. The attached diagram represents a denser town centre precinct with an applied FSR of 3:1. The 2 storey podium style development envelope ensures the existing Town Centre character can be preserved.



**figure 17:** Diagram of subject site within the recommended density uplift of the Town Centre



figure 18: Plan of subject site within the recommended density uplift of the Town Centre



There are a number of key sites along the centre which represent strategic opportunities for anchor developments in the context of the up-scaled Town Centre. The 3 sites directly adjacent the train station entrance would be effectively upscaled with minimal overshadowing impact on any residential or commercial premises, as they exist directly north of the rail line. They would provide a dense, concentrated centre which would be appropriately supported by direct access to the rail line.

There are two additional key blocks either end of the Centre that could support an increased density and act as anchor points or 'markers' for the growing centre. The amalgamation of the different uses along Morts Rd (between Newman and Victoria Avenue) would see the demolition of the existing single residences, and consolidation of the commercial and residential uses under one mixed use development. The site would define the northern edge of the centre. The subject site of this report also represents a key opportunity to consolidated a number of dispersed uses and densities under a new mixed use development which would provide a new south-western anchor site for the centre. The development could activate a currently vacant car parking site which takes up it's majority and provide continuity to the currently fragmented streetscape.

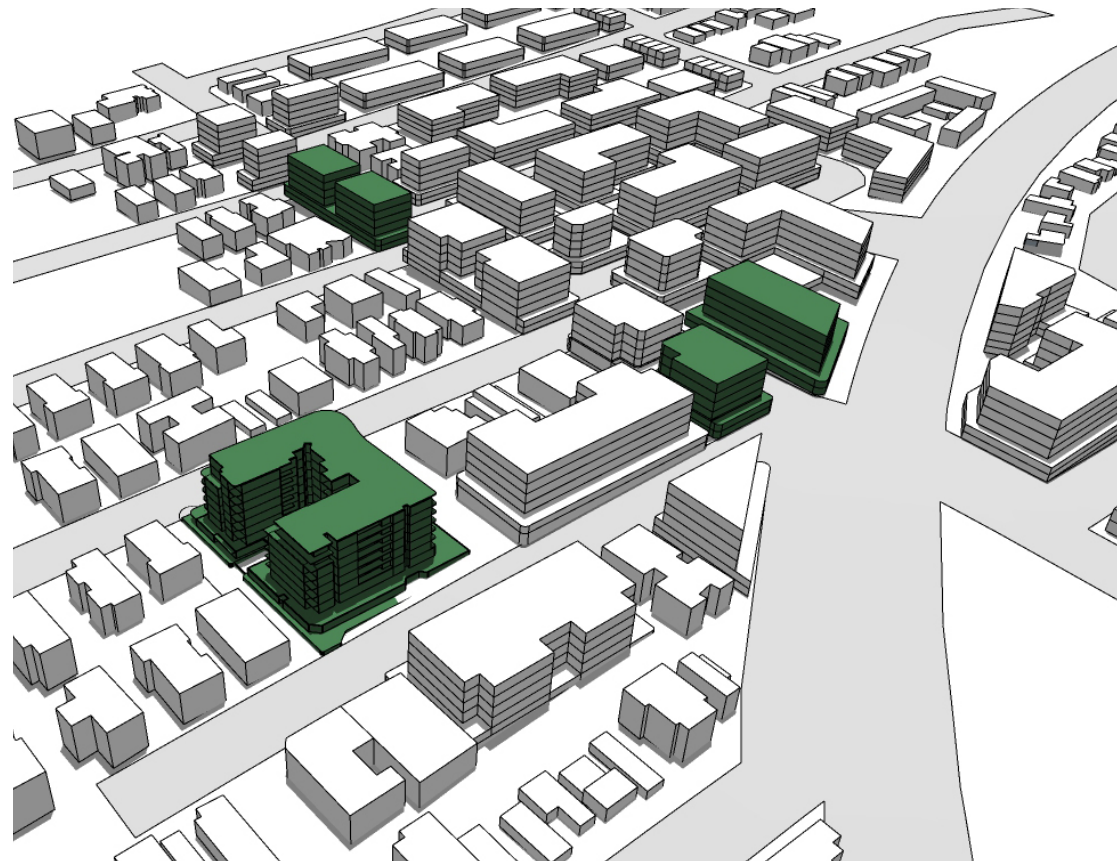


figure 19: Diagram of key anchor developments



figure 20: Plan of key anchor developments



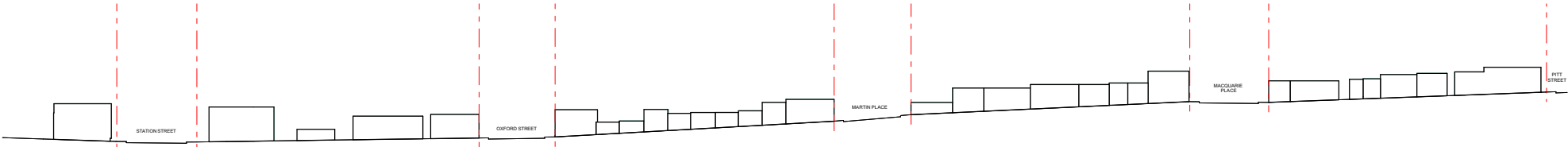


figure 21a: Existing street elevation Morts Rd

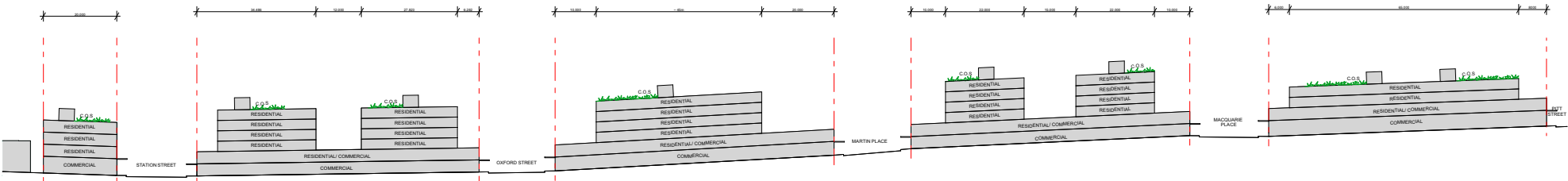


figure 21b: Proposed street elevation Morts Rd

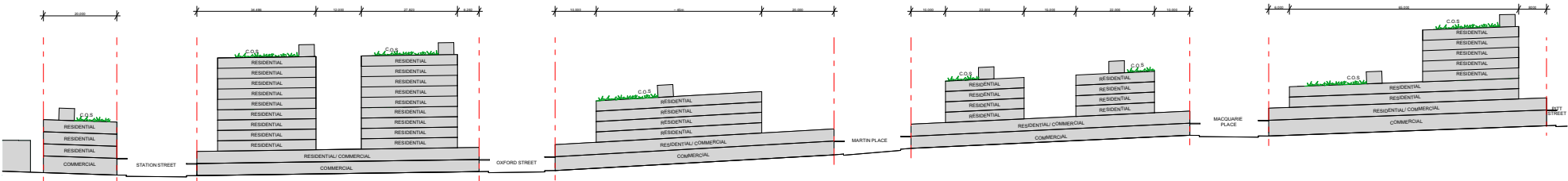


figure 21c: Proposed street elevation Morts Rd with key Anchor Developments

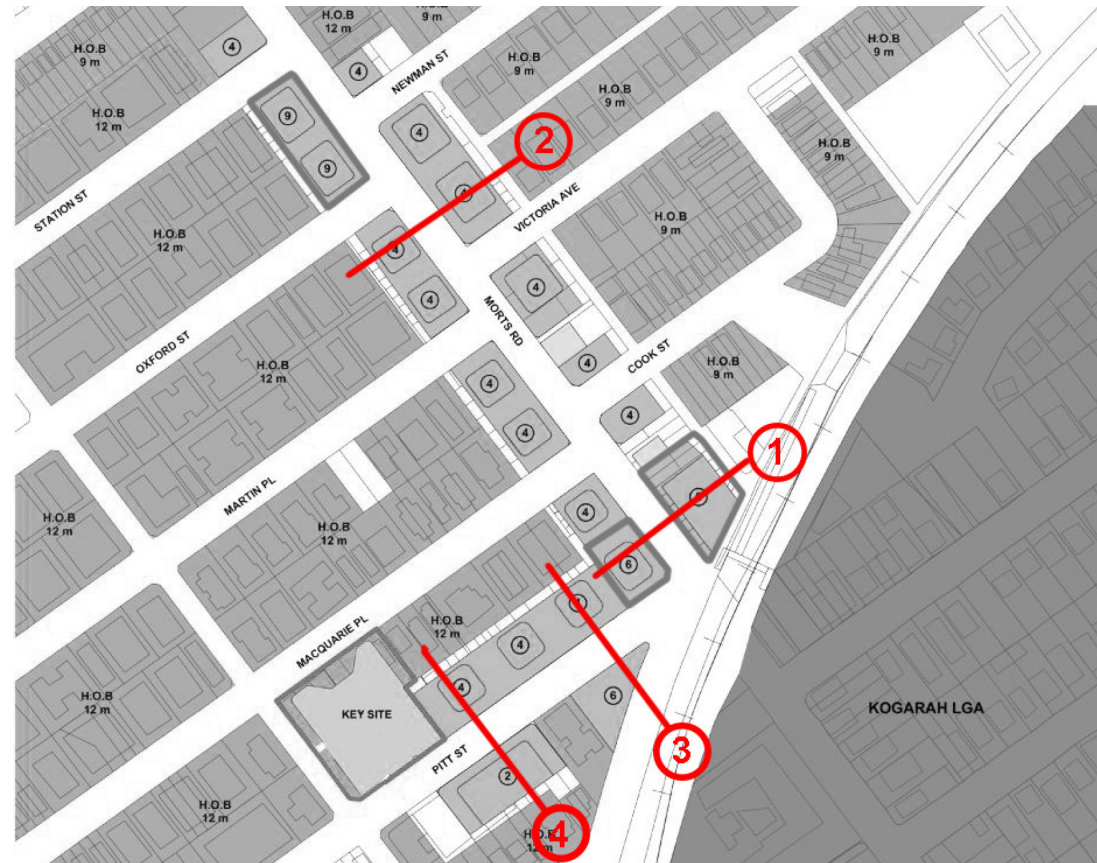
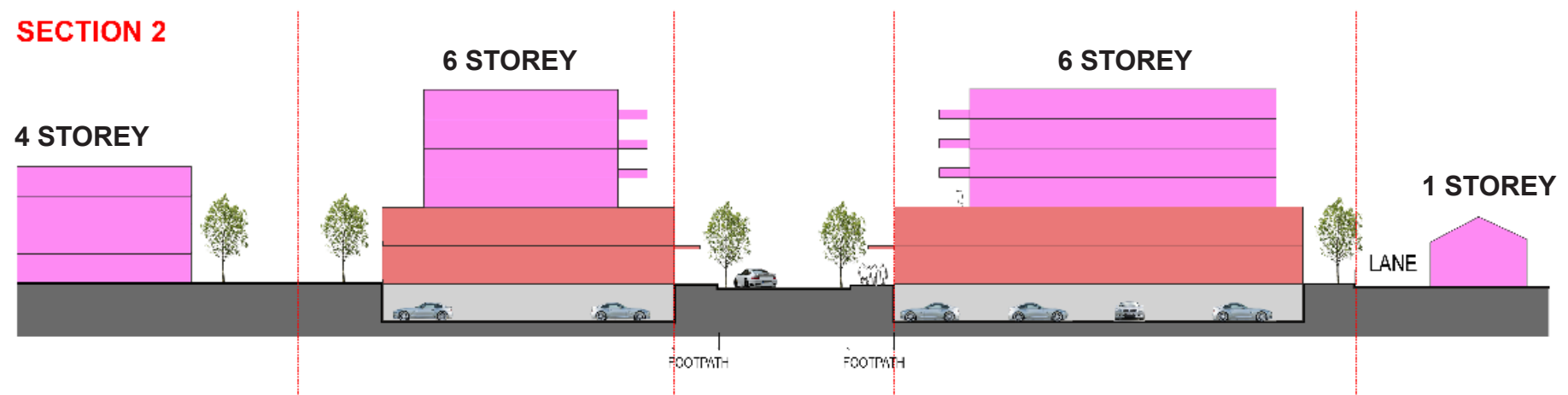


figure 22: Map identifying key sections (refer following page)



