Watkins Street
Urban Conservation Area
Heritage Study

DRAFT December 2013
10 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of Study

The purpose of the Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area Heritage Study is to:

- investigate and assess the heritage significance of the area;
- make recommendations for its conservation; and,
- provide a basis for potential future discussions with residents about the heritage values of their area and how to conserve these values.

1.2 Study Area

Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area is located in the suburb of Bondi to the south of Old South Head Road. Watkins Street is terminated by Anglesea Street at its eastern end and by Flood Street at its western end. (Figure 1).

The conservation area encompasses the houses on both sides of Watkins Street.

The Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area adjoins the Woodstock Street Urban Conservation Area which is located immediately to the west. The Flood Street Landscape Conservation Area runs along Flood Street. (Figure 2)

The Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area contains a large number of heritage items, Nos 1, 3 and 5 Watkins Street being the only properties which are not heritage items.
1.3 Background

A heritage conservation area is an area in which the historical origins and relationships between various elements create a sense of place that is worth keeping. Heritage areas reveal many different aspects of our cultural history. They show how Australians have responded physically, emotionally, socially and architecturally to the environment and how places have been variously occupied, used, ignored, refined, degraded or associated with Australian society over time.

A heritage study undertaken in 1993, Waverley Heritage Study, recommended that the area around Watkins Street be made a heritage conservation area and provided the following background history:

(The 1890s) was a period of transition in architecture. The economic downturn (of the 1890s) saw a move away from the excessive ostentation of the Late Victorian period. People had also tired of the standard Victorian designs and began experimenting with new styles...In Sydney the quality of bricks improved greatly, making stucco renderings unnecessary. Red face brick became popular. Marseille terra cotta tiles were introduced and also enjoyed demand.

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1 Heritage Office, Conservation Areas, 1996, p 3
A high proportion of buildings built in this period survive in reasonable condition. They give a quite good account of most of the major trends...

2-40 Watkins Street is both a conventional terrace and a distinctly transitional example. The distinguishing feature is the exposed red brick. In all other respects it is like its Late Victorian predecessors.\textsuperscript{2}

The Watkins Street Heritage Conservation Area was formally created in 1996 by Waverley Local Environmental Plan 1996.

1.4 Methodology

Research was undertaken using readily available documentary evidence.

Site visits were undertaken in September and October 2013. Unless otherwise noted, all photographs were taken by Kate Higgins during these visits.

The heritage significance of the conservation area has been assessed in accordance with NSW Heritage Division guideline Assessing Heritage Significance, NSW Heritage Office, 2001.

This report complies with the principles established by the The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance 2013.

The heritage inventory sheet for the conservation area has been prepared using the NSW Heritage Division State Heritage Inventory data sheet template.

1.5 Limitations

This study does not include an investigation or assessment of European or Aboriginal archaeology. Refer to the 1993 Waverley Heritage Study for a general discussion of Aboriginal occupation of the area prior to European settlement.

Research was generally limited to material and books held by Waverley Council and that readily available on the web.

A limited property title search was undertaken.

1.6 Study Author

The study has been prepared by Kate Higgins, B. Science (Architecture), B. Architecture, Master Heritage Conservation.

1.7 References

Books


B.T. Dowd, The History of the Waverley Municipal District, Municipality of Waverley, 1959


Trevor Howells, Towards The Dawn, Sydney, Hale and Iremonger, 1989

\textsuperscript{2} Perumal Murphy Wu, Waverley Heritage Study. Volume 2. Built Heritage Report, 1993, pp 13 -14
20 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Aboriginal occupation

There can be little doubt that Aboriginal people made use of the abundant fresh water available at Bondi, Tamarama and Bronte and that they fished and collected seafood from these waters and shores. The arrival of the British in 1788 led to local Aboriginal people losing control of their lands and to the death of many local Aboriginals through disease. This had a dramatic impact on traditional Aboriginal communities and their relationship to the land.

2.2 Settlement

2.2.1 Prior to Residential Development

While areas of the Waverley Municipality closer to New South Head Road and the beaches were settled and occupied early in the European history of the area, the Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area remained unoccupied at this time. A Parish Map dating from about 1830 shows early land grants in the area, including the land held by Barnett Levy near present day Bondi Junction, and that held by William Roberts at Bondi Beach. The land set aside for Sydney’s water supply (now Centennial Park) is also evident. The land within the present day Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area was still in the ownership of the Crown at this time (Figure 3).
2.2.2 Early Development Along the South Head Road

In 1811, work gangs supervised by Major Druitt constructed the South Head Road the basic carriageway skirting the sand drifts and lagoons between Bondi Beach and Rose Bay. The remoteness of the lands to the east of Sydney Town and the poor condition of the road prior to the 1820’s saw little settlement, and early land grants focused on the harbour slopes north of the road (Figure 3). After the reconstruction of South Head Road in the 1820s, the road became popular as an excursion route out of the town. Most carriages terminated at the Belle Vue lookout, now Bellevue Hill Park, rather than descend to the sandy valley which formed the hinterland to Bondi Beach.

The improved roadway, ocean and harbour vistas, a fashion for Marine Villas and opportunities generated by passing traffic, saw the beginnings of construction along the ridge line route of the South Head Road and in the valleys below through the 1820’s. Barnett Levy’s Waverley House of 1827 repeated the two storey form and pattern of Robert Coopers Juniper Hall c.1825 further to the west and of villas nestled into the shoreline of Watsons Bay below the South Head lighthouse.

Despite the frequent default of early land owners including Levey and John Piper, the economic depression in 1829, and the introduction of purchase grants in 1831, some development did occur in the 1830s in the area near the South Head Road east of Waverley House, including stone and timber cottages and an inn.

