

TO: Strathfield Local Planning Panel Meeting - 10 April 2025

REPORT: SLPP – Report No. 4

SUBJECT: PLANNING PROPOSAL - NOS 94-98 (LOT 100 DP 862635) COSGROVE ROAD, STRATHFIELD SOUTH

DA NO. PP 2024.2

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Applicant:	Centuria Capital
Owner:	The Trust Company (Australia) Ltd
Date of lodgement:	24 November 2024
Assessment officer:	J Gillies – Senior Strategic Planner
Zoning:	E4 General Industrial - SLEP 2012
Heritage:	No
Flood affected:	Partial

The draft Planning Proposal (PP) applies to the site known as Nos 94 -98 Cosgrove Road, Strathfield South (Lot 100 DP 862635) (Figure 1) and seeks to amend the Strathfield LEP 2012 as follows:

- Increasing the Height of Buildings (HOB) from 12m to 35m, and
- Increasing the Floor Space Ratio from 1:1 to 1.6:1

The site is a large single landholding with an area of approximately 43,100m<sup>2</sup> and has frontage to Madeline Street, Hope Street and Cosgrove Road.



**Figure 1 – Subject Site**

The site is located along the southeastern boundary of the South Strathfield/Enfield Employment Precinct.

The Precinct is located between Liverpool Road to the north, the Cooks River and Cox's Creek to the east and south-east, Punchbowl Road to the south and Roberts Road to the West. The Precinct has a wide range of uses and is primarily characterised by transport, warehousing/distribution, manufacturing, professional services, wholesale trade and urban services. The site is adjoined on three sides with other industrial uses and is zoned E4 General Industrial zoning under Strathfield Local Environmental Plan (SLEP) 2012.

To the south of the site, within 65m is Cox's Creek, Cooke Park (on the eastern side of Madeline Street) and Begnell Field (on the western side). Within 115m to the south of the site is a low-density residential neighbourhood, with single and two storey dwellings fronting Madeline Street.

The PP is supported by a Concept Design Report (CDR) which comprises a three-level warehouse or distribution centre with a total gross floor area (GFA) of 68,960m<sup>2</sup> and building height of 34.6m. It also includes associated infrastructure including heavy vehicle ramps and landscaping (Figure 2).



**Figure 2** – Photo montage from the IRS

### Key Considerations

The site is strategically located near the Enfield intermodal in an established industrial area. Retention and utilisation of existing well located industrial land is a strategic objective throughout all tiers of the applicable strategic planning framework.

Amending the height and FSR permitted on the site to facilitate multi-level warehousing has strategic merit, however, the proposed 35m height is a significant departure from the existing 12m height limit under Strathfield LEP.

A 35m high building, which would be comparable in height to a 10-storey residential flat building, and with no transition in height, would have a significant visual impact for the low-density residential areas to the south (maximum height of 9.5m), as well as open space areas located along Cox's Creek and the Cookes River.

The proposal's longitudinal (east-west) dimension is 208.1m, resulting in a very large southern façade orientated towards residential areas and public open spaces. Noting the need for large floor plates and stacking heights, physical articulation (via through breaks in the building and/or separation of the building and upper-level setbacks) would be difficult to achieve. When combined with the proposed height, any future building on this site, which will have long and expansive facades, will be significantly intrusive, particularly when viewed from the residential and open space areas.

Council, in discussions with the Proponent advised that the proposed 35m height could not be supported and suggested that a maximum 25m height would be more appropriate in this location. This would allow for more appropriate height transition between the site and residential areas to the south and would result in a building that was less visually intrusive and closer in height to a mature canopy tree.

The proponent has advised that they are not willing to consider a reduction in the proposed height from 35m to 25m and have requested that the Planning Proposal be determined as submitted.



## REPORT IN FULL

### 1. PROPOSAL

#### 1.1 Proposed amendments to SLEP 2012

The draft Planning Proposal (PP) applies to the site known as Nos 94 -98 Cosgrove Road, Strathfield South (Lot 100 DP 862635) (Figure 1) and seeks to amend the Strathfield LEP 2012 as follows:

- Increasing the Height of Buildings (HOB) from 12m to 35m, and
- Increasing the Floor Space Ratio from 1:1 to 1.6:1

The proposed amendments will facilitate the future development of a multi-level warehouse or distribution centre on the subject site. Multi-level warehousing is an emerging development outcome for infill areas in metropolitan Sydney where the demand for existing industrial land close to consumers and trade gateways is increasing.

#### 1.2 Existing Planning Controls – SLEP 2012

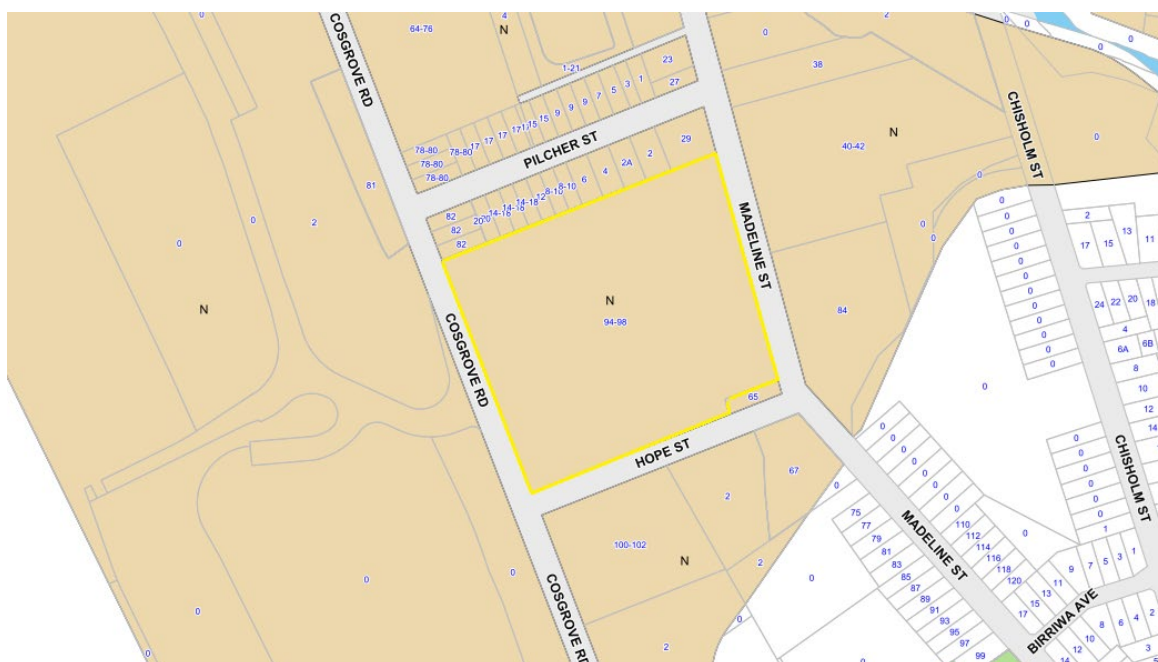
The site is currently zoned E4 General Industrial, and *warehouse or distribution centres* are permitted with consent.

The site is not heritage listed and is not located within a heritage conservation area. The site is not in the vicinity of any local heritage items.

The existing zoning, FSR and HOB mapping is shown in Figures 3-5 below.



**Figure 3 – Existing zoning at the site under SLEP 2012**



**Figure 4 – Existing FSR at the site under SLEP 2012 (1:1)**



**Figure 5 – Existing HOB at the site under SLEP 2012 (12m)**

The following provisions under Part 5 (Miscellaneous) and 6 (Additional Local) are relevant to the subject site:

Strathfield LEP 2012	Comment
Clause 5.21 Flood planning	The site is located within a flood planning area under the Interim Flood Prone Land Policy. Therefore, the provisions of Clause 5.21 are relevant.
Clause 6.1 Acid Sulfate Soils	The site is identified as being Class 5 and is located within

Strathfield LEP 2012	Comment
	500 meters of land that is identified as Class 4 land. Depending on the depth of excavation proposed, Clause 6.1 may be triggered.
Clause 6.2 Earthworks	Excavation at the site may trigger a consideration of Clause 6.2.
Clause 6.4 Essential Services	Availability of essential services is relevant to redevelopment of the site. It is noted that the Site is situated in an existing, well serviced industrial area.

**Table 1 – SLEP 2012 Part 5 and 6 Provisions**

### 1.3 Planning Proposal Supporting Documents

The draft Planning Proposal is supported by supporting studies and plans as shown in Table 1 below. These studies and plans have been used by the Applicant to demonstrate consistency with the relevant parts of the strategic planning framework and are referred to in the Planning Proposal assessment in this report.

