

**DECISION OF 3659th COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON 15 DECEMBER 2014**

544. CIS01: North Sydney Bus Depot Strategic Review and Draft Amendment to NSDCP 2013

Report of Brad Stafford, Senior Strategic Planner - Urban Design

In response to a Notice of Motion at the Council meeting 17 March 2014 (Minute No. 96), a strategic review of the North Sydney Bus Depot site in Neutral Bay was undertaken. The purpose of the review was to inform future redevelopment resulting from any future disposal of the site by the State Government. A draft amendment to North Sydney Development Control Plan 2013 (DCP 2013) was prepared to reflect the recommendations of the strategic review.

The Strategic Review and draft DCP 2013 amendment were adopted by Council on 15 September 2014 for the purpose of public exhibition. The documents were placed on public exhibition from 2 October to 30 October 2014, during which time two submissions were received. Two changes are recommended as a result of the submissions and are highlighted in the report.

Financial implications would be considered in detail under any future proposed development concept, planning proposal and draft voluntary planning agreement.

Recommending:

1. **THAT** Council adopt the draft DCP 2013 amendment at Attachment 2.

It was moved by Councillor Baker and seconded by Councillor Beregi.

RESOLVED:

1. **THAT** matter be deferred to Closed Session.

Voting was as follows:

For/Against 11/0

Councillor	Yes	No	Councillor	Yes	No
Gibson	Y		Barbour	Y	
Reymond	Y		Morris	Y	
Clare	Y		Burke	Y	
Baker	Y		Marchandean	Y	
Carr	Y		Bevan	Y	
Beregi	Y				

598. CIS01: North Sydney Bus Depot Strategic Review and Draft Amendment to NSDCP 2013

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Financial implications would be considered in detail under any future proposed development concept, planning proposal and draft voluntary planning agreement.

Recommending:

1. **THAT** Council adopt the draft DCP 2013 amendment at Attachment 2.

A Point of Order was raised by Councillor Baker that the Mayor withdraw and apologise to the General Manager for comments made.

The Point of Order was not ruled upon.

600. CIS01: North Sydney Bus Depot Strategic Review and Draft Amendment to NSDCP 2013

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Financial implications would be considered in detail under any future proposed development concept, planning proposal and draft voluntary planning agreement.

Recommending:

1. THAT Council adopt the draft DCP 2013 amendment at Attachment 2.

The Motion was moved by Councillor Baker and seconded by Councillor Reymond.

RESOLVED:

1. THAT Council adopt the draft DCP 2013 amendment at Attachment 2.

**Report to General Manager**

Attachments:

1. Draft NSDCP 2013 Area Character Statement
2. North Sydney Bus Depot Strategic Review 2014

SUBJECT: North Sydney Bus Depot Strategic Review and Draft Amendment to NSDCP 2013

AUTHOR: Brad Stafford, Senior Strategic Planner - Urban Design

ENDORSED BY: Joseph Hill, Director City Strategy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In response to a Notice of Motion at the Council meeting 17 March 2014 (Minute No. 96), a strategic review of the North Sydney Bus Depot site in Neutral Bay was undertaken. The purpose of the review was to inform future redevelopment resulting from any future disposal of the site by the State Government. A draft amendment to North Sydney Development Control Plan 2013 (DCP 2013) was prepared to reflect the recommendations of the strategic review.

The Strategic Review and draft DCP 2013 amendment were adopted by Council on 15 September 2014 for the purpose of public exhibition. The documents were placed on public exhibition from 2 October to 30 October 2014, during which time two submissions were received. Two changes are recommended as a result of the submissions and are highlighted in the report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Financial implications would be considered in detail under any future proposed development concept, planning proposal and draft voluntary planning agreement.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** Council adopt the draft DCP 2013 amendment at Attachment 2.
-

LINK TO DELIVERY PROGRAM

The relationship with the Delivery Program is as follows:

Direction: 2. Our Built Environment

Outcome: 2.1 Infrastructure, assets and facilities that meet community needs
2.3 Vibrant, connected and well maintained streetscapes and villages that build a sense of community

BACKGROUND

The North Sydney Bus Depot is a State Government-owned property providing parking and maintenance services to its North Shore bus fleet. The site is located at 359 Ernest Street, Neutral Bay, within the Neutral Bay Town Centre as defined under North Sydney Development Control Plan 2013.



Figure 1: Subject Site

Council, at its meeting of 17 March 2014, considered a Notice of Motion and resolved (Min. No. 96):

THAT Council urgently undertake preliminary strategic planning analysis and assessment to identify appropriate development controls including height, setbacks, density and defined public benefits for the North Sydney Bus Depot site known as 359 Ernest Street, Neutral Bay.

The above Notice of Motion and resolution of Council was made in response to Urban Growth NSW, a State Government development corporation, identifying the subject site in Neutral Bay as an urban renewal development site and calling for registrations of interest for its future redevelopment.

An earlier draft of the Review was distributed to Councillors in late June 2014, with a Councillor briefing held on 1 July 2014. This version of the Planning Review reflects discussions held during that briefing.

CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS

Community engagement was undertaken in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Protocol.

SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT

The sustainability implications were considered and reported on during the initiation phase of this project.

DETAIL

Two submissions were received during the exhibition period and are addressed below. Key points are noted below in italics with staff responses following.

Submission 1

The submission is made on behalf of the owners of the adjoining property - 116 Military Road, also known as the Big Bear site. It states (in italics):

The bus depot cannot be redeveloped in isolation. A more considered outcome could be achieved if the site was redeveloped together with the Big Bear site. The collective redevelopment of the sites would allow for well-designed, integrated through site links, the resolution of issues related to vehicular access, particularly on Military Road, and opportunities to incorporate on-site bus drop off and pick up movements.

Although the proposed Area Character Statement mentions amalgamation of the two sites, this should be further acknowledged in the mapping and principles.

The resolution of Council called for an urgent response to the expressions of interest process initiated by the State Government for the Bus Depot site.

The potential for the Bus Depot and Big Bear sites to amalgamate and redevelop concurrently, and the potential for key principles to be realised under such a scenario are acknowledged in draft provision P5 of the Area Character Statement. It is not agreed however that redevelopment of the subject site cannot occur if the sites are not amalgamated.

Notwithstanding this, the draft Area Character Statement does not preclude amalgamation from occurring. The intent of the Strategic Review was to identify broad principles to guide future consideration of the Bus Depot site given its uncertain future. While it is considered that these principles and the subsequent draft DCP provisions are equally applicable to an amalgamated site, it is acknowledged that other planning considerations specific to the Big Bear site may be beyond the scope of this exercise.

In acknowledging the opportunities for amalgamation with the Big Bear site, it is considered that such an outcome and subsequent redevelopment should be informed by the masterplanning of the sites, extending the entire street block.

It is noted that the site is currently zoned SP2 - Depot, which significantly restricts its redevelopment potential. A masterplan addressing the principles identified in the attached draft DCP amendment will provide a suitable framework for any future assessment of a planning proposal.

Staff Recommendation: That the draft DCP be amended to insert the following provision: P6 Redevelopment of an amalgamated Bus Depot and Big Bear site should be informed by a masterplan for the entire street block.

The anticipated yields are substantially less than those possible under a consolidated scheme.

The Strategic Review was undertaken specifically for the Bus Depot site and did not attempt to anticipate yields for an amalgamated development scenario. Development yields for either or both sites proposed in a future planning proposal/development concept would be assessed against a masterplan referred to in the above recommendation. Principles regarding transition of scale and solar access would still be likely to apply under an amalgamated scenario.

The inclusion of assumptions around works to the Big Bear site when it has been excluded from the draft DCP amendment is not supported.

The intent of draft provision P12 was to ensure that redevelopment of the site facilitated improved access to Military Road, which would ideally occur via the Big Bear site, being the most direct route. It is acknowledged that the provision may read as presuming this would be immediately viable or would meet the approval of the Big Bear owners.

The Big Bear site has not been excluded from the DCP, with provision P5 drafted to recognise the increased opportunities of amalgamation of that and the subject site. It is considered prudent to specifically mention the possibility of linking the two sites to improve access and circulation.

However, the provision should be amended to clarify that redevelopment of the subject site - in isolation or part of an amalgamated concept - includes measures that provide immediate or facilitate future improved pedestrian links between the subject site and Military Road generally.

Staff Recommendation: amend draft provision P12 to read “Create safe and active pedestrian links between Ernest Street and Military Road, particularly where possible via the Big Bear site”.

Submission 2

There is a dearth of public parking in Neutral Bay. The redevelopment of such a large space needs to make adequate provision for public parking. This is Council’s golden opportunity to catch up on inadequate parking requirements for past DAs.

A public car park was not considered as an option in the community needs analysis of the Strategic Review. Council has a long-standing policy of providing an expanded public car park for the Neutral Bay Town Centre on the site of the existing Grosvenor Lane Car Park, around 350m from the subject site.

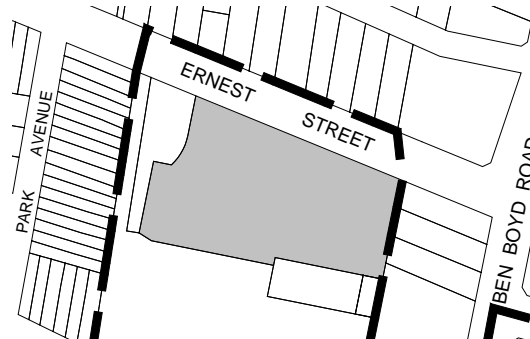
Car parking for future redevelopment proposals would be applied in accordance with required rates under DCP 2013, and vary according to proposed use. It is noted also that car parks are a permissible use in the mixed use zone (pending a rezoning of the subject site) and therefore may be developed should a market exist. It is considered that public car parking not form a public benefit priority for the site.

