



PLANNING PROPOSAL TERRIGAL GATEWAY 310 TERRIGAL DRIVE, TERRIGAL NSW

VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Prepared for:
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By:



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TERRIGAL GATEWAY PLANNING PROPOSAL – VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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1 INTRODUCTION

This Visual Impact Assessment has been prepared by OG_Urban, Planning, Landscape and Urban Design on behalf of LoftusLane Capital Partners (the applicant), in support of a Planning Proposal relating to land identified as 310 Terrigal Drive, Terrigal, which is legally described as Lot 27 in DP 1223375 (the site). The Planning Proposal seeks to amend the Central Coast LEP 2022 by increasing the maximum permissible height of buildings to 25m, and the maximum floor space ratio to 1.3:1. The Planning Proposal will enable the site to be redeveloped from a vacant land parcel to a seven-storey residential flat building, with a café activating the corner of Charles Kay Drive and Terrigal Drive at the ground level. The concept drawings prepared by CKDS Architects demonstrate the potential for the site to accommodate 38 residential apartments and 85 car parking spaces across three basement levels. The report specifically addresses the potential impacts of the Planning Proposal on the visual and landscape quality of its locality.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is in a key location on the corner of Terrigal Drive and Charles Kay Drive on Lot 27 in DP 1223375 (No.310) Terrigal Drive, Terrigal (Figure 3-1). It is 462m² in area and is situated approximately 1km west of the Terrigal Town centre.

The site is currently vacant and partially vegetated with remnant bushland in varying condition. Importantly, the site is cleared of vegetation over a roughly triangular area of approximately 2000m² fronting Terrigal Drive and Charles Kay Drive and the remaining bushland includes a significant number of very tall mature indigenous trees. This bushland extends beyond the site into a reserved and protected riverine corridor along the south eastern boundary. This arrangement of cleared land against a backdrop of very tall indigenous trees provides an opportunity to develop a medium height building into a relatively undisturbed bushland setting.



Figure 2-1 – Site Location Plan (Source:Urbis)

3 PROCESS

The process for assessment of the visual impacts of this proposal has involved an assessment of existing and likely future conditions in the locality of the site, along with assessment of the likely visibility of the completed development in its locality and its impacts on local and regional views.

The process incorporates the following tasks:

3.1 ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

- Review the existing planning controls and strategies that apply to the site and its locality, including specific controls that are relevant to visual and landscape quality.
- Carry out a site and area inspection to assess the visual character of the locality with regard to:
 - Existing built form
 - Open space
 - Building to open space relationship
 - View lines towards the development site
 - Permissible development in the vicinity which could impact on local visual quality.
- Identify the potential visibility of the developed site via review of aerial photography and the site / area inspection.

3.2 ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSAL ON LOCAL VIEWS

- Identification of critical viewpoints toward the development site.
- Preparation of locationally accurate computer generated photomontages from each of the agreed critical viewpoints.
- Assessment of the potential visual impacts of the proposal with respect to:
 - Viewpoint sensitivity - the capacity of the visual environment to absorb change (as viewed from the agreed critical viewing points)
 - Change magnitude - the amount of change that would be experienced as a result of the implementation of the proposal (carried out with the aid of survey accurate photomontages prepared from agreed critical viewing points)
 - The visual quality of the changed visual environment in comparison with the environment prior to development.
- Identification of mitigation measures, if necessary, to address any unacceptable impacts on views that may result from implementation of the Concept Proposal in its current form.

3.3 VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The visual impact of the proposal has been assessed from each identified viewpoint as a composite of the sensitivity of the viewing location to change (visual sensitivity assessment) and the assessed magnitude of the change (Change magnitude assessment). This information has been presented as commentary for each viewpoint and as an overall assessment of the impact of the Proposal on local and regional landscape and visual character.

4 LOCAL VISUAL AND LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

The site is located within an area that is characterised by a mix of low and medium density housing, recreational land, educational and community facilities and bushland.

In its current form, the area in the vicinity of the subject site displays a range of visual character types based on landscape, landuse and topography. Figure 4-1 is an analysis of the visual character of the locality in current conditions. It is followed by photographic and written descriptions of each of the identified visual character types.



