

# WEST KENSINGTON LOCAL CHARACTER STATEMENT

## WEST KENSINGTON LOCAL CHARACTER STATEMENT

DRAFT



Randwick City Council  
a sense of community

1300 722 542  
[randwick.nsw.gov.au](http://randwick.nsw.gov.au)



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statement

Randwick City Council acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the First Australians of this land, and the Bidjigal and Gadigal people who traditionally occupied the land we now call Randwick City.

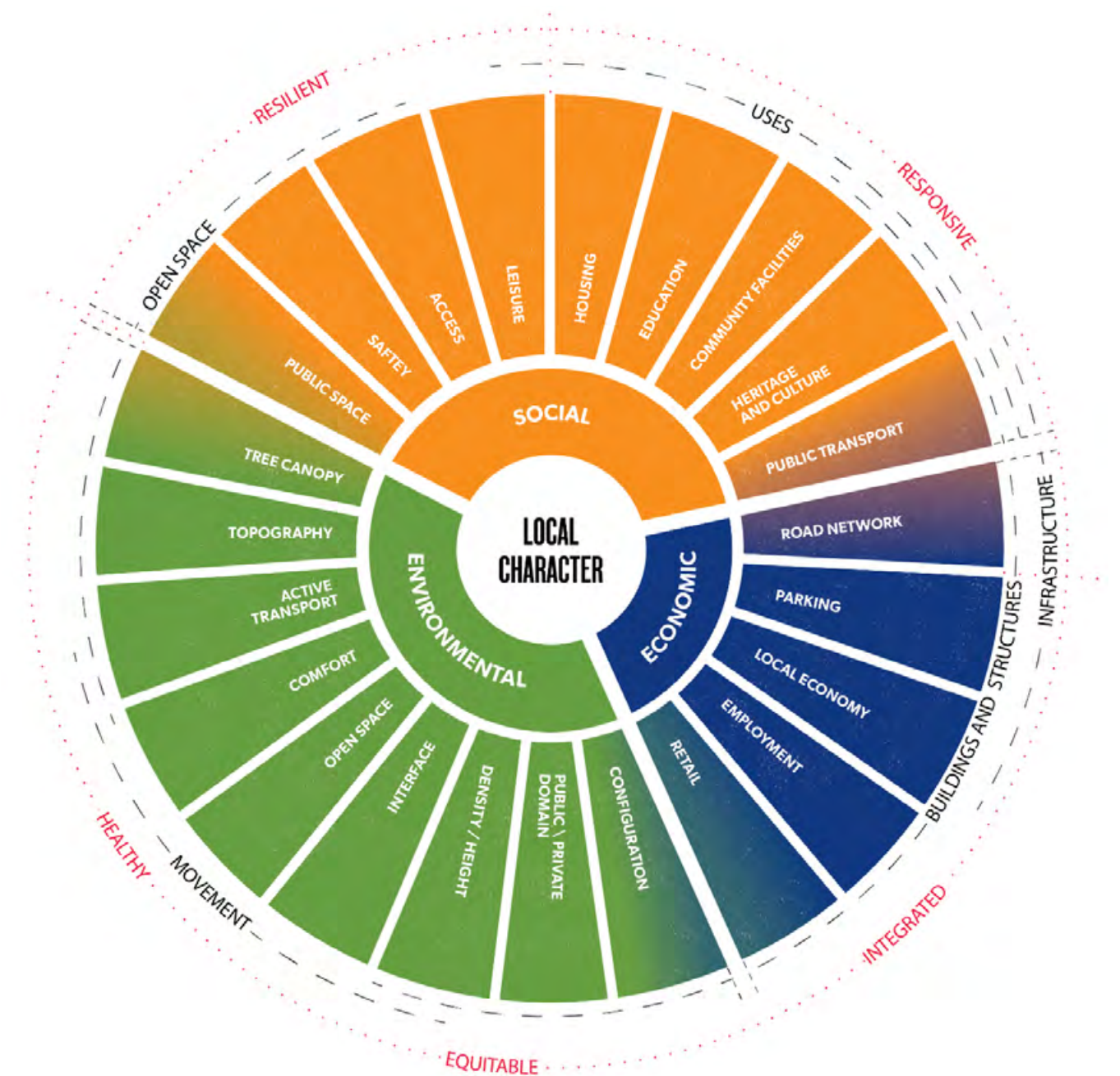
Randwick City has a rich and unique Aboriginal cultural history, with La Perouse being the only area in Sydney where the local Aboriginal community have had an unbroken connection to the land.

We recognise and celebrate the spiritual and cultural connection Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have with the land which long pre-dates European settlement and continues today.

Building on our Statement of Recognition and commitment to Reconciliation, Council wishes to support the vision and plans of our local Aboriginal and Torres Strait community in order to close the gap on disadvantage, build stronger local and regional economies and support culturally rich and healthy communities.

