3.4 HCA 18 - AVON ROAD, PYMBLE

History

The following history is summarised from the article Richard Wall’s grant of 60 acres by Jennifer Harvey, published in The Historian, Official Journal of the Ku-ring-gai Historical Society Inc. Vol. 38, No. 1, October 2009; and from the Ku-ring-gai Urban Conservation Area Study, Godden Mackay Logan, 2002.

Pre-1890

HCA 18 includes: Richard Wall’s 60 acre (24ha) grant of 1821, which was located on the western side of the Pacific Highway north of William Lysett’s grant; southern end of Lysett’s grant (Orinoco St); William Wright’s grant (Avon Rd); Archibald McColl’s grant (Beechworth Rd); and a small part of L.Gordon’s grant (Golfers Parade).

The area was used for timber extraction until about 1840, and by the 1850s orchards were established in the area, producing a large variety of fruits for the Sydney markets, and resulting in subdivision of the earlier grants.

Richard Wall conveyed his 60 acre grant to William Parkes in 1824; Parkes conveyed the land to John Foreman Staff and Daniel Roberts on 17 June 1829; Roberts conveyed his share to John Foreman Staff on 29 June 1829. In February 1830, John Foreman Staff conveyed the land to John Buckingham; John Buckingham conveyed the land to Charles Buckingham (1803-1868) an emancipist, originally a shoemaker’s boy transported at the age of 14 for stealing a handkerchief, and granted an “extended conditional pardon” in 1849. Charles Buckingham died in 1868 and left his land in Pymble to be divided into equal shares and apportioned to his two sons Henry and James Charles. On 13 and 14 August 1884 the brothers Henry and James Buckingham were conveyed the land at Pymble they had inherited.

On 12 February 1885 Henry Buckingham of Hunters Hill, settler, sold his land to A.F. Dutton. The same day James Charles Buckingham of Redfern, carpenter, conveyed his land to A.F. Dutton of Guyra near Armidale. Dutton’s holdings were to become the Pymble Station Estate. On June 1885, within a few months of purchasing the grant from the Buckingham brothers, Archibald Francis Dutton applied to bring his property, containing 49 acres under the Real Property Act as Primary Application No. 6413. In the PA, he stated that Thomas Watson - who was a well-known local identity who drove the coach running from Pymble to North Sydney - was the tenant. Dutton was issued the Certificate of Title on 21 July 1886. In July 1888 the railways resumed a small triangle of Dutton’s land on Lane Cove Road (now the Pacific Highway).

Post-1890

Further subdivision occurred following the completion of the North Shore railway line in 1890. In November 1893 the Scottish Australian Investment Company Ltd purchased the remainder of Dutton’s land. This was subdivided as the Pymble Station Estate and advertised for sale in 1893, 1895, 1904 and 1910. The estate contained 5/6ths of Richard Wall’s original 60-acre grant and a small portion of Thomas Jenkins’ 20-acre grant. The land was divided into 47 lots of one acre residential blocks on either side of Pymble Avenue and 12 smaller lots fronting Lane Cove Road (Pacific Highway), between Livingstone Avenue and Avon Road, with a 20 foot lane at the rear of some of the commercial lots. The Pymble Station Estate did not sell well, with only ten lots of 47 purchased from the Estate by 1907. Grey House at 59 Pymble Avenue was constructed c. 1916, however the key development period for this area was the 1920s-1940s. The adjacent Druitt’s Estate later subdivided as the Railway Station Estate on part of the northern side of Pymble Avenue was developed in the same period. Land originally granted to William Lysett, close to the railway station, was further subdivided and offered for sale in 1906, resulting in the creation of Orinoco Street. Before 1900, Richard Porter’s lands were subdivided as part of the Avon Estate. TR Porter’s Estate and WJ Porter’s Estate were located on either side of the newly formed Avon Road extending as far as present-day boundary of the Avondale Golf Course.

