PROPOSED ROOTY HILL STATION PRECINCT ACCESSIBILITY AND COMMUTER CAR PARK UPGRADE

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER & VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

PREPARED BY ENVISAGE CONSULTING

ON BEHALF OF PITT & SHERRY FOR TRANSPORT FOR NSW

envisage

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Executive Summary

This report has been prepared to assess landscape character and visual impacts associated with Transport for NSW's (TfNSW's) proposed upgrade of Rooty Hill Station. The upgrade is proposed to address accessibility issues at the Station, provide a new commuter car park for Station users and upgrade Station interchanges. The upgrade is collectively referred to in this report as 'the Proposal'. This report assesses the impact of the Proposal on existing landscape character and the impact on views from key locations surrounding the Proposal.

Proposal overview

The Proposal includes the following key features:

- Station upgrade. Featuring four new sets of lifts and stairs, accessible paths, a new footbridge, and overhead pedestrian canopy at the Station platforms. The upgrade would require the demolition of the existing footbridge, ramp to Rooty Hill Road North shopping precinct, and existing stairs.
- A new four-level commuter car park. Providing 504 car spaces, the car park would be approximately 8 – 10m high and located at the site of the existing commuter car park (east of Station Street, between the railway corridor and a Blacktown City Council depot). The car park and would require the removal of several trees, including two visually prominent, tall native trees.
- Interchange improvements. Including shelters for relocated "kiss and ride" zones, widened footpaths, relocation of the taxi rank, new undercover bicycle racks, and extension of an existing shared cycle/pedestrian path to complete the route from M7 to the Rooty Hill Station entrance.

Landscape character

Within the immediate vicinity of Rooty Hill Station are commercial shopping precincts (both north and south of Rooty Hill Station), large areas of car parking, a skate park, a Blacktown City Council depot (waste services), and residential areas. There are also attractive heritage buildings, including the 1940s heritage buildings on the Station platform.

The Station precinct is rapidly changing. New four storey developments are already under construction adjacent to the Station. The locality is zoned to permit a maximum building height of 14m.

In close proximity, the Station is visually dominated by the existing overhead covered pedestrian walkway and ramps. These structures, and the adjoining expanse of hard paved car parks either side of the Station, overshadow the more attractive architectural features of the Station, and detract from the area's pedestrian friendliness.

The proposed car park location is visually separated from the Station, next to the railway corridor, a Council depot and skate park. The area features two mature native trees within the existing car parking area, and several smaller native trees along the fringes of the car park. The trees provide amenity within the extensive hard-paved car park area.

Main visual changes

During construction, there would be extensive demolition, tree removal, use of piling rigs and heavy lifting equipment, road diversions, truck deliveries and hording for a period of approximately 18 months.

Once construction has completed, the Station would be more visually open with the removal of the overhead ramps and replacement of the pedestrian footbridge with a sleeker structure. The heritage architecture of the Station would be more noticeable and entrances on both sides of the Station would be more inviting, featuring wider footpaths, landscaping, shelter and seating.

The commuter car park would be a new and visually distinct element. The height of the car park would be in scale and consistent with new development adjacent to the Station. Landscaping would be introduced, as well as widened footpaths and a cycle route to the Station.

However, the Proposal would result in the loss of two existing tall trees within the proposed car park site, and possibly numerous smaller trees on the fringes of the existing car park.

Assessment of impact to landscape character

The impact of the Station and interchange upgrades were assessed separately from the impact of the new commuter car park.

The Station and interchange areas have been assessed as having a moderate sensitivity ranking for landscape character. The magnitude of change to landscape character during construction has been assessed as moderate. The magnitude of change to landscape character post-construction has been assessed as low. This leads to a predicted overall impact to landscape character of:

- moderate during construction and
- moderate-low post-construction.

The proposed commuter car park area has been assessed as having a low sensitivity ranking for landscape character. The magnitude of change to landscape character during construction has been assessed as moderate. The magnitude of change to landscape character post-construction has been assessed as low. This leads to a predicted overall impact to landscape character of:

- moderate-low during construction and
- moderate-low post-construction.

Assessment on impact to viewpoints

Key viewpoints in the area (locations from which people can see Rooty Hill Station and the proposed location of the commuter car park and road upgrades) were identified and assessed for potential visual impact. The viewpoints identified included locations within the commercial shopping areas:

1. Rooty Hill Road North
2. Intersection of Rooty Hill Road North and North Parade
3. Rooty Hill Road South
4. Intersection of Rooty Hill Road South and Beames Avenue

As well as locations from local roads surrounding the Station:

5. Station Street
6. Intersection of Station Street and North Parade (two viewpoints were identified from this location – one looking toward the proposed commuter car park, and one looking toward the Station)
7. North Parade.

Photomontages were prepared to illustrate the changes and the anticipated view following construction of the Proposal, at viewpoints 2, 4, 5 and 6.

The sensitivity of the viewing locations ranged from moderate to low. There were no highly sensitive viewing locations. From most viewpoints, construction would result in impact levels from high to moderate. Post-construction, visual impacts would reduce to moderate or low.

The elements of the Proposal that would be most noticeable post-construction are:

- The removal of the existing overhead pedestrian walkway and ramps
- The removal of the two tall trees and possibly several smaller trees at the location of the proposed car park
- A new, four-storey commuter car park located adjacent to the Council depot
- New pedestrian walkway over the Station platforms
- New lifts and stairs
- Upgraded pedestrian entrances both sides of the Station, featuring widened footpaths, new shelters, garden beds, lighting, signage, and seating
- New footpath connection between the Station and the commuter car park
- Extended cycle connection between the Station and the M7.

Conclusion

The Proposal has positive visual attributes and, overall, would lead to significant visual improvement of the Station precinct due to the more open views of the Station, creation of attractive pedestrian spaces, and new platform infrastructure. However, the proposed commuter car park, while located in an area that is not visually prominent (being removed from the Station, adjacent the railway corridor, a Council depot, and skate park), would result in the loss of existing trees which provide amenity to the area.

Mitigation measures have been recommended in this report including planting around the proposed car park to address tree removal and loss of amenity. Other recommended mitigation measures include design considerations for Station infrastructure and construction phase measures.

Given the moderate sensitivity of many of the viewing locations, combined with the positive change in pedestrian amenity and scenic quality that would be experienced from most viewing locations post-construction, it is concluded that there would be an overall acceptable level of impact.

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this report

This report has been prepared to assess the landscape character and visual impacts associated with Transport for NSW's (TfNSW) proposed upgrade of Rooty Hill Station precinct, including provision of a new commuter car park and interchange upgrades – collectively referred to in this report as 'the Proposal'. The assessment forms part of the requirements for a Review of Environmental Factors under Part 5 of the *NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979*.

The assessment considers the visual impact on the existing landscape character and key viewpoints that surround the Proposal.

1.2 Proposal overview

The Proposal forms part of the Transport Access Program - a NSW Government initiative to deliver accessible, modern, secure and integrated transport infrastructure. The proposed upgrade at Rooty Hill Station precinct includes the following key features:

- **Station upgrade**. Four new sets of lifts and stairs, accessible paths and a new footbridge are proposed to address Station accessibility. New overhead pedestrian canopies at the Station platforms would be installed. The upgrade would require the demolition of the existing footbridge, ramp to the northern shopping precinct, and existing stairs.
- **Commuter car park**. A new four-level car park is proposed. The car park would provide 504 car spaces and be located at the site of the existing commuter car park (east of Station Street, between the rail corridor and the Blacktown City Council depot). The car park would be approximately 8 – 10m high and would require the removal of several trees, including two visually prominent, tall native trees.
- **Interchange improvements.**

  Changes to the Northern Interchange include:

  - Provision of shelters for relocated "kiss and ride" zones on both side of North Parade
  - widened footpaths
  - relocation of the taxi rank
  - provision of 10 undercover bicycle racks and
  - extension of an existing shared cycle/pedestrian path to complete the route from M7 to the Rooty Station entrance.

Changes to the Southern Interchange include:

- provision of 10 undercover bicycle racks near the Rooty Hill Station entrance
- provision of new bus shelters
- relocation of accessible parking spaces.