## Our Approach

Local character is the identity of place and what makes a neighbourhood distinctive. It is a combination of land, people, the built environment, history and culture and looks at how these factors interact to make the character of an area.



The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment's Local Character Wheel.





The Kensington Park Community Centre

Council's methodology for identifying local character has involved two main streams of research – expert and local knowledge. Our expert knowledge is drawn from Council's databases and is based on the three indicators of local character – environmental, social and economic. Local knowledge is drawn from extensive community consultation conducted in 2019 and social media analytics. By mapping and overlaying all of this data, we have generated spatial representations of local character and have identified draft Local Character Areas (LCAs) and draft Special Character Areas across the LGA.

Eleven draft Local Character Statements have been prepared that will outline the key features and desired future character of each LCA. In addition, Council has identified draft Special Character Areas where local character indicators and community engagement outcomes emerge as a dense layer based on the methodology. Each LCA has one Special Character Area, while the Maroubra Central and Bunnerong Creek LCAs each have two.

For more information on local character, please refer to the the Department of Planning Industry and Environment's *Local Character and Place Guideline*.



## West Kensington Local Character Area

West Kensington Local Character Area (LCA #02) is situated on the western corner of the Randwick LGA. It borders the City of Sydney LGA to the north-west and Bayside LGA to the south-west. It includes the open space recreational area of the Australian Golf Course and most of the residential areas of the Kensington and Kingsford suburbs west of Anzac Parade.



# West Kensington LCA Key Features



Rich Federation period built heritage



The open space and water features of The Australian Golf Course



Strong family feeling within the West Kensington area

## Community Feedback

To inform our local character analysis, Council undertook comprehensive community engagement in 2019 through online surveys, interactive mapping, interviews, community workshops and pop up stalls.

In workshops and online, participants were asked to put points on the map for places they consider have changed for the better, stayed the same and changed for the worse. They were also asked to map their special place.

- Places considered to have changed for the better
- Areas that have stayed the same
- Places considered to have changed for the worse
- Special place





# Kensington

Participants of the community workshops were asked to consider their suburb both now and into the future.

Kensington area character: **now**



Kensington area character: **future**



**NOTE:** the survey was developed for the whole Kensington suburb; many words are related to the light rail construction works along Anzac Pde.

# Kensington

Council engaged a consultant to conduct social media analytics on Randwick City to better understand residents and visitors sentiment toward the key features in each suburb. The analysis drew key words from social media relating to each suburb, which are displayed in a word cloud according to frequency of use.

1,315 social media mentions

Kensington suburb word cloud



10 most frequently used words

PARK	208
STREET	124
NEW	67
TIME	65
GREAT	49
ANZAC	49
PARADE	40
SOUTH	39
RAIL	39
NIGHT	38

**NOTE:** the survey was developed for the whole Kensington suburb; many words are related to the light rail construction works along Anzac Pde.

# Kingsford

Participants of the community workshops were asked to consider their suburb both now and into the future.

Kingsford area character: now



Kingsford area character: future



**NOTE:** the survey was developed for the whole Kingsford suburb; many words are related to the light rail construction works along Anzac Pde.

# Kingsford

Council engaged a consultant to conduct social media analytics on Randwick City to better understand residents and visitors sentiment toward the key features in each suburb. The analysis drew key words from social media relating to each suburb, which are displayed in a word cloud according to frequency of use.

824 social media mentions

Kingsford suburb word cloud



10 most frequently used words

ANZAC	81
TIME	47
CITY	45
UNSW	42
ST	42
ROSE	42
PH	39
PARADE	39
NEW	38
RAIL	37

**NOTE:** the survey was developed for the whole Kingsford suburb; many words are related to the light rail construction works along Anzac Pde.





**Key findings from our community engagement on West Kensington LCA include:**

- The community values the Australian Golf Course to the west of the LCA
- Active transport needs to be improved in the area, particularly east towards UNSW and the Randwick Education and Health Precinct and west towards Zetland
- Upgrades to Kensington Park including the new community centre are valued improvements to the area
- Traffic congestion concerns in the area
- The community values the consistency of the heritage and non-heritage built form

# Environmental characteristics

The West Kensington topography is predominantly flat and undulates gently, with the exception of the prominent north/south ridgeline that bisects the area. Residential development lies to the north and to the east of the LCA while Australian Golf Course extends to the western LGA boundary.

The road network is essentially a grid form which respects the major knoll upon which the Sacred Heart Monastery site is located. The street layout in the West Kensington Heritage Conservation Area (HCA) does not conform to this, with its unusual triangular street layout a result of the original subdivision of the area. In this area, the landscape remains predominantly flat, though there are a few notable variations in level.

The Australian Golf Course is an area with many water features and while it is a private facility, it is the predominant green open space of the LCA. It is one of a few remaining sites in the Randwick LGA that retains evidence of the north-south orientated aeolian dune system. It also has importance as a local water catchment and wetland system. Remnant vegetation on the dunes consists of a few small patches of the critically endangered Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub (ESBS), located on the eastern boundary.

