

## CHARACTER AREA - 6

“The area is characterised by its headland location which forms a prominent corridor of coastal open space; panoramic views to the ocean; curvilinear street network, with irregular blocks comprising predominantly low to medium-rise dwelling typologies and styles; and streetscapes of varying materiality, landscaping and garages”.

The study area is generally bound by St Thomas Street through to Gardyne Street to the east, Murray Street and Bronte Park to the north, the Pacific Ocean to the east and Trafalgar Street and Waverley Cemetery to the south.



Figure 6-1 - Local character area #06 map



Figure 6-4 - Headland viewed from Bronte Marine Drive



Figure 6-2 - Detached dwellings, Gardyne Street



Figure 6-5 - Gardyne Street, looking north



Figure 6-3 - Bronte Road village centre



Figure 6-6 - Pacific Street, looking west

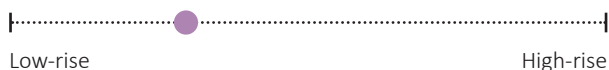
## Existing character attributes



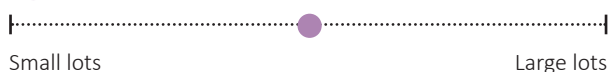
### Built form



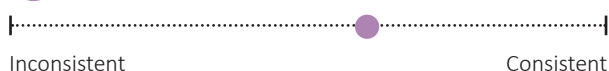
### Height of buildings



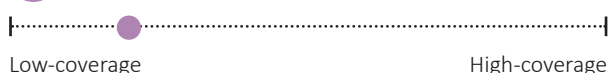
### Subdivision pattern



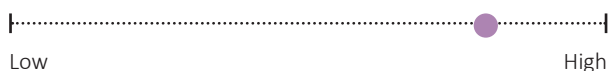
### Public and private domain interface



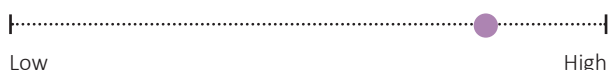
### Vegetation coverage



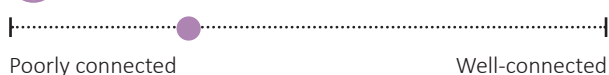
### Open space and landscape features



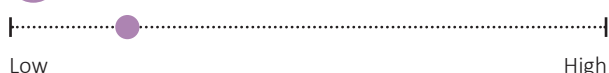
### Views



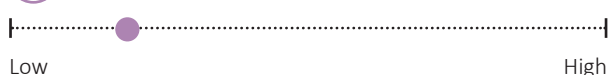
### Access and connectivity



### Heritage significance



### Diversity of uses



## Desired future character

### Vision

The desired future character of the area is a celebrated iconic coastline and nature reserve, with a small strip of historic shopfronts, and sensitive residential development that respects the terrain.

### Objectives

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

- To maintain the predominant 2-3 storey height character of the area, noting that buildings on sloping sites should adjust the relative level and height to follow the natural topography, reinforcing the layering of built form when viewed from the coastline,
- To avoid excessive excavation,
- To retain and enhance the historic shopfronts and manage amenity impacts to the surrounding residential dwellings,
- To ensure high-quality design of new contemporary detached and semi-detached dwellings, with appropriate façade and material articulation. Flat roofs are supported for view sharing,
- To ensure alterations and additions read as a cohesive part of the existing dwelling and extension of historic form and materiality,
- To ensure that carparking structures are of a size and materiality that integrate with existing landscape features and do not dominate the streetscape,
- To retain and enhance natural landscape features including the sloping topography, sandstone or bedrock walls,
- To maintain effective landscape buffers between properties abutting Bronte Gully,
- To promote the reduction of hard surfaces and an increase of public and private landscaping,
- To maintain views and vistas from the public domain,
- To minimise the impact on existing views and vistas from the private domain and maintain residential amenity in terms of overlooking and noise,
- To reduce pedestrian and vehicle conflicts and increase pedestrian accessibility.



## Existing character description

### History

Development of the area began following the original land grant to the Colonial Architect Mortimer Lewis (1836-1843) and the construction of Robert and Georgiana Lowe's Bronte House and Estate in 1840-1845. It was soon followed by other Marine Villa estates in the 1850s. These were subdivided and sold in the building boom of the late 1800s. These land sales continued through the Federation period of the early 1900s, supported by the introduction of tram services via Charing Cross and Macpherson Street to Bronte Beach in 1911. Bronte House remains a fine example of Regency-style architecture, with a large manicured garden merging into Bronte Gully. Whilst the area is predominantly residential, the Bronte Road village centre (see Figure 6-3), fronting Bronte Park at the former tram, now bus terminus, provides an active cluster of restaurants, cafes and retail tenancies catering to local and visitor needs. Another small cluster of commercial premises is located at the intersection of Murray Street and Bronte Road.

