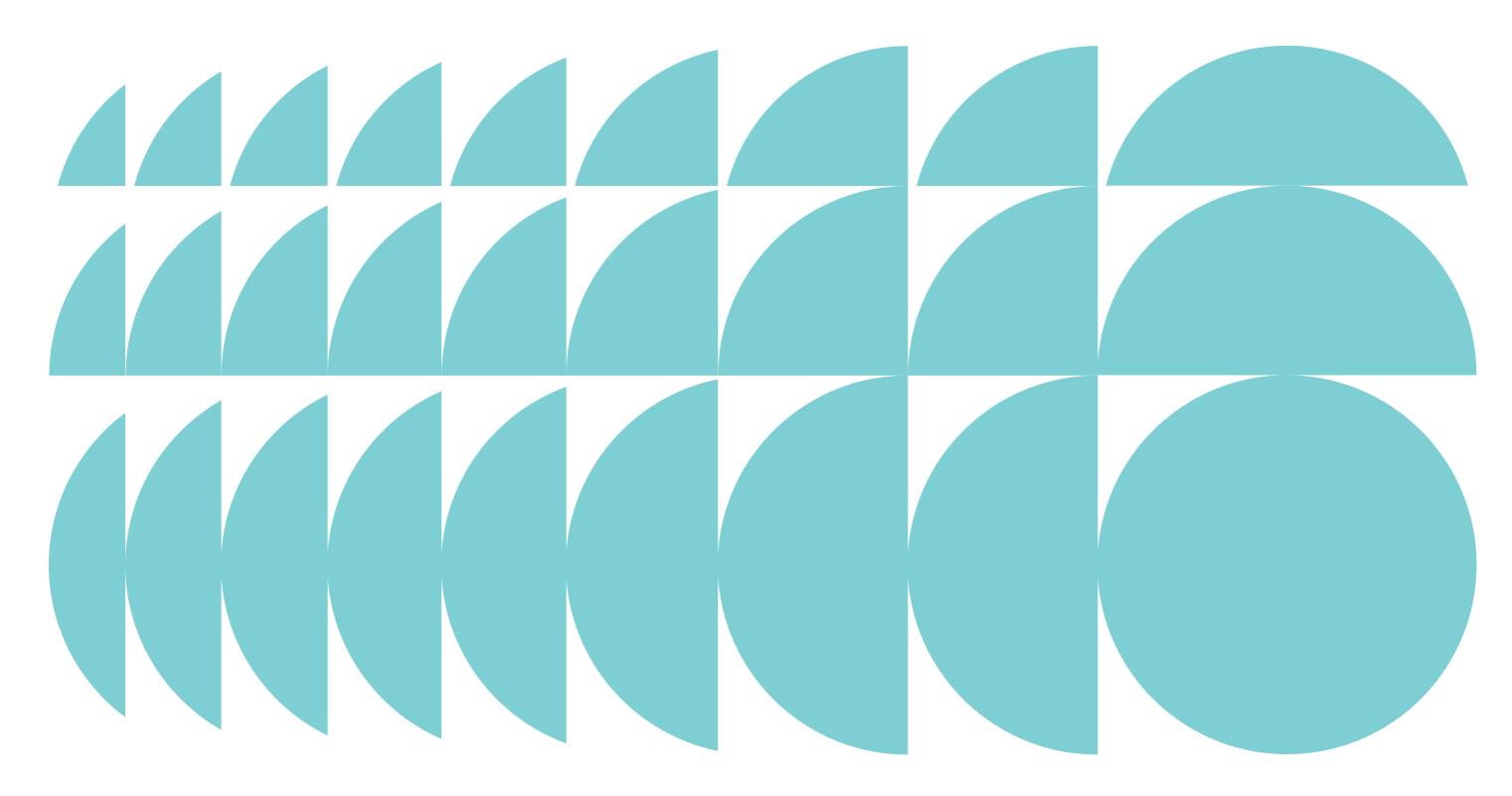
ETHOS URBAN

Urban Design Report Carrington Place, Castle Hill

On behalf of Spotlight Property Group (SPG) 21th December 2020 | 2200717



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1.0 Introduction

Purpose of this report

This Urban Design Report has been prepared by Ethos Urban on behalf of Spotlight Property Group (Spotlight) to support a Planning Proposal submitted to The Hills Shire Council to facilitate the delivery of a new mixed-use precinct at 21-23 Victoria Avenue, Castle Hill, with commercial office, hotel and retail uses. The study positions the site in its strategic context, identifies opportunities and constraints through key findings before defining a vision and urban design principles for the site.

The Site

Located approximately 600 metres west of the Showgrounds Metro station at 21-23 Victoria Avenue, Castle Hill. The site comprises two large lots which occupies a whole block frontage along Victoria Avenue and legeally identified as lot 1 DP660382 and lot 1 DP657013. The consolidated site under single ownership and is located at the intersection of Carrington Road and Victoria Avenue.

Falling between the Norwest Precinct Catchement (as part of the Norwest Service sub-precinct) and the Showground Metro precinct, the site is highly visible despite its location at the topographic lowpoint in the area.

Under the Hills Council LEP, the site is not currently zoned, but permits a maximum building height under of 20m with a maximum permissible floor space ratio (FSR) of 1:1.

The Proposal

The proposal seeks to increase the height and floor space ratio (FSR) provisions on the site to allow for high rise commercial development comprising 31,260m² of commercial floor space across two towers, a new hotel and ground floor retail uses. The proposed uses are permissible within the existing B5 Retail zone, however the height of buildings would need to be increased from 20m to an RL of 148.2 (60m) and the FSR would need to be increased from 1:1 to 2.71:1.

The design proposal has been prepared for the site which proposes a raised ground plane to support a mixture of retail, food and beverage uses to encourage a greater intensity of use of facilities at street level and encourage activation along key street frontages. The commercial and hotel tower components comprising two separate towers are located above the raised ground plane at the southeastern corner of the site at the intersection of Carrington Road and Victoria Avenue.

The proposal also identifies an opportunity to expand large format retail and car parking for the area, with space for an additional 1300-1600 cars and 14,448m² of retail floor space. An additional 5,398m² of open space will also be provided on the roof level (Sky Plaza and roof terraces) of the proposal. The expansion will provide much needed open space for this section of the Showgrounds Precinct including 7,838m² of ground level public domain.

Strategic planning, traffic and transport, ecological, flood, stormwater and economic assessments have been prepared to inform the proposal and consider its impacts.

Strategic Justification

This site represents a rare opportunity to deliver a true-mixed use precinct within the Hills Showground Precinct with key employment-generating commercial, retail, and hotel accommodation floorspace, as consistent with the Showground Station Precinct Plan. Planning and technical investigations support the proposed changes to the existing planning controls, and an indicative development concept has been prepared to demonstrate how the proposal will facilitate the public benefits afforded by the planning proposal.





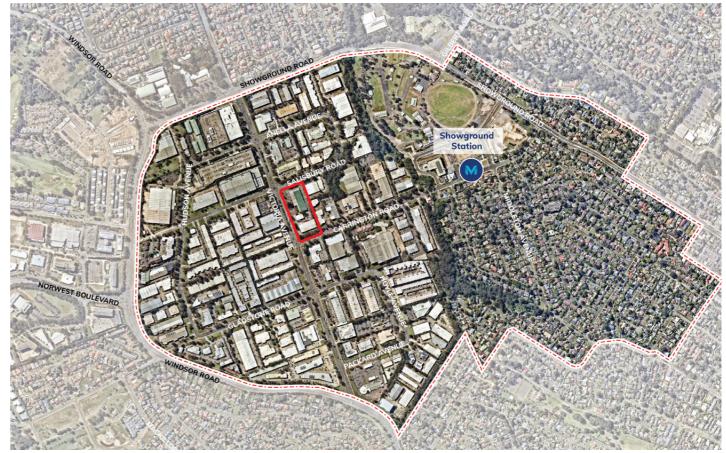


Figure 1. Site location plan



2.1 Greater Sydney Region Plan

The Greater Sydney Commission's Greater Sydney Region Plan is the new metropolitan plan for Sydney. It sets a 40-year vision of Sydney that seeks to meet the needs of a growing and changing population. A key move of the plan is to transform Greater Sydney into a metropolis of three cities - the Western Parkland City, the Central River City and the Eastern Harbour City.

Key planning initiatives relevant to Showgrounds and Norwest include:

- Norwest is identified as a strategic centre geared around employment and economic growth within the North-West Rail Link urban renewal corridor.
- A key priority of the Greater Sydney Region Plan is to accelerate urban renewal in existing or planned transport corridors. Historically, Norwest has been an important employment precinct and is home to a number of campus style office developments, large format retail and light industrial uses.
- Norwest is envisioned to undergo a transition to become a transit-oriented, more vibrant and diversified centre with higher employment
- The site offers an opportunity to deliver a diverse range of employment uses, and a high quality public domain, within walking distance of the Showgrounds metro station that will support Norwest's transition toward becoming a diverse and activated employment centre.

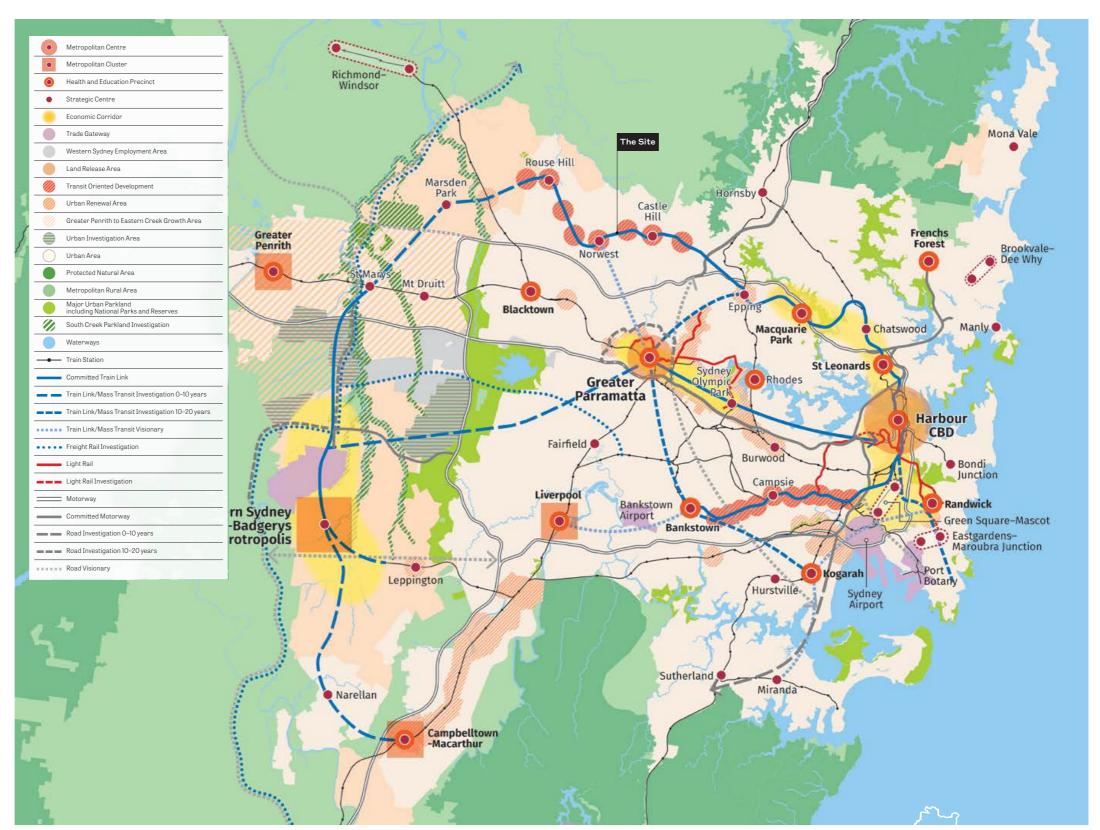


Figure 2. Greater Sydney Region Plan, Greater Sydney Commission

2.2 Central City District Plan

The Central City District Plan, released by the Greater Sydney Commission in March 2018, sets out the 20-year vision, priorities, and actions for the West Central District.

