

## HCA 4 Railway Street (Petersham) Heritage Conservation Area

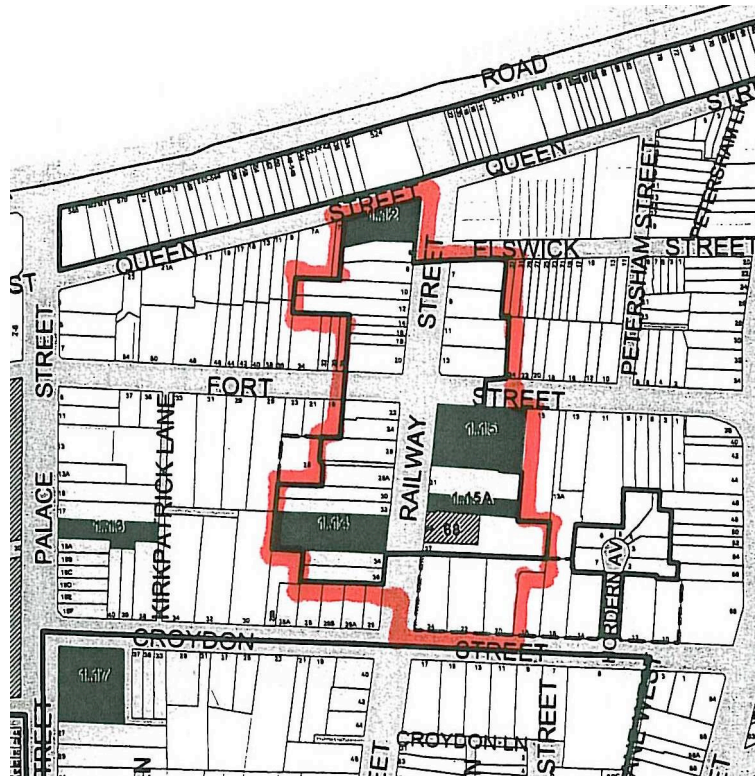


Figure 4.1 HCA 4 Railway Street Heritage Conservation Area



## 4.1 LOCATION

The Railway Street Heritage Conservation Area is located in north Petersham between Parramatta Road and Croydon Street; and between Palace and Crystal Streets.



Figure 4.2 The Area in 1943 and 2009 (source: NSW Lands Department SIX Viewer)

## 4.2 DESCRIPTION

The Railway Street Heritage Conservation Area is within the same subdivision of the Sydenham Estate as HCA 3 (the Petersham Estate). It is characterised by a wide range of architectural styles, including groups of high quality and substantially intact Victorian villas, two-storey terraces, Victorian cottages, a group of good-quality single storey Federation cottages, a Spanish Mission flat building; an Inter-War block of flats, and a church. A variety of approaches to layering can also be found, although the underlying forms can readily be interpreted and the contemporary forms contribute to the prevailing diversity of the precinct.

Although situated close to Parramatta Road the area has retained a residential character, the only significant non-residential structure being the former Petersham Congregational Church. The area also includes several residential flat buildings and converted grand houses. One large infill development created after the demolition of a building which was a pair to the surviving Spanish Mission flat building is intrusive in the area due to its unsympathetic proportioning and large footprint. The western elevation to Railway Street is more domestic in its architectural character and densities and includes some very good examples of larger, good-quality Federation bungalows which are uncommon in Marrickville although their setting is marred by the prominent garage in the front garden of one of the group..

Streetscape qualities reflect the socio-topographic separation of status representative of the settlement patterns of the Marrickville local government area. Setbacks vary but are generally wider than elsewhere in the Petersham area. Their quality is degraded however by the many driveway cross-overs and dedication of the setback area in front of the building for car parking.

Street tree planting is predominantly eucalyptus and other native species and serves to soften the streetscape but is inadequate to create a sense of avenue planting or provide a strongly cohesive feature to the area. Landscaping to private property is generally simple and often devoted to paved areas for vehicular access. A focal point for the area is provided by the mature Canary Island palm in the front garden of the freestanding terrace at 12 Railway Street.

Although the area is in close proximity to the busy Parramatta Road, most properties have retained a transparent interface with the public domain and have not resorted to the use of high brick walls or other devices such as roller shutters to ameliorate noise.

