



STATEMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

44–48 OXFORD STREET, EPPING

JUNE 2016

NBR&PARTNERS PTY LTD

Level 3, 4 Glen Street,
Milsons Point NSW 2061 Australia
nbsarchitecture.com

ABN 16 002 247 565

Sydney: +61 2 9922 2344
Melbourne: +61 3 8676 0427
architects@nbsarchitecture.com

DIRECTORS

Geoffrey Deane NSW reg. 3766, Rodney Drayton NSW reg. 8632,
Andrew Duffin NSW reg. 5602, Garry Hoddinett NSW reg. 5286,
Andrew Leuchars LA reg. 035, James Ward

ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS

Robert Staas, Brett Sherson, Trevor Eveleigh, Andrew Tripet
SENIOR ASSOCIATES John Baker, Barry Flack **ASSOCIATES** Hung-Ying
Foong Gill, Paul Hayes, Derek Mah, Samantha Polkinghorne, Jonathan West

NBRS & PARTNERS Pty Ltd
Level 3, 4 Glen Street
Milsons Point
NSW 2061 Australia

Telephone +61 2 9922 2344 - Facsimile +61 2 9922 1308

ABN: 16 002 247 565

Nominated Architects

Geoffrey Deane: Reg No. 3766; Andrew Duffin: Reg No. 5602; Garry Hoddinett: Reg No 5286;
Rodney Drayton: Reg No. 8632

This report has been prepared under the guidance of the Expert Witness Code of Conduct in the Uniform Civil Procedure Rules and the provisions relating to expert evidence

This document remains the property of NBRS & PARTNERS Pty Ltd.

The document may only be used for the purposes for which it was produced.

Unauthorised use of the document in any form whatsoever is prohibited.

Issued: 13 May 2016
 1 June 2016
 8 June 2016

CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction	4
1.1	Methodology	4
1.2	Site Location	4
1.3	Heritage Listings	5
1.4	Heritage Significance	6
1.5	Authorship	6
2.0	Documentary Evidence	7
2.1	Pre-European and European Settlement of Epping.	7
2.2	History of the Subject Site.....	8
2.3	Lot 5 Section 4 (48 Oxford Street)	11
2.4	Lot 6 Section 5 (44-46 Oxford Street)	14
3.0	Physical Evidence	18
3.1	The former House at 48 Oxford Street	18
3.2	Context of the Item.....	21
3.3	Curtilage.....	23
4.0	The Proposal.....	24
5.0	Evaluation of Heritage Controls	25
5.1	Compliance with the <i>Hornsby Local Environmental Plan, 2013</i>	25
6.0	Heritage Impact Assessment.....	26
6.1	Introduction.....	26
6.2	Demolition of a building or structure.....	27
6.3	New development adjacent to a heritage item (including additional buildings and dual occupancies).....	28
7.0	Conclusion	29

STATEMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

FOR 44–48 OXFORD STREET, EPPING

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Statement of Heritage Impact has been prepared for Dunnett Properties Pty Ltd in accordance with the standard guidelines of the NSW Heritage Division to accompany an application for proposed redevelopment of this site. The site contains a heritage item, a former house in the north-western corner of the site. The remainder of the site has no heritage significance.

A Heritage Assessment by this firm in September 2014 found that while the former house has some heritage significance, it is far from intact and a representative history of housing in Epping exists in the conservation area further the east of this site. So, this Statement of Heritage Impact assesses the heritage impact of demolition of the heritage item, and the redevelopment of the site.

1.1 Methodology

This Statement of Heritage Impact adopts the format of the NSW Heritage Council publication *Statements of Heritage Impact*. It is prepared responding to the requirements for development affecting a local heritage item listed in the *Hornsby Local Environmental Plan 2013*.

1.2 Site Location

The subject site is 44-48 Oxford Street, Epping, but of these allotments, only 48 Oxford Street has a building of any heritage interest upon it. Nonetheless, a history has been prepared of the larger site. The site is located in the Epping business district, now subject to the Epping Town Centre Urban Activation Precinct.

The subject building is used as professional suites, but given that it was built as a dwelling, it is described for the purposes of this report as a house.



Figure 1 – location map showing the redevelopment site outlined in red, with the heritage item being the house at 44 Oxford Street, Epping in the north-west corner. (Source: SIX Maps)

1.3 Heritage Listings

The site is identified on the following statutory list:

- Hornsby LEP 2013.

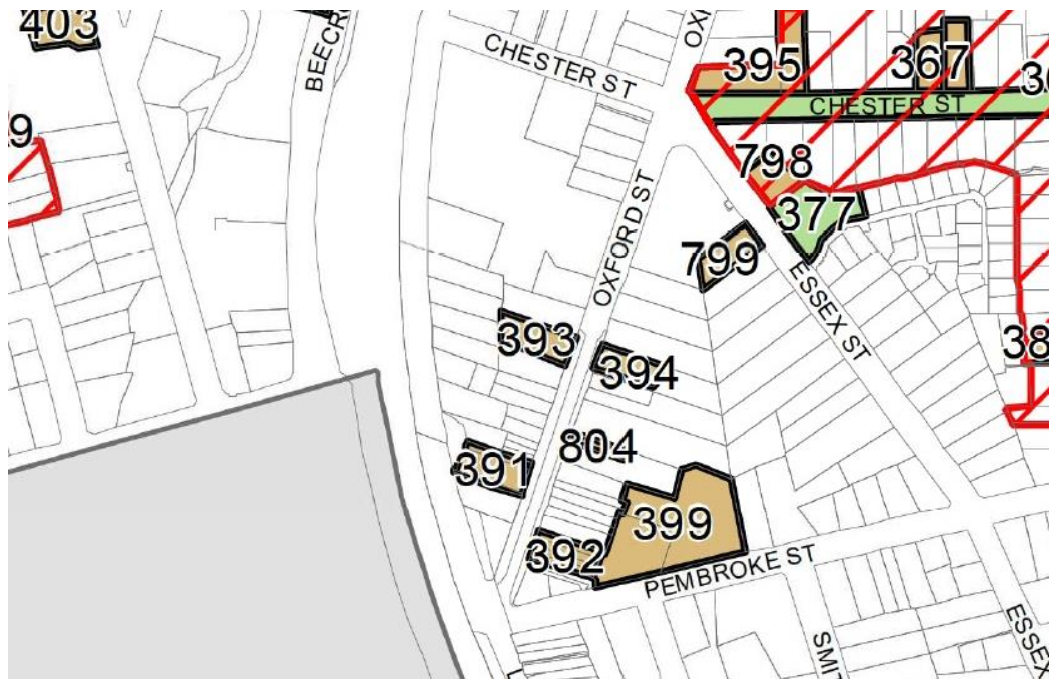


Figure 2 – extract from Hornsby LEP 2013 heritage map showing the subject property as heritage item No. 394 (centre).