Planning for a growing population

Central City District is the fastest growing District, with the population expected to grow by an additional 550,500 people by 2036. Within The Hills LGA, there will be demand for an additional 8,550 dwellings over the next 5 years. Currently, The Hills LGA has a high proportion of detached homes, and to meet the needs of a growing and more diverse population, there will need to be increased housing diversity and smaller homes.

Planning for jobs closer to home

Norwest is a Strategic Centre, recognising the significant commercial, industrial and retail role that Norwest provides for the north west. The Hills Shire currently has 8 local jobs for every 10 working residents across the LGA and are seeking to retain the current ratio. This means a projected increase of an additional 50,000 jobs in the Shire by 2036. Growth will be focused on increasing jobs, economic activity, and enhanced connectivity to the strategic centres of Norwest, Blacktown, Greater Parramatta and Sydney Olympic Park.

Supporting the vision for a 30-minute city

Enhancing access to a broad range of jobs and services within a 30-minute city is a key part of the Greater Sydney Commission's vision for Sydney. Both Norwest and Showgrounds are strategically located within 30 minutes of existing centres, including Parramatta and Macquarie Park, can build on this vision.

The Sydney Metro North-West, provides direct connections from Norwest to other major employment centres, supporting renewal and redevelopment of Norwest and Showgrounds.

Priorities for Norwest

Strengthen Norwest through approaches that:

- retain and grow commercial capacity to achieve the centre's job targets
- encourage complementary retail services around Norwest Lake and the station precinct

Work with NSW Government to identify a potential future corridor for mass transit links to Greater Parramatta.

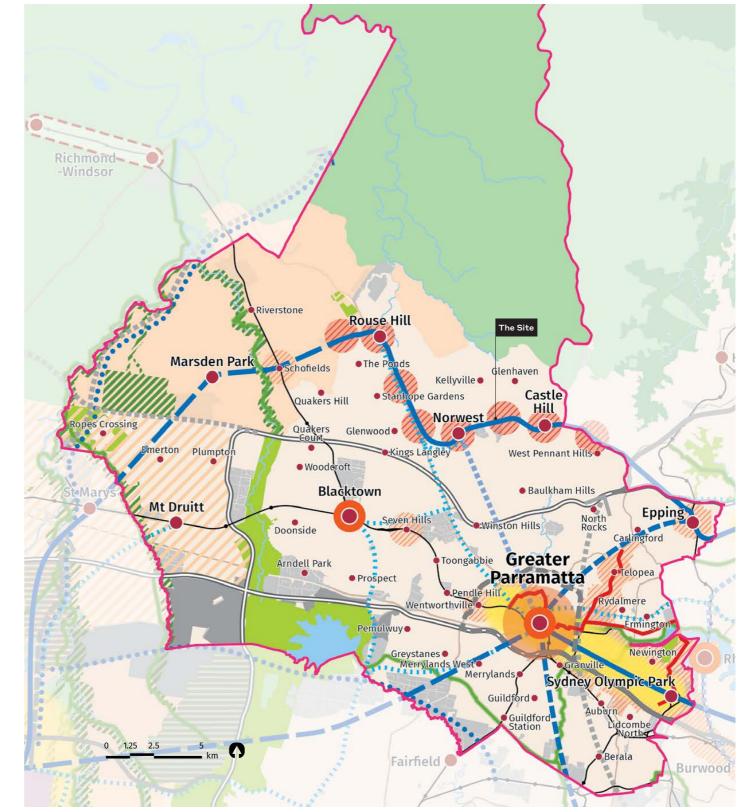


Figure 3. Structure Plan for the Central District, Greater Sydney Commission

2.3 Hills Future LSPS - 2036

Hills Future 2036 is the Hills Shire Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS), which sets out the framework for future planning decisions. It provides an outline of the planning priorities identified by the Hills Council and be used to inform future decisions relating to housing, jobs, open space, services and population growth.

Norwest Strategic Centre

The LSPS identifies Norwest as a strategic centre which combines a mix of business and commercial uses, with a variety of low to high density housing surrounding and permeating the commercial areas.

Provision of physical and social infrastructure to support the workforce will also be important for the strategic centre. Work locations that are rich in opportunities for meeting and connection, convenience retail, events and dining are valued by this generation of workers. A focus on the night-time economy will make it easier for workers to blend their work commitments and lifestyle.

Forming part of Norwest strategic centre is Norwest Service sub-precinct. The Hills Future 2036 LSPS, specifically identifies its vision for 'Norwest Service sub-precinct' to envisions a mix of specialised retail and new commercial/office development along Victoria Avenue and Carrington Road, while delivering quality landscaping to complement existing areas. Specifically, the sub-precinct will support:

- a specialised retail (bulky goods) spine along Victoria Avenue will be retained.
- new commercial/office development along Carrington Road and on Windsor Road adjacent to Norwest Business Park could include taller office style buildings, with setbacks that incorporate quality landscaping to complement existing areas.
- mixed use residential and employment

- development adjacent to Cattai Creek will facilitate restoration of the creek while benefiting from the natural setting and open space.
- light industrial areas in the west providing urban services but in the longer term could also provide space for smaller start-up businesses following a review of lot sizes and permitted uses.

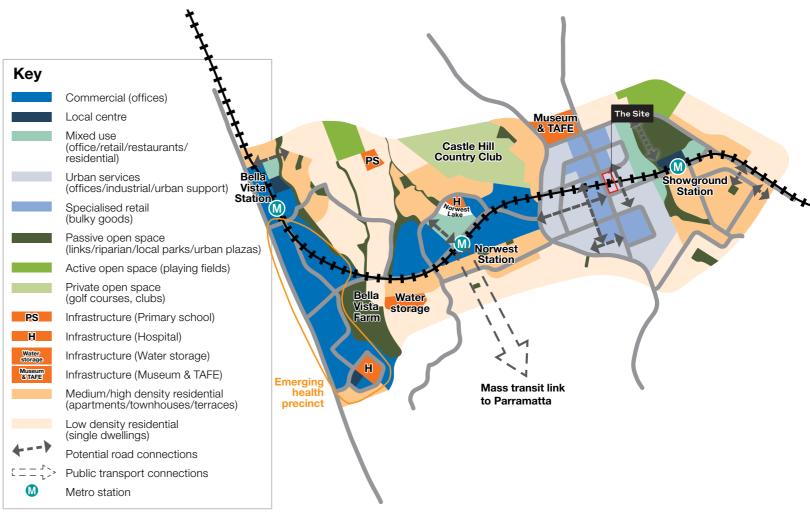


Figure 4. Norwest strategic centre structure plan, The Hills Shire LSPS

2.4 Design Policies



Better Placed

The Office of the Government Architect, NSW, 2017

The Government Architect NSW has prepared Better Placed, an integrated design policy for the built environment of NSW that establishes principles to support better design and create good places within NSW. The policy also advocates the support of design excellence of future development to create better quality places. This may utilise existing tools, such as design review panels, competitive design processes and guidelines and manuals to encourage support design excellence as part of future development proposals.

In this document, seven objectives for the built environment are identified:

- Better Fit contextual, local and of it's place
- Better Performance sustainable, adaptable and durable
- Better for Community inclusive, connected and diverse
- Better for People safe, comfortable and liveable
- Better Working functional, efficient and fit for purpose
- Better Value creating and adding value
- Better look and feel engaging, inviting and attractive

Better Placed is part of a suite of documents that the NSW Government is preparing to advocate good design.

The document also advocates Design as a process and an outcome, that is constituted of three core collaborative steps - 'Discover', 'Create' and 'Deliver'.

Key Takeaways:

 The proposal has the opportunity to be designed following these objectives. The Carrington Place proposal can deliver a high quality place for the Norwest Strategic Centre and Showground precinct.



Greener Places

The Office of the Government Architect, NSW, 2017

The Government Architect NSW has prepared Greener Places to guide the planning, design and delivery of Green Infrastructure in urban areas across NSW. The vision for the policy is to establish a network of well-planned Green Infrastructure that will make NSW more attractive, better connected, healthier and more resilient.

The policy outlines the following principles for well-designed Green Infrastructure:

- Integration The principle of integrating green space with urban development and hard infrastructure (e.g. roads, storm-water drainage)
- Connectivity promoting a network of high quality open spaces that connect with other areas of activity, such as town centres, public transport hubs, rivers, creeks and employment and residential areas. This aims to create a network of open space through the Central City District and Greater Sydney region.
- Multi-functionality where design of green spaces provides a range of benefits in one area through careful planning. This may include the simultaneous function of green spaces for ecosystem, environmental and other services
- Participation where stakeholders are involved in the development and implementation of neighbourhood, local, district and regional Green Infrastructure policies.

Key Takeaways:

 The Carrington Place proposal has the opportunity to be designed with these principles in mind. Given the sites context, integration of green space with urban development and hard infrastructure will be a key focus that the proposal will need to address.

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Green Grid - West Central District

Tyrell Studio in association with The Office of the Government Architect, NSW, 2017

The West Central District Green Grid identifies project opportunities to expand and enhance the green grid within the District. An important objective of the Green Grid is to create a network of rich green spaces. The Green Grid identifies a number of principles including:

- Increase access to open space
- Encourage sustainable transport connections and promote active living
- Create a high quality active public realm
- Conserve the natural environment
- Adapt to climate extremes, improve air quality and increase urban greening
- Promote green skills, improve management, maintenance and sustainable green space design

Project opportunities that this document as well as the LSPS identifies that could be relevant to Carrington Place include:

- Sydney Metro North West The Sydney Metro Northwest provides a significant opportunity to create public domain in the new transit-oriented developments proposed at each station. There are also opportunities for integrated networks of pedestrian and cycle routes to and from stations.
- Cattai Creek Corridor: The Cattai Creek corridor will continue to play an important role for recreation, walking and cycling, urban greening, improved water quality and stormwater treatment and ecological protection, and create east-west links to provide access between neighbourhoods and the station. Council has identified the importance of Victoria Avenue as a green link to green corridors further north such as Smalls Creek.
- **Urban heat island:** The Hills Shire benefits from good urban tree canopy cover, especially throughout established residential areas which typically contain detached dwellings on large lots. It is this pattern of development that has historically contributed to the 'Garden Shire' image.

Key Takeaways:

- The Carrington Place proposal can benefit from the governments investment in infrastructure, especially, improved pedestrian and cycle links to and from Showground station.
- The Carrington Place proposal has the opportunity to deliver a high quality and active public realm as well as recreation areas for workers along an identified gap in the green corridor (Victoria Avenue).
- There is the opportunity for the Carrington Place proposal to contribute to the 'Garden Shire' image in a employment area that typically sees lower percentages of urban tree canopy. cover.

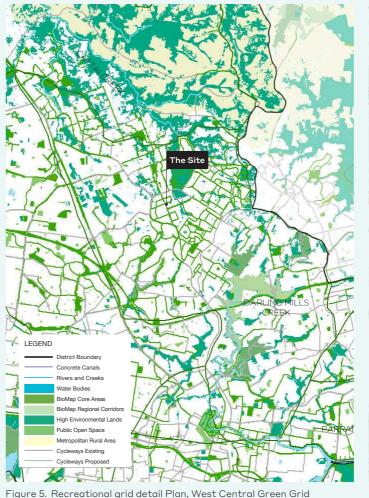




Figure 7. Urban Green Grid priorities plan, The Hills Shire LSPS

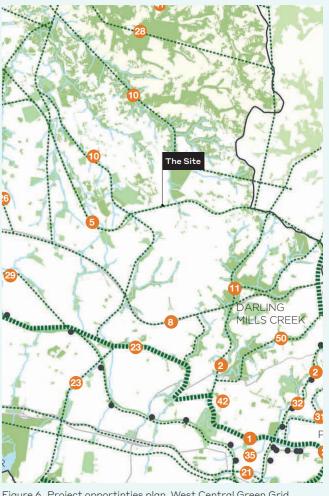


Figure 6. Project opportinties plan, West Central Green Grid

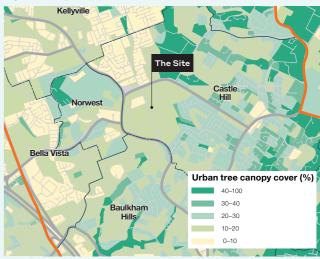


Figure 8. Urban tree canopy plan The Hills Shire LSPS

2.5 Hills Council LEP 2019

Land Use Zoning

The site is currently listed as a 'Deferred Matter (DM)' under the HLEP 2019 (Figure 12). Therefore, zoning controls for the site defer back to the last applicable zoning for the site before the DM listing, specifically the revision of The Hills Local Environmental Plan 2012 (HLEP 2012) applicable from 1 December 2017 to 14 December 2017 (refer to Section 2.2 above for further context). Under this revision of the HLEP 2012, the site is zoned B5 Business Development (Figure 13), with a small narrow southern strip along Carrington Road being zoned SP2 Infrastructure (Local Road Widening) to facilitate the future widening of Carrington Road.