- **Ancillary works.** The upgrade would also include: pedestrian lighting between the new commuter car park and Rooty Hill Station; landscaping to enhance visual amenity; and, CCTV and wayfinding signage.

Further detail on the Proposal is provided at Section 4.

1.3 Report format

The principal tasks of the assessment process are set-out in the report's format:

- Task 1: Define the methodology for the assessment (Section 2)
- Task 2: Establish baseline conditions and describe the context of the site, including the visual environment and site visibility (Section 3)
- Task 3: Describe the main visual changes associated with the Proposal (Section 4)
- Task 4: Assess the likely effects to landscape character (Section 5)
- Task 5: Assess the likely effects on surrounding key viewpoints (Section 6)
- Task 6: Describe design and mitigation measures that have been, and could be, incorporated into the design to improve the visual outcome (Section 7).
- Task 7: Conclusion (Section 8).

2 Assessment methodology

This section of the report defines the methodology for the assessment.

2.1 General

The assessment methodology used in this report is based broadly on the NSW Road and Maritime Services' (Roads and Maritime, 2013) *Environmental Impact Assessment Practice Note: Guideline for Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment EIA-N04,* March 2013.

Under the guideline, two main types of visual effects (or impacts) are assessed:

- effect on the landscape character
- effect on key viewpoints (visual impact).

The guidelines describe these impacts as follows:

> *"Landscape character and visual assessment are equally important. Landscape character assessment helps determine the overall impact of a project on an area's character and sense of place. Visual impact assessment helps define the day to day visual effects of a project on people's views."*

2.2 Detailed assessment methodology

The determination of the effect on landscape character and viewpoints are based on the combination of two criteria – the sensitivity and the magnitude of change, defined by Roads and Maritime (2013) as:

- *Sensitivity - The sensitivity of a landscape character zone or view and its capacity to absorb change. In the case of visual impact this also relates to the type of viewer and number of viewers.*
- *Magnitude - The measurement of the scale, form and character of a development proposal when compared to the existing condition. In the case of visual assessment this also relates to how far the proposal is from the viewer.*

For the purposes of this assessment, the criteria developed to determine sensitivity are listed in Table 2-1**.** Criteria used to determine magnitude are listed in Table 2-2. These criteria have been defined for sensitivity and magnitude of change for both the assessment of landscape character and the visual impact to viewpoints. The combination of sensitivity and magnitude provide the rating of the level of impact, as shown in Table 2-3 (as adapted for this type of project from Roads and Maritime, 2013).

Indicative images (photomontages) have been prepared to illustrate the likely visual changes from key viewpoints and are included where relevant.

Table 2-1: Sensitivity Ranking Criteria

Sensitivity	Criteria (general guide only, some or all may apply)
High	▪ Landscape or heritage of high to very high conservation value or ▪ Public views with a high to very high number of users or ▪ Viewers are in close proximity or ▪ The site has a high visual prominence or ▪ Viewers have opportunity for prolonged or stationary views
Moderate	▪ Landscape or heritage of moderate conservation value or ▪ Public views with a moderate to high number of viewers or ▪ Viewers are in close or moderate proximity or ▪ The site is visually prominent or ▪ Private views in close proximity with mostly unimpeded views
Low	▪ Some landscape or heritage conservation value but of lower visual value or ▪ Public views for a small number of users or ▪ Viewers at a more distant proximity and ▪ Site is less visually prominent ▪ Viewers have short-time period to view / transitory views
Negligible	▪ Landscape has no or very little heritage or visual value ▪ Very few people can view ▪ Viewers are long distance from site ▪ Site is not visually prominent ▪ Viewers have short time period to view / no private/stationary views

Table 2-2: Magnitude of Change Ranking Criteria

Magnitude	Criteria (general guide only, some or all may apply)
High	▪ Significant size and extent of area affected ▪ Permanent and irreversible change ▪ The proposal forms a significant and immediately apparent part of the scene, and one that significantly contrasts in scale and character (either existing or planned) and is severely detrimental to the quality of the scene.
Moderate	▪ Moderate in size and extent of area affected ▪ Temporary, or if permanent, effects reduced over time ▪ The proposal becomes the dominant feature of the scene to which other elements become subordinate, and one that significantly contrasts in scale and character (either existing or planned), possibly reducing the quality of the scene.

Magnitude	Criteria (general guide only, some or all may apply)
Low	▪ Small in size and extent of area ▪ Temporary, or if permanent, visual effects able to be reduced substantially ▪ The proposal forms a visible and recognisable new element within the overall scene, yet one that is relatively compatible with the surrounding character (either existing or planned).
Negligible	▪ The proposal constitutes only a minor component of the wider view, which might be missed by the casual observer or receptor. Awareness of the proposal would not have a marked effect on the overall quality of the scene.

Table 2-3: Landscape character and visual impact grading matrix (Matrix of Sensitivity and Magnitude)

		Magnitude			
		High	Moderate	Low	Negligible
Sensitivity	High	High impact	High-moderate impact	Moderate impact	Negligible
	Moderate	High-moderate impact	Moderate impact	Moderate –low impact	Negligible
	Low	Moderate impact	Moderate –low impact	Low impact	Negligible
	Negligible	Negligible impact	Negligible impact	Negligible impact	Negligible

3 Existing landscape character

This section of the report describes the existing landscape character of Rooty Hill Station precinct – including the Station, the location of the proposed commuter car park, and interchange areas.

3.1 General context

The Proposal is located at Rooty Hill Station precinct. Rooty Hill Station is on the T1 Western Line in western Sydney. It is approximately 20km west of Parramatta CBD, within the local government area (LGA) of Blacktown City Council. In addition to being accessible via the railway line, Rooty Hill Station is easily accessed via major roads: the Westlink M7 (approximately 300m to the east); the Great Western Highway; and the Western Motorway (1.5km and 2.5km to the south respectively).

Rooty Hill is primarily a residential suburb; however, it is also home to manufacturing industries (including OneSteel, Humes, and Global Metals), and significant recreational facilities (including: Blacktown International Sports Park; The Rooty Hill – a reserve of state heritage significance; and Nurragingy National Reserve – a 63-hectare reserve attracting more than 1 million people per year).

The location and visual context of the Proposal is illustrated in Figure 3-1.

Figure 3-1: Visual context of Proposal location

3.2 Landscape character

Within the immediate vicinity of Rooty Hill Station are commercial shopping precincts (both north and south of Rooty Hill Station), large areas of car parking, a skate park, Blacktown City Council Depot (waste services), and residential areas. Figure 3-2 shows the vicinity of Rooty Hill Station.

Figure 3-2: Vicinity of Rooty Hill Station

3.2.1 Heritage

The original Rooty Hill Station buildings constructed when the railway line opened in 1863 no longer exist. The current Station platform and buildings date from 1943.

Rooty Hill Station is listed on RailCorp's Section 170 Register as an item of local significance. It is also listed as an item of local significance in *Blacktown City Council's Local Environment Plan 2015* (Blacktown LEP).

RailCorp's s170 listing of the Rooty Hill Station Group includes the platform passenger buildings (1943), signal box - parcels/booking office, platforms (c1943) and footbridge (1944). However, the listing excludes the footbridge beyond the boundary.

The statement of significance "Aesthetic Significance" states:

> *Rooty Hill Station platform buildings are of aesthetic significance as examples of mid-sized Inter-War Railway Functionalist style station buildings in an urban setting. The buildings are noted for their use of finely detailed face brickwork, complex geometric massing, single pitch roofs, detailed fenestration and use of glass bricks*[1].

Other heritage items in the vicinity (listed in Blacktown LEP) include:

- The Imperial Hotel, located 60 metres northwest of the Station. The Hotel is listed as an item of state heritage significance
- School of Arts Hall, located 150 metres south of the Station. The Arts Hall is listed as an item of local heritage significance.

Blacktown City Council's *Development Control Plan 2015* (Blacktown DCP) has specific objectives and controls for development in the vicinity of heritage items[2].