2.2.3 The Anglesea Estate

The land which incorporates the present day Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area is located on land purchased by Michael Woolley for 161 pounds on 2 February 1830.
1839. The land, Portion 321, comprising 11½ acres (4.6 hectares), extended south from Old South Head Road to the later line of Bondi Road (at that time called Waverley Street). The Parish Map of 1900 shows the extent of Woolley’s land (Figure 4).

Michael Woolley was an ironmonger in the business trading as T and M Woolley whose premises were located in George Street, Sydney. On the 27 February 1839, Woolley purchased two additional portions of land along Bondi Road, Portion 323, 14½ acres (5.9 hectares), and Portion 324, 13½ acres (5.5 hectares). These portions encompass present day Penkivil and Ocean Streets and are also shown on the 1900 Parish Map (see Figure 4).

![Figure 4: Parish of Alexandria. County of Cumberland. Metropolitan Land District Eastern Division NSW, 15 May 1900. The approximate location of the Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area has been outlined in red. Source: NSW Land and Property Information](image)

The association of the name Anglesea with the immediate setting of Watkins Street is recorded as early as February 1855 in advertisements in the Sydney Morning Herald where reference is made to the “Anglesea Estate”. The extent of this estate has not been determined, but may have been the 11½ acres of Woolley’s land. The “Anglesea Estate” this time was the early semi-rural estate rather than the later Anglesea Estate subdivision.

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3 B.T. Dowd, The History of the Waverley Municipal District, Municipality of Waverley, 1959, p 26
6 Sydney Morning Herald, 7 February 1855.
*Anglesea Villa* is mentioned in an advertisement in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of February 1858, with Mr McRoberts noted as being the resident at this time. The villa was then advertised To Let in June 1858 being described as a newly erected commodious cottage of eight rooms with extensive views of the ocean (Figure 5).

**Figure 5:** To Let advertisement for the *Anglesea Estate*
Source: *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 June 1858

*Anglesea Villa* was located on land bounded by New Street, Orr Street, and Old South Head Road, and immediately to the north of the later subdivision known as the “Anglesea Estate” (Figure 5). The area of land where *Anglesea Villa* was located was subdivided as the “Williams’ Estate” in 1900. *Anglesea Villa* appears to have remained until replaced by a residential flat building during the late twentieth century.

The subdivision of the Anglesea Estate was undertaken sometime prior to 1859 as allotments 47 and 48 of the Anglesea Estate were advertised for the sale at this time (Figure 6). The Estate subdivision is shown in Figure 7.

**Figure 6:** Advertisement of the sale of Lots 47 and 48 of the Anglesea Estate.
Source: *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 May 1859

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7 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 February 1858
8 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 May 1859. Additional evidence is provided a subdivision plan titled *Extension of Waverley Crescent* for sale by Brewster and Trebeck which has the date 1868 on the plan.
11 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 May 1859
The Anglesea Estate subdivision created Anglesea Street and Orr Street (formerly Mitchell Street).\textsuperscript{12} An old house variously referred to as “Wairoa”, “Mrs Schofields House”, and “Bondi House”, was located on the north-western corner of the subdivision near the intersection of Flood and Orr Streets. A local identity known as “Scotch Mary” lived in a cottage at the southern end of the subdivision near Bondi Road and ran a flock of goats. She had some local fame in the 1880s as a medicine women and concocted medicines of goats’ milk and herbs.\textsuperscript{13}

The Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area was originally part of the Anglesea Estate, and encompassed Lots 16, 17, 18, 19, 60, 61, 62 and 63 of the Estate (Figure 7).

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure7.png}
\caption{Plan of the Borough of Waverley, S Pollitzer, 1887. The location of the Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area is outlined in red.}
\source{National Library of Australia}
\end{figure}

\subsection{Re-Subdivision and Development}

The character of the area around the present day Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area in the later years of the nineteenth century is evident in the Metropolitan Detail Series Map of 1891, which shows scattered free standing houses and assorted out buildings, the size of the houses varying from substantial homes to modest cottages. No buildings are shown on land which comprises the present day Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area (Figure 8).

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure8.png}
\caption{Metropolitan Detail Series Map of 1891.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{12}B.T. Dowd, \textit{The History of the Waverley Municipal District}, Municipality of Waverley, 1959, p 26
\textsuperscript{13}B.T. Dowd, \textit{The History of the Waverley Municipal District}, Municipality of Waverley, 1959, p 27
On the 5 April 1895, the land comprising the present day Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area was bought by Reverend James Woolnough, Reverend George Lane, and John Corbett. Woolnough and Lane were both, at different times, presidents of the Conference of the Methodist Church in Australia. Woolnough acquired sole ownership of the land in January 1906 following the deaths of Lane and Corbett.\(^{14}\)

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\(^{14}\) Certificate of Title Vol 1159 Fol. 28
In August 1906, Woolnough sold the allotments which form the Conservation Area (allotments 16 to 19 and 60 to 63) along with his other allotments, to Maurice Neustadt, Bondi manufacturing agent. Neustadt re-sold allotments 16 to 19 and 60 to 63 three months later, on the 28 November 1906, to Thomas Longworth.¹⁵

A Raine and Horne auction notice for an auction to be held on the 8 December 1906, *Portion of Schofield’s Estate Bondi - Close to Waverley Park and Bellevue Hill Tram, Figure 10*) indicates that Neustadt had subdivided the land into thirteen allotments facing Flood and Anglesea Streets with the intention of putting up the lots for sale. However it appears that Longworth purchased the land prior to the auction and the auction did not proceed.

