

Peer Review:

# Heritage Impact Statement



No. 44 – 48 Oxford Street, Epping

October 2017

**Weir  
Phillips**  
Heritage

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

<b>CONTENTS</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
<b><u>PEER REVIEW:</u></b>	<b><u>1</u></b>
<b><u>HERITAGE</u></b>	<b><u>1</u></b>
<b><u>IMPACT</u></b>	<b><u>1</u></b>
<b><u>STATEMENT</u></b>	<b><u>1</u></b>
<b><u>1.0 INTRODUCTION</u></b>	<b><u>1</u></b>
1.1 PREAMBLE	1
1.2 AUTHORSHIP	1
1.3 LIMITATIONS	1
1.4 METHODOLOGY	1
1.5 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE	1
1.5.1 HERITAGE LISTING SHEET	1
1.5.2 PLANNING DOCUMENTS	1
1.6 SITE LOCATION	2
<b><u>2.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT</u></b>	<b><u>2</u></b>
<b><u>3.0 SITE ASSESSMENT</u></b>	<b><u>3</u></b>
3.1 THE SITE	3
3.2 OTHER SITE COMPONENTS	6
3.3 THE GENERAL AREA	7
<b><u>4.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE</u></b>	<b><u>8</u></b>
4.1 SUMMARY OF EXISTING CITATIONS AND LISTINGS FOR THE SITE	8
4.2 HERITAGE ITEMS IN THE VICINITY OF THE SITE	8
<b><u>5.0 SCOPE OF WORKS</u></b>	<b><u>9</u></b>
<b><u>6.0 METHOD OF ASSESSMENT</u></b>	<b><u>10</u></b>
<b><u>7.0 REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF IMPACT</u></b>	<b><u>10</u></b>
7.1 CONCLUSIONS OF THE REPORT	10
7.2 RESPONSE	11
7.2.1 SETTING	11
7.2.1 EXTANT FABRIC	12
7.3 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS	12
7.3.1 DESIGN	12
7.3.2 DEVELOPMENT IN THE VICINITY OF HERITAGE ITEMS	12
<b><u>8.0 CONCLUSIONS</u></b>	<b><u>13</u></b>

---

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Preamble**

This peer review of the Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) by NBRS + Partners (2016) has been prepared in conjunction with a Development Application (DA) for the demolition of No. 44- 48 Oxford Street, Epping New South Wales.

The site is located within Hornsby Local Government Area. The principal planning control for the site is the *Hornsby Local Environmental Plan 2013 (LEP 2013)*. The site contains a heritage item by Schedule 5 Part 1 of the *Hornsby LEP 2013*.

The purpose of this report is to provide a peer review of the NBRS + Partners HIS (2016) which accompanies the DA, so as to allow Council to ascertain whether the HIS submitted with the application has provided thorough analysis and assessment of the proposed works which entail the demolition of a site listed as a heritage item in Schedule 5 Part 1 of the *Hornsby LEP 2013* from a heritage perspective.

### **1.2 Authorship**

This statement has been prepared by Anna McLaurin, B.Envs (Arch), M.Herit.Cons., and James Phillips, B.Sc.(Arch), B.Arch, M.Herit.Cons.(Hons), of Weir Phillips Heritage.

### **1.3 Limitations**

An Aboriginal history and assessment was not provided for. No historical archaeology was carried out on the site.

### **1.4 Methodology**

This HIS has been prepared with reference to the NSW Heritage Division publication *Statements of Heritage Impact* (2002 update) and with reference to the Council planning documents listed under Section 1.5 below.

A site visit was undertaken in August 2017.

