

#### Annex 4: Illustrating likely visual impacts on views from the SAAO



Figure 1: The image above has been taken from the SAAO site looking towards Devil's Peak across the River Club.

Immediately across the Liesbeek River, some 180m away is the River Club Building, a two-story white structure. The building is approximately 12m high at its apex.

Behind the River Club building, an 8-story facebrick Office complex for the Black River Park, approximately 25m in height is visible some 450m away.

The line of sight to the Black River Complex is more or less at the height of the apex of the River Club building.

What the development proposal intends to place on Precinct 1 is set of buildings which range from 20m to 44m in height, approximately twice to three times the height of the current River Club building. It should be clear that if the River Club building is doubled or trebled in size, the impact on the SAAO's visual connection to the mountain and horizon will be severely impacted. Similarly, views from Observatory to the SAAO will also be screened off by this 'urban wall' effect.

There are no views provided in the Visual Impact Assessment of the mountain or of Signal Hill from the SAAO. However, there are artist recreations of views said to be from the SAAO in Annexure C4: Environmental Impact Assessment. These are pasted below. Nevertheless, these images presented in Figure 2 below provide no comparison to the current views and do not position the viewer in relation to the current SAAO site.



Figure 72: Perspectives from the SAO

Figure 2: Perspectives from the SAO as contained in Annexure C4



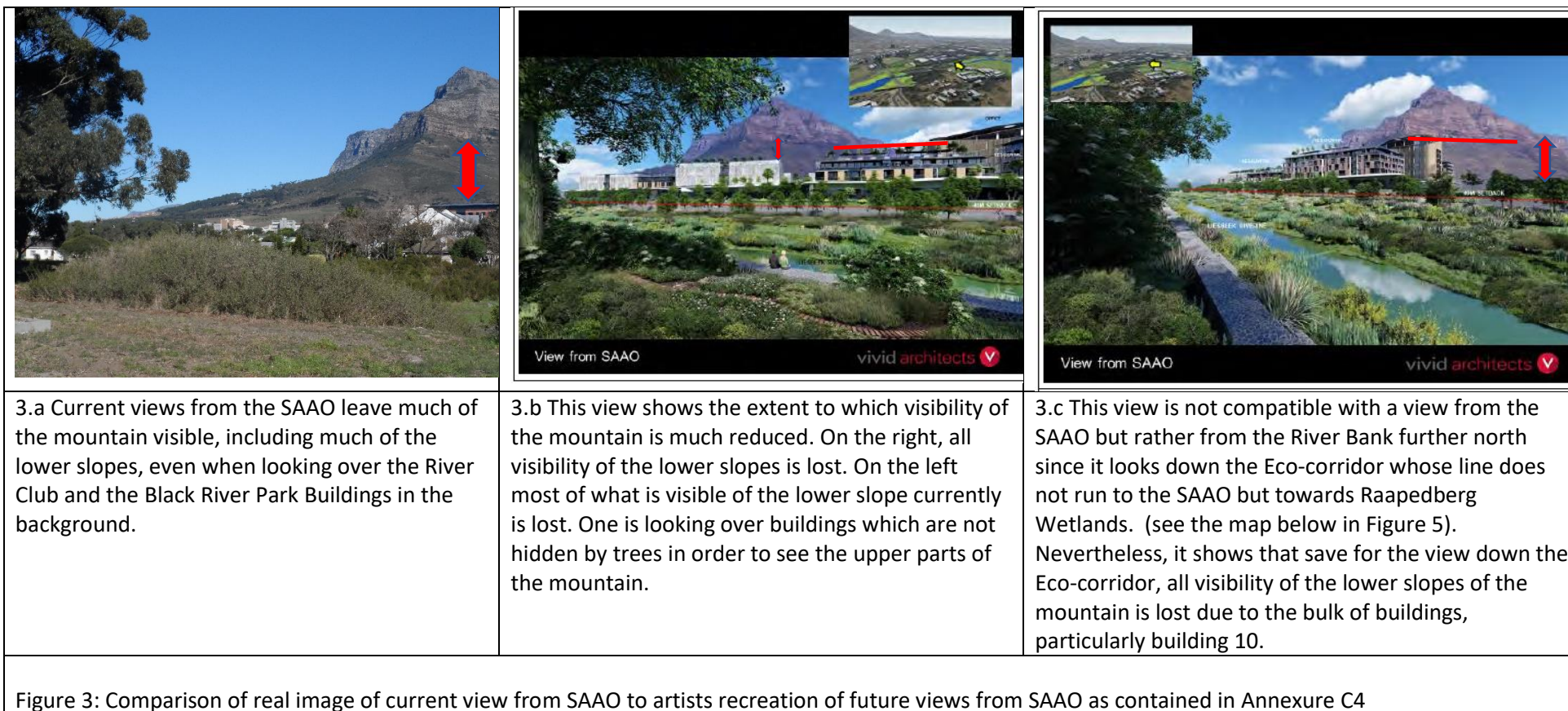


Figure 3 placed the artist’s images said be views from the SAAO against the current view taken from the SAAO grounds looking out across the River Club Building. On the left, the red arrow shows that in the current situation, most of the lower slopes of the mountain are visible to a person standing on the SAAO hill. The middle image shows that for the lower buildings on the left, the sight of the mountain slopes is much reduced while on the right, the lower mountain slopes are completely blocked from view.

