
Guidelines for Alterations and Additions to Terraces



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Introduction

1

General

1.1

Council wishes to encourage the continued viability of terraces within the City boundaries for residential and commercial use by permitting sympathetic alterations and additions.

These guidelines have been prepared to explain the principles to be followed when considering works to terraces. Council wishes to ensure that in the process of enhancing the amenity of existing terraces, consideration is given to the need to maintain their historical significance, architectural integrity and character. Well designed alterations and additions, and conservation where appropriate, will improve the amenity of the buildings, enhance the character of conservation areas, and improve property values.

Heritage Significance of Terrace Areas

1.2

References to terraces in these guidelines refers to all terraces in City of Sydney Local Government Area. However, it is recognised that terraces may be individually heritage listed, or included in a conservation area listing, and that some therefore have more heritage significance than others.

Generally, works proposed for terraces that are individually listed must ensure conservation of significant original features, internally and externally. For terraces listed as part of a conservation area the external form is considered important. Some terraces have not been listed as heritage items or in conservation areas, however, these terraces generally have streetscape significance, and retention of their streetscape characteristics is desirable.

Maps showing terraces listed as heritage items in the City are included in Appendix A.

Millers Point is an area of particularly high significance, with many early terraces displaying consistent form and intact interiors as a result of the continuous ownership of the suburb by various public authorities. Therefore, the continuity of use of many buildings in Millers Point is an important factor contributing to their significance which may need to be considered when alterations are proposed.

Purpose of guidelines

1.3

These guidelines are intended to ensure that:

- > alterations and additions to terraces do not adversely affect the heritage significance of individual terraces or the character of conservation areas;
- > a high standard of residential amenity (i.e. quality open space, access to sunlight, and privacy) is achieved for terraces in the City;
- > alterations and additions to terraces do not detrimentally affect the residential amenity of neighbouring properties;
- > a high standard of architectural design for new work is achieved for terraces in the City;

Council will assess all applications for proposed alterations and additions to terraces to ensure that the above objectives are achieved.



Alterations and additions to terraces should not adversely affect the heritage significance of individual terraces or the character of conservation areas.

Advice for Building Owners and Architects

1.4

Council encourages owners to seek advice from architects and/or other design professionals who have experience in designing alterations and additions to terraces. In some instances specialist conservation advice may be necessary. Advice from appropriate professionals often assists owners in interpreting Council's requirements, and assists Council by ensuring clear presentation of the proposed works.

Information on the heritage significance of terraces is available from Council's Cultural Heritage Database in the City Library, on Level 3 of Town Hall House. Advice is also available in the publications listed in the Bibliography at the rear of this document.

Advice and copies of the relevant planning legislation for listed buildings is available at the One Stop Shop on Level 2 of Town Hall House. Council's planning staff are also available for consultation once preliminary schemes have been developed (phone 9265 9333).

While adherence to the principles contained in these guidelines will assist in meeting Council's requirements, the normal development and building application processes still apply to proposals for alterations and additions to terraces (see Appendix C).

Residential Amenity

2

General

2.1

Residential amenity includes access to sunlight, daylight, ventilation and privacy. A high standard of residential amenity should be achieved in any proposed alterations or additions. The amenity of adjacent buildings as well as the building subject to alteration should not be adversely affected.

2.2

Access to sunlight

Alterations and additions to terraces should strive to preserve access to available sunlight to all properties. The height of new boundary walls, distance of setbacks, and design of the roof must be carefully considered in order to ensure that the available sunlight to the subject site or to adjacent sites is not substantially reduced. As a guide, it is recommended that the major part of the useable open space should receive at least two hours of sunlight between 9am and 3pm on June 21 (winter solstice).

2.3

Open space

Open space requirements are set by the Local Government (Approvals) Regulations. Variations to these standards require approval from both Council and the Department of Local Government. Council considers that 20 square metres useable open space is a minimum requirement on small terrace sites. This useable open space is preferred to be at ground level, and the calculation would not normally include balconies or side passages.

Existing buildings

Existing approved terraces which currently have less than 20 sq metres open space will be allowed to remain;

New additions:

Where new additions provide habitable rooms which rely solely on a courtyard for the provision of natural light and ventilation, then the minimum area of that courtyard should be 20 sq metres.

The proportion of the area measured as useable open space should be such that it is of sufficient width to be used for recreation, as shown in the

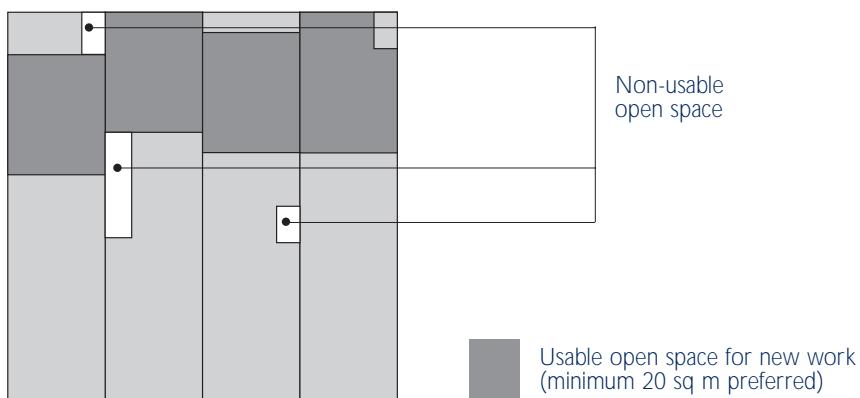


diagram below:

Requirements relating to daylight, ventilation and other building standards are detailed in Appendix B.

Privacy

Reasonable visual privacy should be enjoyed by occupants in terrace precincts. Privacy issues are further discussed in Sections 3.3.2, 3.3.4 and 3.3.6.

Alterations and Additions to Terraces

3

General

3.1

Approvals for work

A Development Application (DA) must be lodged with Council for any external or internal demolition, additions or alterations to buildings as specified in Appendix C, followed by a Building Application (BA).

It is recommended that owners or their representatives contact Council's City Development Division (ph 9265 9333) early in the process of design of new work to discuss the suitability of proposed schemes.

It may be necessary that a Conservation Plan be lodged with a development application, particularly if the building is listed in Schedule 1 of the Central Sydney LEP 1992 - Conservation of Heritage Items, or in Schedule 4 in SREP 26 for Ultimo/Pyrmont.

Design standards for new work

Council will aim to ensure a high standard of design for new work.

Building owners are encouraged to use an architect experienced in working on terraces when substantial alterations or additions are proposed.

Appendix D details Council's requirements for documentation when DAs are lodged.

Original features

When terraces are not listed as individual heritage items or in conservation areas it is still desirable that their scale and any existing original features to the street frontage be retained.



