



Heritage Impact Statement

Edgecliff Centre

Planning Proposal

Prepared for Longhurst

FINAL REPORT, SEPT 2020

Document Information

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Executive Summary

Curio Projects Pty Ltd were commissioned by Longhurst Investments No. 1 (Longhurst) to prepare a Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) to support a planning proposal for the redevelopment of the Edgecliff Centre at 203-233 New South Head Road, Edgecliff. In particular, this report assesses any potential visual heritage impacts associated with the proposed overall precinct concept and redevelopment of the site.

The planning proposal for the Edgecliff Centre seeks to amend the building height and FSR for the site, and envisages a mixed-use precinct, incorporating within: an integrated podium a vibrant retail centre, state of the art office spaces, curated medical/wellness offering, as well as a residential tower, significant improvements to the Edgecliff Transit entry, generous public plaza, a new naturally lit atrium with intermodal connection between bus and train users, community spaces, improved wayfinding & identity, and a large publicly accessible open space.

While the Edgecliff Centre subject site itself is not heritage listed, it is located adjacent to and above the Edgecliff Railway Station (listed as a heritage item on RailCorp's Section 170 Heritage Register (s170), as well as in vicinity of a number of significant local and SHR listed items (closest heritage items at being the locally listed items at 136 New South Head Road and 188 New South Head Road), as well as in close proximity to Paddington (C8) and Woollahra (C15) Heritage Conservation Areas (HCAs), and in the vicinity of Mona Road HCA (C6).

Heritage Impact Assessment

The Planning Proposal for the Edgecliff Centre subject site does not include any heritage listed items, nor is it located within an HCA, and therefore will have no physical impact to any heritage items nor within any HCA. Neither will the planning proposal present any heritage impact to the S170 register listed Edgecliff Station.

The planning proposal does not propose any interventions to Edgecliff Station itself but would include significant upgrade and improvements to the connectivity to the station and transport interchange, as well as improved retail offering and public amenities associated with the transport complex. Improvement of connectivity and accessibility to the station will have a positive impact on the readability and experience of the station, particularly with the adoption of a sensitive material and colour palette through detailed design.

While the proposed increase in height allowance for the site to accommodate a mixed use development tower (including health/medical offering) would be visible from surrounding heritage items (i.e. Rushcutters Bay Park) and adjacent HCAs (i.e. Paddington and Woollahra to the south), it would not present an adverse impact to any views and vistas to and from the heritage items or HCAs, particularly considering that the key significance of these listings generally HCAs relates to the internal character and street-level experience of the HCAs within their specific boundaries.

Similar to the HCAs, the heritage significance and associated key views and vistas of Rushcutters Bay Park relate predominantly to the location, experience and historical significance of the park itself, connectivity of the views and vistas to Sydney Harbour and surrounding inner Sydney

parklands, as opposed to simple visibility of surrounding development as part of the wider skyline of Sydney's eastern suburbs. In addition, consideration of the views southeast from Rushcutters Bay Park towards the development area, demonstrates that while the tower and part of the podium components of the proposal would be visible, the addition of the tower would be commensurate with the existing skyline including an existing residential tower and larger scale buildings.

Existing views from the southern HCAs towards the Edgecliff Centre have already been impacted by the current Edgecliff Centre—a building that is unsympathetic to the heritage character of the HCAs. The redevelopment of the site presents the opportunity to actually improve the existing views and vistas to the site from the HCAs, by the application of improved and more sensitive design, e.g. improved permeability, accessibility and sympathetic materiality. Any visual impact of the tower will also be balanced by significant improvements to public amenity and transport interchange proposed by the development.

The more distinct visual impacts of the bulk, scale and height of the development could be softened and reduced by use of careful design and application of built form, materiality and colour palette, thus lessening any new visual impacts on surrounding heritage items and HCAs. Application of principles for the new design around ensuring permeability, appropriate colour and materiality, especially if developed in consultation with a heritage specialist, will allow for better visual outcomes of the new development than those of the existing Edgecliff Centre.

The future design process should consider the design principles such as those contained within heritage design documents: *Design In Context: Guidelines for Infill Development in the Historic Environment* (NSW Heritage Office 2005); and the more recent NSW Government Architect Office document *Better Placed: An integrated design policy for the built environment of New South Wales* (2017), to ensure that final design is appropriate to and respectful of the existing heritage framework and surrounding character.

Overall, the planning proposal for the Edgecliff Centre will not have an adverse impact or alteration to the character and significance of any nearby heritage items, nor any of the nearby HCAs (Paddington, Woollahra or Mona Road). The planning proposal is considered to be consistent with the existing built context of this part of New South Head Road, Edgecliff, and will present opportunities for improvements to existing setting and character of the area than that of the existing building.

1. Introduction

Curio Projects Pty Ltd were commissioned by Longhurst Investments No. 1 (Longhurst) to prepare a Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) to support the planning proposal for the redevelopment of the Edgecliff Centre (the subject site). In particular, this report assesses any potential visual heritage impacts associated with the proposed overall precinct concept and redevelopment of the site.

This HIS supports a planning proposal for the Edgecliff Centre at 203-233 New South Head Road, Edgecliff.

This report has been prepared with reference to the following key documents:

- Curio Projects 2019, *Edgecliff Centre - Heritage Risk Assessment*, prepared for Longhurst.
- Woollahra Local Environmental Plan 2014 (LEP 2014).
- NSW State Heritage Inventory Database
- Heritage Office, 2001, *Assessing Heritage Significance*.
- The *Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, The Burra Charter 2013* (Burra Charter) and the associated series of Practice Notes.
- RLA 2020, *Edgecliff Centre Planning Proposal, Visual Impact Assessment*, prepared for Longhurst.

1.1. Project Background and Context

The Edgecliff Centre was purchased by Longhurst in October 2016, and since this time, the client has been developing and preparing the asset for redevelopment.

The client's vision for the redevelopment of Edgecliff Centre is to:

- *Create an iconic, world leading and best-in-class development*
- *Provide improved access and inter-modal connection facilitating a delightful customer and commuter experience*
- *Realise the identity of Edgecliff, creating a place and connecting it to the wider city in a meaningful manner*
- *Curate a diverse mix of uses within the development in a truly integrated way.*¹

The planning proposal for the Edgecliff Centre seeks to amend the building height and FSR for the site, and envisages a mixed-use precinct, incorporating within: an integrated podium a vibrant retail centre, state of the art office spaces, curated medical/wellness offering, as well as a residential tower, significant improvements to the Edgecliff Transit entry, generous public plaza, a new naturally lit atrium with intermodal connection between bus and train users, community spaces, improved wayfinding & identity, and a large publicly accessible green open space.

¹ Longhurst presentation powerpoint, 'Vision & Brief', 12 December 2019

1.2. Site Identification

The subject site is located in the Eastern Sydney suburb of Edgecliff, within the Woollahra Municipal Council Local Government Area (LGA) (Figure 1.1). The subject site is known as 'The Edgecliff Centre', located at 203-233 New South Head Road, Edgecliff, and formally identified as Lot 203, DP1113922.

