

Area 6 Scarvell Estate Conservation Area

Landform

This area comprises gently sloping land on the eastern slope of Catherine Street. It slopes down to Whites Creek and the remains of the small-scale early twentieth industrial activities that characterised the reclaimed estuarine areas of the Leichhardt Municipality.



Figure 6.1 Scarvell Estate Conservation Area Map.

History

This land was once part of Martha Moore's original land grant of 16 acres (pre-1811). It was subdivided into smaller parcels and then sold as part of the Redmond's Estate. This parcel, comprising the Scarvell Estate, was resubdivided for suburban development in 1902, and laid out to gain as many allotments as possible from its odd shape. Most allotments are about 20ft wide. Those within the central portion of the subdivision have varied depths. Each title carried a covenant requiring that the building be constructed of brick or stone to ensure a certain standard of dwelling.

The area was constructed over a short period, at the end of the 1890s Depression. Some of the small scale builders took the opportunity to join their allotments together and build groups of terraces, or some pairs of semis, gaining some extra internal space for the dwellings. Occasionally two adjoining allotments are combined to provide for one double-fronted house.

Significant Characteristics

- A notably unified townscape constructed over a short period of time.
- Single storey in scale.
- Single-fronted buildings (mostly) – detached, semi-detached and terraced; a few double-fronted buildings.

- Hipped and gabled roofs.
- Face brick construction.
- Terracotta tiled roofs; occasional slate roof; some iron roofs mostly to verandahs.
- Decorative street facades – elaborate chimneys, moulded and patterned front gables, wall and path tiles, plaster mouldings around corners, windows etc; squat 'towers' over entrances.
- Regular front setbacks.
- Small green front gardens.
- Fences low – mostly of face brick and contemporary with the house.
- Cement footpaths in green (lawn) verge.
- Sandstone kerbs and gutters, largely uninterrupted by driveway crossings.
- Remnants of street planting (brush box) in carriageway in North and South Avenues.
- Strong pattern of hips or gables alternating with spaces between buildings.
- Skyline with ridging and chimneys, particularly noticeable from The Avenue.
- Very intact townscape with little demolition of original buildings.
- Little detracting development, the few exceptions including a 1960s two-storey red brick block of flats, and two two-storey additions to houses in Catherine Street.

Statement of Significance or Why the Area is Important

One of a number of conservation areas which collectively illustrate the nature of Sydney's early suburbs and Leichhardt's suburban growth, particularly between 1871 and 1891, with pockets of infill up to the end of the 1930s (ie prior to World War II). This area was developed over a short period of time between 1902 and c1910 and is significant for its surviving development from that period.

- Through its pattern of subdivision and the scale, shape, siting and materials of its buildings it provides a very intact example of an early twentieth-century tradesmen's suburb
- It demonstrates, through its architectural embellishments, the social aspirations of its first residents.
- It is of streetscape value for its fine unified collection of single-storey houses almost exclusively of the 1902-1910 period; for the very strong pattern formed from the gables/hips of the buildings alternating with V-shaped spaces between the roofs; and for the decorative skyline of ridges and chimneys particularly noticeable along the southern boundary of the area.

- It clearly illustrates through its construction materials, the ready availability of machine-made face bricks in Sydney by the early twentieth century.

Management of Heritage Values

Generally

This is a conservation area. Little change can be expected other than modest additions and discrete alterations. Buildings which do not contribute to the heritage significance of the area may be replaced with sympathetically designed infill.

Retain

- All sandstone kerbs and gutters, uninterrupted by any new vehicular driveways.
- All existing buildings, except the 1960s flats.
- All face brick walls and original or early roofing materials. Encourage restitution of face brick where it has been plastered or painted in recent years.
- All brick fences contemporary with the construction of the houses.
- All original architectural features.

Avoid

- Amalgamation of any allotment to create larger building sites.
- Two-storey additions – extensions should be to rear of existing house only.
- Demolition of any residential building except the 1960s flats or any other building/part of building that is known to be of post-1960 origin.
- Painting or plastering of any unpainted brick surface.
- Road chicanes which alter the line of the streets.
- Timber picket fences.
- Outside the conservation area any building which might intrude onto the sharp decorative skyline formed from all the buildings along the southern side of South Avenue.