

Design Framework

Public Housing Renewal Program

Walker Street, Northcote

July 2017



Public Housing Renewal Program

The Victorian Government is committed to better meeting the housing needs of Victorians. As part of its Homes for Victorians strategy, the government has committed to a \$2.7 billion program of investment into housing and homelessness initiatives. The creation of safe, accessible, affordable and suitable housing is a priority of the government.

The Public Housing Renewal Program is a \$185 million commitment to redevelop a number of ageing public housing estates into vibrant, better-connected, mixed-tenure neighbourhoods where people can live in housing that is safe and secure. DHHS wants to grow social housing in these areas because they are close to transport, education and work opportunities, as well as support services. Social housing at each estate will increase by at least 10 per cent and deliver properties that better suit the needs of tenants.

The Walker Street site is one of nine public housing sites identified in stage one for renewal as they consist of buildings that are rundown and have high maintenance costs. The “walk-up” buildings were commonly constructed in the 1960s without lifts, making them inaccessible to people with mobility issues, families with small children and older Victorians.

This project aims to improve conditions for residents and meet the growing need for social and private housing that suits smaller households in areas with access to services, job opportunities, education and public transport.

The project aims to deliver replacement housing by using an approach that involves the Director of Housing:

- 1. using the equity in under-utilised land to build more social housing through a commercial relationship with the private sector, the State’s delivery agency Development Victoria and/or community housing sectors; and
- 2. redirecting the proceeds from the sale of land for private development and strategically leveraging program funding to partly or wholly fund the construction of the new social dwellings.

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Contents

1.0	Introduction	5
<hr/>		
2.0	Design Principles	7
<hr/>		
3.0	Location & Site Context	9
	Location Context	9
	Site Context	10
	Site Context - Elements	11
<hr/>		
4.0	Planning Context	13
<hr/>		
5.0	Opportunities and Constraints	14
<hr/>		
6.0	Site Analysis	15
	Built Form	15
	Movement Networks	16
	Landscape	17
<hr/>		
7.0	Design Response	18
	Built Form	18
	Movement Networks	19
	Internal Connections	20
	Amenity	21
	Parking	22
	Landscape	23
	Section	25
	Shadow Study	27

1.0 Introduction

The Walker Street, Northcote site is located approximately four kilometres from central Melbourne in the municipality of Darebin.

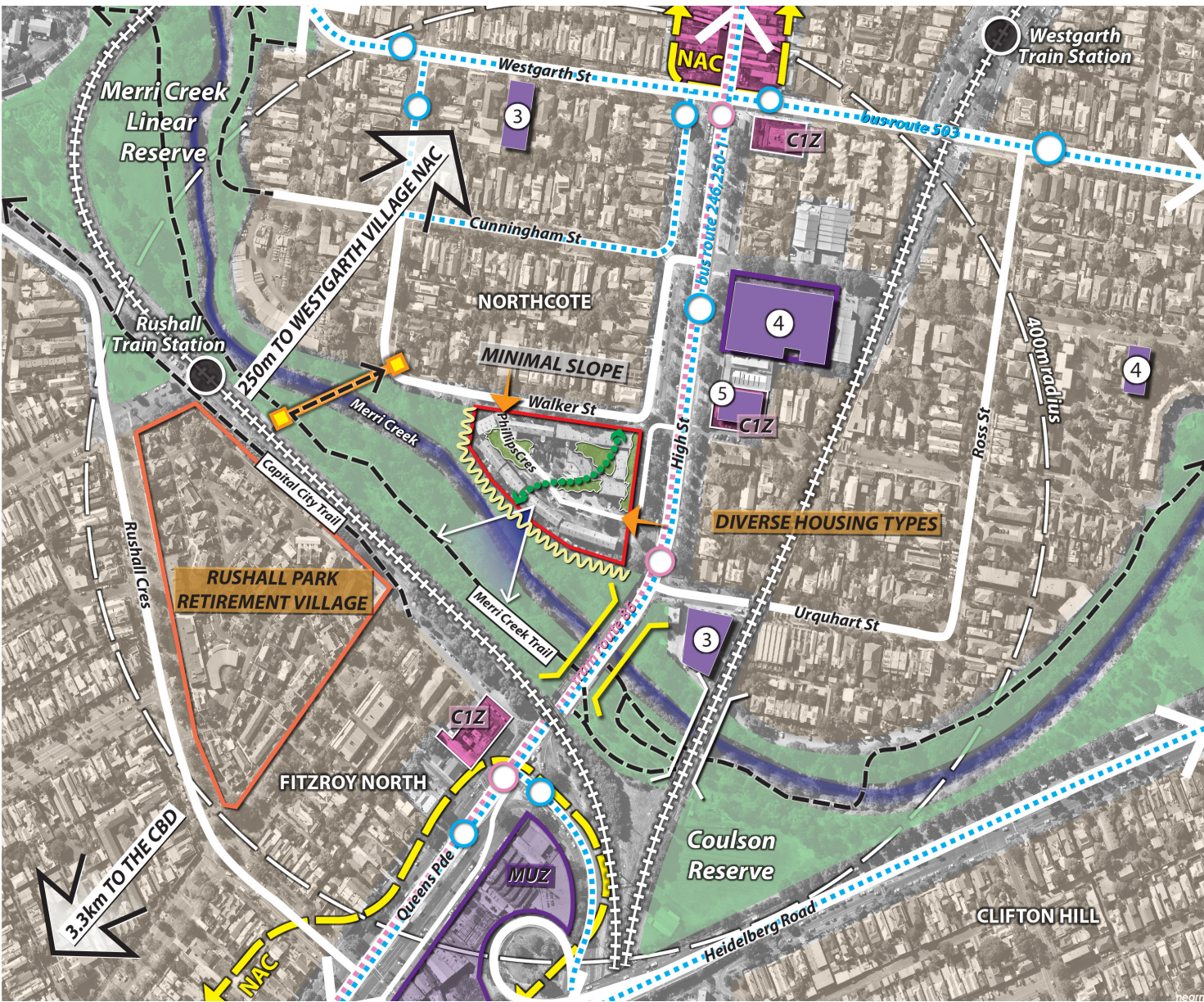
The site is zoned Neighbourhood Residential Schedule 1 (NRZ1). The land is subject to the provisions of the following overlays: Development Contributions Plan Overlay Schedule 1 (DCPO1); Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 (ESO1).

The project will involve the demolition of the existing 87 dwellings across two walk-up family and singles general blocks which will be replaced with a mix of public and private dwellings. There will be an increase of at least 10% of social housing on the site.

The site is irregular in shape and has an area of approximately 1.06 hectares. The site accommodates an array of post war three and four storey walk-up flats, ancillary buildings and communal open space incorporating a playground. The land contains scattered mature and semi-mature trees.

Tram services are available to the site along Walker Street and the nearest Metro Station is Rushall Station, less than 400 metres walk to the east. The Northcote High Street Commercial zone is within 270 metres to the north of the site.

Development within the locality is generally one or two storey and there are few examples of high density development or tall buildings nearby. The nearest apartment building is a four and five storey new-build located around 670 metres to the north of the subject site on High Street.



2.0 Design Principles

Design Principles for the Public Housing Renewal Program were established by the Department of Health & Human Services, other key stakeholders from the Office of the Victorian Government Architect (OVGA) and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) at a series of three workshops in November 2016. Extensive discussion took place around a range of draft design principles for the projects and commentary from all stakeholders was recorded and integrated into the final design principles for the project shown.

01 - Public Land Assets Maximise the social, economic and environmental ‘return’ of public land assets and ensure the economic viability of the project.	02 - Sustainable Development Deliver a sustainable and high quality development that contributes to the longevity of housing stock and minimises the cost of living.	03 - Safe Places Create safe buildings and spaces throughout the site.	04 - Site Features Respond to the features of the site, such as context, aspect, topography and significant vegetation.	05 - Neighbourhood Contribution Integrate with the surrounding area by responding to existing or preferred neighbourhood character, enhancing the public realm and existing networks and delivering ‘good neighbour’ outcomes.
06 - Tenure Equity Balance issues of equity in the successful delivery of market and social housing that is ‘tenure blind’.	07 - Non-Residential Uses Provide retail, commercial or community uses to meet an identified local need or stimulate local activity and participation.	08 - Active Transport Prioritise pedestrian and bicycle access within the site.	09 - Legibility Establish legible access and address points for the site, buildings and spaces, including defining private, communal and public spaces.	10 - Social Integration Foster social connections between residents and the wider community.
11 - Residential Amenity Provide high levels of residential amenity and livability.	12 - Integrated Landscape Provide landscaping and communal open spaces that is resilient and enhances the sense of place, sustainability and livability of the site and local area.	13 - Accessibility + Adaptability Deliver buildings and spaces that are accessible, practical for people of all abilities and readily adaptable to respond to the future needs of residents.		

Site Context

Walker Street is a tree-lined residential street with on-street parking. On the north side, there are predominantly one and two storey dwellings. The DHHS apartment blocks on the south side are three and four levels but set back some four metres from the site boundary.

High Street Close is effectively the service road to High Street which has been in part colonised by the DHHS apartments and used for on street parking, a garbage enclosure and a one-on-one basketball court.

The site slopes from Walker Street towards the creek with a level bench along Walker Street.

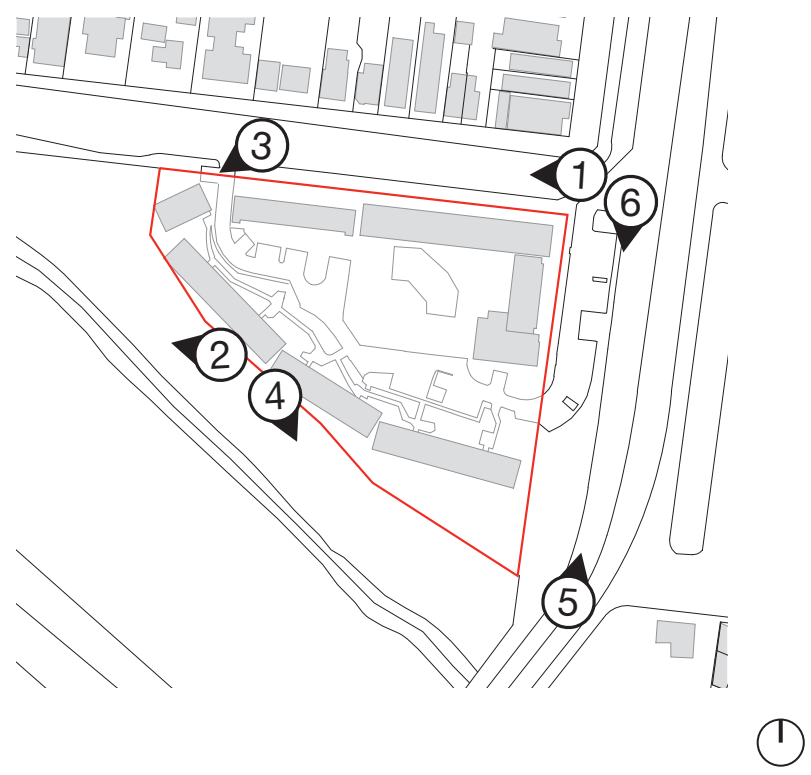
Philips Court off Walker Street and Hales Court off High Street Close provide access to the site with the internal road linking informally through the site.



