

Lake Macquarie City Council  
Pasminco Cockle Creek Smelter

# **Boolaroo Main Street Heritage Study**

**Volume 1:  
Study Report**

Date  
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Project  
**5062**

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## Executive Summary

The land around Boolaroo was inhabited by Aboriginals long before the area was first granted to William Brooks in 1839. The town of Boolaroo only started to grow in 1896 when the Sulphide Corporation cleared land to build their lead and silver ore treatment plant. This subsequently saw the development of residences and associated businesses, and Boolaroo began to prosper.

Main Road has continued as the commercial centre of the town, and today the town's shops and offices are spread out along its length. However, recent development within the town centre has created a non-cohesive streetscape and a loss of commercial identity. Lake Macquarie City Council and the community of Boolaroo are now seeking to identify options for improving their town. This Main Street Heritage Study is part of that quest for improvement. The study process has been aided by a Steering Committee comprised of representatives from the Council, Pasminco, Boolaroo business owners, and residents, and by a public workshop which identified five priorities for the community. These priorities were agreed as:

1. improvement of the relationship between Council and the community;
2. beautification of the area;
3. enhancing public awareness about the history of Boolaroo, through information plaques and the like;
4. recognition and development of a niche business market, and promotion of that market and of Boolaroo;
5. development of traffic and signage solutions for approaches to the town and for the Main Road commercial area.

The future of Main Road will depend much on its survival as a local shopping centre, able to meet the daily needs of local residents. In order to help achieve this, general principles for improvements to Boolaroo are aimed at enhancing the character of buildings and unifying the streetscape. Recommendations are based on retaining and highlighting original fabric wherever possible. Adaptation is encouraged to meet changing needs, when done in a manner that maintains the authentic character of the town.

Authenticity is probably the most important aspect, both in terms of keeping original fabric and accurately reconstructing missing fabric. Any original fabric, no matter how large or small, contributes towards the historic character of a place for it displays the effects of time, the wear and tear caused by years of continued use, and reveals the layers of development and different use the building has seen. In this way it "tells the story" of the place.

Recommendations for the streetscape are given related to specific elements of buildings, including parapets and facades, verandahs and awnings, shopfronts, signage, and materials. Suggested colour schemes are illustrated.

The report provides a strategy for the implementation of recommendations, and divides these into short term goals which will provide immediate results, and longer term goals which should be adopted by the community and Lake Macquarie City Council as objectives. Short term results may be seen by the adoption of a strategy for signage, tree planting, building upgrades, design and installation of improved street lighting, consolidation of seating, and adaptation and unification of planter boxes. All of these recommendations provide simple, inexpensive methods for immediate results with high visual impact. Longer term goals involve the enhancement and formalisation of the natural gateways at the north and south entrances to Boolaroo, guidelines for new development in the town, and further recommendations for building adaptation and restoration, guidelines for which are included on individual building datasheets contained in an Appendix to this report.

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# **1 Introduction**

## **1.1 Background to the Study**

Funding for this Main Street Heritage Study has been provided jointly by Lake Macquarie City Council, the NSW Heritage Assistance Program and Pasminco Cockle Creek Smelter, Boolaroo. The study considers commercial and public buildings along Main Road, Boolaroo between First and Eighth Streets, including also the few commercial buildings north of First Street and any other nearby structures that contribute to the character of the main street area.

As a separate exercise, this same area is currently being considered by Council for gazettal as a Heritage Conservation Area in the Lake Macquarie Local Environmental Plan.

## **1.2 Aims of the Study**

The aims of the study were to analyse the main street area of Boolaroo and to make recommendations for improvement and future development. Generally, the process for the study given in the brief was:

- a) Review historical information of Boolaroo as provided by Lake Macquarie City Council.
- b) Prepare individual datasheets for each building, with recommendations for future works.
- c) Analyse the streetscape and make recommendations for future works and give guidelines for infill development.

## **1.3 Methodology**

This information contained in this report has been arrived at through a series of Boolaroo Main Street steering committee meetings, a public workshop, a review of historical information available and a field survey.

The recommendations given in this study follow the requirements of the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter, where appropriate. Terminology used is that defined by the Burra Charter, and is included as Appendix C.

Existing buildings are often referred to throughout the body of this report, and are identified by an item reference number corresponding to their individual datasheet, for example Alan Craig Cycles [004].

## **1.4 Authorship**

Lake Macquarie City Council commissioned Suters Architects to prepare this report in February 1997. Director-in-Charge: Phil Manns, Project Architect: Ran Boydell, Research and Report Compilation: Linda Smith.

The historic overview of Boolaroo was provided by Lake Macquarie City Council and local residents, particularly Kerrie Frier, Alan Craig and Bill Hale.

## 2 Historic Overview

Much of the area now known as Boolaroo was granted to William Brooks in 1839. By the mid 1880s Sir James Fairfax was the owner, and it was around this time that the Stockton Borehole Colliery opened just west of Boolaroo across Cockle Creek. Fairfax sub-divided his land in the 1890s, and by 1900 Thomas James Thompson had purchased all vacant land in the area. By 1902 three subdivisions had taken place, setting up the residential allotments bounded by Main Road, Creek Road, First and Seventh Streets.

In 1896 land was cleared north of First Street for the Sulphide Corporation (Ashcrofts Process) Ltd, for a lead and silver ore treatment plant. The construction and operation of this plant led to increased demand for adjacent residential land, and Boolaroo began to thrive. Subsequently, several businesses established themselves in Boolaroo, including G Hawkins & Sons transport and construction firm, Finlay's sawmill, and TC Frith's grocery (which grew to include hardware and electrical goods and still exists today). The Boolaroo Public School [046] officially opened in 1900. The Post Office (since demolished) soon followed in 1901. Continued prosperity is recognised by the opening of the Fire Brigade in 1910 and the ambulance station [050] in 1922, the first ambulance station in the Newcastle area.

## 3 Structure of the Town

### 3.1 The Layout of the Town

The street layout of Boolaroo generally follows a grid pattern, although Main Road takes a slightly meandering path, and to the west follows the line of the creek. The names of the streets suggests the practicality for which the town developed, ie. First to Eight Streets, Lake View Street, etc. In 1899 Watkins Bridge was built over Cockle Creek at First Street. Named after Davey Watkins, state MP for Wallsend, the bridge connected Boolaroo to Teralba and the Stockton Borehole.

The early layout of the town centre, as shown below, was fairly condensed. Today this is no longer the case, with commercial enterprises stretching from north of First Street well down to Seventh Street, interspersed with numerous residential buildings.



Main Road looking south  
from First Street, c1905.  
source: Newcastle Region Library

### 3.2 The Buildings

The buildings along Main Road and surrounds may be grouped into a few different styles and periods.

#### a) Federation Period Buildings

Due to the relative youth of Boolaroo as a town, the oldest surviving buildings are from around the turn of the century and are constructed of timber. Commercial buildings of this period in Boolaroo had simple parapeted fronts with little ornamentation.

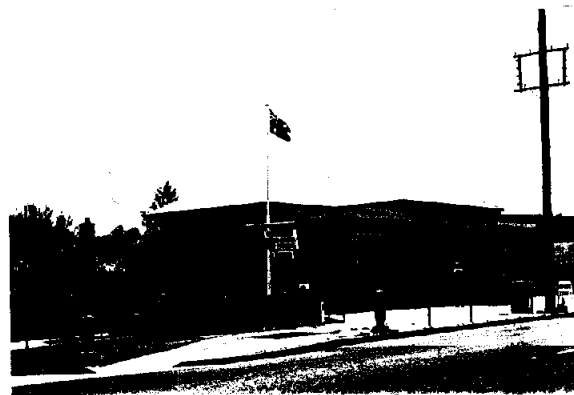
Former Frith's building [055], First St.  
source: Suters Architects neg# 5062 C11



#### b) Inter-War Buildings

Buildings from this period surviving in Boolaroo are mostly brick public structures. The bulk of the housing along Main Road is of this period.

Former Post Office [030],  
cnr Main Rd & Seventh St.  
source: Suters Architects neg# 5062 B7



#### c) Post-War

Several buildings in Boolaroo, both commercial and ecclesiastical, may be described as Post-War (c1940-1960). Most are of simple design with little or no ornamentation.

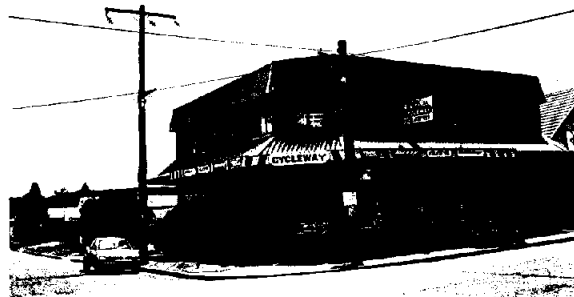
Former Bank of NSW [010],  
cnr Main Rd & Fourth St.  
source: Suters Architects neg# 5062 A12



#### d) Late Twentieth Century Buildings

Several buildings have been erected since 1960 and are predominantly of face brick. Several additions of this type have been intrusive to the overall streetscape of Main Road.

Shops/offices [049],  
cnr Main Rd & First St.  
source: Suters Architects neg# 5062 C5

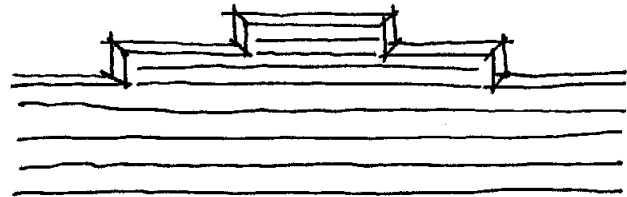


### 3.3 Typical Features of the Buildings

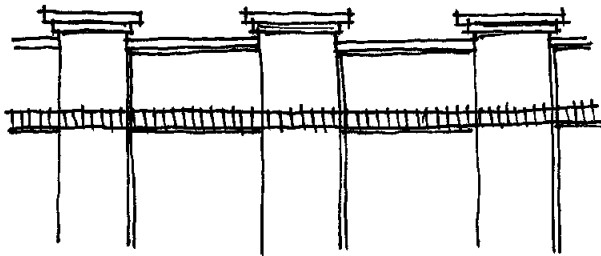
Although the character of Main Road, Boolaroo is drawn from varying styles of buildings, certain features were identified as being typical, and so contribute to the streetscape character. These features are generally consistent with the architectural detailing of the Federation and Inter/Post-War periods in which most of Boolaroo's commercial buildings were constructed, and are noted as follows.

#### a) facade material

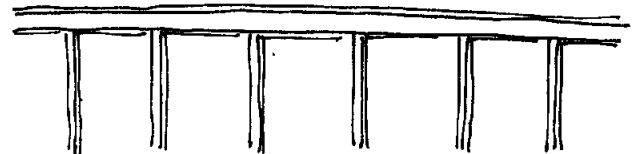
Due to the varied nature of the streetscape, not one facade material dominates. Typical materials are timber weatherboard, and face or rendered brick.



weatherboard



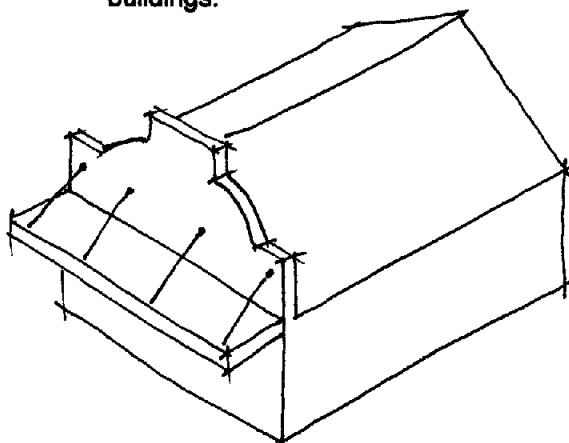
brickwork with relief in pilasters  
and coursing



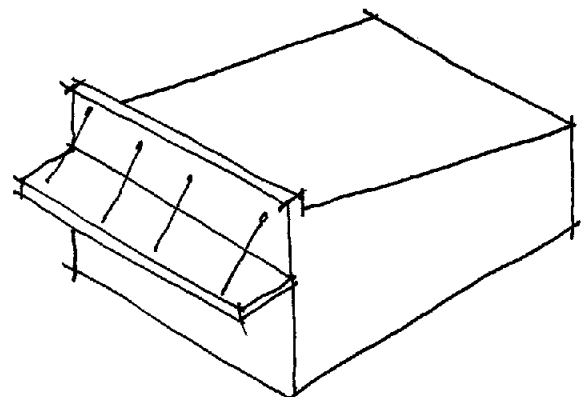
fibre cement sheet with battens

#### b) parapets and roofs

Most of the commercial buildings have a stepped or sloped parapet, often of timber, along the street front concealing a simple skillion or gable roof behind. The buildings without parapets have exposed hipped or gabled roofs and tend to be converted residences or ecclesiastical buildings.



