

# design excellence statement

mixed use development | 344 high street PENRITH

prepared for CABA

for submission to Penrith City Council

26 August 2016



## introduction

We provide this statement with regard to the design quality of the proposed development at 344 High Street Penrith in accordance with Clause 4.6 and 8.4(2) of the Penrith Local Environment Plan 2010. The following statement outlines how the proposed development addresses key design criteria in its design to deliver the highest standard of architectural and urban design.

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2a	Proposal has a high standard of architectural design, will be constructed with quality materials and has a high standard of detailing that reflects the building type, location and the surrounding buildings.
2b	Proposal will significantly improve the quality and amenity of the public domain through the building's form and external appearance.
2c	Proposal will not detrimentally impact on the amenity of the surrounding area, nor on any view corridors, vistas or landmark locations.
2d	Proposal will not detrimentally impact on any land identified as <u>Area 4</u> on the Height of Buildings Map.
2e	Statement identifies how the proposed development will address the following matters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i) the suitability of the land for development</li><li>ii) existing and proposed uses and use mix</li><li>iii) heritage issues and streetscape constraints</li><li>iv) the relationship of the development with other buildings (existing or proposed) on the same site or on neighbours sites in terms of separation, setbacks, amenity and urban form</li><li>v) bulk massing and modulation of buildings</li><li>vi) street frontage heights</li><li>vii) environmental impacts such as sustainable design, overshadowing, wind and reflectivity'</li><li>viii) the achievement of the principles of ecologically sustainable development</li><li>ix) pedestrian, cycle, vehicular and service access, circulation requirements</li><li>x) the impact on, and any proposed improvements to, the public domain</li></ul>

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Through careful design consideration the proposal provides a landmark presence in the Penrith CBD which has an elegance in its form; quality in its use of materials; and increases pedestrian activity and vibrancy through the design of retail spaces, and street frontages.

We believe that the development embraces the principles identified by council in it's LEP and the outcome is a building that will provide a high quality precedent for urban development in the precinct.

Yours faithfully

**Andrew Elia**  
associate director | reg# 7928



## 2(a) | high quality design

*Proposal has a high standard of architectural design, will be constructed with quality materials and has a high standard of detailing that reflects the building type, location and the surrounding buildings.*

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The proposed design provides a landmark architectural building for the Penrith Town Centre. As a backdrop to the vibrant High Street, adjacent to several significant heritage items, and located in Council's proposed new Legal precinct (as part of the Penrith New West initiative) the subject site is in a prominent location in the Penrith Town Centre and ideal for a high standard architectural and urban design solution.

Rather than repeating the residential grain of surrounding developments, this development embodies a sleek elegant form to reflect the commercial and retail nature of a CBD location, whilst providing high-end apartments into the Town Centre, promoting pedestrian activity around a more retail and commercial streetscape.

The proposed development seeks to maintain the DCP envelopes in the existing streetscape in accordance with the DCP guidelines to provide and is consistent in scale with the recent and proposed commercial developments at the eastern end of the High Street CBD. This provides a consistent streetscape with increased activity as you enter the traditional heart of the Penrith CBD.



## building form

Whilst the DCP and LEP allow a 0m setback to the adjacent heritage items at 340 High Street, the development proposal actually **increases** the building setback in order to pull the new building away from the boundary to provide an appropriate curtilage around the heritage buildings at 340 High Street.

This provides the the old Bank Building at 340 High Street to have 'breathing space' with the opportunity to appreciate this building from the western and southern elevations. The proposal also reinstates the prominence of the Old Bank Building at 340 High Street in the streetscape through the use of symmetry. Using the proportions of the Bank Building's large archways the proposal incorporates a new entry structure for 344 High Street at the ground level within the setback from the eastern boundary to provide the bank building.

This curtilage is reinforced by the extension of the vertical blades on the curved eastern facade which through the use of a bridging steel structure, provides an integrated facade between the front and rear buildings on the site which provide a consistent texture which acts as a backdrop to the heritage buildings. This backdrop not only addresses the Bank Building on the 340 High Street frontage, but also the old stables building at the rear of the site, providing a neatly landscaped courtyard at the end of John Cram Place.

The curved nature of the building also sets up the potential for a 'heritage precinct' where new developments in line with the LEP and DCP objectives can address the heritage buildings in this area, such as the items at 340 High Street and the Catholic Church adjacent. Refer to the response to Part 2(e)(iii).





The proposal also provides a direct connection between High Street and the old 'Stables' building at the rear of 340 High Street. We note that the ground floor retail covers the entire frontage of High Street but is designed in such a way to provide pedestrian access through the retail space to the rear of the site.

We are looking to bring pedestrian activity into the site through a secure covered walkway which can be used by commercial tenancies to promote pedestrian activity and passive surveillance at the end of John Cram Place.

This glazed walkway includes a rustic concrete columns and a glass roof - ensuring that the addition is deliberately new fabric, but the space and proportion to connect to the buildings of the past.

The proposal also seeks to address John Cram plan through location of the residential lobbies for the development which enter directly onto John Cram place which create immediate pedestrian activity on the lane way, and changes it from a vehicle only service lane, to an active alive street. The installation of a new stormwater drainage line, a new footpath and external lighting for pedestrian safety enhance this treatment.



