

*Transport Access Program*

## Flemington Station Upgrade

DRAFT Visual Impact Assessment

NSW Government | Transport for NSW

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## 1.0 Introduction

IRIS Visual Planning + Design were commissioned by Transport for NSW to undertake an assessment of the visual impacts of the proposed upgrades to Flemington Railway Station, in West Homebush, Sydney. This Visual Impact Assessment will inform the Review of Environmental Factors (REF) for the project.

Flemington Station is located in the Strathfield Municipal Council local government area. The station is located between the Sydney Markets and West Homebush village centre. The station spans The Crescent, in the south, and the Sydney Markets site, in the north.

Generally, the Flemington Station Upgrade project proposes:

- a new covered concourse overbridge linking The Crescent and the station's two existing island platforms
- three new lifts and three sets of stairs to provide access to the station platforms
- an overbridge to link the new covered concourse to the existing Sydney Market footbridge
- Resurfacing of the station platform including tactile indicators, and new platform canopies
- Streetscape upgrades including minor roadworks in The Crescent, relocation of the existing pedestrian crossing, the addition of an accessible parking, taxi and kiss and ride bay.

The following report includes: a review of the relevant planning context; identification of the existing visual conditions and character of the site; an assessment of the visual, urban design and landscape character impacts of the project, and identification of potential landscape and visual mitigation measures.

Site inspections were undertaken in July and August of 2014. Following these site inspections this assessment was undertaken by a Registered Landscape Architect.

## 2.0 Study Scope

This visual impact assessment identifies the potential impacts of the project on the character and views of the Flemington Station precinct, and surrounding Sydney Markets and Homebush West town centre.

Through the process of the assessment this report documents the: visual character and unique qualities of the precinct and surrounding areas; the visual character of the proposal; and compatibility of the proposal with its context. This compatibility will consider the sensitivity of the receptors, visual absorption capacity of the landscape, and magnitude of the change that is proposed.

This assessment is based upon a viewpoint assessment, identifying and assessing views that are representative of the broad range of visual receptors of the project. The assessment includes views from surrounding residential and commercial areas, footpaths and streets of West Homebush, the Flemington Station precinct, and Sydney Markets.

The assessment has identified the impacts of the project during day and night time conditions (considering lighting), and throughout construction and operation. The assessment includes consideration of the appropriateness of the height, bulk, massing and scale of the proposed station architecture, and potential for overshadowing.

### 3.0 The Project

Flemington Station comprises six tracks and four platforms, set out as two Island Platforms, which are accessed by an elevated concourse with stair access to each platform. Access between the existing Flemington Station concourse and Sydney Markets is provided via an elevated footbridge which is approximately 150m long. This elevated walkway currently provides pedestrian access between residential and commercial developments south of the rail corridor and the Sydney Markets and the Parramatta Road precinct to the north.

The objective of Flemington Station Upgrade project is to provide improved integration and access to, within and around the Flemington station precinct for all users, including persons with impaired mobility. The proposal involves the construction of a new elevated station structure and platform awnings, and demolition of the existing elevated station buildings and footbridge.

#### *Project Components*

There are a range of elements within the proposal that may create a visual impact, including both the construction of new structures and the upgrading of existing station elements, services relocations, minor road works, demolition of redundant buildings, footbridge and stair structures. Specifically, the proposal includes the following components:

- Construction of a new covered concourse overbridge located over the station, with three lifts and three sets of stairs providing access to both island platforms and The Crescent.
- Station platform upgrades including resurfacing, installation of tactile indicators, and additional platform canopies.
- Streetscape upgrades including minor roadworks in The Crescent, relocation of the existing pedestrian crossing, the addition of an accessible parking, taxi and kiss and ride bay.

- The removal of 21 existing trees and a number of shrubs (10 trees to make way for the project works, and 11 trees for a temporary worksite which will be re-vegetated following construction).
- Demolition of the existing covered concourse and demolition of the dog-leg section of the Sydney Markets footbridge.

#### *Architectural Design*

The design intent of the proposed overbridge is to not mimic or match the heritage platform buildings so that there is a clear delineation between old and new structures. The architects have endeavored to reduce the visual dominance of the proposed structures at the station by locating the overbridge and associated lift shafts so that the awnings provide a transition in scale. The proposed design is shown in Figure 3-1 Architectural Design Concepts.



FIGURE 3-1 ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN CONCEPTS

The station buildings would be constructed of a range of different materials, with a different palette for each architectural element. Subject to detailed design, these would include:

- Lift shafts - precast concrete and glass
- Concourse and overbridge - concrete base with mesh throw screens, decorative panels and roof
- Platform stairs - concrete with mesh throw screens and canopy
- Stairs to The Crescent - concrete with porcelain tiled panels and canopy
- Platform canopies - steel frame and glass
- Sydney Markets footbridge - concrete structure with steel mesh and framed throw screens
- Sydney Markets footbridge - existing steel structure with palisade fencing.

The final design would be submitted to TfNSW's Design and Sustainability Review Panel for comment, and the Urban Design and Landscape Plan (UDLP) would need to be accepted by TfNSW.

The use of a range of different materials and treatments is intended to visually 'break-up' the scale of the proposed structures. The design of these building elements has intentionally created visual interest through articulation of the building facades, creating shadow and depth. The structure would be visually lightened by the use of semi-transparent steel mesh throw screens on the stairs and concourse level bridge, the use of angled panels would also disguise the visual mass of the concourse level.

### **Construction**

Existing high voltage aerial cabling, located parallel to the tracks on both sides of the corridor, would be realigned prior to the construction of the new works. These electrical enabling works will overlap with the project, however, it has been considered in a separate environmental approvals process, and is not a source of impact for this

assessment. This work would require the removal and trimming of a number of trees along The Crescent.

Visual impacts during construction are anticipated as a result of tree and vegetation removal, erosion and sediment control devices, materials deliveries and haulage, construction zones, temporary security fencing and hoarding, contractor's site sheds and the machinery on site.

It is likely that excavators, tipper trucks, assorted light delivery vehicles up to 12m long, road profilers, concrete trucks and pumps, line markers, truck mounted HIAB / cherry picker / mobile elevated work platform and a truck mounted piling rig or similar will be seen at the site during construction.

The main construction site (the footprint of the works) would be overlooked from Flemington Station platforms and the pedestrian overbridge connecting The Crescent to Sydney Markets. The works would potentially be visible to residents and patrons of commercial premises in The Crescent, as well as Sydney Markets patrons and personnel.

On the northern side of the corridor, an area of approximately 700m<sup>2</sup> would be concreted, a new access gate and fencing suitable fencing to provide separation to the rail would be provided. Construction access to the main construction site would be via the Sydney Markets.

A construction zone would be established to the west of the pedestrian footbridge, an area currently used for palette storage. This would be required for the duration of the works.

A proposed construction compound area would be required to the south of the corridor, on the Crescent in the vicinity of Hampstead Road, requiring the removal of 10 trees.

The station will remain operational for the duration of the works, with customer accessible areas transitioning from the existing to proposed structures over the duration of construction.

## 4.0 Planning Context

The State and Local Government planning guidance relevant to the visual, landscape character and urban design values of the site include:

- Strathfield Local Environmental Plan, Strathfield Council (2012)
- Draft Strathfield Comprehensive Local Environmental Plan, Parramatta Road Corridor Urban Design Study, Strathfield Council (2011)
- Development Control Plan No 20 (DCP20), Parramatta Road Corridor Area, Strathfield Council (2005)
- Strathfield Significant Tree Register Index, Strathfield Council (2013)
- Sydney Markets Master Plan, Sydney Markets Limited and Urbis JHD (2006).

