

HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT



Western Distributor, Pyrmont

June 2022 | J5413L

**Weir
Phillips**
Heritage
and Planning

Level 19, 100 William Street Woolloomooloo NSW 2011
Phone: (02) 8076 5317

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preamble

This Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) has been prepared in conjunction with a Development Application for a new monopole single-sided digital advertising signage at Western Distributor, Pyrmont, New South Wales. The site lies within an area managed by Sydney Trains. A previous application (DA 10665) was approved by the Department of Planning and Environment on 1 April 2022 granting consent for erection of a new monopole digital advertising sign at Lot 9, D.P. 870309. It is the applicant's intention to surrender DA 10665 on approval of the subject proposed DA as the proposed DA will result in a better environmental planning outcome for the area.

Figure 1 shows the location of the approved DA (identified in red) and the proposed DA (identified in green).



Figure 1: Aerial photograph showing location of the approved DA (red) and the proposed DA (green).

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The site is located within the City of Sydney. The principal planning control for the site is the *Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012 (LEP 2012)*. The site forms part of an item listed on the State Heritage Register ('Pyrmont and Glebe Railway Tunnels') under the *NSW Heritage Act 1977* and is also listed on the Transport Asset Holding Entity S.170 Register.

This statement has been prepared at the request of JCDecaux and accompanies plans prepared by Tzannes Associates.

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

The information provided by the listing sheets for this item was relied upon.

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. All photographs were supplied by the client.

1.6 Documentary Evidence

1.6.1 General References

- Fitzgerald, S., and Golder, H., *Pymont and Ultimo Under Siege* (Sydney: Hale and Iremonger, 1994).

1.6.2 Heritage Listing Sheets

- 'Former warehouse, "Festival Records" including interiors', Heritage NSW State Heritage Inventory ID No. 2424454.
- 'Pymont and Glebe Railway Tunnels', Heritage NSW State Heritage Register ID No. 5011985.
- 'Pymont Heritage Conservation Area', Heritage NSW State Heritage Inventory ID No. 2424801.

1.6.3 Planning Documents

- Transport Corridor Outdoor Advertising and Signage Guidelines (November 2017).
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Industry and Employment) 2021*.
- *Sydney Development Control Plan 2012*.
- *Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012*.

1.7 Site Location

The site is located adjacent to the Western Distributor corridor at the eastern end of the Anzac Bridge, within a light rail corridor in Pymont (Figure 2). The site is identified as Lot 1012, D.P. 870307.