The objectives of the B5 Business Development zoning are as follows:

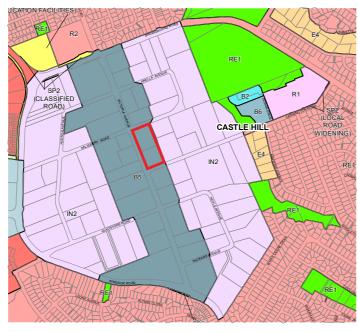
- To enable a mix of business and warehouse uses, and specialised retail premises that require a large floor area, in locations that are close to, and that support the viability of, centres;
- To provide for specialised retail premises that meet community demand; and
- To enable other land uses that provide facilities or services to meet the day to day needs of workers in the area.

Height of Buildings (HOB)

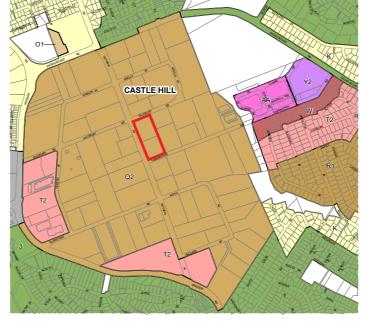
The site is currently subject to a maximum height of 20m while the Showground Precinct at the station has a maximum of height of 68m.

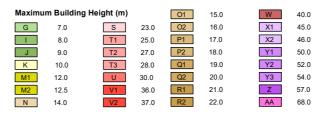
Floor Space Ratio (FSR)

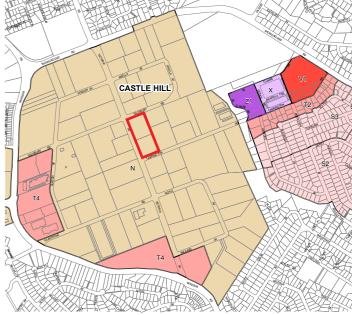
A maximum FSR of 1:1 applies to the site while the Showground Precinct at the station has a maximum floor space ratio of 5:1.



7		
Zone	IN2	Light Industrial
B1	Neighbourhood Centre R1	General Residential
B2	Local Centre R2	Low Density Residential
B4	Mixed Use R3	Medium Density Residential
B5	Business Development R4	High Density Residential
B6	Enterprise Corridor RE1	Public Recreation
B7	Business Park RE2	Private Recreation
E1	National Parks and Nature Reserves RU1	Primary Production
E2	Environmental Conservation RU2	Rural Landscape
E3	Environmental Management RU3	Forestry
E4	Environmental Living RU6	Transition
IN1	General Industrial SP2	Infrastructure







Maximum Floor Space Ratio (n:1)								
P2 1.22	V1 3.0							
R1 1.4	V2 3.2							
R2 1.49	W 3.8							
S1 1.5	X 4.0							
S2 1.6	Z1 5.0							
S3 1.9	Z2 5.5							
S4 1.99	AA 6.4							
	R1 1.4 R2 1.49 S1 1.5 S2 1.6 S3 1.9							

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2.6 Hills Council DCP 2012 Showground Station Precinct

Vision

The vision for Showground Station Precinct is proposed to become an attractive and well-connected neighbourhood that achieves housing targets, creates vibrant, safe and desirable places, reinforces the garden shire character and lifestyle, and is supported by necessary infrastructure. It is anticipated the Precinct will provide up to 9,000 additional dwellings and 2,300 additional jobs by 2036 (excluding potential growth within the deferred area on the western side of Cattai Creek).

Objectives

- To ensure that development occurs in a coordinated manner consistent with the Precinct vision and the development principles of housing diversity, employment opportunities, transit oriented development, quality infrastructure and open space and place making.
- To provide a mix of housing, retail, employment and services in appropriate and logical locations within the Precinct.
- To locate higher scale residential apartments and commercial uses closest to the station, the Castle Hill Showground and Cattai Creek corridor to optimise access to station facilities as well as outlook and natural amenity.
- To develop a local centre and main plaza in the area immediately surrounding the station to provide local shopping, employment opportunities and other services to support the incoming population and establish a vibrant and well-used public domain.

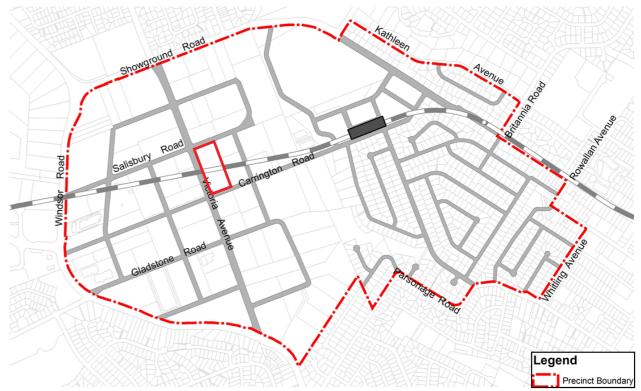


Figure 9. Urban grid and land to which the DCP applies, Hills Council DCP 2012

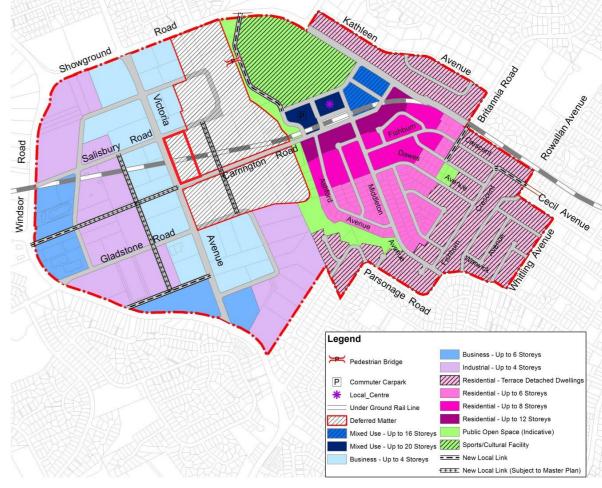
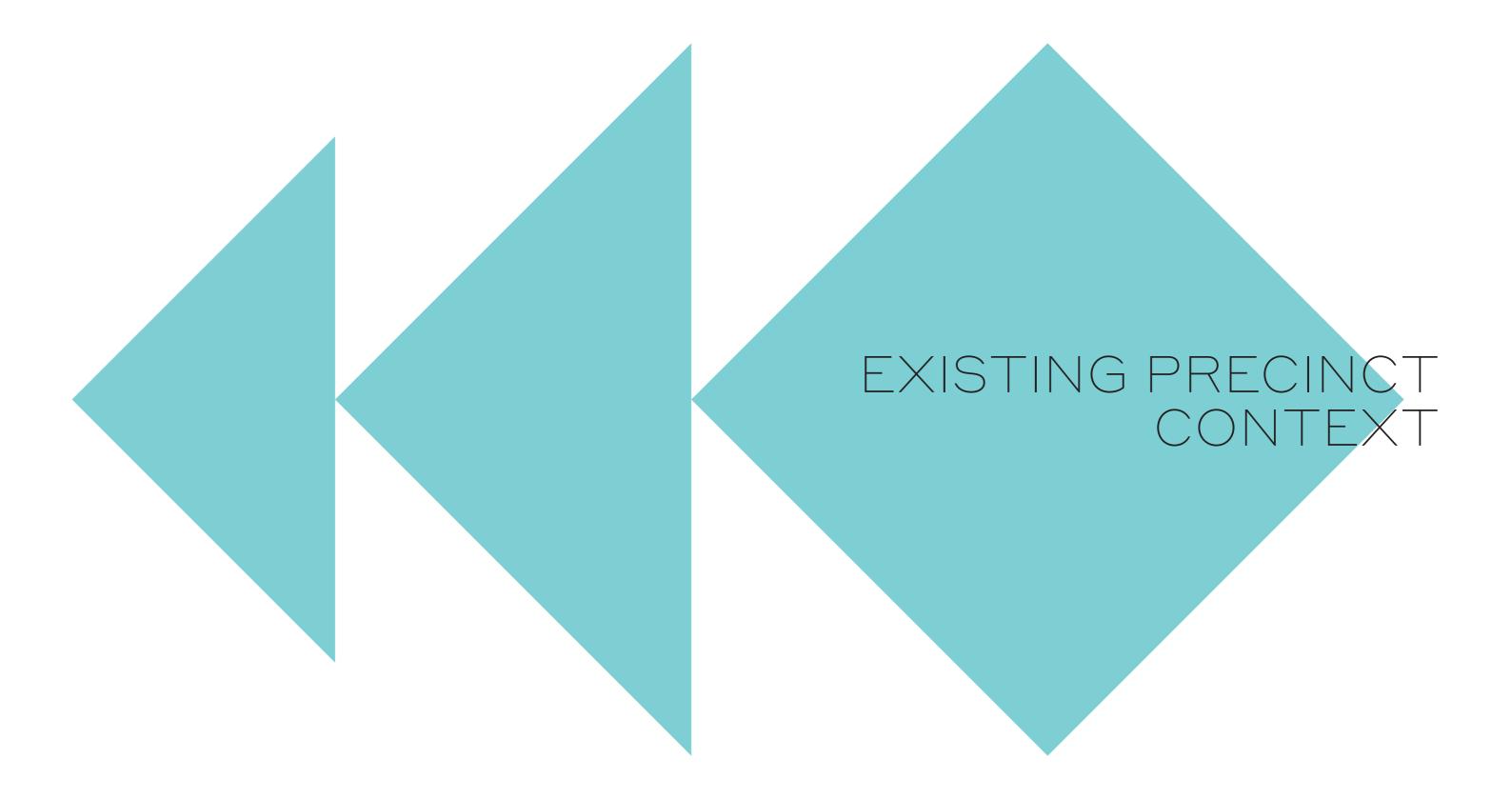


Figure 10. Showground Precinct Structure Plan. Hills Council DCP 2012



3.1 Strategic Context

The Site is strategically located in the overlap of two key precincts

Key Findings:

- The site is strategically located at the intersection of two key precincts -Norwest Strategic Centre (as part of the Norwest Services sub-precinct) and the Showground Station Precinct.
- The Showground Town Centre will be a vibrant neighbourhood centre and intensified housing around the station core following the principles of transit oriented development.
- The Norwest strategic centre will continue to develop into a higher order centre with a focus on mixed use and commercial uses to fulfill the objectives for continued employment growth in the area.
- The site is in a unique position to take the best of what both precincts have to offer and provide a unique place which responds to the needs of the residential neighbourhood while contributing to the creation of jobs in the area.