The guidance offered by these documents is summarised in the following paragraphs.

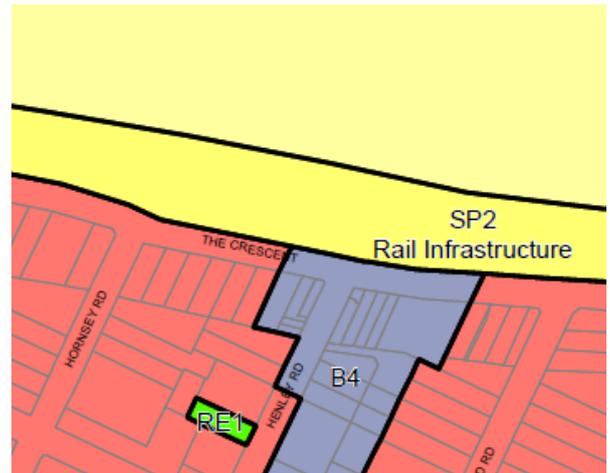
### ***Strathfield Local Environmental Plan (2012)***

The Strathfield Local Environmental Plan 2012 includes a number of plans which offer guidance for development within the study area including land use zoning, and maximum heights for development.

The study area includes a number of land use zones including:

- SP2 Infrastructure, the rail corridor and station
- SP1 Special Use, the Sydney Markets
- B4 Mixed Use, Homebush West Town Centre
- R3 Medium Density Residential, surrounding residential areas.

There are some objectives identified for these zones that are relevant to the visual amenity of the site, these are listed in the following paragraphs.



*Excerpt from Strathfield Local Environmental Plan 2012, Zoning Map 1*

The objectives of the Zone SP2 – Infrastructure, which applies to the station and rail corridor, relevant to this assessment are:

- *“To prevent development that is not compatible with or that may detract from the provision of infrastructure.”*
- *“To ensure that development does not have an adverse effect on adjoining land.”*

The objectives of the Zone SP1 – Special Activities, which applies to the Sydney Markets, relevant to this assessment are:

- *“To facilitate development that is in keeping with the special characteristics of the site or its existing or intended special use, and that minimises any adverse impacts on surrounding land.”*

The objectives of the Zone B4 – Mixed Use, which applies to the West Homebush town centre, relevant to this assessment are:

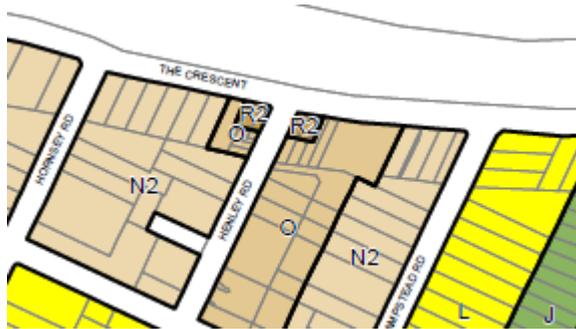
- *“To integrate suitable business, office, residential, retail and other development in accessible locations so as to maximise public transport patronage and encourage walking and cycling.”*
- *“To facilitate mixed use urban growth around railway stations and transport nodes and corridors, commercial centres and open space.”*

The objectives of the Zone R3 – Medium Density Residential, which applies to the residential areas surrounding Hornsey and Hampstead Roads, relevant to this assessment are:

- *“To enable other land uses that provide facilities or services to meet the day to day needs of residents.”*

The LEP sets out the maximum building heights allowable in the council area. The maximum heights allowable in the areas surrounding the site are:

- R2 – 22 metres, at the corners of Henley Road and The Crescent
- 0 – 16 metres, adjacent to the corner buildings and to the east of Henley Road
- N2 – 14 metres, along The Crescent.



*Excerpt from Strathfield Local Environmental Plan 2012, Heights Map 1*

#### **Development Control Plan No 20 (DCP20), Parramatta Road Corridor Area (2005)**

A Development Control Plan No 20 (DCP20) has been prepared for specific sites within the Strathfield Municipal Council area, and to support the Strathfield Planning Scheme. The DCP No 20 Parramatta Road Corridor Area, has the objective ... *“to control and guide the nature, form and scale of multiple-unit housing and mixed use developments within the Parramatta Road Corridor Area.”*

The site is located adjacent to the DCP study area, and is not referred to in this strategy. However, the DCP provides direction for additional urban density within the context of the study site.

This document is somewhat superseded by the Draft Strathfield Comprehensive Local Environmental Plan (2012), which builds upon these recommendations.

#### **Draft Strathfield Comprehensive Local Environmental Plan, Parramatta Road Corridor Urban Design Study (2011)**

This Urban Design Study was prepared as a background report to the LEP. It identifies a potential connection between Parramatta Road, through the Sydney Markets, and to Flemington Station.

#### **Sydney Markets Master Plan (2006)**

A Master Plan was prepared to guide the future development and strategies for the long term future and viability of the Sydney Markets in Flemington. The site is located adjacent to an area identified in the Master Plan as the ‘South Precinct’. Opportunities identified for this precinct are described in the Master Plan as:

*... “The south precinct has presented two principle [sic] opportunities for the future, either as a service and access precinct, or alternatively as a site capable of large scale development to leverage off the location of Flemington Station.”*

Specifically, the plan identifies the opportunity for ... *“large scale development along the rail siting [sic] to utilise station access”,* and to ... *“consider future rail build-over options”*

The Master Plan identifies a proposed future connection between Flemington Station and Parramatta Road, connecting through the centre of the Markets site. Due to the age of this Master Plan, some of the upgrades have been implemented, including the recommended priority of improved access to the southern precinct.

***Significant Tree Register Index, Strathfield Local Government Area (2013)***

The Significant Tree Register Index identifies some trees located within private properties located on The Crescent, however these are not in the vicinity of the site. There are no significant trees impacted by the proposal.

## 5.0 Guidance for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

While there are no specific legislative requirements for the methodology of an assessment such as this, in New South Wales the industry typically refers to the guidance offered by:

- Guidance note EIA-N04 Guidelines for Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment, NSW Government, Roads and Maritime Services (2013)
- The Guidance for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA), Third Edition, prepared by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (2013).

The methodology used for this proposal is described in Section 6, and conforms generally with the direction offered by these guidelines.

## 6.0 Methodology

This visual impact assessment will consider:

- An assessment of visual impact during construction and operations, day and night;
- An assessment of urban design & landscape character impacts; and
- Identification of opportunities for mitigation measures.

### 6.1 Identifying Visual Impacts

The assessment of visual impact is based on the identification of the level of visual modification created by the proposal, and the sensitivity of the viewer. Combined, these characteristics of the view are then considered to assign a level of likely impact. This methodology is explained as outlined in the following paragraphs.

### Identification of Existing Visual Conditions

A visual site inspection was carried out during August of 2014. This inspection was used to evaluate the existing visual character of the area and photograph the site.

In order to appreciate the baseline condition, a series of representative viewpoints have been selected to illustrate the visual influence of the site. These views represent publicly accessible viewpoints from a range of locations and viewing situations. Particular attention was paid to views from residential properties and places where viewers are expected to congregate such as churches, shopping areas and the Sydney Markets.

