

CHARACTER AREA – 4

“The area is defined by its civic character, comprising a variety of uses, including educational establishments and the distinctive Charing Cross village centre, peripheral streets extend from historic Bronte Road creating long north-south blocks of inconsistent streetscapes comprising layered built form, materiality and limited vegetation”.

The study area is generally bound by Birrell Street to the north, Henrietta and Leichhardt Streets to the east, Varna, Wallace and Albion Streets to the south and Carrington Road and Henry Street to the west.



Figure 4-1 - Local character area #04 map



Figure 4-2 - Terrace shopfronts, Bronte Road



Figure 4-3 - Terrace row, Bronte Road



Figure 4-4 - Semi-detached dwellings, Zarita Avenue

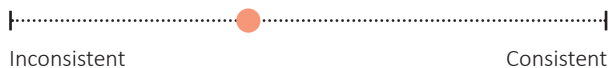


Figure 4-5 - Wiley Street, looking south

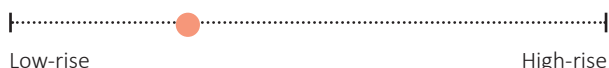
Existing character attributes



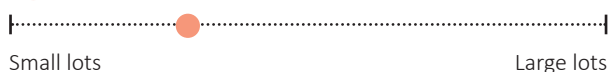
Built form



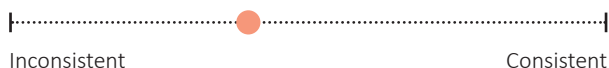
Height of buildings



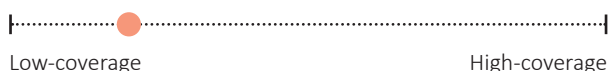
Subdivision pattern



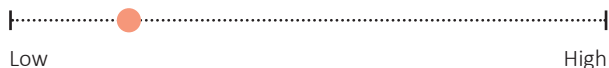
Public and private domain interface



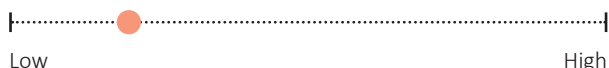
Vegetation coverage



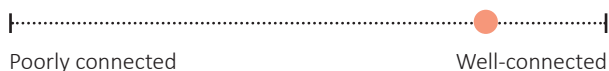
Open space and landscape features



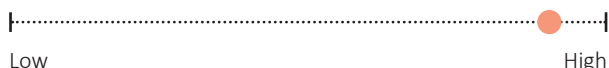
Views



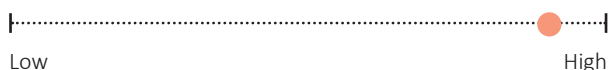
Access and connectivity



Heritage significance



Diversity of uses



Desired future character

Vision

The desired future character of the area is an attractive and well-maintained historic centre, with a range of civic, commercial and residential uses that exist harmoniously.

Objectives

The objectives for development on land identified within the character area are as follows:

- To promote the significant contribution of the area during the early years of the Waverley municipality,
- To celebrate the history of the area through urban design and activations that promote local heritage,
- To recognise and maintain the diversity of uses in the area,
- To maintain the visual prominence of landmark buildings, including the Robin Hood and Charing Cross Hotels, Mary Immaculate and Grahame Memorial churches and War Memorial Hospital,
- To protect regional and local views from and within the public domain,
- To protect the curtilage of institutional heritage buildings including churches and school to enable visual appreciation of buildings in their campus-style setting,
- To maintain the predominant 1-3 storey height character of the area,
- To protect the high-street nature of Bronte Road, maintain and enhance distinctive pattern of continuous terrace and semi-detached shopfronts, prioritise active street frontages and provide no new vehicle crossovers,
- To preserve the diversity of dwelling typologies, architectural periods and heights in the area by retaining buildings from the Late Victorian, Federation and Inter-war periods,
- To promote sympathetic additions and new development that respects the historic patterns, architectural styles, heights, materials and details of existing dwellings,
- To ensure an integrated approach and consistent treatment of groupings of dwellings, including terraces and semi-detached dwellings, for example pitched roofscape and front setbacks,
- To increase pedestrian wayfinding and accessibility to nearby open space,
- To maintain and grow the canopy coverage as a defining feature when viewed from Centennial Parklands.