## materials

The proposal also includes a selection of materials which achieve the objectives of a sleek, modern new building at the heart of Penrith's new urban CBD, whilst also providing an engaging public building at the street level which illustrates the retail heart and commercial aspect of the development.

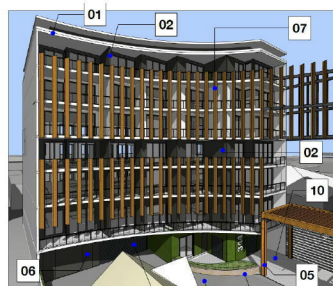
With the core structure of the building utilising a combination of a AFS rendered system and a concrete frame structure below. The clarity of this large white concrete shell keeps the building simple, clean and elegant as it rises above the existing neighbouring buildings. This shell is punctuated at the ground level interaction with large glazed openings promoting openness for tenants looking to attract street business.

The curtain wall glazing to the tenancies provides a lightness to the structure and allows a visibility through from the street into the buildings. This glazing is carried through into the horizontal plane with the glazed ceiling over the commercial through link which opens the deepest central parts of the commercial floor plate to natural light.

The proposal also seeks to continue the proposed commercial street wall along High Street whilst at the same time acknowledge the finer grain of the old suburb through a patterned window box which is constructed from a series of box frames which sit external of the curtain wall structure to the north of the street. This box structure takes the proportions of the openings in the heritage building to acknowledge that past, re-interpret these openings into a finer patterned texture, and through deep reveals with a warm rustic metal paint finish provide a warmth and texture to a streetscape dominated by glass, brick and signage boards.



1 | street elevation finishes



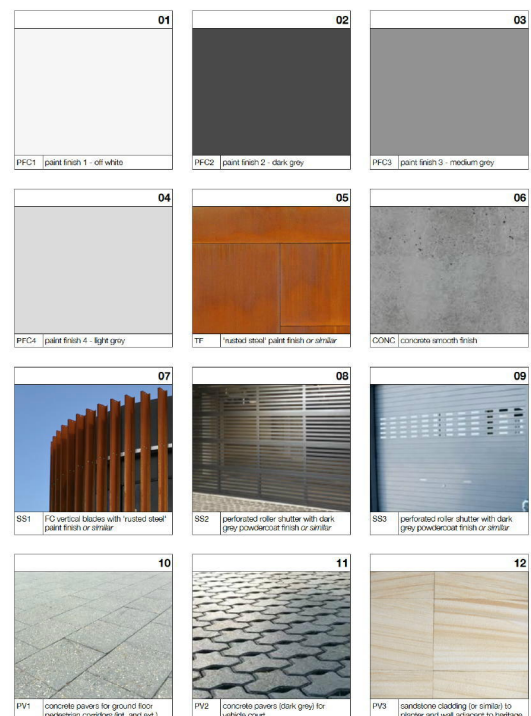
7 | building B north finishes



3 | north elevation



4 | building A south finishes





The external face of these window boxes are a woodland grey powdercoated steel, whilst the internal faces are a painted FC sheet with a rustic metal finish to provide warmth to the materialist of the streetscape, and increase a warm reflective light into the commercial and residential properties at this frontage.

The box structure is then repeated on the southern facade of Building A on the John Cram Place frontage to maintain consistency throughout the development, and bring that residential grain to the laneway.

The large FC blades to the curved eastern facade provide a consistent elegant backdrop to the heritage buildings at 340 High Street and are visible from the eastern end of High Street as you enter the CBD from the Great Western Highway. The fine texture of the blades softens the scale of the building, and provides a feature... These fixed blades are FC sheets with a rustic metal paint finish.

These blades are repeated on the southern facade of Building B to provide privacy to the residential dwellings from any future development.

## 2(b) | the public domain

*Proposal will significantly improve the quality and amenity of the public domain through the building's form and external appearance.*

Through careful attention to form, massing and architectural detail the proposal has a distinctive character. Located in the new legal precinct identified in the Penrith New West initiative the use of high quality materials, bold architectural features, and an expansive building form which curved and wraps around existing heritage items, result in a building is not a regular residential apartment block.

The role of this building in the public domain is to promote pedestrian activity in the precinct, set a high standard for architectural detailing and finishing, to celebrate and acknowledge the heritage buildings that are adjacent to this site, and importantly with regard to the public domain set a precedent for future developments in the area.

The proposal maintains the streetscape envelope required by the DCP (see response to 2(d) and 2(e)(iii) and 2(e)(vi)) and as such the street frontage is an appropriate scale for pedestrian interaction, allows for the streetscape to retain good access to natural light and ventilation. Whilst it maintains the desired street wall along High Street the ground floor design allows for high pedestrian activity and easy access through the site to buildings at the rear of the site on John Cram place on adjacent properties.

The public domain is also improved at the southern side of the building. New pedestrian footpath, external lighting and guttering mean that the development provides a pedestrian friendly environment along John Cram Place without compromising the service function the laneway performs for the existing commercial premises. With increased pedestrian activity there is regular surveillance of this laneway which makes this a safe place.





