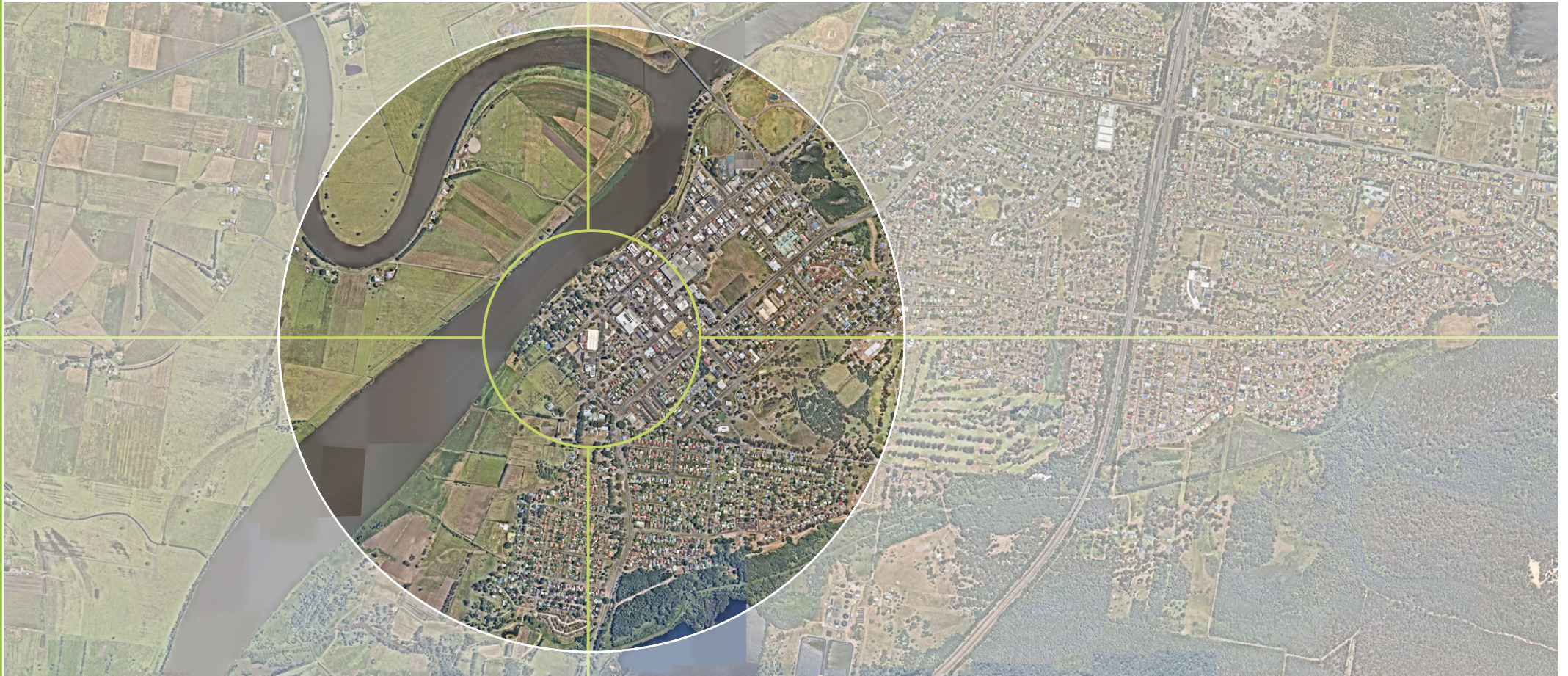


ATTACHMENT 8: UPDATED VISUAL ASSESSMENT



VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT - RAYMOND TERRACE BOWLING CLUB

2 Jacaranda Ave, Raymond Terrace NSW 2324

Prepared for:
JASON STOKES ACCM



Rev	Description	Initial	Date
B	ISSUE FOR DA	KH	28.11.2023
C	UPDATED PHOTOMONTAGES	ER	20.12.2024

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VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT - RAYMOND TERRACE BOWLING CLUB

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assessment summary

1. ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

Terras Landscape Architects has undertaken a visual assessment of a proposed development at Raymond Terrace, NSW. The criteria for the visual assessment has been detailed and viewpoint data sheets have been prepared using site photographs to allow the reader to gain a visual appreciation of the views from the identified significant viewing locations.

Additional descriptive text and information has been provided to support this investigation. This summary has been provided as a brief commentary on the findings of the visual assessment.

- The study area is located at the south western end of Raymond Terrace City Centre at the intersection of Port Stephens Street and Swan Street. The proposal shall occupy approximately 12,000 square metres and is permissible within the RE2 (Private Recreation) zoning within which it occurs.
- Raymond Terrace is a town located at the confluence of the Williams and Hunter Rivers.
- The site is currently occupied by the Raymond Terrace Bowling Club, carparks and bowling greens. A stand of mature trees define the western boundary of the site.
- The local area character units associated within a 500 metre radius of site include Rural Land, Public Open Space, Residential fabric, Commercial Core, Hunter River, Main Arterial Routes and Support. The town is characterised by mature existing trees defining streets and softening the build form of the town.
- The proposal is for alterations and additions to Raymond Terrace Bowling Club and construction of a five-storey hotel with serviced apartments, restaurant, swimming pool, function room and office spaces.
- Views of the site are limited to within 250m for the most part due to surrounding development and existing vegetation with filtered distant views available from the north across the Hunter River.
- The greatest visual access afforded into the site will be from residences located immediately north of the site on Port Stephens Street. Although the viewer number is low, the duration is long due to their permanent residency. Views of the proposal are available from the Raymond Terrace Boat Ramp including a narrow viewing corridor from the Hunter River. The proposed structure differs from all of the surrounding double and single storey development however existing vegetation surrounding the site provide a degree of integration from most viewpoints.
- As a result of the above factors the overall visual impact rating has been assessed to be low - moderate.

introduction

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1. Objectives

The objectives of this report are as follows:

- To identify and describe the existing visual/landscape environment and to evaluate its current qualities including an assessment of visual quality.
- To identify viewsheds and to locate and/or identify typical viewpoints from which the impacted areas may be seen.
- To determine what the likely impacts the proposal may cause to the prevailing visual/landscape quality of the area and to make recommendations, where appropriate, to mitigate the visual impact of the proposed development if required.

2.2. Methodology

The methodology applied to this study involves systematically evaluating the visual environment pertaining to the site and using value judgements based on community responses to scenery. This identifies aspects that are more objective (such as the physical setting, character and visibility of a proposal), from more subjective aspects, such as the compatibility of the proposal within the setting.

Visual data collection involves an initial desktop study, followed by systematically evaluating the visual environment from relevant viewpoints through fieldwork to determine the actual potential for views to the site. Once a viewpoint has been identified, data is recorded both photographically (and when required, by survey) and as detailed notes.

The selection of viewpoints has generally been based on locations where potential for views of the proposed development would occur. Viewpoint selection criteria include: consideration of where views can be obtained from publicly frequented locations, such as major traffic corridors; prominent look-outs or locations of high scenic value; or, where members of the local community may be affected.

This field study assessment has been carried out following the steps noted below:

a) Desktop Analysis. Identifying key components of interest through extensive desktop analysis from a variety of sources. These resources range from relevant planning and environmental resources and written documents, to digital aerial photography, cadastral data, vegetation mapping and terrain modelling.

b) Field study. Carried out by a qualified landscape professional to gather primary, photographic resources of

key components highlighted through desktop analysis. A collation of ground-truth data as gathered during the preliminary desktop assessment and any additional field study required that desktop analysis did not capture. Where weather or other reasons have prevented the capture of required information, a supplementary site visit has occurred to ensure correct and accurate data. Photographs are used to best capture the landscape character of the area, inform the reader of the representation of the view from each viewpoint, as well as provide baseline visual references for the production of photomontage and photographic simulations. It should be noted that photographic resources have been captured by Terras Landscape Architects, unless noted otherwise.

This written assessment has been carried out following the steps noted below:

1. Establish the site context and describe the site. A description of the site and its context.

2. Describe the visual environment. A description of the site's immediate and broader context as well as photos from surrounding landscape character areas to demonstrate the broader landscape setting and features.

3. Identify the visibility of the existing landscape catchment and any viewpoints. This includes a review of the existing visual environment/landscape setting of the locality and the preparation of a Visual Envelope Map (VEM) to explore the study locality. This requires the preparation of a viewpoint analysis using a representative number of viewpoints located within a reasonable distance of the site located within its visual catchment.

4. Assess the likely landscape and visual impacts with regards to visual access, visual quality, visual sensitivity and magnitude of change. A brief description of the proposal is included within this section followed by an assessment of the likely impacts based on a composite of the sensitivity of the view and the magnitude of the proposal being a combination of scale, size and character having regard to the proximity of the viewer.

5. Report illustration. Include illustrations such as photomontages and other three-dimensional (3D) imaging where necessary to clarify the landscape and visual changes and potential impacts to the site and surrounding viewpoints.

6. Summary and conclusion. Include a summary of the main findings of the report, and if appropriate, a discussion of the overall likely level of landscape and visual impact of the proposed development on the site and surrounding viewpoints.

The purpose of the above methodology is to reduce the amount of subjectivity entering into the impact assessment and to provide sufficient data to allow for third party verification of results as well as compliance with the requirements of any site-specific scenic quality guidelines.

introduction

2.3. Technical Methodology for Photos and Montages

The creation of photomontages and visualization tools follows established Technical Guidance and Best Practice resources. Ensuring accuracy across all aspects is crucial for the validity of visual representations.

The level of verification required varies based on the type and application of the visualization data. The following visualisations included within this report have been prepared with reference to the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note "Visual Representation of Development Proposals - Table 2: Visualisation Types 1-4," 17 September 2019.

In saying such, the following methodology has been undertaken to ensure validity of each visually represented viewpoint:

1. A baseline image of each viewpoint to convey the current viewed landscape will be taken with a crop-sensor camera with an equivalent lens used to achieve 50mm FFS. Weather, lighting, camera configuration and date of collection is noted for each viewpoint
2. A cylindrical, photo-stitched panorama will be prepared for each viewpoint to establish landscape character and context.

An allowance is made for the preparation of up to three (3) montages showing the building massing model and proposed vegetation from three principal viewpoints. Montages will be in accordance with the Technical Guidance and Best Practice Resources (Landscape Institute 2019). Photomontages to be presented as follows:

3. The build form model provided by architects is imported into a georeferenced file in Vectorworks to create the base site model.
4. Point Cloud data is then overlaid with the proposed site model and baseline photograph to provide verification of the proposal's placement and visibility from the assessed viewpoints. **Note: While photo-stitched imagery considers peripheral visual experience, it is unsuitable for photomontage application due to potential distortions in field of view and focal length during the merging process, which can compromise the accuracy of the focused scene**
5. The model is then inputted into Lumion with vegetation modelled at expected maturity to create an accurate representation of the viewpoint within the proposal to match the cameral settings of the baseline imagery.
6. The final image is adjusted. Contrast, brightness, saturation and photo-editing may be required to colour

match the CGI to correspond with the existing image as per LEC of NSW General Principles 7.3.

7. On this occasion, selected/each viewpoint(s) required a physical on-site marker, for producing photomontages. One 0.9m diameter helium filled red balloon was positioned in the north-western corner of the proposed building footprint. It was released to the maximum height of the proposed building and its relevant height from natural ground level, as per the architects' documentation and tightly secured. The balloon was then used to identify (or attempted to view) the proposal from various points within the subject locality. Refer below, for indicative location of balloon on site.



Image 1 Indicative balloon location

introduction

2.4. Terminology

The below meaning for the following terms shall apply to this report:

•Character a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, and often conveys a distinctive 'sense of place'. This term does not imply a level of value or importance.