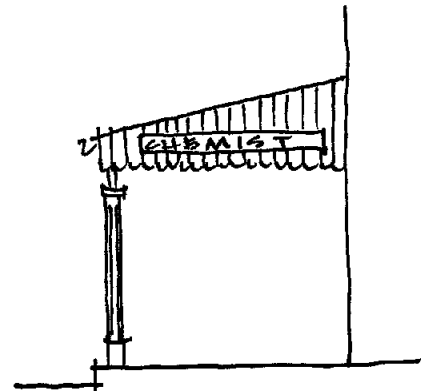
stepped parapet with gable roof



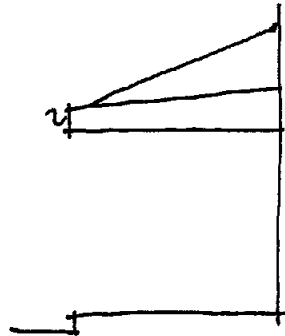
simple parapet with skillion roof

### c) verandahs and awnings

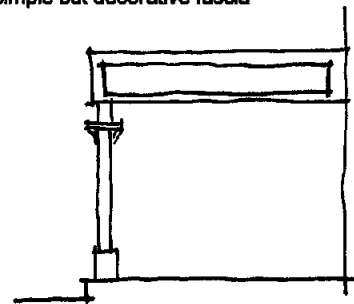
Most of the commercial buildings in Main Road have awnings, although the cover of the footpath is not continuous due to the scattered nature of the commercial buildings. Many of these awnings are not original, and verandahs were once quite prevalent along Main Road, although few remain. The only buildings with verandahs today are the Commercial Hotel [001], the delicatessen [028], and the HCB Electric [034] building, and the latter two have had their verandahs recently reconstructed.



this type of verandah would have been typical on early buildings - moulded timber columns, simple skillion roof, and simple but decorative fascia



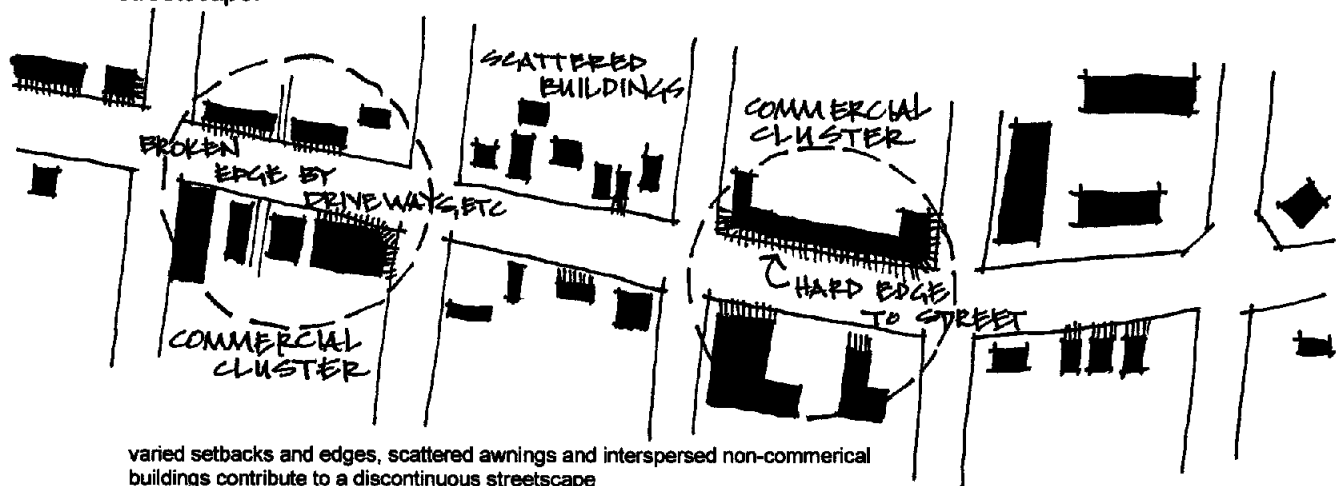
suspended awning with low pitch roof and tie rods - typically drains to front face



variation on the above verandah, with the verandah roof hidden behind a parapet

### d) discontinuous streetscape

The commercial streetscape of Main Road, Boolaroo is characterised by its discontinuous nature. The tradition of a hard edge to the street formed by continuous commercial buildings has developed here into an array of freestanding buildings with varied setbacks. While there are clusters of commercial buildings, many are scattered amongst houses and often adjoin laneways, creating voids along the street facade. An inconsistency of awnings and verandahs further emphasises the discontinuous appearance of the streetscape.

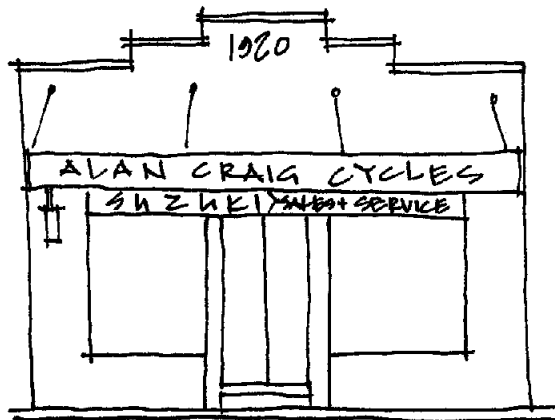


varied setbacks and edges, scattered awnings and interspersed non-commercial buildings contribute to a discontinuous streetscape

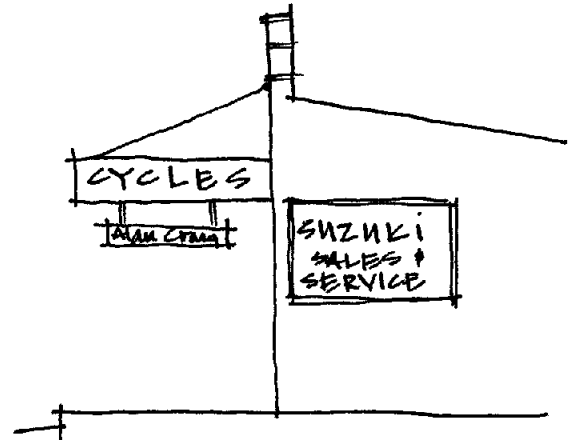


e) signage

Signage most often occurs in a traditional location such as the awning fascia and/or end boarding, the spandrel above shopfronts and, less often, the parapet. There are a few intrusive or oversized displays, including those on the Boolaroo Cellars [033], the Festival IGA supermarket [009] and the Mitre 10 / NASA Auto Parts building [048].



signage to awning fascia and shopfront spandrel -  
parapet and under awning signs are also traditional



traditional signage to awning end panel and side  
facade of building

### 3.4 Significant Elements of the Townscape

There are a number of buildings in Main Road and immediate surrounds which are considered to be of heritage significance, due to either their prominence within the townscape, their architectural quality, or their historic and social associations. The heritage value of many of these buildings has already been recognised by their listing in the draft heritage schedules of the Lake Macquarie Local Environmental Plan (LEP). These include the former Post Office [030], the Commercial Hotel [001], and Woods Electric [047].

However, other buildings of significance were identified during the course of this study, and it is recommended that these be added to the schedule of Heritage Items already listed for protection in the LEP. These items are:

- Boolaroo Public School [046]
- the former Ambulance Station and associated outbuildings [051]

### 3.5 Contribution to the Streetscape

All buildings in the main street area that were part of this study have been assessed as to their impact upon the character of the streetscape. Four types of impact have been defined.

- **Key Elements:** those buildings that act as landmarks along the streetscape.
- **Background Elements:** those historic buildings that are basically intact, and which make up the bulk of the streetscape.
- **Neutral Elements:** those buildings which are generally sympathetic to the historic character but do not contribute to it.
- **Intrusive Elements:** those buildings that actually negate the character of the streetscape, perhaps because of extensive or unsympathetic alterations, and which should preferably be remodelled or replaced.

These categories are listed below.

#### Key Elements

- former Ambulance Station [051]
- Commercial Hotel [001]
- Boolaroo Public School [046]
- former Post Office [030]

#### Background Elements

- Kenny Park [003]
- Alan Craig Cycles [004]
- Lake Macquarie Neighbourhood Information Centre [006]
- Festival IGA supermarket [009]
- Boolaroo Medical Centre [010]
- take-away shop, 40 Main Road [012]
- Lake Cinema [019]
- Boolaroo Baptist Church, Sixth Street [020]
- Albert Reserve [021]
- All Saint's Anglican Church [022]
- former Anglican Church Hall [023]
- former Anglican Rectory [024]
- Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Church [025]
- delicatessen [028]
- shops, 67-71 Main Road [034]
- Boolaroo Uniting Church [037]
- Environmental Health Centre [038]
- former Commonwealth Bank [039]
- Newcastle Auto Abrasives [042]
- shops, 21-33 Main Road [045]
- Woods Electric [047]

- Mitre 10 building, 13-15 Main Road [048]
- shop (former residence), 5 Main Road [051]
- Lake Macquarie Remediation Management Centre [052]
- former Catholic Church, 26 Seventh Street [054]
- former shop, 34 First Street [055]

#### **Neutral Elements**

- Bogas Petrol Station [002]
- Dental Surgery [005]
- former Petrol Station, 22 Main Road [007]
- car sales building, 42 Main Road [013]
- newsagent [017]
- Catholic hall [018]
- Catholic Rectory [026]
- Boolaroo Police Station [029]
- shops, 85-89 Main Road [031]
- shops, 81-83 Main Road [032]
- shops, 63-65 Main Road [035]
- Boolaroo Auto Centre [036]
- Elliott's video shop [040]
- Boolaroo Fire Station [041]
- shops, former G Hawkins & Sons store [043]
- Boolaroo Ambulance Station [053]

#### **Intrusive Elements**

- shops, 22 Main Road [007], excluding former petrol station
- offices, 36 Main Road [011]
- shops, 50 Main Road at Fifth Street [014]
- Boolaroo Cellars [033]
- shops, 35-37 Main Road [044]
- mixed use, 9 Main Road [049]

## 4 Guidelines for Buildings

The following guidelines should be used to guide any works to buildings within the study area, whether noted as significant or otherwise. While generally they refer to restoration or reconstruction works to existing buildings, they are also in part applicable to any new buildings to be constructed, whether infill of vacant sites or replacing existing unsympathetic buildings.

The guidelines have been formulated to give simple and practical advice, to ensure that any money spent on buildings, no matter whether just maintenance and minor repairs or large scale reconstruction, is directed to works that will maintain or enhance the historic character of the town overall as well as the individual building. Without such guidelines to coordinate works, buildings tend to be treated quite differently depending on their use and ownership, sometimes sympathetically but often not, and the overall streetscape suffers.

For specific recommendations for each individual building, refer to the Datasheets in Appendix B of this report. They give a brief description of recommended works, and are listed in order of priority. For some buildings this will be sufficient detail with which to undertake the works, while others may require detailed advice from Council's heritage adviser, or from an architect with experience in heritage work.

The guidelines are grouped under the headings related to different elements of a building or their general design, as defined below:

1. General Principles: the general basis on which works should be undertaken, with reference to items specifically noted on the datasheets.
2. Parapets and Facades: the parapet is that part of the street facade projecting above the general wall line to conceal or partially conceal the roof behind, while the facade is the street or front face of a building, excluding any shopfronts.
3. Verandahs: a post-supported verandah across the footpath, or occasionally set back behind the street boundary.
4. Awnings: a cantilevered or suspended canopy supported by the building and extending across the footpath.
5. Shopfronts: the ground floor section of the street facade, comprising display windows, entrance doors and surrounding special finishes, such as wall tiling.
6. Advertising and Signage: signs attached to buildings, painted or raised lettering, including building name, dates and foundation stones.
7. Fenestration: the arrangement of door and window openings and the actual window and door fittings.
8. Colour Schemes: a selection of traditional paint colours, face brick and render, appropriate to the various architectural styles / periods.
9. Materials: the materials used for external surfaces.
10. Local Character: maintaining the local character in any new development, and not allowing corporate identity requirements to override this.

The principles and historic origins of each element is explained, and examples of buildings in Main Road given, before the actual guidelines are given in a point by point form.

## 4.1 General Principles

The general principle that should guide any work is one of retaining original fabric wherever possible in order to maintain the authentic character of the town. This is not to arbitrarily replicate historic details of a certain historic style, or to impose a "theme" or character upon the town at the expense of all other features, but rather enhance the characteristic that exist, and which demonstrate the historic pattern of development in some way. Authenticity is the probably the most important aspect, both in terms of keeping original fabric and accurately reconstructing missing fabric. It relates to a building as a whole, as well as individual components of its fabric.

Any original fabric, no matter how large or small, contributes towards the historic character of a place for it displays the effects of time, the wear caused by years of continued use, and reveals the layers of development and different use the building has seen. In this way it "tells the story" of the place.

Accurate reconstruction of missing elements is also important because it completes missing parts of the story. Buildings which were once important streetscape elements may appear to be unattractive or poorly constructed where original elements are replaced or covered over by inappropriate forms. Even where restoration has been attempted, it may not fit within the actual design of the building. Modern additions may simply appear inappropriate and clumsy, while adding traditional details to a more modern building will cause confusion as to its actual age.

Having noted this, it is stressed that every effort must be made to maintain the role of Boolaroo Main Road as a local shopping centre, able to meet the day to day needs of the residents. As such allowance should be made for adapting buildings to meet changing uses and contemporary requirements to insure this ongoing viability.

### **Guidelines for General Principles:**

- a) *Encourage the restoration and reconstruction of original fabric based on accurate historic research of a particular building wherever possible in preference to details that are simply typical of a period.*
- b) *Based on their assessed level of contribution to the streetscape, the following actions are appropriate:*
  - *Key: retain all buildings identified as "Key" elements, and encourage their restoration based on appropriate research and professional advice, including accurate reconstruction of missing fabric.*
  - *Background: retain all buildings identified as "Background" elements, and encourage the accurate reconstruction of missing fabric while allowing for minor adaptation.*
  - *Neutral: retention of buildings identified as "Neutral" elements is appropriate, although adaptation or replacement with sympathetic new development is considered permissible.*
  - *Intrusive: Encourage the replacement or adaptation of buildings identified as "Intrusive" elements to a form more sympathetic to the streetscape.*
- c) *Encourage the retention and restoration of fabric identified as significant for the facade or shopfront of a building (see Inventory Datasheets, Appendix B). Reconstruction of missing sections is also encouraged, while minor adaptation is permissible.*
- d) *Encourage and provide incentives for building owners to undertake the recommended works to their buildings (see Inventory Datasheets, Appendix B).*
- e) *Encourage the incorporation of those features identified as being typical of Boolaroo in any refurbishment or infill development, including maintaining the discontinuous nature of the streetscape and the clustering of commercial buildings into small groups.*
- f) *It is generally simpler and cheaper to do some minor repairs and put on a fresh coat of paint than to completely reconstruct.*

## 4.2 Parapets and Facades

The basic component of any building in terms of streetscape is its street facade. Commercial buildings are almost always built to the street and side boundaries, and as such their side walls are generally not visible and so are given no decorative treatment. Even buildings located on street corners will sometimes present bland facades to the side streets, with all the emphasis (and expense) put into creating a prominent face to the main street, for example the Lake Cinema [019] and Mitre 10 [048] buildings. Commercial buildings also generally have parapet walls concealing the roof. This gives the building greater prominence along the street, concealing its often simple skillion or gabled roof. Finally, parapet walls provide the necessary anchor point for tie rods supporting footpath awnings, as opposed to post-supported verandahs.

As shopfronts dictate the design at ground floor level, the street facade is defined as that part above the awning (or verandah). For single storey buildings this means the parapet only, while for two storey buildings it will include the upper wall surface.

A parapet may be a plain horizontal wall, though will usually be stepped in some way. This may be as simple as rising to a central pediment aligned with the pitch of a gable roof behind (such as the Dental Surgery [005]), though is often more complex including multiple stepping and curved pediments, cornices and other detailed timber or renderwork, pilasters, decorative finials and feature panels (such as Newcastle Auto Abrasives [042], on Fourth Street just off Main Road). Parapets were often of timber construction, and as decorative as those of masonry.

Apart from the actual surface treatment of the parapet wall, another important aspect is their appearance against the skyline, or their silhouette. The Lake Macquarie Neighbourhood Information Centre [006] and the HCB Electric building [034] are good examples within Boolaroo.

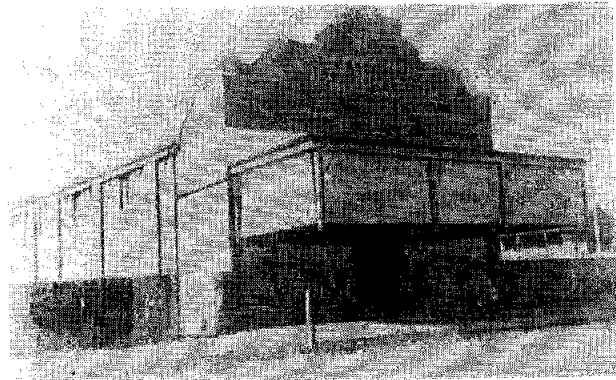
Where a building contains a number of separate shops, the parapet will often rise to various high points corresponding to each shop. The HCB Electric building [034] is an example of this, with three distinct parapet sections and corresponding signage on the awning fascias. The building at 35-37 Main Road [044] has attempted to continue this feature in a modern style by stepping the parapet and shopfronts forward along the length of the building. The building adjacent to the north has a continuous parapet across all shops, although one section has been altered at some stage. It is desirable that consistency be maintained where several shops are covered by one parapet.

