



Statement of Urban Design Expert Evidence

Melbourne Planning Scheme Amendment C309

Prepared by
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June 2019

Instructed by
Echelon Planning

On behalf of
Miami Hotel Melbourne

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1.1 Background and Instructions

[1] This statement of urban design expert evidence has been prepared by Brodie Blades, Associate Director (Urban Design) of urban design studio SJB Urban Pty. Ltd. SJB Urban is an independent, specialist urban design practice based at Level 5 of 18 Oliver Lane, Melbourne.

[2] I hold qualifications in urban design and town planning and have approximately eight years' experience in these fields -the majority of which has been exclusively in the field of urban design. I have provided a summary of my qualifications and experience within Appendix A.

[3] In June 2019 I was instructed by Echelon Planning on behalf of Miami Hotel Melbourne to undertake an independent urban design review of Melbourne Planning Scheme Amendment C309 (the 'Amendment') – including the underlying 'West Melbourne Structure Plan (2019)' (the 'Structure Plan') – as it relates to the property at 599-601 King Street, 605-609 King Street and 13-27 Hawke Street, West Melbourne (the 'subject site').

[4] Specifically, my instructions from Echelon Planning are as follows:

- a. *'Review this memorandum and the background materials contained within this brief.'*
- b. *Confer with Echelon Planning where necessary.*
- c. *Prepare an expert report considering the urban context of the Miami Hotel and the urban design merits of the landowner's vision for redeveloping 15-25 Hawke Street and 605-609 King Street [West Melbourne] with a sensitively-designed hotel building exceeding the current mandatory GRZ1 11m height control and reaching to a height of at least six storeys. Relevant matters to consider in undertaking this assessment include the immediate and nearby urban context of the site (including heritage considerations and the extent of change envisioned on other parts of the Structure Plan) and the urban design visions of the wider location as articulated in the West Melbourne Structure Plan and associated studies.*
- d. *Appear at the Panel Hearing on 22 July 2019 (2pm to 5pm) for the purpose of presenting your expert evidence.'*

[5] As part of this, I have been provided with the following information:

- a. Letter of Instruction dated 14 June 2019.
- b. West Melbourne Structure Plan and Background Documents dated various.
- c. Advertising Material for TP-2017-203 dated 20 March 2017.
- d. Submission to West Melbourne Structure Plan dated 18 August 2017.
- e. Future Melbourne (Planning) Committee Agenda dated 17 April 2018.
- f. Endorsed Plans for TP-2017-862 dated 30 April 2018.
- g. Submission to Amendment C309 dated 21 January 2019.
- h. Future Melbourne (Planning) Committee Agenda dated 7 May 2019.
- i. Panel Timetables and Directions dated 6 June 2019.
- j. Council Responses to Panel Directions 3(a) to 3(e) dated 13 June 2019.

[6] I have also conducted my own investigations (including a site inspection on 7th June 2019) and have referred to additional material where I have deemed it appropriate to do so. I have identified these within Appendix A of this statement.

1.2 Evidence Structure

[7] I have organised this statement into the following overarching structure:

- **Section 2.0 – Subject Site:** A brief description of the subject site, previous approvals and the landowner's preliminary future redevelopment concept.
- **Section 3.0 – Physical and Policy Context:** A brief description of the broader physical context of the subject site, and summary of the subject site's relevant planning and urban design policy context (including that proposed by the Amendment regarding the subject site).
- **Section 4.0 – The Need for Amendment C309:** A brief analysis of the overarching need for the amendment from an urban design perspective, with a particular focus on the subject site.
- **Section 5.0 – Urban Design Analysis:** A comprehensive analysis of underpinning holistic design intent of the Structure Plan and Amendment, and corresponding analysis of the capacity of the subject site to contribute toward this in both a 'micro' (ie. site specific) and 'macro' (ie. broader context) context.
- **Section 6.0 – Conclusion:** A concise summary of my urban design assessment of the Amendment, including recommendations.

[8] I have attached a copy of my qualifications and experience at Appendix A, along with a summary of the documents referred to in the preparation of this statement. I have done this having regard to Planning Panels Victoria's 'Guide to Expert Evidence'. I have also provided the 3D modelling I have relied upon in arriving at my urban design conclusions at Appendix B, including a high-level summary of their production methodology.

Subject Site

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10. I am instructed that the following properties are controlled by the landholders by whom I am engaged:
- 599-601 King Street, West Melbourne comprising two (2) double storey terraces.
 - 605-609 King Street, West Melbourne comprising a vacant parcel of land.
 - 13-25 Hawke Street, West Melbourne comprising a three-level residential hotel.
 - 27 Hawke Street, West Melbourne comprising a single storey terrace.
11. The subject site is located on the south east corner of King Street and Hawke Street, with a frontage to Hawke Street of approximately 39.0 metres and a frontage of King Street of approximately 15.25 metres. A continuous frontage to the corner of these intersection is interrupted by 611-617 King Street, which adjoins the subject site for 18.25 metres to the east and 21.5 metres to the north.
12. The subject site has a side boundary to the east of approximately 43.75 metres and a rear boundary to the south of approximately 29.0 metres. A continuous rear boundary is interrupted by 599-601 King Street which adjoins the subject site for 14.75 metres to the east and 24.5 metres to the south.
13. The subject site has an overall site area of approximately 2,095 square metres and a fall of approximately 2.0 metres from north to south. Refer to Figure 01.

14. Having regard to 605-609 King Street, I am aware that Planning Permit TP-2017-862 was issued by the City of Melbourne for the demolition of the existing building and construction of a three (3) storey residential hotel above a basement. The endorsed plans prepared by Jackson Clements Burrows (dated 30 April 2019) indicate a three-storey built form to King Street similar in height to the adjoining commercial building to the west and residential buildings to the east, with vehicle and pedestrian access being provided through the rear and side driveways respectively
15. Jackson Clements Burrows Architects have prepared an indicative design package for the redevelopment of the subject site. The concept (dated 10 August 2018) envision a six-storey built form with a central separating open space element. Refer to Figure 03. The design appears to respond to the adjoining lower scale residential built form through chamfered setbacks.



Figure 01 - Site location plan

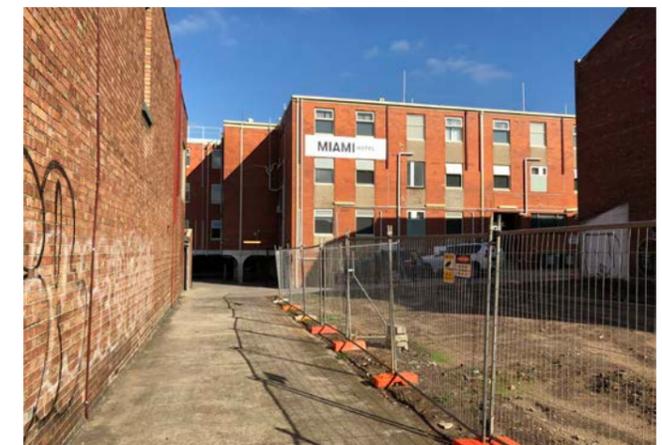


Figure 02 - Site photos, from left to right: Hawke Street interface, 599-601 King Street, and 605-609 King Street (Source: site inspection, June 2019)

Subject Site

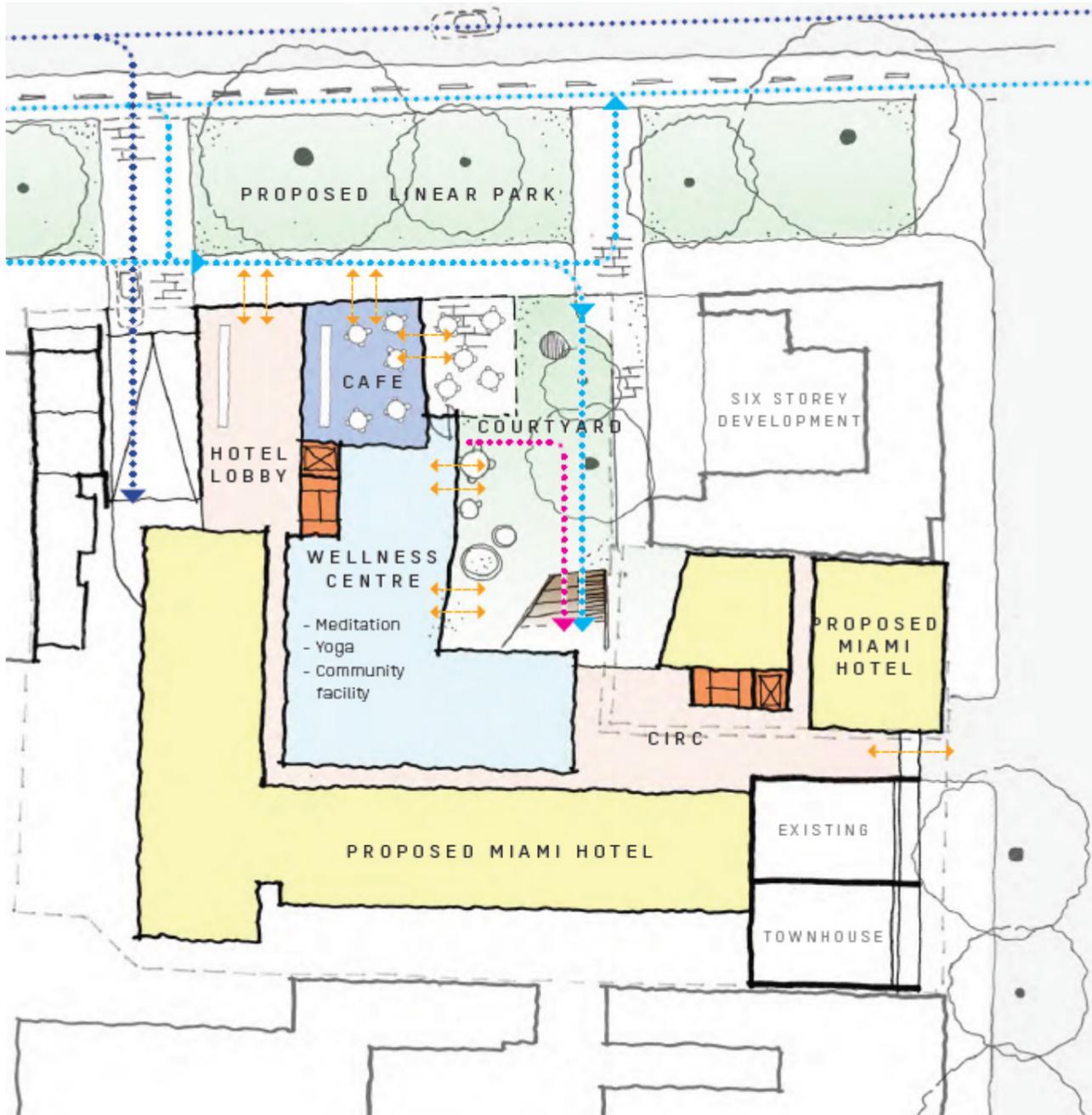
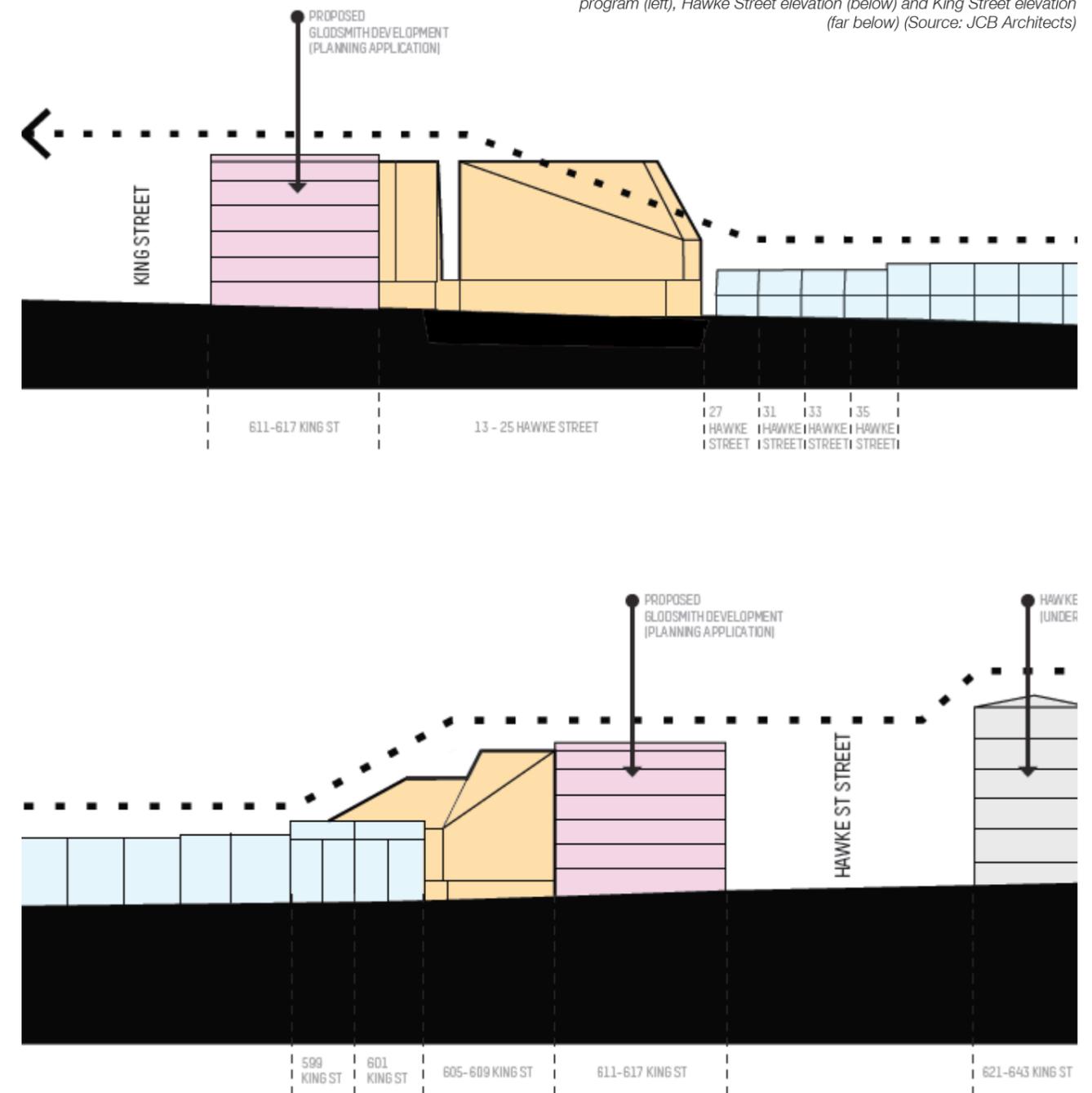


Figure 03 - Conceptual hotel design for subject site, including Ground Floor program (left), Hawke Street elevation (below) and King Street elevation (far below) (Source: JCB Architects)



Physical and Policy Context

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3.1 Physical Context

16. With respect to immediate interfaces with the subject site:
- **North** – Hawke Street is approximately 30 metres in width and comprises footpaths, parallel carparking, two lane traffic and a median accommodating additional carparking and landscaping. Further north is 18-30b Curzon Street which comprises a six (6) level residential development and Hawke and Curzon Street Reserve comprising public open space.
 - **East** – 611-617 King Street comprises a double storey commercial building located on the south west corner of the King Street and Hawke Street intersection. Further east is King Street which is approximately 30 metres in width and comprises footpaths, two lane traffic and a median accommodating turning lanes and landscaping.
 - **South** – Jones Place is approximately 7.5 metres in width and comprises two-way traffic and vehicle access to the rear of Hawke Street and Roden Street properties. Further south is 53-57, 59 and 61 Jones Place which comprise single and double storey residential developments fronting the laneway and 599-601 King Street which comprises double storey terraces.
 - **West** – 27 Hawke Street comprises a single storey terrace with a double storey addition to the rear. Further west is a combination of single and double storey terraces with frontages to Hawke Street and rear access from Jones Place and a three-storey commercial building with at grad carparking.
17. The prevailing existing built form condition of the immediate surrounds is single and double storey residential built form largely Victorian in architectural style and having heritage value. This

- built form is characterised by the absence of side boundaries, brick materials, marginal front setbacks and access from rear laneways. The intact fine grain subdivision pattern is contrasted by the atypically wide streets which carry the landscape and open space character of the area and provide a robust piece of public realm.
18. This largely consistent character is contrasted by several buildings – most notably:
- 13-25 Hawke Street, West Melbourne (subject site) comprising a four-storey residential hotel with at-grade carparking.
 - 605-609 King Street, West Melbourne (subject site) comprising a vacant parcel of land.
 - 611-617 King Street, West Melbourne comprising a two-storey commercial building.
 - 18-30b Curzon Street, West Melbourne comprising a six-storey residential building.
 - 562-576 Spencer Street, West Melbourne comprising a three-storey commercial building with at-grade carparking.
 - 550-558 Spencer Street, West Melbourne comprising a single-storey car wash.
12. The subject site in addition to the above sites contrasts with the predominant character of the area through substantial allotments sizes (approximately 2000 to 2500 square metres), prominent corner locations, more robust built form (due to reduced setbacks and increased building heights), a distinct lack of private realm landscaping, substantial at-grade carparking, and non-residential uses.
13. More broadly, the subject site is located within a largely residential pocket bound by King / Victoria Street to the north-east with the Errol Street

- commercial precinct servicing the surrounding residential and mixed-use land further north and Queen Victoria Market further east.
14. The subject site is bound by Spencer Street to the south-west with North Melbourne Station servicing the surrounding residential and mixed-use land and urban renewal precincts in E-Gate and Docklands further west. A mixed-use precinct is located further to the south with the central city including Flagstaff Gardens further beyond.

