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Concept urban design report for planning proposal

St Leonards 601 Pacific Highway

architectus™



601

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Pacific Highway, the major North South connector following the ridge-line, will have an exciting new landmark tower on its iconic bend in St Leonards.

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Executive summary

Purpose of this report

Architectus has prepared this Urban Design Report on behalf of Stockland Development Pty Ltd to support a Planning Proposal to amend the statutory planning controls that apply to 601 Pacific Highway, St Leonards (Lot 71 in Deposited Plan 749690) (the site) under North Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2013 (LEP).

The intended outcome of this Planning Proposal is to amend the LEP planning controls as follows:

- Establish a site-specific building height control, with maximum building height of 187.25 metres; and
- Establish a site-specific floor space ratio (FSR) control, with a maximum FSR of 20:1.

The Planning Proposal does not amend the site's existing B3 Commercial Core zoning. Future development aligned with the Planning Proposal is consistent with the permissible land uses and objectives of Zone B3.

The new planning controls seek to unlock the potential of a strategically-located landholding within the St Leonards centre and facilitate a new commercial building in a precinct earmarked for density uplift.

This Planning Proposal will deliver strategic planning merits commensurate with State and Local government policy and align with the St Leonards and Crows Nest 2036 Plan adopted by NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) (August 2020). Future development of the site will generate substantial public benefit and make a significant contribution to the evolving character of St Leonards town centre.

The primary purpose of this report is to accompany a Planning Proposal for the subject site. A detailed urban design analysis and indicative concept plan have been developed demonstrating the land use, massing, building form, and an overall building height and floor space ratio for the site. This has been developed with consideration for adequate building separation, and assessment of solar impacts to public domain and neighbouring properties.

In 2020 DPIE adopted the St Leonards and Crows Nest 2036 Plan proposing revised controls for the subject site. The proposal has been prepared to demonstrate that development on the subject site is aligned with the proposed controls in the St Leonards and Crows Nest 2036 Plan, and that the proposal can be accommodated without additional overshadowing impacts to nominated parks and open spaces. An indicative concept design has been prepared that includes indicative basement car parking arrangements, ground level street address, above ground podium, and commercial uses above.

The site and strategic context

The site is located at 601 Pacific Highway in St Leonards town centre, within a 400m walking catchment of both the existing St Leonards railway station and proposed Crows Nest Metro Station .

The site is approx. 2,844 sqm in a rectangular shape, bounded by the Pacific Highway to the south, Mitchell Street to the east and Atchison Street to the north. It is extremely well supported by public transport, and at present contains a 14 storey commercial tower.

One of the key open space and public domain elements in St Leonards town centre, Mitchell Street Plaza, is located along the eastern boundary of the site and provides an excellent opportunity for interface with the ground floor of the proposal.

The North Sydney Local Environmental Plan (LEP) zones the site B3 Commercial Core, with a maximum building height of 49m, and is not subject to a maximum FSR control. East of the site is the B4 Mixed Use zone. The St Leonards and Crows Nest 2036 Plan indicates a proposed height of 42 storeys and an FSR of 20:1 for the site.

The 2036 plan seeks to unlock the potential of a strategically-located landholdings within the St Leonards centre and facilitate a new commercial building in a precinct earmarked for density uplift. This proposal will deliver strategic planning merits commensurate

with State and Local government policy and align with the St Leonards and Crows Nest 2036 Plan. Future development of the site will generate substantial public benefit and make a significant contribution to the evolving character of St Leonards town centre.

Design options tested

Architectus has developed principles for the site in regards to built form, public domain and character. These include:

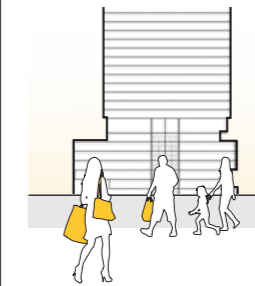
- Development on the site should contribute to and reinforce the significance of St Leonards town centre, as a strategic centre on key transport links.
- The development should be a landmark on this iconic corner of the Pacific Highway and at the highpoint of St Leonards town centre,
- Active lobby frontages to Mitchell Street and Atchison Street, and a retail offer on the Pacific Highway will make a significant improvement to the public domain and constitute an important public benefit.
- Building setbacks and public open space along Mitchell Street should improve pedestrian amenity in the walking catchments to St Leonards railway station and proposed Crows Nest Metro Station.

The Proposal

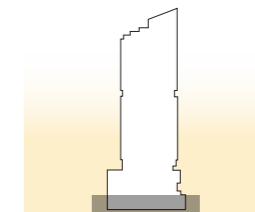
This report presents an indicative concept design for the subject site that results in the following:

20:1

- A commercial development with a 20:1 ratio for future employment opportunities;
- A podium providing activation to Atchison Street and Mitchell street plaza.



- An active ground plane will contribute to Mitchell Street Plaza and engage the public realm



- A new commercial tower above the podium to a maximum height of 187.5m (42-storeys)

601 Pacific Highway St Leonards can reinforce the position of St Leonards as a priority growth area in metropolitan Sydney. Being one of the last remaining large sites in the town centre and given its iconic location on the Pacific Highway between St Leonards Train Station and the proposed Crows Nest Metro Station, the site represents an exciting opportunity to add to the St Leonards skyline with a landmark commercial development.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this report

1.2 The site

1.1 Purpose of this report

The concept urban design report has been prepared by Architectus on behalf of Stockland for land at 601 Pacific Highway, St Leonards (the subject site).

The primary purpose of this report is to accompany a Planning Proposal for the subject site, which has been prepared to be consistent with the vision and actions of the St Leonards and Crows Nest 2036 Plan endorsed by DPIE. A detailed urban design analysis and indicative concept plan has been developed demonstrating the future potential distribution of land uses, massing, building form, and an overall building height and floor space ratio for the site. This has been developed with consideration for adequate building separation, and assessment of solar impacts to public domain and neighbouring properties.

To demonstrate that development on the subject site is feasible, an indicative concept plan has been prepared that includes indicative basement car parking arrangements, ground level street address, above ground podium, and commercial uses above.

The indicative concept plan shows one way in which the site could be redeveloped under the controls sought by the Planning Proposal.

Report Objectives

The objectives of this report are to:

1

Investigate the strategic context of the site in light of St Leonards and Crows Nest as Strategic Centres, leveraging the proposed metro station.

2

Present the site's strategic planning context, local character and existing planning controls.

3

Review and understand North Sydney Council's controls and visions of the DPIE St Leonards Crows Nest 2036 Final Plan for the site and Council's vision for the St Leonards town centre.