Figure 4-1 Local visual / landscape character (existing conditions)

Brief descriptions and typical photographs to represent the current visual character of each of the identified character types in the locality of the subject site follow.

Low density residential housing



(reference: Google Earth)

Single dwelling housing in bushland settings

Medium density and retirement living based housing



Medium density residential development in a largely indigenous landscape setting



Educational facilities



(reference: Google Earth)

Local schools also in a landscape dominated setting.

Creek corridors / semi natural – natural bushland



Tracts of natural bushland follow the South Creek and Badgerys Creek corridors to the east and west of the subject site. There are also scattered parcels of remnant bushland remaining in various locations across the local landscape.

Open space / recreational / community facilities

5 VISIBILITY OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

An indication of the likely visibility of a building as proposed in the Planning Proposal in its locality has been gained by a review of aerial photography and a visit to the area.

Broadly speaking the topography of the area is comprised of undulating hills, broad valleys and flood plains. In this context, Terrigal Drive follows one of these valleys from west to east till it reaches the Terrigal Town Centre and Terrigal Beach. The site of the Planning Proposal is located on relatively flat land where the valley opens to a plain before falling away gradually to the Terrigal Lagoon and then to the Town Centre. Higher land occurs to the north and south of the site.

The consequences of the local topography for visibility of the developed site are that the building is only likely to be substantially visible in views from Terrigal Drive and adjoining land to the west and, less so, to the east and from Charles Kay Drive and its surrounds to the south. There is potential that the development may be visible from the hill lands to the north and southwest but from those locations the building would constitute a very small component of broad and expansive views across the valley to the coast. A visit to these areas has confirmed that views in the direction of the site are generally screened by topography or by existing vegetation.

So essentially, the visual impacts of the proposal are likely to be limited to views from Terrigal Drive and Charles Kay Drive and the immediate surrounds of each of these roads.

6 VIEW ANALYSIS

Critical viewpoints within the likely view catchment of the site have been selected as representative locations that would:

- Be likely to be subject to changes in views as a result of the development; and
- Be sensitive to these changes to views as a result of the expectations of viewers.

Selected viewpoints are indicated on Figures 6-1. Photomontages have been prepared from these viewpoints to illustrate the changes to these views that would result from implementation of the proposed development. These are included in Section 7 of the report.



Subject site

- VP1 Corner Terrigal Drive and Charles Kay Drive
- VP3 Corner Terrigal Drive and Mittara Road
- VP5 Charles Kay Drive, west of proposed building

- VP2 Corner Terrigal Drive and Raymond Terrace
- VP4 Terrigal Drive near pedestrian bridge
- VP6 Charles Kay Drive, southern end of site

Figure 6-1 Selected viewpoints

7 VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Consistent with current best practice in visual impact assessment (VIA), this assessment of the likely impacts of the Planning Proposal on local visual quality has been carried out via a process of qualitatively assessing:

- Viewpoint sensitivity – the level of value that viewers would be likely to attribute to the quality of views from a given location.
- Change magnitude – the amount of change to views from given locations that would likely result from implementation of the proposed development.
- Composite impact level – a value judgement based on the assessed sensitivity of the viewpoint and the amount of change that would be likely to occur to the specific view or views from similar locations.

Impacts on each view have been graded as Low, Moderate or High, or gradations between each.

This approach is consistent with the process adopted by NSW Roads and Maritime Services in *Guideline for landscape character and visual impact assessment – Environmental impact assessment practice note EIA-NO4* (December 2018). The process is currently accepted as appropriate for visual impact assessment in New South Wales.

Following is an assessment against these criteria for each adopted viewpoint. To assist in the assessment, photomontages have been prepared by visualisation specialists, Cornerstone. These have been prepared over base photographs of existing views taken in the direction of the site from the critical viewpoints. The approximate location of the viewpoints is indicated in Figure 6-1.

The results of this assessment follow.