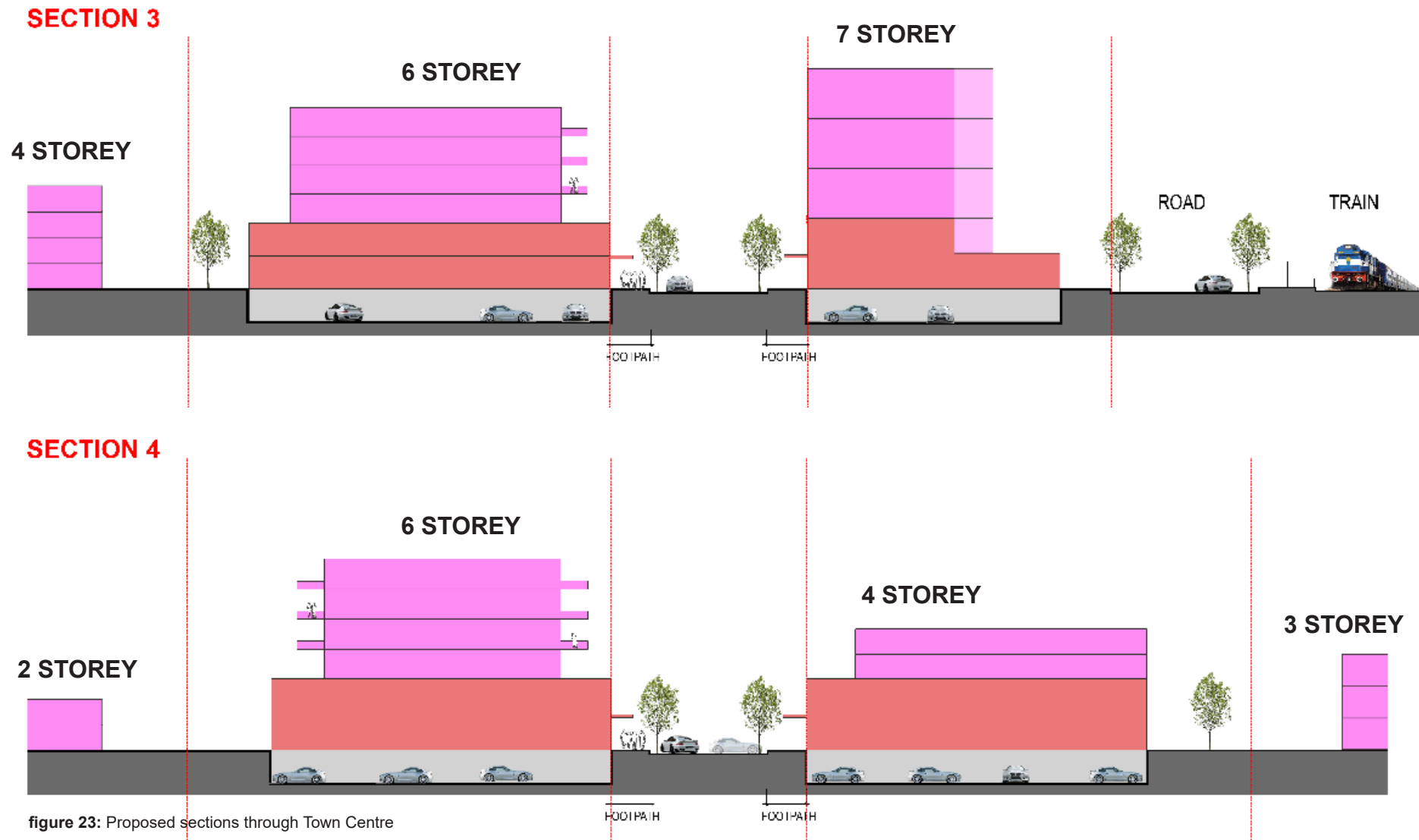


figure 23: Proposed sections through Town Centre

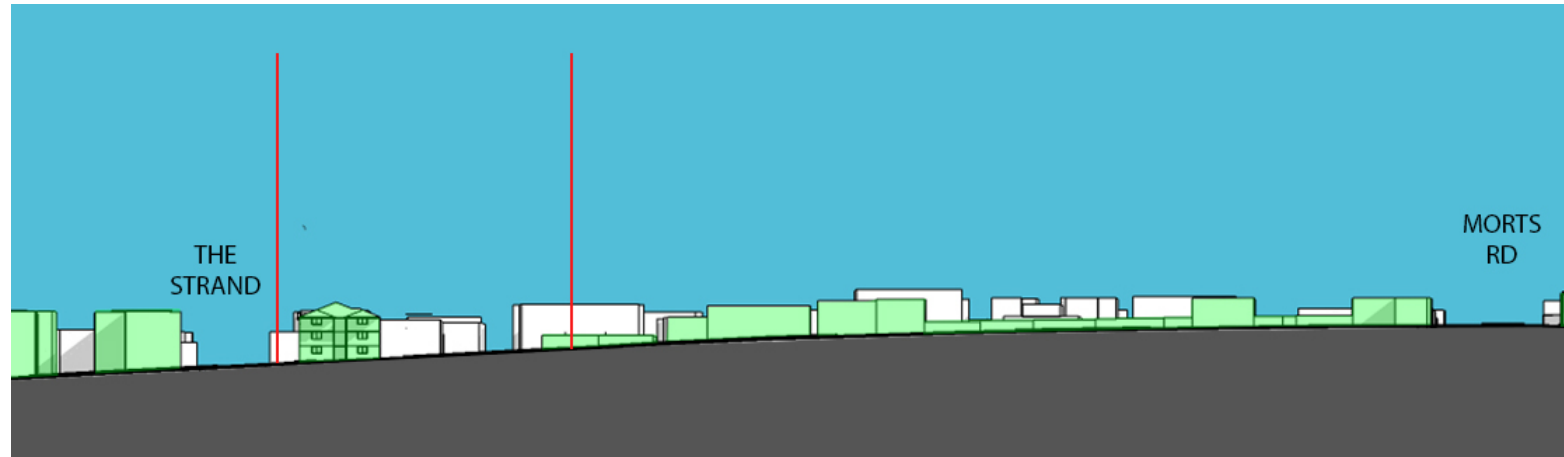


figure 24: Existing street elevation along Pitt st



figure 25: Proposed street elevation along Pitt st showing deinsified town centre and anchor developments