3.2.2 Commercial

From the Station, there is direct pedestrian access to the northern shopping centre via a non-wheelchair-accessible pedestrian ramp. The ramp extends from the covered pedestrian walkway above the Station platforms, over North Parade, and down to the footpath at Rooty Hill Road North.

There is also pedestrian ramp access (again non-wheelchair accessible) from the Station to the smaller, southern shopping centre along Rooty Hill Road South.

Both commercial areas comprise one to two storey buildings. The range of facilities provided reflects the diverse local community and includes retail and grocery shops, restaurants, business and community services.

On the south side of the Station, near the Station entrance, is a 20-space car park. The car park services both Rooty Hill Road South shops and the Station.

On the northern side of the Station, the Imperial Hotel is an attractive feature at the terminus of Rooty Hill Road North shopping area, with its bullnose awnings, brickwork detail, and wrought iron balustrades (shown in Figure **3-3**).

[1] Rooty Hill Railway Station Group, Assessment of Significance, SHR Criteria c), Office of Environment and Heritage, environment.nsw.gov.au. Accessed 10 October 2017.

[2] Blacktown City Council, DCP 2015, Section 4.4.2

Figure 3-3: Imperial Hotel

At the rear of the Rooty Hill Road North shopping area, is a large 200-space car park. The area is largely hard paved with fencing, signage and service entry to businesses. East of the car park, adjacent to the M7 on Station Street, is a Blacktown City Council depot. The depot provides waste services and is accessed by Council's rubbish collection vehicles, large trucks and staff vehicles. Also on Station Street, between the Council depot and the car park, is a skate park.

3.2.3 Ecological

The area is an urban landscape. There are several mature native trees within the footpath near the exit of the pedestrian ramp at Rooty Hill Road North, and street trees and gardens associated with the Station and the commercial shopping areas.

In the vicinity of the car park near the Council depot, and around the skate park, there are several tall trees. Two tall native trees are centrally located within the car park. One is near the depot boundary, and the other within the bitumen parking area. There are other, smaller native trees along the edges of the car park and also a newly planted garden bed along the boundary of the car park and depot. The trees are attractive, provide shade and soften the expanse of hard paving.

There is a stormwater drain parallel to the railway corridor. Unfortunately, the drain appears dirty and has an odour. Between the drain and the railway corridor is a thick corridor of tall weeds.

3.2.4 Residential

Residential streets surround the commercial areas north and south of the Station. The residential areas generally comprise single storey detached houses. The nearest residential building to the Station is an apartment block at 18 Station Street (shown on Figure 3-2). The apartment block balcony faces the car park, however, vegetation growing near the apartment building largely screen the property.

Rooty Hill Public School and Rooty High School are approximately 500m from the Station.

3.2.5 Proposed Developments

The area around Rooty Hill Station is well serviced by public transport, retail and commercial facilities. Blacktown City Council proposes a growth target of approximately 220 new dwellings at Rooty Hill by 2036[3].

Blacktown LEP 2015 provides for a 14m maximum height of buildings around the Station. A mixed-use seniors housing and commercial development is currently underway to the Station's south. The development includes:

- a four-storey mixed used building (including a relocated IGA, specialty shops, offices and hostel units)
- a three-storey residential care facility (containing low and high care beds), and
- 4 x four-storey in-fill self-care housing containing a total of 165 units

Other sites to the north and south of the Station, including the car park on North Parade, could potentially be redeveloped to the 14m height limit.

3.2.6 Character summary

While the Station buildings are stylish and evocative of their 1940s-era construction, the character of the Station is visually dominated by the covered pedestrian walkway and ramps. The existing concrete construction of the walkway features thick supporting columns and decking, and the roofed canopy over the walkway is quite deep. Consequently, the pedestrian walkway structure overshadows the more elegant architectural features of the Station itself.

Adjacent to the Station, the car parks, service roads, backs of shops, and overhead infrastructure, detract from the more pleasant commercial shopping streets and attractive heritage aspects of the area. The surroundings are largely hard-paved, however, numerous large trees in the area (along Rooty Hill Road North, North Parade, Station Street and within the car park) provide amenity.

The character of the vicinity is rapidly changing with increased development and intensified population. Blacktown Council has made provisions in its LEP for new developments to have high architectural standard and attractive design. Redevelopment around Rooty Hill Station must comply with "Design Excellence"[4]. That is, development must exhibit design excellence that contributes to the natural, cultural, visual and built character values of Blacktown. External appearances are expected to improve the quality and amenity of the public domain.

[3] Section 8.3.3, Integrated Transport Plan 2013, Blacktown City Council

[4] Clause 7.7 of Blacktown LEP 2015 has identified the Rooty Hill Station area as "Design Excellence"

4 Proposal description

This section describes the main components of the Proposal and the main visual changes that are likely to have visual impact during construction and operation.

4.1 The Proposal

The Proposal includes: an upgrade of Rooty Hill Station; an upgrade to the Station interchanges (north and south); and construction of a new commuter car park. The key features of the each of these aspects of the Proposal are detailed below.

4.1.1 Rooty Hill Station

The key features of Rooty Hill Station upgrade are:

- Demolition of existing footbridge, ramps and stairs
- Provision of a new footbridge and station concourse (in a new location) with ticketing and passenger information facilities
- Four new sets of stairs and four lifts located at station entrances and platforms
    - The stairs would be relocated to arrive more centrally on Platform 1/2
    - Stairs and lifts on North Parade would be located outside the rail corridor
- Removal of existing seating and shelter on Platform 1/2
- New canopy coverage from stairs to Station building on Platform 1/2
- Accessible paths to station entrance lifts
- New customer service window on Platform 3/4
- Family Accessible Toilets on both platforms.

4.1.2 Commuter Car Park

The key features of the commuter car park are:

- a 504-space car park including accessible parking spaces
- located on the existing commuter car park east of Station Street (between the rail corridor and the Council depot)
- Removal of two existing tall native trees within the existing commuter car park
- Possible removal of smaller native trees on the fringes of the car park
- Open on all elevations

- Open-air stairs serving the car park
- Vehicle accessibility from Station Street
- Provision of an accessible footpath to the Station
- Provision of lighting and help points between car park and the Station.

4.1.3 Interchanges

The key features of the **northern interchange** upgrade include:

- Provision of a new pedestrian crossing and removal of refuge islands on North Parade
- Provision of shelters for "kiss and ride" and taxi zones on both sides of North Parade
- Removal of garden beds at northern interchange to create wider footpaths
- Relocate taxi rank to the southern side of North Parade on the departure side of the pedestrian crossing
- Relocate the kiss and ride zone to Station Street adjacent to the multi-storey commuter car park
- Provision of 10 undercover bicycle racks near the Rooty Hill Station entrance
- Extension of the shared path from the M7 to Rooty Hill Station entrance
- Removal of sections of existing garden bed on the eastern side of Rooty Hill Road North to allow set-down of bus passengers.
- Retain bus zone on the western side of Rooty Hill Road North for future bus layover space
- Relocation of disabled parking.

The key features of the **southern interchange** upgrade include:

- Provision of 10 undercover bicycle racks near Rooty Hill Station entrance
- Relocation of the accessible parking spaces at the southern interchange to on-street accessible parking spaces on Beames Avenue
- New accessible path to Station entrance lift and stairs
- Relocation of disabled parking space closer to lift
- Providing a forecourt area improve at the southern entrance to improve connectivity, legibility and safety.

A preliminary plan of the Proposal is shown at Figure 4-1. An artist impression of the Proposal from a birds-eye view (prepared by Architectus) is shown Figure 4-2.