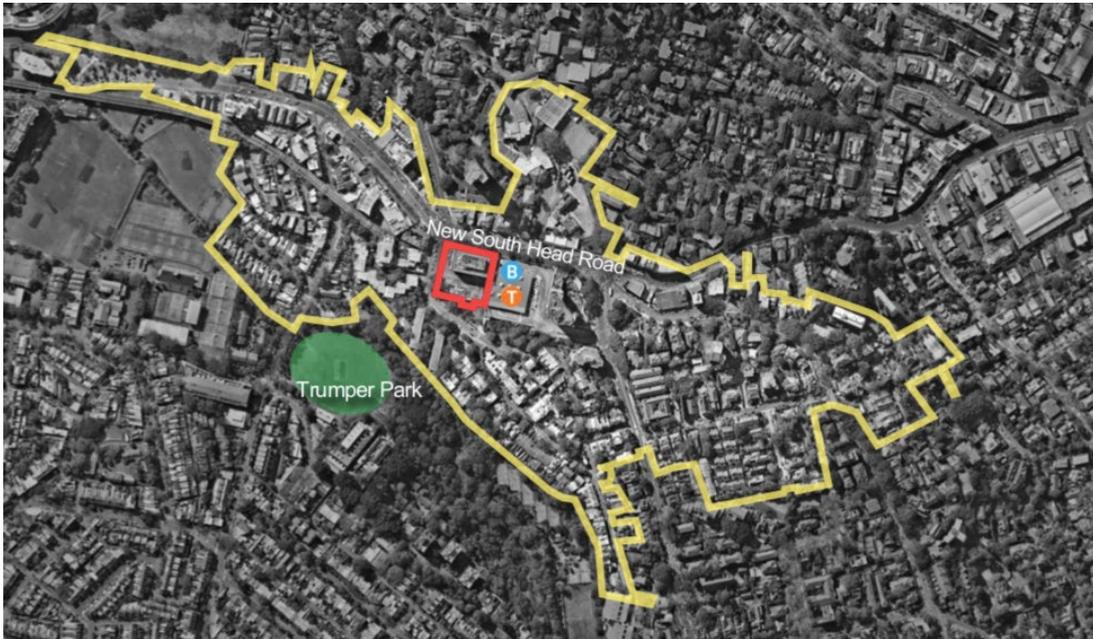


Figure 1.1: Subject Site Contextual Location (Source: Longhurst 2020)

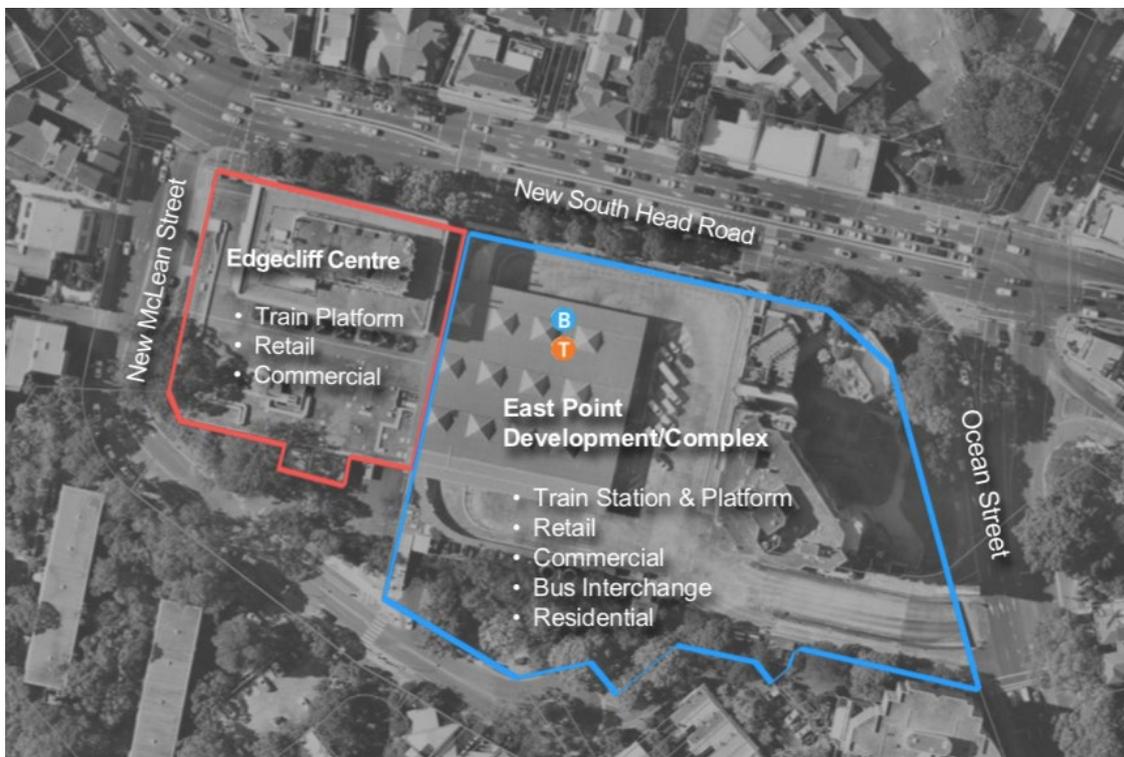


Figure 1.2: Locational Context (Source: Longhurst 2019)

1.3. Constraints and Limitations

The following report is based on readily available information only and has been considered in accordance with the best practice management guidelines issued by NSW Heritage and the Australian Burra Charter Guidelines. The report relates to heritage risks only, and no other planning risks associated with the proposed redevelopment of the subject site. The preparation of this HIS has not included any stakeholder consultation.

1.4. Authorship

This report has been prepared by Sam Cooling, Heritage Specialist, with review by Natalie Vinton, Principle Heritage Advisor and Director, both of Curio Projects Pty Ltd.

2. Statutory Context

2.1. Environmental Planning and Assessment Act

The NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) administers the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act), which provides the legislative context for environmental planning instruments made to legislate and guide the processes of development and land use. Local heritage items, including known archaeological items, identified Aboriginal Places and heritage conservation areas are protected through listings on Local Environmental Plans (LEPs) or Regional Environmental Plans (REPs). The EP&A Act also requires that potential Aboriginal and historical archaeological resources are adequately assessed and considered as part of the development process, in accordance with the requirements of the NPW Act and the Heritage Act (see relevant sections below for further on the NPW and Heritage Acts).

The planning proposal to which this HIS report relates seeks to amend the Woollahra height and floor space controls to facilitate the future redevelopment on the site. This planning proposal will be considered by Council and then progress through the Gateway process, including assessment by the Department, further assessment by Council, and public consultation.

2.1.1. Woollahra Local Environmental Plan 2014

The Woollahra LEP provides local environmental planning provisions for land within the Woollahra LGA. Clause 5.10 of the LEP sets out objective and planning controls for the conservation of heritage in the Council area, including the conservation of built heritage, archaeological sites, and heritage conservation areas.

While the subject site itself is not listed on the LEP, it is located in proximity to a number of heritage items and a heritage conservation area, which must be considered in the context of the proposed development (see Section 2.3).

2.1.2. Woollahra Development Control Plan 2015

The Woollahra DCP is a non-statutory development control plan that provides the detailed design guidelines to support the LEP 2014. The DCP provides simple guidance on how development may occur, and includes notably, main objectives to ensure that items of environmental heritage are conserved, respected and protected.

