

Residential Aged Care Facility
7 Martin Close & 42 Stronach Avenue, East Maitland
Urban Design Report
June 2020

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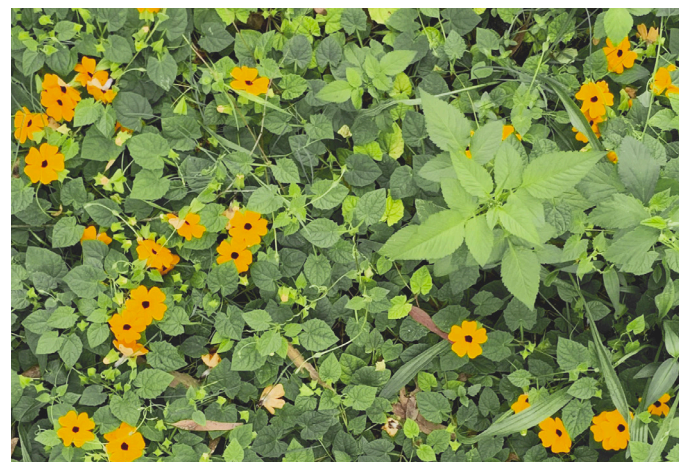
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INTRODUCTION

Purpose of this report is to support the redevelopment of the Green Hills Aged Care Facility on the existing site in East Maitland. The design has been prepared by Calder Flower Architecture and Arterra Landscape Architects. Atlas Urban has been engaged in the design development and has provided urban design advice, informing the design response to the opportunity and to the site context.

The direction set by Fresh Hope Care is to think creatively about this beautiful East Maitland site. This gives an opportunity to assess the whole site as a precinct and reevaluate what the site can offer for future residents.

This Urban Design Study reflects the challenges and opportunities for the residential aged care facility. We have examined relevant case studies. This proposal captures the insights of the context analysis and best practice initiatives from Australia and around the world.



PROJECT VISION

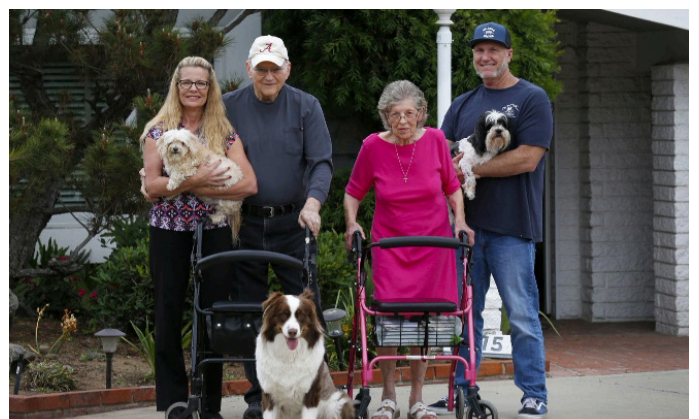
Create a place of pride, respect and dignity for all residents and workers:

- emphasise and encourage the health and wellbeing of all residents, workers and the community.
- enables people to do the activities they want to do.
- safe and effective care for all.
- safe and comfortable environment.
- enabling enjoyment, creating a sense of belonging, interaction, functionality and the ability to move freely indoors/outdoors.
- independence and quality of life.

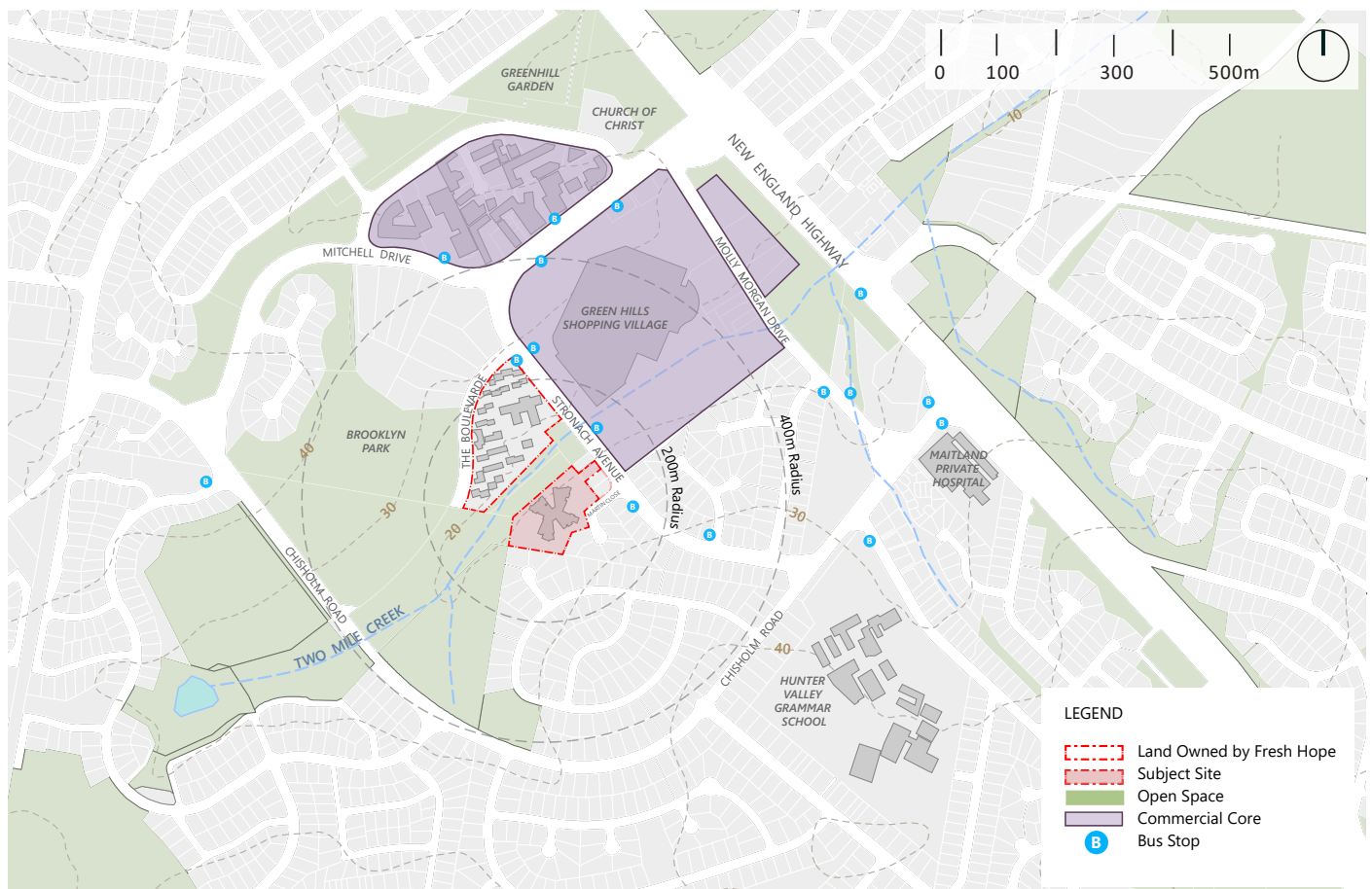
Key themes have been developed through the Architecture and Landscape design. for the project as follows:

1. **REFRAME THE 'PROBLEM'** - We view older age as the norm not the exception and move away from ageism and seeing ageing as a 'problem', rather it is a rich experience.
2. **NEEDS-LED, NOT COMPLIANCE-DRIVEN** - Creating a place that moves from a compliance-driven approach to a more needs-based approach, challenging stereotypes and seeking better, more uplifting outcomes.
3. **EMPATHY AND ERGONOMICS** - Designing the place for wellbeing of all residents and their abilities and ailments.
4. **MAKE IT MIXED** - Promote and encourage community connection, bring the community in, and offer the choice for external activities, include facilities and transport opportunities for all.
5. **ACTIVITY IS ESSENTIAL** - The benefits of being active are essential. There are two ways to design for activity: incidental and designed. The scheme includes a wide variety of spaces for activities, walking, or simply to sit and enjoy the view.

6. **PROCESS IMPROVEMENT** - After the project is built, the residents have moved in and the ribbon cut, the design process hasn't finished. We must remember the optimisation and activities and learnings have only begun.



THE SITE



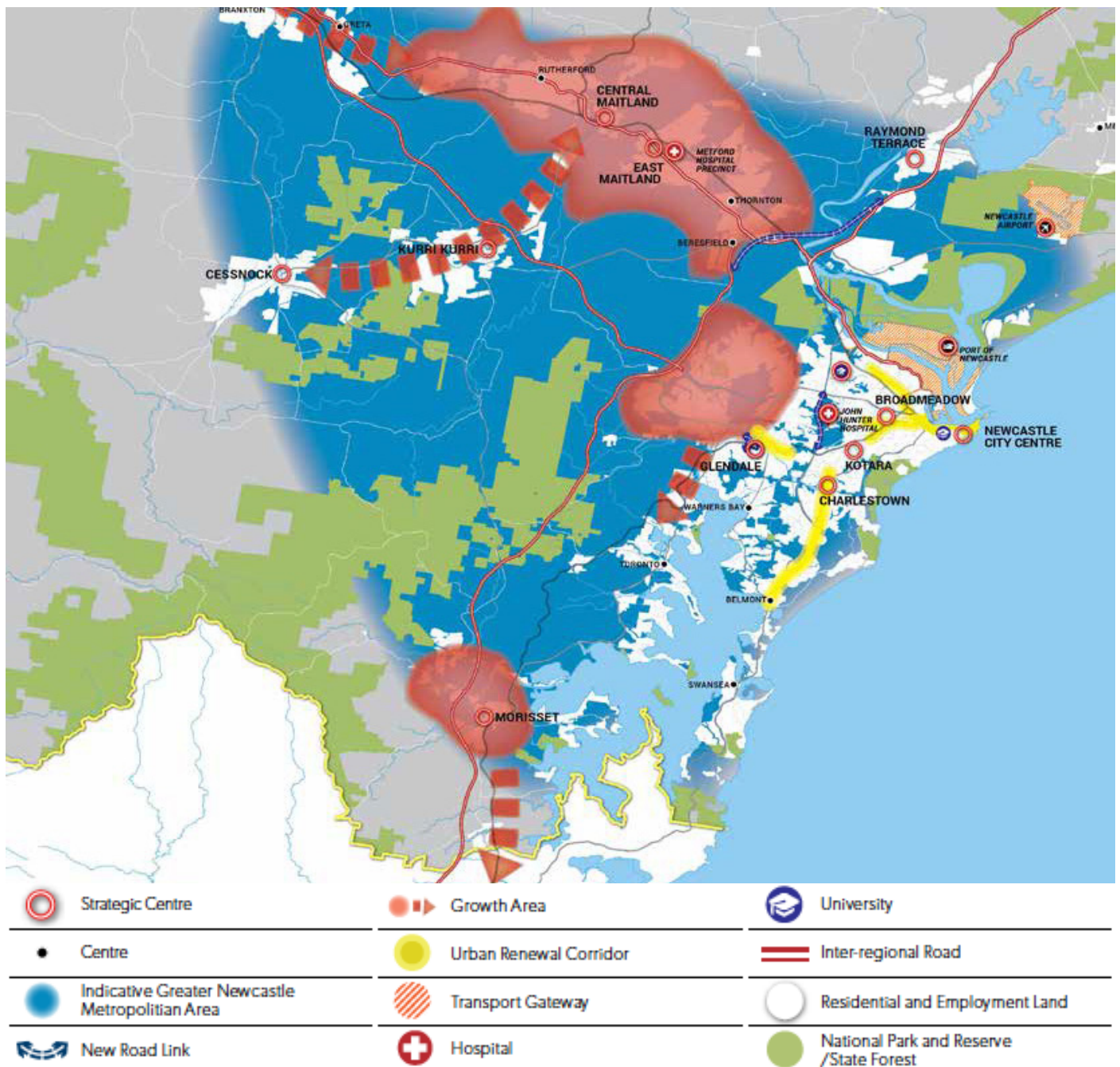
Fresh Hope Care owns two sites situated on each side of Two Mile Creek. In the northwest is the independent living units (ILU) site (not the subject of this development application). To the southeast is an existing residential aged care facility (RACF). The proposal is for the demolition and redevelopment of the RACF. The possession of the ILU site, provides flexibility in for the management of the facility, including the ability to temporarily relocate some residents while the RACF redevelopment proceeds.

Fresh Hope has recently acquired three residential properties on Stronach Avenue. These represent a consolidation of the site, which give the RACF direct access to the Stronach Avenue frontage. These will be held and 'land banked' until after this stage of redevelopment. These properties provide flexibility and an important means to connect with East Maitland.

The site occupies a position between a natural bushland setting and the town centre, giving it access to the *"best of both worlds"*.