Site Context - Elements

Interfaces

The site has two heavily treed interfaces with Merri Creek Reserve. The northern interface is with fine grain, low scale residential housing. To the east is a service road, Hales Court, and main road, High Street. The site has a significant slope from north to south.



1. Northern interface with fine grain residential housing on Walker Street



2. Southern interface, looking west, with Merri Creek Reserve



3. Western interface between site and Merri Creek Reserve



4. Southern interface, looking south-east, with Merri Creek Reserve



5. Eastern interface with service road, Hales Court

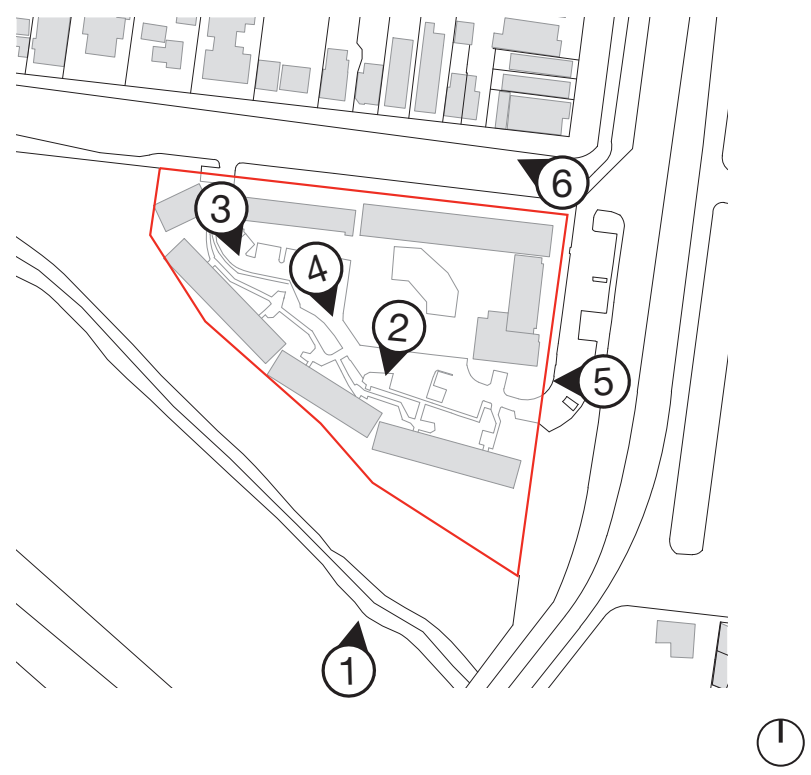


6. Eastern interface with service road and High Street

Site Context - Elements

Aspect and Prospect

Aspect and prospect to and from the site shows the range of urban conditions present. Views of the site from the surroundings are generally dominated by three to four storey housing blocks through trees. Views out of the site are varied and engage with fine grain residential housing, Merri Creek Reserve and elevated distant views of the CBD.



LOOKING IN



1. Looking north from the other side of Merri Creek

LOOKING OUT



2. Looking south towards the CBD



3. Looking south-east into the site



4. Looking out across the site to the South-East from an elevated position



5. Looking west from Hales Court



6. Looking out to Walker Street

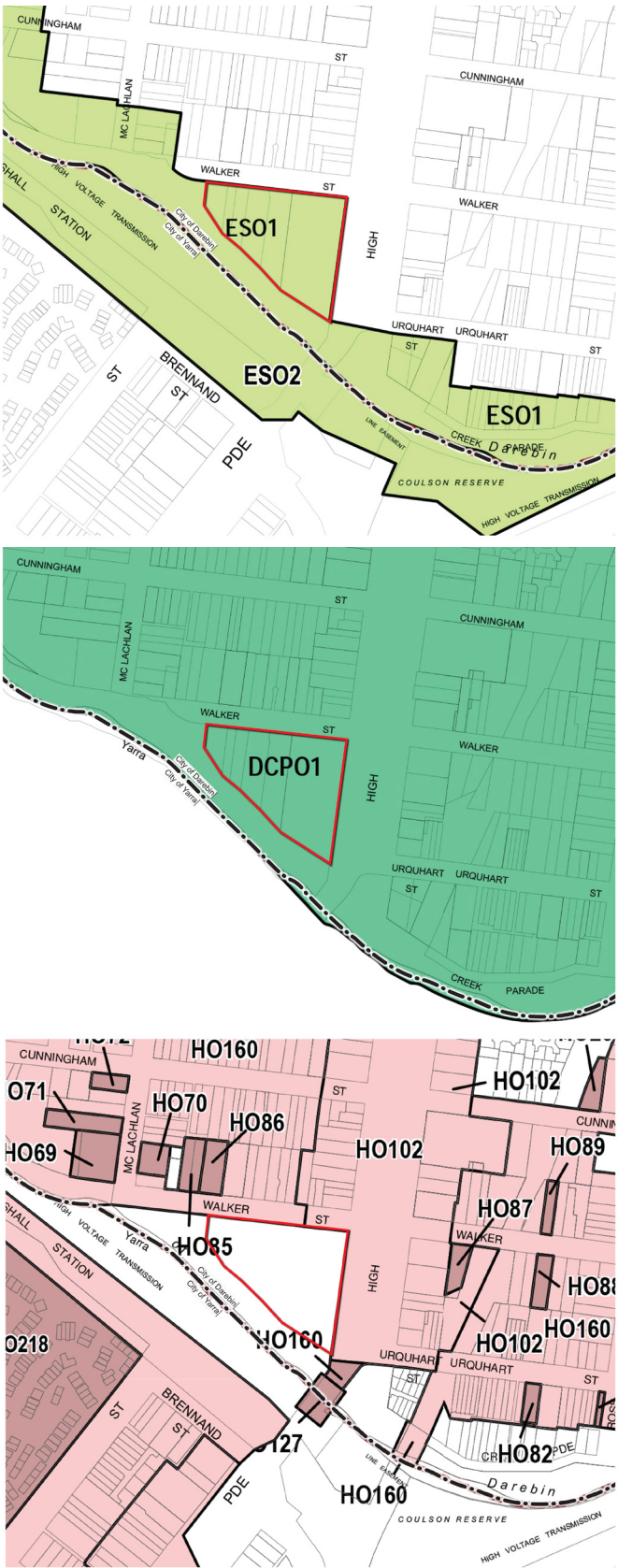
4.0 Planning Context

The site is currently included within a Neighbourhood Residential Zone – Schedule 1 (NRZ1), where the purpose is to recognise areas of predominately single and double storey residential development and to ensure that development respects the identified neighbourhood character, heritage, environmental or landscape characteristics.

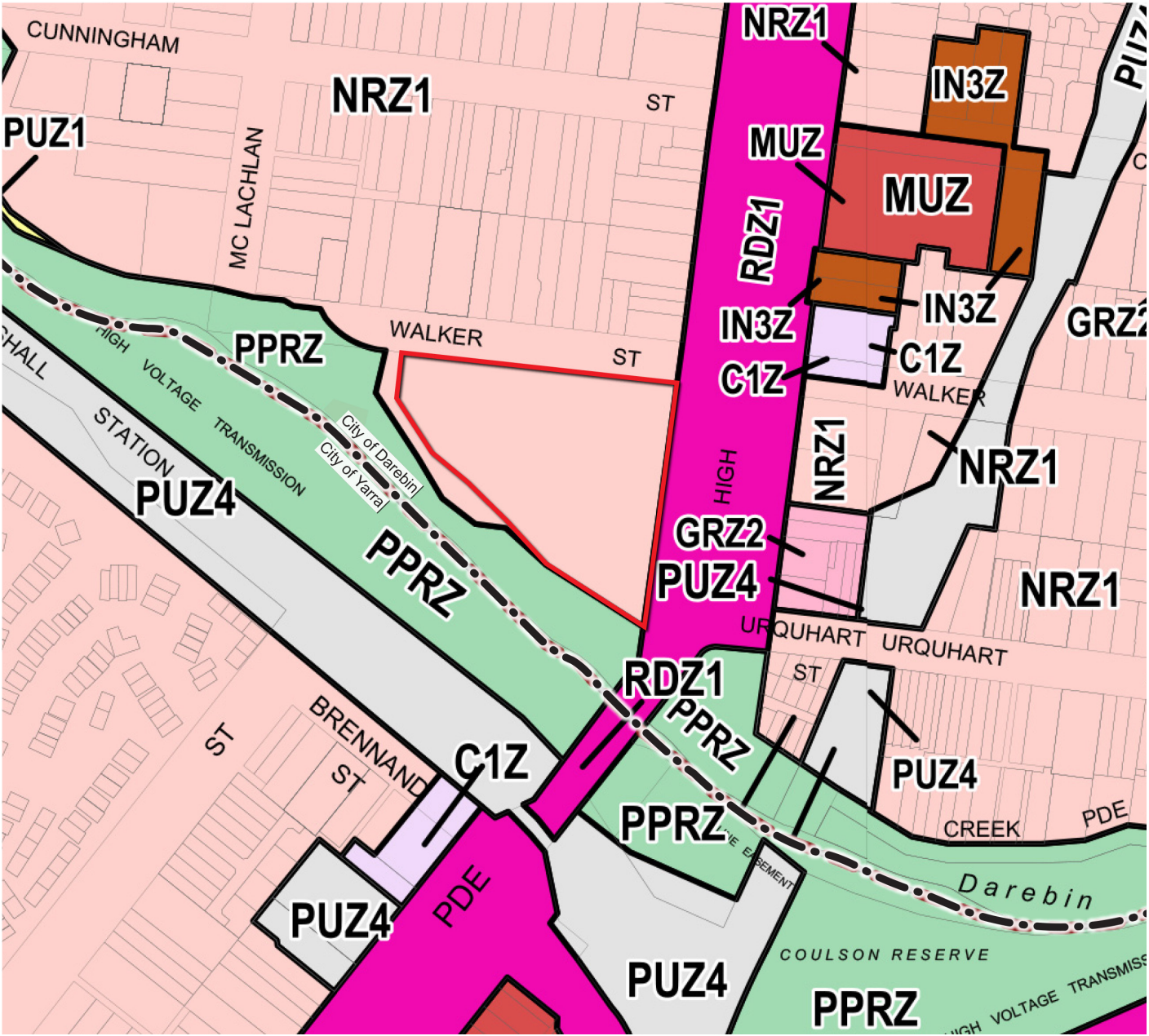
The site is affected by 2 overlays. The Environmental Significance Overlay – Schedule 1 (ESO1) requires development to be compatible with the environmental values of Merri Creek and environs. The Development Plan Overlay - Schedule 1 (DCP01) requires development contributions for the provision of works, services and facilities in accordance with the City of Darebin Development Contributions Plan. The site is identified as being within an Area of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sensitivity. The land to the north and east is affected by a Heritage Overlay (HO102 and HO160).