Chapter D4 of the DCP relates specifically to the 'Edgecliff Centre', including 203-233 New South Head Road, 235-285 New South Head Road, and 180 Ocean Street. That is, the area to which Chapter D4 of the DCP applies extends across an area larger than the specific subject area of this HIS (i.e. 203-233 New South Head Road only). The objectives for this chapter of the DCP are stated as:

- 01 *To encourage a high standard of architectural and landscape design in any new development within the centre.*
- 02 *To protect the amenity of residential and commercial development.*

- 03 *To protect the amenity of adjoining residential areas.*
- 04 *To improve connections within the centre and into the surrounding commercial and residential areas.*
- 05 *To enhance the way development contributes to a sense of place.*
- 06 *To encourage a diverse mix of uses in the centre, whilst maintaining its role of providing medical services.*
- 07 *To activate the frontage to New McLean Street and Arthur Street*

2.2. NSW Heritage Act 1977

In NSW, heritage items are afforded statutory protection under the *NSW Heritage Act 1977* (the Heritage Act). Heritage places and items of particular importance to the people of New South Wales are listed on the NSW State Heritage Register (SHR). The Heritage Act defines a heritage item as a 'place, building, work, relic, moveable object or precinct'. The Heritage Act is responsible for the conservation and regulation of impacts to items of State heritage significance, with 'State Heritage Significance' defined as being of 'significance to the state in relation to the historical, scientific, cultural, social, archaeological, architectural, natural or aesthetic value of the item'.

Section 170 of the Heritage Act requires government agencies to identify, conserve and manage heritage assets owned, occupied or managed by that agency. Under Section 170, government agencies are required to keep a Register of heritage items, known as a *Heritage and Conservation Register* (S170 Register), as a record of the heritage assets owned or managed by the relevant government agency.

2.3. Heritage Listings

While the Edgecliff Centre subject site itself is not heritage listed, it is located adjacent to and above the Edgecliff Railway Station which is listed as a heritage item on RailCorp's Section 170 Heritage Register (s170)- a statutory heritage register maintained by the NSW Heritage Division, under the provisions of the *NSW Heritage Act (1977)* (the Heritage Act).

The State Heritage Inventory Datasheet for Edgecliff Station states that:

Edgecliff Station is of local significance as one of a group of stations that make up the Eastern Suburbs Railway (ESR) line, one of the largest and most contentious post-war rail projects undertaken in the Sydney system. The stations were designed as part of a collection but with individual design and colour styles to differentiate them within it. They represent a continuation of the design principles of the underground system as first displayed in the Museum and St James stations and also represent the latest in construction and design technology at the time.

Figure 2.1 presents the location of the train station in relation to the Edgecliff Centre subject site.

The subject site is also located in close vicinity to a high density of significant local and SHR listed items, as shown on the Woollahra LEP (2014) Heritage Map 3A (Figure 2.2). It is also located in

close vicinity to the Heritage Conservation Areas (HCA): Paddington, including parts of Woollahra and Edgecliff (C6), and in the vicinity of Mona Road HCA (C6), as well as nearby heritage items at 136 New South Head Road and 188 New South Head Road. Rushcutters Bay Park (LEP #1403 and recently listed on the SHR in June 2020; SHR #02041) is also located c.700m to the northwest of the Edgecliff Centre.

Nearby and/or relevant heritage listings and their significance are summarised in the relevant subsections below.

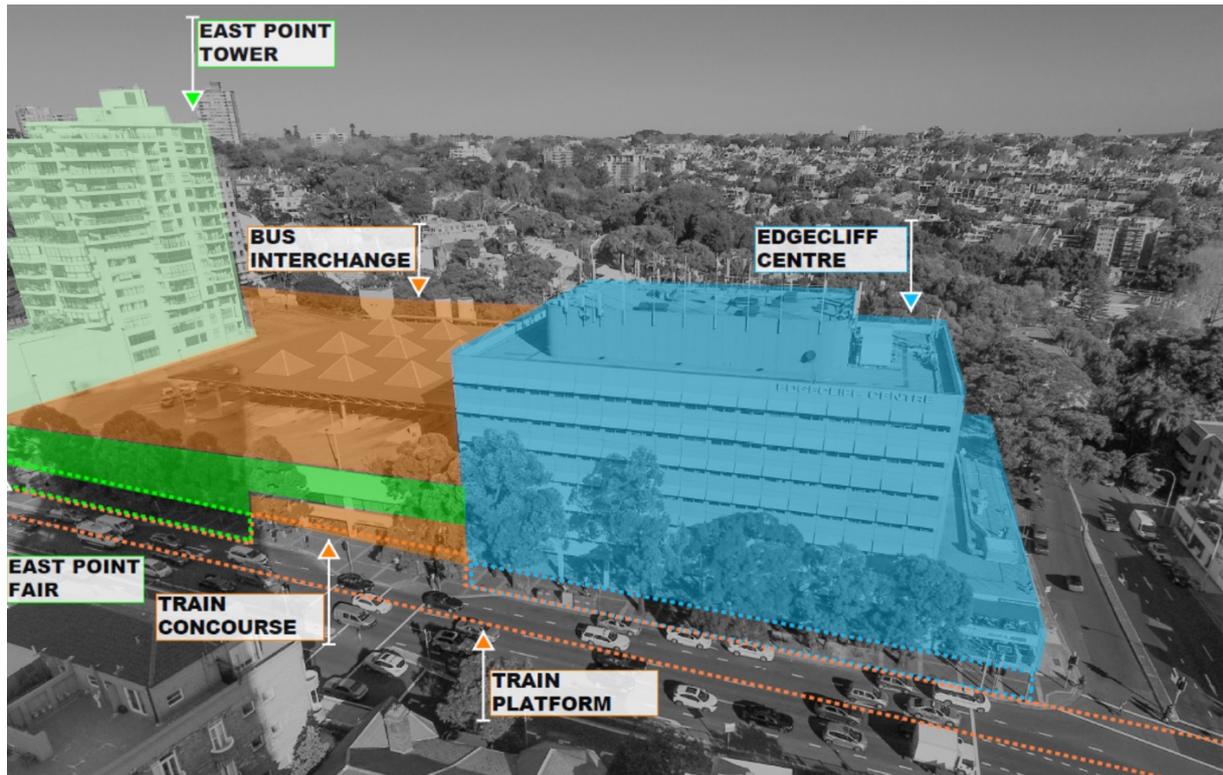


Figure 2.1: Edgecliff Station in relation to Edgecliff Centre subject site.

