

Transport Access Program

Pymble Station Upgrade

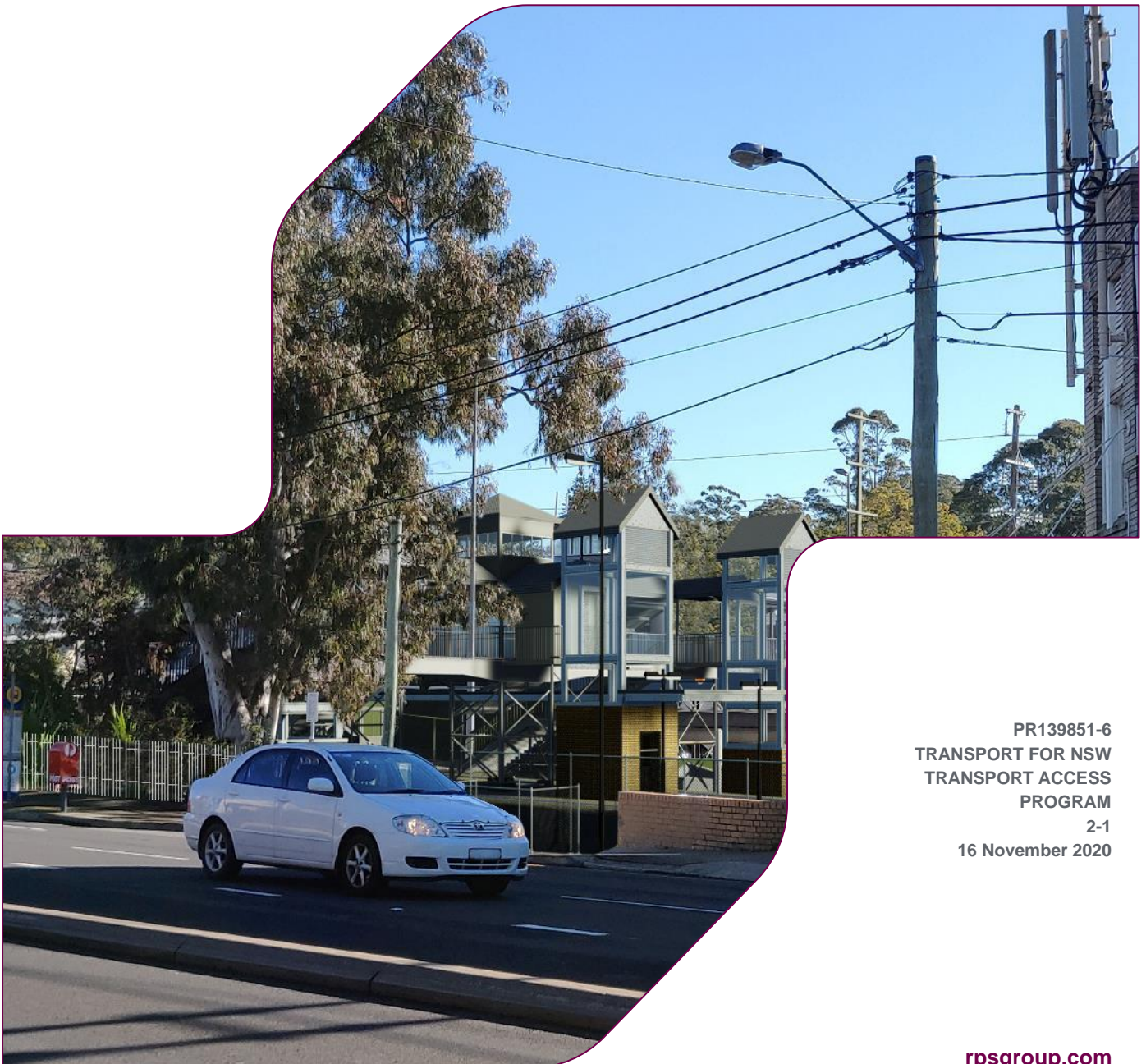
Supporting Studies



Artist's impression of the proposed Pymble Station Upgrade, subject to detailed design

PYMBLE STATION UPGRADE

Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment



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TERMS AND ACRONYMS

Table 1: Terms

Term	Description
Ku-ring-gai Council	Local Government Area (LGA) for the Proposal area.
Inbound	South bound trains and stops (heading to Sydney).
Landscape Character	"The combined quality of built, natural and cultural aspects which make up an area and provide its unique sense of place." (Transport for NSW, 2020)
Landscape Character Zone	"An area of landscape with similar properties or strongly defined spatial qualities, distinct from areas immediately adjacent." (Transport for NSW, 2020)
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. Combined with sensitivity, magnitude provides a measurement of impact" (Transport for NSW, 2020)
Proposal	Construction and operation of the Pymble Station Upgrade.
Proposal area	The extent to which the Station upgrade would occur, including work to the platform, stairs, the Station building and other ancillary items.
Road reserve	Public roads that are controlled by a local authority/ government or other State authority.
Roads and Maritime Services	Former NSW road agency now incorporated as part of Transport for NSW. References to previous publications issued by Roads and Maritime are made in this report.
RPS	The author of this Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment.
Scenic amenity	The overall pleasantness of the views people enjoys of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of the people living, working, recreating, visiting or travelling through an area.
Sensitivity	"The sensitivity of a landscape character zone or view and its capacity to absorb change of the nature of the Proposal. In the case of visual impact this also relates to the type of viewer and number of viewers. Combined with magnitude, sensitivity provides a measurement of impact." (Transport for NSW, 2020)
Viewpoint	"The specific location of a view, typically used for assessment purposes." (Australian Institute of Landscape Architects, 2018)
Visual amenity	The attractiveness of a scene or view." (Australian Institute of Landscape Architects, 2018)
Visual catchment	The Australian Institute of Landscape Architects describes visual catchment as "Areas visible from a combination of locations within a defined setting (may be modelled or field-validated)." (Australian Institute of Landscape Architects, 2018)
Visual prominence	Is determined by the size, height and colour of proposed infrastructure elements and the degree to which the landscape within which they sit can assist in reducing their visual prominence (e.g. screening vegetation, landform, etc.).
Visual receptor	Individuals and/or defined groups of people who have the potential to be affected by a Proposal. These are sensitive visual receptors such as houses, roads and other infrastructure that is used frequently.

Table 2: Acronyms

Abbreviation	Title
DDA	Commonwealth <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i>
DSAPT	Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport
EP&A Act	NSW <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>
Infrastructure SEPP	<i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007</i>
LCZ	Landscape Character Zone
LEP	Local Environment Plan
LGA	Local Government Area
REF	Review of Environmental Factors
SHR	State Heritage Register
TAP	Transport Access Program

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

RPS has been commissioned by Transport for NSW to undertake a Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment for proposed modifications to Pymble Station located on Grandview Street, Pymble, NSW.

The Proposal is part of the Transport Access Program (TAP) which is an NSW Government initiative to ensure that stations meet legislative requirements stipulated within the Commonwealth *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the *Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002* (DSAPT).

This Landscape Character and Visual Amenity Impact Assessment delivers an objective assessment of the probable impacts on the visual environment resulting from the construction of the Proposal. This report outlines results from site assessment and describes the present landscape character. It documents the assessment of visual impact resulting from the Proposal and provides recommendations for suitable mitigation measures.

This Landscape Character and Visual Amenity Impact Assessment supports the Review of Environmental Factors (REF), which has been developed concurrently with this report.

1.2 Study limitations

This assessment is intended to be an objective report based on professional analysis of the scoping design. It seeks to establish the anticipated visual impacts of the Proposal on a wide range of receivers. The assessment has been undertaken based on conceptual level information and therefore is generally broad in its approach.

Landscape character and visual impact assessment requires qualitative (subjective) judgements to be made. The assessment process aims to be objective and describe any changes factually. Potential changes because of the Proposal have been defined, however the significance of these changes requires qualitative (subjective) judgements to be made. The conclusions of this assessment therefore combine objective measurement and subjective professional interpretation.

The opinions, conclusions and any recommendations in this report are based on assumptions made by RPS described in this report.

1.3 Methodology

This report adopts the industry standard in its approach to visual impact assessment that is process-driven, consistent, and based on professional, value judgement of commonly accepted and adopted criteria in the industry.

The methodology adopted for this report is guided by policy and guidelines outlined in *Beyond the Pavement* (Transport for NSW, 2020) and the *Guideline for Landscape character and visual impact Environmental Impact Assessment Practice Note assessment EIA-N04* (Transport for NSW, 2020).

The methodology for this visual impact assessment involves the following activities:

- desktop study using aerial photography to identify the potential visual catchments and possible visual receptors
- ground-truthing of assumptions reached through initial desktop studies
- visiting the Proposal area on 13 August 2020 and reviewing the surrounding vantage points from publicly accessible areas
- describing and evaluating the existing landscape character and visual environment to establish a baseline for the visual assessment

- mapping the visual envelope based on field studies and data while identifying sensitive visual receptors. Sensitive visual receptors are people who would experience a visual impact
- undertaking a visual impact assessment using the grading matrix, considering visual sensitivity (of the visual amenity or viewpoints) and the magnitude of the visual change, to arrive at an overall level of effect or impact
- views from habitable room windows and private outdoor areas of residences are treated as sensitive receptors. Views from residual land beyond the primary outdoor area (such as driveways, agricultural lands, easements) are treated as less sensitive receptors
- this assessment adopts the standard methodology of sensitivity relating to proximity - the greater the distance between the visual receptor and the Proposal, the lesser the visual sensitivity of that visual receptor.

Key information reviewed as part of this report included:

- Transport Access Program Scoping Design Report – Pymble Station (Stantec, 2019)
- Urban Design Report – Pymble Station (DesignInc, 2018))
- Pymble Station Upgrade – Statement of Heritage Impact (RPS, 2020)

2 PROPOSAL OUTLINE

2.1 Site description

Pymble Station first opened in 1890 and is located at Grandview Street in Pymble within the Ku-ring-gai local government area (LGA) in the Sydney region of NSW. The Station is serviced by the T1 North Shore Line, providing services to Central Station and Hornsby Station; and is approximately 15 kilometres northeast of Sydney's Central Business District (refer Figure 1).

Pymble Station is situated between commercial properties on Grandview Street to the north of the Station and the Pacific Highway to the south of the Station, and residential properties on the southern side of the Pacific Highway (refer Figure 2).

Pymble Station is accessed by a singular set of stairs off the pedestrian footbridge connecting Grandview Street and the Pacific Highway, providing a link to the platform level. Platform 1 provides services to Central Station and Platform 2 provides services to Hornsby. A small vacant kiosk is located directly above the Station on the footbridge.

A bus stop is located at the Pacific Highway Station entrance which is accessed via the footbridge. There is a taxi rank located on Grandview Street which is also accessed from the footbridge. The car park located at the Pacific Highway Station entrance is leased to Ku-ring-gai Council and is primarily used by the commercial businesses on the Pacific Highway. There are two car parks located within the Pymble shopping village to the north of the Station, however the commuter car parking is mostly in the local streets, particularly further east along Grandview Street. There are bicycle parking facilities at both Station entrances, providing capacity for 12 bicycles in total.

The Pacific Highway has a road bridge and footpath which crosses the rail corridor over the north-western end of the platform. There is a pedestrian underpass under the Pacific Highway which connects the Station to the medium to high density residential areas and Pymble Ladies' College on Avon Road.