The site is designated a ‘minimal housing change area’ in Clause 21.03, where a modest level of development may occur that respects the type, scale and character of the area.

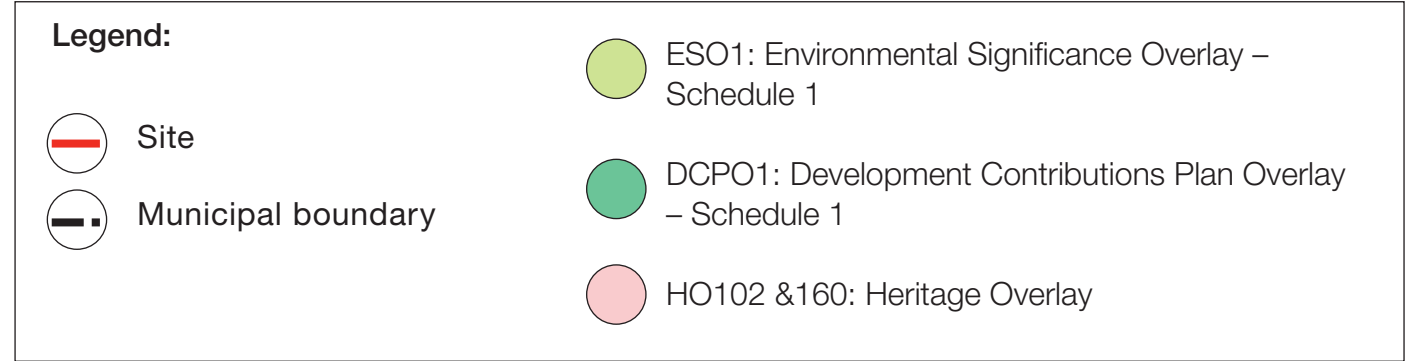
The site is included within Precinct 1 of the High Street Corridor in Clause 22.05, where it is policy to retain the predominantly low-rise residential, historically significant built form character and streetscape.



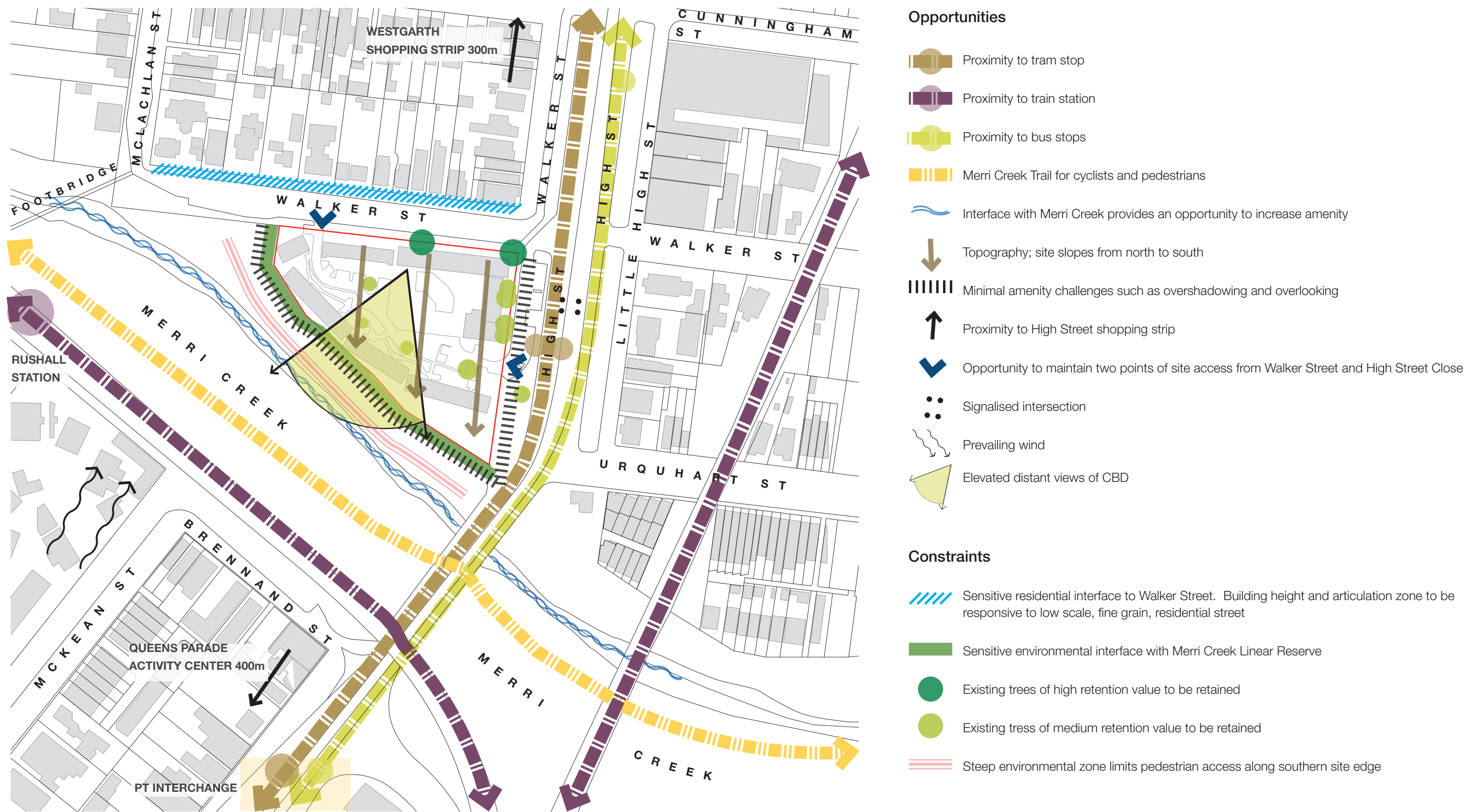
Overlay Plans



Zoning Plan



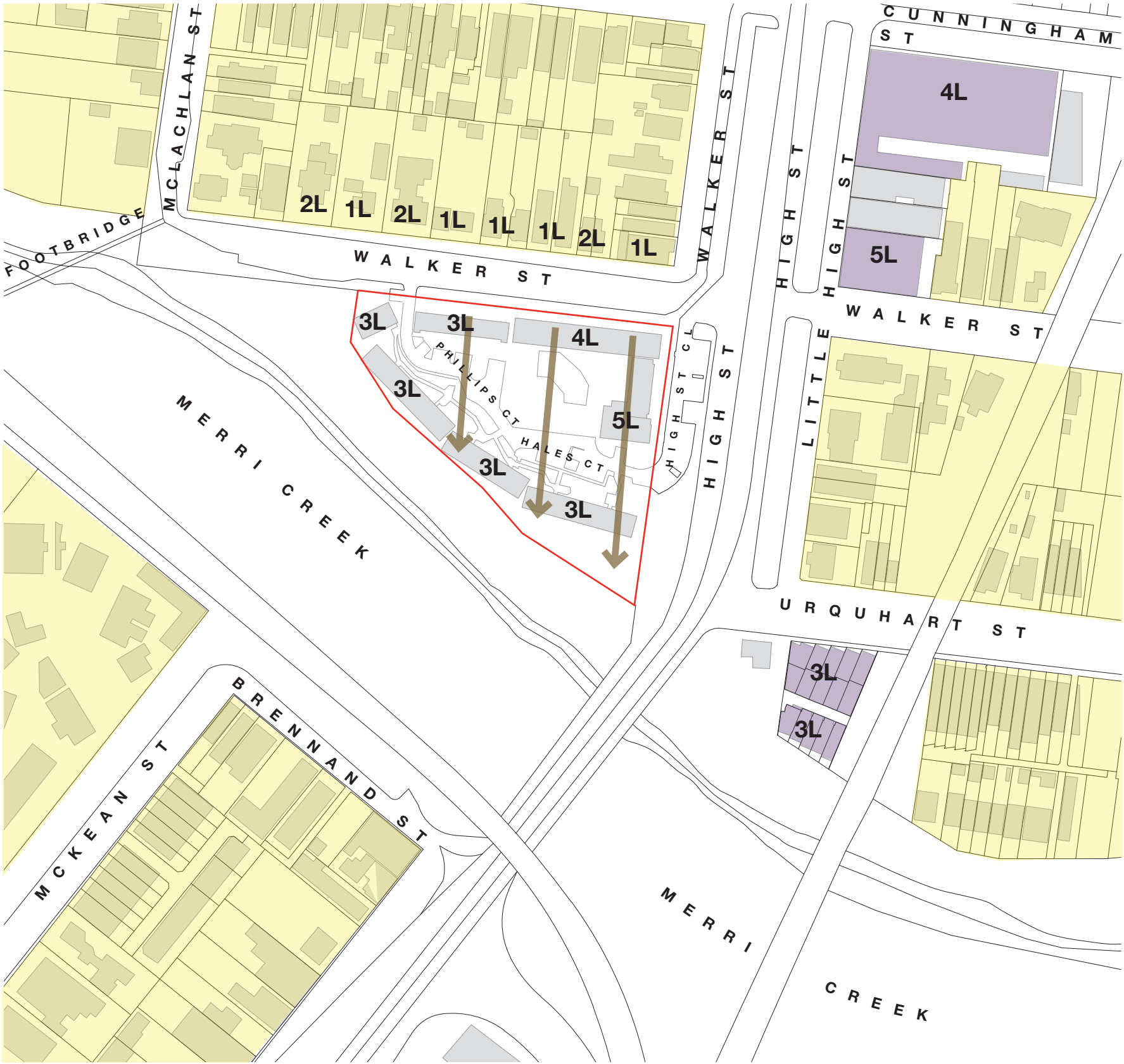
5.0 Opportunities and Constraints Plan



Walker Street, Northcote

6.0 Site Analysis

Analysis - Existing Built Form



Building Heights (Storeys) & Established Residential Zones

The site sits between a Heritage Overlay area of predominantly one and two-storey attached and semi-attached Victorian and Edwardian dwellings to the north and the Riparian Zone of the Merri Creek to the south. An Environmental Significance Overlay includes the Merri Creek easement and the whole of the subject site.

