



# **BLOCK 10 & 11, SECTION 100 CANBERRA CITY** **ARCHITECTURE DESIGN REPORT**



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## IMAGERY

# OVERVIEW

## Introduction

This architectural design statement is provided in support of a Works Approval application for a new mixed use commercial development at Blocks 10 & 11 Section 100 Canberra City for Morris Property Group, represented by BJM Canberra Pty Ltd.

The site is located opposite City Hill, adjacent to the ACT Courts precinct and has frontages to Vernon Circle, Knowles Place and the recently completed Edinburgh Avenue extension.

The site is currently under construction of the basement public carpark required by the Crown lease and approved under Works Approval WA101113.

The aims of this report are to describe the proposed design scheme and how it improves on the existing approved scheme. How the development interacts with its context, how people will use its amenities and enhance the developing nature of the south western edge of the CBD. This proposal was presented to the National Capital Design Review Panel on 19 June 2020, and has since undergone further design development in response to the Panel's advice. The Panel's advice and the Proponent's responses to this advice is provided in this report.

## Site Description

The property subject to this application is located at Blocks 10 & 11, Section 100 Canberra City. The site is bounded on three sides by Vernon Circle to the east, Edinburgh Avenue to the south and Knowles Place to the west. The northern boundary of the development adjoins the recently expanded Courts precinct.

## Site Orientation and Topography

The site slopes away from City Hill to the east, all the way down to London Circuit to the west. At Vernon Circle the existing RL is 572.0m and falls steadily along Edinburgh Avenue to approximately 567.8m at the corner of Edinburgh Ave and Knowles Place. Knowles Place rises gently moving north to RL 569.2m at its northern corner. The sloping nature of the site and the level differences afford the site ground level frontages at both the Knowles Place and Vernon Circle levels. The Vernon Circle boundary faces east, Edinburgh Ave faces south, Knowles Place faces west and the boundary addressing the adjacent Courts precinct faces north. The predominant elevations address Vernon Circle and Knowles Place with shorter boundaries to north and south.

## Development Overview

The development consists of commercial office accommodation within two 'towers', North and South. At the lower ground floor along Knowles Place, retail tenancies, office entries and public car park access are found. Below ground is located the parking structure within three basement floors that partially sit below the extension of Knowles Place. From Vernon Circle the office towers project 6 storeys above street level and from Knowles Place, 7 storeys above street level.

The massing of the towers has been broken down with the uppermost storey of office accommodation of each tower setback in profile to minimise mass while the towers are separated at Vernon Circle. This break, along with two storey high pedestrian colonnades break down the height and elevation of the building into a human scale and tie in with the adjacent built context.

## Development Snapshot

Site Area	8,381m <sup>2</sup>
Building Storeys	6 at Vernon Circle 7 at Knowles Place
Height Limit	25m from Vernon Circle level
Height Datum	AHD 572.0m at Vernon Circle
Building Height	AHD 597.0m to Parapet from Vernon Circle
Gross Area	Office Area 34,086m <sup>2</sup> Ancillary Area 6,847m <sup>2</sup> Retail Area 783m <sup>2</sup>
Total Gross Area	41,716m <sup>2</sup>
Parking Provision	871 Cars 4 Drop-off bays 1 Loading dock

# Design Statement

## A Contemporary Contribution to the City Urban Culture

The new 34,000 sqm office accommodation development at One City Hill provides a highly flexible, sustainable and innovative workplace environment that will contribute positively to the urban life of Canberra's CBD. The development comprises two distinct new office buildings which together provide cohesive and clearly defined built forms which compliment the existing urban context. The building geometry is articulated to provide an appropriate urban response to each of its four boundaries, including the following:

- To Edinburgh Avenue: an articulated and highly transparent façade which gives strong definition to this significant city corner and provides a high level of transparency into the building
- To Vernon Circle: a curvilinear façade, double height colonnade and textured louvre screen which aligns with the adjacent court building. The top level steps back to provide an appropriate scale to Vernon Circle and City Hill.
- To Knowles Place: continuous retail frontages, an undulating façade, double height colonnade and textured louvre screen and a large double height entry at the mid point between the two buildings.
- To The Court: An articulated façade that responds to the existing form of the Court, while providing a north facing terrace overlooking Vernon Circle

At street level the new development presents an architecture that is open, welcoming and sophisticated in character. One City Hill integrates seamlessly with the existing CBD precinct, and creates a dynamic new workplace address with close proximity to public transport, parking, and Canberra's many retail, business and cultural amenities.

## Creating An Active Public Realm

At street level the two new buildings activate the public realm, with continuous retail frontage along Knowles Place and the corner of Edinburgh Avenue, access to end of trip facilities, and a generous forecourt linking the main entry between the two buildings. A generous setback at ground level provides the opportunity for extensive public amenity at ground level, while a generous laneway between the Courts along the northern frontage, and along the southern Edinburgh Avenue frontage, allows permeability across the site to City Hill Park.

## Providing Public Amenity

The continuous double height colonnade wraps around the buildings and provides a generous civic interstitial space, while affording protection from rain and allowing filtered light which reflects the subtly coloured louvres. The generously curved glazed faced at ground level allows pedestrians to walk seamlessly around the building, while enhancing their sight lines and allowing them to navigate the city with ease and confidence. Extensive landscaped planter beds and trees around the building provide pedestrians with natural amenity, while raised planter walls provide pedestrians with a sense of safety along the heavily trafficked Vernon Circle.

## A Welcoming Building With A Strong Sense of Identity

The new office entry along Knowles Place provides a highly attractive, safe and convenient drop off and entry to the foyer, with a driveway providing access to a secure basement parking occurs at Knowles Place to the north west. A continuous colonnade allows people to walk around the building under protection, and connects the entry at Knowles Place, with the future stages of The Barracks precinct to the west and the future light rail stop on London Circuit.

Above the double height entry colonnade, a textured, curving facade embraces Vernon Circle and Knowles Place, and relates clearly to the roof datum of the adjacent Court building. The louvred frames which control eastern sun create a dancing rhythm along Vernon Circle and Knowles Place, while the highly glazed north and south ends take advantage of the spectacular views across the city.

## A Dynamic & Light Filled Atria at the Heart of the Building

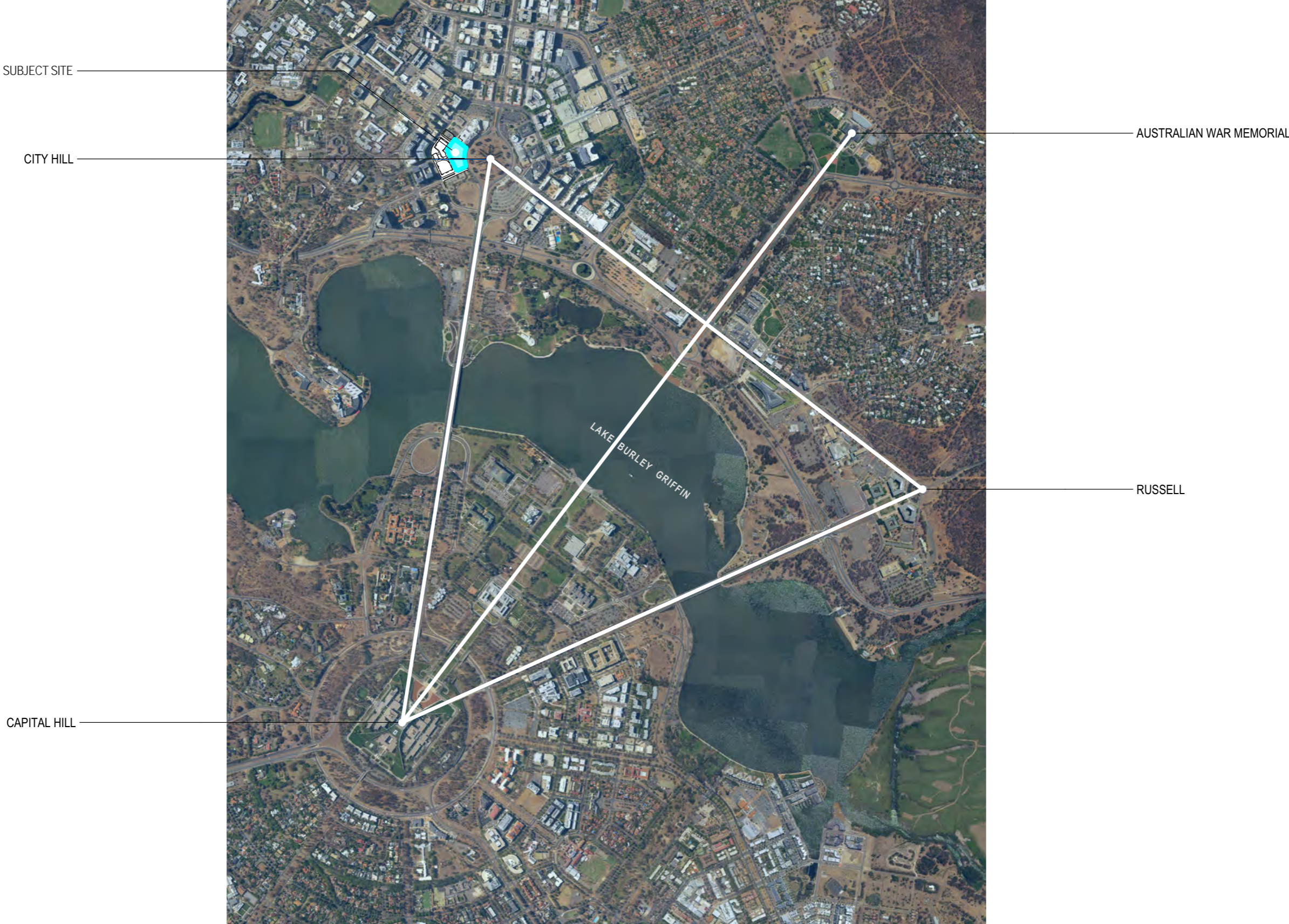
Upon entering the building, the foyer provides access to the central security screening area, which provides access to the circulation core of both buildings, including the central atrium to the north building. Upon passing security, occupants can disperse among the three lift cores and connect with the northern atrium at level 1, which is filled with natural light and activity, including a variety of lounge, meeting and touchdown spaces.

## Encouraging A Dialogue Between Public and Commercial Space

The open and transparent ground level offers visual connection into and across the building interior, including a transparent double height entry to Knowles Place and an extensive clear glazed façade to the south. The resulting transparency allows a visual dialogue between the public and the building occupants and help break down the perceived barriers of public and private space.