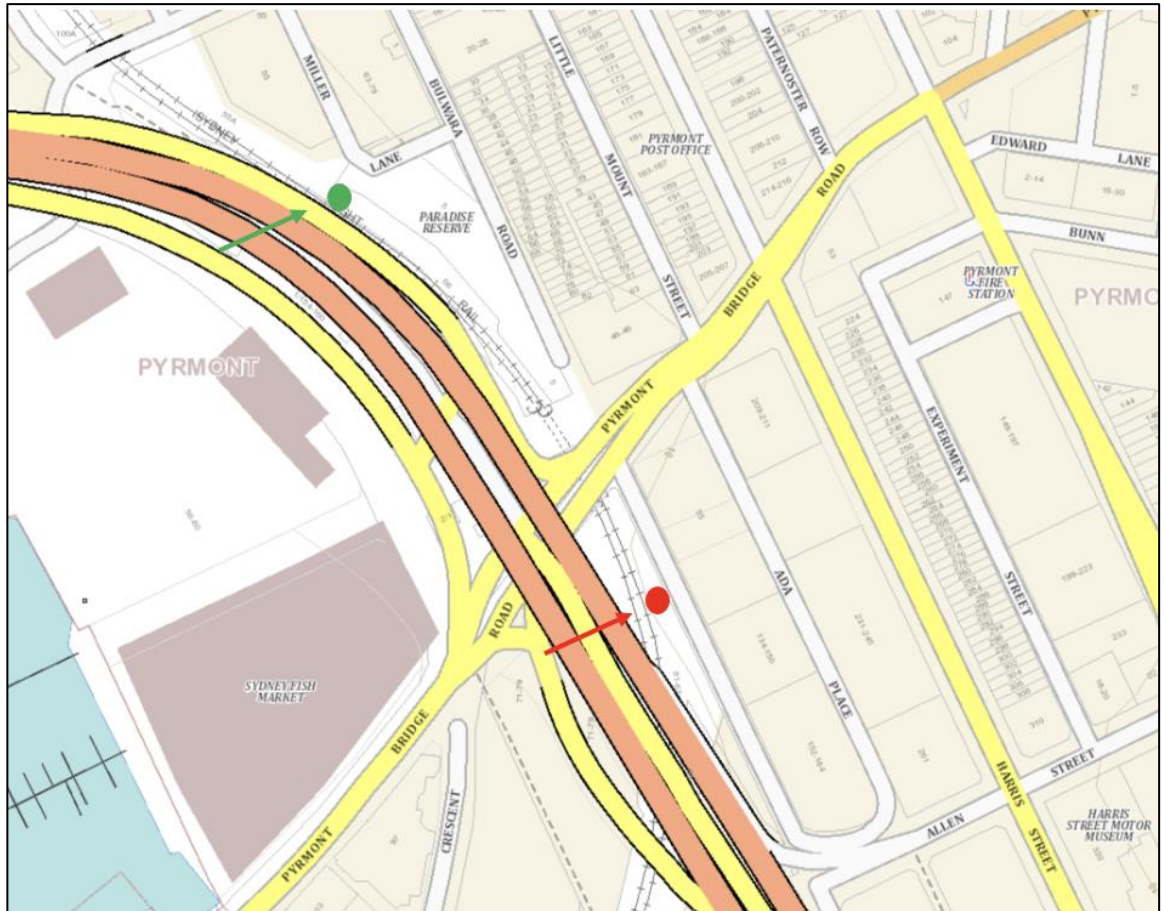


Figure 2: Site map showing location of the proposed signage (in green) in relation to the approved signage (in red).

SIX Maps, 2022

2 BRIEF HISTORICAL OUTLINE OF THE SITE

2.1 Aboriginal History

While an Aboriginal history is not provided for, it is acknowledged that the traditional custodians of the City of Sydney are the Gadigal peoples of the Eora nation.

2.2 Early European History

The Colony of New South Wales was officially established at the place the colonists called Sydney Cove on 26 January 1788. Ignoring the presence of the Aboriginal people, all land was declared to be Crown Land. From 16 January 1793, successive colonial governors granted land outside the declared boundaries of the township of Sydney to further the purposes of settlement. Present-day Pyrmont lies outside of the original township boundaries.

The northern end of the present-day Pyrmont peninsula was granted to Thomas Jones, a private in the New South Wales Corps, in 1795. It is on this grant that the subject property now stands.

Jones' grant, known as *Jones' Farm*, was described by a later surveyor as being 'rocky and unprofitable.'¹ Jones appears to have made no attempt to clear the land or occupy it during the brief period in which he owned it. In 1796, the grant was sold to Sergeant Obadiah Ikin, also of the New South Wales Corps. Three years later, Jones (and his wife) were convicted of murder in 1799 and hanged. Despite his less than honourable end, Jones' name is commemorated in present-day Jones Street and Jones Bay.

Other early land grants on the peninsula included four separate grants made between 1803 and 1818 to Surgeon John Harris, totalling 191 acres; a 24-acre land grant to John Malone (a soldier) in 1794; and an 18-acre grant to William Mitchell (a soldier) in 1794. Only John Harris made any attempt to improve his grant. In 1804, he constructed *Ultimo House* on his peninsula grant. The main entrance to *Ultimo House* stood at the head of what would become Harris Street. The line of this road was carefully marked on contemporary maps. Whilst maintaining a road across the peninsula to Pyrmont was a condition of Harris' grant, it would remain, in reality, little more than a rough track for some years to come.

2.3 Brief History of the Site

The State Heritage Inventory provides the following historical notes for the site:

During the earliest period of Sydney's growth Pyrmont was isolated from the city and early development in the area was generally related to waterfront industries, such as shipyards. The establishment of the Australian Steam Navigation Company shipyard on Darling Island, plus several other industrial enterprises such as Charles Saunders' stone quarry, brought a residential population of workers, though anyone of means tended to travel to the area from somewhere more desirable. The opening of Pyrmont Bridge across Darling Harbour in the 1850s facilitated development in both industry and population. Several large businesses established themselves in Pyrmont in the late nineteenth century, including the Colonial Sugar Refinery (CSR) and the wool industry moved here from the 1880s. A new bridge in 1901, the opening of the power stations (Ultimo in 1899 and Pyrmont in 1904) and the extension of wharfage around the waterfront from Darling Harbour cemented the industrial character of the peninsula and it remained this way until after the end of World War Two. With only a few notable exceptions residential development remained largely working class and in fact progressively reduced in size as the new industries demolished housing to accommodate larger premises.

After World War Two though, most of the characterising industries either ceased operating or moved to other locations. Since the 1970s, redevelopment of the area has moved slowly, with numerous schemes and proposals. Many of the industrial buildings have been demolished or converted to other uses. The Darling Harbour/Lilyfield Railway Goods Line (of which the Pyrmont Point cutting and tunnel are a part) has its origins in the original goods line to the head of Darling Harbour, built in 1855 as the first stage in a scheme to link the railway with wharfage at the head of this bay. This line remained little used for many years but in the 1870s began to be used more regularly with the construction of the Iron Wharf by the Railways Department.