•Landscape is an all-encompassing term that refers to areas of the earth's surface at various scales. It includes those landscapes that are: urban, peri-urban, rural, and natural; combining biophysical elements with the cultural overlay of human use and values.

•Magnitude of change refers to the extent of change that will be experienced by receptors. This change may be adverse or beneficial. Factors that could be considered in assessing magnitude are: the proportion of the view / landscape affected; extent of the area over which the change occurs; the size and scale of the change; the rate and duration of the change; the level of contrast and compatibility.

•Mitigation measures to avoid, reduce and manage identified potential adverse impacts.

•The proposal/development site is that activity which has the potential to produce a visual impact either during the works or as a result of it.

•The sensitivity refers to the capacity of a landscape or view to accommodate change without losing valued attributes. Includes the value placed on a landscape or view by the community through planning scheme protection, and the type and number receivers.

•The subject site (referred to also as the site) is defined as the land area directly affected by the proposal within defined boundaries.

•The study area consists of the subject site plus the immediate surrounding land potentially affected by the proposal during its construction and operation phase.

•The study locality is the area of land within the regional visual catchment whereby the proposal can be readily recognised. Generally this is confined to a six-kilometre radius beyond which individual buildings are difficult to discern especially amongst other development where contrasts are low. Further, visual sensitivity generally declines significantly beyond this range due to the broad viewing range that can be had from vantage points. For this study the locality has been limited to the visual catchments that have distances less than a quarter-kilometre as views beyond this are extremely restricted.

•Values are any aspect of landscape or views that people consider to be important. Landscape and visual values may be reflected in local, state or federal planning regulations, other published documents or be established through community consultation and engagement, or as professionally assessed

•View refers to any sight, prospect or field of vision as seen from a place, and may be wide or narrow, partial or full, pleasant or unattractive, distinctive or nondescript, and may include background, mid ground and/or foreground elements or features.

•The viewpoint is the specific location of a view, typically used for assessment purposes.

•Viewshed refers to areas visible from a particular location (may be modelled or field-validated).

•Visual absorption capacity involves the potential for the physical attributes (landform, vegetation and built form) of a scene to absorb a particular change.

•Visual amenity is the attractiveness of a scene or view.

•The visual catchment involves areas visible from a combination of locations within a defined setting (may be modelled or field validated).

•The visual effect is the interaction between a proposal and the existing visual environment. It is often expressed as the level of visual contrast of the proposal against its setting or background in which it is viewed.

•Visual representation refers to the graphic representation of a proposal in context showing its likely appearance and scale.

3. THE SITE

3.1. Site Context

Raymond Terrace is a town in the Hunter Region of New South Wales, 26km north of Newcastle on the Pacific Highway within the Port Stephens Local Government Area. Raymond Terrace had a population of 13,453 at the 2021 census. The Pacific Highway lies to the south of the suburb.

Raymond Terrace is located to the east of the Hunter and Williams rivers with the centre of the town lying adjacent to the Hunter River just south of the confluence of the two rivers. Access to the northern side of the rivers is via the Seaham Road Bridge. The area is low lying and access beyond the bridge to the northern side is often not possible during floods. The town is mostly protected by levee banks and other mitigation devices. There is a boat ramp to the end of Hunter Street and the area is popular with water skiers and boaties.

The site is zoned RE2 (Private Recreation) and lies at the southern end of the Raymond Terrace commercial precinct zoned E2 (Commercial Centre). The site is surrounded by land zoned R2 (low density Residential) and R3 (Medium Density Residential) to the immediate north west and south east with land zoned RU2(Rural Landscape) to the south west. Further north is land zoned RE1(Public Recreation) associated with Riverside Park and RU1 (Primary Production) over the Hunter River.

Although the site sits within the Port Stephens LGA, the Maitland LGA lies to the north west of the site and falls within the visual catchment area of the site and therefore views from within the Maitland LGA been considered within the report.

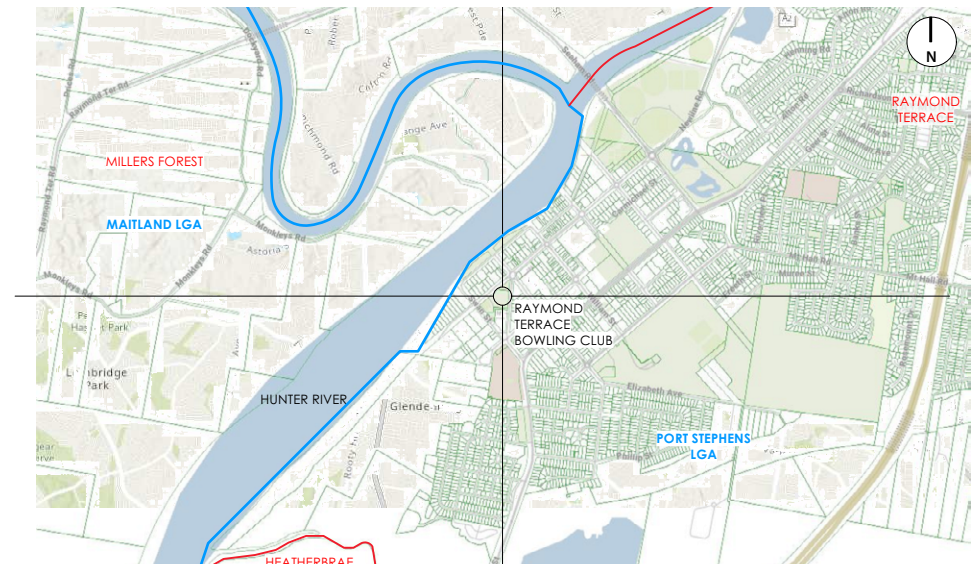


Image 2 Site location

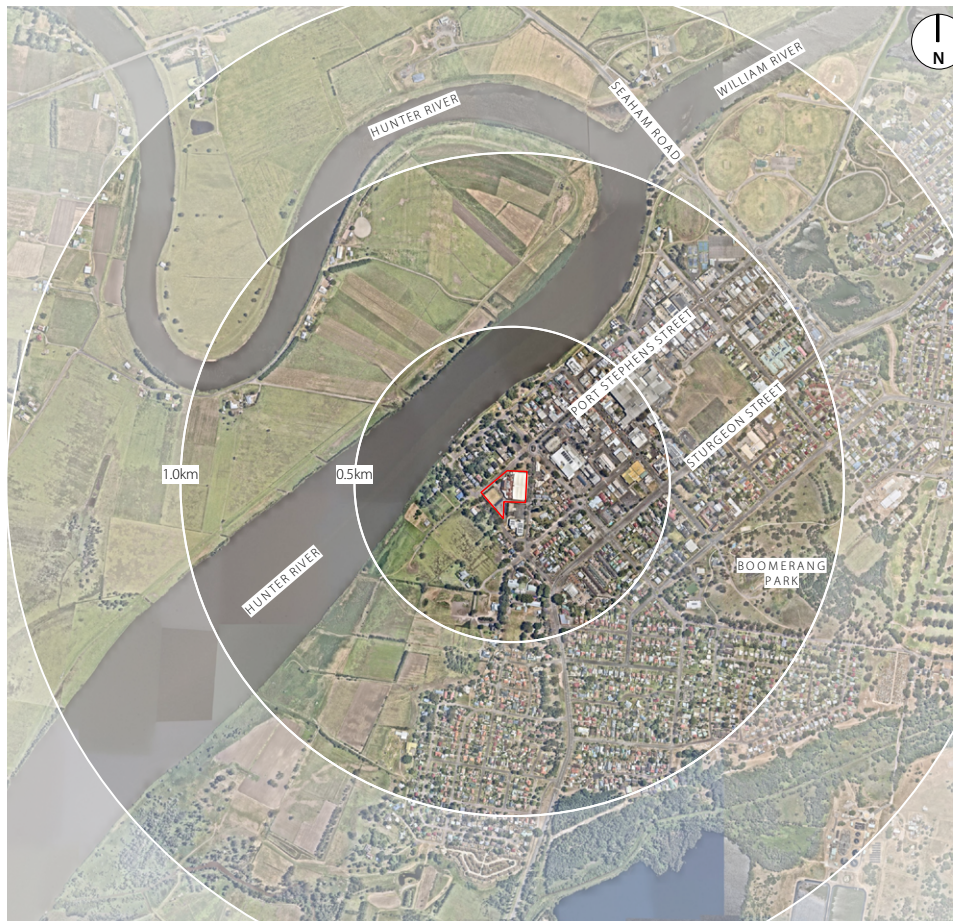


Image 3 The site and immediate surrounds

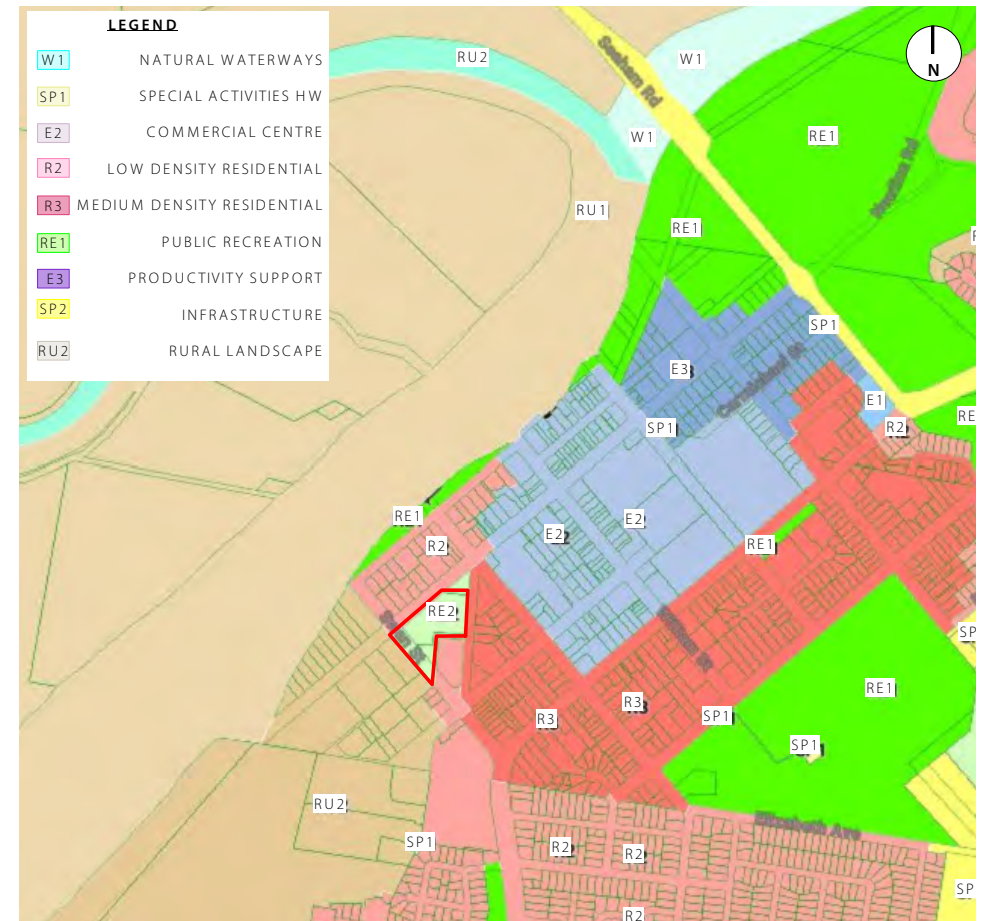


Image 4 Land zoning diagram

VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT - RAYMOND TERRACE BOWLING CLUB

site description

3.2. Site Description

The study area is located on the western end of Port Stephens Street at the intersection with Swan Street. Port Stephens Street is a main road which dissects the commercial core of Raymond Terrace however at the intersection with Jacaranda Avenue the road narrows and becomes a minor residential road. The site occupies approximately 12,000 square metres. and is currently occupied by bowling greens, Raymond Terrace Bowling club and carpark.