- Site adjacent to town centre
- Site engages green space/ remnant bushland
- Bus stops close to site

STRATEGIC PLANNING CONTEXT



Hunter Regional Plan 2036

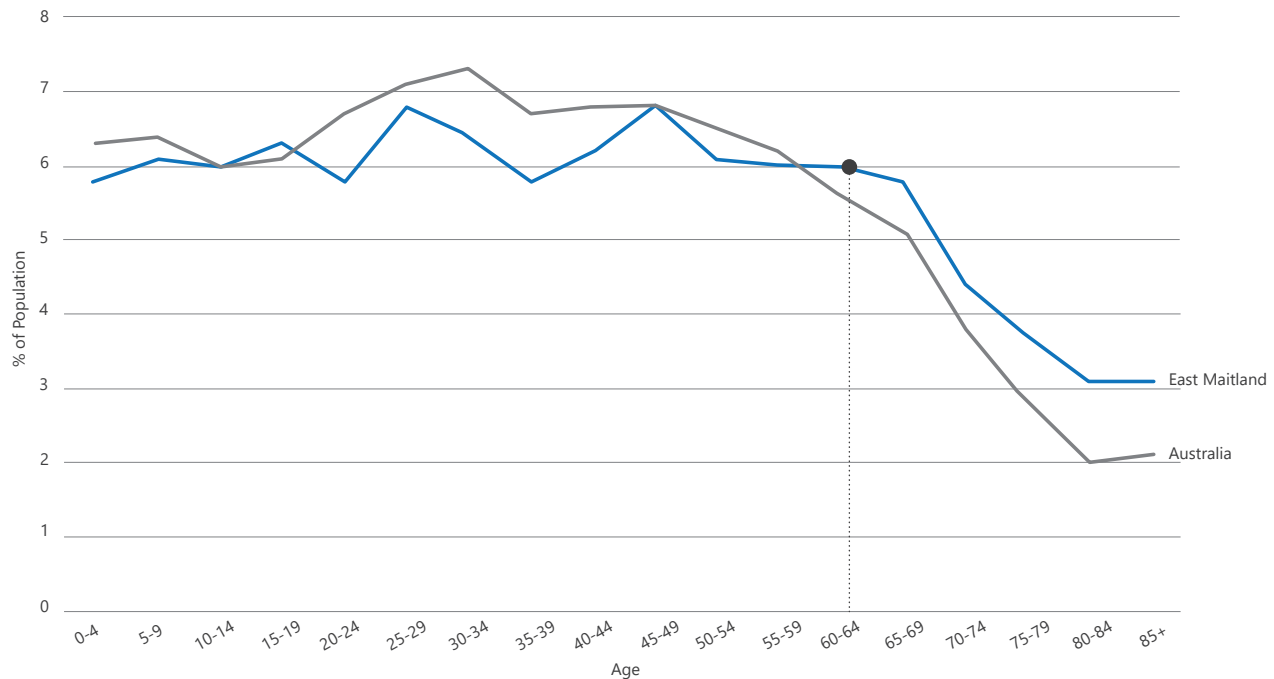
The Hunter Regional Plan 2036 (published in 2016) is the key regional planning instrument. This Plan has a set of important and relevant strategies. East Maitland lies at centre of the largest Growth Region in the Hunter. The Plan emphasises the importance of health services, with the Metford Hospital Precinct.

- Population projection is estimated to be 1.1M by 2036

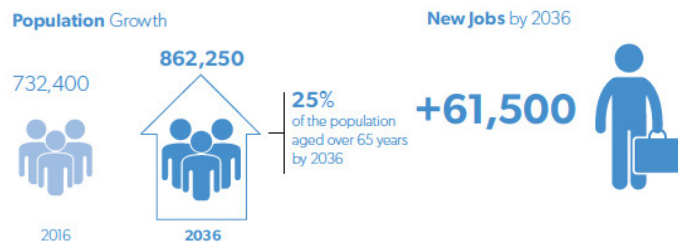
- 25% of the population aged over 65 by 2036
- Maitland and Maitland East are the centre of the major Growth Area
- East Maitland is designated as a Strategic Centre
- Plan calls to investigate opportunities to develop a health cluster that leverages the NSW Government commitment to build a new Maitland Hospital
- The target of 61,500 new jobs is identified in the plan.

POPULATION AGE

Population Age Australia vs East Maitland

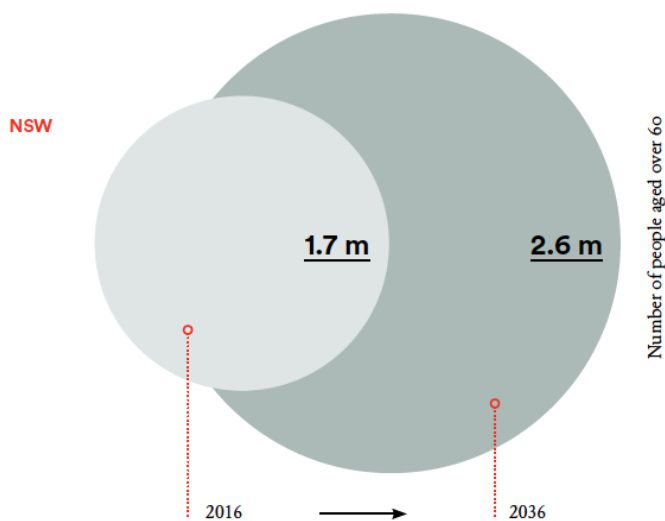


Source: 2016 Census ABS



The population age distribution for east Maitland shows a distinctly older population than the Australian average. This is particularly true in the older age cohorts. Whereas, the over 80-year-old represent only 4% of the total Australian population, in East Maitland this group represents 6% of the community. These demographic trends points to the importance of this project if people are to remain within their community as they age.

According to "Better Placed" produced by NSW Government, ageing population is projected 56% increase of people aged 60+ over by 2036 in NSW.