REMNANT BUSHLAND SITE	ITEMS
The Australian Golf Course	Threatened species, indigenous plant species rare in the City of Randwick, aeolian dune deposits, native revegetation, wetland/ponds.



*The water features and wildlife within the Australian Golf Course*



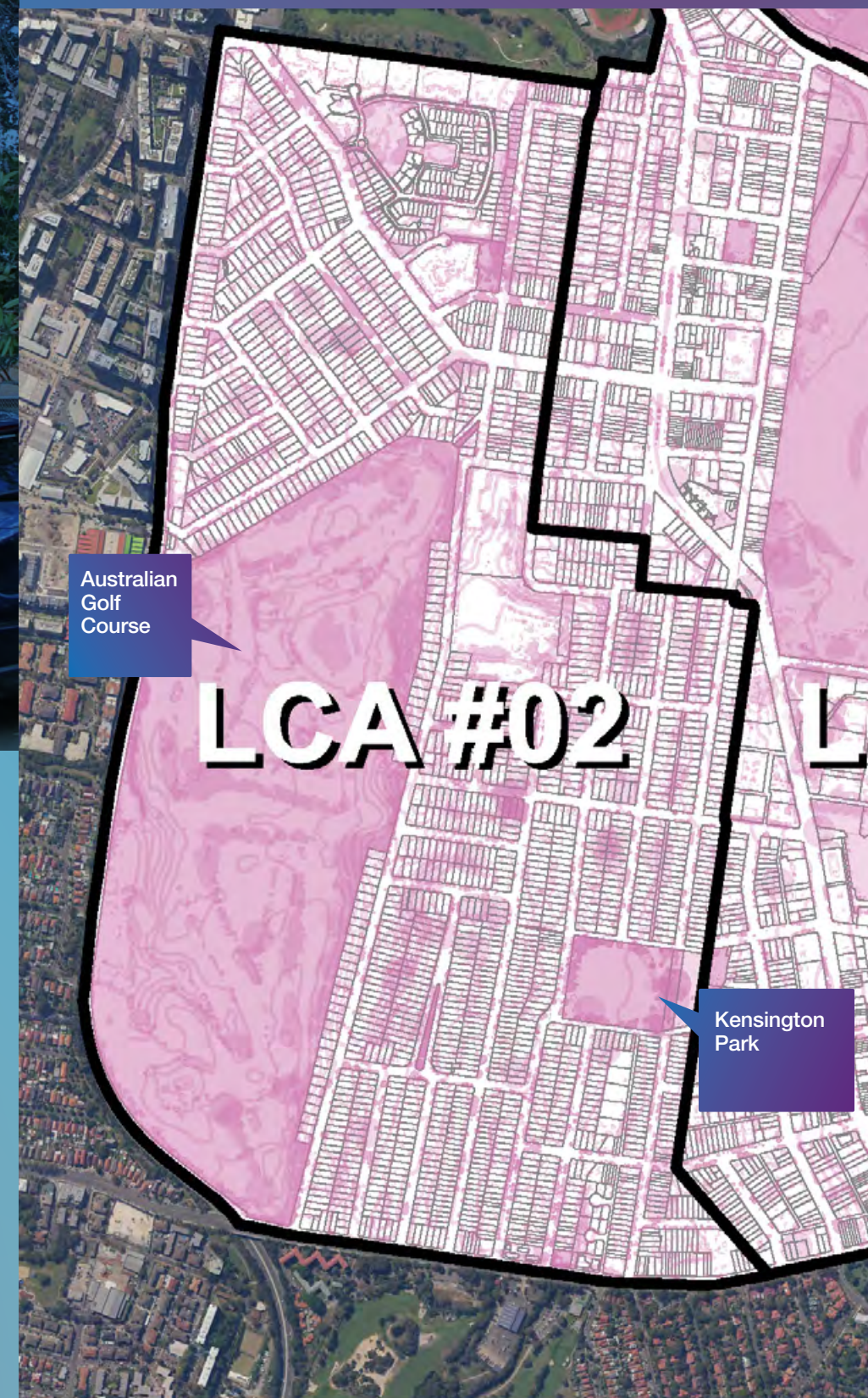




Kensington Park is the largest public open space in the LCA located on the corner of Barker Street and Cottenham Avenue. The park includes Kensington Oval which is often used for organised sport, the John Calopedos Memorial Playground and the Kensington Community Centre. Located predominantly around the perimeter of the park are a number of mature Canary Island date palms and fig trees that provide shade and habitat for local fauna. Other local parks in the LCA are smaller in scale but contribute to the area's urban form, providing public open space generally utilised by the surrounding community.

