

PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT

AT

**LOFTUS CRESCENT,
HOMEBUSH, NSW**

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT



Prepared by:

John Oultram Heritage & Design
Level 2, 386 New South Head Road
Double Bay, NSW 2028

T: (02) 9327 2748
E: heritagedesign@bigpond.com

Prepared for:

Pacific Planning

September 2018

© John Oultram Heritage & Design

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION.....	4
1.1	THE BRIEF.....	4
1.2	THE STUDY AREA.....	4
1.3	PREVIOUS REPORTS.....	5
1.4	LIMITATIONS AND TERMS.....	5
1.5	METHODOLOGY.....	5
1.6	AUTHORS AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	5
2.0	HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT.....	6
2.1	LAND GRANTS.....	6
2.2	THE COMING OF THE RAILWAY LINE.....	6
2.3	SITE HISTORY.....	8
2.4	82-92A PARRAMATTA ROAD.....	10
2.5	82 - 86 PARRAMATTA ROAD.....	11
2.6	90-92A PARRAMATTA ROAD.....	12
3.0	PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION.....	13
3.1	GENERALLY.....	13
3.2	LOFTUS CRESCENT.....	13
3.3	KNIGHT STREET.....	13
3.4	PARRAMATTA ROAD.....	13
3.5	SUBWAY LANE.....	13
3.6	ENVIRONS.....	13
4.0	HERITAGE LISTINGS CONTROLS.....	18
4.1	NATIONAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA (NSW).....	18
4.2	HERITAGE DIVISION OF THE NSW DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE.....	18
4.2.1	STATE HERITAGE REGISTER.....	18
4.2.2	STATE HERITAGE INVENTORY.....	18
4.3	LOCAL AUTHORITY.....	18
5.0	DISCUSSION OF SIGNIFICANCE.....	21
5.1	PREAMBLE.....	21
5.2	HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE.....	21
5.2.1	HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT.....	21
5.2.2	HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS.....	21
5.2.3	AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE.....	21
5.3	SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE.....	22
5.4	TECHNICAL/SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE.....	22
5.5	ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE.....	22
6.0	PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT.....	23
6.1	THE CURRENT PROPOSALS.....	23
7.0	IMPACT OF THE PROPOSALS.....	24
7.1	GENERALLY.....	24
7.2	EXCAVATION.....	24
7.3	PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT.....	25
7.4	STRATHFIELD LOCAL ENVIRONMENT PLAN 2012 (LEP).....	26
7.4.1	IMPACT ON HERITAGE ITEMS IN THE VICINITY.....	26
7.4.1.1	Former Homebush Theatre.....	26
7.4.1.2	Horse and Jockey Hotel.....	27
7.4.1.3	72-76 Parramatta Road.....	28
7.4.1.4	Homebush Railway Station.....	29

8.0	SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS	31
8.1	SUMMARY	31
8.1.1	ARCHAEOLOGY	31
8.1.2	INTERPRETATION	31

Frontispiece: The earlier Horse and Jockey Hotel built in 1883

Source: Strathfield-Homebush Historical Society website

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE BRIEF

The following report has been prepared to accompany a development submission for the redevelopment of the existing properties at 11-16 Loftus Crescent, 2 Subway Lane, 5, 9 and 11 Knight Street and 82-92A Parramatta Road, Homebush, NSW. The report has been prepared on behalf of Pacific Planning, the owner of the properties.

1.2 THE STUDY AREA

The Study Area is as follows:

ADDRESS	Lot	DP
11 Loftus Crescent	Lot B	419854
12 Loftus Crescent	Lot A	419854
13 Loftus Crescent	Lot 2	201286
14 Loftus Crescent	Lot 1	201286
15 Loftus Crescent	Lot 2	314354
16 Loftus Crescent	Lot 101	846306
2 Subway Lane	Lot 7	18702
	Lot B	403083
11 Knight Street	Lots 1-6	SP1702
82 Parramatta Road	Lot 1	203695
84 Parramatta Road	Lot C	419617
86 Parramatta Road	Lot B	419617
Lane	Lot A	419617
90 Parramatta Road	Lot 3	201120
92 Parramatta Road	Lot 2	201120
92A Parramatta Road	Lot 1	201120

in the Municipality of Strathfield, Parish of Concord and County of Cumberland (Figure 1.1).

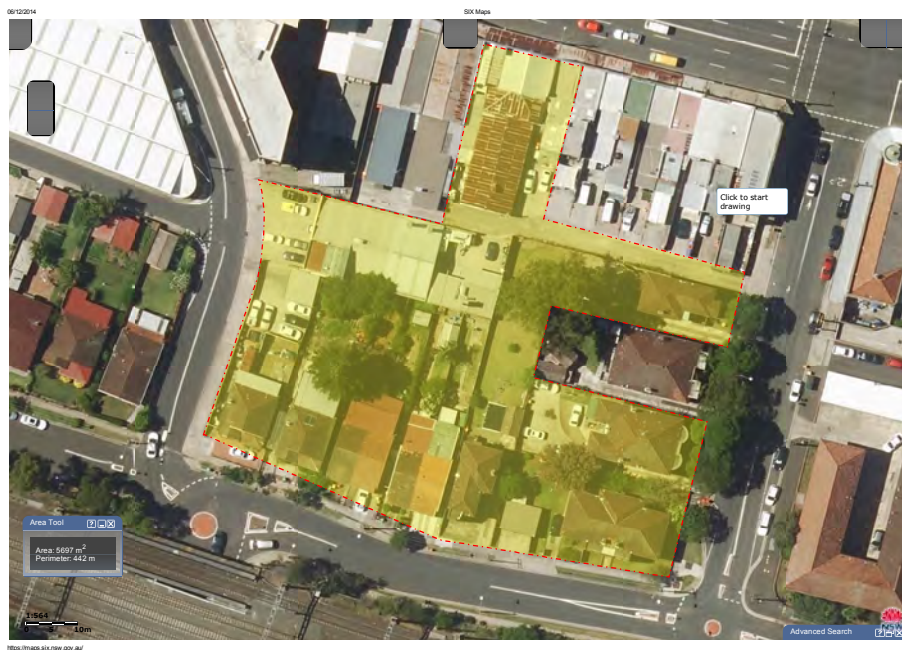


Figure 1.1 The Study Area

Source: Client

1.3 PREVIOUS REPORTS

The site was the subject of a historical research report:

Heritage 21, *Heritage Research, Proposed Development at 5, 9, 11 Knight Street, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 & 16 Loftus Crescent, Homebush*, dated December 2016 (HR)

The historical information in this report is largely taken from the HR.

1.4 LIMITATIONS AND TERMS

The report only addresses the European significance of the place. The terms *fabric, conservation, maintenance, preservation, restoration, reconstruction, adaptation, compatible use and cultural significance* used in this report are as defined in the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter.

1.5 METHODOLOGY

This report was prepared in accordance with the *NSW Heritage Manual* "Statements of Heritage Impact", "Assessing Heritage Significance Guidelines" and the Burwood Council guidelines for the preparation of heritage impact statements. The philosophy adopted is that guided by the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter 2013.

1.6 AUTHORS AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report, including all diagrams and photographs, was prepared by John Oultram of John Oultram Heritage & Design, unless otherwise noted. Additional historical research was prepared by Nicholas Jackson. John Oultram Heritage & Design was established in 1998 and is on the NSW Heritage Office list heritage of consultants.

2.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The following history is largely taken from the HR.

2.1 LAND GRANTS

The first land grants in the Strathfield district were established in 1793 by the colonial authority. The first grants were given to Thomas Rose, Thomas Webb, Edward Powell and Frederick Meredith on 28 May 1793. Powell's and Webb's grants were later re-granted to Simeon Lord on 09 August 1803. Further grants were made throughout the area in the early Nineteenth Century. The area came to be known as 'Liberty Plains', and was the site of early, unsuccessful attempts at farming in the colony. Many of the original grants were abandoned or sold.

In the decades prior to the proclamation of the Municipality of Strathfield in 1855, the Strathfield area had been settled by wealthy businessmen, tradesmen and officials who sought, and could afford, a peaceful, suburban lifestyle that was accessible to the city.

2.2 THE COMING OF THE RAILWAY LINE

In 1855, the Sydney to Parramatta railway line was opened, which included Homebush Station. The area did not start to develop rapidly until 12 years after this opening. From 1867, the land grants started to be subdivided and the area was transformed by suburbanisation.

However, not all of the land parcels were subdivided and developed during this time and Strathfield became a prosperous area. During the 1870s and 1880s, the land to the north was further subdivided, close to Homebush Station, starting with the Underwood Estate in 1878, located immediately south of the Homebush Railway Station. In 1878, Homebush Village was set out, and was subdivided in 1883, but only the lots situated at a distance from Parramatta Road were purchased. The area became increasingly wealthy, reinforcing the upper middle class nature of the area.

The notion of a 'garden city' had been popularised at the turn of the century and advocated the separation of residence and industry and the prevalence of parkland in and surrounding, residential areas. The Local Government Acts (LGA) of 1906 and 1919 increased the power of Councils to exercise control over their local government area and under the LGA of 1919, the Strathfield Council was empowered to reserve much of the suburb as a residential district, preventing the construction or use of any building in designated residential areas for trades or industries and excluding residential flats.

Only some streets were exempt from the ruling against residential flats, including Rochester Street, the northern part of which is now Knight Street. The proclamation was suspended in 1969 by the Strathfield Planning Scheme Ordinance, and so few residential flat buildings were constructed in the Strathfield area between 1920 and 1969. The small number of units constructed in the Strathfield area during 1920 to 1969 mostly comprised single dwelling conversions, sites located near town centres or sites located outside the earlier Strathfield Council boundaries, such as Homebush.¹

The area to the north of Homebush Station was a part of the Homebush Municipal Council from 1906 until 1947, when it was subsumed into the Strathfield Council.¹⁵ Homebush Council adopted a Residential Proclamation in 1927, leading to the construction of mainly residences during the Inter-War period, but it did not restrict the construction of residential flat buildings on Rochester (now Knight) and Station Streets during the Inter-War period.

Rochester Street, at this time, was a small commercial strip, both north and south of Homebush Railway Station, known as Homebush Shopping Village. The first shop on Rochester Street is listed in the 1887 Sands Directory and the number of shops continued to grow, with fifteen timber shops on Rochester Street and The Crescent (to the south of the railway) by 1915. At this time, Rochester Street extended to Parramatta Road, linking the commercial strip to the heritage-listed Horse and Jockey Hotel, Homebush Theatre and other commercial properties to the north on Parramatta Road. The elevation and realignment of the tracks during the Twentieth Century led to the disconnection between the commercial properties on each side of the railway tracks, and the section of Rochester Street to the north of the railway was renamed Knight Street.

Many of the original timber shops along Rochester Street were rebuilt in brick in the 1920s, during which the Homebush Theatre was constructed and opened in 1925,¹⁸ leading to a renewed commercial and shopping district on Parramatta Road and Rochester Street.¹⁹ The Horse and Jockey Hotel was originally built in c.1883 but was demolished in 1940 due to the widening of Parramatta Road.