# SITE & CONTEXT

## Site Location



# Site Context



CITY AREA CONTEXT PLAN SHOWING SUBJECT SITES LOCATION

## Existing Streetscape & Approach



COURTS PRECINCT INTERFACE



KNOWLES PLACE / SUPREME COURT



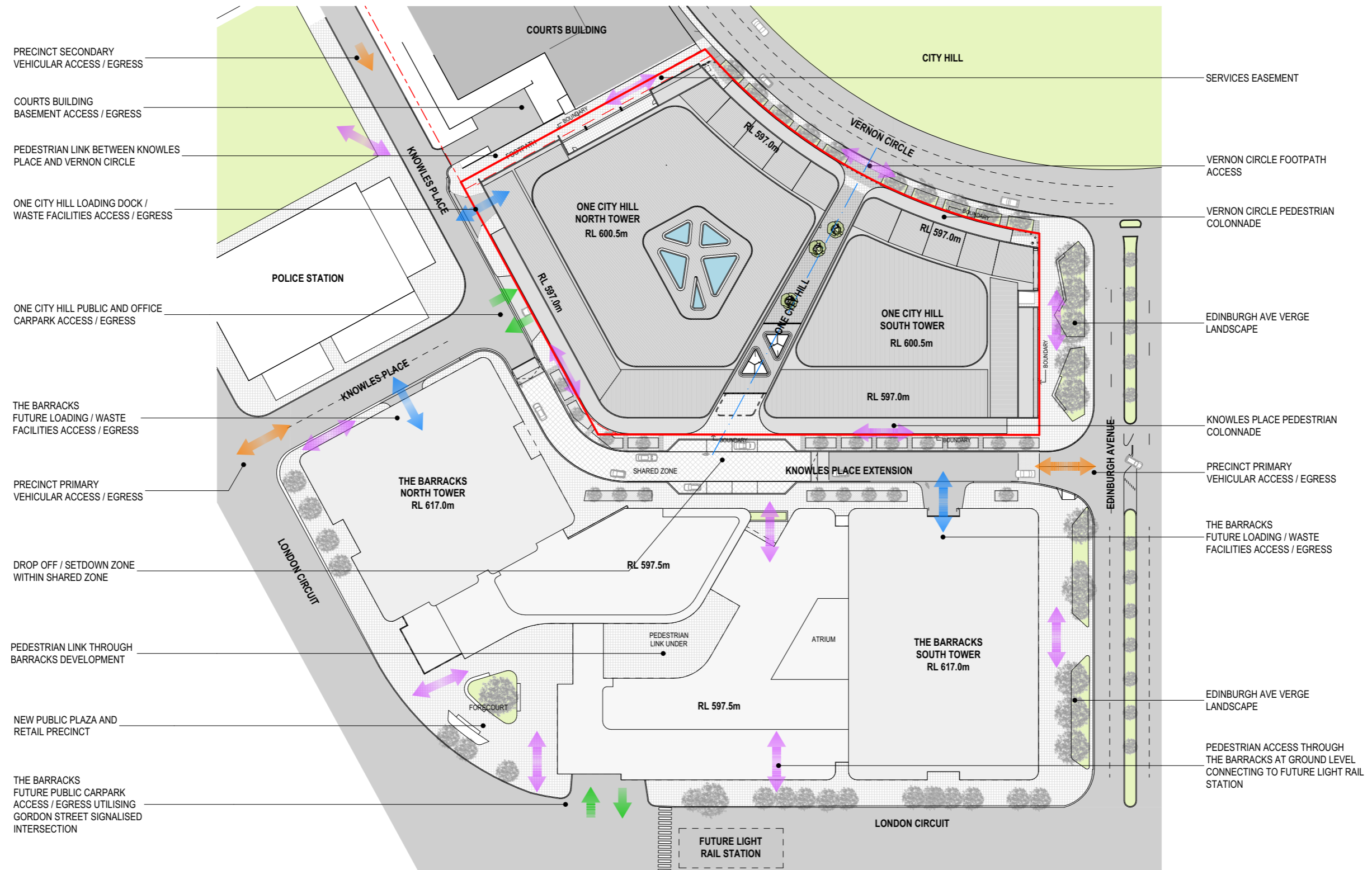
SOUTHERN APPROACH FROM DISTANCE



SOUTHERN APPROACH ENTERING VERNON CIRCLE



# Precinct Masterplan



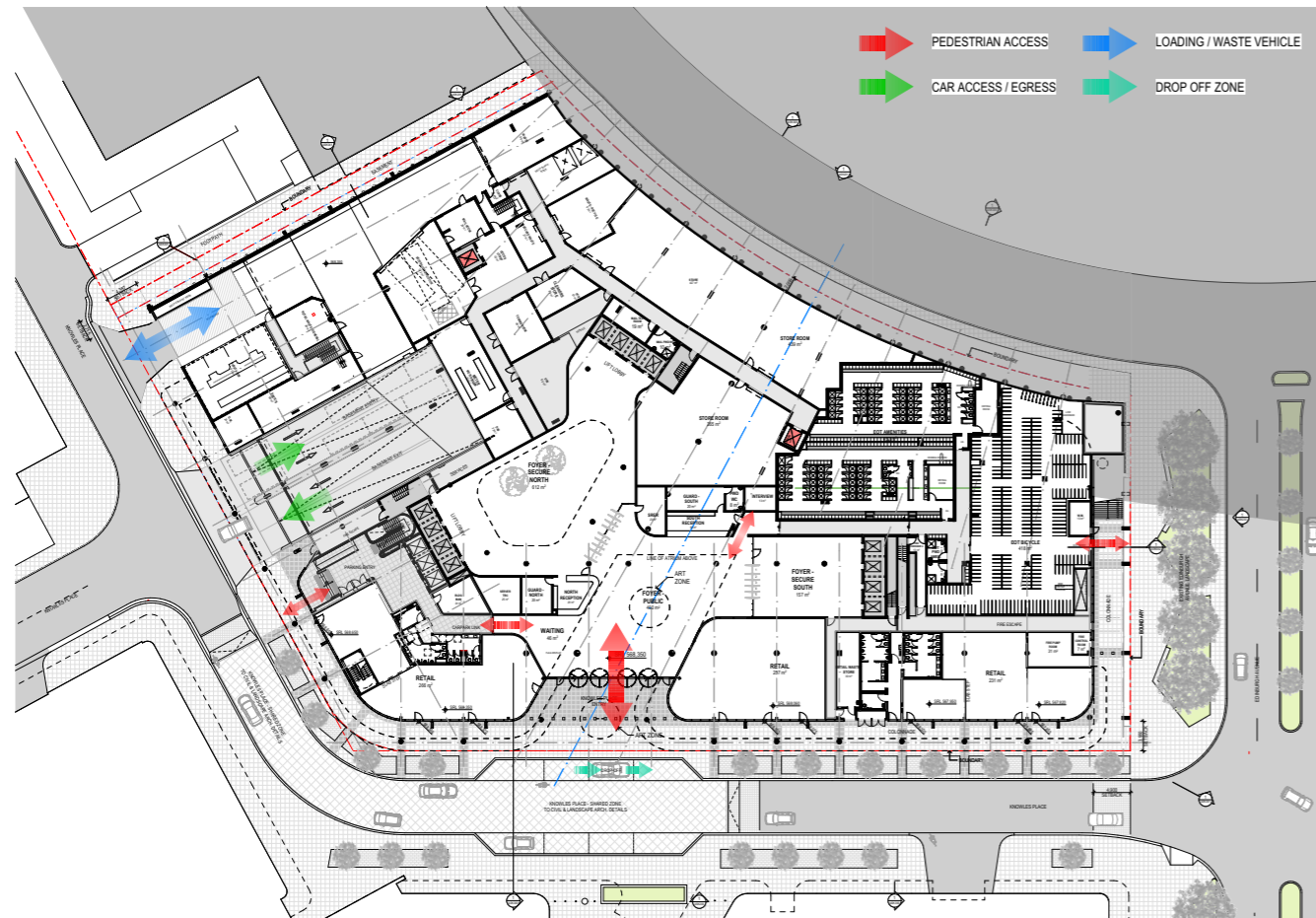
Precinct Masterplan showing the future stages of The Barracks (blocks 8 & 9) and One City Hill (blocks 10 & 11)

**DESIGN ELEMENTS**



# Improved Public Realm Interface

## Pedestrian access and street scale



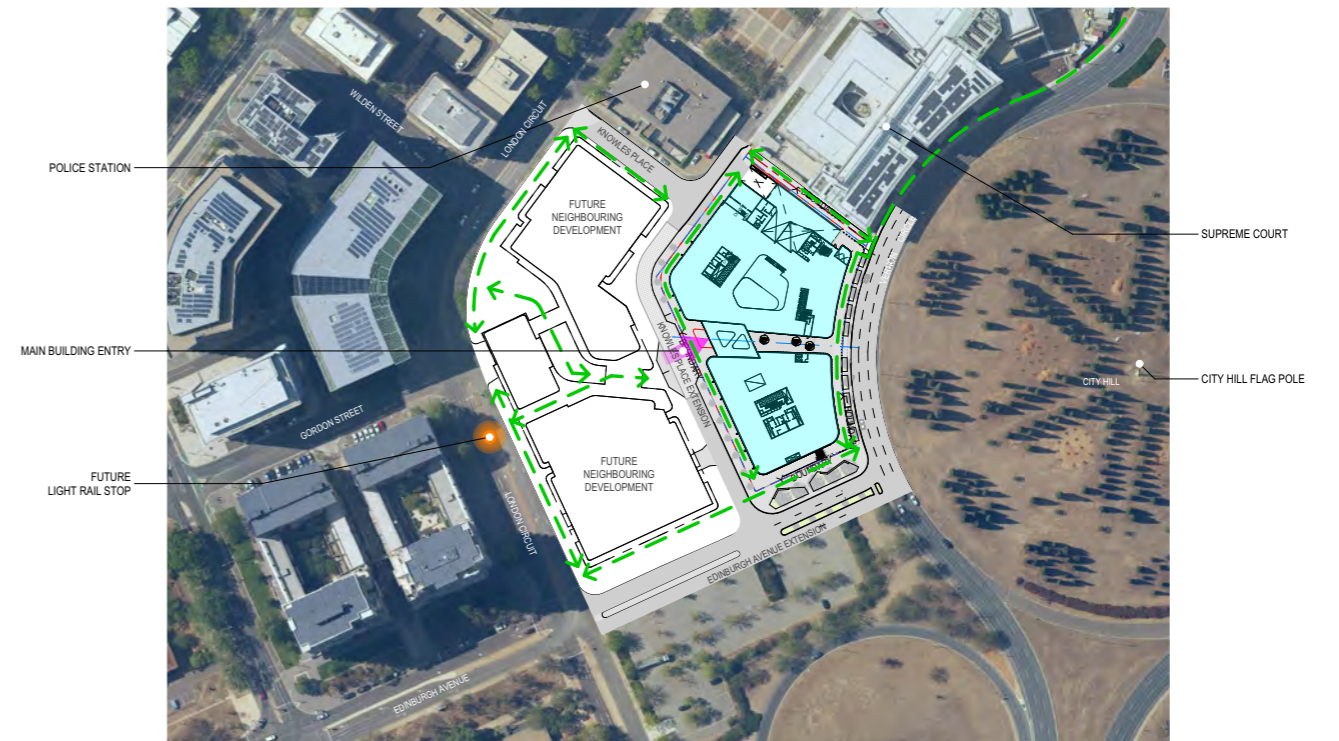
Separation of retail, office and vehicle movements increases pedestrian safety. Keeping heavy vehicles to one end of the development promotes improved pedestrian and cafe / retail environment.



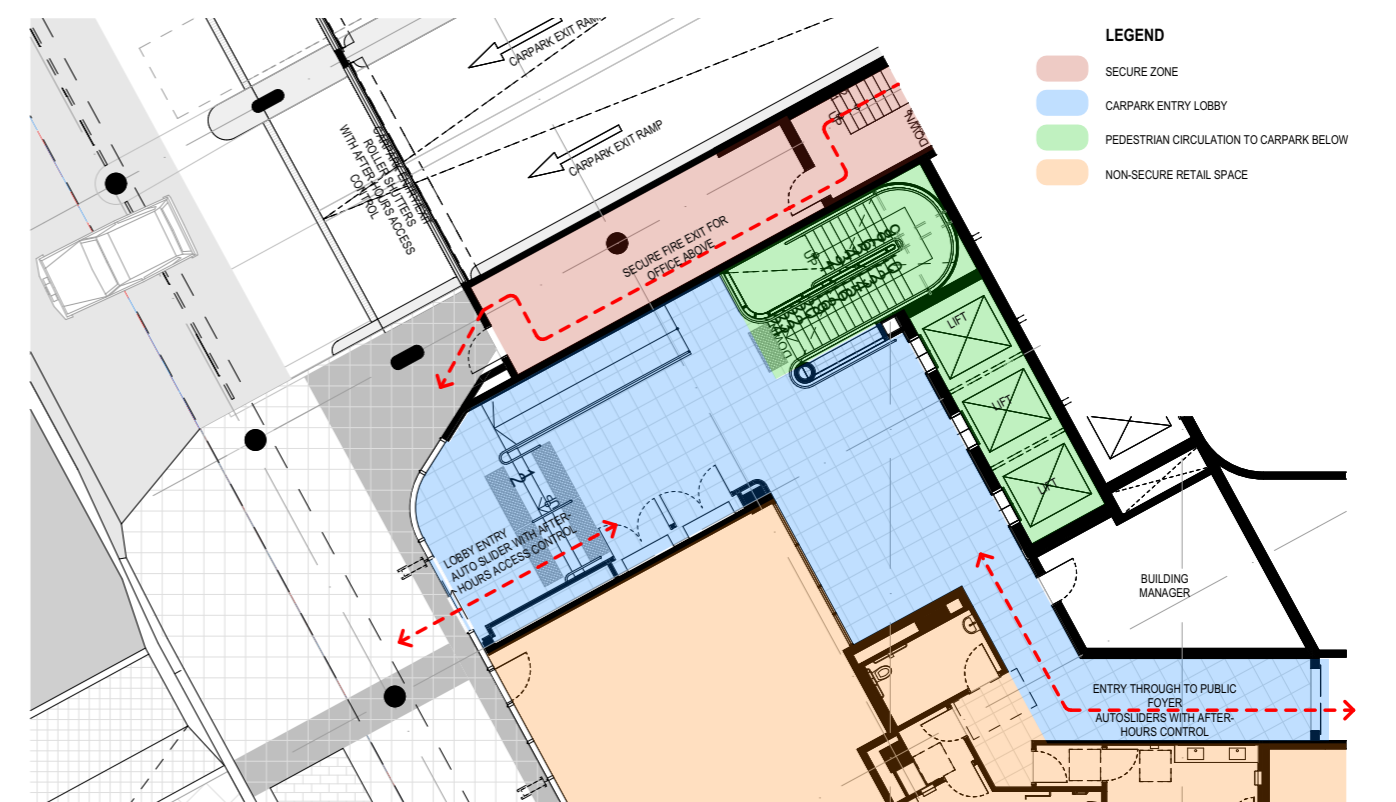
Louvres and pedestrian awnings / canopies contribute to a more human scale to the streetscape. Stepping back of the upper office floor and plant spaces contribute to a lower street profile and solar penetration to street level.