Due to the vegetation on the northern and western boundaries of the site views into the western portion of the site are currently restricted. Views to the south from the site are towards the new Raymond Terrace Health Centre

Large existing trees occur within Swan Street providing a vegetated edge to the site. Anzac Park lies to the north of the site.

The site is zoned RE2 Private Recreation. Registered clubs and hotels or motel accommodation are permissible in the zone with consent. In accordance with the Port Stephens Local Environmental Plan 2013 (PSLEP).

The subject site is not listed as a heritage item, however, nearby residential dwellings, the jacaranda trees on Jacaranda Avenue and the neighboring Anzac park are listed heritage items under PSLEP. The area immediately to the east, including Jacaranda Avenue is also within the Raymond Terrace Heritage Conservation Area.

The site lies within the Raymond Terrace Town Centre specific area as Defined in the Port Stephens DCP 2014.



Image 5 View of existing sails over bowling green from Jacaranda street



Image 6 Existing bowling greens



Image 7 View across the site to the south east towards the hospital

visual environment

4. VISUAL ENVIRONMENT

4.1. Landscape Character

Raymond Terrace can be described as a riverside town with tree lined streets and public openspace adjoining the Hunter River. Several streets are recognisable due to the themed tree planting including Jacaranda Avenue with Jacarandas and Port Stephens Street with the mature Phoenix Palms which are both to be protected and retained in accordance with the Port Stephens DCP Section D11.G. Mature trees throughout the suburb provide a leafy backdrop to the area. The public foreshore along the southern edge of the hunter river has views to the rural paddocks to the north. The commercial core which lies between Port Stephens Street and Adelaide Street is for the most part one and two storey buildings providing services and speciality shops.

Seven landscape character units are identifiable within a 1000m radius of site, of which three relate to various phases of residential development. These are:

1. Rural Land
2. Public Open Space
3. Residential fabric
4. Commercial Core
5. Hunter River
6. Main Arterial Support
7. Support

These are explained in greater detail on the following page.

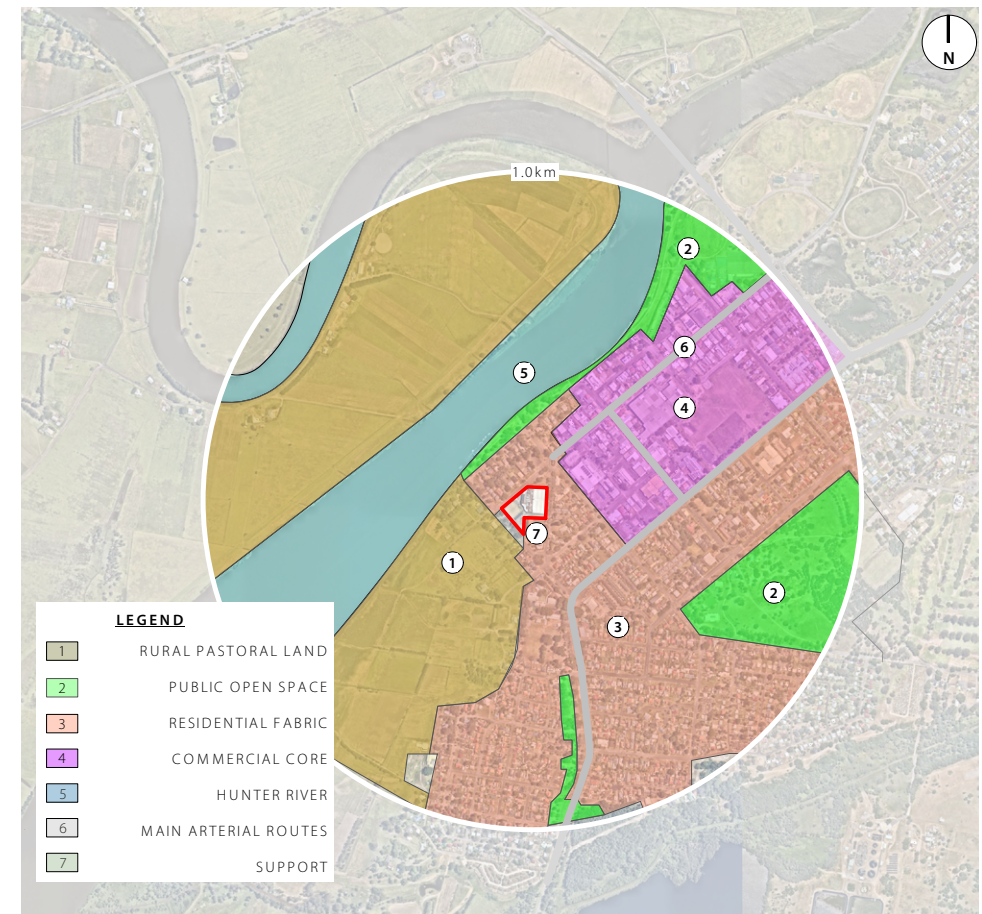


Image 8 Landscape character units within 500m of site

landscape character units

1. Rural Land



Image 9 Open paddocks looking south back towards Raymond Terrace

Rural land occurs over the Hunter River to the north of the site which provides an open outlook when looking back towards Raymond Terrace and the site. As this is zoned RU1 Primary production, it is likely that it will remain and not be subject to residential development. Due to the land being in private ownership access is limited and this restricts close proximity views back towards the site from the north.

2. Public Open Space



Image 10 View north towards the Hunter River from Riverside Park



Image 13 View north along Riverside Park

Public Open Space occurs to the north and north east of the site associated with the Hunter River. The riparian canopy vegetation associated with the river provides a buffer between the site and views from the north and restricts views through to the built form of Raymond Terrace.

Boomerang park lies to the south west of the site on a local high point however due to significant planting within the park and the streets surrounding the site there is no visual connection to the site

3. Residential development



Image 11 Residential fabric of Raymond Terrace

Several hectares of double and single storey low density housing occurs to the north and east of the site as presented in the above images. Construction is primarily brick or rendered masonry with tiled roofing. Immature street trees and front of lot landscaping does not yet reduce the dominance of the built form. Construction works dominate most of the eastern and northern site interface. This is temporary and will evolve into that of Image 8.

4. Commercial Core



Image 12 View north along Port Stephens Street

The commercial centre of Raymond Terrace lies primarily between Adelaide Street and Port Stephens Street. The main shopping centre is based around William Street containing supermarkets and a variety of speciality shops. Shops also line William Street and the adjacent Port Stephens Street and Sturgeon Street. Buildings are generally single or double storey typical of a suburban centre.

VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT - RAYMOND TERRACE BOWLING CLUB

landscape character units

5. Hunter River



Image 14 Hunter River from the public open space

The Hunter River lies to the north of the site and is approximately 150m wide. The river is characterised by vegetated edges associated with the public openspace to the south and the rural land to the north. Views of greater Raymond Terrace are predominantly screened from view from the river beyond the public openspace. The Raymond Terrace Boat Ramp and Raymond Terrace wharf provide access to the river on the southern side with no public access to the northern side due to the land being privately owned.

6. Main Arterial Routes



Image 15 Seaham Bridge



Image 16 Port Stephens Road

Seaham Road is a main road to the north west of the site providing access suburbs to the north and west including Thornton and Brandy Hill. The road takes dissects flat open plains zoned RU1 Primary production. Port Stephens Road a Main Street of Raymond Terrace running parallel to the Hunter River and aligned by the commercial core. The street is characterised by central median planting of established palm trees to two blocks reinforcing axis. Adelaide Street is the main connecting route providing access from and to the Pacific Highway to the east.

7. Support



Image 17 Raymond Terrace Health Centre

Immediately south of the site is the Raymond Terrace Health Centre. The building is a large 2 story brick and paneling building with associated carparking orientated north towards the site.

5. THE PROPOSAL

5.1. Proposed Project and Landscaping

Raymond Terrace Bowling Club are preparing a development application for a proposed development, located at 2 Jacaranda Avenue, Raymond Terrace. The Proposal is for alterations and additions to Raymond Terrace Bowling Club and construction of a six-storey 50 room hotel including 5 serviced apartments, restaurant, bar, swimming pool, gym, function space and office spaces. The Proposal will be one development application to be constructed/ delivered in three stages, with assessment to cover all three stages. The stages include the following:

- Stage 1 : Alterations and Additions to Raymond Terrace Bowling Club - Including associated parking and the reshaping of the croquet lawn facing Port Stephens Street. This includes additional parking for stage one (1) only;
- Stage 2: Demolition of the existing shade over the Bowling Greens and the construction of a new Bowling Green roof to overhang the Raymond Terrace Bowling Club roof; and
- Stage 3: Construction of the Hotel - Including associated parking and demolition.

Proposed landscaping includes planting of shade tolerant species to the carpark levels and a continuation of the existing planting theme established to Port Stephens Street to the pedestrian entry to the hotel. The existing Callistemons within Port Stephens street will be retained and provide screening to the street level. Canopy planting of *Corymbia Maculata* is proposed to this interface being endemic to the site while softening the built form from the north in association with a climber to a portion of the northern facade. The large existing street trees to Swan Street will be retained and protected and will continue to provide screening to views from the south west. To the minor entry from Jacaranda Street tree planting is proposed to provide a buffer between the health centre and the bowling club.

A pool terrace on the upper level has been developed with tropical style planting creating privacy to neighboring units and to residents using the space.

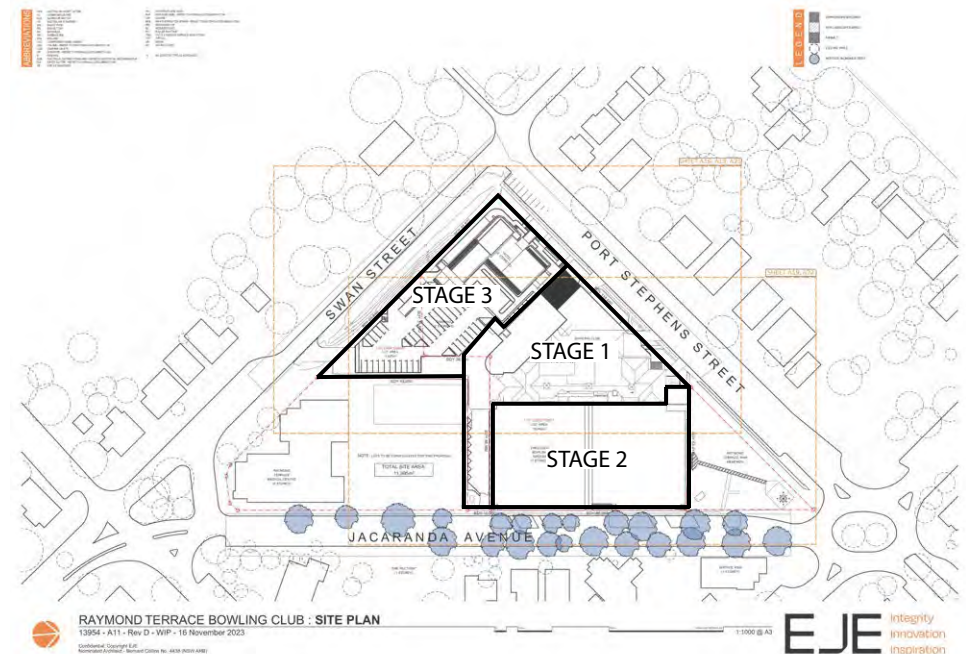


Image 18 Proposed site plan.

6. VIEWPOINT DATA SHEETS

6.1. Viewpoint Analysis

This section of the VIA considers the likely impact that the proposed development may have on the local visual environment. This is achieved by selecting particular sites, referred to as Viewpoints, conducting inspections and determining how the development will appear from these locations. These viewpoints are further explored in the following sections. Other potential viewpoints around the site were also assessed for inclusion in this report. Due to local topography, existing vegetation, access and existing development, views to the site are generally limited to less than 500 metres.