Existing character description

History

The area's character is predominantly derived from the forms, streetscapes and social relationship of industry, worker housing and commerce in the early years of the Waverley municipality. Development began in the 1800s, with subdivision of early land grants providing the site of Maddens Corner, now known as Charing Cross, which served as a rural village on the route from Old South Head Road to Coogee and La Perouse (now Bronte Road). Further subdivision and configuration of the area was influenced by the establishment of the Vickery's Tannery (1866), religious / educational institutions on large allotments, introduction of horse drawn omnibuses (1860s) and later steam, then electric trams along Bronte Road. This results in an irregular block pattern and complex road network comprised of primary arterial roads, secondary local streets and service laneways.

Configuration and connectivity

Following the natural ridgeline, Bronte Road provides the primary north-south connection through the study area. The topography slopes gradually to the west at Queens Park and south-east at Varna Park. District views are available to the west across Centennial Park and the CBD. Local roads extend from primary roads following the topography resulting in long north-south blocks of residential development, with limited east-west connections. The area is well-served by multiple bus routes along Bronte Road, Birrell Street and Carrington Road, which provide access to surrounding centres including Bondi Junction, to the north, and the Randwick health and education centre, to the south-west.

The area was, and remains, defined by its civic character, comprising religious institutions, educational establishments, small industries, community services, and retail and commercial uses, with surrounding residences. Church schools emerged from the 1850s, with St Catherine's School Sydney, originally known as Clergy Daughter's School, opening in 1856. The study area now includes some 5 schools and multiple childcare centres. The War Memorial Hospital (1922), located on the former Victorian 'Edina Estate' represents the early provision of medical services to the community. It continues to provide accommodation, medical and social services. Today, the Charing Cross village centre accommodates a diverse range of commercial and retail tenancies.