# Pedestrian Connection & Movement

## Pedestrian Access / Public Car Park Access

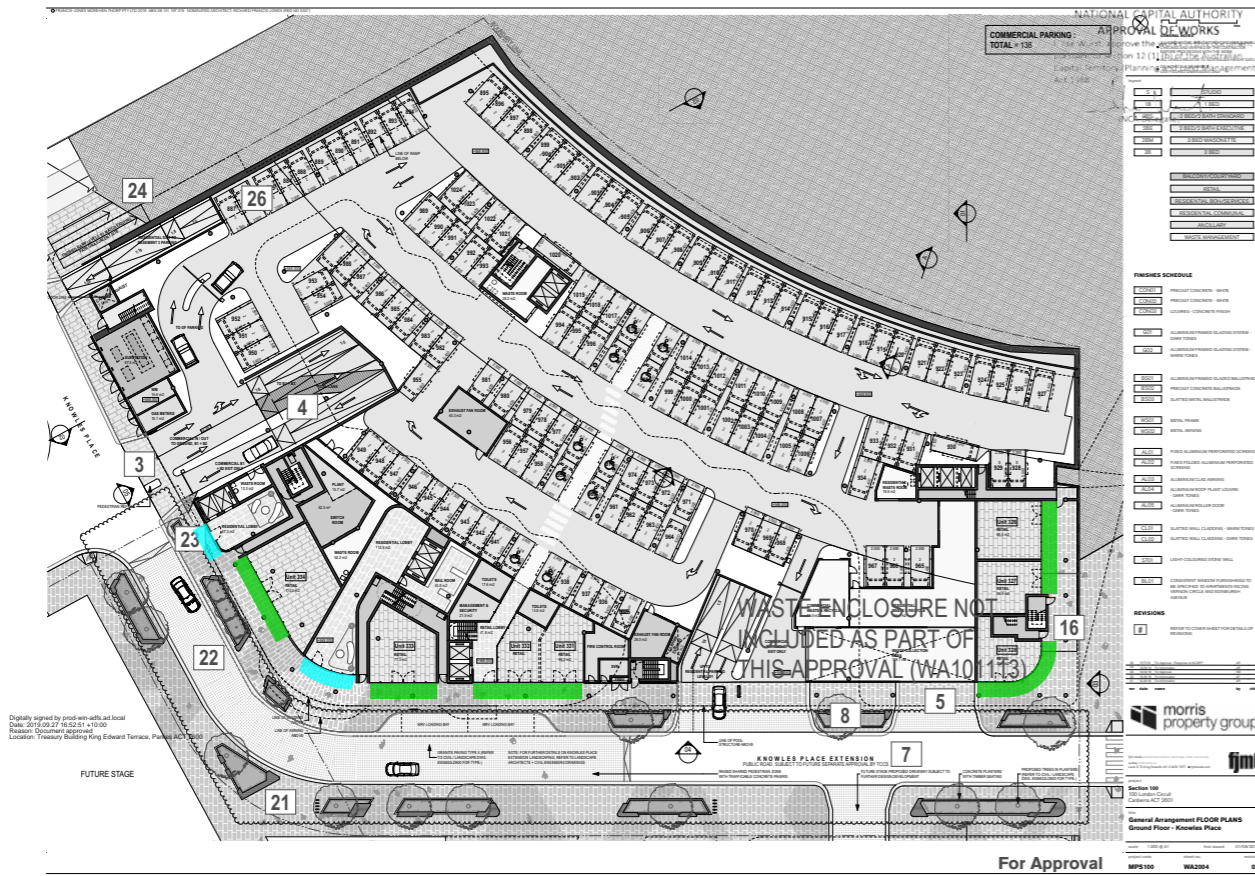


The Barracks precinct provides multiple cross block connections that provide opportunities to link with future proposed light rail infrastructure, connections to the city and across City Hill.



Public car park access with external connection and pedestrian links with adjacent developments and internal links to office public space and retail connection

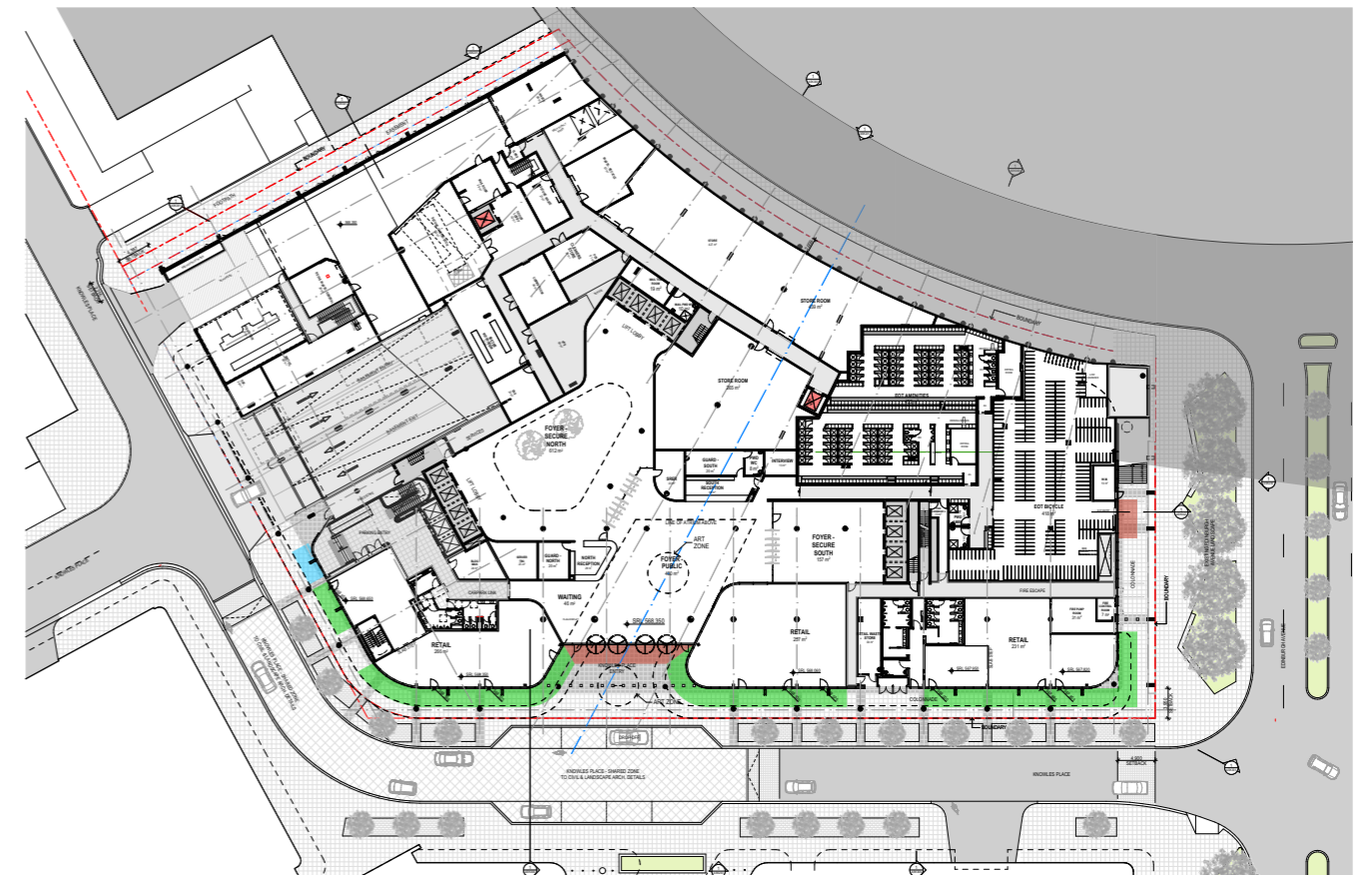
# Active Frontage - Improving pedestrian environment



- RETAIL FRONTAGE - 58 meters
- RESIDENTIAL ENTRY FRONTAGE - 13 meters
- TOTAL ACTIVE FRONTAGE - 71 meters

## Knowles Place active frontage (previously approved residential bldg WA101113)

The diagram above demonstrates the extent of different uses at ground level of the currently approved works approval. The diagram shows limited retail frontage, frequently broken by service areas



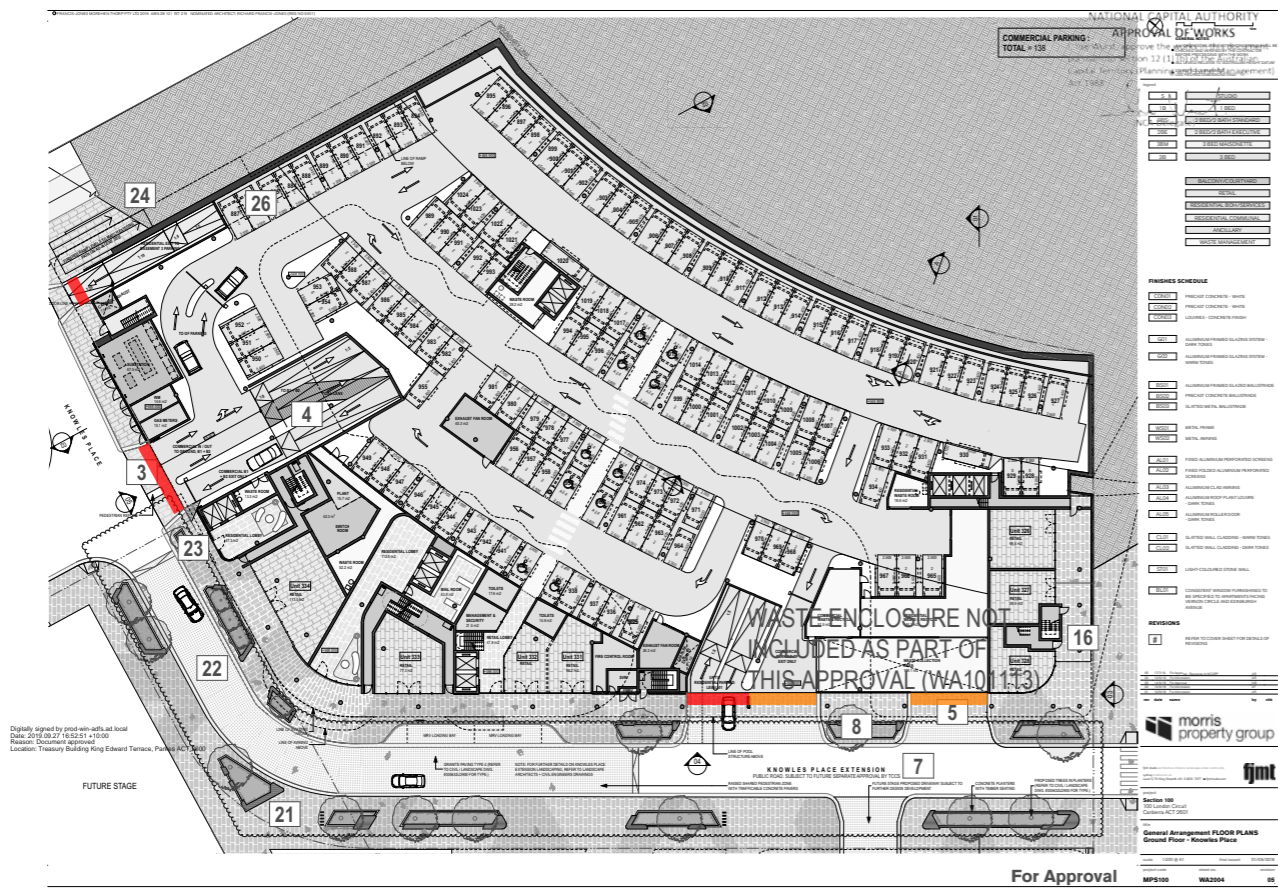
- RETAIL FRONTAGE - 94 meters
- PUBLIC CAR PARK ENTRY FRONTAGE - 6 meters
- OFFICE ENTRY FRONTAGE - 21 meters
- TOTAL ACTIVE FRONTAGE - 121 meters

## Knowles Place active frontage (new proposal)

The diagram above demonstrates the increased frontage of different uses at ground level of the proposed scheme. The diagram shows an expanded continuous retail frontage without vehicle crossover interruptions.