15. The subject site is located within a strategic inner-city context close to the Principal Public Transportation Network (PPTN) and proximate to a diverse range of services, amenities, infrastructure and recreation opportunities. These include (but are not limited to):
- Errol Street Commercial Precinct (including 57 Tram) – 150 metres north
 - Central City Edge (including Flagstaff Garden and Flagstaff Station) – 850 metres south east
 - Queen Victoria Market (including 58 Tram) – 750 metres east
 - North Melbourne Station – 550 metres west

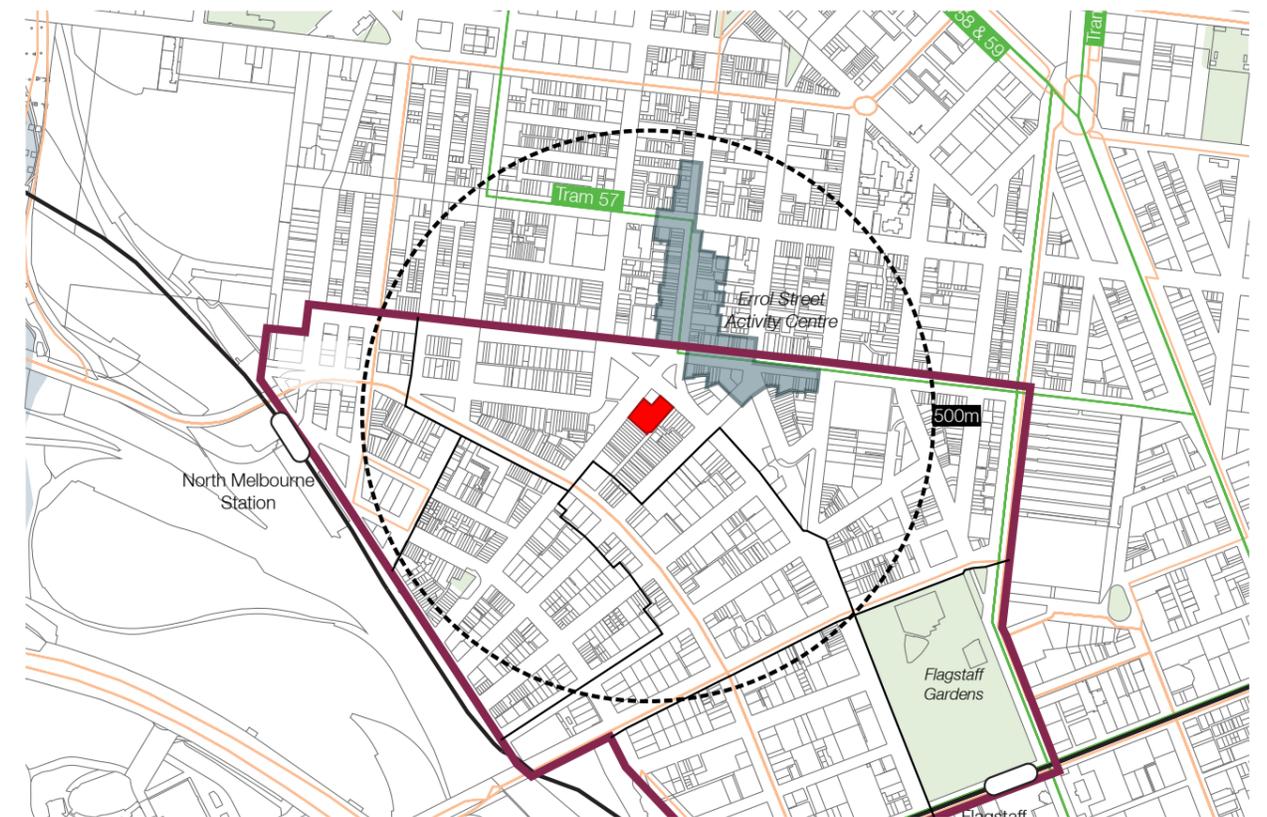
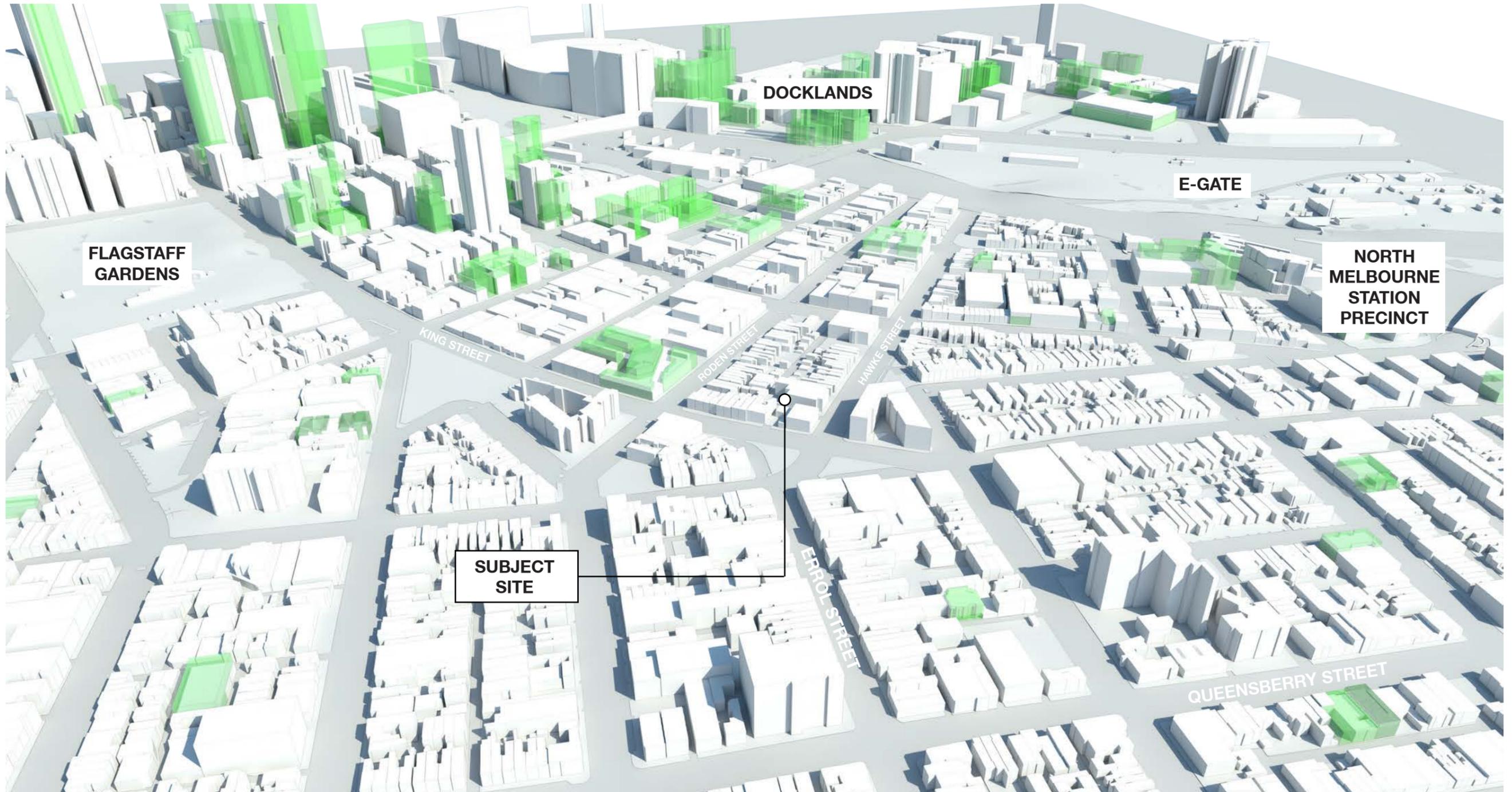


Figure 04 - Site context plan in relation to C309 area (red) and Errol/Victoria Street C1Z (blue)

Physical and Policy Context

Figure 05 - Existing conditions model of West Melbourne, Docklands and the Hoddle Grid. Approvals are shown in green (Source: CoM Opensource data)



Physical and Policy Context

3.2 Existing Policy Context

16. Having regard to zoning, the subject site is located within the **General Residential Zone – Schedule 1 (GRZ1 – General Residential Areas)** which seeks – where relevant:
- To encourage development that respects the neighbourhood character of the area.
 - To allow educational, recreational, religious, community and a limited range of other non-residential uses to serve local community needs in appropriate locations.
17. The Parent Clause specifies that an application to construct a residential building must provide a minimum garden area of 35% for a lot above 650 square metres in area and does not have to provide a minimum garden area for a lot less than 400 square metres in area. Moreover, a building must not be constructed for use as a residential building that exceeds 11.0 metres in height or contains more than three (3) storeys in height.
18. The maximum building height and number of storeys may be exceeded by up to 1 metre if the slope of the natural ground level is greater than 2.5 degrees when measured at any cross section of the site of the building wider than 8 metres or if the new building replaces and does not exceed the building height or contain a greater number of storeys than the immediately pre-existing building.
19. Schedule 1 to the GRZ does not specify any variations to Clause 55 requirements or maximum building height requirements.
20. Having regard to overlays, subject site is affected by **Heritage Overlay – Schedule 3 (HO3 – North and West Melbourne Precinct)** which seeks – where relevant:
- To conserve and enhance heritage places of natural or cultural significance.
 - To conserve and enhance those elements which contribute to the significance of heritage places.
 - To ensure that development does not adversely affect the significance of heritage places.
- I understand Hawke Street and King Street are both graded as ‘Level 2’ streetscapes.
21. Having regard to the Planning Policy Framework, **Clauses 11 – Settlement** states that planning is to facilitate sustainable development that takes full advantage of existing settlement patterns and investment in transport, utility, social, community and commercial infrastructure and services. More specifically, **Clause 11.01-1R – Settlement (Metropolitan Melbourne)** seeks to create mixed-use neighbourhoods at varying densities, including through the development of urban-renewal precincts, that offer more choice in housing, create jobs and opportunities for local businesses and deliver better access to services and facilities.
22. **Clause 17 – Economic Development** states that planning is to provide for a strong and innovative economy, where all sectors are critical to economic prosperity. Planning is to contribute to the economic wellbeing of the state and foster economic growth by providing land, facilitating decisions and resolving land use conflicts, so that each region may build on its strengths and achieve its economic potential. More specifically, **17.04-1S – Facilitating Tourism** seeks to encourage the development of a range of well-designed and sited tourist facilities including accommodation.
23. Having regard to the Municipal Strategic Statement, **Clause 21.04 – Settlement** seeks to target urban growth and development into specific areas of the City, enable ongoing but incremental growth and development in those parts of the City needing constant renewal of their vitality and to maintain the existing character in valued established areas.
24. This policy focussed on promoting areas of growth and protecting areas of stability through the Hoddle Grid, Urban Renewal Areas, Proposed Urban Renewal Areas, Potential Urban Renewal Areas and Stable Residential Area. The subject site does not fall within any of these areas and is instead identified as an area of ongoing and incremental growth with its regulation deferred to the current planning scheme controls.
25. **Clause 21.06 – Built Environment and Heritage** identifies a range of objectives and strategies having regard to urban design, heritage and sustainable development. More specifically, **Clause 21.06-1 – Urban Design** provides guidance having regard to the overall urban structure, the Yarra River Corridor, iconic views of the city, preferred built form character, public realm amenity and safety with the following strategies – where relevant:
- Protect Melbourne’s distinctive physical character and maintain the importance of identified places and precincts of heritage significance (1.1).
 - Ensure a strong distinction between the built form scale of the Central City with that of development in surrounding areas (1.2).
 - In areas where the existing built form is to be retained, ensure development is designed to maintain the generally low scale and character of those areas (4.3).
26. **Clause 21.07 – Housing** identifies a range of objectives and strategies having regard to residential development. More specifically, **Clause 21.07-1 – Residential Development** provides guidance having regard to housing growth, valued characteristic of existing neighbourhoods, internal amenity, external amenity, housing tenure and social and physical infrastructure with the following strategies – where relevant:
- Ensure that the scale, bulk and quality of new development supports a high-quality public realm (5.2).
 - Ensure the design of buildings and public spaces enhances the public realm and the pedestrian environment (6.2).
 - Ensure that the reasonable expectations of amenity for existing residential uses are maintained (3.1).
 - Support the development of well-designed and managed tourist accommodation close to major visitor attractions in the Central City (4.4).
27. **Clause 21.08 – Economic Development** identifies a range of objectives and strategies having regard to retail, business, industry and knowledge. More specifically, **Clause 21.08-2 – Business** provides guidance having regard to the principal commerce centre and employment opportunities with the following strategies – where relevant:
- Support the provision of facilities and services for the changing and diverse needs of residents, visitors and workers (7.1).
 - To ensure the nature and intensity of office and commercial activity is appropriate to its location (2.3).

Physical and Policy Context

- Encourage a mix of commercial and business support and services close to the Central City in identified parts of South Carlton, East Melbourne, Jolimont and North and West Melbourne (2.4)
 - In Residential and Mixed-Use Zones support business uses that provide services to the local community only where consistent with local amenity (2.6).
28. **Clause 21.16 – Other Local Areas** identifies spatial and built form directions for the remaining neighbourhoods of the municipality. More specifically, **Clause 21.16 – North and West Melbourne** provides guidance having regard to housing, economic development, built environment and heritage, transport and infrastructure with the following directions – where relevant:
- Support a mix of uses including retail, small scale business uses with some light industrial uses and small to medium enterprises in West Melbourne south of Hawke and Roden Streets, given the proximity to Docklands and the Hoddle Grid.
 - Strengthen the role of the Errol and Victoria Streets shopping area for convenience shopping, neighbourhood facilities and as a neighbourhood focus.
 - Maintain lower scale streetscapes in other parts of West Melbourne and North Melbourne. Ensure that development is sympathetic to the architecture, scale and heritage character of the lower scale areas.
 - Ensure infill redevelopment and extensions complement the architecture, scale and heritage values of the residential area, especially where it is in a Heritage Overlay.
 - Strengthen pedestrian and cycle connections
29. Having regard to the Local Planning Policy, **Clause 22.02 – Sunlight to Public Spaces** identifies a range of objectives having regard to public realm comfort, sunlight access, overshadowing, pedestrian enjoyment, sanctuary, visual pleasure and recreation and leisure opportunities with the following policy – where relevant:
- Development should not unreasonably reduce the amenity of public spaces by casting additional shadows on any public space ... between 11.00 am and 2.00 pm on 22 September.
30. **Clause 22.05 – Heritage Places outside the Capital City Zone** identifies a range of objectives having regard to conservation of buildings, new development and aboriginal cultural heritage with the following policy – where relevant:
- The external shape of a new building, and of an addition to an existing building, should be respectful in a Level 1 or 2 streetscape.
 - Higher rear parts of a new building should be partly concealed in Level 2 and 3 streetscapes.
 - The facade height and position should not dominate an adjoining outstanding building in any streetscape, or an adjoining contributory building in a Level 1 or 2 streetscape. Generally, this means that the building should neither exceed in height, nor be positioned forward of, the specified adjoining building.
31. The grade of buildings and streetscapes are identified in the incorporated document the **North and West Melbourne Conservation Study 1993** specified within this policy does not contain an individual reference to the subject site. Similarly, **Heritage Places Inventory March 2018** specified at Clause 72.04 – Incorporated Documents does not contain an individual Building Grade for the subject site, but identifies both Hawke Street and King Street as Level 2 graded streetscapes.
32. **Clause 22.17 – Urban Design outside the Capital City Zone** identifies a range of high-level urban design objectives having regard to scale, context, building height, building bulk, large and prominent sites, street level frontages, fronts and backs of buildings, building tops, visible facades and backs of buildings, pedestrian connection and vehicle access, building projections, protection from wind and rain, landscape and access and safety in public spaces with the following policy – where relevant:
- The scale of new development is encouraged to respond to the scale of surrounding development both in terms of its overall dimensions and the size of its individual architectural elements.
 - Buildings and works are encouraged to
33. Finally, there are a range of guiding documents and policies external to the Planning Scheme that are of urban design relevance. These include the **Victorian Urban Design Guidelines 2017** and **Planning Practice Note – 59 (PPN59 – The Role of Mandatory Provisions in Planning Schemes)**.
- Conversely, the height of the facade should not be significantly lower than typical heights in the streetscape. The facade should also not be set back significantly behind typical building lines in the streetscape.
 - The height of a building should respect the character and scale of adjoining buildings and the streetscape. New buildings or additions within residential areas consisting of predominantly single and two-storey terrace houses should be respectful and interpretive.
 - The height of new development should respect the existing built form of the immediate surroundings.
 - The massing and design of large new buildings is discouraged from overwhelming the built scale of any important pattern and character of existing built form.
 - New development in prominent locations will be encouraged to use building design, including the design of certain building elements as well as other techniques of perceived scale and contrast to acknowledge this prominence.
- respond to the building and settlement pattern of the surrounding area acknowledging that any development is part of a larger setting and that each setting is different.

Physical and Policy Context

3.3 Proposed Policy Context

West Melbourne Structure Plan 2018

34. The City of Melbourne has prepared the **West Melbourne Structure Plan 2018** which was endorsed by the Future Melbourne Committee in February 2018 and forms the basis of the Amendment providing the strategic rationale for the urban design parameters.

35. **Objective 1** seeks to introduce floor area ratio controls and built form controls that celebrate the diverse character of West Melbourne identifying the following rationale – where relevant:

- *Respond better to the varying characteristics of specific sites in West Melbourne compared to the blanket height controls which have no relationship to the size of a site or existing character.*
- *Ensure that the future development of a site is proportionate to its size.*
- *Deliver a range of different building typologies, rather than just developing each site to its maximum allowed height.*
- *Enable flexibility for an architect to design buildings within the built form envelope of the floor area ratio control (and the accompanying built form controls) to better respond to the varied characteristics and context of each site.*

36. **Objective 4** seeks to support mixed-use development to facilitate a range of business and employment opportunities through rezoning areas to Special Use Zone identifying the following rationale – where relevant:

- *The uniqueness of the location means that the current mix of floor space and character*

provides unique conditions for employment uses that might not otherwise locate in the central city region.

- *It is considered that there is no appropriate combination of other currently available planning zones, overlays and local policies to give effect to the desired objective to support mixed use development to facilitate a range of business and employment opportunities within this specific location.*

37. The subject site is within **Historic Hilltop** which is identified as a low scale residential area with heritage value and wide and open local streets comprising grassy medians and canopy trees. The majority of sites are less than 500 square metres in area with built form predominantly between two and five storeys providing a largely uniform character.

38. Historic Hilltop envisions the current built form controls that apply to the area to remain with new buildings rising to a maximum 14 metres in height to help maintain the predominantly low scale nature of the area (refer page 126). Whilst the current built form controls remain it is acknowledged that development should respond to important interfaces to positively frame open space and contribute to their sense of place.

39. Also, of relevance is the **Spencer Precinct**. It identifies a preferred maximum height of eight storeys along Spencer and King Streets and a preferred maximum height of six storeys elsewhere responding to the different character of the local streets and interfaces with existing buildings while ensuring good levels of sunlight to the streets.

40. The **Adderley Precinct** envisions Hawke Street to provide high quality local open spaces and become an important strategic walking and cycling route linking the West Melbourne community to Errol Street and North Melbourne as well as E-Gate and Docklands into the future.

Amendment C309

41. My understanding of **Amendment C309** of relevance from an urban design perspective and relevant to the subject site are as follows:

- Update Clause 21.16 – Other Local Areas in the Municipal Strategic Statement.
- Update Clause 21.16-5 – North and West Melbourne to only refer to North Melbourne.
- Insert Clause 21.16-6 – West Melbourne to ensure the vision for the area reflects the Structure Plan.
- Update Clause 21.17 – Reference Documents to include the West Melbourne Structure Plan 2018.

42. **Clause 21.16-6 – West Melbourne** provides guidance having regard to housing, economic development, built environment and heritage, transport and infrastructure with the following directions – where relevant:

- *Retain and provide opportunities for the creation of employment through the application of the Special Use Zone.*
- *Support mixed use development to facilitate a range of business and employment opportunities throughout West Melbourne to support the delivery of the projected 10,000 jobs.*
- *Ensure all new development responds sympathetically to and enhances the valued heritage character of West Melbourne.*
- *Support the development of West Melbourne as a mid-rise, human scaled neighbourhood with a diverse range of building types and some higher built form in specified locations.*

Physical and Policy Context

- Ensure that new development is of the highest design quality, and is responsive to the local context, varied subdivision patterns and site sizes West Melbourne.
- Ensure new development enables sunlight and daylight to reach into the parks, streets and lower levels of buildings.
- In the Historic Hilltop Precinct retain and enhance the wide green streets and open spaces, the Hawke and King intersection and Hawke Street linear park.
- Support the creation of linear open spaces through West Melbourne to enhance pedestrian connectivity with surrounding areas.