Where accessible, areas within the study locality were visited to gain an appreciation of views and sight lines back to the subject site. This VIA assesses the existing visual amenity of the site and resultant visual impact of the proposed development.

Landscape assessment is concerned with changes to the physical landscape in terms of features/elements that may give rise to changes in character. Visual appraisal is concerned with the changes that arise in the composition of available views as a result of changes to the landscape, people's responses to the changes and to the overall effects on visual amenity. Changes may result in adverse (negative) or beneficial (positive) effects.

The nature of landscape and visual assessment requires both objective analysis and subjective professional judgement. Accordingly, the following assessment is based on the best practice guidance listed above, information and data analysis techniques, uses subjective professional judgement.

Photographic images were taken using a digital camera with a focal length approximating a standard 50mm lens for a conventional 35mm camera and equivalent to the human eye, so that all images represent an accurate representation that is neither zoomed in or out. A number of indicative photo panoramas have been included to put views to the site in context with the surrounding area.

Views into the site are generally restricted from the west and south due to existing trees and built form. Several viewpoints were identified in close proximity to the site and further afield to the north and north west.



Image 19 Viewpoint locations

viewpoint data sheets

6.2. Viewsheds

The viewshed diagram explores and demonstrates the views into the site from the nominated viewpoint locations. Due to existing vegetation surrounding the development and associated with the Hunter River the viewshed area is restricted.

The most prominent views afforded into the site will be for residents immediately adjoining the site along Port Stephens Road, boaties using the Raymond Terrace Boat ramp including an extension of this as a small corridor on the Hunter River and visitors to the Raymond Terrace Health Centre

Distant filtered views from select locations to the north and north west of the site will be available due to established vegetation associated with the rivers edge.

Views of the site south west along the Port Stephens Road corridor will be restricted due to existing vegetation and built form.

It is noted that the site is generally viewed within the existing R2 / R3 Low/Med Density Residential context and further afield from the R1 Primary Production context..



Image 20 Viewshed diagram.

assessment criteria

7. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

7.1. Visual Quality

The visual quality of an area is essentially an assessment of how viewers may respond to designated scenery. Scenes of high visual quality are those that are valued by a community for the enjoyment and improved amenity that they can create. Conversely, scenes of low visual quality are of little scenic value to the community with a preference that they be changed and improved, often through the introduction of landscape treatments (e.g. screen planting).

As visual quality relates to aesthetics, its assessment tries to anticipate subjective responses. There is evidence to suggest that certain landscapes are continually preferred over others with preferences related to the presence or absence of certain elements.

The rating of visual quality of this study has been based on the following generally accepted conclusions arising from scientific research (DOP, 1988).

- Visual quality increases as relative relief and topographic ruggedness increases.
- Visual quality increases as vegetation pattern variations increase.
- Visual quality increases due to the presence of natural and/or agricultural landscapes.
- Visual quality increases owing to the presence of water forms (without becoming common) and related to water quality and associated activity.
- Visual quality increases with increases in land use compatibility.

VISUAL QUALITY REFERENCE TABLE				
		RATING		
		LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
ELEMENT	LANDFORM / RELIEF			
	CONTRAST	FLAT TERRAIN DOMINANT. RIDGELINES NOT OFTEN SEEN.	UNDULATING TERRAIN DOMINANT. LITTLE CONTRAST OR RUGGEDNESS. RIDGELINES PROMINENT IN ONLY HALF OF LESS OF LANDSCAPE UNITS.	HIGH HILLS IN FOREGROUND AND MIDDLE GROUND. PRESENCE OF CLIFFS, ROCKS AND OTHER GEOLOGICAL FEATURES. HIGH RELIEF (E.G. STEEP SLOPES RISING FROM WATER OR PLAIN). RIDGELINES PROMINENT IN MOST OF LANDSCAPE UNIT.
	VEGETATION			
	DIVERSITY AND CHANGING PATTERNS	ONE OR TWO VEGETATION TYPES PRESENT IN FOREGROUND. UNIFORMITY ALONG SKYLINE	PATTERNING IN ONLY ONE OR TWO AREAS. 3 OR 4 VEGETATION TYPES IN FOREGROUND FEW EMERGENT OR FEATURE TREES	HIGH DEGREE OF PATTERNING IN VEGETATION. 4 OR MORE DISTINCT VEGETATION TYPES. EMERGENT TREES PROMINENT AND DISTINCTIVE TO REGION.
	NATURALNESS			
	CORRECT BALANCE	DOMINANCE OF DEVELOPMENT WITHIN MANY PARTS OF A LANDSCAPE	SOME EVIDENCE OF DEVELOPMENT BUT NOT DOMINANT	ABSENCE OF DEVELOPMENT OR MINIMAL DISTURBANCE WITHIN LANDSCAPE UNIT. PRESENCE OF PARKLAND OR OTHER OPEN SPACE INCLUDING BEACH, LAKESIDE, ETC.
	WATER			
	PRESENCE, EXTENT AND CHARACTER	LITTLE OR NO VIEW OF WATER. WATER IN THE BACKGROUND WITHOUT PROMINENCE. PRESENCE OF POLLUTED WATER OR STAGNANT WATER.	MODERATE EXTENT OF WATER. PRESENCE OF CALM WATER. NO ISLANDS, CHANNELS, MEANDERING WATER. INTERMITTENT STREAMS, LAKES, RIVERS, ETC.	DOMINANCE OF WATER IN FOREGROUND AND MIDDLE GROUND. PRESENCE OF FLOWING WATER, TURBULENCE AND PERMANENT WATER.
	DEVELOPMENT			
	FORM & IDENTITY	PRESENCE OF COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL STRUCTURES. PRESENCE OF LARGE SCALE DEVELOPMENT (E.G. MINING INFRASTRUCTURE, ETC) RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT	PRESENCE OF ESTABLISHED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT. SMALL SCALE, INDUSTRIAL ETC. IN MIDDLEGROUND. PRESENCE OF SPORTS AND RECREATION FACILITIES.	PRESENCE OF RURAL STRUCTURES (E.G. FARM BUILDINGS, FENCES ETC.). HERITAGE BUILDINGS AND OTHER STRUCTURES APPARENT. ISOLATED DOMESTIC SCALE STRUCTURES.

Source: After Clouston & Brouwer, 1995

assessment criteria

7.2. Viewer Access

This considers the relative number and type of viewers, the viewer distance, the viewing duration and view context. The rationale is that if the number of people who would potentially see portions of the proposal is low, then the visual impact would be low, compared to when a large number of people would have the same view.

VIEWER ACCESS MATRIX													
		VIEWER DISTANCE											
		VERY SHORT (<1km)			SHORT (1-2km)			MEDIUM (2-3km)			LONG/DISTANT (>3km)		
		VIEWING DURATION											
		<10mins	10-30mins	>30mins	<10mins	10-30min	>30mins	<10mins	10-30min	>30mins	<10mins	10-30min	>30mins
VIEWER NUMBERS	VERY LOW (>49 PEOPLE PER DAY)	L	M	H	L	M	M	L	L	M/L	L	L	L
	LOW (50-149 PEOPLE PER DAY)	L	M	H	L	M	M	L	L	M	L	L	L
	MODERATE (150-199 PEOPLE PER DAY)	M	H	H	M	M	H	L	M	M	L	L	L
	HIGH (>200 PEOPLE PER DAY)	H	H	H	M	H	H	H	M	H	L	L	M

Source: Adapted from Urbis, 2008

7.3. Visual Effect

Visual effect is the interaction between a proposal and the existing visual environment. It is often expressed as the level of visual contrast of the proposal against its setting or background in which it is viewed.

This is particularly important should any proposed development extend above the skyline unless, once again, there are particular circumstances that may influence viewer perception and/or visual impact.

It should be noted that a high visual effect does not necessarily equate with a reduction in scenic quality. It is the combination of both visual sensitivity and visual effect that results in visual impact.

VISUAL EFFECT TABLE	
LEVELS	HIGH
	RESULTS WHEN A PROPOSAL PRESENTS ITSELF WITH HIGH VISUAL CONTRAST TO ITS VIEWED LANDSCAPE WITH LITTLE OR NO INTEGRATION AND/OR SCREENING.
	MODERATE
	RESULTS WHERE A PROPOSAL NOTICEABLY CONTRASTS WITH ITS VIEWED LANDSCAPE, HOWEVER, THERE HAS BEEN SOME DEGREE OF INTEGRATION (E.G. GOOD SITING PRINCIPLES EMPLOYED, RETENTION OF SIGNIFICANT EXISTING VEGETATION, PROVISION OF SCREEN LANDSCAPING, CAREFUL COLOUR SELECTION AND/OR APPROPRIATELY SCALED DEVELOPMENT).
LOW	OCCURS WHEN A PROPOSAL BLENDS IN WITH ITS EXISTING VIEWED LANDSCAPE DUE TO A HIGH LEVEL OF INTEGRATION OF ONE OR SEVERAL OF THE FOLLOWING: FORM, SHAPE, PATTERN, LINE, TEXTURE OR COLOUR. IT CAN ALSO RESULT FROM THE USE OF EFFECTIVE SCREENING OFTEN USING A COMBINATION OF LANDFORM AND LANDSCAPING.
	NEGLECTIBLE
	THERE ARE NO VIEWS OF THE PROPOSAL COMPONENTS AND AS SUCH THERE IS NO IMPACT

Source: Adapted from EDAW, 2000

assessment criteria

7.4. Visual Sensitivity

Another aspect affecting visual assessments is visual sensitivity. This is the estimate of the significance that a change will have on a landscape and to those viewing it. For example, a significant change that is not frequently seen may result in a low visual sensitivity although its impact on a landscape may be high.

The assessment of visual sensitivity is based on a number of variables such as: the number of people affected; viewer location including distance from the source; the surrounding land use and degree of change. Variables may also include viewer position, i.e. inferior, where the viewer's station is below the horizontal axis as characterise by looking up (least preferred), neutral, where the viewer sight line is generally along the horizontal axis, and, superior, where the viewer sight line is above the horizontal axis as characterise by looking down to an object (most preferred).

Generally the following principles apply:

- Visual sensitivity decreases as the viewer distance increases. This occurs as changes to the scenic environment must be assessed over a broader viewshed which is comprised of a greater number of competing elements.
- Visual sensitivity decreases as the viewing time decreases.
- Visual sensitivity can also be related to viewer activity (e.g. a person viewing an affected site while engaged in recreational activities will be more strongly affected by change than someone passing a scene in a car travelling to a desired destination).
- Visual sensitivity decreases as the number of potential viewers decreases.

Visually sensitive landscapes include:

- Main ridgelines
- Significant natural landscape features such as coastal headlands, prominent hills, lake channel entrances, lake islands and lake promontories
- National Parks, State Recreation Areas and other protected natural conservation areas
- Other areas zoned for natural values (areas zoned C2 - Conservation)
- Within 100m of the lake edge
- Within 300m of the coastal edge
- Heritage conservation areas and precincts

The adjoining table outlines the visual sensitivity based on the above criteria.

