



Statement of Urban Design Expert Evidence

Maroondah Amendment C130

Prepared by
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July 2020

Instructed by
Contour

On behalf of
Barro Group Pty Ltd

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1.1 Introduction

1.
- This statement of urban design evidence has been prepared by Amanda Roberts, Director of 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 Architectural Studies, Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning. Further details of my qualifications and experience are listed within Appendix A.
3.
- In June 2020, I was instructed by Contour on behalf of Barro Group Pty Ltd to undertake an independent urban design review of Maroondah Amendment C130 (the ‘Amendment’) as it relates to the property at 32-48 Maroondah Highway, Ringwood (the ‘subject site’).
4.
- The purpose of the urban design is to inform a planning review at PPV pursuant to Section 24 (‘Hearing by Panel’) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

1.2 Evidence Structure

5.
- I have organised my statement into the following overarching structure:
- **Section 2.0 – Existing Context:** A description of the physical and policy context relevant to the subject site and the broader Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre.
 - **Section 3.0 – Amendment C130:** A description of the proposed amendments to the policy context relevant to the subject site and the broader Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre.
 - **Section 4.0 – Urban Design Discussion:** A discussion of the urban design implications of the proposed amendments relevant to the subject site including recommendations.
 - **Section 5.0 – Conclusion:** A concise summary of the urban design discussion including a list of recommendations.

1.3 Other

6.
- I have attached a copy of my qualifications and experience, a summary of the facts, matters and assumptions relied on along with a list of documents referred to in the preparation of this statement and a summary of my expert opinion and provisional opinions within Appendix A in accordance with PPV’s ‘Guide to Expert Evidence (April 2019)’.
7.
- I have also relied on 3D modelling in arriving at my urban design conclusions, and have included a high-level summary of their production methodology within Appendix B.

Existing Context

2

2.1 Physical Context

8. The subject site is located along the southern side of Maroondah Highway, Ringwood and forms a large corner allotment at the south-west intersection with New Street.
9. It comprises a large amalgamated allotment with a 136m (approx.) frontage to Maroondah Highway, a 123m (approx.) frontage to New Street, an overall area of 17,328sqm (approx.) and substantial north-west to south-east slope in the order of 7m-8m (approx.).
10. The site is currently occupied by a concrete batching plant that comprises 1-2 storey industrial/commercial form fronting New Street and Maroondah Highway with at-grade parking and some vegetation occurring across the remainder of the site further west.
11. With respect to the immediate interfaces with the subject site:
 - **North:** Immediately north is Maroondah Highway which comprises a 30m wide arterial road adjoined by large parcels of vacant land and a fast food restaurant (McDonalds). A bus stop and several street trees immediately adjoin the subject site proximate to the intersection with New Street. Further north is 1-2 storey residential and office park hinterland with an emerging character of 3-4 storeys.
 - **East:** Immediately east is New Street which comprises a 20m wide street adjoined by 1-2 storey industrial/commercial form comprising a combination of boundary construction and setbacks for at-grade parking. Further east is a combination of 1-2 storey 'high street' and 'bulky retailing' development along Maroondah Highway with an emerging character of taller commercial and residential built form.

This emerging character of taller built form includes (to the best of my knowledge) 5-storeys at 60-62 Maroondah Highway (refer to M/2018/44), 6-storeys at 92 Maroondah Highway (constructed) and 7-storeys at 96-98 Maroondah Highway (refer to M/2014/916/B).

- **South:** Immediately south is the Belgrave/Lilydale railway corridor which comprises a 35m wide elevated train line with some vegetation and a shared bicycle/pedestrian path along the southern side. Further south is 1-2 storey industrial form west of New Street and 1-2 storey residential built form east of New Street.
- **West:** Immediately west is 28-30 Maroondah Highway which is a large site currently under construction for a multi-tower development comprising maximum building heights of 10-storeys (31.7m), 17-storeys (52.4m) and 22-storeys (69.8m approx.) (refer to M/2016/985/D). Further west is the Eastlink toll road (including a shared bicycle/pedestrian path) which forms the western boundary of the activity centre.

12. More broadly, the immediately adjoining portion of Maroondah Highway (including properties to the west and north) is characterised by a wide and open streetscape context with a lack of public realm landscaping and a minimal consistency across built form and streetscape interfaces.

13. The subject site is located in proximity to a diverse range of services, amenities, infrastructure and recreation opportunities. These include (but are not limited to) Ringwood Square including Coles, Aldi, and Costco (450m north-east), Heatherdale Station (550m west), Eastland (950m north-east) and Ringwood Station (850m north-east).

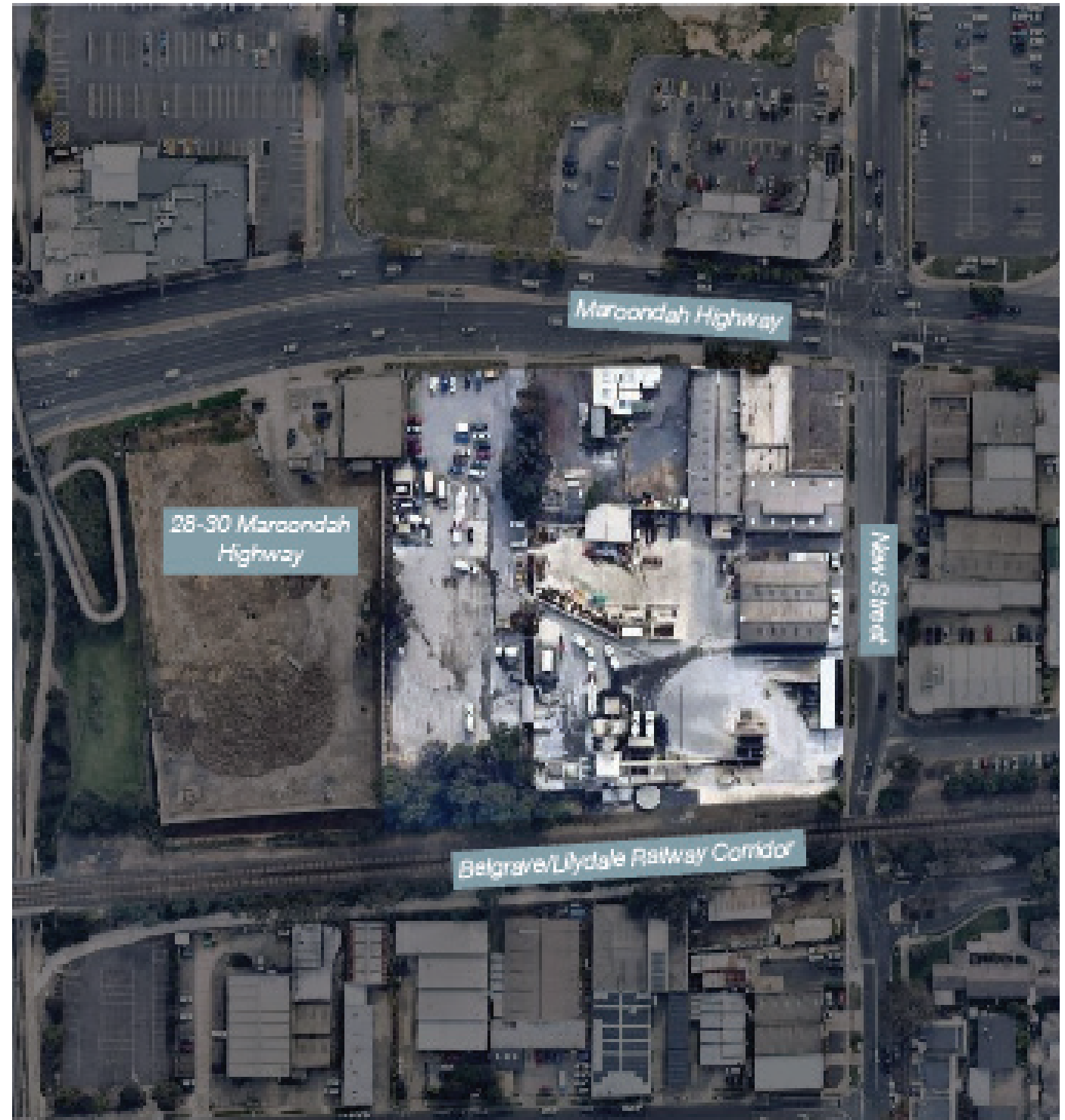


Figure 01: An aerial photograph of the subject site and the immediate surrounds (Source: Nearmap with emphasis added)