With the advent of the Goldsbrough Mort woolstore in 1883, the railway connection assumed new importance and over the next three decades, the goods yard expanded rapidly, with loading and unloading platforms, storage sheds and numerous new sidings being constructed around the head of the bay. In 1901, the Sydney Harbour Trust was formed to take over control and management of the commercial port areas of Sydney Harbour and it immediately set about removing old, formerly private, wharfage around the waterfront and building large modern, well equipped wharf and storage structures, which were then either leased to private concerns or operated as general wharves. Work commenced at Darling Island in 1901 and

¹ Shirley Fitzgerald and Hilary Golder, *Pyrmont and Ultimo Under Siege* (Sydney: Hale and Iremonger, 1994), pp. 15.

continued north along the peninsula. A major aspect of the design and construction of the Jones Bay wharves was the provision of rail connections onto the deck of the wharves allowing direct exchange of cargoes between ship and train. Wharf 19-21 was built progressively between 1911 and 1920 and in 1916, the railway line was extended to this wharf with lines built along the aprons on either side of the wharf.

As this was underway, the Railways Department, acknowledging the congestion already prevalent at Central Station, began construction of a goods line from Enfield via a secondary yard at Lilyfield to connect with the north end of the Darling Harbour Goods Line via cuttings through Pyrmont. This was completed in 1922 and the line had sidings to both power stations, the Gillespie and Edwin Davey flour mills and to the oil depot at Blackwattle Bay (now the Fish Markets site). It remained in use until the 1980s but was never electrified. As well as being connected with major transport developments on the waterfront during the period and the continued development of Pyrmont's industrial infrastructure, the cuttings had a big impact on the local community for the peninsula was divided by them and numerous houses were demolished.²

3 SITE ASSESSMENT

3.1 The Site

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

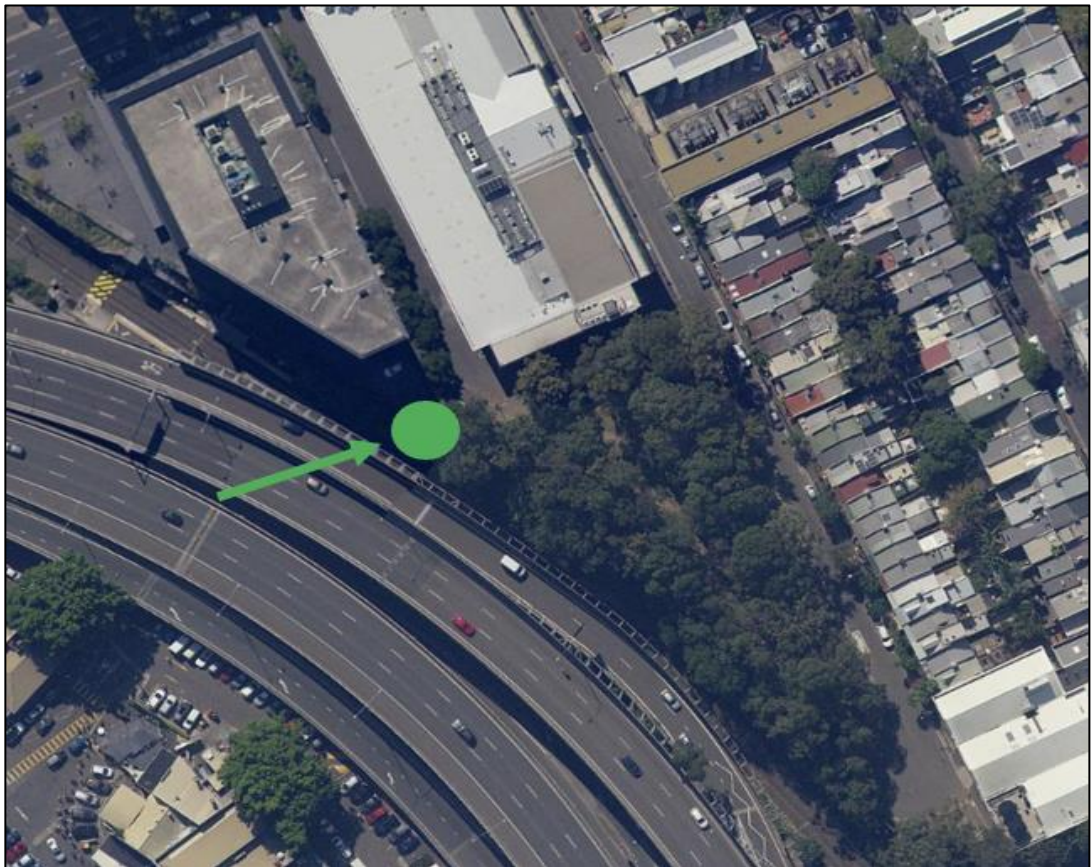


Figure 3: Aerial photograph of site. The approximate location of the proposed signage is indicated by the green circle.