There are a few newer buildings in Main Road that have incorporated very plain parapets with profiled steel sheet cladding (the mixed use buildings at 35-37 Main Road [044] and at 9 Main Road [049]), a material which is generally unsympathetic to the streetscape.

Alterations to facades is often done purely for aesthetic reasons, a plain and unadorned appearance being seen as more modern and thus more appropriate than the original ornate detail on many old buildings. Lowering of the parapet height is often undertaken to give a single horizontal line. The former G Hawkins & Sons store at 39-43 Main Road [043] is an example of this. The brick pilasters can still be seen on the parapet of this building.

Changing the surface finishes to a parapet may appear a less drastic alteration, though the cumulative effect may be just as great and is often difficult to reverse, unlike the above. The most common change is to paint face brickwork or renderwork (such as the Mitre 10 building [048]), and this is readily reversed by stripping the paint. More difficult to rectify is where a facade has been rendered over, obliterating such features as detailed render mouldings, roughcast or signage panels, brick banding and bonding patterns or polychrome brickwork (such as the section of parapet in the block of shops at 21-33 Main Road [045]).

The most drastic change however comes with complete remodelling of the facade and parapet. This is often associated with the overall refurbishment of a building to a contemporary architectural style of the time. This has happened in Boolaroo with the Festival IGA supermarket [009], as seen in the figures following.



The Boolaroo Co-operative Society.  
undated photo, Newcastle Region Library



The same building [009], April 1997,  
with addition and altered parapet.  
source: Suters Architects neg# 5062 A11

**Guidelines for Parapets and Facades:**

- a) *Retain existing original parapets and facades, check for structural stability, repair and maintain as required.*
- b) *Remove modern cladding from the face of parapets and facades if possible, and reconstruct missing sections such as pediments and finials to original details. Evidence can be gathered from historic photographs, original construction drawings, evidence left on the face of the building, or similar buildings around the town.*
- c) *Reinstate original finishes by the removal of accretions, such as stripping paint from face brick, or removing signage panels from detailed recessed panels.*
- d) *If the existing parapet is inappropriate to the character of the streetscape, whether an unsympathetic refurbishment of an old building or simply a modern building, alter the parapet to a more sympathetic form, reconstructing any original details if appropriate.*

### 4.3 Verandahs

Verandahs were an essential feature of most Australian towns until relatively recently. Just about every commercial building constructed before the turn of the century and even through to the 1910's or 1920's would have had a verandah, ranging from a simple lean-to type that covered the footpath in front of the building, through to elaborate structures of two or even three stories decorated with ornate cast iron or timber fretwork. However, from around the 1920's cantilevered awnings took the place of verandahs on new buildings, and would often be constructed to replace existing verandahs during major refurbishment - the verandah, perhaps, being considered too old fashioned. Many verandahs did remain in place however, and of all things it was the rising importance of motor cars and trucks that saw their ultimate demise. No longer were the verandah posts considered a useful place to tie up the horse and carriage but simply as a hazard whilst parking. And so, at the order of local Council's, most verandahs were removed around the 1960's.

Most original commercial buildings in Main Road, Boolaroo would have had verandahs, as evidenced by the photo shown below taken from First Street looking south. Few verandahs remain however, with the Commercial Hotel having the only original one. The HCB Electric building [034] has a reconstructed verandah and the delicatessen [028] has a verandah adapted from an awning.

The importance of verandahs to the character of a town should not be underestimated. Like their modern replacement, the cantilevered awning, they provided weather protection to pedestrians. However verandahs do much more than just this, as they actually extend the building space out over the footpath to the street edge and provide a sense of enclosure. They provide outdoor spaces at the upper level that enhance the amenity of the first floor rooms and provides a secluded space to sit and watch life on the street below. They provided decoration to the streetscape with their elaborate construction. They provided the support for signage panels, often quite large and prominent without appearing as "stuck-on" elements like most modern signs. And finally, they helped to give emphasis to particular buildings, marking them out as landmarks within the town. All of these points can be noted in the photo below.



Main Road looking south  
from First Street, c1905.  
source: Newcastle Region Library



Evidence of former verandah or  
awning in remnant flashing [055].  
source: Suters Architects neg# 5062 C11



**Guidelines for Verandahs:**

- a) *The reconstruction of verandahs is encouraged, but should only be done on buildings that are known to have once had them. Verandahs may also be used on new buildings, particularly where adjacent existing verandahs.*
- b) *Ensure that the style and detailing of the verandah is appropriate for the design of the building, otherwise it will appear incongruous.*
- c) *Match original details where possible. Evidence can be gathered from historic photographs, original construction drawings, evidence left on the face of the building such as flashings or the ends of floor joists, and remnant pieces of material that may be stored on site or elsewhere.*
- d) *Where no clear evidence of the original verandah can be found, details should be for those typical of the period. Appropriate details can be provided through Council's heritage service, through architects experienced with heritage buildings, and through various books on the subject.*
- e) *Modern or pseudo-historic materials and details should not be used, such as aluminium lace, metal pipe framing or tightly rolled bull-nosed iron.*
- f) *Where verandahs are two stories high, try and make sure that they provide a useful amenity to the first floor rooms.*
- g) *The length of the verandah should correspond to the building. Where a building comprises a number of different premises, a coordinated approach to reconstruction of the verandah should be encouraged. Verandahs should not however be run unbroken across adjacent buildings, even though they may now function as one.*
- h) *Where buildings are clustered together, verandahs should not finish short at the corners of buildings, but extend to adjacent verandahs or awnings to provide continuous weather protection for pedestrians beneath.*
- i) *Posts should be set back from the kerb by approximately 300-600mm (this should be confirmed with Council) to minimise the risk of damage by motor vehicles. Where evidence exists, posts should be replaced in their former location in the footpath or kerb, where practical.*

#### 4.4 Awnings

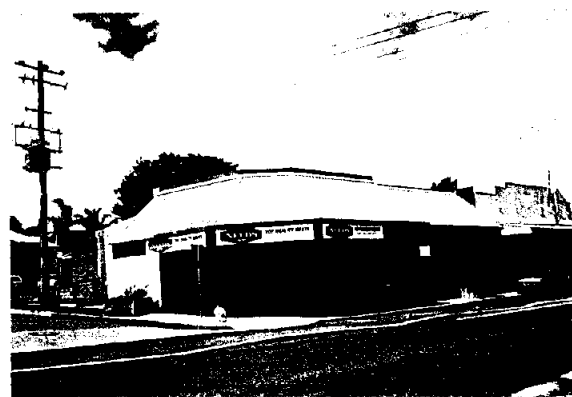
Almost every commercial building will have an awning of some type, for they provide protection from the weather for pedestrians whilst looking at window displays, and provide additional space on which to place signage. Buildings of a non-retail nature can be an exception, particularly for banks and professional chambers where an imposing and formal facade is often desired to convey the ideals of wealth and security and where display of merchandise is not required, such as the Boolaroo Medical Centre [010] (former Bank of NSW / Westpac Bank) or former Commonwealth Bank [039].

Like verandahs, awnings are an integral part of the design of commercial buildings, and original structures should be retained in preference to modern designs. Traditional awnings included fascia panels and mouldings, ceiling linings such as decorative pressed metal or timber battens over flat sheets, and ornate wrought or cast iron suspension rods and anchor plates. Often awnings would include canvas blinds for sun shades which may have doubled as signage banners. Light fittings and suspended signs are often an integral part of the awning design.

Most modern awning structures are bland in comparison, and the refurbishment of older awnings has often resulted in the loss of their original details, and so diminishes the intrinsic character of the building.

Many of the awnings in Boolaroo appear to be original or only slightly altered, although the large awnings around the Festival IGA [009] and Mitre 10 [048] buildings have replaced former individual awnings or verandahs.

Generally the awning roof is concealed by the awning fascia. On some newer buildings, the awning roof extends well up the second storey facade or doubles as the parapet, such as Boolaroo Cellars [033] and Lance Needs butcher shop [014], and these are considered to be out of character and intrusive elements in the streetscape.



Lance Needs butcher shop [014].  
source: Suturs Architects neg# 5062 A16

##### **Guidelines for Awnings:**

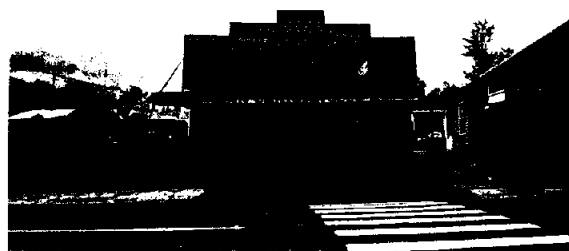
- a) *The refurbishment and reinstatement of awnings is generally encouraged.*
- b) *Retain original fabric where possible.*
- c) *Ensure that the style and detailing of the awning is appropriate for the design of the building, otherwise it will appear incongruous. Steeply pitched awnings are not appropriate and should be discouraged.*
- d) *Match original details where possible. Often original fabric may still be in place beneath modern cladding. Where the awning has been removed in full, evidence can be gathered from historic photographs, original construction drawings, evidence left on the face of the building such as suspension anchor plates, and remnant pieces of material that may be stored on site or elsewhere.*
- e) *Modern or pseudo-historic materials and details should not be used (for example profiled metal cladding).*
- f) *The length of the awning should correspond to the building. Where a building comprises a number of different premises, a coordinated approach to reconstruction of the awning should be encouraged. Awnings should not however be run unbroken across adjacent buildings where commercial buildings are clustered together, even though they may now function as one.*
- g) *Awnings should not finish short at the corners of buildings, but extend to adjacent verandahs or awnings to provide continuous weather protection for pedestrians beneath.*

## 4.5 Shopfronts

The shopfront is defined as that part of the buildings street facade at ground floor level ie: below the awning. While the building facade, verandahs and awnings are the main feature of the streetscape when you first enter and drive through the town, the shopfronts are where people come into face to face contact with the building. As such, the character of the shopfronts is of great importance in maintaining the character of the town.

Shopfronts traditionally included various elements. The principle one is the display windows, which for retail shops would cover most of the facade, while for offices and hotels may simply be large window openings. They would often include a recess for the entry doors, either to one side or symmetrically within the facade. The display windows generally step back around this area to maximise the visibility of the internal display space. The area in front of the door would be paved with tiles, marble or terrazzo, sometimes including some signage or graphics, and the ceiling might be finished in pressed metal or similar. There are few surviving examples of this in Boolaroo.

Alan Craig Cycles [004],  
shopfront still largely intact.  
source: Suters Architects neg# 5062 A5



What little was left of the walls was generally clad with glazed ceramic tiles, sometimes plain but often with elaborate border or feature tiles. The use of tiling was really to come to the fore on hotels where, due to the relatively large wall areas compared to shops, wall tiles are often the most prominent feature of the shopfront together with recessed signage panels.

The ceiling of the awning or verandah, together with any lights or signs, are also important features of the shopfront, however these are dealt with in the previous sections.

While it is recognised that the demands of modern merchandising do not always neatly fit within the confines of traditional shopfront design, traditional details can generally be adapted to suit the purpose.

Shopfronts can also give some indication of the history of change to a building, particularly where they run across adjacent buildings of obviously different construction dates, suggesting a common owner or the combining of internal spaces to form larger shops.

The majority of commercial buildings in Boolaroo have had their shopfronts replaced with modern aluminium framed glazing and entrances flush with the building facade. The former entrances and display windows of the Festival IGA [009] have been obscured with paint and doorways have been bricked up.

Shopfronts that remain fairly intact include:

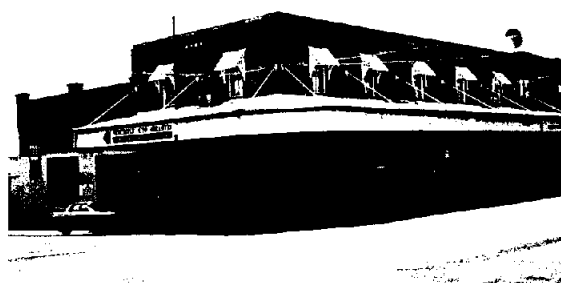
- Alan Craig Cycles [004]
- take-away shop at 40 Main Road [012]
- Lake Macquarie Neighbourhood Information Centre [006]
- Mitre 10 building [048]

**Guidelines for Shopfronts:**

- a) *The restoration and alteration of shopfronts is generally encouraged.*
- b) *Retain original shopfront features wherever possible, including display windows and their framing, entry doors, paved thresholds especially with any signage or graphics, wall tilings and ceiling cladding.*
- c) *Where only remnants of original shopfronts survive, seek to incorporate these within new layouts. These may include some wall tiling at the corners, older frames to display windows with modern doors, or small details such as sill or dado sections.*
- d) *Where the shopfront is an essential feature of a design, match original details where possible. Evidence can be gathered from historic photographs, original construction drawings, evidence left on the building such as sills or framework, and remnant pieces of material that may be stored on site or elsewhere.*
- e) *Where a building comprises a number of different premises, a coordinated approach to the shopfronts should be encouraged. However, shopfronts should preferably not run unbroken across adjacent buildings.*
- f) *Wall tiling can often be used to give a more modern shopfront a traditional appearance where the basic door and window layout is sympathetic. Unlike painted render or face brick, tiles are easily cleaned of grime or graffiti and are particularly hard-wearing.*

## 4.6 Fenestration

The arrangement of door and window openings is an important part of the appearance of old buildings. As a general rule they will be arranged on a regular spacing and with a consistent head and sill height across the facade. They will also be vertically proportioned and based on the traditional structural design of "holes within walls" rather than as large voids or extended horizontal openings. Shopfronts obviously are an exception to this rule.



Former G Hawkins & Sons store [043]-  
note altered ground facade, original openings to upper  
facade, and altered (capped) parapet.  
source: Suters Architects neg# 5062 B19

Openings will often be altered over time to reflect the use of the internal space. They may be enlarged to admit more light or form a display window, bricked up to conceal a store room or new partition behind, or reduced in size to increase privacy. The openings are also sometimes altered when the actual window or door fittings are altered, especially where traditional vertically proportioned timber windows are replaced by modern aluminium windows of horizontal proportions, with the head being lowered and the opening extended to one or both sides. All such alterations drastically alter the appearance of the building.

Replacing the actual windows or doors with modern components also alters the appearance of a building, although perhaps in a more subtle way to altering the openings. Even where the modern element is of a similar form the detail is likely to be completely different, such as the slender frames of aluminium windows rather than the larger sections of timber windows, aluminium windows much less prominent than their timber counterparts. Doors suffer from similar problems. Modern prefabricated doors with false-panelling or routed faces do not replicate the detail of traditional panelled doors, only their proportions.