Existing Context

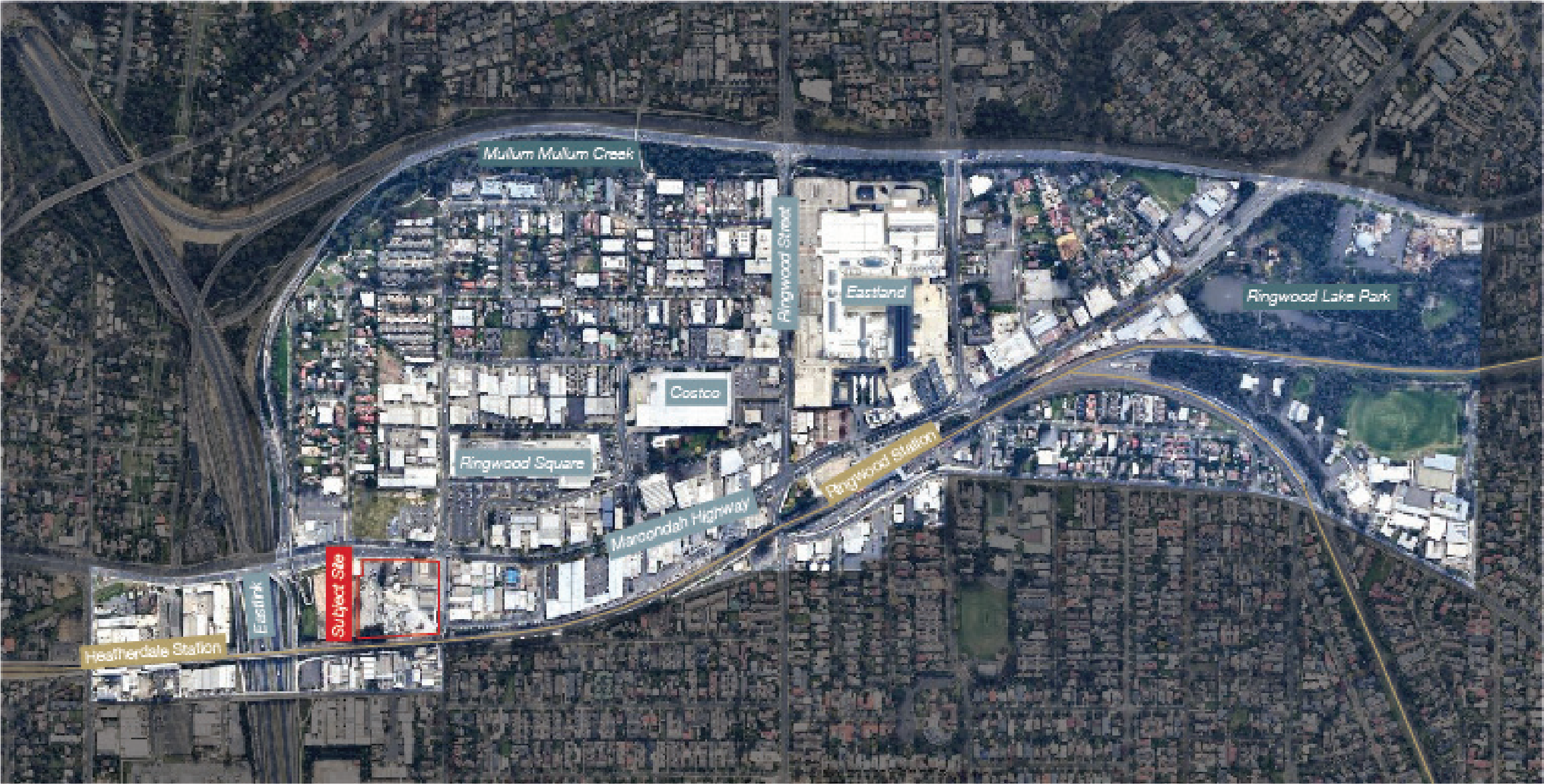


Figure 02: Aerial photograph of the subject site and the broader Ringwod MAC (Source: Neamap with emphasis added)

Existing Context



Image 01



Image 02



Image 03

Figure 03: Various site photography of the subject site and immediate surrounds, including:

Image 01: The subject site from the north-east corner of Maroondah Highway and New Street

Image 02: The subject site from the north side of Maroondah Highway

Image 03: The subject site from the north-west corner of Maroondah Highway and Sherbrook Avenue

Image 04: The subject site from the north-east corner of New Street and the railway corridor



Image 04



Image 05



Image 06

Image 05: The subject site from the south-east corner of Maroondah Highway and New Street

Image 06: The subject site public realm interface with New Street

Image 07: The subject site public realm interface with Maroondah Highway

Image 08: The Belgrave/Lilydale railway corridor looking west

Image 09: The shared bicycle/pedestrian path along the southern side of the railway corridor looking east



Image 07



Image 08



Image 09

Existing Context

2.2 Policy Context

14. With respect to zoning, the subject site is located within **Commercial 1 Zone** which has the purpose (but not limited to):
- To create vibrant mixed-use commercial centres for retail, office, business, entertainment and community uses.
 - To provide for residential uses at densities complementary to the role and scale of the commercial centre.
15. With respect to surrounding zoning, all surrounding land is similarly located within C1Z. Further south beyond the railway corridor are properties located within Industrial 1 Zone (I1Z) and General Residential Zone (GRZ1 – General Residential Areas).
16. With respect to overlays, the subject site is affected by **Design and Development Overlay (DDO3 – Design Controls Ringwood Activity Centre)** which has the design objectives (but not limited to):
- To encourage future development that optimises the full potential of sites and reflects its location within a Central Activities Area.
 - To create a built form hierarchy that establishes the tallest building forms within the Town Centre precinct and provides a physical and visual transition down to sensitive residential interfaces around the periphery of the Activity Centre.
 - To encourage new development that creates a sense of street address and facilitates attractive and pedestrian friendly environments through the use of active and open street frontages at ground level.

- To encourage excellence in architectural and building design throughout the Activity Centre.
 - To encourage the development of landmark and feature buildings that by exceeding the general building scale strongly define key junctions, topographical high points and gateways to and within the Activity Centre, and in particular acknowledge the Town Centre axis between the Ringwood Station and the retail hub.
 - To ensure appropriate urban design outcomes that minimise the appearance of visual bulk and respect the amenity of sensitive adjoining interfaces.
 - To create certainty for the community, land owners and developers within Ringwood regarding the future of the Activity Centre and potential opportunities and constraints associated with existing allotments.
 - To encourage multi-level apartment style residential housing opportunities to complement and enhance the form and transit city role of the Ringwood Activity Centre.
17. DDO3 identifies the subject site within ‘Precinct C’ which specifies a 18m maximum building height requirement and seeks to achieve:
- A scale of development that takes advantage of the high level of exposure from the frontage to the Maroondah Highway but respects the adjoining residential areas around the periphery of the Activity Centre.

18. DDO3 more broadly identifies ‘Precinct A’ and ‘Precinct B – Feature Forms’ which specify a 28.5m maximum building height requirement at the intersection of Maroondah Highway and Eastlink and within the Town Centre.

19. The subject site is also affected by **Development Contributions Plan Overlay (DCPO1 – Ringwood District Centre Development Contributions Plan, July 1997)** however this not relevant from an urban design perspective.
20. With respect to the balance of the Local Planning Policy Framework, **Clause 21.02 – Maroondah Vision and The Strategic Framework** is relevant as it identifies the subject site within the ‘Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre’ and along a ‘Restricted Retail’ area.
21. **Clause 21.06 – Built Form and Urban Design, Clause 21.07 – Housing and Residential Land Use and Clause 21.08 – Retail and Commercial Land Use** are also relevant and provide pertinent guidance in relation to the Ringwood MAC through the strategies (but not limited to):

- Encourage a mixture of residential development in identified areas within the Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre and the Croydon Major Activity Centre at medium or higher densities to make optimum use of the facilities and services available.
 - Maintain the hierarchy of commercial centres in Maroondah, based around the Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre, the Croydon Major Activity Centre and the Neighbourhood Activity Centres at Ringwood East and Heathmont
 - Promote the development of a Town Centre as a key element of the Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre and the Croydon Major Activity Centre.



Figure 04: Ringwood Transit City Urban Design Guidelines (Hansen, 2004)

Existing Context

22. **Clause 22.06 – Ringwood Activity Centre** applies and provides further guidance in relation to the Ringwood MAC identifying the subject site within the ‘Commercial Boulevard’ and ‘Western Gateway’ and specifying the policy (but not limited to):

- Encourage buildings either side of Maroondah Highway of a consistent scale and built hard to the street frontage to achieve a coherent boulevard effect.
- Maintain the strong view lines experienced along Maroondah Highway to the east toward the Mount Dandenong Ranges ridgeline.
- Ensure views to the Wicklow Hills and Dandenong Ranges ridgelines are maintained with built form along Maroondah Highway responding to sloping topography and providing recessed upper levels.
- Ensure street tree planting along Maroondah Highway to the east be restored with suitable and consistent species.

23. Clause 22.06 also identifies the ‘Ringwood Transit City Urban Design Masterplan (2004)’, ‘Ringwood Transit City Public Domain and Landscape Guidelines (2006)’ and ‘Ringwood Western Gateway Urban Design Review (2007)’ are identified as Reference Documents.

24. Finally, there are a range of guiding documents and policies external to the Planning Scheme that are of urban design relevance including the **Victorian Urban Design Guidelines 2017** and **Planning Practice Note – 60 (PPN60 – Height and Setback Controls for Activity Centres)**.

25. In summary, there exists a clear and overarching strategic intent within the provisions of the Planning Scheme for redevelopment to occur within the existing commercial centres of the municipality with the highest intensity of development occurring within the Ringwood MAC.

26. More specifically, there is a clear expectation for redevelopment of the subject site to respond to its role as a ‘Commercial Boulevard’ and ‘Western Gateway’ site. The physical context of the subject site – in conjunction within the provisions of the C1Z, DDO3 and Clause 22.06 – provide the most pertinent urban design guidance as how to achieve this.

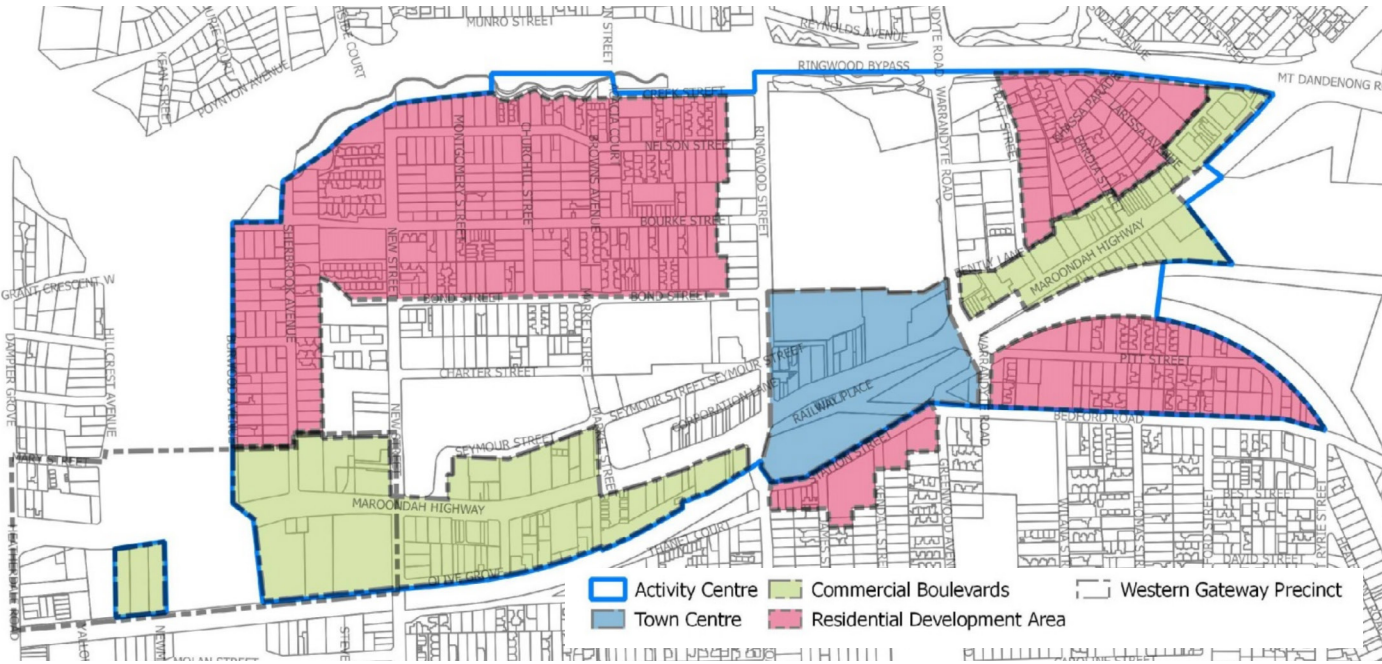


Figure 05: Clause 22.06 demonstrating the subject site within the Commercial Boulevard and Western Gateway precincts (top)