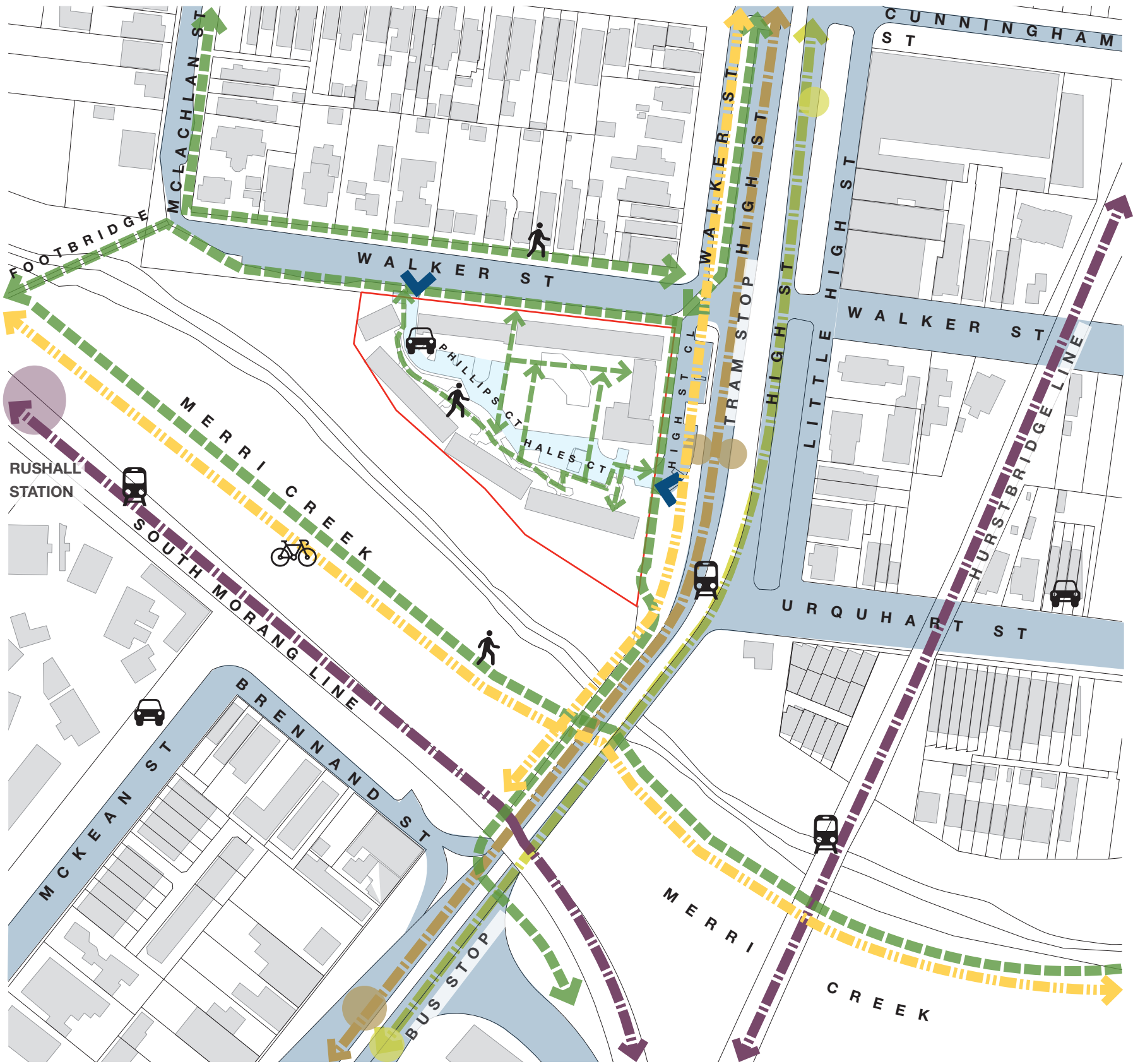
The existing apartment buildings are typical 3-5 level walk-ups with the five-level building fronting High Street. The site is irregular in shape and the buildings are arranged around the perimeter to create a central open space interspersed with carparking areas.

Topography

The site falls three metres from north to south and then further down into the Merri Creek beyond the site boundary. There is a relatively flat bench along Walker Street that forms the sites for the existing buildings.

- Legend:**
- Recent development
 - Established residential area
 - 5L** Number of storeys/levels
 - Direction of fall

Analysis - Existing Movement Networks



Pedestrians

Existing Pedestrian pathways through the site link the street to buildings and at-grade carparking. An additional pedestrian access point is located centrally along Walker Street.




There are footpaths on both sides of Walker Street and a shared path continuing along High Street to the east that links to the Merri Creek path, on to the Clifton Hill Neighbourhood Activity Centre to the south, and the Westgarth shopping strip to the north.

Bicycles

There is a shared path along High Street (designated as Walker Street and High Street Close). Cyclists also use the existing road network and the footbridge across the Merri Creek to link to the Capital City Trail and Rushall Station.

Public Transport

The 250/251 Bus route travels along High Street linking the CBD with Latrobe University via Northland Shopping Centre. The number 86 Tram links the Docklands to Bundoora via the CBD and High Street.

-  Bus Route
-  Train Route
-  Tram Route

Vehicles

There are two main entry points shared with vehicles, one off Walker Street at Philips Court and one off High Street Close at Hales Court.

Analysis - Existing Landscape



- High Retention Value Trees**
Three existing trees on the site have been identified as having 'high retention value'. See arborist report for details.
- Medium Retention Value Trees**
Many of the existing trees on the site have been identified as having 'medium retention value'. See arborist report for details.
- Low Retention Value Trees**
Many of the existing trees on the site have been identified as having 'low retention value'. See arborist report for details.
- No Retention Value Trees**
Two existing trees on the site have been identified as having 'no retention value'. See arborist report for details.
- Existing trees outside site boundary

Tree Assessment, Walker Street, Northcote prepared by Tree Consultant & Contractors, 31.01.2017
Site Survey Plan, Walker Street Estate, Northcote prepared by Land Development Consulting, Ref 3630, 31.01.2017

7.0 Design Response

Response - Indicative Built Form



Legend:

- Parking podia
- Indicative proposed build form
- Existing trees outside site boundary
- 5L** Number of storeys/levels

Parcel Areas

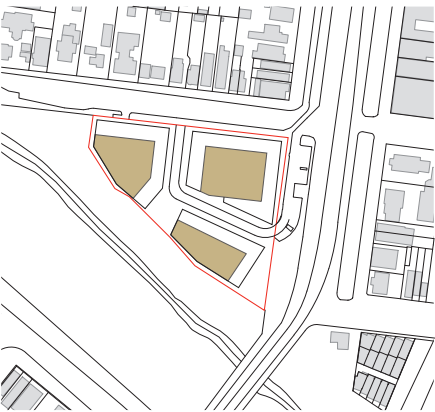
The site layout response depicts three new parcel areas for residential development. Each parcel is composed of two or more new buildings and is served by existing or new street access network.

Based on this indicative built form diagram, the analysis on the previous pages and modelling, this site could accommodate up to 250 dwellings.



Building Footprints & Heights

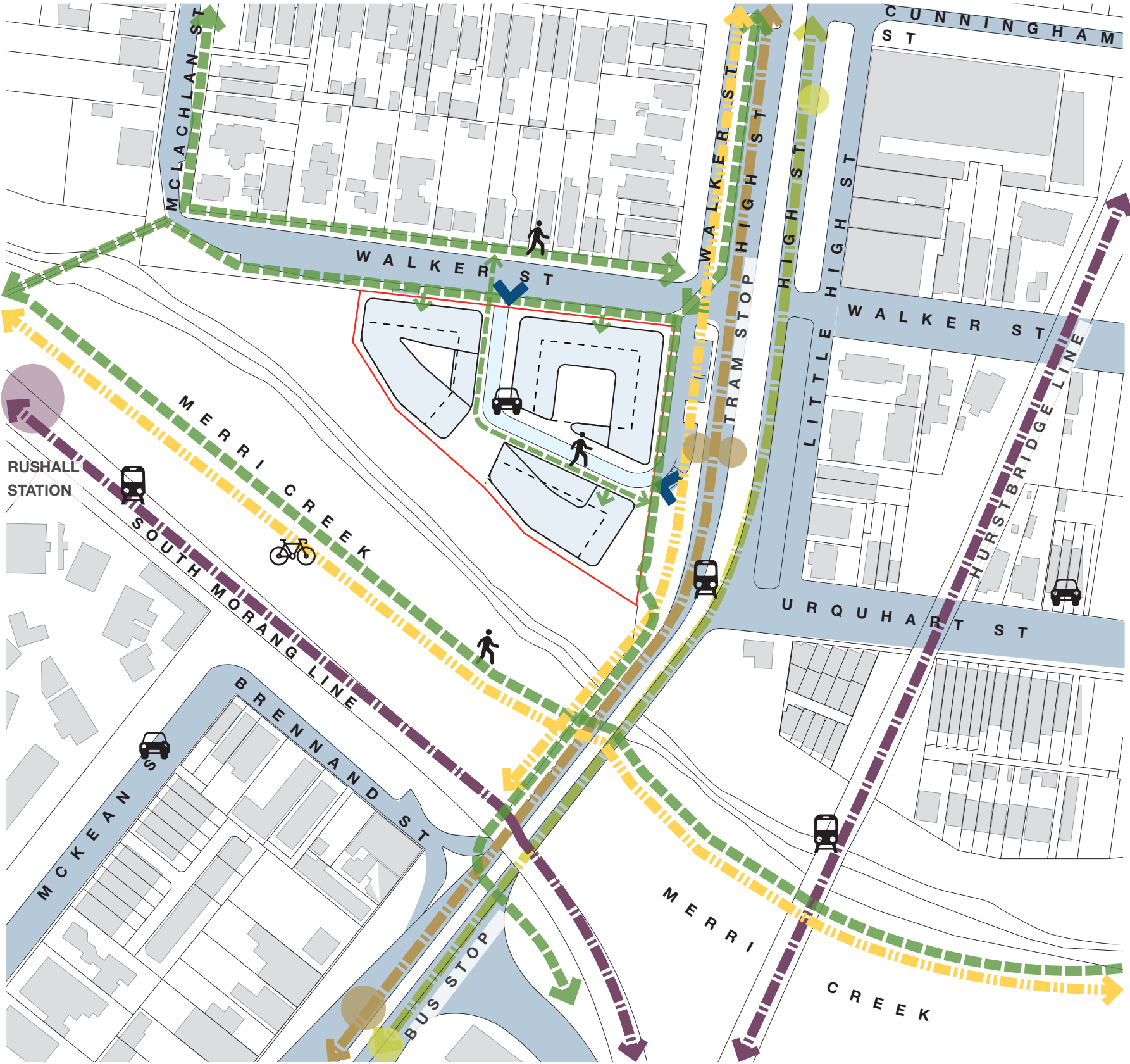
Approximate building footprints and relative heights are suggested. Transitional heights at sensitive interfaces, are proposed. Generally new apartment buildings are sized to be 'double-loaded' and oriented on a north-south axis to acheive ESD Standards. Some non-residential uses may be integrated into the ground floor of some buildings at key points.