VISUAL SENSITIVITY TABLE						
		DISTANCE ZONES				
		FOREGROUND 0-0.5km 0.5-1km		MIDGROUND 1-1.5km 1.5 - 2km		BACK- GROUND (>2km)
LAND USE	RESIDENTIAL: RURAL OR URBAN	MODERATE SENSITIVITY	MODERATE SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY
	NATURAL AREAS	HIGH SENSITIVITY	HIGH SENSITIVITY	HIGH SENSITIVITY	MODERATE SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY
	TOURIST OR PASSIVE RECREATION	HIGH SENSITIVITY	HIGH SENSITIVITY	MODERATE SENSITIVITY	MODERATE SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY
	MAJOR TRAVEL CORRIDORS	HIGH SENSITIVITY	MODERATE SENSITIVITY	MODERATE SENSITIVITY	MODERATE SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY
	TOURIST ROADS	HIGH SENSITIVITY	MODERATE SENSITIVITY	MODERATE SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY
	MINOR ROADS	MODERATE SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY
	AGRICULTURAL AREAS	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY
	INDUSTRIAL AREAS	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY

Source: Adapted from EDAW, 2000

assessment criteria

7.5. Visual Impact

Visual impact is the assessment of changes in the appearance of the landscape as the result of some intervention typically man-induced, to the visual quality of an area having regard to visual sensitivity and visual effect and the other attributes that these elements embody as discussed above.

Visual impact may be positive (i.e. beneficial or an improvement) or negative (i.e. adverse or a detraction). When visual impacts are negative, the loss of visual quality needs to be determined and when they are found to be undesirable or unacceptable, then mitigation measures need to be formulated with the aim of reducing the impact to within, at least acceptable limits.

The adjoining table illustrates how Visual Effect and Visual Sensitivity levels combine to produce varying degrees of Visual Impact. The overall project assessment summary is assessed as LOW. Further assessment is provided in the Visual Evaluation for selected viewpoints.

VISUAL IMPACT TABLE					
		VISUAL EFFECTS LEVELS			
		HIGH	MODERATE	LOW	NEGLIGIBLE
VISUAL SENSITIVITY LEVELS	HIGH	HIGH IMPACT	HIGH IMPACT	MODERATE IMPACT	NEGLIGIBLE IMPACT
	MODERATE	HIGH IMPACT	MODERATE IMPACT	LOW IMPACT	NEGLIGIBLE IMPACT
	LOW	MODERATE IMPACT	LOW IMPACT	LOW IMPACT	NEGLIGIBLE IMPACT
	NEGLIGIBLE	NEGLIGIBLE IMPACT	NEGLIGIBLE IMPACT	NEGLIGIBLE IMPACT	NEGLIGIBLE IMPACT

Source: EDAW, 2000

7.6. Visual Absorption

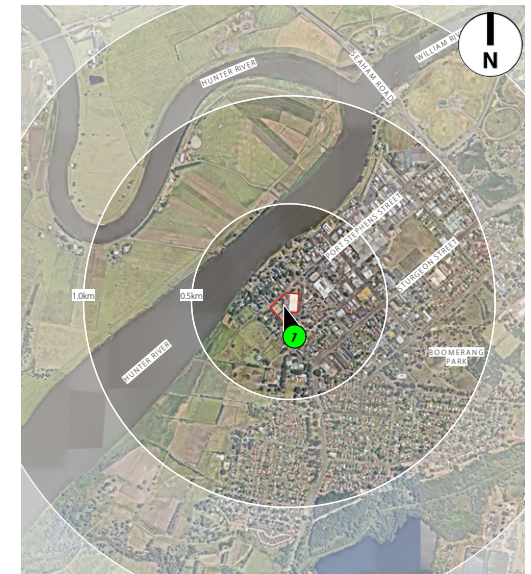
Visual absorption capacity (VAC) is the physical capacity of a landscape to accept human alterations without loss of its inherent visual character or scenic quality.

viewpoint 1

Location: Swan Street



Image 21 Photo stitched view north west towards site (NOTE: Photo stitching provides a level of distortion to photographs, but is used in this instance to establish context).



Site	Viewpoint 1	
Distance: 35m south east	Viewer Access	Visual access is MODERATE due to the very short viewer distance and the assumed viewer numbers.
View position: Neutral	Visual Effect	The visual effect is assessed as MODERATE from this location the development from this location will be partially screened by existing vegetation and the proposed colour selection and form provide integration and the proposal will appear as an expansion of the health centre
Visual Quality: LOW	Visual Sensitivity	The visual sensitivity of the site is considered MODERATE as it will be viewed from a minor road.
	Visual Impact	The visual impact is expected to be HIGH due to the above reasons.

Visual Evaluation Criteria				
	NEGLECTABLE / VERY LOW	LOW	MODERATE / MEDIUM	HIGH
Viewer Access				
Visual Effect				
Visual Sensitivity				
Visual Impact - Significance rating based on above criteria:				
Moderate				



Image 22 Viewpoint 1, one frame, existing view



Image 23 Viewpoint 1, indicative massing montage of proposal showing approximate extents of building within this view.

Note:
This montage is a singular, stand-still image to particular camera settings to match those closest to the visual experience of the average human.

Photostitched imagery, whilst it does consider peripheral visual experience, is not suitable for this application as it is affected by distortion to field of view and focal length during photo merging and cannot be relied upon to produce an accurate and correct depiction of the predicted view.

The montage included can be considered an accurate representation of the focused scene of the viewpoint, as experienced in-situ.

Photostitched imagery has been included on each viewpoint analysis page to convey a sense of context, with an outline of the approximate extent of the photomontage viewpoint, on relevant pages.

viewpoint 2

Location: 118 Port Stephens Street

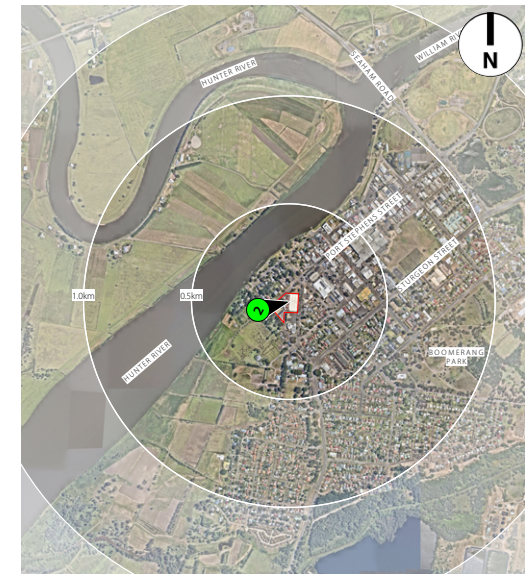


Image 24 Photo stitched view north west towards site (NOTE: Photo stitching provides a level of distortion to photographs, but is used in this instance to establish context).

Site	Viewpoint 2	
Distance: 40m West	Viewer Access	Viewer access is considered LOW due to the limited number of people using this minor road
View position: Neutral	Visual Effect	The visual effect is considered MODERATE as the proposal will contrast its existing viewed landscape however mature trees to the foreground and propose planting and the intended building setback will provide a degree of integration
Visual Quality: Low - Medium	Visual Sensitivity	The Visual Sensitivity of the site is considered MODERATE as it will be viewed from a minor road
	Visual Impact	The visual impact is considered MODERATE due to the above factors

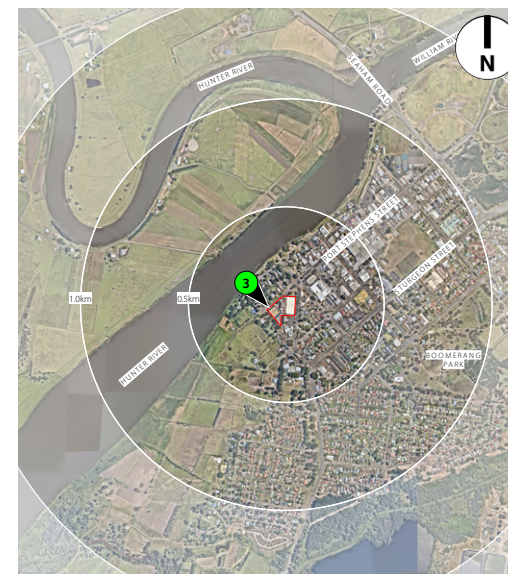
Visual Evaluation Criteria				
	NEGLIGIBLE / VERY LOW	LOW	MODERATE / MEDIUM	HIGH
Viewer Access				
Visual Effect				
Visual Sensitivity				
Visual Impact - Significance rating based on above criteria:				
MODERATE				

viewpoint 3

Location: Riverside Park Boat Ramp



Image 25 Photo stitched view south east towards site (NOTE: Photo stitching provides a level of distortion to photographs, but is used in this instance to establish context).



Site	Viewpoint 3	
Distance: 150m south west	Viewer Access	Visual access to the site is HIGH due to the proximity to the site and the assumed viewer numbers due to the nature of the viewpoint being the boat ramp.
View position: Neutral	Visual Effect	From this location the proposal will noticeably contrast with its viewed landscape however the retention of existing vegetation surrounding the site will help to reduce the visual effect. The proposal will appear as an extension of the residential fabric in the foreground from this viewpoint and proposed trees will help to screen the development. The visual effect is MODERATE
Visual Quality: Medium	Visual Sensitivity	Due to the boat ramp being used for passive recreation the sensitivity rating is HIGH
	Visual Impact	The visual impact is likely to be HIGH from this location due to the above factors.

Visual Evaluation Criteria				
	NEGLECTIBLE / VERY LOW	LOW	MODERATE / MEDIUM	HIGH
Viewer Access				
Visual Effect				
Visual Sensitivity				
Visual Impact - Significance rating based on above criteria:				
HIGH				



Image 26 Viewpoint 3, one frame, existing view



Image 27 Viewpoint 3, indicative massing montage of proposal showing approximate extents of building within this view.

Note:
This montage is a singular, stand-still image to particular camera settings to match those closest to the visual experience of the average human.

Photostitched imagery, whilst it does consider peripheral visual experience, is not suitable for this application as it is affected by distortion to field of view and focal length during photo merging and cannot be relied upon to produce an accurate and correct depiction of the predicted view.

The montage included can be considered an accurate representation of the focused scene of the viewpoint, as experienced in-situ.

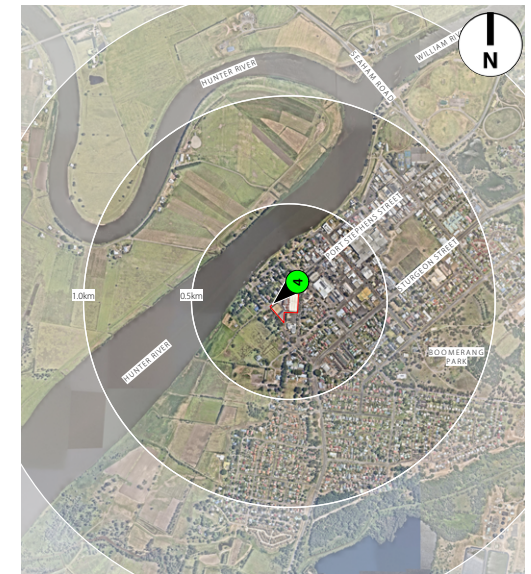
Photostitched imagery has been included on each viewpoint analysis page to convey a sense of context, with an outline of the approximate extent of the photomontage viewpoint, on relevant pages.

viewpoint 4

Location: 100 Port Stephens Street



Image 28 Photo stitched view north towards site (NOTE: Photo stitching provides a level of distortion to photographs, but is used in this instance to establish context).



Site	Viewpoint 4	
Distance: 125m north east	Viewer Access	Viewer access is considered HIGH due to the distance to the site and the expected numbers of viewers. It is noted that due to the wind direction on this day the balloon position is further north than is to be expected and true representation can be seen in the photomontage on the following page
View position: Neutral / slightly inferior	Visual Effect	From this location it is expected that the visual effect will be LOW due to existing trees in the foreground providing screening and the proposed planting associated with the development. Additionally from this location the proposal will sit within an existing streetscape and appear to be an extension of this fabric.
Visual Quality: Medium	Visual Sensitivity	The viewpoint is from a minor road. It is acknowledged that Port Stephens Street is a main street however this section of the road narrows and is considered minor therefore the visual sensitivity is MODERATE
	Visual Impact	The visual impact is likely to be LOW from this location due to the above factors.