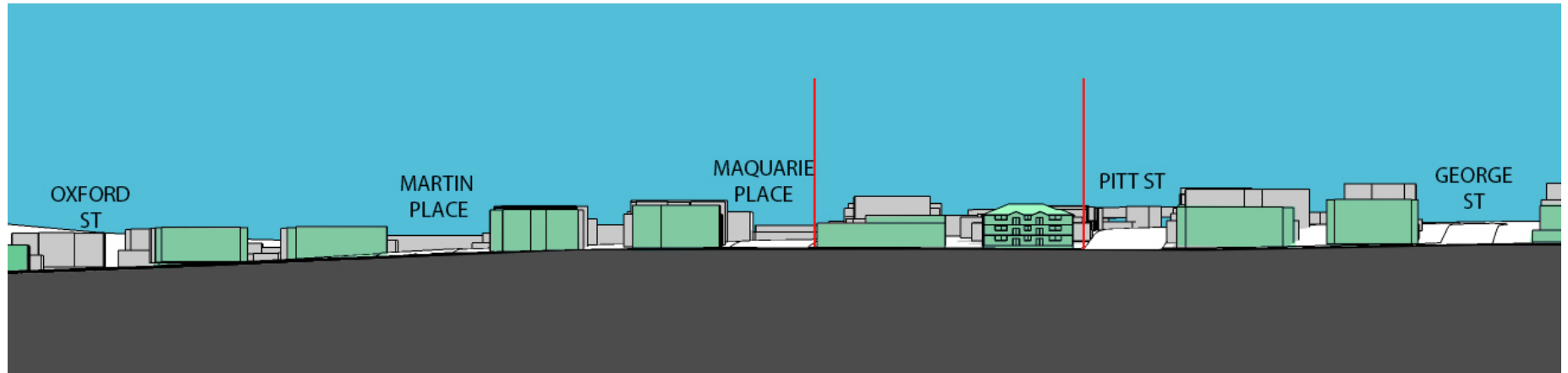




**figure 26:** Existing street elevation along Maquarie Place



**figure 27:** Proposed street elevation along Maquarie Place showing deinsified town centre and anchor developments



**figure 28:** Existing street elevation along The Strand



**figures 29:** Proposed street elevation along The Strand showing deinsified town centre and anchor developments

## 8.0 Neighbouring Interfaces

The site is an amalgamation of the existing RSL as well as two adjacent residential dwellings. The proposal has two neighbours on the eastern boundary in the form of a single storey residence to the north and a single storey commercial premises to the south. There is an opportunity to continue the existing commercial frontage along Pitt St with a continuous podium and boundary to boundary development against the existing blank wall of the neighbouring commercial premises. Any development would require sufficient offset from the single dwelling on the northern side of the eastern boundary.

There exists a 3-4 storey RFB on the south of the subject site at 56 Pitt St. This apartment building has its primary orientation to the residential street, but also includes private open space which is oriented to the north-east facing the subject site. Development of the subject site would be recommended to provide a spatial offset from these balconies.

Critically, a proposal to the north of the existing apartment building at 56 Pitt St would be required to allow northern solar access to the existing bedrooms and private open spaces.

### URBAN DESIGN CONCLUSION:

Provide for a boundary to boundary podium infill along the Pitt St frontage which utilises the blank wall of the existing commercial building.

Provide an offset from the existing single residence neighbour at 19 Macquarie Place.

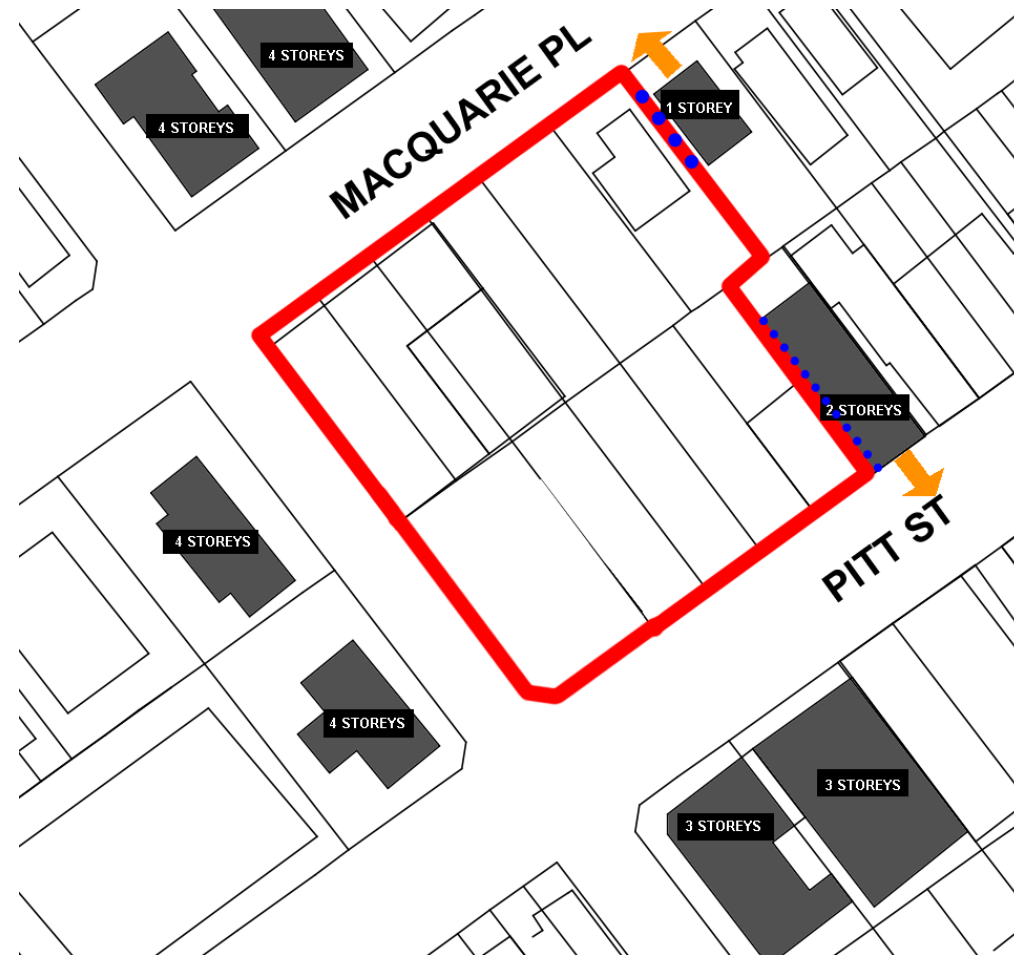


figure 30: Neighbouring interfaces diagram

## 9.0 Urban Design Options Analysis: Site

Based on the key items and urban design principles examined in the previous sections of this report, BureauSRH has developed two different design iterations for the subject development. These design options analyse the urban impacts of different forms at 3.5:1 FSR, with 3:1 proposed above ground and 0.5:1 proposed within the basement levels hence not contributing to the building massing. This has been identified to be an appropriate density for the subject site (see previous chapters). The options draw on the following common elements:

- Provide a 'book end' or 'marker' site to the Mortdale Town Centre. The amalgamation of the sites addressing 3 frontages presents an opportunity for a larger anchor development, that along with key sites adjacent to the station and along Morts Rd, would become significant gateway sites that would mark the entry to the Mortdale Town Centre.

