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URBIS

HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT

Alfred Street Precinct | 263-
283 Alfred Street & 4 Little
Alfred Street, North Sydney

Prepared for

BENMILL PTY LTD & JB NO. 3 PTY LTD

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Urbis has been engaged by Benmill Pty Ltd & JB No. 3 Pty Ltd to prepare the following Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) to accompany a Planning Proposal regarding the Alfred Street Precinct, North Sydney (the site). The Alfred Street Precinct is located in North Sydney, on the eastern side of the Warringah Freeway, and comprises the urban block bound to the west by Alfred Street North, to the east by Little Alfred Street, to the north by Ormiston Avenue, and to the south by Whaling Road. The Precinct comprises the properties known as 263-269 Alfred Street / 4 Little Alfred Street, 271-273 Alfred Street, 275 Alfred Street, and 283 Alfred Street. The buildings are commercial & mixed-use in nature, while the immediate surrounds to the north and east are residential.

The planning proposal seeks to amend the North Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2013 (LEP) to allow for the following planning provisions for the site:

Provision	Amendment sought
Land use zoning	Rezone the Precinct from B3 Commercial Core to B4 Mixed Use
Height of buildings	<p>Increase the maximum height of buildings from 13m (Precinct-wide) to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 29m for 263-269 Alfred Street / 4 Little Alfred Street ▪ 28m for 271-273 Alfred Street ▪ 80m for 275 Alfred Street (noting that the building on the site is 52.36m) ▪ 31m for 283 Alfred Street
Floor space ratio	<p><u>275 Alfred Street</u></p> <p>Increase FSR provision for 275 Alfred Street from 3.5:1 of a base FSR of 7.3:1 (which is the current FSR of the existing Bayer building).</p> <p>Insert a design excellence clause which allows for an additional 2:1 FSR (with total maximum FSR control of 9.3:1), subject to achievement of design excellence through a design excellence competition being undertaken for the site.</p> <p><u>263-269, 271-273 & 283 Alfred Street & 4 Little Alfred Street</u></p> <p>Retain existing FSR controls of 3.5:1</p>

The Precinct currently comprises 3 commercial and 1 mixed-use building, all of which date to the late-twentieth century. The Precinct includes the well-known 'Bayer Building', which is the tallest building at the eastern side of the Warringah Freeway.

None of the buildings located within the Alfred Street Precinct are identified as heritage items under any statutory or non-statutory lists, nor would they be considered to be able to meet the threshold for listing. The Precinct is not located within the boundaries of any Heritage Conservation Area (HCA). However, the Precinct is located adjacent to the Whaling Road HCA, which is listed under Schedule 5 of the North Sydney LEP 2013, and is also located in the vicinity of a number of sites which are identified as individual heritage items under Schedule 5 of the North Sydney LEP.

The assessment carried out in this HIS has found that the changes sought by the planning proposal would respect and, in some aspects, enhance the heritage significance of the heritage items and HCA in the vicinity of the Precinct as a result of the following:

- The changes would result in significant alterations to, or removal of, existing buildings which are of no architectural merit – including the highly visible Bayer Building at 275 Alfred Street – and which currently detract from the setting and significance of the nearby heritage items and HCA

- The proposed changes would result in less overshadowing impacts on the HCA and nearby heritage items than the earlier Council scheme
- The proposed change to land use zoning within the Alfred Street Precinct, from B3 Commercial Centre to B4 Mixed Use, would result in a highly sympathetic transition between the North Sydney CBD and the residential Whaling Road HCA, between which the site acts as the interface
- The proposed pedestrian through-links would respond to the fine grain, walkable character of the Whaling Road HCA and create a positive transition between the two distinct zones
- Increased setbacks, particularly at the north, would provide a more sympathetic transition between new built forms within the Precinct and the adjoining HCA, and would allow for the introduction of enhanced landscaping
- The proposed fine-grain residential development at Little Alfred Street would provide a sympathetic interface between the existing North Sydney CBD – of which the Alfred Street Precinct constitutes the easternmost boundary – and the adjoining residential HCA

Accordingly, it is recommended that this Planning Proposal be viewed favourably on heritage grounds.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND

Urbis has been engaged by Benmill Pty Ltd & JB No. 3 Pty Ltd to prepare the following Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) to accompany a Planning Proposal regarding the Alfred Street Precinct, North Sydney (the site).

As will be detailed below, the Alfred Street Precinct is adjacent to a Heritage Conservation Area (HCA) which is listed under Schedule 5 of the North Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2013 (LEP) and is in the visual catchment of a number of individually listed heritage items which are identified under the North Sydney LEP 2013. This HIS is therefore required to assess the potential impact of the changes sought by the Planning Proposal on the heritage significance of those heritage items and HCA.

1.2. SITE LOCATION

The Alfred Street Precinct is located in North Sydney, on the eastern side of the Warringah Freeway, and comprises the urban block bound to the west by Alfred Street North, to the east by Little Alfred Street, to the north by Ormiston Avenue, and to the south by Whaling Road.

The site comprises the following individual properties:

Table 1 – Properties comprising the Alfred Street Precinct

Address	Description
263-269 Alfred Street / 4 Little Alfred Street	SP71563 & SP71454
271-273 Alfred Street	Lot 1 / DP532504 & SP6839
275 Alfred Street	Lot 1 / DP54856
283 Alfred Street	Lot 14 / DP67882; Lot 15 / DP 67882; Lot 16 / DP 67882; Lot 3 / DP554750 & Lot 1 / DP554749



Figure 1 – Site location
 Source: Urbis, 2020

1.3. HERITAGE CONTEXT

1.3.1. Heritage Listings

None of the buildings located within the Alfred Street Precinct are identified as heritage items under any statutory or non-statutory lists.

1.3.2. Heritage Conservation Area

The Alfred Street Precinct is not situated in the boundaries of any HCA.

1.3.3. Heritage Items & HCAs in the Vicinity

The site is situated in the vicinity of the following heritage items which are listed under Schedule 5 of the North Sydney LEP 2012:

Table 2 – Heritage items in the vicinity of the Alfred Street Precinct

Item name	Address	Significance	Item no.
House	2 Bray Street	Local	I0794
House	18 Neutral Street	Local	I0929

Item name	Address	Significance	Item no.
House	20 Neutral Street	Local	I0931
House	1 Whaling Road	Local	I1007
House	3 Whaling Road	Local	I1008
House	5 Whaling Road	Local	I1009
House	7 Whaling Road	Local	I1010
House	9 Whaling Road	Local	I1011
House	11 Whaling Road	Local	I1012
House	15 Whaling Road	Local	I1013
House	17 Whaling Road	Local	I1014
House	19 Whaling Road	Local	I1015
House	21 Whaling Road	Local	I1016
House	23 Whaling Road	Local	I1017
House	25 Whaling Road	Local	I1018
House	27 Whaling Road	Local	I1019
House	29 Whaling Road	Local	I1020
House	31 Whaling Road	Local	I1021
"Dorking"	12 Doris Street	Local	I0801

Additionally, the site is located to the west and south of the Whaling Road HCA, which is assessed as an HCA of local significance under Schedule 5 of the North Sydney LEP 2013 (CA21).