Visual Evaluation Criteria				
	NEGLECTIBLE / VERY LOW	LOW	MODERATE / MEDIUM	HIGH
Viewer Access				
Visual Effect				
Visual Sensitivity				
Visual Impact - Significance rating based on above criteria:				
Low				



Image 29 Viewpoint 4, one frame, existing view



Image 30 Viewpoint 4, indicative massing montage of proposal showing approximate extents of building within this view.

Note:
This montage is a singular, stand-still image to particular camera settings to match those closest to the visual experience of the average human.

Photostitched imagery, whilst it does consider peripheral visual experience, is not suitable for this application as it is affected by distortion to field of view and focal length during photo merging and cannot be relied upon to produce an accurate and correct depiction of the predicted view.

The montage included can be considered an accurate representation of the focused scene of the viewpoint, as experienced in-situ.

Photostitched imagery has been included on each viewpoint analysis page to convey a sense of context, with an outline of the approximate extent of the photomontage viewpoint, on relevant pages.

viewpoint 5

Location: Raymond Terrace Health Centre

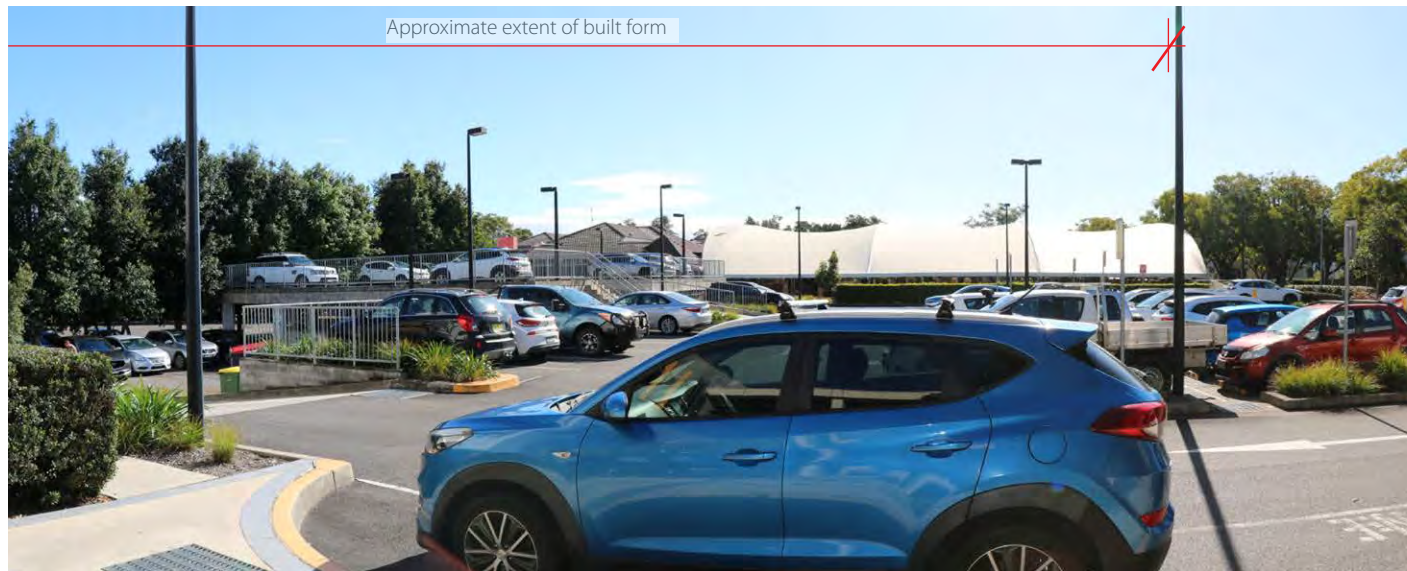


Image 31 Photo stitched view north towards site (NOTE: Photo stitching provides a level of distortion to photographs, but is used in this instance to establish context).



Site	Viewpoint 5	
Distance: 70m South	Viewer Access	This viewpoint is typical of visitors to the Raymond Terrace Health Centre. Viewer numbers are high and the proximity to the site is high therefore the viewer access is HIGH .
View position: Neutral	Visual Effect	The visual effect is considered LOW due to the existing vegetation screening the majority of views of the proposed development and proposed planting to the secondary access providing a vegetation buffer between this viewpoint and the site.
Visual Quality: Low	Visual Sensitivity	The sensitivity from this viewpoint is considered MODERATE
	Visual Impact	The visual impact is likely to be LOW from this location due to the above factors.

Visual Evaluation Criteria				
	NEGLECTIBLE / VERY LOW	LOW	MODERATE / MEDIUM	HIGH
Viewer Access				
Visual Effect				
Visual Sensitivity				
Visual Impact - Significance rating based on above criteria:				
LOW				

viewpoint 6

Location: 49 Port Stephens Street

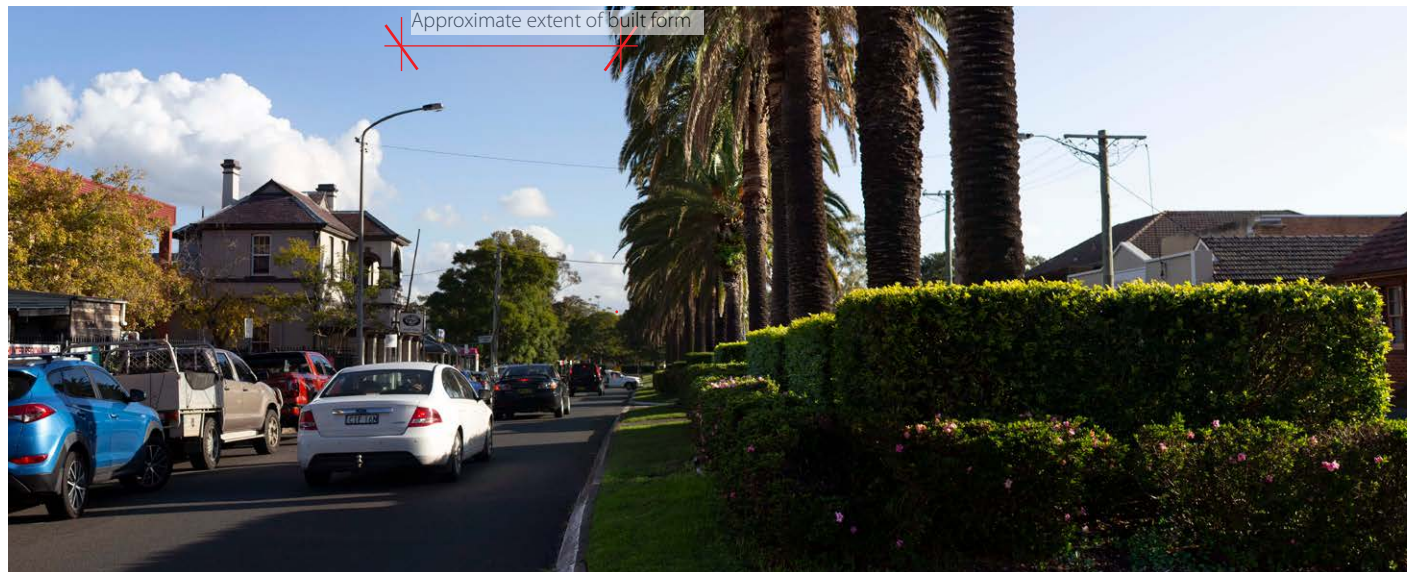


Image 32 Photo stitched view south west towards site (NOTE: Photo stitching provides a level of distortion to photographs, but is used in this instance to establish context).



Site	Viewpoint 6	
Distance: 350m north east	Viewer Access	The visual access is high due to the proximity to the site and the expected viewers in excess of 200 per day.
View position: Neutral	Visual Effect	From this location the proposal will blend with its existing viewed landscape due to the viewing angle and existing vegetation and built form within the view corridor. Therefore the visual effect will be LOW
Visual Quality: Medium	Visual Sensitivity	HIGH rating due being a main travel corridor
	Visual Impact	The visual impact is likely to be MODERATE from this location due to the above factors. It is believed the sensitivity of the viewpoint has a disproportionate bearing on the impact from this viewpoint and the true impact has been reassessed as LOW

Visual Evaluation Criteria				
	NEGLECTIBLE / VERY LOW	LOW	MODERATE / MEDIUM	HIGH
Viewer Access				
Visual Effect				
Visual Sensitivity				
Visual Impact - Significance rating based on above criteria:				
LOW				

viewpoint 7

Location: Seaham Road Bridge



Image 33 Photo stitched view south towards site (NOTE: Photo stitching provides a level of distortion to photographs, but is used in this instance to establish context).



Site	Viewpoint 7	
Distance: 1200m north east	Viewer Access	MODERATE due to the short (1-2km) viewer distance with high viewer numbers.
View position: Superior	Visual Effect	Riverside development is present in this view. It is believed a small portion of the proposed development will be visible from this location near the top of the existing vegetation however from this location the majority of the proposed development will be screened therefore the visual effect will be LOW.
Visual Quality: Medium	Visual Sensitivity	MODERATE due to the viewpoint being from a major travel corridor beyond a kilometer to the site.
	Visual Impact	The visual impact is likely to be LOW from this location.

Visual Evaluation Criteria				
	NEGLECTIBLE / VERY LOW	LOW	MODERATE / MEDIUM	HIGH
Viewer Access				
Visual Effect				
Visual Sensitivity				
Visual Impact - Significance rating based on above criteria:				
Low				

viewpoint 8

Location: Raymond Terrace Bridge

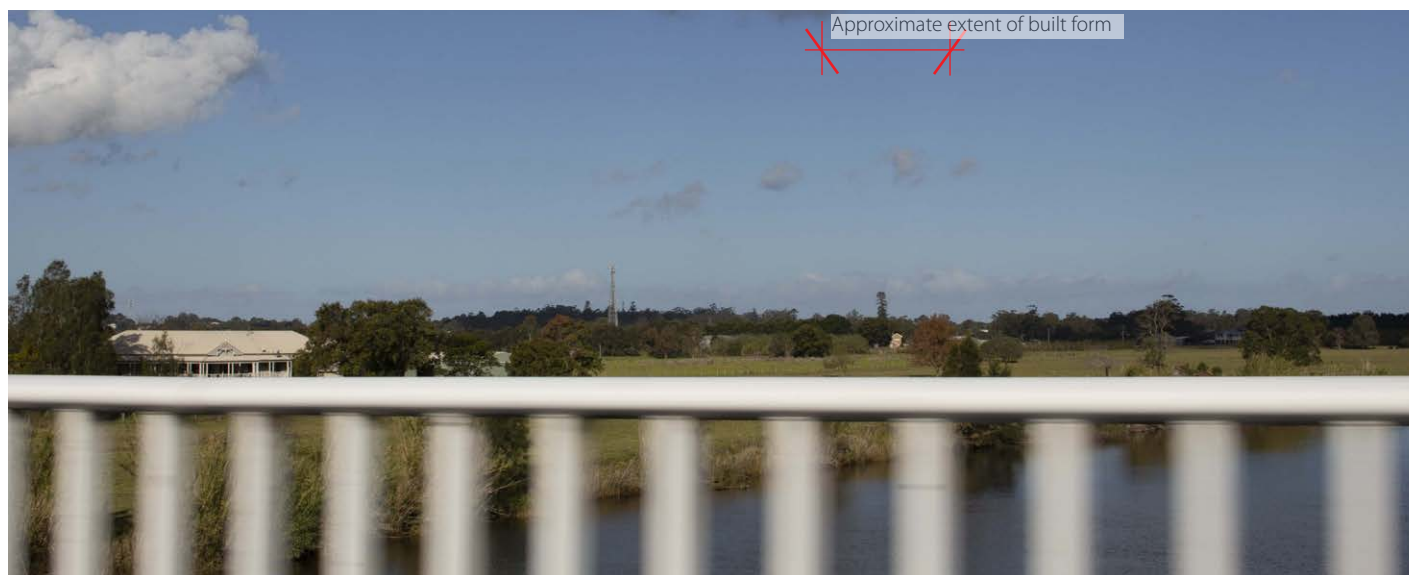


Image 34 Photo stitched view south east towards site (NOTE: Photo stitching provides a level of distortion to photographs, but is used in this instance to establish context).