7.1 VIEWPOINT 1 – CORNER TERRIGAL DRIVE AND CHARLES KAY DRIVE

Assessment summary

Viewpoint	Visual sensitivity	Change magnitude	Composite impacts assessment
Close views			
Viewpoint 1	Moderate - high	High	Moderate - high

Viewpoint location

Viewpoint 1 is a direct view towards the site that would be experienced by motorists turning right from Terrigal Drive onto Charles Kay Drive. The viewpoint represents a typical close view of the development when approaching from the west on Terrigal Drive. This close and direct view towards the site is likely to have the greatest potential for visual impacts.

Viewpoint sensitivity: Moderate - high

Terrigal Drive is a Regional Road and is a key east – west connection between the Terrigal town centre and the M1 Motorway. The corner location at the intersection of Terrigal Drive and Charles Kay Drive is a significant viewpoint with potential to function as a visual gateway to Terrigal. The current visual environment, comprising largely bushland with the urban foreground of road infrastructure, would be sensitive to change and users of the road would be expected to be sensitive to the visual quality of the locality. However, the view towards the site from this viewpoint also illustrates the potential of the site

to absorb a relatively large building while retaining a backdrop of tall indigenous trees. It also needs to be acknowledged that the cleared foreground of the site appears under utilised and somewhat unkempt in this critical view. In this regard, there is likely to be an expectation amongst viewers that the site is in need of improvement as an element in the landscape. Taking all of this into account, the sensitivity of the viewpoint to change is considered to be moderate to high.



Figure 7-1 Viewpoint 1



Figure 7-2 Viewpoint 1 – photomontage (Cornerstone)

Change magnitude: High

The photomontage at Figure 11-2 indicates that the proposed development will present as a significant new built element on this corner site. The impact of the proposed building on this view is, however, mitigated by the design quality of the new building and its finishes, the softening effect of the extensive use of plant material both on the ground plane and on the building façade and the retained visibility of existing forest scale trees on and adjacent to the site. These form a partial backdrop to the built form in this view.

A development of high architectural and landscape quality as is proposed has the potential to improve the visual and urban quality of this important site and function as a gateway development to Terrigal.

Composite impact level: Moderate - high

7.2 VIEWPOINT 2 – TERRIGAL DRIVE, WEST OF THE SITE, NEAR CORNER OF RAYMOND TERRACE.

Assessment summary

Viewpoint	Visual sensitivity	Change magnitude	Composite impacts assessment
Close views			
Viewpoint 2	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate

Viewpoint location

Viewpoint 2 is a similar location to viewpoint 1 but further west on Terrigal Drive. Drivers in this location would be heading west and would have a more easterly view than viewers at Viewpoint 1. Accordingly, the viewpoint provides a broader contextual view towards the site which includes existing built form along the road and the extensive bushland backdrop in the middle distance. Views to the site from Viewpoint 2 are over a distance of approximately 200m.

Viewpoint sensitivity: Moderate.

Similar to Viewpoint 1, users of this part of Terrigal Drive will have an expectation that the natural tree canopy would remain as a significant component of the view. The visual environment would be moderately sensitive to change.



Figure 7-3 Viewpoint 2 – base photo



Figure 7-4 Viewpoint 2 – photomontage (Cornerstone)

Change magnitude: Moderate

Comparison between the base photo and photomontage from Viewpoint 2 illustrates that the proposed building complex will be a significant new built element in views from Terrigal Drive heading east. The building will, however, appear in the broader context of forest scale indigenous trees on and adjacent to the site and further to the east. Notably, the building reads as lower in the view than the existing trees directly to its south. Existing trees will also remain visible as skyline elements behind the building and the built form will be softened by proposed plantings at ground level and on the façade. With these mitigating factors in place, the magnitude of change to views from this locality is considered to be moderate.

Composite impact level: Moderate

7.3 VIEWPOINT 3 – TERRIGAL DRIVE, WEST OF THE SITE, NEAR CORNER OF MITTARA ROAD

Assessment summary

Viewpoint	Visual sensitivity	Change magnitude	Composite impacts assessment
Close views			
Viewpoint 3	Moderate	Low - moderate	Low - moderate

Viewpoint location

Viewpoint 3 is at the corner of Terrigal Drive and Mittara Road, approximately 170m west of the site. The viewpoint provides a broader contextual view towards the site than viewpoint 2 broader views of bushland to the south. which includes existing built form along the road and the extensive bushland backdrop in the middle distance.