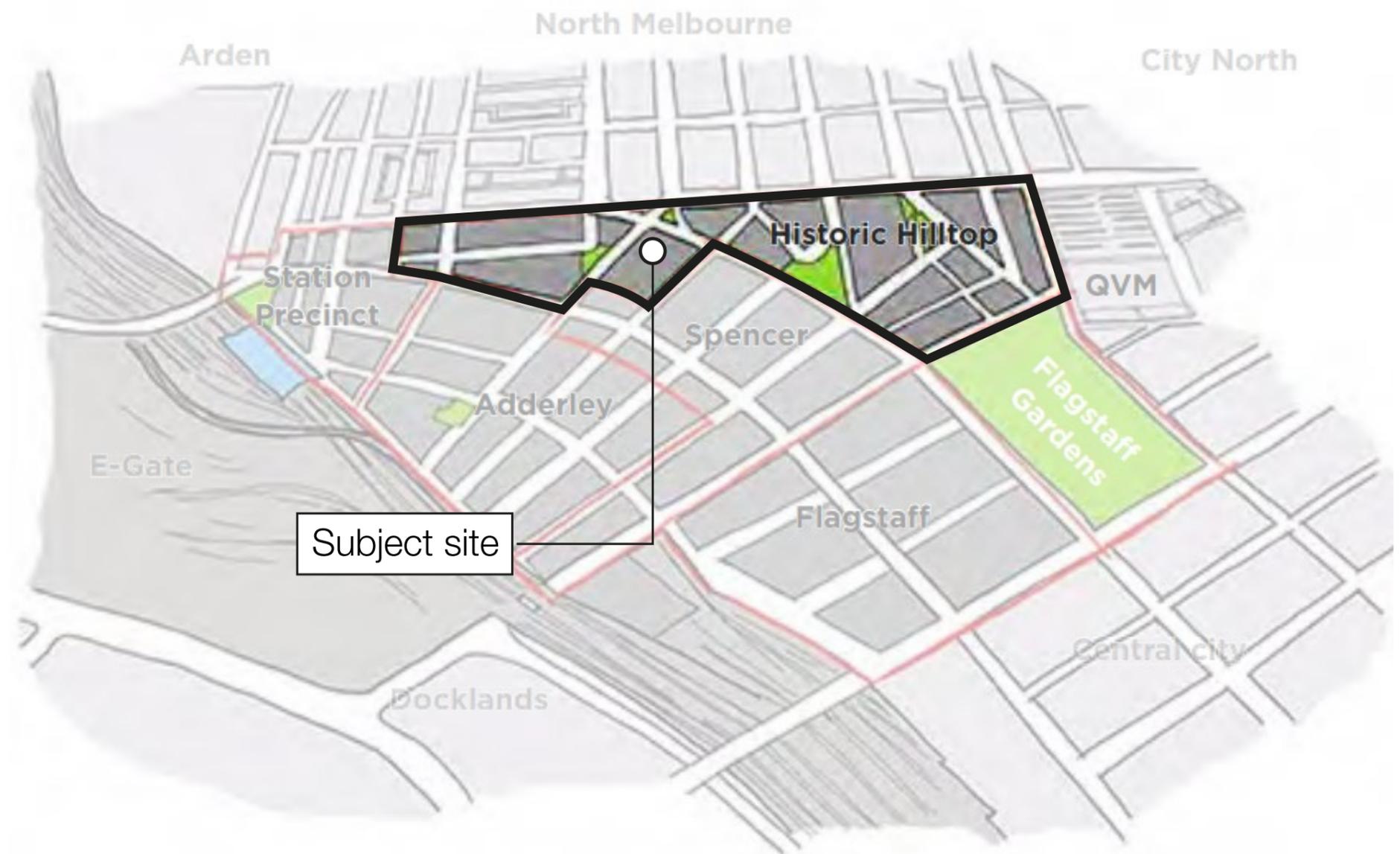


Figure 06 - Subject site in relation to West Melbourne Structure Plan Precincts (Source: West Melbourne Structure Plan, with emphasis added)

The Need for Amendment C309

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43. My understanding of the aspects of the Amendment of relevance from a broader urban design perspective is as follows:
- Provide greater clarity regarding the vision for West Melbourne by amending Clause 21.16 to outline a new, precinct-specific vision.
 - Implement the West Melbourne Structure Plan into the Planning Scheme as a Background Document, including identification at Clause 21.17.
 - Rezone a number of properties from the Mixed Use Zone to the Special Use Zone Schedule 6 (SUZ6 – West Melbourne).
 - Rezone a number of existing and proposed public open spaces to the Public Park and Recreation Zone
 - Amend the existing Schedule 28, Schedule 29 and Schedule 33 of the Design and Development Overlay (*'DDO28 – West Melbourne – Station Precinct', 'DDO29 – West Melbourne – Adderley Precinct'* and *'DDO33 – West Melbourne – Flagstaff Precinct'*) and add a new Schedule 72 to the Design and Development Overlay (DDO72 – West Melbourne - Spencer Precinct).

44. From an urban design perspective, the fundamental purpose of the Amendment is to provide greater built form certainty regarding the preferred future character of West Melbourne. I support the design intent of the Amendment insofar as it seeks to achieve this, as the principle of providing place-specific and sophisticated urban design guidance and built form controls is sound in-principle.

45. Importantly, whilst the Amendment proposes a suite of changes to the Planning Scheme, it does not propose any change to a number of design-relevant aspects of the Planning Scheme in its current form – such as Clause 22.02 (*'Sunlight to Public Spaces'*) and Clause 22.17 (*'Urban Design Outside the Capital City Zone'*). The retention of these aspects of the existing suite of policies is sound, and will ensure that they work with the suite of the Amendment's proposed changes in elevating the importance of quality urban design within West Melbourne.
46. However, in my opinion, there is a fundamental disconnect between the underlying principles of the Structure Plan and the Amendment's corresponding technical execution insofar as both relate to the subject site. Whilst I support the intent of the Amendment in-principle, I do not support the manner in which the Amendment seeks to make appropriate VPP provisions for the subject site in achieving the broader strategic design aspirations of the Structure Plan. I outline my rationale for this in the following sections of this statement.

Legend

Subject Site Massing 

Approved Developments 

Amendment C309

DDO28 (West Melbourne - Station Precinct) 

DDO29 (West Melbourne - Adderley Precinct) 

DDO33 (West Melbourne - Flagstaff Precinct) 

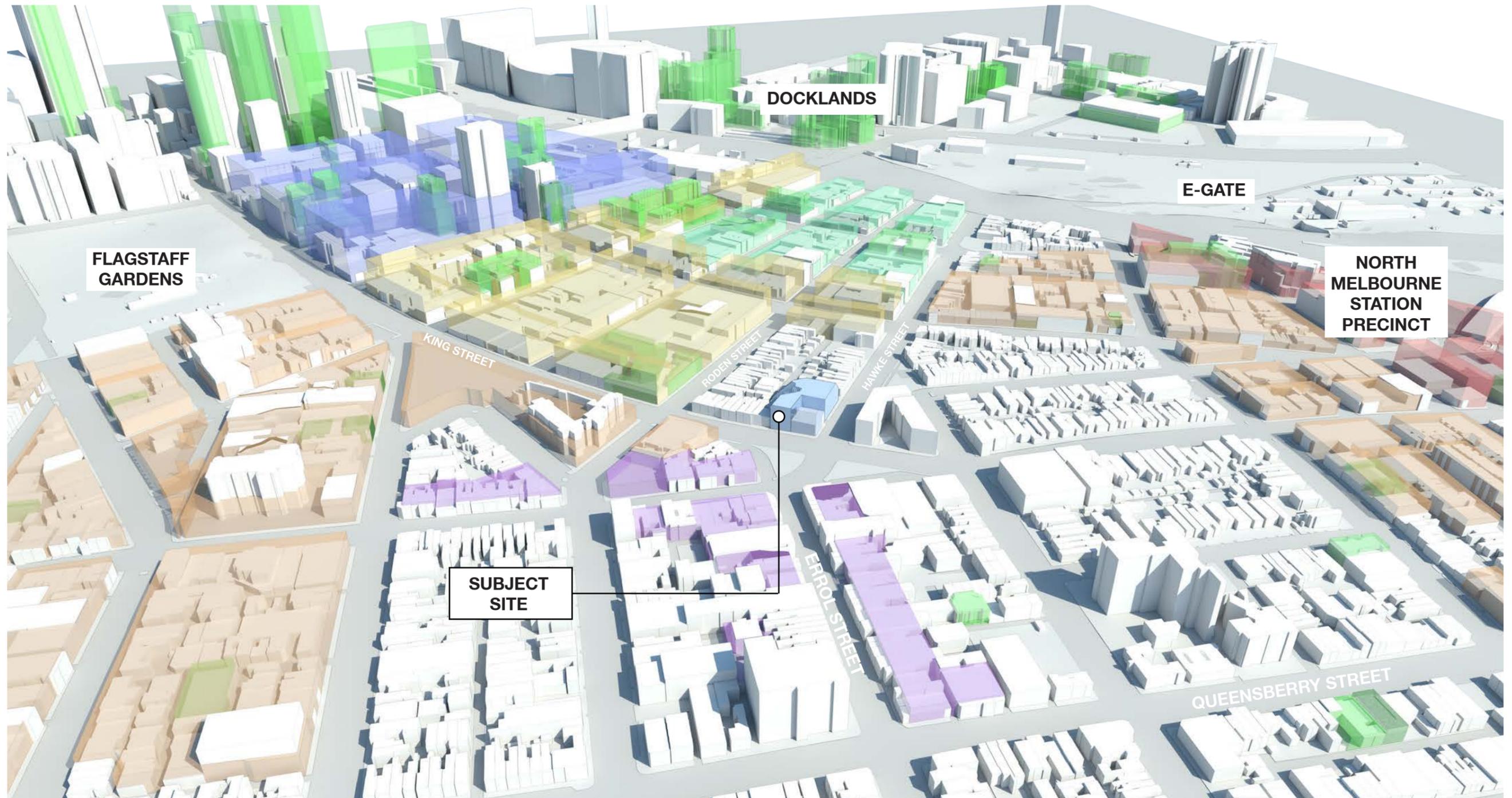
DDO72 (West Melbourne - Spencer Precinct) 

Existing DDOs

DDO32 (North Melbourne Peripheral) 

DDO34 (Errol Street and Victoria Street) 

Figure 07 - West Melbourne future character aspirations in relation to existing context (Source: Melbourne Planning Scheme, the Amendment and CoM Opensource data)



5.1 Background

[47] Any urban design assessment of the subject site must first begin with an understanding of the strategic aspirations of the Amendment, both in a 'micro' context (ie. those aspects of the Amendment that specifically relate to the subject site itself) and in a 'macro context' (ie. the Amendment's 'bigger picture' aspirations for the subject site's context).

[48] However, insofar as the Amendment relates to the subject site, the proposed suite of Planning Scheme changes are limited. With the exception of an updated LPPF (such as Clause 21.16), no change is proposed to the subject site's underlying zoning, and no design-based Planning Scheme control (such as a DDO, as is proposed for other aspects of West Melbourne) is proposed.

[49] Consequently, this implies that the subject site's existing planning framework (including mandatory three storey building height for residential uses within the GRZ) is sufficient in achieving the broader strategic urban design aspirations of the Amendment in both a micro and macro context. Certainly this is the sentiment of Section 3.5 of the Structure Plan in identifying the subject site as within the 'Historic Hilltops' precinct, noting the following at Page 126 of the Structure Plan:

'The current built form controls that apply to the area will remain the same with new buildings a maximum building height of 14m. This will help maintain the predominant low-scale nature of the area and to ensure that development retains views to significant landmarks, such as the Meat Market building and the North Melbourne Town Hall roof and tower.'

[50] Yet it is clear that the subject site and immediate surrounding context possess a number of physical attributes that support the notion of more intensive development on site in-principle. These include (but are not limited to):

- a. The physical size of the subject site (approximately 2,000m²)
- b. The subject site's corner location, at the junction of locally-significant main roads
- c. The existing character of the subject site's surrounding context, including recently-completed six storey development immediately west at 643 King Street
- d. The existing built form condition of the subject site, that predominantly comprises a established large-floorplate hostel that varies in height between three and four residential storeys
- e. The proximity of the subject site in relation to services and transport
- f. The 'vista termination' role of the subject site in relation to the linear spine of the Errol Street Activity Centre
- g. The broader urban morphology of the subject site's context, including public realm width (by way of existing and proposed public open spaces), broader topography, and physical location of the subject site in relation to public realm overshadowing

[51] Critically, I note that the Structure Plan clearly contemplates the continuation of larger-floorplate (and therefore more-intensive) built form outcome on site within the future of West Melbourne, by way of the 'West Melbourne Master Plan' (refer pages 16 and 17). Refer to Figure 08. In articulating a holistic future character aspiration for West Melbourne, the Master Plan clearly anticipates a role for the subject site to continue to accommodating an ultimate built form that is clearly distinct from – and contrasts with – the balance of form within the broader 'Historic Hilltops' precinct.

[52] Therefore, whilst I support the broader strategic intent of the Amendment in-principle insofar as it seeks to provide greater urban design certainty for West Melbourne, consideration should be given to whether there is a disconnect between the physical opportunities of the subject site and the strategic aspirations of the Structure Plan. Consideration should also be given to whether a disconnect exists between this and the proposed suite of Planning Scheme amendments as they relate to the subject site in the Amendment's current form.

Urban Design Analysis



Figure 08 - West Melbourne Masterplan, as contained within the West Melbourne Structure Plan. The subject site is shown in red (Source: West Melbourne Structure Plan, with emphasis added)

Urban Design Analysis

5.2 Contextualising Strategic Urban Design Aspirations

[53] The Amendment's Explanatory Report articulates that the principal purpose of the Amendment is 'to implement the built form and land use directions of the Structure Plan'. Page 12 of the Structure Plan contextualises this further by identifying the principal objective of the Structure Plan is to undertake a 'character-based approach' to structure planning for West Melbourne 'informed by the way buildings, landscape and topography, and public and private areas relate to each other'.

[54] It does this by way of four key 'overarching themes' as follows:

- 'Density and Built Form (Section 2.1)'
- 'Activities, Uses and Infrastructure (Section 2.2)'
- 'Movement and Access (Section 2.3)'
- 'Streets and Spaces (Section 2.4)'

[55] All have relevance in understanding the overarching strategic urban design aspirations of the Structure Plan in both a micro and macro context.

[56] With specific respect to 'Density and Built Form' at Section 2.1, the broader built form aspirations of the Structure Plan and Amendment are predicated on a number of valid, high-level urban design principles that can generally be summarised as follows:

- a. Site-specific Design:** The Structure Plan and Amendment seek to make use of Floor Area Ratios (FARs) within those parts of the Amendment in which transformative built form change is anticipated. In articulating the rationale for the FAR as a preferred approach to design, the Structure Plan seeks to facilitate contextually -responsive design

that responds to the full eclecticism of design considerations within West Melbourne. It does this by clearly stating the following:

'The purpose of the FAR is to 'respond to the spatial characteristics of West Melbourne' where the subdivision pattern is not uniform and site attributes vary significantly throughout the neighbourhood and from site to site. This pattern reflects the history of land uses in West Melbourne, with larger industrial sites interspersed with smaller residential and commercial sites and forms a fundamental element of the area's character. The benefits of FAR controls in West Melbourne are that they.... respond better to the varying characteristics of specific sites in West Melbourne compared to the blanket height controls which have no relationship to the size of a site or existing character' (Structure Plan, page 38).'

Further, the impetus for contextually-responsive design is further reinforced by a number of overarching design objectives at Page 40 of the Structure Plan, including the following:

- To 'achieve variable building heights, including street wall heights, that contribute positively to the specific character of each site'
- To ensure development appropriately considers the amenity impacts on neighbouring development and achieves a high standard of internal amenity within the development

- To ensure that new development respects the scale of adjoining residential and heritage buildings and does not overwhelm the existing building

- b. Urban Hierarchy:** Page 40 of the Structure Plan also outlines Design Objectives that have implications for the broader urban hierarchy of the West Melbourne precinct as a whole, including 'providing for for a largely mid-rise, human scaled neighbourhood with a diverse range of building types with some higher built form in specified areas' and ensuring 'development responds appropriately to the hierarchy of main streets (Spencer, King, Dudley and La Trobe Streets), local streets and laneways in its address, activation and management of services'.

Of relevance, it holds aspirations such as reinforcing King Street and Spencer Street as the principal east-west corridors through a taller quantum of built form (up

to eight storeys preferred on King Street and Spencer Street respectively).

- c. Public Realm Enclosure:** In determining an appropriate quantum of building heights for the future character of West Melbourne (and, in many ways, further to the urban hierarchy comment above), the Structure Plan makes use of the 'building height to street width' conventional urban design principle, which is consistent with Guideline 5.1.1 of the VUDG. It does this at Page 41 of the Structure Plan, which states the following:

'Supporting taller forms of development in appropriate locations... also helps to create well-defined and enclosed streets whilst also enabling different forms of development.... While five distinct places have been identified in West Melbourne, the interfaces between the streets that join them is crucial and has been considered in the development of the FAR and preferred maximum height controls....

As a guide, a street enclosure and definition is achieved through a building height to street width ratio of between around 1:2 (the street height is half of the street width) and 1:1 (the street height is the same as the street width). This also enables sunlight and daylight to reach into the streets and lower levels of the buildings. The maximum height to street width ratio of 1:1 will be more suitable on the primary streets of Spencer Street, King Street, Dudley Street and La Trobe [Street], where maximum height on the street edge is generally no greater than the street width (30m).... New buildings



Figure 2.4: Proposed and existing building heights in West Melbourne.

Figure 09 - Structure Plan preferred heights (Source: West Melbourne Structure Plan)

Urban Design Analysis

fronting existing or proposed open spaces should offer positive definition of the space....'

[57] Within specific respect to **'Activities, Uses and Infrastructure'** at Section 2.2, it is a fundamental objective of the Structure Plan and Amendment to facilitate a 'genuine mix of uses' within West Melbourne (insofar as there is a nexus between land use and urban design). It does this primarily by way of Objective 4 of Strategy 2.2, which seeks specifically to *'support mixed use development to facilitate a range of business and employment opportunities'* (page 52).

[58] With specific regard to **'Movement and Access'** at Section 2.3 and **'Streets and Spaces'** at Section 2.4, the Structure Plan holds the fundamental purpose of reinforcing Hawke Street as one of two 'priority walking routes' (the other being Spencer Street), and the primary north-south priority walking route between Docklands/E-Gate/North Melbourne Station (in the south) and Errol Street (in the north). It does this by way of Figure 2.16 – refer right.

[59] Objective 14 of the Structure Plan builds upon the future character aspirations of the Structure Plan for Hawke Street by seeking to 'create linear open spaces through West Melbourne to enhance connectivity with surrounding areas'. It states the following (at Page 72) regarding Hawke Street:

'Hawke Street runs through West Melbourne between Railway Place and the intersection of Errol and Victoria Streets. This alignment creates the opportunity to establish an important pedestrian and cycling route to key destinations with an extension of the street via a bridge over the railway lines to E-Gate and docklands. This link will improve access between the proposed Docklands Primary School... and the existing Errol Street Local Shops.'

[60] Critically, it seeks to improve the streetscape of Hawke Street primarily by way of a strip of linear parkland along the south of the road reserve, along with other changes (bike paths, pedestrian crossing upgrades etc.), and seeks to upgrade the intersection of Hawke Street, King Street and Victoria Street as a public open space through capital works and landscape architecture (refer page 127). As a side, I note that the Amendment seeks to give weight to this through a rezoning of this intersection from RDZ1 to PPRZ.

[61] Taken together and in summary, the Structure Plans holds the following strategic urban design implications of relevance to the subject site:

- a. A fundamental driver for development in West Melbourne is the need for flexibility in responding to the eclecticism of West Melbourne's urban morphology, and the need for site-specific contextual design. The Structure Plan expressly does this by way of the fundamental rationale and purpose of the FAR as a design mechanism as articulated at Page 38 and 39.

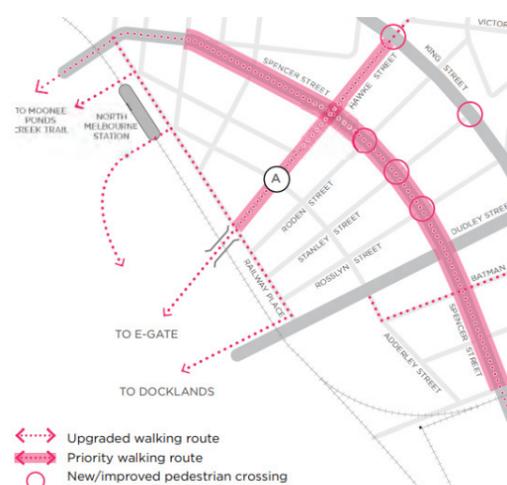


Figure 10 - Structure Plan Priority Walking Routes (Source: West Melbourne Structure Plan)

Figure 2.16: Improving walking within and around West Melbourne.

- b. The preferred future character for larger allotments on the southern side of King Street is envisioned to evolve to a preferred maximum building height of 8 storeys, where between Dudley Street (to the east) and Roden Street (to the west). The Structure Plan does this by way of Figure 2.4 of the Structure Plan and the Amendment's proposed DDO72.