Report	Prepared by:
A. Concept Design Report	Nettletontribe Architects
B. Site Survey	LandPartners
C. Draft LEP Maps	Ethos Urban
D. Draft Site-Specific DCP	Ethos Urban
E. Concept Landscape Plan	Geoscapes
F. Visual Impact Assessment	Geoscapes
G. Transport Assessment	Ason Group
H. Noise Assessment Report	Acor Consultants
I. Preliminary Arboricultural Impact Assessment	Hugh the Arborist
J. Preliminary Site Investigation	Douglas Partners
K. Flooding Management Report	Acor Consultants
L. Service Infrastructure Assessment	LandPartners
M. Social and Economic Impact Assessment	HillPDA
N. Community Notification Letter	Ethos Urban

**Table 2 – Planning Proposal supporting studies and plans**

### 1.4 Internal Officers Comments

The draft Planning Proposal has been referred to:

- Urban Forest Supervisor
- Senior Traffic and Transport Engineer
- Senior Environmental Health Officer

The majority of comments related to the future design of the proposed development, based on the concept design, which would be dealt with as part of any future Development Application. A summary of the comments is included at Attachment 1.

## 2. SITE & LOCALITY

### 2.1 Regional Context

The site is approximately 12km south-west of the Sydney Central Business District (CBD) and approximately 11km south-east of the Parramatta CBD.

The site is located along the southeastern boundary of the South Strathfield/Enfield Precinct which is the largest employment precinct within the Strathfield LGA. The Precinct is located between Liverpool Road to the north, the Cooks River and Cox's Creek to the east and south-east, Punchbowl Road to the south and Roberts Road to the West.

The Enfield Intermodal Logistics Centre is owned by NSW Ports and connects to Port Botany, Sydney Airport and Regional NSW through dedicated freight-only rail lines. It represents a 60 hectare area to the immediate west of the Site inclusive of an intermodal terminal, container storage and industrial lots for logistics freight forwarding, packing and unpacking and transport and warehousing.

Cosgrove Road provides access the Hume Highway approximately 1.15km north of the Site, and Punchbowl Road approximately 770m south of the Site.





**Figure 6 – Site (yellow) location within the Strathfield South industrial area (red)**

## 2.2 Site

The site is identified as 94 -98 Cosgrove Road, Strathfield South (Lot 100 DP 862635) (refer Figure 1). The Site is a large single landholding approximately 43,100m<sup>2</sup> in area. The site has the following dimensions:

- Northern boundary – 232.7m. Along this boundary the site adjoins a series of small industrial allotments that front Pilcher Street,
- Southern boundary (Hope Street) – 212.8m,
- Western boundary (Cosgrove Road) – 195m, and
- Eastern boundary (Madeline Street) – 185.5m.

The site is regular in shape, with the exclusion of the corner site at the south-eastern corner, being No 65 Madeline Street.

No 65 Madeline Street, adjoining to the southeastern corner of the site does not form part of the site or this Planning Proposal. The proponent has attempted to acquire this site on several occasions, with the last offer

being made in September 2024. The offer was in line with a formal valuation prepared by CBRE, which was also included in the package issued to the landowners. At the time of preparing the Planning Proposal no response had been received.

The site currently contains three (3) industrial buildings and hardstand space used by a freight and logistics company and a retail shop-fitting manufacturer. The buildings range in height, with a 15m high building in the south eastern corner, 12.75m high building in the south-western corner and 11.25m high building in the north-western corner.

The site features four (4) crossovers along Cosgrove Road which appear to primarily provide heavy vehicle access, one (1) crossover along Hope Street providing access to off-street parking and two (2) crossovers along Madeline Street with the southern crossover providing access to an off-street parking area and the northern crossover appearing to provide heavy vehicle access.

The verge along Cosgrove Road is approximately 5m in width and features turf and small trees. A steel security fence runs along the boundary, with larger canopy trees inside the site along the boundary. The building setback ranges between 10m and 20m.

The verge along Hope Street is approximately 5m in width and features turf and a series of mature paperbark gums on both sides of the road. The boundary is marked by a chicken wire security fence, with areas of groundcover planting and a scattering of mature canopy trees. The building setback ranges between 50m and 26m.

The verge along Madeline Street features inconsistent but mature large canopy trees within a verge width of approximately 5m. The boundary here is also marked by a chicken wire security fence, with lower tree planting inside the boundary. The existing building setback is approximately 18m at the shallowest point, however the setback features several ancillary structures such as water tanks and substations.

The site contains two (2) existing substations along the eastern and western boundaries with right of way easements to protect access to the substations. It is also identified as containing right of way easements in the south-east portion adjacent to 65 Madeline Street (Lot 18 DP 9011). Refer to the site survey submitted with the Planning Proposal for further details.





**Figure 7** – Close up aerial of the Site



**Figure 8** – Northernmost driveway crossover at the site on Madeline Street





**Figure 9** – Southern driveway crossover along Madeline Street and existing 15m high building in the south-eastern corner of the site



**Figure 10** – Driveway crossover along Hope Street, car park and industrial building behind





**Figure 11** – Google street view image of the site looking north-east from the corner of Cosgrove Road and Hope Street



**Figure 12** – Google street view image of the site looking east from Cosgrove Road

### 2.3 Locality

The adjoining and nearby land uses are as follows:

- i. South / South-East of the Site



On the southern side of Hope Street, a small pocket of freight related industrial uses are located along Cox's Creek. Four (4) single storey small industrial tenancies also front Madeline Street (Figure 8).

Further south, a chicane on Madeline Street prevents large and medium rigid vehicles crossing Cox's Creek south of the site, limiting north and south access for these vehicles to Cosgrove Road.

To the south of Cox's Creek there are two (2) sports fields – Cooke Park on the eastern side of Madeline Street and Begnell Field on the western side.

Cooke Park includes three sports fields, a playground and skatepark. Begnell Field includes a large single sports field and a number of informal open space areas. Upgrades are proposed for Begnell Field as part of the State Government's Westinvest program (refer Figure 13 for masterplan).



**Figure 13 – Begnell Field Masterplan**

Adjoining Begnell Field to the east and south is a low-density residential area and comprises of single and two (2) storey dwellings. Dwellings located along the northern extent of Madeline Street (south of Cox's Creek) have an east-west orientation. The nearest residential dwelling is situated approximately 115m from the Site (75 Madeline Street). Other nearby residential dwellings include those on Birrawa Avenue



(265m from the Site), Chisholm Street and Excelsior Avenue (250m at closest point) and Bianche Street (313m at closest point).



**Figure 14** – Industrial, residential and public open space south of the Site



**Figure 15** – Looking north from the northern side of the Madeline Street chicane at the playground in Cookes Park





**Figure 16** – Looking north from Begnell Field – the 15m high building at the site can be seen through the canopy line in the background





**Figure 17** – Looking north west from the edge of Cooke Park near dwellings located along Chisholm Street. The tip of the existing 15m building at the site can be seen

#### East of the Site

On the eastern side of Madeline Street, a number of heavy industrial land uses are in operation, including a materials recycling facility at 40-42 Madeline Street, and a waste transfer and recycling facility in Chisholm Street.

The Cooks River runs along the eastern edge of the wider Strathfield South Industrial area, and includes a number of parks, located along the eastern bank of the watercourse, including Dean Reserve and Ford Park further south-east.



**Figure 18** – Materials recycling facility at 40-42 Madeline Street



**Figure 19** – Access to the waste transfer and recycling facility at Chisholm Street

#### North of the site

To the north, the site adjoins the rear of a number of smaller industrial tenancies that front Pilcher Street and are built to boundary. Figure 20 below provides an example of the types of units fronting Pilcher Street.



**Figure 20** – Industrial units fronting Pilcher Street

#### West of the Site

Enfield Intermodal is located on the western side of Cosgrove Road with NSW Treasury or Ports NSW being the landowner. These land holdings feature relatively large industrial buildings and areas of vacant land (refer Figures 21 and 22 below). The western side of Cosgrove Road features landscaped setbacks including mature canopy trees.



