

Preliminary Viewshaft assessment

18 March 2022

Introduction

A number of viewshafts have been identified for protection in the Draft District Plan. When considering these, the Council requested that further work be carried out to investigate potential additional viewshafts. The Council resolved to:

“Request officers do more work before the publication of the Notified District Plan to identify significant viewshafts for protection, including views to and from the Basin Reserve, the Carillon, the Victoria University site and Old St Pauls.”

This preliminary viewshaft assessment assessed potential viewshafts from:

1. Mt Victoria Tunnel to assess views towards Brooklyn
2. Victoria University Kelburn Campus to assess view back to the City and surrounding hills
3. Old St Pauls and environs to assess views of the site from surrounding area and potentially further away if relevant.

The purpose of the preliminary assessment was to determine the scope of potential view shafts, what are the key elements in the view and whether they are important to the view shaft.

Site visits to all locations and surroundings were carried out and photos taken of each location assessed. (Appendix 1).

Assessment was made against the direction of the Draft District Plan Viewshafts Chapter to establish their purpose and whether this is consistent with the approach taken in the plan. This included consideration of:

- whether they contribute to sense of place and the City’s identity,
- whether they provide a means of orientating oneself in the City and /or
- whether they provide visual relief from the built form
- Whether they are recognised as having regional, national or international importance

A summary was made of each potential viewshaft and a conclusion made as to whether they warranted protection in the District Plan.

Mt Victoria tunnel to Brooklyn

Views were assessed from:

- the portal of the tunnel progressing in 10 metre distances heading west
- Paterson Street
- Austin Tce

Contents and criteria	Mt Vic tunnel to Brooklyn
Key elements	Western and south western hills, wind turbine. Wind turbine is a local landmark, possibly an orienting element although from a long distance. Heavily built foreground
Scope	From the Mt Vic tunnel portal, the view is more to the north of Brooklyn and this view emerges travelling west. The wind turbine becomes visible at about 45 metres from the portal and this is obscured by infrastructure. A view from a publicly accessible point in the vicinity of Mt Vic tunnel is from Austin Tce or Paterson St. Neither of these streets are however widely traversed.
Contained, vista or panoramic	Panoramic with heavily built form in short, medium and long distances
Contribution to sense of place and city's identity	Wind turbine is local landmark and Brooklyn is a continuation of the western hills and provides the backdrop to the city
Provides a means of orientating oneself in the city	Wind Turbine potentially assists orientating but at a long distance. The western hills assist orientation and understanding of location.
Provides visual relief from the built form	The view comprises established built form at all distances so no clear relief.
Recognized as having regional, national or international importance	No

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Summary

From the tunnel there are emerging views of Brooklyn travelling west and one narrow glimpse of the wind turbine about 45m from the tunnel portal but this is obscured by infrastructure associated with Wellington College. Views from Paterson St and Austin Tce are possible but from a very long distance with a well established built form in the short, medium and long view.

VUW Kelburn campus to the city and surrounding hills

Views were assessed from:

- Hunter building and foreground
- South side of the Student Union building
- The Recreation Centre
- Vicinity of the Malaghan Institute

Contents and criteria	From VUW Kelburn to the city and surrounding hills
Key elements	Short range views of city buildings. Long range views of Point Jerningham, Point Halswell, Matiu Somes Island and Rimutaka and Orongorongo ranges
Contained, vista or panoramic	Panoramic
Contribution to sense of place and city's identity	Identification with setting and orientation
Provides a means of orientating oneself in the city	Useful to locate oneself within the wider city and landscape context

Provides visual relief form the built form	Strong built form in short and medium distance with undeveloped landscape in the long view
Recognized as having regional, national or international importance	Regional. Very similar panorama as V18 from Cable Car but not as distinctive

Summary

The views are very similar to that captured by existing V18 from the Cable Car but not as elevated and less significant. While a wide panoramic view is available particularly from the southern end of the site near the Malaghan Institute, it is not significantly different or better than the view from the Cable Car.