Restoration of original terraces features is encouraged

Where terraces are listed as individual heritage items or in conservation areas, repetitive original features of terraces (e.g. decorative render, cast iron lace, verandahs, chimneys and joinery in addition to the overall form of terraces) will be required to be retained when visible from streets or lanes.

Should original interiors of an individually listed terrace survive, the plan layout and original internal features may be required to be retained, although this is likely to be a rare occurrence.

Alterations and additions at the rear of terraces

While conservation of the external scale and detail of the original terrace from the front is important, in some heritage listed terraces there may also be a requirement to retain the external form of the original wings at the rear, particularly when they are viewed from a street or lane.



The consistency of form and scale is one of the reasons why terraces can form striking streetscapes

Materials

Council requires the use of traditional materials for alterations to street elevations and elsewhere wherever the significance of a terrace is high. However, in new rear wings or areas of little significance or not visible from a street or lane the use of contemporary materials is acceptable, providing a suitable design is proposed.

Finishes

Previously unpainted external walls of terraces should not be rendered or painted. However, Council would normally consider non-traditional colour schemes to be acceptable, particularly at the rear, provided that they do not detract from the character of the precinct. References listed in the attached bibliography will provide advice regarding traditional colour schemes.

Commercial terraces

Some terraces in the City boundaries are zoned to allow for shops or other commercial uses. Proposed works relating to these terraces will also be required to achieve the objectives of these Guidelines, especially with regard to conserving the heritage significance of terraces and ensuring a high quality of design for alterations and additions. However, some relaxation of the amenity requirements raised in Section 2 may be permitted for commercial terraces.

Alterations

3.2

General

It would be preferable that the most radical change to terraces should occur in areas where there are no significant features, or in areas where change may previously have taken place. Usually this is at the rear of the terrace, behind the original front rooms.

Council has not surveyed the interior of every terrace. Some terraces that are individually listed as heritage items may be of such significance that no substantial change should take place, although this would be a rare occurrence.

Council may accept a greater degree of change when the existing terrace and its site are particularly small, and when the new work will not be visible from a street frontage. However, retention of the scale and character of the streetscape will still be required to be retained.

Street elevations

It is particularly important to maintain the quality and consistency of the repetitive features on the street elevations of terraces, (i.e. prominent steeply pitched roofs, parapets, chimneys, main ridge line, joinery, projecting balconies) in order to retain their significance.

It is also important that new work is consistent with the original character of the terrace group. Therefore, the enclosure of front balconies of terraces is not supported, and the use of skylights on the front elevations of terraces is not encouraged. Cast iron or picket fences should be maintained rather than replaced with high, solid privacy fences.

Removal of original features at the front of a terrace to provide car access will not be supported.

Generally, proposals to convert single storey terraces to double storey terraces would not be supported, particularly where the single storey terraces are part of a single storey precinct.



It is important to maintain the quality of repetitive features on the street elevations

Solar water heating systems

Solar heating systems should not impact on the street elevations of terraces, and would preferably be remote systems (i.e. only the solar panels exposed) if located anywhere on the original terrace roof.

Additions

General

Additions to terraces may take the form of attic additions, extensions to rear wings or detached pavilions at the rear of the site. Additions to terraces should not be visible from a main street and should be well designed. Diagrams 1, 2 and 3 on pages 9 and 10, show how examples of how these options might be achieved.

Opportunities for increased development

On some sites, in Pyrmont/Ultimo, detached pavilions, built to the alignment of the rear street or lane, may provide an opportunity to increase accommodation and enhance the amenity of the street or lane. However, this will only be appropriate when the privacy and sunlight access of adjacent properties is not detrimentally affected. Note that street wall height limits exist in the UDP for Ultimo/Pyrmont. Diagram 3 (on page 10) details principles of building detached pavilions.

Millers Point provides an early and particularly significant example of a 19th century Sydney subdivision pattern which should be conserved. Accordingly, it is not likely that detached pavilions will be an acceptable form of development in Millers Point.

