CHARACTER AREA - 8

"The area is characterised by well-defined, regular blocks comprising detached, and semi-detached dwellings interspersed with residential flat buildings, of varying heights, architectural styles, materiality and finishes; narrow rear laneways; and wide-street verges with limited drive-way crossovers and sporadic street trees".

The study area is generally bound by Dickson Lane to the north, Cross Street to Hewlett Street to the east, Bronte Gully and Hewlett Street to the south and Dickson Street to the west.

Figure 8-1 - Local character area #08 map

Figure 8-4 - Semi-detached dwelling / RFB, Alfred Street

Figure 8-2 - RFB, Belgrave Street

Figure 8-5 - Streetscape, Belgrave Street

Figure 8-3 - RFB, cnr Alfred Street and Hewlett Street


Figure 8-6 - Detached dwellings, Read Street

Existing character attributes

Built form
Inconsistent ——————————— Consistent

Height of buildings
Low-rise ——————————— High-rise

Subdivision pattern
Small lots ——————————— Large lots

Public and private domain interface
Inconsistent ——————————— Consistent
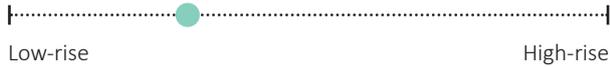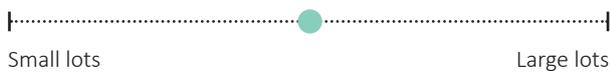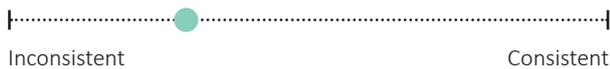
Vegetation coverage
Low-coverage ——————————— High-coverage
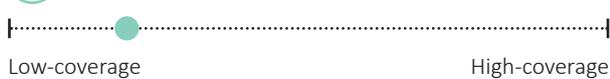
Open space and landscape features
Low ——————————— High
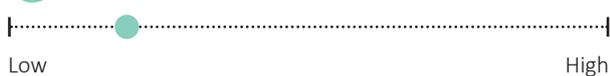
Views
Low ——————————— High
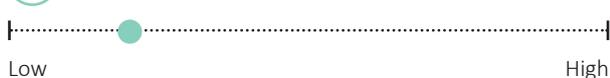
Access and connectivity
Poorly connected ——————————— Well-connected
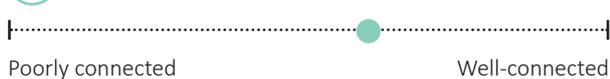
Heritage significance
Low ——————————— High
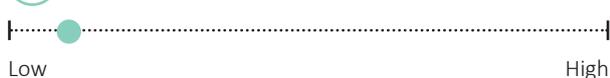
Diversity of uses
Low ——————————— High
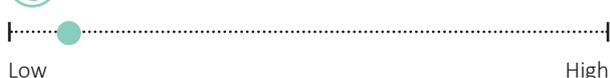
Desired future character

Vision
The desired future character is a leafy and varied residential area with easy and safe access to open space.

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

- To promote the diversity of dwelling styles and typologies, including semi-detached (dual occupancy),
- To encourage the restoration of traditional architectural forms and details of Federation and Inter-War-style bungalows,
- To ensure alterations and additions read as a cohesive part of the existing dwelling and reinforce the established form, style and materiality of the dwelling,
- To ensure new development responds to the adjacent built form and street frontage in terms of height, setbacks and street alignment,
- To maintain the 1-4 storey height character of the area,
- To ensure secondary dwellings and ancillary development enhance rear laneways and maintain a high standard of residential amenity for surrounding dwellings,
- To discourage new driveway crossovers and car parking within the front setback, by retaining vehicle access from rear lanes,
- To retain and extend street tree plantings on all streets,
- To promote landscaping at the rear of dwellings, to soften transition to rear laneways.

Existing character description

History

Development of the area has resulted from the subdivision of various land holdings including the Dickson, Palmerston, Kenilworth, Mandeville and Pacific View Estates, in the Late Victorian to early Federation era, between 1880-1900. These holdings were part of 16 blocks of land of varying sizes on the elevated plateau, on the southern side of Birrell Street that were sold in 1855 to various purchasers. The topography slopes gently from the natural ridgeline along Belgrave Street, south-east towards Bronte Gully. The area was developed for predominantly residential use, with the subdivision sale notices advertising "commanding grand views, convenient access to Waverley and Bondi trams..." and a "healthy location". The area remains predominantly residential except for the Belgrave local centre which comprises a small cluster of shops.