### Configuration and connectivity

The topography slopes steeply to the north-east from the coastal plateau and headland to Bronte Gully, creating an "amphitheatre" offering wide, panoramic views of the coastline, ocean and surrounding areas. Subdivision and development of the area's steep topography resulted in a curvilinear street network and irregular blocks and lots of varying size. Lot alignment is typically north-south, east-west despite the irregular layout. Topographical "ameliorations" and interventions provide suitable grades for streets and tram corridors result in terraced sites and streets, stone retaining walls and exposed sandstone bedrock.

Bronte Road and Macpherson Street provide the primary connection to and from and through the study area. Secondary east-west streets, Albert, Pacific and Trafalgar Streets, support internal vehicle and pedestrian connectivity. North-south streets are limited to St Thomas, Gardyne Streets and Yanko Avenue. Connectivity is offset by multiple through-block pedestrian links, for example Bronte Road to Gardyne Street, Pacific Street to Tipper Avenue and Macpherson to Trafalgar Street. North-south vehicular connectivity to and from the study area is further impeded by the Bronte Gully and Waverley Cemetery. Public transport connectivity is also limited, with the area serviced by a single bus route along Macpherson Street and terminating at Bronte Beach.

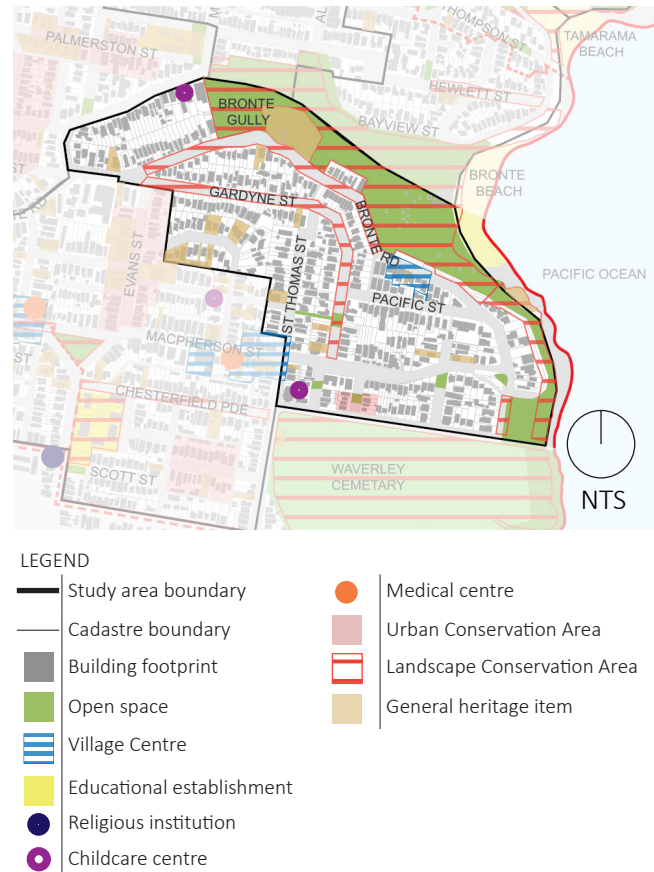


Figure 6-7 - Built form, uses and heritage area #06

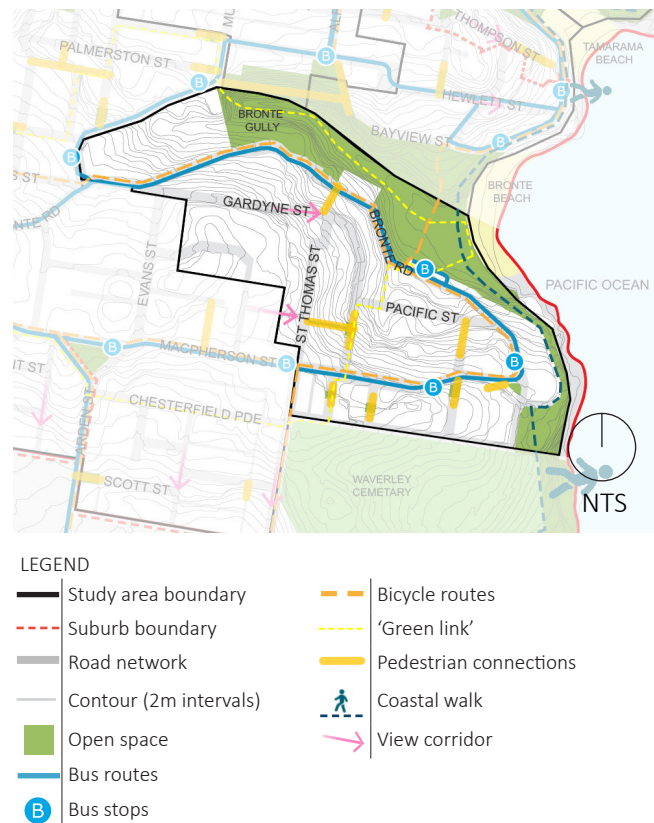


Figure 6-8 - Road network and movement area #06



## Public and private domain interface

Streetscapes are characterised by upper and lower sites, each with different features. Dwellings on the upper sites are raised above street level, with built retaining walls, high fences or garage doors fronting the street (Figure 6-10). Front landscaping varies. Car access is difficult with excavation and cutting into the stone walls often required to accommodate garages, for example Gardyne Street (see Figure 6-11). Unsympathetic designs and materiality have in parts altered the street character. Upper balconies typically overlook the public domain and provide views to the ocean. Dwellings on the lower sites are often partially