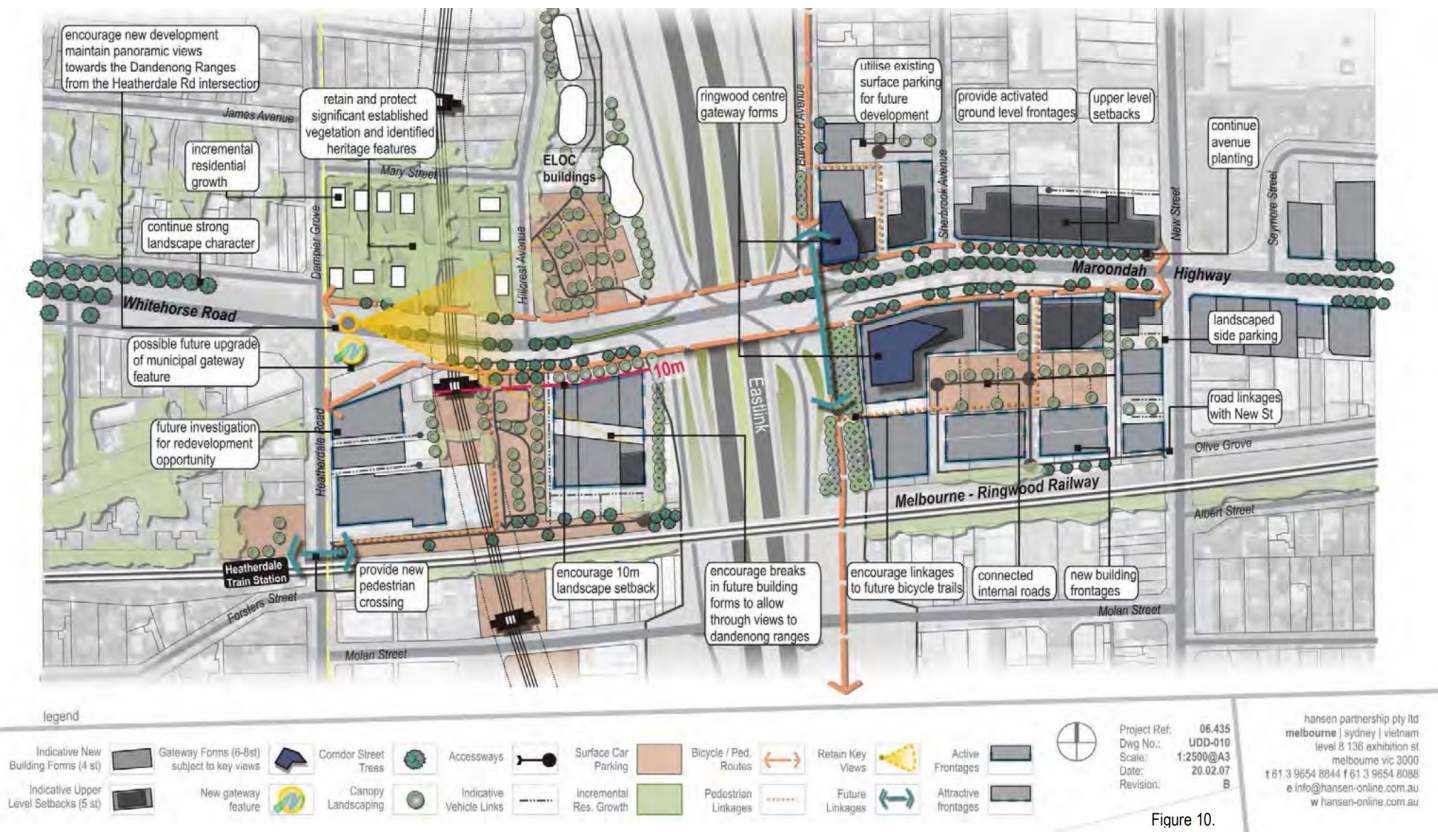


Figure 10.

Figure 06: Ringwood Western Gateway Urban Design Review (Hansen, 2007) (bottom)

3.1 Introduction

27. My understanding of the Amendment from an urban design perspective and with respect to the subject site is as follows:
- Implement the recommendations of the Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre Masterplan (Maroondah City Council, 2018) (the ‘Masterplan’).

• Rezone the subject site from Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z) to Activity Centre Zone (ACZ1 – Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre).

• Delete Design and Development Overlay (DDO3 – Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre) and Clause 22.06 – Ringwood Activity Centre.
28. The Amendment proposes changes to the ‘Maroondah City Council Plan 2017-2021’, ‘Maroondah 2040: Our Future Together’ and the ‘Maroondah Housing Strategy’ and subsequently amends the MSS – however whilst these documents are relevant – the balance of this statement is predicated on the Masterplan/ ACZ1 as these have more pertinent urban design implications.
29. Additionally, the Amendment is supported by the ‘Ringwood MAC Background Report’ and the ‘Ringwood MAC Urban Design Guidelines’, however these documents are not proposed to be incorporated into the Planning Scheme so I have again focused the balance of this statement on the Masterplan/ACZ1.
30. Finally, the ‘Ringwood MAC Urban Design Guidelines Case Studies’ is a supporting document however does not provide any built form testing for the subject site so I have given it little weight in this statement.

3.2 Policy Context

31. **Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre Master Plan (November 2018)** provides the strategic underpinning of the Amendment and identifies the urban design principles (where relevant):
- Activity Centre Definition

• To define the Activity Centre as an urban form that is distinct from its low-density residential surrounds, through built form typologies that correspond to Ringwood MAC status.

• To define the Activity Centre’s edges and improve its image and legibility.

Subdivision Pattern

• To encourage land consolidation that realise integrated development outcomes within the Activity Centre

• To support increased development intensity on larger sites, without diminishing the importance of designated feature forms.

• To encourage site specific development responses on particularly large sites.

Gateway and Landmarks

• To encourage development of high-quality form that heightens the sense of arrival at Ringwood MAC at key junctions and entries into the centre.

• To support wayfinding into and through Ringwood MAC at both a macro (urban form) and micro (streetscape) level.
- Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre Masterplan

Working towards an attractive, thriving and well built community






- Statement of Urban Design Evidence | Maroondah Amendment C130
- Figure 07: The Ringwood MAC Masterplan (2018)
- 9

Amenity

- To ensure building heights do not result in the impact of unreasonable overshadowing impact on private land and public (footpaths and open space).
- To ensure future development maintains solar access to footpaths between 11.00 to 14.00 at the equinox (22 September).
- To ensure future development minimises overshadowing impact to existing and future open space between 11.00 to 14.00 at the winter solstice (22 June).
- To provide separation between buildings (above street wall/ podium) to facilitate outlook and amenity for existing and future building occupants.

Landscape and Environment

- To advance and improve the boulevard character of Maroondah Highway.

Street Definition

- To commonly adopt new development with a clear street wall that is proportionate to its abutting street width.
- To adopt upper level setbacks above the street wall to emphasise the prevailing street wall effect at street level.
- To encourage continuous street edges which invite active ground floor frontages.

Topography

- To encourage development that reinforces Ringwood’s topography and landscape character.
 - To ensure that feature forms occupy land at higher points that are noticeable in the skyline across Ringwood MAC.
 - To encourage future development that does not result in excessive and exposed cut and fill visible from public space.
- Transition
- To ensure a legible transition in building scale within Ringwood MAC from its higher core to its lower fringe.
 - To provide sufficient gradual transition between adjoining redevelopment sites and any existing buildings.
 - To ensure urban form transitions are provided between residential and commercial precincts that are sensitive to the land use function.

32. **Activity Centre Zone (ACZ1 – Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre)** provides the statutory translation of the Masterplan and specifies the activity centre wide land use and development objectives and centre wide provisions (where relevant):
- Objectives
- To ensure a balanced land use mix in Ringwood MAC to promote future liveability and sustainability.
 - To encourage built form that provides active pedestrian interfaces along main roads.