Subdivision of the area expanded before 1915 with the offer of lots at the south end of Avon Road and in Lonsdale Avenue and Arilla Street as the Avondale Estate between 1915 and 1920. Development within Archibald McColl’s grant was dominated by Beechworth Road, which cut the holding in two. Subdivision of Cornwall’s land as the Cornwall Estate also occurred before 1900. Development of the Kimbarra Estate in the 1910s resulted in lots being formed along Kimbarra Road and Myoora Street.

Presbyterian Ladies’ College (now Pymble Ladies’ College) was established in the area in 1916, and the Avondale Golf Club was formed in 1926, “by a group of leading businessmen who wanted to establish a private club for themselves and their families. They purchased over 200 acres of rugged bushland in Pymble adjoining Presbyterian Ladies College, which the same men were instrumental in founding. Along with other holdings, a parcel of land was purchased from the college, and to this day there is an
allocation of seven membership places available to the school.\textsuperscript{11} It is believed that the early landscaping of the golf course was to a design by renowned landscape designer Edna Walling.\textsuperscript{12} However, development of the area was slow, and up until the 1930s Pymble Avenue remained a narrow road without kerbing or guttering with only a scatter of houses. Waterboard plans from the mid 1930s show development along both Pymble Avenue and Livingstone Avenue, with large houses on large elongated blocks, many set well back from the street. These blocks were further subdivided over the following years resulting in creation of battleaxe allotments fronting onto both of these streets. At the south end of Pymble Avenue, a major tract of land was subdivided between 1925 and 1930, resulting in the creation of Golfers Parade with relatively small residential lots. Much of the housing within the area, however, was not constructed until after World War II.

Further subdivision occurred after 1925 and the 1930s resulting in the creation of Ashmore Avenue and Lawley Crescent.

Figure 116: The south-eastern end of HCA 18 in 1943, showing little development except for a cluster in Pymble Avenue and a scatter along Livingstone Avenue, more development at the northern end

\textsuperscript{11} Information from www.avondalegolfclub.com.au/guests/club/history.mhtml

\textsuperscript{12} Information from Ku-ring-gai Historical Society
Figure 117: The north-eastern section of HCA 18 in 1943 – note cluster of housing at southern end of Orinoco Street, and around the corner into Livingstone Avenue, also cluster of housing in Pymble Avenue.

Figure 118: North-western section of HCA 18 in 1943, with housing clusters towards the northern end
Figure 119: The south-western section of HCA 18 in 1943, showing very little development at the southern end

Description

Topography and streetscapes

HCA 18 is bounded by Sheldon Forest to the northwest, the Avondale Golf Course to the southwest, the Pymble Town Centre boundary including the Pymble Ladies College site to the north and northeast, and a line through lot boundaries and along part of Livingstone Road and Courallie Avenue to the southeast and south. The area is in bisected by Pymble Ladies College. From both the north and south, vehicular access is available via Beechworth Road into the western section of the area, and via Livingstone Avenue into the eastern section of the area.

The area slopes steeply down from the Pacific Highway, with north-south streets – Beechworth Road, Avon Road, Pymble Avenue and Livingstone Avenue being particularly steep. A creek line runs through the area, and is particularly evident in front gardens with driveway bridges crossing the creek line in Livingstone Avenue. The area is heavily vegetated, with remnant Blue Gum High Forest surrounding houses and along street verges.
Figure 120: Courallie Avenue streetscape

Figure 121: Courallie Avenue Street verge

Figure 122: Golfers Parade streetscape

Figure 123: Pymble Avenue streetscape with impressive Blue Gum High Forest trees within street verge
Figure 124: Rand Avenue streetscape
Figure 125: Livingstone Avenue streetscape
Figure 126: Orinoco Street streetscape
Figure 127: Avon Road streetscape (looking south, Pymble Ladies College to left)
Figure 128: Avon Close streetscape
Figure 129: Lonsdale Avenue streetscape
Figure 130: Barclay Close streetscape