The topography of the area is generally level, rising to a plateau between Fort and Croydon Streets. Views out of the area are available from the edges; those to the south terminating at the main Petersham ridge line marked by the water reservoir and those to the north terminating at the buildings fronting the western side of Parramatta Road. Views into the area are limited due to its location above the surrounding area and those from Parramatta Road obstructed by the bend in Railway Street. This helps to give the area a sense of privacy from the busy thoroughfare.

The following figures illustrate the main elements and characteristics of the Railway Street Heritage Conservation Area.





Figure 4.3 Terrace pair. The garden and original iron palisade fence of one of the pair has been removed and replaced by carparking.



Figure 4.4 Victorian Italianate cottage pair with prominent palm.



Figure 4.5 The former Petersham Congregational Church is a Federation Gothic church – with an uncommon symmetrical design.



Figure 4.6 Many of the buildings in this group are set well back with a small front garden. The original iron palisade and sandstone pillar front fences make a very important contribution to the significance of the aesthetic values of the area.



Figure 4.7 The 1930s Spanish Mission style is rare in Marrickville. This block of flats was originally one of a pair, its partner being demolished in recent years. The inclusion of upper level arcades and rooftop terrace reveals an understanding of the nuances of this style by the original architect.



Figure 4.8 Modest Victorian vernacular cottage in substantially intact condition. Alterations and additions have been achieved in a sensitive manner or are readily reversible.





Figure 4.9 and Figure 4.10 This cottage has been layered by the addition of a red texture brick facade in the post-war years. The original Federation cottage can still be seen behind the addition.



Figure 4.11 Pair of good Federation cottages with detailing and finishes rare in the Marrickville area. The garage in the front garden of one is an unfortunate element in the local streetscape.



Figure 4.12 Recent infill development has attempted to reflect the faceted bay window of the adjoining Victorian villa but the proportions have been manipulated unsuccessfully.



Figure 4.13 A contemporary interpretation of the original iron palisade fence. The proportions and close spacing of the bars however has led to a loss of the original transparent quality when viewed from the footpath.



Figure 4.14 Original iron palisade fence with sandstone block pillars.





Figure 4.15 Modest freestanding Victorian Italianate cottage



Figure 4.16 The conservation area extends along the northern side of Croydon Road to include the similarly scaled and sited properties. It also includes a highly intrusive residential flat development.

### 4.3 SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The Railway Street Heritage Conservation Area is of aesthetic significance for its ability to demonstrate the evolutionary patterns of development in the Marrickville area including Federation cottages and Victorian Italianate villas. The diversity of buildings of a high quality but individual architectural approaches built within a relatively short period demonstrates the range of housing options available to property owners who had the resources to build a bespoke home. This contrasts with the speculative nature of most of the development within the Marrickville local government area.

The Area reflects the history of subdivision and development in the former Petersham Municipality between the period 1854 - 1940.

#### KEY PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE: 1854 – 1940

The Railway Street Heritage Conservation Area demonstrates heritage values that satisfy the NSW Heritage Council's Criteria for listing as a locally significant heritage conservation area. These values can be seen in the area in many ways, including:

Heritage Council Guideline for Inclusion satisfied	H.C.I Crit.	Heritage value	How the value can be seen in the area today
The Area demonstrates overlays of the continual pattern of human use and occupation	A	The cultural landscape of the Area demonstrates the pattern of development in the Council area from early land grants to densely settled urban landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Through the street and subdivision patterns, which provide evidence of the ways in which the layers of re-division and infill of parcels of land have resulted in increasing density of development and decreasing scale of buildings throughout the area.</li> <li>- Through the range of high style and modest dwellings of typologies and densities representative of the different phases of development.</li> <li>- The primary heritage value of this</li> </ul>



Heritage Council Guideline for Inclusion satisfied	H.C.I Crit.	Heritage value	How the value can be seen in the area today
			conservation area is derived not from its cohesiveness, but rather its ability to demonstrate the evolutionary patterns of development in the Marrickville area. The diversity of buildings of a high quality but individual architectural approaches built within a relatively short period demonstrates the range of housing options available to property owners who had the resources to build a bespoke home. This contrasts with the speculative nature of most of the development within the Marrickville local government area.
The Area is associated with a significant activity or historical phase	A	The Area occupies the core of the Petersham Estate; one of the most important of the early estates in the Marrickville Council area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The street pattern east of Palace Street reflects the original subdivision of the Sydenham Estate from the Petersham Estate.</li> <li>- The original subdivision of the Sydenham Estate provided generous block sizes and all have now been re-subdivided. The only surviving indication of the size of the original allotments is the depth of the lots at nos. 10-12 and 30-32 Railway Street.</li> </ul>
The area demonstrates the principal characteristics of a class of Marrickville's cultural places (residential)	G	It demonstrates the principal characteristics of the development of the Marrickville Council area from an early Estate to urban cultural landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The principal characteristics of the Marrickville area's residential cultural landscape are demonstrated through the rich variety of built forms in the area; each of which is representative of the cultural needs and aspirations of the community that built and occupied them; including:</li> </ul> <p>Early development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Substantial Victorian Gentlemen's villas located at the highest and most prominent parts of the Sydenham Estate area</li> <li>• Substantial Victorian terraces and Federation houses intended for the affluent middle classes</li> <li>• Detached residential development – Victorian, Federation and (some) Inter-War</li> <li>• Adaptive re-use of villas and large houses for boarding houses and group accommodation</li> </ul>