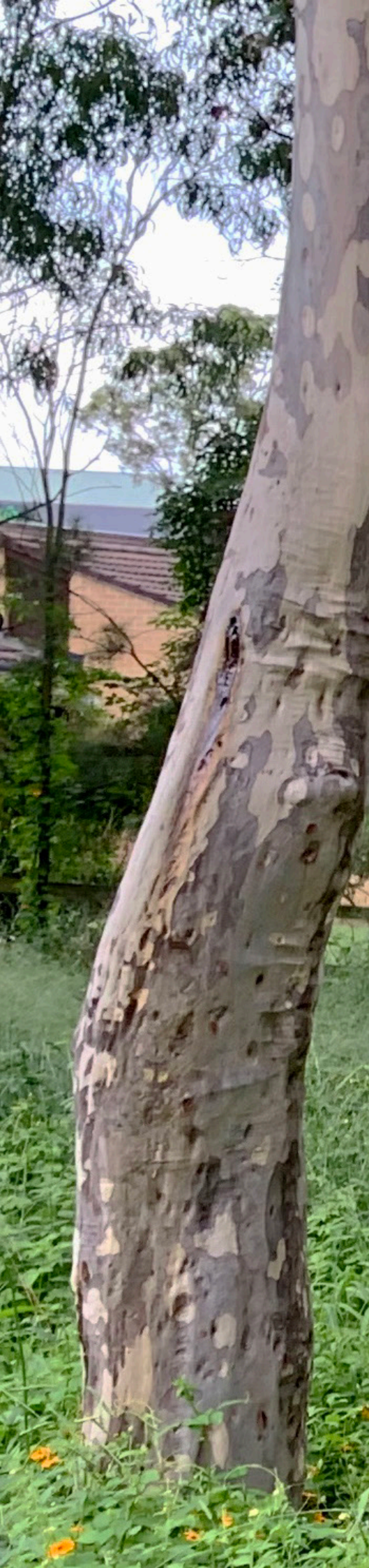


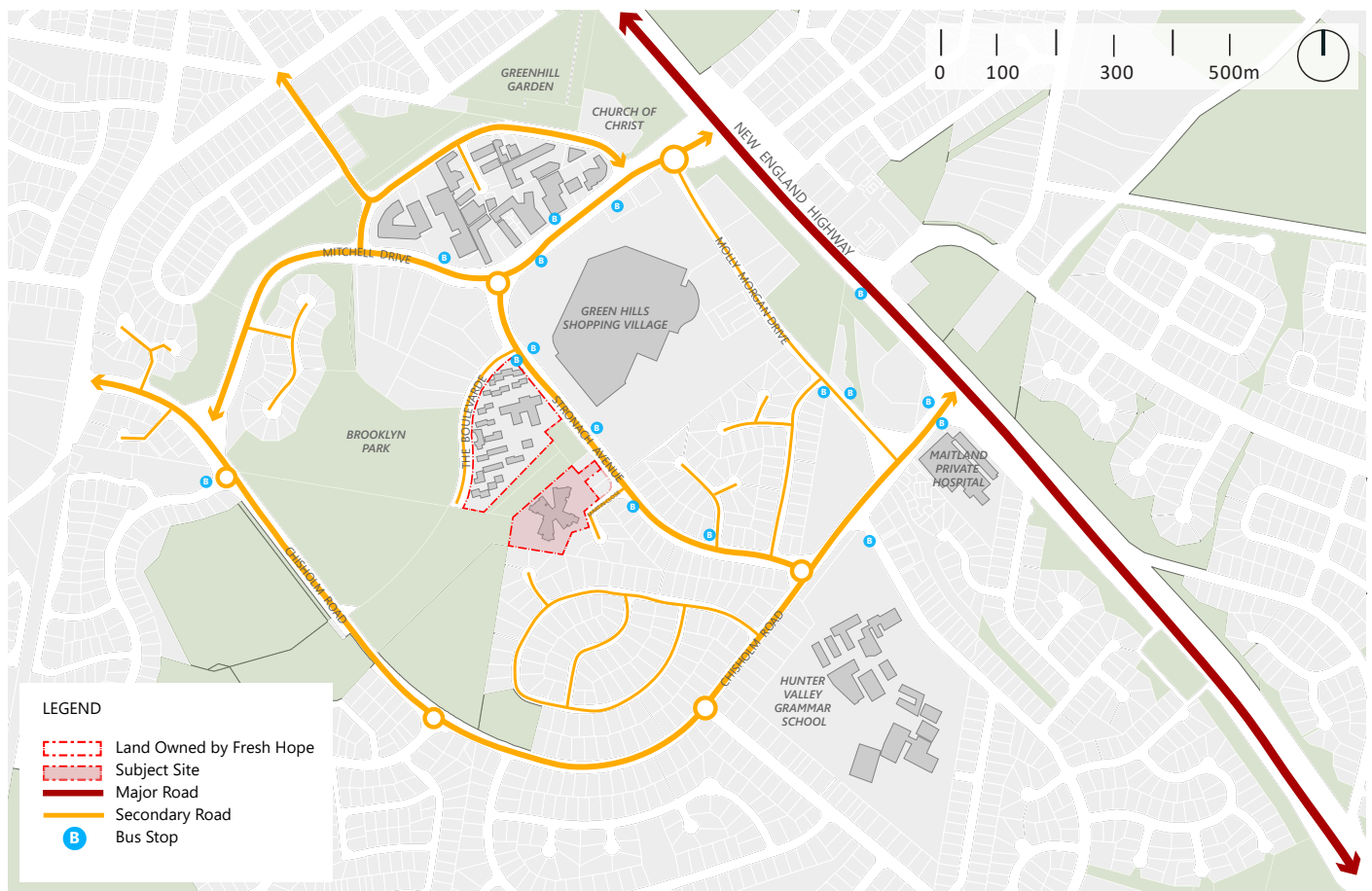
FIGURE GROUND



The figure ground diagram illustrates a diversity of building footprints in the precinct. The smaller detached houses are distinguishable from the larger form of the institutional uses of the school and hospital. The proposal has a distinctive form, which is more akin to the other institutional uses. The large footprint of Stocklands site is distinguished by its size.

- Precinct include mixture of institutional, commercial and suburban housing
- Proposal is for an institutional use and adopts similar footprint