In the image on the right, which is purportedly a “view from SAAO”, the building completely obscure the view of the mountain slopes except if on looks down the eco-corridor where no buildings are located. However, such a view cannot be a view from the SAAO as the direction of the eco-corridor does not

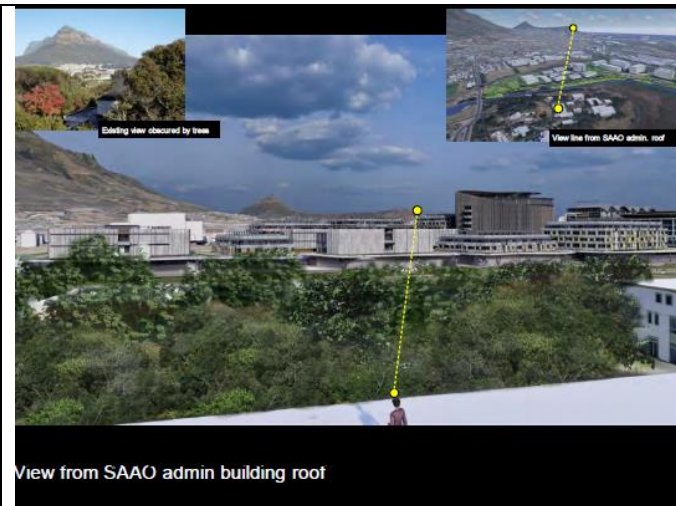
run towards the SAAO but in a direction towards the Raapenberg Bird Sanctuary (Figure 4). The statement that this is a view from the SAAO is either a mistake or misleading. Nonetheless, it does show the impact of building of bulk on the views from the SAAO.

Figure 4 below is a further view of the eco-corridor and more likely in the proper direction of what the SAAO might see. The view of Devil's peak (4a) is completely blocked and Lion's Head only slightly visible. On the right (4b) is the view from the roof of the SAAO building as recreated by the artist. Building 10, which is 44m high, is clearly an intrusion on the skyline and permanently alters the visual frames from the SAAO. Note that building 10 is the tallest building in Precinct 1 and the only building in Precinct 1 over 40m high. In precinct 2, three of the 8 buildings are over 40m in height. Although the VIA and EIA documents given no images of the visual line north from the SAAO across Precinct 2 where the heights of buildings are 10 to 20 meters higher than in Precinct 1, it is clear that, given the looming effect of building 10 in precinct 1, three very tall buildings to the north in precinct 2 will severely disrupt views from the SAAO.

The Views from the SAAO across the precinct 1 are therefore considerably impacted. If one has to climb onto the roof of the SAAO to gain vision of the Noon Gun, over an expanse of 20 to 40m high buildings in Precinct 1, and taller buildings in Precinct 2, this cannot be called a sensitive treatment of height. Building 10 clearly stands out as an intrusion on the visual line of already intrusive buildings.



4a. The Eco-corridor view of the mountain is narrow. Devil's peak is rendered entirely invisible behind building 10.