Heritage Council Guideline for Inclusion satisfied	H.CI Crit.	Heritage value	How the value can be seen in the area today
			<p>Later infill development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inter-War residential walk-up flat buildings (Spanish Mission and Art Deco)</li> <li>• Mid 1970 to present: substantial walk-up residential flat buildings</li> </ul> <p>Cultural layering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post-War austerity</li> <li>• Post-War migration</li> <li>• Gentrification</li> </ul>
The area demonstrates the principal characteristics of a class of Marrickville's cultural places (cultural)	G	It demonstrates the principal characteristics of the development of the Marrickville Council area from an early Estate to urban cultural landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Former Petersham Congregational Church (now Petersham Tongan Uniting Church)</li> </ul>
<p>The area demonstrates the principal characteristics of a class of Marrickville's cultural places (public domain)</p> <p>The area has attributes typical of the particular philosophy and design of Marrickville Council (and its predecessors)</p>	G	It demonstrates the principal characteristics of the development of the Marrickville Council area from an early Estate to an urban cultural landscape and contains high quality streetscapes and public domain elements representative of civic management and improvement programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sandstone kerbing</li> <li>- Street names inset in footpath in red cement at corners (Municipal practice: Petersham Municipality)</li> <li>- Street tree planting of the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century Environmental movement (primarily native species: bottlebrush, melaleuca, angophora) Some contributory groups – taller species adversely impacted by overhead cable clearance</li> </ul>
Is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/ or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in the Marrickville Council area.	C	It contains many buildings and elements of individual and group aesthetic value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 19<sup>th</sup> Century Villas and their setting</li> <li>- 19<sup>th</sup> Century houses (detached and semi-detached) and their setting</li> <li>- 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century terraces and houses (detached and semi-detached)</li> </ul>



Heritage Council Guideline for Inclusion satisfied	H.CI Crit.	Heritage value	How the value can be seen in the area today
The area contains groups and streetscapes which collectively illustrate representative types of Marrickville's cultural landscape.	G		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Groups and streetscapes containing 19<sup>th</sup> Century villas, houses and terraces</li> <li>- Groups and streetscapes containing 20<sup>th</sup> Century houses and terraces</li> <li>- 20<sup>th</sup> Century residential flat buildings (these illustrate the types of development that has occurred in the area but only the Spanish Mission styled flat building contributes to the aesthetic values of the area)</li> </ul>

#### 4.4 DEFINING THE EXTENT OF THE HERITAGE CONSERVATION AREA

The boundary of the heritage conservation area reflects the identified heritage values of the area and the ability of the fabric of its buildings, places and streetscapes to demonstrate these values.

The original subdivision of the land for the Sydenham Estate was for large allotments, all of which have since been re-subdivided. The estate boundaries extended well beyond the Railway Street area but the built forms of the surrounding areas do not demonstrate the same qualities and have not been recommended for inclusion in this Heritage Conservation Area. The focus of the area is provided by the properties with frontage to Railway Street. The properties oriented to Elswick Street, including the school were not included.

The northern edge of the area is described clearly by the rear of the commercial premises with frontage to Parramatta Road; and the southern is irregular but generally bounded by Croydon Street. The dwellings on the north-western edge of the intersection of Croydon and Railway Streets have been either demolished and rebuilt or layered beyond the point of their original form having the potential to contribute to the value of the area.

The properties on the north-eastern side of the intersection with Croydon Street are recommended for inclusion because their values are consistent with those of the substantial developments to their north which front Railway Street, and they demonstrate a different built form, setting and character to the development to the east (which are recommended for inclusion in the Inter-War group of the Hordern Avenue Conservation Area (HCA27)).