TRAFFIC NETWORK

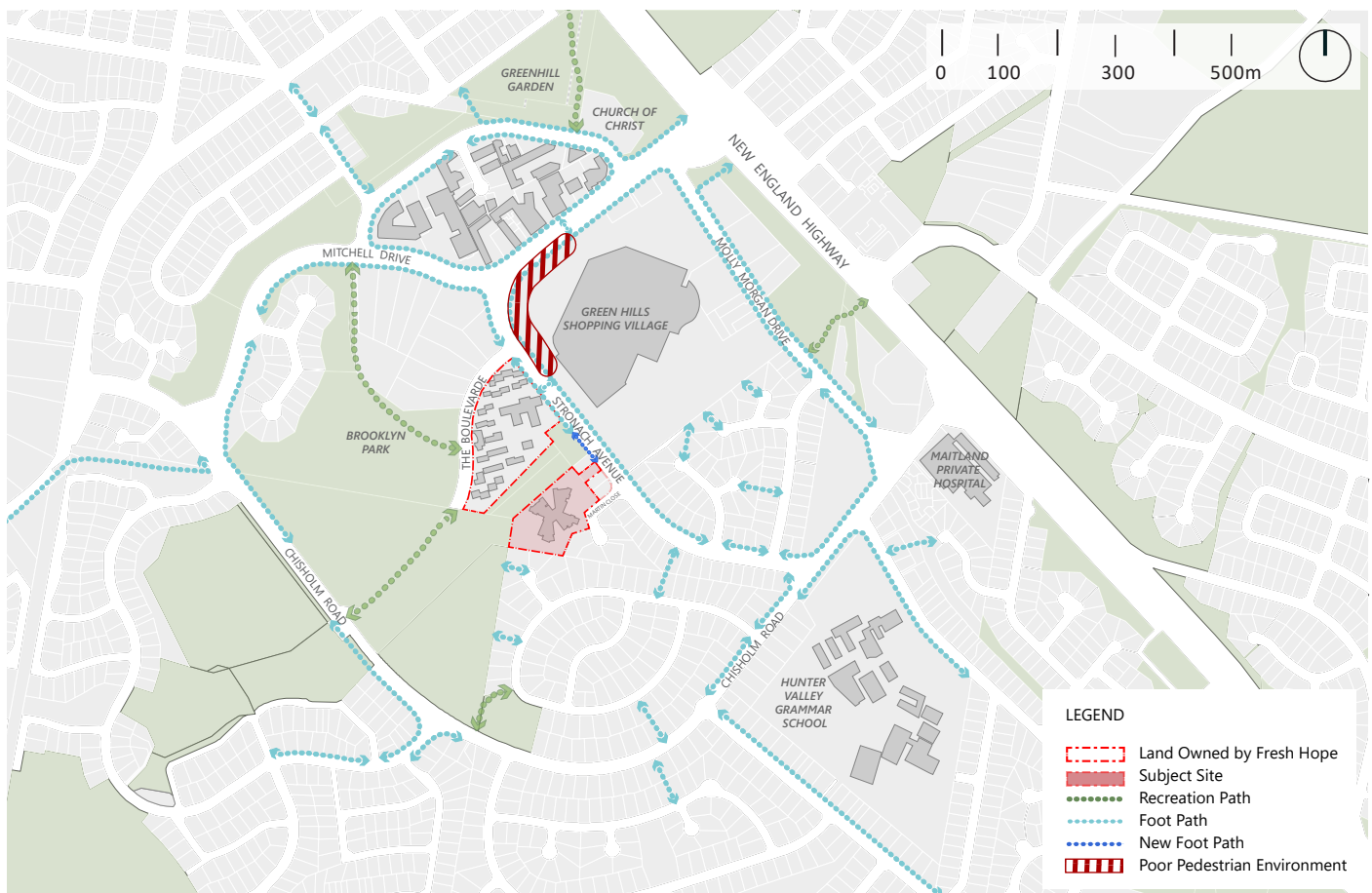


The road system has a distinct hierarchy. The higher level is a network characterised by large blocks, several hectares in size with roundabouts at intersections. The lower level in the hierarchy is made up of cul-de-sacs and local streets with limited access. The subject site has frontage to both; a higher level road (Stronach Avenue) and a cul-de-sac (Martin Close).

Traditional, town centres have the desirable characteristic of finer-grain block form. However, here the reverse is true, finer-grain away from the centre and larger blocks closer to the centre. This lack of permeability makes the quality of footpaths and walking track connections all the more important.

- Super block traffic network
- Cul-de-sac subdivision pattern
- Major intersection predominately roundabout

PEDESTRIAN NETWORK



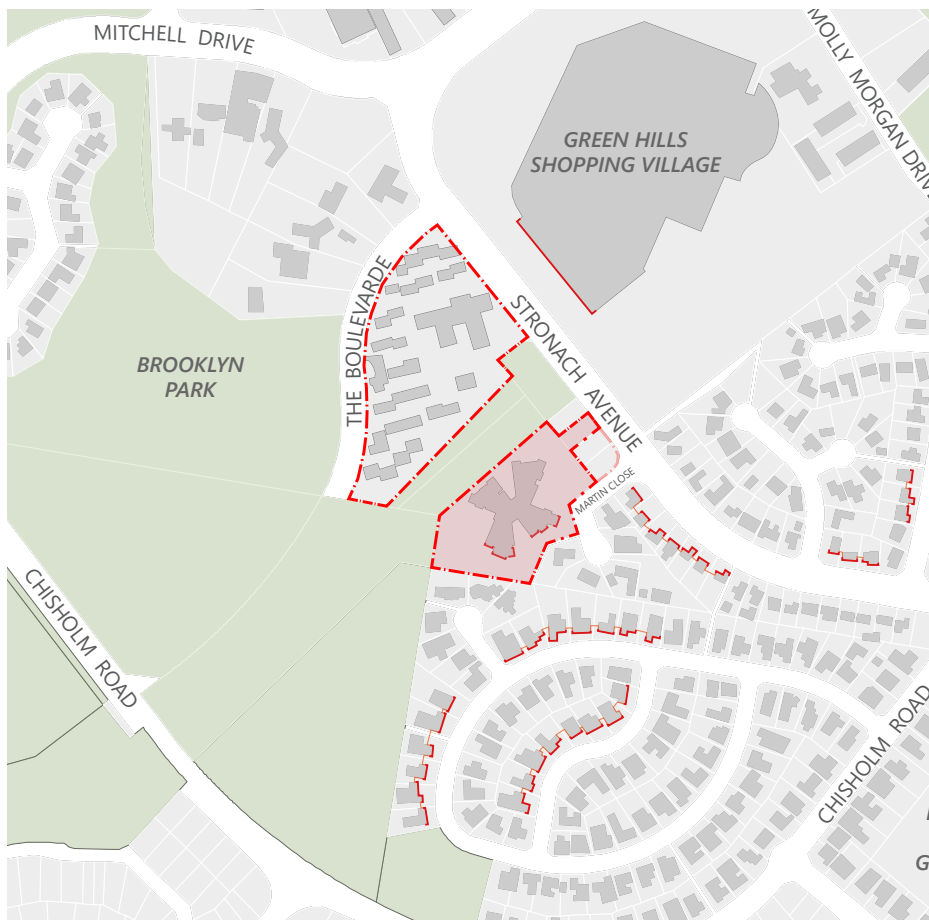
The pedestrian network has a hierarchy, characterised as follows:

- Footpaths on major roads only, crossings at intersections hampered by roundabouts
- No footpaths on local streets, however low traffic volumes generally make walking on roadway acceptable for the able-bodied
- Pedestrian permeability is much-improved by the extensive system of walking tracks for mid-block connections and off the end of Cul-de-sacs
- Some walking tracks exist in the bushland, however this does not represent an integrated system.

The pedestrian environment is particularly poor to the north of the pedestrian crossing along the frontage of Green Hills Shopping Centre (refer to the diagram above). Confusing and difficult pedestrian crossings, car priority over footpaths, difficult gradients. We understand that Council and Stocklands intend to improve this situation, we welcome this initiative. We note also that there is an ongoing program of constructing footpaths in East Maitland.

The proposal incorporates elements which will improve connectivity by extending a new footpath along Stronach Avenue.

