# STATEMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

# FORMER EMPIRE HOTEL SITE

# 643-651 Hunter Street Newcastle, NSW



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#### 1. INTRODUCTION

EJE Heritage has been requested to provide a Heritage Assessment and subsequent Heritage Impact Statement for the proposed development of the former Empire Hotel site, 643-651 Hunter Street, Newcastle NSW, which involves construction of a new mixed-use development on the existing vacant site.

The initial section of the report places the site within an historical context, and examines the physical condition and context of the current site. With the history and physical condition and context of the building understood, a heritage assessment of the site can be completed using the NSW Heritage Branch guidelines encompassing the Australia ICOMOS *Burra Charter 2013* heritage values: historical significance; aesthetic significance; scientific significance; and social significance.

The Statement of Heritage Impact that follows examines the proposed works, identifying any impacts which the proposal might have on the significance of the heritage items, and any measures which should be taken to mitigate any negative impacts, if these are in fact identified.

The Historical Context section of this report has been sourced from a previous Statement of Heritage Impact for the site, prepared by EJE Architecture in 2008. The Historical Context at this time was undertaken by Anne Dunne of *Hunter History Consultants*, these authors are gratefully acknowledged.

This Statement of Heritage Impact was prepared by EJE Heritage. The project team consisted of:

- □ Barney Collins (Director), Conservation Architect.
- □ Dominic Warland Graduate of Architecture.

Unless otherwise acknowledged, photographic images are by EJE Heritage.

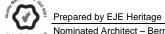
#### 1.1 METHODOLOGY

This report has been undertaken in accordance with the NSW Heritage Office publications, Assessing Heritage Significance and Statements of Heritage Impact, together with the Australia ICOMOS, The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance 2013.1

#### 1.2 CONSTRAINTS AND LIMITATIONS

EJE is not qualified to offer structural opinions. This report is not intended to convey any opinion as to the structural adequacy or integrity of the structure, nor should it in any way be construed as so doing. Similarly, the author's observations are limited to the fabric only: he does not comment on the capacity, adequacy, or statutory compliance of any building services.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Burwood: Australia ICOMOS, 2013.



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#### 1.3 HERITAGE LISTINGS

The site is not listed as a Heritage Item in the Newcastle Local Environmental Plan 2012, Schedule 5 Part 1. The subject site is within the C4 Newcastle City Centre Heritage Conservation Area.



Figure 1. NCC LEP2012 Heritage Map 004G. The site is highlighted in blue.

The subject site is in proximity to further Heritage Items of Local significance, as hereunder:

Suburb Newcastle West	Item Newcastle Technical College	Address 590-608 Hunter Street	<b>Description</b> Lots 1 and 2, DP 852552	Significance Local	<b>Item No.</b> 1496
Suburb Newcastle West	<b>Item</b> Hunter Water Board Building	Address 599 Hunter Street	<b>Description</b> Lot 1, DP 595677	<b>Significance</b> Local	<b>Item No.</b> 1497
Suburb Newcastle West	<b>Item</b> Theatre Royale	Address 669 Hunter Street	<b>Description</b> Lot 111, DP 75158	Significance State Nominated	<b>Item No.</b> 1498
Suburb Newcastle West	<b>Item</b> Bellevue Hotel	Address 738 Hunter Street	Description Lot 101, DP 1096718	<b>Significance</b> Local	<b>Item No.</b> 1499
Suburb Newcastle West	Item Former Miss Porters Residence	Address 434 King Street	<b>Description</b> Lot 441, DP 998073	<b>Significance</b> State	<b>Item No.</b> 1506
Suburb Newcastle West	<b>Item</b> Former Gasworks Office	Address 461 King Street	<b>Description</b> Lot 1, DP 797175	<b>Significance</b> Local	<b>Item No.</b> 1507
Suburb Newcastle West	Item Palais Royale (Government Farm archaeological site)	Address 684 Hunter Street	<b>Description</b> Lot 11, DP 872463	Significance Local	Item No. A8

#### 1.4 SITE IDENTIFICATION

The site is identified as 641-653 Hunter Street; it is located within the City of Newcastle LGA. The real property description is: Lot 1 DP1166015. The site is zoned B3 Commercial Core.

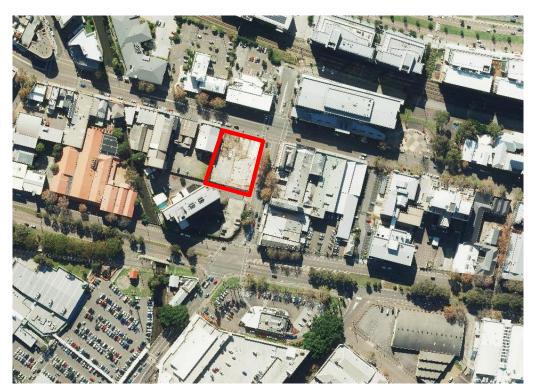


Figure 2. Aerial photograph, the site is outlined in red. Six Maps



Figure 3. The Empire Hotel Site, outlined in red, as seen from the Spire Apartment developments at Marketown, currently under construction.

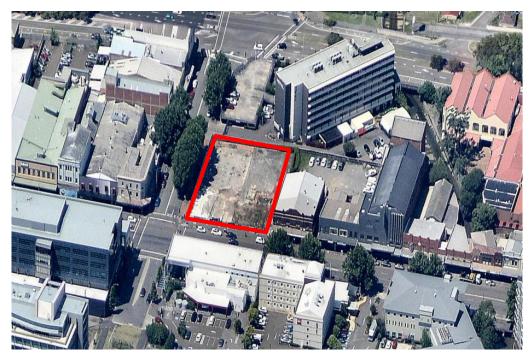


Figure 4. Aerial Perspective of the site, facing south. The site is outlined in red. NearMap (by license)



Figure 5. NCC LEP Land Zoning Map 004G. The site is outlined in red.

#### 2. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The following history of the subject property was undertaken by Anne Dunne for *Hunter History Consultants*, the text here is sourced from the 2008 SOHI prepared for the site by EJE Architecture. The authors of these reports are gratefully acknowledged.

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The site under study is located on land that was originally Lot 107 and Lot 108 Section A of the Australian Agricultural Company's Newcastle Estate in the west end of Hunter Street (formerly Blane Street²). Situated between two areas historically known as Honeysuckle Point and Cottage Creek, early development on Lots 107A and 108A contributed to the commercial and social character of these precincts.

The site in its existing condition is empty, with all former buildings having been demolished around 2011 following dereliction and abandonment. The Empire Hotel, previously standing at 649/651 Hunter Street (formerly Lot 6 DP 631425) was originally built c.1855 and is historically the most significant of the buildings to have been situated on the study site. A two storey brick building with shopfront formerly at 645/647 Hunter Street (Lot 7 DP 631425) was erected c.1920 whilst the premises formerly located at 643 Hunter Street (Lot 1, DP73668) appeared to be a merger of two buildings; namely, a two storey brick building constructed on the corner of Hunter and Steel Streets c.1920 and retail showrooms fronting Steel Street that were erected in the mid 1930s.

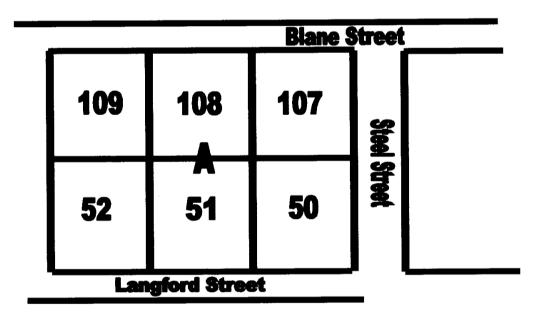


Figure 6. Sketch showing Lots 107 & 108 Section A of Australian Agricultural Company's Newcastle Estate.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Both street names have been used throughout this study in keeping with historical context.



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#### 2.2 PRE-COLONIAL INHABITATION

Prior to European exploration and settlement, *Muloobinba* (Newcastle) and the *Coquon* (Hunter River) region hosted the traditional nations of the Awabakal and Worimi Aboriginal people. The river estuary at this time was considerably wider than the present day harbour, consisting of shifting sands and moving channels, with the area of today's Foreshore reserve then a large shallow lagoon.<sup>3</sup> Coastal Banksia, otherwise known as *Honeysuckle*, flourished along the banks of the river, an area rich in food sources for the traditional occupants. Sea food such as fish, oysters and pippies would have been a prominent source of bush tucker, with evidence of shell middens, a campsite, and ceremonial ground discovered at *Meekarlba* (today's Honeysuckle Precinct).

While not always confrontational in nature, European colonial occupation in the 19th century drastically affected the Aboriginal people; times of conflict, dispossession of hunting grounds, and the introduction of diseases such as small pox drastically reduced Aboriginal populations in the area. The first European census of aboriginal people in the area of Newcastle occurred in 1827, and counted only 140 individuals in receipt of government provisions.<sup>4</sup>

The area of the subject site was in pre-colonial times on the edges of a swampy estuary, where a steady creek running from the south met the harbours edge; a prime site for food collection. Evidence of Aboriginal inhabitation of the area is well documented, with a significant archaeological deposit of aboriginal artefacts uncovered adjacent to the current site at 700 Hunter Street in 2011.<sup>5</sup>

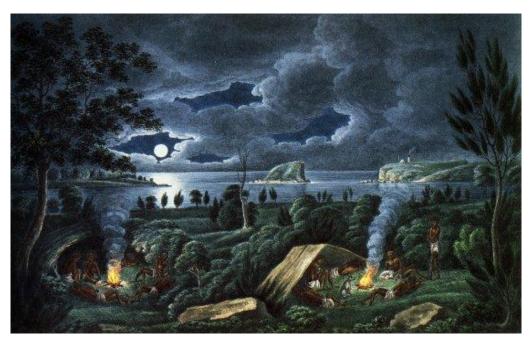


Figure 7. Lycett, Joseph (ca.1775 – 1828). Aborigines resting by a Camp Fire near the Mouth of the Hunter River, Newcastle, NSW.

National Library of Australia

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> See for example *The Newcastle Herald*, 20 May 2011.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The Hunter Estuary as Discovered by Dr. John Shortland (Sept. 10, 1797), in: The Institution of Engineers, Australia, Newcastle Harbour – A National Engineering Landmark. 1989.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> NSW Government – Hunter Development Corporation, *History of Ferries in Newcastle*, n.d.

#### 2.3 EARLY COLONIAL HISTORICAL CONTEXT

While the fledgling settlement of Newcastle operated as a penal outpost between 1801 and 1822, development was limited to land east of Church Hill, with one exception. By 1812 a government farm worked by convict labour, and a cottage most likely used as a guardhouse, had been established about a mile west of the settlement around Cottage Creek. It is believed that the cottage was on land opposite the Empire Hotel at today's 700 Hunter Street (also the site of the former Palais Hotel).<sup>6</sup>

Town development was slow in the decade following the opening up of Newcastle to free settlement in the early 1820s. Part of the land originally earmarked for the town's expansion was, in fact, given to the Australian Agricultural Company (A.A. Co.) in the late 1820s as part of their 2,000 acres of land granted for the purpose of coal mining.<sup>7</sup> The grant initially formed a barrier to westward expansion of the town, however, the presence of the A.A. Co. was intrinsically linked to the early commercial, industrial and residential growth of Newcastle.<sup>8</sup>

By the 1840s the A.A. Co. had several mines operating and imported British miners to supplement their workforce that was largely made up of assigned convicts. During the 1830s and 1840s people including Richard Furlong, Alexander Walker Scott, and Dr James Mitchell established farms and small industries on grants to the south east of the town and to the west of Throsby Creek as well as the north side of the harbour. The immigration into the town increased the demand for housing and associated facilities. By 1841 the population of Newcastle totalled 1,377 and there were 193 houses in the town.<sup>9</sup>

In 1841 a one-acre site for use as a Roman Catholic burial ground was secured near the former convict farm at Cottage Creek. <sup>10</sup> The Government subsequently dedicated a further acre of land adjoining the Roman Catholic Burial Ground for use as a Presbyterian Burial Ground in 1845 and another acre further west (near the present disused Wickham Station) for a Wesleyan Methodist Burial Ground in 1846. <sup>11</sup> At the time of their establishment these burial grounds were on the extreme western boundary of Newcastle. They were still in operation when the site under study was first settled.

Cottage Creek was also the site of one of Australia's first meat canning factories founded by the Dangar family in 1848. The extensive establishment was still in full operation when John Askew visited Newcastle in 1852. Askew wrote in his journal that:

all the workmen employed there in making tins to secure the meat, had been hired for a term of three years. They were mostly from London, and although they were receiving from £2 to £3 per week, there was much dissatisfaction on account of their contract. Beyond this is a large boiling down establishment, the immediate vicinity of which was a complete Golgotha. During the boiling down season several hundreds of cattle and sheep were slaughtered there every week.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> John Askew, *A Voyage to Australia and New Zealand*, London, 1857, p.265, http://www.newcastle.edu.au/services/library/collections/archives/int/chrp/coquunhunter.html#Askew.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> J.W. Turner, 'Honeysuckle Historical Study', January, 1994, pp. 48, 63.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> P.A. Pemberton, *Pure Merinos and Others: The Shipping Lists of the Australian Agricultural Company*, ANU Archives of Business and Labor, Canberra, 1986, p.8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> University of Newcastle, Archives, http://www.newcastle.edu.au/services/library/collections/archives/int/page25.html

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> C. and M.J. Doring Pty. Ltd., Consulting Engineers, 'Honeysuckle Project Historical and Industrial Archaeological Survey', October, 1991, p. 2; Turner, 'Honeysuckle...', p.2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Peter Douglas and Graham Wilson, '700 Hunter Street Newcastle, NSW: Historical Archaeological & Impact Assessment of the West Newcastle Presbyterian & Roman Catholic Cemetery Site (c1844-1881)', prepared for ACCOR Asia Pacific to comply with the NSW Heritage Council & Newcastle City Council's request to archaeologically assess the site before redevelopment for the proposed ACCOR Ibis Hotel', Archaeological & Heritage Management Solutions Pty.Ltd., Sydney, March, 2001, p.58.; Elaine Sheehan, (ed.), Newcastle West New South Wales: Presbyterian Burial Ground 1844-1881, Family History Society Inc., Lambton, 1999, p.2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Elaine Sheehan, (ed.), *Newcastle West New South Wales: Wesleyan Methodist Burial Ground 1858-1881*, Family History Society Inc.,Lambton, 1999, p.3. All three Newcastle West cemeteries were closed in 1881 after the opening of Sandgate Cemetery.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Turner, 'Honeysuckle...', p. 56.

Development of the western end of Newcastle hastened after 1853 when the A.A. Co. started to sell its land on the south side of Blane Street. A massive and ongoing programme of wharf construction, harbour dredging and foreshore reclamation was associated with the growth of Newcastle in the mid nineteenth century.<sup>14</sup>

In the early 1850s, the route from Newcastle to Maitland was still nothing more than a dirt track. The decision made in 1853 to construct a railway between the two towns with Honeysuckle Point (first located on the site of the present Civic Station) as the line's terminus provided an impetus for the development of Blane Street. 15

However, following the closure of the meat cannery in the mid 1850s, development on the north side of Blane Street in the Cottage Creek and Honeysuckle areas slowed because the Act of Parliament that originally authorised the construction of the railway also authorised the resumption of all of Honevsuckle Point for the establishment of the terminus. 16 "As the population of Newcastle grew and its coal industry expanded rapidly after 1856, land near the railway became more and more valuable."17

#### 2.4 THE EMPIRE HOTEL (FORMERLY RAILWAY HOTEL) 649/651 HUNTER STREET - LOT 6 DP 631425

#### 2.4.1 Ownership, Construction and Alterations - Nineteenth Century

The land on which these premises were built was originally Lot 108 Section A of the A.A.Co's Newcastle Estate. The Lot was:

bounded towards the east by the west boundary line of Lot 107 two chains fifty links. Towards the south of the north boundary line of Lot 51 one chain. Towards the west by the east boundary line of Lot 109 two chains fifty links. And towards the north by the southside line of Blane Street with a frontage of one chain and containing 40 perches.<sup>18</sup>

When John Devonald purchased Lot 108A for £41 from the A.A. Co. in the mid 1850s, construction on the rail line between Newcastle and Maitland had already commenced. The line would run adjacent to the northern side of Blane Street right past Lot 108A and in anticipation of what was to come, Devonald erected an hotel on his newly acquired site and named it the Railway Inn. 19 Evidence suggests that the Railway Inn was the first hotel built in Newcastle's west end.20

Devonald also invested in other property in the district during the 1850s including the purchase of 28 acres of land in what is now the Mavfield industrial area. 21 Although Devonald's conveyance for Lot 108A is not dated until the 28 March, 1856, he received his publican's licence for the Railway Hotel in 1855, so one can assume that the hotel was erected by that date.<sup>22</sup> Local Hunter historian W.J. Goold believed that the Railway Inn would have provided the necessary liquid refreshments" for the construction workers sent out from England in 1854 to build the rail line.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Conveyances of Land Sold, Book B, No. 47, Australian Agricultural Company Archive, University of Newcastle Archives; Jean McNaught, Butts and Certificates of the First Publicans Licences 1830-1860, Richmond-Tweed Regional Library, 1997, p. 99. <sup>23</sup> Goold, 'Inns and Taverns...', n.p.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Doring, 'Honeysuckle Project...', p.6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Turner, 'Honeysuckle...', pp.45-46; Doring, 'Honeysuckle Project...', p.11.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Turner, 'Honeysuckle...', p. 56; Doring, 'Honeysuckle Project...', p.11.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Turner, 'Honeysuckle...', p.46.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Conveyances of Land Sold, Book B, No. 47, Australian Agricultural Company Archive, University of Newcastle Archives.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.; W.J. Goold, 'Inns and Taverns of Old Newcastle', unpublished manuscript, n.d., n.p., Newcastle Region Library.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> John Windross and J.P. Ralston, *Historical Records of Newcastle*, 1797-1897, facsimile, Sydney, 1978, p.92; Goold, 'Inns and Taverns...', passim; Newcastle Morning Herald, 7 June, 1909/ 3 January, 1941.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> F.A. Cadell, 'A Survey of Newcastle from Its First Settlement to the Present Day', Royal Australian Historical Society Journal and Proceedings, Vol. XXII, Part VI, 1936, p.404.

Devonald did not live long enough to reap the expected rewards of his opportunely located hotel, dying in 1856 a year before the official opening of the Great Northern Railway on the 30 March, 1857. Ownership of the Railway Hotel passed to Devonald's widow, Sarah, who married James Laughton in 1857. <sup>24</sup> It would appear that the couple only managed the hotel for a few years before leasing the premises to a series of publicans. <sup>25</sup>

At the time of its construction, the Railway Hotel was considered to be on the far western outskirts of the township of Newcastle. In an account of the appearance of the town in the late 1850s, the Newcastle Morning Herald noted that west beyond the A.A. Co.'s Bridge across Hunter Street (near the corner of Crown Street), the only buildings of note besides the railway station, and the residence of Mr. Fleming at Honeysuckle Point, were the Black Diamond Hotel, Cameron's Inn (the original Star Hotel, not Cameron's Family Hotel) and the Railway Hotel.<sup>26</sup>

The earliest Australian inns were often private residences belonging to people who had obtained licences to sell liquor from their own homes. In such inns, guests and the publicans' families generally shared the same facilities. However, by the 1830s legislative requirements meant that the distinction between the licensee's living quarters and accommodation for guests had become more formalised.<sup>27</sup> The Liquor Act of 1830 stipulated that:

Every house which shall be licensed under this Act shall contain at least two sleeping rooms for public accommodation, independent of the apartments occupied by the family of the publican, and if any licensed house upon any line of road in the colony shall without reasonable cause refuse a traveller or guest, the Licensee shall pay a sum of not less than five pounds not more than twenty pounds.<sup>28</sup>

The influence of the gold rushes in the early 1850s also brought changes in the design of most inns. By this time:

bars were attractive rooms with glass fronted cabinets displaying every brand of liquor – mostly imported but these were for the carriage trade...House rum was easily the most popular drink...brass foot rests in front of the bar counter and swinging doors at the entrance not to mention spitoons often made of Lithgow pottery were an American influence from the Californian gold rush era.<sup>29</sup>

Unfortunately, no surviving description of the Railway Hotel at the time of its construction has been located to date. The earliest found description is located in the rate Assessment Book for the Honeysuckle district for the year 1860-1861. James Laughton is listed in this record as the owner of the Railway Hotel, which is described as a two storey, public house of stone construction with a shingled roof, containing ten rooms (at least one of which was probably an outhouse) 30

Another early account is provided in an 1863 advertisement for the hotel:

Railway Hotel, near the famed Cottage Bridge. To the inhabitants of Newcastle, Maitland and surrounding districts. R. Collier, having taken a lease of the above hotel, situated in the most pleasant part of Honeysuckle Point, respectfully intimates to his friends and the public that it will be his constant study to make the above hotel one of the most comfortable in the district and trusts by

<sup>30</sup> Assessment Book, Honeysuckle 1860-1861, AB5419, Newcastle Region Library.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Turner, 'Honeysuckle...', p.45; NSW Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, http://www.nsw.gov.au

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Index to Liquor Licences in the Hunter Region 1865-1921, Newcastle Region Library; Newcastle City Council Rate Books, Newcastle Region Library (hereafter referred to as NCC Rates), 1868-1875.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Newcastle Morning Herald, 7 June, 1909.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Clare Wright, 'Of Public Houses and Private Lives: Female Hotelkeepers as Domestic Entrepreneurs', *Australian Historical Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 116, April, 2001, p. 64.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Cited in Catherine Foggo, Inns and Hotels 1825-1900, NSW Branch of the Australians Hotels Association, 1989, p.2.

civility and attention and by keeping the best liquors, ales, wines, etc., to be had in the market to meet with a share of their patronage. Good stabling.<sup>31</sup>

In the second half of the nineteenth century, hotels increasingly served as centres for civic, community and political life.<sup>32</sup> Goold claimed that the Railway Hotel was used as a venue for community meetings in the years when development of the surrounding area was starting to grow. In 1871 the hotel was used by residents from the west end of Newcastle to hold a meeting about establishing a local school – the meeting resulted in the foundation of the Wickham Public School. Hotels were also often the centre of betting activities associated with sport and the Railway Hotel provided a venue for the crowds that gathered to watch the popular footraces that were held in the 1870s along a track at the nearby Cottage Bridge.<sup>33</sup>

In 1876 the Laughtons sold Lot 108A and the Railway Hotel to Atkinson Alfred Patrick Tighe for £1326.34 Tighe also acquired Steel Street access to the rear of the hotel through the purchase of Lot 5 of the subdivision of Lot 107A in 1878.35 Statutory regulations required that licensees had to permanently reside at the licensed premises and although neither Tighe nor members of his family served as publicans, the Railway Hotel remained in possession of Tighe's descendants for just over one hundred years.36 Tighe, who lent his name to the inner Newcastle suburb of Tighe's Hill, was a well-known and successful businessman and politician in the district. Tighe ran a successful auctioning business and had considerable land holdings especially in the suburb of Waratah where he once served as police magistrate. He was an alderman on the inaugural Newcastle City Council formed in 1859 and represented the district in the New South Wales Legislative Assembly between 1862 and 1882.37

A further brief account of the hotel is found in an 1877 advertisement for the sale of "the unexpired lease, goodwill, fixtures, furniture, glasses and measures." The advertisement claimed that the hotel "is doing good business, contains nine rooms with large close stables, yard and every convenience for doing a first-class trade." The built environment of nineteenth century hotels was organised around both public and private spaces. The fact that the building contained nine rooms suggests that it was a typical two storey, mid nineteenth century built colonial hotel with bar, parlours and dining rooms downstairs and residential facilities and bedrooms upstairs. Architectural drawings for alterations to the hotel at the end of the 1920s designed by architects, Pitt and Merewether show plans of the existing building which tend to confirm that the original rectangular section of the premises consisted of four main rooms downstairs and five upstairs.

The Newcastle Council rate book for 1880 notes that there were 12 rooms at the Railway Hotel. The increase in number could refer to outhouses including laundries that were not always included in the room count. The assessed rate value of the premises remained virtually constant between the early 1870s and the early 1880s indicating that there was little if any structural changes during this period.<sup>42</sup>

The 1886 Mahlstedt and Gee Survey Map depicts the Railway Hotel as a rectangular, two storeyed, shingled roof building with a 43 foot frontage onto Hunter Street. (The building still

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> NCC Rates, 1873-1880.



<sup>31</sup> Newcastle Chronicle, 17 June, 1863.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Wright, 'Of Public Houses...', p.64.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Goold, 'Inns and Taverns...', n.p.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Conveyance Registration No. 565, Book No. 163, NSW Land and Property Information (hereinafter referred to as LPI).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> Conveyance Registration No. 820, Book No. 182, LPI.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Wright, 'Of Public Houses...', p.65; Title Search No. B135, LPI.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> Clerk of Legislative Assembly, *The New South Wales Parliamentary Record*, Eighteenth Edition, Sydney, 1953, p.200; *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 7 June, 1909; *The Federal Directory of Newcastle and District for 1901*, Davies and Cannington, Newcastle, 1901.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> Newcastle Morning Herald, 23 June, 1877.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Wright, 'Of Public Houses...', p.65.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Pitt & Merewether, Plan of Existing Building, Empire Hotel, 1926, Newcastle Region Library.

occupied the same frontage in 1926 prior to major alterations.)<sup>43</sup> As hotels continued to evolve as social institutions they often required additional rooms to meet the needs of various communal purposes.<sup>44</sup> When publican Frederick Garnham took over the hotel in the mid 1880s he advertised that "the Hotel is now undergoing a complete renovation, and excellent accommodation for visitors and boarders is guaranteed."<sup>45</sup> In his advertisement Garnham also emphasised that the hotel housed "a splendid Billiard Table … with an efficient marker.<sup>46</sup> This was during the period when "architecturally, pubs began to give prominence to meeting rooms, libraries, billiard rooms and lounges."<sup>47</sup>

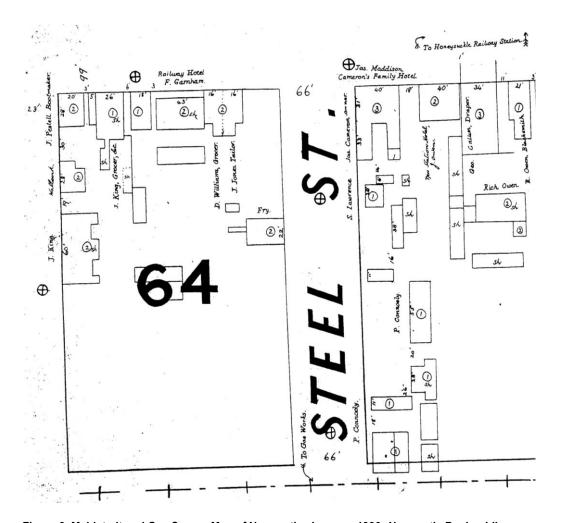


Figure 8. Mahlstedt and Gee Survey Map of Newcastle, January, 1886. Newcastle Region Library.

A two storey wing was adjoined to the western rear of the building providing extra accommodation off an upper level balcony with laundry, kitchen and dining room below. Unfortunately, the date of these additions has not been located in the extant historical evidence but it is unlikely that this work was the renovation referred to by Garnham in his mid 1880s advertisement. It would appear that the addition did not occur any earlier than the mid 1890s because the new wing is not indicated on the outline of the hotel in the 1896 Survey Map of Newcastle.<sup>48</sup> The balcony bedrooms were built with gas light fittings indicating that the extension wing was constructed before electricity was supplied to the hotel but again this date is

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> Survey Map of Newcastle Suburbs, 1896 (NSW Department of Lands).