## 2(c) | view corridors and local landmarks

*Proposal will not detrimentally impact on the amenity of the surrounding area, nor on any view corridors, vistas or landmark locations.*

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Due to the compliance with Council's DCP setbacks and height limits along High Street, the proposal maintains the views to the Blue Mountains from High Street as you enter the CBD from the east. As a result adjacent landmark heritage buildings remain visible from both the east and west approach along High Street.

Also, increasing the side setback on the eastern boundary and through the use of proportion to develop a symmetrical setting to the heritage building at 340 High Street, the proposal re-establishes a prominence for this building as it allows a focal point at the end of Lawson Street.

In addition to this the proposal also deliberately uses the design of the John Cram Place to frame the heritage stables building at 340 High Street, and the Catholic Church spire at 338 High Street.

From its very inception the proposal has been deliberately set up around the local heritage items and landmarks, and deliberately uses the form of the building to establish a larger precinct around these items (refer to response to Part 2(e)(iii), Part 2(e)(iv) and Part 2(e)(v) in this document).

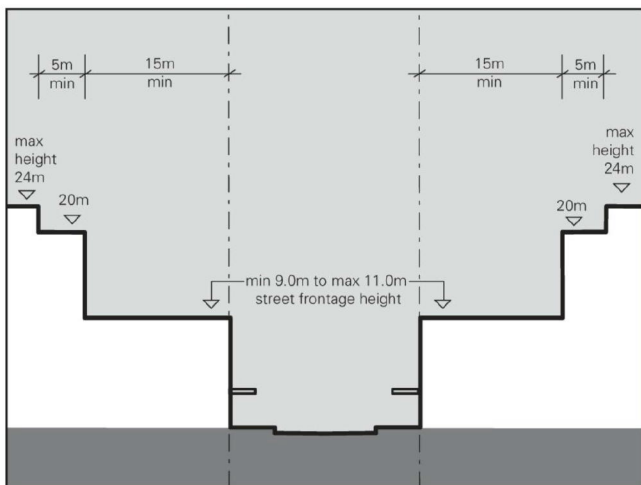


## 2(d) | impact of building height on "Area 4"

Proposal will not detrimentally impact on any land identified as Area 4 on the Height of Buildings Map.

The proposed development responds the site context and contributes to the vibrancy of the Penrith community. Attention to form, massing and facade detail ensures that the building is a distinctive building, however the compliance with the DCP streetscape setbacks. and height limits along High Street ensure that the building maintains the Council's envisioned streetscape for High Street and becomes a seamless part of the streetscape.

This part of High Street (Area 4) draws in many people for dining and entertainment and Council's objectives through the DCP setback controls is to ensure that the street walls along High Street are pedestrian friendly, and maintain access to natural light and ventilation. The proposal through it's height and form complies with these objectives and enhances the streetscape through increased activity.



6 | building height type b  
penrith city DCP part E11



## 2 (e) i | suitability of the land for development

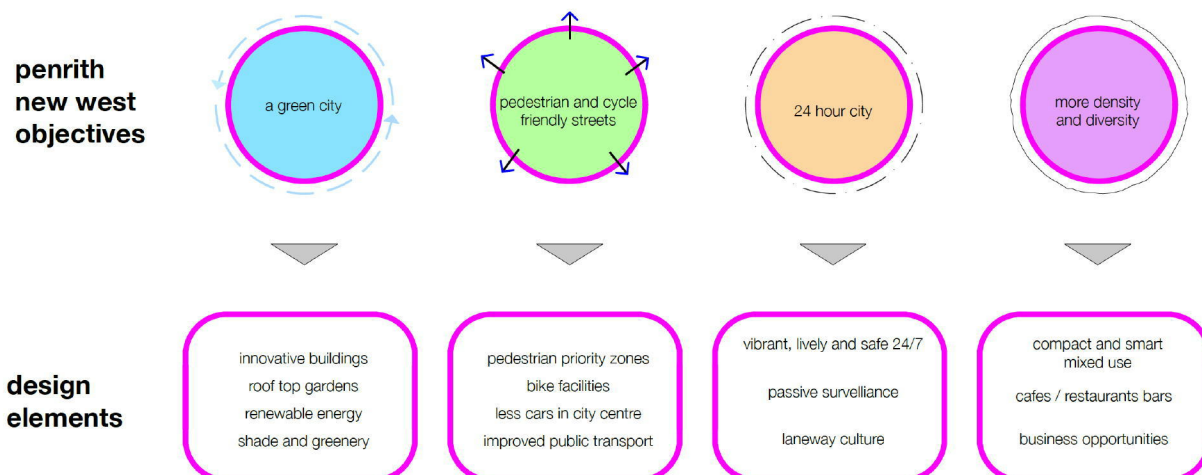
Well-designed buildings within close proximity of each other and within easy walking distance to amenities, can have the effect of transforming the overall impression of the streetscape and bring about vitality that is often lacking in medium density development, borne about by poor design, bulk, scale and landscape setting.

The subject site is located about 500m directly southwest of Penrith Station and within 700m walking distance (refer to site plan DA 0100). It is located on High street, one of the main retail streets in Penrith and is surrounded by mostly 2 storey commercial and retail developments. The site is adjacent to and opposite to buildings of heritage significance. There are distant mountain views to the west.