4

Understand in detail the features and character of the site, its opportunities and constraints and its potential for renewal.

5

Identify appropriate urban design and architectural principles for the site.

6

Develop key moves for the site based on the understanding of the site achieved through the analysis, and on the implementation of the urban design principles.

7

Test potential development scenarios against the urban design and architectural principles and key moves, and identify a preferred option.

8

Prepare an indicative concept design that demonstrates the development potential of the site and the most appropriate built form and public domain.

9

Provide a preferred planning and urban design recommendation that achieves the best outcome for both the site and the community. The best outcome should be one that celebrates the site's strategic context whilst reinforcing the local character and enhancing public domain.

1.2 The site

Site context

The site is strategically located within the North Sydney Local Government Area (LGA). It is within five kilometres of Central Sydney, three kilometres of North Sydney CBD and is centrally located in St Leonards Town Centre.

The site is well supported by public transport, located within 400m of the existing St Leonards Train Station and proposed new Crows Nest Metro Station. The site is also well serviced by existing bus services, providing connections to key centres including Epping, Lane Cove, Chatswood and Sydney CBD. The site also has good road access, being located on the Pacific Highway, and fronting Atchison Street.

Gore Hill Park, to the west of the site provides a significant regional park, which contains sporting and recreational facilities. The Hume Street Park on the edge of St Leonards is also in close proximity.

Royal North shore Hospital and the Gore hill business Park, as well as Artarmon Industrial Precinct, all provide for a diversity of job types and opportunities to the west of St Leonards station. The planned Gore Hill Technology Park to the north-west of the site will provide new jobs in St Leonards.

The site's proximity to local and strategic centres, public transport and open space make it an appropriate location for increased density and height.



Site context map in priority precinct



St Leonards, located in North Sydney local government area, is identified as a strategic centre and Commercial Office Precinct in the Eastern Harbour City in the Greater Sydney Region Plan-A Metropolis of Three Cities. The priorities of this strategic centre are to work with Council to:

- Provide capacity for additional mixed-use development in St Leonards including offices, health, retail, services and housing.

The indicative concept plan shows one way in which the site could be redeveloped under the controls sought by the Planning Proposal.



2.0 Planning context

2.1 Strategic context

2.2 Building heights and density
in centres of Sydney

2.3 St Leonards and Crows Nest 2036 Plan

2.4 Local Council planning controls

2.5 Approved and pending local approvals

2.1 Strategic context

Greater Sydney Region Plan: A metropolis of three cities

The Greater Sydney Region Plan, finalised in March 2018, is the new metropolitan plan for Sydney. The plan provides a 40-year vision of Sydney for a city where people will live within 30 minutes of jobs, education and health facilities, services and great places.

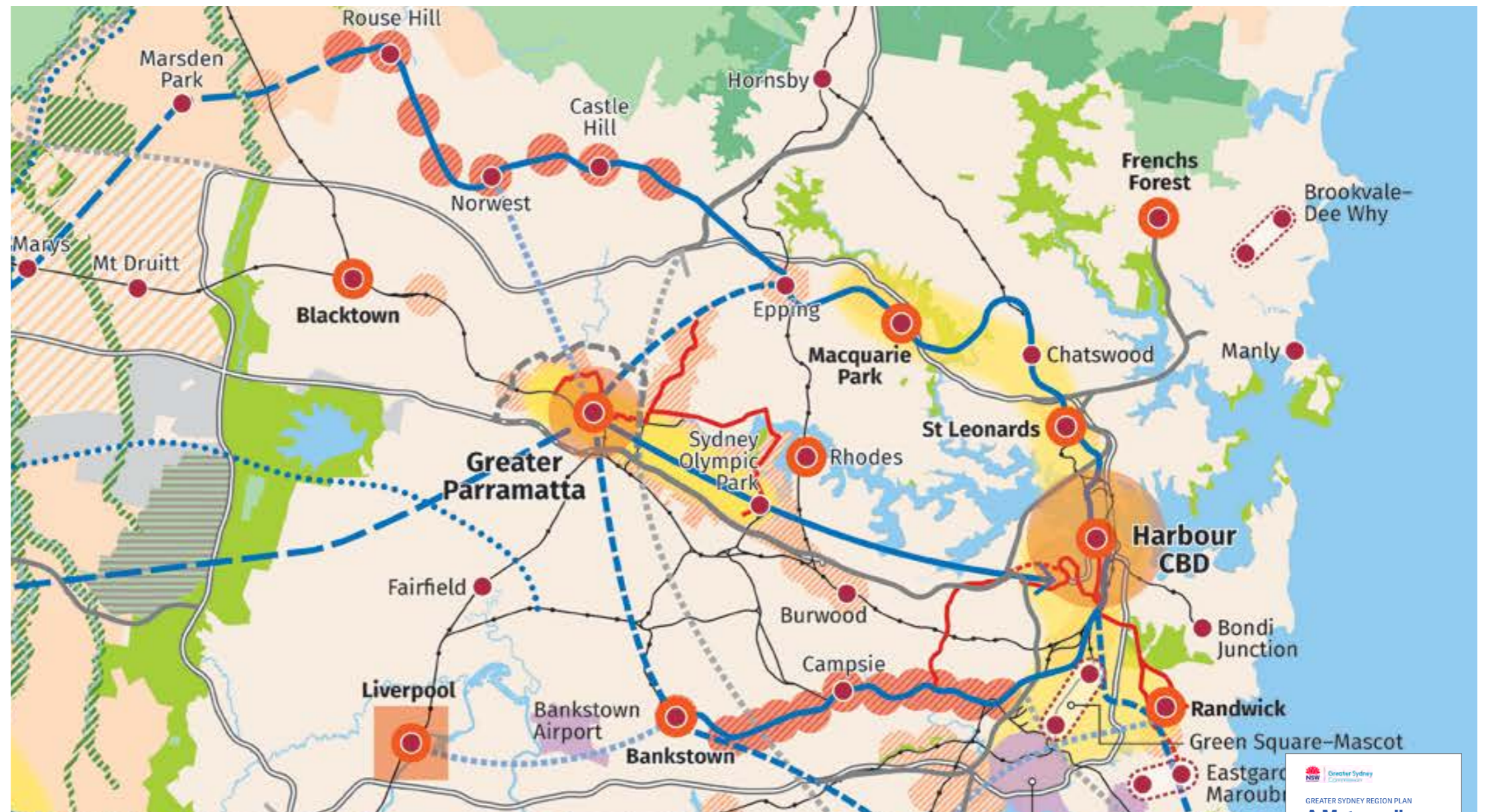
The vision seeks to meet the needs of a growing and changing population by transforming Greater Sydney into a metropolis of three cities - the Western Parkland City, the Central River City and the Eastern Harbour City.

