

Appendix D

Heritage Considerations Report



Hornsby West Side Precinct

Heritage Considerations

Executive Summary

Hornsby West Side Precinct incorporates a number of heritage items and contributory items within a conservation area which contribute the architectural quality and village character of the streetscapes. The heritage values have been identified as a key public interest by the local community and a necessity for the current run-down appearance to be changed.

Hornsby West Side is historically and socially significant for its association with the opening of the railway and as an extant example of the earliest commercial precinct in Hornsby.

The Urban Design Analysis Report prepared by JBA provides a key set of principles for the proposed revitalisation and redevelopment of the area. Further planning controls should be incorporated into the relevant section of the draft *Hornsby Development Control Plan* to retain the heritage aspects of the precinct and guide future sustainable development.

History of the Peats Ferry Road and Coronation Street Hornsby area

In 1848, a road was cleared from Pearce's Corner to Peats Ferry, descending to the Hawkesbury River at Kangaroo Point. The road was called Peats Ferry Road after the George Peat who established Peat's Ferry. The Pacific Highway name was adopted in 1931.

The railway line from Strathfield to Hornsby Junction was opened in 1886 and this led to the sub-division and sale of land around the railway line. The sale of lands led to the arrival of shops on the west side of the railway station.

The group of buildings within Coronation Street/Jersey Road form the earliest shopping precinct in Hornsby, although Coronation Street was originally called Burdett St. It forms part of the historic village of Hornsby and has continued their original use for over one hundred years. The Railway Hotel and the Post Office are rebuilds

In 1889 the Railway Hotel was built and in 1894 Thomas Willington and his brother William Alfred built the first shop in Hornsby (number 5 Coronation St). The business was called Hornsby Junction Emporium and was owned by Willington & Co. In 1904 Thomas Willington transferred the title of the shop to William's wife Priscilla Jane Willington, who continued to run the store for many years.

Also in 1894, Catherine Fitzgerald wife of James, an established storekeeper purchased the block of 1 and at the corner of Coronation and Jersey Streets, opposite the railway Hotel (numbers 9 and 11).

In 1896 the Sydenham family built rental accommodation, both commercial and domestic, at numbers 1 and 3 Coronation Street. For many years number 1 was rented by Arthur Smith, a baker and confectioner, while number 3 was leased to James Miners who ran a drapers emporium until he built his own shop in 1901 on the Pacific Highway. After Miners moved out a chemist and dentist then rented the premises where he worked and also lived with his wife and family.

At the time of Federation Hornsby's only shops were six on the northern side of Coronation Street and one on the Pacific Highway. By 1912 the shops on the southern side of Coronation Street had been built.

Development along the Pacific Highway dates from c.1901 and by 1903 a number of shops had been established between High Street and Hornsby Park. This included grocers, saddlers, a butcher's shop, bootmaker, fruit shop and newsagent. Although much altered a number of these shops are still in situ.



Figure 1: c1913 view of Coronation Street (Source: Hornsby Library Local Studies Collection)



Figure 2: c1913 view of Peats Ferry Road looking south (Source: Hornsby Library Local Studies Collection)



Figure 3: c1930 view of Peats Ferry Road looking south
(Source: Hornsby Library Local Studies Collection)

Description

Hornsby West Side is characterised by the historic 19th century and early 20th century parapeted shop fronts and first floor awnings overhanging the pavement. The village atmosphere of the town centre is brought about by the 'High Street' character, forming a distinct commercial and civic town centre. Landscaped areas within streetscapes also contribute to the overall character of the precinct.

The exterior of the buildings appear to be substantially intact above the awnings. Major alterations appear to have been made to internal spaces for current and past uses; however, further investigation is required to determine what significant fabric retains.

Select buildings within the area may also retain significant internal spaces and features, including the 'Pair of Federation Period Shops', property No. 1-3 Jersey Street (heritage item I 486) and The Browsey Cottage, property No. 5 Jersey Street (heritage item I 487). Hornsby Cinema, property No. 155 Pacific Highway (heritage item I 502).