SIX Maps, 2022

² 'Railway cutting', Heritage NSW State Heritage Inventory ID No. 2431129.

The site is located within the existing light rail corridor to the east of the Western Distributor and on the northern side of Pyrmont Bridge Road. The site makes up the L1 Dulwich Hill Line that provides connectivity between the Sydney CBD and the Inner West and carries two light rail tracks in each direction. The proposed signage will be located above the rail cutting on the embankment. The embankment is separated from the street by a metal palisade fence.

Refer to Figure 4 which illustrates the site of the proposed signage.

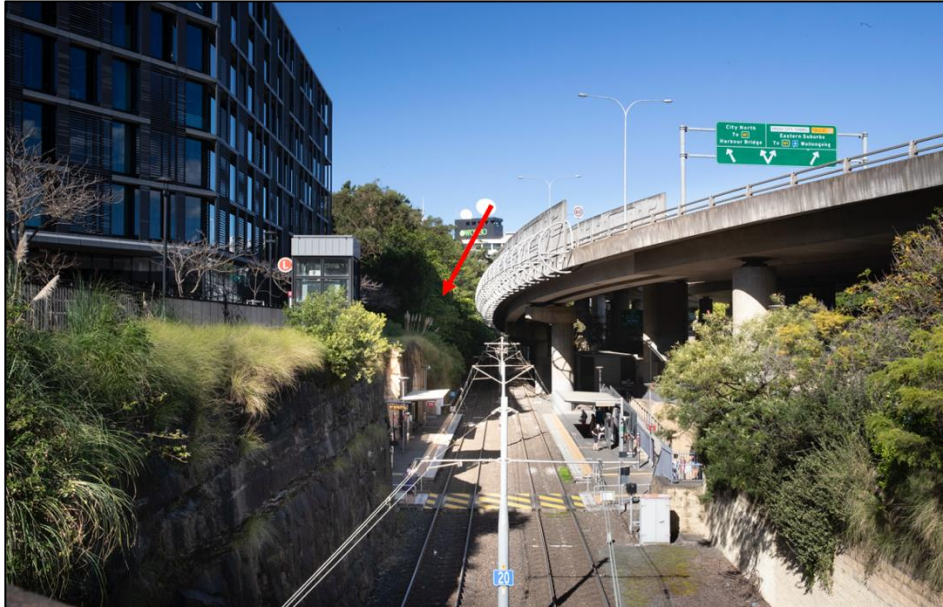


Figure 4: Looking towards the location of the proposed signage as indicated by the red arrow.

Provided by the client

3.2 The Surrounding Area

3.2.1 The General Area

For the following, refer to Figure 5, an aerial photograph of the surrounding area.

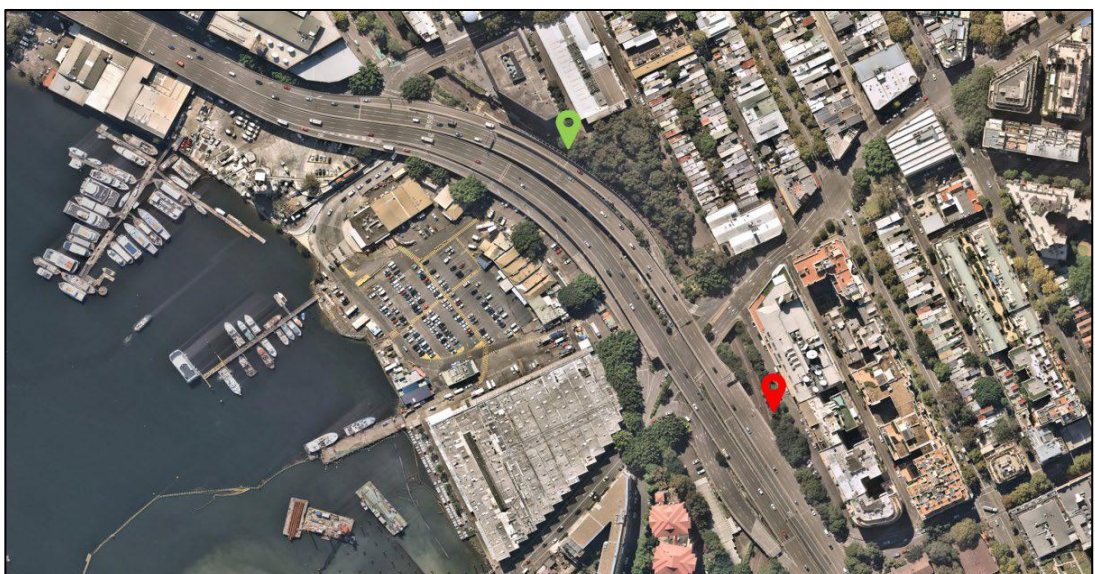


Figure 5: Aerial photograph of surrounding area showing location of approved (in red) and proposed (in green) signage.