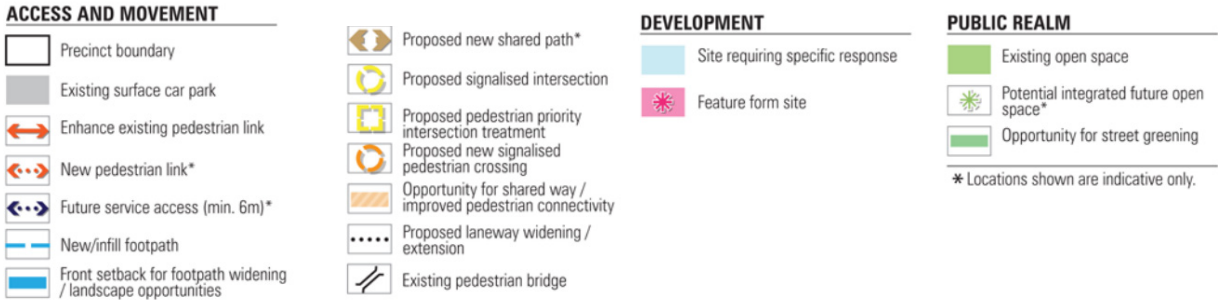
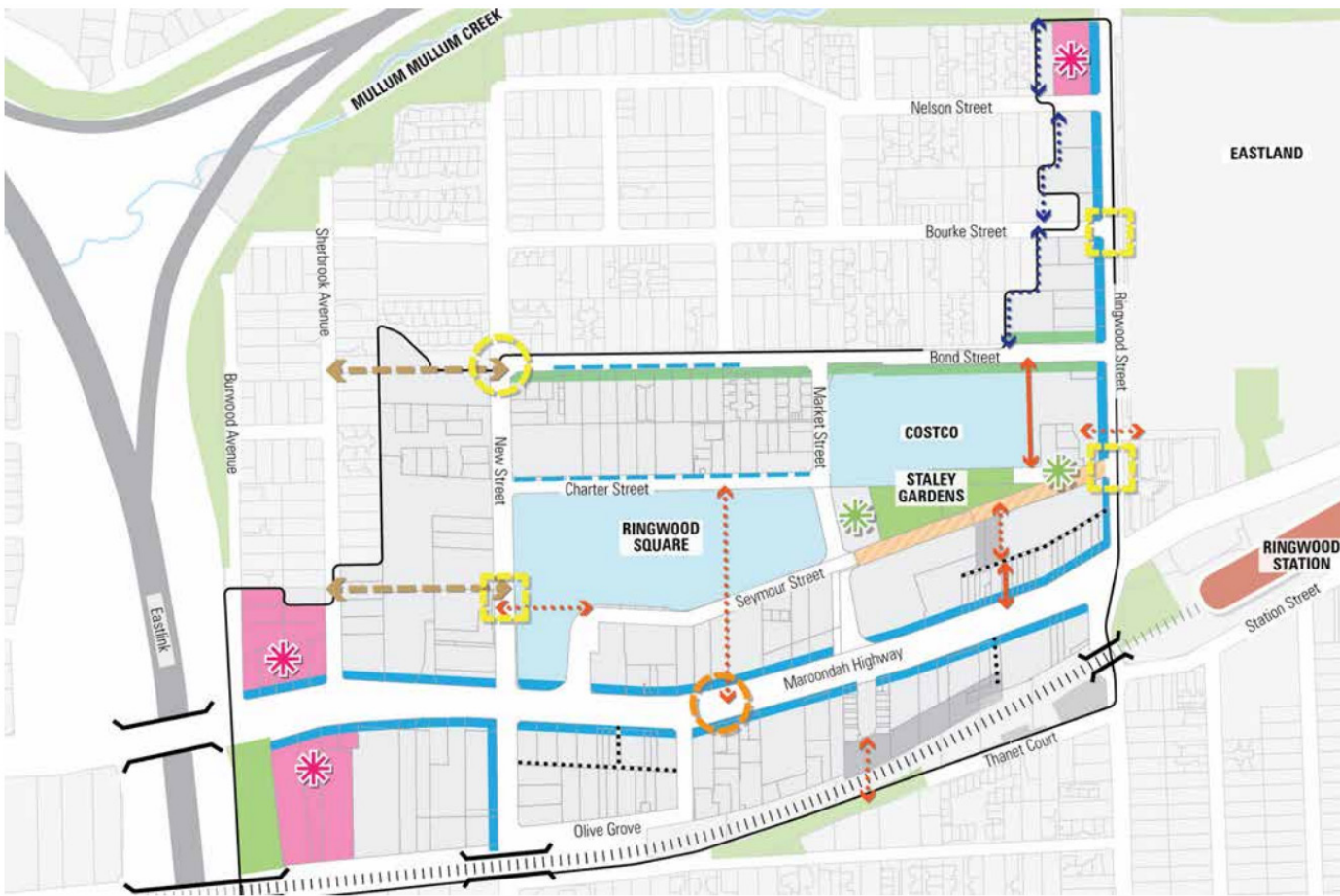


Figure 08: The Ringwood MAC Masterplan (Hansen, 2018) demonstrating Precinct 2

Amendment C130

- To support urban design that embraces the natural setting of Ringwood MAC and reinforces Ringwood's topography and landscape character. - To encourage development form that heightens the sense of arrival at Ringwood MAC at key junctions and entries into the centre. - To advance and improve the boulevard character of Maroondah Highway, extending the 'boulevard treatment' to the east and west of Ringwood MAC. - To ensure that feature forms occupy land at higher points that are noticeable in the skyline across Ringwood MAC. - To provide opportunities for new landscaping including additional canopy tree planting and understorey vegetation. - To provide a fine-grained pedestrian path network with wider footpaths and additional pedestrian crossings that provide pedestrian priority. - To encourage land consolidation that realises integrated development outcomes within the activity centre. - To support increased development intensity on larger sites, without diminishing the importance of designated feature forms. - To encourage site specific development responses on particularly large sites.	Provisions - Buildings and works should minimise overshadowing of existing and future open space, beyond shadow cast by new street walls/podiums at the winter solstice. - Buildings and works should not cast shadows over footpaths between 11 am and 2 pm on 22 September. - Buildings and works should minimise shadows over existing and future open space between 11 am and 2 pm on 22 June. 33. More specifically, subject site is identified within 'Precinct 2' which specifies the precinct objectives, requirements and guidelines (where relevant): Objectives - To contribute to the boulevard character of Maroondah Highway as a consolidated mid-rise precinct, with revitalisation opportunities on selected key sites, transitioning to the adjacent residential precinct. - To accommodate new taller contemporary form that contributes to an attractive pedestrian-orientated boulevard. - To encourage commercial and office uses in Ringwood MAC. - To encourage mixed use development in commercial areas along Maroondah Highway that includes commercial and residential land use.	Requirements 28.5m (8-storeys) preferred maximum building height: - Development with a strong employment focus that reflects the mixed-use character of the precinct. - Development with Maroondah Highway frontage takes advantage of the high levels of exposure. - A clear visual increase in building height from adjoining lower scale developments in Precincts 3 to be evident. 21.5m (6-storey) street wall height to Maroondah Highway, including 5m upper level setback. 4m minimum ground level setback from the street kerb. 14.5m (4-storey) street wall height to New Street, including 5m upper level setback. Guidelines - Encourage consistent, taller built form along either side of Maroondah Highway to achieve a coherent boulevard effect. - Encourage the creation of taller feature forms at the following locations to contribute to the sense of arrival into Ringwood MAC:	- South western corner of Eastlink and Ringwood Street junction. - North eastern and south eastern corners of Maroondah Highway and Eastlink junction - Ensure built form along Maroondah Highway responds to the sloping topography and provides recessed upper levels. - Encourage office development, or retail uses within the podium with residential uses above that contribute to the activation and surveillance of the public realm from within the upper levels. - Development of sites requiring specific response should be arranged as a 'suite of forms', rather than a single development envelope. - Encourage ground level setbacks for footpath widening along Maroondah Highway and Ringwood Street with high levels of pedestrian amenity and forming an inviting corridor for Ringwood MAC. - Encourage future redevelopment of 'sites requiring a specific response' to retain existing pedestrian link, with opportunities for additional pedestrian connections to improve site permeability.
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Urban Design Discussion

4

4.1 Introduction

Urban Design Principles/Metrics

34.

A starting point for this urban design discussion is to acknowledge that there has been a clear evolution in thinking and in addressing the needs of a growing population over the last decade and a half, evident by the difference in built form intensity sought by the existing Masterplan 2004 and the proposed Masterplan 2018.
35.

This difference can be attributed to a number of factors including; greatly increased density and built form massing successfully delivered in other Metropolitan Activity Centres such as Box Hill and Footscray ‘normalising’ larger development; the clear directions of the state government to locate increase population density, both residential and working, in close proximity to amenities such as public transport, commercial hubs and community centres; the need to accommodate and design for a growing, diverse and healthy population that can prioritise walking, cycling and public transport to achieve daily tasks.
36.

Therefore, I am supportive of the intent of the Amendment to respond to this changing urban context and provide an updated masterplan and re-envision the future of the Ringwood MAC through the proposed ACZ1.
37.

In my opinion, any re-envisioning should have a strong foundation in urban design principles (focusing on those that impact on the subject site), including those that underpinned the existing Masterplan 2004, such as establishing a built form hierarchy based on pockets of taller buildings defining key junctions/gateways and the Town Centre/Ringwood Station, creating a relatively uniform boulevard along Maroondah Highway of a mid-rise streetwall with upper level setbacks, and increasing the public realm amenity of these streets through overshadowing protection and activation at ground levels.
38.

Rather than ‘reinventing the wheel’ and establishing a completely new set of urban design principles, the focus of this Amendment should be on revising the existing ‘urban design metrics’ (such as building height, street walls and upper levels setbacks) to respond to the current context.
39.

This statement is focused on the proposed ACZ1 and seeks to investigate the appropriateness of the proposed controls/metrics and whether there are alternative metrics that can also achieve the overarching objectives for the subject site.

4.2 Overall Building Height

Overall Building Height

40.

Having regard to overall building height, the ACZ1 proposed a 28.5m (8-storey) preferred maximum building height across the subject site.
41.

More broadly, the preferred 8-storey building height applies to the balance of Maroondah Highway except for at the intersection with Eastlink (to the west) and Ringwood Street (to the east) which are designated at ‘Feature Form’ sites with a 53m (15-storey) preferred maximum building height.
42.

I am generally supportive of the proposed building heights at a macro scale where the notion of robust built form along the main commercial spine of Maroondah Highway with taller pockets of built form projecting above to demarcate key junctions is logical from an urban design perspective.
43.

However, I am challenged by the application of a ‘blanket’ height control across the balance of Maroondah Highway as this blunt application of macro urban design principles has the potential to be contextually dismissive to the physical nuances of individual sites.
44.

I make this comment as there are several physical attributes of the subject site that make it distinct from the majority of sites along Maroondah Highway (particularly further east) and support the notion of taller built form.
45.

Firstly, the subject site is atypically large in comparison to the balance of Maroondah Highway comprising frontages and depths in excess of 125m. It is a commonly accepted urban design principle that large sites can accommodate and support increased heights with the proviso that any identified adverse impacts to neighbouring properties and the public realm can be managed within the boundaries of the site.

Urban Design Discussion

46.