NEIGHBOURHOOD FIGURE GROUND PATTERN

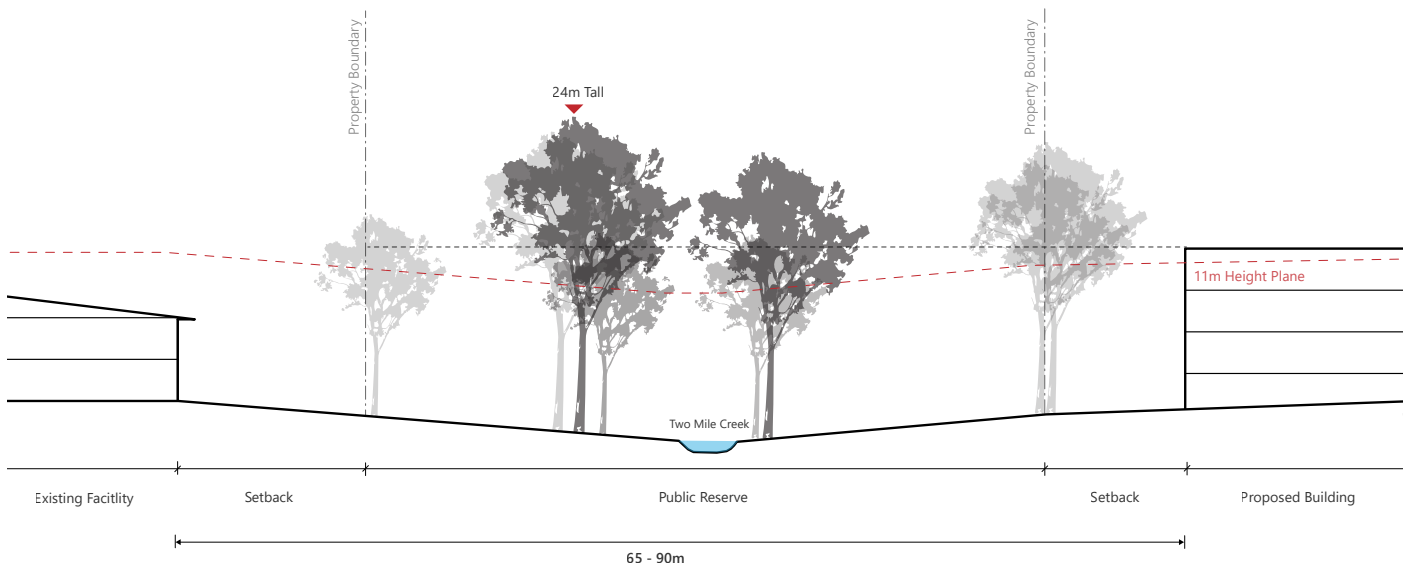


The proposed building footprint adopts a form which mirrors the existing patterns in the surrounding residential streets:

- Regular pattern of streets defined by house-front
- Project massing broken down by wing configuration
- Wing-ends further broken down in architectural form



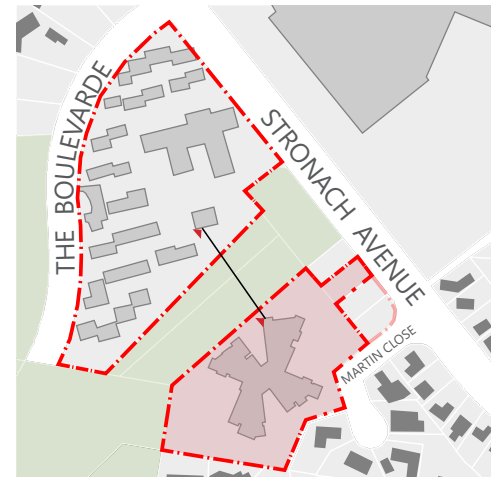
BUILDING HEIGHT



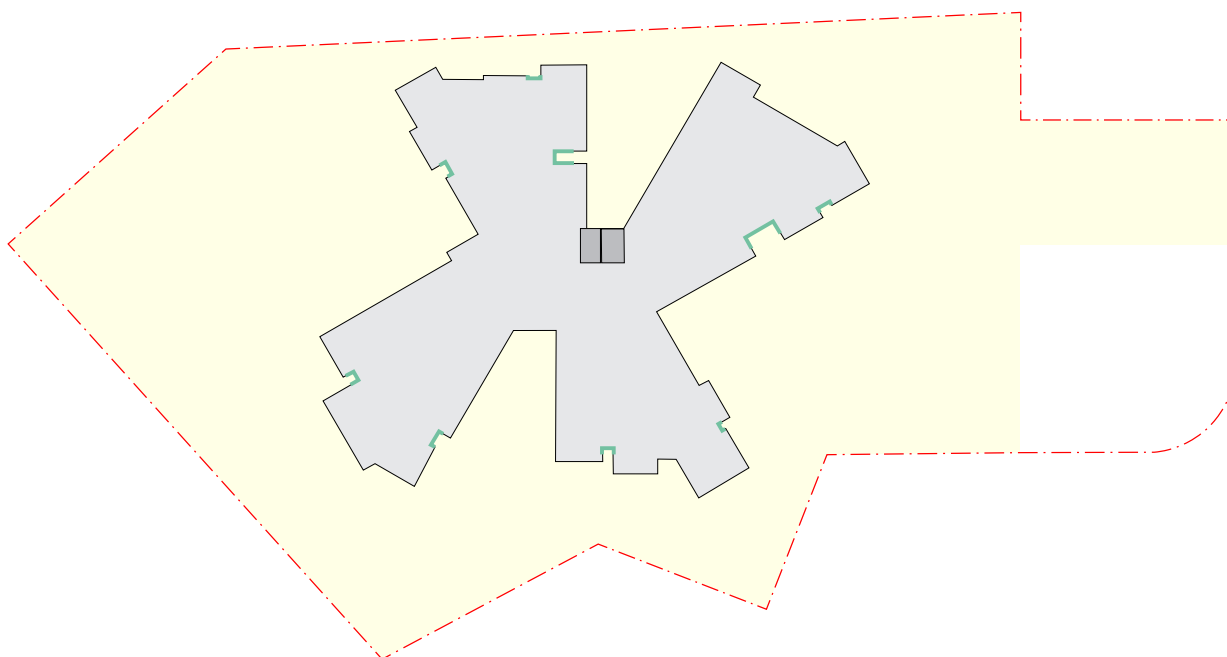
Typical section 65 - 90m

The tallest part of the proposed building occurs along its northwestern edge. The height derives from a set of factors including flood levels and the site's cross fall. We consider the proposed height appropriate in this location for the following reasons:

- In mid-winter between 9am and 3pm, the proposal creates no overshadowing of neighbouring residences
- Large building separation to Independent Living Units of around 65 metres.
- The upper level is among tree canopy which rises to a height of around 24 metres



BUILT FORM



Viewed from the surrounding area, the most visible parts of the building are the ends of the wings. Particular attention has been paid to these elevations in their form and material selection. Key elements of these follows:

- Variegated built form
- Elevation defined by distinct components
- Differentiated material distinguish built elements
- Differentiated lower level creates distinct base
- Varied roof forms distinguish elements



“The form of the building is conceived as a central core with radiating wings. Four wings extend outward from the centre into the landscape and create protected landscaped courtyards. The wings widen outward towards their ends to create sitting spaces and ‘garden rooms’ that invite generous views and connections to nature and the outside.”