**Figure 21** – Vacant land and industrial warehousing west of the site





**Figure 22** – Warehousing along Cosgrove Road near the mid-point of the Site's western boundary

### 3. BACKGROUND TO THE PLANNING PROPOSAL

<b>October 2022</b>	The Proponent met with Council staff to discuss the concept of multi-level warehousing at the site.
<b>12 March 2024</b>	Scoping Proposal submitted in accordance with the Local Environmental Plan Making Guideline 2023.
<b>23 April 2024</b>	Meeting with the Proponent to discuss the Scoping Proposal.
<b>30 April 2024</b>	Written feedback on the Scoping Proposal provided to Proponent. Key issues included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building envelope, visual impacts from bulk and scale,</li> <li>• Need for high quality urban design, large setbacks and landscaping,</li> <li>• Need for a site specific DCP,</li> <li>• Public benefit.</li> </ul>
<b>24 November 2024</b>	Planning Proposal submitted on the NSW Planning Portal.
<b>20 December 2024</b>	Request for further information (RFI) sent to proponent seeking further information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visual impacts from the proposed height and associated bulk and scale,</li> <li>• Setbacks and landscaping, and</li> <li>• Requesting a public benefit offer be considered and presented to Council,</li> </ul>
<b>12 February 2025</b>	Additional information submitted, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An updated site specific DCP which includes requirements for increased setbacks to Hope Street and inclusion of public art in the building facade.</li> <li>• An updated Concept Landscape Plan,</li> <li>• Updated Concept Design Report, and</li> <li>• Updated Planning Proposal Report.</li> </ul>
<b>3 February 2025</b>	Council appointed Audex Urban to undertake an independent peer review of the Visual Impact Assessment submitted with the application.
<b>21 February 2025</b>	Independent peer review of the VIA received. This peer review substantiated Council's concerns with respect to the proposed height and bulk and scale of any future development, and its visual impact for residential areas and open space areas south of the site.
<b>27 February 2025</b>	Council advised Proponent that a maximum height of 35m would not be supported in this location due to the potential adverse visual impacts to the residential properties to the south. Council requested that the Proponent consider amending the Planning Proposal to lower the proposed maximum height to 25m. A maximum HOB at 25m would still allow for a large, multi-level warehouse or distribution

facility, and would result in a building profile that would sit near or below the tree canopy line, therefore lessening its visual impact when viewed from the open space areas and low-density residential precinct.

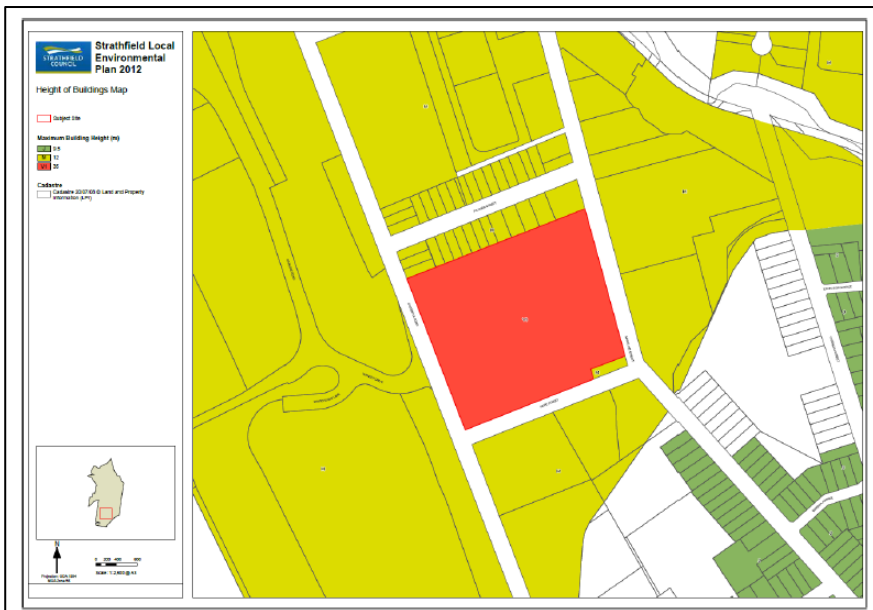
**10 March 2025**

The Proponent advised Council that they would proceed with the Planning Proposal, as submitted.

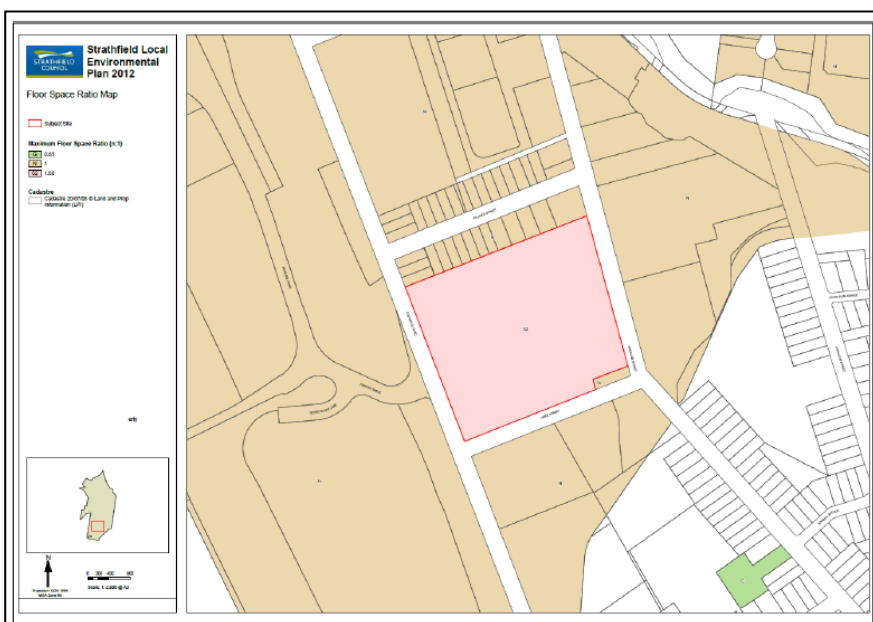
## 4. EXPLANATION OF PROVISIONS

### 4.1 LEP Amendments

The Planning Proposal seeks to amend the HOB and FSR Maps under SLEP 2012 to facilitate multi-level warehousing and distribution at the Site. The proponent has prepared proposed maps (sheets HOB\_003 and HOB\_006 as well as FSR\_003 and FSR\_006). These are shown in Figures 23 and 24 below.



**Figure 23 – Proposed HOB map showing the site with a 35m layer**



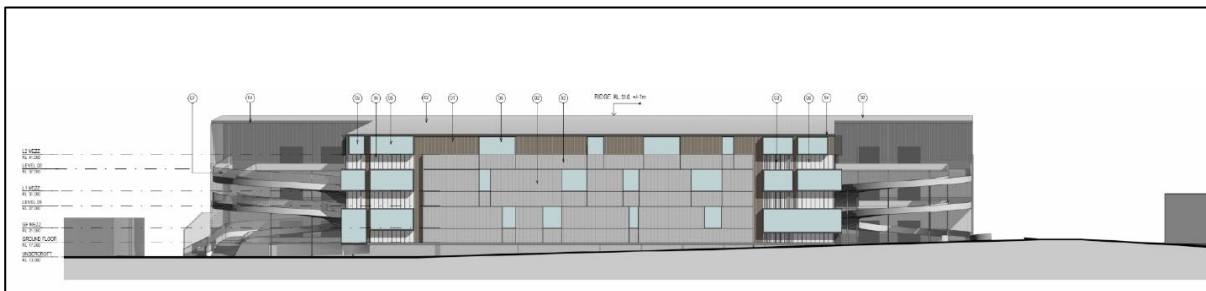
**Figure 24 – Proposed HOB map showing the site with a 35m layer**

### 4.2 Site Specific DCP

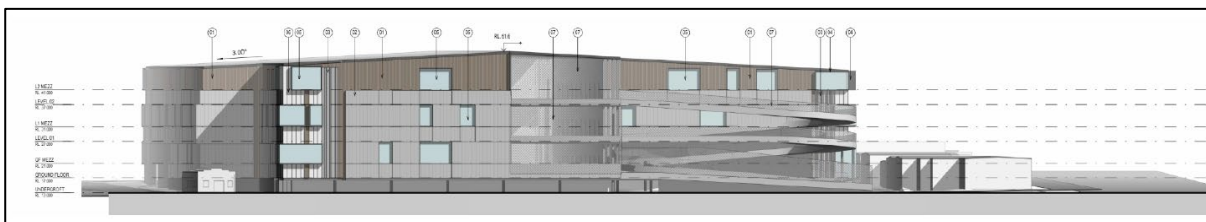
At the Council's request, the Proponent has prepared and submitted a Site Specific DCP. The DCP provides site specific controls relating to setbacks, architectural design, landscaping, sustainability, parking and accessibility, and environmental amenity.