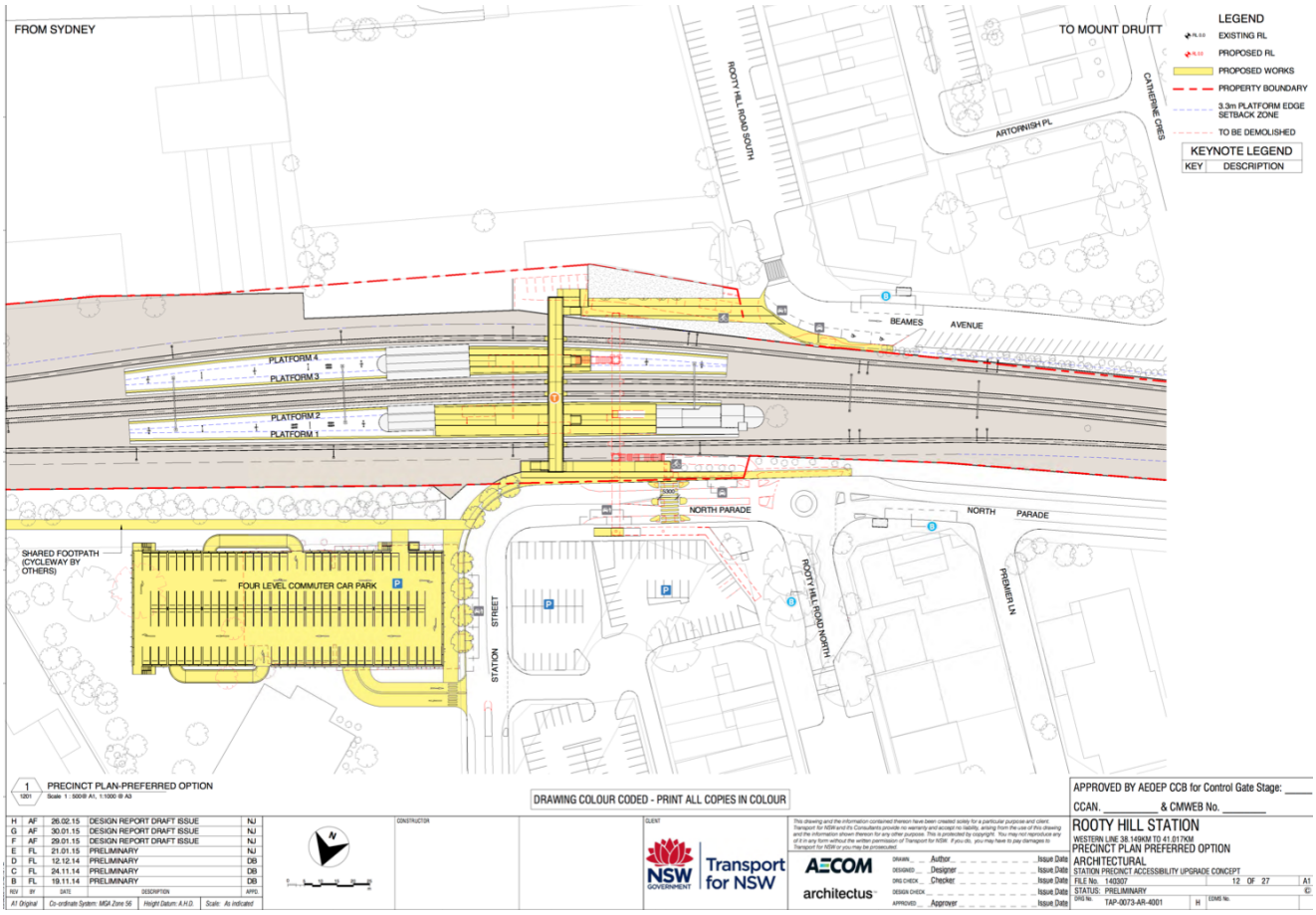

Figure 4-1: Preliminary Precinct Plan (TAP-0073-AR-4001) 26.02.2015

Figure 4-2: Artist Impression of Proposal - looking east (prepared by Architectus)

4.2 Construction

Construction works are expected to take approximately 18 months to complete. Work at the Station is anticipated to commence early 2018, and be completed mid 2019.

Where possible, work would be undertaken during standard construction hours, typically 7am to 6pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 1pm Saturday. However, where this is not possible, working outside of standard construction hours would be required. Night works would require lighting.

The construction footprint is approximately 1,636 m^2. Following is a description of the visual changes that would occur during construction.

4.2.1 Site establishment

Prior to commencing construction, the following preliminary works would take place:

- Site compounds would be established:
    - The main construction compound and site offices are proposed at the car park on the southern side of the Station
    - Two construction compounds/storage areas would be located on the Station platforms (one on platform 1/2, one on platform 3/4)
    - A further construction compound/storage area would be located adjacent to the stormwater drain in the vicinity of the proposed commuter car park
- Fencing/hoarding would be installed around construction zones on the platforms and at street level to provide demarcation from the public and rail customers
- Heritage listed buildings at the Station platform would be protected
- Existing vegetation to be protected:
    - Existing street trees at Rooty Hill Road North (near the exit of the existing pedestrian ramp)
    - Existing street trees and vegetation at the northern station entry/interchange
    - Part of newly planted garden beds at the eastern end of the proposed commuter car park.

4.2.2 Construction

Demolition/removal of existing features would be required which would require numerous truck movements and large equipment, and possibly generate dust. The following would be demolished:

- Existing pedestrian footbridge and platform stairs

- Non-wheelchair-accessible ramps
- Two tall native trees within the site of the proposed commuter car park would be removed
- Possible removal of the smaller native trees along the edges of the site of the proposed commuter car park
- Garden beds near the drop off area on North Parade
- Sections of garden bed on east side of Rooty Hill Road North to accommodate the new bus stop on Rooty Hill Road North
- Removal or pruning of vegetation along the extended shared bike and footpath route from the M7 to the Station
- Trimming of trees on the northern side of the station in proximity to the existing footbridge
- Disturbance to grassed areas within the rail corridor and to the north and south of the proposed commuter car park

Earthworks would require numerous truck movements, use of earthmoving equipment, and possibly generate dust. The following earthworks are likely:

- Piling / footing sub-structure for platform stairs, concourse and lift pits
- Piling / footing for new commuter car park
- Digging / trenching within road corridor for realignment of kerbing, services and drainage

Installation/construction works would require use of cranes and other heavy lifting equipment and includes:

- New columns, lifts, precast stairs, aerial footbridge, canopy and concourse sections
- New commuter car park
- Regrade of surface of platforms, roads and footpaths
- Additional lighting for concourse, overhead wiring for new communications infrastructure (including CCTV)
- Installation of shelters for "kiss and ride" and taxi zones
- Installation of new garden beds and landscaping
- Installation of new footpaths
- Kerbing, line marking, signage.

4.3 Operation

Once construction has completed, the elements that would be visible post-construction are:

- The new multi-storey car park

- The new, sleeker pedestrian concourse over the Station
- New pedestrian canopy at Station platforms
- New lift wells and new stairs either side of the Station
- Pedestrian forecourt entry area on the southern side of the Station
- Wider footpath and open entry area on the northern side of Rooty Hill Station
- New garden areas on both sides of the Station
- Footpath, lighting and signage to direct people to/from the new commuter car park
- Landscaped streets around the Station (North Parade and Beames Avenue)
- New pedestrian zebra crossing at North Parade
- New bus, "kiss and ride", and taxi shelters.

5 Assessment of landscape effects

This section of the report assesses the likely impact of the Proposal on landscape character. The level of impact is based on the combination of two criteria: sensitivity and magnitude of change:

- Sensitivity refers to the nature of the receptor – the type and number of receptors, how sensitive the existing character of the setting is to the proposed change, and the value attached to the landscape.
- Magnitude refers to the nature of the effect – how much change is likely to occur, the size and scale of the change, the extent of the area over which it occurs, whether it is reversible or irreversible, and whether it is short or long term in duration.

The landscape character of the vicinity of the Proposal has been described at Section 3. The impact of the Station and interchange upgrades have been assessed separately from the impact of the commuter car park.

5.1 Station and Interchange Upgrades

5.1.1 Sensitivity

Rooty Hill Station includes heritage-listed features; however, the attractive features of Station are largely overshadowed by the pedestrian overbridge and ramps. The area immediately around the Station is dominated by hard paving, car parking and services roads. It is not inviting or pedestrian- friendly.

Using the criteria listed in Table 2-1, landscape character is rated as having **moderate** sensitivity:

- The Station and vicinity feature heritage of conservation value
- However, the overhead Station infrastructure and entrances detract from the more pleasant architectural features of the area
- Public views are available to a high number of users in close proximity
- However, these views are available for a short-time period and transitory as people move through/use the Station.