1.4 Heritage Significance

The Heritage Assessment by NBRS+Partners dated September 2014 found that the significance of the heritage item on the site is as follows.

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.

1.5 Authorship

This report was prepared by Brad Vale, Senior Heritage Consultant, using research and a history researched and written by Léonie Masson, Historian, under the direction of Robert Staas, Associate Director / Heritage Consultant, all of **NBRS+Partners**.

2.0 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

2.1 Pre-European and European Settlement of Epping.¹

Aboriginal people from the Wallumedegal group, whose lands stretch along the Parramatta and Lane Cove rivers, were living in the region of Epping when the first Europeans arrived.²

The first settler in the district was David Kilpack, a freed convict who received grants of land in 1794 and 1795 totalling 80 acres (32.3 hectares). He died two years later and his widow Eleanor married Thomas Higgins, whose son Thomas Edward Higgins was one of the first settlers in the Hornsby district.³

The western side of Epping stands on two major land grants – Lieutenant William Kent had 170 acres (69.8 hectares) granted by Governor Hunter, and his nephew William George Carlile Kent was granted 460 acres (186.1 hectares) in 1803. The western boundary of the Field of Mars bordered their land.

Many settlers struggled to clear the land and make a living from their farms. The government, in an attempt to ease the burdens on these pioneers, proclaimed town commons, where they could pasture their animals, leaving their own land available for food crops. One such common was the Field of Mars common which covered between 5,050 and 6,253 acres (2,044 to 2,530 hectares).⁴

2.1.1 Timber

Epping had an important role in the early years of the colony, particularly during the time of Governor Macquarie, when timber from the area was in high demand. The trees were tall and spreading, mainly blue gum, blackbutt and some cedar, with an understorey of wattle and pittosporum. There was little undergrowth, and the ground was covered with luxuriant kangaroo grass.

A convict timber camp which included huts, a cooking place, sawmill and possibly burial ground, was established in 1817 by the colonial government. Because the trees were soon removed, the general area was known as Barren Ridges by 1825. The sawpit was on the western side of Oxford Street (approximate site of the Epping Catholic Church). The camp site for the convicts was on the east side of Oxford Street. The convict kitchen was built on the site of the Epping Uniting (former Methodist) church that was subsequently built in 1905, adjacent to the subject site. The first Methodist chapel in Hornsby Shire, established sometime before 1821, was also at Barren Ridges, possibly on the same site.

¹ This history of Epping is reproduced in its entirety from Joan Rowland, Epping, *Dictionary of Sydney*, 2008, <http://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/epping>, viewed 13 May 2014.

² Hornsby Shire Historical Society, *Pioneers of Hornsby Shire, 1788–1906: a history*, Library of Australian History, Sydney, 1983, revised edition, p 42.

³ Hornsby Shire Historical Society, *Pioneers of Hornsby Shire, 1788–1906: a history*, Library of Australian History, Sydney, 1983, revised edition, p 49.

⁴ Hornsby Shire Historical Society, *Pioneers of Hornsby Shire, 1788–1906: a history*, Library of Australian History, Sydney, 1983, revised edition, p 48.

2.1.2 Orchards and bushland

After the sawing establishment closed, the Epping area consisted mostly of orchards and bushland, with most people making a living from vegetable and fruit growing. In the 1820s, the Mobbs family established citrus orchards in the Epping area, and other orchardists soon followed. Produce was carted to Ermington wharf on the Parramatta River and sent by boat to the Sydney markets. The Hazlewood plant nursery was operating by the 1860s.

2.1.3 The Railway

Epping railway station was opened on 17 September 1886 and was at first called the Field of Mars station, then renamed Carlingford the following year. People were not happy with this name, as the post office was called East Carlingford, and the different names caused confusion. When William Midson suggested the name Epping, it was accepted, and the township was officially named Epping in 1899.⁵ It was a popular choice, as the district was by this time heavily forested, the result of secondary growth since the end of logging, and the area reminded residents of Epping Forest in England. The word Epping is said to mean 'people of the look-out place',⁶ and fine views can certainly be seen from the ridges and hills around Epping.

The coming of the railway resulted in an increase in land prices. The first subdivisions of land were made at Epping in the same year as the railway line opened, with a section of the Field of Mars subdivided into large blocks and sold by the government. This was the beginning of the development of the area into the suburb of Epping.

The government resumed the commons land in 1874. It was opened up for sale in 1889⁷, and by the turn of the Twentieth Century, there were twelve houses in the area bounded by Rawson to Midson Roads and Chesterfield Road to Devlins Creek, covering an area of about 450 acres (182.1 hectares).⁸ The first general store was built by Joseph Walker in 1892.

After World War II, there was an increased demand for housing, and the small farms and orchards were subdivided and sold.

2.2 History of the Subject Site

The Government of NSW passed an Act of Parliament in 1874 for the disposal of land in the Field of Mars Common to assist with the cost of construction of the Gladesville and Iron Cove bridges. In September 1885 the sale of the Field of Mars Commons land commenced and continued to the turn of the century.

⁵ W G Hazlewood, 'History of Epping', Sydney Allen for WG Hazlewood, Epping NSW, 1966, p 9.

⁶ Frances Pollon (ed), *The Book of Sydney Suburbs*, Angus and Robertson, North Ryde NSW, 1988.

⁷ Hornsby Shire Historical Society, *Pioneers of Hornsby Shire, 1788–1906: a history*, Library of Australian History, Sydney, 1983, revised edition, p 49.

⁸ WG Hazlewood, 'History of Epping', Sydney Allen for WG Hazlewood, Epping NSW, 1966, p 14.



