

HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT



Pacific Highway, Pymble

September 2022 | J5413R

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preamble

This Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) has been prepared in conjunction with a Development Application for the installation of new digital advertising signage at Pacific Highway, Pymble, New South Wales. The site lies within an area managed by Sydney Trains.

The site is located within the Ku-ring-gai Council. The principal planning control for the site is the *Ku-ring-gai Local Environmental Plan 2015 (LEP 2015)*. The site forms part of a heritage item listed by Schedule 5 Part 1 of the *LEP 2015* ('Pymble Railway Station Group') and lies within the vicinity of other items listed on the *LEP 2015*.

This statement has been prepared at the request of JCDcaux and accompanies plans prepared by Dennis Bunt Consulting Engineers Pty Ltd.

1.2 Authorship and Acknowledgements

This HIS was prepared by Elliot Nolan, B.A. (Anc.Hist.Hons), M. Mus.Herit.Stud., Grad.Dip.Herit.Cons., and James Phillips, B.Sc. (Arch.), B.Arch., M.Herit.Cons. (Hons), of Weir Phillips Heritage and Planning.

1.3 Limitations

A brief history only of the site was prepared.

No Aboriginal or historical archaeology was carried out on the site.

1.4 Methodology

This assessment has been prepared with reference to the *NSW Heritage Manual* update *Statements of Heritage Impact* (2002) and with reference to the Council planning controls listed under Section 1.6.

1.5 Physical Evidence

This report is based on a desktop study only. Unless otherwise stated, all photographs were supplied by the client.

1.6 Documentary Evidence

1.6.1 General References

- Aboriginal Heritage,' http://www.kmc.nsw.gov.au/About_Ku-ring-gai/History_heritage/Aboriginal_heritage.
- O'Reilly, W., *The History of Ku-ring-gai* (Pymble, 1948).
- RPS Group, *Pymble Station* (November 2020).
- Tropman & Tropman, *Heritage Study of the Municipality of Ku-ring-gai Review* (unpublished report, 1996).
- Wells, W.H., *A Geographic Dictionary of Gazetteer of the Australian Colonies* (Council of Library of New South Wales, 1970).

1.6.2 Historic Photographs

- Photograph of Pymble Overbridge (c. 1939). State Library of New South Wales.

1.6.3 Heritage Listing Sheets

- 'Pymble Hotel', Heritage NSW State Heritage Inventory ID No. 1880385.
- 'Pymble Railway Station Group', Heritage NSW State Heritage Inventory ID No. 4801068.

1.6.4 Planning Documents

- *Ku-ring-gai Development Control Plan 2015 (DCP 2015).*
- *Ku-ring-gai Local Environmental Plan 2015 (LEP 2015).*
- NSW Government Department of Planning *Transport Corridor Outdoor Advertising and Signage Guidelines* (November 2017).
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Industry and Employment) 2021.*

1.7 Site Location

The site is located on the west side of Pacific Highway, Pymble and has frontage to Avon Road (Figure 1).

