

HCA 5 Parramatta Road Commercial Precinct Heritage Conservation Area



Figure 5.1 HCA 5 Parramatta Road Commercial Precinct Heritage Conservation Area

5.1 LOCATION

The Parramatta Road Commercial Precinct Heritage Conservation Area is located in north Petersham and extends along the southern side of Parramatta Road from Palace Street to just east of Northumberland Avenue.



Figure 5.2 The Area in 1943 and 2009 (source: NSW Lands Department SIX Viewer)

5.2 DESCRIPTION

The Parramatta Road Commercial Precinct Heritage Conservation Area is by its nature linear. It consists of the shops and commercial buildings that abut the northern edge of Marrickville local government area as it follows the southern alignment of Parramatta Road.

Commercial in character, the historical role of Parramatta Road as a major commercial thoroughfare is strongly expressed through its fabric and function today. Its earlier role as the northern boundary of George Johnson's Annandale Farm Estate is also able to be interpreted through the subtle differences in the fabric today, such as the later period (late Victorian and Federation) buildings lining the Stanmore section of the streetscape when compared against those on the northern side (now within the Leichhardt local government area). The group of shops near where the Olympia Milk Bar is today and extending to the west of the recent infill development were near the position of the driveway entry to the Annandale Estate and were the last elements of the Estate to be infilled.

The character and quality of the existing buildings along the commercial strip vary considerably from the high-quality and intricately detailed to mediocre. Few original shopfronts have survived. An early drive-through service station has also survived under an otherwise ordinary commercial building but is showing signs of significant deterioration.

Much of the value of this area is not derived from the architectural quality of the individual buildings or their contributory value to the streetscape, but rather from its historic role as one of a major 19th and early 20th Century commercial area lining one of Sydney's most important transport corridors.

Its contemporary character is mixed, and its environmental quality poor due to the proximity and volume of traffic only metres away, but the area continues to demonstrate powers to act as a comparison shopping destination for such diverse purchases as electric guitars and bridal outfits.

Access to car parking remains a challenge for many businesses. Some major demolition and new infill development has occurred with vehicular access from the rear lane to car parking, retail activity at ground floor level and residential above. The design of these has not always been successful, but the outcome of retaining active use to Parramatta Road is consistent with its demonstrated heritage values.



Figures 5.3 – 5.12 demonstrate the variety of built forms found along Parramatta Road. The prevailing parapet height is consistent at between two and three stories. Most of shopfronts have been replaced over the years. The 1920's period hanging ball lights are a feature of all major shopping precincts within the Marrickville local government area.



Figure 5.13 Early petrol stations and motor workshops were of a drive-through and are increasingly rare elements in the streetscape.

Figure 5.14 Traditional main road uses such as this hotel can still be found along Parramatta Road.



Figure 5.15 and 5.16. The Olympia milk bar was built in conjunction with the Stanmore Cinema to its west and is a Sydney landmark for its substantially intact interior and exterior. The original gates to Annandale Farm were located immediately to the west of the former cinema (recently redeveloped).



Figure 5.17 this group of shops demonstrates a strong parapet line free of any attempt at adornment or visual interest. It is representative of the late, austerity period of retail development along Parramatta Road.



Figure 5.18. This group also demonstrates a strong parapet line with the modulation of the different bays creating a visually interesting skyline. Remnants of the original arched veranda openings to the upstairs residence can still be seen although all have been infilled over the years.



Figure 5.19 an original boxed bay window



Figure 5.20. This arched veranda opening has been infilled crudely but the original brickwork is intact and has not been rendered or painted, making the layer readily reversible.



Figure 5.21. The contemporary commercial building is an intrusive visual element in the Parramatta Road streetscape due to its horizontal proportions and lack of respect for the established parapet line. Its current use as a bridal dress shop demonstrates however the current function of Parramatta Road as a comparative shopping destination for specialist retail sales such as bridal wear and musical instruments.



Figure 5.22. This group of shopfronts has been repaired and reinstated as part of a redevelopment of the remainder of the site. The glazed ceramic tiles are typical of the late Federation – Inter-War shopfront.



Figure 5.23 and 5.24. The original balcony to the upper level of this group has been removed although evidence can still be seen through the original door openings and in the shadow lines in the rendered facade





Figure 5.25 and 5.26. Parramatta Road continues to be an important transport corridor and is undergoing increasing pressure for more intensive development. Recent redevelopment proposals have achieved this by building additional levels set back behind the main parapet line with varying degrees of success. The loss of the ability to see the line of the parapet against the sky has an adverse impact on the aesthetic and historic values of the area. Care also needs to be taken to not simply locate all the new development away from the road, since most of the area adjoining the Parramatta Road Commercial Precinct is also heritage conservation area. A very sensitive approach to the design, siting, detailing and materials is essential if increased densities are desired along this busy corridor. .