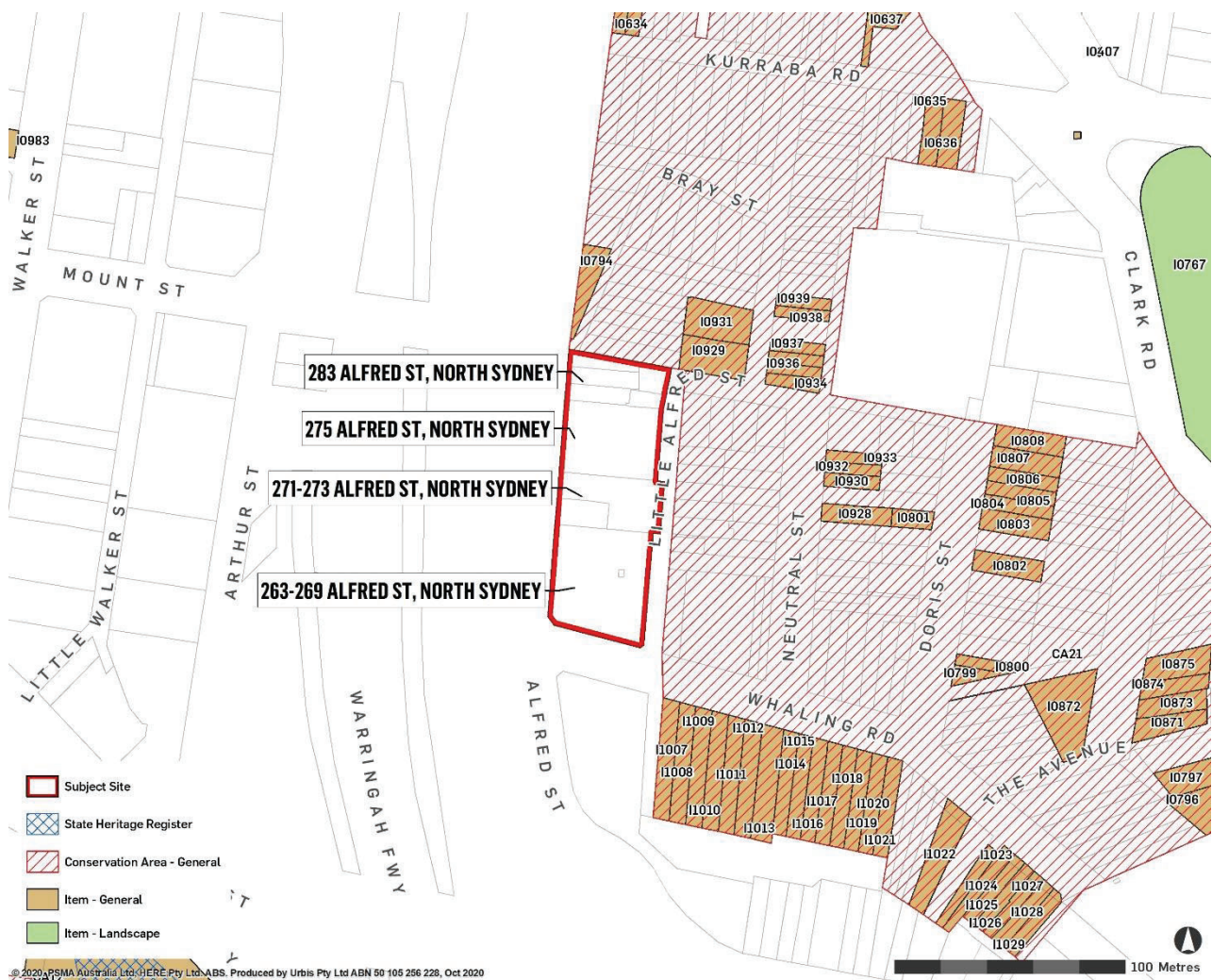


Figure 2 – Heritage context
 Source: Urbis, 2020

1.4. METHODOLOGY

This HIS has been prepared in accordance with the NSW Heritage Division guidelines ‘Assessing Heritage Significance’, and ‘Statements of Heritage Impact’. The philosophy and process adopted is that guided by the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter 1999 (revised 2013).

Site constraints and opportunities have been considered with reference to relevant controls and provisions contained within the North Sydney LEP 2013 and the North Sydney Development Control Plan 2013 (DCP).

1.5. AUTHOR IDENTIFICATION

The following report has been prepared by Anthony Kiliias (Senior Consultant) and Annabelle Cooper (Assistant). Stephen Davies (Director) has reviewed and endorsed its content.

Unless otherwise stated, all drawings, illustrations and photographs are the work of Urbis.

1.6. THE PROPOSAL

The Planning Proposal seeks to amend the current land use zoning, floor space ratio and height of building controls which currently apply to the site under the North Sydney LEP 2013. These changes are outlined in the table below:

Table 3 – Amendments to North Sydney LEP 2013 sought by Planning Proposal

Provision	Amendment sought
Land use zoning	Rezone the Precinct from B3 Commercial Core to B4 Mixed Use
Height of buildings	<p>Increase the maximum height of buildings from 13m (Precinct-wide) to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 29m for 263-269 Alfred Street / 4 Little Alfred Street ▪ 28m for 271-273 Alfred Street ▪ 80m for 275 Alfred Street (noting that the building on the site is 52.36m) ▪ 31m for 283 Alfred Street
Floor space ratio	<p><u>275 Alfred Street</u></p> <p>Increase FSR provision for 275 Alfred Street from 3.5:1 of a base FSR of 7.3:1 (which is the current FSR of the existing Bayer building).</p> <p>Insert a design excellence clause which allows for an additional 2:1 FSR (with total maximum FSR control of 9.3:1), subject to achievement of design excellence through a design excellence competition being undertaken for the site.</p> <p><u>263-269, 271-273 & 283 Alfred Street & 4 Little Alfred Street</u></p> <p>Retain existing FSR controls of 3.5:1</p>

The proposal is illustrated in architectural and urban design documents prepared by Grimshaw, which are submitted with the application.

2. PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

2.1. LOCALITY & SETTING

The site is situated at the eastern side of the Warringah Freeway and forms the interface between the North Sydney CBD and the residential area to the east, which includes the Whaling Road HCA.

The western side of the site addresses the highly trafficked Alfred Street and freeway beyond, providing a buffer for the low-scale residential dwellings within the HCA from the freeway and the high-density North Sydney CBD beyond.

At the eastern side of the site, at Little Alfred Street, the non-active rears of the subject site's commercial buildings provide an unattractive interface with the lower-scale residential development within the Whaling Road HCA.

The site is located along a ridge, which slopes significantly to the north and east.

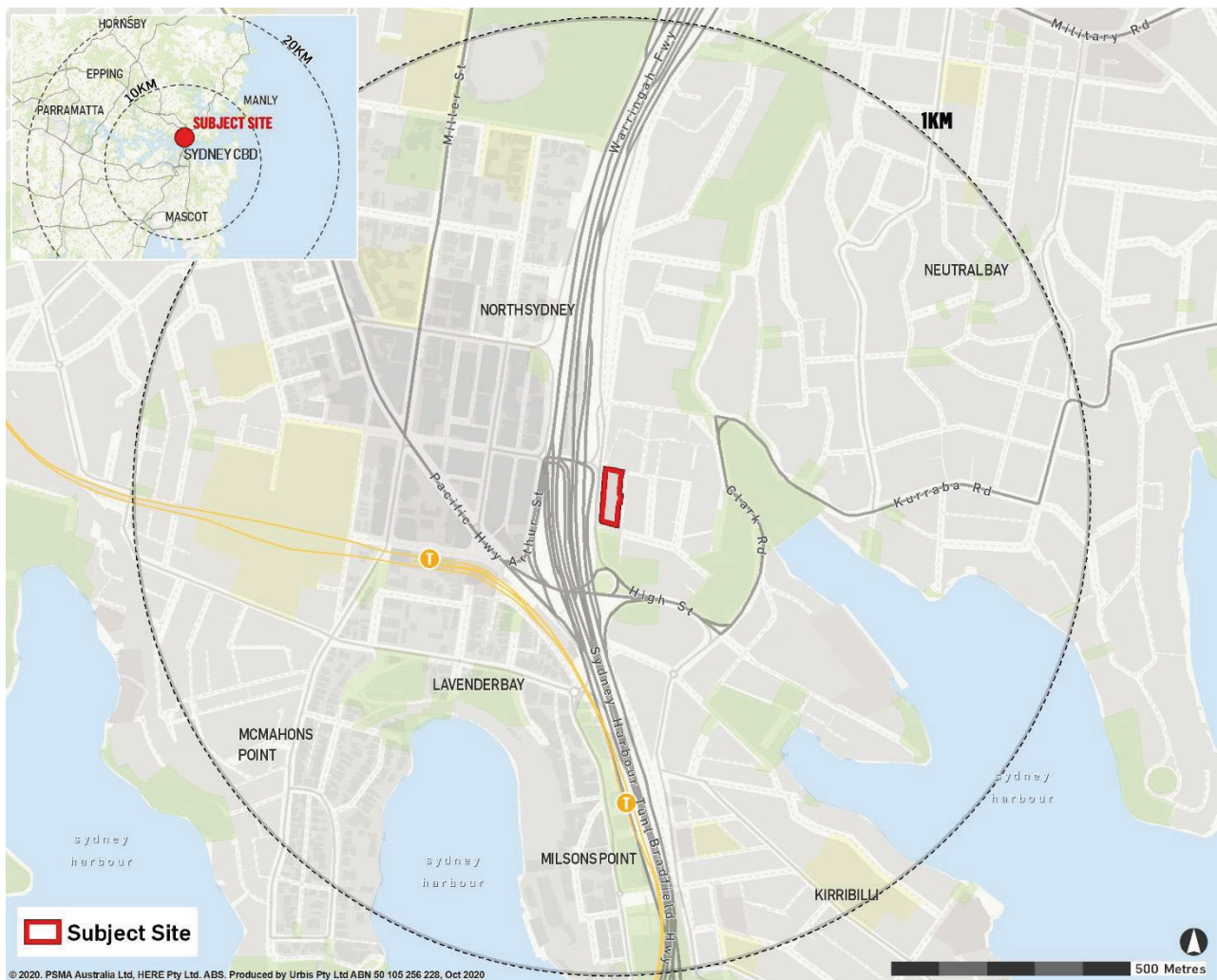


Figure 3 – Locality map
Source: Urbis, 2020



Figure 4 – View facing north along Alfred Street, with subject site at right of image.



Figure 5 – View facing north along Mount Street towards subject site.