### Visual Sensitivity

Visual sensitivity refers to the nature and duration of views. Locations from which a view would potentially be seen for a longer duration, where there are higher numbers of potential viewers and where visual amenity is important to viewers can be regarded as having a higher visual sensitivity. In addition, any views recognised by local, state or federal planning regulations would, by nature of their recognition in these documents, increase the sensitivity level of the view.

In order to ensure the assessment of impact is reasonable, the sensitivity of a viewpoint is considered in the broadest context of possible views, from those of national importance through to those considered to have a neighbourhood visual importance. For this reason the following terminology is used to describe the level of visual sensitivity, see Table 6-1.

Table 6-1 Visual sensitivity levels

Visual sensitivity	Description
National	Heavily experienced view to a national icon, e.g. view to Sydney Opera House from Circular Quay or Lady Macquarie’s Chair, view to Parliament House Canberra along Anzac Parade.
State	Heavily experienced view to a feature or landscape that is iconic to the State, e.g. view along the main avenue in Hyde Park, or an identified view corridor to one of the monuments (such as historic museum station building) within Hyde Park.
Regional	Heavily experienced view to a feature or landscape that is iconic to a major portion of a city or a non-metropolitan region, or an important view from an area of regional open space, e.g. views to the Sydney Town Hall from George Street, or Sydney CBD skyline view from Centennial Park.
Local	High quality view experienced by concentrations of residents and/or local recreational users, and/or large numbers of road or rail users.
Neighbourhood	Views where visual amenity is not particularly important, such as lesser quality views briefly glimpsed from roads, and views from small groups of residences.

In the study area, there are views of **local** and **neighbourhood** sensitivity. In particular, views between the Sydney Markets and the station, views from the main shopping precinct of West Homebush, and the St Dominic’s Church buildings, are all considered to be of **local visual sensitivity**.

### Visual Modification

Visual modification describes the extent of change resulting from the project and the compatibility of these new elements with the surrounding landscape. There are some general principles which determine the level of visual modification; these include elements relating to the view itself such as distance, landform, backdrop, and contrast. There are also characteristics of the development itself which

are: scale, form and line/alignment. Visual modification can result in an improvement or reduction in visual amenity.

A high degree of visual modification would result if the development contrasts strongly with the existing landscape. A low degree of visual modification occurs if there is minimal visual contrast and a high level of integration of form, line, shape, pattern, colour or texture values between the development and the environment in which it sits. Table 6-2 lists the terminology used to describe the level of visual modification.

Table 6-2 Visual modification levels

Visual modification	Description
Considerable reduction or improvement in visual amenity.	Substantial part of the view is altered.  The proposal contrasts substantially with surrounding landscape.
Noticeable reduction or improvement in visual amenity.	Alteration to the view is clearly visible.  The proposal contrasts with surrounding landscape.
No perceived reduction or improvement in visual amenity.	Either the view is unchanged or if it is, the change in the view is generally unlikely to be perceived by viewers.  The proposal does not contrast with the surrounding landscape.

### 6.2 Identifying Night Time Visual Impacts

The assessment of night time impacts has been undertaken with a similar methodology to the daytime assessment. However, rather than assessing particular viewpoints or landscape features, this assessment draws upon the guidance of the Institution of Lighting Engineers (UK), and their ‘Guidance for the reduction of obtrusive light’ (2005). This guidance note

identifies environmental zones, useful for the categorising of night time landscape settings.

These zones are:

- E1: Intrinsically dark landscapes – National Parks, State Forests etc.;
- E2: Low district brightness areas – rural, small village, or relatively dark urban locations;
- E3: Medium district brightness areas – small town centres or urban locations;
- E4: High district brightness areas – town/city centres with high levels of nighttime activity.

Specific features of the lit landscape can be described in terms of:

- Sky glow – the brightening of the night sky above our towns, cities and countryside;
- Glare – the uncomfortable brightness of a light source when viewed against a dark background; and
- Light trespass – the spilling of light beyond the boundary of the property or area being lit.

The level of impact on the precinct will be described according to the impact levels that are identified in Section 6.5.

The precinct is considered to be an area of **medium to high district brightness**, as the station, Markets and commercial town centre are used at night and are brightly lit. Surrounding residential areas are medium density and include lights from residences, street lighting and vehicle headlights.

### 6.3 Assessment of Urban Design & Landscape Character Impacts

For the purposes of this assessment, impacts on urban design and landscape character will include:

- A discussion of the project's consistency with the design intent and strategies identified in the: Strathfield Municipal Council Local Environmental Plan, and Sydney Markets Master Plan.
- An assessment of the impact of tree removal, overshadowing and alterations to the legibility of the precinct.

### 6.4 Assigning Impact Levels

An assessment of visual impact has been made on a range of representative viewpoints. Additionally, urban design and landscape character impacts have been assessed for the features of the proposal area. Significance criteria have been used to assign landscape and visual impact levels. These are further explained in section 6.5.

### 6.5 Significance Criteria

Significance is defined in the Guidance for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (2013) as *“a measure of the importance or gravity of the environmental effect”*. The following significance criteria have been developed specifically for the landscape and visual impacts of the proposal. The purpose of the criteria is to ensure there is a clear and consistent means of evaluating impact. The following criteria have been used, refer Table 6-3.

Table 6-3 Visual impact significance criteria

		Sensitivity				
		National sensitivity	State level sensitivity	Regional sensitivity	Local sensitivity	Neighbourhood sensitivity
Modification	Considerable reduction	Very high adverse	Very high adverse	High adverse	Moderate adverse	Minor adverse
	Noticeable reduction	Very high adverse	High adverse	Moderate adverse	Minor adverse	Negligible
	No perceived change	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
	Noticeable improvement	Very high beneficial	High beneficial	Moderate beneficial	Minor beneficial	Negligible
	Considerable improvement	Very high beneficial	Very high beneficial	High beneficial	Moderate beneficial	Minor beneficial

Similarly, for the assessment of visual impacts at night, the following criteria will be applied. (Table 6.4)

Table 6-4 Night time visual impact significance criteria

		Sensitivity			
		E1: Intrinsically dark landscapes	E2: Low district brightness	E3: Medium district brightness	E4: High district brightness
Modification	Considerable reduction	Very high adverse	High adverse	Moderate adverse	Minor adverse
	Noticeable reduction	High adverse	Moderate adverse	Minor adverse	Negligible
	No perceived change	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
	Noticeable improvement	High beneficial	Moderate beneficial	Minor beneficial	Negligible
	Considerable improvement	Very high beneficial	High beneficial	Moderate beneficial	Minor beneficial

### 6.6 Mitigation Measures

Following the identification of potential landscape and visual impacts potential opportunities for mitigation were identified. Measures include opportunities to avoid, reduce and manage

potential adverse impacts during construction and operation of the proposal.

