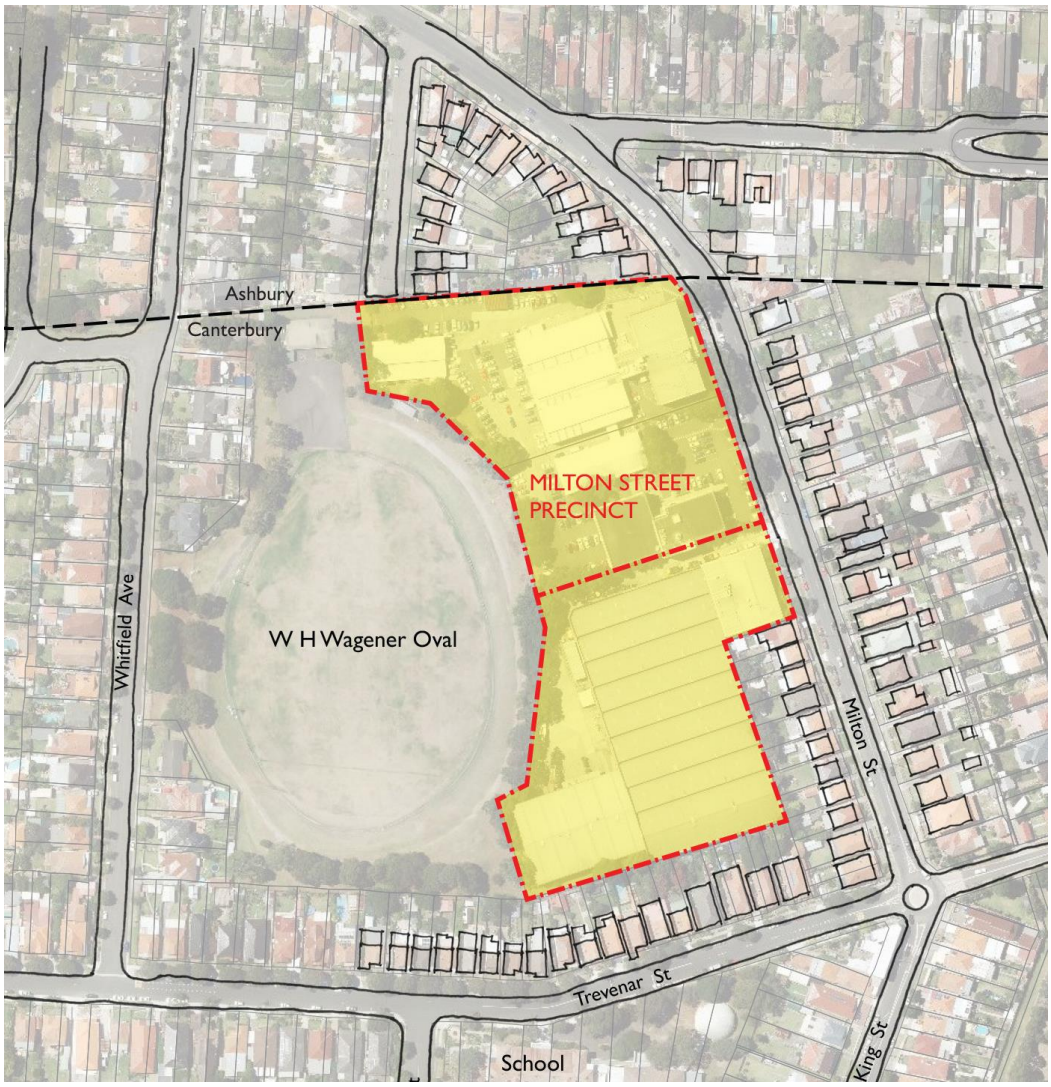
Urban Design Assessment Report



Planning Proposals for Milton Street Precinct

No. 149-163 and 165-171 Milton Street, Ashbury

Date: 27 November 2017

Issue	Date	Status	Prepared by	Reviewed by
A	14 / 09 / 2016	Final	KW	GM
B	27 / 11 / 2017	Final – Revised	WW	GM

Contents

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1. Introduction

The Milton Street Precinct is located to the north of Ashbury bordered by Inner West Council (formerly Ashfield Council) to the north. It is bounded by WH Wagener Oval to the west, Milton Street to the east and lower scale residential dwellings, predominantly single-dwellings, to the north and south.

The Milton Street Precinct comprises two large industrial properties known as No. 149-163 and No. 165-171 Milton Street that are legally identified as Lot A, B and C, DP 30778 as shown in Figure 1.

GM Urban Design and Architecture (GMU) have been engaged by Canterbury-Bankstown City Council in August 2016 to undertake a revised urban design assessment for the two updated Planning Proposal Requests submitted in April 2016, for the two industrial properties within the Milton Street Precinct.

This report will assess the appropriateness of the two current proposals holistically as part of the 'Milton Street Precinct' (the precinct) with considerations of a succession of discussions with the new amalgamated Council.

In this report, GMU will refer to the two above properties within the precinct as the subject sites and No. 149-163 Milton St as the "northern site", No.165-171 Milton St as the "southern site".

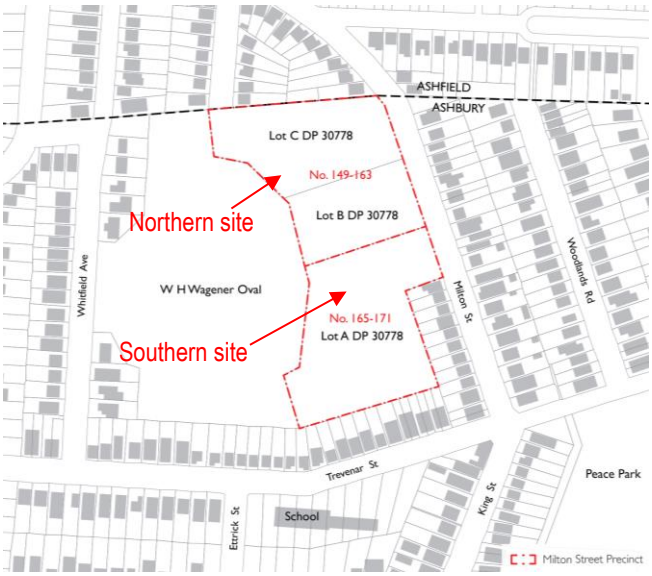


Figure 1- Locality Plan

For Council's internal discussion, GMU has previously provided several urban design assessments for the original Planning Proposals and amended plans for the northern and southern sites.

For ease of referencing, GMU will refer to the updated Planning Proposal documentation for the subject sites submitted in April 2016 as the "current proposals". The previous proposals submitted in 2014, inclusive of the amended plans provided in 2015 will be referred as the "original proposals".

This report provides a discussion of the desired character and context of the Milton St Precinct and the subject sites and whether the planning proposals respond to the context, current planning controls and policies, as well as whether the current proposals have addressed previous issues and recommendations raised during the assessment of the original proposals.

The report also discusses the planning proposals with respect to SEPP 65 and the Apartment Design Guide (ADG) and provides recommendations on the scale and built form configuration that GMU considers to be appropriate for the Milton St Precinct.

1.1 Methodology

In arriving at the opinions and recommendations included in this report, GMU has conducted a desktop review of the available documentation and the applicable controls. GMU has also conducted a strategic analysis of the location of the Precinct and its proximity to nearby centres and facilities to understand the potential for an increase in height and/or density for the Precinct.

GMU have also undertaken a local context analysis and site visit including consideration of the built form pattern in the area and the existing streetscape. In arriving at the conclusions of this report, GMU has accounted for the potential change of zoning from the existing warehouse and office uses and the potential regeneration of the existing poor boundary and street interfaces, which can be a positive outcome for the community and the character of Milton Street.

1.2 Documents Reviewed

In preparing this report, GMU has reviewed the following documents describing the immediate surroundings and current and original proposals for the northern and southern sites include:

Documents reviewed describing the current proposal and site conditions for the **northern site**:

- 165-171 Milton Street, Ashbury, Updated Planning Proposal Request by Mecone dated April 2016
- Appendix 2: Urban Design & Architectural Report by SJB Architects dated April 15th 2016
- Appendix 3: Report on the Traffic Aspects of Planning Proposal for 165 Milton Street by Colston Budd Rogers & Kafes dated April 2016
- Appendix 4: Geotechnical Investigation Report by Environmental Investigations dated February 18th 2016
- Appendix 5: Stormwater Information by Wood & Grieve Engineers dated Dec. 18th 2015

Documents reviewed describing the current proposal for the **southern site** include:

- Planning Proposal Request prepared by Urbis for Ashbury FMBM Pty Ltd, April 2016
- Appendix A: Site Survey by Dunlop Thorpe & Co., January 2015
- Appendix B: Employment Study by Urbis, April 2015
- Appendix C: Urban Design Report by SITE IMAGE and CMT Architects Australia, April 2016
- Appendix D: Concept Plan and Section drawings by CMT Architects Australia Pty Ltd, April 2016
- Appendix E: Traffic Impact Assessment by Traffix, April 2016
- Appendix F: Heritage Impact Statement prepared by Urbis, April 2016
- Appendix G: Phase 2 Detailed Site Investigation by Environmental Investigations Australia, Feb 2016
- Appendix H: Geotechnical Investigation Report by Environmental Investigations Australia, Feb 2016
- Appendix I: Geotechnical Investigation Report by IGS, Feb 2016

Documents provided by Council and its independent advisor include:

- Traffic Engineering Review Residential Planning Proposal Milton St, Ashbury NSW by McLaren Traffic Engineering, December 2015
- Milton St Sites Stormwater by The new City of Canterbury-Bankstown, printed on 25 August 2016
- Contour Map by City of Canterbury, printed on 23 April 2015

GMU has also reviewed the following controls and policy documents relevant to the development proposal:

- Canterbury Council Development Control Plan, 2012, (DCP)
- Canterbury Council Local Environment Control Plan, 2012, (LEP)
- State Environmental Planning Policy No 65— Design Quality of Residential Apartment Development in conjunction with the Apartment Design Guide
- State Environmental Planning Policy No 32—Urban Consolidation (Redevelopment of Urban Land)
- Towards 2032-City of Canterbury Economic Development & Employment Strategy, Final Report, September 2009 SGS Economics & Planning
- Canterbury Residential Strategy, October 2013, by GLN planning
- Metropolitan strategy – A Plan for Growing Sydney, December 2014, NSW Government

1.3 Executive summary

The purpose of this report is to provide an urban design review of the planning proposals considering an appropriate built form outcome for the Milton St Precinct, formed by two properties located at No.149-163 Milton St (northern site) and 165-171 Milton Street, Ashbury (southern site). GMU has previously reviewed and provided urban design input and recommendations during May-September 2015 for the original proposals submitted.

Since then, Council advised the applicants to amend the original proposals to adopt GMU's recommendations and incorporate into the concept masterplans a number of urban design and built form parameters as follows:

- General reduction in bulk, height and density
- Maintaining built form under the line of sight viewed from across Milton Street and Trevenar St, to minimise the visual impact from the public domain
- Greater building separation distances amongst proposed buildings, meeting ADG requirements
- More sensitive edge interfaces by providing greater setbacks from site boundaries, maintaining the built form perceived height to be no more than 3 storeys from the adjoining low scale dwellings and provision of landscaped edges
- Permeability into the site and provide access to the Oval
- View corridors from Milton Street to the Oval
- A variety of communal open spaces with solar access

Following a collaborative design process, the current proposal has incorporated the main design principles created for the site, such as overall scale, placement of built form and heights, general setbacks, access and circulation pattern, connectivity, building separations, the location of communal open space and general landscape elements. GMU considers the proposed residential use to be more compatible with the existing context than the existing industrial use, which can be considered as an urban renewal opportunity for the locality. Therefore, GMU considers that the built form of the current planning proposal is an improvement over the original proposal.

Post GMU's review of the proposed schemes' performance against the objectives of relevant controls and discussion with new Council staff between August- September 2016 (post council amalgamation), it is concluded that the following issues need to be addressed.

As part of any future planning proposal for the precinct/ both sites, there should be:

- A more sensitive transition to the context and responsive built form across the 'Milton Street Precinct'.
- Reduced FSR of no more than 1.11:1 using a 75% efficiency rate. (Refer to Section 3.3-Density)
- 2-storey fine-grained building typology (townhouse, semis) with single storey interface along the Milton St frontage.
- No higher than 3-storey buildings from existing ground line with fine-grained façade articulation (contemporary apartments with expressed party walls) and recessed top storey (away from line of sight viewed from the middle of adjoining dwelling backyards) to northern and southern boundaries of the precinct/ residential interfaces.
- Adjusted proposed ground levels to reflect existing ground levels or berm level to minimise excavation. These levels should be confirmed with Council, as it will impact upon groundwater level, overland flow paths and exposure of pre-existing contaminants.
- Good amenity to ground level apartments. Subterranean units should be avoided.
- Breaks (min. of 6m wide and 2m deep) and articulation to buildings with more than 60m building lengths.
- No buildings protruding above the line of sight viewing from Milton and Trevenar Streets. (Refer to Section 3.3 for details)
- An internal loop road on each site (as per Council's traffic advice from McLaren Traffic Engineering), stemming off the proposed shared access entry road along the common boundary. Location and road configuration to be confirmed with Council and provide waste management details to demonstrate that the proposal schemes can satisfy the Council's waste management controls.
- A skilfully design internal loop that is integrated as a share zone not interrupting pedestrian movement and activity in the communal open spaces. Recommend to be operated as a one-way road system, subject to manoeuvrings of emergency vehicles, connecting a series of basement car park entries encapsulated with the proposed built form.

- Deep soil zone along the western boundary/ the edge facing the oval with a minimum of 6m to allow the growth of mature trees. Retain as many existing trees in this area and on the oval berm as possible to provide privacy screening and softening of this edge.
- Further detail provided on typical floorplan layout, extent of basement carpark and entries, apartment mix and car space schedules, sectional diagrams across the sites, view analyses, waste management, stormwater and traffic engineering solutions.
- Detail Shadow Diagrams provided to understand the level of overshadowing impact of the development on surrounding dwellings and oval, in comparison to existing conditions.
- Further design development to focus on architectural language and expression, introduction of quality materials and roof forms to achieve design excellence and a sympathetic response to the existing surrounding character.

For the Northern site, there should be:

- A maximum height of no more than RL+57.0 with the exception of plant level (non-habitable) above recessed away from line of sight viewing from Milton and Trevenar Streets and a perceived height of 6 storeys. (Refer to Section B below)
- Simpler, rectilinear shapes to the proposed Block 4 and 5 in place of the curvilinear shapes.
- Greater separation distance (at least 18m) between buildings adjacent to the 2 communal courtyards, allow two view corridors from the site to the oval and provide a meaningful recreational space for the development. (Refer to Section 3.3)
- Detailed overshadow and solar access diagrams provided to confirm that the built form and communal open space meet the ADG requirements. Further articulation for the currently proposed built form will be required.
- Illustrated landscape and basement plans confirming the extent of deep soil zone. GMU suggests providing adequate deep soil to the northern setback zone, the Milton Street front setback and western setback to the oval to allow for significant tree planting, buffering and to enhance the character. Opportunities to provide deep soil to the proposed communal courtyard should be maximised.

