

89 GEORGE ST - PARRAMATTA

HISTORY

George Street was laid out as one of the principal streets of Australia's second European settlement at Parramatta. The site at 89 George Street was once the part of a larger allotment which included prisoner barracks with the military barracks (now known as Lancer Barracks) on the south side of Macquarie Street. The Crown land to the south of the site was developed in the early nineteenth century as the Government lumber yard. By the 1840s the adjacent land had had a cottage known as Rose Cottage erected upon it which was replaced, a short time after, by the stone cottage at 85 George Street known as Perth House.

By the late nineteenth century, a two storey duplex residence was constructed on the site (visible on bottom RTA aerial from 1943). In the post World War Two period this was demolished and a single storey motor vehicle workshop was constructed in its place. The building continues in use as a motor vehicle workshop with an automated dry-cleaning service operating from the street front.

SIGNIFICANCE

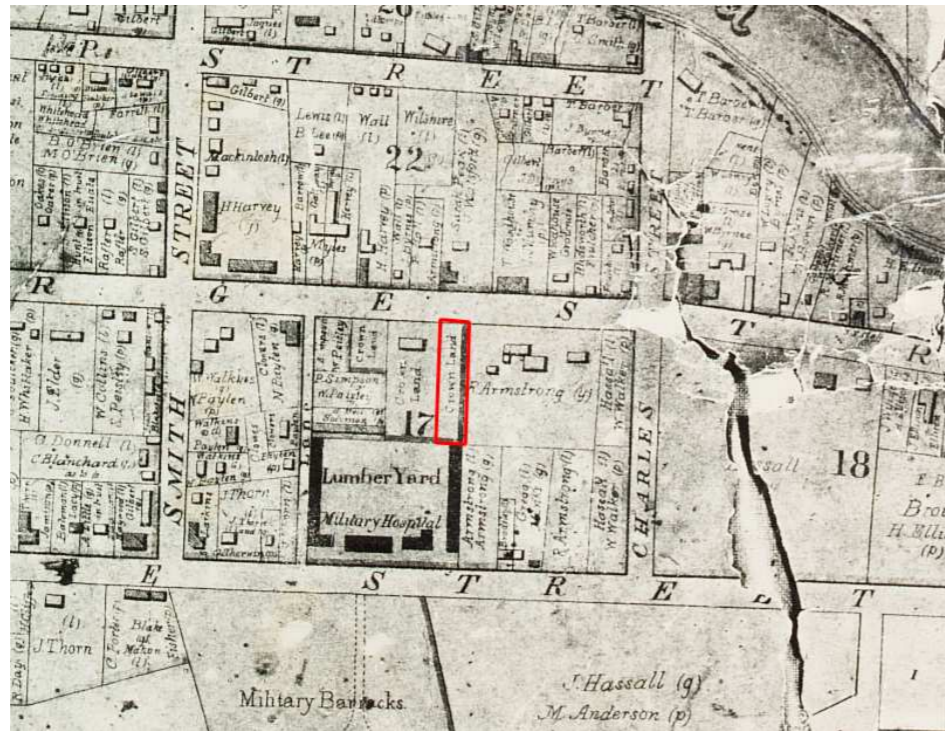
The site at 89 George Street has no intrinsic heritage value. The adjacent Perth House and Stables at 85 George Street has had its heritage significance summarized as follows in an assessment by Conybeare Morrison Partners:

Perth House and Stables, 85 George Street, Parramatta, a Victorian Georgian residence and outbuilding has rare and early aspects associated with historic, aesthetic and scientific significance at local and State level. The place has historical associations that reflect early development and changing pattern of use in central Parramatta. The earliest phase includes convict built huts and a convict-built brick barrel drain. Rose Cottage, a substantial convict built timber residence for the superintendent of Convicts and Public Works at Parramatta replaced the convict huts. Perth House with associated outbuildings was constructed in the late 1840s as a private residence and replaced Rose Cottage. Perth House was later used as a private ladies' college, boarding house, commercial office, funeral parlour and restaurant.