Pymble Station Group is listed on RailCorp's Section 170 Heritage and Conservation Register (s170). Pymble Station is considered to have local significance as the opening of the railway in 1890 was instrumental in encouraging rapid subdivision and development of the area. The footbridge, Station building and the platform remain in good condition and retain heritage significance in terms of integrity and aesthetics. Topographically, the Station is located in a landscape gently sloping north through suburban Pymble as shown in Figure 3. The Station is located below grade of the adjacent Pacific Highway running along the southern side of the site. The Station sits at grade with the adjacent shopping strip on Grandview Street.

Table 3: Proposal area particulars

Aspect	Details
Station name	Pymble Station
Address	Grandview Street, Pymble, NSW 2073
LGA	Ku-ring-gai Council
Coordinates (approx.)	Lat: -33.74479 Long: 151.14222
Site total area (approx.)	3.521 ha
Lot and Plan	Lot 2073 on DP1132828
Land zoning (site)	SP2 Infrastructure – Railway Infrastructure
Adjacent land zoning	SP2 Infrastructure, B2 Local Centre, B5 Business Development R4 High Density Residential

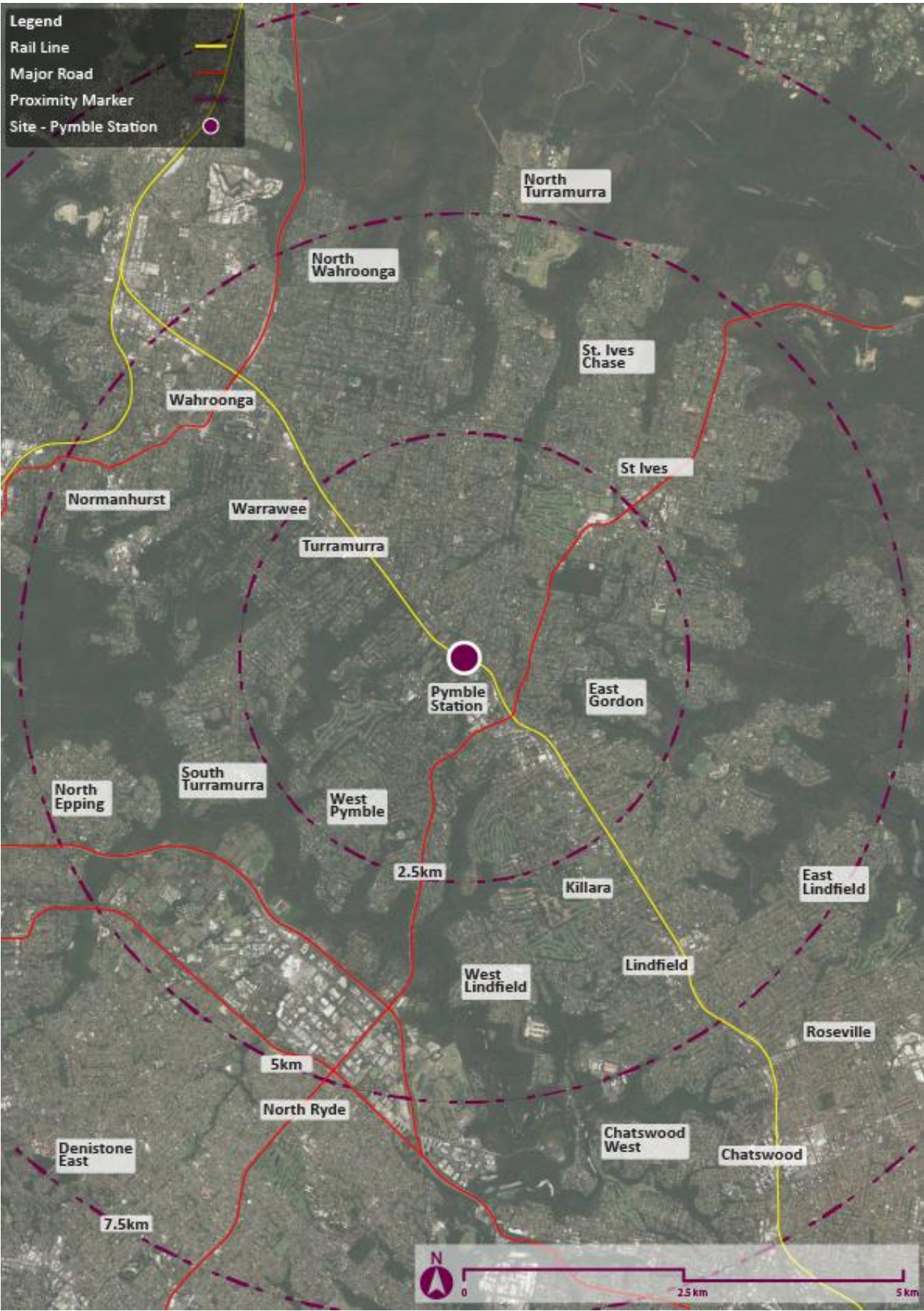


Figure 1: Pymble Station: Regional context



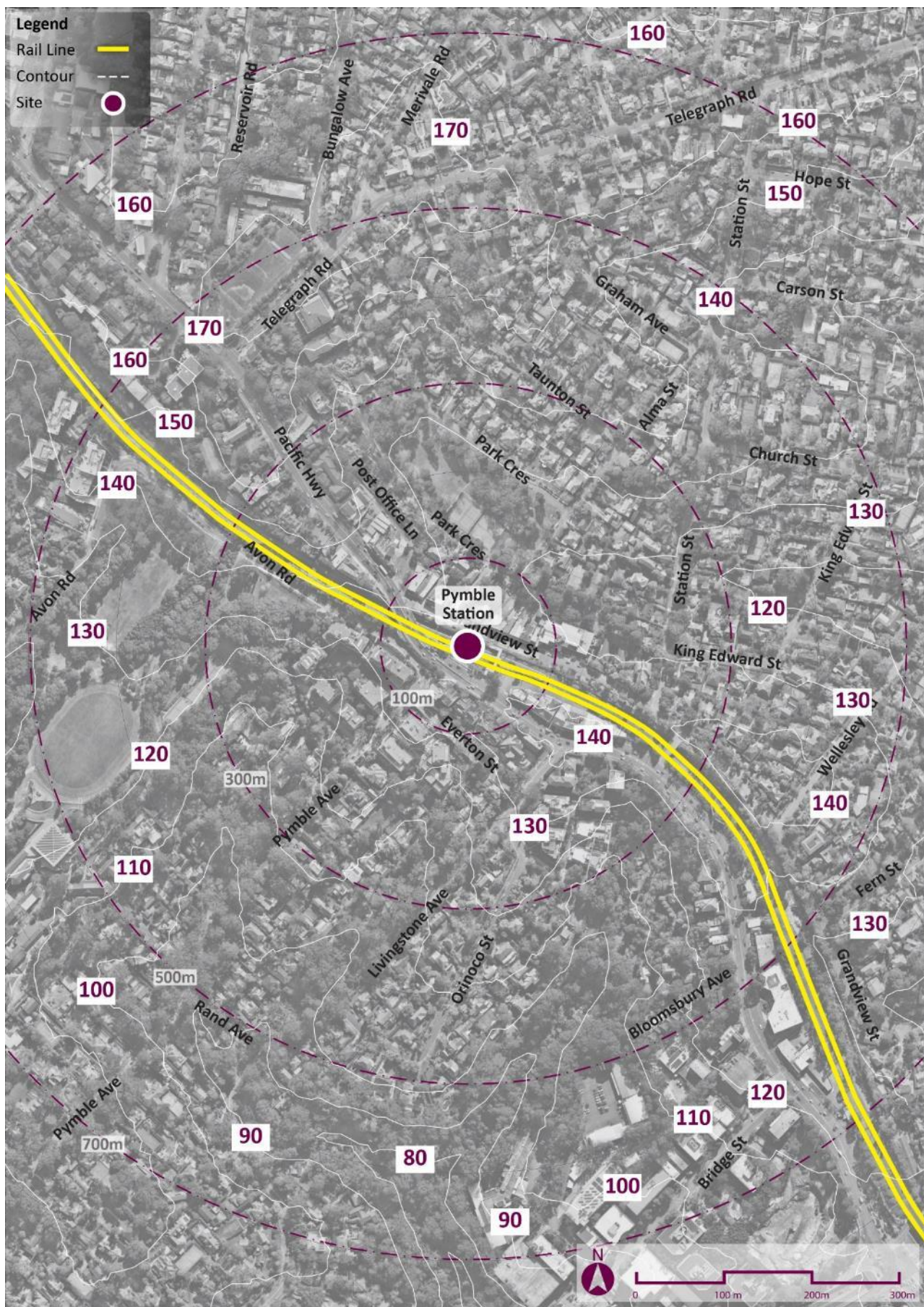


Figure 3: Pymble topography

2.2 Urban and landscape design objectives and principles

The following urban design objectives and principles have been developed for the Proposal. These are focussed towards maintaining the existing landscape and heritage character where possible, through strategic and practical measures.

2.2.1 Design guidelines

The design outcomes for the Proposal have also been developed from the following guidelines and reference documents:

- Around the Tracks - urban design for heavy and light rail (Interim Issue) (Transport for NSW, 2016)
- Ku-ring-gai Local Environmental Plan (Ku-ring-gai Council, 2020a)
- Ku-ring-gai DCP (Ku-ring-gai Council, 2020b)

2.2.2 Urban Design and Landscape design principles

The overarching urban design and landscape design principles for the project are drawn from *Around the tracks - urban design for heavy and light rail* (Transport for NSW, 2016) which provides the following core principles:

1. Draw on a comprehensive site and context analysis to inform the design direction
2. Provide value-for-money design solutions that achieve high quality low maintenance architectural and urban design outcomes that have longevity
3. Provide connectivity and permeability for pedestrians
4. Integrate the project with the surrounding area
5. Maximise the amenity of the public domain
6. Protect and enhance heritage features and significant trees
7. Maximise positive view opportunities
8. Design an efficient and functional transport solution which enhances and contributes to local amenity and prosperity

2.3 Proposal overview

Upgrades under the Transport Access Program are designed to provide a better experience for public transport customers by delivering accessible, modern, secure and integrated transport infrastructure. The Proposal would improve accessibility of the Station in line with the requirements of the Commonwealth *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA) and the *Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002* (DSAPT).

The key features and construction staging of the Proposal is summarised as follows and as shown in Figure 4: Key Elements of the Proposal. It is noted that the description of the Proposal is based on a concept design and is subject to further design refinement.

- three new lifts connecting the existing footbridge to the Grandview Street Station entrance, the Pacific Highway Station entrance and the Station platform
- upgrades to the Grandview Street Station entrance including a widened footpath to allow for a new lift landing with a canopy

- modifications to the existing taxi rank and no parking zone to accommodate the widened footpath on Grandview Street
- two new accessible parking spaces and one accessible kiss and ride space at the Pacific Highway Station entrance car park
- upgrades to the Pacific Highway Station entrance including:
 - a three stop lift connecting the car park / accessible parking, the bus stop at street level and the footbridge
 - a new accessible path to the lift landing with a new canopy at car park level with a new canopy
 - a new lift landing at street level with footpath upgrades
 - a new widened stair entrance with canopy upgrades.
- upgrades to the existing footbridge including canopy extensions and anti-throw screens, and the conversion of the vacant kiosk to allow for a new lift and lift landing
- canopy extension at platform level from the lift to the boarding assistance zone
- a new family accessible toilet and unisex ambulant toilet within the Station building
- upgrade work to the existing stairs including replacement of treads and handrails
- improvements to Station lighting and CCTV to increase improve safety and security
- improvements to customer information and communication systems including wayfinding modifications, public address (PA) system upgrade and new hearing induction loops
- modifications to the rail corridor fencing at the Grandview Street and Pacific Highway Station entrances
- electrical upgrades for the new infrastructure, including a new padmount substation
- localised platform regrading and the replacement of tactiles.