CONCLUSION

The recommended amendments to the draft DCP Character Statement resulting from the submissions received aim to improve the clarity and operation of the draft provisions. The proposed amendments are not considered to require re-exhibition of the draft document.



5.0.1 North Sydney Bus Depot



Diversity of activities, facilities, opportunities and services

- P1 Continued operation of the bus depot as important public transport infrastructure.
- P2 If the bus depot ceases to operate, then the site should be used for mixed use development.
- P3 Incorporate community functions in the form of open space, through site links and / or other community uses.
- P4 Development provides active frontages to Ernest Street and internal public spaces.
- P5 Amalgamation with Big Bear site provides further opportunities for public benefit.
- P5P6 P6 Redevelopment of an amalgamated Bus Depot and Big Bear site should be informed by a masterplan for the entire street block.

Form, massing and scale

- P6P7 Transition scale of built form down from central / southern portion of site to surrounding lower scale development and heritage conservation area.
- P7P8 Maximise solar access to internal public spaces.

Public Benefit

- P8P9 Provide public benefit with any proposed change to existing planning controls.
- P9P10 Affordable housing is a public benefit priority for the site.

Podiums

- P10P11 Podium of 10m (three storeys) to Ernest Street.

Ecologically Sustainable Development

- P11P12 In implementing ESD best practice, explore opportunities to incorporate ESD demonstration project in redevelopment.

Access

- P12P13 Create safe and active pedestrian links between Ernest Street and Military Road, particularly where possible via the Big Bear site. ~~Create safe and active pedestrian link(s) between Ernest Street and Military Road (via Big Bear site).~~
- P13P14 Vehicular access minimises the impact on the flow of traffic along Ernest Street.

Noise

- P14P15 Elevations of buildings fronting Ernest Street are to be designed and incorporate design features to minimise traffic noise transmission (e.g. the use of vegetation,



North Sydney Development Control Plan 2013

Area Character Statements - North Cremorne Planning Area

cavity brick walls, double glazing, minimal glazing, solid core doors, concrete floors, enclosed balconies etc).

Heritage

~~P15~~P16 Protect and respond architecturally to existing heritage items.

~~P16~~P17 Subsurface archaeological material is assessed prior to excavation.

North Sydney Bus Depot

STRATEGIC REVIEW



Strategic Planning October 2014

North Sydney Bus Depot Strategic Review

North Sydney Bus Depot Strategic Review

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North Sydney Bus Depot Strategic Review

1. Background and Need for Review

In response to Notice of Motion NoM01 No. 09/14 by Councillor Baker regarding the North Sydney Bus Depot site - 359 Ernest Street, Neutral Bay, Council, at its meeting of 17 March 2014, resolved among other things:

1.THAT Council urgently undertake preliminary strategic planning analysis and assessment to identify appropriate development controls including height, setbacks, density and defined public benefits for the North Sydney Bus Depot site known as 359 Ernest Street, Neutral Bay.

The above NoM and resolution of Council was made in response to Urban Growth NSW – a State Government development corporation – identifying the North Sydney Bus Depot site in Neutral Bay as an urban renewal development site and calling for registrations of interest for its future redevelopment.

This strategic review aims to respond to the above resolution and inform Council's further thinking on the future of the site. The Review provides a comprehensive site, policy, planning and capacity analysis and establishes a number of principles to guide any future redevelopment proposal and inform Council's consideration of it.

2. Site Location and Setting

2.1 REGIONAL CONTEXT

The subject site is located at the western end of the Neutral Bay Town Centre as defined by North Sydney Development Control Plan 2013, with the residential suburbs of Cammeray and Neutral Bay to its north and south respectively. The site lies between the two main arterial road routes linking the lower Northern Beaches and Mosman with North Sydney and the Sydney CBD, and is around 300m east of the Warringah Freeway. Cammeray, Forsyth and St Leonards Parks are all within 1km of the subject site.

Figure 1

Regional Context

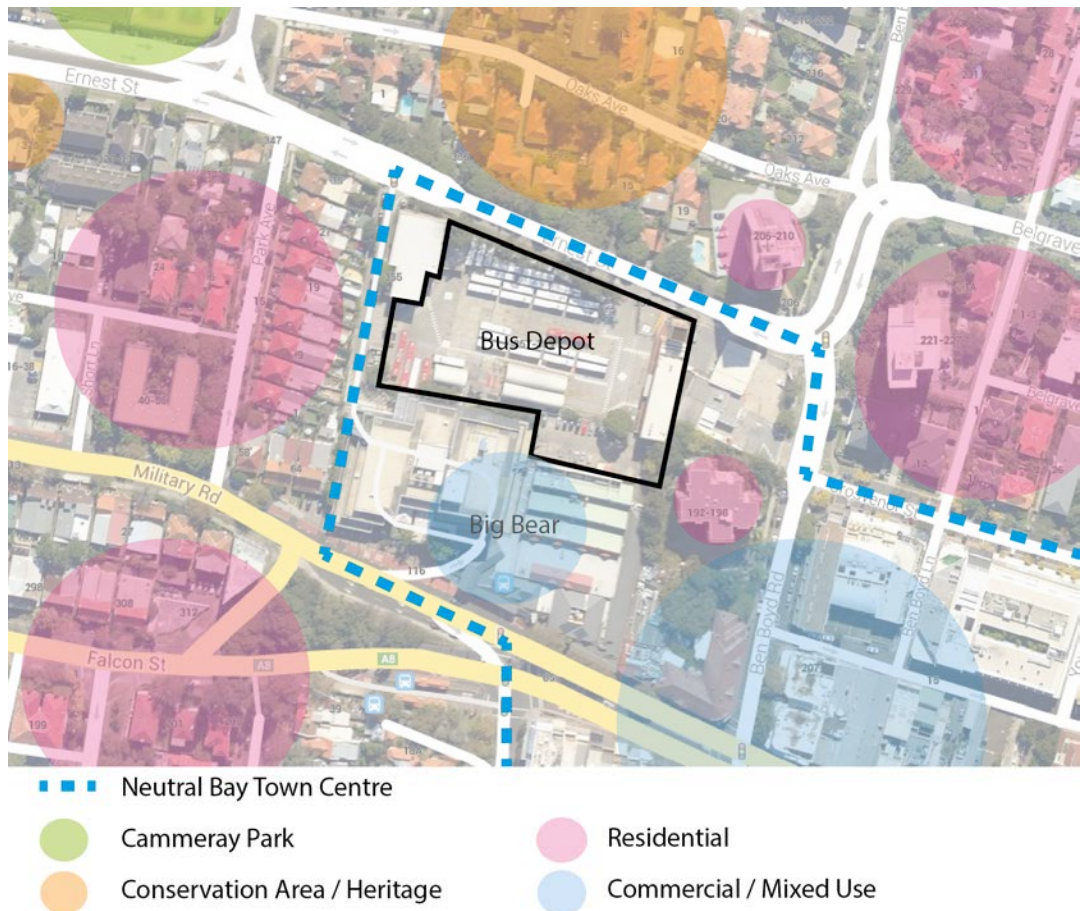


North Sydney Bus Depot Strategic Review

2.2 LOCAL CONTEXT

The subject site is bound by the Big Bear shopping and commercial centre to its south and west and by a petrol station and multi-storey residential flat building to its east. To the north across Ernest Street lies the Oaks Avenue Conservation Area, characterised by low density detached dwellings. Low density housing is also located on Park Avenue to the west of the subject site within the same street block.