The existing Horse and Jockey Hotel was built in 1941, designed by Architects Scott, Green and Scott and built by Alex Speers and Sons. However, this shopping district declined from the 1940s after the separation of the north and south sides of Rochester Street, the increase in car ownership the construction of large shopping malls in the 1960s.



Figure 2.1 Early land grant map of the area, showing the 1803 re-granting of Edwards Powell and Thomas Webb's grant to Simeon Lord (approximate site location indicated)



Figure 2.2 Map of Homebush c.1875 showing the subdivision of the Underwood Estate to the south of the subject site and the Homebush Railway Station to the south-east (site location indicated)

2.3 SITE HISTORY

The land of the subject site was first granted to Thomas Webb in 1798 but was later granted to Simeon Lord in 1803. The land was outside the bounds of the subdivision of the Anderson Estate in 1878. The land was subdivided in 1918 as part of Hudson's Estate. From c.1919, part of the subject site was used by a timber-getting company, known as A. & E. Ellis Ltd, who provided timber, paints, oils, wire gauze and hardware to builders. This stockyard was sold in 1925 and the stock auctioned on 31 January 1925.

Later in 1926, the eastern section of this stockyard became Alton Tennis Courts (most probably now 11 Knight Street and 10 Loftus Crescent), which continued to be used at least until 1933. In 1927, the houses at what are now 11 through to 16 Loftus Crescent appear in the Sands Directory for the first time, indicating an approximate construction date of 1926. The 1929 Sands Directory listings indicate that these properties were originally numbered 8 to 13 Loftus Crescent.

The extant residential flat buildings at 5 to 11 Knight Street and 10 Loftus Crescent do not appear on the Sands Directory, indicating a construction date after 1932, at the earliest.³² All five buildings appear on the 1943 aerial photograph of Sydney indicating a construction date between 1932 and 1943.

Knight Street, to the east of the subject site, was originally an extension of Rochester Street, laid out between 1875 and 1914. The street was renamed after the leveling of the train tracks at Homebush Station in the Twentieth Century.



Figure 2.3 Map of Homebush in 1914 showing only Loftus Crescent and Rochester Street bordering the site had been established (site indicated)



Figure 2.4 Map of Homebush c.1926 showing further subdivision but that not all roads bordering the site had been established (site indicated)



Figure 2.5 1943 aerial photograph showing the properties within the subject site

Source: Six Maps

2.4 82-92A PARRAMATTA ROAD

The sites along Parramatta Road were also part of the land grant to Simeon Lord that was subdivided in the 1880s as the Underwood Estate. The sites were part of Section 18 than ran along the southern side of Parramatta Road.

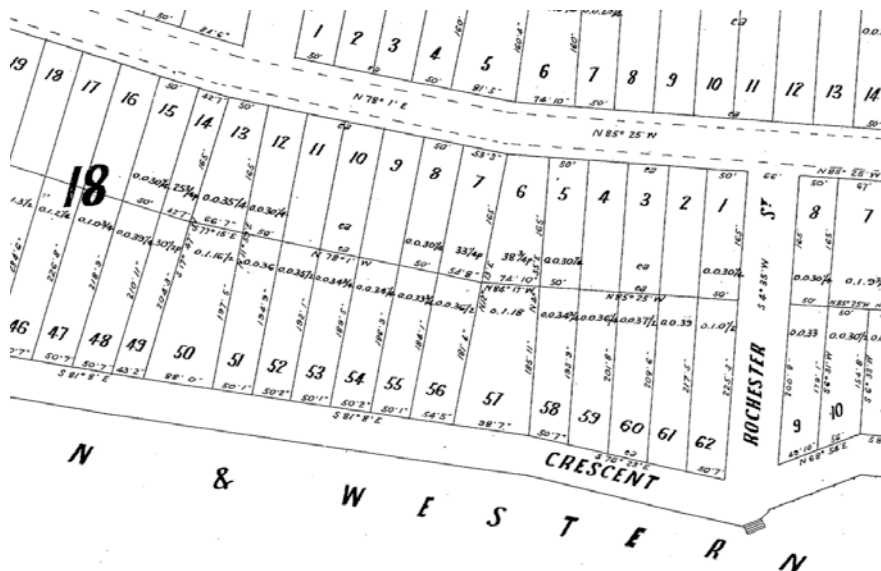


Figure 2.6 Part of the subdivision of the Underwood Estate. Rochester Street was later renamed Knight Street. The subdivision plan is not dated

Source: NSW Land Registry Services DP 477

2.5 82-86 PARRAMATTA ROAD

In 1884 Albert Augustus Kerr, a chemist of Goulburn, purchased eight lots of the Underwood Estate including Lots 1, 2 and 3 in Section 18 to the south side of Parramatta Road¹. It is not clear if Kerr developed the sites but he retained the lots till 1912 when they were re-subdivided under DP 6439.