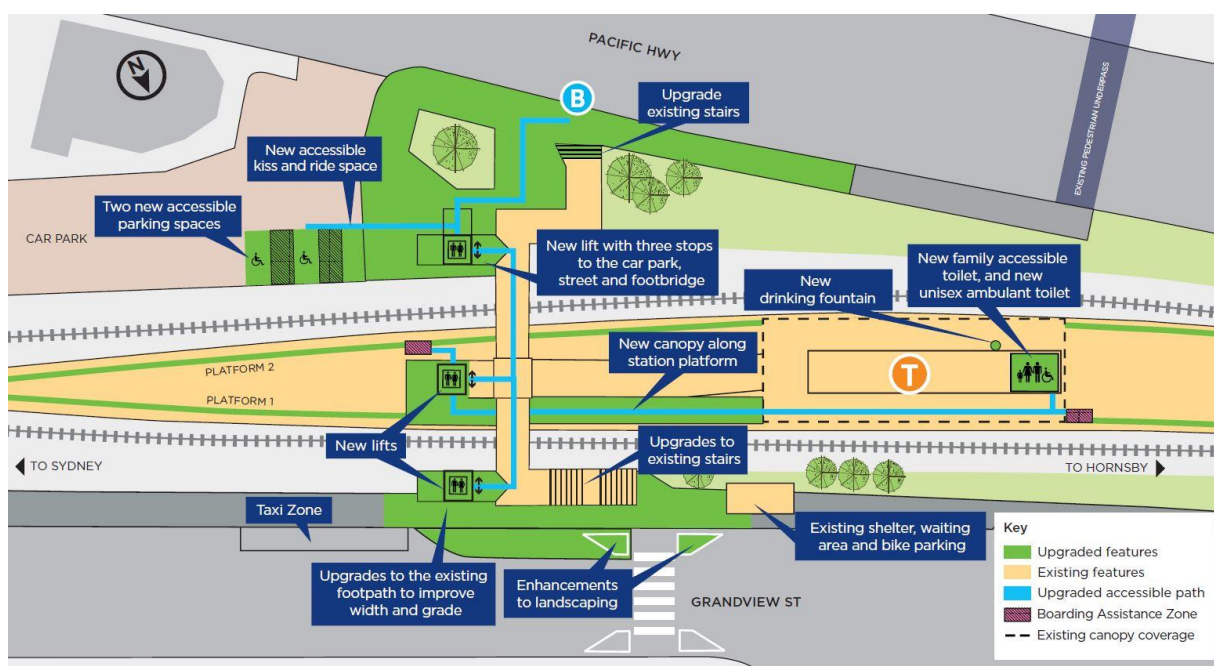


Figure 4: Key Elements of the Proposal

2.4 Materials and finishes

Subject to detailed design, the Proposal would include the following:

- lower lift shaft – brick facade
- upper lift shaft – steel frame with glass infill panels
- new lift canopies – steel frame with glazed canopy at the platform and ground level and designed to match the existing at footbridge level
- new canopy extension from the lift to the existing Station building canopy – steel frame with canopy designed to match the existing
- Pacific Highway Station entrance canopy replacement - steel frame with canopy designed to match the existing
- handrails – stainless steel.

The design would be submitted to Transport for NSW's Design Review Panel at various stages for comment before being accepted by Transport for NSW.

2.5 Consideration of visual amenity in development of the concept design

A number of initiatives have been incorporated as part of the scoping design to minimise visual impacts, impacts to the heritage setting and to respond to the design objectives listed in Section 2.2. A summary of these is provided below:

- a. lift shaft structures are steel type and appearance of base shall match the Station building (masonry)
- b. vegetation clearing has been minimised in the proposed design
- c. proposed new lighting will be confined to the new lift landings
- d. heights of the proposed lifts have been reduced
- e. the lift roof design matches the Station building roof pitch.

2.6 Legislative context

The Proposal is subject to the provisions of the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007* (Infrastructure SEPP) and Division 5.1 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) and is permissible without consent under the Infrastructure SEPP.

2.7 Local planning context

Although the Proposal is permissible without development consent and does not formally require consideration of local planning instruments, where possible the design and/or systems associated with any development should have some regard for these, and to establish a high level of aesthetic synergy with the wider LGA. A Proposal should also be considerate of the broader objectives and strategies within the local government's Development Control Plan (DCP), in addition to more specific design parameters such as those relating to development within publicly accessible/ public domain areas.

Relevant Ku-ring-gai Council policy includes:

- *Ku-ring-gai Local Environmental Plan 2015* (Ku-ring-gai Council, 2020a)
- *Ku-ring-gai Local Environmental Plan (Local Centres) 2012* (Ku-ring-gai Council, 2020b)
- *Ku-ring-gai Development Control Plan 2016*.

Table 4 outlines objectives for development that is in or near a rail corridor related to the zone SP2 Infrastructure (refer Figure 5).

Table 4: Local planning objectives

Reference	Objectives
<i>Ku-ring-gai Local Environmental Plan (Local Centres) 2012- Land Use Zone SP2 Infrastructure</i> Source: (Ku-ring-gai Council, 2020b)	<p>The desired objectives of the area are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide for infrastructure and related uses • To prevent development that is not compatible with or that may detract from the provision of infrastructure.
<i>Ku-ring-gai Development Control Plan 2016 – Part 20.1 Development Near Road or Rail Noise</i>	<p>The desired objective of the area is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that excavation, earthworks, demolition, and construction does not adversely impact on the function or safety of the rail corridor or busy roads • To ensure noise and vibration mitigation measures are implemented in development adjacent to rail and road corridors • To address air quality issues associated with rail and road corridors, and minimise their effect upon adjacent development

Reference	Objectives
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure development does not reduce the safety of users of the site or the road or rail corridor To minimise the impact of external noise from road or rail corridors and facilitate comfortable living conditions for residents
<i>Ku-ring-gai Local Environmental Plan (Local Centres) 2012 - Heritage conservation Source: (Ku-ring-gai Council, 2020b)</i>	<p>The objectives of this clause are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to conserve the environmental heritage of Ku-ring-gai to conserve the heritage significance of heritage items and heritage conservation areas, including associated fabric, settings and views to conserve archaeological sites to conserve Aboriginal objects and Aboriginal places of heritage significance.
<i>Ku-ring-gai Local Environmental Plan (Local Centres) 2012 - Earthworks Source: (Ku-ring-gai Council, 2020b)</i>	<p>The objectives of this clause are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to ensure that earthworks for which development consent is required will not have a detrimental impact on environmental functions and processes, neighbouring uses, cultural or heritage items or features of the surrounding land to allow earthworks of a minor nature without requiring separate development consent.

The Proposal broadly aligns to the local planning objectives on the following basis:

- the Proposal seeks to upgrade Pymble Station to improve the infrastructure and related uses at the Station
- the Proposal is not listed on the Ku-ring-gai LEP for heritage; the Proposal does not impact those heritage items which are listed on the Ku-ring-gai LEP in close proximity to the Station
- The proposed earthworks undertaken as part of the Proposal are minor in nature and will not have a detrimental impact on environmental functions and processes, neighbouring uses, cultural or heritage items or features of the surrounding land.

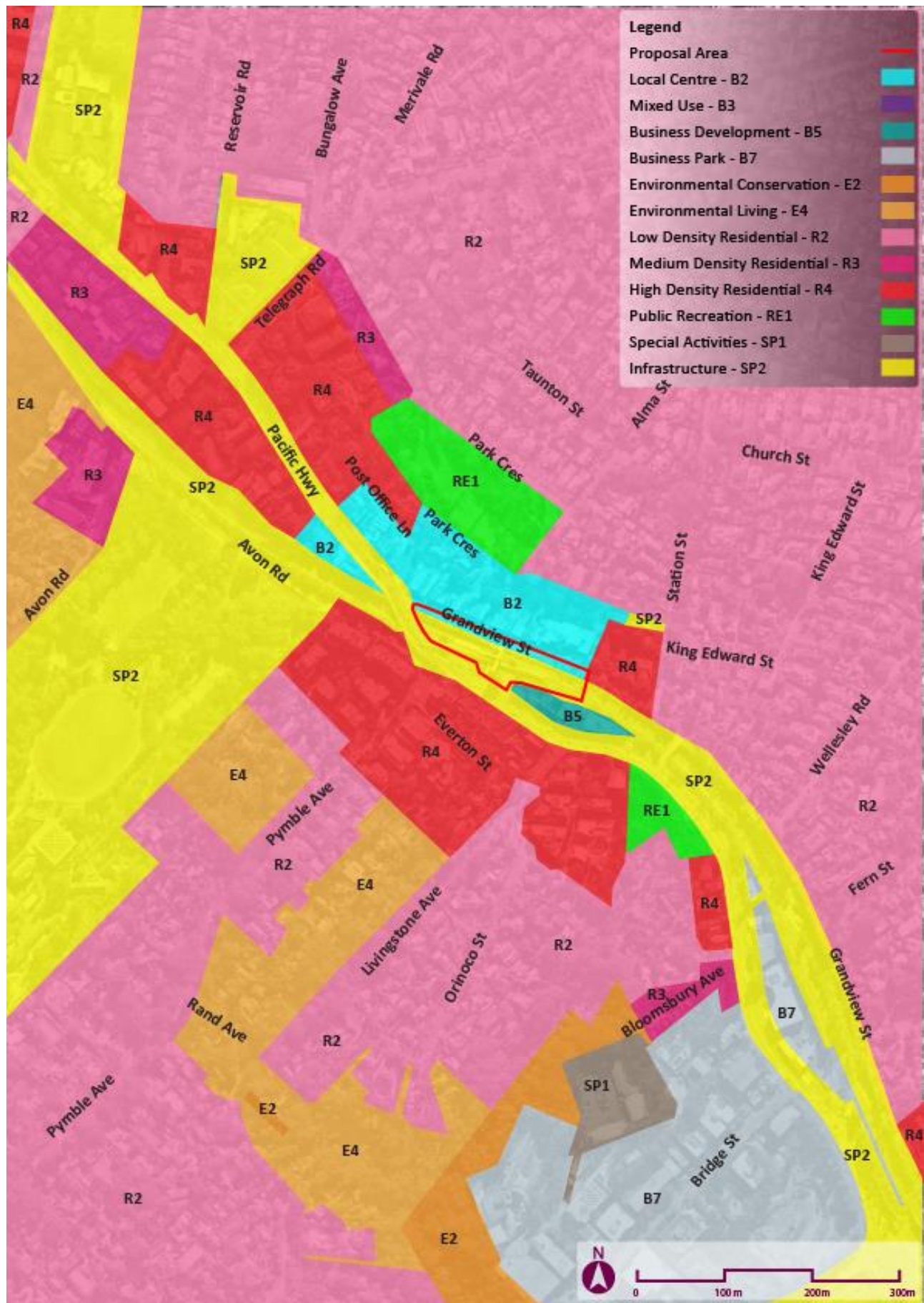


Figure 5: Pymble Land Use Zone

3 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

3.1 Methodology

This chapter outlines the urban landscape character within a localised context to obtain an appreciation of the existing visual environment of the area in which the Proposal is located, and to subsequently develop a visual baseline. This visual baseline will be used as a measurement to gauge the level of influence the Proposal has on its surrounding area.