- Uplift FSR to an appropriate scale of 3.5:1 (3:1 above ground & 0.5:1 below ground)

- Height and building bulk to take into consideration the impacts of overshadowing to neighbouring sites and solar access to the site itself.

- Minimum setbacks to commercial activated frontage along Pitt St.

- Continuation of active commercial frontage at podium level to Pitt St and partially to Macquarie Place and The Strand.

- Secondary entrance/foyer along Macquarie Place adjoining residential street.

- Boundary to boundary podium infill along the frontage of Pitt St, utilising the blank wall of 44 Pitt St.

- Podium setback along boundary adjoining 19 Macquarie Place with basement access, providing offset to single dwelling.



## Option 1: 8 Storeys (FSR 3.5:1)

Option 1 tests a building form with a maximum height of 8 storeys. It exercises a podium level of 1 storey with a consolidated taller residential building form that wraps around the L shape of the site, utilizing appropriate DCP setbacks from the neighbouring dwellings.

The residential 'tower' form presents a uniform envelope along the frontage of Pitt St, whereas the building forms along the less busy residential streets of Macquarie Place and The Strand have reduced frontage, taking up approximately one third of each frontage respectively.

The decision to contain the majority of the density of the tower component along the north-east of the site is advantageous from a solar perspective. The solar diagrams clearly indicate a reduced solar impact on the two residences located opposite on The Strand. However, the residential buildings opposite Macquarie Place have no solar benefit from a reduced building bulk along Macquarie place.

As demonstrated in the street views, a continuous building bulk along Pitt St for the residential tower is appropriate in continuing the urban density pattern along the Mortdale Town Centre. However, the lack of building bulk on the north western corner of the site presents a 'hole' in the overall address to the street.

As a next step forward in analysis, it is useful to test a building form that has full frontage along both Pitt St and Macquarie Place, but has a reduced building form along The Strand.

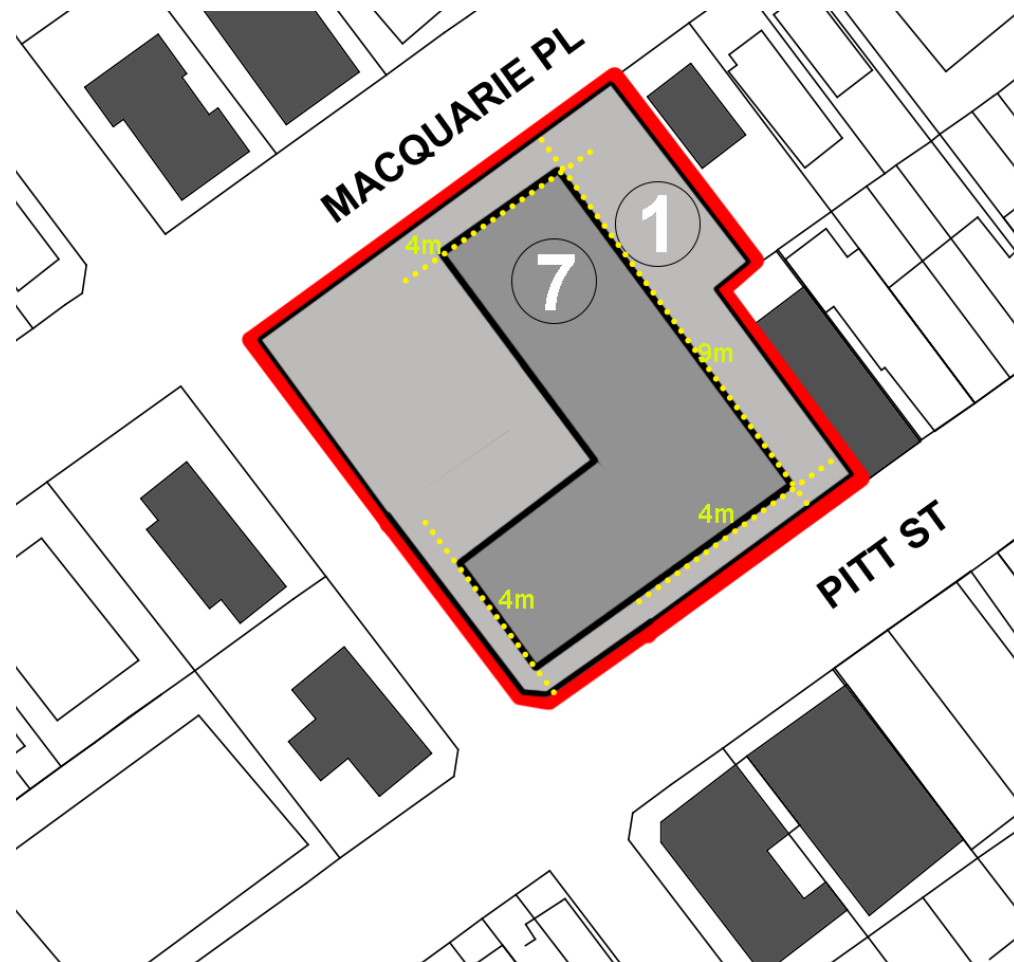
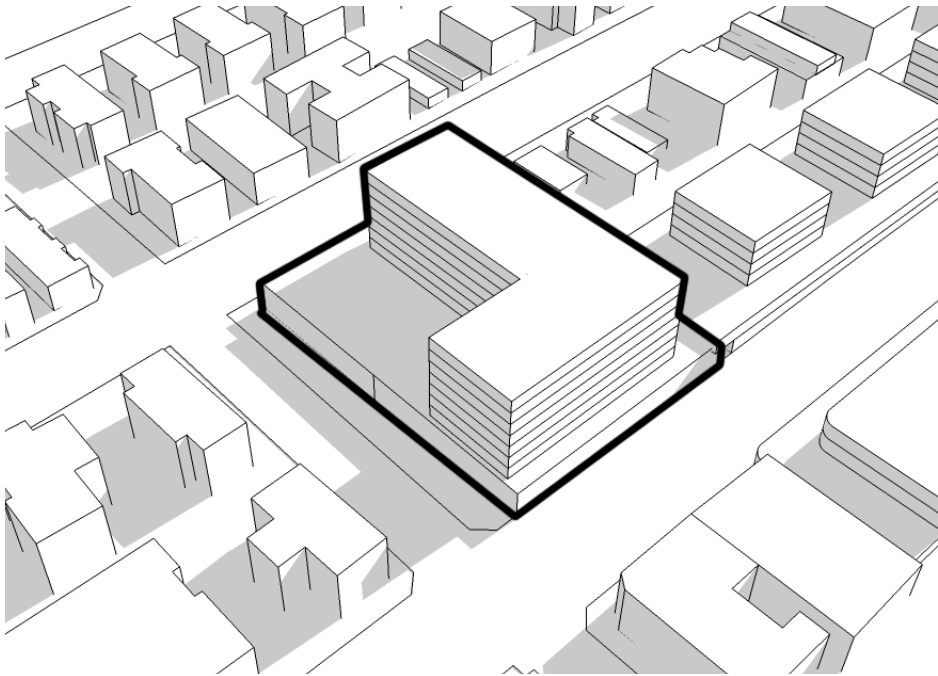
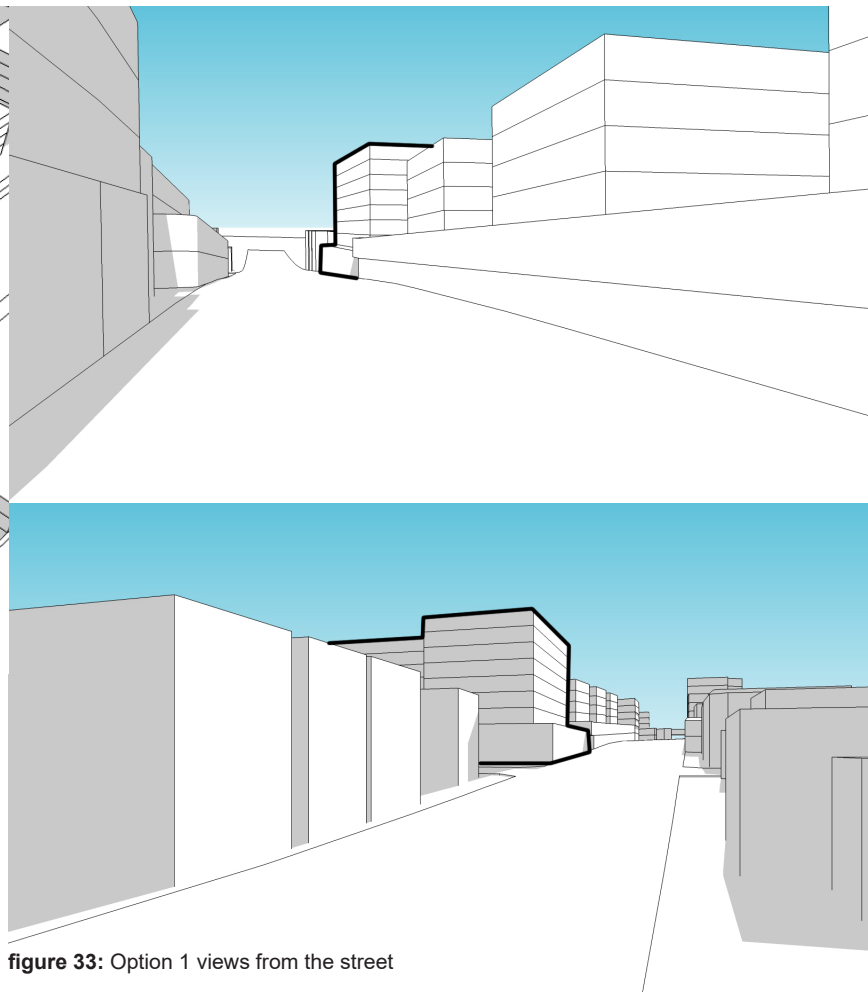