Figure 2
Local Context

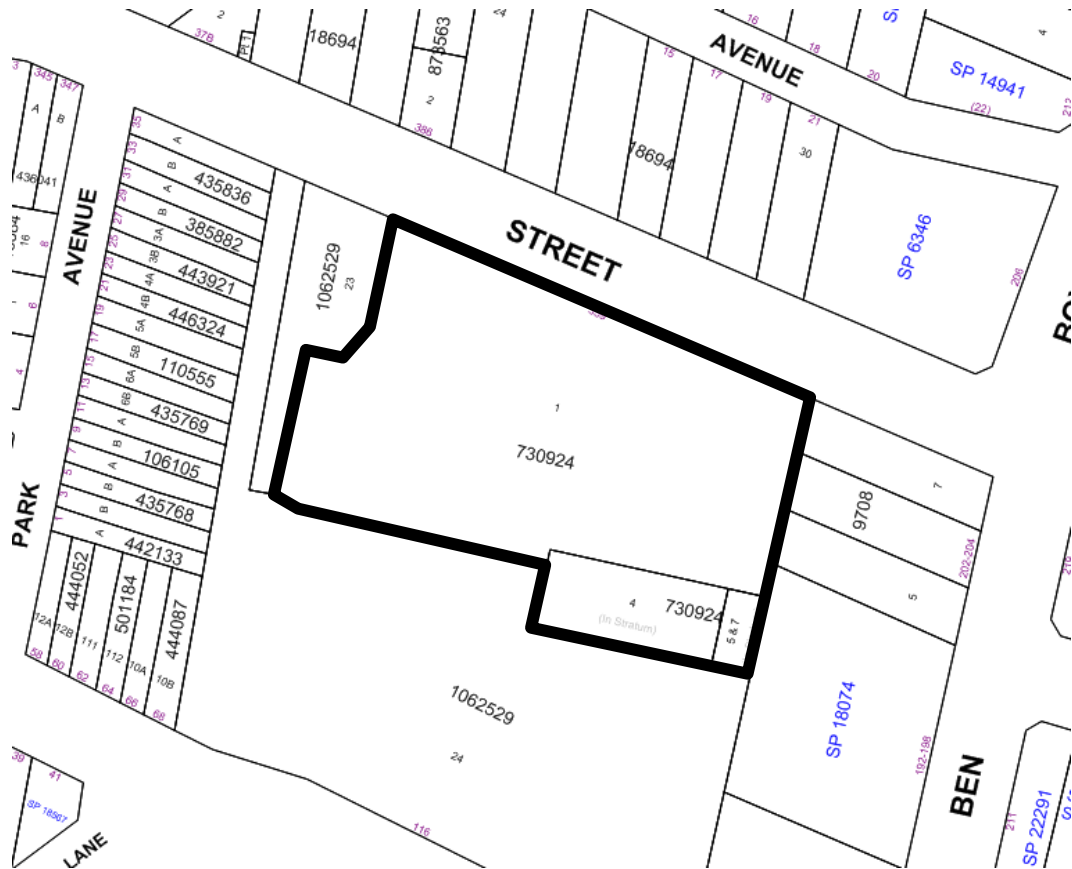


3. Site and Context Analysis

3.1 SITE DESCRIPTION

The subject site has an area of 7,403m² and is comprised of four separate lots – Lots 1, 4, 5 & 7 DP 730924. Lots 4, 5 & 7 form part of a stratum subdivision of the land, under which car parking and access facilities for the adjoining Big Bear Shopping Centre site to the south exist above a car parking / storage area used by the subject site. The site has a 103m frontage to Ernest Street, which is classified as a Regional Road.

Figure 3
Subject Site



North Sydney Bus Depot Strategic Review

3.2 TRANSPORT

Road Network

The subject site lies on the southern side of Ernest Street, a classified regional road and part of the arterial linkage between the lower Northern Beaches / Mosman and North Sydney and the Sydney Harbour Bridge. The key component of the above linkage – Military Road, runs to the south of the subject site.

Public Transport

The study area is well-served by buses, with services to and from the Northern Beaches, North Sydney and Sydney City passing close to the site on Military Road. North Sydney Railway Station is 2km from the study area. The NSW Long Term Transport Masterplan of December 2012 identifies Military Road as a ‘strategic corridor with high constraints’, citing the north/south journey between the Northern Beaches and Sydney City as the second-slowest commuter route in Sydney. Despite this, the State Government has recently announced that it wishes to pursue a bus rapid transport solution for this corridor. This presents a number of potential impacts for Military Road and the Town Centre, particularly relating to increased bus traffic and extended or permanent clearways for the corridor.

Active Transport

The study area is not connected to any recognised bicycle route, but is within reasonable distance of on-road bicycle routes linking the local area with Mosman, the Sydney Harbour foreshore, North Sydney and to Sydney City beyond.

Figure 4

Transport Map



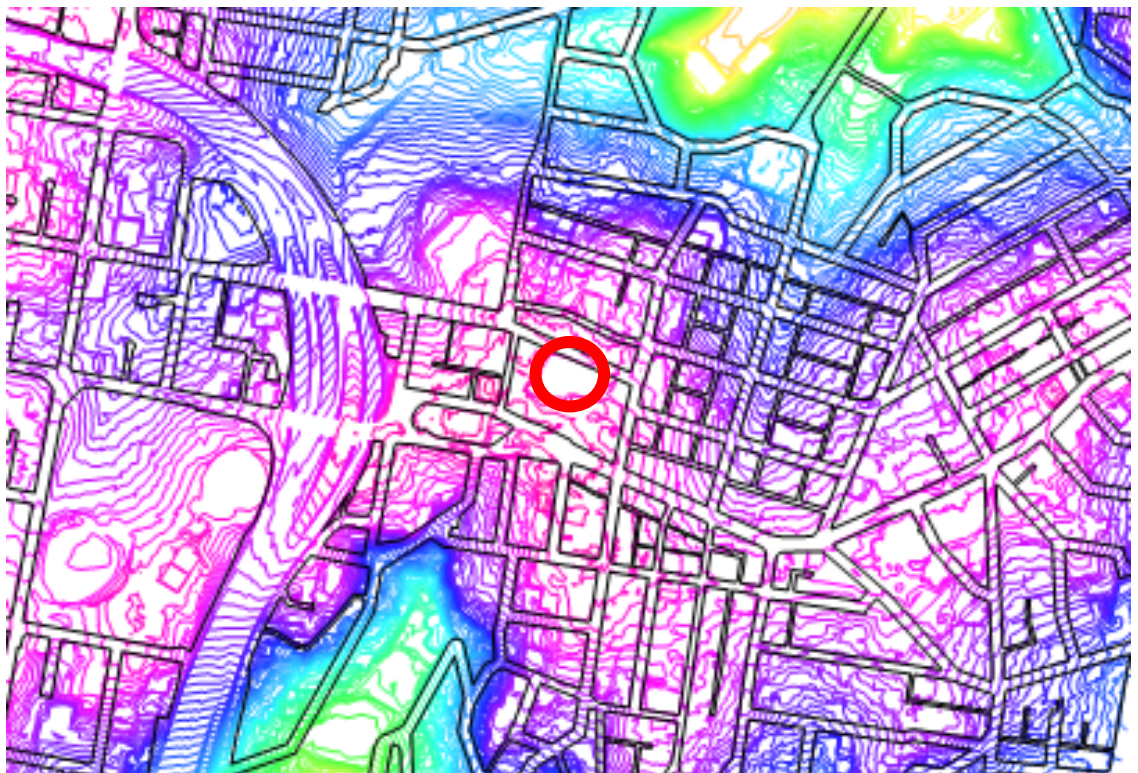
North Sydney Bus Depot Strategic Review

3.3 TOPOGRAPHY

The subject site lies atop a ridge along which Military Road and the Neutral Bay Town Centre runs generally east-west. The land slopes away from this high point to the north towards Willoughby Bay and to the south towards Neutral Bay and Sydney Harbour.

Figure 5

*Contour Map
Extract*



North Sydney Bus Depot Strategic Review

3.4 OPEN SPACE

Although the Neutral Bay Town Centre suffers from a distinct lack of quality public space for shoppers, residents and local workers to relax / eat lunch etc., the subject site itself is close to Cammeray Park. Slightly further afield lie Forsyth, St Leonards and Primrose Parks.

Figure 6

*Significant Areas
of Open Space
(400m radius
shown)*



North Sydney Bus Depot Strategic Review

3.5 TRAFFIC

Military Road is the key arterial route linking Mosman and the Northern Beaches with the Warringah Freeway and the southern side of the Harbour. The subject site fronts Ernest Street, which acts as a secondary route performing similar functions to Military Road, particularly during peak times.

To the east of the site, Ben Boyd Road caters for a moderate volume of local and regional north / south traffic. Park Avenue to the west of the site caters for a relatively low volume of mostly local traffic, albeit more than what might be expected from a street of this nature, owing to it linking the two busiest roads in the vicinity.

Figure 7

Indicative Traffic Intensity



North Sydney Bus Depot Strategic Review

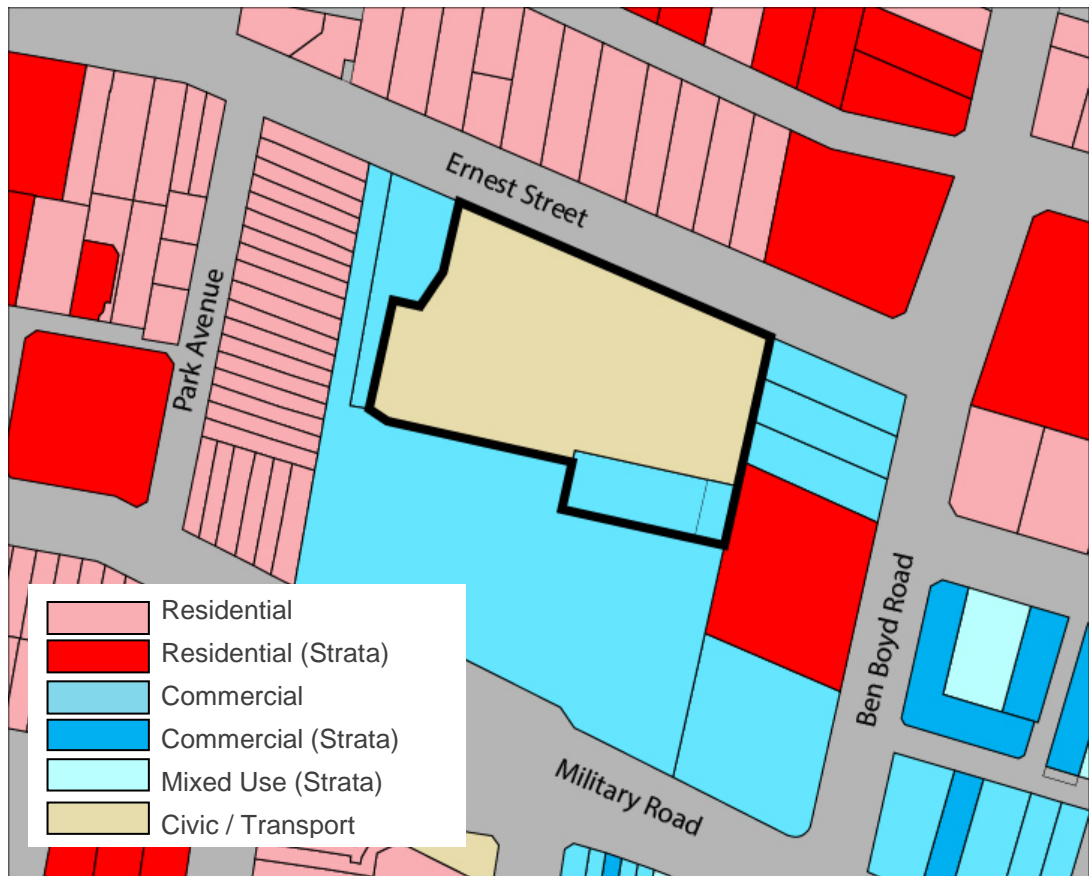
3.6 LAND USE AND OWNERSHIP TYPE

The subject site comprises a Transport NSW bus depot and associated buildings for administrative and maintenance purposes. A mix of commercial, retail and residential land uses exist within the vicinity.