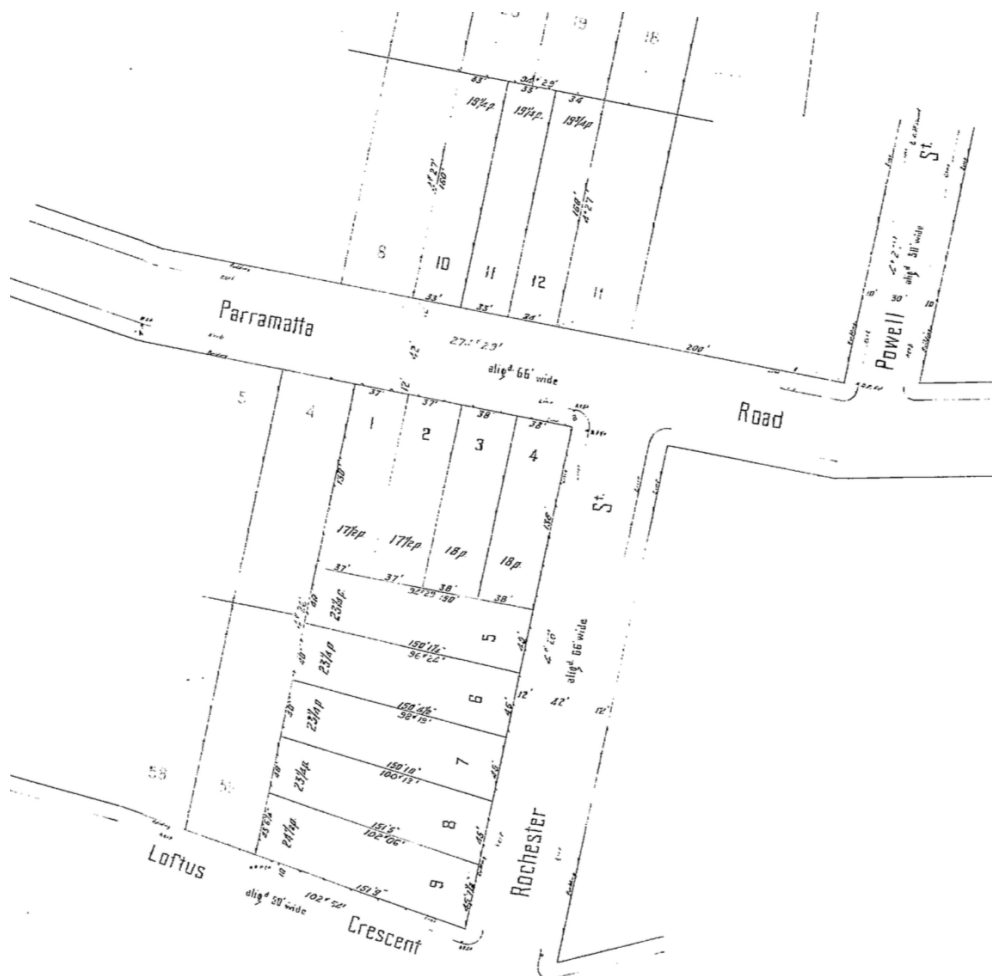


Figure 2.7 Plan of the re-subdivision of the Underwood Estate dated 1912

Source: NSW Land Registry Services DP 6439

Kerr sold Lots 1-4 of the subdivision in 1915 to John Hurley, a stockdealer of Glebe². Hurley sold three of the Lots (1-3) to John Henry Cross in 1919 and the residue to the same in 1921³. Cross took out mortgages on the properties and the sites may have been developed at that time as Cross began issuing leases on the subject sites in 1920.⁴

¹ NSW Land Registry Services, Vol. 714, Fol. 147

² NSW Land Registry Services Vol. 2606, Fol.15

³ Ibid

⁴ NSW Land Registry Services Vol. 3065, Fol. 87

2.6 90-92A PARRAMATTA ROAD

90-92A Parramatta Road were part of a re-subdivision of the Underwood Estate under DP 9154 that had formed Subway Lane. The subject site was part of Lot 42 that was purchased by Helenor Cross in 1921 and 1924⁵. Helenor, the wife of the aforementioned John Henry Cross, purchased the properties in 1921 from A. E. Ellis Limited. John Cross is noted in later dealings as a builder of Croydon.

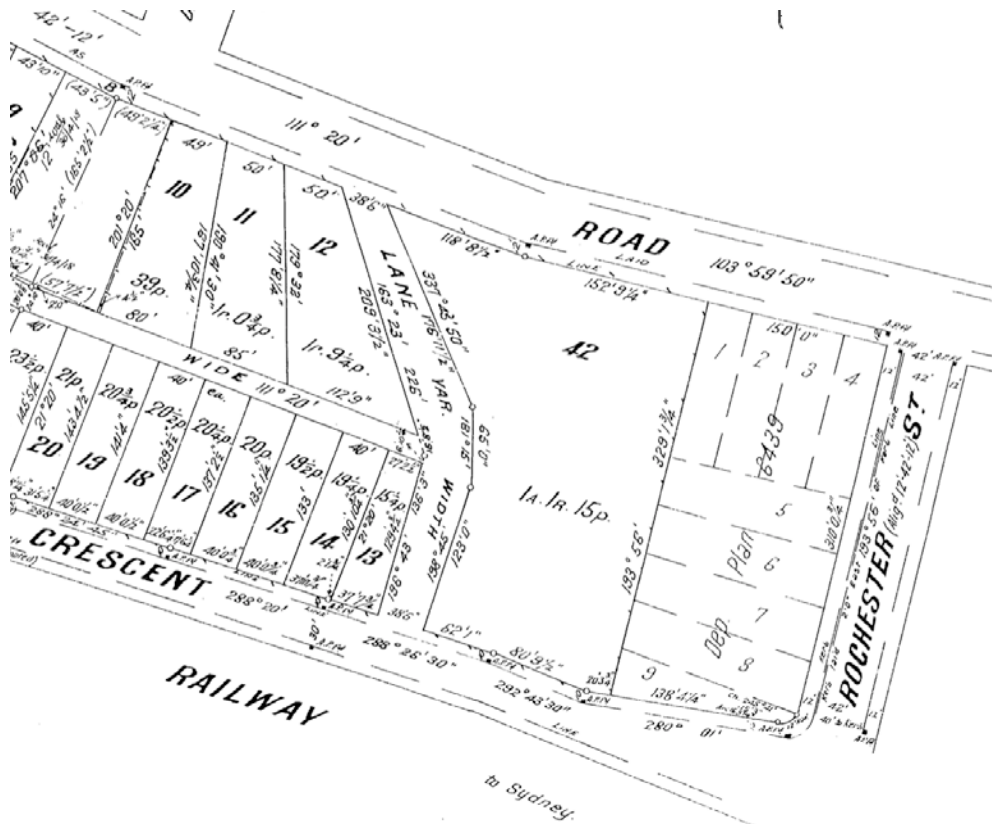


Figure 2.8 Plan of the re-subdivision of part of the Underwood Estate dated 1918. The subject sites are within Lot 42 that was developed but not subdivided

