



12 March 2009

Mr Ernest Dupere  
c/o Mr Philip Graus  
Cox Richardson  
Level 2  
204 Clarence Street  
SYDNEY 2000

Dear Philip

**Menangle Rezoning Project for potential employment uses - Visual Impact Assessment – Summary advice**

I refer to the above and to our field assessments carried out on 18 February and 3 March 2009. I take this opportunity to provide you with a preliminary visual and landscape character analysis of the site and its potential for rezoning for future development for generating employment uses.

*Visual context, character and visual resources of the site*

1. The site is a very large parcel of rural land with the Main Southern Railway forming the eastern boundary of the site and a section of the Nepean River being its northern and western boundary. The South Western Freeway runs in a north-south direction and divides the site into an eastern and western part. Map 1 shows the location of the site within its surrounding context.
2. The Menangle township is located adjacent to the northeast part of the site. Durham Green, a retirement village has been recently constructed adjacent to the southern edge of the township. The Menangle Railway Station and a former Camden Park Estate Central Creamery are located to the north of the Menangle Township. The Railway Station Building is a State Significant Heritage Item and the Creamery and the Rotolactor is of Local Heritage Significance. They form a group that is potentially a future heritage precinct which will require close consideration in regard to relevant controls. A Benedict Quarry site is located within the site, to the north of the Township.
3. The main local and regional roads within the context of the site are Menangle Road, Woodbridge Road and Moreton Park Road. Woodbridge Road runs in an east-west direction and terminates at its intersection with the Railway Line. Menangle Road runs to the north, west and south of the site from Campelltown, through to Menangle and towards Douglas Park. Moreton Park Road starts at the eastern terminus of Woodbridge Road and runs parallel to the Railway line for a distance and then crosses the South Western Freeway and runs through the eastern part of the site.



4. The other heritage items in the vicinity of the site are Menangle Rail Bridge over the Nepean River (State Heritage Significance), Menangle Store (Local Significance), Gilbulla Anglican Conference Centre (Local Significance) and St James Anglican Church (Local Significance). Mount Gilead which is visible from parts of the site in the district views towards Campbelltown is of State Significance. Camden Park, although not visible from the site, has significant heritage associations with and possibly view contacts with items inside the site, such as St James Church, Gilbulla and the Creamery Station.
5. Other prominent, historical and important vantage points include the Nepean River Reserve off Menangle Road, to the north of the site, the Bridge along the South Western Freeway over the Nepean Reserve and Menangle Weir.
6. The major scenic resources of the site are hills and prominent slopes, lower slopes, creeks and drainage lines and its associated vegetation, the Nepean River Edge and its associated vegetation and significant strands of native vegetation such as Ironbark Woodland. The Visual Resources of the site including those which are present in its immediate surrounding context are shown on Map 2.
7. The subject site is partly level and partly gently undulating in character. It is predominantly on landscapes typical of the Cowpastures region of the Cumberland Basin land system, formed on Wianamatta Shale series geology. It is of a kind that is widespread and regionally common, between the Liverpool district and Picton
8. The exception to this character is on the eastern and south eastern edge of the site which is in the form of an escarpment along the western and north western side of the Nepean River. The river has cut a gorge through the landscapes, which exposes Hawkesbury Sandstones of the underlying Hornsby Plateau land system. The gorge landscape is characterised by steep topography, poor, erodible soils, residual native forest and woodland vegetation and has relatively higher scenic quality as a result of minimal disturbance for agriculture in the past.
9. There are three prominent ridgelines which predominantly emanate from near the south western corner of the site and run in a north-northwest, north and north-northeast directions respectively. The two prominent high points are a Hill located in the south western sector of the site, surmounted by a dwelling and various outbuildings and the location of a storage dam in the vicinity of the bridge along Moreton Park Road over the South Western Freeway. These two high points are landmark features of the site.
10. The variation in topography, creekline vegetation, other strands of vegetation and physical features such as roads, Freeway and Railway separate the site into various relatively homogeneous visual character zones. The Visual character Zones are shown on Map 3. These visual character zones have varied visual exposure to external viewing locations (the visual catchment).

#### Existing Visual exposure of the site

11. Close views into the site are restricted by the Nepean River to the north and east. Close views of parts of the site are possible from the South Western Freeway, Railway, and Moreton Park Road. Close views of the north western and northern parts (Visual Character Zone B on Map 3) are also available from the existing Menangle Township including the Church hill, the Railway Station and the Creamery.
12. There are middle distance and distant views of parts of the site from some viewing locations on Menangle Road. This includes some elevated locations to the north of the site, northwest of the site and from some high points to the north of Douglas Park. The



whole expanse of the site is visible from the latter viewing locations on Menangle Road due to its significantly elevated location relative to the site. There would be views of the whole site from some residences located along this section of the road.