Thomas Longworth formally subdivided the land in 1908 creating Watkins Street, which was dedicated as a public road on 11 July 1908 (Figure 11).¹⁶ Watkins Street was made a straight road 66 feet (20 metres) wide running east-west. The width may have been a requirement of Council as the design of roads in new subdivision estates was a concern of Waverley Council, Council having decided in 1903 that no new subdivisions would be approved until the streets and lanes were laid out and made to the satisfaction of Council.¹⁷ Also, in 1906 local councils were given power to regulate road design, under Section 7.3 of the Local Government Act 1906.

It is likely that Watkins Street was named for Robert George Watkins who was Mayor of Waverley from 1906 to 1910.

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¹⁵ Certificate of Title Vol. 1729 Fol. 144
¹⁶ Certificate of Title Vol. 1729 Fol. 144
Figure 11: Land purchased by Thomas Longworth in 1906 showing the Watkins Street road dedication of 1908.
Source: Extract of Certificate of Title Vol. 1729 Fol. 124

Figure 12: The long piece of land on the northern side of Watkins Street created as part of the 1908 subdivision.
Source: Extract of Certificate of Title Vol. 1897 Fol. 55

Figure 13: The long piece of land on the southern side of Watkins Street created as part of the 1908 subdivision.
Source: Extract of Certificate of Title Vol. 1897 Fol. 56
The subdivision resulted in two long pieces of land facing Watkins Street, thus maximising the development potential of the land by allowing houses to be built facing the newly created street (figures 12 and 13). Longworth did not further subdivide the land into individual housing allotments. Instead, he retained the land as two large pieces of land on either side of Watkins Street, with the exception of an allotment of land at the western end of Watkins Street (No. 1 Watkins Street) which Longworth sold to Susan Cohen in 1908 for 566 pounds (Figures 14 and 15).

The making of Watkins Street resulted in the eventual creation of twenty-nine allotments on the land rather than the thirteen envisaged by Neustadt’s proposed subdivision, thus maximising the development potential of the land.

Thomas Longsworth built a row of terrace houses along the south side of Watkins Street and a series of larger semi-detached two-storey terraces along the northern side of the street. Construction of the buildings may have started prior to Longworth formally subdividing the land and dedicating the road as new houses are advertised to let in the Sydney Morning Herald on 15 July 1908 (Figure 16) indicating that the houses may have been under construction in 1907. Terrace houses are again offered to let in October 1908 (Figure 17). That 1907 was the year in which construction started on the houses in Watkins Street is supported by an advertisement placed in The Sydney Morning Herald on 27 June 1907 by H. Longsworth for ‘rubble work’

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18 Memorandum of Transfer 520305, dated 4 August 1908.
tenders for ten houses in Flood Street (Watkins Street not known at this time). This is not long after the purchase of the land by Thomas Longworth in November 1906.

The construction for the houses in Watkins Street occurred progressively in the short time span between 1907 to 1909. The terraces on the southern side of Watkins Street appear to have been constructed in groups of ten. The front section of all the terraces matched, however the rear section of each group of ten terraces differed slightly with as can be clearly seen on the 1943 aerial photograph (Figure 18) where the roofs of the rear building wings on Nos. 2 to 20 are set below the main roof, while the roofs of the rear wings of the terraces at Nos. 22 to 40 are set into the main roof. It may be that the rear wings of Nos. 2 to 20 were single storey while the rear wings of the other group, Nos 22 to 40, were double storey.

The houses were offered for rent and also for sale, although none were sold, perhaps because they were offered as a group rather than individually (Figures 16, 17 and 18).

A search of Sands Sydney Directory reveals that some of the houses in Watkins Street were occupied by 1909, and all of the houses by 1910. This supports the construction date of the buildings in Watkins Street being 1907 and 1909.

Thomas Longworth constructed a row of two storey terrace houses along the southern side of Watkins Street and a row of two storey semi-detached dwellings along the northern side of Watkins Street. The original houses were face brickwork with a verandah across the front elevation.
The table below show the occupants listed in *Sands Sydney Directory* for the years 1909, 1910 and 1913.\(^{19}\)

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\(^{19}\) *Sands Sydney Directory* of 1911 has the same occupants as the *Directory* of 1910 with the exception of No. 6 Watkins Street which has a different tenant.

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\[^{19}\] Sands Sydney Directory of 1911 has the same occupants as the Directory of 1910 with the exception of No. 6 Watkins Street which has a different tenant.
The land on the southern side of Watkins Street was further subdivided in 1924 and transferred to a number of Thomas Longworth’s sons. This subdivision created four equal allotments, each with five terrace houses (Figure 20). The land on the northern side of Watkins Street was transferred by Thomas Longworth to two of his sons and a son-in-law in 1918 and they subdivided and sold the land in 1931.

Figure 20: The four allotments created on the southern side of Watkins Street in 1924. Each contained five terrace houses.
Source: Extract of Certificate of Title Vol. 3663 Fol. 241

The land which comprises the present day Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area remained within the ownership of the Longworth family for 50 years up until the 1950s (with the exception of an allotment at the corner of Watkins and Flood Streets (No. 1 Watkins Street) which had been sold to Susan Cohen in 1908). An aerial photograph of 1943 shows that the character of the area at this time appears to be similar to that when the houses were first constructed (Figure 21).