Perth House and Stables is associated with prominent persons including George Oakes, a local Parramatta and State politician, who first owned and built Perth House; James Houison, a local politician and prominent Sydney builder/architect active in the Parramatta area and believed to have designed and built Perth House for George Oakes; and William Aird, superintendent of Convicts and Public Works at Parramatta from 1 January 1825, who lived in Rose Cottage, a former residence on the site.

Perth House has aesthetic significance as a fine representative example of the Victorian Georgian style residence dating from the late 1840s. The house is representative of the style with symmetrical facades and planning, 'reasonable' proportions, exposed stonewalling, slate roof, simple chimney forms, verandahs with slender timber posts, twelve pane sash windows, louvred timber shutters and significant interior finishes including the high quality polished cedar door and window joinery and fire surrounds. Perth House with flanking fig trees is a strong contributory element in the significant urban streetscape of George Street, Parramatta, and a rare surviving element of early Parramatta.

Perth House has scientific significance associated with the archaeological potential of the remains of convict built huts and cottage located beneath the footprint of Perth House together with the convict built brick barrel drain located under the drive to the west of the house. (Perth House and Stables Conservation Management Plan, November 2004, Conybeare Morrison, page 36)

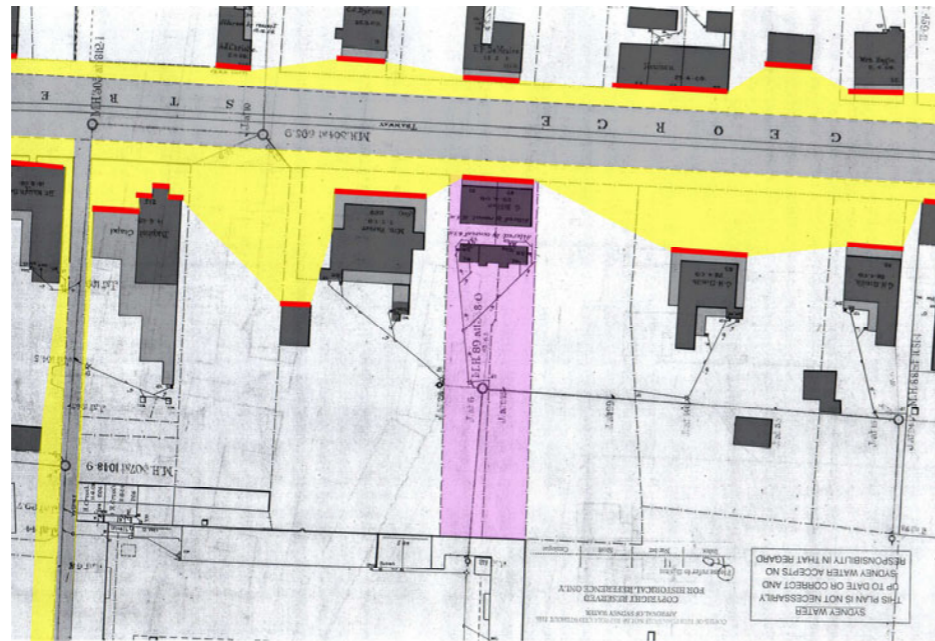


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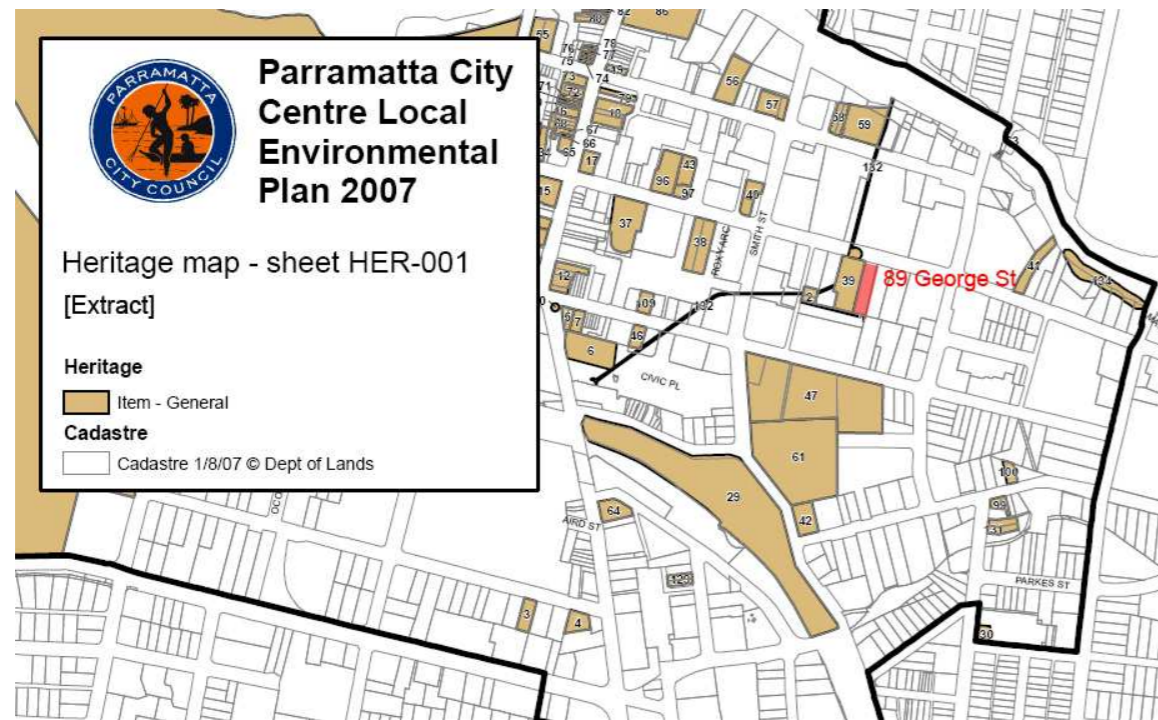
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SETBACKS AND VISUAL CURTILAGE

The diagrams to the left show the historic setting of Perth House with the two storey duplex at 89 George Street and the streetscape for much of the twentieth century. They have been overlaid with colour to indicate the site at 89 George Street (pink) together with building setbacks (in yellow and red, top) and the maximum possible built form visual curtilage for Perth House (in green, bottom).