## 5. IMPACTS OF THE PLANNING PROPOSAL

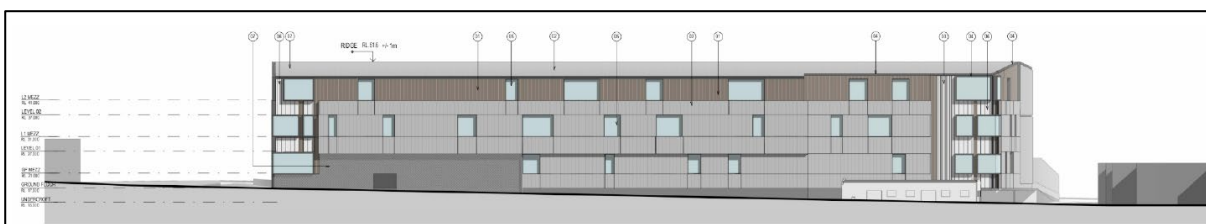
The CDR submitted with the PP and prepared by Nettleton Tribe, contains a conceptual built form to illustrate future development outcomes based on the proposed HOB and FSR (refer to Figures 25-28 below for elevations and perspectives). The design concept, principles and design considerations such as setbacks and access are also included in the CDR.



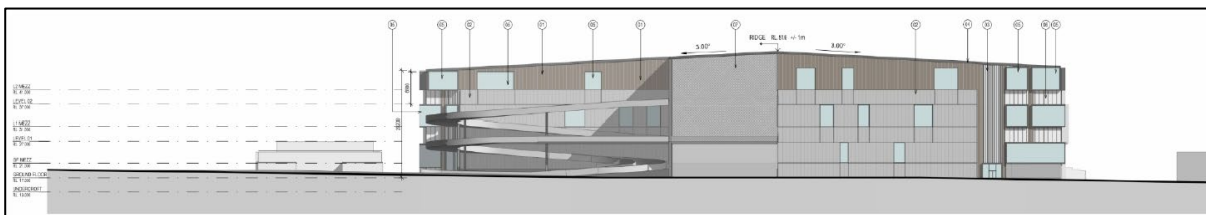
**Figure 25 – Northern Elevation**



**Figure 26 – Eastern Elevation**

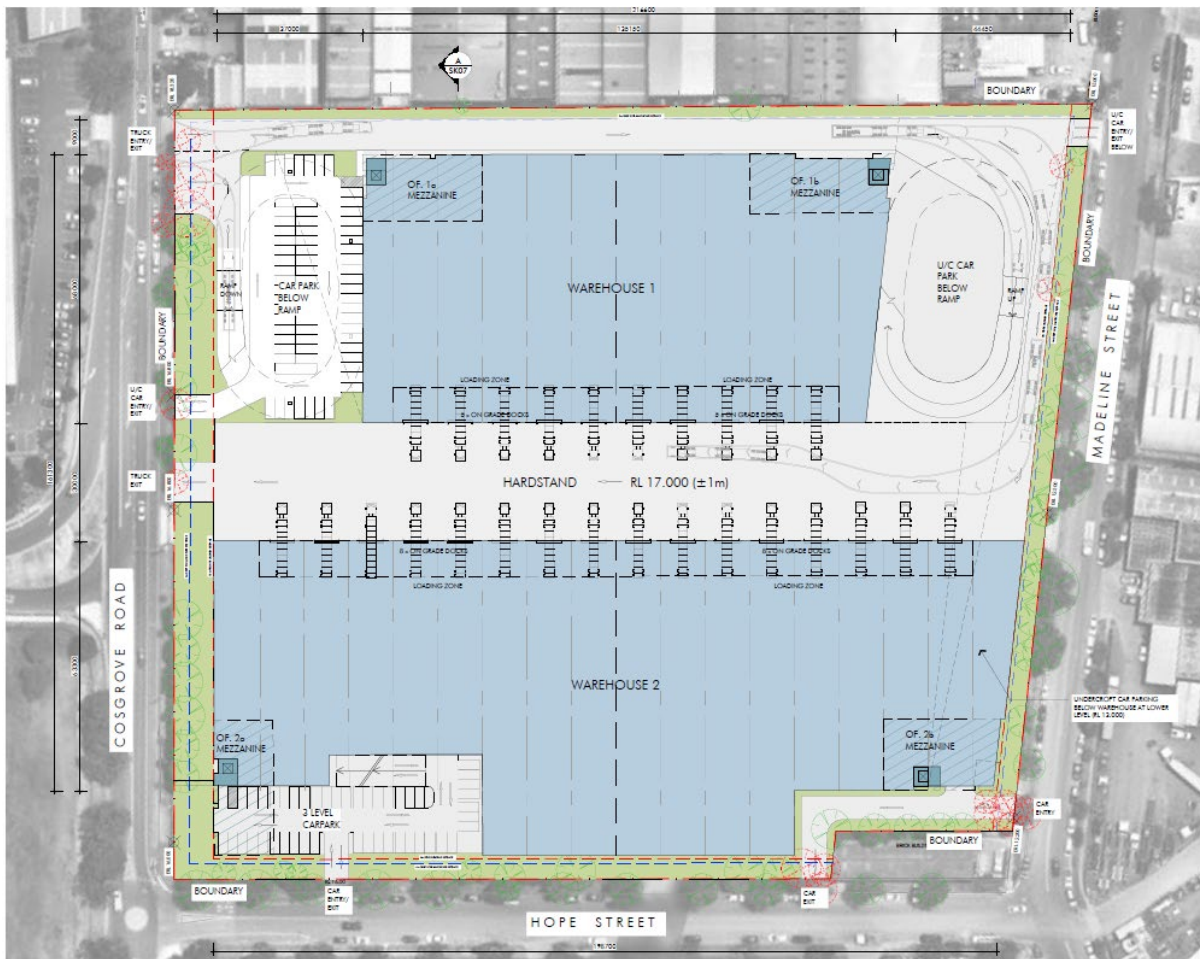


**Figure 27 – Southern Elevation**



**Figure 28 – Western Elevation**





**Figure 29 – Ground Floor Plan**



**Figure 30 – Perspective, Corner of Cosgrove Rd and Hope St**



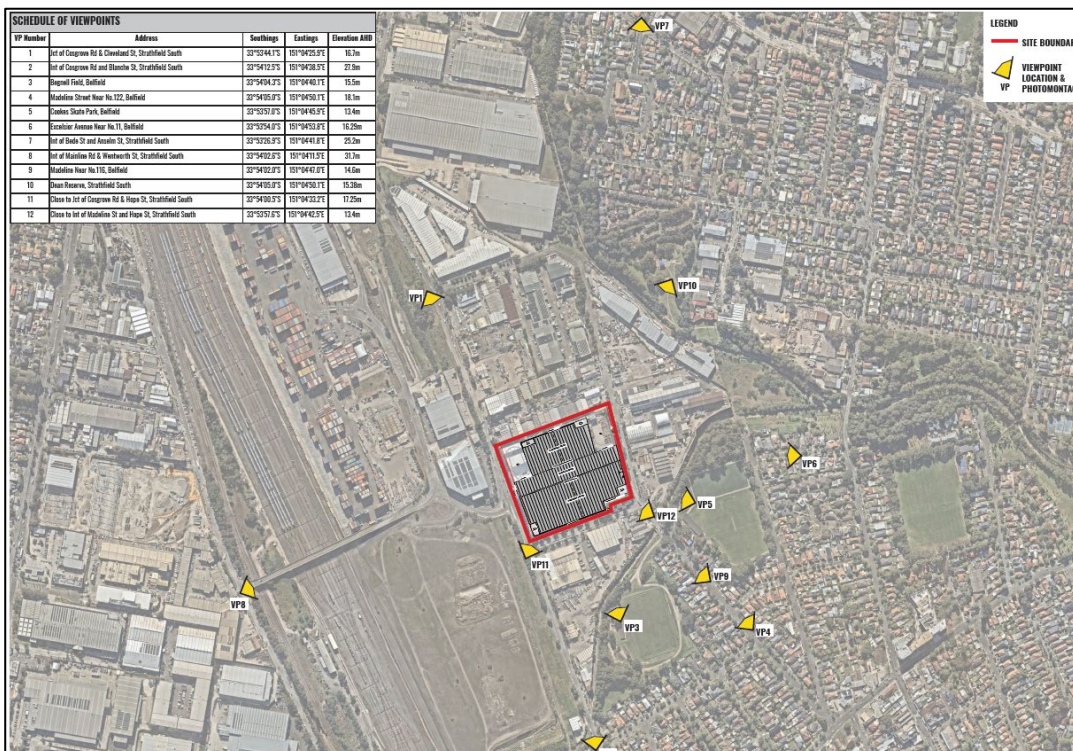


**Figure 31** – Perspective, Corner of Hope St and Madeline St

### 5.1.1 Building height and mass

The draft Planning Proposal seeks to amend the maximum HOB from 12m to 35m metres to facilitate the redevelopment of the site for a three (3) storey industrial and warehouse building. This represents a 191.6% increase to the existing height under the Strathfield LEP. A 35m tall building is equivalent to a 9-10 storey residential flat building, which exceeds the height of any built form in the locality.