Figure 21: 1943 aerial photograph. The location of the Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area is outline in red. Note the lack of street tree plantings.
Source: SIX Maps

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20 Waverley Town Clerk’s Certificate of Subdivision, 9 August 1924
21 Certificate of Title Vol 2140 Fol 93.
In the late 1950s the Longworth family began to subdivide the land. On the southern side of Watkins Street the land was subdivided so that each terrace house sat upon its own allotment and could therefore be sold as an individual dwelling. The allotments on the southern side of Watkins Street were subdivided and, with the exception of only a few allotments, each property was sold between 1957 and 1960.22 As an example, No. 32 Watkins Street was sold by Harold Longworth (son of Thomas Longworth) to Jack Hann, factory manager, for 1,635 pounds in 1958.23

The subdivision of the land on which the terrace houses were situated created roughly equal lots each with an area of about 4 ¼ perches (114 m²), frontages of about 15 feet (3 metres) and depths of about 51 feet (15.5 metres). The front fences shown as 9 inch (270 mm) stone walls. A rear service passageway was created behind Nos 32 to 40 Watkins Street (shaded blue in Figure 23). The arrangement of the terraces in 1958 can be seen in Figures 22 and 23.

The current subdivision pattern for the semi-detached houses on the northern side of Watkins Street was created by a 1958 subdivision and this subdivision pattern remains (Figures 24 and 25).24

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23 Certificate of Title Vol. 7779 Fol. 87
24 Deposited Plan 442730.
Figure 25: Arrangement of the semi-detached houses on the allotments created on the northern side of Watkins Street by the 1958 subdivision.
Source: Deposited Plan 442730

2.2.5 Thomas Longworth

The following information about Thomas Longworth, the businessman who developed what is now the Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area, is taken from the Australian Dictionary of Biography.

William Longworth (1846-1928) and Thomas Longworth (1857-1927), mine managers and industrial entrepreneurs, were the eldest and third sons of Thomas Longworth, coalminer, and his wife Rose..... Thomas Longworth senior.... under contract to the Australian Agricultural Co., migrated to New South Wales ...on 28 December 1849. Thomas (junior) was born on 5 April 1857 at Newcastle...and as a boy worked with his.... father in coal-mines around Newcastle.

In 1878 the family opened a small coal-mine at Rixs Creek, near Singleton. At All Saints Anglican Church, Singleton, Thomas married Frances Nowlan on 14 April 1884. The death of Thomas senior and thirteen other miners in a roof collapse on 30 September profoundly influenced the brothers and forged them into a close working relationship. They combined with their brother-in-law W. W. Robinson and (Sir) Albert Gould, both Singleton solicitors, and another local collier Dr Richard Reed, to produce coal suitable for the railways and installed extensive coking ovens at Rixs Creek. Finding insufficient outlet for coking coal, the partners in 1890 engaged an authority on copper mining and smelting who drew their attention to the Great Cobar copper mine, idle since 1889. They began negotiations to operate the mine on tribute and with the addition of A. A. Dangar formed the Great Cobar Mining Syndicate in 1894. Thomas Longworth moved to Cobar to take charge of operations, while William managed the Singleton Coal & Coke Co.
With copper prices low, Thomas introduced coke-fired blast furnaces, fitted with crucible water jackets, that lowered the reduction cost of the rich ores, which had a high gold content. By 1898 five blast furnaces were in use and electric lighting was installed in the works. Next year, improved furnaces using a hot blast were operating. The main shaft was deepened and connected to other workings by cross-cutting. With the price of copper at £70 a ton by 1899 of which £15 was paid as tribute, the syndicate purchased the mine outright in 1900.

At Lithgow, under William's direction, a refinery and electrolytic plant with an associated colliery were opened. By the electrolytic method he extracted gold worth over £20 a ton, leaving pure copper. From 1900 William and Thomas alternated as manager at Cobar. They persuaded the railway commissioners to supply water trains from Warren during the worst seven months of the 1902 drought to prevent closure of the mine and the dismissal of 600 men, and to reduce freight rates when copper prices fell in 1903. After rebuffing approaches from the Mount Lyell Mining and Railway Co. Ltd, in 1906 the syndicate sold to an English firm, Great Cobar Ltd, all their mines, smelters, refineries, collieries and coke works for £1,006,000 of which £800,000 was paid in cash to the six principals.

The same members of the syndicate founded Australian Woollen Mills Ltd at Marrickville in 1908, with William as a director and Thomas chairman in 1908-27. Under the latter's direction the factory expanded and contained the most efficient machinery available internationally. By early 1914 judicious management had made it possible to double the plant for carding, combing and spinning operations. During World War I the mill produced enormous quantities of khaki for the Australian Imperial Force as well as adequate supplies of khaki knitting wools for regimental comforts' funds. By 1927 A.W.M. operated 200 looms, employed 700 persons and manufactured only high-grade worsted serges.

The brothers also operated a brickworks, potteries and timber-mills at Thornton and had pastoral interests; William bred racehorses at Dulwich, near Nundah. As ‘W. T. Nowlan’ they jointly owned and raced such winners as Blue Metal (Summer Cup 1899 and 1900, and Australian Cup 1902) and Satin Bird (Epsom Handicap 1917).

Thomas moved to Lithgow in 1902 but in 1905 bought a mansion, Woollahra House, Point Piper, from the Cooper estate and built a steam yacht, Cobar, for use on Sydney Harbour. He died at Woollahra on 5 February 1927 and was buried in the Anglican section of South Head cemetery. Predeceased by his wife, he was survived by seven sons, and two daughters. His children inherited his estate, valued for probate at £305,582.25

2.2.6 Street Improvements

In 1977 Waverley Council undertook street improvement works, stating in a letter to residents that it “has been noted by Council that the cottages in Watkins Street are being renovated by their owners and these renovations are enhancing the appearance of the street”, and also, that the street improvement works will “further increase the aesthetic appeal and general environment of the street”.26

The improvement work realigned the wide straight carriageway into a narrower sinuous curve and created areas for passive recreation and community interaction on a grassed verge. Tree planting was undertaken to reduce the visual dominance of the roadway and to create “a parkland setting bordered by the picturesque cottages”.