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Mahlstedt and Gee Survey Map, January, 1886, Newcastle Region Library; Pitt & Merewether Architects Report, Empire Hotel, Hunter Street, Newcastle, 9 November, 1926, Tooth & Co. Ltd., Empire Hotel Correspondence 1924-1939, Newcastle Region Library, A1283 (hereinafter referred to as Tooth Correspondence).

<sup>44</sup> Wright, 'Of Public Houses...', p.65.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> Railway Hotel, Hotels in the Hunter Valley, Cuttings and note books, Newcastle Region Library.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Ibia

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Wright, 'Of Public Houses...', p.65.

difficult to pinpoint without further investigation. As can be seen in the photo below, electric street lighting was connected to this part of Hunter Street by 1891, however, connection to actual buildings only occurred gradually. It was obviously not connected to the hotel as late as 1899 when a fire was started by a candle flame (see below). Without further detailed building records the date of the extension is estimated to have been undertaken around the early 1900s.

One improvement implemented by Garnham, namely the supply of running water to both the upper and lower stories of the hotel, saved the property and probably the surrounding buildings from destruction when fire broke out in an upper floor bedroom in October, 1899. A naked candle flame ignited curtains in the bedroom of Garnham's five-year-old daughter who quickly raised the alarm and Garnham attached the house hose to the standpipe outside the landing and was able to extinguish the fire before the fire brigade arrived. The only damage sustained was that to bedding, clothing and furnishings within the room.<sup>49</sup>

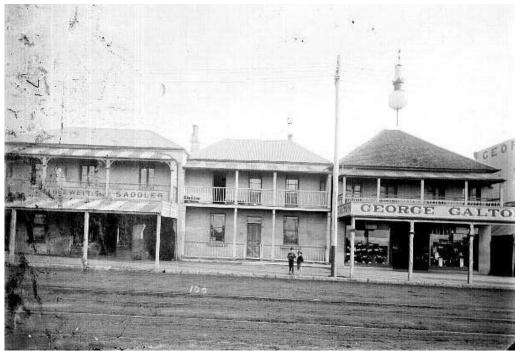


Figure 9. Street lighting in Hunter Street near the south eastern corner of Hunter and Steel Streets. Snowball Collection, c.1891, Newcastle Region Library.

#### 2.4.2 Hotel Name Change

It has been claimed that Garnham, who was licensee between 1886 and 1903<sup>50</sup> was also responsible for changing the name of the hotel from the Railway to the Empire. Commercial development of the Railways Department land to the west of the Honeysuckle Railway Workshops began after the opening of the second Honeysuckle Point Station in 1872, 35 chains west of the original. Although the Railways Department kept a tight hold on its land, leases were issued to private enterprises keen to be located close to the railway line and station. Some of those businesses that were established on the north side of Hunter Street included the Bellevue Hotel, a bank and the Elite Skating Rink.<sup>51</sup> The latter was opened in 1888 opposite the Railway Hotel in premises that would later house the City Arcade and Western Markets. In 1894 the Empire Music Hall was opened in the same building.<sup>52</sup> According to Goold, "the advent of the Empire brought considerable custom to the hotel opposite which was now a more modern and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> Turner, 'Honeysuckle...', pp.63-64; Suters Architects Snell, 'Honeysuckle Goodsyard Civic Workshops and Lee Wharf Area, Heritage & Conservation Study', Draft Final Report, March, 1990, p.7.





<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> Newcastle Morning Herald, 14 October, 1899.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> Index to Liquor Licences in the Hunter Region 1865-1921, Newcastle Region Library.

up to date building, so the licensee decided that it would be appropriate to change the title of his house to the 'Empire Hotel'."53

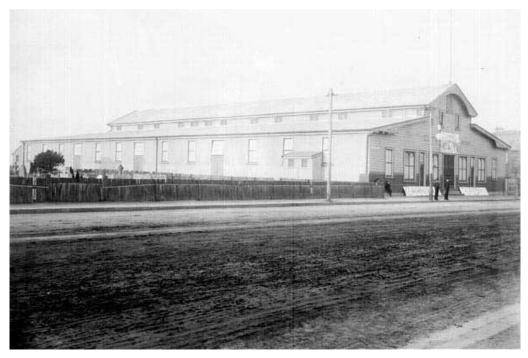


Figure 10. Elite Skating Rink. Note cemetery to the left of buildings. Snowball Collection, undated, Newcastle Region Library.

#### 2.4.3 1928 Remodelling and Additions

At the time that the Empire Hotel was established in the mid 1850s Newcastle imported all its beer from Sydney but in 1876 a local brewery was established at the far west end of Hunter Street by brothers John and Joseph Wood, agents for the Castlemaine Brewery Company. <sup>54</sup> In 1896 Tighe provided a four year lease on the hotel to Castlemaine Brewery and Wood Brothers & Co. Newcastle. <sup>55</sup> In 1898 Tighe transferred the Empire to his 30 year old daughter Mabel, wife of Arthur Warren Cornish, civil servant. He also transferred the use of the reserved lane, ten feet wide, leading from Steel Street through to the hotel running along the southern boundary of Lot 107A. <sup>56</sup> Mabel Cornish and her husband resided in Sydney and continued to lease the Empire to the brewery and the brewery then subleased the hotel to publicans.

In 1906 the Cornishes changed breweries after negotiating a 24year lease on the Empire to Tooth & Co. Ltd. for £2.10.0 per week.<sup>57</sup> By 1926, discussions were already underway between the two parties regarding the renewal of the lease. Tooths were desirous of negotiating a further 20 year lease and were willing to undertake remodelling and additions in order to obtain it.<sup>58</sup>

Newcastle architects, Pitt and Merewether, who were employed to carry out work on Tooth's hotels in the Newcastle district, inspected the Empire in November, 1926, in order to prepare an architect's report on the existing premises. Their findings are listed below:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> Inspector's Report, 5 November, 1926, 2 December, 1926, Tooth & Co. Ltd., Hotel Reports, Newcastle Region Library (hereinafter referred to as Tooth Report).



<sup>53</sup> Goold, 'Inns and Taverns...', n.p.

<sup>54</sup> http://www.nrmuseum.com.au/homecmb.htm

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> Conveyance Registration No. 326, Book No. 624, LPI.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> General Manager, Tooth & Co. Ltd to Newcastle Branch Manager, 8 September, 1926, Tooth Correspondence.

The land has a frontage of approx. 65' to Hunter Street by a depth of approx. 167'. The frontage width of 65' extends back 59' from Hunter Street, where it is reduced to 54' by the provision of a Right of Way on the Eastern side.

The building occupies only 44' of the frontage and is placed on the Eastern side of the block. The walls are of brick and in places stone rubble, all plastered throughout internally, with faced brick front and tiled dado 4' 6" high. The ceilings are wood, the roof galv. Iron and the partitions brick or lath and plaster. The building although fairly old is in a fair state of repair, though extensive damp patches indicate that the damp course is defective or missing and the roof iron generally is showing signs of decay.

The Ground Floor contains Public Bar, two Parlours, Dining Room, Kitchen and Laundry, Entrance Hall and Stairs. The First Floor contains nine Bedrooms and two baths and W.C.'s., Front Balcony (colonnade over footpath) and back Balcony. Outhouses consist of brick lavatories in fair state of repair and various sheds and stables in varying stages of disrepair and of little use.

The design generally is out of date and the building unsuitable. The Bar is small dull and has no cellar, one of the Parlours being used as a Bar Store. The Parlours occupy valuable space and are not used to any great extent. The Dining Room Kitchen and Offices are fair but require brightening. The Bedrooms are large and airy but the timber ceilings are unattractive and the walls require renovating. One bath and one W.C. are unattractive on Balcony but the other which is of a more modern structure is fair. The appearance of the building from Hunter Street is fair but could be made much more attractive.

The building does not lend itself to any great improvement by additions and alterations without incurring considerable expense which the property does not warrant. The enclosed drawing however shows how the building may be extended to occupy the whole of the frontage, providing a large Bar with cellar under and a large Parlour at rear which can be utilised as a Saloon Bar or an addition to the Public Bar if needed. The remaining portion of the Ground Floor at present occupied by the two parlours to be partioned off to form Lock-up shop. Upstairs the building to be extended as shown to provide three additional Bedrooms (making total of twelve) also a modern bath and W.C. in place of the out of date structure at present at the end of Balcony.

The existing colonnade to be demolished and a steel cantilever awning erected along the whole of the frontage. The front of the building to be modernised by cementing and tiling the existing brickwork. The electric light installation to be overhauled and the sanitary services to be modernised and brought up to date by the addition of Hot Water Service. The Bar will have tiled walls and counter front and generally fitted up in keeping with the company's requirements.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> Pitt & Merewether Architects, Architect's Report, Empire Hotel, Hunter Street Newcastle, 9 November, 1926, Tooth Correspondence.





Figure 11. Façade of the Empire Hotel prior to 1928 remodelling. Pitt & Merewether's plans and drawings of Empire Hotel, Newcastle Region Library. (Appendix B)

Architects, Nigel Pitt and Edward Merewether set up the practice of Pitt and Merewether in Newcastle in 1913 and became one of the most productive architectural firms in the city. By the early 1920s they had built up a considerable reputation with works that included Tyrrell House, Telford Street, Newcastle (1921). Following the death in 1924 of Wallace Porter, the architect for Tooth & Co.'s northern work, Pitt and Merewether were given Tooth's expanding hotel work. In the period up to 1943 they designed 29 new hotels (including the Crown & Anchor (1924), the Orient (1925), the Burwood Inn (1929) and the Station (1937)) and renovated a further 31 of Tooth's hotels. Other major works designed during this time included the Classical styled office buildings for Stewarts & Lloyds, Port Waratah (1934), the Australian Wire Rope Works, Mayfield (1935), and Nesca House (1937).

Whilst the brewery was discussing lease renewal with the Cornishes it was also in negotiations for a new publican to take over the Empire. The proposed alterations designed by Pitt & Merewether were estimated to cost approximately £3,000 but under the sublease between Tooths and publicans, the latter were required to bear the cost of most internal and external renovations and repairs. In May 1927 a new sublease was sold to publican, Thomas Percival John Hennessy, who agreed to expend the £3,000 required for improvements provided Tooths advanced him a sum of £2,000.61

Of prime concern to the incoming publican was the remodelling of the old bar areas.<sup>62</sup> One of the major influences affecting hotel structural design, and in particular the public bar, was the introduction of six o'clock closing in 1916 during World War One. "The long and unrelenting work of the dedicated temperance forces, the increasingly effective influence of the churches...and the memory of the depression, had prepared a lot of the common people...to

<sup>62</sup> Tooth Report, 31 May, 1927, 8 November, 1927.



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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> Les Reedman, 'Architects of Newcastle and the Hunter Valley: A History 1841-1940', unpublished manuscript.

<sup>61</sup> Manager Newcastle Branch to Braye Cragg & Cohen, 3 May, 1927, 23 November, 1927, Tooth Correspondence.

accept 6 o'clock closing of hotels as a progressive and desirable step"63 especially during wartime. By 1920 it was estimated that 90 percent of the beer consumed in hotels was done so between the hours of 5pm and 6pm in what would become known as the 'six o'clock swill.' Thirsty men crowded into hotels at the end of the working day trying to drink their fill before closing time.<sup>64</sup>

To meet the crisis, hotel after hotel knocked out walls to extend the small, corner-entranced public bar. The normal encircling passage and the adjacent parlour were thrown into public bar space. Every possible area that could be spared and still receive the approval of the licensing courts was converted to bar space, either public, private, or saloon. In the larger hotels, one of the first victims was the billiard room.<sup>65</sup>

Interestingly, it was during the early 1920s that the Cornishes set up a billiard room separate from the hotel on the upper level of the adjacent, newly erected building also owned by the family at 645/647 Hunter Street. 66

Few of the old hotels escaped the change that occurred in the 1920s moving from buildings in which bars were only a small physical part of the whole operation to where they formed a far greater part and focus. <sup>67</sup> Pitt and Merewether's plans for alterations to the Empire included a complete remodelling of the bar spaces wherein walls would be knocked down to extend drinking space and allow the public bar to physically occupy the central focus of the ground floor. Designs for a more modernised public bar counter and canopy were also included in their plans. <sup>68</sup>

With early closing came not only a transformation of physical space but also a change in pub culture. Whereas hotels had traditionally served as centres for social gathering and communal meetings they became, according to J.M. Freeland, "no more than high-pressure drinking houses." <sup>69</sup>

The application for alterations and additions to the Empire was approved in January, 1927. However, Mr Burgess of the Niagara Refreshment Rooms, Newcastle, made an offer to pay £10 per week rent if the lock-up shop to be erected on the vacant land between the Empire and the land owned by Union Theatres Ltd could be extended by 20 feet in depth. This alteration was incorporated into the addition.<sup>70</sup>

Mr Cornish requested that his own architects, F.G. and A.C. Castleden, be allowed to oversee the remodelling according to Pitt & Merewether's designs. Contractors Messrs. Baker and Lamb were the successful tenders and work commenced on the 10 March, 1928. The alterations and additions were completed in July 1928 at a cost of £3,218.71

The planned demolition of the front balcony in 1928 was necessitated due to a recently passed ordinance by Newcastle City Council requiring all existing balconies in Hunter Street to be replaced by suspended awnings within 18 months. 72 Similar legislation had first been enacted in the early 1920s by building authorities in Sydney and Melbourne and afterwards by most local governments. "Using light steel framework hung on steel tension rods anchored back to the

<sup>72</sup> F.G. & A.C. Castleden, Architects to Pitt & Merewether, Architects, 20 February, 1928, Tooth Correspondence.



<sup>63</sup> J.M. Freeland, The Australian Pub, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1966, p. 173.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p.175.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p.175.

<sup>66</sup> Site Plan of W.C. Thompson's Subdivision of Lot 107A, April, 1920, LPI.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> Freeland, *The Australian Pub*, pp.175-176.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> Pitt & Merewether, Plan of Existing Building, Empire Hotel, 1926; Pitt & Merewether, Working Drawings, Alterations and Additions, Empire Hotel, 29 November, 1927, Newcastle Region Library.

<sup>69</sup> Freeland, The Australian Pub, p. 178.

Proceeding, 7710 August and 7710 August and 7710 August and 7710 Braye Cragg & Cohen to Manager Newcastle Branch to A.W. Cornish, 27 October, 1927, Manager Newcastle Branch to General Manager Tooth & Co., 25 January, 1928, Tooth Correspondence.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> General Manager Tooth & Co. to Manager Newcastle Branch , 22 December, 1927, F.G. & A.C. Castleden, Architects to Manager Newcastle Branch, 4 February, 1928, Manager Newcastle Branch to General Manager Tooth & Co, 16 May, 1928, Manager Newcastle Branch to Braye Cragg & Cohen, 23 July, 1928, Tooth Correspondence.

brickwork, flat verandah canopies, lined on the underside with pressed metal sheets and above with corrugated iron, were added as protection on one pub after another."<sup>73</sup> However, Tooth & Co. decided not to go ahead with the removal of the existing verandah until they were forced to do so by Council. Finally, in October 1931, J. Bennett of Broadmeadow was chosen as the successful tender for the demolition of the old balcony and the erection of a new cantilever awning.<sup>74</sup>

The introduction of such canopies in the 1920s was also accompanied by the new look tiled façade:

From the pavement to a height of five feet the facades were covered with hygienic vitreous tiles in dark oranges and browns. Above the tiles, up to the underside of the canopy, the wall was plastered and painted cream. The part of the building above the canopy was left untouched. The result, externally, was two buildings – an old and a new - divided by the horizontal shelf of the canopy.<sup>75</sup>

Pitt and Merewether's 1927 working drawings indicate that a similarly tiled façade was planned for the Empire.<sup>76</sup>



Figure 12. Proposed new façade for the Empire Hotel. Pitt & Merewether's plans and drawings of Empire Hotel, Newcastle Region Library. (Appendix B)

Development within the vicinity of the Empire Hotel in the 1920s reflected an entertainment focus in the West End. In 1924 the Theatre Royal described as "one of the most comprehensive and elaborately appointed picture houses in Australia" was opened on the south side of Hunter Street a few doors to the west of the Empire Hotel. Across the road on the former site of the Empire Music Hall, a new dance hall called the Palais was built in 1929.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> Newcastle Herald, 20 April, 1996.



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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> Freeland, *The Australian Pub*, p. 176.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> Manager Newcastle Branch to Pitt & Merewether, 29 March, 1928, General Manager Tooth & Co. to Manager Newcastle Branch , 20 October, 1931, Tooth Correspondence.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> Freeland, *The Australian Pub*, p. 177.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> Pitt & Merewether, Working Drawings...,1927.

<sup>77</sup> Newcastle Morning Herald, 6 February, 1923.

#### 2.4.4 Further Alterations

There were still stables at the rear of the property in the early 1930s and in 1932 they had to be moved as they partly encroached by three inches onto the property of Earp, Woodcock, Beveridge & Co. Ltd. An insurance valuation undertaken for the Cornishes in 1934 listed the other outbuildings on the premises as follows:

Empire Hotel premises with lock-up store	£5,550	
Brick lavatory and urinal		20
Weatherboard store room		15
Range of old weatherboard stabling		80
Weatherboard and galvanised iron garage	25	
		£5,690 79

It would appear that there have been numerous alterations to the Empire over the years, however, the basic structure of the hotel remains that of the remodelled premises of the late 1920s.

Pitt and Pitt drew up plans for minor alterations in 1959 and 1969. These changes included demolition of existing bathrooms and lavatories and the building of new ones, as well as renewal of flooring, doors and frames.<sup>80</sup>

Once erected, the adjoining shop was included with the hotel for rate purposes. Under the terms of Tooth & Co.'s sublease, the rental on the shop went to the residing publican. When new licensee, William Lake, took over from Hennessy at the end of the 1920s he leased the shop premises to Arthur Swift, of Swift & Co. Tailors. Mrs Swift applied to sublease the shop to another tailor, Ben Ailion, in 1939.81 Various businesses have operated out of the shop but from the late 1970s it was used until recently as a restaurant.82

Following the death of Mabel Cornish in 1947, the property remained in the hands of the Cornish family until 1982 when it was sold to Mansin Pty Ltd (registered office 71-76 Hunter Street). Joseph Lang was provided with a ten year lease on the Empire in 1997.<sup>83</sup> In 1989 Mansin Pty Ltd transferred the property to Michael Yip, George Lam and Ricky NG who retained ownership until 1995 when it was transferred to Mok's Investments (Australia) Pty Ltd.<sup>84</sup> The lease on the Empire was transferred to Frentez Pty Ltd 1992 then to TJBT Investments in 2000.<sup>85</sup> Current legislation allows licences to be transferred from one hotel to another and in 2003 the licence on the now closed Empire Hotel was sold for \$1.6million.<sup>86</sup>

Nominated Architect - Bernard Collins #4438

<sup>86</sup> Newcastle Herald, 19 July, 2003.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> Earp, Woodcock, Beveridge & Co. Ltd. to Manager Newcastle Branch, 10 November, 1932, Valuation of Property for Insurance Purposes completed by Lang Wood & Co. Ltd. for Cornish, 19 October, 1934, Tooth Correspondence.

<sup>80</sup> Pitt and Pitt, Architects, Empire Hotel, Lavaatory Blocks, August, 1959, Pitt and Pitt, Architects, Empire Hotel, Additions and Renovations, September, 1969, Newcastle Region Library.

<sup>81</sup> Braye Cragg & Cohen to Manager Newcastle Branch, 4 March, 1931, 25 May, 1939, Tooth Correspondence.

<sup>82</sup> Information supplied by Newcastle City Council Plan Room, July, 2003.

<sup>83</sup> Certificate of Title, Vol. 15165, Fol. 243, LPI.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>84</sup> Lease Registration No. 321, Book No. 2254, Conveyance Registration No. 809, Book No. 3520, Transfer Y467671, Title Search No. B135, LPI.

<sup>85</sup> Title Search No. B135, LPI.

#### 2.5 LOT 107 SECTION A

Located on the corner of the south side of Blane Street and the western side of Steel Street, Lot 107 Section A was originally part of the A.A.Co's Newcastle Estate. Containing 40 perches, the block extended one chain along its Blane Street boundary and two chains, fifty links lengthwise along Steel Street. Up until the late 1870s there was little development in Steel Street between Blane and Langford (King) Streets and Lot 107A remained vacant land. In 1877 William Carby Thompson purchased Lot 107A from the A.A. Co. for £600.87

#### 2.5.1 Thompson's Subdivision

Little is known of Thompson although it is likely that he was the same William C. Thompson, draper of Hunter Street, listed in the Newcastle Directory for 1880.88 Thompson's purchase of Lot 107A was probably speculative in intent as he quickly subdivided the land into five sub-lots each 33 feet wide by 66 feet long and set about selling off the subdivision.

Lot 1 was the first to be sold. The purchaser was Newcastle baker, Frederick Rodgers and the conveyance was dated 2 September 1878.<sup>89</sup> In the same year Lot 2 fronting Blane Street and Lot 5 fronting Steel Street was sold to A.A.P. Tighe for £417.<sup>90</sup> The conveyance for the sale of Lots 3 and 4 to Tom and Alfred Ingall, Newcastle drapers, for £296, is dated 30 June 1879.<sup>91</sup>

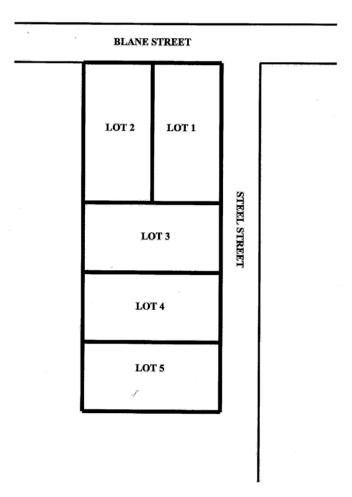


Figure 13. Diagram of Thompson's 1878 Subdivision of Lot 107A.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>91</sup> Conveyance Registration No. 978, Book No. 192, LPI.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>87</sup> Conveyances of Land Sold, Book C, No. 170, Australian Agricultural Company Archive, University of Newcastle Archives.

<sup>88</sup> W.H. Shaw, The Newcastle Directory and Almanac for the Year 1880, Newcastle, 1880, p.24.

<sup>89</sup> Schedule in Application to Bring Lands Under the Provision of the Real Property Act No. 23668, LPI.

<sup>90</sup> Conveyance Registration No. 820, Book No. 182, LPI.

#### 2.5.2 Steel Street Historical Background

Three of Thompson's subdivided Lots, namely 3, 4, and 5 had Steel Street frontages whilst Lot 1 was located on the corner of Steel and Blane Streets. Originally extending between Blane and Langford Street (now King Street) then later to Parry Street, Steel Street was originally part of the A.A. Co's Newcastle Estate and takes it name from one of the company's officers, engineer, James Steel. For much of the twentieth century, the section of Steel Street between King and Hunter Streets served as Newcastle's major food and vegetable produce markets.

In 1866 the Newcastle Gas and Coke Company was established and acquired A.A. Co land on Steel Street between Langford Street and Parry Street in order to build a gas works. 92 Three years later the Newcastle Chronicle reported that Chinese market gardens had been established nearby:

Within less than a mile from our city, and in rear of the Gasworks, are situated two markets, known as the Chinese gardens. The area occupied by these gardens was formerly an uncleared swamp, owned by the A.A. Company, and, to all appearance, a land of little value. Two or three Sons of China…have set to work in good earnest to make it productive.<sup>93</sup>

In the second half of the nineteenth century Chinese market gardens became a mainstay of urban food supply in most Australian cities and towns. Market gardening and fruit and vegetable production was one industry where Chinese immigrants found little competition or friction with European workers. The Chronicle described the Chinese market gardeners on the Gasworks Flats as industrious and thrifty and had much praise for the gardens, "most ingeniously laid out, in square plots and beds of various lengths and breadths, according to the Chinese idea of gardening; and the care bestowed upon rearing...seems to be of no ordinary character."

Apart from the Gasworks there was very little land use in Steel Street up until the 1880s. Much of the land along the street had been purchased by publican, Peter Conoly, but the western side of Steel Street between Blane and King Streets remained vacant until a house was erected in the mid 1880s on Thompson's subdivision. During this period Cameron's Family Hotel was erected on the western corner of Steel and Blane Streets.<sup>96</sup>



Figure 14. For a brief period Cameron's Family Hotel on the south eastern corner of Hunter and Steel Streets was known as the Cardiff Arms. Snowball Collection, 1886, Newcastle Region Library.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>96</sup> HDWB Rate Books 1868-1880; Mahlstedt and Gee Survey Map, January, 1886.



<sup>92</sup> The First One Hundred Years of the City of Newcastle Gas and Coke Company Limited, Newcastle, 1966.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>93</sup> Cited in Anne Pill, 'Cooks Hill: Its Contribution to the Development of Newcastle', unpublished manuscript, 1979, p. 7, Newcastle Region Library.

<sup>94</sup> http://www.ahc.gov.au/infores/publications/chineseheritage/trackingthedragon/background.html

<sup>95</sup> Cited in Pill, 'Cooks Hill...', p.7.

By the early 1890s John Ash and Sons established a timber yard and sawmill on A.A. Co. Lots 50 and 51. The operation encompassed a large parcel of land on the corner of Steel and King Streets to the south of Thompson's subdivision. Ash and Sons occupied this site until 1904 when Earp, Woodcock, Beveridge and Company took over the operation.<sup>97</sup>

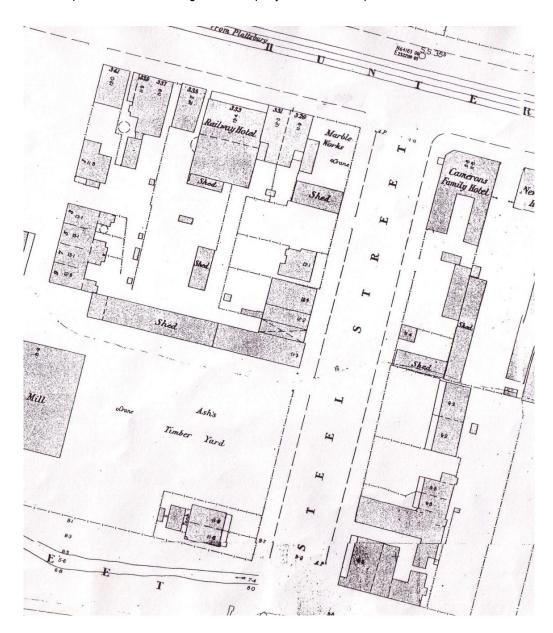


Figure 15. Survey Map of Newcastle Suburbs, 1896. Newcastle Region Library.

The A.A. Co. leased the land behind the Gasworks to the Chinese market gardeners for over 50 years.98 During this time other Chinese immigrants established market gardens throughout the Newcastle district and many set up businesses including produce stores and residences in Newcastle in the areas bound by Steel Street and nearby Devonshire Lane.99

The Western Markets were established on the north side of Hunter Street in the early 1890s opposite the Railway Hotel on a site that would later be home to the Palais. 100 Although the

<sup>100</sup> Newcastle Herald, 20 April, 1996.



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<sup>97</sup> HDWB Rate Book 1892; Newcastle Morning Herald, 3 May, 1972.

<sup>98</sup> Pill, 'Cooks Hill...', p.8.

<sup>99</sup> Gray and Milton, Business Directory Almanac, Diary & Year Book For 1885, Newcastle, 1885, The Federal Directory of Newcastle and District for 1901, Davies and Cannington, Newcastle, 1901; The Federal Directory of Newcastle and District for 1909, Davies and Cannington, Newcastle, 1909.