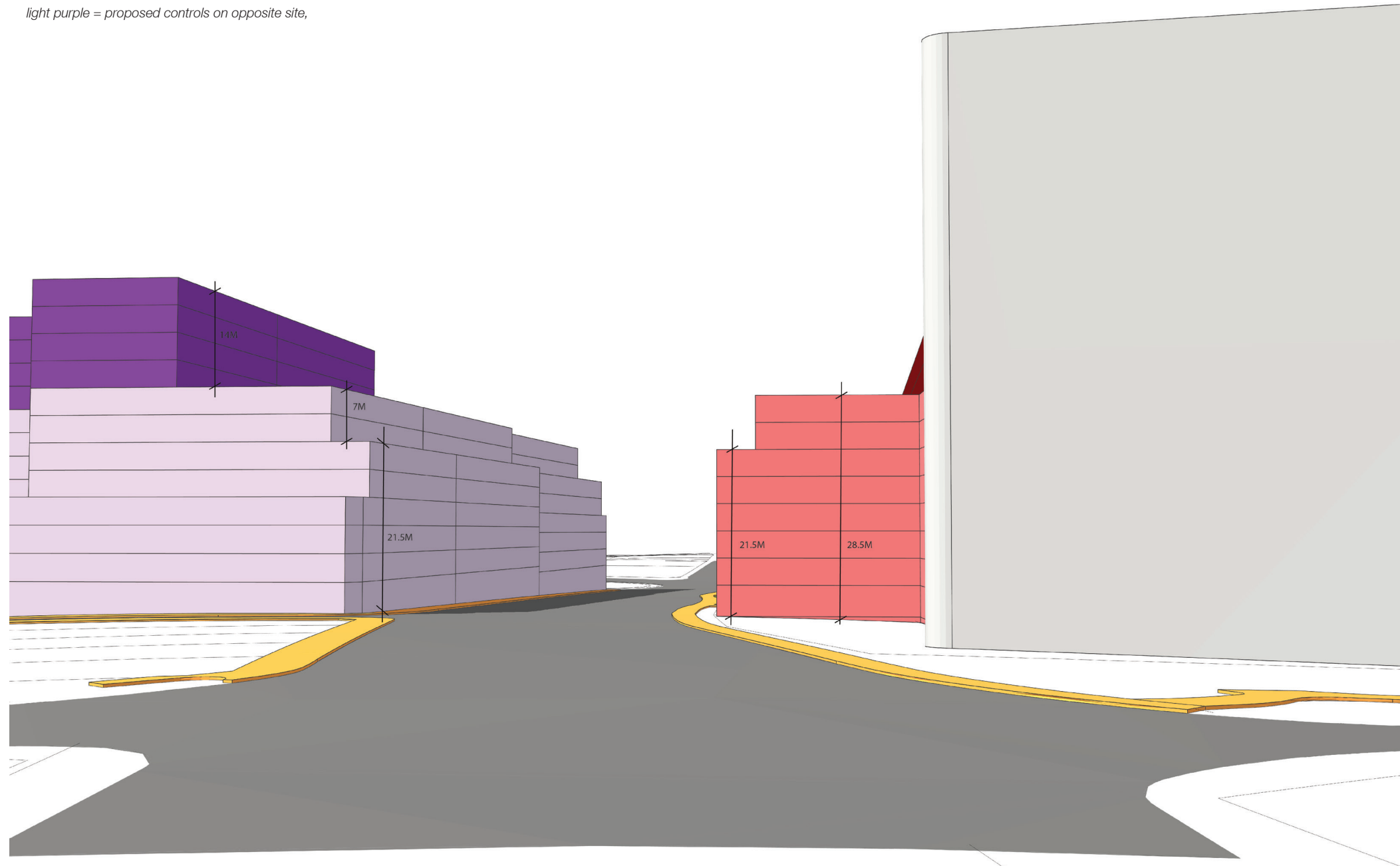
To reiterate the size of the subject site, it is approximately the same size of the entire street block bounded by New Street, Olive Grove and Maroondah Highway (to the east) and the Costco Ringwood which is identified as a key redevelopment site within the Ringwood MAC.
47.

Secondly, the southern interface is particularly robust and non-sensitive due to the railway corridor and industrial land further south. The notion of additional height located toward this boundary (as already approved on the neighbouring site to the west) is logical from an urban design perspective as it has the potential to have little to no visual impact on the desired mid-rise Maroondah Highway boulevard, can be setback to retain the visual prominence of the 'feature form' buildings on the corner of EastLink and Maroondah Highway and does not overshadow key public realm or impact on residential amenity.
48.

The nearest residentially zoned land is approximately 50m towards the south-east and is buffered by the railway corridor and alignment of New Street and Albert Street. This separation reduces potential amenity impacts having regard to overshadowing or perceptions of visual bulk and additional height can be set back further given the depth of the site to provide further separation.
49.

Thirdly, the potential for public realm overshadowing is limited to New Street (to the east) as the subject site is located along the southern portion of Maroondah Highway. Maintaining solar access to north-south oriented street is usually an overly onerous requirement – however given the depth of the subject site – there is potential for additional height to be massed away from this interface to maintain solar access.

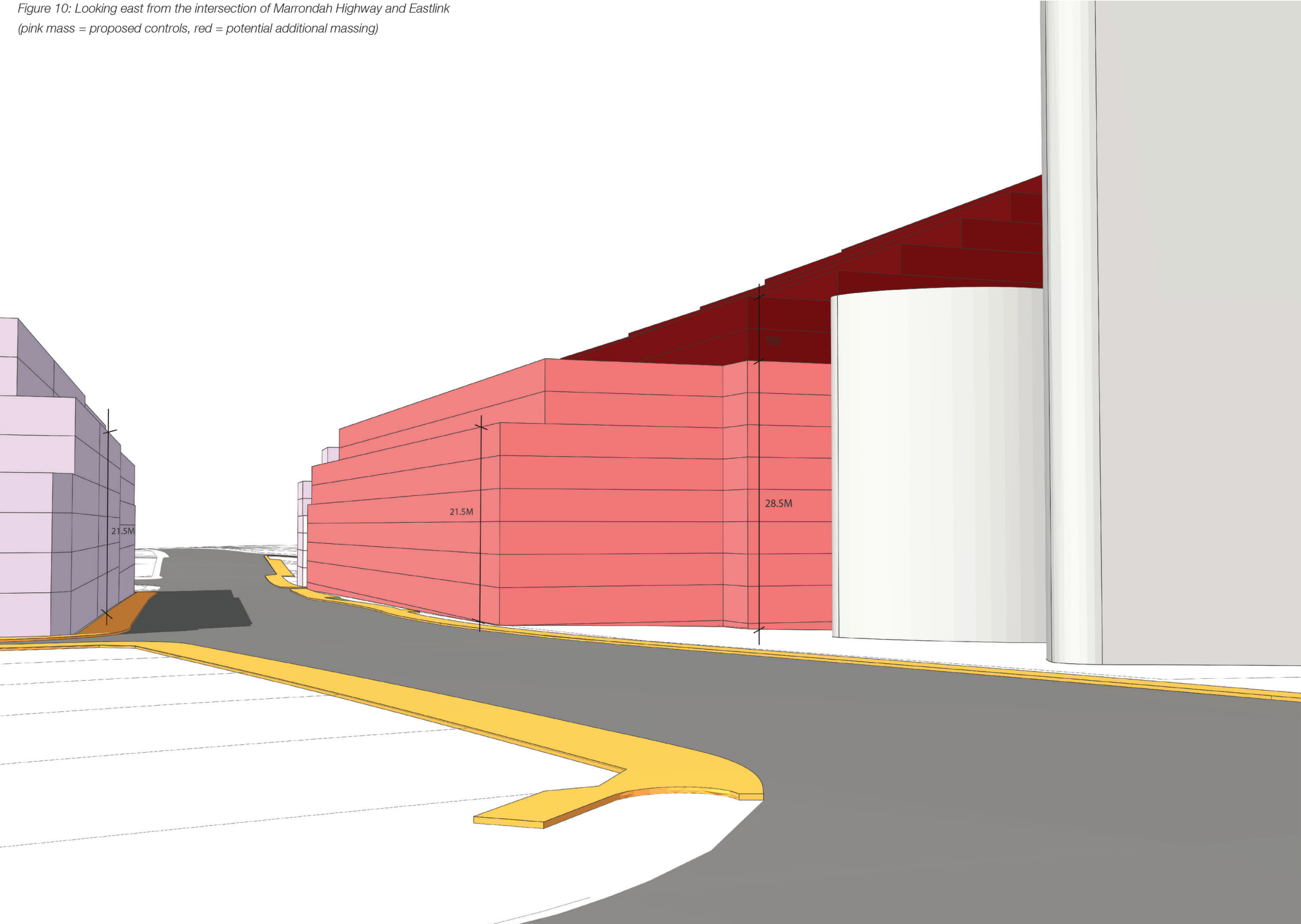
Figure 09: Looking east from the intersection of Marrondah Highway and Eastlink
(pink mass = proposed controls on subject site, red = potential additional massing, light purple = proposed controls on opposite site,



All diagrams show an overall massing volume only and do not portray buildable footprints. Any development within this envelope would have to address building separation, articulation and design quality on a case specific basis.

Urban Design Discussion

50. The subject site is also sufficiently sized to maintain solar access to the shared bicycle/ pedestrian path to the south over the railway, however given the existing environment of the bike path, which is largely already overshadowed in the middle of the year by the vegetation along the rail line and the elevated rail infrastructure itself, is set down significantly from the ground level of the subject site, as well as the paths purpose as a path to be travelled along at walking/running/ cycling speed (there are no stopping points in the relevant section) solar protection is considered unnecessary.
51. Finally, the immediately adjoining property at 28-30 Maroondah Highway is currently under construction with a multi-tower development ranging from 10-22 storeys. The tallest tower form is positioned towards the south against the railway corridor and the smallest tower is positioned to the north-east proximate to Maroondah Highway and the subject site.
52. I appreciate that this site neighbouring site is proposed to be designated as a Feature Form, and the subject site is not. However, I consider that the subject site has a role to play in responding to this development and providing a transition from the western gateway towards the balance of Maroondah Highway. Given the prominence of this development from the western approach, the notion of additional building height on the subject site is logical will be largely obscured from this oblique view 'gateway' view.
53. Therefore, considering the above commentary in relation to the physical characteristics of the subject site and the 3D modelling accompanying this statement, I recommend that the subject site can accommodate a building height of around 35.5m (10-storeys) increasing to approximately 58m (16-storeys) at the south-west of the site.