Most streetscapes retain their essential period character. In some parts of the LCA, street planting has created a more intimate streetscape. Figs, eucalypts, brush boxes and palm plantings add interest and enhance the local environment. Important landscape features identified that contribute to the local character of the area include:

- The figs on the Sacred Heart Monastery site
- The central median strip avenue of Canary Island date palms in Shaw Avenue
- The mature figs on the north western end of Todman Avenue and sections of Lenthall Street that provide shading and canopy cover
- Mature trees on Milroy Avenue, including a number of Canary Island date palms



### Environmental indicators density map

The following map is the spatial representation of the environmental indicators mapping overlay. It shows the concentration of indicators such as topography and tree canopy, hydrography, open space and protection areas. It provides evidence of nodes where environmental indicators emerge as a dense layer (i.e. dark pink) at the Australian Golf Course and Kensington Park.



# Social characteristics



The main leisure and recreation facilities of the LCA are the Australian Golf Course and the Kensington Park Community Centre.

The Kensington Park Community Centre is located within the park adjacent to Kensington Oval. The site was formerly the Kensington Bowling Club, which closed in 2013. The Community Centre is located on Crown land and is under Council care and control. The facility represents a high quality venue suitable for all types of events. Situated adjacent to the centre is a children's playground, half basketball court and exercise equipment.

In terms of active transport connections, the LCA's location between the built up areas of Zetland and Green Square to the west in the City of Sydney LGA and the Randwick Education and Health Precinct to the east means that there are many people travelling through the area.

The busy corridors of Todman Avenue and Lenthall Street are used by many forms of transport – buses, private vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. The road network is often congested with the high volume of traffic travelling through the area at peak times. There are opportunities to improve active transport connections through the area to alleviate traffic concerns and provide safer options for walkers and cyclists. With the introduction of light rail, it is also important to provide connections so local residents can access the Kingsford and Kensington town centres easily. Improving active transport connections along both



Todman and Lenthall Streets are on the list of Council construction priorities but remain unfunded.

The **West Kensington Heritage Conservation Area (HCA)** is significant for its highly consistent early twentieth century streetscapes. The unusual triangular street layout, overlaid on a former water supply catchment, has produced a unique subdivision pattern. There are a large number of internal vistas throughout the HCA as a result of this unique subdivision. Views from the area also include those toward the elevated areas to the south-east where the Sacred Heart Monastery site is located.

The heritage character of the area largely derives from its Federation and Inter-War housing, its predominantly single storey scale, the originally consistent face brick construction, and the highly visible tiled and slated roofs. Whilst many buildings have been substantially altered, there has been very little redevelopment relative to other parts of Randwick. Most buildings and streetscapes still retain their essential period character.



The **Sacred Heart HCA** is dominated by a notable group of brick religious buildings with tile roofs, mostly Federation Gothic style, located on a prominent knoll in the western of the LCA. The buildings' appearance is enhanced by their setting in spacious grounds, with large areas of lawn, large groups of Moreton Bay figs, palms, camphor laurels and other mature trees, and brick walling on most street frontages. The Sacred Heart precinct has particular social significance for the school community and other current and former users of the site.

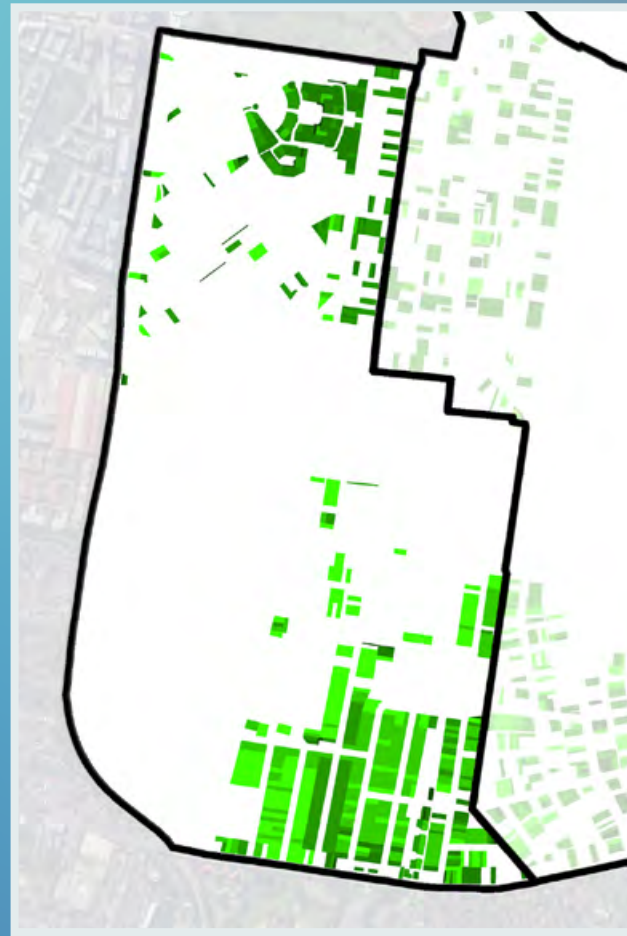
In the south area of the LCA, the built form is predominantly characterised by Inter-War and Federation styles, with a large number of Californian bungalows. Many of these have retained their original condition externally,

meaning that the area has retained a highly consistent streetscape. Mooramie Avenue and Cottenham Avenue have consistent groupings of California bungalows that contribute to the local character of the area. The area south of Roma Street is representative of the broad-acre subdivision patterns of the Inter-War period with each house built facing the street and offset on its allotment to allow vehicular access to the rear garden area. Across the LCA, there is a generally even texture of development - setbacks from the street and side boundaries are consistent, with most houses offset on their allotments to allow vehicular access to the rear of the property.