Figure 3 – Field of Mars, Plan of 320 Allotments at the Field of Mars Platform, Parish of Field of Mars County of Cumberland, 1886. (Source: NSW Land & Property Information)

The subject site is located on original Lots 5 and 6 in Section 4 of the Field of Mars Common at the Field of Mars Platform as shown in the plan at Figure 3 and extracted in Figure 4. The individual allotments are illustrated in the Block plans at Figure 5 and Figure 6.



Figure 4 – Extract from Field of Mars, Plan of 320 Allotments at the Field of Mars Platform Parish of Field of Mars County of Cumberland, 1886. Study site outlined in purple labelled with the name of the purchasers, Henry Perdriau Jnr and Henry Perdriau Senr. (Source: NSW Land & Property Information)

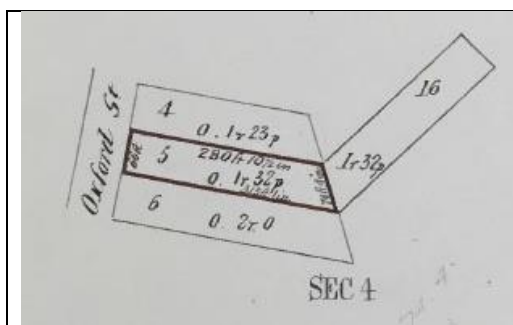


Figure 5 – Block plan accompanying grant under the Field of Mars Common Resumption Act, 1874, Vol 823 Fol 232. (Source: NSW Land & Property information)

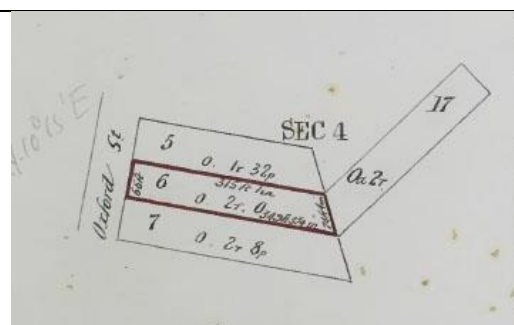


Figure 6 – Block plan accompanying grant under the Field of Mars Common Resumption Act, 1874, Vol 823 Fol 233. (Source: NSW Land & Property information)

2.3 Lot 5 Section 4 (48 Oxford Street)

Lot 5 Section 4 of the Field of Mars Commons, identified as Lot UU in the advertisement dated 4 September 1886, was sold by public auction on 2 October 1886 to Henry Perdriau junior of Balmain, for the sum of £38 five shillings.⁹

Young Perdriau sold Lot 5 in February 1895 to Edward Lewis Puckering of Redfern, draper. Late the following year, according to the *Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers* on 12 December 1896:

Mr E.L. Puckering, the well-known draper of Redfern, is having a nice residence erected at East Carlingford. The building occupies a choice site close by Walker's store, and is to be a brick cottage of nine rooms, exclusive of out-houses.

Two months earlier J. Slade of Redfern (contractor) advertised for "price required for erection and completion brick cottage, East Carlingford".¹⁰ It is presumed that Puckering knew Slade as they both lived and operated businesses at Redfern. The design of the subject residence is thus attributed to Slade, variously described as a builder and contractor. The completed house was called "Eulowrie" and was known as 48 Oxford Street.

Puckering transferred ownership of the property to his wife, Fanny Lucy Puckering "for her own separate use". The earliest Hornsby Shire Rate Book (1907-1909) identifies Fanny Lucy Puckering as the owner of Lot 5 Section 4 in addition to Lots 2-4 (all in Oxford Street) as well as Lots 13/15 Section 4 in Essex Street. The 1910-1913 Rate Book identifies the same allotments not as yet undeveloped (unimproved capital value and improved capital value being identical). The sequence of Hornsby Rate Books to 1927 proved extremely unreliable and inaccurate as at no time is the subject property rated with a house built thereon, though it was in existence from 1897.

Notwithstanding the unreliability of the Rate Books, the Sands Directory identifies Edward L Puckering at Oxford Street Epping commencing in 1911. Prior to that date the Epping district (formerly East Carlingford) was classified agricultural in nature and therefore not listed in the suburban directory.

Edward Lewis Puckering died at Eulowrie on 17 December 1923. His widow remained in residence until her death in 1938. The property then passed by transmission to her executors, The Public Trustee and Sydney Edward Puckering. The latter lived with his mother before and after her death.

⁹ Grant under the Field of Mars Common Resumption Act 1874, Vol 823 Fol 232, NSW Land & Property Information.

¹⁰ "Tenders", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 19 October 1898, p8.