All diagrams show an overall massing volume only and do not portray buildable footprints. Any development within this envelope would have to address building separation, articulation and design quality on a case specific basis.

Urban Design Discussion

54. In doing so, this additional building height would:

- Maintain the prominence of 28-30 Maroondah Highway as a key landmark within the western gateway precinct.
- Provide a transition from 28-30 Maroondah Highway to the balance of Maroondah Highway (east of New Street)
- Maintain the envisioned ‘boulevard character’ of Maroondah Highway comprising a 6-storey street wall and an 8-storey building height proximate to the street interface.
- Maintain solar access the eastern footpath of New Street between 11am and 2pm on September 22.
- Maintain solar access to the residential land beyond the activity centre boundary to the south-east by casting no additional overshadowing on September 22.
- Further define the edge of the activity centre through a robust form adjoining the railway corridor and the industrial land further beyond.

55. In summary, I make the following recommendations in relation to overall building height:

- a. Increase the maximum preferred building height requirement of the subject site, in the south western portion to 58m (16-storeys).

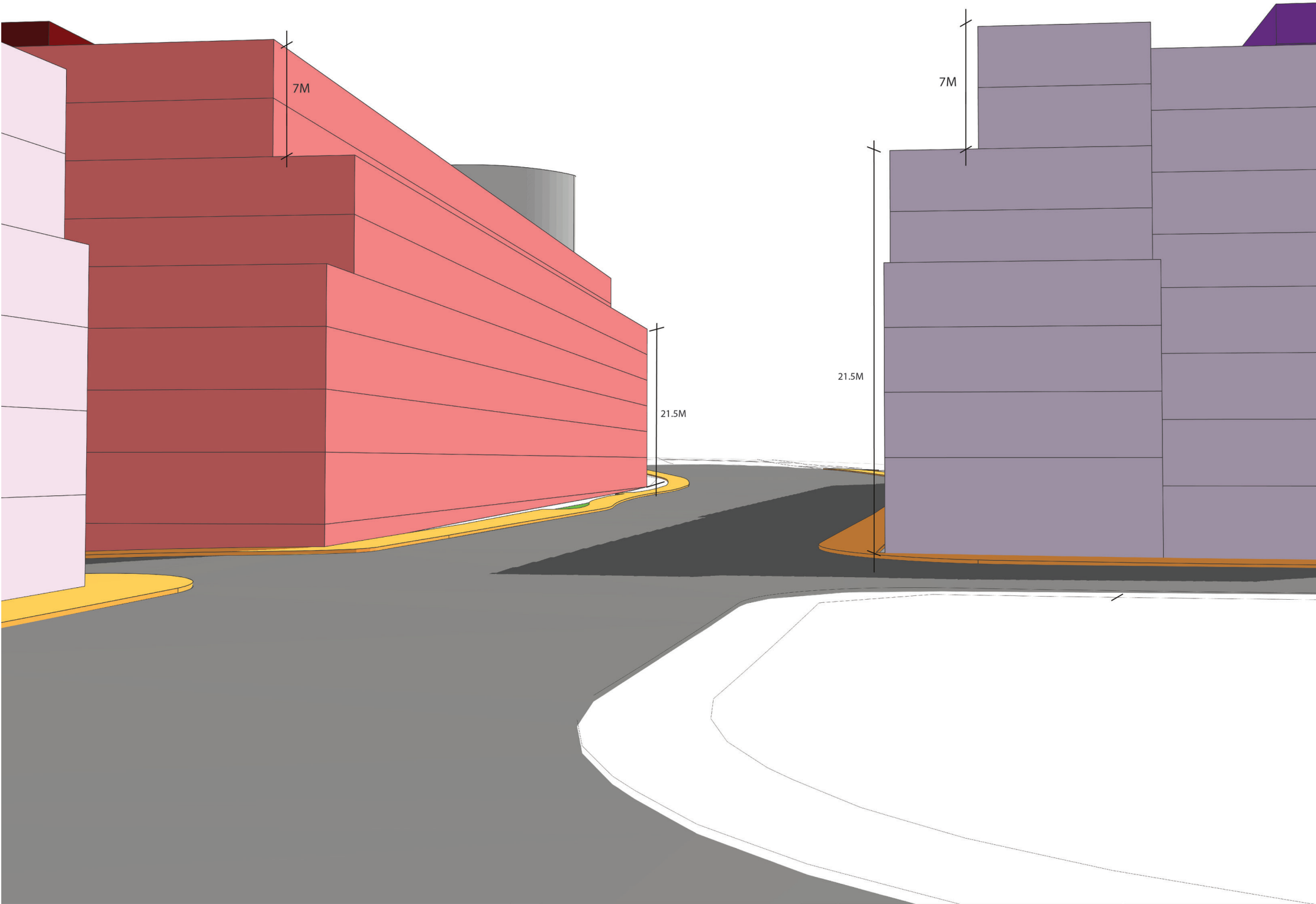
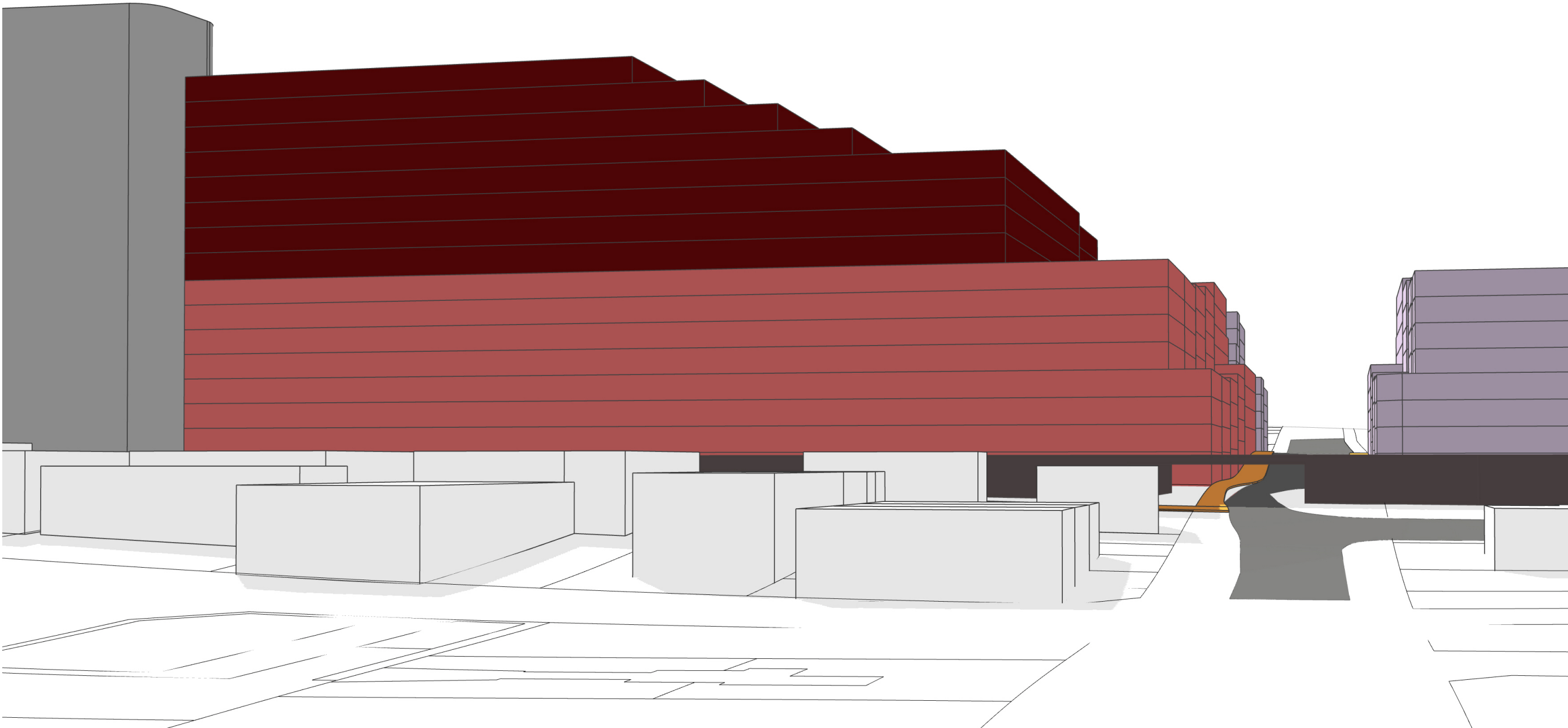


Figure 11: Looking west from the northern footpath of Maroondah Highway (east of New Street) (pink mass = proposed controls, red = potential additional massing)

All diagrams show an overall massing volume only and do not portray buildable footprints. Any development within this envelope would have to address building separation, articulation and design quality on a case specific basis.

Figure 12: Long range view from the south beyond the railway corridor and activity centre boundary (pink mass = proposed controls, red = potential additional massing)



All diagrams show an overall massing volume only and do not portray buildable footprints. Any development within this envelope would have to address building separation, articulation and design quality on a case specific basis.

4.3 Street Wall/Setbacks

Street Wall/Setbacks

56. Having regard to street walls and upper level setbacks, the ACZ1 proposes a 21.5m (6-storey) street wall to Maroondah Highway, a 14.5m (4-storey) street wall to New Street. The ACZ1 additionally proposes a 5m upper level setback to both street interfaces.
57. Again, the ACZ1 has applied a blanket street wall height along Maroondah Highway. However, as opposed to maximum building height I am supportive of a consistent street wall as it assists in achieving the envisioned boulevard character.
58. Whilst the properties along Maroondah Highway vary greatly in physical characteristics (as discussed previously within ‘Overall Building Height’), a common characteristic that these properties share is their interface with Maroondah Highway.
59. Maroondah Highway is an open and robust road streetscape context that readily absorbs mid-rise built form. More specifically, the proposed 21.5m street wall provides a comfortable level of enclosure within a 30m wide road reserve and appropriately frames this space.
60. Further, the 3D modelling accompanying this statement demonstrates that the proposed 21.5m street wall height and 5m upper level setback along the northern portion of Maroondah Highway maintains solar access to the southern footpath between 11am and 2pm on September 22.
61. Similarly, the proposed 14.5m street wall to New Street responds to the narrower context of New Street being a 20m road reserve – and in conjunction with the proposed 5m upper level setback – maintains solar access to the eastern footpath at 2pm on September 22.