Figure 6 – View facing north-west along Whaling Road, near intersection with Neutral Street.



Figure 7 – View facing south along Little Alfred Street. Subject site is at the right of image; low-scale residential development, within the Whaling Road HCA, is at the left.

2.2. ALFRED STREET PRECINCT

2.2.1. 263-269 Alfred Street / 4 Little Alfred Street

The site at 263-269 Alfred Street / 4 Little Alfred Street is a late-twentieth century, 3- to 5-storey strata building with a mix of residential and commercial uses. Access is made both from Alfred Street and Little Alfred Street. It is enclosed with a pitched roof and contains a series of dormer windows at both frontages. The building's exterior is finished in a combination of face brick and render.



Figure 8 – 263-269 Alfred Street, principal frontage.



Figure 9 – 4 Little Alfred Street, principal frontage.

2.2.2. 271-273 Alfred Street

271-273 Alfred Street contains a 3- to 4-storey commercial building which was constructed in the late-twentieth / early-twenty-first century. The building is of simple, rectilinear form and is enclosed with a flat roof. The building contains frontages at both Alfred and Little Alfred Street, however, the Little Alfred Street entrance is recessed within the building envelope and of poor urban quality.



Figure 10 – 271-273 Alfred Street, principal frontage.



Figure 11 – 271-273 Alfred Street, rear frontage at Little Alfred Street.

2.2.3. 275 Alfred Street

275 Alfred Street is occupied by an 18-storey commercial building which is commonly known as the 'Bayer Building', owing to the prominent company signage at its upper reaches. The building was erected in 1971 and, although a readily identifiable part of the North Sydney skyline, is of no architectural merit. The building is a simple and somewhat ungainly commercial office tower.



Figure 12 – The 'Bayer Building', principal frontage at Alfred Street.

2.2.4. 283 Alfred Street

283 Alfred Street contains a 3- to 4-storey commercial building, constructed in the late-twentieth–early-twenty-first century. The building is of simple, rectilinear form and is enclosed with a flat roof. The building provides only vehicular access at Little Alfred Street.



Figure 13 – 283 Alfred Street, principal frontage.



Figure 14 – 283 Alfred Street, rear frontage at Little Alfred Street.

2.3. WHALING ROAD HCA

The following description of the Whaling Road HCA has been reproduced from the North Sydney DCP 2013:¹

The Whaling Road Conservation Area is defined by the Warringah Expressway and the Escarpment edge to Clark Road.

The landform slopes steeply to the north east, creating dramatic views, and resulting in stepped forms and house. The urban form is strongly influenced by the topography, and by the main phases of development.

The area is a discrete residential neighbourhood that is characterised by dwelling houses on small lots. The subdivision pattern is regular and irregular reflecting the topography with has small lots. Streets follow the slope and contours of the area with short streets with a number of steep, dead-end streets. Doris Street is split level for most of its length, and Margaret Street is not accessible to vehicles.

The area is characterised by small scale housing, one to two storey Victorian Georgian, Victorian Filigree and Federation style dwellings forming a dense urban pattern. There are high quality groups of single and two storey attached dwellings.

There are small pocket of public open space, some pedestrian links. Fencing is low and characteristically of timber giving coherence throughout the area.

Doris Street has remnant cobbling showing through contemporary road surfacing.



Figure 15 – View facing west at intersection of Bray Street and Neutral Street.

¹ North Sydney Council, 'Area Character Statements - Neutral Bay Planning Area', *North Sydney DCP 2013*



Figure 16 – View facing south along Nicholas Street.



Figure 17 – Typical residential development along Doris Street, facing west with Bayer Building in centre.



Figure 18 – View facing north along Doris Street, with listed item “Dorking” (12 Doris Street) at right of image.



Figure 19 – View east from Alfred Street facing into Whaling Road. 263-269 Alfred Street, which forms part of the Precinct, is at left of image.

3. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

3.1. AREA HISTORY

The following history of North Sydney is reproduced from *The Dictionary of Sydney*:²

North Sydney

North Sydney is on the traditional land of the Cammeraygal people. It is a mostly landlocked suburb located in the North Sydney local government area, bounded to the east by the Warringah Expressway, to the south by the suburb of Lavender Bay, on the south-east by Kirribilli and Milsons Point, and the suburbs of Crows Nest, Waverton and Cammeray share boundaries to the north and west. The suburb also extends to the harbour at Neutral Bay, inclusive of the High Street promontory. The North Sydney central business district, a major feature of the suburb, is one of Australia's largest commercial centres, serving both the local population and the Sydney region. Landmark buildings in the suburb include the Independent Theatre, the Don Bank Museum, Stanton Library, and prestigious schools such as Monte Sant' Angelo Mercy College, Sydney Church of England Grammar School (Shore) and Wenona.

Early Surveys

As early as 1828, Sir Thomas Mitchell had been asked to provide a report on James Milson's claim for land on the north shore, after a fire destroyed deeds to his property. In preparing this report, Mitchell also identified an eligible site for a Township, land which to this point had not yet been disposed of in various land grants. The recommendations included in Mitchell's 1828 plan included suggestions for streets and subdivisions, a reserve and a great road towards the north of the colony and Broken Bay.

Mitchell's plan was discarded, and in 1836 the entire area was resurveyed in response to demands of several petitioners to purchase land in the area. By 1838 the basic road structure of the town centre was established on a traditional 10-chain grid, with Berry, Mount, Blue and Lavender streets running east-west and Miller and Walker streets running north-south. This initial site for the Township (nowadays the commercial centre of North Sydney) was a small rectangle of Crown land north of Hulk Bay (later named Lavender Bay). It was the southern tip of a reserve for the extension of Sydney. Initially, in 1838 48 half-acre building allotments in three sections were offered for purchase by application.

Naming the Town

The Township of St Leonards was formally gazetted in 1838. It is thought to have been named after St Leonards (near Hastings in Britain) by Major Mitchell when he surveyed the district in 1828. An alternative, though less probable explanation, is that the district was named for the British statesman, Thomas Townshend, Baron Sydney of Chislehurst, whose name was given to Sydney Cove by Governor Phillip in 1788, and who was created Viscount Sydney of St Leonards on his retirement from politics in 1789.

However the name St Leonards was arrived at, the present name of North Sydney was adopted by the alderman of the newly consolidated borough in 1890. Although there was a strong sentiment attached to the name St Leonards, Alderman Clark proposed the name North Sydney, arguing that it would give the new borough more prestige if they wanted to borrow more money. At this vote, North Sydney won the day.

Subdivision and Development

After 1843 there were occasional sales of Crown lots, with substantial sales, especially to the north and north-east of the St Leonards Reserve: in total 35 sections were sold during the 1850s, enlarging the developing St Leonards township. Subdivisions in the late 1850s and

² Masson, L., 2010, 'North Sydney', *The Dictionary of Sydney*, http://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/north_sydney

1860s anticipated a boom period and provided allotments of various sizes, encouraging the building of cottages and terraces as well as villas and mansions.

St Leonards Park was envisioned by Mitchell in his original 1828 township plan, but it was Alderman William Tunks who planned and designed the gardens and layout. He fought the Carlow Street Enclosure Bill which would have allowed Carlow Street to cut the park in half in the 1880s. The area bordering the park, south from Ridge Street to Berry Street between Miller and Alfred streets, developed as an upper-middle-class neighbourhood. Here prominent businessmen, parliamentarians and doctors built grand Victorian and Federation houses on large blocks. Sadly, many of these homes were demolished for high-rise residential or commercial buildings from the 1960s onwards. There are however a few outstanding surviving examples at the northern end of Walker Street and in Ridge Street overlooking St Leonards Park, whilst others are located in the grounds of schools including Monte Sant' Angelo Mercy College and Wenona.

Local government began in the area with the formation of the Borough of St Leonards (1869) to administer the township, beginning the provision of utilities such as gas, water, roads, garbage collection, sewerage and sanitation. The three local boroughs (East St Leonards, St Leonards and Victoria) amalgamated to form the present council in 1890.

In the mid-1880s, the intersection of Miller and Mount streets and Lane Cove Road (present day Victoria Cross) was the commercial and civic centre of the township. The development of a town centre was boosted by the construction of the cable tramway from Ridge Street to the ferry wharf at Milsons Point, via Miller and Alfred Streets. The foundation stones of the Post Office/Court House/Police Station complex, designed by government architect James Barnet, were laid in 1885 and the buildings opened in 1886. Opposite this complex was the former School of Arts, and nearby the Masonic (now Central) Hall, owned by the Wesleyan church. The former water hole and quarry at the corner of Blue and Miller streets, and practically the whole of Walker Street, were being developed. Business flourished in this area and banks, public buildings and shops were built in Miller, Mount and Walker streets.

Over the next 30 years, the population that settled in the township was a conglomerate of professional and commercial people, skilled tradesmen and labourers. The middle class built grand homes on the heights of North Sydney in the vicinity of the St Leonards Reserve. The medical fraternity established itself in and around Miller Street between Berry and Ridge streets, and this area became known as the 'Macquarie Street of the North Shore'.