The methodology inherited for the landscape character used herein is based on an objective assessment of the landscape attributes of a place. The Proposal area is viewed as a whole site within a broader context for the specific purpose of evaluation, and to assist with developing guidelines to manage and plan for the landscape character type and its relationship with the site and Proposal.

3.2 Landscape Character Zones

A Landscape Character Zone (LCZ) is defined as the collective qualities including the built form, natural elements, and the cultural and social facets that combine to provide a locale with a unique sense of place. An appreciation of the visual character of the present landscape assists in the development of a baseline and means for evaluation in visual impact assessment, and subsequently how the Proposal will influence: the present visual environment; aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the landscape, and; its unique character.

An LCZ takes place when there are apparent patterns of elements occurring consistently in a specific type of landscape. The landscape character zones, and prominent landscape features identified and described below collectively define the overall character for the part of the local area. Seven LCZs have been identified within a 300-metre radius from the Proposal (refer Figure 6). The following sections provide a description of each LCZ to convey the landscape character of the locale.

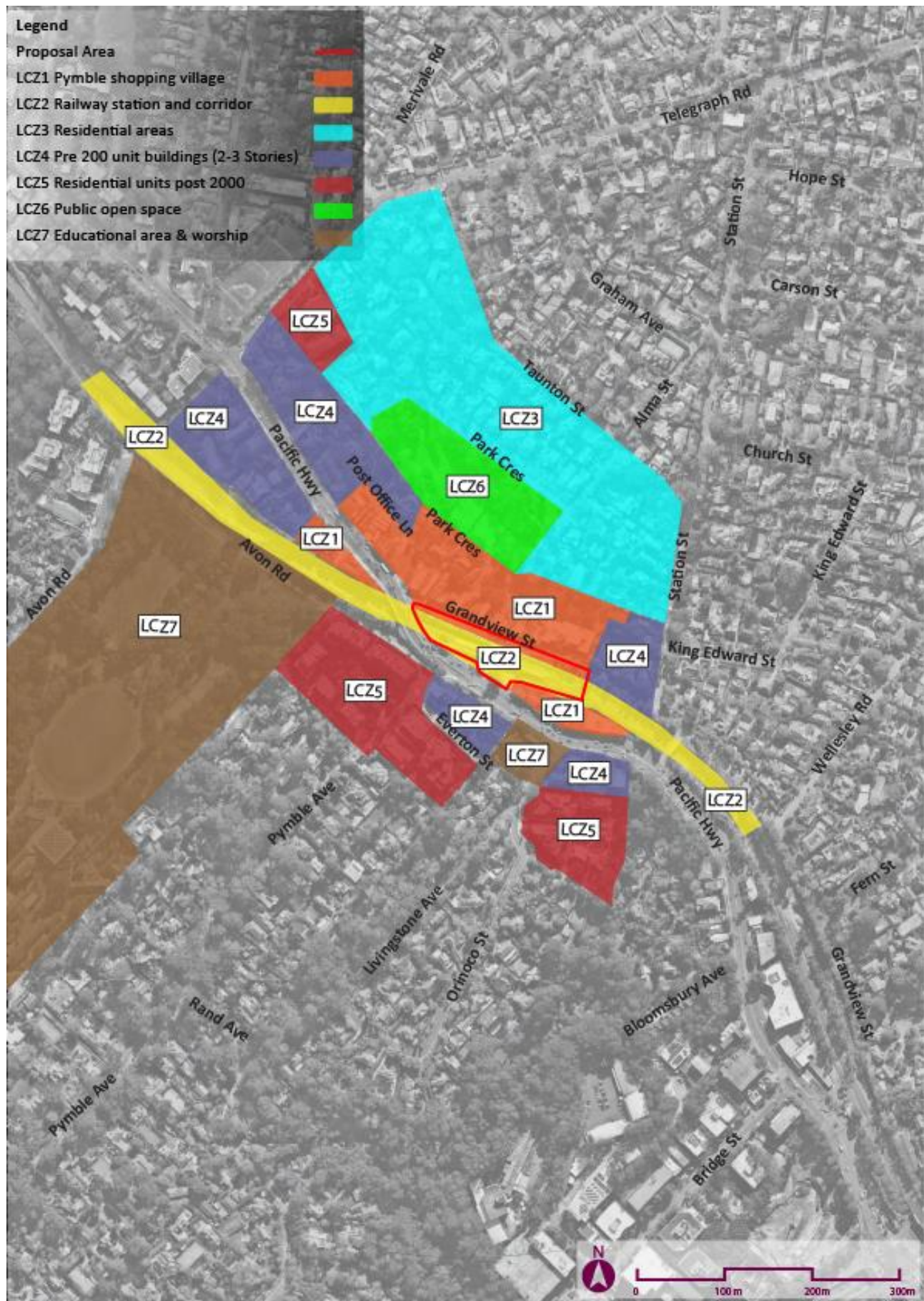


Figure 6: Landscape Character Zone

3.2.1 LCZ 1 – Pymble shopping village

LCZ 1 comprises the Pymble shopping village which is located along Grandview Street and the Pacific Highway. The LCZ 1 is designated within B2 Local Centre zone and B5 Business Development zone which comprises the commercial zone of Pymble including retail trade and restaurants. The second storey for these retail buildings contain various professional suites.

The landscape character of the LCZ 1 has been represented in Figure 7.

The shopping precinct has a landscape character of wide sidewalks on both sides of the road, on-street car parking and shopfront awnings extending to the road frontage. Shops consist of boutique retail outlets, and on street eating/cafes and other services. The design material of the shops is generally made of bricks. More modern buildings are located on Grandview street east of Alma Street and on the northern side of the Pacific Highway east of Livingstone Avenue. The paving pattern and design on Grandview Street also follows the design architecture. This commercial typified zone also includes the Pymble Hotel.

The landscape character in this zone is heavily urbanised/modified with only contrived landscape elements throughout the zone.



Figure 7: Landscape Character Zone 1 – Pymble shopping village - Photo: RPS

3.2.2 LCZ 2 – Railway Station and corridor

LCZ 2 is Pymble Station and the rail corridor. The station infrastructure is bound by Pacific Highway to the south and Grandview Street to the north. The character of LCZ 2 has been represented in Figure 8.

This LCZ is typified by the railway infrastructure on the ground plane and overhead. The track is two lines and the station is an island platform configuration. Vegetation lines each side of the corridor. Per Flora and Fauna Assessment Report - TAP 3 Pymble Station upgrade (RPS, 2020) the vegetation is mainly exotic with few native specimen trees and ground cover; no endemic vegetation is present.

The Sydney Trains s170 listing of the site (NSW Office of Environment & Heritage) states that the station building consists of:

- red face brick, tuck pointed
- moulded render string course, architraves and windowsills
- gabled, corrugated iron roof
- cast iron cantilevered brackets support the timber framed awning
- timber gable ends, barge boards and valances.

The landscape character in this zone is heavily industrialised/modified with only contrived landscape elements.



Figure 8: Landscape Character Zone 2 – Railway Station and corridor Photo: RPS

3.2.3 LCZ 3 – Residential areas

LCZ 3 is located along the streets of:

- Park Crescent
- Taunton Street
- Graham Avenue
- Alma Street
- Station Street
- King Edward Street
- Pymble Avenue
- Livingston Avenue, and
- Orinoco Street

Residential building typographies in the LCZ 3 include single detached dwellings, which are made up of unpainted bricks with tile roofs. Front fencing is prevalent throughout this LCZ.

The streetscape character of the LCZ 3 is characterised by narrow tree lined streets with informal (unmarked) parking either side of the road. Landscape character includes well vegetated street verges with front gardens full formal planting arrangements. Typical residential housing stock is represented in Figure 9.

The landscape character in this zone is highly urbanised/modified with no evidence of the original landscape or its components.



Figure 9: Landscape Character Zone 3 – Residential Photo: RPS

3.2.4 LCZ 4 –Residential units – Pre 2000 construction

LCZ 4 is mid storey residential buildings located mainly around The Pacific Highway. These buildings are generally two to three storeys and are typified by brick finished buildings built between 1950s and before the 2000s. There are some interspersions of even older buildings within this zone; there volume and finishes are for the most part like the residential units described above.

Mature vegetation (e.g. Eucalypt species) is evident in the streetscapes and lots within this LCZ. Front gardens are fenced/retained in many situations with formal hedges featuring fronting many of the streetscapes.

The landscape character in this zone is highly urbanised/modified with no evidence of the original landscape or its components.



Figure 10: Landscape Character Zone 4 – Pre 2000 unit buildings (2-3 Storeys) Photo: RPS

3.2.5 LCZ 5 – Residential units – Post 2000 construction

The bulk of LCZ 5 is located to the south of Pymble Station; one unit complex is located on Telegraph Road north of the site. The character of LCZ5 has been represented in Figure 11.

The landscape character zone is predominantly modern architecture design. Dwellings are typically three to five storeys with a wide streetscape. The streets are lined with exotic big trees and highly dense vegetation within the residential open spaces.

The architectural style of the individual dwellings is modern architecture with glazing, and juxtaposition between the masonry and building features.

The landscape character is highly urbanised/modified, with very modern landscape and built elements, and no evidence of the original landscape of the area.



Figure 11: Landscape Character Zone 5 – Residential units – Post 2000 construction, Photo: RPS

3.2.6 LCZ 6 – Public Open Space

LCZ 6 is predominately recreational area within the suburb of Pymble. It is zoned Public Recreation and is within the Heritage Conservation Area as pursuant to the *Ku-ring-gai Local Environmental Plan 2015*.

Established vegetation (both native and exotic) dominate the landscape in and around the park. The park features multiple tennis courts, a playground, and lawns, with dense landscaping around all road frontages. Pathways intersect the eastern end of the park and seating is provided at vantage points around the park. The landscape character is highly contrived with little evidence of the pre-modern landscape character. Elements of landscape value include the open grass lawns and the established vegetation.

An example of the landscape character is shown in Figure 12.



Figure 12: Landscape Character Zone 6 – Public Open Space, Photo: RPS

3.2.7 LCZ 7 – Education and Worship

LCZ 7 includes the following sites:

- Pymble Uniting Church
- Former Police Station (Pymble)
- Pymble Ladies' College
- James Kelso Pavilion/ Field and Coles Sports Field

The landscape character of these sites is typified by detached dwellings of federation and inter-war architecture. The landscape elements are highly contrived with vegetation being mainly exotic. The landscape is heavily formalised and extensively maintained.

The *Ku-ring-gai Local Environmental Plan (Local Centres) 2012* (Ku-ring-gai Council, 2020b) identifies both the Pymble Uniting Church and the Former Police Station as items for conservation.