The built environment is generally characterised by detached single-storey Federation and Inter-War dwellings which is reflective of the prevalent lot sizes of 500 to 800smq (51.0%) and frontages from 12 to 15m (47.8%).



*Lot areas from 150 to 500sqm*

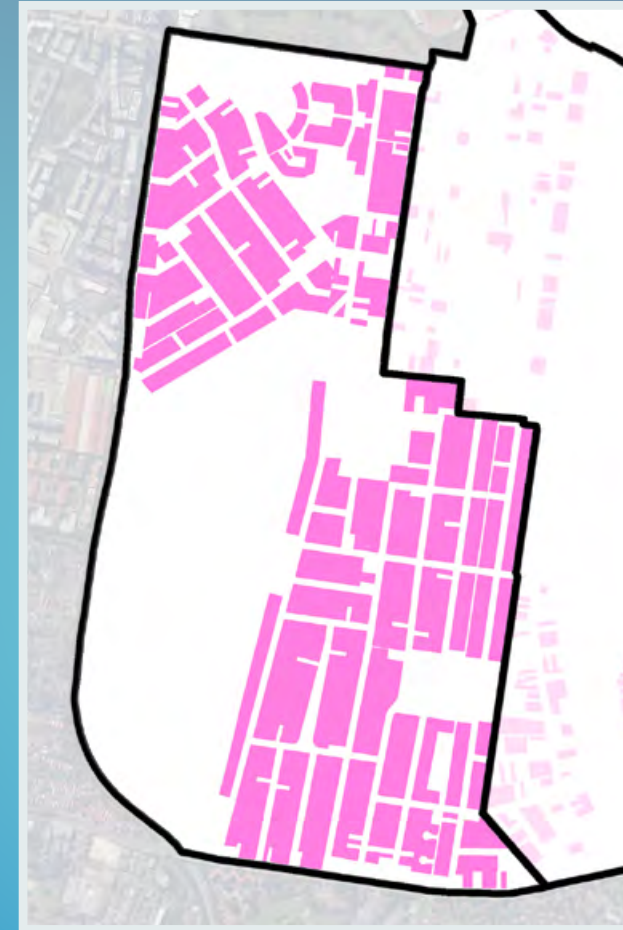


*Lot areas from 500 to 800smq*

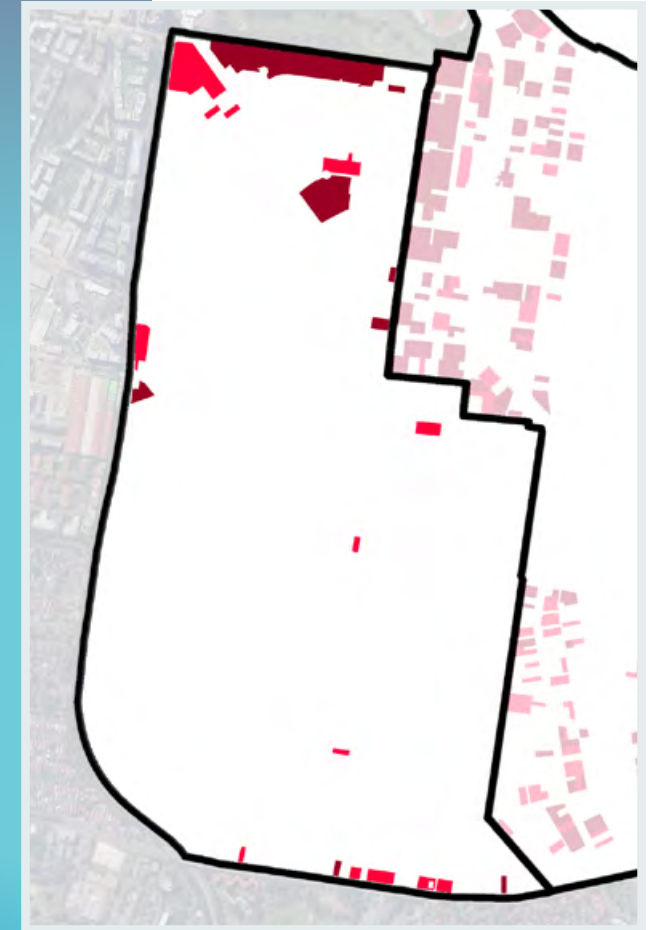


*Lot areas above 1000sqm*

Single dwellings with 1 or 2 storey are the predominant building typology in the LCA, representing 90% of all dwellings. This reflects the residential character of the area, with large swathes of the LCA built during the Inter-War period. The large apartment blocks on Todman Avenue and Brompton Road are the exceptions to the generally low-rise character of the area.