### **Guidelines for Fenestration:**

- a) *Maintain and repair original timber windows and doors, and reinstate missing elements to the original design.*
- b) *Remove any modern elements such as aluminium windows or false-panelled doors, return openings to original proportions, and reconstruct windows and doors to original details.*
- c) *Where there is a need to increase light or ventilation to a space, additional windows should match existing pattern and be located to maintain balance and/or symmetry across the facade. Also consider other less conspicuous methods, such as skylights or windows to the side or rear.*
- d) *Window and door openings (except shopfronts) should be vertically proportioned and read as "holes within walls," rather than horizontal voids.*
- e) *For new buildings or alterations to existing, window openings should be approximately 25% of the wall area at upper floor levels.*

## 4.7 Advertising Signs

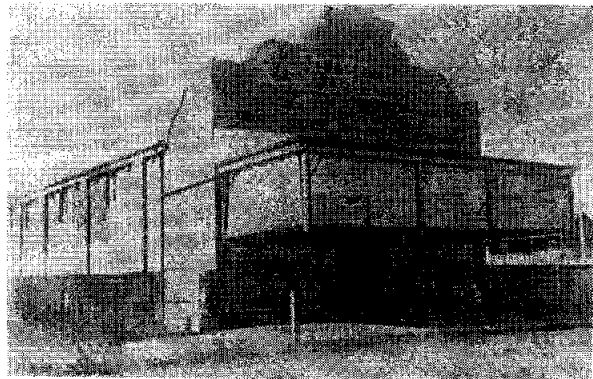
Signage has historically been an important feature of a streetscape. Traditionally any prominent expanse of flat surface on a building has been taken over to advertise the wares or services offered by the premises, either painted direct to the surface or on an attached panel. Typical building elements that have been used for signage include the awning or verandah fascia, the spandrel panel above shopfront glazing, the return ends of verandahs, or the sides of buildings where they are adjacent an access lane, a side street or where upper floors project above adjacent buildings.

In more recent times however the increase in the scale of advertising and the advent of illuminated signs has caused a proliferation of signage attached to buildings. Advertising is designed to attract attention, and so the result is often that the prominence of the sign outweighs that of the building. With the lack of any coordination of signage between buildings, the result is often one of excess clutter and lack of a consistent streetscape character. Often beautiful details of a building's facades will be obscured by large signage panels. Boolaroo has fortunately seen little of this, however there are a number of intrusive signs that should be removed. Perhaps the worst offender is the Boolaroo Cellars [033] bottle shop with the array of standard modern signage panels, blackboards and stickers arranged across its facade, and the giant sign shaped as a bottle on the roof. The importance of advertising is acknowledged, however it should be carefully handled.

Signs to the awning fascia and/or parapet are the most common in Boolaroo, and appear on almost every commercial building. Hanging signs from the ceiling of the awning/verandah for viewing by pedestrians is now also prevalent. Large roof areas also often had painted signs, and the remnants of such can still be seen on the roof of the Commercial Hotel [010].

The historic photographs of Boolaroo Co-operative Society at right show what a large area of signage can be achieved without appearing out of scale.

Boolaroo Co-operative Society, date unknown.  
Note areas for signage on parapet  
and on pull down canvas shading.  
source: Newcastle Region Library



Same building with addition, date unknown.  
Note areas for signage on parapet, on attached awning  
panel and on awning return end.  
source: Lake Macquarie City Library



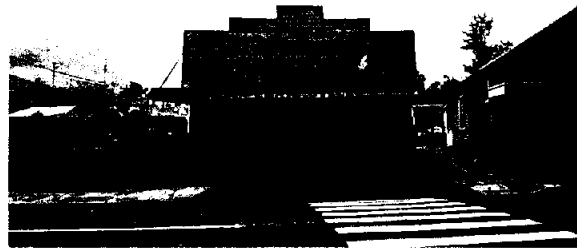
Another traditional way that additional signage area has been provided, as shown in the top photo of the Boolaroo Co-operative Society, is the use of canvas sun blinds supported along the street edge of the awning. These also provide valuable protection to pedestrians along the footpath and shelter display windows from direct sunlight. As such they would probably have been more common along the eastern side of Main Road where they catch the harsh western light of a summers afternoon.

As mentioned above, the sides of buildings where they are adjacent an access lane or a side street were also popular for signage.



The T C Frith General Store, Boolaroo.  
undated photo from Lake Macquarie City Library

Shopfront signage can take many forms, but the most obvious is that of the spandrel panel located above door head height and directly beneath the awning, sometimes referred to as "top hamper" signs. Often this will originally have been a separately glazed area, and derived from this is the traditional method of simply painting a sign of the rear of the glass, giving the crisp and glossy appearance typical of these signs. No examples of these exist in Boolaroo, although Alan Craig Cycles [004] and the Mitre 10 building [048] display adaptations of this method, with simple painted or printed signs that conceal the glazing behind, but are still effective and sympathetic in form.



Alan Craig Cycles [004], Boolaroo.  
source: Suters Architects neg# 5062 A5

### **Guidelines for Advertising Signs:**

- a) Any early signage should be retained and actively preserved wherever possible, including signage related to original shopfronts, or remnants of painted signs to side walls of buildings.
- b) Advertising signs should generally be restricted to the following locations:
  - awning or verandah fascias
  - awning or verandah return end boarding
  - additional horizontal panels directly above or below the awning at the street edge
  - canvas sun blinds suspended from the awning
  - spandrel panels above shopfront windows
  - within shopfront windows
  - under-awning suspended panels
- c) The preference is for non-illuminated signs, however if necessary illuminated signs may be used within shop windows or as under-awning suspended signs. Flashing or scrolling electronic signs are not permitted.
- d) Any signage on canvas sun blinds should be restricted to a business, and the blind should generally be of a colour sympathetic to the building.
- e) The following forms of signage are inappropriate. Their removal from existing buildings should be encouraged, and no new signs of these forms permitted:
  - projecting wall signs
  - vertically proportioned above-awning signs
  - roof mounted signs
- f) Signs to upper facades should not be for general advertising but restricted to the name of the building/business only. Such signs should be located in such a way that the balance or symmetry of the facade is retained, and should align with any grid established across the facade by pilasters, windows and the like. They should run across any openings or decorative detail of the facade, and must be flat against the wall. The use of existing recessed panels or raised plaques for signage is encouraged.
- g) Signs should be horizontally proportioned rather than vertical, though they need not be rectangular and may include curved or stepped elements as appropriate.
- h) Signs should not obscure the architectural features of a building, and as such the height of any above-awning sign should be limited.
- i) Lettering should be in a traditional style consistent with the age of the building. Historically, simpler font styles were common such as Roman/Clarendon or Sans Serif rather than more flamboyant script, and using capital letters only. Lettering was usually quite bold or "fat" in appearance, and shadowing was commonly used to increase the impact of the sign.
- j) The use of borders to define signage panels is appropriate, however the use of graphics, such as scrolls and silhouettes, should be restricted to a minimum and carefully located to maintain the balance or symmetry of the sign across the building.
- k) Aim to reduce the overall number of signs on a building, and have consistency in terms of proportions, colour and style of signs on any one building.



## 4.8 Materials

As noted previously, not one building material dominates in Main Road, although many of the buildings are of brick, be it face, rendered or tiled in some way. Several shops and some of the ecclesiastical buildings are of timber, and historic photographs reveal most of the first buildings to have been timber, this being typical of the development of townships.

Of the brick buildings, the proportion of face brick against painted would be approximately equal. Early face brick buildings did have some decorative renderwork details, such as the former Post Office [030] and the original Co-operative Society building, with more recent structures such as All Saints Anglican Church [022] being entirely of face brick.

### **Guidelines for Materials:**

- a) *Retain existing materials and finishes wherever possible, and use compatible materials for extension and alterations to existing buildings.*
- b) *Materials for new development should generally be consistent with surrounding existing structure and the overall character of the streetscape. Preferred materials are face brick in dark red tones (non-textured, non-mottled), detailed renderwork, timber weatherboards or timber battens on fibre cement sheet for walls and parapets, and corrugated iron for roofs.*
- c) *Modern materials are acceptable provided they are consistent with the general finish, appearance and proportions of surrounding original materials. Applied decoration and colour can be used to unify the appearance. Profiled steel sheets such as "Kliplock", moulded fibre cement profiles, and prefabricated or precast panels are inappropriate and should not be used. Modern variations of timber weatherboards, such as metal or vinyl weatherboards, are also not acceptable.*
- d) *Modern high-build and textured coatings such as "Granosite" are inappropriate and should not be used for existing or new developments.*
- e) *Timber framed windows and doors should be used in preference to aluminium. If aluminium is to be used, the sections should be of the larger sizes typical of commercial installations rather than the smaller domestic sections.*
- f) *Glazed ceramic tiles in traditional colours are the preferred material for shopfront walls.*
- g) *Applied decoration should only be used where consistent with the building design. Use of standardised contemporary elements, such as Federation-style finials, brackets, etc is generally considered inappropriate. Missing elements should be accurately reconstructed based on historic information.*

#### 4.9 Colour Schemes

Altering the colour scheme of a building is one of the simplest ways to enhance its character and create a consistent streetscape. Repainting is generally done on a regular basis in any case, and it costs no more to select the colours from a traditional colour scheme. Thus, the coordination of colour schemes along Main Road would produce substantial results over a relatively short period.

Colour schemes can however be controversial. Individual owners will no doubt have their own likes and dislikes and will not want a specific colour scheme imposed. There may also be corporate identity requirements. Both of these can generally be complied with by subtle variations of colour schemes. However colour schemes that are designed only to make a building more prominent, such as the use of particularly vibrant highlights or a single overall colour, are inappropriate to the aims of the main street approach which is to create a consistent streetscape character.

Several different colour schemes are provided in this report, each relevant to a different period and style of architecture that appears in Boolaroo as noted on the datasheets for each building. The colours are selected from the traditional range of paint colours that were commonly available through the late 19th and early 20th century, this being much more limited than the vast range available today. Colour schemes for specific buildings may be researched through historic photographs, documentary evidence and paint scrapings. Even black and white photos indicate tonal differences between parts of the building.

The former Boolaroo Post Office [030], researched  
and re-painted with original colours in 1996.  
source: Suters Architects neg# 5062 B7



The colour names are as per the Pascol traditional range developed in association with the National Trust, however all the major paint manufacturers have similar "heritage" ranges eg., Dulux, Taubmans and Solver, and generally a colour can be mixed to order from any base irrespective of the brand. The Australian and British Standards may also be referred to for traditional colours, and these are a valuable cross reference. Note that the colour boards in this report do not give a good reproduction of the actual paint colours, and paint charts or samples should be referred to for final selections.

### **Guidelines for Colour Schemes:**

- a) *A colour scheme appropriate to the period and style of the building should be selected.*
- b) *If possible, colours selections should be based on evidence of the original colour for each particular building, particularly for those noted as key items. This may be based on colours revealed in weathered or concealed areas, paint scrapes where multiple layers of paint exist, and from historic photographs which may reveal relative tones and contrast between different elements of a building even though only black & white in nature.*
- c) *Assistance in refining colour schemes may be obtained from various sources, including heritage advisers/architects/colour consultants, and from various published books on period colour schemes. Most of the major paint manufacturers also provide a colour selection service, though this is usually contingent upon purchase of their paint for the work and the size of the project.*
- d) *Exterior wall surfaces should generally be painted with a matt finish, while joinery like windows and doors should be painted with a gloss finish.*
- e) *Surfaces which were originally unpainted should be left as such. If they have been previously painted they should be stripped wherever possible. Note that sand blasting or high pressure water blasting are not appropriate ways to strip paint from surfaces like brick, stone, render or timber, as it tends to pit the surface and damage softer surrounding components like mortar. If stripping is not practical, the surface should be painted in a colour similar to the original material, eg. red brickwork.*
- f) *Where a building includes a number of separate premises under separate ownership, coordination to produce a consistent colour scheme is desirable. There may be cost benefits by having the whole building painted at the same time rather than by individual premises.*

## Federation Colour Schemes



Indian Red



Eau-de-Nil



Pale Olive



Dune



Pale Eau-de-Nil



Copper Beech



Mid Green



Palm Green



Mid Brown



Leaf Brown



Pale Cream



Sienna



Ivory



Terra Verte



Bronze Green



Light Stone



Bone



Manilla



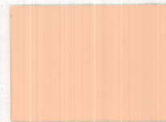
Ivory



Camouflage Green

### Federation Colour Scheme 1

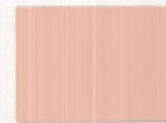
**Walls:** Biscuit  
**Wall Trim:** Sienna  
**Joinery:** Indian Red & Pale Cream  
**Joinery Trim:** Sienna  
**Soffit:** Eau-de-Nil



Biscuit

### Federation Colour Scheme 2

**Walls:** Rose Pink  
**Wall Trim:** Terra Verte  
**Joinery:** Dune  
**Joinery Trim:** Pale Olive  
**Soffit:** Ivory



Rose Pink

### Federation Colour Scheme 3

**Walls:** Cream  
**Wall Trim:** Light Stone  
**Joinery:** Copper Beech  
**Joinery Trim:** Bronze Green & Light Stone  
**Soffit:** Pale Eau-de-Nil



Cream

### Federation Colour Scheme 4

**Walls:** Face Brick (unpainted)  
**Wall Trim:** Manilla  
**Joinery:** Palm Green & Bone  
**Joinery Trim:** Mid Green  
**Soffit:** Palm Green



Face Brick

### Federation Colour Scheme 5

**Walls:** Face Brick (unpainted)  
**Wall Trim:** Camouflage Green  
**Joinery:** Ivory  
**Joinery Trim:** Leaf Brown & Mid Brown  
**Soffit:** Ivory



Face Brick



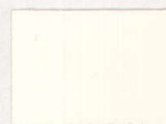
## Inter-War & Post-War Colour Schemes

### Inter/Post War Colour Scheme 1

**Walls:** Vellum  
**Wall Trim:** Camouflage Grey  
**Joinery:** Bone  
**Joinery Trim:** Bronze Green & Venetian Red  
**Soffit:** Bone



Vellum



Bone



Camouflage Green



Bronze Green



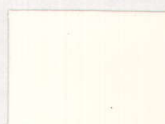
Venetian Red

### Inter/Post War Colour Scheme 2

**Walls:** Warm Grey  
**Wall Trim:** Juniper Green  
**Joinery:** Eau-de-Nil & Bone  
**Joinery Trim:** Pale Olive  
**Soffit:** Pale Eau-de-Nil



Warm Grey



Bone



Juniper Green



Eau-de-Nil



Pale Eau-de-Nil

### Inter/Post War Colour Scheme 3

**Walls:** Yellow Ochre  
**Wall Trim:** Buff  
**Joinery:** Starch  
**Joinery Trim:** Sienna & Light Stone  
**Soffit:** Starch



Yellow Ochre



Starch



Buff



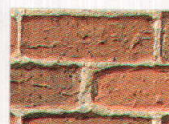
Sienna



Salmon

### Inter/Post War Colour Scheme 4

**Walls:** Face brick (unpainted)  
**Wall Trim:** Warm Grey  
**Joinery:** Light Stone & Coir  
**Joinery Trim:** Purple Brown  
**Soffit:** Coir



Face Brick



Coir



Warm Grey



Purple Brown



Light Stone

### Inter/Post War Colour Scheme 5

**Walls:** Face Brick (unpainted)  
**Wall Trim:** Bronze  
**Joinery:** Ivory & Pale Olive  
**Joinery Trim:** Mink  
**Soffit:** Ivory



Face Brick



Ivory



Bronze



Pale Olive



Mink

#### 4.10 Local Character

An important aspect of commercial development in the Main Road is that the local character is more important than corporate identity. Often corporations have been allowed to impose their standard building designs and over sized signage on any locality, with little or no reference to existing structures or the streetscape as a whole, for example a freestanding building within an area of attached structures built hard to the street boundary. The most obvious offenders have been the fast food outlets and service stations, though chain stores are also a problem particularly with regard to signage, shopfronts and colour schemes. Sometimes a locally based business will adopt a similar approach, presumably in an attempt to enhance their street presence and convey a particular image.