Parking Podia

All parking is depicted as 'above ground' as per the brief and integrated into the podium. Podia of varying dimensions and heights are integrated into development parcels and sleeved by residential development where possible. Where parking podia are un-sleeved by residential uses, architectural and landscape screening will be required.

Response - Movement Networks



Pedestrians




A pedestrian spine runs through the site along the road alignment and connects Walker Street to High Street. This route connects to existing surrounding pedestrian networks.

Bicycles

There is a shared path along High Street in the area of the service road which is designated as Walker Street and High Street Close. Cyclists also use the existing road network including the footbridge across the Merri Creek to link to the Capital City Trail. Cyclists coming from Rushall Station will also use the new shared road link through the site.

Public Transport

Pedestrian routes will connect to existing surrounding public transport facilities.

-  Bus Route
-  Train Route
-  Tram Route

Vehicles

A new road links through the site. A new connection is located further east on Walker Street and connects to the existing location on High Street Close. Pedestrian priority will be encouraged. Functional street sections provide on-street parking.

Walker Street, Northcote

Response - Internal Connections



Internal Connections

The principle of direct street access to ground floor apartments will be incorporated into the new scheme. All new buildings should have legible entry and address points for both pedestrians and vehicles.

The new link road reinforces legibility and way finding. The proposed built form along the vehicle and pedestrian link will provide passive surveillance opportunities.

Response - Amenity



Solar Access

New developments on the north boundary of the site should take advantage of unencumbered solar access. New built form should be sited and designed to ensure adequate levels of solar access to public and communal open spaces.

Open Space

Communal open space of generous dimension should be located to provide high amenity to all units. Within individual parcels there are opportunities for podium top landscape.

- Playgrounds/active sports
- Communal gardens (podia top)
- Public gardens/ open space

Views

Configure new built form to take advantage of internal and distant views. Particular opportunities exist for city views across the Merri Creek.

- Elevated views
- Low level views

Passive Surveillance

The proposed built form should reinforce opportunities for passive surveillance both internal to the site and along Walker Street and High Street Close.

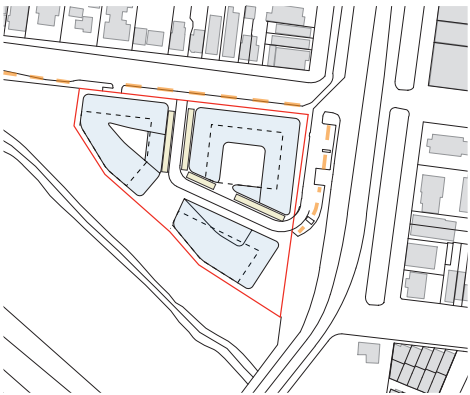
- Passive Surveillance
- Indicative building footprint
- Existing trees outside site boundary

Walker Street, Northcote

Response - Parking



Parking Podia
All parking is to be above ground or street based.



Street Parking
Street parking will be accommodated along the configured internal street. Existing angled parking on Walker Street and High Street Close will be maintained.

- Legend:**
- Surface level visitor parking
 - Roads
 - Indicative building footprint
 - Existing Street Parking
 - 20P** Number of parking spaces
 - Existing trees outside site boundary

Response - Landscape

Tree Retention and New Trees



High Retention Value Trees
Retain the maximum number of high value trees. See arborist report for details.

Medium Retention Value Trees
Retain as many medium value trees as possible that benefit streetscapes and open spaces. See arborist report for details.

Low / No Retention Value Trees
Retain as many low value trees as practical to benefit streetscape and open spaces. See arborist report for details.

New Trees
New trees are proposed to provide amenity to the internal road, main open spaces and street edges.

Indicative building footprint
Existing trees outside site boundary

Response - Landscape

Trees Removed



High Retention Value Trees
One existing tree on the site has been identified as having 'high retention value'. See arborist report for details.

Medium Retention Value Trees
Many of the existing trees on the site have been identified as having 'medium retention value'. See arborist report for details.

Low Retention Value Trees
Limited small low retention value trees removed to allow development of parcels. See arborist report for details.

No Retention Value Trees
Remove one no retention value tree. See arborist report for details.

Indicative building footprint
Existing trees outside site boundary

Response - Section

Section 1: Northern interface with Walker St

The new built form is to be set back to match existing building alignment to create private gardens at ground level.

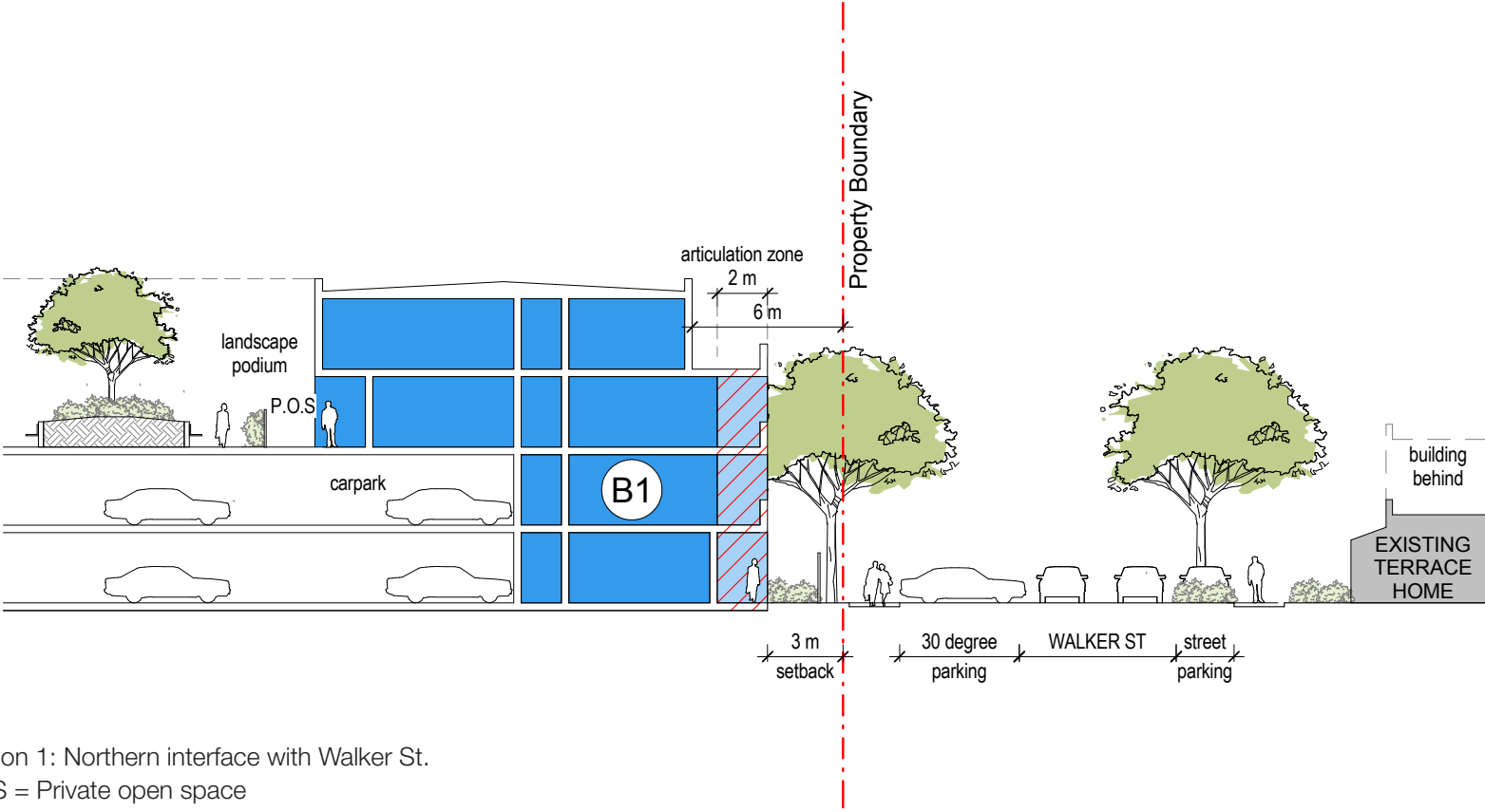
Built form is varied in presentation to the street with predominant three level forms along the street and taller forms working perpendicular to the street. The rhythm and grain of the buildings on Walker Street should respond to the context of the heritage place.

The street cross section remains unchanged with significant trees to be retained within the setback and new trees introduced to reinforce a consistent approach to the streetscape.