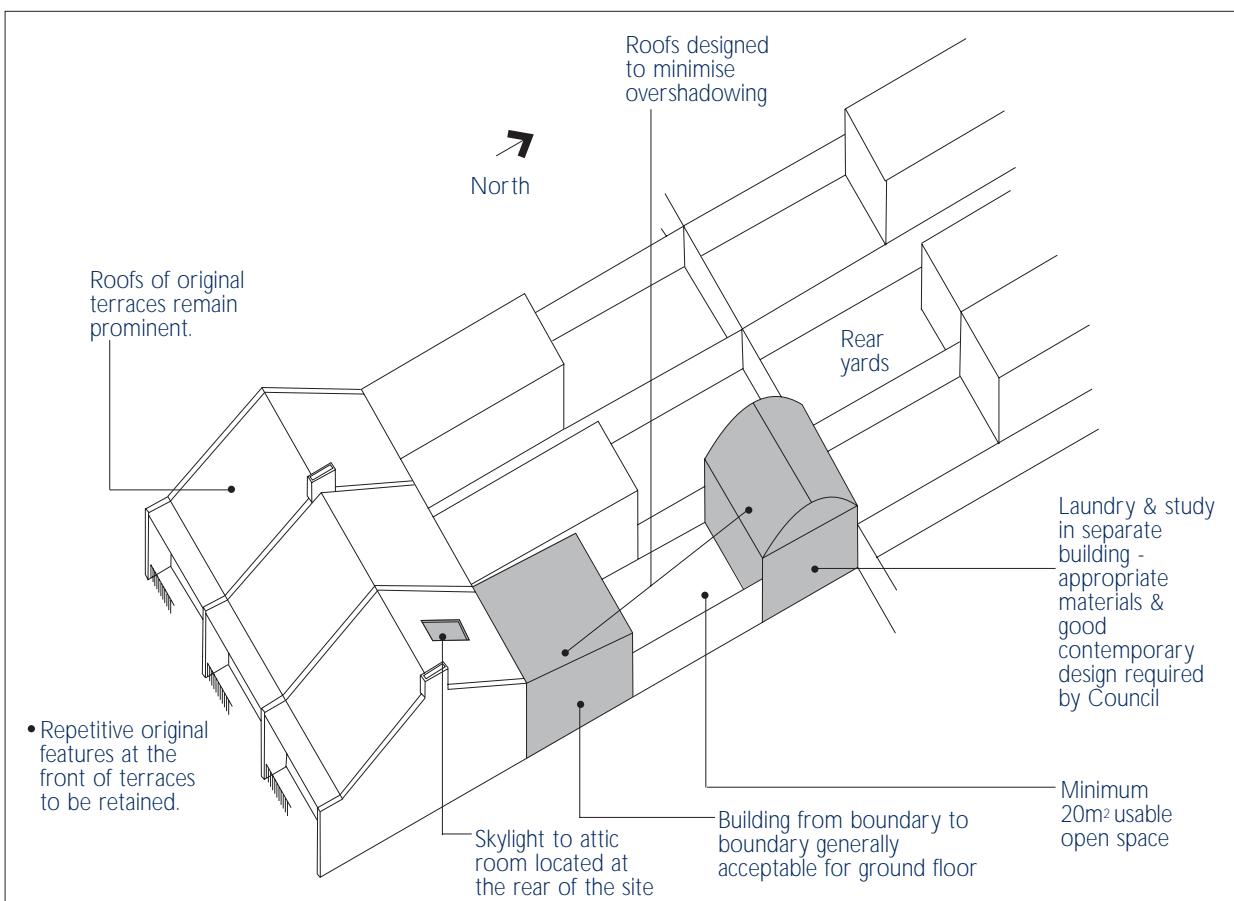


Diagram 1

Shows one option for additions to a single storey terrace when the rear of the terrace backs onto other terraces