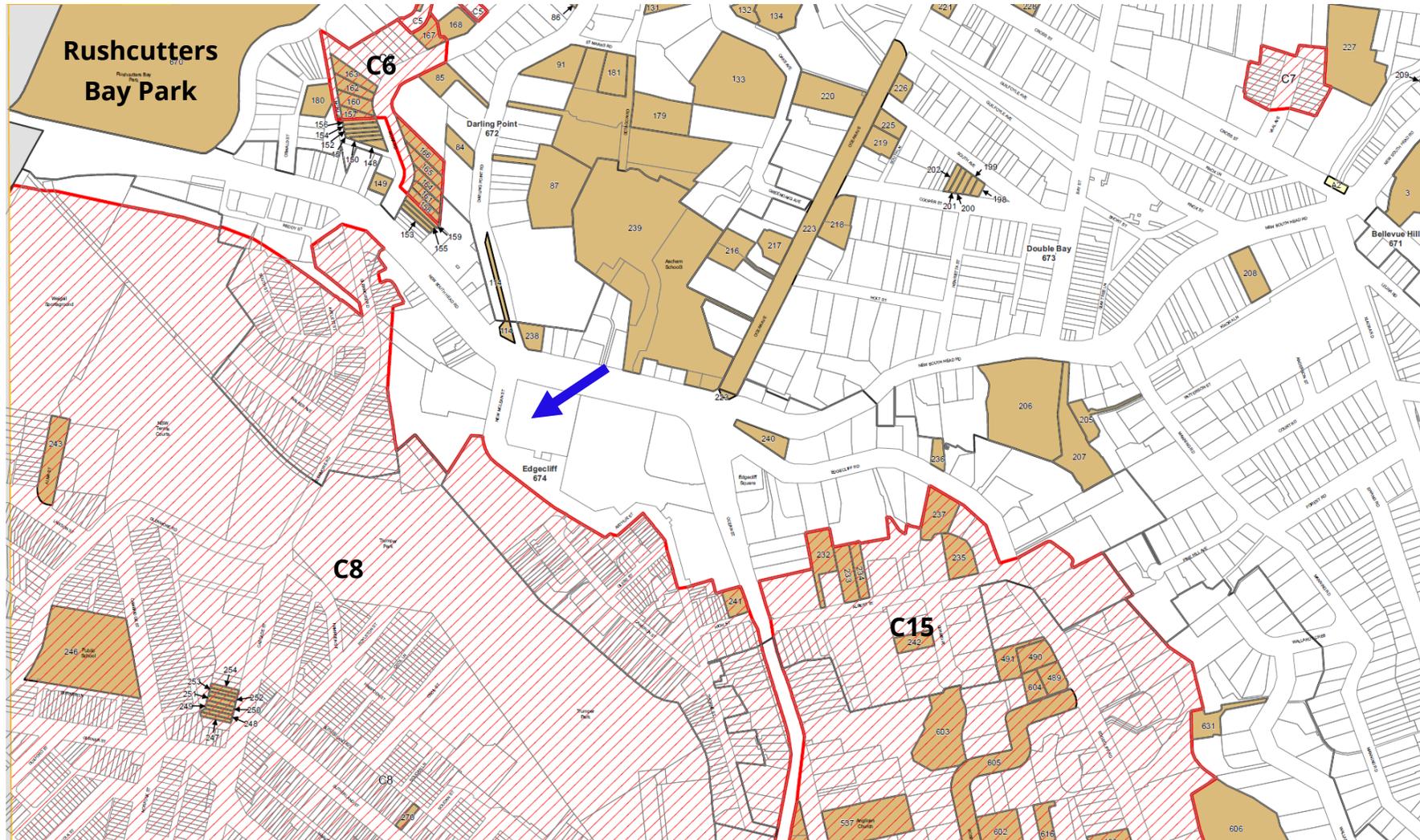


Figure 2.2: Woollahra Heritage Map 3A, heritage items in brown, heritage conservation areas in red, identified as relevant. Subject site indicated by arrow (Source: Woollahra LEP 2014, Heritage Map 3A)

2.3.1. Nearby Heritage listings

Local heritage items listed on the Woollahra LEP in the immediate vicinity of the subject site include:

- 136 New South Head Road- *Building & Interiors* (LEP 238)
- 188 New South Head Road- *Ascham school precinct* (LEP 239)
- Darling Point Road, near New South Head Road intersection- *Concrete balustrade* (LEP 114)

All three of these local heritage items are located across New South Head Road to the north from the current subject site. The Ascham School Precinct (LEP 239) includes a group of heritage items, including 'Fiona and former entrance gates', 'Glenrock and inner and outer gates', and 'Dower House', 'The Octagon', 'Yeomerry', as well as other landscape features including sandstone works, remaining open space and oval adjacent to Fiona, and Moreton Bay Figs.

2.3.2. Paddington HCA (C8)

The suburb of Paddington is located across two LGAs: City of Sydney; and Municipality Woollahra. The significance of the Paddington HCA as per the Woollahra LEP is described as follows:

a unique urban area which possesses historical, aesthetic, technical and social significance at a National and State level. An important factor in the significance of Paddington is its exceptional unity, encompassing scale, character, history, architecture and urban form

...Paddington has a unique aesthetic significance due to the superimposition of the built form on a sloping topography which overlooks Sydney Harbour and its foreshores. The coherent and extensive Victorian built form comprising groups of terrace buildings on narrow allotments which step down hills, turn corners or sit in ranks along tree lined streets produces a singularly recognisable image..²

The heritage character of Paddington can be said to be typified by its predominantly 19th century residential character (represented by late-Victorian terrace houses, modest workers' cottages, etc), including other townscape features such as significant trees, historical sandstone kerbs and gutters. Retention of the heritage character and significance of the HCA is achieved through the conservation of the character, form and setting of the key items and structures within the HCA curtilage.

2.3.3. Woollahra HCA (C15)

Commencing approximately 300m southwest of the Edgecliff Centre subject site (i.e. around the intersection of Albert and Ocean Streets-see Figure 2.2), the significance of the Woollahra HCA is summarised as:

² Woollahra DCP 2015: Chapter C1: 7

The Woollahra Heritage Conservation Area (Woollahra HCA) is a place of outstanding local heritage significance. The special character of the Woollahra HCA derives from its unique historic background and the expression of this background in its interrelationship of buildings, their settings, landscaping and open spaces, topography and land uses.³

2.3.4. Mona Road HCA (C6)

The Mona Road HCA is located c.300m northwest of Edgecliff Centre subject site. The following has been extracted from the Statement of Significance for the Mona Road HCA:

The Mona Road HCA is located within the Darling Point residential precinct and comprises dwelling houses, semi-detached houses and apartments that demonstrate the important characteristics of the Federation Arts and Crafts and Federation Queen Anne styles.

This HCA contains a cohesive group of substantial but speculative housing built within the first decade of the 20th century on part of the Mona Estate that demonstrates the more intense residential development pattern of Darling Point. Some of the dwellings were subsequently converted to duplexes or triplexes in the 1920s without changing their form or altering their integrity.

The winding alignment of Mona Road through the steep topography results in extensive rusticated ashlar or brick retaining walls which, together with the mature Hill's Weeping Fig street trees form a distinctive streetscape with cohesive groups of buildings on each side of Mona Road which are orientated towards the harbour view..⁴

Following from the Statement of Significance for the Mona Road HCA, it can be seen that—similar to that of the Paddington HCA—the significance of the Mona Road HCA relates mainly to the conservation of the residential character, historical subdivision pattern, built form and landscape features within the curtilage of the HCA.

2.3.5. Rushcutters Bay Park (LEP I1403, SHR #02041)

Located c.700m northwest of the Edgecliff Centre subject site, Rushcutters Bay Park was recently listed on the SHR (June 2020) (listed as “Rushcutters Bay Park and Yarranabbe Park”) as:

...state significant examples of the reservation of land for public recreation by councils in response to community lobbying. Both demonstrate the importance placed on inalienable and accessible public lands in Sydney from the mid to late-19th century and are amongst the largest harbour reclamation schemes for public recreation undertaken in the history of NSW. This broad expanse of open foreshore land, punctuated with rows of huge Moreton Bay figs form a magnificent southern boundary to this bay-side common, located beside the most densely populated area of Sydney, a

³ Woollahra DCP 2015: Chapter C2: 1

⁴ Woollahra DCP 2015: Chapter B2: 9-10

*place of respite from city life, and an opportunity to enjoy sweeping views of inner Sydney Harbour.*⁵

Rushcutters Bay Park has historical significance for its demonstration of early reshaping of the creek valley of this natural bay and as an early example of reservation of land for public recreation, as well as aesthetic significance “a large-scaled inner-harbour foreshore informally-landscaped park, providing dramatic views to and from the harbour and surrounds”. The social value of the Park is also of State significance, as a place of continuous multi-purpose public use since the mid-1870s (including being the site of key major public events), and as a reflection of public lobbying in the mid to late 1800s for the establishment and protection of this area as a park. The Park also has technical significance at a State level for its part of a major public works program including land reclamation and seawall construction, and research potential to inform knowledge of contact and possible contact between Aboriginal people and earlier colonial settlers in inner Sydney. Rushcutters Bay Park is a rare example of a large scaled 19th Century inner-suburban park and continues to demonstrate the importance placed by the community and Councils on inalienable and accessible public lands in Sydney from the early to mid 19th Century.