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To the southwest of the site are the Sydney Fish Markets. To the north and east of the site are multi-storey buildings comprising residential, commercial and retail uses. A parkland reserve, characterised by established trees and lawn, also lies adjacent to the east of the site, on the other side of the light rail cutting.

The *Sydney Development Control Plan 2012* provides the following locality statement for the Pyrmont Point Locality, of which the subject site forms part:

Pyrmont's mixed use character is to be maintained. The area is to function as a combined living and working precinct while protecting historic buildings and topography. The striking cliff faces are important to remain as exposed landmarks visible from within the area and from the Harbour. Views of Central Sydney and surrounding suburbs from the public domain are to be maintained. Active ground floor uses such as shops and cafés and restaurants are encouraged.³

3.2.2 Western Distributor

The Western Distributor is a 3.8km long elevated motorway that connects the southern end of the Bradfield Highway at the Sydney Harbour Bridge to Victoria Road in Rozelle. The Western Distributor carries four lanes of traffic in each direction with a concrete median strip in between. There is no pedestrian access to the motorway. The motorway sits approximately 12m above the light rail line and is supported by reinforced concrete piers.

Refer to Figures 6 and 7 which illustrate the character of the Western Distributor in the vicinity of the site.

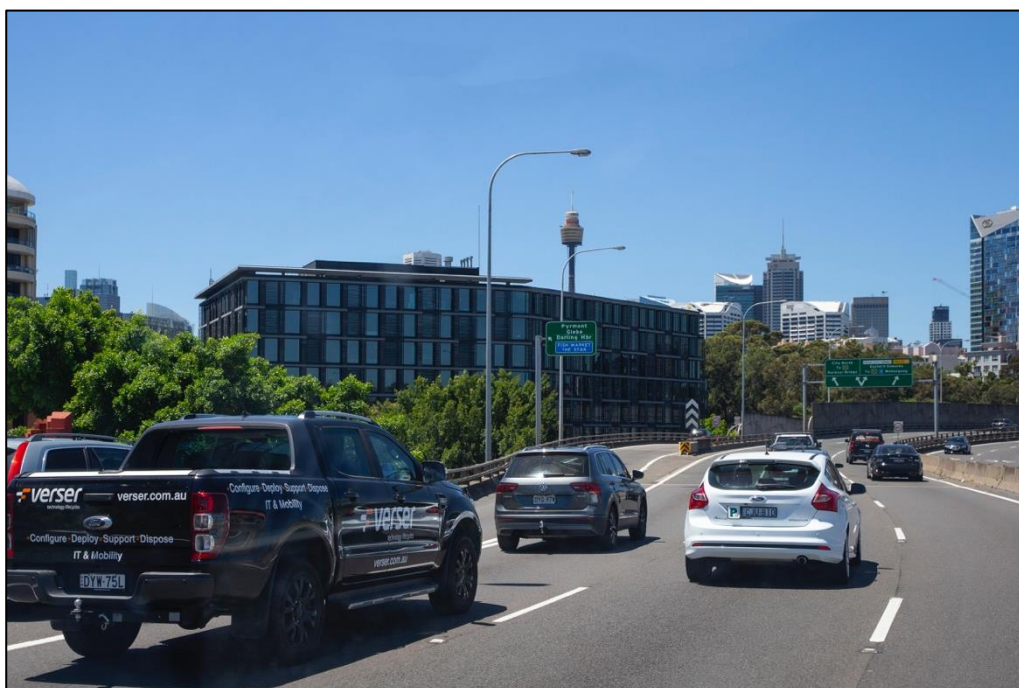


Figure 6: Looking east on the Western Distributor and showing the character of the motorway and surrounding area.

Provided by the client

³ *Sydney Development Control Plan 2012*, Section 2.12 Pyrmont Point.



Figure 7: The Western Distributor as viewed from within the light rail line.
Provided by the client

4 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

4.1 Statutory Listings

The site:

- Is listed as an item on the State Heritage Register under the *NSW Heritage Act 1977* ('Pyrmont and Glebe Railway Tunnels').
- Is listed as an item on the Transport Asset Holding Entity S.170 Register ('Pyrmont Railway Cuttings, Tunnel & Weighbridge').
- Is not listed as an item by Schedule 5 Part 1 of the *Sydney LEP 2012*.
- Is not located within a Conservation Area by Schedule 5 Part 2 of the *Sydney LEP 2012*.