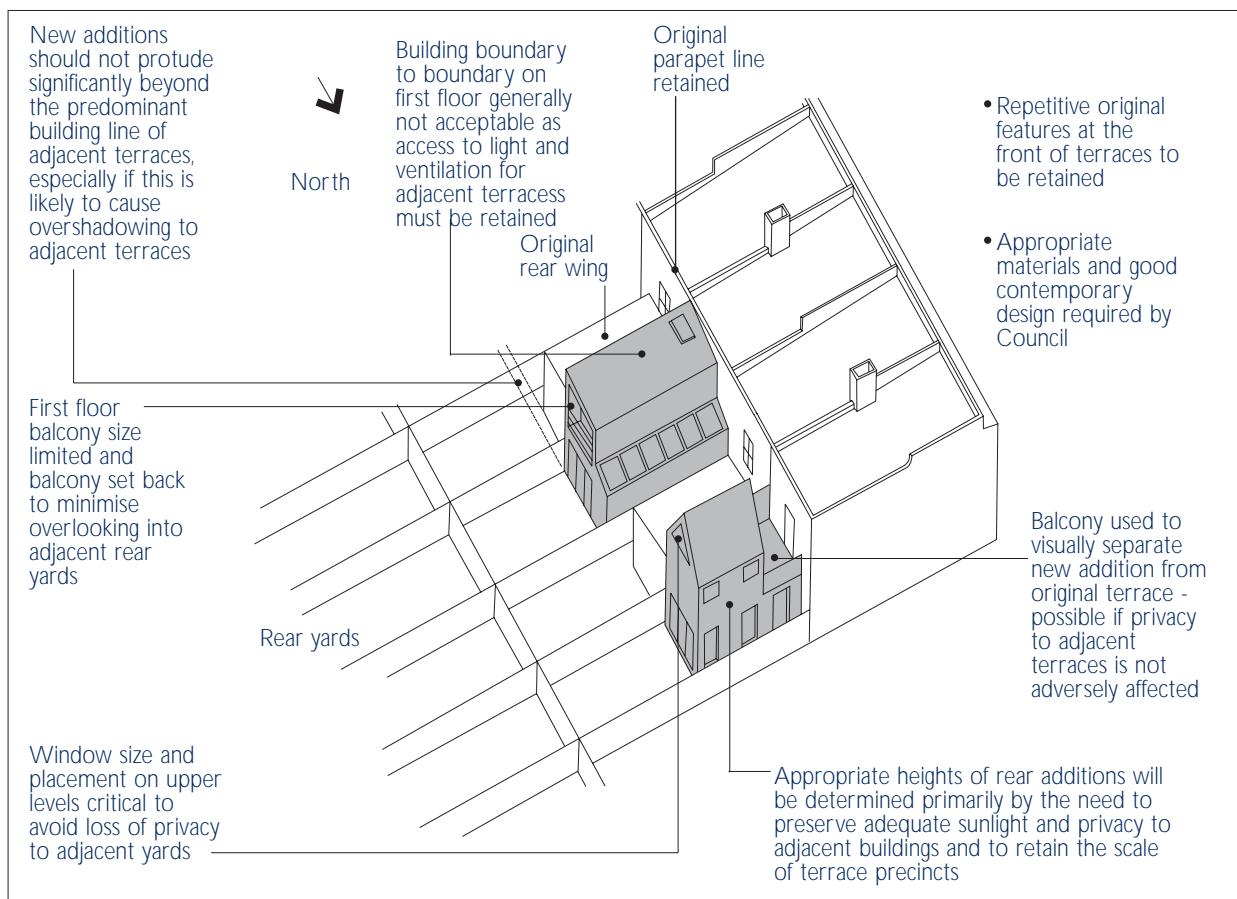


Diagram 2
Shows possible ways of adding to the rear of a terrace

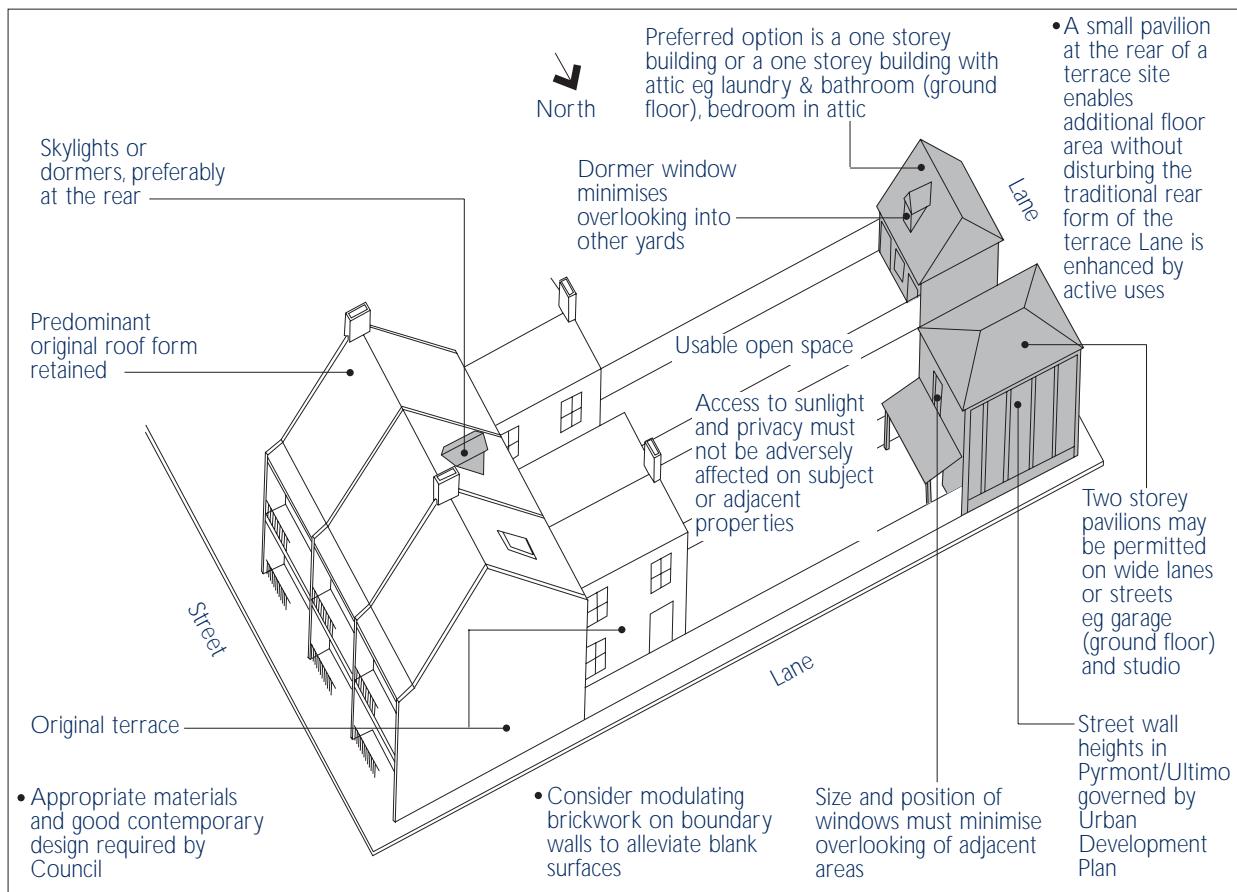


Diagram 3
Showing intact rear form of terraces, and methods of adding floor area to a large terrace site without disturbing this consistent form. This approach has the benefit of enhancing the lane by providing active uses.

Dormer windows to attics

Light and ventilation to attic rooms should preferably be achieved by skylights or dormer windows in the rear of the roof unless there is an established pattern of dormer windows on the street elevation in adjacent terraces.

New dormer windows should be designed and detailed in a manner compatible with the scale and historic character of the terrace. It may also be necessary to provide consistency in detail with an adjacent original dormer window.

However in some roofs, a dormer may not be suitable and a skylight is preferred e.g. when a roof pitch is very shallow or where a terrace is very small.



Original dormer window (left). New dormers in this row have been designed to reflect the character of the original dormer, while clearly being new work

Height of new additions

Height limits for Pyrmont/Ultimo are defined in the City West REP (generally a maximum of 9 metres for terrace precincts with some commercial terraces also subject to an FSR control). In Millers Point, there are no maximum height limits, although a maximum Floor Space Ratio (FSR) of 2:1 applies.

Appropriate heights of rear additions will be determined primarily by the need to preserve adequate sunlight and privacy to adjacent buildings and to retain the scale of terrace precincts.

Roof forms at the rear of terraces

Generally, in listed terraces and in conservation areas, original roof forms should be conserved.

Low pitched skillion or curved roofs are preferred for roofing rear additions as they minimise overshadowing. Gabled roofs may be suitable, providing that the original form of the terrace roof remains dominant, and that excessive overshadowing does not result. Where visible and repetitive roof forms occur at the rear of a listed terrace, it may be necessary that these features be retained.

The junction between a new roof and an existing terrace should be well designed and carefully detailed. Diagrams 1 and 2 (on page 9) show options for rear roof additions.



Additions should reflect the scale and character of the original terrace. Note that this one storey addition repeats the unique original roof form at the rear of the terrace to achieve a compatible design.

Upper level balconies

Balconies proposed above ground level will only be considered for approval if the privacy of adjacent sites is not adversely affected. If a balcony projects beyond the building envelope Council may consider it necessary to limit the size of the balcony or to require the balcony to be partially screened to protect the privacy of adjacent properties.

Building to side boundaries

In principle, ground floor additions extending from boundary to boundary across the width of a site are acceptable. Additions built from boundary to boundary above ground floor will only be acceptable if the amenity of adjoining properties is not detrimentally affected.

Council may request a limit to the height of walls built on the boundary in order to minimise overshadowing of adjacent terraces (see page 9, Diagram 2).

Courtyards and Backyards

3.4

Soft landscaping

The urban character of terrace precincts is a result of the traditionally high density of development in these areas. However, to reduce both the volume and speed of rainwater run-off created by the predominance of hard surfaces, Council wishes to encourage the use of soft landscaping (i.e. gardens, lawns, trees, shrubs) rather than hard paving wherever possible. Perimeter planting will assist in achieving this aim.

A tree preservation order exists within Council's boundaries for trees 75mm in diameter or greater and/or of a height of 3.5m or greater. Prior to demolition of a tree covered by a tree preservation order, approval must be obtained from Council.

Car access

Provision for car access at the rear of terraces may be supported if adequate access is available, and the significance of the terrace or precinct would not be detrimentally affected. Car parking would not be supported if it replaced an active use on a street or lane, or involved demolition of early building fabric to achieve the required clearances.



New work should display a high standard of architectural design. Note the use of the rear garage (on the right) as a small pavilion, enhancing the lane by providing active uses.

All ancillary building such as garages should exhibit a high quality of design and architectural detail consistent with the character of the terrace or terrace addition. It is necessary to preserve the character of streets or lanes in terrace precincts, therefore roller shutters should be as small as possible, and integrated into the design of rear fences etc. Important historical and topographic features such as stone walls and steps should be retained.