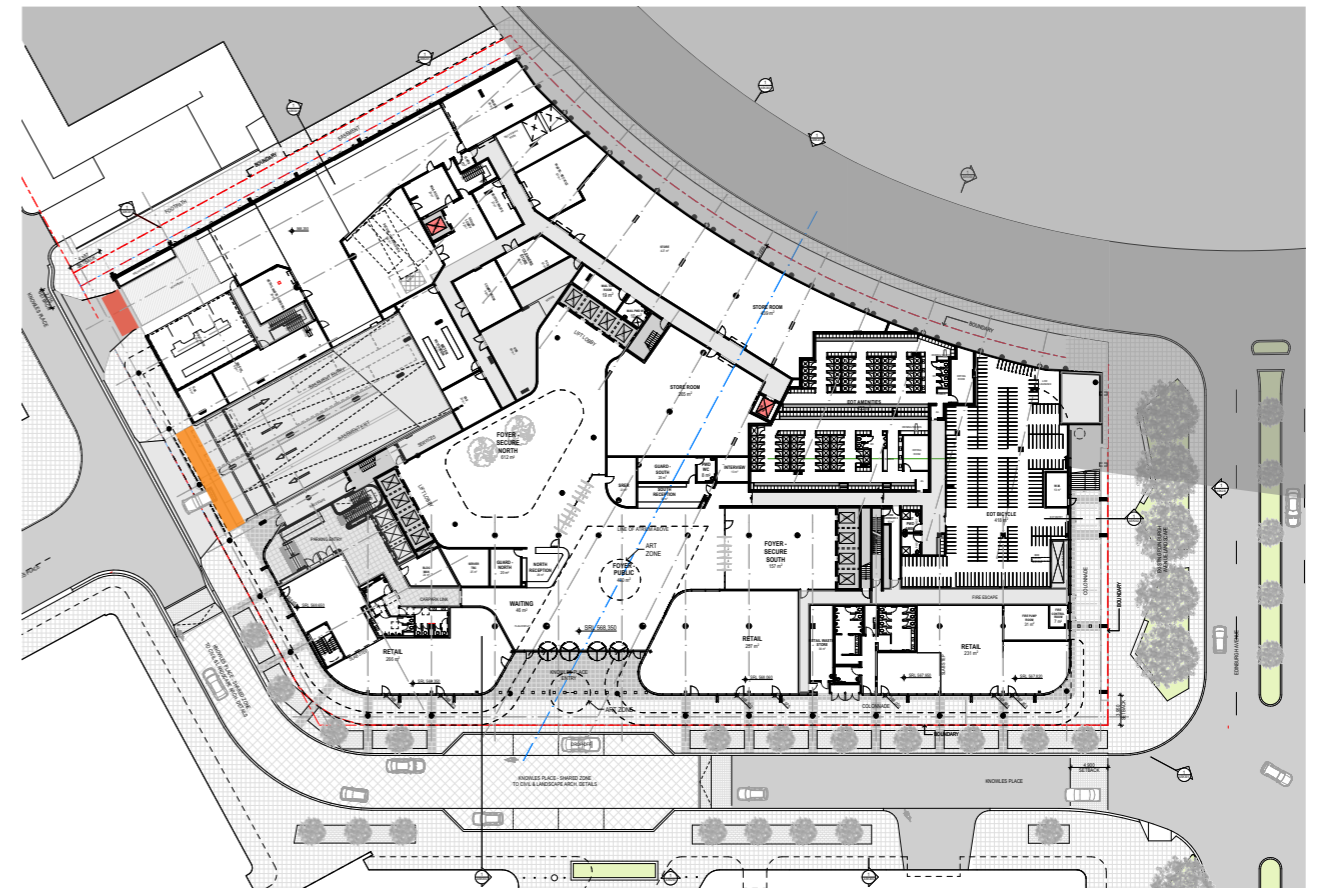
# Vehicle Interaction and Crossovers



- CAR PARK ACCESS / EGRESS CROSSOVER
- LOADING / WASTE ACCESS / EGRESS CROSSOVER

## Vehicle Interaction and Crossovers (previously approved residential bldg WA101113)

The diagram above demonstrates the extent of different vehicles at ground level of the currently approved scheme. The diagram shows 9 lanes of driveway crossovers along Knowles Place at both the north and south ends.



- CAR PARK ACCESS / EGRESS CROSSOVER
- LOADING / WASTE ACCESS / EGRESS CROSSOVER

## Vehicle Interaction and Crossovers (new proposal)

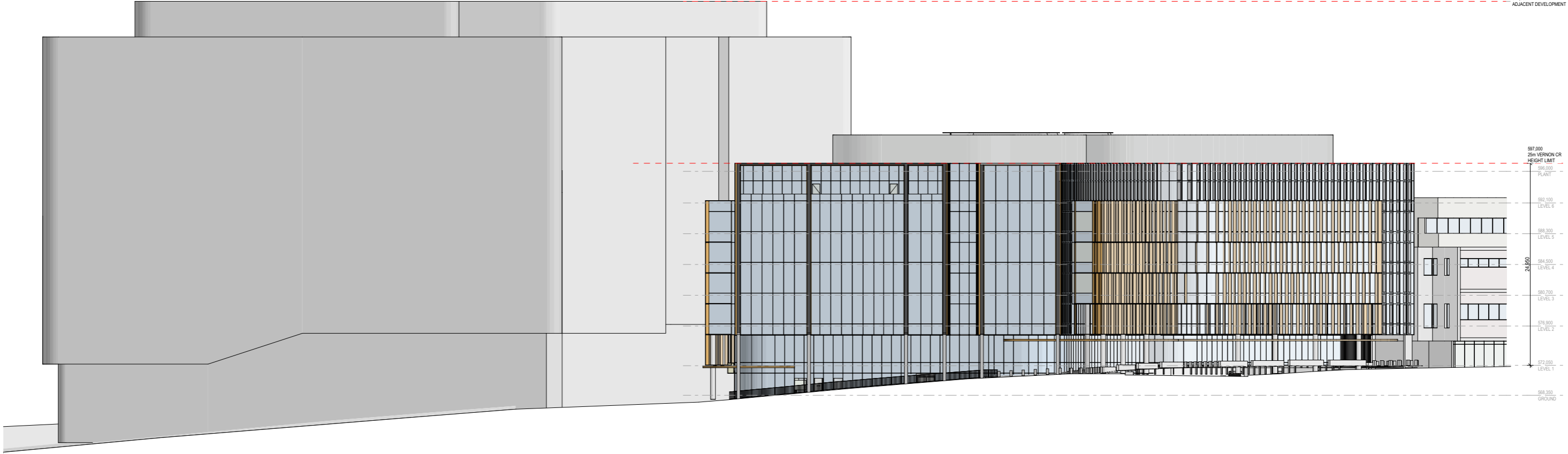
The diagram above demonstrates the reduced extent of vehicle crossovers at ground level of the proposed scheme. The diagram shows the crossovers limited to 5 lanes at the north end of the site away from the retail areas and office entry.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT BEYOND

ONE CITY HILL

REDEVELOPED COURTS PRECINCT

617.000  
ADJACENT DEVELOPMENT



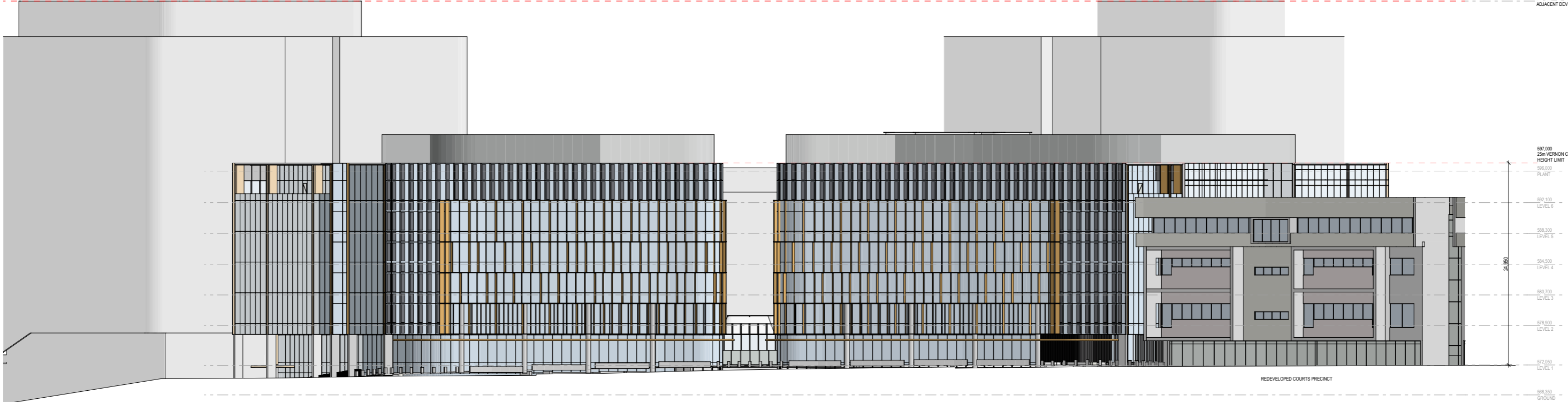
STREETSCAPE ELEVATION - EDINBURGH AVENUE