- c. The Structure Plan is explicit in its adoption of public realm spatial definition in determining appropriate building heights. The Structure Plan does this at Page 41 by way of reference to building-height-to-street-widths (including street wall heights) in determining the strategic underpinning for preferred development heights - particularly in King Street and Spencer Street.

- d. The Structure Plan acknowledges the appropriateness of providing taller forms of development opposite public parks and spaces in determining an *'appropriate sense of enclosure'*. It does this again by way of Page 41 of the Structure Plan, combined with the intent behind design recommendations for precincts currently envisioned to undergo change (such as that outlined for the Spencer Precinct at Page 86)

- e. The Structure Plan seeks to reinforce Hawke Street as the principal north-south pedestrian route through West Melbourne (own emphasis added), linking Docklands/E-Gate/North Melbourne Station in the south to Errol Street in the north. It does this by way of Section 2.3 and Figure 2.16. Critically, the Structure Plan also implies a 'sequential marking' of major intersections along this route with

taller built form - such as that proposed at the intersection of Spencer Street and Hawke Street by way of Figure 2.4 (and which is encapsulated within DDO72).

- f. Finally, insofar as the Structure Plan envisions a holistic masterplan for the West Melbourne precinct, it clearly envisions the subject site continuing to host a large-format and more intensive development that juxtaposes with the grain and scale of the subject site's surrounding context and broader 'Historic Hilltops' precinct. The Structure Plan does this by way of the overarching West Melbourne Master Plan at Figure 1.4.

[62] As this specifically translates to the subject site, the urban design question becomes on of whether the subject site is capable of making a greater contribution to the strategic urban design aspirations of the Structure Plan than that currently envisioned by existing controls and the suite of proposed changes to the Planning Scheme within the Amendment. Specifically, the two key resultant urban design considerations could be summarised as:

- a. Is the subject site capable of accommodating a more intensive form of development in a **micro context**, having respect to the nuances of each of the subject site's respective interfaces?
- b. If so, would a more intensive development on site than that currently contemplated by the Amendment be appropriate from a **macro context**, having regard to the subject site's physical context and the strategic urban design aspirations of the Structure Plan?

Urban Design Analysis

5.3 Mico Context

[63] I have previously outlined characteristics of the subject site that support the notion of taller development in-principle, and I have previously outlined the nuances of each of the subject site's interfaces. Taken together, the eclectic range of public and private realm interfaces reasonably temper ultimate built form possibilities on the subject site in a micro context.

[64] In making this statement, design guidance is provided by way of the Planning Scheme – both in its current form and as it is proposed to stand by way of the Amendment. Within this, the following physical and policy realities will combine to influence the development of the subject site:

Heritage: The subject site is entirely included within the Heritage Overlay Schedule 3. Whilst I defer to the expertise of others on matters of heritage, insofar as there is a nexus between heritage and urban design it is a reasonable assumption that valued heritage fabric on site will be retained. Refer below. For the purpose of this exercise, it is assumed that all existing heritage fabric on site is retained, and that a form of development is possible at the rear of properties as per Clause 22.05 of the Planning Scheme.

Visual Bulk: The subject site is in abuttal to a number of residential properties that have a number of sensitivities, including habitable room windows and Ground Floor POS areas. They are also afforded a level of amenity protection by way of their GRZ zoning. Therefore, for the purpose of this exercise, it is assumed that Standard B17 of Clause 55.04-1 is a driving force behind appropriate built form interfaces to adjoining sensitivities. Refer below.

Overshadowing: The subject site is located to the north of a number of residentially-zoned sensitivities to the south and east, which again are afforded a level of amenity protection by way of Standard B21 of Clause 55.04-5. Refer below. It is assumed that any development on site would be required to achieve full compliance with Standard B21 in relation to these sensitivities.

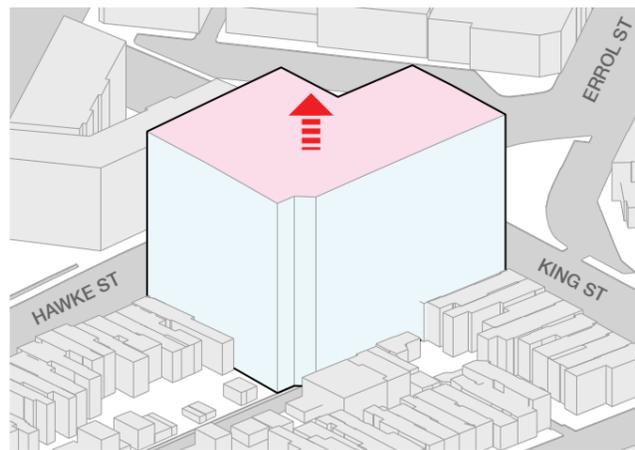


Figure 11a - Extrusion

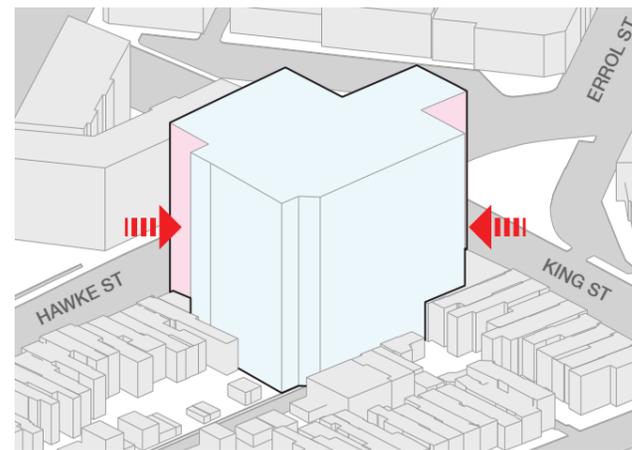


Figure 11b - Heritage

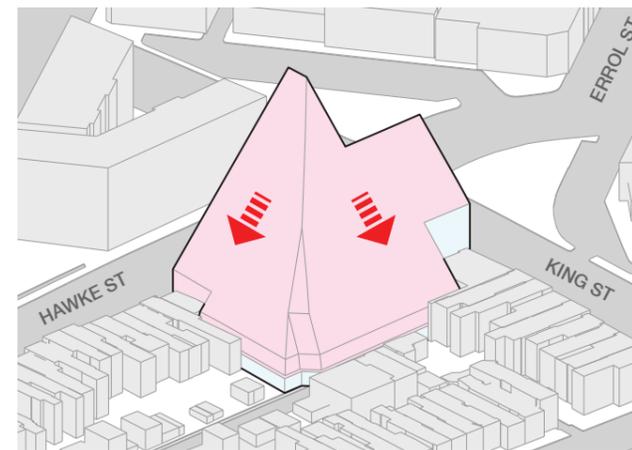


Figure 11c - Visual Bulk

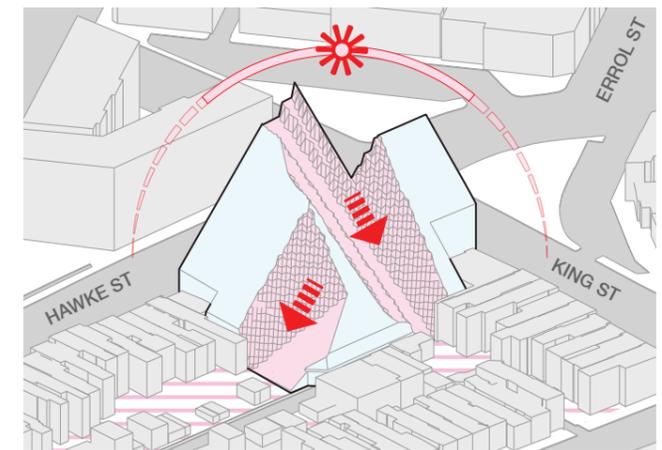


Figure 11d - POS Equinox Overshadowing

Urban Design Analysis

Street Setbacks: The existing built form condition of 613-617 King Street introduces an urban character to both King Street and Hawke Street comprised of built form built sheer to the public realm. The existing planning permit on site also affirms the appropriateness of robust streetbacks (circa 1.7m) - at least as it relates to 605-609 King Street. Therefore, it is assumed that on-boundary construction to both King Street and Hawke Street is appropriate. Refer below.

Equitable Development: 613-617 King Street is a large corner allotment with multiple aspects, and which has significant development potential in-principle. In the same way as aspects of the subject site's physical context support the notion of taller development on site, so too do they for 613-617 King Street. It is assumed that any development of the subject site will be required to anticipate a comparable scale of form on this property to that ultimately achievable on the subject site. Refer below.

[65] Based on this, if it can be assumed that the above drivers are the sole drivers for a future development on site, the figure to the left clearly shows that a taller form of development is possible on site whilst still maintaining a usable floorplate dimension for a diverse range of uses. This affirms earlier observations made regarding the appropriateness of the subject site for a more intensive form of development in-principle, based solely on physical properties.

of this scale (as a minimum), Figure 11g below 'caps' the resultant envelope to a maximum of six storeys above NGL at the centre of the subject site's frontage to King Street (ie. 19m above footpath NGL). Note that this is not to say that the site is not capable of taller height subject to design, based on micro contextual considerations.

[66] However, I have also been explicitly instructed to consider the appropriateness of the landowner's current design intentions for the subject site, comprising six storeys of residential uses. Therefore, as I have been instructed to the urban design merits

[67] Therefore, based on the above, I consider that the subject site is readily capable of accommodating a form of development of at least six storeys in scale, based on the nuances of each of the subject site's respective interfaces at a micro scale.

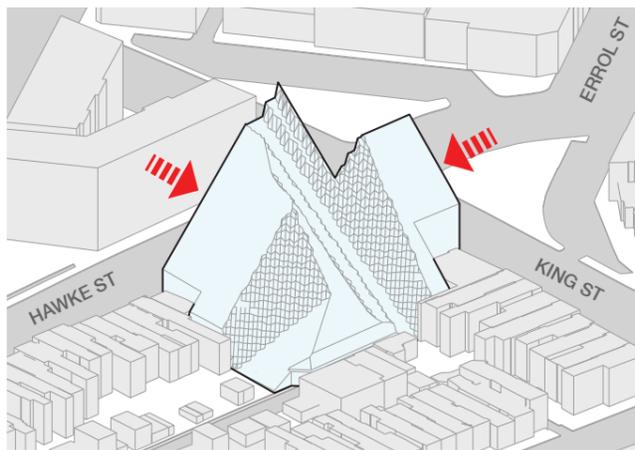


Figure 11e - Street Setbacks

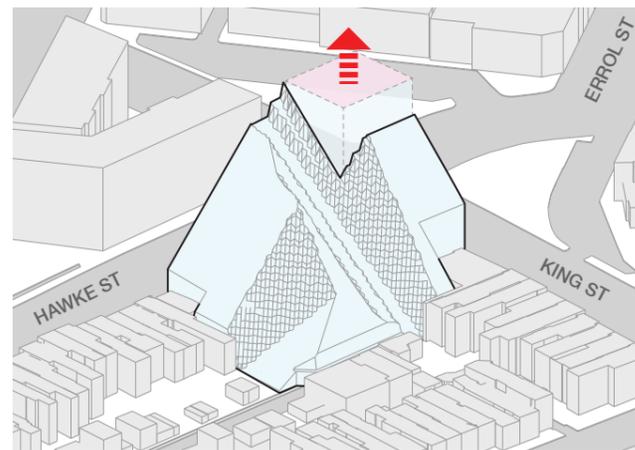


Figure 11f - Equitable Development

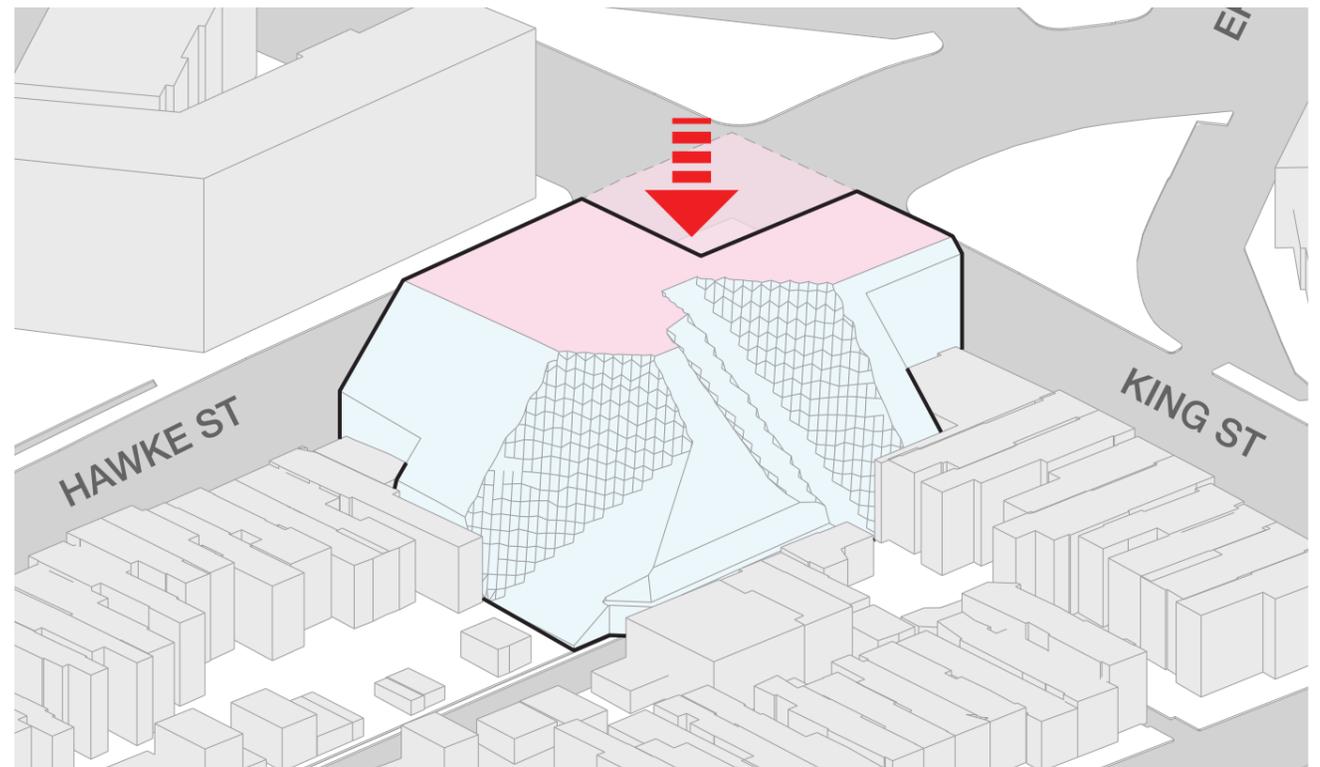


Figure 11g - Six Storey Indicative Height Cap

Urban Design Analysis

5.4 Macro Context

[68] The images that follow transfer the earlier six storey envelope on-site into the subject site's broader existing West Melbourne context (in light blue). It does this in relation to approved envelopes (light green) and the future character envelope aspirations of the Amendment's various DDOs – including DDO33 (dark blue), DDO72 (yellow), DDO29 (dark green) and DDO28 (red).

[69] It also simulates the envelope aspirations of existing planning controls, such as Errol Street's DDO34 (purple) and North/West Melbourne's existing DDO32 (orange). Refer to Appendix B for the specific methodology used in constructing the simulation (including data sources and limitations).

[70] As the subject site interfaces to both King Street and Hawke Street (which both differ in terms of existing physical context and future character aspirations of the Structure Plan), I have structured my urban design assessment accordingly.

King Street Interface

[71] Views A-D (opposite) simulate a six storey envelope on-site in relation to the subject site's broader King Street streetscape. They do this from the following vantage points:

- **View A:** An easterly oblique view from King Street
- **View B:** A westerly oblique view, from the intersection of Curzon Street and King Street
- **View C:** A longer range 'vista terminus' view from the centre of Errol Street, north of the site
- **View D:** A closer-range view from the north-eastern intersection of Victoria Street and Errol Street, north of the subject site.

[72] My principal observations regarding the nuances of this interface are as follows:

- Whilst the Structure Plan places the subject site in the 'Historic Hilltops' precinct, the reality is that this is an arbitrary designation that dismisses the physical experience of King Street as a streetscape corridor comprised of a linear 'sequence of experiences'. The existing character of this corridor (where between the subject site and the Hoddle Grid) is not one that is comprised predominantly of fine-grained low-scale heritage streetscapes, but in reality is one that is vice versa; it is predominantly comprised of larger lots that hosts a coarser grain of larger format built form (warehouses, showrooms, remnant industry etc.).

Effectively, the subject site's prevailing streetscape condition does not form an 'intrusion' into an otherwise consistent fine-grained low-scale heritage streetscape within King Street, but it is the fine-grained low-scale heritage condition of King Street (between Hawke Street and Roden Street) that forms an uncharacteristic protrusion into a generally coarse-grain and robust commercial streetscape.

- In terms of a pedestrian experience of the subject site in transient oblique views along King Street, any taller development of the subject site would realistically insert itself between existing taller form to the west of the subject site (6 storeys at 643 King Street) and taller development to the east (eight storey future character aspirations of the Structure Plan/DDO72 within King Street, east of Roden Street). Both realities would temper the impact of taller development on site in oblique views from King Street.

- Further to the above, I note that King Street's road alignment adopts a curvilinear trajectory where between Dudley Street (in the south) and Curzon Street (in the north). It is therefore not possible to perceive King Street's streetscape in its entirety in prevailing pedestrian viewsheds, which is a consideration that would work to reduce the impact of taller built form on site within King Street.

- The subject site is located at the confluence of a number of locally significant roads, including King Street, Victoria Street, Errol Street and Hawke Street. It is also located directly opposite existing open space (Hawke Street Reserve, proposed to be upgraded within the Structure Plan) and forms part of the southern vista terminus of the Errol Street Activity Centre. All are considerations that support the notion of taller building heights in-principle (particularly within the context of Objective 5.1.1 of the VUDG), and are considerations that assist in distinguishing the subject site as unique within the balance of the existing King Street streetscape.

[73] Within this context, I make the following urban design observations:

- A six storey redevelopment of the subject site will respond to the scale of existing built form immediately west. By respond to this aspect of existing context, it will achieve built form cohesion in closer-range oblique views from King Street. Refer to View B and View D. This is consistent with the underpinning intent of the Structure Plan that seeks contextually responsive design that responds to specific site considerations.

- As the subject site's portion of King Street is comprised of a predominantly coarser-grain subdivision pattern (where between the subject site and the Hoddle Grid), a six storey redevelopment of the subject site will simply read as consistent with the future character aspirations of the Structure Plan/Amendment for other comparable larger sites within King Street. Refer to View A and View B. By doing so, it will achieve built form consistency between sites with comparable physical qualities in King Street's linear sequence of experiences, and – in doing so – reinforce the spatial definition ambitions and future character aspirations of DDO72 for King Street.

- A six storey redevelopment of the subject site will provide far greater spatial definition to abutting parkland opposite the subject site. Refer to View D. This is directly consistent with the design aspirations of the Structure Plan insofar as it expressly seeks for greater spatial definition of public spaces. It will also do this without overshadowing the Hawke Street Reserve, which is consistent with the Structure Plan and Clause 22.02.

- Finally, a six storey redevelopment of the subject site will not compete for visual primacy with the roof form and clock tower of the North Melbourne Town Hall. Refer to View C. Instead, it will form a detached backdrop to the Town Hall in longer range northerly views from Errol Street. It will also not obscure any prevailing or important pedestrian viewline from south of the subject site. This is consistent Clause 21.16-6 of the Amendment, and consistent with Guideline 5.1.1(b) of the VUDG.