figure 31: Option 1 plan



**figure 32:** Option 1 birds eye view



**figure 33:** Option 1 views from the street

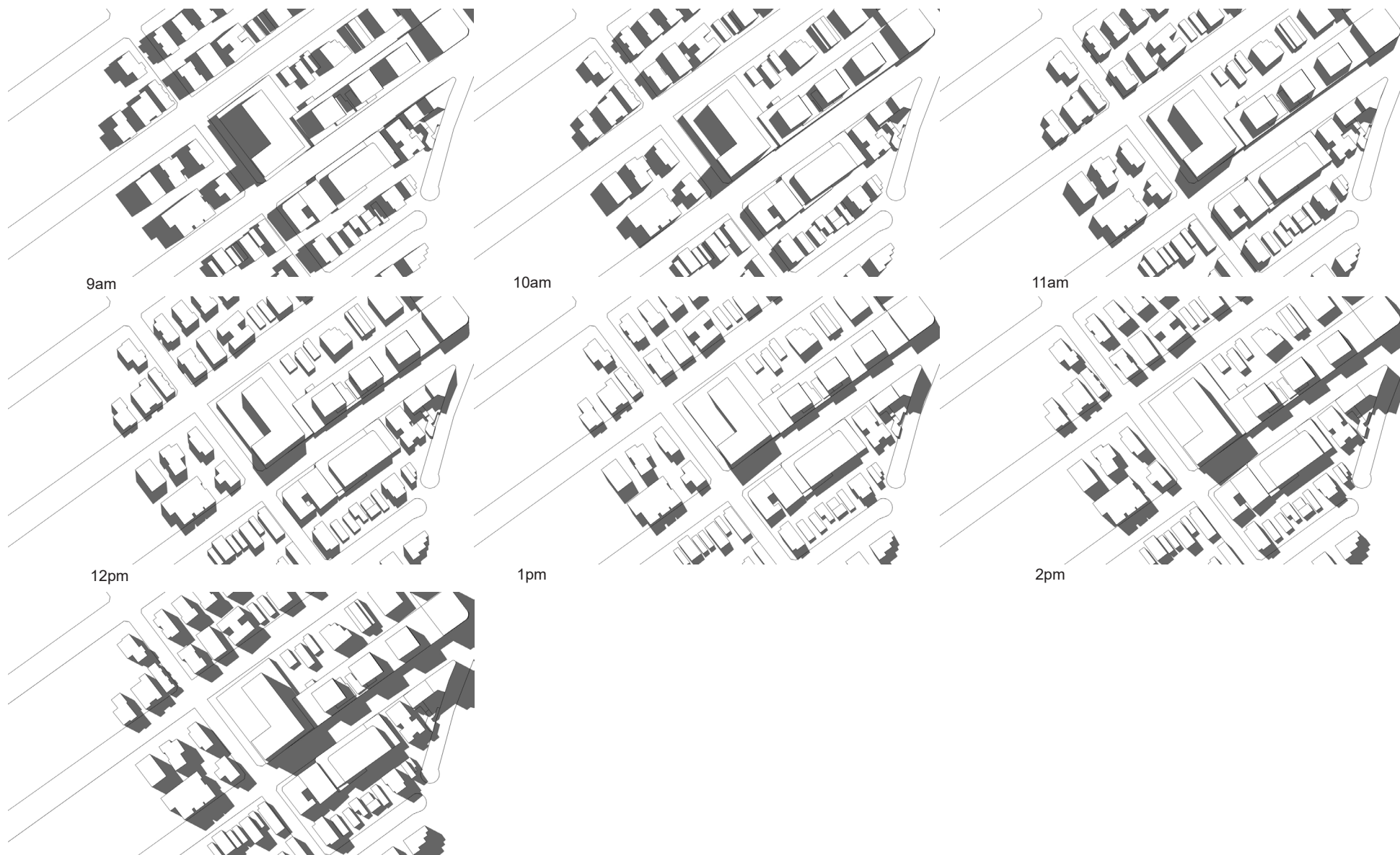


figure 34: Shadow diagrams Option 1 winter solstice

## Option 2: 8 Storeys (FSR 3.5:1)

Option 2 tests a building form with a maximum height of 8 storeys. It has a podium level of 1 storey with two clearly defined taller residential building forms along Pitt St and Macquarie Place that create a continuous frontage along these streets respectively. The building form along The Strand presents as two clearly marked 'towers' with 12m building separation between them.

The two distinct 'towers' activate the frontages along Pitt and Macquarie and improve the urban address to the corner of Macquarie Place and The Strand. It is clearly a more logical building form from a street address perspective as it directly engages with the buildings opposite and improves the vacant corner 'hole' that was present in the Option 1.

Importantly, the analysis of the solar diagrams cast from Option 2 shows that the increased density of the residential tower in the north-western corner of the site has little additional significant impact on the residential apartment buildings opposite The Strand. These apartment buildings opposite receive more than ample sun throughout the day and are only impacted briefly between the hours of 9-10am. The western portion of the northern tower has no significant addition of overshadowing to the neighbours, proving it not only clearly defines the Town Centre precinct, but is appropriate in scale and bulk. Furthermore the proposed building form maximizes the Northern aspect to the proposed scheme, with the majority of units receiving a North East or North West aspect.



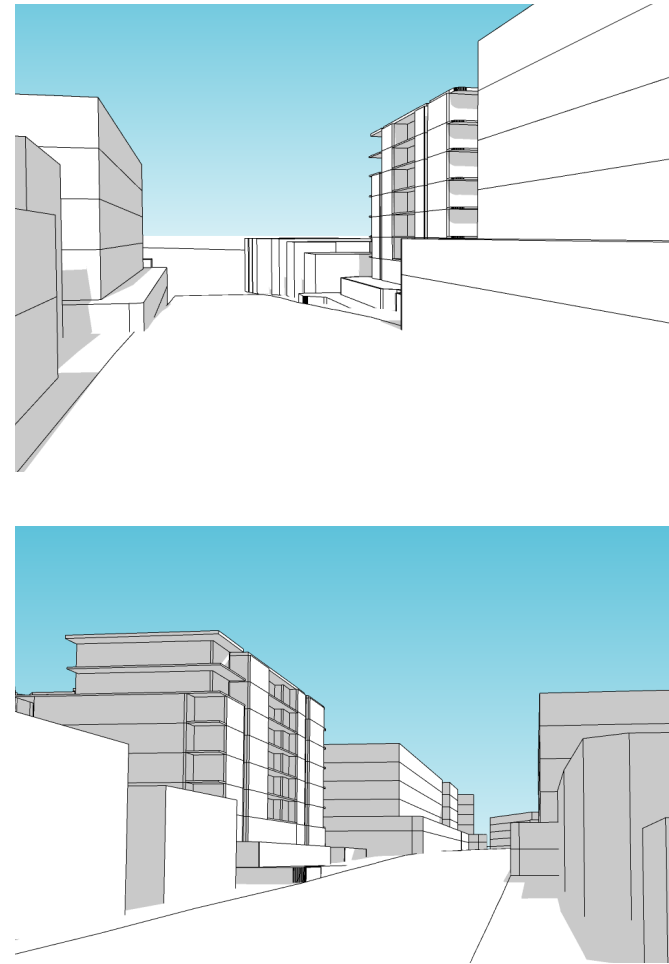
figure 35: Option 2 plan



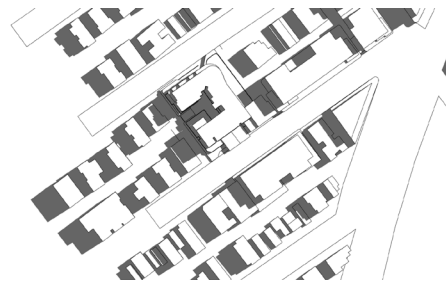




**figure 36:** Option 2 Birds eye view



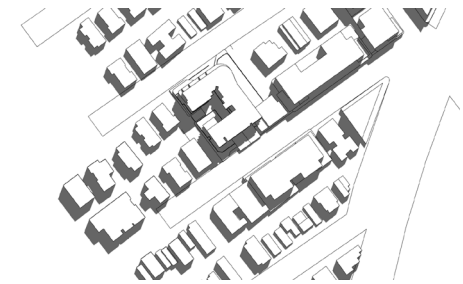
**figure 37:** Option 2 views from street



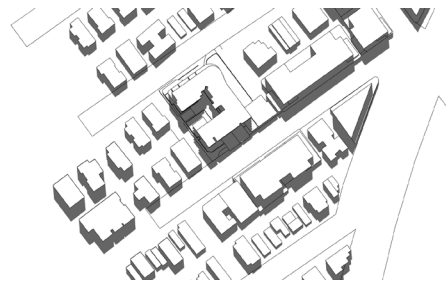
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**10AM**



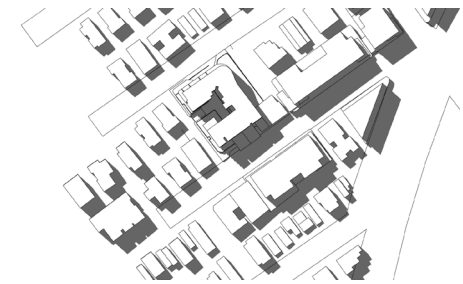
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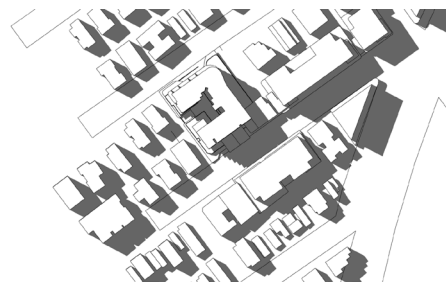
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**1PM**