## 7.0 Assessment of Visual and Urban Design Impacts

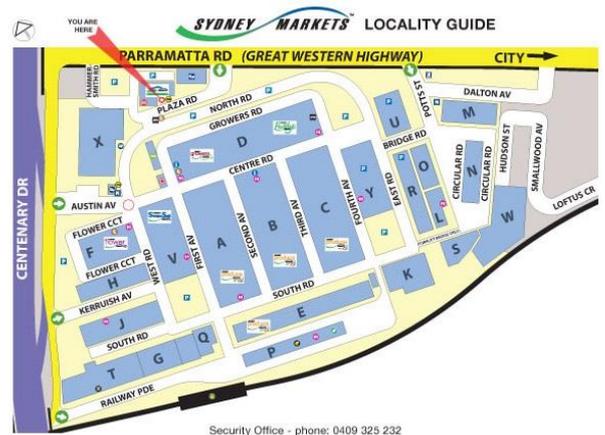
### 7.1 Existing Visual Conditions

The railway line and Flemington Station creates a boundary between two distinctly different landscape character areas. To the north, the Sydney Markets is characterised by large industrial scale buildings with working frontages facing the station. To the south, the Homebush West Town Centre has a much finer urban grain with a regular grid of streets, and is characterised by a mix of historic and contemporary residential and commercial buildings, including numerous authentic Chinese and Vietnamese restaurants, Asian green grocers and butchers. Surrounding the town centre are leafy residential areas. The visual conditions of each of these areas is described in the following paragraphs, and illustrated in Figure 71 Local Landscape Character Plan.

#### The Sydney Markets

The Sydney Markets, located to the north of the study area, has a distinct character. Large industrial scale buildings with loading bays and 'back of house' working areas face the station and railway line. These buildings are set within large, open forecourts with heavy vehicles loading bays, large shipping containers and forklifts transporting goods from these loading bays into the markets.

From areas to the west of the station (adjacent to buildings T, G and Q), fencing, equipment and storage areas block views to the station and railway corridor. From areas to the east of the station (adjacent to buildings P and E) the views between the railway corridor and the markets are more open. In these views, the station precinct is seen with the main station building visually prominent, elevated above the station platforms.



*Sydney Markets Locality Guide (Source: [www.sydneymarkets.com.au](http://www.sydneymarkets.com.au))*



*View west from the footbridge bridge to Railway Parade, showing the edge between the railway line and Sydney Markets*



*View south west to Flemington Station from the Sydney Markets*

The public areas of the markets are located further north, and there is no visibility between the commercial areas of the markets and the station precinct.



*View to footbridge from within the Sydney Markets*

A footbridge provides public access between the Markets and the station. This bridge is visually prominent, elevated high above the working areas of the Markets, and following an alignment which runs south, and turns sharply east, in a visually jarring alignment.



*View south from the Sydney Markets to the footbridge and Flemingington Station*



*View north along footbridge towards the existing Station Buildings*

## Flemington Station and Rail Corridor

Flemington Station is characterised by rail infrastructure. Views are dominated by the elevated timber station building, footbridge and stairs. The footbridge weaves across the site, connecting The Crescent, both station island platforms, and the Sydney Markets.



*View east along the footbridge towards the Station buildings*



*View west along the station to powerlines, catenary structures and overhead wires*

Brick heritage character buildings are located on the station platforms with station signage and furnishings along the platform.

The rail corridor includes catenary structures with overhead wires, and rail tracks with regular trains moving along the alignment, east to west. These elements create a strong visual line across the landscape. The station and railway land has considerable visual clutter and can be viewed from public areas of the station, locations along the north and south of the corridor.



*View along the station platform*



*View from the elevated station building, across the station*

The elevated station buildings offers broad views across the station, markets and Homebush West.

## The Crescent

The Crescent, despite its name, has a straight alignment east to west where it is located along the southern boundary of the railway corridor. The Crescent has a predominantly leafy, tree-lined character, and offers glimpses and filtered views to the station along its length.

To the east, the rail corridor is screened somewhat by vegetation on the corridor and street trees on The Crescent. Adjacent to the station, viewed from the West Homebush Town Centre, the station is screened by shrub and street tree planting. To the west, views to the station are more open, where the corridor narrows and there is limited opportunity for planting. In this area the Sydney Markets and elevated footbridge can be clearly seen across the station platforms.



*View to planted gardens and street trees, screening views to existing station buildings*



*Filtered views from the corner of The Crescent and Hornsey Road, west of the station*



*Filtered views to the rail corridor from The Crescent, east of the station*



*View from The Crescent across the station to the Sydney Markets*

To the south of The Crescent there is a mixed architectural character, with buildings of varying ages and styles, unified by the use of red and brown brick construction on key landmark buildings.

Two storey brick retail buildings surround the corner of Henley Road, acting as a visual marker, identifying the main commercial street and town centre. The footpaths are visually enclosed by awnings and street trees. An eclectic mix of shops with retail frontages spill out onto the streets, creating a vibrant community character.



*View east to the corner of The Crescent and Henley Road and the commercial centre of West Homebush*



*View east from the corner of The Crescent and Henley Road towards the existing station*

A number of local landmarks are located along The Crescent, including the St Dominic's Church buildings, grand residential homes, units and corner stores.



*View to existing detached house on The Crescent*



*View east from the corner of The Crescent and Henley Road towards the existing station*

## Henley Road Commercial Precinct

Henley Road is the main commercial street in West Homebush, and links the town centre with Flemington Station. The buildings which line the street have a mixed architectural character, with one and two storey shop fronts, and a range of decorative façades.

The streetscape has a mix of awning covered footpaths and scattered street trees. A mix of Asian grocers, restaurants and other shops activate the street, extending into the footpath with stalls and seating in some areas.

Although the Flemington Station precinct terminates views along Henley Road, the station is well screened by shrubs and trees located on The Crescent.



*View to commercial buildings on Henley Road, two storey frontages with awning covered footpaths*



*View to commercial buildings on Henley Road, with a brown brick character*



*View to commercial buildings on Henley Road, brown brick character with fabric awnings*



*View towards the station showing street trees and station and Markets in the background*

## Hampstead Road

The Hampstead Road area is a residential precinct including a mix of unit developments, detached and semi-detached homes. The streets are shaded by mature street trees with local footpaths and grassed verges. The rail corridor is well screened from views in this precinct.



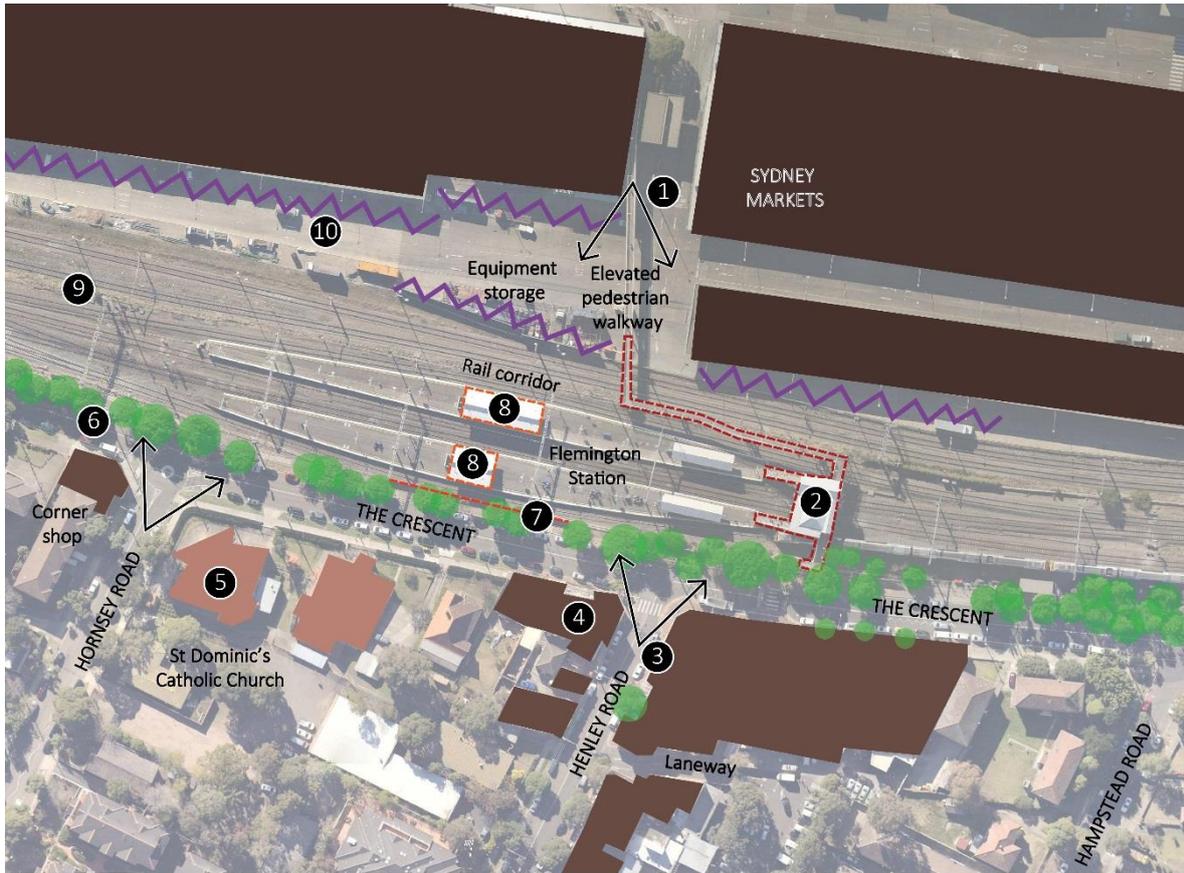
*View to residential buildings on Hampstead Road, red brick character with low brick fences*