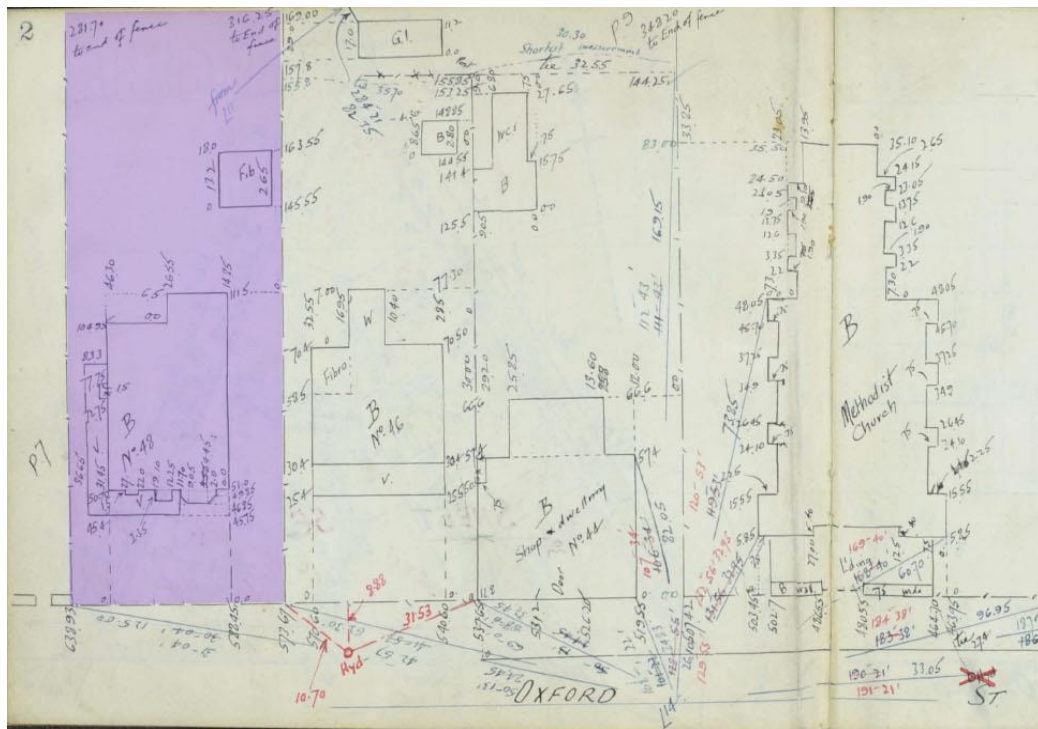


Figure 7 – Field Book 3389, Hornsby Sheet 56 (part), HE Lanyon (surveyor), 25 July 1938. 48 Oxford Street shaded purple thereon. (Source: Sydney Water Plan Room)

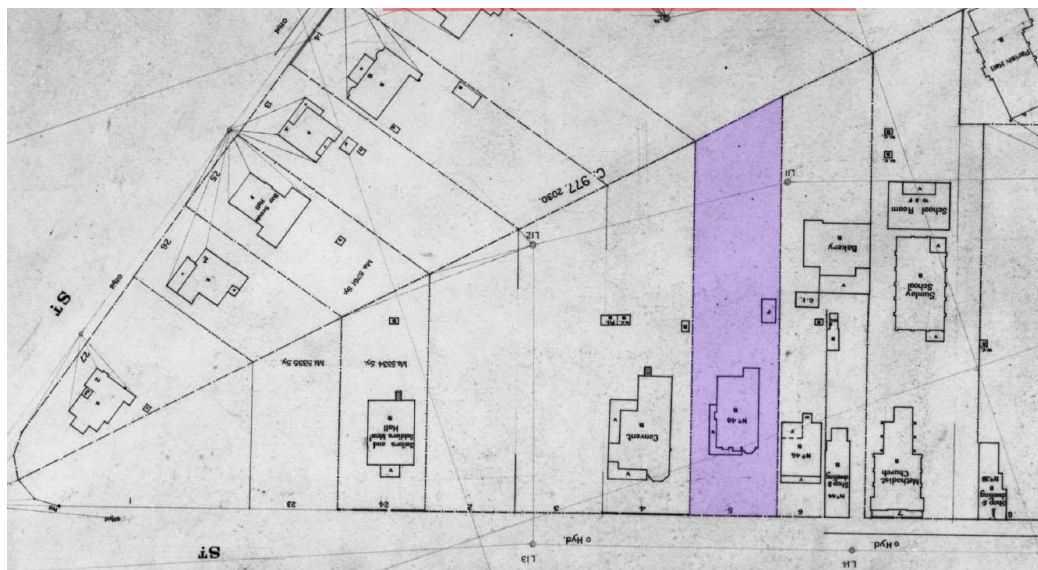


Figure 8 – Extract from DTS 2457 Hornsby Sheet 56, HE Lanyon (Surveyor), 3 Apr 1940, showing 48 Oxford Street shaded purple thereon. (Source: Sydney Water Plan Room)



Figure 9 – Extract from 1943 aerial of Sydney showing present cadastral boundaries of 48 Oxford Street. (Source: NSW Land & Property Information, SIX Maps)

The allotment was subdivided into two lots in 1960 as shown in Figure 7, whereupon 48 Oxford Street was described as Lot 1 DP 206646. Sydney Edward Puckering retained ownership of Lot 1 (Eulowrie) until his death in July 1980 whereafter the property passed by transmission to Alma Edith Puckering in June 1987.¹¹ She died in 2007 at Dulwich Hill, however the residence was sold in 1994. Pirasta Pty Limited (the present owner) purchased 48 Oxford Street in 2003.

Purckering sold Lot 2 at the rear of Eulowrie (with a right of way) to Victoria Bakery Pty Limited in 1961. That allotment changed hands in 1976 to Mermex Holdings Pty Limited and again at the end of the following year to the AMP Society. Copeland Developments Limited purchased the property in 1981.¹² Amalgamated with 44-46 Oxford Street, the new commercial offices changed hands to the MLC in 1982 thence to Pirasta Pty Limited (the present owner) in 1986.

¹¹ Certificate of Title Vol 5159 Fol 226, NSW Land & Property Information.

¹² Certificate of Title Vol 9159 Fol 227, NSW Land & Property Information.