Archaeology in terrace precincts

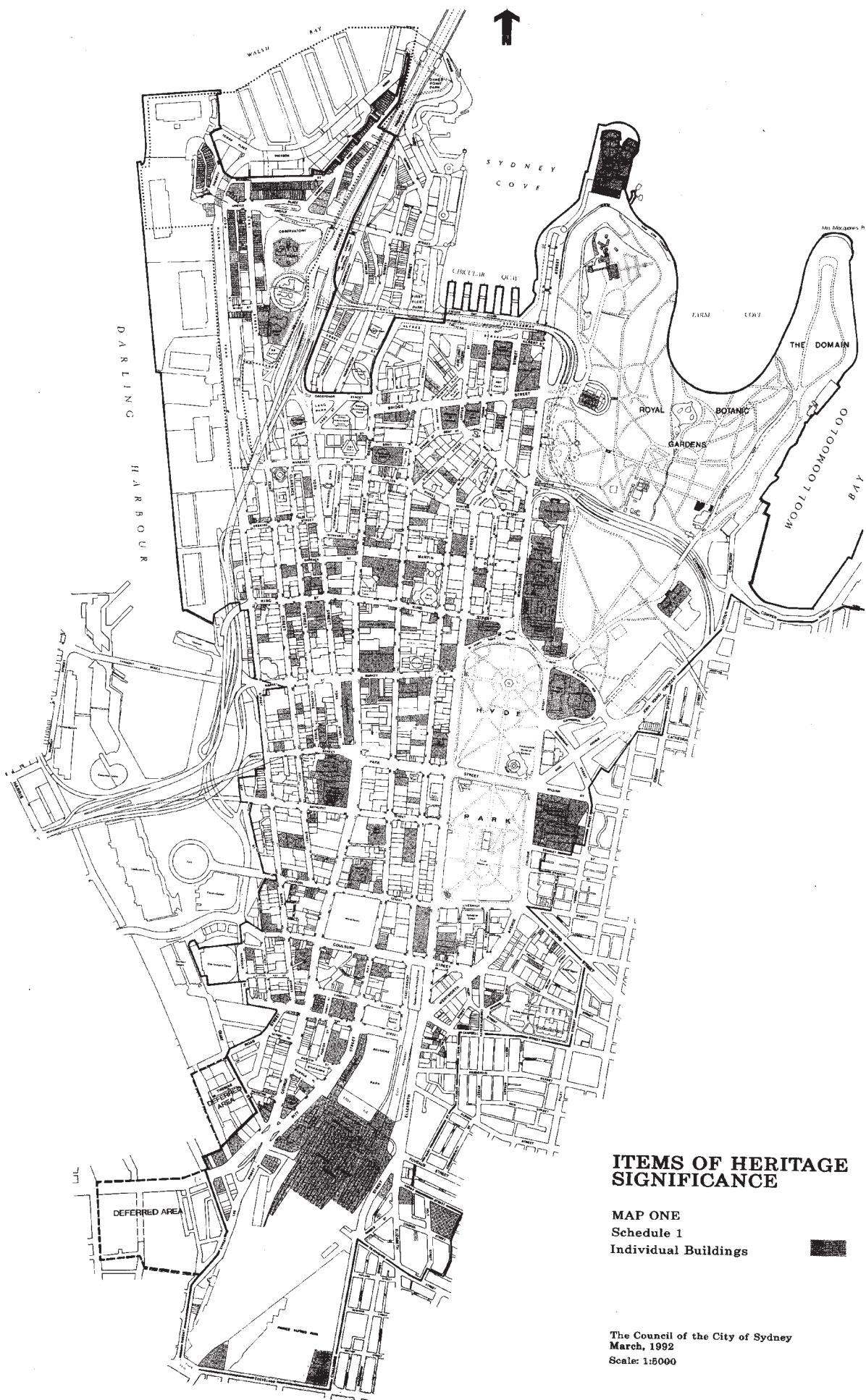
Council's brochure "Archaeology in the City" provides detail relating to potentially significant archaeological sites. Many of these significant sites are located in terrace precincts.