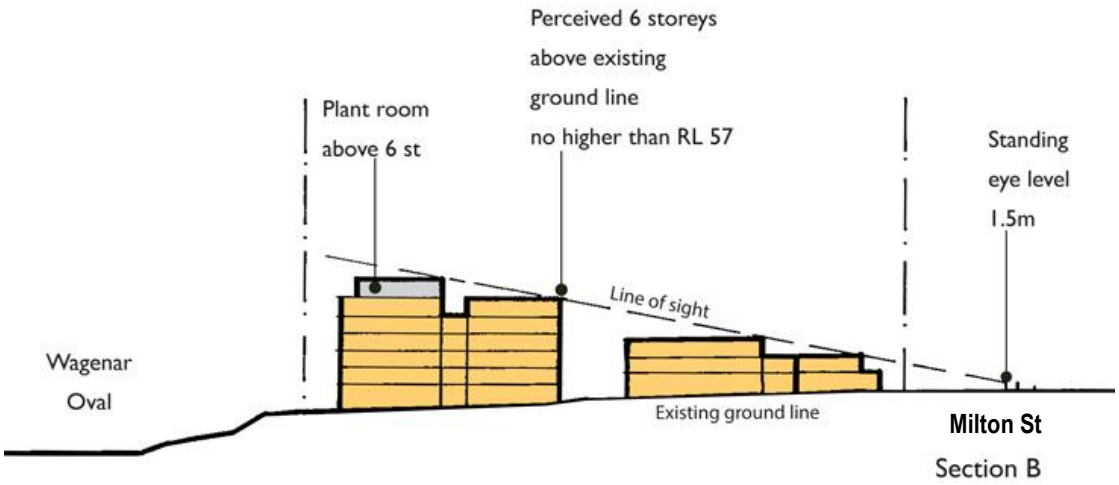


Figure 2- Section B-Section across from Milton St to the Oval near entry access road (Northern Site)

For the Southern site, there should be:

- A maximum height of no more than RL+56.5 with the exception of plant level (non-habitable) above recessed away from line of sight viewing from Milton and Trevenar Streets and a perceived height of storeys. (Refer to Section B below)
- A reduced built form for Building E. Instead of a 6-storey building, a 4-storey built form with breaks and perceived height of 2-2.5 storeys, viewed from the middle of neighbouring backyards is considered to be more appropriate. Top level this building should be recessed away from this line of sight. (Refer to Section 3.3- Built Form for details).
- A increased setback of 12m to the eastern façade of Building D

2. Context

2.1 Broader Context

Ashbury is located approximately 11.6 km south-west from the Sydney CBD and 3.6 km south-east from the strategic centre of Burwood (by car). The nearest local centres connected to the railway network are Ashfield and Canterbury Stations and the nearest local centre is Croydon Park (1km to the west).

Figure 3- The Milton St Precinct in its regional context (Source: Google Maps)

Ashbury is a residential suburb within the Canterbury-Bankstown Council LGA. It relies on one of the 7 local centres on its periphery to meet its retail, community and commercial needs. The suburb of Ashbury is a heritage listed conservation area and therefore it is constrained to an area for future higher density development.

This approach is similar to other LGAs where entire suburbs have been zoned as Conservation Areas in which large pockets of built form from last century remain largely intact. Some examples include Haberfield, Daceyville and Balmain.
Like Balmain, Ashbury also has remaining fragmented pockets of large lot industrial lands, some of which have transitioned into other uses and some of which are still functioning. With changing demographics and patterns of work, these large lot, industrial lands are envisioned to cease operation in the near future.

The Milton St Precinct is a large industrial zone within Ashbury that has been recommended by the 'Towards 2032 Strategy' as industrial lands suitable to be rezone as residential land.

2.2 The subject sites and the local context

Ashbury is a small suburb within City of Canterbury-Bankstown of approximately 3,114 residents and shares a northern border with Ashfield LGA. It is 98 hectares and has a population density of 31.84 persons per hectare. Records show that the first land grants for Ashbury were in 1793; however, it is predominately an intact residential area of small, single lot housing dating from the interwar period.

The suburb also has industrial lands on large amalgamated lots such as the subject northern and southern sites which have become or are in the process of becoming redundant due to the changing nature of manufacturing and the relocation of industry to cheaper land on the fringes of metropolitan Sydney. Another notable example is the former brick-pit site which has since been transformed into a public park, named Peace Park located near the site towards the south – east.

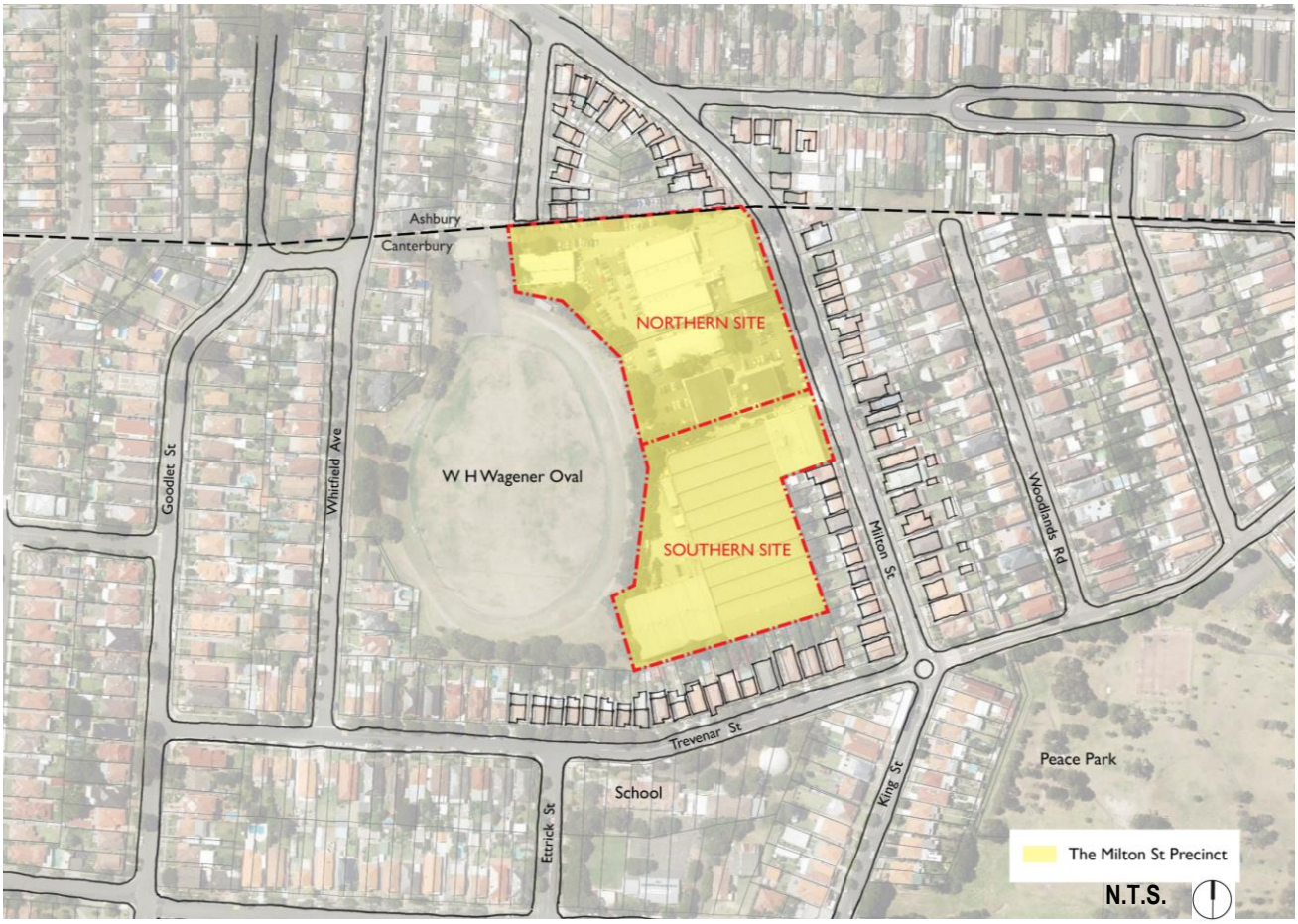


Figure 4-The subject sites and the Milton St Precinct within local context of Ashbury (Source: Google Maps)

Together the northern and southern sites form the Milton St Precinct, situated in the mid portion of Ashbury. The Precinct is surrounded by small-scale residential dwellings. These 1-2 storey, interwar, small lot housing dwellings border the Precinct's northern and southern boundaries and part of its eastern boundary along Milton St. The W.H. Wagener Oval is directly adjacent the Precinct to the west.

The northern site is approximately 1.63 ha while the southern site is approximately 1.4 ha. The subject sites are currently occupied by commercial and warehouse uses called Chubb Security to the north and Tyres 4 U to the south.

Connectivity and Transport

Both subject sites are accessed directly off Milton Street to the east, a busy local connector road which provides a north-south cross suburb link between the arterial roads- Georges River Road and Canterbury Road.

Milton Street is a 13 m wide double lane carriageway with continuous on-street car parking along a good portion of the road, which will probably decrease once the factory operations cease. The street width is consistent with the surrounding streets which have an average street reserve of 20m.

The connection to other centres is directly off Milton Street to Canterbury, Croydon Park and Ashfield. There are two bus services near the subject sites- bus 413 which runs between Campsie Station and the City and bus number 491 which runs between Hurstville and Five Dock.

The nearest train stations to Ashbury are Ashfield Station, a 1.5 km or 25min walk and Canterbury Station, a 1.8 km walk. There is no direct bus route to the Dulwich Hill Light Rail stop although it is possible to catch a bus and walk to the stop.

Pedestrian connectivity exists only along public streets. Milton Street's streetscape lacks any substantial landscape and suffers from high noise levels due to through traffic. This lack of amenity tends to discourage pedestrian movement. There is no direct link from the street through the Milton St Precincts to the W H Wagener Oval. Any redevelopment of the subject sites provides an opportunity for a connection as one of the main improvements for the local community.

Urban Form and Streetscape

The subject sites have seven factory buildings which are visible from Yabsley Ave, Milton and Trevenar Streets and from Whitfield Avenue on the other side of the oval. The scale of these buildings is not in character and detracts from the conservation values of the locality.
The lot width of the surrounding residential lots adjacent and opposite to the Precinct on Milton and Trevenar Streets is approximately 10m with lot areas of 300sqm. Very few lots have been further subdivided and the housing stock remains largely intact from the original interwar subdivision featuring single storey double gabled Californian bungalows with solid brick enclosed porches and front bay windows.

The urban form of the industrial buildings in comparison to the existing 1-2 storey surrounding houses is monolithic. The existing factory buildings on the southern site are setback 13m from the Milton Street edge and 5m behind the building line of the adjacent residential lots. The southern site Milton Street's frontage has little mature trees to provide screening and contribute to the landscape character of the street. The existing industrial buildings also with their blank walls and on-grade car-parking, present very poor interfaces to the surrounding houses. However, the visual privacy of the majority of the dwelling backyards is not affected due to the current commercial use of the site. Any rezoning of the industrial land to a residential use needs to take this relationship and potential impact into consideration.

Northern Site

Figure 5- Milton St viewing towards King St opposite northern site

Figure 6- View from Milton St along common boundary

Figure 7- *Panoramic Street view of the northern site's interface with existing residential (on the right) along Milton St*

Figure 8- *Milton St view showing existing warehouse buildings on northern site*

Southern Site

Figure 9- Milton St towards King St opposite the southern site

Figure 10- Milton St southern site adjacent existing houses

Figure 11- Milton St panoramic street views southern site interface with existing residential houses

Eastern and Southern interfaces – Milton Street and Trevenar Street

The urban form along Milton and Trevenar Street consists of residential houses which are a mix of single-storey, weatherboard and double brick dwellings in a Californian Bungalow style. There are also some instances of later, unsympathetic, two storey development which stand in contrast to the rest of the streetscape. The architectural styles along the street are very regular with repeating elements of verandahs and pitched roofs indicating an established rhythm in the streetscape.

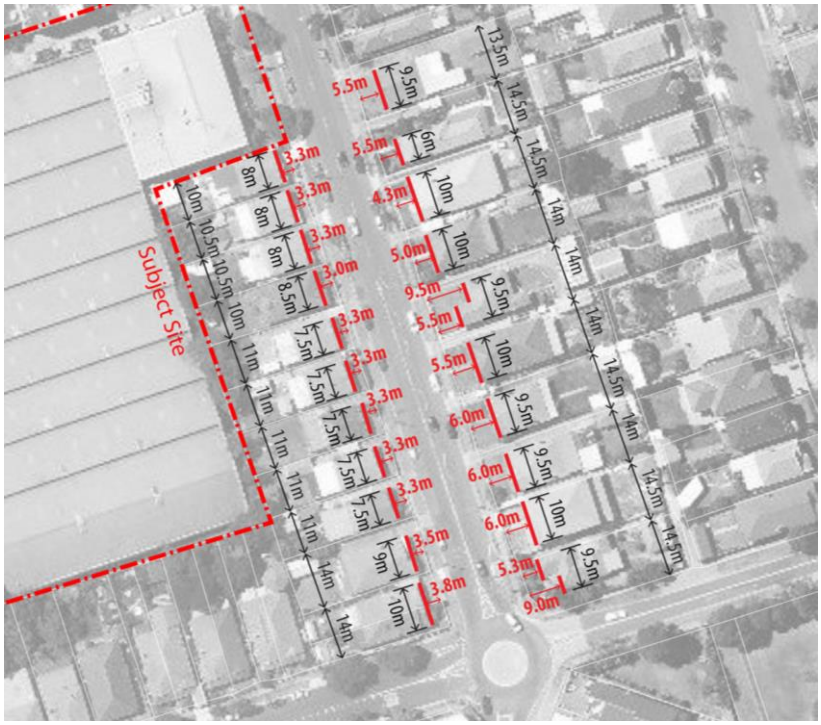


Figure 12- Strong and repetitive grain to the Milton St streetscape

The general amenity of the street is poor, reflective of the current acoustic environment of Milton Street both from the through traffic and the constant truck traffic from the factories. Street trees are sparse and are of a low height variety, constrained by having low overhead wires on this side of the street. The amenity of the street would be greatly improved by some landscape treatments and consistent street tree planting on this side of the carriageway. Gentrification and the repair and /or reinstatement of the interwar federation housing typology is evident on King Street, (the continuation of Milton Street after the roundabout to the south of the site) and in the surrounding streets so this building style typology is likely to be reinforced.