## Hornsey Road

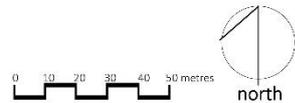
The Hornsey Road area is similar in character to the Hampstead Road area. It is a residential precinct including a mix of detached and unit developments. The streets are shaded by mature street trees with local footpaths and grassed verges. The rail corridor is well screened by street trees on The Crescent from views in this precinct. The intersection of Hornsey Road and The Crescent, adjacent to the rail corridor, is marked with St Dominic's Catholic Church on one corner and a corner shop on the other.



*View to St Dominic's Catholic Church and the corner shop Henley Road, with a mix of brown, red and blonde brick construction*



-  Existing trees
-  Heritage platform buildings
-  Elevated station concourse building and footbridge
-  Local landmark building
-  Commercial buildings
-  Large scale industrial buildings



1. Elevated views from pedestrian walkway
2. Elevated station buildings
3. Views filtered through trees to the station buildings
4. Two storey commercial buildings
5. St Dominic's Catholic Church and Church buildings
6. Existing trees to the northern side of The Crescent filter and soften views to the rail corridor and station buildings
7. Heritage brick wall, creates a visual edge to station
8. Heritage platform buildings located on the station concourse, seen from surrounding streets through trees
9. Rail corridor creates a strong visual and physical barrier through the area, separating Homebush West from the Sydney Markets
10. Sydney Markets buildings create a strong and visually dominant edge (indicated by purple zig zag) and enclose views to the north

FIGURE 7-1 LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER PLAN

## 7.2 Assessment of Representative Viewpoints

The following viewpoints were selected as representative of the range of views to the site and the proposed development:

- Viewpoint 01 - View south from the Sydney Markets footbridge
- Viewpoint 02 - View west along The Crescent near the intersection with Hampstead Road
- Viewpoint 03 - View west along The Crescent to the existing station buildings
- Viewpoint 04 - View north from the Arcade at number 95 The Crescent towards the station
- Viewpoint 05 - View west along The Crescent to the intersection with Henley Road
- Viewpoint 06 - View north along Henley Road to The Crescent and station beyond
- Viewpoint 07 - View east along The Crescent adjacent to the existing station buildings
- Viewpoint 08 - View east along The Crescent from the shops at the intersection with Hornsey Road
- Viewpoint 09 - View east along the Flemington station platform

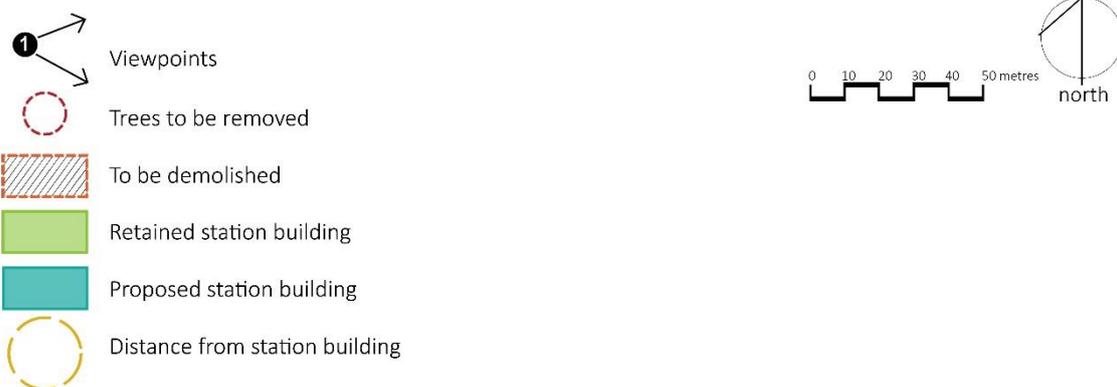
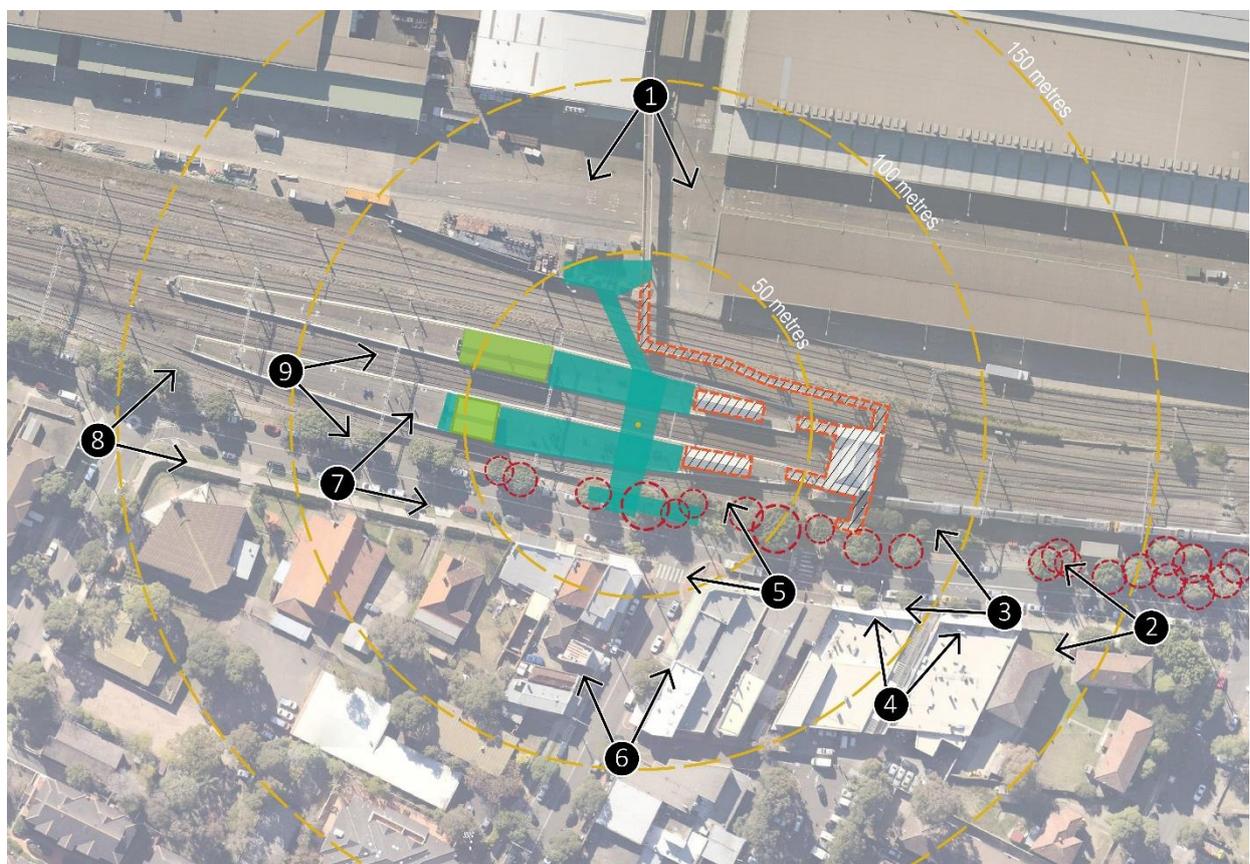