To date, Boolaroo has seen relatively little pressure for such development. The precedent has however been set for restricting the prominence of such corporate identity features, particularly within heritage areas. For example, the Rocks in Sydney has seen many historic buildings successfully adapted for use by corporate business, with signage on these buildings restricted to traditional forms and modest sizes. Such an approach is now common place through much of Europe and America.

Restrained advertising and colouring that maintains corporate identity for Macdonald's at Circular Quay, Sydney.  
source: *Streetwise: A Practical Guide* by Elizabeth Vines, 1996



Another demand often placed by corporate business is for a large street presence, though with little interface with the footpath and street. Typically there will be long and unbroken shopfronts with only one entry. Large retail outlets also often require particularly high ceiling levels, which can result in excessively bulky external forms with little fenestration. Never the less it is desirable that such retail outlets are located within the main street area rather than outside it, and there are a number of ways to limit their impact.

The preferred form is for the actual retail space to be set back from the street, with individual stores of traditional proportions built along the street frontage as a screen. Access from the main street is crucial however, and can be provided by pedestrian arcades. Offices or other functions can be accommodated at first floor level to screen bulky building forms. Where the retail space has to be located on the street frontage, the facade should be broken into vertical bays to reflect the rhythm of the streetscape, and the shopfront broken down accordingly. For particularly long shopfronts a number of entrances should be provided.

##### ***Guidelines for Local Character versus Corporate Identity:***

- a) *Standard designs and oversized signage panels should not be permitted. All developments within the main street area should be designed in accordance with the guidelines laid out in this report.*
- b) *The use of corporate colours for the exterior of buildings should be limited to signage panels, or subtly incorporated within the overall colouring of traditional colour schemes.*
- c) *Large retail developments should be located to the rear of the site and screened by smaller shops, or have the street facade broken down into vertical bays, to maintain the character of the streetscape.*

## 5 Guidelines for the Public Space

While the buildings are undoubtedly the principle features in defining the character of the streetscape, the treatment of the surrounding public spaces, that is the street itself, footpaths and parks or other open spaces, is important in consolidating this character. No matter how attractive the buildings, their appearance will be marred by adjacent public spaces that are cluttered, poorly maintained, lack consistency, or which contain elements unsympathetic to this historic character.

### 5.1 Footpaths, Kerbs and Guttering

The footpaths are often identified as one of the first items to be upgraded in a main street area, being a relatively straight forward task and often including realignment to provide wider footpaths, blisters to define parking and pedestrian crossing areas, or improved stormwater drainage. The combined effects of these alterations will have a substantial impact on the appearance of the streetscape.

The existing concrete footpaths in Main Road are generally sympathetic to the character of the area, although they appear to be in poor condition. Practical measures for improving footpath safety can be readily undertaken within the existing framework. Replacement of the footpath with different materials, such as brick paving or stencilled or pigmented concrete, is not considered appropriate.

Kerb and guttering would probably have originally been of stone. Remnants of this may be seen in some areas of Main Road, and retention of this evidence is highly desirable. Restoration of the stonework in the long term, where it exists underneath bitumen or concrete, should be considered.

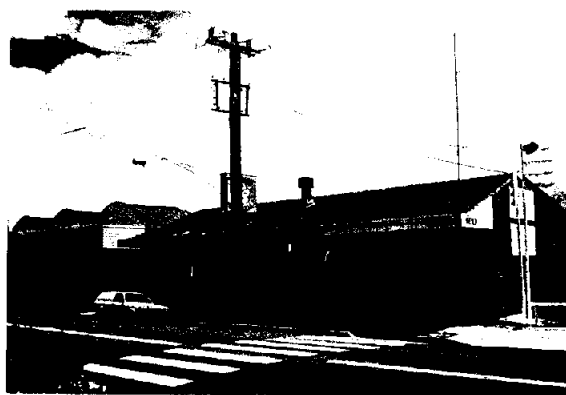
#### ***Guidelines for Footpaths, Kerbs and Guttering:***

- a) Repair and maintain the existing concrete footpaths in the Main Road area.*
- b) Where upgrading is necessary, and where no evidence of stone exists beneath, use plain concrete to match existing.*
- c) Consider revealing remnant stone kerb and guttering, where such exists, throughout the Main Road area as a long term goal.*
- d) Consider highlighting pedestrian crossing in some way, such as kerb blisters.*

## 5.2 Street Lighting and Electrical Supply

Little is known about original forms of street lighting in Boolaroo, although the first lighting would have probably been gas lamps of some sort.

Today, electricity poles provide support for the street lighting, supporting metal brackets at high level. Different light designs exist, whether over a pedestrian crossing or simply on a street corner. Specific lighting for car yards and parking areas are of a different design again, but help to add general light to the Main Road area. The present level of street lighting was identified in the public workshop as inadequate and should be enhanced.



Existing lighting at pedestrian crossing.  
source: Suters Architects neg# 5062 B13

An unfortunate result of electricity poles being located along the street are the supply cables that run to each individual building, often connecting to the building in a clumsy sort of way and obscuring decorative details of the facade. The poles also provide fixing for streamers running between buildings and across Main Road, concentrated between Third and Fourth Streets. Similar streamers are seen at the car sales yards and the petrol station.

### ***Guidelines for Street Lighting:***

- a) *Retain existing timber electricity poles for street lighting and add new timber light poles where necessary.*
- b) *Install new co-ordinated street lighting (possibly to a design consistent with existing at pedestrian crossings) along the length of Main Road to provide adequate light levels for night time security.*
- c) *Co-ordinate the location of electricity supply cables to buildings so as to minimise the impact on building appearance. Consider underground power or supply to the rear of buildings as alternatives.*
- d) *Remove streamers from across Main Road and other areas.*

See maps contained in Appendix A.



### 5.3 Street Furniture

Street furniture includes items like seats, litter bins, fences, bollards, tree guards and bus shelters. As with most parts of the streetscape the preference is for items of a consistent design and in a style sympathetic to the historic character of the town. Typically most of the existing items meet neither category, being a mix of types collected over the years, usually standard designs with no particular historic precedent or local input.

In the Main Road area the seats are generally of galvanised steel pipe legs with timber slats, though there are a few exceptions. Albert Reserve [021] has an integral seat designed into its brick retaining wall to Main Road. The litter bins are plastic "Wiz Bin" types held in position by steel purpose-made posts and brackets. Generally, the placement of seating and bins should be co-ordinated with areas of high pedestrian traffic, such as bus stops and outside food shops.

The historic lack of trees in main street areas makes establishing a precedent for tree guards difficult. If trees are planted along Main Road, it is suggested that the design of tree guards follow existing timber balustrading, as shown at right.



Existing timber balustrading, Main Rd and Sixth St.  
source: Suters Architects neg# 5062 B11

The only bus shelter in Main Road exists at Albert Reserve [021] and is of "pebble-dash" pre-cast panels. It has a pleasing sign on the fascia marking it as "Albert Reserve" bus stop.

While there are many standard designs available today for street furniture in traditional styles, it is proposed that locally designed and produced articles be considered as well. Such items are able to draw on historic precedents in their design, will enhance the unique character of the town, and in their manufacture will contribute towards the local economy.

Simple timber balustrading exists adjacent to some footpath areas to guard stormwater drains. These sections of balustrading should be maintained and reconstructed where necessary. Any other areas in need of balustrading should use this existing design in order to promote consistency within the Main Road area.

#### **Guidelines for Street Furniture:**

- a) Consider letting a tender for the local design and manufacture of street furniture.
- b) Seating should be consistent. This could most practically be achieved by replacing the few concrete seats with the metal-framed type prevalent along Main Road. Existing seating could be enhanced by repainting including Boolaroo town logo or similar.
- c) The suggested design for litter bins is of traditional galvanised cylinders, hung singly or as a pair on either side of a hardwood post, planter boxes, or on other existing supports such as electricity poles. Timber parts may be paint or oil finished.
- d) New bus shelters should be purpose-designed for existing unprotected bus stops, possibly drawing on the general form and fascia design of that existing at Albert Reserve. The "pebble-dash" of the existing bus shelter should be painted to match the dark green framing.
- e) Tree guards should consist of hardwood posts consistent in design with existing timber balustrading (for example at Main Road and Sixth Street), and should be removed once trees have reached maturity. Timber may be paint or oil finished.
- f) Fencing or bollards should be consistent in design with existing timber balustrading (for example at Main Road and Sixth Street).

See maps contained in Appendix A.

## 5.4 Street Signs

The design of street signage is generally only considered with regard to its practical functions of naming and directing. However with careful design and coordination of the various elements it can become an attractive part of the streetscape in its own right.

For general street signs, a simple hardwood post was the traditional style before the advent of the galvanised steel pipe that we see almost everywhere today. Routed timber signs, painted white with black lettering or similar, were common place until quite recently, and are still used in many instances, particularly in National Parks and State Forests. The construction and maintenance of such signs is now much reduced, with the use of computer-guided routing machines and preservative treated timber.

Signs in Main Road, Boolaroo vary widely. Streets are marked with metal signs, in some spots with dark lettering on a yellow background and in other spots with yellow lettering on a blue background. Social points of interest are marked with similar metal signs, which vary from white lettering on green to black lettering on white. The mounting of signs varies from metal posts to timber electricity poles.

Bus stop signs are standard metal piping with yellow inserts. A new design may be considered for these in something more sympathetic to the character of Boolaroo, although it must be noted that any non-standard signage introduced will set a precedent. The Newcastle-Speers Point steam tram once ran along Main Road, with stops approximately consistent with current bus stops.

Points of interest along Main Road are poorly marked, with the exception of Albert Reserve, which marks its presence with an attractive hanging metal sign with painted script lettering.

Generally, street signage is inconsistent and needs to be standardised. Signage displaying information about places, such as parks, schools and possibly buildings/businesses, needs to be established or enhanced. Information plaques depicting Boolaroo history may be incorporated in areas such as bus stops, seating, pedestrian crossings and other areas of pedestrian gathering.

There are of course many forms of signage other than the corner street signs. The large scale RTA directional signs for example, or signs designating parking restrictions. It is preferable for the use of these signs to be restricted as much as possible, and to be sympathetic in design.

### ***Guidelines for Street Signs:***

- a) Signs designating streets and places of social interest should be co-ordinated in design and colour.*
- b) Consider the re-design of bus stop signs, possibly suggestive of the Newcastle-Speers Point steam tram that once ran through Boolaroo.*
- c) Restrict the use of large scale modern signage, such as large green or blue RTA directional signs. Large directional signage should be purpose designed to be sympathetic to the character of Boolaroo.*
- d) Cluster signs together on signposts, or use other existing mounting points such as electricity poles and verandah posts wherever possible, to minimise the clutter caused by excessive numbers of signposts.*
- e) Increase information signage related to public and/or historic places, in a design sympathetic to the character Boolaroo.*

See maps contained in Appendix A.

## 5.5 Street Trees and Planters

Most country towns have not historically had any trees along the main commercial street of the town centre, as evident from most historic photographs. The exceptions are where the town layout has been designed for trees from the outset, such as along the centre of a wide avenue, down either side of a boulevard framing a view to one end, or along a lake or sea side promenade. Nearby Toronto is a good example of this. While the value of street trees is now well recognised, careful consideration needs to be given before they are introduced into the main street, as they will drastically alter its appearance and operation.

Main streets are traditionally devoid of most soft landscaping, as is Main Road, Boolaroo, although in recent years the Boolaroo Improvement Group (BIG) has constructed brick planters in various locations along the footpath. There are two open parks along Main Road, Kenny Park [003] at the junction of Second Street, and Albert Reserve [021] at the junction of Sixth Street. Both parks are on residential sized blocks of land, Kenny Park being a fairly informal open grassed space and Albert Reserve a more formal, terraced space incorporating a brick toilet block.

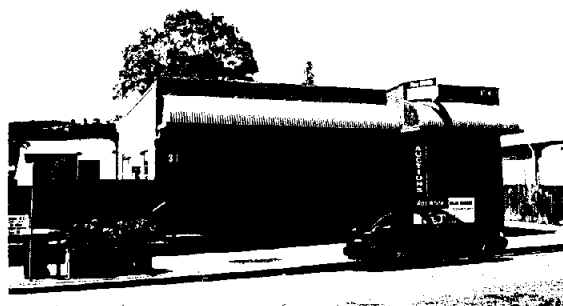
There is no known historic precedent for street trees in Main Road, Boolaroo, although they have the potential to enhance the environmental and visual state of the area. As building facades are the principle feature of the main street and they may be obscured by mature trees, it is advisable only to plant trees where the buildings make little contribution to the streetscape. Trees can be used to screen an otherwise unattractive and inconsistent streetscape, and can help to make a natural gateway into an area.

Street trees can also take up parking spaces along the street, and this is generally considered undesirable by the business operators. In Main Road, it is suggested that any trees introduced be planted in the footpath (refer to attached maps in Appendix A).

Street trees along the approaches to a town centre is historically more common and practical. Consistent with the establishment of a gateway into Boolaroo from the junction of Main Road and T C Frith Avenue, trees may be considered in the area north of the ambulance station. Any landscaping of this area should take into consideration the "Environmental Mound" proposal by Pasminco Metals Sulphide / EJE Landscape Architecture.

The use of planter boxes, either freestanding containers or raised garden beds contained by low walls, has been common over recent decades as a means of "improving" a townscape. These have however proven to be difficult to maintain plants in a healthy condition and prone to vandalism, and they tend to become receptacles for cigarette butts, matches, sweet wrappers and the like. The Boolaroo Improvement Group (BIG) has recently organised the construction of brick planter boxes along the Main Road, however the location of these is inconsistent and their appearance is unsympathetic, and some of the plantings in these boxes has become a problem, either dying or growing too high.

A proposal exists for a large "Environmental Mound" to shield the residential area from the Pasminco Metals Sulphide site, and extensive tree planting has been in the residential streets recently.