5.1.2 Magnitude

Construction

The construction footprint would affect a large area of publicly accessible space. During construction, car parking spaces would temporarily be reduced. Behind the fenced off construction area, it is likely that cranes and heavy machinery would be visible. Local roads would be affected by delivery trucks and road diversions.

Using the criteria listed in Table 2-2, the magnitude of change to landscape character during construction is rated as **moderate**. There would be:

- Large extent of area affected
- Construction would be the dominant feature of the scene
- However, effects would be temporary and reversible.

Operation

Once construction is completed, the Station would be more open with the removal of the overhead ramps and replacement of the concourse with a sleeker structure. The heritage architecture of the Station would be more noticeable and entrances on both sides of the Station would be more pedestrian friendly featuring wider footpaths, landscaping, shelter and seating.

Using the criteria listed in Table 2-2, the magnitude of change to landscape character during operation is rated as **low.** The changes would be:

- complementary to the heritage aspects of the Station and the vicinity
- improve the visual quality of the Station and Station surroundings
- provide attractive pedestrian entrance spaces.

5.1.3 Impact

Construction

The moderate sensitivity ranking, combined with the moderate magnitude of change during construction, leads to an overall moderate level of impact.

Operation

The moderate sensitivity ranking, combined with the low magnitude of change post-construction, leads to an overall moderate-low level of impact.

5.2 Commuter Car Park

5.2.1 Sensitivity

The location of the proposed multi-storey commuter car park is a hard-paved existing commuter car parking area. The car park surroundings include more car parking, the Council depot, and the railway corridor. It is not a pedestrian friendly location; however, the car park does feature two tall native trees that provide amenity and shade, and soften the large hard paved area. Use of the location is transitory.

Using the criteria listed in Table 2-1, landscape character is rated as having **low** sensitivity:

- The site is not visually prominent (being removed from the Station, adjacent the Council depot, railway corridor, and skate park)
- People using the space are primarily in transit
- The area is dominated by views of the railway corridor, car parking and roads.

5.2.2 Magnitude

Construction

During construction, public use and access to the existing car park would be prevented. Behind the fenced-off construction area, it is likely that cranes and heavy machinery would be visible. Clearance of the two mature native trees, as well as removal of smaller native trees along the edges of the car park site would be seen. Station Street may be affected by delivery trucks and temporary road controls may be in place.

Using the criteria listed in Table 2-2, the magnitude of change to landscape character during construction is rated as **moderate**. There would be:

- Large extent of area affected
- Construction would be the dominant feature of the scene
- Removal of mature trees

Operation

Once construction is completed, the landscape character would be dominated by the new multi-storey car park. The height of the car park would be consistent with new development adjacent the Station. Landscaping would be introduced, widened footpaths and extended cycle route to the Station.

Using the criteria listed in Table 2-2, the magnitude of change to landscape character during operation is rated as **moderate:**

- The proposed changes are moderate in size and extent of area
- The scale of the car park is consistent with recent approved four-storey developments adjacent to the Station

- The visual quality of the pedestrian and cyclist experience would improve; however, visual quality would be affected by the loss of the tall native trees.

5.2.3 Impact

Construction

The low sensitivity ranking, combined with the moderate magnitude of change during construction, leads to an overall moderate-low level of impact.

Operation

The low sensitivity ranking, combined with the moderate magnitude of change post-construction, leads to an overall moderate-low level of impact.

5.3 Summary

The assessment results of impact to landscape character are summarised in the tables below.

Table 5-1: Summary of Impact to Landscape Character, Construction

Construction of:	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Impact level
Rooty Hill Station and Interchange upgrades	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Commuter Car Park	Low	Moderate	Moderate-low

Table 5-2: Summary of Impact to Landscape Character, Operation

Operation of:	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Impact level
Rooty Hill Station and Interchange upgrades	Moderate	Low	Moderate-Low
Commuter Car Park	Low	Moderate	Moderate-Low

6 Assessment of visual effects

This section identifies the key viewpoints in the area from which people can currently see the Proposal location. It describes the existing views and assesses the likely impact of the Proposal on each view.

The same methodology combining the two criteria - sensitivity and magnitude of change – is used to determine level of impact.

6.1 General visibility

The Proposal has a relatively confined area of visibility due to the flat nature of the surrounding landform. With the exception of The Rooty Hill and the M7, there are no opportunities for elevated views at ground level. Even from these elevated locations, views are limited. Future views from The Rooty Hill would be hindered by the four-storey development being constructed adjacent to the Station; and barricades, vegetation and buildings limit the outlook from the M7.

Potential viewpoints at ground level are confined to close locations. Due to existing structures, buildings and vegetation, available views are within approximately 250m from the Station.

The following public and private viewing locations have been identified for this visual impact assessment:

From the commercial shopping areas:

1. Rooty Hill Road North
2. Intersection of Rooty Hill Road North and North Parade
3. Rooty Hill Road South
4. Intersection of Rooty Hill Road South and Beames Avenue

From local roads surrounding the Station:

5. Station Street
6. Intersection of Station Street and North Parade (two viewpoints are taken from this location – one looking toward the proposed commuter car park, and one looking toward the Station)
7. North Parade

These viewpoints are identified on Figure 6-1 and are described below. Photomontages have been prepared to illustrate the changes and the anticipated view following construction at viewpoints 2, 4, 5 and 6.

Figure 6-1: Assessed viewpoints

6.2 Viewpoint 1: Rooty Hill Road North

Existing view

The commercial shopping area centred along Rooty Hill Road North terminates at North Parade and the railway corridor. From the shopping area, there are direct views of the pedestrian ramp that leads to the Station, and partial views of the Station buildings in the background, behind existing tall, mature trees. The ramp infrastructure is quite prominent.

A typical view from Rooty Hill Road North toward the Station is shown at Figure 6-2. It is not possible to see the location of the proposed commuter car park from this viewpoint.

Figure 6-2: View from Rooty Hill Road North

Sensitivity

Using the criteria listed in Table 2-1, the sensitivity of the viewpoint is rated as **moderate**. This viewpoint:

- Provides public views for a moderate number of users
- Viewers are in close to moderate proximity
- Viewers are primarily transitory, moving through the location.

Magnitude

Construction

Construction work would occupy most of North Parade visible from the commercial centre. During construction, the demolition works area associated the ramp would be fenced off. Fencing would be in close proximity to shoppers. Associated construction activities such as truck movements and lifting equipment would be seen from this viewpoint. The existing trees near the exit of the ramp would be protected.

Using the criteria listed in Table 2-2, the magnitude of change to the view during construction is rated as **moderate**. From this viewpoint, the construction would be:

- Moderate in size and extent of area affected
- Close to people accessing the North Parade end of the shopping centre
- Temporarily detract from the visual quality of the commercial centre.

Operation

Once construction is completed and infrastructure associated with the pedestrian ramp and overpass removed, the scene toward North Parade would be more open. The Station buildings and pedestrian areas of North Parade would feature more prominently, including new garden areas, widened footpath, and shelters.

Using the criteria listed in Table 2-2, the magnitude of change to the view during operation is rated as **low**:

- The removal of the ramp would be a significant visual change
- Its removal would create a larger pedestrian space
- The existing tall trees near the ramp would be retained and views would open to the upgraded Station.

Impact

Construction

The moderate sensitivity ranking, combined with the moderate magnitude of change during construction, leads to an overall moderate level of impact.

Operation

The moderate sensitivity ranking, combined with the low magnitude of change post construction, leads to an overall moderate-low level of impact.

6.3 Viewpoint 2: Rooty Hill Road North / North Parade Intersection

Existing view

From the intersection of Rooty Hill Road North and North Parade, in the vicinity of the Imperial Hotel, the view is dominated by the pedestrian ramp and overbridge infrastructure. The Station buildings are seen behind vegetation along North Parade. Several mature, tall trees in the foreground soften the view, breaking up the expanse of hard paving.

A typical view from the intersection toward the Station and pedestrian ramp is shown at Figure 6-3**.** A photomontage of the proposed view is shown at Figure 6-4.