The works required existing street trees to be relocated in order to provide “unobstructed community activity areas.”

The Mayor of Waverley, Ernie Page, held a meeting in Watkins Street on 16 April 1978 with residents, senior Council staff, and lecturers and student of The University of New South Wales Town Planning Department, to discuss the recently completed street improvements.

The works have resulted in a visually un-cohesive mixture of street planting and the envisaged play areas are not useable as such due to their small size and topography.

Figure 26: Watkins Street Proposed Street Improvement Works by Waverley Municipal Council. 14 July 1977.

2.2.7 Waverley in the Federation years

Waverley was originally comprised of small house holdings and minor rural and industrial undertakings, with later growth being the result of development of larger estates. In 1901 Waverley had 2,538 houses and a population of 12,342. In 1907 Waverley Municipality had 3,160 dwellings housing a population of 15,480. By 1909

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Waverley and a population of 18,540 living in 4,100 occupied dwellings, a 30% increase in dwellings since 1907. The growth in the number of dwellings had been encouraged by the subdivision of the early large estates and by the attractiveness of the area, not least due to a regular tram service to the city and other areas of employment.

Watkins Street was close to the trams which ran along Bondi Road and to Bondi Junction, the local shopping village. The Watkins Street speculative development was a continuation of development near Bondi Junction, and is adjacent to the Woodstock Urban Conservation Area which was developed earlier.

Small speculative developments such as that undertaken in Watkins Street were not uncommon, and continued development practices from the Victorian period in providing housing considered suitable for workers and the lower middle class.

30 CHARACTER OF THE AREA

3.1 Context

The Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area is set within a residential area characterised by a variety of housing types, scales, styles and dates.

![Figure 27: Aerial photograph of the Watkins Street context. Note the variety of building types. Source: SIX maps.](image)

3.2 Subdivision pattern and allotment layout

The Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area has a regular subdivision pattern of rectangular shaped allotments.
On the northern side of the street are five equal allotments upon which sit two storey semi-detached houses, and an allotment located on the corner of Flood Street that has a single storey detached house. The five equal allotments have a width of about 9.5 metres and a depth of about 16 metres. The area of each allotment is about 145 sq. metres. The semi-detached terraces have a small front garden in the street setback and a private garden running along one of the long sides of the allotment. There is not the possibility of a rear garden as the houses extend to the rear boundary.

The allotments on the southern side of Watkins Street are occupied by a row of twenty terrace houses. Each allotment has a width of about 4.4 metres and a depth of about 27 metres. The area of each allotment is about 107.5 sq. metres. The terraces have a 1.2 metre setback for a front garden and a rear courtyard area created by the stepping in of the original rear service wing. The depth of the allotment for the four terraces at the eastern end of Watkins Street is reduced by 1.2 metres as a right of way has been created behind these allotments.

The subdivision created Watkins Street, a straight street running east-west, with a width of 20 metres (66 feet). Watkins Street runs between Flood Street to the west and Anglesea Street to the east.

![Figure 28: Aerial view of Watkins Street](source:SIX maps)

### 3.3 Streetscape

The Watkins Street streetscape is characterised by a multi-curved road, a mixture of street tree plantings, and a wide grassed area at the eastern and western ends of the street. The vista at either end of the street is terminated by housing.
Watkins Street slopes gently to the east from Flood Street down to Anglesea Street. The terraces and semi-detached houses step down the hill in pairs.

The footpath, kerb and gutter are concrete.

Figure 29: Looking east along Watkins Street

Figure 30: Looking west along Watkins Street
Figure 31: The row of terraces which forms the southern side of Watkins Street – looking east from near Flood Street.

Figure 32: The row of terraces which forms the southern side of Watkins Street – looking west from Anglesea Street.
3.4 Buildings

The houses in the Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area display a uniformity of architectural style, form, scale, material, details and colour, which contributes greatly to the visual harmony of the area. This uniformity is the result of the short period of their construction, the building materials that were readily available, and the use of a consistent design.

3.4.1 Federation Period Style

The houses in the Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area were built in the Federation period (1890 – 1914). Architecture in Australia during this time had a range of stylistic influences, although domestic architecture of the period was largely influenced by the Queen Anne style fashionable in Great Britain. The Federation style house was typically single storey and free-standing with a large spreading roof, exuberant detail and natural materials. The roof was complicated by an asymmetrical floor plan, and often featured projecting gables, decorative terracotta ridge cappings, and picturesque chimneys. The roof usually extended in an unbroken line across the verandah and was typically covered with terracotta roofing tiles imported from Marseille, France.

The houses in the conservation area are Federation style buildings that, like many buildings built at this time, also have architectural elements typical of the earlier Victorian period. The use of elements from the earlier Victoria period in combination with the new architectural features fashionable in the Federation period, was not uncommon. Slate roofs are seen on Federation houses as well as cast iron lace work. In the case of the houses in Watkins Street, cast iron decorative lacework was used on the front verandahs and the houses have cast iron palisade front fences, even

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though at the time the houses in Watkins Street were constructed, cast iron architectural elements had come to be considered as old fashioned.\textsuperscript{34} It may be that, being no longer fashionable, the Victorian cast iron architectural elements were cheaper than their new Federation style counterparts, or that the popular new Federation joinery elements were in short supply.

A key difference between earlier Victorian housing and housing built during the Federation period is the use of face brickwork for the external walls rather than the walls being rendered and painted. High quality bricks had become readily available due to the importation of brick making machines which replaced the old hand making method. The quality of the bricks was such that they did not need to be rendered, thus saving considerably on building costs. The typical bricks for front facades were warm coloured red face brick walls, with brown commons often used for the side and rear walls, particularly on less expensive housing.