The site is located within the Harbour CBD in the Eastern Harbour City, which will build on its credentials and leverage its strong financial, professional, health and education sectors and extend its capabilities with an innovation precinct that will boost productivity and global connections.

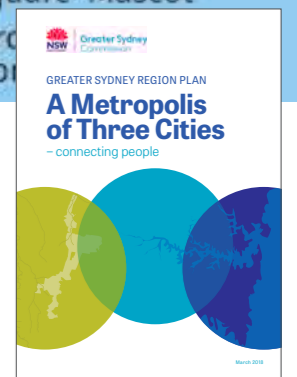
The Plan provides ten key directions for a metropolis of three cities. Key directions and objectives relevant to 601 Pacific Hwy include:

- Jobs and skills for the city: creating the conditions for a stronger economy.
- 'A city in a landscape' objective- the planning proposal will provide significant opportunities to contribute to the accessibility, activation and enhancement of the public domain.

This proposal will facilitate the renewal of the site, which will provide more jobs closer to homes, and businesses connected to a large skilled workforce, supported by an effective public transport network. These benefits maximise opportunities to attract higher density and higher residential amenity, which will enhance the vibrancy of the strategic centre, and support walk-able neighbourhoods.



Structure plan for the Metropolis of three cities, Greater Sydney Commission, 2018



Strategic context

St Leonards and Crows Nest 2036 Plan

In 2020, the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) finalised the package planning for St Leonards and Crows Nest, which includes the St Leonards and Crows Nest 2036 Plan. The 2036 Plan leverage the existing public transport infrastructure and the future Crows Nest Metro Station to support the growing St Leonards and Crows Nest community with the provision of new infrastructure, open spaces, upgraded cycle lanes and planning for health and education. The plan will deliver 6,680 new homes, planning capacity for an extra 119,979 sqm employment floor space and 16,500 new jobs in health, education, professional services and the knowledge sector.

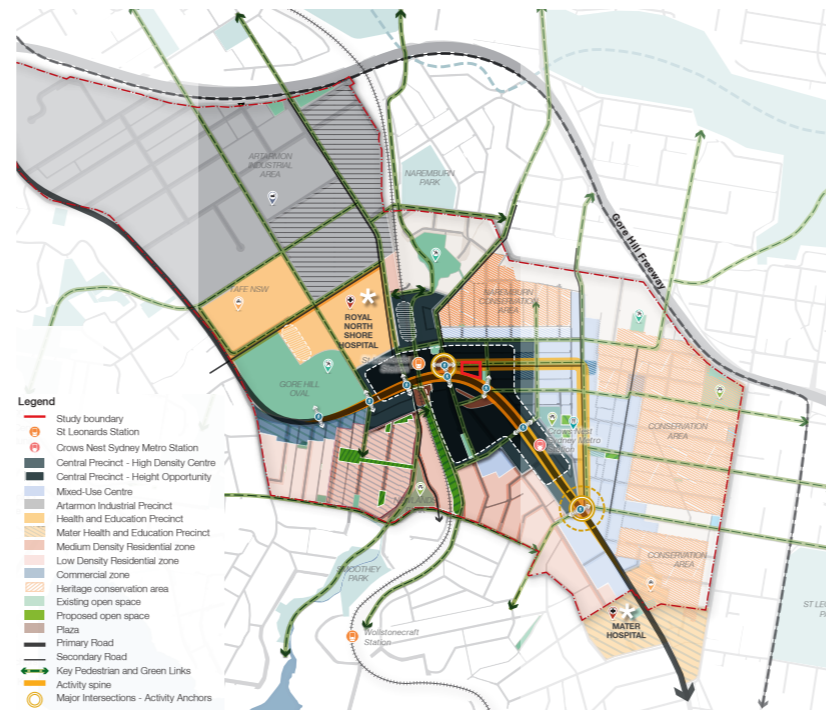
Based on the Department's studies, there is strategic merit and opportunity for the 601 Pacific Highway to deliver increased employment densities, that would provide employment space, focused around an efficient public transport network.

The site is identified as being located in an 'area for higher density between stations', and that large developments are to be located between the stations. The focus of height is referred to as the 'knuckle area' within the St Leonards mixed use commercial core.

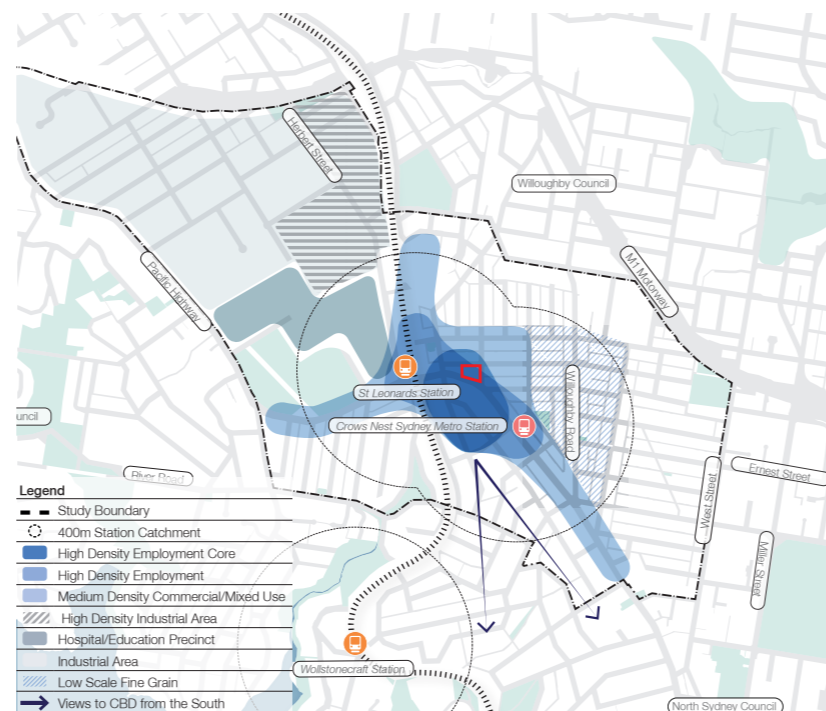
Key opportunities for the site to deliver on the objectives of the plan include:

- Increased height and densities as a result of the new metro station;
- Increasing the offering of employment floorspace via the redevelopment of older stock into new developments;
- Improving and strengthening existing connections to open space and public transport;
- Protecting and enhancing district views to Naremburn Park.