Consideration of the heritage significance of Rushcutters Bay Park indicates that its significance is also focused on the location, experience and historical significance of the park itself, and in what it represents as part of a wider expanse of inner Sydney parks that have been protected for continuous public access and recreation. While the State level heritage significance of this item is recognised, it would follow that the key views of significance to Rushcutters Bay Park (as relevant to its history and significance) would be internal views within the park and connectivity to the harbour and surrounding spaces and immediate developments and features along the shoreline, as opposed to general visibility to built form and features at a greater distance inland from the park.

⁵ Rushcutters Bay Park and Yarranabbe Park, SHR Listing:
<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/heritageapp/ViewHeritageItemDetails.aspx?ID=5067067>

3. Brief Historical Context

The name of the Woollahra area is anecdotally derived from local Aboriginal word 'Woo-la-ra', meaning 'camp' or 'meeting ground', selected by Sir Daniel Cooper as the name for his planned mansion at Point Piper in 1856.⁶

Following the establishment of the NSW Colony in 1788, the early Woollahra area consisted of early land grants and subsequent large estates developed along what is now Oxford St and Old South Head Road from the 1810s onwards. early land grants mostly for soldiers (eg. Captain John Piper, who then sold to Daniel Cooper who developed/expanded area from 1827 onwards).

The Borough of Woollahra was incorporated on 17 April 1860, following which time the area remained largely residential, with some industries commencing operations later in the 19th Century. Tram services were extended through the area in the 1880s, first along Oxford St to Ocean St in 1881, and further to Waverley via Old South Head Road in 1887. A cable tram opened in the area 1894, which operated from King St in the City to Ocean Street in Edgecliff, until electrification in 1905.

In the 1960s, shops and residences along the southern side of New South Head Road were demolished to make way for the construction of Edgecliff Station (a new station proposed for the Eastern Suburbs Railway (ESR)- under construction at the time). Eventually opening in 1979, Edgecliff Station is an underground station, constructed over two levels—concourse and platforms—with a gallery and bus interchange above. Edgecliff Centre (203-233 New South Head Road) was developed in the late 1960s/early 1970s in association with the ESR and future Edgecliff Station.⁷



Figure 3.1: 1970s View east along New South Head Road, Edgecliff Centre visible in background (Source: Woollahra Library, pf006360/0343)

⁶ Woollahra Municipal Council, *A brief history of Woollahra*, accessed 30 March 2020 from https://www.woollahra.nsw.gov.au/library/local_history/a_brief_history_of_woollahra

⁷ DCP 2015: D4, p. 5



Figure 3.2: c.1972 New McLean Street, looking across to Edgecliff Centre, block of flats 'Ranelagh' visible (3-17 Darling Point Rd) (Source: Woollahra Library Local History Collection, pf004134)



Figure 3.3: Edgecliff Centre 1982 (Source: Woollahra Library Local History Collection, Field Surveys (6874)

4. Site Context

4.1. Edgecliff Centre

The following site context has been incorporated from the *Edgecliff Centre Redevelopment Briefing Summary* and is included for ease of reference.

The site forms the gateway precinct to the eastern suburbs and is a substantial land holding within both the Edgecliff corridor and the Woollahra LGA overall. The corridor has positioned itself as a fundamental hub for all mixed-uses including commercial, retail & residential. These are well serviced with close proximity to the major transport node of the Woollahra LGA, being the Edgecliff train station and bus terminal located within the adjoining East Point Development, and below the Edgecliff Centre.

The Edgecliff Centre site is boarded by New South Head Rd to the north, New Mclean St to the west, a small council owned road reserve to the south and East Point Centre to the east. The adjacent East Point Centre incorporates the transport interchange (bus & rail), retail mall, residential, commercial & car parking all within a stratum arrangement.

The Edgecliff Centre site area is approximately 4,900m² and accommodates a 7-storey retail/commercial building with a further 2 storey cut-in car park. It has a total of 11,217 sqm of NLA with 254 car spaces. The site sits above the Eastern Suburbs Railway line, a commuter railway line completed in June 1979. The tunnel sits at a relatively shallow depth and is located directly below the lowest level of basement parking at the centre.⁸

The DCP provides the following Precinct Character Statement for the overall 'Edgecliff Centre' precinct within which the current subject site (i.e 203-233 New South Head Road, Edgecliff) is located.

The Edgecliff Centre is part of the wider Edgecliff commercial area which includes the land zoned B4 Mixed Use along New South Head Road. New South Head Road is a major State road linking the Eastern Suburbs to the city and is the primary route for vehicles to the Edgecliff Centre.

The Edgecliff Centre comprises three main sites: two contain a multi-storey retail and commercial buildings. The centre provides a good range of convenience retailing opportunities, including supermarkets and speciality stores and services the surrounding residential suburbs including, Edgecliff, Elizabeth Bay, Darlinghurst, Darling Point, Kings Cross, Paddington, Potts Point, and Woollahra. The centre also has a high proportion of medical services and experienced a 40% increase in health care related jobs from 2006 to 2011.

⁸ From *Edgecliff Centre Redevelopment Briefing Summary*, prepared by Longhurst, April 2019

The Edgecliff Bus and Rail Interchange also form part of the centre. Local and regional bus routes service the bus interchange which is located above the Eastpoint Shopping Centre.⁹

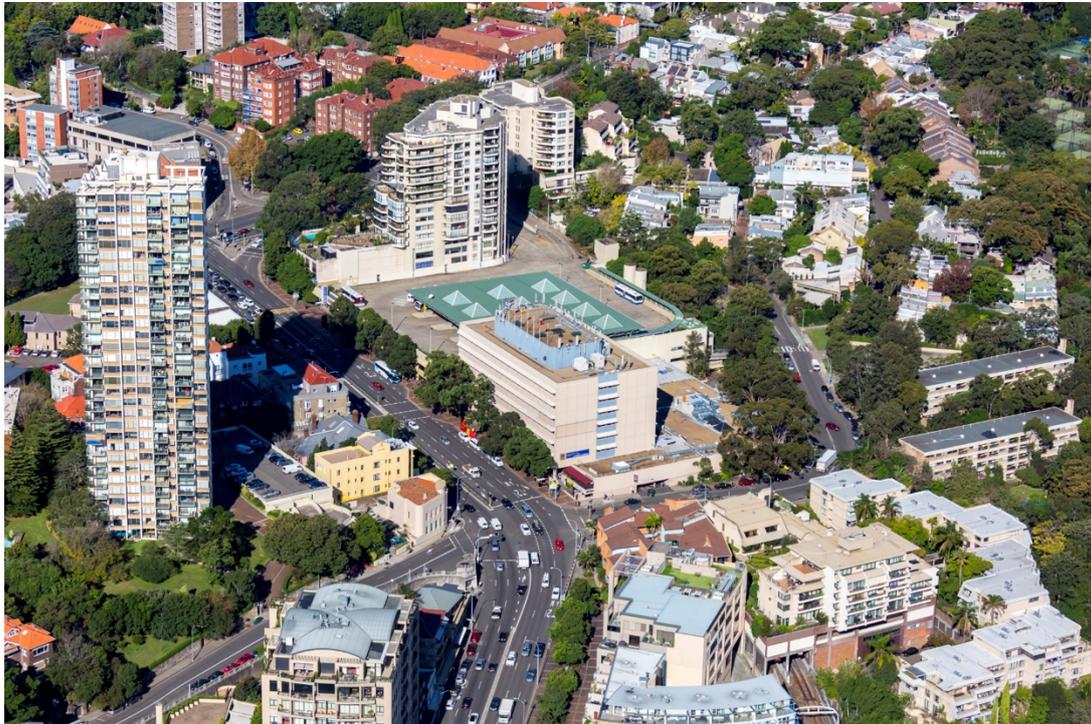


Figure 4.1: An aerial view of the site within its immediate setting (Source: Longhurst, April 2019)