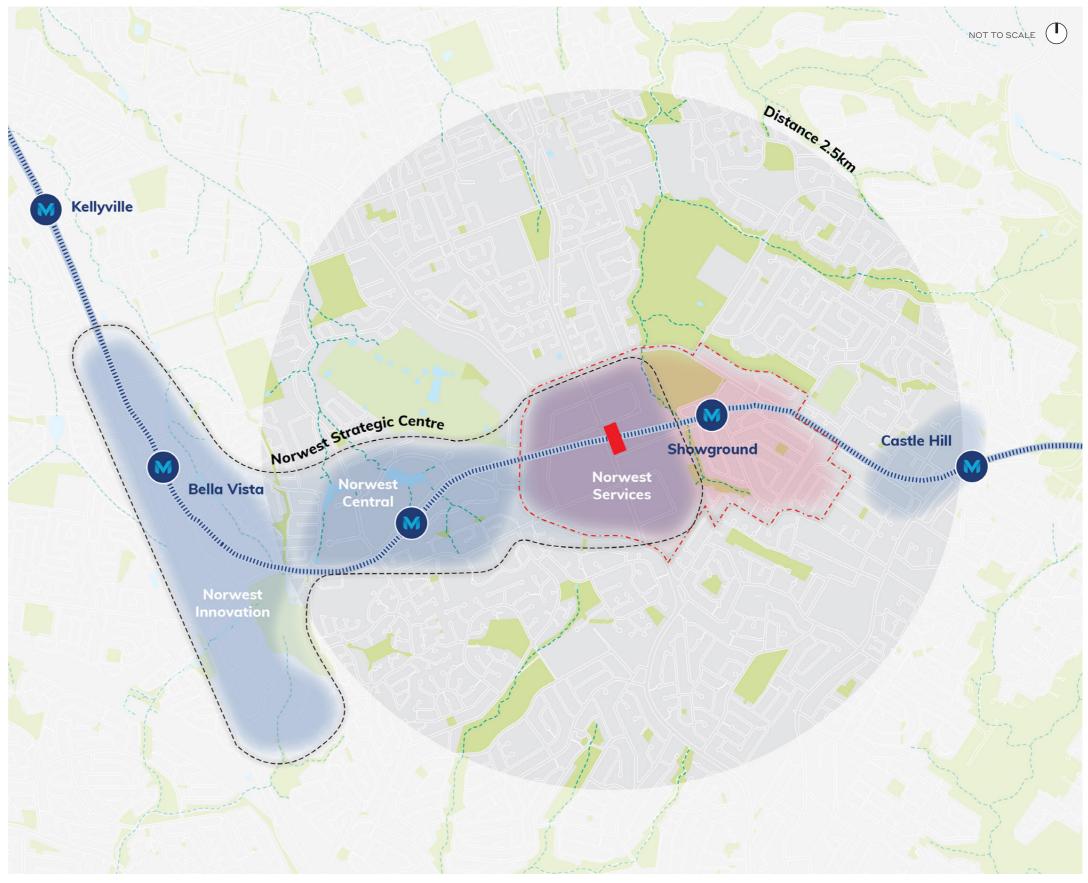


Figure 11. Strategic context plan



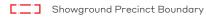
3.2 Public / Active Transport

Showgrounds is a well connected and well serviced precinct

Key Findings:

- The site is located along key public / active transport routes and is highly accessible by Showgrounds Metro Station and bus interchange which is 600m/8mins walk away along Carrington Road.
- The site is well serviced by several local existing bus routes which offer convenience for people traveling to and from the precinct from surrounding centres such as Blacktown, Rouse Hill, Kellyville, Castle Hill, Epping and Pennant Hills.
- The Hills DCP identifies future local links which aim to increase the permeability and walkability of the precinct which is historically characterised by large blocks up to 400m in length.
- Future public / active links are proposed to connect through to Norwest Boulevard as a extension of Carrington Road unlocking greater connectivity the site

LEGEND



The Site

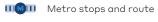
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Block Pattern



Rivers and Creeks



Bus stops and routes



New local link subject to future Master Plan (As per The Hills DCP 2012)



••••• Existing Cycle Links







Victoria Avenue is a common bus stop location. Source: Ethos Urban

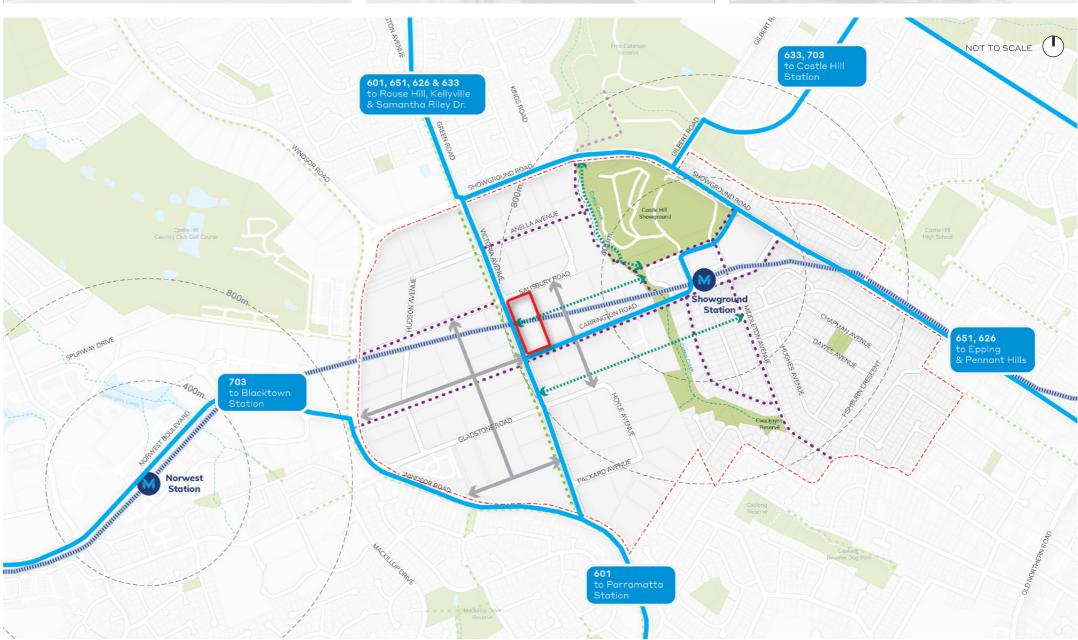


Figure 12. Public and active transport plan

3.3 Road Infrastructure

Carrington Road and Victoria Road will remain critically important local connections

Key Findings:

- The site is located at a major intersection of distributor roads which filter traffic through the Norwest Services Precinct to Showground Road in the north/east and Windsor Road in the south/west.
- The future extension of Carrington Road will include an upgrade of the existing intersection to include signals and crossings. It will offer a direct connection through to Norwest and further highlights the importance of this intersection.
- The site is in a highly visible location and has the opportunity to deliver a landmark destination on the corner to anchor the western end of Carrington Road.







Victoria Avenue looking north. Source: Ethos Urban

NOT TO SCALE To Glenhaver To Bella Vista To Baulkham Hills

Figure 13. Road infrastructure plan

LEGEND

Showground Precinct Boundary

The Site

Cadastre

Block Pattern

Open Space

Rivers and Creeks Metro stops and route

Key Signalised Intersection

Arterial Road

Major precinct intersection (Proposed to be signalised)



→ Distributor Road



Proposed Road (The Hills DCP 2012)

3.4 Built Form Character

The Site is located in a precinct undergoing transition

Key Findings:

- The site is located in an area undergoing transition. The figure ground analysis shows that the area is undergoing significant change east of Cattai Creek which is consistent with recent changes to land uses and density controls within the Showground Precinct.
- The Showgrounds Precinct west of Cattai Creek comprise large lots with light industrial, large format retail and low density commercial uses will generally take longer to re-develop over time.
- The combination of large lots and the nature of industrial uses in the area highlights a lack of permeability and pedestrian amenity which will need to improve as the area changes.
- There is the opportunity to harness the benefits of the Showground neighbourhood centre.
- The site offers the opportunity to be a catalyst for new employment typologies in the Norwest Services sub-precinct that celebrates a diversity of uses and active ground plane.

LEGEND



Cadastre

Block Pattern

Open Space

Rivers and Creeks

Metro stops and route

Residential Development

Showground Neighborhood Centre

Norwest Services (Employment)









Figure 14. Built form character plan

3.5 Topography, Ecology & Hydrology

The site is located at the topographic low point in the Showgrounds **Precinct**

Key Findings:

- Major and minor ridges are formed along Windsor Road and Showground Road on the periphery of the precinct.
- Cattai Creek creates a depression and in the land as it cuts through the precinct forming a valley.
- Due to the sites proximity approx. 450m from the Cattai Creek, it is located at a topographic low point and subject to flooding.
- There is existing storm water infrastructure located beneath the site to assist with drainage and overland flow towards Cattai Creek.
- The site is not constrained by existing ecological communities as identified in the DCP.

LEGEND

Showground Precinct Boundary



Cadastre

---- Rivers and Creeks

••••• Stormwater Infrastructure



Metro stops and route



Minor Ridge



Living Ecological Communities (The Hills DCP 2012)



1 in 100 Year Flooding (Hydrology & Drainage Report 2015)



High Point

Low Point







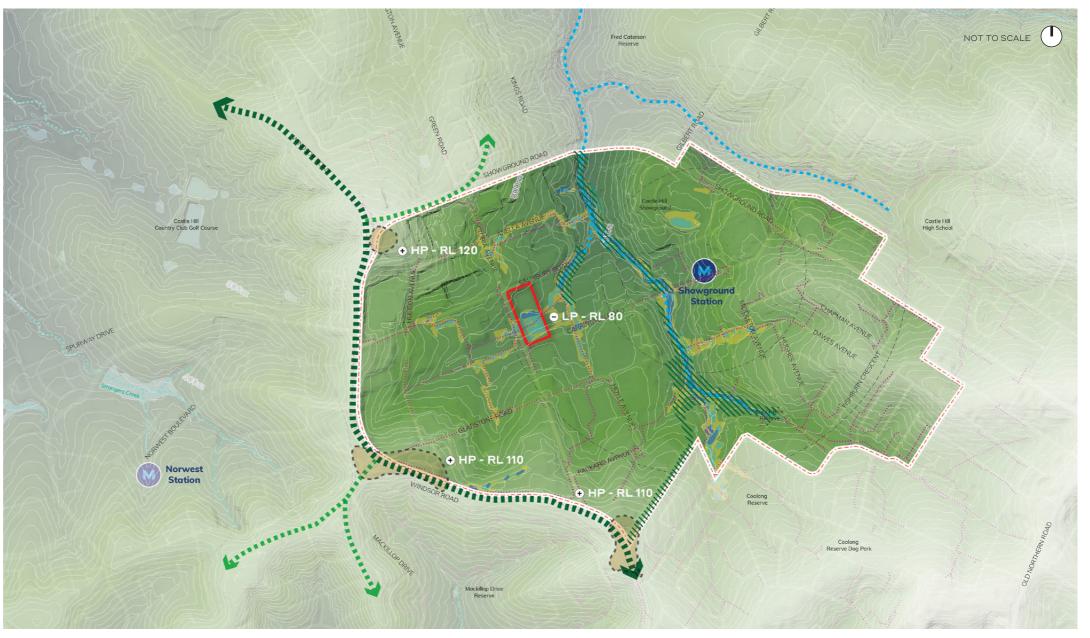


Figure 15. Topography, ecology and hydrology plan

3.6 Precinct sections

Section AA - Carrington Road Section

A section through Carrington Road shows the sites proximity to Showground station and the Cattai Creek corridor. This section also shows the relationship between existing LEP heights and future built form.

Section BB - Victoria Avenue Section

A section through Victoria Avenue shows that the site is located a the topographic low-point of the Showground Precinct where the terrain rises to Showground Road in the north and Windsor Road in the south. This section also shows the relationship between existing LEP heights and future built form.