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT BEYOND

ONE CITY HILL

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT BEYOND

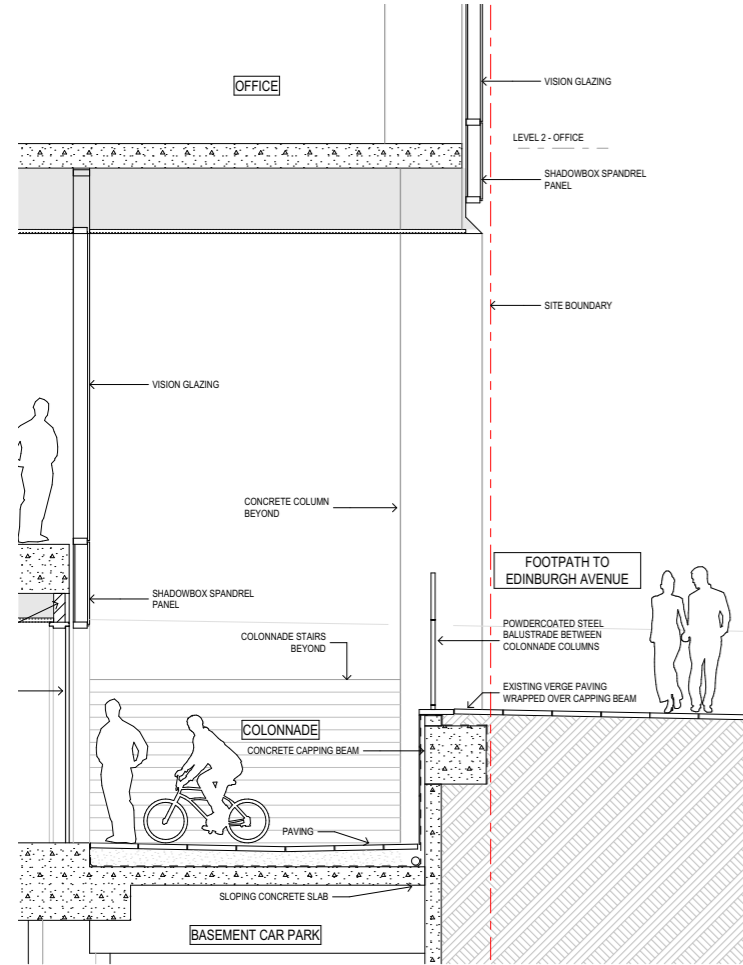
617.000  
ADJACENT LEVEL



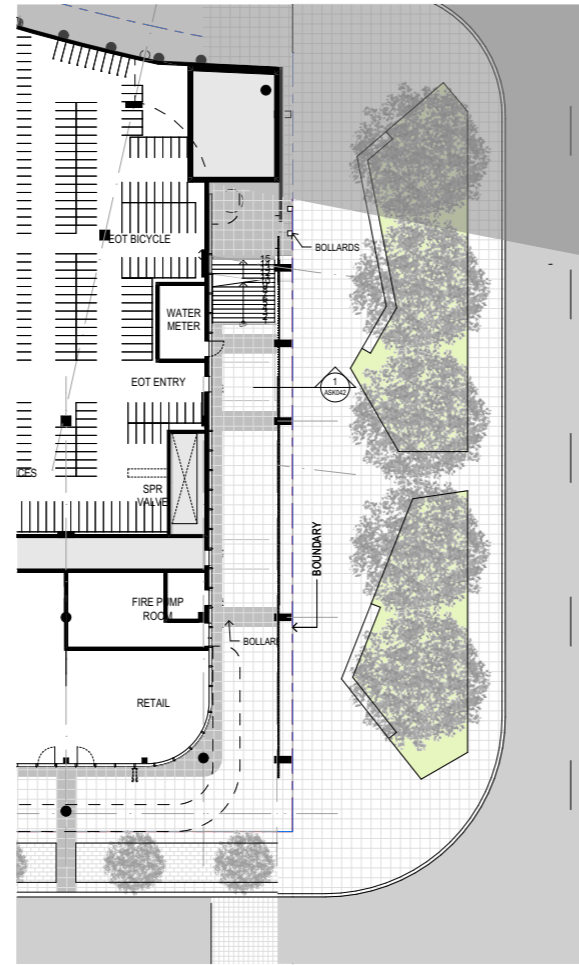
STREETSCAPE ELEVATION - VERNON CIRCLE



# Southern Colonnade



Southern colonnade indicative section detail



Southern Vernon Circle Corner



South Colonnade & Retail Corner. End of Trip Access



Southern Retail Corner



## Knowles Place Colonnade



Knowles Colonnade looking south opens into Office Entry

## Vernon Circle Colonnade



Vernon Colonnade looking south opens into Secure Terrace

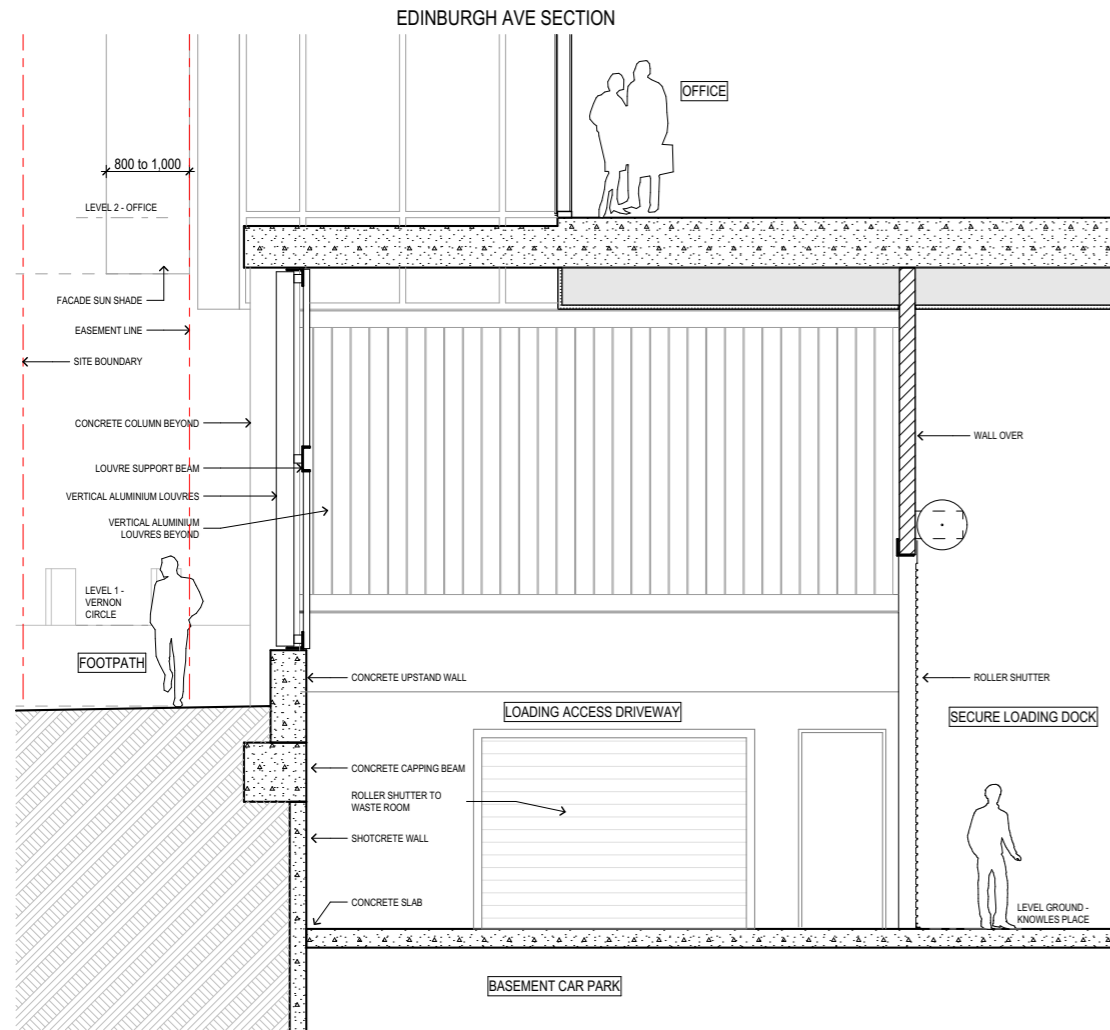


Knowles Colonnade looking north towards Police Station and Public Car Park entry



Vernon Colonnade looking north towards Courts Building

# Northern Pedestrian Link & Easement

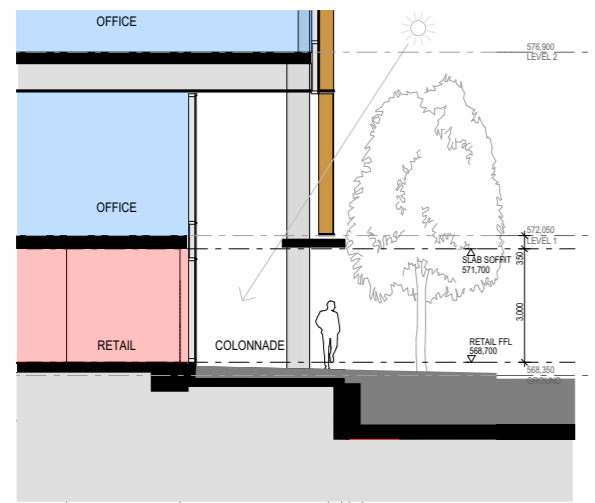
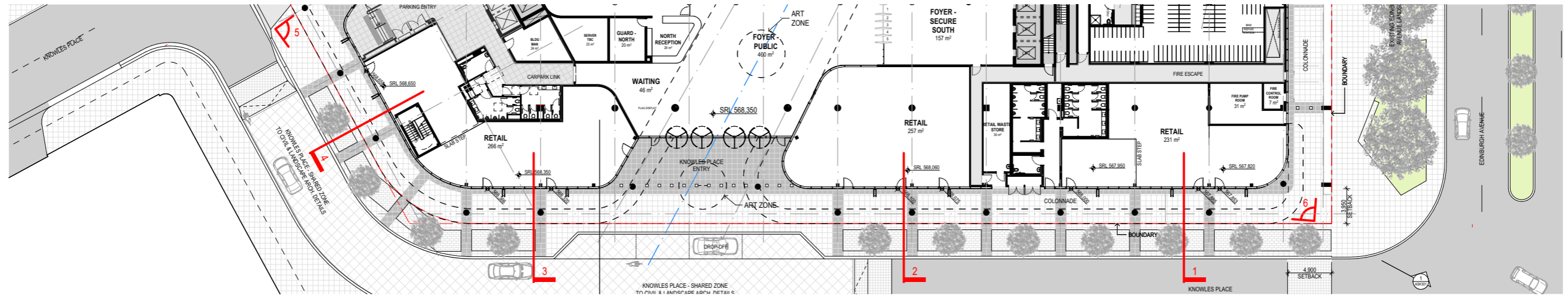


LOADING DOCK SECTION DETAIL

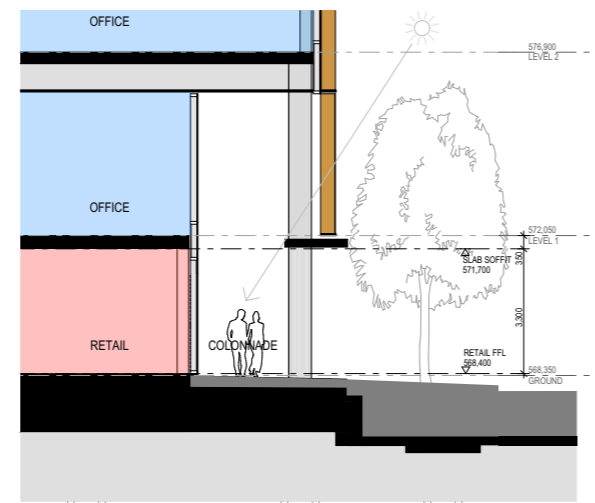


Pedestrian link from Knowles Place to Vernon Circle. Existing narrow footpath to Courts Building extended in width across services easement providing generous open footpath with improved visibility and public safety.