Figure 4.2: View of Existing Edgecliff Centre, from New South Head Road, Edgecliff

⁹ DCP Chapter D4, Section D4.2.1, p. 4. Last updated 16 March 2020

4.2. Edgecliff Station

Edgecliff Station is located across two separate levels: concourse level with street access from New South Head Road and New McLean Street (including retail shops and station ticket gates); and a platform level located below the concourse level that provides access to train services. A gallery level is also located above the concourse level, providing street access to New South Head Road, as well as retail shops and access to the bus interchange above. The bus interchange is currently located on the roof of the Edgecliff Station Building.

The SHI Datasheet for Edgecliff Station identifies its attributes as follows:

Physical description: STATION BUILDING (1979)

Edgecliff Station consists of the concourse level and the underground island platform area below. The concourse is accessed via the Edgecliff Centre on New South Head Road. The concourse area is tiled in light grey tiles and includes manned ticket booths, automatic ticketing machines and automatic gates through to the station area.

The station platforms are accessed via two escalators from the concourse level. The escalator shaft ceilings are of moulded plywood. This plywood, with recessed fluorescent strip lights, is used throughout the station platform area. Station walls are painted yellow, with dark blue tiled sections displaying the station name in tri-level banked white lettering.

The platform end walls (adjacent to the tunnel shafts) are tiled with glazed tiles in deep orange/red and station platform columns are tiled in dark blue. The platform faces are concrete.

The platform area includes three cross-passages joining the up and down platforms and allowing for passenger flow. The station group includes a bus interchange at the upper (exterior) level.

4.3. Surrounding Precinct Context

The immediate urban context of the subject site along this section of New South Head Road, Edgecliff, can generally be characterised by moderate to high rise residential and commercial properties (e.g. 30 storey residential tower ‘Ranelagh’ at 3-17 Darling Point Road- north across the road from Edgecliff Centre; East Point Centre and 14 storey mixed residential and commercial tower adjacent at 235-287 New South Head Road.) (Figure 4.3). The VIA prepared for the project (RLA 2020), describes the built form context of the area as

Clusters of taller building and tower forms also respond to the location of infrastructure, historical transport routes and historical demand for housing on the periphery of low density early settlement areas like Paddington and Darlinghurst... Tower form residential developments are scattered throughout the Eastern Suburbs but concentrated on the transport routes and ridges leading toward the Harbour, such as the vicinity of the Site. Mixed late 20th century development of various scales are also concentrated in commercial areas on transport nodes including

the vicinity of the Site. Thus the proposal would be visually compatible with the overall distribution of built form in the visual setting. (RLA 2020: 6)

The VIA also describes the existing built form in the vicinity of the subject site as being:

... variable and of no consistency in terms of building typology, height or massing. ... (RLA 2020: 6)

The DCP describes the connectivity across the Edgecliff Centre Precinct as being 'restricted', noting that along New McLean Street (i.e. to the southern boundary of the current subject site):

car park entries and loading bays dominate the streetscape, and the landscaping is sparse and uncoordinated. This creates an unwelcoming pedestrian environment with little visual interest and provides a harsh transition to the residential land opposite.¹⁰

The desired future character of the Edgecliff Centre as described in the DCP includes recommendations for an active street frontage along New McLean Street.

As identified in the LEP, the subject site is surrounded by a high density of heritage-listed items of varying ages, types and significance. In particular, the site is located within close vicinity to the iconic Ascham school precinct which comprises: "Fiona" including interiors and former entrance gates, "Glenrock" including interiors and inner and outer gates, the Dower House including interiors, sand-stone works, remaining open space and oval adjacent to "Fiona", 4 Moreton Bay Figs, related items "The Octagon", (Octagon Road), "Yeomerry" (1 St Mark's Road) and "Duntrim" (37 Darling Point Road) which are also part of Ascham school.

The school site itself is leafy, contains significant cultural plantings and many significant sandstone buildings. It should also be noted that while the school is accessed via the sandstone entry gates from New South Head Road, the majority of the precinct is set back significantly from the road itself, with modern commercial and retail buildings along the street frontage obscuring the majority of heritage items from view from the road (Figure 4.4).

Beyond the school site, there are many other heritage items, including churches, 1930a-1940s buildings and late 19th housing which make up the urban fabric of the neighbourhood. The predominant materiality of the precinct varies from sandstone buildings with dark grey/black slate roofing, through to the red and orange-roofed blue and red brick apartment buildings of the 1930s-1940s.

Mature cultural plantings, and greenery are a significant streetscape factor within the broader streetscapes surrounding the site, to the south with Trumper Park and Paddington HCA, northwest within the Darling Point HCA, and through landscaping features for the majority of heritage listed items.

¹⁰ DCP 2015 D4, p.5



Figure 4.3: Immediate context of the existing Edgecliff Centre (View west towards Sydney CBD) (Source: Longhurst 2019)



Figure 4.4: View from Edgecliff Centre across New South Head Rd towards Ascham school precinct. Sandstone school gates visible in right of image. Majority of precinct itself obscured by contemporary medium density development along street frontage (Source: Google Maps 2020)

5. Description of Planning Proposal

The planning proposal for the Edgecliff Centre seeks to establish the controls for the site (i.e. amendments to the LEP) in order to support the future redevelopment of the site. The future redevelopment of the site will be proposed as a mixed use, socially useful, and vertically blended site, including retail, commercial, and residential development, to be integrated with transport links (i.e. bus interchange and Edgecliff Train Station).

The precinct design remains in concept stage and its description within this report is indicative only. The proposal has been described in this report for contextual purposes to allow for an overall assessment of any potential heritage impact the proposal may have in its locational context, and does not itself form part of the Planning Proposal approval. The design will be further refined and developed through a future DA process specific to the precinct design.

The planning proposal seeks to vary the building height and FSR for the Edgecliff Centre at 203-233 New South Head Road, Edgecliff. The proposal envisages a mixed-use precinct, incorporating the following key features within an integrated podium:

- a vibrant retail centre;
- office spaces;
- curated medical/wellness offering;
- residential tower;
- significant improvements to the Edgecliff Transit entry (including a new volumetric entryway for the Edgecliff Transit Interchange);
- generous public plaza;
- new naturally lit atrium with intermodal connection between bus and train users;
- community spaces;
- improved wayfinding & identity; and
- large publicly accessible green open space.

The regeneration of the ‘Edgecliff Precinct’ also incorporates key public benefits that focus on improving existing key infrastructure, while creating a green and connected precinct for the wider community. The overall philosophy of the proposal is to create and improve the identity of Edgecliff as a destination to “Work, Live, Shop and Transit”.