*Single dwellings*



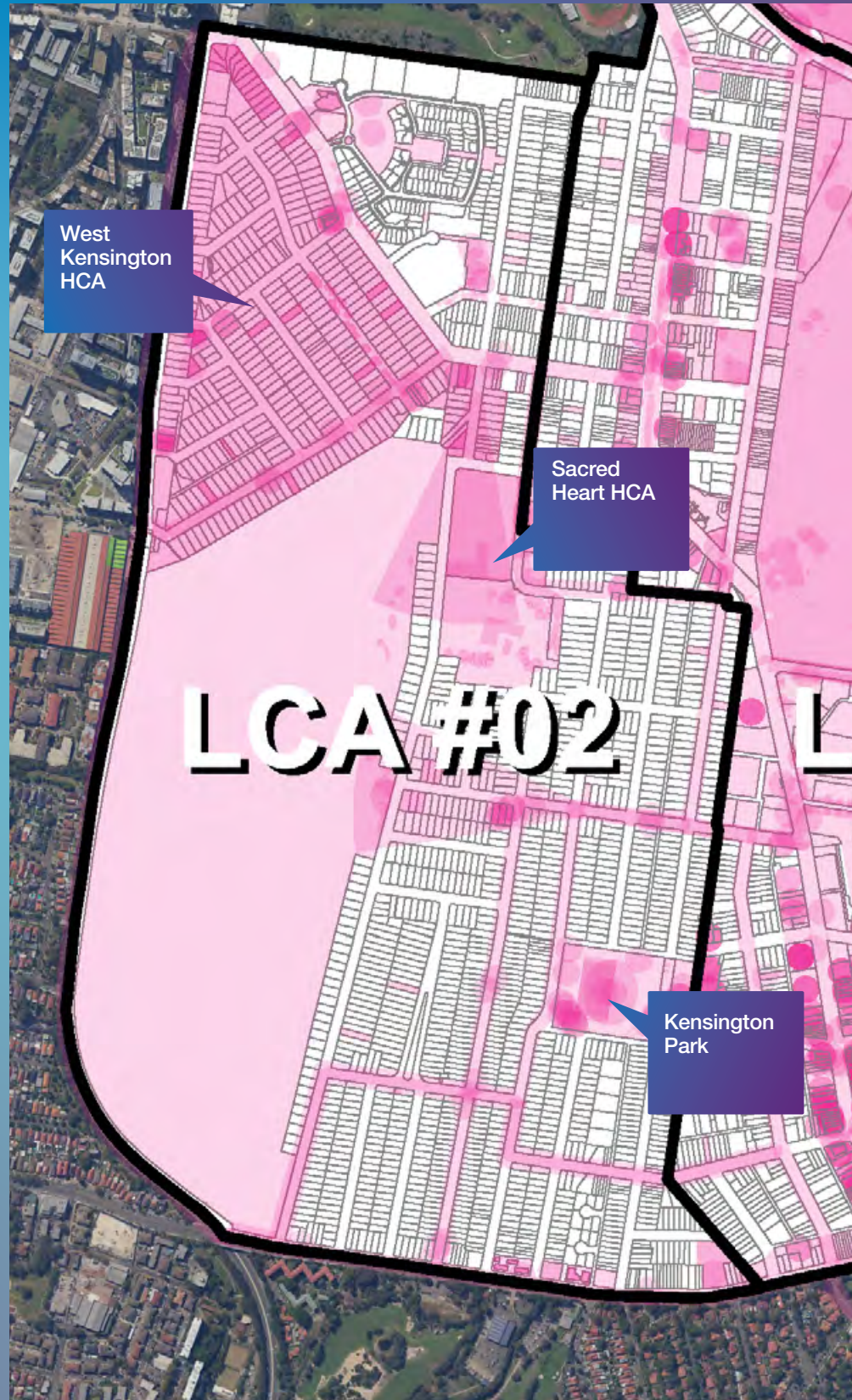
*Multi storey flats*



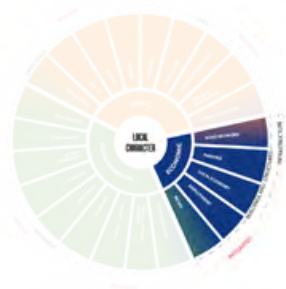


### Social indicators density map

The following map is the spatial representation of the social indicators mapping overlay. It shows the concentration of indicators such as community facilities, heritage and culture, leisure and recreation, public transport and social housing. It provides evidence of nodes where social indicators emerge as a dense layer (i.e. dark pink) at the West Kensington and Sacred Heart HCAs and Kensington Park.