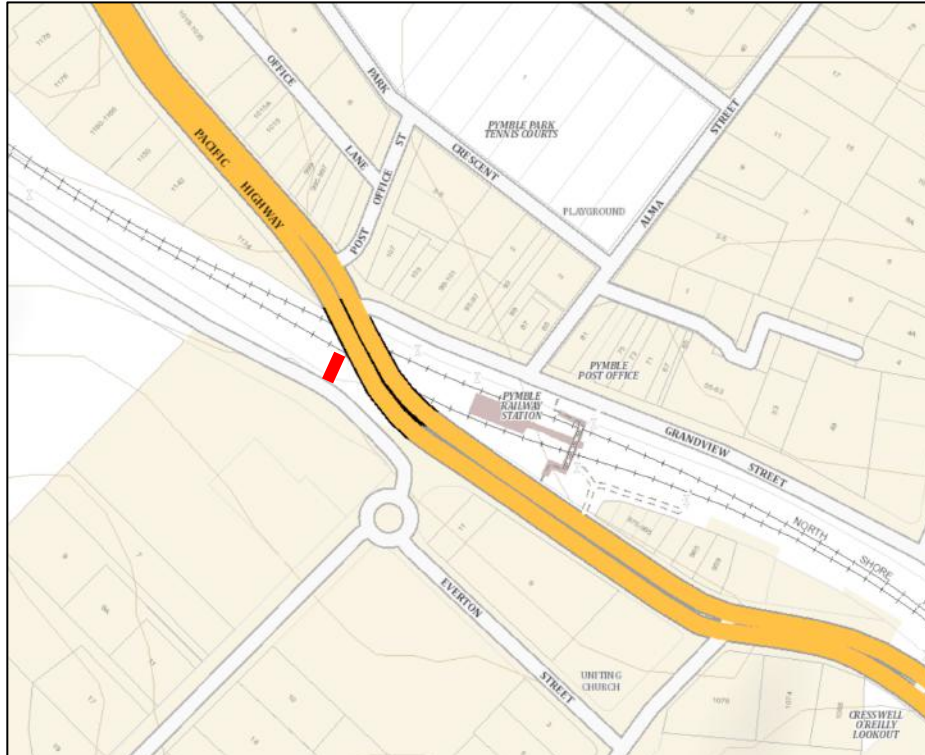


Figure 1: Site location (indicated by the red rectangle).
SIX Maps, 2022

2 BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Aboriginal History

While an Aboriginal history is not provided for, it is acknowledged that the original inhabitants of Ku-ring-gai are the Darramuragal or Darug people.¹

2.2 Early European History

European exploration of the northern shores of Sydney Harbour began soon after the establishment of the Colony of New South Wales on 26 January, 1788. On 15 April, 1788, Governor Phillip lead a small exploratory party from Manly Cove. The party travelled north

¹ 'Aboriginal Heritage,' http://www.kmc.nsw.gov.au/About_Ku-ring-gai/History_heritage/Aboriginal_heritage.

and then west, reaching what is now the Ku-ring-gai Municipality around two days later. The land was described as being 'covered with an endless wood.'²

From 16 January 1793, successive colonial governors granted land outside the declared boundaries of the Township of Sydney in order to open up the colony and augment food supplies. The northern shores of Sydney Harbour were located well outside the township boundaries. The first land grants on the North Shore were made in the present-day North Sydney Council area in the mid 1790s. With the discovery of more immediately accessible and arable land elsewhere, however, there was little interest in cultivating these grants. With the exception of timber getters and shell collection for the production of lime, the North Shore was essentially ignored by the early colonists.

Early maps to 1820 include present-day Ku-ring-gai in the District of Hunters Hill. The western-most section of this district was known as Lane Cove, presumably because of its proximity to the Lane Cove River. Early references to Lane Cove can be taken to include present-day Ku-ring-gai.

The abundance of timber noted by the first explorers encouraged legal and illegal timber getters. Between 1805 and 1819, a convict sawyers' camp at Fidden's Wharf, known as the Lane Cove Sawing Establishment, employed up to 48 convicts. During the 1820s, other camps and sawmills appeared. The felled timber was taken by bullock drays to the Lane Cove River, where it was punted to Sydney from Fidden's, Hyndes' or Dick's Wharfs.³

The first official grant in the Ku-ring-gai area was a 400-acre grant in present-day Roseville made to Daniel Derring Mathew in 1819. Over the following 15 years, the land along the plateau spine was issued to around 20 individuals, mostly in allotments of 40 to 100 acres.⁴ The present-day suburb was named for Robert Pymble, the most influential of the early settlers in this part of Ku-ring-gai, who received a grant of land in the area in 1823.

Access into the area was via the road now the Pacific Highway, which may have followed an earlier Aboriginal route. Known as Lane Cove Road and subsequently as Gordon Road, this road, together with Fox Valley Road, developed from an early time to provide for the needs of the timber getters. The line of Lane Cove Road appears on the first available parish map, dated 1835. The road was not then the major thoroughfare that it is now; the principal means of access to the north was by water.

The condition of the Lane Cove Road during this period was frequently poor. Surveyor-General Mitchell's preference for a road through the already settled areas of Parramatta and Pitt Town to Wiseman's Ferry and north to Maitland and the Hunter Valley delayed any improvement work. Bush tracks linked the Lane Cove Road with the river and outlying areas of settlement. Stoney Creek Road/Pittwater Road connected the area to Pittwater; Ryde Road lead to the older settlements at Ryde and along the Parramatta River; and Kissing Point Road, Fiddens Wharf Road and Grosvenor Roads provided access to the river.