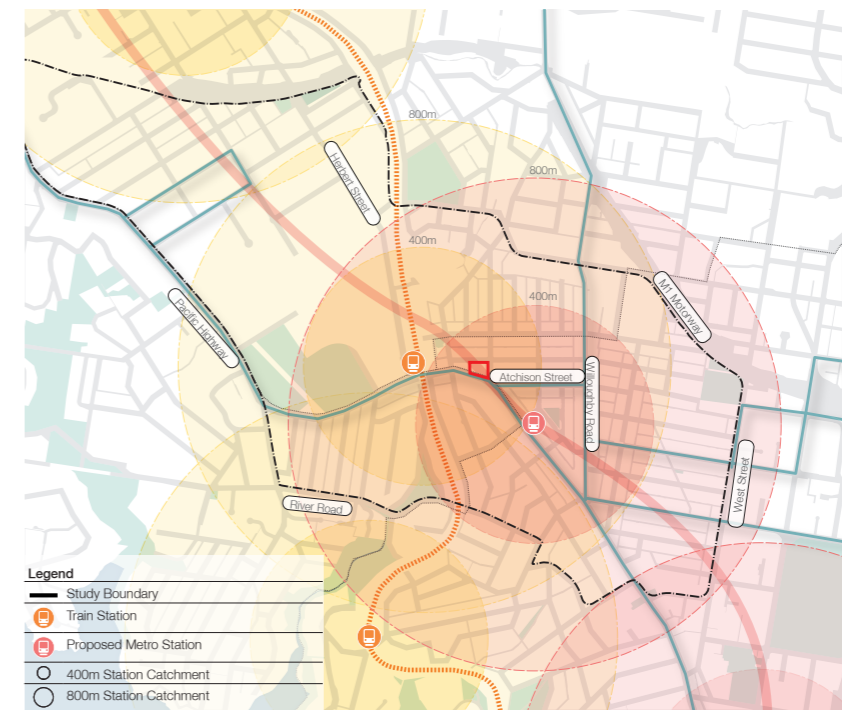
Key directions for the subject site are illustrated in the plans from the St Leonards and Crows Nest 2036 Plan to the right.



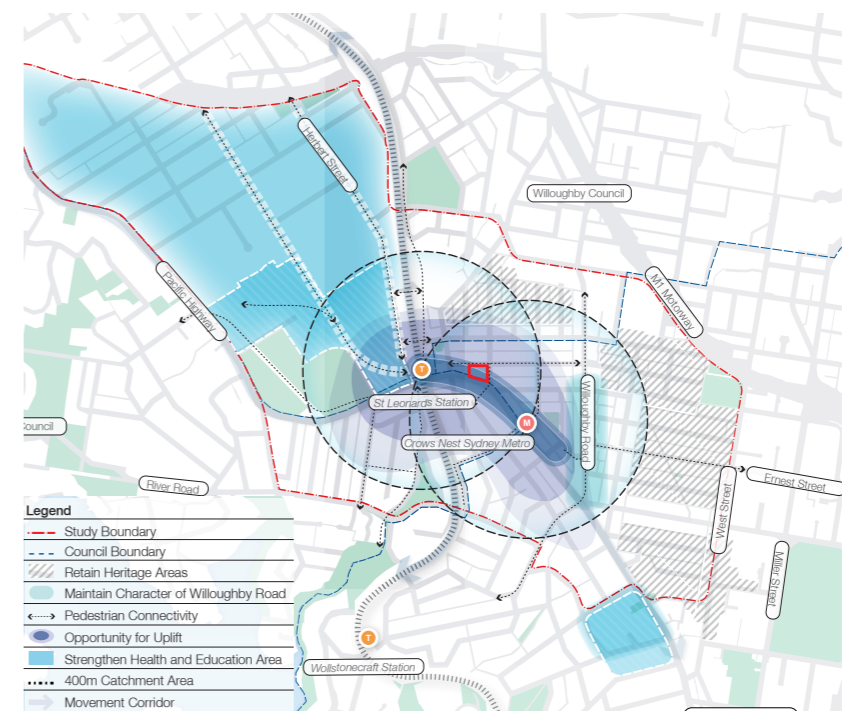
The strategy identifies the site as an appropriate location for potential increase in height and density, located within the St Leonards CBD and along the Pacific Highway.



The site is identified in the St Leonards high density employment core. This will be supported by a contiguous provision of employment along the Pacific Highway Corridor south and west. Through new mixed use development.



The strategy identifies the site within both the St Leonards Train Station and Metro Station catchment. There is also opportunity to improve and strengthen existing connections from the site to existing and proposed infrastructure.

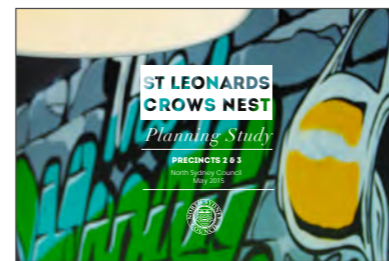


The site is identified within an opportunity corridor for potential uplift along with improved pedestrian connectivity.

Strategic context



Image above showing the vision for the precinct (Source: SJB Architects on behalf of North Sydney Council, St Leonards Planning Study Precinct 2 and 3)



St Leonards / Crows Nest Planning Study- Precincts 2 & 3

In 2015, North Sydney Council released Precinct 2 of the St Leonards and Crows Nest Planning Study, with the aim of accommodating population growth in North Sydney Local Government Area, protecting jobs, and providing new and improved public domain and open spaces. 601 Pacific Highway is located in Precinct 2, within the high density commercial and mixed use area of St Leonards. The Planning Study identifies the following opportunities for the precinct:

- Strong public transport connections;
- 'Fine bones' of a creative precinct;
- A few 'anchor' establishments;
- North/ south streets running along Mitchell and Oxley Streets; and
- Potential to activate lane ways.

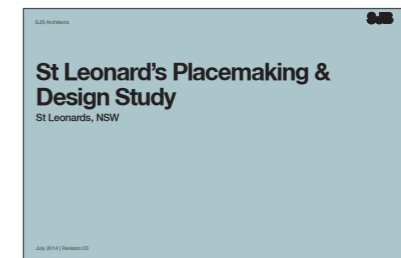
Future development is to reflect the high density character of the centre where the impact on neighbouring properties and the public domain is mitigated through well located, tall, slender towers.