Appendix A - Maps

A



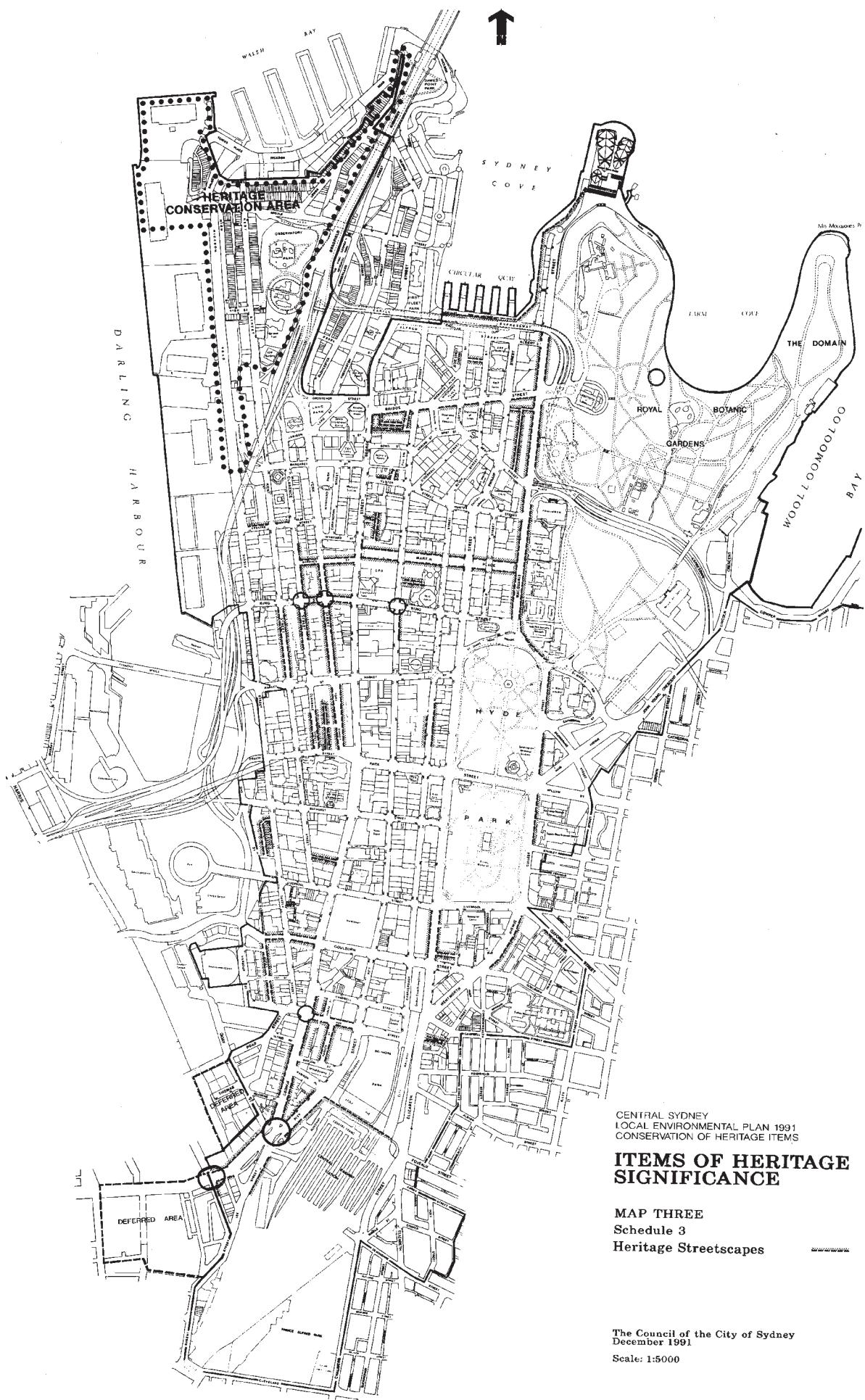
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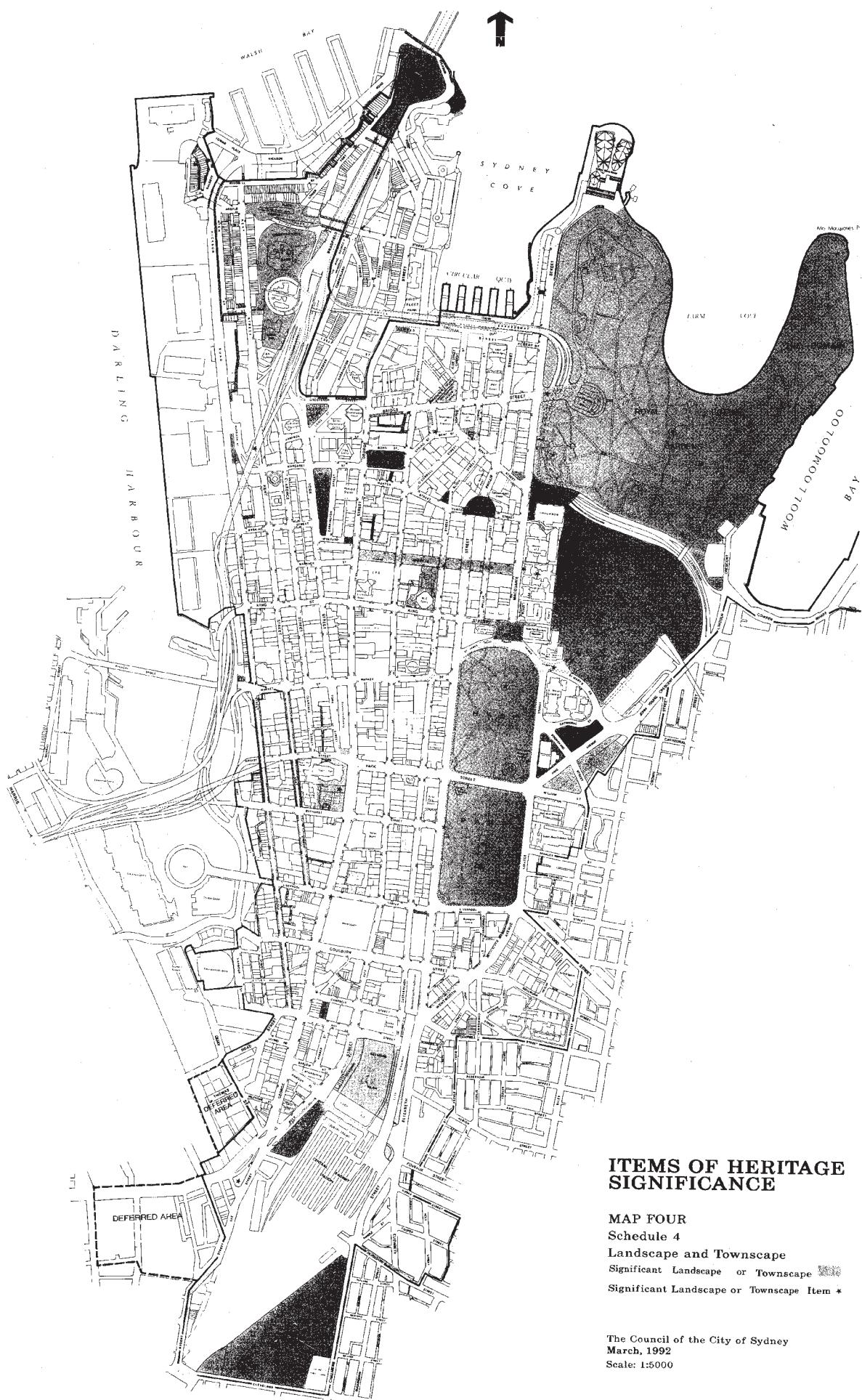