Following in the wake of the timber getters, orchards were established in parts of the present-day Municipality, the first recorded being Robert Pymble's orchard begun in 1826. Orchards would remain a feature in the area for the following sixty years by which time the soils were exhausted and crops infested with insects and disease.

Throughout the first part of the nineteenth century, Ku-ring-gai had an unsavory reputation. Lane Cove was:

'...noted as the resort of disreputable people, and we do not hesitate to say that there should be a military post established there to

² Walter O'Reilly, *The History of Ku-ring-gai* (Pymble, 1948), p. 3.

³ O'Reilly, *The History of Ku-ring-gai*, p. 4.

⁴ Tropman and Tropman, *Heritage Study of the Municipality of Ku-ring-gai Review* (unpublished report, 1996), p. 38.

prevent smuggling and sly grog selling. If an active Police Magistrate were to visit this infamous district frequently, we have no doubt that much would be done towards cleansing it of as great a set of ruffians as the Colony holds.’⁵

The area was sparsely populated. The *Geographic Dictionary of Gazetteer of the Australian Colonies* of 1848 notes that within the whole of the Parish of Gordon, there was only 107 houses and 443 inhabitants.⁶

By the 1860s, progress was being made by the small, but modestly increasing, population. At Pymble, a Catholic Church (and School) was built on the hill on Lane Cove Road in 1863, followed three years later by the first hotel.

By the 1870s, the early estates were beginning to be broken into smaller holdings, typically of four to ten acres. While some of this land was purchased for speculative purposes, most of the new landowners were orchardists and/or market gardeners.

2.3 Pymble Railway Station

The pressure to build a suburban passenger line on the North Shore increased in the late 19th century. At the election of 1885, Henry Parkes stood for the seat of St Leonards. His key election promise included a bridge across Sydney Harbour and a railway line between Milson’s Point and Pearce’s Corner. When Parkes became Premier of New South Wales again in 1887, he appointed his colleague Bruce Smith as Secretary for Public Works. Smith approved the North Shore Line, which opened in 1890, in addition to Pymble Railway Station.⁷

The construction of the railway station and line led to the rapid growth of the district and opened the North Shore to settlement in a way that had previously been limited.

Later alterations and additions include the following:

- A new station building, footbridge and island platform were constructed in 1909 as part of the duplication of the line.
- A major station upgrade was carried out in 1990 including all-weather canopies, repainting, platform resurfacing, new finishes to the footbridge and security systems.
- In 2017, another upgrade was carried out which including the removal of redundant services, upgrade of toilets, repainting of buildings, upgrade of lighting, and landscaping.⁸

The area of the proposed works is on a brick retaining wall which forms part of the Pymble Overbridge. Refer to Figure 2 which shows an early c. 1939 photograph of the wall.

⁵ O’Reilly, *The History of Ku-ring-gai* p. 4.

⁶ William Henry Wells, *A Geographic Dictionary of Gazetteer of the Australian Colonies*, (Council of the Library of New South Wales, 1970), p. 186.

⁷ RPS Group, *Pymble Station* (November 2020), p. 11.

⁸ RPS Group, *Pymble Station*, pp. 12-13.



Figure 2: Pymble Overbridge (c. 1939) as viewed from Avon Road. Note the metal fence on top has been replaced, while the wall itself is now largely overgrown with vegetation.

State Library of New South Wales

3 SITE ASSESSMENT

3.1 The Site

For the following, refer to Figure 3, an aerial photograph of the site.



Figure 3: Aerial photograph of site. The red rectangle indicates the location of the proposed signage.

SIX Maps, 2022

The site of the proposed signage is located on a brick retaining wall which supports the Pymble Overbridge. A metal palisade fence separates the site from Pacific Highway.

Refer to Figures 4 and 5 which illustrate the site.



Figure 4: The site of the proposed signage as viewed from Pacific Highway.
Provided by the client



Figure 5: The site of the proposed signage as viewed from Avon Road.
Provided by the client.

3.2 The Surrounding Area

3.2.1 The General Area

For the following, refer to Figure 6, an aerial photograph of the surrounding area.