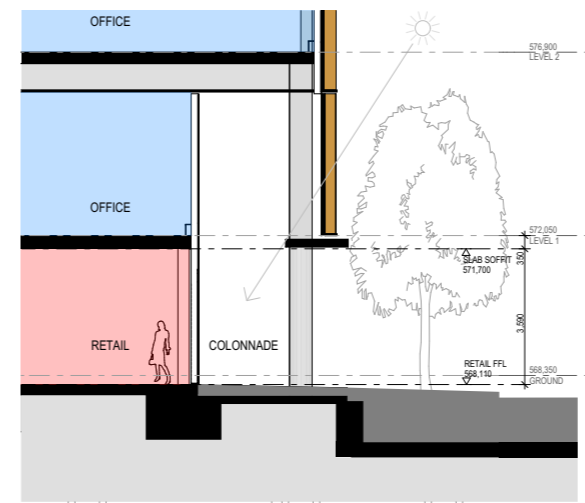
# Retail Frontage



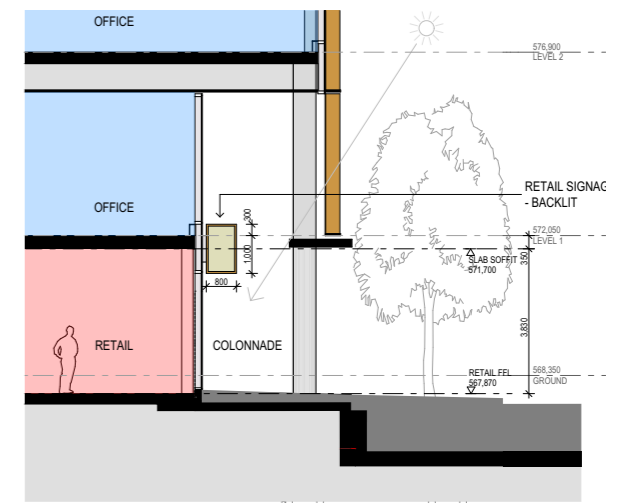
4 Retail Section 4  
1:100



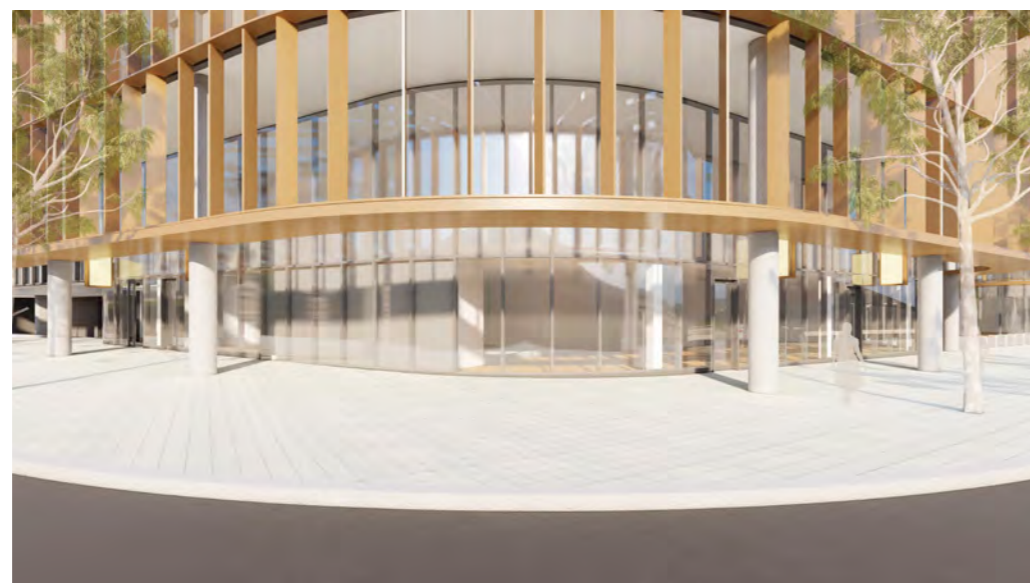
3 Retail Section 3  
1:100



2 Retail Section 2  
1:100



1 Retail Section 1  
1:100

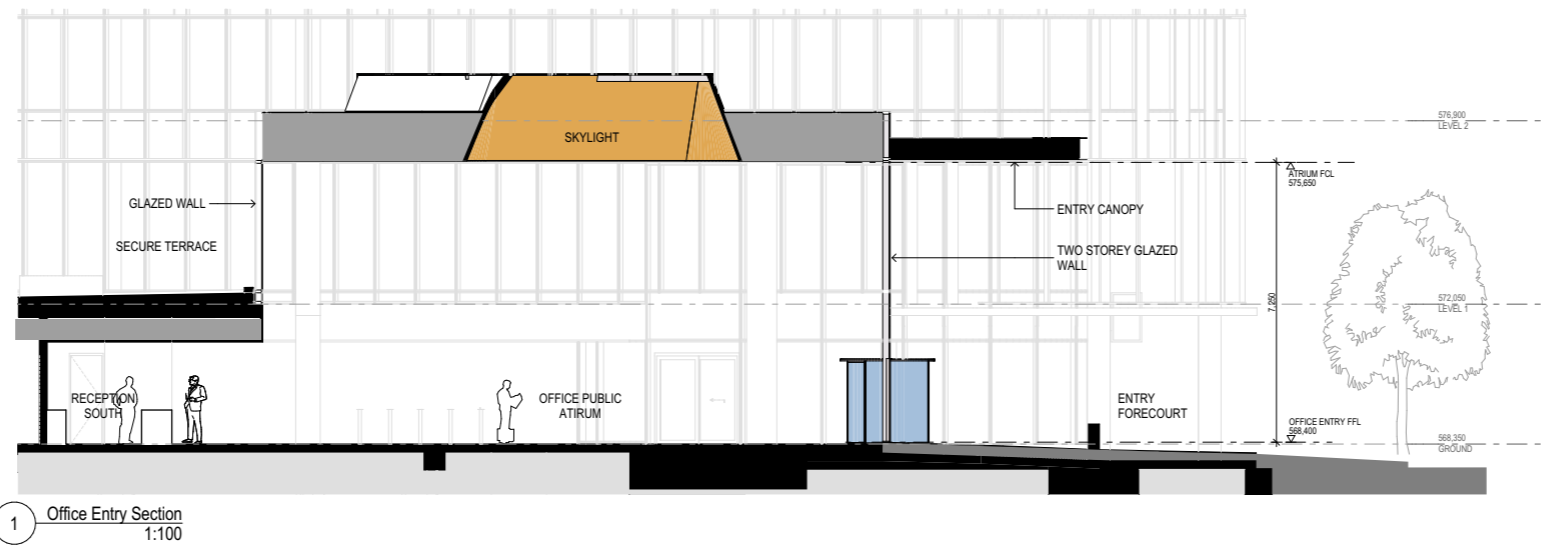
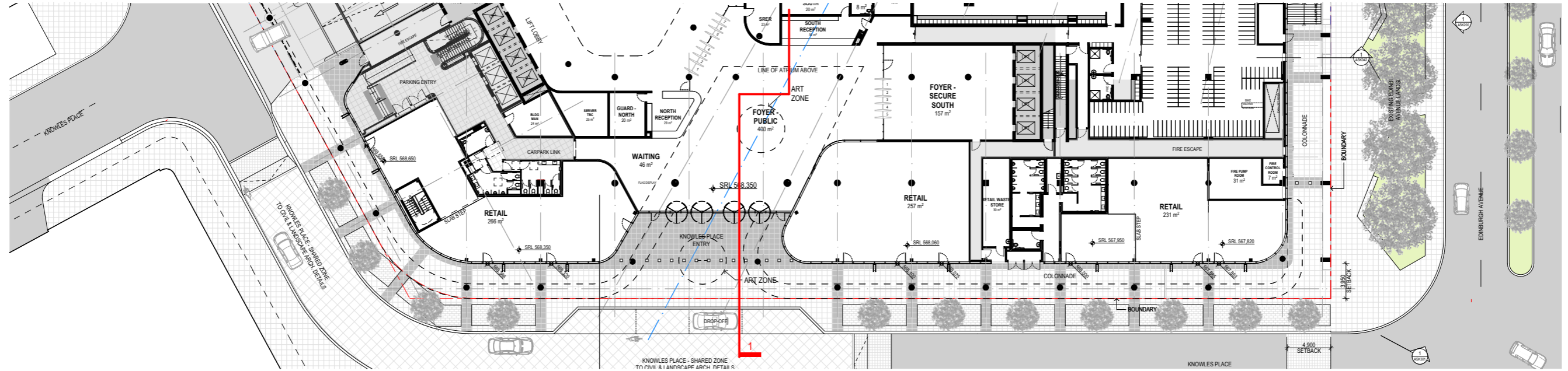


5 Retail  
1:5



6 Retail  
1:5

# Office Entry

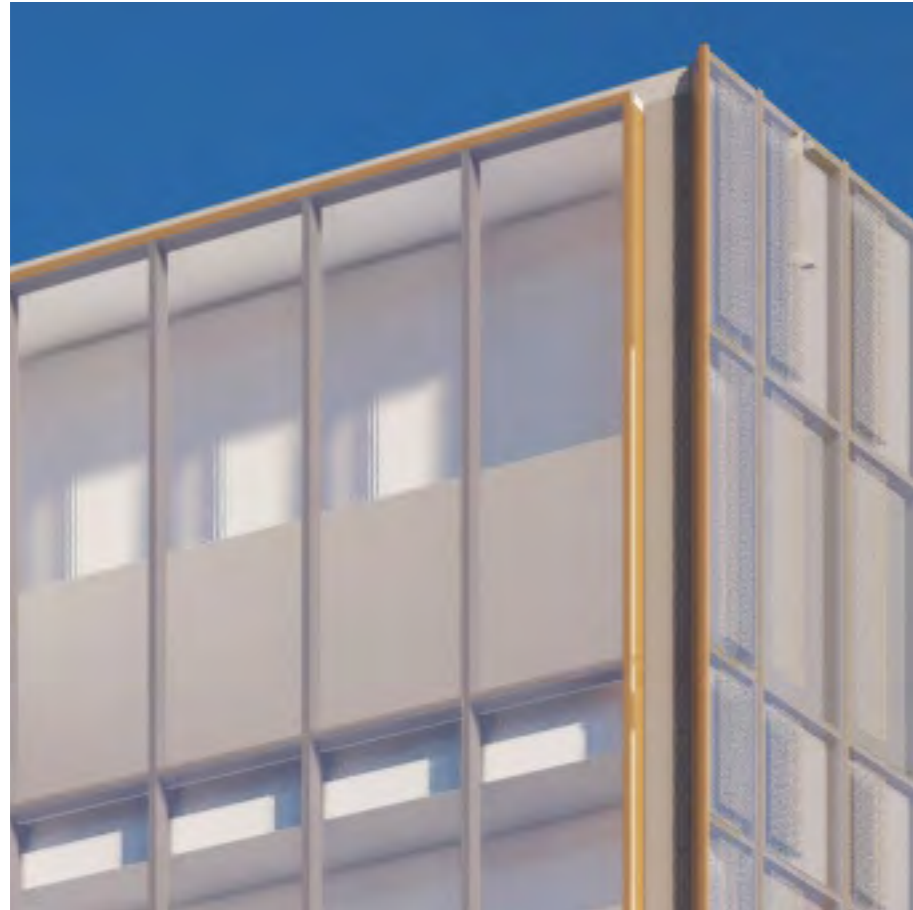


2 Entry - Exterior  
1:5



3 Entry - Atrium  
1:5

# Materials



DOUBLE GLAZED CAPLESS CURTAIN WALL SYSTEM



APPLIED FRIT SOLAR CONTROL TO GLAZING



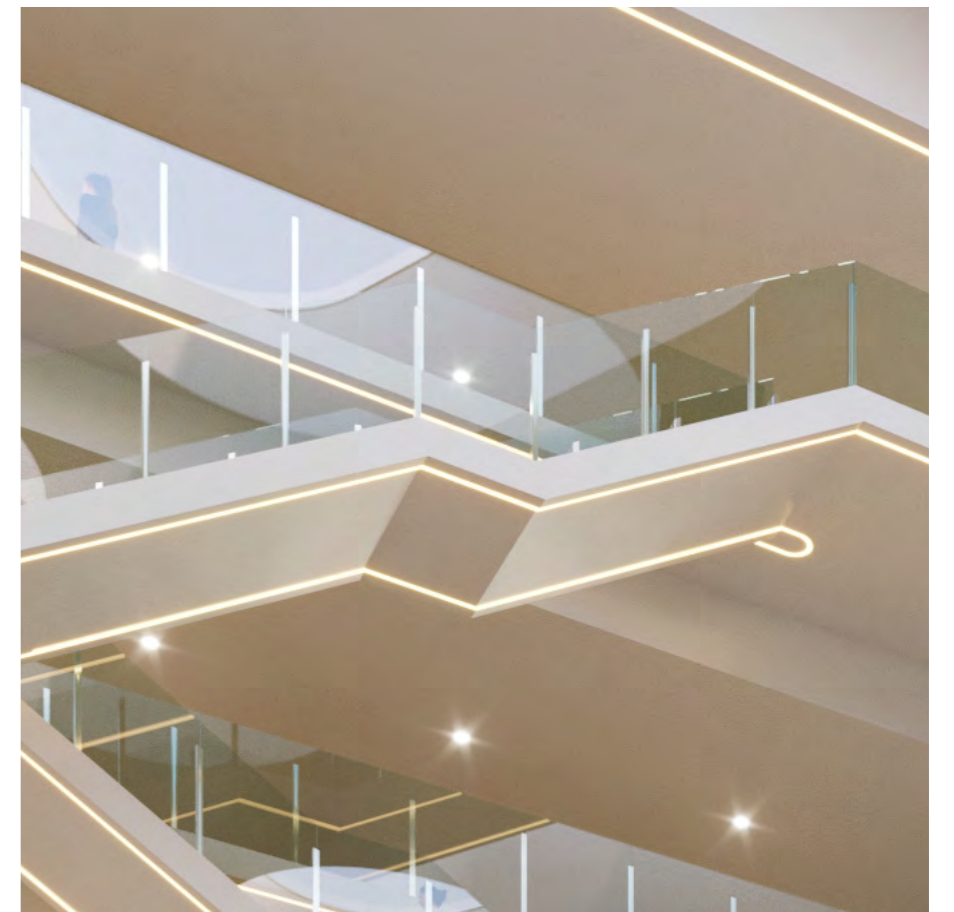
NATURAL CONCRETE FINISH TO COLONNADE COLUMNS



ALUMINIUM TO EAST & WEST FACADES - COLOUR: WARM BRONZE



DOUBLE HEIGHT COLONNADE WITH OPEN LOUVRE



GLAZING BALUSTRADE TO ATRIA

# NCA Design Review Panel Response & Imagery



17 November 2020

Mr. Andrew Smith  
Chief Planner  
National Capital Authority  
Treasury Building  
King Edward Terrace  
Parkes ACT 2601

Dear Andrew,

## Response to National Capital Design Review Panel's Advice Blocks 10 & 11, Section 100 City

We refer to the National Capital Design Review Panel's advice provided for the following project:

<b>Project:</b>	One City Hill
<b>Date:</b>	Friday 19 June 2020
<b>Meeting Location:</b>	Session held remotely via Microsoft Teams
<b>Panel Members:</b>	Andrew Smith, Chair Kiong Lee Ken Maher AO Shelley Penn
<b>Proponent:</b>	Morris Property Group represented by BJM Canberra Pty Limited
<b>Observers:</b>	Representatives from the: - Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) - City Renewal Authority (CRA) - National Capital Authority (NCA) - Major Projects Canberra (MPC)
<b>Conflicts of Interest:</b>	None

Please find below our response to the Design Review Panel (DRP) recommendations.

### 1.0 Context and Character

1.1 *The Panel notes the prominence of the site situated opposite City Hill and at an apex of the National Triangle and further notes its proximity to the Canberra city centre and the newly developed ACT law courts precinct. The proponent is encouraged to engage in further analysis of the surrounding character and immediate context which should inform the site response and architectural form and expression of the proposal. The Panel notes that the building ought to develop a more civic presence and expression, however the glazed northern and southern facades are considered to be more typical of a commercial precinct. The Panel encourages the proponent to consider how the proposal may respond to the street*

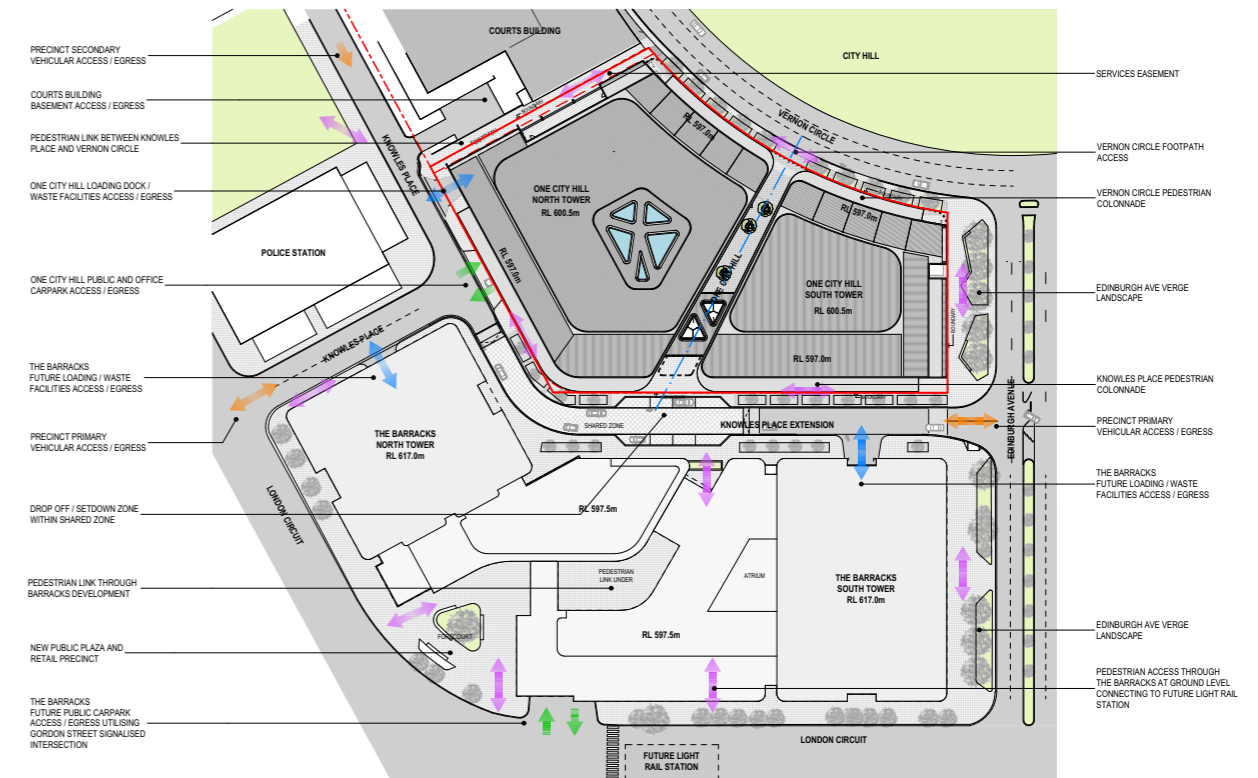
property investment | asset management | development | construction

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Aerial view showing One City Hill proposed development in the foreground with indicative massing for future stages of the The Barracks precinct behind with the courts precinct on the right



Precinct Masterplan indicating vehicular and pedestrian integration and relationship with City Police Station and Courts Building to the north and future stages of the The Barracks precinct to the west

wall scale on Vernon Circle, and key datum lines, height, materiality and colours of the neighbouring Supreme Court of the ACT building; and how it can be scaled and articulated in order to provide a more sympathetic, authentic and finer grained response to the predominantly civic character surrounding the site.