Western Markets were short lived they provided the impetus for the further development of the produce merchants in Steel Street. Following the closure of the Borough Markets in 1916, Steel Street came to dominate the city's fruit and vegetable trade. By 1921 a call in the Newcastle Morning Herald for municipal markets to be established nearby the site of the former Western Markets, noted how busy Steel Street had become. "On three mornings in the week Hunter Street, West and Steel Street are scenes of much activity in the fruit and vegetable trade. But the parcels in which the produce is sold are too large for anyone but shopkeepers and dealers." 101

By 1922 the Steel Street markets occupied most of the block between Hunter and King Streets on the eastern side of Steel Street south of Cameron's Hotel. 102 By the early 1930s the former timber yard on the western side of Steel Street was also occupied by fruit and vegetable merchants. 103 This end of Steel Street continued to flourish as the centre of the city's fruit and vegetable trade until 1972 when the Newcastle City Council constructed a new market complex at Sandgate. 104

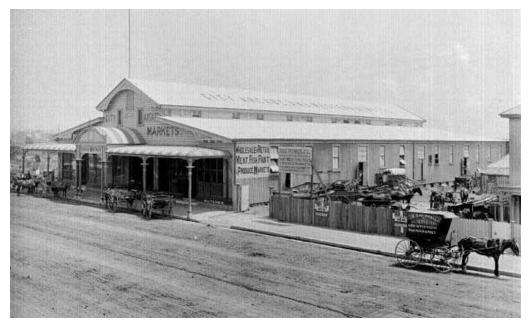


Figure 16. City Arcade and Western Markets. Snowball Collection, 1892, Newcastle Region Library.

#### 2.5.3 Subdivision Lot 1

Rate book searches reveal that this land located on the corner of Hunter and Steel Streets in the north eastern corner of the subdivision, remained vacant for a decade after it was purchased by Frederick Rodgers from Thompson in 1878. The 1886 Mahlstedt and Gee Survey Map of Newcastle shows only vacant land but by the early 1890s, the monumental mason, Thomas Gaites, had established a marble works on the site known as the Thomas Gaites & Co. City Marble Works. The 1896 Survey Map clearly shows a marble works and crane on Lot 1 with a shed to the rear and another structure (probably a weatherboard office). The 1896 According to the local rate books, between 1898 and 1907 Michael Kelly had taken over the site but by 1910 Thomas Gaites was again leasing the site from Rodgers and continued to do so for at least six more years. Apart from the small weatherboard office and tin shed there were no other buildings erected on Lot 1 during this period. The subdivision of the local rate were no other buildings erected on Lot 1 during this period. The subdivision of the local rate were no other buildings erected on Lot 1 during this period.

<sup>107</sup> HDWB Rate Books, 1898-1916.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>101</sup> Newcastle Morning Herald, 9 February, 1921.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>102</sup> Liverpool and London Globe Insurance Company, Detailed Survey Map of the City of Newcastle 1922.

<sup>103</sup> HDWB Rate Books 1931-1934.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>104</sup> Australian Chamber of Fruit and Vegetable Ind., http://www.freshmarkets.com.au

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 1892-1898.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>106</sup> Survey Map of Newcastle Suburbs, 1896 (NSW Department of Lands).

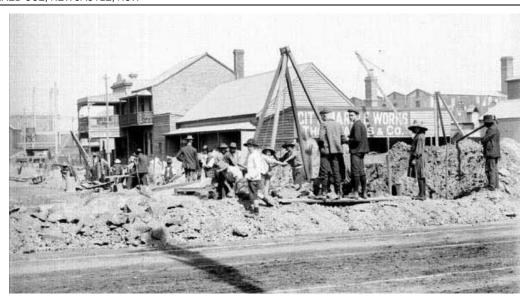


Figure 17. City Marble Works – located on Lot 1 of Thompson's subdivision. Photo depicts stores and residences on subdivision Lots 3 to 5 fronting Steel Street, c.1910. Snowball Collection, Newcastle Region Library.

Although Rodgers also acquired Lots 3, 4 and 5 of Thompson's subdivision, his interest in the Steel Street sites appear to be purely for investment purposes. Frederick Rodgers was born in Singleton in 1849 and moved to Newcastle at a young age. He learnt the baking trade from biscuit maker William Arnott before opening his own bakery in Hunter Street. Rodgers was a confectioner as well as a baker and in 1888 his business was described as, "the principal business of the kind in the city. He is assisted by five hands besides the members of his family. He is an honest and industrious tradesman, being widely known and esteemed." Following Rodgers' death in 1915 his land and properties were transferred to Frederick and Reginald Joseph Rodgers of Sydney.



Figure 18. City Marble Works c.1910 depicting headstones in foreground. The weatherboard façade of the upper level of premises on Lot 2 of Thompson's subdivision can be seen in the top right hand corner. Snowball Collection, Newcastle Region Library.

J.W. Turner, Who was Who in the Hunter Valley Towns in 1888, Hunter History Consultants, Newcastle, 1984, p.24.
 Certificate of Title Vol. 3768, Fol. 165, LPI.



By 1920 a new two storey brick building had been erected on Lot 1.<sup>110</sup> In May 1922 Frederick and Reginald Joseph Rodgers provided James Alfred Booth, furniture warehousemen of Sydney, with a 15 year lease on Lot 1 and part of Lot 3.<sup>111</sup> A 1922 Map indicates that the new building was occupied by J.A. Booth & Co., furniture warehouse.<sup>112</sup> This area of Hunter Street became a focus for furniture retailers. Booths continued to operate out of these premises until 1953.



Figure 19. Workmen in Hunter Street at the corner of Steel Street c.1950s. Depicts Booth's Furniture Store and adjacent two storey brick premises on Hunter Street. The upper level of the Empire Hotel is faintly visible. *Hood Collection, NSW State Library.* 

#### 2.5.4 Subdivision Lots 3, 4, and 5

In 1878 less than six months after he had purchased Lot 5 from Thompson, A.A.P. Tighe, owner of the Railway Hotel, sold the still vacant land to John James Fry, stonemason of Newcastle, for £142. It would appear that Tighe's original intention in acquiring Lot 5 was to secure access from Steel Street to the rear of the Railway Hotel and its stables. As part of the sale to Fry, Tighe reserved a ten foot wide right of way running parallel to the southern boundary of Lot 5 giving permission to Fry to erect a wall on the boundary of Lot 5 and the passage and to build over the passage provided a clearance of 12 feet was left. 113 By 1880 Fry had still not built on the land but the 1886 Mahlstedt and Gee Survey Map of Newcastle shows a two storey building on Lot 5 indicating Fry as the occupant. 114

Although Fry sold Lot 5 to Frederick Rodgers for £540 in 1885 (reserving the right of way for Tighe and his heirs) it would appear that Fry continued to lease the premises until the late 1880s. 115 He also operated a stone yard up until 1898 on vacant land on Lot 3 facing Steel Street adjacent to the southern boundary of Gaites' marble works. 116

<sup>116</sup> HDWB Rate Books, 1892-1898.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>110</sup> Site Plan of W.C. Thompson's Subdivision of Lot 107A, April, 1920, LPI.

<sup>111</sup> Certificate of Title Vol. 3768, Fol. 165, LPI.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>112</sup> Liverpool and London Globe Insurance Company, Detailed Survey Map of the City of Newcastle 1922.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>113</sup> Conveyance Registration No. 557, Book No. 186, LPI.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>114</sup> NCC Rate Book, 1880, AB5377; Mahlstedt and Gee Survey Map, January, 1886.

<sup>115</sup> Conveyance Registration No. 178, Book No. 329, LPI; R.C. Knaggs, The Newcastle Nautical Almanac, Newcastle, 1887, p. 197.

Tom and Alfred Ingall who had purchased Lots 3 and 4 from Thompson in 1879 ran a large drapery store in their Northern Emporium at the eastern end of Hunter Street and had considerable property investments throughout the district. The Ingalls did not build on their Steel Street land before selling it to Rodgers in 1881 for £360.<sup>117</sup> So by the mid 1880s Rodgers owned all three lots facing Steel Street as well as Lot 1 facing Hunter Street. However, up until the late 1880s it would appear that the two storey house first built by Fry on Lot 5 was the only property on the three lots facing Steel Street.

By the early 1890s the house on Lot 5 was operating as a store rented by Chinese merchants and a further house had been constructed on the adjacent land also occupied by Chinese tenants. 118 By 1910 there were four buildings occupying the Steel Street frontage between the southern boundary of the City Marble Works (on the corner of Hunter and Steel Streets) and the right of way (on the southern boundary of Lot 5) leading to the rear of the Empire Hotel. All of these premises were occupied by Chinese tenants, the two southernmost properties leased by merchants, Sun Yee Loong & Co. 119



Figure 20. Steel Street in flood looking towards Hunter Street. Buildings erected on Thompson's subdivision are visible on left. *Crofts Collection c. 1900, Newcastle Region Library*.

Frederick and Reginald Joseph Rodgers of Sydney, who inherited the Steel Street properties following the death of Rodgers in 1915, continued to rent these premises to various Chinese tenants up until the late 1920s. 120 In the early 1930s, three of these buildings were demolished and a new building consisting of showrooms was built in their place in 1935. Only the old former Chinese merchants store on Lot 5 was left standing. The new showrooms were rented to the furniture store operators, J.A. Booth & Co. Ltd., long term tenants of the premises on the corner of Hunter and Steel Streets. 121

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 1931-1940; NCC Rate Book, 1935.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>117</sup> Conveyance Registration No.827, Book No. 223, LPI.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>118</sup> HDWB Rate Books, 1892-1898.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 1910.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., 1925-1928.

# 2.6 CONSOLIDATION OF PROPERTIES ON SUBDIVISION LOTS 1, 3, 4 & 5 - 643 HUNTER ST – LOT 1 DP73668

At the time of the sale of Lots 1,3,4 and 5 by Reginald Joseph Rodgers to A.G. Healing Limited in 1953, Booths Furniture was still occupying the premises erected c.1920 on the corner of Hunter and Steel Streets as well as the adjacent showrooms fronting Steel Street. Apart from the showrooms the only other building fronting Steel Street on Lots 3 to 5 was a shop on Lot 5.122 It is unclear whether this was the former Chinese merchants store, a subsequent structure, or a shop connected to the showrooms.

A 1957 picture of Steel Street reveals that a single awning had been erected around the former furniture store on the corner of Hunter and Steel Streets and the Steel Street showrooms. By the end of the 1950s the A.G. Healing Ltd premises were rated as a single entry in Council rate books, namely 643 Hunter Street.<sup>123</sup>



Figure 21. Steel Street 1957. Fruit and vegetable trade in city market. The merged Steel Street showrooms and c.1920 corner building belonging to A.G. Healing Ltd visible top left. *Hood Collection, NSW State Library.* 

A. G. Healing Ltd was a Melbourne based company that had commenced operations in 1896. Before the company's collapse in the early 1970s, it "was an extensive enterprise, manufacturing everything from household electronic appliances, bicycles and even spanners to locomotives and other heavy equipment." The company sold household electrical and whitegoods from its store on the corner of Hunter and Steel Streets, Newcastle.

A 1965 photo shows Healings still occupying the c.1920 corner building and adjacent showrooms. However, a picture of Healing's store taken three years later reveals a completely different façade to that of a decade previously. It is likely that Healings remodelled and linked the existing premises rather than demolished and rebuilt. No evidence of demolition could be found in local newspaper reports but due to the unavailability of complete sets of council rate books for this period during the time of writing, the remodelling explanation cannot be verified in the available written historical evidence.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>125</sup> Norm Barney, *The First Two Hundred Years, A Hunter Pictorial*, Adamstown, 1997, p.120.



<sup>122</sup> Certificate of Title, Vol. 3768, Fols. 165 and 166, LPI; NCC Rate Book, 1954.

<sup>123</sup> NCC Rate Book, 1959.

<sup>124</sup> The Age, 14 August, 2002.

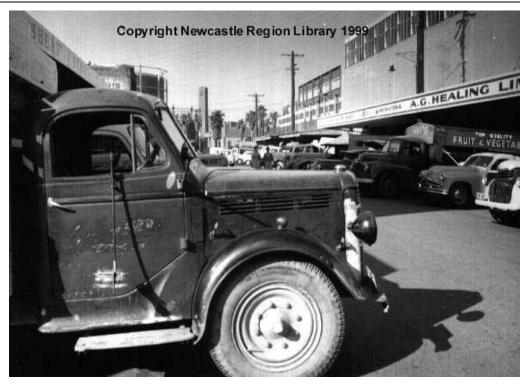


Figure 22. Steel Street 1968. New façade of A.G. Healing Ltd. Morrison Collection, Newcastle Region Library.

Following the company's closure, Lots 1, 3, 4, and 5 and the premises located thereon were transferred from A.G. Healing Ltd to Newcastle Land Pty Ltd in 1976. The new purchasers retained the property until 1978 when ownership was transferred to Mark Pears Investments Pty Ltd. By 1982 the property was again under new ownership, namely that of Newcastle company, Mansin Pty Ltd, which at the same time purchased Lot 108A and the Empire Hotel and 645/647 Hunter Street. <sup>126</sup>

It is likely that the current façade of the premises on the corner of Hunter and Steel Streets is a result of remodelling in the early 1980s following the sale to Mansin Pty. Ltd. Renowned property developer, Kurt Piccardi, who was responsible for redeveloping several sites in the vicinity of 643 Hunter Street during this period including, the Theatre Royal and the former Mackies Furniture Store site was associated with Mansin Pty. Ltd. 127 The current façade of 643 Hunter is very similar in style to many of Piccardi's projects.

The ground floor premises of 643 Hunter Street have been leased to numerous tenants since the 1980s and have been used for a variety of purposes including a floor coverings store, sporting goods shop, carpet specialist, liquor outlet, restaurant and most recently an Asian grocery and retail store. 128 A gymnasium has been in operation on the first floor for several years. Various alterations and repairs have been undertaken to the building over the years as changes of use have occurred. The building also sustained damage in the 1989 Newcastle Earthquake. 129

In 1989 ownership of Lots 1, 3, 4, and 5 was transferred from Mansin Pty Ltd to Michael Yip, George Lam and Ricky NG who retained the property until 1995 when it was transferred to Mok's Investments (Australia) Pty Ltd. 130

<sup>130</sup> Transfer Y467671; Title Search No. B135, LPI.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>126</sup> Certificate of Title Vol. 6666, Fol. 87; Conveyance Registration No. 809, Book No. 3520, LPI.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>127</sup> Second Schedule, Primary Application No. 57295, LPI; Hunter Development Board, *Hunter Region Directory* 1982-1983, Newcastle, 1983, pp.353-354.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>128</sup> Certificate of Title Vol. 6666, Fol. 87; Title Search No. B135, LPI.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>129</sup> Information supplied by Newcastle City Council Plan Room, July, 2003.

#### 2.7 SUBDIVISION LOT 2 645/647 HUNTER STREET - LOT 7 DP 631425

Commencing at a point 33 feet from the corner of Blane and Steel Streets, Lot 2 of Thompson's subdivision extended 33 feet along its Blane Street frontage to the Railway Hotel then south 66 feet to its southern border running along Lot 3 of the subdivision. Its eastern boundary extended 66 feet along Lot 1 of the subdivision. Following A.A.P. Tighe's purchase of Lot 2 from Thompson in 1878, the site remained vacant until around the mid 1880s when double terrace shops were erected. (The side of this building can be seen in a photograph of Gaites' City Marble Works and it would appear to be weatherboard in construction.) In 1884 Tighe gave local building contractors Alexander Shedden and Sons a 20 year lease on the property. <sup>131</sup>

Alexander Shedden was a well known local businessman who had acquired numerous properties in Newcastle. He became Mayor of the municipality of Wickham and an alderman in the City Council. The building company that he operated with his four sons, A. Shedden and Sons, "having erected some of the most effective buildings in the city and district." The company had workshops on the north side of Hunter Street almost opposite Lot 2. The rate books indicate that Shedden did not occupy the premises on Lot 2 preferring to sublease the shops. On the 1886 Mahlstedt and Gee Map, one shop is occupied by J. Jones, tailor, and the other by D. Williams, grocer 133

The ownership of Lot 2 was transferred to Tighe's daughter, Mable Cornish, together with the Empire Hotel in 1898.<sup>134</sup> Various tenants occupied these shop premises until the building was demolished some time between 1916 and 1920.<sup>135</sup> A 1920 site plan of Thompson's subdivision reveals a new two storey brick building erected on Lot 2, probably around the same time of the construction of the new premises on Lot 1.<sup>136</sup> The 1922 Map shows two shops operating out of the building on the lower level; one a refreshment room and the other a hairdresser salon. A billiard saloon was in operation on the upper level across both shops.<sup>137</sup> Whilst the ground floor shops of the new building were rented to various tenants the upper level billiard rooms continued to operate at least to the mid 1950s.<sup>138</sup>

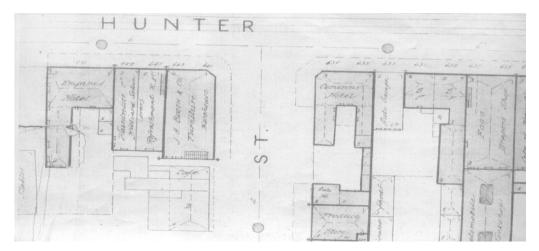


Figure 23. Liverpool and London Globe Insurance Company, Detailed Survey Map of the City of Newcastle, 1922. Newcastle Region Library.

<sup>138</sup> HDWB Rate Books, 1919-1940; NCC Rate Book, 1954.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>131</sup> Conveyance Registration No. 820, Book No. 182, Conveyance Registration No. 326, Book No. 624, LPI; Mahlstedt and Gee Survey Map, January, 1886, Newcastle Region Library.

<sup>132</sup> Turner, Who was Who..., p. 20.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>133</sup> Mahlstedt and Gee Survey Map, January, 1886, Newcastle Region Library; Gray and Milton, *Business Directory Almanac, Diary & Year Book For 1885*, Newcastle, 1885.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>134</sup> Conveyance Registration No. 326, Book No. 624, LPI.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>135</sup> HDWB Rate Books, 1892-1916.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>136</sup> Site Plan of W.C. Thompson's Subdivision of Lot 107A, April, 1920, LPI.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>137</sup> Liverpool and London Globe Insurance Company, Detailed Survey Map of the City of Newcastle 1922.

By 1937 the Union Bank was operating out of the ground floor premises of one of the shops and following the death of Mabel Cornish in 1947, her son Edgar Warren Cornish leased the ground floor to the ANZ Bank Ltd from 1953 on 3 year lease at £234 per year. <sup>139</sup> In 1982 the Cornish family sold Lot 2 to Mansin Pty Ltd (registered office 71-76 Hunter Street). <sup>140</sup> In 1989 the property was transferred to Michael Yip, George Lam and Ricky NG<sup>141</sup>who retained the property until 1995 when Mok's Investments (Australia) Pty Ltd became the new owners. <sup>142</sup>



Figure 24. Hunter Street looking west 1957, Steel Street corner on left. Hood Collection, NSW State Library.

#### 2.8 FIRE & DERELICITON

The hotel fell into disrepair and was gutted by fire in 2003.<sup>143</sup> The disused building became a residence for squatters and vandals, and succumbed to several more suspicious fires in the following years. A notable eyesore to the public, Newcastle City Council provided a push to have the building demolished in 2008, but this did not occur for some years to come.

There's been yet another suspicious fire inside the derelict Empire Hotel on Newcastle's Hunter Street. While little damage was caused to the building, Newcastle City Council says it will ramp up efforts to get it demolished. Almost every window bears scorch marks, testament to the number of fires ignited by squatters. Newcastle City Council today renewed calls for the Empire Hotel's owner to finally tear it down. "It's had two approvals, and the last one they pleaded with us to get it done as quickly as possible so that they could arrange their finances, so it could get on with demolition and on with the job," said Lord Mayor John Tate. Council gave that approval two months ago. 144

<sup>144</sup> http://media.nbnnews.com.au/index.php/2008/07/06/empire-hotel-fire/



<sup>139</sup> HDWB Rate Books, 1937-1940; Lease Registration No. 321, Book No. 2254, LPI.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>140</sup> Conveyance Registration No. 808, Book No. 3530, LPI.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>141</sup> Transfer Y467671, LPI.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>142</sup> Title Search No. B135, LPI.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>143</sup> http://www.governmentnews.com.au/2015/09/key-newcastle-site-up-for-grabs-again/



Figure 25. The disused hotel as a target for vandals in 2004. Empire Hotel - gdaypubs.com.au



Figure 26. The inside of the venue after various fires, photographed in 2008.

#### 2.9 CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP & DEMOLITION

The site was purchased by the State Government's Hunter Development Corporation (HDC) in 2010<sup>145</sup> and demolition of the remaining buildings followed soon after. Demolition works specifically left footings and in-ground material intact on the site, in the knowledge that archaeological relics may be present in the area. The findings of an Archaeological Report are presented in a following section of this document.



Figure 27. Demolition of the Empire Hotel, around 2011. www.theherald.com.au/story/1649801/hunter-street-empire-hotel-site-revamp/

The Hunter Development Corporation prepared a proposal for a 14 storey affordable housing development on the site, selecting *Newcastle First* as the preferred developer in 2014. Plans for this development were designed by EJE Architecture. Contractual negotiations unfortunately reached an impasse and the project was shelved in July 2015. The site went back on the market and was purchased by the current owners, the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle, who have prepared the enclosed application for development of the site. The building scheme, also designed by EJE Architecture, is similar to that proposed by HDC, but with revisions to the layout to provide a more diverse spread of dwelling types.

<sup>146</sup> http://www.newcastlestar.com.au/story/3223628/empire-hotel-housing-plan-wont-go-ahead/



<sup>145</sup> http://www.governmentnews.com.au/2015/09/key-newcastle-site-up-for-grabs-again/

#### 2.10 CONCLUSION

The timeline of the Empire Hotel buildings have reflected the changing commercial and entertainment fabric of this section of Newcastle's West End. The original development of these properties was part of the expansion of the commercial centre of Newcastle towards the west end of Hunter Street following the opening of the Great Northern Railway in 1857. By the turn of the twentieth century the West End was already firmly established as an important retail and entertainment sector within the city. The West End continued to flourish in the prosperous post Depression period, however, by the late 1960s the commercial activities of the area had begun to wane. When business and retail interests moved out into the suburbs following the development of large suburban shopping centres, the commercial life of the West End entered into a period of steady decline. This decline was plainly apparent at the Empire which fell into disrepair and abandonment in the early 2000's, resulting in its demolition. In recent years, strategies and plans to revitalise the area through retail, commercial, residential and tourism redevelopment, including the Honeysuckle Precinct Project, have been put into play.

The history of the sites themselves, if not necessarily all of the current buildings, can be linked to a number of NSW Heritage Council themes including Commerce, Leisure and significant Persons. In particular, Lots 3, 4, and 5 of Thompson's subdivision fronting Steel Street, can be linked to the theme of Ethnic Influence given that this was a focus for Chinese residential and commercial interests that contributed to the development of the fruit and vegetable trade in Steel Street. The history of ownership of these sites is also linked with the business endeavours of prominent members of the local community such as politician, A.A.P. Tighe and former retailers and businessmen Tom and Alfred Ingall and Frederick Rodgers.

The former Empire Hotel (formerly the Railway Inn) is the most historically significant building of the study site. The Empire Hotel was the first hotel built in the West End of Newcastle and once played a significant role in the cultural life of the local residents. However, the influence of the hotel would have been diminished with the establishment of larger, more elaborate hotels of the late Victorian era including the nearby Bellevue Hotel and Cameron's Family Hotel. Built to service the needs of travellers and the local population, the original Railway Inn was simple and functional in design unlike some of Newcastle's grander hotels of the late nineteenth century such as the Imperial in Scott Street, the Centennial, the Grand and the Crown and Anchor. Although it had undergone several major additions and numerous alterations throughout its history, there is nothing in the available records to indicate that the original external structure of the Railway inn built c.1855 was previously demolished. As such, and in light of the demise of other hotels listed as extant in the late 1850s, it would appear that the Empire Hotel was at the time of its demolition around 2011, the oldest standing hotel in the Newcastle CBD.

The current vacant site, with footings and in-ground from the hotel material intact, is not a heritage listed site under the Newcastle LEP 2012. Whilst the history of the site is pertinent and critical in its interpretation of the development of the West End of Newcastle, there is no obvious tangible remnant of this history visible or accessible on the site.

#### 3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT

An archaeological report by *Insite Heritage* was prepared for the site in 2004 with the Empire Hotel building still extant. The full document is included at the end of this report in Appendix 10.1. The report made the following conclusions about the archaeological context of the site:

The report finds that the site has very high potential to reveal information about Aboriginal occupation of the site. On the basis of 700 Hunter Street there is potential for thousands of artefacts to occur in possibly undisturbed contexts.

The Empire Hotel was found to be of high local significance retaining potential archaeological deposit and significant fabric. This fabric includes the rear wall of the 1855 structure and walls relating to the 1898 additions, the lower level of which has been partly modified. The study also found that there remains a potential for the preservation of footings relating to back yard structures such as sheds, outhouses and stables constructed between 1886 and 1954.

A full assessment of the remainder of the site has not been conducted yet however initial impressions have noted some elements of possibly original fabric and elements of numerous repairs and modifications.

It was subsequently described in the report that excavation of the site for subterranean car parking/ basement levels of a proposed building would have the most significant impact on the archaeological deposits of the site.

The likely presence of subterranean relics enacts the provisions of the *Heritage Act (NSW)* 1977, and the likely presence of material evidence of Aboriginal inhabitation of NSW on the site engages the provisions of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act (1979)*.