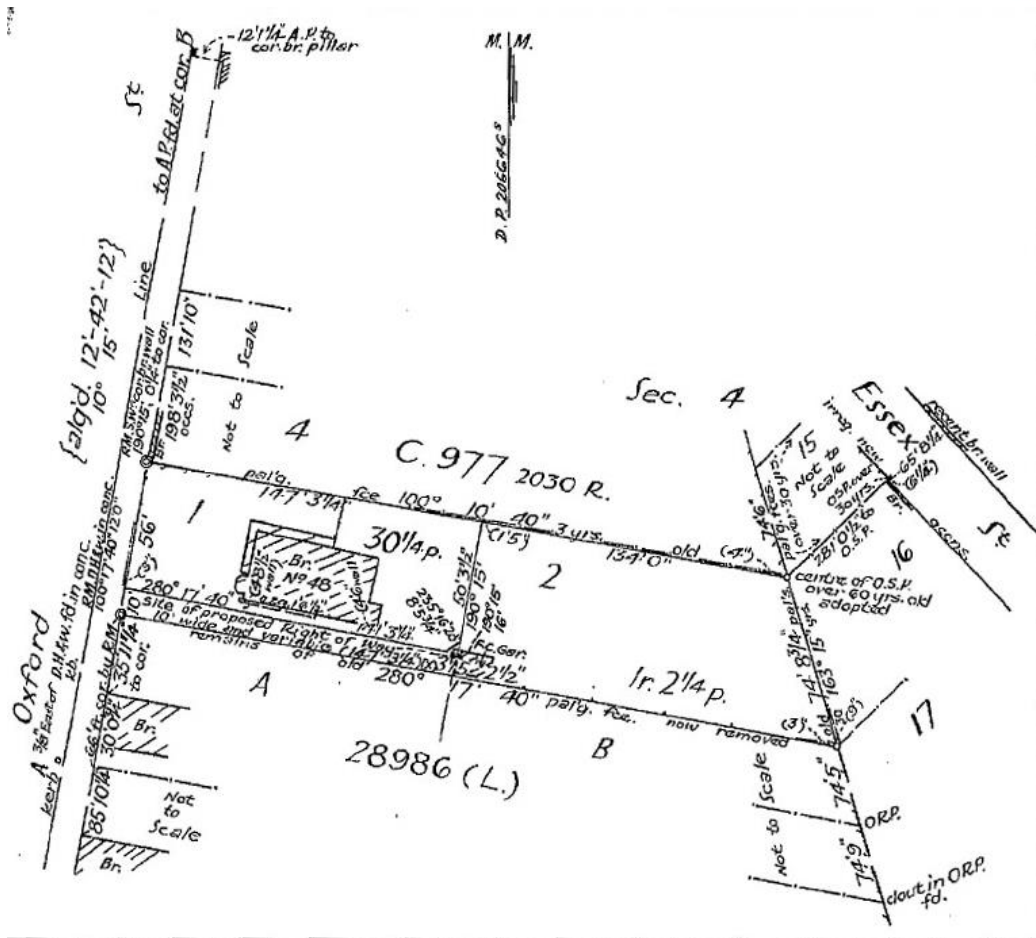


Figure 10 – DP 206646, Plan of Subdivision of Allotment 5, Sec 4 in Plan C977 2030R being the land in CT Vol 5124 Fol 246, comprising 48 Oxford Street. (Source: NSW Land & property information)

2.4 Lot 6 Section 5 (44-46 Oxford Street)

Lot 6 in Section 4 (Lot VV) of the Field of Mars Common was sold to Henry Perdriau senior for the sum of £42 10 shillings.¹³ He sold the allotment in August 1891 to John Kirkland of Balmain, merchant. The land remained undeveloped until 1912 when it was sold in January to Lionel James Thompson thence in April to Margaret Ann Mallaby, wife of William Mallaby of Epping, accountant. W Mallaby promptly lodged a successful building application to Hornsby Shire for a brick shop & residence in Oxford Street¹⁴ which was reported to be under construction in September the same year.¹⁵ It is not clear whether this was two separate buildings or a shop with dwelling above. The shop (with dwelling above) was later known as 44 Oxford Street. According to the Sands Directory, "Misses Mallaby, confectioners" and "W Mallaby" are listed sequentially in Oxford Street in 1914 possibly implying that the allotment comprised the shop and a separate residence.

¹³ Grant under the Field of Mars Common Resumption Act 1874, Vol 823 Fol 233, NSW Land & Property Information.

¹⁴ "Epping – Buildings Booming", *Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, 15 June 1912, p8.

¹⁵ "Epping- New Buildings", *Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, 10 August 1912, p8.

Margaret Mallaby sold part of her property (comprising one rood and 18 perches) to Thomas and William Sidney Ball in 1920. In *the Sands Directory*, Thomas Ball is listed in Oxford Street commencing in the same year. They established a bakery on the property (formerly the Mallaby sisters' confectionary shop at 44 Oxford Street).

The residue of Lot 6 owned by Margaret Mallaby comprising 22 ¼ perches was conveyed in May 1927 to Thomas Ball.¹⁶ He sold this property in October 1929 to William Charles Green of Balgowlah, master baker.

In 1920, the Ball's consolidated their two parts of Lot 6 on a single Certificate of Title Vol 3097 Fol 130, comprising one rood eighteen perches. This land contained the shop and bakery buildings at the rear. This property was sold to William Charles Green in October 1929. He did not operate the bakery at this site, instead leasing it to a succession of operators.¹⁷

Thus at the end of 1929 Green was the owner of the whole of Lot 6 of Section 4. The allotment was subsequently subdivided into Lot A (19 perches), and Lot B (one rood twenty-one and one quarter perches), respectively 46 and 44 Oxford Street. Lot B was sold to George Watsford Dando of Gladesville, bread manufacturer, in late 1954¹⁸ while Lot A was conveyed to the Victoria Bakery Pty Limited in January 1958.¹⁹ Lot B was subsequently sold to the Victoria Bakery Pty Limited in 1960.

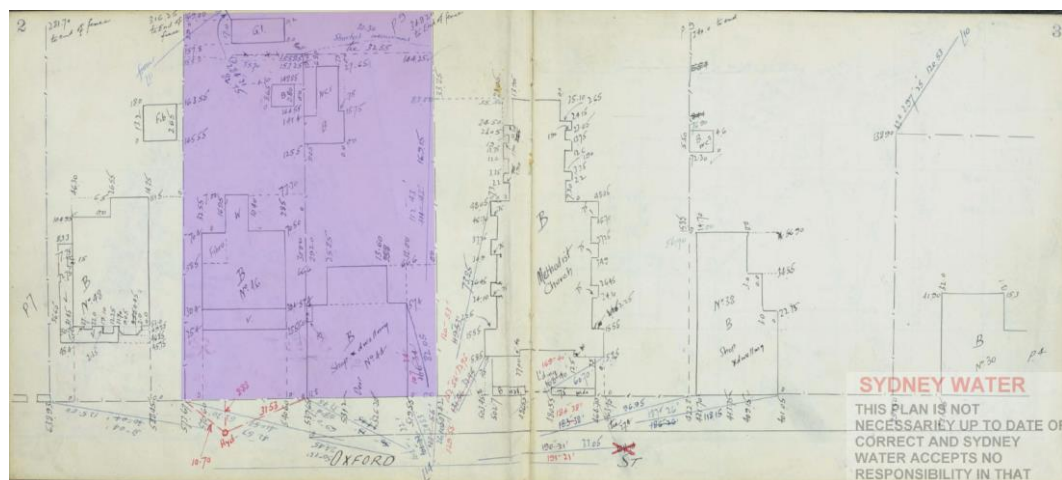


Figure 11 – Field Book 3389, Hornsby Sheet 56 (part), HE Lanyon (surveyor), 25 July 1938. 44 and 46 Oxford Street shaded purple thereon. (Source: Sydney Water Plan Room)

¹⁶ Certificate of Title Vol 3108 Fol 189, NSW Land & Property Information.