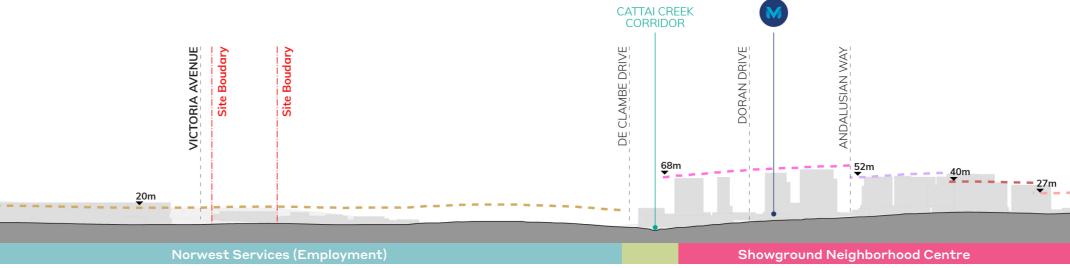


Figure 16. Section AA through Carrington Road

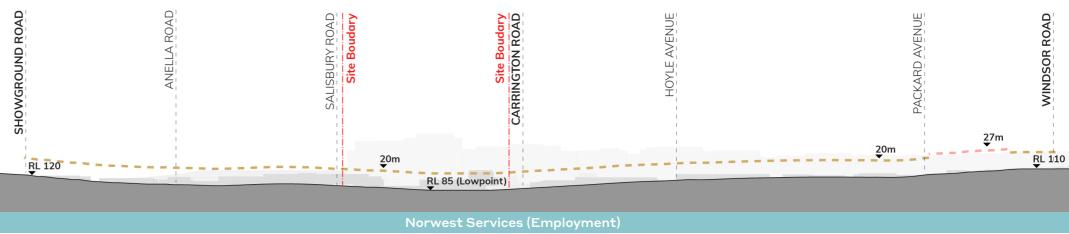
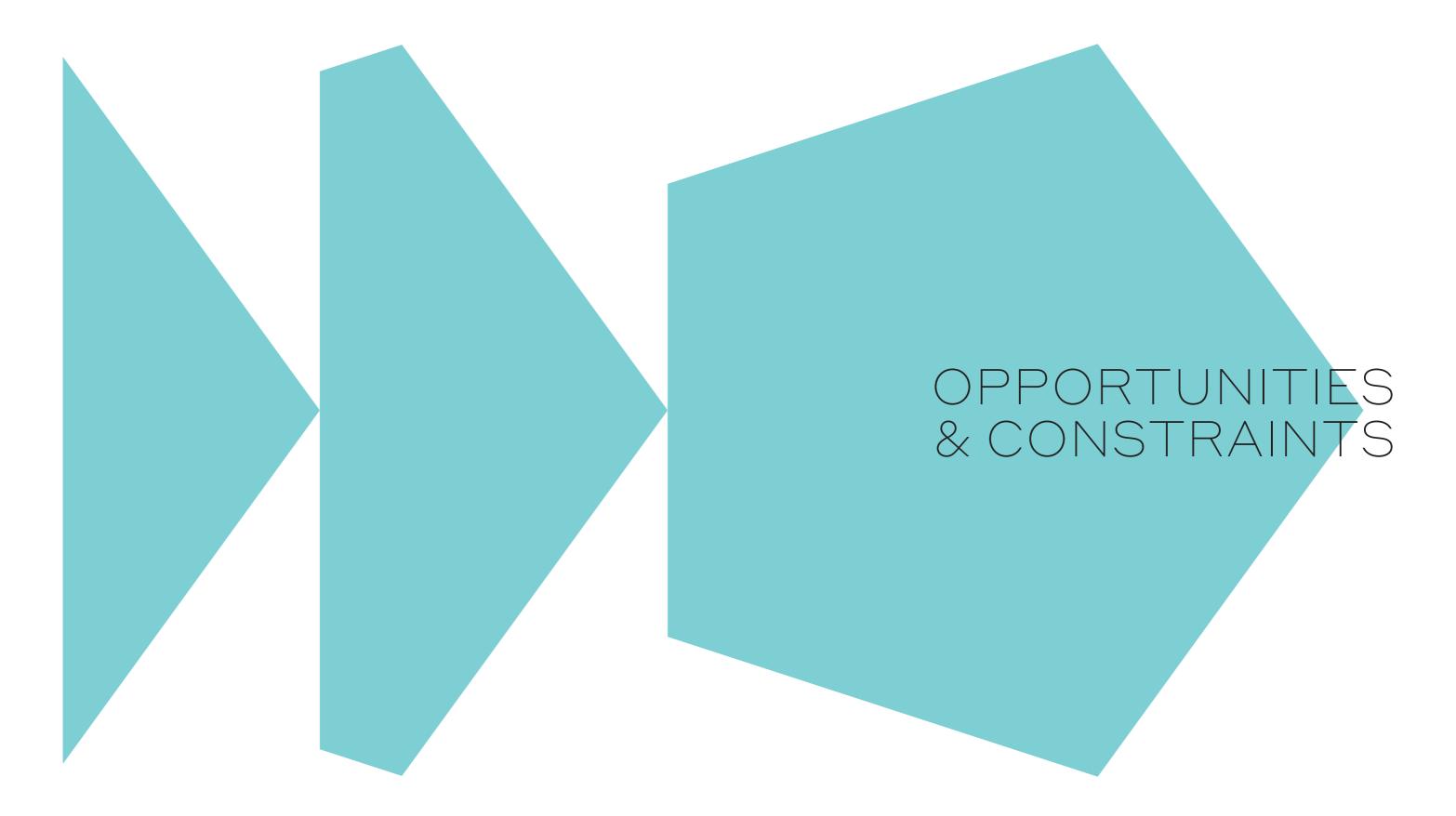


Figure 17. Section BB through Victoria Avenue

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Opportunities

4.0 Opportunities

1. Large consolidated site

At over 21,000sqm, the site is large enough to support an increase in density and a greater range of uses which focus on employment generating uses. This should be supported by publicly accessible open spaces that will ensure a permeable ground plane. In addition, there is the opportunity to improve extensive interfaces along Victoria Avenue (approx. 220m) and along Carrington Road (Approx 100m).

2. Position of the site on the most prominent intersection

The site is located on the corner of Carrington Road and Victoria Avenue which is currently the most prominent intersection within the Showgrounds precinct. The importance of this intersection will continue to grow as the proposed extension of Carrington Road to Norwest Boulevard is implemented. This will provide a much needed road connection to the Norwest precinct which has the potential to unlock the development potential of sites to the west of Victoria Road. TfNSW plans indicate that the intersection of Victoria Avenue and Carrington Road will be upgraded from the existing roundabout to signalised lights and crossings further reinforcing the sites prominence.

3. Area undergoing transition

The Showground precinct is undergoing a once in a generation transformation. The arrival of the North-West Metro, changes in the land use zoning and densities have been made to accommodate more employment and residential floor space, particularly around station centres. As one of the first proposals in the area to seek an increased height and density, there is an opportunity for the site to act as a catalyst for positive change within the precinct and Norwest services sub-precinct which is opportune for transformation and where change is occurring at a slower pace as opposed to the residential areas.

4. Proximity to transport

The Showgrounds Metro Station is part of the North-West Metro network that connects the Hills district to Central Sydney via Chatswood and Macquarie Park. Located less than 800m away, the station and bus interchange are a convenient walk to the site along Carrington Road. The bus interchange provides important local services which link the surrounding suburbs of Kellyville, Castle Hill, Blacktown, Parramatta, Epping and Pennant Hills.

5. Supporting role for Norwest Strategic Centre (Norwest services)

The sites is uniquely located within the Showgrounds precinct at the heart of the Norwest Services area. This central location offers it the opportunity to support a diverse mix of employment uses such as commercial, hotel and specialised retail (bulky goods) to deliver jobs close to homes, while reinforcing Norwest's role as an important strategic centre for commercial growth within the north-west metro corridor. The site has the opportunity to provide a range of convenient retail and food services for workers of the proposed scheme and surrounding precinct.

6. Reinforce green grid gaps

The site is located along Victoria Avenue which is identified in The Hill LSPS as an extension of the Cattai Creek Green Corridor. The identified corridors play an important role in providing walking and cycling connections between residential, recreation and retail areas, assist with stormwater management and help to maintain biodiversity through increased tree planting. The site also has the opportunity to contribute to the 'Garden Shire' image through incorporate quality landscaping along its extensive frontages, provide new squares/plazas and rooftop spaces for informal meetings, recreation and dining which are absent from the precinct currently.

7. New urban typology for the precinct

Whereas many typologies in the Norwest services precinct have persisted to operate monofunctionally i.e singular in use, they lack place making and consideration of the environment. There is the opportunity to progress alternative arrangements of employment and active typologies so they are well stitched into the urban fabric, have a greater consideration of environment with a sense of place and character unique to The Hills Shire. New development has the opportunity to set a new benchmark for the precinct fostering greater interaction between people and to promote healthier, more social and economically viable communities, as well as enhancing the design quality of the built environment.



Carrington Road is a tree lined road which reveals the topographic variation between the Showground station and the site. Source: Ethos Urban.



Victoria Avenue is already a tree lined road which is consistent with the green character of the broader area. Source: Ethos Urban.



The intersection of Victoria Avenue and Carrington Road will in the future become a significant intersection carrying the bulk of public transport bus services and future active transport links.

Source: Ethos Urban.

Opportunities



Showground Precinct Boundary

The Site

Cadastre

Blocks

Open Space

Rivers and Creeks

Metro stops and route

Urban Structure (The Hills DCP 2012)

Key Roads through the Precinct

Future Road Links (The Hills DCP 2012)

Prominent Corner

Figure 18. Opportunities plan

Key Nodes (existing and proposed)

LEGEND

Constraints

4.1 Constraints

1. Poor walkability in the precinct due to existing block configurations

The site shares its eastern boundary with an adjoining development and is part of a larger block which is over 600 metres in length. Given the site's location at the western end of this block, consideration must be given to providing opportunities to facilitate better pedestrian access across these sites. This should include the provision of new east-west pedestrian linkages which are integrated into future development to ensure improved pedestrian walkability and access to sites.

2. The site is flood prone and sits at a topographic low point in the area $\,$

The site has sloping terrain which falls to the centre of the site from both Carrington and Salisbury Road and is located at a topographic low-point in the Showground Precinct due to its location in a valley in close proximity to Cattai Creek. This condition exacerbates the effects of flooding and will require a management solution which addresses the issue of overland flow and drainage path across the site. The site is located on an overland flow path, which significantly increases the risk of flood events, the location of any future through link, such as those indicated running east-west across the site in the current DCP may need to be re-considered given the large vertical level changes that will be required across multiple sites to facilitate them.

3. Retention of key services & infrastructure on site

The stormwater line along with the newly completed metro line which also runs beneath the site will be retained in situ on site. These key pieces of infrastructures will need to be carefully considered in the design of sub-floor areas such as the basement to ensure they remain functioning and are accessible for maintenance after the completion of the building. The retention of these infrastructures will also pose challenges to providing parking on the site which will need to be overcome through careful site planning.

4. Road widening to Carrington Road

The Hills Shire LEP 2012 indicates SP2 land acquisition for proposed road widening along Carrington Road. It is important that the future built form and ground level interface response to Carrington Road be consistent with the desired future character of this street which is of a walkable, shaded green street capable of supporting a landscaped median, active transport cycleway and additional urban greening and includes the retention of existing trees wherever possible.