![Figure 34: A newspaper article on the demand for bricks.](Source: Sunday Times, 25 June 1905)

Marseille roof tiles were another new fashionable material and the tiles were imported into Australia in large numbers. Wunderlich was one of the largest importers and sellers and from 1889 up until 1914 (when shipping was interrupted by WW1), more

\textsuperscript{34} Richard Apperley, Robert Irvine and Peter Reynolds, \textit{A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture. Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present}, Angus and Robertson, 1994, p108
than 75,000,000 million tiles had been imported through Wunderlich’s Neutral Bay Wharf. Wunderlich enthusiastically promoted Marseille tiles:

The artistic trend of domestic architecture gives the architect great scope for picturesque outlines in his designs, and the quaint gables, chimney stacks and skyline of the modern home is greatly enhanced by the use of terracotta roofing tiles and accessories. There is a restful charm about the villa roofed with Wunderlich Marseille tiles. The deep shadows of its overhanging eaves and gables breathe that feeling of repose only assured under a roof which is sound and weatherproof

Marseille tiles...are rich in colour, strong, reliable, or hard surface, absorption or moisture reduced to a minimum, and they are perfect insulators and keep the building warm in Winter and cool in Summer. ....Our tiles are imperishable and withstand climatic change35

![Advertisement for Marseille tiles.](image)

Figure 35: Advertisement for Marseille tiles.
Source: Sydney Morning Herald, 5 October 1907

3.4.2 Terrace Houses

The terrace houses on the south side of Watkins Street are two storeys high with steeply pitched roofs and a verandah stretching between the party walls. The decorative detail is restricted to the front facade of the terraces.

The terraces almost certainly were built in rows of ten, as the design of the rear section of the terraces is different for each group of ten terraces. The rear wings of the terraces at Nos. 2 – 20 Watkins Street appear to have been single storey with the roof set below the main roof over the front section of the terrace. The rear wing of the terraces at Nos. 22 – 40 Watkins Street appear to have been two storey with the roof set into the main roof over the front section of the terrace. (Refer to the 1943 aerial photograph in Figure 21. Also development application DA220/2006 for No. 14 Watkins Street which states that the rear wing was single storey at the time of the application.)

It has not been able to be determined if the verandah of the terraces originally had a single large double hung window or a pair of French doors. All the terraces except one currently have French doors, however all the doors are of a slightly different

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design, indicating that they may not be original. The verandah doors may have had shutters or half shutters.

Typical Federation details include:

- the main roof of the front section of the terrace extends to encompass the verandah in an unbroken line
- tile roof (originally terracotta)
- the front walls of the terraces being tuck pointed red face brickwork, with the side walls being face brick commons
- decorative rendered elements of the stepping party walls
- a pair of tall front windows with painted and rendered sills and triple row of header bricks forming a slightly arched opening
- double timber hung windows
- timber front door with two rectangular timber panels at the base, a central glazed square panel, and at the top, two square glazed panels (the original glass may have been coloured)
- fanlight above the entry door
- triple row of header bricks forming a slightly arched door opening
- timber lining boards forming the ceiling of the verandah
- ornamental timber verandah valance (used in combination with cast iron lacework)
- terracotta chimney pots
- exposed rafter ends

Elements typical of the Victorian period include:

- terrace form (and most likely the floor plan)
- decorative cast iron balustrades, and verandah fringes
- cast iron palisade fence

Figure 36: Nos.2 and 4 Watkins Street. These buildings make an important contribution to the conservation area because of their intactness and prominent position.
Figure 37: The terraces step down the hill in pairs. Changes such as dormer windows, enclosure of verandahs, and painted face brickwork are clearly evident.

Figure 38: The rear and end facade of No. 40 Watkins Street. Provides a good understanding of the form of the original terraces.

Figure 39: No. 18 Watkins Street showing the original lacework and verandah detailing.
Figure 40: No.6 Watkins Street showing the original palisade fence set into a sandstone base, and gate. Also evident is the face brickwork front wall, and pair of tall narrow front windows.

Figure 41: No.6 Watkins Street showing the original tessellated verandah floor tiles and the bullnose slate edge. The rendered and painted window sills and wall are also evident, together with the original terracotta ventilator.
| Figure 42: Detail of the verandah showing the lacework and timber mouldings. |
| Figure 43: Detail of the party wall showing decorative rendered elements and the stepping of the wall. |
3.4.3 Semi-detached Houses

Four pairs of two storey semi-detached houses stand on the northern side of Watkins Street.

The single-storeyed, semi-detached houses are a transitional form between the terrace house and the free-standing dwelling. They exploit the economies of a party wall between two adjoining houses and a continuous roof structure over both occupancies. But by setting back the house’s walls from the side boundaries the design allows access from the front garden to the back yard and provides light and air to rooms facing the side of the house. Most semi-detached houses were speculatively built and aimed towards the low income end of the housing market.36

Typical Federation details evident on the semi-detached houses include:

- simplicity of the decorative detail
- the main roof covering the front section of the terrace extending across to encompass the verandah
- hipped and tiled roof (originally terracotta) both semis sitting under a single large roof
- brick chimneys with decorative rendered tops and bases
- the front walls of the terraces being tuck pointed red face brickwork, with the side walls being face brick commons
- triple row of header bricks forming the slightly arched door and window openings the dark colour of the bricks providing a decorative contrast the red face brick walls
- a pair of tall front windows with painted and rendered sills

• timber front door with three long narrow rectangular timber panels surmounted by a glazed horizontal panel (the original glass may have been coloured)
• fanlight above the entry door
• a timber verandah post, timber valence, timber boarding as the verandah ceiling, exposed rafter ends
• terracotta chimney pots

Elements typical of the Victorian period include:
• decorative cast iron balustrades, and verandah fringes
• cast iron palisade fence

Figure 45: Nos. 15 and 17 Watkins Street.