Source: NSW Land Registry Services DP 9154

It would seem likely the sites along Parramatta Road between Knight Street and Subway Lane were developed by the pair. The 1925 edition of the Sands notes the occupier of the Horse and Jockey Hotel as JH Cross. In 1920 only four premises are noted between Crane Street and Rochester Road but this had expanded to 33 premises by 1925. In 1930 the shops are listed as:

• 92A	J Orphans	Fish shop
• 92	Mrs Le Hamilton	Hardware
• 90	E Fisher	Boot maker
• 86	Mrs A Loacocco	Baby shop
• 84	MRS EH Armstrong	Small goods
• 82	C Cottee	Fruiterer

⁵ NSW Land Registry Services Vol. 2988, Fol. 212

3.0 PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

An inspection of the study area was carried out by John Oultram in March 2018.

3.1 GENERALLY

The subject site is a large parcel of land bounded by Loftus Crescent, Knight Street, Parramatta Road and Subway Lane. The site is largely level with a slight fall to the west. The site has been cleared of all buildings but there are extant buildings on the sites adjoining.

3.2 LOFTUS CRESCENT

Loftus Crescent runs along the northern side of the railway line that is partly elevated from the street. The site has been cleared to this side apart from the apartment building to the corner of Knight Street.

3.3 KNIGHT STREET

Knight Street is a wide road extending from Loftus Crescent to Parramatta Road and is lined with a number of two storey, Inter War apartment buildings in face brick with hipped, terracotta tile roofs.

To the north at the corner of Knight Street and Parramatta Road is a two storey, Inter War period retail/residential building in rendered masonry with a parapet and awning to the street. Opposite is the Horse and Jockey Hotel, a two storey, Inter War hotel in face brick with tiling to the ground floor and an awning over that wraps around the street frontages. The hotel has a circular corner tower and string courses to the first floor windows and a hipped, terracotta tile roof.

3.4 PARRAMATTA ROAD

The south side of Parramatta Road from Knight Street to Subway Lane is largely lined with two storey, Inter War period commercial/residential developments in render with parapets to the street. The previous buildings on the subject site have been demolished.

At the corner of Parramatta Road and Subway Lane is a six storey, late Twentieth Century apartment building with shop units to the ground floor with an awning over.

3.5 SUBWAY LANE

Subway Lane is a winding, narrow street lined to the west with a single storey, light industrial building in face brick with a saw tooth roof. The apartment building fronting Parramatta Road extends down part of the eastern side of the lane and adjoins the development site. The lane leads to the railway line and Homebush Station and is aptly named for the road and subway that carries over the road at the railway line.

3.6 ENVIRONS

The site is close to the commercial strip that runs along Parramatta Road that is partly lined with Inter War period commercial/residential developments but with considerable later infill of commercial and residential building.

Opposite the junction of Knight Street and Parramatta Road Homebush Theatre that is a three storey building in an exuberant Inter War style with extensive stucco decoration.

Further east and also further west along Parramatta Road there are extensive development of modern, multi storey apartments. The southern section of the area is strongly bounded by the railway line and to the east and west of the subject site are rows of single storey, Inter War houses.

Figures 3.1 – 3.10



Figure 3.1 Loftus Crescent, Homebush

View to the corner of Loftus Crescent and Knight Street



Figure 3.2 Loftus Crescent, Homebush

View looking north along Knight Street to the Homebush Theatre



Figure 3.3 Loftus Crescent, Homebush

View looking west along Parramatta Road from Knight Street



Figure 3.4 Loftus Crescent, Homebush

View to the corner of Knight Street and Parramatta Road



Figure 3.5 Loftus Crescent, Homebush

View to the development site from Parramatta Road



Figure 3.6 Loftus Crescent, Homebush

View to the buildings in Parramatta Road towards Subway lane



Figure 3.7 Loftus Crescent, Homebush

View to the site from Subway Lane



Figure 3.8 Loftus Crescent, Homebush

View looking north along Subway Lane



Figure 3.9 Loftus Crescent, Homebush

View to the site from the corner of Subway Lane and Loftus Crescent



Figure 3.10 Loftus Crescent, Homebush

View looking east along Loftus Crescent

4.0 HERITAGE LISTINGS CONTROLS

4.1 NATIONAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA (NSW)

The properties are not listed on the Register of National Trust (NSW).

4.2 HERITAGE DIVISION OF THE NSW DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

4.2.1 State Heritage Register

Under the Heritage Act 1977 (as amended), the NSW Heritage Council, administered by the Heritage Division of the NSW Department of Environment and Heritage, maintains the State Heritage Register (SHR), a register of items and places that are considered to have heritage significance at a state level. The subject properties are not listed on the Register.

4.2.2 State Heritage Inventory

The Heritage Division also compiles the State Heritage Inventory (SHI), a collated database of all places listed on statutory heritage lists, including Local Environmental Plans. The subject properties are not listed on the Inventory.

4.3 LOCAL AUTHORITY

The local authority for the area is Strathfield Council. The properties are not listed as heritage items in Schedule 5 Part 1 of the *Strathfield Local Environmental Plan 2012* (as amended) (LEP) and are not within a conservation area.