The families of the township were also well served by educational establishments. The North Sydney Superior Public School (later the Greenwood Hotel) was erected in Miller and Blue streets in 1878, and expanded over time to serve a rapidly growing local population, eventually spawning North Sydney Girls' and North Sydney Boys' High Schools (1914 and 1912 respectively) and the North Sydney Demonstration School (1932). Religious schools for girls and boys were also established in the area before the end of the nineteenth century, and included Monte Sant' Angelo Convent (Miller Street), SCEGS Shore (Blue Street) and Wenona School (Walker Street).

Churches came to the township in the 1840s and 1850s. The Anglicans built the first St Thomas's in 1843 (the present grand Gothic church was erected in 1884), and the Jesuits established St Mary's in 1856. A church was built by the Methodists in 1863, and Presbyterians erected St Peter's in 1844 (rebuilt 1866). Entertainment venues included the Coliseum Theatre, built on the site of the cable tram winding sheds in Miller and Ridge streets in about 1912. It was later subdivided to become the Hoyts Union De Luxe Cinema and Independent Theatre in the 1930s.

Early Twentieth Century Changes

In the wake of the Depression and the building of the Sydney Harbour Bridge in 1932, building activity stalled, especially in the shopping centre in the heart of North Sydney. Land values dropped and population levels remained static. In 1926 the town hall was relocated to the heart of middle-class suburban North Sydney, taking over Dr Capper's Federation house at the corner of Miller and McLaren streets. The Lane Cove Road was extended to the Bradfield

Highway and the newly constructed Sydney Harbour Bridge, resulting in the resumption and demolition of an entire street (Junction Street) and the North Sydney Methodist church on the Blue Street intersection. The road was also widened and renamed the Pacific Highway in 1932, at which time the present Victoria Cross intersection was formed. Council chose this name from a public competition held in 1939.

Development after the Depression mainly consisted of rebuilding. New Art Deco style hotels (Albert, Federal and Union Hotels rebuilt in the late 1930s), garages and public buildings replaced earlier buildings. Large Federation and Victorian houses were converted into boarding houses, with verandahs and balconies enclosed to provide additional bed-sitting accommodation and servants' quarters turned into flats. Despite this, the population declined across the suburb and municipality after World War II.

Post-war Development

Low land prices (by comparison with the Sydney central business district) led several companies to build large headquarters in North Sydney. The headquarters of the Mutual Life and Citizens Assurance Company (MLC Limited) was built in Miller Street, opening in 1957, and the AMP built a substantial office block in Miller Street at the Blue Street corner. The MLC building was the first high-rise office block in North Sydney and the largest for a number of years after its construction: it was a pioneer building which influenced subsequent high-rise design in Sydney.

During the building boom of the 1960s, North Sydney was aggressively promoted as the 'Twin City' to Sydney. Cheap rents encouraged smaller firms to lease office space in the commercial centre. Between 1968 and 1973, 138 million dollars worth of office and bank building was commenced in North Sydney, causing the State Planning Commission to move to limit further growth in 1973. These developments had attracted insurance, advertising, computing and banking businesses to North Sydney.

Progress boomed again in the early 1980s. Companies were encouraged to build office towers in the formerly low-rise Victorian and Federation shopping centre, extending as far north as McLaren Street, and companies such as Philips, Sabemo, NRMA, Transfield and Ampol were attracted.

Directly to the east of this burgeoning commercial district, the Warringah Expressway was built. Opening in 1968, construction involved the demolition of nearly 500 houses and shops. North Sydney was split in half and many long-time residents forced out of the area. The completion of the expressway coincided with intense development in the central business district. With this, North Sydney came to resemble a 'Twin-City' rather than a suburban locality with a local shopping centre.

The building boom resulted in the wholesale demolition of the nineteenth-century township – Victorian and Federation shops, terraces, houses and public buildings disappeared from the streetscape. The residents of North Sydney began to object to the extent of development and the destruction of amenity and heritage, and a number of resident action groups were formed, including the North Sydney Civic Group. Dissatisfaction with the council in the late 1970s, particularly over plans for a new civic centre development to replace the existing council chambers, led to a rout of the existing council in the 1980 elections, with two-thirds of councillors replaced and Ted Mack elected Mayor.

There followed a period of reassessment of planning controls in North Sydney, to take into account the needs of residents living in adjoining streets and within the central business district and the large labour force working in the suburb. North Sydney Council, led by Mayor Mack, focused on reviving a sense of community, humanising and bringing a civic heart back to the suburb. A community identity that was to be distinctly North Sydney was fostered, via new street signs, bus shelters, colour schemes of public buildings, paving and street furniture, and rebuilding public facilities such as North Sydney Oval and Stanton Library. The pioneering North Sydney Heritage Study was released in 1982, a Precinct Committee system for citizen participation was implemented, and in 1989 the new Local Environmental Plan was gazetted.

The development pressure continues. However, in more recent times there has been a push to balance commercial development with conserving the environmental quality of the central business district and surrounding residential areas. In 2009 there are about 690 dwellings in the business district accommodating about 1,300 people. Future residential development will be in mixed-use buildings outside the commercial core, encroaching into the residential neighbourhoods. North Sydney had, in 2009, about 700,000 square metres of commercial floor space in the CBD, accommodating an estimated 35,000 workers (at a rate of 20 square metres per worker). It is expected that commercial space will grow by 250,000 square metres in the next 10 to 15 years, accommodating an additional 12,500 workers.

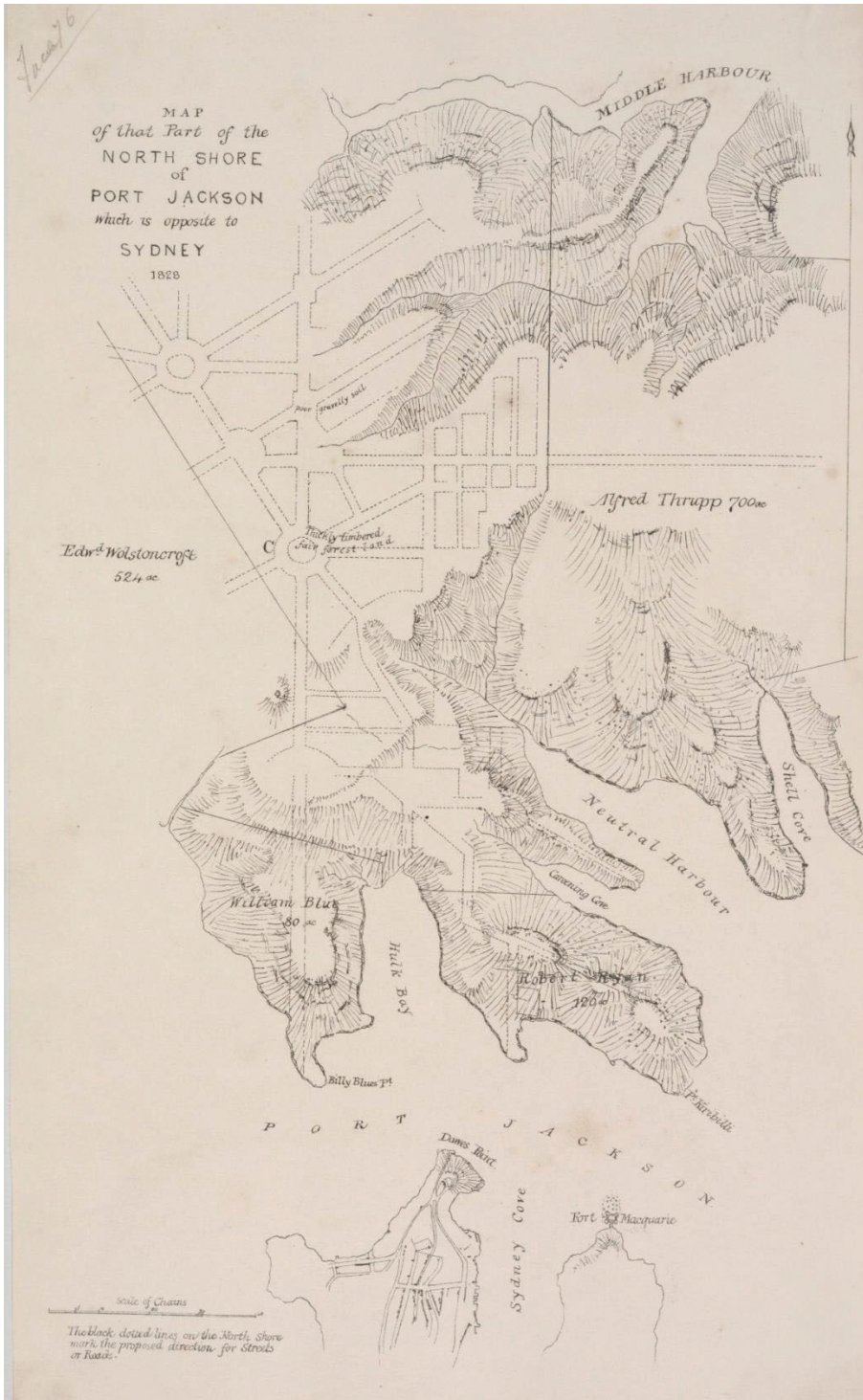


Figure 20 – 'Map of that part of the North Shore of Port Jackson which is opposite to Sydney 1828'.
 Source: By John Thompson, Thomas Livingstone Mitchell from the collections of the State Library of New South Wales [A 331B. opp p228].