### **1.5 Documentary Evidence**

#### **1.5.1 Heritage Listing Sheet**

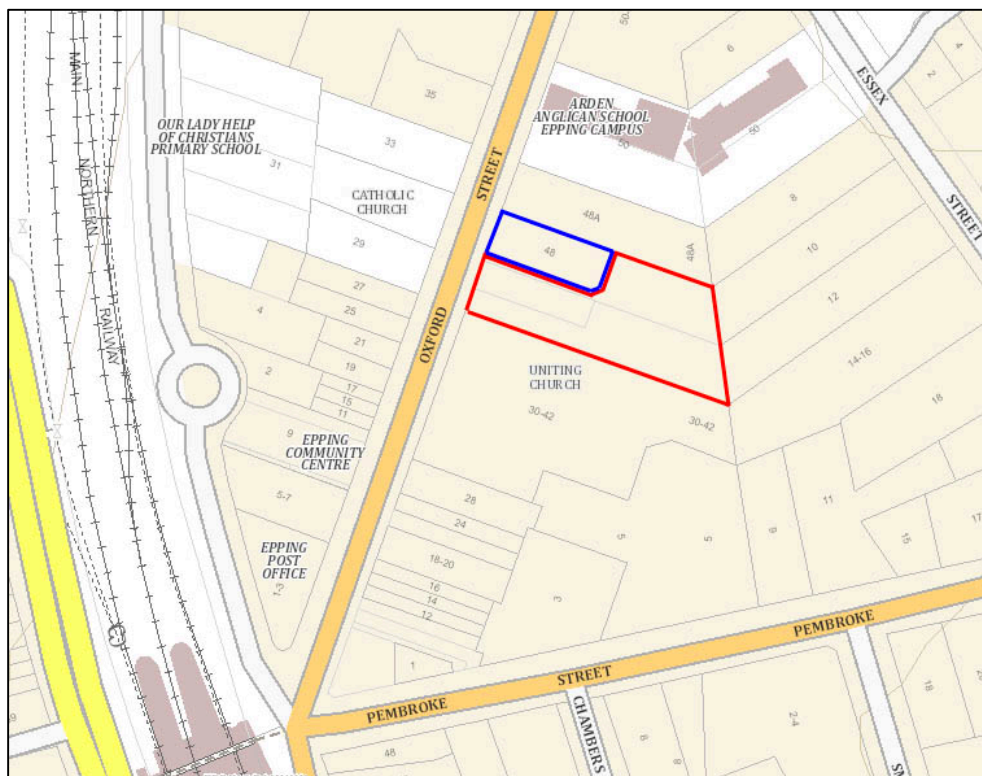
- *House, 48 Oxford Street, Epping. State Heritage Inventory Database No.: 1780107*

#### **1.5.2 Planning Documents**

- *Hornsby Development Control Plan 2013.*
- *Hornsby Local Environmental Plan 2013*

## 1.6 Site Location

No. 44-48 Oxford Street, Epping is located on the western side of Oxford Street, between Pembroke Street to the south and Chester Street to the north (Figure 1). The site is identified as Lots A and B of D.P. 390454, and Lots 1 and 2 of D.P. 206646. Lot 1 of D.P. 206646 contains the heritage item.



**Figure 1: The location of the subject site. The heritage item is outlined in blue, the remainder of the site is outlined in red.**

SIX Maps 2016

## 2.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

This historical development of the site was analysed during the completion of this HIS peer review. The information contained in the historical development has been reviewed and cross checked. The information contained is found to be correct and accurate.



---

### 3.0 SITE ASSESSMENT

#### 3.1 The Site

For the following, refer to Figure 2, an aerial photograph over the site.



**Figure 2: An aerial photograph showing the subject site and its surrounds. The heritage item is outlined in blue, the remainder of the site is outlined in red.**

SIX Maps 2016

No. 48 Oxford Street is a detached single storey face brick late Victorian era former dwelling, now used as a medical centre. The former dwelling has a new terracotta tile hipped principal roof and a Colourbond bullnose corrugated iron veranda. The roof has a transverse hip across the front elevation and two parallel hips projecting towards the rear with a box gutter in between. The eastern elevation has a projecting faceted bay with three timber framed double hung sash windows. The new enlarged veranda is supported by new cast aluminium treillage columns and cast aluminium lace brackets. There are two timber four paned doors leading onto the veranda. To the north a modern veranda infill. The two chimneys are decorated with corbelling with glazed terra cotta chimney pots on top.