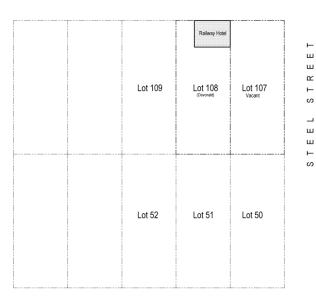
### **GRAPHIC TIMELINE**

Following is a graphic timeline of the location of structures on the site:

BLANE STREET

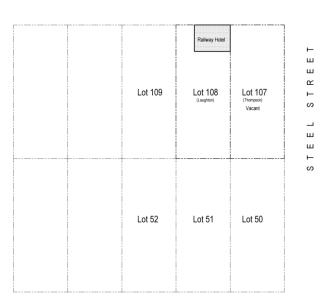
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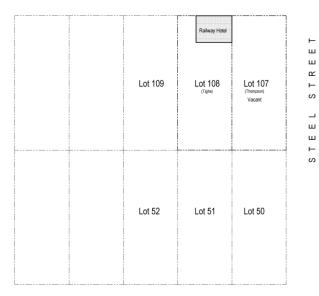


1855

HUNTER STREET



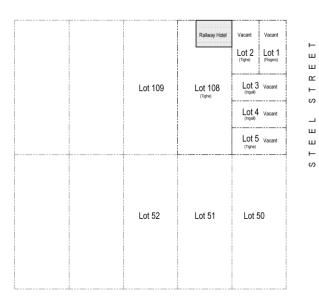
1875



1877

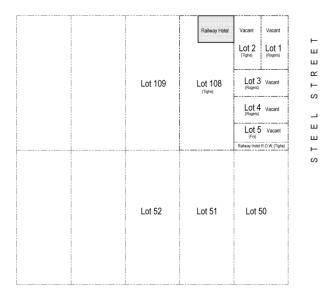
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HUNTER STREET



1878

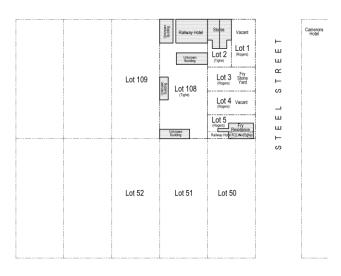
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1881

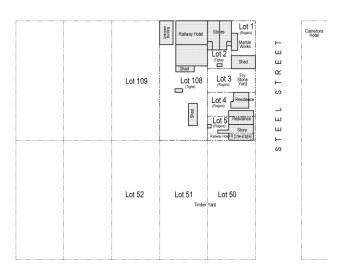
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#### HUNTER STREET



1886

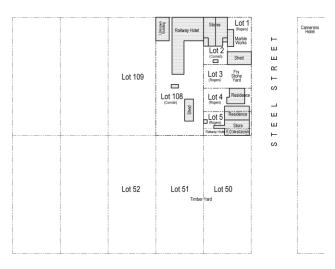
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1896

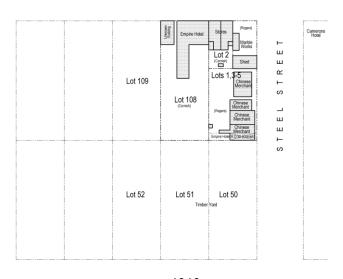
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HUNTER STREET



c.1898

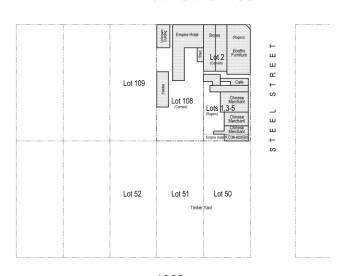
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c.1910

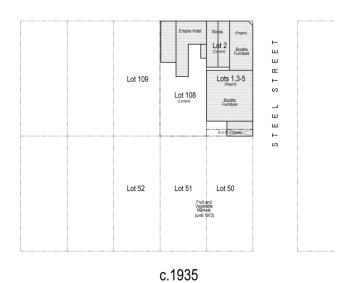
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HUNTER STREET

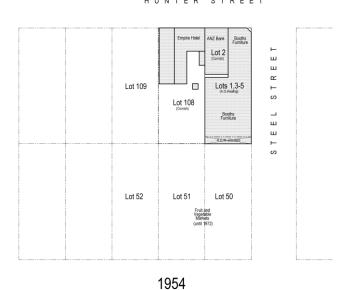


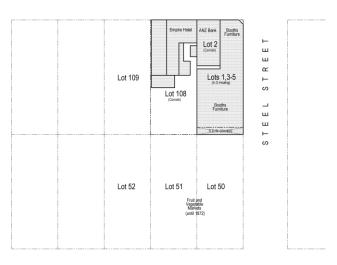
1922

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HUNTER STREET

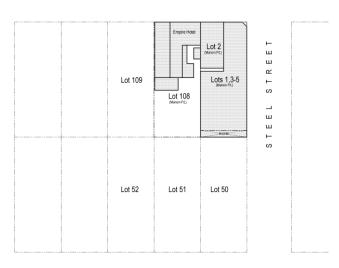




1969

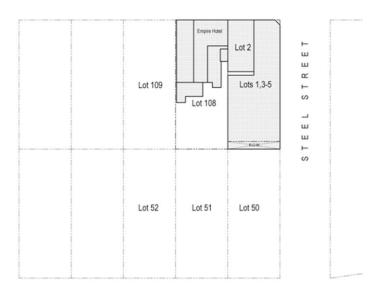
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HUNTER STREET



1982

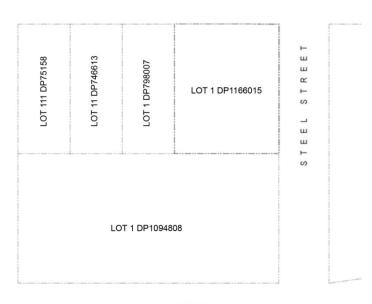
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2008

0 5 10 15 20 25m

HUNTER STREET



2016

0 5 10 15 20 25

#### 5. PHYSICAL CONDITION AND CONTEXT

#### 5.1 THE SITE

The site covers an area of 2079sq.m, it is rectangular in shape and aligned roughly North-South along its long axis. The site's north boundary, fronting Hunter Street, is roughly 41m in length. The east boundary, fronting Steel Street, is roughly 51m in length. The site is flat and level, and covered almost entirely in existing concrete slabs from former buildings and back yard areas. There is no vegetation present on the site.

#### 5.2 THE BUILDING

No buildings are extant on the site, having been demolished around 2011. The in-ground footings and concrete slabs of many former structures are remnant on the site.

#### 5.3 CURRENT USE

The site is currently vacant, and surrounded by a temporary building hoarding to prevent unauthorised access.

#### 5.4 CONDITION

The empty site is covered almost entirely in concrete slabs in poor condition.

#### 5.5 SURROUNDING CONTEXT

The site fronts the main commercial strip of Hunter Street, which general consists of one-three storey shopfronts and businesses, with occasional examples of commercial and residential buildings climbing higher to 8 or more storeys.

The east boundary of the site fronts Steel Street, a busy side road, linking the main thoroughfares of Hunter and King Street. Development on this road is limited to three storeys.

To the south of the site, the Travelodge Hotel sits in the middle of a more open site, with a two storey car park in its south-east corner. The hotel climbs to seven storeys with a plant equipment room above. Further to the south, across King Street, sits the Marketown shopping complex, with the Spire apartment buildings being constructed above.

To the east of the site, the shopfronts of Hunter Street are generally two storeys with car parking in a rear yard.

#### 6. HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The NSW heritage assessment criteria encompass four generic values in the Australian ICOMOS *Burra Charter 2013*: historical significance; aesthetic significance; scientific significance; and social significance.

These criteria will be used in assessing heritage significance of the place.

The basis of assessment used in this report is the methodology and terminology of the *Burra Charter 2013*; James Semple Kerr, *The Conservation Plan: A Guide to the Preparation of Conservation Plans for Places of European Cultural Significance*;<sup>147</sup> and the criteria promulgated by the Heritage Branch of the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage. The *Burra Charter 2013*, Article 26, 26.1, states that:

Work on a place should be preceded by studies to understand the place which should include analysis of physical, documentary, oral and other evidence, drawing on appropriate knowledge, skills and disciplines.

Places and items of significance are those which permit an understanding of the past and enrich the present, allowing heritage values to be interpreted and re-interpreted by current and future generations.

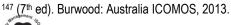
The significance of the place is determined by the analysis and assessment of the documentary, oral and physical evidence presented in the previous sections of this document. An understanding of significance allows decisions to be made about the future management of the place. It is important that such decisions do not endanger its cultural significance.

The NSW Heritage Manual, prepared by the former NSW Heritage Branch and Department of Urban Affairs and Planning, outlines the four broad criteria and processes for assessing the nature of heritage significance, along with two added criteria for assessing comparative significance of an item.

#### **Heritage Significance Criteria**

The NSW assessment criteria listed below encompass the following four values of significance:

- Historical significance
- □ Aesthetic significance
- □ Research/technical significance
- Social significance





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Listed below are the relevant Heritage Assessment Criteria identified in the Heritage Act:

- **Criterion (a)** An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).
- **Criterion (b)** An item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).
- **Criterion (c)** An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area).
- **Criterion (d)** An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.
- **Criterion (e)** An item has the potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).
- **Criterion (f)** An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).
- **Criterion (g)** An item is important in demonstrating the principle characteristics of a class of NSW's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments (or a class of the local area's cultural places; or cultural or natural environments).

An Assessment of Significance requires that a level of significance be determined for the place. The detailed analysis uses the levels of significance below:

LOCAL	Of significance to the local government area.
STATE	Of significance to the people of NSW.
NATIONAL	Exhibiting a high degree of significance, interpretability to the people of Australia.

#### 6.1 ANALYSIS OF SIGNIFICANCE

#### **Historical Significance**

Criterion (a) An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

The vacant site has low historical significance in this category, given that the above ground tangible historic fabric of the former hotel building has been demolished and removed.

Criterion (b) An item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

The site of the former hotel has moderate historical significance in this category, in that its association with former publicans, owners and patrons of the site across its history is well documented and recorded intangibly in written and photographic formats.

#### **Aesthetic And Technical Significance**

Criterion (c) An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area).

The demolition of the buildings of the site has removed any evidence of aesthetic and technical significance on the site.

#### **Social Significance**

Criterion (d) An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

The extant hotel would have had moderate to high social significance in the local context for former publicans, owners and patrons. The dereliction of the buildings and subsequent demolition however have removed any tangible evidence of this criteria from the site, and the subsequent low significance survives only intangibly within historical records of the former hotel.

#### **Research Significance**

Criterion (e) An item has the potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

The demolition of the buildings of the site has removed almost all potential for the attribution of research significance to the built structures of the site. The potential for archaeological research significance however is very high, given the occurrence of a high quantity of aboriginal artefacts discovered during archaeological survey on neighbouring sites, and the potential for some evidence of European inhabitation of the site in the form of footings of former buildings dating back to the late 1800's.

#### **Rarity Significance**

Criterion (f) An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).



The ubiquity of hotels the type and era of the Empire Hotel within the greater city gives the site a low significance in this category, although the age of the original structure lends perhaps more weight to the site than other nearby establishments. T

#### Representative Significance

Criterion (g)

An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments (or a class of the local area's cultural places; or cultural or natural environments).

The extant hotel would have had moderate to high social significance in the local context in its representative status as one of the oldest hotels in Newcastle; however its demolition has removed all significance in this category.

#### 6.2 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Following dereliction and demolition of the former Empire Hotel buildings, the site of 643-651 Hunter Street retains no accessible historic fabric that allows public responders to interpret the history of the site. The significance of the history of the site and buildings, namely the former Hotel's cultural role in the lives of patrons and its representative portrayal of the urban development and decline of Newcastle's West End, is now solely confined to documentary evidence such as written histories and photographs of the Hotel from years past. The vacant site in its existing condition as such has low historical significance, bordering on being intrusive in the context of the greater Heritage Conservation Area. This is reflected in the fact that the site is not a listed Heritage Item in the Newcastle LEP2012.

There is however potential for the site to be of high archaeological significance, particularly in relation to Aboriginal inhabitation of the area. Archaeological survey of adjacent sites has uncovered considerable amounts of archaeological material of this nature. The potential for the presence of relics from the first colonial occupation of the site through to the modern day is also considerable.

#### 7. PROPOSED WORKS

The proposal for development of the former Empire Hotel site involves the construction of a new 14 storey mixed use building that will occupy the entire site. The proposal does not include basement or any underground levels, meaning that excavation will be limited to that required for the buildings footings.

The ground level of the building consists primarily of a 702sq.m commercial space addressing Hunter Street and Steel Street; this zone has the ability to be split into multiple smaller tenancies or remain as one large lease area, and has the potential to be used by a hospitality industry such as a restaurant/ cafe. The commercial zone also includes accessible toilet and staff facilities, a loading dock and back of house areas and the level is accessible with disabled access ramps up from both Hunter Street and Steel Street. The ground floor also includes 15 car parks allocated to the commercial area. Facilities associated with the residential elements of the building also located on the ground floor include 29 bicycle parking spaces, a large communal garbage room, plant rooms, an electrical substation, and a central lift foyer.

The first floor car park includes 62 residential car parking spaces, 6 motorbike parking spaces and a long-term bicycle storage room for 15 bicycles along with 18 personal bicycle parking spaces adjacent to car parks. The second floor car park is similar in layout, but with 59 residential car parking spaces and four disabled parking spaces are included on this level.

Above the podium are 11 residential levels and a rooftop plant level. The residential levels incorporate in total 24 studio apartments; 33 one bedroom apartments, all of which are accessible; 68 two bedroom apartments, and 3 three bedroom apartments. Many of the apartments of level three, sitting above the podium, enjoy large private gardens. This level also houses as 66sq.m community room with kitchenette and accessible bathroom, and two community garden areas adjacent of 222sq.m and 40sq.m.

The plant level includes two generous plant rooms and two 78kL tank rooms, and a wraparound exterior roof terrace with pergola shading, planters and a mix of artificial grass and paved floor surfaces.

Proposed Floor Plans are included at the end of this document in Appendix 10.2

#### 8. STATEMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

This is the Statement of Heritage

Impact for:

The Empire Mixed Use Development

Date:

This statement was completed in May 2015

**Address and Property Description:** 

643-651 Hunter Street Newcastle, Lot 1 DP

1166015

Prepared by:

EJE Group

Prepared for:

The Catholic Diocese of Maitland, Newcastle.

The following aspects of the proposal respect or enhance the heritage significance of the item or area for the following reasons:

The intended continuation of the name "The Empire" returns and extenuates the strong association between the site and its former Hotel, providing an ongoing and promoted link between the site and its historical significance.

The proposal's deliberate intention to not include a basement level respects the high possibility that such work would disturb archaeological remnants from colonial and pre-colonial inhabitation of the site.

The following aspects of the proposal could detrimentally impact on the heritage significance of the item or area for the following reasons:

Any construction work on the site that disturbs the ground has the potential to disturb the possible archaeological deposit.

The following sympathetic design solutions were considered and discounted for the following reasons:

None.

The following actions are recommended to minimise disturbance and/or enhance the interpretation of the heritage significance of the item or area:

Applications will necessarily be made to the National Parks and Wildlife Service under the National Parks and Wildlife Act (1979) regarding the potential for disturbance of any archaeological deposit. The direction of the NPWS should be followed as to the management of any artefacts discovered or left in-situ on the site. Likewise, application should be made to the Heritage Council as per the provisions of the Heritage Act (1977), and their resulting directions complied with.

Some elements of heritage interpretation of the former Empire hotel's history should be included in the public or semi-public areas of the building. This could include for example plaques with historical information affixed to the exterior of the building at street level and/or a photographic history of the site displayed within the residential lobby or commercial fit out of the building on the ground floor.

#### 9. CONCLUSION

The site of the former Empire Hotel has a well documented and interesting history, painting a picture of the development of Newcastle's West End through early settlement, urban growth, decline, decay and recent renewal. The previous demolition of the Hotel building itself has however rendered the actual site less important in terms of this history for the general public, with documentary evidence now being the better reference for interpretation of any significance.

The potential for a significant archaeological deposit on the site is high, and direction from the National Parks and Wildlife Service and Heritage Council should be sought as to how to manage any deposit present.

Given the intrusive nature of the currently vacant site on the urban fabric of the West End, the proposed mixed-use development will only add to the cultural significance of the Heritage Conservation Area, in particular with its continuation of "The Empire" title for the building on the site.

EJE Heritage suggests that the proposal as such is in keeping with the aims of the DCP regarding the maintains of Cultural Significance in Heritage Conservation Areas, and recommends that Council allows the application to proceed on these grounds.

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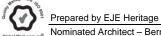
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NSW Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, <a href="http://www.nsw.gov.au">http://www.nsw.gov.au</a> Nearmap (by license) - <a href="http://au.nearmap.com/">http://au.nearmap.com/</a>

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NSW LPI: Spatial Information Exchange - http://maps.six.nsw.gov.au/

#### 11. APPENDIX

- 11.1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL REPORT INSITE HERITAGE 2004
- 11.2 PROPOSED FLOOR PLANS EJE ARCHITECTURE 2016

INSITE HERITAGE
295 DOBELL DRIVE
WANGI WANGI NSW 2267

# ARCHAELOGICAL REPORT

643 - 651

# HUNTER STREET NEWCASTLE

PREPARED FOR
EJE TOWN PLANNING

Date

16 September 2004

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#### SUMMARY

This report documents the archaeological assessment of 643-651 Hunter Street, Newcastle. The report was prepared by Angela Besant BA (hons) in archaeology ANU, for Insite Heritage. The history of the site has been prepared in a separate document by Hunter History Consultants.

The report is based on a review of the site history, plans provided by EJE, an inspection of the Empire Hotel and inspection of the external facades of the buildings facing Steel Street. The report addresses the archaeological potential of the site to reveal further information regarding human occupation of the site.

The report finds that the site has very high potential to reveal information about Aboriginal occupation of the site. On the basis of 700 Hunter Street there is potential for thousands of artefacts to occur in possibly undisturbed contexts.

The Empire Hotel was found to be of high local significance retaining potential archaeological deposit and significant fabric. This fabric includes the rear wall of the 1855 structure and walls relating to the 1898 additions, the lower level of which has been partly modified. The study also found that there remains a potential for the preservation of footings relating to back yard structures such as sheds, outhouses and stables constructed between 1886 and 1954.

A full assessment of the remainder of the site has not been conducted yet however initial impressions have noted some elements of possibly original fabric and elements of numerous repairs and modifications.

#### PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development comprises demolition of several buildings and excavation to two basement levels. The amalgamation of the numerous parcels of land forming the corner of Steel and Hunter Streets, Newcastle is also proposed. On the amalgamated lots it is then proposed to erect a 15 storey building, plus ground floor (total 16) and new access routes. Two basement levels have also been proposed, and it is these that are likely to have the greatest impact on Aboriginal heritage.

A development plan has not been available for review at this stage.

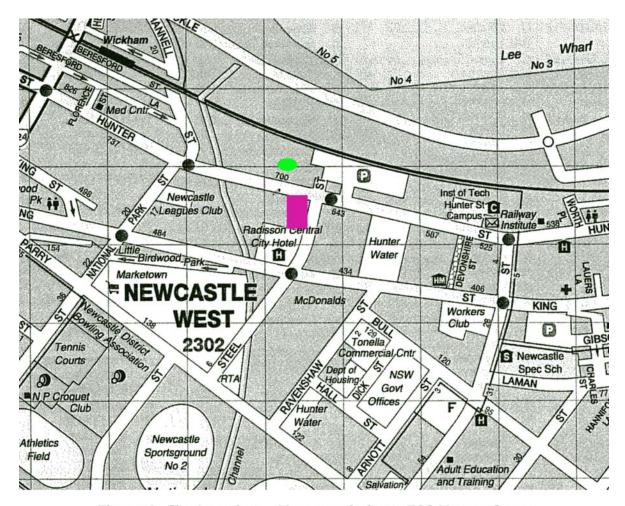


Figure 1 - Site Location . Note proximity to 700 Hunter Street

Photograph 1: View from rear of Hotel toward the open concrete parking area the size of which can be seen in the plans.



Photograph 2: View toward 700 Hunter Street, The Ibis Motel.



#### **ISSUES**

The site lies within an area identified as having archaeological potential in the Newcastle Archaeological Management Plan, 1997. The site is within the vicinity of known heritage items. The site is located across the road and about 50 metres east of 700 Hunter Street, where a large Aboriginal occupation area was located in the course of previous investigations.

#### BACKGROUND

#### LOCAL BACKGROUND

In 2001 excavations were carried out at 700 Hunter Street, the site of the Roman Catholic Cemetery between 1841 and 1881. Fifty-five intact burials were identified and two hundred and sixty three archaeological contexts were recorded. These contexts would include items of material culture and soil profile disturbances. One burial vault was found abutting the western margins of the site. Scattered fragmentary human remains were found associated with early 20th century exhumations. The excavation probes were 1 metre square and placed five metres apart. The probes found that the intact burials were located below the end levels of the proposed development thus allowing for the retention in-situ.

The same excavations revealed extensive Aboriginal occupation of the site. The stratigraphy of the site showed superimposed layers of fill, bedding, and hard surfaces lying over a modified natural soil profile (AHMS, 2001). The underlying natural soil profile comprised black humic or dark grey sandy loam topsoil, over dark-grey sandy loam over Yellow / Brown sand . The soil profiles were consistent with Aeolean process during the late Pleistocene – early Holocene. The total of indigenous artefacts retrieved was > 4,000. The sample also contained 326 pieces of mammal, fish and bird bone and 2,939 whole and fragmented shell pieces of estuarine species. The stone types included silcrete, chert and quartz, and contained a wide range of artefact types. Cores flakes, and knapping waste indicates in-situ knapping occurred. The occupation of the site was dated to a minimum of 4,000 years ago through to settlement, although the many artefacts are potentially older (AHMS, 1997).

#### FIELD SURVEY RESULTS

A site inspection was carried out in March 2004. The following conditions were noted.

#### Aboriginal Heritage:

The entire site is covered by building structures, or concrete pads of associated parking areas. There is no visible natural surface and no opportunities to probe sub-surface without first penetrating concrete. Therefore the assessment of the site in terms of potential to contain cultural heritage material is based solely on the findings of 700 Hunter Street, a site that can be anticipated to contain the same landscape elements.

Geotechnical bores were noted on the site and the contractors contacted. Unfortunately the bores were designed to locate underground coal workings and no records of the overlying strata were recorded. Therefore it is necessary to anticipate that the site is likely to contain the same or similar sub surface strata as 700 Hunter Street, located approximately 50 metres northwest.

#### Urban settlement history:

The site and grounds of the Empire Hotel were inspected. The following elements were noted:

- Sections of the rear wall of the bar appear to date from the original 1855 building. Whilst
  reference is made to the replacement of doorjambs and skirtings in 1959 –1969 (HHC,
  2003), the doorjambs (and window frames) in this wall exhibit indications of the earlier
  phase of occupation based on door latch heights and multiple hinge rebates.
- 2. The front portion of the original 1855 building was set back from the front building line and replaced as part of the 1890 extension appear to remain intact.

#### Archaeological potential:

The site inspection and review of the site history found the following items that might remain on the Empire Hotel site:

Remnant footings of stables and outbuildings may remain under the slab at the rear of
the site. Figure 2 demonstrates the locations of buildings noted by a review of the historic
record of the site. The locations shown are the area of the structures that now lie under
the rear concrete slab / car park eliminating sections that have been intercepted by later
buildings.

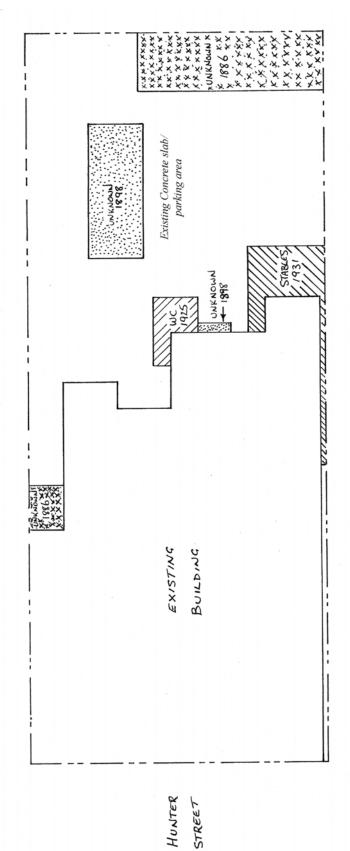


Figure 2 - Possible footing location under existing slab



- 2. The use of certain outbuildings is currently unknown and it is probable that some would have been outhouses that will result in vertical deposits. Buildings such as stables are likely to have had flagged stone flooring that may remain under the concrete.
- 3. There may be domestic and hotel related items / refuse under the flooring areas of the building (excluding the cellar), the paved floor area, the rear concrete slab. These items are likely to result from discard activities and shall vary over the site according to the contemporary footprint of development at the time.

It was not possible to inspect the other buildings on the site other than from the outside. The other buildings on the subject site did not appear to retain the level of original elements as the Empire. The brick walling facing the lane way between lot 2 and lots 1, 3 & 5 and the evolution of the building footprint, indicate that walls may retain portions of early structures and portions of extension and repair. The wall abutting the eastern side of the Empire (circa 1886) appears to possibly be original to about 3 or 4m in height with additions above this.

#### RELEVANT LEGISLATION

The assessment, impact analysis and management recommendations are developed in consideration of the following legislative framework.

#### THE NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE ACT 1974

The NPW Act (section 90) provides statutory protection for all material evidence of Aboriginal occupation of NSW. Aboriginal places which are areas of cultural significance to the Aboriginal community, are also protected by the 1974 Act (section 84) which states that:

- Aboriginal places within the Act are defined as any landscape feature deemed significant by the traditional owners of that area; and
- The Minister may declare lands to be 'protected archaeological areas' to preserve Aboriginal places and relics; and
- It is an offence to disturb or destroy an Aboriginal place or relic without first obtaining written consent from the Director of National Parks and Wildlife Service NSW.

A permit under Section 87(1) of the Act it is required prior to attempting to locate an Aboriginal object.

To excavate or disturb land to locate objects without the appropriate permit is an offence under Section 86 of the Act.

#### THE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT (1979)

The EP&A Act states that environmental impacts are to be considered in land use planning. The term 'environmental impacts' specifically relates to Aboriginal heritage in three parts.

Part III covers planning instruments such as State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPP), Regional Environmental Plans (REP) and Local Environmental Plans (LEP). The REP and LEP can specify the following;

- Zones of appropriate land use; and
- Identification of constraints within these zones.

The guidelines on the preparation of planning instruments specifically state that Aboriginal heritage should be assessed as an integral part of these studies.

Part IV of the Act determines the way in which consent authorities make decisions regarding development applications. Section 79C (b) states that the impact of development on the natural or built environment should be considered before consent is granted.

Part V of the EP&A Act also points out that State government agencies which act as determining authorities must also conduct reviews of their own or other agencies activities in terms of impact on the environment. Where these impacts are deemed to be minimal a Review of Environmental Factors is required, although where impacts are greater an EIS would be generated. This part of the Act requires that;

- Any impacts on a locality having aesthetic, anthropological, architectural, cultural, historic, scientific, recreational, scenic or
- Social significance or other special value for present of future generations' (DUAP 1995) be accounted for.

#### THE HERITAGE ACT (NSW) 1977

The Heritage Act provides protection to all relics, making it illegal to disturb or excavate land to discover, expose or move a relic, without a permit issued by the NSW Heritage Council. Relics are defined as deposit, object or material evidence relating to the settlement of the area that comprises NSW fifty or more years old (*Heritage Act 1977 s.4 (1)*). Where potential archaeological sites have been identified the proponent must provide and archaeological assessment, notify the Heritage Council of New South Wales and consider comments received and ensure that all necessary excavation permits under the *Heritage Act 1977* have been granted.

#### SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT

Significance assessment in heritage management is an evaluation of cultural significance, which has been defined by the Australia ICOMOS¹ Burra Charter (1988) as follows:

*Cultural significance* means aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value for past, present or future generations (Article 1.2).

In the case of Aboriginal cultural heritage, the significance of a site to the Aboriginal people is particularly important. However, this is not the only criterion by which significance is assessed, and it should be pointed out that a site might have a mix of aesthetic, historic, scientific and social values. A series of definitions of these criteria has been adapted from *Looking after heritage places* (Pearson & Sullivan 1995: 134-165) and is provided below.

Aesthetic value – In essence this includes all aspects of sensory perception. It can be particularly applicable to landscapes, and in the case of Aboriginal sites is of special importance when evaluating art sites and cultural landscapes. Qualities that may be present in a site or landscape that displays aesthetic value are:

Abstract qualities- presence of rare features or combinations of features;

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> International Council on Monuments and Sites

Evocative responses- an ability of a site or landscape to evoke strong responses from viewers;

Meanings- the existence of long-standing special meaning for a group of people, together with an ability to convey that meaning to the viewer;

Landmark quality- features that make it stand out in the view of the broader community;

Landscape integrity- existence of a natural and/or cultural character that has suffered minimal degradation.

*Historic value* – This relates to the way in which a place has influenced or been influenced by, an historic figure, event, phase or activity. Such value is increased in cases where there is *in situ* archaeological evidence of that aspect of the place's history. With regard to Aboriginal cultural heritage, historic value relates to people, events and activities that involved contact between Aborigines and European settlers.

Scientific value – Scientific significance (also referred to as archaeological significance) can be defined as research potential; that is, the potential for further study of a site to help with answering research questions. Scientific value is often dependant on site integrity together with the rarity of information contained in the site, and the site's representativeness (i.e. is the site representative of a particular type, time period etc for that locality, region or the country as a whole?). Representativeness is important because the aim of cultural heritage management is to conserve a representative sample of site types for a given region.