The Edgecliff Centre employs a holistic approach in upgrading infrastructure that serves the whole neighbourhood, integrating and improving the green infrastructure, improving connectivity in and out of the area, utilising the existing amenities to the maximum extent, thereby creating a great human-centric place that encourages people to visit, live and stay in the Centre.¹¹

¹¹ From Longhurst ‘Edgecliff Centre Public Benefits’



Figure 5.1: Proposal, Aerial view west along New South Head Rd (Source: Longhurst, June 2020)



Figure 5.2: Proposal, Bus Terminal (Rev. E) (Source: Longhurst 2020)



Figure 5.3: Proposal, New South Head Road (Rev. D) (Source: Longhurst 2020)



Figure 5.4: Proposal, Station Entry (Rev. D) (Source: Longhurst 2020)

6. Heritage Impact Assessment

Since the Edgecliff Centre subject site does not include any heritage items within its boundaries, nor is it located within a Heritage Conservation Area, neither the planning proposal nor the future concept design DA will present any physical impact to any heritage items or fabric. Therefore, the heritage impact assessment as presented below discusses potential visual impacts of the proposal only.

6.1. Visual Impact

A preliminary View Impact Analysis (VIA) has been undertaken for the development (FJMT Architects 2019), positioned from several viewpoints around the subject site to investigate the potential visual impact of the planning proposal (i.e. predominantly relating to the increase in built height). A further Visual Impact Assessment has been prepared by Dr Richard Lamb (RLA) to accompany the planning proposal.¹² Where applicable, the FJMT and RLA VIAs have been used by Curio to demonstrate and discuss potential visual heritage impact of the planning proposal on surrounding heritage items and HCAs, as presented in the following section.

6.1.1. Edgecliff Station

The planning proposal does not propose any interventions to Edgecliff Station itself, but would include significant upgrade and improvements to the connectivity to the station and transport interchange, as well as improved retail offering and public amenities associated with the transport complex. Therefore, the planning proposal will have no visual impact to Edgecliff Station, assuming that detailed future design considers that:

- Any connections to station concourse must be commensurate with aesthetic significance and qualities of station.
- While the design of new connections and interchange upgrades should not replicate the exact colour scheme, materiality, and colour palettes of Edgecliff Station, connections should visually relate to, and be commensurate with, significant fabric
- Detailed design of new and revised station entrances should be sympathetic to the heritage values and features of the station, to ensure that the design has as a minimum, a neutral (complimentary) or at best, a positive, visual impact to the readability of the entrances to Edgecliff station.
- Should the future design include features requiring activities such as bulk excavation etc, the location of these activities should be carefully considered to ensure that potential for either direct or indirect impact to the underground Edgecliff Station and ESR is avoided.

6.1.2. Other Heritage Items and HCAs

While the bulk and scale of the proposed development may have an impact on some views from the surrounding HCAs (i.e. Paddington, Woollahra & Mona Road) and heritage items in the

¹² RLA 2020, *Edgecliff Centre Planning Proposal, Visual Impact Assessment*, prepared by Dr Richard Lamb for Longhurst, May 2020.

vicinity, the existing Edgecliff Centre (constructed in 1970s, unsympathetic to and inconsistent with the heritage context of the surrounding HCAs) has already impacted on the majority of these views and vistas. The general character and form of this area of New South Head Road is as a moderate to high density mixed use commercial and residential precinct with buildings varying in scale and form. This part of the broader Edgecliff suburb and surrounds is utilitarian by its very nature and function, located on a heavily trafficked main road, and acts as a main hub for transportation. A significant contrast already exists between the existing modern, mixed-used retail and commercial character of the Edgecliff Centre, New South Head Road and immediate surrounds, when compared to the low density residential precincts of the surrounding HCAs of Paddington, Woollahra and Mona Road (Figure 6.1).



Figure 6.1: Existing Edgecliff Centre Precinct commercial/mixed use context (circled in red), in comparison with surrounding lower density residential character of surrounding HCAs (Source: Longhurst 2019)

Further, the heritage significance and character of the neighbouring HCAs (e.g. Paddington and Woollahra), relates predominantly to the 19th century low-scale, high-density residential character and townscape features within the curtilage of the HCAs. The heritage significance of the HCAs relates to the finer local residential character, walkable scale, architectural design, aesthetics and form experienced predominantly from within the HCAs themselves. The heritage significance and character of the Paddington and Woollahra HCAs does not extend to encompass the current Edgecliff Centre, which sits within a more modern, contrasting mixed use and commercial context.

Currently, there are no highly significant views and vistas to and from the existing Edgecliff Centre, the HCAs and surrounding precincts (e.g. such as the significant visual relationship to and from the open spaces of Rushcutters Bays Park and Sydney Harbour).

While the tower and part of the podium components of the proposal would be visible against the skyline within an expansive view southeast from Rushcutters Bay Park, the addition of the tower would be commensurate with the existing view of the skyline from the Park that already includes other residential towers and larger scale buildings (Figure 6.2 and Figure 6.3). Similar to the HCAs, the heritage significance and associated key views and vistas of Rushcutters Bay Park relate predominantly to the location, experience and historical significance of the park itself, connectivity of the views and vistas to Sydney Harbour and surrounding inner Sydney parklands, as opposed to simple visibility of surrounding development as part of the wider skyline of Sydney's eastern suburbs.

As a result, the proposed development is considered unlikely to present any major detrimental visual impact to the HCAs or surrounding heritage items, particularly in comparison with existing viewlines and impacts. In particular, the development would not have a major impact on the existing character and significance of Rushcutters Bay Park, nor the neighbouring HCAs (i.e. Paddington and Woollahra) and their ability to be experienced and/or appreciated in their historical form or desired character. The addition of a tower to the Edgecliff Centre site is not likely to be readily apparent nor visually intrusive at the pedestrian/street scale from the Paddington, Woollahra or Mona Road HCAs (Figure 6.4), and would not have any additional adverse visual impacts from within the HCAs when compared to the existing development.



Figure 6.2: Rushcutters Bay Park West, view towards subject site. Demonstrates that while the tower and part of the podium components of the proposal would be visible against the sky in this expansive view of high sensitivity, the addition of the tower would be commensurate with the existing skyline including visible residential tower and larger scale buildings (Source: RLA 2020: Viewpoint 26, p.43)



Figure 6.3: View from Waratah Street, Rushcutters Bay. Addition of the tower would be visible, but commensurate with the existing skyline including other residential tower and larger scale buildings (Source: Virtual Ideas, Appendix 2 in RLA 2020: Viewpoint 30, p.102)



Figure 6.4: View along New South Head Road from Mona Road (HCA). While street wall, part of podium and tower of proposal would be visible, this view is already dominated by existing buildings. (Source: RLA 2020: Viewpoint 19, p. 40)

The current 1970s Edgecliff Centre building provides little to no relief in the podium/tower form with respect to permeability, visibility and setbacks. The redevelopment of the site will create the opportunity to improve the existing setting, permeability and visual impact of the Edgecliff Centre, as visible from the Paddington and Woollahra HCAs. The redevelopment of the Edgecliff Centre will allow the opportunity to design a more sensitive response to the heritage context of the surrounding precincts compared to the existing.

The proposed break-up of the bulk of the new built form, via the potential use of an integrated podium and tower form to manage and minimise views to and from the development as an uninterrupted built mass is positive. An improved podium design and form has the opportunity to significantly increase the ground plane permeability and accessibility through the podium levels of the development, which in turn, could positively open up the views and vistas from the central Edgecliff Site, to the Paddington and Woollahra HCAs.