Internally there is a central hallway with rooms leading to either side. There is typical late Victorian joinery and with decorative cornice. The main hallway has an arch at the midpoint with new pilaster capitals. Rooms leading off the corridor have had original details removed. This includes cornices and fireplace surrounds.

Photographs of No. 48 Oxford Street, Epping is outlined in Figures 3 – 7 below.



**Figure 3: The primary western elevation of the No. 48 Oxford Street**



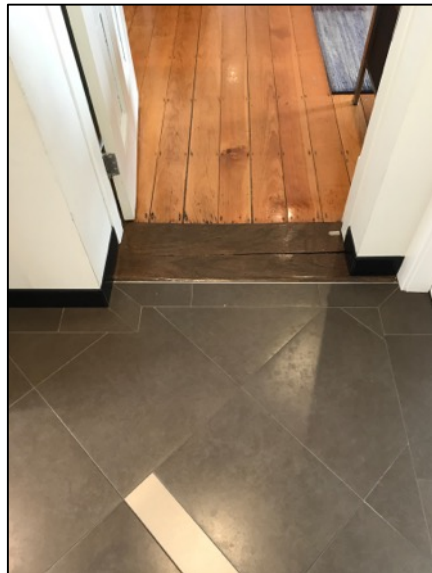
**Figure 4: The southern elevation of No. 48 Oxford Street.**



**Figure 5: The southern elevation looking towards the carpark at the rear**



**Figure 6: Looking down the hallway towards the front door. Note the plaster moulding and all joinery is non-original.**



**Figure 7: Original floorboards.**



**Figure 8: A remnant chimney breast in one of the rooms.**



---

### 3.2 Other site components

To the rear of No. 48 Oxford Street is a multi-story concrete carpark. To the south is a rendered masonry commercial building. There is a small shop constructed in the front garden of the heritage item.

Figures 9-11 illustrate these items.



Figure 9: The concrete carpark to the rear of the heritage item



Figure 10: The commercial building to the south.





**Figure 11: The shop in the front yard of the heritage item.**

### **3.3 The General Area**

The site is located within a mixed-use precinct. Lot sizes vary, as do the massing, scale and sizes of buildings.

Oxford Street runs in an approximately north south direction and is a wide thoroughfare with a mixture of commercial and residential buildings. The site is the only Federation era detached dwelling remaining on the street. The directly opposite the site is Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Church and to the south, separated by a two storey modern office building is the Christ Evangelical Centre of Australia.

Further to the south of the existing site are being demolished to make way for a new mixed use development.

Figure 12 – 15 illustrate the surrounding area.



**Figure 12: The eastern side of Oxford Street including the old Methodist Church that was recently demolished.**



**Figure 13: Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Church, opposite the subject site.**



**Figure 14: Looking south down Oxford Street.**



**Figure 15: looking North towards the commercial building from No. 44 – 46 Oxford Street, note the heritage item is entirely obscured by this building.**

## **4.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

### **4.1 Summary of Existing Citations and Listings for the Site**

No. 48 Oxford Street, Epping

- Is listed as a heritage item by Schedule 5 Part 1 of the *Hornsby LEP 2013*.
- Is located within the vicinity of local heritage items by Schedule 5 Part 1 of *Hornsby LEP 2013*.

It is noted that the site is:

- Is not located within a Heritage Conservation Area by Schedule 5 Part 2 of *Hornsby LEP 2013*
- Is not listed as a heritage item on the State Heritage Register under the auspices of the *NSW Heritage Act 1977*.