Figure 131: Arilla Road streetscape

Figure 132: Allawah Road streetscape

Figure 133: Linden Avenue streetscape

Figure 134: Arden Road streetscape

Figure 135: Mayfield Avenue streetscape
Figure 136: Lawley Crescent streetscape

Figure 137: Ashmore Avenue streetscape

Figure 138: Kimbarra Road streetscape

Figure 139: Myoora Street streetscape
Figure 140: Beechworth Road streetscape from the northern end looking south

Built Form
Houses are generally on large lots (with some exceptions, as outlined above), and set within generous gardens. As can be seen from the 1943 aerial photos above, pre-1943 development was scattered, and much of the housing development in the area, particularly towards the southern end, is later. Around Golfers Parade, Lawley Crescent, Ashmore Avenue, Kimbarra Road and Myoora Street housing is 1960s or later. Additionally, modern housing built from the 1980s and more recently occurs throughout the area, and there are several large sites currently undergoing redevelopment for additional housing (2 in Pymble Avenue, and another in Lonsdale Avenue). There are several intact Inter-war California Bungalows in Mayfield Avenue, and a cluster of pre-1943 houses in Pymble Avenue and at the southern end of Orinoco Street, extending around the corner into Livingstone Avenue.

Figure 141: 15 Golfers Parade – typical 1960s house
Figure 142: 82 and 84 Golfers Parade – recent new houses
Figure 143: 81 Pymble Avenue – deceptive modern house carefully designed and detailed to reference historic styles, including slate roofing.

Figure 144: 27 Orinoco Street – Inter-war Georgian Revival style house (pre 1943)

Figure 145: 36 Livingstone Road (near Orinoco Street) – a pre-1943 Inter-war Functionalist style house

Figure 146: 56 Pymble Avenue – one of the cluster of pre-1943 houses in Pymble Avenue
Figure 147: 51 Pymble Avenue – pre 1943 house

Figure 148: 55 Pymble Avenue – pre 1943 house

Figure 149: 8 Lonsdale Avenue – modern pseudo Federation style house

Figure 150: Development site in Lonsdale Avenue

Figure 151: New housing development at 82 Pymble Avenue

Figure 152: 4 Mayfield Avenue – modern house
Discussion of Significance

The area now contains a mix of housing development largely ranging from the 1920s through to modern housing. Pre-1943 development is scattered about the northern section of the HCA. Fine examples of earlier housing such as Macquarie Cottage at 11 Avon Road (designed by William Hardy Wilson in 1919) and the Federation period house at 9 Beechworth Road, are generally heritage listed.

The most significant development period for this area is the Inter-war period, and a number of fine examples of Inter-war styles remain, some already heritage listed: the only clusters of intact Inter-war housing within the area occur in Orinoco Street, extending around the corner into Livingstone Road, and in Pymble Avenue (Nos. 37 to 77B on the west side, and 56 to 72 on the east side).

Recommendation

Two areas within HCA 18 are recommended as Heritage Conservation Areas:

- an extension of the already gazetted Orinoco Street HCA to encompass Nos. 23-33 Orinoco Street and extending around the corner into Livingstone Road to encompass Nos. 32-38 Livingstone Road. This area contains all pre-1943 housing in a number of Inter-war period styles including Inter-war Georgian Revival and Inter-war Functionalist, the only modern house within the area being No. 31 Orinoco Street (which is built on a site which was vacant in 1943).
- a Pymble Avenue HCA encompassing houses from No. 37 to 61 Pymble Avenue on the western side, and Nos. 56 to 72 on the eastern side (excluding battleaxe sites except for Nos. 70 and 72, which were developed prior to 1943).

A number of potential heritage items are also recommended within HCA 18.