The landscape character in this zone is highly urbanised/modified with no evidence of the original landscape or its components. The value in this landscape character is in the distinctive architectural types, buildings/landscape.

The character of the LCZ 7 is represented in Figure 13.



Figure 13: Landscape Character Zone 7 – Education and Worship – Photo: RPS

4 VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

4.1 Methodology

The methodology adopted in this assessment has been adapted from the *Guidelines for landscape character and visual impact assessment* (Transport for NSW, 2020). This methodology has been used as a guide to assess the features and impacts of this Proposal.

This report considers groups or clusters of visual receptors which are used to demonstrate the influence of the Proposal in a broader context.

There are two primary measurements used to determine impacts to the landscape character:

1. Sensitivity of the character
2. Magnitude of a Proposal

4.1.1 Sensitivity

Visual sensitivity refers to “the quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change” (Transport for NSW, 2020). Combined with magnitude, sensitivity provides a measure of impact. Visual sensitivity relates to the direction of view and the composition of the view.

The higher the visual quality of the landscape surrounding the viewpoint, the greater the significance of introducing new development and therefore the impact on the existing. For example, road widening would be ranked lower than changes to national parkland. A place with a more consistent character would be more visually sensitive to new development than a place with less consistency.

4.1.2 Magnitude

When assessing visual impact the magnitude “refers to the form—scale, size, character—of the project and its proximity to the viewer” (Transport for NSW, 2020).

Magnitude also takes into consideration the distance between the viewer(s) and the proposed development. Judging the magnitude of visual effects takes account of:

- the scale of the change within the view with respect to the addition (or loss) of elements taken up by the proposed development
- the degree of change and/or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape in terms of form, scale and mass, line height, colour, and texture
- the nature of the view of the proposed development and whether the views are permanent, full, partial or glimpses
- the magnitude of proposed development in a landscape character depends on the scope of the Proposal
- the location of the proposed development in relation to the region in question also influences magnitude.

Six categories are used in ranking the magnitude of a Proposal, ranging from negligible to high. Impact on the visual character of the landscape is determined using the matrix shown in Figure 14. Rankings for sensitivity and magnitude are combined to generate the impact in the body of the table.

		Magnitude			
Sensitivity		High	Moderate	Low	Negligible
	High	High Impact	High-Moderate	Moderate	Negligible
	Moderate	High- Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-Low	Negligible
	Low	Moderate	Moderate-Low	Low	Negligible
	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Figure 14: Impact Grading Matrix (Roads and Maritime Services, 2018)

4.1.3 Viewpoints

To assess the sensitivity and the magnitude of the Proposal a desktop study was undertaken of potential viewing locations of the Proposal. These viewpoints were ground-truthed and analysis was undertaken from each of the viewpoints during site inspection. Figure 15 outlines the position and direction of the viewpoints analysed for the Proposal.

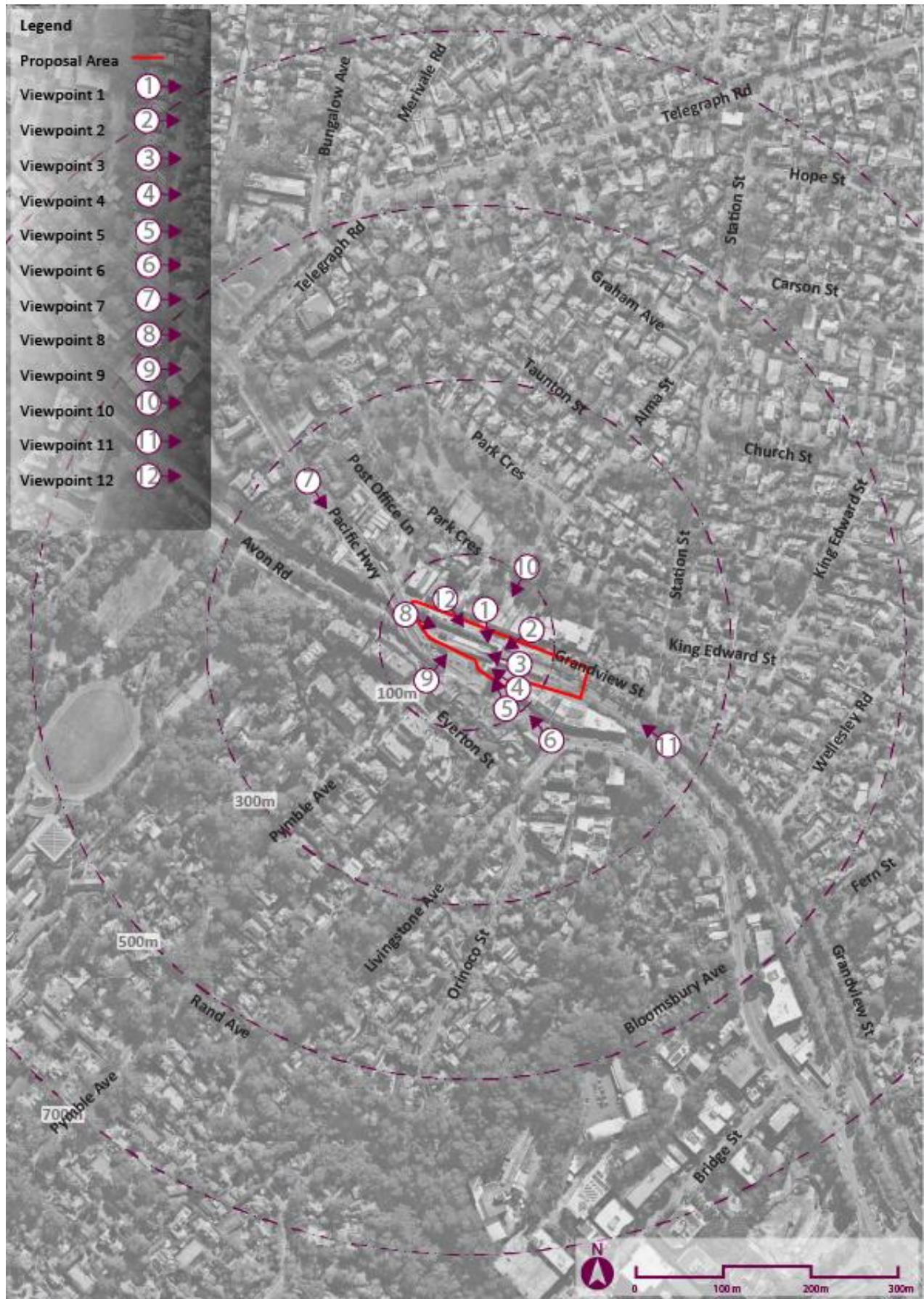


Figure 15: Viewpoint locations

4.1.4 Artist impressions

Artist impressions provide an indication of what a Proposal may look like from key representative viewpoints once complete and help to demonstrate the bulk and scale. Artist impressions for the Proposal have been prepared from three viewpoints: viewpoints 2, 3 and 5. These viewpoints were chosen to highlight different aspects of the Proposal and demonstrate potential future views from the most impacted viewpoints. The artist impressions are shown against the existing environment noting that materials and finishes are indicative and would be further investigated during detailed design. Refer to Figure 16, through Figure 21.



Figure 16: Grandview Street – Existing view Photo: RPS



Figure 17: Grandview Street – Artist impression: RPS



Figure 18: Platform – Looking Outbound – Existing view Photo: RPS



Figure 19: Platform – Looking Outbound – Artist impression: RPS



Figure 20: Pacific Highway – Looking north-west – Existing view Photo: RPS



Figure 21: Pacific Highway – Looking north-west – Artist impression: RPS

4.2 Viewpoint assessment

4.2.1 Viewpoint 1: View from Grandview Street

4.2.1.1 Viewpoint description

Railway infrastructure dominates the viewshed from Viewpoint 1. The tin roofing of the station mainly obscures the background of this view with railway fencing obscuring view lines into the station platform. Some vegetation is noticeable in the background of the viewpoint (refer Figure 22). Other power infrastructure is also evident in the view. Small glimpses of the retail precinct on Pacific Highway are evident.



Figure 22: Viewpoint 1 – View from Grandview Street (west side) Photo: RPS

4.2.1.2 Viewpoint impacts

- New lift on Grandview Street would be mainly obscured from this viewpoint by the existing stairs.
- The new platform lift and platform canopy on the inbound side of the platform would be partially visible from this location.
- The widened footpath on Grandview Street would be evident from this viewpoint.
- Covered compliant access, lift, lift canopy and bin enclosure on Pacific Highway side of the station would not be evident from this viewpoint.
- Removal of stairs on Pacific Highway would not be evident from this viewpoint
- Vegetation along the railway fence line may be disrupted dependant on detailed design of facilities (power) upgrade.
- The possible removal of the large *Eucalyptus scoparia* (*E. scoparia*) would be evident but not expose any built infrastructure from this viewpoint.

- The removal of the overhead power would be evident from this viewpoint.

4.2.1.3 Assessment of impacts

For Viewpoint 1 refer to Table 5 for an assessment of sensitivity, magnitude and impacts

Table 5: Viewpoint 1: Visual Impact Assessment

Sensitivity	Magnitude	Overall impact
“the quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change”	Magnitude refers to the form—scale, size, character—of the project and its proximity to the viewer.	Rankings for sensitivity and magnitude are combined to generate the impact
Low	Low	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The view is highly urbanised with buildings, car parking, fencing, road signage, power infrastructure, and railway infrastructure present throughout the view • Plants and plant species in this view are highly contrived. There are very few natural elements in the view other than planting within the railway fence line. • 22m tall <i>Eucalyptus scoparia</i> is evident in the background of the photo. The REF indicates that this tree will be subject to major encroachment from the proposed design of the lift foundations, excavations for retaining wall realignment and the new path connecting the footbridge to the Pacific Highway and the lift. The work is proposed within the tree protection zone and structural root zone of the tree. The tree is assessed as having high amenity value due to its size; however, the arborists report indicates that the tree has been subject to failure of large branches and contains active decay. The tree is very likely for failure and poses a moderate to extreme risk rating given its proximity to the Pacific Highway. The possible removal of this tree would reduce the amount of non-built elements in this view and open views up to the Pacific Highway. • Based on the highly contrived character of the view it has low scenic amenity and has low sensitivity to change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed station infrastructure is not a significant visual departure from the existing visual conditions and has been designed to be sympathetic with the surrounds (refer Section 0) • The scale of the Proposal is the same as existing • There is a close distance between the Proposal and commercial properties. • Motorists and pedestrians with direct views to the Proposal area. • Proposal is not a departure from existing landscape character. • The magnitude of the Proposal does not increase due to the proximity of users/commuters/viewers 	

4.2.2 Viewpoint 2: Views from Grandview Street

4.2.2.1 Viewpoint description

Railway infrastructure dominates the viewshed from Viewpoint 2 on Grandview Street. The existing stairs and concourse obscures the background of this view. (refer Figure 23).

Railway fencing and some vegetating provide little buffer to the railway infrastructure. Power infrastructure is also evident in the view. The Pacific Highway thoroughfare is evident from this viewpoint.



Figure 23: Viewpoint 2 – View from Grandview Street (east part) Photo: RPS

4.2.2.2 Viewpoint impacts

Refer Figure 17 for Artist impression.