or completely obscured from street level as a result of the sloping topography, vegetation and carports and garages at the boundary, for example Gardyne Street (see Figure 6-13). Where a site abuts two street frontages, for example Gardyne Street and Bronte Road, the rear of the site has typical lower site characteristics with garage frontages and / or dense landscaping. On flatter sites, for example Yanko Ave (see Figure 6-12), Trafalgar Street and Pacific Street, dwelling visibility increases, however streetscapes remain characterised by varying fence height and materiality, front landscaping and garages built to boundary.

## Built form

The study area comprises a variety of dwelling typologies and styles, from detached and semi-detached Federation and Inter-War bungalows to Inter-War and Mid-century Modern residential flat buildings (RFBs). Tipper Avenue, Collingwood, Pembroke and Murray Streets comprise early bungalows. Despite notable architectural styles, early dwellings have been significantly modified over time. Modifications include, second-storey and garage additions.



Figure 6-9 - RFB, Pacific Street



Figure 6-10 - Detached dwellings, Gardyne Street



Figure 6-11 - Detached dwellings, Gardyne Street



Figure 6-12 - Detached dwellings, Yanko Avenue



Figure 6-13 - Detached dwellings, Gardyne Street



## Existing character description cont.

Inter-War and modern RFBs dominant Pacific Street (see Figure 6-9) and Bronte Road. Progressive change of the area has resulted in the replacement of earlier dwellings with large detached dwellings of late 20th century and 21st century styles, particularly along the coastline. These dwelling typologies account for a low density of approx. 50 persons/ha.

Dwellings are predominantly 1-3 storeys in height. The topography has resulted in the modulation of built form, with the dwelling base (retaining wall or garage) at street level and floors stacked above on upper sites or behind and below for lower sites. The exception being the 3-5 storey RFBs distributed through the area. The height of the building can appear increased due to the raised topography above street level, for example Macpherson Street. Flat roof-scapes are becoming more prominent for new dwellings and alterations to existing dwellings.