Figure 13- Corner of Milton St and Trevenar St

Figure 14- Milton Street opposite southern site

The industrial building on the southern site abuts the rear boundary of 14 residences and the factory building can be clearly seen beyond the houses from the street. There are no windows along the southern wall of the industrial building providing privacy and fire protection from the industrial facility. Its visual impact detracts from the ambience of the street.

Trevenar Street is a pleasant street with consistent plantings of mature street trees in scale with the street width and single storey housing typology. The dwellings are in good repair and provide an attractive address to the street with landscaped gardens featuring shrub and tree plantings. On the southern side of Trevenar Street is the site of Ashbury Public school, a k-6 public primary school.

Figure 15- View from Trevenar St with existing warehouse visible behind low scale dwellings (Left)

Figure 16- Trevenar Street leafy streetscape (Right)

Topography

The Ashbury suburb is characterised by a changing topography and sloping sites. The ridge runs along Milton Street with a rapid fall towards the western boundary of the site (along the oval) of approximately 7m. The grade is one of the main constraints for the connectivity across the Precinct and the block connecting to the oval.
The topography map is shown to the right with darker colour showing the higher ground and lighter colour around the oval showing the lowest levels in the area.

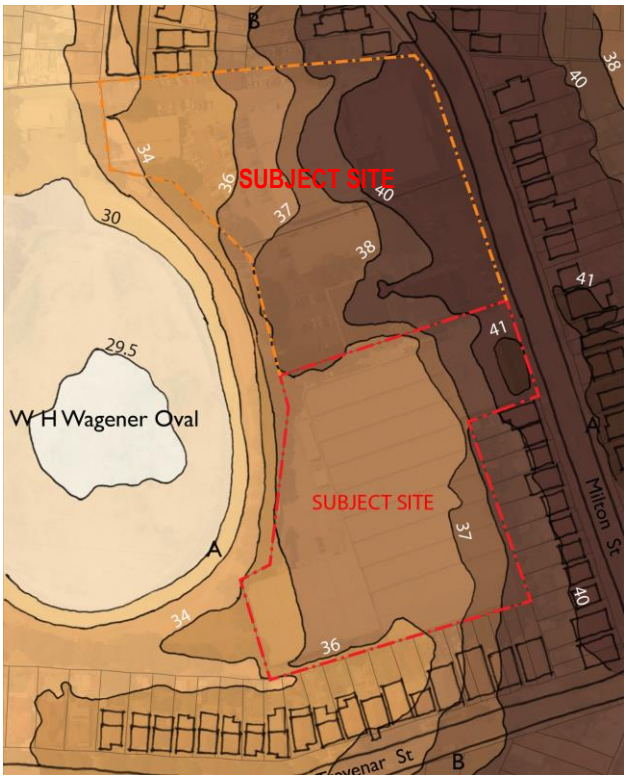


Figure 17-Topographic map of the Milton St Precinct (Source: Canterbury Council)

Open Space

The site's longest boundary is directly next to the WH Wagener Oval. The centre of the oval is the lowest point in the immediate context at RL 29.50 and is surrounded by earth berms. The oval is currently fenced off from the community with limited access, although the gates are open during the day. Formerly the home ground of the Western Suburbs AFL Football Club, the Oval is currently used by school children from a number of surrounding schools and the AFL Junior League as their major training ground.

There is an existing informal footpath around the oval outside of the fence that doesn't include any facilities or lighting associated with the footpath.

The oval is surrounded by a row of mature trees that currently screen the existing development on the industrial sites. It would be fundamental for the future development on the site to enhance the oval and maintain most of the existing trees and the level of the berm, as well as improving the quality of landscape and public domain associated with the oval.

Another park is also located on the opposite side of the oval along Whitfield Avenue with a small playground, fenced off from the street and the oval, with limited access that doesn't contribute to the sense of safety in the local area.

Figure 18- Wagener Oval panoramic view across to the precinct in front of the children's play area on Whitfield Ave

Figure 19- Existing dwellings on the edge of Wagener Oval.

Figure 20- Informal walking trail with children's playground beyond

There are other parks in the context of the site. Peace Park is located nearby on Trevenar Street to the south-east. This park includes a large sloping grass area and shading with seats. There are district views available from this park.

Heritage relationship

The suburb of Ashbury is classified as a heritage conservation area (HCA) within the Canterbury LEP. The suburb is constrained for future development by the heritage controls. This delivers a community expectation of little future development and maintenance of the character of the suburb. It is important that any future development respects the context and existing character of the immediate surrounds and the greater visual catchment of the Canterbury LGA. Chapter 6.5A of the Canterbury DCP is solely concerned with the heritage controls for the suburb. The current controls state a maximum of two storeys with a maximum height of 8.5m and the front setback to be aligned with the established building line.

The Precinct is not within the HCA however the southern site has common boundaries with the HCA and these boundaries require sensitive response to this heritage transition. The Precinct is also surrounded by single storey original Californian Bungalows and therefore the proposed apartment blocks compared to the existing industrial facility would become a more sympathetic use within the historical context that would further mitigate the existing impacts of the industrial building forms by the added setbacks and articulated forms.

The highest point in the neighbourhood is a State Heritage item (water tower) called Ashfield Reservoir. It is located on the eastern side of the local park (Peace Park). The ground RL at this point is approximately RL50 and the height of the tower is equivalent to approximately 4-5 storeys (estimated only). The tower is visible from the distance, although it is not visible from the Precinct due to the change of topography and significant slope of the site.

2.3 Section Conclusion

The existing industrial buildings on the site are out of character with and detract from the area. With the road network connections and proximity to sporting fields, local parks and schools, redevelopment of the site to residential use is, therefore, a positive option if it is sensitive to the scale, heritage character of the area and the established streetscape rhythm.

The subject sites within the Milton St Precinct, are constrained by topography and the surrounding established context of the R2 zoned, low scale traditional dwellings. However, there is an opportunity to accommodate some additional height within the slope that will reduce any visual impact on the surrounding streets. Street view analysis and sectional relationships should be provided and assessed for any future developments to ensure that the bulk and scale are mitigated when viewing from adjacent streets.

WH Wagener Oval will provide high amenity for the future residents of these current proposed developments. Due to the change in topography from surrounding streets to the oval, additional height along the interface with the oval is favourable. However, to minimise visual impacts from across the oval, the dense mature native planting along the western boundary of the site should be maintained. Additional planting is encouraged to soften this edge and provide screening to the higher building scale, as well as acting as a privacy buffer to the ground units' private open spaces.

The Precinct currently does not reinforce or extend pedestrian permeability across the oval or between streets. The change to a residential zone would be a positive outcome for the area, subject to the proposals providing appropriate built form and scale that is responsive to the historical context and relationship to the existing back yards and the oval.

The sites are situated away from centres and shopping areas, with limited public transport servicing the locality. During the original assessment, it was discussed that a major increase in density might be difficult to support. The applicants should demonstrate how the current transport capacity can cater for the increased density in the next stage, as well as providing traffic solutions for increased traffic generation.

3. Current Proposals

This report provides a holistic urban design assessment and recommendations for the two current proposed schemes within the Milton St Precinct. The details of these current schemes are as follows:

1) The Planning Proposal scheme submitted by Ashbury FMBM Pty Ltd. Is for No. 149-163 Milton St, Ashbury. The planning document was prepared by Urbis dated April 2016 and supported by an Urban Design Study prepared by CMT Architects, dated 22 April 2016. (This will be referred to as the *'current northern scheme'*)

2) The other proposed Planning Proposal scheme was submitted by Coronation Property Co. for No. 165-171 Milton St, Ashbury. The planning document was prepared by Mecone dated April 2016 and supported by an Urban Design Study prepared by SJB Architects dated 15 April 2016. (This will be referred to as the '*current southern scheme'*)

There were previous planning proposal requests submitted for these subject sites which Council and GMU have previously provided comments and recommendations on the desired design principles and character for the Milton St Precinct. The amended schemes within the current proposals should reflect and incorporate these recommendations previously provided.

Post Council amalgamation and a succession of discussions with the new Council staff between August- September 2016 regarding the future desired outcomes for the Milton St Precinct, it was agreed that GMU will base this assessment on the principles provided in our previous Urban Design Assessment Reports. However, due to the contour, groundwater and traffic engineering information recently received from Council in August 2016, some of the recommendations such as scale, height and access have been adjusted to suit these newly identified site conditions.

3.1 Principles for Milton St Precinct

Original principles provided by GMU to the applicants for any developments within Milton St Precinct include:

- Sensitive transition to the residential interface and preservation of the conservation area character, providing a reasonable buffering, scale and articulation of forms when viewed from the oval
- Lower scale to the street frontages
- Similar scale to the surrounding housing to precinct edges and a typology that sits comfortably with the existing domestic forms
- Reasonable setbacks that allow a strong landscape buffer
- Higher amenity and upgrades to the sites suitable for residential use
- Oval edge treated as a frontage
- Retaining as many existing trees as possible
- Proposed Ground levels to be similar to existing berm to ensure ground floor apartment amenity and maximise passive surveillance
- Appropriate maximum scale set by ensuring a minimal visual awareness of the tallest development from the surrounding streetscapes

3.2 Review of the Current Proposals

Use

Both planning proposals seek to change the land use from Light Industrial IN2 to High Density Residential R4. The land use zone surrounding the subject sites is Low Density Residential R2. In general, the change from industrial lands to residential lands is a typical change seen in the residential suburbs such as Ashbury. R4 zone with residential flat buildings is supported in order to provide a different housing choice for the local community. However, this is a significant change to the density and a portion of the site needs medium density forms to achieve appropriate transition. This can be instigated via built form controls however within the overall R4 zoning.

Built form

In general, the original northern and southern schemes proposed overall heights (4-9 storeys for the northern site and 4-12 storeys for the southern site) which were much greater than the established surrounding residential neighbourhood without an appropriate response to the existing fabric.

Northern Site

The current northern scheme by the applicant proposes 6 buildings comprising residential and potential minor commercial uses varying in height from 2 to 10 storeys. The lower height buildings (2-3 storeys) are located near the eastern boundary along Milton Street and the northern boundary to the existing low scale detached dwellings. Two taller buildings (5-7 storeys and 7-10 storeys) are located along the western boundary of the site, facing Wagener Oval. A 4-5 storey building is proposed at the middle section of the site. It is noted that the Urban Design Report indicated the proposed built form to Milton Street is 12m in height. This translates to 4 storeys and is inconsistent to the Planning Proposal Report which suggests that the building envelopes fronting Milton Street are 2-3 storeys.

Figure 21- Northern Site Concept masterplan prepared by CMT architects (Source: Urban Design Report- No.149-163 Milton St Ashbury by CMT Architects)

The current scheme does not demonstrate a consideration of the existing 5m wide predominant street frontage width along Milton Street, which is important for the existing/future heritage conservation area streetscape. Similarly, the proposed low scale built forms to the northern boundary should respond to the local fine-grain street rhythm as the elevation is highly visible from the public domain of Milton Street.

The 4-storey built form at the north western corner of the site provides 9m setback to the northern boundary. Whilst the separation distances should meet the ADG requirements, the built form should also sympathetically transition down to the 1 -2 storey heritage conservation area. The elevation of the proposed development facing the Wagener Oval is comprised by 3 buildings ranging from 4 to 10 storeys. Taller buildings should transition to the lower ones to provide a coherent profile to the

oval. This elevation should be considered together with the southern site to better define the edge to the oval and the proposed central boulevard linking Milton Street to the oval.

Excavation is proposed to all proposed buildings with some excavation levels ranging from 1 to more than 3m deep. It is unclear where the proposed basement carpark mentioned in the 'Planning Proposal Request' document is located and its extent. GMU recommends that excavation should not be more than 1m to ensure good amenity to all apartments and discourage any subterranean units. The proposed storeys created by excessive excavation and potential exposed carpark levels are not supported. Due to this, it is also unclear as to whether or not the GFA provided includes these carparking levels.

The proposed Block 4 and 5's are illustrated as curvilinear forms. For this Planning Proposal request stage, only building envelopes are required and does not need to be too specific. GMU recommends illustrating them as simple, rectilinear shapes. The built forms will be refined in later DCP and DA stages.

Southern Site

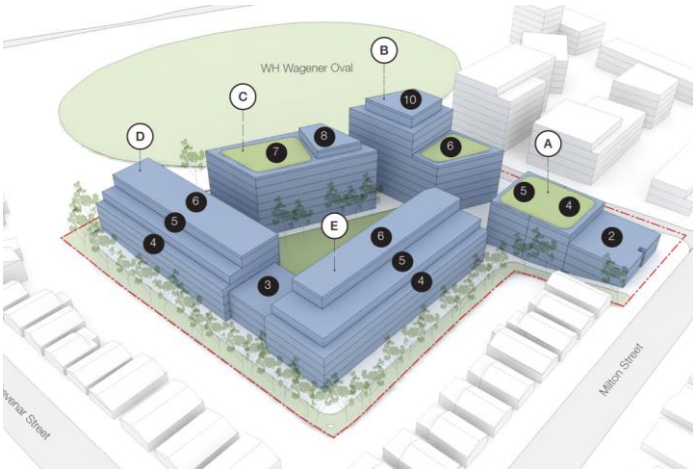


Figure 22-'Built Form massing'

(Source: Urban Design Study by SJB Architects)

The current southern scheme comprises 5 residential flat buildings varying in height from 2 to 10 storeys. Two medium height buildings, of 4-storeys high with their 5th and 6th storeys recessed, are located adjacent to the backyards of existing single storey residential dwellings along Milton Street and Trevenar Street to the east and south. The proposed 10 storey (height marker) building is located in the north-west portion of the site, adjacent to WH Wagenar Oval and the adjoining northern site. The 5 proposed buildings are arranged around a central courtyard or communal open space.

Comments

As per the Principles for Milton St discussed in Section 3.2 and discussions with Council, post the amalgamation, regarding the current schemes' scale and visible compatibility with the surrounding context, GMU prepared the following 'Recommended Concept Masterplan' to guide the applicants in arriving an appropriate built form for the two sites. The heights and access network recommended in this recommended concept masterplan have been amended based on sectional studies (Sections A-E) and newly received technical advice from Council's independent consultants. The sectional studies provide an analysis of the proposed building heights to understand at what heights the proposed developments protrude above the lines of sight, when viewed from Milton and Trevenar Streets. They also investigate the bulk and scale relationship between the appropriate built forms and the adjoining dwellings' backyards, to achieve a sensitive interface.

Figure 23- GMU Recommended Concept Masterplan (Sept 2016)

GMU recommends the proposed schemes to amend the proposed built form as follows.