**RESPONSE**

The Vernon Circle frontage has developed significantly with major changes to the massing of the building as well as development of the façade design. The sectional profile along Vernon Circle reflects the following significant initiatives:

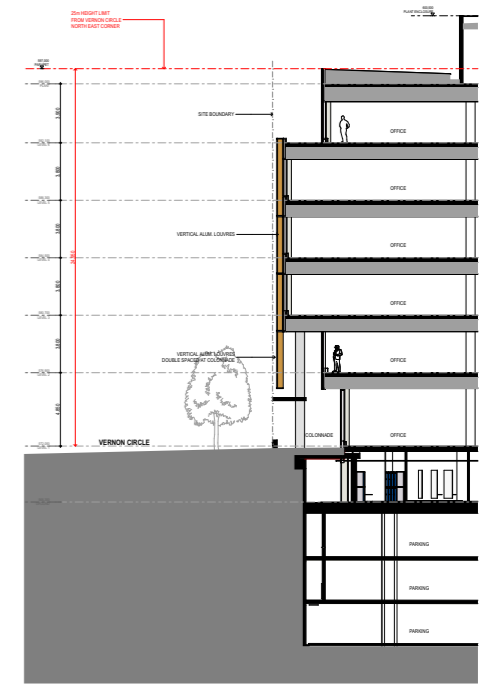
- The top level of office is now set back to provide an alignment more closely matched to the Supreme Court of the ACT building height profile;
- The plant room is further set back from the top office level;
- A double height pedestrian colonnade developed for the full length of the Vernon Circle frontage, providing a generous open building edge;
- Vernon Circle façade gently folds at the centre in a major gesture of articulation;
- Louvres are expressed along the prominent portion of façade separately from the recessive portions of façade;
- Louvre 'skirt' provides a sense of some spatial enclosure to the colonnade while remaining open;
- The metallic cladding of the Supreme Court building is complemented by the louvre materiality and positioning;
- The two Vernon corners are rounded in lieu of angled corners, providing better pedestrian circulation around the building;
- The Vernon Circle car drop off area has been deleted, providing an uninterrupted pedestrian path.

1.2 *The Panel is concerned that the proposal does not provide a strong urban response to Edinburgh Avenue, noting the combination of inactive frontage and absence of building entries, along with its southern orientation is likely to result in this portion of the proposal becoming an underutilized space, particularly in the context of possible wind impacts due to the building's form and façade. The proponent is encouraged to consider providing greater connectivity (e.g. entries to primary building and/or tenancies) and to explore other measures to ensure that the proposal provides a positive contribution to the broader Edinburgh Avenue streetscape.*

**RESPONSE**

Although noting the challenge posed by the significant level change along Edinburgh Avenue between Vernon Circle and Knowles Place, the design team has sought to increase the activity along this frontage by relocating the main End-of-Trip facilities entrance here from its previous location in Knowles Place. Given the large number of employees expected to use these facilities, this is likely to become a highly trafficked area. This is further enhanced by the inclusion of a retail outlet that wraps around the Edinburgh Avenue & Knowles Place corner of the building, likely to be a significant sized café.

1.3 *Noting that the current proposal is the first of several stages within the Barracks precinct, the Panel wishes to understand the relationship of the current proposal to subsequent stages. The Panel considers it vital that the proposal contributes towards a high-quality public domain that facilitates strong pedestrian connections and provides a pleasant, safe and amenable environment for users within and moving through the precinct. The Panel requests that the proponent provides indicative massing, elevation and movement network studies, indicating the current proposal within the context of future stages at the next design review session.*



Louvre screening elements and a pedestrian awning provide a more human scale to the building, and its relationship with Vernon Circle. Verge landscaping and plantings will provide a softer landscape connection while maintaining a physical car security line around Vernon Circle.

The upper most office floor is set back to reinforce the relationship of the louvre screened office floors with the adjacent courts building



Vernon Circle view showing relationship of proposed building massing with adjacent Courts Precinct.

The louvre screen element of the proposed buildings relate to the height and projecting elements of the neighbouring courts building, reinforcing the mass and scale along Vernon Circle with the additional storey within the height limit set back from the main facade.



Vernon Circle view showing detailed facade relationship of proposed building massing with adjacent Courts Precinct.

The proposed massing shows the screened facade proud of the upper and edge facade and in alignment with the courts building

**RESPONSE**

One City Hill has been designed to fit cohesively within The Barracks precinct. The main entry to the building on Knowles Place is located opposite the main pedestrian laneway through the precinct, which provides a direct link through to the public plaza on London Circuit and the new Canberra Metro Light Rail Stop. These laneways will be activated with retail cafes and restaurants to service the office workers above and in the surrounding City West precinct. The significant Shared Zone along Knowles Place will ensure pedestrians and cyclists can safely travel through the precinct.

Although not the subject of this Works Approval application, indicative massing of the future buildings proposed within the precinct are now provided, along with an overall precinct plan, at *Attachment A*.

**2.0 Landscape**

2.1 *Though the proponent has indicated Neil Hobbs of Harris Hobbs has been engaged as the landscape architect for the project, the Panel notes that the proponent has not involved the landscape architect in the design process to date. The Proposal has been presented with indicative planting zones rather than comprehensive landscape designs for hard and softscape areas to support pedestrian amenity and these require significant further development. The proponent is strongly encouraged to incorporate their preferred landscape architect in a collaborative design process to ensure that the building and landscape are integrated as part of a cohesive experience, considerate of connections, amenity and local environment.*

**RESPONSE**

Subsequent to the DRP presentation, Harris Hobbs Landscapes have been formally engaged by the Proponent and involved in the design development of the project.

2.2 *The Panel considers a much more civic approach is required in the public domain interface that responds to the significance of the location and reinforces the continuity of the public domain, particularly in relation to the proposed future stages.*

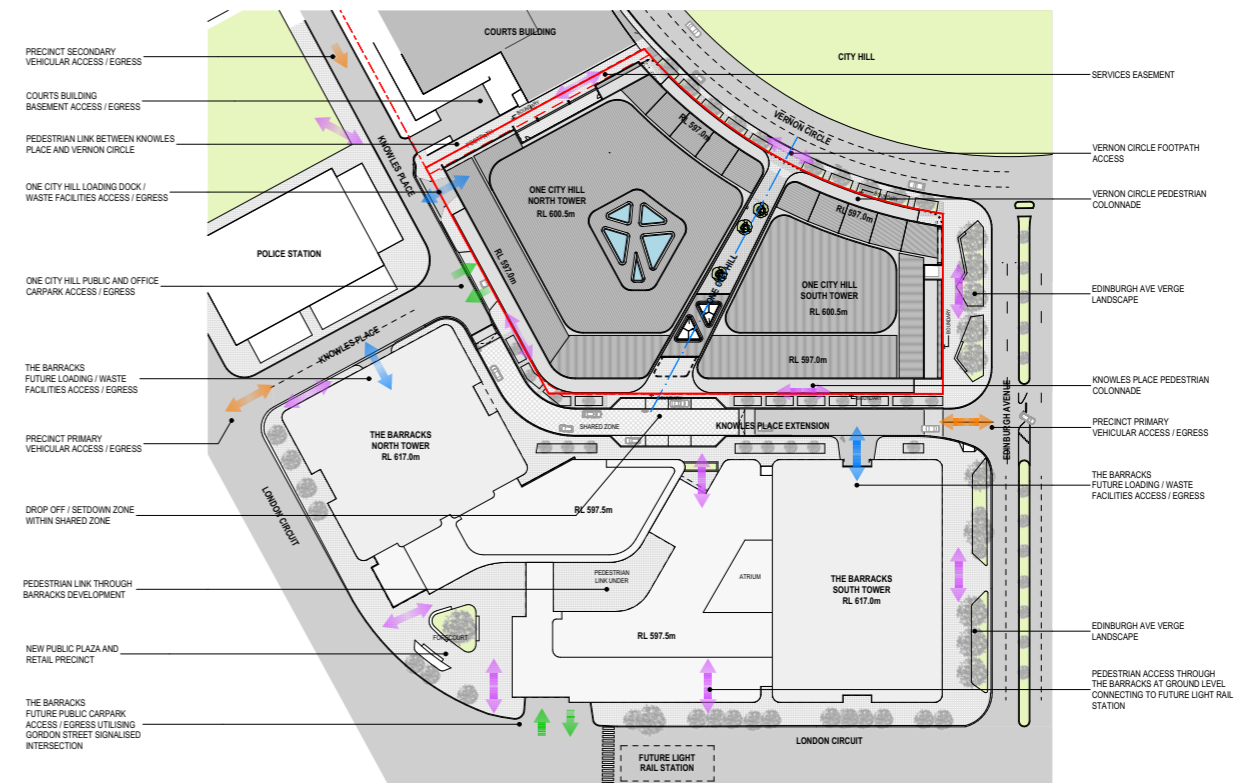
**RESPONSE**

The public domain has been the prime focus of the re-planning of the building frontages. Car parking has been removed from the ground level (Knowles Place level) and the numerous required services have been re-planned to be within the ground level floor plate, including:

- Waste storage & loading;
- Substation orientation;
- End-of-Trip facility access off Edinburgh Avenue;
- Reduction of crossovers;
- Forward-in, forward-out for truck access, with only one loading dock crossover;
- Fire services relocated off the Knowles Place frontage.

The retail frontage has been significantly enhanced by consolidating into two major zones in lieu of three smaller zones. The Edinburgh Avenue retail corner has been enhanced with a flat paving zone to both frontages allowing street café style use.

The Knowles Place and Vernon Circle frontages have been developed into premium pedestrian zones with double-height colonnades providing a balance of shelter and openness.



Precinct masterplan showing the relocation of the vehicular access / egress to edges allowing for improved central shared space along Knowles Place



Two storey colonnades and awnings around the building improve the pedestrian experience and scale of the development



The main entrance has developed with a strong and clear focus on Knowles Place, which is the most active part of the site, with a substantial pedestrian-friendly Shared Zone. This main entrance is also best placed to connect building occupants to the future City West light rail stop on London Circuit.

2.3 *The Panel does not support the proposed setback to the future extension of Edinburgh Avenue, and its proposed levels resolution. An alignment to the existing geometry of the avenue is a more fitting urban response.*

### RESPONSE

The Edinburgh Avenue frontage has been re-designed to align with the civic plan geometry as well as developing smaller scale façade zones more responsive to the scale of this end of the site. The top edge is articulated with a substantial outdoor terrace. The building base has been developed to have flat sections of pedestrian path that allow a better relationship to active uses within the building and introducing a generous stair linking the upper and lower. This pedestrian base is complemented by a covered colonnade continuing from the Knowles Place colonnade to the Vernon Circle colonnade.

2.4 *The Panel recommends the inclusion of large trees is maximised for the provision of shade and amenity, and that they are planted in structural deep soil pots in areas where there is basement carparking below. It is also recommended that permeable surfaces are maximised and the extent of soft landscaping is extended, particularly in the Knowles Place shared zone.*

The Knowles Place extension landscape design has been developed to seek to maximise available soil volume for the proposed trees. The tree planting areas have extensive areas of permeable paving, and have supplementary watering from pipe connections for the stormwater – grated drains and sumps that allow for low flow water to reach the tree pits directly from the SW infrastructure. Harris Hobbs recommends the proposed trees to Knowles Place extension are Crepe Myrtles, which are hardy in the Canberra environment and are proven performers in urban environments.

The selected tree species is of small/medium scale, appropriate for the narrow verge widths and overhanging awnings. The trees are of a scale to provide for a pedestrian scale canopy of branches. The trees will read as a block of green looking up the street, and as a regular row of individual trees looking across the street. The canopies of each tree will be distinct.

Trees are proposed to be planted in strata vault cell system as required by TCCS, piled with Type B topsoil. The soil volumes are maximised, taking into account service easements and service clearances.

Tree planting to Vernon Circle is proposed to continue the line of Zelkova planted north of the Law Courts. These trees will be located in the existing Vernon Circle verge, and will be planted with ground cover surrounding the trees.