Social value – Social value encompasses the way in which a place is significant to a majority or minority group. This can range from such things as the potential of a site as an educational resource to the wider community, or the importance of a site to the local Aboriginal community. The importance afforded a place by the Aboriginal community is one of the most important criteria in assessing significance for Aboriginal sites, and can only be determined through consultation with the Aboriginal people. The significance of a site to the Aboriginal people may be based on many things, some examples are: connections to spiritual beliefs; connection to traditional practices; or its importance in their history of contact with European settlers.

#### SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENT

**Aboriginal cultural heritage** – the location of the subject area and the relatively low impact of the built environment in this soil landscape renders this site as having potentially high regional significance, for the following reasons:

- 1. The accumulation of sand since the late Pleistocene could potentially conserve Aboriginal living surfaces over a great deal of time. These surfaces could occur at some depth depending on the geomorphology and subsequent disturbance of the site.
- 2. The density of artefacts at 700 Hunter Street gives an indication how rich in artefact density and variety the assemblage may be.
- 3. The concreted area at the rear of the Empire Hotel may overly particularly undisturbed deposits; it is also possible that relatively undisturbed deposits can be found between the footings of older structures where excavation has been minimal.

Without further information as to the geomorphology of the site it is not possible to provide a definitive significance assessment of the subject area.

Whilst it has been suggested that a Section 90 Consent be sought, this is unlikely to be granted until the character and potential significance of the material can be proven. Therefore a Section 87 permit should be sought for exploratory purposes.

#### Heritage Significance

The Empire Hotel retains elements of an 1850's building in good order, and elements of the 1890s extension also in good order (ground floor brickwork, verandah and second storey). As the building is reputed to be the first pub built in Newcastle West in response to the development of the railway, it retains high local significance under the following themes: urban development, community development and transport.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

On the basis of work conducted at nearby 700 Hunter Street the following recommendations are made:

- 1. A section 87(1) permit be sought from NPWS. This permit would approve a testing program to determine the character of heritage items on the site.
- 2. Pursuant to the results the proponent: (a) could seek a section 90 consent from the Director General of NPWS, with the support of Awabakal Local Aboriginal Land Council and any other community groups identified by NPWS with or without mitigation dependant upon the significance of the findings in stage one.

#### Historic Archaeology

On the basis of the site history and NSW Heritage Act, 1977 the following recommendations are made:

- 1. Mitigation by conservation should be considered for those elements considered of high local significance.
- 2. A Section 140 permit will be required prior to excavation of the site.

### **APPENDIX A**

### SITE DEVELOPMENT

(courtesy of EJE Town Planning)





### ARCHITECTURAL DRAWING SCHEDULE

**COVER SHEET** A001 SITE PLAN A002 SITE ANALYSIS PLAN A003 SITE LOCALITY PLAN

A102 GROUND LEVEL FLOOR PLAN A103 LEVEL 1 FLOOR PLAN - CARPARK

A104 LEVEL 2 FLOOR PLAN - CARPARK A105 LEVEL 3 FLOOR PLAN - PODIUM

A106 LEVEL 4 FLOOR PLAN A107 LEVEL 5 FLOOR PLAN

A108 LEVEL 6 FLOOR PLAN

A109 LEVEL 7 FLOOR PLAN A110 LEVEL 8 FLOOR PLAN

A111 LEVEL 9 FLOOR PLAN

A112 LEVEL 10 FLOOR PLAN A113 LEVEL 11 FLOOR PLAN

A114 LEVEL 12 FLOOR PLAN

A115 LEVEL 13 FLOOR PLAN A116 PLANT LEVEL FLOOR PLAN

A117 ROOF LEVEL FLOOR PLAN

A501 NORTH ELEVATION A502 EAST ELEVATION

A503 SOUTH ELEVATION

A504 WEST ELEVATION

A505 SECTION A-A & B-B

A1000.1 SHADOW DIAGRAM - 9 AM A1000.2 SHADOW DIAGRAM - 12 NOON

A1000.3 SHADOW DIAGRAM - 3 PM

A1001 PERSPECTIVE 01 A1002 PERSPECTIVE 02

A1003 PERSPECTIVE 03 A1004 PERSPECTIVE 04 A1005 PERSPECTIVE 05

A1011 PHOTOMONTAGE 01 A1012 PHOTOMONTAGE 02

A1013 PHOTOMONTAGE 03

A1016 SCHEDULE OF EXTERNAL FINISHES

A1020 NOTIFICATION - SITE PLAN

A1021 NOTIFICATION - NORTH ELEVATION (HUNTER STREET) ALLOWABLE FSR 5:1 (MIXED-USE RESIDENTIAL)

A1022 NOTIFICATION - EAST ELEVATION (STEEL STREET)

# UNIT MIX - 128 UNITS TOTAL

24 x STUDIOS 33 x 1 BED UNITS 68 x 2 BED UNITS

3 x 3 BED UNITS

702m<sup>2</sup> RETAIL / COMMERCIAL SPACE

136 CAR SPACES

### PLANNING CONTROLS

SITE AREA 2,078.5m<sup>2</sup>

PROPOSED GFA 9,899m<sup>2</sup>

PROPOSED FSR 4.76:1

## BASIX INFORMATION

# MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT 643-651 HUNTER STREET, NEWCASTLE, NSW 2300

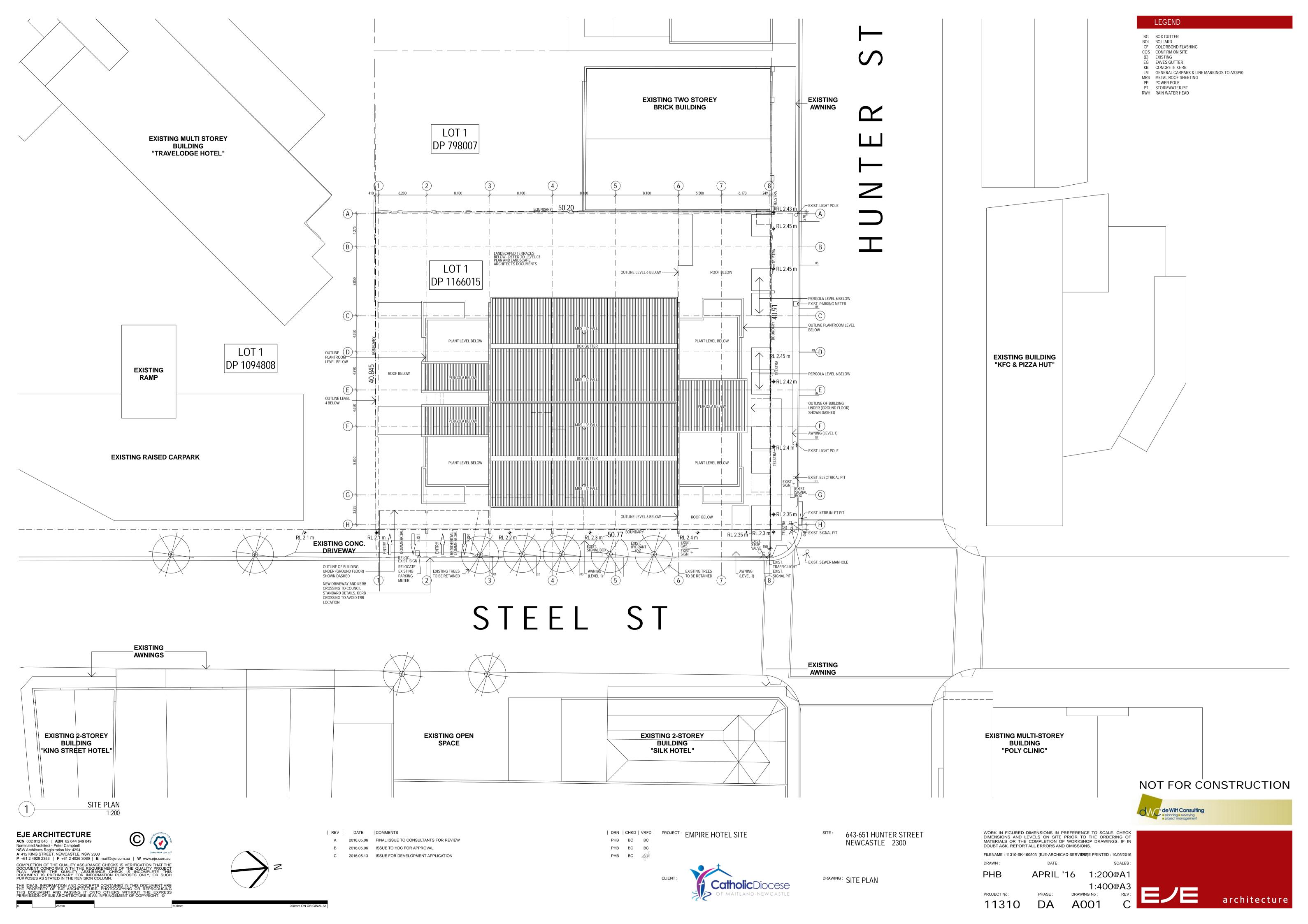


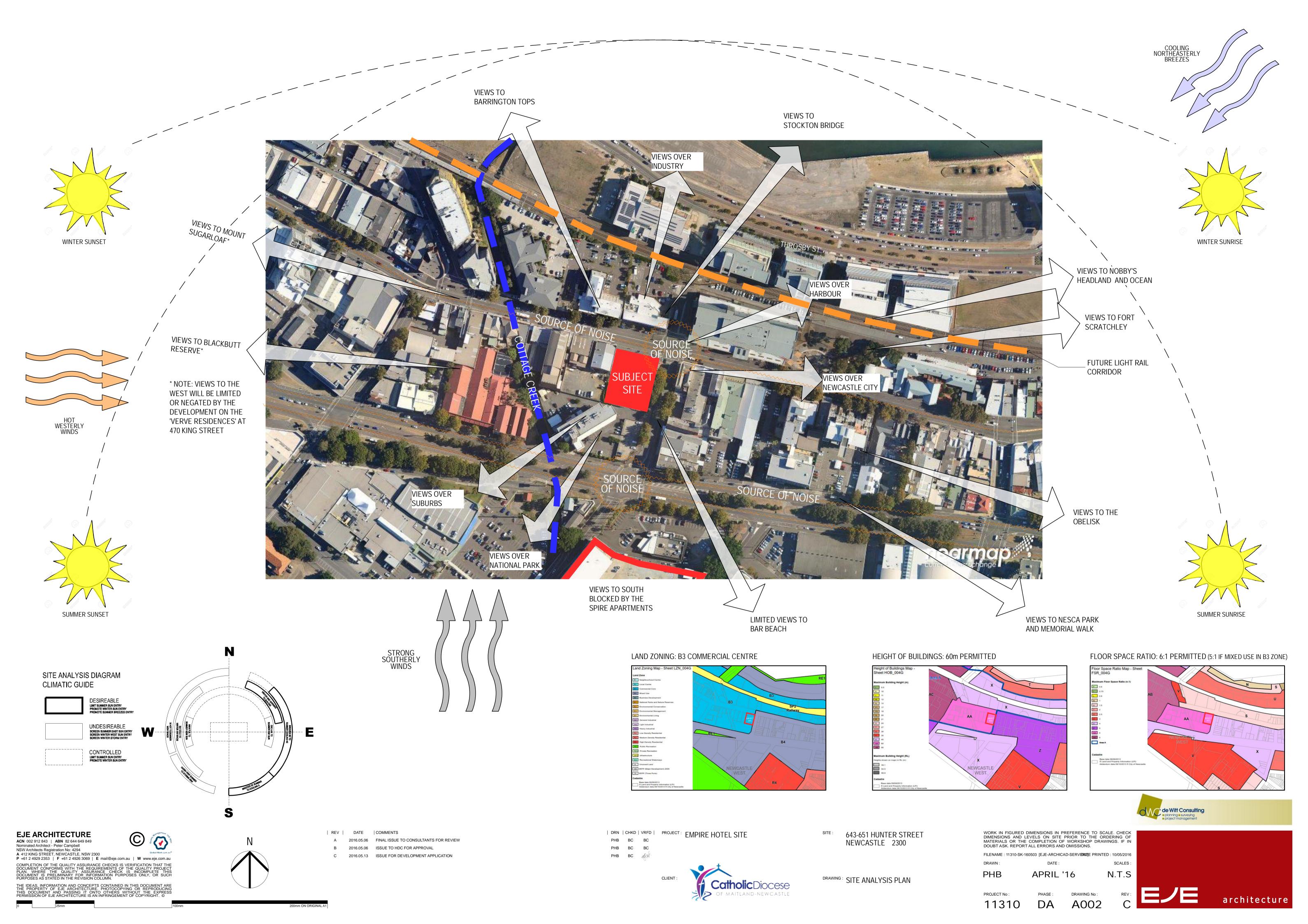
**EJE ARCHITECTURE** 

ACN 002 912 843 | ABN 82 644 649 849 Nominated Architect - Peter Campbell | NSW Architects Registration No: 4294 P +61 2 4929 2353 | F +61 2 4926 3069 | E mail@eje.com.au | W www.eje.com.au A 412 King Street, Newcastle, NSW 2300 COMPLETION OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE CHECKS IS VERIFICATION THAT THE DOCUMENT CONFORMS WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE QUALITY PROJECT PLAN. WHERE THE QUALITY ASSURANCE CHECK IS INCOMPLETE THIS DOCUMENT IS PRELIMINARY FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY, OR SUCH PURPOSES AS STATED IN THE REVISION COLUMN.



A511 STREET ELEVATIONS - COLOURED







'THE HUXLEY' APARTMENTS UNDER CONSTRUCTION



'THE COVE' APARTMENTS COMPLETED RECENTLY



738 HUNTER ST APARTMENTS COMPLETED RECENTLY



'EDITION' APARTMENTS UNDER CONSTRUCTION



'PINNACLE' APARTMENTS COMPLETED RECENTLY



THE EMPIRE HOTEL SITE APARTMENTS -SUBJECT OF CURRENT DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL



'ICON' APARTMENTS DEVELOPMENT APPROVAL GRANTED



'VERVE' RESIDENCES PROPOSAL CURRENTLY BEING ASSESSED



SITE CONTEXT PHOTO - CORNER OF STEEL AND KING STREETS



'THE SPIRE' APARTMENTS CURRENTLY UNDER CONSTRUCTION

| DRN | CHKD | VRFD | PROJECT: EMPIRE HOTEL SITE



SITE CONTEXT PHOTO - CNR OF STEEL AND HUNTER STS

PHB



WORK IN FIGURED DIMENSIONS IN PREFERENCE TO SCALE. CHECK DIMENSIONS AND LEVELS ON SITE PRIOR TO THE ORDERING OF MATERIALS OR THE COMPLETION OF WORKSHOP DRAWINGS. IF IN DOUBT ASK. REPORT ALL ERRORS AND OMISSIONS.

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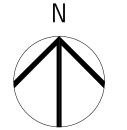
ACN 002 912 843 | ABN 82 644 649 849

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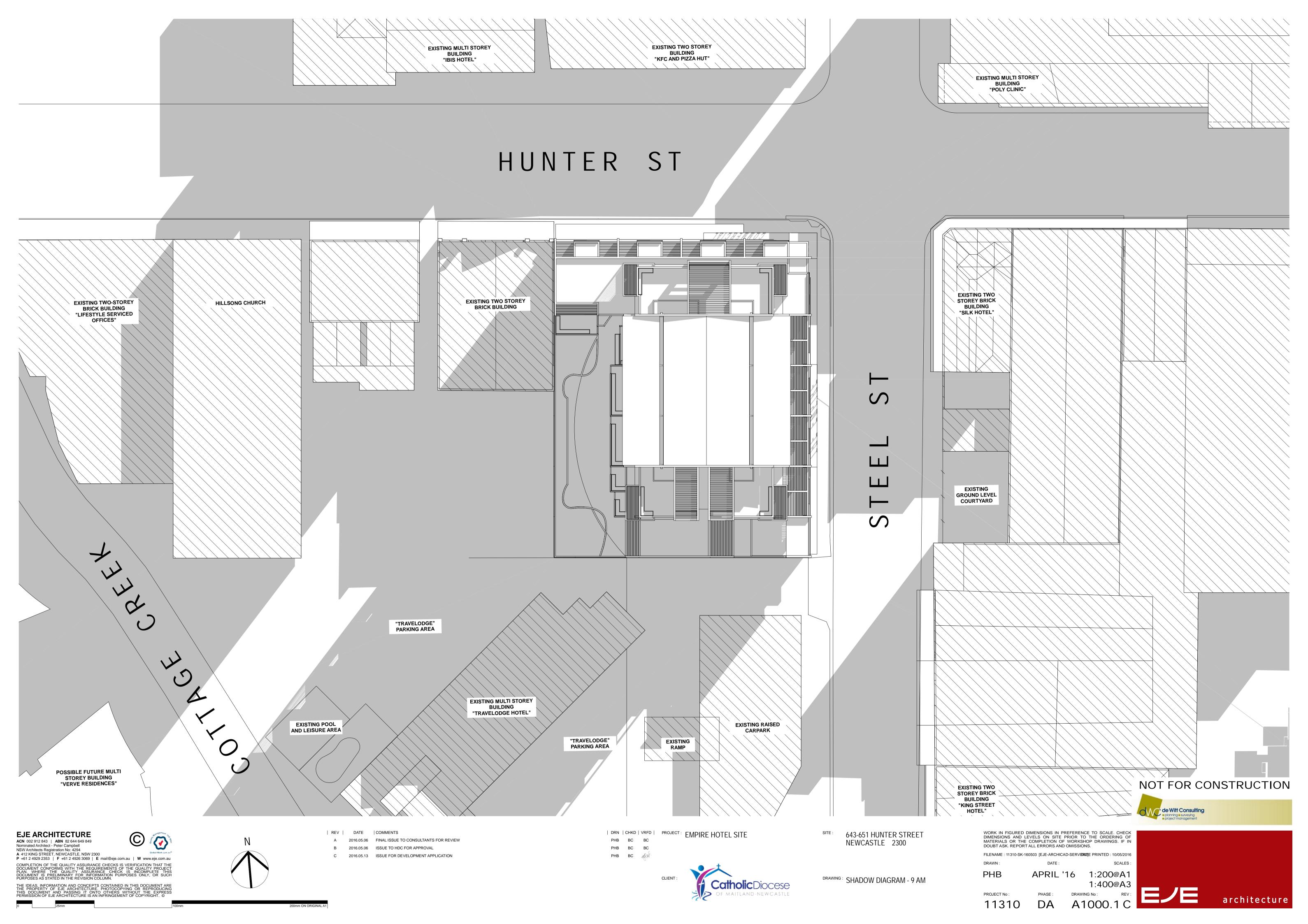
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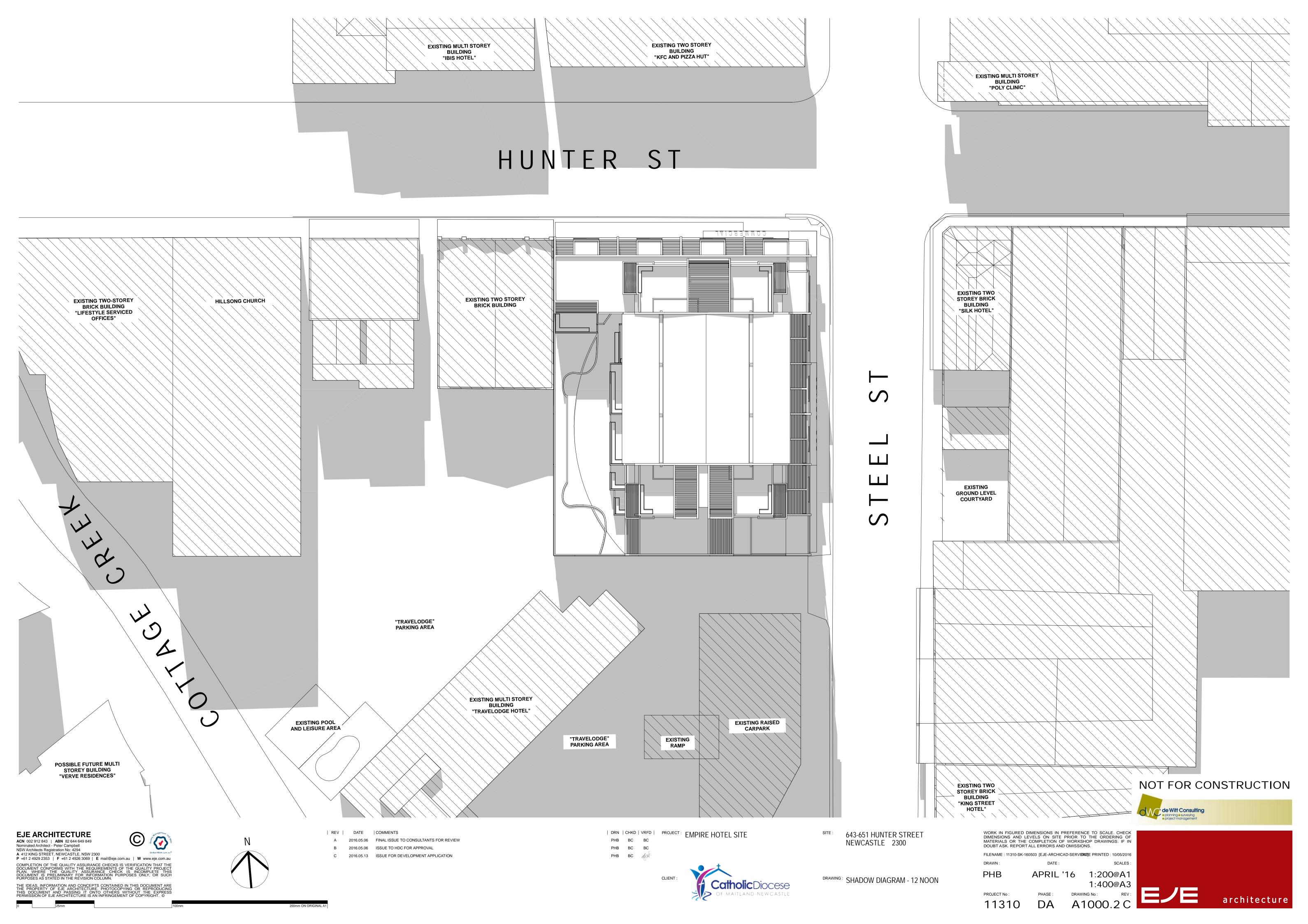
PHB BC

PHB BC BC

DRAWING: SITE LOCALITY PLAN

643-651 HUNTER STREET NEWCASTLE 2300





**EXISTING TWO STOREY EXISTING MULTI STOREY** BUILDING

"KFC AND PIZZA HUT" BUILDING "IBIS HOTEL" EXISTING MULTI STOREY
BUILDING
"POLY CLINIC" HUNTER ST EXISTING TWO STOREY BRICK EXISTING TWO STOREY
BRICK BUILDING **EXISTING TWO-STOREY** HILLSONG CHURCH BUILDING BRICK BUILDING
"LIFESTYLE SERVICED "SILK HOTEL" S **EXISTING** COURTYARD S "TRAVELODGE" PARKING AREA **EXISTING MULTI STOREY** BUILDING "TRAVELODGE HOTEL" EXISTING POOL AND LEISURE AREA EXISTING RAISED CARPARK "TRAVELODGE" EXISTING PARKING AREA RAMP POSSIBLE FUTURE MULTI STOREY BUILDING "VERVE RESIDENCES" NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION **EXISTING TWO** STOREY BRICK BUILDING **"KING STREET** de Witt Consulting

planning surveying
project management HOTEL" | DRN | CHKD | VRFD | PROJECT: EMPIRE HOTEL SITE WORK IN FIGURED DIMENSIONS IN PREFERENCE TO SCALE. CHECK DIMENSIONS AND LEVELS ON SITE PRIOR TO THE ORDERING OF MATERIALS OR THE COMPLETION OF WORKSHOP DRAWINGS. IF IN 643-651 HUNTER STREET **EJE ARCHITECTURE** | REV | DATE | COMMENTS ACN 002 912 843 | ABN 82 644 649 849
Nominated Architect - Peter Campbell
NSW Architects Registration No: 4294
A 412 KING STREET, NEWCASTLE, NSW 2300
P +61 2 4929 2353 | F +61 2 4926 3069 | E mail@eje.com.au | W www.eje.com.au A 2016.05.06 FINAL ISSUE TO CONSULTANTS FOR REVIEW PHB BC BC NEWCASTLE 2300 DOUBT ASK. REPORT ALL ERRORS AND OMISSIONS. B 2016.05.06 ISSUE TO HDC FOR APPROVAL PHB BC BC FILENAME: 11310-SK-160503 [EJE-ARCHICAD-SERVED PRINTED: 10/05/2016 C 2016.05.13 ISSUE FOR DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION PHB BC COMPLETION OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE CHECKS IS VERIFICATION THAT THE DOCUMENT CONFORMS WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE QUALITY PROJECT PLAN. WHERE THE QUALITY ASSURANCE CHECK IS INCOMPLETE THIS DOCUMENT IS PRELIMINARY FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY, OR SUCH PURPOSES AS STATED IN THE REVISION COLUMN. DRAWN: SCALES: APRIL '16 1:200@A1 PHB DRAWING: SHADOW DIAGRAM - 3 PM 1:400@A3 PROJECT No:

architecture



VIEW FROM HUNTER STREET TO STEEL STREET

EJE ARCHITECTURE ACN 002 912 843 | ABN 82 644 649 849 Nominated Architect - Peter Campbell

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 C 2016.05.16 ISSUE FOR DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION

| DRN | CHKD | VRFD | PROJECT: EMPIRE HOTEL SITE PHB BC BC PHB BC #F



SITE: 643-651 HUNTER STREET NEWCASTLE 2300

DRAWING: PERSPECTIVE 01

MAY '16

PHB

PROJECT No: PHASE: DRAWING No: REV: 11310 DA A1001 C





VIEW FROM HUNTER STREET

EJE ARCHITECTURE
ACN 002 912 843 | ABN 82 644 649 849
Nominated Architect - Peter Campbell

| DATE | COMMENTS |
2016.04.15 | PRELIMINARY ISSUE FOR COORDINATION |
2016.04.20 | ISSUE FOR COORDINATION TO CONSULTANTS |
2016.05.06 | FINAL ISSUE TO COORDINATION TO CONSULTANTS |
2016.05.06 | FINAL ISSUE TO CONSULTANTS FOR REVIEW |
2016.05.06 | ISSUE TO HOC FOR APPROVAL |
2016.05.16 | ISSUE FOR DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION |

PHB BC BC

SITE: 643-651 HUNTER STREET NEWCASTLE 2300

DRAWING: PERSPECTIVE 02

NTS PHB APRIL '16

PHASE: DRAWING NO: REV: 11310







| DRN | CHKO | VRFD | PROJECT: EMPIRE HOTEL SITE
PHB BC BC
PHB BC A

SITE: 643-651 HUNTER STREET NEWCASTLE 2300

DRAWING: PERSPECTIVE 03

11310

NTS PHB MAY '16

PHASE: DRAWING No: REV: DA A1003 B





VIEW FROM HUNTER STREET TOWARDS EAST



| DRN | CHKD | VRFD | PROJECT: EMPIRE HOTEL SITE PHB BC BC PHB BC A

643-651 HUNTER STREET NEWCASTLE 2300

DRAWING: PERSPECTIVE 04

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PHASE: DRAWING No: REV: DA A1004 B





## CORNER HUNTER STREET AND STEEL STREET

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643-651 HUNTER STREET NEWCASTLE 2300