FIGURE 7-2 VIEWPOINT LOCATION PLAN

## 8.0 Summary of Impacts

Table 8.1 summarises the impacts identified in the viewpoint assessment.

Viewpoint Number and Location		Visual Sensitivity	Construction		Operation			
			Visual Modification	Visual Impact	Day		Night	
					Visual Modification	Visual Impact	Visual Modification	Visual Impact
01	View south from the Sydney Markets footbridge	Local	Considerable reduction	Moderate adverse	Noticeable improvement	Minor beneficial	Noticeable improvement	Minor beneficial
02	View west along The Crescent near the intersection with Hampstead Road	Neighbourhood	Noticeable reduction	Negligible	Noticeable improvement	Negligible	Noticeable improvement	Negligible
03	View west along The Crescent to the existing station buildings	Neighbourhood	Considerable reduction	Minor adverse	Noticeable improvement	Negligible	Noticeable improvement	Negligible
04	View north from the Arcade at number 95 The Crescent towards the station	Neighbourhood	Noticeable reduction	Negligible	No perceived change	Negligible	No perceived change	Negligible
05	View west along The Crescent to the Intersection with Henley Road and proposed station buildings	Local	Considerable reduction	Moderate adverse	Noticeable improvement	Minor beneficial	Noticeable improvement	Minor beneficial
06	View north along Henley Road to The Crescent and station beyond	Local	Considerable reduction	Moderate adverse	Noticeable improvement	Minor beneficial	Noticeable improvement	Minor beneficial
07	View east along The Crescent adjacent to the existing station buildings	Local	Considerable reduction	Moderate adverse	Noticeable improvement	Minor beneficial	Noticeable improvement	Minor beneficial
08	View east along The Crescent from the shops at the intersection with Hornsey Road	Local	Considerable reduction	Moderate adverse	Noticeable improvement	Minor beneficial	Noticeable improvement	Minor beneficial
09	View east along the Flemington station platform	Local	Considerable reduction	Moderate adverse	Noticeable improvement	Minor beneficial	Noticeable improvement	Minor beneficial

TABLE 8.1: SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT

Key observations from the viewpoint assessment are as follows:

## Views from the Sydney Markets

The existing buildings located in the southern precinct of the Markets are large in scale. Each having a height of approximately 9-15m, and in excess of 100m long, creating a considerable visual bulk. The removal of the extended footbridge and station buildings to the east, which has a visually jarring alignment, would remove some visual clutter. However, a very large new structure, rising some eight metres above the already elevated footbridge level, would be constructed at the terminus of views seen from the footbridge.

The bulk of the station buildings, as seen from the Markets, would form a visual transition as it steps-up from the existing Sydney Markets footbridge level to the covered concourse overbridge and lift structures beyond.

These structures would be constructed of a range of different materials and treatments to visually 'break-up' the scale of these structures. Furthermore, the design of these building elements has intentionally created visual interest through articulation of the building facades, creating shadow and depth. The Markets footbridge would be enclosed in semitransparent throw structures, formed in an asymmetrical shape to disguise the scale and underlying bulky form of the structure.

The covered concourse overbridge would be clearly of a different architectural style to the heritage platform buildings.

Views from the Markets footbridge, are of local visual sensitivity as the route from the public areas of the Markets and the station is well used and connects two local landmarks.

From the Markets footbridge the new station buildings would block views to the roofscape of West Homebush, seen from this location. As this new station building would be seen as a number of built elements, with a layering of building shapes and forms, it would blend somewhat with the roofscape, visible in the surrounding view.

As set out in the LEP, the potential maximum heights allowable in the areas to the south of the station, seen in views from the Markets, is 22 metres, at the corners of Henley Road, and 16 metres in the surrounding residential areas. A future development form reaching these heights would further visually integrate the station within the surrounding character.

Due to the scale and architectural treatment, the proposed station buildings would become a visual feature, highlighting the entry to the station and improving the legibility of the route.

Overall, it is considered that there would be a considerable alteration to these views resulting in a **minor beneficial** impact on the amenity of views from the Sydney Markets footbridge.

Refer, Viewpoint 01 - View south from the Sydney Markets footbridge.

Other views from within the Sydney markets are located within the working areas and are therefore of low visual sensitivity. Alterations to these views, although resulting in a noticeable to considerable modification of the view, would be **negligible to minor adverse** visual impact.

## Views West from The Crescent

Views west towards the station from The Crescent are of neighbourhood visual sensitivity, as they are local routes, connecting residential areas with the station and the main commercial streets of West Homebush.

As set out in the LEP, the allowable building heights along The Crescent is 14 metres, and 16 metres around Henley Road commercial precinct. There are a number of unit developments scattered around the precinct which rise to this height.

In a number of these views, the existing elevated station building is visible, and would be removed. In addition, a number of trees adjacent to the station would be removed, opening up views to the new station buildings and increasing the visibility of the Sydney Markets beyond. The new station buildings would be seen in the background of these views, seen as a number of separate elements, visually broken-up by their shape and materials, and with some transparency achieved through the use of steel mesh throw screens and angled lines of the panel frames.

This alteration to the views would typically result in a noticeable improvement in the amenity of these views and a **negligible** visual impact, in views at a distance.

Refer, Viewpoint 02 - View west along The Crescent, near the intersection with Hampstead Road; and Viewpoint 03 - View west along The Crescent to the existing station buildings.

In views at close proximity, the alteration to these views would result in a noticeable improvement in the amenity of the view, which would result **minor beneficial** visual impact.

Refer, Viewpoint 05 - View west along The Crescent to the intersection with Henley Road and proposed station buildings.

## Views from Henley Road

Henley Road has a greater urban density with multiple storey buildings and shop fronts lining the street, particularly at the corners with The Crescent. As set out in the LEP, development can be up to 22 metres high at the corners of Henley Road.

The station precinct is located at the terminus of views along the commercial street of Henley Road. In these views, existing trees and landscaped gardens, which partially screen and filter views to the station, would be removed.