Lara Calder, Architect

DESIGN RESPONSE



Outdoor Space

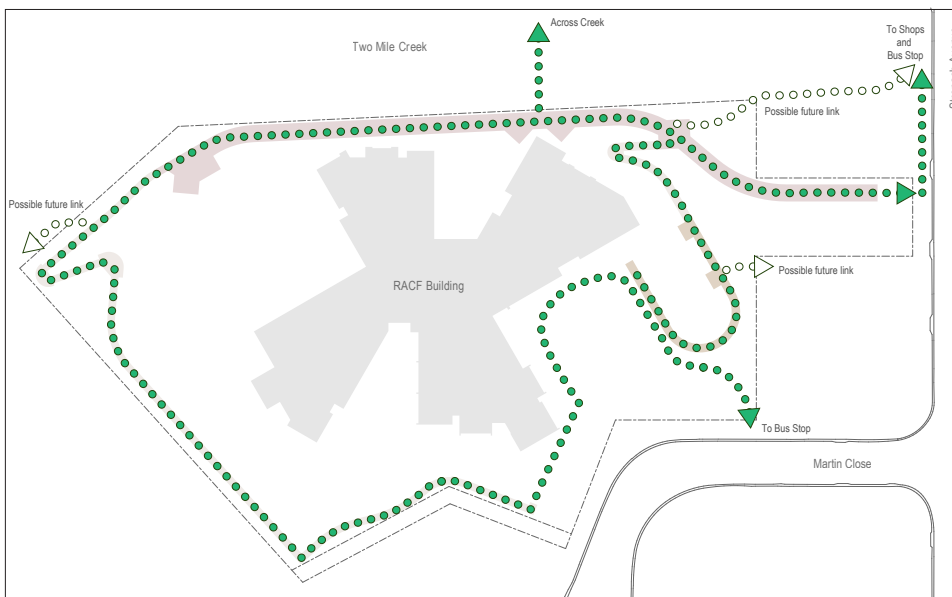
A distinctive set of outdoor spaces provides for a variety of activities and interest. The landscape character uses a simple and robust palette of materials and plant species that are responsive to the new building and the existing surrounding native vegetation of Two Mile Creek.



Natural Setting

The planting scheme proposes to maximise tree canopy cover and provide green outlook from all rooms. There are three organising layers to the planting palette:

- Inner core – is an exotic mix of trees and shrubs designed to provide for winter sun and summer shade and delight the senses.
- Outer core – includes more native and some exotic vegetation, using predominantly fire-retardant and 'hard to burn' species.
- Periphery and native meadow planting – are largely endemic native trees and shrubs with some feature planting.



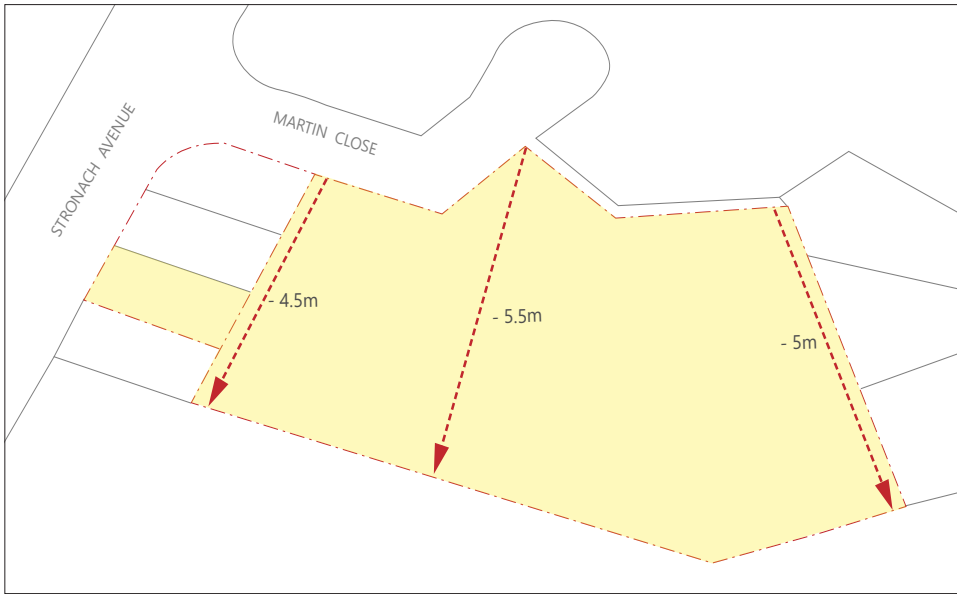
Walking Track

An accessible loop is proposed around the entire site, with smaller internal circuits within individual courtyards. The track links with the existing pedestrian bridge and also offers an obvious and effective demarcation between public and private landscape.

“The landscape design ensures the proposed development sits comfortably within its setting and provides an attractive outlook from the new facility and softening from adjoining buildings. The landscape design is simple in its structure and materials yet functional and responsive to the privacy of existing neighbours, future residents and responds well to the site’s grades and various and versatile uses.”