The key aspect to this site, is its place within the Penrith New Strategy set up by the Penrith Progression movement within Penrith Council. The report (dated May 2015) states: *“With Penrith’s population expected to grow to 224,000 in 2031, the City will need another 35,000 new dwellings to house our new residents.”*

The New West strategy look to change the Penrith CBD to be a more vibrant, economically sustainable, and liable site with the objectives summaries below. In the heart of the Penrith CBD this development seeks to provide high quality apartment housing close to major transport infrastructure and in the retail heart of the city, high end commercial tenancies (in the new Legal Precinct) and retail activity on the street front to promote and activate High Street adjacent to important heritage items.

The site at 344 High Street is ideal for a new urban infill development, that brings high quality residential into a commercial heart of the CBD to revitalise and activate the town centre.



## 2 (e) ii | existing and proposed uses and use mix

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The existing use of the site is commercial. The High Street section of the site contains a 2 story brick building which has two Real Estate Agencies as tenants. The rear part of the site (accessed via John Cram Place) contains an on-grade open carpark that serves the two commercial tenancies. The proposal increases the uses on the site to provide a diversity that reflects the changing nature of Penrith's CBD.

### **commercial**

The commercial component of the development maintains the existing commercial use of the site and in fact increases the available floor space to provide for additional tenancies. The existing tenants will also remain on the site once the building is completed. This maintains a strong commercial presence visible from the public realm and maintains the presence of quality commercial business in the High Street precinct.

### **retail**

The proposal provides for 2 new retail tenancies on High Street with the addition of a cafe space central to the building. This cafe serves the commercial tenancies in the area and could possibly utilise the glazed walkway in the development for seating which looks back to the Heritage buildings as a backdrop. This retail component provides a different character, high class retail tenancy for the Penrith CBD containing smaller boutique tenancies so as not to compete with existing larger scale retail in the existing shopping centre.

This part of Penrith draws in many people for dining and entertainment and is conveniently located in close walking distance to Penrith Station for bus and rail interchange. This development provides opportunity for higher pedestrian activity additional residential dwellings in the heart of the CBD.

### **residential**

The apartment mix ensures a diversity of dwelling type to encourage occupation by a wide cross section of the community & with proximity to public transport the units are well positioned to offer a range of lifestyle options.

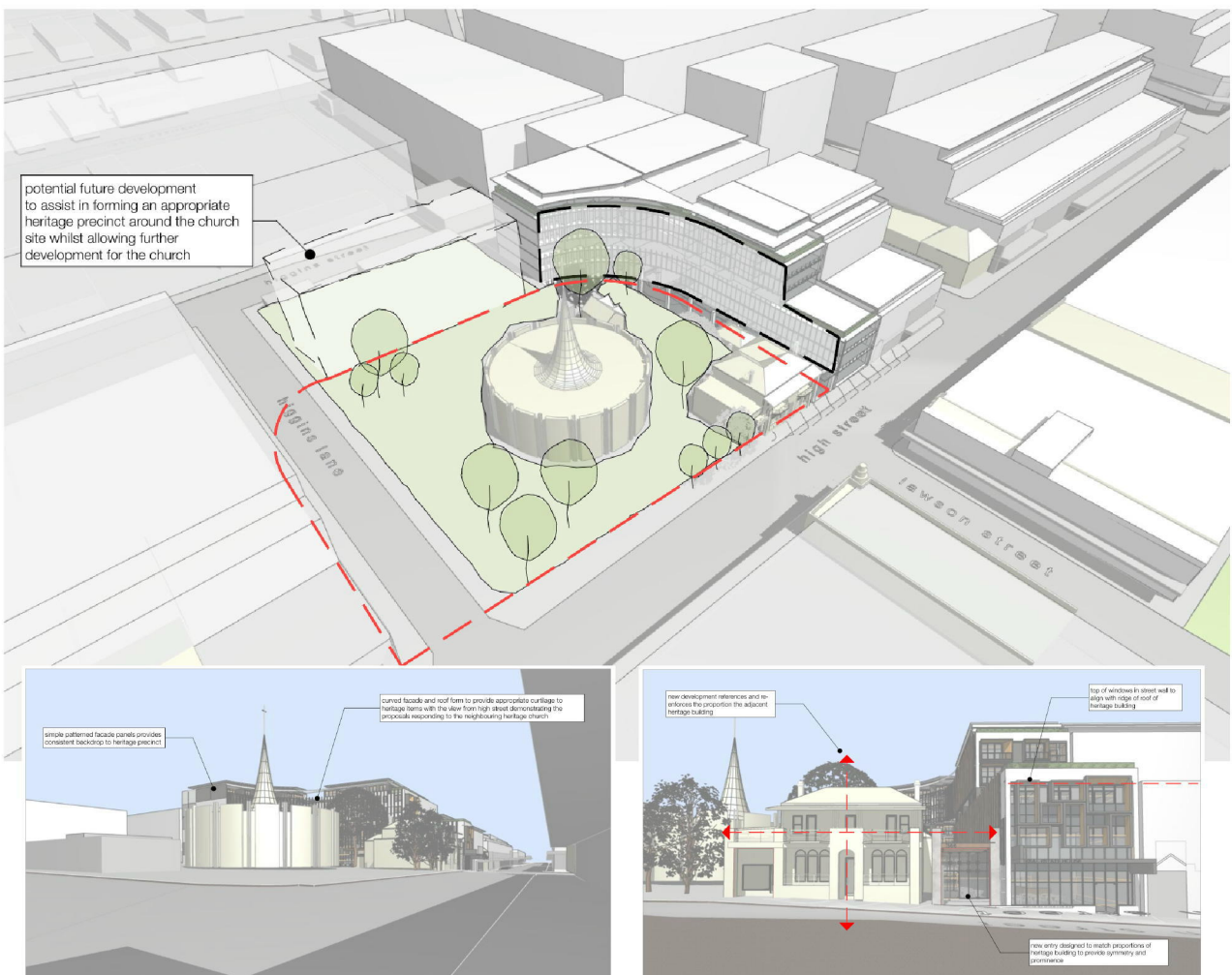
In having residential dwellings on the site it increases passive surveillance in the rear John Cram Place which provides additional safety in the streetscape outside of commercial hours of operation.