A



A





ITEMS OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

MAP FOUR

Schedule 4

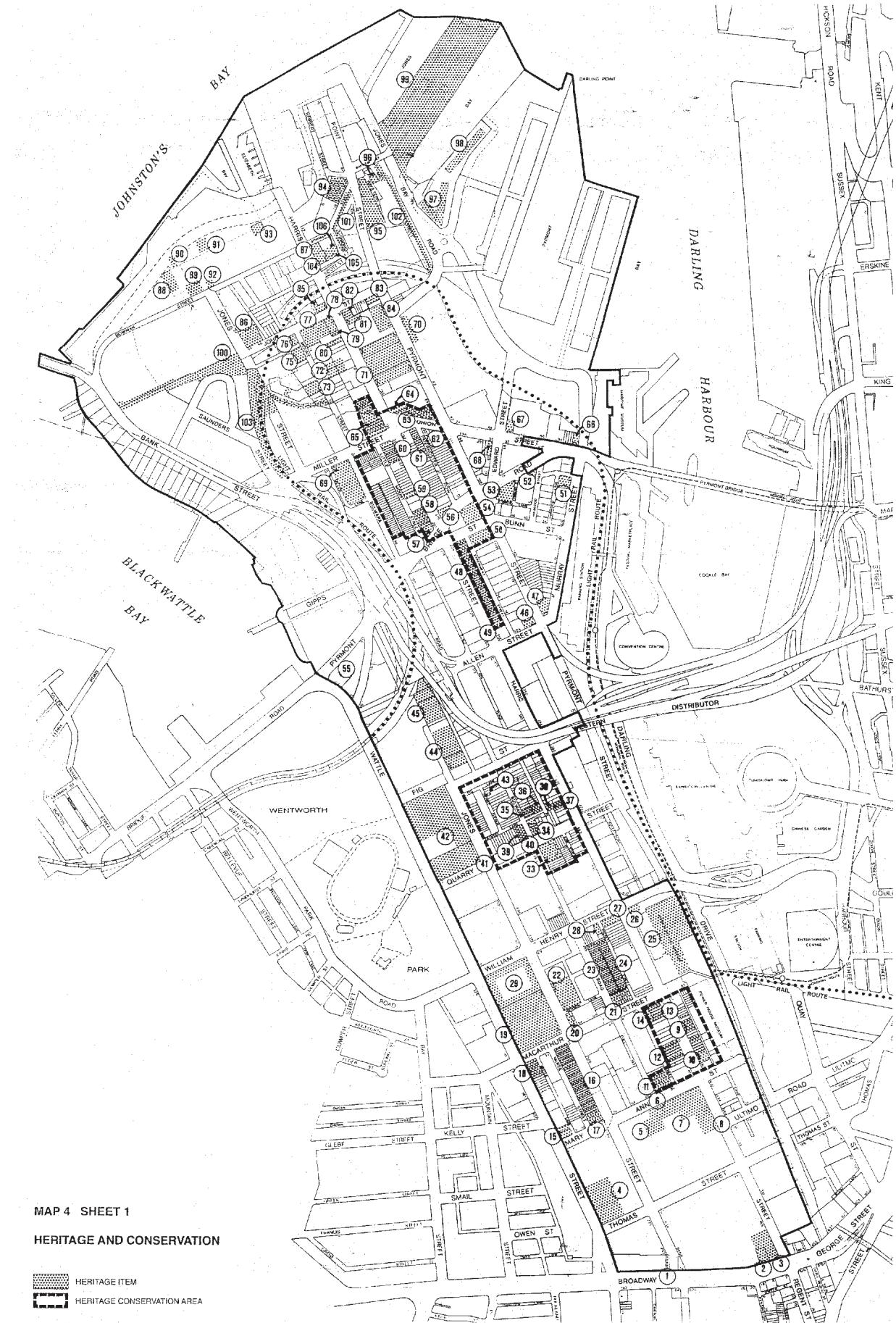
Landscape and Townscape

Significant Landscape or Townscape

Significant Landscape or Townscape Item *

The Council of the City of Sydney
March, 1992
Scale: 1:5000

A



Appendix B - General Building Issues

B

The following requirements will need to be met in any proposal for alterations and additions to terraces in order to satisfy the requirements of the Building Code of Australia (BCA). These would normally be dealt with as part of a Building Application. However, they are listed here in a simplified manner to allow early consideration of the issues.

Site Cover

In cases where an existing terrace already exceeds the maximum two-thirds site cover requirement under the Local Government (Approvals) Regulations, then Council would allow alterations to the existing building while allowing the existing site cover. However, for additions that exceeds the two-thirds site cover it will be necessary to lodge an application to vary this Regulation. Council's planning staff can provide further information in this regard.

Ventilation

An area equivalent to 5% of the floor area of a room is required to be provided as operable windows, doors, louvres etc. otherwise mechanical ventilation will be required.

Daylight

An area equivalent to 10% of the floor area of a room is required to be glazed in order to provide adequate natural daylight.

Room Sizes

There are no minimum room sizes under the BCA. Council will determine whether or not a room is acceptable for habitation for the use proposed.

Minimum ceiling heights

Council is able to vary the minimum ceiling heights set down in the BCA for rooms with sloping ceilings (e.g. attic rooms).

Fire safety

A non-fire rated structure, or a non-fire rated window or door opening must not be located less than 900mm from a boundary. The fire resistance level of a wall located on boundary must not be less than 60/60/60.

Stairs

Stairs must be designed to provide safe and comfortable passage, and should comply with the BCA provisions with regard to stair geometry. A balustrade should be provided to the satisfaction of Council.

Appendix C - Obtaining Council Approval

C

A number of planning instruments exist that place specific controls on some areas of terrace buildings within the boundaries of the City of Sydney. These instruments are separate documents that can be viewed at Council's One-Stop-Shop on Level 2 of Town Hall House.

Heritage Listings

There are two types of heritage listings that exist under the planning instruments :

- > individual listings of terraces, and
- > listings as part of a Conservation Area.

There are also requirements for assessing archaeological potential of some sites if any site disturbance is proposed, including under-floor excavation. Council's Planning staff should be contacted if further details are required.

When is it necessary to obtain Council approval?

Millers Point

The entire area of Millers Point lies within a Conservation Area under the Central Sydney Local Environmental Plan 1992 - Conservation of Heritage Items. Development and building approval under this planning instrument is required as follows:

- > Conservation Area listing only:
DA and BA required where structural or non-structural changes would affect the exterior of the building and/or where changes to the interior involve a change of use or structural alterations.
- > Individually listed terrace:
DA and BA required where structural or non-structural changes to the exterior and/or interior of a terrace are proposed (including changes to the detail, fabric, finish or appearance of the terrace).

Other areas within Central Sydney

- > Terraces with no heritage listing:
Some groups of terraces within central Sydney are not listed in The Central Sydney Local Environmental Plan 1992 - Conservation of Heritage Items. Therefore, only the requirements of the Central Sydney LEP 1993 apply. A DA and BA is required where external alterations are proposed. However, a BA only is required where internal works are proposed.

- > Individually listed terrace:
For terraces within central Sydney that are individually listed as heritage items under the Heritage LEP, approval is required as follows: DA and BA required where any structural or non-structural changes to the exterior and/or interior are proposed (including changes to the detail, fabric, finish or appearance of the terrace).

Pyrmont/Ultimo

Many terraces in Pyrmont/Ultimo are listed in conservation areas and/or individually listed under the Sydney Regional Environmental Plan No 26 - City West. Development and building approval under this planning instrument is required as follows:

- > Individually Listed Item:
DA and BA required for any proposed internal and/or external works.
- > Terraces within a Conservation Area only, and non-listed terraces:
DA and BA required for any proposed structural or non-structural works except demolition of sheds, kiosks, garages, internal walls and ceilings and partitions.

Information to be submitted with a development application (DA)

It is essential to provide all necessary information to Council in order to facilitate a speedy approval. The following information will be required by Council when lodging a DA.