- New lift on Grandview Street would be evident from this viewpoint.
- The new platform lift and platform canopy on the inbound side of the central platform would be visible from this location.
- The widened footpath on Grandview Street would be evident from this viewpoint (obscured by parked car in this view).
- Covered compliant access, lift, lift canopy and bin enclosure on Pacific Highway side of the station would be somewhat evident from this viewpoint.
- Removal of stairs on Pacific Highway would not be evident from this viewpoint
- Vegetation along the railway fence line may be disrupted dependant on detailed design of facilities (power) upgrade.
- The possible removal of the large *Eucalyptus scoparia* would open view up to the Pacific Highway from this location.
- The removal of overhead power lines would be evident from this viewpoint.

4.2.2.3 Assessment of impacts

For Viewpoint 2 refer to Table 6: Viewpoint 2: Visual Impact Assessment for an assessment of sensitivity, magnitude and impacts.

Table 6: Viewpoint 2: Visual Impact Assessment

Sensitivity	Magnitude	Overall impact
“the quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change”	Magnitude refers to the form—scale, size, character—of the project and its proximity to the viewer.	Rankings for sensitivity and magnitude are combined to generate the impact
Low	Low	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The view is highly urbanised with railway infrastructure, power infrastructure, fencing, buildings and car parking dominating throughout the view. • Plants and plant species in this view are highly contrived. There are very few natural elements in the view other than planting within the railway fence line. • The <i>Eucalyptus scoparia</i> is evident in the left midground of the viewpoint photo. As above The REF indicates that this tree will be subject to major encroachment with work proposed within the tree protection zone and structural root zone of the tree. The tree is assessed as having high amenity value due to its size. The possible removal of this tree due to its likely failure (refer arborist’s report) would reduce the amount of non-built elements in this view and without 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed station infrastructure is not a significant visual departure from the existing visual conditions and has been designed to be sympathetic with the surrounds (refer Section 0). • The scale of the Proposal is the same as existing. • Some infrastructure is proposed to be moved from overhead to underground further mitigating the magnitude of the change. • There is a close distance between the Proposal and commercial properties. • Motorists and pedestrians with direct views to the Proposal area. • Proposal is not a departure from existing landscape character. • The magnitude of the Proposal does not increase due to the proximity of users/commuters/viewers. 	

replacement of a suitable sized specimen tree would expose some of the Pacific Highway from this viewpoint. There are few natural or other elements providing a higher level of scenic amenity in this view.

- Based on the highly contrived character of the view it has low scenic amenity and has low sensitivity to change
-

4.2.3 Viewpoint 3: Views from the footbridge

4.2.3.1 Viewpoint description

Viewpoint 3 is located on the footbridge looking outbound over the station towards the Pacific Highway. Views from this position are highlighted in Figure 24.

The view is dominated by the platform, the platform building and railway infrastructure below. Multistorey residences are evident to background left of the view. Commercial properties to the mid and background on the right of the view. Some vegetation is evident through the mid ground and at the horizon.

The Pacific Highway bridge over the railway line is evident below the horizon tree line.



Figure 24: Viewpoint 3 – View from Footbridge outbound. Photo: RPS

4.2.3.2 Viewpoint impacts

Refer Figure 21 for Artist impression.

- The new platform canopy would be evident on the platform below.
- New lifts on Grandview Street, the island platform and the Pacific Highway would not be evident from this viewpoint.
- The extended footpath on Grandview Street would not be evident from this viewpoint
- Removal of stairs on the Pacific Highway side of the site would not be evident from this viewpoint
- Proposed new bin enclosure/infrastructure on the Pacific Highway side of the site would not be evident from this viewpoint
- Covered compliant access on Pacific Highway would not be evident from this viewpoint

4.2.3.3 Assessment of impacts

For Viewpoint 3 refer to Table 7 for an assessment of sensitivity, magnitude and impacts.

Table 7: Viewpoint 3: Visual Impact Assessment

Sensitivity	Magnitude	Overall impact
“the quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change”	Magnitude refers to the form—scale, size, character—of the project and its proximity to the viewer.	Rankings for sensitivity and magnitude are combined to generate the impact
Low	Low	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The view is highly urbanised with railway and power infrastructure dominating the view. • Highway infrastructure and buildings are also evident in the view. • There is some vegetation evident in this view. The planting is introduced and not endemic to the site • There are very little natural or other elements providing a higher level of scenic amenity in this view • Based on the highly contrived character of the view it has low scenic amenity and has low sensitivity to change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The scale of the Proposal is increased marginally with the addition of the platform canopy • Proposed station infrastructure is not a significant visual departure from the existing visual conditions and has been designed to be sympathetic with the surrounds (refer Section 0) • Commuters have close, direct views to the Proposal area • Proposal is not a departure from existing landscape character • The overall magnitude of the Proposal does not increase due to the proximity of users/commuters/viewers 	

4.2.4 Viewpoint 4: Views from Pacific Highway car park

4.2.4.1 Viewpoint description

Viewpoint 4 is located in the car park on Pacific Highway to the south of the station. This view is represented in Figure 25.

The view towards Pymble Station is dominated by the footbridge in the mid view and the car park area at the front of the view. A large existing Eucalypt dominates the left of the view. Some vegetation is evident in the right of the view within the platform garden beds.

Lighting and power infrastructure are evident in the view. Refuge bins are located in multiple locations in the view.



Figure 25: Viewpoint 4 – View from car parking Photo: RPS

4.2.4.2 Viewpoint impacts

- Covered compliant access, lift, lift canopy and bin enclosure on Pacific Highway side of the station would be evident from this viewpoint
- New accessible car parking would be evident in this viewpoint
- The new platform lift and platform canopy on the inbound side of the central platform would be visible from this location
- New lift on Grandview Street will be evident from this viewpoint but obscured by the new platform lift and canopy
- The extended footpath on Grandview Street would not be evident from this viewpoint.
- Removal of stairs on Pacific Highway would be evident from this viewpoint; its connection to the Pacific Highway would be obscured by *Eucalyptus scoparia* in the left of the photo. The removal of the *E. scoparia* would open a view to the new pathway/stair connections.

4.2.4.3 Assessment of impacts

For Viewpoint 4 refer to Table 8 for an assessment of sensitivity, magnitude and impacts.

Table 8: Viewpoint 4: Visual Impact Assessment

Sensitivity	Magnitude	Overall impact
“the quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change”	Magnitude refers to the form—scale, size, character—of the project and its proximity to the viewer.	Rankings for sensitivity and magnitude are combined to generate the impact
Low	Low	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The view is highly urbanised with car parking, railway infrastructure and refuge facilities dominating the view There is some vegetation evident in this view. The planting is introduced and not endemic to the site. <i>Eucalyptus scoparia</i> is proposed to be retained subject to detailed design. There are very little natural or other elements providing a higher level of scenic amenity in this view. The <i>Eucalyptus scoparia</i> is evident in the left of the viewpoint photo. As above The REF indicates that this tree will be subject to major encroachment with work proposed within the tree protection zone and structural root zone of the tree. The tree is assessed as having high amenity value due to its size. The possible removal of this tree due to its likely failure (refer arborist’s report) would reduce the amount of non-built elements in this view and without replacement of a suitable sized specimen tree would expose some of the new built elements from this viewpoint. Based on the highly contrived character of the view it has low scenic amenity and has low sensitivity to change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The scale of the Proposal is increased marginally with the addition of the lift canopy and other elements in the view The character of the view is improved with the formalisation of pedestrian access and obscuring of the utilities Proposed Station infrastructure is not a significant visual departure from the existing visual conditions and has been designed to be sympathetic with the surrounds (refer Section 0) Commuters have close, direct views to the Proposal area but the Proposal is not a departure from existing landscape character The overall magnitude of the Proposal does not increase due to the proximity of users/commuters/viewers 	

4.2.5 Viewpoint 5: Views from Pacific Highway - northbound

4.2.5.1 Viewpoint description

As shown by Figure 26, the station infrastructure is evident from the Pacific Highway.

The view is dominated by the traffic infrastructure at the foreground of the view and the large existing *Eucalyptus scoparia* at the centre of the view. Commercial buildings are in the right of the view. Vegetation and smaller buildings are evident throughout the midground of the view to the horizon.

Telecommunications and power infrastructure are evident in the view.



Figure 26: Viewpoint 5 – View from Pacific Highway Photo: RPS

4.2.5.2 Viewpoint impacts

Refer to the artist's impression in Figure 21.

- Covered compliant access, lift, lift canopy and bin enclosure on Pacific Highway side of the station would be evident from this viewpoint.
- The new platform lift and platform canopy on the inbound side of the central platform would be visible from this location.
- New lift on Grandview Street would be evident from this viewpoint.
- The extended footpath on Grandview Street would not be evident from this viewpoint
- Removal of stairs on Pacific Highway would not be evident from this viewpoint as it is obscured by the vegetation in the centre of the photo.

4.2.5.3 Assessment of impacts

For Viewpoint 5 refer to Table 9 for an assessment of sensitivity, magnitude and impacts.

Table 9: Viewpoint 5: Visual Impact Assessment

Sensitivity	Magnitude	Overall impact
“the quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change”	Magnitude refers to the form—scale, size, character—of the project and its proximity to the viewer.	Rankings for sensitivity and magnitude are combined to generate the impact
Low	Low	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The view is highly urbanised with the Pacific Highway Dominating the view Commercial Buildings, Railway infrastructure, telecommunications infrastructure, fencing and car parking are also evident in this view 22m tall <i>Eucalyptus scoparia</i> is evident in the midground of the photo. As above The REF indicates that this tree will be subject to major encroachment with work proposed within the tree protection zone and structural root zone of the tree. The tree is assessed as having high amenity value due to its size. The possible removal of this tree due to its likely failure (refer arborist’s report) would reduce the amount of non-built elements in this view and without replacement of a suitable sized specimen tree would expose some of the new built elements from this viewpoint. Some scattered planting is located throughout the view. These plantings are exotic/introduced species There are very little natural or other elements providing a higher level of scenic amenity in this view. Based on the highly contrived character of the view it has low scenic amenity and has low sensitivity to change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The scale of the Proposal is increased marginally with the addition of the lift canopy and other elements in the view The character of the view is improved with the formalisation of access and obscuring utilities Proposed station infrastructure is not a significant visual departure from the existing visual conditions and has been designed to be sympathetic with the surrounds (refer Section 0) Motorists/passengers have views to the Proposal area from the Pacific highway – generally whilst in motion Proposal is not a departure from existing landscape character Relocation of the bins could further mitigate the magnitude of the Proposal 	

4.2.6 Viewpoint 6: Views from Pymble Uniting Church

4.2.6.1 Viewpoint description

Viewpoint 6 is located on Pacific Highway, north-west of the station, outside of the Pymble Uniting Church. This view is represented in Figure 27.

Vegetation adjacent to the western side of the Pacific Highway is evident.

The view is otherwise dominated by the traffic infrastructure (including street furniture) at the fore and midground of the view terminating behind the vegetation on the right.

Commercial buildings are in the right of the view. Some other vegetation is evident in the midground of the view to the horizon.

Telecommunications and power infrastructure are evident in the view around the commercial precinct.