Existing brick planters along Main Road.  
source: Suters Architects neg# 5062 A13

**Guidelines for Landscaping:**

- a) *The Boolaroo Planting Strategy, 1996 should be further researched and developed, in association with the implementation of Pasminco's Environmental Mound and the establishment of gateways into Boolaroo from the north and south and considering driver and pedestrian visibility.*
- b) *Selection of appropriate species should be based on trees with a historic precedent in the area or on their potential to be a feature for the town, ie. flowering trees.*
- c) *A selection of plants more appropriate for planter boxes should be chosen and installed. The maintenance of the plantings should be by shop owners or through a co-operative venture.*
- d) *Planter boxes should be rendered and painted in a manner more sympathetic with the character of Boolaroo. Those planter boxes attached to buildings should be removed and rebuilt in a location consistent with others along Main Road. The construction of new planter boxes should be considered to achieve consistency along Main Road.*

See maps contained in Appendix A.

## 6 Implementation

### 6.1 Priority Actions

While the final adoption of the recommendations of this report rest with Council, certain works are considered a priority. In general terms these works may be described as follows:

- Works which will have the maximum impact for the minimum outlay.
- Works which will be of some practical benefit to the function of the main street area, not just aesthetic.
- Works which will be highly visible to the public, and so have considerable impact in enhancing the streetscape.
- Works which maintain authentic historic fabric or accurately reconstruct original details rather than simply of a traditional style.

To this end the following actions are seen as priorities.

#### a. Basic Restoration of Facades

Council should actively encourage the restoration of the basic elements of the building facade along the main street area. Such works would include:

- The removal of false cladding and associated repairs to the facade.
- Repainting to traditional colour schemes and/or stripping and cleaning of face brickwork.
- Repairing or replacing damaged or missing elements which were prominent features of a facade.
- Removing redundant brackets, fixtures, electrical connections and the like.

#### b. Advertising Signs

Council should actively encourage the removal of inappropriate advertising signs, and provide guidance to appropriate traditional forms. Such works may include:

- Removal of all above-awning signs.
- Removal of unsympathetic modern signage panels from shopfronts.
- Removal of false panels from awning fascias.
- Encourage the painting of the shop name in an appropriate form across the awning fascia of each and every shopfront.
- Encourage the erection of appropriate awning sun blinds on buildings where they were known to exist.
- Encourage the conservation of authentic historic signage, whether painted on side walls, or within shopfronts.

#### c. Street Signs and Furniture

The installation of sympathetic street signs and other street furniture is a relatively instant and effective way of enhancing the streetscape. While there are many manufactured systems that have traditional forms, it is considered that individual designs to reflect local character and made by local craftsmen are more appropriate in maintaining an authentic historic character. Such works may include:

- Call for submissions from local craftsmen and industry for the design and manufacture of street signs, seats and litter bins for installation in the main street area.
- Liaise with other authorities, particularly the STA, regarding appropriate signage forms.
- Adapt unsympathetic street furniture, including planter boxes.

#### d. Landscaping

Consideration should be given to street trees along Main Road, as well as for plantings in association with gateway development. Implementation works may include:

- Complete a tree planting strategy for the suburb as a whole, identifying appropriate species for different areas and including Main Road and gateway areas.

**e. Reconstruction of Awnings and Verandahs**

As noted in the report, awnings and verandahs were a particularly important element of the streetscape in early towns. While their reconstruction can be expensive, their impact is substantial, and should be encouraged for significant buildings. Such works may include:

- Encouraging the reconstruction of awnings and verandahs, where documentary or other evidence exists to prove former existence.
- Permit the construction of verandahs in a traditional form on new buildings where there is a historic precedent for verandahs, as opposed to awnings, amongst the surrounding buildings.

**f. Alterations to Unsympathetic Buildings**

The few unsympathetic buildings that do exist in Main Road are quite prominent. In many instances, simple alterations to the facade and awning are all that is required to improve their appearance and create a consistent streetscape. Such works may include:

- Liaise with the owners of such properties to identify practical ways of improving the appearance of the facade. Note in particular the offices at 36 Main Road [011], the car sales building at the corner of Main Road and Fifth Street [013], the Catholic Rectory [026], the shops at 35-37 Main Road [044] and the shops at 9 Main Road [049].
- Similarly, liaise with the owners of properties where the historic facade has been completely modernised to identify ways of recreating its historic design. Note in particular the Festival IGA building [009] and the former G Hawkins & Sons building [043].

**Guidelines for Priority Actions:**

- a) Encourage the restoration of the basic elements of historic facades.*
- b) Encourage the removal of inappropriate advertising signs and provide guidance for traditional forms of signage.*
- c) Complete a street tree planting strategy for the town including new and existing plantings.*
- d) Encourage the reconstruction of verandahs.*
- e) Liaise with the owners of unsympathetic buildings to identify ways the building appearance can be made more appropriate to the historic streetscape.*

## **6.2 Implementing Priority Actions**

There are many building and streetscape proposals that have the ability to improve the visual aesthetic of Main Road, Boolaroo. The following actions are simple, inexpensive methods for immediate results with high visual impact:

1. new designs for signage (street signs, bus stop signage, information signs/plaques to buildings and parks);
2. consolidation of street seating design;
3. design of new and better street lighting;
4. adaptation and consolidation of planter boxes; and
5. building and streetscape enhancement through new paint and minor works.

Longer term goals involve:

1. the enhancement and formalisation of the natural gateways at the north and south entrances to Boolaroo;
2. the formalisation and implementation of a tree planting scheme along Main Road;
3. construction of bus shelters; and
4. larger scale building works, such as reconstruction, adaptation and new development.

Several practical issues are worth noting, as they directly affect the aesthetic and physical environment of Main Road. These are:

1. Footpath safety is currently inadequate, with sections out of level posing a danger to pedestrians.
2. Street lighting, although mentioned above as a short term goal, is not only an aesthetic issue but a safety concern. The present light levels along Main Road are inadequate and may be considered unsafe for pedestrians at night. Increased lighting will also help to alleviate vandalism.
3. Traffic issues generally need to be studied in Boolaroo, possibly through a local area traffic management study, as Main Road is presently used as a traffic thoroughfare.

### 6.3 Funding Opportunities

Most of the works recommended in this report have been devised to be as low cost as possible while giving the maximum benefit. In many instances the works would be undertaken as part of the regular care and maintenance of a property, and the purpose of these guidelines is quite literally to "guide" that work so that its form is appropriate to the historic character of the streetscape. An example is repainting, where the use of a traditional colour scheme and the coordination with adjacent buildings will have a significant impact at little or no extra cost.

Never-the-less there will be many projects, both to private buildings and public spaces, that will require a substantial capital outlay. There are a number of ways that such costs can be offset, and these are described below.

#### a. Local Heritage Assistance Fund

The Lake Macquarie City Council has established a fund to provide assistance to property owners in maintaining and restoring historic structures within the area. The initial capital has been provided jointly by the Council and the NSW Government Heritage Office. Funding may be provided for a variety of different types of projects including:

- Restoration or reconstruction of significant elements of a building where damaged or missing eg. reconstructing a verandah.
- Maintenance works where essential to preserve the historic building as a whole eg. installing a damp proof course.
- Preparation of studies to guide the ongoing restoration and occupation of important historic buildings eg. the original Ambulance Station.
- Educational or research projects aimed at enhancing community awareness of the Council's heritage eg. school projects on local history.

The funding may be provided to property owners in a variety of ways depending on the situation, as follows:

- Low Interest Loan - where a loan is provided, usually no more than half of the total costs, to be repaid over a fixed term with low or nil interest. This is the preferred form as it ensures the capital of the fund will be maintained over the years.
- Dollar for Dollar Grant - where a direct grant is made, to be matched or bettered by the property owner. This is particularly appropriate where it covers the extra costs involved in restoration or reconstruction rather than simply maintaining and repairing existing inappropriate fabric.
- Loan Repayable Upon Sale - where a loan is provided for high priority works and only repayable, with or without interest, upon the sale of the building and/or death of the current owner. Particularly appropriate for buildings owned by low income groups like pensioners, or non-profit community groups.

Applications will be regularly called for suitable projects, either on an annual basis or as funds are available, and these will be assessed according to a number of established criteria. These criteria might include:

- Whether the property is a listed heritage item in Council's Local Environmental Plan, or other heritage registers such as the National Trust.
- Whether the property is located within an identified heritage precinct and so will have an important impact on the character of the streetscape.
- Priorities can be established on an annual or permanent basis, for example works to restore historic shopfronts, or works to buildings in Main Road.
- Works that have been recommended by this or other heritage studies, or are consistent with stated Council policy for heritage conservation.
- Works that are guided by professionals in the heritage field and/or are well researched for their historical accuracy.
- Buildings that are open to the public, or where the works will be highly visible to the public.



**b. NSW Heritage Assistance Programme**

This programme is run by the NSW Government Heritage Office, and provides funding for projects large and small all over the state. It also administers the funding provided by the National government for specific heritage projects.

Its operation is basically similar to that of the Local Heritage Assistance Fund. Applications are called for in February/March each year, and grants are normally awarded around July/September. They have separate categories for buildings, landscapes and gardens, moveable items, pipe organs and research projects.

Anyone can apply for these grants, whether an individual or group, public or private. Indeed many of the projects it funds are for Local Government, with the establishment of Local Heritage Assistance Funds being one. Competition for grants is considerable however, and only those projects that meet most of the grant criteria are likely to be successful in obtaining a grant. There are some restrictions, and generally restoration works to government owned buildings are excluded.

Funding for this scheme has recently been restricted, however an associated scheme known as the Heritage 2001 Program is a new incentive to be introduced for major projects in NSW. Eligibility for this program is restricted to conservation and presentation of state significant heritage items, with proposed works totalling at least \$40,000 over four years.

**c. Australian Government Tax Concessions**

The commonwealth government has recently initiated a programme for granting tax concessions for the cost of restoration works. Buildings have to be registered on one of the various formal heritage registers to be accepted, such as a council Local Environmental Plan, a Permanent Conservation Order issued by the state Heritage Council, or the National Estate register compiled by the Australian Heritage Commission.

Right to the tax concessions is not automatic, with only a fixed total value of concessions available each year. Applications have to be approved before work commences.

**d. Council Incentives**

Councils have the right to offer various sorts of incentives to encourage the conservation of heritage places. These include:

- providing a rebate on annual rates
- waiving building and development application fees for restoration works
- granting concessions for standard requirements, such as car parking, floor space ratios or zoning restrictions

Generally buildings have to be listed as heritage items in the Council Local Environmental Plan or a heritage study to qualify, and each case will usually be assessed on its merit.

**e. Corporate Sponsorship**

Many projects involving civic buildings, memorials, or the streets and other public space engender considerable community support, and often gain extensive coverage in the local media. Such projects are always attractive for corporate sponsorship, as they are highly visible and demonstrate a commitment to the community. Acknowledgment of their support can be made by a dedication plaque or signage, and in itself this is part of the continuing local history of a place. The part funding of this study by Pasminco represents this form of sponsorship.

Two recent schemes in Newcastle serve as examples of the sorts of sponsorship possible. In one, the local Chamber of Commerce established a Heritage Sponsors Programme, where various heritage sites around the city centre were identified, all in public ownership but lacking recognition for their importance and hence poorly maintained. These included a stone staircase, a shipwreck, a beacon tower, a statue and a water reservoir. In each case the public authority in charge of the structure contributed funding, as well as obtaining a grant through the NSW Heritage Assistance Programme (see above), with all the works being coordinated by the Chamber of Commerce. Two plaques were erected at each place, one giving historical details about the place and the other commemorating its restoration.

In the other scheme Newcastle City Council identified certain sections of main roads which required better maintenance and upgrading, and these have been sponsored by local business. Their sponsorship is acknowledged by street signs detailing the scheme. The same approach may be applied to any aspect of the public space, such as parks, street furniture, special street lighting or historic structures. It should be noted however that sponsorship should not confer advertising rights within that place, but is restricted to acknowledgment of their support on signs or plaques. Care must be taken to ensure such signs do not detract from the historic character of the place.

**f. Coordination of Work and Discounts for Bulk Buying**

There is the possibility of reducing the costs of restoration by coordinating works across various buildings or the main street as a whole. This could take many different forms, of which the following are only some examples.

- Where a building contains a number of premises with each one separately owned (eg. shops at 21-33 Main Road), the various owners can agree to undertake work to the building facade as a single coordinated project. Not only should this reduce the overall cost, but it ensures the building is restored to a consistent design.
- Council or the Main Street Steering Committee can negotiate with the suppliers of building materials to provide their products at a discount rate for works to main street properties. This can be done direct with the manufacturers, but is probably better tackled by dealing with the local distributors, ensuring the money goes through the local economy and providing on the spot support services.
- Council may arrange to purchase materials itself and donate them towards a project where it enhances the public space around a building. Council could for example donate concrete for the footpath outside a building, with the building owner meeting the costs of laying the concrete as part of their general refurbishment of the building. Again this also ensures consistency of materials throughout the town.

***Guidelines for Funding Opportunities:***

- a) Promote use of the Local Heritage Assistance Fund and ensure adequate funding for its ongoing operation.*
- b) Encourage and assist in applications to the NSW Heritage Assistance Programme.*
- c) Encourage and assist in applications to the Australian Government Tax Concessions Scheme.*
- d) Consider means of providing incentives to property owners for conservation works to heritage listed properties.*
- e) Investigate possible projects for corporate or community sponsorship.*
- f) Assist in the coordination of works across the town and in establishing discount and bulk buying schemes.*

## **6.4 The Planning and Advisory Framework**

Most of the recommendations of this report are phrased as guidelines. That is, they are intended as a guide to future development but do not in themselves have any formal status. If formally adopted by Council these recommendations must then be considered as Council Policy with regard to any building or development application, though still have no binding legal status. Only where such guidelines are incorporated into a Development Control Plan, or referred to within the Local Environmental Plan, do they have formal legal status, and in that instance all building and development applications must comply unless Council formally waives the requirement.

Even so, the property owner has the final say on what works are undertaken. Council can not for example force a property owner to undertake conservation works in a certain way or at a certain time, though they can prevent inappropriate works being undertaken by refusing to grant building or development consent for those works.

There are certain areas where some form of formal policy or legal planning controls should be considered. These are identified below.

### **a. Adoption of this Study and a Development Control Plan**

The recommendations of this study should be placed before the Council for formal adoption as Council Policy. It may be appropriate to incorporate these recommendations as a Development Control Plan for the main street area.

### **b. Amendments to the Lake Macquarie Local Environmental Plan**

This study has identified certain buildings to be of particular heritage significance. These should be added to the list of heritage items already protected under the LEP, and are:

- the former Ambulance Station and associated outbuildings
- the Boolaroo Public School

It has also identified a number of places off Main Road which are considered likely to be worthy of such listing, and the significance of these places should be further researched. These are:

- the former Catholic Church at 26 Seventh Street
- the former shop at 34 First Street

Any amendments to the LEP should also incorporate the latest revisions to the standard heritage provisions as issued by the NSW Heritage Office.

### **c. Control of Demolition**

In the Local Government Act 1993, provision was made for the control by Council of any demolition works. Before this, control over demolition was at the discretion of a council and was often ignored for small scale residential and commercial buildings. However in heritage terms, these buildings are often important parts of the streetscape, and any demolition must be carefully considered.

