

CHARACTER AREA – 9

“The area is defined by its prominent headland location and adjoining gullies which form a prominent corridor of coastal open space; panoramic views of the ocean; irregular blocks, with terraced streets and steep lots comprising layered low-rise built form, with built retaining walls, fences, garages and limited vegetation fronting the street”.

The study area is generally bound by Tamarama Gully and Park to the north, the Pacific Ocean to the east, Bronte Gully and Park to the south and Ashley Street to Hewlett Street to the west.



Figure 9-1 - Local character area #09 map



Figure 9-4 - Street frontage, Pacific Avenue



Figure 9-2 - Tamarama Beach and Park from Pacific Avenue



Figure 9-5 - Detached dwellings, Thompson Street



Figure 9-3 - Natural coastal setting from Wolaroi Crescent

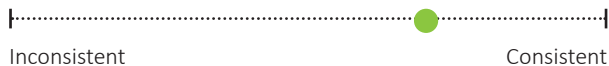


Figure 9-6 - Tamarama Gully from Birrell Street pedestrian link

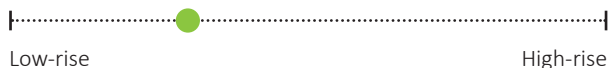
Existing character attributes



Built form



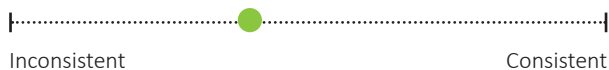
Height of buildings



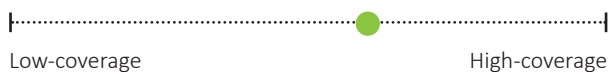
Subdivision pattern



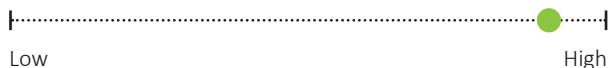
Public and private domain interface



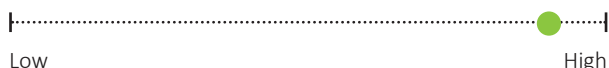
Vegetation coverage



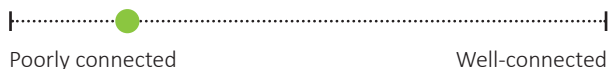
Open space and landscape features



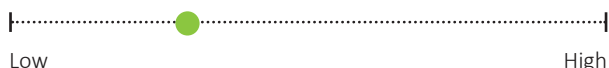
Views



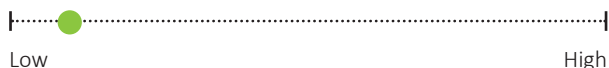
Access and connectivity



Heritage significance



Diversity of uses



Desired future character

Vision

The desired future character of the area is defined by high-quality, contemporary detached and semi-detached dwellings with appropriate façade and material articulation. Dwellings are integrated with the natural sloping topography, buffered by vegetation that enhances the natural setting of the coastal headland.

Objectives

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

- To maintain the predominant 2-3 storey height character of the area, noting that buildings on sloping sites should adjust the relative level and height to follow the natural topography,
- To avoid excessive excavation,
- To ensure high-quality design of new contemporary detached and semi-detached dwellings, with appropriate façade and material articulation. Flat roofs are supported for view sharing,
- To ensure that carparking structures are of a size and materiality that integrate with existing landscape features and do not dominate the streetscape,
- To retain and enhance natural landscape features including the sloping topography, sandstone or bedrock walls,
- To maintain the significant landscape buffer between Thompson Street and Tamarama Marine Drive, and promote development that retains the landscape character,
- To promote the reduction of hard surfaces and an increase of public and private landscaping,
- To maintain views and vistas from the public domain,
- To minimise the impact on existing views and vistas from the private domain and maintain residential amenity in terms of overlooking and noise.

Existing character description

History

The character of the area is defined by its prominent headland location, offering panoramic views of the coastline, ocean and surrounding areas. The topography slopes steeply towards the coast and adjoining gullies. Progressive subdivision and development of the area from the late 1880s has resulted in irregular blocks, with terraced streets and steep lots of varying size. Stone retaining walls and exposed sandstone bedrock are common features, for example on Thompson Street. Lot alignment is typically north-south, east-west, except for the blocks closest to the south, which remained only partially developed until the 1940s.