4b. The Views from the SAAO across the precinct 1 are considerably impacted. If one has to climb onto the roof of the SAAO to gain vision of the Noon Gun, over an expanse of 30 to 40m high buildings, this cannot be called a sensitive treatment of height. Building 10 clearly stands out as an intrusion on the visual line of already intrusive buildings. The VIA and EIA documents given no images of the visual line north from the SAAO across Precinct 2 where the heights of buildings are 10 to 20 meters higher than in Precinct 1. Three of the 8 buildings in precinct 2 are of the same order of height as the single building 10 breaking one's view of the horizon evident in the image above.

Figure 4: Other Views from the direction of the SAAO (source Annexure C8c)



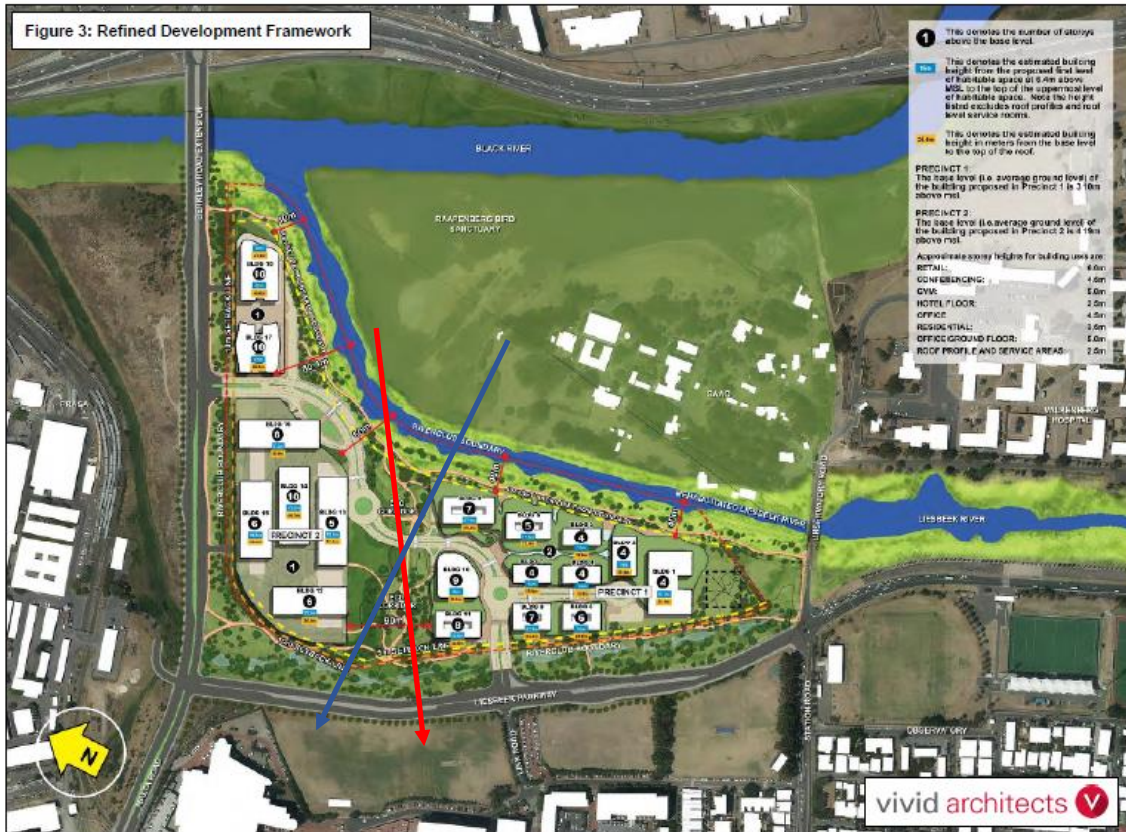


Figure 5: Layout of proposed development (source Annexure G2)

Figure 5 shows that it is impossible for the SAAO to have any line of sight down the eco-corridor toward Devil’s Peak. The view in Figure 3c above is only possible if one is standing somewhere near the Raapenberg Bird Sanctuary as indicated by the red line in the figure. The only view that the SAAO campus might have through the ecocorridor is at an angle hemmed in by buildings 9 and 10 on the left (33m and 44 m high, respectively) and buildings 12 and 13 on the right (36m and 32m high, respectively) as shown by the blue line. Such a view would only be obtainable at the northernmost end of the SAAO campus and not from the Observatory, which will be hemmed in by an array of buildings between it and Devil’s Peak. Figure 5b is more accurate in showing that there is no view down the eco-corridor to any mountains; rather, the view has to look over the top of a range of buildings.