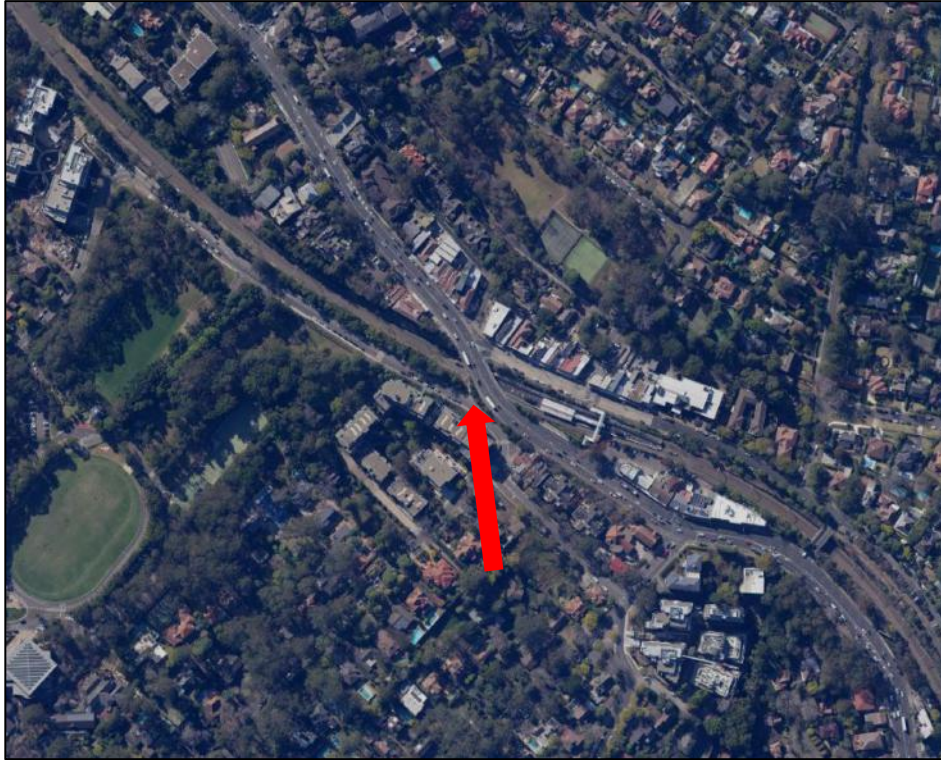


Figure 6: Aerial photograph of site and surrounding area. The site is indicated by the red arrow.

SIX Maps 2022

The site is located on the Pacific Highway, a busy road corridor that extends along the eastern coast of Australia. Pymble Railway Station lies to the east and Pymble town centre to the west.

3.2.2 Pacific Highway

Pacific Highway is a major road corridor. The section of road in which the site is located carries two-way traffic with no provision for street parking. Concrete footpaths line both sides of the road. This part of Pacific Highway is characterised by two-storey 20th century period commercial buildings and later infill.

Refer to Figure 7 which illustrates the streetscape.



Figure 7: The streetscape to the north of the site showing 20th century period buildings and later infill.

Provided by the client

3.2.3 Avon Road

Avon Road runs between Lonsdale Avenue and Everton Street. The road carries two-way traffic with provision for street parking on both sides. Concrete footpaths line either side of the road. The section of road in which the site is located is residential and characterised by multi-storey contemporary residential flat buildings on the south side. The North Shore Line extends along the north side of the road.

Refer to Figure 8 which illustrates the streetscape.



Figure 8: The streetscape to the south of the site showing infill development.

Provided by the client

4 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

4.1 Statutory Listings

The site:

- Is listed as a heritage item by Schedule 5 Part 1 of the *Ku-ring-gai LEP 2015* ('Pymble Railway Station Group').
- Is not located in a Heritage Conservation Area by Schedule 5 Part 2 of the *Ku-ring-gai LEP 2015*.
- Is not listed as an item on the State Heritage Register under the *NSW Heritage Act 1977*.

The State Heritage Inventory provides the following Statement of Significance for the Pymble Railway Station Group:

Pymble Railway Station Group is significant at a local level. Pymble station, opened in 1890, has historical significance as there was limited settlement in the area prior to this date and the construction of the railway was instrumental in encouraging the rapid subdivision and development of the area. Pymble railway station has aesthetic significance at a local level as a good example of a standard design station building in its original context, dating from the 1909 duplication works. The site has aesthetic significance in particular due to its well-known landmark qualities, particularly the elevated footbridge which forms an important visual element of the station precinct viewed both from the Pacific Highway and from Grandview Street.