Milton St frontage

Milton St consists of predominantly single-storey dwellings. The proposed 2-3 storey and 2-5 storey built form proposed by both schemes is not supported, as it defers from the existing street scale and character of Milton St.

GMU considers a 2-storey building typology, with a single storey architectural feature (i.e. portico, porch or verandah) fronting Milton St, to be a more sympathetic built form.

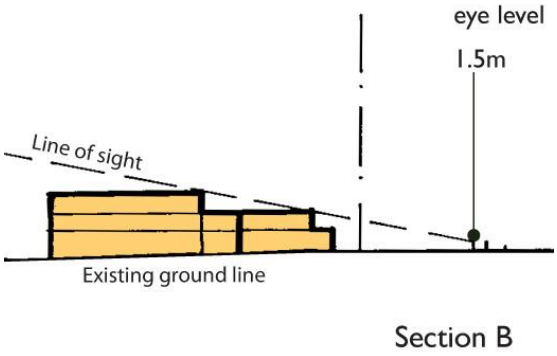


Figure 24- Milton St Frontage- no more than 2 storeys with single storey presentation

Interfaces with R2 residential zone

The proposed built forms in both schemes over 4-storeys high are not supported as responsive interface to these existing 1-2 storey domestic dwellings. GMU recommends that sectional diagrams and view analysis be provided in the next stage in order to demonstrate the relationship between the further amended built forms, varying topographic conditions and the surrounding dwellings. In general, no more than 2 storeys of the development should be perceived from the middle of the dwellings' backyards.

GMU has undertaken a series of sectional studies below providing the appropriate built form for the Milton St Precinct.

Section A is through the northern boundary of the northern site and the existing dwellings along Yabsley Avenue. It is recommended to have a built form of no more than 3 storeys and should only be perceived as 2 storeys from adjoining dwellings. The 3rd storey should be recessed away from line of sight.

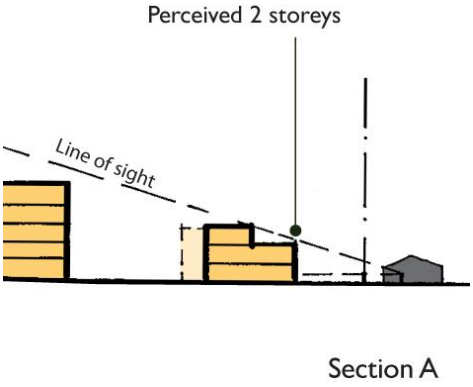


Figure 25- Residential Interface adjacent to Yabsley Ave dwellings to be 3-storey building with a perceived height of 2 storeys and recessed top level away from line of sight

Section C is from east to west through Milton St and across the southern site. Due to the existing 4m level change from Milton St to the middle of the southern site, there is opportunity for an additional level from the existing ground line RL 36.5. The recommended built form for the eastern boundary of the southern site, at the rear of the dwellings along Milton St should be no more than 4 storeys with a perceived height of 2 storeys and the top level to be recessed away from line of sight.

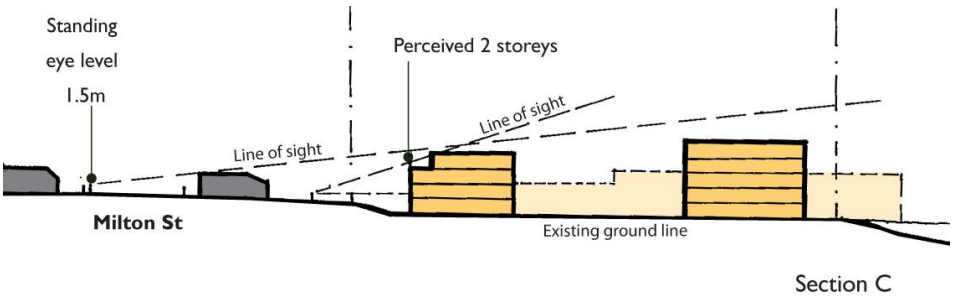


Figure 26- Section from Milton St through the site to the Oval- Buildings to be kept under the line of sight from across Milton St

Section D is (south-west corner of the southern site and across Trevenar St) through the lowest point of the precinct. As the southern site sits slightly higher than the dwellings along Trevenar St, its built form will have more significant visual and privacy impacts onto the adjoining dwellings.

GMU recommends similar built form as Section A (peceived 2 storey building with the 3rd storey recessed away from sight) to respond to this edge condition.

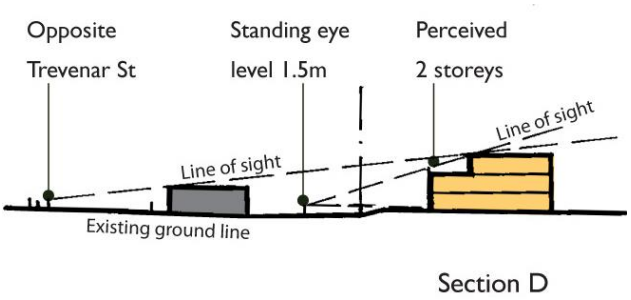


Figure 27 - Residential interface at the SW corner of southern site (lowest point of the precinct)

Section E is through Trevenar St and the south-eastern corner of the southern site.

For this eastern end of the southern boundary, a 4-storey built form with 2-2.5 storey perceived height is acceptable.

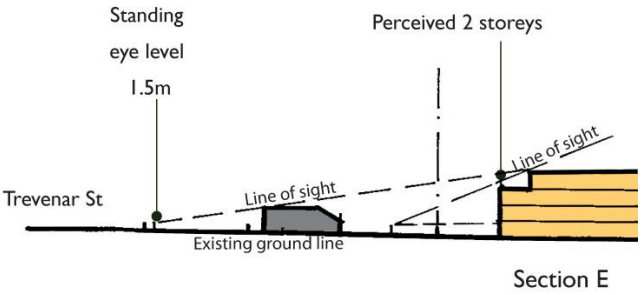


Figure 28 - Residential Interface at the rear of Trevenar St dwellings

Maximum Height

Based on the sections provided by the applicants, the proposed height markers are approximately 30m (northern site – RL65.0) and 33m (southern site – RL 66.0) from the proposed ground level (at respectively RL 35.0 and RL 33.0). With Milton Street level at RL 40.5, 4m higher than the centre of the existing site (RL 36.5), the perceived height of these height markers viewed from across Milton St are approximately 26-29m or 8-9 storeys. When assessing the maximum height from a strategic level, these heights are equivalent to the allowable heights of the nearest centres (e.g. Ashfield, Canterbury and Marrickville). However, the precinct is isolated within an R2 Low Density Residential & adjoining the Heritage Conservation area and not strategically identified as a centre nor small village; Council considers this height (8-9 storeys) to be excessive for this low density suburban context.

Council considers that proposed 7-10 storeys buildings from both schemes create visual bulk impact to the neighbouring streets and presents a towering volume over the oval. This scale also presents a poor frontage to the oval.

Furthermore, both schemes are proposing exacavations of up to 3m to achieve an additional subterrean storey. The proposed ground level of the southern site (where the central communal open space is located) is at RL33.00, 3.5m under the existing RL36.5 level. Ground level of Block 1 (northern site) is located at RL 33, 2-3m below the existing ground line. This extent of excavation is not supported, especially if groundwater is present at 2-4m below existing ground line based on Council's geotechnical advice. Previously provided recommendations suggest that the proposed ground level to be at the existing ground level or the oval berm level whichever is higher. Based on Contours and Stormwater map (Figure 31) provided by below Council in August 2016, it is evident that the existing ground of the northern site ranges from RL 34.0-40.5 and the southern site ranges from RL34.5-41.0, with the majority of the lot at RL36.0-37.0. This extent of excavation is equivalent to one storey which should be reduced from the proposed height, unless Council is satisfied with the applicants' solutions to mitigate the groundwater, overland flow and contamination issues which has yet been demonstrated. Applicants should provide detail surveys confirming these levels and discuss the proposed ground levels to Council for any future Planning Proposal and site specific DCP for the Milton St Precinct.

Figure 29 - Milton St sites stormwater map -printed on 25/08/2016 by the new City of Canterbury-Bankstown Council

GMU has undertaken a high-level sectional study to understand the relationships of the perceived height, the existing built form and existing topography to provide the following height recommendations. The objective of these height recommendations is to ensure that the visual impact of any proposed developments is kept to a minimum when viewing from Milton St and Trevenar St.

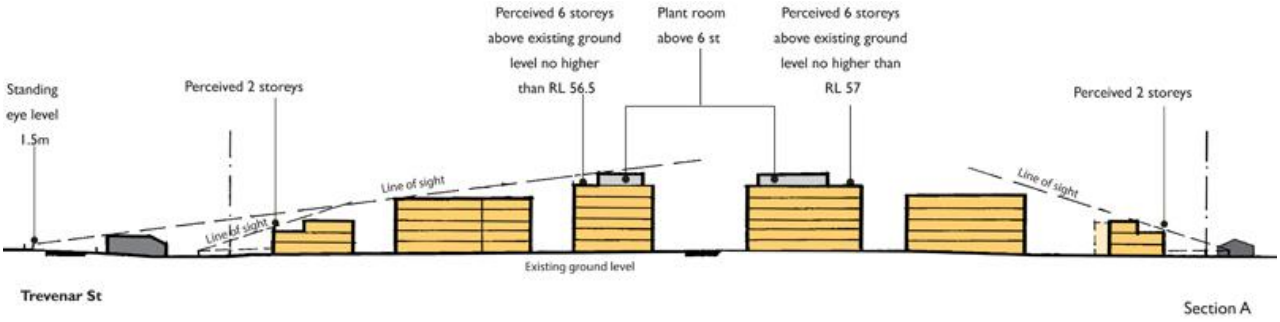


Figure 30- Cross Section through the Milton St Precinct (South-North) - Height transition to existing context

Comments

As Council considers that the existing single storey traditional dwellings along Milton St to unlikely be redeveloped within this heritage conservation area. Based on Section C and Section A above, proposed height marker buildings should be no more than over 6 storeys of perceived height or above RL 56.5 (southern site) or RL 57.0 (northern site) within the precinct. Non-habitable, plant levels above these RL levels are to be keep to a minimum height, recessed from all facades (min. 3m) and designed to be integrated and positively contribute to the overal built form.

All other proposed buildings should not protrude above the lines of sight viewed from across Milton and Trevenar streets and backyards of adjoining dwellings as per the sections above. These buildings should gradually transit in scale from perceived 2 storey height to perceived 6 storeys under the line of sight. GMU recommends the built form to follow the recommended heights suggested within the GMU Concept Masterplan in Fig 23.View and section analysis should be provided by applicants to ensure that no buildings are visible above the lines of sight from across Milton St, Trevenar St and the adjoining backyards of the R2 dwellings. This will assist in the preservation of the existing local and heritage conservation character.

Furthermore, GMU recommends the current proposals to incorporate breaks to divide these lengthy building masses into smaller and well-articulated building envelopes. The façade treatment as illustrated in the photomontages of the southern site appears to be out-of-character with the existing dwellings and the heritage conservation area. Further façade articulation quality materials and variations in roof form are encouraged in the later stages from both sites, to achieve good articulation and design excellence.

Density

The proposed schemes propose to change the current FSR from 1:1 to a proposed FSR of 2:1. The existing R2 zone allotments, to the north of the Milton St precinct within the Inner West Council, have an FSR limit of 0.7:1. There are no FSR limit to the R2 zone surrounding the precinct within Canterbury-Bankstown Council and the sites' FSR control of 1:1 is not applicable to this area. However, the Council has exhibited a draft amendment proposing an FSR of 0.5-0.65:1 for dwelling houses in the R2 zone. This will be adopted in the near future.

Northern Site

The current northern scheme proposes to change the existing FSR from 1:1 to 2:1. No change is proposed to the FSR for the existing Inner West lot. The intended number of units is stated as approximately 385 units by the concept master plan.

The calculation of the proposed GFA does not consider any building efficiency. The proposed GFA is simply calculated by adding the floor space areas of all proposed building envelopes. It is GMU's opinion that the proposed FSR of 2:1 will be approximately 25% more than the actual FSR that the proposed built form of the current northern scheme masterplan can deliver (if a 75% building efficiency were to be applied).

Southern Site

The planning proposal of the current southern scheme stated that the GFA is calculated by applying an 85% efficiency rate to the GBA, which delivers 29,698m^2 of GFA and equates to approximately 330 apartments. A nominated GFA based on the footprint of each building has not been provided. Therefore it is difficult to ascertain whether this FSR 'fits' the suggested built form. However, based on previous discussions with Council in July-Dec 2015, it is agreed that the 85% efficiency rate should exclude balconies. This should approximately be equivalent to a 75% efficiency rate to the GBA instead. GMU has undertaken an independent estimation of the GFA of the current proposal (applying the 75% efficiency rate) and the resultant FSR is 1.45:1. This estimation excludes the proposed ground level, as the current southern scheme has yet to demonstrate that it can mitigate the groundwater, contamination issues and satisfy the amenity requirements. This 75% efficiency will also allow more articulation and breaks of the current proposed built form while maintaining the bulk and scale.

Comments

The proposed densities of the current northern and southern schemes have been reduced from the original schemes that proposed FSRs exceeding 2.5:1. The estimated proposed FSR of 1.38-1.45:1 (with 75% efficiency) is double the density of its surrounding context (Inner West Council – FSR 0.7:1).

Furthermore, both schemes have proposed subterranean ground levels and basement car parking levels. Given the contaminated nature of these industrial sites due to the previous use of the oval lands and the presence of groundwater close to the existing ground plane of the site, significant excavation could be hazardous as contaminants can be exposed. As the majority of the proposed ground level lies within the proposed excavation zone, applicants must demonstrate satisfactory groundwater, overland flow, remediation solutions and apartment amenity to Council first before these questionable proposed ground floor GFAs be included into the FSRs calculation for any future planning proposal and site-specific DCP. Accompanying these engineering solutions, the applicants should also provide the proposed number of car parking spaces and extent of the basement car park area.

These pre-existing site conditions could impact the final bulk and FSR achievable on the site as well as the sort of interface the proposals will have to the oval and to adjacent properties. They must be addressed and consulted with Council in the future planning proposal and site-specific DCP stages.

Based on the above Figure 23- 'GMU Recommended Concept Masterplan (Sept 2016)' in the 'Built Form' section above, GMU estimates that the recommended built form delivers an approximate FSR of 1.1:1 This recommended concept masterplan does not include any ground floor excavation and a 75% efficiency has been applied to the calculation. Basement car parking excavation will be subjected to consultation with Council.

Internal amenity

At this planning proposal stage, GMU understands that internal layout plans are not required to be provided. However, this doesn't provide sufficient information for GMU to assess the amenity of the future units.