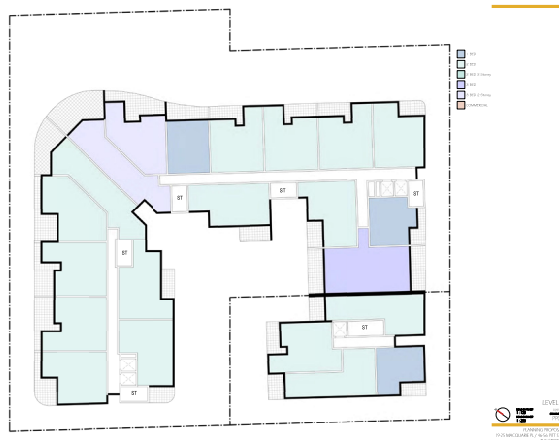
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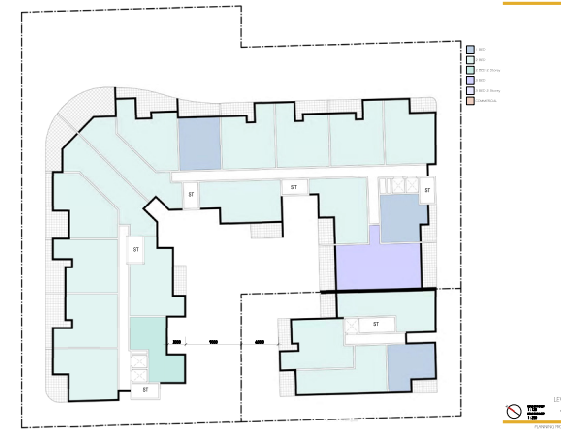


**3PM**

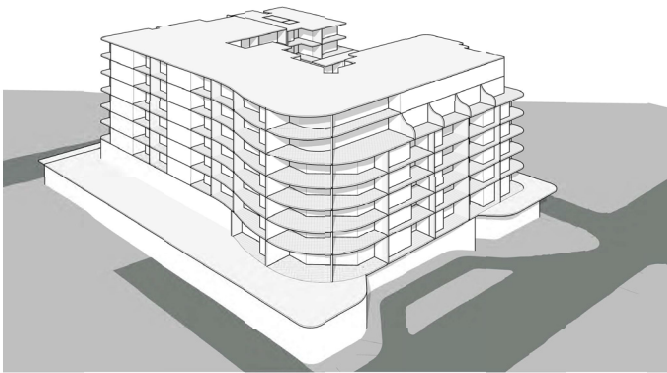
**figure 38:** Option 2 shadow diagrams winter solstice

## 10.0: Preferred scheme: Option 2: 8 storeys (FSR 3.5:1)

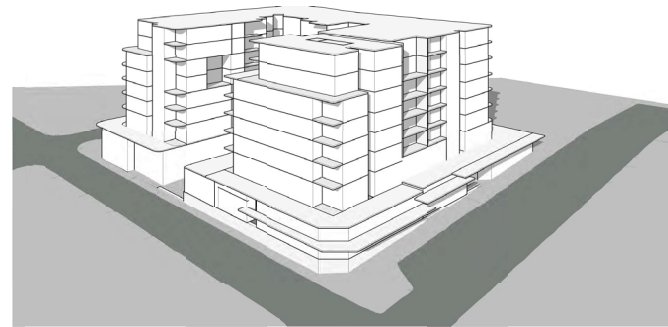




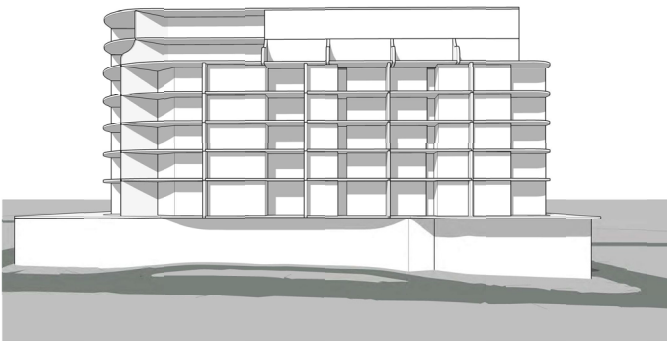




BIRD EYE VIEW MACQUARIE PL TOWARD SOUTH



BIRD EYE VIEW CORNER OF PITT ST & THE STRAND



VIEW FROM MACQUARIE STREET



VIEW FROM PITT STREET

## 11.0 Conclusion

The analysis of the Mortdale Town Centre under the chapter headings above reveals a highly fragmented land use pattern that is in need of densification and consolidation in key areas. There exists an already established quality and character which is provided by key historical and cultural buildings that are recommended to be retained in this report. The retention of these key sites offer an opportunity for strategically selected consolidated sites of increased density that will distinguish Morts Rd and Pitt St as a centre of significance within a broader context. Having regard for the two streets in the L shape, the logical pattern for redevelopment of the town centre is to provide markers at it's entry points and it's nucleus. These 'anchor developments' should provide an ideal level of density, and visually delineate the entry points and heart of the centre.

This report recommends that the existing urban character of the Town Centre is preserved, with the existing 1-2 storey buildings identified retained as commercial podium levels and bolstered with recessed residential above of up to six storeys. The proposed 'marker' developments will strategically exceed the six storey development pattern and should be approximately 8 storeys with an applied FSR of 3.5:1 (3:1 above ground & 0.5:1 below ground). This mix of density and height is critical to the activation of the centre.

This report further demonstrates that the proposal can contribute to the invigoration of the Town Centre through an uplift in density, invigorated public interface and site positioning.

A further analysis of the site under a more immediate contextual framework provided the following conclusions:

- Minimum setbacks to commercial activated frontage along Pitt St and partial activation along Macquarie Place and The Strand.
- Secondary entrance/foyer along Macquarie Place adjoining residential street.
- Boundary to boundary podium infill along the frontage of Pitt St, utilising the blank wall of 44 Pitt St.
- Podium setback along boundary adjoining 19 Macquarie Place with basement access, providing offset to single dwelling.

Through developing and testing different design iterations, an optimal arrangement for the site was proposed through specific analysis of building bulk and scale and how this pertained to key environmental constraints of the site as well as address to neighbouring sites. The preferred design solution demonstrates a superior solar access outcome and placement of building bulk.

The introduction of increased FSR and height to this Town Centre will provide for appropriate densification and activation. The proposed retail/commercial podium allows for the preservation of the existing street character and the introduction of the three marker buildings provide the necessary variation and framework to properly define Mortdale Town Centre.