It is recommended that Council strongly enforce the requirement for demolition consent for any buildings within the main street area. Application can be made through the standard Building and Development application process. Consent should not be granted without a review of the heritage significance of the building and its impact on the streetscape. For buildings within the main street area, consent should not be granted without the concurrent submission of an application detailing the new structure to be built, and some commitment to constructing this within a fixed time frame, to ensure the new building will be more sympathetic to the streetscape than that which it is replacing.

### **d. Heritage Advisory Service**

Many Councils now participate in the Heritage Advisory service, including Lake Macquarie City Council. Under this scheme, a heritage adviser employed by Council will offer guidance and advise on architectural and planning issues regarding heritage, as well as promote the importance of heritage conservation to the community in general.

**e. Liaison with Building Owners**

Council should take the initiative in dealing with building owners to ensure that particularly significant buildings are appropriately conserved and utilised. This is particularly important where buildings are threatened by decay through neglect, vandalism due to lack of use, or inappropriate development proposals on the surrounding site. A similar approach may be made to the owners of buildings identified as being intrusive elements in the streetscape in order to identify how they could be made more sympathetic to the historic character of the town.

***Guidelines for the Planning Framework:***

- a) Formal adoption of the recommendations of this study by Council, and consideration of incorporating them as part of a Development Control Plan.*
- b) Amendments to the Local Environmental Plan to include additional heritage items and revised heritage provisions.*
- c) Enforce the requirement for demolition consent for all buildings within the main street area.*
- d) Encourage the use of the free heritage advisory service provided by Council.*
- e) Liaise with owners of significant and/or threatened buildings to identify appropriate new uses and/or conservation strategies, and to make intrusive buildings more sympathetic to the streetscape.*

## References

Vines, Elizabeth. *Streetwise: A Practical Guide*, The National Trust of Australia, Sydney: 1996.

historic photos from the Lake Macquarie City Council Library Collection, Speers Point Branch

clippings file on Boolaroo, from the Lake Macquarie City Council Library

historic photos from the Newcastle Region Library Collection, Laman Street Branch

## 7 Report Addendum

A public presentation of this document was held on 29 July 1997 at the Sulphide Welfare Club, and resulted in feedback which warranted inclusion in this final study report.

### 7.1 Group Discussions

Following the formal presentation of the document, those present divided into three groups to discuss reactions to the proposals. Outlined below are comments arising from those group discussions.

- Group 1*
- old garages at Speers Point and Boolaroo - two examples in the same street, image needs upgrading, approach to Council, work toward getting them done up
  - repainting to: Woods Garage, Cinema (owned by Council, and roof about to be renewed, should be careful not to lose any heritage value), Catholic Hall, Fish & Chip shop in more traditional colour scheme, very old shops (building ref number 032), Newsagent (applied to Council for advice on doing up parapet, but Council never responded - note lack of enthusiasm from Council)
  - in the longer term, look at traditional street lighting styles, and allow for underground cabling if footpaths are replaced
  - seating at bus stops, especially at the bottle shop, Mitre 10 and the chemist/former Commonwealth Bank
  - graffiti and vandalism - suggested that shopowners might fund a reward for convictions
  - planter boxes - seat on side, render brickwork, and consistent low planting all endorsed
  - street trees - good, but ensure careful selection and placement
  - Needs House at Main Road and Third St - smoke house at back deserves further investigation
- Group 2*
- public parking needs to be better identified, especially the two public/overflow parking areas which many people do not know about
  - suggest a town information plaque / map somewhere at the north entrance, to be financed and kept by the business owners
  - implementation should start with 1) better public relations and education on what is happening in Boolaroo, and 2) co-operation and support through finance and participation from LMCC and Pasminco
  - some confusion exists between heritage / Main Street Programme / commercial or residential focus / sources of funding
  - need for greater urban design and greater landscaping design, which could possibly integrate surround suburbs such as Speers Point and Argenton
  - encourage some financial institution to return to Main Road, possibly Hunter United Credit Union who operate at Pasminco
  - encourage improvement to gateway areas, especially to the north as this is the entrance to the Lake and to the LMCC Chambers
- Group 3*
- retain pedestrian crossings, traffic safety generally, encourage traffic study
  - no points in the study proposals were objected to
  - signage at entrances to the town, gateways are important, ensure gateways and signs are undertaken in reasonable time frame, quality and presentation important for permanence and vandalism protection
  - gaining support from property owners in important (incentives?) look to other successful towns, presentations to share our findings and improve the benefits

- improve public support for the school as it is an integral part of Boolaroo past, present and future
- Commercial Hotel Centenary November 9th, plan anniversary celebration events
- planter boxes - initiate beautification and interpretive signage
- supply of taps on footpath to enable easier watering of planter boxes
- footpath safety needs to be better addressed
- Council vehicles not to park on street in front of buildings in Main Road, use overflow parking
- Festival car park not good - changed for the worse
- explanation of study recommendations with more specific time frames to ensure they are implemented
- dangerous crossing the road from the railway to the town - the road needs a pedestrian safety barrier, and the access could be made more attractive
- adopt-a-road good idea, more emphasis on entrance near the RSL - (Pasminco, Long-Airbox, Sulphide, Golf Club could be sponsors/owners of footpaths)
- roundabout at north proposed for 2004 by the 217 study is too far away, earlier completion date is desirable
- the triangle/ambulance paddock needs improvement - wetlands, walking track
- Kenny Park - Fred McInery
- traffic - heavy vehicles, do they need to use Main Road?
- youth - needs not met, no facility, skateboard ramp may help (in triangle?) activities to reduce vandalism

## 7.2 Common points arising from group discussions

The points raised in the group discussions were then summarised and discussed, with the following points identified :

- 1 Heritage Garages:** It was noted that there are two heritage garages, one in Speers Point and one in Boolaroo (Woods Electric [047]) which are quite unique within the City, with the Vintage Car Club located in the former Anglican Church Hall [023] in between. The enhancement of the two garages, and the common theme of vintage cars, should be encouraged.
- 2 Lake Cinema:** Council is currently proposing roof and other repair works to the Lake Cinema. The retention of any significant fabric should be encouraged, and the facade should be repainted to a traditional colour scheme.
- 3 Cooperation of Groups:** Public relations and education, and co-operation among involved groups (LMCC, Pasminco, Chamber of Commerce / Steering Committee, BIG, Pensioners Association) is an area that should be concentrated. The working together of all groups will give a more effective organisation and allow for success in implementation.
- 4 Traffic:** General traffic issues were noted, and solutions desired for:
  - pedestrian crossings
  - the pedestrian connection to the town from the railway
  - traffic signage
  - parking signage
  - greater amenity at bus stops.
- 5 Landscaping:** Proposals for landscape solutions include:
  - street trees along Main Road
  - a landscape plan for the greater Main Road area (possibly taking in Speers Point - Argenton)
  - the triangle at the Pasminco end of Main Road
  - adaptation of the planter boxes including new plant types and possibly information plaques
  - the provision of water taps on the footpath to enable watering of planter boxes.
- 6 Part of Entrance to Council and the Lake:** The north entrance to Boolaroo was noted as being the principle entrance to Lake Macquarie City Council, and therefore

important as giving a first impression of the City. For this reason, the area should be more representative of what Lake Macquarie has to offer. It was also noted that Main Road is the only arterial road running straight to the Lake rather than alongside it.

- 7 Gateways:** Gateways into the town were seen as a good idea, and should be attractive to passers-by and include appropriate signage.
- 8 Youth Needs:** The youth of the area are not currently catered for. Provision of activity based sites, such as a skateboard ramp or similar, should be considered. Vandalism needs to be addressed and the initiation of a graffiti fund was suggested.
- 9 Lighting:** Street lighting along the Main Road is inadequate. The erection of more lighting as per existing would be welcomed. Purpose-designed street lighting unique to Boolaroo was suggested as a long term goal.
- 10 Broader Action Plan:** The heritage study should be accepted as only one component of a greater plan to address issues at Boolaroo (refer to Steering Committee Action Plan).

### 7.3 Implementation Time Frame

Following the public presentation and feedback from those present, the implementation of priority actions may be further defined by what are felt as appropriate time frames.

Timing	Item	Action
within 1 year	• upgrading street signage to a consistent form including town logo	prepare strategy and implement
	• information and history plaques to streets, parks, key buildings and a town information map	prepare strategy
	• street seating rationalised through consistency, new paint, and use of a town logo	prepare strategy and implement
	• improved street lighting	implement
	• repair unsafe areas of footpath	implement
	• adapt planter boxes through rendering, information / sponsorship plaques, and replanting (relocate and add boxes as noted)	prepare strategy and implement
	• undertake a study into landscaping strategies for Main Road and the greater Boolaroo area, including street trees for Main Road and gateways into Boolaroo	prepare strategy
	• encourage building owners to plan restoration and refurbishment works (especially to key buildings) including grant funding applications or sponsorship/group discounts	prepare strategy
	• encourage minor building works, such as removal of inappropriate signage and installation of signage to awning fascias	implement
within 2 years	• encourage repainting with traditional colour schemes and cleaning face brickwork to buildings	implement
	• information and history plaques to streets, parks, key buildings and a town information map	implement
	• planting of street trees to Main Road	implement
	• consider replacing or extending sections of footpath where necessary	prepare strategy and implement

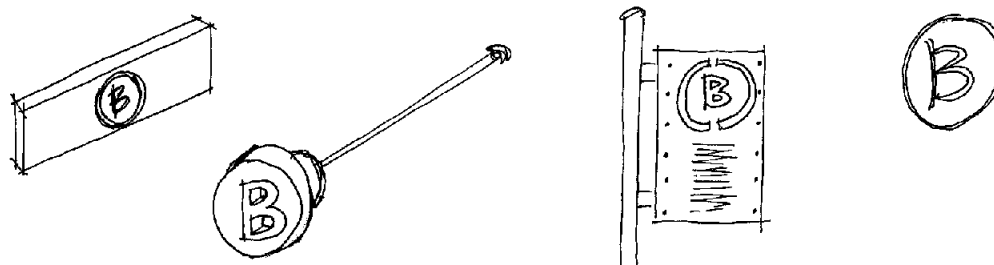


- |                |   |           |
|----------------|---|-----------|
| within 5 years | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• remainder of landscaping works, such as gateways to Boolaroo, the triangle, and the broader area to Argenton and Speers Point</li></ul> | implement |
|                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• implementation of traffic solutions deemed appropriate by a local area traffic study undertaken by Council</li></ul>                    | implement |
|                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• encourage larger scale restoration projects like verandahs and parapets</li></ul>   | implement |

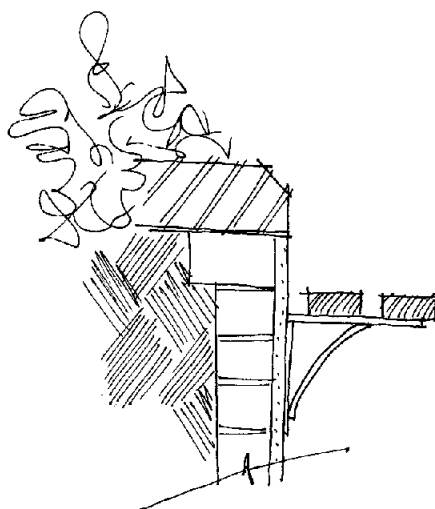
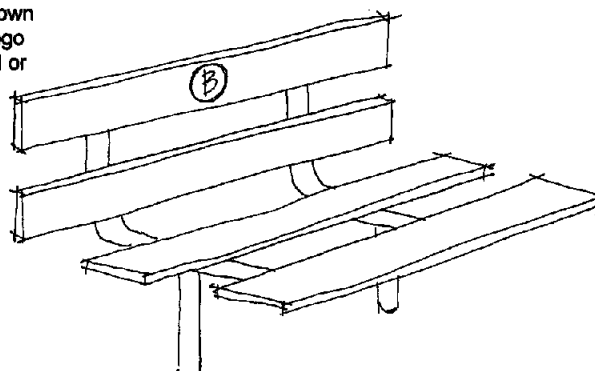
## 7.4 Suggested Designs

Subsequent to the above, the following suggested designs for street furniture and signage have been developed and complement the study report.

The design of any town logo for Boolaroo should ideally be based on a thorough review of the town's character and history. It could, for example, draw on former emblems or crests used by Council, the Sulphide Corporation, or other historic businesses or landowners associated with the development of Boolaroo. It is suggested however that it should be a modern interpretation of any such historic design, representing the community of Boolaroo today rather than being just an historic pastiche. Thus the design shown on these sketches is not intended as the final logo but simply as a prompt. Options for the final design might include routed timber panels, a "brand" that could be applied to any surface, a metal plate cutout, or a cast metal medallion.

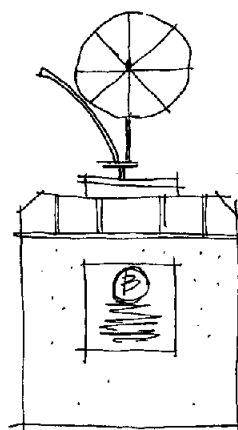


Street seating adapted with some sort of Boolaroo town logo. Seats to be repainted in appropriate colour. Logo could be routed into the timber, or otherwise painted or applied as a moulding.

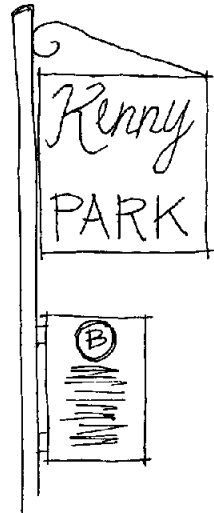
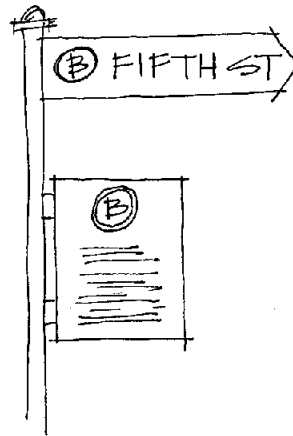


The planter boxes could be rendered, with a splayed brick course added as a capping. Some planter boxes could incorporate bench seating.

Planter boxes may incorporate sculpture, with themes possibly relating to industrial heritage and other history of the town

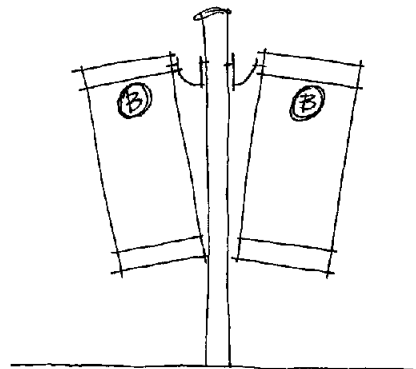


Street signs in appropriate colour with Boolaroo town logo, incorporating interpretive signage panel.



Park signage with Boolaroo town logo, incorporating interpretive signage panel.

Garbage bins mounted on existing electricity poles or new steel posts, with Boolaroo town logo.



## **Appendix A**

### **Maps**

## **Appendix B**

### **Burra Charter Terminology**

# **The Australia ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance (The Burra Charter)**

## **Preamble**

Having regard to the International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (Venice 1966), and the Resolutions of the 5th General Assembly of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) (Moscow 1978), the Burra Charter was adopted by Australia ICOMOS on 19th August 1979 at Burra Burra, South Australia. The following definitions form part of that Charter.