Sensitivity

The Imperial Hotel, being a heritage listed building, is a sensitive location. However, the existing surroundings have not complemented the heritage of the Hotel, or the Station.

Using the criteria listed in Table 2-1, the sensitivity of the viewpoint is rated as **moderate**. This viewpoint:

- Provides public views for a moderate number of people
- Viewers are in close proximity and
- The Proposal site is visually prominent.

Figure 6-3: View from Rooty Hill Road North / North Parade

Figure 6-4: Photomontage – Rooty Hill Road North / North Parade intersection

Magnitude

Construction

Construction work would dominate the view from the intersection. Demolition works would occur in close proximity to pedestrians and hotel patrons. Fencing and traffic controls are likely, and complete or partial road closures may be necessary to undertake intersection upgrades.

Using the criteria listed in Table 2-2, the magnitude of change to the view during construction is rated as **high.** From this viewpoint, the construction would be:

- Significant in size and extent of area affected
- A dominant feature of the scene
- However, the works would be temporary.

Operation

Once construction is completed and infrastructure associated with the pedestrian ramp and overpass removed, the scene would be more open. A pedestrian space would replace the location of the ramp in the foreground, and the proposed commuter car park would be seen in the background. Station buildings would feature more prominently and new pedestrian areas along North Parade would be seen.

Using the criteria listed in Table 2-2, the magnitude of change to the view during operation is rated as **low**:

- The removal of the ramp would be a significant visual change
- Its removal would create a larger pedestrian space
- The existing tall trees near the ramp would be retained and
- Views would be more open to the upgraded Station and the commuter car park in the distance.

Impact

Construction

The moderate sensitivity ranking, combined with the high magnitude of change during construction, leads to an overall high-moderate level of impact.

Operation

The moderate sensitivity ranking, combined with the low magnitude of change post construction, leads to an overall moderate-low level of impact.

6.4 Viewpoint 3: Rooty Hill Road South

Existing view

The commercial shopping area centred along Rooty Hill Road South terminates at Beames Avenue and the railway corridor. From the shopping area, there are views of the Station buildings, and partial views of the southern pedestrian ramp. Only in close proximity to Beames Avenue are direct views of the ramp infrastructure leading to the Station.

A typical view from Rooty Hill Road South toward the Station is shown at Figure 6-5. It is not possible to see the location of the proposed commuter car park from this viewpoint.

Figure 6-5: View from Rooty Hill Road South

Sensitivity

Using the criteria listed in Table 2-1, the sensitivity of the viewpoint is rated as **moderate**. This viewpoint:

- Provides public views for a moderate number of users
- Viewers are in close to moderate proximity
- However, viewers are primarily transitory, moving through the location.

Magnitude

Construction

During construction, the Station side of Beames Avenue would be fenced-off while intersection improvements are underway. Works associated with the ramp demolition and construction activities would be less visible.

Using the criteria listed in Table 2-2, the magnitude of change to the view during construction is rated as **low**. From this viewpoint, the construction would be:

- Small in size and extent of area
- Moderately close to people accessing the Beames Avenue end of the shopping centre
- Temporary and reversible.

Operation

Once the intersection upgrade is complete, more distant views toward Beames Avenue would be very similar to the existing. Closer to Beames Avenue however, shoppers would see an improved pedestrian area and entry to the Station, including new garden areas, widened footpath, and shelters.

Using the criteria listed in Table 2-2, the magnitude of change to the view during operation is rated as **low**:

- The view from the shopping street following construction would be largely unchanged
- Closer views would be improved via a more attractive pedestrian space
- Station buildings and vegetation would be retained.

Impact

Construction

The moderate sensitivity ranking, combined with the low magnitude of change during construction, leads to an overall moderate-low level of impact.

Operation

The moderate sensitivity ranking, combined with the low magnitude of change post construction, leads to an overall moderate-low level of impact.

6.5 Viewpoint 4: Rooty Hill Road South / Beames Avenue

Existing view

From the intersection of Rooty Hill Road South and Beames Avenue, there are direct views of the existing bus stop on Beames Avenue, Station buildings, and the southern pedestrian ramp and overbridge infrastructure. The scene is dominated by extensive hard paving, and rail and road overhead service lines.

A typical view from the intersection toward the Station and pedestrian ramp is shown at Figure 6-6. A photomontage of the proposed view is shown at Figure 6-7.

Figure 6-6: View from Rooty Hill Road South / Beames Avenue intersection

Figure 6-7: Photomontage – Rooty Hill Road South / Beames Avenue intersection

Sensitivity

The intersection is well-used with bus patrons, passenger pick-ups, commuters and shoppers. However, the southern entrance to the Station, via a parking street, is not attractive or pedestrian friendly.

Using the criteria listed in Table 2-1, the sensitivity of the viewpoint is rated as **moderate**. This viewpoint:

- Provides public views for a moderate number of people
- Includes the heritage Station buildings (although partially screened by fencing, the bus shelter and power pole) and
- Viewers are in close proximity.

Magnitude

Construction

The main construction compound and site offices are proposed at the car park on the southern side of the Station and may be seen from the intersection. Ramp demolition and construction works would be occurring in close proximity to pedestrians and shoppers. Fencing around the construction area and traffic controls are likely, and complete or partial road closures may be necessary to undertake intersection upgrades.

Using the criteria listed in Table 2-2, the magnitude of change to the view during construction is rated as **moderate.** From this viewpoint, the construction would be:

- Moderate in size and extent of area
- A key feature of the scene
- However, the works would be temporary.

Operation

Once construction is completed and infrastructure associated with the pedestrian ramp and overpass removed, the scene would be more open. An improved pedestrian space would be seen at the Station entrance featuring garden beds, shelters and widened footpath.

Using the criteria listed in Table 2-2, the magnitude of change to the view during operation is rated as **low**:

- Replacement of the pedestrian concourse would reduce the dominance of the Station's overhead infrastructure
- The Station entry would be more visually appealing with changes proposed to the pedestrian footpath and addition of new shelters
- The addition of landscaping at the entrance to the Station would break up the expanse of hard paving.

Impact

Construction

The moderate sensitivity ranking, combined with the moderate magnitude of change during construction, leads to an overall moderate level of impact.

Operation

The moderate sensitivity ranking, combined with the low magnitude of change post construction, leads to an overall moderate-low level of impact.

6.6 Viewpoint 5: Station Street

Existing View

From Station Street, the location of the proposed commuter car park can be seen behind the skate park. The two tall native trees within the car park site are visually prominent, being the highest features in the vicinity, and surrounded by cleared, hard-paving. Smaller native trees bordering the car park are seen in the background and screen the railway corridor. The railway corridor is also screened by tall shrubby weeds lining the stormwater drain adjacent the railway corridor. The Station platform buildings and pedestrian concourse are seen at the end of Station Street.

This is the only known location from which there may be views of the Proposal from residential buildings. The two-storey apartment building at 18 Station Street (refer to Figure 3-2) is close to this viewpoint. The apartment building is quite well screened behind vegetation; however, it is possible some residents would have views of the existing carpark, skate park and Station.

A typical view from Station Street toward the proposed commuter car park and Station is shown at Figure 6-8. A photomontage of the proposed view is shown at Figure 6-9.

Sensitivity

Using the criteria listed in Table 2-1, the sensitivity of the viewpoint is rated as **moderate**. This viewpoint:

- Provides public views to a moderate number of people
- Could provide private views for residents of the apartment building on Station Street, at a moderate proximity
- Is not visually prominent (being removed from the Station, located in front of the railway corridor and next to a Council depot).

Figure 6-8: View from Station Street

Figure 6-9: Photomontage – Station Street

Magnitude

Construction

A construction compound/storage area would be located adjacent to the stormwater drain in the vicinity of the proposed commuter car park and is likely to be seen from Station Street. There are also compound/storage areas on the Station platforms, however, these would be hidden by existing vegetation from this viewpoint.

Fencing of the construction area would be seen behind the skate park and along Station Street. Removal of the mature native trees, trucks, cranes and piling rigs would be visible above the surrounding site fence. As construction progresses, the multi-storey building would begin to appear. The car park would eventually screen a section of railway corridor and vegetation along the stormwater drain.