## 2 (e) iii | heritage and streetscape constraints

The proposal pulls the building mass way from the adjacent heritage building and coach house and creates a curtilage around this. The new building wraps around the 340 High Street (taking cues in it's geometry from the adjacent church building) and sets a back drop to 340 High Street which which provides a more significant setting to the heritage buildings in the precinct.

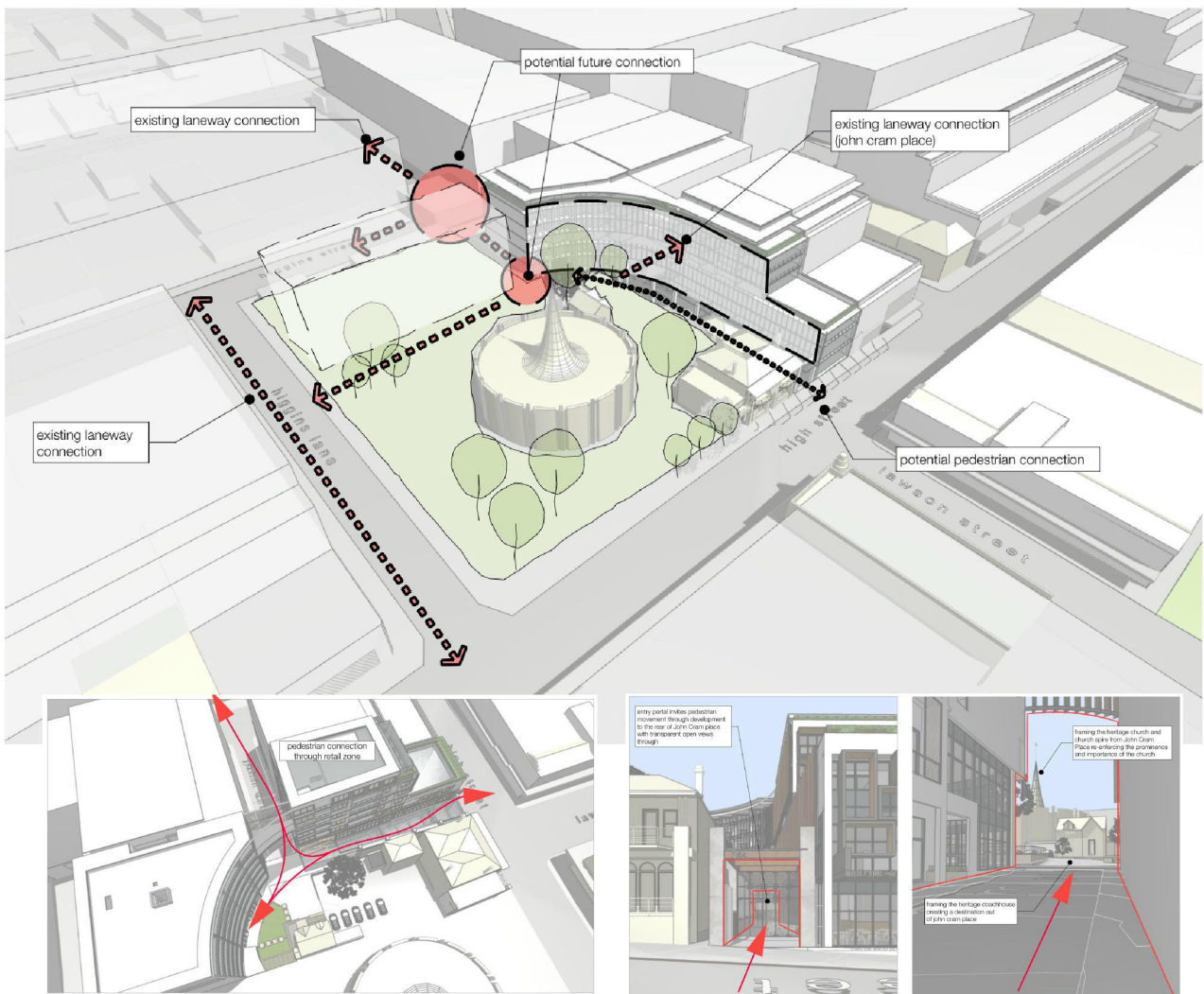
The proposal also uses side setbacks and proportions to create symmetry and prominence for 340 High Street at the end of Lawson Street, sets up a view of the coach house and the Catholic Church (also a heritage item) at the end of John Cram Place. (as outlined in response to Part 2(a)).