The subject sites are in the vicinity of heritage items at:

REF	ADDRESS	ITEM	RANKING
I31	55-57 Parramatta Road	Former Homebush Theatre	Local
I32	70 Parramatta Road	Horse and Jockey Hotel	Local
I33	72-76 Parramatta Road	Commercial building p two storey, Inter War, stripped classical style building	Local
I40	The Crescent	Homebush Railway Station	State

The heritage provisions of the LEP relating to development in the vicinity of a heritage item would apply.

Council may also take into consideration the heritage objectives in the *Strathfield Development Control Plan 2012* (DCP) that contains detailed guidelines and controls for development.

Under the LEP the site is zoned *B4 Mixed Use* and the zoning map and height of buildings map are shown below.



Figure 4.1 Strathfield Local Environmental Plan 2012 Heritage Map HER_004

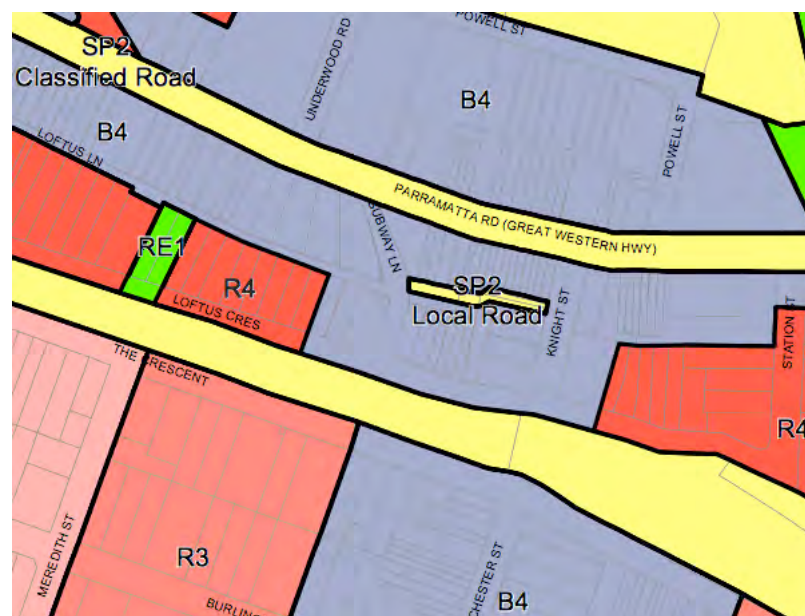


Figure 4.1 Strathfield Local Environmental Plan 2012 Zoning Map LZN_004

The site is zoned B4 Mixed Use

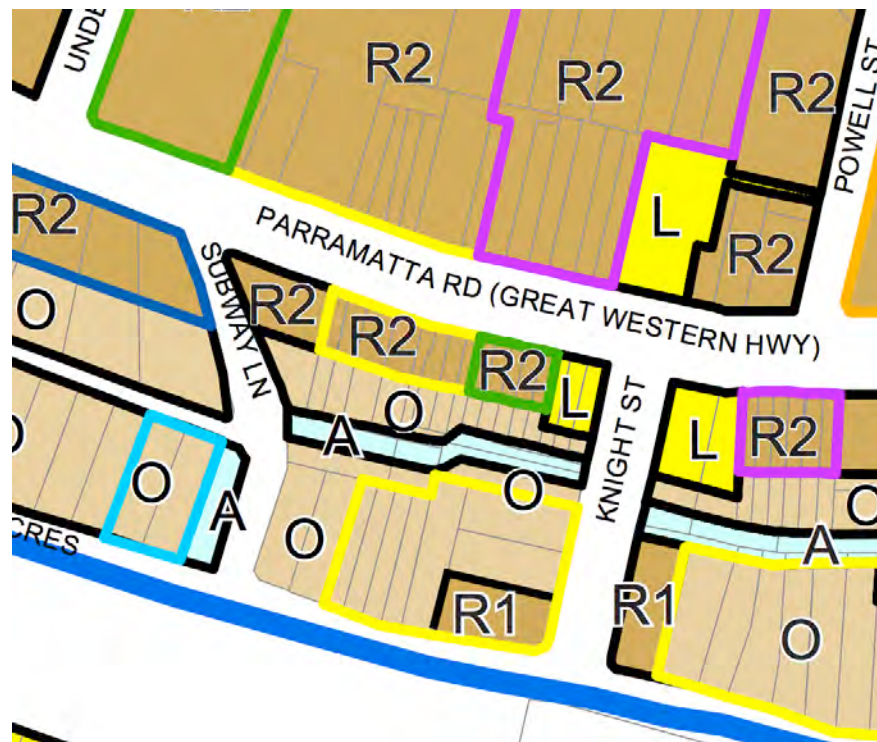


Figure 4.3 Strathfield Local Environmental Plan 2012 Height of Buildings Map HOB_004

The site generally has a permitted height limit of 16-22 metres

The height limits and FSR controls are also governed by the Parramatta Road Corridor Urban Transformation Strategy that provides an FSR of 5.0:1 and a height limit of 80 metres.

5.0 DISCUSSION OF SIGNIFICANCE

5.1 PREAMBLE

The site has been cleared and contains no buildings from previous development periods. It is axiomatic that cultural significance is largely embodied in extant fabric and the significance of the site is largely in its historical development and associations.

5.2 HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

5.2.1 Historical Development

The site was part of the re-grant to Simeon Lord, the well-known merchant and developer, in 1803. Following the opening of the Sydney to Parramatta Railway in 1855 the area began to be developed and a large parcel of land close to the station was subdivided as the Underwood Estate in 1878.

