
GORDON SQUARE

Heritage Conservation Area

A unique precinct of nineteenth century workers housing including several fine terraces.

A rectangular area generally bounded by Gordon Street in the north, Waverley Street in the west, and Sydney Street, and including Randwick Street in the west.

What is the area's significance?

Aesthetic Significance:

The Gordon Square conservation area is unique in Randwick for its unusual street and subdivision layout. The centre block development, with its narrow streets and small lots, was an inventive attempt to maximize yields from subdivision.

The housing stock is an interesting mix of small and large terraces, semi-detached, single storey row houses and freestanding cottages. The mixture of periods and styles, from Victorian to Federation, results in a remarkably varied streetscape for such a small area. The combination of street layout and architecture produces an intimate scale and some interesting internal vistas, enhanced by the small park at the corner of Gordon and Randwick Streets.

Despite intrusions by a number of Post-War flat buildings, and some unsympathetic alteration to older houses, the area retains several reasonably intact period buildings. Most notable are the fine terraces on Gordon and Waverley Streets. The stepping of the Gordon Street terraces with the topography, and the projecting boundaries, produce a particularly impressive streetscape.

Historic Significance:

The Gordon and Waverley Street terraces are also of special historical significance as examples of nineteenth century workers' housing. The terraces have a special connection with Randwick Racecourse, one of the oldest and most enduring institutions in the area. The terraces are individually listed as heritage items.

Although the area developed later than Struggletown, it retains a greater degree of integrity and its streetscapes remain unmistakably Victorian and Federation in character.

Social Significance:

The precinct is now the best surviving example of early workers' housing in Randwick. The subdivision layout has produced a quiet enclave with a strong sense of identity.

Themes Represented:

The following historical themes, identified in the 1989 Randwick Heritage Study, are directly illustrated in the conservation area:

- Speculation and promotion
- Suburbanisation

The following themes are indirectly represented:

- Modifying the landscape
- Transport and communications