Heritage Significance

Hornsby West Side incorporates the Peats Ferry Road (Pacific Highway) Precinct within the heritage listed Hornsby West Side Heritage Conservation Area. The Peats Ferry Road Precinct is identified as the old Hornsby town centre and is strongly defined as a civic, commercial and park precinct. It retains buildings from its early development, including original 19th century and early 20th century commercial buildings and an attractive collection of civic buildings, including the Hornsby Court House and Council Chambers.

The Precinct is of local historical significance for its association with the development of Hornsby as a railway town, its role within the old town centre and being one of the few surviving streetscapes of early commercial buildings in Hornsby Shire Council.

Hornsby West Side includes 15 built heritage listed items and is located within the immediate vicinity of 10 heritage listed built and landscape items. A number of contributory items also contribute the architectural quality and village character of the streetscapes.



Figure 4: Hornsby West Side heritage listed items and heritage conservation area

Importance to the Community

During the recent community consultation survey, the local community identified the heritage characteristics of Hornsby West Side to be one of the key important aspects in their appreciation of the precinct. These included:

- The Oden Cinema building;
- The village character and atmosphere; and
- The heritage facades within the streetscape

The respondents of the survey also identified the current rundown appearance and poor physical condition of the buildings to be the key aspects of the area to be changed.

Accordingly, the heritage considerations for the conservation, protection and restoration of the historic facades and village character of the streetscape are the important values held by the local community, and should be retained.

Revitalisation and Redevelopment

It is important that the integrity of the heritage items and character of the precinct be retained while providing opportunity for revitalisation and redevelopment.

Accordingly, a heritage impact statement should be prepared and submitted with any future development application for the precinct to indicate the heritage values of the area, identify the constraints and opportunities for redevelopment and guide sympathetic future development.

The Urban Design Analysis Report prepared by JBA provides a brief summary of the heritage aspects considered for the revitalisation and redevelopment project. The report includes an outline of the heritage listed items, the extent of the heritage conservation area and 5 *Heritage and Façade Retention* principles to guide the future redevelopment:

- Ensure that development located in the vicinity of a heritage item is designed and sited to have regard to the heritage significance of the item and its setting.
- Encourage the retention of significant heritage items.
- Facilitate adaptive re-use of heritage items where appropriate.
- Retain high quality facades where possible to help maintain the traditional streetscape character and experience of the precinct.
- New development interfacing with heritage items or retained facades should emulate the scale and rhythm of the retained building to contribute the overall character of the West Side Precinct.

Council obtains only limited information prepared in 1993 as part of the initial Hornsby Shire Heritage Study on the historical background and importance of the individual buildings. The Heritage chapter of the draft *Hornsby Development Control Plan* provides planning controls for commercial heritage items, however there are no specific guidelines for sympathetic development within the heritage listed commercial precinct.

As such, further prescriptive measures/planning controls should be incorporated into the Hornsby West Side Conservation Area section (9.3.7) of the draft *Hornsby Development Control Plan* as outlined below:

1. Fabric and Setting

Development controls should retain original shop fronts, awnings and upper façade details such as parapets, original signs, veranda h's and encourage sympathetic contemporary changes. The aim is to conserve the significant and contributory items, incorporate sympathetic maintenance and repairs; and enhance the existing places through sympathetic alterations and additions through new work that contributes positively to the streetscape.

- Original parapet facades should be retained above the ground floor and any existing upper storey levels.
- The definition between individual buildings at the ground floor should be retained.
- Unsympathetic air-conditioning units should be removed.
- Reconstruction of original awnings and window openings should be encouraged.
- Colour schemes for repainting should be based on historical evidence or period colour charts.
- The painted brick side elevations of *Shop – No. 171 Pacific Highway* (heritage item I 506) and *The Junction Stores – No.173 Pacific Highway* (heritage item I 507) facing Dural Lane are contributory to the early twentieth century character of

the street scape and should be retained. Original features (such as window openings and chimneys) should be retained.

2. Uses

The continual use of the buildings as commercial premises is of high historical significance.