Viewpoint sensitivity: Moderate.

Similar to Viewpoints 1 & 2, there would be an expectation that the natural tree canopy would remain as a significant component of the view. The visual environment would be moderately sensitive to change.



Figure 7-5 Viewpoint 3 – base photo



Figure 7-6 Viewpoint 3 – photomontage (Cornerstone)

Change magnitude: Low - moderate

The photomontage illustrates that the proposed building complex will be a new built element in these more distant views from Terrigal Drive heading east but, importantly, the building would be a recessive element in the view, appearing completely below the existing treeline. The tree canopy will remain a dominant component in these views. The magnitude of change to views from this locality is considered to be low - moderate.

Composite impact level: Low - Moderate

7.4 VIEWPOINT 4 – TERRIGAL DRIVE, AT CREEK OVERBRIDGE (NEAR CORNER WITH BRUNSWICK ROAD)

Assessment summary

Viewpoint	Visual sensitivity	Change magnitude	Composite impacts assessment
Close views			
Viewpoint 4	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate

Viewpoint location

The 4th selected viewpoint for the VIA is on Terrigal Drive, at a road bridge over the creek that borders the eastern side of the site. Views towards the proposed building on the site are over a distance of approximately 70m.

Viewpoint sensitivity: Moderate.

Travellers heading west on Terrigal Drive would move through a mosaic of landscapes that would include low and medium density housing and the bushland adjoining the Terrigal Lagoon. Expectations would be that the naturalistic elements of the environment would generally remain as a significant component of its visual character. The visual environment at and within the vicinity of Viewpoint 4 is considered to have a moderate visual sensitivity.



Figure 7-7 Viewpoint 4 – base photo



Figure 7-8 Viewpoint 4 – photomontage (Cornerstone)

Change magnitude: Moderate

The photomontage at Figure 7-8 illustrates that from viewpoint 4, the built form associated with this proposal will be largely screened by existing vegetation along the creekline that adjoins the eastern boundary of the site. The building will appear lower than these trees and, as importantly, existing native vegetation to the west would comprise much of the backdrop to the built form and would remain as a natural horizon for most of the view.

On this basis, it is considered that the change magnitude of the proposal in views from this part of Terrigal Drive is low to moderate.

Composite impact level: Moderate

7.5 VIEWPOINT 5 – CHARLES KAY DRIVE, AT SOUTHERN EDGE OF THE PROPOSED BUILDING

Assessment summary

Viewpoint	Visual sensitivity	Change magnitude	Composite impacts assessment
Medium distant views			
Viewpoint 5	Low - moderate	High	Moderate - high

Viewpoint location

Viewpoint 5 represents close view (around 30-50m) towards the north from Charles Kay Drive.

Viewpoint sensitivity: Low - moderate

In close views from Charles Kay Drive, the site presents as a somewhat degraded piece of land. The tall remnant indigenous trees in the foreground are the most valuable elements of these views. The visual sensitivity of these views is considered to be low to moderate.



Figure 7-9 Viewpoint 5 – base photo



Figure 7-10 Viewpoint 5 – photomontage (Cornerstone)

Change magnitude: High

The building will be a major new built element in these views. The proposal includes retention of several existing forest scale trees on the eastern site boundary and these will serve to soften the view of the

building façade. Additional landscape treatment on the façade and ground plane will further soften the impact of the building in these views. A development of high quality architectural and landscape design would have an acceptable impact on these views.

Composite impact level: Moderate - high

7.6 VIEWPOINT 6 – CHARLES KAY DRIVE, AT SOUTHERN EDGE OF THE SITE

Assessment summary

Viewpoint	Visual sensitivity	Change magnitude	Composite impacts assessment
Medium distant views			
Viewpoint 6	Low - moderate	Moderate	Moderate

Viewpoint location

Viewpoint 5 represents view towards the north from Charles Kay Drive. These views include the site on the right hand (eastern) periphery at distances of between 50 and 100m.