### 3.0 Sustainability

3.1 *The Panel acknowledges the proponent's intention to provide solar control via external façade treatments, however the Panel is concerned that the proposal is overly reliant on high performance glazing to achieve its internal amenity and sustainability objectives. The Panel notes for instance that the proposed southern façade has a slight south-east orientation that may result in solar gain, requiring a level of management not evident in the current glazed curtain wall façade. The north facing glazing does not appear to have adequate solar protection, and this also appears to be the case with the curved*

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Revised building massing with facade addressing site and street alignment. Image also shows updated response to solar control to the east elevation with revised density to the screening element with the addition of frits to areas without physical sun and privacy protection measures.



The revised design showing the building alignment with the street and the colonnade linking the upper and lower ground levels

glazed corners to the east and west facades. The proponent is therefore encouraged by the Panel to explore integrated sustainability measures to manage these aspects of the proposal.

#### RESPONSE

The Edinburgh Avenue façade has been reviewed for solar impact showing no solar gain issues. The northern façade has been re-designed and the northern Knowles Place corner now has a significant horizontal louvre treatment along with an articulated form.

- 3.2 *The Panel is concerned that the proposal makes insufficient provision for deep root planting zones. Noting the ACT Government has acknowledged the growing imperative to respond to climate change through the Climate Change Strategy and Living Infrastructure Plan, the Panel encourages the proponent to explore options to reduce the basement footprint to provide more extensive deep root planting zones, particularly in proximity to the newly formed T-intersection 'central zone' for Knowles Place.*

#### RESPONSE

The proposed tree planting to Knowles Place has been designed to take into account the extensive service requirements within the verge, yet aims to maximise available soil volume. Refer to 2.4 above.

#### 4.0 Density and Connectivity

- 4.1 *The Panel commends the proponent for their intention to create a highly permeable development that responds to the National Capital Plan's proposed movement networks and to significant nodes and attractors such as the future Light Rail stop to be located on London Circuit. Regarding the midblock internal pedestrian link that traverses the atrium, the Panel is concerned that the expression of this link does not adequately convey that it is intended as a public accessway, noting it is unlikely to be read as inclusive and welcoming as a through-block link. Noting that internalised pedestrian through-links are uncommon in an ACT context, the proponent is encouraged by the Panel to consider how the proposed form, and design of skylights, could be enhanced to effectively signal these key entries and clearly communicate the public nature of the proposed through-link.*

#### RESPONSE

The proponent has given further consideration to the internal link and believes it to be an unnecessary pathway, given its termination away from any formal crossing of Vernon Circle. It is also noted that a public pathway through the centre of a single-tenant office building is unacceptable to the type of commercial tenants with high security requirements that are expected to occupy this building.

The wide, pedestrian-friendly verge of Edinburgh Avenue is a safer and more intuitive route for pedestrians to access the City Hill parkland, as this is where the signalised pedestrian crossing is located.

In addition the design includes a generous 3-metre wide pathway at the northern end of the building (to the block boundary), which, combined with the pathway on the adjacent Law Courts block, provides a 5-metre wide pedestrian route.



Revised northern facade and massing showing solar protection integration. In the foreground is the courts building

## 5.0 Built Form and Scale

5.1 *The Panel commends the proponent's intention to provide a landmark building and civic response for the site, however the Panel is concerned that the current proposal presents as an unrelieved, singular mass. The Panel acknowledges the previous development approvals for the site with respect to height and massing however considers that the current proposal for a single building without significant modulation in the building form or articulation does not adequately respond to its context, nor support a high-quality public domain. The Panel therefore encourages the proponent to explore options that provide greater modulation and articulation to the building and façades, including options that suggest two parallel building forms potentially articulated by a more continuous skylight and intersected by the cross axis of the pedestrian link, rather than a singular form in order to provide a finer grain urban form.*

### RESPONSE

The building form has developed further with several major articulating elements:

- The façade profiles are strongly articulated at the base, mid and upper levels;
- The Knowles Place façade is now the major entrance with the building form gently folding to reflect this and create an entry plaza;
- The Vernon Circle façade is articulated in the centre with a major folding element, at the edges with recessed facades, and at the top with a large setback;
- The Edinburgh Avenue façade is articulated with major portions of the façade reflecting the depth and use of the office zones beyond. A top level terrace also changes the top edge profile providing appropriate prominence to the Edinburgh-Vernon corner.

5.2 *The long, glazed facades with few entries along Vernon Circle and Edinburgh Avenue are a concern of the Panel as they are considered to likely result in poor engagement with these streetscapes. Their lack of modulation and articulation also contributes to the perceived scale and presentation of the building as a large mass. In keeping with 5.1 and 7.1 the Panel encourages the proponent to introduce greater variation and permeability to the façade at ground level to ensure a positive relationship between the building and the surrounding urban fabric.*

### RESPONSE

The building design has developed a more direct relationship between inside and outside, particularly along the Edinburgh Avenue frontage. The retail elements have been planned along Knowles Place to have the best opportunity to thrive with the activity generated with the pedestrian movement. The Vernon Circle frontage has developed with the tenant brief to provide a 'corporate centre' which will be the activity and meeting hub of the building. Appropriately this has a Vernon Circle aspect, and in the future as tenant requirements change these areas can be converted to retail and other commercial tenancy uses opening directly off the street frontage.

## 6.0 Diversity and Amenity

6.1 *The Panel notes that the proponent has indicated that wind studies have not been conducted for the proposal as they are not a statutory requirement. The proponent is encouraged to engage a suitable qualified professional to conduct wind studies to ensure that the amenity of the public domain can be guaranteed and maintained. Similarly, the Panel requests solar studies demonstrating appropriate access to daylight within the commercial floorplates be provided at the next design review session.*

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Images showing the original building massing (left) with the proposed development massing (right).

The buildings separation into two towers, with the two façades broken down into smaller scales relieves the massing originally proposed.



Main building entry can be easily identified by the two storey glazed entry atrium from which access to either tower is provided. Retail space flanks both sides of this entry and is linked to the public zone of the entry foyer and internal access from the public basement carpark.

**RESPONSE**

The proponent will engage a Wind Engineer to prepare a wind study for The Barracks precinct as a whole, to ensure that the public domain areas are pedestrian friendly and provide pleasant spaces for people to visit. The findings and their subsequent design measures will be submitted as part of the Works Approval application for One City Hill.

6.1 *The Panel is concerned that the proposed Knowles Place loading and basement entries provide an unsatisfactory termination the Knowles Place extension, and present as substantial breaks in the continuity of the streetscape and appear to run counter to the intention for a vibrant, well-activated shared zone. The Panel therefore encourages the proponent to explore options to minimise the vehicle crossovers to support the successful implementation of the future shared zone.*

**RESPONSE**

The building's loading dock has now been relocated to the northern end of the building, where a previous basement exit ramp was located. This results in an uninterrupted, activated retail frontage to the majority of Knowles Place, a much improved design outcome. All basement entry and exit points are located at the future intersection of Knowles Place Central, Knowles Place South, and the Knowles Place Extension, near the ACT Policing building. This is the optimal location for this entrance from a traffic movement perspective, minimising driveway crossovers to Knowles Place, and allowing the area of raised Shared Zone for pedestrians to be maximised.

**7.0 Community and Public Domain**

7.1 *The Panel notes the long-term vision for Vernon Circle and City Hill articulated in the ACT Government's City Plan (2014) as pedestrian-focused spaces and encourages the proponent to ensure that the proposal adequately considers this future context and demonstrates flexibility to accommodate this future character within the design response. The Panel appreciates the intention to provide a generous setback landscaped area along the Vernon Circle frontage, however, the Panel is concerned that the proposed colonnade does not offer a strong positive contribution to this space. The proponent is encouraged by the Panel to explore options for a double height colonnade to ensure that the proposal presents generously to Vernon Circle and offers both visual and functional amenity for pedestrians and passing vehicular traffic. The Panel also recommends further resolution of the interface of levels, proposed vehicular drop-off and consideration of street level uses and the extent of direct interfaces between interior and exterior spaces, to activate the public domain and the foyer spaces and to enhance their contribution to public domain vibrancy and quality.*

**RESPONSE**

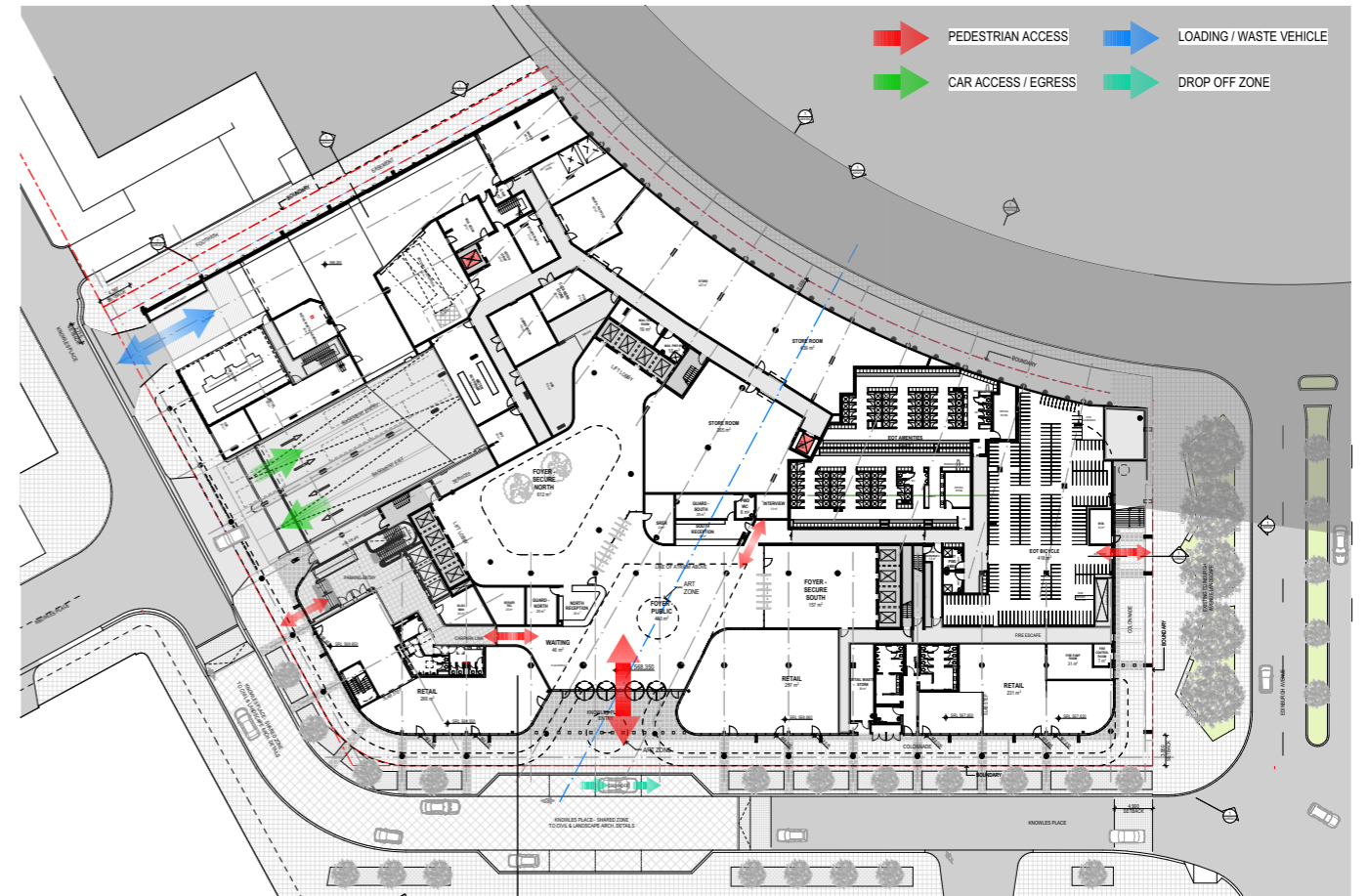
The design development has been highly responsive to the Panel's suggestions, by:

- Providing a double-height colonnade;
- Providing better finished levels along the Edinburgh Avenue frontage and Vernon Circle corner allowing closer integration to inside-outside;
- Remove the Vernon Circle vehicle drop-off driveway, thus enhancing the pedestrian paths;
- Relocating and reducing the amount of loading dock and vehicular crossovers to provide better pedestrian movement continuity along Knowles Place.

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The relocation of the loading and waste facilities to the north end of the site co-locates these services with those of the adjacent courts building and separates pedestrian, retail and office activities allowing for improved retail amenity along Knowles Place.



Retail spaces flank the office entry and link through from the street to the public entry foyer. The setback office entry also provides space and separation to the drop off zone at the street. The forecourt will also provide public art at this entry location

## IMAGERY



View from Edinburgh Ave looking north along Knowles Place



View from City Hill



View of Vernon Circle relationship with Courts Building



View of Office entry flanked by Retail





View of Knowles Place colonnade and entry forecourt



View from Vernon Circle footpath looking south



View of Edinburgh Ave elevation