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

The brick tunnel and cuttings are a major feature of the landscape and layout of the Pyrmont area and have a great impact on the visual qualities of the area. They are important relics of the inner city freight system that operated to the wharves, including Darling Harbour, and connected through to the southern suburbs. The tunnel and its portals is an important brick structure that reflects the industrial nature of the area. The tunnel is a fairly long track brick-lined structure opened in 1922. As the line has not been electrified the structure remains virtually intact.⁴

This Statement is adopted for the purposes of this assessment.

⁴ 'Pyrmont and Glebe Railway Tunnels', Heritage NSW State Heritage Register ID No. 5011985.

As established by the Statement of Significance, the rail cutting, and tunnels are the elements that define the significance of the item. The proposed works are located above the cutting on the embankment.

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 Sydney LEP 2012

Refer to Figure 8, a map showing heritage items and Conservation Areas in the *Sydney LEP 2012*. In this plan, local heritage items are coloured brown and Conservation Areas are hatched red. The site is indicated by the green circle.

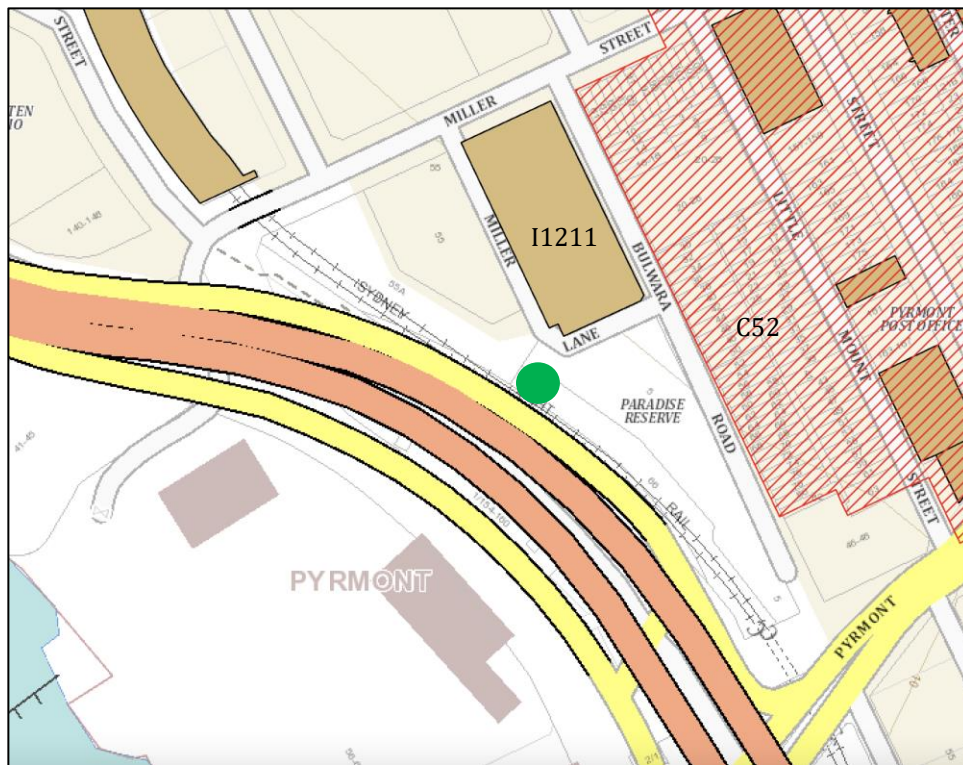


Figure 8: Detail, map showing heritage items and Conservation Areas in relation to the site.
NSW Planning Portal, 2022

There is one heritage item and one Conservation Area within the vicinity of the site as defined by Schedule 5 Parts 1 and 2 of the *Sydney LEP 2012*:

- **'Former warehouse "Festival Records" including interiors', Nos. 1-3 Bulwara Road (and Nos. 63-79 Miller Street), Pyrmont**

This item is located to the north of the site and is separated from it by the rail cutting, vegetation and Miller Lane. It is identified as 'I1211' in Figure 8 above. The item is generally visible from the site and vice versa.

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

The former Festival Records Building has aesthetic significance as a good, representative example of an Inter-War Functionalist industrial building which is rare in the locality of Pyrmont. It is

evidence of the continuing industrial development of Pyrmont during the late interwar period. The building has historical significance for its association with Festival Records, C.C. Wakefield & Co and as the former Australian headquarters of Castrol Oil company.⁵

Refer to Figure 9 which illustrates the item.



Figure 9: The item as viewed from Miller Street.
Google Maps

- **'Pyrmont Heritage Conservation Area', Pyrmont**

This Conservation Area is located to the east of the site and is separated from it by the rail cutting, vegetation and Bulwara Road. It is identified as 'C52' in Figure 8 above. The Conservation Area is generally visible from the site and vice versa.