Ramp demolition works would be seen in the distance, as well as construction works on the Station platform. Fencing, traffic controls and heavy equipment associated with the northern interchange upgrade would also be visible.

Using the criteria listed in Table 2-2, the magnitude of change to the view during construction is rated as **high.** From this viewpoint, the construction would be:

- Significant in size and extent of area
- The construction works would dominate the scene
- Requires the removal of existing visually prominent trees.

Operation

Once construction is completed, the multi-storey commuter car park would be seen behind the skate park. The car park would screen a section of the railway corridor. The vehicular entrance to the car park would be visible off Station Street.

The existing pedestrian ramp and overpass to the Station would be removed. The concourse would be replaced with a sleeker version, relocated further east. A new pedestrian canopy would be installed along the platform. Pedestrian upgrades between the Station and the commuter car park, including footpath and lighting would be visible at the end of Station Street.

Using the criteria listed in Table 2-2, the magnitude of change to the view during operation is rated as **moderate**:

- The commuter car park would be a new, moderately sized feature
- The car park size would be compatible with surrounding proposed development in the vicinity of the Station
- The car park, being located adjacent the railway corridor, and next to the Council's depot, is not in a visually prominent location
- However, the loss of existing trees would be a permanent change to the visual amenity of the area

Impact

Construction

The moderate sensitivity ranking, combined with the high magnitude of change during construction, leads to an overall high-moderate level of impact.

Operation

The moderate sensitivity ranking, combined with the moderate magnitude of change post construction, leads to an overall moderate level of impact.

6.7 Viewpoint 6: Station Street /North Parade

Existing view

Pedestrians and vehicles pass through the intersection of Station Street and North Parade to access the Station, adjacent car parks, and the commercial shopping centre. From this location, there are close, unobstructed views of the Proposal.

Looking southwest, the Station platform and buildings, the pedestrian overbridge, and the northern entrance to the Station, can be seen along North Parade. Looking northeast, the proposed commuter car park site, including the existing two tall trees, smaller trees along the car park boundary, and Council depot in the background, are visible.

A typical view from the intersection looking southwest toward the Station and the pedestrian ramp is shown at Figure 6-10. A photomontage of the proposed view is shown at Figure 6-11.

A typical view from the intersection looking northeast toward the proposed commuter car park location is shown at Figure 6-12. A photomontage of the proposed view is shown at Figure 6-13.

Sensitivity

Using the criteria listed in Table 2-1, the sensitivity of the viewpoint is rated as having **low** sensitivity. This viewpoint:

- Provides public views for a moderate number of viewers and
- Viewers are in close proximity
- However, the view is dominated by hard paving, service infrastructure, roads, car parking, the railway corridor, and pedestrian overbridge.

Figure 6-10: View southwest from Station Street / North Parade

Figure 6-11: Photomontage – Station Street / North Parade intersection, view southwest

Figure 6-12: View northeast from Station Street / North Parade

Figure 6-13: Photomontage – Station Street / North Parade intersection, view northeast

Magnitude

Construction

Ramp and pedestrian bridge demolition works would be seen when looking southwest along North Parade. Dust generated during demolition could affect air quality and visual amenity of the area. The works would include use of heavy machinery and trucks, and require traffic controls and possible partial or full road closure. Fencing around the construction site along North Parade would include pedestrian diversions while road upgrades and footpath improvements are occurring. Works on the Station platform, installation of lift shafts and new stairs would be in close proximity.

Looking northeast, construction of the commuter car would be seen along Station Street. The construction compound/storage area adjacent to the stormwater drain would be in close proximity. Although they are less prominent from this viewpoint, removal of the two tall native trees would be noticed behind the construction site fence. Removal of the smaller native trees around the car park boundary would also be visible. Trucks, earth moving equipment and piling rigs may be in use at the construction site and visible above the construction site fence. As construction progresses and the multi-storey car park begins to appear, it would screen a large section of the Council depot in the background.

Using the criteria listed in Table 2-2, the magnitude of change to the view during construction is rated as **high.** From this viewpoint, the construction would be:

- Significant in size and extent of area
- The construction works would dominate the scene
- The loss of trees would be a permanent change.

Operation

Once construction is completed, the view southwest would include the new lift and stairs to the Station, and new, sleeker pedestrian concourse, relocated closer to Station Street. The new pedestrian canopy over the Station platforms would also be visible. Removal of the pedestrian overbridge would open up the view. The improved pedestrian footpath between the Station and the commuter car park, installation of garden beds, lighting and shelters would create a more attractive entrance to the Station.

The view northeast would principally comprise the multi-storey commuter car park. The vehicular entrance to the car park may be partially visible off Station Street. A large section of the Council depot, behind the car park, would be screened from view. New landscaping and footpath would be visible in the foreground of the new car park.

Using the criteria listed in Table 2-2, the magnitude of change to the view during operation is rated as **low.** From this viewpoint:

- The commuter car park would be a new, significantly sized feature

- However, the car park location, adjacent the railway corridor, and next to Council's depot, is not visually prominent
- The removal of the pedestrian overbridge would open up the view around the Station entrance
- The changes proposed to the concourse, lifts and stairs, widened footpaths along North Parade, lighting and shelters would improve the attractiveness of the Station

Impact

Construction

The low sensitivity ranking, combined with the high magnitude of change during construction, leads to an overall moderate level of impact.

Operation

The low sensitivity ranking, combined with the low magnitude of change post construction, leads to an overall low level of impact.

6.8 Viewpoint 7: North Parade

From North Parade, the pedestrian overbridge and ramps either side of the Station are visible. Station buildings on the platform can be seen, although partially obscured by vegetation.

A typical view from North Parade toward the Station is shown at Figure 6-14.

Figure 6-14: View from North Parade

Sensitivity

Using the criteria listed in Table 2-1, the sensitivity of the viewpoint is rated as **low**. This viewpoint:

- Provides public views for a moderate number of users
- Viewers are in close to moderate proximity

- However, viewers are primarily transitory, moving through the location.

Magnitude

Construction

Works associated with the northern and southern ramp demolition and construction activities at the Station would be visible. Closer to the intersection with Rooty Hill Road North, construction fencing, trucks and traffic controls would be seen while intersection improvements are underway.

Using the criteria listed in Table 2-2, the magnitude of change to the view during construction is rated as **moderate**. From this viewpoint, the construction would be:

- Moderate in size and extent of area
- Moderate to close proximity to people in transit along North Parade
- Temporary and reversible.

Operation

Once construction is complete, the view toward the Station would be more open. The ramps both sides of the Station, and the pedestrian bridge over North Parade would no longer be seen. A sleeker concourse over the Station platforms would be visible at a further distance from the viewer. The Station buildings would be more prominent and a new pedestrian canopy at the Station platforms would be visible.

Using the criteria listed in Table 2-2, the magnitude of change to the view during operation is rated as **low**:

- Views would be improved through removal of the visually heavy overhead pedestrian infrastructure
- The Station buildings and trees along North Parade would be retained
- The new pedestrian concourse would be sleeker in design and further from the viewer.

Impact

Construction

The low sensitivity ranking, combined with the moderate magnitude of change during construction, leads to an overall moderate-low level of impact.

Operation

The low sensitivity ranking, combined with the low magnitude of change post construction, leads to an overall low level of impact.

6.9 Summary of Visual Impact to Key Viewpoints

The assessment results of impact to individual viewpoints are summarised in the tables below.

Table 6-1: Summary of Visual Impact to Viewpoints, Construction

Viewpoints: Construction	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Impact level
1. Rooty Hill Road North	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
2. Rooty Hill Road North / North Parade	Moderate	High	High-moderate
3. Rooty Hill Road South	Moderate	Low	Moderate-low
4. Rooty Hill Road South / Beames Avenue	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
5. Station Street	Moderate	High	High-moderate
6. Station Street / North Parade	Low	High	Moderate
7. North Parade	Low	Moderate	Moderate-low

Table 6-2: Summary of Visual Impact to Viewpoints, Operation

Viewpoints: Operation	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Impact level
1. Rooty Hill Road North	Moderate	Low	Moderate-low
2. Rooty Hill Road North / North Parade	Moderate	Low	Moderate-low
3. Rooty Hill Road South	Moderate	Low	Moderate-low
4. Rooty Hill Road South / Beames Avenue	Moderate	Low	Moderate-low
5. Station Street	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
6. Station Street / North Parade	Low	Low	Low
7. North Parade	Low	Low	Low

7 Mitigation

This section of the report describes the design and mitigation measures that have been, and are recommended to be, incorporated into the design to improve the visual outcome.