Figure 27: Viewpoint 6 – View Pacific Highway Photo: RPS

4.2.6.2 Viewpoint impacts

- Covered compliant access, lift, and lift canopy on Pacific Highway side of the station would be somewhat evident from this viewpoint
- The new stair entry and canopy on Pacific Highway side of the station would be somewhat evident from this viewpoint
- Accessible car parking would be obscured from this location by the adjacent commercial property
- The new platform lift, platform canopy, and the Grandview Street lift would be obscured from this location by the adjacent commercial property
- The widened footpath on Grandview Street would not be evident from this viewpoint

- The viewpoint is too far away to see the changes relating to the removal of stairs on Pacific Highway

4.2.6.3 Assessment of Impacts

For Viewpoint 6 refer to Table 10 for an assessment of sensitivity, magnitude and impacts.

Table 10: Viewpoint 6: Visual Impact Assessment

Sensitivity	Magnitude	Overall impact
“the quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change”	Magnitude refers to the form—scale, size, character—of the project and its proximity to the viewer.	Rankings for sensitivity and magnitude are combined to generate the impact
Low	Low	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The view is highly urbanised with the Pacific Highway and telecommunications infrastructure dominating the view • Commercial Buildings, Railway infrastructure, fencing and car parking are also evident in this view • The <i>Eucalyptus scoparia</i> is evident in the mid to background of the photo. As above, The REF indicates that this tree will be subject to major encroachment with work proposed within the tree protection zone and structural root zone of the tree. The tree is assessed as having high amenity value due to its size. The possible removal of this tree due to its likely failure (refer arborist’s report) would reduce the amount of non-built elements in this view and without replacement of a suitable sized specimen tree would expose some of the new built elements from this viewpoint. • Some scattered planting is located throughout the view. These plantings are exotic/introduced species • There are very little natural or other elements providing a higher level of scenic amenity in this view. • Based on the highly contrived character of the view it has low scenic amenity and has low sensitivity to change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed station infrastructure is not a significant visual departure from the existing visual conditions and has been designed to be sympathetic with the surrounds (refer Section 0) • Church users have distant and obscured views to the Proposal area • The overall magnitude of the Proposal does not increase due to the proximity of users/commuters/viewers • Proposal is not a departure from existing landscape character 	

4.2.7 Viewpoint 7: Views from Pacific Highway north of Pymble Railway Station

4.2.7.1 Viewpoint description

Viewpoint 7 is from Pacific Highway north of the Proposal. The position of this viewpoint is shown in Figure 28.

The view towards the Proposal is dominated by the highway heading towards and terminating at the overpass to the north of the platform. The roadway is lined with vegetation and one to three storey residences. Power infrastructure and street furniture is noted throughout.



Figure 28: Viewpoint 7 – Views looking Pacific Highway north of the Proposal – Photo: RPS

4.2.7.2 Viewpoint impacts

- Nil –The highway, vegetation and residences blocks views to the Proposal.

4.2.7.3 Assessment of Impacts

For Viewpoint 7 refer to Table 11 for an assessment of sensitivity, magnitude and impacts.

Table 11: Viewpoint 7: Visual Impact Assessment

Sensitivity	Magnitude	Overall impact
“the quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change”	Magnitude refers to the form—scale, size, character—of the project and its proximity to the viewer.	Rankings for sensitivity and magnitude are combined to generate the impact
Low	Negligible	Negligible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The view is urbanised with the Pacific Highway dominating this view. Commercial buildings residential buildings, and other infrastructure are evident in the view Some scattered planting is located throughout the view. These plantings are exotic/introduced species There are very little natural or other elements providing a higher level of scenic amenity in this view. Based on the highly contrived character of the view it has low scenic amenity and has low sensitivity to change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nil –the highway, vegetation and buildings block view to the Proposal 	

4.2.8 Viewpoint 8: Views from Pacific Highway bridge north of Pymble Station

4.2.8.1 Viewpoint description

Viewpoint 8 is from Pacific Highway north of Pymble Station. The position of this viewpoint is shown in Figure 29.

The view towards the station is screened by the overpass fall protection barrier. Commercial properties are evident along with vegetation adjacent to the railway line. Vegetation is evident across the horizon line. Fencing, power, and other infrastructure is evident in the view.



Figure 29: Viewpoint 8 – Views Pacific Highway looking south to platform Photo: RPS

4.2.8.2 Viewpoint impacts

- The new platform canopy on the inbound side of the central platform would be visible through the barrier fencing from this location.
- Covered compliant access, lift, lift canopy and bin enclosure on Pacific Highway side of the station would be obscured from this viewpoint.
- The new platform lift would be obscured from this location.
- New lift and extended footpath on Grandview Street would not be evident from this viewpoint
- Removal of stairs on Pacific Highway would not be evident from this viewpoint as it is obscured from this location.

4.2.8.3 Assessment of Impacts

For Viewpoint 8 refer to Table 12 for an assessment of sensitivity, magnitude and impacts.

Table 12: Viewpoint 8: Visual Impact Assessment

Sensitivity	Magnitude	Overall impact
“the quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change”	Magnitude refers to the form—scale, size, character—of the project and its proximity to the viewer.	Rankings for sensitivity and magnitude are combined to generate the impact.
Low	Negligible	Negligible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The view is highly urbanised with fencing, as well as transport and railway infrastructure dominating the view Commercial buildings, car parking and other infrastructure are evident in the view Some scattered planting is located throughout the view. These plantings are exotic/introduced species There are very little natural or other elements providing a higher level of scenic amenity in this view. Based on the highly contrived character of the view it has low scenic amenity and has low sensitivity to change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motorists/passengers /pedestrians have views to the Proposal area from the Pacific Highway – generally whilst in motion Proposal is not a departure from existing landscape character Proposed station infrastructure is not a significant visual departure from the existing visual conditions and has been designed to be sympathetic with the surrounds (refer Section 0) The overall magnitude of the Proposal does not increase due to the proximity of users/commuters/viewers 	

4.2.9 Viewpoint 9: Views from Pymble Avenue

4.2.9.1 Viewpoint description

Viewpoint 9 is from Pymble Avenue, south west of Pymble Station. The position of this viewpoint is shown in Figure 30.

The view towards the station is dominated by the highway embankment and overhead power infrastructure.



Figure 30: Viewpoint 9 – Pymble Avenue to Proposal - Photo: RPS

4.2.9.2 Viewpoint impacts

At ground level:

- Nil –the Pacific highway blocks view to the Proposal.

Residences at corner of Pymble Avenue and Avon Road:

- The new platform canopy on the inbound side of the central platform would be obscured by the existing walkway canopy.
- Covered compliant access, lift, lift canopy and bin enclosure on Pacific Highway side of the station would be obscured from this viewpoint by vegetation on both sides of the Pacific Highway and the existing footbridge.
- The new platform lift would be obscured from this location by the existing footbridge.
- New lift and extended footpath on Grandview Street would not be evident from this viewpoint; it will be obscured by the station building.

- Removal of stairs on Pacific Highway would not be evident from this viewpoint as it is obscured from this location by vegetation on both sides of the Pacific Highway.

4.2.9.3 Assessment of Impacts

For Viewpoint 9 refer to Table 13 for an assessment of sensitivity, magnitude and impacts.

Table 13: Viewpoint 9: Visual Impact Assessment

Sensitivity	Magnitude	Overall impact
“the quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change”	Magnitude refers to the form—scale, size, character—of the project and its proximity to the viewer.	Rankings for sensitivity and magnitude are combined to generate the impact.
Low	Negligible	Negligible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The view is urbanised with roadways, most notable the side of the Pacific Highway, dominating the view. • Residential buildings are evident in the view along with power infrastructure, lighting and other street furniture. • Some scattered planting is located throughout the view. These plantings are exotic/introduced species. • There are very little natural or other elements providing a higher level of scenic amenity in this view. • Based on the highly contrived character of the view it has low scenic amenity and has low sensitivity to change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil –Pacific Highway, existing station infrastructure, and vegetation block view to the Proposal. 	

4.2.10 Viewpoint 10: Views from Alma Street

4.2.10.1 Viewpoint description

Viewpoint 10 is from Alma Street, east of Pymble Station. The viewpoint is shown in Figure 31.

The view towards the station is a mix of built forms and vegetation. Power infrastructure and street furniture are present throughout the view. The station fencing and platform building can be seen at the termination of the view line at the top of a small rise.



Figure 31: Viewpoint 10 – Views looking from Alma Street - Photo: RPS

4.2.10.2 Viewpoint impacts

- Nil – The station can be seen at this point; however, the Proposal changes cannot be seen from Alma Street because of the commercial buildings fronting Grandview Street.

4.2.10.3 Assessment of Impacts

For Viewpoint 10 refer to Table 14 for an assessment of sensitivity, magnitude and impacts.

Table 14: Viewpoint 10: Visual Impact Assessment

Sensitivity	Magnitude	Overall impact
“the quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change”	Magnitude refers to the form—scale, size, character—of the project and its proximity to the viewer.	Rankings for sensitivity and magnitude are combined to generate the impact
Low	Negligible	Negligible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The view is urbanised with the rear of commercial buildings, and car parking highly evident in the view. Power, stormwater and other infrastructure types are also evident in the view. Planting is also highly evident throughout the view. These plantings are exotic/introduced species. There are very little natural or other elements providing a higher level of scenic amenity in this view. Based on the highly contrived character of the view it has low scenic amenity and has low sensitivity to change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nil –vegetation and buildings block view to the Proposal. 	

4.2.11 Viewpoint 11: Views from railway overpass south of Pymble Station

4.2.11.1 Viewpoint description

Viewpoint 11 is from Pacific Highway south of the Pymble Station. The position of this viewpoint is shown in Figure 32.

The station can be seen in the distance with a tree lined railway corridor either side focusing on the station in the viewline. Overhead power infrastructure is evident along the railway corridor. More glimpses of adjacent buildings can be seen either side of the corridor.



Figure 32: Viewpoint 11 – Views looking north from railway overpass south of the Proposal - Photo: RPS

4.2.11.2 Viewpoint impacts

- The new lift structures would be visible from this location but not prominent
- The temporary construction compound may be visible from this location during construction
- The new platform canopy on the inbound side of the central platform would not be visible from this location
- Covered compliant access, lift, lift canopy and bin enclosure on Pacific Highway side of the station would be obscured from this viewpoint
- The extended footpath on Grandview Street would not be evident from this viewpoint
- Removal of stairs on Pacific Highway would not be evident from this viewpoint as it is obscured from this location.

4.2.11.3 Assessment of Impacts

For Viewpoint 11 refer to Table 15 for an assessment of sensitivity, magnitude and impacts.

Table 15: Viewpoint 11: Visual Impact Assessment

Sensitivity	Magnitude	Overall impact
“the quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change”	Magnitude refers to the form—scale, size, character—of the project and its proximity to the viewer.	Rankings for sensitivity and magnitude are combined to generate the impact.
Low	Low	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The view is highly modified from its natural state. Railway infrastructure dominates the view Planting of mixed heights and types are also highly evident throughout the view. These plantings are exotic/introduced species There are few natural or other elements providing a higher level of scenic amenity in this view. Based on the highly contrived character of the view it has low scenic amenity and has low sensitivity to change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motorists/passengers /pedestrians have views to the Proposal area from the overpass – generally whilst in motion. Proposal is not a departure from existing landscape character. Proposed station infrastructure is not a significant visual departure from the existing visual conditions and has been designed to be sympathetic with the surrounds (refer Section 0). The overall magnitude of the Proposal does not increase due to the distance away of users/commuters/viewers from the Proposal. 	

