In the city, buildings exist in relationship to their street and immediate vicinity. The Urban Context Plan shows a site in relationship to the surrounding urban area. A good understanding of context, (the urban environment) assists designers to create buildings that complement the immediate vicinity and capitalise on a site's best assets without impacting badly on the neighbours and street. The urban environment is created by a series of overlapping natural, cultural and built factors. An urban context plan shows these key elements drawn together on a scaled plan. The plan is essential to developing an appropriate design and built response because it shows:

- Key urban elements of the existing and future proposed context
- The main opportunities and constraints affecting the site
- Important factors to be included in the design response that will support the existing and future desired context.

The elements to be included in each plan will vary from site to site, depending on the location and the degree of change proposed for the area. Sometimes it will be clearer to present the information as a series of plans. Generally the following minimum information will need to be included:

- Subdivision and street layout
- Topography, Landscape, Open Space and waterways
- Public Domain elements such as footpaths and street trees and bus stops
- Transport stops nearby

- Building footprints and heights
- Neighbourhood functions and public institutions nearby
- Nearby shops and services
- Existing patterns of setbacks, private vegetation and drives that contribute to the streetscape character
- Important views and vistas
- Heritage and archaeological elements
- North point
- Planning controls
- Local Context Photos

The Parramatta Urban Design Team has developed some sample plans to assist applicants in understanding the required contents and style. These are:

URBAN CONTEXT PLAN FIGURE 1
URBAN CONTEXT PLAN FIGURE 2
SITE CONTEXT PLAN
LOCAL CONTEXT PLAN PHOTOS

The Parramatta Development Control Plan also provides guidance about the context plans in Chapter 2 Site Planning.
Location
The site is located on Park Street Rydalmere, on the western side of a main street running north-south that links 2 arterial roads Victoria Road and Kissing Point Road.

Proximity to Local Amenities
The site is within 250m of bus stops servicing bus routes to Rydalmere, Parramatta, Ryde and Epping. There are a range of local amenities nearby including local shops, schools, Rydalmer Park and a creekland park. Employment in the near vicinity includes UWS, Rydalmer and Camellia.

Vehicle access to private sites is by drives crossing the footpath to garages located to the rear of the site and adjacent to houses.

Subdivision Blocks
The block subdivision is rectilinear. Blocks have a regular depth of approximately 45m. This site is located in a section of short square blocks providing good pedestrian connectivity.

Subdivision Lots
Typical lots in the area are between 600 to 700 sqm with street frontages of 15m.

Topography and Vegetation
The site is located midway between a spur along Victoria Road (contour 26) and the creek (contour 8). The slope is reasonably gentle at 1 in 21 and facing north. There is some street tree planting in this area, and also a strong pattern of tree planting on the private lots along the rear and side boundaries. There is a distinct pattern of trees in the back yards forming green refuges mid-block. Regular street trees exist in some streets including along the western side of Park Street.

Built Form
The majority of the buildings in the area are one and two storeys and are a mix of detached houses with some more recent multi-unit housing built as attached town houses and row housing. Most buildings are detached and set in landscaped setting created by generous front, side and rear setbacks.

Streetscape
The streetscape for this particular site is typical of the suburban area. It is a short block with 1 and 2 storey houses addressing the street. The front setbacks are reasonably regular 5-7m and mostly lawn with low landscaping in the front setbacks.
Future Planning and Built Form Context

The planning context shows the site to be in a mixed area and at the edge of a low density residential area. The site zoning is medium density residential are as the properties across the road. Immediately to the south, the zoning is B4 Mixed Use and the block further south is B2 Local centre. Several blocks to the west are zoned high density residential and these abut the SREP 28 Parramatta Technology and Enterprise Zone. To the east the blocks are mostly Low Density Residential. A number of buildings in the local vicinity are likely to remain being strata titled and there is a heritage building with established gardens neighbouring the site.

Building heights are predominately 2 storeys with 3 storeys allowed in the high density and local centre areas to the south and west of this Text Proposed Site.

Smaller 3m setbacks along the street and a zero street setback at the south eastern corner of the block are allowable under the new DCP which will result in a stronger built edge to the street. These setbacks align with that of the heritage building to be retained.

Zoning for LEP 2010

- R2 Low Density Residential
- R3 Medium Density Residential
- R4 High Density Residential
- B1 Neighbourhood Centre
- B2 Local centre
- B4 Mixed Use
- RE1 Public Recreation
- E2 Environmental Conservation
- SREP No 28 Parramatta Technology and Enterprise Zone
- Buildings likely to remain heritage / strata
- Site
- Height in storeys
- 200 m / 2.5 minute walking radius
- Heritage

EXAMPLE OF SITE ANALYSIS REQUIRED TO ACCOMPANY DA’S URBAN CONTEXT PLAN FIGURE 2
Site Analysis

The site includes a single dwelling with a garage adjoining the back of the house and sheds along the rear fence. All buildings are proposed to be demolished. There are some existing shrubs along the northern fence. Vehicular access is currently from the north and would need to be retained in this location to retain existing mature street trees.

The site has long boundaries to the east and west sides. Given the up zoning of this area it is likely that the streetscape will change over the next few years while existing houses are demolished for medium density and community uses which will all be built closer to the street.

Prevailing summer breezes are from the east. The winter winds from which protection is desirable are from the west. The single storey heritage building to the north will preserve good solar access to this site which will also receive morning and afternoon sun from the east and west respectively.
The typical built form along Park Road is detached houses. The heritage listed cottage adjacent to the site. The new 2 storey townhouse development opposite the site.

The Site showing mature street tree planting, landscaped setting and side drive. View of Park Road looking north.

EXAMPLE OF SITE ANALYSIS REQUIRED TO ACCOMPANY DA'S LOCAL CONTEXT PLAN PHOTOS

Prepared by Parramatta City Council Urban Design Unit  August 2011