206 HIGH STREET
Context & Design Response Report

REVISION T1

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INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared by K2LD Architects on behalf of Chapter Group, who is the planning permit applicant with respect to the development of 206 High Street, Windsor.

The purpose of this report is to document the key urban design characteristics of both the subject site and its broader context. This should influence future development and assess how the proposed development responds to this context.

The proposal is for the replacement of a double storey car services garage with a 6-storey mixed use development.

Section 1 provides an overview of the project, firstly describing the project aspirations, then, members of the project team and an overall summary.

Section 2 documents the existing characteristics of the subject site, including opportunities and constraints and relevant policies that govern our site.

Section 3 provides key details of the strategic and policy context to inform future redevelopment of the subject site and outlines a number of corresponding urban design principles.
1.1 Project Aspiration

Activity around the immediate precinct near the intersection of High Street and Chapel Street has seen considerable change in recent years. There has been a substantial number of residential developments in and around this area, and there have been important infrastructure developments as well such as the new multi storey Prahran High School fronting High Street just past the west side of Chapel Street.

Melbourne’s inner ring of suburbs – particularly those up and down the length of Chapel and Church Streets, are in high demand for high quality commercial space. Many notable technology firms, and other ‘new economy’ enterprises are moving into these areas seeking creative locations with good access to transport and amenity infrastructure. This recent growth has led to many other small businesses utilising co-working spaces in and around these inner suburbs.

This scheme is an six storey mixed use/commercial scheme which will provide six levels of high quality A Grade commercial space, supported by mixed use/retail on the ground floor. The scheme will have basement car parking and it will include extensive End of Trip facilities.
1.2 Project Team

Client
Architect
Town Planning Consultant
ESD Consultant
Waste Engineer
Wind Consultant
Traffic Engineer
Landscape Architect

Chapter Group
K2LD Architects
SJB - Planning
Umow Lai
Salt 3
Vipac
Traffix
Papworth Davies
02
ANALYSIS
ANALYSIS

2.1 Location - City of Stonnington

116k
Population

2,563
hectares
Land Area

45.33
persons per ha
Population Density

Gender
52%
Female

48%
Male

Age

18-34
38%

35-44
14%

45-54
12%

55+
25%

Household Income (weekly)

< $649 per week
14%

$650 - $1749
27%

$1750 - $3999
34%

$4000 - $8000
15%

Gender
2.2 Location - Windsor

The project site is located within the suburb of Windsor, situated approximately 5kms from the city of Melbourne. Historically, Windsor is known as the more affordable, bohemian end of the popular Chapel Street shopping strip. However, with the increasing density in the city of Stonnington there are signs of a changing dynamic. This is seen in the local vernacular, which is equally diverse.

Windsor is described in the Chapel Street Revision Structure Plan as:

“A colourful and bohemian urban neighbourhood with a slightly retro feel. Chapel street Windsor comprises a diversity of stores and has a cosmopolitan and vibrant atmosphere with a strong student presence (...) (Windsor) provides a local and a unique shopping experience with a strong street focus with footpath trading/dining and eclectic bar.”

and:

“(Windsor) has a distinctive Victorian and Edwardian character comprising predominantly two-three storey Victorian era scale buildings along Chapel Street, a fine grain pattern of subdivision and residential in streets of Chapel Street. The Chapel Street street scape in Windsor is the most sensitive, oldest and intact heritage street scape within the Centre.”
2.3 History of Windsor

Known at first as Prahran South, it was connected by railway to Melbourne and Brighton in 1860 and by a loop line to St Kilda the year before. (The latter ceased serviced in 1862, and is traceable today by the linear reserve which runs into Gladstone Street.) The locality was settled with small farms and a scatter of houses and business premises. There was a Windsor Castle Hotel, from which the area’s name may have originated, and the name of the railway station was changed from Chapel Street to Windsor in 1867.

Due to its slight elevation over other areas of Prahran, Windsor’s area was generally more favored for settlement. Whilst the areas in the north and east of the Prahran municipality attracted merchants and villas, Windsor and the southern part of the municipality attracted residents of lesser means.

Windsor is connected to the Chapel Street retailing spine. Tram networks were established and serviced Chapel Street in 1888, and an extension added in 1891 to the St Kilda route. Although the giant Emporia of Chapel Street were further north, the Windsor section had a solid range of drapers, footwear sellers and homewares merchants. There were several garment factories in and behind Chapel Street. Windsor’s census population in 1911 was 3593.

Source: Victorian Places - Windsor
2.4 Heights

Building heights in direct proximity to the subject site vary strongly. Directly across High Street from the subject site are several buildings consisting of 5-7 or more levels. To the south, along Victoria Street, there are still a number of single level properties. However, several developments along Victoria Street have resulted in double, three and more level properties.