3.2. SITE HISTORY

During the early development of the colony, Millers Point was recognised for several profitable industries, many of which were oriented around maritime enterprises. The location of Millers Point, with its relationship to the waterfront, was ideally suited for shipping purposes, and merchants tapped into its potential by erecting private jetties, wharves and storage for goods. The village of Millers Point became a definitive one in the early 1830s, as maritime and other related enterprises began to radiate outwards from Sydney Cove, bringing with it residential and commercial facilities. Access to Millers Point was gained through a set of rough-cut steps leading through from the Rocks. Those who chose to live in the area comprised both the successful wharf-owners and employees, labourers and artisans. Ownership of Millers Point land was by haphazard means; while some was documented as granted land, other parcels appeared to have been simply 'occupied' and by the mid-1830s administration, ownership and transfer of land was problematic and from the late 1830s a Commissioner of Claims was responsible for issuing land grants for most of Millers Point.³

The village quickly became an integral part in coastal and international trade and shipping, shipbuilding and similar related activities. The incorporation of such commercial and mercantilist elements was both indicative of, and contributory to the public perception and nature of Millers Point, with a roll-on effect throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Growing colonial interest in whaling and maritime enterprises fostered local prosperity during the 1830s and 1840s. From this period Millers Point became irrevocably associated with maritime industries and activities, with merchants, sailors and craftsmen putting a distinctive stamp on the area.⁴

Whaling Road was created in 1832 when the Governor, acting on the advice of the Surveyor General's Department, created a number of allotments along the peninsula between Careening Cove and Neutral Bay to be granted for the purposes of whaling activities. The grants were taken up, but no record exists of any whaling activities occurring here. The road was itself impractical as it ran over the edge of an escarpment and was not formed except on its uppermost section and a number of mansions were built around the escarpment by the 1850s. ('Deancliff', 'Claraville') Subdivision of the surrounding areas caused confusion as to the location of the road and it was resurveyed in the mid-1880's. Subsequent development was as an extension of the North Sydney township and by the turn of the century, the larger properties were also being subdivided.⁵

The proposed development envelope originally formed part of the grant awarded to James Milson in 1839. By the 1890s the land at Whaling Street and Alfred Street had been subdivided for the construction of dwellings.

The northern portion of the block was subdivided into individual allotments, each containing low density residential housing by the late 1890s. The allotments remained unchanged until the 1970s when the lots were amalgamated, and the buildings demolished in preparation for the construction of the mixed residential and commercial buildings which currently occupy the block. This includes the high-rise building at 275 Alfred Street (commonly known as the 'Bayer Building', due to the prominent business signage which surmounts it). The building, which is a prominent built form in the North Sydney skyline, was designed by Ezzy & Bird Architects, a small local practice formerly based in Thornleigh. Ian Ezzy, architect, is now based in Hornsby.⁶ The consulting structural engineer was V A Lamaro Consulting Engineers, who is no longer in practice.⁷

In the late 1890s a structure occupied the corner of Alfred Street and Whaling Road, known as the Old Queens Hotel. In 1940, owner of the site, Humphrey F.W undertook alterations and additions to convert the building into a guest house. The site remained largely unchanged until the 1970s when it was demolished in preparation for the construction of medium density residential apartment complex which currently occupies the site, known as 'Portman Place'. Portman Place was originally constructed as a L-shaped development along the eastern and northern alignments of the end of the block. A secondary apartment complex began construction in the centre of the lot in the 1990s and was complete by the 2000s.

³ Millers Point HCA SHR inventory sheet, via NSW Heritage.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Whaling Road Group SHR inventory sheet, via NSW Heritage.

⁶ Adoranti, Kylie, "Ezzy Architects design buildings across Australia but still call Hornsby home", *Hornsby Advocate*, accessed from <http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/>.

⁷ Correspondence with client, October 2020.

North of the Old Queens Hotel located at 258 Alfred Street, North Sydney, which has since been absorbed into the 263-269 Alfred Street address, was the former home of North Sydney Mayor James Street Stanton built by J.T Hurlstone. The dwelling was demolished in the 1970s in preparation for the construction of Portman Place.

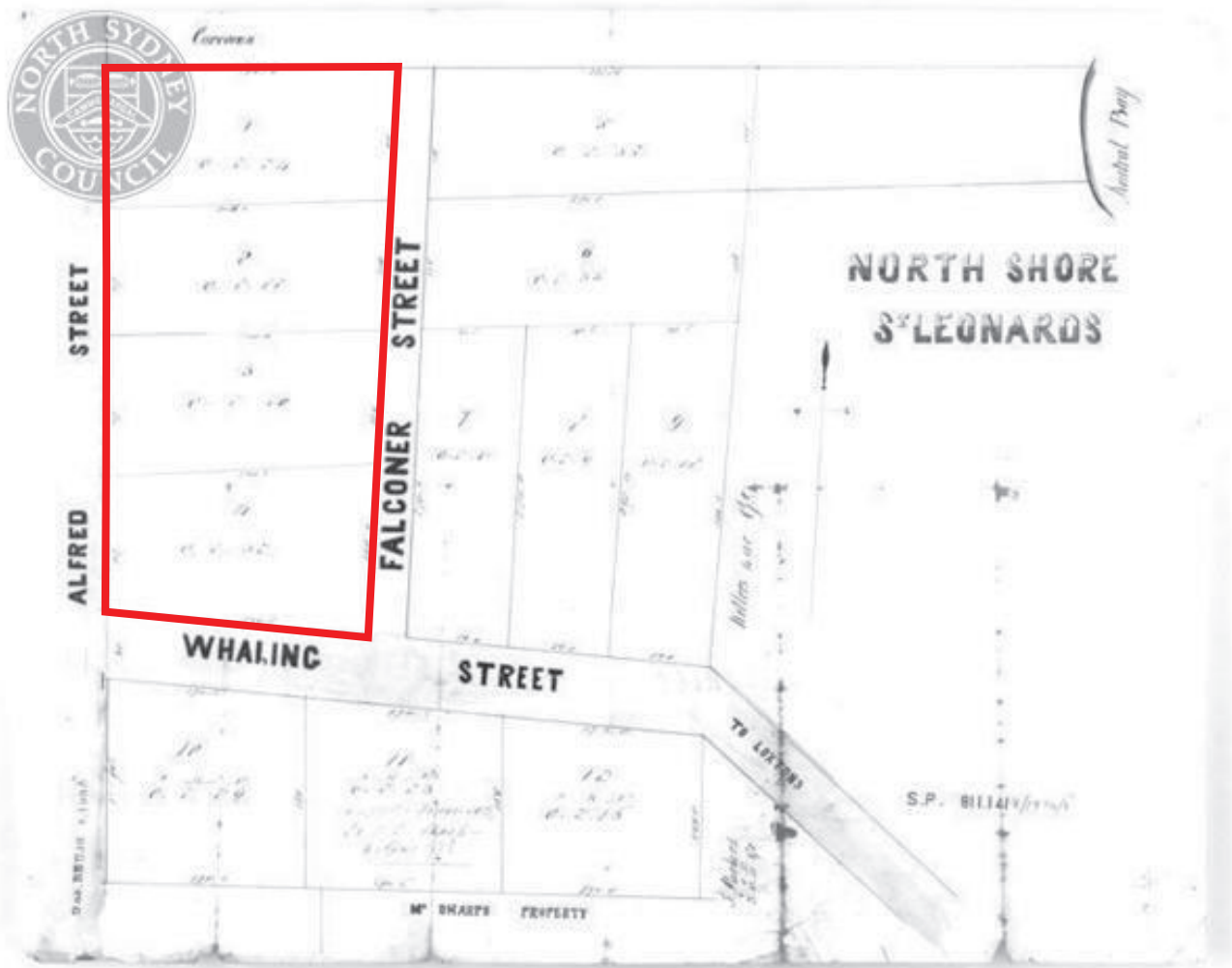


Figure 21 – ‘North Shore, St Leonards’, 1874. Subject site is indicated.
Source: North Sydney Council, with Urbis overlay



Figure 22 – North Sydney Sheet No.14, c1890-1896. Subject site is indicated.
Source: Sydney Water Board Maps via North Sydney Council