¹⁷ Certificate of Title Vol 3097 Fol 130, NSW Land & Property Information.

¹⁸ Certificate of Title 6954 Fol 15, NSW Land & Property Information.

¹⁹ Certificate of Title Vol 6954 Fol 16, NSW Land & Property Information.

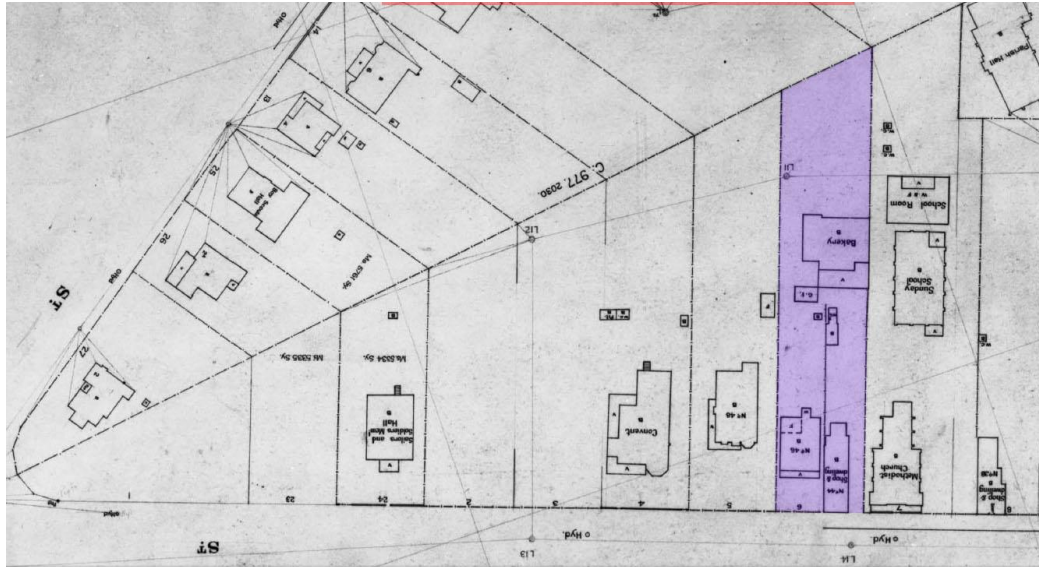


Figure 12 – Extract from DTS 2457 Hornsby Sheet 56, HE Lanyon (Surveyor), 3 Apr 1940, showing 44 and 46 Oxford Street shaded purple thereon. (Source: Sydney Water Plan Room)



Figure 13 – Extract from 1943 aerial survey of Sydney showing present cadastral boundaries of 44-46 Oxford Street. (Source: NSW Land & Property Information, SIX Maps)

Various building works were undertaken at 44 and 46 Oxford Street in the 1960s and 1970s including a “Bk & F/C office block” (1964), “storeroom” (1966), “carport” (1969), “radio mast” (1970), “retaining wall” (1971) and “F/C additions” (1973).

Both Lots A and B (44-46 Oxford Street) changed hands in November 1976 to Mermax Holdings Pty Limited, to AMP Society in November 1977, to Copeland Investments Limited in 1981 and to the MLC in 1982. Leases are recorded on the Certificates of Title for both allotments for various suites in the property over this same period. The present owner purchased both allotments in 1986.²⁰ "Oxford Place" as the commercial building is presently called, was most likely built in 1981 coinciding with Copeland Investments Limited ownership of the allotments; the original house, shop and bakery buildings were demolished at this time. The commercial office building was subsequently refurbished.

2.4.1 Edward Lewis Puckering

Edward Louis Puckering, born 19 December 1858 in Islington, Middlesex, England, United Kingdom, third son of William Puckering, cotton warehouseman, and Fanny Sarah Sanders. Arrived in Sydney on 1 March 1880 on the Duntrune as a 1st class passenger. He married Fanny Lucy Sanders at St Michaels Church, Surry Hills in 1884.

In May 1885 in the *Sydney Morning Herald* he placed the following advertisement:

Wanted – to purchase, store or drapery business or premises suitable, E.L. Puckering, 178 Albion Street, SH (Surry Hills).

Thereafter he is listed at various addresses, including 779 George Street, 402 George Street, and 207 Elizabeth Street, Redfern. Puckering & Company, drapers, is listed at 201 Elizabeth Street, Redfern when the company was registered in April 1903. He was heavily involved in the Epping Presbyterian Church.

He died on 17 December 1923 at Eulowrie, Oxford Street, Epping, aged 65 years. He was buried in the Presbyterian Section, Field of Mars Cemetery.

²⁰ Certificates of Title Vol 11652 Fol 117 and Vol 14511 Fol 238, NSW Land & Property Information.

3.0 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

3.1 The former House at 48 Oxford Street

The original section of the building is a single-storey former house that was built in a late Victorian style with a conventional plan. The building has a centralised front door leading to a through-hallway with the major four rooms leading off the hall. The roof is hipped with a transverse hip across the front facade and two parallel hips projecting from it towards the rear with a box gutter in between. It is constructed of load-bearing brick walls and a timber-framed floor and roof. A projecting faceted bay on the southern side of the front elevation terminates the front veranda constructed of cast metal treillage columns and lace brackets. The doors leading onto the veranda are set in small projecting bays as an unusual feature.

The face bricks are common bricks, likely made locally. The flat arched lintels are made of more expensive red bricks. The walls are bonded with lime mortar, but there is no tuck pointing. The covering of most of the internal walls with 5mm fibre cement sheet suggests that the walls move a little as is common for houses of this period constructed on reactive clay soils. The two chimneys are decorated with corbelling in a typically Victorian interpretation of a classical entablature, with glazed terra cotta chimney pots on top. The sill of the faceted bay has a profile that is the only external decorative element made of render. The roof is clad with new terra cotta tiles featuring volute finials and decorative ridge capping. The veranda is entirely reconstructed in a traditional form. The cast iron treillage columns and lace brackets were noted in 2010 as not being intact; the fact that the current veranda cast metal is perfectly consistent suggests that the veranda posts may have been replaced in their entirety with cast iron column pattern No. 6 from the Wagga Iron Foundry, or perhaps missing elements replaced to match. The veranda boards are clearly from c2010, as is the reconstructed bull-nosed roof framing and corrugated steel cladding.