Built form objectives relevant to the 601 Pacific Highway include:

- Deliver award-winning architectural design offering quality mixed use and commercial development;
- Create a built form that transforms St Leonards into a modern, mixed use centre;
- Consider additional residential and employment capacity to meet the demand for new jobs and housing in the LGA;
- Provide a human scale to streets and lane-ways and
- Provide greater pedestrian amenity and outdoor dining opportunities.



Image above showing the vision for the precinct (Source: SJB Architects on behalf of North Sydney Council, St Leonards Place-making & Design Study)



St Leonards Place-making and Design Study

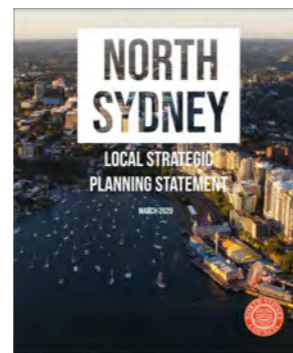
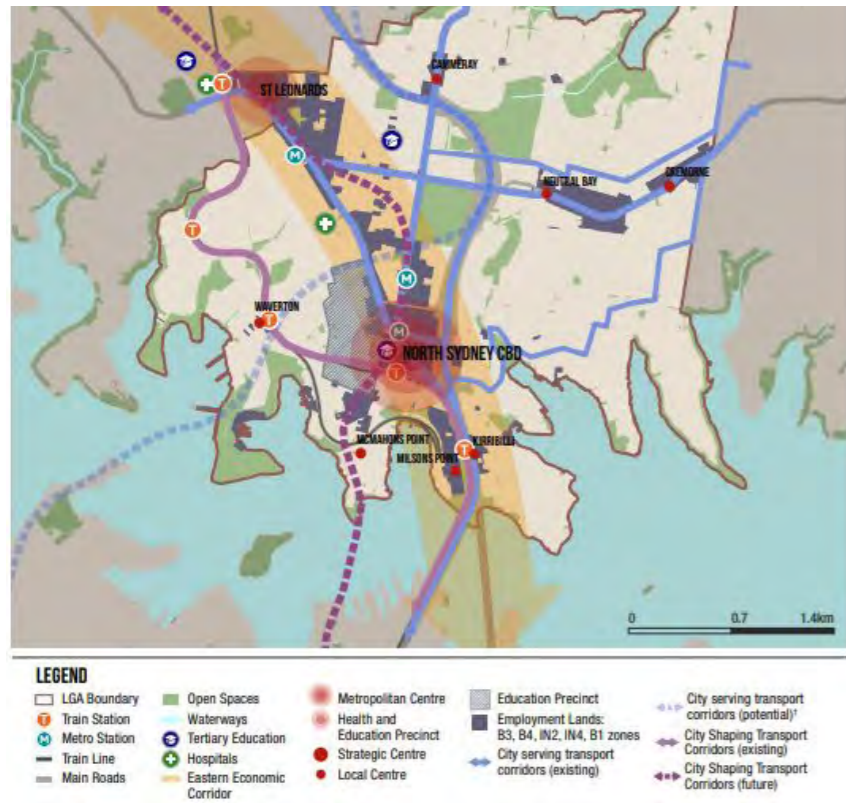
In 2014, SJB Architects prepared a Place-making and Design Study for St Leonards which set a range of design principles and framework to assist North Sydney Council's review of built form, public domain and open space controls. The vision for St Leonards was to create an active, vibrant and sustainable precinct with a strong unified identity that reflects the various characters, land uses and attractions within the area.

The study provides an assessment framework which identifies the site in Zone 2, Mitchell Street West. Key objectives for development in the area are to:

- Encourage through site links and ensure activity and surveillance is achieved at the ground plane;
- Promote commercial development within the podium;
- Ensure a level of high residential amenity is achieved.

Key design principles relevant to the site are:

- Improve connectivity to public open space;
- Open up sightlines;
- Promote active frontages and outdoor dining;
- Ensure sustainable measures are adopted;
- Transition mixed use development from residential areas to the core;
- Encourage smaller commercial developments;
- Redevelop a key site for community purposes;
- Vary height and built form across the precinct;
- Position taller towers on corner blocks;
- Provide ground floor and upper level setbacks to reflect zone character;
- Ensure side setbacks consider the amenity of lane-ways and adjoining buildings;
- Ensure built form is appropriate to the size and setting of the site;
- Ensure that residential amenity is considered for both proposed and existing developments.



Local economy and employment. Source: North Sydney Council LSPS 2020

North Sydney Local Strategic Planning Summary (LSPS)

The LSPS, adopted in March 2020 sets out Council's land use vision, planning principles, priorities, and actions. One of the key roles of the LSPS is to draw together, in one document, the priorities and actions for future land use planning, and present an overall land use vision for the North Sydney Local Government Area (LGA) for the next 20 years. This will assist in identifying priorities outside Council's responsibilities, which require collaboration and partnership with government agencies and organisations to deliver.

The LSPS outlines the desired future direction for housing, employment, transport, recreation, environment, and infrastructure for North Sydney LGA.

The LSPS guides the content of Council's LEP and DCP and supports consideration and determination of any proposed changes to the development standards under the LEP (via Planning Proposals).

Specifically the plan outlines:

- An approach for Council to work collaboratively with the State Government to maximise and lock-in the regional mode shift benefits of Sydney Metro, as well as support the delivery of the State Government's principal bicycle network.
- Improving walking and cycling infrastructure within walking and cycling catchments of centres that provide access to high quality public transport will be a priority
- The intensification of health and education facilities at St Leonards will continue to support jobs growth within the precinct. Supporting all the opportunities that the existing education, medical, telecommunications and multimedia clusters can bring will ensure North Sydney remains competitive and nationally significant.

2.2 Building heights and density in centres of Sydney

Comparative centres such as Parramatta, Chatswood, Burwood, Green Square and Epping Town Centre with major transport links to some of Sydney's key employment centres are currently undergoing significant growth, resulting in increased densities and building heights.

Given the role of St Leonards as a strategic centre in the eastern economic corridor, there is scope to review heights and densities on this key site close to transport.

As a point of comparison, a summary of comparable growth areas are shown to the right. It is anticipated that future growth and increased densities and building height in St Leonards will be comparable with these centres.



Parramatta (Metropolitan City Centre)

A review of planning controls by Parramatta Council recommended the removal of maximum building height controls in the City Centre, with expected development of 35-75 storeys. The approved 'Aspire' tower, located on Parramatta Civic Square near Parramatta Train Station is currently under construction. The building is a commercial tower which will comprise 120,000m² of office space and be 233 metres in height.