The Edgecliff Centre building was built prior to heritage controls, and is, as a result, generally unsympathetic in terms of its materiality, when considered in the context of nearby heritage items and HCAs. The application of a more sensitive and appropriate colour palette and materiality scheme for the new development would allow for the construction of a new building more commensurate and sympathetic to the surrounding HCAs and overall character of this section of New South Head Road.

For example, given that the more traditional heritage buildings in the area (i.e. materiality of sandstone, older painted light brickwork buildings) have had an influence on the colour schemes and materiality of some of the large-scale developments within the precinct, a similar approach to identifying a sympathetic colour scheme and materials palette could be applied to the redevelopment of the Edgecliff Centre, allowing for the new development to continue to work within the existing dominant colour palette of the surrounding precinct.

Views from the Paddington HCA to the subject site along the McLean Street elevation are currently described by the DCP as being 'visually intrusive', due to the existing configuration of car park entries and loading bays that dominate the streetscape in this location (Figure 6.5). The revision and upgrade along the southern side of the subject site, particularly with its interface with New McLean Street will significantly improve views in this location, which notably includes the northern boundary of the Paddington HCA.



Figure 6.5: Existing character along New McLean Street to rear (south) of subject site (Source: Google Maps 2020)

6.2. Summary of Heritage Impact

While the proposed increase in height allowance for the site to accommodate a mixed use development tower (including health/medical offering) would be visible from surrounding heritage items and adjacent HCAs (i.e. Paddington and Woollahra to the south), it would not present an adverse impact to any views and vistas to and from the heritage items nor HCAs, particularly considering that the key significance of heritage items such as Rushcutters Bay Park and the HCAs relates to the internal character and street-level experience of the HCAs within their specific boundaries, or in the case of Rushcutters Bay Park, its experience and historical significance as a park setting on Sydney Harbour.

Further, existing views from the southern HCAs towards the Edgecliff Centre have already been impacted by the current Edgecliff Centre—a building that is unsympathetic to the heritage character of the HCAs. The redevelopment of the site presents the opportunity to actually improve the existing views and vistas to the site from the HCAs, by the application of improved and more sensitive design, e.g. improved permeability, accessibility and sympathetic materiality. Any visual impact of the tower will also be balanced by significant improvements to public amenity and transport interchange proposed by the development.

The more distinct visual impacts of the bulk, scale and height of the development could be softened and reduced by use of careful design and application of built form, materiality and colour palette, thus lessening any new visual impacts on surrounding heritage items and HCAs. Application of principles for the new design around ensuring permeability, appropriate colour and materiality, especially if developed in consultation with a heritage specialist, will allow for better visual outcomes of the new development than those of the existing Edgecliff Centre. This could therefore result in an improved setting and presentation of the Edgecliff Centre more complementary to the surrounding HCAs and heritage context of the site, than that of the existing Centre.

The future design process should consider the design principles such as those contained within heritage design documents: *Design In Context: Guidelines for Infill Development in the Historic*

Environment (NSW Heritage Office 2005); and the more recent NSW Government Architect Office document *Better Placed: An integrated design policy for the built environment of New South Wales* (2017), to ensure that final design is appropriate to and respectful of the existing heritage framework and surrounding character.

In addition, introduction of the largely publicly accessible green open space extending the existing public domain, and associated addition of greenery at streetscape level would significantly reduce any potential 'harshness' of potential bulk and scale of the site, creating a redevelopment that pays homage to the highly green historical precincts and cultural landscapes which surround the site (i.e. Paddington HCA to the south, Mona Street HCA to the northwest). This would have a positive visual impact on the precinct at a streetscape level, commensurate with and contributing to, the streetscape character and greenery of surrounding HCAs.

Overall, outcomes of the redevelopment of the site, such as a revised built form and detailed building design more sensitive and sympathetic to the heritage character of the surrounding area, and improved connectivity and pedestrian links (both across the subject site, as well as to local street network and adjacent development), will have an overall positive impact to the heritage context and character of the surrounding heritage items and HCAs in proximity to the Edgecliff Centre.

The planning proposal does not present an adverse impact or alteration to the character and significance of any nearby heritage item, nor any of the nearby HCAs (Paddington, Woollahra or Mona Road).

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

The Planning Proposal for the Edgecliff Centre subject site does not include any heritage listed items, nor is it located within an HCA, and therefore will have no physical impact to any heritage items nor within any HCA. Neither will the planning proposal present any heritage impact to the S170 register listed Edgecliff Station.

The proposal includes significant upgrades and additions to the public amenity, services, access and connectivity of the site, including improvement to the transport interchange, large public plaza, public accessible open green space, medical/well-being and retail offerings.

The immediate urban context of the subject site along this section of New South Head Road, Edgecliff, can generally be characterised by moderate to high rise residential and commercial properties. The existing streetscape and precinct character within which the Edgecliff Centre is situated is vastly different from and in contrast to the low density historic residential character and setting of the Heritage Conservation Areas in the vicinity of the site (i.e. Paddington to the south, Woollahra to the southeast, and Mona Road to the northwest). The significance and character of the HCAs predominantly relates to the local, street level appreciation of the low scale, high density residential character of these areas, and is not associated with nor particularly influenced by the nearby built form of the Edgecliff Precinct along New South Head Road.

The proposed redevelopment of the Edgecliff Centre, as facilitated by the planning proposal, is considered to be consistent with the existing character of this section of New South Head Road, Edgecliff, and will not present any detrimental or adverse impact to the setting or character of any nearby heritage items nor HCAs.

While the bulk and scale of the proposed development will be visible from the surrounding HCAs and heritage items in the vicinity, many of these views and vistas are already negatively impacted upon by the unsympathetic form and materiality of the existing Edgecliff Centre. Redevelopment of the site will create the opportunity for improvement to these existing views, particularly through introduction of increased permeability, building articulation and setbacks, connectivity and visibility through the site at the podium level, as well as improved connectivity of the Edgecliff Centre site with the surrounding local street network and to adjacent development.

The planning proposal will not have an adverse impact or alteration to the character and significance of any nearby heritage item, nor any of the nearby HCAs (Paddington, Woollahra or Mona Road).

7.1. Recommendations

Overall, the planning proposal for the Edgecliff Centre is considered to be consistent with the existing context of this part of New South Head Road, Edgecliff, and will present opportunities for improvements to existing setting and character of the area than that of the existing building. Recommendations for detailed design features to reduce visual impact of the development include:

- The detailed design should be developed in close consultation with a heritage specialist to develop a colour and materiality palette more sympathetic to the heritage values and character of the area, than that of the existing building.
- Break-up of the built form at the podium level (i.e. use of an integrated podium and tower form), would encourage permeability and visibility across the site, improving existing views to the site from surrounding HCAs.
- Integration of plantings and materiality at the streetscape level, as proposed by the development through features such as the new public plaza and large publicly accessible green open space, will have a positive visual impact on the precinct at a streetscape level, commensurate with and contributing to, the streetscape character and greenery of surrounding HCAs

The integration of the above recommendations will enable the future redevelopment of the Edgecliff Centre to provide a contemporary but consistent viewscape within the existing mixed commercial, retail and residential precinct within this area of Edgecliff.

Revisions and upgrade to the rear of the Edgecliff Centre (i.e. from McLean Street) is consistent with the desired future character of the precinct, as per the DCP, and will be a positive impact on views along this side of the site—currently described by the DCP as being ‘visually intrusive’.