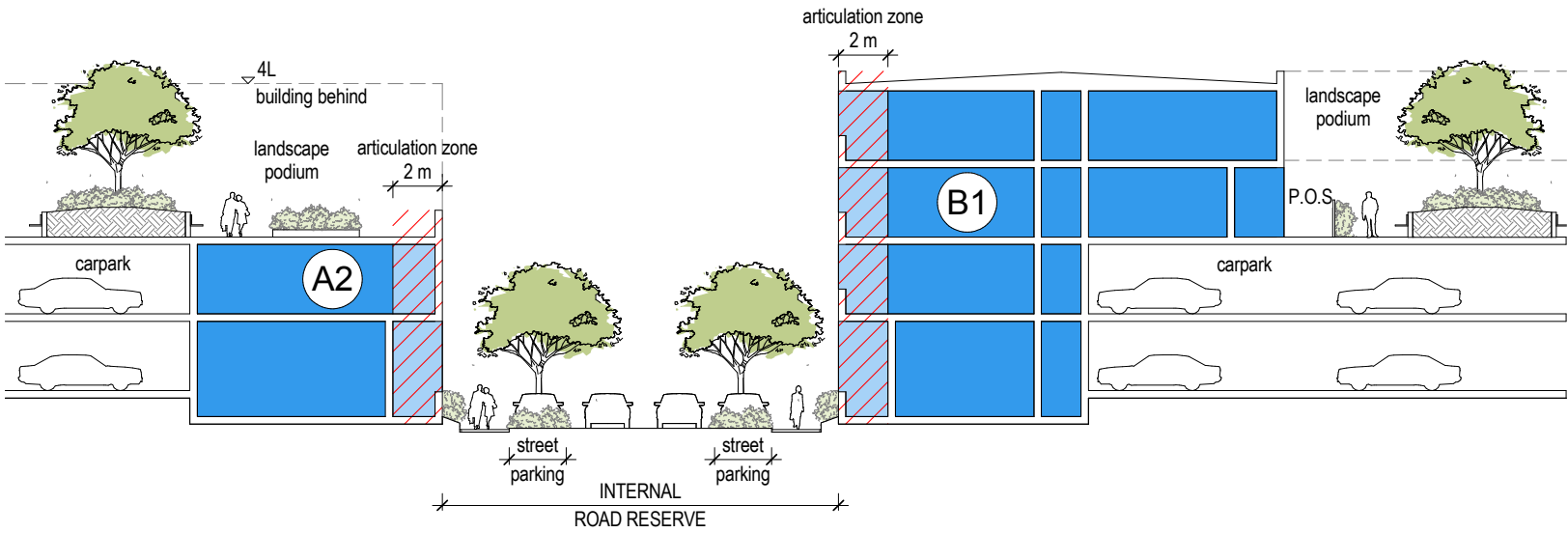
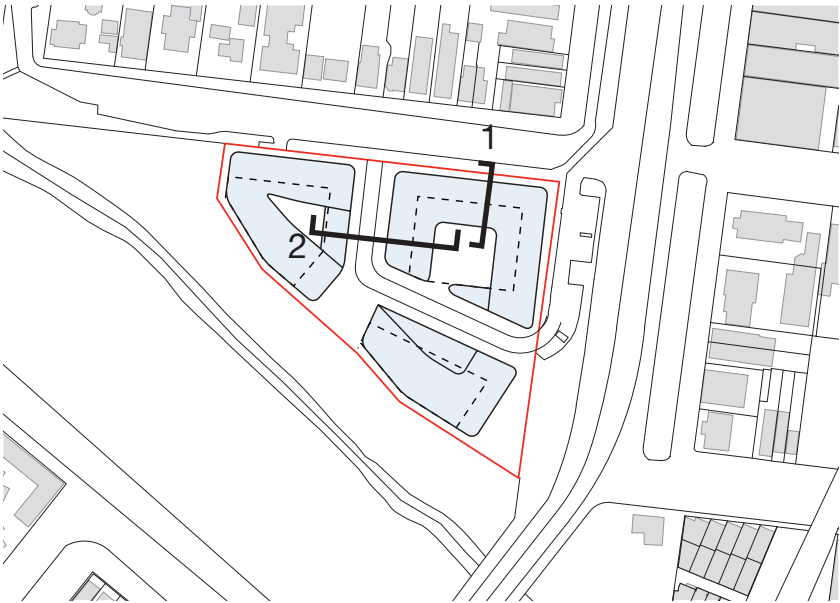
Section 2: Internal street

The internal street is defined as 16m wide to meet council requirements for owning and maintaining the street and to provide access for service and emergency vehicles. The cross-section arrangement allows for indented parallel parking in between street trees with a 5.5m clear pavement for through traffic.

Because the built form is to the edge of the road easement, the ground floor should be articulated as a front porch. A narrow, landscaped zone is provided outside the property boundary to create a zone between the private garden and the public foot path. There are further landscape opportunities around the base of the street trees.



Section 1: Northern interface with Walker St.
P.O.S = Private open space

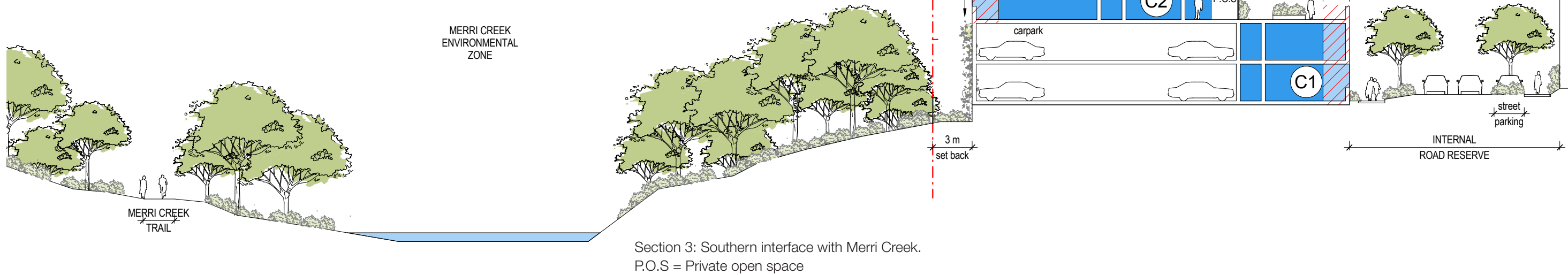


Section 2: Internal street.
P.O.S = Private open space

Section 3: Southern interface with Merri Creek

The internal street at Section 3 is similar to Section 2 except that it needs to accommodate the fall across the site. This means that a verge strip which contains the street tree on the southern side, becomes the device to accommodate the change in level, along with a cross fall on the road. Parallel parking is to be provided on the north side only.

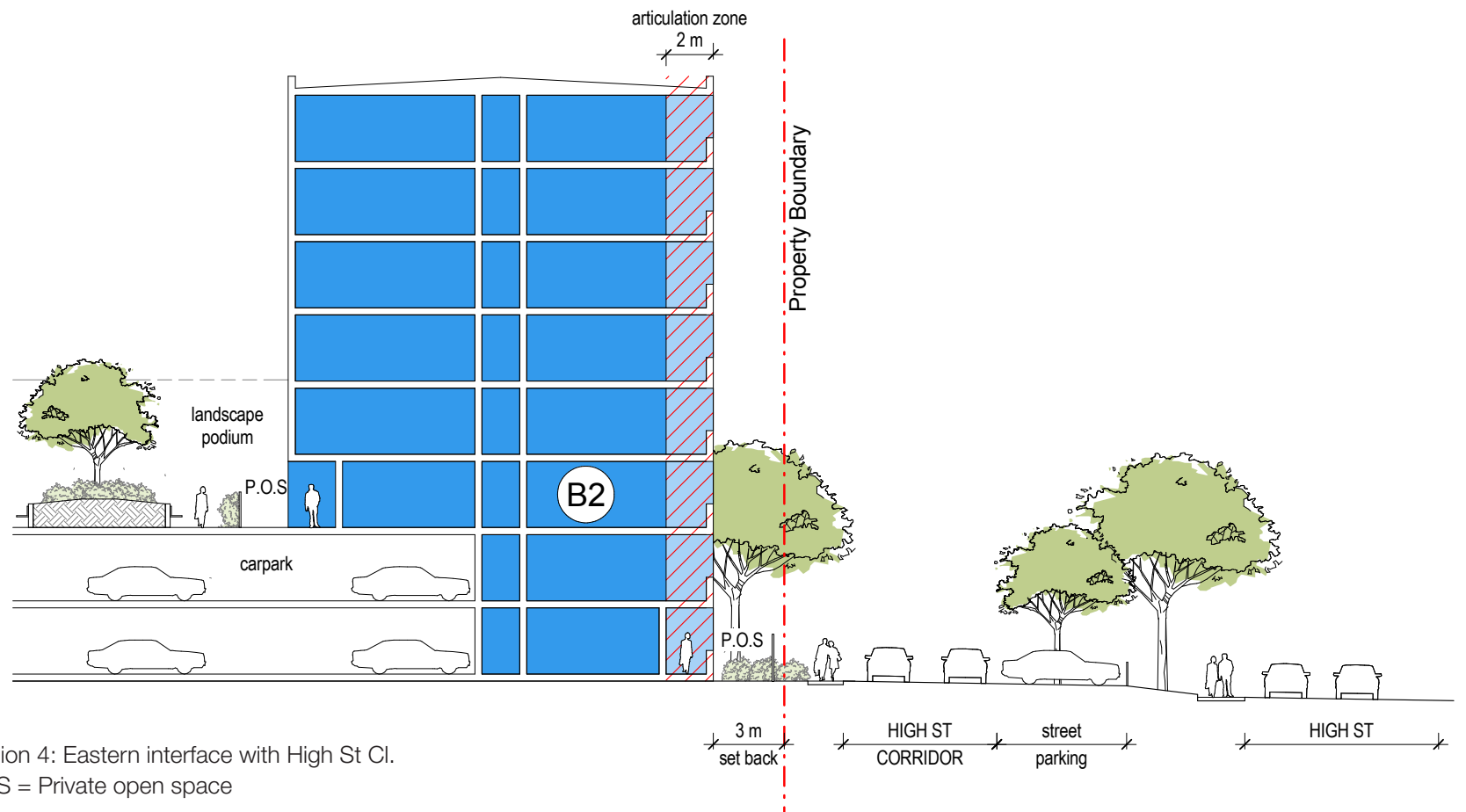
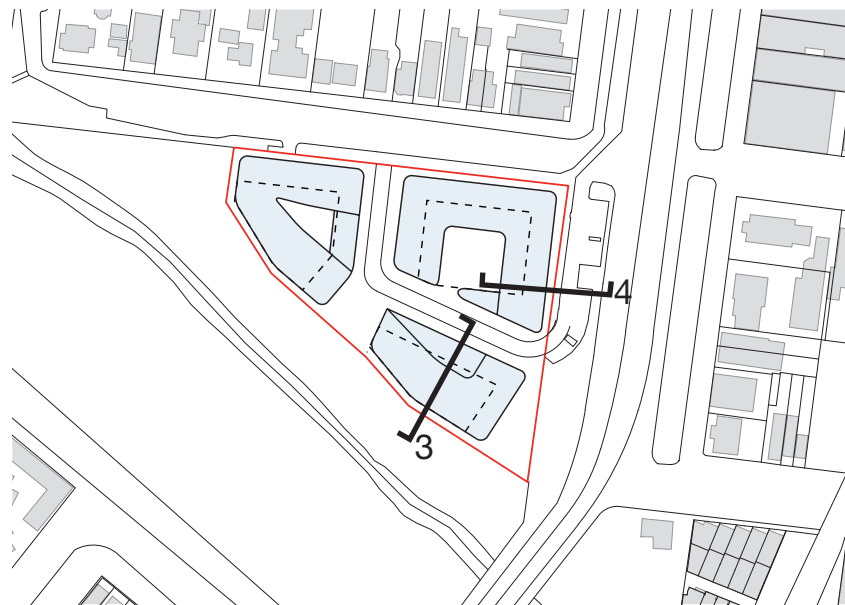
The interface with the Merri Creek incorporates a 3m setback to the lower levels and a 6m setback to the upper 2 levels to avoid any interference with existing planting within the Environmental Significance Zone along the creek. There are 2 level podium parking with natural ventilation and a vertical landscape treatment at the edge. The landscaped podium also reinforces the green edge.