Configuration and connectivity

Topographical changes, combined with an unclear street hierarchy, restricts access to, from and within the area. Hewlett (see Figure 9-7) and Darling streets provide the primary east-west connections. The coastal road, Tamarama Marine Drive and Bronte Marine Drive, provides connectivity to the north. Bronte Gully and Park impedes connectivity to the south. Limited buses service these routes. The prevalence of no-through local streets, for example Bayview Street, Wolaroi Crescent and Harlowe Place, further impede access and circulation within the area. Pedestrian connectivity is maintained through multiple through-block pedestrian links, for example Thompson Street, Wolaroi Crescent to Tamarama Park and Andrew Street to Hewlett Street.



Figure 9-7 - Hewlett Street, looking east

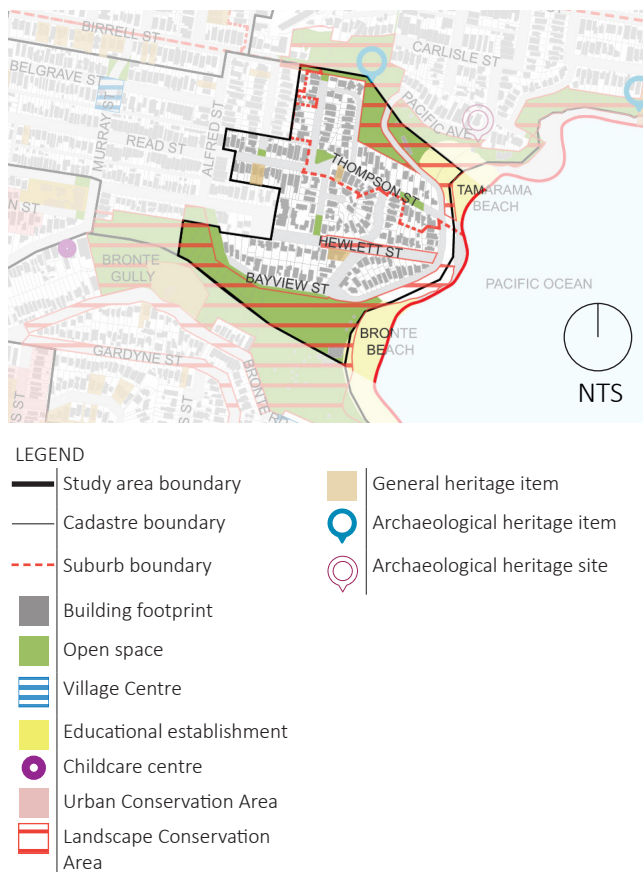


Figure 9-8 - Built form, uses and heritage area #09

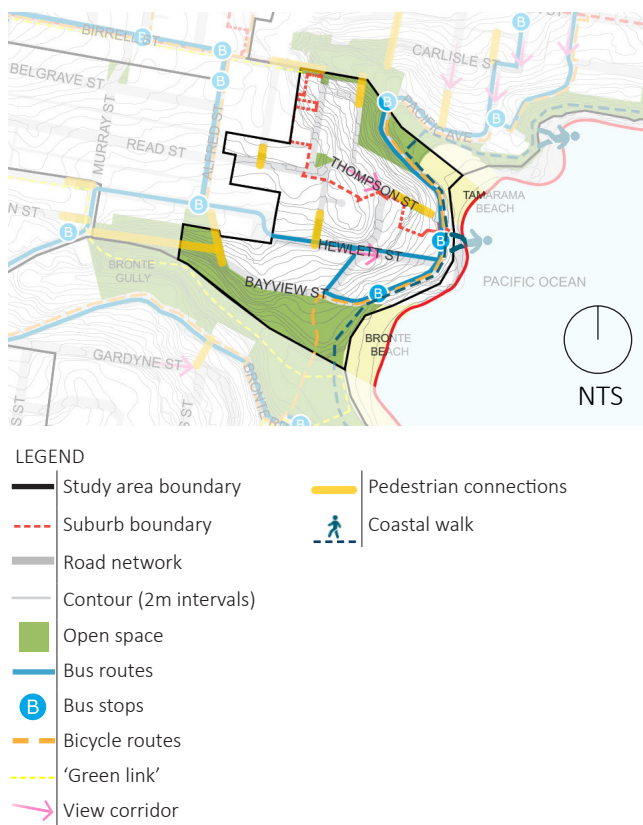


Figure 9-9 - Road network and movement area #09

Public and private domain interface

Streetscapes are typically characterised by upper and lower sites, each with different features. Variable verge widths and front setbacks result in built form (dwellings, garages) being situated at varying distances from the public domain. Dwellings on the upper sites are raised above the public domain, with built retaining walls, high fences and / or garage doors of varying materials and finishes, fronting the street. A solid wall presenting to the street is common, for example Thompson (see Figure 9-10) and Darling streets. Front landscaping also varies, with deep soil often limited due to garage construction, for example Bayview Street. Upper balconies typically overlook the public domain and are oriented to provide expansive views to the ocean. Dwellings on the lower sites often have their ground level partially or completely obscured from the street as a result of the sloping topography, vegetation, fencing and / or garages at the boundary, for example Ashley Street and Hewlett Street (see Figure 9-11). Again, materiality and finishes vary, contributing to the area's inconsistent character. On flatter sites, for example Andrew Street, dwelling visibility increases, however the streetscape remains characterised by parking structures and varying front landscaping. The combination of terraced upper and lower sites creates a layering of built form when viewed from a distance.