Figure 23 – Extract from 1943 aerial imagery of Sydney, with subject site indicated.
 Source: SIX Maps, 2020 with Urbis overlay



Figure 24 – Extract from 1950s aerial imagery of Sydney, with subject site indicated.
 Source: Historical Imagery Search and Discovery, via Heritage NSW, with Urbis overlay



Figure 25 - Extract from 1960s aerial imagery of Sydney, with subject site indicated.
Source: *Historical Imagery Search and Discovery*, via *Heritage NSW*, with *Urbis* overlay



Figure 26 - Extract from 1970s aerial imagery of Sydney, with subject site indicated.
Source: *Historical Imagery Search and Discovery*, via *Heritage NSW*, with *Urbis* overlay



Figure 27 - Extract of 1980s aerial imagery of Sydney, with subject site indicated.
Source: *Historical Imagery Search and Discovery, via Heritage NSW, with Urbis overlay*



Figure 28 - Extract of 1990s aerial imagery of Sydney, with subject site indicated.
Source: *Historical Imagery Search and Discovery, via Heritage NSW, with Urbis overlay*



Figure 29 - Extract of 2000s aerial imagery of Sydney, with subject site indicated.
Source: *Historical Imagery Search and Discovery*, via *Heritage NSW*, with *Urbis* overlay



Figure 30 – 1904 image of Warrington, 515 Alfred Street, since absorbed into 283 Alfred Street address (now demolished).
Source: *Stanton Library*



Figure 31 – Principal frontage of 258 Alfred Street, c1930.
Source: Stanton Library

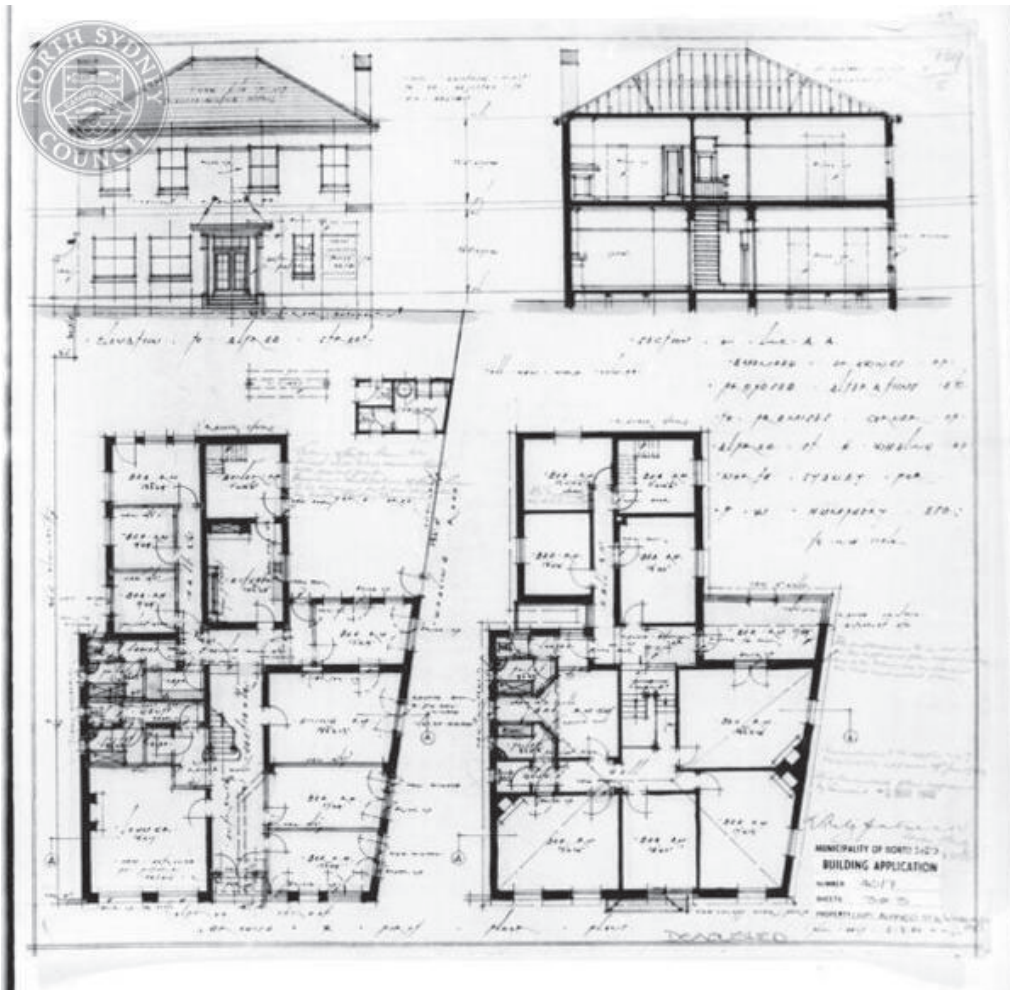


Figure 32 – Building Plan for proposed works to Old Queens Hotel, 1940. Since demolished, with property now part of present-day 263-269 Alfred Street.
Source: Stanton Library



Figure 33 – View of Warringah Expressway, c1960s.
Source: Stanton Library



Figure 34 – Warringah Expressway viewed from Greenway Flats, 1975. 'Bayer Building' is indicated.
Source: North Sydney File 7619.8.75;68 via Stanton Library, with Urbis overlay



Figure 35 – Primary frontage Portman Place, 263-269 Alfred Street, North Sydney, c1982. Image by Max Dupain.
Source: Stanton Library

4. HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

4.1. WHAT IS HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE?

Before making decisions to change a heritage item, an item within a heritage conservation area, or an item located in proximity to a heritage listed item, it is important to understand its values and the values of its context. This leads to decisions that will retain these values in the future. Statements of heritage significance summarise the heritage values of a place – why it is important and why a statutory listing was made to protect these values.

In the case of the current Planning Proposal, it is necessary to ascertain the heritage significance of the Whaling Road HCA and the heritage items located in the visual catchment of the Alfred Street Precinct.

4.2. SUBJECT SITE

The buildings located on the subject site are of no known historical, architectural or social importance, and therefore they would not fulfil the criteria for heritage listing.

4.3. WHALING ROAD HCA

The following statement of significance for the Whaling Road HCA is reproduced from the North Sydney DCP 2013:⁸

The Whaling Road Conservation Area is significant:

- (a) *For its unity that relates to its subdivision history and which is evident in the development and streetscape of the area.*
- (b) *As a consistent and intact Victorian and Federation residential area that consists of modest housing on small lots.*
- (c) *As a largely intact late 19th and early 20th century subdivision that retains much of the urban fabric and detail associated with its development over time such the street formations, sandstone kerbing, fencing, gardens and a strong relationship to topography.*
- (d) *For the quality and collective significance of the buildings within the area.*

4.4. HERITAGE ITEMS IN THE VICINITY

The following statements of significance for the heritage items in the vicinity have been reproduced from the NSW State Heritage Inventory:⁹

4.4.1. 'House', 2 Bray Street

Important remnant area from North Sydney Township, now isolated by Warringah Expressway. Varied collection of late nineteenth and early twentieth century domestic houses, mostly of small scale and modest finish, which, in a limited area, provides a representative sample of this building type. Evidence of the early twentieth century working class residential nature of North Sydney, contrasting with more expensive development in adjacent areas. Almost intact example of late nineteenth century North Sydney subdivision for high-density housing.

The interior is also of significance.

⁸ North Sydney Council, *North Sydney DCP 2013*

⁹ Heritage NSW, 2020, *Search for NSW Heritage*, <https://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/search-for-heritage/search-for-nsw-heritage/>

4.4.2. 'House', 18 Neutral Street

An interesting example of an early stone cottage, one of a pair of attached cottages constructed in circa 1882-1883 by local builder John Sheriff, that is representative of late nineteenth century residential development in North Sydney. Together with 20 Neutral Street, they present as an asymmetrical stone building with a hipped and gables roof clad in corrugated metal roofing. 1960s modifications designed by Ted Mack, architect, include a one-and-two-storey addition to the south of the original house, designed in a sympathetic style with sandstone walls. It is a modest semi-detached Victorian residence that demonstrates the aesthetic characteristic of the area, which have been continued by the 1960s modifications. Although some interior integrity has been lost through the removal and insertion of walls and joinery, it retains its external form to the street. No 18 Neutral Street has an association with the early phase of suburban development in North Sydney in the nineteenth century and has major local historical significance as the long term residence of architect, Mayor of North Sydney and NSW and Commonwealth Member of Parliament, Edward (Ted) Carrington Mack, from 1966 to 2008, who designed the 1960s modifications.