The draft Planning Proposal is supported by a Visual Impact Assessment (VIA), prepared by Geoscapes which shows the impact of the concept building in the Urban Design Report from 12 vantage points in the immediate locality. The 10 vantage points are shown below in Figure 32.





**Figure 32 – Viewpoints in the Applicants VIA**

From the west, north and north-east, the VIA concludes that the visual impact will generally be low. The VIA establishes that these spaces generally have a low sensitivity in that the views are from existing industrial areas towards an existing industrial site. The VIA suggests the magnitude of change would be low as the building would not look out of place in its industrial context. Council agrees with the findings of the VIA in this regard.

From the south and south-east where low density residential dwellings are located, the VIA establishes moderate to high visual impacts. A summary of the VIA's assessment of each viewpoint is provided below.

<b>Viewpoint</b>	<b>Sensitivity</b>	<b>Magnitude of Change</b>	<b>Visual Impact</b>
<u>Viewpoint 1</u> (Jct of Cosgrove Rd & Cleveland St)	Low	Low	Minor
<u>Viewpoint 2</u> (Int of Cosgrove Rd and Blanche St)	Low	Low	Minor
<u>Viewpoint 3</u> (Begnell Field)	Low	Low	Minor/Negligible
<u>Viewpoint 4</u> (Madeline Street Near No.122)	Medium	High	Moderate
<u>Viewpoint 5</u> (Cokes Skate Park)	Medium	Low	Minor
<u>Viewpoint 6</u> (Excelsior Avenue near No. 11)	Medium	Very Low	Minor/Negligible
<u>Viewpoint 7</u> (Int of Bede St and Anselm St)	High	Very Low	Minor
<u>Viewpoint 8</u> (Int of Mainland Rd and Wentworth St)	Very Low	Low	Negligible
<u>Viewpoint 9</u> (Madeline Street Near No.116)	Medium	Very High	High/Moderate
<u>Viewpoint 10</u> (Dean Reserve)	Low	Medium	Minor
<u>Viewpoint 11</u> (Near Jct of Cosgrove Rd and Hope Street)	Low	Medium	Minor
<u>Viewpoint 12</u> (Close to Int of Madeline Street and Hope Street)	Low	High	Moderate/Minor

**Table 3 – Summary of viewpoints and magnitude of change**

Council considers that the visual impacts from the proposed development will be greater than what has been presented in the Applicant's VIA. The concept design proposes a building that will have a longitudinal (east-west) dimension of 208.1m, resulting in a very large southern façade orientated towards residential areas and public open spaces. The eastern boundary dimension is approximately 185m which presents similar bulk

and scale concerns. These large expanses of wall, combined with a maximum building height of 35m will result in a significantly bulky building, which when viewed from the open space and low-density residential precinct will have a significant visual impact.

Noting the need for large floor plates and stacking heights, physical articulation (via through breaks in the building and/or separation of the building and upper level setbacks) will have a limited effect on mitigating bulk and scale. The VIA presents a number of before and after images that depict the scale of change. As a reference, the images for Viewpoints 5 and 9 are shown below.



**Figure 33** – Viewpoint 5 (Cookes Skate Park) from the Applicant's VIA





**Figure 34** – Viewpoint 9 from the Applicant's VIA

However, the images show small portions of a building that will have a 200m long southern façade and similar length along the eastern façade. The viewpoints show a narrow view window that indicates the visual impact of the building will be mitigated by trees and buildings in the foreground. This is considered to underplay the presence of the building in the local environment, which currently features a 12-15m height plane across industrial areas and 9.5m (at the highest) plane across residential areas.

Viewpoints 9 and viewpoint 4 are also considered in isolation from the wider residential area south of the site. Discussion of these limited viewpoints underplays the impact of the building on numerous residential streets and dwellings located along Chisolm Street, Blanche Street, Birriwa Avenue, Chatfield Avenue and potentially further afield on Water Street.

In relation to Viewpoints 4 and 9, the VIA proposes a medium sensitivity based on a criteria that places limited value on the existing scenic context which incorporates canopy trees that screen the majority of industrial buildings. The leafy outlook for residents and travellers along the local road network contributes to a higher sensitivity than is attributed in the VIA.

The outcome generated by this Planning Proposal would result in a new focal point for residents south of the site, with direct and close range views of a building more than twice the height of existing industrial buildings across a large horizontal extent. Therefore, the magnitude of change is expected to be high or very high.

As part of the pre-scoping response letter, Council provided suggested viewpoints, which have been addressed in the submitted VIA. However, a number of the suggested viewpoints have been used to demonstrate low visual impacts due to localised view obstructions. For example, Viewpoint 6 has been given

a minor/negligible impact due to a crop of mature trees directly opposite this viewpoint. However, numerous dwellings south of this point along Chisholm Street look across Cooke Park, where the new development would introduce a large structure well above the background canopy line. Figure 35 below shows a google street view position near 1 Chisholm Street that presents a different sensitivity and impact considering the unobstructed views across Cooke Park. The tip of the existing 15m building at the site can be seen in the distance.



**Figure 35** – Google street image from a position near 1 Chisholm Street



**Figure 36** – A site visit photo taken from inside the park

The sensitivity applied to open space areas (in Viewpoints 3 and 5) underplays the scenic value of users of these spaces. The local open spaces provide green space outside of organised sport and all users have the



potential to enjoy these spaces in the current visual setting where buildings are mostly screened by the tree canopy line. In considering the magnitude of change, the VIA presents narrow viewpoints that focus on areas of canopy trees in the foreground.

In reality, the building will be a significant new focal point from these spaces where there are numerous unobstructed views of the site or views from the other side of Cooke Park and various other points in Begnell Field.

#### Veracity of the VIA

During the assessment, Council contracted Audax Urban to undertake a peer review of the submitted VIA. Audax Urban provided confirmation of Council's visual impact concerns, finding that the proposal would have greater levels of visual impact than that described in the Applicant's VIA.

Audax Urban also questioned the methodology used by Geoscapes, noting that no proof of the veracity of the montages has been provided, and, at best, these can be described as 'artist's renditions' and their accuracy cannot be ascertained as they are not court certifiable montages.

This brings into question all other viewpoints, including those on the northern side of the Cooks River, where there may be other topographical high points that present greater visual impacts than the discussion orientated around Viewpoint 7.

#### **5.1.2 Façade design and setbacks**

The Planning Proposal is supported by the CDR and Site Specific DCP that establish urban design benchmarks for the proposed development, as well as minimum setbacks as follows:

- a) 10m along Cosgrove Road;
- b) 7m along Hope Street; and
- c) 5m to Madeline Street.

These features of the development are essential to mitigating bulk and scale for multi-level warehousing development. However, as noted above, the setbacks and landscaping within those setbacks would not have a mitigating effect on a 35m high building considering the visual impacts are primarily from areas outside of the adjoining local road network.

Façade treatments would not be able to modulate the building to a point where it would not be a new visual focal point for surrounding residential and open space areas and the ability to create significant breaks in the façade and step the development is limited by the nature of the land use.

Audax Urban also questioned the VIA's use of architectural treatments to downplay visual impacts from certain viewpoints. Architectural treatments at the Planning Proposal stage are a variable that should not be used to reduce visual impacts in the discussion of impacts from a general building envelope.

Notwithstanding, articulation of the built form as presented has limited impact to a building of this scale when combined with the need for regular floor plates.

### **5.1.3 Landscaping, deep soil and canopy cover**

The concept landscape plan submitted with the Planning Proposal establishes that the concept scheme would retain 48 trees within the Site and plant 145 trees, resulting in 193 trees and a canopy cover of 9.7%. This is a notable increase from the existing canopy cover at the site which is approximately 2.5%. However, this falls short of Council's 20% target and the State Government's City wide 40% target.

The setbacks proposed generally allow for mature canopy spread, although Council's Urban Forest Supervisor outlined a 6m minimum should be applied. However, mature canopy trees would have minimal contribution to mitigating bulk and scale under the proposed height.

### **5.1.4 Ecologically Sustainable Development**

The Applicant has included a number of sustainability requirements in the site specific DCP:

- a. 100% solar capable roof;
- b. Native and drought tolerant landscaping;
- c. Rain water harvesting for irrigation and non-potable uses;
- d. Provisions in the built form for a common energy storage system to support power usage outside of sunlight hours for base building items (i.e. lighting and air conditioning);
- e. Use of passive shading and ventilation where appropriate; and
- f. Electricity metering to each tenancy and sub metering within where appropriate to monitor and improve specific electricity uses over time.