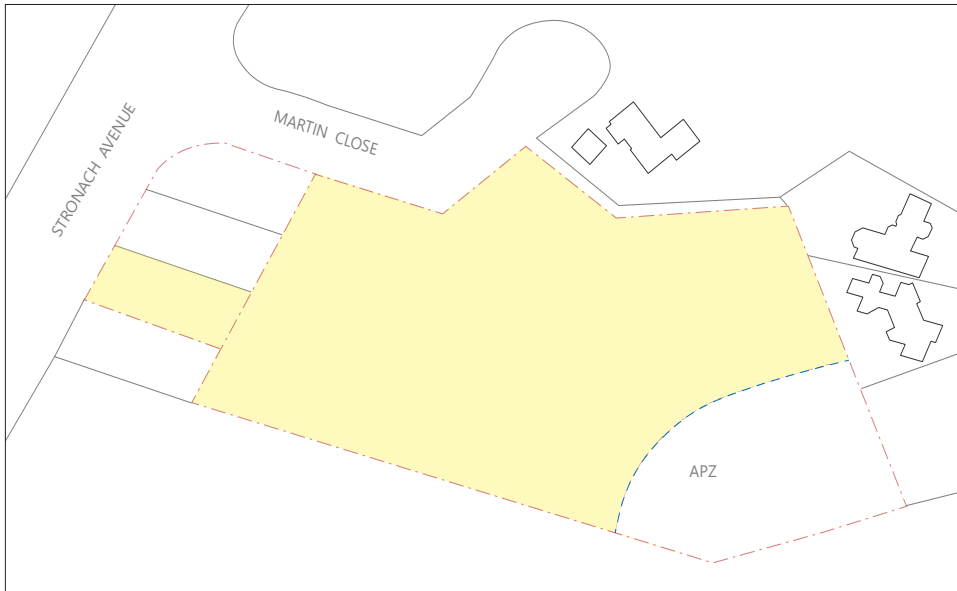
Robert Smart, Landscape Architect

DESIGN RESPONSE



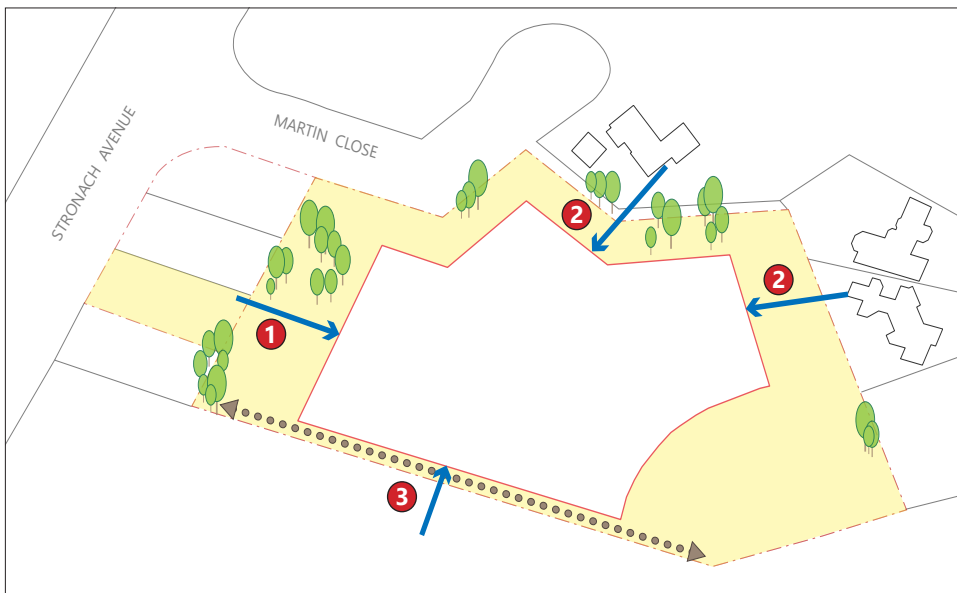
Level Difference

The site has distinct slope from Martin Close down toward the creek.



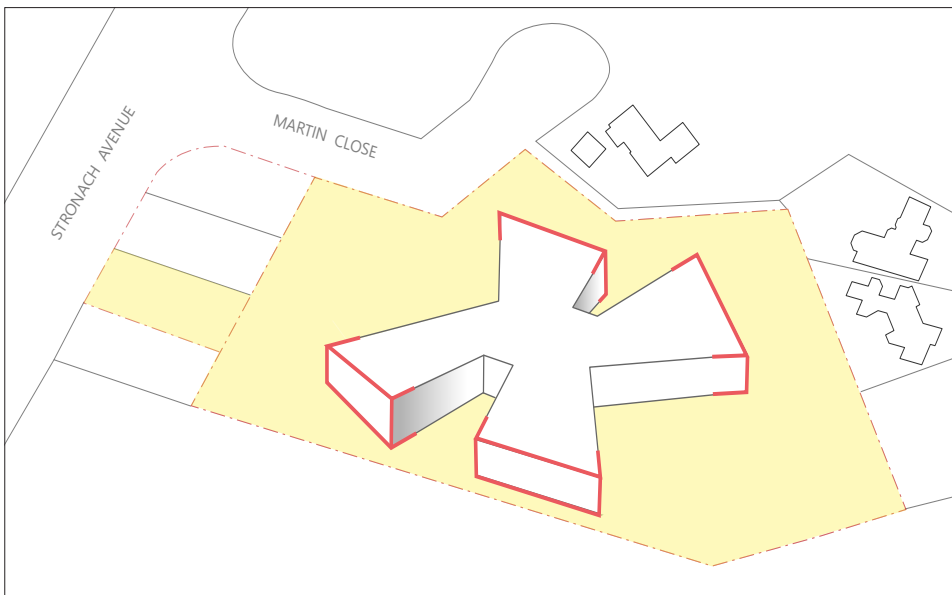
Statutory Setback

The Southern part of the site includes a set back, which is the result of a brushfire Asset Protection Zone (APZ)



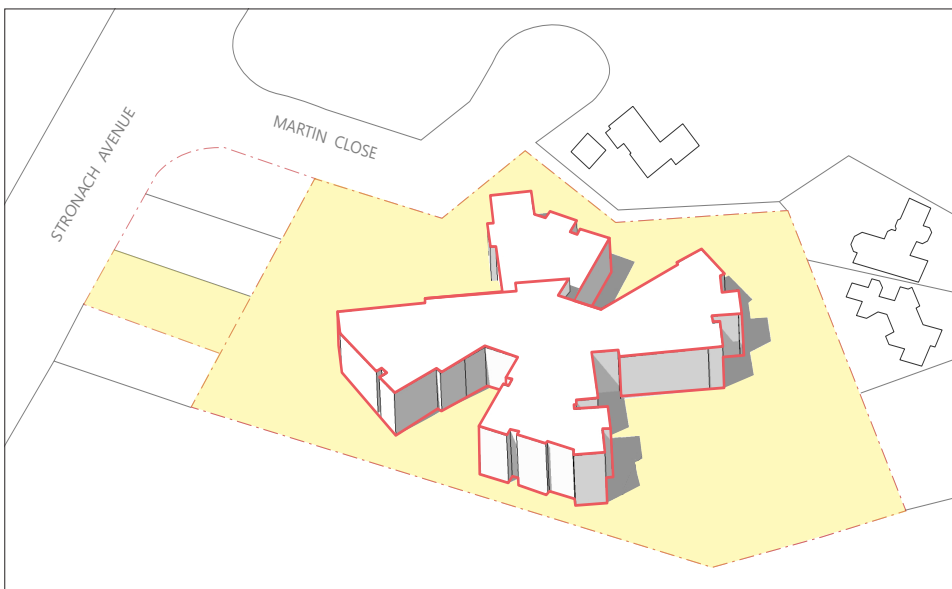
Design Response

1. Enlarged setback to protect trees
2. Enlarged setback from houses
3. Setback for path and amenity



Discreet Wings Ends

- Avoid bulky form
- Landscaped courtyards
- Daylight to room



Variegated Form

- Architectural interest
- Composition of smaller components
- Reflect residential setting

“The design concept for the new building, is to provide a building that is strongly connected with the existing landscape setting, especially the beautiful mature trees on the site and along Two Mile Creek”

Lara Calder, Architect

CONCLUSION

The design presented in this Development Application is the result of a careful analysis of the site and its setting. It provides for the particular needs of elderly people while creating a set of rich and varied living environments.

The building has been designed to allow residents to connect to the beautiful setting. The Landscape design creates a set of attractive spaces that integrate the building with its natural setting.

The architecture mediates its institutional function to create a homely and familiar living environment for residents. The outward form and expression of the building is carefully modulated, it does not pretend to be a house, however it adopts, materials (brick and timber) and a variegated form which is familiar in the surrounding suburban streets.

The proposal is for an aged care facility, which will become an attractive and familiar part of the community which it serves.