Comments

General proposed building envelopes in the current schemes suggest a double-loaded configuration with a number of single-aspect units between corner units at the ends of these lengthy buildings ranging from 50-70m long. The applicant should use skilful design in planning the internal layouts to create breaks the massing to encourage good solar access and cross ventilation and meet ADG requirements in the next stages.

As both schemes propose the ground level to be 2-3m below existing ground, there are a large number of subterranean units which will have limited solar access and overlooking issues. GMU is not supportive of these subterranean units and recommends the applicants to amend the proposed ground level to be consistent with existing natural ground level. These proposed ground levels should be confirmed with Council for any future planning proposals and site-specific DCPs for the precinct.

The current southern scheme has provided shadow diagrams indicatively how the apartments will receive solar access. However, the southern façade of Building D will have limited solar access should the building remain as a lengthy block. The introduction of breaks to the building mass and dual-aspect or corner apartments can improvement amenity to these southern apartments.

Access and connectivity

As per Council's intention, both current schemes have proposed a shared entry access road along the entire common boundary between the two sites with a round-about located at the intersection of Milton Street. This encourages public access to the W H Wagener Oval, which is currently not accessible via the existing industrial site. This road acts as a shared way between the northern and southern sites. Both schemes have proposed a series of east to west pedestrian linkages throughout the site; this is a positive outcome which will introduce public access and permeability to the precinct and the oval. The location of the basement carpark entries is not proposed in both current schemes, but should be specified as part of future planning proposal and site- specific DCPs.

Northern Site

The current northern scheme has provided inconsistent information. An internal loop road within the northern site to provide basement access for buildings has been illustrated in their concept masterplan. However, the landscape plan indicates this loop as a footpath network based on the width and curvilinear shape illustrated.

Due to the size of the site and scale of the redevelopment, one entry/exit may not be adequate for the northern site. The independent Traffic Review prepared by McLaren Traffic Engineering proposes an internal loop road system with basement entries under buildings. The Council would also prefer that each building has a street address. From an urban design point of view, GMU considers that a single carriageway (subject to Traffic Engineer's advice on manoeuvrings of emergency vehicles) operating as an one-way system and integrated as a shared zone to be the least disruptive to pedestrian movement and activities within the communal courtyard. Basement parking entries must be encapsulated within proposed buildings to reduce noise impacts.

The current proposal also indicates that the vehicular entry road along the southern boundary leads to a vehicular entry to Block 4 (refer to the concept plan by CMT Architects). Due to the 'elevation' role of the Block 4 façade facing the oval, the location of this vehicular entry is not supported.

Southern Site

The current southern scheme has not proposed any internal road of the shared entry access road along the common boundary of the two sites. All future traffic will enter/exit the basement parking from this access road, however the number and location of basement car park entries off this access road are unclear. Due to the size of the site, the shared access road can only provide a limited number of basement car park entries. Waste collection for all the proposed buildings within the southern site will be difficult, especially with Council's limited distance of travel to waste collection points. The proposed single amalgamated car park will also result in future residents traversing long distances from their vehicles to their apartments. Similar to the northern site, GMU proposes a single-lane loop road with limited on-street parking that is connected to a number of basement parking entries encapsulated within proposed buildings.

2 pedestrian links are currently proposed (refer to Fig. 32), along the northern and southern facades of Buildings A & B, that directly connect Milton St to WH Wagener Oval. The location of these links is well considered as it directs the local community to the centre of the oval and could potentially open up district views to the east across the oval and Whitfield Avenue, providing a visual corridor from Milton St. The third pedestrian link connects the new access road to the Oval via the central communal open space. This linkage can be further extended into the northern site.

For both sites, the extent of all vehicular driveways should be minimised and parking entries should be encapsulated within buildings. Garbage collection should be carried out within the basement.

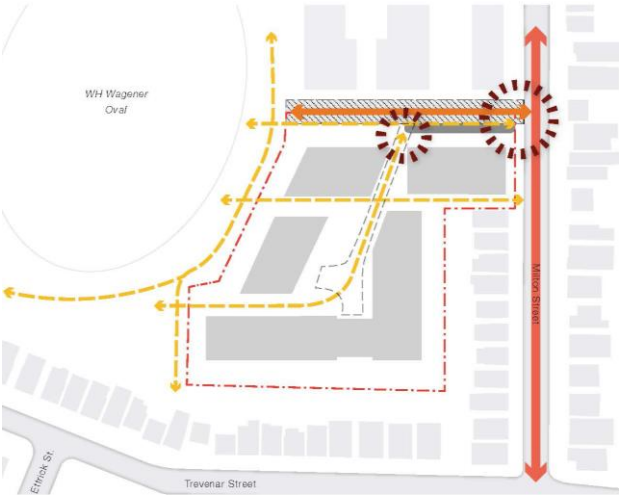


Figure 31: Access & Movement Diagram (Source: Urban Design Study by SJB Architects)

Excavation

It was discussed in the original proposals that the site would be benched and lowered to accommodate development and adjusted to allow connection from Milton Street (RL 40) to the Oval (RL 29).

The current southern scheme proposed the excavation level to be one basement storey (4m) below the proposed ground RL33.00, as indicated in Section G of SJB's Urban Design Report. This is below the established level of the berm surrounding the site. The berm is a required means of stormwater and pollution control integrally associated with the maintenance and ongoing use of the oval. Careful investigations/studies for its retention value should be conducted in case the proposal is likely to disturb this area.

It is noted that there is contamination within or adjacent to the subject sites due to its previous industrial uses. Combined with a high water table level, close to the Wagener Oval level, the proposed basement excavation level is subject to discussion with Council's geotechnical, hydraulic and environmental safety officers to ensure environmental safety for the residents in the vicinity.

Based on preliminary discussions with Council in September 2016, GMU understands that the groundwater level is approximately 2-4m below the existing ground level (approximately at RL32-34). Therefore, the proposed basement level (2 storeys below existing ground level) will within the groundwater table and significantly impact overflow patterns and it is not supported.

GMU understands that the current and original proposals attempt to lower the majority of ground levels of the buildings closer to the level with the oval to achieve a better connection from Milton St through to the oval. It is an appropriate urban design principle to provide 'visible' activation along the perimeter to the oval, however, not at the expense of exposing underlying contamination and ground water hazards as well as maintaining and protecting existing vegetation.

There are also groundwater and contamination issues that the current proposals have yet to demonstrate satisfactory resolution. Due to this, the proposed ground levels below natural ground level are questionable. GMU recommends the proposed ground levels to be maintained above natural ground level until further geotechnical or remediation solutions receive Council's confirmation. For any future planning proposals and site-specific DCPs, the applicants should refer to Council's stormwater advice to locate appropriate retention areas and stormwater discharge points.

Figure 32- *Historic and current aerial photographs of Wagener Oval, Source: Canterbury City Council*

Pushing the central courtyard and Buildings B, C & D under the berm level loses the potential for a more direct connection with the oval and diminishes positive outlooks for the residents. The proposed extent of excavation (2-3m deep) is not supported across the precinct and it is likely to result in the loss of the visual connections from Milton St to the Oval. The greatest incentive for the applicant to excavate further is to gain an extra level of additional development.

As previously suggested, GMU recommends that the proposed ground level either be set at the level of the berm or at the existing site level (approximately RL 36.5), whichever is higher, to avoid any potential conflicts with the function of the berm and to protect the existing trees.

Setbacks and transition to adjacent residential lots

In general, the proposed building separation distances of the current schemes comply with the ADG. However, the habitable to non-habitable rooms or non-habitable to non-habitable room relationships should be maintained. Generally, GMU suggests a 4m front setback to Milton Street for both sites, aligning with the predominant street building line. For both sites, GMU recommends that the applicants provide view analysis studies for Council's benefit to review that the recommended perceived height design principle has been achieved, as per sectional diagrams provided in the 'Built Form' section discussed above.

If these two sites are not to be developed concurrently, each of the sites should provide a minimum of 6m setback to the consolidated shared entry road reserve, as this access road will be the major through site link Boulevard to the oval and will be configured with pedestrian footpaths. The actual shared road alignment and design is subject to discussion with Council in the next stage.

The current northern scheme provides 6m setback to the western boundary and to the oval; 9 to 12m to the northern and eastern boundaries and 9m to the southern boundary. The front setback to Milton Street is approx. 3-4m based on the scale provided in the concept master plan; the applicant should clarify the actual dimension in the next stage.

The current southern scheme has built forms setback 12m away from the eastern and southern boundaries to the rear of the neighbouring single to double storey residential lots along Trevenar and Milton Streets.

Furthermore, the setbacks of the upper levels of Buildings D and E are subject to a view base control to minimise impacts of visual bulk and overshadowing to the adjoining low scale R2 dwellings. As recommended in the Built form section above, these two buildings should be reduced to 3 and 4 storeys in height. This is equivalent to a maximum perceived height of 2 storeys and a recessed top storey away from the line of sight, viewing at standing height from the centre of neighbouring backyards over the allowable fence height.

The 'Built Form' diagram in the Urban Design Study by SJB Architects shows, Buildings B, C and D having a minimum 6m setback to the western boundary. As discussed in the "Access, connectivity and public domain" chapter, GMU further recommends that the proposed ground level either be set at the level of the berm or at the existing site level (approximately RL 36.5), whichever is higher. However, GMU recommends that Building D to have a wider setback of 12m to the west, as this end of the site is the lowest point of the precinct and it is a significant part to the Cook Rivers Overland Flow as shown in Figure 31.

Landscape and public domain

Understanding the relationship between the 2 public domain (Milton St and the WH Wagenar Oval) is essential for the further planning of the Milton St Precinct. Given the significant slope within the existing sites (8m fall from Milton Street to the western boundary of the two sites) further sectional and landscape information is required for GMU to determine the relationship between the existing berm along the perimeter of the oval and the proposed developments on the subject sites, as well as the amenity for the public domain.

Both current schemes have generally indicated landscaped edges within the side setbacks to the neighbouring residential backyards with deep soil zones located along these edges. With the appropriate detail landscape design and mature tree planting, GMU considers this an appropriate interface treatment to the existing sensitive residential use. GMU recommends the provision of 6 meters deep soil as the minimum width to ensure mature planting along these edges. This has been indicated in the current southern scheme however the applicant of the northern site must clarify the width of the deep soil zone in the amended schemes for the next stage. Landscape details and basement plans (if any) should be provided to ensure the preservation of the proposed deep soil zone to be compliant with ADG requirements.

This 6m deep soil zone is also recommended to the western boundaries of the site, along the berm and oval in order to maintain its existing character, provide privacy screening to the residents and a better transition from the oval level to the proposed height marker buildings. Breaks between these plantings should be provided to ensure that intended view corridors are preserved.

Furthermore, the proposition for an internal loop road on both sites, should be carefully integrated into the landscaping and surface design to act as a share zone, allowing pedestrian movement and minimising impacts to activities within the communal open spaces.

The current northern scheme proposes two courtyard communal open spaces. It is noted that it aims create vistas through the communal open spaces to Wagener Oval. However, the opening of the northern vista is not sufficient. While the separation distance around the northern communal open space should meet the minimum ADG requirements, GMU suggests the provision of a larger separation distances up to 18m between the northern portion of Blocks 2 and Block 6. All separation distances are subject to a shadow testing too. Furthermore, 9 to 12m setbacks are provided to the northern side and is indicated as landscaped open space in the landscape concept plan. The location of the roof top communal open space is not indicated.

The current southern scheme proposes a courtyard space at the centre of the site with generous building separation distances, widening from 23m to 40m. Further landscape details and communal facilities in this central open space are encouraged to further enhance usability for residents and create a pleasant outdoor recreational area.

The Urban Design Study by SJB has indicated that 25% of the southern site area is dedicated as communal open space (COS) and is provided in various locations:

- Central courtyard at the centre of the southern site
- Roof terraces located above Buildings A,B & C

It also indicates that 65% of these COS will receive 2 hours of sunlight. This is compliant with ADG requirements if the proposed development nominates the 3 rooftop terraces as the principle open space area; however, it is more ideal that a central space at ground level be the principal space with compliant solar access.

The current proposal should further illustrate how it has provided upgrades to the site, edges to the oval and street, and should aim to retain as many existing trees as possible, especially the existing native trees along the western boundary. The oval edge must be treated as a frontage to the site in its resolution and ideally ground levels should be similar at the base of the site to the berm to ensure amenity and passive surveillance are maximised. Works on the oval frontage should be contained wholly within the subject site and further mature tree planting is encouraged.

Figure 33- Landscape Character diagram (Source: SJB Architects Urban Design Study)

4. Government Policies and Applicable Controls

4.1 Ashbury in Metropolitan Strategy - A Plan for Growing Sydney

In the Plan for Growing Sydney (the Plan) Ashbury is located between and outside of two urban renewal corridors which follow the T3 Bankstown Line and the T2 Inner West Line and South Line.

The Plan considers the housing demand for the Sydney area stating that the main concentration of the new housing should be located near the existing or planned centres and public transport. Chapter 'Housing Choices - Direction 2.2: Accelerate urban renewal across Sydney – providing homes closer to jobs' highlights that:

> *New housing will be supported by social infrastructure – for example, parks and sporting facilities, schools, and medical services – to make the living environment more attractive.'*

Ashbury has a number of parks, a primary and secondary schools and some local shops and so would be able to provide a comfortable level of amenity for future residents.

The second part of the Government's Plan relates to the type of development considered for the subject site is: *'ACTION 2.2.1: Use the Greater Sydney Commission to support council-led urban infill projects'. It states that:*

> *'A significant proportion of Sydney's additional housing supply needs to come from urban infill across Sydney.*
>
> *While significant programs are in place for large-scale urban renewal projects, small-scale urban infill development can also have an impact on the demand for infrastructure services. Urban infill will be most successful where development is coordinated with social infrastructure delivery.'*

Action 2.2.1 has the most significance for Ashbury in that the large lot transitional lands may be developed as urban renewal projects to help provide for Sydney's additional housing needs.

4.2 Subregional Strategy

The Milton St Precinct is located in the south subregion, now to be called precincts. The economic focus for the subregion/precinct is the Global Economic corridor, Sydney Airport, Port Botany and the Illawarra region.

There are a number of specific priorities listed in the Subregional strategy such as delivering WestConnex and other connections, supporting local and metropolitan economy and the priorities which impact upon Ashbury are to '*identify and protect strategically important industrial-zoned land*'. housing intensification and urban renewal is to be provided particularly along the new and established public transport corridors.

The subject sites are not located near those corridors; however, a rezoning of industrial lands to residential uses ties in with the priorities for the subregion as being a location suitable for urban renewal.