## 2 (e) iv | relationship with other buildings

*Relationship with existing or proposed buildings in terms of separation, setbacks, amenity and urban form*

We are looking to bring pedestrian activity into the site by creating the possibility for a courtyard at the rear of the heritage building. This also provides a visible and clear entry for residents, and as such promotes a walkable community of residents who interact directly with the main street. This also provides good surveillance and activity in John Cram place. We note that the ground floor retail covers the entire frontage of High Street but is designed in such a way to provide pedestrian access through the retail space to the rear of the site.





## 2 (e) v | bulk massing and modulation of buildings

There are two objectives with a development of this kind. Provide enough bulk and massing to achieve the objectives of the urban street walls of the development, as addressed in response to Part 2(e)(vi), but also provide enough modulation and definition in the facade so as not to create large monolithic buildings facing High Street. The proposal achieves this through the use of external fittings which provide texture and definition.

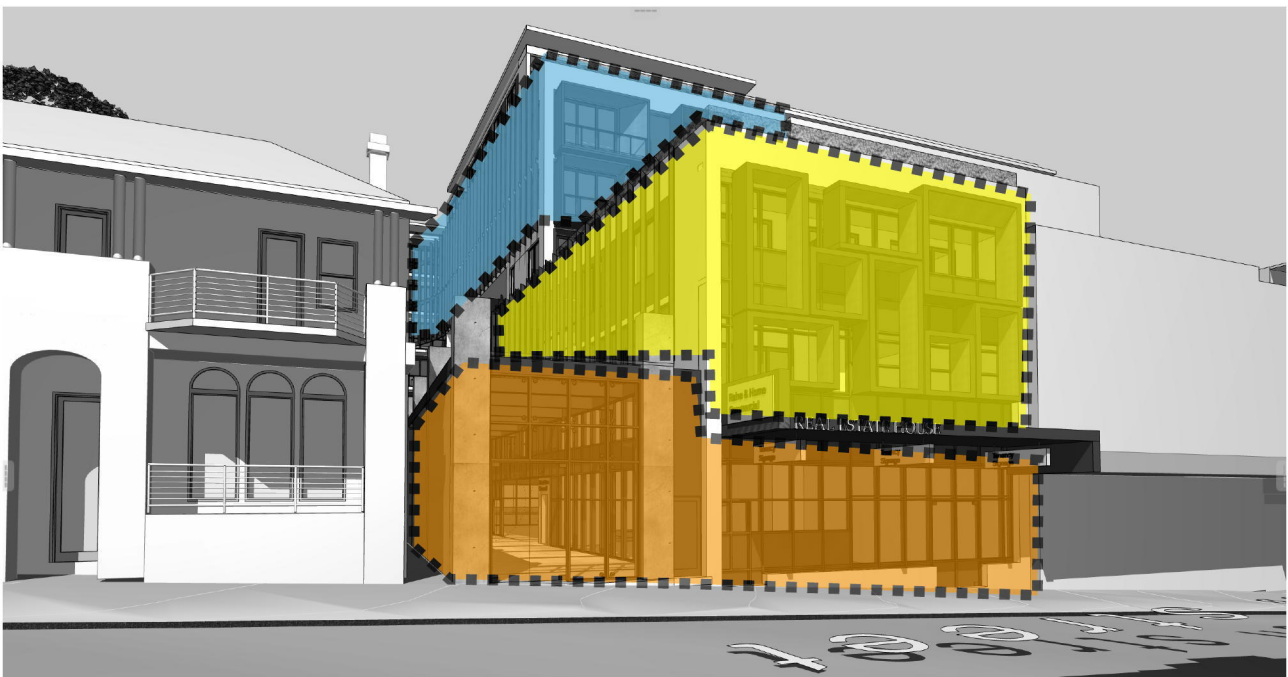
Above the ground level the High Street frontage is a series of box elements which break up the scale and the size of the 4 storey building. These present a more appropriate pedestrian scale (with some of these elements framing balconies that allow for interaction with the streetscape).

The development addresses the larger scale of the building by dividing it into 3 distinct components:

**ground floor retail:** The ground floor of the building is the direct public interface. It is glazed and open with both commercial and retail tenancies within. The ground floor transparency is re-enforced by the glazed entry walkway which allows for direct sunlight and daylight access to the middle of the site.

**commercial tenancies:** Through the use of the DCP setbacks and height for the High Street frontage we have a mid level which is defined by the vertical louvres on the eastern boundary. This mid level runs from the northern part of the site through to the southern section of the site.