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STATUTORY LISTING

The site comprises a single storey dry-cleaning business and car service workshop from the post World War Two period which has little intrinsic heritage value. The land is not listed on any heritage list and is not identified as an archaeological management unit of moderate or high archaeological potential in the Parramatta Historic Archaeological Management Study.

The adjacent 1840s sandstone cottage - Perth House and Stables - is listed both as a Heritage Item on the Parramatta City Centre Local Environmental Plan 2007 and on the State Heritage Register. Listing on the State Heritage Register affords Perth House and Stables the maximum protection provided by the State government and development within its vicinity must be assessed so as to identify and reduce adverse impacts on its significance.

The most recent conservation management plan for Perth House was prepared by Conybeare Morrison + Partners in November 2004. Despite highlighting the need to manage the impact of new developments within the setting of Perth House, the curtilage remains undefined in that document and may be assumed to be the lot boundary.

Materials and finishes

Reuse existing materials where possible. New materials and detailing must be compatible with the original and consideration must be given to the colour, texture and type of materials and finishes.

Materials visually compatible with the sandstone and timber of Perth House will be used for the ground level of proposed development. At higher levels, materials will provide a neutral, contemporary backdrop to Perth House.

Use

The best use for a building is usually the one for which it is built. Where this is not possible, a use sympathetic to the layout of the building and requiring minimal alterations will be more compatible.

Principally relates to heritage items rather than development in the vicinity of heritage items.

Original fabric

It is important to minimize alterations to the original fabric and where possible, repair rather than replace individual elements, such as windows and doors.