Built form

The area comprises predominantly detached dwellings, interspersed with semi-detached dwellings and clusters of residential flat buildings (RFBs) in Andrew and Bayview streets (see Figure 9-12). These dwelling typologies result in a low population density. Architectural styles vary, however Mid-century, late 20th century and 21st century styles dominant, highlighting the progressive redevelopment of the area since the 1950s. Limited examples of earlier Federation or Inter-War dwellings remain. Those that do remain, particularly detached or semi-detached bungalows, are characterised by brick, rendered brick or weatherboard construction, low gabled terracotta tiled roofs, with thick masonry or timber verandah posts and decorated timber gable trim. These have been substantially modified over time, with second-storey and garage additions. Notable examples of Inter-War RFBs include 99 Hewlett Street (heritage-listed) and 2 Bayview Street. Modern dwellings are typically 3-storey flat-roofed cascading buildings with wider modulation, wide integrated garages, large balconies and areas of transparent glass for doors, windows and balcony balustrades (see Figure 9-13).



Figure 9-10 - Detached dwellings, Thompson Street



Figure 9-11 - Obscured detached dwellings, Hewlett Street



Figure 9-12 - RFB, Bayview Street



Figure 9-13 - Detached dwellings, Mirimar Avenue

Existing character description cont.

These dwellings seek to maximise floor space and height and capture available views.

Dwellings are predominantly 2-3 storeys in height. The topography has resulted in the modulation of built form, with the dwelling base (retaining wall, fence or garage) at street level and floors stacked above on upper sites or behind and below for lower sites. The height of the building can appear increased due to the raised topography above street level. Further, dwellings sloping up / down sites are irregularly splayed, with varying front and rear setbacks, resulting in varied transitions between dwellings.