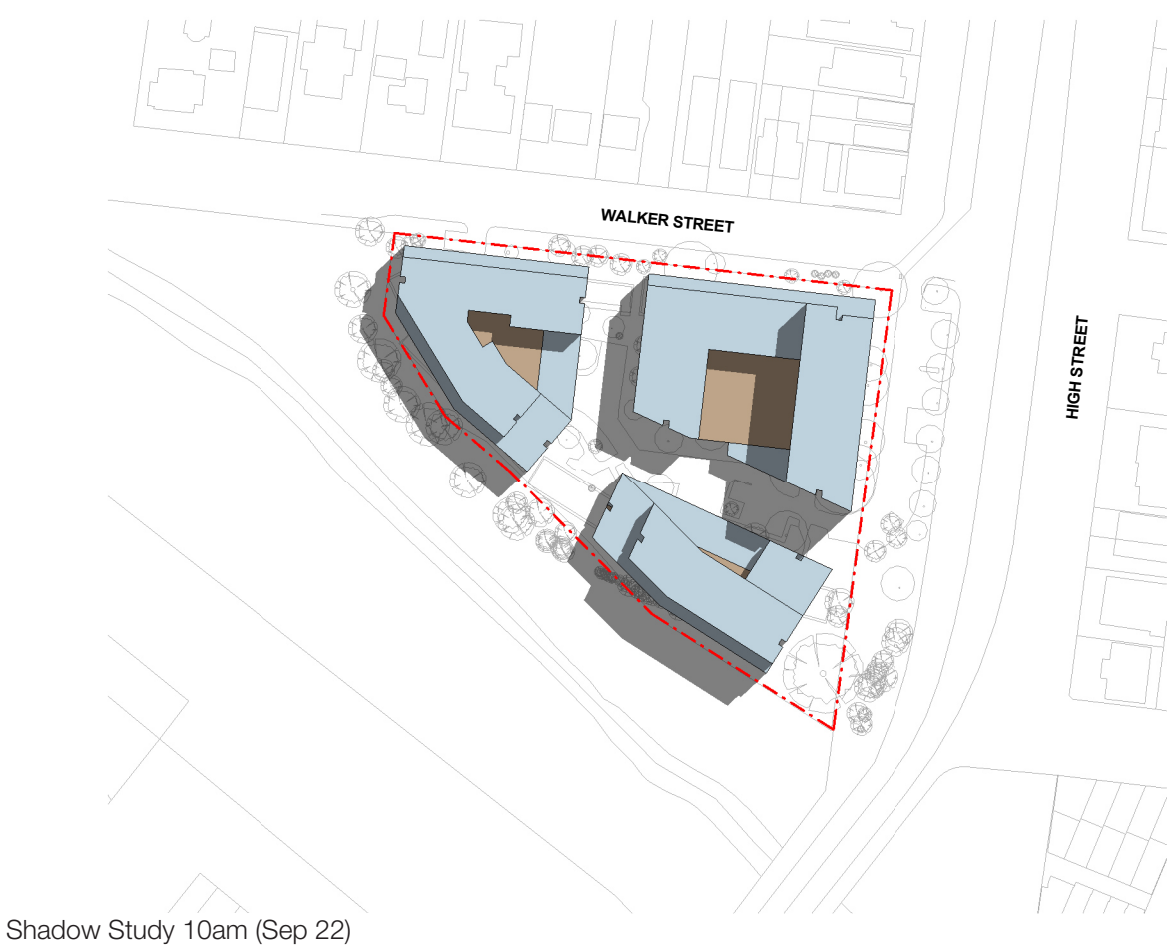
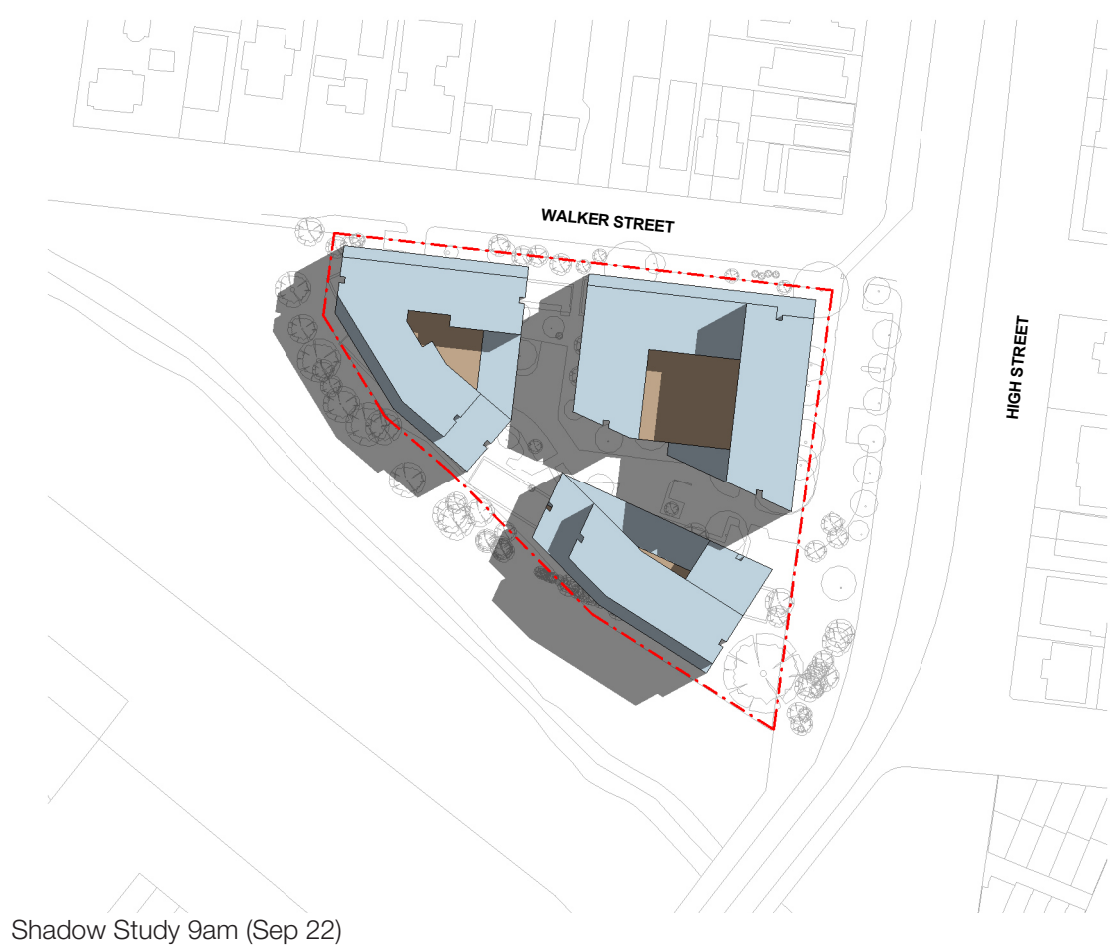
Section 4: Eastern interface with High St Cl

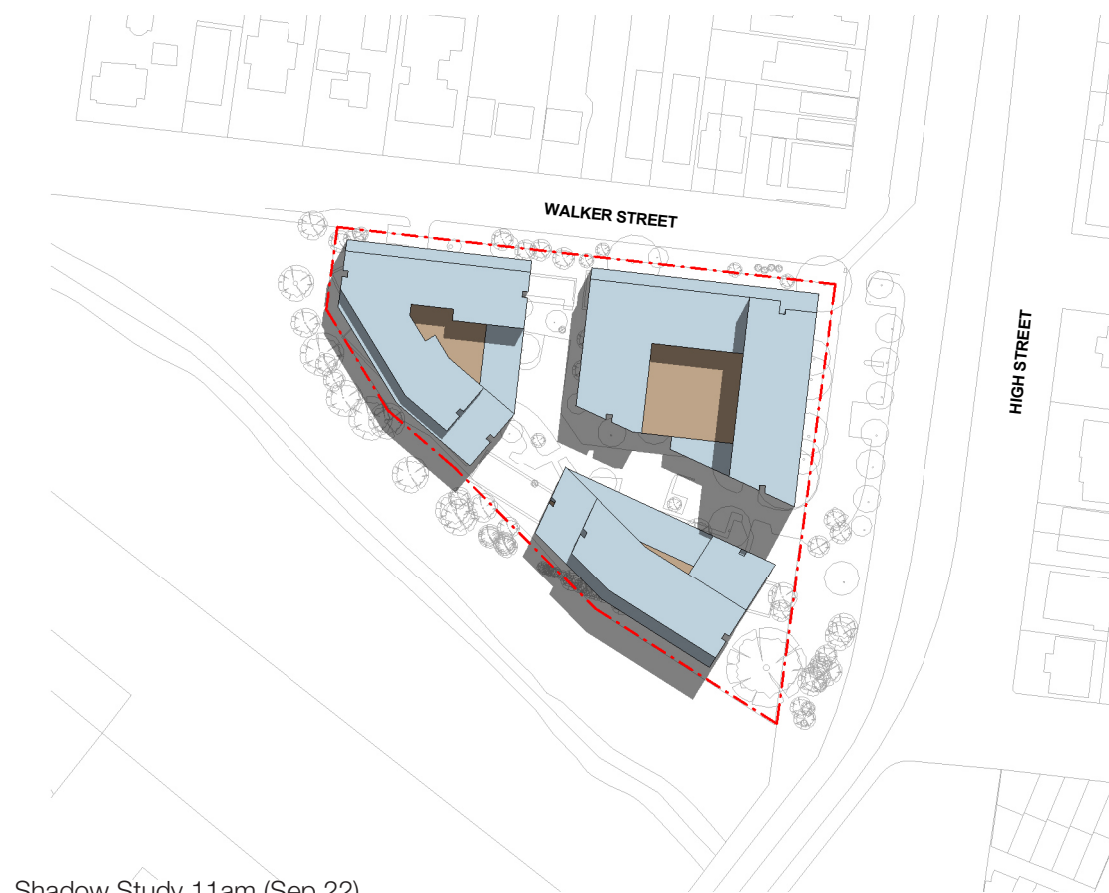
The new built form is set back to match the existing building alignment to create private gardens at the lower level. Taller built form is nominated along this edge as it will have little impact on the amenity of open space or the street.