The rear service wing was removed c2010, and replaced with a single-storey suite of offices facing a reinforced concrete car park.



Figure 14 — front view of the building showing reconstructed veranda and roof cladding, with recent landscaping in the foreground.



Figure 15 — the reconstructed veranda, with the northern side veranda enclosed in modern metal framed glass.



Figure 16 – northern view showing the side elevation with an original door and a pair of windows. To the right is the recent extension that replaced the rear service wing.

The original interior section of the building consists of the central hall and the pairs of rooms leading off each side. The walls appear to have been traditionally plastered with three coats of lime work, but most of the walls are now covered with the fibre-cement. The hall has an early cast plaster ceiling and cornice that have a style consistent with the 1920s, but could be earlier. The other ceilings are flat with a repeated period style cornice. The cornice pattern is even neatly accommodated in the rear northern room where the common wall with the hall has been removed to make a reception area. The flat ceilings would likely have originally been lath-and-plaster ceilings, but the presence of many services seamlessly penetrating suggests that the original ceilings have been replaced with plasterboard. The four main rooms have the same cornice, which is not a traditional decorating device from the period. It is likely that the cornices in the main four rooms have been reconstructed with a reproduction cast plaster cornice. The pilaster capitals on the piers midway down the hall appear to be a recent interpretation made of cast plaster profiles. The original fire breasts remain, but no mantelpieces or fire places remain.

The joinery is typical of the late Victorian period with a front door with side and top lights, French doors to the two northern rooms, and sash windows with a single pane to each sash. The door leading onto the veranda have glazed panels above the lock rail, while the original door in the southern façade has the traditional four panels of timber. All the doors and windows have recent stainless steel door furniture, including hinges, demonstrating that they have been reworked to a considerable extent, though the timbers may be original. The skirting boards have signs of wear suggesting that they are original. The architraves around the doors and windows also appear to be original, as is the window seat with hinged openings inside the faceted bay. The floor boards are likely to be original – the dark stain visible inside the window seat is consistent

with period floor treatment. The hardwood thresholds have been estapoled, but are otherwise original.



Figure 17 – the front door (original) in its projecting bay



Figure 18 – the hall looking towards the front door. The pre-cast plaster capitals appear to be a recent interpretation of what might have been.

3.2 Context of the Item

The building at 48 Oxford Street stands approximately 14m back from the street, with commercial buildings in its vicinity constructed much closer to the street frontage. The commercial building at Nos. 44–46 Oxford Street makes a dominant presence over the heritage item. The shop constructed in recent years in the front garden of the heritage item diminishes views to the former house.



Figure 19 – the former house at 48 Oxford Street (centre) seen from the opposite footpath.

The former house is the only remaining building constructed as a detached dwelling along Oxford Street between Chester and Pembroke Streets. While the building is visible from the street, it is set back from the commercial buildings on either side, and the building does not have a strong streetscape presence. The closest building constructed in a similar era is the Federation period shop at No. 38, but like all the other Federation period buildings in the street, the subject building cannot be seen in the same view with any of them.



Figure 20 — the rear of the subject building, showing recent extension.



Figure 21 — view from the rear of 44 Oxford Street looking towards the development at 44-46 Oxford Street.



Figure 22 — the east side of Oxford Street showing varied development. The two-storey shop is a heritage item.



Figure 23 — Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Church, directly opposite the subject building.



Figure 24 — the subject building is blocked in this view by these commercial developments.



Figure 25 — view south along Oxford Street from outside the subject building.

3.3 Curtilage

The legal curtilage of 48 Oxford Street is the allotment. The visual curtilage of the property extends from the line at the rear of the original four rooms of the former house, going to the front boundary, and excluding the footprint of the new pavilion built in the front garden. The rear of the allotment that is covered with a two-storey reinforced concrete carpark has no heritage significance and contributes no more to the heritage value of the house than an understanding of the original size of the allotment.

4.0 THE PROPOSAL

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.

The redevelopment scheme is illustrated in the drawing package by Nettleton Tribe Architects dated 6 June 2016.

Drawing Name	Drawing number	Issue	Date
Survey Plan	DA-01	A	06.06.2016
Demolition Plan	DA-02	A	06.06.2016
Site Plan	DA-03	A	06.06.2016
Basement Level 4	DA-04	A	06.06.2016
Basement Level 3	DA-05	A	06.06.2016
Basement Level 2	DA-06	A	06.06.2016
Basement Level 1	DA-07	A	06.06.2016
Lower Ground Plan	DA-08	A	06.06.2016
Upper Ground Plan	DA-09	A	06.06.2016
Level 1 Plan	DA-10	A	06.06.2016
Level 2 Plan	DA-11	A	06.06.2016
Level 3 Plan	DA-12	A	06.06.2016
Level 4-8 Plan	DA-13	A	06.06.2016
Level 9-13 Plan	DA-14	A	06.06.2016
Level 14 Plan	DA-15	A	06.06.2016
Level 15-16 Plan	DA-16	A	06.06.2016
Roof Plan	DA-17	A	06.06.2016
East & West Elevation – Tower A	DA-21	A	06.06.2016
East & West Elevation – Tower B	DA-22	A	06.06.2016
North Elevation	DA-23	A	06.06.2016
South Elevation	DA-24	A	06.06.2016
Section A	DA-31	A	06.06.2016
Section B & C	DA-32	A	06.06.2016
Shadow Diagram	DA-41	A	06.06.2016
Perspective	DA-61	A	06.06.2016

5.0 EVALUATION OF HERITAGE CONTROLS

For matters pertaining to planning controls and heritage management, the site is subject to the *Hornsby Local Environmental Plan, 2013* and the Hornsby Development Control Plan, 2013.

5.1 Compliance with the *Hornsby Local Environmental Plan, 2013*

The Hornsby LEP 2013 lists the following objectives.