The street block on which the subject site sits is largely unencumbered by strata subdivisions. Further afield, strata subdivisions of commercial, residential and mixed use buildings are scattered throughout the area.

Figure 8

*Land Use and
Ownership Type*



North Sydney Bus Depot Strategic Review

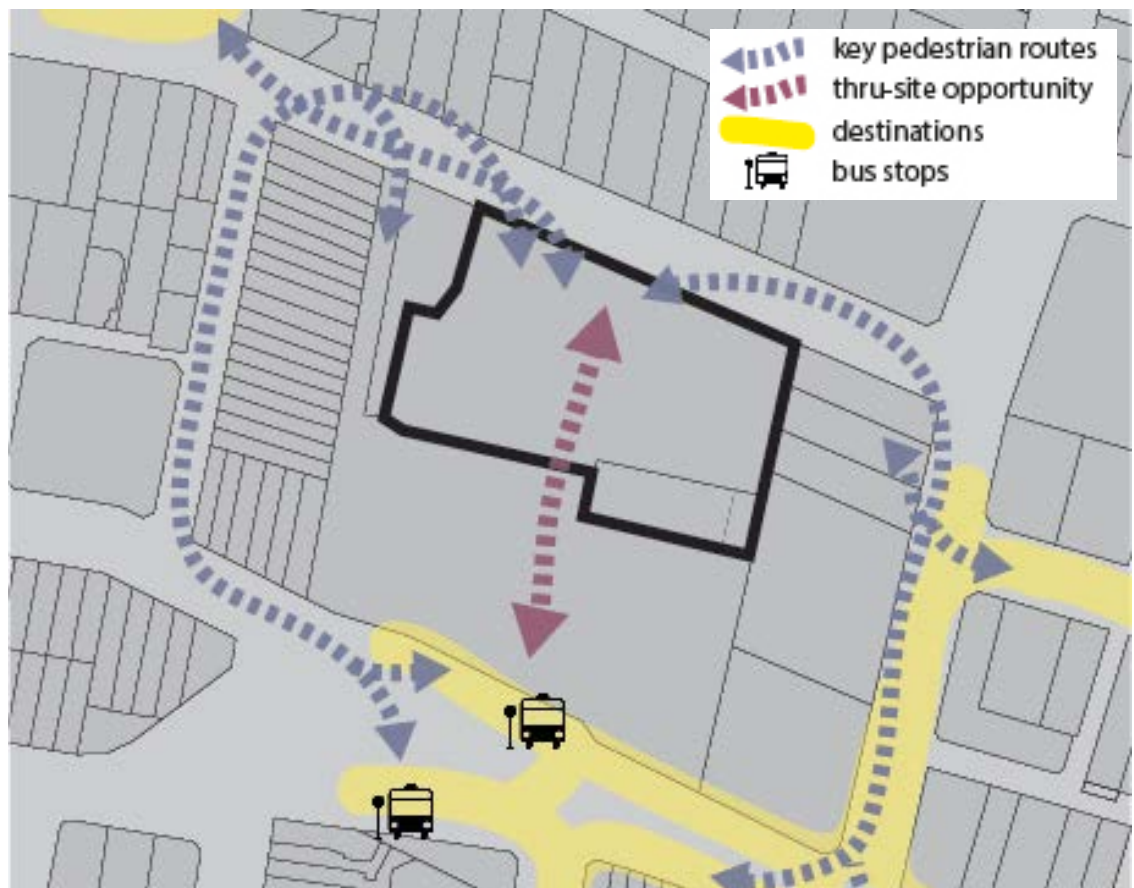
3.7 PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

Key pedestrian destinations include the retail and commercial tenancies of Military Road and Grosvenor Street (including the Big Bear Shopping Centre), and public transport stops along Military Road. The nearby Cammeray Park facilities are a pedestrian destination for recreational activities.

Access to destinations is provided primarily if not solely by footpaths. A linkage from the site through Big Bear to Military Road would be highly desirable and provide more direct access to Military Road transport from the site.

Figure 9

*Pedestrian
Circulation and
Destinations*



North Sydney Bus Depot Strategic Review

3.8 ACTIVE STREET FRONTAGES

The subject site forms part of what is a particularly non-active portion of Ernest Street, with the bus depot fence forming the main frontage. The northern side of Ernest Street is made up largely of the rear of Oaks Avenue properties.

Much of the surrounding area, especially to the north east, north and west, has residential frontages which relate to the street to varying degrees.

The most active frontages can be found within the Neutral Bay Town Centre in which retail and other service functions dominate at ground level.

Figure 10
*Street Frontage
Activation*



North Sydney Bus Depot Strategic Review

3.9 EXISTING BUILT FORM

The scale and nature of the built form of the subject site and surrounds varies greatly. The site itself, being primarily for the parking of buses, has minimal built form, comprising a two-level administrative building and single-level maintenance sheds. The heritage water tower is the tallest structure on the site, measuring around 13m.

To the south of the site sits the Big Bear retail and commercial centre, the office tower of which rises to almost 30m at its highest floor level.

To the north and west, single and two storey semi-detached and detached residential buildings dominate, while to the east, multi-storey residential flat buildings in garden settings dominate the skyline.

The Neutral Bay Town Centre is home to a range of built forms, but is dominated by traditional main street subdivisions with 2-3 storey retail / commercial buildings, and newer 4-5 storey mixed use buildings.

Figure 11

Existing built form, looking SE



Figure 12

Existing built form, looking NW



North Sydney Bus Depot Strategic Review

3.10 ZONING

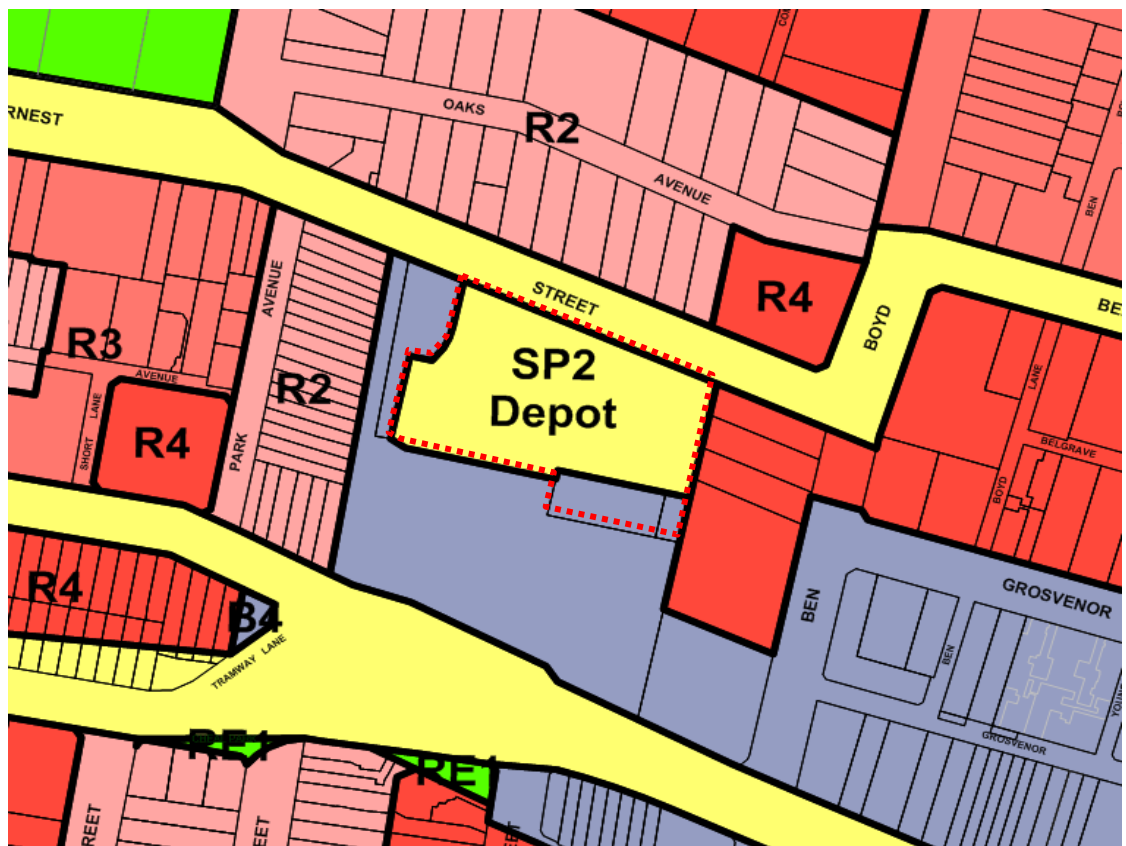
The subject site is zoned SP2 Depot under North Sydney LEP 2013, except for a portion at its south eastern corner which is zoned B4 Mixed Use and subject to stratum subdivision.

The Big Bear shopping centre and commercial site to the south is zoned B4 Mixed Use, while lots to the immediate east of the site are zoned R4 High Density Residential.