Principally relates to heritage items rather than development in the vicinity of heritage items.

The aging process

The patina of age on a building adds much to its character and significance. A worn step for example demonstrates the many years of feet crossing a threshold. Such features add to the uniqueness and character of a place and must be retained wherever this does not present a public safety risk.

Principally relates to heritage items rather than development in the vicinity of heritage items. Compatible materials used in the foyer and lower levels of the proposed building will be investigated which may provide their own patina in time subject to maintenance issues.

Curtilage

There are three types of heritage curtilage:

- Lot boundary. The lot boundary is the most common type of curtilage. It may contain associated buildings, gardens, walls, fences and the like which contribute to the significance of the property. The majority of built items in Parramatta are listed within their lot boundary curtilage.

Due to the historic closure of much of the view to Perth House from the east by the two storey duplex that existed in the nineteenth and twentieth century a lot boundary curtilage can be assumed and the opportunity taken to recover or enhance views to Perth House from the east. This has been done by setting back the ground and lower floors from the north-western corner of the site.

- Reduced curtilage. This curtilage is less than the lot boundary of the property and it arises where

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the significance of the item and its interpretation is not dependant on having a large curtilage extending to a lot boundary. For example where there are large estates with sufficient land on the lot that can be subdivided independent of the heritage significance of any item on that land, or a new dwelling adjacent but not impacting on the existing heritage item on that land. In such cases, it is necessary to identify a curtilage that enables the heritage significance of the item to be retained.

- Expanded curtilage. This curtilage is greater than the property boundary. An expanded curtilage may be required to protect the landscape setting or visual catchment of an item. For example, the significance of some properties includes a visual link between the property itself and a river or topographical feature.

Infill development

The key to successful infill development adjacent to a heritage item is reflected in design where the infill is of similar mass and character to the adjacent heritage building/s. This may comprise use of the vertical (versus square) windows, verandahs, balconies, positive roof pitches (i.e. 25 to 35 degrees) and general facade detailing. Buildings and landscaping may establish a character of an area and provides a sense of continuity and a recognised community value. Unsympathetic infill will disrupt the unity of a group of buildings and may spoil the existing character. Architectural 'good manners' are important in areas of special character. An infill building must not precisely imitate its neighbour but use recognisable tools such as massing, scale, setback and orientation, detailing and materials, roof forms and coursing lines to complement adjacent heritage items.

The development is infill development on a site which mediates the single storey heritage item and existing larger office towers by providing a neutral contemporary backdrop to the heritage item when viewed from the west and by mediating the lower floors with the transitional verandah form and domestic scale of Perth House.