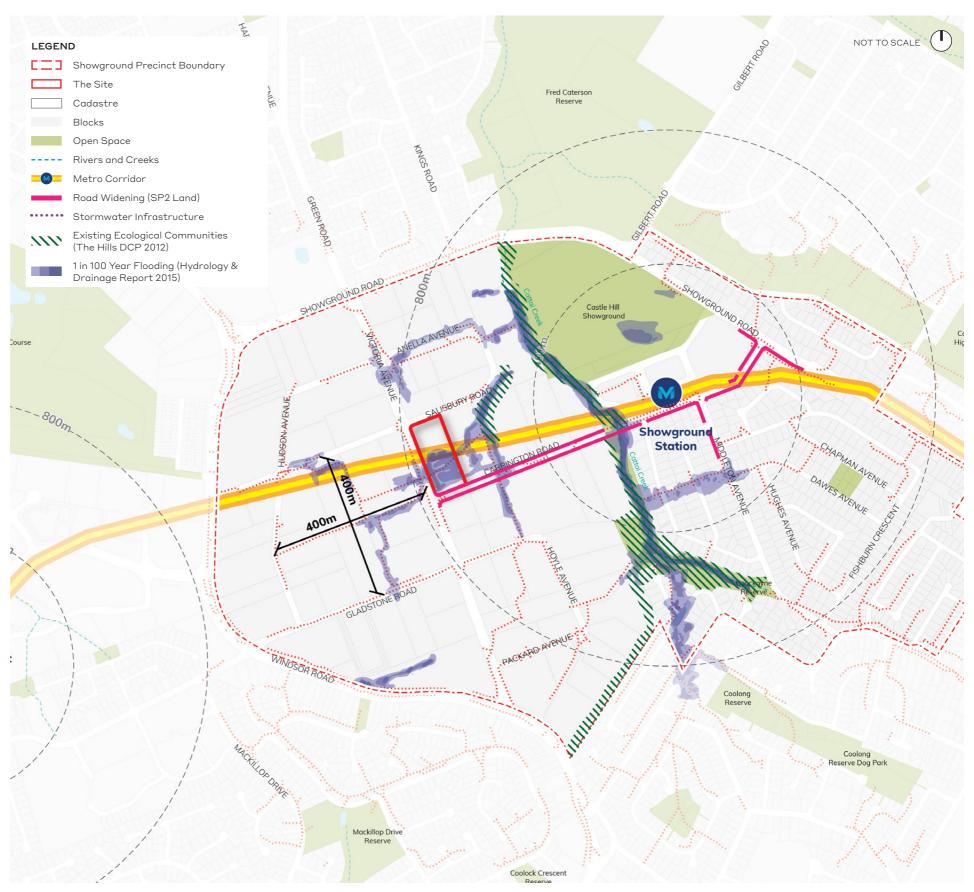


Figure 19. Constraints plan



Our vision is to contribute to the future success of the Norwest Precinct by showcasing a range of employment generating uses which include an innovative mix of hospitality, recreation and retail. These uses will be anchored by new, high quality commercial office buildings supported by a new hotel offering for the precinct that will provide a new and attractive environment to set up and do business in.

By combining the best of what a commercial hub has to offer with a mix of retail, lifestyle and food and beverage offerings, the new development will seek to provide a new experience for workers as well as residents in the area to socialise and unwind.

Careful consideration of the ground plane at street level with active uses accompanied by green landscape interfaces will be adopted to ensure street the activation of key frontages are social places with courtyards and terraces for socialising and relaxing. A high quality public domain in this respect will ensure a high standard for future development in the Showgrounds precinct.

The proposal will support the delivery of new employment uses in conjunction with retail uses which will significantly transform the precinct which are consistent with the broader strategic objectives set out in both the Hills LSPS and the District Plan.

The following case studies form part of our thinking in aspiring to cultivate a better social and urban outcomes for the area:



Case Study 1: Caribbean Park, Melbourne

Caribbean Park is a recently completed master planned business park in southwest Melbourne. it works with the existing topography to create a lush planted urban landscape which links the various industrial, retail and lifestyle facilities housed in large format, high density commercial and mixed use buildings across the 120 hectare park.

Key Learning:

The public realm ensures that the precinct is well connected to the existing street network while providing opportunities for pedestrian links to ensure access to the green spaces within the park.



The landscape design completed by Occulus. Source: Occulus



Case Study 2: The Concourse, Chatswood

The Concourse in Chatswood is an arts and civic facility located in the third largest retail centre in Australia behind Sydney and Melbourne CBD. Located in the heart of the highly urbanised Chatswood centre, it plays an important role in providing a venue for local and regional performing arts groups.

More importantly, the development has given the Chatswood centre an accessible, permeable and connected open public space that offers good solar amenity that is active at all times of the day.

Key Learning:

Publicly accessible open space should always be easily accessible from street level and be supported by good activation where foot traffic is maximised to ensure eyes on and off the street. Should the open space comprise elements of greening, it must have good solar access and provide shading through built form or planting.



Activated ground plane at the concourse. Source: Weekend Notes



Case Study 3: New Acton Precinct, Canberra

New Acton is part of a recently completed mixed-use urban renewal precinct which integrates commercial, residential, hotel, cultural and retail uses at the edge of Canberra's parliamentary triangle. As a place of work, rest and play, the development successful integrates a diverse range of green spaces for socialising and gathering.

Key Learning:

The delivery of communal and publicly accessible open spaces are essential for providing amenity for tenants in high density commercial developments with outdoor places to gather and socialise. The diversity in the types of spaces offered will ensure a place which is inclusive and available for anyone to enjoy.



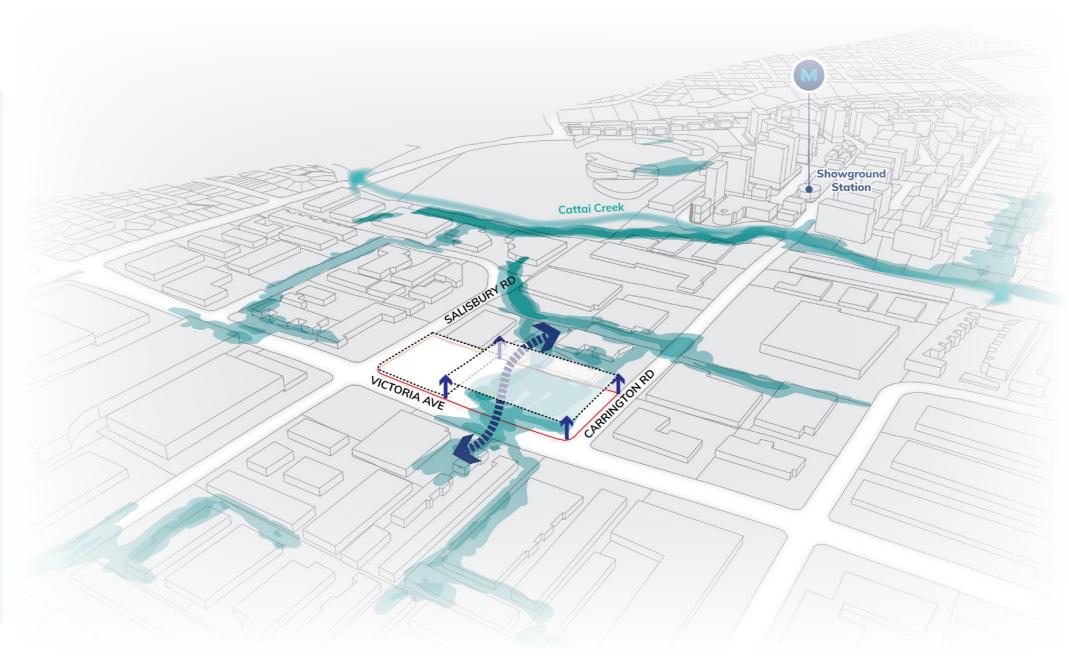
New Acton Precinct, Canberra. Source: Occulus

Principle 01

Establish a safe, habitable ground plane

As the site is subject to level changes, by elevating part of the ground plane over the flood affected areas of the site, water from the overland flow can pass though at lower a level. This strategy is consistent with the approved Development Application for the site.

This split in levels across the site has the primary benefit of ensuring that the habitable levels of the development will be safe from the effects of flooding and remain a resilient and active place for ground floor uses to thrive.









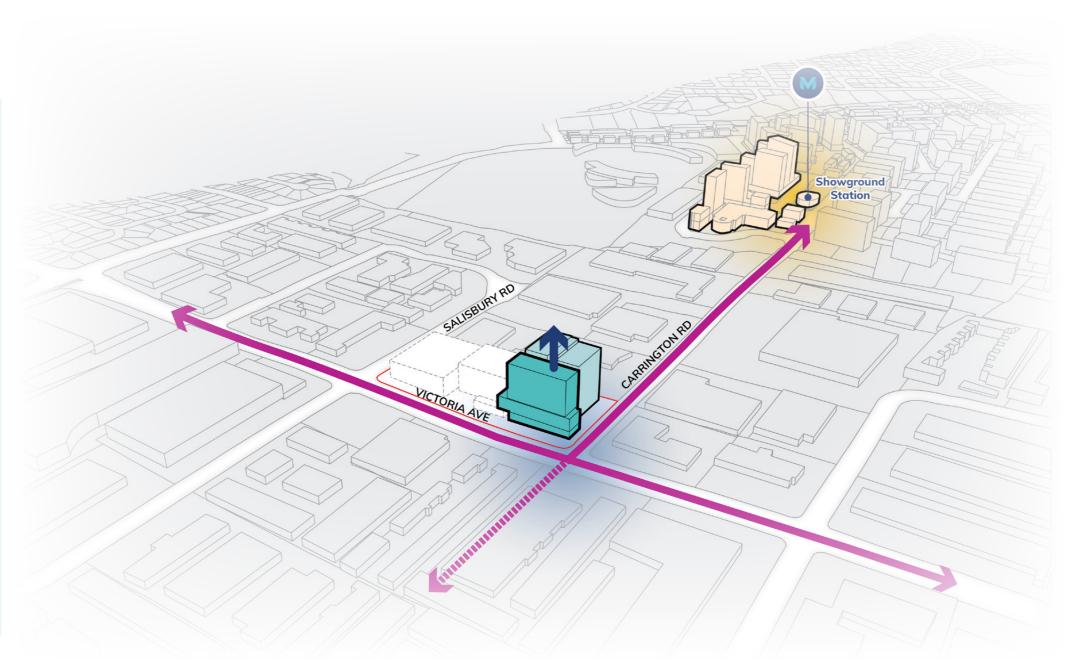
Principle 02

Height & Density on Key Corner

This principle establishes an approach to height and density on the site. Locating the portion of greatest height and density on the corner of Victoria Avenue and Carrington Road will create a marker and form a clear book-end to the western edge of Carrington Road.

It is important that built form of this scale reinforces the corner while positively engaging with Carrington Road and Victoria Avenue, with a focus on providing clearly defined entries for buildings, landscaped edges and spaces which integrate with the streetscape.

Lower scale development on the site should be concentrated away form the intersection along Victoria Avenue to form a transition to the existing built form in the area.







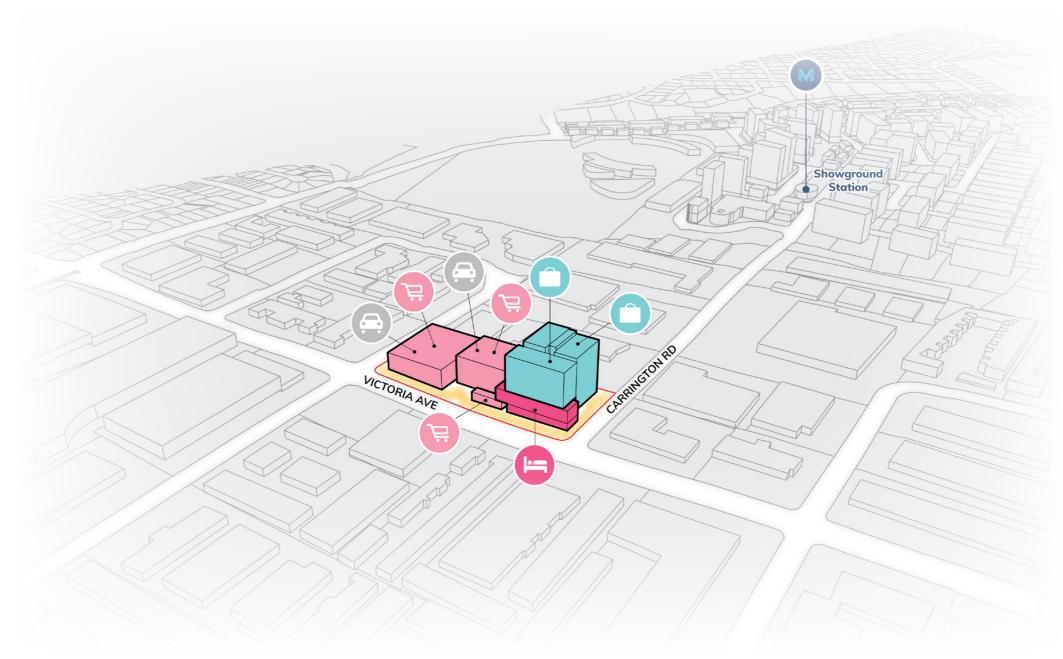
Principle 03

Diversity of Uses & Activation

This principle establishes an approach to a spatial program for the site which responds to the desired land uses in the precinct which specifically envisions a mix of specialised retail and new commercial/office development along Victoria Avenue and Carrington Road.