Site	Viewpoint 8	
Distance: 1700m north west	Viewer Access	MEDIUM due to the distance to the site and the high viewer numbers. This viewpoint is typical of motorists travelling along Raymond Terrace Road and passing over Raymond Terrace Bridge
View position: Neutral	Visual Effect	Although the proposed development will be very partially visible along the vegetation line it is believed it will be for the most part screened and therefore the visual effect will be LOW from this viewpoint.
Visual Quality: Medium	Visual Sensitivity	MODERATE due to being a major travel corridor
	Visual Impact	It is acknowledged that this viewpoint while rural is not pristine and will have a limited viewing duration. The visual impact has been assessed as LOW.

Visual Evaluation Criteria				
	NEGLECTIBLE / VERY LOW	LOW	MODERATE / MEDIUM	HIGH
Viewer Access				
Visual Effect				
Visual Sensitivity				
Visual Impact - Significance rating based on above criteria:				
Low				

viewpoint 9

Location: Hunter River

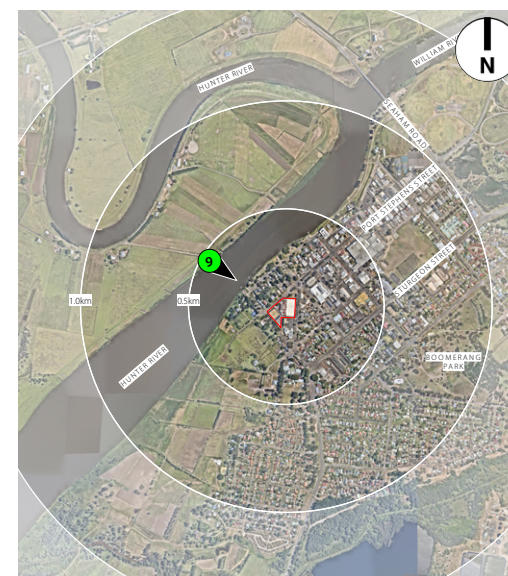


Image 35 Photo stitched view south east towards site (NOTE: Photo stitching provides a level of distortion to photographs, but is used in this instance to establish context).

Site	Viewpoint 9	
Distance: 130m north west	Viewer Access	This viewpoint is typical of people using the Hunter River. Viewer access is considered MODERATE. Due to the gap in vegetation from this viewpoint directly opposite the boat ramp there will be relatively unobstructed views to the proposed development.
View position: Neutral	Visual Effect	From this location the majority of the development of Raymond Terrace is screened by the riverside vegetation. The height of the proposal will extend to the tree line as can be seen from the balloon location. The visual effect has been considered MODERATE due to the existing vegetation partially screening the development and the proposed material selections providing integration.
Visual Quality: Medium	Visual Sensitivity	HIGH rating due to its passive recreation use
	Visual Impact	A HIGH visual impact results from referencing the assessment criteria tables.

Visual Evaluation Criteria				
	NEGLECTIBLE / VERY LOW	LOW	MODERATE / MEDIUM	HIGH
Viewer Access				
Visual Effect				
Visual Sensitivity				
Visual Impact - Significance rating based on above criteria:				
HIGH				



Image 36 Viewpoint 9, one frame, existing view

Note:
This montage is a singular, stand-still image to particular camera settings to match those closest to the visual experience of the average human.

Photostitched imagery, whilst it does consider peripheral visual experience, is not suitable for this application as it is affected by distortion to field of view and focal length during photo merging and cannot be relied upon to produce an accurate and correct depiction of the predicted view.

The montage included can be considered an accurate representation of the focused scene of the viewpoint, as experienced in-situ.

Photostitched imagery has been included on each viewpoint analysis page to convey a sense of context, with an outline of the approximate extent of the photomontage viewpoint, on relevant pages.

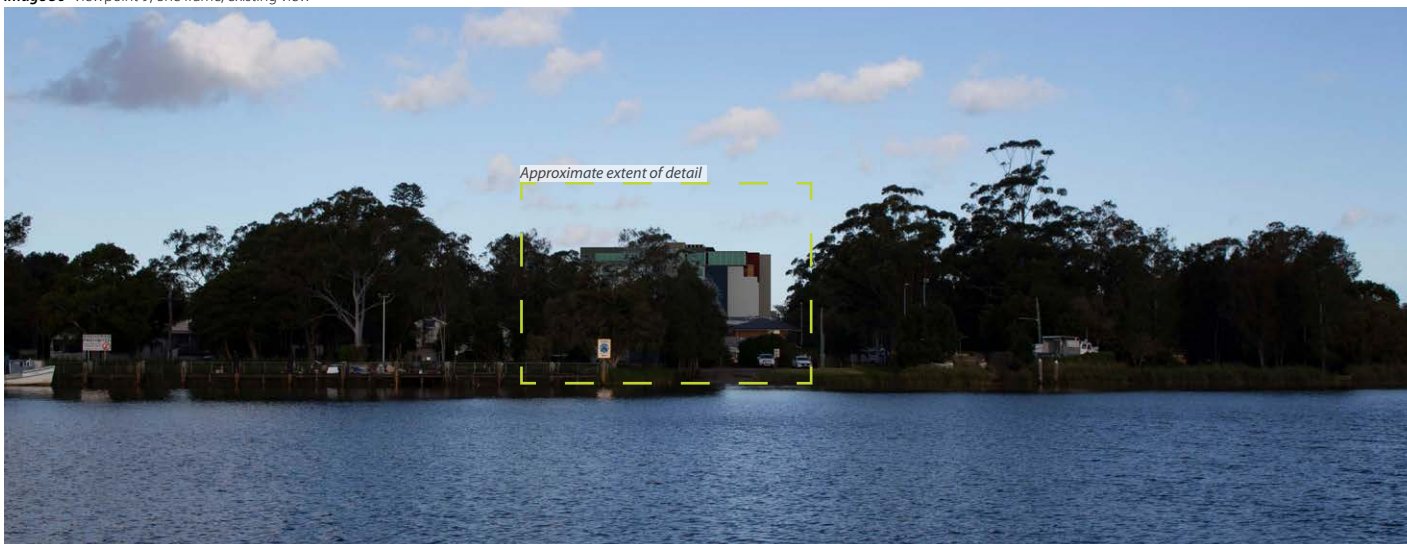


Image 37 Viewpoint 9 indicative massing montage of proposal showing approximate extents of building within this view.



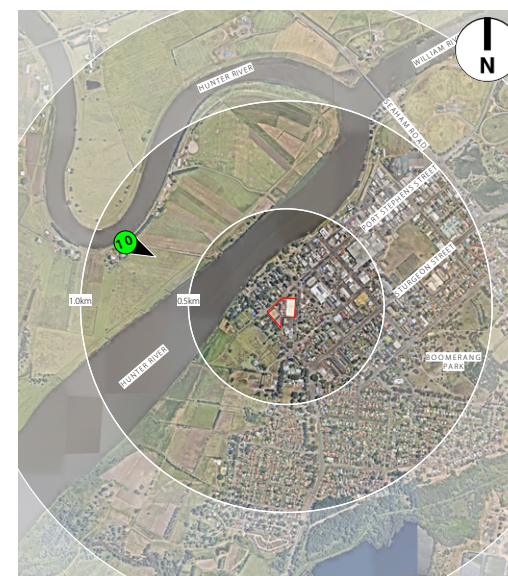
Image 38 Detail blow up of Viewpoint 9 indicative massing montage

viewpoint 10

Location: Intersection of Monkleys Road



Image 39 Photo stitched view east towards site (NOTE: Photo stitching provides a level of distortion to photographs, but is used in this instance to establish context).



Site	Viewpoint 10	
Distance: 780m north west	Viewer Access	This viewpoint is typical of motorists traveling along Monkleys Road. This minor road is a farm access road. Viewer access is considered LOW due to very low viewer numbers, being a minor road
View position: Neutral	Visual Effect	It is unlikely that the proposed development will be visible from this location due to existing vegetation providing a buffer from this viewpoint. The top of the proposal may be partially visible through the trees to the trained eye however the visual effect has been assumed to be LOW - NEGLIGIBLE
Visual Quality: Medium	Visual Sensitivity	LOW rating due to the viewpoint being from a minor road and greater than 500m distance from the site
	Visual Impact	The visual impact is likely to be LOW from this location.

Visual Evaluation Criteria				
	NEGLIGIBLE / VERY LOW	LOW	MODERATE / MEDIUM	HIGH
Viewer Access				
Visual Effect				
Visual Sensitivity				
Visual Impact - Significance rating based on above criteria:				
Low				

viewpoint 11

Location: 245 Monkleys Road



Image 40 Photo stitched view east towards site (NOTE: Photo stitching provides a level of distortion to photographs, but is used in this instance to establish context).



Site	Viewpoint 11	
Distance: 155m north west	Viewer Access	This viewpoint was is from the existing residence at the end of Monkleys Road looking back towards Raymond Terrace. Viewer access is LOW due to the very low viewer numbers despite the distance to the site.
View position: Neutral	Visual Effect	Although the proposed development will be partially visible the majority of the built form will be screened by riverside vegetation. It is assumed that the visual effect from this location will be LOW
Visual Quality: Medium	Visual Sensitivity	MODERATE rating due to its residential context.
	Visual Impact	The visual impact is likely to be LOW from this location.

Visual Evaluation Criteria				
	NEGLECTIBLE / VERY LOW	LOW	MODERATE / MEDIUM	HIGH
Viewer Access				
Visual Effect				
Visual Sensitivity				
Visual Impact - Significance rating based on above criteria:				
Low				