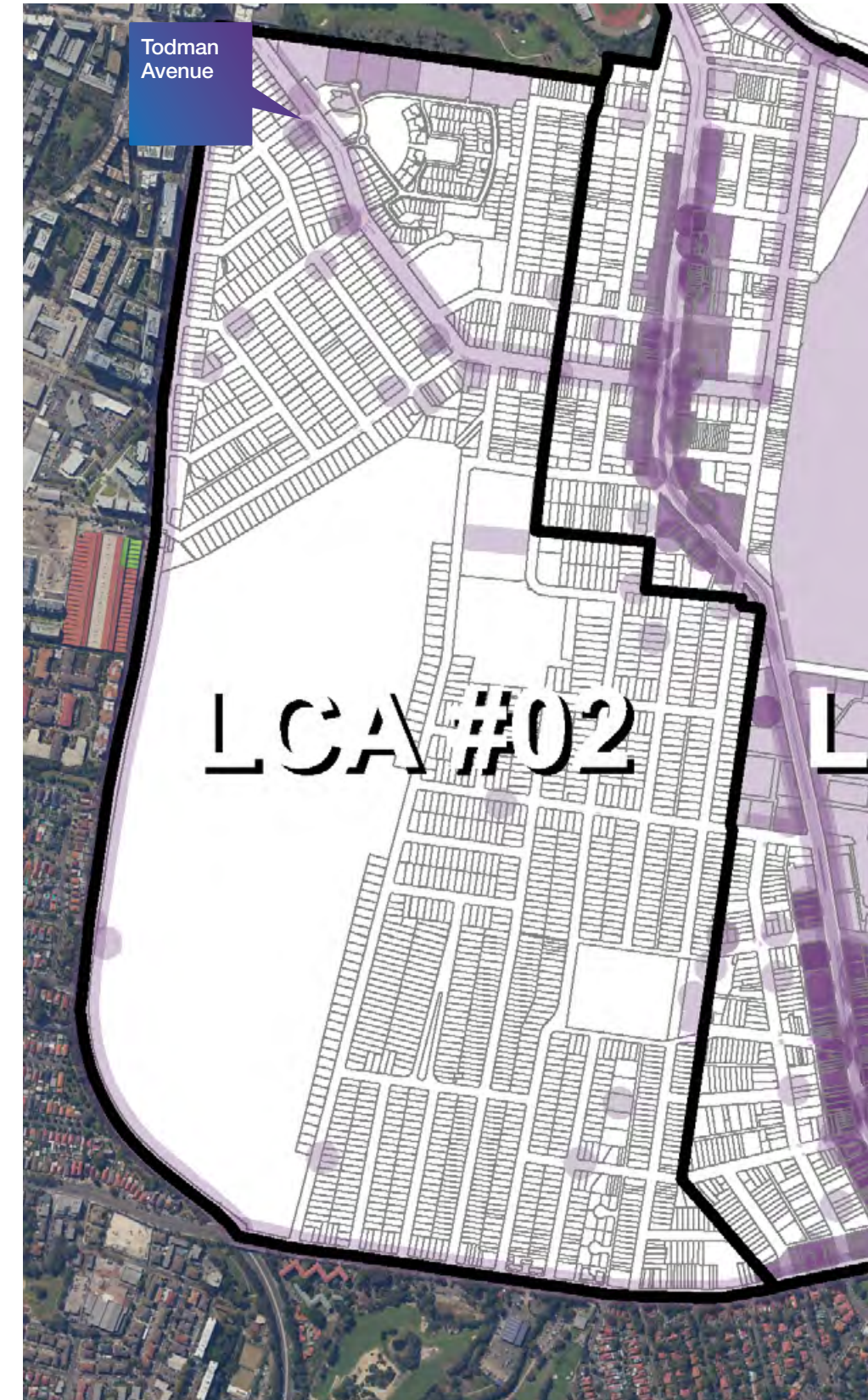
## Economic characteristics



The West Kensington LCA is predominantly residential and does not contain strong economic characteristics. Beside the Australian Golf Course, there are a few cafes and retail activities.

### Economic indicators density map

The following map is the spatial representation of the economic indicators mapping overlay. It shows the concentration of indicators such as local economy, commercial areas, food and health-related activities, road network and parking. It provides evidence of nodes where economic indicators emerge as a dense layer (i.e. dark purple) along Todman Avenue.