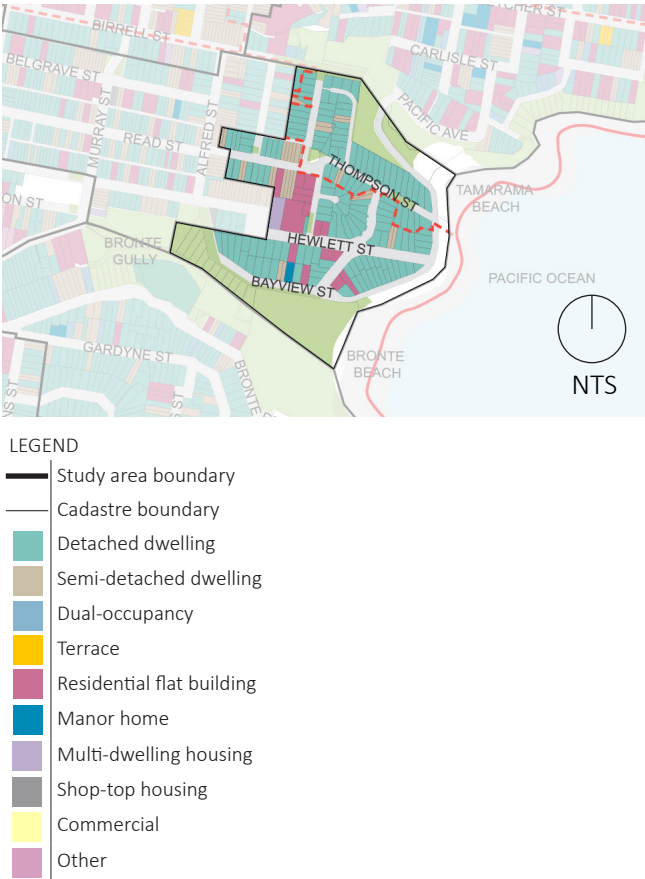


Figure 9-15 - Dwelling typologies area #09

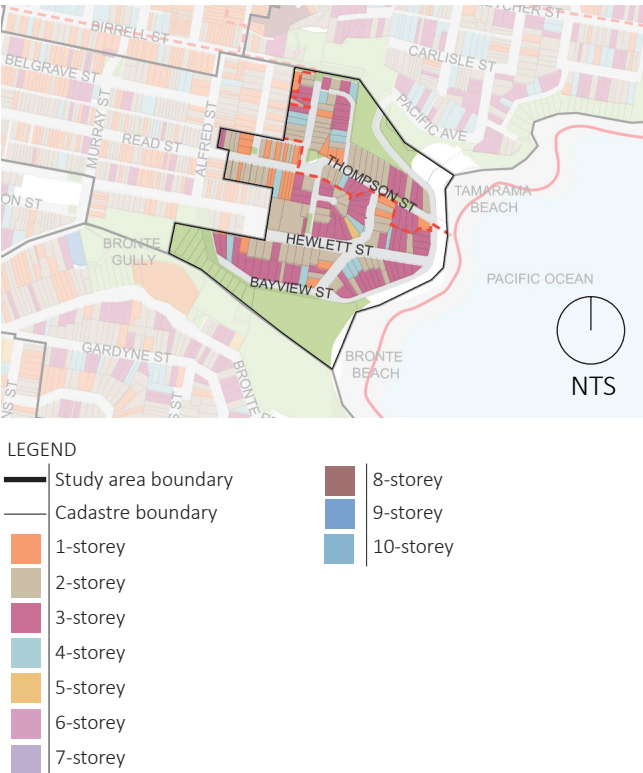


Figure 9-14 - Building height in storeys area #09

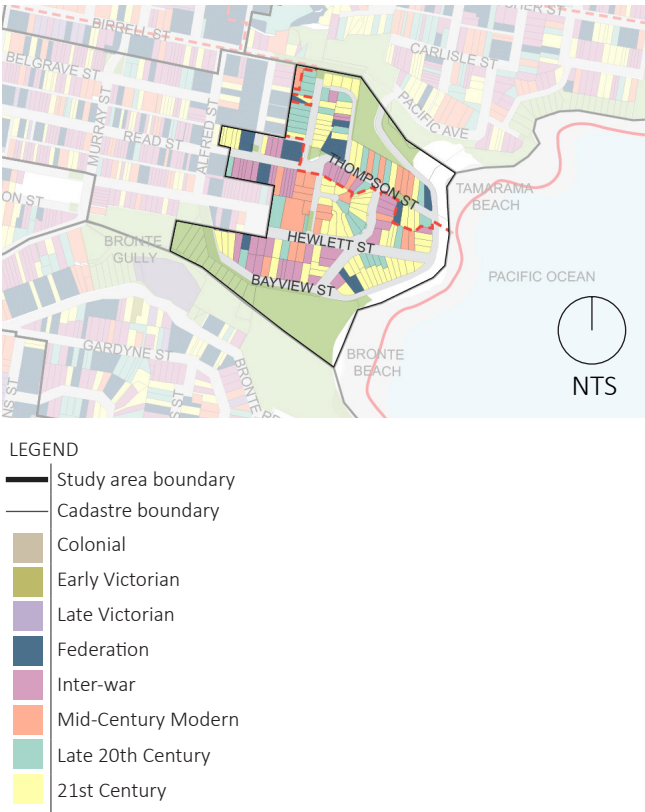


Figure 9-16 - Architectural styles area #09

Natural environment

The headland and adjoining gullies contribute to an important corridor of coastal public open space, having significant aesthetic, landscape and recreational value. Tamarama Beach and Park (see Figure 9-6), Marine Drive, Hewlett Street and Bronte Beach and Park are heritage-listed Landscape Conservation Areas. These areas support a biodiversity corridor. Vegetation coverage is typically low across the area. In the public domain, varying verge widths limit the ability to accommodate consistent planting. In the private domain, landscaping is often limited due to high site coverage and the desire to maintain views. Notwithstanding, the slope between Thompson Street / Wolaroi Crescent and Tamarama Marine Drive (see Figure 9-3), has identifiable landscape character. Dwellings are integrated within the landscape, immersed in vegetation, softening the impact of built form on the coastline. These factors contribute to a low-medium heat vulnerability across the area.