Viewpoint sensitivity: Low - moderate

Views looking north from Charles Kay Drive are of moderate visual quality. Aside from the broad carriageway of Charles Kay Drive, they include playing fields and medium density residential development against a naturalistic backdrop of tall indigenous trees. Expectations regarding changes to these views are likely to be tempered by this mixed visual character and consequently the visual sensitivity of the locality is considered to be low to moderate.



Figure 7-11 Viewpoint 6 – Charles Kay Drive, at southern edge of site



Figure 7-12 Viewpoint 6 – photomontage (Cornerstone)

Change magnitude: Moderate - High

The developed site will constitute a significant new built element in close views from Charles Kay Drive. As with closer views from the south, the proposed building will, however, be partially screened by existing tall trees on the western boundary of the site that are to be retained and preserved. Additional landscape treatment on the façade and ground plane will further soften the impact of the building in these views. Contingent on retention of the boundary trees, implementation of the landscape scheme and high quality architecture, the development would have an acceptable impact on these views.

Composite impact level: Moderate**7.7 DISTANT AND GENERALLY UNAVAILABLE VIEWS**

Area inspections have indicated that the subject site is largely screened from view from medium distant locations to its east and south and from distant locations in all directions. Aside from the viewpoint locations described above, it is unlikely that the proposed development would be substantially visible from other locations in the vicinity. Its visual impacts on these views are considered to be negligible.

7.8 SUMMARY OF VISUAL IMPACTS

The table below summarises the assessment of impacts of the proposal on the selected viewpoints.

Viewpoint	Visual sensitivity	Change magnitude	Composite impacts assessment
Close - medium distant views			
Viewpoint 1	Moderate - high	High	Moderate - high
Viewpoint 2	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Viewpoint 3	Moderate	Low - moderate	Low - moderate
Viewpoint 4	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Viewpoint 5	Low - moderate	High	Moderate - high
Viewpoint 6	Low - moderate	Moderate - High	Moderate
Long distant views			
General viewing locations	Moderate	Low	Low

8 CONCLUSION

This study of the likely visual impacts of a Planning Proposal to facilitate construction of a high density mixed use development on a site at the corner of Terrigal Drive and Charles Ash Drive at Terrigal has been carried out following the process described in *Guideline for landscape character and visual impact assessment – Environmental impact assessment practice note EIA-NO4* (December 2018).

The conclusions of the visual impact assessment are:

- The site of the proposal is suitable for a high density development of medium height for the following reasons:
 - It is a significant site at the corner of two regional roads with the potential to function as a gateway site that marks the entry to the Terrigal township;
 - It is heavily vegetated with remnant native bushland but partially cleared at the corner, thus providing an opportunity for development of a tall building that would be substantially screened and / or set against a backdrop of existing tall indigenous trees.
- The proposed high density mixed use building would be variably visible in its locality.
 - In close views from the west and north the building will present as a significant new built form that would be softened in its appearance by existing forest scale trees on and adjacent to the site. With the development of the proposed landscape treatment, including a mix of native and exotic plants at the ground plane and on the building façade, the setting of the building will be further softened. It's impact on these close views is considered to be moderate to high but acceptable if the quality of the architecture and landscape is maintained at the high level envisaged by the proposal.
 - In medium distant views from the west, the new development will present in the context of existing native trees and other vegetation in the broader available view. Its impact on these views is considered to be moderate and acceptable.
 - In medium distant views from the east, the building will be largely screened by existing vegetation and / or built form. The composite impact of the proposal on these views is considered to be low.
 - In longer distant views the proposal is likely to be either entirely screened by topography and / or vegetation or partially visible as a small element in the broad and expansive views available. Its impact on visual quality from these locations is considered to be low.
- With the proviso that the development that would be facilitated by this Planning Proposal is of high architectural and landscape quality, it is considered that it would have an acceptable impact on the local visual environment and would be a positive element within its urban context.