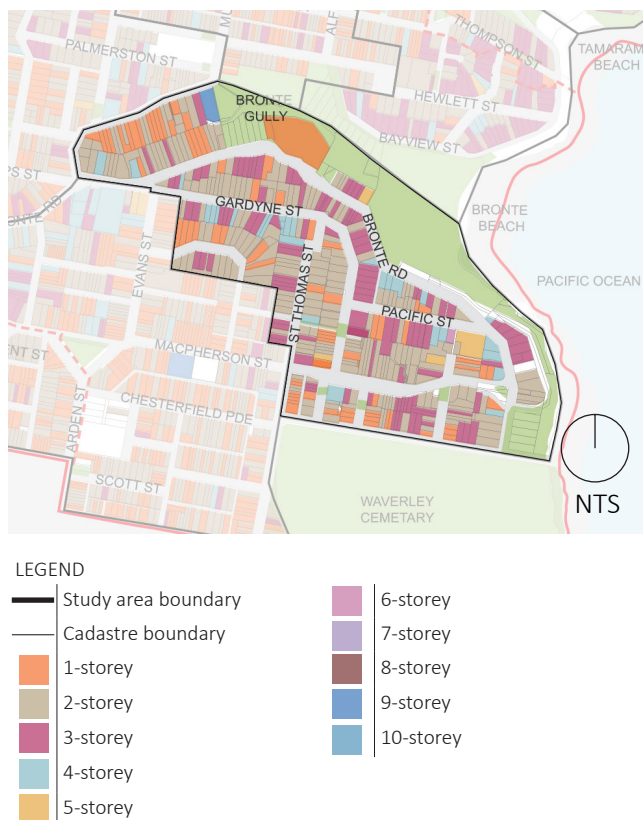


Figure 6-15 - Building height in storeys area #06



Figure 6-14 - Dwelling typologies area #06

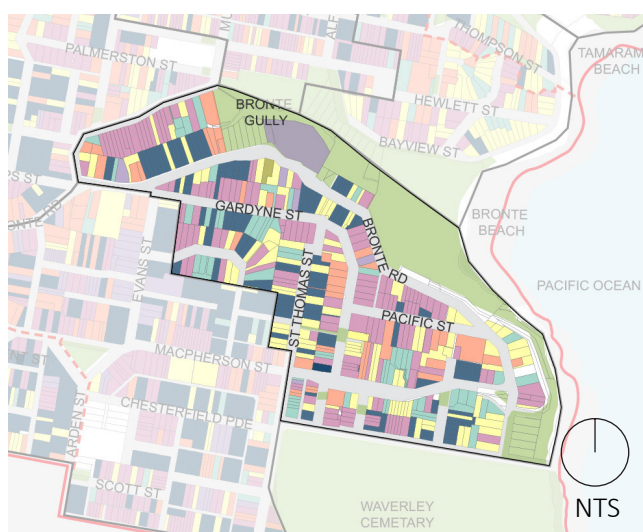


Figure 6-16 - Architectural styles area #06

## Natural environment

The character of the study area is defined by its natural landscape setting. The headland, including the Calga Cutting, and the adjacent Waverley Cemetery and Bronte Park and Beach (all heritage-listed as Landscape Conservation Areas) create a prominent corridor of coastal public open space, having significant aesthetic and archaeological value. The corridor is reflective of the area's long history of seaside leisure, offering passive and active recreation opportunities including the Bronte Ocean Pool and the Bondi-Coogee Walk. Bronte Gully and Park (see Figure 6-18) provide a visual and spatial interface with surrounding properties. The area supports a biodiversity corridor. Vegetation coverage in the public and private domains varies across the area, being predominantly low-medium on the upper sites, characteristic of the elevated position and need to maintain views. The area's location provides for prevailing coastal winds from the east, which combined with the open character results in low heat vulnerability. Seen from a distance the area juxtaposes the layers of built form, roofscape and vegetation.



### LEGEND

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <span style="border-bottom: 2px solid black; width: 20px; display: inline-block;"></span> Study area boundary                       | <span style="color: purple; font-size: 1.2em;">●</span> Neighbourhood playspace                                       |
| <span style="border-bottom: 2px dashed red; width: 20px; display: inline-block;"></span> Suburb boundary                            | <span style="color: orange; font-size: 1.2em;">●</span> Pocket playspace  |
| <span style="border-bottom: 1px solid grey; width: 20px; display: inline-block;"></span> Contour (2m intervals)                     | <span style="color: pink; font-size: 1.2em;">▲</span> Key view  |
| <span style="background-color: lightgreen; width: 20px; height: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span> Open space                    | <span style="background-color: lightblue; width: 20px; height: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span> Flood prone land |
| <span style="color: green; font-size: 1.2em;">~</span> Significant street-tree canopy   |   |
| <span style="color: green; font-size: 1.2em;">■</span> Remnant vegetation   |   |
| <span style="color: green; font-size: 1.2em;">—</span> Green Grid (TfNSW + GANSW)   |   |
| <span style="background-color: lightgreen; width: 20px; height: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span> Biodiversity habitat corridor |   |
| <span style="color: blue; font-size: 1.2em;">●</span> Recreation facility   |   |
| <span style="color: orange; font-size: 1.2em;">●</span> District playspace  |   |

Figure 6-17 - Open space and vegetation area #06

## Recent development

Recent development includes alterations and additions to existing detached and semi-detached dwellings, such as second-storey additions, double garages; alterations and additions to RFBs; demolition of existing dwellings and construction of new 2-3 storey detached or semi-detached dwellings (including dual occupancy), with integrated garages; limited secondary dwellings including studios above rear garage. This indicates a demand for additional floor space and car-parking within the area. It is also observed that Bronte has the fourth highest proportion of dwellings by suburb listed on Airbnb within Australia, indicating a trend of use of private dwellings for short-term rental accommodation.



Figure 6-18 - Bronte Gully and Park



## 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?