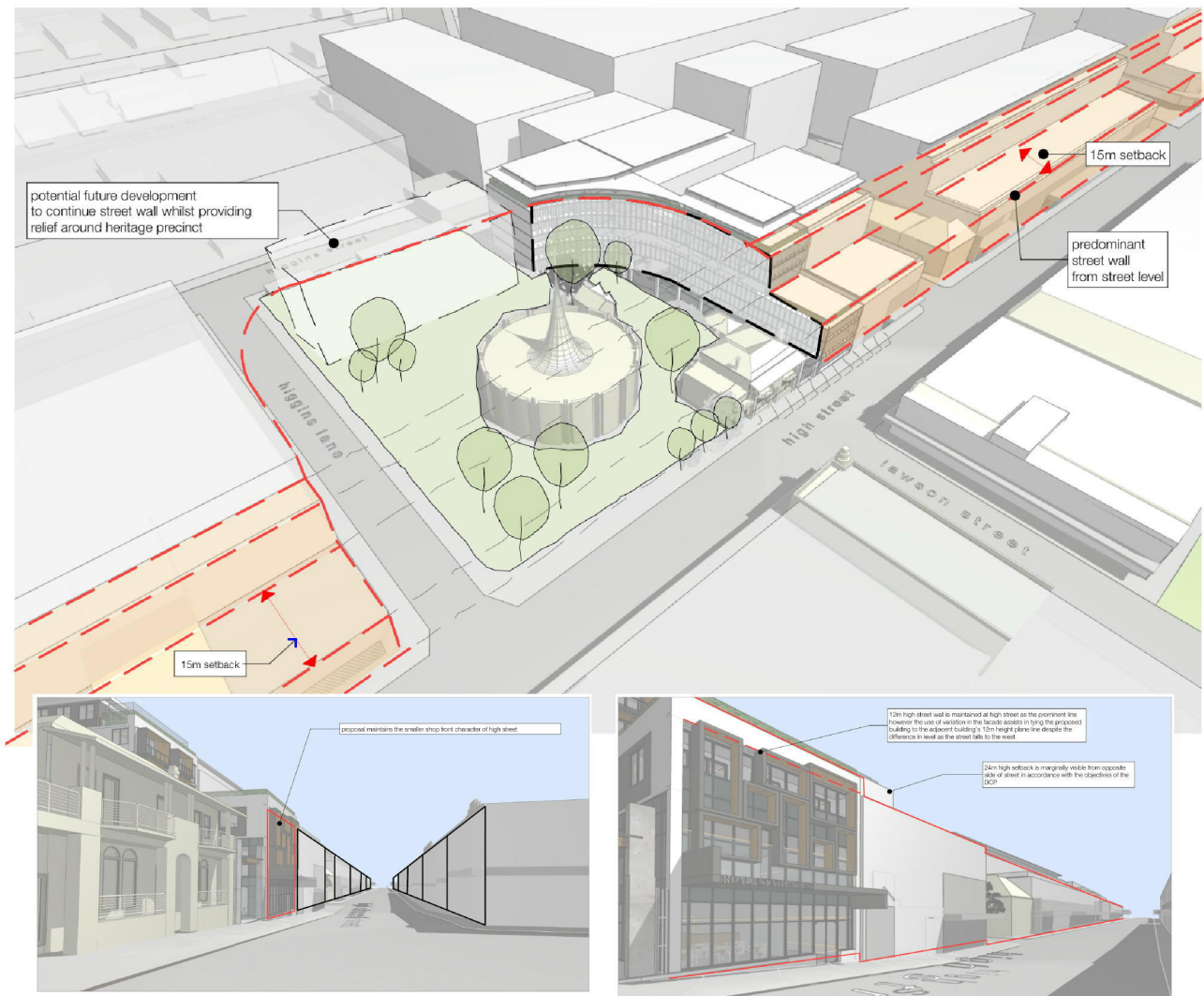
**residential block:** The break in the vertical louvres at Level 5, and re-introduction at level 6 provides a top layer which houses the residential component of the development.



## 2 (e) vi | street frontage heights

The proposed building is designed in accordance with the Penrith Council DCP Part E11 (building height type B) with regard to building heights and setbacks with regard to the street frontage on High Street.

We understand that council's intention to maintain a 12m height limit along High Street to provide natural light to public spaces and to take into account a number of heritage buildings. This proposal maintains the DCP setbacks and heights for the streetscape. We also provide a more significant presence of the heritage building adjacent to our site but using the same proportions of that for our walkway entry. This has been addressed in response to Part 2(d) and 2(e)(iii) previously noted in this statement.





## 2 (e) vii | environmental impacts

*Impact of development with regard to sustainable design, overshadowing, wind and reflectivity*

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### **access to light and ventilation**

The proposed building is designed with passive environmental principles in mind allowing greater access to daylight and natural ventilation in both the residential and commercial components.

The shallow depth of the commercial tenancies, with the curtain wall glazing to the perimeter (and glazed roof over the commercial walkway) provide significant daylight access to the commercial tenancies making them an enjoyable place to work and visit, but also reducing the reliance on artificial lighting through operating hours.

With the great variance in Penrith's temperatures we note the incorporation of vertical louvres to the eastern face which provide a buffer to harsh morning sun in summer, but allow for free air movement throughout.

Outlook to suburb views and distant views to the mountains will contribute to the resident's quality of life and good sized sheltered balconies are provided adjacent to each living room in the residential apartments which provide access to these views, and good access to natural ventilation and light, allowing flexibility in the living areas for a variety of social interactions.