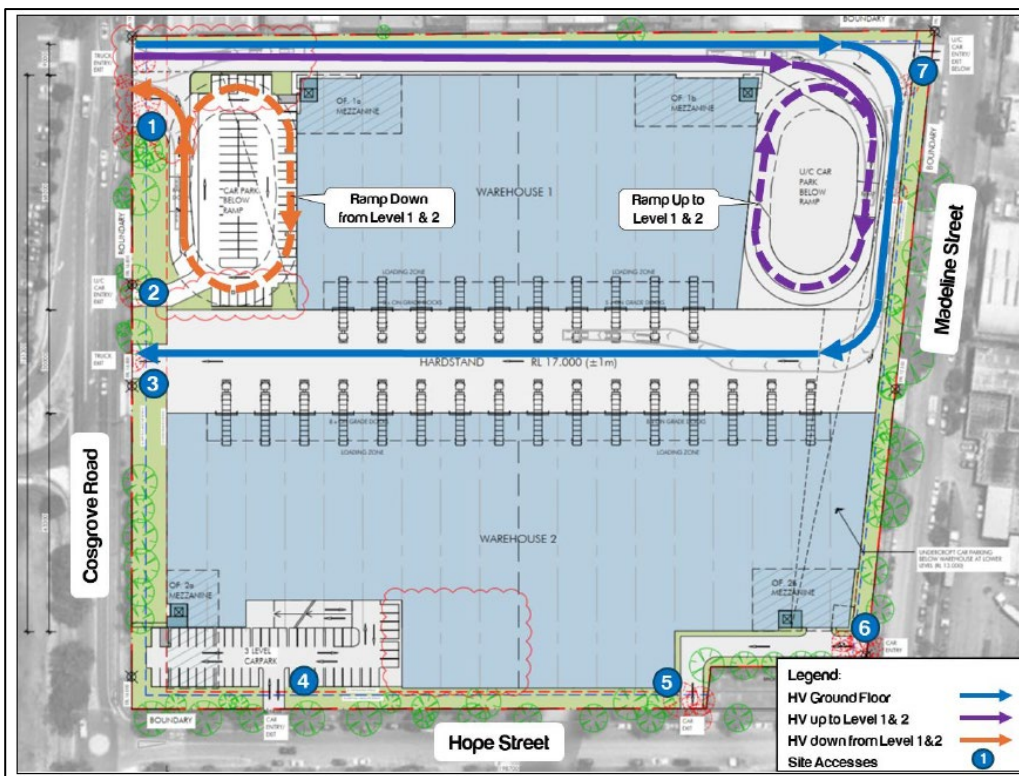
These measures are limited in the commitment to minimising the footprint of the development. The introduction of site specific local LEP provisions to minimise the consumption of energy and water, and to capture energy and water on site would provide more certainty in reducing the environmental footprint of a substantial development.

### **5.1.5 Vehicle access and parking**

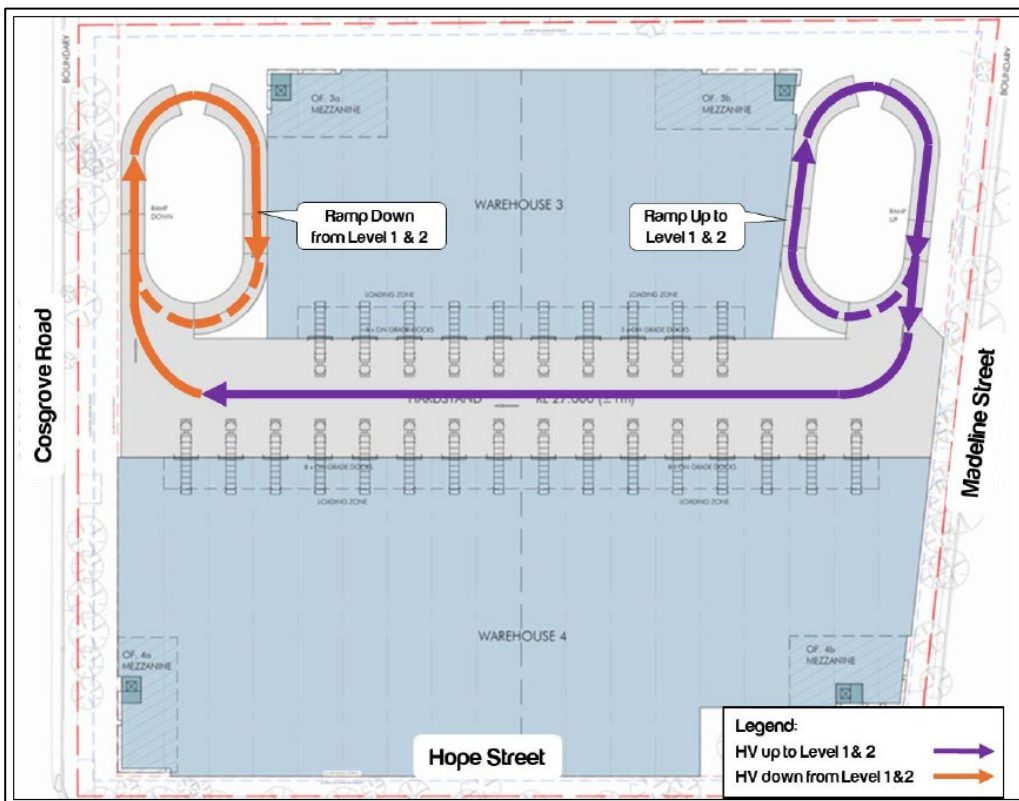
The submitted design concept indicates that a future multi-level warehouse development can be mostly accessed via existing crossovers at the site.

The site features four (4) crossovers along Cosgrove Road which appear to primarily provide heavy vehicle access, one (1) crossover along Hope Street providing access to off-street parking and two (2) crossovers along Madeline Street with the southern crossover providing access to an off-street parking area and the northern crossover appearing to provide heavy vehicle access. The concept plan shows that one of the crossovers along Cosgrove Road would be closed, with a new crossover on Hope Street. This outcome is shown in Figure 36 and upper level circulation is shown in Figure 37.





**Figure 37 – Concept design access at ground floor**



**Figure 38 – Concept design access at level 1**

Council's Traffic Engineer reviewed the Planning Proposal documents and was satisfied, subject to detailed design at the development application stage, that the LEP amendments allow for suitable vehicle access, heavy vehicle routes, on-site parking provisions, car parking layout and geometric and traffic generation.

#### **5.1.6 Pedestrian access, active travel and on-site amenity**

The site benefits from three street frontages with existing pedestrian footpaths along each road (Hope Street only features one footpath on the southern side of the road).

The site is within close proximity to Cooke Park and Begnell Park which presents a logical destination for employees within the Strathfield South Industrial Area. Existing pedestrian paths provide access to these spaces. It is noted that the paths are not in good condition and heavy vehicles pass over several crossovers between the Site and Cox's Creek.

Notwithstanding, the site could be designed to orientate pedestrians towards Madeline Street and Hope Street to encourage visitation to the nearby open spaces. The Concept Design does not illustrate open spaces for use by employees other than the scenic benefits of the landscaped setbacks.

#### **5.1.7 Contamination**

Based on the Preliminary Site Investigation report, a detailed site investigation (DSI) is required. The DSI report must comply with the NSW EPA guidelines for *"Consultants Reporting on Contaminated Land 2020"* and be undertaken by a suitably qualified environmental consultant. It is noted that the DSI is not required at this stage as the Planning Proposal does not change the zoning of the land. A DSI can be a requirement following gateway approval of the Planning Proposal or more suitably can be addressed during the development application process.

#### **5.1.8 Flooding**

The Site is identified as being located within the Cooks River catchment area in Council's Cooks River and Cox's Creek Flood Study and is identified as being only partially inundated during the Probable Maximum Flood (PMF) event and is not identified as affected during the 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) flood events.

Notwithstanding, the Applicant has indicated the Concept Design has adopted ground floor level that is above the 1% AEP.



## 6. NEED FOR THE PLANNING PROPOSAL

### 6.1.1 Section A - Need for the Planning Proposal

**Question 1 - Is the planning proposal a result of an endorsed LSPS, strategic study or report?**

No, this Planning Proposal is the result of a request from the landowner to increase the height and FSR to facilitate delivery of a warehouse.