The *State Heritage Inventory* provides the following statement of significance for the No. 48 Oxford Street, Epping:

*Federation period cottage in good condition and little altered. Good quality face brick especially chimneys. Original iron lace valence and iron posts also of interest.*<sup>1</sup>

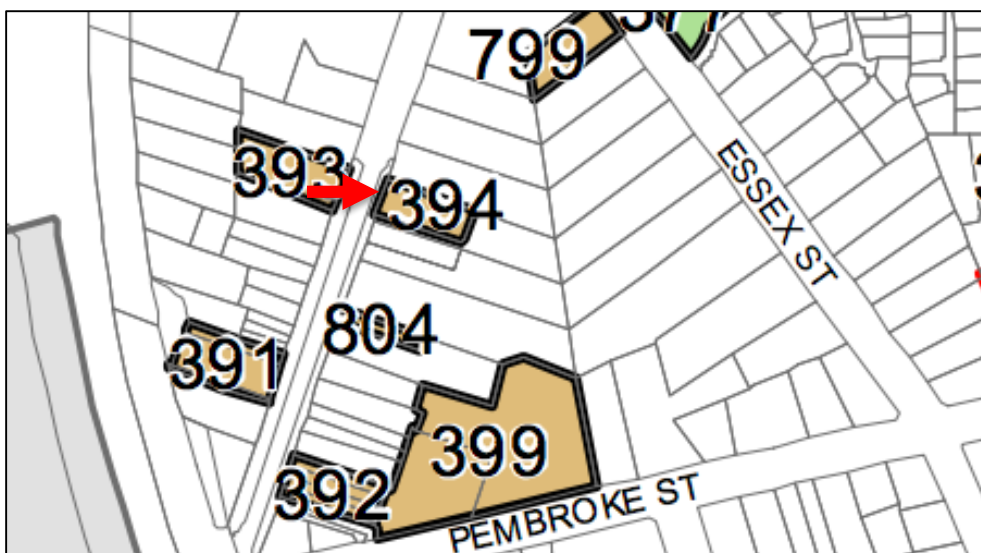
### **4.2 Heritage Items in the Vicinity of the Site**

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

Figure 21 shows the location of heritage items, listed by Schedule 5 Part 1 of the *Hornsby LEP 2013* Heritage items are coloured brown and numbered. The arrow marks the site.

- *Our Lady Help of Christians Church*, 31 Oxford Street (I393)
- *House*, 38 Oxford Street, Epping (804)
- *School of Arts and Garden*, 9 Oxford Street (391)

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/heritageapp/ViewHeritageItemDetails.aspx?ID=1780107>



**Figure 16: Detail of the Hornsby Heritage Map 011. The red arrow identifies the site.**  
North Sydney LEP 2013.

### 4.3 Integrity

The following changes are noted at No. 48 Oxford Street, Epping:

- The roof tiles are new along with metal sheeting to the rear in the valley leading to the rear box gutter;
- The verandah has been unsympathetically reconstructed in Colourbond and cast aluminium lace;
- The veranda on the northern side has been infilled with contemporary materials;
- A single storey rear addition with flat metal deck roof has been added to the site;
- The front fence is not original;
- The original lot has been subdivided to create a battle axe lot with a concrete carpark to the rear;
- A concrete and glass building has been constructed on the north western boundary of the site;
- The front garden has been altered, the axial entry path remains;
- Much of the internal of the building appears to have been remodelled;
- Ceilings and cornices are not original;
- Fire breasts remain with no mantelpieces or fire places;
- All the doors and windows have recent stainless steel door furniture, including hinges.

### 5.0 SCOPE OF WORKS

The following should be read in conjunction with the plans prepared by Nettleton Tribe Architects that accompanies this application. The following description of the works has been sourced from the HIS by NBRS + Partners 2016.

*It is proposed to demolish the house at 48 Oxford Street, remove all other site improvements and excavate the site for four levels of basement. A multi-storey mixed use development would be constructed over the site with a podium of four above-ground levels and two towers rising from the podium. Tower A would rise to Level 17 (roof slab at RL 156.710 with additional service overrun) and Tower B would rise to Level 15 (roof slab of service overrun at RL 150.540). The building would be*

---

*constructed of reinforced concrete and be finished in formed concrete with panels of concrete and brick. The fenestration would be metal-framed glazing. Balustrades would commonly be metal-framed glazing.*

*Several terraces would be planted. A section of land offset 7m from the eastern boundary would be planted with trees in deep soil. It is intended to retain the two trees growing close to the eastern boundary, one of which is a eucalyptus.*

## **6.0 METHOD OF ASSESSMENT**

The following is a merit-based assessment. It does not consider compliance or otherwise with Council's numerical controls unless non-compliance will result in an adverse heritage impact. Refer to the Statement of Environmental Effects (SEE) that accompanies this application.