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

The area dates from one of the key period of layers for the development of Pyrmont as a direct result of subdivision of the Harris and Macarthur Estates. It is a good example of a mid to late Victorian working class community consisting of both residential and commercial buildings which are largely intact and make a positive contribution to the streetscape.⁶

⁵ 'Former warehouse "Festival Records" including interiors', Heritage NSW State Heritage Inventory ID No. 2424454.

⁶ 'Pyrmont Heritage Conservation Area', Heritage NSW State Heritage Inventory ID No. 2424801.

4.3 View Corridors

The site of the proposed signage is within the rail cutting; the principal view corridor towards it is either from within the cutting itself (below street level) or from the Underbridge on Miller Street. As the proposed signage will be elevated, it will be visible from the Western Distributor, however, will integrate into the tree line so that it has only minimal visibility, particularly looking east on the Western Distributor. There will be secondary view corridors from Miller Lane but again, the proposed signage will blend in with the tree line.

Refer to Figures 10 to 14 which illustrate view corridors and show the proposed signage.



Figure 10: Looking west on Western Distributor towards the site of the proposed signage, as indicated by the red arrow.
Provided by the client



Figure 11: Looking east on Western Distributor. As noted, the signage will integrate into the tree line.
Provided by the client



Figure 12: Looking east above the rail cutting towards the proposed signage.
Provided by the client

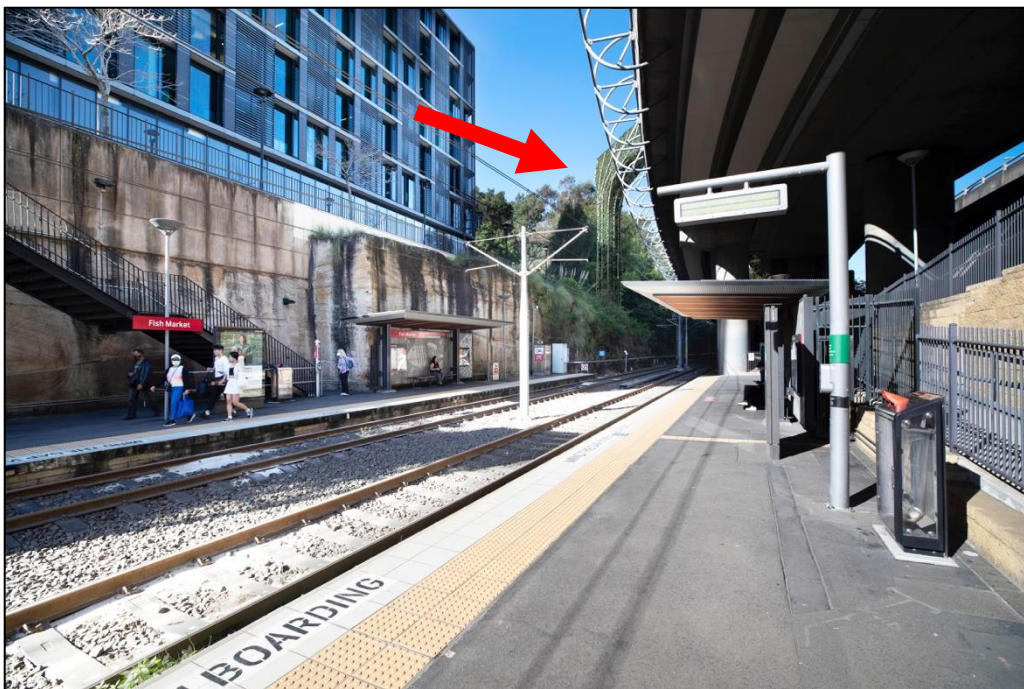


Figure 13: Looking east within the rail cutting towards the proposed signage.
Provided by the client



Figure 14: Looking southwest from Miller Lane towards the proposed signage. Again, this shows the way in which the signage will have little or no visibility against the tree line.
Provided by the client

5 THE PROPOSAL

The following should be read in conjunction with the plans prepared by Tzannes Associates:

It is proposed to install a new monopole single-sided digital advertising signage facing westbound traffic on the eastern embankment above the rail cutting. The proposed signage, measuring 12.48m x 3.2m, is to be located on a steel mesh structure with a vertical planting system. The structure will be supported at ground level on the embankment by a concrete plinth. The whole structure will measure approximately 21.76m in height.

The following materials and finishes are proposed:

- Exposed concrete plinth.
- Galvanised steel pipes.
- Satin black powder coated galvanised steel mesh panels.
- Climbing plants.

As set out above, the proposed signage is intended to replace the approved DA 10665.