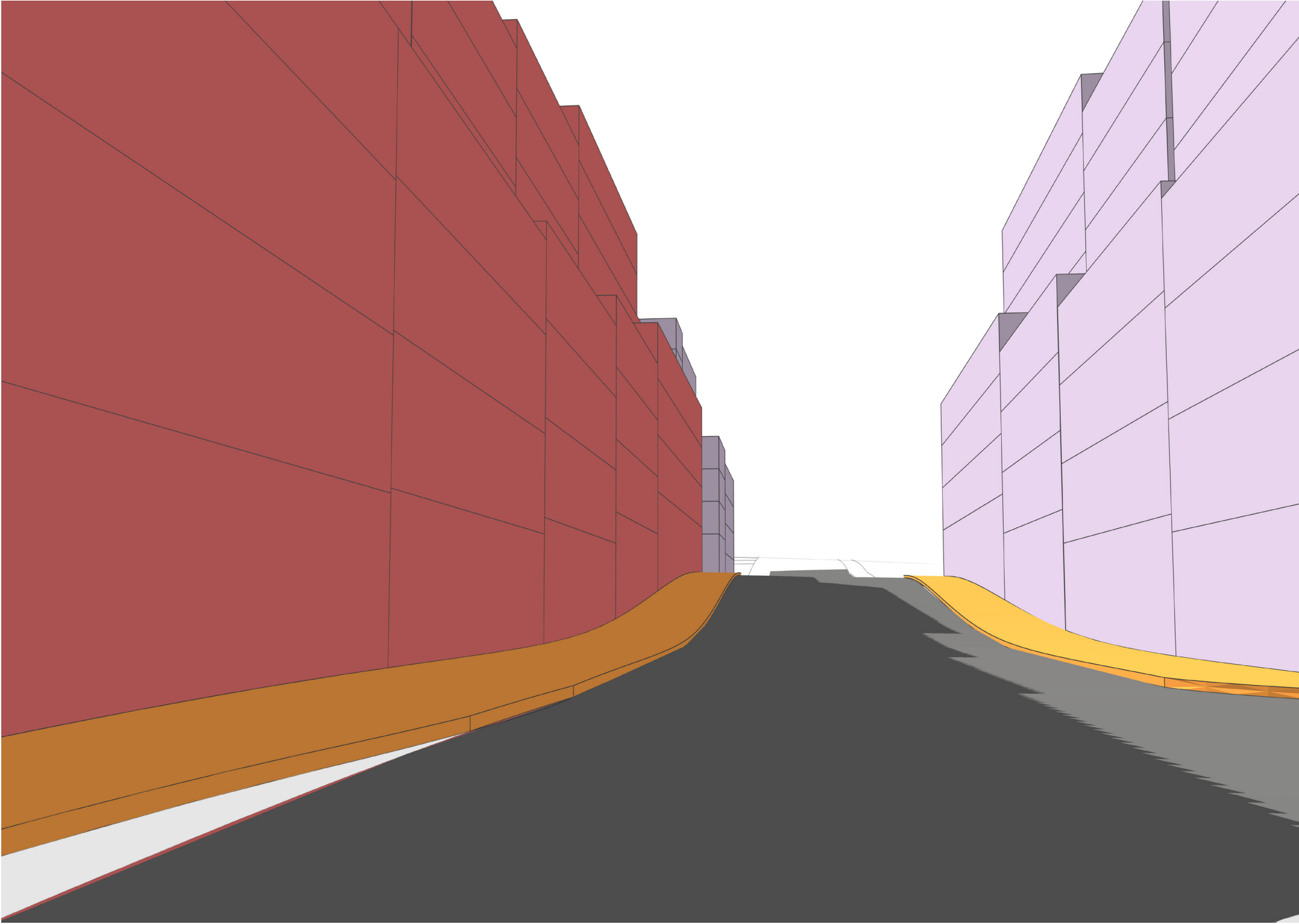
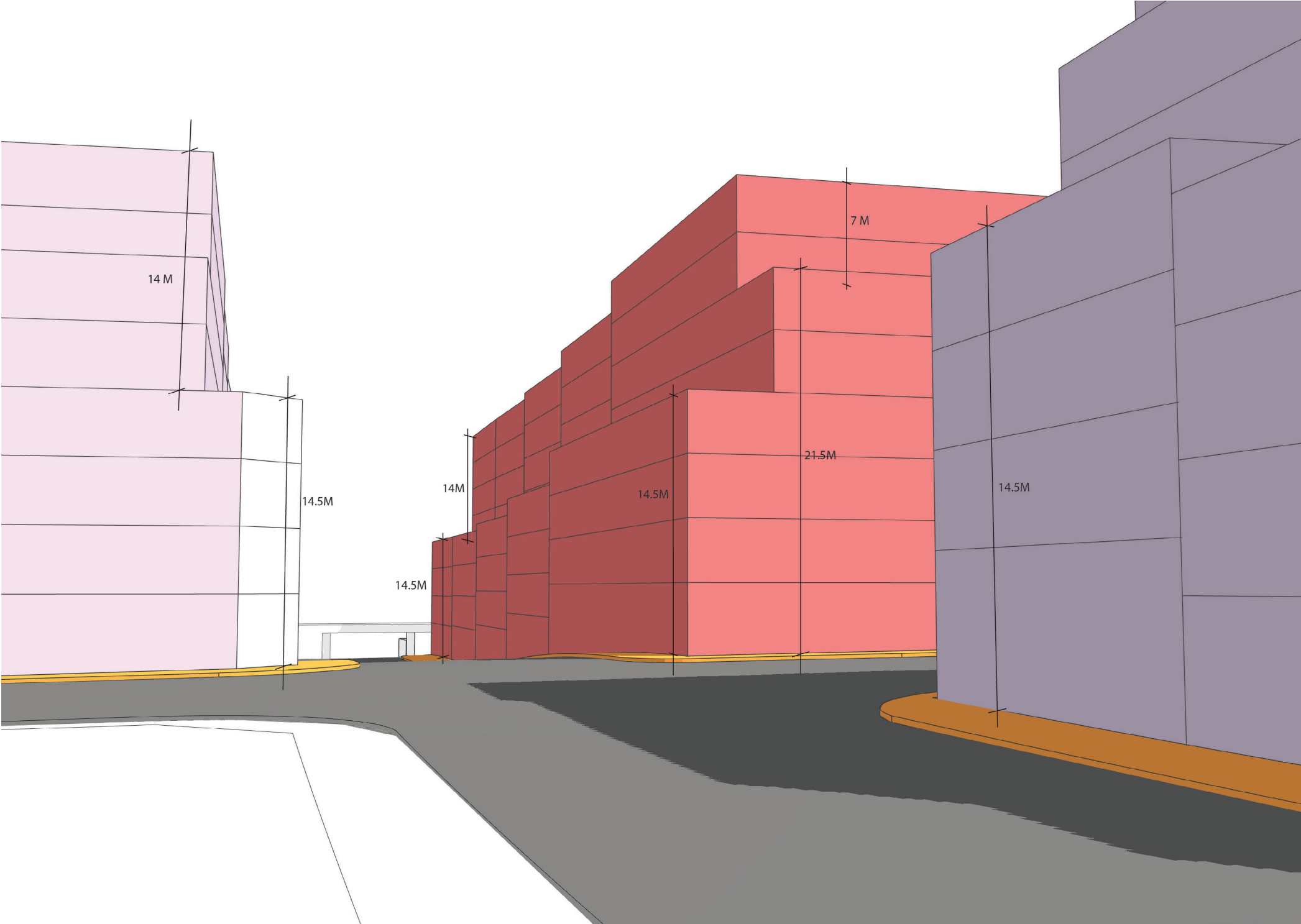


Figure 13: Looking north from the centre of New Street (slightly north of the railway corridor (pink mass = proposed controls, red = potential additional massing))

All diagrams show an overall massing volume only and do not portray buildable footprints. Any development within this envelope would have to address building separation, articulation and design quality on a case specific basis.

Urban Design Discussion

62. Having regard to the proposed boulevard character and absence of side setback requirements, I am supportive of the intent to omit side setback requirements for the street wall.
63. Owing to the linear nature of this commercial corridor, oblique views down the street will inevitably result in a continuity of built form that could only be 'broken down' by excessive and onerous side setbacks. In my opinion, building separation below a height of 6-8 storeys is not required for a comfortable urban environment within a commercial context such as Maroondah Highway.
64. Finally having regard to upper level setbacks, I have already expressed my support for the proposed 5m setbacks based on solar access to footpaths. Further the proposed upper level setbacks provide for a strong distinction from the street wall and is a generally accepted urban design principle for upper level setbacks of larger development lacking heritage constraints.
65. Therefore, I am supportive of the proposed street wall heights and upper level setbacks.



4.4 Other Considerations

Other Considerations

66. Having regard to other considerations, the ACZ1 proposes to maintain solar access to footpaths between 11am and 2pm on 22 September and seeks to minimise the overshadowing of proposed open space between 11am and 2pm on 22 June (beyond that of the shadow cast by a street wall). I note this is a discretionary control and site specific circumstances will impact on design and decision making.
67. I am generally supportive of the proposed overshadowing controls for the following reasons.
68. Firstly, Maroondah Highway is envisioned as a commercial boulevard and I consider maintaining solar access in addition to the proposed footpath widening to be appropriate measures for achieving these aspirations.
69. The portion of Maroondah Highway adjoining the subject also comprises a bus stop which will benefit greatly from maintained solar access and footpath widening.
70. Secondly, New Street is likely to be a tertiary street with regards to pedestrian activity and adjoining commercial uses. Further, it is a generally accepted that maintaining solar access to north-south streets is particularly difficult given the length cast by morning and afternoon shadows.
71. However, the 3D modelling accompanying this statement demonstrates that the substantial depth of the subject site can readily accommodate upper level setbacks and maintain solar access to the eastern footpath.