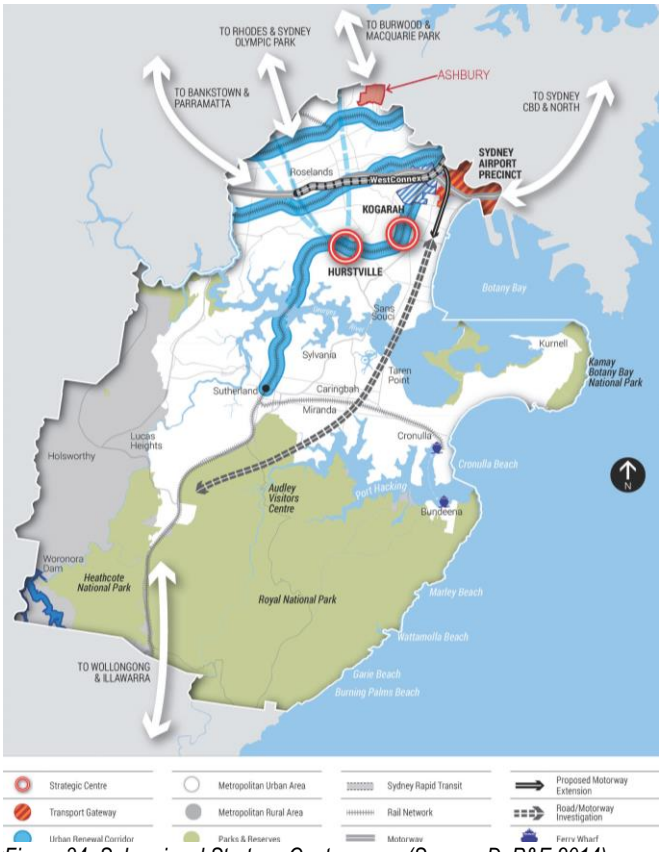


Figure 34- Subregional Strategy Centres map (Source: DoP&E 2014)

A

4.3 Towards 2032 - City of Canterbury Economic Development & Employment Strategy

The 2009 report commissioned by the former Canterbury Council "*Towards 2032 - City of Canterbury Economic Development & Employment Strategy*" by SGS Economics classified the subject site, which is currently zoned IN2, as being Category 1 Business office which has the uses of integrated warehouse storage R&D, back-room management and administration with up to 40% office component.

The recommendation of the report was that the Milton St Precinct and adjoining industrial land lots be rezoned as residential lands. The following diagram Figure 36 from the report illustrates the subject site highlighted in the green triangle in relation to other key employment and growth centres within the former Canterbury LGA.

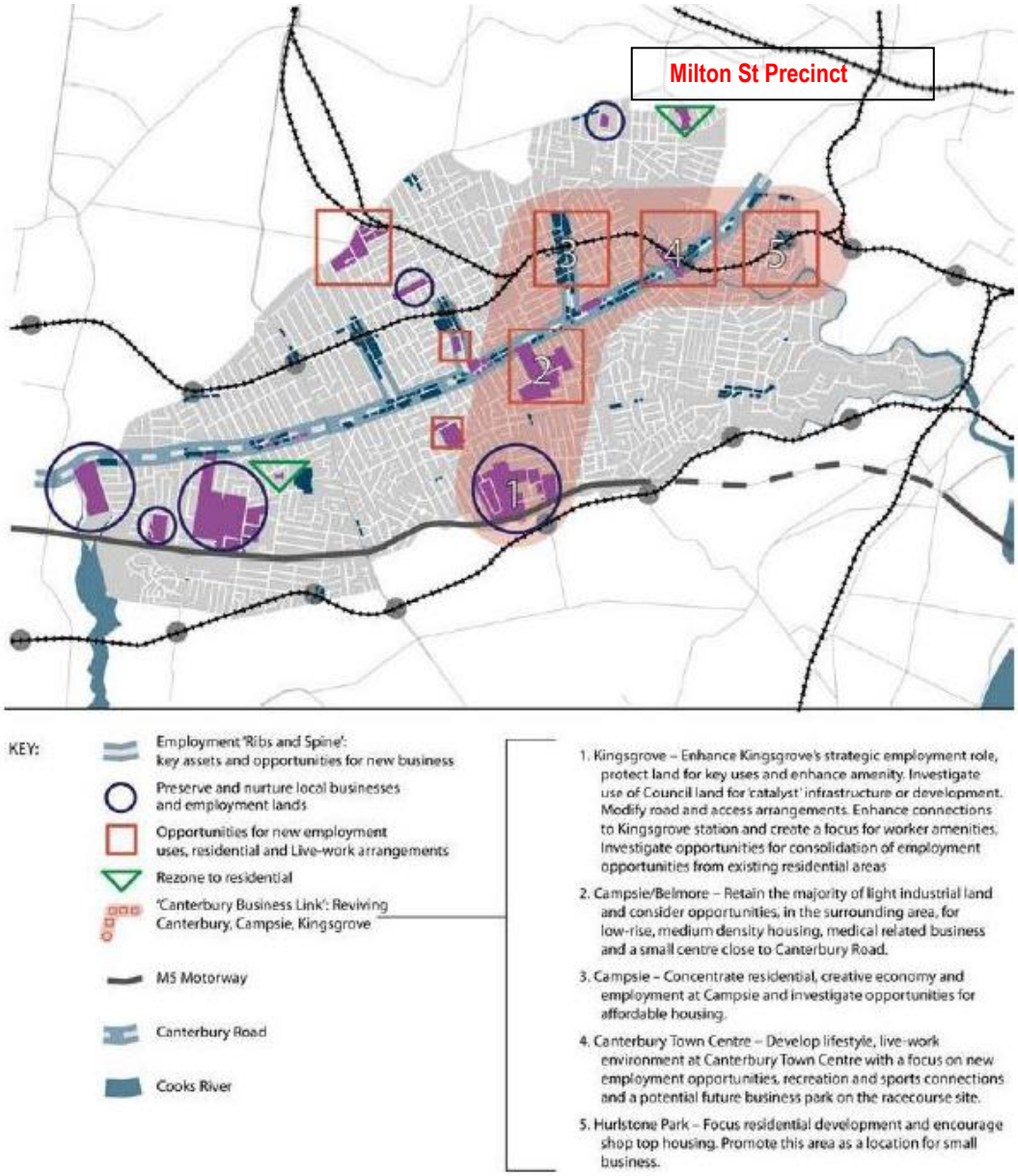


Figure 35- Draft Strategic Directions Map, SGS 2009, pg 79

4.4 Canterbury Local Environment Plan 2013 (CLEP)

There are many objectives of the CLEP that relate to the growth of the LGA in terms of new housing supply for the locality.

The current controls for the site are:

- Zone – IN2
- FSR – 1:1
- Height – currently by DCP Height Plane Controls

The LEP controls that apply to the context of the site are:

- Zone – R2
- FSR – 0.5:1 to 0.75:1
- Height – 8.5m
- Conservation area

The LEP main provisions include:

1.2 Aims of the Plan

The aims of the plan are:

a) to ensure that development is of a design and type that supports the amenity and character of an area and enhances the quality of life of the community.

b) to protect and promote the environmental and cultural heritage values of Canterbury.

As Milton St Precinct is undergoing a transition from a declining industrial use to residential, due to its particularly large lot size, it is understood that the current proposed developments are more sympathetic to the existing pattern and character of the surrounding suburb.

When considered against the aims and controls of the CLEP, the proposed developments will be reviewed based on the performance of 'large lot transition land' and their responses to the local character and preservation of the local environmental and cultural heritage values.

The immediate surrounding R2 low density residential area comprises of small lot single storey dwellings with an average 10m lot frontage and maximum allowable height of 8.5m.

The current proposals have acknowledged this largely different built form scale and have provided improved transition to mitigate the interfaces with the R2 zone. Both schemes provide double the required ADG building separation distance (up to 12m setback from the northern, eastern and southern boundaries, except Block 1 of the northern site with a 9m setback) and recessed upper levels to reduce visual impact when viewing from the backyards of these R2 dwellings.

However, to preserve the environmental and cultural heritage of the Asbury HCA, Council views that the current proposals must not be visible from across Milton and Trevenar Streets. The current proposals will also open up view corridors into the oval, as well as provide direct access to the oval via the new access road.

The previous recommendation of Council's Heritage advisor was that an independent "*detailed Heritage Management Document should be prepared by a suitably qualified heritage consultant that addresses the surrounding context and curtilage of the site. The curtilage should not be limited to the boundaries of the site but should consider and not be limited to views and vistas, street patterns and layouts, and built form of the immediate and greater context".* GMU remains supportive of the Council Heritage advisor recommendations that a management document should be prepared for the site.

GMU understands that the development provides a new variety of housing stock into the area and will encourage improvements to the amenity for the public domain and possibly public transport service. From an urban design perspective, these 2 higher density developments have provided an improved response to its local context. However, post discussion with Council staff in August and September 2016, GMU understands that there are concerns about the proposed development being visible from the public domain (along Trevenar and Milton St). Through sectional studies, GMU recommends that the general building height be reduced, in order to stay within the line of sight along these public streets. Refer to Section 3.3- Built Form discussion for details. In addition, the achievement of design excellence through the architecture expression of the current proposals should be an integral part of the development.

4.5 Canterbury Development Control Plan 2012 (CDCP)

Neighbourhood context

The Canterbury DCP 2012 Part 2 - Residential Neighbourhoods provides the description of the desired character for isolated sites. It reinforces the fact that '*the development of existing isolated sites is not to detract from the character of the streetscape and is to achieve satisfactory level of residential amenity for its occupants and those on adjoining properties.'*

The current proposals are for isolated sites located amongst low scale existing houses of 1-2 storeys with an established character to the street; therefore, it is important to balance the opportunity of introducing a new housing stock with the established character of the neighbourhood by drawing from the built form features of those that are existing around the site. The current proposals should provide further documentation to demonstrate that the proposed developments meet ADG requirements and that adjoining properties retain reasonable amenity.

Height

Clause 2.1.3 Height: '*New buildings have a scale that is visually compatible with adjacent buildings, and the intended character of the zone.'*

The maximum proposed heights/ height markers at 30m (Northern site- from proposed ground level RL +35.00 to +65.00) and 33m (Southern site - from proposed ground level RL +33.00 to +66.00) in comparison with the surrounding 8.5m DCP height limit, this height difference is no longer considered to be contextual with the surroundings.

As the CLEP prescribes the development to be 'visually compatible', based on visual controls such as 'line of sight' and perceived height discussed in the previous Section 3.2 Principles for the Milton St Precinct and 3.3- Review of the Current Proposals - 'Built Form' and 'Setback'. These recommendations take into account the topographical changes within the precinct and the location of the buildings deep into the site (45m from the street to edge buildings and 80m from Milton St to the height markers). Based on these sectional studies, the maximum height should be no higher than RL+56.5 (southern site) and RL+57.0 from existing ground levels. Applicant should provide detail survey confirming existing ground levels and contours and confirm proposed ground levels that correlates to existing natural ground levels with Council in the next stages.

Setbacks

The current proposals are in alignment with the existing street edge. A minimum of 6m setback is provided to the Wagener Oval boundary.

The proposals are compliant with the DCP's side setback control (Clause 2.1.7. Minimum setback) as it only requires a 4m setback. The CDCP, however, doesn't envisage setbacks for buildings of the scale that is suggested in the proposals. The CDCP only mentions developments up to 6 storeys deferring to SEPP 65 for larger developments. A DCP 4m setback would not meet the ADG separation requirements subject to the design and layout of apartments along these boundaries.

The other area of the DCP requires development to comply with the separation distances from the ADG, which are greater than 4m and relevant for the type and scale of buildings proposed. The current proposals comply with the building separation distances prescribed in the ADG. Along the interface with the R2 zone, 12m are provided (double of the 6m requirement).

The DCP anticipates a stepping form of a building with a 3 storey streetwall and base up to 4 and 5 storey total height or a 4 storey base (6 storey total height). This control, however, does not consider existing scale with the heritage conservation area (predominantly single storey dwellings). The current proposals have a 'perceived' height of 3 storeys and Building D and E of the southern site have the upper levels are setback away from view. As discussed in Section 3.3- Built Form and Setbacks, GMU recommends a 'perceived' height of 2 storeys instead of 3 storeys and suggests Council to request view analysis studies for any future planning proposals and site-specific DCPs with the Milton St Precinct to ensure that the proposals achieve and meet this clause to minimise visual bulk and privacy impacts onto the residential neighbours.

Deep soil

The DCP requires a minimum of 2m deep soil along each of the 3 side boundaries and 5m along the front and rear boundaries. The proposals have indicated landscape buffers for privacy screening between the existing and proposed new residential gardens. The indicative landscape concepts illustrate that deep soil is provided along all side boundaries of the Milton St Precinct.

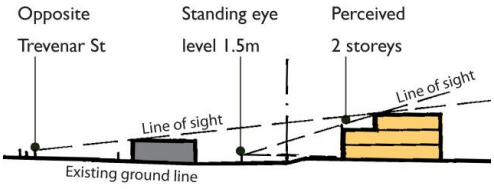
It is unclear as to where the northern site proposes to have their deep soil zone and whether the width can support mature tree planting. This must be clarified by the applicant in a later stage.

The southern site has indicated the deep soil zone to be 6m wide along its eastern and southern boundaries; however, the deep soil zone along the western boundary has insufficient width (3m) and it is recommended to increase to a minimum of 6m.

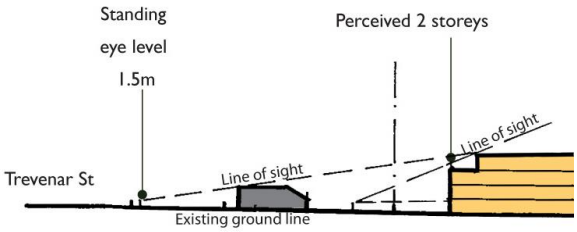
Both applicants should further provide basement plans to confirm the extent and location of the basement level to ensure that these deep soil zones are preserved.

Privacy

There is currently an insufficient level of detail to provide in-depth assessment on privacy. However, the taller forms along the rear gardens of the low scale dwellings along Yabsley Avenue, Milton and Trevenar Streets have their balconies facing directly to the adjoining properties, although they are setback at least 12m away from the common boundaries. Through sectional studies along the changing topography, GMU considers that these edge buildings especially Block 1 of the Northern Site, (Buildings D & E), are inappropriate to the residential interface and should be reduced to have perceived height of 2 storeys and no taller than 3-4 storeys high.



Section D



Section E

Figure 36- Section near the corner of Trevenar St and Milton St Figure 37- Western end of Trevenar St- at the precinct's lowest point

Additionally, the developments should demonstrate that redirection of outlooks can be provided to mitigate any potential overlooking to fully satisfy the objective of this DCP privacy control.

As mentioned in Section 3- Excavation & Landscape and Public Domain, the proposed ground level should be consistent with the existing ground level and mature tree planting should be retained and enhanced along the western berm area, to provide privacy screening to the ground level units.