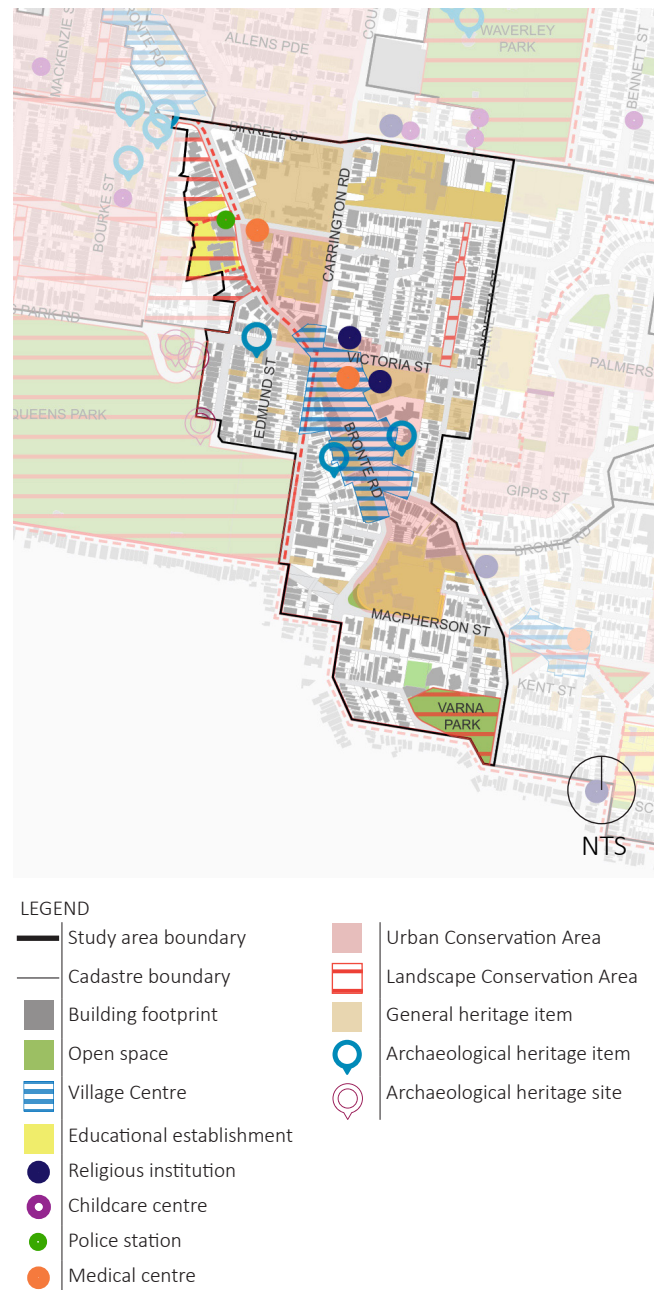


Figure 4-6 - Built form, uses and heritage area #04



Figure 4-7 - Intersection Bronte Rd and Carrington Road

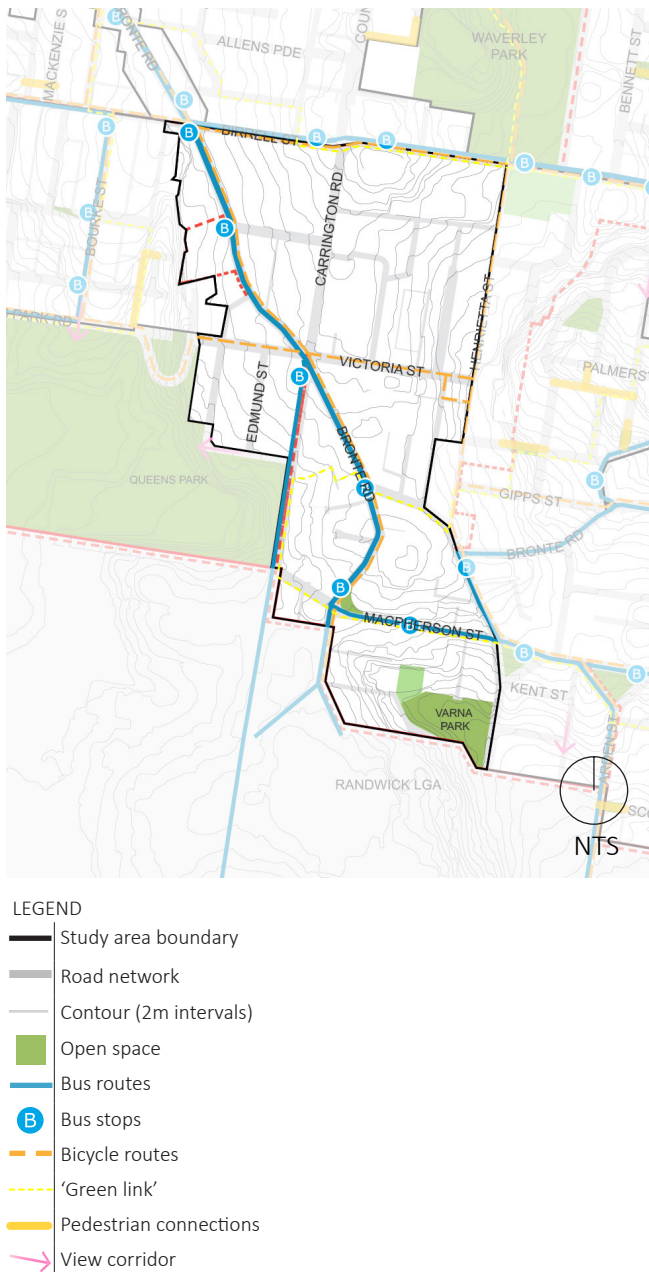


Figure 4-8 - Road network and movement area #04

Built form

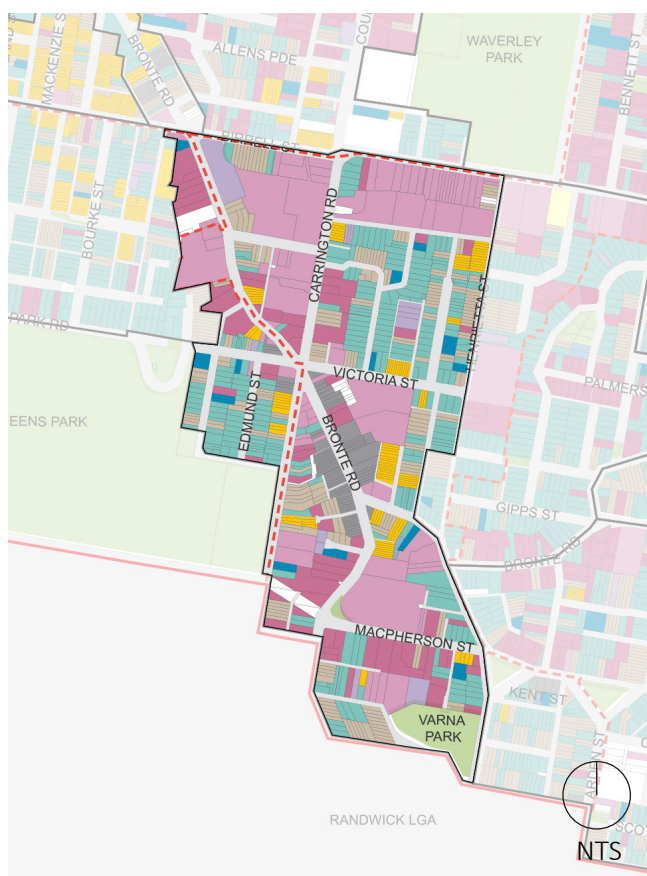
Layered built form is indicative of the area's early and continued development. The village centre is characterised by a distinctive 'high street' of 1-2 storey brick-fronted retail facades of late Victorian, Federation and Inter-War styles interspersed with mid-late 20th century development and modern additions (see Figure 4-2). Significant buildings include the Robin Hood and Charing Cross Hotels, former Waverley Post Office, Mary Immaculate and Grahame Memorial churches. Peripheral residential streets exhibit a predominantly 1-2 storey character with near-complete rows of late Victorian and Federation-style terraces, detached and semi-detached bungalows. Buildings are typically of face brick, stone and rendered masonry with decorative plaster, timber and iron filigree detailing. A number of large freestanding Victorian Villas remain generally unaltered, for example 74 Victoria Street and 348 Bronte Road, or within educational campuses. The 'Glenrock Terraces' on High Street provide a lasting example of mid-Victorian sandstone workers cottages in timber and stone, formerly part of the