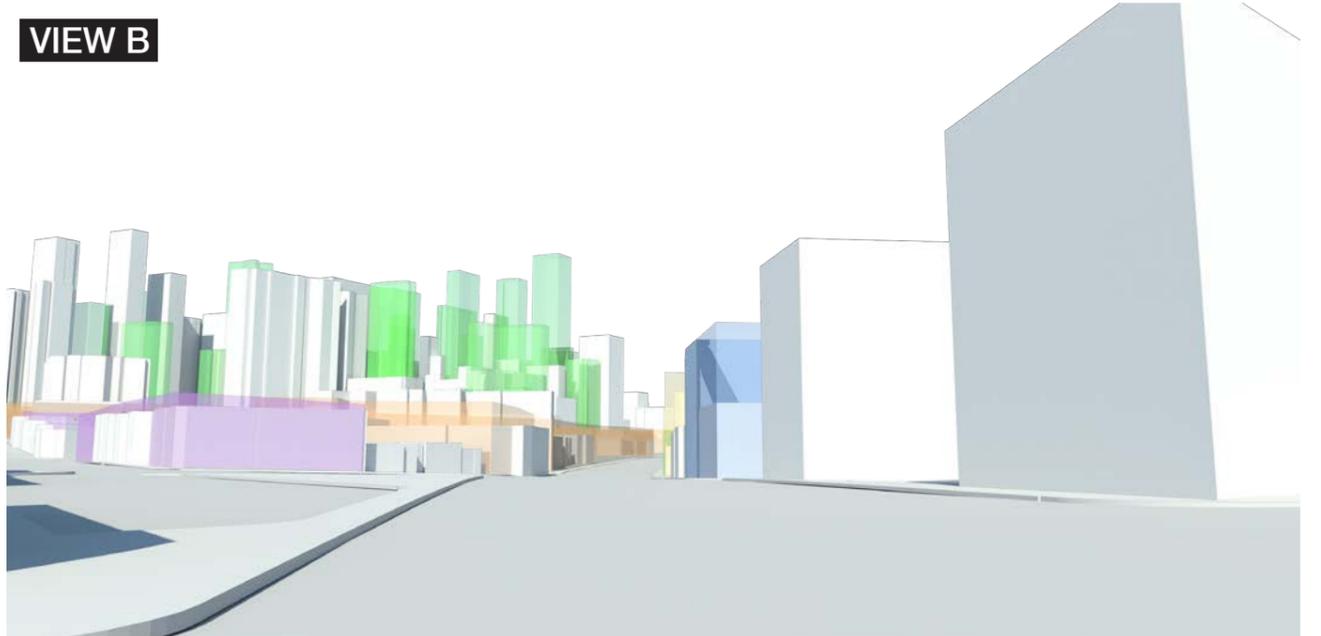
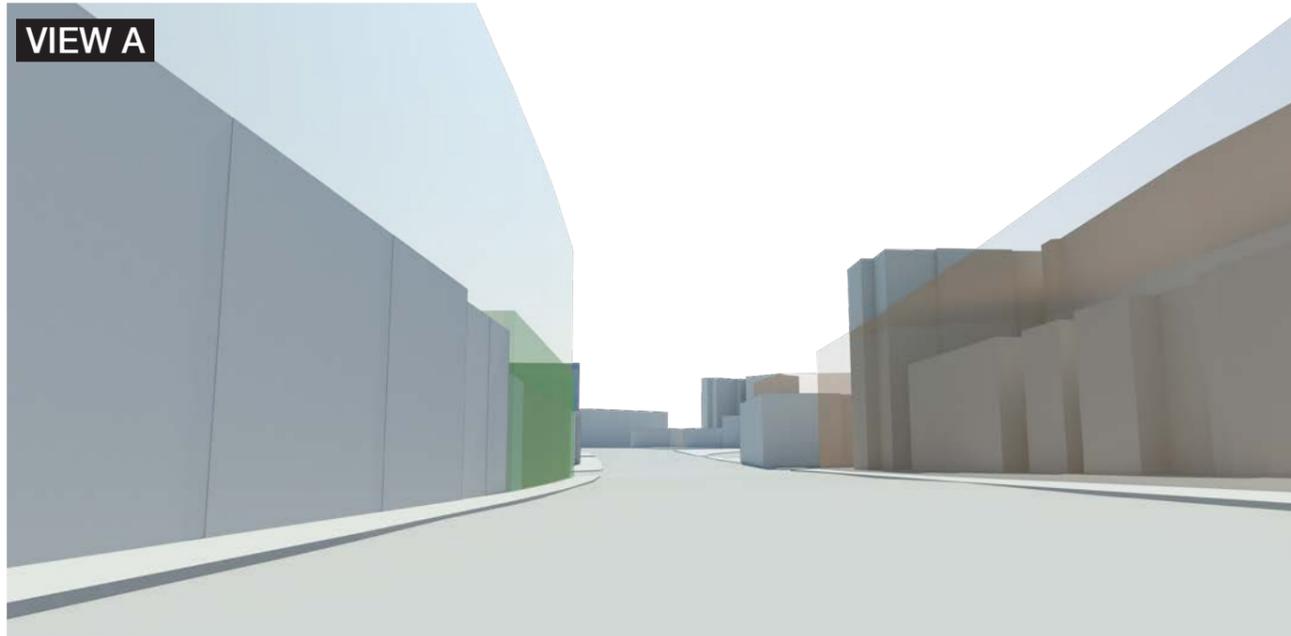


Figure 12a - King Street view, from east of site

Figure 12b - King Street view, from west of site

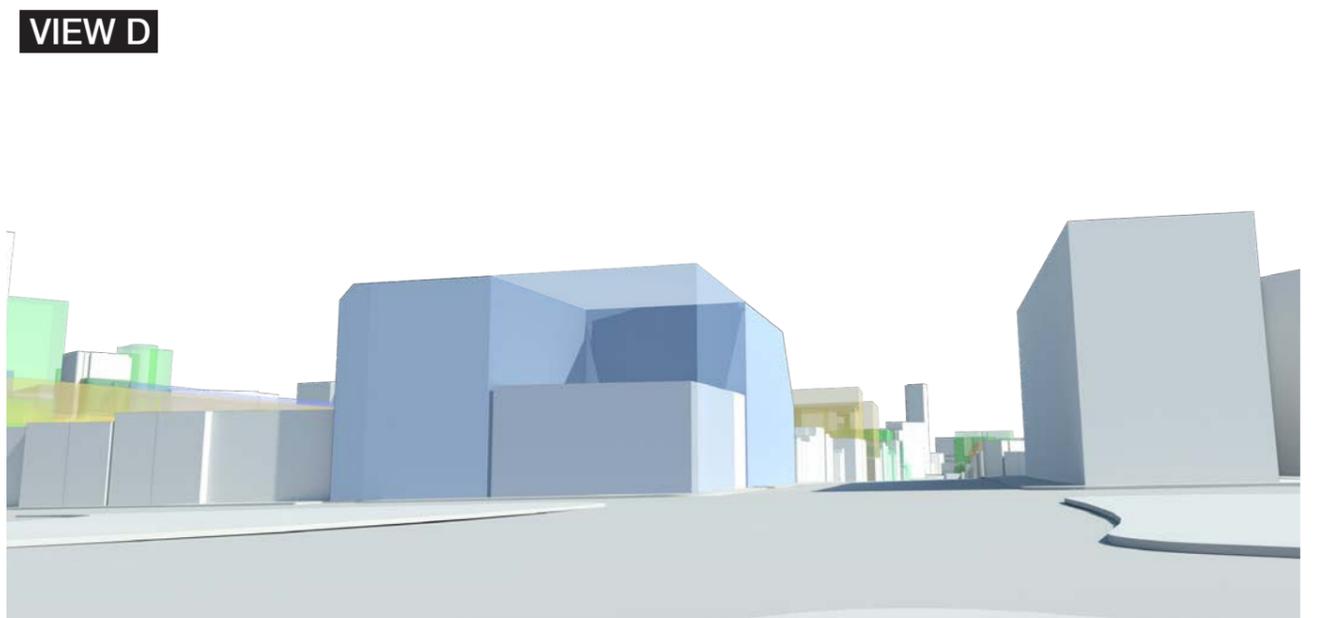
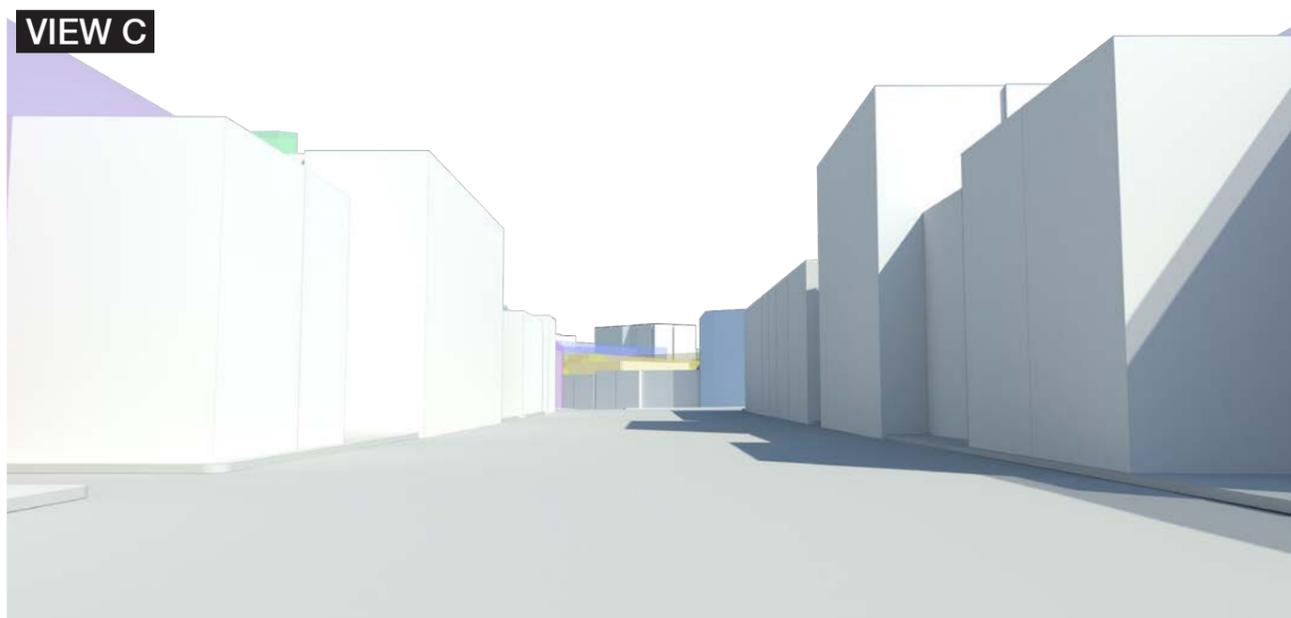


Figure 12c - Errol Street 'terminus' view

Figure 12d - 'Close range' view from north of site

Urban Design Analysis

Hawke Street Interface

[74] Views E-H (opposite) simulate a six storey envelope on-site in relation to the subject site's broader Hawke Street streetscape. They do this from the following vantage points:

- **View E:** A closer-range view from the intersection of Hawke Street and Spencer Street, south of the subject site
- **View F:** A longer-range view from Hawke Street south of the subject site
- **View G:** A closer-range view from Curzon Street, west of the subject site
- **View H:** A longer-range view from Jones Place (to the rear of the subject site)

[75] My principal observations regarding the nuances of this interface are as follows:

- The existing character of Hawke Street is far more low-scale and fine-grained than that of King Street (at least where in proximity to the subject site), with the subject site forming part of a relatively limited number of larger sites that are generally confined to the junction of Hawke Street's major intersections (such as Spencer Street and King Street) and which host robust forms of larger existing development (such as that which exists at 576 Spencer Street [the 'Radio Parts' site] and at 643 King Street).
- The broader topography of Hawke Street gently rises toward the subject site, peaking close to the intersection of Curzon Street and Victoria Street (to the west of the subject site). Any development of the subject site would therefore be more prominent in upslope views from further

south within Hawke Street, which is a reality that is demonstrated the existing condition of the 643 King Street where visible in oblique views from the eastern Hawke Street footpath.

- The existing condition of Hawke Street benefits from excellent solar access. Given the location of the subject site in relation to Hawke Street, any development of the subject site would need to be cognisant of public realm overshadowing.
- There is a natural desire line between North Melbourne Station (toward the south of Hawke Street) and the Errol Street Activity Centre/ tram services (toward the north), which will only strengthen in the event that the Structure Plan's aspirations of greater connectivity to Docklands and E-Gate are realised. Guideline 2.1.1(f) of the VUDG reinforces a universal urban design principle that taller built form can play a role in reinforcing urban legibility and wayfinding in pedestrian movement networks in contexts such as this.
- In the same manner in which the subject site is located directly opposite existing open space within King Street, so too is the subject site located directly opposite existing open space immediately west on Hawke Street, noting that the subject site also forms part of the eastern vista terminus along Curzon Street further beyond. Both are considerations that again support the notion of taller building height on site in-principle (particularly within the context of Objective 5.1.1 of the VUDG), and are considerations that assist in distinguishing the subject site as unique within the balance of the existing Hawke Street streetscape.

[76] Within this context, I make the following urban design observations:

- A six storey development on site will again respond to the scale of existing built form immediately west of the subject site at 643 King Street. In doing so, it will reinforce the scale of existing built form at the northern terminus of Hawke Street, in a manner consistent with the underpinning intent of the Structure Plan for contextually responsive design.
- In longer-range southerly views from Hawke Street, a six storey development of the subject site will largely be tempered by the future character aspirations of the Structure Plan and DDO72 insofar as they articulate a preferred future character of eight storeys at the intersection of Hawke Street and Spencer Street (and six storeys behind). At full development, the metric of height simulated on-site will largely be 'read' as a backdrop to taller development within the foreground views from Hawke Street, which will result in greater built form consistency between larger sites within Hawke Street with comparable physical qualities.
- With respect to the Structure Plan's future character aspiration for Hawke Street to evolve as the principal north-south pedestrian priority street of West Melbourne, the notion of taller built form on the subject site will contribute to the existing (and envisioned) pattern of taller built form demarcating major intersections along the Hawke Street linear movement network. It will result in a 'linear sequence' of taller development in a manner that will directly assist in wayfinding between southerly anchor points of the Hawke Street pedestrian priority street (ie. Docklands/E-Gate/North Melbourne Station) and northerly anchor points (ie. Errol Street Activity Centre/tram services/future Arden Station). This is consistent with Section 2.3 of the Structure Plan and Guideline 2.1.1(f) of the VUDG.

- With respect to the Structure Plan and Clause 22.02 combined ambition to preserve reasonable solar access to public spaces, a six storey development on site will combine with the orientation of Hawke Street to avoid overshadowing of the Hawke Street public realm from 10.28am onwards at the Equinox (refer to Appendix B). This is consistent with both the Structure Plan and Clause 22.02.
- Finally, a six storey redevelopment of the subject site will again provide greater spatial definition to the Hawke Street public realm and existing parkland opposite the subject site. Whilst the Structure Plan clearly articulates a preference for spatial definition to be defined by a 1:1 or 2:1 street-width-to-building-height ratio, I note that a six storey form on site (19m) will actually be less than the quantum of spatial definition envisioned, and represent an outcome that is closer to 0.7:1 (to the Hawke Street road reserve [30m wide]) and 0.25:1 (relative to the opposing Hawke Street park, including opposite site of Curzon Street [80m wide]). Whilst this suggests that the breadth and openness of the subject site's immediately-adjointing public realm context can accommodate taller form, it nonetheless contributes toward the type of greater spatial definition envisioned by Guideline 2.2.3 of the VUDG and the design aspirations of the Structure Plan in-principle.

[77] Therefore, taken together, I consider taller development on site to be appropriate in a macro context.

[78] I consider the notion of taller development to be more consistent with the underpinning strategic design aspirations of the Structure Plan compared to the outcome currently envisioned by the Amendment for the subject site.

Urban Design Analysis

VIEW E

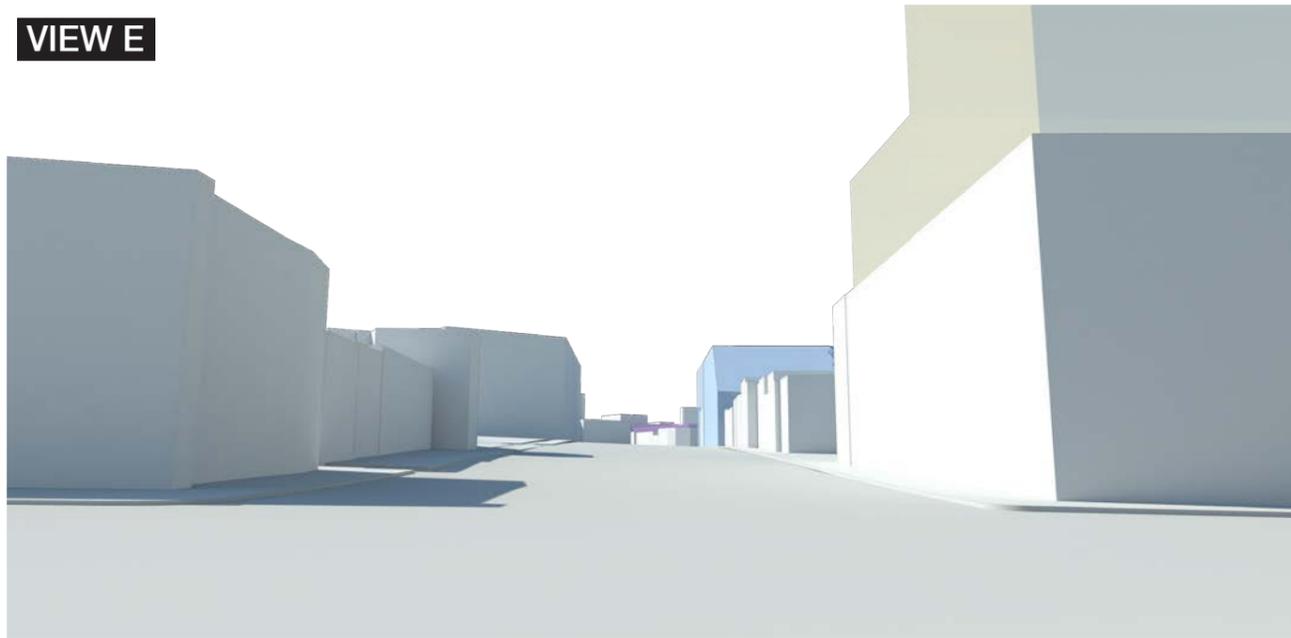


Figure 13a - Hawke Street view, from Spencer Street

VIEW F



Figure 13b - Hawke Street view, from Adderley

VIEW G

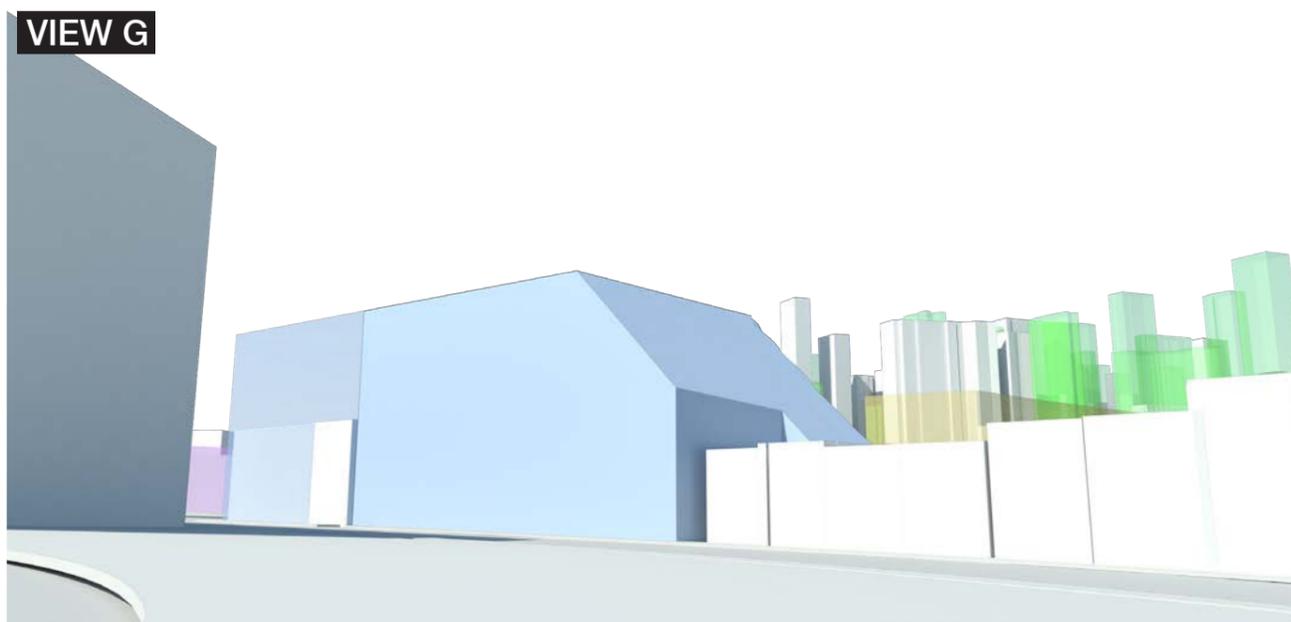


Figure 13c - Close range view from west of site (Curzon Street)