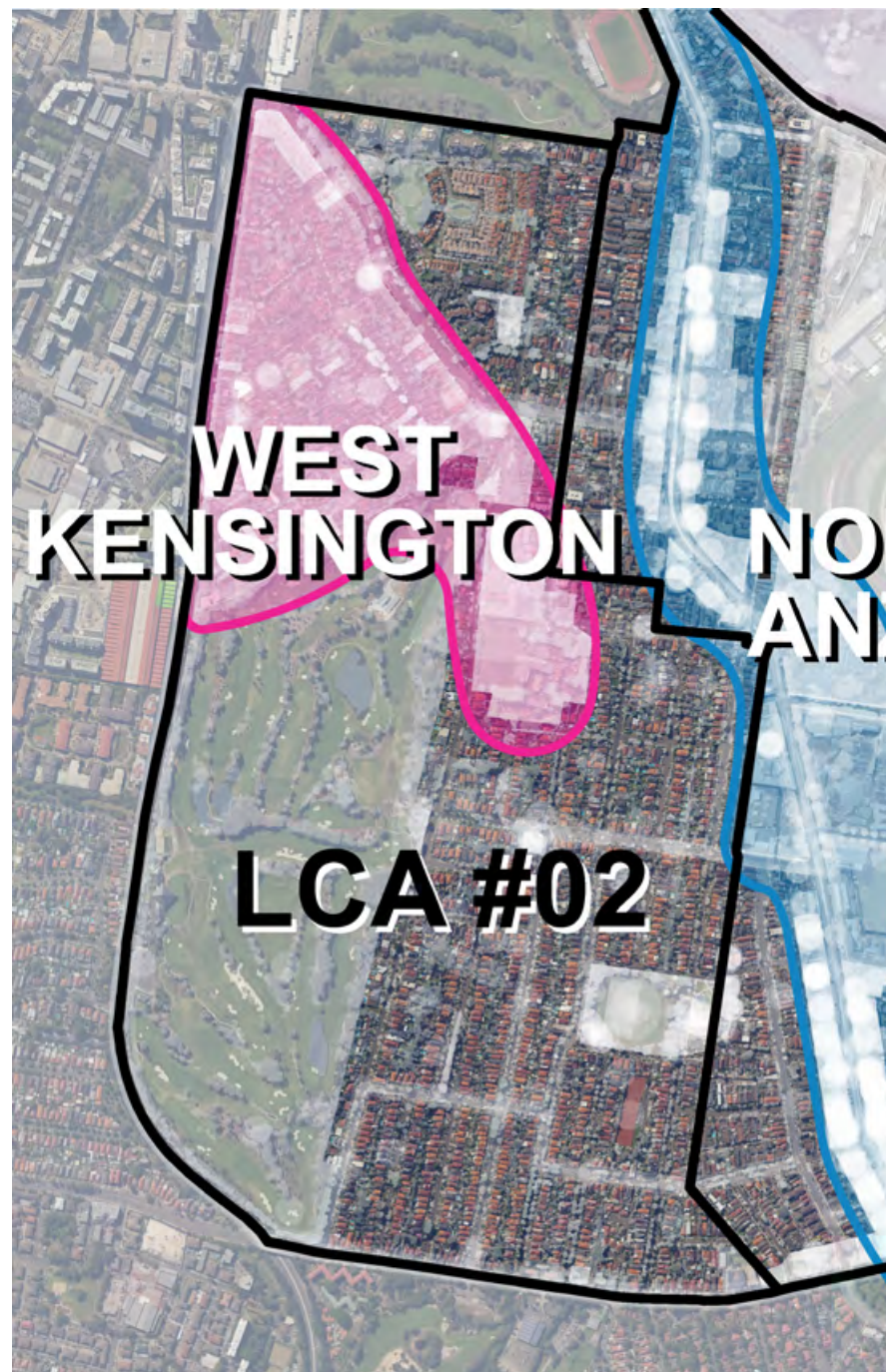




# West Kensington Special Character Area

The West Kensington Special Character Area has been derived from the indicators overlay density analysis and the community's shared values and future aspirations.

It encompasses the historically significant areas of the West Kensington and Sacred Heart heritage conservation areas (HCAs). The West Kensington HCA has a highly consistent early twentieth century streetscape with an unusual triangular street layout. The Sacred Heart HCA is a landmark church precinct located on a prominent knoll to the west of the LCA. Both these locations have historic significance to the LCA and the wider area. Its characterisation is maintaining and enhancing their unique heritage features.



# Character principles

These character principles have been prepared to set the desired future character of West Kensington LCA. The character principles have been formulated based on the analysis documented in this statement.

## West Kensington LCA character principles:

- Ensure view corridors to the Australian Golf Course are maintained and enhanced
- Ensure view corridors to the Sacred Heart HCA are maintained and enhanced
- Consistent street tree plantings in the West Kensington HCA to ensure a visually cohesive streetscape
- Maintain the predominantly single and double storey character of the area
- Retain mature trees that are linked to the local character of the LCA
- Improve connections through the LCA to Anzac Parade and UNSW
- Improve green grid connections to support local wildlife through native plantings

These character principles will inform the comprehensive review of the Randwick Local Environmental Plan 2012 occurring in 2020 and guide future provisions in the Randwick Development Control Plan 2013 which will be reviewed and updated following the adoption of the new LEP.

By elevating local character in the local planning framework, we will deliver better place-based planning outcomes for the community.





Randwick City Council  
30 Frances Street  
Randwick NSW 2031  
Phone 1300 722 542

[council@randwick.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@randwick.nsw.gov.au)  
[www.randwick.nsw.gov.au](http://www.randwick.nsw.gov.au)

Follow us here