early Vickery Tannery. Inter-War development replaced earlier construction. Notable groupings of 1-3 storey Inter-War residences include the distinctive setting of Santa Marina Avenue (see Figure 4-10), 352-358 Bronte Road, Wallace Street (see Figure 4-9) fronting Varna park and Wills Ave. Heritage listing of much of the study area as the Charing Cross Conservation Area has retained the character of these early settings, however alterations, including second-storey and car-parking additions, have impacted their integrity. Mid-late 20th century and 21st century residential flat buildings (RFBs) are dispersed throughout the study area, however, are primarily located adjacent main roads including Albion, Macpherson and Birrell Street. These dwelling typologies account for a medium-high population density, with approx. 74 persons/ha.



Figure 4-9 - Semi-detached dwellings, Wallace Street



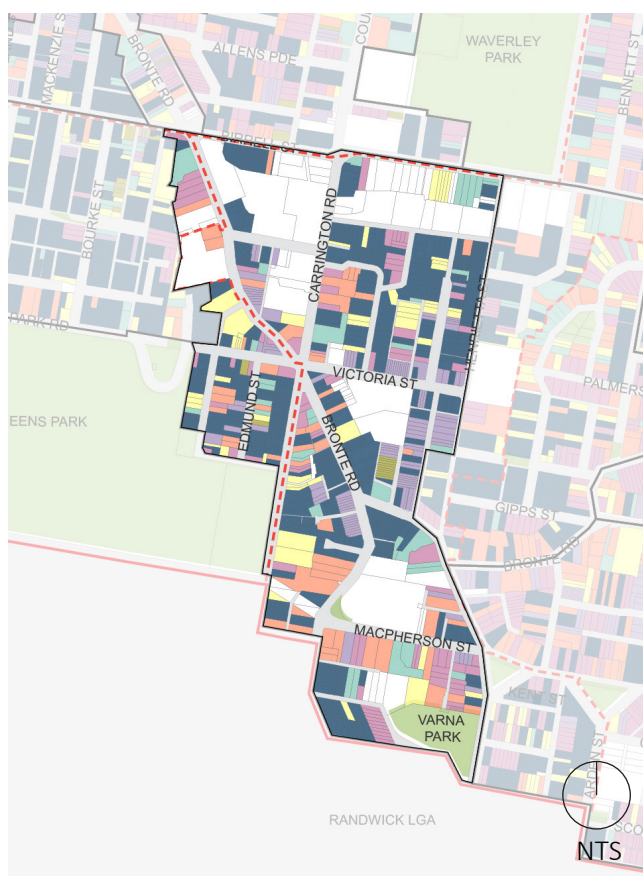
Figure 4-10 - RFBs, Santa Marina Avenue



LEGEND

Study area boundary	Multi-dwelling housing
Cadastral boundary	Shop-top housing
Detached dwelling	Commercial
Semi-detached dwelling	Other
Dual-occupancy	
Terrace	
Residential flat building	
Manor home	

Figure 4-11 - Dwelling typologies area #04



LEGEND

Study area boundary	Mid-Century Modern
Cadastral boundary	Late 20th Century
Colonial	21st Century
Early Victorian	
Late Victorian	
Federation	
Inter-war	