R2 Low Density Residential zonings exist to the north and west of the subject site.

Figure 13

LEP 2013
Zoning Map



North Sydney Bus Depot Strategic Review

3.11 HEIGHT CONTROLS

Under NSLEP 2013, the subject site has a height limit of 16m (O2 on Figure 14), which is consistent with much of the Neutral Bay Town Centre, including the adjoining Big Bear site.

The R4 High Density Residential zoned properties to the east have a 12m height control (M) while R2 Low Density Residential zones to the north and west have an 8.5m height control (I).

Figure 14
LEP 2013
Height of
Buildings Map



North Sydney Bus Depot Strategic Review

3.12 HERITAGE

Both the subject site and the adjoining Big Bear site are subject to heritage listings under NSLEP 2013. The sites form the former tram depots that serviced the lower North Shore up until the 1950s. The subject site contains a heritage water tower in its north eastern corner, while the Big Bear site contains a tram shed and servicing building.

Beyond the subject site to the north lies the Oaks Avenue Conservation Area (red hatching on Figure 13), while to the west there exists a conglomeration of residential heritage items of local significance.

Figure 15

LEP 2013
Heritage Map



**Figures 16
& 17 (far
right)**

Tram Depot
c. 1950s



Figure 18

Tram Depot
c. 1920



4. Statutory and Policy Context

This section of the Planning Study seeks to inform decisions on the future of the subject site through a review of statutory documents applying to that area, including adopted Council policies regarding the need for public infrastructure.

4.1 STATE STRATEGIES

Under the current Metropolitan Plan for Sydney 2036, as well as the Draft Inner North Subregional Strategy, the subject site sits within the Global Arc – the global economic corridor connecting Macquarie Park, Chatswood, St Leonards, North Sydney, Sydney City, Pyrmont-Ultimo, Sydney Airport and Port Botany. The corridor is the preferred location for higher order global and regional economic activity. The subject site however does not lie within an identified strategic centre within the corridor.

The Strategies mandate the increase of employment capacity within the sub-region, of which North Sydney is a part. This increase in employment is expected to be realised predominantly within the North Sydney Centre commercial core and mixed use areas, and to a lesser extent in other mixed use areas within the LGA.

In terms of residential development, the Strategies mandate a housing target of 5,500 additional dwellings in North Sydney by 2031. The majority of this target is expected to be delivered within existing mixed use areas and to some extent by infill development within other residential zones.

A new Draft Metropolitan Strategy for Sydney 2031 was released for consultation purposes in March 2013. When new regional targets are implemented, the above figures may be altered.

North Sydney Bus Depot Strategic Review

4.2 NORTH SYDNEY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (RDS) 2009

The RDS establishes the strategic framework for housing in North Sydney to 2031. It formed the basis for residential zonings and development standards during the drafting of North Sydney LEP 2013.

A total of 267 additional dwellings were approved in the suburb of Neutral Bay Town Centre between 2001 and 2012. The RDS estimates that the suburb of Neutral Bay holds capacity for an additional 860 dwellings by 2031 under the provisions of LEP 2013, 509 of which exist in areas zoned B4 Mixed Use.

4.3 LOCAL PLANNING CONTROLS

The following environmental planning instruments and development control plans are of particular relevance to the subject site, although it is noted that this list is not exhaustive:

- SEPP 55 – Remediation of Land
- SEPP (Infrastructure) 2007
- SEPP (State and Regional Development) 2011
- SREP (Sydney Harbour Catchment) 2005
- North Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2013
- North Sydney Development Control Plan 2013

4.3.1 SEPP 55 – Remediation of Land

There is potential for parts of the site to be contaminated. In particular, there are 4 underground fuel storage tanks and chemicals for maintaining and cleaning buses would have been stored and used on the subject site. In addition, given the age of some of the buildings there is potential for the site to contain hazardous building materials (e.g. asbestos). These issues would need to be addressed in any future development application and or planning proposal.

North Sydney Bus Depot Strategic Review

4.3.2 SEPP (Infrastructure) 2007

While the current zoning of the site permits its use as a bus depot, the SEPP (Infrastructure) 2007 permits bus depots with consent, even where the proposed operator is someone other than a public authority.

The Infrastructure SEPP also enables a number of other infrastructure-related uses to be permitted on the subject site. The following table lists the additional uses permissible on those parts of the site zoned SP2 – Infrastructure and B4 Mixed Use.

Zone	SP2 – Infrastructure	B4 – Mixed Use
Permissible development types	Air transport facilities, correctional centres, educational establishments, electricity generating works, emergency services facilities, health services facilities, public administration buildings, railways and rail infrastructure facilities, research and monitoring stations, road infrastructure facilities, sewerage systems, telecommunication facilities, waste or resource management facilities, Water supply systems	Correctional centres, educational establishments, electricity generating works, emergency services facilities, health services facilities, public administration buildings, road infrastructure facilities, telecommunication facilities

North Sydney Bus Depot Strategic Review

4.3.3 North Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2013

Zoning and Permissible Land Uses

The subject site is predominantly zoned *SP2 – Infrastructure – Depot* with a small portion of the south eastern corner of the site zoned *B4 – Mixed Use*.

The objectives and land use tables for the relevant zones are as follows:

Zone B4 Mixed Use

1 Objectives of zone

- *To provide a mixture of compatible land uses.*
- *To integrate suitable business, office, residential, retail and other development in accessible locations so as to maximise public transport patronage and encourage walking and cycling.*
- *To create interesting and vibrant mixed use centres with safe, high quality urban environments with residential amenity.*
- *To maintain existing commercial space and allow for residential development in mixed use buildings, with non-residential uses on the lower levels and residential uses above those levels.*

2 Permitted without consent

Nil

3 Permitted with consent

Amusement centres; Backpackers' accommodation; Boarding houses; Car parks; Child care centres; Commercial premises; Community facilities; Educational establishments; Entertainment facilities; Function centres; Hostels; Hotel or motel accommodation; Information and education facilities; Medical centres; Passenger transport facilities; Places of public worship; Recreation areas; Recreation facilities (indoor); Registered clubs; Respite day care centres; Restricted premises; Roads; Seniors housing; Serviced apartments; Sex services premises; Shop top housing; Signage; Vehicle repair stations; Veterinary hospitals

North Sydney Bus Depot Strategic Review

4 Prohibited

Any development not specified in item 2 or 3

Zone SP2 Infrastructure**1 Objectives of zone**

- *To provide for infrastructure and related uses.*
- *To prevent development that is not compatible with or that may detract from the provision of infrastructure.*

2 Permitted without consent

Environmental protection works

3 Permitted with consent

Roads; The purpose shown on the Land Zoning Map, including any development that is ordinarily incidental or ancillary to development for that purpose

4 Prohibited

Any development not specified in item 2 or 3

The extent of uses permissible on that part of the subject site zoned *B4 – Mixed Use* is extensive, enabling either non-residential development or a combination of non-residential and residential uses. In contrast, the extent of uses permissible on that part of the subject site zoned *SP2 - Infrastructure* is practically limited to a bus depot only.

A Planning Proposal would be required to change the extent of uses occurring over those portions of the subject site zoned *SP2 - Infrastructure*.

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CI.5.3 - Development near zone boundaries

This clause enables development that is permissible with consent on land adjoining land zoned SP1 Special Activity or SP2 Infrastructure to be undertaken with development consent, but only where that development is undertaken within 25m of the zone boundary.

That part of the subject site zoned *SP2 – Infrastructure*, is adjoined by land zoned:

- *SP2 – Infrastructure* to the north,
- *R4 - High Density Residential* to the east, and
- *B4 – Mixed Use zone* to the south and west.

That part of the subject site zoned *SP2 – Infrastructure* is approximately 115m in width and 60m in depth. Accordingly, the entire part of the site zoned *SP2 – Infrastructure* would need to be rezoned to enable something other than a bus depot to be constructed across the entirety of this site.

Principal Development Standards

The following principal development standards apply to the subject site:

- Maximum Height: 16m
- Non-Residential FSR Range: 0.5:1 – 2:1 (Area 6)

4.3.4 North Sydney Development Control Plan 2013

Any proposed development on the subject site would be largely subject to the following sections of the DCP:

- Part B: Section 1 – *Residential Development*
- Part B: Section 2 – *Commercial and Mixed Use Development*
- Part B: Section 3 – *Non-Residential Development in Residential Zones* (as it relates to that part of the site zoned (SP2 – Infrastructure)
- Part B: Section 10 – *Car Parking and Transport*

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- Part B: Section 13 – *Heritage and Conservation*
- Part C: Section 5 – *North Cremorne Planning Area* (in particular, subsections 5.1 Neutral Bay and Cremorne Town Centres, and 5.1.4 Tram Depot)

Section 5.1.4 states Council's preference for the bus depot to remain as such, but that should its use change, then a mixed use development is preferred. Importantly, the Section also requires that mixed use developments be located around public open space and landscaping.

Other sections of the DCP are also likely to apply depending upon the nature of any development proposed on the site.

Development on land zoned *SP2 – Infrastructure* needs to adopt the controls of the most restrictive adjoining or adjacent zone. The most restrictive zone adjoining the bus depot site is the R2 – Low Density Residential zone, which is located to the north of the site on the opposite side of Ernest Street.

The principle DCP provisions that would apply to the subject site are identified in the following table.