VIEW H

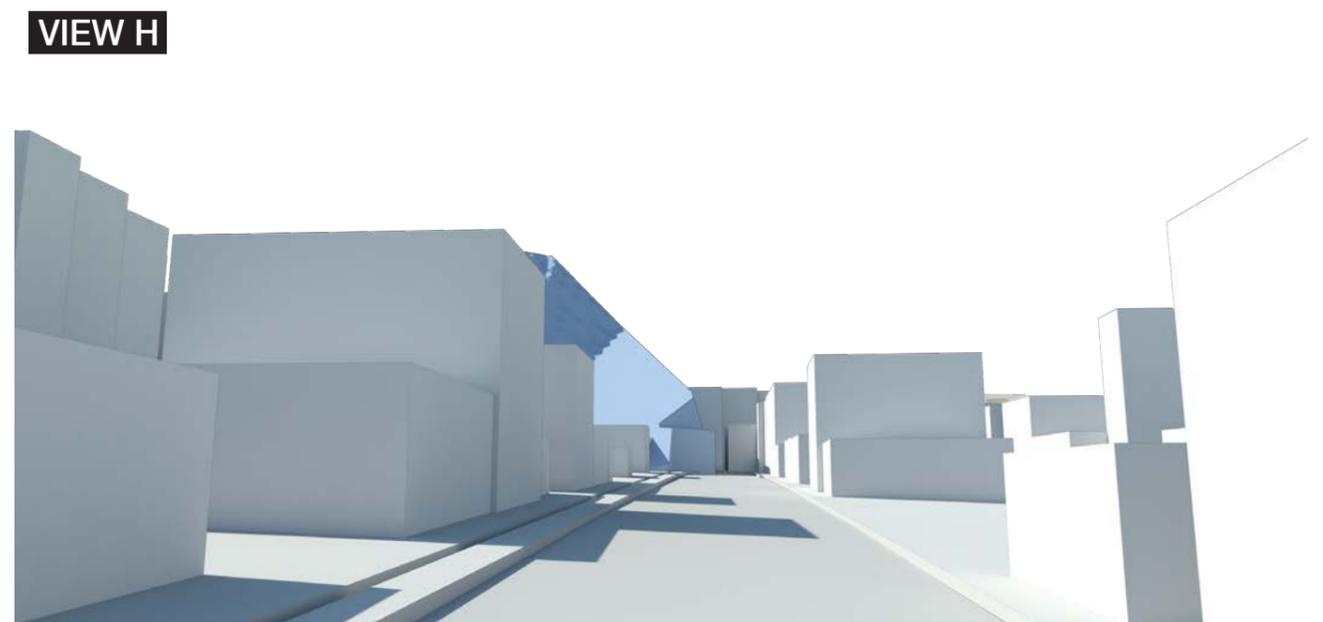


Figure 13d - View from Jones Place

Urban Design Analysis

5.5 Recommendations

- [80] The preceding analysis confirms that the subject site has a number of physical qualities that support the notion of taller development in-principle. It confirms that a redevelopment of the subject site to a magnitude of six storeys is readily able to be accommodated on-site without impacting upon the existing or preferred future character of each of the subject site's corresponding streetscapes.
- [81] It does not confirm that a building height of six storeys would be the maximum building height able to be achieved on site.
- [82] However, whilst the Structure Plan and Amendment clearly aspire to facilitate contextually responsive design and a preferred future character of taller built form on larger lots within both King Street and Hawke Street, it eschews applying the same logic and same mandate for contextually-responsive design to the subject site. It eschews this in favour of pursuing a 'top down' birdseye approach to precinct planning, rather than contemplating the design merits of sites that are clearly distinct from the precinct in which they are proposed to be located.
- [83] Section 2.1 of the Structure Plan states the following:
- '.. There is a wide assortment of different sized sites, building typologies and heritage assets across West Melbourne which adds significantly to the character of the area and its potential to develop into a place with a diversity of types of buildings and uses. However some of the existing uniform (or 'blanket') height controls fail to respond to this diversity and character' (page 36)*
- [84] Yet the Amendment's intended retention of the subject site's GRZ zoning is a direct manifestation of this, as retaining the GRZ for the subject site will constrain the clear ability of the subject site to make a more meaningful contribution to the strategic intent of the Structure Plan.
- [85] Therefore, insofar as the nexus between urban design and land use zoning is concerned, I recommend including a rezoning of the subject site as part of the suite of the Amendment's changes to the Planning Scheme to a suitable zone capable of facilitating taller forms of residential development on site than that which is currently permissible under the site's existing GRZ. Doing so would:
- Perpetuate the Structure Plan's clear aspirations for taller development on larger sites in both King Street and Spencer Street (including at the intersection of King Street and Hawke Street)
 - Provide for greater degrees of spatial definition (including spatial definition of existing and proposed parks directly opposite the subject site in both King Street and Hawke Street) as per the Structure Plan's clear aspiration for appropriate spatial definition
 - Build upon the fundamental intent of the Structure Plan's use of the FAR as a design mechanism that allows for contextually-responsive design within the context of the eclecticism of the existing West Melbourne urban morphology (such as allowing for a built form response to the scale of immediately surrounding built form)
 - Be consistent with the intent of the Structure Plan to position Hawke Street as the principal north-south pedestrian priority street of West Melbourne, through greater urban legibility and wayfinding consisting of a linear sequence of taller development that demarcates key intersections.
- [86] Whilst I defer to the expertise on others on the most-appropriate VPP tool to facilitate this, there is a certain logic from an urban design perspective in applying the Mixed Use Zone for all aspects of the subject site that do not host heritage fabric. By logic, the same zone would also apply to 613-617 King Street in abuttal to the subject site, given it demonstrates many of the same attributes as the subject site.
- [87] I make this recommendation based on the following:
- The prevailing zone of King Street is currently the Mixed Use Zone (noting that it remains to be seen by this Panel whether the Amendment's SUZ is an appropriate planning outcome).
 - Clause 32.07-10 of the MUZ will continue to provide for amenity protection of abutting GRZ-zoned sensitivities, regardless of ultimate building height or use on site.
 - Insofar as there is a nexus between land use and urban design, the MUZ will allow for a spectrum of land uses capable of perpetuating Theme 2.2 of the Structure Plan.
 - Finally, MUZ Parent Clause eschews specifying a mandatory height control, which will allow for a design and merits-based approach to achieving contextually-responsive taller built form on site.
- [88] Therefore, I recommend updating the Amendment to rezone the following properties to the MUZ:
- 605-609 King Street, West Melbourne
 - 613-617 King Street, West Melbourne
 - 13-27 Hawke Street, West Melbourne

Conclusion

6

[89] In summary, I support the overarching strategic intent of the Amendment and Structure Plan to provide greater urban design certainty to the broader West Melbourne precinct in-principle.

[90] However, I have significant concerns regarding the Amendment and Structure Plan's rigid precinct-based approach to urban design, and the consequent implications of this for the future of the subject site. I am also challenged by the disconnect between the Structure Plan's aspirations for context-responsive design and the Amendment's retention of a blanket, uniform mandatory height control for the subject site.

[91] I have therefore made recommendations regarding the Amendment's intended suite of changes to the Melbourne Planning Scheme (the 'Planning Scheme') as it relates to the subject site. Refer to Section 5.0 of this statement.

Name and Address

Brodie George Blades
(Grad Dip UrbanDes Plan, BApp Sci [Planning], MPIA)
Associate Director (Urban Design)
SJB Urban Pty Ltd
Level 5, 18 Oliver Lane
Melbourne VIC 3000

Qualifications and Experience

- Graduate Diploma Urban Design and Planning (2014) – The University of Melbourne (Melbourne School of Design [MSD]);
- Bachelor of Applied Science (Planning) w/ First Class Honours (2011) – RMIT University, Melbourne;
- Full member of the Victorian Planning and Environmental Law Association (VPELA) – 2013-current; and
- Full member of the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) – 2010-current.

2018-present: Associate Director (Urban Design), SJB Urban
2015-2018: Associate Urban Designer (since 2016), David Lock Associates
2012-2014: Town Planner, Sweett (Australia) Pty. Ltd.
2011: Town Planner, City of Melbourne
2009-2010: Assistant Placemaker, Maribyrnong City Council

Area of Expertise

My area of expertise is in urban design, derived from over eight years' professional experience in private sector urban design consulting and public sector urban planning - including employment at various municipal bodies, planning consultancies and urban design studios in Australia. I have practiced exclusively in the field of urban design since 2014. In addition to my Australian experience, I have previously been exposed to international urban design projects in the United Kingdom and have undertaken paid urban design and planning research assignments in the United States.

Expertise to Prepare this Report

I have led or been involved in the design and assessment of numerous urban design projects in Victoria. These have included (but are not limited to):

- The Rye Urban Design Guidelines, Mornington Peninsula, Victoria;
- The Former Amcor Paper Mill Precinct New Town Centre Design Review, Alphington, Victoria;
- The Wangaratta Hospital Health Precinct Masterplan, Wangaratta, Victoria;
- The Ballarat Hospital Health Precinct Masterplan, Ballarat, Victoria;
- The LaTrobe University Campus Masterplan, Preston, Victoria;
- The Showers Street Built Form Analysis and Urban Design Guidelines, Preston, Victoria;
- Sunbury Road Mixed Use Estate Master Plan and Development Plan, Sunbury, Victoria;
- The Richmond Maltings/Nylex Precinct Masterplanned Development, Cremorne, Victoria;
- The Tally-Ho Business Park Development Plan and Urban Design Guidelines, Forest Hill, Victoria;
- Botanica Springs Master Plan and Development Plan, Brookfield, Victoria;
- The Springvale Civic Hall Master Plan, Springvale, Victoria;
- Numerous urban design referral reviews on behalf of a number of metropolitan and regional Victorian municipalities, including (but not limited to) City of Yarra, City of Ballarat, Bayside City Council, Manningham City Council, Darebin City Council and Banyule City Council.

In addition, I have provided urban design expert evidence before the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) and Planning Panels Victoria (PPV) for a large number of complex matters – including multiple central-city Melbourne matters on behalf of the Victorian Minister for Planning.

I have been assisted in the preparation of this statement by Nicolas Chahin (Urban Designer) and Campbell Gullock (Assistant Urban Designer).

Instructions Which Define the Scope of this Report

I am engaged by Miami Hotel Melbourne and have received written instructions from Echelon Planning, including various documents relating to the proposal.

Facts, Matters and Assumptions Relied Upon

I have relied upon an inspection of the subject site and surrounding area, and a review of planning controls and policies of the existing Melbourne Planning Scheme and proposed Planning Scheme Amendment with respect to the subject site and surrounding area.

Documents Taken Into Account

- The Melbourne Planning Scheme, most notably Clause 10-19, Clause 20-23, Clause 32.08 and Clause 42.01;
- The West Melbourne Structure Plan (2018) endorsed by the Future Melbourne Committee in February 2018;
- The exhibited documentation for Melbourne Amendment C309, most notably the Explanatory Report and Clause 21-17;
- The submission made by Echelon Planning on behalf of Miami Hotel Melbourne in relation to West Melbourne Structure Plan;
- The submission made by Echelon Planning on behalf of Miami Hotel Melbourne in relation to Amendment C309;
- The Development Plans for TP-2017-862 endorsed on 30 April 2018;
- The relevant requirements of Planning Panels Victoria, most notable the Guide to Expert Evidence (2019);
- Various State Government documents, most notably the Victorian Urban Design Guidelines (2017).

Summary of Opinions

Refer to the conclusion of this statement (Section 6.0).

Provisional Opinions

There are no provisional opinions in this report.

Questions Outside My Area of Expertise, Incomplete or Inaccurate Aspects of the Report

To the best of my knowledge, this report is complete and accurate. This report does not address questions outside my area of expertise. All aspects of the nexus between urban design and heritage have been clearly outlined within this evidence.

Other

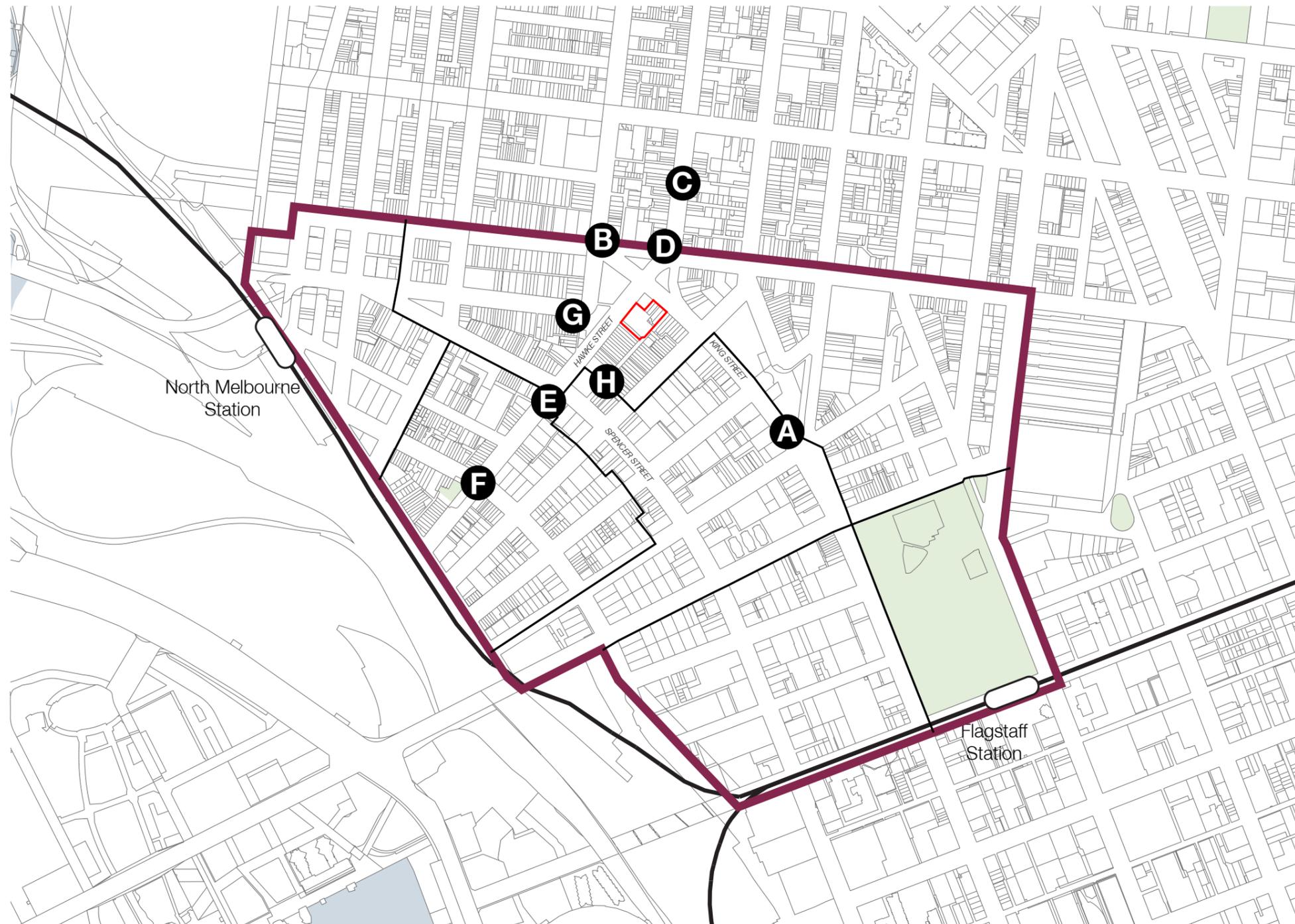
I have made all inquiries I believe to be reasonable, desirable and appropriate and confirm that no matters of significance which I regard as relevant to my knowledge have been withheld from the



Brodie Blades

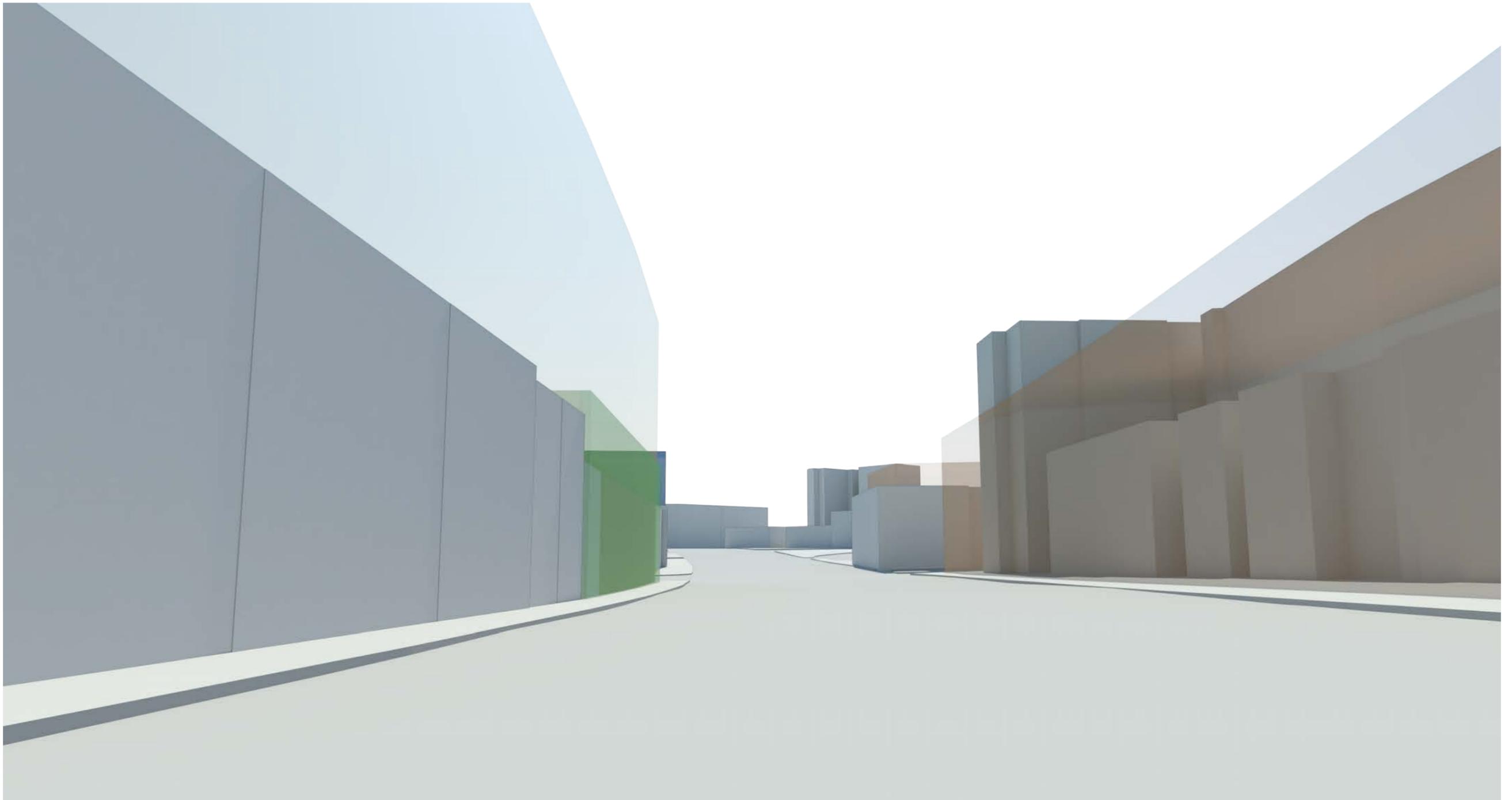
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View Location Plan