The cross-section arrangement of High Street Close remains unchanged apart from the introduction of landscaped strip immediately adjacent to the property boundary. High Street Close remains a part of the bicycle path link across the Merri Creek.



Response - Shadow study

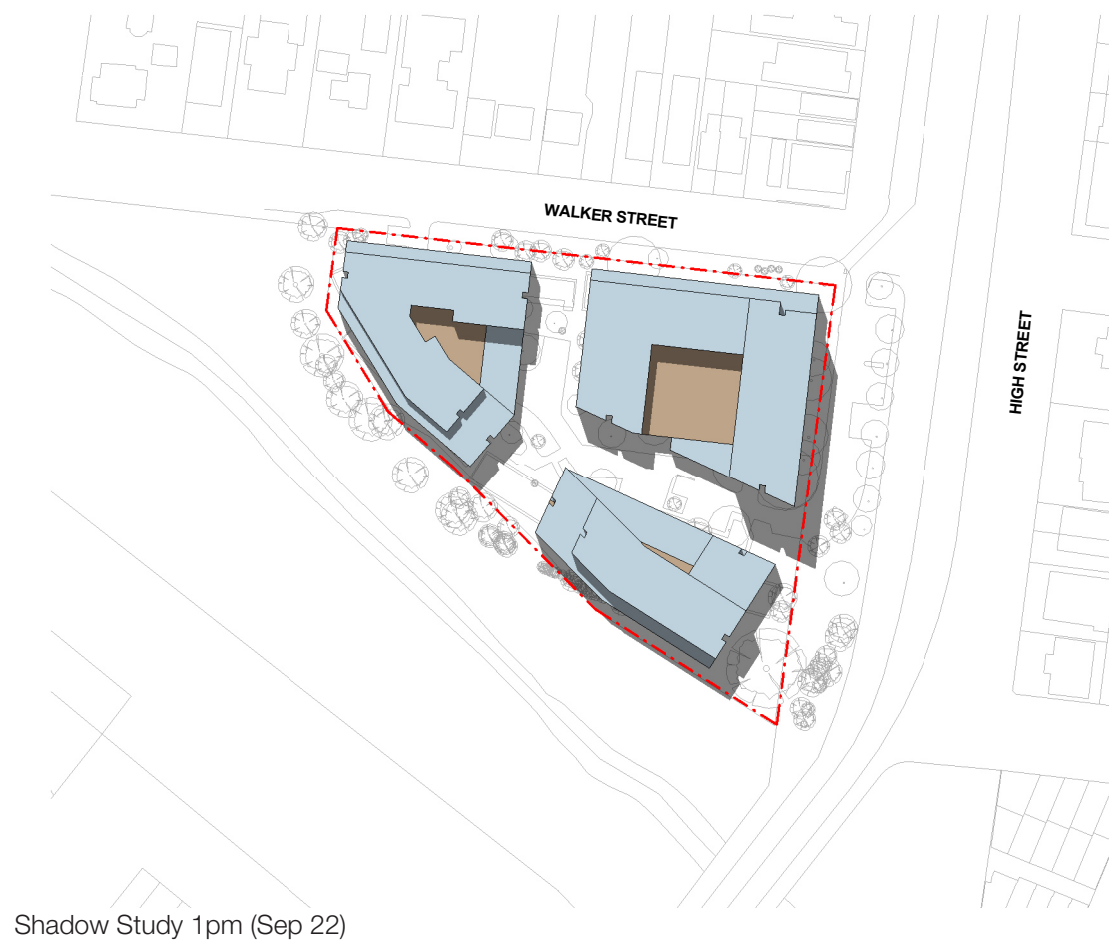




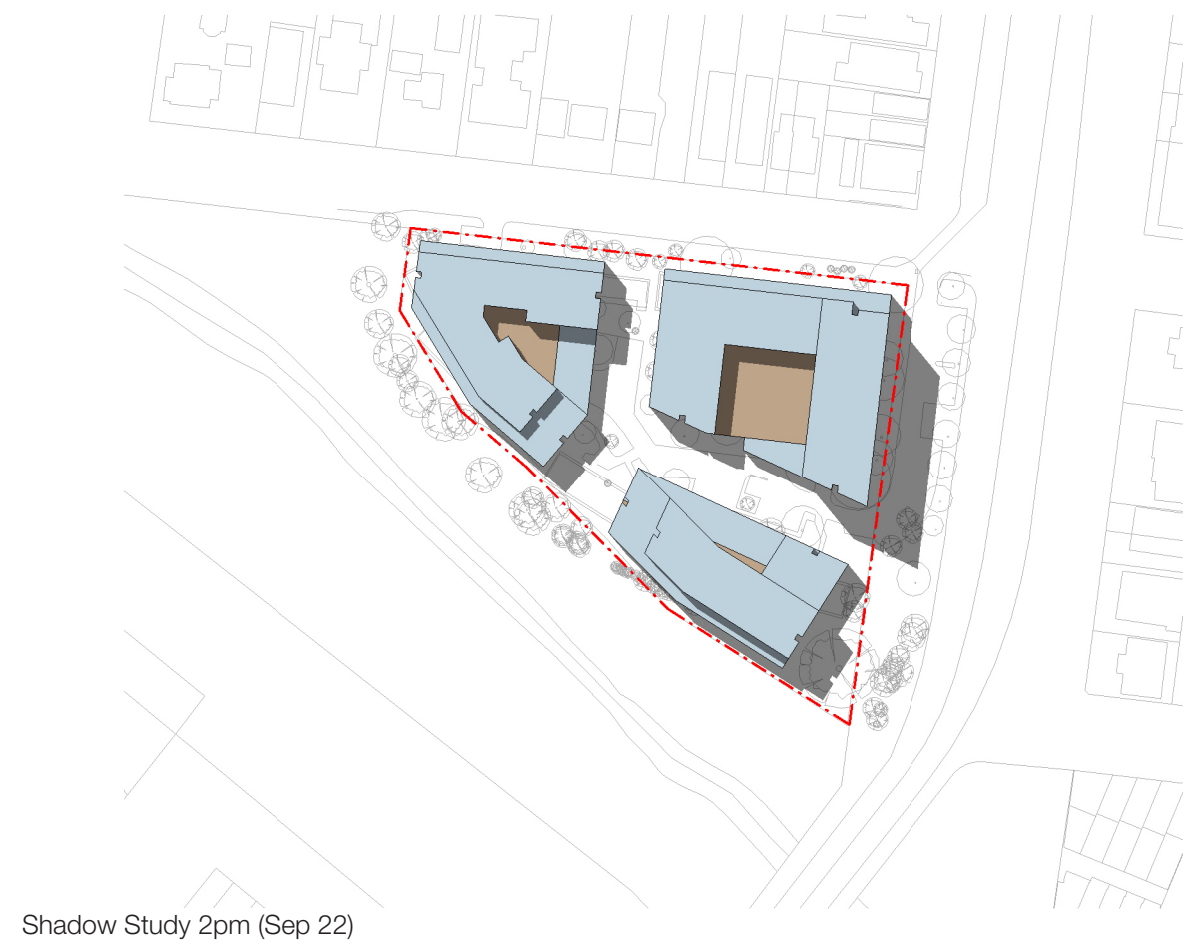
Shadow Study 11am (Sep 22)



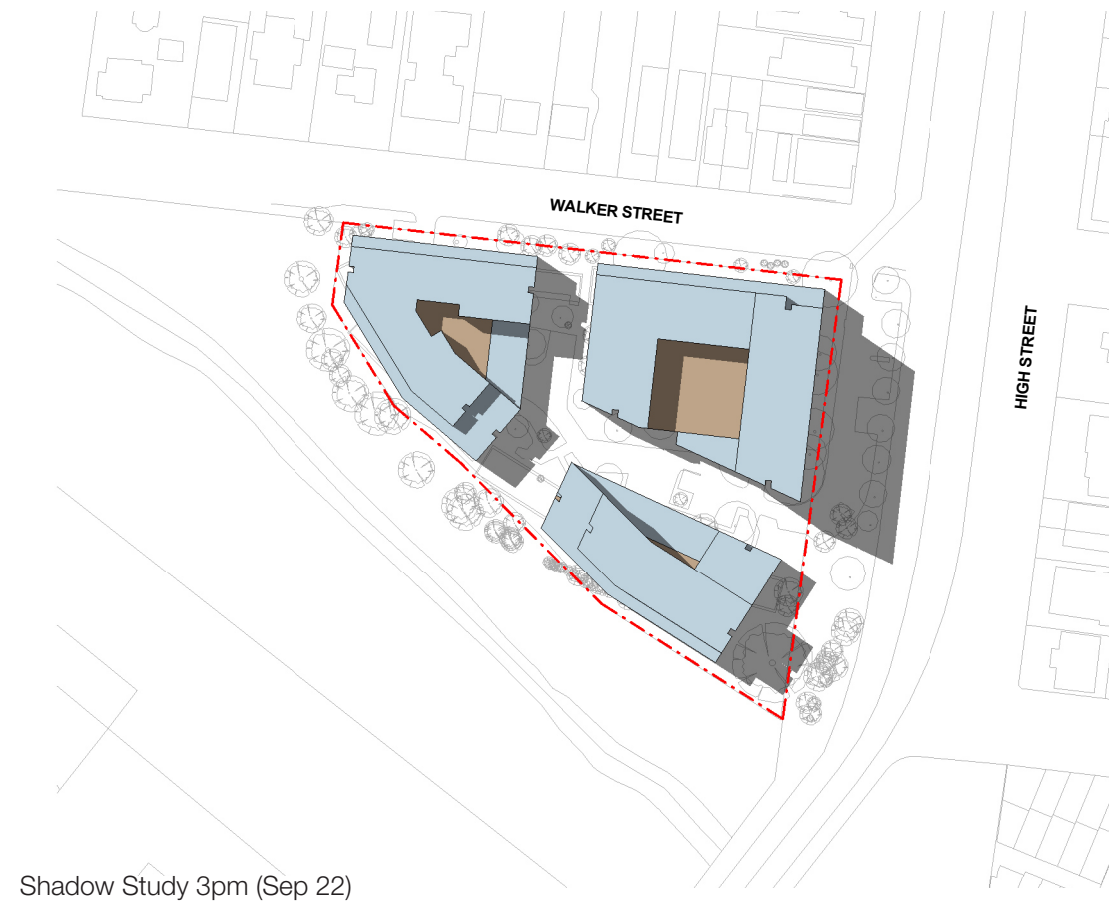
Shadow Study 12pm (Sep 22)



Shadow Study 1pm (Sep 22)



Shadow Study 2pm (Sep 22)



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