Figure 46: Nos. 11 and 13 Watkins Street. The face brickwork has been painted.
Figure 47: Nos. 7 and 9 Watkins Street.

Figure 48: Nos. 3 and 5 Watkins Street.

Figure 49: No. 3 Watkins Street. A bay window has been added and a two storey extension at the side. The roof has been changed to accommodate the addition.
Figure 50: Verandah detail.

Figure 51: No. 11 Watkins Street. The original palisade fence set in a sandstone base, and verandah floor and entry path finish are evident.

Figure 52: Front windows. Note the dark coloured brick arch above the window.
3.4.4 No. 1 Watkins Street

No. 1 Watkins Street is a free-standing single storey modest Federation bungalow with a short projecting front wing which gives the house an asymmetrical plan. The
steeply pitched roof is tiled with decorative ridge tiles, and the walls of the house are painted. The front wing has a street facing gable while the verandah across the main body of the house is terminated by the front wing.

A modern garage has been built at the side of the house.

Figure 56: No. 1 Watkins Street.

3.4.5 Integrity

All the houses in the conservation area have undergone some degree of change, particularly at the rear. Some of the semi-detached houses have a garage or car space in the original side garden. Many of the terraces appear to have had an extension at the side and all the terraces appear to have had changes to the original rear section of the building. The building most adversely affected by unsympathetic changes is No. 3 Watkins Street which has a large side extension under an encompassing roof, and a bay window added to the ground floor facade.

The most visible changes are additions, new garages, and the replacement of original details and materials on the visible facades. Changes include:

- painting of original face brick walls
- enclosure of the first floor verandah
- replacement of the original terracotta tile roofs with tiles of a different material and shape
- replacement of original verandah floor tiles
- painting of sandstone
- original front fences replaced eg with tall brick fences
- front gardens hard paved
- dormer windows to the front roof plain of the terraces. The dormers display a variety of styles and forms
- door/window to the verandahs of the terrace houses
4.0 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The comparative analysis is undertaken with regard to conservation areas within the Waverley Local Government Area, and in a general way, with regard to conservation areas within the Sydney metropolitan region.

4.1 Waverley Local Government Area

There are seventeen urban conservation areas in the Waverley local government area. The Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area is compared to these areas with regard to the key historical period of development for each area. The key historical periods of the conservation areas has been determined from Waverley Heritage Assessment, 2007 (Meyers and Brady) and Bondi Junction Heritage Assessment, 2004 (Meyers and Brady).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urban conservation area</th>
<th>Key historical period/s of development</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blenheim</td>
<td>Victorian and Federation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bondi Beach</td>
<td>Inter-War (flats)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Botany</td>
<td>Victorian and Federation and Inter-War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brighton Boulevard</td>
<td>Inter-War (flats)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown Street</td>
<td>Federation and Inter-War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Busby Parade</td>
<td>Victorian and Federation and Inter-War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charing Cross</td>
<td>Federation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collingwood Street</td>
<td>Federation and Inter-War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evans Street</td>
<td>Victorian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grafton Street</td>
<td>Victorian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperial Avenue</td>
<td>Federation and Inter-War</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mill Hill</td>
<td>Victorian and Federation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Palmerston Avenue</td>
<td>Inter-War (flats)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Queens Park</td>
<td>Victorian and Federation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Watkins Street</td>
<td>Federation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodstock</td>
<td>Victorian and Federation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yenda Avenue</td>
<td>Inter-War (houses)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area is one of two wholly Federation period conservation areas in the Waverley Local Government Area. Nine other urban conservation areas contain Federation period buildings along with buildings of other historic architectural periods.

4.2 Sydney Metropolitan Area

The Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area is one of a large number of Inter-War heritage conservation areas in the Sydney metropolitan area, the percentage of Inter-War heritage conservation areas comprising approximately 17% of all conservation areas. There are more Inter-War conservation areas than any other type of conservation area (with regard to the period of development). An approximate further 45% of the total of all conservation areas are areas with mixed architectural periods that include Inter-War buildings.\(^{37}\)

The Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area is not rare in the Sydney metropolitan region.

\(^{37}\) Kate Higgins, *Sydney Metropolitan Conservation Areas: An Investigation*, 1911, p 19
5.0 ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

5.1 Cultural Significance

Cultural significance is synonymous with ‘heritage significance’. It is the terminology used by *The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance 2013* (Burra Charter) which defines cultural significance as the aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual values of a place for past, present or future generations.

Cultural significance is embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects.

The assessment of heritage significance relies on an understanding and analysis of documentary and physical evidence of the Watkins Avenue Urban Conservation Area.

5.2 Assessment Methodology

The NSW Heritage Division has established guidelines for the assessment of cultural significance of places and for the statement of significance for the place. The guidelines incorporate the five types of cultural heritage values identified in the ICOMOS Burra Charter into a specifically structured framework which is currently accepted as the required format by heritage authorities in New South Wales.

The guidelines are set out in the NSW Heritage Branch publication, *Assessing Heritage Significance*, which proposes seven criteria for the assessment of heritage significance. The seven detailed assessment criteria are:

Criterion (a) An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

Criterion (b) An item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW’s cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

Criterion (c) An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area).