Early development was along Rochester Street including the Horse and Jockey Hotel that was constructed in 1887. The street was later divided when the railway was elevated and the northern section of the street became known as Knight Street. This section was later redeveloped in the 1920s for apartments. During this period the Homebush Theatre was constructed and the Horse and Jockey Hotel rebuilt in the 1940s when Parramatta Road was widened.

The western section of the site was used by AE Ellis Limited as a timber getting yard. The company also had premises at Pymont.

Part of the site was used for the Alton tennis Courts till 1933 and Loftus Crescent was developed for housing. The western section of the site was later sold to Helenor Cross and developed by her and her husband John Henry Cross. John Cross has purchased the eastern lots of the estate in 1919 and 1921 and re-subdivided these for development.

Commercial development along Parramatta Road does not appear to have occurred till the 1920s.

The site is typical of the outer suburban development of Sydney that followed the establishment of railway lines leading to residential, commercial and retail development close to railway stations.

5.2.2 Historical Associations

The place is associated with John Henry Cross and his wife Helenor who appear to have developed the properties on the subject site. Cross is described as a builder and was at one time the landlord of the Horse and Jockey Hotel. Cross was elected alderman to Homebush Council in 1924⁶. No other biographical information was available.

The associations with earlier owners and Simeon Lord would cover a large portion of the local area and are incidental.

5.2.3 Aesthetic Significance

The site has no aesthetic significance.

⁶ *The Sun, Homebush By-Election*, 31 March 1924, p. 9

5.3 SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

The place would have no special associations for any particular group.

5.4 TECHNICAL/SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

There were numerous previous buildings on the site but these have been demolished and there are unlikely to be any earlier developments that would provide the place with some archaeological potential.

5.5 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Based on the above, we consider that the site would not meet any of the Heritage Division criteria for identification as an item of local significance and the site is typical of the development pattern of the outer suburbs of Sydney following the establishment of the railway lines.

6.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

6.1 THE CURRENT PROPOSALS

The owners of the properties would like to redevelop the site for a mixed commercial/residential development.

The proposals are shown in the Massing Study Report (Revision F) dated August 2018 and prepared by Aleksandar Projects.

The proposals include:

- Excavation for basement car parking
- Three multi storey towers
- 25 storey tower to the corner of Loftus Crescent and Subway Lane
- 25 Storey tower to the corner of Loftus Crescent and Knight Street
- 21 storey tower to Parramatta Road

Through routes are to be provided to the centre of the site; a pedestrian link north-south from Loftus Crescent to Parramatta Rad and a laneway east-west from Knight Street to Subway Lane that will be a continuation of the current laneway. A green, public open space is proposed to the centre of the site fronting Loftus Crescent.

The towers have retail development to the ground floor with apartments above with entry points to Knight Street, Loftus Crescent and the new pedestrian route off Parramatta Road.

The proposals are at a preliminary design stage but the buildings are in a contemporary design with a three storey plinths and well articulated facades above.

7.0 IMPACT OF THE PROPOSALS

7.1 GENERALLY

The development of the site is part of the ongoing trend to increase residential density in inner city and inner suburban areas particularly where sites are close to transport and local services. This is reflected in Strathfield Council's planning controls and the Parramatta Road Corridor Urban Transformation Strategy that allow a considerable increase in height and density.

This type of development can be seen across Sydney and recent development along Parramatta Road that has seen a considerable increase in scale in areas close to the railway line and along the main commercial strip each side.



Figure 7.1 Recent development close to the subject site including high rise development in Powell Street

Loftus Crescent marks the boundary from higher scale of development to the north and the more suburban, period development to the south of the railway line that forms a strong barrier between the sites

7.2 EXCAVATION

The site is to be excavated for car parking. The site has little archaeological potential and the current buildings on the site (that largely dated from the Inter War period) have recently been demolished and there is unlikely to be any impact in this regard.

7.3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The site is close to public transport links and the commercial centre of Homebush and is ideal in terms of potential development

The proposed development is in line with the current planning controls for the site that anticipate an intensification of use and built form. The proposal is higher than the scale and detail of the many high-rise developments close to but the new development will be read against the backdrop of the larger scale development along Parramatta Road to the east, west and north.

Current development in the subject block is largely two storey but the change of scale is an ongoing trend in what are now inner suburban areas and the remaining buildings in the block provide no design cues as to the treatment of the proposed towers apart from the provision of a three storey podium that will provide some scalar linkage to the earlier development.

The design is contemporary as there are no design cues from the current buildings or the surrounding, low scale residential development.

Many aspects of the design, such as site planning, setbacks and heights are driven by concerns such as privacy and overshadowing that has led to three, well articulated blocks that allow for activation of the development at the ground level with through routes and a public park fronting Loftus Crescent.

As noted in the Massing Study report the development has echoes of the development of the CUB brewery close to Central Station where the introduction of laneway and parks and the retention of heritage buildings has led to a variety of heights to the development to achieve floor space while creating a lively and popular residential, commercial and retail precinct.

The design is much as could be expected from a modern development in this location.

7.4 STRATHFIELD LOCAL ENVIRONMENT PLAN 2012 (LEP)

7.4.1 Impact on Heritage items in the Vicinity

There are a number of heritage items in the vicinity of the development site.

7.4.1.1 Former Homebush Theatre



Figure 7.2 Former Homebush Theatre

The theatre was constructed c. 1924 by a consortium under the Homebush Theatre Company with directors L Betts, D Rogers, JH Cross (who had developed the subject site), AC Crawley and J Irvin⁷. The building was designed in the Inter War, Greek Revival style but the architect is not known.

There is no SHI listing sheet for the property.

The development will impact on the setting of the theatre being to a considerably larger scale and contemporary style though the proposed development is set across Parramatta Road and has a narrow frontage to the street.