4.4.3. 'House', 20 Neutral Street

An interesting example of an early stone cottage, one of a pair of attached cottages constructed in circa 1882-1883 by local builder John Sheriff, that is representative of late nineteenth century residential development in North Sydney. Together with 18 Neutral Street, they present as an asymmetrical stone building with a hipped and gabled roof clad in corrugated metal roofing. It is a modest semi-detached Victorian residence that demonstrates the aesthetic characteristic of the area and it retains its external form to the street. No 20 Neutral Street has an association with the early phase of suburban development in North Sydney in the nineteenth century. Despite some previous alterations internally and to the rear the building retains its fundamental external form and presentation to Neutral Street and contributes to the diverse streetscape. The property has some historical significance associated with the former tenancy of Percy Lindsay (1870-1952), the prominent landscape painter, illustrator, cartoonist and member of the artistic Lindsay family, which is recognised by a historical marker from the North Shore Historical Society.

4.4.4. Whaling Road & Doris Street Items

All items at Whaling Road and Doris Street, as listed in Table 1 above, have the same statement of significance, which is reproduced below:

Important remnant area from North Sydney Township, now isolated by Warringah Expressway. Varied collection of late nineteenth and early twentieth century domestic houses, mostly of small scale and modest finish, which, in a limited area, provides a representative sample of this building type. Evidence of the early twentieth century working class residential nature of North Sydney, contrasting with more expensive development in adjacent areas. Almost intact example of late nineteenth century North Sydney subdivision for high-density housing.

5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The following section provides an assessment of the proposal against the relevant statutory and non-statutory heritage planning controls which apply to the site and the proposal.

5.1. NORTH SYDNEY LEP 2013

Below, the planning proposal is assessed against the relevant heritage conservation provisions found in part 5.10 of the North Sydney LEP 2013.

Table 4 – Assessment against North Sydney LEP 2013

Clause	Discussion
<i>(1) Objectives</i>	<p>The planning proposal would entail modifying the existing planning provisions on properties which are not identified as heritage items or located within any HCAs. There would therefore be no material impact on the significance of the Whaling Road HCA which adjoins the site, nor on the heritage items which are found within the HCA.</p> <p>The intended removal of the existing, intrusive buildings would engender positive outcomes with regard to the interface of the site with the adjoining Whaling Road HCA. Similarly, the proposed alterations and additions to the prominent Bayer Building at 275 Alfred Street – which would be subject to a rigorous design process – would improve the presentation of the currently intrusive building to the public domain and the Whaling Road HCA.</p> <p>The proposed change of land zoning of the Alfred Street Precinct, from B3 Commercial Core to B4 Mixed Use, would provide for a highly sympathetic transition between the North Sydney CBD and the adjoining residential HCA and would respect and appropriately respond to the established significance and character of the HCA.</p> <p>The changes sought by the planning proposal would not unreasonably alter or impact the established setting and low-scale residential character of the Whaling Road HCA and the heritage items found within it. The high-rise commercial buildings of the North Sydney CBD are visible from many points within the HCA, however there remains a clear distinction between the residential and low-scale character of the HCA and the dense, commercial character of the North Sydney CBD. In a similar way, the changes sought by the planning proposal would not unreasonably impact the dialogue between these contradistinctive urban typologies.</p>
<i>(2) Requirement for consent</i>	<p>The planning proposal seeks to change the existing land use zoning, height of building and FSR controls for a group of sites adjoining an HCA which is identified under Schedule 5 of the North Sydney LEP 2013. Numerous heritage items which are listed under Schedule 5 of the North Sydney LEP 2013 are also located within this HCA.</p> <p>This HIS has therefore been prepared to assess the impact of the proposed amendments on the heritage significance of the Whaling Road HCA and the heritage items located within the HCA.</p>
<i>(4) Effect of proposed development on heritage significance</i>	<p>This HIS has been prepared to assist the consent authority to ascertain the degree to which the proposed works would impact the heritage significance of the Whaling Road HCA and the heritage items found within it. The assessment carried out below concludes</p>

(5) Heritage assessment

that there would be no unreasonable impacts on the significance of the HCA or of the heritage items. The planning proposal would, in some aspects, engender positive impacts with regard to the ability of these changes to provide a more sympathetic response to the Whaling Road HCA.

5.2. NORTH SYDNEY DCP 2013

Below, the planning proposal is assessed against the relevant objectives and provisions of the North Sydney DCP 2013. This includes the existing, gazetted DCP as well as the draft Site Specific DCP which has been prepared for the Alfred Street Precinct.

5.2.1. Gazetted DCP

Table 5 – Assessment against gazetted North Sydney DCP 2013

Clause	Discussion
Part B - Development Controls	
Section 13 - Heritage and Conservation	
<u>13.4 Development in the vicinity of heritage items</u>	
<p>Objectives</p> <p><i>O1 Ensure that new work is designed and sited so as to not detrimentally impact upon the heritage significance of the heritage item and its setting.</i></p>	<p>The planning proposal seeks amendments to planning controls which are applicable to sites which are not identified as heritage items or within an HCA.</p> <p>Given the existing setting of the Whaling Road HCA – where the dense, commercial high-rise buildings of the North Sydney CBD provide a strongly contradistinctive backdrop to the low-scale, residential character of the HCA – the amendments sought would not be out of context.</p> <p>The existing situation demonstrates that the character and significance of the Whaling Road remains entirely legible and protected in the context of its adjacency to the North Sydney CBD. The changes sought by the planning proposal would not alter this.</p>
<p>Provisions</p> <p><i>P1 Respect and respond to the curtilage, setbacks, form, scale and style of the heritage item in the design and siting of new work.</i></p> <p><i>P2 Maintain significant public domain views to and from the heritage item.</i></p> <p><i>P3 Ensure compatibility with the orientation and alignment of the heritage item.</i></p>	<p>P1 The planning proposal would not alter the existing subdivision pattern and would not encroach on any heritage items or on the Whaling Road HCA. The proposal would result in new mixed-use buildings which would be clearly legible as part of the North Sydney CBD, while the residential character and setting of the nearby heritage items would be maintained.</p> <p>P2 Views between the nearby heritage items are to the dense and varied urban environment, which demonstrates the historical development of North Sydney. The changes sought by the planning proposal would not alter this.</p> <p>P3 The introduction of active frontages at Little Alfred Street would allow for a more positive interface with the nearby heritage items. The existing situation at Little Alfred Street is of detrimental impact on the setting of these items.</p>

Clause	Discussion
<p><i>P4 Provide an adequate area around the heritage item to allow for its interpretation.</i></p>	<p>P4 As the planning proposal only seeks changes to the provisions relating to the properties which form the Alfred Street Precinct, the interpretation of nearby heritage items would be fully maintained.</p> <p>Shadow studies prepared for the Planning Proposal by Grimshaw have found that the increased building height which is sought on the sites would not have unreasonable shadow impacts on nearby heritage items, and would indeed cause less overshadowing on nearby heritage items than the original North Sydney Council scheme. Subsequent shadow studies have also been prepared by Cad Draft P/L, which indicate a similar outcome. The planning proposal would therefore result in a not unreasonable outcome with regard to overshadowing.</p>
<p><u>13.6 Heritage conservation areas</u></p>	
<p>General Objectives</p> <p><i>O1 Ensure that new development is designed to retain and complement the character and significance of the conservation area.</i></p>	<p>The Planning Proposal seeks to change the existing land use zoning of the Alfred Street Precinct from B3 Commercial Core to B4 Mixed Use. This would result in a more sympathetic and logical use of the site as the interface between the North Sydney CBD and the residential HCA directly to its east.</p> <p>The proposed introduction of through-site links would provide a positive response to the fine-grain character of the Whaling Road HCA, and enhance the amenity and ‘activeness’ of Little Alfred Street. The proposed introduction of elevated landscaped podiums at this frontage would further reinforce this fine grain character and provide a sympathetic response to the landscaped character of the properties within the HCA.</p> <p>The scheme also provides for a deep setback at the north between new built forms and the existing HCA streetscape, to allow for landscaped open space and an improved interface with the HCA. The new built form at the north would also be stepped back, which would sufficiently reduce perceived bulk and scale.</p>
<p>Form, massing and scale</p> <p><i>P1 To ensure new development has a compatible and complementary building form and scale to that which characterises the conservation area.</i></p> <p><i>P2 To maintain and enhance streetscape character as identified within the Area Character Statements.</i></p>	<p>P1 The planning proposal seeks to retain the site of the existing Bayer Building as the highest built form within the Precinct, while allowing for modest increases to building heights at the other properties. In this way, the existing setting of the HCA, in which views towards the Bayer Building are found throughout, would not be unduly impacted.</p> <p>Additionally, the planning proposal does not seek changes to the existing FSR controls for 263-269, 271-273 & 283 Alfred Street & 4 Little Alfred Street. This would result in future built forms with potentially less site coverage, allowing for an appropriate and sympathetic response to the open space which characterises the Whaling Road HCA.</p> <p>P2 The planning proposal would introduce fine-grain commercial development within the Alfred Street Precinct, including pedestrian through-site links and active frontages at Little Alfred Street. These changes would be wholly in keeping with, and sympathetic to, the established streetscape character of the Whaling Road HCA.</p>