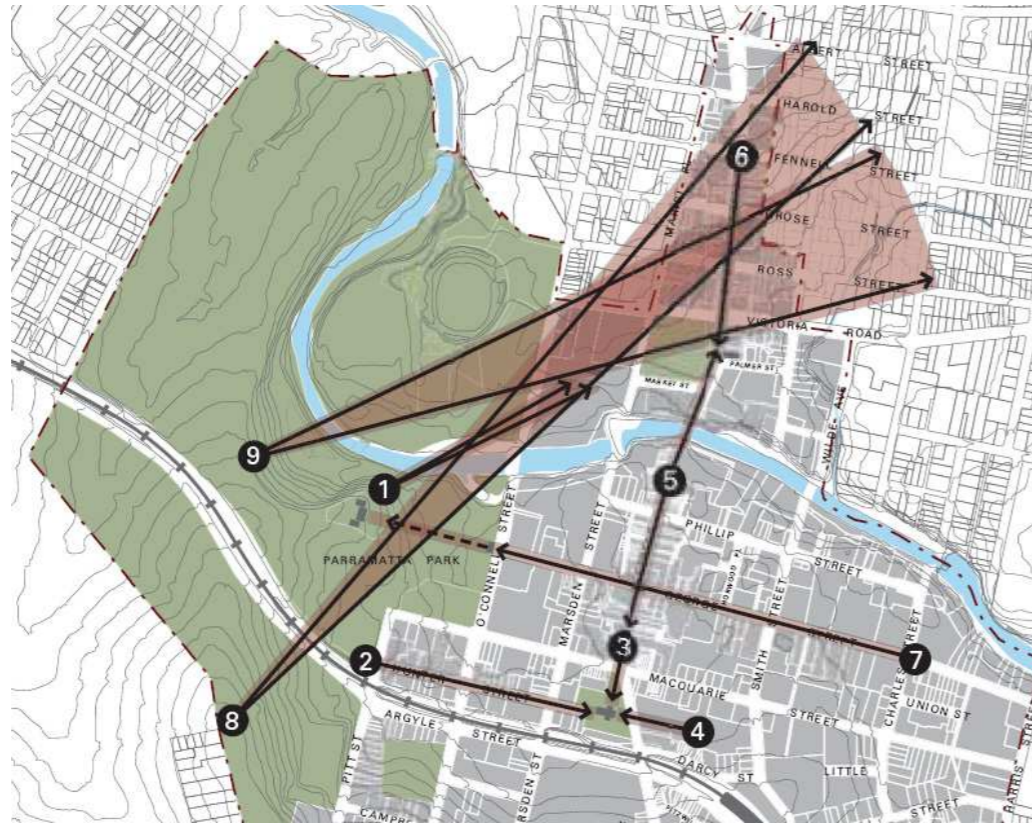
Archaeology

Parramatta is a highly valued source of information relating to Aboriginal and post 1788 settlements. All developments within the city centre must be informed and guided by the Parramatta Historical Archaeological and Landscape

Management Study (Known as PHALMS). Map in the Parramatta City Centre LEP identify potential of various parcels of land to contain significant archaeological relics and information about Parramatta's past. All development proposals involving excavation must be in accordance with the recommendations of this study. Such developments on properties identified by PHALMS as having moderate or high potential to find archaeological relics must obtain a permit from NSW Heritage Council under Section 140 of the Heritage Act prior to lodging a development application. However, if such developments are listed on the State Heritage Register or National Heritage Register, formal approval is required from the NSW Heritage Council under the Heritage Act or from the Commonwealth Minister for Environment under the Environmental protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act.

The land is not identified within the PHALMS as having high or moderate archaeological potential. A section 140 application will be made to the Heritage Office before commencement.

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Historic Views

For historic views refer to Appendix 2 in this DCP (shown here at left).

The view (west) 'along George Street to Parramatta Park gatehouse and trees' (View 7) is identified as an historic view corridor. Views of streetscape and heritage items are to be retained and enhanced. A view from the east to Perth House is enhanced by setting back the corner of the proposed development at the north-western corner of the site. The views to the gatehouse and trees of Parramatta Park from George Street will not be obscured. See also 'Development in the Vicinity of Heritage Items' below.

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Top left: View west along George St with Perth House obscured by planting. Historic view to Parramatta Park and gatehouse visible in distance from centre of road.

Top right: View southeast to Perth House with key setting feature of fig tree at centre right.

Left: View southeast to Perth House dominated by fig tree.

Below: View directly opposite Perth House with 1980s office building at rear.



Development in the Vicinity of Heritage Items

Development in the vicinity of heritage items or properties that have heritage significance but not yet listed on a statutory list must consider the impact it is having on them. This would involve identifying the contribution these heritage items are making to the streetscape and the overall character of the city centre and finding a way to retain that contribution. This may involve providing front and side set backs at ground or above a certain level to retain views of the heritage buildings from public domain. The massing, design and materials of the proposed development will also need to be compatible to the heritage building in the vicinity. Refer to the joint NSW Heritage Office and RAlA publication "Designing in Context: Guidelines for Infill Development in the Historic Environment" (2005) for further guidance.

The proposed development is adjacent to Perth House. Analysis of the significance of that item and historic, current and desired views to Perth House have been accommodated throughout the design process in accordance with those 'conservation criteria' above.

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