The effect of work is assessed with an understanding of the relevant provisions of the *Hornsby Development Control Plan 2013 (DCP)*.

The three questions raised by the NSW Heritage Division publication *Statements of Heritage Impact* (2002 update) have been taken into consideration in the following assessment.

The recommended management provisions on the heritage inventory listing sheet for the heritage items in the vicinity have been read and understood.

## **7.0 REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF IMPACT**

As indicated in Section 5.0 above, the proposed development would entail the demolition of a heritage item at No. 48 Oxford Street, Epping. The demolition of a heritage item which is statutorily protected is a delicate matter, and should only be permitted if the approval authority is satisfied that the place no longer has the potential to display the significance which has led to its listing, whether such significance is tangible or intangible.

The following sections of this report responds to the conclusions reached in the Statement of Heritage Impact prepared for the proposal by NBRS + Partners in 2016 and is based on the site investigations in Sections 2.0 and 3.0 of this report.

### **7.1 Conclusions of the Report**

The HIS by NBRS + Partners made the following conclusions regarding the proposed demolition of No. 48 Oxford Street, Epping.

*Have all options for retention and adaptive reuse been explored?*

- The subject heritage item has been adapted and extended in several phases since the late twentieth century. This has diminished its heritage significance from what it might have been, but the fact remains that it is a local heritage item. The former house could continue in its commercial use, and be surrounded by high-rise development. But in view of the zoning and development controls applying to the site, which demonstrates the desired future character for the precinct close to Epping Railway Station, this outcome would not be ideal, and would leave the heritage item looking discredited by its context.

*Can all the significant elements of the heritage item be kept and any new development be located elsewhere on the site?*



- No, the site is intended to be redeveloped for a high-rise building responding to the desired future character of the precinct. There may be potential to retain a couple of elements of the former house in an interpretation of the building in the development.

*Is demolition essential at this time or can it be postponed in case future circumstances make its retention and conservation more feasible?*

- The redevelopment of surrounding properties would make the retention of a low-rise suburban context for this heritage item impossible. There is no conceivable future event that would make the retention of the item more viable, so there is no reason to delay the redevelopment beyond the proper processes of statutory consideration applying now.
- The Development Studies for the site by Nettleton Tribe Architects demonstrate the implications for compromised urban design if the heritage item is retained.
- Several development applications have been lodged in accordance with the controls for higher density.

*Has the advice of a heritage consultant/specialist been sought? Have the consultant's recommendations been implemented? If not, why not?*

- NBRS+Partners have provided heritage advice to the applicant for this site since 2014. NBRS+Partners recognise that the Epping Town Centre is undergoing transformation, and that the area would have a streetscape more in keeping with the desired future character in the planning documents if the entire site is redeveloped.
- In 2014, NBRS+Partners found that the heritage item on the subject site has the following diminished significance. *The former house provides an isolated, representation of suburban development near the main northern railway line in the late Nineteenth Century. As a conserved and adapted house, the front section of the building retains its late Victorian (Filigree) form and is representative of the style. The reconstructed fabric contributes to the aesthetic value of the building, but has less significance than the original Victorian fabric. Reconstructed fabric includes all of the veranda, the roof tiles, the cornices in the four major rooms, the capitals on the piers in the hallway and all the door and window furniture. The former house is a common type in its plan, materials and construction detailing, so it does not appear to contain any built element that could be the subject of research, nor would the larger subject site.*

## 7.2 Response

Weir Phillips Heritage concurs with the conclusions made in the NBRS + Partners report for the demolition of No. 48 Oxford Street, Epping is an acceptable outcome. Our response is based on two aspects of the site in its present state: its setting with the wider context and its extant fabric.