5.2.2. Draft DCP

Table 6 – Assessment against draft North Sydney DCP 2013

Clause	Discussion
Part D - Specific Sites	
Section 1 - Alfred Street Precinct	
<u>1.1.5 General Objectives</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>A new modern iconic Tower at 275 Alfred Street which will represent a significant improvement in the Architecture and Urban Design compared to the existing “unattractive” building and Bayer rooftop signage.</i> ▪ <i>To improve permeability within and around the Precinct to allow for better connections between the North Sydney CBD and Heritage Conservation Area</i> ▪ <i>To minimise the amenity impacts to the adjoining residential dwellings in the Heritage Conservation Area</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The significant alterations and additions to the Bayer Building (including the replacement of the existing, visually intrusive external cladding, and the introduction of a slimmer profile at the new upper levels), together with the replacement adjoining commercial development, would result in positive impacts on the setting off the Whaling Road HCA. The planning proposal provides the opportunity to introduce contemporary development of high-quality contemporary design to provide a more sympathetic interface with the HCA than existing. ▪ The enhanced permeability of the site, as the result of through-site links, would respond to the walkable, fine-grain established character of the Whaling Road HCA. ▪ The proposed change to the land zoning provisions, from B3 Commercial Centre to B4 Mixed Use, would respect the significance and amenity of the HCA and provide an appropriate transition from the North Sydney CBD.
<u>1.1.6 Layout and Massing</u>	
<p><i>P3 The built form within the podium along Little Alfred Street is to incorporate fine grain residential accommodation to create an appropriate transition with the adjoining Heritage Conservation Area.</i></p> <p><i>P5 Limit the overshadowing to the surrounding neighbours within the Heritage Conservation Area and to the Alfred Street North Park.</i></p>	<p>P3 Fine-grain residential accommodation along the lower levels of Little Alfred Street would provide an appropriate and sympathetic transition to the residential Whaling Road HCA.</p> <p>P5 The changes sought by the planning proposal would limit overshadowing, and would result in enhanced solar access as compared to the scheme earlier proposed by Council.</p>
<u>1.1.7 Pedestrian Arcade</u>	
<p><i>P1 Create a pedestrian arcade which is generally consistent with Figures D-1.6 to D-1.7 above which will provide connections between Little Alfred Street, Alfred Street and Whaling Road.</i></p>	<p>The creation of through-site links for pedestrians would sympathetically respond to the fine grain, walkable character of the Whaling Road HCA.</p>
<u>1.1.9 Public Domain Works</u>	

Clause	Discussion
<p><i>P1 Provide new public domain and improvements to the existing pedestrian infrastructure including the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Increase landscaping along Little Alfred Street and Alfred Street to create a landscaping buffer;</i> ▪ <i>Increase setbacks along Whaling Road, Little Alfred Street and Alfred Street to improve the pathways with some kerb build outs along Alfred Street generally consistent with Figure D-1.3 above</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased landscaping at the Precinct boundaries, as the result of increased built form setbacks, would provide an appropriate and sympathetic response to the landscaped character of the residential streetscape of the Whaling Road HCA. ▪ Increased setbacks along Whaling Road and Little Alfred Street would provide an appropriate transition between the Precinct and the HCA and would minimise the perceived bulk and scale of the new built forms.
<p>Part B - Development Controls</p> <p>Section 9 - Advertising and Signage</p>	
<p><u>9.2 Advertising Design Analysis</u></p> <p>9.2.2 B4 - Mixed Use Zone</p>	
<p><i>(e) Alfred Street Precinct</i></p> <p><i>To minimise the impacts to the Heritage Conservation Area and surrounding locality, signage is to be restricted to the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>No advertising or signage structures should be located along the ground floor of Little Alfred Street or Whaling Street;</i> ▪ <i>Business and or building identification signage along Alfred Street is to be limited to small scale signage at ground floor;</i> ▪ <i>Given the prominent location of the Precinct adjacent to the Bradfield Highway and views from Sydney Harbour large wall signs should be limited to the northern and western elevations;</i> ▪ <i>Business/building identification signs and rooftop advertisements should be limited to the north, west and south elevations and no larger than as is presently existing; and</i> ▪ <i>All such signs should be incorporated into the overall design of the building(s).</i> 	<p>The proposed controls for signage and advertising would adequately mitigate potential impacts on the setting, character and significance of the Whaling Road HCA and the heritage items found within it.</p>

5.3. HERITAGE NSW GUIDELINES

The changes sought by the planning proposal are addressed in relation to relevant questions posed in Heritage NSW’s ‘Statement of Heritage Impact’ guidelines.

Table 7 – Assessment against HNSW guidelines

Question	Discussion
<p><i>The following aspects of the proposal respect or enhance the heritage significance of the item or conservation area for the following reasons:</i></p>	<p>The planning proposal seeks changes to the current controls which apply to the Alfred Street Precinct, which adjoins the Whaling Road HCA and is in the visual catchment of a number of sites which are identified as heritage items under Schedule 5 of the North Sydney LEP 2013. The changes are considered to respect and enhance the significance of the HCA and the heritage items for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The changes would result in significant alterations to, or removal of, existing buildings which are of no architectural merit – including the highly visible Bayer Building at 275 Alfred Street – and which currently detract from the setting and significance of the nearby heritage items and HCA ▪ The proposed changes would result in less overshadowing impacts on the HCA and nearby heritage items than the earlier Council scheme ▪ The proposed change to land use zoning within the Alfred Street Precinct, from B3 Commercial Centre to B4 Mixed Use, would result in a highly sympathetic transition between the North Sydney CDB and the residential Whaling Road HCA, between which the site acts as the interface ▪ The proposed pedestrian through-links would respond to the fine grain, walkable character of the Whaling Road HCA and create a positive transition between the two distinct zones ▪ Increased setbacks, particularly at the north, would provide a more sympathetic transition between new built forms within the Precinct and the adjoining HCA, and would allow for the introduction of enhanced landscaping ▪ The proposed fine-grain residential development at Little Alfred Street would provide a sympathetic interface between the existing North Sydney CBD – of which the Alfred Street Precinct constitutes the easternmost boundary – and the adjoining residential HCA
<p><i>The following aspects of the proposal could detrimentally impact on heritage significance.</i></p> <p><i>The reasons are explained as well as the measures to be taken to minimise impacts:</i></p>	<p>The introduction of increased building heights within the Alfred Street Precinct will result in some impacts with regard to views and overshadowing. However, these impacts are seen to be mitigated as a result of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The greatest height increase would be at the site of the existing Bayer Building, where there is already precedent for a high-rise building ▪ The established setting of the Whaling Road HCA is related to its adjacency to the North Sydney CBD, which is a visible part of the skyline from within the HCA. The proposed changes would not greatly or unreasonably impact this established setting, and the HCA would remain a distinct part of the urban environment within North Sydney.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The increased building heights would result in some overshadowing impacts. However, the proposed changes would result in less overshadowing impacts on the HCA and nearby heritage items than the earlier Council scheme and, further, would only result in a short duration of overshadowing. These impacts are therefore not considered unreasonable. ▪ The proposed increase to building heights would be appropriately offset by no changes to existing FSR provisions at 263-269, 271-273 & 283 Alfred Street. This would allow new built forms on these sites to adequately respond to the fine grain character of the Whaling Road HCA.
<p><i>The following sympathetic solutions have been considered and discounted for the following reasons:</i></p>	<p>None known.</p>

6. CONCLUSION

This HIS has been prepared to assess the potential impact of the Planning Proposal for the Alfred Street Precinct, North Sydney, on the heritage significance of the Whaling Road HCA and the heritage items found within it.

Overall, the changes sought by the Planning Proposal have been found to respect and, in some aspects, enhance the heritage significance of these listed places as a result of the following:

- The changes would result in significant alterations to, or removal of, existing buildings which are of no architectural merit – including the highly visible Bayer Building at 275 Alfred Street – and which currently detract from the setting and significance of the nearby heritage items and HCA
- The proposed changes would result in less overshadowing impacts on the HCA and nearby heritage items than the earlier Council scheme
- The proposed change to land use zoning within the Alfred Street Precinct, from B3 Commercial Centre to B4 Mixed Use, would result in a highly sympathetic transition between the North Sydney CBD and the residential Whaling Road HCA, between which the site acts as the interface
- The proposed pedestrian through-links would respond to the fine grain, walkable character of the Whaling Road HCA and create a positive transition between the two distinct zones
- Increased setbacks, particularly at the north, would provide a more sympathetic transition between new built forms within the Precinct and the adjoining HCA, and would allow for the introduction of enhanced landscaping
- The proposed fine-grain residential development at Little Alfred Street would provide a sympathetic interface between the existing North Sydney CBD – of which the Alfred Street Precinct constitutes the easternmost boundary – and the adjoining residential HCA

Accordingly, it is recommended that this Planning Proposal be viewed favourably on heritage grounds.

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