5.10 Heritage conservation

(1) Objectives

The objectives of this clause are as follows:

- (a) to conserve the environmental heritage of Hornsby,*
- (b) to conserve the heritage significance of heritage items and heritage conservation areas, including associated fabric, settings and views,*
- (c) to conserve archaeological sites,*
- (d) to conserve Aboriginal objects and Aboriginal places of heritage significance.*

The proposed demolition of the subject heritage item would contravene these objectives in clause 5.10, but in the current zoning context, the redevelopment of the subject site responds to the zoning clause 2.2 of Hornsby LEP 2013, which describes a high-rise future character for the precinct. The maximum building height is 48m and a floor space ratio (FSR) of 4.5:1 applies to the site under the Hornsby Local Environmental Plan 2013 (HLEP).

6.0 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 Introduction

The following assessment of this application is based on the guidelines set out by the NSW Heritage Office (now Heritage Branch of the Department of Environment and Heritage) publication 'Statements of Heritage Impact', 2002. The standard format has been adapted to suit the circumstances of this application.

The following aspects of the proposal respect or enhance the heritage significance of the item or conservation area for the following reasons:

- The development would at best provide an opportunity for interpretation of the heritage item in the redevelopment.

The following aspects of the proposal could detrimentally impact on heritage significance. The reasons are explained as well as the measures to be taken to minimise impacts:

- The redevelopment would result in the demolition of the heritage item and the removal of all traces of the cultural landscape from the site. In this instance, the rezoning of the precinct to allow high-rise mixed use development close to Epping Railway Station would de-contextualise the heritage item, thereby reducing its heritage significance. The applicant has had discussions with Hornsby Council over the last two years (including a minuted meeting on 7 May 2015). This has included advice that the heritage significance of the item cannot be sustained with the high-rise development that is envisaged under the current zone, height and floor space ratio controls. For this reason, the applicant has argued that demolition of the item should be acceptable.

The following sympathetic solutions have been considered and discounted for the following reasons:

- Relocating the former house as a reassembled structure has been considered but rejected because the existing heritage building has had many elements reconstructed, and the ensuing relocated building would be unlikely to meet the threshold for local heritage listing.
- The urban design implications of retaining the heritage item would result in an even more isolated low-scale building. This would form a gap in the desired future character of a consistent street wall along Oxford Street. Considering how far back the building is from the street, the heritage item has little potential to be integrated with development on the site that comes close to achieving the allowable floor space ratio.

6.2 Demolition of a building or structure

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 it 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.

6.3 New development adjacent to a heritage item (including additional buildings and dual occupancies)

The proposed redevelopment is sited opposite Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic church at 29-31 Oxford Street. This is the nearest heritage item to the subject site. There is also a two-storey Federation period shop at 38 Oxford Street, approximately 25m to the south, separated by the Uniting (former Methodist) church. (Note that DA 1381/2015 has been submitted for the site at 38–40 Oxford Street, retaining the heritage item shop within a 16–17-storey mixed-use development)

How is the impact of the new development on the heritage significance of the item or area to be minimised? Is the new development sympathetic to the heritage item? In what way (eg form, siting, proportions, design)?

- The Catholic church is a more substantial building than the subject heritage item. The church bulk is likely to be seen in a similar scale as the podium of the proposed development. The proposed podium would rise to 3–4 storeys above ground, which is a similar scale to the church. The towers would be set back so that they would be blocked from view in close-up views from the public domain.
- The podium would be clad with brick panel screens, which would have a distant affinity with the heavy brickwork in the Inter-War Romanesque style church opposite.

Why is the new development required to be adjacent to a heritage item? How does the curtilage allowed around the heritage item contribute to the retention of its heritage significance?

- The proposed redevelopment would be on a discreet allotment at 44–48 Oxford Street. It would not intrude into the curtilage of another heritage item.

How does the new development affect views to, and from, the heritage item? What has been done to minimise negative effects?

- The proposed redevelopment would not have an impact on views to any other heritage item. The redevelopment would change the visual setting of the heritage items in this section of Oxford Street without impacting on their visibility from the public domain.

Is the development sited on any known, or potentially significant archaeological deposits? If so, have alternative sites been considered? Why were they rejected?

- The Archaeological report identifies that The Barren Hills Sawing Establishment cut up indigenous trees using convict labour in the vicinity of this site in the early Nineteenth Century. This report concludes that *The Subject Site has archaeological potential. Whether anything remains is unknown at this time.*

Will the additions visually dominate the heritage item? How has this been minimised?

- The redevelopment, when seen from afar, would have a dominant contrast in scale with the Catholic church opposite. This would come from the height of the high-rise residential towers. It needs to be acknowledged that the towers would be relatively slim. The podium responds to the desired future character for the area. As a broad massing of two-to-three storeys, the podium would form the major streetscape theme in pedestrian views from the street. The podium would have a scale that is complementary to the Catholic church, while the tall, slim towers would be at another scale, setback from the street, and feeling much further away.

Will the public, and users of the item, still be able to view and appreciate its significance?

- The proposed redevelopment will have no impact on the public's ability to view the other heritage items in Oxford Street.

7.0 CONCLUSION

The former house that is a heritage item at 48 Oxford Street, Epping has some heritage significance as a late Victorian dwelling, albeit one that has been altered, extended, with a reconstructed verandah and internal sheeting that was placed to hide the wall cracks. In view of the desired future character for the Epping town centre, the retention of this small-scale heritage item would look out of scale surrounded by vastly larger podiums and taller towers. The changed context would have an adverse heritage impact on the building. For these reasons, NBRS+Partners has come to the view that it may be acceptable to demolish the heritage item at 48 Oxford Street.

The proposed redevelopment of the site at 44-48 Oxford Street responds to the desired future character for the area as envisaged in the *Hornsby Local Environmental Plan, 2013* and the *Hornsby Development Control Plan, 2013*. It would assist in the facilitating the planned transformation of the Epping Town Centre. The development would change the context of the heritage item, Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic church opposite the subject site, but this

church is large enough, and set in a parish centre of buildings, that it would be able to assert a reasonable streetscape presence in the transformed precinct.



Brad Vale
Senior Heritage Consultant
NBRS+PARTNERS