The footbridge was identified as an item of high heritage significance in the 2016 'Railway Footbridges Heritage Conservation Strategy'. It retains a high degree of integrity and is a good representative of an early twentieth century haunched beam

footbridge with a trestle sub-structure. It is unusual in that it retains its original balustrades on both the footbridge and stairs.⁹

This Statement is adopted for the purposes of this assessment.

It is noted that the Statement focuses on the significance of the station building and footbridge. The heritage inventory listing sheet does not specifically note the Pymble Overbridge or the brick retaining wall as having any significance.

4.2 Heritage Items Within the Vicinity of the Site

For the following, ‘within the vicinity’ has been determined with reference to physical proximity, existing and potential view corridors and the nature of the proposed works.

4.2.1 NSW Heritage Act 1977

There are no items listed on the State Heritage Register under the *NSW Heritage Act 1977* within the vicinity of the site.

4.2.2 Ku-ring-gai LEP 2015

Refer to Figure 9, which shows a heritage map. In this plan, local heritage items are coloured brown and Conservation Areas are hatched red. The site is indicated by the red rectangle.

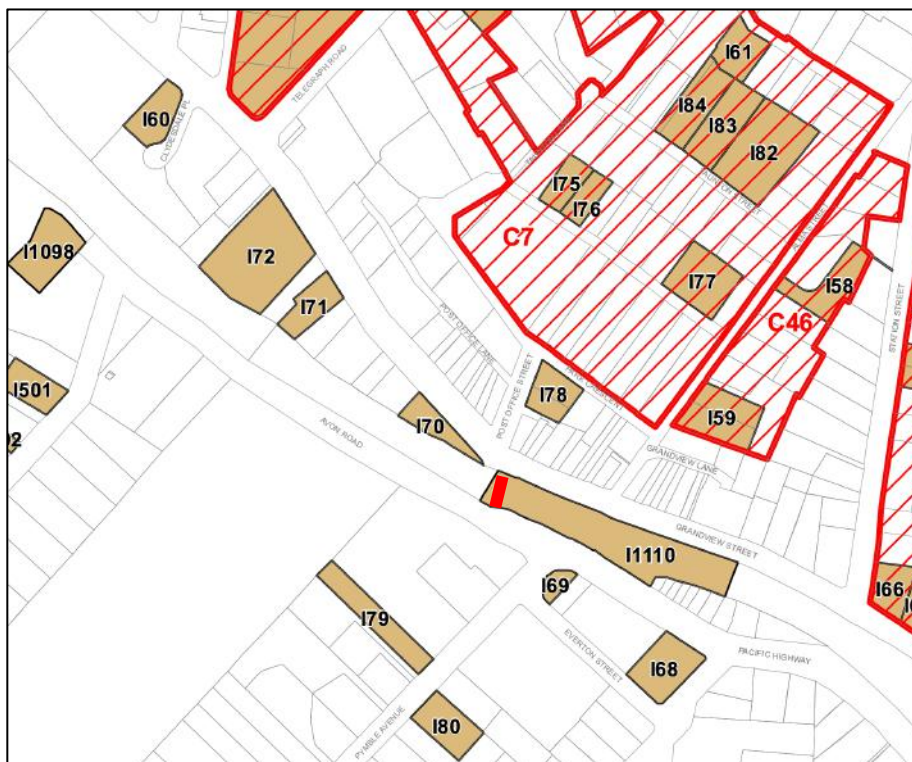


Figure 9: Detail, map showing heritage items and Conservation Areas in relation to the site. The approximate location of the site is indicated by the red rectangle.
Ku-ring-gai LEP 2015

There are two heritage items listed by Schedule 5 Part 1 of the *Ku-ring-gai LEP 2015* within the vicinity of the site:

⁹ ‘Pymble Railway Station group’, Heritage NSW State Heritage Inventory ID No. 4801068.

- **'Pymble Hotel', No. 1134 Pacific Highway, Pymble**

This item is located to the northwest of the site. It is identified as '170' in Figure 9 above.

This item has limited visibility from the site and vice versa due to vegetation and the curve of the road.

The State Heritage Inventory provides the following Statement of Significance for this item:

Reasons for listing; social, architectural, municipal significance.¹⁰

Refer to Figure 10.