There are few elements that can mitigate the change of scale apart from the provision of a plinth to the new building fronting Parramatta Road and this is provided in the proposals. Otherwise the development will read as part of the high-rise development along Parramatta Road that is likely to be repeated at some point on the other development sites.

The theatre is large and has a robustly detailed front elevation. We consider that the proposals will have no impact on the significance of the item but will have some impact on its setting that is mitigated by the detail to the lower floors.

⁷ The Daily Telegraph, 6 May 1924, p. 9

7.4.1.2 Horse and Jockey Hotel

The Hotel is set to the corner of Knight Street and Parramatta Road and is a well-detailed example of an Inter War Functionalist style hotel that was built in 1941 for Tooheys Ltd and designed by Ernest Scott, Green and Scott. The Hotel replaced a late Victorian hotel on the site though a hotel (known as the Half Way House Hotel) is reputed to have stood close to the site since 1809. There is no SHI listing sheet for the property.



Figure 7.3 The earlier Horse and Jockey Hotel built in 1883

Source: Strathfield-Homebush Historical Society website



Figure 7.4 The Horse and Jockey Hotel

The impact on the Hotel is less than might be found on smaller scale properties as the hotel has its own, robust scale (albeit two storeys) with well detailed and distinctive elevations. The hotel is set to the street corner allowing views to it from the east, west and south. The impact of high rise development close to the Hotel can be seen in similar locations such as the Tea Gardens Hotel at Bondi Junction that remains a prominent feature in the local streetscape despite its high rise backdrop.



Figure 7.5 Tea Gardens Hotel in Bronte Road, Bondi Junction

There are few elements that can mitigate the change of scale apart from the provision of a plinth to the new building. The proposed development does not directly abut the Hotel site and is to the south and west and will have no impact on views to the Hotel

Otherwise the development will read as part of the high-rise development along Parramatta Road that is likely to be repeated at some point on the other development sites.

We consider that the proposals will have no impact on the significance of the item but will have some impact on its setting that is mitigated by the detail to the lower floors.

7.4.1.3 72-76 Parramatta Road

To the corner of Parramatta Road and Knight Street is a two storey, Inter War retail/residential development with a high parapet to the street corner with elevations divided by engaged piers. The building was part of the Inter War development of the area by John Henry Cross. There is no SHI listing sheet for the subject property.



Figure 7.6 72-76 Parramatta Road

The item has some historical connections to the subject site as it formed part of the early development by the Cross's but the site is separated from the development site by intervening development along Parramatta Road and the laneway at the rear.

As with the other heritage items the change of scale to the new development can be mitigated somewhat by the provision of a plinth to the main frontages but the proposal will form a high-rise backdrop to the item in the context of other, high rise development along Parramatta Road. The building is set to the street corner allowing views to it from the east, west and south but the new development will not impact on these views.

We consider that the proposals will have no impact on the significance of the item and will have a limited impact on its setting.

7.4.1.4 Homebush Railway Station

To the south east of the site is the Homebush Railway Station that was opened on the first rail line for the City to Parramatta that was constructed in 1855. The station was rebuilt in 1860s to accommodate an expansion of the rail line and the existing arrangement dates from the 1890s.



Figure 7.7 Homebush Station c. 1895



Figure 7.8 View to Homebush Station from Loftus Crescent

The SHI listing sheet for the station (SHI 4801087) contains a statement of significance:

Homebush Railway Station has state significance as the site of three different railway stations that represent three significant historical phases in the development of the NSW railways. The site is significant as one of only four original intermediate stations on the first railway line in NSW between Sydney and Parramatta; the subsequent rebuilding of the station in the 1860s was associated with servicing the nearby Government Abattoirs at Homebush; and the existing station arrangement dating from the 1891 quadruplication of the line represents the expansion of the railways in the late 19th Century to accommodate increasing rail services.

Homebush Railway Station is significant for its rare collection of railway structures dating from 1891 that form a unique and cohesive group. Designed under the direction of Commissioner Edward Eddy, the platform buildings demonstrate the first use of island platforms in NSW and are one of only four extant examples of 1891 'Standard Eddy' platform buildings. The 1891 overhead booking office is also a rare structure being one of only three similar structures representing the earliest use of above-platform buildings. The station buildings including the signal box, brick store rooms and footbridge collectively demonstrate a former era of travel, communication and trade. The group remains highly intact.

The footbridge was identified as an item of high heritage significance in the 2016 'Railway Footbridges Heritage Conservation Strategy'. Homebush station footbridge is of high heritage significance as a rare lattice balustrade design on original brick piers. Original balustrading and stair details have been reconstructed although the primary deck support is now pre-stressed concrete dating to 1992. It contributes strongly to an outstanding ensemble of station structures dating to 1892.

The station is some way from the development site and the proposal will have no immediate and reflects the ongoing change of scale to development sites along Parramatta Road. Stations along the major rails lines are often the subject of similar development close to as they provide transport links for potential residents and workers.

The proposal will not impact on views to the item along Loftus Crescent and we consider that the development will not impact on the significance of the place or its setting.

8.0 SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 SUMMARY

Overall we consider that the proposed development is a well-considered response to the development of a mixed-use site and the current planning controls applying.

The proposed design is well articulated and scaled and uses appropriate forms and details. It will follow the ongoing pattern of development in the area and will have a limited and acceptable impact on the setting and significance of the heritage items in the vicinity.

8.1.1 Archaeology

There were previous buildings on the site and, though the archaeological potential of the site is low, excavation of the site should be monitored for an evidence of this and any remains assessed and recorded by a suitably qualified consultant.

8.1.2 Interpretation

The history and development of the site be interpreted by introduced devices such as plaques that detail the history of the site and its historical associations as outlined above.



JOHN OULTRAM