#### 4.5 ELEMENTS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE AREA

The table above outlined the ways in which the heritage significance of the Railway Street Heritage Conservation Area are expressed through the contemporary cultural landscape.

The relevant planning controls to conserve the evidence of the area's heritage significance are contained in the Mixed Residential Streetscapes section of the DCP (see the DCP for details).

The Railway Street Heritage Conservation Area also contains many details, or fine-grained elements that are found throughout the area on buildings of different styles and types that contribute to the integrity and heritage significance of the area. The elements are not found on all buildings; but if they are present they need to be retained in any new development. Further details about how to protect these details and incorporate them in new development can be found in the detailed DCP sheets.

#### SIGNIFICANT SUBDIVISION AND PUBLIC DOMAIN ELEMENTS:

- Street layout
- Street tree plantings
- Street names set into footpath
- Sandstone block kerbing
- Consistent setbacks appropriate to period and architectural typology
- Central placement of development within lot

**ELEMENTS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE CONSISTENCY OF THE STREETScape (VISIBLE FROM THE PUBLIC DOMAIN)**

- Groups and runs of buildings from key period of significance (1854-1940)
- Original fabric
- Quality of streetscape patterns, rhythms and textures
- Building typologies reinforce the urban grain.
  - Groups of similar types and runs of terraces demonstrate strong streetscape qualities including cohesiveness of form, scale, rhythm and materials.
  - High quality original detailing to front elevation
  - Increasing simplification of scale and detailing towards rear – including window size, bulk and visual prominence in view from street
- Roof forms appropriate to typology and period of construction
  - Intact roof forms
  - Primary ridgelines of roofs are aligned parallel to the street
  - Roof forms of groups or runs of buildings demonstrating consistent pitch and rhythm
  - Lack of major alterations to roof form and volumes
  - Original chimneys contribute to the quality and visual interest of roofscapes
  - Original dormer windows - small and vertically proportioned
- Intact or substantially intact built elements
  - Consistency of form and detailing to intact and substantially intact original dwellings and streetscapes
  - Any additions visible from the public domain that are of a minor scale, respect original built form and are unobtrusive in the context of the streetscape
- Building heights appropriate to typology and period of construction
- Detailing and finishes appropriate to typology and period of construction
  - Window openings appropriate for architectural type
  - Timber framed windows
  - Complex timber framed windows to main bay of front elevation
  - Un-painted and un-rendered face brickwork to 20<sup>th</sup> Century fabric
  - Use of appropriate colour schemes for detailing
- Fences appropriate to typology and period of construction
  - Original Iron Palisade fences
  - Original low face-brick (not rendered or painted) walls
- Garden plantings in front of dwellings
- Garden settings of detached dwellings
- Lack of car parking infrastructure



**ELEMENTS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE INTEGRITY OF THE OVERALL PATTERN OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE AREA (NOT NECESSARILY VISIBLE FROM THE STREET)**

- Footprints of additions to the rear respect the traditional pattern of development (including service wing/pavilion/recessive scale)
- Vehicle access from rear lanes (where available)

**4.6 ELEMENTS THAT DETRACT FROM THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE AREA**

The Railway Estate Area Heritage Conservation Area has undergone many layers of change and alteration over the years since it was first developed. Some of these contribute to the cumulative heritage significance of the area but others do not because they are of an irreversible nature or result in a visual fabric that destroys, overwrites or otherwise confuses the identified values of the area. These include:

- Overscaled and poorly proportioned additions
- Alterations to roof forms and volumes visible from the street, including poorly sited and proportioned dormer windows and lifted ridgelines
- Inappropriate use of dormers (contrary to typology)
- Application of conjectural detailing to new work
- Concrete tiles or inappropriate use of metal panels to roof
- Painting and rendering original face brick
- Removal of original detailing
- Alteration to fenestration patterns (including reconfiguration/re-orientation of vertical openings to horizontal)
- Removal/replacement of timber windows with aluminium-framed windows
- Roller shutters to windows
- Historically inappropriate garages, fence design and details not relevant to building typology and/or incongruous/visually intrusive in streetscape views
- Visually intrusive security measures (eg security bars painted a light colour, roller shutters and enclosing grilles to verandahs)
- Replacement fences of type or form inappropriate to building typology and/or intrusive on aesthetic qualities of the streetscape
- High/solid front fences and walls
- Infilled verandahs