Green Square (Strategic Centre)

Towers in Green Square Town Centre are up to 28 storeys. The majority of the wider Green Square Renewal Area, consists of a typology of lower perimeter blocks and tall, slender buildings marking corners, providing landmarks.



Epping Town Centre (Strategic Centre' and Priority Precinct)

Building heights in Epping town centre are between 48m and 72m (approximately 15-23 storeys).

Planning proposals have been approved recently with proposals considering development up to 30-35 storeys.



Chatswood (Strategic Centre)

The centre is currently being reviewed to investigate further transit oriented development opportunities. Currently, building heights allowing up to 55 storeys apply.



Burwood (Strategic Centre)

Towers in the Burwood Strategic Centre are up to 42 storeys. A vibrant mix of uses are emerging, including high density residential, to create an extended hours urban retail centre for Burwood Town Centre;

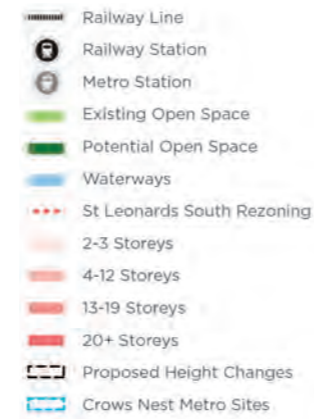
2.3 St Leonards and Crows Nest 2036 Plan

The following maps show the proposed planning control changes under the DPIE St Leonards and Crows Nest 2036 Final Plan (referred to in this report as 2036 Final Plan).

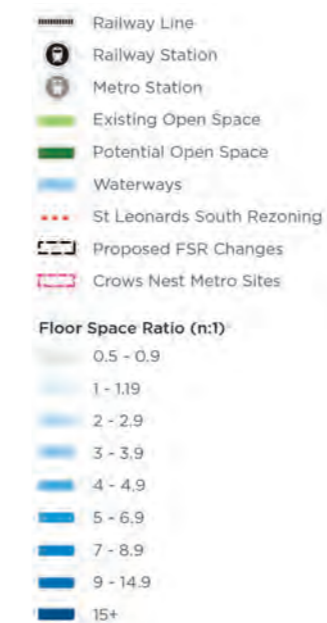
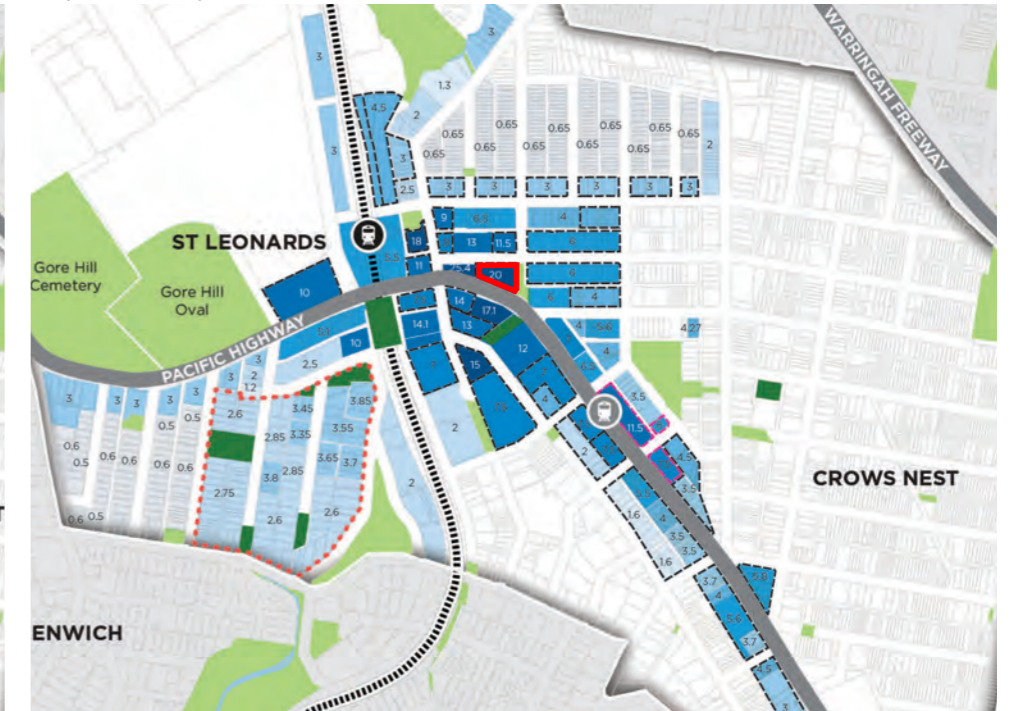
Key Planning control changes for the subject site include:

- Increase the maximum building height to 42 storeys
- Retain the existing B3 commercial core land-use
- Introduce a new maximum floor space ratio (FSR) of 20:1.
- Street setbacks:
 - 0m along Atchison Street
 - 5m along Mitchell Street
 - 3m ground level setback along Pacific highway
- 5 Storey street wall height
- Newlands Park should not be further overshadowed between 10am to 3pm.