Statement of Significance for Orinoco Avenue HCA

Orinoco Street is significant historically and aesthetically as a highly intact portion of the 1894 Hamilton Estate subdivision and for its collection of Peddle Thorp designed bungalows and housing in a variety of Inter-war period styles. The Heritage Conservation Area boundary also encompasses 16 Livingstone Avenue, a house designed 1956-57 by architects Morrow & Gordon for Grace Irene Gordon, wife of Percy J. Gordon architect, principal of the firm at the time, as his family residence. The area is considered rare for its concentration of housing designed by a single architectural firm (Peddle Thorp later Peddle Thorp & Walker) between 1913 and 1930, and for its intact Inter-war period housing including fine examples of the Inter-war Georgian Revival and Inter-war Functionalist styles.

Statement of Significance for Pymble Avenue HCA

Pymble Avenue HCA is significant historically as a portion of the Pymble Station Estate of 1894, developed in the Inter-war period and also subject to later subdivision, creating a distinctive pattern of large lots fronting Pymble Avenue, many with battleaxe allotments to the rear. The area encompasses a fine group of Inter-war period housing from the 1930s and early 1940s including two listed heritage
items. 41 and 59 Pymble Avenue. “Elderslie” at 41 Pymble Avenue was built in 1939 to a design by architects Peddle Thorp & Walker\textsuperscript{13}, and other housing of this period within the area include similar design features. Housing in this HCA includes fine examples of Inter-war Functionalist, Inter-war Mediterranean and Inter-war California Bungalow styles.

**Battleaxe Lots recommended for viewing**

The following battleaxe lots within HCA 18 are recommended for viewing as Lands Dept. 1943 aerial photos indicate the possible presence of pre-1943 housing development:

- 8A Lonsdale Avenue
- 77 Pymble Avenue – believed to be the site of a house designed in 1971 by Russell Jack of architectural firm Allen Jack and Cottier
- 79 Pymble Avenue
- 70 Pymble Avenue
- 72 Pymble Avenue

**Potential Heritage Items**

The following properties within HCA 18 are recommended for further investigation as potential heritage items (see Table 6 for details):

- 6 Arden Road
- 57 Avon Road
- 67 Avon Road
- 27 Beechworth Road
- 7 Kimbarra Road
- 9 Kimbarra Road
- 12 Kimbarra Road
- 56 Livingstone Avenue
- 51 Pymble Avenue
- 61 Pymble Avenue
- 77B Pymble Avenue

\textsuperscript{13} Reference Sydney Morning Herald Tuesday 15 August 1939, page 6 Building and Construction article
Table 6: Potential heritage items in HCA 18

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<th>Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>6 Arden Road</td>
<td>House designed in 1949 by architect Sydney Ancher</td>
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Figure 155: 6 Arden Road

57 Avon Road

Weatherboard Inter-war California bungalow

Figure 156: 57 Avon Road
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<tr>
<th>67 Avon Road</th>
<th>“Avonleigh” – Inter-war Georgian Revival style house</th>
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<td>Figure 157: 67 Avon Road</td>
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<td>27 Beechworth Road</td>
<td>1940s Inter War Old English style house</td>
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<td>Figure 158: 27 Beechworth Road</td>
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<td>7 Kimbarra Road</td>
<td>1940s Inter-war Functionalist style house</td>
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<td>Figure 159: 7 Kimbarra Road</td>
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<td>9 Kimbarra Road</td>
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<td>Figure 160: 9 Kimbarra Road</td>
<td>“Sunningdale” – 1930s Inter-war Old English style house</td>
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<td>12 Kimbarra Road</td>
<td>1940s Inter-war Old English style house</td>
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<td>Figure 161:12 Kimbarra Road</td>
<td>Weatherboard house, c. 1900 or earlier</td>
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<td>56 Livingstone Avenue</td>
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<td>Figure 162: 56 Livingstone Avenue</td>
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<tr>
<td>51 Pymble Avenue</td>
<td>“Cottswold” 1940s bungalow</td>
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<th>“Hilltop” – Inter-war Mediterranean style house</th>
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<th>Inter-war Functionalist style house</th>
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