Directly adjacent to the east of the site along Victoria Street a 5 level building has been granted a planning permit and to the west of the subject site a 7 storey has just been constructed.

Legend

- Parking
- 0-2 levels
- 3-4 levels
- 5-6 levels
- 7 or more levels
- Subject Site

○ 5 storey building
   Approved

○ 7 storey building

○ 4 storey building

○ 6 storey building

○ 6 storey building

Figure 2.4.1 - Map outlining existing building heights
2.5 Lot Sizes

Lot sizes in the immediate vicinity of the subject site vary greatly. There is an overall repetition of the 'finer grain' all throughout Windsor featuring small repeated shop lots or town houses. There are the occasional, larger (at various scales) lot sizes embedded within the finer grain that provides a break in the repetitive rhythm - an example of this is our subject site.

According to the Victorian Heritage Database Report, these larger scale lots are a result of the amalgamation of several smaller adjacent blocks and shop terraces, introduced in the 1880s.

Furthermore, depending on the network of streets some lots also feature a double street frontage. If it’s on the Activity Centre Zone, these double street frontages could provide the lot with greater retail opportunities.
2.6 Land Uses

The subject site is located within the Chapel Street Activity Centre.
Land Uses in the Wider Precinct

This page explores the various land uses of Windsor at a precinct wide scope. The following land uses were investigated: residential, educational, commercial and parklands.
2.7 Amenities and Connectivity

Located in a well serviced activity centre, the site has a wide variety of amenities in close proximity. Along High Street the No. 6 tram line runs from Glen Iris through the Melbourne CBD to Brunswick. Along Chapel Street, the No. 78 tram line connects North Richmond to Balaclava. Both the Windsor and Prahran train stations are within a 10 minute walk, with both having the Sandringham train service. This service runs to Flinders Street Station in approximately 15 minutes. Many civil amenities, such as Centrelink, Prahran Town Hall, Prahran Library and the St Matthews Church are all within walking distance. Melbourne Polytechnic and the Prahran High School are among the educational institutes close to the subject site.

For entertainment aside from the vast range of local restaurants, bars and cafes, there are the Now Showing Cinema and the renowned Astor Theatre. For live performances there are the David Williamson Theatre and Impro Melbourne. The cafe facilities close by include the Windsor and Hornbrook Children’s Centres and the Avenue Hospital. In addition to these there are the many local doctors, physio and dental clinics. Close by supermarkets include Foodworks along Chapel Street. For leisure the Victoria, Grattan and Princess Gardens and the Chris Gahan Reserve are within walking distance.

Legend

- Subject Site
- Public Park
- Tram stop

Key Amenities

1. Centrelink
2. Prahran Town Hall
3. Prahran Library
4. St Matthews Church
5. Melbourne Polytechnic
6. Prahran High School
7. David Williamson Theatre
8. Impro Melbourne
9. Supermarket
10. Windsor Childrens Centre
11. Hornbrook Childrens Centre
12. Hospital

Nearby Licensed Venues

1. The Smith (Licensed)
2. Galah (Licensed)
3. Neptune (Licensed)
4. 188 High St. (Licensed)
5. Hannoi Hannah (Licensed)
6. Huxtaburger (Licensed)
7. Charlie Dumpling (Licensed)
2.8 Walk Score

Situated at the intersection of Chapel St and High St, the site is easily accessible by tram networks, and is within walking distance to the train network.
2.9 Planning Overlays

Planning overlays to the surrounding sites include a Heritage Overlay applicable to the immediately adjacent buildings west of the subject site. There is also a Development Plan Overlay in place for an area to the east of High Street. However, none of these overlays apply to the subject site.

Legend

- **HO**  Heritage Overlay
- **DPO**  Development Plan Overlay
- **Subject Site**
2.10 Policy Context

High level strategic guidance for the development at 196-206 High Street in Windsor is provided through a range of organizations and documents, notably:

**ORGANIZATIONS**
- Planning department at the City of Stonnington
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning at Victoria State Government

**POLICY DOCUMENTATION**
- Stonnington Planning Scheme
  planning-schemes.delp.vic.gov.au
- Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria
- Chapel Revision Structure Plan

These documents have been read, studied and understood in the context as applicable to 196-206 High Street and its direct surroundings. Applicable policies and quality guidelines have been distilled and combined in the following design principles.

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION**
The referenced documentation outlines a number of strategic directions for urban consolidation in well serviced locations. It is found that community, cultural life and economy - both existing and future - lie at the heart of these directions.