Proposed Height of Buildings plan



Proposed FSR plan

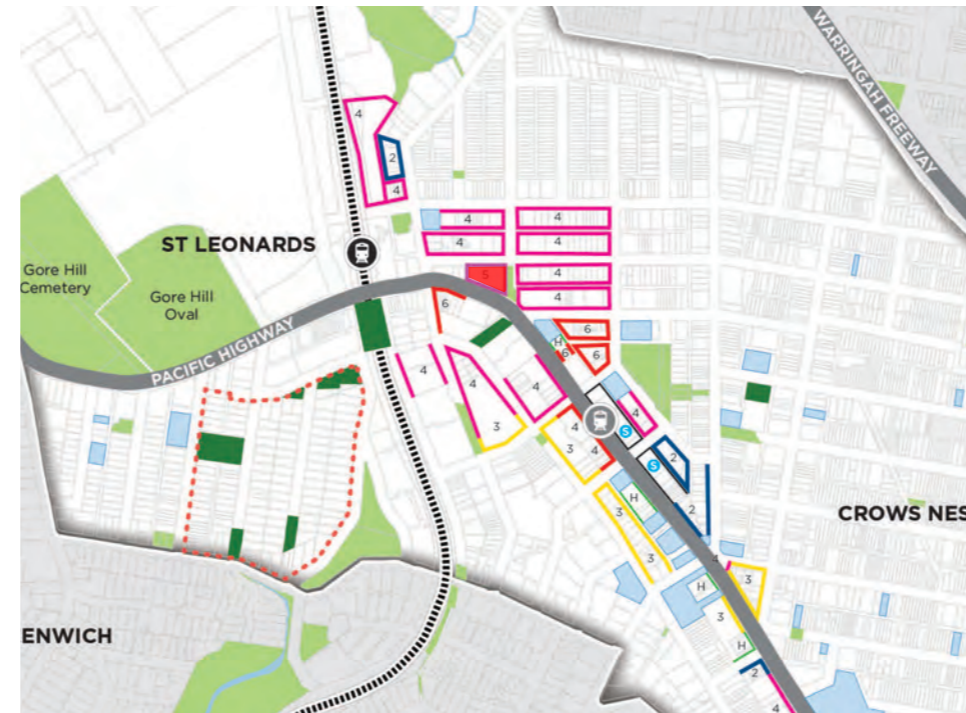


Proposed street setbacks



- Railway Line
- Railway Station
- Metro Station
- Existing Open Space
- Potential Open Space
- Waterways
- St Leonards South Rezoning
- 3m reverse setback
- 1m reverse setback
- 0m setback
- 3m setback
- 5m setback
- 8m setback for laneway
- Heritage

Street wall heights



- Railway Line
- Railway Station
- Metro Station
- Existing Open Space
- Potential Open Space
- Waterways
- St Leonards South Rezoning
- 2 storey street wall height
- 3 storey street wall height
- 4 storey street wall height
- 5 storey street wall height
- 6 storey street wall height
- As adjoining heritage storey wall height
- Heritage
- Street Wall Height Subject to Final Crows Nest Metro Station Design

Solar access plane



Public Open Space 10.00am - 3.00pm

- 1 Christie Park
- 2 Newlands Park
- 3 St Leonards South (indicative)
- 4 Propsting Park
- 5 Hume Street Park
- 6 Ernest Place
- 7 Gore Hill Oval
- 8 Talus Reserve

Streetscape 11.30am - 2.30pm

- 9 Mitchell Street and Oxley Streets
- 10 Willoughby Road

Residential Areas 9.00am - 3.00pm

- 11 Residential areas inside boundary (for at least 2 hours)
- 12 Heritage Conservation Areas inside boundary (for at least 3 hours)
- 13 Residential outside boundary (for the whole time between 9am and 3pm)

2.4 Local Council planning controls

North Sydney LEP 2013

The site is currently subject to the following key controls within the North Sydney LEP 2013:

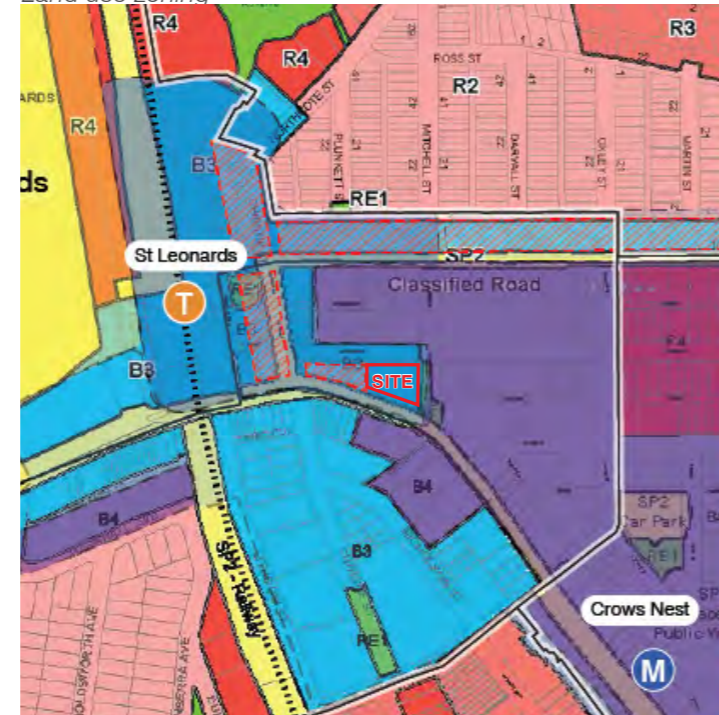
- Land use: B3 'Commercial Core'
- Building Height: 49 metres maximum building height
- FSR: No FSR control
- No non-residential floor space ratio
- No heritage constraints

North Sydney DCP 2013

The site is currently subject to the following key controls within the North Sydney DCP 2013:

- 3m ground level setback - 1 storey (Pacific Highway)
- 3m whole of building setback (Mitchell Street)
- 4 storey podium
- 3m above podium setback

Land use zoning



B3	Commercial Core
B4	Mixed Use
E4	Environmental Conservation
F4	Environmental Living
IN2	Light Industrial
IN4	Working Waterfront
R2	Low Density Residential
R3	Medium Density Residential
R4	High Density Residential
RE1	Public Recreation
RE2	Private Recreation
SA1	Special Activities
SP1	Infrastructure
U	Unzoned Land
U2	Mixed use site (pending)

Maximum Height of buildings



A	1	S	24
I	8.5	T1	25
K	10	T2	26
L	11	U1	30
M	12	U2	33
N	13	W1	40
O1	15	W2	42
O2	16	X	49
Q1	19.15	Y	50
Q2	20	AA1	65
		AA2	72

Minimum non-residential floor space ratio



D	0.5	U1	2.5
F	0.6	U2	2.7
H	0.7	V	3.0
J	0.8	X	4.1
N	1.0	Y	4.5
O	1.1	Z	5.1
P	1.2	AA	6.0
R	1.4	AE1	10.0
S1	1.5	AE2	10.1
S2	1.6	AG	12.0
S3	1.7	AI1	14.1
S4	1.8	AI2	17.1
T1	2.0		
T2	2.4		

2.5 Approved and pending local approvals

Existing building heights in St Leonards are up to about 35 storeys. Several planning proposals and development applications will exceed this height, with towers up to 50 storeys.