To Old St Paul's from surrounding area and further away

Views were assessed from:

- Various locations along Murphy St and Mulgrave St
- Thorndon Quay
- Ahumairangi Lookout

Contents and criteria	To Old St Paul's from surrounding area and further away
Key elements	Spire of cathedral
Contained, vista or panoramic	Contained
Contribution to sense of place and city's identity	St Paul's is a local landmark as a heritage building. As such, it contributes to sense of place but it is not the views of it that contribute to this and it is only visible in close range

Provides a means of orientating oneself in the city	Only views are close range so not an orienting element
Provides visual relief form the built form	N/A
Recognized as having regional, national or international importance	Regionally important building but not in any view

Summary

Old St Paul's can only be seen on the approach down Murphy St and Mulgrave St and only the spire is visible until the corner of Pipitea St and Mulgrave St. The tip of the spire is also visible from Thorndon Quay sitting above Pipitea Marae. At this location it is barely visible. No long distance views were identified.

Conclusion

A preliminary assessment of the identified potential viewshafts was undertaken to determine whether they warranted further consideration for identification in the draft District Plan.

From the Mt Victoria Tunnel and immediate surroundings there is no clear distinctive view shaft to Brooklyn. Views of Brooklyn from the tunnel area and several nearby locations are evident as part of the southern and western hills surrounding the city rather than a distinctive viewshaft. From the portal of the tunnel there is a view of the wind turbine but this is obscured by foreground infrastructure. I don't consider that this view warrants further consideration as a potential view shaft albeit a valued backdrop to the city.

The view from VUW Kelburn campus to the city and surrounding hills is a classic Wellington view from the west. In this area, the views are clear from the Student Union building and in the vicinity of the Malaghan Institute. These views are however also captured by those in Viewshaft 18 which is identified for inclusion in the draft District Plan. This viewshaft is taken from a higher point at the Kelburn Cable Car terminal and is clearer and more spectacular than the views from the VUW Kelburn campus. I don't consider that the view from VUW Kelburn Campus, while a good panoramic view of the city, warrants further consideration as a viewshaft as it is better captured in V18 from the Cable Car.

Views of St Paul's from the surrounding area are obscured by the adjacent built environment. St Paul's is a significant heritage building but it is nestled in amongst other tall buildings and the surrounding landscape including trees and other listed heritage buildings. There are minor emerging views as you move along Mulgrave and Murphy Streets but these are mostly just of the spire as the building is setback from the street and there are large trees in the foreground. From Thorndon Quay there is a glimpse of the spire but it is not distinctive as it is amongst taller structures and above Pipitea Marae in the foreground. From further away, Ahumairangi lookout, there is no clear view of St Paul's nestled as it is within the wider and immediate built form. St Paul's is well recognised as an important Wellington heritage building but it is located amongst the wider institutional area of taller buildings and other heritage buildings. Views of it are not clearly evident because of its location and I don't recommend that it be considered further as being part of an identified viewshaft.

Jane Black

18 March 2022

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Appendix 1

Mt Vic Tunnel to Brooklyn



At tunnel portal – no view to Brooklyn



10 metres from portal – Brooklyn coming into view



20 metres from portal – Brooklyn in view



30 metres from portal



40 metres from portal – Turbine now in view but obscured by infrastructure



45 metres from portal – view obscured by trees



View to Brooklyn from Austin Tce (End Ellice St)



View to Brooklynn from Paterson St

Views of the City from VUW campus, Kelburn



From edge of carpark opposite Hunter building



From Hunter steps



View to north from Student Union building



View to east from Student Union building



View to north east from Student Union building



View from VUW rec centre



View north east from vicinity of Malaghan Centre



View north east from vicinity of Malaghan Centre



View east from vicinity of Malaghan Centre



View east from vicinity of Malaghan Centre

Views of Old St Paul's



View down Murphy St at NW carpark entrance



View from north west corner Pipitea and Mulgrave



View from south west corner Pipitea and Mulgrave



Opposite site



View corner Aitken and Mulgrave



View from Thorndon Quay