**BUILDING MASSING**
The referenced documentation promotes good urban massing motivated from two main perspectives. Firstly, massing should be informed by the strategic direction that is appropriate to the site.

**NEIGHBOURING CONTEXT**
Secondly, the referenced documentation prescribed how considerate urban design massing is informed by the preexisting conditions of the local context.

**ARCHITECTURAL APPEARANCE (HIGH / VICTORIA ST)**
The referenced documentation acknowledges that architectural design - or the form, scale and appearance of a new building - is dependent on the strategic direction, building massing and neighbouring context.
2.11 Subject Site

Address:
196-206 High Street, Windsor

Site Area:
2082m²

Site Frontage:
High Street
Victoria Street

Existing Building Type:
Double Storey, service

Existing Building Use:
Used as a car-services garage
Formerly functioned as a factory

Figure 2.11.1 - Satellite photo showing the subject site
2.12 Street Profiles

The street profile along Hornby/Banga Street provides an informative outline of the building profiles along this end of Windsor.

The 12 and 7 level developments to the northern side of High Street are visible, with some of the smaller grain existing conditions to the foreground. Alongside the subject site - between High Street and Victoria Street - the average building height is slightly taller and growing with the approved developments at 43-45 Victoria Street and 168-176 High Street.

To the south side of Victoria Street it is clearly visible how the street scape varies from single storey Victorian and Edwardian cottage and terrace houses to the more recently developed multi-storey townhouses and apartment complexes.
2.13 Street Elevations - High Street
Site Elevation - Victoria Street
2.14 Site Opportunities

- Enhance the existing street scape character of High Street and Victoria Street, through a modern building form that balances future character aspirations with valued existing context.

- Provide a high quality contribution to the public realm through considered building design and strategic orientation to stimulate activation and passive surveillance.

- Provide a benchmark for a building height that meets the desired character intentions, whilst being sensitive to the existing street scape character and scale.

Site Constraints

- Physical site constraints associated with the site boundary, immediate surrounding interfaces and preexisting context.

- Coordination of building design together with mandatory planning controls such as the Stonnington Planning Schemes, the Chapel Street Revision Structure Plan and the Urban Design Guidelines.

- Providing contemporary architectural design that references and respects existing heritage buildings within the High Street street scape.
03 DESIGN RESPONSE
3.1 Architectural Statement

This site at 196-206 High Street, Prahran has been occupied in various forms since the 1850s. Since 1992 the two storey brick warehouse has been used as a repair shop for the John Blair Honda car dealership. It is a substantial infill site that exists at a point of transition along the southern side of High Street being the point of termination of the long mostly two storey street wall which begins at Chapel Street. The site and exiting building also has a similar large presence along the northern side of Victoria Street where it terminates an older finer grained streetscape to the west with a more diverse range of low to medium rise building types to the east.

The north side of High Street, east of Chapel Street, begins with a number of two storey shops before it steps up to a substantial five storey multi residential building with ground level retail. Further along at 201 High Street, and approximately opposite the 206 High Street site, is a large seven storey residential complex which wraps around the corner of Clifton Street this building then step up to a 12 storey high building on Clifton Street.

The south side of High Street, east of Chapel Street, begins with an unbroken, and mostly heritage, Victorian era retail street wall. It begins at three stories at Chapel Street then steps down to an unbroken two storey street facade until it adjoins 206 High Street.

The street wall continuity dissolves somewhat east of 206 High Street. Noting the change in urban condition, this proposal takes the scale of the two storey wall and mimics the rhythm of the Victorian street wall with rectangle screening expressions. These screening expressions will share a similar architectural language as the proposed building form above. At ground floor, the proposed shopfront is broken into a regular rhythm similar to the shopfronts to the east, cladded with brick with regular punched shopfront windows/glazing. The two storey southern street wall is finished in brick cladding and regular punch windows to achieve a residential interface to the Victoria Street context.

To the upper form above the podium, we have introduced a screened architectural expression on the façade, giving it a recessive reading to the overall form. This screening of vertical fins in an earthy terracotta tone will allow an overall built form that sits comfortably & recessively within the context of the site. It also responds to the residential characteristic of the southern side of the subject site. The upper screening is eroded in some locations to break the mass in a subtle manner allowing some “peeping” of the office activity behind. The terracotta toned screening also provides shading to the occupants of the building and assisting in managing cooling load.
3.2 Urban Design Principles

A Larger and more active public realm

Currently 206 High Street is a relative opaque car repair workshop, and its High Street frontage is part of a quite narrow pedestrian precinct. This proposal includes retail shop fronts and a new commercial office lobby.

This will make the site more permeable, and will provide activation to the frontages.