- Original uses for particular buildings (i.e. *Bank* – Nos. 185 Pacific Highway and 193 Pacific Highway) should be encouraged.
- Commercial use should be retained at ground floor level.
- Mixed use of residential and commercial should be encouraged for upper storey levels.

3. Future Developments

New infill development must consider the adjacent development and should not copy or mimic historic buildings, rather pick up aspects of the character of the surrounding buildings and incorporate these in a creative manner into the design.

- Additional storeys should be set back from the existing parapet facades.
- Fenestration and exterior detailing of new development should complement the early twentieth century character of the streetscape.
- Contrasting building materials should be used, such as face brick, painted brick, smooth and rough cast render and sandstone in a manner that complements the existing buildings in the streetscape.
- Demolition of the buildings behind the front facades, would not have a major impact on the heritage qualities of the streetscape. Most buildings appear to have been substantially altered to the rear and internally. Generally, the configuration of the buildings behind the front façade is of little significance.
- Architectural drawings submitted with a development application must also incorporate adjacent buildings showing the visual impact on the streetscape.

4. Building Heights

Proposed building heights must consider the likely effect on the heritage significance of heritage items within the immediate vicinity of the streetscape

- Building heights should step down to a lower height north of Coronation Lane to preserve the prominence of the historic civic buildings in the precinct.
- Any new development should not be dominant in the streetscape directly adjacent to the historic civic buildings - *Hornsby Court House* – No. 292 Pacific Highway (heritage item I 519) and *Hornsby Shire Council Chambers* – No. 296 Pacific Highway (heritage item I 520).

5. Signage

A signage strategy should be developed to minimise visual clutter of signs, develop a unified strategy suited to the sites and context, significance of the precinct and nature of the proposed uses.

- Original parapet facades should not be obstructed by obtrusive signage.

- Intrusive signage, including large brightly coloured signs, should be removed.
- Signage should be located on parts of the building that have traditionally been used for signs - the outer edge of suspended awnings or a hammer sign above the shop front window
- Above awning signs should be avoided except where sympathetically designed and is part of the original building design.

6. Further Investigation

Further investigation should be undertaken prior to the redevelopment of heritage listed sites to provide an informed understanding of the cultural significance of the heritage items and contributory items within the conservation area and a heritage impact statement prepared.

Historic photographs would also assist in restoration or sympathetic maintenance and repair of original parapet facades and colour schemes.

A detailed fabric survey should be submitted for work involving heritage items of outstanding significance to determine what original and significant fabric remains. The following buildings appear to be relatively intact externally and internally and therefore, should be conserved.

- *Pair of Federation Period Shops* - No. 3 Jersey Street, (heritage item I 486)
- *The Browcery Cottage* – No. 5 Jersey Street (heritage item I 487).
- *Hornsby Cinema* – No. 155 Pacific Highway (heritage item I 502)
- *Shop* – No. 187 Pacific Highway (heritage item I 511)

7. Interpretation

An interpretation strategy should be developed and incorporated into the revitalisation and redevelopment of the precinct.

There is an opportunity to promote the historical and social history of the Hornsby West Side Precinct. For example:

- Painted wall memorials on side elevations of buildings depicting an early images of Peats Ferry Road or Coronation Street
- Installation of plaques in the pavement with the date and original use of significant shop buildings
- Restoration of significant buildings within the precinct
- Restoration and conservation of the parapeted facades
- Encourage original uses for particular buildings (i.e bank buildings).

Conclusion

The local community identified the 'village character' and 'heritage facades' to be the key important aspects of the Hornsby West Side Precinct. It is one of the few surviving streetscapes of early commercial buildings in Hornsby Shire Council of rare local historic and social significance.

To retain the heritage aspects of the precinct, further planning controls should be incorporated into the relevant section of the draft *Hornsby Development Control Plan* as outlined in this report.

Proponents of future development of the precinct should engage suitably qualified heritage consultant to assist with the design of any proposal taking into account the cultural significance and heritage constraints and opportunities in the precinct.