PHB MAY '16

11310



DRAWING: PERSPECTIVE 05

DA A1005 B

METAL COMPOSITE CLADDING (MCC.1) AS SCHEDULED WOOD LOOK RENDERED BLOCKWORK WALL (WHITE PAINT FINISH) POWDERCOATED FIXED AND OPERABLE ALUMINIUM LOUVRES METAL FRAME — CLEAR GLASS TO WINDOWS AND DOORS -GLASS FACADE PANELS -METAL COMPOSITE CLADDING (MCC.2) AS SCHEDULED METAL COMPOSITE CLADDING (MCC.1) AS SCHEDULED WOOD LOOK GLASS BALUSTRADE -METAL COMPOSITE CLADDING (MCC.2) AS SCHEDULED ALUMINIUM FACADE PANELS ANODISED (PERFORATED)-WOVEN METAL MESH (CARPARK)







GLASS FACADE PANELS



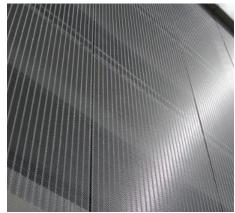
COMPOSITE METAL CLADDING - WOOD LOOK



METAL COMPOSITE CLADDING EXAMPLE



GLASS BALUSTRADE EXAMPLE



CARPARK METAL MESH



PERFORATED ALUMINIUM FACADE PANELS



**EJE ARCHITECTURE** 

2016.05.06 FINAL ISSUE TO CONSULTANTS FOR REVIEW 2016.05.06 ISSUE TO HDC FOR APPROVAL

2016.05.16 ISSUE FOR DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION

| DRN | CHKD | VRFD | PROJECT: EMPIRE HOTEL SITE

643-651 HUNTER STREET NEWCASTLE 2300

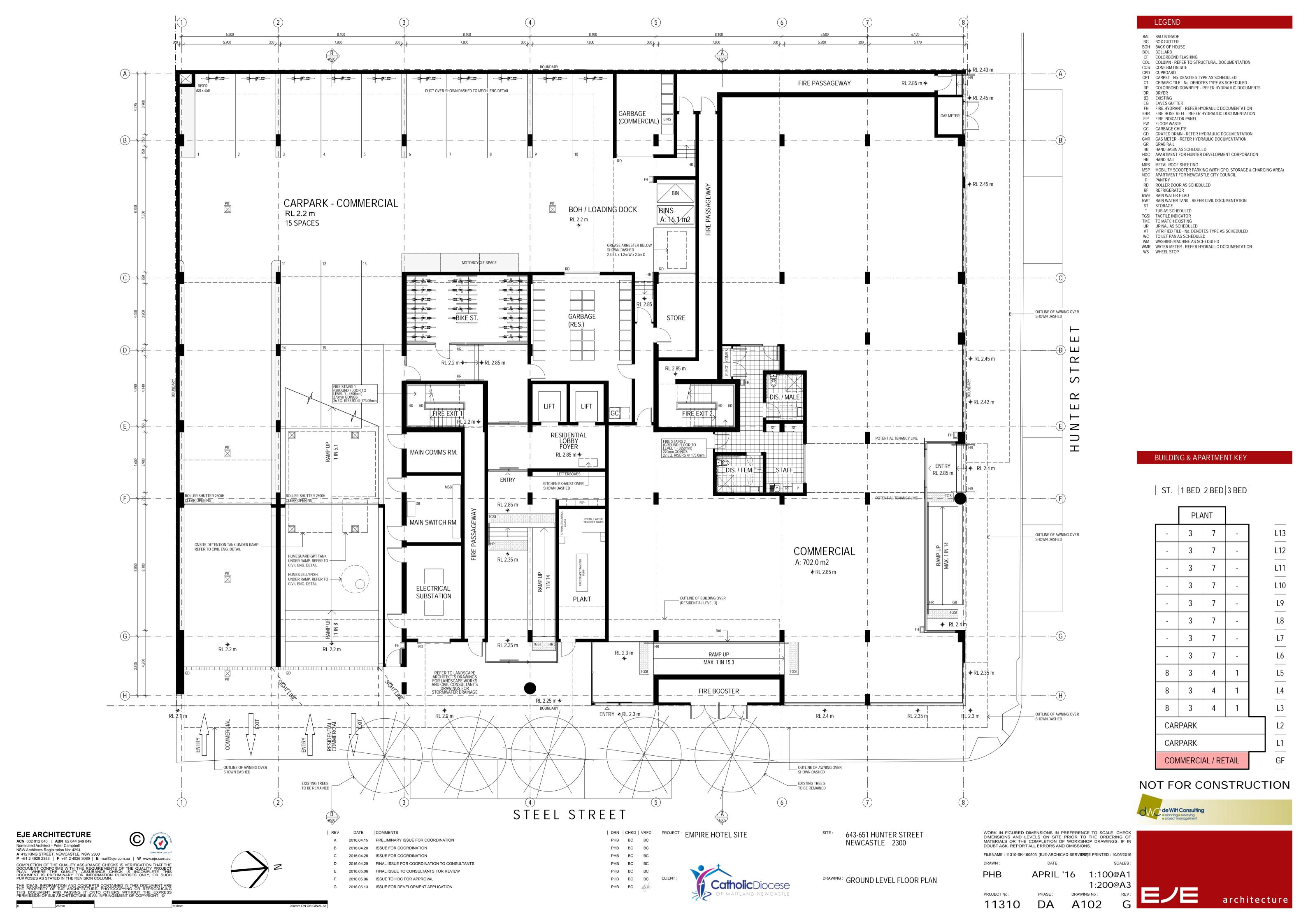
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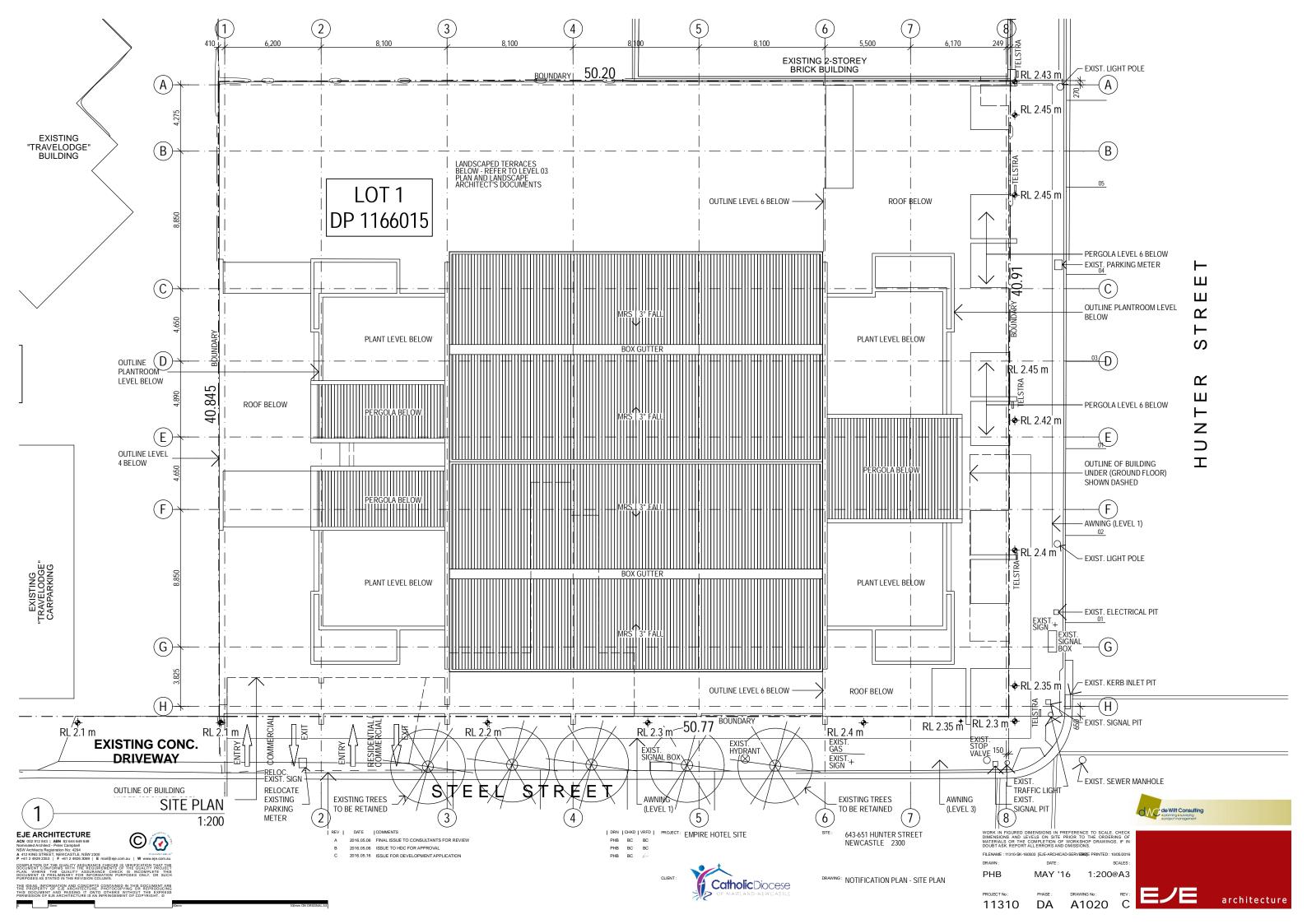
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DA A1021 C

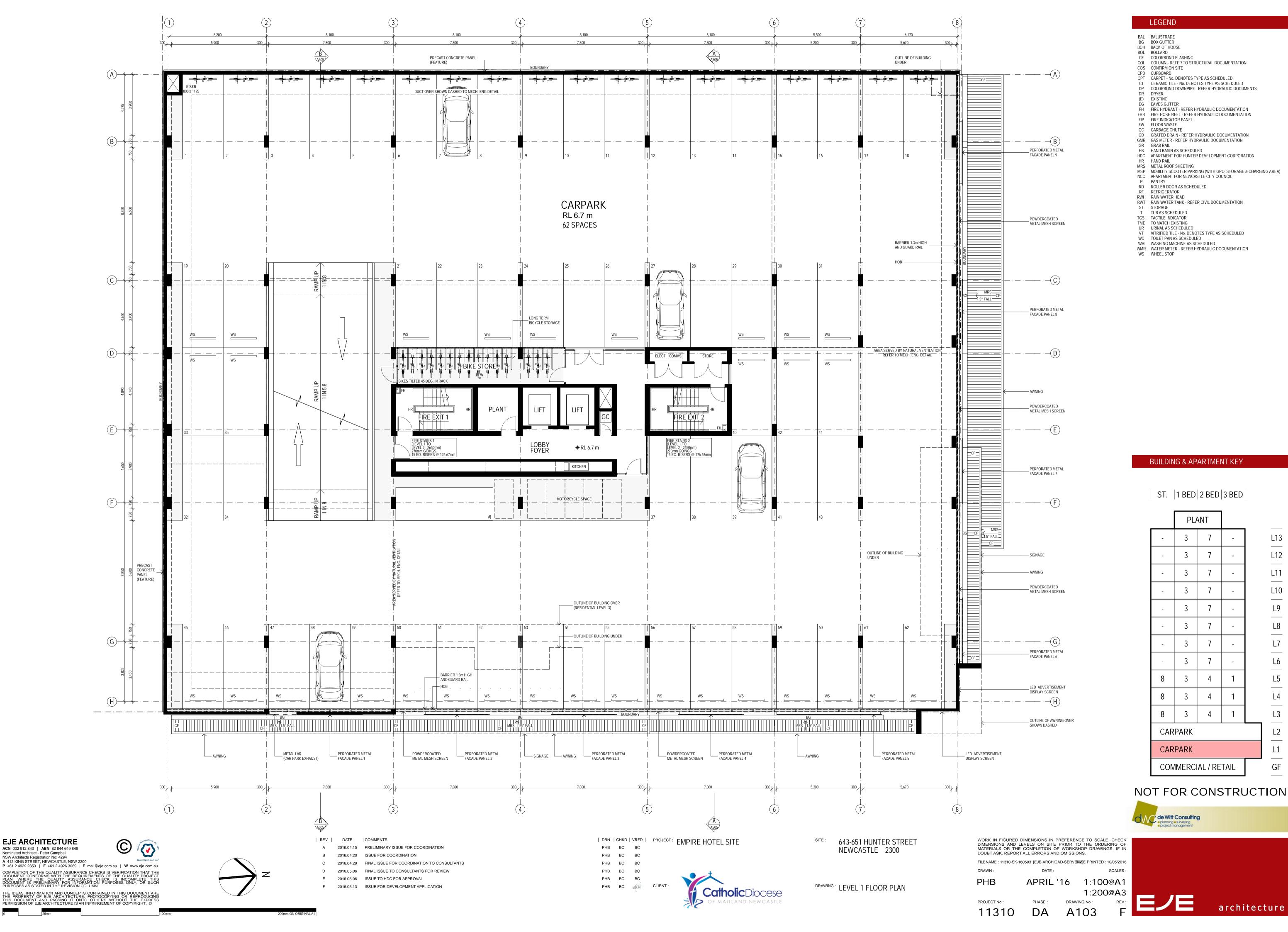


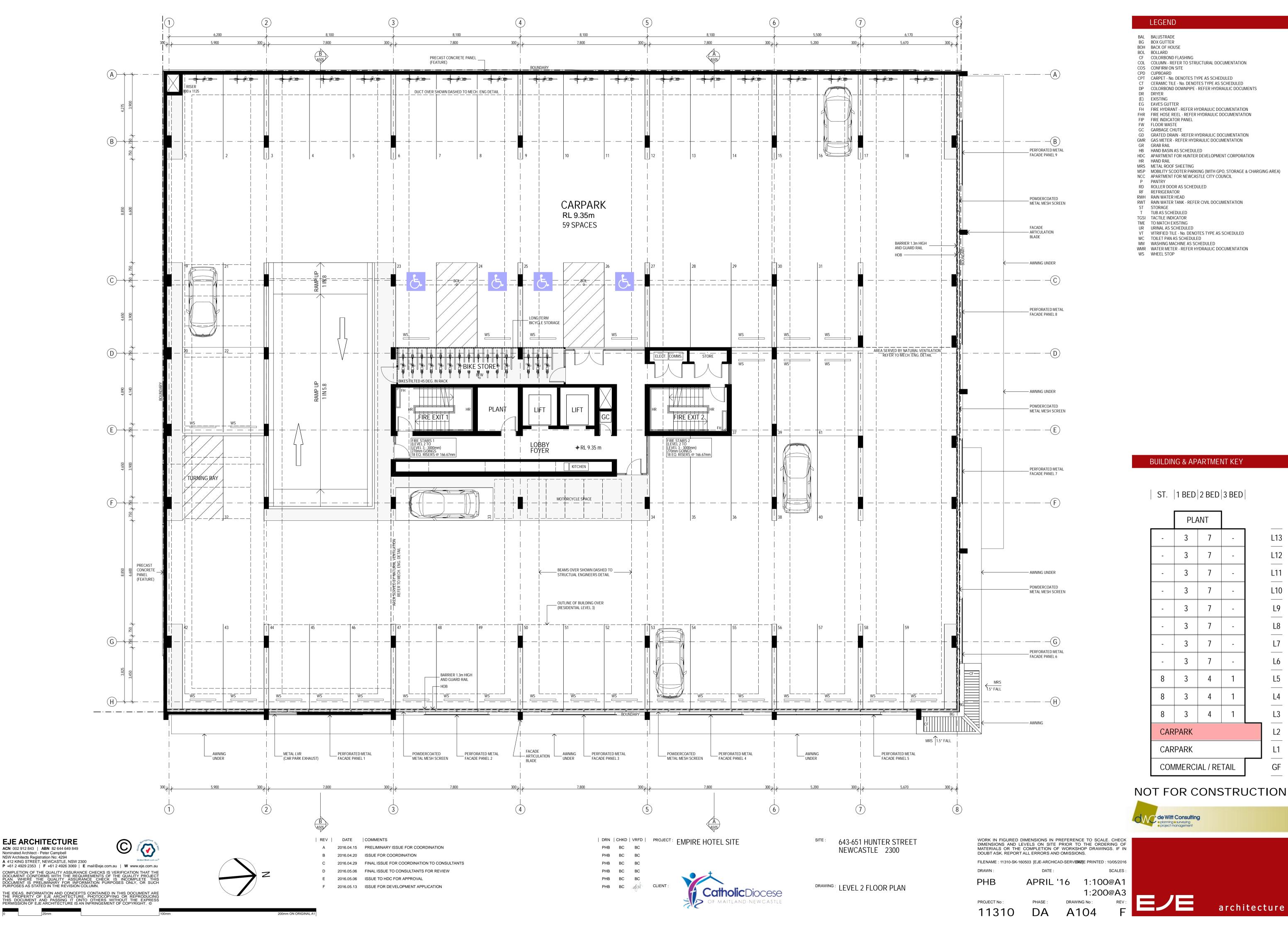


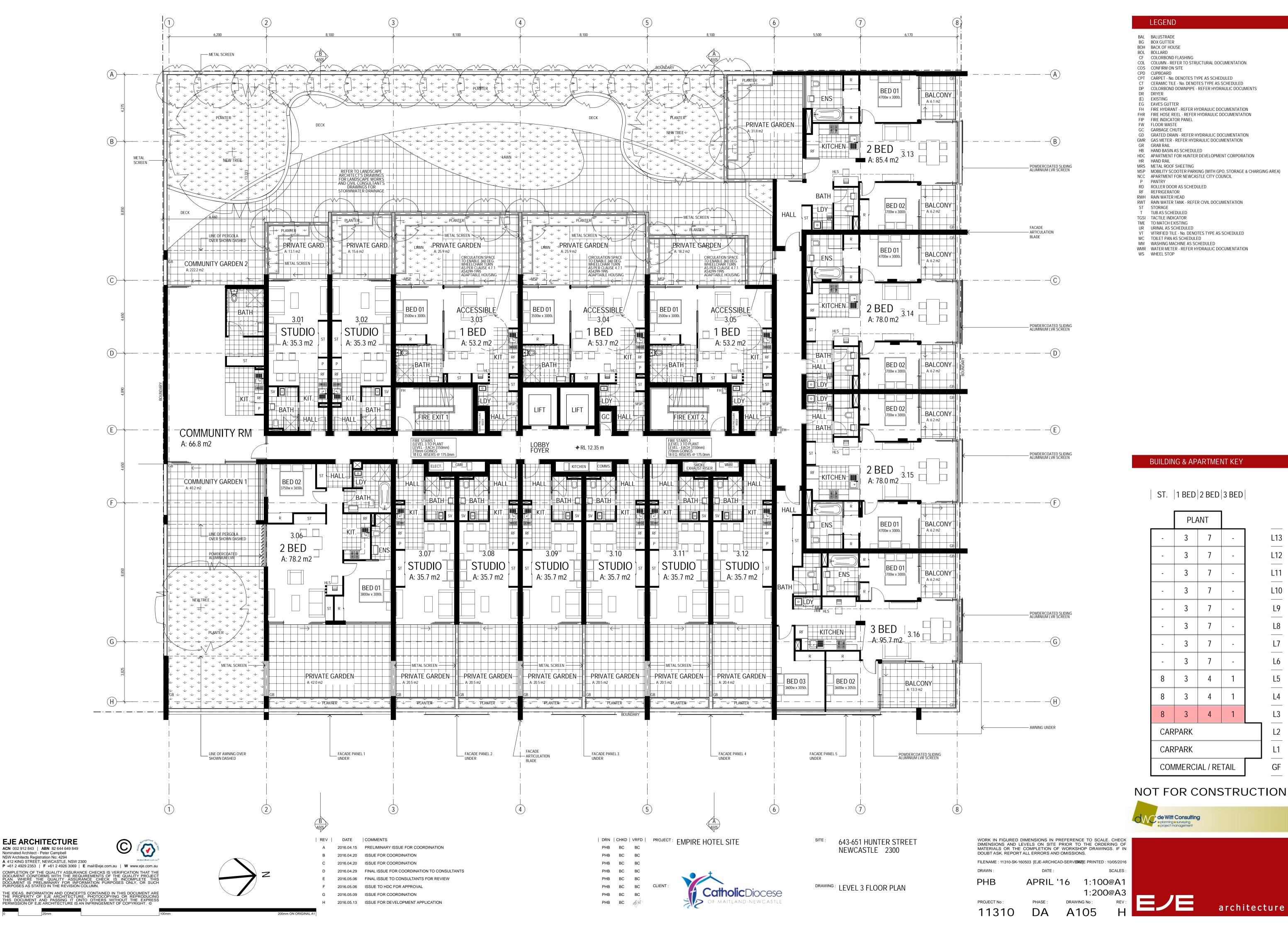
de Witt Consulting

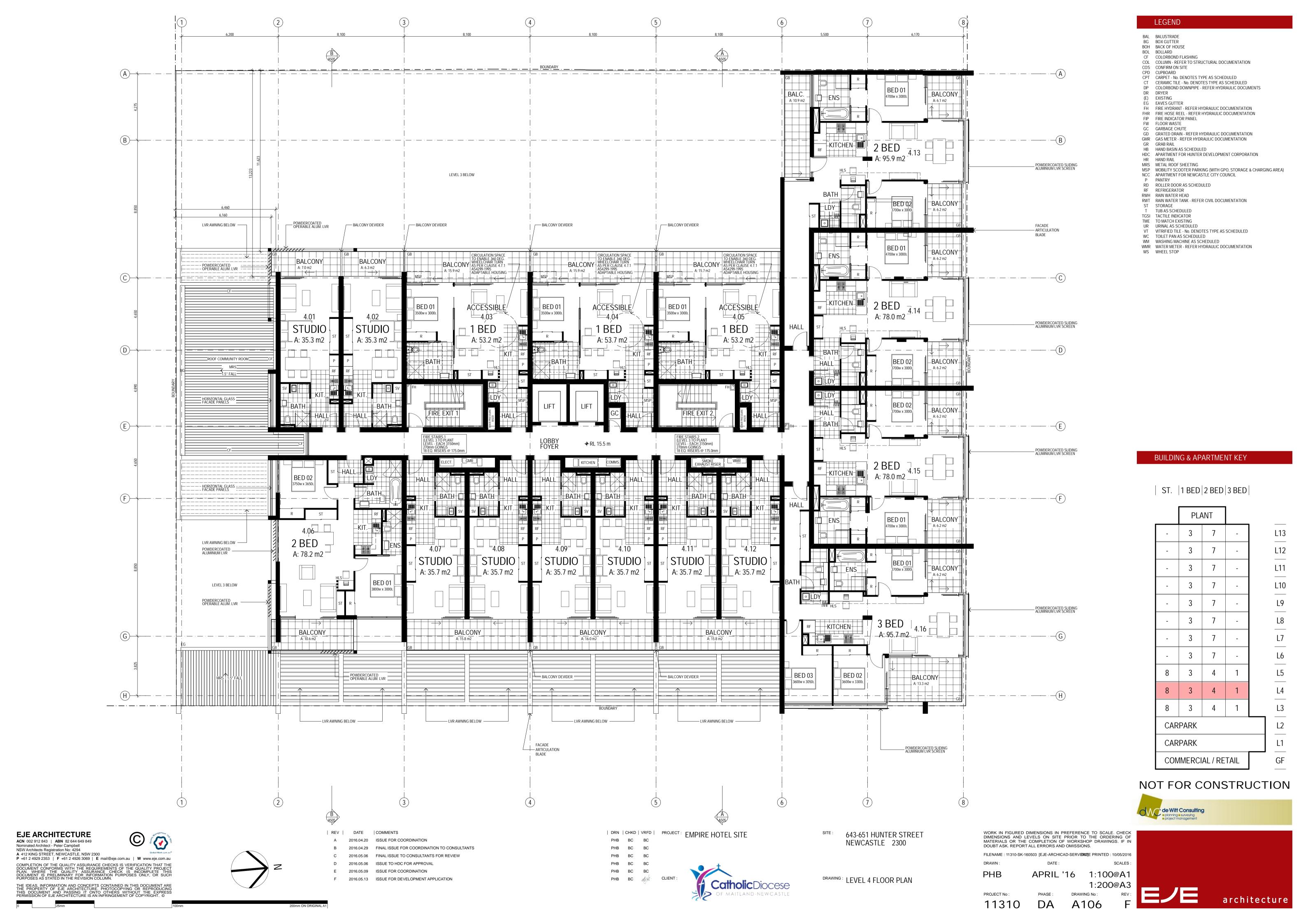
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# project management