The eastern portion of the new station building would be seen and would include a barrier fence in the centre of the view, stairs rising to the west, and the lift and bridge structure seen in line with the commercial buildings. It is likely that the upper portions of the lift structures would be seen rising above the surrounding streetscape in this view.

The scale of the proposed station would be in keeping with the current scale of buildings within this view, and future built form scale. The station would extend the streetscape character into the station precinct, improving the visual connectivity and providing a visual transition to the mass and scale of the Sydney Markets buildings beyond.

This alteration to the character of views from Henley Road would typically result in a noticeable improvement in the amenity of these views and a **minor beneficial** visual impact.

Refer, Viewpoint 06 - View north along Henley Road to The Crescent and station beyond.

## Views East from The Crescent

Views east towards the station from The Crescent are of local visual sensitivity, as this area is local route connecting the residential areas of West Homebush with the station and it is representative of views from community

gathering places such as the local corner store, and community church buildings.

In these views a number of street trees, which currently create a green edge to the station, would be removed. This would open up views to the new station buildings and increase the visibility of the Sydney Markets beyond.

In these views, the new station structure would be elevated, rising to approximately three storeys above the surrounding ground level. Views to the existing brick station buildings would be opened up somewhat. The proposed bridge structure would be seen as a number of separate elements, visually broken-up by their shape and materials, and with some transparency achieved through the use of steel mesh throw screens and angled lines of the panel frames.

The LEP sets out the maximum building heights allowable in this area as 14 metres, along The Crescent, and 16 metres, adjacent to the corner with Henley Road. There are also a number of commercial buildings visible in the background of this view, at the intersection with Henley Road. The new station buildings would be seen as a landmark structure, clearly identifying the location of the station from surrounding residential areas.

The scale of the proposal would create a visual transition between the commercial areas, visible in the background, and the Markets, which are clearly visible in views from this area. The visual prominence of the church would be maintained. This would be visually compatible with the surrounding character and be absorbed into the character of the surrounding townscape.

The architectural style of the new buildings would clearly differentiate them from the heritage platform buildings and the stepping down of the stairs and canopies.

This alteration to the views, would result in a noticeable improvement in the amenity of these views and a **minor beneficial** visual impact from The Crescent.

Refer, Viewpoint 07 - View east along The Crescent, adjacent to the existing station buildings; and Viewpoint 8 - View east along The Crescent, from the shops at the intersection with Hornsey Road.

## Views from within the station

Views from within the station are of local visual sensitivity as the station is a community gathering place and forms a main entry to the town centre. Views on the platform include the heritage character brick platform buildings, and existing elevated station buildings.

While the elevated station building and stairs would be removed, the brick station buildings would be retained and returned to use. Three lift structures would be visible, one on The Crescent and one on each island platform. These would be linked by a concourse which would be seen elevated and crossing the station from the Markets in the north, across the station and to The Crescent in the south.

This structure would be considerably larger in size and scale to the existing station buildings, rising to three stories in height and aligned across the view, extending 50-75 metres. The mass of this building would be reduced somewhat by the use of glazing in the lift structures and steel mesh throw screens in the elevated concourse. Angled lines would also visually break-down the mass of the structure.

The station would be seen as a transition in scale between the Markets and the main street of West Homebush, and would be absorbed into the surrounding townscape character.

This alteration to the views, would result in a noticeable improvement in the amenity of these views and a **minor beneficial** visual impact from the station.

Viewpoint 09 - View east along the station Platform

### Views during construction

For the construction of the project there would be the removal of existing trees, establishment of construction sites with hoarding and temporary works to enable the station to function, construction of buildings, minor local road works, and the demolition of redundant buildings. Works would include cranes, piling rigs, materials and equipment transport and storage, site hoarding and temporary road and pedestrian diversions.

When construction works are seen in the foreground of views, such as from the Markets footbridge, the station platforms and from the footpaths on The Crescent, this would result in a considerable reduction in visual amenity. Particularly where pedestrian areas are diverted and hoarding limits views and access around the station and adjacent streets. The result would be a temporary **moderate adverse** visual impact.

This impact would be reduced when seen in the middle and background of views, such as from The Crescent, and Henley Road. The change in character seen in these views would be more easily absorbed into the view, seen against the industrial character of the Sydney Markets. It is expected that this would result in a considerable reduction in the amenity of the views, and a temporary **minor to moderate adverse** visual impact.

### Views at night

At night the study area is considered to be of **high district brightness**, with the existing Flemington Station, Henley Road in the West Homebush town centre, and Sydney Markets being brightly lit. Surrounding this the residential areas are of **medium district brightness**, with lighting associated with the residential properties and street lights.

At night the station would be brightly lit and more visually prominent due to the height and scale of the new station buildings. The station is likely to create additional sky glow above the site. As the station and its environment are already brightly lit there is unlikely to be any glare created by the project. Furthermore, due to the separation of the station from residential and commercial areas by The Crescent, it is not expected that there would be any light trespass onto adjacent properties.

There would be additional lighting provided by the upgraded station at night and the station would be more visually prominent due to the removal of existing street trees, and greater height of the buildings. This would be an incremental increase from the current lit character of the station and consistent with the character of the Markets, seen beyond the station, and are brightly lit at night.

Generally, the character of the proposed station upgrade at night would be visually absorbed into the surrounding brightly lit environment whilst the legibility of the precinct would be improved. At night the alterations to the view would be noticeable and result in a **negligible to minor beneficial** visual impact.

## Urban Design & Landscape Character

The proposed station upgrade is generally consistent with the design intent and strategies identified in the Strathfield Municipal Council Local Environmental Plan. Specifically, the zoning requires that the development within the Infrastructure Zone does not have an adverse effect on adjoining land. The Zone B Mixed Use, which covers Henley Road and adjacent parts of The Crescent includes the objective of maximising public transport patronage and encourage walking and cycling as well as an objective to facilitate urban growth around railway stations and transport nodes. The proposed upgrades to the station would assist in the achievement of these objectives.

The Sydney Markets Master Plan envisages a service access precinct or large scale development on the 'south precinct' of the markets, with the specific intention of leveraging off the location of the Flemington Station. Therefore, the upgrading and improvement of the accessibility of the station will further the intent of the Sydney Markets Master Plan.

The loss of vegetation along The Crescent and rail corridor, not only has an impact on visual amenity but on the shade and comfort of the pedestrian footpaths, waiting areas and taxi pick up areas. In some areas these trees cannot be replaced due to the constraints of adjacent infrastructure and limited space. This results in an adverse landscape impact.

Overshadowing of adjacent properties would be limited to the winter months, due to:

- The roughly north to south orientation of the station building
- The separation of the proposed station building from neighbouring residential and commercial areas by The Crescent

In addition, the use of semi-transparent steel mesh throw screens will reduce the depth of

shadow thrown by the proposed station building in some areas.

The following Figures 8-2 and 8-3 illustrate the overshadowing impacts of the proposed station building in winter.