In general, landscape details between publicly accessible areas/ communal open spaces and private open spaces should be provided to demonstrate how residents' privacy will be maintained.

Shadow impact

Based on overshadowing diagrams provided by CMT architects, the existing industrial buildings on both sites overshadow the oval partially in the morning between 9am -12pm. Applicants should further highlight the overshadowing impact created by the current proposals on to the oval and the neighbouring dwellings above the existing shadows.

The current northern scheme has provided shadow diagrams in perspective view for the concept master plan. These indicate the following:

- Overshadowing of the oval occurs in the morning between 9am and 12pm on 21st of June.
- Overshadowing of the adjoining site to the southern proposed boulevard occurs midday to 3pm on 21st of June.
- It is not clear as to whether the current proposal would result in overshadowing of Milton Street during the afternoon.

More detailed (plan view) shadow diagrams are required to clarify the extent of the overshadowing on the adjoining neighbours, the main site link boulevard and within the site.

The current southern scheme indicates that it overshadows the backyards of the properties on Milton Street and the rear properties in Trevenar Street between 9am up to 3pm. The properties along Trevenar Street receive plenty morning sun but little afternoon sun. As the existing factory has approximately 2-5m setback from the common boundary, the amount of proposed overshadowing may be similar to the proposed buildings. The applicant should provide sufficient information to assess this.

Site coverage

The site coverage control allows no more than 40% of the site area for the proposed building footprint. Based on high-level calculations of the concept masterplans, it is estimated that both proposals can meet the site coverage control.

Parking

The current schemes do not provide detail information regarding the provision of car parking for the subject sites. Further information is required in order for GMU to assess if the proposal complies with this control.

Both proposals, as per Council's intention, proposed a consolidated shared entry access road along the common boundary.

The current northern scheme proposes a surface loop across the two proposed courtyards to provide basement parking entries. This is consistent with the recommendations from the Council's independent traffic advice prepared by McLaren Traffic received in August 2016 and this will more likely support Council's waste collection requirements, provide sufficient basement car park entries and reduce residents travel distance from their vehicles to their apartments. However, GMU recommends keeping this loop road as a single carriageway, operating as a one-way system to minimise interruption to pedestrian movement. Further surface and landscape design will integrate this loop road as a shared zone. The applicant should further discuss the arrangement of this loop road with Council.

The current northern scheme also suggests a basement parking access to the western façade of Block 4 facing the oval. This is considered to be an inappropriate outcome due to its highly visual impact on the elevation facing the oval.

The estimated required parking is 575 vehicles; however, no further detail on the proposed basement parking is provided in plans. According to the Traffic Impact Assessment, it is assumed that compliance with relevant car parking controls can be confirmed as part of any subsequent Development Application. GMU is therefore unable to comment on compliance.

The current southern scheme proposes basement car parking to be accessed from the proposed shared entry road; however, the entry points to the basement car park have not yet been resolved. As per McLaren Traffic advice, an internal loop road is supported instead of an amalgamated basement car park with a single entry. Similar to the northern site, this internal loop road should be operated as a one-way system and the applicant should provide further landscape and surface design to integrate it as part of a share zone.

The DCP prescribes the carpark driveway to be located to the side of the site and within the side setback. Non-encapsulated driveways are usually not recommended for a residential flat building as it results in noise and visual impacts to the residents, as well as safety issues and undesired outlooks. In general, GMU recommends the basement car park entries to be encapsulated within the built form and recessed from the façade.

Building Design

The façade design and articulation control includes a number of specific controls that refer to the desired design outcome for new buildings including type of required materials, roof forms and in particular including a requirement to provide modulation to the façades with:

- 6-8m modules that reflect the grain of individual bungalows for facades facing streets
- 10-15m for side facades

Articulated building design is not provided by both current schemes. The proposal needs to demonstrate how the objectives of these controls are intended to be achieved by the proposed built forms. Generally, the proposals should be reduced in bulk and scale to the Milton Street frontage to respond to the existing heritage conservation area context and residential edges. The suggested typology for this frontage would be terraces, townhouses or apartments with fine-grain articulation and contemporary design.

4.6 Conclusion

A Planning Proposal application does not require detailed architectural resolution but rather a resolution of its broad design principles and approach. In GMU's opinion, the current proposals have provided improved solutions to address some of the overarching controls such as height, setback, deep soil and interface relationships with adjoining heritage and low scale zone. However, GMU considers that the current proposals require further amendments and provision of information as discussed above, to arrive at the appropriate amenity, bulk and scale.

The current schemes have improved in certain aspects, however amendments in the next stage are required to meet a satisfactory urban design outcome. Other aspects of the proposals that follow the overarching controls still need to be addressed and these are discussed in the following pages of this report.

5. SEPP 65 analysis and comment

This section of the report provides an overall assessment of the proposal against the principles of SEPP 65. It provides further commentary on the proposal's performance on the issues raised in previous sections of this report including its response to the surrounding context and its performance against the applicable controls. As this is a Planning Proposal application, this assessment will focus mainly on the overarching issues of bulk and scale and contextual fit.

Principle 1: Context and Neighbourhood Character

Good design responds and contributes to its context. Context is the key natural and built features of an area, their relationship and the character they create when combined. It also includes social, economic, health and environmental conditions.

Responding to context involves identifying the desirable elements of an area's existing or future character. Well-designed buildings respond to and enhance the qualities and identity of the area including the adjacent sites, streetscape and neighbourhood.

Consideration of local context is important for all sites, including sites in established areas, those undergoing change or identified for change.

Comment

In establishing the appropriate design for the sites, it is important to respond to the existing context. The above SEPP65 principle requires consideration of the planning and design policies for areas undergoing a transition. The review of Economic Development & Employment Strategy 2009 indicates that the Milton St Precinct has been identified as an opportunity site for a residential rezoning (discussed in Chapter 4.3). The Strategy focuses on the current employment areas and recommends that the site is suitable for residential uses and the recommendation is that the applicable zone should be R4- High Density Residential.

This zoning was proposed to encourage redevelopment of the sites from industrial to residential. Due to the large and consolidated nature of the 2 sites within this precinct, consideration of a residential flat building typology within the precinct is reasonable. The precinct is not part of the 'business link' which is the area identified for growth for the LGA Towards 2032 – City of Canterbury Economic Development and Employment Strategy. Therefore, it is considered to be reasonable, that the precinct is rezoned to allow residential use. The objectives for the Neighbourhood controls in the CDCP highlight the importance of balancing any new development on isolated sites with the established character of the context. Therefore, any future residential development within the Milton St Precinct must consider the existing context and the 'fine grain' character of the surrounding neighbourhood.

The current proposals attempts to respond to the precinct's key natural features by introducing greater height to the west of the site, stepping down the built forms to minimise the perceived bulk and scale visible from the street and from adjacent lower scale dwellings. However, the height markers will be visible from neighbouring public streets and edge buildings do not present an acceptable height to the residential edges. These aspects of the proposals are not supported.

The proposed developments are considered to respond to the surrounding key natural and built features of the area in terms of distribution of heights and the positioning of building footprints on site. The planning proposals have the potential to satisfy this principle subject to further design development. This arrangement can lead to an acceptable outcome only, if the proposed ground levels take into account environmental constraints and visual impacts from the public domain. However, the current proposed ground levels in both schemes are under the existing ground level. Based on the advice provided by Council regarding stormwater and geotechnics issues, the proposed basement level may be located within the groundwater table and potentially interrupt the existing overflow pattern and may result in the exposure of hazardous contaminants. Equally, the consideration for appropriate levels of amenity available to the apartments must be considered. Subterranean apartments and subterranean private open spaces must be avoided as this leads to poor amenity.

It is noted that the applicants have provided geotechnical and contamination assessments as per Council's request. The applicants should in the future consult with Council to resolve the existing stormwater and geotechnical issues.

In the next stages, the architectural expression of built forms and building facades need to transition and respond to the surrounding area and existing heritage character.

Principle 2: Built Form and Scale

Good design achieves a scale, bulk and height appropriate to the existing or desired future character of the street and surrounding buildings.

Good design also achieves an appropriate built form for a site and the building's purpose in terms of building alignments, proportions, building type, articulation and the manipulation of building elements.

Appropriate built form defines the public domain, contributes to the character of streetscapes and parks, including their views and vistas, and provides internal amenity and outlook.

Comment

The proposals are seeking an increase in height from the existing 2-4 storey commercial and warehouse buildings to a number of buildings ranging in height from 2 to 10 storeys (10 storeys along the oval edge). The subject sites are currently surrounded by a predominantly 1-2 storey residential neighbourhood. As discussed in *Fig 23- GMU recommended concept Masterplan*, Section 3.2 and 3.3 Built Form and Height, the appropriateness of the proposed built form massing relates to the configuration of bulk and scale in response to the surrounding context and topography.

GMU have analysed the appropriate height based on the available view cones from the surrounding streets in a set of sections shown and described in the diagrams below. Refer to the GMU Recommended Concept Masterplan for section locations.

Figure 38- GMU Concept Masterplan (Sept 2016)

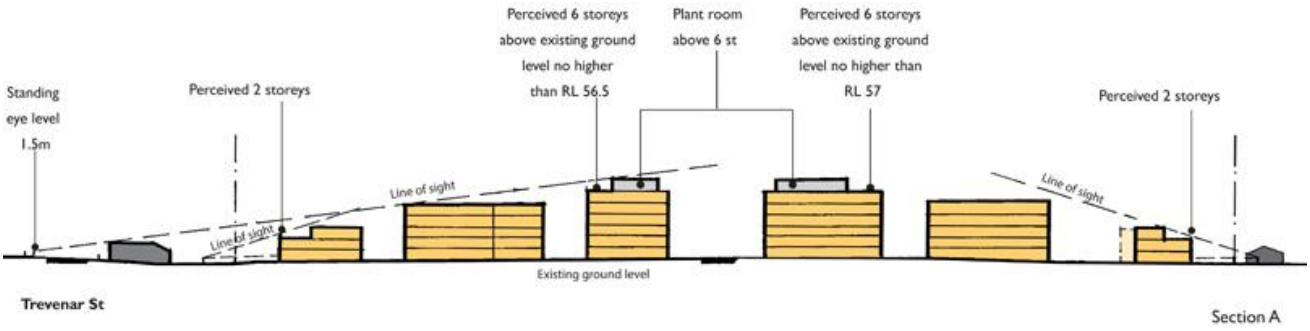


Figure 39- Section A- view impact of built form near the interface to existing developments across the Milton St Precinct

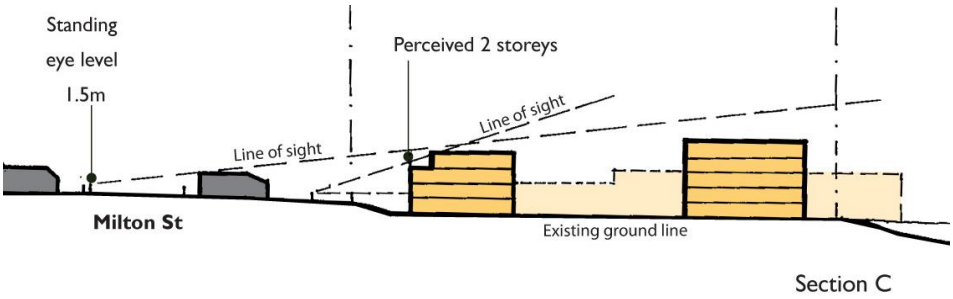


Figure 40- Section C- view impact of built form on Milton Street towards the oval

The proposals seek to present lower scale to Milton Street in response to the existing streetscape and taller built forms to the western boundary facing the oval. Built form transition is proposed in the two sites, through stepped built forms along the access entry street following topographic changes and lines of sight from across Milton St. The access entry street provides access to the site and a view axis from Milton Street through to the oval and Whitfield Avenue beyond.

Each proposal has 3 buildings transitioning in height: height marker (10 storeys for both sites) located adjacent to the shared entry access road to the lower edge buildings (3-4 storeys for the northern site and 4-6 storeys for the southern site) along the sensitive residential interfaces. These buildings were intended to define the oval edge, however the new amalgamated Council considers that this scale presents a towering effect over the oval and a highly visible element from the neighbouring properties. GMU recommends the applicants to amend the built forms to reflect the scale and transition illustrated in Sections A and C above from existing ground level.

Proposed medium height buildings Block 5 and 6 of the northern site should be reduced to height to 5 storeys and 3 storeys respectively. Whilst Building C and E of the southern site should be reduced to 5 storeys and 4 storeys with the top level being recessed away from lines of sight respectively. This provides a more gradual transition across the Milton St Precinct in the North-South direction and also ensures that the built forms are under the lines of sight from Milton St and Trevenar St.

Lower built forms are proposed to the interface areas of the developments. The northern portion of Block 2 (northern site) is a 3 storey building; this scale is considered appropriate to this edge however a double storey interface and fine-grain typology such as a townhouse is more suitable. Block 1, a 4-storey building, is however not supported and should be reduced following similar recommendations given for Block 2.

Building D & E (southern site) are 4-6 storeys and are not supported. Council considers this to be an inappropriate scale to the 1-2 storey traditional dwellings. As part of Building D sits above the adjoining backyards of dwellings along Trevenar St, it should be reduced to no more than 3 storeys, with a perceived 2 storey height and recessed top storey. Due to the topographic change, Building E however can accommodate 4 storey buildings with a perceived 2 storey height and recessed top storey.

Setbacks and separation distances

For both current schemes, the proposed setback to Milton Street is 4m to align with the predominant street setback. This is considered to be appropriate given the surrounding context, as described in Chapter 2.2. GMU considers that this setback will allow adequate landscaping to Milton Street.

The setbacks proposed to the oval are 6m. Given the location of the berm, it is considered that this setback will provide adequate separation to the western boundary and the oval. As discussed, the applicant must consult with Council to determine the relative level of the proposed ground level. Based on contour maps provided by Council (with 0.5m intervals) the existing ground level for the southern site is RL +36.0-36.5, however the northern site ranges from RL+34.5-40. This western setback (minimum 6m)

should be maintained and this is independent from the consultation results. Rising the proposed ground level to the existing natural ground level (RL 36.5) is recommended, as subterranean apartments are not supported.

Building separation must comply with ADG guidelines to ensure amenity to future residents. Further detailed design will be required, to determine if the proposed building separation can meet ADG requirements, pending on the internal layout of the individual apartments.

Depth and length of buildings –

The proposals indicate building depths of 22m across the site with Blocks 2 and 3 (northern site) being partially 15m wide. These building depths comply with ADG guidelines.

Some of the built forms included in the proposed masterplan appear to be in excess of the typical length of residential apartment buildings; however, some articulation is suggested in the plan diagrams to break the continuity of the facade and the perceived length of the building. It is recommended that buildings in excess of 40m are articulated with recessed areas of articulation to achieve a reduced building length to the pedestrian environment and adjacent open areas. This is particularly applicable to Blocks 2 and 3 (northern site), Building D and E (southern site), which have building lengths of more than 70m. GMU recommends applying a 9m wide break to the centre of the building with 3m deep recesses to both the eastern and western facades.