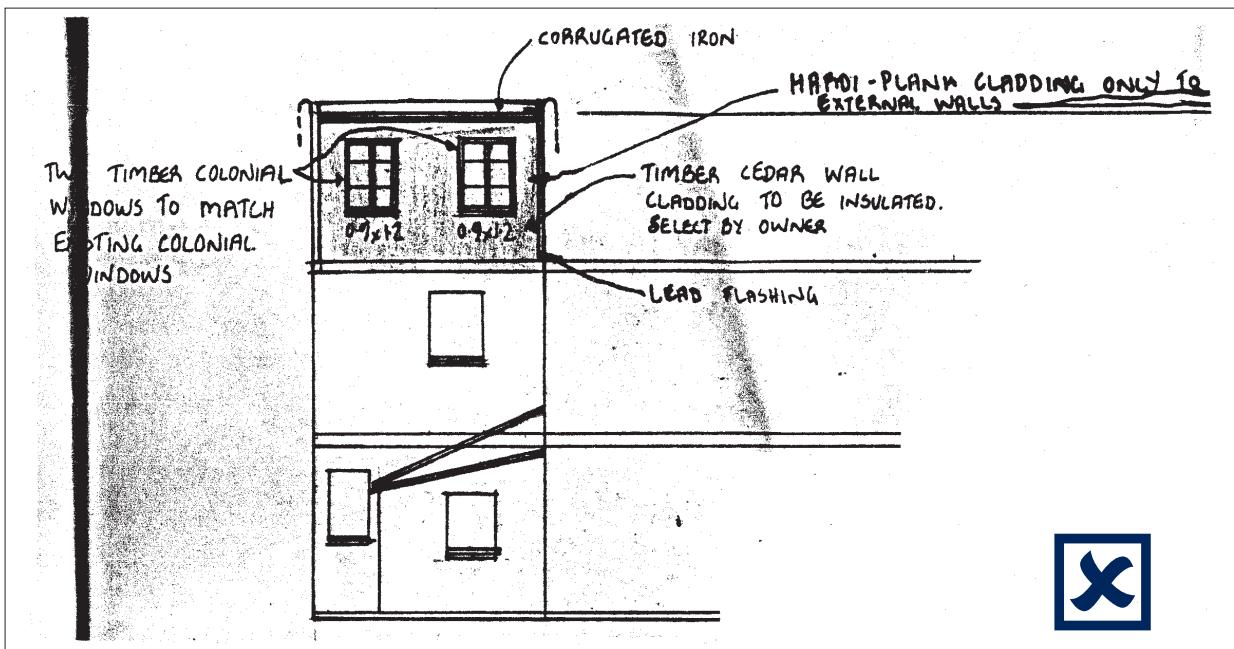
- Drawings, in triplicate, of the existing site to which the application relates, showing :
- > a site survey by a registered surveyor;
 - > the location, boundary dimensions, site area and north point of the site;
 - > the existing buildings and vegetation on the land and any topographical features;
 - > the existing levels on the land in relation to buildings and roads;
 - > location of affected adjacent buildings (show windows and doors), and location and height of relevant fences;
 - > shadow diagrams showing:
 - existing shadows on adjoining properties at 9.00 a.m., noon and 3.00 pm on June 21.
 - existing shadows on adjoining properties at 9.00 a.m., noon, and 3.00 p.m. on April 21 and August 21
 - > a Conservation Plan may be required if the subject site is listed in Schedule 4 of SREP26 or Schedule 1 of the Heritage LEP.

Coloured drawings in triplicate, of the site to which the application relates, being plans, sections and elevations at a scale of 1:100 or 1:50 clearly identifying and colouring the proposed works as follows :-

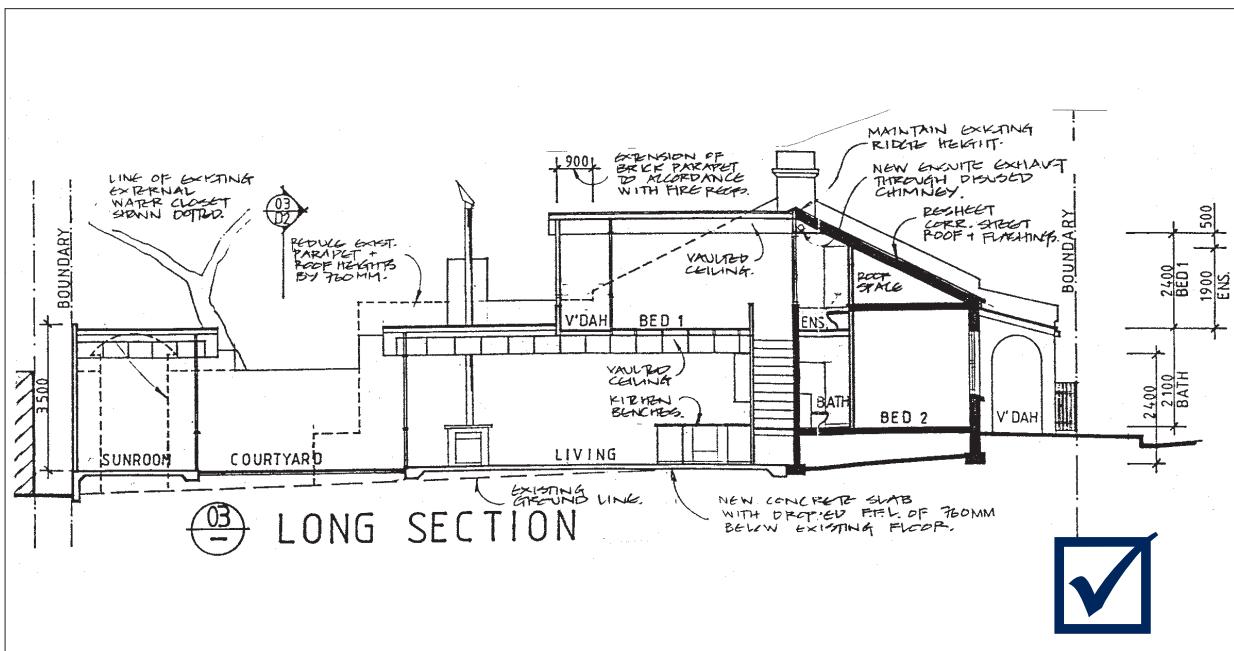
- > plan showing location of proposed works in relation to the boundaries of the site and adjacent buildings, and noting site cover and open space areas;
- > floor plans showing layout, partitioning, room sizes and proposed use of rooms;
- > elevations and sections showing proposed external finishes and heights, including the finished levels of land;
- > elevations and sections showing the relationship of the proposal to the heights of adjacent buildings, and the height, roof pitch and floor-to-ceiling heights of the proposal;
- > 1:20 details of dormer windows or of additions to original terrace, if proposed
- > shadow diagrams showing effect of proposal on adjoining properties at -
 - 9.00 a.m. and 3.00 p.m. on June 21
 - 9.00 a.m., noon and 3.00 p.m. on April 21 and August 21
- > proposed landscaping and treatment of open space including drainage details:
 - a written description of the works proposed, and an assessment of the impact of these works on the heritage significance of the site (unless a conservation plan has been submitted);
 - a completed standard DA form, and the prescribed fee;
 - photos of the site.

Appendix D - Document Standards

D



The above is an example of inadequate documentation, because it is not accurate (eg windows in the wrong location, chimneys not shown), it is not drawn to scale, it does not show details of the extent of demolition, it does not show the adjacent buildings etc.



The above is an example of excellent documentation which, along with plans and elevations, provides Council with the information necessary to assess the proposal. This includes dimensions, details of the extent of demolition, information about the use of the building etc.

Bibliography

Brochures

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- > Conservation Areas - *Managing Change in Conservation Areas*, Department of Planning Guidelines, 1994.
- > *Guidelines for Conservation Work on Heritage Buildings and Landscapes and New Additions*, Department of Planning Heritage Assistance Programme, January, 1993.
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- > Lucas, Clive, *Conservation and Restoration of Buildings - Philosophy and Approach*, Australian Council of National Trusts, 1978.
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These brochures are available for viewing at Council's One-Stop-Shop on Level 2 of Town Hall House.

Books

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