A new typology for the precinct that celebrates a mix of employment uses such office, hotel, specialised retail as well as thoughtful and complimentary lifestyle uses such as gyms, medical facilities, childcare and food and beverage premises positively contributing to the future character of the Norwest Services precinct.

On-site parking should be provided to support the mix of uses on the site and to provide convenience for workers, visitors and customers. Where activity is focused, parking should be sleeved and screened to minimise light spill and improve the visual amenity of these façades.









Principle 04

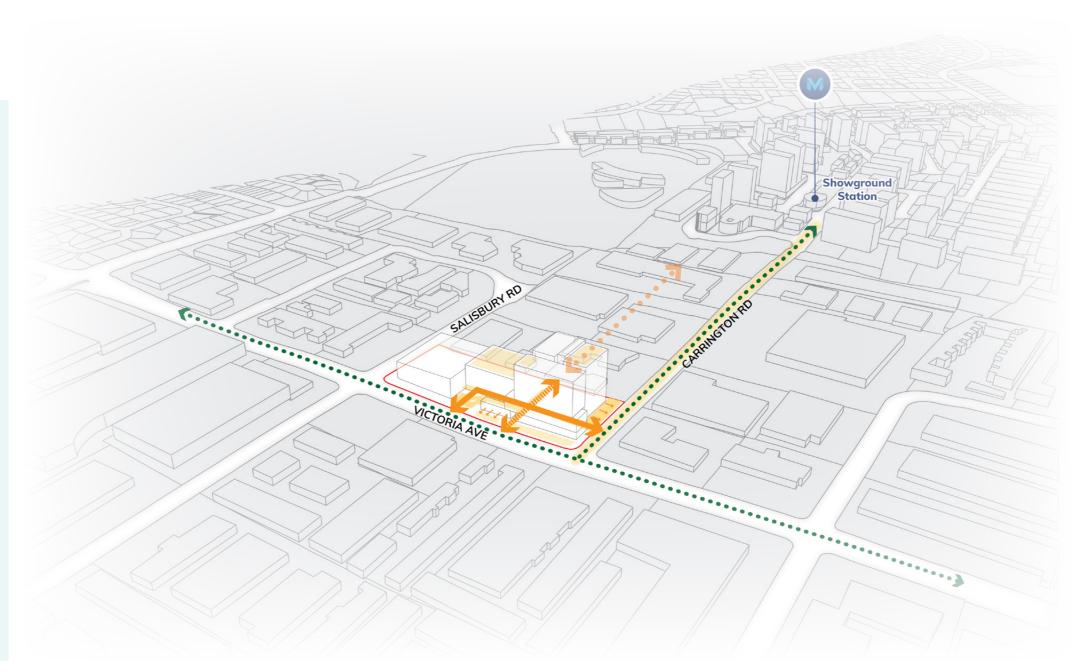
Increased Pedestrian Amenity & Public Domain

This principle puts forward an approach to improve pedestrian amenity and public domain on and around the site.

Fundamental to this principle will be the way people navigate through the site, ensuring there are clear and legible links with opportunities for breakout areas with shade and informal seating that provide a range of places for people to meet and socialise.

Due to the sites long frontage along Victoria Avenue, there should be at least one east west link and a central spine in which other movements can permeate throughout the site.

Public domain in general should be of high quality finishes, welcoming and generous where links converge as well as direct people through the proposal in a way that is clear and legible.









Principle 05

Enhanced Urban Greening

The proposal should seek to retain large existing trees where possible, especially along Carrington Road, Victoria Avenue and Salisbury Road to contribute to the 'Garden Shire' image through enhanced urban greening.

The site's prominent frontage along Victoria Avenue will play an important role in the The Hills green grid strategy to increase greening along this road as an extension of the Cattai Creek Green Corridor.

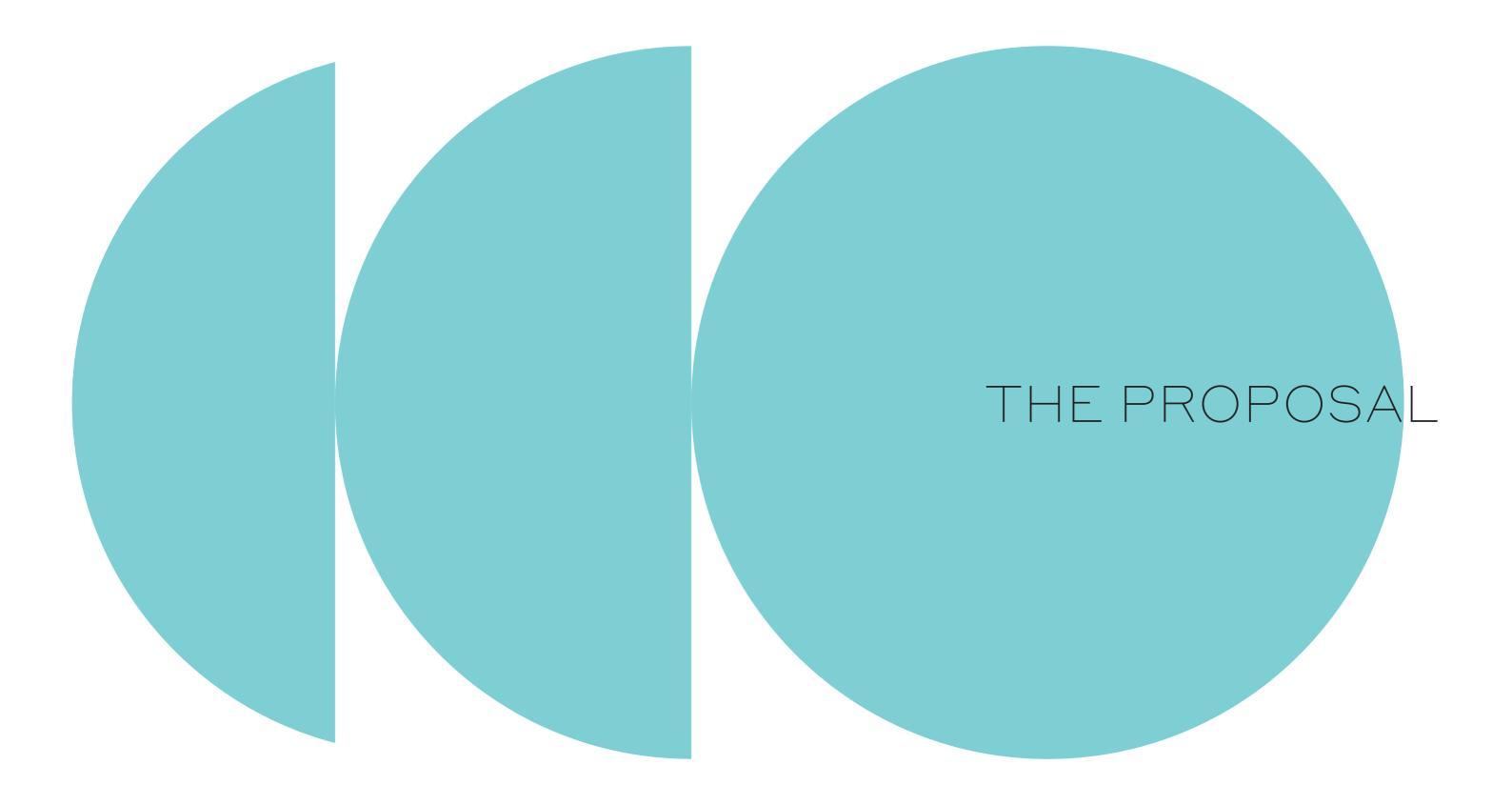
Measures in response to this should include landscaped setbacks at street level, particularly along Victoria Avenue to facilitate deep soil planting, the introduction of native vegetation and green walls to buildings and the greening of rooftops that will assist in reducing urban heat island impacts.













6.1 Benefits of the Proposal

The proposed design concept generates:

56,963m² Floorspace 2.71:1 FSR

Mix of uses	
Commercial	31,260m²
Specialised Retail	8,288m²
Hotel	6,931m²
Shop	5,700m²
Gym, Medical, Childcare	3,677m²
Business Premises	647m²
Food & Beverage Premises	460m²

7,838m²
Ground Levels Public



6.2 Built form response

The proposal imagines a highly integrated mixed-use precinct comprising a collection of individual buildings connected by high quality publicly accessible open spaces each with their own identity.

The proposal includes a range of employment generating uses with two commercial towers and a hotel fronting Carrington Road in close proximity to the new metro station and Castle Hill Showgrounds town centre.

Retail uses front Victoria Avenue reinforcing the established Specialised retail corridor. Active uses are organised along a network of outdoor public laneways and courtyards that deliver a diverse range of spaces for people. Integrated landscaping, terraces and rooftop recreation facilities extend the network of outdoor spaces, reinforcing the landscape setting of the Hills Shire and adding a range of publicly accessible landscaped spaces.

Refer to Bates Smart - Architectural Concept Design



 $\ \ \, \text{View of proposed built form from Carrington Road featuring the new arrival plaza. Source: Bates Smart} \\$

6.3 Building Envelope Setbacks

The proposal is generally in alignment with ground level setbacks as per the Hills DCP. Challenges to the setbacks reflect a new typology for the precinct that steps away from typical industrial warehouse development and aims to better stitch into the surrounding precinct and urban setting.

Carrington Road

- The built form outcome seeks to reinforce the significance of the corner by pushing into the current DCP setback zone of 15 metres and providing a built form response which is modulated allowing an architectural response to further break down the scale of the envelope.
- An increased setback away from the corner is intended to create an opportunity for a forecourt or plaza.

Victoria Avenue

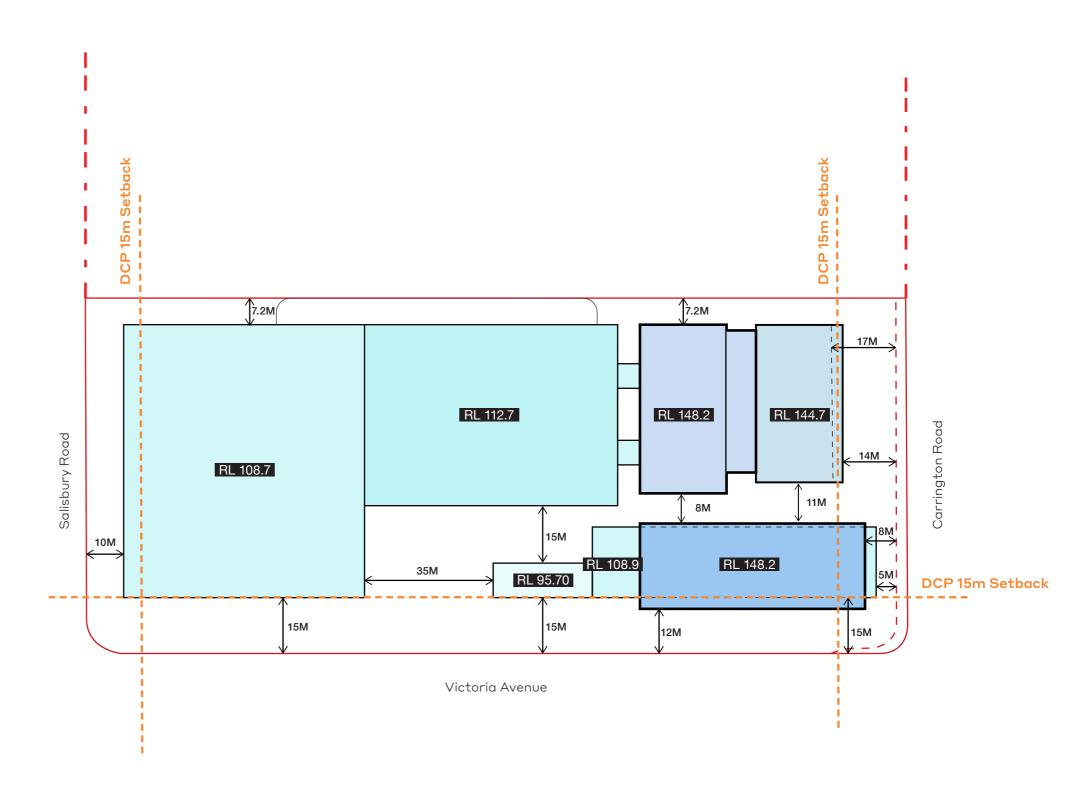
- The Victoria Avenue setback is generally consistent with the 15 metre DCP control with the exception of the tower portion of the envelope, which is 12 metres. The reduced setback at height provides increased emphasis on the corner condition.