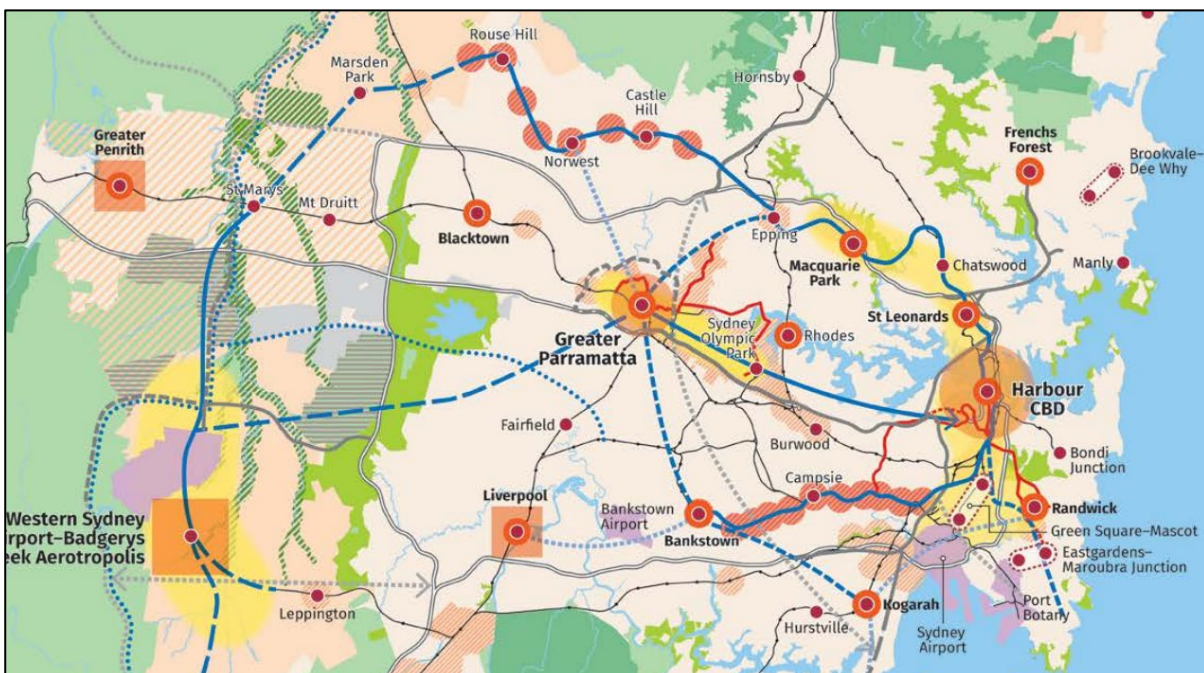
**Question 2 - Is the Planning Proposal the best means of achieving the objectives or intended outcomes, or is there a better way?**

This is a site-specific Planning Proposal which is seeking to increase the height and FSR to facilitate a multi-level warehouse.

### 6.1.2 Section B - Relationship to the strategic Planning Framework

**Question 3 - Is the Planning Proposal consistent with the objectives and actions of the applicable regional or sub-regional strategy (including any exhibited draft plans or strategies)?**

The Region Plan is the overarching strategy for growing and shaping the Greater Sydney Area. It sets a 40-year vision (to 2056) and establishes a 20-year plan to manage growth and change for Greater Sydney in the context of social, economic and environmental matters. It was adopted in March 2018 and seeks to reposition Sydney as a metropolis of three cities, being the Eastern Harbour City, Central River City and Western Parkland City. The Region Plan provides 10 high level policy directions supported by 40 objectives that inform the District Plans, Local Plans and Planning Proposals which follow in the planning hierarchy.



**Figure 39 – Greater Sydney Region Plan – A Metropolis of Three Cities**

The District Plan underpins the Region Plan and sets the 20-year vision for the Eastern City District through 'Planning Priorities' that are linked to the Region Plan.



**Figure 40 – The Eastern City District Plan**

The Planning Proposal is consistent with a number of planning priorities and objectives within the Region Plan and District Plan. Of particular relevance are the following:

- *Region Plan - Objective 23: Industrial and urban services land is planned, retained and managed,*
- *Region Plan - Objective 16: Freight and logistics network is competitive and efficient*
- *District Plan - Planning Priority E12: Retaining and managing industrial and urban services land*
- *District Plan - Planning Priority E9: Growing international trade gateways*

Consistency with these Objectives and Planning Priorities is the result of two fundamental features of the proposal:

- The site is strategically located within the vicinity of the Enfield Intermodal, responding to demand for industrial land, capable of supporting freight and logistics, with access to Port Botany.
- It features the retention of industrial land and intensification of the use through multi-level warehousing and additional floor area.



However, these two points do not justify multi-level warehousing at a height of 35m. The assessment of the Planning Proposal's site-specific merit has demonstrated that the height proposed for the site and use will introduce a building that is out of character with the locality and will have a negative impact on how local residents and visitors experience the Strathfield South residential area to the south of the site due to visual impacts.

The Region Plan and District Plan both address the need for a city of great places achieved through a well-design-built environment. Planning Priority E6 in the District Plan includes details on the need for great places to be attractive and details on place-based planning in Action 18 require Council's to recognise and celebrate the character of places in decision making.

The Planning Proposal will facilitate a development that would create a new local visual landmark and due to its prominence, detract from the local character. The future building would sit well above the tree canopy line which defines views from surrounding residential and open space areas.

Due to the nature of the development, opportunities to mitigate bulk and scale through high quality urban design are limited. With these site-specific impacts and limitations in mind, the Planning Proposal is inconsistent with place based objectives and Planning Principles in the Region and District Plans.

**Question 4 - Is the planning proposal consistent with a council LSPS that has been endorsed by the Planning Secretary or GCC, or another endorsed local strategy or strategic plan?**

The Strathfield LSPS contains planning priorities and actions of which represents Council's 20-year vision and strategy for the LGA's future direction, and contains directions about infrastructure, liveability, productivity and sustainability. It draws from Region and District Plan and implements the planning priorities identified from these larger strategic documents at a local level.

The Planning Proposal relates most directly to Planning Priority P10 under the Productivity section:

- *P10 - Industrial land and precincts deliver District and local urban services and provide activated spaces with minimal impact on neighbourhoods*

Similarly to the relevant planning principles in the Region and District Plan, the Planning Proposal addresses the need for retention of industrial land via the intensification of the site fundamental to the Planning Proposal.

However, the LSPS also provides amenity and place-based considerations to minimise the impacts on local neighbourhoods as industrial lands evolve. Under P10, the LSPS establishes that *development and renewal of industrial and commercial areas must support the LGA's attraction as a desirable place to live and work.*

In this regard, the Planning Proposal is inconsistent with the LSPS, as the proposed height would have a negative effect on local character and amenity for the Strathfield South residential area.

To a lesser extent, the Planning Proposal is relevant to P16 and Action 104 shown below:

- *P16 - A healthy built environment delivers sustainable and resource efficient outcomes*

- *Action 104 - Continue to work with industrial land owners to implement priorities and sustainability actions for industrial sites (priorities to reduce heat island effect such as tree planting, water runoff, noise and pollution impacts to adjoining land uses)*

As noted above, the Concept Design falls short of canopy cover targets for the greater Sydney region and the Strathfield LGA.

***Question 5 - Is the Planning Proposal consistent with any other applicable State and regional studies or strategies?***

The following State strategies are applicable to the Planning Proposal:

***i) Future Transport Strategy 2056***

*The Future Transport Strategy 2056 sets out the NSW government's vision for transport in a growing and changing state. It guides the community on strategic directions for future planning integrated with evolving transport networks throughout the greater Sydney metropolitan area and the state. The strategy delivers a framework that informs place-based planning and policy decisions to achieve successful outcomes, aiming to connect communities to the city and state shaping infrastructure and services pipeline.*

*The strategy seeks to ensure that freight networks and supply chains are efficient and reliable (E1). It identifies that the lack of adequate infrastructure, facilities and land around intermodals can impact the efficiency of supply chains, cause delays for freight operators, and limit capacity. The encroachment of residential land on existing strategically located industrial lands is similarly a concern that places pressure on freight routes connecting ports, airports, employment lands and intermodal.*

***ii) NSW State Infrastructure Strategy 2022-2042 – Staying Ahead***

*The NSW State Infrastructure Strategy 2022-2042 – Staying Ahead identifies infrastructure needs and strategic priorities for the State over the next 20 years, building on the recommendations made by the previous strategy. NSW Government*

*strategies, policies and reform initiatives underpin the development of the strategy, which sets out nine (9) long-term objectives for Infrastructure NSW.*

*The strategy seeks to improve freight efficiency, security and capacity to support NSW's industries and supply chains, in addition to supporting existing, and emerging knowledge and manufacturing industries in dedicated precincts with high-quality infrastructure.*

The Planning Proposal is consistent with these strategies as it seeks to retain and intensify existing industrial land in close proximity of the Enfield Intermodal. However, this does not necessitate the height proposed.

***NSW Government Architects 'Better Placed' and 'Greener Places'***



*Better Placed was released in September 2017, as a strategic document to guide the future of urban environmental planning such that it works towards the creation of better designed places throughout NSW.*

The Proponent has indicated that the Planning Proposal is consistent with Greener Places, however design guidance within the Strategy indicates a much higher (40%) canopy cover target than what is proposed in the Concept Design and achievable under the setbacks proposed.