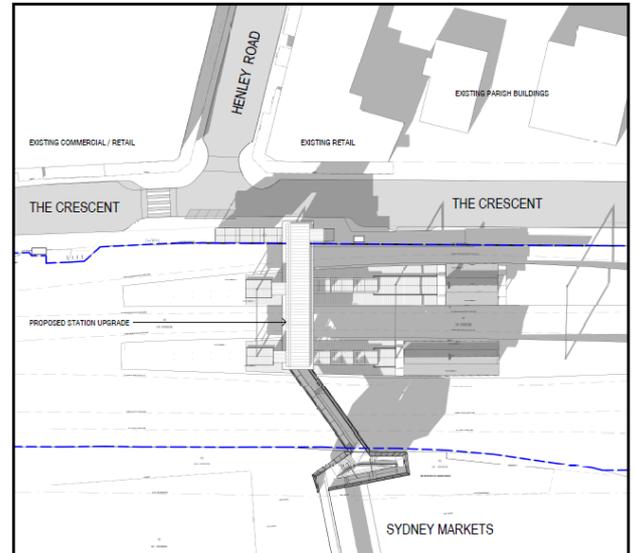


FIGURE 8-2 SHADOW DIAGRAM, WINTER JUNE 21 9AM

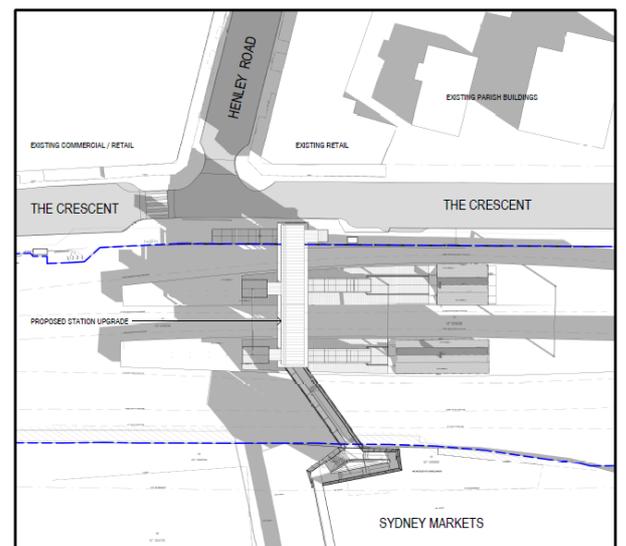


FIGURE 8-3 SHADOW DIAGRAM, WINTER JUNE 21 3PM

The properties that would be impacted by overshadowing in winter are the commercial properties on the corner of The Crescent and Henley Road. In addition to these buildings, the public footpaths located adjacent to the proposed station buildings, along The Crescent, would also experience overshadowing during winter.

The legibility of the precinct will be improved by the scale and visual prominence of the proposed station building. In particular, the location of the station at the terminus of views along Henley Road, and east and west along The Crescent, would locate the station within the commercial precinct of West Homebush.

The safety and security of the station precinct will be improved by the proposal. Passive surveillance is currently limited as there are limited active frontages and vegetation screens the station from surrounding streets. The removal of vegetation along The Crescent will increase the intervisibility between the station platforms and the adjacent streets. In addition, the improved provision of CCTV and other safety devices will create a safer public realm for the station precinct.

## 8.0 Mitigation of Impacts

In summary, the inherent mitigation of the proposed architectural design includes:

- Northern south orientation of the bridge concourse minimises potential of overshadowing.
- Use of some visually light materials including the steel mesh and transparent glass panels.
- Angled steel mesh structure surrounding the Markets footbridge ramp structure, hiding the mass of the concrete structure.
- Use of a range of materials and forms to break up the scale of the structures.
- Visually light glass canopy on station platform.
- Angled lines on linear bridge to visually break down scale.

The unmitigated impacts include:

- Visual compatibility of construction activity.
- Loss of trees and shrubs along The Crescent.
- Unfiltered views to the station from The Crescent.
- Overshadowing of nearby commercial buildings during the months surrounding the winter solstice.

The following mitigation measures should be considered to reduce the remaining visual impacts.

During construction:

- All trees to be retained are to be protected prior to the commencement of construction in accordance with AS4970 the Australian Standard for Protection of Trees on Development Sites and Adjoining Properties.
- Site equipment and facilities should be consolidated to maximise the area of useable public realm and maintain pedestrian permeability.
- Where possible the elements within the construction site should be located to minimise visual impact e.g. materials and

machinery should be stored behind fencing.

- Cut off and directed lighting should be used to minimise light spill and glare impacts on surrounding areas, whilst ensuring adequate lighting of publicly accessible areas for customer safety that meets Australian Standards.
- Worksite compounds should be screened with shade cloth, hoarding or similar material where necessary to minimise adverse views from surrounding areas.
- Printed screens for site fencing, which incorporates project images or artwork from the local community, in high use and highly visible areas should be provided where possible.
- Regular maintenance of site hoarding and perimeter areas should be undertaken, including the prompt removal of graffiti.
- Temporary hoardings, barriers, traffic management and signage should be removed promptly when no longer required.
- Construction sites and work areas should be kept tidy and well maintained at all times.

During operation:

- Opportunities for the inclusion of street trees adjacent to the station on The Crescent should be considered, including in the vicinity of the new bus shelter, at the terminus of Henley Road, and adjacent to the kiss and ride parking bay.
- Finishes and materials should be complementary to the existing locality and landscape.
- The use of highly reflective surfaces should be minimised with a preference for the use of a muted, less intrusive colour palette.
- Directed and cut-off lighting should be used to ensure spill light and glare onto private property is kept to a minimum.
- Any areas of 'blank' wall should be softened by appropriate plantings and/or artwork to minimise visual impacts.

## 9.0 Conclusions

In conclusion, the proposal would create some visual impacts due to its scale and the loss of vegetation along The Crescent. However, these impacts would include temporary **moderate to minor adverse** impacts during construction, and **minor adverse to negligible** visual impacts during operations.

Generally the station architecture is in scale with the development potential of the area to the south, with heights allowable in the Local Environmental Plan being consistent with the overall height of the proposed new station buildings.

The character of the existing townscape, particularly at the Sydney Markets and the existing rail infrastructure, has the capacity to visually absorb the character and scale of the proposal. The station architecture would form a visual transition from the large scale markets character, which is widely seen from The Crescent and Flemington Station, to the commercial town centre of West Homebush.

The location of the station, aligned with the southern built edge of Henley Road, would further reinforce this connection, and be visually compatible with the existing built form at this commercial street, in views from surrounding areas.

The new station would become a local visual landmark when approached from the north and south, with the scale and prominence of this structure being consistent with the local importance of this important public transport node.

The proposed station buildings would be constructed of a range of different materials and treatments, designed to visually 'break-up' the scale of these structures. The design of these building elements has intentionally created visual interest through articulation of the building facades, creating shadow and depth. The structure would be visually lightened by the use of semi-transparent steel mesh throw

screens on the stairs and concourse level bridge, the use of angled panels would also disguise the visual mass of the concourse level. The creation of a visual feature with the throw screens surrounding the ramps connecting the station concourse level with the existing Sydney Markets footbridge, further breaks the building into separate visual elements with a visually coherent station architectural style.

The station would create minor overshadowing impacts on commercial properties located on The Crescent during the winter solstice. This impact is limited by the north-south orientation of the station building and its separation from adjacent private property to the south by The Crescent. There is also unlikely to be any direct light spill during night-time hours due to its location and separation from residential areas by The Crescent.

At night the existing setting of the station is of **high to medium district brightness**, and therefore would have capacity to visually absorb the increased light levels proposed by the station upgrade. It is likely that there would be additional sky glow created by the proposal, however, this would only result in only a **minor adverse to negligible** visual impact. The station is already brightly lit, and in most views is seen against the backdrop of the brightly lit Sydney Markets and the Station.