The area is recognised for its long history of seaside bathing and leisure and for its association with the beginnings of the surf lifesaving movement. Bronte Surf Life Saving Club (SLSC) and Tamarama SLSC were formed soon after ocean bathing was legalised in 1902. The iconic beaches, parks and Bondi-Coogee coastal walk offer passive and active recreation opportunities and support public gathering and events.

Recent development

Recent development 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; and 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 noted that at a suburb level, Tamarama has the highest percentage of dwellings listed on Airbnb in Australia, with one in five dwellings listed, Bronte has the fourth highest, indicating a trend of use of private dwellings as short-term rental accommodation.

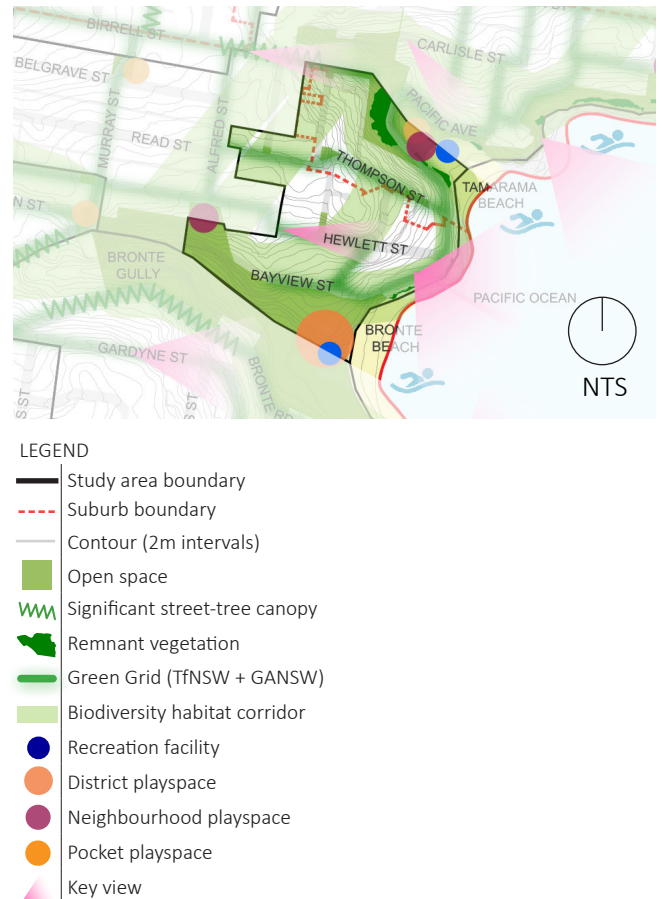


Figure 9-17 - Architectural styles area #09



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?