Configuration and connectivity

Successive subdivision of the estates combined with the area's relatively flat topography has resulted in a well-defined, regular street network, of generally north-south and east-west alignment. The network consists of a primary through-street, secondary local streets and rear laneways. Murray Street provides the primary north-south connection to and from the area. The regular block and street network results in a high degree of permeability. Wide street corridors, with wide verges improve visibility. Relatively flat topography promotes walkability. Public transport is limited with only a few bus routes servicing the area via Birrell, Alfred, Hewlett and Murray streets, which provide connection to surrounding areas including Bondi Junction.

Figure 8-7 - Alfred Street, looking south

LEGEND

Study area boundary		General heritage item
Cadastre boundary		Archaeological heritage item
Suburb boundary		
Building footprint		
Open space		
Village Centre		
Educational establishment		
Childcare centre		
Urban Conservation Area		
Landscape Conservation Area		
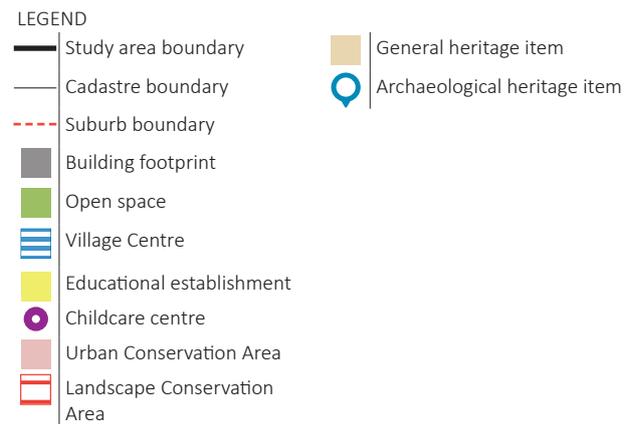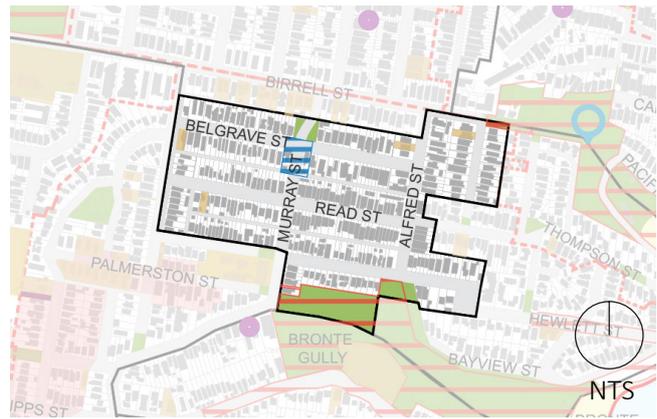
Figure 8-8 - Built form, uses and heritage area #08

LEGEND

- Study area boundary
- Suburb boundary
- Road network
- Contour (2m intervals)
- Open space
- Bus routes
- Bus stops
- Bicycle routes
- 'Green link'
- Pedestrian connections
- View corridor
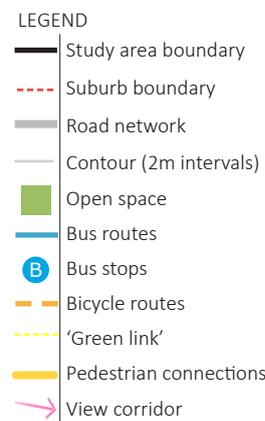
Figure 8-9 - Road network and movement area #08

Built form

The area is predominantly characterised by 1-2 storey detached and semi-detached dwellings interspersed with 3-4 storey residential flat buildings (RFBs), of varying architectural styles. The predominant dwelling typologies are Federation and Inter-War bungalows. These dwellings are often characterised by brick, rendered brick or weatherboard construction, low gabled terracotta tiled roofs, with thick masonry, timber or ironwork verandah posts and decorated timber gable trim. Window awnings and chimneys are additional features. Exemplar buildings include heritage-listed 2 Belgrave Street and 3 Alfred Street, as well as 13 Belgrave Street and 2 Read Street. A cluster of Federation bungalows are evident on the western side of Cross Street. Examples of earlier Late-Victorian dwellings are evident to the west of the area on Read, Dickson and Belgrave streets. These styles reflect the evolution of housing as the area changed from a district of rural worker housing and isolated villas to a setting of close subdivisions. However, despite noticeable architectural styles, early dwellings have been significantly modified overtime. Modifications include second-storey and garage additions. Replacement of early dwellings has occurred since the 1950s, with the Mid-century Modern style RFBs and late 20th century and 21st century detached and semi-detached dwellings evident throughout the area. The interspersion of these dwelling results in a varied tapestry of building heights, architectural styles, materiality and finishes. The area has a population density of about 70 persons/ha.