### 7.2.1 Setting

The NBRS + Partners Report identifies No. 48 Oxford Street Epping is remnant example of late Victorian suburban development in the proximity to Epping Railway Station. The report recognises the Epping Town Centre has evolved since the construction of the former dwelling and that the town centre is continuing to evolve into a higher density development area.

Weir Phillips Heritage agrees that the retention of a low rise dwelling in a high rise commercial context is not a good heritage outcome and would further diminish any understanding of the original suburban setting. Retaining the former dwelling in this context would appear awkward and out of scale.

---

Weir Phillips Heritage also agrees that the existing setback of 14m from Oxford Street, further isolates the former dwelling from the surrounding streetscape which are mostly set to the boundary line. The setback makes integrating the item into the urban design context problematic as the consistency of the streetscape will be interrupted by a gap, with the only view corridors towards the former dwelling will be from directly in front of it.

#### 7.2.1 Extant Fabric

The NBRS + Partners Report outlined a number of alterations and additions undertaken to the former dwelling as a conserved and adapted house, which has been largely reconstructed with replica materials. The images and analysis of the setting contained in Section 3.0 show signs of internal and external modification which date from the mid-twentieth century to the present day.

Weir Phillips Heritage agrees that the external modifications which form the basis of the site's listing on as a heritage item on the *Hornsby LEP 2013*, have altered the site to an extent where the original character of the late Victorian era former dwelling almost lost. Although the site continues to contain some aesthetically pleasing elements, both internally and externally the majority of these elements are reproductions and do present type of historic or research potential. The former dwelling has had its level of integrity severely reduced. The changes to the street presentation, in particular the front and side veranda, and reproduction roof tiling diminishes significance.

Given the demonstrably diminished significance of the property as a result of extensive modifications over time, Weir Phillips Heritage can support that the site as a whole is no longer of any meaningful heritage significance.

### 7.3 Other Considerations

#### 7.3.1 Design

The report produced by NBRS is supporting of the design of the proposed development at the subject site. Weir Phillips Heritage is equally satisfied that the proposal, from a design perspective would not be detrimental to the surrounding streetscape. Council's future desired character for the Epping town centre is to facilitate higher density commercial and residential development due to the site's proximity to the railway station. The design proposed by Nettleton Tribe Architects is readable as contemporary and generally responsive to the surrounding built forms.

#### 7.3.2 Development in the vicinity of heritage items

The report by NBRS + Partners notes that there will be some impact on the Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic church at 29-31 Oxford Street. The reports notes that the height of the proposal when viewed from afar will dominate the church. The report also notes that in close proximity the setback and detailing of the podium will be of a similar massing and scale to the church and will not significantly impact on the streetscape presence and responds to the desired future character for the area.

Following a site inspection in August 2017 Weir Phillips Heritage agrees with the above analysis and can similarly assess that the impact on Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Church and other more distant heritage items is mitigated by a well-designed podium.

---

## 8.0 CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this report has been to review the Statement of Heritage Impact prepared by NBRS + Partners pertaining to the proposed development at 44-48 Oxford Street, Epping which would entail the demolition of a heritage listed building. The NBRS + Partners supports the demolition of this property as part of the proposed development.

This report prepared by Weir Phillips Heritage, has produced the following findings:

- The heritage listed item “House” at No. 48 Oxford Street, Epping has limited integrity due to successive alteration and additions to the existing building and its setting.
- Retaining the heritage listed item not a good heritage outcome in light of Council’s desired future character of the Epping Town Centre would further diminish any understanding of the original suburban setting. Retaining the former dwelling in this context would appear awkward and out of scale.

For these reasons, Weir Phillips Heritage is satisfied that the Statement of Heritage Impact produced by NBRS + Partners, which has made largely the same findings as those outlined in this report, has adequately assessed the potential heritage impact that would result of the proposed development. Weir Phillips Heritage can therefore support the proposed development and the resultant demolition of the heritage item at No. 48 Oxford Street, Epping.