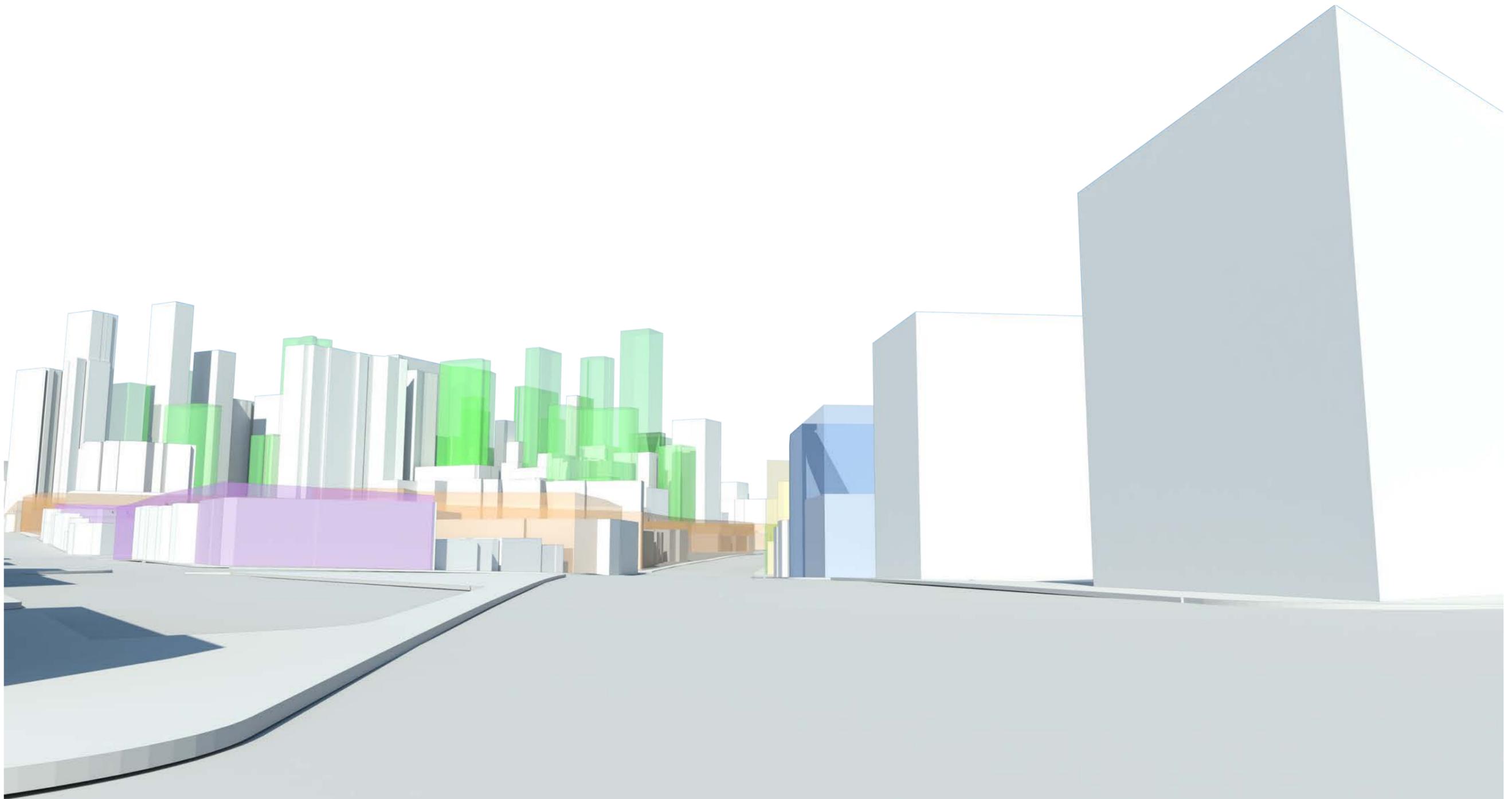


- **View A:** An easterly oblique view from King Street
- **View B:** A westerly oblique view, from the intersection of Curzon Street and King Street
- **View C:** A longer range 'vista terminus' view from the centre of Errol Street, north of the site
- **View D:** A closer-range view from the north-eastern intersection of Victoria Street and Errol Street, north of the subject site
- **View E:** A closer-range view from the intersection of Hawke Street and Spencer Street, south of the subject site
- **View F:** A longer-range view from Hawke Street south of the subject site
- **View G:** A closer-range view from Curzon Street, west of the subject site
- **View H:** A longer-range view from Jones Place (to the rear of the subject site)

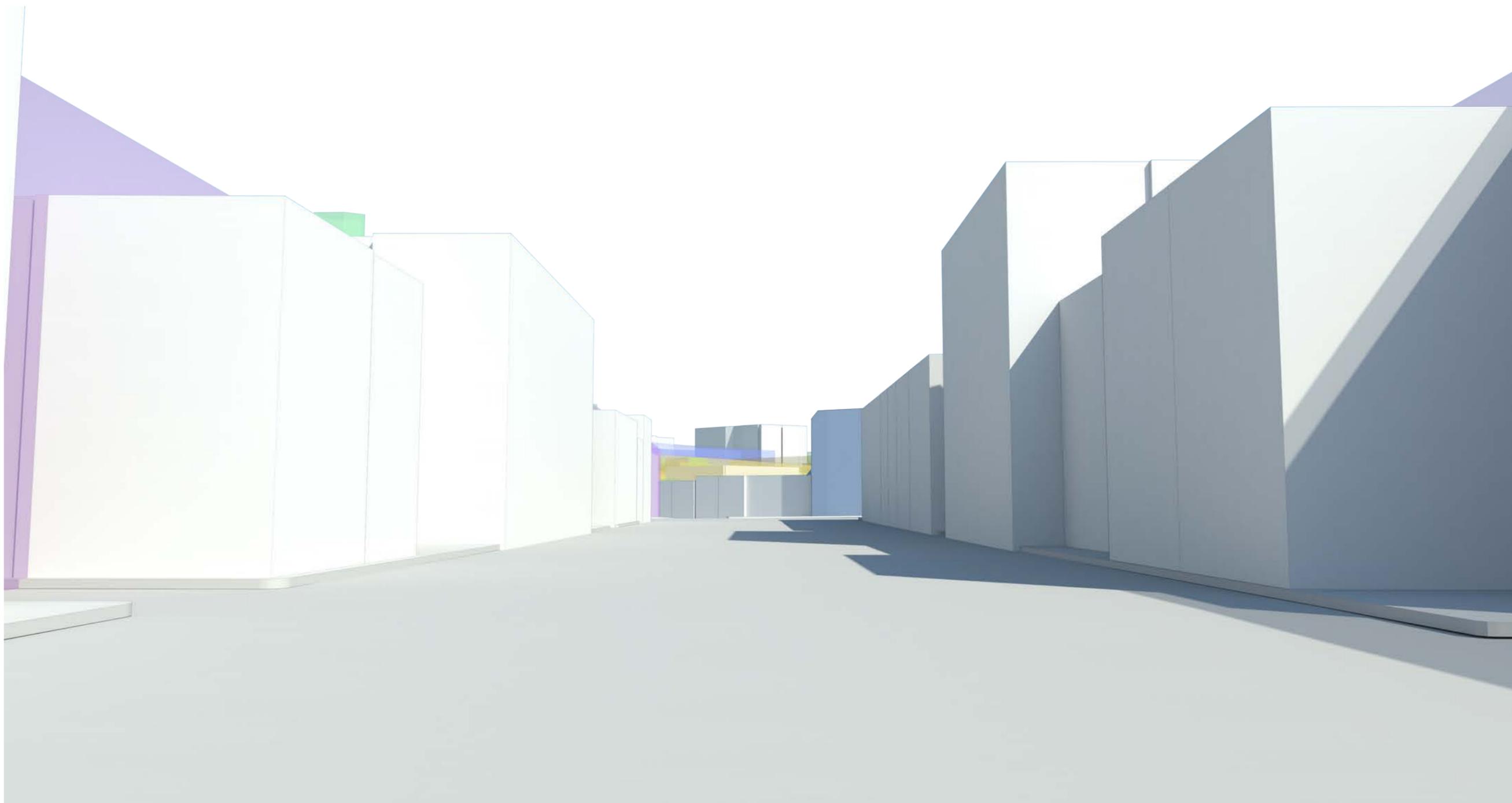
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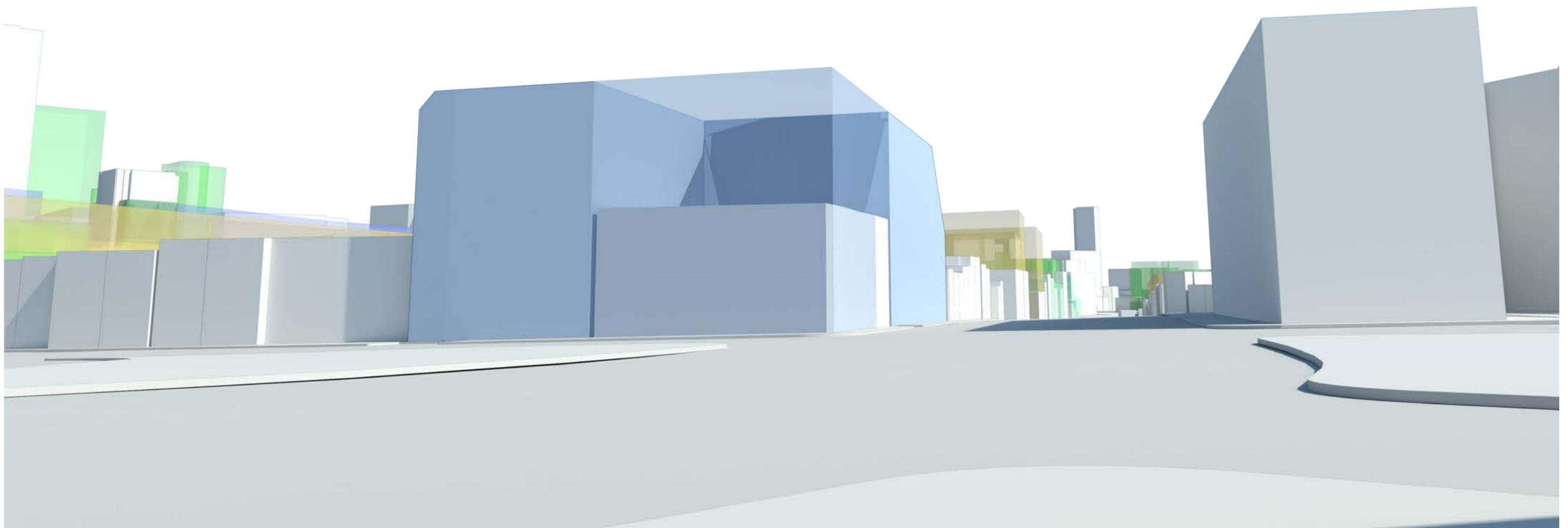
View B