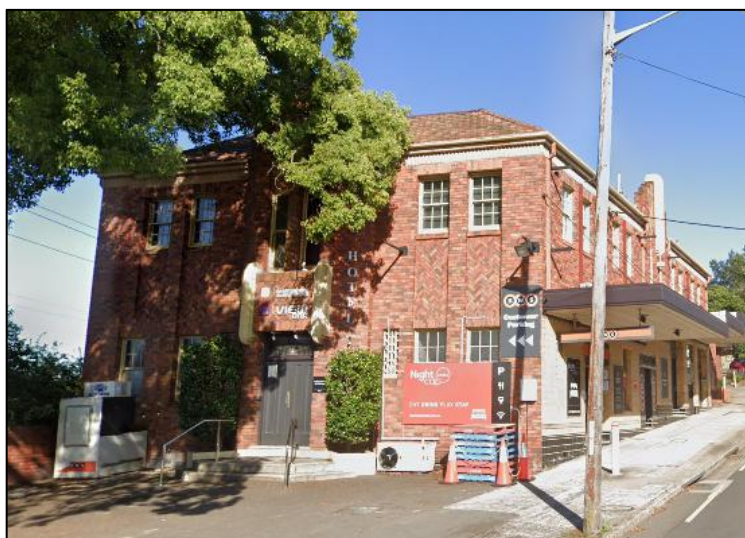


Figure 10: Pymble Hotel as viewed from Pacific Highway.
Google Maps

- **'Former police station', No. 1116 Pacific Highway, Pymble**

This item is located to the southeast of the site. It is identified as '169' in Figure 9 above.

This item is visible from the item and vice versa, except where it is obscured by vegetation.

The State Heritage Inventory provides the following Statement of Significance for this item:

Reasons for listing; historic, social significance.¹¹

Refer to Figure 11.

¹⁰ 'Pymble Hotel', Heritage NSW State Heritage Inventory ID No. 1880385.

¹¹ 'Former police station', Heritage NSW State Heritage Inventory ID No. 1880386.



Figure 11: The former police station as viewed from Avon Road.
Google Maps

In addition, there is one other heritage item and a Conservation Area listed on the *LEP 2015* within the vicinity of the site:

- **'Dwelling house', No. 4A Park Crescent, Pymble ('I78').**
- **'Park Estate Conservation Area', Pymble ('C7').**

Both of these are located to the north of the site and do not have any visibility due to vegetation and intervening buildings of up to two-storeys. Due to the minor scale of the works which are unlikely to create any new view corridors, this heritage item and Conservation Area is no longer considered for the purposes of this assessment.

4.3 View Corridors

The principal view corridor towards the site is from the northwest and southeast on Pacific Highway. Views decrease with distance due to vegetation and the curve of the road. The site also has visibility from Avon Road and Grandview Street and from within the railway corridor. Refer to Figures 12 to 15.



Figure 12: Looking southeast towards the site from Pacific Highway.
Provided by the client



Figure 13: Looking northwest towards the site from Pacific Highway.
Provided by the client



Figure 14: Looking towards the proposed signage from Avon Road.
Provided by the client