Salisbury Road

- The built form retains a 10 metre setback to this boundary. This proposed setback will still enable deep soil and planting along this edge and the retention of an existing pocket of trees.

Eastern Boundary

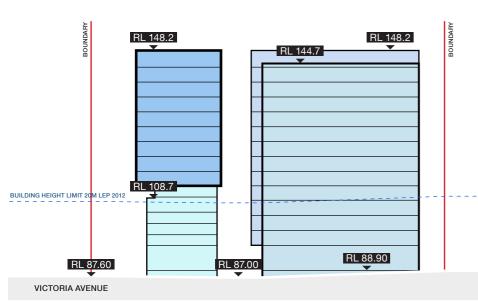
- The eastern boundary setback is set back 7.2 metres from the adjacent property boundary and provides a sufficient separation between buildings.



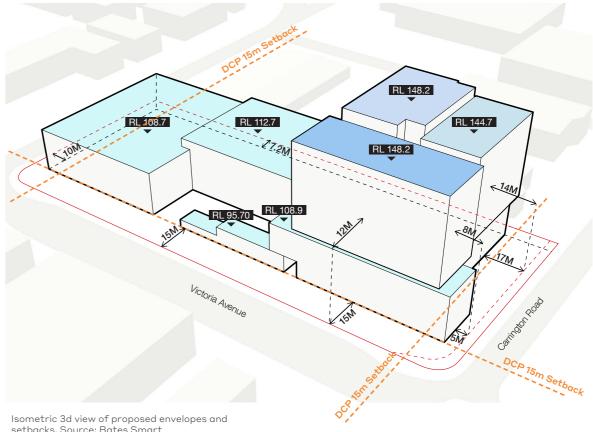
Plan view of proposed building envelopes, setbacks and indicative heights. Source: Bates Smart

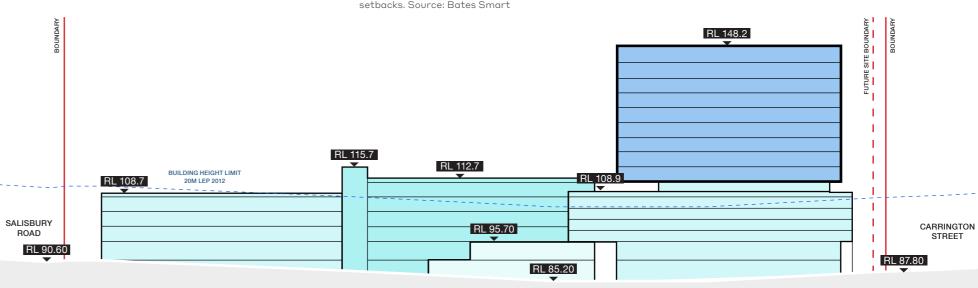
6.4 Building Envelope Heights

The concept design prioritises massing and height towards Carrington Road, with the tallest volume at the corner of Victoria Avenue up to RL148.2m. At the northern end of the site where large format retail is proposed, the existing height limit of 20m is respected.



Carrington Road Elevation. Source: Bates Smart





Victoria Avenue Elevation Source: Bates Smart

The proposed design establishes two connected ground levels, with a lower ground plaza connecting directly to Victoria Avenue and an upper ground plaza connecting to Carrington Road.

6.5 Lower Ground Level

Lower ground level is at grade with the central part of the site, providing level access from Victoria Avenue.

The key features of the lower ground level include:

- Arrival for pedestrian via the lower ground plaza
- Retail activating Victoria Avenue
- Vehicular entry into a lower ground carpark and loading areas for retail and hotel
- End of trip facilities
- Lifts to access all levels of the proposal
- Flood management via a 40m wide zone



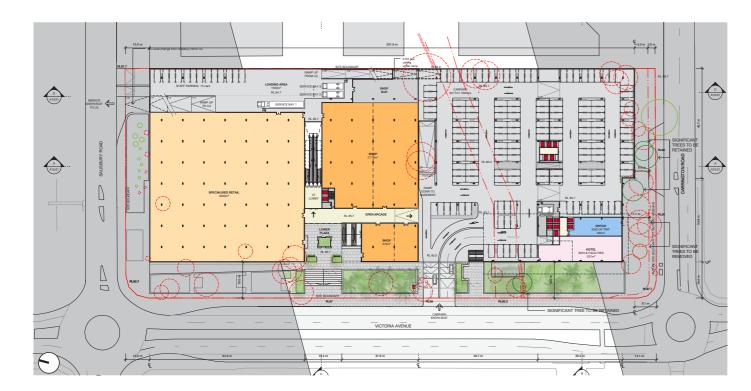
6.6 Upper Ground Level

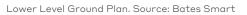
Upper ground level is at grade with Carrington Road and transitions to Victoria Avenue through the lower ground level responding to the site's level change.

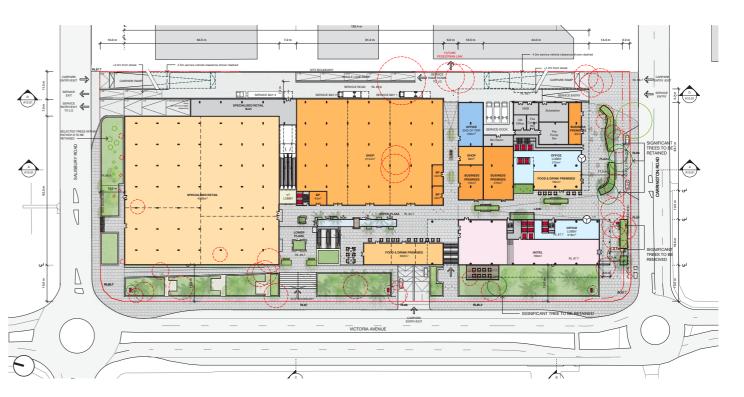
The key features of the upper ground level include:

- Commercial address along Carrington Road
- Activated laneway and central movement spine through the centre of the development
- High amenity plaza with food, shopping and services
- Considered landscape interfaces to surrounding streets
- Terracing down to lower ground level plaza and connecting to Victoria Avenue









Upper Level Ground Plan Source: Bates Smart

6.7 Typical Podium Floors

The podium floors which cover levels 1-4 typically comprise the car parking levels of the proposed development, which are sleeved partially by lifestyle leisure or commercial uses. These uses are integrated into the most highly visible interfaces, particularly along Carrington Road and the public plazas fronting Victoria Avenue.

The hotel use is also located within the podium floors of the building providing it with a good connection to the street and public amenities below.



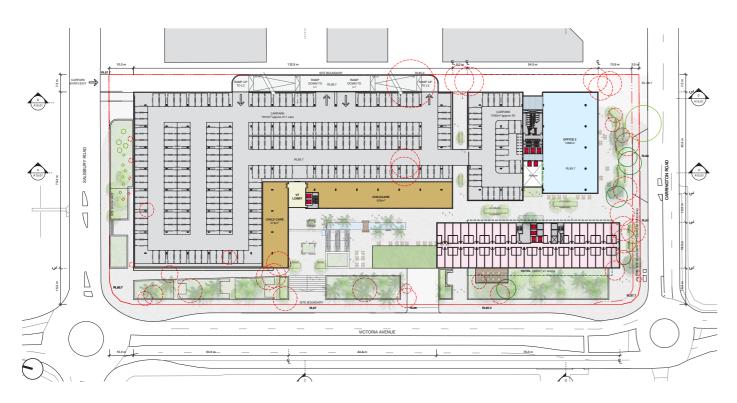
6.8 Typical Upper Level

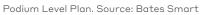
The upper floors comprise commercial tower floor plates to provide flexibility and attract different varied tenant types. The tower located closest to the intersection has a reduced setback to provide greater definition at the the street edge.

The tower located on Carrington Road is set back from the street to provide additional amenity with an urban plaza to clearly define the commercial entry at ground floor.

The roof deck of the car park adjacent provides additional recreation amenity for commercial tenants with open garden and sports facilities to be available for use.







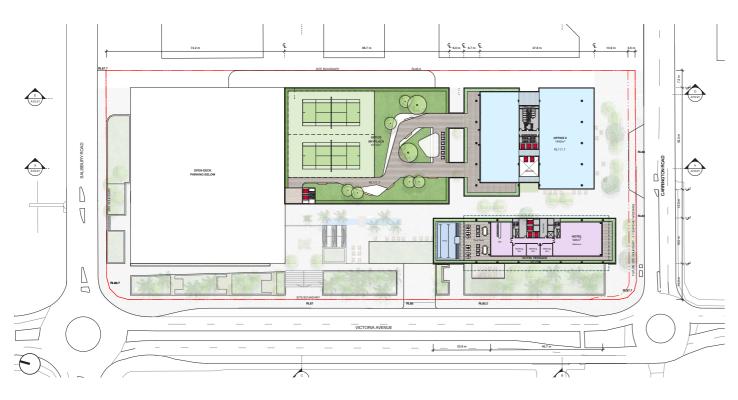


Upper Level Plan Source: Bates Smart

6.9 Sky Plaza

The podium roof provides a range of active and passive landscaped spaces which provide breakout areas for workers with an area of 3,710m². The sky plaza is connected to all levels for a central lift core.

Additional to the sky plaza is a hotel terrace (691m²) and office roof terrace (997m²)



Podium Level Plan. Source: Bates Smart

6.10 Proposed precinct sections

The following precinct sections show the proposal in the context of the Norwest Services and Showground precinct. These sections show the relationship between existing LEP heights and future built form.

The proposal has a maximum height of RL 148.2 which is approx 60m above ground level. This height is 8m lower than LEP heights at the Showground metro station. Aligned with the design principles set out in this report, built form then transitions down to the north from the prominent intersection to generally align with the existing 20m LEP height limit.



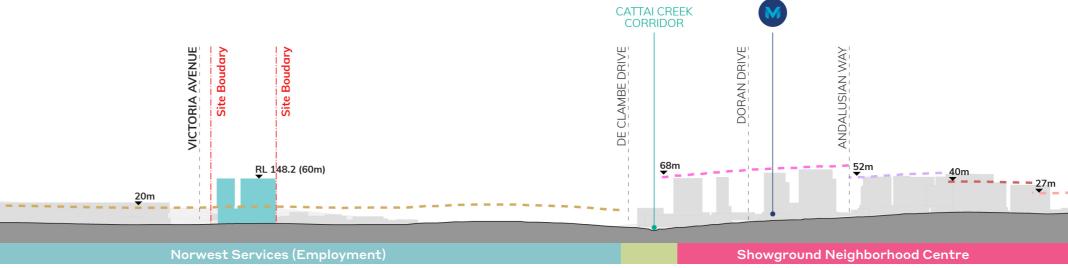


Figure 20.Section AA through Carrington Road

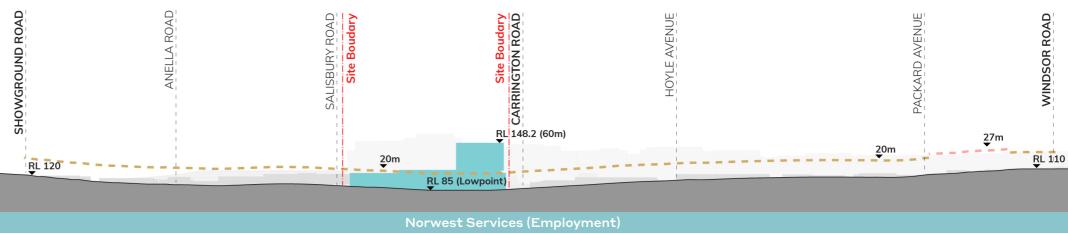


Figure 21.Section BB through Victoria Avenue

Carrington Place, Castle Hill, Urban Design Report