Figure 4-12 - Architectural styles area #04

Public and private interface

The public and private interface varies throughout the area, dependent on use, dwelling typology and street frontage. Terraces, detached and semi-detached bungalows are typically closely set, with narrow front setbacks and limited landscaping (see Figure 4-3 and Figure 4-4). The dwelling is highly visible from the street. Varying fence height and materiality creates an inconsistent streetscape character. The later addition of car-parking within the front setback, either hard-stand, carport or enclosed garage at the boundary, detracts from the streetscape and can obscure the dwelling. Inter-War RFBs also typically

comprise narrow setbacks and limited landscaping, with a solid brick façade (facades vary), small window openings and entry presenting to the street. Mid-late 20th century RFBs are raised above street level incorporating ground-floor carparking. Upper balconies overlook the public domain. Educational / hospital campuses comprise clusters of buildings with varied setbacks, often obscured from the public domain by buildings at the frontage, mature vegetation and landscaping. Through the village centre, fine-grain shopfronts abut the public domain, creating a highly visible, active frontage. Laneways provide off-street parking, typically with high fence lines and enclosed garages.

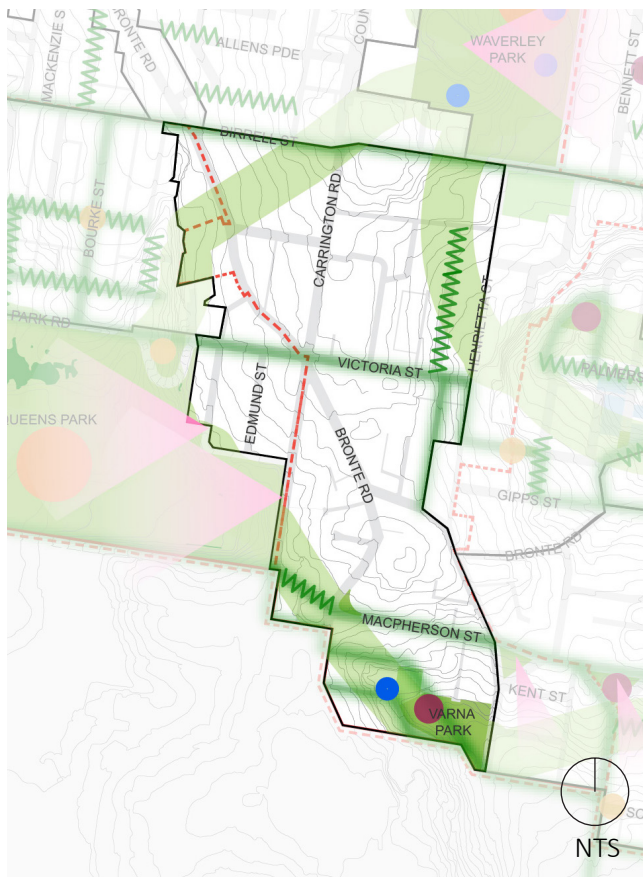
Natural environment

The area is located in close proximity to local and regional open space including Varna Park in the south, Queens Park to the west (see Figure 4-14), Waverley Park to the north and Bronte Beach to the east, which provide active and passive recreation opportunities. 'Green Links' aid with connectivity. The closely set nature of development reduces the opportunity for significant private open space in front or backyards. Vegetation coverage varies throughout the area, as a result of dense urban development and the varying capacity of the street verge to accommodate planting. Coverage is particularly low along Bronte Road through the village centre, contributing to heat vulnerability and a high Urban Heat Island effect. Coverage improves adjacent Varna Park and along

vegetated streetscapes and properties including Wiley and Blenheim Streets (both Landscape Conservation Areas) and the War Memorial Hospital site.

Recent development

Recent development history includes alterations and additions to existing terraces, detached and semi-detached dwellings and commercial premises such as, second or third storey additions, hard-stand parking, carports; limited construction of new 2-storey dwellings. Indicative of a trend toward maintaining existing built form and respecting the Charing Cross Conservation Area, whilst achieving more floor space and on-site car-parking.



LEGEND

Study area boundary	District playspace
Suburb boundary	Neighbourhood playspace
Contour (2m intervals)	Pocket playspace
Open space	Key view
Significant street-tree canopy	Flood prone land
Remnant vegetation	
Green Grid (TfNSW + GANSW)	
Biodiversity habitat corridor	
Recreation facility	

Figure 4-13 - Open space and vegetation area #04



Figure 4-14 - Views west across Queens Park from Henry Street



Have Your Say!

1. Is the boundary of the area accurate?
2. Do you think this is an accurate description of the areas existing character?
3. What characteristics of the area do you value most?
4. Are the desired future character objectives listed above helpful in maintaining and enhancing the areas valued characteristics?