As the proposals are located in an established low scale residential neighbourhood where each dwelling is accessed from the public domain, it is particularly important to provide the same sense of amenity to the new residents and provide access to the ground floor units from the street and from the public domain within and adjacent to the site.

This includes the units facing the recommended or proposed internal loop road or communal open areas. Each of the private access gardens should provide adequate space to achieve landscape screening and preferably a slightly elevated ground level relative to the public domain (no more than 1m) to avoid direct viewing into the units from the public areas.

The proposals are yet to satisfy this principle as the bulk and scale requires further amendments to minimise impacts to the surrounding context and neighbouring properties. However, the design of individual building envelopes and proposed setbacks are meeting this principle in general. GMU suggest the Council to review proposed configuration once relative ground levels are confirmed with the applicants for any future planning proposals and site-specific DCPs.

Principle 3: Density

Good design achieves a high level of amenity for residents and each apartment, resulting in a density appropriate to the site and its context.

Appropriate densities are consistent with the area's existing or projected population. Appropriate densities can be sustained by existing or proposed infrastructure, public transport, access to jobs, community facilities and the environment.

Comment

The two current planning proposal submissions propose to increase the permissible FSR of the precinct from the current maximum of 1:1 and 0.7:1 (for the small site to the north) to a maximum FSR of 2:1. This proposed increase significantly exceeds that of the surrounding residential area.

The documents prepared by CMT Architects provide inconsistent FSR. In the masterplan drawing, titled "Option 2", the Project Details described the proposed FSR to be 1.84:1 and within the 'Urban Design Report' p 24, it suggested the concept masterplan to have a "maximum FSR in the order of 2:1".

As mentioned in Section 3.3, both schemes have applied an unrealistic efficiency to the calculation of FSR. CMT (northern site) has applied a 100% efficiency and SJB (southern site) has applied an 85% efficiency rate to the gross built area (GBA); this is not a realistic figure as this percentage should include balconies, vertical circulation, plant area and articulation areas (breaks and recesses). The ADG generally suggests 70%. In this scenario based on the previously agreed efficiency rate of 85% without balconies, GMU suggests a 75% efficiency rate.

The current proposals did not provide a breakdown of GFA, however, based on the provided floor plans and sections, GMU estimates that the current proposed FSR for the northern site to be approximately 1.38:1 and 1.45:1 for the southern site (based 75% efficiency rate). This estimation excludes the proposed ground level, as the current proposals have yet to demonstrate that it can mitigate the groundwater, contamination issues and satisfy the amenity requirements. This density is comparably higher than the surrounding R2 low density residential development of 0.5-0.75:1 FSR.

As mentioned in Section 3.3, this proposed density is still double that of its adjoining R2 zone and it is away from centre and public transport nodes. There are little existing amenity to support this level of increased density. There are also little plans for strategic planning changes in this isolated area.

From high-level calculation of the GMU recommended concept masterplan, the suggested building envelopes should support an approximate FSR of 1.1:1. This FSR is close to the existing FSR for this locality.

Principle 4: Sustainability

Good design combines positive environmental, social and economic outcomes.

Good sustainable design includes use of natural cross ventilation and sunlight for the amenity and liveability of residents and passive thermal design for ventilation, heating and cooling reducing reliance on technology and operation costs. Other elements include recycling and reuse of materials and waste, use of sustainable materials and deep soil zones for groundwater recharge and vegetation.

Comment

At this planning proposal stage, both proposals have provided insufficient information such as apartment layout, choice of material, waste management system and landscaping details for GMU to provide proper assessment against this principle.

Based on stormwater advice from Council received in August 2016, a stormwater collection point is required at the south-west corner of the southern site (the lowest point of the precinct). Geotechnical advice from Council also suggested that the groundwater level is present at 2-4m below existing ground; therefore, any proposed basement under the excavated proposed ground levels RL +35.00 (northern site) and RL +33.00 (southern site) will be within the groundwater level and interrupt the existing overland flow patterns. The proposed extent of excavation ranging from 0.5m to more than 3m is not supported and it is considered to be inconsistent with this principle, as the proposals deteriorate the existing environmental condition. The applicant should confirm with Council the existing ground levels and maintain the proposed ground storeys at this level. Equally, contamination issues due to the former use of the subject sites must also be taken into account to ensure no future adverse impacts.

Principle 5: Landscape

Good design recognises that together landscape and buildings operate as an integrated and sustainable system, resulting in attractive developments with good amenity. A positive image and contextual fit of well-designed developments is achieved by contributing to the landscape character of the streetscape and neighbourhood.

Good landscape design optimises useability, privacy and opportunities for social interaction, equitable access, respect for neighbours' amenity and provides for practical establishment and long term management.

Comment

Both proposals have provided broad landscape concepts for this planning proposal stage but require further information for GMU to assess the schemes. Both schemes, however, demonstrate good potential to satisfy this principle.

The current northern scheme includes a landscape strategy which indicates screening vegetation to the northern setback, a walking loop, pedestrian link between courtyards and buildings. However, the northern scheme lacks substantial information for GMU to assess the proposed scheme. There is no information provided on the following:

- Extent of deep soil
- The discrepancy of the proposed loop road (whether it is an "internal surface road" as stated in the Planning Proposal Request document by Urbis)
- The provision of a pedestrian footpath (Landscape Concept Masterplan).
- The relationship between the proposed walking loop/ road and the proposed buildings
- The surface road material for the loop road
- Roof top gardens
- Solar access to the two proposed courtyards

The current southern scheme in general has a good approach, integrating key landscape design strategies into the site arrangement and edge conditions. The communal open space at the centre of the site encourages good building separation distances between proposed buildings and provides a pleasant outlook for future residents. Proposed landscape edges along the zone change interface provides adequate privacy buffer and softened edges to the low density residential dwellings. However, sectional landscape design should be provided to demonstrate how privacy is achieve along the residential interfaces.

The 3 proposed pedestrian links encourage permeability into the site and the oval beyond. They also offer good visual connections into the oval and communal open space from Milton St. It also has the potential to continue the linkage into the northern Site. There are 3 roof terraces on Building A, B & C which will ensure that the COS of the development can meet the ADG solar access requirement (2 hours to a minimum 50% of the area).

As the oval is contaminated due to its former use with a high underground water level, it is recommended that this proposal, particularly the proposed level for the communal open space, is reviewed by a contamination expert and Council Officers to ensure no future adverse impacts. The current southern scheme includes a deep soil zone to three edges of the site, though the western deep soil zone does not have sufficient width (3m) for mature trees. Based on high-level calculations, GMU estimates that the proposal has the ability to meet the 7% ADG requirement.

Principle 6: Amenity

Good design positively influences internal and external amenity for residents and neighbours. Achieving good amenity contributes to positive living environments and resident well-being.

Good amenity combines appropriate room dimensions and shapes, access to sunlight, natural ventilation, outlook, visual and acoustic privacy, storage, indoor and outdoor space, efficient layouts and service areas and ease of access for all age groups and degrees of mobility.

Comment

Both proposals have not provide an adequate level of detail for a comprehensive evaluation of this principle.

Northern site

The current northern scheme has not provided any typical floor layouts of the buildings which is essential in assessing whether the internal amenity, such as solar access, cross ventilation and privacy are meeting the ADG requirements. However, based on the proposed building envelopes and depths (15-22m) proposed, it is evident that the current scheme is an improvement from the original scheme. The current scheme has broken down the original excessive building length and generally provided a minimum separation distance as per the ADG. This has the potential to create a number of corner units which could have better solar and ventilation amenity.

However, further tests are required to ensure solar amenity to the proposed courtyards. Relevant building envelopes need to be adjusted to provide a wider opening for the northern vista to the oval to enhance visual amenity.

Southern site

Cross ventilation and solar access

The current southern scheme states that it is capable of complying with the principles of SEPP65; however, the typical building layouts provided (SJB Urban Design Study- section 4.4) indicate the majority of apartments being single aspect apartments which may not be able to achieve the required solar access or cross ventilation given the configuration of the lengthy built forms as well as the orientation on the site. The 'Solar Insolation Plan' submitted does not provide sufficient detail on the solar access to all the facades, especially to the balconies and private open spaces. However, it demonstrates that the central open courtyard will receive less than 2 hours of solar access and will be reliant on the 3 proposed rooftop gardens to meet the ADG requirement. The applicant must demonstrate that the proposal will meet the minimum requirements for solar access and natural ventilation. GMU recommend that views from the sun (hour diagrams) to be provided.

There is a percentage of south facing apartments; the applicant should demonstrate that the proposal does not exceed the maximum percentage as per the ADG. The provision for amenity to outdoor and public domain areas is important to the character of the precinct and should be prioritised in the detail design development. Solar corridors and minimised overshadowing impacts should guide the internal layout of the buildings, to maximise the amenity available to the future residents and the local community.

Additional information should be provided to address how the proposal intends to satisfy the requirement for cross ventilation for the individual apartments.

Privacy and outlook

Visual privacy should be carefully considered in the detail design of the building layouts. Typical building layouts (4.4) suggest some overlooking may occur where balconies face the habitable rooms of adjacent buildings. Where balconies face the backyards of existing properties, reasonable separation must be provided to avoid adverse impacts to adjacent dwellings.

The built form configuration appears to allow for good outlook for the majority of apartments. The sloping typography should be utilised to provide outlook to the communal open areas with an outlook to the oval and the recreational areas to the west.

Common Circulation

The typical building layout plan indicates that Buildings D & E (65m and 75m long buildings) are serviced by a single corridor and single lift core. This is not compliant with ADG's requirement that no more than a maximum of 8 apartments be off a single circulation core on a single level.

Principle 7: Safety

Good design optimises safety and security within the development and the public domain. It provides for quality public and private spaces that are clearly defined and fit for the intended purpose. Opportunities to maximise passive surveillance of public and communal areas promote safety.

A positive relationship between public and private spaces is achieved through clearly defined secure access points and well-lit and visible areas that are easily maintained and appropriate to the location and purpose.

Comment

At this stage, both proposals provide building envelopes and indicative landscaping concepts only. Southern site has provided a generic indication of building layout. The proposals should provide further details, such as general indication of design elements to address issues of safety for the residents and the general community, entry points, security screening, electronic access control, natural surveillance and overlooking of streets to meet the objectives of this principle.

Principle 8: Housing Diversity and Social Interaction

Good design achieves a mix of apartment sizes, providing housing choice for different demographics, living needs and household budgets.

Well-designed apartment developments respond to social context by providing housing and facilities to suit the existing and future social mix.

Good design involves practical and flexible features, including different types of communal spaces for a broad range of people and providing opportunities for social interaction among residents.

Comment

Further design detail such as apartment mix schedule and indicative layout floorplans are required to comprehensively determine if the proposals can satisfy this principle.

CDCP Section 2.3.6 Housing Choice specifies that the proposals need to 'provide at least 10% of dwellings in any new multi-unit development as accessible or adaptable to suit residents with special needs.' This requirement should be included as a condition of approval. However, no information is provided on the mix of units or on the proposed configuration of unit types.

The current southern scheme provides a typical building layout plan for the site (Urban Design Study- 4.4) indicating that a mix of apartment types will be provided. However, the applicant should provide accessible or adaptable apartments to suit residents with special needs, as per CDCP requirements. Flexible apartment layouts are encouraged to ensure flexibility for residents and support the demographic diversity of the precinct.

Social interaction is likely to occur in well-designed communal open areas, public domain spaces and common circulation area. The shared public access from Milton Street to Wageners Oval is considered to be a positive contribution to the proposed developments and benefits the local community and the general area. A number of well-designed public open spaces is likely to increase the use of the oval and activate the circulation areas within the precinct.

GMU finds that the proposals hold the potential to fulfil this principle subject to detailed design, appropriate unit mix and unit sizes.

Principle 9: Aesthetics

Good design achieves a built form that has good proportions and a balanced composition of elements, reflecting the internal layout and structure. Good design uses a variety of materials, colours and textures.

The visual appearance of a well-designed apartment development responds to the existing or future local context, particularly desirable elements and repetitions of the streetscape.

Comment

Sparse information is provided on the architectural detailing of the proposed developments on the 2 sites in the form of architectural drawings, renderings and reference imagery for a comprehensive evaluation of this principle.

Southern Site

The architectural rendition does not yet exhibit the required levels of design excellence. The building appears institutional and out-of-character with the heritage neighbourhood's context.

The illustrations suggest façade modulation with a vertical rhythm to reflect the small lot development pattern of the existing streetscape, however the proposal's choice of material, lack of finer articulation and roof variation fails to provide a complimentary and sympathetic architectural style in-sync with the existing low-scale, vernacular building features and architecture along Milton Street.

Whilst the position of building footprints and setbacks are generally acceptable, GMU recommends the applicants to further develop and refine the architecture and building heights. We recommend that a variation of façade treatments and high quality materials to be applied to provide a balanced façade expression. Rooftop landscape features can be utilised to the edge buildings to encourage the development to blend in with its surrounds and provide a greener outlook to its adjoining neighbours.

6. Recommendations & Conclusion

GMU has considered the current proposed schemes for the two sites that together form the Milton St Precinct, within the wider and more immediate context and has taken into account the character of the surrounding context.

Both sites create Milton St Precinct, a large parcel of land capable of having a positive transformation from the existing warehouse and office uses and the existing poor boundary and street interfaces. The redevelopment of the precinct can be a good outcome for the community and the character of Milton Street.

GMU takes into account both sites to form a unified and complimentary built form strategy that responds to its existing context. Below is a revised draft Concept Master Plan recommended by GMU. The applicant has adopted some of the main design principles into their schemes. While the emphasis of a planning proposal scheme is mainly focused on massing and the general vision for the site, further details and resolution should be developed, adhering to the principles for Milton St Precinct (previously recommended and discussed in Section 3.2 of this report), CLEP, CDCP and ADG.

Figure 41- GMU Recommended Concept Masterplan (Sept 2016)

It is GMU's opinion that the proposed built form relationships are an improvement from previous schemes and that both schemes have the potential to provide s more responsive contextual fit than the existing uses on the site. However, the proposals need to address a number of recommendations discussed within this report, particularly bulk and scale, to ensure that the development will be 'visually compatible' and architecturally sympathetic in its finer design details with the existing local context of Yabsley Avenue, Milton and Trevenar Streets and the heritage conservation area. The developments should demonstrate how they provide a reasonable buffer, scale and articulation of forms when viewing from the oval and the Milton St Precinct edges.

Based on the overall configuration of footprints, location of built form on the site, the proposals have the potential to have a transformative effect on the current uses available on the site, subject to appropriate refinement on height.