13. There are medium distance, partial views from a section of Woodbridge Road, west of its intersection with Menangle Road. Close views of the north western part (Visual Character Zone B on Map 3) of the site are possible from the section of Woodbridge Road close to the east of its intersection with Menangle Road.
14. Close views of the northwestern parts of the site are possible from the Nepean River Reserve, the Railway Bridge over Menangle Road and the Menangle Weir.
15. There are views of predominantly Zones D and E from the Gilbulla Property. Views of the site from heritage items and landmark items in the wider visual context such as visibility from Mount Gilead, Mount Annan and possibly Camden Park is not considered to be a constraint for the future development of the site.
16. The parts of the site with high visual exposure to the South Western Freeway are the Visual Character Zone J and parts of Zone I. There are filtered views or views in the form of narrow windows of viewing opportunities of parts of the site in Zones A, E and C. There is no significant visibility of the site from the Bridge over the Nepean River along the South Western Freeway. There are no views of Zones B, D, F, G and H from the Freeway.
17. The parts of the site with high visual exposure from Moreton Park Road are Zones B, southern part of Zone A, southern part of Zone E, parts of Zone I, G and H. There are no views of Zones C, D and J from Moreton Park Road. There are highly filtered views of Zone F from this road.
18. The parts of the site with high visual exposure from the Railway Line are Zones B, the southern part of Zone A and Zone J.

#### Visual Opportunities and Constraints of the site

19. I have assessed the major issues for scenic quality preservation by identifying the visual opportunities and constraints of the site.
20. The South West Freeway, Moreton Park Road and Menangle Road were considered to be of the same significance as potential viewing places at this stage of the assessment. However, more stringent specific controls over design and configuration of future development would apply in a hierarchical way, acknowledging differences in the sensitivity of specific viewing places for example according to exposure to high numbers of viewers, impacts on landscape character of high scenic quality landscapes and heritage items and their settings.
21. The land immediately adjacent to the Nepean River Edge, associated sandstone landscape and gorge is constrained due to its high scenic quality and potential wildlife conservation values. At the same time it has the potential to be developed as a buffer to a conservation and recreation zone. Parts of this land especially the northern fringe is also flood prone.
22. The existing creek lines and their associated vegetation are of moderate or moderate-high scenic quality and have the potential to be further adapted as future riparian corridors and flood plains. These corridors would also provide vegetated character and the benefits of screening effects to parts of the future development.
23. A minor constraint identified was the future preservation of an axial view to the Church from the Nepean River Reserve. This could be addressed in the detailed urban design principles for the future development of the site. A further opportunity is the potential to



maintain some future view corridors to the Church through road networks and open spaces as part of the development of the site.

24. The predominant ridgelines, undulating topography and the high points constrained parts of the site for future employment use.
25. Parts of the site are constrained due to its proximity to the heritage precincts such as the Railway Station and Creamery Precinct and the Gilbulla Estate. Landscape buffers and protection and retention of these items could be part of the future development of the site. It is noted that Gilbulla Estate is not within the site.
26. In general, it is assessed that the site has the potential for employment uses subject to consideration of a number of mitigation measures and strategies.

#### Potential landuses, mitigation measures and residual constraints

27. Based on the above identified visual opportunities and constraints of the site, I recommend a potential land use plan for the site with a series of preliminary guidelines so as to preserve, adapt, link to and enhance the visual and scenic resources of the site.
28. The vegetation associated with the Nepean River Edge and creek lines is recommended to be conserved and adapted as recreational and vegetation buffers. The flood plain areas could be utilised for scenic and wildlife conservation and also integrated with future recreation uses, including active and passive uses.
29. Vegetation buffers along the main roads and railway could be integrated with acoustic barriers where deemed necessary, to assist in softening or blocking views to adjacent development in some cases. Significant view lines identified at the more detailed level would be protected and enhanced so that the views to the surrounding rural setting of the site are protected.
30. Future walkways/parkland can be integrated with the creeklines, ridges and Nepean River Edge. Existing axial views to the Church should be retained and future vistas be provided at the detailed Concept Plan design stage.
31. The existing predominant ridges could be re-vegetated to enhance the existing scenic resources of the site, re-establish some of the former woodland character of the landscape and assist in decreasing the impact of buildings seen on the side slopes from specific viewing locations such as the South Western Freeway and parts of Moreton Park Road.
32. Appropriate landscape buffers and protection of views to and out from the heritage precincts such as the Railway Station and Creamery precinct and Gilbulla property should be incorporated within the future development plans for the site.
33. Appropriate view corridors through parts of the site and views of the horizon beyond should be maintained with considered spatial arrangement, heights, distributions and setbacks of the future development from viewing places, such as views toward the Razorback Range across parts of the future employment land west of the Freeway in Zone J.

#### Conclusion

The assessment above has also considered the small number of vantage points identified in the Wollondilly Visual Catchment Study and Wollondilly Vision 2025 and assessed a large number of others. The strategy above is considered to be consistent with this document.

The SREP 20 Hawkesbury-Nepean River and the Scenic Quality Study associated with it applies to the site. The study identifies the Nepean River running along the development site as part



of the Landscape Unit No. 1.1.5: Nepean Georges: Douglas Park Weir to Menangle Weir with regional significance. It identifies Menangle Bridge and Menangle Weir as important view points. The assessment carried out above addresses these features and is considered to be consistent with the statutory instrument as well as the provisions and recommendations of the Scenic Quality Study of SREP 20.

I consider from the above assessment that the site has a potential for rezoning for the proposed uses. Subject to the incorporation of above guidelines, development of more fine grained response to specific view lines and location and appropriate urban design principles, I consider that the site has the potential for future development, as intended by adequately identifying and addressing the main scenic resources of the site and protecting and managing these resources for the future in a way that will provide for high quality scenic amenity.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Richard Lamb'.

**Dr Richard Lamb**

Richard Lamb & Associates