Criterion (d) An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

Criterion (e) An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW’s cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

Criterion (f) An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW’s cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

Criterion (g) An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW’s cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments (or a class of the local area’s cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments).
5.3 Assessment of Heritage Significance

Criterion (a) An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW’s cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

The Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area is a relatively intact and cohesive Federation subdivision and residential development undertaken between 1907 and 1909.

The Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area demonstrates the ongoing development of the area near Bondi Junction in the early twentieth century.

The Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area demonstrates suburban residential development undertaken for the working and lower middle classes during the early years of the twentieth century.

The area demonstrates the history of land subdivision and re-subdivision in Waverley as land became more valuable and desirable for housing, continuing the pattern of development established in the Victorian period.

The Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area demonstrates the Victorian characteristic of maximising the development potential of land through the use of the terrace house form, and also the concern for providing greater residential amenity as is evident in the semi-detached housing common in the Federation period.

The face brickwork of the buildings in the conservation area illustrates the new brick making technology introduced into Australia at the turn of the twentieth century which ensured bricks of high quality could be produced at a cost effective price.

Criterion (b) An item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW’s cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

This criterion is not satisfied.

The Watkins Avenue Urban Conservation Area has an association with William Longworth and the Longworth family. However, there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that this association is important to the history of the Waverley area.

Criterion (c) An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area).

The Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area is an attractive collection of relatively intact Federation houses displaying features of the earlier Victorian period. The area has a visual cohesiveness due to the similarity of house form, scale, siting, materials, detailing, and decorative elements on the front facade.

The Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area is visually pleasing due to the consistent character of the buildings and to the front gardens and some of the mature street tree plantings.
The Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area demonstrates the primary importance of the front facade and front garden in the design.

**Criterion (d) An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.**

This criterion has not been able to be evaluated. Listing as a conservation area in Waverley Council’s local environmental plan since 1996 does however imply a continuing level of community regard for the area.

**Criterion (e) An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW’s cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).**

This criterion is not satisfied.

**Criterion (f) An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW’s cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).**

The Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area is rare in the Waverley Local Government Area as it is one of only two conservation areas wholly comprised of buildings of the Federation period. However there are several conservation areas which contain houses from the Federation period including terrace housing similar to that of Watkins Street.

The Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area is not rare within the Sydney metropolitan area.

**Criterion (g) An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW’s cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments (or a class of the local area’s cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments).**

The Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area is typical of suburban development comprising Federation period buildings which also incorporate architectural elements of the Victorian period.

### 5.4 Statement of Significance

The Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area illustrates the historical development of the area near Bondi Junction in the early years of the twentieth century as land was subdivided and re-subdivided and the present day streets created.

The Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area demonstrates the characteristic of maximising the development potential of land through the use of the terrace house form more typical of the Victorian period, and also the increasing concern for providing greater residential amenity as is evident in the semi-detached housing common in the Federation period. The houses illustrate housing developments undertaken for the working and lower middle classes during the early years of the twentieth century.
The Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area is an attractive and visually consistent streetscape with a collection of relatively intact modest Federation houses displaying features of the earlier Victorian period.

5.5 Gradings of Significance

Different components of a place make a different contribution to its heritage significance. The significance of the buildings in the Watkins Avenue Urban Conservation Area has been graded with regard to the level of contribution each building makes to the significance of the conservation area.

- Contributory buildings are those which make an important contribution to the heritage significance and character of the conservation area.
- Neutral buildings are those
- Intrusive buildings are

All the properties within the Watkins Street Urban Conservation Area are contributory buildings.

![Contributory items map.](image)

**Legend**
- Contributory
- Neutral
- Intrusive
- Urban conservation boundary
6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Contributory buildings and their original features should be retained and any unsympathetic elements removed.
2. The existing subdivision pattern should be retained.
3. Existing front setbacks should be retained. A soft soil area with garden plantings should be located at the street frontage.
4. The main body of the dwellings, including the main roof, should be retained. Where the original form of the main section of the building (as presented to the street) has been lost, it should be reinstated.
5. The main body of the dwelling should remain the dominant element on the site, and the front facade the dominant visual feature. New additions need to be carefully designed to be not visible from the street or to be visually recessive. In some cases it may be appropriate for additions to match the existing building, in other cases a simple contemporary design may be a better option.
6. Dormer windows are acceptable in the front roof plane but should be traditional in design and proportions.
7. Original front fences should be retained, repaired and, reconstructed.
8. Original external architectural details on the front facades and on any side facades visible from the street, should be retained, repaired and reconstructed as appropriate. Many original details remain on houses in the street. The details which are original to the group should be determined and used for the purpose of reconstruction. Missing elements should generally be replaced with the same material as the original detail.
9. Face brickwork and sandstone are not to be rendered or painted.
10. Where possible, paint should be carefully removed from originally unpainted sandstone elements.
11. Original external finishes should be retained and reinstated where appropriate. Roof tiles should be terracotta tiles to match the originals.
12. The consistency of colour is also important. Colours should be traditional and should highlight architectural features in a way similar to the original. Home owners should be encouraged when repainting their houses to choose colours similar to the original face brickwork and sandstone, with the cast iron lace work a contrasting colour. The timber windows would traditionally have been a light cream/off-white.
13. Garages can be built to the sides of the semi-detached houses. The garages should have flat roofs and be rendered and painted. The roof of the garage may serve as an outdoor terrace area so long as the balustrade is a simple open design. The height of the garage should be kept to a minimum. The wall of the garage should not extend up to form a parapet for the terrace.
14. A new landscape scheme should be prepared for the street in consultation with property owners. Consideration should be given to straightening the road and new street tree plantings.
15. On-site parking is not to be allowed in the front gardens of the terrace houses.
16. A heritage impact statement should be required for proposed work.