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:

- NSW Government Department of Planning *Transport Corridor Outdoor Advertising and Signage Guidelines* (November 2017).
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Industry and Employment) 2021*.
- *Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012 (LEP 2012)*.

-
- *Sydney Development Control Plan 2012 (DCP 2012)*, particularly Part 3.16 Signs and Advertisements.

6.2 Effect of Work on Subject Site

The proposed signage will have a minimal and acceptable impact on the subject site for the following reasons:

- The proposed signage will facilitate high-quality advertising signage that enhances the public domain and will deliver a better environmental planning outcome than the approved DA 10665. As set out below, the signage will read as a lightweight 'green' structure that is unobtrusive in the setting of the item
- Part 3.16 of the *Sydney DCP 2012* permits illuminated signage provided it is a static image, as is proposed. The proposed signage will display static images at 10-second intervals with minimal illumination as is compliant with Part 3.16.
- The proposed signage is well-designed and uses high quality materials including a steel mesh structure with a vertical planting system. The structure will over time be immersed in climbing plants which will reduce its visual impact and enable it to blend into the background against the tree line.
- The proposed signage is to be located on the eastern crest above the rail cutting and supported by a concrete plinth measuring 3m in height which will require minimal excavation. It is sufficiently separated from the elements that primarily define the item's significance, comprising the cutting and tunnel. No significant fabric will be modified or otherwise disturbed as a result of this proposal.
- 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 advertising signage within an existing major transport corridor.
- The proposed signage will be oriented away from the item. Any advertising material will only be visible when travelling west on the Western Distributor, and not within the rail cutting.
- When viewed from within the curtilage of the item, the primary view corridor will be of the steel mesh structure. As noted above, the visual impact of the structure will be reduced in the long-term by the climbing plants which will ensure it integrates easily into the surrounding landscape.
- The signage will be digital which will enable the change-over of advertisements and any other messaging, without requiring physical intervention.
- Maintenance of the signage, when required, will be achieved from inside the structure with access via a secure ladder to the base from the side of the light rail track and a connecting landing. This will minimise the long-term impact on the item from signage within its curtilage.

6.3 Effect of Work on Heritage Items Within the Vicinity

'Former warehouse "Festival Records" including interiors', Nos. 1-3 Bulwara Road (and Nos. 63-79 Miller Street), Pyrmont

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.

- There will be no impact on significant view corridors towards this item, which are obtained from Bulwara Road or Miller Street. The site is located to the rear of the site, well outside these view corridors.
- The proposed signage will likely be visible from the item through the tree line and will form part of its wider setting. This will have a minimal and acceptable impact because any advertising material will be oriented away from the item, with only the steel mesh structure visible. Refer to Figure 13 above which illustrates the view of the proposed signage from the item.
- 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.

6.4 Effect of Work on Conservation Areas Within the Vicinity

‘Pymont Heritage Conservation Area’, Pymont

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 any of the buildings that make up this Conservation Area, which is sufficiently separated from the site.
- There will be no impact on significant view corridors towards this Conservation Area. The closest section of the Conservation Area, in relation to the site, is located on Bulwara Road. The site lies to the west, well outside these view corridors.
- The proposed signage will likely be visible from the Conservation Area through the tree line and will form part of its wider setting. This will have a minimal and acceptable impact because any advertising material will be oriented away from the item, with only the steel mesh structure visible. Refer to Figure 13 above which illustrates the view of the proposed signage from the item.
- 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.

7 CONCLUSION

This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared in conjunction with a Development Application for the installation of a new monopole single-sided digital advertising advertising signage at Western Distributor, Pymont, New South Wales. The site forms part of an item listed on the State Heritage Register under the *NSW Heritage Act 1977* and is listed on the s.170 Register managed by the Transport Asset Holding Entity. The site also lies in the vicinity of an item and Conservation Area as defined by Schedule 5 Parts 1 and 2 of the *LEP 2012*.

The proposed works will have a minimal and acceptable impact on the subject site because the signage will be located above the rail cutting and away from the tunnel, which form the focus of the item’s significance. The proposed signage is well-designed and sets a new standard for high quality advertising signage that is located within a busy road transport corridor. The proposed signage will comprise a steel mesh structure with a vertical planting structure that will over time integrate into the landscape and against the tree line. Any advertising material will be oriented away from the item and will only be visible from westbound traffic on the Western Distributor.

There will be no impact on the fabric of or view corridors towards heritage items and Conservation Areas within the vicinity of the site. The proposed signage will likely be visible from the item and Conservation Area and will form part of their wider setting. This will have a minimal and acceptable impact because any advertising material will be oriented away, with only the steel mesh structure visible. The vertical planting structure

will, over time, easily integrate into the landscape. 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 and Conservation Area.