5.3 SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The Parramatta Road Commercial Precinct Heritage Conservation Area is of historical significance due to its ability to continue to demonstrate the changing role and expectations of retail and commercial development of land adjoining Sydney's main arterial corridors since the first period of Colonial settlement. The Area includes a variety of retail and commercial built forms; some of which (for example the former drive-under petrol station) are now rare in the Sydney Metropolitan area. Its built forms provide evidence of the final subdivision of the South Annandale Estate in 1906 as well as evidence of the effect of later road widening on the built environment.

The aesthetic significance of the Parramatta Road commercial precinct heritage conservation area is derived from its ability to demonstrate the changing role of retail centres along major arterial roads and the ability of the fabric of these buildings to adapt to these changing needs and commercial imperatives. The buildings are predominantly representative of the period 1906 to 1940 and include some rare examples of their type.

KEY PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE: 1788 – 1920

The Parramatta Road Commercial Precinct 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"> - Parramatta Road was one of the earliest main roads in the early Colony and has maintained its role as a major thoroughfare since this time. - Originally lined by significant Colonial Estates, the edges had become a retail focus for the inner western suburbs by the mid-

Heritage Council Guideline for Inclusion satisfied	H.C.I Crit.	Heritage value	How the value can be seen in the area today
			<p>late 19th Century, with many of the shops evident today built during this time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The significance of the Parramatta Road commercial precinct heritage conservation area is derived from its ability to demonstrate the changing role of shopping centres along major arterial roads and the ability of the fabric of these buildings to adapt to these changing needs and commercial imperatives.
The Area is associated with a significant activity or historical phase	A	The Area marks the edge of several major estates including the Petersham Estate; the Sydenham Estate and the Annandale estate, (within the Marrickville area), each of which is an important early estate in the Council area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Through the alignment of Parramatta Road.
The area demonstrates the principal characteristics of a class of Marrickville's cultural places (retail)	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"> - The principal characteristics of the Marrickville area's residential cultural landscape are demonstrated through the variety of retail land uses. - They are also represented through the diversity of shop types which are representative of the cultural needs and aspirations of the community that built and occupied them; including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Early development: o Pairs, groups and runs of two storey commercial premises from the Victorian and Federation periods - with shops at ground level and residential or commercial business on the upper level o Later infill development: o Pairs, groups and runs of two storey infill commercial premises from the Inter-War and post-war periods - with shops at ground level and

Heritage Council Guideline for Inclusion satisfied	H.Cl Crit.	Heritage value	How the value can be seen in the area today
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> residential or commercial business on the upper level ○ Major infill development including retail, commercial and some residential land uses with underground carparking - Cultural layering (expressed through building fabric and retail activity) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Post-War austerity ○ Post-War migration ○ Gentrification
<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 a urban cultural landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ball-shaped light fittings hung under awnings at regular intervals – practice introduced in the 1920s and still maintained. - No street tree planting
The area contains groups and streetscapes which collectively illustrate representative types of Marrickville's cultural landscape.	G	It contains buildings and elements of individual and group aesthetic value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 19th Century retail groups and streetscapes

5.4 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 area is limited to the retail premises fronting Parramatta Road. The edge areas that demonstrate a wider range of land uses (including car yards, storage, light industrial etc) introduce different land uses, built forms and aesthetic values and are not included in the area.

The northern boundary of the area is the alignment of Parramatta Road and the southern boundary is the rear of the properties fronting Parramatta Road.

5.5 ELEMENTS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE AREA

The table above outlined the ways in which the heritage significance of the Parramatta Road Commercial Precinct 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 Shopping Streetscapes section of the DCP (see the DCP for details).

The Precinct 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.

SUBDIVISION AND PUBLIC DOMAIN ELEMENTS:

- Alignment of Parramatta Road
- Street names set into footpath (where present)
- Continuity of retail/commercial uses

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

- Commercial land uses
- Active street frontage at ground level
- Zero setback from street frontage and side boundaries
- Two-storey parapet to street frontage
- Integrity of skyline view – of parapet detailing against the sky from northern footpath and important oblique views
- Presentation of street elevation formed by regularly spaced bays reflecting historic lot widths
- Orientation of active uses to Parramatta Road
- Traditional shop-top late 19th Century commercial design
- Surviving original land uses, including the Olympia Milk Bar at Stanmore
- Surviving original shopfronts
- Vertical separation of land-use with retail at ground floor and commercial/residential above
- Individual shops with high-quality detailing including arched openings to verandahs and high quality detailing to brickwork – quoining etc
- Division of larger buildings into vertically proportioned bays
- Vertically proportioned windows at upper levels
- Detailed building typology appropriate to architectural type
- Signage appropriate – scale, materials, location and content related to business

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

- Vehicle access from rear lanes

5.6 DETAILS AND ELEMENTS THAT DETRACT FROM THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE AREA

The Parramatta Road Commercial Precinct 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:

- Major additions behind parapet that block contributory skyline views (where visible)
- Removal of original detailing
- Bricking/blocking of original openings to street frontage (shopfronts or upper level)
- Alteration to fenestration patterns (including reconfiguration/re-orientation of vertical openings to horizontal)
- Removal/replacement of timber windows with aluminium
- Application of conjectural detailing to new work
- Visually intrusive security measures (eg roller shutters on external face of buildings)