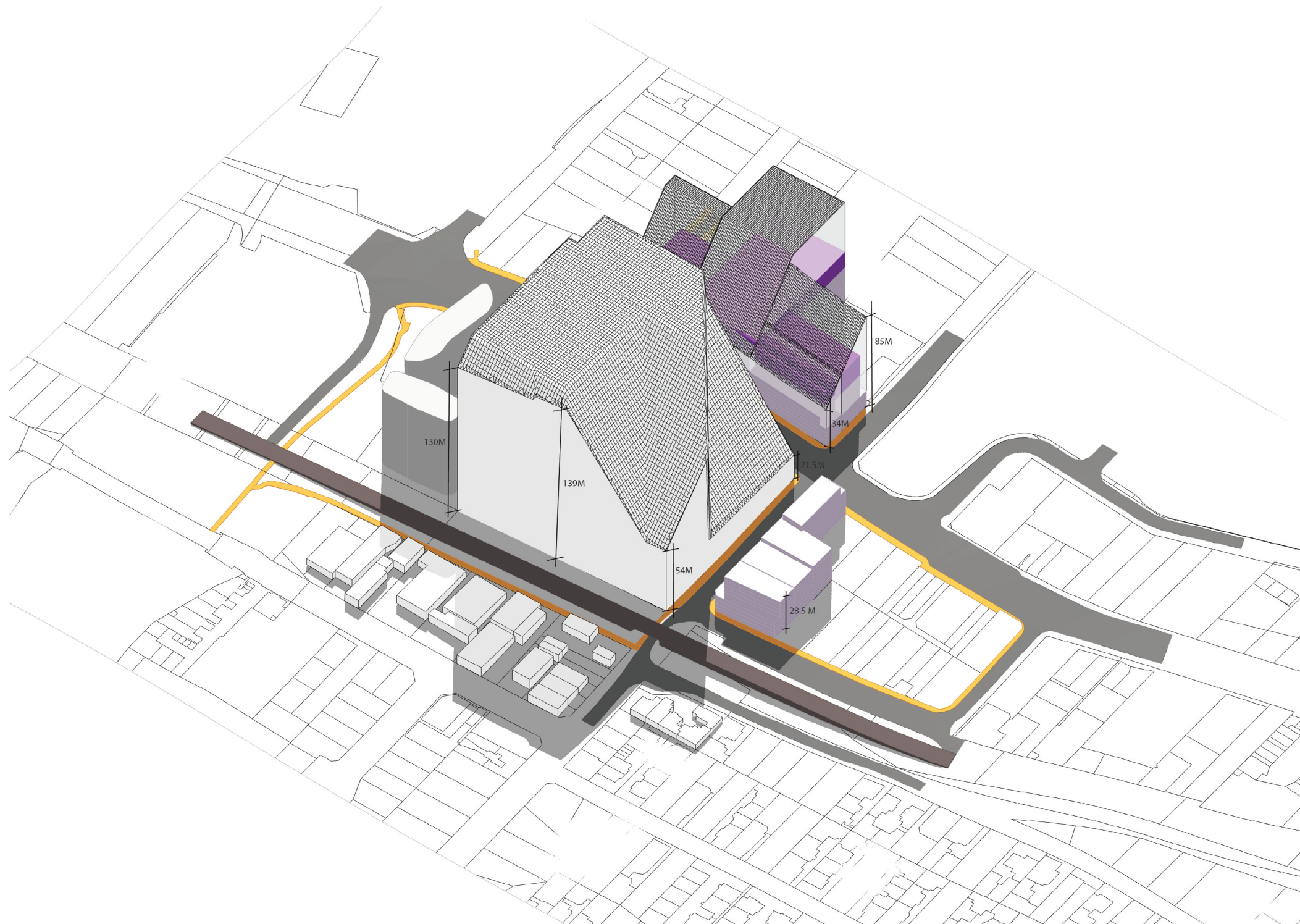


Figure 15: Solar envelope limiting any additional overshadowing of GRZ properties. The above shows that the built form could reach 54-193 metres in height in the southern portion whilst still addressing the overshadowing objectives. (pink mass = proposed controls, red = potential additional massing)

5.1 Conclusion

72. In conclusion, I support the strategic intent of the Amendment as it provides an updated urban design review of the Ringwood MAC that is broadly grounded in the urban design principles established within the previous strategic work.
73. I support certain aspects of the Amendment including the desire to create a coherent boulevard along Maroondah Highway through the application of a 21.5m (6-storey) street wall and a 5m upper setback.
74. I also support certain public realm amenity considerations of the Amendment including maintaining solar access to footpaths between 11am and 2pm on 22 September and the 4m setback from the kerb to facilitate footpath widening along Maroondah Highway.
75. However, whilst there is a logic behind provide a consistency in street wall height, upper level setbacks and solar access along the entirety of Maroondah Highway, I am challenged by the blanket application of height controls across Precinct 2 and the potential for it to be contextually dismissive of the physical realities and opportunities of the subject site.
76. Therefore, I make the following recommendations from an urban design perspective:

a. Increase the maximum building height requirement the subject site to around 58m (16-storeys) in the south western portion.

b. Include a requirement for the subject site to transition down to the north and east of the site in response to the street wall heights and preferred building heights and footpath overshadowing controls.

Appendix A

Name and Address

Amanda Roberts (MUrban Planning, BLandArch, BArchStud, AILA)
Urban Designer and Landscape Architect
Director, SJB Urban Pty Ltd
Level 5, 18 Oliver Lane
Melbourne VIC 3000

Qualifications and Experience

- Master of Urban Planning (MUrban Planning): The University of Melbourne
- Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (BLandArch) (First Class Honours), The University of Adelaide
- Bachelor of Architectural Studies (BArchSTud), The University of Adelaide

2013-present: Director (since 2016), SJB Urban
2012-2013: Team Leader Subdivisions & Urban Design, City of Wyndham
2007-2012: Urban Designer, Places Victoria (VicUrban)
2006-2007: Urban Designer, Department of Planning & Community Development
2002-2003: Landscape Architect, Hames Sharley, Perth
2001-2002: Technical Officer, City of Stirling, Perth
1999-2000: Urban Design/Landscape Architect, Heaton Associates, UK
2010-present: Tutor, occasional Lecturer, The University of Melbourne
2015 –present: Member ODASA review panel

Area of Expertise

My area of expertise is Urban Design, derived from my professional experience in urban design practice, landscape architecture practice, and state and local government urban design, as well as my tertiary qualifications in Landscape Architecture and Urban Design. Within this field, my specific expertise and experience includes the following:

- Design Review:
 - Representative for State Government on review panels for Melbourne Docklands;
 - Lead Urban Design review member for Places Victoria on Melbourne Docklands and Dandenong;
 - Lead Urban Design review member for local government projects, City of Wyndham;
- Project manager of the Gehl Places for People study on Melbourne Docklands;
- Independent Urban Design Reviews for Councils, including Yarra;
- Urban Design Advice on a range of development proposals and locations;
- Urban Design Analysis and Assessment and preparation of Urban Context Reports;
- Preparation of Development Plans, Master Plans and Urban Design Frameworks for public and private sector clients
- Urban development research, investigation, modelling; and
- Landscape Architectural practice - design, documentation, administration on a range of residential, commercial and master planning projects.

I have been assisted in the preparation of this statement by Campbell Gullock (Urban Designer) and Bhuvnesh Mundhra (Urban Designer).

Instructions Which Define the Scope of this Report

I am engaged by Burro Group Pty Ltd. I have received written instructions from Contour, 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 Maroondah Planning Scheme with respect to the subject site and surrounding area.

Documents Taken Into Account

- The Maroondah Planning Scheme and relevant Background Documents and Incorporated Documents, most notably:
 - Ringwood Transit City Urban Design Masterplan (2004).
 - Ringwood Transit City Public Domain and Landscape Guidelines (2006).
 - Ringwood Western Gateway Urban Design Review (2007).
- The exhibited documentation for Maroondah C130, most notably:
 - The Explanatory Report for Maroondah C130.
 - Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre Masterplan 2018.
 - Activity Centre Zone (ACZ1 – Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre).
 - Ringwood MAC Background Report.
 - Ringwood MAC Urban Design Guidelines (including Case Studies).

- Various State Government Documents, most notably:
 - Victorian Urban Design Guidelines (2017).
 - Planning Practice Note 60: Height and Setback Controls for Activity Centres (September 2018).
- The submission made by Contour on behalf of Barro Group Pty Ltd (dated 27/03/2020).
- The Endorsed Plans for 28-30 Maroondah Highway, Ringwood (reference M/2016/985/D, dated 14/05/2020).
- The relevant requirements of Planning Panels Victoria, most notably the Guide to Expert Evidence (2019).
- Various documents and correspondences related to the above.

Summary of Opinions

Refer to the conclusion of this statement

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. I have made all the inquiries that I believe are desirable and appropriate and that no matters of significance which I regard as relevant have to my knowledge been withheld from the Panel.



Amanda Roberts
Director, SJB Urban

Appendix B

QGIS 3.4.4

- GIS data (shapefiles) downloaded from data.melbourne.vic.gov.au and data.vic.gov.au
 - Building Outlines 2015
 - Contours
 - Footpaths
 - Property Boundaries
- GIS data re-projected (GDA94 / MGA zone 55)
- GIS data clipped down to required area

Rhino 5.14 & Grasshopper

- Develop Grasshopper script to import shapefile geometries and attributes into Rhino
- Develop Grasshopper script to create:
 - Context built form and development activity by extruding geometries to height (Australian Height Datum) specified in attribute table
 - Surface from contour lines and attribute height (AHD)
 - Block boundaries from region union of footpath and property geometries
 - Roads and blocks from split surface using block boundaries
- Model indicative envelopes ‘manually’ based on provisions of ACZ1
- Extrude indicative building mass of the adjacent under construction site based on endorsed plans in M/2016/985/D
- Extrude site upwards
- Subtract ACZ1 street wall and upper level setback controls
- Solar analysis
 - Develop Grasshopper script using Ladybug component to:
 - Set Sun path
 - Produce envelope on site avoiding any overshadowing of neighbour’s private open space and the adjacent footpath, on the equinox between 11am and 2pm – calculated at 15 -minute intervals and mapped onto a 20cm grid (high resolution)
- Subtract solar analysis envelope

SJB Urban

sjb.com.au

We create spaces people love.
SJB is passionate about the
possibilities of architecture,
interiors, urban design
and planning.
Let's collaborate.

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