Development Control	Requirement
Site Coverage	Max 30% of site area (R4 is 45%)
Landscaped area	Min 50% of site area (40% in R4)
Form Massing and Scale	4-5 storeys
	Mixed use buildings located around public open space and landscaping
Frontage	Minimum of 25-30m
Access	To provide pedestrian links between Ernest Street and Military Road

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Development Control		Requirement
Setbacks	Front	0m
	Side & Rear	Minimum of 3m where adjoining residential development Otherwise a minimum of: Ground floor – 900mm First Floor – 1.5m Upper floors – 2.5m
Podiums		10m to Ernest Street with 3m setback above Provide adequate podium setbacks were they adjoin residential zones.
Car parking and access		DCP 2013
Parking	Non Residential	1 / 60sqm
	Residential	Studio / 1 bed: 0.5 / dwelling 2+ bed: 1 / dwelling Motorcycle: 1 / 10 car spaces
	Supermarkets	4 / 100sqm

5. Community Needs Analysis

To establish what, if any, public infrastructure should be considered for the subject site, a review of Council's needs and priorities is required. The review draws on the following strategies and studies:

- North Sydney Open Space Provision Strategy 2009
- North Sydney Recreational Needs Study 2005
- North Sydney Social Plan 2008
- North Sydney Affordable Housing Strategy 2008
- North Sydney Children's Services Strategic Plan 2010
- North Sydney Arts and Cultural Strategic Plan 2012-2017
- NSROC Regional Community Ageing Priorities Document
- North Sydney Delivery Program 2013/2014
- Neighbourhood Parks Plan of Management 2010
- Inner City Mayors' Group Study on Affordable Housing
- Section 94 Contributions Plan 2006
- DCP 2013

The following tables assess key infrastructure / public benefit types against established identification of needs, and their suitability for on-site provision.

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5.1 EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

Strategy / Study / Resolution

Council Resolution 17 March 2014 in response to Notice of Motion 9/14 by Councillor Baker. Council resolved particularly:

THAT the Acting General Manager write to the Premier, the Minister for Education and the local member Mrs Jillian Skinner drawing attention to the suitability of this site to provide a badly needed local high school and asking that consideration be given to this use in priority to all others. The letter should note:

- Previous public statement by an Education Department spokesperson to the effect that they have had a task force scouring the lower North Shore for suitable school sites. [Public meeting at Willoughby Girls High School in late 2012.]
- That the new high school on the relatively limited Bradfield College site announced in the 2013 State Budget does not fully address the need for a local high school as it is only envisaged to cater to Years 7 to 10. That in any event, far greater capacity for local high school students is required than is provided by the Bradfield College site.
- That the North Sydney Local Government Area [LGA] previously lost two high schools, being Crows Nest Boys and Cremorne Girls High Schools and the small Bradfield College site does not even equate to one of these larger campuses in terms of capacity.
- That the presence of two selective high schools in this area, drawing approximately 90% of their students from out of the area, does not address the needs of the local community due to departmental policy being opposed to partial de-selection of such schools to address local needs.
- That North Sydney Council has done its utmost to assist the State Government in the provision of more local schools by negotiating the long term lease of the former Anzac Club site for this purpose rather than selling it for development.
- That the State Government should consider following this example.
- That the significant Bus Depot site may represent the last real opportunity for the State Government to address the dire need for more school capacity in this area.
- That due to infill development encouraged, indeed required, by the State Government in the North Sydney LGA, the need for more school capacity will only increase in future. If effect is to be given to Government policy requiring more housing

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	<p>density, more infrastructure must also be provided.</p> <p>4. THAT the Acting General Manager and Mayor seek to meet with the Minister for Planning and the Minister Assisting the Premier on Infrastructure to discuss the issues raised and a Councillors briefing be held to inform Councillors of the outcome of the meeting.</p>
Specified Needs	Public High School
Suitability for On-Site Provision	<p>Educational Establishments are a permissible use on the site under LEP 2013 and the Infrastructure SEPP. The site is in a central location within the LGA and has excellent public transport linkages, with major bus routes nearby.</p> <p>The size of the site needs to be considered, as it is significantly smaller than the average suburban high school site. A school on the site would most likely need to be of a multi storey typology in order to provide adequate passive open space. The provision of a playing field or similar would not be an option however, and alternatives, such as the use of nearby Cammeray Park, would need to be explored.</p>
Comment	<p>The future use of the land largely rests with the State Government who owns the site. Given the expressions of interest process recently undertaken, it could be assumed that the highest and best use would be pursued for the site, especially considering that the redevelopment or relocation of bus depot facilities would require significant financial investment.</p> <p>The Minister for Education advised Council on 27 May 2014 that the Department of Education and Communities does not deem the site suitable for school uses.</p>

5.2 OPEN SPACE (PASSIVE e.g. park)

Strategy / Study	North Sydney Open Space Provision Strategy 2009
Specified Needs / Details	The Strategy acknowledges the deficiency of open space along the Military Road corridor (see figure below) and that this is likely to be exacerbated by planned increases in residential population in the mixed use zone. These areas are therefore identified as being in need of new open space.

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Suitability for On-Site Provision	The site is less than 200 metres from the nearest park or reserve of reasonable size and good quality (Cammeray Park) and is within the Priority 3 classification for the provision of new open space. At 7,403m ² , the site is potentially capable of accommodating a reasonably significant park. Opportunity exists also for a small, high capacity neighbourhood park integrated with other uses.
Comment	<p>Given the site's proximity to Cammeray Park and its location within the Neutral Bay Town Centre, the subject site is considered an unlikely site for a new stand-alone park. This is especially true given the State Government's request for expressions of interest in redeveloping the site.</p> <p>There is scope however to integrate some amount of public space and improved amenity within a future development on the site, particularly if the opportunity to provide a pedestrian connection to the Big Bear Shopping Centre site is pursued. Should the Big Bear site also be redeveloped, and in conjunction with the subject site, an excellent opportunity exists to provide a significant piece of open space within the Town Centre.</p>

5.3 OPEN SPACE (ACTIVE)

Strategy / Study	Recreational Needs Study 2005
Specified Needs	<p>The RNS 2005 does not specifically mention this site.</p> <p>The RNS 2005 finds that there is high demand for quality sporting fields and other recreational facilities, such as tennis and basketball courts, in North Sydney and that many of Council's facilities are at or near capacity.</p>
Suitability for On-Site Provision	<p>The site is within reasonable proximity to significant open space and recreational infrastructure (Cammeray Park). Whilst space for new sports fields, especially for team sports such as football, cricket, hockey etc, are lacking, the subject site cannot provide for these uses.</p> <p>The site is capable of supporting active recreational uses such as an indoor sports centre or the like.</p>

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Comment	<p>The RNS 2005 is nearing the end of its utility. In December 2013 Council endorsed the preparation of a new RNS which is due for completion in late 2014.</p> <p>Given the ownership and current status of the site, the provision of active recreation facilities would likely be provided only as part of a wider mixed use development in which such a use was deemed financially feasible.</p>
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5.4 OPEN SPACE - COMMUNITY GARDEN	
Strategy / Study	<p>Neighbourhood Parks Plan of Management 2010</p> <p>Delivery Program 2013/14</p> <p>North Sydney Council Community Gardens Guidelines 2012</p>
Specified Needs	<p>The Neighbourhood Parks Plan of Management lists the establishment of new community gardens in appropriate locations in North Sydney as an objective.</p> <p>The Community Gardens Guidelines seeks to help increase the number of community gardens as demonstration sites.</p> <p>The Delivery Program, part 1.2.2, lists encouraging the establishment of community gardens as a key strategy in providing quality urban green spaces.</p>
Suitability for On-Site Provision	<p>The site is large enough to accommodate such a use, and would likely be provided as part of a wider development. The north-facing site has excellent solar access, but is potentially contaminated.</p> <p>The site is well located within the LGA for such a use as existing community gardens are located well away from the site, and is likely to have a considerable catchment of participants given its surrounding development and central location, well serviced by public transport.</p> <p>Council however has recently resolved to pursue the establishment of a community garden at Forsyth Park, about 500m from the subject site.</p>

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Comment	<p>Community gardening is a valuable recreational activity that has positive social, nutritional and educational benefits for participants. It can also improve the amenity, safety and patronage of the surrounding area. Community gardens also tie into wider themes of sustainability and food security.</p> <p>Given the site's current use, a community garden provided as part of a wider development could only be considered if any contamination issues were adequately addressed. If a future rezoning to R4 occurs, a community garden could be established. It is not however considered a priority for this site.</p>
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5.5 SENIORS HOUSING

Strategy / Study	North Sydney Social Plan 2008
Specified Needs	The Social Plan identifies a shortfall in the supply of seniors housing in North Sydney, but recommends only that Council should ensure that its controls allow for the appropriate development of aged care facilities.
Suitability for On-Site Provision	The site is suitable for seniors housing, given its size, location and access to public transport and local services.
Comment	<p>It is considered that future demand will be catered for through private development on other sites, meaning there is no specific need to require seniors housing to be developed on this particular site.</p> <p>It is noted that a review of the Social Plan 2008 is pending.</p>

5.6 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Strategy / Study	<p>Affordable Housing Strategy 2008</p> <p>Social Plan 2008-2012</p> <p>Inner City Mayors' Group Study on Affordable Housing</p> <p>Northern Sydney Aboriginal Social Plan 2007</p> <p>Section 94 Contributions Plan</p>
Specified Needs	The Affordable Housing Strategy 2008 cites a continued trend of loss of affordable bed spaces within the LGA – with an estimate of 2000 bed spaces lost since 1984. It states that 15 bed spaces have been replaced since 1999, with funds collected for further allocation. The number of boarding houses in North Sydney has halved in 14 years