4.2.12 Viewpoint 12: Views from Grandview Street - east of the station

4.2.12.1 Viewpoint description

Railway infrastructure dominates the viewshed from Viewpoint 12 on Grandview Street. The station mainly obscures the background of this view with only minor glimpses of buildings and vegetation beyond (refer Figure 33).

Railway fencing and some vegetation provide some buffer to the railway infrastructure. Power infrastructure is also evident throughout the view.



Figure 33: Viewpoint 12 – View from Grandview Street (West part) Photo: RPS

4.2.12.2 Viewpoint impacts

- Vegetation being removed on Grandview Street would be evident from this viewpoint.
- The removal of overhead power lines would be evident from this viewpoint.
- New lift roof on Grandview Street would be evident in the background from this viewpoint.
- The new platform lift and platform canopy on the inbound side of the island platform would be visible from this location.
- The widened footpath on Grandview Street would be evident in the mid ground from this viewpoint (obscured by parked car in this view).

- Covered compliant access, lift, lift canopy and bin enclosure on Pacific Highway side of the station would not be evident from this viewpoint.
- Removal of stairs on Pacific Highway would not be evident from this viewpoint.

4.2.12.3 Assessment of impacts

For Viewpoint 12 refer to Table 16: Viewpoint 12: Visual Impact Assessment for an assessment of sensitivity, magnitude and impacts.

Table 16: Viewpoint 12: Visual Impact Assessment

Sensitivity	Magnitude	Overall impact
“the quality of the view, and how sensitive it is to the proposed change”	Magnitude refers to the form—scale, size, character—of the project and its proximity to the viewer.	Rankings for sensitivity and magnitude are combined to generate the impact
Low	Low	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The view is highly urbanised with railway infrastructure, power infrastructure, fencing, buildings and car parking dominating throughout the view. • Plants and plant species in this view are highly contrived. There are very few natural elements in the view other than planting within the railway fence line. • The <i>Eucalyptus scoparia</i> is evident in the background of the viewpoint photo. As previously discussed, the REF indicates that this tree will be subject to major encroachment with work proposed within the tree protection zone and structural root zone of the tree. The tree is assessed as having high amenity value due to its size. The possible removal of this tree due to its likely failure (refer arborist’s report) would not impact this view as it does not expose any additional infrastructure, buildings etc. from this viewpoint. • Based on the highly contrived character of the view it has low scenic amenity and has low sensitivity to change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed station infrastructure is not a significant visual departure from the existing visual conditions and has been designed to be sympathetic with the surrounds (refer Section 0). • Tree removal on Grandview Street for utility relocation would be evident from this view • The scale of the Proposal is the same as existing. • Some infrastructure is proposed to be moved from overhead to underground further mitigating the magnitude of the change. • There is a close distance between the Proposal and commercial properties. • Motorists and pedestrians with direct views to the Proposal area. • Proposal is not a departure from existing landscape character. • The magnitude of the Proposal does not increase due to the proximity of users/commuters/viewers. 	

4.3 Summary of Visual Impact Assessment

Refer to Table 17 for a summary of the visual impacts across all eleven viewpoints.

Table 17: Summary of Visual Impact Assessment

Viewpoint	Summary	Overall impact
Viewpoint 1: Views from Grandview Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The viewpoint has low sensitivity due to the urbanised/contrived environment with little scenic value Despite the close relationship between the viewpoint and the station the Proposal has little impact in terms of magnitude The visual improvements of removal of overhead power infrastructure contribute to offsetting the impacts of the removal of the roadside vegetation on Grandview Street. Proposal is not a departure from existing landscape character 	Low
Viewpoint 2: Views from Grandview Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The viewpoint has low sensitivity due to the urbanised/contrived environment with little scenic value The lift well is noticeable at this the viewpoint but does not materially change the magnitude of the existing setting The visual improvements of removal of overhead power infrastructure contribute to offsetting the impacts of the removal of the roadside vegetation on Grandview Street. Proposal is not a departure from existing landscape character 	Low
Viewpoint 3: Views from platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The viewpoint has low sensitivity due to the urbanised/contrived environment with little scenic value The visual improvements of removal of overhead power infrastructure contribute to offsetting the impacts of the removal of the roadside vegetation. From this viewpoint the scale of the Proposal has low impact Proposal is not a departure from existing landscape character 	Low
Viewpoint 4: Views from Pacific Highway car park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The viewpoint has low sensitivity due to the urbanised/contrived environment with low scenic value outside of the 22m non-endemic <i>Eucalyptus scoparia</i> The possible removal of the <i>E. scoparia</i> would expose more of the station infrastructure to views from the Pacific Highway. Proposal is not a departure from existing landscape character 	Low
Viewpoint 5: Views from Pacific Highway - northbound	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The viewpoint has low sensitivity due to the urbanised/contrived environment with low scenic value outside of the 22m non-endemic <i>E.scoparia</i>. The possible removal of the <i>E. scoparia</i> would expose more of the station infrastructure to views from the Pacific Highway Proposal is not a departure from existing landscape character 	Low
Viewpoint 6: Views from Pymble Uniting Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The viewpoint has low sensitivity due to the urbanised/contrived environment with low scenic value outside of the 22m non-endemic <i>E.scoparia</i>. 	Low

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The possible removal of the <i>E. scoparia</i> would expose more of the station infrastructure to views from the Pacific Highway Proposal is not a departure from existing landscape character 	
Viewpoint 7: Views from Pacific Highway – north of the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The viewpoint has low sensitivity due to the urbanised/contrived environment with little scenic value The Proposal is not a departure from existing landscape character as it cannot be seen from this viewpoint. 	Low
Viewpoint 8: Views from Pacific Highway bridge– north of the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The viewpoint has low sensitivity due to the urbanised/contrived environment with little scenic value The Proposal changes cannot be seen from this viewpoint 	Negligible
Viewpoint 9: Views from Pymble Avenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The viewpoint has low sensitivity due to the urbanised/contrived environment with little scenic value Where the Proposal can be seen from this area the Proposal is not a departure from existing landscape character 	Negligible
Viewpoint 10: Views from Alma Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The viewpoint has low sensitivity due to the urbanised/contrived environment with little scenic value The Proposal changes cannot be seen from this viewpoint 	Negligible
Viewpoint 11: Views from Railway Overpass south of the Proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The viewpoint has low sensitivity due to the urbanised/contrived environment with low scenic value added by the vegetation either side of the trainline. Where the Proposal can be seen from this area the Proposal is not a departure from existing landscape character 	Low
Viewpoint 12: Views from Grandview Street West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The viewpoint has low sensitivity due to the urbanised/contrived environment with low scenic value added by the screening vegetation at both the roadside and within the train station. The visual improvements of removal of overhead power infrastructure contribute to offsetting the impacts of the removal of the roadside vegetation. From this viewpoint the Proposal is not a departure from existing landscape character of the view. 	Low

5 CONCLUSION AND SAFEGUARDS

5.1 Conclusion

A key consideration in the visual impact assessment of the Proposal will be the sensitivity of residents, passengers and other stakeholders to specific elements, which may result in a variety of responses, both positive and negative. Whilst the degree to which the scale of the Proposal area is visible from certain vantage points can be quantified, ultimately, the residents and users of the landscape surrounding the site will reflect a range of sensitivities. The degree to which the changes to the landscape are perceived will depend on the values of the actual users / residents.

This report considers views from passengers, motorists, habitable room windows, outdoor areas of the home yard dwelling as the most sensitive receptors. Views from residual land beyond the home yard area (such as recreational land) are treated as less sensitive receptors. This report also adopts the standard methodology of sensitivity relating to proximity, in that the greater the distance between the visual receptor and the Proposal, the lesser the visual sensitivity.

In summary, the Proposal would result in Negligible or Low impacts for all of the selected viewpoints.

Section 5.2 proposes mitigation measures to assist with maintaining the current visual quality of the landscape as well as complimenting the heritage character of the precinct.

5.2 Mitigation measures

Mitigation measures to manage and minimise the potential visual impacts have been identified based on the findings in this report. Mitigation measures, where not already provisioned by the concept design, are proposed in response to impact assessment ratings of Moderate or above, to help further reduce the visual impacts of the Proposal during the construction and operational stages.

Design recommendations have been made with the aim of meeting the key urban design and landscape objectives as outlined in Section 2.2 and maintain the current design considerations relating to mitigating visual amenity.

5.2.1 Design safeguards

- The proposed materials and finishes should be implemented as the use of these materials are complimentary to the existing landscape character of the local area. This would extend to:
 - The use of materials such as brick, to match the existing platform buildings, mitigates the visual impact of the elements on adjacent visual receptors
 - The extensions to the canopies should carry on the colour and materials of the roofing present in the current walkways and platform building
 - Use of translucent / lightweight materials (e.g. glass) which allow the design to best match the current building mass within the landscape will assist in mitigating the visual impact of the design
- Where the detailed design allows, retain trees in accordance with the design scope and the Arborist's report for the work. Tree removal is to be minimised to maintain screening of new and existing railway infrastructure
- The detailed design should consider design and construction methodology to maximise the potential to retain the large *Eucalyptus scoparia* on the Pacific Highway side of the platform
- Consideration should be given to a vegetation succession plan to replace the visual screening the large *Eucalyptus scoparia* should this tree require removal. Should short term replacement of the *Eucalyptus scoparia* be required, a suitably sized specimen tree should be included with reference to mitigation of visual and amenity impacts from the various critical viewpoints around the Proposal
- The scope and extent of the landscaping proposed by the Contractor for the Grandview Street entrance should be implemented as part of the Urban Design and Public Domain Plan

- Consideration should be given to the location and design of the refuge collection. Convenience of disposal/collection should be weighed against mitigating the negative visual impacts of refuge collection.

5.2.2 Construction safeguards

- Avoid unnecessary loss or damage to other vegetation adjacent to the rail corridor by protecting trees not proposed for removal prior to construction. This includes vegetation that makes a substantial and positive contribution to landscape character such as the mature native and exotic trees and vegetation adjacent to the station corridor boundary. Restore any areas that are impacted by construction with appropriate landscape treatments approved by Transport for NSW.
- Minimise light spill from the development areas into adjacent visually sensitive residential properties surrounding the development by directing construction lighting into the construction areas and ensuring the site is not over-lit. This includes the sensitive placement and specification of lighting to minimise any potential increase in light pollution.
- Temporary hoardings, barriers, traffic management and signage would be removed immediately when no longer required. This is particularly critical to the Proposal's location within a highly trafficable location.
- The site is to be kept tidy and well maintained, including removal of all rubbish at regular intervals. There should be no storage of materials beyond the construction boundaries. Storage should occur off-site considering the location of sensitive receptors, utilise rail corridor storage space where possible.
- Graffiti (other than sanctioned art), posters and other visual nuisance should be removed during construction in accordance with standard requirements, particularly to areas immediately adjacent Pymble Station.

5.2.3 Operational safeguards

- Undertake regular landscape maintenance work to maintain the current high standard of maintenance in and around the station. This will maintain the requirements of the heritage listing as well maximise the health and effectiveness of existing planting to help buffer the removal of any existing landscape items.
- For safety and crime prevention- retain any critical views through to the station building and the rail corridor through regular pruning maintenance.
- Graffiti (other than sanctioned art), posters and other visual nuisance should be removed during on-going operation in accordance with standard requirements, particularly to areas immediately adjacent Pymble Station.

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