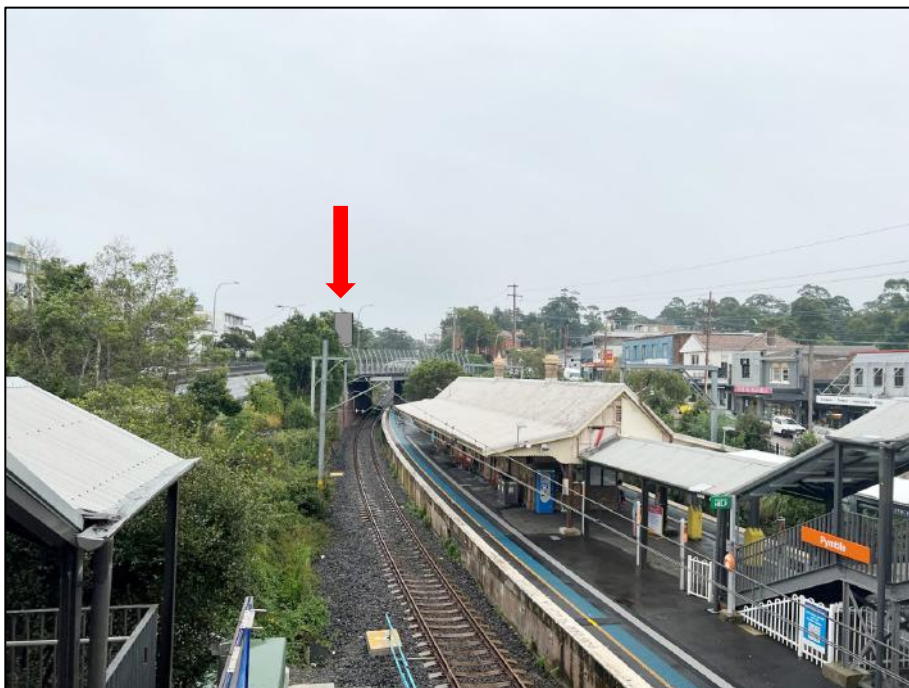


Figure 15: Looking towards the proposed signage from the Pymble Footbridge.
Provided by the client

5 THE PROPOSAL

The following should be read in conjunction with the plans prepared by Dennis Bunt Consulting Engineers Pty Ltd that accompany this application:

It is proposed to install a new monopole single-sided LED signage facing outbound traffic. The proposed signage, measuring 3.172m x 4.708m will be located on the brick retaining wall, which forms part of the overbridge, and behind the existing metal fence to Pacific Highway. It will require a new concrete pier and support.

Refer to Figure 16 which reproduces the proposed plans.

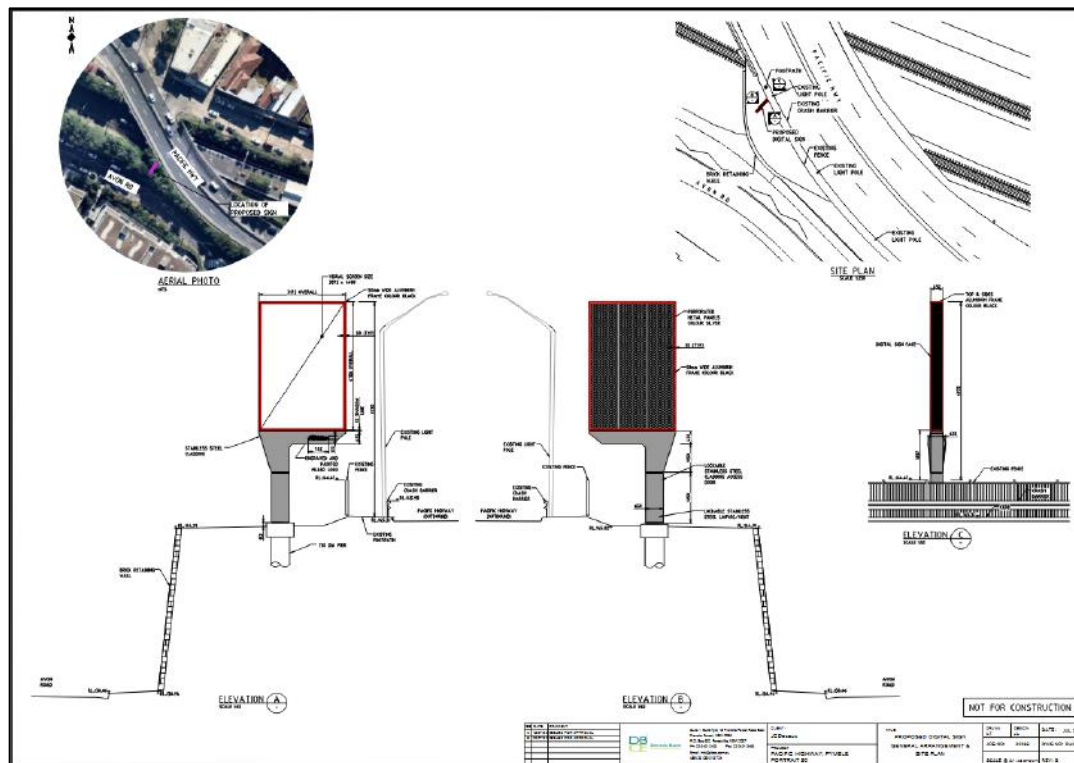


Figure 16: Proposed signage.
Dennis Bunt Consulting Engineers Pty Ltd

6 EFFECT OF WORK

6.1 Methods of Assessment

The following is a merit-based assessment. It does not consider compliance or otherwise with Council's numerical controls except where non-compliance would result in a heritage impact. Refer to the Statement of Environmental Effects that accompanies this application. The following assessment is made with an understanding of the objectives and controls provided by the following:

- *Ku-ring-gai Local Environmental Plan 2015 (LEP 2015).*
- *Ku-ring-gai Development Control Plan 2015 (DCP 2015).*
- NSW Government Department of Planning *Transport Corridor Outdoor Advertising and Signage Guidelines* (November 2017).
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Industry and Employment) 2021.*

6.2 Effect of Work on Subject Site

The proposed works will have an acceptable impact on the subject site for the following reasons:

- The proposed signage is consistent with the setting of the item, as characterised by a busy motorway with a high volume of traffic. The proposal will facilitate high-quality advertising signage within an existing major transport corridor.
- The proposed signage will be internally illuminated and will display static images on a 10-second basis, which will have a negligible visual impact as it will not generally be discernible to either vehicular or foot traffic.

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- The proposed signage will be located on a brick retaining wall which forms part of the Pymble Overbridge. As set out in this HIS, neither of these elements is considered to have any specific significance within the heritage listing and have, in any case, undergone changes over time.
 - The proposed signage will be located well away from the elements that primarily define the item's significance, i.e., the station building and footbridge, and will lie outside their immediate setting, separated from the site by the Pymble Overbridge which carried this section of the Pacific Highway.
 - The proposed signage will be visible from the item, specifically the Pymble Footbridge, however, as demonstrated by Figure 14, this will have an acceptable impact as it will be one of several illuminated elements visible from the item.
 - The proposed signage will only require minimal excavation for the new concrete pier. It is sufficiently set into the site and has been structurally engineered so that it does not impact on the integrity of the brick retaining wall.
 - The signage will be digital which will enable the change-over of advertisements and any other messaging, without requiring physical intervention.

6.3 Effect of Work on Heritage Items Within the Vicinity

'Pymble Hotel', No. 1134 Pacific Highway, Pymble

The proposed works will have a minimal and acceptable impact on this item for the following reasons:

- There will be no impact on the fabric of this item, which is sufficiently separated from the site.
- The proposed signage will not block significant view corridors towards this item, which are obtained from directly outside on Pacific Highway. The site lies well to the southeast, outside these view corridors, and is otherwise minor in scale.
- The proposed signage will likely be visible from this item and will form part of its wider setting. This will have a minimal and acceptable impact as any advertising material will be oriented away from the item, with only the steel structure visible.
- The proposed works will, overall, have no impact on the ability of the public to understand and appreciate the historic and aesthetic significance of this item.

'Former police station', No. 1116 Pacific Highway, Pymble

The proposed works will have a minimal and acceptable impact on this item for the following reasons:

- There will be no impact on the fabric of this item, which is sufficiently separated from the site.
- The proposed signage will not block significant view corridors towards this item, which are obtained from directly outside on Avon Road. The site lies to the northwest, outside these view corridors, and is otherwise minor in scale.
- The proposed signage will likely be visible from this item, except where obscured by vegetation, and will form part of its wider setting. This will have a minimal and acceptable impact as any advertising material will be displayed on a 10 second changeover and will not be readily perceptible, where viewed from the item.

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- The proposed works will, overall, have no impact on the ability of the public to understand and appreciate the historic and aesthetic significance of this item.

7 CONCLUSION

This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared in conjunction with a Development Application for the installation of new digital advertising signage at Pacific Highway, Pymble, New South Wales. The site is listed by Schedule 5 Part 1 of the *Ku-ring-gai LEP 2015* and lies within the vicinity of a heritage item listed by the *LEP 2015*.

The proposed signage will have an acceptable impact because the signage will be located away from any elements that form the focus of the item's significance. The signage will be in a busy transport corridor and will not form part of the immediate setting of the item, as it will be separated from the station building and footbridge by the Pacific Highway. The proposal requires minimal excavation and will not impact on the structural integrity of the retaining wall.

There will be no impact on the fabric of, or on significant view corridors towards, the Pymble Hotel or the former police station. The proposed signage will likely be visible; however, any advertising material will either be oriented away from the item or will not be visually intrusive due to the slow changeover of advertising material. The proposed works will, overall, have no impact on the ability of the public to understand and appreciate the historic and aesthetic significance of the item.