Consideration of Neighbouring Heritage Context

The site at 206 High Street is adjoining a heritage overlay & it will look to the scale, materiality and grain of the nearby properties as devices to modulate the design proposal. New work whilst contemporary, will be respectful to precincts and streetscapes with a heritage overlay.

Support for mixed-use activity

This proposal includes ground floor retail activity with frontages on High Street. The increase in retail activity will be well supported by the workplace population from the floors above & the immediate neighbourhood.
3.2 Urban Design Principles

**Ground Plane Activation & Grain**

The planning at the ground plane is at a scale that reflects the immediate urban grain. There is an opportunity for a larger ground plane retail anchor tenant, but its presence on the street is at a similar scale to the new and nearby retail frontages.

**Home to a New Workplace**

This proposal is for an six storey mixed use building which includes at least five levels of contemporary workspace.

Creating a work space with that is user-centric with its high quality working environment, and one that intelligently maximizes sustainability over the long term.

Meeting these standards are important for the development at 206 High Street to be the highest quality and thus meet the relevant expectations demanded by commercial tenants within this growing sector.

**Green & Sustainable**

The object behind sustainable buildings is to create and maintain places that are assessed across three dimensions - financial, ecological and social sustainability. These dimensions are fundamentally intertwined and exceptional ESD buildings will have excellent outcomes for both human health and whole-of-life costs. They are ‘smart’ buildings that have an indoor environmental quality which enables a high morale and satisfaction within the workplace.

This building will have an important role to play in helping to achieve this. It will enhance human resources and provide environmental systems which support the productive, creative and intellectual capacities of people who will be proud to work there for the long term.
3.3 Podium Facade - External Finishes

- MEDIUM MASONRY
- DARK METAL CLADDING
- VERTICAL LOUVRES
3.4 Podium Facade Design Principles

The podium design is characteristically Windsor.

*Design Intent:*

Respond to the heritage context further west with the design respecting the streetscape grain

Shared language in the facade expressions between the podium and massing above

Defined lobby entry

Street activation on High Street

Maximum aspect from windows
3.5 Upper Facade Design Principles

The upper levels are recessive without being read as a “wedding cake.”

*Design Intent:*

- Shared language in the facade expression to the podium level
- Articulation and erosion of form
- A fifth level which is concealed from view at street level
- Maximise views out whilst controlling heat gain
3.6 Urban Renewal: Transformation of 206 High Street
3.7 Proposed Views

Proposed view from High Street looking west.
3.8 Proposed Views

Proposed elevation view on High Street.
3.8 Proposed Views

Proposed view from High Street looking east.
3.8 Proposed Views

Proposed view from Victoria Street looking east.
3.8 Proposed Views

Proposed view from Victoria looking west.
3.8 Workplace Concept

**THE ‘VILLAGE’ MODEL**

The traditional model of a village is based around the idea of various single units of operations working in conglomeration towards the greater good of its community. This project foresees the architecture to facilitate a sense of community in a similar way; using individual units of operation that could be clustered together to facilitate more complex and larger functions.

In-between spaces are as much if not more important. They facilitate physical communication but also social encounters. This is where informal interactions happen, where ideas can be conceived in a more informal environment.

**WORKPLACE COMMUNITY**

Community in the workplace is fostered by the in-between spaces. In-between spaces are opportunities whereby communication, cooperation and social interactions can be enhanced. Social, health and wellness functions could be introduced in these areas to promote a workplace that puts fitness, wellbeing and the community at the forefront.

Blurred boundaries between office spaces and communal spaces allow for office functions to bleed out into communal spaces.

A Vertical Village...
3.9 Workplace Design Principles

Visual Connectivity
Visual connectivity, both laterally and across levels, are to be facilitated wherever possible to increase ‘social bumps’ and to enhance a greater sense of community.

Communal Gardens
Communal gardens provide occupants with both a strong sense of connection with nature as well as a social activity to which workplace relationships can be fostered.

Self-sustainable
Integration of active and passive sustainable design strategies to create a self-sustainable building.

Workplace Flexibility
Seamless transitions between indoors and outdoor environments whereby the outside acts as an extended place of work.
3.10 Innovative Amenities

Wellbeing Spaces
Gyms, meditation spaces

End of Trip
Bike storage, changing rooms and showers

Outdoor terraces
Green spaces, external extensions to the work place
3.10 Innovative Amenities

Meeting rooms
Of various sizes for a range of functions

Congregation
Internal opportunities for gathering, engagement and exhibition

Breakout spaces
Informal relaxation spaces
3.10 Innovative Amenities

**Social spaces**
Opportunities to create ‘social bumps’ and interactions

**Studio spaces**
Flexible and agile working spaces for ideas generation and discussion

**Learning spaces**
Libraries and sample rooms