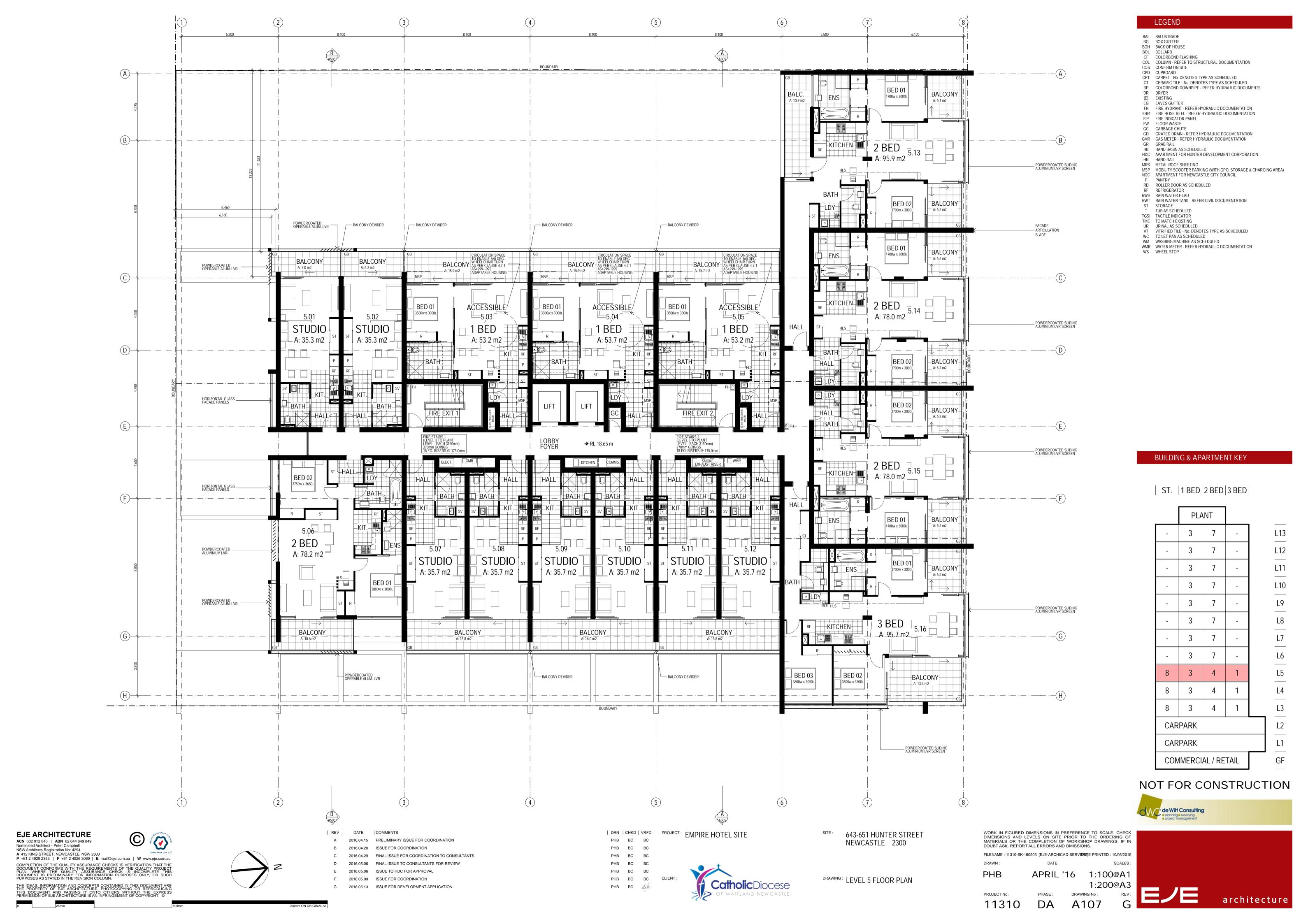


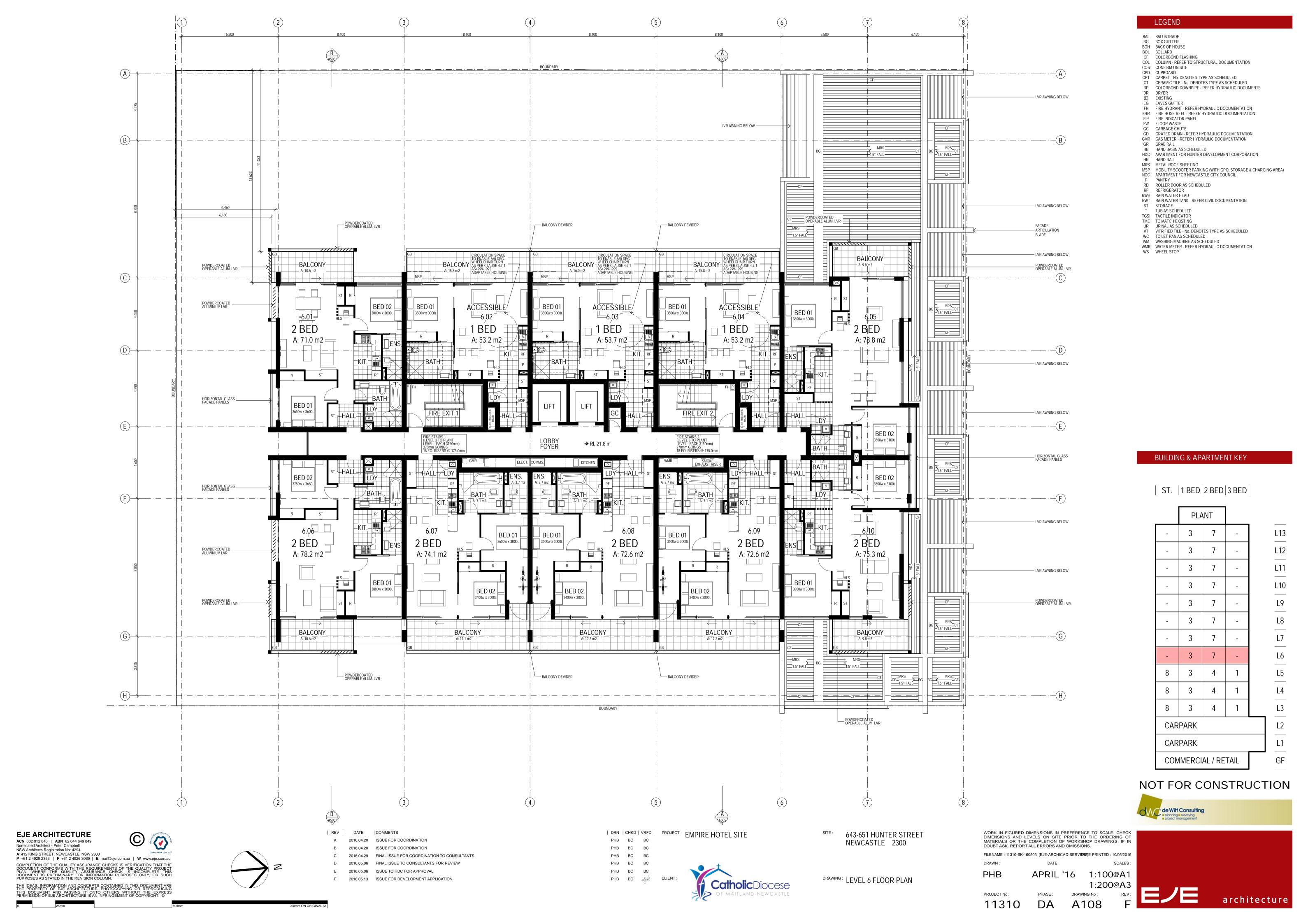


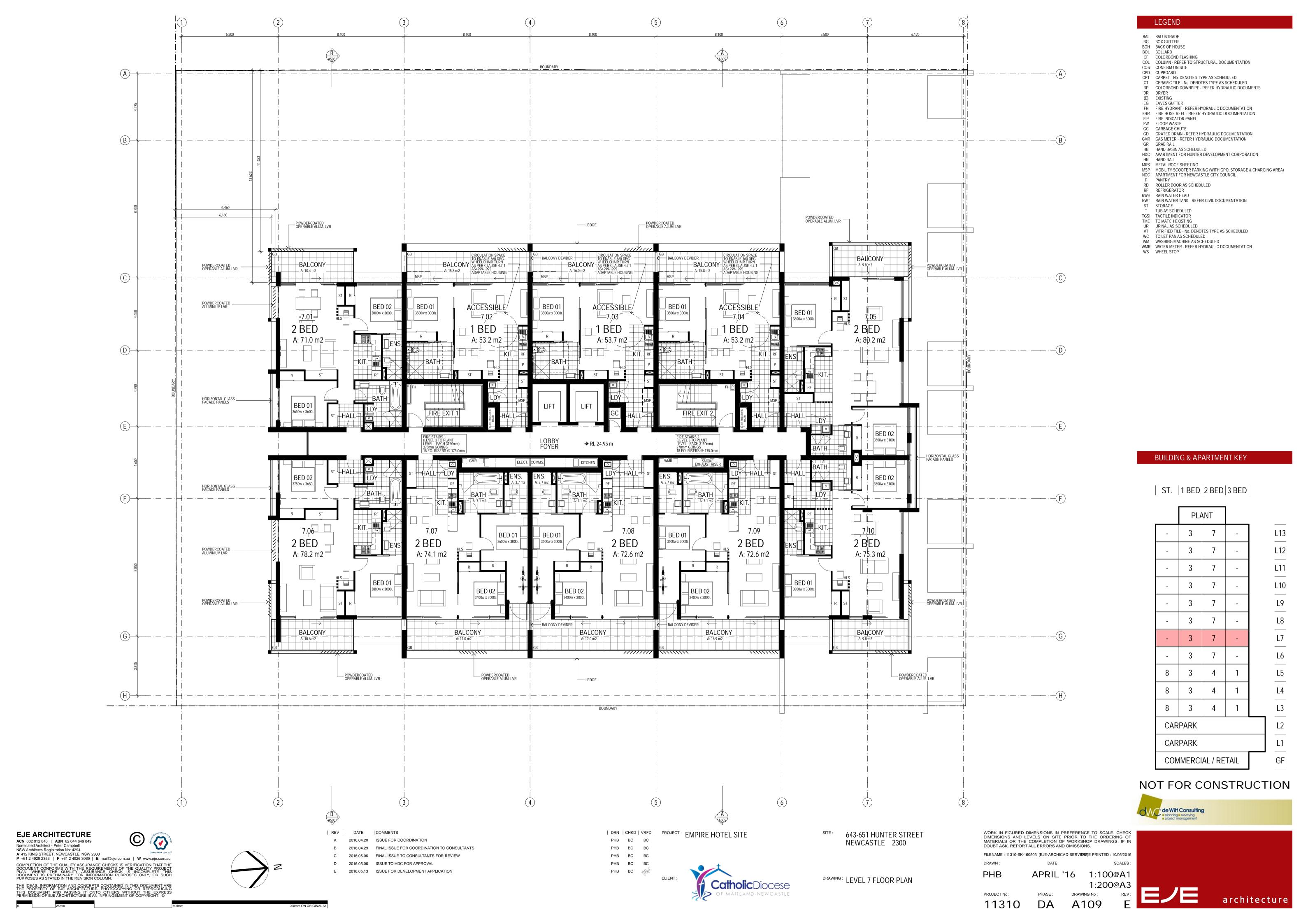


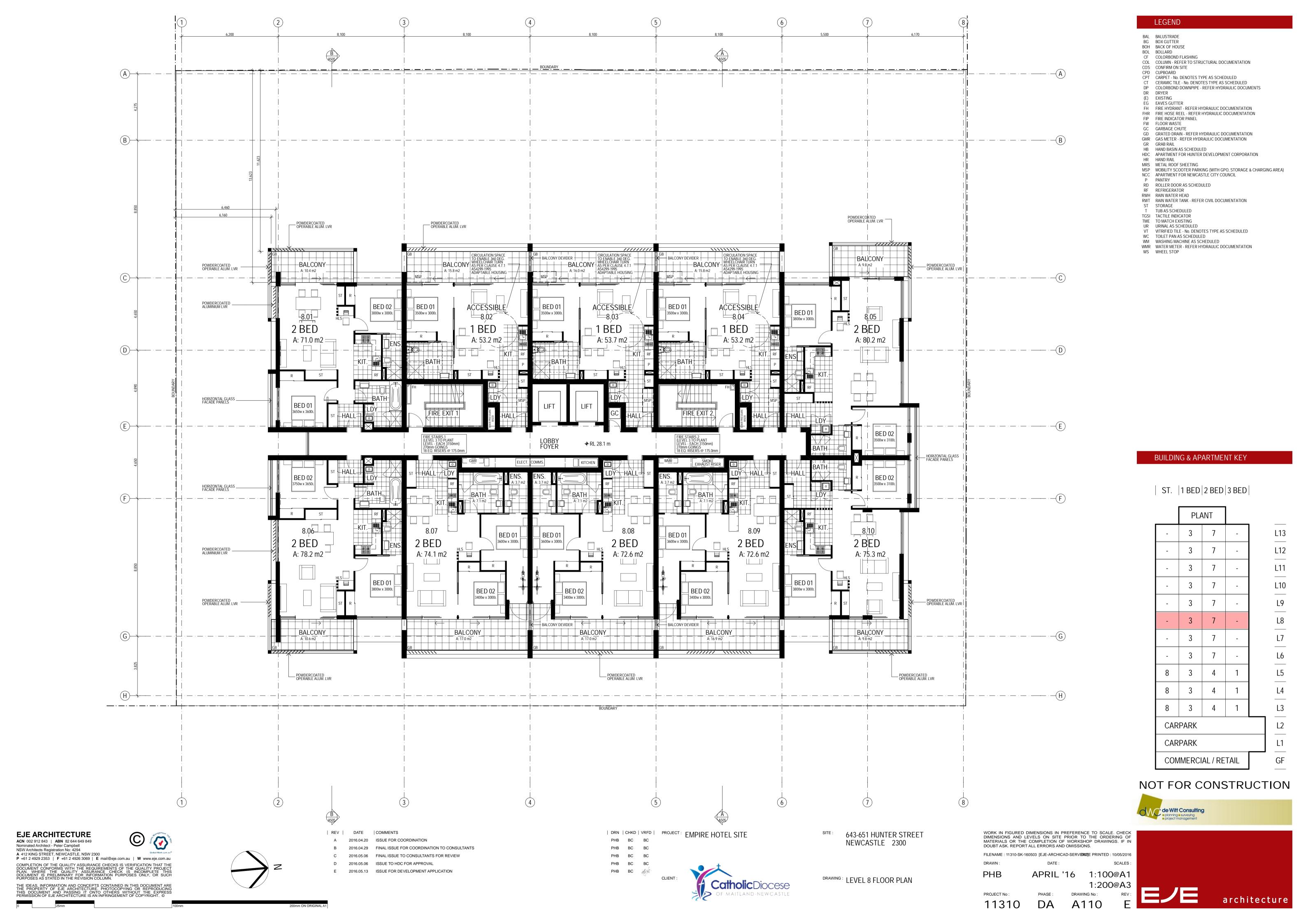


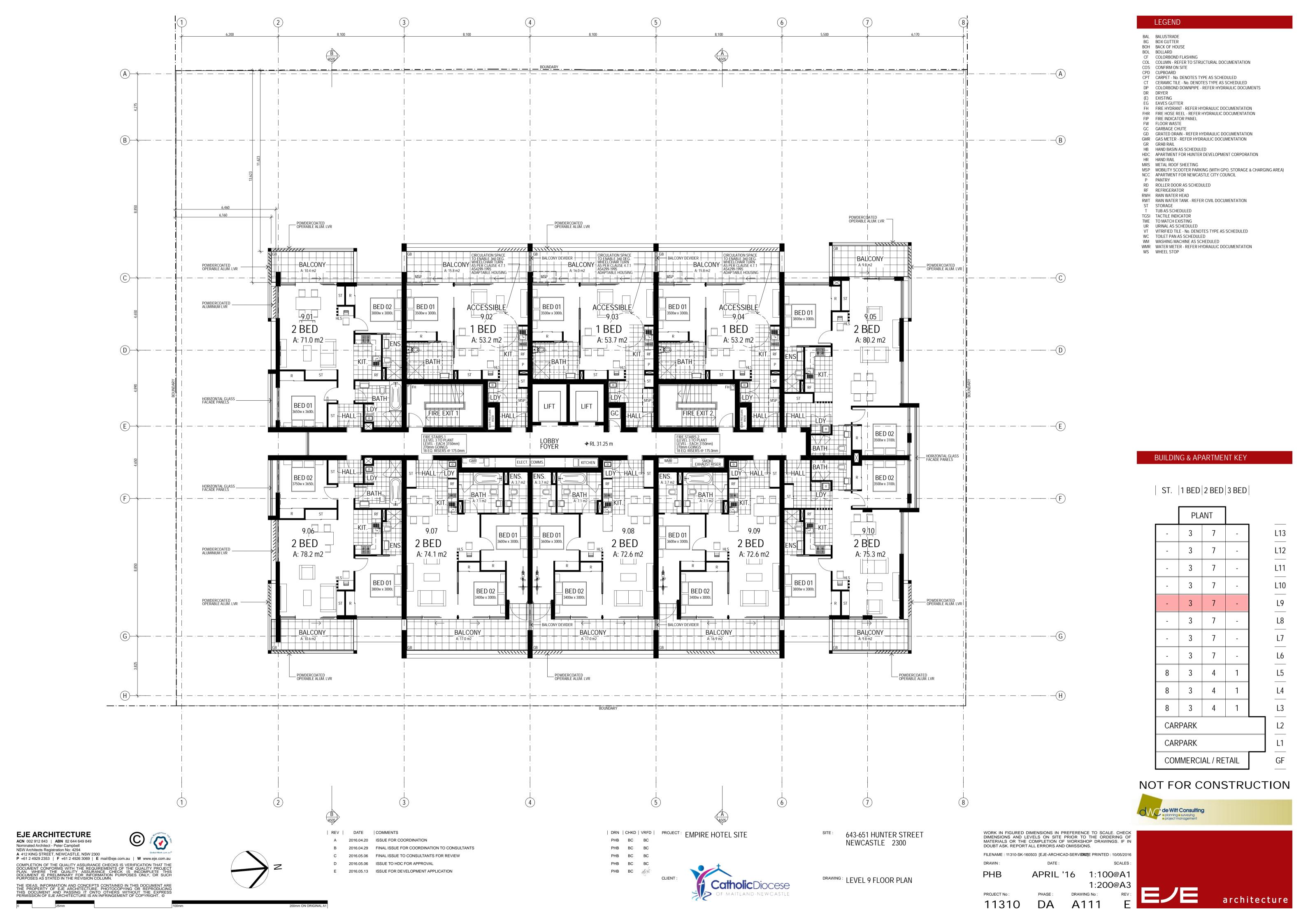


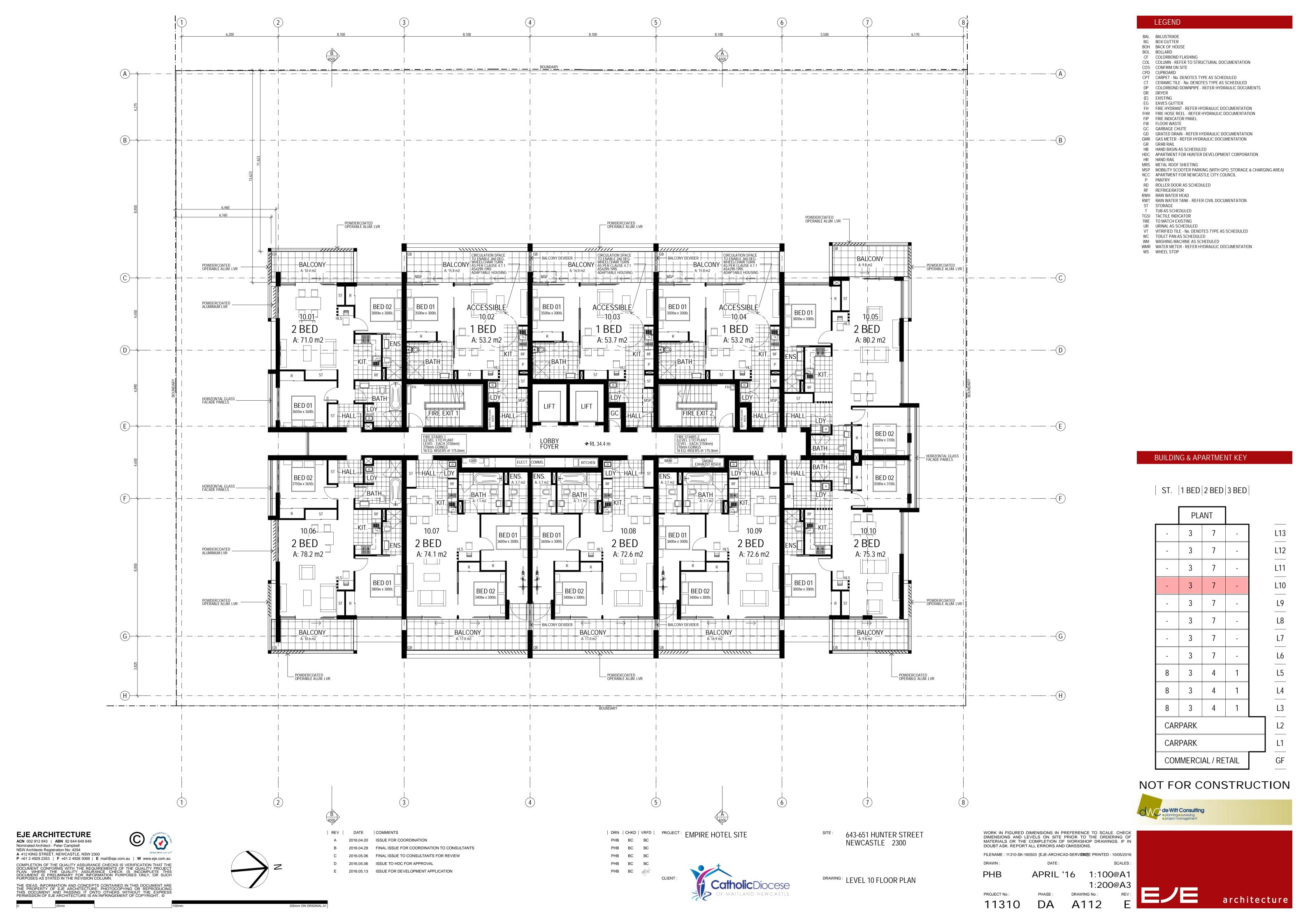


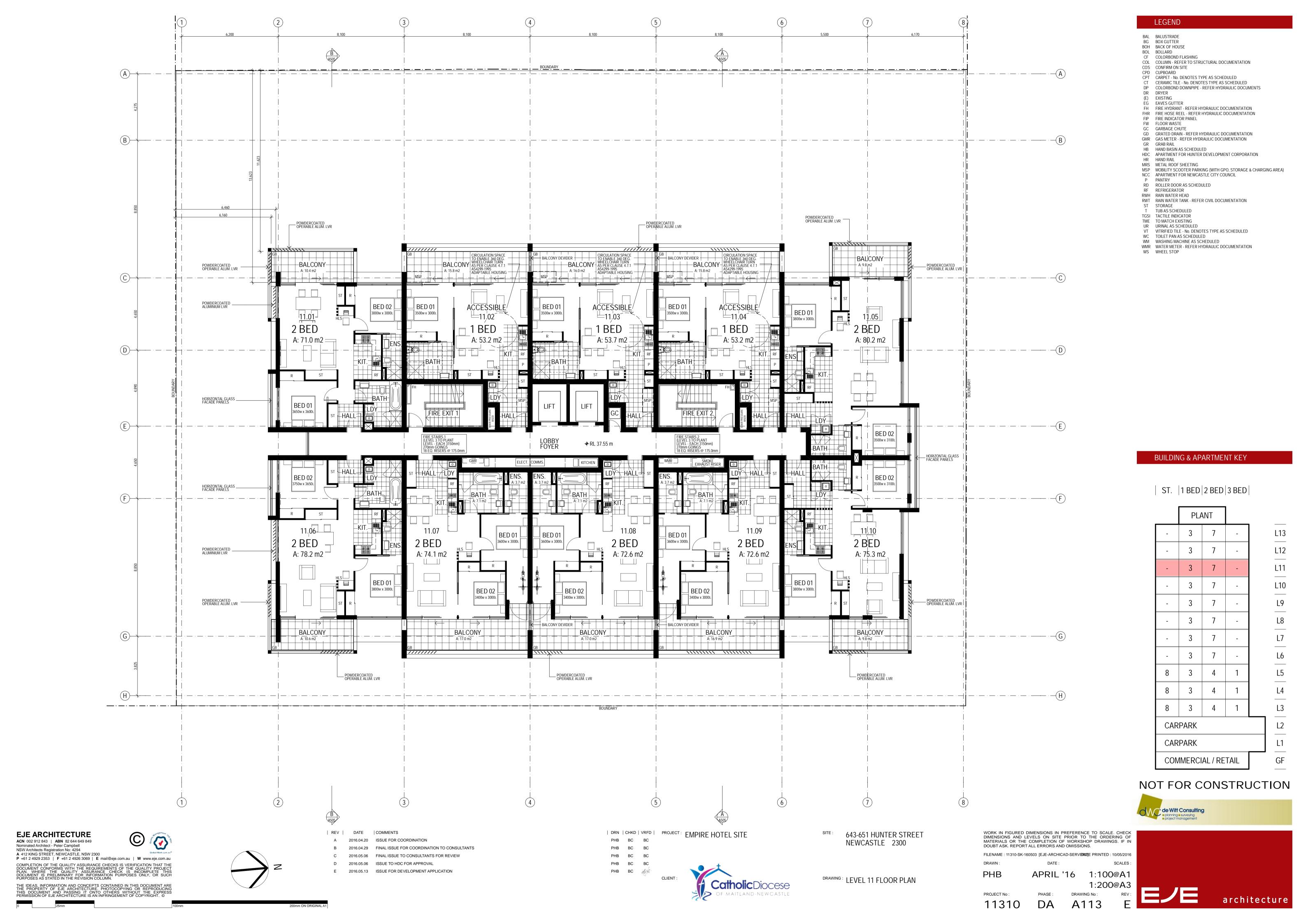


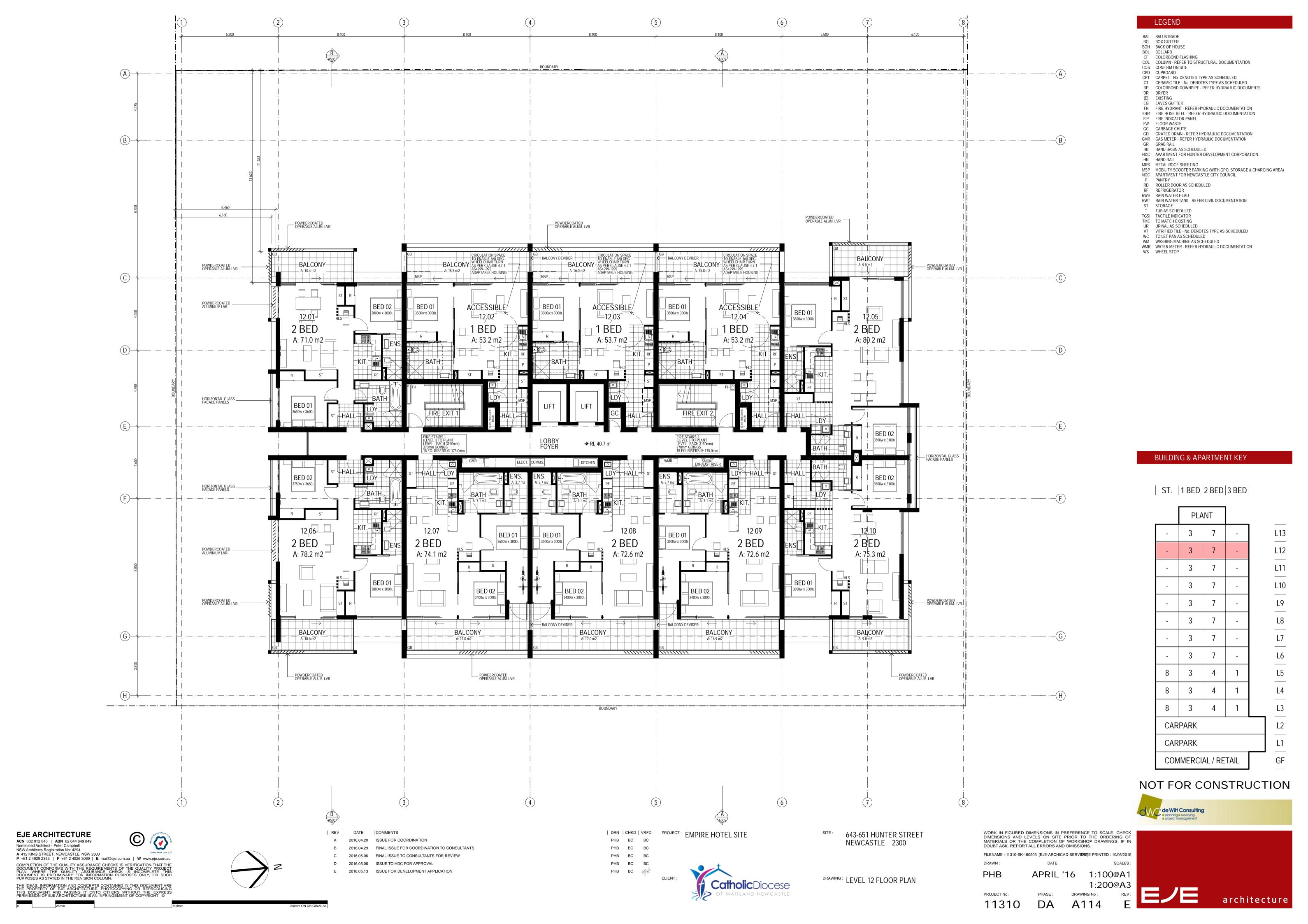


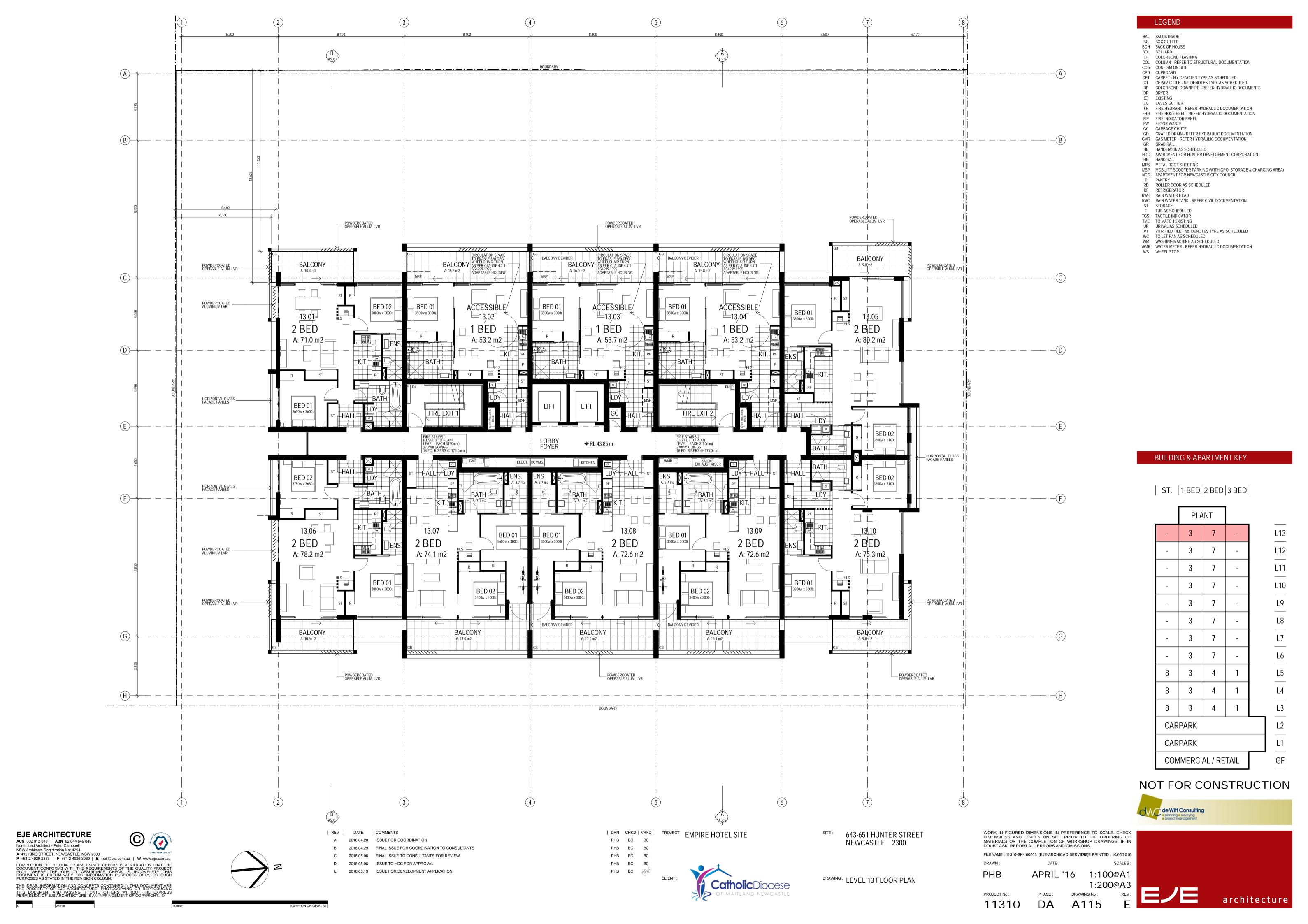


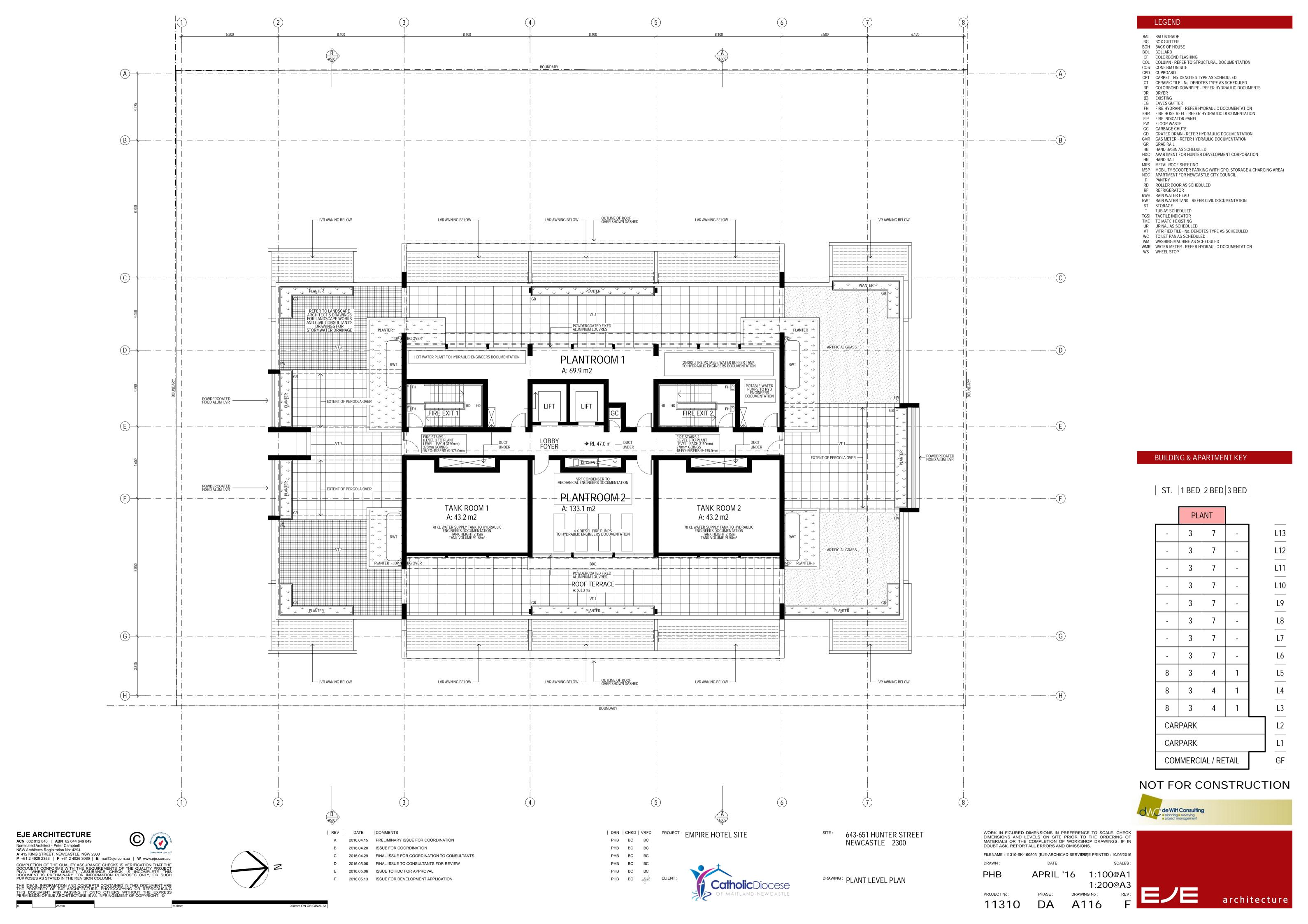


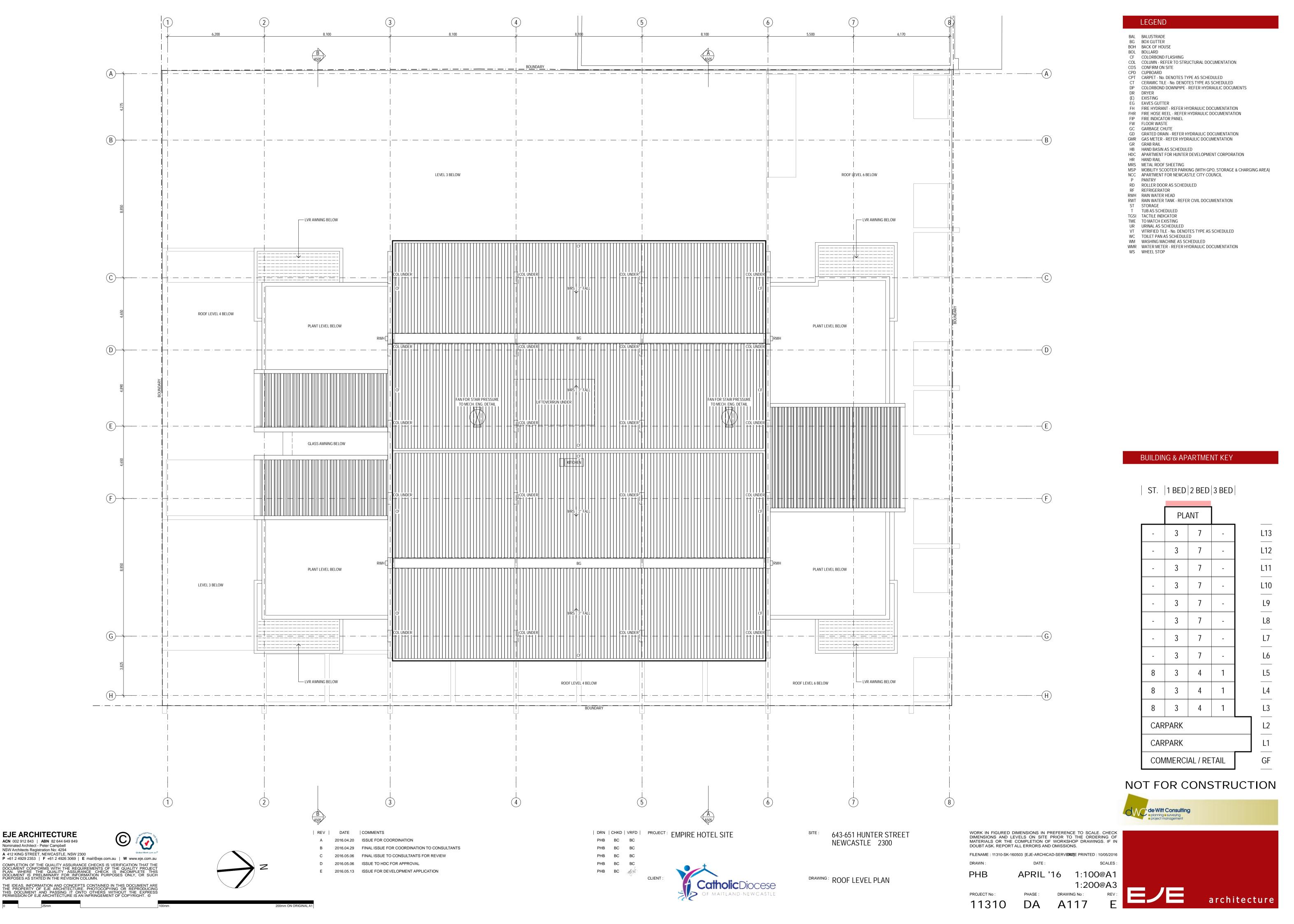














LEGEND

AL ALUMINIUM LOUVRES POWDERCOAT FINISH AS SCHEDULED ALP ALUMINIUM FACADE PANEL ANODISED FINISH AS SCHEDULED

BAL BALUSTRADE
BD BI-FOLD DOOR
BD-G GLASS BI-FOLD DOOR
BO BO SUTTED A SUMMER TO BE SUMED TO BE SUMMER TO BE SUMMER.

BLW BLOCKWORK

BOL BOLLARD

CF COLORBOND FLASHING

CFC COMP. FIBRE CEMENT PANELS WITH PAINT FINISH AS SCHEDULED CL COVED LIGHTING COL COLUMN - ALSO REFER TO STRUCTURAL DOCUMENTATION

CR CEMENT RENDER DP COLORBOND DOWNPIPE - ALSO REFER TO HYDRAULIC DOCUMENTATION

(E) EXISTING EG EAVES GUTTER - ALSO REFER TO HYDRAULIC DOCUMENTATION

FG FIXED GLASS - TO AUST. STANDARDS GB GLASS BALUSTRADE

GD GLASS DOOR - TO AUST. STANDARDS GD-S SLIDING GLASS DOOR - TO AUST. STANDARDS

GFP GLASS FACADE PANEL
GL GLASS LOUVRES - TO AUST. STANDARDS
GW GLASS WINDOW
GW-S SLIDING GLASS WINDOW - TO AUST. STANDARDS

HD HINGED DOOR HD-G GLASS HINGED DOOR HR HAND RAIL

LVR LOUVRE MC METAL CLADDING MCC METAL COMPOSITE CLADDING AS SCHEDULED

MI MIRROR - AS SCHEDULED

MRS METAL ROOF SHEETING

OG OPAQUE GLASS - TO AUST. STANDARDS

PB 13mm PLASTERBOARD LINING WITH PAINT FINISH AS SCHEDULED PCP ARTICULATED PRECAST CONCRETE WALL PANEL WITH PAINT FINISH

PT PAINT FINISH R RENDER - No. DENOTES COLOUR AS SCHEDULED RD ROLLER DOOR AS SCHEDULED

RF REFRIGERATOR RWH RAIN WATER HEAD - ALSO REFER TO HYDRAULIC DOCUMENTATION
RWT RAIN WATER TANK - ALSO REFER TO HYDRAULIC DOCUMENTATION

SD SLIDING DOOR SS STAINLESS STEEL TBR TIMBER TF TEXTURE FINISH

TP TIMBER POST - ALSO REFER TO STRUCTURAL DOCUMENTATION TRS TRANSLUCENT ROOF SHEETING V VENT

VP VENT PIPE

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION





**EJE ARCHITECTURE** 

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| DRN | CHKD | VRFD | PROJECT : EMPIRE HOTEL SITE PHB BC BC PHB BC BC

PHB BC

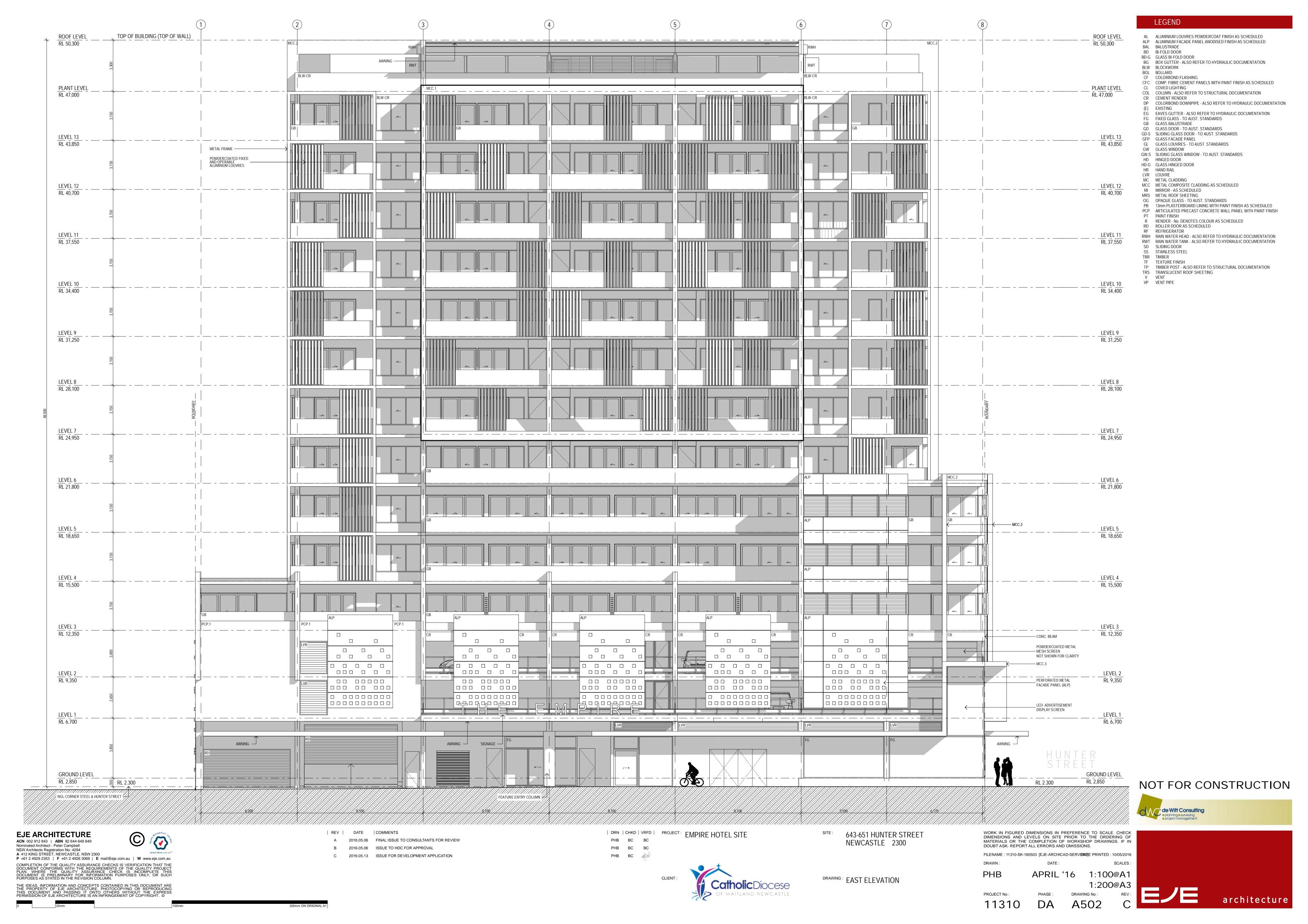
643-651 HUNTER STREET NEWCASTLE 2300

DRAWING: NORTH ELEVATION

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PROJECT No:





LEGEND

AL ALUMINIUM LOUVRES POWDERCOAT FINISH AS SCHEDULED ALUMINIUM FACADE PANEL ANODISED FINISH AS SCHEDULED

ALP ALUMINIUM FACADE PANEL ANODISED FINISH AS SCHEDULED
BAL BALUSTRADE
BD BI-FOLD DOOR
BD-G GLASS BI-FOLD DOOR
BG BOX GUTTER - ALSO REFER TO HYDRAULIC DOCUMENTATION
BLW BLOCKWORK

BOL BOLLARD

CF COLORBOND FLASHING

CFC COMP. FIBRE CEMENT PANELS WITH PAINT FINISH AS SCHEDULED CL COVED LIGHTING COL COLUMN - ALSO REFER TO STRUCTURAL DOCUMENTATION

CR CEMENT RENDER
DP COLORBOND DOWNPIPE - ALSO REFER TO HYDRAULIC DOCUMENTATION (E) EXISTING

EXISTING

EG EAVES GUTTER - ALSO REFER TO HYDRAULIC DOCUMENTATION

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GB GLASS BALUSTRADE

GD GLASS DOOR - TO AUST. STANDARDS

GD-S SLIDING GLASS DOOR - TO AUST. STANDARDS

GFP GLASS FACADE PANEL
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GW GLASS WINDOW
GW-S SLIDING GLASS WINDOW - TO AUST. STANDARDS

HD HINGED DOOR HD-G GLASS HINGED DOOR HR HAND RAIL LVR LOUVRE

LVR LOUVRE
MC METAL CLADDING
MCC METAL COMPOSITE CLADDING AS SCHEDULED
MI MIRROR - AS SCHEDULED
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OG OPAQUE GLASS - TO AUST. STANDARDS
PB 13mm PLASTERBOARD LINING WITH PAINT FINISH AS SCHEDULED PCP ARTICULATED PRECAST CONCRETE WALL PANEL WITH PAINT FINISH

PT PAINT FINISH
R RENDER - No. DENOTES COLOUR AS SCHEDULED
RD ROLLER DOOR AS SCHEDULED

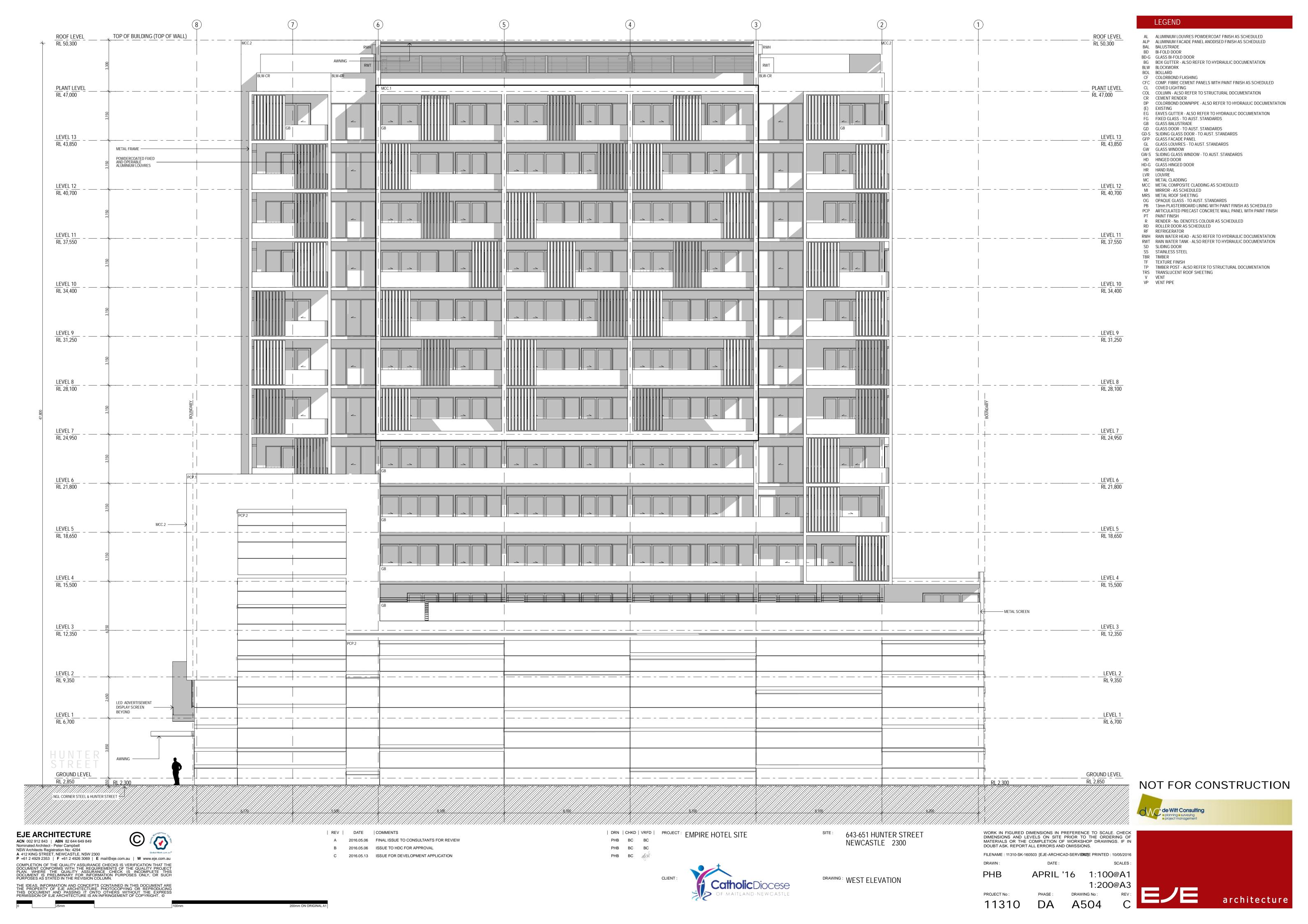
RF REFRIGERATOR
RWH RAIN WATER HEAD - ALSO REFER TO HYDRAULIC DOCUMENTATION
RWT RAIN WATER TANK - ALSO REFER TO HYDRAULIC DOCUMENTATION
SD SLIDING DOOR SS STAINLESS STEEL

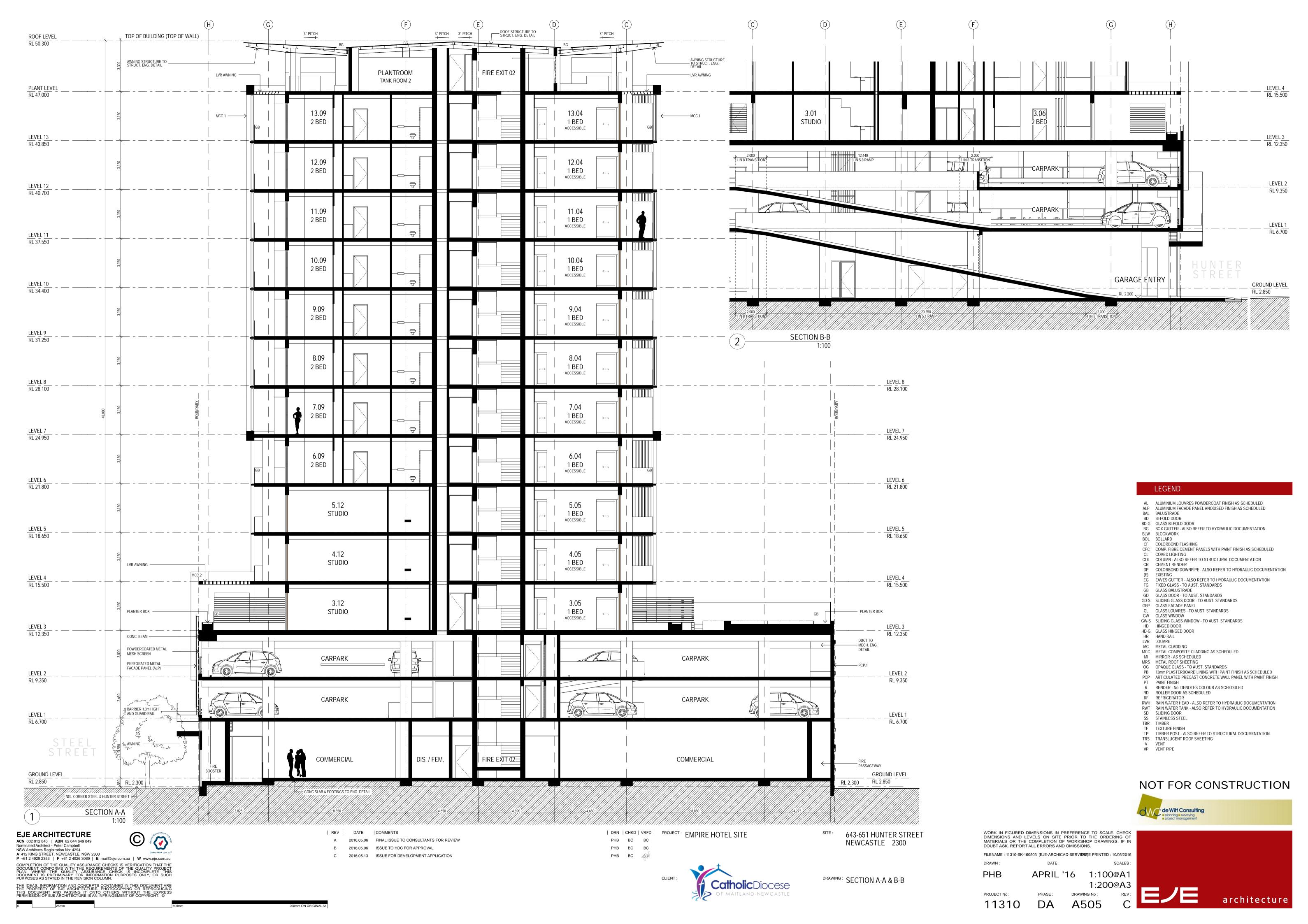
TF TEXTURE FINISH
TP TIMBER POST - ALSO REFER TO STRUCTURAL DOCUMENTATION
TRS TRANSLUCENT ROOF SHEETING
V VENT
VP VENT PIPE

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| C 2016.05.13 | ISSUE FOR DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION

| DRN | CHKD | VRFD | PROJECT: EMPIRE HOTEL SITE
PHB BC BC
PHB BC BC
PHB BC

CLIENT:

CatholicDiocese

643-651 HUNTER STREET NEWCASTLE 2300

DRAWING: STREET ELEVATIONS - COLOURED

WORK IN FIGURED DIMENSIONS IN PREFERENCE TO SCALE. CHECK DIMENSIONS AND LEVELS ON SITE PRIOR TO THE ORDERING OF MATERIALS OR THE COMPLETION OF WORKSHOP DRAWINGS. IF IN DOUBT ASK. REPORT ALL ERRORS AND OMISSIONS.

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 PHASE:
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