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	<p>from 48 to 24. The Strategy highlights the clear undersupply of affordable rental properties in the LGA.</p> <p>Under the Social Plan 2008-2012, housing (including affordable) is one of the four strategic priorities of the Plan, with the objective that 'low and medium income earners with links to the LGA are supported in accessing affordable accommodation'.</p> <p>The Northern Sydney Aboriginal Social Plan recommends Northern Sydney Councils take action in promoting the critical need for affordable housing in the region (Rec. 4.2).</p> <p>Council's Section 94 Contributions Plan provides for the replacement of lost bed spaces via a monetary contribution made to Council for the purchase of bed spaces within the LGA. However, since a ministerial direction in 2009 any payment of contributions for the loss of affordable housing will only be required in accordance with the provisions of the Affordable Housing SEPP and s.94F of the EP&A Act. Council generally collects such funds via a condition of consent and forwards them to Housing NSW. Council therefore has no role in the provision of affordable housing using s94 monies, with the exception of monies collected prior to the ministerial direction in 2009.</p> <p>The Affordable Rental Housing State Environmental Planning Policy that was introduced in 2009 has failed to provide a meaningful supply of affordable housing in North Sydney.</p>
<p>Suitability for On-Site Provision</p>	<p>Residential accommodation, including affordable key-worker housing, is not currently permissible on the site under the existing zoning.</p> <p>However, the site is well located for the provision of affordable housing units given its central location and access to public transport and local services.</p>
<p>Comment</p>	<p>Affordable housing is a pressing need in North Sydney for which targets have not been met. If the site is to be redeveloped for residential or mixed use purposes, then affordable housing units should be provided in line with DCP 2013, with provision of further affordable housing being considered as public benefit.</p>

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5.7 CHILDCARE CENTRE	
Strategy / Study	Children's Services Strategic Plan 2010
Specified Needs	The Strategic Plan cites a shortage in childcare places, especially for 0-2 year olds and family day care.
Suitability for On-Site Provision	The site is large enough to accommodate such a use, particularly as part of a wider mixed use development. Its location next to a classified road has implications for pick-up / drop-off regimes and for the safety, security and health of children and would need to be managed accordingly.
Comment	<p>An analysis of the location of childcare facilities within the North Sydney LGA reveals that there are several long day care centres within the Neutral Bay area and Military Road corridor (in addition to other care services).</p> <p>Childcare centres, in a similar way to seniors housing, are provided by the market if and when they are considered commercially viable – that is – when demand exists. Most centres within the North Sydney LGA are privately operated.</p> <p>The Children's Services Strategic Plan 2010-2012 is due to be updated in 2014.</p> <p>A childcare centre is not considered a priority for the site.</p>

5.8 PUBLIC ART	
Strategy / Study	Arts and Cultural Strategic Plan 2012
Specified Needs	Spaces to exhibit public art and temporal works.
Suitability for On-Site Provision	The site is located on a major thoroughfare and although there is currently no link between them, located near a significant destination (Big Bear). Should future development include commercial uses at ground level and /or a pedestrian link through to the Big Bear site, the provision of appropriate public art would be suitable for the site.
Comment	Public art should be a consideration in future development options for the site.

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5.9 SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES / DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

Strategy / Study	Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) Best Practice Project (2013)
Specified Needs	The ESD Best Practice Project identified the need for green roof and green wall pilot projects that can be used to obtain data regarding the benefits of green roofs and to act as demonstration sites for the community.
Suitability for On-Site Provision	The site is located on a major thoroughfare and near a significant destination. The site is considered a reasonable location for a demonstration project.
Comment	The site may prove an appropriate location for a green wall or green roof. A significant north-facing facade to Ernest Street may present an opportunity for a green wall to be built, and green roofs may be considered generally for some or all buildings.

5.10 FIRE STATION

Strategy / Study	n/a
Specified Needs	Council's Director Community Development has raised the possibility of the site being used for a relocated of the Neutral Bay Fire Station, which is understood to be sub-standard for modern firefighting purposes. Relocating the fire station to the subject site could facilitate the use of the existing fire station for a relocated Neutral Bay Community Centre.
Suitability for On-Site Provision	<p>The specific needs for a new fire station in terms of size and location are unclear, however the site is ten times larger than the existing fire station site, and therefore likely to be able to accommodate such a use. Depending on the land area required for a new fire station, this would most likely be in conjunction with another use on the site. Compatibility with that use would be a matter for consideration.</p> <p>Using the site or a portion of it for an expanded fire station would be likely to facilitate improvements in fire coverage and service.</p>

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Comment	<p>The relocation of the existing fire station and its purchase or use by Council is a matter for the state government and NSW Fire Service, to which Council may make approaches to consider and negotiate such an outcome.</p> <p>The redevelopment or relocation of the existing Neutral Bay Community Centre is a matter for consideration in both the ongoing Grosvenor Lane Planning Study and the Community Uses on Council Land Study currently being undertaken.</p>
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The above list is not exhaustive; other public benefit or community uses should be considered for the site, including for example, a relocated Neutral Bay Community Centre, specialist or branch library, art gallery or performance space. Any redevelopment proposal should also consider the need for public amenities associated with any proposed public use.

6. Capacity Analysis

Understanding the existing capacity on the subject site is important in determining the extent and impacts of any future development proposal.

6.1 COMPLIANT ENVELOPE (B4 / R4 ZONING)

Remembering that the site is currently zoned SP2 Infrastructure – Bus Depot, this analysis assumes that a rezoning would be undertaken for an appropriate alternative use. In attempting to calculate an approximate ‘compliant’ yield figure for the site, options for both B4 Mixed Use and R4 High Density Residential have been developed.

Figure 19 shows the envelope inside which a compliant mixed use or residential development could be built. It is important to note that this represents the *permissible envelope*, not built form. The envelope incorporates all relevant height (16m) and setback controls, including the building height plane and SEPP 65 separations.

Figure 19

Compliant envelope



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6.2 COMPLIANT YIELD (B4 or R4 ZONING)

For a mixed use development scenario, calculating yield is difficult, as full-site podium coverage on such a large site is only likely to occur with certain commercial uses, such as a supermarket or other large floor plate retail offering. There is however a reasonable possibility of this, given the proximity of the Big Bear Shopping Centre to the site. Alternatively, it may be preferable for the commercial component of future development to have a lower proportion of site coverage, with ground level open space such as a pedestrian link into and through the Big Bear site incorporated into the design.

Also problematic at this stage is determining the likelihood of level 1 being used for commercial purposes. Assuming that the highest and best use would be pursued for a mixed use development, it could be expected that the ground floor only would be dedicated to commercial floor space, thereby creating implications for achieving the necessary commercial floor space required (0.5-2:1), particularly under a scenario where the building does not cover the whole site. With this in mind, the options explored assume commercial uses at ground floor only.

A number of built form scenarios were tested to derive a likely yield under the basic planning controls which would apply if the site was zoned B4 Mixed Use or R4 High Density Residential.

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6.3 COMPLIANT YIELD SUMMARY

OPTION A – MIXED USE

Height	16m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole-site non-residential site coverage assumed at ground level i.e. supermarket • Non-residential uses at ground floor only • Parking rates based on supermarket rates
Non-Res GFA	5068m ²	
Non-Res FSR	0.7:1	
Residential Units	90	
Max Parking	71 (res) 202 (non-res)	
Total FSR	1.5:1	

OPTION B – MIXED USE

Height	16m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partial site coverage only assumed at ground level • Figures reflect non-residential uses at ground floor only
Non-Res GFA	1902m ²	
Non-Res FSR	0.25:1	
Residential Units	107	
Max Parking	83 (res) 32 (non-res)	
Total FSR	1.25:1	

The mixed use scenarios above indicate an overall floor space ratio of between 1.25:1 and 1.5:1. This depends largely on the nature and extent of the non-residential use at ground level. Parking rates are also highly dependent on the nature of the non-residential use proposed.

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6.3 COMPLIANT YIELD SUMMARY (cont.)

OPTION C – RESIDENTIAL

Height	16m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking figures include max visitor parking • 16m height limit applied as per current control
Non-Res GFA	n/a	
Non-Res FSR	n/a	
Residential Units	155	
Max Parking	190	
Total FSR	1.4:1	

OPTION D – RESIDENTIAL

Height	16m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking figures include max visitor parking • 16m height limit applied as per current control
Non-Res GFA	n/a	
Non-Res FSR	n/a	
Residential Units	129	
Max Parking	165	
Total FSR	1.2:1	

The residential option scenarios above indicate an overall floor space ratio of between 1.2:1 and 1.4:1. This is slightly lower than the mixed use scenarios owing site coverage / landscaped area restrictions / requirements under such a zoning. It is noted though that Council's current policy does not support this zoning option.

7. SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS

- Proximity to public transport
- Positioning within the Neutral Bay Town Centre
- Close to amenities and services
- Large, rectangular block
- Location atop ridge line
- North facing
- Proximity to Cammeray Park

WEAKNESSES

- At periphery of Town Centre
- Inactive street frontages on both sides of Ernest Street
- Ernest Street at times heavily trafficked
- Possibility of site contamination
- Situated between two major arterial roads

OPPORTUNITIES

- Quality mixed use or residential development
- Large site has potential for increased height control
- Connectivity with Big Bear site and public transport along Military Road
- Incorporation of community benefit in redevelopment
- Incorporation of heritage elements into new development
- Integration into future redevelopment of Big Bear site
- ESD demonstration project (green wall, green roof for example)
- Provision of affordable housing units or seniors housing
- Whole-block approach to future planning of the site

CONSTRAINTS

- Relocation of existing use difficult, as it is important to network operation
- Restrictive current zoning
- Ownership and ultimate control lies with state government
- Part of site subject to stratum subdivision
- Possible impacts of redevelopment on surrounding low scale residential
- Restrictive current height control

8. Opportunities Discussion

8.1 HEIGHT AND SCALE

The analysis identifies that additional height may be considered on the site in line with the principles established later in this report. This would require a transition in height and scale generally from the centre of the site's southern boundary adjoining the Big Bear site downwards towards the north, east and west. This will ensure that an appropriate scale of development occurs at the interface with residential zones and heritage conservation areas.