### **overshadowing**

As any building of up to 7 storeys, the development has some overshadowing impact to its neighbours however this impact is not unreasonable in the context of an urban environment. The impact of this overshadowing is minimised due to the north-south orientation of the building form (as shown architectural drawing 9100)

### **wind and air movement**

The building is open in the middle to ensure air movement continues throughout the site without impediment, however the design of the building also allows for pockets of sheltered outdoor areas around the adjacent heritage building which provides a more pleasant and usable outdoor space.

### **reflectivity**

On the eastern facade the building utilises large vertical blades along the facade to create a consistence curved facade which soften the building appearance. The finish of these blades a rustic paint finish with a low reflectivity. The western facade of the development is essentially a white backdrop, with a patterned paint finish (to match the proportions of the blades on the eastern facade) which have a grey toned palette which reduce the reflectivity of the building. This wall will be concealed once neighbouring developments are completed.

## 2 (e) viii | principles of ecologically sustainable development

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The proposal has been designed with thought to a more ecologically sustainable approach with regard to waste generated during construction, durability of materials to avoid on-going maintenance and replacement of materials, minimising the use of energy in on-going operation within the residential components, and the re-use of resources such as water within the development.

### **construction waste and maintenance**

The development proposes to incorporate a concrete wall system which utilises a permanent formwork construction in order to minimise waste during construction. The formwork and reinforcement is prepared and constructed in accurate components off site and simply put together on site. This provides a significant reduction in waste during construction while at the same time providing a durable low-maintenance building product which does not require replacement.

### **solar passive design**

As noted in 2(e)(vii) the units have been designed to promote increased access to daylight and natural ventilation with living rooms having large balcony areas which provide shelter to the hard summer conditions natural ventilation. A living areas have generous glazing onto these balconies creating outdoor rooms in winter, and shelter from the summer heat.

Significant access to light through solar passive design also means that units receive significant daylight not requiring artificial light during daylight hours. The incorporation of LED lighting throughout the residential component of the facility also means that the on-going energy use of the property is significantly reduced.

The design of the roof also allow for the simple installation of solar PV panels banks without visual impact on surrounding properties.

### **management of water**

The water catchment has been designed in basement 1 for on site detention of storm and rainwater recycling in line with water sensitive urban design guide. The rainwater recycling can be reused for garden irrigation ensuring the landscaped areas are well maintained for all tenants in an ecologically sustainable method.

## 2 (e) ix | pedestrian, cycle, vehicular and service access

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### **pedestrian activity**

This proposal provides a simplified and elegant solution to pedestrian access and circulation through the site. The ground floor retail opportunities which support life in the public streetscape are further activated by provision of a commercial through-link for pedestrians to move through and explore the site and connect to John Cram Place at the rear.

An added benefit of the proposed commercial through-link is the provision of greater access to the commercial tenancy at the rear of 340 High Street during opening hours, and access to John Cram place in a supervised and safe fashion.

The commercial access through 344 High Street also provides pedestrian access from the residential the component of the development directly to High Street during commercial operating hours which provide further pedestrian activity to the existing streetscape.

The ability to close this down after hours allows for a safer pedestrian environment along high street without providing hidden alleyways and 'escape routes' for undesirable activity as the commercial component of the development can be shut down after hours leaving the activity along High Street to be more easily monitored.

### **cycling infrastructure**

Significant cycling infrastructure is included for residents at basement levels, enabling the use of bicycles as a daily transport option, reducing the reliance of personal motor vehicles.

### **service access**

The rear area of the site has been planned to ensure efficiency of space and ease of facilities management across the development of both 344 High Street and the neighbouring 340 High Street allowing service access from John Cram place rather than High Street. A new vehicle court is proposed at the rear of the site (combining with 340 High Street) to provide adequate turning and operation for service vehicles, and easy access to parking for both 340 and 344 High Street.

### **pedestrian safety**

There has been a clear separation between residential and commercial activities on the site, and through the use of materials, slow down devices, canopies and pedestrian crossings, the vehicle movement areas are well separated from pedestrian circulation areas.



## 2 (e) x | the public domain

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The affect of the development on the public domain is addressed in the response to Part 2(b).

## summary

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The proposal has considered the objectives of the Penrith LEP 2010 and the Penrith DCP in determining the urban response.

The proposed FSR and height controls provide a reasonable development density in the area to provide street walls in the CBD. This density allows for increased residential housing, and commercial tenancy which in turn provides vibrant public activity at the ground level which is ideal for a commercial and retail precinct that fronts a public square.

In turn, the proposal provides a precedent for the area by deliberately creating a finer grain to this large urban street wall by providing a face with smaller box sections arranged in a patterned facade (taking cues from the proportions of the openings in adjacent buildings) which speaks to High Street's history as a collection of small land owners coming together to form a town centre.

The existing controls for height and FSR for the front section of the subject site are lower than this proposal which restrict the ability to participate in the intended streetscape and height along High Street.

As such the proposal seeks to **increase** these controls to be the same as the adjacent neighbours to provide consistency in the urban fabric, and to highlight the landmark building for the new Penrith CBD.