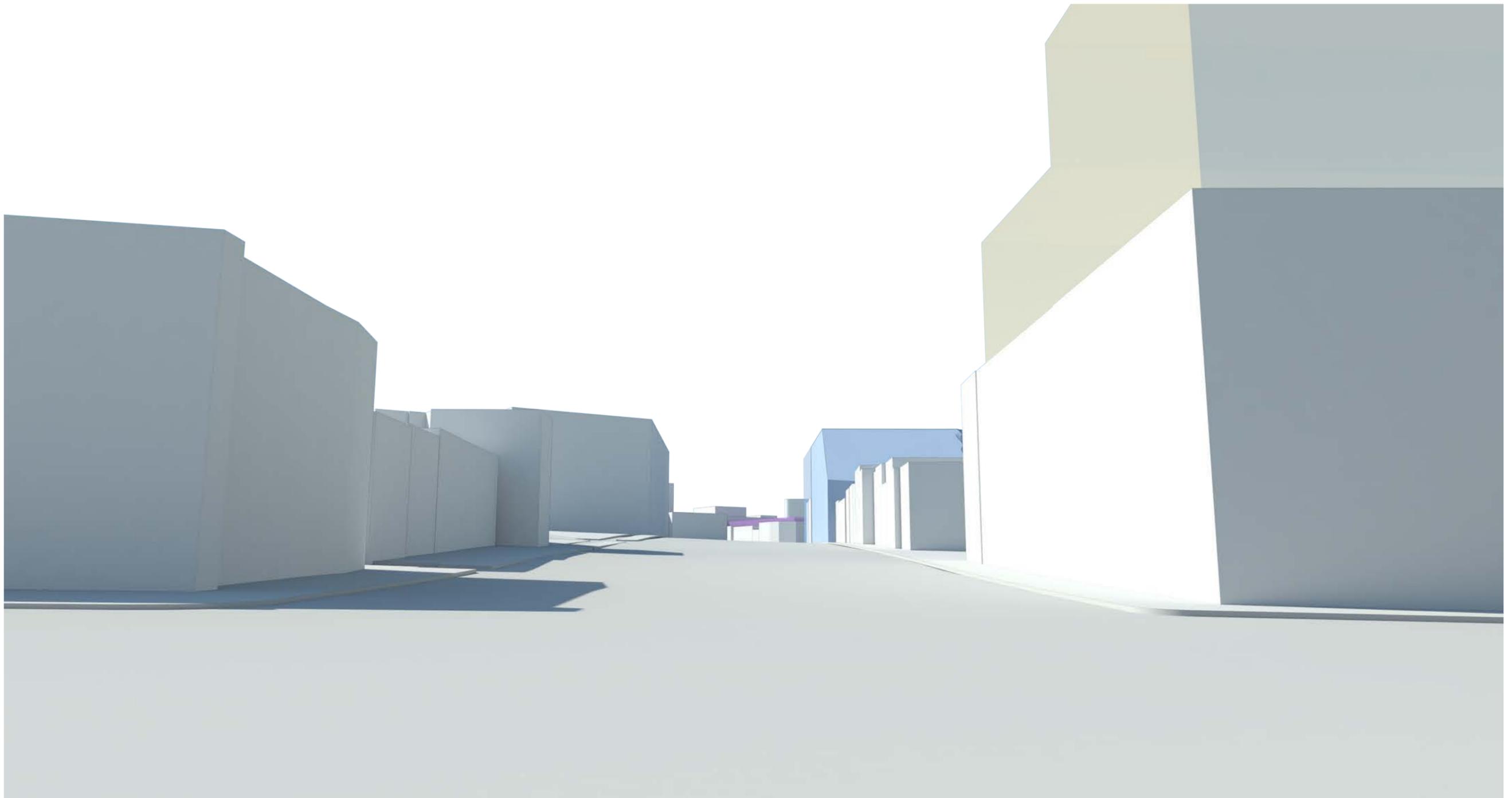
View C



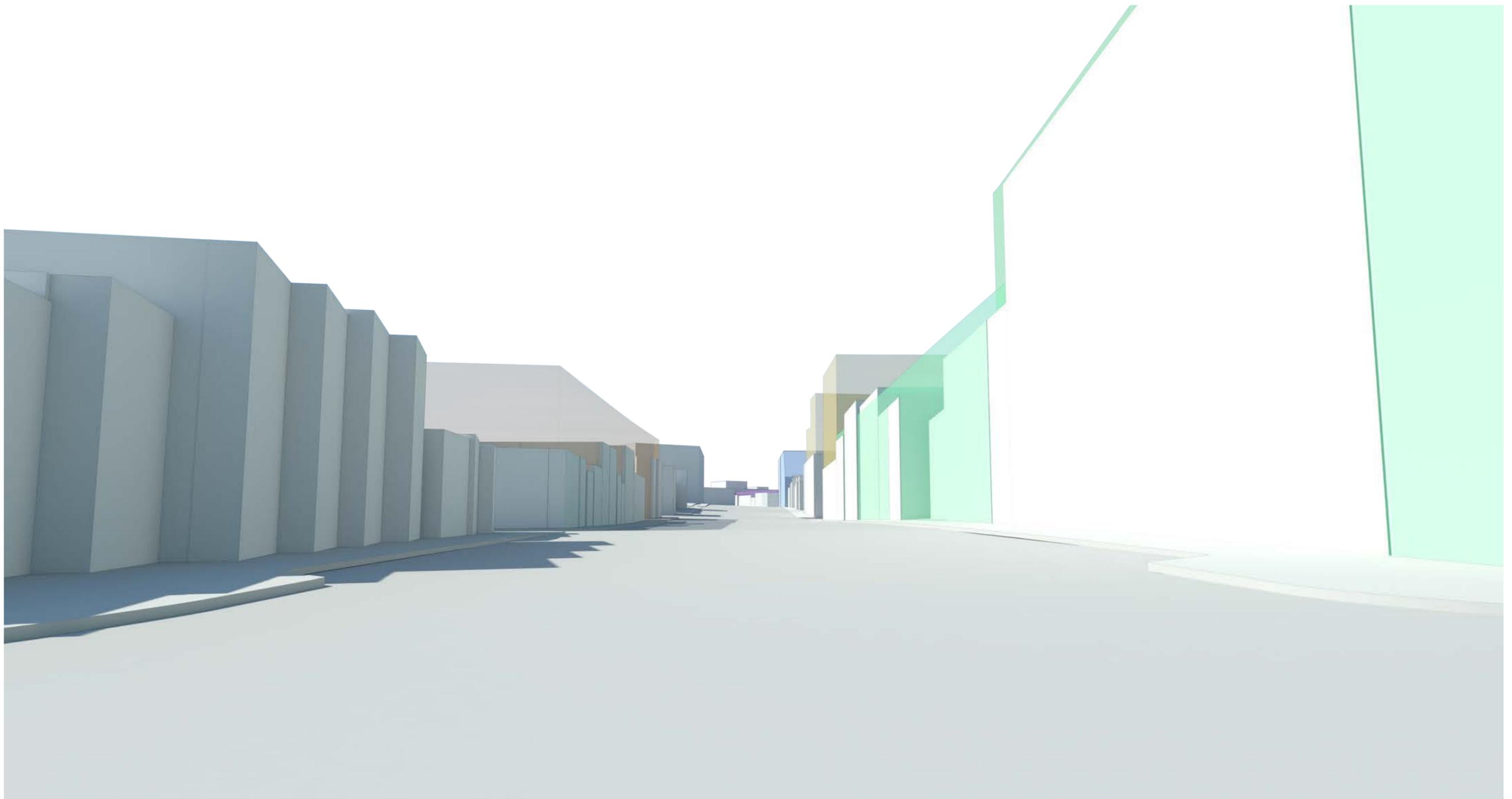
View D



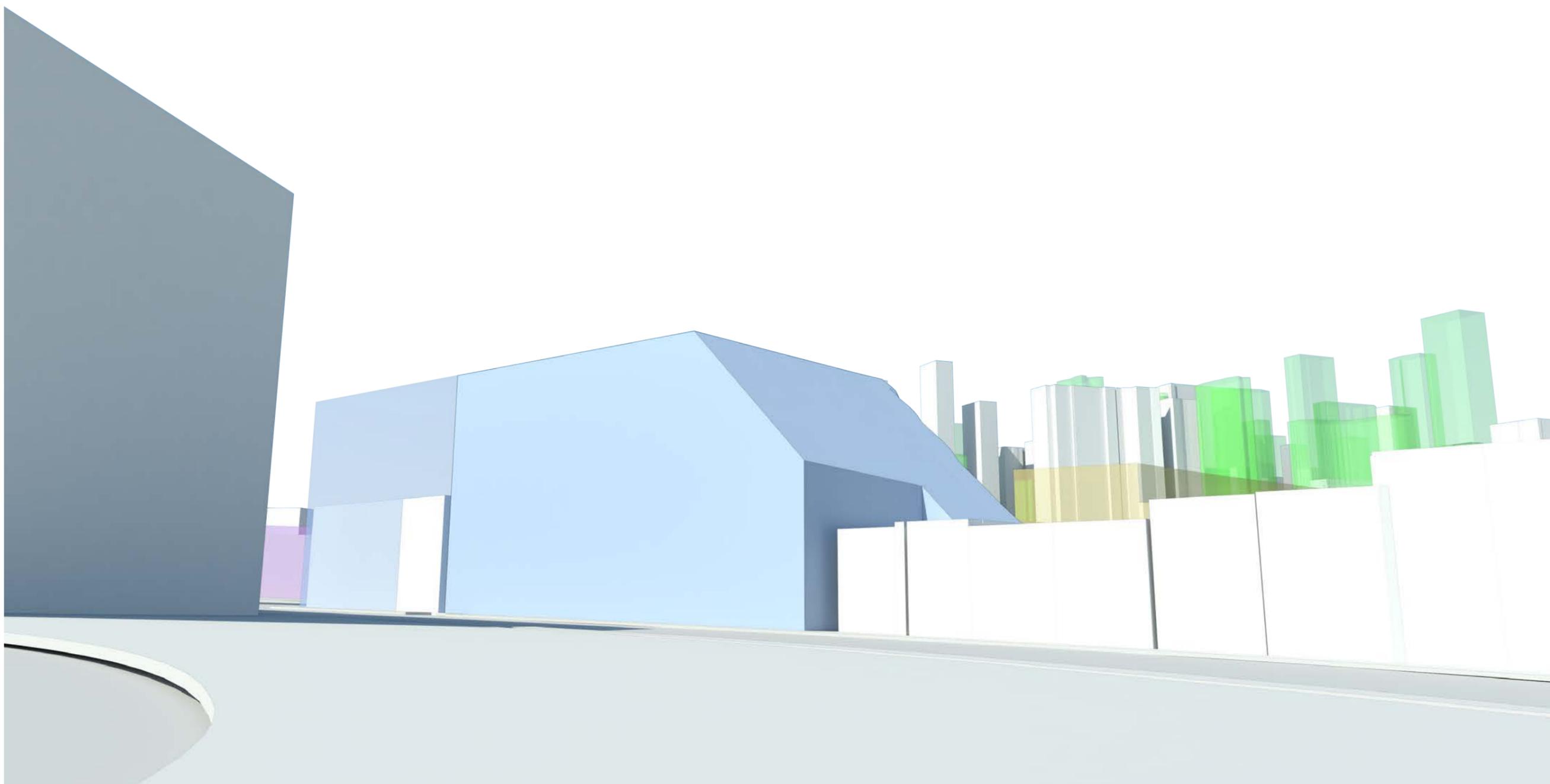
View E



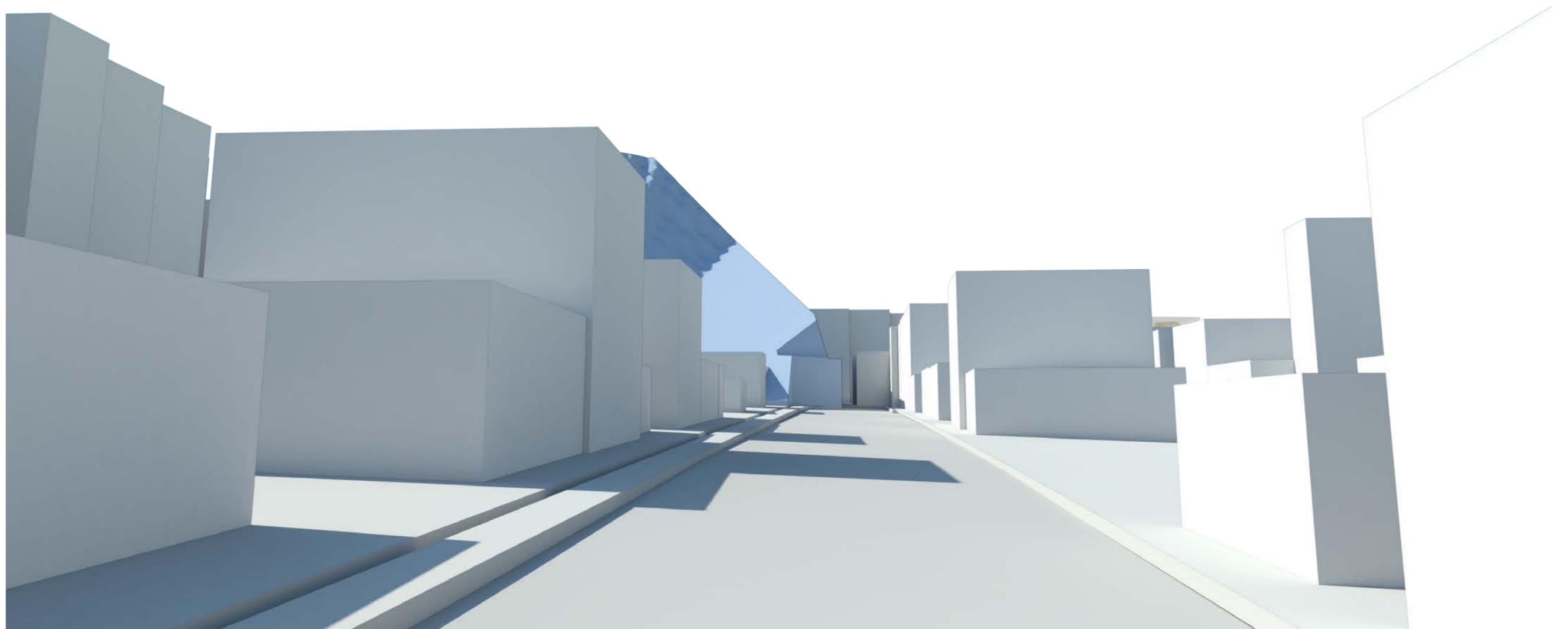
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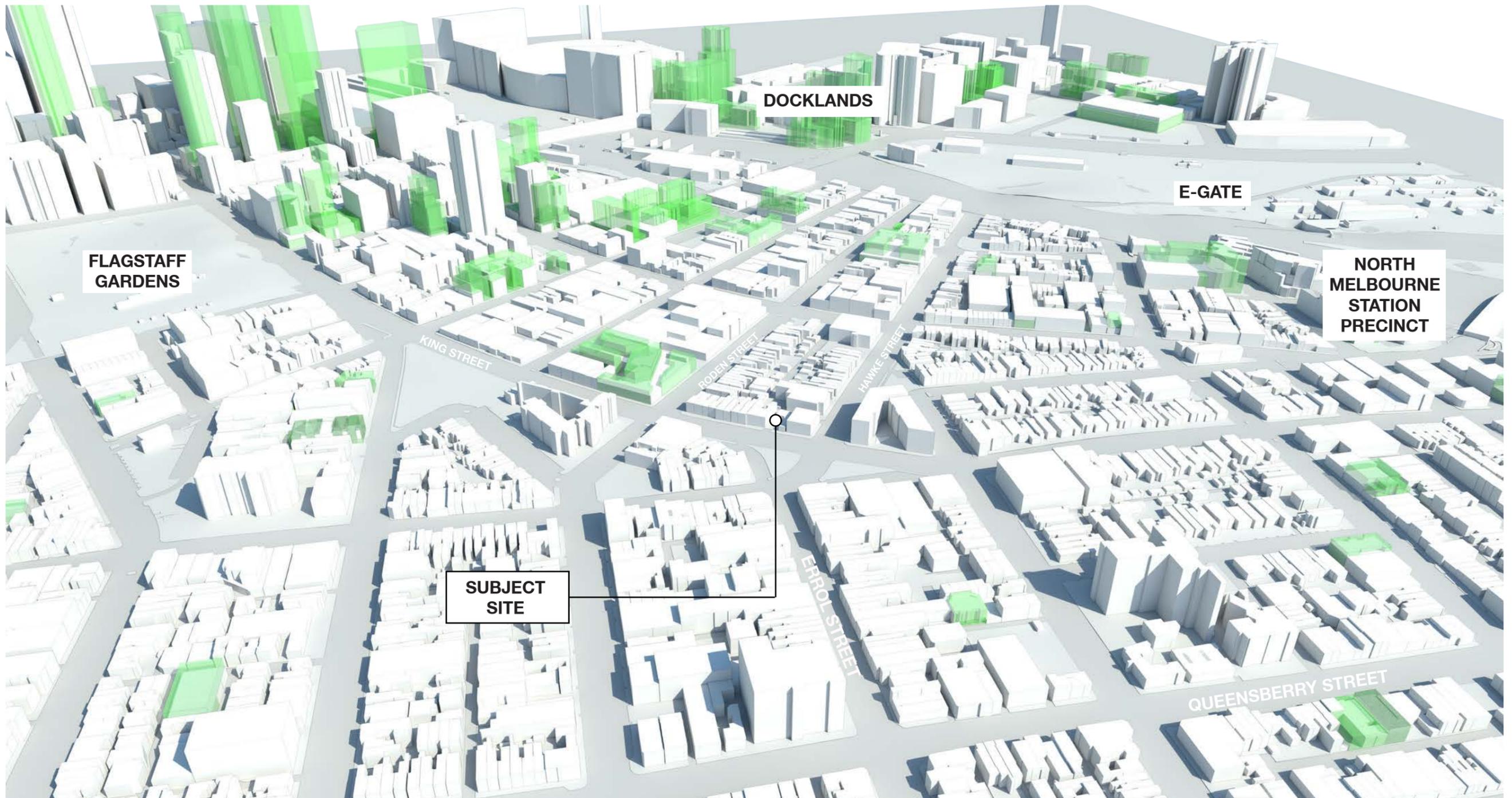
View G



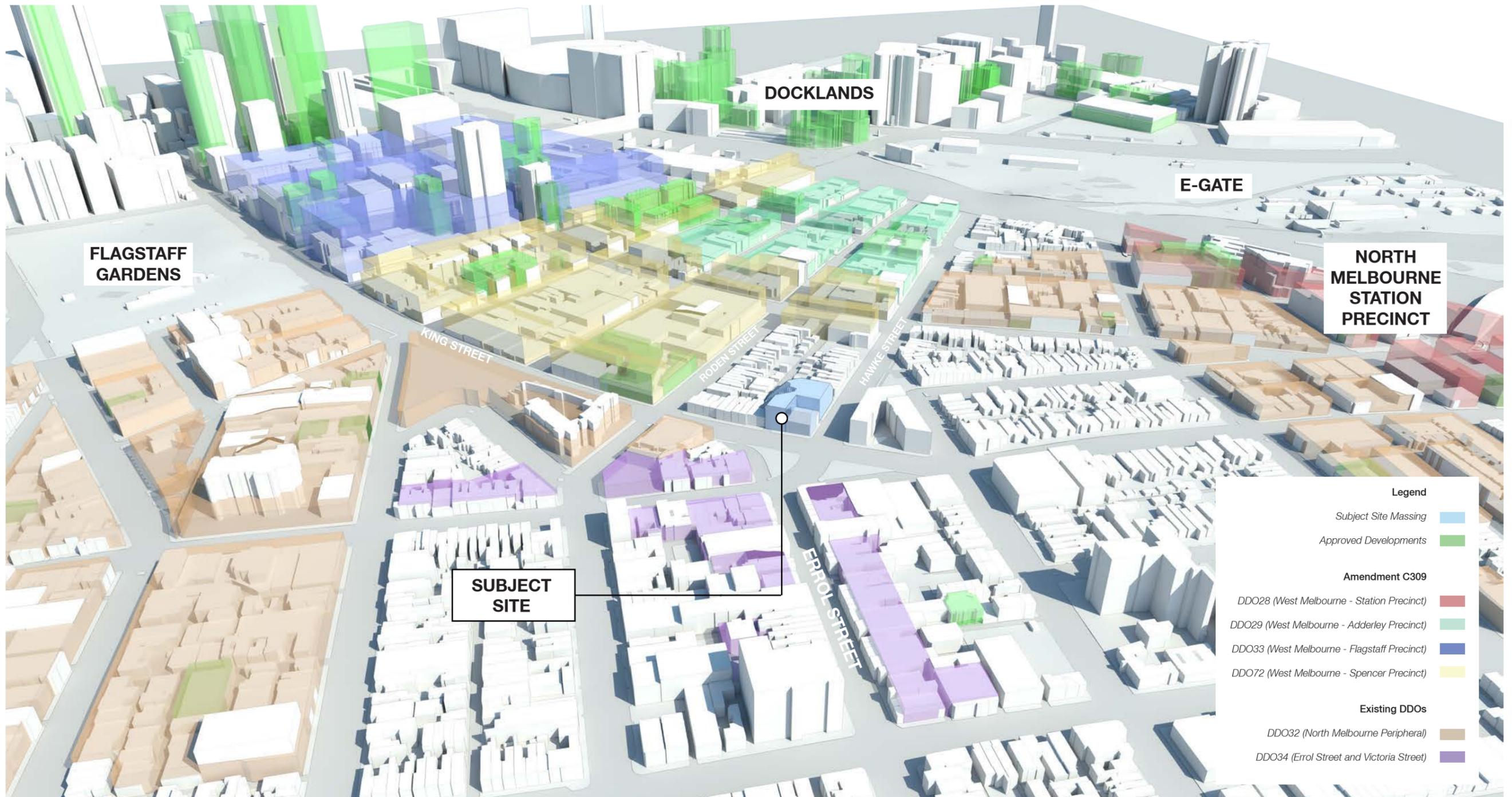
View H



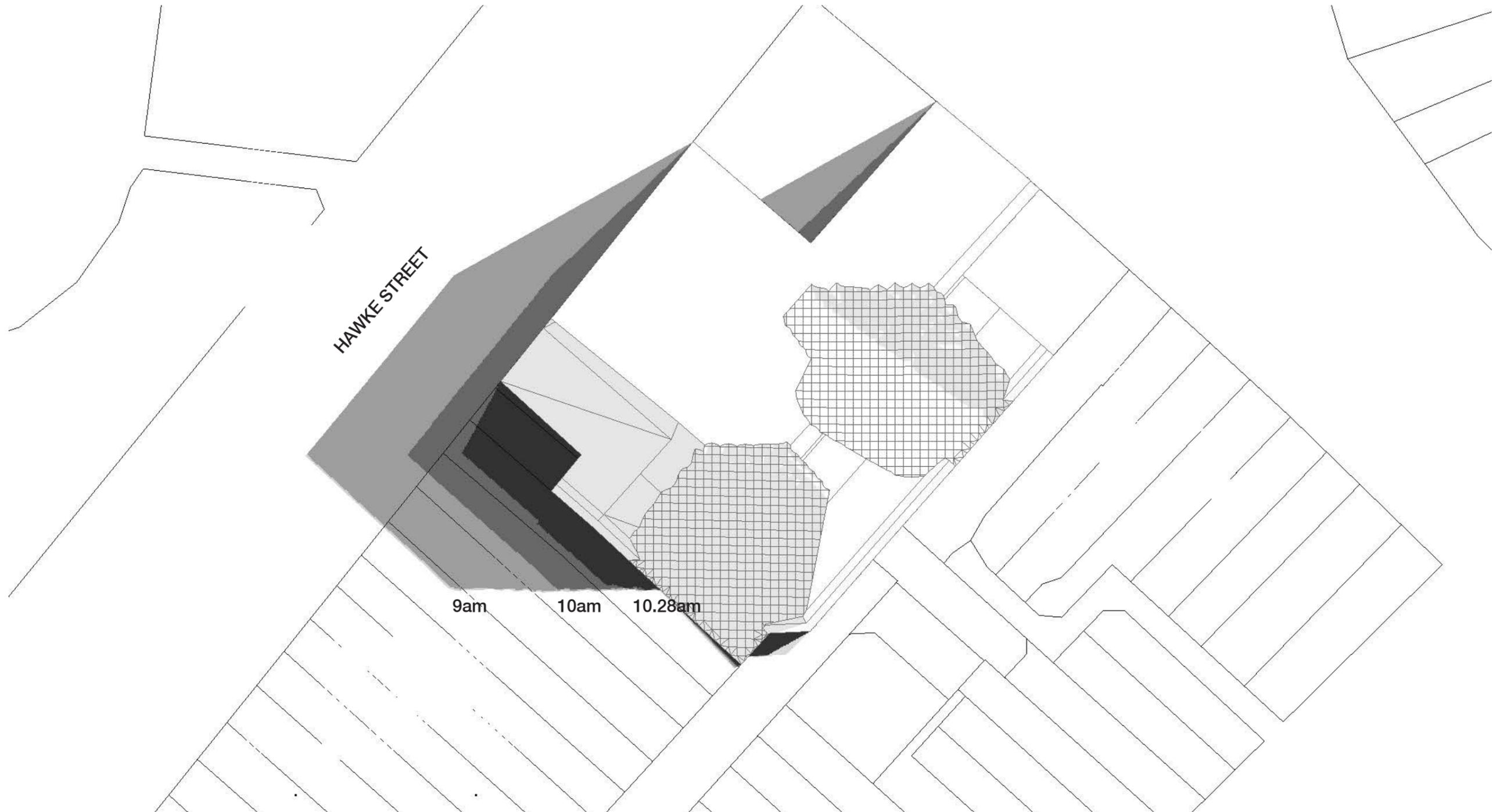
Existing Context Model (including approvals in green)



Existing Context Model with DDO Future Character Envelopes



Equinox Overshadowing Diagram (Hawke Street)



3D Modelling Methodology and Limitations

Context Model

QGIS 3.4.4

1. GIS data (shapefiles) downloaded from data.melbourne.vic.gov.au and data.vic.gov.au
 - a. Building Outlines 2015
 - b. Contours
 - c. Development Activity Footprints
 - d. Footpaths
 - e. Property Boundaries
 - f. Overlays
2. GIS data re-projected (GDA94 / MGA zone 55)
3. GIS data clipped down to required area

Rhino 5.14 & Grasshopper

1. Develop Grasshopper script to import shapefile geometries and attributes into Rhino
2. Develop Grasshopper script to create:
 - a. Context built form and development activity by extruding geometries to height (Australian Height Datum) specified in attribute table
 - b. Surface from contour lines and attribute height (AHD)
 - c. Block boundaries from region union of footpath and property geometries
 - d. Roads and blocks from split surface using block boundaries

3. Model DDO indicative envelopes 'manually' based on provisions of the existing Melbourne Planning Scheme and suite of proposed changes under Melbourne Amendment C309

Site Envelope Model

Rhino 5.14 & Grasshopper

1. Extrude site upwards
2. Subtract heritage
3. Subtract Standard B17 controls
4. Solar analysis
 - a. Develop Grasshopper script using Ladybug component to:
 - i. Set Sun path
 - ii. Produce envelope on site avoiding any overshadowing of neighbours' private open space on the equinox between 9am and 3pm – calculated at 15 -minute intervals and mapped onto a 20cm grid (high resolution)
5. Subtract solar analysis envelope
6. Usable floorplates
 - a. Develop Grasshopper script to:
 - i. Slice resulting polysurface into horizontal planes
 - ii. Test planes for usable areas and dimensions
 - b. Subtract unusable top end of polysurface

SJB Urban

sjb.com.au

We create spaces people love.
SJB is passionate about the
possibilities of architecture,
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Let's collaborate.

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