## **Definitions**

**Place** means site, area building or other work, group of buildings or other works together with associated contents and surrounds.

**Cultural significance** means aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value for past, present or future generations.

**Fabric** means all the physical material of the *place*.

**Conservation** means all the processes of looking after a place so as to retain its *cultural significance*. It includes maintenance and may according to circumstance include *preservation, restoration, reconstruction* and *adaptation* and will be commonly a combination of more than one of these.

**Maintenance** means the continuous protective care of the *fabric*, contents and setting of a *place*, and is to be distinguished from repair. Repair involves *restoration* or *reconstruction* and it should be treated accordingly.

**Preservation** means maintaining the *fabric* of a *place* in its existing state and retarding deterioration.

**Restoration** means returning the EXISTING *fabric* of a *place* to a known earlier state by removing accretions or by reassembling existing components without the introduction of new material.

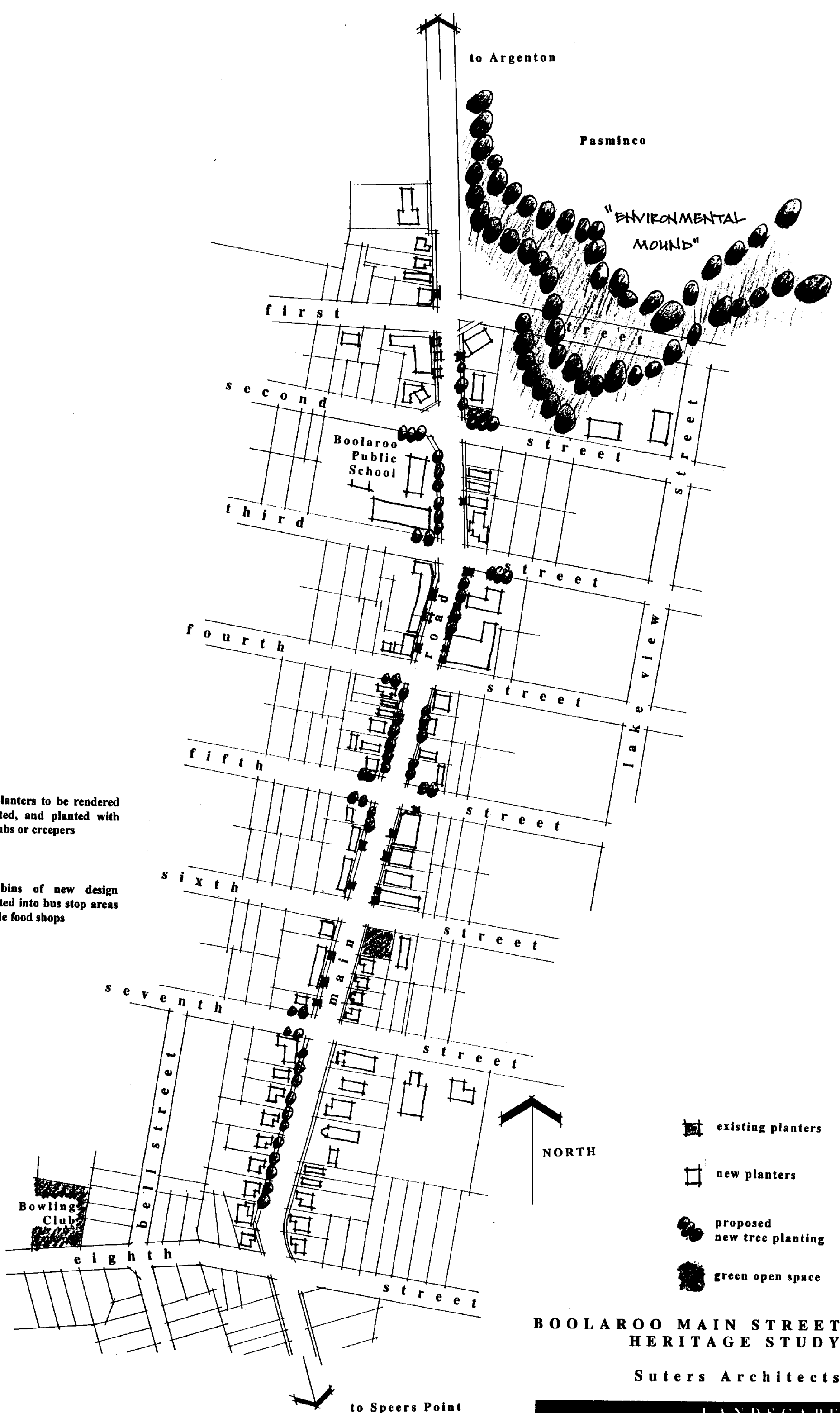
**Reconstruction** means returning a *place* as nearly as possible to a known earlier state and is distinguished by the introduction of materials (new or old) into the *fabric*. This is not to be confused with either recreation or conjectural reconstruction which are outside the scope of this Charter.

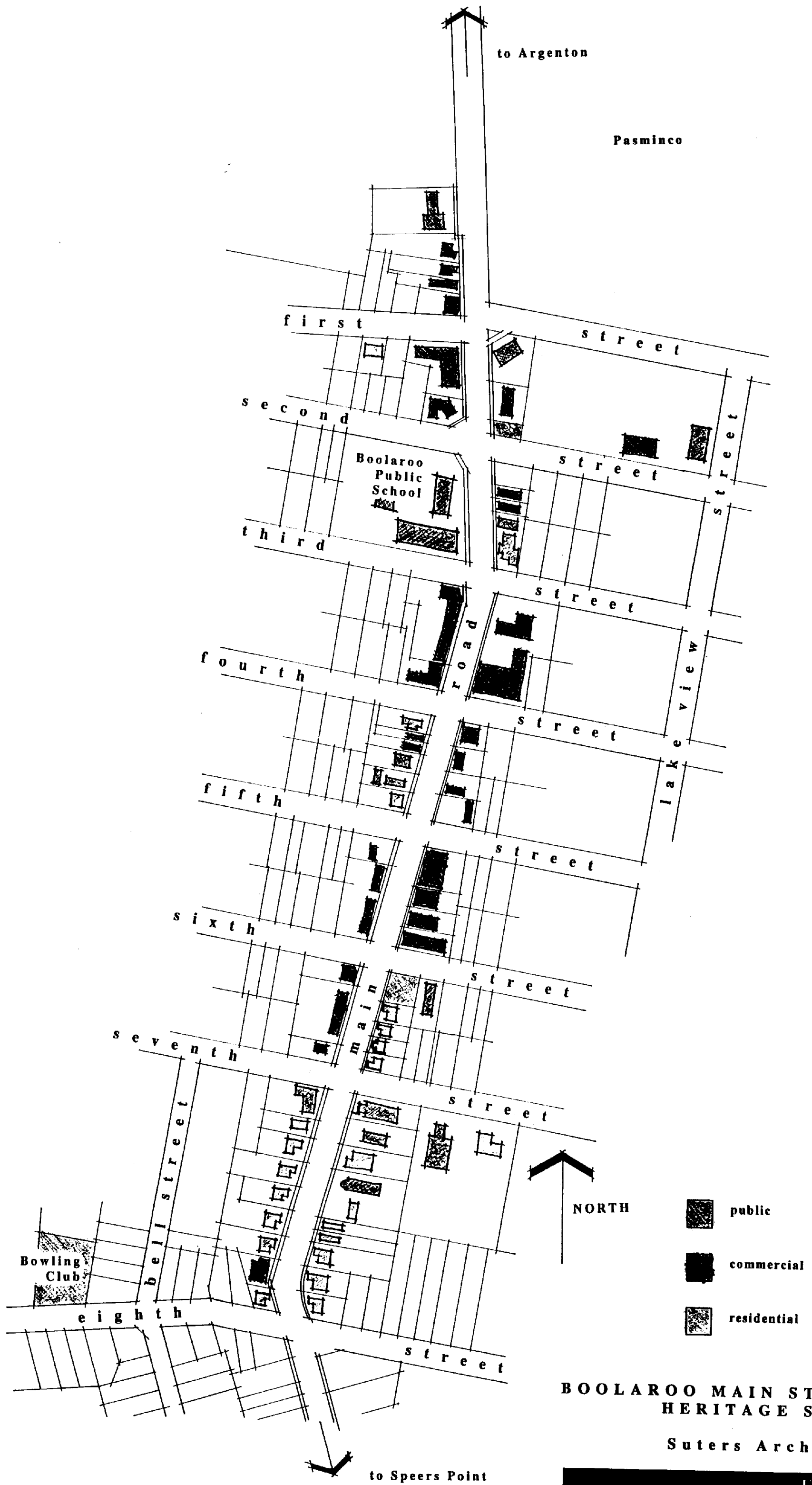
**Adaptation** means modifying a *place* to suit proposed compatible uses.

**Compatible use** means a use which involves no change to the culturally significant fabric, changes which are substantially reversible, or changes which require a minimal impact.

existing planters to be rendered and painted, and planted with small shrubs or creepers

garbage bins of new design incorporated into bus stop areas and outside food shops



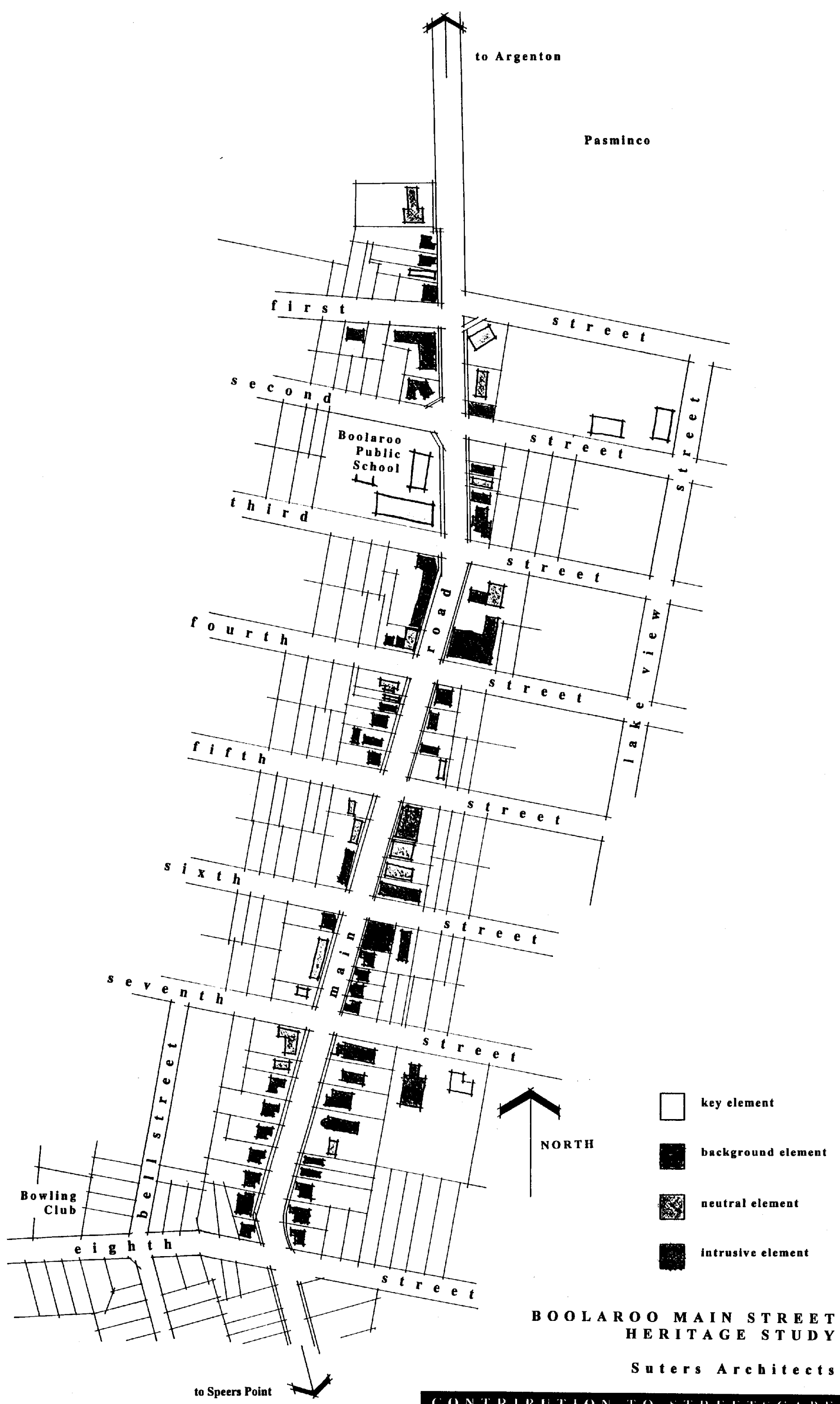


**BOOLAROO MAIN STREET  
HERITAGE STUDY**

Suters Architects

USAGE





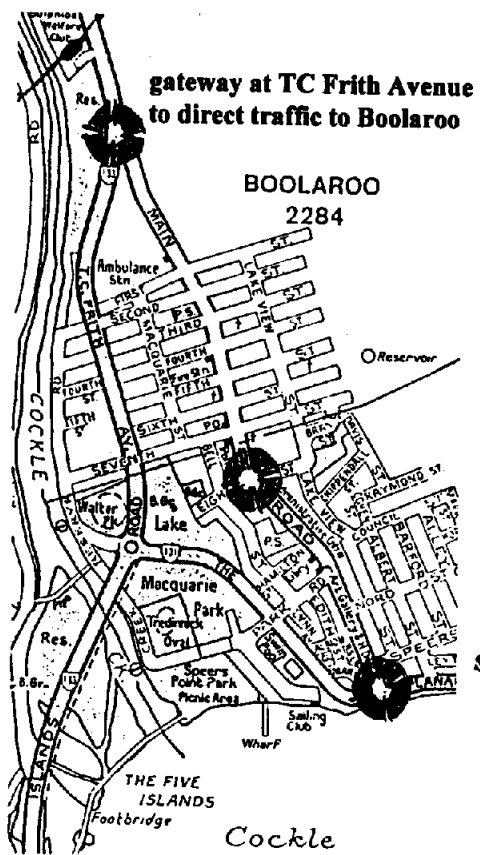


Newcastle-Speers Point steam tram, c1930s

speed reducing measures at gateways and within Main Road

bus stop signs and shelters may be designed around tram theme

bus stops may have history information plaques



local area traffic management study should be undertaken

Bowling Club

eighth

seventh

sixth

fifth

fourth

third

second

first

Boolaroo Public School

road

main

signage to TC Frith Avenue

to Argenton

Pasminco

street

street

street

street

street

street

street

street

lake view

NORTH

to Speers Point

-  roundabout
-  gateway
-  roundabout / gateway
-  existing public parking
-  existing bus stop
-  relocated bus stop

BOOLAROO MAIN STREET  
HERITAGE STUDY

Suters Architects

TRAFFIC



Verandah streetscape, c1905  
First Street looking south



timber barriers  
upgrade of footpaths



new street lighting designed  
around existing