#	Site address	Development	Building height
A	100 Christie Street	LEP changes gazetted.	132m 36 storeys
B	20-22 Atchison Street	2036 Strategy allows increased building height	35 storeys
C	50-56 Atchison Street	DA documentation being prepared	56m (16 storeys)
D	617-621 Pacific Highway	DA documentation being prepared	180m (approx. 50 storeys)
E	23-25 Atchison Street	Approved	56m, 16 storeys
F	8-90 Christie Street, 546-564 Pacific Highway + 71-70 Lithgow Street	Under Construction	T1 - no change (RL227.4) T2 - no change (RL168) T3 - 16 (45m)
G	500, 504-520 Pacific Highway	Constructed	44 storeys (RL 227.4)
H	575-583 Pacific Highway	LEP changes gazetted	56m
I	7-11 Albany Street	Approved mixed use buildings	13 storeys
J	472-494 Pacific Highway	Constructed 2 x mixed use buildings	36 and 28 storeys (2 towers) (RL204.5 and RL180.5)
K	46 Nicholson Street	LEP changes gazetted	RL174.95
L	29-57 Christie Street	DA approved	Tower A - 8 storeys (RL115.20) Tower B - 12 storeys (RL130) Tower C - 18 storeys (RL 151.40)
M	Crows Nest OSD	Concept Development Application - Post exhibition phase.	Site A - approx 21 storeys (RL175.6) Site B - approx 17 storeys (RL155) Site C - approx 9 storeys (RL127)



Development context plan

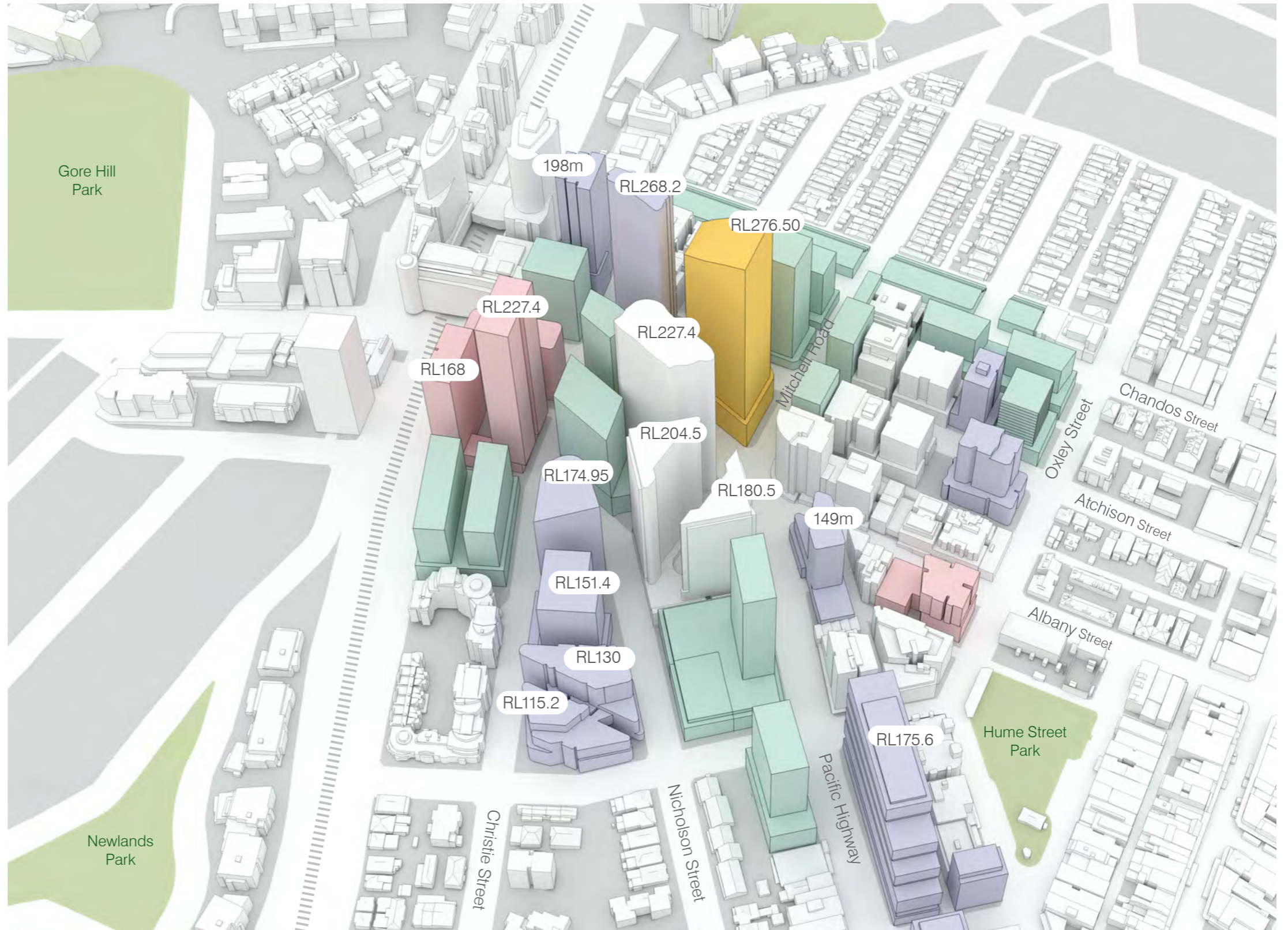
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Building heights

The proposed indicative building envelope for the subject site would be the highest of current proposals in St Leonards Town Centre.

We believe that this scale is appropriate for the following reasons:

- The site is in an iconic location at the bend in the Pacific Highway
- The site is located at the topographic high point of the town centre
- It is located between two stations, a location identified in the 2036 Final Plan as the location for height
- Given the size of the site, the tower form would appear slender and provide sufficient space to permit views to sky between adjacent towers
- The tower could become a visual marker of the town centre on the skyline.



Legend

- Buildings under construction
- DA Approved/ DA being prepared
- Likely development (under the 2036 Final Plan)
- Commercial use for subject site
- - - Site boundary

Building envelope within adjacent development context showing heights as RLs

Approved and pending local approvals



Building envelope within development context- South elevation



Building envelope within development context- East elevation




Building envelope within development context- North elevation



Building envelope within development context- West elevation

- Legend**
- Buildings under construction
 - DA Approved/ DA being prepared
 - Likely development (under the 2036 Final Plan)
 - Commercial use for subject site
 - Site boundary

An aerial photograph of a city skyline, likely Sydney, Australia. The image shows a dense urban area with numerous high-rise buildings of varying heights and architectural styles. A prominent, tall, thin tower is visible in the background. The foreground shows a mix of residential and commercial buildings, with some greenery interspersed. The sky is clear and blue.

The site is located within in the suburb of St Leonards in the North Sydney Local Government Area (LGA) at the boundary of both Lane Cove and Willoughby LGAs.

The precinct within which the site is located has been identified in the St Leonards and Crows Nest 2036 Plan as an 'area for higher density between stations'.