7.1 Positive visual attributes of the Proposal

The Proposal incorporates a number of positive measures designed to mitigate potential landscape character and visual impacts:

1. The form and character of the heritage architecture of the Station has been identified as aesthetically significant[5] and would be retained.
2. The proposed commuter car park site is not in a visually prominent location being adjacent to the railway corridor, near the M7, next to Blacktown Council's depot (waste services facility), within an area of existing car parking and behind the service entries to the commercial centre.
3. The Proposal includes removal of the visually-heavy, aerial pedestrian infrastructure that dominates close proximity views, and detracts from the heritage architecture at the Station. This would open up the view around the Station, assisting surveillance and user friendliness of the space.
4. Glass and highly reflective materials would not be used in the construction of the Proposal, reducing potential glare impacts.
5. Pedestrian spaces would be created at both entrances including widened footpaths, shelters, lighting, CCTV and way finding signage.
6. Pedestrian/cycle linkages would be improved, with a new footpath between the Station and proposed commuter car park, and extension of the cycle path from the M7 to the Station.
7. Existing mature trees adjacent to the road upgrades, such as the large street trees on Rooty Hill Road North, would be protected.
8. New garden beds and landscaping are a feature of the Proposal.
9. Stockpile and site compounds have been located in areas that are already cleared, and do not necessitate clearing of vegetation.

[5] Rooty Hill Railway Station Group, Assessment of Significance, SHR Criteria c), Office of Environment and Heritage, environment.nsw.gov.au. Accessed 10 October 2017.

7.2 Mitigation Measures

Blacktown City Council seeks to promote high quality design for the Station precinct (reflective in Council's identification of the area in its LEP as "design excellence"). Therefore, it is essential to:

> *ensure that development exhibits design excellence that contributes to the natural, cultural, visual and built character values of Blacktown. Development must be of a high architectural standard and its external appearance should improve the quality and amenity of the public domain.*

Accordingly, the above positive measures listed at Section 7.1 are integral to the Proposal to reduce adverse visual impacts. In addition, measures are recommended in Section 7.2.1 to further reduce visual impacts:

7.2.1 Planting

- Protect existing trees to be retained prior to commencement of construction in accordance with Australian Standard *Protection of trees on development sites* AS4970-2009 and TfNSW's *Vegetation Management (Protection and Removal) Guideline,* 2015 (*Vegetation Management*, TfNSW, 2015)
- Consult with a qualified arborist to minimise impact on the long-term health of trees within the construction zone, or trees that would be affected by construction
- Undertake replacement planting to address proposed tree loss in accordance with *Vegetation Management,* TfNSW, 2015
- Plant tall native trees between the skate park and the proposed car park to soften and reduce the visual bulk of the car park when viewed from Station Street
- Plant tall native trees (where possible in consideration of pedestrian/vehicular sightlines, safety and surveillance issues) along the Station Street interface with the car park
- Remove weeds along the stormwater drain in consultation with the authority responsible for the stormwater drain. Manage and dispose of weeds in accordance with TfNSW's *Weed Management and Disposal Guide*.

7.2.2 Design

- Promote/highlight design objectives from Blacktown DCP (Sections 1.4 and 4.4.2) in tender documents for the car park design:
    - Encourage high quality development that contributes to the existing or desired future character of the area, with particular emphasis on the integration of buildings with a landscaped setting
    - Protect and enhance the public domain

- Encourage a high standard of aesthetically pleasing and functional development that sympathetically relates to adjoining and nearby developments
- Ensure that development does not adversely affect the heritage significance of heritage items, heritage groups or archaeological sites as well as their settings, distinctive streetscape, landscape and architectural styles
- Ensure that development in the vicinity of a heritage item is responsive and respectful in terms of height, setback, form and overall design. Ā

- New Station canopies should have a shallow pitch, typical of the roof lines of the heritage Station buildings. Ā
- The colour of the new canopies should be recessive, to reduce their visual dominance. Ā
- Use a common palette of materials to provide consistency across the precinct upgrade.
- Use a common theme/style for new site elements like seating, paving, signage and lights, which is complementary to the heritage architecture of the Station
- New pedestrian infrastructure (concourse, platform canopy, stairs etc) to be designed complementary with the heritage architecture of the Station:
  - Design elements to reflect elegant simplicity of the 1940s Station buildings character
  - Design with an appropriate human scale. Ā

7.2.3 Construction phase

- Install screen hoarding and/or shade cloth screens around the construction area
- reduce potential dust impacts by:
  - Not undertaking demolition on windy days
  - Misting demolition work area during demolition activities
- avoid temporary light spill beyond the construction site (if night work is required) by directing light source down and installing shields around the light source
- rehabilitate disturbed areas as soon as possible following construction
- remove graffiti if it occurs at the construction site in accordance with TfNSW standard requirements.

8 Conclusion

Rooty Hill Station precinct comprises the Station, two commercial centres, a large car parking area, skate park, Council depot, and services the wider residential community. Within the vicinity are many attractive features, including the heritage buildings on the Station platform.

The Station precinct is rapidly changing. Surrounding the Station, building heights have a maximum height limit of 14m. Some four storey developments adjacent the Station are already under construction.

The Proposal to upgrade Rooty Hill Station to an accessible Station, includes provision of a four-storey commuter car park, replacement of existing overhead pedestrian walkways at the Station, and upgrades to the interchanges either side of the Station.

The Station is currently visually dominated by the overhead covered pedestrian walkway and ramps. These structures, and the adjoining expanse of hard paved car parks either side of the Station, overshadow the Station's elegant 1940s architectural features and detract from the Station's pedestrian friendliness.

The Proposal incorporates a number of key measures designed to mitigate potential landscape character and visual impacts. Most significantly:

- The heritage architecture of the Station would be retained
- The replacement pedestrian structures would be a sleeker design
- Existing mature street trees within the vicinity of the Station and along Rooty Hill Road North would be retained
- Pedestrian spaces would be created at both Station entrances, and
- The proposed commuter car park site is not in a visually prominent location (being removed from the Station, next to the railway corridor and adjacent to a Council depot).

However, the Proposal would result in the loss of two existing tall trees located within the proposed car park site, and possibly several smaller trees on the fringes of the car park site. The trees provide much needed amenity within the large hard-paved car park area.

Most viewpoints to the Station have moderate sensitivity, primarily due to their proximity to the Proposal. During the construction period, views of fencing/hording, demolition and construction equipment, traffic disruptions, and truck movements would be typical. Tree removal would be visible behind construction site fencing. The impact to viewpoints during construction ranges from low to high.

Once construction is completed, the impact would be significantly reduced. Views toward the Station would be more open and there would be an improved pedestrian experience with widened footpaths, new shelters, garden beds and new pedestrian crossing. The commuter car park would be a new and visually distinct element. However, at four-storeys in its proposed location next to the Council depot, it would be in scale with surrounding redevelopment. The impact to viewpoints post-construction ranges from moderate to low.

To further address visual impacts, mitigation measures have been included in this report to address the loss of existing trees at the proposed commuter car park site, design of Station infrastructure, and construction phase measures.

Given the moderate sensitivity of many of the viewing locations, combined with the overall positive change that would be experienced from most viewing locations post-construction, it is concluded that there would be an overall acceptable level of impact that would result from the proposed Rooty Hill Station precinct upgrades.

References

Blacktown City Council, 2013, *Integrated Transport Plan*

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Blacktown City Council, *Development Control Plan 2015*

Blacktown City Council, *Local Environmental Plan 2015*

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Transport for NSW, 2015, *Vegetation Management (Protection and Removal) Guideline*