Using the Big Bear built form as a guide, this equates to a north-south transition from two-storeys at the Ernest Street frontage to approximately ten storeys at the southern edge of the site, as illustrated in Figure 20. Figure 21 shows an indicative height transition for the east-west elevation, while Figure 22 illustrates this principle in plan form. The building height plane control gives further guidance to this principle.

Figure 20

*North-south
indicative transition*

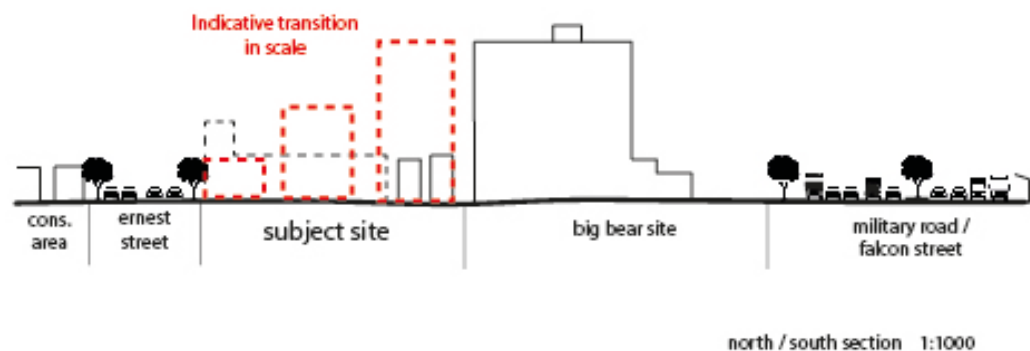
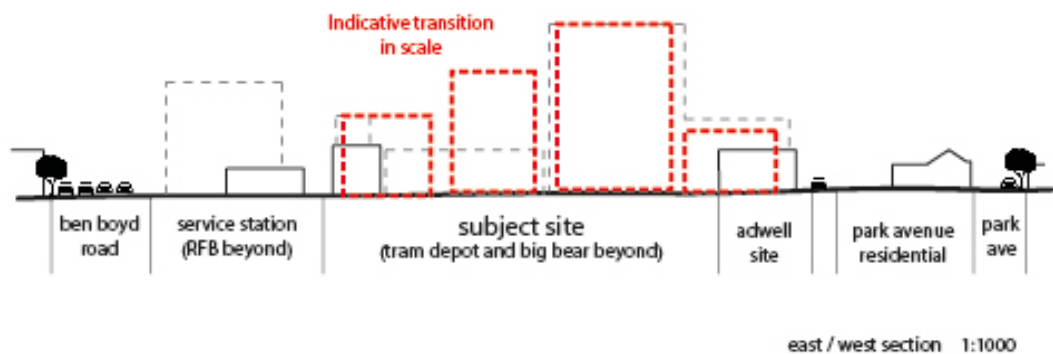


Figure 21

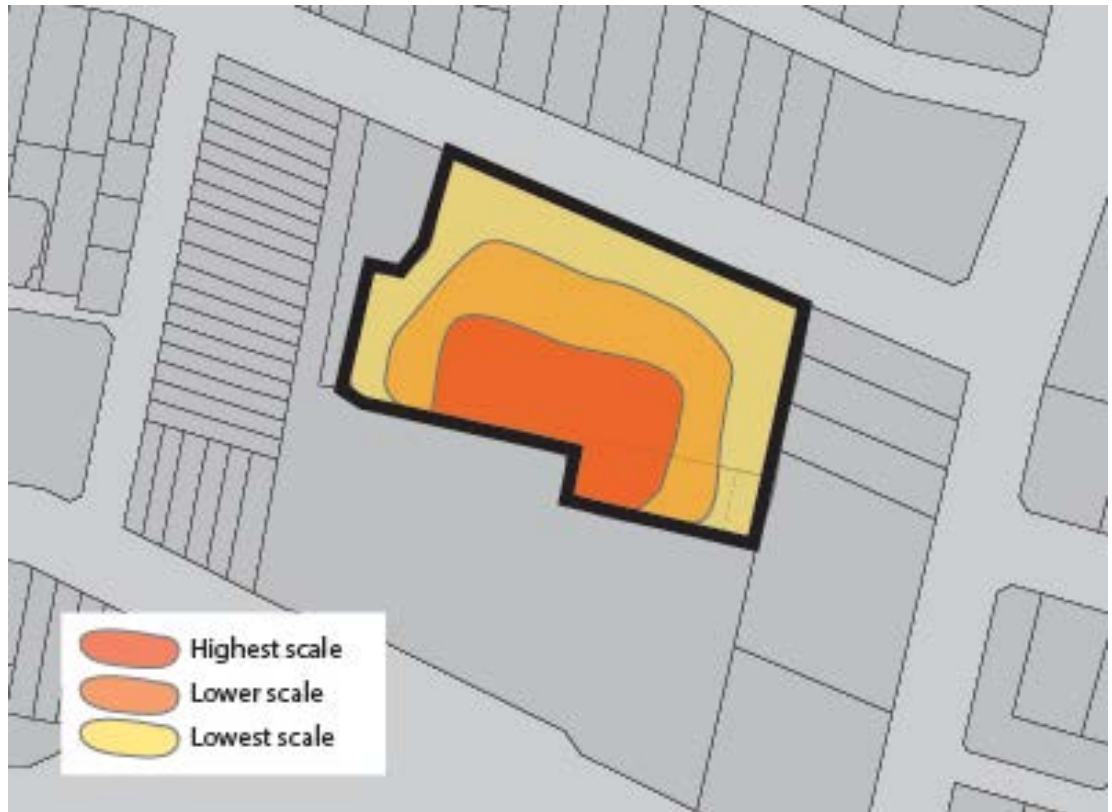
*East-west
indicative transition*



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Figure 22

*Indicative height
and scale
transition*



8.2 PUBLIC BENEFIT

Section 5 of this report assessed several community needs, highlighting a pressing need for affordable key worker and other housing in the LGA. Under the likely scenarios of mixed use or residential development on the site, such a public benefit can be easily incorporated into the built form. Community functions (child care centre, for example) could be incorporated into redevelopment options which strengthen the role the site plays within the Neutral Bay Town Centre. Other public benefit, such as improved pedestrian amenity and connection, will benefit public and private interests alike.

The measure of public benefit provided will depend in part on the yield and built form sought by a developer of the land. These will be matters for consideration at

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the planning proposal / development concept stage, with public benefit negotiated under a voluntary planning agreement.

8.3 PUBLIC DOMAIN AND PEDESTRIAN AMENITY

Providing a pedestrian link between the subject site and the Big Bear site is a priority and relatively easy to incorporate in any future redevelopment options (an entrance to Big Bear at its northern edge already exists). Doing so would allow for linkages between commercial uses and/or improve connectivity between residents of the site and Military Road and the Neutral Bay Town Centre beyond.

The provision of a through site link will require careful consideration in terms of ground level use on the subject site. There is an opportunity for some form of active ground level uses or accessible public space, particularly under scenarios where development incorporates only partial ground level site coverage.

Opportunities to create an improved public domain and activate the site's Ernest Street frontage should also be explored in future development scenarios.

8.4 HERITAGE

The water tower structure on the site should be protected and can be incorporated into the design or function of any new development to make it a key feature of it. Any redevelopment should respond appropriately to the Oaks Street Conservation Area to the north and the tram shed building on the Big Bear site.

8.5 ECOLOGICALLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Redevelopment of the site for any purpose should incorporate elements of best-practice ecologically sustainable development where appropriate, in line with DCP 2013. Opportunities for demonstration projects should also be explored and implemented where possible.

9. Future Development Principles

Council's existing policy is that the site retain its important current function as a bus depot. Redeveloping the site for any other purpose is contingent on a suitable alternative site being chosen for this use.

In the event that the State Government disposes of the site, it is considered that the following principles should be applied to any redevelopment of it. The principles are derived from the preceding sections of this review and are based on an assumption that a predominantly mixed use / residential development will be pursued as the highest and best economic use of the site. Any other uses considered for the site should also adhere to any relevant principle identified here.

Unless specifically stated otherwise, LEP 2013 and DCP 2013 controls still apply to redevelopment of the land.



1. Any changes to existing controls should facilitate achievement of public benefit



2. Transition scale of development down from Big Bear to surrounding lower scale development and heritage conservation area



3. Minimise shadow and other impacts on surrounding residential properties



4. Redevelopment should deliver identified public benefit

9. Future Development Principles (cont.)



5. Affordable housing is a public benefit priority for the site



6. Incorporate community facilities to take advantage of regional function of Neutral Bay Town Centre



7. Improve pedestrian connections to Big Bear site and Military Road



8. Contribute to the activation / improvement of Ernest Street frontage



9. Protect and respond architecturally to on-site heritage items



10. Incorporate ESD best practice into design and function of new development

10. Conclusion

Council's longstanding policy is for the bus depot to remain and serve its increasingly important function to the local and regional community. It is acknowledged however that this is ultimately a decision for the owner of the land.

This Review has sought to understand the policy, community needs and planning context of the site. Through the analysis process, a set of principles has been established that should be applied to any future redevelopment considered for the site.

It is recommended that the principles derived in this Review form the basis of an amendment to the site-specific area character statement in North Sydney DCP 2013.