LEGEND

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

Figure 8-11 - Dwelling typologies area #08

LEGEND

▬	Study area boundary
—	Cadastre boundary
■	Colonial
■	Early Victorian
■	Late Victorian
■	Federation
■	Inter-war
■	Mid-Century Modern
■	Late 20th Century
■	21st Century

Figure 8-10 - Detached dwelling, Belgrave Street

Figure 8-12 - Architectural styles

Existing character description cont.

Public and private interface

The public and private domain interface varies depending on street hierarchy. Murray Street, the primary through-street, is characterised by narrow verges with limited street trees. Side boundaries typically abut the street, resulting in inactive frontages, screened by high fences (see Figure 8-14). Where a front boundary abuts the street, it is typically characterised by street-level garages. For local streets, wide verges provide for additional street trees, softening the transition between the public and private domains. Dwelling setbacks are typically consistent and of a narrow depth, resulting in the dwelling being in close proximity to the street. However, visibility of the dwelling, however varies, due to carparking and landscaping of the front setback and the style of the front fence, for example timber or brick of low-medium height. The exception being Mid-century Modern RFBs, which are characterised by street-level garages with upper balconies overlooking the public domain (see Figure 8-16). Rear lanes are characterised by garages, hard-stand parking or high fences at the boundary (see Figure 8-17). Dwellings are predominantly serviced by off-street carparking at the rear of the property, accessed by the adjoining lane, hard stand / carport parking in the front setback or integrated garages for dwellings without rear lane access. Laneway parking reduces the need for driveway cross overs, resulting in a more consistent streetscape and greater on-street carparking.

Figure 8-14 - Street frontage, Hewlett Street

Figure 8-15 - RFB, Belgrave Street

Figure 8-16 - RFB, Murray Street

Figure 8-13 - Street frontage, Read Street

Figure 8-17 - Garage frontages, Read Lane

Natural environment

Open space is limited within the study area, comprising of small pockets in Jessie Street Reserve, Belgrave Street Reserve and Hewlett Street Park (see Figure 8-18). Notwithstanding, the area abuts Bronte Gully and is in close proximity to the coastal open space network and Tamarama and Bronte beach / park to the east, and Waverley Park to the north-west. A biodiversity habitat corridor traverses the area, connecting these open spaces. Vegetation coverage across the area is generally low. In the public domain, wide verges support increased planting, however rear lanes are typically void of vegetation. In the private domain, planting is low due to narrow front setbacks and rear lane structures, however planting increases where rear boundaries adjoin. These conditions result in a medium-high urban heat island affect and low-medium heat vulnerability.

Recent development

Recent development history includes alterations and additions to existing detached and semi-detached dwellings, such as second-storey additions, double garages, carport replacements; 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 the suburb of 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.

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?
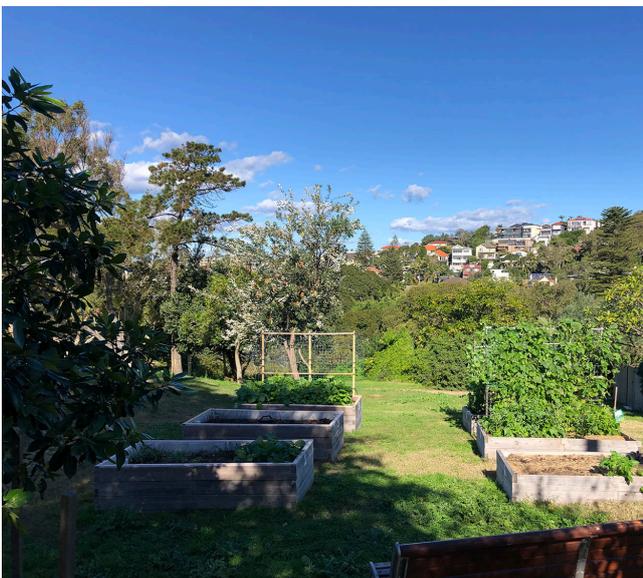
Figure 8-18 - Hewlett Street Park Community Garden

LEGEND

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

Figure 8-19 - Open space and vegetation area #08