***Question 6. Is the Planning Proposal consistent with applicable State Environment Planning Policies?***

The Planning Proposal is consistent with the applicable State Environmental Planning Policies as shown below.

State Environmental Planning Policy	Consistency
State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021	<p>Yes - Chapter 4 of the Resilience and Hazards SEPP aims to promote the remediation of contaminated land.</p> <p>A Preliminary Site Investigation has been submitted with the Planning Proposal and concludes that the Site can be made suitable for the future land use and development from a contamination perspective.</p>
State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021	<p>Yes - Future development on the site would be considered a traffic generating activity under Section 2.122 of the Transport and Infrastructure SEPP requiring the consent authority to refer the Development Application to Transport for NSW (TfNSW).</p>

**Table 4 – State Environmental Planning Policies**

***Question 7 - Is the Planning Proposal consistent with the applicable Ministerial Directions (Section 9.1 Directions) or key government priority?***

The Planning Proposal is consistent with the applicable Ministerial Directions as shown below.

Ministerial Direction	Consistency
4.1 Flooding	<p>The Planning Proposal includes a Flood Impact assessment that demonstrates the site could be developed to be to accommodate the probable maximum flood levels established in Council's Cooks River and Cox's Creek Flood Study. The Planning Proposal is consistent with Council's adopted flood study.</p>

	The Planning Proposal does not seek to rezone land and does not seek to introduce any new special provisions into SLEP 2012.
4.4 Remediation of Contaminated Land	<p>The Planning Proposal is supported by a Preliminary Site Investigation report which outlines that a detailed site investigation (DSI) is required.</p> <p>It is noted that, under the Ministerial Direction, the DSI is not required at this stage as the Planning Proposal does not change the zoning of the land. A DSI can be a requirement following gateway approval of the Planning Proposal or more suitably can be addressed during the development application process.</p>
4.5 Acid Sulfate Soils	<p>The Acid Sulfate Soils Map – Sheet ASS_06 of Strathfield LEP 2012 indicates that the site is classified as Class 5 where development consent is required for works within 500m of adjacent Class 1, 2, 3 or 4 land that is below RL 5 and by which the water table is likely to be lowered below RL 1 on adjacent Class 1, 2, 3 or 4 land. Class 4 land is located approximately 50m to the south and east of the Site, however, the topography is above RL 5 AHD.</p> <p>In addition, Council has adopted the Model LEP clause under Clause 6.1 of the Strathfield LEP, meaning that Direction 4.5(4) does not apply.</p>
7.1 Employment Zones	The Planning Proposal is consistent with the Ministerial Direction as it retains and does not reduce existing industrial employment land.

**Table 5 – Ministerial Directions**

### 6.1.3 Section C – Site-Specific Merit

***Question 8 - Is there any likelihood that critical habitat or threatened species, populations or ecological communities, or their habitats, will be adversely affected because of the proposal?***

The subject site is located centrally within an existing industrial precinct and is unlikely to contain any critical habitats or threatened species, populations or ecological communities or their habitats. Council's records and GIS mapping do not indicate any environmentally sensitive land at the site or within close proximity of the site.

***Question 9 - Are there any other likely environmental effects as a result of the Planning Proposal and how are they proposed to be managed?***

An assessment of the environmental impacts is provided in Section 6 of this report. The salient environmental consideration relates to visual impacts from the expected bulk and scale of the proposal. The size of the subject site will result in long and expansive facades when combined with the 35m height and will have a detrimental effect on the character of the locality due to visual impacts. The submitted VIA does not accurately capture the physical presence of a building of this scale and form on a large portion of the Strathfield South residential area and open spaces along the Coxs Creek and Cooks River.



***Question 10 - Has the Planning Proposal adequately addressed any social and economic effects?***

The Planning Proposal is supported by a social and economic impact (SEI) assessment.

This document outlines the economic benefits of the Planning Proposal, focusing on job creation and economic output. The SEI presents a base case, reflecting the current potential of the site, to highlight the economic benefits of the PP. While this comparison shows clear economic advantages, it remains a simplistic one. Of more relevance would be comparisons with similar multi-level warehousing developments in comparable settings, particularly in the context of discussions about the feasibility of multi-level warehousing at a reduced height on the site.

In this regard, Council requested during the assessment that the Proponent provide any feasibility studies conducted for the site, noting that there are numerous examples of two-storey warehouses within the trade and logistics corridor east of the site in other local government areas. However, this information was not provided to Council.

The Proponent asserts that the economic benefits of the Planning Proposal offer significant public value. However, the Council disagrees, pointing out that the Planning Proposal fails to address the need for local infrastructure improvements, lacks robust sustainability initiatives and commitments, and does not meet the canopy tree targets set by the relevant Planning Policies.

The SEI also examines the social impacts of the Planning Proposal. It is agreed that the proposal will not significantly affect the general way of life, culture, community, or access. However, the SEI indicates the impacts on the surroundings for nearby residential receivers can be mitigated through architectural quality and articulation in the detailed design phase. Council's assessment of the visual impacts from the Planning Proposal do not align with this assumption.

**6.1.4 Section D – Infrastructure (Local, State and Commonwealth)**

***Question 11 - Is there adequate public infrastructure for the Planning Proposal?***

The Proponent's Service Infrastructure Assessment indicates that the site is suitable serviced. This aligns with the sites position in an existing industrial area within close proximity to the Enfield Intermodal and arterial roadways Punchbowl Road and Liverpool Road which can be accessed via Cosgrove Road.

**6.1.5 Section E – State and Commonwealth Interests**

***Question 12 - What are the views of state and federal public authorities and government agencies consulted in order to inform the Gateway determination?***

State agencies were consulted as part of the pre-scoping process. Their responses to the pre-scoping material are outlined below.

Authority	Comment
Transport for NSW	Comments provided related to details to be included in a Traffic

	Impact Assessment. The Applicant has undertaken additional consultation with TfNSW to determine appropriate growth rates for traffic impact assessments.
NSW Ports	NSW Ports outlined that comments would be provided at formal exhibition stage.
Sydney Trains	No response received.
Ausgrid	Ausgrid provided comments relating to requirements for a services and utilities impact assessment.
Sydney Water	Sydney Water provided high level comments and established that further comments may be provided at formal exhibition stage.

**Table 6 – Pre-scoping State Agency Consultation**

## 7. CONCLUSION

The Planning Proposal has strategic merit in that it protects and utilises existing well-located industrial land.

Council acknowledges the significance of preserving and enhancing industrial land near the Enfield Intermodal. On a broader scale, the DPHI is currently conducting a thorough review of its Industrial Lands Strategy, which may lead to a Council-led comprehensive review of industrial land. This review will aim to establish appropriate heights and Floor Space Ratios (FSRs) that support modern industrial warehouse stacking heights, including multi-storey warehousing at suitable levels. Additionally, this review will be complemented by updates to Council's Development Control Plan (DCP).

The Council's recognition of the need for height increases in modern industrial developments is reflected in its support for several 4.6 variation requests during Development Application assessments, including one for the site at 41 Roberts Road on the western side of the Intermodal. This site, developed by Goodmans, saw a 48% increase to the 12m height limit, allowing for a building height of 17m.

However, the proposed 35m height represents a significant departure from the current height patterns of buildings in the surrounding industrial area. It will create a dominant visual focal point that could undermine the setting and character of the Strathfield South area. While physical articulation, such as breaks in the building or upper-level setbacks, may help reduce the bulk and scale, these measures will have limited impact given the large size and scale of the proposed structure, which at 35m will be equivalent to a 9-10 storey residential flat building

During the assessment of the Planning Proposal, Council informed the Proponent that a maximum height of 25m could be supported. This height would facilitate appropriate transitions between the site and the residential areas to the south, while allowing the building to be at or slightly above the existing and future canopy tree heights. However, the Proponent has stated that a 25m height limit does not align with their future vision for the site.



Accordingly, in consideration of the Planning Proposal's inconsistency with place based strategic planning objectives and anticipated visual impacts, Council recommends that the Planning Proposal for land at 94-98 Cosgrove Road, Strathfield South (Lot 100 DP 862635) to amend the Strathfield Local Environmental Plan 2012 should not progress to the Department of Planning, Housing and Industry under Section 3.34 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

## RECOMMENDATION

That the Planning Proposal for land at 94-98 Cosgrove Road, Strathfield South (Lot 100 DP 862635) to amend the height and FSR in the Strathfield Local Environmental Plan 2012 should not progress to the Department of Planning, Housing and Industry under Section 3.34 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. This is primarily due to the proposed height and associated visual impacts.

## ATTACHMENTS

1. 94-98 Cosgrove Road - Internal Referral Comments