viewpoint 12

Location: 116 Port Stephens Street

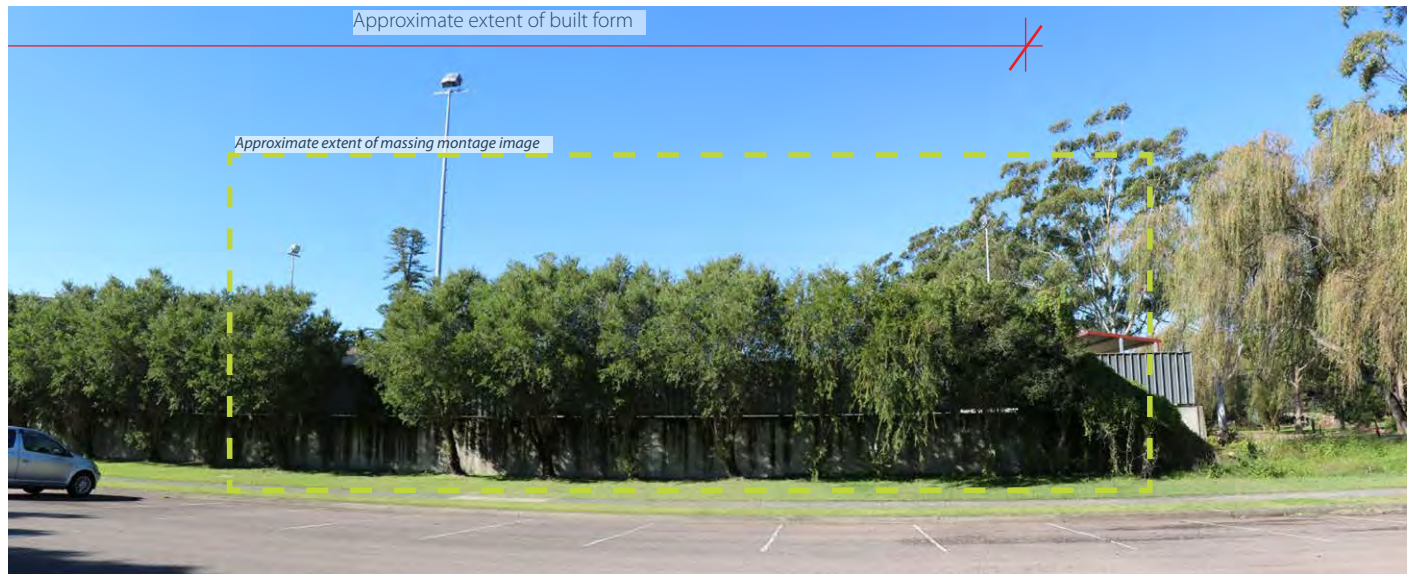
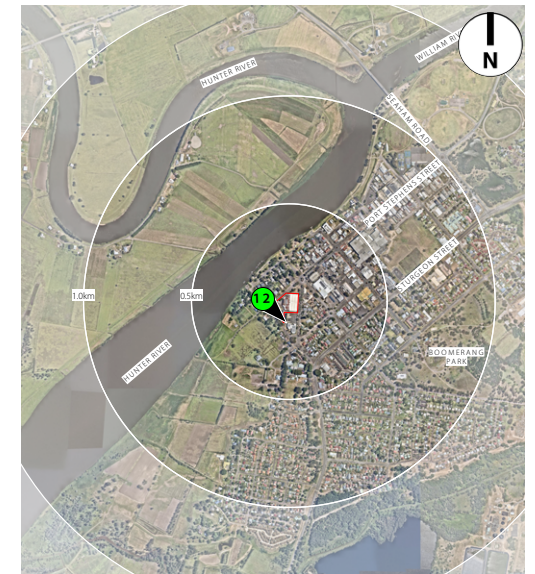


Image 41 Photo stitched view south towards site (NOTE: Photo stitching provides a level of distortion to photographs, but is used in this instance to establish context).



Site	Viewpoint 12	
Distance: 30m north west	Viewer Access	This viewpoint is from the existing residence opposite the site on Port Stephens Street. Visual access is considered HIGH due to the viewing duration and the proximity to the site.
View position: Neutral	Visual Effect	The visual effect is HIGH as the proposal will present itself with high visual contrast to its viewed landscape.
Visual Quality: Low	Visual Sensitivity	MODERATE rating due to its residential context.
	Visual Impact	The visual impact is likely to be HIGH from this location.

Visual Evaluation Criteria				
	NEGLECTIBLE / VERY LOW	LOW	MODERATE / MEDIUM	HIGH
Viewer Access				
Visual Effect				
Visual Sensitivity				
Visual Impact - Significance rating based on above criteria:				
HIGH				



Image 42 Viewpoint 12, one frame, existing view



Image 43 Viewpoint 12, indicative massing montage of proposal showing approximate extents of building within this view.

Note:
This montage is a singular, stand-still image to particular camera settings to match those closest to the visual experience of the average human.

Photostitched imagery, whilst it does consider peripheral visual experience, is not suitable for this application as it is affected by distortion to field of view and focal length during photo merging and cannot be relied upon to produce an accurate and correct depiction of the predicted view.

The montage included can be considered an accurate representation of the focused scene of the viewpoint, as experienced in-situ.

Photostitched imagery has been included on each viewpoint analysis page to convey a sense of context, with an outline of the approximate extent of the photomontage viewpoint, an relevant pages.

viewpoint summary

8. VIEWPOINT SUMMARY

Viewpoint Summary				
	ACCESS	EFFECT	SENSITIVITY	IMPACT
Viewpoint 1 Swan Street (35m)	MODERATE	MODERATE	MODERATE	MODERATE
Viewpoint 2 / Photomontage Port Stephens Street (50m)	LOW	MODERATE	MODERATE	MODERATE
Viewpoint 3 Raymond Terrace Boat Ramp (150m)	HIGH	MODERATE	HIGH	HIGH
Viewpoint 4 / Photomontage 100 Port Stephens Street (125m)	HIGH	LOW	MODERATE	LOW
Viewpoint 5 Raymond Terrace Health Centre (70m)	HIGH	LOW	MODERATE	LOW
Viewpoint 6 49 Port Stephens Street(350m)	HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW
Viewpoint 7 Seaham Road Bridge (1200m)	MODERATE	LOW	MODERATE	LOW
Viewpoint 8 Raymond Terrace Bridge (1700m)	MODERATE	LOW	MODERATE	LOW
Viewpoint 9 / Photomontage Hunter River (130m)	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH	HIGH
Viewpoint 10 Monkleys Road (780m)	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW
Viewpoint 11 245 Monkleys Road (150M)	LOW	LOW	MODERATE	LOW
Viewpoint 12 Port Stephens Street (30M)	HIGH	HIGH	MODERATE	HIGH

impact assessment

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

9.1. Discussion

This section considers the general impact the proposal may have on the local visual environment and identifies those areas where the visual impact may potentially be the most significant. This was done by undertaking a surrounding site inspection and broadly scoping the study area to identify where the proposed development would likely to be visible and appear to be most prominent. Visual effect may be either based on the degree of exposure or the number of people likely to be affected.

While there is no building height limit nominated for the site, the proposal must be consistent with the objectives of Clause 4.3 which include:

- (a) to ensure the height of buildings is appropriate for the context and character of the area,
- (b) to ensure building heights reflect the hierarchy of centres and land use structure.

Viewpoint 1 is typical of motorists travelling north along Swan Street. Swan Street is a minor street. The existing mature trees to the eastern side of Swan Street will provide partial screening of the proposed development however the vegetated backdrop further north will be interrupted by the proposed built form. It is noted that the view is not pristine and the existing Health Centre to the right of the view sets a precedent for the area. From this location it is acknowledged that the form and material selection provides a level of integration and ensures the proposal sits appropriately adjacent to the Health Centre.

Viewpoints 2,4,6 and 12 are all viewpoints assessed along Port Stephens Street. From the north western approach to the site along the street (viewpoints 4 and 6) the proposal for the most part will be screened by vegetation in the foreground. These views are typical of motorists travelling south west along Port Stephens Street. It is noted that although the proposed height is greater than surrounding development from this approach due to the mentioned vegetation, proposed planting and setback the visual impact will be low.

Viewpoint 12 is typical of residents directly opposite the site. The current outlook is to the Callistemon buffer to the northern edge of the bowling green. These will be retained with the exception of the pedestrian entry for the hotel. These will help to provide screening from the street level. The impact will be high however the viewer numbers are low from this location and the proposed landscaping to the Port Stephens interface will a degree of integration. However, it should be noted that immediate proximity viewpoints will produce high visual impacts due to the viewer's proximity to the site and limitations on distance to gain full context.

Viewpoint 2 is typical of motorists traveling north east along Port Stephens Road. This portion of Port Stephens Street becomes a narrow minor road servicing 5 residences therefore viewer numbers are limited and the mature vegetation existing along Swan Street filter views to the site from this location. The visual impact will be moderate due to the proximity to site and the proposal will noticeably contrast with its viewed landscape however there has been a degree of integration in materials, landscaping and setback.

Viewpoints 3 and 9 are typical of people accessing the Raymond Terrace Boat Ramp and the Hunter River. There will be a high visual impact from both viewpoints due to the nature of the viewpoints being recreational based. From Viewpoint 9, the proposed development is viewed in a narrow view corridor due to a break in vegetation and existing infrastructure. When viewed from this location, the proposal is viewed as a solid building mass in contrast to its surrounding environment. However, it is noted that the established riverside vegetation screens views of the proposal from the remaining Hunter River and the impact of this view is for a small proportion of the views from the Hunter River. It is also noted that views of the existing cell tower, which visually breaks the skyline, are viewed along the whole extent of the Hunter River. The tabled assessment has resulted in a high visual impact, however, visual impact has been reassessed as moderate, as the weighting of the sensitivity has disproportionately influenced the visual impact, as demonstrated in the photomontage for Viewpoint 9.

From viewpoint 3 the visual impact is high due to the nature and use of the boat ramp. It is noted that the proposal will appear as an extension of the residential buildings to the foreground and from this viewpoint the existing mature trees will appear significantly taller than the proposal. Propose canopy planting and the proposed green wall to the northern aspect of the hotel will help to integrate the proposal to an extent.

Viewpoint 5 is typical of visitors to the Raymond Terrace Health Centre. Visitors will be in close proximity to the site. Existing vegetation to the north west provides a significant vegetation buffer to the proposed hotel. The opportunity to provide trees to the secondary access to the north of this viewpoint will provide screening to the proposed roof of the bowling further integrating the proposal into the landscape.

Viewpoint 7 and 8 are typical of motorists traveling over bridges on Seaham Road and Raymond Terrace Road therefore from elevated positions. While it is expected that the proposed development will be partially visible from these locations, visibility will be minor due to the vegetation associated with the Hunter River, the distance to the site and the proposed materials. Additionally viewing time will be low therefore resulting in a low visual impact.

Viewpoints 10 and 11 are from viewpoints on Monkleys Road. Viewpoint 11 is from the residence at the end of Monkleys Road so viewer numbers are limited, however from this viewpoint there will be filtered views of the proposed development to the trained eye. Due to the limited viewer numbers, screening vegetation and distance to the site the visual impact is considered low.

Viewpoint 10 is from Monkleys Road from a view corridor afforded towards the site due to minor farm road providing private access to the Hunter River. The balloon was not visible when investigating this viewpoint however it is expected that there will be filtered views to a portion of the hotel from this location however it is

impact assessment

considered that the development will be difficult to make out from this location therefore the impact is low.

It is noted that access to the site from the north is restricted due to the privately owned farm land. The proposed impact is expected to be mainly localised and decreases as distance from the site increases.

It is noted that the proposed permanent roof to the existing bowling greens will essentially be a replacement of the existing in height and size therefore there is not visual impact resulting from this. The proposed hotel to the corner of Swan and Port Stephens Street is the primary focus of this impact assessment.

The proposed development lies to the southern end of the Raymond Town Centre precinct. Although the proposed hotel height is greater than that of other buildings in the local vicinity, visual access to the development is limited due to the existing mature trees within close proximity to the site and associated with the southern edge of the Hunter River. Views of the proposal are limited to within 250m of the site to the south, east and west. More distant views are available to the north of the site however from this aspect the mentioned vegetation filters visibility to the site.

It is considered the greatest visual impact will be from private residences directly opposite the site to the north. The proposal will be noticeable from further afield however will not be detrimental due to the existing vegetation surrounding the site.

9.2. Conclusion and Recommendations

A review of the visual catchment of the proposed development showed that views of the site were generally limited to within the immediate vicinity of the proposal and where further afield only filtered views were accessible due to stands of existing mature vegetation.

The proposal although higher than other development in the area for the most part sits comfortably within the landscape due to existing mature vegetation surrounding the site and associated with the Hunter River. The proposal will have a low accumulative visual impact on the surrounding area, with the exception of immediate proximity views and views immediately north via a narrow view corridor from the Raymond Terrace Boat Ramp to the Hunter river.

Where the development is visible from the rural lands to the north of the site and Seaham Bridge, the distance to the site is such that the proposal will be difficult to make out as the river side vegetation provides a vegetation buffer obscuring the majority of the proposed development

Suggested mitigation measures include:

- Use of non reflective, recessive colours to the building facade of the hotel
- Implementation of landscaping as proposed in the landscape scheme with priority given to canopy planting
- Articulation of the facade of the hotel

10. REFERENCES

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